

PONTE VEDRA RECORDER

June 9, 2022
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75 cents

Not your average newspaper, not your average reader

PonteVedraRecorder.com



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INSIDE: CHECK IT OUT!
The Recorder's Entertainment EXTRA featuring TV listings, streaming information, puzzles and more!



Contributed photos

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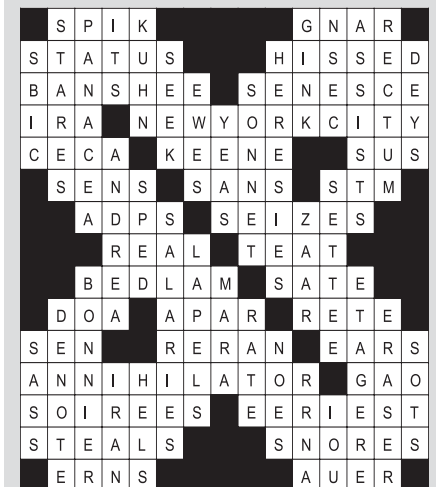
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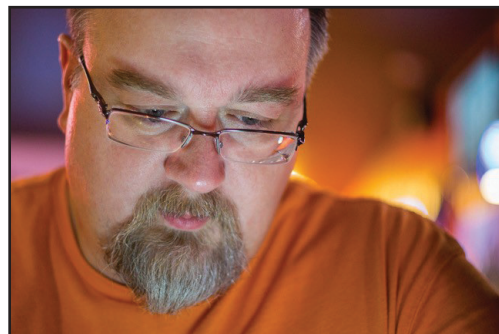
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PUZZLE SOLUTIONS



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

BRIEFS



Contributed photo

Published author Erik Deckers will give a presentation on compelling dialogue at the meeting of the Ponte Vedra Writers group.

Writing dialogue is topic of writers group meeting

Writer, branding expert, speaker and humorist Erik Deckers returns to discuss writing compelling dialogue. Deckers will present “He Said, She Said: The Secrets of Writing Solid Dialogue” at the June 18 meeting of the FWA Ponte Vedra Writers group. The meeting will be held at 2 p.m. at the Ponte Vedra Branch Library.

“Dialogue lets you illustrate themes and convey ideas through a character’s verbal response to the situations and people they encounter,” said Deckers. “Your characters can express deep emotions with what they say, sometimes more than they can with unspoken actions and unvoiced feelings. Without dialogue, you don’t have a story, you have an essay. But writing dialogue can be quite tricky, and it’s an art unto itself.”

Deckers is the co-author of “Branding Yourself: How to Use Social Media to Invent or Reinvent Yourself” along with other social media books. He’s recently published his first humor novel, “Mackinac Island Nation.” He’s been blogging since 1997 and been a published writer for more than 27 years.

The Ponte Vedra Writers group is part of the Florida Writers Association, a statewide, non-profit organization with nearly 1,500 members dedicated to the support of both aspiring and published writers in any genre.

The June 18 meeting is free and open to members and non-members alike. For information on FWA, go to floridawriters.org.

Municipal Service District announces meeting change

The Municipal Service District of Ponte Vedra Beach has given notice of meeting time change for the remainder of year 2022. The monthly meetings on the second Monday of the month will now begin at 5:30 p.m. and will be held at the Ponte Vedra Beach Branch Library. An agenda for the meeting can be obtained at www.pvmsd.org or by contacting Ann Jurenovich at pvmsd@comcast.net

Pursuant to the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act, any person requiring special accommodations to participate in any of these meetings is asked to advise the district at least five days before the meeting by contacting Ann Jurenovich at pvmsd@comcast.net.

Library announces summer reading program

The St. Johns County Public Library System is encouraging youth and adults to participate in “The Best Summer at Your Library” summer reading program, June 13 through Aug. 6. The program includes virtual and in-person opportunities that are fun for the whole family.

Readers of all ages are invited to pick up their free reading logs from any library branch or track their progress virtually through the READsquared app. Participants may earn free books for every six days read on logs or 60 points reached on READsquared.

In addition, the library system is hosting the second annual “Amp up the Magic” show with magician Mark Alan at 10 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. June 30 at the St. Augustine Amphitheatre located at 1340C A1A South. Registration is on a first-come, first-served basis. Attendees are encouraged to bring chairs or beach towels and bug spray for this free outdoor event. Register at sjcpls.org/the-best-summer-22.

“The Best Summer at Your Library” is sponsored by multiple Friends of the Library groups.

To learn more about the summer reading program and how to register for the variety of programs, contact your local branch library or go to sjcpls.org.



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The Palm Valley Rotary Club recently held its Annual Community Shredding Event in the Ponte Vedra Branch Vystar Credit Union parking lot. Traffic flow was steady as locals lined up to take advantage of this opportunity while supporting local charities, including Peace of Heart community in Ponte Vedra Beach.

The Rotary Club thanked those who turned out to support the effort and its sponsors, Cyndi King at Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Network Realty, River City Capitol Investments and Masters, Smith & Wisby, P.A.

Altogether more than 3,600 pounds of sensitive documents were shredded.



Contributed photos

Palm Valley Rotarians assist local residents with the large shredding project.

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This is your opportunity to purchase one of the coveted condominiums at The Colony at Ponte Vedra. East of A1A with a sidewalk all the way to the beach, this 2 BR 2 BR, fully renovated unit is waiting for you. Kitchen is loaded with marble countertops, SS appliances and deep kitchen sink. Waterproof vinyl plank flooring throughout, barn doors and updated bathrooms. Unit comes with garage and washer and dryer. Great investment property, use as a guest house or secure for your forever abode with ground level easy access. You cannot go wrong with this unit!

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Ponte Vedra Cul-de-sac

A wonderful opportunity to live in Ponte Vedra "proper", on the water. This property is priced at lot value but has opportunities for renovation, if preferred. The home located on a cul-de-sac with no drive by traffic. Just 2.5 blocks to beach access. Water pumped from lake for landscaping is grandfathered in. Dock and gazebo also grandfathered in.

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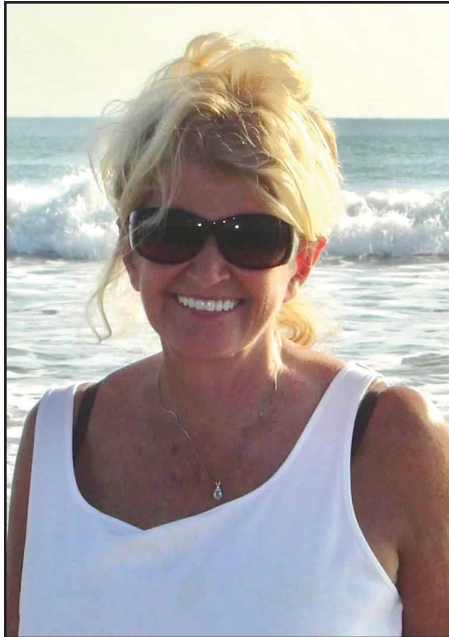
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ELIZABETH HUDGINS

OBITUARIES



Sandra Kay Brum

Sandra Kay Brum, 77 of Ponte Vedra Beach, FL died May 15, 2022. She was born in Fort Smith, Arkansas to the late Bernice and Robert Peel. She graduated early and at the top of her class from Fort Smith High School and went on to receive her Nursing Diploma from St. Edwards Mercy Hospital School of Nursing in Fort Smith. She held various positions as a registered nurse and enjoyed working in hospital obstetrics

and neonatal care in Hannibal, Missouri. She earned a bachelor's degree in Health Arts at the College of St. Francis, her Education Certificate at Georgia State University and her Master's in Health Services Administration with an emphasis in Marketing from Central Michigan University.

Her family moved to Georgia in 1983 and she became a practical nursing instructor at Henry County High School in McDonough. From 1986 to 1997, Sandy was the executive vice president of marketing for Health Images, a public company that owned and operated outpatient diagnostic imaging centers in the U.S. and U.K. She managed national sales and training and directed all company operations relating to marketing. Sandy created, recruited, and acted as the liaison for the national physician advisory board along with negotiating physician and managed care contracts. In 1997, Sandy joined P.E.T Net Pharmaceutical Services as vice president of marketing where she developed a marketing program focused on nuclear medicine, radiology, oncology, cardiology, and neurology. She moved to Ponte Vedra Beach in 2000 as executive vice president of CSCM, Inc. where she developed the company's policy and procedure manuals and trained and supervised medical employees for facilities achieving Ambulatory Health Care

Accreditation.

Sandy retired in 2014 and continued consulting and staying active in the healthcare industry and on various boards including the Sawgrass Beach Condo Association and North Florida Republican Committee. She was a proud Mom and Grandmother, and she loved the water, swimming, boating, playing golf and walking on the beach. Sandy enjoyed collecting shark's teeth and sea glass, finding sea turtle nests, listening to music (especially country music), dancing, traveling, and most of all she loved being with her family and friends. She was the life of the party, and her beautiful smile and brown eyes will be missed by all.

Sandy is survived by her son Bryan (Rhonda) of Atlanta, GA, her daughter Elizabeth (Andy Bayman) of Atlanta, GA, her grandchildren Jeffrey (Aubrey) Brum, Ellen Brum, Julia White, JB White and Thomas Bayman, and her beloved companion Dr. Michel S. Pawlowski of St. Augustine Beach, FL.

A funeral mass will be held at Cathedral Basilica of St. Augustine at 9 a.m. on Tuesday, June 28, 2022. A private celebration of life will be held on Wednesday, June 29, 2022 at 10 a.m. at the Sawgrass Beach Club in Ponte Vedra Beach, FL. In lieu of flowers, the family requests a donation in Sandy's memory to Vicar's Landing - Employee Scholarship Fund,

American Heart Association or Beaches Sea Turtle Patrol.

- Vicar's Landing Employee Scholarship Fund, 1000 Vicar's Landing Way, Ponte Vedra Beach, FL 32082
- American Heart Association – Online donations at Heart.org or mail to PO Box 840692, Dallas, TX 75284-0692.
- Beaches Sea Turtle Patrol, Inc.-Online donations at <https://bstp.net/donate/> or mail to PO Box 50723, Jacksonville Beach, FL 32240-0723.



*When the cares of my heart
are many, your consolations
cheer my soul.*

Psalms 94:19

DEATH NOTICES

Stephen Edward Bishop

Stephen Edward Bishop, 63, of Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida, died May 26, 2022. Arrangements by Quinn-Shalz Family Funeral Home & Cremation Centre. 904-249-1100 www.quinn-shalz.com

Paul Vernon Brooks

Paul Vernon Brooks, 47, of Jacksonville Beach, Florida, died June 1, 2022. Arrangements by Quinn-Shalz Family Funeral Home & Cremation Centre. www.quinn-shalz.com. 904-249-1100

Joyce M. Jones

Joyce M. Jones, 85, of Jacksonville, Florida, died June 1, 2022. Arrangements by Quinn-Shalz Family Funeral Home & Cremation Centre. www.quinn-shalz.com. 904-249-1100

Julia Vivian Potthoff

Julia Vivian Potthoff, 50, of Jacksonville, Florida, died March 29, 2022. Arrangements by Quinn-Shalz Family Funeral Home & Cremation Centre. www.quinn-shalz.com. 904-249-1100

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Baptist Beaches volunteer, 91, loves comforting patients

When Jerri Snavley discovered the joy of hospital volunteer work 42 years ago, she knew she had found her calling. She has been dedicated to bringing cheer to patients and families and helping to make their hospital stays a little easier ever since.

She began her volunteer journey at a hospital in her Ohio hometown and continued it at Baptist Medical Center Beaches when she moved to the area 24 years ago. The 91-year-old said she enjoys being able to help people while also feeling a strong sense of friendship and community.

“All three of my sisters-in-law were nurses and so was my daughter, so I thought I’d try volunteering in a hospital setting,” she said. “It didn’t take long for me to know it was exactly what I wanted to do when I retired and moved to Florida.”

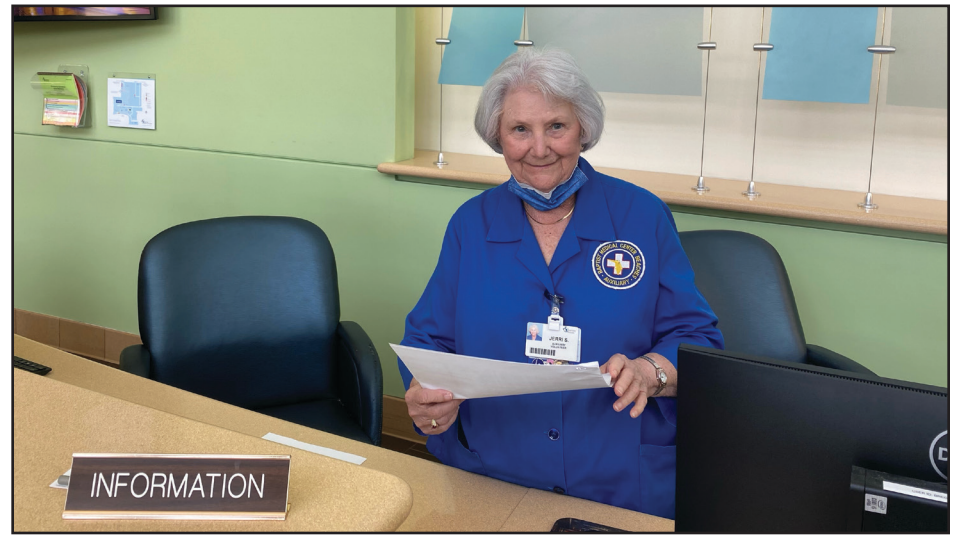
Snavley has served in various capacities at Baptist Beaches, including reception, registration, administration, coordinator of the teen volunteer program and auxiliary president. Each opportunity

allowed her to gain new skills and meet new people. She has also helped on the nursing floors and assisted the hospital chaplain with pastoral care.

“A lot of the patients just want somebody to talk to,” she said. “So, if I go to a room to pour water for a patient or get a magazine, I always linger a little bit to see if they want to talk, and most of the time they do. I have spent a lot of time visiting with people. I never go into a patient’s room in a rush — I go in relaxed and give them plenty of time to open up and say what they need to say. It helps the patients a lot to be able to talk.”

When Snavley’s late husband, Paul, became ill, she continued to volunteer at Baptist Beaches three days a week while he received dialysis treatment nearby. Paul Snavley was also a volunteer at Beaches Baptist for 20 years — it was a passion the couple shared.

Jerri Snavley attributes her spryness and spring in her step to the purpose and satisfaction she finds in her volunteer work. She said she plans to continue serving for as long as she can.



Contributed photo

Jerri Snavley has been volunteering at hospitals for 42 years, the last 24 at Baptist Medical Center Beaches.

“When people ask me why I have stuck with it so long, I tell them it’s because I feel so rewarded, knowing I am doing something worthwhile,” Snavley said. “Helping people makes you feel good on the inside and the outside, and whatever you give comes back three-fold. I’ve

completed around 40,000 volunteer hours in the hospital setting and I have loved every minute of it.”

Anyone interested in volunteering at Baptist Beaches can go to baptistjax.com/volunteer or call 904-202-2000.

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Alexander Kiss is co-founder and CTO of vranda, which puts environmental, social and governance data for small- and medium-sized businesses into the hands of stakeholders. His is one of several young businesses located at the link in Nocatee.

Alexander Kiss

As told to Shaun Ryan

Tell me about your company and what it does.

vranda is a software company focused on corporate ESG (Environmental, Social, Governance) data. Our platform allows sustainability managers to collect relevant data, track it across departments, task manage and set meaningful goals to promote change. Examples of this type of data are carbon emissions, diversity across departments and also social/charitable contributions (to name just a few). Our dashboard allows for visualization of complex inputs allowing stakeholders to spot patterns easier.

Tell me about your customers, not necessarily by name but rather by type or what qualities they typically share.

Our focus is on SMB's (small-/medium-sized businesses) as they are under pressure to report ESG data to their larger customers. Our clients range from \$50 million to \$250 million in revenue, which is the sweet spot of a supplier that is being directly impacted by the impending rules. Carbon emissions has been targeted by the SEC recently and public companies will soon be mandated to report this data. Specifically, Scope 3 targets the supply chain of these publicly listed corporates, which is why the SMBs are scrambling to find a solution to track emissions.

How long has your company been around, and how did you first get the idea for it?

vranda was formed in April 2021 on Earth Day, and we have reached our first-year anniversary. Initially, our goal was to help corporates source goods from sustainable and diverse suppliers, but we realized that we can have a greater effect by broadening our reach and focusing on all ESG data. The vranda team is extremely talented, and we are excited to bring about meaningful change by holding companies accountable to their data, rather than have them "check the box" and move on.

What is the most rewarding part of what you do?

Working with companies that want to effect meaningful change is very rewarding. Coming from a financial background, I have seen what happens when profit is put above all else, and it feels like that calculus is now shifting. Black Rock, Vanguard and State Street (this trio manages \$15 trillion of assets) have publicly stated they are focused on ESG investing. Employees are also declaring that they want to work for companies that share their values, which is putting intense pressure on companies in a very tight labor market.

Tell me about your affiliation with the link. How has it benefitted your business?

I have known Raghu (Misra, link co-founder) for three years and his focus on getting the link built, running and then giving back to the community has been incredibly impressive. The Nocatee area is filled with talented entrepreneurs and giving them a space to meet, share ideas and lift each other up has created a hub of activity and mind-share. I am excited to see how it crystalizes in the coming years as there is no reason



Contributed photo

Alexander Kiss, co-founder of vranda, gives a presentation at the link.

why we can't have amazing \$100 million-plus start-ups hatch and grow right out of the link.

What do you like about living here in Northeast Florida?

It's been a great spot to raise our kids for the last seven years as the community is very engaged and has a fantastic school system. Being near the beach is a nice perk while the amenities at Nocatee are truly impressive, and only getting better.

How do you like to spend your free time?

Mostly staying around the area, riding bikes with the kids and being involved with their activities. I am a part of some great tech meetup groups which are pushing Jax forward on the national scene. After travelling so much with my previous companies, it's nice to remain in place and not to have to catch a flight every other week — although I think we could also all use a break from the incessant Zoom calls.

We Can Be Heroes remembers D-Day, honors veteran



By Anthony Richards

The events of June 6, 1944, also known as D-Day, will always play an important role in our nation's history and the events of that day were honored during a remembrance brunch hosted by the We Can Be Heroes Foundation June 4.

The Salem Centre auditorium in Jacksonville was packed with people on hand for the annual event and to celebrate guest of honor Frank Pupura, who was a veteran of D-Day and a Purple Heart recipient.

Pupura played an important role as a boat operator on that fateful day, which still serves as the largest amphibious invasion in military history.

Only 18 years old, Pupura was responsible for delivering both men and supplies to the Normandy shore in France.

A piece of shrapnel struck his right eye during his first trip to the beach, but he was patched up and quickly returned to

Photo by Anthony Richards

D-DAY continues on **Page 12**

The "Let Freedom Sing" Choir sang various patriotic songs to open the ceremony.

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Congratulations to all Ponte Vedra Graduates!

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As you find your path forward,
remember your good fortune to grow up
in a giving and caring environment.
Here's to your future ~ the explorations,
the missteps and the successes.
And remember your roots
on the way...
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Nease, Ponte Vedra send-off 2022 seniors

By Anthony Richards

There are certain moments in life that are seemingly more meaningful than others and high school graduation is one of those.

For the 2022 senior classes at Ponte Vedra and Nease high schools the graduations were a culmination of years of hard work and signify the end of one stage and the beginning of another in their life's journey.

"I thought I'd feel a lot different walking out of the arena after graduation or leaving PV for the last time, like some switch would flip and I'd feel all grown up, but that didn't happen," Cate Rosa

said.

However, she did find herself looking back on the memories she created during her senior year, so many of which came in the final weeks.

"My favorite memories from high school always happened during the last few weeks, after exams and before the last day," Rosa said. "Everyone is just playing cards and what not. As the classes started to thin out, you'd get closer with people you didn't really talk to all year and that was fun."

She especially remembers the times when she and her classmates went up to Gate and brought back Icee's for their teachers.

According to Nease graduate Cruz Dexter, every year of high school was special in its own way, but what made senior year so unique was the hectic schedule at times of fun things to do and for the final time in the case of the seniors.

Dexter was a member of the Panthers' boys lacrosse team and he will never forget the ride the team into the playoffs.

"It was a memorable year considering our lacrosse team made it farther than we ever have in 13 years," Dexter said. "Overall, senior year was a good time and one of the better years in my high school experience thanks to lacrosse, all the school events and getting out of school early."

Both schools held their graduation ceremonies in the University of North Florida Arena in Jacksonville, as Ponte Vedra held their celebration May 28 followed by Nease June 1.

College is up next for many graduates, while others have military service or other career endeavors they are about to pursue.

Many graduates took the time to decorate the top of their caps to signify what their next step will be now that their high school days are over.

Whatever that next step is, the Ponte Vedra Recorder congratulates each graduate and their families on their accomplishment and wishes them the best of luck moving forward!



Ashley Allen and family



Wilson Whitehead



Photo courtesy of Robin Pantoja
Teacher Jason Nettle stands beside Padraig Pantoja, Presley Baesler and Evan Fleischer.

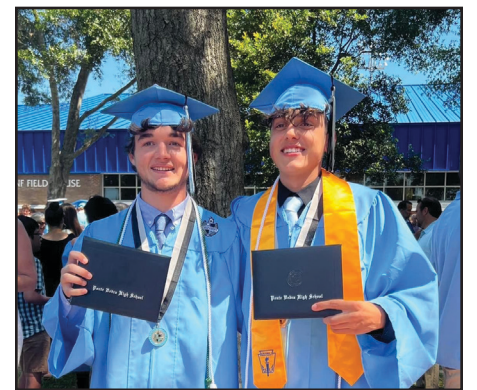


Photo courtesy of Cheryl Mosley
Nathan Wozniak and Britton Mosley.



A happy bunch of graduates after receiving their diplomas.



Photo courtesy of Molly James
Sarah James, Caitlin Gregory, Audrey Hackett and Lola Newman.



Savannah Gomes, Sydney Gomes and Alli Fifield with Nease girls basketball coach Sherri Anthony.



Caleb Kramer stands with his mom Pamela Kramer in front of the University of North Florida fountain after graduation.



Photo courtesy of Jenn Eidam.
Pictured from left are: Sydney Evanger, TaylorAnn Eidam (Summa Cum Laude) and Katey Kroog.



Photo courtesy of Jenn Eidam
Pictured from left are: Dillion Rijsinghani, Kenzie Conway, Joe Hoban, Gus Jordheim and TaylorAnn Eidam.

How to Choose a Memorable Gift for Your Recent Grad



Photos provided by Miriam's Jewelry

Jewelry that recipients want to wear for years and reminds them of the day they received it make excellent graduation gifts.

By Benji Rust, Miriam's Jewelry

Graduation Day marks an important milestone for a student. This major accomplishment is certainly worth recognizing with a special something. Celebrate your graduate's achievements by choosing a memorable gift that reflects their style, age and stage of life.

Pass Down a Family Keepsake

Giving a family keepsake is a sentimental and thoughtful way to show your graduate you care. This item should be something they can always cherish, especially if the keepsake has a valuable story behind it. Memorable keepsakes could include family heirloom jewelry or pocket watches.

Unfortunately, heirloom jewelry can

have the tendency to stay in a jewelry box. You want your graduate to feel connected with their family every time they see their gift — which means you want them to wear it.

Jewelry shops, such as Miriam's Jewelry, can restore family heirloom pieces and customize them to match a graduate's style. Miriam's specializes in creating something old into something new. That

way, graduates can keep their families close to heart with a gift they will always want to wear.

Consider Their Next Phase of Life

You can't go wrong if you choose a gift that will prepare your graduate for their next chapter, especially if it also helps

GIFTS continues on **Page 10**

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Gift

Continued from 9

them remember the one they are celebrating.

For example, high school graduates — boys and girls alike — often cherish personalized jewelry pieces that incorporate their graduation year or school mascot. If they plan to attend college, consider custom gifts that will help with their transition, such as memorable photo frames, monogrammed towels or dorm bedding.

Many college graduates will appreciate a gift they can treasure into adulthood, such as a stunning piece of jewelry or well-made watch. This should be a classic piece they can wear for the rest of their lives. They might also enjoy gifts to help them start their new homes, such as personalized kitchenware.

Celebrate Their Success With a Customized Gift

Why not give your graduate a gift that is completely unique to them? Customize their gift based on their initials, anticipated field of work or personal style. Monogrammed journals, custom briefcases, or home/apartment decorations are all nice options.

A custom piece of jewelry is something your grad can keep forever. Shops like



Photos provided by Miriam's Jewelry

Miriam's Jewelry offer a full custom jewelry experience that caters to the graduates' preferences and taste.

Make Graduation Day Memorable

A graduation from high school, college or graduate school is a milestone worth celebrating. Make the moment memorable with a personalized gift that matches your grad's style and personality. With a meaningful gift from you, your loved one is sure to remember this day for years to come.

Benji Rust is a co-owner of Miriam's Jewelry, a family-owned jewelry store in the Sawgrass Village Shopping Center in Ponte Vedra Beach. To learn more about Miriam's and their specialty in custom, heirloom jewelry, visit MiriamsJewelry.com.



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INK! receives Vystar grant to celebrate county teachers

The St. Johns County Education Foundation Inc., which operates as INK! (Investing in Kids), has received a grant for \$1,000 from VyStar Credit Union to help honor St. Johns County teachers.

Through this grant, VyStar supported INK!'s end of the school year appreciation event celebrating St. Johns County educators.

Recently hosted at the Tringali Barn at Heritage Farms in St. Augustine, teachers enjoyed an opportunity to relax and connect with fellow educators from across the county, celebrate the many accomplishments of the school year and brainstorm new ideas and classroom projects for the upcoming school year.

"During the last several years, we have seen unprecedented challenges in St. Johns County schools, from a global pandemic to rapid growth and an influx of new students along with teacher and staff shortages, yet our educators have remained dedicated and committed," said Donna Lueders, INK! executive director. "Despite the challenges, our educators have continued to be a guiding light for

our students. We wanted to show our appreciation for their dedication and resilience and for their continued efforts educating St. Johns County students."

The funding received by INK! is part of a \$50,000 VyStar grant to the Consortium of Florida Education Foundations to fund teacher appreciation and support activities by local education foundations for thousands of teachers throughout their 49-county Florida footprint.

"At VyStar Credit Union, we are proud to work alongside teachers across many Florida communities through our High School Branch Program, and we are deeply appreciative of all their hard work in support of their students," said Patricia McElroy, SVP and president, VyStar Community Foundation. "Today's students will go on to become tomorrow's leaders, and that's because they have teachers who are dedicated to helping them reach their full potential. By supporting this wonderful celebration, VyStar recognizes and lifts up educators across the state and thanks them for guiding their students every day."

Nease NJROTC hosts National Military Signing Day

Nease NJROTC hosted its National Military Signing Day for its graduating seniors receiving appointments to the United States Service Academies or full ROTC scholarships at public universities.

A record nine cadets signed letters of intent during a formal ceremony held on campus and attended by family, teachers and classmates.

Kaitlyn Boggs received an appointment to the United States Coast Guard Academy in New London, Connecticut.

Christopher Debus received an appointment to the United States Merchant Marine Academy in Kings Point, New York.

Samuel Dec received an appointment to the United States Military Academy Prep School in West Point, New York.

Daniel Mahoney received an appointment to the United States Merchant Marine Academy in Kings Point, New York.

Brodie Mongon received an Army ROTC scholarship to the University of South Florida in Tampa, Florida.

Emmelie Neff received an appointment to the United States Coast Guard Academy Scholars Program in Boston, Massachusetts.

Benjamin Rider received a Navy NPP ROTC scholarship to the University of Maine in Orono, Maine.

Isabella Rivera received an appointment to the United States Coast Guard Academy in New London, Connecticut.

James Shely received a Navy NPP ROTC scholarship to Regent University in Virginia Beach, Virginia.

“These young men and women represent the absolute finest ideals in America’s youth,” said Capt. Scott LaRochelle, Nease’s senior naval science instructor. “I could not be more proud of them and their achievements. Through four years of hard work and education, they earned it.”

Nease NJROTC has been recognized as the Most Outstanding NJROTC Unit in Area-12 (60 schools in Northern Florida and the State of Georgia) for five consecutive years.



Nease NJROTC cadets Sam Dec, Emmelie Neff, Ben Rider, James Shely, Brodie Mongon, Kaitlyn Boggs, Isabella Rivera, Daniel Mahoney and Christopher Debus along with Senior Naval Science Instructor Capt. Scott LaRochelle, celebrate National Military Signing Day at Nease High School.



Contributed photos

The Merchant Marine Academy – Coast Guard Academy rivalry began immediately at Nease’s National Military Signing Day as Daniel Mahoney and Christopher Debus showed their academy allegiance toward rivals Kaitlyn Boggs and Isabella Rivera.

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Kelly Barrera

ST. JOHNS COUNTY
SCHOOL BOARD

Paid for and approved by Kelly Barrera for St. Johns County School Board, District 4

Atlantic Beach prepares for inaugural Canine Carnivale

By Anthony Richards

The City of Atlantic Beach will be celebrating residents who are pet owners and their dogs during the inaugural Canine Carnivale June 11 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

The festival will take place at Jordan Park located at 1671 Francis Ave. in Atlantic Beach. It will be the second attempt to have the event after it was initially scheduled for May 21 but had to be postponed due to inclement weather.

However, pushing it back a couple of weeks has not tempered the excitement

surrounding the first-time event, which will feature anything and everything associated with dogs.

This will include having 15 or more vendors situated around, as the park is transformed into a dog-lover's paradise for a couple of hours.

The schedule of events is planned to be kicked off at 10:15 a.m. with a special "salute to veterans" ceremony, followed by bevy of fun to be had for both humans and animals.

Several contests will be available for those in attendance to enter, including

a look-a-like contest and best patriotic costume.

Owners can also have their dogs' skills put to the test in not-so-stupid pet tricks competition and the "Simon Says" portion of the event, where a dog's listening abilities will come in handy.

Dogs can be signed up for the various contests and competitions by filling out the online form by going to coab.us and clicking on Canine Carnivale under the recreation/events tab on the website's main page.

Adding to the event's atmosphere will be food trucks To Be Frank, Hook 'Em Up Seafood and Frio's Pops, while live music will be performed by Steel Pan Band and DJ Bruce Reed.

Dog yoga and kids' crafts will also be available to make sure that the whole family has something to enjoy.

Anyone with questions about the event or are interested in getting involved can call the City of Atlantic Beach at 904-247-5828 or email recreation@coab.us.

D-Day

Continued from 7

duty to make 50 more trips on the day.

"We're thankful that you're here today and we're thankful as a nation," said Beth Heath, We Can Be Heroes Foundation president.

Pupura is the oldest member of the local Purple Heart Chapter 524.

"I'm a nervous wreck," Pupura chuckled as he shared a few words in front of the crowd. "I can't believe it. I don't know how to thank you all for this, so I'm just going to say 'God bless you and God bless America.'"

The family of fellow and late World War II veteran Bob Hall was on hand for the ceremony, as their family sat around a circular table, keeping an empty seat open for their loved one, who passed away earlier in the year.

Heath applauded Bob and his wife Shirley for all the initiatives they have been involved with over the years with the goal of helping local veterans.

The "Let Freedom Sing" Choir sang various patriotic songs to open the ceremony and the Atlantic Coast Young

Marines presented the nation's colors for the pledge of allegiance and national anthem.

D-Day historian and retired Navy Capt. James Ransom III gave a virtual presentation during the ceremony that looked back at it being 78 years since D-Day took place.

"It is arguably the single most important battle of World War II," Ransom said. "FDR called it 'A mighty endeavor.'"

Ransom explained how it is easy to see how Pupura would be more susceptible to being hit by shrapnel because while all the other soldiers were tucked down in the boat, the craft's operators had to have their heads up and visible to see where they were going and properly steer the boat.

"I'm disappointed that I couldn't be there to have the honor of shaking Frank's hand," said Ransom, who had intended to present in-person, but made a late change to the plans after feeling sick in recent days.

The National D-Day Memorial is located in Bedford, Virginia and Ransom encouraged everyone to visit the memorial if they ever get the chance.



Photos by Anthony Richards

D-Day Purple Heart veteran Frank Pupura was honored by the We Can Be Heroes Foundation during a D-Day remembrance event June 4.



The family of the late World War II veteran Bob Hall was on hand for the ceremony and kept an empty seat open for their loved one, who passed away earlier in the year.



Members of the local Purple Heart Chapter 524 were on hand.

Organize and declutter room-by-room

Clutter can be a major source of stress that affects how individuals feel about their spaces. Psychology Today indicates messy homes and work spaces can contribute to feelings of helplessness, anxiety and overwhelming stress.

Clutter bombards the mind with excessive stimuli, makes it more difficult to relax and can constantly signal to the brain that work is never done. With these organizational tips and tricks, anyone can work through their home room-by-room and conquer clutter.

Find a place for everything

Clutter creeps up as people accumulate possessions over the years. Over time,

failure to regularly go through belongings and thin the herd can lead to the accumulation of clutter. But clutter also can accumulate if people fail to find a place to put items. Racks for garages, organizational systems for closets and furniture with storage capacity, such as storage ottomans, are some storage solutions that can help people find a place for their possessions.

Utilize vertical space when possible

Getting items up and off the floor can maximize square footage in a home. Bookshelves, hanging wall shelves, hooks, cabinetry, built-ins, and other storage solutions that rely on walls and ceilings are simple and effective storage solutions.

Unused space behind cabinet or closet doors are some additional places to store belongings. Hang razors or toothbrushes on medicine cabinet walls and curling irons and other hair tools on the interior of cabinet doors in bathrooms.

Create a coding system

Home offices can be some of the more disorganized rooms in a house simply due to the volume of electronics and paperwork within them. HGTV suggests using a color-coded system for important files to keep them organized. Label important items, whether they're paper or digital files, in accordance with your system.

Put it away

When you finish using an item, return it to its storage location. This eliminates piles of belongings strewn around the house - and hunting and pecking for missing things. If you can't put it away immediately, have a few baskets on hand labeled for the different rooms in the house. Pop the items in the requisite baskets and then routinely take each basket around the house to return the items.

Investing in custom cabinetry and organizational systems also can help people organize their belongings. Tackle rooms such as the garage, basements, bedroom closets, and pantries, or those areas that tend to accumulate clutter the fastest.

Storage solutions and organizational tips for pet supplies

From food to toys to bedding, many pets require a laundry list of items. Developing a storage strategy means keeping items within reach but potentially out of sight. These suggestions can help individuals calm pet-related clutter.

Food storage

Purchase a food grade and BPA-free plastic storage container that can accommodate the volume of food and has an airtight lid to maintain freshness.

Medications

Store medications separately from products used for children and adults in the house. Keep medications in the original packages so labels can be referred to as needed.

Supplies

Invest in some similarly sized clear storage containers. Label the containers and fill them with the items you need, such as pet waste bags, leashes or collars, groom-

ing brushes/combs, or whatever other supplies are needed. Devote a shelf or shelves in a storage closet for these items so they're always readily available.

Toys

Find a ground-level basket that is slipped under a side table in the living room or den. It's easily accessible but kept out of sight. Clean-up means a quick sweep of toys that quickly can be tossed in the basket.

Bedding

Depending on the animal, bedding may mean a cozy stuffed fabric bed or a pile of shaved cedar. Both can be bulky. A designated spot for storage helps keep the home organized, and dog and cat beds can be coordinated to the color scheme of the house so they blend in.

Pets require many different supplies that, when properly stored, will not seem like they're intruding on pet owners' space.



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Photo by Shaun Ryan

Local residents are helping a family who had to leave Ukraine due to the war. From right are: Natalia Plyam, Dr. Karen Wolf, Olena Stozhok with daughters Daryna, 4, and Sofia, 18 months, and Plyam's daughter Rachel.

Local residents helping family who fled Ukraine

By Shaun Ryan

On Feb. 25, the day after Russian bombs began to fall on the Ukrainian capital of Kyiv, the Stozhok family made the difficult decision to leave their home country.

Olexander and Olena Stozhok took their daughters — Milana, 7, Daryna, 4, and 15-month-old Sofia — and fled to neighboring Romania, leaving behind their businesses, their friends and the dream home they'd built just four months prior.

At first, they believed the evacuation would be short-term. Instead, the young family became part of Europe's fastest growing refugee crisis since World War II. Nearly 7 million Ukrainians — about a sixth of the population — are thought to have left the country.

The Stozhoks traveled to Spain and then to Mexico, where they found a queue reserved to Ukrainian refugees seeking entry into the United States. Olexander and Olena Stozhok remembered a vacation they'd taken six years prior where they got to know someone from the Ponte Vedra area. Having heard what a nice place the First Coast was, they made it their destination.

Arriving here, they still faced tremendous challenges.

Back in the Kyiv suburb of Irpin, they not only had a home, they also had a means of earning a living. Olena Stozhok, who said her first job was “being a mom,” also worked from home

making flower arrangements. She and her husband had a shoe store and also a small restaurant. In addition, Olexander Stozhok made toys to sell on Etsy.

Now they found themselves in a land where they didn't speak the language, didn't have job or credit histories, didn't have Social Security numbers and really didn't know anyone.

Fortunately, some local residents stepped up to help.

Natalia Plyam moved to the First Coast from Ukraine in 1989. Like many others, she wanted to help those impacted by the war, but didn't really know what she could do.

Then, she saw a post on a Facebook page dedicated to speakers of Russian and Ukrainian. The writer was asking where to find good schools in the region. Plyam recommended St. Johns County schools and asked if there was anything else the writer needed.

The response: “Maybe some furniture.”

The writer was Olena Stozhok.

“That's when we started talking, and I realized they really came here without anything,” Plyam said.

She asked who was helping them. The answer came back: “Nobody.”

Plyam had found a concrete way to really help someone in need, but that would not be as easy as it seemed at first. She called around to local charities but couldn't find the family a better place to stay than a homeless shelter. Then, she turned to a hyperlocal social networking

app called Nextdoor.

And the help poured in.

One neighbor made a very large monetary donation, and Plyam was able to get the family into an Airbnb rental for a few days. A couple donated the use of their condo for three months. Someone else donated a car.

Plyam called the response “unbelievable.”

“Nextdoor has been an invaluable resource for us,” she said.

When Dr. Karen Wolf, a local optometrist, saw the posts on Nextdoor, she quickly joined the effort. Like Plyam, she'd been wanting to help somehow, but all she had been able to do was donate to various relief organizations.

“I am so grateful to have crossed paths with this family and be able to help out,” wrote Wolf in a text message. “They are starting over, but with our community's help, support and love, they will overcome this hardship.”

Wolf used her professional expertise to help right away, repairing a set of glasses for one of the relatives who had joined the Stozhoks here.

Others did their part. A dentist pulled a tooth and another doctor saw the children free of charge. An attorney friend of Plyam's is helping the family complete the necessary paperwork to get access to critical programs.

Meanwhile, Olexander Stozhok has found work. He repairs cars to be resold at auction. At the same time, his wife is working as a housekeeper when she can

get access to the car. It's a start, but not yet enough to pay all the bills.

“They're going to be very self-sufficient, I'm sure,” predicted Plyam. “It's just hard. It's a new country. It's a new language. New everything.”

Still, Olena Stozhok said she's glad to be here, though she misses her new house and her friends.

“My family is safe,” she said with an expression of great relief.

Wolf and Plyam are encouraging local residents to join them in helping this family. They need many different things, including toiletries and diapers, but one of the most helpful donations can be made in the form of gift cards from grocery or department stores. That way, the family can purchase whatever they need most. Even gift cards from local restaurants would be welcome.

Beyond that, Plyam is hoping to find them a second car so that they can both work at the same time. She's also trying to find a pre-K school — or even a summer camp — that can admit the family's middle daughter at a price they can afford. Alternately, perhaps someone would be willing to sponsor attendance at one of these.

Readers wanting to help can reach Plyam at 310-902-1496 or myrealtornatalia@gmail.com. In addition, Wolf is accepting donations at her office: Ponte Vedra Eye Associates, 150 Professional Drive, Ponte Vedra Beach. The phone number there is 904-285-8448.

Cypress Village celebrates Armed Forces Day

New resident names added to Veterans Recognition Wall

Residents of Cypress Village gathered May 21 in front of the Veterans Recognition Wall to induct new names to the wall of honor and to celebrate Armed Forces Day.

Jim Jandreau, Veterans Committee chair, led the Pledge of Allegiance and the induction of new names to the digital



Veterans Committee chair Jim Jandreau addresses the gathering for Armed Forces Day.

display.

“Today is Armed Forces Day, always on the third Saturday of May,” he said. “I cannot better describe the honoring of our women and men in our armed forces than what former President Ronald Reagan said 41 years ago. Today, their job is vitally important — their sacrifice and patriotism make it possible for those of us who are civilians to go about our everyday lives. Their commitment keeps our nation strong and our future free. Today, millions of Americans are honoring the dedicated men and women who serve in our armed forces. Like me, they’re saying with gratitude, with respect and affection in their hearts. Today, I want all those wearing American uniforms around the globe to know: America is grateful to you — and proud of you, too.”

The wall was created as a collaboration with Cypress Village management and the Veterans Committee. The display was created by resident Mike Boutin and the Community Life Services Department to include the names of all active veteran residents and employees, widows and widowers, along with their branch of service.

The vinyl presentation of the United States flag along with the iconic scene of the flag raising at Iwo Jima was designed



Contributed photos

Veterans Committee chair Jim Jandreau stands next to the Veterans Recognition Wall at Cypress Village.

by Fast Signs in Jacksonville. The bronze crests of each branch of service were special ordered by the residents through Metal Designs NY Inc. in New York. And the hand-stained wood frame was the work of resident Floren Fisher as a part of the Cypress Village Wood Workshop.

Eighteen names of veterans were added to the wall to celebrate their honor and service to our country. After the

ceremony, residents gathered for photographs, shared stories of their service and participated in friendly banter between the different branches of the armed forces that were present.

A reception was held in Egret Hall to honor the recently departed veterans. The community will continue to update the names on the wall semi-annually on Armed Forces Day and Veterans Day.

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The free self-defense class taught girls basic self-defense skills both physical and mental to help avoid common threats to their personal protection.



Photos courtesy of the PVHS Generation WOW club
Ponte Vedra High's Gen WOW club held its annual self-defense class at the link May 21.

PVHS Gen WOW presents self-defense class

By Anthony Richards

Self-defense classes can be helpful for anyone of any age, but Ponte Vedra High School rising senior Hope Freedman has seen the experience be very empowering for teenage girls.

Freedman is president of the Generation WOW club at the high school. The club is the teen component of the nonprofit Generation W, which strives to

educate, inspire and connect adult women through leadership initiatives.

“They (Generation W) make it very easy to connect and set something like this up,” Freedman said. “Always very helpful and so nice to interact with.”

An annual event called “Fight Like a Girl” was held May 21 at the link in Nocatee. It served as a free self-defense class with the goal of teaching girls basic self-defense skills both physical and men-

tal to help avoid common threats to their personal protection.

“Sadly, the U.S. Department of Justice believes one out of every four women will be attacked or sexually assaulted in her lifetime, so this event and events like it play an important role in helping to protect members of our community,” Freedman said.

It was the fourth year the event took place, but it was the first after being canceled the past couple of years due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Freedman along with fellow board members Lily Darnell and Madeleine Dionne organized the event and ensured the program was a success.

“We had a very good turnout,” Freedman said. “Everyone was very engaged in the class.”

One of the differences in this year’s class compared to previous years was that several refugee students took part in the class along with various other local high school students.

According to Freedman, the idea to include the refugees came from her role as co-president with JaxTHRIVE, a youth-led nonprofit based in Jacksonville, but serving the Northeast Florida area, where she had previously interacted with the refugees.

She reached out to Lutheran Social Service to help provide the refugee girls with transportation so they could attend the class.

“The key tips stressed during the class were to never stop fighting and to always be aware of your surroundings,” Freedman said.

Although she had taken part of the class in the past, she always finds it interesting and helpful to revisit those tips and familiarize herself with them as often as she can.

According to Freedman, feeling confident is one of the best and quickest ways to gain empowerment in one’s life.

Some of the techniques taught during the two-hour class were how to fight off someone from a variety of angles, including breaking arm holds and getting away from an attacker when on the ground.

“While they hope to never be in that type of situation, they are more prepared should anything ever happen,” Freedman said.

Heading into her senior year, Freedman hopes to do even more service projects through the Generation WOW club directed at helping provide service or clean-up projects for schools in lower-income areas in need of assistance.



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Freedman along with fellow club board members Lily Darnell and Madeleine Dionne organized the event.

Early Learning Coalition organizes air and wind science program

The Early Learning Coalition of North Florida has been focusing on STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts and math) programs this past spring. The coalition outreach staff launched a new science-themed program specifically about air and wind.

Preschoolers studied the science behind what air is and what makes wind. The outreach team dressed in lab coats and goggles and put on an interactive program featuring many science experiments that help explain these concepts.

Kids were enthralled with the “keeping the ping pong ball in the air with a blow dryer” and “putting the paper towel into the water without it getting wet” experiments, according to the outreach team.

Balloons were used to demonstrate air, and the popping of a confetti balloon was a big hit. Children waved scarves like sailboats to music and blew their own pinwheels. The students also learned about tornados and then made their own “tornados” in bottles to take home.

Each child received a book called “Wind” by Erin Edison, and the teachers received a large bag of science resources

to further teach this theme in the classroom.

In March, the coalition held a contest in which preschool classrooms sent in photos of science projects they did. Prizes were given to the top three projects.



The Early Learning Coalition of North Florida’s outreach assistant Susan Murphy pops a balloon filled with confetti.

The winner was Island Prep West of St. Augustine’s pre-K classroom, featuring their “Bees” project.

“Focusing on STEAM promotes problem solving and thinking skills,” says Joan Whitson, coalition outreach

manager. “Getting kids excited about science at an early age leads to a greater interest in later years.”

To learn more about the Early Learning Coalition of North Florida go to elcnorthflorida.org.

Photos provided by The Early Learning Coalition of North Florida



Kids make their own “tornados” inside bottles at one of the programs.



The Early Learning Coalition of North Florida Early Literacy Outreach Manager Joan Whitson and outreach assistant Susan Murphy demonstrate a science experiment to the kids at Brighton Day Academy in St. Augustine.

ACE Mentor Program announces scholarships and awards

The ACE Mentor Program of Northeast Florida held its annual year-end event on April 29 at The Schultz Center, where high school student participants presented final projects and 23 scholarships were distributed.

The program helps students explore potential careers in architecture, construction and engineering. The students worked in teams with industry mentors to create practical solutions for “real-world” projects.

Students presented their final projects before jurors. Best Overall Response winning teams included three Creekside High School teams for their Urban Renewal, Strong + Sustainable and Memorial of the Future Responses as well as Pedro

Menendez High School for their Urban Renewal Response.

Over the past 15 years, the Northeast Florida Affiliate of the ACE Mentor Program has offered scholarships to students planning to attend post-secondary education and training leading to careers in architecture, engineering, construction or the skilled trades.

This year, the nonprofit organization awarded more than \$27,000 in scholarships. Recipients from St. Johns County, Clay and Duval schools demonstrated exceptional work ethic and relationship building with industry professionals.

The industry sponsor and named scholarship recipients from St. Johns County included:

- Baptist Health Scholarship: Brandon Stowell-Campos from Nease High School
- Florida Healthcare Engineers Association Scholarship: Siri Jonnalagadda from Nease High School
- HCA Healthcare Scholarship: Alexander Simes from Creekside High School
- American-Electrical Contracting Scholarship: Ryan Flack from Creekside High School
- Haskell Scholarship: Alyssa Buckingham from Creekside High School
- Stellar Scholar: Sydney Lynch from Creekside High School
- Whiting-Turner Construction: Corrigan Rotz from Creekside High School
- DPR Construction Scholarship: Sydney Antal from Bartram Trail High

School

Additional scholarship winners from St. Johns County sponsored by the affiliate included Brady Schaffstein from Nease High School; and Shaan Chudgar, Jacob Denson and Brandon Ruckh from Creekside High School.

Northeast Florida Junior Mentor Anthony Andrade was also awarded a scholarship. He is a mentor at Pedro Menendez High School and is pursuing a career in construction management at the University of North Florida.

ACE Mentor Program of Northeast Florida is looking for mentors, guest speakers and sponsors for the 2022-23 program. To learn more, go to acementor.org/northeast-fl.

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Chamber After Hours

St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce held its Chamber After Hours event May 25. Sawgrass Marriott Golf Resort & Spa was the host. It was an evening of networking, food and fun.

Photos by Susan Griffin



Anna Washington, Mark Ryan and Josie Malone



Kari Zerrahn, Lori Adams, Jackie Smith, Felicia Cox, Gloria Dongara, Christine Ondek, Michael Benko and Mark Ryan



Alex Marozzi, director of memberships for the Cabana Beach Club & Sawgrass Spa, speaks during the event.



St. Johns County Board of Directors Ponte Vedra Beach Division Chair Matt Price, speaks as Karen Everett, division executive director, looks on.

Baptist Health introduces app to help patients

Baptist Health launched Baptist Access, a new app designed to help patients navigate their health care journey, whether digitally or in-person.

The new app, powered by the Gozio Health platform, provides all-in-one access to Baptist Health hospitals and outpatient locations.

With Baptist Access, patients can:

- Find a Baptist Health provider or location
- Schedule an appointment
- Get directions from their home to

their health care destination

- Find any location within hospital campuses including: Indoor wayfinding with turn-by-turn directions to patient care, parking, food, restrooms, ATMs and more

- View insurance plans
- Access medical records
- Pay bills

“We’re excited to introduce the Baptist Access app, underscoring our commitment to innovatively improving patient experiences,” said Michael A. Mayo, president and CEO of Baptist Health. “In

addition to providing in-person assistance, we are leveraging the convenience of mobile-phone technology to make it easier for patients to navigate our health system, inside and out. On our two largest hospital campuses, patients will even be able to find their way from where they parked to their appointment, and back.”

“With Baptist Access, Baptist Health aims to optimize the patient’s journey at all main access points of the health system,” said Joshua Titus, CEO and founder of Gozio Health. “This is a strat-

egy that aligns with research that suggests digital offerings play an important role in overall patient experiences. With this app, patients gain great control of their care journey with everything from accessing patient records and finding a location, to appointment scheduling, physician directories and emergency room waiting times.”

The Baptist Access app is free and can be downloaded from Google Play or the Apple app store. Go to baptistjax.com/accessapp for more information.



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Contributed photos

Abstract in Blues-Black

Abstract artist featured at Butterfield Garage

The featured exhibitor at Butterfield Garage for June is abstract painter Susan Smith.

Smith is currently intrigued with texture and line. She paints without brushes, using scraping tools, which adds to the tactile surface of her work.

Line plays an important but often hidden component, as each painting begins with many lines and gradually, as they are refined and eliminated, a composition emerges. A thought or feeling emerges to speak to the viewer.

Self-taught in an abstract style, Smith painted in the '70s until children intervened. Raising both them and most of their food for many years, Smith took a detour into spinning, weaving, dyeing and going so far as creating handwoven clothing that she sold wholesale and retail.

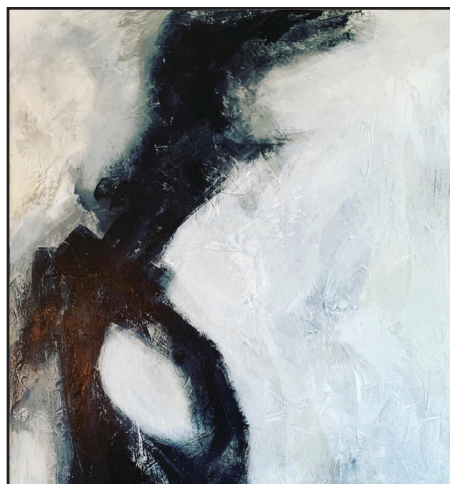
A cancer diagnosis and treatment led her to examine her life and ask, "What do I really want to do?"

The answer was easy: paint.

Smith chose watercolor because its transparency is similar to dye. After a few years of creating loose, still lifes and scenic images, she yearned to return to a more abstract style. Despite many classes with other artists, it remained a struggle.

Eventually, collage with hand-painted papers helped guide her back into abstraction. Collage morphed into mixed media and lately she has been letting go of a reliance on collage and using pen, pencil and crayon with acrylics. The freedom of mixed media has set her on the open-ended path she had been searching for.

Butterfield Garage Gallery is located at 137 King St., St. Augustine. For information, go to butterfieldgarage.com.



Abstract in Black

ON STAGE

A roundup of musical acts appearing before July 10 at local venues

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Purchase tickets at the St. Augustine Amphitheatre box office or ticketmaster.com. For further information about each act, go to pvconcerthall.com/events.

- **American Aquarium** — 8 p.m. June 21
- **Matt Maeson** — 8 p.m. July 9. With special guest 1-800-brennan-collect

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Tickets may also be purchased at ticketmaster.com.

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

- **Jason Isbell and the 400 Unit & Sheryl Crow** — 6 p.m. June 9, 6:30 p.m. June 10. With special guest Waxahatchee
- **Flogging Molly & The Interrupters** — 5:30 p.m. June 12. With special guest The Skints and Tiger Army.
- **Nathaniel Rateliff & The Night Sweats and Zach Bryan** — 7 p.m. June 21.
- **Ringo Starr and His All Starr Band** — With guest Edgar Winter. In addition to the former Beatle, band members include Steve Lukather, Colin Hay, Gregg Rolie, Warren Ham, Gregg Bissonette and Hamish Stuart. 7:30 p.m. June 24.
- **Steve Miller Band** — 7:30 p.m. July 1.
- **Blackberry Smoke — Rasslin' Is Real Tour** — 6:45 p.m. July 7. With special guest The Steel Woods.

— Compiled by Shaun Ryan

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Sports



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Recent Nease graduate Rheinhardt Harrison crosses the finish line as the 16th American high schooler to run a mile in less than four minutes.



Harrison became the first Florida high schooler to accomplish the feat. Photos courtesy of MileSplit/Cyrus Hannah

Historic run caps busy week

Harrison sets sub four-minute mile two days after graduation

By Anthony Richards

Rheinhardt Harrison accomplished a rare feat by running a mile in less than four minutes, just days after having graduated from Nease High School.

With his run during a high school track meet at East Lake High School in Tarpon Springs June 3, and what makes the feat so amazing is that Harrison's time of 3:59.33 made him only the 16th high school athlete to run the mile faster than four minutes and the first to do so in Florida.

He wound up winning the race by more than a 10-second margin, which put a cap on an already memorable week for Harrison and his family, as the race took place just two days after his high school graduation ceremony.

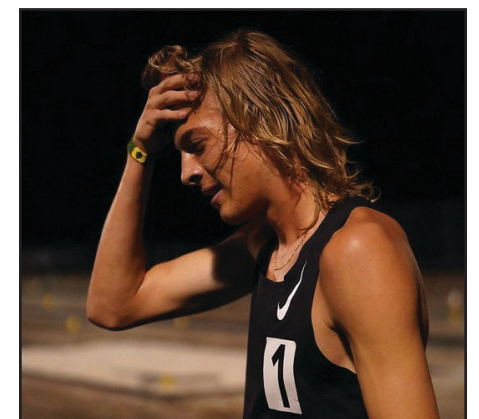
The record is just the latest achieve-

ment in what has been an award-winning high school career for Harrison.

Harrison is a multi-time state champion, including being fresh off winning the state title in the 800 meters in May.

His high school career also includes being named the 2021-2022 Gatorade Player of the Year in boys cross country, which is a national honor.

He is an Oregon commit, where he will soon join the school's program, which is considered one of the best college track and field programs in the country.



Harrison shortly after becoming part of a historic club of runners.

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Sofia Garcia made the cut in last weekend's U.S. Women's Open Championship in North Carolina.



Garcia hits from the tee box on hole No. 2 at the event.

Photos courtesy of Mark Berman

Local match play created unique U.S. Open opportunity

By Anthony Richards

The number of opportunities has continued to increase ever since the PXG Women's Match Play Championship was created in October of last year.

Some opportunities are on a large scale while others come by way of much smaller levels of support but are valuable to female professional golfers trying to make a name for themselves in the world of golf.

The latest of these opportunities included Sofia Garcia, 23, who competed in the inaugural match play championship,

qualifying, and making the cut at last weekend's U.S. Women's Open.

Not only was it a once-in-a-lifetime experience for Garcia, but also for St. Augustine chiropractor Dr. Scott Fechter.

Fechter signed on to play in the INK! Charity Pro-Am, which was part of the Match Play Championship's festivities, and six months later, found himself walking inside the ropes at the 77th U.S.

Women's Open at Pine Needles Lodge & Golf Club in Southern Pines, North Carolina.

He was paired with Garcia during the pro-am and as they talked, he became more fascinated with her story and was impressed by her game.

"When I met Sofia, I knew she could be a star," Fechter said. "Her game and her personality are both very noticeable."

As a result, a professional relationship grew as Fechter's local Pain Relief Centre practice became Garcia's primary sponsor.

It has been such a long journey for me and on the way, I have met so many wonderful people who are forever part of my journey," Garcia said. "In this case,

OPPORTUNITY continues on Page 22

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CROSSWORD												
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56										57		
	58									59		

ACROSS

- 1. Slovenian mountain
- 5. Growl
- 9. Where things stand
- 11. Made a sharp sound
- 13. Female spirit in Irish folklore
- 15. Deteriorate with age
- 16. A way to save for retirement
- 17. The Big Apple
- 19. Intestinal pouches
- 21. City in New Hampshire
- 22. Giving a bad impression
- 23. Samsung laptops
- 25. Without (French)
- 26. Scientist's tool (abbr.)
- 27. System of one more computers
- 29. Captures
- 31. Authentic
- 33. Female mammal's nipple
- 34. Pandemonium
- 36. Satisfy
- 38. Arrived extinct
- 39. Shipborne radar (abbr.)
- 41. Network of nerves
- 43. Monetary unit
- 44. Showed old TV show
- 46. They help you hear
- 48. One who eliminates
- 52. Congress' investigative arm
- 53. Parties
- 54. Most supernatural
- 56. Takes illegally
- 57. Breathes while asleep
- 58. Sea eagles
- 59. German surname

- 2. Solution for diseases
- 3. Belonging to a thing
- 4. Former Packers fullback
- 5. Contemptible person
- 6. One billionth of a second (abbr.)
- 7. Helps
- 8. Final section of the large intestine
- 9. Invests in little enterprises
- 10. Look for
- 11. Unbeliefs
- 12. Susan and Tom are two
- 14. Female sheep
- 15. A poet writes it
- 18. Affirmatives
- 20. "Full House" actress Barber
- 24. Traveled rapidly
- 26. Long upholstered seat

- 28. Set wages
- 30. Peter Gabriel song
- 32. Sides of a jacket
- 34. More beautiful
- 35. Actress Kate
- 37. Furniture with open shelves
- 38. Indicate
- 40. The cost of a room
- 42. Gets rid of something
- 43. Impudence
- 45. No No No
- 47. Drunkards
- 49. Middle eastern country
- 50. High energy lasers (abbr.)
- 51. Primary component of ribosomes
- 55. An informal debt instrument

DOWN

- 1. Looks at for a long time

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

Level: Beginner

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!

Noc-Pal lacrosse competes at Orlando tournament



Photo courtesy of Noc-Pal Area Athletics

The Noc-Pal Area Athletics lacrosse team made a trip down to compete in a tournament hosted by Orlando Lacrosse. The Panthers are just one of the youth teams that is part of the non-profit sports association that serves young athletes in the Nocatee and Palencia areas of St. Johns County.

Opportunity

Continued from 21

I have connected with someone who has gone the extra mile. There is the obvious thing of the financial relief but there is also the magical thing of having someone believe in you.”

However, he began asking himself a question that runs through the mind of many golfers trying to make it to the top. How do you become a star when the financial deck is stacked against you?

“The more she told me her story, she’s not a wealthy kid from a wealthy family and that is not unique to her, the more I wanted to get involved,” Fechter said. “We love Sofia and look forward to her continued rise. I’m glad we can be even a small part of her success.”

Garcia made the cut at her first U.S. Women’s Open and finished tied for 60th with a score of 12-over.

However, the fortunate meeting between the two was close to not even taking place.

Garcia barely made it to World Golf Village in time for the Monday morning pro-am, having played late Sunday at the LPGA Q School second stage in Naples.

She finished second overall in that event and because she finished late, and she did not make the pairings party on Sunday night at Murray Brothers’ CaddyShack. When her name was drawn that night for Fechter’s group, he was introduced to the potential fill-in in case

Garcia could not make the pro-am in time.

However, she made it and it has turned out to be a turning point in her career.

The East Coast Women’s Professional Golf Tour, owned and operated by Ponte Vedra resident Mark Berman also oversees the PXG Women’s Match Play Championship.

According to Berman, players on the tour typically earn less than \$20,000 in a season. And a recent survey by the East Coast Women’s Professional Golf Tour found that 70% of women professionals work second jobs to make ends meet in either restaurant or retail jobs.

“It’s hard to practice efficiently and play competitively when one has a day job or her boss won’t grant the days off to play tournament golf, her actual career,” Berman said.

That scenario exactly is why Berman created this the match play championship in the first place.

“Our mission with this event, and now the entire tour that it inspired, is to create opportunities on and off the course for these amazing women so they have a fighting chance to get to where they work so hard to go,” Berman said.

Julianne Alvarez of New Zealand, who finished runner-up in the Match Play Championship, also competed in the U.S. Women’s Open, while current ECWPGT golfers in the field were Gabi Ruffels, Alyaa Abdulghany, Mariel Galdiano, Karen Kim, and amateur Bailey Shoemaker.

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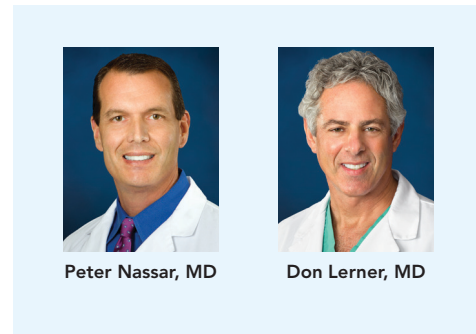
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