

An impressionistic painting of a street scene. On the left, a building with a window is partially visible, surrounded by lush greenery and pink flowers. The street leads towards a building with arched doorways in the distance. The overall style is painterly and vibrant, with a mix of warm and cool tones.

# REGISTER

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AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2022

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FALL  
*Arts*  
PREVIEW

BACK TO  
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WINE & DINE  
ON THE FIRST COAST

# ABOUT THIS MAGAZINE

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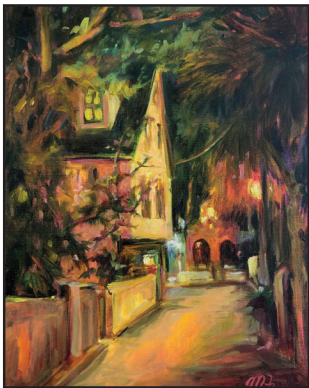
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## ON THE COVER



The cover features the painting "Evening Colors On Artillary Lane" by Martha Ferguson.

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# ONE OF US

## Wendy Tatter

**Wendy Tatter has become a regular among the St. Augustine artist scene, and recently moved her gallery to a new location at 806 Anastasia Blvd. in St. Augustine. She specializes in a unique art form known as Batik.**

as told to ANTHONY RICHARDS  
photos by ANTHONY RICHARDS

### Tell us a little about yourself.

I first had a place at Butterfield Garage Art Gallery years and years ago, and then I opened my own place on San Marco Avenue and was there about seven years before I moved to the beach with a little gallery.

I then moved across the street down on A1A and had that place for four years, but when this building opened up, I knew I had to do it and I did. It was cutest barber shop for years, and since I moved to St. Augustine, I always felt that this was just a really cool-looking building.

Luckily, Joe Rocco, who owned the barber shop was also an artist and he had some of his work on display at my old gallery.

I told Joe that if he let me buy it, I would make sure that one of his paintings was always hanging on display. It's totally different from the way that he had for his barber shop. The ceiling was a drop ceiling and we ended up opening that up, and even took a wall out. It was a bunch of major changes, but I love it turned out.

Everybody in the community has been so excited for me, because I have a lot of people that have known me since all the other moves, and they pretty much all came during the grand opening.

### Has art always been a passion of yours?

I was shameless as a kid, because I would get all the neigh-



Wendy Tatter stands outside her new art gallery location in St. Augustine.

borhood kids to draw a picture and then I'd make everyone lay them on the stairway and have my mom choose the best one, and of course she would always end up picking mine. I was probably about 6 years old, but it shows that I've always loved arts and to draw.

### How would you describe your art form?

I paint with wax and dyes on fabric in a style called Batik. It's kind of like a backwards way of working when it comes to art because I start with the lightest colors and go to the darkest. They kind of build on each other because you're dying over the color before that.

I learned how to do it when I lived in Mexico, after going to a school called Instituto Allende in San Miguel, where I had went for photography, but ended up taking a class in Batik, and it was so much fun.

### Where do you get the inspiration for your artwork?

I take a lot of photographs and if there's something I like that I've taken a picture of, I'll do that roughly. I also like to do things with quotes around them. Such as, a painting of a pineapple will have quotes about pineapples around the border. Those are all just some of the little fanciful things that I do.

I lived in the Caribbean for years, so a lot of my stuff has

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# FLORIDA'S UNIQUE FALL FASHION

## Clothing colors change with new season

story by **ANTHONY RICHARDS**  
photos courtesy of **ROCHELLE'S CLOTHING BOUTIQUE**

Florida is unique from the rest of the country and that includes the world of fashion.

With fall right around the corner, that means not only do the weather and leaves begin to change, but so does people's fashion.

However, Florida experiences a more gradual season change during the transition from summer to fall compared to the Northeast or even other states in the South.

As a result, many local boutiques, such as Rochelle's Clothing Boutique in St. Augustine, see fall trends in Florida involving a change in colors as much as the attire itself.

According to Rochelle's co-owner Karen Rochelle, extreme cutout tops and dresses are among the popular trends she has been noticing. Long cling-to-body Maxi dresses also become popular this time of year as a way a person can show off her figure.

"At times it doesn't seem like we have a fall, because as you prepare for fall it is still 100 degrees out," Rochelle chuckled.

Whereas tube tops are also a part of Florida fashion, leather is usually something that begins to find a place in people's wardrobe during the fall months.

"We are always to have retro pieces in stock, such as bell bottoms and tie-dye patterns," Rochelle said.

Rochelle's has become known over the years for offering a Bohemian look, which Rochelle best described as a "concert look."

Selecting soft fabrics is important to Rochelle when it comes to choosing what goes in her store. The comfort of the one wearing the clothing is just as important as the way



CONTINUED ON PAGE 7 ■

# FASHION

■ CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

it looks, and she strives to find the best of both worlds.

It has worked well as certain fashion trends have circled back around and become popular again.

“They usually come back, but in a newer way,” Rochelle said. “So, it may look the same, but there’s a new spin on it.”

As lighter and bright colors are often associated with spring fashion, darker and more rusty tones tend to go well in the fall.

“People have been a little shy of wearing traditional black lately,” Rochelle said. “It’s starting to come back, but with a glimmer or shine often added to the black.”

Denim is another fabric that has a place regardless of the season, but it just changes from shorts to pants to go with the season.

“It will change shape, but it’s a staple and will always be there,” she said.

Since the boutique opened in 1984, it has focused on providing styles that are both fun and fashionable, with the hopes of having looks that appeal to a wide range of women of all ages.

“We’ve had a girl come in with her



**“Seeing the smile on their face when they look at themselves in the mirror is everything.”**  
- KAREN ROCHELLE

grandmother and they both end up finding something that suites them,” Rochelle said. “The clothes you wear is all about attitude. We want people to be confident in who they are, no matter their body type.”

With so many people moving into the North Florida area of late, it can be challenging because they are so used to the clothing choices that take place wherever they had been living.

However, they quickly find out that the approach in Florida is different and Rochelle believes a boutique’s staff goes a long way in helping new residents and customers understand and be part of the education process when it comes to Florida fashion.

According to Rochelle, this aspect has made the relationship between staff and their customers as important as it ever has been.

“Some people walk in knowing exactly what they need, but it’s fun when someone comes in with no expectations and they rely on you to help lead them down the right path,” Rochelle said. “Seeing the smile on their face when they look at themselves in the mirror is everything.”

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# SECOND ANNUAL TACO & TEQUILA FEST SET FOR SEPT. 24-25

story by **ANTHONY RICHARDS**

The Jacksonville Taco & Tequila Festival is back this year, as a two-day festival at Riverside Park near historic Five Points.

Riverside Park is Jacksonville's second oldest park.

The festival will take place the weekend of Sept. 24 and 25 and will feature Mexican cuisine from more than 20 restaurants and food trucks from around the First Coast.

Food will not be the only thing for people to enjoy, as tequila stations, craft margaritas, local makers, games, live music and more will be on hand.

This year's entertainment lineup will include a variety of entertainers and bands from the blues, reggae and electronic genres.

Offering a special mixture of music and Mexican cuisine gives the festival to present residents with a unique experience.

The headline performers will be Badfish: Tribute to Sublime on Sept. 24 and Yacht Rock Revue featured Sept. 25.

This year's festival will boast one of the largest events to ever happen in Riverside with more than 25 bands and DJs playing on two different stages throughout the two days.

Roosevelt, Schwayze, LPT, Artikal Sound System, Howi

Spangler of Ballyhoo!, Fayuca, Max Danger, Chillula, Soulo Lyon, Cloud 9 Vibes, Xperimento, Outeredge, Drifting Roots, The Hulagans, Kalani Rose Band, Colin Paterson, Phrantiq, Yin & Yang, Ben Lewis, Gracie Seymour, Billy Pary are a list of the acts scheduled with other special guests also prepared to make appearances.

Tickets to this year's festival includes a daily general admission experience pass for \$20 prior to Aug. 21, which includes a complimentary beer or margarita upon entry.

Two-day general admission passes are \$25 prior to Aug. 21. Daily Tequila samplings, an enhanced VIP experience and more are packages also available.

The festival is a fundraiser for several local Jacksonville nonprofits benefiting arts, community enrichment and education on the First Coast.

Ticket prices will increase after Aug. 21, as one-day tickets will be \$30, and the two-day price will increase to \$40.

For more information and details or to purchase tickets, go to [JaxTacoFest.com](http://JaxTacoFest.com).

## AMELIA ISLAND JAZZ FESTIVAL SET FOR WEEKLONG CELEBRATION

story by **ANTHONY RICHARDS**  
photos courtesy of **AMELIA ISLAND JAZZ FESTIVAL**

This year marks the 19th Annual Amelia Island Jazz Festival, which will once again feature a weeklong celebration of the wonderful sounds that make jazz what it is Oct. 3-9 in Fernandina Beach.

The week of fun will begin Oct. 3 with the festival's sponsor party, which will be followed by a jazz and wine tasting event Oct. 4, Jump Jive and Wail/ Swing night Oct. 5, Latin jazz concert and dance Oct. 6, weekend concerts and late-night jams Oct. 7 and 8, and the week's festivities will wrap up with the Dixie to Swing Jazz Brunch Oct. 9.

The sponsor party will kick things off with an event hosted by world-class drummer Les DeMerle, who is also the festival's founder and director. He will be accompanied by Bonnie Eisele and guests providing vocals from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. at the Courtyard Amelia Island/Springhill Suites by Marriott.

Two shows will be held as part of the jazz and wine tasting showcase Oct. 4, with the first one scheduled from 5 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. followed by a second from 7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at The Decantery in Historic Fernandina Beach.

Attendees will have a night to cut loose and show off their dance moves during the Jump Jive and Wail/Swing Night Oct. 5 from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. at Sadler Ranch in Fernandina Beach.

Sadler Ranch will be the place to be once again Oct. 6, this time for a Latin jazz concert and dance 7 p.m. to 10 p.m.

A pair of featured concerts by world-renowned jazz musicians

will take place Oct. 7 and 8. Legendary jazz clarinetist and saxophonist Ken Peplowski.

He is one of the most recorded jazz players to date with more than 50 CDs made as a soloist and nearly 400 as a featured sideman.

John Pizzarelli will be the featured act for concert Oct. 8. His career includes producing numerous tribute recordings honoring both jazz and pop artists.

Both nights of concerts will be held in the ballroom at the Courtyard Amelia Island/Springhill Suites by Marriott.

Late night jam sessions will be held after the concerts on both nights at the Dizzy's Den at Mocama Beer Company on Eighth Street in Fernandina Beach.

The weeklong festival will come to an end with the Dixie to Swing Jazz Brunch, which is the popular grand finale for the event as a whole.

The event will be broken up into two sessions with the first seating taking place 10:30 a.m. and the second starting at 1 p.m.

Entertainment during the brunch will be performed by Spare Rib Six, which will include J.B. Scott on trumpet, Dr. Bill Prince on clarinet, Mike Levine on piano, Dennis Marks on bass and Les DeMerle on drums, plus Bonnie Eisele and other special guest appearances.



The 19th Amelia Island Jazz Festival is scheduled Oct. 3-9.



# TATTER

■ CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

kind of this island sort of theme, because I miss it every day.

## What are some of the aspects that are the most challenging about Batik?

Your whole piece is covered in wax pretty much by the end, so you can't really tell how it's going to look until you iron the wax out and see if it worked or didn't. It usually does, though.

It's a challenge because you really truly have to think about what color is going to lay over next and not make it mud. There's planning that goes into every move. I do pillowcases and lamp shades as well.

## What are your future plans for the gallery?

On Aug. 30, I will be having a group show with more than 50 different artists both local and non-local. I have a girl that will actually be sending me something from the



A view from the inside of the W.B. Tatter Studio Gallery.



Tatter specializes in the Batik artform, which involves painting with waxes and dyes on fabric.

Netherlands. The subject is anything to do with fruit, and it should be a really great show. I was trying to think of a subject matter, and I thought, "Who doesn't like fruit?"

I've done group shows the last five years, and they are always a hit. I think next year I may do a cat show.

However, my space is less than what I'm used to, because I went from having four times less space than I had before.

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

I really like the beach and the fact that downtown St. Augustine is still one of the most beautiful places there is. Whenever you come over that bridge and you just see it spread out, it really is nice. St. Augustine does have a real tropical vibe to it, especially the lighthouse area. It's not your run of the mill Florida feel.

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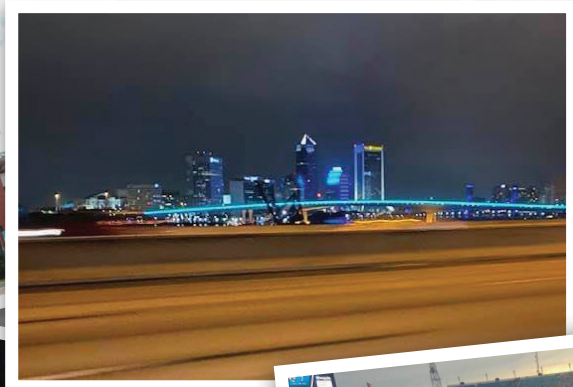
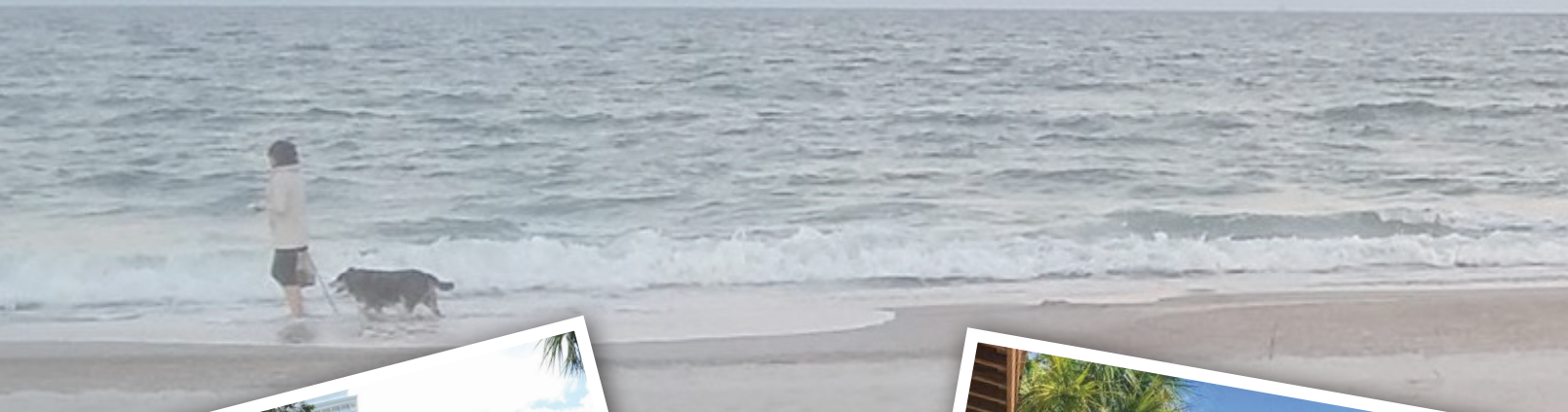


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At 36 years of age, John asked his acclaimed artist mother for a blank canvas; not wanting to waste a new canvas, John’s mother gave him a sheet of artist paper. “I’m going to paint.” And paint he did.

His past working abroad in ministry in over thirty-five nations intertwines with his present to catalyze on canvas, creating something much more than an image hanging on the wall. John is a rare find, much like the paintings he creates.

Art seeps into every corner of John’s life. In his career, his home, his marriage, his perspectives and his dreams. Creativity does not sleep; it is in constant motion working in John’s mind. But don’t be fooled, art is his second love, while his wife, interior designer Molly Beard, takes the lead.

“I respect Molly very much for her talents and the way she handles herself in professional mode. I smile often as I watch her work knowing she is my person and her drive equals my drive and that our goal is the same.”

Their most recent endeavor; relocating John Beard Collection Headquarters to a larger production facility with a gallery front open to the public, situated ideally on CR210 in Saint Augustine.

Cracking the code to make a living as an artist, John and his Crew stays busy creating giclee’s of John’s art while he fills commission orders and often paints into the night.

“There are times when I step back, work on other projects that are at other phases of the creative process that may require less focus and more relaxation. Tennis is an outlet for me four days a week. Sometimes, I go into the studio alone for late night paint sessions where I release and unleash my creative energies; this is very restorative.”

What else does John do when there isn’t a canvas in front of him? You can find him in the garage building a vintage race car or hanging out with his four (adorable) dogs.

Stop by John Beard Gallery; John may even pop out and say hello!





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Heather Brooke Quick is the founder and CEO of the only divorce and family law firm for women in Northeast Florida. Divorce is often looked at in a negative way but staying in an unhappy and unhealthy marriage is not positive for anyone, especially if there are children involved. It takes strength and courage to walk away from something that is toxic and head into the unknown to look for a better future. At Florida Women's Law Group we want to support and empower women that feel trapped in hopeless situations. We are committed to providing women with the information and tools necessary to make educated decisions about their future and goals.

It has been amazing to watch women transform as we help them navigate their divorce. We have supported women breadwinners protecting what they have worked so hard to earn and accomplish in their careers as well as safeguarding their custody and time with their children. We are here to give strength to the supportive stay-at-home mother who has been in the background propelling her husband's success while putting her own career goals to the side. As a firm of all women, we understand women and what it feels like to be second guessed and under-valued. With Florida Women's Law Group you are always first and you are always valued.

In February 2022, we launched our podcast, "Women Winning Divorce." Each week we focus on different aspects of family law to help guide women through the difficult and emotional legal challenges they are facing. Heather brings over 20 years of law experience that advocates and empowers women to achieve happier and healthier lives. Join Heather as she discusses family law issues including divorce, custody, alimony, paternity, narcissism, mediation and more.

We are committed to guiding women with compassion and empathy through matters of alimony, child support, domestic violence, relocation, and other family law matters. Our team continually looks for innovative ways to solve problems for our clients, working together with them to move their lives forward in a better, more comprehensive manner than the traditional legal approach allows. We are women empowering women through personal, financial, and legal difficulties in family courts. If it is time for you to make a change, let us help you achieve a more stable, healthy and happy future.

**Listen to our podcast at  
[WomenWinningDivorce.com/podcast](http://WomenWinningDivorce.com/podcast)  
or on all major podcast outlets.**





Clareberryrealestate.com

I have been fortunate to work as a Realtor in Northeast Florida for over 30 years. We like to think Northeast Florida is undiscovered. But word is out that our neighborhoods, and the people who live here, are special.

I grew up in Jacksonville and moved to the beach in my 20s. I studied architecture and interior design in college and followed that with a stint in the media. In those years, I learned the art of listening and of asking questions.

My real estate career began in 1985 with Watson Realty, where I learned my craft. I then moved to the original Marsh Landing Realty firm, which marketed the Marsh Landing development in stages, including the opening of unique Harbour Island.

In 1993, I opened my own brokerage, Berry & Co. Real Estate. Our first listing was The Ponte Vedra Carlyle, 48 new condominiums on Ponte Vedra Boulevard. That was an exciting time – new residences in a premier location, with Lodge membership included for every purchaser! We have a robust general brokerage business, having helped hundreds of buyers and sellers with their residential real estate needs. We take pride in our market knowledge - it is the foundation for the extra level of service we provide our customers.

My customers describe me as “one of our most trusted advisors”... “responsive, kind and honest”... “always felt we were in good hands” ... “stands out from the rest regarding professionalism, true customer satisfaction and a real passion to do things the right way.” I am proud to share my knowledge and insights to help make the real estate buying and selling process efficient, enjoyable and rewarding.

At our boutique brokerage, we are committed to identifying each customer’s needs, wants and desires. We match this customized perspective with our market knowledge and years of experience to help our customers make their best decisions. It is such a pleasure, as a native of this area, to guide newcomers to learn about what makes Northeast Florida special, from the wildlife to the beaches to the residents and business owners who call the area home. Equally exciting to me is marketing homes and land, securing that best new owner through customized communications that tell the special story of each property.

While homebase for our office is Ponte Vedra Beach, we also are active in neighboring Jacksonville Beach, Neptune Beach, Atlantic Beach and Nocatee as well as greater Jacksonville. Our real estate market is ever-changing and always intriguing, keeping me excited about the challenges and opportunities each new day brings.



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# wine & dine

## ON THE FIRST COAST

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# THE CHEF BEHIND THE CUISINE

## Michel Richardson describes his journey from humble beginnings to culinary success

story by **SHAUN RYAN**

photos provided by **MICHEL R. RICHARDSON**



Chef Michel R. Richardson began his career at a school in Las Vegas. Today, he is executive chef/chef de cuisine for the Castillo Craft Bar + Kitchen in St. Augustine.

As a child, there were two jobs Michel R. Richardson especially loved when helping his mother in the kitchen: grating cheese and mixing up her meatloaf.

From such humble origins has come one of the top chefs on the First Coast — executive chef/chef de cuisine for the Castillo Craft Bar + Kitchen at the Renaissance St. Augustine hotel in the heart of the Nation’s Oldest City.

Growing up in Hemet, California, southeast of Los Angeles, Richardson’s first job in the food industry was working as a dishwasher at a retirement home at age 14. During his three years there, he worked his way up to server and then cook. And there were early indications of his ultimate career.

“As a high-schooler, I would come home and make these amazing sandwiches,” he said.

He then went into construction, and Northeast Florida might have been deprived of Richardson’s culinary talents had it not been for his sister Rachel, who suggested he look into Le Cordon Bleu College of Culinary Arts, which she had seen in a TV commercial.

So, at age 19, Richardson moved to Las Vegas to attend the school. The classes, which he completed in 15 months, taught the basics of cooking and arguably served a more important purpose.

“I really developed my passion and appreciation for cooking,” Richardson said.

While in Las Vegas, he worked at a few kitchens, including local favorite Nora’s Italian Cuisine.

He left Las Vegas and moved to San Diego, where he furthered his career as a line cook and ultimately a chef.

### THE KEY INGREDIENT

Working with Chef Chris O’Donnell at La Villa Restaurant & Bar, Richardson found the recipe for success.

“The best school is right there in the kitchen,” he said. “Out of all my knowledge, about 10% was school, and the other 90% was just working in the kitchen, staying humble

CONTINUED ON PAGE 15 ■

# CHEF

■ CONTINUED FROM PAGE 14

enough to take direction and learn from someone else.”

While at La Villa, he learned technique, plating, molecular gastronomy and working with liquid nitrogen. If the last two sound a bit like laboratory terms, know that these sciences have allowed those of us who appreciate excellent dining to try new and tasty dishes.

Richardson went on to become the sous chef for the Bluewater Boathouse Seafood Grill in Coronado, California, and then lead banquet chef for The Lodge at Torrey Pines, a AAA Five Diamond rated resort in La Jolla, California.

“There, I worked with the best chef in all of San Diego, Chef Jeff Jackson,” Richardson said. “He taught me how to walk with a purpose, always think ahead, elegance. A chef I will never forget.”

Jackson later promoted Richardson to sous chef de cuisine at the Catermeran Resort Hotel and Spa in San Diego.



Chef Richardson's culinary creations inspire much mouth-watering.



Michel R. Richardson learned his trade primarily from other successful chefs.

## THE SUNSHINE STATE

Richardson then moved to Northeast Florida, where he became the banquet chef for the Ponte Vedra Inn & Club. Eventually, he was placed in charge of the spa kitchen and menu.

He next played a role in the opening of M Brothers at Mayo, one of the restaurants of chefs Matthew and David Medure.

“It was an honor to cook side by side on the line with such high caliber chefs as the Medure brothers,” Richardson said.

Then, in April of this year, Renaissance St. Augustine called.

Richardson has two roles there. As executive chef, he is tasked with building a successful team and restaurant. He is in charge of food safety while keeping the restaurant efficient and profitable.

As chef de cuisine, he develops menus and recipes and trains his staff with a goal of putting out an exceptional menu and an unforgettable experience. He keeps everyone abreast of new menu items. It is also his responsibility to ensure health code practices remain an important part of the day-to-day operations. He said keeping a clean walk-in, dry storage and freezer is essential.

Among Richardson's favorite dishes to make is handmade pasta.

“I get joy from making an amazing pasta sauce that goes with whatever pasta I roll out,” he said.

He also lists ribeye steak and salmon fillet among his favorite dishes.

“My wife enjoys my Crispy Salmon Caesar Salad with spiced croutons,” he said.

## LIVING HERE

Northeast Florida is very different from the Southern California where Richardson grew up.

Asked what he enjoys most about living on the First Coast, he joked, “Well, it ain't the rain.”

On a more serious note, he said he loves how green it is here, though it takes a bit of getting used to not seeing any mountain ranges around the area.

He also enjoys the wildlife.

“Seeing deer as I drive into our neighborhood is really cool,” he said.

And, of course, the beaches are, as he said, “beautiful.”

“Florida is full of beauty and a rich wildlife and ecosystem,” he said. “One thing I love feeling is the Southern hospitality. Coming from the West Coast, you hear about Southern hospitality, but you truly don't grasp it until you have felt it and seen it for yourself — and it all starts with a glass of sweet tea!”

From a professional perspective, Richardson said the best part of his career is the people he meets and works with “where nationality, gender, politics go out the window. Everyone is there for a common goal: serving amazing food.”

He enjoys seeing a smile or other reaction from a customer who has just enjoyed food that he cared for and made himself.

He called that one of the best feelings.

When he's not at work, Richardson enjoys spending time with his wife and best friend, Kristen.

“We love going to the movies, checking out different cuisines, hanging out with family,” he said. “Family is extremely important to me.”

Whenever possible, Richardson likes to get out into the woods, sometimes hunting with his father-in-law.

But the most important thing in his life is making time for his faith.

“Without that, I wouldn't be able to make it,” he said.

Listing these, his favorite ways to spend his leisure time, he suddenly remembered one of the biggies.

“Oh,” he said, “and video games.”



# STRIVING FOR HEALTHIER BAR FOOD OPTIONS

## Mocha Street opens location in Jacksonville Beach

story by ANTHONY RICHARDS

photos courtesy of MOCHA STREET

Mocha Street is a new food truck located outside Green Room Brewing in Jacksonville Beach, but it is taking a unique approach and looking to reinvent the mindset often associated with bar food.

Twelve years ago, the family-owned

restaurant called Mocha Rita's Deli opened in Jacksonville on Philips Highway and now the family has decided to start a second venture, this time in the form of a food truck, which began January 15.

"The most flavor always comes out

of small kitchens," said, Chef Lipsky, who oversees Mocha Rita's Deli. "I'm not sure how somewhere along the line, the industry set the bar at edible. We feel that is unacceptable and together

CONTINUED ON PAGE 18 ■



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we can raise the bar and raise awareness much quicker. Taste buds high fiving each other tends to make for a great add-on to any day.”

The family also decided to open Carved Catering seven years ago.

“Years later, now we’re at the Beach with our first mobile unit,” said Amy Divido, director of operations and creative sales at Mocha Street. “This is the first time we are expanding and bringing in employees and outside chefs that aren’t friends and family. It’s awesome to see the growth.”

One of the unique catering aspects that has been brought into Mocha Street, is the offering of a custom-chef experience for customers.

“Our specialty is creating anything from scratch and getting creative with it by figuring out what our customers really want,” Divido said. “We’ve had customers want different meats imported from Chicago and wanted us to create a recipe that was Chicago-based.

We also get a lot of origin requests, such as families from Europe that want a European dish.”

The mobile unit was an idea that became a reality thanks to a partnership devised between the restaurant and Green Room Brewing, which is allowing them to use the space in front of their building.

“They wanted to keep their dog-friendly bar but also have a great food option for their customers,” Divido said. “We do incorporate the catering, because every Friday the chef will come in and make one of our catering dishes as a scratch-kitchen entrée to be our dinner special for the weekend.”

Other than the weekend specials, the rest of the menu is all deli-based items.

However, even with the deli-style they strive to remained focused on using ingredients that are made from scratch and that come from local sources.

“If it’s not locally sourced, then of course it’s going to be products that have no preservatives, no hormones, and no color dyes,” Divido said. “We

don’t sell soda out of our kitchen or play with corn syrup, or any of those cancerous that are put into food to make them last longer.”

Behind all the measures Mocha Street is taking in its approach is the goal of creating healthier food options with the hopes that people will in turn notice the results by feeling better after eating the food prepared.

Part of that approach is not just the preparation of the food itself, but also taking it a step further by creating a scratch kitchen awareness committee, which is designed to create awareness by educating individuals about the food they are eating and the choices that exist for a healthier lifestyle.

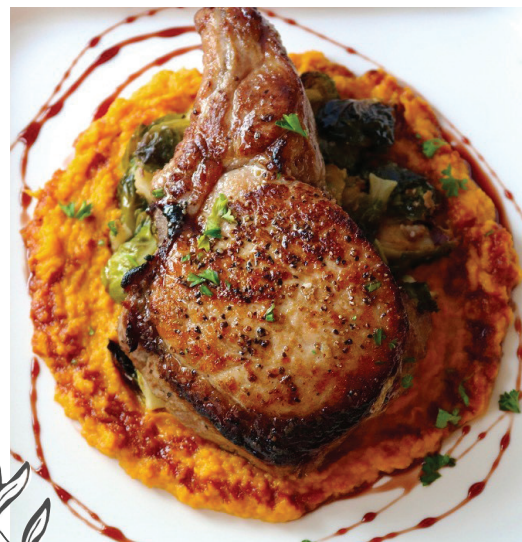
According to Divido, bar food is commonly thought to be greasy and fried, but at Mocha Street the belief is that this does not have to be the case.

“It’s all about educating,” Divido said. “Once our customers are aware that we’re providing a fresher ingredient, they begin to see the value of what they’re getting. It’s all about creating a new mindset.”

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# MEET ME ON THE CORNER OF WOODLAND AND NEW YORK!

## DeLand a wondrous destination for visitors with a big appetite for history and dining

story by **LEIGH CORT**  
photos provided by **LEIGH CORT**



LEIGH CORT

If DeLand, Florida, was the winter home of famed hat maker John B. Stetson, honored with the title of ‘First Snowbird’ (1886 to 1906), you, too, can plan to run away for a few glorious days of American history while you “Savor a taste of Old Florida, a sprinkling of Real Florida and a spoonful of Vibrant

Florida” — all in one small town with a big appetite!

As you drive slowly into town, you’ll be amazed at the turn-of-the-century architecture, sprawling campus of Stetson University, towering live oak trees shading the main avenue of Woodland Boulevard and then the bustling little town with restaurants, shops and businesses taking up residency in charming buildings, homes and historic landmarks.

At every street’s turn, notice the amazing murals that demand your attention.



An Old Florida mural in DeLand

Begun in 1996, the West Volusia Tourism Authority created the ‘DeLand Mural Tour’ as a way of sharing the history of their community, and it’s one of the most fascinating self-guided travelogues of 15 historic murals. You can also arrange for a guide to walk you through the storytelling, which will open the doors to the most charming walk through downtown and history!

You don’t have to experience the entire collection at once. Visible on approximately 12 square blocks, each cleverly designed depiction takes you back in time to Wild West Volusia and the St. Johns River in the 19th Century, bicycling on the boulevard set in the 1920s, riverboat landing in the 1870s, DeLand at the turn of the century ... even the 1942 Naval Air Station that describes DeLand’s large role during World War II

CONTINUED ON PAGE 20 ■



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when it donated its airport to the war effort.

Once you’ve arrived, there is little doubt why DeLand was the first community in Florida to receive the Main Street designation and recognized as a “Great American Main Street” winner in 1997 by the National Trust for Historic Preservation Main Street Center.

This isn’t the only award; in 2017, Main Street DeLand won the “America’s Main Streets’ contest presented by IndependentWeStand.org.

From beginning to end, this little hamlet is an authentic, thriving and great American downtown! It’s so walkable. It’s so discoverable. It’s so adoptable (meaning that you’ll fall in love with it within your first few hours).



Melissa Reed, proprietor of The Table

**A TASTE OF DINING**

Whether you’re staying over for a Sunday or arriving on a Sunday, DeLand’s “The Table” has created a globally inspired, boundary-pushing brunch that you might not find anywhere else.

Owner Melissa Reed is influential in shaping the local dining scene with her unique concept of inviting guests to order everything on the menu for one very modest price. Although you might think they are more “tasting” size, start with six dishes, and then if you’re

still hungry, order six others to explore the full bottomless plate experience. With at least 15 dishes, you might select Southern fried chicken with three-pepper jelly, smoked salmon crostini, apple cinnamon French toast, custom omelets, shrimp and grits, and onward.

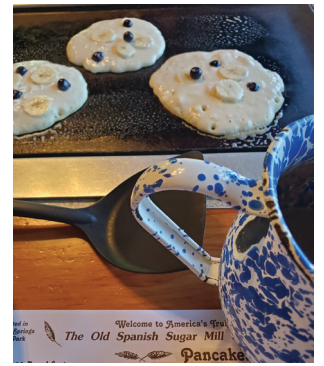
It’s also a marvelous shopping boutique, too — upstairs from the stylish brunch garden. Her in-house bakery, Downtown Dough Co., is surrounded by culinary gifts from charcuterie boards and candles to local curated artisan treasures.

In a small city where many different types of people bring their expertise and traditions, it’s not a surprise that the restaurant scene feels uniquely ever-evolving. Discerning visitors find it easy to seek out something delicious at every meal — especially when something as outrageously fun for breakfast or lunch is right around the corner. A short 10-minute drive from downtown is the DeLeon Springs State Park, a “real” Florida spring where visitors can swim in the tranquil waters, rent a kayak or canoe, fish for bass and bream or hike the half-mile paved nature trail. The spring provides access to the Lake Woodruff National Wildlife Refuge with 18,000 acres of lakes, creeks and marshes.

Bring a picnic or get prepared for one of the most entertaining meals that delights every age. The Old Spanish Sugar Mill Grill & Griddle House invites guests to be creative; make your own pancakes at a comfy table with a “griddle in the middle.” Eat them plain or fancy with fresh fruits, pecans, chocolate chips — even peanut butter. Of course, you can indulge in a normal menu of sandwiches and salads but the reason why this

unforgettable restaurant has been around since 1961 are the pancakes!

With more than 20 places to enjoy a cornucopia of delicious menus, a stop-in for a late afternoon cappuccino at The Boston Coffeehouse is more than just picturesque. Step into the cozy brick-walled café where you don’t have to snag a table. Enter into this intimate Colonial Boston-designed hip eatery that could be anywhere. There is a vibrant scene of patrons from Stetson University students and shopkeepers to visitors and dedicated locals.



Make-them-yourself pancakes



Shrimp and Grits at Cress

For the discerning diner, Cress is at the top of locals’ and visitors’ cuisine list. Winning the 22nd Annual Orlando Sentinel Foodie Award in 2020 is no small feat — and this tiny restaurant always has a long reservation list for dining indoors or at one of their streetside outdoor tables. Their menu, a wonderful easy-to-pilot one page, represents their commitment to sourcing and

supporting local farmers while drawing inspiration from global favorites. If you read the ingredients, you’ll be enchanted with short rib stroganoff, Indian-inspired curries, local fish creations, braised leg of lamb — even shrimp and grits. The preparations are distinctive, and you’ll leave with a feeling of gastronomic satisfaction.

A short scenic drive from downtown DeLand on the original train route is another popular eatery, The DeLand Stockyard. If you’re a train lover, there are stories galore about one of the “Great American Stations” in DeLand.

Built in 1918 in Craftsman style for the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad, it has been restored over the years and is currently an Amtrak and CSX stop. In its early days, circa 1884, DeLand had six depots coming to the city. And was originally built as passenger and freight depots for wealthy northerners shipping their automobiles via baggage car. Subsequently John B. Stetson was easily able to ship oranges... and the present facility is the only surviving depot in the area.

The restaurant, dating to the 1920s, was originally a lodge along that era’s bustling main thoroughfare used by merchants to transport goods to the docks on the nearby St. Johns River. Enjoying its pedigree for nearly 100 years, its (changing names) and story is dotted with moonshine, prohibition, romance and subsequently great food.

Today, the Stockyard is open nightly for dinner in the original building or you can choose seating outdoors on a fabulous deck



Onion loaf

with a long view of the train tracks with daily scheduled trains that really add to the ambience. It's a perfectly balanced menu of steaks, seafood, casual contemporary fare, burgers and the best "sweet onion ring loaf" this side of the tracks!



Cabin on the Lake, Lake Helen

serene Lake Helen is your style, consider Cabin on the Lake for its privacy, lakefront boating, fishing and chilling.

Olga and hubby Hugo offer a surprising blend of English country cottage and romance that only takes a 15-minute

**WHERE TO STAY**

If you have chosen to secure accommodations in the historic district at the Courtyard by Marriott or a mainstream chain hotel throughout the business district, you can count on enjoying a pedestrian adventure that takes you through delightful narrow back streets and an easy-to-navigate network of boutique shopping, dining, galleries and museums.

But if a personalized and intimate bed-and-breakfast on

rural drive to enjoy the vibe of DeLand. Welcoming you upon arrival, with only three themed rooms, you might choose to unwind immediately on the private dock and take a country stroll in the sleepy neighborhood nicknamed "The Gem of Florida." Then upon your return any evening, you'll realize this little piece of heaven is a superb balance to the hustle and bustle of downtown DeLand.

With two acres of land and a grassy lawn, guests love the screened porch and picnic tables, plus their pet-friendly invitation to feel at home throughout the entire property. Imagine this "best kept secret" for now — only a short drive to New Smyrna Beach, Daytona Beach, Deltona, Wekiva Springs, Port Orange, Winter Springs and a wealth of surrounding towns.

**THINGS TO DO**

Without question, DeLand is a cultural melting pot where the "rich and famous" played a starring role in shaping the town's warmth and vigor more than 150 years ago. There are so many things to do in a small town setting that visitors find irresistible.

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The link celebrated its first anniversary with a Business Expo and Family Olympics.

# LINK MARKS FIRST YEAR WITH BUSINESS EXPO, FAMILY OLYMPICS

story by **SHAUN RYAN**  
 photos by **SHAUN RYAN & SUSAN GRIFFIN**

The link, a multipurpose facility in Nocatee, celebrated its first anniversary Friday, July 15, with a Business Expo and Family Olympics, both of which were well-attended.

The event reflected the two primary areas of focus for this enterprise over the past 12 months: business and family.

On one hand, the 22,500-square-foot hub at 425 Town Plaza Ave. serves professionals as a co-working space and business incubator that offers a variety of office-space solutions. On the other, it's a place that offers members and the community at large a variety of activities, classes and entertainment.



The link's pavilion was a great place to get refreshments on a hot and humid afternoon during the Family Olympics.

**“The community support has been phenomenal, shockingly good.”**

- RAGHU MISRA

couldn't have imagined in the beginning how it would evolve during its first year.

“The community support has been phenomenal, shockingly good,” he said.

The expo was a busy place Friday, with members of the community visiting the 40 tables to learn about the products and services of a diverse

cross-section of local businesses.

“I think we have a good spectrum of representation,” said Misra.

Meanwhile, on the lawn out front, families gathered to compete in timeless games, such as tug-of-war, potato sack races and a three-legged race, while a DJ played music.

As the link enters its second year, Misra indicated that an emphasis was going to be placed on education. The facility is looking to augment the curriculum offered by the schools.

“It's going to be an interesting journey for the next year,” Misra said.



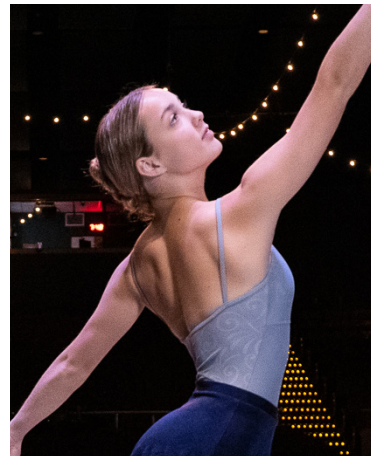
Katy Morgan and Elijah Brooks were at the Orange Theory table to tell visitors about the Nocatee fitness center.



A birthday cake celebrates the link's first year in Nocatee.



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# THE MORRIS CENTER'S SUCCESS GROUNDED IN RESEARCH, EVIDENCE-BASED APPROACH

story & photo by **SHAUN RYAN**

As classes get underway this month for the 2022-23 academic year, some students are facing steep challenges due to dyslexia and other learning disorders. Parents will be seeking solutions.

In fact, so great is the demand for help that a Ponte Vedra Beach clinic, having opened its doors just one year ago, has already more than quadrupled the size of its staff.

The Morris Center, located at 50 Executive Way, a neurodevelopmental treatment and assessment clinic, offers prevention and remediation services to meet the specific needs of each client.

Within the center are three businesses: a health care clinic that addresses neurodevelopmental disorders, a category that includes dyslexia, language disorders, ADHD, sensory processing disorders and autism; a school where educators help

students “close the gap” between their IQ and their current level of academic skills; and an afterschool tutoring program, which relies on small-group instruction and is the most affordable of the clinic’s services, at \$40 per hour.

The health care team of speech pathology, occupational therapy and psychology each play an important role in the assessment and treatment process and work with instructors at the center.

The comprehensive array of services is the creation of neuropsychologist Tim Conway Ph.D., president of The Morris Center clinics. Conway is a UF professor with an extensive background in research and demonstrable results.

The center’s school is patterned after another of Con-



The link's pavilion was a great place to get refreshments on a hot and humid afternoon during the Family Olympics.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 27 ■

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# LOCAL VOLUNTEERS MEET STUDENTS' CRITICAL NEEDS

## Hugs St. Johns makes sure children get clothing, food and more

story by **SHAUN RYAN**  
photos provided by **KAREN BURKE**

St. Johns County, according to most criteria, is the most affluent county in Florida. Yet, even here, 8.2% of minors live below the poverty line.

In fact, about 800 students in the county are technically homeless, according to federal guidelines established by the McKinney-Vento Act.

These students are identified through the school district's Aid and Support for Students in Sudden Transition (ASSIST) program so that district staff can assess their needs, according to Michael Israel, the district's homeless liaison.

"One of the many high-priority needs of the identified stu-



Michael Israel, homeless liaison for St. Johns County Schools, and Karen Burke, Hugs clothing coordinator for Hugs St. Johns, are seen inside the warehouse space the organization uses to store apparel and other items for distribution to students in need.

dents is a need for clothing and hygiene supplies," Israel said.

Fortunately, for more than a decade, a group of volunteers has been at the forefront of local efforts to meet those needs.

Alternately known as Hugs St. Johns and Hugs Across The County, this nonprofit maintains a 2,000-square-foot storage space filled with clothing, shoes, socks, underwear, toiletries and school supplies. When a school counselor makes a request via the Hugs website, volunteers gather up the items and deliver them to the school. Sizes and color preferences are noted, and students are given a week's worth of outfits.

Last year, the Hugs volunteers packed about 500 large bags for delivery. The bags were dropped off at nearly every public school in the county, and not just Title I schools. Deliveries were made in Ponte Vedra and Fruit Cove, as well.

But clothes are not all the group provides. And schools are not the only places they deliver.

### THE BOY WHO LIMPED

Brette Reiman founded Hugs in 2009 with a small group of volunteers who traveled twice a week to Webster Elementary, a Title I school in St. Augustine, to help in the classroom.

There, they quickly discovered that many of the students needed clothing and other items.

But it was a first-grader who really inspired them to act.

The boy had been limping for months, and no one knew why. Then, someone suggested checking the size of his shoes. It turned out they were two sizes too small — his family did not have the means to buy him a new pair.

So, the volunteers ran out to Walmart and bought him shoes in the right size.

From there, the group began purchasing items for other students in need and soon learned that this need was not limited to Webster Elementary. It existed through the county.

That's when Reiman established the nonprofit. Clothing was stored in her garage, but soon the volume exceeded the available space and Hugs rented a pair of storage units. Then, in 2020, the group found a warehouse large enough to accommodate its growing stock.

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CONTINUED ON PAGE 28 ■

way’s successes, The Einstein School in Gainesville. Built in 1999, it is the first charter school in the nation for children with dyslexia.

The approach of The Morris Center Academy school is evidence-based, using a program the company developed after decades of research and testing. It is meant to be a temporary school, where students would receive remedial courses in addition to regular curriculum for a year or two.

“Our goal is: Close the gap from a remedial instructional model, get these skills up to their IQ level ... and then transition them back to whatever school environment the family and the student feel is the right fit for them,” said Conway. With newly improved academic skills, they choose the school they want, not the school that might accept them with poor academic skills.

In some cases, the child’s struggles to read, write or spell may not be related to a disorder at all, but rather to poor instruction at a former school. Despite new stories from the UK, all people with dyslexia do not genetically have “strengths” that fully literate people do not have — that is a misguided myth.

Florida Standards Assessment figures for spring 2022 offer a grim picture of English language arts proficiency in the Sunshine State. Only an average of 29% of students taking the assessments in grades three through six demonstrated profi-

ciency. Likewise, National Assessment of Educational Progress outcomes report that only 25% of Florida’s third graders are proficient readers, a consistent outcome that has occurred annually for more than 30 years, not due to COVID.

Neither outcome can be attributed solely to dyslexia, which affects between 5% and 20% of students.

Students struggling to keep up, regardless of the cause, can be helped by The Morris Center. And that is largely due to its reliance on health care brain scientists using approaches that are research-based or evidence-based.

In a study published in 1999, Conway and his team compared the progress of four groups of 5-year-olds who had performed poorly on phonological skills (the number one predictor of reading skills), each group then receiving a different type of intervention. Three of the groups — including one that relied on a standard phonics program — demonstrated unimpressive to poor results. Between 25% and 41% of students in those groups did not pass kindergarten or first grade.

However, 91% of the group that used a methodology that worked first on speech processing skills and later on letters, decoding, reading and comprehension passed kindergarten and first grade — Conway’s intervention program.

In a follow-up study, those students were brought back at the end of the fourth grade to see how they had fared on their own without additional treatment. The result: their reading accuracy and speed had increased without additional remedial services or special education placements.

Clearly, setting the neurological and speech processing



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pantries at 13 schools each month.

These were created at the request of a principal who, out of her own pocket, had been providing food to students as they left for the bus every afternoon; she knew that they didn't have food at home to eat.

Another way Hugs St. Johns looks after students' dietary needs has been its No Hungry Holidays program, which provides 10 days of breakfasts and lunches over the winter break. That program has grown to where it now serves about 1,200 students each December at schools throughout the district — including more than 100 students from the Ponte Vedra area.

"Food insecurity is very real throughout St. Johns County," said Reiman.

In addition to its food and clothing efforts, Hugs St. Johns offers a girls' empowerment lunch-and-learn program at Murray Middle School and a summer reading program with high school volunteers who visit three locations in underserved communities to read to the kids.

It has also expanded its services beyond schools to help children at the Betty Griffin Center, a domestic violence shelter in St. Augustine.

"A lot of times when families are fleeing domestic violence, they leave their belongings behind," said Jessica Gamble, Betty Griffin Center children's advocate. "The emergency clothing bags from Hugs ease the difficult transition into shelter by meeting some of their basic needs and giving that family one less thing to worry about."

Gamble said Hugs has even assisted with school uniforms, dance leotards and football cleats.

"Their help goes beyond clothing, though," she said. "Anytime we need anything for one of our kids, they do whatever they can to help us. They have donated Christmas presents, snacks, school supplies, toiletries, board games, books and so much more."

## VOLUNTEERS AND DONATIONS

A few years ago, Karen Burke of Ponte Vedra began donating items on the Hugs wish list. Soon, she began to volunteer as a delivery driver, and the experience was an eye-opener.

"I was shocked," she said. "I went places in the county, and I was like, 'I didn't even know these places existed.'"

Today, she is the nonprofit's clothing coordinator and heads a team of volunteers who keep the donated apparel organized and see to its distribution. But more help is always welcome. Hugs St. Johns posts a list of donations it needs and hours that volunteers are needed on social media.

"I am always, always, always looking for volunteers, and also I'm always looking for donations of gently used or new clothing to help keep our shelves stocked," Burke said.

Some clothes come through neighborhood clothing drives. Others are simply singular donations. The sizes can be infant to adult. But they must meet a minimum standard of quality.

"As long as they're clean and no rips, no stains — anything that I would want to send my kids to school in, we'll take that stuff," Burke said.

In addition to ordinary clothing donations, some people purchase apparel from the organization's Amazon wish list. Others donate money.

Reiman praised Burke for her conscientiousness.

"She packs those clothing bags for kids as if they were her own children," Reiman said.

Israel has seen firsthand how this personal touch has benefitted the students.

"The thoughtfulness, care and concern are definitely shown in each package that a student receives," he said. "The sense of pride that our identified students have when they can put on a fresh set of clothing items each day is invaluable."

"Hugs is an amazing organization filled with amazing people, and we are beyond grateful for all they do for us and our families at Betty Griffin Center," said Gamble.

Reiman extends her praise to the community.

"I cannot state enough that we would not have been able to do what we do and grow the way that we have grown without the absolutely incredible community support from so many people throughout St. Johns County," she said.

To learn more about the organization, including ways to volunteer and donate, go to [stjohnshugs.org](http://stjohnshugs.org). Social media sites include: [twitter.com/StJohnsCoHugs](https://twitter.com/StJohnsCoHugs), [instagram.com/stjohnshugs](https://www.instagram.com/stjohnshugs) and [facebook.com/HugsStJohns](https://www.facebook.com/HugsStJohns).



Hugs St. Johns stores all donated clothing items in orderly fashion at its warehouse.

foundation for successful literacy made all the difference.

And such success can be life-changing.

"When you change a child's literacy, you don't just change their reading skills," said Conway. "You change their whole self-esteem. You change their self-confidence, and it impacts the child and family for generations!"

In 2013, Conway launched his online instruction service, Neuro-Development of Words — NOW! It is accessible from anywhere and offers 1:1 or small group instruction to children, teens and adults. People around the globe are using the service with strong outcomes, too.

"We are the world's only global provider of literacy services that are evidence-based from 15 years of NICHD-funded randomized controlled trials research," said Conway.

Conway joined The Morris Center in 1989 and bought the company in 2008, opening a clinic in Ocala in 2011. In 2016, he opened a Caribbean clinic in Trinidad and Tobago. In 2020, he partnered with a nonprofit, Alabama Game Changers, to launch a 16,000-square-foot clinic in Birmingham with a staff of 50.

The Ponte Vedra clinic opened in 2021. But Conway is far from finished.

"We're opening clinics across the country and internationally," he said, adding that, because of the growth, he is "hiring every day."

To learn more, go to [TheMorrisCenterPVB.com](http://TheMorrisCenterPVB.com). To learn about the NOW! Programs, go to [NOWPrograms.net](http://NOWPrograms.net).



Scott Grant and John Rutkowski.



Tiger May and Scott Grant.

# UNDERWOOD JEWELERS, STANDFAST ASSET MANAGEMENT HOST ROLEX PARTY

photos by **SUSAN GRIFFIN**

One guest likened the event to “Breakfast at Tiffany’s, only better!” Underwood’s Jewelers and Standfast Asset Management combined forces for a Rolex watch event that was quirky good fun. Excellent food and drinks and a brief talk about the history of Rolex by local storyteller Scott Grant thrilled all of those in attendance. The highlight of the evening was the watches, but it turns out you did not need a Rolex to have a good time.



Michael Dudley, Scott Grant and Justin Shiver.



Deb Chapin, John Miller and Ro Gioia.



Brenda Sandvoss, Susan Knapp, Debra Smith and Donna Guzzo.

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Plenty of laughs were had during the event.



Women from throughout the local community attended the summer social event.



Edie Williams, Carly Jewell and Anna Chattaway.



Heather Howard and Dr. Erica Joy Siegel.



Kelley Bost, Debra Smith and Susan Knapp.

# PONTE VEDRA WOMEN'S CLUB HOSTS summer social

story & photos by ANTHONY RICHARDS

The Ponte Vedra Women's Club held its annual summer social event at Pusser's Bar and Grill in Ponte Vedra Beach July 20.

It was a well-attended event that featured women from throughout the community and the surrounding areas.

"Our club year is September through May, but we started having these socials just to keep people engaged," club president Lori Marjerison said. "We end up meeting a lot of potential members."

"What we've found is that the people coming to these events are relatively new in town or they're working, and their life may be changing in some way," Marjerison said.

The club is a mix of both retired and working women and is open to all ages.

Since its inception in 1970, it has sought to raise money to help a certain cause within the community.

At first, it held social events for the Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind, which it still does today, but the charities and initiatives have grown over the years.

The club has a social meet every month, with the next one scheduled for Aug. 11 from 6-8 p.m. for new and prospective

members. It will be held at a member's home in Sawgrass.

"We have anywhere from 20 to 25 people for the meetings," Marjerison said.

Several rules have changed over the years as the club continues to adapt and expand its membership.

As an example, the meetings used to be held in the mornings and membership to the club was only allowed for those who lived in Ponte Vedra.

However, changes were made over time to better accommodate working women and expand its footprint to the surrounding areas.

"I've been told that people like our meetings, because there is not a ton of structure," Marjerison said. "We just have more of a casual and very conversational approach."

The club's big fall charity fundraiser or "fun"raiser as the members like to

say will be Diamonds and Denim at the Ribault Garden Club Oct. 1 from 6-10 p.m., as the club will partner with Underwood Jewelers to put on the event.

Highlights of the night will include a silent auction, as well as entertainment, food and drinks for all those in attendance to enjoy.

**"I've been told that people like our meetings, because there is not a ton of structure."  
- LORI MARJERISON**



# FALL Arts PREVIEW

PAGES 31 - 34

## Village Arts Framing and Gallery

155 Tourside Dr. #1520 Sawgrass Village  
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# LOCAL ARTIST 'HONORED' BY LIGHTNER EXHIBIT

## Ferguson showcases St. Augustine at museum

story & photos by **ANTHONY RICHARDS**

For St. Augustine's own Martha Ferguson, the ability to exhibit her artwork as part of a Lightner Museum showcase was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.

"Just to be in a museum, especially one like the Lightner is such a nice thing to have on the resume," Ferguson said. "It's a real honor for me."

The exhibit was held June 3 to July 22 as part of the "Lightner Local" series, which was created to highlight the works of local artists.

"Lightner Local is supported by the Benjamin and Jean Troemel Arts Foundation here in town," Lightner Museum Director David Bagnal said. "It allows us to bring in exhibitions by local contemporary artists and help us build a stronger sense of community."

She was the second local artist to be selected as part of this year's four-show series.

"It gives them different exposure, because it's a slightly different audience than you might get at a commercial gallery," Bagnal said. "We have visitors from all over the U.S. and internationally as well."

Many of the pieces Ferguson had on display during the exhibit were painted recently in anticipation of the showcase.

"A lot of them I painted after I received the news that I had



Martha Ferguson's artwork was shown as part of the Lightner Museum's "Lightner Local" series.

been selected," Ferguson said. "I just got into that mode and started to paint."

For Ferguson, that meant going out and experiencing the St. Augustine community, as all her work depicts scenes that take place on the local streets.

"Painting St. Augustine is my love," Ferguson said.

Her first interaction with the area was when she moved down from her home state of West Virginia to go to Flagler College in the 1980s.

After meeting her husband, the couple moved to New Jersey where they lived for 30 years before eventually making it back to the First Coast, where a piece of their heart had never left.

"We always knew we'd come back," Ferguson said. "We had always vacationed here and finally in 2009 we bought a house."

One of the interesting things about St. Augustine being the theme of her artwork, is that all she has to do at times is walk out her front door and she could be inspired by what's going on that day.

Her style of painting on location is called "plein air."

"It's a French term for painting in the open," she said. "In New Jersey they had some plein air events, but down here,



Cattin Around



Early Morning Ride



Heading Home



Quiet Night on St. Francis



Support for Ukraine





Martha Ferguson stands next to her paintings as she was the most recent local artist to be featured at the Lightner Museum in St. Augustine.



Window Under the Palms

it seems like everybody paints plein air. I guess it's the good weather."

By painting the local scene, she believes it gives residents a sense of pride when they observe her paintings. That is the emotion she hopes her paintings capture within the people that view them.

"I love painting first thing in the morning, because that's when the sun hits the streets pretty and it's not as crowded, which is important,"

Ferguson said. "Painting outside allows you to get a different perspective of the color. It's just a different experience."

Years ago, she started as a watercolor painter, but now she primarily uses the approach of oil colors on canvas.


Ferguson has been painting since she was in junior high, and she even took part in shows and sold some of her artwork even back then.

Years later, she found herself at the Lightner which was the first time she had been shown in a museum exhibit.

Ferguson believes the artist community around St. Augustine is full of talented creators and she enjoys how the area embraces its local art culture.

She encourages all aspiring local artists both young and old to trust in their work and find smaller shows to enter. One day they may end up in the Lightner.

"The biggest thing with art, is not being afraid to put your work out there," Ferguson said. "I think that's the case for every artist."



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# fall arts event schedule

NOTE: DATES AND EVENTS ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE

**PONTE VEDRA  
CONCERT HALL**  
1050 A1A North  
Ponte Vedra Beach  
pvconcerthall.com

**Sept. 17:** The Fixx  
**Sept. 20:** Andy McKee  
**Oct. 1:** Todd Barry  
**Oct. 2:** Ainsley Earhardt  
**Oct. 5:** Victor Wooten,  
Steve Bailey, Derico Watson  
**Oct. 8:** Jen Fulwiler  
**Oct. 9:** Bob Mould  
**Oct. 21:** Steve Vai  
**Oct. 23:** Pablo Cruise  
**Nov. 4:** Steep  
Canyon Rangers  
**Nov. 9:** Joe Satriani  
**Nov. 19:** Paul Reiser  
**Dec. 7:** Ana Popovic  
**Dec. 9:** UNF Choral  
Ensembles: Carols and  
Messiah Favorites  
**Dec. 10:** The Fab Four —  
The Ultimate Tribute  
**Dec. 14:** Mindi Abair  
"I Can't Wait for Christmas"



**THE ST. AUGUSTINE  
AMPHITHEATRE**  
1340 CA1A South  
St. Augustine  
staugamphitheatre.com

**Sept. 4:** Dispatch & O.A.R.  
**Sept. 9:** Matisyahu  
**Sept. 10:** Billy Currington  
**Sept. 15:** Ringo Starr  
and his All Starr Band  
**Sept. 16:** Sing  
Out Loud: Snail Mail  
**Sept. 18:** Conan Gray  
**Sept. 19:** Jack White The  
Supply Chain Issues Tour  
**Sept. 25:** Sing Out Loud:  
Shovels & Rope  
**Sept. 27:** Earth, Wind & Fire  
**Sept. 30:** Sing  
Out Loud: Lucius  
**Oct. 6:** The War On Drugs  
**Oct. 13:** The Head  
And The Heart  
**Oct. 14:** Gov't Mule & Old  
Crow Medicine Show  
**Oct. 15:** Trace Adkins  
**Nov. 2-3:** Lauren Daigle

**Nov. 4-5:** Alabama  
**Nov. 12:** Bonnie Raitt  
**Nov. 16:** Paramore  
**Nov. 17:** Cole Swindell —  
Back Down to the Bar Tour  
**Nov. 19:** Cody Johnson  
(sold out)  
**Nov. 20:** Mannheim  
Steamroller Christmas  
by Chip Davis



**FLORIDA THEATER**  
128 E. Forsyth St. Suite 300  
Jacksonville  
floridatheatre.com

**Aug. 18:** Blues,  
Brews and BBQ  
**Aug. 21:** "Dirty Dancing"  
**Aug. 27:** Randy Rainbow —  
The Pink Glasses Tour  
**Aug. 28:** "Monsters, Inc."  
**Sept. 9-10:** Jim Gaffigan:  
The Fun Tour  
**Sept. 13:** Collective Soul  
and Switchfoot  
**Sept. 15:** Bat — The Official  
Meat Loaf Celebration  
**Sept. 16:** Judy Collins  
**Sept. 29:** Blue's Clues & You!

**Oct. 2:** We The Kingdom  
**Oct. 6:** Benise —  
Spanish Nights  
**Oct. 7:** Hotel California:  
A Salute to the Eagles  
**Oct. 8:** Tauren Wells  
**Oct. 9:** Peppa Pig's  
Adventure  
**Oct. 11:** Theatreworks —  
Click, Clack, Moo  
**Oct. 12:** Ray Lamontagne:  
The Monovision Tour  
**Oct. 14:** Scotty McCreery  
**Oct. 22:** Josh Gates Live! An  
Evening of Ghosts, Monsters  
and Tales of Adventure  
**Oct. 25:** Amos Lee  
**Oct. 26:** Daniel Howell —  
We're All Doomed!  
**Oct. 27:** Boney James  
**Oct. 29:** The Rocky Horror  
Picture Show  
**Oct. 30:** Rumours of  
Fleetwood Mac  
**Nov. 2:** Theatreworks —  
The Empiror's New Clothes

**Nov. 4:** Floyd Nation:  
Experience Pink Floyd  
**Nov. 6:** Brian Culbertson  
**Nov. 11:** Celebrating Billy  
Joel — America's Piano Man  
**Nov. 17:** Disney Junior Live  
on Tour: Costume Palooza  
**Nov. 18:** Cat & Nat  
Unfiltered Live!  
**Nov. 29:** Theatreworks —  
Pete the Cat's  
Big Hollywood Adventure  
**Nov. 30:** Allman  
Family Revival  
**Dec. 1:** Dave Koz and  
Friends 25th Anniversary  
Christmas Tour  
**Dec. 2:** Sal Vulcano  
**Dec. 2:** Theatreworks —  
'Twas The Night  
Before Christmas  
**Dec. 3:** Paula Poundstone  
at the WJCT Soundstage  
**Dec. 3:** Tab Benoit and the  
Dirty Dozen Brass Band  
**Dec. 4:** Black Violin  
**Dec. 11:** Eric Gales  
**Dec. 18:** Cirque Musica  
Holiday Wonderland



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jaxsymphony.org

**Sept. 30-Oct. 1:**  
Tchaikovsky's Piano  
Concerto No. 1  
**Oct. 8:** Organ  
Chamber Music  
**Oct. 14-15:** Cirque de la  
Symphonie: Spooktacular!  
**Oct. 21-22:** Bach,  
Beethoven & Brahms  
**Oct. 27:** At The Ballet  
**Nov. 4-5:** The Paul Simon  
Songbook  
**Nov. 11-12:** Brahms'  
German Requiem  
**Nov. 18-19:**  
"Rocky" in Concert  
**Dec. 2-3:** Tchaikovsky's  
Violin Concerto  
**Dec. 8-11:** Holiday Pops



**EMMA CONCERT  
ASSOCIATION**  
Lewis Auditorium  
at Flagler College  
14 Granada St.  
St. Augustine  
904-797-2800  
emmaconcerts.com

**Sept. 10:** The Queen's  
Cartoonists  
**Oct. 30:** Hollywood Concert  
Orchestra — The First 50  
Years of Broadway  
**Dec. 14:** Holiday Pops with  
Gainesville Orchestra



**THE FIRST COAST  
CULTURAL CENTER**  
3972 3rd St. South  
Jacksonville Beach  
904-280-0614  
firstcoastculturalcenter.org

**Dec. 2-3:** Holiday Shoppes



**MUSEUM OF  
CONTEMPORARY ART**  
333 N. Laura St.  
Jacksonville  
904-366-6911  
mocajacksonville.unf.edu

**Through Aug. 21:**  
Jessica Hische, "Covered"  
**Through Oct. 2:** Kara  
Walker: Cut to the Quick  
**Through Nov. 20:** Project  
Atrium: Maud Cotter  
**Ongoing:** Fifty,  
An Alumni Exhibition  
**Opens Sept. 3:** Shervone  
Neckles, "Bless This House"  
**Opens Sept. 11:** Art With a  
Heart in Healthcare  
**Opens Dec. 9:**  
Project Atrium Milagros



**THE CUMMER MUSEUM  
OF ART AND GARDENS**  
829 Riverside Ave.  
Jacksonville  
904-356-6857  
cummermuseum.org

**Aug. 6:** Free Gallery Tour:  
Arts and Influences of Asia  
**Aug. 10:** Look at That!  
Art of Buddha and Shiva:  
Tibet, Nepal, Sri Lanka  
**Aug. 24:** Look at That!  
Art of Buddha and Shiva:  
Cambodia, Thailand  
**Sept. 7:** Look at That! Art of  
Buddha and Shiva: Vietnam  
**Sept. 21:** Look at That! Art  
of Buddha and Shiva: Japan



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**Oct. 7-8, 14-15:**  
"The Lifespan of a Fact"  
**Dec. 2-3, 9-10:**  
"Shorts & Giggles"



**CRISP-ELLERT ART  
MUSEUM**  
48 Sevilla St.  
St. Augustine  
904-826-8530

**Sept. 5-Oct. 22:**  
Florine Demosthene  
**Nov. 4-Dec. 2:**  
Erin Kendrick



**LIMELIGHT THEATRE**  
11 Old Mission Ave.  
St. Augustine  
904-825-1164  
limelight-theatre.org

**Through Sept. 4:** "Parade"  
**Sept. 30-Oct. 30:** "Big Fish"  
**Dec. 3-4:** Holiday Hallelujah



**FERNANDINA BEACH**

**Sept. 10, Oct. 8,  
Nov. 12, Dec. 10:**  
Artrageous Artwalk  
**Dec. 9-11:**  
Dickens on Centre  
**Oct. 1:**  
Island Hop Craft Beer  
Festival

— Compiled by Shaun Ryan

# REALTOR GROUP DONATES \$500 TO RETHREADED

Contributed photos



Rethreaded pastry chef Doralene Vance with her 11th birthday cake creation for the event.



Pictured from left are: Rethreaded sales manager Tamera Colcord, Rethreaded sales associate Abigail Hassell, CBV Cares Carole Bayer presenting check to Rethreaded Director of Development Priscilla Jones and Rethreaded Assistant Manager of Business Development Stephanie Patton.

A grant check for \$500 was presented to Rethreaded's Director of Development Priscilla Jones during its 11th birthday celebration July 30 at its new Hope Campus in Jacksonville on Saturday.

The donation was presented by local Beaches Realtor Group CBV Cares representative Carole Bayer. Donated funds at this event were matched by Riverside Homes up to \$30,000.

Rethreaded is a nonprofit organiza-

tion formed to assist survivors of human trafficking by providing a safe, supportive work environment where survivors may earn income while learning a skill and also gain counseling to assist in planning for the future.

The celebration was an '80s neon-themed event celebrating "Reclaiming the Light" with free food, drinks, '80s music, shopping, a raffle and a fall product launch of Rethreaded products with live debossing of initials on leather

purchased items.

For more information on Rethreaded, contact Jones at 904-257-3226 or [priscilla@rethreaded.com](mailto:priscilla@rethreaded.com) or go to [rethreaded.com](http://rethreaded.com).

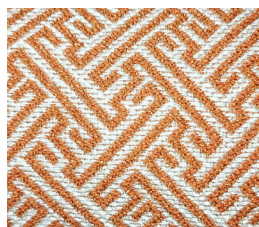
For more information on the Coldwell Banker Vanguard Realty Group CBV Cares, contact Bayer at 904-860-5000 or [cbayerrealtor@gmail.com](mailto:cbayerrealtor@gmail.com). The Coldwell Banker Vanguard Realty Beaches office is located at 240 Ponte Vedra Park Blvd., Suite 201, Ponte Vedra Beach.

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# PIRATES, MAGIC A UNIQUE COMBINATION

Bill McRea, also known as Captain William Mayhem stands behind his bar in his "pirate cave" at his house in St. Augustine.

## Captain William Mayhem leads St. Augustine Swashbucklers

story & photos by ANTHONY RICHARDS

The First Coast of Florida has a rich pirate history, and ever since the St. Augustine Pirate & Treasure Museum was established in 2010, Bill McRea has been bringing the place to life as Capt. William Mayhem.



photo contributed by  
BILL MCREA

McRea decked out in pirate attire with his wife.

"St. Augustine is ripe to have pirates, and it's a very fitting tie," McRea said. "There are very few cities in the United States that can boast the same thing. Savannah, Charleston and the Keys. It just works well here."

McRea is a native of St. Augustine and he and his wife returned to the area in the summer of 2007 after spending years in Las Vegas as a professional magician.

"When I came back home, I had a plan, but it didn't work out, so I needed a way to make a little money and started dressing up in more

colonial wear and hanging out in the pubs downtown doing card tricks and drinking way too much," McRea chuckled. "I did that for three or four nights a week."

After a while, people began to get to know McRea and he became known within the community.

**"I started combining the magic and the pirate, and the idea for Capt. Mayhem was born."**

- BILL MCREA



McRea is the leader of the St. Augustine Swashbucklers pirate crew, which has won several awards for recognition over the years.

"Things started to really progress from there, and I began getting offers to do other things," McRea said.

His expertise with magic and the ability to introduce that as

CONTINUED ON PAGE 37 ■



McRea is a fan of pirate history, including the weapons they used.

## PIRATES

■ CONTINUED FROM  
PAGE 36

part of his act has helped transform his character beyond the pirate persona and create a unique combination.

As a magician he has performed in many ways and for a variety of crowds over the years, from comedy clubs to even having his own stage show in a theater in Arizona at one point.

“All I know is entertaining, because that has been my life,” McRea said. “I started combining the magic and the pirate and the idea for Capt. Mayhem was born.”

Before he knew it, he had become the pirate magician of St. Augustine.

“I’ve gotten away from the old Vegas-style stuff and gotten into more old-world style using ropes and anything else that looks like it would have come from the period from the 1680s to 1720s,” McRea said.

According to McRea, it is his love of entertaining and captivating people that continues to be a passion of his all these years later.

“I’ve done over 9,600 tours in the pirate museum in almost 12 years,” McRea said. “That’s a lot of tours. Almost everybody’s knowledge of pirates is from movies, books and cartoons. Most of that is way different from what real pirate history was, so when they come to the museum, they get a dose of what it was like to be a real pirate.”

He gets plenty of calls to do birthday parties for children and adults and has also done some festivals over the years, including the annual St. Augustine Celtic Festival since it began in 2011.

McRea was even invited to take part in a wedding ceremony of a woman who was fascinated by pirates as a child and remembered Captain Mayhem from a visit to the museum even years later.

“The most flattering thing is when someone asks to take a picture and then they show you all the previous you took photos with them,” Mayhem said. “If you ask any entertainer, you hope what you do makes an impact on those who are watching.”



The area where McRea records his “Captain’s Quarters Podcast.”



photo contributed by **BILL MCREA**

Captain William Mayhem is known as the pirate magician of St. Augustine.

He leads a pirate crew called the St. Augustine Swashbucklers, which he took over the reins of from the original founder and pirate historian Joe Osteen.

“All he (Osteen) was really doing with the crew was dressing up going downtown for dinner and socialize,” McRea said. “In 2009, he said, ‘I’m thinking about turning it all over to, because you know so much more about what you can do with it.’”

Since McRea took over, the crew has grown with 53 members currently and had as much as 125 at one point.

Another aspect that McRea brought to the crew was the increase of charitable appearances they do now.

“Children’s charities, the homeless, or food banks,” McRea said. “It’s really about whatever we come up with for ourselves to do, and we make sure to spread ourselves out everywhere.”

The three charities the St. Augustine Swashbucklers give to the most are Investing in Kids (INK!), St. Augustine Youth Services and the St. Augustine Humane Society.

However, the crew’s reach goes beyond St. Johns County, as they have also taken part in events by Dreams Come True out of Jacksonville, Make-A-Wish Foundation and Give Kids the World out of Orlando.

In recent years, McRea has also begun a weekly podcast show called “Captain’s Quarters Podcast,” where the conversations are usually related to pirate history but can vary depending on the episode.

# STUMPY'S AIMS FOR ENTERTAINMENT BULLSEYE

## Axe throwing business opens location in Jacksonville

story by **ANTHONY RICHARDS**  
photos courtesy of **STUMPY'S HATCHET HOUSE**

Businesses are always looking for new ways to provide entertainment to the public, and that is exactly the case for Stumpy's Hatchet House, which recently opened a location in the Springfield area of Jacksonville.

The idea for the business came about in 2015 through the most grassroots of circumstances.

Owners Stu and Kelly Josberger were living up in the Northeast and had been looking to start a new business venture.

They were hanging out at a friend's house in the backyard when suddenly Stu started chopping wood from a tree that had fallen during Hurricane Sandy.

Eventually it led to the friends throwing the axe at a stump and the group created a game out of it and they realized how much fun it was.

"There had been a business model for it in Canada, but not in the U.S.," Stu Josberger said.

As a result, the first location was opened in 2016 in Eatontown, New Jersey.

"Being the first in the country, we quickly realized we were onto something," Kelly Josberger said.

The sudden interest continued to grow to the point where they decided to franchise the company just one year after opening it.

"It's pretty unheard of to franchise a business after one year, but the demand was there and it was an opportunity we could not pass up," Stu Josberger said. "We sold 30 (locations) and built 28 in four years."

Despite being a franchise, the Josbergers still own two of the 32 locations open across the states, with Jacksonville being one of them.

Choosing to introduce Stumpy's to the Northeast Florida area was an easy choice for the couple, who now call Jacksonville home.

For the Josbergers, it is obvious why the business became an



Stumpy's Hatchet House held a ceremony to open its 32nd location nationally and first in Jacksonville.



Participants that land a bullseye get the honor of ringing the bullseye bell.



Customers participate in an axe-throwing game. The Jacksonville location has seven throwing pits that can hold up to groups of 10.

instant hit, because it is so unique in so many ways.

"Not many people have usually thrown a hatchet or even picked one up," Stu Josberger said.

The hatchets used are 14 inches and the location consists of seven "pits" that have two targets each and can hold up to 10 people.

"They get super excited when they ring the bullseye bell," Stu Josberger said.

Everyone is required to receive training prior to entering the playing whether they have experience or not.

The training not only teaches about proper throwing techniques but also gives tips and rules with safety in mind.

However, it is not just hatchet throwing that customers can take part in, but the location also has shuffleboard and giant ganga.

"We offer rustic games that help people get away from social media," Kelly Josberger said. "They put down their electronic devices for the most part while they're here."

According to Stu Josberger, more than 800,000 people have gone through the 32 locations over the years with no major incidents to report.

Private and corporate team building events can be reserved at the location.

"We encourage people to try it out," Stu Josberger said. "Once they do, we're sure they'll be back for more."

For more information about the business, go to Stumpy's social media outlets @Stumpy's Jax on Facebook, Instagram and Youtube.

**"We encourage  
people to try it  
out. Once they do,  
we're sure they'll  
be back for more."**

- STU JOSBERGER

[ bridal ]

# WEDDING PLANNING TIPS AND TRICKS

It's hard for newly engaged couples who have never before planned a wedding to know what awaits them. But the following tips can help make the wedding planning process go smoothly.

• **Find your organization method.** Whether your organizational style is best served by jotting details down in a notebook or utilizing an online spreadsheet or smartphone app, choose your method early on. Keeping information and reminders in one place can make it easier to manage all the tasks that lie ahead.

• **Take your time.** There's no rush to the altar. Feel free to extend the engagement long enough to keep stress levels down and get the location and ceremony of your dreams.

• **Discuss the budget openly and honestly.** Wedding costs can vary widely, and couples should sit down together to decide what

they can afford and are willing to pay for.

• **Decide on a guest list.** Planning decisions are often based around the projected number of guests. You'll need to have a ballpark figure regarding guests before you can choose a venue and make other decisions, such as where guests will stay.

• **Create a priorities list.** Make a list of at least three things that are most important for each of you. It may be the ceremony location, the food or another factor. Knowing what is important can help you negotiate prices and understand what to look for when planning.

These are some of the considerations couples should make while planning their weddings. While it's important to consider these factors and others, it's also important that couples have fun when planning their nuptials.

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