

THE RECORDER



Not your average newspaper, not your average reader.

August 25, 2022
Volume 53, No. 43
75 cents

Covering Ponte Vedra, St. Augustine, and Greater St. Johns County

PonteVedraRecorder.com



Primary Election results
Page 12



Local Real Estate Spotlight
Page 29



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

FOOTBALL IS BACK!



The football season is upon us from the high school to the professional level. Read our football preview inside to be the most informed fan among your family and friends.
Football preview on pages 13-28.



Photos by Anthony Richards and Kam Nedd

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INSIDE

One of Us

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Send us your news

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



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BRIEFS

COA presents herbology at THE PLAYERS Community Senior Center

COA will offer a four-week course on herbology on Tuesdays in September at COA's THE PLAYERS Community Senior Center in Ponte Vedra Beach.

Led by instructor James Carucci, the course is designed to show participants how herbs can be used to promote health and well-being by looking at specific health concerns and herbal solutions.

Classes will be 3-4 p.m. Sept. 6, 13, 20 and 27. The cost to participate in the four-week session is \$30. Registration is required, and space is limited.

To register and for more information, contact COA's Amanda Jones at 904-209-3659 or via email at ajones@stjohnscoa.com. THE PLAYERS Community Senior Center is located at 175 Landrum Lane in Ponte Vedra Beach.

Coastal Friends to host September event

Coastal Friends, formerly known as Newcomers Alumnae, has announced that its popular monthly luncheon will be held on Sept. 7 at Marsh Landing Country Club, 25655 Marsh Landing Parkway, Ponte Vedra Beach from 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

This month's guest speaker will be Nicole Woodsmall, donations manager at BEAM Thrift in Jacksonville Beach.

This luncheon is open to all members of Coastal Friends, their guests and anyone interested in joining the ladies' social club, which has been in existence since 1998. Marsh Landing's luncheon will consist of caesar salad, chicken parmesan with linguini and tiramisu for dessert.

The cost to attend the luncheon is \$25 and reservations must be made in advance to reserve a seat by contacting the luncheon chairman (bartshar@comcast.net) as soon as possible since the deadline is Friday morning, Sept. 2.

For details on how to join Coastal Friends, contact brookemeister@msn.com or go to coastalfriends.wildapricot.org.

Health screenings coming to Ponte Vedra Beach

Local residents living in and around Ponte Vedra Beach can learn about their risk for cardiovascular disease, osteoporosis, diabetes and other chronic, serious conditions with screenings by Life Line Screening. Ponte Vedra Presbyterian Church will host this community event on Sept. 9. The site is located at 4510 Palm Valley Road in Ponte Vedra Beach.

Screenings can check for:

- The level of plaque buildup in your arteries, related to risk for cardiovascular disease, stroke and overall vascular health.
- HDL and LDL cholesterol levels
- Diabetes risk
- Bone density as a risk for possible osteoporosis



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Briefs

Continued from 2

• Kidney and thyroid function, and more

There is a charge of the screenings. Free parking is available.

For information, call 1-877-237-1354 or go to lifelinescreening.com. Pre-registration is required.

Workshop focus: dizziness, headaches, neck pain

John Goetze Physical Therapy is

planning a free postural workshop for dizziness, headaches and neck pain in September. The workshop will be held from 6 to 7 p.m. Sept. 12 at 1400 Marsh Landing Parkway, Suite 112, Jacksonville Beach. To register, call 904-280-2001.

Junior Achievement of North Florida receives \$800K donation

Junior Achievement of North Florida has received a gift of \$800,000 from philanthropist MacKenzie Scott. It is part of a total of \$38.8 million donated to Junior Achievement USA and JA

operations in 26 communities across the country. This is the largest gift from a single donor in the organization's 103-year history.

"We greatly appreciate the incredible generosity of MacKenzie Scott for this amazing gift to our organization," said Shannon Italia, president of Junior Achievement of North Florida. "We see this investment as a recognition of all the great work taking place in our community because of the passion and commitment of the business leaders, educators, volunteers and other partners who support Junior Achievement

locally. This donation will allow us to make even better use of other community investments to positively impact the lives of the young people we serve."

Junior Achievement of North Florida will use its portion of the gift to scale its impact in the region and accelerate the timeline for launching an integrated program model that provides young people with a pathway to work readiness and financial literacy.

— Compiled by Shaun Ryan



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

Photos provided by Kathy's Creative Gardens & Nursery

KATHY'S GARDENING GUIDE

Bromeliad Paradise

"Plant a seed so your heart will grow." — Hafez

By Kathy Esfahani



Kathy Esfahani

Bromeliads add interest and color into your tropical landscape. These unique plants feature decorative leaves in red, green, purple, orange and yellow. Leaves may have

stripes, spots or bands and often form rosettes that can hold water. Bromeliads can grow up to 3 feet tall, but they are slow growing and may take one to three years to mature.

Although bromeliads only flower once before dying, the flower they produce is stunning and unique. The main plant will also produce "pups" that can be cut off and cultivated into new plants.

There are two types of bromeliads. The majority are called epiphytes, or "air plants," and include the well-known Spanish moss. They grow on trees, rocks, logs and other plants. Air plants cling to other plants for support, but they are not parasites. They get their

own energy through photosynthesis, absorbing nutrients into their leaves. The smaller bromeliad category grows in soil; an example of these terrestrial bromeliads is a pineapple.

As a natural rain forest plant, bromeliads love a hot, moist environment. When selecting a bromeliad for your home, be sure to note the amount of light in the location you are planning. Although some types of bromeliads enjoy full sun — such as dyckia — most prefer partial, filtered sun for best growth. Bromeliads love humidity, but be careful not to overwater! If growing a terrestrial bromeliad, keep the soil consistently moist but not soggy. If your plant's leaves form vase-shaped rosettes, add water to these cups at the base of the leaves. These cups should stay full of water, but you can flush them out by adding and dumping clean water before refilling. Bromeliads can be very low maintenance — just place them under a shady tree and enjoy!

Several popular types of bromeliads in our area include:

- Lila — This tropical beauty loves humidity! It is a great choice to add color and texture to beds and borders. Lila is an air plant that will produce new pups off the main clump.
- Royal burgundy — Hence the name, royal burgundy bromeliads have long, deep red leaves that feature green spots. It is an air plant that can attract butterflies, and the cup often becomes a



Bromeliads

home for insects and frogs.

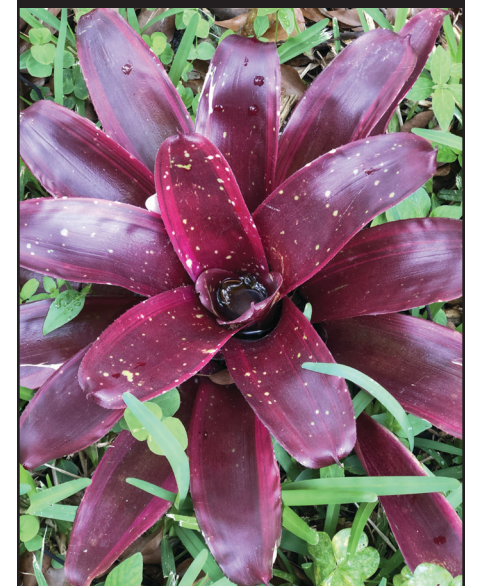
• Tiger — Another air plant, the tiger bromeliad is known for dark bars of color on light green leaves. It requires little maintenance and enjoys a humid climate. Tiger makes a nice ground cover, accent plant or border in a bed that receives at least partial sunlight.

Happy planting!

Flower of the Week: Royal Burgundy

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

Flower of the Week



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Chamber at Noon

St. Johns County Deputy County Administrator Joy Andrews was the speaker for the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce's Chamber at Noon event Aug. 17 at the Sawgrass Marriott Golf Resort & Spa. She spoke about the importance of infrastructure and balance needed in the county. The luncheon was sponsored by Fields Auto Group.

Photos by Susan Griffin



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Kelly Ussia is the St. Johns County Parks and Recreation naturalist. In that role, she leads several diverse and interesting outdoor activities in various parts of the county.

Kelly Ussia

As told to Shaun Ryan

Did you do a lot of things outdoors when you were young?

As much as you can in Rochester, New York, without freezing to death. [Laughs] So, I grew up on the Erie Canal, and we spent a lot of time outside. ... When it was nice, we were outside. When it was not so nice, we still went outside; we just had to put on, like, seven layers of clothes. So, when I turned 18, I only looked at colleges in Florida. I ended up going to Florida Gulf Coast University in Fort Myers.

Tell me about your career path.

I had gotten a job at Marineland. And then I got a part-time job at the beaches over the summertime for sea turtle nesting season. That led me to working with Parks and Rec. They needed somebody to help with kayak trips. Once I got in with Parks and Rec, I was just able to grow that into the full-time position, which is the parks naturalist position.

Tell me about you do on your job.

I love my job. No two days are the same, which is wonderful. I spend a lot of time in our amazing parks and natural areas, taking people kayaking and on beach walks. We have nature photography classes. We do a lot of fishing programs. ... Pretty much, if it's outside and it's recreation that's not on a field or on a court, we're doing it.

What do you like best about what you do?

I'm going to say two things. One, personally, I really love just being outside and sharing my love of the outdoors with people. I have so many useless facts that if I didn't have this job, I would have no real appropriate venue to share them. [Laughs]

I think the second thing that came to fruition after the pandemic was seeing the impact that our programs have. We started working with the VA on veteran-exclusive programming. Not that the general public wasn't appreciative of the programs we're doing, but you can just see and feel the difference we're making with the veterans in the community through the veterans-only program, and they've expressed that. That means the world to me.

Tell me about this arrangement with Veterans Affairs.

We just started it in January. We basically do one fishing and one kayaking program a month.

One of the VA's recreational therapists comes, as well. She refers patients in her system as well as when we open it up to just any general veteran.

So, it's a good joint program for us to be able to reach that specific community while also potentially giving them new skills, being able to connect them with other veterans in the area — and it's a nice informal setting for them to get a feel for what the VA can potentially do to benefit them.

How can veterans get involved in the program?

They can call or email me. My office line is 904-209-0335.

The other option, if they don't want to reach out to me directly is to just go to our Parks and Recreation page on the county website. There's a big banner with a picture. Below that is a paragraph with two different links. The



Photo by Rhonda K. Lovett

St. Johns County Parks and Recreation naturalist Kelly Ussia has always enjoyed being outdoors.

first one will take you to a link of the catalogue of our current program offerings. And that will give you a list of everything that we've got on the books for the next month or two. And the other link will take you to sign up for our newsletter. That goes out once or twice a month and has all of our upcoming programming.

How would the general public learn more about your programs?

Same exact process.

We really run the gamut. We've got summer camps. We do family fishing clinics. We also do some history-themed beach walks that are typically during the day when the kids are in school. We do the same thing with some fishing clinics while the kids are in school.

We do sunset beach walks and some guided trail hikes. We're going to be doing some geocaching programs.

And then, always we encourage folks who have families that want to get involved in service to come out for any of our clean-ups. We have waterway cleanups and beach cleanups. We try to do each of those twice a year.

What do you like about living in this area?

I like being able to go downtown (St. Augustine) and go to a nice restaurant and hang out and listen to music. But I also love the fact that, equidistant driving in the opposite direction, I can be at McCullough Creek Preserve or Nocatee Preserve and kind of get away from everything.

Do you have a message for readers?

I feel like a lot of folks who are moving here just don't even know all the cool things that we have to offer. That's why signing up for that newsletter is so important. Every month, you'll get new updates, and we're always doing different stuff, depending on the season.

What's coming up?

We have a new program, and that's pretty big, that we're launching with two community partners, and we're going to do a pretty big waterway cleanup the Wednesday after Labor Day. It's on our website.

I'm super-excited about it. We're going to try to clean the northern part of the Matanzas River between ourselves, the Matanzas Riverkeeper and Sol Margin Fishing & Conservation Foundation.

Your job is so recreation-oriented, how do you like to spend your free time?

To be honest, I watch a lot of TV. [Laughs] I enjoy spending time with family and just watching a good show.

I do plan really big, epic vacations. My husband and I have a mission to see every national park. We've seen five so far this year.

We do plan really cool outdoor adventures. I just don't get out as much as people probably think I do, outside of the job, just because I'm doing that all day.



Contributed photo

WheelHouse Luxury Storage will open its second location in Nocatee in 2023.

WheelHouse opening second location at Nocatee

WheelHouse has announced the anticipated opening of its second location in the Nocatee Town Center in late 2023. It will be located near Baptist HealthPlace and YMCA, west of the West End at Town Center neighborhood.

Construction on the new community of luxury garage condos is expected to begin late this year.

WheelHouse is an automobile storage community that provides a place to store and enjoy vehicles. Safe, secure and fully customizable units are the solution to crowded home garages and serve as a backdrop for connecting with other enthusiasts and owners.

“We could not be more excited to grow the WheelHouse community with another

location in Nocatee,” said David Wallace, WheelHouse Partner. “We remain dedicated to bringing first-class facilities that provide the perfect environment to fuel the automotive passions of our unit owners.”

The first WheelHouse location opened in early 2018 on Palm Valley Road, north of the Nocatee Parkway.

WheelHouse provides owners the assurance that their valuables are safe and secure. The community’s perimeter is fully enclosed with two owner’s access gates, a 24/7 security surveillance system and a fire-protection system in each unit.

To learn more about purchasing WheelHouse Luxury Storage, go to nocatee.com/contact-wheelhouse.

Animals featured at Nocatee Farmers Market

Gatorland visitors were the featured attraction Saturday, Aug. 20, for Wildlife Encounters at the Nocatee Farmers Market. The event at Nocatee Station Field was a success with young children fascinated by the visiting reptiles. In addition to interactive animal shows, the Farmers Market hosted more than 60 local vendors and the bloodmobile.

Photo by Susan Griffin



Grand Opening at the Beach!

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PLAYERS invites nonprofits to apply for grants

THE PLAYERS Championship is inviting local nonprofits to submit applications to its grant program, which is open to nonprofit organizations in Baker, Clay, Duval, Nassau and St. Johns counties. Applications are being accepted through Jan. 15. Interested organizations must meet the eligibility requirements and other criteria outlined at theplayers.com/charity/info/red-coat-grants.html.

Most notably, applicants must provide services aligned with THE PLAYERS key charitable pillars: youth services, education, character development, health, wellness and sports and military support.

“We are so pleased to open up our grant program and continue to build on our mission of serving the Northeast Florida community we call home,” said Jared Rice, executive director of THE PLAYERS. “THE PLAYERS

grant program allows us to understand the biggest needs facing citizens in the five-county region and determine how we can best deploy our resources to support those needs. Thanks to ongoing support from our Proud Partners, more than 2,000 volunteers and our loyal fans and community sponsors, we are in a great position to be able to provide significant funds back to the charities in this community who are positively impacting lives every day.”

THE PLAYERS 2023 will be held March 7-12. More information about THE PLAYERS’ charitable efforts can be found at THEPLAYERS.com/charity.

Fast facts about THE PLAYERS’ grant program:

Application deadline: 11:59 p.m. Jan. 15

Link to apply: theplayers.com/charity.html

Eligibility and criteria: For complete guidelines, go to theplayers.com/charity/info/red-coat-grants.html

- Hold a current tax-exempt status under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code;
- Government entities (law enforcement or fire departments) with a funding request to serve the public
- Educational institutions (K-12 public, private, charter schools, and colleges and universities)
- Operate and serve citizens in the five-county area of Baker, Clay, Duval, Nassau, and St. Johns counties
- Provide services aligned with THE PLAYERS’ priority focus areas
- Have been in operation with sound fiscal management practices and operations for a minimum of five years

Restaurant helps Humane Society achieve its mission

In September, Columbia Restaurant patrons can help the St. Augustine Humane Society.

Simply dine at the restaurant during the month of September, choose the St. Augustine Humane Society from the list on the ballot provided and enjoy your meal. The Gonzmart family, founder of the Columbia Restaurant, will donate a portion of the check to the St. Augustine Humane Society.

Since the program’s inception, the Columbia Community Harvest has given more than \$3 million to charities

in cities throughout Florida.

The St. Augustine Humane Society promotes healthy, lifelong pet ownership by serving the medical and rehabilitative needs of companion animals in the community.

“Our programs are designed to strengthen human-pet relationships by reducing the need for pets to enter shelters,” said Executive Director Carolyn Smith. “Through generous support from the Columbia and our community, we can continue to work diligently to encourage the humane treatment of animals, avoid overpopulation and prevent animal suffering.”

For more information, go to staughumane.org.



Contributed photos
Vet techs Hannah Beregsasy and Beth Pope take care of a dog.



Milkman the cat heals up from an injured leg.

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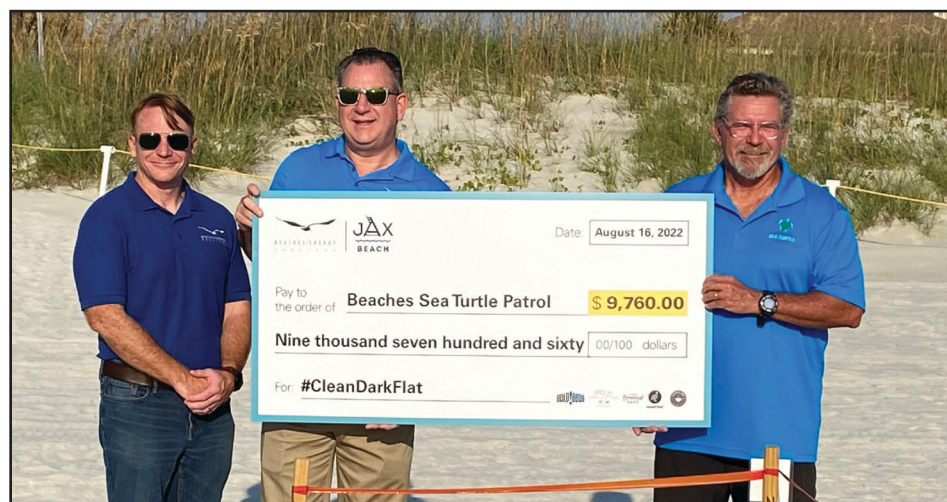
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\$9.7K raised to help protect sea turtles

Beaches Energy Services, Jacksonville Beach and the Beaches Sea Turtle Patrol have teamed up to protect the sea turtles along local beaches with the #CleanDarkFlat public awareness campaign. As a result of a committed partnership, a dedicated community and a shared compassion for this threatened species, a record-breaking \$9,760 was raised and donated to the Beaches Sea Turtle Patrol. The campaign was created by Beaches Energy to help educate residents and visitors about the impact people can have on protecting the sea turtles.

Contributed photo



Tickets on sale now for Whiskey, Wine & Wildlife

The popular culinary destination weekend festival, Whiskey, Wine & Wildlife – W3, which has taken place on Jekyll Island, Georgia, since 2016 is now moving to Vilano Beach. It will be held Nov. 4-6.

A limited release of early bird discount tickets is now available for sale for the festival's signature events.

"We are so excited about relocating this already successfully established event to Vilano Beach, as there are so many opportunities now available for new growth potential, including a more diversified culinary experience," said Jan Gourley, festival founder/director. "Whiskey, Wine & Wildlife will also be returning to its original all-inclusive tasting tickets for all its events, which includes unlimited tasting bites and unlimited wines, beers and spirits with souvenir glasses. Nearly 65% of the previous Georgia festival's attending guests visited from Florida, which will make the Vilano Beach location very popular for Floridians and visitors throughout the Southeast."

Early bird discount tickets available

Early bird discount tickets available at 904tix.com/events/whiskey-wine-and-wildlife-11-3-2022.

The schedule of events for Whiskey, Wine & Wildlife, presented by Publix + GreenWise Market follows, additional events and details will be available on the festival website in the coming weeks. A limited release of event tickets is now available at early bird discount pricing on the festival website at whiskeywineandwildlife.com.

W3 Master Classes, presented by Publix + GreenWise Market

Four classes: 10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Nov. 4. Class schedule and location to be announced soon.

\$50 per person, per class, Early Bird discount pricing. Or \$175 master class pass for all four classes. (General admission: \$60 per person/\$199 master class pass)

These interactive and intimate learning experiences showcase local and celebrity guest chefs, cookbook authors and beverage experts. Each class includes tasting bites with a paired wine, beer or signature cocktail. Limited tickets available to only 60 people per class.

Class 1: 10-11 a.m.; Class 2: 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.; Class 3: 1-2 p.m.; Class 4: 2:30-3:30 p.m.

Guided Tours through the GTM Research Reserve/Wine & Cheese Paired Reception

Guana Tolomato Matanzas Research Reserve, 505 Guana River Road, No. 6527, Ponte Vedra Beach.

\$39 per person, early bird discount pricing; (general admission: \$45 for person); limited tickets available

When: 3-4:30 p.m. Nov. 4, 10:30 a.m. to noon Nov. 5, 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Nov. 6.

Explore the great coastal outdoors and the natural beauty of the GTM Research Reserve with a private guided tour. The tour concludes with tasting some notable wines, paired with specialty cheeses from Publix + GreenWise Market.

Friday, Nov. 4

Whiskey Inspired on the Pier, 6:30-8:30 p.m., Vilano Beach Pier, 260 Vilano Road.

\$69 per person, early bird discount pricing; (general admission pricing: \$79 per person)

Enjoy a variety of whiskeys, wines and beers, along with a showcase of the festival's official beverage partners. Guests will taste whiskey-inspired classic cocktails and more with a souvenir glass along with a variety of appetizer stations, and "Pig Pickin' on the Pier" with whole hog barbecue and music.

Those who enjoy spectacular sunsets won't want to miss this event from one of the best vantage points.

Saturday, Nov. 5

W3 Main Event – Whiskey, Wine & Wildlife, 2-5 p.m., block party in Vilano Beach. (Location to be announced soon)

\$99 per person, early bird discount pricing; (general admission pricing: \$119 per person)

The main event combines all three of the W's and much more for the perfect Vilano Beach afternoon. Taste culinary delights from up and down the A1A corridor. Guests will enjoy hundreds of unlimited varieties of beverage tastings (spirits, wines and beers) with a souvenir glass at this private Vilano Beach block party. It's a full afternoon of live music from Laiken Love & The Fellowship of Love, celebrity guest chefs on the Publix Cooking Demonstration Stage, artisan market and the GTM Reserve Stage with wildlife demonstrations and more. Tickets are all-inclusive with food and drink tastings included, from some of Northeast Florida's best restaurants and world-renowned spirits, wines and beers.

Publix + GreenWise Market Cooking Demo Stage at W3 Main Event

2:15-2:45 p.m.: Aprons Cooking School, Jacksonville

3-3:30 p.m.: Kenny Gilbert, Silkie's Chicken and Champagne Bar, Jacksonville

3:45-4:15 p.m.: Rebecca Reed, Restaurant Orsay, Jacksonville

4:30-5 p.m.: Michael Lugo, Michael's St. Augustine & Pesca by Michael's, Vilano Beach

EDITOR'S NOTE: Read an expanded version of this story at pontevedrarecorder.com




Contributed photos

Attendees queue up for whiskey-inspired Pig Pickin' on the Pier.



Chef Kenny Gilbert at work on some tasty offerings.



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SCHOOLS ARE BACK IN SESSION

A new school year has begun, which means the halls of schools that had been quiet in recent months are now bustling again. Below are some photos from this year's first week of school. The Ponte Vedra Recorder wishes all students and faculty have a memorable 2022-2023 school year!

Contributed photos



Bella



Zach, Stephen, Nick and Alex



Pine Island Academy PTO decorated the hallway.



Contributed photos

The Bolles School Lower School Ponte Vedra Beach campus started the new school year Aug. 11.



Cade



Audrey



Patrick, Sam and Hunter



Nate and Buzz

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PVPV-Rawlings Elementary School welcomed back students with some creative artwork.

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Winn-Dixie donation helps HUGS St. Johns provide food

To kick off the new school year, local all-volunteer non-profit HUGS St. Johns restocked emergency food pantries at more than 13 St. Johns County schools and afterschool programs, thanks to a donation from the Winn-Dixie Gives Foundation.

The HUGS pantries serve hundreds of food-insecure children every month by providing kid-friendly, grab-and-go items that students can discreetly bring home as needed.

“It gives me great relief to no longer worry about whether families have food to eat when our doors are closed, and I look forward to our continued partnership with HUGS,” said Rona Welch, unit director, THE PLAYERS Championship Boys & Girls Club, a HUGS Pantry Partner for three years.

“We tailor the program to each school’s needs by providing afterschool snacks and meals, weekend meals or

late-arrival breakfasts,” said Holly Ross, HUGS volunteer food program coordinator. “We are so thankful for the incredible support from Winn-Dixie and in-kind donations from families, and also feel so fortunate to have a dedicated, high-energy volunteer team that delivers to schools each month.”

With the addition of more school locations and the rise in food costs, the Winn-Dixie donation is impactful.

“As inflationary pressures continue to impact our communities, we want to do our part to aid organizations like HUGS that support families as they plan for the school year ahead,” said Shawn Sloan, North Florida region vice president for Winn-Dixie. “We are grateful for this opportunity to serve our neighbors inside and outside of our stores to help restock pantry shelves and cultivate positive learning environments as students head back to class.”

St. Johns County has more than 400 children considered homeless each year, and thousands more who are affected by poverty, domestic violence or parent incarceration.

“The help our Title I school receives from HUGS is invaluable to our students,” said Julie Conoscenti from Gaines Transition School in St. Augustine. “By stocking our pantry with nutritious food that is easy to prepare, we are able to send food home with students each Friday who might otherwise have nothing substantial to eat until Monday morning. We are also able to add food to their backpacks midweek for our most food-insecure students.”

For information about donating to or volunteering with HUGS food programs or clothing programs benefiting St. Johns County children, go to stjohnshugs.org or call 904-580-4847.

Real estate company, branches donate hundreds of backpacks

Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Network Realty and its branch offices donated hundreds of backpacks filled with school supplies this year to Northeast Florida children during its 23rd Annual Backpack Challenge.

The backpacks filled with school supplies were donated to Northeast Florida schools and family/youth-centered organizations including Dreams Come True of Jacksonville, Doctors Inlet Elementary School in Clay County, Grace United

Methodist Church in Lawtey, Hugs Across the County St. Johns, Mayport Elementary School in Duval County, Operation New Hope, John A. Crookshank Elementary School, R. B. Hunt Elementary School, Osceola Elementary School and South Woods Elementary School in St. Johns County and Trinity Foundation of Florida.

During the campaign, monetary donations as well as new backpacks and school supplies for local students

in kindergarten through grade 12 were collected at Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Network Realty offices throughout Northeast Florida. The company used the donations to purchase additional backpacks and school supplies and also encouraged donors to purchase backpacks and school supplies online via Amazon wish lists and ship directly to the charities.

“Words cannot express how much we appreciate the numerous donations

and generous funding we received from our Realtors, employees, clients and the community during The Backpack Challenge,” said Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Network Realty Founder and Chairperson Linda Sherrer. “It is so important for students to have the tools they need for success, and we truly appreciate the support to help make a difference in the lives of children and families in our communities.”

Tickets on sale now! Call 904.202.2886 or visit thefloridaforum.com

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Voters make local, statewide choices in primary election

By Shaun Ryan

Democrat Charlie Crist will face Republican Ron DeSantis on Nov. 8 in the race for Florida governor following Crist's victory in Tuesday's primary election.

With 99% of the votes counted, Crist had 59.7% of the votes. Nikki Fried was in second place with 35.3% of the votes.

In the race for U.S. senator, Republican Marco Rubio will face Democrat Val Demings in the general election.

With 99% of the votes counted, Demings had 84.2% of the votes.

U.S. Rep. John H. Rutherford (District 5) was re-elected. With more than 98% of the votes counted, he received more than 65%. His opponents were Mara Macie and Leigha Lopez.

Aramis Ayala prevailed in the Democrat race for attorney general with 44.9% of the vote. She is running against Daniel Uhlfelder and Jim Lewis. She will face Republican incumbent Ashley Moody on

Nov. 8.

In the race for state commissioner of agriculture, Wilton Simpson won the Republican nomination and Naomi Blemur got the Democrat vote. They will face off in the Nov. 8 general election.

Closer to home, state Sen. Travis Hutson was re-elected, beating challenger Gerry James in a close race. Hutson and James were neck and neck in St. Johns County, but voters in Flagler and Volusia counties selected Hutson by a wide margin.

In the race for county judge group 2, Casey L. Woolsey won with 55.82% of the vote, defeating challenger Alyssa Camper Shorstein.

In the St. Johns County commissioner race for District 2, Sarah Arnold won with 50.91% of the vote. Her opponents were Nelson Cline, Johnny Coe Counts, Chuck Labanowski and LaShawnda L. Pinkney. Labanowski came in a distant second with 24.46%.

The District 4 county commission



A supporter of County Commissioner Jeremiah Blocker sits in the shade beneath a canopy Tuesday.



Photos by Susan Griffin

St. Johns County School Board member Kelly Barrera speaks to supporters Tuesday night after winning the primary election.

race was a nail-biter with only 188 votes separating challenger Krista Keating-Joseph and incumbent Jeremiah Blocker. Keating-Joseph received 50.25% of the vote to Blocker's 49.75%. That margin is just small enough to activate a recount as mandated by law.

In the District 1 School Board contest, 37.55% of the votes went to Beverly Slough and 32.51% went to Racheal M. Hand. There will be a runoff between the two Nov. 8 during the general election. The third candidate, Nancy Tray, received 29.94% of the vote.

In the race for the District 3 School Board seat, Lauren Abell won, receiving 41.71% of the vote, defeating Rita Baldwin, Jennifer Collins and Douglas

Anthony Russo.

In the School Board District 4 race, incumbent Kelly Barrera was the clear winner over challenger Yvonne Lockbaum. Barrera received 69.31% of the vote.

According to the St. Johns County Supervisor of Elections Office, 28.34% of the 219,381 eligible county voters cast a vote in Tuesday's election. A total 62,162 ballots were counted, though 366 of the mail-in votes out of a total 17,862 were still uncounted at press time.

A total 14,975 ballots were cast in early voting. On Tuesday, 29,375 votes were cast.



Two voters hold up signs Tuesday to promote the candidates of their choice.



The primary election Tuesday brought out voters to show support for their candidates.



Supporters of Democrat candidates stay cool under a canopy outside one polling location.

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Ponte Vedra looks to establish groove offensively

By Anthony Richards

Consistency is the name of the game for the Ponte Vedra offense this season.

The Sharks proved last year that they have dynamic players on that side of the ball, by making big plays and moving the ball at certain points, however the goal in 2022 is to make that the norm.

A large part of that will be staying healthy, especially at the quarterback position, where Nate Bunkosky was thrust into duty last season and did an effective job leading the team down the stretch.

However, heading into this year Ben Burk has established himself as the starting quarterback after an excellent spring.

“He’s good all around, he can run it really well and throw it really well and he’s got the respect of the team,” Ponte Vedra head coach Steve Price said.

Not helping the matter was that a new coaching staff came in last year and it took some time for relationships to build and for an offensive identity to develop.

“It takes a long time, because there’s just so many details in football,” Price said.

Helping Burk out is a talented group of wide receivers that will be led by seniors Wyatt Rogers, Andrew Cotto and Bunkosky, who will be playing on defense at safety as well.

“We’re probably one of the more veteran units on the team,” Rogers said.

Adding depth to the receiving corps will be sophomore tight end Landon Okla, who has impressed and looks to have an increased role as an underclassman.

If Okla can continue to develop and come into his own, his mixture of size and speed will present a matchup problem that opposing defenses will have to account for.

Another factor that the Sharks had to deal with last year was the amount of youth they had on the offensive side of the ball.

But through spring and fall practice, that youth seem to have grown up and the playing time they gained a year ago seems to be paying dividends.

“We’re feeling fast and efficient out there for sure,” Rogers said. “We’re bringing a lot of returning players and experience to our offense this year, and it feels good.”

He made some highlight reel catches last season and showed that he has reliable pair of hands, but he understands that there is more to master to be an overall receiver.

“Blocking has been a big thing for me, because you always want to be more physical as a receiver, and I feel like it gets overlooked,” Rogers said.

Improving his blocking could mean good things for the Sharks’ rushing attack, especially when it comes to breaking long runs that get into the secondary.

Rogers has felt different with it being



Junior offensive tackle Jake Guarnera is one of the key cogs on a veteran line.

Photos by Anthony Richards



Ben Burk returns as quarterback for the Sharks after missing much of last season with an injury.

his senior season, not only in the way the younger guys look at him, but also about how he feels about his overall game.

“It’s a confidence booster for sure, but at the same time it puts a welcome stress on you, because you’ve been waiting for this moment to come,” Rogers said.

The Sharks offensive line will be saddled with making sure Burk has a clean pocket to operate in, and junior offensive tackle Jake Guarnera is one of the key cogs on the line.

“I think we’re going to turn some heads this year,” Guarnera said.

During the offseason he has worked a lot on his run blocking to complement his pass protection skills.

“I’ve worked on more of my run blocking, because I feel like I’m pretty solid when it comes to pass pro,” Guarnera said.

He went to several camps and college visits during the summer as his recruiting process has really heated up since the end of last season. He gained eight offers alone during the months of June and July.

“This year, I did like 11 camps, which is a lot, but it was worth it, and it was a

great experience,” Guarnera said. “It’s pretty crazy to think that I’m going to have the chance to play high level college football.”

The offensive line will have five upperclassmen starting, signifying the veteran presence the group will bring to the table this year.

“At the end of the day, we just want to show people that this isn’t the same Ponte Vedra that they thought we were,” Bunkosky said. “We’re ready to make a statement from game one.”

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2022 REGULAR SEASON SCHEDULE

DATE	TIME	OPPONENT/LOCATION
Sep. 11	1:00 pm	@ Washington Commanders
Sep. 18	1:00 pm	Indianapolis Colts
Sep. 25	4:05 pm	@ Los Angeles Chargers
Oct. 2	1:00 pm	@ Philadelphia Eagles
Oct. 9	1:00 pm	Houston Texans
Oct. 16	1:00 pm	@ Indianapolis Colts
Oct. 23	1:00 pm	New York Giants
Oct. 30	9:30 am	Denver Broncos
Nov. 6	1:00 pm	Las Vegas Raiders
Nov. 13	1:00 pm	@ Kansas City Chiefs
Nov. 27	1:00 pm	Baltimore Ravens
Dec. 4	1:00 pm	@ Detroit Lions
Dec. 11	1:00 pm	@ Tennessee Titans
Dec. 18	1:00 pm	Dallas Cowboys
Dec. 22	8:15 pm	@ New York Jets
Jan 1.	1:00 pm	@ Houston Texans
Jan. 8	TBA	Tennessee Titans

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Trooper Price and Nate Bunkosky will be important pieces on the defensive side of the ball in 2022.



Photos by Anthony Richards

Senior Trooper Price (No. 18) returns as the captain of the Sharks' defense.

Sharks defense ready to take a bite out of opponents

By Anthony Richards

Ponte Vedra High's defense looks to leave its mark on its opponents this season, as it builds on the success it had a year ago.

"We still have a lot of the same corps guys that we had last year," senior middle linebacker Trooper Price said. "We stop teams by playing sound football that's

hard and fast."

The Sharks have playmakers at every level of the defense, which should create fits for opposing offenses and an abundance of competition at practice.

"It makes practices really fun, because you can't take a play off because there's a guy behind you that can do almost exactly the same thing," Price said.

Many defenses are better in one aspect than others, so teams can design game-plans to take advantage of that, whether it be through the air or on the ground.

However, this year's version of the Sharks appears poised to present an overall challenge for offenses.

"When we are able to shut them down and get the ball back to our offense, that

is such an electrifying feeling and that's why we do what we do," senior edge Kingston Kamal said.

Along the defensive front, the Sharks look to be relentless at getting after the passer and collapsing the pocket.

"The vibe is great and our front seven is strong," Kamal said. "We come with

SHARKS DEFENSE continues on **Page 25**

Go Sharks!

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2022 REGULAR SEASON SCHEDULE

DATE	TIME	OPPONENT/LOCATION
Aug. 26	7:00 pm	@ Bartram Trail Bears
Sep. 2	7:00 pm	Florida State University High School
Sep. 16	7:00 pm	@ Middleburg Broncos
Sep. 23	7:00 pm	Pedro Menendez
Sep. 30	7:00 pm	Flagler-Palm Coast Bulldogs
Oct. 7	7:00 pm	@ Bishop Kenny Crusaders
Oct. 14	7:00 pm	@ Trinity Catholic - Ocala
Oct. 21	7:00 pm	Orange Park Raiders
Oct. 28	7:00 pm	@ Nease Panthers
Nov. 4	7:00 pm	Creekside Knights

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Photo by Anthony Richards

Senior quarterback and University of Florida commit Marcus Stokes is the orchestrator of the Nease offense.

Nease offense looks to continue to soar

By Anthony Richards

The magic has returned around Nease Panthers football program following last year's deep postseason run to the Class 7A regional championship.

This year's squad now looks to keep the momentum going and keep the bar of expectations raised high.

On the offensive side of the ball the Panthers are led by a returning cast that includes University of Florida commit Marcus Stokes at quarterback, Samuel Milton at running back and wide receiver Da'von Patterson.

Stokes and the offense both came into its own last year, and he returns as the operator of the high-flying passing attack.

He has the necessary tools to run head coach Collin Drafts' offensive scheme, which features a lot of high tempo mixed with multiple receiver sets designed to spread out and pressure defenses.

"I love to go fast and have a high tempo during the game because it really throws off the defenses," Stokes said.

However, losing 36 seniors from last year's team is something Stokes understands may take some time to adjust to, and that includes the group's comfortability when tempo is pushed.

"Our team is still really young, and we've brought some kids up, and it's just not as fast of a game at junior varsity,"

Stokes said. "I think after week one, we'll all be ready to go."

Drafts, who played quarterback himself, approaches each game with an attacking mindset, which is something Stokes believes suits him as well and one of the main reasons why the two seem to always be on the same wavelength when it comes to play calling and the nature of the position.

"When it comes to getting excited and energetic, I think Coach Drafts and I kind of have of the same personality, which is cool to have," Stokes said. "Our relationship is really good, and it's built up these past few years, to the point where I know what he's thinking, and he knows what I'm thinking."

Three of Stokes' go-to wide receivers last season graduated, which has opened the door for Patterson and company to step into even more prominent roles in the offense this season.

Patterson's quickness is what makes him such a weapon, especially when it comes to stretching the field or making people miss in open space to create opportunities for big plays and extra yards.

Landon Patterson, Brendan Monty and Gavin Gmeiner are also senior receivers looking to increase their production with

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NEASE PANTHERS

2022 REGULAR SEASON SCHEDULE

DATE	TIME	OPPONENT/LOCATION
Aug. 26	7:00 pm	Andrew Jackson Tigers
Sep. 2	7:00 pm	@ Creekside Knights
Sep. 9	7:00 pm	Fleming Island Eagles
Sep. 16	7:00 pm	Fletcher Senators
Sep. 23	7:00 pm	@ Orange Park Raiders
Sep. 30	7:00 pm	Sandalwood Saints
Oct. 7	7:00 pm	@ St. Augustine Yellow Jackets
Oct. 14	7:00 pm	@ Flagler-Palm Coast Bulldogs
Oct. 28	7:00 pm	Ponte Vedra Sharks
Nov. 4	7:00 pm	Tocoi Creek Toros

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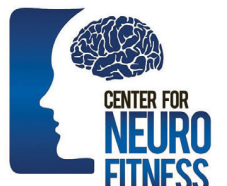
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New faces, same attitude for Panthers defense

By Anthony Richards

This year's version of the Nease Panthers defense will look differently, but the pieces still appear in place for another potential stellar season.

The Panthers are experience the departure of so many from a veteran group a year ago that captured the heart of the Nease faithful with their tenacious and attacking style.

However, one of the seniors returning this year is Sterling Grimes, who is doing his part to help the team by switching positions from weak safety to strong safety.

"There's been a lot of competition in practice, and it feels like no one side of the ball is more dominant than the other one," Grimes said.

One of the things he has worked on the most during the offseason in preparation for the switch was building up his strength to handle the more physical demand of the strong side.

"When you're playing on the weak side you're covering more shallow passes, but on the strong side, you've got to be ready to go everywhere," Grimes said.

According to Grimes, defense has always been the side of the ball that seemed to suit him, even from an early age.

After playing both running back and safety his freshman year, he has been fully focused on defense ever since.

The Panthers also have a new defensive coordinator, which according to Grimes has put even more responsibility on the seniors to make sure everyone is aware of where they need to be lined up before each snap.

"The assignments are getting better every day and people are understanding where they need to be," senior Joey Garrett said. "The young guys have some big shoes to fill, but they're up to it."

Grimes is not the only player having gone through a change in positions, as Garrett has made the move from edge rusher to middle linebacker.

As middle linebacker, Garrett knows a lot of the play calls on defense will run through him, but it is a challenge he has embraced with open arms.

Garrett had knee surgery last year, so he is looking forward to making his senior year a special one.

"Being out there with them, it kind of feels like being out there with last year's team, because you've got a lot of the same personalities," Grimes said. "You've got a Ben Bogle character in Joe Miracle and then you have a Zach Harmon character in Joey (Garrett), and you have a Creed (McClafferty) in Canon, who is actually his little brother. It's crazy how it's different but it really hasn't changed."

With that, comes the mindset of maintaining the foundation last year's defense set and make it the standard for the Panthers on that side of the ball.

"The goal is always to win," Garrett



Photos by Anthony Richards

The Panthers defense strives to be fast and attacking.



Nease's defense has the potential to be strong against the pass and the run.

said. "There's no point in going out there, if you're going to lose."

Senior lineman Nick Severt is expected to have a busy year, because not only is he a mainstay on the offensive line, but he has also been working with the defense throughout fall practice and is expected to contribute as a two-way player at times.

According to Severt, having played along the defensive line primarily as a freshman and sophomore before transitioning to offense has allowed the role of

a two-way player to be a smooth transition.

"Because I know both sides of the ball, it hasn't given me too much of a challenge mentally," Severt said.

Even though they've been around the program, there is a definite difference felt among the team for the players that have the title of "senior" next to their name.

"You definitely feel a lot more responsible for everybody on the team," Garrett said.

The energy head coach Collin Drafts

has echoes throughout the program and regardless of the side of the ball, even though he calls the plays on offense.

That is something Grimes has come to respect about Drafts, and he believes it is one of the main reasons why the Panthers are such a close-knit group.

"He coaches us hard and that's what I love about him," Grimes said. "And he also coaches everybody the exact same way. If you're wrong, you're going to know it, and that makes us so much better."



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2022 REGULAR SEASON SCHEDULE

DATE	TIME	OPPONENT/LOCATION
Aug. 26	6:30 pm	Mandarin
Sep. 2	6:30 pm	Chiles
Sep. 9	6:30 pm	Andrew Jackson
Sep. 16	7:00 pm	@ Nease High School
Sep. 23	6:00 pm	@ Sandalwood High School
Sep. 30	6:00 pm	Parker
Oct. 7	6:30 pm	@ ED White High School
Oct. 14	6:00 pm	@ Englewood High School
Oct. 27	6:00 pm	First Coast
Nov. 4	6:30 pm	@ Atlantic Coast High School

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Stokes soaks up recruiting process

Nease quarterback fulfills dream, commits to Gators

By Anthony Richards

It has been a whirlwind summer for Nease senior quarterback Marcus Stokes, who has been busy going on recruiting visits and various prospect camps across the nation.

Although it was a hectic schedule at times, Stokes continued to not lose sight of what a neat experience it was and how important it was to soak it all up.

He capped the offseason by committing to the University of Florida, and now that he has that decision out of the way he has turned his full attention to finishing off his senior campaign at Nease on a high note.

Prior to committing to Florida, he had been a Penn State commit, but when the Gators came calling, he knew it was too good of an opportunity to pass up.

“Even before I committed to Penn State, I told myself and my parents that if Florida were to come my way, I would take with no regrets,” Stokes said. “Florida has been my dream school ever since I was a little kid, even though back then I only wanted to go there because the colors were cool.”

Fast forward years later and that childhood dream has now become a reality.

“As I’ve gotten older, I wanted to go there because I just like the school and the atmosphere around the football program,” Stokes said. “I was given my opportunity and I took it.”

However, he is still involved in the recruiting process, but he has now shifted his focus to helping his teammates find the right fits for them to play at the next level.

“Now when it comes to recruiting, it’s all about my teammates and trying to get them out there,” Stokes said. “We have some athletes and some really talented

guys on our team, that I think deserve a shot to play college football. I want to see them make the plays this season so that they can be where I’m at right now.”

That mindset demonstrates who Stokes is as a person and is a prime example of why he is a respected leader on the Panthers’ squad.

The recruiting process is nothing new to Stokes, who first received interest from Cincinnati and Wake Forest as an underclassman in high school.

However, the last couple of years the interest on the recruiting trail seemed to pick up drastically.

“Where it all started kicking up was after I came back from San Antonio and the National Combine,” Stokes said.

The National Combine is modeled at the NFL Scouting Combine and he was invited as one of the top 600 high school underclassmen in the nation at the time.

“It was a really cool experience, and pretty crazy just to be out there,” Stokes said. “From there it’s all moved just really fast and really aggressive.”

Stokes has been to several national camps since, and he always enjoys the competition and conversations that go on amongst the players taking part.

“It’s bad cool man, and I love it,” Stokes said. “They are all just so outgoing people, and we all have the same goals of playing college football and one day getting to the NFL. I’ve been able to make a lot of great friends throughout this recruiting process, and I’ve learned a lot from them.”

He took part in the finals of the 2022 Elite 11, which is a premier national camp featuring some of the top quarterback prospects in country. His commitment to the Gators came after returning from the camp.

Stokes understands that even he has progressed as a quarterback over the years, there are always things to work on and this offseason was no different.

“I’ve been trying to work on staying calm in the pocket, and I think I’ve been

STOKES continues on Page 24



Photos by Anthony Richards

Nease senior quarterback Marcus Stokes is a University of Florida commit.



Marcus Stokes has represented Nease High during a busy summer involving recruiting trips and national camps.

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DATE	TIME	OPPONENT/LOCATION
Sep. 3	7:00 pm	Utah
Sep. 10	7:00 pm	Kentucky
Sep. 17	7:30 pm	Souh Florida
Sep. 24	TBA	@ Tennessee
Oct. 1	12:00 pm	Eastern Washington
Oct. 8	TBA	Missouri
Oct. 15	TBA	LSU
Oct. 29	3:30 pm	Georgia (Jacksonville, FL)
Nov. 5	TBA	@ Texas A&M
Nov. 12	TBA	South Carolina
Nov. 19	TBA	@ Vanderbilt
Nov. 25	7:30 pm	@ Florida State

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TRY THESE TAILGATING TREATS

By Chef Cassandra Cotoia

Tailgating is always better with great food. Here are a few recipes that will score well with your team.

Beef Enchiladas

Yield: 6-8 portions

10-12 corn tortillas
3 cups shredded cheddar cheese
1 cup red salsa

1-pound grass-fed ground beef
1 onion diced
1 jalapeno chopped
3 cloves garlic chopped
3 ea. Plum tomatoes chopped
1T. ground cumin
1T. ground coriander
1 tsp. Mexican oregano
1T. paprika
Salt and pepper, to taste
2T. olive oil

Begin by placing a medium saucepan on high heat. Add the olive oil and ground beef. Sauté for 5-6 minutes. Add the onion, jalapeno, garlic, tomatoes and spices. Place the lid on top of the pot and reduce heat to medium. Cook for 15-20 minutes more. Season to taste. Enjoy!

To Make Enchiladas:

Preheat the oven to 400°F. Warm the corn tortillas for 1-2 minutes in a microwave oven to soften. Place 2-3T of the meat mixture on each tortilla, top with 1T. cheddar cheese. Roll all of the corn tortillas into enchilada shape and place in a lightly oiled casserole dish, approximately 9-by-12 inches. Top with 1 cup of red salsa and remaining cheese. Bake for 20-25 minutes, until the cheese is melted, and the enchiladas are heated all of the way through. Enjoy!

Guacamole

Yield: 4 portions

2 large or 3 medium avocados, pit and skin removed
1 small onion, diced
1 jalapeno chopped
3T. cilantro, chopped
½ lime, juice only
Salt and pepper to taste

In a small bowl add onions, jalapenos, cilantro and lime juice. Add a generous pinch of salt. Using a mashing tool, mash together the vegetables with the salt for several minutes, allowing the juices to release. Add the avocado and gently mash with the vegetables. Taste and adjust seasoning if necessary. Enjoy!



Cassandra's Hot Wings

Yield: 2 dozen

Hot Wings

2 dozen chicken wings
2-3T. Cajun spice
2-3T. tapioca flour
Salt and pepper
Olive oil
Franks Hot Sauce
2T. grass fed butter

Preheat the oven to 375°F. In a large bowl toss chicken wings with Cajun spice. Add the tapioca flour and toss the wings several times to coat evenly. Season them lightly with salt and pepper. Heat a large pan on medium high heat. When the oil is hot add the wings in small batches, allowing them to brown evenly on all sides, about 5-6 minutes. Place the wings on a baking rack on a large baking sheet. Once all of the wings have browned, place them into the pre-

heated oven and bake for another 10-15 minutes until they are cooked through. Place the cooked wings into a large bowl and add enough hot sauce to coat along with the butter. Toss several times to coat on all sides. Enjoy!

Blue Cheese Dressing

1 cup olive oil mayo
½ cup sour cream
½ cup crumbled blue cheese
1 tsp. onion powder
1 tsp. garlic powder
Dash of Worcestershire
2T. chopped parsley
Salt and pepper

Combine all ingredients together in a small bowl and season to taste. Enjoy!

From Chef Cassandra Cotoia of Empowered Foodie
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Stokes

Continued from 22

doing much better at that,” Stokes said. “I’m also trying to see the whole field, which has gotten so much easier once you can read defenses and you know where your receivers going to be.”

According to Stokes, he likes to play with a certain amount of swagger in his game, which he believes comes from his confidence not only in his ability, but the ability of his teammates around him to make plays.

“Probably my biggest attribute to playing quarterback is that I like to have fun out there,” Stokes said.

In many ways, the excitement he demonstrates when playing the game of football is something that he shares with his head coach Collin Drafts, who played quarterback both in college and professionally and serves as the Panthers’ offensive coordinator.

“As a quarterback, the bond you have with your head coach, offensive coordinator and quarterback coach is so important, and it’s great because he’s all three of those,” Stokes said. “That’s something you need to have.”



Photo by Anthony Richards

Now that he has committed to Florida, Marcus Stokes is ready for a memorable senior season.

Sharks defense

Continued from 16

that action, it's what we do."

Kamal credits the tight knit nature the Sharks have within the football program to the high level they play on the defensive side of the ball.

"I've been playing ball since I was 4 years old and a lot of this team has been together since Pop Warner," Kamal said. "It's great when you know the guy next to you has got your back."

He is one of the rushers coming of the edge for the Sharks, but has unique role within the scheme as a standup defensive end that has the ability to either put his hand on the ground and rush or drop back into coverage.

According to Kamal, the fact that he played linebacker for years prior high school makes him feel comfortable anytime he is called held in pass defense.

"It really helps with my footwork," Kamal said. "It's a totally different ball-game when you put your hand in the dirt, because you've got to deal with that offensive tackle or pulling guard, where as a linebacker you've got to have eyes on the quarterback, the ball and your guy. It just takes different mental aspects of the game to make them both happen."

Price returns as the captain on defense in the middle of the linebacking corps.

"We've come out with an energy every single practice," Price said. "There's just been a different type of feel this year. Everyone's still a little salty about last year and they're ready to go on the revenge

tour this season."

Price has worked on his coverage skills this offseason, in the hopes of giving the Sharks an added dimension to the middle linebacker role.

"You know there's going to be RPOs (run-pass options), so you've got to be able to sit and wait so that a pass doesn't go behind you," Price said. "I've been watching film study of Luke Kuechly and K.J. Wright, and it has definitely helped."

Fellow senior Nate Bunkosky showcased his versatility last season by coming in to play quarterback during the second half of the season as the Sharks endured injuries.

He now enters his senior season with his focus on playing two ways once again, but as a safety and wide receiver.

"I'm ready to do whatever role that

Coach Price needs me to," Bunkosky said.

As a safety, Bunkosky's athletic skills come in handy, as many times he is the Sharks last line of defense when it comes to preventing big plays through the air.

"I've been doing defensive back since I was in high school, so it's something I've really worked on," Bunkosky said.

The Sharks gave their fans plenty to cheer about last year and the 2022 season looks to be poised to be much of the same.

"When the lights turn on Friday nights, it's the best thing in the world, and it's definitely a different mindset," Price chuckled. "The person I am in school is not who I am on Friday night. When I get on that field, there's definitely a switch that flips and I'm in a different zone."



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FLORIDA STATE SEMINOLES

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DATE	TIME	OPPONENT/LOCATION
Aug. 27	5:00 pm	Duquesne Dukes
Sep. 4	7:30 pm	LSU Tigers
Sep. 16	7:30 pm	@ Louisville Cardinals
Sep. 24	TBA	Boston College Eagles
Oct. 1	TBA	Wake Forest Demon Deacons
Oct. 8	TBA	@ NC State Wolfpack
Oct. 15	TBA	Clemson Tigers
Oct. 29	TBA	Georgia Tech Yellow Jackets
Nov. 5	TBA	@ Miami Hurricanes
Nov. 12	TBA	@ Syracuse Orange
Nov. 19	TBA	Louisiana Ragin' Cajuns
Nov. 25	7:30 pm	Florida Gators

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Photo by Kam Nedd

Travis Etienne Jr. has looked the part since coming back from a Lisfranc injury that made him miss the entire regular season last year.



Photo by James Gilbert

Travon Walker and Josh Allen give the Jaguars a ferocious tandem of edge rushers.

Signs of potential begin to sprout for Jaguars

By Anthony Richards

For the second straight season the Jaguars enter the football season with a new head coach, however this time around there is a much different feel surrounding it.

Doug Pederson has taken over the reins of the team, but unlike Urban Meyer who held that position a year ago, he is not a first year NFL coach and in fact is far from it with a Super Bowl title to his name.

As a result, there seems to be a sense of hope that has resonated not just within the organization but also among the fan base.

The key to maintaining that hope is to establish some success and make that the Jaguars' standard for which everything is measured.

That is easier said than done and finding a level of consistent success is some-

thing the Jaguars have been in search of for more than a decade.

However, signs are beginning to take shape that signal the Jaguars are heading in the right direction.

Not only is Trevor Lawrence in his second season as an NFL starting quarterback, but he is also now having a head coach that played the position in the league and understands what it takes to succeed.

Although it is extremely early in the relationship, it looks to have the potential to be something special.

Not only does Lawrence have a new outlook from the head coach, but he also has upgraded offensive weapons around him with the additions of wide receivers Christian Kirk and Zay Jones in free agency.

Not to mention the return of Lawrence's college teammate Travis Etienne Jr., who missed all of last regular season

with a Lisfranc injury but is back in the swing of things and has looked explosive throughout the preseason.

If he can create the production, he did during his career at Clemson added with the eventual return of James Robinson and the potential of rookie Snoop Conner, the offense should be fun to watch.

On the defensive side of the ball, the Jaguars were also very active in free agency and the draft and were able to revamp the defense in many ways.

It all starts along the front seven, where they provided some much-needed help for Josh Allen on the edge, by drafting Travon Walker No. 1 overall.

Walker has not taken long to make his share of splash plays that demonstrate the talent he has.

It may take some time, but as the season progresses, he should only get more comfortable and as he does, he and Allen could turn into quite the ferocious tandem when it comes to getting after the passer.

The linebacking corps has almost all new names with free agent pickup Foyesade Oluokun taking leadership in the middle.

The unit is youthful with rookies Devin Lloyd and Chad Muma expected to contribute right away, but with that also comes an added energy.

Potential can be a bad word because it also means a sense of uncertainty and unproven nature, but after years of frustration, for Jaguars fans this year it offers an outlet for hope.

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Photo by James Gilbert

Doug Pederson brings a winning pedigree as the new head coach of the Jaguars.

Nease offense

Continued from 18

more playing time.

Monty presents a big target for Stokes at 6-foot-2-inches.

Growing the relationships with his receivers is something Stokes has worked on, and he hopes the results on the field will reflect that.

“All of our receivers have varsity experience, but it has definitely taken some getting used to, knowing that you don’t have Dom (Henry), Grant (Stevens) and Donovan (Wilson) out there to throw to.”

Helping take some of the pressure off the passing game will be the Panthers rushing attack, which features senior Samuel Milton as the starting back heading into the year.

Milton showcased his ability during his junior year after having to fight his way back from a lengthy recovery from COVID-19 as a sophomore.

“I had actually suffered from MIC

(multisystem inflammatory syndrome), and I was in the hospital for about a month and the ICU for about a week,” Milton said. “I suffered really bad from heart and lung shutdown, but I was cleared in the spring (2021).”

However, Milton did not let that set him back from becoming a fixture in the backfield.

“I really had to grind to earn my spot back,” Milton said. “I feel like I can do even better this season because I didn’t really have an offseason heading into my junior year. This is going to be my breakout year.”

Having gone through what he did, he feels like it has made him even more hungry to do well on the football field, and that is something you can tell in the determined nature with which he runs the football.

“It kind of gave me a perspective about the time that we have left, and especially with it being my senior year, I really want to take advantage of it,” Milton said.

“We’re mainly a player-led team, and



Photo by Anthony Richards

Nease head coach Collin Drafts speaks to the team following practice.

that seems to be working out really well,” Milton said.

Paving the way for Milton is the Panthers’ offensive front, which includes the likes of seniors Nick Severt, Paden

Pinder and Ben McGuinness.

The veteran line will not only open up running lanes, but also look to provide a consistently comfortable pocket for Stokes to survey the field and make plays.

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Sep. 3	3:30 pm	Oregon (Atlanta, GA)	Oct. 15	TBA	Vanderbilt
Sep. 10	4:00 pm	Samford	Oct. 29	3:30 pm	Florida
Sep. 17	12:00 pm	South Carolina	Nov. 5	TBA	Tennessee
Sep. 24	12:00 pm	Kent State	Nov. 12	TBA	Mississippi State
Oct. 1	TBA	Missouri	Nov. 19	TBA	Kentucky
Oct. 8	TBA	Auburn	Nov. 26	TBA	Georgia Tech



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PAGE 29 THURSDAY, AUGUST 25, 2022

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— FEATURING —
Local Real Estate Spotlight

Altitude Trampoline Park franchise opens in Jax Beach

Altitude Trampoline Park, one of the world's largest family entertainment brands with more than 85 parks open or in development, recently opened three new locations in just 10 days. The new parks in Jacksonville Beach; Cincinnati, Ohio; and Mandeville, Louisiana, will offer families a low-cost option to clean, safe and active indoor adventure.

"The recent opening of our 11th park in Jacksonville Beach would not have been possible without the tireless dedication and support provided by the ATP Support Center," said Larry Carrington, director of operations for Trampoline Park Opportunity Group, the brand's largest multi-unit franchisee. "Since signing our franchise agreements with Altitude

Trampoline Park, we've leaned on the brand's leadership team for their expertise in operations, attraction design and construction, local marketing activations and so much more. Now it's time to focus on ramping up our business through memberships, birthday parties and other community events."

With nearly 90 parks now open and several locations in the pipeline, Altitude Trampoline Park has reached new heights in 2022, growing to the world's third-largest family entertainment franchise. Park performance boomeranged back from pandemic pressures through successful brand-wide initiatives.



Contributed photo

Altitude Trampoline Park is a premier indoor adventure park offering cutting edge trampolines, games, programs, and celebrations for all ages.

ALTITUDE continues on Page 30

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Altitude

Continued from 29

“Our recent park openings in Cincinnati, Jacksonville Beach and Mandeville only reinforce our position as a dominant player in the family entertainment industry,” said Mike Rotondo, CEO of Altitude Trampoline Park. “The Altitude franchise opportunity allows our owners to not only invest in a scalable business for themselves and their families, but in the smiles of the countless guests that rely on our parks to fill the need for active family fun in their communities.”

Altitude Trampoline Park is targeting markets throughout the country to further increase the brand’s national footprint, with specific priority for new locations in Missouri, Minnesota, Iowa, Indiana, Michigan, Oklahoma, Virginia and more.

The company provides support to franchisees through aiding in real estate site selection, construction support, design models, financing options and more. The ideal buildout for a park is 25,000 square feet but can range between 20,000 and 35,000 square feet.



Ninja courses at Altitude Trampoline Park test kids’ skills.



At Altitude Trampoline Park, kids will find trampolines, zip lines, basketball, dodgeball, ninja courses, interactive games and more.



The venue offers new approaches to the traditional trampoline.



The basketball courts at Altitude Trampoline Park add a new element to the fun.

Contributed photos



Here’s a rock-climbing wall at Altitude Trampoline Park.

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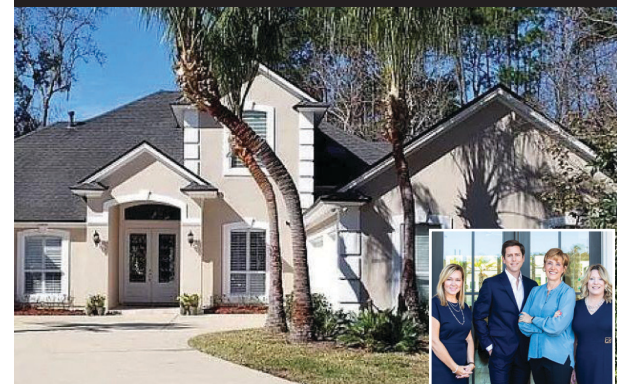
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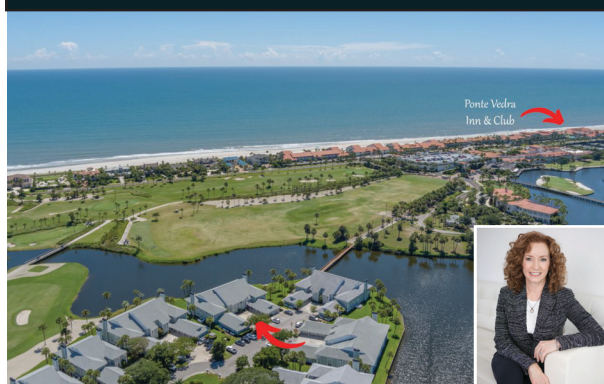
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*Source: Keller Williams Multi-Trend Report & MLS

Northeast Florida housing market shifts to 'new normal'

A “new normal” has taken over Northeast Florida’s housing market.

In contrast to the rapidly rising prices experienced over the past 18 months, little change occurred in the median price of single-family homes throughout the region in the past 60 days. And as the

price midpoint for single-family homes in Northeast Florida hovered at \$400,000 in July, closed sales, pending sales, and new listings began a sharp decline. From June to July, closed sales dropped 23.6% to 1,886, pending sales dropped 12.6% to 1,795 and new listings dropped 11.7%

to 2,870.

Meanwhile, days on the market rose 33.3% to 24, and the number of homes in the region’s inventory rose 11.6% to 4,962 homes, a 2.6-month supply. This signals a loosening up of the market that should be a welcome relief to buyers.

“It appears that the real estate market in Northeast Florida is settling into a new normal,” said NEFAR President Mark Rosener.

This “new normal” is also evident when you add townhomes and condos to the mix within the region, he said.

“In looking at the combined data for single-family houses, condos and townhomes for the six-county market area that is served by NEFAR, we see the median price inching up to \$376,600, a mere 0.5% increase in July compared to

MARKET continues on Page 33

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Market

Continued from 32

June 2022,” Rosener said. “The stabilization of the median price and mortgage interest rates has resulted in the home affordability index remaining unchanged at 73, month over month, which is still a concern.”

The Housing Affordability Index measures housing affordability for the region by measuring whether a typical family earns enough to qualify for a mortgage on a typical home, based on current interest rates, median income and median home prices. A higher number means greater affordability.

The silver lining within the “new normal” is seen in housing inventory and a less frenzied market, Rosener said.

“The good news is that our housing inventory (single-family homes, townhouses, condos), is at 5,953 active listings, which is up 6.2% over June 2022 levels and 24.5% more than what was on the active market in July 2021,” he said. “While still dramatically lower than the 7,500 active listings in March of 2020, the increased selection of available homes is a relief to those looking to buy a new home. For sellers, it means a less hectic and longer marketing period with the median days on the market at 25 days. This is, of course, still a brisk marketing time frame by historical

standards, but much less disruptive to a seller’s lifestyle while their home is on the market. With 3,446 new listings hitting the market in July and closed and pending sales taking a typical summer dip in activity, the months of supply of inventory has now nearly doubled to 2.6 months.”

In St. Johns County, July prices rose slightly 1.8% to a median price of \$565,000 for single-family homes. The median days on the market were 27, a 42.1% increase from the month before. Month-to-month, closed sales dropped 22.7% to 489, pending sales dropped 15.4% to 395, and new listings dropped 23% to 625. Active inventory rose to 1,257 homes, a 9.3% increase of 5.13% from June, and a 2.6-month supply. The affordability index dropped to 48, demonstrating that St. Johns County continues to remain the least affordable area to live in the region.

In Duval County, the July median price of single-family housing was \$350,000, the same as in June. The median days on the market in July was 22, a 22.2% increase over June. Month-to-month, closed sales dropped 24% to 931, pending sales dropped 7.2% to 954, and new listings dropped 8.4% to 1,545. Active inventory for the county was 2,471 homes, an increase of 12.7% from last month and a 2.7-month supply. In July, the home affordability index registered at 78, the same as in June.



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The company logo is seen on a pane of glass within the new office.



Contributed photos

The new office has more space for agents and the administrative team.

Real estate team moves into new office

The Lisa Barton Team and Keller Williams Realty Atlantic Partners continue to expand their market presence in Ponte Vedra Beach.

This June, Keller Williams Atlantic Partners, part of the largest real estate company in the world, moved to its new location in Ponte Vedra Beach. The new office is located at 13000 Sawgrass Village Circle Building 1, Suite 5, in the Vil-

lage Professional Center. The Lisa Barton Team Ponte Vedra Beach expressed excitement about the new headquarters. The team made the transition along with other Keller Williams agents and support services, including Blue Ocean Title and Bank of England.

According to a media release, the team is delighted with the move to the new office, which has more space for agents

and the administrative team. There are also several meeting spaces where agents can handle closings, entertain clients and work with vendors. The contemporary coastal style and natural light make this office inviting.

Having a presence in the heart of Ponte Vedra Beach is essential for the team. This prime location allows more opportunities for connections and interaction

with the Ponte Vedra Beach community. And the shops and restaurants of Sawgrass Village are just steps away.

“Our new office space is terrific,” said team lead Lisa Barton. “As a team, we enjoy working collaboratively. This new space is conducive to operating efficiently together and the location can’t be beat.”

The team has settled in and is enjoying the new space.




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THURSDAY, AUGUST 25, 2022 · PAGE 35

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Work of 16 young patient artists on exhibit

Museum of Contemporary Art Jacksonville has announced its new exhibition, “What Lifts You Up,” in partnership with Art with a Heart in Healthcare.

The exhibition will be on view Sept. 11 through Jan. 8. The opening event will take place at 2 p.m. Sept. 11. “What Lifts You Up” features the work of 16 young artists who are patients at local hospitals.

For more than a decade, MOCA Jacksonville has partnered with Art with a Heart in Healthcare, a nonprofit organization that provides personalized art experiences to enhance the healing process for patients and families at Wolfson Children’s Hospital, Nemours Children’s Specialty Clinic, St. Vincent’s Medical Center, Mayo Clinic and Baptist Medical Center.

The teams at Art with a Heart in Healthcare and MOCA Jacksonville work together each year to develop a unique patient art exhibition based on a prompt or question that inspires imagination, artistry and individual expression among young patients, who work under the guidance of an artist-in-residence.

“In addition to the benefits each patient

artist gleans from engaging in artistic exploration, they are able to build a sense of accomplishment, pride and meaning by having their artwork on display within a museum space,” said Christy Ponder, executive director and artist-in-residence for Art with a Heart in Healthcare.

Over the years, the program has developed different themes to encourage more than 100,000 patients to express themselves through art. They are empowered to gain technical art-making and creative skills, while learning to articulate their feelings, ideas and experiences. The experience empowers patients to celebrate and explore the artistic process, while gaining self-confidence and self-awareness.

“MOCA Jacksonville is a proud partner of Art with a Heart in Healthcare and its work to transform the health care experiences of young patients through the power of creative expression,” said Caitlin Doherty. “The creation of art has a unique ability to help people see their world in new ways, to process their experiences and to share those experiences with others, especially during difficult or stressful times.”



Addison, age 11, “What lifts you Up,” 2022. Acrylic on canvas, 24 x 12 inches.



Coner, age 6, “What lifts you Up,” 2022. Acrylic on canvas, 24 x 12 inches.



Quinalia, age 12, “Never Give Up,” 2022. Acrylic on canvas, 24 x 12 inches.

This year’s artists-in-residence were Dylan Bauer, Heidi Drost, Kianna Godoy, Amy Irizarry, Brooke McKinney, Lisa Miyares, Jill Olmo, Matt Richards and Abigail Santos. This exhibition is sponsored by the Florida Blue. Additional

support for this exhibition was made in part by the City of Jacksonville, the Cultural Council of Greater Jacksonville, the Florida Division of Cultural Affairs, the National Endowment for the Arts and the University of North Florida.

BOOK REVIEW

‘Hello, Goodbye’ keeps readers captivated, engaged

By Banks Vadeboncoeur

Youth and old age. Love and revenge. Grief and joy. Mystery and revelation. Kate Stollenwerck of Ponte Vedra, Florida, brings readers on an incredible journey in her first ever novel, “Hello, Goodbye.”

The story follows Hailey Rogers, a teenager from Dallas, Texas. Although 15-year-old Hailey doesn’t particularly want to spend the summer with her grandma Gigi, it’s the only way to stop her parents from bothering her about SAT prep, finding a job or college plans.

Although doubtful at first, Hailey immediately develops a close relationship with Gigi, who exposes her to the Beatles, “The Great Gatsby” and driving a vintage convertible called “Betty.” Two popular football players from Hailey’s school, Blake and DeMarcus, whom she meets while visiting Gigi, wind up

becoming her unexpected friends.

Her grandmother also imparts to her some of the convoluted family history. After finding hints in an ancient letter written by her great-grandfather, Hailey sets off on a road trip to a desolate Texas town to unravel the family mystery.

The coming-of-age story is fitting for all ages and is sure to keep readers captivated and engaged. The author did a wonderful job of combining several storylines, making it easy to fall in love with each individual character. Hailey is unique, independent and spunky. Her loving relationship with her eccentric, charming grandmother carries the story along and truly makes the novel special.

The story captivated me and gave me the sensation that I was physically in the room with Hailey and her grandmother. I felt as though I was sitting on Gigi’s couch, hearing the tales of her history. Fans of the Beatles will enjoy

how seamlessly the music from the band is incorporated into the narrative, and Stollenwerck fittingly included historical elements that play a significant role in the story.

Ultimately, “Hello, Goodbye” was a beautifully written debut that demonstrates the sweet, unmatched relationship between a grandmother and her granddaughter. Stollenwerck tastefully

incorporated themes of family, romance and, above all, love. As written in the novel, “All you need is love. Love is all you need. Just like Gigi said.”

Banks Vadeboncoeur is a sophomore at Ponte Vedra High School. She loves to write and hopes to have a future career in journalism.


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ON STAGE

A roundup of musical acts appearing before Sept. 26 at local venues

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Augustine Amphitheatre box office or ticketmaster.com.

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

• **The Fixx** — 7:30 p.m. Sept. 17.

• **Andy McKee** — With special guest Calum Graham. 7:30 p.m. Sept. 20

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required for all box office transactions and ticket purchases must be made in person.

Tickets may also be purchased at ticketmaster.com.

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

• **Dispatch & O.A.R.** — With special guest G. Love. 7 p.m. Sept. 4.

• **Matisyahu** — 7:30 p.m. Sept. 9

• **Billy Currington** — With special guests Noah Guthrie and Matt Koziol. 7:30 p.m. Sept. 10.

• **Ringo Starr and His All Starr Band** — 7:30 p.m. Sept. 15

• **Snail Mail** — Sing Out Loud free event. 7 p.m. Sept. 16

• **Conan Gray** — 7 p.m. Sept. 18

• **Jack White, The Supply Chain Issues Tour** — With special Guest Cat Power. 8 p.m. Sept. 19

• **Sing Out Loud: St. Augustine Record Fair** — Free event. 11 a.m. Sept. 25.

• **Sing Out Loud: Shovels & Rope** — Free event. 6 p.m. Sept. 25.

— Compiled by Shaun Ryan



Ringo Starr and His All Starr Band will perform Sept. 15 at The Amp.

Image from The Amp

CANVAS, STAGE AND MORE

Writers as researchers is meeting topic



Dorothy K. Fletcher

Some writers hate research, but author Dorothy K. Fletcher loves going to libraries, historical societies, antique stores and churches where she can rummage through the lives of long-gone people to find

interesting facts to use in her writing.

Fletcher will present “Making Research a Pleasant & Happy Experience,” at the FWA Ponte Vedra Writers meeting at 10 a.m. Saturday, Aug. 27, at the Ponte Vedra Beach Branch Library.

In her presentation, she will provide writers with methods they haven’t considered for the acquisition of information.

In 2007, she retired after 35 years of teaching high school English in Jacksonville. At that time, she began her writing career in earnest. Many of her poems had already been published in literary magazines and she even had the honor of reading her poetry at an event at the Library of Congress.

She’s also written six histories about the city of Jacksonville, two novels and a children’s book.

The Ponte Vedra Writers group is part of the Florida Writers Association,

a statewide, nonprofit organization dedicated to the support of both aspiring and published writers. The Aug. 27 meeting is free and open to members and nonmembers alike. For information on FWA, go to floridawriters.org.

Artists to exhibit work featuring Disney, Marvel, DC, ‘Star Wars’

Gallery 725, a contemporary art space in Jacksonville, will present, in a limited engagement presentation, “Thomas Kinkade Studios: Generations.” This is a new exhibition from Thomas Kinkade Studios featuring Disney, Marvel, DC and Star Wars characters. Works will be on exhibition and available for acquisition at the gallery from Sept. 2-11.

Three not-to-be missed receptions with Patrick and Zac Kinkade are planned for noon-2 p.m. and 6-8 p.m. Sept. 10 as well as 1-3 p.m. Sept. 11. There will be a special fun-filled children’s event from 11 a.m. to noon Sept. 10.

This exhibition will take place at the new gallery art space located at 13475 Atlantic Blvd. Suite 6.

For more information, go to gallery725.com or call the gallery at 904-345-9320. To RSVP, go to eventbrite.com and search for Kinkade.

CommUNITY Concert set for Sept. 11

8th Day at the Beach, a pre-Rosh Hashanah CommUNITY Concert, is set for Sept. 11 at the Marsh Landing Country Club. Pre-concert fun begins at 5 p.m., and the concert begins at 5:30 p.m.

The address is 25655 Marsh Landing Parkway, Ponte Vedra.

To order tickets, go to chabadbeaches.com.

For further information, call Dafne at 904-770-0502 or email info@chabadbeaches.com.

Gamble Rogers Gala set for Oct. 8

The inaugural Gamble Rogers Gala, featuring live music, a raffle, live and silent auctions, hors d’oeuvres and drinks will be held from 6 to 9 p.m. Oct. 8 at the St. Johns County Agricultural Center.

Medicine Springs will perform during the event. Band members are Lon and Liz Williamson, Scott Anderson, Gabe Valla and Christian Ward.

Admission is \$25 per guest. Proceeds benefit the nonprofit Gamble Rogers Music Festival.

Tickets are available at: gamblerogersfest.org/product-page/gamble-gala-oct-9th.

The agricultural center is located at 3125 Agricultural Center Drive, St. Augustine.

For further information, call 541-914-4849.

— Compiled by Shaun Ryan

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Sports



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Ponte Vedra's Sutton commits to Tennessee

By Anthony Richards

Make it four Division 1 commits on this year's Ponte Vedra High volleyball roster, following junior Chelsea Sutton's verbal commitment to the University of Tennessee.

"The recruiting process was crazy, but I'm very grateful because I received multiple offers," Sutton said.

According to Sutton, she knew Tennessee was the place for her after she made her visit.

"The coaching staff is incredible, and I just love the school, the campus and Knoxville," Sutton said. "The amount of support for the athletes there could definitely be felt on campus. That was a big deal for me."

Sutton's commitment comes early, as she still has two years left in high school, but it she made it with complete confidence.

"I knew once the opportunities were presented in front of me, that I wanted to make a really good and informed decision, but I also didn't want to wait around," Sutton said. "It was the best decision I could have made."

One of the advantages of having committed is that now she can just focus on finishing out her high school career.

"I remember going into tournaments and seeing the different (college) coaches at the court, and then receiving letters and emails from all of them," Sutton said. "I think that's when it really started to sink in."

She began playing competitive volleyball at 14 years old, but prior to that she

had always been part of an athletic family growing up.

"My dad was big into rugby and my mom was big into basketball, so growing up they really let my twin sister and I try all of the sports," Sutton said.

After playing a variety of sports, volleyball was the one that Sutton gravitated to.

"I knew at a young age that I wanted to play a sport for a long time, and I just knew it needed to be volleyball," Sutton said. "It's a very methodical game and you have to really think it out. When I first started playing, I don't think I realized how complex the game can be, but now that's the part that I really enjoy."

She primarily plays middle blocker, and it is a position she has played for some time due to her height and ability to make plays at the net.

"Ever since I started playing one of the things that came natural to me is blocking, so over the years I've really been working on my attacking and shots," Sutton said. "I'm really happy with the progress I've made."

Sutton has been playing for so long that she is aware of when she is in the "zone" during a game.

She can tell it because all of a sudden she is so focused on the game that she no longer hears or realizes the crowd is there, even though they are just feet away in the stands.

At that time, all she is focused on is the match and the winning the next point available.

"It's like a freeze frame, and just a one-of-a-kind experience," Sutton said.



Photos by Anthony Richards

Ponte Vedra High junior Chelsea Sutton has verbally committed to play volleyball at the University of Tennessee.



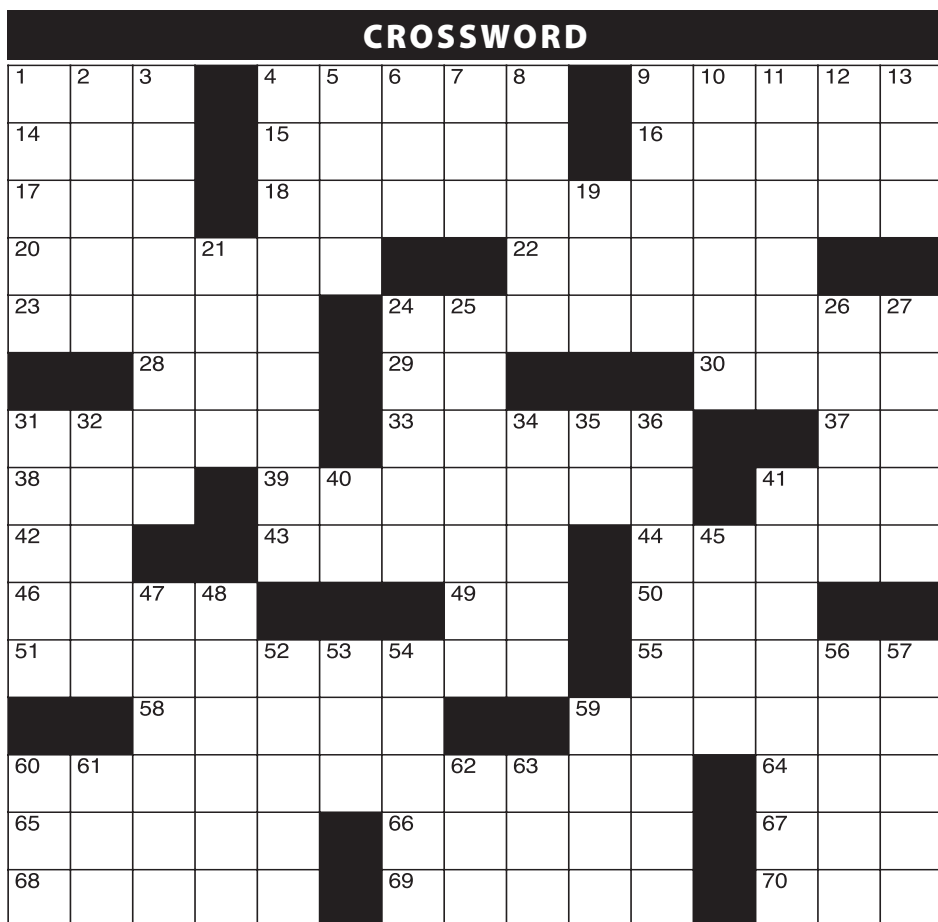
Chelsea Sutton plays middle blocker, as her height allows her to be a force around the net.



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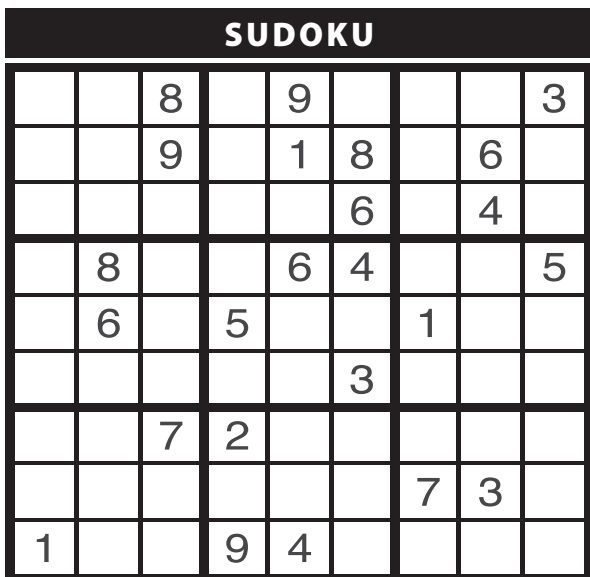
- 1. One point north of due west
- 4. Indigenous peoples of northern Scandinavia
- 9. Popular California/Nevada lake
- 14. Go quickly
- 15. Fatty acid in soaps
- 16. Brand of fuel stations
- 17. State of fuss
- 18. Romance novelist
- 20. Members of a household
- 22. Asserts to be the case
- 23. Type of infection
- 24. With metal inlays
- 28. Chinese philosophic principle
- 29. Early multimedia
- 30. Employee stock ownership plan
- 31. He investigated Clinton administration
- 33. Shells
- 37. Six
- 38. Snakelike fish
- 39. Capital of Kenya
- 41. Influential group (abbr.)
- 42. Used to chop
- 43. It comes as a case
- 44. Challenges
- 46. Small amounts
- 49. The Golden State
- 50. Peyton's little brother
- 51. For walking in Alaska
- 55. Buddhist honorific titles
- 58. Lively ballroom dance
- 59. Capital of Albania
- 60. Late night host
- 64. Draw from
- 65. A way to utilise
- 66. One who is not native Hawaiian
- 67. A power to perceive
- 68. Bulky
- 69. Horse mackerels
- 70. Proclaim out loud

- 5. It's often in soap
- 6. For each
- 7. Innermost membrane enveloping the brain
- 8. A way to leave
- 9. Emaciation
- 10. Punish with a fine
- 11. Steeds
- 12. Having eight
- 13. Greek goddess of the dawn
- 19. Mature reproductive cells
- 21. Armadillo species
- 24. Ancient country in what is now Romania
- 25. Extreme greed
- 26. Stars
- 27. Poems
- 31. Places to sit
- 32. One from the Lone Star State
- 34. Small rails
- 35. One quintillion bytes (abbr.)

- 36. Where coaches work
- 40. Indicates position
- 41. Mammals
- 45. Resembling a wing
- 47. Beliefs
- 48. Hindu male religious teachers
- 52. Mischievously
- 53. Where athletes want to end up (abbr.)
- 54. Large, deep-bodied fish
- 56. Horned squash bug genus
- 57. Excessively sentimental
- 59. Shared verbally
- 60. You can put it on toast
- 61. Data mining methodology (abbr.)
- 62. Resinlike substance secreted by certain insects
- 63. Mauna __, Hawaiian volcano

DOWN

- 1. Hits
- 2. Bathroom accessory
- 3. Young
- 4. Beef cattles



Level: Intermediate

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!

Florida Senior Games set for Dec. 3-11



The Florida Sports Foundation, the state's sports promotion and development organization, has announced an agreement with Florida's Sports Coast (Pasco County), to host the 2022-2024 Florida Senior Games, presented by Humana.

The Florida Senior Games is an Olympic-style sports festival, for athletes age 50 and older. The 2022 Games will be held Dec. 3-11 with a roster of 22 sports. The 2022 Florida Senior Games is a qualifier for the 2023 National Senior Games, to be held in Pittsburgh.

While the 2022 Games will be the first time Florida's Sports Coast will act as the primary host, it is not the area's first venture into the Florida Senior Games.

In December 2020, the Wiregrass Ranch Sports Campus of Pasco County and Sarah Vande Berg Tennis & Wellness Center combined to host five sports. The former hosted bag toss, basketball shooting, 3-on-3 basketball and volleyball. Pickleball was played at the latter.

"The staff of Florida's Sports Coast has made Pasco County and the northern edge of Tampa along Interstate 75 a premier sports destination," said Florida Sports Foundation President Angela A. Suggs. "We look forward to introducing the area to Senior Games athletes, not only from Florida, but nationwide."

The Wiregrass Ranch Sports Campus, located in Wesley Chapel, will once again host multiple sports during the nine days of the 31st Annual Florida Senior Games. The Sarah Vande Berg Tennis & Wellness Center in Zephyrhills also returns as a host site. Other facilities already identified as host sites include Cypress Creek High School, the Zephyrhills Shuffleboard Club, the Land O' Lakes Recreation Center and Pin Chasers.

"Florida's Sports Coast is thrilled to be the host destination for such prestigious sporting events that exhibit the level of talent of athletes 50 and older within our statewide sporting community," said Florida's Sports Coast Tourism Director Adam Thomas.

The Florida Senior Games features a wide variety of sports. The roster includes basketball, volleyball, table tennis, bowling, powerlifting and racquetball. Outdoor sports include track and field, tennis, archery, cycling and a 5K road

race. Some sports can be played either indoors or outdoors, like pickleball and swimming.

Besides sports that require strength and stamina, the Florida Senior Games offers events focusing on hand-eye coordination and focus, including shuffleboard, horseshoes and basketball shooting.

Joining the Florida Senior Games roster of sports in 2022 is padel, a racket sport typically played by doubles teams on an enclosed court roughly 25% smaller than the size of a tennis court. Scoring is the same as tennis and the balls used are similar but with less pressure. The main differences are that the court has walls and the balls can be played off them in a similar way as in the game of squash and that solid, stringless bats are used.

"Exceptional teamwork among Experience Florida's Sports Coast, Florida Sports Foundation and some of our best sports venues created this opportunity that will highlight the best we have to offer when it comes to sporting events," said Consuelo Sanchez, Florida's Sports Coast sports development and tourism manager. "We're excited to be the primary host destination for the Florida Senior Games for the next three years."

Florida Senior Games athletes compete in five-year age groups beginning with the 50-54 age group and increasing through the 100+ age group.

Previous multi-year host locations have included Clearwater, Fort Myers, Fort Lauderdale, Lakeland, Kissimmee/St. Cloud and The Villages.

The Events

Here's a look at the events being included: 5K road race, power walk and race walk, archery, badminton, basketball shooting, basketball 3 on 3, bowling (individual), bowling (team), cycling (5K and 10K time trials), cycling (20K/40K), foot golf, golf, horseshoes, padel, pickleball, powerlifting, power walk (1500-meter), race walk (1500-meter), racquetball, shuffleboard, swimming, table tennis, tennis, track and field and volleyball.

For more information about the 2022 Florida Senior Games, presented by Humana, go to floridaseniorgames.com or follow FloridaSeniorGames on Facebook.

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