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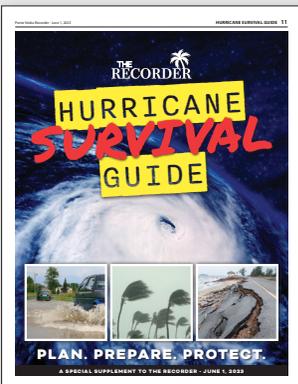


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PonteVedraRecorder.com



Hurricane Survival Guide
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Ponte Vedra Spring Football
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INSIDE: CHECK IT OUT!
The Recorder's Entertainment EXTRA featuring TV listings, streaming information, puzzles and more!



Five members of the community were recognized by the Rotary Club of Ponte Vedra Beach and The Recorder for their exemplary service to the local community. Scott Hetzinger, Lyn Gabrielson, Lori Richards, Cody Langley and Bill and JoAnn Lee were each honored and received plaques. See photos from the annual event on page 23

Photo by Susan Griffin

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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.**



Visit our new website at www.pontevedrarecorder.com

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

BRIEFS

Local United Way helps 1,368 residents file taxes

The United Way of St. Johns County has announced that its RealSense-SJC program has helped residents file 1,368 tax returns for free, resulting in more than \$1.18 million in returns. The program expanded to serve Putnam County in addition to St. Johns County this year, providing free tax preparation services to low- and moderate-income families and individuals.

In addition to the financial benefits, the program also saved residents \$328,320 in preparation fees. This year, 26 volunteers dedicated 2,800 hours, providing quality tax preparation services to residents with incomes of \$74,000 or less. Other partners who made this important program possible include Vystar Credit Union, St. Johns County, Heart of Putnam and the IRS.

"We are thrilled to lead the RealSense-SJC program, which provides critical assistance to low- and moderate-income families and individuals in our community," said Joe Pickens, chair of the United Way Board. "The dedication of our volunteers and partners makes it possible to help residents navigate the complex tax system and claim the credits they deserve."

Palm Valley Market every Tuesday

The Palm Valley Market is held from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. every Tuesday inside the Palm Valley Community Center, 148 Canal Road. The market offers fresh produce, baked goods, local honey, tea, seasonal treats, soap, jewelry, plants and more.

Mega Open House Weekend set for June 10-11

Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Network Realty will hold its next Mega Open House Weekend on June 10-11.

The event features numerous open house viewings of the company's listings of available homes. Along with the in-person open houses, homes will be featured virtually on social media.

In May, the company's Mega Open House event hosted 48 in-person open houses with virtual open houses on social media to ensure maximum reach and engagement. The online analytics show the virtual open houses attracted more than 50,000 online impressions, an aggregate reach of 38,077 users and 3,435 clicks.

Go to OpenHouseNEFlorida.com for a list of open houses. Go to the company's Facebook page, facebook.com/FloridaNetworkRealty,

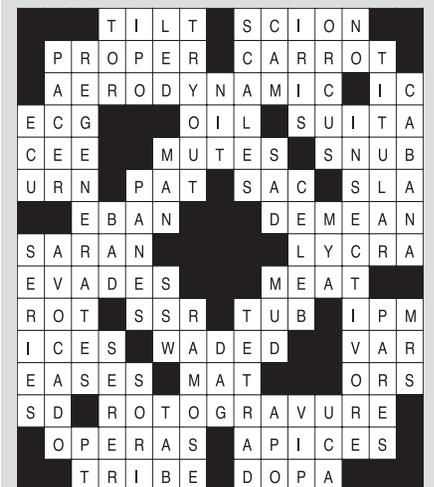
and Instagram, [instagram.com/FloridaNetworkRealty](https://www.instagram.com/FloridaNetworkRealty), to view the homes virtually during the event.

Morris Center plans Fun Fest

The Morris Center, 50 Executive Way, Ponte Vedra Beach, will hold a free Family Fun Fest from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. June 24. There will be food, sensory stations, face painting and free occupational therapy screening with registration for ages 5-12. For further information, call 904-834-2482 or go to eventbrite.com/e/family-fun-fest-tickets-635424621147?aff=ebdssbdestsearch.

BRIEFS continues on Page 9

PUZZLE SOLUTIONS



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



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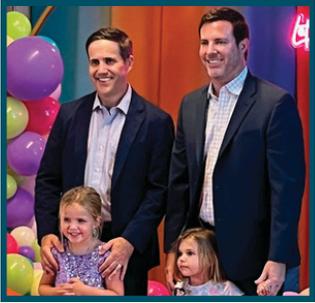
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AND GARDENS

New law defines who can drive a golf cart

By Anthony Richards

There will be new rules surrounding who can drive a golf cart on public roads thanks to a new state law that has been passed and will go into effect Oct. 1.

The new law is listed as “operation of a golf cart” and is House Bill 949. The bill was drawn up and proposed by Rep. Cyndi Stevenson.

Once enacted, the bill will prohibit anyone younger than 18 years old from operating a golf cart on certain roadways unless they have a valid driver license or learner’s

driver license.

However, being 18 years old does not automatically allow you to drive a golf cart on public roads, as those people must still possess a valid form of government-issued photographic identification to legally get behind the steering wheel.

It will also authorize a water control district to designate certain roads for use by golf carts, but county approval would be needed before making such a designation official.

As a result, beginning in October when

the new law takes effect, a golf cart may only be operated on county roads that have been designated for golf carts by the county; municipal streets designated as such by that municipality; two-lane county roads located within the jurisdiction of such a municipality; or roads that are owned and maintained by a water district that are designated for the use of golf carts.

Once a public roadway is deemed open to golf carts, it will then be up to the responsible government entity to post appropriate signage indicating that golf carts

are allowed and list the criteria and age restrictions for driving one.

Violations of the new law would be classified as a noncriminal traffic infraction and punishable as such.

The bill did not receive any detractors of legislators who voted on it during its process of getting approved, as it received no nay votes in either the Florida House of Representatives vote on April 28 or in the Florida Senate vote May 1.

The final step was when Gov. Ron DeSantis signed the bill into law on May 11.

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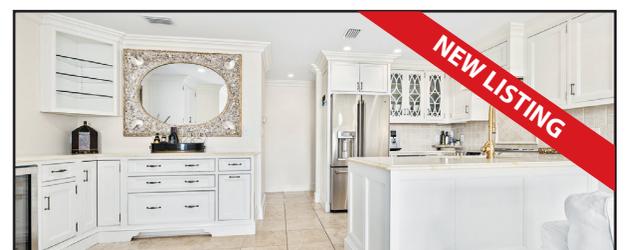
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Nease NJROTC students excelling in cybersecurity

By Shaun Ryan

For years, the Nease NJROTC drill teams have excelled in competition. Now, they are about to be joined in their success by students in the program's newest discipline, one based on an emerging field of study: cybersecurity.

In its third year, the Nease NJROTC CyberPatriot team has grown dramatically in number and in competitive victories.

"This year we did very, very good," said CyberPatriot Commander Macayla Cole-Banner.

In its most recent season, the local team advanced to the semi-finals and finished second in the state and sixth nationally among participating JROTC programs.

CyberPatriot was created by the Air & Space Forces Association to inspire students to pursue careers in cybersecurity or any of the STEM disciplines. The program is open to all students in participating schools with separate brackets for middle schools, high schools and JROTC programs.

The Nease team practices throughout the school year, always seeking to improve, studying the basics at first and later moving on to more advanced methods, according to team member Kyan

Sanchez. Team member Alexander Cummings, in his first year with the program, said he has learned a lot so far.

The students compete in a series of six-hour meets in the National Youth Cyber Defense Competition. In these contests, the students must find and repair cybersecurity vulnerabilities in virtual operating systems, and teams are scored on how secure they make the system.

According to Seth Scruggs, the Nease NJROTC team's technical mentor, competitors first must answer investigatory questions and then find the flaws in a group of bugged images, a process he compares to "a cyber Easter egg hunt."

"There are four different terminals or images that you compete on," said team member Ruhi Shanbhag. "Basically, you're trying to decode and get through the system to find whatever they're asking you for."

"Once you find those things, you have to rectify them in a manner that doesn't disrupt the running of the rest of the image," explained team member Zack Servello. "If I find a file that's out of place, I have to remove that file without causing a cascade of other things getting damaged in the process."

Since its founding, the Nease team has grown from a handful of students to the



Contributed photo

The Nease High School NJROTC CyberPatriot team has grown in number and success since its founding almost three years ago.

point where it now consists of 18 students in three competition teams drawing from the individual strengths of the members.

One of the most important elements in these competitions is a reliable internet connection. But blockers at the school interfered with the students' ability to participate, so they had to set up shop in private homes.

"Right now, we do it at my house," said Macayla. "We have one team in our dining room, one team in one living room and one team in the other. We all just try to stay out of each other's way."

Still, internet integrity remains a challenge.

CYBERSECURITY continues on Page 7

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Attorney David Dunlap has been practicing civil law in Jacksonville for 25 years. He opened his own firm, Dunlap, Ravis & Miller, in 2016.

David Dunlap

As told to Shaun Ryan

Tell me a little about your background, your education and your career so far.

I grew up and attended college and law school in Alabama. War Eagle!! I moved to Ponte Vedra in 1989 after marrying my law school sweetheart, Holly Green. I practiced civil trial law in Jacksonville for 25 years at Harris, Guidi, Rosner and Dunlap. I started my current firm, Dunlap, Ravis & Miller, in 2016 and relocated to Ponte Vedra on A1A and have absolutely loved it since.

What initially drew you to the law? Is it something that you knew you'd want to pursue from youth or did you discover it later?

I was one of those lucky ones who always wanted to be a lawyer. I think, generally speaking, I saw the law as the framework of rules by which we all play. And he who knows the rules has a better chance at success. Additionally, there is tremendous competition in practicing law. There is strategy in the planning and execution of each case. There are winners and losers. That was probably the biggest driving force.

Tell me about your practice and what types of cases you work on. Can you tell us a little about the critical role lawyers play in our culture?

My practice has always involved representing the individual in civil disputes. A personal injury or wrongful death from an auto crash or other injury. An insurance coverage or claims denial. A defective and unsafe product such as a modified golf cart causing injury or death. Trucking crashes. Defective premises or property cases.

While the cases may have the same general theme, each one is different factually and each client has a very interesting story. Each case takes 18 to 24 months, some longer, so we really get to know each client well. Many remain long-term friends and our client referrals are our number one source of new business.

In terms of the lawyers' role in our culture, we as a nation and in our individual communities have become so divisive and contentious on every issue that civil and criminal disputes are skyrocketing. Attorneys are necessary to resolve these issues and hopefully our civil justice system will remain intact to assist in resolving these differences.

It should not be lost on us the Founding Fathers chose to guarantee a civil jury trial in the Seventh Amendment/ Bill of Rights to our Constitution. A pretty foundational right in our culture.

Do you have any advice for young readers who may be considering a career as an attorney?

Like most professions, the practice of law has changed drastically since I began. Sadly, the professionalism level has dropped among litigation attorneys. While competition is important and winning is the preferred outcome, the win-at-all-cost mindset has brought our profession down in the public eye. Email, Zoom, remote offices and the COVID isolation fiasco have all led to a disconnect in the personal communication and interaction among lawyers, clients and judges.



Contributed photo

Attorney David Dunlap in the office of his law practice.

A career in law can still be an extremely rewarding profession on many levels if you approach it correctly and demand integrity of yourself and your colleagues. Those interested in the profession should go to the courthouse and observe all types of proceedings. The court staff and the Judges will welcome your interest. You will find it's not all a John Grisham novel!

What do you like best about what you do?

Without question, it is the interaction with clients and their individual cases and legal needs. Our clients come from all walks of life. In representing them, I am able to learn about so many different products, engineering applications and best of all the anatomy and medicine involved in the injury and death cases. It is like playing multilevel chess on see through boards. A successful conclusion that actually changes lives in an otherwise

unfortunate and often tragic situation is a tremendous reward for the hard work.

What do you like best about life here on the First Coast?

The pace of life is just right. The weather. The Rotary Club of Ponte Vedra. The water and abundant fishing opportunities. You can catch redfish, trout, flounder, tarpon and even snook on any given day in the summer between St. Augustine and Fernandina. It is a tremendous fishery.

How do you like to spend your free time?

Fishing obviously. Spending evenings with Holly and our friends at the great beach bars and restaurants. Training and retraining my GSP bird dog, Ruger. He requires major attention.

Breakfast Broadcast

“FOX & Friends” co-host Brian Kilmeade broadcast from the Beach Diner in Ponte Vedra Beach on Tuesday morning, May 30, for the “Breakfast With Friends” segment. Among those participating were U.S. Reps. John Rutherford and Michael Waltz. Pictured from left are: Lonnie Smith, Deb Pettry, Pam Shore, Kilmeade, Janet Westling, Leslie Miro and Susan Griffin.

Photo by The Recorder



Cybersecurity

Continued from 4

“We have about six computers on at the same time, and we’re all on our phones looking stuff up, so the internet has definitely been an issue,” Macayla said. “Nobody else can be on the computer or on the phone or anything like that.”

That all changed after Raghu Misra, co-owner of the link, learned of the team’s needs. The link, located at 425 Town Plaza Ave. in Nocatee, is an award-winning smart building at the forefront of embracing technology for smart work spaces, event spaces and experiences. Approached about the possibility of hosting a fundraiser, Misra offered the team space at the link – with its superior internet capabilities – for competitions.

For some of the students the program may actually be the doorway to a career.

Team member Jacob Desrosiers plans on going into information technology, most likely with an emphasis on cybersecurity. Macayla, who said she knew nothing about CyberPatriot before getting involved, now hopes to go to the Air Force Academy to study cybersecurity.

The next competition will be in September. Over the summer, the Nease NJROTC CyberPatriot team will be training, taking part in exhibition rounds and

growing the program. Macayla said she would like to get more girls involved.

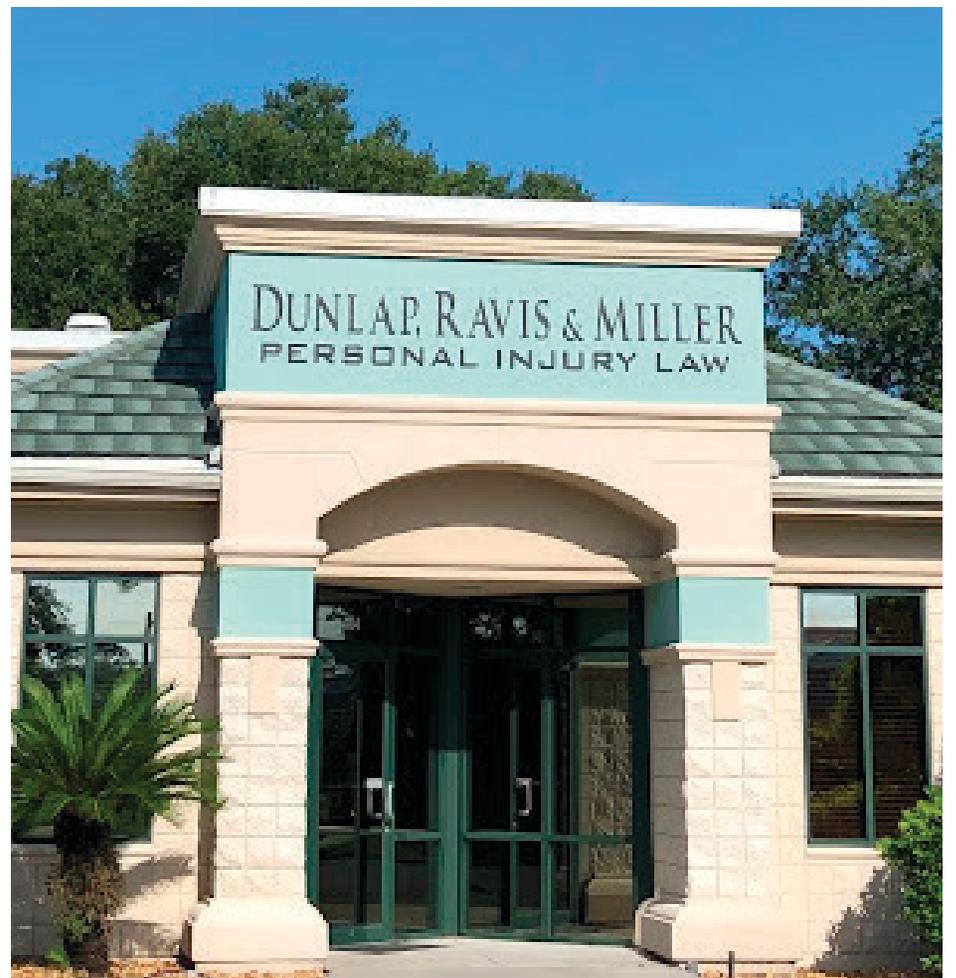
If the team continues to grow, it may claim the kind of accolades being won by other members of the NJROTC program.

“Just like our drill team is amazing or known for winning drill all the time, I see the CyberPatriot team kind of using the same model, where you build a strong foundation and then the cadets are training the new cadets coming in,” said Chief Warrant Officer Michael Donato, senior naval science instructor for Nease NJROTC. “Once you have that strong foundation, it just breeds success every year, and they take it to the next level every year.”

“We really want to thank the parents and the instructors, because they give us so much support, and we really couldn’t do anything without them,” said Macayla. “We couldn’t even have competitions. They help us so much, especially Mr. Scruggs.”

“We also want to thank the people at the link for giving us the opportunity to expand into this space,” said Zack. “We’re very appreciative that they’ve been so welcoming to us and been so helpful with everything we need.”

To learn more about Nease NJROTC, go to sites.google.com/a/navyjrotc.us/nease-panther-njrotc.



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GUEST COLUMN

Debt Ceiling Déjà Vu

A brief history of debt crises



By Scott A. Grant

Today, we are facing another terrifying debt ceiling crisis. You can be forgiven if you feel you have seen this story before. You have. The United States is rapidly approaching a self-imposed debt

ceiling of a little over \$31 trillion. That may sound like a lot of money. It is. If the U.S. cannot borrow more than that amount, we will go into default with potentially disastrous effects.

The national debt has always been a political issue. Andrew Jackson, our seventh president, was so appalled by the debt that he made it a campaign promise to pay it off. Through a variety of austere measures, he accomplished that goal in January of 1835. It is the only time in our history we have been debt-free. The results were disastrous. Immediately after Jackson left office the country plunged into one of the worst recessions ever, the Panic of 1837.

The first debt ceiling was implemented in 1917. It was part of the Second Liberty Bond Act and set a limit on all U.S. debt at \$15 billion. Liberty Bonds were issued to pay for our involvement in World War I. There were four issues and eventually, we paid off the first three

and then defaulted on the fourth during the Great Depression.

That debt ceiling remained soft until the Public Debt Act of 1939. At that time the debt ceiling was increased to \$49 billion. Today we spend almost \$10 billion per day. The debt ceiling was increased in 1941, 1942, 1943, 1944 and 1945 to a new limit of \$300 billion. In a rare move the ceiling was decreased in 1946.

The debt ceiling has been increased approximately 90 times since 1940. In the late 1970s, Congressman Dick Gephardt proposed the “Gephardt Rule” that automatically increased the debt ceiling to avoid a government default. That remained the standard until a hard ceiling was implemented again in 1995.

Since then, every year or so, we are faced as a nation with a new debt crisis. Currently, our government is gridlocked as we hurtle towards a possible default. One side argues that if we do not curtail

spending, our growing debt will ruin us. The other side warns that if we do not increase the debt ceiling we will go into default and lose our international monetary primacy. So far, neither of those consequences have materialized.

In 2011, failure to increase the debt ceiling led to a downgrade of U.S. debt and a stock market crash of about 15%. Since then, we have gotten used to the idea that these regular brawls over the national debt are a non-event. This seems like a crazy way to run a country. The reality is that the national debt has increased steadily since 1835 and will continue to do so into the future. We cannot authorize spending and then not deliver payment. Sooner or later, that kind of nonsense will catch up to us.

Scott A. Grant is a local historian and investment advisor. He uses his knowledge of the past to prepare and protect for the future.

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Goodwill Festival: Saluting veterans, community

Veterans News Network has announced the upcoming Goodwill Festival, an event designed to fortify and celebrate the unbreakable bond between the military and civilian communities in Jacksonville.

The festival, formerly known as the MilVetsFest, recognizes Jacksonville's unwavering backing of its service members and veterans with a huge "Thank You for Your Support."

Taking place from noon to 9 p.m. Saturday, June 3, at the SeaWalk Pavilion in Jacksonville Beach, the festival draws

upon the rich military history of Jacksonville. Home to Naval Air Station Jacksonville, Naval Station Mayport and the Jacksonville Air National Guard Base, the city's robust Naval presence and enduring legacy of military tradition form the backbone of the Goodwill Festival.

As Jacksonville's largest military/veterans festival, the Goodwill Festival offers an all-day program including a music festival, organized to honor the military, veterans and their supporters. The festival has extended an invitation to the First

Coast business community and industry leaders to partner in this event. Each partner will be recognized as a community leader supporting local veterans and active-duty service members, reflecting the spirit of unity and gratitude.

The festival promises a vibrant atmosphere, inviting vendors and food trucks to participate and offers individuals the chance to become "friends" of the festival by making a donation of any amount.

On June 3, the Goodwill Festival provides a platform for veterans to express

their gratitude to the city that has stood by them, reflecting the festival's theme of "Thank You for Your Support." It presents a unique opportunity to be part of a pivotal movement that sets a precedent for future community events, aiming to bring veterans and civilians closer.

Veterans News Network encourages interested parties to explore the various partnership opportunities for the Goodwill Festival. Go to goodwillfestival.com or call 904-683-0918 for more information.

Briefs

Continued from 2

Pianist to perform with symphony

World-class pianist Conrad Tao returns to perform with the Jacksonville Symphony on June 9 to close the season with a performance of Prokofiev's Piano Concerto No. 3 in a program that also includes Shostakovich's Symphony No. 10.

Conrad, a former child prodigy at the

piano, is also an acclaimed composer whose original works have been performed by the New York Philharmonic, the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, the Baltimore Symphony and more.

To learn more or purchase tickets, go to my.jaxsymphony.org/conrad-cao-plays-prokofiev.

Gala raises \$675K for Ronald McDonald House

Nearly 300 supporters raised a record-

setting \$675,000 to support Ronald McDonald House Charities of Jacksonville during its May 20 gala fundraising event, presented proudly by Fields Auto Group, Vystar Credit Union, Campbell Plumbing & Mechanical Contractors Southeast Inc, Florida Blue, Nan and Joe Ferrara, and Tim and Stephanie Cost.

McGala 2023, in celebration of the 35th Anniversary of the Jacksonville location, was held at Ponte Vedra Inn and Club.

"Our McGala was an opportunity to

commemorate three-and-a-half decades of unwavering commitment to helping families during their most challenging times," said Joey Leik, Ronald McDonald House Charities of Jacksonville CEO. "We are profoundly grateful for the collective efforts that have transformed RMHC into a beacon of hope for countless families from around the world."

— Compiled by Shaun Ryan



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St. Johns County named among Florida's most generous

By Anthony Richards

There continues to be a lot going for St. Johns County, as it is not only a popular destination for people moving to the state due to its proximity to the coast and excellent schools and way of life, but a recent study also found that it is one of the most generous counties in Florida.

For years now, St. Johns County has been known as a very affluent county throughout the state, but a study done by SmartAsset, an online option for consumer-focused financial information and advice, labeled the county among the top-10 most generous Florida counties.



The study listed St. Johns as sixth statewide among counties with a generosity index score of 45.82. In comparison, topping the list was Collier County in Southwest Florida with a score of 56.62. Other counties just ahead of St. Johns

included Monroe, Walton, Palm Beach and Martin.

The counties St. Johns was ahead of on the list were Indian River, Sarasota, Nassau and Broward.

SmartAsset methodology used in determining the generosity score was factoring in a combination of how much money county residents donate as a percentage of their net income and the proportion of people who made charitable donations.

Tax return data gathered from the Internal Revenue Service was used to account for federal state and local taxes paid and combined with the net income of all the people in each county.

Each county's total charitable donations were then divided by its total net income to determine how much a county's residents donate in relation to their income.

Despite being sixth on the list overall, St. Johns County was second with a mark of 12.97% of returns itemizing charitable contributions, only behind Collier at 13.40%.

SmartAsset did not stop there and did the same study but for the United States as a whole.

St. Johns County's generosity score wound up being ranked 183rd nationally among 3,000-plus counties.

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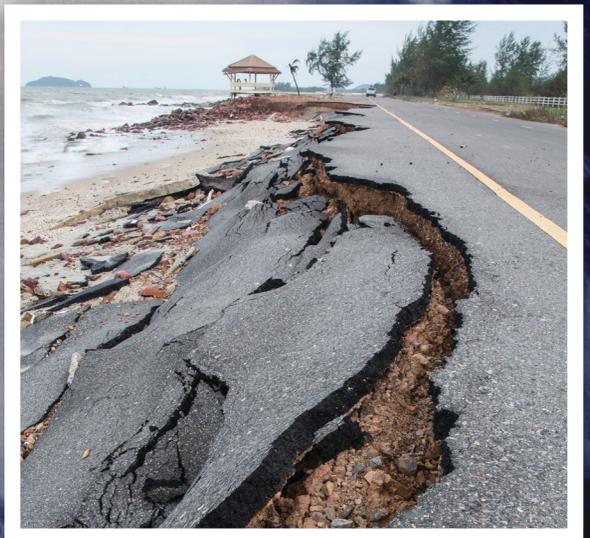
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HURRICANE
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HURRICANE SURVIVAL GUIDE

HURRICANE CHECKLISTS

Make checklists, get items together before the storm

One way to be prepared for a major storm is by assembling a disaster supply kit. Once disaster strikes, it will be too late to shop or search for supplies. If you have gathered supplies in advance, you and your family can endure an evacuation or home confinement.

ON THE ROAD

Prepare Ahead for the Trip. Things to assemble:

- Cash | Credit Cards
- Important Documents
- Road Maps
- Jumper Cables
- Tire Repair Kit
- Flashlight | Batteries
- Battery Operated Radio
- Fire Extinguisher
- Blankets | Sleeping Bags
- Pillows
- Toiletries
- Medications
- First Aid Kit
- Extra Baby Supplies
- Non-Perishable Foods
- Drinking Water
- Games | Books

AT HOME

What to get together in advance of a hurricane:

- Non-Perishable Foods
- Drinking Water
- First Aid Kit
- Medications
- Cash | Credit Cards
- Flashlight | Batteries
- Battery Operated Radio
- Manual Can Opener
- Extra Baby Supplies
- Games | Books
- Fire Extinguisher
- Phone | Non-Portable
- Fill Tub with Water for Sanitation
- Porta-Pot for Well Water Users

AT THE SHELTER

If you are going to a shelter, consider bringing these, as needed:

- 3-Day Supply of Water
- 3-Day Supply of Non-Perishable Foods
- Medications | Specialized Supplies
- Diabetics on Insulin | Small Cooler for Insulin
- Toiletries
- Flashlight | Batteries
- Pillows | Blankets
- Sleeping Bag | Egg Crate Mattress
- Cot | Lawn Chair
- Important Papers | Identification
- Extra Clothing
- Books | Magazines | Cards, etc.

— Adapted from [sjcemergencymanagement.com](#)

With the 2023 Atlantic hurricane season officially beginning on June 1, local families need to know what to do and where to go should the threat of a hurricane (or any disaster) become real.

The Ponte Vedra Recorder has pulled together a collection of resources to help readers prepare.

HURRICANE CATEGORIES

What does the hurricane category mean?

The Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Wind Scale is a rating from 1 to 5 based on a hurricane's maximum sustained wind speed. This scale does not take into account other potentially deadly hazards such as storm surge, rainfall flooding and tornadoes.

The scale estimates potential property damage. While all hurricanes produce life-threatening winds, hurricanes rated Category 3 and higher are known as major hurricanes. Major hurricanes can cause catastrophic damage and significant loss of life simply due to the strength of their winds. Hurricanes of all categories can produce deadly storm surge, rain-induced floods and tornadoes. These hazards require people to take protective action, including evacuation from areas vulnerable to storm surge.

Here's a look at each level:

Category 1 | 74-95 mph

Well-constructed frame homes could have damage to roof, shingles, vinyl siding and gutters. Large branches of trees will snap and shallowly rooted trees may be toppled. Extensive damage to power lines and poles likely will result in power outages that could last a few to several days.

Category 2 | 96-110 mph

Well-constructed frame homes could sustain major roof and siding damage. Many shallowly rooted trees will be

snapped or uprooted and block numerous roads. Near-total power loss is expected with outages that could last from several days to weeks.

Category 3 | 111-129 mph

Well-built framed homes may incur major damage or removal of roof decking and gable ends. Many trees will be snapped or uprooted, blocking numerous roads. Electricity and water will be unavailable for several days to weeks after the storm passes.

Category 4 | 130-156 mph

Well-built framed homes can sustain severe damage with loss of most of the roof structure and/or some exterior walls. Most trees will be snapped or uprooted and power poles downed. Fallen trees and power poles will isolate residential areas. Power outages will last weeks to possibly months. Most of the area will be uninhabitable for weeks or months.

Category 5 | 157 mph or higher

A high percentage of framed homes will be destroyed, with total roof failure and wall collapse. Fallen trees and power poles will isolate residential areas. Power outages will last for weeks to possibly months. Most of the area will be uninhabitable for weeks or months.

— Adapted from [sjcemergencymanagement.com](#)

ST. JOHNS COUNTY SHELTER LOCATIONS

The following shelters are designated as official hurricane shelter locations by the Department of Emergency Management. If possible, evacuate to the home of a friend or family member outside of the evacuation area. A shelter should be your refuge of last resort if you have absolutely nowhere else to go.

Monitor the county's emergency management website, local radio and television stations, or contact the Department of Emergency Management at 904-824-5550 to find out which shelters are open when an evacuation order is given.

Public schools in St. Johns County serve as evacuation shelters. Remember, the school closest to your home may not necessarily be an evacuation shelter.

General Evacuation Shelters

- **Bartram Trail High School**
7399 Longleaf Pine Pkwy., St. Johns
- **Creekside High School**
100 Knights Lane, St. Johns
- **Cunningham Creek Elementary**
1205 Roberts Road, St. Johns
- **Durbin Creek Elementary School**
4100 Race Track Road, St. Johns
- **Fruit Cove Middle School**
3180 Race Track Road, St. Johns
- **Hickory Creek Elementary School**
235 Hickory Creek Trail, St. Johns
- **Mill Creek Elementary School**
3750 International Golf Pkwy., St. Augustine

- **Osceola Elementary School**
1605 Osceola Elementary Road, St. Augustine
- **Otis Mason Elementary School**
207 Mason Manatee Way, St. Augustine
- **Patriot Oaks Academy**
475 Longleaf Pine Parkway, St. Johns
- **Pedro Menendez High School**
600 S.R. 206 West, St. Augustine
- **Tocoi Creek High School**
11200 St. Johns Parkway, St. Augustine
- **Pet-Friendly Shelters**
- **South Woods Elementary School**
4750 S.R. 206 West, Elkton

- **Timberlin Creek Elementary School**
555 Pine Tree Lane, St. Augustine

Special Needs Evacuation Shelters

- **Freedom Crossing Academy**
1365 Shetland Drive, St. Johns
- **Pacetti Bay Middle School**
245 Meadowlark Lane, St. Augustine

The special medical needs shelter is for persons with medical needs that cannot be met in a general shelter. Pre-registration is strongly encouraged for assignment to a special medical needs shelter, prior to a disaster.

— Adapted from [sjcemergencymanagement.com](#)

GUEST COLUMN

Important things for home or business owners to know



By Wayne Terry

2023 NOAA Prediction: Hurricane season starts June 1, 2023, and ends on November 30, 2023. The NOAA outlook predicts a likelihood of 12-17 named storms: 5-9 hurricanes and 1-4 major hurricanes.

If you have lived in Florida for a long time, you already know to be prepared with getting plenty of water, food, gas, etc.; however, what if your home or business is damaged?

If you own a home, you most likely have a regular homeowner's insurance policy. If a pipe breaks in your home, you are most likely covered for all but your deductible. However, if you have rising water due to a storm, your insurance policy, most likely, will not cover this. When I think of Jacksonville I don't think "if" it's going to happen, I think "when" is it going to happen.

I highly recommend purchasing a flood policy for your home whether or not the city says you are in a "flood zone." As the owner of PuroClean Emergency Services, most of the storm floods I come across the building owner says, "This has never happened to me before." Or "This has never happened in this neighborhood before." It is important to know that if you have a flood policy it still might not cover all the costs associated with a flood; however, it will cover a good portion. This is something you should talk to your insurance agent about. Flood insurance is very inexpensive, and I would call this a great safety measure.

If your home or business is flooded from a storm, I would not recommend trying to take care of the damage yourself. Call a professional restoration company such as PuroClean Emergency Services. Restoration companies deal with insurance companies all the time and know the proper ways to make sure your insurance company is taking good care of you. Do not take a fast payout offer, as they are usually lower than what it would cost to restore a property properly.

Although water losses are assigned a category of 1, 2, 3 and sometimes 4 (not to be mixed up with the category of a hurricane), water coming in from the outside is always at least a 3 if not 4. This is because the water coming in from outside could have pesticides, animal urine, automobile oils and gases and other unknown ingredients. Anything this water touches should be discarded with the exception of structural items, which should be disinfected and dried out as soon as possible.

The last thing to know is that if FEMA is involved and your flood has been sitting there long enough to cause mold, FEMA will not cover mold-related activities. It is important to discuss this with your restoration company at the time of inspection so if there are any additional charges you know what they are.

Wayne Terry is the owner of PuroClean Emergency Services in Jacksonville. For more information about his restoration company, go to www.PuroCleanES.com or call 904-573-3566. This company is available for emergencies or questions 24 hours a day.



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Photo courtesy of Patriot Roofing Services, Inc.

Roofs are one of the primary layers of defense between a family and a storm, so it is important to keep them maintained.

Roof maintenance, awareness part of storm prep

By Anthony Richards

With another hurricane season under way, there are certain things that a resident should be aware of as they prepare and that includes their roof.

According to Mark Tuzzolo, owner and general contractor at Patriot Roofing Services, Inc., there is not much a homeowner can do at times to prevent damage during a storm from taking place, but there are certain steps they can take to limit the amount of damage that may occur in the event of a natural disaster.

That includes having a roof go through a checkup by a roofing company every year or every couple of years.

“It’s all about making sure there are no glaring issues that may exist, which could become a real problem in the event of a storm rolling through,” Tuzzolo said.

Just as homeowners are completing their checklists to make sure they are as prepared as possible in the case of a storm this hurricane season, so does Tuzzolo, by going around and buying tarps from Home Depot to have on hand for when emergencies arise.

“That way at least we can cover up their roof in the event of damage, so that they stay dry at least until their insurance company has a chance to come out and assess the situation,” Tuzzolo said. “From now until mid-November, we stay pretty busy.”

Tuzzolo has been a general contractor since 1985 and began Patriot Roofing 12 years ago.

He has seen a lot of changes take place during his dozen years in the business, but one of the most impactful has

occurred in the past couple of years as insurance companies have begun to force people to pay more attention to their roofs than ever before.

“Here is Florida, from an insurance standpoint, roofs are the biggest risk,” Tuzzolo said.

In recent years most insurance companies in Florida will require a homeowner to get a new roof after 15 years or else no longer be insured.

“It’s a good way to make people more aware, because let’s face it, roofs are not as sexy as redesigning your kitchen or bathroom, because you don’t quite see the everyday effects of it,” Tuzzolo said. “But it does protect you from the weather, and that is a big deal.”

Due to Florida being a peninsula and its history with hurricanes, there are certain measures and precautions taken that are unique from other states.

“Some states don’t even require you to pull a permit to put on a roof,” Tuzzolo said. “We have much more stringent codes we have to apply here.”

According to Tuzzolo, houses built in the state before 2005 were required to have nail spacing of 12 inches apart, but it has since been changed to six inches apart, and shingles now require six nails instead of four.

“It makes the structure stronger against hurricane-force winds,” Tuzzolo said.

Patriot Roofing helps protect residential and commercial owners throughout the Northeast Florida area, with a coverage area spanning from south of St. Augustine up north to St. Mary’s and west to Macclenny.

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Planning is critical prior to the arrival of a named storm

Every year, local residents are reminded of the community's vulnerability to hurricanes. As the county grows and develops, knowledge and planning become increasingly important.

Those who live in coastal or low-lying areas, areas that flood frequently, or in manufactured homes, may be asked to evacuate. To be "prepared," residents should have a plan.

Have a Plan

A disaster can strike quickly and without warning. You can be forced to evacuate your

neighborhood or be confined to your home. What will you do when disaster strikes? Where will your family be when disaster strikes? Are you prepared?

Begin by gathering some basic, yet vital information. Know if you live in an evacuation area or not. Know your home's vulnerability to storm surge, flooding and wind. If you are asked to evacuate, where will you go? Know the evacuation routes you will take. Do you have a family member with special needs? Do you have pets? Does your plan include them?

Write a family plan based on this informa-

tion. For helpful information and guidance in preparing "Your Family Disaster Plan," view the county's Hurricane Preparedness Guide, which can be found at <https://www.sjcemergencymanagement.com/pdf/SJC-Hurricane-Preparedness-Guide.pdf>.

Also, go to any of the following sites:

Family Communications Plan for Parents

Does your family know how to get in touch with each other? Go to <https://www.sjcemergencymanagement.com/pdf-fema/parentsplan.pdf>

Family Communications Plan for Kids

How to get in touch with your family. <https://www.sjcemergencymanagement.com/pdf-fema/kidsplan.pdf>

Get a plan

Go to Florida Disaster.org.

Red Cross

Make a disaster preparedness plan. Go to: <https://www.redcross.org/get-help/how-to-prepare-for-emergencies/make-a-plan.html>

— Adapted from [sjcemergencymanagement.com](https://www.sjcemergencymanagement.com)

What to know about storm surge

— Adapted from [sjcemergencymanagement.com](https://www.sjcemergencymanagement.com)

Storm surge is water that is pushed toward the shore by the force of the winds swirling around the storm. This advancing surge combines with the normal tides to create the hurricane storm tide, which can increase the mean water level 15 feet or more. Additionally, wind-driven waves are superimposed on the storm tide. This rise in water level can cause severe flooding in coastal areas, particularly when the storm tide coincides with the normal high tides.

Because much of the densely populated Atlantic coastline lies less than 10 feet above mean sea level, the danger from storm tides is tremendous.

Wave and current action associated with the tide also causes extensive damage. Water weighs about 1,700 pounds per cubic yard; extended pounding by frequent waves can demolish any structure not specifically designed to withstand these forces. The currents created by the tide combine with the action of the waves to severely erode beaches and coastal highways. Many buildings withstand hurricane force winds until their foundations, undermined by erosion, fail.

The level of surge in a particular area is also determined by the slope of the continental shelf. A shallow slope off the coast will allow a greater surge to inundate coastal communities. Communities with a steeper continental shelf will not see as much surge inundation, although large breaking waves can still present major problems. Storm tides, waves and currents in confined harbors severely damage ships, marinas and pleasure boats.

Storm surge also affects rivers and inland lakes, potentially increasing the area that must be evacuated.

The more intense the storm, and the closer a community is to the storm's right-front quadrant, the larger the area that must be evacuated. The problem is always the uncertainty about how intense the storm will be when it finally makes landfall. Emergency managers and local officials balance that uncertainty with the human and economic risks to their communities. This is why a rule of thumb for emergency managers is to plan for a storm one category higher than what is forecast.



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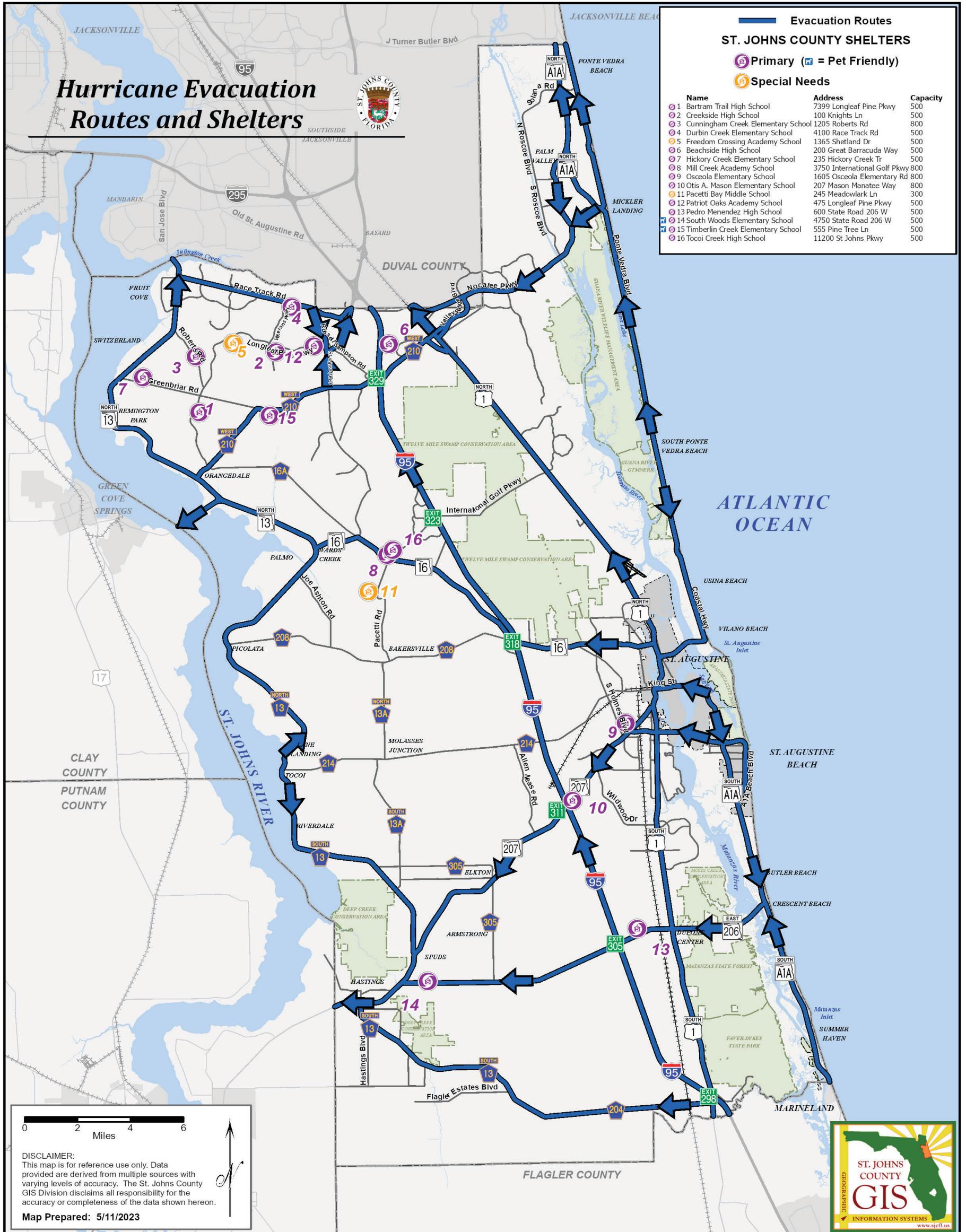
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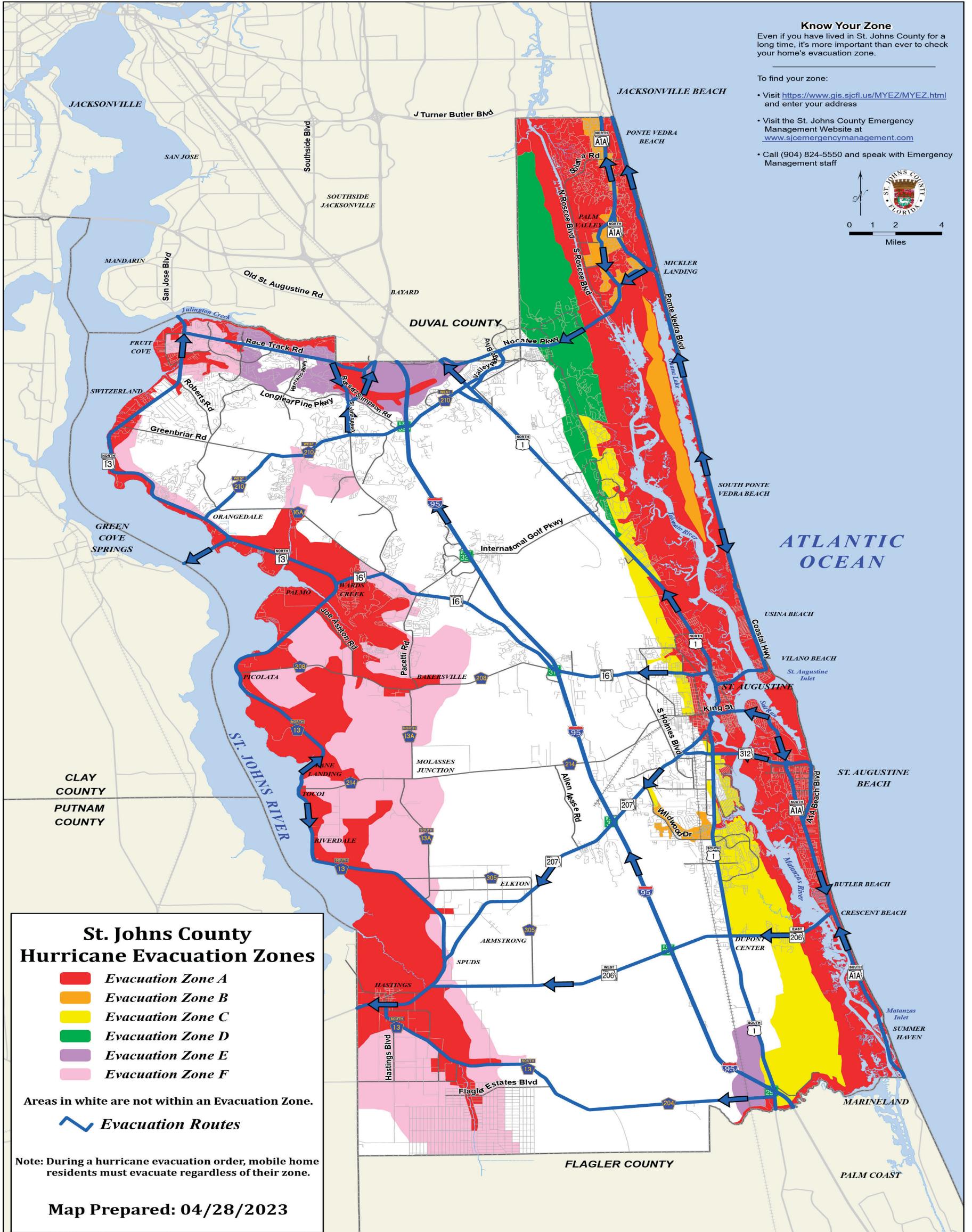
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What you need to know about shelters

A shelter is a place to go in the event of an evacuation. Shelters are noisy, crowded and have few personal comforts. It is important to note that shelters should be your refuge of last resort if you have absolutely nowhere else to go. For your comfort, if possible, it would be preferable to arrange to stay outside the area of danger.

Being in a shelter is stressful, so evacuees are asked to treat others with courtesy and kindness.

Food and Water

During a storm, the water supply may be interrupted. You are responsible for bringing bottled water to the shelter in the event this should happen. One gallon per person per day is recommended. You should also bring a three-day supply of nonperishable foods or healthy snacks for yourself, your caregiver and any family member accompanying you. Though food is usually supplied, it may take several hours for meals to be prepared.

Notification

In the event of an evacuation, shelter openings will be announced. It is very important to monitor the local television and radio stations for weather updates, evacuation orders and shelter information.

You can also monitor sjcemergencymanagement.com or call 904-824-5550.

In St. Johns County, select public schools serve as our evacuation shelters. It is a good idea to familiarize yourself with the shelter locations. Remember, the school closest to your home may not necessarily be an evacuation shelter.

Shelter Rules

- You must sign in when you arrive and



sign out when you leave

- No disorderly or disruptive behavior
- No smoking in the shelters
- No alcohol or drugs
- No guns or weapons of any kind

Public Shelter Information

No registration is required for a public shelter. Once an evacuation order is given, and the public shelter locations have been announced, proceed to shelter location.

If you need to go to a public shelter but do not have transportation, register with the county by way of printable mail-in form or call 904-824-5550.

Special Needs Shelter Information

St. Johns County Department of Emergency Management, St. Johns County Public Health Department and other county agencies and volunteers have established special medical needs shelters for use during an evacuation.

A Special needs shelter is different than

a public shelter; it is a refuge for people who have specific medical needs that cannot be met in a public shelter.

The special needs shelter is not for people who need 24-hour dedicated care, require hospital beds or ventilators or have other complex care needs. These people must discuss other sheltering arrangements with their caregiver, health care provider or physician. If ambulance transportation is required, this should be discussed at that time, also. These arrangements should be made well in advance, not when the order to evacuate has been announced.

A limited number of cots are available and are offered on a first come-first served bases, so there is the possibility there will not be cots available for everyone in the shelter, so prepare your supplies accordingly. Hospital beds will not be available.

The shelter has an emergency generator to supply power to medical equipment. There may be times in order to conserve

available power, that air conditioning will not be available.

The special needs shelter is not a substitute for regular health care. Basic medical assistance and monitoring will be available. The shelter is not equipped with advanced medical equipment and is not staffed to provide advanced levels of care.

Pet Shelters

Pets are only allowed at designated pet-friendly shelters. St. Johns County has two. The following two schools are designated as pet friendly shelters:

- South Woods Elementary School, 4750 S.R. 206 West
- Timberlin Creek Elementary School, 555 Pine Tree Lane

Pre-registration is not required to go to a public pet friendly shelter. You only need to register if you need transportation assistance during an evacuation.

Pet owners are required to shelter with their pets and care for them. You may not drop off your pets and leave.

Farm animals and exotics (primates, snakes, spiders, insects, etc.) are not permitted at pet friendly shelters.

Pet requirements include:

- Airline-approved pet carriers
- Cage liners
- Proper ID collar and rabies tag
- Leash
- Food supplies — at least three days
- Water and food bowls
- Pet medications — If necessary
- Disposable litter trays (aluminum pans work well)
- Litter or paper towels
- Disposable garbage bags for clean-up
- Comfort items for your pet (such as blankets and toys)

— Adapted from sjcemergencymanagement.com

Building or rebuilding, observe hazard mitigation

Hazard mitigation means reducing the loss of life and property by taking measures to lessen the impact of disasters.

Why Is Mitigating Important?

As Floridians rebuild after a hurricane, they can take steps to make their homes stronger. On average, every \$1 spent on mitigation helps save \$6 in future disaster-related repairs.

Know Your Risk

The first step is identifying what you need to protect your home from. Your local floodplain manager and emergency manager can give you information on the wind and water hazards possible in your community.

Be sure to consult with a licensed contractor and the local building de-

partment before making any structural changes to understand requirements and obtain any necessary permits.

For information on selecting contractors, disaster cleanup, flood insurance, building back stronger and safer, and other ways to reduce future risk, call a FEMA Hazard Mitigation Specialist at 833-336-2487.

Mitigation Options

Protect your home from:

Flooding — Elevate or floodproof heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) and/or mechanical units, ductwork, electrical systems and other utilities to protect against flood damage and reduce repair costs. For more information, read “Protect Your Property From Flooding,” which can be found

at https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/2020-11/fema_protect-your-home_flooding.pdf

Wind — Install hurricane shutters to protect windows and glass doors as a practical way to prevent damage from strong winds. Also, consider reinforcing garage and double-entry doors to prevent failure under wind pressure. Check out “Protect Your Property from Severe Winds” for more tips. It can be found at https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/2020-11/fema_protect-your-property_severe-wind.pdf

Storm surge — This is the most destructive part of coastal flooding. The first step to protect your home against storm surge is identifying the Base Flood Elevation (BFE) for your home. You can do so by looking up your ad-

dress on the National Hazard Layer. Go to <https://www.fema.gov/flood-maps/national-flood-hazard-layer>.

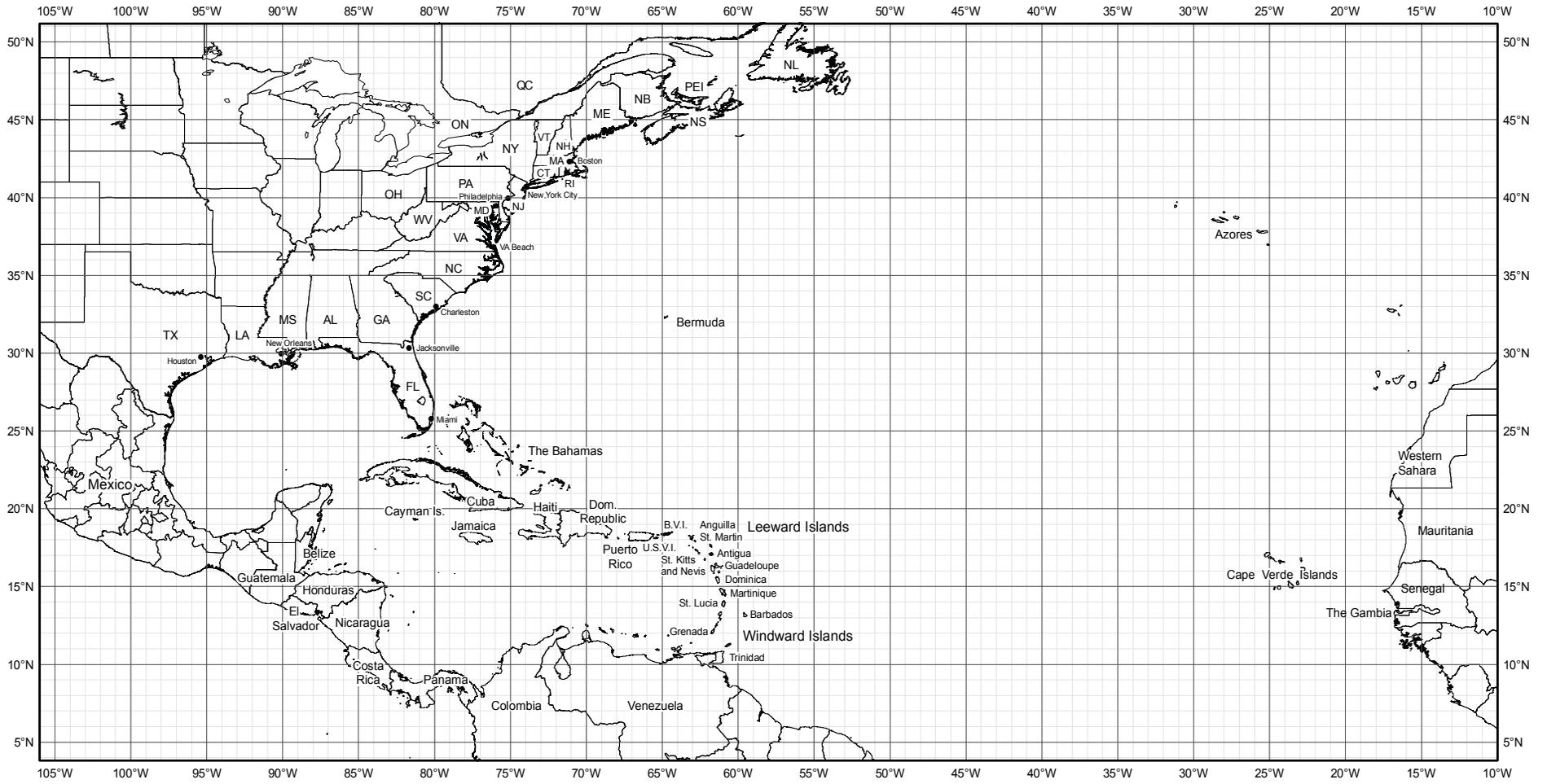
Florida has a 1-foot freeboard plus BFE, and some communities have a higher freeboard requirement. For the proper height to elevate your structure, contact your local floodplain manager. Knowing your flood elevation will help you determine how high to elevate your house, outdoor A/C units and more.

For assistance finding and understanding your flood elevation, email FEMA-FMIX@fema.dhs.gov or call 877-336-2627. Go to Protect Your Property from Storm Surge for more details. It can be found at https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/documents/fema_protect-your-property-storm-surge.pdf



Atlantic Basin Hurricane Tracking Chart

National Hurricane Center, Miami, Florida



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Attendees visited St. Augustine wastewater plant on Riberia Street for a tour.

Chamber hosts 'Beyond Weathering the Storm: How to Thrive, Not Just Survive'

St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce and the organization's Historic St. Augustine Area Council hosted a free meeting and community roundtable in April at Our Lady of La Leche at Mission Nombre de Dios on the topic of storm mitigation measures, "Beyond Weathering the Storm: How to Thrive, Not Just Survive."

The member and guest event was also open to the public and included a discussion about short- and long-term solutions plus simple to sophisticated methods to protect homes and businesses from flooding, storms and hurricanes. Potential funding opportunities to strengthen local businesses and private residences, along with updates on actions being taken by St. Johns County and the City of St. Augustine to prepare were also covered.

The presentation addressed storm preparation and mitigation solutions for businesses and residents. Speakers provided attendees with resources such as a list of loans and grants available to support their properties for long-term resilience.

"Our business owners know the drill," said Isabelle Renault, Chamber president and CEO. "They have their list of supplies, including plastic tarp, foam spray and lots of sandbags to protect their properties. Going beyond that is critical. When the ocean waters are calm, businesses must consider reducing their risk and exposure by implementing mitigation measures."

Invited speakers included Marge Cirillo, a consultant at Florida Small Business Development Center; Jessica Beach, chief

resilience officer, and a professional engineer with the City of St. Augustine; and Westly Woodward, floodplain manager with St. Johns County Growth Management.

After the talk, event transportation sponsor Old Town Trolley Tours of St. Augustine and Historic Tours of America, hosted 20 attendees on a short trip to the St. Augustine wastewater plant on Riberia Street for a tour. Participants learned how the protective measures implemented by city staff are applicable to residents' and business owners' properties.

The measures include the use of hardening methods and advanced pumping stations, among many others.

"St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce is dedicated to its members and helps to inform businesses and residents about many topics for a diverse group of industries, people and interests," said Renault. "With all our programs, we serve as an integrated influence and a strong voice. Our board and council leaders work hard to sustain and grow many value-added services to support economic development with a mission to thrive in our county."

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FPL prepares for hurricane season with storm drill training

More than 3,500 Florida Power & Light Company (FPL) employees participated in the company’s comprehensive annual storm drill designed to test their response to a simulated hurricane. The weeklong drill is an important component of FPL’s extensive year-round training to ensure employees are ready to respond when customers need them most.

During the exercise, “Hurricane Flynn” — a mock Category 4 storm — made a simulated landfall in Southeast Florida. FPL employees tested and role-played how they would respond, including their restoration efforts, operations, logistics, communications and customer service.

The upcoming hurricane season is the first since Hurricane Ian made landfall in Southwest Florida as the fifth strongest storm to ever hit the United States. Six weeks after Ian, Hurricane Nicole struck the east coast of Florida as the first November hurricane to hit the state since 1985.

“The 2022 hurricane season is still fresh in the memory of many Floridians, especially those who lost loved ones or who are still recovering from hurricanes Ian and Nicole,” said Armando Pimentel, president and CEO of FPL. “We learn lessons from every storm season. At FPL, rigorous training and cutting-edge technology help us to enhance our response each year, but no electrical system is hurricane-proof, and storms will result in power outages. We urge all Floridians to



Photo provided by FPL

More than 3,500 FPL employees participated in a mock Category 4 storm drill recently.

start planning for the upcoming hurricane season now and consider how best to prepare their families, homes and businesses. The work we put in today will pay off as we face another hurricane season together.”

Since the historic 2004-05 hurricane seasons, when seven storms hit FPL’s service area, FPL has made significant investments to strengthen the power grid against extreme weather and improve day-to-day reliability. These include:

- Hardening main power lines that serve critical community facilities and services
- Installing more than 200,000 intel-

ligent devices along the energy grid to detect and prevent power outages and minimize restoration times when outages occur. These devices helped customers avoid nearly 550,000 outages during the 2022 hurricane season.

- Placing more neighborhood power lines underground through the Storm Secure Underground Program, which has completed more than 1,200 projects through the end of 2022.

“The most important preparation for extreme weather is sustained, long-term investments to build a stronger and smarter energy grid, as we have seen time

and again,” said Manny Miranda, executive vice president of power delivery for FPL. “We continue to train our men and women — as we’ve been doing at our storm drill this week — so that when a storm hits, we can get the lights back on faster for our customers who depend on us, and the Florida economy can return to normal operations quickly.”

As part of the training exercise, FPL showcased and demonstrated innovative technology used to assist with storm restoration, including its new drone-in-a-box and the Mobile Command Center emergency vehicle that provides FPL with on-scene command and control during major events and emergencies. In addition, FPL unveiled its EVOlution trailer, the state’s first electric vehicle (EV) mobile-charging trailer that provides “on-the-go” fast charging during evacuations for the growing number of EV drivers.

Customers urged to connect with FPL

FPL reminds its customers that every storm is different, along with the potential damage it can cause. Staying connected with FPL can help customers make decisions, before, during and after a storm:

- FPL website: [FPL.com/storm](https://www.fpl.com/storm)
- Twitter: twitter.com/insideFPL
- Facebook: facebook.com/FPLconnect
- FPL Power Tracker: [FPL.com/powertracker](https://www.fpl.com/powertracker)
- FPL app: Download from the App Store or Google Play

Nearly \$7B in federal support has helped Floridians after Hurricane Ian

More than \$6.97 billion in federal support to Floridians continues to help households, communities and the state of Florida recover from Hurricane Ian, which struck the state Sept. 29.

The support includes \$1.06 billion in FEMA Individual Assistance for 384,477 households to help with rent and repairs, \$1.77 billion in low-interest disaster loans from the U.S. Small Business Administration, \$3.4 billion in payments from the National Flood Insurance Program, and \$738 million to reimburse the state and local governments for the costs of debris removal and emergency response.

Temporary housing is a priority and 709 families have been given the keys to travel trailers, manufactured housing units or apartment homes provided by FEMA

for hurricane survivors. More homes are being prepared for occupancy. More than 4,500 households have stayed in hotel rooms provided by FEMA, though most have found longer term housing.

FEMA is providing funds for the state’s non-congregate sheltering in travel trailers.

“This has been an enormous effort on the part of many federal agencies, assisting the state with response and recovery,” said Federal Coordinating Officer Tom McCool. “As part of emergency response, we funded state operations to restore power, transportation, and access to island communities. Federal medical teams helped medical facilities in Lee County continue to treat patients. The U.S. Coast Guard helped get supplies to islands. When the state asked if we could pay for the trailers they are using for survivors, we said yes. We are doing everything we can to get help to people who need it and we will be on the job for as long as it takes.”

Debris removal in the hardest-hit areas was expedited when FEMA allowed for waivers in the application process by some local jurisdictions, saving as much as six months in the debris removal pro-

cess. More than 32.3 million cubic yards of debris has been removed, including almost 12.4 million cubic yards in Lee County.

Of the \$1.06 billion provided to households through Individual Assistance, \$449 million has gone to 97,878 Lee County households.



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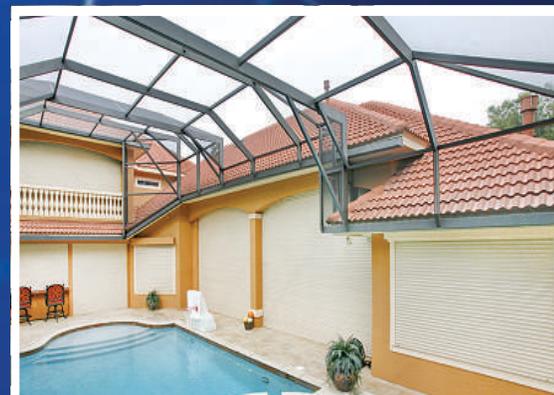
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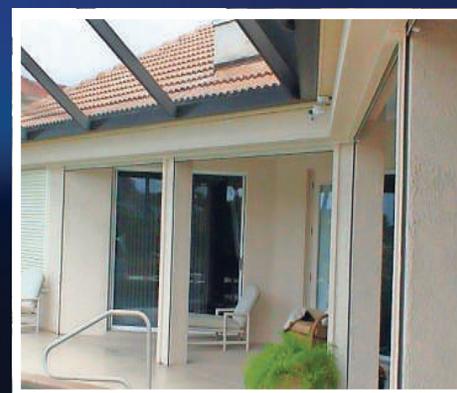
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Residents honored at annual Rotary Local Heroes Banquet

The Rotary Club of Ponte Vedra Beach and The Recorder held the 31st Annual Local Heroes Banquet at Marsh Landing Country Club on May 25. Five residents were recognized for their various forms of dedication to the community and were each presented with a 2023 local hero award.

Photos by Susan Griffin



Scott Hetzinger was recognized as the behind-the-scenes force behind Lend an Ear to help ensure the nonprofit organization continues its life-altering work.



Lyn Gabrielsen was recognized for her unwavering commitment to volunteer service at local schools.



Cody Langley is a high school student and was recognized for leading by example.



Lori Richards' daughter Kate Savage accepted the award for her mom, who was unable to attend the ceremony. Lori was recognized as the retiring leader of BEAM and for her years of nonprofit leadership in Northeast Florida.



Bill and JoAnn Lee were recognized for their years of faithful commitment to community service.

Business Weekly

For MORE business news, go to facebook.com/ThePVRecorder

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THURSDAY, JUNE 1, 2023

www.PonteVedraRecorder.com

Mixed-use luxury development to open by fall 2024

The Beaches Town Center will soon welcome a development unlike any other where Atlantic Boulevard meets the ocean.

On Thursday, June 1, crews will break ground on Grand Ocean, a 25,000-square-foot mixed-use development in the heart

of The Beaches Town Center, the cultural and commercial hub of Atlantic Beach and Neptune Beach.

The three-story building will be home to two floors of Class A office space, with the bottom floor offering a mix of high-end

retail, dining and other amenities. In addition to on-site street parking, Grand Ocean will offer full-time valet for all tenants and customers of the building.

"Our vision is to create a special place that both locals are proud of and that visitors are impressed by," said Shahab Derazi, president of J&H Advisors, Inc., the Jacksonville Beach-based group representing the project owner.

Preserving the aesthetic

While it will be the only three-story building in the area, its developers have taken a thoughtful approach to ensure the new addition complements the beaches community and preserves the unique character of the traditional seaside neighborhoods.

"This isn't going to be just another building at the beach," Derazi said. "We want Grand Ocean to have a certain presence, so we're considering the right mix of tenants to attract quality customers that reflect the values of this tight-knit community I call home, too."

One-of-a-kind office space

Grand Ocean will bring two floors of Class A office space to a thriving area known for its dining, retail and entertainment. At 7,000 square feet each, the second and third floors can accommodate multiple tenants or single users, but flex-

ibility is built into the design. Additional amenities for office tenants include large outdoor terrace balconies on the second and third floors with ocean views. Elias Hionides and Rich Trendel of PETRA, a local boutique brokerage company, will handle office and retail leasing for the building.

"The floorplans don't include demising walls, so our office tenants will have the freedom to customize the space to meet their needs," said Derazi. "Plus, with valet service and a two-minute walk to the beach, we expect high demand for this unique workplace."

In addition to an interior elevator and restrooms on each floor, the office spaces will feature open-air balconies and ocean views, all within walking distance of several lunch hot spots, offering an office experience unlike any other in the area.

Jacksonville-based Tim Young Construction will be the project's contractor, with an estimated construction schedule of 14 to 16 months. A grand opening is tentatively planned for the summer or fall of 2024, but leasing is available now. For more information, potential tenants can contact Elias Hionides (ehionides@petrajax.com or 904-894-6620) or Rich Trendel (rich@petrajax.com or 904-241-1151).

Grand Ocean, owned and managed by GPS Holding Group LLC, will be located at 42 E Coast Drive in Atlantic Beach.



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Elks enable kids to attend St. Augustine Yacht Club's Sail Camp

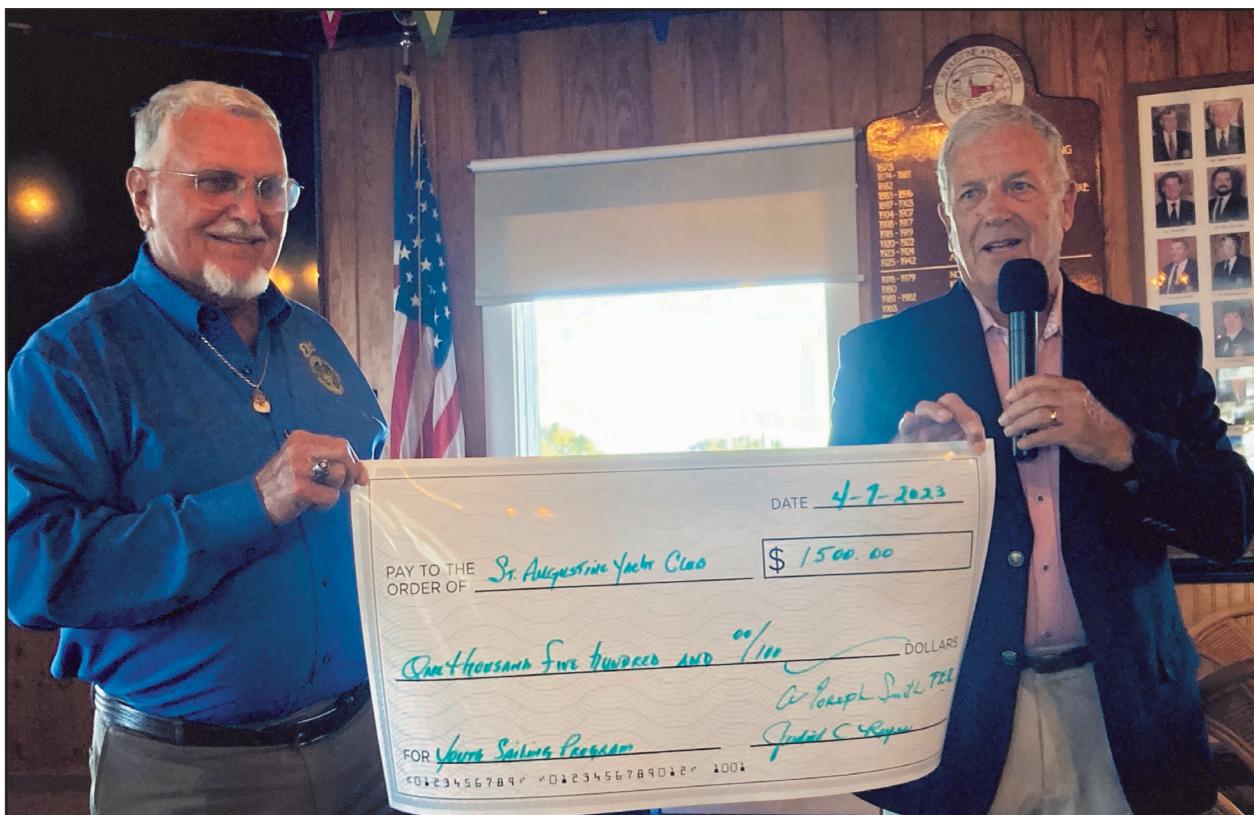
Two social organizations are joining forces to help the youth of St. Augustine. The Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks has contributed \$1,500 to assist in funding scholarships for kids wanting to learn sailing at the St. Augustine Yacht Club's annual summer Sail Camp. Elks Exalted Ruler Joseph Smith recently presented a check to SAYC Commodore David Patrick in ceremonies at the yacht club.

Patrick said, "We are most appreciative of the Elks' generous donation, which will allow local children, ages 5 to 17, who may not otherwise be able to afford the cost, to learn how to sail or to improve their sailing ability. We hope this is a start of a wonderful partnership between our organizations that will continue into the future for the benefit of the community's children."

Of the many charitable endeavors the Elks is known for, one is the support of non-budgeted projects at R.B. Hunt Elementary, spearheaded by Sara McDevitt. Fittingly, the Elks Lodge, the SAYC, and R.B. Hunt are all physically close-by neighbors on Anastasia Island, near the water's edge. Many students from R.B. Hunt already participate in an after-school program at the St. Augustine Yacht Club. The donation, however, can assist students from any school.

The SAYC Sail Camp is in its 11th year. It incorporates the U.S. Sailing Reach curriculum, is STEM (science, technology, engineering, math) based, and a hands-on experience for children and teens to learn the sport of sailing.

Marissa Burrier, sail director of the St. Augustine Yacht Club, said, "I truly believe that to teach a child to sail is to give them a gift for life. Sailing builds confidence while creating lifelong friendships. Additionally,



Contributed photo

Elks Exalted Ruler Joseph Smith presents a \$1,500 check to SAYC Commodore David Patrick for kids to attend Sail Camp.

our students learn how to better care for our environment and become stewards of the sea."

Burrier is assisted by several young adults who are U.S. Sailing certified instructors, along with volunteer instructors who are training for certification.

A native of St. Augustine, Burrier was a college athlete and is a trained educator, avid sailor and race coach.

All Sail Camp program information, including costs, availability and registration can be found at saycsc.org.

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[www.pontevedrarecorder.com/bestof2023/index.html#//](http://www.pontevedrarecorder.com/bestof2023/index.html#/)

In the Arts

Send your arts news to
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www.PonteVedraRecorder.com

Local landscape painter featured in exhibit

By Shaun Ryan

Gazing upon Linda Sperruzzi's paintings, one feels a sense of tranquility. The small brush strokes of unblended color work in unison to evoke reflections on the surface of water. Structures, watercraft and more populate the canvas, arranged in a way that communicates harmony even as it introduces contrast.

"I always tend to paint landscape subject matter that includes some sort of architectural feature," Sperruzzi said. "The way different planes of color work against each other on their straight edges intrigues me, especially as it contradicts the softness of nature and water. Bridges, boats and building structures are included in most of my pieces. Occasionally, I include the human form or wildlife, depending on the composition."

Sperruzzi calls her style "Modern Impressionism," which applies the Impressionist tradition to contemporary subjects

and adds a touch of the Abstract.

And, while her style began to take form when she was living in New York, it blossomed with a change in subject matter after she moved to the Nation's Oldest City nearly three years ago. A portrait artist for 25 years, she turned to landscapes.

"Once I got to St. Augustine, I felt very inspired by my surroundings," she said.

Sperruzzi has since found a home for her work at the Grand Bohemian Gallery in St. Augustine and also exhibits in other states.

In addition, her work will be on display through July 17 at the Lightner Museum as part of its Lightner Local series, presented by the Benjamin and Jean Troemel Arts Foundation.

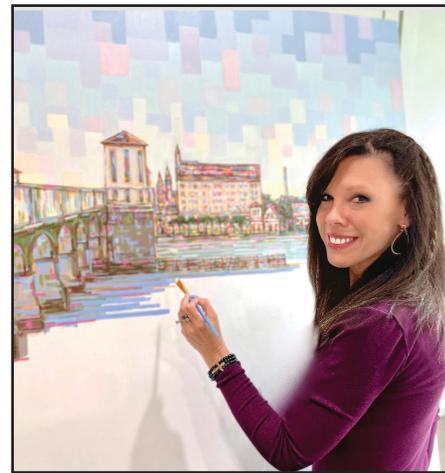
A new subject

Sperruzzi credits her mother, a watercolor impressionist, with nurturing her interest in painting. She studied illustration at the Rhode Island School of Design but interrupted her studies to pursue teaching — something she later decided was not for her.

She began to do commission work, including murals, while living on Long Island. Eventually, she opened a teaching studio in Wading River, New York, and ran it for more than nine years.

"Everything was going smoothly until the pandemic," she said.

Like other businesses, her studio was forced to close in the face of COVID-19.



Contributed photos

Linda Sperruzzi works on a painting of the Bridge of Lions.

"That kind of prompted us to finally pursue our lives in Florida," Sperruzzi said.

The first painting she did after her arrival was of the Bridge of Lions. The subject matter, combined with her evolving style, "just felt right," she said.

A matter of technique

Sperruzzi said she usually paints about four or five hours a day and completes most paintings in about a week.

Though trained in all mediums, she chooses to work exclusively in acrylics. She and her husband visit downtown St. Augustine about once a week, and she takes photos of the various sights from different angles to use as a reference later.



"Peaceful Views Of The St. Augustine Lighthouse" is an example of Linda Sperruzzi's "Modern Impressionism."

Using the photos as guides, she completes pencil sketches before starting on her paintings. Then, she sketches in thin burnt sienna on the canvas itself. This is followed by the paint with each color applied in two or three coats.

"My focus when I paint, it's all about layout of color," she said. "I mix and combine my own colors and label them; each one has a name. ... I'll lay out the bottles I want to work with, and I just keep placing the colors in little strokes, one at a time, and just play around with what works together to get my view across."

One thing that is very important to her is her faith, and she views her painting as a form of worship. Hidden in many of her works are crosses. And she includes a verse on the back of each painting.

"Each painting is dedicated to a different theme or verse surrounding my faith and my honor to God," Sperruzzi said. "I do believe that any glory and honor does belong to Him."

Lightner exhibit

"Linda Sperruzzi: Colors of St. Augustine" opens at 5:30 p.m. Thursday, June 1, at the Lightner Museum, 75 King St., St. Augustine. It consists of 18 new works, which will be featured concurrently in a virtual exhibition through the Grand Bohemian Gallery. Paintings are available for purchase at the gallery, located at 49 King St., St. Augustine. Inquire by calling 904-829-6880.

Admission to the opening is free.

Also, during the opening, Sperruzzi will be selling her children's book, "Allie the Artist."

To learn more, go to lightnermuseum.org/event/colorsofstaugustine.

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Music therapy program hosts year-end performances

Sound Connections Music Therapy program held its year-end school performances May 17-22. More than 400 students in St. Johns County School District's Access and Florida Head Start classrooms took part.

Board certified music therapist Candice Sirak led performances and performed specially designed therapeutic songs and guitar compositions with a wide variety of musical items and interactive touch boards for students. Ocean Palms Elementary School hosted a virtual performance and First Coast Technical College held a performance as part of the school's end-of-year festivities.

First Coast Cultural Center and its Sound Connections Music Therapy program for children with disabilities serves public schools in St. Johns County, including First Coast Technical College, Ocean Palms Elementary, Osceola Elementary School, PVPV Elementary School, The Webster School and Valley Ridge



Contributed photo

Candice Sirak performs a musical piece for students at Osceola Elementary School on May 19.

Academy.

Sound Connections supports Exceptional Student Education (ESE) program specialists, teachers, students, parents and school personnel who are assigned to specific classrooms with program development and training with an interactive music curriculum and assistive technology for children with autism spectrum disorder, behavior challenges, speech and language impairments, traumatic

brain injury and visual impairment, among others.

The program is offered at no charge to parents or schools and is fully funded by local donors and philanthropists for children in preschool to fifth grade including Title 1 schools for low-income families. Contributions and matching grants are provided by the Persbacker-Wyman Family Foundation, DuBow Family Foundation, The Lazzara Family Foundation, and others.

"Each year, First Coast Cultural Center raises a minimum of \$120,000 to support the program in local schools. We continue to campaign to serve Title I schools in St. Augustine and schools in northern St. Johns County," said Donna Guzzo, First Coast Cultural Center president and CEO.

For more information, contact Sirak at 904-280-0614 ext.1206 or email Candice.sirak@stjohns.k12.fl.us. Or go to firstcoastculturalcenter.org/arts-outreach/outreach-programs.

Chamber Music Project to end season with Brahms, Schumann

Florida Chamber Music Project (FCMP) will end its 10th season on Sunday, June 4, with a program of Brahms and Schumann. Joining FCMP will be pianist Hyunsoon Whang. The concert will be played at the Beaches Museum Chapel, which is part of the Beaches Museum at 505 Beach Blvd., Jacksonville Beach.

Brahms Rhapsody in B minor, Opus 79, No. 1 and Rhapsody in G minor, Opus 79, No. 2 and Robert Schumann's Quintet for Piano and Strings in E-flat Major, Op. 44 make up the program. The Schumann work is considered to be one of his finest compositions and a major work of 19th century chamber music. It revolutionized the music character of the piano quintet and established a Romantic-era genre.

"I'm delighted that Hyunsoon is joining us and indulging me by playing these pieces," said Artistic Director Susan Pardue "These pieces are special to me from my childhood, and Hyunsoon learned to play them for us."

Concert attendees are invited to meet the musicians and enjoy light refreshments after the performance.

Beaches Museum Chapel is wheelchair accessible and has free parking along Pablo Avenue near 4th Street North of Beach Boulevard. Tickets are \$27 online and at the door. Student tickets are \$10.

The Florida Chamber Music Project was founded 10 years ago by violist Susan Pardue. Joining her are violinists Patricia Evans, Siyu Zhang and Ann Hertler and cellist Laurie Casseday. All are members of the Jacksonville Symphony.

For advance tickets online, go to flchambermusic.org.

Writers to tackle justice-related writing



Jennifer Wolfe

Jennifer Wolfe, founder and executive director of Women Writing for (a) Change Jacksonville, will lead an interactive writing circle at this month's FWA Ponte Vedra Writers group meeting. The meeting takes place at 2 p.m. Saturday, June 3, at the Ponte Vedra Beach Branch Library.

Wolfe will ask the writers gathered at the library that day: When have you witnessed or experienced injustice? How can we make justice more available to everyone? In her highly interactive and engaging workshop, she will use poetry and prose to help expand on the theme of "And Justice for All," to enhance the storytelling experience. She'll later work with the group on the editing process.

Wolfe is an author, journalist and publisher. Women Writing for (a) Change Jacksonville is a writing community offering writing circles, art exhibitions, community events and leadership development using the art of writing to help bring the community together.

The Ponte Vedra Writers group is part of the Florida Writers Association, a statewide membership organization dedicated to the

support of both aspiring and published writers in any genre. The June 3 meeting is free and open to members and nonmembers alike.

For information on FWA go to floridawriters.org.

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Sports



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Photos by Anthony Richards



The Sharks found success on the ground against Beachside High.



Ben Burk (No. 3) reads the defense in the backfield.



The Sharks offensive line paved the way for big gains on the ground on the night.

Sharks ground and pound to spring game victory

By Anthony Richards

The football season may be played in the fall, but it begins in the final semester of the previous school year with spring practice, and it could not have begun much better for the Ponte Vedra Sharks.

The Sharks capped weeks of spring practice and drills with a 22-14 victory in its spring game on the road against the Beachside Barracudas May 25.

Both teams only played their varsity squads for the first half and as a result did not keep score in the second half, as the junior varsity players took centerstage after halftime.

“We weren’t real sharp in everything and we’ve got some stuff to work on, but at the end of the day I was really pleased with the effort and coachability of these guys,” Ponte Vedra head coach Steve Price said. “It’s why I love coaching at PV.”

The Sharks looked the part, especially early on as they came out and established a rhythm on the offensive side of the ball

with a ground game that the Barracudas had little answer for.

Ponte Vedra’s offensive line appeared in midseason form as they were working together as a cohesive unit and creating holes left and right for the Sharks’ backfield members.

Ben Burk returns at quarterback and will be a senior in the fall and is excited for the potential of the offense heading into next year.

“Ben is a heck of a player, and he started as a sophomore, so he’s played a lot of football,” Price said.

Burk understands that it all starts with the confidence the entire team has in the five guys along the offensive front.

“Those guys are just incredible and having guys like that just makes all the difference for us,” Burk said. “We’ve got a great group of guys that have been playing together for a long time now, and it’s really starting to show.”

One of those players includes incoming senior Jake Guarnera, who will be making



Joe Mahoney (No. 21) plays tight coverage and breaks up a pass in the end zone.

the transition from tackle to center and did a nice job holding his own during the spring game.

Landon Okla showed his versatility as a tight end as he not only blocked and ran routes, but also took a handoff and ran for a touchdown to open the game’s scoring in the first quarter.

“We’ve got a lot of good new plays ready to go this fall, and it’s going to be fun to see it all come together,” Okla said. “I’ve been working on a little bit of everything to get ready, from speed to lifting, it’s all about getting better everywhere.”

The defense then did their part to keep the Sharks out front, as it took Beachside a couple of drives and quick punts before they were able to move the ball even somewhat against the Sharks.

One of the more interesting matchups of the night pitted Sharks’ junior cornerback Joe Mahoney against one of the Barracuda’s top receivers who had a height advantage against Mahoney and pretty much everyone on the field.

However, Mahoney stood tall and used excellent technique to deny receptions on several occasions, including a couple fades in the end zone.

After coming on last season, it will be fun to see how Mahoney continues to develop not on with his play on the field, but as a leader off it.



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JAGA announces 2023 scholarship recipients

The Jacksonville Area Golf Association officially announced and honored its 18 new college scholarship recipients for 2023 at a banquet last evening at Deerwood Country Club.

Each recipient will be awarded a \$1,000 scholarship for each semester of the 2022-2023 school year. Scholarships are renewable each semester based on scholars meeting certain criteria, including a minimum grade-point average, for up to eight semesters.

Since the JAGA Scholarship Trust was formed in 1974, JAGA has awarded approximately \$2 million to approximately 400 deserving young students. The trust is JAGA's 501 (c)(3) not for profit organization that manages the scholarship program.

"The JAGA scholarship program continues to get stronger every year and branch out in new ways," said scholarship trust chairman Wayne St. Clair. "In recent years, this stability has allowed us to expand the number of college-bound students we are able to support, which is very gratifying. Currently, JAGA is providing grants to 46 who we are confident will become key contributors to the Jacksonville area community or wherever else they may wind up. We are greatly impressed and encouraged by the candidates who come before us for interviews. Many thanks to first-year scholarship chairman Joe Grippi for doing such a terrific job managing the scholarship process and banquet arrangements."

The featured speaker was Rear Admiral



Photo courtesy of Jacksonville Area Golf Association

The Jacksonville Area Golf Association awarded scholarships to 18 recipients in 2023.

Marty Evans (Retired, U.S. Navy), one of America's most respected leaders having served nearly 30 years in the United States Navy, achieving the rank of rear admiral, one of the few females to do so.

After retiring from the Navy in 1998, the Springfield, Illinois, native led two of the nation's preeminent non-profit organizations, the Girl Scouts of America and the American Red Cross. In subsequent roles, she was a director of Lehman Brothers and was named to the LPGA's board of directors and served as acting commissioner for nine months in 2009.

Current trustees of the Trust are St.

Clair (chairman/Jacksonville G&CC), Michael McKenny (vice chairman/Timuquana CC), Allen Witham (treasurer/Hidden Hills GC), Grippi (scholarship committee chair/Deerwood CC), John Tancredi (Marsh Landing CC) and Susan Waite (Moore-Myers Children's Fund).

Applicants for scholarships must be sons, daughters or grandchildren of a member of a JAGA member club or an employee of a member club who resides in JAGA's Northeast Florida region. Applicants are screened and sponsored by JAGA Directors.

JAGA scholarship recipients have gone

on to successful careers as golf course superintendents, golf club managers, PGA TOUR players, PGA golf professionals and other careers both inside and outside the golf industry.

Funds to support the Scholarship Trust are generated by JAGA member clubs and corporate/individual contributors to the scholarship fund.

Entities and individuals who are interested in making contributions to the Scholarship Trust may do so by emailing St. Clair at gstclair@bellsouth.net or any JAGA director from a JAGA member club or going to www.jaxareagolf.org.

Franchise to bring women's pro soccer to the First Coast

JAXUSL, the United Soccer League (USL) franchise group bringing men's and women's professional soccer to Northeast Florida, has announced that Jacksonville is among the initial markets to join the USL Super League, bringing the highest level of women's pro soccer to the First Coast.

While the USL Super League intends kick off play in 2024 as a first division league, Jacksonville's entry into the new women's professional league is contingent on the development of a new soccer stadium in Northeast Florida by 2026.

For the past several years, the USL has developed a full youth-to-professional pathway for girls and women.

USL Super League President Amanda Vandervort said, "We're excited to bring the first-ever professional women's soccer team to Northeast Florida, a region with a strong history of women's soccer, and a thriving community of players and fans today. Super League Jacksonville will create more opportunities for players, coaches, fans and partners at the highest level and bring professional women's soccer closer to home for all."

JAXUSL President and CEO Steve Livingstone said, "Soccer's impact for women and girls extends far beyond the pitch and we are proud to be selected as a future USL Super League city. This exciting opportunity will, historically,

bring the first professional women's professional team in a major league to Northeast Florida. Women's pro soccer embodies the grace and power of the sport and further fuels our efforts to elevate those who play, work in and watch the game as we continue our men's pro team development and stadium plans for the Northeast Florida community."

In the coming weeks, JAXUSL will host a Jacksonville Super League announcement locally, where USL Super League President Amanda Vandervort will join the club to provide additional details on the ownership and developments around the new women's pro franchise in Northeast Florida.

Learn more at jaxusl.com.



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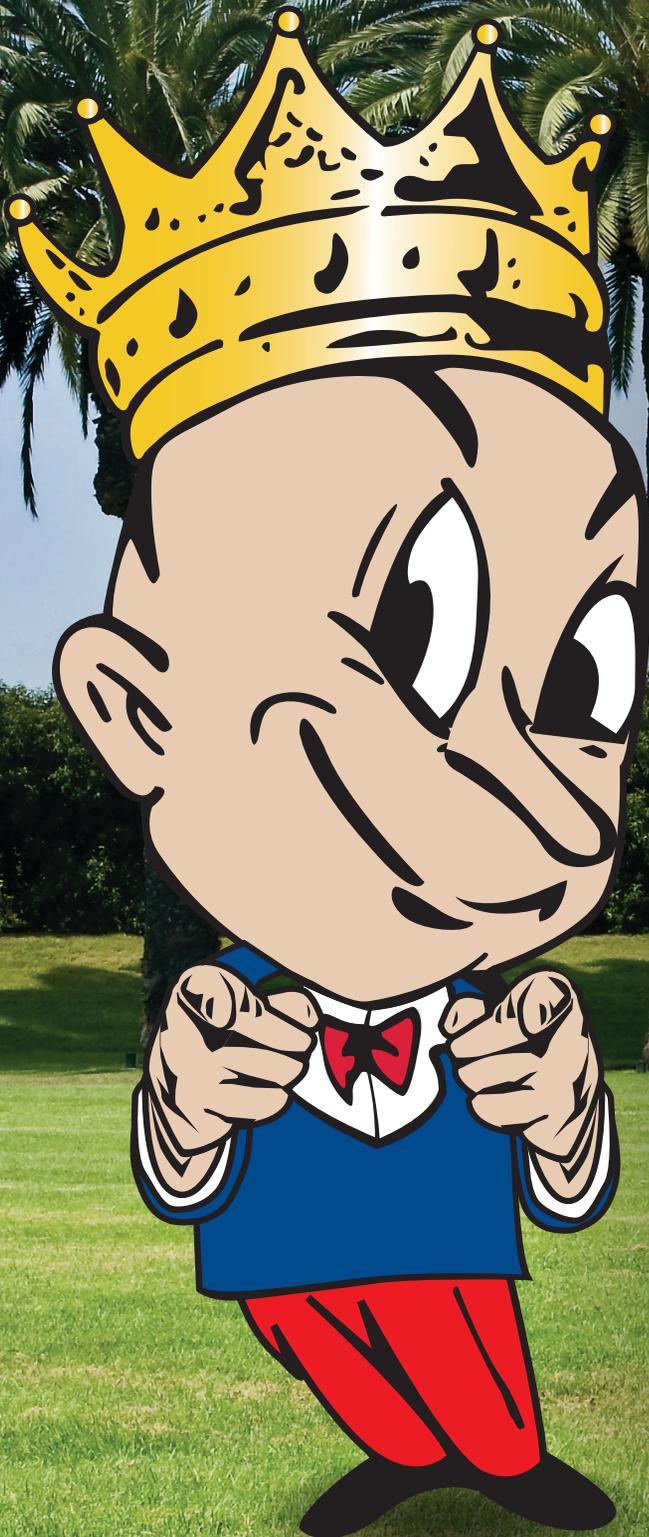
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