

# the register

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**FACES OF THE FIRST COAST**

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JUNE/JULY 2023



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5 Bedrooms, 5 Full Baths, 2 Half Baths \$10,250,000



## Charming Pool Home in East Hampton

This exceptional home offers year-round outdoor living with a screened lanai and sparkling pool/hot tub with the lush preserve as its backdrop.

It was thoughtfully designed with the family room, kitchen and casual dining area centrally located with open concept. This home boasts a prime location in the front of the East Hampton community located across from the community pool, clubhouse, soccer field, basketball court and tennis courts.

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## about the cover



This waterfront home on San Jose Boulevard is an extraordinary property. *Read about it and see more photos on page 22.*

PHOTO COURTESY OF ANITA VINING

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# SAIL SCIENCE BLENDS THE WONDER OF SAILING WITH THE WORLD OF NATURE

Science and biology meet sailing in the newest offering from St. Augustine Sailing. Sail Science adventures offers guests a chance to set sail with resident professor, Dr. Dale Edgar, and learn about a variety of topics, including the local wildlife, geology, and history. A gifted storyteller and an experienced sailor, a voyage with Dr. Edgar is a truly unique and immersive experience, perfect for a variety of ages.

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# ONE OF US

## Rose Ann Points

as told to **SHAUN RYAN**

photos provided by **ROSE ANN POINTS**

**W**ith husband Chuck Points at her side, Rose Ann Points manages St. Augustine Sailing, the local SailTime franchise and the new-and-used boat sales brokerage, Yacht Sales by Rose Ann. She began her boating life cruising the Columbia River in Oregon with her family. In 1996, she moved to Florida and lived aboard a ketch with her children for 13 years.

### Tell me about your background growing up on the water and living aboard a ketch for several years.

I grew up in the country, a small town in Oregon. We had a river within a mile or so and as a family we would go and relax on the bank. Although my mother gave me swimming lessons, I really never learned to swim, but I loved the water anyway. I got married and moved to Washington state at 26. This is really the beginning of my boating life.

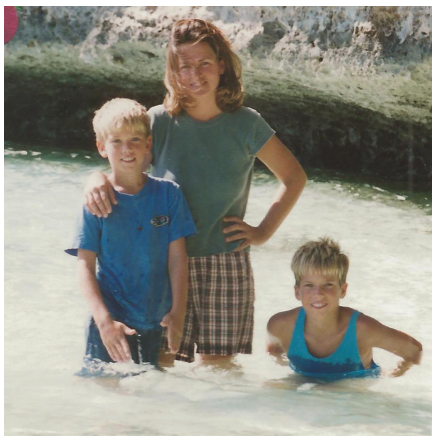
We had a cabin cruiser that we would go on during the weekends and vacation on during the summer. After selling everything we owned, at 30, my family traveled from Washington state to Florida in search of our new home, which happened to be a 41-foot Morgan OutIsland Ketch purchased in West Palm Beach.

Since none of us knew how to sail, with the exception of reading how it was done, our family moved aboard. We took short trips around the Keys, Everglades and Tortugas before we began our grand adventure across the Gulf Stream. We had to get out of Dodge, you might say, before 90 days of purchasing our sailing vessel so this made our learning and getting used to living on the vessel really urgent.

I think it took me at least two months to become accustomed to living aboard,



Rose Ann Points manages St. Augustine Sailing, the local SailTime franchise and Yacht Sales by Rose Ann. She also founded Women on Water.



Rose Ann Points and her sons are seen in a photo taken during a period when they lived aboard a ketch.

my boys — I think maybe one day.

Life aboard *Tranquility* was fun but not without challenges, too. We did not have refrigeration, so it took some time to learn how to live without it. We lived

off the ocean; my boys fished every day. In the whole 13 years we lived aboard I never had to clean a fish; our rule was they caught whatever they wanted to eat, bring it back to the boat ready to be cooked and my daughter and I would cook it.

We ate a lot of conch, lobster and grouper (since that was my favorite fish).

We generally traveled off the beaten path. We loved going to locations that were not touristy so we could experience real life. By doing this we often made lifelong friends, learned how to cook like the locals and enjoyed a very simple life. Our days often consisted of breakfast together, school for the kids (9 a.m. to noon), lunch, siesta (most of the time it was just hanging out in the cockpit talking or playing games) until around 2 pm. Then swimming and exploring the areas around us. Then the boys would get something for dinner, and we would go back to the boat.

After dinner we would sit in the cockpit or lay on deck and play a game, or talk about the day, talk about creation and how through creation we could know and learn about our Creator. We regularly read and studied the Bible together.

Sometimes, we would stay at one location for just a day and others maybe a few months. It all depended on how much we enjoyed the area. One of our favorite places to anchor was a cove that had three small deserted islands around it. It was comfortable, with a nice small beach that was protected, beautiful clear warm water, great snorkeling, lots of fish, lobster and conch. Only a few days' sail to a reasonably sized grocery store, which we only went to every few months.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 7 ■





PHOTO BY DERK BURKIN PHOTOGRAPHY



Rose Ann Points is surrounded by her family aboard Wind Dancer.

St. Augustine Sailing offers several different cruises, including this one aboard Wind Dancer with St. Augustine in the background.

## ONE OF US

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

### Tell me about the charters offered by St. Augustine Sailing. Where do they travel and what kinds of experiences do they offer?

St. Augustine Sailing offers a variety of sailing experiences:

- Day sails
- Sunset sails
- Culinary sails: brunch, lunch, dinner, charcuteries, desserts
- Wine tasting sails: Sip & Sail experience, choice of one or two hours
- Special occasions: proposals, elopements and wedding experiences
- Educational: dolphins, turtles, birds, manatees and just nature in general
- Land and sea packages
- Vacation sails: multiple days.

We stay in St. Augustine and sail in the ocean during the day, travel to Cumberland for a three- or four-day trip, travel to Daytona for a three- or four-day trip. On longer trips, you could go to Miami or the Keys.

### You also offer sailing lessons and membership in SailTime. Can you tell me a little about that?

- Instruction from beginner to advanced using American Sailing curriculum to receive a certification. And then for those who want to dip their toes in but are not quite ready to take the leap, we offer a two-hour intro to sailing.
- Crew membership: Two Sundays per month, our captain selects one of his or her favorite sailing vessels from our best-in-class luxury sailing fleet and the

crew members get to join them on board and help sail the beautiful waterways of St. Augustine. Our goals are to help you build and/or improve your sailing skills and build a solid sailing community, all while having fun on the water. With our crew membership, sailors can join our weekly crew sails every Sunday with a choice of 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. or 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.

- St. Augustine Sailing's WOW! Program (aka Women on the Water) is designed by women for women. The purpose of the program is to make sailing an attainable goal for all women. The program will run every weekend throughout the year, focusing on different topics each month, modified to fit every level of experience. The program will cover "all things sailing."
- SailTime offers guaranteed access to your boat every month. You can make reservations online up to one year in advance. With SailTime PLUS, members can rent boats at other SailTime locations at a mere fraction of the cost of regular bareboat chartering.

### I know you also offer yacht sales. Are there certain types or brands of yachts you handle? Also, how is delivery arranged?

How the vessel is delivered depends on the manufacturer of the boat. The vessels generally arrive on a cargo ship and, depending on the size of the vessel, some are wet delivery (from cargo ship straight to the water) or transported (loaded to a transport truck) to a yard to be commissioned.

After they are commissioned (for a sailboat that means building and installing the mast, standing and

running rigging, putting the sails on, canvas, and installing any other options the customer chooses), if the customer is putting the vessel into our charter fleet, then the vessel is delivered to our location in St. Augustine. Otherwise, delivery or handover is done at the location where the vessel is commissioned. The vessel is splashed, and the buyer and I go out for a shake down sail and go over all the equipment and options ensuring the buyer knows how everything works. Depending on the size will determine the length of time required to complete the handover.

As a franchise base for SailTime, we offer Jeanneau, Beneteau and Lagoon brands. We also partner with a local Jeanneau dealer for power boats this area. We also partner with a local Catalina dealer.

### If someone reads this article and is interested in either a charter or lessons or in purchasing a yacht, how would they arrange it?

Call 904-829-0648, email sas@sta-sail.com or go to @StAugustineSailing (Facebook, Instagram and YouTube).

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

For me, living on the First Coast is the best of both worlds. The ability to live a simple life in a beautiful surrounding. The area isn't so developed that you can't see the stars at night or enjoy creation because it is paved over. Everywhere you look you see plants, sea creatures, birds, insects and land mammals. Each of these things brings joy and happiness when looked at and examined and meditated on.





Families sat at tables and honored their family members who were World War II veterans during a D-Day remembrance banquet hosted by the We Can Be Heroes Foundation.



A member of the Atlantic Coast Young Marines serves fried chicken to a veteran during the event.

# VETERANS, UNSUNG HEROES RECOGNIZED DURING D-DAY REMEMBRANCE

story and photos by  
**ANTHONY RICHARDS**

**T**he We Can Be Heroes Foundation honored the veterans who served and sacrificed their lives during D-Day with its annual remembrance June 6 with a presentation at the Salem Centre Auditorium in Jacksonville.

John Connelly as one of the many veterans who attended the event on the night. He served during World War II as a pilot and was a prison of war, having spent time in two German prison camps after being captured during the war.

Also in attendance was Capt. Gregory Streeter who retired from the U.S. Navy and was the past commander general

of the Naval Order of the United States.

Streeter has become a regular over the years at the D-Day banquet and its only fitting because not only is he a veteran, but he also was instrumental in helping get a monument built on the beaches of Normandy, France, that honors the heroic acts of the U.S. Navy on that fateful day.

According to Streeter, at the time when the monument was erected, there were various D-Day monuments around the area, but none commemorating the U.S. Navy.

There were many veterans that had hoped to make it on the night but were unable to due to health-related issues they are dealing with.

Beth Heath asked the audience to

remember to pray for those veterans who continue to battle the ailments they are going through.

“Our veterans have set such a high bar for us to follow,” Heath said. “Please include them in your daily prayers. They will appreciate your support and thoughts.”

Tables throughout the auditorium had family members of World War II veterans who had passed away but continue to be honored by placing a photo of them in the middle of the table, often in their military uniform.

“Nine out of 10 times they’ve got the cutest and biggest smiles you’ll ever see in those photos,” Heath said. “There are some sweet memories at those tables.”



The D-Day remembrance event had a very patriotic atmosphere.



Eadie Dumm was one of three “unsung heroes” recognized for their service and help offered to veterans in need in the community.



The Atlantic Coast Young Marines present the colors.



# Day at the Whitney Lab

## CELEBRATES 30 YEARS

### Program introduces students to life as a scientist

story by **BRENT FOSTER**  
Contributed photos

**E**ight children sit arranged so they can see the education volunteer at the front of the room. They're each hunched over and looking through a microscope while the volunteer walks around helping with the magnification and focus knobs. She asks the children scientists what they are seeing, and they note the differences between bryozoans and hydroids, checking off their observations on a laminated sheet. After they've had a chance to see a variety of tiny critters, the volunteer tells them they have some free time to look at any of the dishes beside their microscope, and it's like the bell has gone off for recess. At one point, a student calls his friend over and points to the dish under the lens, asking, "Can I show you what I'm seeing?" They huddle together at the same microscope, sharing a moment to "ooh" and "ahh" together.

These students are just a sampling of the thousands who have participated in the Day at the Whitney Lab over the last 30 years. This program, created by faculty and volunteers at University of Florida's Whitney Laboratory for Marine Bioscience, is designed to help children experience what it's like being a scientist. And, after the difficulties of the global pandemic that forced the lab to close for a time, its



A Day at the Whitney Lab has been offered for 30 years.

school programs are rolling once more.

"This all started from a couple of moms who recognized a need and decided to do something about it," said Barbara Battelle, a retired UF professor emerita who specialized in the biochemistry of vision. Between running a lab, conducting experiments and writing grant proposals, Battelle also volunteered at her daughter's elementary school. During these experiences, she noticed students struggling with science and teachers who needed additional support. Many of these teachers would ask Battelle if Whitney Laboratory had any programs for elementary school students.

"I got tired of saying no and finally said yes," Battelle admitted. "Sometimes you have to say yes and just figure it out."

The challenge was getting the program started. At the time, communities near Whitney didn't know about the lab.

Funding was another hurdle. Whitney Lab was too small to garner any attention from NSF, a federal funding source for scientific research, to provide money for community outreach programs. That meant that any activities would have to be paid out of pocket.

Battelle received permission from then-director Michael Greenberg to create and run the first Day at the Whitney Lab program in 1993.

"At least he didn't say not to do it," Battelle said with a laugh.

The first "committee" consisted of three individuals: Battelle, the professional scientist; Christine Skipp, a cardiac-nurse-turned-elementary-school-teacher; and Mrs. Skipp's husband, who happened to be a graphic artist. Together, the three of them pieced together the first work booklet for visiting children. Fifteen community volunteers joined the skeleton crew.

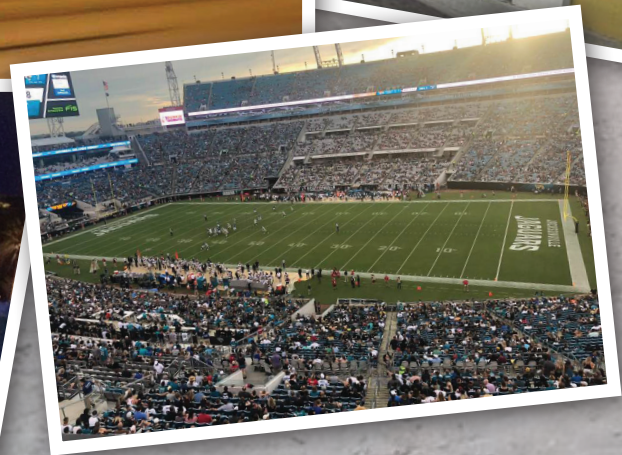
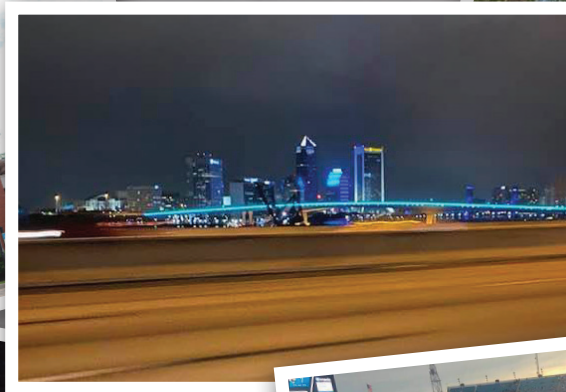
"If we could find a warm body who wanted to help, we figured out how to use them," Battelle said.

One of the first experiments in the early years of the program was designed by a fifth-grade student as his science fair project. Children observed parasitic flatworms clinging to the underbellies of horseshoe crabs. These worms were removed and placed in a container with a Y-shaped tube connected to a clean bowl and a bowl where horseshoe crabs had been stored. Students hypothesized where they

CONTINUED ON PAGE 37 ■



# FACES OF *The First Coast*



Faces Of The First Coast is an exclusive feature for First Coast Register readers to get to know prominent business leaders in Northeast Florida's coastal communities.

*If you would like to be featured in Faces of the First Coast, please contact us at (904) 285-8831.*

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Lucky me! I have been a Realtor in my home, Northeast Florida, for nearly 40 years. I grew up in Jacksonville and moved to the beach in my 20s. I studied architecture and interior design in college, feeding my love of homes and style. After graduation, I worked in media, where I learned the art of listening and asking questions, marketing and advertising.

In 1985, I transitioned from media to real estate, joining Watson Realty's Ponte Vedra office. It was meant to be! Serving customers by customizing promotions for their homes and researching housing options for buyers is exciting. The reward of finding a seller or a buyer the perfect home is what keeps me charged up about real estate. In 1990, I moved to the original Marsh Landing Realty, where I learned about lots and builders and the development process.

In 1993, I opened my own brokerage, Berry & Co. Real Estate. Our first listing was The Ponte Vedra Carlyle, 48 new condominiums on Ponte Vedra Boulevard. That was an exciting time – new residences in a premier location, with Lodge membership included for every purchaser!

Berry & Co. Real Estate continues to be a robust general brokerage. We have helped hundreds of buyers and sellers with their residential real estate needs. We take pride in our market knowledge – it is the foundation for the extra level of service we provide our customers.

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

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



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“Our mission is to provide objective and timely financial advice and guidance - with the highest level of professional service - in building and preserving wealth for our clients.”

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### OUR TEAM

**Jamie Seim** has over 12 years of investment experience as a Financial Advisor. He attended the University of Nebraska at Kearney and the University Arkansas at Little Rock on golf scholarships, graduating cum laude. He later graduated with an MBA in Accounting & Finance from Jacksonville University. Over the years, Jamie has devoted much of his time to local organizations and charities.

**Stephen T. Foody** has 38 years of Capital Markets experience. He

holds a BA in Economics and History from Fordham University. He was chairman of the board of trustees for the Guardian Catholic School, and a founding member of Ponte Vedra High School PTO.

**Evonne T. Heykens**, Senior Registered Client Associate, has 40 years of financial services industry experience. She started within the financial industry in 1982, and most of her career has been in Jacksonville or Ponte Vedra.

**Melissa Scott**, Client Associate, has almost 20 years of financial services experience. Born and raised in Indiana, she joined the United States Air Force out of high school and spent 10 years living in many states around the country and some abroad.

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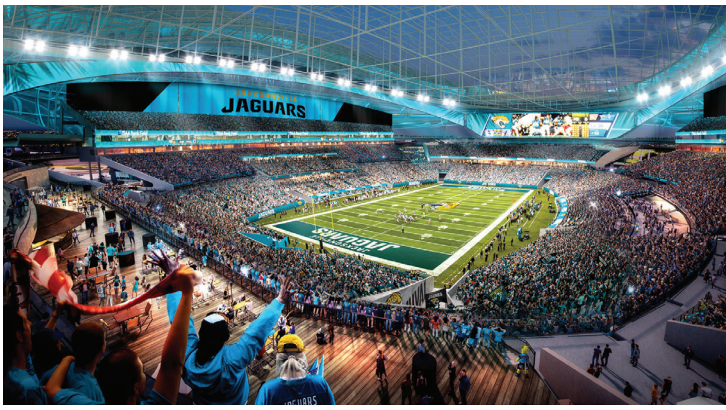
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The Jacksonville Jaguars recently released conceptual renderings of what renovations to TIAA Bank Field would look like after completion.



The initial conception includes a 360-degree concourse, which would be four times wider than the current concourse, that will feature interactive social bars and many communal spaces for fans to enjoy.

# JAGUARS PROPOSE PLAN FOR STADIUM OF THE FUTURE

story by ANTHONY RICHARDS

photos courtesy of JACKSONVILLE JAGUARS

The Jacksonville Jaguars and the City of Jacksonville are in discussions about plans for a renovation of TIAA Bank Field and the area surrounding it in downtown Jacksonville.

The stadium renovation is all part of a bigger outlook of improving downtown as a whole through an initiative called “1st

DownTown Jacksonville,” which was created as a platform where the future vision of downtown can be discussed and supported.

However, the centerpiece of that area’s growth is the future of the stadium and the Jaguars recently unveiled conceptual designs and an initial approach to how they envision the stadium renovations taking shape.

According to the Jaguars organization, releasing the designs has been in the works for the past three years after initial talks began in July 2020.

The plan would include renovating the current stadium instead of constructing an entirely new facility from scratch.

This would mean developing a plan once construction begins that could result in the team playing “home games” in another town or finding a way that they could still play at home while construction takes place.

Discussions pertaining to where the team would play during the project are ongoing.

Design highlights of the new stadium based on the initial conception includes a 360-degree concourse, which would be four times wider than the current concourse, that will feature interactive social bars and many communal spaces for fans to enjoy.

The stadium’s structure will feature a mirrored material facade designed to be energy efficient as well as reflect Jacksonville’s waterfront to those passing by outside the stadium.

The stadium will continue to be open-air but will feature a large canopy with the goal of providing shade to reduce heat retention by more than 70% and lower temperatures by 10 to 15 degrees for fans in attendance.

A fritted roof membrane will go over top of the stadium and will allow for ambient light throughout the stadium.

The stadium will have a base seating capacity of 62,000 with the ability to expand to 71,500 for college football games, such as the Florida-Georgia rivalry played annually at the venue, and reach an even higher capacity for concerts.

Once construction is completed, the state-of-the-art renovation is expected to open up Jacksonville as a destination spot for future marquee national sporting events, such as the college football playoff and NCAA Final Four.

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# PORSCHE CLUB PLANS FUNDRAISER FOR NEW HEART RHYTHM CENTER

story by **CYNDI KING, BERKSHIRE HATHAWAY HOMESERVICES FLORIDA NETWORK REALTY**

The local Florida Crown Region of the Porsche Club of America is raising awareness of heart disease and having a fundraiser for the Baptist Heart Hospital.

On Saturday morning, July 15, about 75 Porsches will gather at Baptist's downtown campus to raise funds and awareness for the Heart Rhythm Center. Members of the Porsche Club are encouraged to register their cars and the car community is invited to donate to the cause as well. The goal is to raise \$50,000.

Registration fees and donations are 100% tax-deductible. There will be two top trophies awarded at the conclusion of the event. The Porsche Club is working hand-in-hand with the Baptist Health Foundation to organize the event to make sure the fun includes the patients and staff as they will be able to vote for their favorites.

Porsches are high-performance automobiles, and, as with an athlete, it

depends on its engine to perform.

The engine is the heart of all Porsches — just like the human heart depends on valves, electrical sensors and injectors. If a Porsche wasn't running right, then the owner would see a mechanic. The Baptist Heart Hospital is the best mechanic for the human heart in the area. In fact, it's this area's only freestanding hospital for heart and vascular care.

The Heart Rhythm Center is a new \$17 million state-of-the-art facility specializing in treatments and cures for heart-rhythm abnormalities.

Located within the Baptist Heart Hospital, the Heart Rhythm Center is a one-stop destination for electrical physiological procedures, including catheter-based ablations, and implanting defibrillators, pacemakers and other devices. All pre-operative, procedure and post-operative care, including overnight stays if needed, are performed in this state-of-the-art center, allowing patients

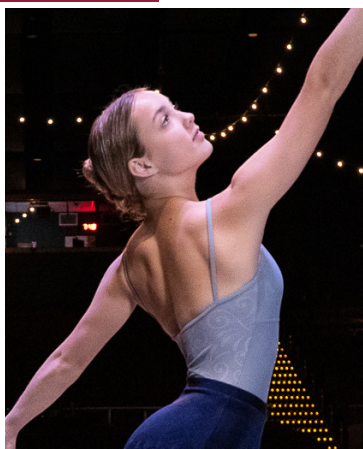
to get this specialized care close to home.

With the population growth in Southeast Georgia and Northeast Florida, and the ability to diagnose heart rhythm abnormalities expanding with new technology, the need to treat atrial fibrillation (Afib) and other heart rhythm abnormalities is increasing.

Thanks to the expert teams and physicians, the Heart Hospital at Baptist Jacksonville offers high quality cardiac care for the region, and adding an electrical physiological center will help meet the growing community's needs.

Just like high performance Porsches need a specialized mechanic, the human heart also needs a specialized doctor. Heart rhythm problems can be life-limiting, or life-ending, so the need for treatment is important.

For more information about the event: [pcafcr.org/event/baptist-heart-hospital-rhythm-center-fundraiser](http://pcafcr.org/event/baptist-heart-hospital-rhythm-center-fundraiser) or [pcafcr.org/contact](http://pcafcr.org/contact).



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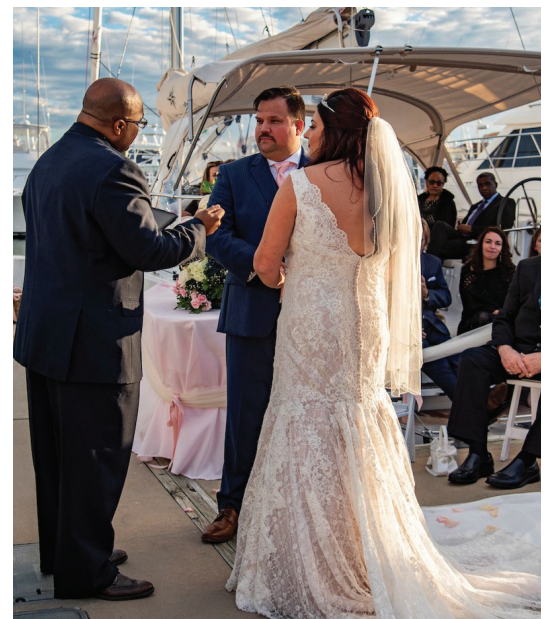


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A married couple embraces during their wedding ceremony aboard one of St. Augustine Sailing's boats.



A bride and groom exchange vows aboard one of St. Augustine Sailing's boats.

[ first coast summer ]

# ST. AUGUSTINE SAILING OFFERS UNIQUE VENUE FOR TYING THE KNOT

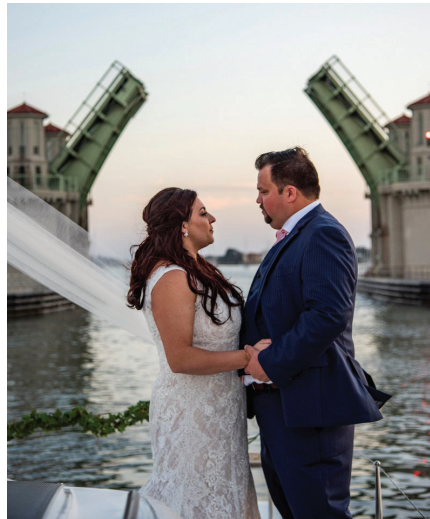
Contributed photos

Each couple's love story is special. Whether they've been together for six months or six years, no two are the same. With St. Augustine Sailing's new customizable wedding packages, couples can create an event as unique as they are. And with the nation's most historic and beautiful city as a backdrop, it just doesn't get any better.

This family-owned and -operated luxury charter business is a one-stop-shop — with a variety of packages and enhancements available, the ceremony of your dreams is just a call away.

"As someone whose love story blossomed on the water, I know the magic that can happen," said Rose Ann Points, owner, captain and broker at St. Augustine Sailing. "I fell in love at sea, I raised my children at sea and we see other couples create amazing connections on board our boats. It was only natural for us to want to help couples create the perfect experience for this milestone event. You want an intimate sunset elopement? Done. A yachtie-themed wedding with friends and family? We can do that! My staff and I are here to make sure your day is nothing but smooth seas."

St. Augustine Sailing has crafted



With romantic scenery in the background, a couple ties the knot aboard one of St. Augustine Sailing's boats.

three new wedding packages for their prospective couples. The Arbor Knot package features an intimate ceremony at sea for just the bride and groom or with a few of their closest family and friends. The Lover's Knot package offers a dockside service on a luxury yacht, designed for an elopement or smaller ceremony. And for larger parties, the Marriage Knot package can accommodate wedding parties of up to 30 guests at the dock, with the picturesque marina as a backdrop.

Packages include an officiant, a small bouquet and boutonniere, self-serve sparkling wine and a cake. Couples can personalize their service with enhancements such as a photographer, personal chef, sailing experience and even an overnight stay on board.

"All of our enhancements were conceptualized to add to the beauty of the ceremony," said Points. "One of my personal favorites would have to be the acoustic guitar because if you've never experienced live music at sea, it's absolutely divine. My other favorite is the private couples charter with brunch the day after the ceremony. It's a lovely way for the bride and groom to relax, reflect and really soak in some quality time together."

St. Augustine Sailing is a luxury adventure experience that offers a variety of sailing excursions. They offer private charters that can be customized to create a unique experience. Popular options include private chef-prepared meals, premium beer and wine upgrades, and overnight adventures.

St. Augustine Sailing also offers sailing lessons and membership in SailTime, a club that allows members to rent a boat at franchises around the country.

For more information on their programs, go to [sta-sail.com](http://sta-sail.com).



[ first coast summer ]

# EXPLORING OUR BACKYARD

story by **AMBER BULLINGTON TIPTON, AMELIA ISLAND KAYAK EXCURSIONS**  
photo courtesy of **AMELIA ISLAND KAYAK EXCURSIONS**

**H**i, adventure seekers! Are you tired of the same old routine? Are looking for a new way to explore this summer? Consider your own “backyard” of unique and exciting options to discover the beauty of our surroundings. Many times, overlooked, our backyard of Northeast Florida offers serene inland creeks, saltmarshes, intracoastal waterways and rivers to explore via kayak. So, gather your sense of adventure to embark on a journey you won't forget!

For example, imagine lavender flowers draping into the Florida blackwater. There are lush, green, low-lying palmetto palms and majestic moss-laden cypress and oak trees along the creek's banks. Can you hear the chirping of the recently hatched baby alligators hiding in the weeds along the water's edge? We are now paddling through the salt grasses in view of Amelia Island's historic lighthouse, watching great egrets and herons take flight. Wow! Trusty camera in hand, you get a great



A bald eagle soars over jetties in a scene one might encounter while exploring the outdoors.

shot!  
Allow me to share the story of my most recent shot which is my favorite so far:  
Early one morning my family and I went kayaking. It was my mom and nephew's maiden voyage in our Hobie Mirage kayaks. We took tandem kayaks, which made it more convenient for me to take pictures, and we stopped off for a short period of time on the beach of

Cumberland Island.  
It was low tide, and there were sandbars where gulls and pelicans frequent. (It is common to see a flock of birds completely covering the exposed sand bar, giving the illusion that they are floating on the water.) Capturing our attention was one lone bird. I thought it

CONTINUED ON PAGE 18 ■

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# LIGHTHOUSE & MARITIME MUSEUM CELEBRATES JUNIOR SERVICE LEAGUE LEGACY

Contributed photos

The St Augustine Lighthouse & Maritime Museum is one of the city's most visited museums — welcoming visitors from all over the country and beyond. Yet, many residents and visitors alike are unfamiliar with the humble beginnings of the museum and how a group of local women committed to historic preservation saved the Keepers' House from the wrecking ball.

In 1970, a fire gutted the abandoned Keepers' House located at the St. Augustine Light Station. The following year, St. Johns County purchased the property from the U.S. Coast Guard with the intention of demolishing the burned-out shell of the building. Enter the Junior Service League of St. Augustine and the idea of restoring the Keepers' House as a museum and community center. The women of the JSL literally turned back the bulldozers, saving a piece of local

history.

In 1981, the members of the Junior Service League adopted the Keepers' House as their newest service project. The JSL signed a 99-year lease with St. Johns County for the Keepers' House and grounds and launched an estimated \$300,000 campaign to restore the exterior of the building to its original beauty.

Through the assistance of Hamilton



The Keeper's House in disrepair.

Upchurch, who served in the Florida House of Representatives, the League approached the State of Florida and the Bureau of Historic Preservation. The agency provided a matching grant of \$15,000, requiring the League to raise an additional \$15,000. The League members raised money in a variety of ways, including reaching out to businesses like Winn-Dixie and CSX in Jacksonville and private foundations such as the David Family Foundation. Members also sold prints of the Keepers' House by local artist Scott Young and hosted progressive dinners. The League also started the Bud Light 5K Run in a partnership with Burkhardt Distribution, an event known today as the Lighthouse 5K and Fun Run.

With the completion of the Keepers' House project, the Junior Service League reached out to Coast Guard operations

CONTINUED ON PAGE 19 ■

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## BACKYARD

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 17

to be odd for only one bird to be resting on the sandbar alone. It was a large bird. This piqued my curiosity; is this what I think it is? It is what I thought it was! Framed by the ocean's mist, was a majestic bald eagle. (The national anthem started playing in my head).

I quickly took pictures because this was an adventure where the clock was ticking. He could take flight at any moment! Well, he did fly, just as the tide was coming in causing the sandbar to vanish into the deep. But this did not stop me. I had my camera set on continuous mode, which enabled me to shoot many frames of the soaring eagle!

Over the rock jetties he flew as the ocean's waves crashed against the rocks. For me, seeing this powerful symbol of our nation caused patriotism to fill my heart. This experience was

enhanced by being in our kayaks exploring the waters of our beautiful home with my family.

Quality time spent with friends and family is special. Whether you're kayaking, paddleboarding or boating, our waterways offer thrilling activities that will have your family bonding and creating unforgettable memories. With the wind in your hair and the sun on your face, you'll explore new and familiar places and experience the great outdoors like never before!

I am honored to be a part of my family's business, and I invite you to create memories of your own with us at Amelia Island Kayak Excursions, Where Kayaking Fun Begins! [www.AmeliaIslandKayak.com](http://www.AmeliaIslandKayak.com). 904-557-5307. Interested? Just call us or visit our website. It is as simple as that — your first step toward an adventure your family will always remember!



## LEGACY

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 18

in Jacksonville to inquire about the potential of leasing the lighthouse tower and opening it to the public. The League received a guarantee that the Coast Guard would paint the tower prior to it handing it over to the League.

In 1992, the League launched the tower restoration project with the primary goal of restoring the tower and repairing the damaged Fresnel lens. Unfortunately, in 1986, a vandal shot and damaged 19 of the 370 glass panels in the Fresnel lens.

The Coast Guard prepared to remove the historic Fresnel lens and replace it with an airport beacon, thus destroying the historic value of the lighthouse tower. Yet, prior to 1992, no lighthouse in the country had undertaken a restoration of its Fresnel lens.

With the help of two Coast Guard lampists, Joe Cocking and Nuck Johnston, the League partnered with Artworks Florida who fabricated replacement parts for the damaged glass in the lens.

Dan Spinella, who started Artworks Florida, had previously worked with Walt Disney Imagineering and brought his

[ first coast summer ]



The St. Augustine Lighthouse and Keeper's House.

talents to the project. On May 21, 1993, a communitywide celebration was held on the grounds of the museum for the relighting of the original Fresnel lens. The following year, the restoration work on the tower and the oil house took place, completing the final stage of the League's restoration of the original light station buildings.

Because of the success of the Junior



The roof being repaired on the Keeper's House.

Service League of St. Augustine and their restoration of the Keepers' House and lighthouse tower, other lighthouses across the country launched similar projects. The St. Augustine Lighthouse is a symbol not only to the determination of a local service organization to save our history but also as a blueprint for other organizations to save historic lighthouses across the country.

To learn more about the St. Augustine Lighthouse & Maritime Museum, go to [staugustinelighthouse.org](http://staugustinelighthouse.org). The museum is open every day from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. except Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day.



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[ first coast summer ]

# SAN JOSE HOME OFFERS *unparalleled riverfront luxury*

story by **ANITA VINING**  
Contributed photos

**I**ndulge in the ultimate riverfront living experience at 6120 San Jose Blvd. West. This extraordinary property presents an opportunity to own a slice of paradise, boasting 15,255 square feet of pure luxury, a private boat dock and an indoor swimming pool. Prepare to be captivated by the sheer elegance and breathtaking views that define this exceptional home. Offering 243 feet of St. Johns River frontage.

The expansive living spaces are bathed in natural light, creating an inviting and open atmosphere. Floor-to-ceiling windows showcase stunning panoramic views.

The heart of the home lies in the magnificent indoor swimming pool, where you can enjoy a refreshing swim

or simply relax and soak in the tranquil ambiance. The pool area is beautifully designed and complemented by large-screened windows that bring the outdoors inside, creating a serene oasis for year-round enjoyment.

The gourmet kitchen is a chef's dream, equipped with top-of-the-line appliances, ample counter space and custom cabinetry. Prepare delicious meals while overlooking the river and entertain guests in the adjacent dining area, which offers a seamless transition between indoor living spaces.

The luxurious master suite is a private haven, complete with a spacious bedroom, a lavish ensuite bathroom and a private balcony that grants breathtaking views of the river. Additional bedrooms and living spaces provide comfort and privacy for family members and guests, ensuring that

everyone feels pampered and at ease.

Outside, the property unfolds into a sprawling outdoor oasis. Host memorable gatherings on the expansive patio or stroll down to your private boat dock and set sail on the river. Whether you're enjoying a sunset cruise, exploring the waterways or simply basking in the tranquility of your surroundings, this riverfront retreat offers endless opportunities for relaxation and recreation.

Located in the coveted neighborhood of San Jose, this home provides not only an exceptional living experience but also convenient access to Jacksonville's finest amenities. Explore the vibrant dining and shopping options nearby or embrace the natural beauty of the surrounding parks and recreational areas.

Take a tour at [anitaving.com](http://anitaving.com) or call for a private tour.



The home at 6120 San Jose Blvd. West is like a slice of paradise.



[ first coast summer ]

# SAILTIME OFFERS BENEFITS OF BOAT OWNERSHIP WITHOUT THE COST

Contributed photo

Summer in Florida means warm breezes and swathes of glassy blue-green seas for days. And there's no better way to enjoy Florida on the Historic Coast than on your very own sailboat.

SailTime Northeast Florida's sail-sharing membership options allow sailors to enjoy the benefits of owning a boat without the cost and responsibility of actually owning a boat. Experienced sailors can select from a wide variety of sailboats, from monohulls to catamarans. SailTime members then have fractional membership of the vessel.

"Sailing really is one of the purest joys in life," said Rose Ann Points, owner of SailTime Northeast Florida. "As a lifelong boater, parent and now a grandmother, I completely understand that boat ownership is not practical for everyone at every stage of their life. That's where SailTime can really fill that gap. Instead of dedicating countless hours and dollars to maintenance and storage, St. Augustine Sailing's SailTime members just walk down the dock, throw off the lines and sail away. We're currently looking to add more boats to our fleet, including a Jeanneau 349, Jeanneau 380, Jeanneau 410 and a Lagoon 40."

St. Augustine Sailing's SailTime program offers four membership levels: Weekday, Lite, Classic and Premier. Weekday allows for four uses Monday through Friday. Lite allows for three sailing excursions



per month, perfect for busy professionals and families. The Classic membership steps it up a notch, with seven sail times per month with additional times available with 36-hour prior scheduling. Sailors really looking to stretch their sea legs will enjoy the Premier membership, where members can cast the lines off a minimum of 14 times per month, including trips of seven continuous days and nights. Members can schedule their time using the cloud-based scheduling app.

St. Augustine Sailing even offers boat owners a chance to join the program with their own vessels, through a sister company, All Points Yacht Sales. Slip fees and routine maintenance fees are all covered as part of the membership. Owners can sleep soundly knowing that their vessel is cared for

and operated by responsible, well-trained captains. The program also offers guaranteed income rather than profit sharing.

"Our members are all proficient sailors, but we do have options for beginners," said Points. "We're proud to offer one of the best sailing schools around, through our parent company, St. Augustine Sailing. Our American Sailing Association-certified instructors can take you from novice to skipper with in-depth, hands-on instruction. Once they're certified, they can join SailTime Northeast Florida membership program and get out on the water."

For more information on membership, go to [sailtime.com/location/northeast-florida](http://sailtime.com/location/northeast-florida).

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Dr. Diane DeMell Jacobsen talks about the special frame she acquired for this painting of a structure in Spain.



Jonathan Stuhlman leads a tour of "American Made: Paintings and Sculpture from the DeMell Jacobsen Collection."

# Uniquely American art

## SUBJECT OF CUMMER EXHIBIT

story and photos by **SHAUN RYAN**

“Ars longa, vita brevis.”

An aphorism by Hippocrates (translated from the original Greek) and a summation by Dr. Diane DeMell Jacobsen describing the value of preserving art for future generations.

That’s something the philanthropist and her Thomas H. and Diane DeMell Jacobsen PhD Foundation have been striving to accomplish for several years. Toward that end, Jacobsen has acquired about 270 masterpieces created by some of the best American artists working in the 19th and 20th — and even the 21st — centuries.

Now through Sept. 24, the fruits of that effort are on exhibit at the collection’s home gallery, the Cummer Museum of Art & Gardens, in a show titled “American Made: Paintings and Sculpture from the DeMell Jacobsen Collection.”

Here, museum visitors will see works from the Colonial era by Sarah Miriam Peale and Benjamin West, sweeping landscapes from the 19th century by Thomas Cole and Jasper Francis Copsey and art by 20th century masters like Elizabeth Catlett and John Marin.

Viewing the show’s 104 works awakens the visitor to the full range and diversity of American art. The exhibit makes a point of including artists who, by virtue of their race or gender, have not received the attention they deserve.

“Most Americans don’t know about the great art that they have,” Jacobsen said. “They don’t know about all the

artists. They certainly don’t know about women artists, people of color, Asians.”

“Dr. Jacobsen had thoughtfully and carefully amassed an impressive collection that captures the breadth and dynamism of American artistic production,” said Andrea Barnwell Brownlee, Ph.D., the George W. and Kathleen I. Gibbs director and CEO of the Jacksonville museum. “‘American Made’ exemplifies her keen eye, highlights her informed understanding and, moreover, offers an extensive examination of American art from the past two centuries.”

Pieces showcased in the exhibit have been on view at other museums, some of them, like the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Philadelphia Museum of Art and the Smithsonian American Art Museum, among the most important venues in the United States, if not the world. However, this is the first exhibition that features a comprehensive collection of the works.

“When we put this show together, we had to call back loans from museums all across the country to assemble the show,” said Jonathan Stuhlman, Ph.D., senior curator of American art at The Mint Museum in Charlotte, North Carolina, and one of the curators of “American Made.”

The impetus for the collection was a request by Jacobsen’s late husband.

Thomas H. Jacobsen had a successful career in banking, including stints as director of the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis and president of the Federal Reserve Advisory Council; chairman, president and chief executive of the

Mercantile Bancorporation; board chairman of Firststar Corp.; and vice president of First National Bank of Chicago.

But in 2002, before leukemia claimed his life at the age of 62, it was art that occupied his thoughts.

“When he sat in his hospital bed with his yellow legal pad, he said, ‘I need you to build an American art collection that would be transformative,’” said Diane DeMell Jacobsen. “So that’s what I tried to do.”

Her goal in setting up the foundation was to create this collection, one that “would not only honor his legacy — I made a deathbed promise that I would do that — but that would be a gift to America and a gift to all the young people in America.”

Each painting in the collection is studied under microscope and UV light. Great care is taken to restore works where necessary.

One landscape by William Bradford was very dirty at the time of acquisition. Over a period of two years, it was cleaned, inch by inch.

Framing, too, was not taken for granted. When a portrait of Martha Washington did not share a matching frame with that of a companion portrait of her famous husband, one was created and today is indistinguishable from the other.

Another frame encircles a work of art with an ornate inscription in Arabic.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 25 ■



# CUMMER

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 24

Jacobsen searched 18 years before she had the right frame for that piece.

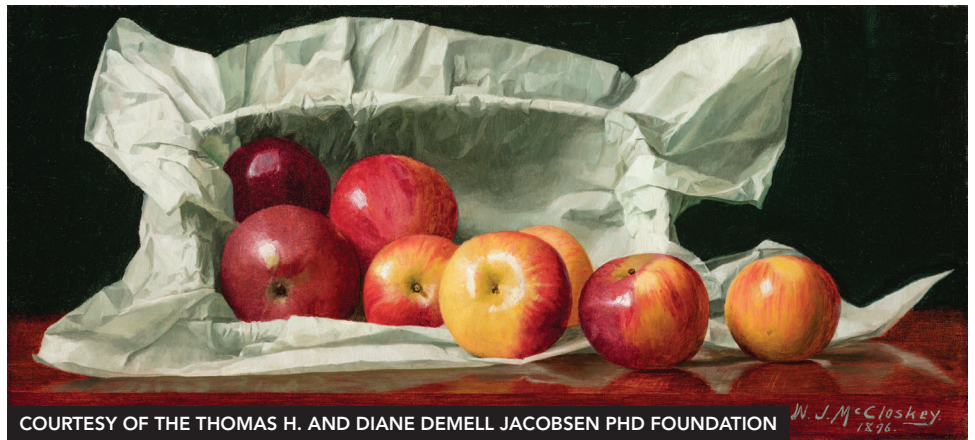
“Great frames are really hard to find,” she said.

That painting was the subject of an architectural and geographic mystery of sorts. It was rumored to depict a structure in Cordoba, Spain, but that turned out not to be true. Eventually, a friend of Jacobsen discovered the painting’s actual subject in Granada.

A more recent work, an abstract done in the 1960s during the civil rights era, depicts black and white elements clashing in some areas and coming together in others.

The entire exhibit is roughly chronological, though there are some subsections arranged in accordance with approaches to art, styles and subject matter.

The exhibit is part of a national tour that originated at The Mint Museum. After closing in Jacksonville, it will move to the San Antonio Museum of Art (Oct. 14 to Jan. 7), Dixon Gallery & Gardens in Memphis (Jan. 29 to April 16) and the Huntsville Museum of Art (March 24 to June 16).



COURTESY OF THE THOMAS H. AND DIANE DEMELL JACOBSEN PHD FOUNDATION

William J. McCloskey (American, 1859-1941). “Basket of Apples,” 1896, oil on canvas.

It is curated by Todd Herman, Ph.D., president and CEO of The Mint Museum; Kevin Sharp, director of the Dixon Gallery & Gardens; and Stuhlman; with contributions by William Keyse Rudolph, Ph.D., deputy director, curatorial affairs at The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art in Kansas City, Missouri.

During the month of June, three programs related to the show were conducted: “The Red-Haired Beauty: Private Art, Public Art and Access to Beauty in American Society” with Scott Brown, Ph.D., professor of art history at UNF; a lecture by Jacobsen, who lives in Ponte Vedra: “An ‘American Made’

Collector’s Story”; and an artist meet-and-greet and demonstration with Gail Beverage.

An afternoon tea, “American style,” is scheduled for Sept. 17. Paid ticket and pre-registration are required. Go to [cummermuseum.org/events](http://cummermuseum.org/events) to register.

“Art is so important in our lives,” said Jacobsen, “and its endurance is something I felt would represent my late husband. ... *Ars longa, vita brevis.*”

For further information about the Cummer Museum of Art & Gardens’ permanent collection and special exhibitions, go to [cummermuseum.org/visit/art](http://cummermuseum.org/visit/art).

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Donna MacPherson



Rebekah Lingenfelter



Barbara Ryan Harris

# WOMEN'S FOOD ALLIANCE EXPANDS TO COASTAL GEORGIA

story by LEIGH CORT

**T**he Women's Food Alliance officially launched its second chapter in Coastal Georgia on June 26 on St. Simons Island.

Founder Leigh Cort has been leading the hospitality organization in Northeast Florida since 2013 to connect women in all careers that are associated with the food, beverage, event and hospitality industries. Now with 150 members throughout the North Florida region, it's time to bring the excitement and networking opportunities to women throughout Coastal Georgia and beyond, according to Cort.

Memberships to the Coastal Georgia chapter are available directly through Cort.

From the Georgia "community" of hard-working, creative and passionate hospitality women, Cort has selected a talented and diverse Leadership Board from a vast pool of well-respected women, including Donna MacPherson (owner of Golden Isles Olive Oil Culinary Center on St. Simons Island), Rebekah Faulk Lingenfelter (food writer, award-winning food blogger and TV personality in Savannah) and Barbara Ryan (publisher of St. Marys Magazine and founder of St. Marys Little Theater).

MacPherson's passion for fresh food and flavorful meals began as a child cooking with grandma in the kitchen on Cape Breton Island in Nova Scotia where no matter whose house you went to visit, something was always brewing. Kitchen smells always permeated the air.

She spent hours in the field picking blueberries and bringing them back to grandma, and they would appear in pies, jams, dessert bars and blueberry pancakes. MacPherson's lifelong dream

was to own a business that enabled her to share her love for healthy, delicious food, cooking, wine and a commitment to the community.

She combined everything into an inviting establishment, buying Golden Isles Olive Oil in 2016. MacPherson traveled to Italy to become a Certified Olive Oil Sommelier and earned an Olive Oil Sensory Certification at UC Davis in California. After expanding into a demo kitchen, she invited guest chefs to thrill her clients. Her new island Culinary Center now offers classes, tastings and a knowledgeable, friendly staff in her full-service restaurant.

Rebekah Faulk Lingenfelter is author of the best-selling memoir, "Some Kinda Good" and is the creative force behind an award-winning food blog of the same name.

A culinary TV personality/food writer, she is the longtime Statesboro Herald food columnist and food contributor for Southern Soil, Discovering Bulloch and Effingham Living magazines. Featured in Forbes, on Food Network Star and ABC's "The Taste," Lingenfelter earned her Bachelor of Science degree in public relations from Georgia Southern University. She also attended the Culinary Institute of Savannah and is a 5-star private chef.

Lingenfelter is currently writing her second book, titled "Unique Eats and Eateries of Savannah," as part of a national series with Reedy Press to be released in the spring of 2024. She is a proud member of Georgia Grown and invites everyone to have a seat at her table on SomeKindaGood.com, where she shares local, in-season recipes and encourages everyone to gather around the family table to share in the joy of cooking and eating together.

To learn more, go to [rebekahlingenfelter.com](http://rebekahlingenfelter.com) or connect with Some Kinda Good on social media.

Barbara Ryan Harris is and has been a devoted supporter of women in the food and hospitality industry for more than four decades through her marketing and publishing companies in Florida and Georgia, and in her career as a writer. She's the founder and publisher of St. Marys Magazine, the centerpiece of tourism and lifestyle in Southeast Georgia.

Harris is well-known in Camden County, Georgia, as the founder and chair of St. Marys Little Theatre where she writes, produces, directs and stars in numerous theatrical productions every season of the year.

Recognized throughout all of Georgia and the southeastern United States as the co-founder of Coastal Georgia Film Alliance, she works with film production companies that bring their feature films to St. Marys and Kingsland. Harris is the recipient of numerous awards, including a Lifetime Achievement Award from the American Advertising Federation.

Careers represented by members of the Women's Food Alliance include: restaurateurs, specialty foods creators, chefs, hospitality consultants, hotel specialists, unique venues, photographers, sommeliers, brewers, event planners, party rentals, country clubs, culinary schools, caterers, chocolatiers, floral designers, marketing and PR, food writers, farmers, wedding consultants and more.

The Women's Food Alliance's mission is to cultivate and advance networking, education and collaboration for women in the hospitality industry in Coastal Georgia/Northeast Florida.



# THE SHOW MUST GO ON

story by ANTHONY RICHARDS

photo courtesy of AMELIA COMMUNITY THEATRE

## Busy summer ahead for Amelia Community Theatre

There is just something about community theatre that makes the soul feel good, and Amelia Community Theatre is one of the places on the First Coast that offer that outlet for artists.

The theatre is in its 42nd season serving those who have a passion for the arts on Fernandina Beach and the surrounding area.

It does not matter what age either, because love for the arts does not have an age limit.

As a result, Amelia Community Theatre has several summer camp programs coming up, including teen musical adventure in Shrek the Musical Jr., which will be for ages 12 to 18 and take place from June 26 to July 7 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. with no camp held on July 4 due to the holiday.

The summer camps are two weeks long and consist of a very streamlined



Amelia Community Theatre will have summer camps going on this summer as they strive to grow the passion of the next generation of actors and actresses.

approach, but one that those taking part are eager to take part in.

An audition will be held on the first day to help sort out who makes the best characters and which roles are most fitting.

There will then be workshops each day focusing on the acting tools of improvisation and character development as well as basic skills.

For teens more interested in learning the methods of what made William Shakespeare's work such classics that are still talked about years later, there

will be a "Much Ado About Nothing" camp for those 12 to 18 years old from July 10-21 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. each day.

Members of both camps will showcase their play in front of an audience at the end of the camp, as they demonstrate all the hard work and fun they experienced over the two weeks in a performance.

Registration for both camps can be found by going to the education tab at [ameliacommunitytheatre.org](http://ameliacommunitytheatre.org) to be a part of all the fun and thrills that come with acting.

Camps are not the only thing included as part of the theatre's busy summer, but there will also be the inaugural Amelia Community Theatre Golf Tournament which will be taking place July 17 at the Golf Club of Amelia Island which sits by the Ritz Carlton.

It will serve as a new fundraising effort for the theatre and will feature a shotgun start beginning at 9 a.m. followed by lunch, raffles and awards being given out.

Go to [actgolffundraiser.com](http://actgolffundraiser.com) for more details and to register for the tournament.

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# Explore Jacksonville

## LIKE NEVER BEFORE THIS SUMMER

### Pair of books offer unique journey through the city

story by ANTHONY RICHARDS  
Contributed photo

In many ways summer presents opportunities for quality time with family and loved ones, but it can be interesting at times to find unique things to do together.

Author Amy West has helped provide an answer to that question with a pair of books that encourage adventure with a Jacksonville flair.

She combined her passion for travel, which she developed as a child, and her love for Jacksonville and the North Florida area to write a pair of books designed to showcase destinations that have made up Jacksonville's culture throughout the years.

The first book was "100 Things to Do in Jacksonville Before You Die," and it was followed by the release of "Jacksonville Scavenger: The Ultimate Search for Jacksonville's Hidden Treasures."

"The idea to write the books was just another avenue for me to express my love for writing and travel while exploring Jacksonville, the place I grew up around and love more than anything," West said. "My hope is that the books help shed light and showcase the number of great destinations we have in Jacksonville."

While both books do share certain similar destinations, they truly are two separate entities and offer their own unique journeys through the city.

"You don't need one book to figure out the other, but there are going to be some things that do cross over from one to the next," West said. "They are each something that is truly Jacksonville and has a special place or plays a part in making the city's culture what it is."

There are more than 20 restaurants listed in the first book, as well as a variety of other destinations, such as greenspaces and historical markers.

The second book is a scavenger hunt



Amy West is an author who has written a pair of books highlighting cultural destinations around Jacksonville.

that she believes will be perfect for families who are looking to explore together and strengthen that bond even more while also getting to know the area they call home this summer.

"'Jacksonville Scavenger' presents more of a challenge and prompts the reader to find clues and go out, find the many destinations out there," West said.

There are 24 neighborhoods in Jacksonville included in the scavenger book and multiple clues and riddles are given for each one of them as well as a photo and an illustration, including more than 340 clues throughout the book.

West used her own knowledge and love of the city in the creation of the books, as she lived in Jacksonville Beach for 32 years and grew up in the area.

"My mother still calls Jacksonville home, and we have B&Bs that we own in town," West said.

"Ever since I can remember travel

has always been a huge part of my life and something that I have always been fascinated with," West said. "My dad worked with Delta, so the opportunities were definitely there, and when my parents divorced I ended up flying back and forth from Florida to Kentucky a lot when I was just about 7 or 8 years old."

According to West, she was taking about 12 flights a year, and that's when she caught the "travel bug."

"I was traveling abroad at 14 years old, and I haven't stopped since," West said.

Her passion for visiting new places led her to have a travel TV show series and blogs over the years, and she has used writing as a way to journal all her travels.

"If you are someone who likes adventure, 'Jacksonville Scavenger' will take you on the biggest and most epic tour of Jax you'll ever be on," West said. "Whether you are into nature, history or you are a foodie, Jacksonville has something for you."





# CELEBRITIES COME FROM FAR AND WIDE FOR *Jay Fund Golf Classic*



photos by ANTHONY RICHARDS

The Tom Coughlin Jay Fund Foundation hosted its 28th Annual Celebrity Golf Classic at TPC Sawgrass on May 7 and 8. The following photos are from the event's dinner and auction on May 7. The event served as one of the foundation's marquee fundraisers of the year and featured a variety of current and former professional athletes and celebrities.



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TABLE TALK

# RIVER & FORT:

## *An eye-catching showstopper*

story by **LEIGH CORT**  
Contributed photo



**R**iver & Fort, at the crossroads of Avenida Menendez and Cuna Street on the Matanzas River, has created a sense of drama and place that

separates it from the rest of the dining candidates in historic St. Augustine.

There are many restaurants that deliver a fantastic culinary experience, others an interesting ambiance, some are just convenient to drop into on a well-traversed, narrow, brick-paved street with a pedigree.

Somehow this show-stopping exquisite new landmark is a multi-level hot ticket destination that's unquestionably handling the raves!

Let's step in and take a tour first. You can dine on the audacious rooftop with sofas, umbrella tables and even bar-top ledges with the ultimate view of America's oldest city. You don't have to miss any of the magic of St. Augustine. Here you can see the breath-taking Castillo de San Marcos, the legendary Bridge of Lions, rooftops of buildings and homes from the 1600s, horse-drawn carriages and the most expansive vista all the way to the Atlantic Ocean.

The name River & Fort so appropriately embraces the rightful scope of its position in the city.

General Manager Chelsy Johnson is very adept at leading the entire team of this 400-seat landmark from its tranquil dining hours to its bustling I-don't-mind-waiting-an-hour-for-my-table times!

Don't select a dining spot quite yet. Chelsy might suggest that you should first select one of nine seating locations. Take a moment to visit the charming



General Manager Chelsy Johnson and Executive Chef Derrick Haggerty

sidewalk tables on the Avenue and beautiful indoor dining rooms that feel as if you've been dropped into homey-yet-snazzy private homes that buzz with conversations in every language.

Perhaps you'll select one of two magnificent bars that nearly run the length of the building itself (one irresistibly open air) or romantic balconies that don't miss a view of the night and day activity all around. River & Fort makes it easy to fall in love with the possibility of dining here at lunch and dinner for a week and never having the same ambiance experience twice. Or the same meal!

Get wild and order a scrumptious "Old City Outlaw" cocktail. (Bacardi

coconut rum, coconut cream, lime juice, pineapple and mint). Chef's dishes aren't the only eye-catching items on the menu! Each specialty cocktail has its connection to St. Augustine's history: Conquistador, Gun Powder & Guava, Blacksmith, Seminole Wind or Cannonball. It's not easy to make a selection but I guarantee they are deliciously exceptional.

Executive Chef Derrick Haggerty and his thrilling/evolving menus are the culmination of family roots, childhood eating during his father's 30-year career as a famous resort executive chef. His is a kaleidoscopic resume of working as chef, sous chef and partner in numerous well-known restaurants and hotels at a very young age.

At River & Fort, he was chosen by the owners not only because he garnered numerous culinary awards, but because he knows how to have free rein to live in the moment with food.

"This is my labor of love," he said. "When I walked into this building, I knew it was going to be a big job; it's an empty plate waiting for my ingredients and the quality of exciting food that my team and I can create."

Chef Derrick has often been referred to locally as the Gordon Ramsey of St. Augustine. He knows what he wants, and his enormous staff must live up to his standards — from the hard working, creative back-of-the-house culinary professionals to the fantastic waitstaff who "wow" you with their knowledge and passion for his food.

If you enjoy dining surprises, the varied plates, bowls and platters are all unique. Each dish is a shining star in its own galaxy; look for the marvelous lion head bowls — reminiscent of the Bridge of Lions!

Chef's locally inspired menus

CONTINUED ON PAGE 31 ■



## RIVER & FORT

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 30

represent a blend of Southeast, Asian, French — nothing gimmicky or flashy here. But if you adore far-flung combinations of deliciousness, River & Fort has you covered with iconic classics and nothing boring.

We know that overseeing a restaurant of this size is like conducting a symphony, an artistry that takes every member of the team to create an unforgettable experience. Chelsy understands her responsibility to lead 150-plus team members to ensure every guest leaves satisfied.

“We constantly strive to keep the restaurant running smoothly and are committed to the community by creating job opportunities as well as providing a successful vibrant atmosphere,” she said.

Once settled in, take time to really discover the menu. Even if you spot familiar looking dishes, Chef’s food is worthy of investing some time to read — since River & Fort has become a



Sourdough bread

bona-fide dining destination. Imagine fried pickle hushpuppies to share with a datil pepper remoulade. Chopstick wings will impress your palate and friends — Gochujang BBQ, sesame, green onion and root slaw. Even bread service with an aromatic crusty sourdough boule with micros and sweet butter demands a standing ovation.

Summer months are ideal for the elegant roasted beet salad that could stand alone for lunch or dinner. There



Hushpuppies

are two surprising additions to the trio of beets, arugula, goat cheese and green onion. The chef’s sweet mint vinaigrette and two pools of almond butter both brought this dish centerstage.

Hopefully, the crab claw appetizer and scallop entrée will not lose their

CONTINUED ON PAGE 35 ■

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# FERNANDINA BEACH CELEBRATES *58th Annual Shrimp Festival*

photos courtesy of  
**AMELIA ISLAND**

**T**he 58th Annual Isle of Eight Flags Shrimp Festival was held May 5-7 in Fernandina Beach. Although it is a shrimp festival, there was nothing small about the three-day event, which is a tradition that the town and its residents embrace.



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# *St. Augustine Food and Wine Festival* RETURNS FOR THE THIRD YEAR

photos by **SUSAN GRIFFIN**

**T**he third annual St. Augustine Food and Wine Festival was held May 3-7 at various locations across St. Johns County. The main event was a grand tasting held Saturday, May 6 at the World Golf Village, which included a Kentucky Derby hat contest. The event also included celebrity chef cooking demonstrations, fine wine dinners, and a jazz brunch.





## RIVER & FORT

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 35

prominence on the menu as months move forward. The white wine garlic cream sauce where the crab claws dance slowly in the cast-iron pan — well, you might want to dip the entire round loaf of bread. It's easy to enjoy to the last little taste. The Scallops are gracefully resting atop aged-parmesan risotto paired with roasted corn and fennel chow. This dish demands full attention and savoring.

Whether you're a meat- or fish-lover, gluten free, Keto, vegetarian or vegan, there are so many menu choices that Chef Derrick has created that will obviously change from season to season — but quality will not waiver.

The most amazing part of dining here is the fluidity of menu knowledge that servers share with their tables of guests. Daily, they carry a listing of garnishes, clever mocktails, menu guidance for everyone's dietary preferences and market prices for many of the specialty foods that are served based



Crab Claws

on availability. From tomahawk ribeye, lobster, grand seafood platters and flown-in oysters to hand-cut filet, stuffed New York strip and outrageous cioppino — you're in good hands at River & Fort.

Never forget dessert! Chef's dessert menu is very popular, because the restaurant is open throughout the day,



Pots de Crème

too — and stopping in for a Pots de Crème could become a chocolate habit. His desserts are elegant — yet could be enjoyed stopping in with flipflops and a St. Augustine beach tan! Consider a Guava Pop Tart, Apple Galette or simply Donuts with Coffee Anglaise! Love is the most ingredient in the recipes.

Table Talk Hint: Leave weekends to the city's visitors and enjoy River & Fort's vivacious, esprit, vigor and verve on weekdays. You'll be imbued with a desire to return often to eat, drink and be merry!

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# JACKSONVILLE SYMPHONY PLANS WORLD PREMIERES, CLASSICS AND MORE

## 2023-24 season offers rich variety of performances

Contributed photo

The Jacksonville Symphony and Music Director Courtney Lewis have unveiled a diverse slate of programming and performances, acclaimed guest conductors and world-renowned guest artists for the symphony's 2023-24 season. The symphony's 74th season, which runs from Sept. 15 to June 8, 2024, seeks to create concert experiences that will enrich the lives of patrons with inspirational performances of the very best music has to offer.

### CLASSICAL, POPS AND MORE

Commencing the season are two free community concerts on Sept. 15 and 16 conducted by Associate Conductor Kevin Fitzgerald, an honored Jacksonville Symphony tradition that welcomes all of Jacksonville to Jacoby Symphony Hall for a preview of the season's musical offerings.

The Florida Blue Classical Series is packed with concertos and symphonies by classical legends like Ludwig van Beethoven, Gustav Mahler, Sergei Rachmaninoff, Johannes Brahms and more.

On Sept. 29 and 30, the series opens with a major new organ



Jacksonville Symphony Music Director Courtney Lewis conducts a concert at Jacoby Symphony Hall.

concerto commission produced by award-winning composer Lowell Liebermann and performed by Paul Jacobs, the first organist ever to win a Grammy. Later in the season, Courtney Bryan returns for the world premiere of another Jacksonville Symphony commission.

More standout performances include Concertmaster Adelya Nartadjeva's solo in Vaughan Williams' soaring "The Lark Ascending," three performances by award-winning pianists Simone Dinnerstein, Joyce Yang and Conrad Tao as part of the David M. Hicks Piano Series, with a special celebratory performance of George Gershwin's "Rhapsody in Blue" for its historic 100th birthday.

The Paysafe Pops Series is brimming with performances featuring tributes to musical greats like "The Music of Earth, Wind and Fire," "The Music of John Williams," "Women Rock!" and other creative, collaborative programs that showcase Prince, Elvis, Queen, Paul McCartney and more.

Finally, the fan-favorite FIS Symphonic Night at the Movies Series returns with live-to-picture performances of "E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial," "Home Alone" and "Harry Potter and the Half Blood Prince."

### GOING ABOVE AND BEYOND

The Friday morning Coffee Series offers eight concerts sampling music from a variety of genres including "A Journey from Bach to Beethoven," "Rodgers & Hammerstein Celebration," "Music of the Knights" and much more. There will also be four Thursday evening concerts in the Symphony In 60 Series, including the return of fan-favorite "At the Ballet II," featuring dancers from the Florida Ballet on the Jacoby Symphony Hall stage. Subscribers to this series also receive two tickets to a Florida Blue Classical Series concert of their choice.

The Concert Organ Series will also return with three Saturday evening concerts spotlighting the monumental Bryan Concert Organ and esteemed guest artists.

Another major highlight of the 2023-24 season is the symphony's grand opera production of Georges Bizet's "Carmen," produced by Stage Director Gregory Keller. As one of the most cherished operas of all time, this symphonically staged production will feature an award-winning cast of international guest artists, the Jacksonville Symphony Chorus and the symphony orchestra.

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## WHITNEY LAB

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

thought the worm would go and then observed. Afterwards, students discussed why they thought the worms chose a specific path given the fact that these parasites didn't have noses or real eyes. How did they know where to go?

Over the years, the experiments may have changed, but the goal has remained the same.

"We tried to turn everything on its head," Battelle said, explaining how science is sometimes approached with a didactic lens that limits perspective and wonder. "Our goal was to get kids to observe natural phenomena and ask questions."

This can sometimes be overlooked in the effort to teach mandated curricula and prepare students for standardized tests. But research shows that most Nobel Prize winners developed an interest in science at a young age and outside of standard classroom activities. Whitney Laboratory is taking that message to heart with its hands-on, question-and-observation-based



A student uses a microscope during a Day at the Whitney Lab.

approach to inspire scientific curiosity beyond the confines of a textbook.

"Does every kid who comes through become a scientist?" Battelle asked. "99.9% of the time, probably not. But those kids can now associate science with something cool."

Within five years, the Day at the Whitney Lab expanded to include a

Traveling Zoo where Whitney staff and volunteers would drive to local schools and visit the classrooms. By this point, there was enough community interest to warrant a full-time education coordinator at the Whitney Lab. Brenda Cannaliato, the lab's current education program manager, was hired in 2007. Over the first 28 years of Whitney Lab's school programs, the pool of community volunteers would grow to more than 90 individuals, each valued at approximately \$29 per hour. In that time, Whitney's education programs would serve seven counties and inspire more than 80,000 local students.

"We never want to duplicate anything the teacher can do in the classroom," Cannaliato explained, emphasizing that the purpose of these programs is to enhance curricula and justify the cost of a visiting class.

In 2020, COVID-19 disrupted Whitney Laboratory and local school operations. The lab was forced to work with minimal staff, and the number of available volunteers shrank to just six individuals.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 39 ■

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PHOTO BY REEMA PATEL

# COMMUNITY FIRST IGLOO *goes beyond just ice skating*

photos by ANTHONY RICHARDS

A ribbon cutting ceremony was held for the Community First Igloo, which has a variety of activities for the community to take part in, including ice rinks, e-sports and a restaurant called Ice Breakers. Members of the Jacksonville Icemen minor league hockey team and the City of Jacksonville were on hand for the event.



PHOTO BY REEMA PATEL





## WHITNEY LAB

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 37

Local schools closed their doors and moved their classes to online Zoom formats.

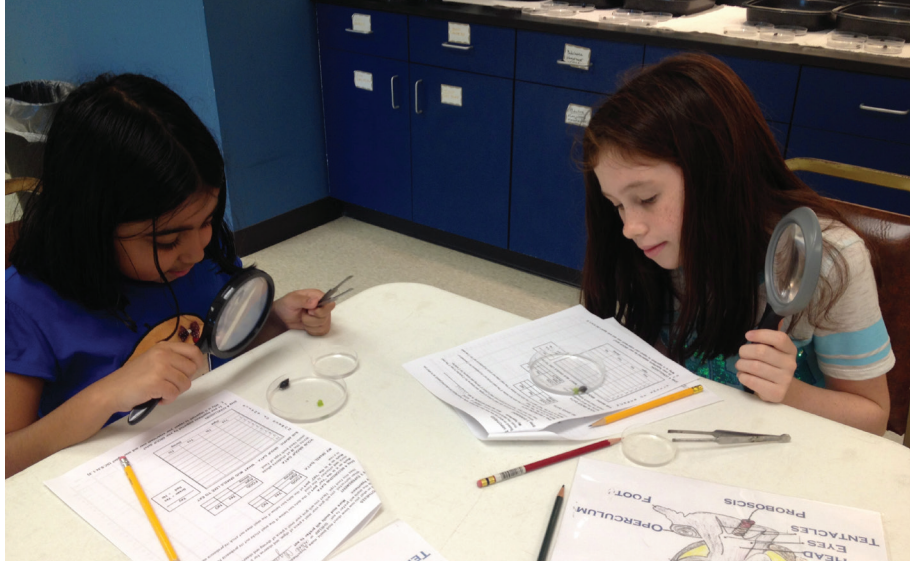
“During shutdowns, we didn’t want teachers to go without,” Cannaliato explained. “We didn’t have an online presence and had to adjust on the fly with the teachers. We still wanted to provide that service.”

Cannaliato and Amy Biedenbach, the education program coordinator at Whitney Laboratory, developed a hybrid experience to replicate one of the experiments children conduct when visiting the lab. Called “Snails on the Move,” this hybrid format consists of a kit complete with forceps, magnifying glasses, even live mud snails — everything a teacher would need to distribute to children. A Whitney supporter purchased filming equipment while Pete Meyers, a board member specializing in online visual design, helped compile web curricula and videos of Biedenbach doing the experiment. Teachers could click the link and share the material with students as Biedenbach guided the class through the lesson plan. Meyers and his team at EP Visual Design also helped the lab develop a virtual microscope experience for students to use.

During this time, some schools wouldn’t allow any visitors into the building. Whitney staff and volunteers would coordinate with teachers and load the Traveling Zoo van with the materials for “Snails on the Move.” After arriving at the school, masked teachers and staff members would exchange the goods in the empty parking lot.

Two other Whitney programs were created to address the needs of virtual or socially distant interactions during the pandemic. These include home learner activities geared toward individual students who could visit the lab and have a more personalized, one-on-one experience. Biedenbach also expanded summer day camps to include sixth and seventh graders in addition to elementary-school students.

Whitney Laboratory has also grown its online presence. Last year, faculty, staff and graduate students from the Whitney science community shared their Paths



Two students study tiny creatures during a Day at the Whitney Lab.

to Science videos describing examples of the many different paths that lead to science careers. These videos are posted on Whitney’s webpage.

Cannaliato is also in the process of creating Whitney Laboratory’s very first turtle education program for high school students interested in veterinary or health academies or marine biology. This program, inspired by Dr. Jessica Farrell’s recent dissertation defense at Whitney, will consist of an online curriculum covering advanced topics in science.

Now, as the community and the lab are recovering from the pandemic, things are starting to return to normal. And, according to Cannaliato, these new programs are here to stay.

“Once we create something, we don’t want it to go away, especially if it works,” she said. With these new programs, Whitney expects to serve an additional 700 students each year, plus thousands more online through YouTube and career path videos.

“We can grow anything if you give us the space, the staff and the time,” Cannaliato said.

Whitney’s new programs responding to the needs of classrooms highlight a niche that the lab is willing to fill, with potential to expand even more. Despite these additions and efforts to minimize costs — especially for underserved schools — Whitney still does not receive federal support or community funding beyond private donations to serve more than 5,000 students each year. More support is needed to deliver these programs and continue inspiring kids to get excited about science. Whitney Laboratory started an endowment fund

with a foundation matching support to help sustain the K-12 program and continues to seek donations that can be matched one to one to sustain the program for youth.

The hybrid class experience, “Snails on the Move,” was underwritten the first year for all schools and now remains free of charge to Title I schools where more than 50% of students receive free or reduced lunches. This service to underserved schools is funded by a private foundation who also provided Whitney’s mobile marine zoo van.

As of this summer, Whitney’s programs are already filling up for next school year. And the promise of the Whitney staff and its 40-plus volunteers is that the experience will be memorable.

One of the activities of the Day at the Whitney Lab allows students to develop a hypothesis and test it. Each child is given a petri dish with a live mud snail zipping around, and in the first several minutes the young scientists point to the waving siphons and the tentacles feeling around. At the front of the room, a volunteer displays the snail’s anatomy with the aid of a home-crocheted mud snail, popping out the proboscis to show how the snail eats.

Another volunteer passes around Q-tips dipped in snail chow with the instruction: “Just watch.” There are several squeals of excitement, and the children say, “I see it! I see it!” as the proboscis of their snail wriggles out to lick the Q-tip. Someone asks a question, and the volunteer responds, “You guys are the scientists today. What do you think?”



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