

THE RECORDER



INSIDE



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Serving Ponte Vedra, St. Augustine, The Beaches and Greater St. Johns County

Thursday, August 3, 2023

PonteVedraRecorder.com

VOLUME 54, NO. 40 \$1.00

Alhambra to stage 'Fiddler'

By Shaun Ryan

Fifty-nine years after "Fiddler on the Roof" debuted on Broadway, its popularity continues unabated — so much so that near-perpetual revivals and touring productions have made it very difficult for modest venues to acquire the rights.

"We've been trying for years to get it," said Tod Booth, creative director and producer for The Alhambra Theatre & Dining. "It hasn't been available."

But on Thursday, Aug. 3, that will change. The popular Jacksonville venue will present more than 50 performances of the timeless musical for the first time in many years, concluding the run on Sept. 17.

And, for the first time in his six-decade theatrical career that includes multiple stints in "Fiddler" casts, Booth will play the lead role of Tevye.

"Fiddler on the Roof" tells the story of a Jewish family living in Ukraine early in the 20th century. Seen through the eyes of the family's patriarch, the characters struggle to find their place in a changing world while contending

FIDDLER continues on Page 27

Anastasia State Park named to national list for top beach RV access

By Anthony Richards

Locals know how Anastasia State Park has a great mix of camping and beach access, but the park recently got recognized nationally by being named among a list of top beaches in the country by RVT.com.

RVT.com is North America's leading source of classifieds for those looking to buy or sell any type of RV.

The study and list were completed as part of the website's RV Insight blog for travelers looking to camp along the coast this summer.

Anastasia State Park and its more than 1,600 acres made the list of the top eight beaches with RV access at No. 8, which according to Jennifer Armentrout, customer satisfaction manager with RVT.com, the park was chosen among various coastal sites throughout North America.

"It was not only about a park's stunning views but also the different amenities and RV access that it offers to campers," Armentrout said.

These amenities include having proper handicap access points so that no



Photo courtesy of Anastasia State Park

Anastasia State Park in St. Augustine and its more than 1,600 acres made the list of the top eight beaches with RV access by RVT.com.

members of a family feel left out and can enjoy all the vacation activities planned.

"When you're RVing you can't necessarily always take all your bikes and kayaks along with you, so you need the

opportunity to rent those onsite and Anastasia presents that option," Armentrout said.

Another one of the factors that stood

LIST continues on Page 14



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The Recorder's Entertainment EXTRA featuring TV listings, streaming information, puzzles and more!

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One of Us

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Visit our new website at www.pontevedrarecorder.com

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

BRIEFS

Democratic Club to meet

The Ponte Vedra Democratic Club's monthly meeting will be held Tuesday, Aug. 15. Chat and chew is at 5:30 p.m. and the meeting begins at 6 p.m. The featured speaker will be Dr. Abigail Levrini, psychologist and owner and director of Psych Ed Connections. The topic is "How to keep going through disappointment." For more information, email jkary@verizon.net. The Ponte Vedra Branch Library is at 101 Library Road.

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.

GTM Reserve plans volunteer orientation

Guana Tolomato Matanzas National Estuarine Research Reserve (GTM) will offer a new volunteer orientation from 10 to 11:30 a.m. Friday, Aug. 4, at the GTM Research Reserve Visitor Center, 505 Guana River Road, Ponte Vedra Beach.

Interested volunteers will learn about the background and history of the reserve, volunteer opportunities and the benefits of volunteering at GTM. Complete the application at gtmner.org/volunteer. Then, contact volunteer coordinator Abby Kuhn at Abigail.Kuhn@FloridaDEP.gov to ensure it was received.

Grief support group to meet

A grief support group meets on the third Wednesday of every month at St. Paul's Catholic Church in Room 107 of the Family Life Center, 578 First Avenue N., Jacksonville Beach. The group is for men and women grieving the death of a family member or friend. The next meeting will be 7 p.m. Wednesday, Aug. 16. For information call Kathy at 553-8933.

Foundation donates \$1M to MOSH project

The Museum of Science & History (MOSH) announced Monday, July 31, that the Harden Family Foundation has donated \$1 million to the MOSH Genesis capital campaign. The gift will be honored through the naming of the river patio at the museum's new facility on the north-

bank of downtown Jacksonville.

The foundation is led by M.C. "Ceree" Harden III, a Jacksonville business leader known for his impact in both the local business community and Northeast Florida's philanthropic sector.

The MOSH Genesis capital campaign supports plans for MOSH to relocate to a new building on the northbank of the St. Johns River.

In May, legislation for a disposition and development agreement for 2.5 acres of city-owned land at the shipyards property commonly

BRIEFS continues on **Page 3**

PUZZLE SOLUTIONS

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Briefs

Continued from 2

known as Lot X was signed into law. The legislation grants MOSH a 40-year ground lease of the land for \$1 per year; design of the park and the Riverwalk; and other agreements related to the creation of a new museum and surrounding park spaces.

King Tut exhibition extends run

“Beyond King Tut: The Immersive Experience,” a one-of-a-kind exhibition developed in partnership with the National Geographic Society and produced by Paquin Entertainment Group, has extended its

run at the NoCo Center through Oct. 22.

The exhibition has nine galleries to explore and takes visitors on a journey through King Tut’s life — his rule as a child pharaoh, his family, the discovery of his tomb and the mysteries surrounding his early death, and his journey to the afterlife.

Through Oct. 22, “Beyond King Tut” is welcoming sixth-grade students to the exhibition free of charge when visiting with a paid adult admission.

The NoCo Center is located at 712 N. Hogan St., Jacksonville.

Tickets for the exhibition can be purchased at beyondkingtut.com/jacksonville.

— Compiled by Shaun Ryan

Voting for Best Of Ponte Vedra now closed

Voting for the fifth annual Best of the Best of Ponte Vedra contest is now closed.

Readers have nominated and voted for their favorite businesses, organizations, professionals and more in more than 250 categories online. Voting ended Monday, July 31.

If your business won, you will be contacted by The Recorder staff to participate


in the Winner’s Circle to thank readers for voting for you.

A special, pull-out Winner’s Circle section will be inserted into the Aug. 24 edition of The Recorder.

Winners will also receive a free certificate and a Best of the Best of Ponte Vedra window cling.

Thank you for all who voted in this year’s contest! We appreciate your input.



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

Photos provided by Kathy's Creative Gardens & Nursery

KATHY'S GARDENING GUIDE

The Rainy Season!

"Life isn't about waiting for the storm to pass ... It's about learning to dance in the rain."
— Vivian Green

By Kathy Esfahani



Kathy Esfahani

Mother Nature has been overly generous with water lately! What does this mean for your landscape?

High levels of rain and humidity can cause an increase in insects and fungus in

lawns as well as on flowers and plants. There are many products on the market to help control fungus and garden pests. It can be overwhelming when you see all of the options, but keep in mind a general rule of thumb: one chemical product can be used for each category of pests:



Lawn Fungus

- Insecticide — Malathion: used on fruits, vegetables, landscaping and shrubs to control pests
- Fungicide — Daconil: used to treat more than 75 diseases on flowers, landscaping and trees (fruit and shade)
- Neem Oil is an organic option. Be sure to apply it more frequently than the chemical alternatives. There are more natural ways to treat

pests and fungus in the garden, but they require extra attention and continuous effort. This home remedy is beneficial in the short term if you are waiting on professional help. You may need to be apply this solution weekly for best results:

- DIY Organic Spray: 1 teaspoon of vegetable oil plus 1 teaspoon of non-antibacterial liquid dishwashing detergent. Mix with one gallon of water and spray on affected plants.

Because overwatering and high humidity can cause the growth of fungus in lawns, consider limiting your irrigation system during periods of frequent heavy rains. It is recommended to seek professional advice if your lawn needs treatment. There are several types of sod used in our area and treatments can be specific to certain types of sod. You want to be sure that the treatment you choose is most effective for your lawn.

After the rainy season, the appearance

Flower of the Week



Portulaca Moss Rose

of fungus and pests will naturally decline, and you can return to more enjoyment and less treatment in your landscape. Hang in there!
Happy gardening!

Flower of the Week: Portulaca Moss Rose

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

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Voting is now CLOSED!

Winners will be published in print and online on August 24th

Readers have nominated & voted for their favorite businesses, organizations, professionals and more in over 250 categories online. Voting ended July 31st. Thank you for all who voted in this year's contest! We appreciate your input!

Winners in each category of the 2023 BEST OF THE BEST of Ponte Vedra will be listed in a special pull-out "Winner's Circle" section inside the August 24th edition of the Ponte Vedra Recorder.

Until then, we're keeping the results under wraps!
If you've won, you'll be invited to participate in the "Winner's Circle" with an opportunity to advertise and thank our readers for voting for you!

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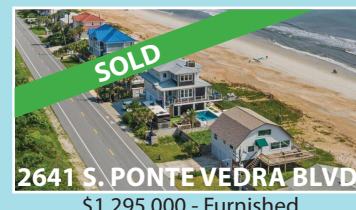
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In November, Bethany Mitidieri and her husband, Rick, opened Cutie Pies Bake Shop at 62 Cuna St. in St. Augustine. The shop has been a lifelong dream for Mitidieri who, after a successful career in education and with the help of her husband and son, launched the bakery.

Bethany Mitidieri

As told to Shaun Ryan

Tell me about Cutie Pies Bake Shop.

We are a from-scratch bakery. We specialize in pies and treats.

We want to use the best ingredients. Kind of pay tribute to the old-fashioned way, where people didn't take shortcuts. So, we make everything from scratch every day. We don't use any pre-made ingredients.

We do catering for special events, and our catering kind of specializes in lunch and brunch, because we do quiche and hand pies. So, we do baby showers, wedding showers. We also do offer afternoon and high tea for people that are interested in that.

Tell me about your background.

I have kind of an interesting story. I'm a self-taught pastry chef. I've been honing my craft for about 25 years.

I was an elementary school principal for 15 years and an educator for 30. And then this past July [2022], I decided to retire from education and pursue this lifelong dream of opening a pastry shop of my own.

My husband and I used to own and operate an organic farm in Live Oak, Florida. And we did a lot of catering and things with that. That's kind of where my passion for real food and organic and quality ingredients comes from.

I also was really inspired by my mother-in-law. She really taught me a lot about baking and how to make bread and how to make things from scratch. So, she was really an inspiration for me.

Tell me more about this transition from education to baking.

I used to kid people and talk about that baking was my "love language." So, even with my staff, if they had a baby or they had a party or they got married, I was always making the groom's cakes or deciding what kind of dessert they'd like for their birthday.

So, I'd always done that for my staff. I think I come at life from sort of a servant-leadership perspective, where I feel like we're here to serve others.

And for 30 years I served other people in that capacity at the school. Most of my career was spent in Title I schools, working with underserved youth, and that's really very much a passion of mine still.

When I turned 50 a year ago, I just wanted to do this and see what it would be like. My first job was in a bakery, so I've had experience working in bakeries. So, I just kind of decided that I didn't want to look back in regret that I had never given it a shot.

I always taught underserved kids to chase their dreams and to never give up and all of those things. And I felt like to some degree, I'd not done that myself.

So, this was an opportunity, I think, for me to kind of practice what I preach.

One of the things I'm proud of is I still work with at-risk kids. This summer, I have two interns from St. Johns Technical High School and I'm on the board of their culinary program.

I'm also in the process of opening another business to teach cooking classes to kids, with a partner. So, that'll be exciting, too, to kind of have an opportunity, because that's the part I would say that I miss the most is the interaction with the kids.



Photo provided by Bethany Mitidieri

Bethany Mitidieri, husband Rick and son Miles are seen outside the Cutie Pies Bake Shop.

I understand that you donate a portion of your proceeds to teachers and youth.

We give discounts to teachers, because I feel like teaching is the most important career on the planet.

And then, I've donated to the special education program for their transition meetings. I always take at least 20% off or try to do it at cost if I can. I've done things at cost for Safe Harbor, which is an organization in St. Augustine that deals with homeless youth.

So, I just really feel like teachers in general maybe are undervalued, and I want to give them an opportunity to kind of shine.

I'm hopeful as business increases and my revenue increases that I'd like to set up a fund with the Education Foundation for at-risk kids to go to culinary school.

What do you like most about what you do?

I feel like baking is a kind of art. It's a really creative outlet for me to kind of experiment with flavors and to experiment with design. I just love when people say, "This is the best ... whatever ... I've ever had."

I'm proud that in our eight months we've gotten a lot of positive feedback. That's been really good.

What do you like most about living in St. Augustine?

We've lived here for 16 years. I feel like St. Augustine

has a little bit of everything.

We have the beach. We have rural. We have the downtown area. So it kind of has a little of everything.

I'm also super grateful to have raised my child here and feel like he had opportunities here that he wouldn't have had before.

I think the schools definitely are a big part of why this county is as prosperous as it is. So, I'm happy about that.

But I just love living here. I love the vibe. And having spent more time in the last eight months downtown, that's been really fun, too.

How do you like to spend your free time?

I love the beach. I'm definitely a little bit of a homebody. I love to just relax. I have two giant Greek Pyrenees dogs that I love very much. I love to take them for walks. I love to hang out with my husband.

I'm pretty simple, as a general rule. I'm not like super-duper exciting. [Laughs]

How can people find out more about your business?

They could go to our website, which is www.cutiepiesstaug.com. Or they could call the shop and we'd be glad to talk with them and set up a consultation. (904-217-8341)

The link announces August schedule

Here's a look at what's happening at the link in August:

"Future in _____" series, presented by Jacksonville University — Aug. 23

Students in eighth grade through high school and their parents will benefit from discussions with professors and industry leaders with backgrounds in law, marine science, math, chemistry and technology. The series will open with The Future of Transformative Science: The Math-Chemistry Equation, 5-8 p.m. Aug. 23. Registration link coming soon.

the link Dog Festival/International Dog Day — Aug. 26

Join the link from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Aug. 26 for a celebration of man's best friend. With pet adoptions, a dog talent show, dog/owner look-alike contest, prizes, a dog agility course, puppy beach, cool zone and vendors, this may be the ultimate canine celebration — just in time for International Dog Day. Attendance is free, so bring out your furry friend for a good time!

Immersive Dining Experience — Aug. 27

The link presents another immersive dining experience, this time featuring



Latin cuisine by Chef Azhar Mohammad. Enjoy the taste of traditional Latin food like asopao de pollo and arroz con leche, while seated in the Flagler Health+ 360-Degree Immersive Studio. Seats sell fast, so go to app.thelink.zone for menu details and chef bio and to book seats. Member and non-member prices available.

Kids Night Out — Aug. 12 and 26

The very popular Kids Night Out program happens twice a month all year round. Kids make new friends while enjoying the PJ pizza party, movies, fun and games, arts and crafts, and more. To book a spot, go to app.thelink.zone. Member and non-member prices are available. Remember, Kids Night Out equals Parents Night Out.

Cosmic Soundbath Sensory Immersive Experience — Aug. 13

This sound journey and sensory experience will be led by Julie of Wise Waves Wellness in the Flagler Health+ 360-De-

gree Immersive Studio at the link. This experience is 75 minutes in length. Go to app.thelink.zone to reserve a spot. Open to members and non-members.

Olympic-Style Fencing

Coach Alan will teach two classes a week on Mondays. Experience the thrill of swordplay and Olympic fencing in classes designed for those with little to no prior experience. From beginners to immediate level, prepare for an action-packed program and learn the fundamentals of this captivating sport. Check out the classes at app.thelink.zone. All classes available to link members.

Fitness/Strength Training — Saturday Mornings

This 45-minute boot-camp style workout focuses on building strength and cardiovascular conditioning with functional training movements using bodyweight and kettlebells. The workout is customized and modified to each participant's individual fitness level. The link will

provide a small number of kettlebells; if you have your own, feel free to bring it. Go to app.thelink.zone to see instructor bios and to book a spot.

Stretch & Sculpt — Monday Afternoons

This popular Stretch & Sculpt class happens each week. It is a great class to tone and sculpt, promote body awareness while having fun. This audience-friendly class is included with the link memberships and available on a drop-in basis for non-members. Go to app.thelink.zone for more details, instructor bio and to book seats.

Floral Design Workshop — Coastal Breeze — Aug. 17

Whether you're a seasoned florist or a complete novice, this hands-on experience is perfect for anyone looking to learn something new and have some fun. Bring along your favorite bottle of wine and a few glasses to share and get

SCHEDULE continues on Page 8

Quiet Tiger

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Children set to take over Nocatee Farmers Market Sept. 23

By Anthony Richards

The Nocatee community hosts a farmers market each month, and it has been embraced as quite the tradition, and now an inaugural Nocatee Kids' Farmers Market is scheduled for Sept. 23.

The kids' farmer market will be in addition to the regular monthly market, but as the name implies the vendors will be children ages 10 to 17 years old.

It is a unique concept that Nocatee community events manager Hannah Davis came up with as she oversees the vendor relations and operations of the Nocatee Farmers Market.

"Believe it or not, when receiving the applications, I always get a lot from children wanting to be a part of it, so I thought about it and it just really seemed like the opportunity was there," Davis said.

According to Davis, it was obvious that the passion to be involved in something like this existed, and she viewed a community event like a farmers market to be a perfect place to feed that pas-

sion.

"I wanted to encourage these kids to pursue their desires and really give them an outlet to do just that," Davis said.

The next step was organizing an event and Davis decided that the kids' farmers market deserved its own recognition and spot on the events calendar.

That decision has been backed up with a great reception early on from children who not only are regulars at the Nocatee Farmers Market, but there has also been interest from children in the community that have not sent applications in the past.

"It's been really well received here in the early going," Davis said. "We're going through the applications right now, and it's just amazing to see all that the kids in the Nocatee community are a part of."

Although the excitement seems to be building around the event, it still is the inaugural event, which means that there is a wait-and-see approach heading into such an event.

"We definitely know there's a place for an event like this, but we're just not sure if it will end up being once a year or quarterly," Davis said. "It's just one of those things where you don't know for sure until it all comes together, and you see how many vendors you have sign up and what those numbers are like."

As is the case with farmers markets the Nocatee community hosts, the kids' farmers market will take place at Nocatee Station Field from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and is open to the public to attend.

Unlike the usual monthly farmers market held, the children applying to be vendors at the market will not need to have a business license.

However, the only requirements are that the participants must be 10 to 17 years old, and the products sold at their booths must be made by them and not by an outside source.

"The kids are the true entrepreneurs at an event like this," Davis said. "This is their time to showcase their talents."

Schedule

Continued from 7

creative with a stunning array of flowers and foliage. Go to app.thelink.zone for more details, instructor bio and to book spots. Available for members and non-members.

Level Up Dance and Tumble Recreational Classes

LUDC at the link has wrapped up the summer camp program and now will start concentrating on the competition teams. Reilly and Maddie will start recreational dance and tumble classes in early August. Check out app.thelink.zone for class schedules, instructor bios and to book classes. All classes available to link members.

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The link is located at 425 Town Plaza Ave., Ponte Vedra Beach.

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Rethreaded receives \$500 grant for donation match

A grant check for \$500 was presented by Coldwell Banker Vanguard Realty Group CBV Cares to Rethreaded's President and Chief Operating Officer Jason Jones and Riverside Homes owner Matt Roberts for matching of the donation at Rethreaded's 12th birthday celebration at their Hope Campus on July 29.

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

The event featured a raffle for multiple prizes, complimentary food and drinks and shopping featuring Rethreaded's new product line, Elemental.

For more information on Rethreaded, contact Director of Development Priscilla Jones at 904-257-3226 or priscilla@rethreaded.com or go to rethreaded.com.

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



Contributed Photo

Pictured from left: Riverside Homes owner Matt Roberts, Coldwell Banker Vanguard Realtor and CBV Cares Co-Chair Nancy Hammond presenting \$500 check for matched donation to be made by Riverside Homes, Rethreaded's President and Chief Operating Officer Jason Jones and Coldwell Banker Vanguard Realtor and CBV Cares Co-Chair Carole Bayer presenting Happy Birthday Card in celebration of Rethreaded's 12th birthday celebration and efforts to support victims and end human trafficking.



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Serendipity in stained glass: A memorable donation

A historic home in need of repair. A sisterhood with a legacy of helping those in need. A charitable act full of improbable serendipity.

What looks to be a simple stained-glass window at Ascension St. Vincent's newest campus in St. Johns County carries an interesting history.

Walter and Sally Suslak purchased their home on King Street, St. Augustine, in 2005 when it was at risk of demolition. Built in 1927 and designed by Marsh and Saxelby architects, the house had served as a private residence and later a convent for sisters within the Ascension St. Vincent's system in Jacksonville.

The home — formerly located where Ascension St. Vincent's River House is today — had a rich history and a rare architectural style that the Suslaks felt called to preserve. They had the building moved by barge to its permanent spot at 1888 Powell Place, just blocks from Ascension St. Vincent's Riverside hospital.

The couple set to work renovating the home, paying careful attention to detail and making every effort to preserve its original features as they updated the



Walter and Sally Suslak and Sister Diane Couture at the King Street home.

rooms. As they worked to transform the space, they wondered what to do with the handmade stained-glass windows that once separated the chapel and enclosed river room (now a patio). They intended



Walter and Sally Suslak stand next to the restored stained-glass window which is now located at Ascension St. Vincent's newest campus.

Contributed photos

STAINED GLASS continues on Page 15

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GUEST COLUMN

Local news is good for business



By Dean Ridings
America's Newspapers

It's no secret that recent years have been tough on small businesses and on newspapers. A bipartisan bill, the Community News & Small Business Support Act, that has been introduced in Congress would offer relief to both newspapers and local businesses. For too many newspapers, help can't come soon enough. Economic challenges have resulted in too many communities seeing their local newspapers being forced to lay off staff, cut back on publication days or — worse yet — close. On average, two newspapers are closing each week. That hurts local businesses and residents in the long (and short) run. However, despite the challenges, what remains true is that local newspapers make a difference in their communities.

But don't just take my word for it. Let's look at the numbers and why America's Newspapers has been pushing for the Community News & Small Business Support Act to be introduced.

A recent national study of 5,000 Americans over the age of 18 was conducted by the independent research firm Coda Ventures for America's Newspapers and provides compelling evidence of the importance, relevance and vitality of today's newspapers in the American media landscape.

Readers told us that their local newspapers make a difference. The study shows that 79% of Americans read/use local news "to stay informed" about their cities, counties and communities. They also said they rely on their local paper to feel connected to their community, to decide where they stand on local issues, to find places and things to do, to talk with people about things happening in the community, because they find it enjoyable/entertaining and to be a better citizen.

And, contrary to popular belief, readers across all age groups turn to local newspapers and their digital products to stay informed about their communities.

Readers also told us they need more local news from their community paper. As one survey respondent in California

said, "Our paper keeps getting smaller. I would like to see more news items, what's happening in town, what's new in politics, etc. And they need to be quicker to respond to breaking news."

All of that takes a committed, local staff — something the legislation introduced by Congresswoman Claudia Tenney (NY-24) and Congresswoman Suzan DelBene (WA-1) will help to make happen.

So, what would this legislation mean to your local community?

Local businesses with fewer than 50 employees would receive a five-year non-refundable tax credit of up to \$5,000 in the first year and up to \$2,500 in the subsequent four years based on their spending level with local newspapers and local media. Our study showed that six out of 10 American adults use newspaper advertising to help them decide what brands, products and local services to buy. Newspaper readers also are almost twice as likely to purchase products from a number of important advertising categories than non-newspaper readers, including: automobiles, trucks and SUVs; home furnishings; home improvement products and services; and home services like pest control, plumbing, heating, etc.

With this legislation, we expect to see more businesses being able to afford to advertise to consumers, which — in turn — helps communities thrive.

For local newspapers, a five-year refundable tax credit would help them hire more journalists to bring you more news! It's a win-win for local communities. Newspapers would receive a tax credit to be used for the compensation of journalists. The credit would cover

50% of journalists' compensation in the first year and 30% of compensation (up to \$50,000) in the subsequent four years. This tax credit would only be available to local community papers with fewer than 750 employees and, if they don't invest in their newsroom, they don't get the credit.

And these tax credits are only available to local newspapers. National newspaper outlets are not eligible.

The importance of local newspapers and local business is the reason Reps. Tenney and DelBene introduced the legislation. We are most grateful for their support.

We need your support, as well, to encourage legislators to enact this legislation. Please contact the offices of your senators and representatives in the U.S. Congress and encourage them to add their support to this legislation. These tax credits aren't permanent; they will sunset in five years. But these critical five years will allow the newspaper industry the time needed to address the challenges that it is facing from Big Tech, which often uses newspapers' content without compensation, as well as other technological and market challenges. Visit www.usa.gov/elected-officials for the contact information for your legislators.

More local reporting means more access for hometown news that citizens like you rely on. And stronger newspapers mean stronger advertising vehicles for local businesses.

Dean Ridings is the CEO of America's Newspapers, an organization serving more than 1,550 newspapers across the U.S. and Canada. Learn more at newspapers.org.



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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Focusing on Roadkill

To the Editor:

Ponte Vedra Beach is our lovely relaxed and laid-back home. As an inhabitant of this community, I have come to realize that we are not doing our best to tackle a very important problem. This happens to be roadkill. Living in Florida, we are all aware of the many wildlife species that share this territory with us. And more specifically in Ponte Vedra, we witness wildlife all around our community. From the various bird species at Bird Island Park to snakes and gators in community retention ponds, we are sure to notice that we humans are not alone.

Roadkill can simply be understood as dead animals on highways and roadways due to animal-vehicle collision. However, roadkill is far more than that. The loss of these animals contributes to species population reduction and overall loss of animal diversity. Right here on A1A, dozens of racoons, rats and rabbits can be seen deceased on the linings of the highway. Armadillos, the most common form of roadkill in Florida, are hit especially hard during the summer months when they cross streets most. And, as shocking as it is, Florida vehicle colli-

sions are responsible for 90% of brown and black bear deaths. Furthermore, over 350 million vertebrate species are killed by traffic in the US.

The wildlife is not the only factor who claims a hard blow. Humans are hit hard, too. Dents, scratches and broken headlights are among some of the most common results of animal collision. Repairs to vehicles cost high prices that some are unable to pay. In some cases, human lives are also unfortunately claimed. The aftermath of the collision can end with a dead body on our roadways. Ponte Vedra is not the place, nor is anywhere else, for dirty and unsanitary roadways. The bodies attract vultures and other large birds to the site, creating unattractive and filthy messes. I believe that our community is advanced and intelligent enough to avoid such issues.

I propose we work with our local road safety authorities to promote more awareness to the public about roadkill. Maybe suggesting small fines for those who hit animals on the road due to careless driving and community rewards for those who remove animals safely from traffic. Perhaps we can implement more animal crossing road signs. Roadkill affects animals as much as it affects our home. Ponte Vedra Beach can lead

Florida in road cleanliness and animal safety. Eliminating roadkill can be possible once we turn our attentions to the right problems.

Soleil Shah
Ponte Vedra High School student



Writer grateful for newspaper

To the Editor:

As a St. Johns County resident who lives in downtown St. Augustine, I am a subscriber to the paper. I am also a public relations professional with clients in Ponte Vedra, throughout the county and beyond.

It is increasingly becoming essential to me and influential readers of the paper that we have a true local news outlet for editorial coverage and advertising opportunities.

Ponte Vedra Recorder has a positive history of focusing on community journalism and newsworthy stories about

our region, which serves a critical role in keeping residents and visitors informed about what is happening in our neighborhoods.

The paper continues to supply a platform for people to voice their opinions, concerns and ideas, while covering prominent issues that may be overlooked by larger news organizations. Stories about the arts and culture, social happenings and philanthropic events are important to this market to raise much-needed funds for those in need throughout the region.

Non-profits and for-profit businesses in the community depend on Ponte Vedra Recorder for information on a weekly basis, and many times more than our regional daily newspapers currently serve.

My sincerest thanks and accolades to the Recorder staff for maintaining a high standard of reporting, layout and design, and sales efforts. There is hard work to keep this paper published.

I very much appreciate the local leadership of the paper and their involvement in the community for so many years.

Bonnie Hayflick
St. Augustine



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Photo courtesy of Anastasia State Park

Renting a kayak is one of the many ways to see Anastasia State Park's natural surroundings.

List

Continued from 1

out when doing the research, according to Armentrout, is the array of opportunities to interact with nature and how the park does an excellent job of catering to that.

“Not only do you have four miles of sandy dunes but also offers various wildlife photography to choose from

with wild horses and birds,” Armentrout said. “If you like spending time in nature, then Anastasia is the place for you from paddleboarding to bike trails, there’s something for the whole family to find and enjoy.”

The park has 139 camp sites available, and each site has between 30- and 50-amp hookups provided to offer electricity for those camping and fire pits at each site for those looking to sit under the stars

at night.

According to Armentrout, there are some parks that do not cater to certain larger RVs as well as they do the smaller ones, and sometimes this is simply due to the available natural space they must work with.

However, Anastasia does not have that issue, and they can accommodate RVs up to 38 feet long.

“There is plenty of space available,

which is so important because you want all campers to be able to enjoy themselves and not have to worry about having enough room,” Armentrout said.

Some of the other more advanced amenities the park offers are an amphitheater associated with it as well as a restaurant bar and grill on location, which are just two more examples of the array of options offered.

“They pretty much thought of everything,” Armentrout said.

Camping and RVing in general is something that Armentrout has seen increasing in interest for years, but she believes the COVID-19 pandemic was what gave it the push it needed and now it has just exploded in popularity the past couple of years.

“It really gives the chance for a family to spend that quality time together that you don’t necessarily get if you were to stay in a hotel,” Armentrout said.

Camping is not the only way to enjoy Anastasia State Park, as they are also open for single-day trips, as they are open from 8 a.m. until sundown each day of the year.

Admission is \$8 per vehicle for the day, while camping is \$28 per night plus tax, along with a nonrefundable \$6.70 reservation fee and \$7 nightly utility fee for RV, cabin, bungalow, boat and yurt units.

Anastasia State Park is located at 300 Anastasia Park Road in St. Augustine.

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Stained glass

Continued from 10

to replace the partially damaged, fragile glass with French doors to access the sunny outdoor space. Walter Suslak placed the panels in cardboard boxes and held onto them.

After some time, he decided to reach out to Ascension St. Vincent's Foundation just down the road.

"I asked if they might have any use for some stained glass, since it was once in this historic building where sisters had once lived," he said.

He offered to pay for repairs to the glass if the foundation could find it a new home.

Meanwhile, a foundation staff member had the idea to add a little history to Ascension's new hospital in St. Johns County by placing the glass there. But first, she had to find someone to repair it.

She called three stained-glass repair companies to no avail; they said they were unable to repair the piece. Her fourth call was to Sister Diane Couture of the Sisters of St. Joseph and St. Joseph Ministries Architectural Stained Glass.

"She told me they had a window that was being donated, but that a couple pieces were broken," said Couture. "She asked if I thought I could do it and sent me some photos. ... I'm looking at these photos to evaluate the damage — and



The stained-glass window created and later repaired by Sister Diane Couture.

I'm thinking: Wait a minute, that's my window!"

Couture sent a note to the foundation.

"I told them I was sure that I could repair the piece, but that they needed to ask the window's owners if the pane came from the King Street convent house," she said.

Surprised and intrigued, the staff member let Couture know that the piece did indeed come from that building.

"I told her, I can absolutely fix it," said Couture, "because I'm the one who made it!"

Couture, once a frequent visitor to the



Contributed photos

Walter and Sally Suslak and Sister Diane Couture at the King Street home.

home when it was a convent, had been asked decades ago to create the stained-glass window. She obliged, and the glass stayed in the chapel/dining room area until the Suslaks replaced it.

Foundation staff then called the Suslaks to let them know the serendipitous news — that the person repairing the stained glass was actually its original creator.

The glass was expertly repaired by Couture and arrived at the hospital in

good condition.

Walter and Sally Suslak recently invited Couture to their home to reminisce about the building's history and the serendipity that brought them all together.

As they overlooked the shore of the St. Johns River, they shared the same sentiment: that the timing and manner of their connection was no accident.

"This was God's work," Couture said with a smile.

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International Student Exchange is offering families in St. Johns County the opportunity to host a foreign exchange student this school year.



Contributed photos

Programs can run from five, 10 or 12 months and applications are currently being accepted.

Discover new cultures by hosting a foreign exchange student

By Anthony Richards

There are plenty of opportunities to make the upcoming school year a memorable one, and one of the more unique ways is being a host family for a foreign exchange student.

According to Hannah Levi, a representative with International Student Exchange, this is an opportunity available to families throughout the Ponte Vedra, Nocatee and the rest of St. Johns County.

Levi and her family have been hosts to several exchange students over the years, which led to her eventually becoming a representative as she got more and more involved with the process.

The benefits for the student are often the focus, but she quickly found out that it is not just the student who takes something from the experience, but instead it can be beneficial for everyone involved in some

way or another.

“You expand your family’s worldview by exposing your family and community to other cultures,” Levi said. “Some kids here in America have never met anyone other than their personal circle, so it’s probably the first exchange student they’ve met. It can also give them a new perspective on American culture by seeing their daily life and community through a new set of eyes.”

Some of the additional benefits that come as a result of the foreign exchange student program is improved international diplomacy, improved communication skills and trying different cuisines.

Many times Levi has seen the cultivation of life-long friendships by the end of the program.

“Connecting with a young person from another culture will teach you and your children patience, compassion and curiosity,” Levi said. “Hosting can inspire your

children to grow up with an open mind and learn lessons that are not often found in a classroom.”

For Levi, the experience was so rewarding that it has now become a yearly tradition each school year that they take part in. “Hosting isn’t something I just do, it’s a lifestyle we have fallen in love with,” Levi said.

Although there is a certain commitment from the family who is serving as a student’s host, there is also a rather large commitment by the student, and that is something Levi has never lost sight of.

In fact, their determination is one of the many reasons why she and her family continue to offer up their home.

“The students are so grateful for the opportunity to see America as a life and not a vacation,” Levi said. “They leave everything they have ever known to come here for 10 months to build and create a life

here to then have to leave it and go back home changed and not the same person.”


According to Levi, many students end up staying in contact with their families and even invite them to make the return trip and visit them in their home country.

Programs can run from five, 10 or 12 months depending on the situation and time frame that works best and although host families are volunteers, tax benefits can be provided as families can write off \$50 per month/per student as a charitable giving tax deduction, according to Levi.

As a result, students arrive in August and January and to fill out an application or to find out more information about the program, go to iseusa.org/Florida.

ISE exchange students will speak English and will be 15 to 18 years old and in high school. The program services students from more than 40 countries around the world.

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Back-to-School Sales Tax Holiday ends Aug. 6

The Back-to-School Sales Tax Holiday began Monday, July 24, and is running for two weeks ending on Sunday, Aug. 6. This initiative allows families to save money when purchasing items that students need for the new school year.

“We worked hard to include this tax holiday in our ‘Framework for Freedom’ budget, and Florida families will now save more than \$160 million on needed back-to-school supplies,” said Gov. Ron DeSantis on Wednesday, July 26. “I’m proud that we were able to use this time to also support local education foundations that were impacted by Hurricane Ian as they prepare for the upcoming school year. In Florida, we will continue to put families first and support our students.”

DeSantis also announced the Florida Disaster Fund’s award of \$2 million in grants to six school foundations located in the counties hit hardest by the storm. These foundations will use the funds to purchase school supplies for children in areas where families are still recovering. By awarding these funds during the sales tax holiday, the foundations will maximize their funds to purchase more supplies and assist more students.

What’s eligible:

The Back-to-School Sales Tax Holiday includes items such as:

- Clothing, shoes and backpacks.
- School supplies such as notebooks, binders, paper, pens and pencils.
- Learning aids, including flashcards, puzzle books and jigsaw puzzles.
- Personal computers, tablets, electron-



ic book readers and related accessories.

A second Back-to-School Sales Tax Holiday will be observed at the beginning of the second semester of school, in order to help families refresh their students’ school supplies. This holiday will run from Jan. 1 through Jan. 14, 2024.

The Back-to-School Sales Tax Holiday overlaps a part of the Freedom Summer sales tax holiday, which began on May 29 and will end on Sept. 4.

The Freedom Summer sales tax holiday applies to items such as:

- Children’s athletic equipment and toys
- Outdoor recreation purchases, such as supplies for camping, fishing and general outdoor activities including kayaks and canoes.
- Boating and water activity supplies such as life jackets, coolers and pool floats.
- Tickets for museums and events such as concerts, fairs, sporting events and theater productions.
- Entry to state parks, including annual passes.

PROTACTX Brazilian Jiu Jitsu opens



St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce photo

Members of the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce were on hand June 29 for a ribbon cutting ceremony at PROTACTX Brazilian Jiu Jitsu, which recently opened at 200 Sterling Plaza Drive, Suite 204, Ponte Vedra.

Primrose Schools launch school supply drive

Primrose Schools of metro Jacksonville is holding its inaugural back-to-school drive in support of the Boys & Girls Clubs of Northeast Florida, which kicked off Monday, July 31, and will run through Friday, Aug. 11.

The Primrose Promise Back-to-School Drive, which will be hosted by five Primrose schools in the Jacksonville area, will collect school supply donations to benefit K-12 students across Jacksonville who participate in various afterschool and core programs at the Boys & Girls Clubs of Northeast Florida.

Impact that matters:

- The Primrose Promise Back-to-School Drive seeks to prepare and support students across Jacksonville by providing access to essential school supplies.
- The donations will impact more than 5,000 young people in Alachua, Clay, Duval and St. Johns counties.



• The Primrose Promise Back-to-School drive reinforces the Primrose Schools belief that generosity in children can be nurtured through teaching the importance of giving to others without expectation.

• Engaging and encouraging the entire Jacksonville community to participate in the school supply donation effort is part of the Primrose Schools mission of forging a path that leads to a brighter future for all children.

How to donate:

- Review the list of requested school supply donations. [bgcnf.org/events/back2school]
- Locate your nearest participating Primrose School supply drop-off location. [www.primroseschools.com/locations/jacksonville-metro]
- Donate via the Amazon Wish List which will ship the items directly. [amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/28GUSN4Z55L1L?ref_=wl_share]

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Brandi Ahmad bought A2K Dance Project a little more than a year ago and has instilled a sense of community support with her dance classes.

Studio's community vision supports every move a dancer makes

By Anthony Richards

A2K Dance Project strives to be a place where girls can feel at home and be supported in more ways than just dance.

"The studio opportunity came at a time that felt like a perfect fit," owner Brandi Ahmad said. "I loved what the studio stood for, which was supporting girls not only in dance but in all the other activities that they do."

Ahmad, who bought the studio a little more than a year ago, understands how competitive the dance world can be having been a professional dancer herself, as an NFL cheerleader years ago, and the current head coach of the Ponte Vedra High School Splash dance team.

According to Ahmad, there is a balance to be had from having a regimented schedule as well mixing in the proper support needed in all aspects of a dancer's life.

"I feel like this studio is a perfect opportunity to continue that support within the community," Ahmad said. "I can provide a space for them to get a great dance education but also feel supported and uplifted in all things that they do and not just dance. I tell my high school girls and my little ones that the faster we learn to support each other, the better off we'll all be."

One of the things she has discovered throughout her years is that it's important to remember that although dance may be a big part of someone's life, at the end of the day it is just another avenue for opportunities, and it is made to add to those life experiences and not hamper them.

As a result, she has developed an approach that centers around a multi-tier commitment level that is designed to help balance a dancer's busy schedule.

"We have a lot of girls that are so involved in their school activities, and they are always looking to try even more," Ahmad said. "I don't want to stifle that mindset just because they dance."

There are a lot of things that Ahmad is excited to be introducing this fall season, including new instructors and continuing to provide dancers with fresh and new content and dance moves to learn.

"Kids need the structure, but they want to be challenged, and there's not much



Photos by Anthony Richards

The entrance to the dance studio.

that can challenge you more than dance, because it is always changing, so you can always learn new moves no matter how long you've been doing it," Ahmad said.

One of those new instructors is new dance director Macey Rowan, who will be coming full-time at the studio in August.

According to Ahmad, there is a vibrance that Rowan will bring to the program that will add to the foundation that has already been established.

The studio is planning on having a grand re-opening on Aug. 7, which is also the day that the studio's fall dance classes start.

"We hope to give folks the opportunity to walk through the space and just see what we're all about," Ahmad said. "We've grown since I bought the place and I feel like we're just going to continue that moving forward."

With both Ahmad and Rowan having been professional dancers, they understand not just the hard work it takes to reach that point, but also the amount of support that is needed along the way, and they both want the studio to be a haven for that support.

"She (Rowan) sees the full picture, which is really great because we are able to see the future for this studio and it is very bright," Ahmad said.



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INK! Executive Director Donna Lueders to retire Aug. 31

The St. Johns County Education Foundation, which operates as Investing in Kids (INK!), has announced that Executive Director Donna Lueders will retire on Aug. 31. The newly named executive director will be Cathy Newman, who has served as the organization's community and district relations achievement director since 2021. Lueders will remain with the nonprofit for approximately six months after her retirement date as a consultant.

Lueders has led INK! as executive director since 2006. Over that time, she helped raise millions of dollars for the 501(c)(3) corporation and establish sustaining relationships with donors, partners, sponsors and supporters while providing the community with an opportunity for creative programs benefiting students and educators throughout the St. Johns County School District.

As a result of Lueders's fundraising efforts, INK! has been able to support the St. Johns County School District by funding programs with a deep impact on student and teacher success where there is a gap in public funding.

Prior to joining INK! and for more than 20 years, Lueders served as a victim's advocate for St. Johns County and the State of Florida Attorney's Office, 7th Judicial Circuit. She serves in a variety of volunteer capacities with civic and business organizations throughout Northeast Florida.

Lueders holds a Bachelor of Science degree in public administration from Flagler College. She and her husband Loran Lueders, former police chief for the City of St. Augustine, have resided locally for more than 40 years.

Newman was selected following an

extensive search and will begin her new role on Sept. 1. She will oversee the foundation's community initiatives and staff activities, along with fundraising, innovative educational programs, classroom resources and teacher support for St. Johns County public schools. She will maintain and build relationships with key stakeholders and contributors to the organization.

Newman was previously the economic development manager for St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce and served as an executive management professional and director for nonprofit and for-profit businesses in real estate, law and marketing.

She holds a B.A. degree in international relations and government with academic and athletic honors from Clark University in Worcester, Massachusetts. She also holds a graduate certificate in strategic communications from Purdue University in West Lafayette, Indiana, and has completed graduate coursework in business management at Florida State University's College of Business in Tallahassee.

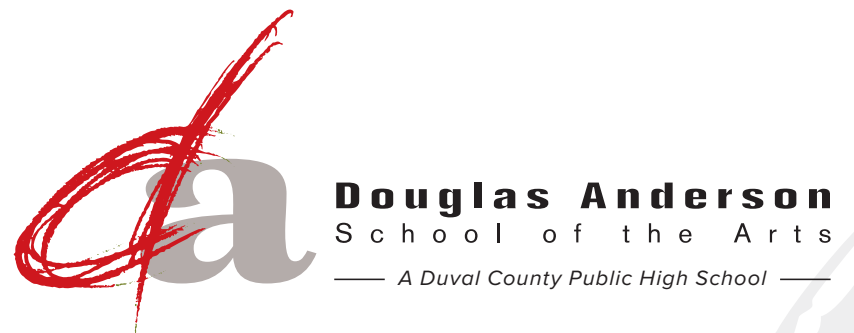
"I am honored and humbled to be recognized by Donna, our board of directors and advisers to manage the meaningful and extraordinary work that INK! does and that has been supported by a team of caring and dedicated professionals," Newman said. "Over the last 17 years, Donna has grown INK!'s impact tremendously throughout St. Johns County and the St. Johns County School District. I am excited to continue the work Donna started and look forward to working closely with our board of directors, INK! staff, school district administrators, donors, supporters and educators to help our students achieve success."



Donna Lueders



Catherine Newman



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To learn more about the school and its programming, go to **douglasandersonSOTA** on Facebook, or online at **da-arts.org**.



Jamie Shelton

bestbet donates \$5K to meal program

bestbet joined the fight against hunger at this year's Miracle on Ashley Street hosted by the Clara White Mission. It donated \$5,000 to the mission's meal program to raise awareness about homelessness in Jacksonville.

"We are so very thankful for bestbet's continued support for many years and want them to know the company's contributions are impacting the lives of so many," said

Ju'Coby Pittman, CEO of Clara White Mission.

Jamie Shelton, president of bestbet, added, "We are very proud to champion Ju'Coby's work and her continuing efforts to impact the lives of individuals in our community through the Clara White Mission."

The Clara White Mission raised \$67,000 total and had more than 200 volunteers and

celebrity servers participate. Because of the contributions from sponsors like bestbet 2,000 free meals were served during this year's Miracle on Ashley Street.

bestbet offers world-class poker, table games, simulcast wagering, food and beverage, and special events in Jacksonville, Orange Park and St. Augustine. For further information, go to bestbetjax.com and clarawhitemission.org.

Ponte Vedra Beach Rotary Club distributes \$65K to local charities

Members of the Rotary Club of Ponte Vedra Beach join with Immediate Past President Ronald "Doc" Renuart, Foundation Chair Billy Wagner and Club President Jennifer Logue to celebrate the success of the club's annual Mineral City Celebration charity gala. As a result of the gala's success, the Ponte Vedra Beach Rotary Club Foundation recently distributed \$65,000 to Beaches-area charities to support their missions and strengthen our communities.

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SenioRITAS have new location for auction party



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2023 is the SenioRITAS' 24th year as a breast cancer research and services charity, and the group has introduced its new venue, The Yards at Oak Bridge Gold Club, for its auction party, set for Oct. 10. They will serve a Carrabba's dinner al fresco and use the surrounding golf holes for fun activities while enjoying the course.

This evening of fun celebrations and bidding for great items will be the first event of the festivities when 300 ladies of a certain age (40-plus) gather at the tennis center at Sawgrass Country Club for the doubles tournament Oct. 13, 14,

15. Arriving from many different states as friends and relatives of the committee, they will be ready to give their skills while having a great time supporting breast cancer research.

The SenioRITAS have raised almost \$6 million through their tournaments and endowments over the 23 years.

Attendees are encouraged to arrive early to get their bids in for the auction items, enjoy the Italian fare and get to know a group of ladies dedicated to serving this community by donating freely their time and talents.



Contributed photos

A participant in Sunday's caravan to raise awareness of human trafficking is seen with the truck he drove in the effort.

Local group organizes to fight human trafficking

The O.U.R. Northeast Florida Conductor Team drove a caravan down the First Coast from Fernandina Beach to St. Augustine on Sunday, July 30, to bring awareness to the issue of human trafficking. Sunday was World Human Trafficking Awareness Day.

The group will hold its first virtual meet-and-greet at 6 p.m. Wednesday, Aug. 2, via Zoom. Anyone interested in taking part can go to [https://us02web.](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9046073490)

[zoom.us/j/9046073490](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9046073490) at that time.

The Northeast Florida effort comes in response to local interest in this issue generated by the film, "The Sound of Freedom." It is being led by Heather Alice Shea, Anita Marie Hurm and Darlene Christianson.

Anyone wanting to join the local Facebook community can go to facebook.com/groups/ournortheastfloridaconductorteam.



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— FEATURING —
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FINANCE**

GUEST COLUMN

What should you know if you hit the jackpot?

**Written by/for
Wells Fargo Advisors**

Picture this: You've just won the lottery or received a large inheritance. You start daydreaming about all the wonderful things you'll buy, the vacations you'll take, and not having to worry so much about money.

If only it was that simple to live on Easy Street. The truth of the matter is if you don't properly plan on how to receive your windfall and invest it wisely, you could instead find yourself on the road to financial disaster.

If by chance you become an overnight millionaire, you might want to consider the following before you quit your day job or buy that new luxury car.

Consider taking winnings in a lump sum

If you're disciplined enough not to spend the money all at once, you may want to consider taking it all in a lump sum. Typically, receiving your winnings this way will give you more money in the end than if you were to get payments



Contributed photo

over a number of years.

For example, if you receive \$1 million and pay half of that in taxes, you'll end up with \$500,000 to invest. At a hypothetical 10% rate of return, your winnings would have the opportunity to grow to

more than \$3.3 million in 20 years. By comparison, if you chose to receive your windfall in 20 annual installments of \$50,000 and invest each year at that same 10%, you would end up with approximately \$2.8 million — a difference of more than \$500,000.

The more money you can get invested right away, the better off you could be. Keep in mind this example is for illustrative purposes only and does not reflect the performance of any specific investment. There is no guarantee you would be able to obtain a consistent rate of return.

The installment option may be better if you're a spendthrift

On the other hand, if having an account with a lot of money in it is too tempting for you to handle, you may want to take your fortune over a period of several years. You may not have this option with every type of windfall, but if you happen to win the lottery, the sponsor may invest your winnings for you. You may get a better rate of return by taking the money in a lump sum, but that's no use if you end up spending all of it without planning.

Keep income taxes in mind

A significant amount of what you win

or inherit will likely go to pay federal and state income taxes. And remember, a multimillion-dollar payout in 2023 would put you in the highest federal tax bracket at 37%. Add state income taxes to that, and you may end up losing half of your money to taxes.

In cases where winning lottery tickets are purchased outside your home state, it's possible that you would be taxed in your home state and the state where you purchased the ticket. Careful tax planning may help you keep as much of the money as possible.

What happens when you die?

Not surprisingly, federal estate tax laws are complicated. That being said, here are a couple things to keep in mind:

- If you're married, the money from your winnings or inheritance — no matter how much — may be passed to your spouse free from federal estate taxes.
- If you die in 2023 and your estate is worth \$12,920,000 or more, your heirs could incur federal estate taxes.

You need to discuss the possible implications of federal estate taxes and how to plan for them with an estate planning attorney.

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Jackpot

Continued from 22

Our firm does not give tax or legal advice. Specific questions on taxes as they relate to your individual situation should be directed to your tax advisor. Any estate plan should be reviewed by an attorney who specializes in estate planning and is licensed to practice law in your state.

This article was written by/for Wells Fargo Advisors and provided courtesy of Jamie Seim, CFP, Senior Vice President – Investment Officer in Ponte Vedra Beach at 904-273-7917.

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Wells Fargo hosts Chamber After Hours

St. Johns County Chamber Ponte Vedra Beach Division was held at Wells Fargo in Nocatee. Thank you Heather McDougal and your team for hosting a wonderful evening of networking, food and drinks.

Photos by Susan Griffin



Attendees enjoy a night of networking.



Patrick Hayes and Dhanu Mundrathi.



Liesl Savage, Steve Markfeld, Sharon Pennant and Somer Dickens.



Heather McDougal, Regional Branch Manager at Wells Fargo, speaks at the event.

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Grasons launches franchise in St. Augustine

Grasons, a national estate sales and business liquidation service, has announced the launch of its first franchise in Florida.

Located in St. Augustine, the franchise will serve Flagler and St. John's counties. The new operation will be helmed by Victor Burke, an experienced estate sale professional who also owns Grasons Beach Cities in Orange County, California.

Burke has an extensive career in the estate sale and liquidation industry, having conducted more than 400 estate sales and liquidations. He brings a vast knowledge of antiques, collectibles and collections, making Grasons the top choice in the area.

Before joining Grasons, Burke worked in the eye care and veterinary industries, where he cultivated his strong sense of compassion and care — qualities that translate well into the estate sales sector.

"I am incredibly excited to extend my service to the people of Flagler and St. John's counties," Burke said. "At Grasons, we aim to alleviate stress and bring peace to families during transitional periods. I look forward to bringing my expertise and



Victor Burke

understanding to the Florida community and continuing to provide top-quality estate sale services."

Grasons offers a comprehensive suite of services, including professional appraisals, estate sales, complete cleanouts and business liquidations, providing streamlined solutions for families, trustees and executors during transitional periods.

Simone Kelly, Grasons founder and brand president, expressed confidence in Burke's leadership of the new Florida franchise.

"Victor's immense experience in the industry and his profound understanding of people make him an excellent fit to lead our first Florida franchise," Kelly said. "His commitment to service and compassion align perfectly with Grasons' mission, and we look forward to supporting his growth."

Grasons is part of the Evive Brands family.

For more information about Grasons and its estate sale and business liquidation services in Flagler and St. John's counties, go to grasons.com/estate-sale-companies/stjohns-flagler-fl. To schedule a free consultation with Burke, call 904-417-3409.

MOSH CEO to retire

The Museum of Science & History (MOSH) has announced that CEO Bruce Fafard will retire in February 2024.

Fafard was appointed as the museum's CEO in October 2020 following progressive roles as a volunteer consultant, chief operating officer and interim CEO earlier that year.

One of his immediate priorities was to grow and stabilize MOSH's attendance after COVID-19 lockdown measures were lifted; today, MOSH has restored its annual attendance to pre-pandemic levels. This success is linked with the development of new programs aligned with the museum's mission to inspire the joy of lifelong learning, including the formation of an on-site voluntary pre-kindergarten program in partnership with Duval County Public Schools and the "Silver Space Series" that provides dedicated time for seniors to experience planetarium shows and programming at their own pace.

Additionally, MOSH debuted its "Passport Series," presenting numerous events each quarter that celebrate the region's diverse cultures. Recent examples included a Black History Month-focused collaboration with the Melanin Market and A Taste of the Philippines, showcasing cuisine by Filipino chefs.

Fafard notified the museum's board chair of his intent to retire in early 2023. The board convened a CEO search committee in January to begin planning for this transition.



Bruce Fafard

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'Unprecedented' crowd forces rescheduling of first Inn & Club development meeting

By Anthony Richards

A mass of people showed up for the Ponte Vedra/Palm Valley Architectural Review Committee's July 26 meeting and forced it to be postponed until a later date and venue.

The committee was scheduled to hear a presentation from the Ponte Vedra Inn & Club regarding its proposed 30-year and multi-phase plan for development and renovations.

However, the site of the meeting was the Ponte Vedra Beach Branch Public Library in its FOL room, which proved not large enough to hold the amount of people who showed up for the public meeting.

It did not take long for those with county helping run the meeting to realize that they were dealing with an "unprecedented" crowd on hand that had never been seen for that specific committee.

By 4:50 p.m., 10 minutes before the meeting was initially scheduled to begin, the FOL room had already reached capacity due to fire marshal regulations.

The line of those who showed up after capacity was reached weaved through the library and out the facility's front door spilling into the parking lot, where cars circled around several times in search of a parking spot.

One of those who struggled to find a place to park was committee chairman Sean Mulhall, whom the rest of the committee waited for before they got started because he had been looking for a place to park for roughly 15



Photo by Anthony Richards

The line of people waiting to get into the meeting weaved through the Ponte Vedra Beach Branch Public Library and out into the parking lot. The amount of people caused the meeting to be postponed so that a larger venue could be found.

minutes.

"There's at least three to four times the number of people here for this meeting," said Christine Valliere,

senior assistant county attorney, in an announcement. "My recommendation is that this meeting not continue until we find a bigger meeting location."

According to Mulhall, he has been doing this for a while on the board and has seen renovations and plans take place over, including ones at Sawgrass, but nothing has ever brought about a crowd like they experienced that night.

Various venue options will be explored and discussed by the county as they look to determine a new venue to hold the meeting.

The architectural review board meets on the fourth Wednesday of each month at 5 p.m., so their next scheduled meeting on the books is for Aug. 23.

The Ponte Vedra Zoning and Adjustment Board will hear and see the Inn & Club's proposal during its meeting Monday, Aug. 7, at 3 p.m. at the St. Johns County Auditorium located at 500 San Sebastian View in St. Augustine followed by the Planning and Zoning Agency Thursday, Aug. 17, at 1:30 p.m. and at the county auditorium.

The fifth and final stop will be when the Inn & Club's presents to the St. Johns County Board of County Commissioners on Tuesday, Sept. 19, beginning at 9 a.m. at the county auditorium.

Each of the meetings is open to the public so residents with concerns or questions are welcome to attend and learn more about the proposed project and what it all entails.



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Contributed photo

Florida Chamber Music Project: top left, Laurie Casseday; top right, Susan Pardue; bottom right, Patrice Evans; bottom left, Ann Hertler.

Florida Chamber Music Project opens 11th season Sept. 17

Florida Chamber Music Project (FCMP) will open its 11th season on Sept. 17 at the Beaches Museum Chapel at the Beaches Museum at 505 Beach Blvd., Jacksonville Beach.

“We had a very successful 10th season and look forward to building upon that,” said Artistic Director Susan Pardue. “We have favorites such as Beethoven and Mozart scheduled along with some newer composers.”

Season tickets for the six concert series cost \$162. There is also a three-concert flex ticket purchase for \$81. Season tickets and flex passes can be purchased through FCMP’s website, flchambermusic.org. Single tickets are \$30. All tickets are available for purchase through Eventbrite. Single tickets are also available for purchase at the door.

Listed below is the schedule:

Sept. 17: Two works by Beethoven

- String Quartet, Opus 18, No. 5
- String Quartet in E flat Major, Opus 74, “The Harp”

This concert shows the contrast between Beethoven’s early quartets and those from his middle period.

Nov. 19: A viola quintet

- String Quartet, Opus 11, Samuel Barber
- String Quintet in g minor, K. 516, W. A. Mozart

Barber’s String Quartet gave us his famous Adagio for Strings. In this concert, hear it in its original form, as a string quartet.

Like all of Mozart’s quintets, the String Quintet No. 4 in G minor, K. 516 is a “viola quintet,” meaning it is scored for a string quartet and an extra viola.

Jan. 28: A little opera to celebrate a birthday

- String Quartet, K. 499, W. A. Mozart
- Crisantemi, Giacomo Puccini
- String Quartet in e minor, Giuseppe Verdi

“Opera Without Words” – a concert featuring the music of opera composers.

No concert of opera music would be complete without Mozart, so FCMP is happy to play his String Quartet and celebrate his birthday.

Feb. 25: It’s all about love

- Langsamer Satz, Anton Webern
- Valencia, Caroline Shaw
- String Quartet No. 2 in a minor, Opus 13, Felix Mendelssohn

A concert about love in different forms. Webern and Mendelssohn wrote these quartets about falling in love, while Caroline Shaw wrote “Valencia” in appreciation of Valencia oranges and their simultaneous simplicity and complexity.

April 7: Haydn, the father of string quartets

- String Quartet, in G Major, Opus 77, No 1, Joseph Haydn
- String Quartet in F Major, Op. 41, No. 2, Robert Schumann

Haydn, the father of the string quartet, wrote 68 quartets during his long career which continued until the Romantic era was ushered in by Beethoven. Schumann continues the Romantic tradition and Haydn’s influence can be heard in Schumann’s String Quartet in F Major, Op. 41, No. 2.

June 2: Special guest pianist Hyunsoon Whang

- Kinderszenen, Robert Schumann
- Piano Quintet in f minor, Opus 34, Johannes Brahms

Pianist Hyunsoon Whang returns for the Brahms Piano Quintet, one of the composer’s most towering masterpieces. This work was originally written as a string quintet. The piano and strings play equally important roles in the piece.

Beaches Museum Chapel is wheelchair-accessible and has free parking along Pablo Avenue near 4th Street North of Beach Boulevard. All concerts begin at 3 p.m.

The Florida Chamber Music Project was founded 11 years ago by violist Susan Pardue. Joining her are violinists Patrice Evans and Ann Hertler and cellist Laurie Casseday. All are members of the Jacksonville Symphony.

For advance tickets online, go to flchambermusic.org.



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Fiddler

Continued from 1

with oppression by Russian authorities. The show features such iconic songs as “If I Were a Rich Man,” “Matchmaker, Matchmaker” and “Sunrise, Sunset.”

At its core, the show is about family.

And family is at the heart of this Alhambra production.

Playing opposite Booth in the role of Golde will be his wife, Lisa Valdini Booth, herself a well-established actress with more than 40 years in the business. Furthermore, the couple’s daughter, Jessica Booth, is the show’s director.

These close relationships stand to strengthen the interplay between the lead characters who at one point pause in the midst of their 25-year marriage to ponder something novel: whether they love one another.

Such a personal, nearly poignant, moment gambles with the audience’s suspension of disbelief but is salvaged — even elevated — by performers who can draw from the experiences of a shared life.

Beyond that, such familiarity adds a level of trust between the director and performers, a quality essential to any stage production.

“I can trust that they can fulfill my vision,” said Jessica Booth, who is directing her first major musical at the Alhambra.

“If she asks me to stand on my head and



Photo by Shaun Ryan

Three members of one family play major roles in the Alhambra Theatre & Dining presentation of “Fiddler of the Roof.” They are, from left: Lisa Valdini Booth (Golde), director Jessica Booth and Tod Booth (Tevye).

spit wooden nickels, I’d at least try,” said her father. “I owe that to her, to try it. And if it doesn’t work, she’s going to be the first person who tells me it doesn’t work. ... There’s respect. There’s an honesty. There’s a rapport. There’s communication. All these things make this process work.”

He encouraged local residents to come to the show and share the experience. Given the popularity of “Fiddler on the Roof” and Alhambra’s reputation for presenting high quality shows, it’s certain audiences will respond. In fact, he said, turnout has been so good that there haven’t been any seats

available for the venue’s last three shows.

“We want to share this with the audience,” he said. “We want to share the message. We want to share our endeavor and our hard work. But theatre doesn’t exist without an audience.”

Alhambra Theatre & Dining is located at 12000 Beach Blvd., Jacksonville. For tickets, go to alhambrajax.com. The business phone number is 904-641-1212.

NOTE: This is an abridged version of the article. To read it at full length, please go to pontevedrarecorder.com.

Metal artist joins PASTA

Metal and wood artist Pam Holthouser recently joined The Professional Artists of St. Augustine (PASTA).

Recently relocating from the mountain town of Asheville, North Carolina, Holthouser began selling zen chimes and wall clocks made from aluminum pipe, vintage textile mill spools, bells, beads, aluminum wire, stainless steel, copper and found objects. In 2017, her metal clockwork was featured in Carolina Home and Garden magazine.

Two years later, Holthouser again made the press with her copper wall sculptures in the April issue of Asheville Made magazine. That same year, she was one of three chosen by the Asheville Chamber of Commerce to create an outside metal sculpture representing “Together We Are More.”

The sculptures were part of a project conducted by the Asheville Chamber in collaboration with Lenoir-Rhyne University and adé PROJECT to demonstrate the diverse

ARTIST continues on Page 28

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(detail) John Frederick Kensett (American, 1816–72), *Singing Beach & Eagle Rock, Magnolia, Massachusetts, 1864*, oil on canvas. Courtesy of the Thomas H. and Diane DeMell Jacobsen Ph.D. Foundation.

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Reception for PASTA artist on First Friday



Contributed photos

Ginny LeJeune

The Professional Artists of St. Augustine (PASTA) Fine Art Gallery of 214 Charlotte St., St. Augustine, will host a reception for member artist Ginny LeJeune, as the featured artist for the month of August.

The reception will be from 5 to 9 p.m. during the Aug. 4 First Friday Artwalk. LeJeune's work will be featured in the front gallery. The Flajberries will play music in the front entry. The event is free to the public.

Art has always been an integral part of

LeJeune's life. She took art and graphic art classes with the thought of becoming a graphic artist, but life interceded and she started a design company, Creative Design and Upholstery in California, where her love for interior design, furniture and soft surrounding eventually led her into painting pictures of interiors.

Influenced by the late Jeremiah Goodman, an impressionistic painter of famous interiors, LeJeune began to paint interiors in oil and sell them through an antique store, and directly to her clients.

In the six years since she has made

Palm Coast her home, she has expanded her repertoire to include the exteriors of homes and resorts, landscapes of her former home in California, and most recently florals.

She is currently delving into Tonalism, a style of painting in which the color range is limited so that subtle gradations of the color tones constitute the primary aesthetic and means of expression. Her paintings in this style are most represented in landscapes.

The show will last through the end of August.



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Artist

Continued from 28

voices and experiences of Asheville artists. Her sculpture "Harmony" utilized a diverse collection of steel, stainless steel, copper and aluminum for a 75-inch high by 22-inch wide by 19-inch deep sculpture.

A member of the River Arts District, Holthouser's work has been displayed in multiple galleries including Sanctuary of

Stuff, Marquee and Eco-Depot Marketplace, all in Asheville; and Artisans on Main in Weaverville, North Carolina.

"Over the years, I've created art using bass wood, gourds, alcohol inks, acrylics, dyes, stains and beeswax," Holthouser said. "I've since developed a love for aluminum, copper and various metals, and I love to combine the metals' color, including using my torch to heat-paint the metals. I look forward to meeting the guests and townspeople of St. Augustine and introducing them to my work."

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Sports

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The majority of those making plays on varsity this fall will have played at the junior varsity level at some point in the past.



The junior varsity season gets underway Aug. 24.

Photos by Anthony Richards

Junior varsity squads, the building blocks of a program

By Anthony Richards

With the football season right around the corner, a lot of the attention is on the varsity squads and for good reason.

However, the junior varsity football teams will also be playing this fall and play an important role, because they are the future of their respective high school programs.

The majority of the players that make up the varsity squads this year will have played on junior varsity at some point

in the last couple of years, as it is the feeder system at the high school level.

Ask any coach and they will speak about the importance of the junior varsity games and how it is the perfect place to establish the characteristics that they hope for their program.

In many ways, the early years help define the success and outlook of the later years for a class of players.

This year Nease High will have a couple of junior varsity squads repre-

sented by the colors green and gold.

The gold squad will play eight contests with two home dates, while the green team has seven games scheduled, including three at home.

Ponte Vedra has a pair of squads as well and they will play a mixture of nine games with five home games this season.

The junior varsity seasons begin Aug. 24 with most games starting at 6 p.m. unless both squads are playing on the

same night, which will then mean the first game starts at 5:30 p.m. with the second following at 7 p.m.

Ponte Vedra opens the season against Bartram Trail, while the Nease gold will play at Andrew Jackson High and Nease green will make a trip to Middleburg.

The rivalry between the Sharks and Panthers carries over to the junior varsity level as well and will be hosted by Ponte Vedra this year on Sept. 28 with kickoff at 7 p.m.

Nocatee set to serve up inaugural pickleball tournament

By Anthony Richards

The pickleball craze that is sweeping the country has officially hit the Nocatee community as it is scheduled to host its inaugural Nocatee Pickleball Tournament Sept. 8-10.

According to tournament director Roseann Detommaso, pickleball has been in the minds and hearts of the residents of Nocatee for some time now, and having a tournament seemed like the perfect fit to cater to that passion.

"Pickleball is big here, and just like everywhere else around it's growing," Detommaso said.

The three-day event will be held at the Nocatee pickleball courts and is only open to residents of the community.

Each day will feature different categories of skill and age levels with Friday consisting of 60 years of age and

older matches, while Saturday will be the women's and co-ed portions of the tournament and Sunday will wrap up with men's matches.

"The co-ed on Saturday is really the highest level of competition that we feel like we have here," Detommaso said. "It's just so competitive and there are really going to be some good games played."

One of the great things about pickleball that has made it so popular and has earned it the title of "the fastest growing sport in America," is the fact that it can be played by anyone so no age groups are left out of the action.

"Our oldest competitor is 82 years old, and for many people pickleball serves such a social purpose in their lives," Detommaso said. "It's pretty easy to figure out and once you do the fun is limitless. We're just happy that we can

provide this fun outlet for our residents to take part in."

Although it is just the inaugural event, it is something Detommaso is confident that will become a staple and a yearly tradition.

"We have to see how it all works out, but it's definitely something we see the potential to grow," Detommaso said. "People are definitely excited about it, and it's something that's been a long time coming."

She encouraged any residents not sure about pickleball to come out and watch some of the action during the three days and she's sure they will leave amazed and hooked by what they saw.

"We have residents all the time that ask, 'What is pickleball?' and after just watching for a little bit next thing you know they are wanting to get out there

and play themselves," Detommaso chuckled. "It's just one of those sports."

The tournament will consist of a round robin format, where six teams will play against each other in separate divisions and be guaranteed to play five games throughout.

"It was designed to try to give our members as much time playing as possible," Detommaso said.

Friday and Saturday action will begin at 8 a.m., while the Sunday's games are set to begin at 10 a.m.

Go Pro Tennis and Pickleball, a Jacksonville company, has offered its support as the main sponsor for the tournament.

Any Nocatee residents with questions about the tournament can email pickleball@nocatee.com for more information.

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35. Prohibit
36. Offense
41. Dish soap brand
45. Ottoman military commanders
46. Ancient Greek City
47. Makes unhappy
50. Discuss again
54. Medical instrument
55. Promote
56. A beloved carb
57. Tag the base runner to get him out
59. Prehistoric people
60. Large African antelope
61. Vehicle
62. Georgia rockers
63. Scientific instrument (abbr.)
64. A major division of geological time
65. Attempt

3. Rather
4. Collected
5. A baglike structure in a plant or animal
6. Patella
7. Ageless
8. Lists of course requirements
9. Pokes at
13. TV network
14. They ___
17. Cooking hardware
18. U.S. Army title
20. Iron-containing compound
22. Swiss river (alt. spelling)
27. Former French coin
28. Electronic countermeasures
29. Taxi
31. Helps little firms
32. Woeful

33. Midway between northeast and east
37. Glowing
38. Tasks which should be done
39. An informal body of friends
40. Intrinsic nature
41. Neural structures
42. Brews
43. Where ships unload cargo
44. Singer
47. Sino-Soviet block (abbr.)
48. Southwest Scotland town
49. Most worthless parts
51. Viscous
52. Put to work
53. Old world, new
58. Swiss river

SUDOKU

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

Level: Beginner

Here's How It Works:

Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

DOWN

1. Plant of the nettle family
2. Fit to be sold



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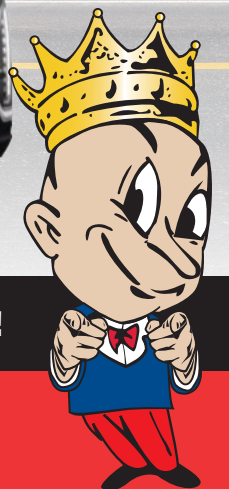
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