

# Merry Christmas

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Connections  
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Thursday, December 21, 2023

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## Proposed bill could lead to MSD referendum

By Anthony Richards

There is a proposed bill set to go forth before the Florida legislature during the state legislative session this year that pertains to special districts and the rules surrounding them.

The bill was brought to the attention of the Ponte Vedra Municipal Service District during its meeting on Dec. 11 by board attorney Wayne Flowers.

According to Flowers, there is a bill being proposed to the state legislature that if passed would require a referendum to take place in 2025, where the residents would vote to decide whether Ponte Vedra Beach would remain a special district.

House Bill 7013 states that elected

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# 'Success is here'

Cultural Center moves into new home

By Shaun Ryan

During the yearslong quest to find a suitable, permanent home for the First Coast Cultural Center, President and CEO Donna Guzzo shared her perpetual optimism with everyone she encountered, expressed in her signature motto: "Success is imminent."

On Thursday, Dec. 14, having cut the ribbon on the fulfillment of that quest, the recently acquired facility at 6000B Sawgrass Village Circle, she voiced a new rallying cry: "Success is here."

Despite the evening's rain and chill, a large contingent of art lovers turned out for the much-anticipated ribbon-cutting ceremony and an opportunity to explore the building, which until Nov. 23 had housed the Ponte Vedra Plastic and Cosmetic Surgery Center.

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Photo by Bonnie Hayflick

First Coast Cultural Center President and CEO Donna Guzzo cuts the ribbon on the organization's new facility.



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

**Hugh Osteen**

COO/VP

hugh@osteenmediagroup.com

(904) 285-8831

**Susan Griffin**

Publisher

susan@pontevedrarecorder.com

(904) 686-3938

**Shaun Ryan**

Editor

shaun@pontevedrarecorder.com

(904) 285-8831, ext. 1202

**Anthony Richards**

Reporter

anthony@pontevedrarecorder.com

(904) 285-8831, ext. 1207

**Don Coble**

Contributor

don@claytodayonline.com

**Amber Anderson**

Page/Graphic Designer

amber@pontevedrarecorder.com

**April Snyder**

Sales Assistant

april@pontevedrarecorder.com

(904) 285-8831, ext. 1204

**Kristin Flanagan**

Account Executive

kristin@pontevedrarecorder.com

(904) 285-8831, ext. 1206

**Adele McGraw**

Account Executive

adele@pontevedrarecorder.com

(904) 285-8831, ext. 1208

**Joe Wilhelm**

Circulation Manager

joe@osteenmediagroup.com

(904) 300-5374

**Subscription Rates, Bulk Mail:**

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## BRIEFS

### Cummer receives grant from PLAYERS

THE PLAYERS Championship has officially announced that it has awarded the Cummer Museum of Art & Gardens a \$90,000 grant to assist the museum in achieving its goal of being a model Blue Star Museum. This grant will allow the museum to provide free admission to active military and veterans on every Wednesday throughout the year.

### 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.

### Stevenson to be honored

The Northeast Florida Regional Council has announced the winners of the 2023 Northeast Florida Regional Leadership Awards. The 20th Annual Regional Awards Luncheon will be held to celebrate the winners and to honor local elected officials on Jan. 4. The council awards these honors each year to recognize the best projects and the brightest leaders in the region.

The Regional Awards recognition program is anchored by the Regional Leadership Award, given to a leader who exemplifies service to community and commitment to regionalism. The 2023 recipient is state Rep. Cyndi Stevenson.

In addition, First Baptist Church in St. Augustine won in the Culture and Historic Preservation category.

For more information about the Northeast Florida Regional Council, go to [nefrc.org](http://nefrc.org).

### Tournament raises \$142K for Rethreaded

The Northeast Florida Division of PulteGroup has announced that the company's second annual Building Hope Golf Tournament at The Palencia Club raised \$142,472 for Rethreaded, a Jacksonville-based nonprofit organization that provides employment, career development and supportive services to survivors of human trafficking.

"We enjoyed a fantastic day of golf, and

we are thrilled to support Rethreaded, which is helping survivors of human trafficking thrive in our community," said Justin Cook, president of PulteGroup's Northeast Florida Division. "We appreciate the support of all of our players and event sponsors to make our second annual benefit golf tournament a success."

### Wounded Warrior Projects delivers holiday joy

A recent event in Jacksonville helped bring the Christmas spirit to more than a dozen

BRIEFS continues on Page 5

## PUZZLE SOLUTIONS

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# Donation helps American Legion post restart operations

By Shaun Ryan

Things are looking up for a local American Legion post thanks in part to a sizable donation made by the Palm Valley Community Association.

Post 233, located at 560 N. Wilderness Trail in Ponte Vedra Beach, has long been a major resource for both local veterans and for the community at large.

Chartered in March 1971, the post has been involved in programs such as Boys State, whereby select high school students travel to Tallahassee to learn

firsthand about how state government works. The American Legion Auxiliary offers a similar program for girls.

Over the years, the post has held numerous special events. And its Taco Tuesday, BINGO Thursday and Friday Steak Night, its regular meals and bar have been popular elements of life in Palm Valley. Veterans seeking help connecting with the right people at the VA could always count on the post's assistance.

"The American Legion's an important member of our community," said Greg

Leonard, Palm Valley Community Association president.

But in recent years, the post has had some difficulties. Its 501(c)19 tax exempt veteran organization status was revoked in November 2022. As a result, it had to suspend operations, and its income was limited to membership renewals.

In addition, the main building, which the post has occupied since 1974, is showing its age to such a degree that it needs to be replaced.

Past Commander Sonny Kirkwood, a 33-year member of the American

Legion, was asked to return and resume his former role. He agreed and took over commandship on Sept. 17.

Immediately, he called a membership meeting, which was attended by about 100 people, and asked for help in resolving the situation.

Some of those members also sit on the Palm Valley Community Association board, and they advocated for the group to lend a hand.

LEGION continues on Page 4



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# Legion

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So, on Nov. 13, the association agreed to donate \$5,000 to the post to cover its operating expenses for a couple of months.

“Because of donations from the Community Center and other American Legion posts, we were able to re-open the doors,” said Kirkwood.

At the same time, the IRS approved reinstatement of the post’s 501(c)19, backdating it so that all donations as of Nov. 22, 2022, could be tax exempt.

These and other actions have allowed the post to restart its revenue stream. Volunteers, too, have been helpful in the effort.

The post now has an 18-month strategic plan. The pavilion is being renovated for use while a new main building is under construction, which is expected to begin in the spring. Gradually, the post’s various activities will be resumed, though it is taking “baby steps” toward that goal.

As a harbinger of things to come, the post plans to be open for Christmas dinner from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Dec. 25.

But the post still needs help, especially from volunteers.

Kirkwood can be reached at skirkwood444@comcast.net. Learn more about the post at al233fl.org.



Photo by Shaun Ryan

The Palm Valley Community Association recently made a \$5,000 donation to American Legion Post 233 to help it reopen. Pictured from left are: Post Commander Sonny Kirkwood, Mike Campbell, Beacham Still, Frank Eckstein and Association President Greg Leonard.

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# MSD

Continued from 1

members of an independent special district cannot serve more than 12 consecutive years unless the district's charter provides more restrictive terms of office.

However, service of terms prior to Nov. 5, 2024, would not count toward the limitation imposed by the subsection.

"For folks who had already served, it doesn't count towards the 12 years," Flowers said. "So, in other words, it is a 'going-forward' type of legislation."

The bill would also require a continuation referendum to be held every 10 years for independent special districts that exercise ad valorem tax authority.

"There are folks who have concerns about special-purpose governments that levy taxes, and that they are not adequately controlled, although there is an entire chapter in the statutes that deal with and restrict and instruct how special districts operate. That's something to look at and pay attention to. The Florida Association of Special Districts is following it."

The proposed bill would also repeal a provision that allows a special district to convert itself into a municipality without legislative approval.

Trustee Kitty Switkes asked how it would affect the MSD's charter in the future.

"It would likely supersede it, because it would be a general law and not a special act," Flowers said.

According to Flowers, when discussing changes to the MSD charter in recent years, it was modeled after legislation that had been passed pertaining to school boards around 2020 or 2021.

Trustee Mickey White was curious about what the genesis is behind the proposed law and what led to it.

"There have been efforts to limit authority of special districts at various times for as long as I've been doing this," Flowers said. "A lot of times the impetus is that a legislature in a particular district has a beef with a special district. There was a review that was done when Gov. (Rick) Scott was governor and there was a fear on behalf of special districts that it was going to result in some further action, but there was no legislation that

came out of it."

There are provisions throughout the proposed bill covering a variety of special district types, including independent and dependent special districts, as well as community development districts.

The state legislature's regular session is scheduled to convene on Jan. 9, with the last day for regularly scheduled committee meetings being Feb. 27 and the last of the legislature's regular session coming on March 8.

"Who knows if this will pass or not," Flowers said. "There are thousands of bills that are introduced every year and like maybe 200 to 250 pass."

Flowers hopes to have more information and insight regarding the bill at future MSD meetings.

# Briefs

Continued from 2

local families. Wounded Warrior Project hosted the families at its headquarters on Belfort Road. The evening started with a family feast and then Wounded Warrior Project provided each family with all the makings for a Christmas dinner to take home (including a gift card to purchase a turkey). Each child also received a wrapped present right from their

individual Christmas lists and a stocking filled with goodies. Wounded Warrior Project started this annual tradition a few years ago to help families deal with rising prices and a tight economy.

## Gate Car Wash planned for S.R. 207

NAI Hallmark, a commercial real estate brokerage and property management firm in Jacksonville, has announced the sale of 1475 S.R. 207 in St. Augustine for \$2 million. Vice President Austin Kay brokered the

transaction on behalf of the seller.

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— Compiled by Shaun Ryan

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*Dr. Erika Hamer is the new chair for the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce's Ponte Vedra Beach Division. She is the owner of Ponte Vedra Wellness, and this is the third time she has held a chair position at some point since joining the Chamber nearly two decades ago.*

## Erika Hamer

### As told to Anthony Richards

#### Tell us a little about yourself and your background.

My name is Dr. Erika Hamer and I started Ponte Vedra Wellness Center in 2004. I graduated from chiropractic school at Life University in Marietta, Georgia, and I hold a special post-graduate designation of diplomate in chiropractic neurology and am also fully licensed in neuro-electrodiagnostics.

I am absolutely excited to serve as chair with the Ponte Vedra Beach Division.

#### Is this your first time in the role of chair with the Chamber?

I've served in this role before but it's been about nine years.

I also served in 2020 as chair of the countywide chamber, which was during Covid and it was a challenging time.

#### Do you feel like the fact that you've had the chair role before will help this time around?

I do feel like having done these roles will definitely make a difference, and I will surely lean on that experience.

One of the things where I feel that I can help the most is that I have a good understanding of the needs of the local community and the Chamber's members.

Being a small business owner myself I feel gives me the ability to give insight and help direct to make sure the local business community is going in the direction we all want.

Knowing the community is so vital and I have a good grasp on that.

Not only have I spent time in the role of chairs at multiple levels, but I have also held positions at various spots throughout the Chamber and I believe I have taken something from each and every one of those experiences.

#### What have you found out about the Ponte Vedra Beach community in your years as a member of the Chamber?

Ponte Vedra Beach is a very tight-knit community and I've worked on being involved even before I was a member of the Chamber.

For about 20 years I've had my business now and it has allowed me to develop relationships with so many people.

#### What have you gained from being a member of the Chamber all these years?

Throughout the years, the Chamber has changed and adapted to what the business needs of the community are. As they change, so should we continue to.

We know the Covid-19 pandemic changed a lot when it comes to business hours, especially when you're a small business, but as a Chamber we're here for those businesses.

It's all about making sure the needs of our local businesses remain at the forefront of what we strive to do.



Photo by Matus Foris

**Dr. Erika Hamer is the new chair for the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce's Ponte Vedra Beach Division.**

#### Do you have goals for the Ponte Vedra Division while in the role of chair?

I'm a big planner and always have been. I like to plan everything.

A big goal of mine would be that we do as much community outreach as possible, because that is the best way to not just offer help to someone but also to find out what the needs are out there.

Once we know the needs we can then create the best

plan moving forward.

I also want to focus on continuing to get the word out about the Chamber and make sure that every business in the community knows that we're here and the services that we can offer.

We have a great board that supports our division, and that's a great place to start.

We want to make sure that we have the ability to create additional opportunities for every business that calls our community home as well.



# Real estate office provides gifts for children in foster care

Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Network Realty is helping to make the holidays special for children in foster care.

The company's Metro Offices of Avondale/Ortega and San Marco/San Jose supported Family Support Services of Duval and Nassau Counties' annual Be an Angel holiday drive. Angels buy gifts from a child's wish list or make a monetary donation so that the children receive Christmas presents they would not otherwise be able to enjoy this time of year.

For the third year, Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Network Realty Realtor Kimberly Waterhouse managed the real estate firm's initiative. With the support of the Metro offices team, she collected and purchased gifts to make Christmas wishes come true for 50 children in foster care. Additionally, Waterhouse secured a \$20,400 donation from the Gray Family Foundation that will help fulfill Christmas wishes for additional children served by Family Support Services.

"We are grateful for the ongoing support of Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Network Realty and the Gray Family Foundation for Be an Angel and our community's children in foster care," said Leigh Ann Lut-

trell, community engagement manager for Family Support Services Duval and Nassau Counties. "Through their generosity, we can support happier holidays for children who might not otherwise receive gifts this time of year. Be an Angel and other FSS programs just aren't possible without committed partners like them."

Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Network Realty is among Family Support Services' top donors supporting the Be an Angel campaign.

"We are so proud of our Metro team and their support of the Be an Angel initiative to ensure more children can have a gift under the tree this Christmas," said Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Network Realty President Ann King. "Our company is committed to making a positive difference in the lives of many local children and families, and we are grateful to be in business with such dedicated, talented and passionate professionals."

For information about Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Network Realty, go to FloridaNetworkRealty.com or flnetworkrealty.com. For information about Family Support Services, go to familysupport.org.

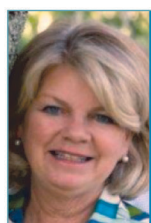


Contributed photo

Pictured from left, front row: Leigh Ann Luttrell, Family Support Services' community engagement manager, and Kayla Garza, Family Support Services community engagement specialist; back row: Realtors Kathy Suber, Nathan Gray and Kimberly Waterhouse; Rochelle Lockett, Family Support services community engagement specialist; and Josh Cohen, managing broker, Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Network Realty.

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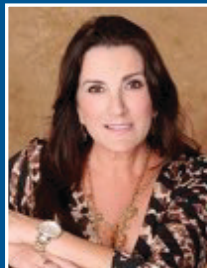


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*Congratulations to our November Leaders!*



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**Cheryl Gillespie (904) 338-8697**



**FOREST HAMMOCK**

Oversized, cul-de-sac lot & No CDD Fees! Upstairs retreat! 3 car garage! 5 BR, 3.5 BA, 2,978 SF MLS 1261589 \$505,000  
**Jennifer Zeiller (904) 697-8152**



**SAINT AUGUSTINE ICW**

Spectacular unobstructed Intracoastal Views! No HOA or CDD! Completely updated! 3 BR, 3 BA, 1,881 SF MLS 1193540 \$1,295,000  
**Matt & Naomi (904) 234-5014**



**PIER POINT**

Second floor corner unit - One block from the ocean! 2 garage parking spaces. 3 BR, 2 BA, 1,854 SF MLS 1250998 \$649,900  
**Michael Paull (904) 705-1004**



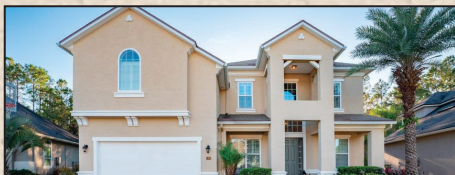
**WATERSONG AT RIVERTOWN**

Maintenance free living Adult community! Private screened lanai. 2 BR + Den, 2.5 BA, 2,212 SF MLS 1257898 \$659,900  
**Josh Foster (317) 439-2024**



**CROSSWATER VILLAGE**

Meticulous, single story home! Quality finishes throughout. Extended screened lanai! 4 BR, 2 BA, 2,108 SF MLS 1255943 \$660,000  
**Jennifer Zeiller (904) 697-8152**



**COASTAL OAKS**

This home features a formal dining room, office and upstairs bonus room. All on a preserve lot! 5 BR, 4 BA, 3,543 SF MLS 1256546 \$995,000  
**Matt & Naomi (904) 234-5014**



**PLANTATION OAKS**

Stunning, two story brick home on just under 1 acre with a screened pool! 5 BR, 5.5 BA, 4,700 SF MLS 1258261 \$1,800,000  
**Kelly & Megan (904) 233-1991**



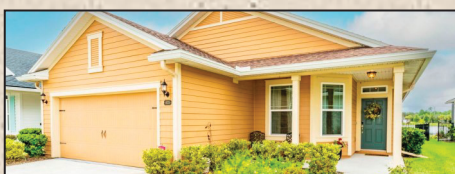
**TWENTY MILE AT NOCATEE**

Private, preserve lot! Open, bright living space! Gourmet kitchen & wood like tile floors 4 BR, 3 BA, 2,458 SF MLS 1258782 \$989,900  
**Josh Foster (317) 439-2024**



**SHEARWATER**

New Townhome available Immediately! Resort style amenities! 3 BR, 2.5 BA, 1,805 SF MLS 1250539 \$2,495 / Monthly Rental  
**Kathy Slusser (904) 760-9763**



**VILLAGES OF VALENCIA**

MOVE IN READY! Peaceful, lakefront home with an enclosed Florida room. 3 BR, 2 BA, 1,939 SF MLS 1245106 \$449,500  
**Sarah Olson (904) 439-0216**



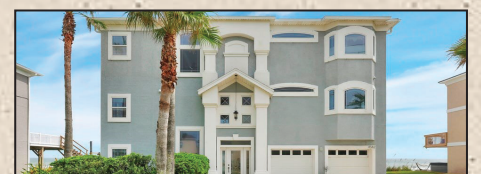
**CYPRESS TRAILS**

Open floor plan with vaulted ceiling. Hardwood floors throughout. 3 car garage. 4 BR + Loft, 3.5 BA, 3,545 SF MLS 1239931 \$874,990  
**Jaya Khakural (904) 738-0907**



**VILANO BEACH**

OCEANFRONT! Ocean views throughout the home. 5 Decks! Ground level apartment. 4 BR, 4.5 BA, 2,531 SF MLS 1250414 \$1,399,000  
**Chris & Rick (904) 349-6163**



**KINGSTON DUNES**

OCEANFRONT! Stunning ocean views from every level, 3 story, furnished home. 4 BR, 4.5 BA, 2,974 SF MLS 1251400 \$1,695,000  
**Kathy Slusser (904) 760-9763**

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## OBITUARIES



### Elaine Cecelia Levins

Elaine Cecelia Levins, age 88, of Ponte Vedra Beach, FL, born March 29, 1935, transitioned peacefully to the Lord's house on December 10, 2023. She was surrounded by her loving family at the time of her passing.

Elaine was born and raised in Whitman, Massachusetts. She is the daughter of W. Leo Welch and Mildred Connors Welch. She graduated from Whitman

High School in 1952. Elaine was a tremendous student and served as her class's vice president. She received the Furney award for the most outstanding pupil. Elaine's academics continued as she went on to graduate from Stonehill College in 1956. While at Stonehill College Elaine once again served as vice president of her class and was elected queen of the 1955 Stonehill College ball. Elaine also excelled in athletics as she was a member of her high school and college woman's basketball teams.

Elaine married John Patrick Levins at Holy Ghost Catholic Church in Whitman, Massachusetts on June 9, 1956. Elaine and Jack honeymooned in Key West, FL where they were stationed to start their lives together with Jack being a naval officer. Elaine and Jack had two daughters: Donna Malia Bradley and Lisa Marie Lynott. Elaine was a devoted mother and wife to her family. Elaine is the grandmother of Donna Malia Victoria Lynott. Elaine enjoyed participating actively in her families' hobbies and passions throughout her life.

Elaine was a devout Catholic and long-time member of the Our Lady Star of the Sea in Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida. Elaine

attended Mass multiple times per week and on Holy Days of Obligation. Elaine went to confession weekly and received weekly communion. Elaine observed the laws of fasting and abstinence and financially supported her church. Elaine provided years of community service as she spent free time volunteering at the Mayo Clinic in Jacksonville, Florida.

Elaine was an avid and exceptional golfer with at least one hole in one on her resume. Elaine not only loved playing the game of golf, she enjoyed teaching and growing the game with all those she encountered. Elaine enjoyed volunteering and supporting the game of golf for all skill levels as she assisted in numerous professional and amateur golf tournaments.

Elaine lived a long and full life and brought joy to all those she engaged. Elaine adored all members of her family and truly valued all her friends. She loved entertaining, hosting, and spending time with them. Elaine was a tremendously hard worker with an incredible work ethic and listening ear. Elaine supported all of those around her effortlessly throughout her life. Elaine was free with her love of those around her and easily returned

the same love back. She will be dearly missed but never forgotten, just like her world-famous handmade Christmas stockings.

Elaine is survived by her two children, Donna Bradley of Indian Pass, FL and her husband, David Bradley, and Lisa Lynott of Orange Park, FL and her husband, Wil Lynott, her granddaughter Lia Lynott of Orange Park, FL. In addition, she is survived by her three brothers: William E. Welch, Donald P. Welch, and Lee F. Welch, and her sister Joan C. Lucca.

A Memorial Service was held at 10:30 a.m. on Wednesday 12/20/23 at St. Lukes Catholic Church, 1606 Blanding Blvd, Middleburg, FL 32068.

In lieu of flowers donations can be made in her name to a cancer organization of your choice. She was especially fond of St. Jude Childrens Hospital and a survivor of uterine cancer. Please visit her online Tribute at [www.quinn-shalz.com](http://www.quinn-shalz.com).

Arrangements by



## DEATH NOTICES

### Joyce Lynn Boynton

Joyce Lynn Boynton, 82, of Jacksonville, Florida, died Dec. 10, 2023. Arrangements by Quinn-Shalz Family Funeral Home & Cremation Centre. [www.quinn-shalz.com](http://www.quinn-shalz.com). 904-249-1100

### Betty Easley

Betty Easley, 94, of Jacksonville, Florida, died Dec. 4, 2023. Ponte Vedra Valley Funeral Home, Cremation Center & Cemetery – 904-285-1130 – [www.pontevedravalle.com](http://www.pontevedravalle.com)

### Robert C. Hanna, Jr.

Robert C. Hanna, Jr., 90, of Jacksonville, Florida, died Dec. 3, 2023. Ponte Vedra Valley Funeral Home, Cremation Center & Cemetery – 904-285-1130 – [www.pontevedravalle.com](http://www.pontevedravalle.com)

### Patricia Lyons

Patricia Lyons, 86, of Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida, died Dec. 10, 2023. Arrangements by Quinn-Shalz Family Funeral Home & Cremation Centre. [www.quinn-shalz.com](http://www.quinn-shalz.com). 904-249-1100

### Norman A. Mattmuller

Norman A. Mattmuller, 92, of Spring Hill, Florida, died Dec. 12, 2023. Arrangements by Quinn-Shalz Family Funeral Home & Cremation Centre. [www.quinn-shalz.com](http://www.quinn-shalz.com). 904-249-1100

### Timothy L. Meyer

Timothy L. Meyer, 44, of Jacksonville, Florida, died Dec. 12, 2023. Ponte Vedra Valley Funeral Home, Cremation Center & Cemetery – 904-285-1130 – [www.pontevedravalle.com](http://www.pontevedravalle.com)

### Kelechi Earnest Obiefule

Kelechi Earnest Obiefule, 43, of Jacksonville, Florida, died Dec. 13, 2023. Arrangements by Quinn-Shalz Family Funeral Home & Cremation Centre. 904-249-1100 [www.quinn-shalz.com](http://www.quinn-shalz.com).





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**Brian Massey**  
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[bmassey@pvclubrealty.com](mailto:bmassey@pvclubrealty.com)

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280 Ponte Vedra Blvd,  
Ponte Vedra Beach, FL 32082





# Mrs. Claus visits newborns at UF Health Flagler Hospital



**Free Park & Ride Shuttle**  
1pm - 11pm, Parking Locations:

**St. Johns County Health Department**  
200 San Sebastian View

**Broudy's Lot**  
(corner of US1 and W. King)  
198 & 212 W. King St.

**San Marco Lot**  
301 San Marco

**Pick up/Drop off:**

**Visitor Information Center**  
10 S. Castillo Dr., St. Augustine

**Days of Operation:**

**Saturdays in December**  
**Tues. - Sat., December 26-30**  
Daily from Broudy's Lot Only

[www.CityStAug.com](http://www.CityStAug.com)

Visitor info @  
[www.NightsofLights.com](http://www.NightsofLights.com)

The Nights of Lights and the park and ride shuttle are produced by the City of St. Augustine with funding assistance from the St. Johns County Tourist Development Council.



Santa Claus is extremely busy this time of year, but Mrs. Claus has a little more flexibility in her schedule. She recently took time away from baking cookies to visit newborns in the neonatal intensive care and maternal child units at UF Health Flagler Hospital in St. Johns County.

"I can confirm that all of the babies are on the Nice List," Mrs. Claus said.

Contributed photos



## Amanda's Char-CUTIE Boards

*A successful party is an event that is full of good people, fun music, and great food!*



**What we offer:**

- Charcuterie Boards
- Grazing Tables
- Pre-ordered Gift Boxes
- Charcuterie Classes

**Perfect for any event!**

- Baby/Wedding Showers
- Weddings • Broker Openings
- Open Houses • Corporate Events
- Team Building Classes • Birthdays
- Graduations • Retirement Parties
- Business Launches • Marketing Events



Amanda can elevate your event with a unique board/table that everyone will rave about! Whether it's a traditional charcuterie or a themed board for the holidays, we will deliver! We use Artisanal cheeses, cured meats and fresh produce in a creative way that is both aesthetically pleasing to the eye and the palette!

We also cater to the gluten-free and vegan community, and have various options for these specific boards.

**Contact me today to book me for your next event!**

[f Amanda's char-cutie boards](#) [i Amandas.char\\_cutie.boards](#)

✉ [medford56@gmail.com](mailto:medford56@gmail.com) ☎ 904-416-4010





# Festive fun for furry friends

Watson Realty Nocatee Office recently held a pet event, Paws and Claus. Treat bags handed out to the furry friends, and there was a hot cocoa bar and cookies for the adults. A drawing for a prize was also held.



Contributed photo



## Celebrate Christmas

*with us!*

December 20 - 25

complete service  
schedule at  
[ccpvb.org](http://ccpvb.org)



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EPISCOPAL

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# LAGOS



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Jacksonville, Florida 32207

[www.underwoodjewelers.com](http://www.underwoodjewelers.com)



# St. Augustine shines its brightest with Nights of Lights



This year's annual Nights of Lights festival in St. Augustine is an event where people can walk or ride around downtown St. Augustine and get in the festive mood with so many businesses taking part and lighting up and decorating for the holidays. It is a popular spot for locals from across the First Coast to visit this time of year and the festival's last day will be Jan. 28, 2024.

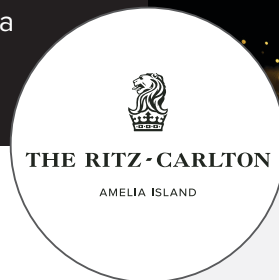
Photos by Anthony Richards



See **MORE PHOTOS** on **Page 13**

## BLACK AND WHITE NEW YEAR'S EVE GALA

Make it a night to remember by welcoming the New Year at the 13th Annual Ritz-Carlton, Amelia Island **Black and White New Year's Eve Gala**. Enjoy extravagant food buffets including a seafood and ice bar, sushi display, scallops and Prime Rib, and an array of scrumptious desserts in the beautiful Ritz-Carlton Ballroom. Dance the night away to the sounds of seven-member band **Finesse** and enjoy the open bar, spectacular fireworks and a Champagne toast to commence the New Year.



## INTRODUCING MAISON 1562

Filled with unusual and enchanting finds with a French flair, **The Signature Shop** has evolved into **Maison 1562**. French-inspired but highlighting treasures from Europe and beyond, the store features one-of-a-kind collectible handbags, accessories, housewares, unique clothing and designer jewelry collections both vintage and contemporary. Exquisite in every detail, browse the collections of **Maison 1562** and discover what you've been missing.



### MORE NIGHTS OF LIGHTS PHOTOS



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# Vilano Beach festivities continue

Here's the holiday schedule for Saturday, Dec. 23, at Vilano Beach.

**Vilano Holiday Village Christmas Artisan Market** — The perfect time to get unique and local holiday gifts in just one place. The market was rescheduled from an earlier date. Meet local artisans who will offer the perfect gifts for that special someone. Jeremy Weinglass has amassed more than 30 years of experience as a professional musician and composer with an expansive repertoire of classical, standards, musicals, rock and pop. Admission is free.

- 4-8 p.m. Artisans along Vilano Road
- 4-7 p.m. Jeremy Weinglass at The Patio at Holiday Inn Express

**Cirque Adventure's high-flying Elf Circus is coming to town!** This aerial and acrobatic show performed to favorite holiday tunes. There will be aerialists flying high in the air, acrobats flipping and tumbling everywhere. There will be three (30 minute) performances. St. Johns County Fire and Rescue Department will showcase emergency vehicles at the event, with the opportunity to get up close and learn more about our local emergency responder. Admission is free.

- 1-1:30, 2-2:30 and 3-3:30 p.m. Elf Circus
- 1-3 p.m. St Johns County Fire and Rescue Department emergency vehicles
- 4-6 p.m. Santa and Mrs. Claus appearance at The Patio at Holiday Inn Express

# Dazzling Nights returns to Jacksonville

Jacksonville Arboretum & Botanical Gardens will transform once again into a stunning, winter wonderland featuring a million dazzling lights, shining forests, magical displays, music and beautiful sculptures during Dazzling Nights, a family-friendly adventure that gives guests the opportunity to embark on an unforgettable, three-quarter mile, interactive holiday experience.

Dazzling Nights runs through Dec. 29. Enjoy new, one-of-a-kind holiday experiences and immersive lighting displays like:

- Have a snowball fight in a giant, 40-foot snow globe
- Travel through a bright, candy-cane corridor
- Walk under thousands of brilliant, twinkling lights and snowflakes
- See some of Audubon's famous flower paintings illuminated as larger-than-life neon flowers
- Explore a hazy forest of lasers

- Discover a path of a thousand brilliant fireflies
  - Gather for a family photo in front of a giant, shimmering Christmas tree
- The evening wouldn't be complete without nightly snowfall, plus sweet treats and holiday (and adult) beverages.

"We're so excited to expand Dazzling Nights Jacksonville for an even bigger and better third year," said Cole NeSmith, chief creative officer of Memoir Agency.

Jacksonville Arboretum & Botanical Gardens is located at 1445 Millcoke Road, Jacksonville. Timed entry will take place from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Adult tickets start at \$22. Children's tickets, ages 3-13, start at \$19. (Children under 3 enter free; no ticket required.) Purchase tickets at [dazzlingjax.com](http://dazzlingjax.com).



## DIAMOND SOLITAIRE NECKLACES EAR STUDS & PENDANTS SAVE 15%



For a limited time, our entire selection of regular Underwood quality diamond ear studs and pendants has been reduced 15%.

### Ear Studs Savings Examples

|            | Reg.       | Sale       |
|------------|------------|------------|
| 1/2 carat* | \$ 1095.00 | \$ 930.75  |
| 3/4 carat* | \$ 2000.00 | \$ 1700.00 |
| 1 carat*   | \$ 2950.00 | \$ 2507.50 |

### Pendant Saving Examples

(Includes 18 inch 14 karat rope chains)

|            | Reg.       | Sale       |
|------------|------------|------------|
| 1/3 carat* | \$ 750.00  | \$ 637.50  |
| 1/2 carat* | \$ 1795.00 | \$ 1525.75 |
| 3/4 carat* | \$ 3400.00 | \$ 2890.00 |

\*Total weight may vary by 5%.

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ST. JOHNS COUNTY  
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE  
Ponte Vedra Beach Division

# Chamber Connections

## 2023 IN REVIEW

Photos provided by St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce, Jackie Hird Photography, and Susan Griffin



St. Johns County Chamber Board Retreat 2023-2024



2023-2024 St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce Ambassadors



Immediate Past Chair Beth Sweeny with Flagler College, left, passes the gavel to the 2023-24 Chamber Chair Berta Odom with RE/MAX Realty 100 at the CELEBRATE event.



2023-2024 Ponte Vedra Beach Division Board of Directors



December 2023



ST. JOHNS  
COUNTY  
CHAMBER  
OF COMMERCE

THE  
RECORDER



2023 Chamber Golf Classic at Hammock Beach Golf Resort



After Hours at THE PLAYERS



## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT/CEO

### Ponte Vedra Wellness and your healthier lifestyle



**Isabelle Renault**  
President/CEO  
St. Johns County  
Chamber of Commerce

In continuing our partnership with the Tourism and Development Council, we have taken the next step in enhancing our visitors' experience in Ponte Vedra with the launch of the Ponte Vedra Wellness website. This website focuses on the luxuries of wellness that Ponte Vedra has to offer

guests and locals alike.

On this site, you'll find ways to rejuvenate, nourish, contemplate and evaluate: a place to discover various ways to experience a wide range of wellness options that will help you decompress, improve yourself and indulge in some pampering.

Rejuvenation, or the process of reviving, and Ponte Vedra Wellness has plenty of options for you to discover just how you can bring renewed life to your self-care process. Perhaps you want to enjoy yoga on the beach with the crashing waves as your background music or indulge in a massage and facial at one of the many spa experiences known all around the country — whatever it is you do to rejuvenate, Ponte Vedra Wellness can help you find it.

Nourishment for your body is a critical element of wellness. A healthy dining experience, a fresh beach picnic or healthy snacks on the go — with so many great choices in Ponte Vedra, healthy choices at mealtimes are easy. Plus, some of the best restaurants are also on the water, giving you

two perks in one place. Finding your next favorite place is as easy as a quick search on the site.

We all need some downtime now and then, and one of the best ways to get that is to take some quiet time in nature, enjoy the sound of birds singing away and relax to the sound of waves crashing against the sand. Contemplate, or meditation can help you center yourself and slow down, enjoy the world around you and destress from the chaos of everyday life. Discover your next peaceful excursion on the site.

Ponte Vedra is part of the healthiest county in Florida, and that's thanks to the extensive array of medical experts, facilities and educational resources in our region. Whether you are looking for a new doctor or specialist, medical ways to improve your health or learn more about how Ponte Vedra is quickly becoming a hub for those on the autism spectrum, our Evaluate section will help you find direction to a healthier lifestyle.

Whether your focus is on one area or you want to indulge in all "ways of wellness," we want to help you see how you can embrace Ponte Vedra Wellness. The Ponte Vedra Wellness website along with its sister's site Ponte Vedra Naturally can be found at [www.experiencepontevedra.com](http://www.experiencepontevedra.com). In addition, for more information visit our official Ponte Vedra Visitor Information Center (VIC) at 200 Solana Road where visitor information center team members will be happy to assist all visitors to Ponte Vedra.

**Isabelle Renault**  
President and CEO, St.  
Johns County Chamber of  
Commerce

Visit Ponte Vedra  
Wellness



PVWellness.net

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### JANUARY

- **Ribbon Cutting:** Cycle Bar St. Johns, Jan. 5
- **Chamber Before Hours – St. Augustine:** Encompass Health, Jan. 10
- **Chamber at Noon w/UF Health St. Johns:** Digital Marketing, Jan. 11
- **Ribbon Cutting:** Effect Spa, Jan. 18
- **Ribbon Cutting:** Fleur de Lis Boutique, Jan. 22
- **Chamber After Hours – St. Johns:** Longleaf St. Johns, Jan. 24
- **Chamber After Hours – St. Johns:** Basecamp Fitness, Jan. 25

### FEBRUARY

- **Women with Vision Council w/Jacksonville Jaguars:** Touchdown Marketing, Feb. 1
- **Chamber Before Hours – PVB:** RISE at Nocatee, Feb. 7
- **Chamber Before Hours – St. Augustine:** Visitors & Convention Bureau, Feb. 8
- **Historic St. Augustine Area Council w/City of St. Augustine:** St. Augustine Parking Code & Traffic Update, Feb. 9
- **Chamber at Noon w/THE PLAYERS:** THE PLAYERS Update, Feb. 14
- **Tourism & Hospitality Council w/Business Panelist:** Digital Domination, Feb. 15
- **Chamber 101:** Zoom, Feb. 16
- **Chamber After Hours – PVB:** YMCA, Feb. 21
- **Chamber After Hours – St. Augustine:** bestbet, Feb. 22
- **Economic Development Council w/ SJC County Administrator, Joy Andrews:** St. Johns County Plan, Feb. 23

### MARCH

- **Night at THE PLAYERS w/ Jax Chamber:** TPC, March 7
- **Chamber at Noon:** March 20
- **Business Development:** Small Biz Best Practices, March 21
- **Chamber After Hours – PVB:** Florida Exchange, March 27
- **Chamber After Hours – St. Augustine:** Liberty Landscape, March 28

Register Now



[sjchamber.com](http://sjchamber.com)

Interested in hosting or sponsoring an event?  
Contact [info@sjchamber.com](mailto:info@sjchamber.com)

### STAFF HIGHLIGHTS

Ericha Gore was promoted to Director, Membership & Events.

## St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce Board retreat



Photo by the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce

The St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors gathered for their board retreat. Participants included, from left, front row, Dr. Erika Hamer, Beth Tate, Leila Bedoian, Melissa Cecil, Isabelle Renault, Elizabeth Bernardino, Jamie Johnson, Cindy Delaparte, Nancy Derring-Mock, Sean Rotolo; back row, Beth Sweeny, Jennifer Howard, Cecil Gibson, Cory Darling, Meg Zabijaka, Scott Maynard, Berta Odom (Chair), Matt Lahti, Bob Porter.

## Ponte Vedra Division Board



Photo by the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce

Front row, from left: Carissa Jackson, Felicia Cox, Elizabeth Bernardino, and Peter verDorn. Back row, from left: Lori Adams, Dr. Erika Hamer, Susan Griffin, and Erin Wallner.

Not pictured: Mary Anne Thomas, Miranda Rossum, and Mark Allen.



# St. Johns County Chamber honors business leaders at awards ceremony



Photo by Jackie Hird Photography

Chamber President and CEO Isabelle Renault, left, stands next to the award winners.

The St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce held its CELEBRATE Annual Awards Ceremony on Nov. 15, and various business leaders who made their mark in the community this year were recognized.

The event, which more than 200 guests attended, was held at the Treasury on the Plaza in historic St. Augustine. Six business leaders were recognized for their dedication to St. Johns County and the community in which they live.

# After Hours at K9s for Warriors



Photo by the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce

The Sept. 13 After Hours was held at K9s for Warriors.

# 1912 ribbon cutting



Photo by the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce

A ribbon-cutting event was held Sept. 5 for 1912 Ocean Bar & Rooftop.



Betty Griffin Center

Betty Griffin Center is the only certified local center to provide quality services, at no cost, to survivors of domestic and sexual violence in St. Johns County.

### PROGRAMS & SERVICES

- 24 Hour Crisis / Texting Helpline 904-824-1555
- Safety Shelter & Transitional Housing
- Rape Care Unit & Recovery Services
- Court Advocacy / Legal Assistance
- Confidential Counseling / Support Groups
- Community / Professional Education

SCAN TO DONATE



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# Hyatt Place ribbon cutting



Photo by the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce

A ribbon-cutting event was held Oct. 10 for The Hyatt Place St. Augustine/Vilano. The property features a 7,000-square-foot ballroom and more than 20,000 square feet of indoor/outdoor flex space. The rooftop bar provides 360-degree views of Vilano Beach.

# Liberty Landscape Supply holds ribbon cutting



Photo by the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce

A ribbon-cutting event was held Oct. 13 for Liberty Landscape Supply.

# Scalice Land Surveying ribbon cutting



Photo by the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce

A ribbon-cutting event was held Nov. 2 for Scalice Land Surveying in Nocatee.

# First Coast Cultural Center's new address



Photo by Bonnie Hayflick

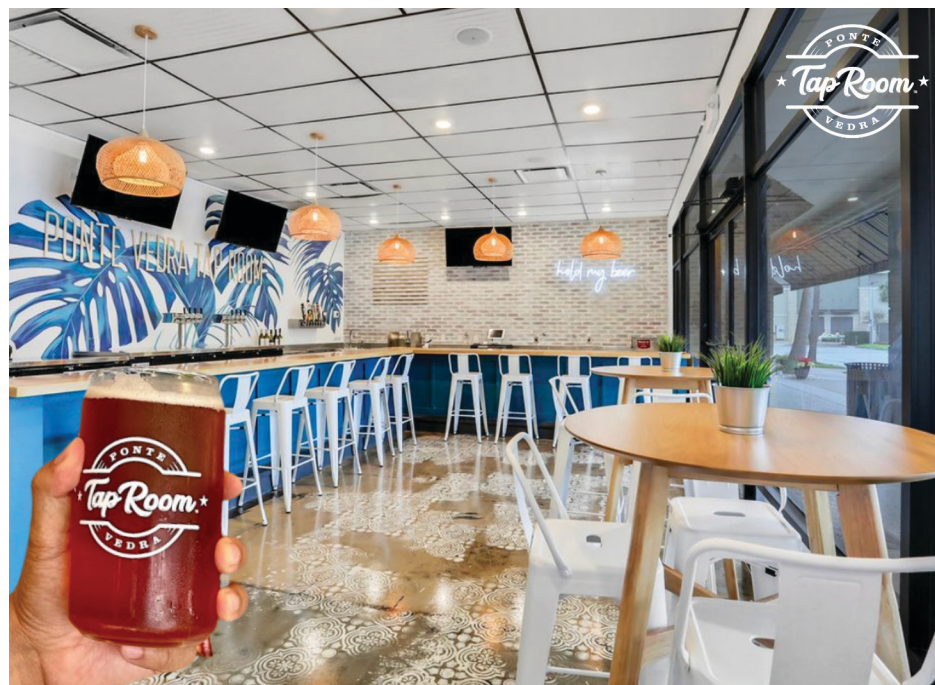
The First Coast Cultural Center cut the ribbon Dec. 14 for its new home at 6000B Sawgrass Village Circle, Ponte Vedra Beach.



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## Vicar's Landing hosts Before Hours



Photo by the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce

The Nov. 1 Chamber Before Hours was held at Vicar's Landing Oak Bridge Campus. Bruce Jones and his staff hosted the morning of networking, food and coffee.

## Jaguars executive speaks

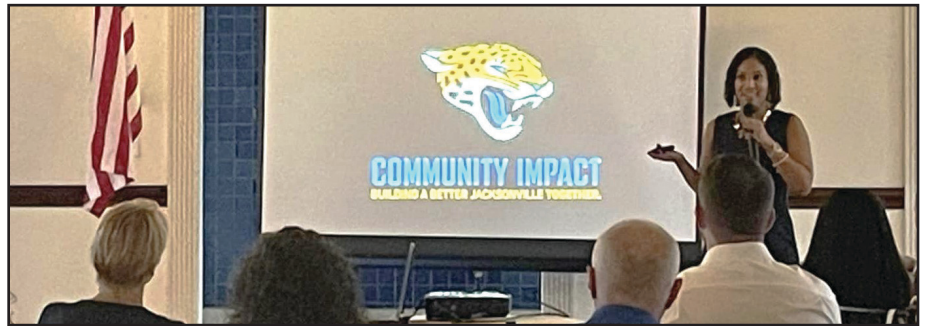


Photo by the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce

Whitney Meyer, senior vice president and chief community impact officer for the Jacksonville Jaguars, spoke at the Oct. 12 Joint Chamber at Noon event with the JAX Chamber. Meyer spoke about the Jaguars community impact initiatives, the Jaguars Foundation and community activities in connection with local development projects.

## Attainable housing is meeting topic

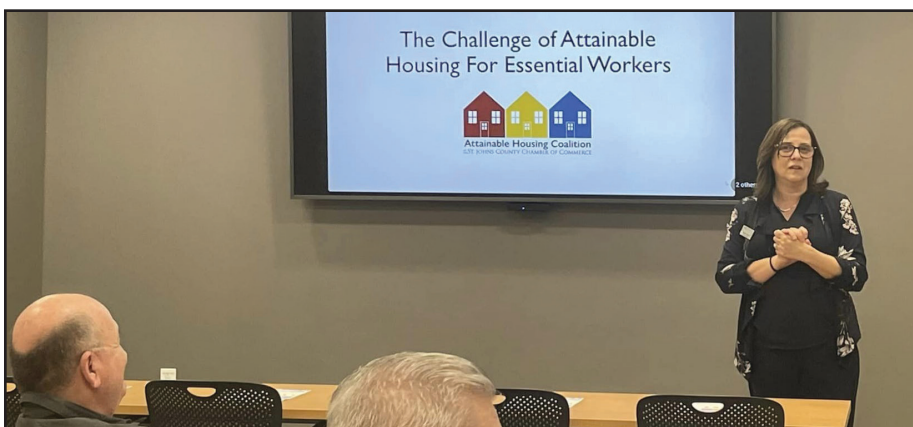


Photo by the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce

Attainable housing was the topic of a public meeting held Nov. 7.

## JAXUSL's Lebesch speaks



Photo by the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce

At the Dec. 1 Economic Development Breakfast, Isabelle Renault, president and CEO, and Scott Maynard, vice president of economic development for St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce, welcomed Dr. Anna Lebesch, senior vice president strategy and talent for JAXUSA Partnership, who spoke about the vision for the future of economic growth in the region.

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## EDC discusses workforce housing



Photo by the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce

The focus of the Sept. 22 Economic Development Council Breakfast was workforce housing.

## Ponte Vedra Church ribbon cutting



Photo by the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce

A ribbon-cutting event was held Nov. 1 for Ponte Vedra Church.

## Veterans Day luncheon held



Photo by the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce

Lt. Scott Mackes spoke at the Ponte Vedra Beach Division's Veterans Day Chamber at Noon luncheon on Nov. 9. Mackes shared his story and how he transitioned from the military to civilian life.

## Nothing Bundt Cakes ribbon cutting



Photo by the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce

A ribbon-cutting event was held Nov. 1 for Nothing Bundt Cakes.

## After Hours at The Blake



Photo by the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce

The St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce held its After Hours event Oct. 25 at The Blake at St. Johns. Attendees said it was a wonderful evening of networking, food and drinks. The Blake at St. Johns is an assisted living and memory care community in St. Johns.

## FYZICAL Therapy ribbon cutting



Photo by the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce

A ribbon-cutting event was held Sept. 26 for FYZICAL Therapy and Balance Center.

## Vivere Meliora Dentistry ribbon cutting



Photo by the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce

A ribbon-cutting event was held Oct. 19 for Vivere Meliora Dentistry.



## 2023 YEAR IN REVIEW

### PLAYERS executive director addresses luncheon



Photo by Anthony Richards

THE PLAYERS Senior Vice President and Executive Director Jared Rice spoke about the upcoming 2023 event during a joint luncheon Jan. 11 hosted by the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce Ponte Vedra Beach Division and the Jacksonville Chamber of Commerce.

### Establishing an export plan the focus of EDC March breakfast



Photo by Susan Griffin

Nicole Briggs, Matt Price, Aimee Stafford and Mary O'Brien.

### Hardage-Giddens opens at St. Johns location



Photo by the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce

Hardage-Giddens Funeral Homes held a grand opening and ribbon-cutting Feb. 16 for its newest location, 1285 St. Johns Parkway, St. Johns. Several people dressed up to embrace the "Roaring '20s" theme for the party.

### Chamber Golf Classic



Photo by the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce

The St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce hosted its Annual Chamber Golf Classic on May 9 at Hammock Beach Golf Resort & Spa.

### America's Choice Title Company hosts Chamber after hours, ribbon cutting



Photo by Susan Griffin

On Feb. 22, the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce Ponte Vedra Beach Division held its monthly after hours event at America's Choice Title Company. It also served as a ribbon cutting event because America's Choice rejoined the Chamber after several years of absence. The event was held at America's Choice headquarters at 171 A1A North in Ponte Vedra.

### Riddle Wellness holds ribbon cutting for Ponte Vedra Beach location



Photo by Susan Griffin

Riddle Wellness officially joined the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce Ponte Vedra Beach Division with a ribbon cutting ceremony Feb. 1.

### Compass Real Estate joins Chamber, welcomes new location



Photo by Susan Griffin

A ribbon-cutting ceremony was hosted by Compass Real Estate to celebrate their newest location at 601C A1A North in Ponte Vedra Beach and partnership with the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce Ponte Vedra Beach Division.

### Memory Lane joins Chamber with ribbon cutting



Photo by the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce

Memory Lane held a ribbon cutting ceremony recently to join the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce.

### Sawgrass Marriott hosts Chamber after hours



Photo by Susan Griffin

Sawgrass Marriott staff members stand alongside Ponte Vedra Beach Division vice chair Kathleen Floryan during the Chamber after hours event.

### Cadence at Nocatee welcomed



Photo by the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce

Assistant Community Director Gretter Anderson and Community Director Brianna Houk wielded the scissors for the ribbon-cutting ceremony at the new Cadence at Nocatee apartments on Jan. 24. Members and ambassadors of the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce participated.

### Joint After Hours event held at TPC Sawgrass



Photo by Susan Griffin

The St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce and the Jacksonville Chamber of Commerce held a joint After Hours event at TPC Sawgrass and took place March 2. Pictured: Kim Scott, Jimmy Briggs and Nicole Briggs.

### Chamber Before Hours at AAA



Photo by the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce

The April 12 Chamber Before Hours was held at AAA in Ponte Vedra. Gloria Dongara and her team hosted the meeting, which included networking, food and coffee.



*Our Business Community Leaders*



If you want to be among the most recognized names in community and business leadership, contact Elizabeth Bernardino at [Elizabeth.Bernardino@sjcchamber.com](mailto:Elizabeth.Bernardino@sjcchamber.com)

# St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce Ambassadors



Photo by the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce  
 The 2023-34 St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce Ambassadors are: Sean Rotolo, Amanda Brown, Akinkawon Frierson, Adam Gregory, Jr., Adele McGraw, Brian Walker, William Barnes, Lori Brandel, Robin Burchfield, Jackie Hird, Joshua Hull, Michele Kuziola, Michael McCarthy, Melissa Mezick, Roderick Moore, K.C. Padgett, Lisa Payne, David Permenter, Tracey Phillips, Marion Richardson, Jennifer Tarbert, Trudy Toche, Cecile Nusbaum and Elizabeth Bernardino.

## Modern Day Dental ribbon cutting



Photo by the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce  
 A ribbon-cutting event was held Sept. 21 for Modern Day Dental

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## 2023 YEAR IN REVIEW

### Arthur Murray hosts Chamber before hours event



Photo by Susan Griffin  
Arthur Murray owner Heiko Leyhausen dances with his daughter during the event.

### Signature First Coast Realty holds ribbon cutting



Photo by Susan Griffin  
Signature First Coast Realty joined the St. Johns County Chamber Ponte Vedra Beach Division with a ribbon cutting ceremony April 20.

### TruTechnology's Nicolitz speaks on cybersecurity



Photo by the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce  
Daniel Nicolitz, TruCIO at TruTechnology, spoke about cybersecurity for small business at the Chamber at Noon event on May 17. He said 67% of small businesses experienced a cyberattack within the last year. The Ponte Vedra Beach Library hosted the luncheon. The series is sponsored by Fields Auto Group.

### PROTACTX Brazilian Jiu Jitsu opens



Photo by the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce  
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.

### Ponte Vedra Plastic Surgery hosts Chamber Before Hours



Photo by Susan Griffin  
The St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce Ponte Vedra Beach Division held a Before Hours event at Ponte Vedra Plastic Surgery on Aug. 9. Members were able to mingle and network inside and outside the location.

### Snyder Air Conditioning, Plumbing & Electric cuts ribbon



Photo by the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce  
Snyder Air Conditioning, Plumbing & Electric held its ribbon-cutting ceremony Aug. 22. It was a morning of networking, food and celebrating.

### Riptide team cuts ribbon



Photo by the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce  
Riptide Home Furniture had its ribbon cutting event on Aug. 31. The business is located on U.S. 1 north of Palencia.

### Wells Fargo hosts Chamber After Hours



Photo by Susan Griffin  
The St. Johns County Chamber Ponte Vedra Beach Division's Chamber After Hours was held at Wells Fargo in Nocatee. Heather McDougal, regional branch manager, and her team hosted the wonderful evening of networking, food and drinks.

### New THE PLAYERS executive director speaks at Chamber lunch



Photo by Anthony Richards  
New executive director of THE PLAYERS, Lee Smith (fourth from the left) spoke at a joint lunch event hosted by the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce Ponte Vedra Beach Division and the Jax Chamber on July 19 at Marsh Landing Country Club.

### Bank branch opens



Photo by the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce  
A ribbon-cutting event was held July 26 for TD Bank — Durbin Creek.

### Hardage-Giddens hosts Chamber after hours



Photo courtesy of St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce  
The St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce Ponte Vedra Beach Division hosted an After Hours event at Hardage-Giddens St. Johns on Aug. 23. The evening included networking opportunities as well as food and drinks.

GROW YOUR BUSINESS BY BECOMING A CHAMBER MEMBER TODAY!



ST. JOHNS COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



# Chamber gets festive with Jingle Mingle

The St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce Ponte Vedra Beach Division held its annual Jingle Mingle holiday social at Marsh Landing Country Club on Dec. 7. It was a festive night of networking, holiday spirit and door prizes.

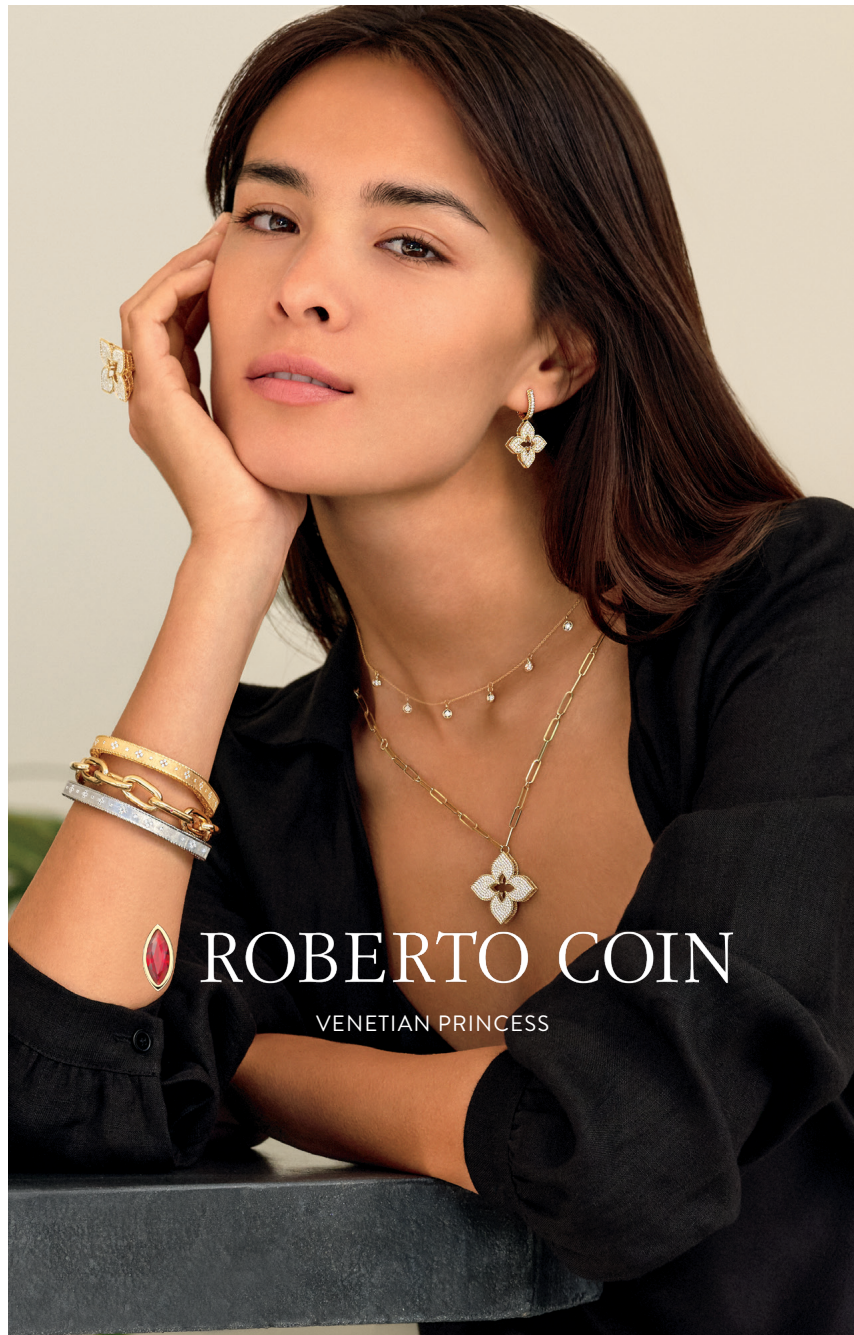
Photos by Susan Griffin



Isabelle Renault, Jamie Johnson, Elizabeth Bernardino and Ericha Gore



Liesl Savage and Pam Ducas.



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Scott Maynard, Elizabeth Bernardino and Trudy Toche.



Photo by Jackie Hird Photography





## UPCOMING EVENTS

**February 3, 2024**

Children Are Rock Stars  
(C.A.R.S.)

*The Brumos Collection*

**February 25, 2024**

Riverside Craft  
Beer Festival

*Riverside Arts Market*

**February 29 - March 3, 2024**

The Amelia

*The Ritz-Carlton, Amelia Island*

**May 4, 2024**

The Derby Run

*Tringali Barn, St. Augustine*

**May 18, 2024**

Women's Leadership  
Council Fashion Show

*The Glass Factory*

**October, 2024**

Halloween Doors  
& More

For event details and updates please visit

**TheFoundationCares.org**

*All event dates and details are subject to change.*

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## Season's Greetings



From Your  
St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce

*Thanks to you and our members, 2023 was a prosperous year:*

- ★ Grew our Chamber membership by 5%
- ★ Hosted 150 member events for more than 5,000 guests
- ★ Launched Attainable Housing Coalition
- ★ Launched Autism Certification initiative
- ★ Launched Chamber Foundation  
*Official announcement coming in 2024!*

*Deck the halls with business calls! Wishing you a joyful holiday season filled with more networking than your office Wi-Fi. May your meetings be merry and your profits be plenty. Here's to a jolly ROI in the coming year!*



*Happy holidays from the  
St. Johns County Chamber team*



## Could it be a hernia? 8 silent signs

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- Fever
- Constipation
- Feeling full and bloated
- Heartburn
- Weakness and muscle fatigue in the upper leg or groin
- Pain when lifting or coughing

If left untreated, your hernia could grow, get more painful, or even become dangerous at some point. And a hernia won't go away on its own. The good news is today's minimally invasive hernia treatment options, including robotic-assisted surgery, can offer you fast recovery.



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# Womens Food Alliance

## Cheers to 10 Years!

womensfoodalliance.com



### *The Womens Food Alliance*

cultivates and advances Networking, Education, and Collaboration for women in the culinary and hospitality industry throughout North Florida and Coastal Georgia. WFA is a safe haven of trusted advice, genuine support and a place to grow.

We cherish "Friendship First."



**For Information and Membership:**

**Leigh Cort, Founder**

leigh@leighcortpublicity.com  
904-806-3613

**WomensFoodAlliance.com**



The Womens Food Alliance Leadership Council 2023



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WOMENS FOOD ALLIANCE — THE 10-YEAR JOURNEY

# From Taking Chances to Finding a Place to Grow and Make Friends



By Leigh Cort

Photos provided by Leigh Cort

When the Womens Food Alliance was conceived in 2013, it began as a place for hospitality women to find industry connections, feel comfortable letting the stresses of the day disappear and enjoy meaningful conversations about facing many of the same business challenges and successes. Sharing the story about its 10-year journey from the first eight members to the current membership of 160 professional women (spanning St. Augustine, Florida to Savannah, Georgia) is best told through photos that highlight each of the past 10 years.



**2013**  
Chocolate Merrymaking at Peterbrooke Chocolate - deliciously educational.



**2014**  
First Anniversary Gala at the Casa Marina Hotel with Laddie Dwyer's "actors."



**2014**  
The Womens Food Alliance continues to grow at Treasury on the Plaza.



**2015**  
Dinner at the World Golf Village Hall of Fame with Chef Deeann Hobbs - starting in the Bob Hope Golf Memorial Gallery.



**2016**  
Alhambra Dinner Theatre Party seeing "Sister Act" with the cast.



**2016**  
First Coast Tech College Culinary Students - Dinner with students learning their skills.



**2017**  
EXPO at Dana Stallings' Jax Kitchen featuring 30 members' culinary businesses.



**2017**  
Christmas at TPC Sawgrass



**2018**  
11 finalists in the 1st Annual Kids Cookie Contest "Why I Like to Bake for my Family."



**2018**  
21 Graduates in WFA's Food Judges Symposium - the History, Ethics & Protocol of Judging Food Competitions!



**2019**  
Jax Cooking Studio Hands-On Cooking Class - lots of fun and laughter!



**2020**  
The Inaugural Golden Pineapple Award Dinner, honoring 12 hospitality leaders.





**Womens Food Alliance**

# Cheers to 10 Years!



**2021**

The 2nd Golden Pineapple Award Dinner recognizes 10 hospitality leaders.

**2022**

International Diner - Grazing and Chef Tasting at The Barn at Palm Valley.



Marie Hope



Rosaria Cammarata



Shelli McInnis



Sherry Stoppelbein



Annett Schultz



**2021**

WFA's Retreat on St. Simons Island – Lighthouse Trolley & Benny's Red Barn.



**2022**

Fun at the Farm - dinner and line dancing at Kelly Farms.



**2023** Women's Food Alliance expansion into Coastal Georgia!



Rebekah Lingenfelter (Savannah, GA)



Barbara Harris (St. Marys, GA)



Donna MacPherson (St. Simons Island, GA)



**2023**

Remembering When - Cookbook Exchange Tribute to Cooking in the 1950's.

The hospitality/food/event industry throughout Florida and Georgia continues to explode with talent, creativity, and passion. The knowledge, hard work, respect, and fellowship that we share leads us to believe that more women in the industry will be joining us in the coming year. Their contributions are all unique; it's an exciting journey to see, understand and celebrate their successes. Our themed events each month showcase our incredible members throughout our expanding region ~ giving everyone a chance to grow, find their place and make friends!



# Business Weekly

For MORE business news, go to [facebook.com/ThePVRecorder](https://facebook.com/ThePVRecorder)

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 21, 2023 · PAGE 31

[www.PonteVedraRecorder.com](https://www.PonteVedraRecorder.com)

## Taking charcuterie boards to the next level

*Business strives to make any party theme come to life*

**By Anthony Richards**

It has only been about six months, but Amanda Medford has begun to come into her own as a local business owner with Amanda's Char-cutie Boards.

She had been showing her creative side by making charcuterie boards for family and friends for two years prior to taking the leap into starting her business.

"It was a fun artform for me to explore at first, but then I did a huge event for a friend, and it seemed like everyone there was coming up to me asking if I had my own business and if they could give me a

call for their event," Medford chuckled.

Being challenged is something that she really enjoys, and she has been up for just about any type of party or ideas that someone throws out there.

"I pride myself in being able to do pretty much any event or theme and I've done my share in just the last six months," Medford said. "I just recently did a Grinch-Christmas theme."

The strange thing is that Medford has never really considered herself to be an extremely artistic type growing up, but one day she found that interior design was what she wanted to pursue as a career.

Although at first glance charcuterie boards seem far from the world of interior design, she has found many similarities, especially when it comes to the design aspects of a project.



Contributed photo

**Amanda Medford had been making charcuterie boards for her family and friends two years before starting the business about six months ago.**

"Instead of a room, you are creating on a board, but you're still able to capture

the magic of turning something from nothing and a blank canvas into something memorable," Medford said. "You're filling that space."

Medford has high hopes for her business, and she continues to want to expand, but she also knows that she does not want to reach the point where she grows too big.

For her, the personal touch that she establishes with her clients by meeting with them beforehand to get an idea of what they are looking for from their charcuterie boards to match their event means everything.

According to Medford, she wants to have a hands-on presence with each project, because she wants the clients to know that she cares as much about the

**CHARCUTERIE** continues on **Page 33**

*Happy Holidays*

*With the holidays approaching, our thoughts turn gratefully to those who have made our success possible.*

*Thank you for a great year!  
Wishing you the happiest of holidays!*

**FROM ALL OF US AT PONTE VEDRA CLUB REALTY**





Contributed photos

NEFAR President Diana Galavis (left front) joins other NEFAR members in packing meals during the NEFAR/Hunger Fight Pack-a-Thon on Dec. 7.



NEFAR President-elect Rory Dubin (left front) joins other members of NEFAR's Global Business Council in packing meals during the NEFAR/Hunger Fight Pack-a-Thon Dec. 7 at the Ramallah American Club in Jacksonville.

# Realtors donate \$370,000 to local charities in 2023

More than 200 Realtors converged at the Ramallah American Club with the goal of packing 75,000 meals for disadvantaged children during the Northeast Florida Association of Realtors annual Hunger Fight Pack-a-Thon on Dec. 7. Within three hours, the Realtors prepared 76,126 meals, surpassing their goal.

The event was sponsored by the NEFAR Charitable Foundation, which donated \$33,000 to cover the cost of the food supplies as well as 2,640 books for underserved preschoolers in the region. The food and book combination supported Hunger Fights' "Food for their bellies, books for their brains" program. Also, to aid in Hunger Fight's distribution of food throughout the region, NEFAR donated two box trucks worth more than \$100,000 to the nonprofit in 2022.

"NEFAR was proud to provide more than 200 volunteers for the packing event with Hunger Fight," said 2023 NEFAR President Diana Galavis. "Realtors to-

gether with real estate industry affiliates joined to pack 76,126 meals for children and families in Northeast Florida. Hunger Fight is an amazing organization, and NEFAR is proud to partner with them again to provide children and families access to food to end hunger and provide those in need with tools for success."

The NEFAR/Hunger Fight Pack-a-Thon capped what has been a very charitable year for the Realtors Association in Northeast Florida. Including Hunger Fight, NEFAR's Charitable Foundation, which is funded by gifts from the 12,000-strong NEFAR membership, has donated \$370,568 to nonprofits and charitable projects on the First Coast.

The following is a list of donations given by the NEFAR Charitable Foundation this year.

- \$100,000 to the National Association of Realtors' Realtor Relief Fund to assist real estate professionals and people within their communities when natural disasters

strike.

- \$100,000 to the Florida Realtors Disaster Relief Fund to assist real estate professionals and members of the community in the wake of Hurricane Nicole

- \$17,568 to the Marine Science Center at the University of North Florida to help create a "NEFAR" oyster bar in the St. Johns River.

- \$10,000 to the St. Johns Housing Partnership to provide painting and flooring for its veterans' project Patriot Place

- \$15,000 as the presenting sponsor of the Best Buddies Champion of the Year North Florida Gala. Three NEFAR Realtors served as champions to raise money for Best Buddies this year.

- \$15,000 to K9s for Warriors in Ponte Vedra

- \$15,000 to Morning Star School

- \$15,000 to Lutheran Social Services

- \$15,000 to the Jewish Community Alliance

- \$15,000 to be a sponsor at the gala

supporting the MaliVai Washington Youth Foundation. Former professional tennis player MaliVai Washington is a Realtor and longtime member of NEFAR.

- \$10,000 gift to MaliVai Washington for his youth foundation as a match to the National Association of Realtors prize of \$10,000 for winning the national Good Neighbor Award.

- \$10,000 to the Coastal Conservation Association as a sponsor for its annual banquet that supports the St. Johns River and its aquatic environment.

"Realtors have the reputation of being very generous with their time, talent and treasure when it comes to the Northeast Florida community," said Galavis. "Nearly every member of NEFAR supports one of the various nonprofits within our region, either through individual giving or through donations to the NEFAR Charitable Foundation. These donations are an expression of appreciation from our association to the community that we love."



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The business recently did a Grinch-themed Christmas event.

Contributed photos

Amanda's Char-cutie Boards seeks to take charcuterie boards to the next level with its layouts.

# Charcuterie

Continued from 31

result as they do.

“Every time I do an event I still get anxious like I did before my first one,” Medford said. “It’s not that I’m nervous, but I just want to make sure I do the best job possible to carry out their vision. I carry a lot of pride with it.”

The scale of the project has a lot to do with how much time Medford needs to

accomplish it, as larger projects require a lot more time to gather the food items ahead of time and come up with an arrangement that works.

“I’ve had people call me before with as short notice as a few days before their event, but that was also a small amount of people attending,” Medford said.

Medford primarily has done events in Jacksonville and St. Augustine, but she is always looking to venture out into other areas of the First Coast as well in the future.

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# In the Arts



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THURSDAY, DECEMBER 21, 2023 · PAGE 34 www.PonteVedraRecorder.com

## Author to speak Jan. 6

Everyone has a treasure chest of life experiences, and award-winning author Kim Bradley will demonstrate how to turn them into short stories that resonate with readers. Bradley will explain the process when the Ponte Vedra Writers group meets at 2 p.m. Jan. 6 at the Ponte Vedra Beach Branch Library.



Kim Bradley

Orleans. Her short-story collection, "Spillway" (Stephen F Austin University Press) is a 2022 Florida Book Award Silver Medalist. Her short fiction has appeared in Southern Humanities Review, Real South Magazine, Bayou, Southern Indiana Review, The Louisville Review,

Natural Bridge and others. She is an associate professor of English at Flagler College in St. Augustine.

The Ponte Vedra Writers group is part of the Florida Writers Association, a statewide membership organization dedicated to the support of both aspiring and published writers in any genre.

The Jan. 6 meeting is free and open to members and non-members alike. For information on FWA, go to [floridawriters.org](http://floridawriters.org).

In her presentation, "Found Fiction," Bradley talks about what writers already have in their cupboards — memories that haunt us, and evocative settings we know and love. Using generative exercises and list-making, she'll explain how she uses Found Fiction in her own writing.

Bradley grew up in Monroeville, Alabama, and studied journalism at Auburn University. She has an MFA in creative writing from the University of New

## Lumen Repertory Theatre announces its 2024 season

Lumen Repertory Theatre has announced its lineup for the 2024 season, curating performances designed to provoke thought, evoke emotion and entertain.

- The first production of the season, running Feb. 16 through March 3, is "A Small Fire" by Obie Award Winner Adam Bock. This poignant drama highlights the resilience of human connection in the face of adversity. Described as a theatrical combo plate, the play offers a mix of raucous humor and unexpected emotional depth.

- Summer heats up with "Slow Burn," a double-bill of Edward Albee's iconic plays "The American Dream" and "Zoo Story," running July 12 through 28. These pioneering plays from the pivotal American playwright delve into societal norms, human relationships and existential dilemmas. The actors will be double cast, adding a fresh dynamic to the stage.

- "Stew," written by emerging playwright Zora Howard, was named a 2021 Pulitzer Prize for Drama Finalist. This endearing and evocative play centered around Black womanhood, familial connections and the impacts of generational trauma is described as a stirring exploration of the ingredients that make people who they are. Shows will run Oct. 11 through 26.

- Additionally, Lumen Repertory Theatre is bringing back an inaugural season crowd pleaser. "ShakesBeer: A Brewery Tour" will be popping up at various breweries throughout Northeast Florida

between April 19 and Nov. 16. This immersive experience merges the richness of Shakespeare's prose with improv, interactive theater and craft beer.

New to this year, a season subscription is being offered. It offers priority access to the three mainstage shows of 2024 and a complimentary ticket to the chosen "ShakesBeer: A Brewery Tour" tour stop.


"In our inaugural season, we illuminated some of the possibilities for world-class, professional theater here on the First Coast," said Lumen Repertory Theatre Artistic Director Brian Niece. "For season 2024, we are unflinchingly raising the heat on a bold theme that is sure to delight, provoke and open the door to even more possibilities for artists and audiences alike."

Tickets and season subscriptions are on sale now and can be purchased at [lumenrep.org](http://lumenrep.org). Single tickets (\$45; \$20 for students with valid ID) will be made available on Lumen Repertory Theatre's website at least six weeks prior to the performance dates outlined above. Locations will be announced in 2024.

Lumen Repertory Theatre is Northeast Florida's only Equity-affiliated repertory theater company. Illuminating empty spaces with possibilities through bold, professional productions, Lumen Repertory Theatre is committed to collaborating with established professional artists and technicians, cultivating emerging professional talent and creating a sustainable vision for the region's culture.

## FIRST COAST OPERA

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Sunday, December 31 Champagne Performance  
Lewis Auditorium, St. Augustine




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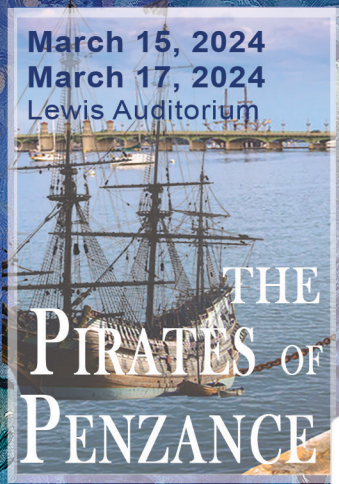
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## Symphony concert to be broadcast

The public is invited to enjoy a special recording of the Jacksonville Symphony's Holiday Pops performance at home on Sunday and Monday, Dec. 24 and 25. It will be broadcast via FM radio at 7

p.m. Dec. 24 on WJCT (89.9). A television broadcast will be 6 a.m. Dec. 25 on WTLV (channel 12) and

CONCERT continues on Page 35



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First Coast Opera



Photos by Shaun Ryan



First Coast Cultural Center President and CEO Donna Guzzo, left, and longtime member and master artist Ellen Diamond at the organization's official opening.



Longtime First Coast Cultural Center member and artist Janet Wilson spent \$20,000 of her own money creating the gift shop at the new facility.

## Center

Continued from 1

The sale closed on Aug. 23, with a purchase price of \$2.2 million. Those funds comprise the lion's share of the \$3.7 million capital campaign launched in 2018 just as Guzzo was taking over the reins of the organization. However, the desire to move into such a facility goes back nearly to the origins of the center.

"A dream has been fulfilled," said longtime member and acclaimed artist Ellen Diamond as she explored the new, second-floor gallery space. "For me, it's been a 25-year dream."

The center was established in 1996. It's original home, a former U.S. Post Office, was located at 50 Executive Way. As one of the early members said Thursday, it was apparent from the start that the building was not going to be large enough to accommodate all that the center wanted to do.

Nevertheless, The Cultural Center at Ponte Vedra Beach, as it was called,

provided numerous art programs, primarily classes and workshops for adults and children, as well as camps for the latter.

Even as the search continued for a larger building, something occurred that perhaps accelerated the process: the COVID-19 pandemic. The center had to close for four months.

According to Guzzo, the outbreak jeopardized all of the center's classes and most of its revenue. Diamond began to offer her painting class online, which helped.

"The online classes really saved us," Guzzo told those assembled Thursday.

Ironically, the online presence even brought Diamond students from beyond the boundaries of the First Coast.

At the same time, in 2020, the center sold its Executive Way building, which was in fact purchased and renovated by Dr. Tim Conway, president of The Morris Center and former Cultural Center board

member.

"Selling that building helped us get through the pandemic," Guzzo said.

The center took up residence at 3972 3rd St. South, Jacksonville Beach, where it operated until this week. This may have actually added to the organization's regional exposure, as reflected in its new name, adopted in July 2021: First Coast Cultural Center.

Through it all, the center hasn't missed a step. It has continued to offer its Sound Connections music therapy program for children with disabilities, its Kick StART afterschool visual arts enrichment program, its annual Beaches — A Celebration of the Arts, exhibitions, youth programs, classes and more.

Settling into its new two-story, 6,000-square-foot home is just the beginning. According to Guzzo, the center's most immediate need is \$500,000 to renovate the space, which includes removing

several interior walls and adding stairs.

As it regards programming, the center will expand its offerings beyond visual arts to include music, pottery, culinary arts and other forms of creative expression.

As a way of generating funds, the center is offering naming rights for each of its spaces, two of which have already been claimed. The main gallery is being named for artist Zena Groover for a sum of \$300,000. Former board chair Joseph Bryant purchased naming rights for the foyer for \$50,000.

In speaking with the visitors Thursday, Guzzo demonstrated her characteristic optimism.

"I am so happy to say that the Cultural Center never has been in better shape," she said, "and its future never has been brighter."

For further information, go to [firstcoastculturalcenter.org](http://firstcoastculturalcenter.org).

## Concert


Continued from 34

WJXX (channel 25).

Tim Hankewich is conductor and Ryan Silverman is vocalist for this Holiday Pops concert, which also features the Jacksonville Symphony Chorus and dancers from Douglas Anderson School of the Arts.

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# Sports



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Photos by Anthony Richards



Tyler Cowan of Ponte Vedra drives on Jack Sullivan of Nease during the contest between the two schools on Dec. 15.



Nease's Bryson Utter surveys the court while being guarded tightly by Sam Ritchie of Ponte Vedra.

## Sharks pull away from Panthers in fourth quarter

By Anthony Richards

The first matchup of the Ponte Vedra and Nease rivalry on the hardwood this season went to the Sharks, as they fended off a late rally by the Panthers to win 46-42 on Dec. 15.

It was a close game throughout with both teams seemingly even matched for the majority of the contest, with the Sharks only leading by one, 29-28, heading into the fourth quarter.

However, the Sharks (7-3) came out firing to open the final frame as senior Tyler Cowan scored on back-to-back possessions in the post and just like that the Sharks extended their lead to 33-28.

"For some reason we've usually struggled in the third quarter, so it was really nice to come right out like that and get around the rim and get a few buckets," Cowan said. "That was huge and just what we needed."

The big man had a marvelous game around the basket as he scored 13 points and was a force on the boards all night long, including grabbing some key offensive rebounds down the stretch that allowed the Sharks to keep possession and run more clock.

"Anytime we can win the boards, that means you're keeping possession of the ball, which means more scoring," Cowan said.

Another senior who came up massive for the Sharks was guard Sam Ritchie, who finished with a team-high 14 points, and was red-hot from beyond the arc with four three-pointers on the night.



The Ponte Vedra cheerleaders put on a show for the fans at halftime.

"Once you see one go through, it really gets you going," Ritchie said.

Two of those three pointers helped the Sharks really grab control of the contest during the fourth quarter, the second of which came after Ritchie jumped in front of an intended pass along the sideline at midcourt and then pulled up shortly after and buried a long-range shot.

It was the sixth game this season where the Sharks have held their opponents to less than 50 points, and the Panthers (5-4) had held each of their opponents except one below that mark so far, so Cowan knew going in that the Sharks needed to have a defensive

mindset coming in.

"The main thing was executing on defense, which we were able to do most times, and from their defense leads to offense," Cowan said. "We were able to lock in on defense early on and it just went from there."

Fans from both schools packed the gym on the campus at Ponte Vedra High to watch the action and just walking in it was obvious to everyone involved that it was a different atmosphere than any other regular season game.

"It's a whole different type of energy when you're playing your rivals, especially when you've got friends in the bleachers and on the other team,"



Jack Sullivan contests a shot at the rim by Ponte Vedra's David Sanchez Barrera.

Ritchie said. "It brings out an entirely different type of competitiveness. The most fun thing in sports is playing against your rivals."

The Panthers were led by senior point guard Bryson Utter, who was a focal point of the offensive sets, and the Panthers appeared at their best with the ball in his hands whether that ends in him getting teammates involved.

Utter finished with a game-high 17 points, while fellow senior center Jack Sullivan had 12 points and several blocked shots on the night as he did his part to protect the rim on defense.





Photo courtesy of TPC Sawgrass

Dye's Valley Course at TPC Sawgrass hosted the PGA TOUR Q-School Final on Dec. 16-18.

# Valley Course still holds its own after more than three decades

By Anthony Richards

The 2023 PGA TOUR Q-School Final was held at Dye's Valley Course at TPC Sawgrass over the weekend and five players earned qualification onto the PGA TOUR for the 2024 season.

In many ways, the event was one of the most important for so many golfers looking to make a name for themselves and get their chance to compete at the top level of the sport.

It was not the first time the Valley Course had hosted a marquee event such as the Q-School Final, as it has also been home to PGA TOUR Champions tournaments, as well as other past qualifiers over the years.

The course was constructed in 1987 adjacent to the THE PLAYERS Stadium Course and although it may not have the worldwide recognition and a famous hole

like the No. 17 Island Green, it has stood the test of time and continues to test the best golfers more than three decades later.

"The thought behind the golf course when we built it was for it to be a sister course to TPC Sawgrass and the Stadium Course," said Bobby Weed, who teamed up with Pete Dye to create the course. "I'm pleased to say that I think we've accomplished that, and it complements it very well."

In fact, over the years, Weed has found many people him that they made the trip to TPC Sawgrass for the opportunity to play the Stadium Course, but they also played the Valley Course and end up favoring that for its style of play even more.

"The hook is the Stadium Course, but they end up often choosing to play the Valley Course twice while they're here," Weed said.

Finding the right mix for both profes-

sional and hobby golfers is the challenge for so many golf courses nowadays.

That becomes even more of a challenge as the average distances off the tee continue to grow for all golfers with the continued advancement in golf club technology and player conditioning.

"You were probably looking at some of the longest players in the game today, because these young guys really love to let it fly and test what all a course has to offer," Weed said.

According to Weed, there are certain ways the Valley Course was adapted in its preparation of the Q-School Final, including narrowing the fairways and letting the rough grow a little longer to increase the skill level required for professional players.

"I'm always amazed at where these guys are hitting the fairways, but it is something that we've seen coming for

some time now and it didn't happen overnight," Weed said. "Every 10 years we've been extending our landing area zones (in the fairway). I even have some comics from the 1920s where someone put wheels under bunkers, so it would make them easier to move every so often."

However, despite the growing challenges, Weed is not one that holds onto the past ways and instead believes that the adaptations to the style of play and therefore the courses it is played on, is an interesting opportunity to put a designer's creativity to the test.

"Without a doubt, it's a big challenge for us," Weed said. "It's an exciting time for us as we move forward, because we can be part of the solution."

Harrison Endycott won the Q-School Final by finishing the 72-hole event at 15-under and earning exempt status on the 2024 PGA Tour season.

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|-----------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| 1         | 2  | 3  | 4  |    | 5  | 6  | 7  | 8  | 9  |    | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 |
| 14        |    |    |    |    | 15 |    |    |    |    |    | 16 |    |    |    |
| 17        |    |    |    |    | 18 |    |    |    |    |    | 19 |    |    |    |
| 20        |    |    |    | 21 |    | 22 |    |    |    | 23 |    |    |    |    |
|           |    |    | 24 |    | 25 |    |    |    | 26 |    |    |    |    |    |
| 27        | 28 | 29 |    | 30 |    |    |    | 31 |    |    | 32 | 33 | 34 |    |
| 35        |    |    | 36 |    |    | 37 |    |    |    | 38 |    |    |    |    |
| 39        |    |    |    |    | 40 |    |    |    | 41 |    |    |    |    |    |
| 42        |    |    |    |    | 43 |    |    | 44 |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| 45        |    |    |    | 46 |    |    | 47 |    |    |    | 48 |    |    |    |
|           |    |    | 49 |    |    |    | 50 |    |    |    | 51 |    |    |    |
| 52        | 53 | 54 |    |    |    | 55 |    |    |    | 56 |    | 57 | 58 | 59 |
| 60        |    |    |    |    | 61 |    |    |    | 62 |    | 63 |    |    |    |
| 64        |    |    |    |    | 65 |    |    |    |    |    | 66 |    |    |    |
| 67        |    |    |    |    | 68 |    |    |    |    |    | 69 |    |    |    |

**ACROSS**

- Droops
- Subatomic particle
- Not in danger
- Nursemaid
- Black band worn in mourning
- Long song in opera
- Edible seed of a Philippine tree
- Chicago political family
- Pursues pleasure from one place to another
- Appetizer
- Hill (Celtic)
- Simple shoe
- Songs to one you love
- Secret activities
- Upset
- Popular hot drink
- Body art (slang)
- Fired
- Blood relation
- Identical
- Porticos
- Partner to cheese
- Type of sword
- Enough (archaic)
- Surface layer of ground
- Cotton fabric woven like satin
- Choose for a post
- Father
- Tell on
- Indian title of respect
- Fonts
- Fencing sword
- Mock
- Vaccine developer
- Atmosphere surrounding a person or place
- Marten with a short tail
- Chinese temple
- Invests in little enterprises
- Popular cut of meat
- Charity
- Iron-containing compound
- River in Northern Europe
- One point east of southeast

- Genus of fish related to gars
- Impudent behavior
- Adherents to Islam
- They come after A
- Spoke
- Room to receive guests
- About opera
- End-blown flute
- Heroic tales
- Member of a Semitic people
- Dog's name
- Opposite of west
- Political divisions in ancient Greece
- Ocean
- Cool!
- Young woman about to enter society
- One from central Caucasus
- Indian city
- A way to serve ice cream
- Emaciation
- Escort aircraft carrier

- Italian city
- Mythical settler of Kansas
- Unhappy
- High schoolers' test
- Measured in pace
- Satisfies
- Gullible person
- Enclosed space
- Substance used to color something
- Shirt type
- Discover by investigation
- \_\_\_-Castell, makers of pens
- Semitic Sun god
- Grads wear one
- French river
- Part of a cap
- Digestive fluid
- Metrical foot
- Body part
- Very fast airplane
- Supplement with difficulty

**SUDOKU**

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

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**

- Exhausts

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