

THE RECORDER

Celebrating 55 Years



INSIDE



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

Thursday, January 11, 2024

PonteVedraRecorder.com

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School takes novel approach

By Shaun Ryan

Students enrolled in a new private school in Nocatee are on a hero's journey.

And like the central figures following the path described in Joseph Campbell's iconic work, "The Hero With a Thousand Faces," these children will face and overcome challenges, occasionally failing but always getting back up and learning from their experiences.

It's part of the overarching philosophy behind Acton Academy Ponte Vedra, which opened in September at the link.

The young heroes — as they are termed — fight monsters, albeit of the figurative variety.

"They fight the monster of victim-

SCHOOL continues on **Page 15**



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

Nocatee Town Center expansion set to take shape in 2024

By Anthony Richards

There are several new businesses in the works to open in the Nocatee Town Center in 2024 that will give the community a variety of new options to choose from.

The PARC Group and Skinner Bros. Realty announced that The Social Society will be opening in the next phase of the Nocatee Town Center in late 2024.

The Social Society will be the first brick-and-mortar shop for Little Miss Party, one of New York City's top party experts.

The goal of the store is to be a fun and creative space where people can find all the supplies needed to throw whatever fabulous party they are planning, which will include a balloon bar with delivery options, trendy gift ideas and entertainment pieces.

Construction on the store is scheduled to begin during the spring of 2024.

"As a Nocatee resident myself, I am thrilled to be fulfilling my dream of opening a party shop in the vibrant Nocatee community where people love to celebrate and party," said Seri Kertzner, owner of



Photo by Susan Griffin

Construction is underway on the next phase of the Nocatee Town Center.

The Social Society. "So much fun is to be had. We cannot wait to help you with your next celebration."

The Social Society is just part of the new retail expansion going on at the Nocatee Town Center, which once completed will

be anchored by The Chophouse at Nocatee, which is a high-end steakhouse that features a rooftop bar that is set to open in the next year as well.

EXPANSION continues on **Page 18**

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Send us your news

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



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The link announces January schedule for events and classes

It's a new year, but the link is bringing the same fun to residents of Ponte Vedra. Take a look at their event and class schedule for January.

Kids Night Out

Jan. 13 and 27, 5:30 to 9:30 p.m.

Kids love playing, dancing and creating during this fun event. 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 nonmember prices are available. Remember, Kids Night Out equals Parents Night Out.

Teen Club

Jan. 16, 24 and 30, 7 to 9 p.m.

Are you a local teen looking for a fun and engaging hangout spot? Look no further! the link is excited to invite you to its exclusive Teen Club Night. It's the perfect place to meet new friends, enjoy a variety of activities, from games to movie nights, charity events and much more. These Tuesday meetings are free to attend and you can register at app.thelink.zone.

Intro to Podcasting

Jan. 21, 1-3 p.m.

Interested in learning about podcasting? Look no further than this informative class on the essentials of podcasting, taught by Tiffany Mason of VirtuallyYou. By the end of this class, students will have a basic understanding of podcasting, including its components, the process of creating a podcast and practical tips for producing engaging content. This Intro class is open to both members and non-members alike. Register at app.thelink.zone.

CPR, AED & First Aid Course

Jan. 24, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Enhance your life-saving skills with this comprehensive on-site CPR AED & First Aid training. The course covers essential topics, provides necessary student supplies, and awards a two-year certification upon successful completion. Elevate your readiness and empower yourself to respond effectively in

emergency situations. For all levels of expertise. Register at app.thelink.zone.

Texas Hold'em: The Beginner's Guide

This is a six-week course.

Thursdays, Jan. 25 to Feb. 29, 7:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Join experienced poker player Brandon Clark for this beginner's Texas Hold'em course. This course will go over the essential strategies, terminology of poker, navigating

THE LINK continues on Page 3

SAFETY CLASSES
at the link

FULL CPR AED & FIRST AID CLASS
Saturday, January 27
9 am - 1 pm
Enhance your life-saving skills with this comprehensive on-site CPR AED & First Aid training.

BABYSITTING & CHILD SAFETY COURSE
Saturday, February 10
10 am - 2 pm
Students will learn how to supervise children and infants, perform basic child care-skills, identify child safety hazards and more.

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The link

Continued from 2

the betting rounds and more. This course is for beginners age 18 and older. You can read a rundown of the six-week course and reserve your spot at app.thelink.zone.

PVA & PIA PTO Open House

Jan. 29, 6 to 8 p.m.

This informative open house is for parents and families of Palm Valley Academy and Pine Island Academy to get to know all that the link offers. 10% of the link membership fees from PIA and PVA families go toward supporting their parent teacher organizations. No RSVP required to attend.



File photo

Mommy and Me Classes

Weekly classes, Tuesdays and Fridays

These weekly classes are designed for parents and their precious little ones to get fit together, learn and play. Classes include fit class, Music and Me and yoga. Classes cater to ages 1 month to 5 years old. See specific class details at app.thelink.zone

Weekly Fitness Classes

Monday, Tuesday and Thursday through Saturday

The link is home to a robust fitness program with classes for all ages and fitness levels. Take part in yoga/pilates, strength training, kids' yoga and more. Classes are free for members, and nonmembers can pay a small drop-in fee for classes. See all class details and register at app.thelink.zone

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OBITUARIES



Colonel (Ret.) Joseph L. Phinney

Colonel (Ret.) Joseph L. Phinney, 93, passed away peacefully on December 23, 2023, in Ponte Vedra Beach, FL after a brief illness. He was born on September 4, 1930, in West Roxbury, Massachusetts to Joseph A. and Mary Phinney, the first of four children.

Joseph grew up in West Roxbury and graduated from Boston College High School. Following two years at Boston College he was commissioned in the United States Air Force Officer Training School in 1951 and served for 27 years as a fighter pilot. Highlights of his military duty included his service as commander of the 5th Fighter Interceptor Squadron in Minot, ND and the Deputy Commander of the Air Defense Weapons Center at Tyndall AFB, FL. Upon retiring

from the Air Force, Joseph embarked on a career with Hughes Aircraft Company, International Operations, where he was based in Seoul, Korea. He returned to Los Angeles where he was Director of Asia Pacific and Latin America for Hughes. He retired from Hughes in 1992 and made his way back east to his permanent home in Ponte Vedra Beach, FL. Joseph loved a great story and was a great storyteller. He enjoyed playing golf at Sawgrass Country Club and serving as a Eucharistic Minister at Our Lady Star of the Sea Catholic Church. More than anything he enjoyed spending time with his family.

Joseph has left us with fond memories as a loving husband, father, grandfather, and warm-hearted friend. Surviving is loving wife of 69 years, Anne Lowry Phinney; and four children, Michael of Los Angeles, CA, Kevin of Ponte Vedra Beach, FL,

Joanne Parcels (Brad) of Atlanta, GA and Thomas (Melissa) of Charlotte, NC; brother Richard (Eileen) of Weymouth, MA, sister-in-law Elizabeth Phinney of Hingham, MA and grandchildren, Erin, Whitney (deceased) and Victoria. He is also survived by many nieces and nephews. He was predeceased by parents, his brother John and sister Eleanor Garten.

A Funeral Mass will be celebrated at Our Lady Star of the Sea Catholic Church, Ponte Vedra Beach, FL on February 6, 2024, at 2:00 followed by a reception at Sawgrass Country Club. Please visit his online Tribute at www.quinn-shalz.com.

Arrangements by



DEATH NOTICES

Eris V. Brazee

Eris V. Brazee, 99, of Jacksonville, Florida, died Dec. 21, 2023. Arrangements by Quinn-Shalz Family Funeral Home & Cremation Centre. www.quinn-shalz.com. 904-249-1100

Lorelei Suzanne Forrest-Vega

Lorelei Suzanne Forrest-Vega, 68, of Jacksonville Beach, Florida, died Jan. 6, 2024. Arrangements by Quinn-Shalz Family Funeral Home & Cremation Centre. www.quinn-shalz.com. 904-249-1100

Randolph A. Jones, Jr.

Randolph A. Jones, Jr., 85, of Atlantic Beach, Florida, died Jan. 3, 2024. Arrangements by Quinn-Shalz Family Funeral Home & Cremation Centre. www.quinn-shalz.com. 904-249-1100

Lillian Ruth Jenkins

Lillian Ruth Jenkins, 93, of Ponte Vedra, Florida, died Jan. 4, 2024. Arrangements by Quinn-Shalz Family Funeral Home & Cremation Centre. www.quinn-shalz.com. 904-249-1100



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David Jordan

David "Dave" Jordan, 75, of Ponte Vedra, Florida, died Jan. 2, 2024. Ponte Vedra Valley Funeral Home, Cremation Center & Cemetery - 904-285-1130 - www.pontevedravalley.com

Roger C. Nichols

Roger C. Nichols, 86, of Jacksonville, Florida, died Dec. 14, 2023. Ponte Vedra Valley Funeral Home, Cremation Center & Cemetery - 904-285-1130 - www.pontevedravalley.com

Alejandro M. Orenge

Alejandro M. Orenge, 72, of Jacksonville, Florida, died Dec. 30, 2023. Arrangements by Quinn-Shalz Family Funeral Home & Cremation Centre. www.quinn-shalz.com. 904-249-1100

Randolph A. Patton III

Randolph A. Patton III, 79, of Jacksonville Beach, Florida, died Dec. 30, 2023. Arrangements by Quinn-Shalz Family Funeral Home & Cremation Centre. www.quinn-shalz.com. 904-249-1100



MSD discusses 'no parking' ordinance on San Juan Drive

By Anthony Richards

The Ponte Vedra Municipal Service District continues to consider the creation of a "no parking" ordinance along San Juan Drive and several residents attended the Jan. 8 meeting interested in the proposal.

The majority of those in attendance were in favor of having such an ordinance in place, many of whom live along the roadway and stated how dangerous it is when people park on the road.

"Every day I walk my dog I feel like I'm putting my life in my hands," resident Barbara Roberts said.

The MSD passed a "no parking" ordinance on Ponte Vedra Boulevard in 2021, and according to MSD trustee Brad Wester, that gives a template to use this time around.

"I think it's (Ponte Vedra Boulevard ordinance) worked perfectly," Wester said. "It takes a couple of years for that learned behavior to go away, but this is a start."

He also believes that San Juan Drive



Photo by Anthony Richards

Several local residents came out to hear the discussion of a possible "no parking" ordinance during the Ponte Vedra Municipal Service District's Jan. 8 meeting.

ORDINANCE continues on Page 7

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Brian Gainor moved to the First Coast with his family in 2020, and it did not take him long to realize the unique and exciting sports scene the area has to offer. With decades of experience in the sports world he is following his dream and recently began Gainor Sports, a sports marketing and advisory practice, located in Ponte Vedra.

Brian Gainor

As told to Anthony Richards

Tell us a little about yourself and your background.

My family and I made the move to the First Coast in 2020, leaving behind Chicago to be closer to our relatives who had relocated from Minnesota to work at the Mayo Clinic.

Our decision was primarily driven by the desire to embrace the pickleball lifestyle. Being a family of four, our family includes our wonderful children, Clara (12) and Garrett (10).

Laura, my wife, is the founder of the world's first pickleball marketing agency, Vossberg Gainor, and the creative force behind a pickleball lifestyle brand, Pickleball in the Sun. The vibrant community of Nocatee has proven to be an ideal and welcoming home for all of us.

I was raised in Miami and attended the University of Florida as a business major.

My journey in the sports industry began as a student assistant in the UF Athletics Department my freshman year, where I enjoyed so many incredible experiences working basketball and football games at The Swamp.

After graduation, I moved to Germany to work for NFL Europe. Upon returning to the U.S., I earned my master's degrees at Ohio University and met my wife in Charlotte.

We've cherished experiences living in Milwaukee and Chicago before finding our new favorite home in Ponte Vedra.

What led to the creation of the recently launched Gainor Sports?

With a long-standing goal and vision of establishing my own sports marketing and advisory practice, I've been fortunate to accumulate over 20 years of experience working with 200-plus professional sports teams, leagues, brands (sponsors) and organizations worldwide.

In early 2023, I co-founded a Jacksonville Sports & Entertainment Networking Group, aiming to unite and raise the profile of our sports and entertainment community in the region.

Through this, I realized over the past year that now is the perfect time to launch Gainor Sports.

What services will Gainor Sports offer?

Gainor Sports will specialize in helping teams, leagues, brands and organizations here in Florida and around the world develop new creative ways to generate revenue, grow their fanbases and create positive impact.

Locally, I am excited to play a key role in helping to continue to grow and elevate the Jacksonville sports and entertainment community and help leaders in the area create positive impact in our community and new, best-in-class fan experiences.

Additionally, I aim to serve as a resource for companies sponsoring local teams and events, helping them optimize their investments and create positive community impact.

What are your future goals and objectives for the business?

My vision for Gainor Sports is to be recognized as a leading sports marketing and consulting agency globally, collaborating with prominent organizations locally, nationally and internationally. I'm also eager to contribute to the continued growth of the First Coast region.



Contributed photo

Brian Gainor has accumulated more than 20 years of experience working with 200-plus professional sports teams, leagues, brands (sponsors) and organizations worldwide.

What are the most rewarding parts about your job?

The most gratifying aspect of my job has been the opportunity to travel and work with diverse organizations worldwide, including the Green Bay Packers, Chelsea FC, Cirque du Soleil, SoFi Stadium, Cricket Australia, Netball New Zealand and more.

What are some of the aspects of the industry that are more challenging that you have to account for?

The sports and entertainment industry's constant evolution presents challenges as teams and leagues strive to grow, adapt and generate greater impact and revenues.

However, navigating these challenges is what makes the industry exciting, given its powerful role in uniting and empowering communities.

How would you describe the sports culture of the First Coast area and how do you see it looking in the future?

The sports and entertainment industry in Florida has exploded over the past 15 years and Jacksonville has such an incredible future and growth trajectory ahead.

With potential developments like a new Jacksonville Jaguars stadium and two professional soccer teams planning stadiums, the future is exciting.

High-profile college sports, a growing music scene and dedicated owners in minor league sports contribute to the area's vibrant sports culture.

Furthermore, with Laura and I both being entrepreneurs, we are enthusiastic about identifying unique opportunities for our agencies to collaborate, especially given the contin-

ued amazing growth and popularity of pickleball.

By uniting efforts, we aim to introduce the local community to the exciting developments in pickleball and establish meaningful collaborations with professional sports leagues and teams.

The First Coast region features an incredible amount of premier and diverse destinations and events like The Yards, championship golf, tennis, state-of-the-art pickleball facilities and more, and we are excited to support and showcase these exceptional properties in our community.

What do you enjoy most about living in the North Florida area?

We love the lifestyle here in Ponte Vedra – there's no better place to raise a family!

We also love being in driving distance to take the kids to Gators games and have met so many incredible families and people who have also moved here in recent years who help make this such a wonderful, unique community.

What do you and your family like to do in your free time?

In our free time, we love enjoying outdoor activities with family and friends, such as kayaking, playing pickleball, attending our kids' youth sports activities at Grace Conservatory of Dance and Jacksonville FC, golf carting around Nocatee and exploring St. Augustine on weekends.

The First Coast offers easy access to numerous incredible travel destinations, providing exciting opportunities for our family to explore Florida and beyond.

Ordinance

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has the traffic numbers where an ordinance could also really make a difference.

However, after discussion it was agreed to hold a vote on proceeding with a possible ordinance until next meeting since the agenda specifically stated the “no parking” ordinance would be considered from Solana Road to North Pablo Road, but Wester suggested that the ordinance be extended to Ponte Vedra Boulevard.

Trustee Mickey White was all for the extension but asked if they should push back the vote to the next meeting because people may have read the specifics of the agenda and not come out to the meeting as a result.

MSD attorney Wayne Flowers agreed that voting at the next meeting would be a good approach and the board agreed to vote on it at the Feb. 12 meeting.

If the proposed ordinance is approved then it will go through the vetting process with the county, which takes about four to six months, according to Wester.

Another major topic of discussion was the cleanup of Sunset Park, which had first been introduced at the previous meeting in December.

Flowers found documentation of an agreement between the county and the MSD from years ago concerning the park, but the agreement was not signed.

According to Flowers, the county owns the park located on a piece of property off State Road A1A that stretches to the neighborhood behind, but the agreement states that the MSD would maintain the upkeep of the park, which the board agreed they will do.

Residents that live nearby mow and maintain the front of the lot and have done so for years and said they would be happy to continue doing it because it has become a real asset for the neighbor-

hood as many children can often be seen out there running around and playing baseball.

However, trustee Kitty Switkes had brought it up initially because she was unaware of the back lot of the property until residents began talking to her about how much it had grown up over the years.

The MSD board voted unanimously to approve Switkes’ request to accept a proposed bid from Tree Masters for \$1,500 to Bush Hog and mow the back lot and remove a dead pine tree that sits in the middle of it and haul off any debris.

“Some of the other bids I got were for \$2,100, \$2,600 and \$1,000, but all those were just for Bush Hogging and they did not include the removal of the tree,” Switkes said.

In other news from the meeting, Wester informed the board that upgrades and repairs have been planned for all 14 beach access points in the MSD, and he is

continuing to work with St. Johns County officials in the drafting of the initial plan for the proposed sidewalk project along San Juan Drive.

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The AMI Kids Jacksonville chair won the Crowd Favorite Display at James Weldon Johnson Park.



The Publix chair won the Best of Show Beaches Display.

Photos courtesy Deck The Chairs

Deck The Chairs announces chair awards

Deck The Chairs (DTC) are beginning the work of taking down displays in two Jacksonville park spaces. DTC organizers expect the popular Jacksonville Beach display to take a week for strike-out while the new Student Display at James Weldon Johnson Park (JWJP) will take three days to remove.

More than 58 lifeguard chairs were decorated by small business and non-profits with 18 chairs decorated by local middle and high school art programs. The popular holiday displays attracted record crowds for the 11th season and successfully showcased more children's programming despite multiple dates impacted by weather.

"We are so proud of the hundreds of students and teachers who participated in the 2023 DTC Chair Decorating Challenge," said DTC Founder and Executive Director Kurtis Loftus. "The Unite With Lights Theme was embraced by all our student artists. Their expressions of unity through creativity and storytelling were inspiring."

Four student awards were distributed between the two displays.

- Judges Award Beaches Display — Fletcher High School

- Crowd Favorite Beaches Display — First Coast Military Homeschoolers
- Judges Award JWJP Display — Bolles School
- Crowd Favorite JWJP Display — AMI Kids Jacksonville

- Jacksonville Beach Deck The Chairs Awards (voted by visitors to the park over three weekends):
- Best of Show Beaches Display — Publix
- Founder's Chair — Expert Glassworks
- Blue Chair — American Legion Post 129
- Yellow Chair — Saint Paul's Catholic School
- Red Chair — City of Jacksonville Beach
- Honorable Mentions — Angel's Construction, Jacksonville Country Day School, Fleet landing, Margaritaville, Make-A-Wish Foundation

Deck The Chairs promotes children's arts and arts education through a nationally recognized holiday display featuring decorated lifeguard chairs. It is free and open to the public. Deck The Chairs, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) Public Charity. For further information, go to deckthechairs.org.





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Best of the Beaches celebrated

In December, The Recorder presented the results of its inaugural Best of the Beaches, featuring readers' favorite businesses, professionals, nonprofits and more in Jacksonville Beach, Atlantic Beach, Neptune Beach and Ponte Vedra Beach. Eligible nominees were located within ZIP codes 32250, 32266, 32233 and 32082.

Between Oct. 6 and Nov. 12, readers nominated their favorites in various categories online, such as: Auto & Transportation, Business, Community, Eat & Drink, Education, Home & Finance, Medical, Professionals and Shopping & Commerce. Between Nov. 13 and Dec. 4, readers voted for their top choices in each category.

More than 8,000 votes were cast in

249 total categories. The votes were counted, and the names of the winners were listed in a special section. The winners will be happy to know that people in their community who rely on their goods and services selected them.

The strong response reveals a community of individuals willing to add their voices to the public conversation and reward those who put forth their best efforts every day.



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GUEST COLUMN

Fix that lower belly pooch

By Samantha Moon

Contributed photo

Ask any woman about her most problematic body issue, and chances are she'll name her lower belly "pooch." It's the annoying bulge that no amount of dieting, crunches or crying seems to be able to fix. Fortunately, when you understand the root causes of your pooch, you can reduce and even eliminate it in a matter of weeks.

What causes the "pooch?"

First, let's talk about what causes a pooch. It can happen at any stage of life, but it's common after having a child and for many women due to normal aging, heredity or weight gain and loss. Pregnancy changes your body in hundreds of ways, and it takes months for most women's bodies to return to their pre-pregnancy form.

Medical experts estimate that up to 60% of women experience abdominal muscle separation to some degree during the first year postpartum and that 33% are dealing with it beyond that. What most women would think was the answer — lots of sit-ups and crunches — actually can make the condition worse.

A pooch might not actually be fat, although the pooch may be covered in fat. It's actually poor displacement of abdominal pressure and core muscle weakness. The bad news is that a pooch may be more than a cosmetic problem; if it's not addressed, it can create medical problems later such as prolapse.

How to fix the pooch

My 4- to 6-week pooch program for women starts with breathing. Most of us have been breathing wrong for years, even decades, without knowing it. That's why many yoga instructors start class with a breathing practice. The correct way to breathe is called 360 breathing.

I help women learn to improve breath-

ing by expanding their entire rib cage during the inhale. Your rib cage should expand outward in all directions as you take in air, just like a balloon does when blown up. This pulls the diaphragm downwards into the abdominal cavity, creating pressure. This pressure helps stretch your deep core and pelvic floor muscles. As you exhale, your rib cage will come back in, and the diaphragm lifts back up, decreasing the pressure and allowing your muscles to return to their resting position. This technique uses the diaphragm muscle to make sure you get the optimal amount of pressure into the abdomen. It also stretches and strengthens the diaphragm, one of the most important of your core muscles.

Once a patient is breathing correctly on a consistent basis, we work on posture. A natural and upright posture maintains a neutral pelvic position and allows you to breathe deeply. It also allows your glutes and deep core muscles to be available for use, especially the transverse abdominis, the muscles that run up and down the sides of your midsection like a girdle. The stronger these muscles become, the tighter your belly will look.

Then, I work on stretching and strengthening the pelvic floor, which is essential to fixing a pooch and maintaining your health over a lifetime. These essential muscles work with the deep abdominal and back muscles and the diaphragm to support the spine and control the pressure inside the abdomen. The deep layer of the pelvic floor provides support for your organs, while the superficial and middle layers help control urine and waste elimination.

I work with patients to learn to contract and release these muscles with an exercise therapists call "lifting the beans and dropping the beans." You lay on your side and imagine that you're picking up a bean with your anus and vagina. You lift it up gently inside of you about 1 cm, then drop it and relax your muscles. I recommend that patients start with three minutes of this two times per day.

The great thing about this exercise is that once you master it, you can do it anywhere and anytime. You can do it while sitting at your desk, standing in

line, watching TV, fixing dinner or washing dishes. It will become second nature, and women will naturally perform this exercise throughout the day.

Once we've incorporated pelvic strengthening and relaxation into a patient's everyday life, we add in 20 minutes of daily exercise in a variety of moves that strengthen the hips, core and legs. Patients do bridges, squats, work with exercise bands and perform other movements, many of which elite athletes also use to build and maintain core strength.

Generally, patients will see a significant improvement in their pooch after six weeks or so of consistent work. If they keep up the practice, they'll do more than fit into last year's jeans. They'll see health benefits that can last a lifetime.

To learn more about fixing your lower belly pooch and to book an evaluation, go to MyInnerStrengthPT.com

Dr. Samantha Moon has more than 15 years of experience with a passion for helping both men and women feel in control of their lives and bodies. She is formally trained with a Bachelor of Science in nutrition from Ohio State University. She went on to complete her Doctor of Physical Therapy from University of Delaware. Certifications earned included pregnancy and postpartum corrective exercises, the Graston Technique and Kinesiotaping. She can be reached at sam@myinnerstrength-pt.com or 904-544-5152.



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CycleBar brings fitness 'party' to St. Johns with new location

By Anthony Richards

CycleBar opened its new location in St. Johns as they opened 2024 in a big way by joining the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce with a ribbon cutting ceremony on Jan. 5.

CycleBar St. Johns aims to provide the area with a premier indoor cycling facility, and it is located at 205 Bartram Market Drive, Suite 160 in St. Johns.

It is an ideal time to open according to owner Susanne Krivanek, as it comes at the start of the new year when so many people are looking to rediscover and start off on the right foot from a fitness standpoint.

"When I came upon CycleBar and started to learn more about it and what they're all about, I was like, 'Wow this has some really good potential,' especially when you think about this area with all the new people moving in," Krivanek said.

One of the unique things about CycleBar is that each of its classes are in a room with relatively dim lights, and the instructor can dim them even further or turn them off completely.

According to general manager Talie Zaifert, the goal behind this is so that everyone feels comfortable, and no one feels judged.

An example Zaifert provided was that if the class is getting to a more difficult portion of the ride, the instructor could then turn down the lights if they see some are struggling during that section.

"There are those times when there's a climb, and when the lights are off you can just focus on yourself and what you're doing," Zaifert said.

Each class lasts 45 minutes, but there is a 30-minute



Photo by Anthony Richards

CycleBar joined the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce with a ribbon cutting on Jan. 5.

express option for those who are looking to get a quick workout in during their lunch break, and songs are played throughout to create a fun atmosphere.

There are even glow rides offered, where much of the room and the riders glow during the class.

"It's a party and an exercise class all in one," Zaifert said.

Krivanek believes that encouragement is key for a person to achieve the goals they have laid out for themselves, and that's the environment she has strived to create at CycleBar.

Krivanek wants CycleBar to not just be a business within the community, but she has goals to really get involved and help give back and be a part and connected to the local scene beyond the fitness options they offer.

"It's an awesome workout that is pretty easy on your joints, so whether you're just getting started or are an avid cyclist, this is the place for you," Krivanek said. "We even have one of our members who is a world-class kickboxer, but he wants to improve his endurance."

The "bar" part of the CycleBar name represents the fact that there are a pair of weighted bars that riders can pull from the stationary bike and do upper body exercises, to allow for the whole body to be part of the workout.

"It's the type of thing where you set the bar for yourself, so you never have to feel like you're not doing exactly what the instructor is doing," Krivanek said. "You do what you're comfortable with and what you need to do to meet your goals."

For Krivanek, this is just the start as she also hopes to open up CycleBar locations in Nocatee and Ponte Vedra in the future.

CycleBar's hours can be found on their website at cyclebar.com/location/st-johns. The best way to schedule a class or join as a member is by calling 904-494-8301 or by emailing stjohns@cyclebar.com.



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Level Up Fitness Jax: It's about transformation

By Shaun Ryan

At the dawn of each new year, countless people will inevitably resolve to get into shape. And before the end of January, many will abandon that goal for another year.

Brandon Floyd, co-owner of Level Up Fitness Jax, suggests mentally preparing oneself for as much as six months prior to tackling this goal and then take it one day at a time. Don't try to get in shape within the first week. Set long-term goals and take baby steps if necessary.

It's all part of adopting a new lifestyle, a perspective that reflects the approach Floyd and the other trainers take at his popular Jacksonville Beach gym.

Level Up Fitness Jax got the most votes in The Recorder's recent Best of the Beaches campaign. In a community with many successful fitness programs, that's no small achievement.

The focus of Level Up Fitness Jax is body transformation, and before-and-after photos covering walls in two of its rooms attest to its efficacy. It's a style Floyd developed over many years, beginning with his first job as a fitness instructor for the YMCA in Raleigh, North Carolina, when he was only 16.

A major part of the program's success is that it's highly individualized.

"You're not just coming in the gym and



Photo by Shaun Ryan

Brandon Floyd, co-owner of Level Up Fitness Jax, developed his system over many years.

doing reps and sets predicated on what everyone else is doing," Floyd said. "For each person who's in the gym, the programs are designed to tailor-fit their needs."

The training begins with a body scan that measures body fat percentage and

analyzes posture as well as photos for use as reference to guide progress. The client is entered into a portal where the details of each workout are posted.

"We're documenting what performance level you're at, how intense was your

workout," Floyd said. "We're documenting things such as what we need to stay away from versus things you're good at. We're taking notes on you every workout."

This helps the trainers "level up" their clients from their initial condition to the goal they have set for themselves.

And while body transformation is the most obvious aim, it is part of a larger effort to holistically elevate mind, body and soul.

"If I'm not changing your mindset and if this program is not helping with that, the results are not going to be permanent," Floyd said. "It's not going to be a lifestyle. It's just going to be what I call a temporary fix."

And anyone mature enough to appreciate the value of working out can "level up." Floyd has clients across the age spectrum, even into their 80s.

Level Up Fitness Jax, which Floyd founded with his business partner, former Jacksonville Jaguars safety Josh Evans, has been at 311 10th Ave. North, Jacksonville Beach, for five years. For more information, call the gym at 904-738-0034 or go to levelupfitnessjax.com.

EDITOR'S NOTE: This is an abridged version of the article. To read the full story, go to pontevedrarecorder.com.

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Teacher of the Year finalists for 2023-24 named

Five public school teachers selected as finalists for the St. Johns County Teacher of the Year honor were recently announced by Investing in Kids (INK!) during a surprise visit to each school. The St. Johns County Education Foundation, which operates as INK!, hosts the annual Teacher of the Year selection process and celebration to acknowledge and commemorate excellence in teaching, and emphasize the importance and impact of the profession in the community.

Fifty-two teachers from every public school in St. Johns County were nominated by their peers as the Teacher of the Year for their school in a selection process that began in October. An INK! selection committee narrowed the search to five finalists through a process that includes a review of the teachers' written applications, letters of recommendation and an interview with the selection committee.

Kristen Anderson, a first-grade teacher at Valley Ridge Academy, has more than 11 years of teaching experience in St. Johns County, and previously in Marion County, Fla., Michigan and New Jersey. She teaches a strong literacy curriculum while constantly ensuring best practices. She coaches middle school boys and girls volleyball for Valley Ridge Academy.

Samantha Gayso is an eighth grade teacher in English



Language Arts at Alice B. Landrum Middle School in Ponte Vedra. She has been teaching in St. Johns County District schools and previously in Pennsylvania for 13 years. Gayso received a Civics Seal of Excellence in 2023 from the St. Johns County School District.

Tina Hemby is an eighth-grade pre-algebra teacher at Mill Creek Academy with 29 years of experience as an educator in mathematics, elementary education and general science in St. Johns County District Schools, and previously in South Carolina. She has been honored with a Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching.

Robyn Rice is teaching Exceptional Student Education at John A. Crookshank Elementary School in St. Augus-

tine. For more than 22 years, she has been an educator for St. Johns County District Schools and previously in Georgia while specializing in social emotional learning support for students in pre-kindergarten through fifth grade.

Duane Spears has taught 10th and 11th grade students at Allen D. Nease High School for more than seven years as an instructor in Naval Science studies and Navy Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps (NJROTC). Spears served with the U.S. Navy for 27 years and was awarded the Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal and the Presidential Volunteer Service Medal.

The countywide Teacher of the Year program builds community awareness for the high level of instructional skills, professional excellence and student interaction among educators and beyond school walls. The announcement of the educator selected as the St. Johns County District Teacher of the Year will be made on Feb. 1 at the World Golf Village Renaissance St. Augustine Resort.

The St. Johns County District Teacher of the Year becomes a candidate for Florida Teacher of the Year and receives various awards sponsored by local businesses and donors including the opportunity to receive a new car from Beaver Toyota St. Augustine.

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Bolles anticipates \$3.4M estate gift

The Bolles School recently announced an anticipated \$3.4 million estate gift from Jacksonville philanthropist Betsy Lovett. This act of generosity is expected to support the school's financial aid program, which provides students with need-based tuition assistance to attend Bolles and will establish the Betsy Lovett Financial Aid Endowment.

"This gift ensures that even more generations of our students will benefit from Mrs. Lovett's kindness," said Bolles Chief Advancement Officer Carol Nimitz. "A gift of this size powerfully contributes to the longevity and sustainability of the school's mission of diversity, which includes students from all different kinds of socioeconomic backgrounds. On average, one out of every five students at The Bolles School receives some form of financial aid assistance. Last year, Bolles provided over \$5 million in financial aid. With the nation's challenging economic environment, this demand is continuing to grow. Mrs. Lovett's endowment will only continue to grow over time. We are grateful that Mrs. Lovett thought of Bolles in her estate planning and remain humbled to continue receiving her support."

Lovett had many fond memories of her days as a Bartram student, and she continued to show her devotion to Bolles over the years. Lovett left a lasting mark at Bolles by building the Betsy Lovett Arts Center on the Middle School Bartram Campus in 2008. Bolles students have thrived in this state-of-the-art facility ever since.

Lovett's daughter, Elizabeth Lovett Colledge '70 (Bartram), was present for the anticipated gift announcement, which



Contributed photo
Pictured from left: Bolles President and Head of School Tyler Hodges; Lovett's daughter, Elizabeth Lovett Colledge '70 (Bartram); Lovett's great-granddaughter, Rose Longenecker; Lovett's granddaughter, Elizabeth Longenecker '01; and Bolles Director of Alumni Engagement and Annual Giving Julia Kalinski.

was appropriately made in the Betsy Lovett Arts Center on Nov. 16 during the school's Grandparents' Day celebrations. Lovett has many grandchildren, nieces and nephews who attend or have attended Bolles.

"Beginning with Betsy Ross Lovett and her sister Caroline Ross Burroughs, three generations of our family have attended the Bartram School for Girls or The Bolles School," said Colledge. "All benefited from the excellent education and moral values instilled by these two institutions. Having previously funded the Betsy Lovett Center for the Arts at the Bartram Campus, Betsy left a significant gift to Bolles for financial assistance for current and future students. We are grateful for our education and excited that Betsy's gift will provide this opportunity for others. We encourage all parents and grandparents to consider expanding their investment in Bolles's future."

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School

Continued from 1

hood, the monster of distraction, the monster of resistance,” said the school’s founder, Matthew Ahrnsbrak. “But they are heroes, and they have very important work to do.”

And that important work is, of course, learning.

Acton Academy Ponte Vedra is part of a network of 300 schools worldwide. Though all have their roots in the original Acton Academy founded in 2009 by Jeff and Laura Sandefer in Austin, Texas, each retains its own character.

“Each Acton is going to be a little bit different, based on what each of the heroes brings to the studio,” said Ahrnsbrak.

The local school began with what might best be described as grades two through five. This month, it expanded to include younger students, ages 5 through 7. Next year, Acton Academy Ponte Vedra plans to expand further to incorporate middle school. Ultimately, it will add high school grades.

But it is not structured the way traditional schools are structured. And though it shares some ideas put forth by Maria Montessori, it is not a Montessori school.

“I think the key defining factor that makes Acton Academy different than any other school here is the role of the



Acton Academy Ponte Vedra students sign a “studio contract,” a set of promises regarding conduct.

adults in the classroom,” said Ahrnsbrak. “We don’t have teachers. Our adults in the classroom are called Socratic guides, facilitators.”

According to Ahrnsbrak, children are innate geniuses.

“It’s not our job to impart knowledge onto them,” he said. “But rather, create games and challenges and scenarios to bring out their genius. And some of the things that they’ve come up with in the studio are incredible.”

The school day begins with a 15-minute Socratic discussion to “start the

day intentionally.” That is followed by core skills work: reading, writing, arithmetic. Curriculum is accessed via adaptive learning programs, such as Khan Academy and Lexia. The children are incentivized to complete their coursework so as to move on to higher levels and their progress is tracked.

Afternoons are reserved for “quests,” sessions with special themes that change each five or six weeks. Currently, the students are learning about coding and robotics.

Aside from the state-mandated stan-

dardized test given each April, there are no exams. At the end of each six-week session, the students present an exhibition of the knowledge they have accumulated. This is another way to gauge their progress.

Parents can learn more by stopping by the link, emailing Ahrnsbrak at matt@actonacademyPV.com or going to www.actonacademyPV.com.

EDITOR’S NOTE: This is an abridged version of the article. To ready the full story, go to pontevedrarecorder.com.



Acton Academy students enjoy lunch outdoors at the link.

Photos courtesy of Acton Academy Ponte Vedra



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GUEST COLUMN

Glaucoma vs. cataracts: What do you need to know?



By **Kenzo Koike, M.D.**,
Florida Eye Specialists

Our eyes, like all other body parts, become more susceptible to disease as we age. The most common vision-related problems in older adults are glaucoma and cataracts. In fact, these are two of the most common causes of vision loss in the world.

However, few people understand how they differ and affect eyesight. Learn the key differences and crucial information

about glaucoma and cataracts to ensure you're well-informed about your eye health.

Glaucoma vs. Cataracts

Glaucoma is an eye disease caused by increased pressure in the eyes. It steals away eyesight with very few or no symptoms, and once lost, vision cannot be restored. That makes early detection crucial.

A cataract is an age-related clouding of the lens of the eye. Just like with a camera, our eyes contain a lens to help us to focus on things whether they are nearby or far away. To work well, the lens must be clear. As we age, the lens of our eye gradually becomes cloudy. This type of vision loss can be more gradual. While it can seem similar to glaucoma, patients won't be able to tell which condition they have without a proper eye exam.

Risk Factors for Cataracts and Glaucoma

Cataracts develop due to aging, but they can also be caused by a history of eye injuries or underlying health conditions. Recognizable symptoms of cataracts include blurry vision, difficulty

seeing at night, dull vision with fading or yellowing of colors, the perception of halos around lights, and frequent changes in glasses prescription.

Glaucoma risk factors include age, race, family history and underlying health conditions, like diabetes. There are several types of glaucoma. One common type of glaucoma is primary open-angle glaucoma, which can lead to blind spots in your side vision. Angle-closure glaucoma can present with sudden vision loss, headaches and pain. Glaucoma can only be prevented through early diagnosis and prompt treatment.

Treatments for Cataracts and Glaucoma

A key difference between the two conditions pertains to treatment options. Cataracts can usually be removed through cataract surgery, allowing the patient to see clearly again. On the other hand, glaucoma symptoms can only be prevented, not reversed.

Glaucoma can lead to irreversible blindness. That's why patients who notice any changes in their vision should get an eye exam right away.

Does Cataract Surgery Help Glaucoma?

Cataract surgery is one of the most commonly performed procedures in the world, proven to be safe, fast, and effec-

tive. Thanks to advanced corrective lens technology, many patients see better after surgery than they ever did before.

What many patients don't realize is that cataract surgery can help improve glaucoma symptoms as well. That's because cataract surgery can lower high eye pressure. This is a big relief for many patients who are often unsure whether they can have cataract surgery with glaucoma. Some patients even have cataract surgery and a type of glaucoma surgery in a combination procedure.

Take Control of Your Eye Health

Remember, all patients 60 and over must receive regular, comprehensive eye exams so we can detect conditions like cataracts and glaucoma and begin treatment right away. If you're overdue for your latest exam, don't wait any longer. Our dedicated team offers both routine and specialty eye care, including premium cataract surgery, glaucoma and cornea treatment. Take control of your eye health by making an appointment today.

Kenzo Koike, M.D., is a board-certified ophthalmologist at Florida Eye Specialists. For more information on Dr. Koike and his specialties in treating cataracts and glaucoma, go to FloridaEyeSpecialists.com or call 904-564-2020.

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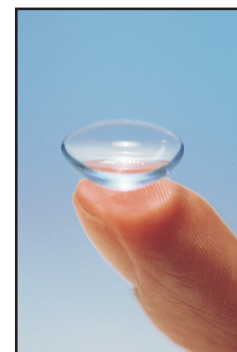
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Avoid infection with proper contact lens care

As contacts sit directly on the eyes, it is important to avoid the introduction of foreign matter to the eye with careful hygiene and other practices. WebMD reports that those who wear contacts have a higher risk for keratitis, an infection of the cornea caused by viruses, bacteria, fungi, and rare parasites. It's also easier to catch conjunctivitis. Smart contact lens usage can help people avoid infections and other eye irritation. Contact wearers can follow these guidelines.

- **Wash hands before handling contacts.** Always wash and dry your hands before touching contact lenses to avoid transferring microorganisms from your hands and fingers to the lenses.

- **Rub the lenses while cleaning.** The American Optometric Association says rubbing the lenses while cleaning them loosens the protein and bacteria that builds up. Even if the solution advertises "no rub," you should do it anyway.



- **Always use fresh solution.** Wash and store contacts in fresh, store-bought solution. Do not reuse solution, and never make homemade saline solution, which may not be sterile.

- **Consider daily lenses.** One way to cut down on the buildup of bacteria is to opt for daily lenses. These are

individually packaged and are only worn for one day before being discarded, as opposed to weekly or monthly lenses.

- **Rest your eyes.** Whenever possible, give your eyes a chance to "breathe," so to speak. Skip the contacts if you are at home and will not be encumbered by wearing eyeglasses. When utilizing contacts, do not wear them longer than is prescribed for that type of lens. Do not sleep in contacts unless they are designed for overnight wear.

Care must be given to contact lenses to avoid eye infections and other harmful conditions.

Business Weekly

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

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www.PonteVedraRecorder.com

Facility rebranded as ROAR Training Center

Originally known as ROAR Fitness Studio, the St. Augustine Beach family-owned space has recently doubled in size and been rebranded to become a premier training center. ROAR Training Center is owned and operated by St. Augustine's Training Family, which consists of local residents and master trainers Kristy Lee Wilson and Chris Cygul.

Wilson is accredited in performance enhancement, corrective exercise, fitness nutrition and postnatal recovery. Cygul has an extensive background in physical rehabilitation, sports medicine, corrective exercise and youth athletics. Their daughter, Ella, is a USTA Junior ranked tennis player.

"We're so much more than a fitness studio, or a gym that you pop in and out of," said Wilson. "We're a training center

that focuses on providing a personalized experience, with workouts and methods that are individually tailored to garner results."

ROAR serves a wide variety of clients: adults in shape, adults out of shape; young adult athletes, young adults who want to get in shape. Wilson's personal passion is working with needs that are specific to women.

"We have the most comprehensive programs in the area for women and girls of all ages," she said. "Whether you're pre- or postpartum, looking to improve your nutritional wellness, or in your late 60s, we can help you achieve your goals."

ROAR also caters to young adults, with youth fitness training and youth athletic performance for sport.

They are Safe Sport Certified, denot-



Contributed photo

Kristy Lee Wilson and Chris Cygul operate the ROAR Training Center.

ing that ROAR staff are knowledgeable, reputable and qualified to operate a safe space for youth exercise. And they have

programs for everyone, of all fitness levels, offering personal training, group training and semi-private group training.


Sessions are tailored to people who want results, and are willing to commit and be consistent. Workouts are typically 30-minutes, highly focused and intentional in order to maximize time and money.

"We feel so lucky to be a part of such a great community in St. Augustine," Cygul said. "And while we're growing and expanding, our mission will always be to provide an intimate space for our clients to feel at home. We're a family of personal trainers, and we want our clients to feel like they're a part of that family."

ROAR Training Center is located at 2085 A1A S, Unit 303, St. Augustine. For further information, call 904-290-1432 or go to roartrainingcenter.com.



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Third Space Improv grand opening is Jan. 11

One of improvisation's hallmarks is to always say "yes, and..." Luckily, Amy Angelilli said yes to striking out and creating a dedicated improv space with hard work, a committed core of students and every penny in her pocket.

Third Space Improv will hold its grand opening 5-7 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 11, at 200 Malaga St., Suite 7, St. Augustine.

"Improv is more than just creating comedic situations," said Angelilli. "Improv can help you get out of your head, live in the moment, build self-confidence and make new friends. It's surreal to see all of the hard work and long days come together. We couldn't have done it without the support of the St. Johns Cultural Council, friends, family and the improv students; so many people have played a critical role in getting Third Space Improv to this place. We're thrilled to open a studio that welcomes and accommodates all community

members."

Third Space Improv comes from the belief that everyone should have three spaces: first, home; second, work; and third, a communal space where people can come together and bond over a shared interest. With the assistance of a State of the Arts Grant from the St. Johns Cultural Council, Third Space Improv constructed a stage with a ramp and a railing, providing access to community members with different abilities and wheelchair users.

At the grand opening open house, light bites and refreshments will be served while guests enjoy improv, with the chance to watch or join every 30 minutes. Not one to rest on her laurels, Angelilli's improv community heads straight into a packed schedule.

To see a full list of classes, events and performances, go to adventure-project.com/events.



Photos courtesy of Third Space Improv

Third Space Improv will hold its grand opening on Jan. 11.

Expansion

Continued from 1

Mayday Ice Cream Shop will add to the food option expansion as well, as the artisan ice cream shop plans to open in the next couple of months.

Unlike The Social Society, which is looking to branch out and introduce something new in the form of a brick-and-mortar store, Mayday already has several locations throughout St. Augustine, Jacksonville and Ponte Vedra Beach, and Nocatee will be the latest.

However, the new expansion showcases the Nocatee Town Center's desire to continue to offer variety to its patrons, as Degree Wellness and V's Barbershop are two more businesses that both plan on opening in this summer, as the next phase is really expected to take shape during that time.

Degree Wellness is a wellness studio that offers advanced technologies to enhance physical and mental health, such as cryotherapy, infrared sauna, red light



Photo by Susan Griffin

The new phase is expected to be completed in fall 2024.

therapy, cold plunge, compression massage, IV drips and vitamin injections.

"We are thrilled to continue Degree's expansion in our hometown," Degree Wellness president Amanda Lightcap said. "I can't wait to bring the latest in self-care and wellness services to the Nocatee com-

munity, helping even more people feel, look and be their best self."

V's Barbershop is considered an upscale barbershop, and just like Degree Wellness, the location's owner Nick Crouch calls Nocatee home and he is thrilled to open a location for his neighbors to enjoy.

The new barbershop will feature antique barber chairs from the 1950s, as well as iconic sports imagery on the walls and licensed and professionally trained barbers.

There is no doubt that the Nocatee Town Center will surely look a little different at the end of 2024 than it does at the start.

In the Arts



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www.PonteVedraRecorder.com

St. Augustine Art Association marks 100 years

Artists and writers gathered in St. Augustine on Jan. 18, 1924, to form what they called the “The Galleon Club.” These cultural trailblazers sought to transform the historic town into a thriving arts community for wintering artists. Artist after artist started traveling south to experience what the club advertised was “like Painting in Europe.”

On Feb. 23, 2024, the St. Augustine Art Association — which became the official name in 1948 — will celebrate its 100th anniversary with the Beaux Arts Ball fundraising event at the Lightner Museum for an evening of dinner, dancing and fine art. Tickets are \$150 each or \$1,200 for a table

of eight. Tickets can be purchased at staaa.org/beaux-arts-ball.

The Beaux Arts Ball is a nod to how the association would raise funds in the 1940s and beyond. With the help of affluent artistic families, the St. Augustine Art Association was able to form a more formal organization but needed its own space, so they put on the Beaux Arts Ball in what was then the Alcazar Hotel (now the Lightner Museum).

Otto Lightner himself hosted the event for years — the first of which is epitomized in a 1949 painting by artist Louise Shanks.

In 1954, the association opened what

is now the main gallery building. With an official gathering space, the organization could finally exhibit work, host regular shows and sketch groups, and become the cultural epicenter for the vibrant and influential force for the arts that it is today.

“Celebrating such a significant and historic milestone feels surreal,” said Jennifer Flynt, executive director. “For 100 years, artists have transformed this city into a flourishing arts community and arts destination. And I believe the magic of St. Augustine has certainly inspired many artists for more than 100 years. These creative minds continue to bring such beauty and energy into our town, which adds so much

to the history already here. It’s an honor to support them, and I know that for the next 100 years we’ll continue to do the same.”

Prior to the ball, the association will host a celebratory open house, 4:30 to 6 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 18, at 22 Marine St., St. Augustine. Meet and mingle with members and friends as the St. Augustine Art Association toasts to the next 100 years. Ticket includes one drink ticket (cash bar after ticket), sweet and savory hors d’oeuvres and complimentary champagne. Tickets are \$19.24 each and can be purchased at staaa.org/100th-anniversary-celebration.

For more information, go to staaa.org.

Concert theme: Mozart’s birthday

Florida Chamber Music Project (FCMP) will celebrate Mozart’s 298th birthday with “Opera Without Words” at 3 p.m. Jan. 28 at the Beaches Museum Chapel at the Beaches Museum at 505 Beach Blvd., Jacksonville Beach.

The program will feature Mozart’s String Quartet in D Major, K499, Puccini’s Crisantemi and Verdi’s String Quartet in E minor.

As FCMP Artistic Director Susan Pardue said, “Any concert with opera music and no Mozart would be sadly lacking. We are so happy to celebrate his birthday with music from composers who were known for their operas, including Mozart himself.”

Crisantemi means chrysanthemum in Italian and is the flower Italians often bring to the cemetery to honor loved ones. Puccini wrote the music in memory of a dear friend. Verdi’s String Quartet is the only surviving chamber music piece in his catalogue of music, written when the production of Aida was delayed due to the illness of the soprano.

Prorated season tickets for the four remaining concerts are still available and cost \$108. There is also a three-concert flex ticket purchase for \$81. Season tickets and flex passes can be purchased through FCMP’s website, fchambermusic.org. Single tickets are \$30. All tickets are available for purchase through Event-

brite. Single tickets are also available for purchase at the door, as are student tickets at a cost of \$10.

Beaches Museum Chapel is wheelchair-accessible and has free parking along Pablo Avenue near 4th Street North of Beach Boulevard.

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

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Richard Alston will perform in a concert titled "Classically Black: Piano Compositions by Composers of African-American Descent" on Feb. 3.



Contributed photos

On Point will perform Jan. 27.

Romanza wraps up concert series on Jan. 27, Feb. 3

Romanza St. Augustine and its inaugural Collage Concert Series in St. Augustine will complete this year's schedule with musical performances in early 2024. As a prelude to the Romanza Festivale of Music and the Arts beginning in May, the series features a variety of professional performers scheduled for diverse audiences.

According to show producers and

coordinators Kathleen Vande Berg and Glo MacDonald, the On Point A Cappella Quartet will perform at 7:30 p.m. Jan. 27. On Point is a captivating barbershop quartet that began in Jacksonville under the guidance of Timothy Workman. Since 2016, the quartet has taken their harmonious talents to stages across the United States.

The quartet earned recognition for their

exceptional vocal blends and versatile repertoire. From classic barbershop melodies to modern a cappella arrangements, the quartet consistently delivers memorable performances which bridge the past and present.

Also, "Classically Black: Piano Compositions by Composers of African-American Descent" will commemorate Black History Month at 7:30 p.m. Feb. 3. The concert and talk presented by Richard Alston includes his performance as a masterful pianist and recitalist. A graduate of the Juilliard School of Music with both his bachelor's and master's degrees, Alston has performance credits ranging from recitals to guest soloist with orchestras, along with live opera and recordings. He is a sought-after instructor in the northeastern U.S.

Romanza's Collage Concerts will be held at The Waterworks, 184 San Marco Ave., St. Augustine. Ticket price for each show is \$20 per person available at romanzacollage.com.

The Collage Concert Series began in October with the Jonathan Dotson Concert, and his virtuoso classical guitar music, and continued with Yael "ZaZa Flamenca" portraying Edith Piaf in music and the spoken word in November. The nearly sold-out concerts served as a testament to the support from local residents,

visitors, families and friends.

From May 3 until May 19, the annual Romanza Festivale will include numerous events and exhibits by dozens of independent nonprofit organizations and talent. Daily concerts, plays, dance showcases, art exhibits, opera, wine events and more will be featured.

Romanza Festivale is the only local event that showcases the arts, culture and heritage. It is an annual collaboration by dozens of organizations and businesses in St. Augustine. Many events are free of charge and open to the public.

For general information, schedules and locations, go to romanzafestivale.com.

Romanza St. Augustine also produces the St. Augustine Celtic Festival, the St. Patrick Parade and Romanza Festivale of Music and the Arts. The productions feature renowned talent from music, dance, visual arts, theater and the spoken word, among others.

Romanza Festivale is funded in part by the St. Johns County Tourist Development Council, and by the State of Florida, Department of State, Division of Cultural Affairs, and Florida Council on Arts and Culture.

For more information, contact Kathleen Vande Berg at 904-788-2444 or email kathvan@comcast.net and glmac@mac.com.

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Maiya Elaine, *painting*

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	Viano String Quartet	11/5	Llewellyn Sanchez-Werner	3/22
	The Queen's Six	12/15	*Vincent DuBois	4/14
	Galvin Cello Quartet	1/21	Emilio Solla & Tributango	5/12



The Jonathan Dotson Concert was presented in October.



Yael "ZaZa Flamenca" portrayed Edith Piaf in music and the spoken word in November.

*All concerts except 4/14 are held at our home venue: St. Paul's by-the-Sea Episcopal Church 465 11th Ave. N Jacksonville Beach

Beaches Fine Arts Series is a 501-c3 nonprofit organization, Sponsored in part by the State of Florida, Department of State, Division of Arts and Culture and the Florida Council on Arts and Culture.

Sports

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Sharks, Panthers take memorable seasons into stretch run

Only one loss tallied between the two schools

By Anthony Richards

The Ponte Vedra and Nease girls soccer teams are both in the midst of a memorable campaign as they enter the final stretch of the regular season.

The Sharks have lost just one game all year with a record of 13-1-1 heading into a home matchup against Seabreeze on Jan. 11.

In 15 contests, the Sharks have only surrendered four goals, and they have backed up the stellar defensive efforts by scoring three or more goals in more than half of their games.

Their lone loss came to Edgewood on Dec. 15, but since that 1-0 defeat, the Sharks have reeled off five straight victories.

The Sharks were quite busy during the winter break, as they compiled four wins in a three-day stretch as part of a tournament in Vero Beach.

However, those were not just three more wins on the schedule, but they proved that the Sharks have the potential to do some real damage once they get to the postseason, as they came against quality teams from across the state, including a 2-1 win over Mariner (13-3); a 2-0 win over Tallahassee Lincoln (8-3-1); and defeating Boynton Beach Somerset Academy (13-4-1), 1-0.

Four home games are left on the schedule for the Sharks, including against Creekside on Jan. 12 at 7:20 p.m., Bartram Trail on Jan. 18 at 7:20 p.m. and undefeated Monteverde Academy on Jan. 20 begin-



ning at noon.

For the Nease Panthers, they have their sights set on finishing strong and going undefeated with three games remaining in the season.

The Panthers are 9-0-3 and have shut out their opponents on six occasions this season, with their largest margin of victory coming on Dec. 14 with a 6-0 triumph over Middleburg on the road.

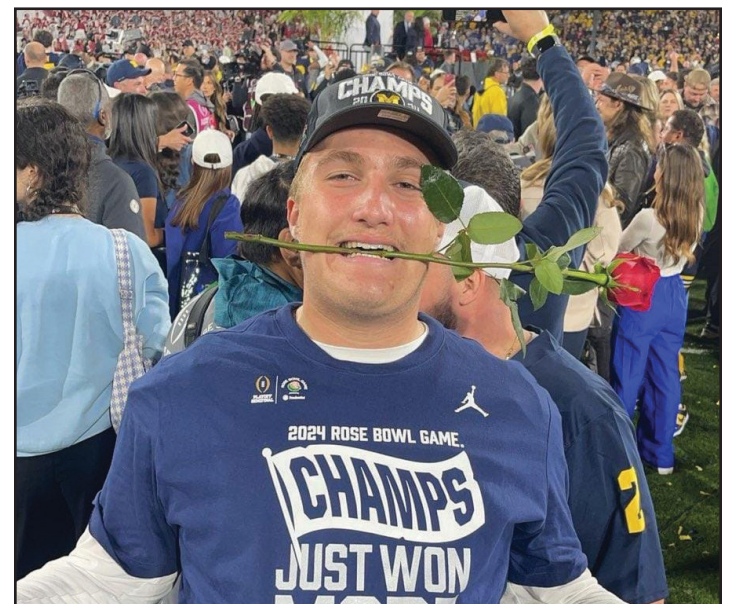
Road warriors is probably the best term to describe the Panthers this season as time after time this season the Panthers have been tested on the road having played nine road games compared to just three at home to this point.

The ability to do whatever they can not to lose games is a unique quality and one that will pay dividends for the Panthers in the playoffs.

They will have senior night at the Panther Den on Jan. 11 against county rival Menendez at 6:30 p.m. and then finish up with two more road games against Creekside on Jan. 17 and Bishop Kenny on Jan. 18. Both of those games will start at 7:20 p.m.

With all the success both the Sharks and Panthers have had this year, it is a shame that both teams were not on the other's schedule this year, because it seems like it would have been a memorable game for both players and fans and just one more moment to cherish in what has been a memorable season to this point.

From signing day to Rose Bowl, national championship



Just a couple of weeks after signing to play football with the University of Michigan, Ponte Vedra High's Jake Guarnera was on the sideline and celebrating a Rose Bowl victory over Alabama on New Years Day.



Jake Guarnera was joined by his family who were in the stands as he was on the field when Michigan defeated Washington to win the College Football Playoff National Championship in Houston on Jan. 8.

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CROSSWORD													
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					70		

ACROSS

- Defensive nuclear weapon
- Moved back and forth
- One-time coach of the Cowboys
- Last letter
- Cause to become less intense
- Genus of tree bugs
- Body art
- Romance novelist
- Be filled with love for
- City
- Make vivid
- Horses
- Mauna __, Hawaiian volcano
- Atomic #18
- Shortly
- A type of prejudice
- Whirls
- Six
- Old world, new
- __ Hess, oil company
- Talk
- Not off
- Begets
- Cars need them
- Computing architecture (abbr.)
- Of I
- Journalist, activist Wells
- Takes apart
- Lists
- Positively charged electrode
- Hard, colorless compound
- Inflammation of the peritoneum
- Trent Reznor's band
- Simply dry fruit
- "Ivanhoe" author
- Google certification
- French commune
- Medieval circuit courts
- Soviet Socialist Republic

- Dietary supplement
- Having a particular sheen or luster
- Views
- Academic Bill of Rights
- Automobile
- When you anticipate arriving
- Beef or chicken intestine
- Conspiracy
- Blood disorder
- Long-time NBAer Shawn
- Time zone
- US, Latin America, Canada belong to
- Upton Sinclair novel
- What a cow does
- Cavalry-sword
- Ancient Greek war galley
- Stars
- Rebukes
- Billion year periods

- Some are in a bottle
- Tears down
- Lethal dose
- Humorists
- Midwestern US state (abbr.)
- Frameworks
- Rocker Billy
- More thin
- Dog
- Habitual repetitions
- State of fuss
- Uneasy
- Chemical compounds
- More cognizant of reality
- A place to build
- Exclamation that denotes disgust
- Supplement with difficulty
- Very slick
- Hill or rocky peak

SUDOKU

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

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

- Indigenous people of Mexico



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