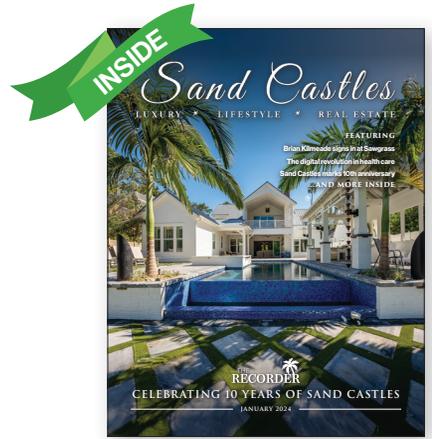


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Volunteers fight human trafficking

By Shaun Ryan

When people speak of slavery, they often think of it in a historical context. But today, tens of millions of people are enslaved worldwide — many of the victims, children — via human trafficking. And it isn't something limited to Third World nations few can find on a map.

"It's the second largest illegal industry in the U.S.," said local activist Dar Christianson. "Drugs are number one, and human trafficking/exploitation is number two."

In fact, she said, Florida has the third highest number of human trafficking and child exploitation cases in

VOLUNTEERS continues on Page 7



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

Celebrating a century of inspiring St. Augustine's art culture

Art association names main gallery, looks to future

By Anthony Richards

The St. Augustine Art Association has been a mainstay in the local arts community for a century as the organization celebrated its creation 100 years to the day with a ceremony on Jan. 18.

The event took place in its newly renovated main art gallery and part of the ceremony included announcing that the gallery will be named after longtime members Diane Bradley and Bill Mayer.

Bradley is the president of the association and has held that role since 2008, while Mayer has been heavily involved for years behind the scenes helping to get the organization's financials in order.

"It will be a lasting testimony for all that they have given to this association," association member Phil Tutschek said.

Bradley had taught art for 30 years prior to joining the board of directors in



Photo by Anthony Richards

Diane Bradley and Bill Mayer were honored with the newly renovated main art gallery being named after them.

2004 after moving to the area.

"The two things that come to mind from the early days when Diane took over, is that they had a vision and almost everything has come to fruition," Mayer said. "Lots of people have vision, but a lot of people don't have action, but she had that action."

Some of the recent developments that have taken place in the past several years include many renovations to the building's interior and exterior.

"I've got tears in my eyes, because this has been such a labor of love for me,"

CENTURY continues on Page 20

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

BRIEFS

St. Johns County announces new polling places

The St. Johns County Supervisor of Elections has officially published the polling place list for the 2024 election cycle. To accommodate growth in St. Johns County, the number of election day polling places has increased from 41 to 43. The number of precincts remains at 53.

Of the 41 polling places used during the 2022 election cycle, several were relocated as those facilities were no longer available for use. Two additional polling places have been added for 2024.

The updated polling place list is available on the St. Johns County Supervisor of Elections website at www.votesjc.gov.

Voters whose polling places have been relocated will receive updated voter information cards in the mail and should review their new cards carefully. For further information, go to www.votesjc.gov or call 904-823-2238.

New code changes beachgoers need to know

The St. Johns County Board of County Commissioners unanimously voted to adopt an updated beach code ordinance at its regular Jan. 16 meeting.

The update features amendments banning any "aircraft, seaplane, helicopter, glider, balloon, dirigible, parachute, drone or other aerial apparatus" taking off from or landing within park property or the beach; the careless operation of "any e-bike, e-scooter, or other electric motorized device"; and operating any motor vehicle "so as to intentionally cause sand to be thrown into the air or across any beach area."

Violation of any part of the ordinance comes with the risk of receiving a \$53 citation from law enforcement for a non-criminal violation.

DeSantis awards funds for workforce housing, infrastructure

On Jan. 19, Gov. Ron DeSantis awarded more than \$2.8 million to five Florida communities through the Florida Small Cities Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program for workforce housing and public infrastructure development. This builds upon more than \$95 million invested in 132 community development projects for Florida communities since 2019.

Among the communities receiving the award is St. Augustine, which will receive \$247,365 to renovate five 100-year-old homes and repair up

to nine other homes for homeless families.

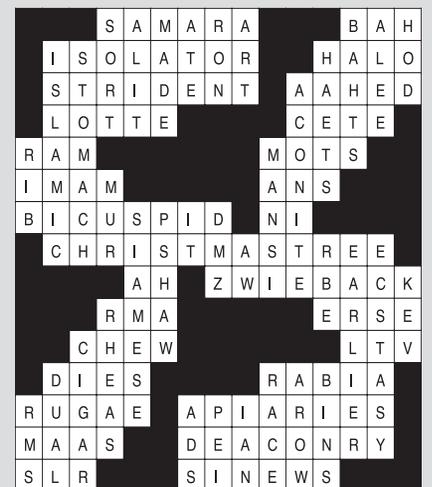
PVPV Rawlings PTO plans carnival

PVPV Rawlings Elementary School will hold its PTO Annual Spring Carnival from noon to 4 p.m. Feb. 24. There will be games, auction baskets, face painting, balloon artists, a game truck, a teacher experience, auction food and more.

Pre-sale wristbands are \$15 each for K-5 students, \$20 the day of the carnival. Admission is free for children age 4 and younger. For further information, contact Jennifer Cleek at jbcleek@gmail.com.

— Compiled by Shaun Ryan

PUZZLE SOLUTIONS



9	6	3	7	5	1	8	2	4
4	5	2	8	6	9	7	3	1
1	8	7	2	3	4	9	5	6
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100 Women Who Care launched in Beaches Area

Poised to make a meaningful impact on local communities, 100 Women Who Care Beaches has announced the launch of their philanthropic initiative to support Duval and St. Johns County nonprofits. This program revolves around the power of collective giving — each member commits to donate \$100 per quarter, totaling \$400 annually, to support a selected not-for-profit organization. With a membership of 100 women, the quarterly donation would be \$10,000.

Here's how it works: prior to quar-

terly meetings, members are invited to nominate a local not-for-profit that serves Duval and St. Johns counties. At each meeting, the three randomly chosen organizations are selected to present their causes to the members.

The members then vote to determine the recipient of the collective funds. The meeting and voting take place within a one-hour time frame. The chosen not-for-profit receives direct financial support from the generous contributions of 100 Women Who Care members.

This unique approach not only fosters a sense of community among its members but also provides a platform for local organizations to showcase their impactful work. By pooling resources, 100 Women Who Care Beaches aims to shine a spotlight on deserving organizations, provide financial support to local nonprofits and foster positive change within the Beaches communities.

The inaugural meeting is 6 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 30, at the Ponte Vedra Beach Branch Library, 101 Library Blvd.

Individuals interested in becoming a part of this movement are encouraged to join by completing a membership form, available at 100womenbeaches.com. People are also welcome to attend and register at the meeting.

As 100 Women Who Care Beaches embarks on this journey of collective giving, the organization welcomes all those with a passion for making a difference to come together and contribute to the betterment of their community.



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OBITUARIES



Roseann Duran

Roseann Duran of Ponte Vedra Beach, FL, passed away on January 15, 2024, at the age of 72, after a courageous battle with cancer. A truly vibrant and unique person, Roseann adored her family, cherished her many friends, and found joy in the company of her beloved dogs.

Roseann was born near Pittsburgh, PA, on October 5, 1951, to the late Edward and Anna Marie (Defino) Duran. She graduated from Penn State University in 1973 and began her impressive career at Barnett Banks, Inc. in Jacksonville, FL. Roseann worked her way up at the bank, eventually becoming the first female officer in the history of Barnett Banks, Inc. She held the titles of Director of Community Relations and Director of Barnett's Print and Media Marketing. In these roles, she was instrumental in the founding and development of the non-profit Take Stock in Children and was responsible for all of Barnett's community involvement and charitable giving. For more than two decades, she was well known within the organization as a powerful promoter of the Barnett brand throughout the state of Florida until she retired from banking in 1997.

While advancing her career at Barnett, Roseann earned an MBA from the Uni-

versity of North Florida and a degree from the prestigious Stonier Graduate School of Banking within the Wharton School of Business. She joined the leadership team at Website Pros, which later changed its name to Web.com after an acquisition. She entered the company as the Chief Marketing Officer in 2002, but in 2010, a unique title of Chief People Officer was created for Roseann. Although she was a terrific marketing officer, she flourished in her Chief People Officer role. Her stewardship of the interests of the Web.com team, including her interest in each and every person that she encountered, made her a powerful force for the company. Roseann remained in this role until her well-deserved retirement in 2019. Roseann commented that one of the highlights of her time with Web.com was when she was one of the executives who ceremoniously rang the closing bell at the stock exchange at Times Square's NASDAQ MarketSite in 2008.

Beyond her professional accomplishments, Roseann was an active community builder and philanthropist. Her support of Jacksonville's Wolfson Children's Hospital is one of her most profound life accomplishments. Over the years, Roseann generously gave of her time and treasure to the hospital, including a major gift in 2015 to establish the Wolfson Children's Pediatric Genetic & Molecular Medicine Endowment. This gift supported the growth and development of the genetics program, which has aptly been named in her honor and is now known as the Duran Genetics Center. Thanks to her support, vision, and partnership, the Duran Genetics Center has grown from a small team of one physician and a couple of genetics counselors to a comprehensive program with 16 team members, including two physicians, three nurse practitioners, three genetics counselors, nurses, dietitians, and support staff. In addition to her own giving, Roseann chaired the recent "Hope Starts Here" \$60 million campaign, which raised critical capital funding to support service lines and programs at the hospital. Roseann had been a devoted Wolfson Children's Board mem-

ber since July 2013, served on the Social Responsibility & Community Health Board Committee for Baptist Health since 2019, and chaired the Wolfson Children's Development Council from 2015-2022.

Roseann's charitable work was not just reserved for Wolfson. Roseann served on the Board of Directors for Camp Boggy Creek from December 2013 through December 2021 and, at the time of her death, had been a member of the University Board of Trustees at Jacksonville University since 2017. She supported countless other causes and organizations and held each one close to her heart.

In addition to leaving an indelible mark on the world through her remarkable career and charitable endeavors, Roseann's enthusiasm for life extended into a tapestry of passions and connections. Her love of exploration led her to diverse corners of the world, creating a collection of travel memories that illuminated her adventurous spirit. Whether it was the picturesque landscapes of Europe, the vibrant markets of Asia, or the pyramids of Egypt, Roseann reveled in the exploration of new cultures, cuisines, and experiences.

Family and friends held the most special places in her heart, and her life was punctuated by joyous gatherings, or "Happy Hours," as she called them, and shared moments that became essential to her being. From lively family holidays and events to intimate dinners with friends, Roseann's ability to infuse every occasion with warmth and laughter left a lasting imprint on all those who loved her.

As adept as she was at bringing people together, the tennis court became another stage for Roseann's infectious warmth to shine. Tennis was more than a sport for Roseann; it was a source of joy and vitality. The matches in 100-degree heat and the camaraderie on the court shaped her love for the game. Whether competing fiercely or enjoying a leisurely match, Roseann's passion for tennis showcased her energetic and competitive spirit.

As a beloved daughter, sister, niece, cous-

in, aunt, and friend, Roseann's love knew no bounds. The routine acts of kindness, thoughtful gestures, and genuine care she extended to those around her came naturally. All who were fortunate enough to know her will feel the void left by her absence.

In commemorating Roseann's life, we honor not just her professional achievements but also the enduring legacy she leaves on the world, a testament to the true essence of her extraordinary life.

Roseann is survived by her brothers John (Kathy) Duran of Export, PA, Paul (Debbi) Duran of Ponte Vedra, FL, and Ed (Laura) Duran, Jr. of Jacksonville, FL; nieces and nephews Gregory (Emily), Andy (Lisa), LeAna Kimball (Jake), Matthew (Melissa), Kimberly Lowman (Chad), Patrick (Erika), Joseph, and Elena; and great-nieces and great-nephews Canaan, Bella, Emma Grace, Kylee, Isabelle, Madelyn, Elsie, Berkeley, Anna, Josephine, and Amelia.

Visitation will be held from 3-5 p.m. on Sunday, January 28, 2024, in the Chapel of Quinn-Shalz Family Funeral Home in Jacksonville Beach, FL. A Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated at 11 a.m. on Monday, January 29, 2024, in Our Lady Star of the Sea Catholic Church in Ponte Vedra Beach, FL, with Rev. Matthew King as celebrant.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to the Duran Genetics Center at Wolfson Children's Hospital by visiting <http://wolfsonchildrens.com/give>. Select "Make a Gift," then "Wolfson Children's Duran Genetics Center" in the dropdown. You may also personalize your gift by selecting "Dedicate my donation in honor or in memory of someone" and entering "Roseann Duran."

Please visit her online Tribute at www.quinn-shalz.com.

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Charles "Chuck" Horner Jr.

Charles "Chuck" Horner Jr., 68, of Ponte Vedra Beach, FL, formerly of Coronado, CA, and originally from Clinton, IA, went to be with his Lord and Savior on January 18, 2024. Chuck was born on November 22, 1955, in Clinton, IA, the eldest son of "Chuck" Sr. and Joan Horner. He graduated from Clinton High School in 1974 and joined the Navy in 1975. Master Chief Petty Officer Charles Henry Horner Jr. dedicated 32 years of his life to protecting our nation at the highest level as a highly regarded United States Navy SEAL.

He moved to Ponte Vedra Beach, FL in 2015, graduated Cum Laude from Florida State College with a BAsC degree in Public Safety Management in 2018, and worked at the Mayo Clinic in Jacksonville as a radiol-

ogy safety officer until 2020. He loved to travel with Sheila, even after his diagnosis of stage four stomach cancer in June 2022. Chuck had a heart for the Lord and serving others, attending bible studies regularly. Chuck proudly attended Bible Study Fellowship for 20 years (2003 - 2023).

Survivors include his partner, Sheila Connor; his three children Dr. Kacey (Bill) Appel, Dr. Angela (Norman) Ellard, and Charles Horner III; his grandchildren, Liam and Kate Appel and Veronica and Violet (expected 4/24) Ellard; siblings Jonelle Kettler, Tim (Billie Jo) Horner, Suzanne (Joe) Davidoski, and Steve Horner; and many nieces and nephews. Chuck was preceded in death by his parents, Chuck and Joan Horner, his first wife and mother of his children Katherine "Kitty" (Hanline) Horner, his brother-in-law Rich Kettler, and

his closest uncle, James "Jim" Holle.

Chuck's Celebration of Life Memorial Service will be held Friday, January 26, 2024, at 11 a.m. in Christ Church located at 400 San Juan Drive, Ponte Vedra Beach, FL 32082 with full military honors.

In lieu of flowers, memorial gifts on behalf of Chuck Horner Jr. may be made either to The Foundation of Community Hospice and Palliative Care or Bible Study Fellowship.

Please visit his online Tribute at www.quinn-shalz.com.

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OBITUARIES



Mary Irene Smith Crumpton

Mary Irene Smith Crumpton of Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida died with her family by her side on Wednesday, January 17, 2024. She was born on October 24, 1928, in Philadelphia as the youngest of 4 children to Donald and Thelma Smith. She is preceded in death by her brothers, Donald Smith, Jr., Duke Smith; sister, Martha Smith MacK-

elan; and her loving husband Bernard Lee Crumpton, Sr.

Growing up, Mary spent her summers in Maine with her family, where she began her life-long love of the outdoors. After graduating from high school, she immediately went to work to help support her mother and family. Her father died at a very young age. After her father's death she and her mother moved to Atlantic Beach, Florida where Mary would meet her future husband. Mary's mother later remarried Dr. John Frederick Dashiell of Chapel Hill, N.C. Mary's mother and stepfather preceded her in death.

Mary's life was devoted to raising her family. All four of Mary's children were born in Jacksonville, Florida. Mary is survived by Martha Finnegan (Mickey), Bernard Lee Crumpton, Jr. (Laurie), Mary Anne Thomas, and John Andrew Crumpton, Sr. (Katherine). Mary's (Nana) greatest love was the time she spent with her grandchildren and great-grandchildren. She is survived by 12 grandchildren and 9 great grandchildren. She is also survived by her sister-in-law, Margie Crumpton.

Mary will be remembered for her love

and kindness to all who met her during her life. The years that she and Bernie spent with Ford Motor Company created lifelong friends whose children remain close with the Crumpton family to this day. After Bernie's retirement from Ford Motor Company, they moved to Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida. As a member of the Ponte Vedra Inn and Beach Club, Mary met new life-long friends as she played golf and tennis. She was President of the PV Inn and Club Women's Golf Association and was a volunteer at the Players Championship for many years.

However, her real passion became the relationships she developed as a member of Christ Episcopal Church in Ponte Vedra Beach. Mary was a true believer in Christ and volunteered many hours serving the church. She led the altar guild, answered phones, took care of memorial flowers for Christmas each year, and helped provide church support to weddings.

In 2007, Mary moved to Vicar's Landing retirement community in Sawgrass. Again, she made new life-long friends who played bridge, enjoyed dining out, attending concerts, and just having a great time. The family would like to thank Christ Church and

Vicar's Landing for all they did to enhance Mary's life.

Those that know Mary will miss her very distinguishable laugh. At parties or just around the house, her laugh would brighten anyone's day who heard it. Her children treasured their weekly phone calls where stories were shared, and Mary's laugh could make any trouble go away. Her grandchildren and great grandchildren will miss the trips to Nana's place in Ponte Vedra Beach. She made each of them feel special by her love and kindness.

A celebration of life will be held at Christ Episcopal Church in Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida on Thursday January 25, 2024, at 11 a.m. Funeral arrangements are being handled by Quinn-Shalz Funeral Home. In lieu of flowers, the family asks that donations be made in Mary's honor to Christ Church. Please visit her online Tribute at www.quinn-shalz.com.

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Jim Kleck has been the captain of the storytellers program at TPC Sawgrass for the past six years but will be moving to the West Coast of Florida later this year to be closer to family. Kleck has enjoyed his time with the storytellers from the stories he has shared to the people he has met and the money he has helped raise for local charities through the initiative.

Jim Kleck

As told to Anthony Richards

Tell us a little about yourself and your background.

I was raised in Ohio in a small farming community and grew up a part of a big family with six kids, where I was the second to the youngest.

I went to college at Oberlin College and Defiance College and the University of Toledo and got a master's degree in microbiology and went to work for a major pharmaceutical company and spent 34 years with them.

Along the way, before I even graduated from college, I got married and we've had two children and now I have four grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

All of them have decided to move to the west coast of Florida, and my wife and I will be moving that way soon as well.

What led you to get involved with the TPC storytellers program?

During my lifetime I've had a lot of volunteer jobs as being part of the corporate structure and everything that goes with that through Junior Achievement, Boy Scouts and various nonprofit hospital boards, including working as a volunteer with Mayo Clinic for 10 years after I retired.

Part of that was volunteering for THE PLAYERS Tournament for five years when we got down here, where I would work on hole No. 5.

And then I was introduced to the storytellers program and I've now been a storyteller for the past 12 years and the captain of the storytellers for the past six years.

What does the storytellers program entail?

There are 51 storytellers, and let me tell you, that it's the best volunteer job I've ever had in my whole life.

It's very rewarding because you get to meet people from all over the world, and I really hate to leave the job, because it is so great.

As the captain, my job is to recruit and train new storytellers and keep them informed of any changes taking place with the clubhouse so that they can incorporate it in their tours.

The storyteller program has really begun to get very well known since it started up in 2007 when the beautiful new clubhouse was built and they wanted to showcase a lot of PLAYERS memorabilia inside it.

It started out with eight storytellers but they soon found that wasn't enough, and we've grown to 51 now, which allows us to have a storyteller on duty at the clubhouse every day of the week from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

What makes the program so special?

Every year we give tours to more than 7,000 guests from all 50 states and 35 foreign countries, which is data that I keep track of myself.

You get to interact with people from all walks of life, and it makes it a highly sought after volunteer job, and every time I go to look for another storyteller, I've got about six resumes of those interested.

These storytellers come from all walks of life, as they're doctors, lawyers or businesspeople and most of



Photo by Anthony Richards

Jim Kleck has served as the captain of the storytellers program at TPC Sawgrass for the past six years.

them are retired with 40% of them being female and 60% male, which makes it a neat group.

What are the most rewarding parts about your job?

For some reason golf trivia sticks in the brain for me, so I've really developed that over the years, and during COVID we were shut down for five months and my wife talked me into writing a book about the storytellers, so I did.

It's 113 pages and all about what I know about being a storyteller and being associated with the clubhouse. That's actually what I use now as my training manual for new storytellers.

You just never know who's going to walk in and want a tour, and it's those conversations that are always fun.

One day I was sitting in the lobby waiting to give tours, and in walked Jason Day, who is one of our winners, and he came over and asked if I had any stories for him.

We sat there and talked for like five minutes while he was waiting for his photographer, so you really get the chance to get up close and personal with a lot of the golfers as well.

What are some of the popular stories that people are most curious about during a tour?

The stories they really gravitate to is the outside tour, where we take people out in a six-seater golf cart and we talk about the No. 16, 17 and 18 holes.

The Island Green at No. 17 is the one that everyone wants to see because it's the most iconic hole in golf worldwide, so everyone wants to hear the stories associated with it, including how many balls are hit in the water each year.

What are some of the ways the storytellers give back to the community?

One of the real kudos of being a storyteller is the money we're able to raise, because the tours are free, but we ask our guests to give gratuities at the end of the tour if they enjoyed it and all of that goes toward charities that we select as storytellers.

Most people are very open with their contributions and since 2007 we've collected more than \$300,000 in gratuities that we've turned around and given to charity.

At the end of each year we submit which charities we want to give the money to, and it's one of the things that the storytellers really like as an opportunity to give back.

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

One of the reasons my wife and I moved here is because it's a very diverse community and we are big supporters of the local symphony, and we have season passes.

It also helps that there are 70 golf courses within a one-hour drive of my house, and we've gotten into boating and have had three boats since we moved here.

Volunteers

Continued from 1

the country.

“This is happening not over there, but here,” Christianson said.

One of the Davids to this Goliath is Operation Underground Railroad (OUR), a nonprofit inspired by the history of the Underground Railroad of the 1800s. Courageous Americans who helped slaves reach freedom through this network were called “conductors,” a name borrowed by OUR volunteers around the globe as they educate their communities and work to end human trafficking.

Saturday, Jan. 20, Christianson and others from the OUR Northeast Florida Conductors’ Club were at Seawalk Pavilion, Jacksonville Beach, for LocalFest.

“We’re here to bring awareness to our community about human trafficking and tell people who we are,” said Christianson. “We want to educate our community, our parents, our citizens on what’s going on in our area and give them the skills in order to protect their children.”



Photo by Shaun Ryan

The OUR Northeast Florida Conductors’ Club was on hand Saturday at LocalFest to speak with the public about human trafficking and child exploitation. Pictured from left are: Jen Vasiliades, Terrye Staggs and Dor Christianson.

LocalFest organizers donated the spot for the club to set up its table.

“We’re getting a lot of people coming up and saying, ‘Thank you for being here; thank you for bringing this subject to the forefront,’” Christianson said.

Though it’s not a happy subject, Christianson said it’s one people must talk about.

The club shared five tips for keeping children safe:

- Educate yourself: ourrescue.org has

JOINING FORCES WITH



OPERATION UNDERGROUND RAILROAD

a resource page offering information that can be shared with children.

- Set safety guidelines online: Monitor children’s online activity. Turn off locations on the phone. Don’t give out personal information. Don’t share pictures with people you don’t know.

- Be active in your children’s lives: Know their friends, where they hang out and who they are talking to. Make your home a safe place where they can talk with you about anything.

- Teach children to be aware of their surroundings: Tell them to put their phones away and be aware at all times.

- Be aware of odd behavior: If a child seems suddenly withdrawn, is losing weight or seems depressed or stressed, you may need to take action.

To learn more about the local Conductors’ Club, go to facebook.com/groups/ournortheastfloridacollectorsclub.

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GUEST COLUMN

Combating human trafficking through awareness and action

By Banks Vadeboncoeur

Within the haze of a dust-filled construction site, the shadows of a dimly lit nightclub, the heavily perfumed scents of a massage parlor and the digital realm within our computer screens, a dark reality unfolds every day. In these seemingly ordinary places across our country, traumatic events of human trafficking are constantly occurring, unnoticed.

Human trafficking is the act of using force, deception or coercion to pressure an individual into engaging in commercial sex acts or labor against their will. Victims, spanning age and gender, come from various backgrounds and locations. The two commonly identified forms of trafficking are labor trafficking and sex trafficking.

Labor trafficking involves exploitative practices like bonded labor, where victims work to repay undefined loans, often exceeding the borrowed

sum. Forced labor confines individuals to work against their will, intimidating victims with violence and punishments. Child labor, affecting 246 million globally, threatens children's development and education due to its hazardous conditions. Children are often forced into harmful activities such as coerced enlistment for armed conflicts, pornography, unlawful weapon trade, prostitution and various illegal undertakings.

Sex trafficking is when someone is forced or tricked into selling sex against their will. Victims of sex trafficking go through different situations, like being pressured after romantic relationships or tricked with promises of jobs such as modeling. Sadly, some even face coercion from their own parents, being forced into selling sex and enduring these situations for different lengths of time.

According to the Polaris Project, a survivor-centered movement aimed at

ending human trafficking, there were 10,359 reported instances of human trafficking to the U.S. National Human Trafficking Hotline in 2021 alone. These incidents involved 16,554 individual victims. It is worth noting that a significant number of human trafficking cases go unreported, as victims are afraid of potential retaliation from their traffickers, putting themselves and their families at risk.

To prevent trafficking, individuals can take a few simple measures. Online, where traffickers often recruit victims, it's crucial to be extra cautious. Add only familiar faces to your friends list and avoid sharing personal details that traffickers could exploit. Steer clear of sending explicit photos, especially to strangers, and verify the legitimacy of self-proclaimed professionals on the internet.

My organization, Young Voices for Change (youngvoicesforchange.org), is working to fight against human traf-

ficking through our upcoming event, "Pickleball for a Purpose." In collaboration with Rethreaded, an organization dedicated to empowering survivors of human trafficking, participants in this pickleball tournament have the chance to sponsor one hour of group therapy, licensed mental health counseling, or development and training for survivors of human trafficking — all for just \$25 per team. The event is set to take place at Fort Family Regional Park from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Feb. 24. For any questions, please contact myself at vadbanks@gmail.com or Mia Tiller at 904-426-8252. Join us in breaking the cycle of trafficking by signing up for the tournament and supporting this crucial cause! Sign up link: <https://forms.gle/HxWRPjGf4R-8CVpmZ9>.

Banks Vadeboncoeur is a student at Ponte Vedra High School.



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Tips to keep pets and strays warm this winter

By Anthony Richards

We are in the thick of the winter season and even living in Northeast Florida can produce its share of extremely cold days.

Although the cold stretches do not last as long in Florida as other states across the country, the St. Augustine Humane Society still reminds all pet owners to be mindful for their furry friends.

Some tips the St. Augustine Humane Society have to help keep cats and dogs warm and prevent hyperthermia from setting in are to consider letting pets that usually stay outside inside one's home for the night or make use of some old blankets that may be lying around the house for them to lay on and snuggle in.

However, the humane society points out to make sure that the blankets are dry because a damp blanket would not be as warm and could cause even more issues for the animal.

If entering the home is not an option, the next best thing is making sure the pets have options to enter garages or sheds around the property, where they will naturally look to enter to at least be directly out of the elements.

According to the organization, outdoor cats often choose to nap on or around vehicle engines and can climb up in



The St. Augustine Humane Society has several ways to help keep local cats and dogs warm this winter.

Photo courtesy of St. Augustine Humane Society

wheel wells because of the warmth that they give off.

As a result, the St. Augustine Humane

Society advises that a good habit during the winter is to honk the horn before starting up a vehicle, so that any cats

have the chance to exit if they were hiding in any of those spots.

Antifreeze may be added to vehicles during the winter, and it is necessary to make sure to clean up any spills that take place on a driveway, because it is known to have a sweet smell, which the humane society says cats could be drawn to, and it is deadly for them if they were to drink it.

Finally, being aware of the change in a cat's dietary needs during the winter is key to helping them combat the cold weather.

Because of the cold, outdoor animals require more calories to generate more energy to help cope with the cold in the winter.

Just as they would naturally grow more fur to have a "winter coat" for added protection, the extra food will provide them with that same added protection from a nutritional standpoint.

The St. Augustine Humane Society is asking for the entire community's help in making sure local cats and dogs get the assistance they need to make it through the winter, and that includes not just those who have a home, but also the stray animals that are wondering the streets, who could use a little extra food or a blanket as well.



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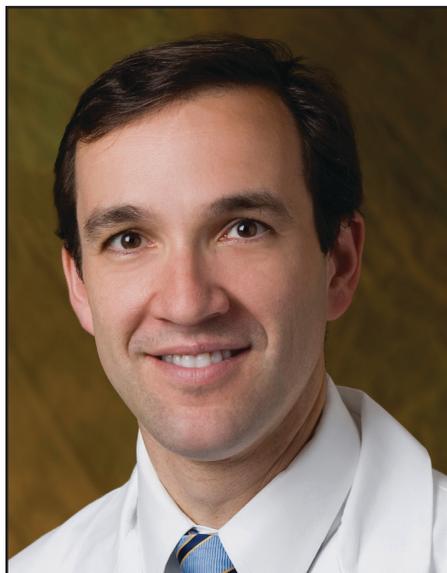
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GUEST COLUMN

6 Ways to Improve Your Heart Health in 2024



By Anthony Magnano M.D.

Ascension St. Vincent's Riverside

Every year, we set great resolutions for our health. Unfortunately, we usually forget them by the end of the month. This year, don't miss the opportunity to reprioritize your heart health. Heart disease is the leading cause of death for both men and women according to the CDC, but many cardiac events are preventable. There are no quick fixes, but there are some easy steps you can take to make a difference.

Follow these tips to take control of your heart health in 2024.

Tip 1: See Your Doctor for Annual Screening

Your risk of developing heart disease increases as you age. According to research published by the Journal of the American Heart Association, people over age 40 have a 1-in-4 lifetime risk of developing AFib, or atrial fibrillation, a common heart rhythm condition. Scheduling regular visits with your primary care doctor and any specialists you see can help catch problems sooner rather than later, which can be lifesaving in some cases.

Especially if you experience high blood pressure or high cholesterol, make doctor's visits a priority to keep a close eye on your heart health. At Ascension St. Vincent's, our teams of primary care doctors and cardiologists, including those at our hospital in St. Johns County, can provide you with the most effective screening methods to check for heart disease and other conditions.

Tip 2: Monitor Your Heart Health

Many of our patients use personal technology, like portable medical-grade EKG devices, to help monitor their hearts from home. These devices can help doctors

detect heart rhythm irregularities sooner, which can sometimes help make a diagnosis or even prevent a stroke. But not all technology is created equal. For example, a less complex heart rate monitor and one that is built to be an EKG-grade device may show differing results.

Tip 3: Avoid Excessive Stress

We all experience stress, but excessive and prolonged stress can contribute to heart issues like blood vessel constriction, high blood pressure, and elevate the risk of a heart attack and stroke. Regular exercise is a key stress reducer. Whether it's a brisk walk, yoga, or a fitness class, physical activity benefits both the heart and mental health.

Tip 4: Focus on Moderation

Alcohol is often linked to heart problems, notably increasing the risk of AFib. An observational study in the European Heart Journal found that even one daily glass of wine or beer led to a 16% higher risk of developing AFib (compared to not drinking). AFib, in turn, increases the risk of stroke, heart failure and cardiac arrest. While enjoying a glass of wine is fine, moderation is key. Exceeding two drinks in a day is never heart-healthy.

Tip 5: Stick to Healthy Eating Habits

Try to limit salty foods, such as canned or processed foods. Also limit high-fat foods, such as red meat, cheese, and baked goods. When it comes to a heart-healthy diet, the important thing is to maintain balance. A Mediterranean-style diet high in vegetables, fruits, lean proteins and whole grains has been shown to promote weight loss and reduce heart disease risk.

Tip 6: Know the Signs of Stroke and Don't Delay Treatment

Recognizing the warning signs of stroke can protect both yourself and your loved ones. The important acronym to remember for identifying a stroke is B.E. F.A.S.T. That stands for balance, eyes/vision loss, face drooping, arm weakness, speech difficulty, and time to call 911. It's common to mistake or minimize the signs of stroke, but don't delay treatment. Call 911.

Dr. Anthony Magnano is a Ponte Vedra resident and Chief of Cardiology at Ascension St. Vincent's Riverside. For more information on Dr. Magnano and his specialty in treating Atrial fibrillation, go to [Healthcare.ascension.org](https://www.healthcare.ascension.org) or call 904-388-1820.

Cypress Village unveils changes to Wellness Clinic

Community adds new resident services director

Cypress Village has announced the appointment of Ashley Miller as its new resident services director and health care navigator. With a wealth of experience as the previous hospital liaison for Cypress Village's Healthcare Center for nine years, Miller returns ready to contribute her expertise to the community in her new role.

Under her leadership, the 2024 Wellness calendar promises to be robust and exciting, with events, workshops and lunch-and-learns strategically curated around the 8 Dimensions of Wellness, from Clinical to Spiritual, according to Cypress Village. Miller's goal is to add value, make an overall impact and provide a high standard of resources to ensure residents can live an abundant life.

The Wellness Clinic is set to host its first cardiac clinic in February, with plans to introduce neurology services by the second quarter, offering a comprehensive range of health care services to the community.

Miller sees opportunities to elevate the Wellness Center and Clinic by expanding the onsite provider list. A new registered dietician is also joining the team, with plans to organize clinic days starting in March, aligning with Nutrition Month.

In addition, Cypress Village has partnered with First Coast Cardiovascular Institute (FCCI), established in 2002 and renowned as one of Greater Jacksonville's leading cardiology practices. The Wellness Clinic will



host cardiac clinics one or two times a month, featuring services from FCCI's team of experts, including an MD, ARNP and EP (electrophysiologist).

The clinic boasts three exam rooms designed to host a consistent flow of providers and residents. The newly renovated space also transports visitors to a serene spa upon entry. In collaboration with fitness instructors, the



Fitness Center is undergoing upgrades with state-of-the-art equipment, enhancing the overall wellness experience for Cypress Village residents.

The Cypress Village team is looking forward to the positive impact these changes will bring to the community's health and well-being.

Cypress Village is a Retirement Care Community that offers residents an outstanding standard of living with all the services and amenities. Located adjacent to the Mayo Clinic, Cypress Village has beautifully appointed homes and apartments on a 120-acre campus. For more information on this unmatched lifestyle of comfort and convenience, call 904-223-6100.

Contributed photos



Paul Wilson and his family.



Paul Wilson and son Luke run in the Wolfson Children's Challenge.

GUEST COLUMN

Returning to the Wolfson Children's Challenge after bunion correction

By Paul Wilson

Running has always been a major part of my life. After my son, Luke, was born with health complications that required surgery and an extended stay at Wolfson Children's Hospital, I decided to use my hobby for a greater cause. I established the Wolfson Children's Challenge – an annual philanthropic event where ultramarathoners can run 55 kilometers with a relay team or by themselves.

On Jan. 27, the 15th annual Wolfson Children's Challenge will be held at Nocatee Station Field. It will be the first time I'll be able to complete the full 55-mile race alone since foot pain caused by a bunion forced me to withdraw five years ago.

Bunions form when bones in the mid-foot slide out of alignment, causing pain that often progresses in severity over time [1]. The deformity is common — about 25% of American adults suffer from them regardless of gender [2]. They also frequently run in families — my grandparents both had bunions [3],[4].

I noticed my bunion forming a few years ago when my big toe turned inward quite a bit and caused a hammertoe to develop on my second toe. I was hesitant

to seek treatment initially, as I didn't want to end my running career. As a longtime athlete, I figured I could work my way through the bunion pain.

Eventually, the bunion pain became too difficult to ignore. I had trouble sleeping due to the excruciating foot pain, and I was unable to run or train. I decided it was time to look for a treatment. One day, I was wearing sandals at my son's soccer game when another parent noticed my foot and suggested that I consider Lapiplasty 3D Bunion Correction.

After searching on the Lapiplasty website's Find a Doctor tool, I discovered that Dr. Hiram Carasquillo, a specialist who treated me years before, was trained to perform the Lapiplasty procedure. After paying him a visit and being deemed a viable candidate, I had my left foot corrected in December 2019. Within nine months after surgery, I was running again [5].

As I gear up for this year's race, I am thankful the Lapiplasty procedure has allowed me to spend more time being active with my family and fully participate in an event I am passionate about.

Only a surgeon can tell if the Lapiplasty procedure is right for you. This experience is unique and specific to this patient only.

Individual results may vary depending on age, weight, health and other variables. There are risks and recovery takes time.

For more information about recovery from the Lapiplasty procedure, see the recovery information and discuss the post-surgery recovery process with your doctor. Risks include infection, pain, implant loosening and loss of correction with improper bone healing. For more informa-

tion on benefits, risks and recovery, go to Lapiplasty.com.

[1] American College of Foot and Ankle Surgeons (ACFAS) Website ©2023.

[2] Nix S, et al. J Foot Ankle Res. 2010. 27:3:21.

[3] American College of Foot and Ankle Surgeons (ACFAS) Website ©2023.

[4] WebMD Website ©2023.

[5] Based on surgeon experience in their practice.



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The Foundation 5000's inaugural event set for this weekend

5K will serve as fundraiser for UF Health St. Johns mobile outreach clinic

By Anthony Richards

The UF Health St. Johns Foundation will be hosting the inaugural The Foundation 5000 on Jan. 27, which will be a 5K race to raise money for the UF

Health St. Johns Care Connect Mobile Outreach Clinic.

The mobile clinic is vital to the community because it offers an outlet for an impactful and affordable health care alternative for many residents.

As a mobile unit, it provides the clinic with the capability of reaching and providing necessary health needs to various communities in St. Johns County regardless of economic status.

A standard mobile clinic offers several services to patients depending on their needs, including primary

care, women's health services, chronic disease management and education, diagnostic testing, wound care and cancer screenings.

UF Health St. Johns is asking for the community to come out and enjoy a fun day of fitness, philanthropy and community spirit with their family and friends.

The event will take place around UF Health Flagler Hospital located at 400 Health Park Blvd. in St. Augustine.

Packet pickup for the race can be received and all paper registrations will be gathered on Jan. 26 from various times, 7 to 9 a.m.; 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.; and 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. There will be a table set up at the roundabout for the main entry to the hospital on the property.

The race route will start along the hospital on Sgt. Tutten Drive and go down Health Park Boulevard and U.S. 1 before making a left onto Shore Drive and taking the loop around and back the way the route came.

The course will wrap up going back around the hospital from Sgt. Tutten Drive and right onto University Boulevard where it will finish.

The race will start at 8 a.m. with same-day registration beginning at 7



a.m. and an awards ceremony is estimated for around 9:15 a.m. with a post-race fair taking place on the property until 11 a.m.

Free parking will be available for all race participants in parking lot C, which is along Health Park Boulevard.

Custom race T-shirts will be given to each runner along with a medal for finishing on top of additional custom awards for the top spots, as it will be a time-chipped race.

Winners will be divided out into age groups and an overall winner and there will be a finish line video on YouTube capturing each participant's moment as they reach the end.

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Haven Hospice receives \$25k for dementia care

Grant will be used to purchase tools with patients, caregivers in mind

By Anthony Richards

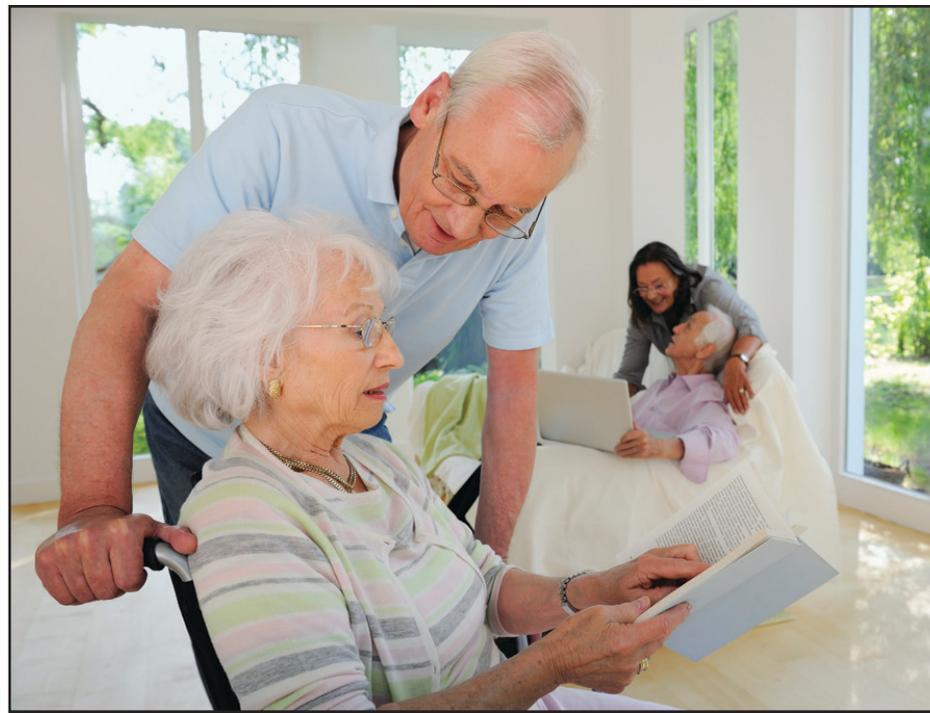
Haven Hospice recently received a \$25,000 grant from the Thomas A. Plein Foundation that will go toward supporting its dementia care program.

The program is all about promoting education of dementia and what it entails for members of the Haven staff, patient caregivers and community partners.

By educating everyone involved with the program, Haven Hospice hopes to improve the quality of life for those facing dementia and the ones tasked with helping them on their journey.

The grant will help in the creation of memory cafes and caregiver support groups, as well as helping fund additional tools designed to help dementia patients.

“Alzheimer’s and other dementia-related diseases affect each person differently,” said Anita Howard, Haven Dementia Care program manager. “The Plein Foundation’s gift will allow Haven



to help staff, families and community partners identify how to best care for those living with dementia. We are thankful for these funds and are already putting them to use at Haven and in the communities we serve.”

Those tools include items, such as robotic animals, busy blankets, aromatherapy, baby dolls, puzzles and art supplies, which have been found to help dementia

patients who are encountering memory loss or other thinking abilities severe enough to affect a person’s daily life.

However, preventing caregiver burnout is another hope that the grant will achieve, as those tools have also been found to help the stress faced by caregivers.

The good news surrounding Haven Hospice continues, as the organization is

also preparing to certify 12 team members through Positive Approach to Care, LLC and Teepa Snow, which offers a wide range of educational courses for caregivers.

“Haven found that a significant number of its patients year-over-year had a dementia diagnosis and that some families were struggling to meet the cognitive, physical and emotional needs associated with dementia,” Howard said. “Our team realized that special training and education were a must to help us identify ways to assist each patient and their caregiver with having a better quality of life.”

The grants will serve the needs of patients throughout the 18 counties that Haven Hospice serves, including those making up the region of Northeast Florida.

To learn more about Haven Hospice and its dementia care program or anyone looking to give toward the cause can go to beyourhaven.org.

In 2020, the Haven Hospice Foundation was formed as a non-profit charitable organization with the goal of supporting Haven Hospice’s mission through fundraising efforts, and the grant from the Thomas A. Plein Foundation is just the latest results from that initiative.

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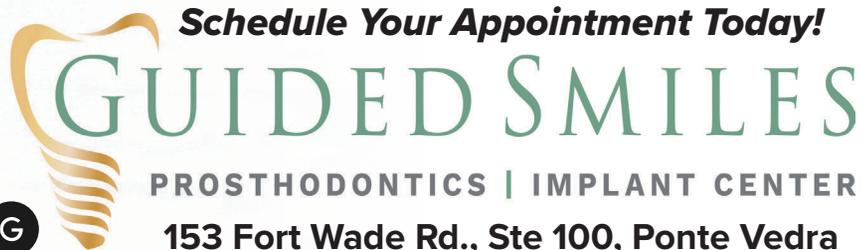
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Miracle Leaf cuts ribbon on new store

By Shaun Ryan

Miracle Leaf Saint Augustine, a franchise operation that helps people suffering from a number of conditions, recently opened its doors at 2487 U.S. 1 South in St. Augustine. Its focus is medical marijuana and CBD products that offer a natural alternative to opioids.

“Our mission is basically to get people off prescription drugs,” said Chief Development Officer Benjamin Padilla for Miami-based Miracle Leaf.

The company was founded in 2017, less than a year after 71% of Florida voters approved a constitutional amendment effectively legalizing medical marijuana in the Sunshine State. Miracle Leaf began selling franchises in 2018 and now has offices in Florida, Georgia, Texas and Ohio.

Though there are dozens of qualifying conditions, people most often seek out medical cannabis products to help with PTSD, arthritis, anxiety, migraine and insomnia. To see a list of qualifying conditions, go to mymiracleleaf.com/florida.

The risk of addiction is much lower than that of Oxycontin and other opioids.

“Our doctors are very passionate

about medical marijuana as an alternative medicine,” said Padilla.

Miracle Leaf performs the initial intake for clients and sets them up with appointments with a physician in the store. The client and physician have a consultation and then, if approved, the client leaves the store with a recommendation, which is then taken to a dispensary.

Alternately, Miracle Leaf sells retail medical and pharmaceutical-grade CBD products, which are made from hemp, and are available in gummies and topicals.

“With CBD, you get the benefits without the high,” said Padilla.

Miracle Leaf also treats pets.

According to Travis Wright, Miracle Leaf vice president of operations, the Florida Department of Health Office of Medical Marijuana Use reports that there are 2,748 qualified physicians and 864,662 qualified patients in the state.

“We’re very passionate about what we do,” said Padilla. “We feel like there is not a day that goes by where we don’t hear from a franchisee or from a client that says, ‘Thank you. You’ve changed my life.’”

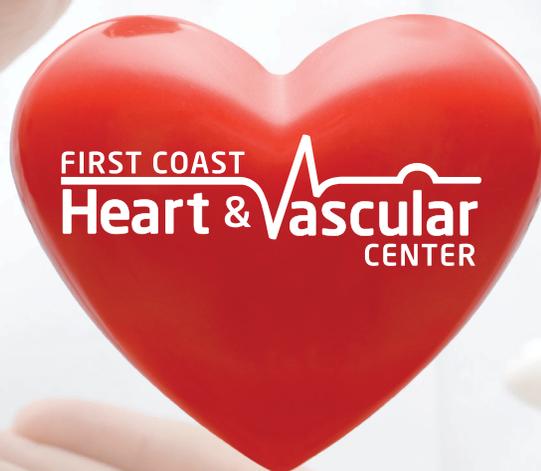
For further information, go to mymiracleleaf.com/st-augustine.



Contributed photo

Miracle Leaf Saint Augustine franchise owners cut the ribbon on their new store Jan. 13.

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Ground broken for Fort Mose reconstruction

Project honors first legally sanctioned free Black community in present-day United States

In a collaborative effort, the Fort Mose Historical Society and the Florida State Parks Foundation hosted a historic groundbreaking ceremony on Friday, Jan. 19.

Initially built almost four decades before the American colonies declared their independence, Fort Mose was the first legally sanctioned free Black community in the present-day United States. Now, efforts to begin reconstruction of the 1738 fort on the grounds of Fort Mose Historic State Park are set to begin and be completed by late 2024.

“As we break ground on the reconstruction of Fort Mose, we are not merely rebuilding walls — we’re creating a tribute to the resilient and determined freedom seekers who made the first free Black settlement a possibility,” said Charles Ellis, president of the Fort Mose Historical Society. “The Fort Mose Historical Society is honored to have played a pivotal role in launching this project, providing the public with an opportunity to consider the true value of freedom. With the community’s

support, we embark on a journey to create a dynamic space where the echoes of the past will resonate in the hearts and minds of all who visit.”

“Today marks a historic moment in our journey to preserve and celebrate our state’s and our nation’s rich cultural heritage,” said Julia Gill Woodward, CEO of the Florida State Parks Foundation. “The Fort Mose groundbreaking ceremony signifies a commitment to fostering a deep connection between our past and present. This project is a tribute to the enduring spirit of community and the profound importance of preserving our shared history.”

The original Fort Mose was established in 1738, marking a new beginning for a wave of freedom seekers who first arrived in St. Augustine in 1687. That version of the fort met its end with the Battle of Bloody Mose in 1740.

The Fort Mose Historical Society launched the fort reconstruction project in 2012 and began fundraising efforts for the reconstruction. The Florida State Parks Foundation was awarded a \$933,000 grant through the Florida Department of State’s Florida African-American Cultural & Historical Grant Opportunity for fort reconstruction. This project transcends the simple reconstruction of a landmark; it will convey the vital history of Fort Mose to the world, a pivotal chapter of the na-



Contributed photo

Local dignitaries break ground for the Fort Mose reconstruction effort.

tion’s narrative.

The project was also made possible through the generosity of several community partners and organizations, including St. Johns County, The Jacksonville Jaguars Foundation, The St. Augustine Amphitheatre’s Fort Mose Jazz & Blues Series, The Delores Barr Weaver Legacy Fund, The Lastinger Family Foundation, Florida Power and Light, The Bailey Group, Wells Fargo, Northrop Grumman, Florida Blue and The Community Foundation for

Northeast Florida.

“We are excited to break ground at Fort Mose after so many years of hard work and dedication,” said Chuck Hatcher, director of the Florida Park Services. “The new fort reconstruction will provide a remarkable experience for visitors from around the world, and we are grateful for everyone who has helped bring this project to life.”

For more information, go to fortmose.org.



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Democratic Club hosts Deegan

By Shaun Ryan

At a meeting of the Ponte Vedra Democratic Club on Monday, Jan. 22, Jacksonville Mayor Donna Deegan highlighted some successes from her first six months in office.

Since day one, she said, “I’ve tried to talk about those kitchen-table issues that are really important to people’s lives instead of constantly stoking the culture wars. I’m not saying that issues aren’t important, but when people can’t afford housing or they can’t afford food or they’re out on the street, it’s hard to care about other stuff.”

Arguably, the most significant development in recent months was passage in December by the City Council of an ambitious \$26 million package of programs rooted in the findings of committees formed by Deegan’s transition

team.

That package established programs to keep people in their homes in the face of various challenges, including pending eviction and the need for roof rehabilitation. It also provided relief for people across the spectrum of homelessness.

“We really have a dearth of affordable housing units,” Deegan said. “You guys probably do, too.”

In addition, the package includes help for small businesses; literacy initiatives; and programs that will improve public health, including that of expectant mothers so as to reduce infant mortality.

In fact, Deegan drew applause for one specific success concerning health care.

“I’m really proud to tell you that we had a major, major drive both on television and social media with influencers

all over Duval County to push people to sign up for health care with the Affordable Care Act,” Deegan said. “In the first few weeks, we’re plus-27,000 from where we were before.”

Deegan also devoted a lot of attention to crumbling infrastructure in various parts of the city.

The bringing together of competing factions to conduct a single, unified Martin Luther King Jr. Breakfast on Jan. 12 has been seen as an expression of Deegan’s efforts toward greater unity.

Deegan earned cheers from her audience when she noted the removal, at her instruction, of “that damned Confederate monument,” a reference to the “Tribute to the Women of the Southern Confederacy” monument removed from its place in Springfield Park on Dec. 27.

Concerning the coming election, Deegan predicted an “enormous wave” of women going to the polls, motivated by the Supreme Court’s 2022 ruling that overturned Roe v Wade and gave individual states the authority to regulate abortion.

Despite challenges faced by the city, Deegan sounded a note of optimism, saying, “I think good days are coming for us.”

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GUEST COLUMN

Three steps to efficient home organization on a tight schedule

By Barbara Trapp,
Zen Your Den owner

As a certified professional organizer, one of the most common refrains I hear is, “My house is in chaos, and I don’t know where to start!” It can be overwhelming to have many areas that need decluttering but only have small blocks of time to devote to getting organized. So how can you make meaningful progress on a tight schedule?

You might be tempted to dive into a big decluttering and organizing project, but without a plan, you can potentially create an even more chaotic environment. It can be more effective — and manageable — to start with small, but meaningful tasks. The saying, “It’s going to get worse before it gets better,” does not have to be your reality.

Here are three steps to starting your home organization project:

STEP 1: Do a walkthrough

Walk through your home starting with where you enter, whether that’s the front door or garage entrance. From that point, gauge your stress level. On a scale of 1-10, with 10 being the most stressful, how do you feel about each area as you pass through it? Consider the entrance to your home, hallways, transition areas, living areas and storage locations. Which areas are causing you the most stress?

Some popular starting points are the areas where people gather, such as kitchens and living rooms. However, if you aren’t sleeping well and your bedroom is a cluttered disaster, I recommend starting there. Having a peaceful oasis to retire to, free of paper piles, clutter and clothes draped everywhere, can improve your ability to disconnect and get some much-needed rest.

STEP 2: Start with the destination

Perhaps you want to clean out your kitchen cabinets and pantry. Where are the items you want to relocate or donate

going to end up? If you are going to store infrequently used small kitchen appliances or partyware on some shelves in the garage, then start by decluttering and cleaning off those shelves. If you are going to donate items, then schedule a donation pickup, or if that isn’t an option, start by making sure your vehicle has space for them. If your intention is to get rid of things, they aren’t really gone until they have left your house — and your vehicle. I’ve worked with many clients whose garages were full of good intentions: boxes and piles of donations that haven’t quite made it off the property.

STEP 3: Set an achievable goal for the time you have

It can be really demotivating to create a bigger mess that you don’t have time to deal with but must spend days maneuvering around. I never leave a client with a half-finished project that makes it difficult to function. Set a goal you can meet in the time you have, and you’ll get a win that will keep you motivated while you enjoy the results of your work. Here are some examples of measurable goals and tiny tasks that will make a big impact:

Examples of small measurable goals and sample tasks:

- By a block of time:
 - Spend 20 minutes processing mail.
 - File receipts/papers.
- By quantity:
 - Put away 30 things in your bedroom.
 - Get rid of 10 items of clothing.
- By time limit:
 - Unload the dishwasher in five minutes. (I love setting timers to keep me on track!)
 - Set the table in three minutes.
 - Clean the kitchen in 15 minutes.
- By area:
 - Clean out one corner of the garage.
 - Clean out a bathroom cabinet.
 - Declutter one bookshelf, donating unwanted books and cleaning off the shelf.
- By category:

- Gather all dirty clothes for laundering.
- Collect all books from every location in your home and sort and purge.
- Sort and purge coffee cups and travel mugs.

Examples of multitasking:

- While parked and waiting:
 - Make your grocery list.
 - Plan dinner.
 - Tidy up your wallet.
 - Clean out your glove compartment.
- While listening to a podcast or audiobook:
 - Clean out your fridge, starting with the top shelf and working down.
 - Clean out a kitchen drawer.
 - Deadhead flowers in your garden.
 - Take a walk. (This can declutter your mind.)
- During a casual call with a friend (note that these are all quiet tasks):
 - Change your sheets and make your bed.

- Sort and fold your laundry.
 - Give yourself a manicure.
- While on an eternal phone hold:
- Delete 100 junk emails (pretty quick if you sort by sender first).
 - Empty out your purse/bookbag, etc. onto the upside-down lid off a large plastic bin. (This will help capture dirt and small objects.)
 - Delete unused apps from your phone.
 - Charge and clean your devices.

Follow these three steps and you will make steady progress on your decluttering projects!

Barbara Trapp is a certified professional organizer and productivity coach serving clients everywhere virtually. She is the owner of Zen Your Den and Zen Your Biz and can be reached at info@zenyourden.com or 904-500-SORT (7678). Visit her website at zenyourden.com.



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Hendrix named UF Health St. Johns chief operating officer



Lydia Hendrix

Lydia Hendrix RN has been named chief operating officer of UF Health St. Johns, where she will oversee all aspects of operations across the region, including existing and future inpatient hospitals and ambulatory sites.

“On behalf of UF Health St. Johns, I am pleased to welcome Lydia to the executive leadership team,” said Carlton DeVoght, president and CEO of UF Health St. Johns. “Her substantial knowledge and experience will deliver valuable insight and leadership as we continue our growth as part of the larger UF Health system.”

Hendrix comes to UF Health St. Johns with extensive experience in the health care industry, most recently as vice president and chief nursing officer at Advent Health East Orlando. In that role, she was responsible for all aspects of nursing

care and clinical ancillary services for the 319-bed hospital and two freestanding emergency departments.

Additionally, Hendrix helped lead strategic and long-range planning related to budget development and oversight, clinical care delivery, market and service line development and community engagement.

“It is an honor to join UF Health St. Johns at this pivotal moment in its history,” Hendrix said. “I look forward to helping guide the organization as we continue the longstanding legacy of meeting the needs of our patients and their families.”

In 2023, UF Health acquired Flagler Health+ and the health system is now UF Health St. Johns.

Hendrix began her career as an administrative nurse manager at Florida

Hospital Medical Center in Orlando. After 14 years, she became the hospital’s administrative director for the Orthopaedic Institute, Fracture Care Center and Rehabilitation and Sports Medicine. Later, she was promoted to assistant vice president of clinical operations for the hospital system’s flagship campus.

Her career in health care administration has seen Hendrix hold senior leadership roles at Siemens Medical Solutions USA Inc., Brooks Rehabilitation and NeuLife Rehabilitation before her time at Advent Health.

Hendrix is a doctorate of nursing practice candidate in executive health systems leadership from Florida State University, holds a master’s degree in strategic leadership from Mountain State University and a bachelor’s degree in nursing from Florida State University.

Baptist Health’s chief nursing officer honored as nursing leader to know

Tammy Daniel, DNP, RN, senior vice president and chief nursing officer of Baptist Health, has been included on Becker’s Hospital Review’s prestigious list of hospital and health system nursing leaders to know.

The list acknowledges nursing leaders who leverage their clinical and leadership experience to provide exceptional patient care and create “professional pathways for the next generation of nurses,” according to Becker’s.

Daniel has spent nearly half of her 35-year career at Baptist Health. She joined the health system in 2007 and held several leadership positions within the organization before assuming the top nursing leadership role in 2018. In addition to strategic planning to align nursing practice with system values and goals, Daniel oversees nursing while

elevating quality, safety, efficiency and a culture of excellence and empathy across the health system.

All of Baptist Health’s eligible adult hospitals have received the coveted Magnet designation from the American Nurses Credentialing Center for providing the gold standard of nursing care. Baptist Health is also a recipient of straight A’s from The Leapfrog Group for patient safety at all of its eligible adult hospitals and Wolfson Children’s Hospital received the “Leapfrog Top Hospital” award.

Initiatives to enhance the careers of Baptist Health’s current nurses and train the next generation of nursing professionals include Baptist Health Clinical School, a 15-week nursing assistant program to teach students to care for patients in diverse care settings, and a

12-month accelerated nursing degree program developed with Jacksonville University.

Baptist Health also offers the ExCEL Clinical Ladder Program, a professional development program that enhances job satisfaction and empowers direct care team members to pursue opportunities for advancement while enhancing the quality of patient care and outcomes.

“We sincerely congratulate Dr. Daniel on this honor,” said Matthew A. Zuino, executive vice president and chief operating officer of Baptist Health. “We thank her for her tireless dedication to our patients’ health and safety and for being an innovator and advocate for advancing the role of nursing at a time when it is critically important to attract and retain a high-quality workforce to serve our growing community.”



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In the Arts



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Ponte Vedra students to present “Les Miz”



Charlie Pennella



Claira Williams

By Shaun Ryan

One of the biggest musicals in history will take the stage February 1-5 at Ponte Vedra High School.

“Les Misérables,” the dramatic production that explores betrayal, forgiveness, redemption, self-sacrifice and much more, is based on Victor Hugo’s 1862 novel of the same name. On Broadway alone, it ran 6,680 performances over 16 years. Among its awards are two Tonys, including one for Best Musical.

With powerful themes and raw emotions, it’s a demanding production, but director Jason Nettle believes in his cast, which is made up of 10th-, 11th- and 12th-grade students from his advanced acting class.

“I think we all possess all the stages of humanity in us, whether we understand them or not,” he said. “And I think this type of show is about how we struggle with so many things and how kindness can help a lot of people through those tough times.”

Indeed, the cast members have embraced the show’s challenges.

“It’s very hard,” said senior Claira Williams, who plays Fantine, the tragic character who surrenders everything she has for the sake of a child she never sees. “To really think about what the character Fantine has to go through, it takes an emotional toll.”

To help her relate to such suffering, Williams draws on substitute experiences that can better aid her understanding and portrayal. But it’s that very challenge that she enjoys.

“I’m so lucky to have this opportunity to play such a hard acting role, because that’s something that I love to do,” she said. “And to really try to find those levels and what goes through Fantine’s mind has been a challenge, but it’s a fun challenge.”



Photos by Shaun Ryan

Cast members perform a song from “Les Misérables” during a recent rehearsal in the auditorium at Ponte Vedra High School.

Solo lines were divided among the show’s 28 performers, and there are between eight and 10 principal roles. Among them is the main protagonist, Jean Valjean, played by sophomore Charlie Pennella.

Preparing for that role, Pennella has done his homework.

“I’ve been doing a lot of research watching as many productions as I can to make it my own,” he said.

Tickets for this production of “Les Misérables” are \$10 and can be purchased by going to gofan.com and looking under Ponte Vedra High School. Show dates are: 7 p.m. Feb. 1, 2, 3 and 5; 5 p.m. Feb. 4.

Nettle made a point of mentioning that this is not a children’s show, rating it a PG-13. The posters say that it is the “school edition,” but aside from some tightening up in parts, it’s very much the

show audiences have always enjoyed. In addition to directing, Nettle is the music director, lighting designer and set designer. Bella Davidson is choreographer.

EDITOR’S NOTE: This is an abridged version of the article. To read the full story and comments from other cast members, please go to pontevedrarecorder.com.

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It was a celebratory atmosphere during the St. Augustine Art Association's 100th anniversary event on Jan. 18.



Attendees view the artwork in the main gallery.



Guests mingle on the night.

Photos by Anthony Richards

Century

Continued from 1

Bradley said. "Art has been my whole life."

Bradley thanked Kay Burtin, who served as executive director for the St. Augustine Art Association for 13 years and continues to be a valuable member of the organization's board of directors.

"She instilled in me the love for this art

association and the importance that it has to the community," Bradley said. "Without that, I would have never understood how valuable this place is to the local artists."

The St. Augustine Art Association is the 13th oldest continuous-operated art association in the country, but Bradley stated that they are unique in their approach.

"I know of no other art association who does what we do," Bradley said. "We don't jury our members in, allowing ev-

eryone to be a member of the art association and that's what makes it a unique and wonderful place."

According to Bradley, the majority of art associations will allow people to be members but will not allow them to show their work because they have to be chosen for that through a process. However, at the St. Augustine Art Association, a love of art is the primary criteria needed.

Bradley and Mayer had friends and family on hand at the ceremony, some of

which made lengthy trips to make sure they were there for the memorable night.

A champagne toast was made, and cupcakes were enjoyed at the end of the event as those in attendance wished for another 100 years of success and inspiring the local art culture.

"Success is not created by one individual, but instead it takes a lot of willing hands," Bradley said. "This celebration of the 100th anniversary is a tribute to all of those who came before us."

Butterfield Garage to feature 'Works in Glass'

The Butterfield Garage featured artist for February will be Tess Blum presenting "Works in Glass," a collection of glass mosaics and stained glass

capturing the radiance and luminosity of Florida's natural beauty. An artist talk at 6 p.m. Feb. 3, First Friday, will be an opportunity to learn how she accom-

plishes her dazzling results.

Her artwork combines precise planning with the surprise results made possible by letting the materials guide the way. The glass is often cut to very defined shapes, but sometimes it is the "found" piece that guides the art to completion. The play of reflection vs. dullness and texture vs. sheen in each piece of glass helps to create the perfect medium for exploring the natural beauty of her surroundings in Florida.

Blum has forged a unique path with her mosaics, using iridized glass and small mirror fragments to capture and reflect light. Florida landscapes, waterways and flora and fauna are illumi-

nated and brought into the light in these intricate pieces.

Blum has been creating art in one form or another her entire life. After successful careers in both textile design and art education, she is focusing primarily on glass arts, including stained glass, mosaics and reverse-painted glass.

She will conduct a "cutting glass for mosaics and stained glass" demonstration at 2 p.m. Feb. 17 at Butterfield Garage Gallery, 137 King St., St. Augustine.

For additional classes in mosaics, stained glass and various painting methods, contact Blum by email, tessmarieblum@gmail.com

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Contributed photos
This stained-glass work depicts a butterfly.



Koi are the subject of this work in stained glass.

Sports



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A wall of Ponte Vedra players stand tall during a free kick.



Natalie Brooks heads out a cross.



Hadley Conway fights to win possession.

SHARKS END REGULAR SEASON WITH STATEMENT WIN OVER MONTEVERDE

By Anthony Richards

The Ponte Vedra girls soccer team finished the 2024 regular season on a strong note by defeating state powerhouse Monteverde Academy 3-2.

Not only did the victory improve the Sharks to a record of 15-1-1 on the season, but it also added to the confidence they have been playing with throughout the regular season as the playoffs are set to begin.

This was not the first highly touted team the Sharks have faced on the year, as head coach Dave Silverberg likes to put together a challenging schedule to help prepare the team for the level of competition they will face to capture a state title.

“We kind of went into the game treating it like it’s an elimination game, because that’s what it’s going to be like when we get in the playoffs,” senior goalkeeper Audrey Johnson said.

The game had a big-game vibe surrounding it as both teams are traditional powers in girls soccer in the state, and according to Johnson the Sharks embraced that had ever other one so far this season.

“We had never played this team and we were super fired up knowing their reputation and we know they are among the best competition we would get,” Johnson said. “We like to go out and prove that we can beat teams like that.”



Photos by Anthony Richards

The Sharks celebrate their game-winning goal against Monteverde Academy on Jan. 20.

However, big games can also carry lots of additional emotion, which controlling and not letting it affect one’s play can be a constant battle especially, for younger players, but that was something Johnson and the rest of the seniors made sure did not happen.

And the Sharks faced early adversity as the Eagles (11-4-1) struck first and led 1-0 at halftime, but the Sharks were not fazed and came out on the offensive attack in the second half with two quick goals from junior Jenny Dearie and sophomore Natalie Brooks, respec-

tively.

“Our midfield definitely stepped up and they played some really good through balls,” Brooks said. “Coach just told us to get in for the crosses and I think we just did a lot better of a job of controlling the middle. That’s something that we always work on a lot in practice.”

The Eagles added a goal to tie the game at 2-all, but the Sharks continued to create their share of opportunities and pressure around the Monteverde net and Brooks eventually broke through the line of defense and buried a shot in the back of the net to put the Sharks up for good late.

“We’ve had a lot of young players, but they are really good,” Johnson said. “Knowing that we have great people ready to fill in our shoes when we leave, including some juniors who are ready now to be captains, is a great feeling.”

For Johnson and her fellow seniors, ending their high school careers with one more deep postseason run and a state championship would mean everything.

“I started my freshman year, and we won state, so it would be great to open the book with a win and then close the book with a win as well,” Johnson said.

The Sharks are the top seed and have a bye in the first round of the district tournament and will play either Fleming Island or Oakleaf in the semifinals on Jan. 29 at 5:30 p.m. Fletcher High School is the tournament host.



Goalkeeper Audrey Johnson winds up to kick the ball downfield.



The Monteverde goalkeeper can only watch the ball fly by her after a shot by Natalie Brooks.



Grace Raymond of Ponte Vedra (No. 15) prepares for a ball coming her way.

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Home Improvements

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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							

ACROSS

1. Winged nut
7. ___ Humbug!
10. One who sets apart
12. Circle above a saint's head
13. Unpleasantly loud and harsh
14. Expressed pleasure
15. Feminine given name
16. Company of badgers
17. Popular Dodge pickup truck
18. Witty sayings
19. Leader
21. Autonomic nervous system
22. Premolar
27. Atomic #28
28. Holiday decorative item
33. Exclamation of surprise
34. Rusk or cracker
36. Returned material authorization (abbr.)
37. Scottish or Irish Gaelic language
38. Eat
39. Marxist economics theory (abbr.)
40. Ceases to exist
41. Male Arabic name
44. Series of ridges on an organ wall
45. Places where bees are kept
48. One-time Yankees sensation Kevin
49. Church office
50. Single lens reflex
51. Pieces of fibrous tissue

2. Dismounted
3. Produced
4. Consumed
5. Director Howard
6. The products of human creativity
7. Thai monetary units
8. Away from wind
9. Builder's trough
10. Relating to Islam
11. It can sometimes ache
12. Small quantities (Scot.)
14. Poisonous plant
17. Laugh at
18. Vogul
20. C. European river
23. Type of cat
24. Exclamation of disgust
25. Stephen King novel

26. Without armies
29. Expression of sympathy
30. Relative biological effectiveness (abbr.)
31. Previously
32. Illegal drug
35. Kiloelectronvolt
36. Large, flightless birds
38. For smoking
40. Binary
41. Competition
42. Mark resembling an arrow
43. Containers
44. Root mean square (abbr.)
45. Commercials
46. I.M. ___, architect
47. 007's creator

SUDOKU

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

Level: Intermediate

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

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