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WELCOME TO TOURNAMENT WEEK

Navigating THE PLAYERS Page 12

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Thursday, March 14, 2024

PonteVedraRecorder.com

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## Operation Shower teams up with THE PLAYERS for 200th event

Fifty local mothers took part in massive baby shower

By Anthony Richards

For many expecting mothers in military families, they are faced with preparing to welcome their child into the world without their husband or family for support.

Operation Shower has been a nonprofit focused for years on making sure those moms have a proper baby shower to celebrate this time in their life.

SHOWER continues on Page 18



Photo by Craig O'Neal

Award-winning country music artist Cole Swindell performs Tuesday, March 12, on the Island Green at TPC Sawgrass during THE PLAYERS Championship Military Appreciation Day festivities. See more photos on page 14.



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



## Decompression Therapy

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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](mailto: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/ThePVRRecorder](https://www.facebook.com/ThePVRRecorder)

## BRIEFS

### Mickler's Landing Beachfront Parking to be temporarily closed

St. Johns County will temporarily close public access to Mickler's Landing Beachfront Parking and beach access in the area as it begins the \$38.6 million Ponte Vedra Beach Restoration Project with the mobilization of large contractor equipment and dredging supplies.

For the safety of the public, the initial closing of the parking lot and beach access will be from Monday, March 18, to Thursday, March 28, and again from Monday, April 1, to Friday, April 5.

As the project progresses to the estimated completion date of August, the parking lot may be closed again intermittently for restoration-related activities.

The public can stay updated on the project and beach parking closures at [sjcfl.us/PVB](http://sjcfl.us/PVB) and by using the county's mobile app SJC Connect, available at [sjcfl.us/SJC-Connect](http://sjcfl.us/SJC-Connect).

The parking lot and beach access in the area will be open to the public during spring break in St. Johns County, which is Monday, March 11, to Sunday, March 17, and on Easter weekend of Friday, March 29, to Sunday, March 31.

### Explore the beach at GTM Research Reserve

A beach exploration will be offered from 9 to 11 a.m. Saturday, March 16, at Guana Tolomato Matanzas National Estuarine Research Reserve. Meet at the GTM Research Reserve Visitor Center, 505 Guana River Road, Ponte Vedra Beach. To register, go to [gtmnerr.org/visit/events](http://gtmnerr.org/visit/events).

The event is free but parking is \$3 per vehicle. Wear comfortable, closed-toe shoes. Hat, insect repellent, water and sunscreen are also recommended.

### Palm Valley Market every Tuesday

The Palm Valley Market is held from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. every Tuesday inside the Palm Valley Community Center, 148 Canal Road. The market offers fresh produce, baked goods, local honey, tea, seasonal treats, soap, jewelry, plants and more.

### Cabana Beach Club memberships reopen

Memberships at Sawgrass Marriott's Cabana Beach Club in Ponte Vedra Beach have reopened.

Exclusive membership perks include access to all Cabana Beach Club facilities and amenities, including 26 miles of private beach access, beachfront pool, fire pits and exclusive restaurants.

To express interest in becoming a new member or to schedule a tour, go to [SawgrassMarriott-BeachClub.com/Memberships](http://SawgrassMarriott-BeachClub.com/Memberships).

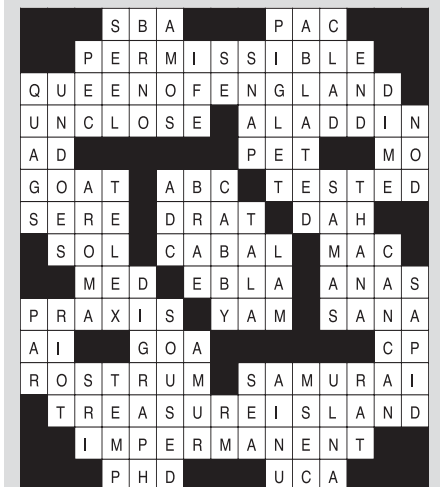
### Grief program offered

Community Hospice & Palliative Care will offer a program on grief from 11 a.m. to noon March 20 at Stephen R. Chapman Family Community Campus, 1355 U.S. 1 South, St. Augustine.

"Understanding Grief: A Program for The Newly Bereaved" is designed to help people learn that healing is possible after the death of a loved one and there are effective ways to cope with grief and loss.

BRIEFS continues on Page 3

## PUZZLE SOLUTIONS



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



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# US investor group to put \$3 billion into PGA Tour

By Kathy Bissell

Several high-powered U.S. investors have come together to form Strategic Sports Group (SSG), and they have made an investment of \$1.5 billion in the PGA Tour. To utilize the investment, a new for-profit entity will be created, called PGA Tour Enterprises. It will be overseen by PGA Tour Inc., which is the non-profit organization that everybody knows as the group that runs the tournaments for the PGA Tour, PGA Tour Champions,

Korn Ferry Tour and the Canadian and Latin American tours, now called PGA Tour Americas.

The way the investment will work for the players is that PGA Tour players will own “stock” in the PGA Tour. The stock will be “earned” by a player based on his recent as well as career accomplishments, membership status and other values. It will vest over time, like a corporate retirement account. Details of that program have not yet been made available.

“By making PGA Tour members owners of their league, we strengthen the collective investment of our players in the success of the PGA Tour,” PGA Tour Commissioner Jay Monahan said about the deal.

“We greatly appreciate the opportunity to join PGA Tour players in this important next phase of the PGA Tour’s evolution,” said John Henry, principal owner of Fenway Sports Group and manager of the Strategic Sports Group.

SSG is made up of several owners of

various sports teams, media companies and other high-level business people who believe in the value of the PGA Tour as a sports property. An additional \$1.5 billion will be available later for future investments.

Policy Board Player Directors Patrick Cantlay, Peter Malnati, Adam Scott, Webb Simpson, Jordan Spieth and Tiger Woods issued a joint statement on the new entity:

**INVESTOR** continues on Page 15

## Briefs

Continued from 2

The one-hour presentation will help attendees:

- Identify normal responses to loss.
- Identify coping skills that may be helpful.
- Understand the importance of self-care in the grieving process.

Understanding Grief is designed to be most helpful for those who have experienced a loss within the last 90 days and are at least 18 years old. All Community Hospice & Palliative Care bereavement services are free of charge to hospice families for up to 13 months after a loved one’s death.

Select services are also offered to the community free of charge.

Register by calling 904-407-7001 or go to [communityhospice.com](http://communityhospice.com) for more information.

### Garden Center Day is March 21

Ribault Garden Club has announced that Garden Center Day will be 10 a.m. to noon March 21 and it will be open to the public. Admission is free. The club is located at 705 Second Ave. North, Jacksonville Beach. The topic will be Grace Garden at BEAM. Speaker is Mary Ellen Waugh, manager. There will be refreshments, door prizes and a raffle. For further information, call 901-634-5028.

— Compiled by Shaun Ryan

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

## KATHY'S GARDENING GUIDE

# Hibiscus

"A flower blossoms for its own joy." — Oscar Wilde



Kathy Esfahani

By Kathy Esfahani

The vivid colors of Hibiscus blooms add a tropical feel to any landscape! These fast growing plants are available as shrubs or small trees and produce flowers that range from 2 to 12 inches in diameter. Their trumpet shaped blooms feature colors of red, pink, orange, yellow, peach, and white. Although blooms may only last 1 to 3 days, Hibiscus plants can flower prolifically throughout a long, spring through fall, growing season.

When considering Hibiscus plants for your landscape, look for areas of full sun. These plants can tolerate partial shade as long as they receive at least 6 hours of direct sunlight. If your Hibiscus is not producing many flowers, try relocating it into a sunnier area to encourage blooming. Although Hibiscus plants prefer well drained soil that partially dries out between waterings, be sure to water regularly to help the plant produce as many flowers as possible. It may even be necessary to water a Hibiscus daily - or twice a day! - during the hottest summer temperatures.

Hibiscus plants are considered either hardy or tropical. Hardy Hibiscus plants can survive in cooler climates



Hibiscus plants in a landscape

where winter temperatures drop below zero. In these areas, the shrub will die back during the cold months but then reappear with warmer spring temperatures. Tropical Hibiscus plants prefer climates here in north Florida's planting zone 9 and areas further south. These heat loving plants thrive in locations with average temperatures over 50 degrees Fahrenheit.

The Hibiscus flower is a symbol of beauty, grace, and happiness. The extract made from these blooms is known for therapeutic uses including reducing blood pressure, detoxifying the body, and strengthening healing skin. Tea made from Hibiscus flowers can ease a sore throat or cough. Extracts from Hibiscus blooms can also increase metabolism and are, therefore, sometimes used to aid weight loss. Finally, Hibiscus is found as an ingredient in shampoos and conditioners due to chemicals in the blossoms that support healthy, shiny hair.

The bold colors of Hibiscus flowers add interest to any

Photos provided by Kathy's Creative Gardens & Nursery

## Flower of the Week



Hibiscus

area of a landscape. These plants are useful as a focal point, as background plants, or as an informal hedge. They are successful in both garden beds and containers. Add Hibiscus plants to your outdoor living area to display an abundance of brightly colored blooms that attract bees, butterflies, and hummingbirds!

Happy planting!

**Flower of the Week: Hibiscus**

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



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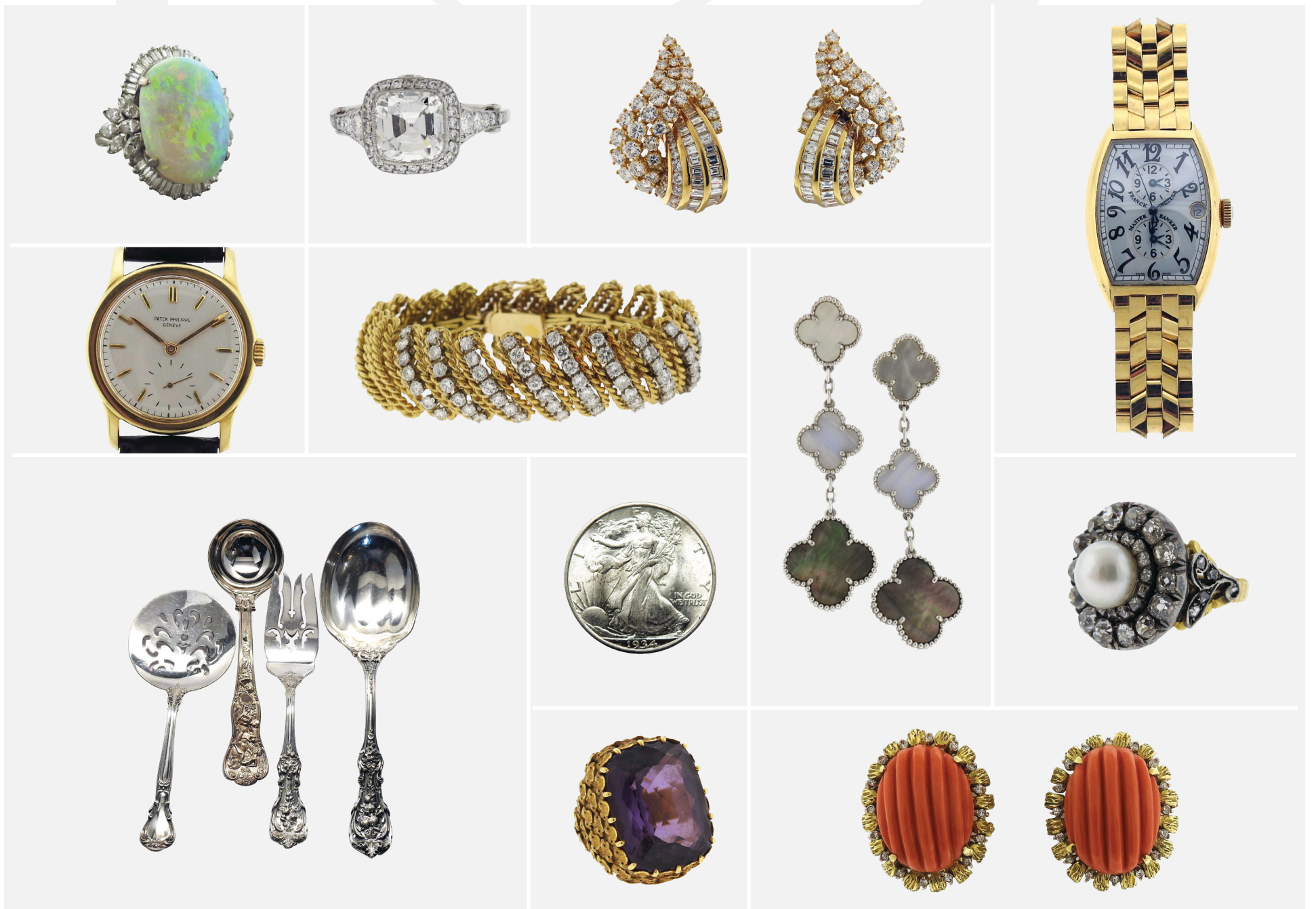




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*Lee Smith is executive director of THE PLAYERS Championship and is experiencing his first tournament week since being named to the position with the tournament in April 2023. He was born in Illinois and has decades of experience working with the PGA Tour and within the TPC family of golf courses. Although he is new, he is aware of the history of the championship and the importance it has in the fabric of the local community, and he is striving to do everything he can to make sure that legacy of excellence continues.*

## Lee Smith

### As told to Anthony Richards

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

I was born and raised in east central Illinois and after playing golf in college, I got right into the golf business as a PGA professional at Urbana Country Club.

I eventually started working with the PGA Tour in 2003 at TPC Scottsdale as an assistant golf professional and then moved on to three-year stops at TPC Summerlin in Las Vegas and TPC Sugarloaf in Atlanta, before heading back to TPC Summerlin as general manager, where they hosted the Shriners Hospitals for Children Open.

Shortly after the President's Cup in 2017, I went to work at Liberty National Golf Club.

The 18th green there was about 700 yards from the Statue of Liberty in New York City, so that was a pretty cool office to go to every day.

#### How do you hope to use those previous experiences as executive director of THE PLAYERS?

I think utilizing some of those previous experiences, especially when it comes to hosting different tournaments will allow this to be a great opportunity.

I've really looked forward to getting engrained in the community and meeting everyone.

My time with the TPC Network and Liberty National Golf Club was a wonderful chapter of my career, and I cannot thank those teams enough for their unwavering support of this opportunity.

#### Have you made any changes that fans can look forward to since becoming executive director?

For those of you who know the grounds forward and back, will notice that we did a lot of earth moving in the offseason.

We used that dirt to fill in a couple of the holding ponds in and around the clubhouse to create a little bit more landing space in what we call Sawgrass Square.

#### How does the tournament look to feature the 50th anniversary during this year's event?

What we're excited about from the 50th standpoint is to explore some of the unexplored stories and continue to talk about the fact that we've never had a back-to-back champion, but also Jack Nicholas won three out of the first five.

We're obviously going to have some on-site branding and a retail capsule built into the fan shop.

It is a story that we're really leaning into for sure. We went to Atlanta Country Club where the first event was held and we're going to host their leadership down here during the tournament.

Recognizing those things is what we've been really having a fun time with, and the fans will get a glimpse into the history.

#### What have some of your goals been during your first year?

"We're certainly focused on 2024 and have already



Photo courtesy of Chris Condon/PGA Tour

**Lee Smith is executive director of THE PLAYERS Championship and is experiencing his first tournament week since being named to the position with the tournament in April 2023.**

had some meetings for 2025, so we're always looking down the road at what the future looks like.

As a vision and an objective, my first role is not to mess it up and secondly continue to expand the profile of THE PLAYERS Championship community wise and globally.

Last year, there were 51 million hours of our broadcast consumed worldwide, so that's a pretty darn nice commercial for Northeast Florida, St. Johns County and Ponte Vedra Beach, and we're proud to be a part of that.

#### How has it been since moving to the North Florida area?

It has been an exciting transition to Ponte Vedra Beach to help build on the tremendous momentum THE PLAYERS Championship has established in recent years.

We will continue to elevate the experience for our players, partners and fans, while ensuring the Northeast Florida community benefits immensely from those efforts.



# THE PLAYERS Championship announces field for 2024

THE PLAYERS Championship announced the field Friday, March 8, for the 2024 event, which has returned to THE PLAYERS Stadium Course at TPC Sawgrass.

The 144-player field features representation from 23 countries. Other notes on the field include:

- 9 PLAYERS Champions: Scottie Scheffler (2023), Justin Thomas (2021), Rory McIlroy (2019), Webb Simpson (2018), Si Woo Kim (2017), Jason Day (2016), Rickie Fowler (2015), Matt Kuchar (2012), Adam Scott (2004)
- Defending champion Scottie Scheffler enters the week as World No. 1, the first player to do so since Rory McIlroy in 2020. (That event was canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.)
- The last man in the field as of 5 p.m. Friday is Alexander Björk (No. 101 in the FedExCup Playoffs and Eligibility Points List through the Cognizant Classic in The Palm Beaches) and the first alternate is Parker Coody (No. 102)
- 23 players in the field are making their tournament debut, highlighted by

seven PGA TOUR winners (**in bold**):

**Ludvig Åberg**, **Akshay Bhatia**, Alexander Björk, **Nick Dunlap**, **Austin Eckroat**, Harry Hall, Ryo Hisatsune, Nicolai Højgaard, Chan Kim, **Jake Knapp**, Ben Kohles, **Vincent Norrman**, **Matthieu Pavon**, Matti Schmid, David Skinns, Jimmy Stanger, Sam Stevens, Ben Silverman, Ben Taylor, Sami Valimaki, Carson Young, Kevin Yu, Carl Yuan

- There are four eligible players not committed: Will Gordon, David Lingmerth, Danny Willett, Tiger Woods

If not otherwise exempt, the winner of the Arnold Palmer Invitational presented by Mastercard and the Puerto Rico Open will qualify for THE PLAYERS.

THE PLAYERS Championship field list as of 5 p.m. Friday, March 8:

Ludvig Åberg, Tyson Alexander, Byeong Hun An, Aaron Baddeley, Christiaan Bezuidenhout, Akshay Bhatia, Alexander Björk, Zac Blair, Keegan Bradley, Joseph Bramlett, Hayden Buckley, Sam Burns,

Patrick Cantlay, Wyndham Clark, Eric

Cole, Corey Connors, Joel Dahmen, Cam Davis, Jason Day, Thomas Detry, Tyler Duncan, Nick Dunlap, Nico Echavarria, Austin Eckroat, Harris English, Tony Finau, Matt Fitzpatrick, Tommy Fleetwood, Rickie Fowler, Ryan Fox, Doug Ghim, Lucas Glover, Ben Griffin, Emiliano Grillo,

Chesson Hadley, Adam Hadwin, Harry Hall, Nick Hardy, Brian Harman, Russell Henley, Garrick Higgo, Ryo Hisatsune, Lee Hodges, Charley Hoffman, Tom Hoge, Nicolai Højgaard, Max Homa, Billy Horschel, Beau Hossler, Viktor Hovland, Mark Hubbard, Mackenzie Hughes, Sungjae Im,

Stephan Jaeger, Chan Kim, Michael Kim, S.H. Kim, Si Woo Kim, Tom Kim, Chris Kirk, Kurt Kitayama, Jake Knapp, Ben Kohles, Matt Kuchar, Martin Laird, Nate Lashley, K.H. Lee, Min Woo Lee, David Lipsky, Luke List, Justin Lower, Shane Lowry,

Robert MacIntyre, Peter Malnati, Ben Martin, Hideki Matsuyama, Denny McCarthy, Rory McIlroy, Maverick McNealy, Troy Merritt, Keith Mitchell,

Francesco Molinari, Taylor Montgomery, Ryan Moore, Taylor Moore, Collin Morikawa, Grayson Murray,

Matt NeSmith, Alex Noren, Vincent Norrman, Andrew Novak, C.T. Pan, Matthieu Pavon, Taylor Pendrith, J.T. Poston, Seamus Power, Andrew Putnam, Aaron Rai, Chad Ramey, Chez Reavie, Davis Riley, Patrick Rodgers, Justin Rose, Sam Ryder,

Xander Schauffele, Scottie Scheffler, Adam Schenk, Matti Schmid, Adam Scott, Robby Shelton, Greyson Sigg, Ben Silverman, Webb Simpson, David Skinns, Alex Smalley, J.J. Spaun, Jordan Spieth, Scott Stallings, Jimmy Stanger, Sam Stevens, Sepp Straka, Kevin Streelman, Steve Stricker, Justin Suh, Adam Svensson,

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# Turnout robust for Military Job Fair

By Shaun Ryan

The weather was perfect Saturday, March 9, for this year's Military Job Fair, the first official event of the 2024 PLAYERS Championship. And the tent at Patriots' Outpost was crowded with job applicants and prospective employers.

"It's amazing," said job fair chairman Bill Hickey. "I look around the room right now, and it is packed. We have not always had the weather cooperate with us, but it's doing so today!"

This is the 13th year for the job fair, a project of the Jacksonville Military Veterans Coalition. As always, it attracted top employers, including law enforcement agencies, Morgan Stanley, Optum, Florida Blue, Comcast, JEA, CSX and more.

The first of the job fairs was held in March 2012, just two months after seven members of the newly founded coalition came up with the idea. Little did they realize then that their idea would become a signature event at THE PLAYERS.

Fortuitously, Cathie Hurlburt, the PGA Tour's then-director of charitable outreach, was in the room when the seven members proposed a job fair. She mentioned that THE PLAYERS had a space they could use if they wanted. Almost



Photos by Shaun Ryan

**The Jacksonville Military Veterans Coalition runs the annual Military Job Fair, which has become the first official event of each PLAYERS Championship. Pictured from left are job fair chairman Bill Hickey, Clay County Manager Howard Wanamaker, Matt Tuohy, City of Jacksonville Director of Military Affairs Harrison Conyers and Brigadier General (retired) Mike Fleming, JMVC chair.**

immediately, Hickey was selected to spearhead the project.

Since then, thousands of veterans have availed themselves of the opportunity to seek employment at the event, and hundreds of employers have participated.

"We've had many, many people over the years come back the following year

and say, 'Hey, I was here last year, and now I work for one of the companies,'" said Hickey. "We've had companies come in and hire people on the spot — pending background checks and everything."

Hickey recalled one year an organization hired 10 people all in the same day.



The secret of the job fair's success may be in the quality of the job applicants. Their military experience grants them skills — including "soft" skills — that many employers prize.

"They're adaptable; they've been through a bunch of training; they've been in high-pressure, dynamic situations without losing their cool," said Hickey. "They know to show up on time, and they know to show up every day. They are taught to follow procedures, which helps especially in construction-type environments and law enforcement-type environments."

The job fair is just the first of the military-related events at THE PLAYERS, which include Military Appreciation Day, Operation Shower and more.



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COMPLIMENTARY VALET PARKING



# MSD supports county's request for temporary 'no parking' signs

By Anthony Richards

The Ponte Vedra Beach Municipal Service District fully supported St. Johns County's request to place temporary signage prohibiting parking along a portion of San Juan Drive during its meeting on March 11.

The signs will be placed along the westside of the route by the golf course beginning at 318 San Juan Drive and extending to the entrance of the maintenance building for the golf course.

The idea for the signs was initiated following an email from the county to

the MSD board, presenting the signs as a possible temporary solution.

What makes the signs temporary is that they will only be up until the planned sidewalk project along San Juan Drive is completed, as once the sidewalk is in place, it will serve as a parking deterrent, because the board stated that it is not legal to park on a sidewalk.

"Can we ask that the signs face east, so you don't see them when driving down the road, just when you pull in to park," MSD trustee Kitty Switkes said. "That's what they did on the (Ponte Vedra) boulevard."

By having the signs in place, it will allow for deputies to enforce the instruction posted.

"If the county administrator says it's OK to have signs up, then it makes it enforceable so the deputies can then write them tickets," MSD trustee Mickey White said.

In other news from the meeting, 18 streetlights have been reported as "not working," since the last MSD meeting, according to trustee Charles Callaghan, with five of those needing further clarification.

Callaghan informed the board that he planned to go out after the meeting and look at each of those five poles to get a closer look and mark the ones needing assistance with tape for easy finding by the service crew.

Trustee John Cellucci stated that the Ponte Vedra Beach public library will start being open on Sundays from 1 to 5 p.m. starting in April.

"It took us a long time to get these hours, so we want to make sure people are aware of them," Cellucci said.

White attended the latest Citizens

Traffic Task Force meeting and the big discussion coming from it was that intersection improvements along State Road A1A may have to be done in conjunction with repaving the entire A1A corridor.

According to White, this may be the best approach in the eyes of the Florida Department of Transportation, but the projected time frame for such a project would not be until 2028 or 2029.

The CTF stressed that FDOT has stated the repaving of A1A through Ponte Vedra Beach is still several years from taking place, as once it gets approved it will take an additional two years after that. The expected approval is to make it an active project as part of the 2025 fiscal year budget.

White also continues to work on talking with county officials to find out solutions to deal with the sorting out of certain easements of land where drainage pipes run through that do not have a clear and certain owner.

"Resolving this would allow us to put together a complete and concise master plan," White said.

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PHOTO BY CRAIG O'NEAL

## TICKETS

Tickets are mobile-only and day-specific tickets. They can be purchased exclusively online at THEPLAYERS.com.

Parking is purchased separately at THEPLAYERS.COM/parking. Parking passes are completely digital and cannot be purchased on-site.

**Will Call:** Located in the parking lot of Tournament Plaza, near Larry's Giant Subs. Will call address is 830 State Road A1A North, Ponte Vedra Beach

**Youth Tickets:** Up to two youth, ages 15 and under, will be admitted free with a ticketed adult all week. All youth age 6 and older must have a ticket in order to access hospitality venues.

Need more information? Go to [theplayers.com/tickets/faq](http://theplayers.com/tickets/faq).

## PARKING

**General Parking Lot address:** 5360 Palm Valley Road, Ponte Vedra Beach

- Parking passes are required on all tournament days, Tuesday-Sunday.
- All parking passes are daily passes and must be purchased in advance via THEPLAYERS.com/parking.
- "Four or more for free" parking vouchers are not available in 2024.
- Tuesday and Wednesday parking costs \$15 per day and Thursday-Sunday costs \$40 per day.

**Rideshare presented by TruGreen:**

Rideshares will drop off and pick up at the Couples Entry off ATP Boulevard,

which is just steps from the 15th hole. Rideshare vehicles will be staged outside the Couples Entry, making this one of the easiest modes of transportation for spectators.

**Getting to THE PLAYERS Championship:**

- Enter Destination: THE PLAYERS Championship
- Enter the tournament through the Couples Entry

**Leaving THE PLAYERS Championship:**

- Exit tournament grounds through the Couples Entry

• Follow the tournament signage to the designated rideshare pick-up area outside the Couples Entry

• Get in available rideshare and head to your preferred destination

**Bike Parking:**

THE PLAYERS offers complimentary bike parking in lot 4W. Lot 4W is situated just past Gate B and fans should enter TPC Sawgrass from the entrance off PGA TOUR Boulevard. Bike parking is not available in the general parking lot. Bike racks are available free of charge

**PARKING** continues on **Page 13**

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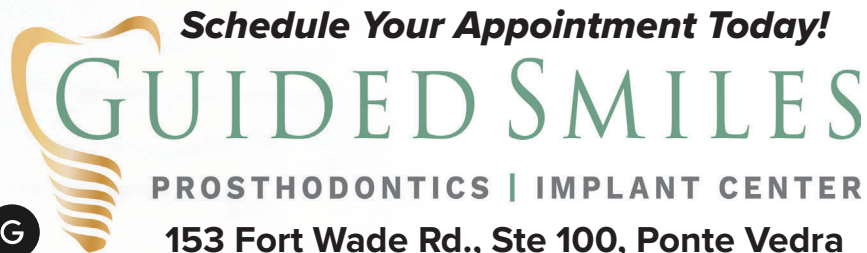
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# Parking

Continued from 12

and fans are reminded to bring their own lock to secure their bicycles.

## Golf Cart Parking:

THE PLAYERS offers complimentary golf cart parking in lot 4W. Lot 4W is situated just past Gate B and fans should enter TPC Sawgrass from the entrance off PGA TOUR Boulevard. Golf cart parking is not available in the general parking lot.

## Disabled Guest Services:

THE PLAYERS Disabled Guest Services program provides shuttles during the championship. Fans who have handicap parking access are still required to purchase a parking pass in advance for THE PLAYERS

general parking lot off County Road 210.

Fans with a handicap parking hang tag, as well as a PLAYERS parking pass, will be directed to park in a specific part of the general parking lot. From there, golf carts will take them to one of the designated Disabled Guest Services locations on the golf course.

Carts will run from the time gates open until 30 minutes after play ends and will only pick up and drop off from the below designated locations. They will not stray from official route under any circumstances.

- Behind 16 green by Couples Gate and The Bier Garden
- Behind 17 tee adjacent to the Welcome Experience and the Food Court
- Players left of 9 fairway by Wine & Dine on 9.
- Players left of 9 green by Past Chair-

man Hospitality.

- Clubhouse area behind 3 tee
- Players right of 16 tee
- Players right of 15 fairway at Taste of JAX

If disabled guests need assistance from a location without shuttle access, they should contact any tournament official who carries a radio.

## Shuttles

On Friday (March 15), Saturday (March 16) and Sunday (March, 17), THE PLAYERS will run a free shuttle service for Nocatee and area residents to park for free at Palm Valley Academy (700 Bobcat Lane, Ponte Vedra Beach), Valley Ridge Academy (105 Greenleaf Drive, Ponte Vedra Beach) and Pine Island Academy (805 Pine Island Road, St. Augustine) and then take a free shuttle to and from THE PLAYERS.

The shuttles will run from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. and will drop fans off right in front of the Nicklaus entrance. Note that the Valley Ridge Academy shuttle is not available on Sunday. Shuttles are available on a first-come first-serve basis.

Shuttles are available from several downtown Jacksonville hotels to THE PLAYERS, Thursday through Sunday of tournament week. Shuttles will be available from Hogan Street by the Marriott Jacksonville Downtown, Hyatt Regency Jacksonville Riverfront and Southbank Hotel Jacksonville Riverwalk (which guests at the Doubletree by Hilton Jacksonville Riverfront can also utilize) to both hotel guests and area residents, providing a convenient and cost-effective way for fans to get to and from the tournament.

Shuttle passes are \$20 plus applicable fees.

## POLICIES AND INFORMATION

**Cashless experience:** Payment processes at the PGA TOUR Fan Shop, all vendors and all concession stands will be digital, contactless and cashless throughout the entire tournament property.

## Spectator Information Tents are located at:

- Davis Love III entry
- Taste of Jax (11 green/12 tee)

- PGA TOUR Fan Shop at THE PLAYERS Welcome Experience
- Wine & Dine on 9 presented by Meiommi Wines

## Help keep THE PLAYERS clean and safe

Fans can text THE PLAYERS from anywhere on the course to notify a staff member of an on-site issue. Text 69050 to reach a staff member while at the

tournament.

## Fan Code of Conduct

Spectators will be subject to expulsion and the loss of ticket privileges for the following breaches of etiquette:

- Making rude, vulgar or other inappropriate comments or gestures;
- Verbal or physical harassment of players, volunteers, officials or spectators;

- Distracting a player or any disruption of play;
- Behavior that is unruly, disruptive, unsafe or illegal in nature;
- Failing to follow the instruction of a championship official, volunteer or security personnel.

Fans can text THE PLAYERS from anywhere on course to notify a staff

POLICIES continues on Page 20

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# Military Appreciation Day kicks off PLAYERS' 50th anniversary

Photos by Craig O'Neal





# Investor

Continued from 3

“We were proud to vote in unanimous support of this historic partnership between PGA Tour Enterprises and SSG. It was incredibly important for us to create opportunities for the players of today and in the future to be more invested in their organization, both financially and strategically. This not only further strengthens the Tour from a business perspective, but it also encourages the players to be fully invested in continuing to deliver — and further enhance — the best in golf to our fans. We are looking forward to this next chapter and an even brighter future.”

According to the PGA Tour’s announcement, “nearly 200 PGA TOUR members will have the opportunity to become equity holders in this new company.”

It is believed this change will create a true sense of ownership by each player. Each will understand how he contributes to the overall and what he needs to do to make the organization better and his own bottom line improve. This is different than the compensation players receive for playing in PGA Tour events.

According to a report on Golf Channel, Tiger Woods said, more or less, that with this new arrangement, as the Tour grows, the players’ revenue will grow. The more they invest of themselves into the Tour, the more benefits they will receive. Again, no details, but one might assume playing extra PGA Tour tournaments, participating in sponsor events, etc.; would benefit both the Tour and the increase the player’s value or shares of stock.

For those wondering how this affects the Saudi PIF (Public Investment Fund) deal that was supposed to be signed by Dec. 31, that proposal is not yet finalized. This new entity, PGA Tour Enterprises, reportedly allows for the PIF to invest if it meets regulatory requirements. That has hit a snag in the Senate.

Recently, in a Senate procedure conducted by the Homeland Security Committee, several U.S. companies did not want to produce documents relating to the PIF-PGA Tour deal for reasons of safety of their employees who they feared might be imprisoned abroad. This has made congressional oversight or approval of PIF investment in the PGA Tour difficult to assess, and it has aggravated senators.

In the future, leadership of PGA Tour Enterprises, which reports to PGA Tour Inc., will be a 13-person board comprised of seven PGA Tour players; four



Photo by Susan Griffin

people from SSG, an independent director from the PGA Tour Policy Board plus the current commissioner of the PGA Tour.

For those who missed this announcement, PGA Tour players added an additional player representative to the PGA Tour Policy Board and it happens to be Tiger Woods. The addition of Woods gives them a voting majority. In ordinary language, that means no deal can happen without the players’ say so. It also means that the Policy Board, comprised of PGA Tour players and outside business people (independent directors) on the board, have signed off on this new deal with SSG.

According to the Tour’s announcement, the PGA Tour’s Strategic Alliance with the DP World Tour is an

important part of the future of this new structure.

Now, everyone wants to know just who are business people on the PGA Tour Policy Board, and who is SSG.

The Policy Board Independent Directors are Ed Herlihy, Policy Board chairman, co-chairman, Wachtell, Lipton, Rosen & Katz Law Firm; Jimmy Dunne, vice chair and senior managing principal, Piper Sandler; Mark Flaherty, former vice chairman, Wellington Management Company; Joe Gorder, executive chairman, Valero; Mary Meeker, partner, Bond Capital.

There is a Policy Board for PGA Tour Champions and for the other Tours.

The SSG investors include:

- John W. Henry, principal, Fenway Sports Group, (Fenway Sports Group owns Boston Red Sox, Liverpool F.C., Pittsburgh Penguins, RFK Racing, Boston Common Golf), along with several FSG Partners

- Steven A. Cohen, owner, chairman and CEO, New York Mets; Chairman and CEO, Point72; owner, TGL New York

- Arthur M. Blank, co-founder, Home Depot; owner and chairman, AMB Sports and Entertainment (Atlanta Falcons, Atlanta United, Mercedes-Benz Stadium, Atlanta Drive GC, PGA TOUR Superstore)

- Tom Werner, chairman, Fenway Sports Group

- Mike Gordon, president, Fenway Sports Group

- Sam Kennedy, CEO and president, Boston Red Sox; Partner, Fenway Sports Group

- Andrew B. Cohen, chief investment officer and co-founder of Cohen Private Ventures; vice chairman, New York Mets

- Mark Attanasio, principal, Milwaukee Brewers and Norwich City; founder and managing partner, Crescent Capital Group

- Wyc Grousbeck, co-founder, Causeway Media Partners; lead owner, Boston Celtics

- Avenue Sports Fund, led by Avenue Capital Group CEO Marc Lasry, owner, TGL San Francisco; former principal, Milwaukee Bucks

- Linda Henry, co-owner and CEO, Boston Globe Media; investor, WNBA and League One Volleyball; Partner, Fenway Sports Group

- Alec Scheiner, co-founder and partner, Otro Capital

Additional Fenway Sports Group investors include: Main Street Advisors including LeBron James, Maverick Carter and Paul Wachter; Herb Wagner; Henry McCance; William Alford; Michael Egan; Tom DiBenedetto; Michael Pucker; Richard Warke; Mitchell Jacobson; Frank Resnek; Laura Trust; and Teddy Werner.

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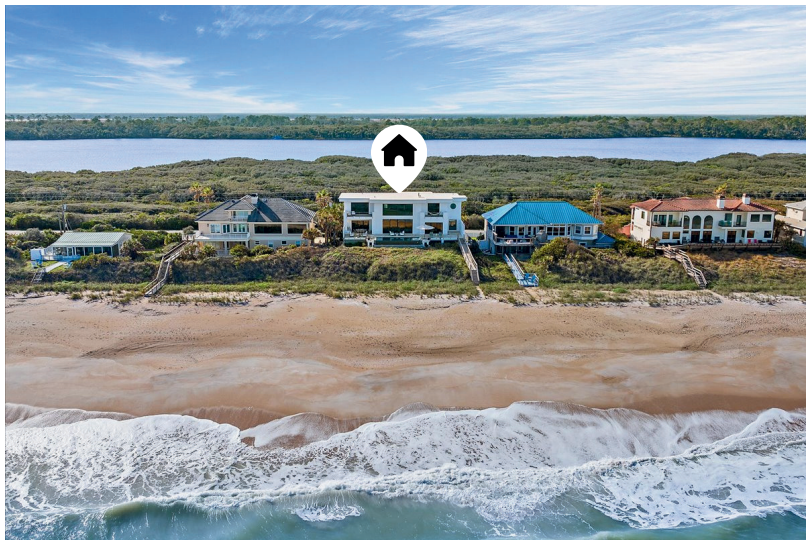


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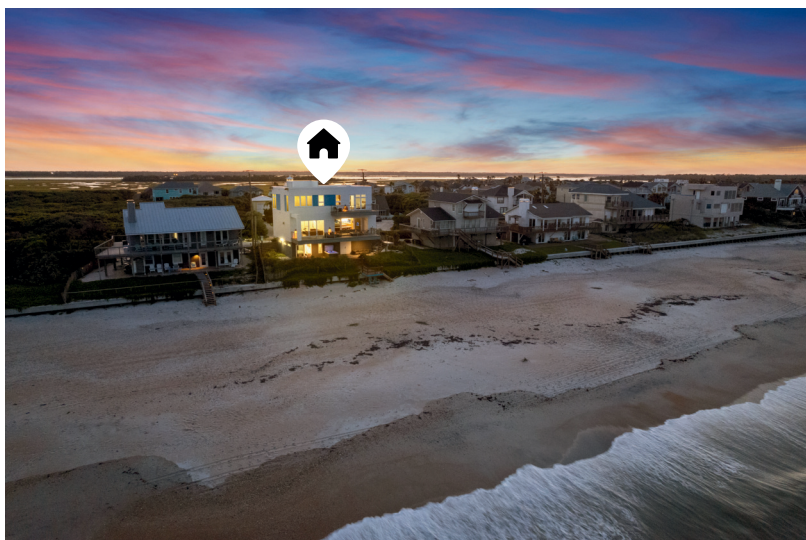
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# Shower

Continued from 1

“For us, it’s a chance to say, ‘thank you’ to them and to let them know that they’re not alone,” Operation Shower product director Lindsey Fletcher said.

The latest of these showers took place on March 10 thanks to a partnership with THE PLAYERS Championship.

Fifty local mothers attended the event, which was held at Patriot’s Outpost at the

TPC Sawgrass Stadium Course.

Some of the mothers were members of the military themselves and they were all expecting or had given birth within three months of the shower date.

This included one couple that was there along with their baby, which was born just three days before.

According to Fletcher, many military mothers do not live in the town they were born in and are not often near family members, so they do not get to have the usual baby shower that moms receive.

“So many of these families completely uproot their lives to move to military bases and have had very few people that they know,” Fletcher said. “It’s fun to connect them with others that also know what they are going through.”

The baby showers given by Operation Shower are always a special time for those involved, but the shower held prior to THE PLAYERS was even more special because it marked the 200th shower given since Operation Shower got its start in 2007.

“It started as a small way of giving back to service members and their families and has really grown naturally and more people have wanted to join in and be a part of the celebration over the years,” Fletcher said. “THE PLAYERS has continued to be one of our main supporters through the years.”

There were several surprise gift bundles handed out throughout the event, all designed to help make the mom’s lives easier once their baby is born.

Photos by Anthony Richards



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# Policies

Continued from 13

member of an on-site issue. Text 69050 to reach a staff member while at the tournament.

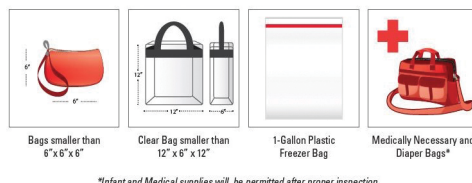
## Mobile Device Policy

- Spectator Mobile Device Policy for PGA TOUR Tournaments (please see your ticket for complete terms):
- Devices must be on silent at all times; flash may not be used.
- Devices may be used to capture video, audio and photos (content) in all areas throughout tournament week.
- Content may be used for personal purposes (e.g., personal social media); no commercial use.
- No live streaming or real-time coverage (e.g., no shot-by-shot coverage).
- Data use (e.g., texting) is permitted in all areas throughout tournament week.
- Phone calls are allowed only in designated areas.
- Please be respectful of play and do not interfere with players, caddies or media.
- All posted signage and instructions from tournament staff must be observed.
- Failure to comply with this policy may result in the revocation of your ticket.

## Autograph Policy

- On-course autograph seeking is prohibited (this includes, but is not limited to, tees,

## APPROVED BAGS



fairways, greens and practice areas during practice rounds and tournament rounds).

- Autograph seeking will be restricted to designated autograph zones: practice grounds and scoring area
- No memorabilia can be brought into the tournament including pin flags, photos, trading cards, balls and other sports paraphernalia.





## Food Policy

THE PLAYERS allows fans to bring in their own food in a one-gallon clear, plastic bag where food items are also wrapped in clear wrap. Fans can refill their empty water bottles at the filtered water stations. THE PLAYERS will allow reusable plastic or metal cups up to 32 oz. at entries, as long as they are empty.

## Alcohol Policy

- Strict adherence to alcoholic beverage consumption laws will be enforced on the course and in all hospitality areas
- Alcohol will not be served to anyone younger than 21; proof of age will be re-

## PERMITTED ITEMS

-  **Personal bags 6" x 6" or smaller**  
(See the PGA TOUR Bag Policy for more information (<https://www.pgatour.com/company/tournaments-prohibited-items.html#bagpolicy>))
-  **Clear plastic, vinyl or other carry items not exceeding 12" x 6" x 12"**  
(See the PGA TOUR Bag Policy for more information (<https://www.pgatour.com/company/tournaments-prohibited-items.html#bagpolicy>))
-  **A one-gallon clear resealable plastic bag**  
(See the PGA TOUR Bag Policy for more information (<https://www.pgatour.com/company/tournaments-prohibited-items.html#bagpolicy>))
-  **At the tournament's discretion, food may enter the tournament in a clear, resealable plastic bag, not to exceed the size of a one (1) gallon bag**
-  **Reusable plastic or metal cups/bottles that are empty upon entry and exit, and cannot hold more than 32-ounces**
-  **Mobile phones, tablets, and PDA's - MUST be on Silent mode and adhere to TOUR's Mobile Device Policy**  
(See the PGA TOUR Mobile Device Policy for more information (<https://www.pgatour.com/company/mobile-device-policy.html>))
-  **Point and shoot, film or DSLR cameras with lens smaller than 6"; no case**  
(During Practice Rounds Only)
-  **Umbrellas without sleeve**
-  **Portable radios with headsets**
-  **Medically necessary materials, strollers, small diaper bags, plastic baby bottles, and other essential baby supplies (Infant must be with carrier) - items subject to search**
-  **Collapsible chairs without chair bags**
-  **Binoculars without case**
-  **Seat cushions that do not require a carrying case or that do not have pockets or compartments**
-  **Segways®, motorized scooters or other personal transportation devices when used as a mobility aid by individuals with mobility impairment**

POLICIES continues on Page 22





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## PONTE VEDRA BEACH



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Ponte Vedra Beach  
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## MARSH LANDING

**UNDER CONTRACT**



MLS ID: 2004662  
7330 Oakmont Court  
Ponte Vedra Beach  
\$2,298,000

## MARSH LANDING



MLS ID: 2006552  
24315 Moss Creek Lane  
Ponte Vedra Beach  
\$2,200,000

## MARSH LANDING



MLS ID: 2012207  
149 Deer Cove Drive  
Ponte Vedra Beach  
\$1,390,000

## COASTAL OAKS

**UNDER CONTRACT**



MLS ID: 2011588  
203 Old Bluff Drive  
Ponte Vedra  
\$2,050,000

## NOCATEE



MLS ID: 2007753  
153 Freedom Landing Drive  
Ponte Vedra  
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## TURTLE SHORES



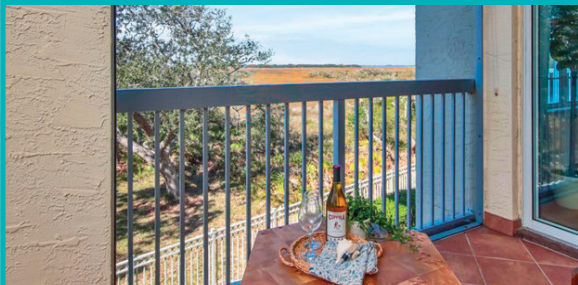
MLS ID: 2011669  
185 Turtle Cove Court  
Ponte Vedra Beach  
\$1,039,000

## OCEAN GRANDE



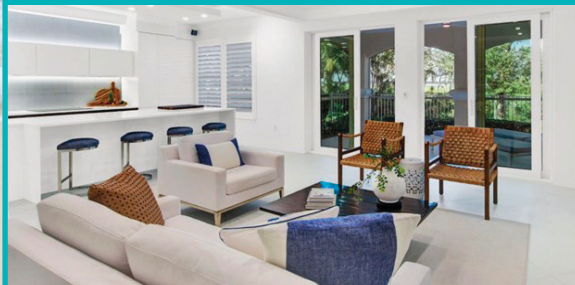
MLS ID: 2012054  
310 S Ocean Grande #101  
Ponte Vedra Beach  
\$838,800

## OCEAN GRANDE



MLS ID: 2002274  
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*Lisa Barton Team*  
PONTE VEDRA BEACH

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# Policies

Continued from 20

quired for anyone younger than 35

- Only two drinks may be purchased at a time; spectators are not allowed to carry more than two drinks at any given time

## Bags + Permitted/Prohibited Items

Opaque bags measuring 6-by-6-by-6 inches and smaller or clear bags 12-by-6-by-12 inches and smaller are allowed inside the course grounds.

THE PLAYERS allows fans to bring in their own food in a one-gallon clear, plastic bag where food items are also wrapped in clear wrap.

THE PLAYERS will allow reusable plastic or metal cups up to 32 oz. at entries, as long as they are empty.

## Free Fan Lockers courtesy of Atlantic Self Storage

Located at the Nicklaus and Couples entry, THE PLAYERS is offering free fan lockers so that fans can conveniently and safely store belongings. (Reminder: THE PLAYERS does adhere to a strict clear bag policy.)

# FOOD & DRINK



Provided by The PGA TOUR

- **Taste of JAX** — 11 green/12 tee
- **Cousins Maine Lobster** — serving up its 100% premium, wild-caught, sustainably harvested lobster from Maine.
- **Mojo BBQ** — a premier barbecue, Southern food and craft cocktail destination with eight locations in North and Central Florida.
- **ABBQ** — Serving up Texas-style BBQ at the Beach.
- **Silkie's Chicken & Champagne Bar** — Historic Springfield upscale casual restaurant featuring Chef Kenny Gilbert's Signature Fried Chicken, Biscuits & Champagne Cocktails.
- **Taste of Jax Bar** — featuring Bushmill's Irish Whiskey

## Wine & Dine on 9 presented by Meiom Wines — 9 fairway

Enjoy food from Bonefish Grill and a glass of wine from Meiom Wines, the official wine of the PGA TOUR, in a beautiful garden setting. Enjoy the brand-new putting green, and if you need to freshen up, take advantage of the permanent restrooms.

## Food Court – THE PLAYERS Welcome Experience

- **Homespun Kitchen** — Healthy fast food. Whether you are vegan, gluten free or paleo, you will find tons of op-

tions at Homespun.

- **Firehouse Subs** — This sandwich shop was founded in Jacksonville and specializes in hot subs and sandwiches made with premium meats and cheeses, steamed to perfection, and then piled high on a toasted roll.

• **Bono's Pit Bar-B-Q** — Lou Bono opened the first Bono's on Beach Boulevard in 1949. The restaurant prides itself on serving up an authentic Southern Pit barbecue experience you won't forget.

• **The Local** — Jacksonville based high quality café focusing on delicious food with unique twists on every dish as well as craft booze and coffee.

• **Top Dawg Tavern** — Be sure to stop by to fuel up classic American food from this family-owned restaurant.

- **Tropical Smoothie** — Bold, fla-

vorful smoothies, wraps, sandwiches, flatbreads and salads with high-quality ingredients and fresh produce.

- **Daily's concessions**

## Tacos on 12 – 12 green

One of the most well-trafficked food venues on the course, featuring food and drink from TacoLu, Jacksonville's most popular Baja Mexicana.

## Sawgrass Square – 10 tee

Located at the Davis Love III Entry. Grab a donut from Mini Bar and/or some BBQ from 4 Rivers Smokehouse.

• **Mini Bar** — Jacksonville's first mini-doughnut shop will be serving up a set menu of mini-sized doughnuts in more than a dozen unique flavors. Some examples include fruity pebbles, samoa, pop tart, maple bacon and coffee cake.

• **4 Rivers Smokehouse** — a sophisticated Texas-style smokehouse

## Trucks on 10

This venue offers flavors from local, favorite food trucks and an open-air Michelob ULTRA Mobile bar.

- Twisted Okie BBQ
- Mama's

FOOD continues on Page 24

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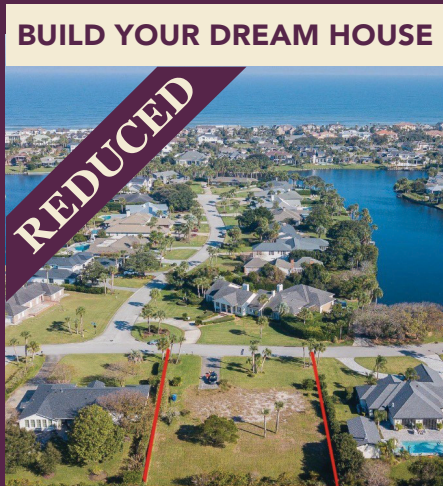


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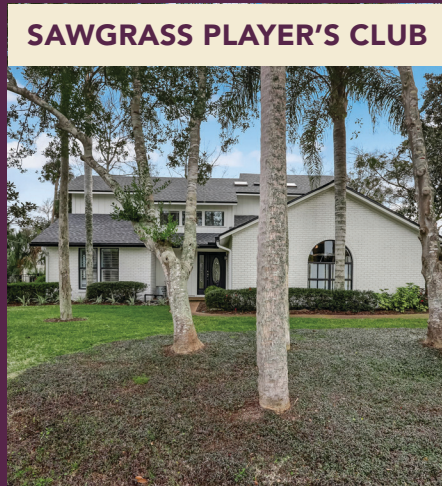


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# Food

Continued from 22

- Chinchillas Burgers
- Saffron Mediterranean Kitchen
- Tikiz
- What's the Catch

## The Patio — between 10 tee and 18 green/16 tee

The Patio offers a shaded fan zone that includes open-air seating and a video board to keep up with the tournament action. The Patio features a Michelob ULTRA bar as well as food from V Pizza, founded by Jacksonville natives with the goal of bringing true Neapolitan pizza to their hometown.

## Bier Garden presented by Hoptinger — behind 16 green

Near the Couples (rideshare) Entry. Choose from a variety of craft beer and bar bites from Hoptinger, a locally owned bier garden and sausage house.

## The Oasis ft. Tito's Stillhouse Lounge

The Oasis is an air-conditioned venue with signature cocktails from Tito's Handmade Vodka, as well as food and drink available for purchase. The Oasis offers an enclosed lounge with premium sightlines of the newly reimagined 9th tee. The lounge also features fun additions for fans, including a putting



Provided by The PGA TOUR

green, Golden Tee retro arcade game, custom murals, TVs with live broadcasts of the tournament and more.

The Oasis features ABBQ – Serving up Texas style BBQ at the Beach.

## Sawgrass Splash: the signature cocktail of THE PLAYERS

As part of the PGA TOUR's commitment to leading the advancement of sustainability in the industry, THE PLAYERS will be serving the tournament's signature drink, the Sawgrass Splash featuring Tito's Handmade Vodka, in a lightweight, aluminum cup. Aluminum is the most sustainable beverage packaging material and, like aluminum cans, aluminum cups can be easily recycled; the 16 oz cups are lightweight, sturdy, cool to the touch and provide an elevated drinking experience for all fans. While the cup is changing, the iconic Sawgrass Splash is staying the same; the drink will continue to feature Tito's Handmade

Vodka, and a refreshing combination of orange juice, lemonade and lime juice.

Sawgrass Splash ingredients:

- 1.5 oz. Tito's Handmade Vodka
- 2 oz. lemonade
- 2 oz. orange juice
- Squeeze of lime juice

## The Grove featuring Maestro Dobel

Enjoy 11 generations of tequila-making legacy at The Grove with Maestro Dobel Tequila, Official Tequila of the PGA TOUR and PGA TOUR Champions. Sharing its commitment to mastery with golf fans, Maestro Dobel offers three signature cocktails featuring its range of smooth tequilas, including the Ace Paloma, available at the entrance of the course. While in the lounge, experience Dobel's rich history and hone your tequila knowledge with the brand's tequila experts, while also learning about "Art of the Cocktail."

## Filtered Water Stations

- Near No. 10 tee/No. 16 tee
- Wine & Dine on 9 (near No. 5 green/No. 9 fairway)
- Behind 16 green (near The Grove)
- Taste of JAX (Located behind 11 green and 12 tee)

Remember: THE PLAYERS will allow reusable plastic or metal cups up to 32 oz at entries, as long as they are empty.

## WHAT'S NEW IN 2024

• **THE PLAYERS' 50th Anniversary:** This year, THE PLAYERS will celebrate its 50th anniversary and will have special merchandise and activations to celebrate the milestone with the community.

• **The Intracoastal Club:** The Intracoastal Club will provide fans with an exciting new destination to relax and refuel while enjoying the tournament. This venue offers the perfect blend of sophistication and sport with abundant TVs, bar-style seating and the ability to purchase upscale food and beverages, including beer, wine and signature cocktails. Situated between Holes 12 and 13, this open-air venue provides incredible views of two of the most thrilling holes on the course.

• **Renovations on Hole 18:** It's a subtle change, but one that is designed to bolster the already raucous atmosphere of the finishing stretch at TPC Sawgrass. A simple reshaping of the mounding on Hole 18 has opened up the sight lines to allow PLAYERS' future spectators to see every shot.

NEW continues on Page 25



### 176 La Pasada Cir, S, PVB

3 BR, 2 BA 1,448 SF with garage, end unit, and all on one floor. Updated kitchen and primary bath. Close to the beach, shopping and dining. Community pool and tennis. Offered at \$485,000. Low HOA fee of \$171/month includes lawn maintenance.



### 128 Deer Cove Dr., PVB

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### 223 11th Ave S, Jax Bch

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# NEW

Continued from 24

• **Top Dawg Tavern:** There's a new top dawg in town — or THE PLAYERS food court. Top Dawg, located in Bartram Park, will bring your gameday

favorites to TPC Sawgrass.

• **New Executive Director:** Lee Smith has taken the helm as executive director for the 2024 tournament. Smith brings with him a wealth of industry experience, having spent more than 20 years with the PGA TOUR and as a PGA of America instructor.

Photo by Craig O'Neal



## SCHEDULE OF EVENTS: THE PLAYERS CHAMPIONSHIP WEEK

### Thursday, March 14

- Entries open at 7:30 a.m.
- Will Call Hours: 7 a.m. to 6 p.m.
- First round of competition begins at 7:40 a.m.

- Will Call Hours: 7 a.m. to 6 p.m.
- Third round of competition begins at approximately 8:15 a.m., depending on the size of the cut (twosomes off No. 1)

### Friday, March 15

- Entries open at 7:30 a.m.
- Will Call Hours: 7 a.m. to 6 p.m.
- Second round of competition begins at 7:40 a.m.

### Championship Sunday, March 17











- Entries open at 7:30 a.m.
- Will Call Hours: 7 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- Final round of competition begins at approximately 7:33 a.m., depending on size of the cut (twosomes off No. 1)

### Saturday, March 16

- Entries open at 7:30 a.m.

**MERCHANDISE** continues on **Page 30**

### PROHIBITED ITEMS

-  **No bags larger than a small purse 6"x6" including carrying cases, backpacks, camera bags, or chair bags** (See the PGA TOUR Bag Policy for more information (<https://www.pgatour.com/company/tournaments-prohibited-items.html#bagpolicy>))
-  **No clear plastic, vinyl, or other carry items larger than 12"x6"x12"** (See the PGA TOUR Bag Policy for more information (<https://www.pgatour.com/company/tournaments-prohibited-items.html#bagpolicy>))
-  **No glass cups or bottles of any kind except for medical or infant needs**
-  **No computers or laptops**
-  **No fireworks or laser pointers**
-  **No lounge or over-sized chairs with extended foot rests**
-  **No seat cushions in a carrying case or that have pockets or compartments**
-  **No pets, except for service animals**
-  **No knives, firearms or weapons of any nature**
-  **No video cameras (All Week)**
-  **No point and shoot, film or DSLR cameras (During Competition Rounds)**
-  **No selfie sticks or hand-held camera stabilizers**
-  **No beverages (patrons may not bring in or exit with beverages) or coolers**
-  **No radios, TVs, or portable speakers**
-  **No posters, signs or banners**
-  **No motorcycles, mopeds, tricycles, bicycles (whether or not motor-driven), skateboards, hoverboards, or other similar devices will be permitted to be operated on or within tournament property.** Segways®, motorized scooters or other personal transportation devices are prohibited if not used as a mobility aid by individuals with mobility impairment
-  **No drones, Remote Controlled Model Aircrafts or other devices that can be operated in airspace will be permitted to be operated at PGA TOUR events during tournament week.**

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  - 17<sup>th</sup> Hole Challenge
  - Bar 904
  - PGA TOUR Fan Shop
- K** MORGAN STANLEY FAN EXPERIENCE
 

Relive an iconic eagle moment from THE PLAYERS 1974 in augmented reality, attempt your own eagle at replica putting bays, win exclusive prizes and more
- L** FOOD COURT
 

Local food and drinks for purchase

  - Bono's Pit Bar-B-Q
  - Daily's
  - Firehouse Subs
  - Homespun Kitchen
  - The Local
  - Top Dawg Tavern
  - Tropical Smoothie Café
- M** FAN BLEACHER PRESENTED BY TITO'S HANDMADE VODKA
 

Public bleacher with scenic views of the 8 green and 9 tee and handcrafted cocktails for purchase
- N** THE OASIS FEATURING TITO'S STILLHOUSE LOUNGE
 

Enjoy handcrafted, signature cocktails at The Tito's Stillhouse Lounge and Texas style barbeque for purchase at ABBQ
- O** WINE & DINE ON 9 PRESENTED BY MEIOMI WINES
 

Shaded venue with open-air seating and upscale food from Bonefish Grill and drinks for purchase from the Meiomi Wine Bar. Come sample Meiomi Wines and try your luck at a hole-in-one at the Meiomi Par 4 Putting Experience
- P** PALM VALLEY VILLAGE PRESENTED BY BUBBA BURGER
 

Enjoy family friendly activities, food and beverages for purchase from BUBBA Burger
- Q** THE PATIO
 

Shaded venue featuring a Michelob ULTRA branded bar with food for purchase available from V Pizza
- R** SAWGRASS SQUARE
 

Local food and beverage available for purchase from The Mini Bar and 4 Rivers Smokehouse. Visit WHOOP to test your putting skills and test your very own WHOOP band
- S** TACOS ON 12
 

TacoLu, Jacksonville's most popular Baja Mexicana, serving food and beverages. Venue includes a shaded seating area
- T** TASTE OF JAX
 

Open-air Bushmills Irish Whiskey Bar, premium cocktails, and guided tastings of exceptional Single Malts. Plus local food and drinks for purchase

  - Cousins Maine Lobster
  - Mojo Kitchen
  - Silkies
  - The G.O.A.T. Tapas
- U** THE BIER GARDEN PRESENTED BY HOPTINGER
 

Featuring a variety of craft beers on tap located behind 16 Green
- V** RIDESHARE PRESENTED BY TRUGREEN
 

Rideshare pick-up and drop-off location behind 15 Tee at the Couples Entry
- W** KIDS ZONE PRESENTED BY NEMOURS CHILDREN'S HEALTH
 

Open to the public featuring activities for kids and families
- X** TRUCKS ON 10
 

Open-air bar with local food and drinks for purchase

  - Mama's
  - Pele's Wood Fire
  - Saffron
  - Tikiz
  - Top Nacho
  - Twisted Okie
- Y** THE GROVE FEATURING THE DOBEL TEQUILA LOUNGE
 

Teeing up an array of delicious, premium tequila cocktails, enjoy 11 generations of Maestro Dobel Tequila® mastery at the Dobel Lounge. Try a delectable cocktail, take a swing at the Closest to the Pin golf simulator, and enjoy golf and tequila trivia for a chance to win





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- D 17 BUILDING D THE PLAYERS MARQUEES**
- E 16 BUILDING E ISLAND SUITES THE PLAYERS MARQUEES**
- F 16 BUILDING F CHAMPIONSHIP CLUB PRESENTED BY LEXUS ISLAND SUITES THE PLAYERS MARQUEES**

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- H THE DECK PRESENTED BY MICHELOB ULTRA**  
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- I INTRACOASTAL CLUB PRESENTED BY SHARK COATINGS**
- THE PLAYERS CLUB**  
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THE LOUNGE (18 GREEN)  
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## MERCHANDISE

**Location:** PGA TOUR Fan Shop at THE PLAYERS Stadium Village (near the main entrance)

**What's New:** The PGA TOUR Fan Shop has increased in size and is now more than 37,000 square feet.



Photos by Anthony Renda PGATOUREntertainment/PGA TOUR

## EVENTS

### Billy Horschel's #DriveOutHunger campaign for Feeding Northeast Florida

Ongoing initiative through Sunday, March 17  
Five-time PGA TOUR winner, 2014 FedExCup champion and Ponte Vedra Beach resident Billy Horschel once again will host his #DriveOutHunger campaign for Feeding Northeast Florida.

He will donate \$1,000 for every birdie and \$5,000 for every eagle that he makes during THE PLAYERS to Feeding Northeast Florida.

Horschel is encouraging fans and supporters to do

their part by going to [feedingnefl.org](http://feedingnefl.org) and choosing "Billy Horschel's #DriveOutHunger Campaign" and then selecting their donation amount.

### Morgan Stanley Eagles for Impact

Located along the 18th fairway, fans are invited to visit Morgan Stanley's Fan Experience to learn about their Eagles for Impact program benefiting the First Tee's Diverse Coaching Initiative and putt for a chance to make an eagle in the putting simulator, win prizes and more!



Photo by Craig O'Neal

2024 Military Appreciation Day at THE PLAYERS



Provided by The PGA TOUR

2023 Military Appreciation Day

## MILITARY APPRECIATION

THE PLAYERS Championship has a long-standing commitment to honoring Northeast Florida military members, veterans and their families.

### Active-duty Service Member Tickets:

Complimentary admission will be provided to active duty, retired, reserve and National Guard members and one dependent on Wednesday, March 13, and one competition day (Thursday, March 14, to Sunday, March 17), while supplies last. Valid identification and credentials are required. All tickets also include a \$20 digital voucher that





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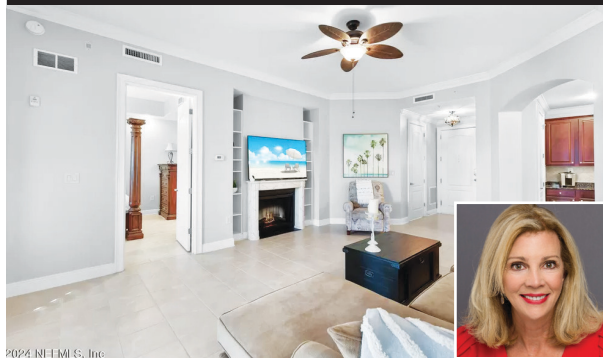
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2023 Military Appreciation Day

## Military

Continued from 30

can be used for food and nonalcoholic beverages on site.

### Veteran Tickets:

Discounted admission will be provided to veterans and one dependent on Wednesday, March 13, and one competition day (Thursday, March 14, to Sunday, March 17), while supplies

last. Valid identification and credentials are required. All tickets also include a \$20 digital voucher that can be used for food and nonalcoholic beverages on-site.

To secure military and veteran tickets, follow these steps:

1. Visit THEPLAYERS.com/tickets and click CLAIM TICKETS in the Military Admission section.
2. Select your chosen tournament day(s).
3. Verify your military designation



Photos provided by The PGA TOUR

using GovX by selecting the link on the checkout page.

4. Once verified, complete the transaction and access your tickets on THE PLAYERS' digital portal.

5. Add your ticket(s) to your mobile wallet prior to arrival.


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# Resident feedback a component for county's latest comprehensive plan

By Anthony Richards

It is important to have a plan for the future, whether you are a government entity or a business, and it can go a long way in helping instill success when the path forward is as clear and obvious as possible.

St. Johns County's current comprehensive plan in place expires in 2025 and they are current in the process of gathering and formulating the information that will go a long way into figuring out the best direc-

tion for a new plan.

Even though the comprehensive plan is not yet in its last year, there has been a lot of work to make sure everything is lined up and approved when the next plan is needed to take its place in 2026.

The plan is required to be evaluated every seven years to determine whether an update is necessary depending on the county's situation at the time and moving, and the latest date for transmittal of the updated plan to the St. Johns County Board

of County Commissioners is July 2025.

The county's staff recommends several updates be made, including a response to changes in the state regulations; population changes in the county; the incorporation of updated master plans for each of the service areas, such as parks and recreation, fire services and libraries and the incorporation of public input.

The latter of these is why the county has been holding community meetings during the last couple of months to get feedback from each of the districts that make up the county.

Two of the five meetings scheduled have already taken place with the remaining three set to take place on March 26 at the Hastings W.E. Harris Community Center in Hastings, on March 27 at The Waterworks Building in St. Augustine, and on March 28 at Creekside High School in St. Johns.

Some of the ideas shared by the public during the meetings, include a slowing down of growth, especially until the roads and infrastructure surrounding the intended growth are developed first in order to handle it.

This includes the daily traffic along State Road A1A, and perhaps more efficient access onto Butler Boulevard heading west along the route.

There are some residents who do not want to see any more growth at all for a while, but many also just want to see a better control of the growth and to reign in the authorized exceptions, especially when they stray from the comprehensive plan initially agreed upon.

Protecting the natural spaces the county has is also something some residents would like to see become more of a focus when approving new development.

The difference between a comprehensive plan and a strategic plan is that a comprehensive plan is a long-term look on where a county hopes to be in terms of its growth and development, while a strategic plan are goals in place that can be achieved in a short term.

Residents who are unable to attend the community meetings can still have their ideas heard by filling out a survey at [inspireengagement.com/stjohnscounty-planupdate](https://inspireengagement.com/stjohnscounty-planupdate).

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# Kendall seeking District 18 state House seat

By Shaun Ryan

Republican Kim Kendall is seeking election to the District 18 state representative seat currently held by Rep. Cyndi Stevenson, who is term-limited, having served continuously since first being elected in April 2015.

Kendall will face challenger Nick Primrose in the Aug. 20 primary election.

A politically conservative candidate, Kendall and her family have lived in St. Johns County since 2001. She has a long history of advocating for causes on both the local and state levels.

“I’ve actually written legislation and lobbied bills,” she said. “I chaired a statewide literacy initiative that involved 150 elementary schools.”

In addition, she was appointed to two statewide education task forces and served as chair of education for the Florida Federation of Women.

Now retired, Kendall has worked as an FAA air traffic controller and, with her husband, owned two dry cleaning businesses in Jacksonville.

She was instrumental in co-founding the Saint Johns Middle School Athletic Association in 2010, supported the establishment of Liberty Pines Academy and advocated for a solution to dangerous pedestrian conditions at State Road 9B and County Road 2209 where students were walking in close proximity to fast-moving traffic while on their way to and from school.

Kendall filed to run on March 1, 2023, and has



received 115 endorsements as of press time.

She identified growth as one of her top priorities, citing the 56,000 additional homes approved for St. Johns County. She wants to pursue FDOT funding for roads, freeing up more money for the county to spend elsewhere as needed.

Another priority is education and providing more vocational classes to promote expansion of the trades, such as plumbing and electrical work.

She backs parental rights, and in response to social issues that have arisen in various places, said, “Boys shouldn’t play girls’ sports; boys shouldn’t use girls’ bathrooms; and there shouldn’t be pornography on the media shelf.”

Mindful of Florida’s place in space exploration, Kendall supports the development of horizontal rocket launches and manufacturing of satellites in the Sunshine State.

Asked why voters should elect her, Kendall pointed out her connection to the community.

“I have a proven track record here in St. Johns County for over 20 years,” she said. “I have full time to do this job, and I have the heart, the work ethic to do it. Even though I’ve done a lot of work at the state level, I think it’s more important that the majority of my energy and effort in changing our community has been here locally. We have 120 legislators in the House of Representatives, but only one represents our district.”



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Photos by Anthony Richards



THE PLAYERS and Nike hosted a panel and interactive experience for local students on March 8.



Students were able to ask questions during the panel discussion.

# THE PLAYERS, Nike host panel for local students

By Anthony Richards

Many sports are doing their part to help find ways to get the next generation involved and passionate about careers in that sports' respective field, and the game of golf is no different.

An example of this was the PGA Tour's "Tee Up the Future" panel, which was held on March 8 in the clubhouse at TPC Sawgrass, as the PGA Tour teamed up

with Nike to host the event.

High school students from around the area attended the panel discussion, which included a panel full of former athletes who had found a path to careers in sports.

In many of their cases, they played a sport other than golf, but it was golf where they would eventually develop a career path.

Alex Baldwin, president of the Korn

Ferry Tour explained to the crowd of students that she always knew she wanted to work in the world of sports, but she just didn't know the exact path when she was in high school, and stressed how that scenario is completely fine.

However, the panel had a wide range of paths, as Don Wallace, senior director of ShotLink with the PGA Tour, said he had no idea what he wanted to do when he was younger.

"I know there are some sitting out there listening that are just like that," Wallace said.

If that is the case, Wallace advised the students to not choose a major in college that does not fit who they are as a person or what they are passionate about, because it will be something they regret.

"Trust your path and believe in yourself and your instincts," Baldwin said. "Make sure not to second guess yourself and put in the work needed once you

realize what you want to achieve."

Another important part of creating a successful career path is the relationships that are made along the way.

"Always be open and thoughtful when developing those relationships," Baldwin said. "Who you know and being personable can go a long way."

While always making sure to maintain accountability was something heavily stressed by Wallace to the students, which is also one of the key traits that he has found most transferable from his days as an athlete to the business world.

"Some of my most important mentors came from the team sports I played," Wallace said. "Playing sports and being part of a team can really instill in you what it's like to have a group of people who are counting on you to do your part to bring success as a whole. It's those experiences that I carry with me the most."



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GUEST COLUMN

# Golf and Advantage VISION!

By **Dr. Arun C Gulani**,  
Gulani Vision Institute

In the world of golf, every stroke counts, and every detail matters. From reading the subtle breaks on the green to tracking the ball's flight with pinpoint accuracy, superior vision can be the difference between victory and defeat.

As THE PLAYERS Championship gets under way, let's delve into the intricacies of one of the most visually demanding sports: golf. While vision plays a crucial role in many sports, golf uniquely relies not only on sight but also on vision — the ability to interpret visual cues effectively.

Sight refers to the clarity of vision at a specific distance, often measured by the familiar 20/20 scale. However, vision involves processing visual information to align the body, balance the stance and visualize shots before they occur, all essential components of a successful drive or putt.

Consider the advice I received from Dean Beman (golf visionary and former



Contributed photo

**VISION** continues on **Page 38**

**Dr. Gulani performs laser vision correction for a golfer's eyes.**

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# VISION

Continued from 37

commissioner of The PGA Tour) when I had the privilege of operating on his eyes where he emphasized the importance of mastering putting as a foundation for success in golf — a lesson I have yet to put into practice myself.

Having performed eye surgeries on numerous professional golfers from all over the world, I've observed that when all visual faculties are maximized alongside eye-hand coordination, optimal execution on the course becomes achievable for players of all levels.

Imagine stepping onto the tee box with crystal-clear vision, free from the constraints of glasses or contacts. Say goodbye to squinting at yardage markers and hello to confidently sizing up every shot with clarity and precision.

Next Generation LASIK: LaZrPlastique is an innovative, no-cut, no-blade, sub-micron, laser-precision technique that can deliver a personalized vision correction for a wide range of nearsightedness, farsightedness and astigmatism, including reading vision to optimize your vision for peak performance on the course to outshine your competition and dominate the fairway.

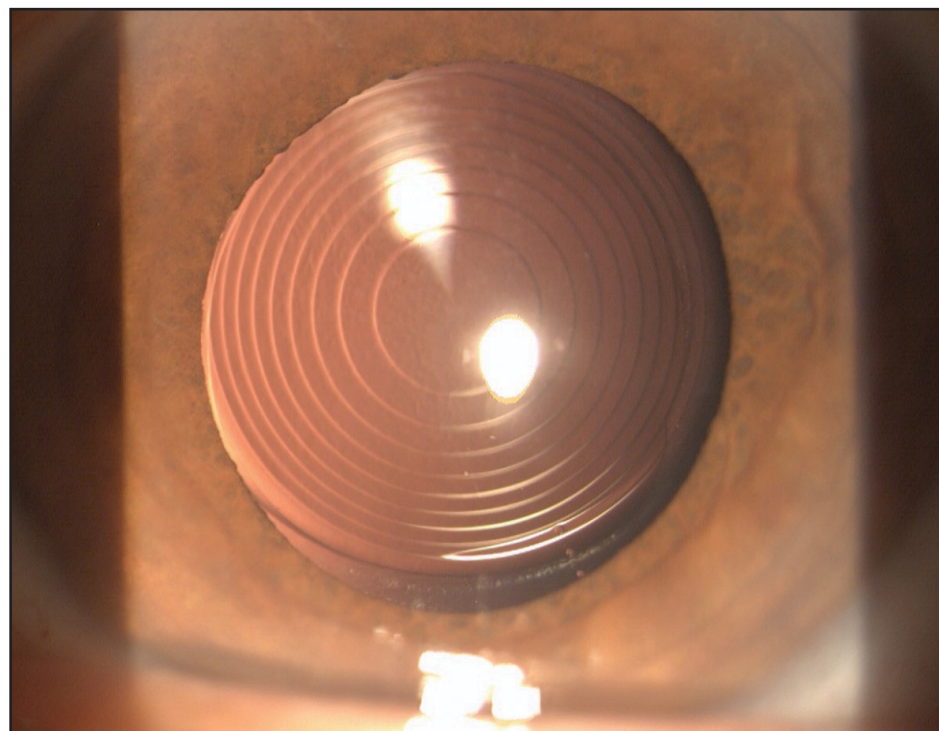
Implantable Collamer Lenses (ICL): Recently FDA-approved, EVO ICL is for those golfers who are extremely near-

sighted or have thin corneas and are “not a candidate” for LASIK surgery. By implanting a thin, biocompatible lens inside the eye, ICL provides crisp, clear vision without compromising the integrity of your cornea. So go ahead — tee off with confidence.

As golfers age, presbyopia (those pesky reading glasses) becomes a concern, necessitating reading glasses (cheaters) for tasks like scoring. However, modern multifocal/trifocal and progressive lens implants and laser techniques provide viable solutions to address presbyopia, restoring visual clarity and eliminating the need for reading glasses so you can sink that birdie putt.

Cataracts, wherein your natural crystalline lens becomes cloudy over time, are a common issue for golfers in their 60s. Next Generation Cataract surgery: LenzOplastique can deliver pain-free, no-needle, no-injection, no-pain and no-stitch surgery along with placement of a permanent, wide range of vision lens implant to not only restore clear vision but also correct astigmatism and reading vision, providing a glasses-free experience for life.

“Golfer’s eyes” are red eyes (pterygium), often exacerbated by sun exposure, and can be corrected to sparkling white eyes by Corneoplastique, using innovative techniques like “no-stitch” human placenta and 3D technology, preserving both vision and cosmetic appearance.



Contributed photo

**A multifocal lens with astigmatism correction is seen in a golfer’s eye.**

Dry eye syndrome, another common ailment among golfers, can now be effectively managed with advanced therapies such as MOIST Ocular Surface Therapy, offering relief and restoring ocular comfort.

In the fast-paced world of golf, every advantage counts — and superior vision is no exception. With recent advancements in eye surgery, golfers now have access to a range of transformative

procedures designed to optimize their vision and unleash their full potential on the fairway. Whether you’re seeking to correct refractive errors, enhance visual acuity, or preserve ocular health, there’s never been a better time to invest in your vision and elevate your game. So why wait? Take the first step toward a brighter, clearer future on the course — your best golf game awaits.

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# Comcast Business donates \$25K to PLAYERS Charity of the Day

By Shaun Ryan

Comcast Business, in its inaugural year as a Proud Partner of THE PLAYERS Championship made a \$25,000 donation Tuesday, March 12, to the tournament's first Charity of the Day for 2024, Five STAR Veterans Center.

"When you think Comcast Business, you think small business, you think enterprise, but our Comcast Business technology goes into our nonprofit partners, as well," said Michelle Oyola McGovern, vice president of governmental affairs for the Florida Region of Comcast. "Five STAR Veterans has been one of those partners for a very long time. We're really proud of that partnership."

Jacksonville-based Five STAR Veterans Center provides homeless military veterans safe housing and supportive services to help them transition to living independently.

The check presentation was made at the Patriots' Outpost.

McGovern explained the reason for the donation.

"They have become so needed and so popular and so necessary in the Jacksonville community that they're working on an expansion," she said. "We felt that it was important that there is a technology center as part of that expansion."



Photo by Shaun Ryan

**Michelle Oyola McGovern, vice president of government affairs for the Florida Region for Comcast, and Jeff Buzzelli, senior vice president for the Florida Region of Comcast, and their team present laptop computers and a \$25,000 check to Five STAR Veterans Center Chief Administrative Officer Suzie Loving, Chief Executive Officer Len Loving, Director of Development Mike O'Brien and Board of Directors Chair Mike Hightower.**

In addition to the financial donation, Comcast Business donated several laptop computers to be given to the veterans as they become independent.

This year, Comcast Business joins Optum and Morgan Stanley as a Proud Partner. That arrangement will continue through 2030.

"We are, at Comcast Business, so excited

about our partnership with THE PLAYERS Championship," McGovern said.

Comcast Business is the nation's largest cable provider to small and mid-sized businesses and one of the leading service providers to the enterprise market. It serves the local market but also has a global footprint in more than 100 countries. In the United States, it serves 2.2 million businesses.

The partnership with THE PLAYERS is an expansion of Comcast Business's relationship with The PGA Tour. It sponsors the Comcast Business TOUR TOP 10, which rewards the top players in the FedExCup standings at the end of the FedExCup regular season.

To learn more about Five STAR Veterans Center, go to [5starveteranscenter.org](http://5starveteranscenter.org).

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# A taste of THE PLAYERS

The following are photos from THE PLAYERS Preview Party held on March 8. The event showcased some of the food and merchandise selections that will be available to attendees of 2024 THE PLAYERS Championship. It included a look inside the PGA Tour's Fan Shop location on site.

Photos by Susan Griffin



TacoLu returns again to THE PLAYERS, find them at Tacos on 12.



Look for Mini Bar in the Sawgrass Square, featuring mini donuts with many flavors to choose from, including special donuts with THE PLAYERS logo.



In the mood for barbecue? ABBQ will be located in The Oasis air-conditioned venue, featuring specialty cocktails from Tito's Handmade Vodka, including the popular Sawgrass Splash.



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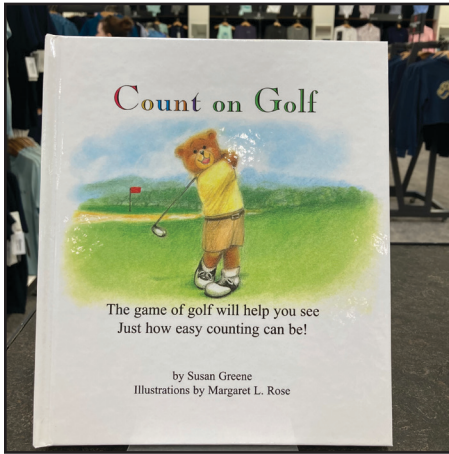
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# A look inside the Fan Shop

The following photos show a sampling of the different merchandise for sale at the PGA Tour's Fan Shop location on site.

Photos by Susan Griffin



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# Bolles students reflect on Black history

During February's Black History Month, students on the Bolles Lower School Ponte Vedra Beach Campus were encouraged to create artwork and write poems and stories about Black Americans who have made a positive impact on the world.

Eighteen students participated in the campuswide Black History Month art/writing contest, with students in pre-K through grade 1 making pieces of art and those in grades 2-5 submitting written works.

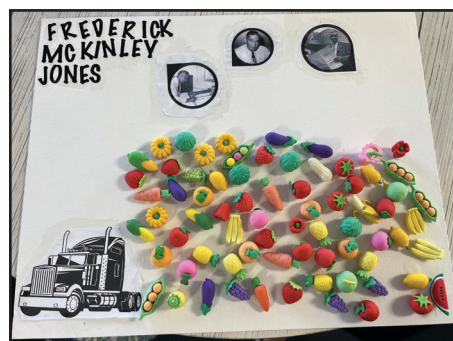
Black Americans featured in their reflections included: Garrett Morgan, the inventor of the stoplight; Patricia Bath, inventor of Laserphaco Probe (a device for cataract surgery); Otis Boykin, inventor of electrical resistors; Alexander Miles, inventor of the automatic elevator door; Frederick McKinley Jones, inventor of refrigeration; George Washington Carver, agricultural scientist; Anna Mangin, inventor of the pastry fork; and Valerie Thomas, inventor of the illusion transmitter.

The following Bulldogs were recognized for their participation in the contest at the March 8 Flag held in George Hall: Eden '37, Will '36, Sedef '36, Estelle '36, Jackson '36, Lucy '35, Noah '35, Ara '35, Jagger '34, Jaxon '33, Seraya '33, McKenzie '33, Sophia '32, Mycah Grace '32, Sophie '32, Milly '32, Miya '31 and Sarah '31.



Students at the Bolles Lower School Ponte Vedra Beach Campus present their Black History Month projects.

Contributed photos



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# Hospital, school district develop nursing program

Ascension St. Vincent's Riverside and Duval County Public Schools have partnered to develop an accredited Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) program. The partnership provides 30-60 seniors at Westside High School with a comprehensive educational experience, equipping students with the knowledge, skills and training essential for a career in health care.

"The partnership with Duval County Public Schools showcases St. Vincent's commitment to inspiring the next generation of health care professionals," said Scott Kashman, president and CEO of St. Vincent's Riverside. "Certified nursing assistants are an essential part of the patient-care team, and the career track can be a career path to work at the bedside or in administrative roles. We feel it is our responsibility to allow young professionals to explore opportunities in health care as early as possible."

The highly competitive program requires students to complete applications to gain acceptance into the program. Students will complete three courses: anatomy and physiology, health sciences foundation, and nursing assistant 3. The program will prepare students to obtain the State of Florida Nursing Assistant Certification during the final semester of their senior year of high school, prepar-

ing them to embark on health care careers dedicated to enhancing the well-being of individuals and communities through exemplary patient care.

"Duval County Public Schools is always looking to partner with local, reputable employers, allowing our students to get an early start on meaningful, fulfilling careers," said Jill Fierle, director of career and technical education, Duval County Public Schools. "The partnership with St. Vincent's Riverside provides our students with exceptional clinical experiences, exposure to a large variety of medical professionals, and access to state-of-the-art technology, making them more attractive candidates to future employers."

The Florida Board of Nursing regulates the accredited program. The curriculum combines theory and hands-on practice, including rounding with experienced St. Vincent's nurses. The theoretical and practical components align with the Florida State Department of Education Curriculum Framework, ensuring alignment with program objectives. All students must complete a minimum of 40 clinical hours.

Developing a robust workforce pipeline is imperative to providing quality, patient-centered care to Northeast Florida communities. This partnership is one of many ways St. Vincent's uses innovative and

creative measures to grow the talent pool.

Ascension Florida includes Ascension St. Vincent's based in Jacksonville and Ascension Sacred Heart based in Pensacola. Ascension Florida operates 10 hospitals and more than 200 other sites of care, employing more than 13,000 associates. Across the region, Ascension Providence, Ascension Sacred Heart and Ascension St. Vincent's have served North Florida for more than 165 years.

In fiscal year 2022, Ascension Florida provided more than \$265 million in community benefit and care of people living in poverty. Ascension is one of the

nation's leading nonprofit and Catholic health systems, with a mission of delivering compassionate, personalized care to all with special attention to persons living in poverty and those most vulnerable.

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Modeling the apparel were, in no particular order, Lisette Colebrooke, Donna Berger, Paula Coleman, Renee Sinaly, Jeanne Stevens, co-president Margie Hesser, Sharon Trumbull, Judy Adams and Karen Omahen.



Dillard's visual manager Lysette Colebrooke models one of Dillard's outfits on the Coastal Friends runway.



Kimberly Pond, assistant store manager for Dillard's in Town Center; Barbara Eddy; Lisette Colebrooke, visual manager for Dillard's in Town Center; and artist Mona Huggins.

# Coastal Friends holds spring fashion show

By Shaun Ryan

Dillard's, located in St. Johns Town Center, was the sponsor this year for Coastal Friends' annual fashion show, "A Tasteful Tee Off to Spring." This was the first time the store has curated a fashion show for a local ladies' group.

The show was held Wednesday, March 6, at Marsh Landing Country Club and showcased such brands as Lilly Pulitzer, J. McLaughlin, IBKUL, Eileen Fisher and Antonio Melani, Dillard's private label.

Emcee was Assistant Store Manager Kimberly Pond. Dillard's visual manager, Lisette Colebrooke, coordinated things behind the scenes and modeled apparel herself. Rebecca Miller, the store's makeup artist for Chanel, gave the models a professional look.

Ponte Vedra-based artist Mona Huggins, owner of Mona H., coordinated her hand-painted jewelry with the fashions and donated a porcelain necklace to the club's raffle. Dillard's donated gift certificates and two high-end baskets, one filled with ladies' luxury skin-care products and the other filled with ladies' fragrances.

Coastal Friends made a donation on behalf of Dillard's to the Make-A-Wish Foundation of Central and Northern Florida.

Barbara Eddy and Maria DiClemente coordinated the event, which drew about 100 attendees. Club models were: Donna Berger, Paula Coleman, Renee Sinaly, Jeanne Stevens, co-president Margie Hesser, Sharon Trumbull, Judy Adams and Karen Omahen.

The meeting was conducted by club co-president Clara Wittman.

Established in 1998, Coastal Friends is a social group of women living in communities throughout the area. They have monthly luncheons (except for July and August). For further information, contact bartshar@comcast.net.



Donna Berger models an outfit during the show. Photos by Shaun Ryan



Paula Coleman models an outfit from Dillard's.



Jeanne Stevens models an outfit during the show.



Sharon Trumbull wears an outfit from Dillard's.



Karen Omahen models an outfit from Dillard's.



Judy Adams models an outfit from Dillard's and jewelry by Mona Huggins.



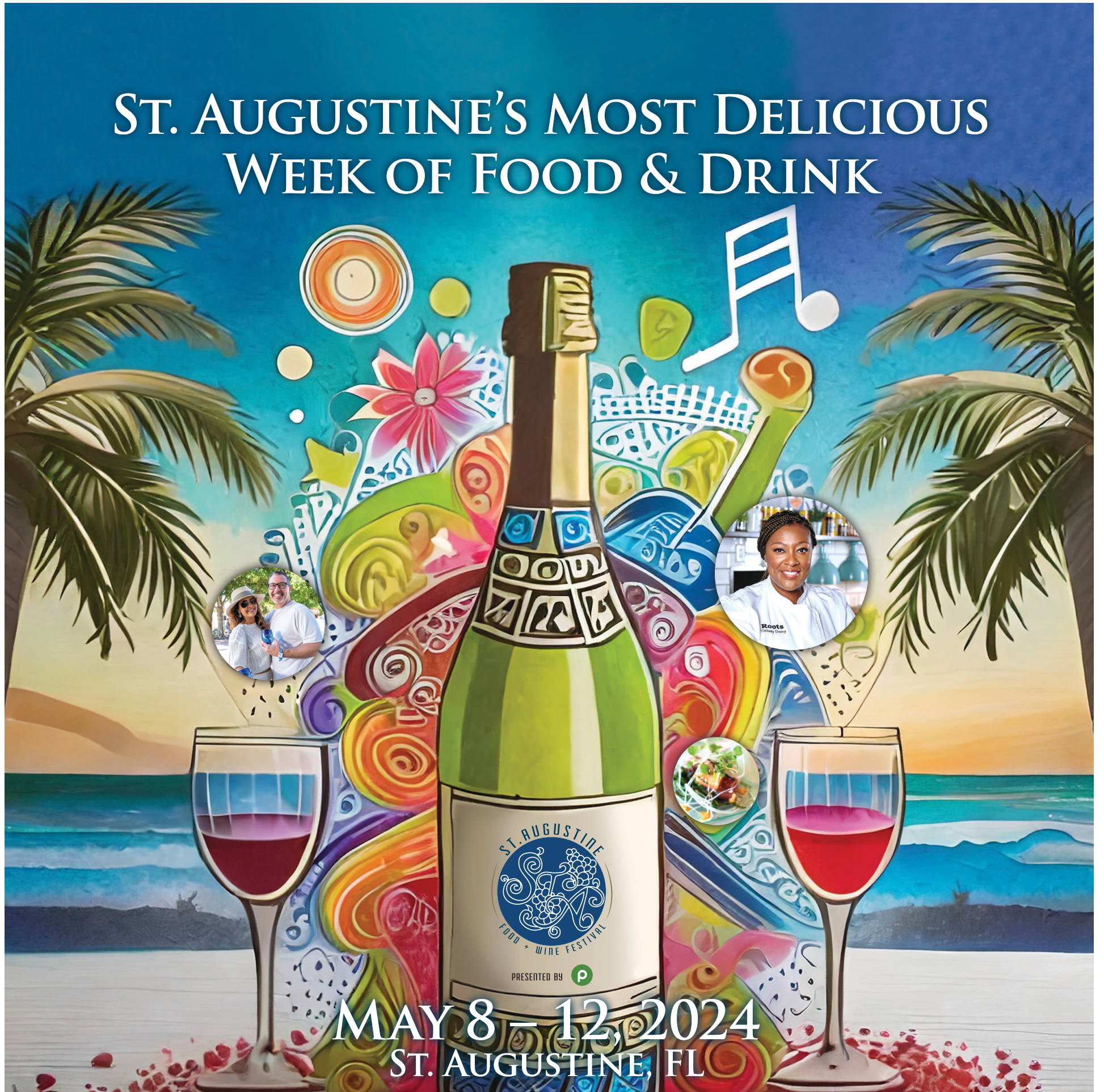
Renee Sinaly wears an outfit from Dillard's.



Margie Hesser models an outfit on the Coastal Friends runway.



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Contributed photos  
Gloria Ziolkowski was the grand prize raffle winner.

## Premier Physical Therapy holds open house

Premier Physical Therapy held an open house Friday, March 1, to celebrate the grand opening of the practice's newest location at 6 Fairfield Blvd., Unit 6, Ponte Vedra Beach.

Refreshments and hors d'oeuvres

were provided, and raffles were held for a free Alter-G session to experience weightless therapy, a complimentary golf fitness evaluation and an in-depth free running screening for athletes in spirit. The grand prize raffle winner, Gloria Ziolkowski,

received a new iPad.

Premier Physical therapy has two other locations, both in Jacksonville, at: 4230 Pablo Professional Court Unit 155 and 11339 Distribution Ave. East.



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# Entrepreneur supports girls soccer team

Building dream homes has always been an aspiration of Amany Youssef. It started when she was a young girl, riding past picture-perfect homes with her family. Now at the age of 25, the entrepreneur and founder of AY Luxury Designs brings her expertise to homes all over Northeast Florida, creating dream exteriors and interiors for families to enjoy. This success at an early age has allowed her the ability to support another one of her passions, student athletes.

“Igniting inspiration in this next generation is something I’m equally as passionate about,” Youssef said.

AY Luxury Designs sponsors Youssef’s high school alma mater’s soccer team, the Wolfpack, Wolfson High School Girls Varsity Soccer Team in Jacksonville, providing practice, home and away kits for each player as well as special gifts for senior players. The Wolfpack was where she learned confidence, resilience and the importance of teamwork.

“Soccer shaped my journey into the male-dominated fields of construction and luxury design,” she said. “It’s important to support these young women, empowering them as leaders and ensuring they have what they need to be successful on and off the field.”



Photo by Anthony Hardge

Entrepreneur Amany Youssef is seen with the Wolfson High School girls varsity soccer team.

Youssef brings endless creativity and innovation to every project, and it’s what’s made her such a success. Her specialty is creating breathtaking outdoor spaces, from patios, outdoor kitchens, pergolas and gazebos to driveways and fire pits.

“I want every family I work with to want to spend as much time as possible in their new space,” she said. “Whether it

be relaxing by the fire, playing with their kids or making something delicious.”

There’s an elegance to all of Youssef’s designs, and her keen eye for a classic, modern aesthetic is clear in every project, from the perfectly-curated outdoor kitchen, with quality brick, top-of-the-line appliances and granite countertops to expertly-laid marble tile in a bathroom remodel. Her wealth of knowledge in-

cludes exceptional CAD software skills, which she uses to digitally create state-of-the-art 3D renderings for every build.

Her projects start in as little as two to four weeks, she offers zero percent financing and her team of professionals and certified contractors handle all documentation, including HOA requirements and county permitting.

Learn more at [ayluxurydesigns.com](http://ayluxurydesigns.com).



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## Housing market warms up

When it comes to the Northeast Florida housing market, February’s market statistics looked more like the spring buying season than winter. Closed sales were up, the median sales price was up, and the list prices received were up — more typical of the spring shopping season than the tail end of winter. Coupled with the highest inventory levels in many years, buyers have many more choices while sellers are still getting good offers.

Specifically, the region’s median sales price came in at \$385,000 in February, 2.8% more than the previous month. Closed sales climbed 31% to 1,491, and new listings escalated to 3,359, a 23% increase. The list price received inched up 0.2% to 97% and closed over list price was 10.8%, which is 2% more than the month before. Active inventory rose 22.2% to 6,204 homes, and houses did not linger, with the days on the market falling 31% to a median of 35 days.

With the market revving up this spring,



# St. Augustine Distillery marks 10-year anniversary

St. Augustine Distillery, a pioneering force in the Florida craft spirits scene, will celebrate its 10th anniversary on Tuesday, March 19. A decade of innovation, dedication and community support has defined the distillery's journey from reviving a historic ice plant to becoming the trailblazer of bourbon distillation in the Sunshine State.

In November 2012, co-founders Mike Diaz and Philip McDaniel embarked on their journey by acquiring the dormant FP&L Ice Plant, dating back to 1907, with a vision to create Florida's first bourbon.

The meticulous restoration of the historic building earned St. Augustine Distillery multiple awards in 2014, including "Excellence in Adaptive Reuse" from the Urban Land Institute, "Excellence in Culture and Historic Preservation" from the NW Florida Regional Council and "The Adelaide Sanchez Award" from The City of St. Augustine for restoration and preservation.

CEO McDaniel's advocacy efforts at both the state and federal levels have significantly and positively impacted the craft spirits industry. From removing restrictions on spirits sold directly from distillery's retail shops to the permanent reduction of federal excise taxes, McDaniel's commitment has ushered in positive changes for the industry, including allowances for on-site sales, festivals, events and consumer tastings.

St. Augustine Distillery first opened its doors with its Florida Cane Vodka and later introduced New World Gin and Pot Distilled Rum. After patiently aging for more than two and a half years, the distillery launched Florida Double Cask Bourbon, the first bourbon fermented, distilled, aged and bottled in the Sunshine State.

St. Augustine Distillery now produces multiple award-winning bourbons, including Florida Straight, The Saint, Port Finished Bourbon and multiple limited release offerings.

Over the years, St. Augustine Distillery has expanded its product line, garnering accolades for its spirits, tour experiences and community initiatives. In 2016, the distillery was named Best Craft Gin



Contributed photo

St. Augustine Distillery has created its 10-Year Anniversary Blend to celebrate its first decade.

Distillery by USA Today's 10Best Readers' Choice Travel Awards. Their guided tour experience was crowned Best Whiskey Tour in North America in the 2018 Drammie Awards, and they later were voted Best Distillery Tour in USA Today's 2023 10Best Readers' Choice Awards.

In its commitment to supporting arts, culture and community, the distillery has been a vital sponsor to events and local institutions like the Sing Out Loud music festival, the Fort Mose Jazz & Blues Concert Series, the Lincolnville Museum and Cultural Center, and participating in Habitat for Humanity home builds.

"Looking back, the past decade has been an incredible journey. We owe so much to our incredible team, local community and dedicated fans," said CFO Diaz.

McDaniel added, "Everyone's collective efforts have allowed us to enhance the craft distilling landscape in the Sunshine State, create local jobs and prove that,

without exception, Florida can produce a world-class bourbon."

Looking forward, St. Augustine Distillery remains committed to excellence, embracing innovation and growth in the dynamic craft spirits industry.

To celebrate a decade of progress, the distillery is releasing a highly exclusive 10-Year Anniversary Blend bourbon, which incorporates four of the distillery's oldest bourbon barrels, each aged more than nine years. This limited release of roughly 400 bottles will be available in-store only starting Saturday, March 16. This unique spirit represents a piece of Florida history, inviting enthusiasts to join the celebration and secure a part of the distillery's legacy.

# Housing Market

Continued from 48

Northeast Florida still is less affordable for some buyers than it used to be. The Home Affordability Index registered 68, a nearly 3% drop from January, which was indicative of slightly higher home prices.

The Home Affordability Index measures housing affordability for the region. In other words, it measures whether a typical family earns enough to qualify for a mortgage on a typical home, based on current interest rates, median income and median home prices. A higher number means greater affordability. This index measures affordability factors for all homebuyers making a 20% downpayment. An index of 100 is defined as the point where a median-income family has the exact amount of income needed to purchase a median-priced existing home. An index value over 100 means that the family has more than enough income, while a value below 100 means that a family doesn't have enough income to qualify for a mortgage loan.



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# In the Arts

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## Gamble Rogers Folk Festival announces performers

Contributed photos



AJ Lee & Blue

The Gamble Rogers Folk Festival has celebrated the life and musical legacy of St. Augustinian Gamble Rogers for more than 27 years. Hailing originally from Winter Park, Rogers became not only a pivotal figure in American folk music, guitarist extraordinaire, humorist and storyteller, but also a local legend and hero, beloved by all who knew him.

The upcoming 28th Annual Gamble Rogers Folk Festival continues these long-running traditions and festivities with more than 100 performers on four stages over three days. It will be held April 12-14 at the St. Johns County Fairgrounds, 5840 State Road 207 in Elkton.

Featuring a balanced blend of seasoned and up-and-coming performers is a hallmark of the Gamble Rogers Folk Festival. Headliners include AJ Lee & Blue



Remedy Tree



Jerron "Blind Boy" Paxton

Summit and the John Jorgenson Quintet, with supporting acts Verlon Thompson, Jerron "Blind Boy" Paxton, Remedy Tree, The Krickets, Red & Christopher Henry & their All-Star Band, and Wyatt Ellis.

AJ Lee & Blue Summit is a golden grass band from the Bay Area that draws influences from country, soul, swing, rock and jam music. John Jorgenson Quintet is a dynamic, authentic gypsy jazz band led by music virtuoso John Jorgenson, known for his fast guitar licks.

With legend Gamble Rogers once calling St. Augustine home, it's only right that the festival features the region's best local performers. The following regional and local artists will perform:

Chelsea Saddler, Davis Loose & Friends, The North Florida Taildraggers, The Morrow Family Band, Patchwork, Brian Smalley, Lauren Heintz, Thick & Thin String Band, Uncle Mosie, Chuck and Laura Rogers, Lyn Rogers Lacey, The Bullard Brothers, Passerine, Dawson Hicks, Bear & Robert, ManChild, Doug Spears & The Cracker Collective, The Dunehoppers,

Michael Jordan, Mary-Lou & Friends, Lee Hunter, Joey Kerr, The Front Porch Backsteppers, Ghost & Bones, Chuck Hardwicke & The Hart Line, Little Mer-



John Jorgenson

cies, Wax Wings, Paul Smithson, Tina & Her Pony, SUMA, Jerry Mincey with Tony Macaluso, Don Cooper, Jim Carrick, Charley Simmons, Larry Mangum, Mike Shackelford, Neil Dixon, Alana DeBow, Aslyn Baringer McTaggart, Jerry Carris, Tim Higgins, Sue Tice, Eric Searcy, Scott Anderson, Susan Brown, Frank Douglas, Frank Lindamood, Ron & Bari Litschauer, Jeanie Fitchen, Joe Mark and Jim Bickerstaff.

One of the highlights of the Gamble Rogers Folk Festival is The YoungFolk Stage, where a new generation of musicians have an opportunity to perform on a nationally recognized professional stage. These up-and-coming performers are 19 years and younger, showing that the folk music tradition is for all ages.

Supporting headliner and mandolin prodigy Wyatt Ellis will be a YoungFolk Stage highlight performance. YoungFolk performers include:

Lauren Gilliam, Kade Robertson, Sam Patterson, Eloise Arnold, Katherine Archer, The Rogers Family, Faith Alene, Ben Brown, Ben Koppman, Paige Bechtold, Daniel Hecht, Ben Edwards, Gamble Rogers Middle School Jazz Band,

Victoria Griffin, Alivia Hunter, Michael Lagasse, Grayson Lagasse, Jessalyn Lau-



Red & Chris Henry

ramore, Jesse Loose, Elcie Nilon, Jesse Sawyer, Sydney Thomas, St. Augustine High School American Music Class, Callum Toner and Madison Wardell.

Tickets are on sale now and may be purchased in advance or at the gate. Advance purchase general admission tickets are \$100 for the full three-day festival (April 12-14), \$35 for Friday night (April 12), \$65 for the full-day Saturday (April 13), and \$35 for the full-day Sunday (April 14).

Gate general admission tickets are \$120 for the full three-day festival (April 12-14), \$40 for Friday night (April 12), \$70 for the full-day Saturday (April 13), and \$40 for the full-day Sunday (April 14).

Admission is free to kids age 16 and younger. Primitive camping and RV sites are available for festivalgoers. Primitive tent sites are \$30, RV sites are \$100 and RV overflow parking is \$75 for the three-day festival.

Food trucks, local artisans, craft vendors, activities for kids, workshops and more will be on-site. Well-behaved and leashed pets are also welcome. Bring blankets, hammocks and chairs.

Tickets can be purchased at eventbrite.com/o/gamble-rogers-folk-festival-51483367423.

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# 'The Road to Picolata' by Tracy Upchurch

Reviewed by Karen Harvey

Tracy Upchurch, long recognized in St. Augustine as a lawyer, public servant and history professor, has found a new passion ignited by the awakening of his literary muse. Upchurch's first historic novel, "The Road to Picolata," was published last year when Upchurch's life-long dream of writing, and his ardent interest in history, merged.

The scene is western St. Johns County (Picolata) where Confederate soldiers are defending their soil from Union aggression.

The protagonist is Henry Whitlock, a 14-year-old boy discovering himself as he dutifully cares for Daniel Allen, a critically injured Confederate soldier and a young boy himself. The tension is increased when Henry's controlling stepfather, an unyielding minister with Union loyalties is determined to find his son at all costs. Abraham and his wife, Mariah, venture out into the country to find Henry and, instead, find the horror of war and the complexities of uncommon relationships.

With the cadence of a raconteur, Upchurch imparts the tale of Henry and Daniel as the two boys struggle with pain and devotion, war and hope. Adult characters find wisdom from the actions of the two young men as they all look for solutions to dismal situations war had created.

"The Road to Picolata" could be a coming-of-age story or it could be a war story. When the reader considers the dilemma Henry's stepfather is in, it also becomes a "life relationships" story. Abraham and Mariah fight their own battles as conflicting beliefs are met head on with



Photo by Karen Harvey

**Tracy Upchurch uses his speaking talents to inform the public.**

soldiers and country-bred misfits alike.

Most importantly, the book provides a story with historic credence. Picolata is an authentic location along the St. Johns River in western St. Johns County. Upchurch describes Florida in the 1800s with colorful details. He also expresses the terror of war and the agony of injuries. The story is short, but don't be fooled, it is long with meaning.

The eye-catching cover of the book represents an

existing painting providing a nostalgic look into real Florida of the 1800s. The illustration invites us to open the book to visit the scenic landscape as richly described by the author.

Upchurch chose his love of St. Johns County and knowledge of Florida history to pen his first historic novel. But he could have selected a theme with law, patriotism or politics. His great-grandfather, John J. Upchurch, served in both the Florida and Georgia legislatures. His grandfather Frank D. Upchurch Sr. was a veteran of WWI, practiced law in St. Augustine and served as a state representative and senator. Frank Sr. also was a mayor of St. Augustine as was his son Hamilton, and later Tracy.

Hamilton Upchurch, Tracy's father, was a veteran of WWII, served on the St. Augustine City Commission, was a two-term mayor and served four years in the Florida House of Representatives. Hamilton's brother, Frank Jr., and son Hamilton Davis Upchurch Jr. were also involved in legal practices.

Tracy not only followed in the footsteps of a family of law and civic service but also walks in a path that embraces history. Frank Sr. was a key player in the establishment of the St. Augustine Preservation Board. Tracy is a trustee for the St. Augustine Historical Society.

Let's hope that Upchurch's muse will stay alert and guide him through more story-telling adventures. Judging by the quality of this book, his readers will demand more from Upchurch.

**Karen Harvey is a local author.**

## CANVAS, STAGE AND MORE

*Here's a look at what's happening in the arts locally*

### Air Supply to perform concert in Jacksonville

Air Supply will perform at 8 p.m. Thursday, March 21, at The Florida Theatre, 128 E. Forsyth St., Jacksonville. General admission and VIP tickets are available for purchase at floridatheatre.com and the Florida Theatre box office at 904-355-2787.

Air Supply is the Australian rock duo of Graham Russell and Russell Hitchcock. They had worldwide success with the major hits "All Out of Love," "Make Love Out of Nothing at All," "Lost in Love," "Here I Am," "The One That You Love" and many more.

### Little River Band returns to the Florida Theatre

The Little River Band will perform with the Jacksonville Rock Symphony Orchestra at 8 p.m. Friday, March 22, at The Florida Theatre, 128 E. Forsyth St., Jacksonville.

Tickets are available at floridatheatre.com and by calling the Florida Theatre box office at 904-355-2787.

Through the '70s and '80s, Little River

Band enjoyed huge chart success with multi-platinum albums and chart-topping hits like "Reminiscing," "Cool Change," "Lonesome Loser," "The Night Owls," "Take It Easy On Me," "Help Is on Its Way," "Happy Anniversary," "We Two," "Man On Your Mind" and "The Other Guy."

### The Guess Who to perform concert

Legendary Canadian band The Guess

Who will appear in concert at 8 p.m. April 11 at The Florida Theatre, 128 E. Forsyth St., Jacksonville. Tickets are available at floridatheatre.com and the Florida Theatre box office at 904-355-2787.

The Guess Who recorded chart-topping hits in the late '60s and early '70s with an impressive catalogue of songs including "American Woman," "These Eyes" and "No Time."

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# Sports



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## Sharks come up short in third straight final four

Photos by Anthony Richards

By Jim Moyes

Ponte Vedra High's boys basketball season came to an end at the hands of a very talented Pembroke Pines Charter team, 61-34, at the Class 6A state semifinals in Lakeland on March 7.

The Sharks clearly were not at their best against the Jaguars, but much of the credit must go to their opponents.

On the Sharks' very first possession, a steal by Pembroke Pines and a made layup was the first sign it was going to perhaps be a long night for the Sharks.

By the time the first quarter had ended the Sharks had tallied only five points to their opponent's 14.

Making only four shots in their 21 attempts in the first half resulted in the Sharks trailing 25-12 at half-time. It was the Sharks' lowest first half scoring total of the season.

Pembroke Pines Charter arguably might have been the best opponent the Sharks have faced since the Bolles School squad in the 2016 state championship.

The Jaguars dominated on the backboards with several of their points coming on put-back layups from their own missed shots.

One oddity in the game was that the Sharks never attempted a single free throw in the contest.

Although it was not the ending they sought, the 2023-24 season was an overwhelming success, which featured three sophomores in their rotation.

The youngsters blended in with the few returning veterans as the season progressed and they improved immeasurably from the start of the season.

At one point in the campaign, the Sharks had a record of 9-5 but kept getting better as the season wore on. Only a buzzer-beater loss to Providence kept coach Ben Wilson's squad from winning 13 straight before their loss in the final four.

The Sharks can eagerly look ahead to next year as the cupboard is not bare of talent. Four players who figured prominently this season will return but they will surely miss the presence of a trio of departing seniors.



**Sam Ritchie capped his career as the seventh leading scorer in the program's history with 837 career points.**

Sam Ritchie capped his career as the seventh leading scorer in the program's history with 837 career points, while six-foot-six Tyler Cowans was a consistent force for all season, especially on the boards as his season total of 191 rebounds was fourth best in school history.

Senior Brendan Hynes was the silent warrior who did much of the work that does not often show up in the stat lines. His work in the regional final against Wiregrass Ranch was a big reason why the Sharks ad-



**Tyler Cowans finished with 191 rebounds on the season, which is fourth best in school history.**

vanced to the final four for the third consecutive year.

The four returnees for next season who played a pivotal role in this season's success include junior David Sanchez-Barrera and sophomores Maddox Palmer, Trace Westercamp and Ryan Speace.

The main question heading into the offseason is whether the Sharks can make it four straight trips to the final four next season. Only time will tell, so stay tuned.

## Pickleball tournament to benefit youth foundation

The fastest growing sport in the United States, pickleball, has a new tournament on the horizon.

The Smoothie King Crown Cup will take place at the Pickleball Courts at Argyle Forest Park (8533 Acanthus Drive

at Argyle Forest Boulevard) on Saturday, April 27. Jax Smoothie King has signed on to underwrite the event as the title sponsor and all proceeds will benefit the MaliVai Washington Youth Foundation.

Men's and women's tournaments will

take place from 8 a.m. to noon in 3.0 and below, 3.5, and 4.0 and above divisions. The afternoon will feature mixed doubles from 1 to 5 p.m. with the same division levels.

Entry fee is \$50 per person per event and participants sign up as a team. Each team is guaranteed a minimum of three matches in a round robin format with the possibility of playing in the championships to become king (or queen) of the court.

"Smoothie King is proud to support this worthwhile organization, which provides

after-school and summer youth development programs in the urban core to at-risk youth," said Jason Luther, a partner in the Jax Smoothie King franchise. "We plan to have a festival-type atmosphere with music, food, pickleball and, of course, Smoothie King smoothies."

To register for the tournament, download the Swish App or register online at swish-tournaments.com/product/smoothie-king-crown-cup. Sponsorships are also available by calling 904-359-5437 or emailing crowncup@malwashington.com.

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Photos courtesy of Ponte Vedra High Athletics

The Sharks competed in the Class 6A semifinals in Lakeland on March 7.

# Sharks go toe-to-toe with undefeated Bloomingdale

By Anthony Richards

The Ponte Vedra Sharks led for much of their state semifinal matchup against Bloomingdale High School but could not hang on in the end and lost 55-50 to the undefeated Bulls in Lakeland on March 7.

Despite the Bulls coming into the match undefeated with a record of 29-0, it was the Sharks that grabbed quick control of the contest as they jumped out to a 10-3 first quarter lead.

Senior Taylor Perce knocked down an early three-pointer for the Sharks and quickly set the tone that the Sharks were not fazed by what the Bulls were able to accomplish up to that point.

It also did take long for senior captains Morgan Gavazzi, Maya Richards and Kennedy Rosendahl to establish themselves in the game flow.

However, the Bulls began to come alive offensively in the second quarter, but the Sharks were able to keep pace and trade long range bombs and big shots through



Morgan Gavazzi and Kennedy Rosendahl were two of the senior leaders on this year's Ponte Vedra girls' basketball squad.

most of the second quarter, as the Sharks clung to a 25-24 halftime advantage and 37-33 heading into the final quarter.

After the Sharks defense limited the Bulls to just nine points in the third quarter, they were outscored 22-13 in the fourth quarter, as the Bulls grabbed only their second lead of the game with less than four minutes remaining.

Just like they had in the second quarter, the Bulls got on a scoring run late that was fueled by converting on their trips to the free throw line.

In the end, the Sharks won the first and third quarters, while the Bulls held the edge in the second and fourth quarters of the back-and-forth contest.

Having the lead for so much of the game and coming up just short of a trip to the state title is a tough way to end the season, but it does not take away from the run and the team chemistry on the court and off that the Sharks were able to capture this season.

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