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Thursday, July 18, 2024

PonteVedraRecorder.com

VOLUME 55, NO. 38 \$1.00

Underwood's names new president

By Shaun Ryan

Underwood's, one of the premier jewelry retailers in Northeast Florida, recently announced the appointment of Michael Richards as president. The company's former vice president and chief operating officer began his new role on July 1.

Longtime Chairman and now-former President Clayton Bromberg remains active in the chairman role, influencing the business's strategic direction, merchandising, diamond buying and inventory procurement.

Richards oversees the watch departments, multiple jewelry lines, repair departments, human resources, accounts payable and receivable, compliance and more.

He expressed appreciation for the accomplishments of Bromberg, who was appointed Underwood's president

UNDERWOODS continues on Page 22

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Finding the story behind every brand

By Anthony Richards

In many ways life is full of stories, and how capturing these stories can be crucial to help brand and sell a product comprised the primary talking points during the latest Circle of Creation event hosted by the link on July 10.

"There's a story behind every product," said Keeli Scarlett, storyteller at the link. "Branding is all about storytelling."

Scarlett was a key speaker on the night and spoke about how telling a product's story is more important now than ever because it can be what allows a product to stand out in an oversaturated market with a lot of competition for customers.

"You have to sell the benefits and the story behind the product instead of just the just the features a product offers."

This means focusing on how a product



Photo by Anthony Richards

Keeli Scarlett, storyteller at the link was a featured speaker during the July Circle of Creation event.

BRAND continues on Page 15

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Send us your news

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



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BRIEFS

Event to fight against human trafficking

The second annual Rise UP Caravan to bring awareness to ending human trafficking will be held from 9 a.m. to noon Saturday, July 27. The caravan will meet at Alvin's Island, 1575 Sadler Road, Fernandina Beach, and travel to St. Augustine Beach. Participants are encouraged to decorate their cars, bring posters and wear Our Rescue gear.

For further information, email Nefconductorclub@gmail.com.

Cord blood donations encouraged

LifeSouth Community Blood Centers Cord Blood Bank is raising awareness about cord blood donation in observance of National Cord Blood Awareness Month. LifeSouth is the first cord blood bank in the Southeast to provide transfusable cord blood products that are licensed by the FDA.

Umbilical cord blood is a rich source of stem cells, which can be used in treatment of many diseases and disorders. It has surpassed bone marrow as a source for stem

BRIEFS continues on Page 14

Essential Tremor Support Group to meet

The Essential Tremor Support Group will meet at 11 a.m. Aug. 6 at Baptist Health-Place in Nocatee, 400 Colonnade Drive, Ponte Vedra. Elaine Keebaugh, Ph.D., will present "An Inside Look at Deep Brain Stimulation and Essential Tremor." She will share images of a DBS patient's brain implanted "leads" and speak on how it's controlled and programmed.

All are welcome. RSVP to Jan Kary at jkary@verizon.net or 202-438-6750.

Event remembers Korean War, veterans

The public is invited to meet on the USS Orleck at 7 p.m. Thursday, July 25, to pay tribute to Korean War veterans and the Korean Defense veterans who served to safeguard freedom in South Korea. The day marks the 71st anniversary of the Korean War Armistice. Complimentary reservations to this annual remembrance are available while the supply lasts at wecanbeheroes-foundation.org/annual-korean-war-armistice-day-remembrance-2.

Hear stories of those who served and America's continuing defense of South Korea. Learn about the USS Orleck extraordinary engagements in the Korean War.

If you know of Korean War or Korean Defense veterans, tell them of this event at the Jacksonville Naval Museum USS Orleck DD-886, docked at 610 East Bay St., Jacksonville. Transportation is available to Korean War veterans by contacting the We Can Be Heroes Foundation at 904-373-8817.

This special event is hosted by the North-east Florida Korean War Defense Veterans Chapter, the Jacksonville Naval Museum and the We Can Be Heroes Foundation.



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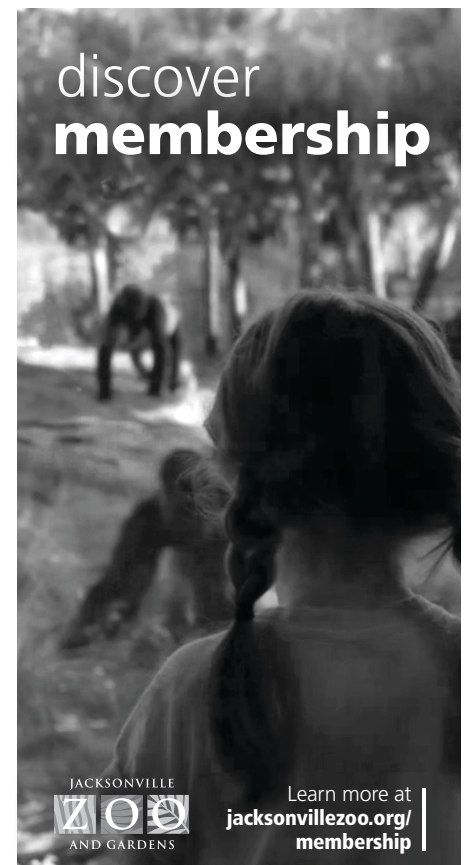
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OBITUARIES



Diane Lazelle Tyler

Diane Lazelle Tyler passed away peacefully at Community Hospice McGraw Center on June 5, 2024. Diane has joined her loving husband, James Lloyd Tyler, who passed away Feb. 19, 2022.

Diane leaves behind a daughter, Karoline Henry; two granddaughters, Alexis and Liberty; step-children and a great-grandson.

The memorial service will be held at 11 a.m. July 22, 2024. All are welcome to celebrate the life of Diane at Christ Episcopal Church, 400 San Juan Drive, Ponte Vedra Beach, FL 32082.

In lieu of flowers, please consider donations to Community Hospice McGraw Center.

DEATH NOTICES

Oliver Lawrence Durocher

Oliver Lawrence Durocher, 90, of Jacksonville, Florida, died July 11, 2024. Arrangements by Quinn-Shalz Family Funeral Home & Cremation Centre 904-249-1100 www.quinn-shalz.com

Helen Boslor Frankenberg

Helen Boslor Frankenberg, 95, of Jacksonville, Florida, died July 10, 2024. Arrangements by Quinn-Shalz Family Funeral Home & Cremation Centre 904-249-1100 www.quinn-shalz.com



Daniel Craig Eubank

Daniel Craig Eubank, 88, of Jacksonville, Florida, died July 11, 2024. Arrangements by Quinn-Shalz Family Funeral Home & Cremation Centre 904-249-1100 www.quinn-shalz.com

James Andrew Grimes

James Andrew Grimes, 47, of Green Cove Springs, Florida, died July 14, 2024. Arrangements by Quinn-Shalz Family Funeral Home & Cremation Centre, www.quinn-shalz.com, 904-249-1100.

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91 San Juan Drive, G2

2BD | 2 BA | 1500sf | SOLD FOR \$1,000,000

Don't miss this opportunity to scoop up this 1st floor condominium in the most coveted condo community in Old Ponte Vedra. Just a short walk to the beach and it's private footbridge to the Ponte Vedra Inn and Club, it is a perfect home or investment property that will not disappoint. This unit offers eastern exposure with water to golf views, an open floorplan and spacious Florida sunroom. Convenient oversized one car garage is just steps from the front door and offers additional storage.



82 San Juan Drive

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Welcome to this charming custom-built home nestled in the highly desired area of Old Ponte Vedra, offering unparalleled privacy with lush landscape and gorgeous golf course views. The property boasts just under a half an acre, with a large circular drive, side-entry garage and no immediate neighbor to the north. The first floor has 2 bedrooms with ADA compliant doorways and barrier free showers in both full baths and the second floor has 2 more ensuite bedrooms. The mature trees and landscaping provide shade and privacy, creating a tranquil oasis right outside your door.

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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

Bromeliads

"There are no gardening mistakes, only experiments." — Janet Kilburn Phillips



By Kathy Esfahani

Tropical landscapes gain interest and color with the addition of bromeliads. These unique plants feature decorative leaves in red, green, purple, orange and yellow. Leaves may have stripes, spots or bands and often form rosettes that can hold water.

Bromeliads can grow up to three feet tall, but they are slow growing and may take one to three years to mature. Although bromeliads only flower once before dying, they produce a bloom that is stunning and unique. The main plant also produces "pups" that can be cut off and cultivated into new plants.

There are two types of bromeliads. The majority are called epiphytes, or "air plants," and include the well-known Spanish moss. These bromeliads grow on trees, rocks, logs and other plants. Air plants cling to other plants for support, but they are not parasites. They get their own energy through photosynthesis, absorbing nutrients into their leaves. The smaller bromeliad category grows in soil; an example of these terrestrial bromeliads is a pineapple.

As a natural rain forest plant, bromeliads love a hot, moist environment. When selecting a bromeliad for your home, be sure to check the amount of light in the location you are considering. Although some types of bromeliads enjoy full sun — such as dyckia — most prefer partial, filtered sun for best growth. Bromeliads love humidity, but be careful not to overwater! If growing a terrestrial bromeliad, keep the soil consistently moist but not soggy. If your plant's leaves form vase-shaped rosettes, add water to these cups at the base of the leaves. These cups should stay full of water, but you can flush them out by adding and dumping clean water before refilling. Bromeliads can be very low maintenance — just place them under a shady tree and enjoy!

Several popular types of bromeliads in our area include:

- Lila — This tropical beauty loves humidity! It is a great choice to add color and texture to beds and borders. Lila is an air plant that will produce new pups off the main clump.
- Royal burgundy — Hence the name, royal burgundy bromeliads have long, deep red leaves that feature green spots. Royal burgundy is an air plant that can attract butterflies, and the cup often becomes a home for insects and frogs.
- Tiger — Another air plant, the tiger bromeliad is known for dark bars of color on light green leaves. It requires little maintenance and enjoys a humid climate. Tiger makes

Photo provided by Kathy's Creative Gardens & Nursery

Flower of the Week



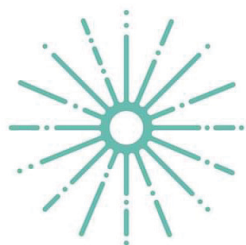
Royal Burgundy Bromeliad

a nice ground cover, accent plant or border in a bed that receives at least partial sunlight.

Happy planting!

Flower of the Week: Royal Burgundy Bromeliad

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



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Landrum Middle School welcomes new principal



Kasting white water rafting.



Kasting with his son, Chappy.



Kasting and a shark during a no-cage shark dive.

Contributed photos

Landrum Middle School PTO has announced the appointment of Troy Kasting as the school's new principal. Kasting brings a wealth of experience and a deep commitment to education and community to the school.

He grew up in Palm Harbor, Florida, and is a graduate of Flagler College. Following graduation, he served in the U.S.

Air Force, where he was an instructor at Lackland, Kelly and Sheppard Air Force bases, and was deployed multiple times. He also served in the Tennessee Air National Guard.

Kasting began his teaching career in Memphis at Central High School. Since then, he has made significant contributions to the St. Johns County School Dis-

trict, serving as an AP psychology teacher at Ponte Vedra High School and as an assistant principal at both Creekside and Pedro Menendez high schools. Additionally, he held the position of coordinator of school services at the district level and has been involved in many community service projects over the years.

Kasting and his son, Chappy, are res-

cue-certified scuba divers. They recently completed an exhilarating no-cage shark dive off the coast of West Palm Beach, where they were surrounded by lemon, sandbar and bull sharks at a depth of 80 feet. Kasting's son also recently competed at the USA Weightlifting Nationals in Pittsburgh, where he placed 12th in the nation.

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-Janet Westling



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Carrie Tawney is a corporate director of sales and marketing with Concord Hospitality. The Nocatee resident first found her passion for hospitality while in college, but she has fallen more in love with it over the decades. She believes her love of getting to know people and finding out who they are and how she can help is what makes it the perfect career for her.

Carrie Tawney

As told to Anthony Richards

Tell us a little about yourself and your background.

I am corporate director of sales and marketing with Concord Hospitality and hospitality has been a passion of mine for some time now. It has certainly been a calling for me.

I was trying to find out what was going to drive me, and I showed up at orientation at UCF and when they showed the list of majors I saw hospitality and thought, wow, that's sounds like it could be a lot of fun.

I decided on that and went through the rest of orientation and the rest is history because I wound up graduating from UCF and their hospitality school.

I graduated early on in the program before the Rosen College of Hospitality Management at UCF became what it is today.

I ended up being one of the first people to graduate there with that major.

What has your hospitality career path looked like?

All these years in hospitality, I've worked mainly with hotels and in sales, but I eventually found a real strong love for business travel sales, which is on the corporate side where you work with travel managers and travel agents.

I've spent most of my career with Starwood Hotels, which was like your St. Regis and "W" Hotels, but then we were acquired by Marriott.

We wound up moving to this area and I heard they were building a new Hyatt at the St. Johns Town Center, so I got a job there as their director of sales.

I am currently at the Residence Inn over by the Mayo Clinic and it is just such a beautiful property, and it has been such a pleasure working there. And most recently I was promoted to work within my company at Concord Hospitality to be a corporate director of sales and marketing.

So, I will be going in to help hotels that are in need of sales may need a position that needs help to be filled. Any hotels that may be having challenges and helping them discover ways to bring in new corporate clients.

What are some aspects you enjoy most about your job?

There is always something different going on each day, so there is never a dull moment, which definitely keeps things interesting.

I would say one of the main things that led me to hospitality and having success in hospitality is that I have a true passion for people and putting them first.

I love getting to know people and who they are. It is important to remember to treat them how you would want to be treated and that means putting their needs ahead of what you want.

Another major thing that I've learned working with the brands that I have, is striving to be the first to respond.

People are going to appreciate the person that is the first to return their call or be there to take their call and help with their situation.

Showing the care for your customers and a strong work ethic are truly what it takes to find success. It comes down to people wanting to know that you care for them and will be there when they need you.



Contributed photo

Carrie Tawney is a corporate director of sales and marketing with Concord Hospitality.

How do you deal with the challenges of the job?

I was brought up with some hard knocks in my life as I lost my father when I was 5, my mother when I was 23, my sister when I was 28 and I've also lost two brothers.

I'm also a survivor of breast cancer, but I think all these things, while they have been tough to go through, those hard times have also helped me to be resilient and be able to respond to anything that comes my way and that includes my job.

I started working when I was 14 and I just remember watching my mother raise five kids on her own, so those are lessons of work ethic that I'll remember for the rest of my life.

It's all about striving to move forward with whatever you get confronted with.

What tips would you give to someone looking to get into the world of hospitality?

It's far more than just showing guests around a hotel, but it's about leading with a certain integrity of not only myself, but also what I want them to buy into.

It's all about forming that respect that will carry on in the working relationships you develop. Everything is earned and without that respect, you won't have their business.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Resident faults forum rules, counters mailer claims

To the Editor:

Within 30 seconds of walking through the doors to attend the candidate forum (PV Recorder, 7/11/24), the campaign manager for commissioners Henry Dean and Christian Whitehurst put a camera in my face and told me to remove campaign materials I had placed on the table for Dean and Whitehurst’s opponents, Ann-Marie Evans and Ann Taylor.

The incumbents’ campaign manager then brought over an organizer of the

event who told me that I must remove the two candidates’ materials because they are not “positive.” She didn’t even pick one up to read it; the decision was predetermined. All three campaign pieces from “the Anns” were banned from the premises, and I later learned that policy was enforced by police. Yes, this happened in the United States of America — home of the First Amendment.

What could have been so objectionable in “the Anns” literature that police were called to escort me out at the end of the meeting when I handed out a few flyers at the door? Here are some excerpts: “On Whitehurst’s watch: ‘Our #1 ranked schools dropped to #2’ (Fl. Dept. of Ed.)”; “65% INCREASE in the number of overcapacity roads from 2020 to 2023 in SJC (SJC Transportation Analysis Spreadsheets)”; “he voted YES to over 15,000 new homes”; “he voted NO to reducing clearcutting; [Whitehurst] voted to put a 15% higher tax on the ballot. It lost in a landslide.” It was all factual and cited.

The ground rule of the forum itself was “no personal attacks.” However, that somehow morphed into “you can’t talk about what your opponent has done, only about what you plan to do.” This rule heavily favored incumbents who spoke about all that they had done in office. Their records could not be mentioned or

questioned. How convenient, considering that Dean alone has approved the development of nearly 30,000 homes and housing units.

Contrast all this “positivity” with the incumbents’ PACs’ attack ads that attempt to wholly shatter the reputations of Ann Taylor and Ann-Marie Evans. I sure wish I had a police officer to escort those lies out of my mailbox and off of my cell phone. They falsely claimed Ann-Marie wants to raise property taxes, citing a Facebook link to nowhere. She’s also accused of donating to a radical leftist group, when in fact she paid dues to her professional trade association for attorneys — without which it would have been difficult to practice law. Ann Taylor is depicted as supporting sex changes of children — all because an article came out about a puberty-blocking drug manufactured by a company Ann had left five years before! She marketed a painkilling gel for arthritis, not puberty blockers, at that company. The PAC ads also accuse her of supporting a “\$7 million tree tax,” even though it’s the identical policy that Henry Dean says he supports, with no reference to a \$7 million tax — which it is not.

The two very conservative, lifelong Republicans known as “The Anns” are now fighting a PAC of lies that has

labeled them “woke liberals.” Their statements rebutting the false claims are on their Facebook pages: ElectAnnMarie.com and VoteAnnTaylor.com.

**Nicole Crosby
Ponte Vedra Beach**



Reader displeased with use of tax funds

To The Editor:

How many taxpayer dollars were wasted renovating the southern beach pavilion in Vilano? What we needed were more toilets, showers and parking spaces. Maybe a splash park? What we got were the same two disgusting bathrooms, two puny feet washers/showers, which are quickly becoming mud puddles, three huge dressing rooms, which will no doubt become urinals and shelters, a sandy spider web play area and a humongous amphitheater paying homage to the old Casino. The irony.

**Patricia Jackson
St. Augustine**

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MSD sets tentative millage rate during 500th meeting

By Anthony Richards

The Ponte Vedra Beach Municipal Service District held its 500th board of trustees meeting in July 8 and the budget is becoming more and more of a topic of discussion.

The board agreed by a vote of four to one to set a tentative millage rate of 0.2464%.

Treasurer Rick Brown was the lone trustee that opposed the tentative millage rate because he preferred the current millage rolled-back rate of 0.2225%.

The decision is not finalized and can be changed because it is currently a tentative rate at this time, because they only had to agree on a tentative millage rate at the time due to state requirements.

In other news from the latest MSD meeting, trustee Mikey White informed his fellow trustees that a group from the University of Florida would be interested in possibly testing the oxygen levels of the lagoon water in Ponte Vedra Beach to see the best approach to help improve the lagoons.

After much discussion over the months, White wants to focus on start really looking into sorting out getting title easements who currently have drainage issues and no active owners, especially on Le Master Drive, San Juan Drive and Morning Side



Photo by Anthony Richards

The Ponte Vedra Beach Municipal Service District held its 500th meeting on July 8.

Drive.

White is also continuing reaching out and trying to work with the county's procurement office to see if the MSD can go ahead and use Isman & Russo for the feasibility study focusing on the drainage layout prior to and along with the sidewalk study as well on Solana Road and San Juan

Drive in Ponte Vedra Beach.

Jim Priester, who is running for St. Johns County Sheriff was in attendance and spoke during the MSD meeting and mentioned to the trustees that one of his goals if he wins the sheriff position, he would be interested in coming up with a new patrol contract similar to what the MSD had pre-

vious with the county where five deputies were in charge primarily of the area.

According to trustee John Cellucci, working together to create a contract the MSD previously had with the sheriff's office is something he and some of his fellow trustees said they would definitely be interested again.

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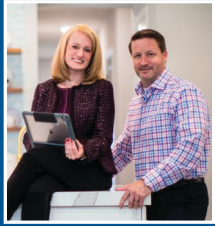
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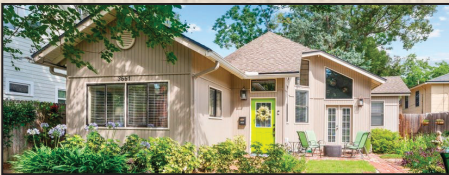
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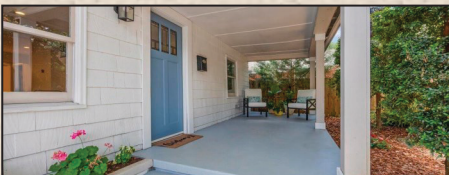
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Contributed photos



Glass blowing ignites creativity at summer camp

This summer, Jacksonville Country Day School's (JCDS) campers experienced the fiery art of glass blowing, thanks to a special visit by Jacksonville Burnt Glassworks during the "Art Adventures" specialty camp, led by JCDS Art Specialist, Alli Flores. The local glass studio captivated young minds with a sizzling demonstration, showcasing their skills as molten glass transformed under their expert hands.

With the glass furnace roaring to a toasty 2400 degrees Fahrenheit, the atmosphere

was charged with excitement and awe. Following an essential safety lesson, each camper got a chance to create their own masterpiece — choosing between crafting a glass pumpkin or an ornament. They learned many glass blowing terms and techniques including:

- Marvering — Rolling and shaping the hot glass on a flat, heat-resistant surface called a marvel;
- Annealing — The process of slowly cooling the finished glass piece in an an-



nealer to prevent stress and cracking;

- Gaffer — The lead glassblower or the person in charge of the creation process.

This hands-on session not only enriched the campers' summer but also offered them a rare glimpse into the intricate world of glass artistry. For many, it was a first-time experience into the transformative power of heat and glass — a truly unforgettable addition to their artistic journey at Jacksonville Country Day School Summer Camp.




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Club names Hardner Rotarian of the Year

For The Record

The Rotary Club of Ponte Vedra Beach recently presented its Rotarian of the Year Award to Danielle Hardner.

Hardner received the award from 2023-24 club President Jennifer Logue, who praised Hardner's numerous acts of community service through Rotary during the year.

"Danielle personifies the Rotary motto of 'Service Above Self,'" Logue said. "She is always willing to step up, pitch in and lend a hand to help others in need."

In addition to coordinating the Ponte Vedra Beach Rotary's EarlyAct club for PV/PV Rawlings students, Logue noted, Hardner organized its Gabriel House of Care service project, whereby club members prepare and serve meals to Mayo Clinic organ transplant and cancer patients. She also played an integral role in the club's hosting of an international delegation from Armenia, hosting two delegates in her home throughout their eight-day visit to the First Coast.

In addition to Rotarian of the Year, the Ponte Vedra Beach Rotary presented the Rookie of the Year Award to Tom Kastner. Presented annually to the new member who has gone above and beyond to become engaged in the club, the Rookie of the Year award recognized Kastner's



Contributed photo

Danielle Hardner receives the Rotarian of the Year Award from 2023-24 club President Jennifer Logue.

efforts as a club greeter, participation in community cleanup projects and his leadership as sponsorship chair for the club's annual Mineral City Celebration fundraiser.

Club Secretary Julie Kurtz received the Service Above Self Award for her tireless attention behind the scenes to the club's administration; Byron Miller received the Rotary Rock Star award for his service

as sergeant-at-arms and leadership of international projects; and Lorraine Dorsa received the Don Blackburn Award recognizing her generosity to the Rotary International Foundation.

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Wolfson Children's Christmas in July underway

Wolfson Children's Christmas in July, presented by Subaru of Jacksonville, is once again accepting donations, giving people the ability to spread joy and support Wolfson Children's Hospital patients through a variety of donation options. The annual month-long toy and donation drive ensures all patients at the hospital have the comfort of toys and a reason to smile as they navigate procedures and treatments.

The drive is under way now, ending July 31.

Members of the community can browse Wolfson Children's Amazon wish list at amazon.com/registries/guest-view/3P0YJR0WAGNHD for toys specially requested by the Wolfson Children's Child Life team or make a financial gift at ChristmasJuly.com.

This year, the Child Life team is placing an emphasis on infant toys, arts and crafts kits and supplies, as well as gift cards in small denominations, which are used as both rewards for older children and as assistance for

patient parents. Requested gift cards include Starbucks, Uber Eats, Publix and more.

For more information, go to ChristmasJuly.com.

Community members can also drop off new, unwrapped toys at Subaru of Jacksonville, 10800 Atlantic Blvd., through until 5 p.m. July 30. Gift card drop-offs can be scheduled directly with the Child Life department at calendly.com/wolfsonchildlifedepartment or they can be sent electronically to Child.Life@bmcjax.com.

At Wolfson Children's, child life specialists and music therapists use instruments and toys as tools to help children understand their conditions and prepare for medical procedures, like blood draws, IV placements and MRIs. The toys and donations from Christmas in July help keep the toy shelves full, giving the Child Life and Music Therapy teams the supplies they need to support, comfort and care for every patient.

Local hospice receives award

Community Hospice & Palliative Care has been honored with the 2024 Hospice CAHPS Honors Award by HEALTHCAREfirst. This award recognizes hospices that consistently provide outstanding care and support to patients and their families.

The award highlights the commitment to patient satisfaction and quality care. To earn this accolade, Community Hospice & Palliative Care surpassed the national average score in the Hospice Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (CAHPS) survey, particularly in the "Willingness to Recommend" category.

Community Hospice & Palliative Care is the only hospice provider in

Northeast and North Central Florida to receive this distinction. Phillip Ward, president and CEO, credits the entire team's dedication and commitment to extraordinary care for achieving this honor.

"We started the annual Hospice Honors Award program over 10 years ago to shine a spotlight on agencies leading the way in quality patient care," said Jeremy Crow, head of RCM and CAHPS Survey, Home Health and Hospice at HEALTHCAREfirst. "We congratulate Community Hospice & Palliative Care on this achievement and are honored to partner with them in their mission to provide excellent care."

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Briefs

Continued from 2

cells in transplants.

Local mothers delivering at UF Health Jacksonville, UF Health North and Baptist Medical Center have the option to donate their umbilical cord blood to LifeSouth. During a cord blood donation, a medical professional collects the stem cell-rich blood from the umbilical cord after delivery. The process is painless for both the mother and child. For more information, go to lifesouth.org/cord-blood-bank.

Palm Valley Market every Tuesday

The Palm Valley Market is held from 10 a.m. to 1 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.

— Compiled by Shaun Ryan

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Dreams Come True names board president

Dreams Come True, Northeast Florida's locally based dream-granting organization for children battling life-threatening medical conditions, has announced the appointment of Paul Davison, assurance practice leader with BDO USA, P.C., as president of the organization's board of directors.

"We are honored to have Mr. Paul Davison stepping into the role of president and helping us continue our long-standing mission and traditions as we celebrate 40 years of fulfilling dreams for local children," said Dreams Come True Executive Director Anna Valent. "Since 2018, Mr. Davison has served our organization in various capacities and continues to provide direct support to our team and the families we serve."

Davison joined the Dreams Come True Board of Directors in 2018. He served two terms as secretary and just completed his second term as vice president. He has also been involved in Dreams Come True's Moore Scholarship program, helping to award college scholarships to dream children and their siblings. In addition to serving Dreams Come True, Davison's engagement in the Northeast Florida community has included involvement with the Jacksonville Downtown Vision (2018-current) and Changing Homelessness in Jacksonville (2017-2020).



Paul Davison

"I am honored to have the opportunity to lead Dreams Come True as it continues to celebrate its rich history in our community and fulfills a record number of dreams for children and families who call the First Coast home," said Davison. "As Dreams Come True continues to grow in its mission and the number of families

served, we have a dedicated team led by our executive director, Anna Valent, and I am excited to join them in ensuring that we reach all children and families in our community needing our support."

Davison has more than 37 years of experience in public accounting and 21 years as a partner with international accounting firms. His experience includes leading audits for public companies and large private companies, while having extensive interactions and communications with boards and audit committees, along with leading the Northeast Florida practice.

Joining Davison on the 2024-25 Dreams Come True Board of Directors will be: Miller Electric Chief Commercial Officer Donnie Smith as secretary and Stephen Tremel Jr. as treasurer.

All officers were inducted on July 1, 2024, and will serve in their respective positions until June 30, 2025.

Since 1984, Dreams Come True has been using the power of a dream to bring hope and joy to local children in Northeast Florida and Southeast Georgia battling life-threatening medical conditions. To date, more than 4,800 children have seen their dreams turned into reality.

To learn more, go to DreamsComeTrue.org.



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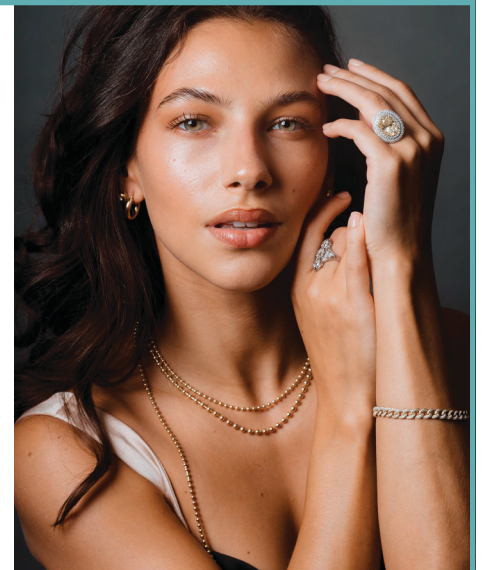
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Photos by Anthony Richards

Networking is a major aspect of the Circle of Creation events.

Brand

Continued from 1

will enhance a person's way of life, and it starts by getting to know their way of life and understanding the audience one is trying to reach.

"There should be an intersection between a brand's story and a consumer's story," Scarlett said. "That unique journey is what helps a brand stand out from the rest. If your brand was a person, what would its personality be?"

She seemed to ease the faces of those in attendance when she informed them that constructing a brand story to pitch is no different than creating any other story, and just as an author, their story would have a beginning, middle and an end, with the end ideally being the consumer agreeing to what was pitched to them.

The knack of storytelling is something that can be a useful tool regardless of what area of business one is in.

"From marketing to sales, your story can help you get your message across," Scarlett said.

Also speaking on the night was Jen Cart, president of Stellar Growth Strategies.

She focused on the different forms of pitches that can be used to sell a product and how it will differ depending on what part of the process one finds herself in.

Cart encouraged practicing pitches at home before using them in the real world because it can help develop more consistency and provide needed structure to a pitch.

"It can really help to keep it from going off the rails, which can easily happen

once you get into a conversation," Cart said.

Making sure to "read the room" and not forcing a pitch on anyone was another tip she offered, as one of the quickest ways to have a pitch go south is for the recipient to feel like they are being forced a pitch at a time when they are not in the mood to be.

"A good pitch is when the person is allowed to lead themselves down a path in the conversation," Cart said. "Having



Photos by Anthony Richards

Jen Cart, president of Stellar Growth Strategies, spoke about the importance of a good pitch.

certain pre-determined questions will help to make sure they find that path."

Circle of Creation has been an ongoing initiative to bring local women business leaders together and it is helping create even more similar opportunities.

"I envisioned a women's group which could meet to learn and share knowledge through their experiences," the link co-owner Gurpreet Misra said. "I also wanted this to be a mix of speaking engagements, hands on learning, net-

working, and a fun social experience. I am glad the model has worked perfectly, the sessions are informative, knowledge is being shared through the experiences, and interactive activity is designed on the topic, with symbolic games bringing the fun part. Rarely do you would see this mix. We are inviting women in this group to stay connected through 'Mindful Mondays,' which will be held every week online and in-person at the link."



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ALL ABOUT PETS



Signs to spot, prevent heat stroke in dogs

By Anthony Richards

The summer heat can be dangerous if the proper measures are not taken, and that goes for pets as much as it does for their owners.

Dogs may spend large amounts of time outside and during the summer that means an increased risk of heat stroke and there are certain signs to look for to know when your dog has reached or is about to reach that point.

According to the American Kennel Club, a dog only has two options to cool off and that is blood vessel expansion or by panting.

The club states that when dogs pant, they evaporate moisture from their tongues, nasal passages and the lining of their lungs, which cools them down as air passes over the moist tissue.

Panting is a vital part in keeping cool

for dogs because they do not sweat like humans do, so the heavier the panting usually equates to the hotter a dog is.

However, the American Kennel Club also warns that not all panting is the same and it can vary depending on the breed, as pugs and bulldogs are known for their heavy breathing due to their short snouts, which could make the signs of heat stroke harder to spot.

An early sign of a dog experiencing heat stroke is rapid breathing accompanying the heavy panting, which can create a different and more pronounced sound than the usual heavy panting on its own.

Excessive drooling, bright red gums and tongue and skin that is hot to the touch are also visible signs that could indicate a heat stroke in the works.

No one knows a dog better than their owners, and they know what their usual body language is like, which could help



save a dog's life because heat stroke can lead to dogs being lethargic and not want-

ing to move or urinating uncontrollably.

According to the American Animal Hospital Association, a dog's weight and age are also factors that could increase the risk of heat stroke, as excess body fat can make it difficult to cool down and young or older dogs are both at higher risks during heat exposure.

If a pet is determined to have a heat stroke, the AHAA advises to not waste any time and immediately move the animal to a cool and shaded area or an air-conditioned space.

However, the association warns to not try to cool down the animal by using cold water or ice because the extreme temperature difference could lead the animal's body to go into shock.

Instead, use room temperature water to cool them slowly and safely by applying primarily to the neck, chest and abdomen areas until the body is cooled off.

Pet adoption drive held this week

It's kitten season, when scores of vulnerable kittens and cats are flooding into already full shelters, looking for people to love. The Jacksonville Humane Society (JHS) is partnering with PetSmart Charities to bring pets to the PetSmart store located at 8801 Southside Blvd. on July 20 and 21 in support of the 30th Anniversary National Adoption Week, taking place now through Sunday, July 21.

PetSmart Charities National Adop-

tion Week in July coincides with kitten season, referring to the annual boom of kittens following peak breeding season for cats. Kittens are particularly vulnerable, and many shelters work overtime to meet their needs for care and feeding. During the in-store event, JHS invites all pet-lovers to come by and meet adoptable pets and spread the word in support of

ADOPTION continues on Page 19



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Clinical trial finds value of service dogs to some veterans

The first National Institutes of Health-funded clinical trial of its kind links the pairing of service dogs with military veterans to lowered PTSD severity, odds of PTSD diagnosis and other negative mental health symptoms. The study was also the largest national study to date comparing veterans and service dog teams to usual care alone for PTSD-afflicted veterans.

Led by Dr. Maggie O’Haire from the University of Arizona College of Veterinary Medicine in partnership with K9s For Warriors, the nation’s largest provider of trained service dogs to military veterans suffering from invisible wounds of war, the study examined more than 150 military veterans over three months through self-reported symptoms and expert clinician assessment. The study analyzed measurable PTSD symptoms, as well as psychosocial functioning (quality of life and social health).

The results revealed:

- Veterans with service dogs had 66% lower odds of a PTSD diagnosis based on expert clinician assessment when compared to a wait-listed control group.
- They also experienced lower anxiety and depression levels, which often co-occur with PTSD.
- They experienced improvements in most areas of emotional and social well-being.

“This research reinforces what we have been studying for almost a decade — that service dogs are linked to significant benefits for many veterans suffering

from PTSD and other invisible wounds of war,” said O’Haire, associate dean for research and professor at the University of Arizona College of Veterinary Medicine, where she runs the OHAIRE Lab. “Service dogs are more than pets — they can be essential partners in helping veterans readjust and thrive after they return from service.”

“Having paired more than 1,000 service dogs with veterans, our work has clearly demonstrated that these dogs are lifesaving and life-transforming,” said Kevin Steele, Chief Program Officer at K9s For Warriors. “These dogs have enabled our warriors to better connect with family, friends and their community and to begin living the life they previously didn’t think was possible. The results of this study further prove



what we do here at K9s works and we continue to have the research to back up the success of our program. We hope this study and others led by the OHAIRE Lab will lead to greater funding and full integration of highly trained service dogs into health protocols for all veterans in need.”

Most of the dogs at K9s For Warriors are rescues. K9s For Warriors trains them on average for six months, then pairs them at no cost with veterans afflicted with the invisible wounds of war and who are at a great and immediate risk of suicide. It is estimated that nearly 20 veterans die by suicide daily, and that more than one million veterans suffer from PTSD, traumatic brain injury or military sexual trauma. K9s For Warriors has rescued more than 2,000 dogs and paired more than 1,000 veterans with highly trained service dogs, saving lives at both ends of the leash.

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Energy levels and exercise needs merit consideration before adopting a new dog

Dogs add a whole new element to a family dynamic. Parents may adopt a dog not only because they love these loyal animals, but also because they hope to instill a sense of responsibility in young children who will be tasked with helping to take care of the family's furry new friend.

The level of interaction dogs require can vary greatly among the breeds. There's no shortage of breeds to consider as families look for a new dog, and it can help to recognize which dogs are especially energetic and which might be more enthusiastic about cuddle sessions on the couch. It's also worth noting that each individual dog is unique, so just because a dog is a certain breed does not mean it will automatically behave exactly the same as other dogs of the same breed. However, breed reputation can be a good barometer as families look to bring a new dog into the fold. The following are five popular breeds and their corresponding exercise needs.

1. Akita: Akitas originated in Japan, and it's not uncommon to refer to this beautiful breed as the Japanese Akita. American Akitas also are popular, and



these dogs may have higher energy levels than those from Japan. Akitas are large dogs and require regular walks and daily play sessions with their owners.

2. Bichon Frise: These small, cheerful pups require ample attention. Bichons typically weight between 10 and 18 pounds, so owners are unlikely to be exhausted by daily play sessions, which are necessary to ensure the dogs do not become overwhelmed by separation

anxiety.

3. Dachsund (standard): These highly affectionate dogs typically weigh between 16 and 32 pounds. Dachsunds' stature can be deceptive in relation to their energy levels, as the American Kennel Club notes these dogs love to play and can even make for fine watchdogs. Ample exercise is vital to ensure dachsunds don't gain a lot of weight, and physical activity also helps them build

strong muscles that support and protect their backs, which are lengthy and therefore vulnerable to disc damage if the dogs don't stay fit.

4. French bulldog: French bulldogs do not require an especially high level of exercise. According to the AKC, a short walk or outdoor play session should be enough daily exercise for these lovable, bat-eared pups to stay in shape. Like English bulldogs, French bulldogs are flat-faced, which means they should be monitored closely and prevented from exerting themselves in hot or humid weather.

5. German shepherd: German shepherds are large, agile and muscular, and those characteristics alone likely give prospective owners an idea of what to expect from these beautiful dogs in relation to exercise. The AKC notes German shepherds are very active and athletic, so they will need lots of exercise. Without sufficient exercise, German shepherds may develop problematic behaviors.

Careful consideration of a breed's energy levels and exercise requirements can ensure families find a dog that will suit their situations and schedules at home.



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Possible causes of low energy in dogs

Many dog breeds love to get outdoors and run. Dogs' love of activity endears them to millions of animal lovers, and it's one of the first distinctions people make between canines and other popular pets, such as cats.

It's not uncommon for dogs to look for a place to lay down and relax after a play session. And certain dog breeds, such as English bulldogs, tend to be less physically active than others. However, low energy levels throughout much of the day and an unwillingness to get up and run around could be signs of something serious in dogs that typically embrace physical activity.

Identifying the cause of low energy in dogs can be the first step toward helping man's best friend get back to being his or her energetic self.

Potential causes of lethargy

The PDSA notes that various medical conditions can contribute to low energy in dogs. A veterinarian should be consulted immediately if a dog's energy levels suddenly dip. That's because certain issues that compromise canine's energy levels could prove fatal if left untreated.

Infections are a potential cause of lethargy in dogs. According to the American Veterinary Medical Association, canine distemper is a serious disease caused by infection with the canine distemper virus. Vaccination can prevent canine distemper, but dogs that are not vaccinated can suffer a range of symptoms, including lethargy, if they are infected with the virus.

Obesity is another potential cause of lethargy in dogs. The PDSA notes that overweight dogs tend to move around less, so pet owners may need to alter pets' diets and exercise routines to help them lose weight and become more physically active. Overweight dogs are at



an elevated risk of developing diabetes, which the PDSA notes is one of a handful of hormonal issues, including Cushing's disease and hypothyroidism, that also can cause low energy in dogs. Each issue is serious and dog owners are urged to work with their veterinarians to help dogs lose weight.

Dogs also can suffer from heart disease, which can cause low energy. PetMD notes that many dogs develop heart disease as they age. The most common forms of heart disease in dogs are heart valve disease, myocardial (heart muscle) disease, heartworm disease, and arrhythmia. Heart disease in dogs affects blood flow and makes it hard for the heart to pump blood, which can make dogs tired.

Additional causes of low energy in dogs include anemia, kidney disease and liver disease. Certain medications also can cause low energy in dogs, so it's vital that pet owners discuss potential side effects of any medicine prescribed to their dogs.

Low energy in dogs can be a warning sign of various issues. Dog owners are urged to contact their veterinarians immediately if dogs exhibit signs of low energy.

Adoption

Continued from 16

finding families for as many pets as possible during July National Adoption Week. All adoption fees are half-priced for animals at the in-store event.

During National Adoption Week, potential pet owners can interact with adoptable pets from local animal welfare organizations at PetSmart stores across the country. With staff and volunteers on hand to help potential adopters, visitors can spend time with the cats, dogs, kittens and puppies available.

"We are so thankful for our friends at PetSmart Charities for making this reduced-cost adoption weekend possible," said Denise Deisler, JHS CEO. "Summer is a busy time of year for animal shelters, and JHS is no exception. We appreciate support that helps connect every pet with a loving home and are grateful for every family that adopts a shelter pet!"

"For 30 years now, PetSmart Charities and local partners have been helping pets find people to love," said Heidi Marston, director of pet placement initiatives at PetSmart Charities. "Shelters across the country are full, and pets of all ages, breeds and temperaments are looking for their families. This National Adoption Week, we are putting a special focus on our feline friends with scores of kittens entering shelters and rescues in need of adoption — and we can't do it without your support. If you have room in your heart and home, please consider adopting or fostering."

To view all pets available for adoption, go to jaxhumane.org/adopt.

Pets will be available 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. July 20 and 21 at PetSmart, 8801 Southside Blvd. Suite 3, Jacksonville. Adoption fees are half-priced at this event.



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St. Johns County announces comprehensive plan update open house on July 23

St. Johns County invites the public to participate in the first open house for the County's Comprehensive Plan Update as it crafts strategies to implement the community's vision. On July 23, two sessions will be held (10 a.m. to noon and 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.) at the County Auditorium, 500 San Sebastian View, St. Augustine.

The Comprehensive Plan is a state-required document that must be evaluated for updates at least once every seven years and is designed to guide a jurisdiction's future actions. For St. Johns County, it will present a long-range vision for a community's future with long-range goals, objectives and policies.

During both open house sessions on July 23, county staff and its consultant, Inspire Placemaking Collective, will guide participants through multiple stations meant to provoke ideas on implementing each of the vision themes created through the public engagement process.

Additionally, the community has until July 31 to complete a survey to provide additional input on implementing the St. Johns County community vision. The public may take the survey at inspire-engagement.com/st-johns-county-plan-update or any of the following locations:

- Sea Grove Main St., St. Augustine Beach
- Bartram Trail Branch Library, 60 Davis Pond Blvd., Fruit Cove
- Hastings Branch Library, 6195 S. Main St., Hastings
- Main Branch Library, 1960 N. Ponce De Leon Blvd., St. Augustine
- Ponte Vedra Beach Branch Library, 101 Library Blvd., Ponte Vedra Beach
- Southeast Branch Library, 6670 U.S. 1 South, St. Augustine
- St. Johns County Utility Department, 1205 State Road 16, St. Augustine
- St. Johns County Permit Center, 4040 Lewis Speedway, St. Augustine
- St. Johns County Auditorium, 500 San Sebastian View, St. Augustine

To enhance ADA transparency and consistency, St. Johns County established a dedicated email address for all ADA accommodation requests: ADA@sjcfl.us.

The county and its consultant are developing plans for an additional open house that will focus on furthering the community vision by prioritizing strategies and building its comprehensive plan. Once set, the county will publish the date, time and location of the second open house on the county website (sjcfl.us) and the comprehensive plan update website (SJCPlanUpdate.com).

Crowley honored for commitment to safety

Crowley, through the achievements of the crews of 67 company-owned or -managed vessels, has again been honored for its safe operations with Jones F. Devlin Awards by the Chamber of Shipping of America.

The Jones F. Devlin Safety Award recognizes the skills and dedication of people and companies achieving high levels of safe vessel operations and protecting their people. Awarded vessels serve across the globe, including tugs, barges, commercial containerships, tank vessels including articulated tug-barges and government-managed vessels.

With this award, Crowley was recognized for achieving 554 cumulative years of accident-free service among its recognized vessels, ranging from two to 23 years without a lost-time injury across its fleet.

"Earning the Devlin Awards underscores Crowley's steadfast commitment to safety and highlights the diligent efforts of our mariners," said Peter Sutton, vice president of marine safety operations for Crowley. "This achievement is a testament to our team's unwavering dedication to maintaining the highest safety standards in the industry."

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Members of the St. Johns County Sheriff's Office and Jacksonville Sheriff's Office came together for a law enforcement meet and greet in Nocatee on July 13.



Photos by Anthony Richards

Several members of the St. Johns County Sheriff's Office were on hand for the event.

County sheriffs combine for community meet and greet in Nocatee

By Anthony Richards

A combined event was held by members of the St. Johns County Sheriff's Office and the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office where members of law enforcement were able to meet residents of the Nocatee community.

The event was scheduled to take place in the parking lot near the Nocatee Splash Waterpark with a drive by of various officers Crosswater Parkway to cheer on their service.

"Four years ago, we were here with some of the same members that are standing here today and supporting this mission to back the blue," St. Johns County Sheriff Rob Hardwick said. "At the time, words were being said like 'defund the police department,' and we were hurting with recruiting and officer retention across this entire country, but now we fast forward and find ourselves in a special place."

However, the drive by scenario that had been planned was canceled due to a conflict taking place with a Nocatee event.

Although the event may not have gone as planned, Hardwick was thrilled to see the residents come out and



Nocatee residents lined up along Crosswater Parkway to support local law enforcement officers.

the amount of support they showed for their local law enforcement.

"This is very patriotic county, and our deputies ride by here and love to see that support," Hardwick said. "As an Army veteran for 25 years and with our son serving in the Army, these days are always special for us."

Attending to the event was Jacksonville Sheriff T.K. Waters and many other officers representing Jacksonville, as the relationship between the two counties is something Harwick is proud of.

"I've got a special relationship with all the sheriffs who are among those touching counties of ours, but T.K. Waters and I worked together in investigations and homicides 20 years ago and now fast forward we sit here today as two sheriffs. We're truly blessed to have that relationship, and if we don't talk daily, it's something out of the ordinary. Help is really just a phone call away for our departments."

One of the features that was able to still take place as part of the event was a helicopter flyover that took place along the Crosswater Parkway route and flying over those in attendance.



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Underwoods

Continued from 1

in 1988.

“Clayton Bromberg is a true giant in our industry,” Richards said, agreeing that Bromberg has left him some big shoes to fill. “Clayton’s been preparing me for this ... All I can do is take all the things he’s taught me all these years and be the best version of me that I can be.”

He said he was excited to continue the company’s legacy of excellence.

“Our commitment to quality in materials, craftsmanship, design, presentation, education and service will remain our guiding principles as we move forward,” he said. “Clayton’s dedication to the business and his commitment to customer satisfaction have made him not only a mentor to me and the generations of staff but a respected figure in the industry and a pillar in our community. His vision and leadership have been pivotal in upholding the value and reputation of Underwood’s.”

Bromberg expressed confidence in Richards.

“In the past three decades, Michael’s expertise and passion for the jewelry industry, along with his achievements in leadership outside of the business, make him the ideal leader for Underwood’s,” he said. “In 2020, he took a more active role in operations and executive leadership, and it has been a natural progression to name him as president officially. I am very proud of the leader he has become and look forward to seeing the company continue to thrive under his direction.”

Having forged a solid reputation for quality and service over decades, the business will continue in that vein, even with the events for which it is known.

Still, company officials have an eye on the future.

“As we look ahead to the next 10 years and embark on this new chapter, I am excited about the opportunities ahead for Underwood’s,” said Bromberg. “We will continue to innovate while staying true to the principles that have made us a trusted name in jewelry for nearly a century.”

Underwood Jewelers was founded in 1928 as a diamond and watch store in Palatka by Herbert F. Underwood. He moved his store to Jacksonville in 1940, selling his Palatka shop at the start of World War II. Underwood opened his first branch store in 1953 in the San Marco neighborhood.

In 1974, he sold the business to Bromberg and Company, one of the oldest and most respected family jewelry businesses in the country, having been founded in 1836 in Alabama. At the urging of Frank Bromberg, Underwood stayed on full-time. In 1980, he switched to part-time and became instrumental in training Clayton Bromberg. Underwood passed away in 1999.

Bromberg began his career with the company at its downtown Jacksonville store as a gemologist. Amid



Contributed photo

Underwood’s President Michael Richards and Chairman Clayton Bromberg

various challenges, he rose through the ranks to store manager, vice president and, ultimately, president.

In the meantime, Richards had begun his career while still in high school at Harper’s Jewelry, which was located in a small West Virginia town. At first, he was given a part-time job doing errands, but the jeweler taught him some important, if basic, skills.

“He taught me how to engrave, wrap packages, solder chains,” Richards recalled.

While pursuing a business management degree at Marshall University in Huntington, West Virginia, he worked at T.K. Dodrill Jewelers.

“I truly fell in love with the jewelry industry, gemology and everything about it while I was in college,” he said.

Following graduation, he was hired by Underwood’s as the San Marco store manager in 1990 and earned the title of gemologist a year later. It was a period of transition and growth for Underwood’s with the addition of the Avondale store and, in 1996, the Ponte Vedra store.

Richards, who had been appointed chief operating officer in 2018, increasingly began to take over greater executive responsibilities at the conclusion of the pandemic. Bromberg, meanwhile, delved more deeply into merchandising, as well as development of the diamond portion of the business.

Ultimately, the decision was made to elevate Richards.

“When you hire somebody just out of college, you

have a chance to help mold them and make them into the type of retailer you’d like them to be,” explained Bromberg. “I’ve seen his progression, and it’s time for him to step into this role.”

Like Bromberg, Richards is a past president of the American Gem Society and has served on the Jewelers Vigilance Committee, an important industry organization that helps to ensure legal and regulatory compliance. These affiliations — and others — have established both men as leaders beyond the doors of Underwood’s.

“(Richards) has served the jewelry industry at large and is a well-known industry figure all over the United States for the work he’s done,” said Bromberg. “We think that’s important — that we remain in positions of leadership in the United States in the jewelry industry.”

In addition, Bromberg has served on the boards for Jewelers of America, Florida Jewelers Association and The Better Business Bureau. He has served on the American Gem Society Laboratory Board since 1996 and has served as its chairman for two terms.

In addition to his professional affiliations, Richards remains active in his community.

In 2003, Bromberg and Underwood’s were recognized via induction into the National Jewelers Hall of Fame. Bromberg is the recipient of the American Gem Society Robert M. Shipley Award (2004), the American Gem Society Triple Zero Award (2013) and the Women’s Jewelry Association Ben Kaiser Award (2015).




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Seaside Adventures adds custom six-seater for sightseeing

For The Recorder

Seaside Adventures, originators of Moke rentals in St. Augustine, are adding a new vehicle to the fleet, and it's a true, one-of-a-kind creation.

Tommy and Crystal Horton, co-owners and founders of Seaside Adventures since 2020, wanted to expand their popular Moke offerings, providing higher capacity vehicles for large families and parties. They have announced that the LiMoke, the first six-passenger Moke in existence, is now available for rent at their 606 N. Ponce de Leon location in St. Augustine.

"This unique vehicle was inspired by customer feedback," said Crystal Horton, co-founder and owner of Seaside Adventures. "Our guests loved the convenience, comfort and cool look of our Mokes, but they wanted a higher capacity. And we get that! So, with the help of our amazing partners at Mokes Unlimited, we designed this one-of-a-kind vehicle, the LiMoke, that can safely accommodate six. And when we say one-of-a-kind, we mean it's the only one there is. It's a head-turner, painted a sunny yellow to capture the beachy St. Augustine vibe."



Photo courtesy of Crystal Horton

Mokes are small electric vehicles that were originally a British Army invention in the late 1950s. Small and compact, they were designed to parachute through the skies to a terrestrial location. While its military career was short, the tiny vehicle gained a cultural cache, adored by fans like Princess Margaret, Bridget

Bardot, The Beach Boys and Caribbean travelers. They soon became a symbol of beachy, breezy island life — even appearing in four James Bond movies.

Moke America brought these unique vehicles to the States, making them bigger, wider, stronger, all-electric and street-legal. To design their custom

Moke, the Hortons worked with their partners at Mokes Unlimited, the authority on Moke customizations.

The LiMoke was created by transforming a classic model into a custom-stretched, eco-friendly limo ride powered entirely by lithium batteries and equipped with advanced speed and battery enhancements. The name LiMoke is a combination of lithium, limousine and Moke.

In addition to Mokes, Seaside Adventures, which just won a TripAdvisor 2024 Traveler's Choice Award, offers golf carts, Polaris Slingshots, Arcimoto electric vehicles and Sand Surfer electric skateboards. The full rental inventory can be viewed at seasideadventures.com.

"We're really excited to offer this fun, new vehicle to our customers," said Crystal Horton. "It's a great way for visitors and locals alike to check out St. Augustine and the Beaches."

Seaside Adventures, originally named Seaside Slingshots, offers fun and unique transportation rentals in historic St. Augustine. The store is open Monday through Saturday from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. and Sunday from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.

Learn more at seasideadventures.com.

Large commercial property sold for \$10.5M in St. Johns County

NAI Hallmark, Jacksonville's largest locally owned commercial real estate brokerage and property management firm, has announced the sale of 3935 Inman Road, St. Augustine. Daniel Burkhardt, CCIM, SIOR represented the seller, Burkhardt Distributing Co. Inc. The Buyer,

Rulon International Inc., purchased the property for \$10,467,500.

The property is a 72,831-square-foot, vacant, air-conditioned warehouse on 10 acres located on Inman Road in St. Augustine. The office portion was designed with a large open workspace,

executive offices, conference rooms, as well as a large employee lounge area. The warehouse was designed with two large, air-conditioned areas, a receiving/loading area, and an enclosed drive-through area. In addition, there is a detached service

garage area with two truck service bays.

For more information regarding the sale of 3935 Inman Road, or any questions relating to commercial real estate sales throughout Northeast Florida, contact Burkhardt at db@naihallmark.com.



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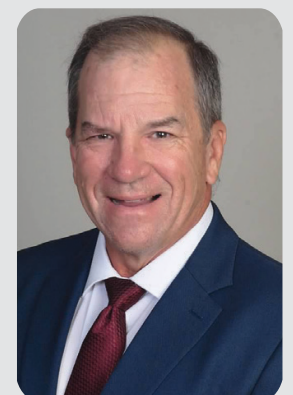
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GUEST COLUMN

Managing your investments during difficult times

Written by/for Wells Fargo Advisors

Economic difficulties, political unrest and natural disasters can all present challenges. Investors may wonder what effect these types of events, and others, could have on their investments. That is why it's helpful to focus on three fundamental actions that could help investors work toward their goals — know yourself, build a plan and keep an eye on the long term.

Know yourself

When stocks drop by 20% or more, some investors might ignore the drop, others might feel the urge to sell, while still others might see it as a good time to buy. This range of reactions illustrates different levels of risk tolerance, or how sensitive investors are to market volatility. Risk tolerance varies from one investor to another, and no level of tolerance is considered the “right” level — there's



Contributed photo

only the right risk tolerance for each investor. Talking with financial advisers or completing online questionnaires can help investors determine their risk tolerance.

While understanding risk tolerance is essential, it should not be considered in isolation. Risk tolerance, goals and time horizon all play a role in setting an investment plan.

Investing more aggressively may yield more rewards, but the length of time available for investing also plays a part. A longer time horizon could give inves-

tors the potential for compound growth. And setting specific goals can help to determine how much an investor should accumulate to support their goals.

Build a plan

Dwight D. Eisenhower may have said it best — “Plans are worthless, but planning is everything.” Even though a plan may need to be modified to adapt to changes, the very process of setting a plan can help investors to discover and focus on their most important investment goals.

For a plan to be useful, it's important for investors to clearly detail which goals they are trying to achieve. Some of an investor's goals will be shorter term, such as building a rainy-day fund. Intermediate-term goals might include buying a house or paying for a child's education. Longer-term goals might include planning for retirement and potentially leaving a legacy for charities or family. Investor assets can then be matched to those various goals.

For example, investors might own short-term bonds to meet a near-term expense, and a mixture of stocks and longer-term bonds to meet needs that are further in the future. The investor's risk tolerance will help determine the mix of historically more volatile assets — such as stocks — to less volatile assets, such as bonds.

Keep an eye on the long term

While market drops can be troublesome, unpredictable economic events have presented challenges in the past. With resilience and creativity, America's businesses and households have managed to overcome them. While there

INVESTMENTS continues on Page 25

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GUEST COLUMN

High housing costs trapping couples in unhappy unions

By Lawrence Datz
Jacksonville Family Law Attorney



Contributed photo

Lawrence Datz

Rising housing costs are not just squeezing first-time buyers and renters; they are also casting a long shadow over a seemingly unrelated realm – divorce. For divorcing couples, the financial burden of securing separate housing, particularly in highly competitive markets, is creating a new set of challenges, anxieties and even delaying separations. Even though this new stress can vary significantly based on geographical location, income levels and the specific circumstances of each couple, those looking to separate today are facing the following issues:

Financial Gridlock: The crux of the issue lies in the soaring cost of acquiring new homes. Rising mortgage rates and inflated property prices mean the financial feasibility of splitting up is increasingly out of reach for many couples. Selling the marital home to split the proceeds often becomes untenable, particularly if it entails hefty losses or leaves both parties struggling to afford separate dwellings. Even renting two apartments can present a steep financial cliff, especially when coupled with potential child support payments.

Unbearable Immobility: This financial gridlock forces some couples into a

state of “unbearable immobility,” trapped in an unhappy marriage due to the sheer practicality of housing. Sharing a space with an estranged partner adds emotional strain to an already difficult period. Pressures include the emotional turmoil of separation while navigating shared grocery lists, laundry schedules and even assigned floors in the same house. This prolonged cohabitation can exacerbate conflicts, hinder emotional healing and even push some couples to delay filing for divorce altogether.

Beyond the Tangible: The impact of high housing costs extends beyond the financial. The inability to secure separate housing can fuel anxieties about financial insecurity, independence, confusion

and uncertainty by the children and even personal safety. For individuals experiencing domestic abuse, being trapped in a shared space can exacerbate the risks and hinder escape options. Additionally, the emotional toll of prolonged cohabitation with an estranged partner can impede the grieving process and delay personal growth after divorce.

While the housing market itself is complex and requires systemic solutions, there are potential avenues to mitigate the

impact on divorcing couples. Exploring alternative housing options like co-parenting arrangements or temporary shared custody of the marital home can offer breathing room. If possible, including grandparents or other relatives for temporary housing assistance could alleviate emotional strain. And finally, working closely with legal professionals, financial advisers and real estate agents could help develop creative solutions tailored to individual circumstances.

Investments

Continued from 24

are no guarantees that past performance will repeat itself, history has shown that sticking to investment plans and taking a long-term view of the markets can help investors work toward their goals.

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First Coast Cultural Center opens Kick StART registration

For The Recorder

Kick StART, an afterschool art enrichment program sponsored by First Coast Cultural Center (FCCC), is taking registration through mid-August at participating schools in St. Johns County. Students in kindergarten through sixth grade will embark on weekly, 90-minute adventures into the world of art, incorporating music and culinary experiences along the way.

“We have two fun semesters planned that include a variety of mediums, using oil pastels, watercolors, acrylics, clay and more,” said Kimberly Sheridan, FCCC events and programs manager.

Students will first learn elements of art from master artists throughout history and in modern times. During the second semester, Sheridan said, students will “become art detectives and travel to

many countries” to create work, such as henna in India, jewelry in Greece, masks in South America, Adinkra patterns in Africa and lapis lazuli in Asia.

Enrollment links are open on FCCC’s website at firstcoastculturalcenter.org/programs-events/kick-start for the following schools on designated days: Picolata Crossing Elementary (Monday), PV/PV-Rawlings Elementary (Monday), Palencia Elementary (Tuesday), Ocean Palms Elementary (Tuesday), Freedom Crossing Academy (Wednesday), Palm Valley Academy (Friday), The Nest Christian Co-Op (Friday) and newly-added Landrum Middle School (TBA).

FCCC members receive a discount, and there is a membership signup link online.

In the past, FCCC was able to fully fund this program at two Title I schools,



Contributed photo

Crookshank Elementary and Webster Elementary. However, FCCC lost more than \$87,000 of its yearly support due to the State of Florida’s defunding of arts programs.

“We have pending grant funding for our Title I schools and for supplies for the Kick StART program, but it’s not guaranteed,” explained Donna Guzzo, FCCC president and CEO. “With the state portion of our funding gone, we are relying more than ever on individual donors, grants, foundation and corporation sponsors, and income from our fee-based programs to keep the arts alive and in the hands of students.”

For more information about Kick StART, contact Kimberly Sheridan at 904-280-0614, Ext. 1205, or email her at programs@firstcoastculturalcenter.org.

Hillbilly Thomists to perform at mission

Get ready for an exciting event as Hillbilly Thomists kick off their summer tour in St. Augustine on July 31. The event will be at the National Shrine of Our Lady of La Leche at Mission Nombre de Dios, located at 101 San Marco Ave. in St. Augustine.

The event will start at 2 p.m. with a Rosary in the garden, followed by confessions with the friars at 3:30 p.m. A Mass

will be celebrated at the Rustic Altar at 5 p.m., followed by the highly anticipated concert at 6:30 p.m. The event will conclude with nighttime prayer at 9:30 p.m.

General admission to the concert is \$35, \$15 for children (ages 6 to 18). Children younger than 5 and religious priests and nuns will be admitted free. Proceeds support the formation of friars at the Dominican House of Studies in Washington,

D.C. Tickets can be purchased at hillbillythomists.com/tour.

The National Shrine of Our Lady of La Leche grounds and parking will remain open for pilgrims to enjoy. Parking for the concert will be available in the southern grass field. Have your emailed tickets available for entry.

The local contact for the Hillbilly Thomists is Jess May, email jessanmay1@gmail.com or call 904-228-0051.

The Hillbilly Thomists, a band of friars of the Order of Preachers, have achieved top spots on the Billboard bluegrass charts. They have released four albums, with their latest, “Marigold,” released in May 2024. Their music consists of original Christian bluegrass.

The Diocese of St. Augustine encompasses 17 counties of Northeast and Northcentral Florida with 71 parishes, mission churches and chapels. The diocese has more than 153,000 registered Catholics under the leadership of Bishop Erik Pohlmeier and approximately 300 priests, deacons and women religious.

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Roy Ferdinand, "Baptism," ca. 2000, mixed media on poster board, 22 x 28 in., Gordon W. Bailey Collection.



Chris Benchetler, "Jerry," ca. 2022, acrylic on wood, 48 x 36 in., Gordon W. Bailey Collection.



Minnie Evans, "Untitled," ca. 1960s, mixed media on paper, 10 1/2 x 14 in., Gordon W. Bailey Collection.

MOCA to exhibit works from The Gordon W. Bailey Collection

For The Recorder

The Museum of Contemporary Art Jacksonville (MOCA), a Cultural Institute of the University of North Florida, kicks off the second half of its 100th anniversary year with "Fill My Heart With Hope: Works From The Gordon W. Bailey Collection."

The inclusive exhibition featuring more than 100 works from the collection of the noted Los Angeles-based scholar and collector follows his gift of 21 works donated to MOCA earlier this year that significantly added to the museum's holding of works by untrained artists.

The works reflect Bailey's decades-long advocacy. Many of the artists, whether because of their gender, race, religion or socio-economic status, pushed through discrimination and overcame various hardships during their lives, especially those living in the Deep South.

"Fill My Heart With Hope" is an extraordinary, diverse exhibition," said MOCA Executive Director Caitlin Doherty. "We are grateful for Mr. Bailey's generous support, and we are honored to celebrate MOCA's centennial year by sharing this impactful exhibition with our community and shine a light on the contributions of untrained artists within the art historical narrative."

Working in concert with MOCA's

team, Bailey selected the works of 56 artists — 21 of whom are women. The expansive exhibition begins on the third floor in the museum's feature gallery and carries over to the second floor where more recently created works are displayed.

Powerful works made by deceased luminaries can be seen on MOCA's third floor. Walls are devoted to Leroy Almon, Eddie Arning, Thornton Dial Sr., Sam Doyle, Roy Ferdinand, Daniel Pressley, Herbert Singleton and Purvis Young.

Other highly-regarded artists include Alpha Andrews, David Butler, Brenda Davis, Minnie Evans, Sybil Gibson, Joseph Hardin, Bessie Harvey, Eric Holmes, Clementine Hunter, Harry Lieberman, Mario Mesa, Sister Gertrude Morgan, Nellie Mae Rowe, Jimmy Lee Sudduth, Mose Tolliver and Willie White.

Among the highlights: Almon's admonition "20th Century Slave"; "Blue Lady And Gorilla Man And The Tiger Along For The Ride" by Dial; Doyle's progressive "He/She"; Evans' "Untitled";



Daniel Pressley, "Wait At The Water," ca. 1960s, carved wood bas relief, 36 x 12 1/4 x 1, Gordon W. Bailey Collection.

Ferdinand's "Untitled" self-portrait; Hunter's "Cotton Gin"; Morgan's "New Jerusalem"; Pressley's deftly-carved, wood bas relief "Wait At The Water"; Singleton's defiant "Ain't Goin' Back"; and Young's "Untitled" depiction of Jesus in chains.

"Fill My Heart With Hope" continues on the second floor where visitors will see works by Hope Atkinson, Aryz, Chris Benchetler, Date Farmers, Doze Green, Hipkiss, Daniel Johnston, Annie Lucas, Michael Noland, John K. Lawson, Ruth Mae McCrane, Samuel Pace, Mary L. Proctor, Welmon Sharlhorne, Myrtle von Damitz III and Jane Winkelman, among others.

Standouts include a group of Aryz's edgy, large-scale paintings; Benchetler's poignant "A Hero's Journey";

a Doze Green/David Ellis collaboration; Lawson's intricate paper collages; Lucas' Biblically-inspired embroidered canvas works; Noland's "Monument"; the surreal "Monk In Dali Land" by Pace; energized, slice-of-life scenes by Ruth Mae McCrane; and Winkelman's socio-

political comments.

Florida is well represented in both galleries by Holmes, Mesa, Proctor, Young and former part-time residents Winkelman and Gibson.

As American museums seek to become more inclusive, artists lacking formal training will undoubtedly find receptive audiences. Their unbridled creativity and bold expression have and will continue to change how we define contemporary art.

MOCA asks viewers to set aside preconceived notions, reconsider historical definitions and more fully embrace the power of individual expression.

The exhibition runs from July 25 through March 23 and is displayed in MOCA's second and third floor galleries.

A "Fall Exhibitions" opening celebration will take place Sept. 5, with free public access from 8 to 9 p.m. Enjoy an evening of art and community featuring live music, the MOCA Bar and new exhibitions throughout the museum. This event is free for all. MOCA members are invited to an exclusive early access preview.

This exhibition was made possible, in part, by the City of Jacksonville, the Cultural Council of Greater Jacksonville, the Donald and Maria Cox Fund, the Haskell Endowment, the Jessie Ball duPont Fund, MOCA Jacksonville's Centennial Sponsors and the University of North Florida.

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Sports

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A counselor works with a camper at the Nease lacrosse camp.



Children of various ages took part at the camp.

Memories, skills created at Nease lacrosse camp

By Anthony Richards

Nease High hosted its annual lacrosse camp July 15 to 18 as elementary and middle school students took part learning various skills from current players on the Nease High team.

“It’s definitely all about fundamentals, skills and the right way to play the game,” said Max Gurowski, Nease High boys’ lacrosse head coach. “We started camp showing a video about the history of the sport, because it’s so unique being that it’s the creator’s game coming from Native Americans. We want to just go out and try and honor the game every time we go out and play and be grateful for the time that we can play it together.”

The children worked with the giant wall on campus, which is used by Nease lacrosse players to sharpen their passing and catching skills and scrimmaged on the strip of fenced in turf that the Nease athletic program uses.

According to Gurowski, seeing the participants running around out there and smiling brought back memories of when he was being introduced and falling



Campers toss balls against a giant cement block wall to practice their passing and catching skills.

in love with the game.

“I’m from Webster, New York and growing up we had a camp just like this,” Gurowski said. “That produced some of my core memories growing up with my brother going there and working with the counselors that I looked up to. Now I’m just trying to do my part to continue to grow the game.”

Camps like the one hosted by Nease are just another



Photos by Anthony Richards

Athletes scrimmage as part of the camp.

example of how lacrosse continues to grow and become a popular sport in the local area.

“At the highest level, it’s extremely clear that North Florida is right there with anyone,” Gurowski said. “Notre Dame that just won back-to-back national championships had at least three guys locally from here in North Florida on their roster. It’s expanding rapidly, and the players are legit.”

PVHS boys golf program seeks donations

Want to make a difference in local high school sports? Your help is needed.

The Ponte Vedra High School Boys Golf Program began in 2008 and has achieved great success over the years. The team won its first State Championship in 2013 under Coach Pete Molinaro. In 2014, Mickey Leapley became the head coach and has held that position for the last 10 seasons. Since 2014, PV Sharks have earned another eight State Cham-

pionships, the last seven in a row. The program has amassed some remarkable Florida High School Athletic Association (FHSAA) records, nine team State Championships and three individual champions.

More than 30 players have moved on to play D1 college golf and countless others have played DII, DIII and college club golf.

Two players have played professionally, Taylor Funk, PGA Tour and PGA Latin

American Tour, and Andrew Farraye, who currently has conditional status on the PGA Canada Tour.

The season begins in August and runs into November. A large part of the success over the years has come from competing against the best junior golfers in the state. This requires team travel and financial resources to help cover a portion of the cost.

The Booster Club is looking for dona-

tions to help support travel, entry fees and hotel expenses among other things not covered by HS Booster Club.

If you would like to support the golf program, go to pvsharksbc.com and click on the shark logo under Boy’s Golf Fundraiser.

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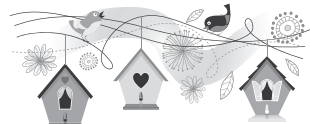
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			1	2	3		4	5	6	7	8	9		
			10				11							
12	13		14					15						
16		17						18				19	20	21
22								23						
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31	32	33			34				35			36		
37			38			39								
40					41			42		43	44	45	46	47
48				49					50					
51									52					
			53						54				55	
		56					57		58					
		59							60					

ACROSS

1. Letter of the Greek alphabet
4. Cause to become entangled
10. Swiss river
11. Conversation
12. "Magnum" was one
14. Small integer
15. Christmas
16. Of a specific mountain region
18. Burrowing bugs
22. Of a symbol worthy of veneration
23. A type of syndrome
24. Cephalopod mollusks
26. Metric ton
27. Ornamental box
28. As quickly as can be done
30. "Hoop Dream" subject Arthur
31. Old TV part
34. Extinct flightless birds
36. Former CIA
37. Successor
39. Archaic form of you
40. Within
41. Danny Hurley's alma mater
42. Not sacred or biblical
48. Written law
50. Popular hairstyle
51. Congressman
52. Type of font
53. A predetermined period in office
54. Pouch
55. Hormone that stimulates ovulation (abbr.)
56. One from a particular Asian region
58. One's sense of self-esteem
59. Headgear used to control a horse
60. The habitat of wild animals

DOWN

1. A right conferred through legal means
2. American island state
3. Inflexibly entrenched
4. "Pollock" actor Harris
5. Foolish person
6. Follows a particular Chairman
7. Choose
8. Sunrooms
9. One hundred grams (abbr.)
12. A symptom of some physical hurt or disorder
13. South American hummingbird
17. "Girl Chopping Onions" painter
19. Wild dog
20. Units of land

21. Footwear
25. Possessing a constant temperature
29. Hormone that promotes water retention (abbr.)
31. Popular game
32. Pension (German)
33. Giant of industry
35. Inferred
38. One who revolves
41. Kept possession of
43. Loss of electricity
44. Stopped bottle
45. Everything
46. First to walk on the moon
47. Engrave
49. Female organs
56. Equal to 1,024 bytes (abbr.)
57. Northeast

SUDOKU

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

Level: Beginner

Here's How It Works:

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



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