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Connections
Page 21

Thursday, September 26, 2024

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Circle of Creation wraps up with women's business showcase

By Anthony Richards

The final event of the 2024 Circle of Creation schedule at the link took place on Sept. 18 and featured a women's business showcase and wrapped up the initiative for this year.

With it being the final event, it highlighted some of the regular attendees during the meetings and invited them to be featured speakers on the night and have an opportunity to get up on stage and talk about what they get the most out of the Circle of Creation sessions.

There was also a business expo held in the lobby of the link with several local businesses setting up tables and serving as vendors promoting their services.

All of the businesses included during the business expo were owned by women to continue the theme of Circle of Creation and help promote conversations and relationships between fellow women business owners.

Four TED-style presentations were given by KC Padgett, and independent consultant for Bemer Group; Kelleah Speichinger, an insurance broker and managing partner at Spice Insurance Services; Javonn Wright, owner of King of Pops Ponte Vedra; and Erin Kelly, in charge of business development at Kelly Farm Events and an Arbonne independent consultant.

According to Padgett, she joined Circle of Creation after getting involved with Collisions and Coffee at the link.

"I was drawn by the opportunity to learn from women who have been successful, and to grow both personally and professionally," Padgett said. "Every time I attend an event at the

SHOWCASE continues on Page 12

COMEBACK FOR THE AGES



Photo by Anthony Richards

Nate Harry (No. 4) led Nease to a comeback victory with 252 passing yards and four touchdowns.

Panthers erase 21-point deficit for epic overtime win against Jackets

By Anthony Richards

The Nease Panthers completed a comeback that will be remembered for the ages, after trailing 21-0 at halftime only to defeat the rival St. Augustine Yellow

Jackets on the road, 35-34 in overtime.

The defense stopped the Yellow Jackets' two-point conversion attempt in overtime, as quarterback Locklan Hewlett was stood up by a combined effort from Nease linebackers Noah Hodge and Kyle Hurtado.

"I saw him coming at me, and I just knew I had to make a play, the instincts just kicked in," Hodge said. "It was definitely intense out there and there's a lot going on, but you just do the best you

can to stay locked in and focused on the job at hand."

The comeback was kicked off after Elisha Luckett picked off a pass and returned it down the right sideline for a touchdown on the opening play of the second half.

"Coach Drafts is like the best pep-talker ever, and at halftime he said that he needed some playmakers to make some plays," Luckett said. "When I saw the ball

COMEBACK continues on Page 10

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INSIDE

One of Us

Page 6

Business Weekly

Pages 38-46

In the Arts

Pages 47-50

Sports

Pages 51-52

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Photo by Lauren Gruny, collections manager

18th species of crocodile hatches at Alligator Farm

The St. Augustine Alligator Farm Zoological Park has announced the hatching of seven African dwarf crocodiles (*Osteolaemus afzelii*). According to "A Guide to Identifying Crocodilians of the World" there are three types of African dwarf crocodiles that were all once considered just one species.

The Alligator Farm has been working with scientists Dr. Matt Shirley, Dr. Kent Vliet and others to determine the differences between these crocodiles.

The parents of these new babies were confirmed to be the new species by DNA testing. This is the first captive hatch of *Osteolaemus afzelii* in the Western Hemisphere. Later this year, scientists plan to convene in western Africa to discuss the dwarf crocodile complex and make recommendations to the IUCN (The International Union for Conservation of Nature) about the Red List conservation status of each of these three species in the wild.

This week's hatchings brings the total number of crocodile species hatched at the Alligator Farm up to 18. No one else in the world can claim that level of success.

Dwarf crocodiles are the smallest of the world's crocodiles, rarely reaching over six feet in length. They consume a variety of prey, including fish, crustaceans, birds and small

mammals. They are not a threat to humans because of their small size and secretive nature. However, they are a known source of food for some subsistence hunters in western and central Africa.

The parents of the new hatchlings can be seen on exhibit in the park's display called Land of Crocodiles. Land of Crocodiles was opened in 1993 for the zoo's 100-year anniversary. It was the first time, anywhere in the world, that every species of crocodilian was on display in one location.

"I'm so proud of our team," said John Brueggen, zoo director. "They continue to strive for excellence in animal care, and hatching 18 of the world's crocodilians is evidence that they are doing an amazing job."

The St. Augustine Alligator Farm Zoological Park is one of Florida's oldest and most treasured attractions. Since 1893, it has provided visitors with exciting and educational opportunities to interact with a wide range of crocodilians, reptiles, mammals and birds. Located on Anastasia Island in St. Augustine, the Alligator Farm features natural exhibits, wild-life shows and educational demonstrations. In 1992, The Alligator Farm was listed on the National Registry of Historic Places. For more information, go to alligatorfarm.com.

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'Pickleball for Peace' registration open

For The Recorder

Pickleballers are invited to compete in a fun-filled round-robin tournament during the second annual "Pickleball for Peace" competition on Friday, Oct. 25, and Saturday, Oct. 26.

Hosted by Old Coast Pickleball, the tournament takes place at the indoor courts at 76 Dockside Drive, Unit 108, St. Augustine, with all proceeds benefiting the Betty Griffin Center and survivors of domestic and sexual abuse in St.

Johns County.

Players can register online on the Betty Griffin Center website at <https://bettygriffincenter.org/second-annual-pickleball-for-peace-fundraiser-set-for-oct-25-26/> or at <https://widgets.courtreserve.com/Online/Public/Embed-Code/7411/41073>.

Registration is \$65 per player and the event is open to all skill levels, ages 12 and up. Players will receive individual scores as they team up with rotating partners for multiple games.

The event begins at 5 p.m. Friday with a Ladies' Team event, followed by a Men's Team event at 7 p.m. On Saturday, the tournament consists rotating partners in a 10-person format. The schedule is:

- 8-10 a.m.: Men 60-plus
- 10 a.m. to noon: Women 60-plus
- Noon to 2 p.m.: Teens
- 2-4 p.m.: Special Couples Event with the Sheriff
- 4-6 p.m.: Women 20-60
- 6-8 p.m.: Men 20-60

To sign up for event volunteer opportunities, go to <https://signup.com/go/zTWasGZ>.

Betty Griffin Center Ambassadors who make this event possible include Old Coast Pickleball, Mastercraft Builder Group, Heidi Eddins, Pearmid Properties LLC, KeHE Cares, Jacksonville Jaguars Foundation, Main Event, Hardage Giddens, Walmart Foundation, Herbie Wiles Insurance, VyStar Credit Union, Volkswagen St. Augustine and iVenture Solutions.

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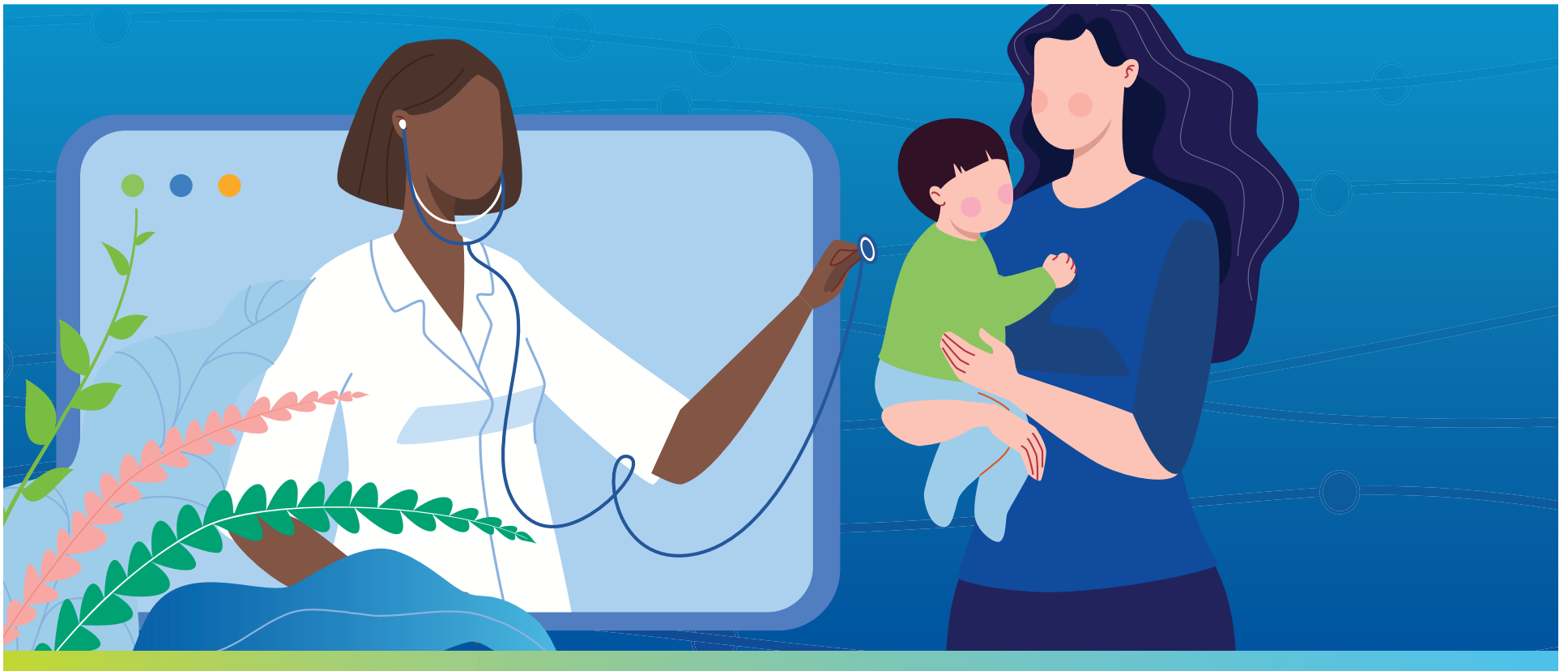
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St. Johns County wins federal ruling on Grand Oaks developer dispute

For The Recorder

St. Johns County announced Tuesday, Sept. 17, that it had secured a favorable ruling from the U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Florida in a legal dispute with Southeast Development Partners LLC and Southeast Land Ventures LLC over the Grand Oaks development.

The ruling, issued on Friday, Sept. 13, supports the county's position and reinforces its commitment to upholding development agreements and protecting community interests by holding the developer accountable.

Judge Claire R. Kelly sided with the county on all counts in the dispute, which centers on the developer's obligation to widen a three-mile stretch of State Road 16.

The project, essential for accommodating growth and ensuring public safety, has seen its costs more than triple since

initial approval, surging from an estimated \$15 million in 2016 to more than \$60 million as of Tuesday. The developer has not completed the work, leading the county to declare them in default.

The court also upheld the county's authority to withhold further approvals of any additional plats and construction plans until the developer meets its contractual obligations.

County Commission Chair Sarah Arnold praised the court's decision.

"This ruling reaffirms our commitment to holding developers accountable and ensuring that promises made to our residents are kept," Arnold said. "The developer's attempt to alter the terms years later was a breach of trust. We stood firm for our community, and this decision sends a clear message that we expect all parties to honor their commitments."

At the Feb. 21, 2023, Board of County Commissioners regular meeting, the

board listened to a presentation from the developer. The developer requested an amendment to the original development agreement as part of this presentation.

The board voted unanimously to deny the developer's request to amend the original development agreement. The developer responded by filing a civil action against the county in March 2023 and the county countersued, ultimately winning the case.

County Administrator Joy Andrews emphasized the significance of this ruling and the county's ongoing dedication to effective governance and protection of the residents' interests.

"The ruling from the U.S. District Court is a powerful validation of the St. Johns County Board of County Commissioners' conviction in prioritizing responsible development and its firm belief in defending our residents' rights at every turn, without compromise," Andrews said. "This court decision

represents a significant victory for our residents, reaffirming our commitment to safeguarding their financial assets and overall well-being. The board's rigorous litigatory approach throughout this dispute has empowered me, along with our strong legal and operations teams, to aggressively pursue the private resources owed to our community, without yielding to negotiation. This outcome underscores our stance on holding developers accountable to their infrastructure obligations and ensuring that our community's interests remain protected."

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Kara Anderson has been teaching at the link since December of last year. She teaches youth camps that focus on cooking and art. Most recently, the link started a youth enrichment class each Wednesday night that Anderson heads up. She brings experience as a former owner of a meal prep business and strives to present a fun atmosphere while exploring her students' creativity.

Kara Anderson

As told to Anthony Richards

Tell us a little about yourself and your background.

I grew up in Wisconsin and it's where I lived for most of my elementary and high school days, but I've lived in Jacksonville now for forever.

I actually worked at Christ's Episcopal Church helping to start their after-care program, as well as summer camps and I also did cooking with kids there for years.

We then opened up our own meal prep business called Super Suppers and had a couple of locations.

At Super Suppers everything was prepped for you and you could come in and get it. We hosted parties and would make up to 12 meals that you could take home and freeze for the rest of the week.

So, I don't live in St. Johns County. I actually live in Jacksonville, but I've worked in Ponte Vedra for years and I know the area.

How did you get involved with the link to start your cooking and kids' art class?

They don't teach home ec the way they used to when I grew up, so the camp really serves as an enrichment class.

I first started doing enrichment classes at the link last Christmas with a full day cooking and crafting camp.

Every week we do some sort of art, science and cooking, and sometimes it's just all about figuring out how it all works together, like baking soda and the variety of ways we can use it.

We can make dog treats out of it or volcanos with it, and of course, we can also always bake cookies and breads with it as well.

What are some of the foods that you've made during the class?

A lot of the food we do, is really a transition from the meal prep days.

Today, we're making monkey bread and last week we did cranberry barbecue meatballs and puffed pastry apple tarts.

I am not a fancy chef, but I originally worked for the Duval County School Board and their lunch programs in the main office creating menus for the schools about 25 or 30 years ago.

My focus is more about family meals and what we can make to help bring families back to the table.

All recipes we use have stemmed from somewhere else's recipe, so it just reminds kids that they can be creative and there are no wrong answers when it comes to cooking. There is always the option for a do-over in the kitchen.

As they follow along and realize they don't like something in a recipe, they know they can just leave it out or add something that helps fit them and their family.

What are some things you've seen the children look forward to most about the classes?

Getting their hands dirty is what they just love. And then the fact that they get to bring home what they've made and sit down and eat it with their family.

The different crafts is also something that the kids really enjoy because there are so many things out there for them to make and discover.

Nowadays, life has just gotten so busy and we're all



Contributed photo

Kara Anderson teaches youth camps at the link with a focus on cooking and art.

running all over the place.

These classes just allow for a couple of hours once a week where kids can just be kids and just be as creative as they can, while the parents also have a break and don't have to clean up any of the mess left behind.

I'm not a super structured teacher. I try to be fun and goofy and one of the girls in my camp also went to four of the summer camps we had over the summer.

That makes me feel that I'm doing a good job, and I'm happy that they keep wanting to come back and take part in even more camps.

Even if it's only one child, I'm OK with that and it just means the world.

How would you like to see the class grow in the future?

This is the first time we've done the enrichment program and right now we've six kids in the class, and during the summer we did nine weeks, day and night, with about 40 to 60 kids, and that was just in my programs, not even including the rest that the link had going on.

I would love to bring about "Meal Prep Mondays" where families can come in and make healthy meals for the week, but for now we'll continue to do the enrichment programs.

A lot of the meal prep companies will deliver the ingredients, but you still have to make it. This would take all the hard work out of it where all you have to do is throw it in the crock pot or pop it in the oven.



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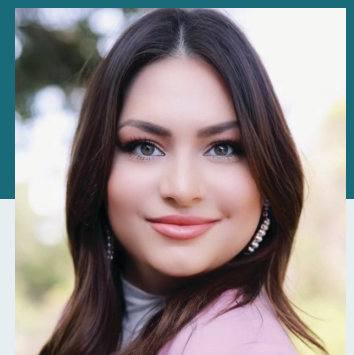
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Homeless Coalition hosts fundraiser for expansion

By Martha Gleason

HCSJC Board Member

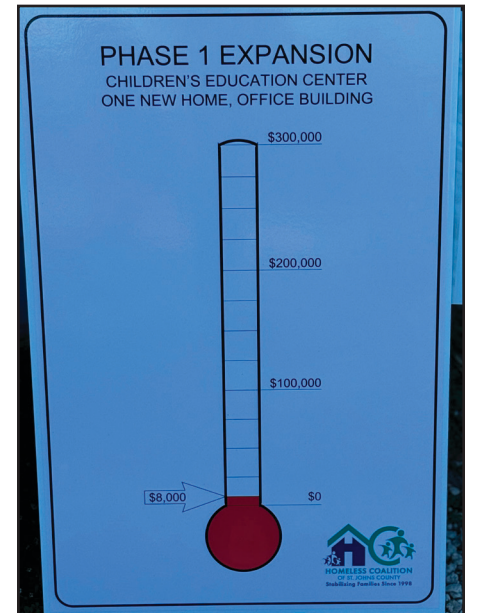
The Homeless Coalition St. Johns County hosted its annual low country boil fundraiser on Saturday, Sept. 21, at Genung's Fish Camp. The event took place on a beautiful sunny day, surrounded by friends and supporters of the organization dedicated to helping homeless families rebuild their lives.

During the fundraiser, attendees had the opportunity to learn about the coalition's ongoing efforts and future plans. The organization is currently raising funds for Phase 1 of its expansion plan,



which is estimated to cost \$300,000. This phase includes the renovation of the existing office into a new Children's Education Center, the transformation of the food pantry into a new home for a family and the construction of an 1,800-square-foot office building with private offices and a conference room. Additionally, paved parking areas and sidewalks are planned to enhance accessibility and functionality.

At the time of the event, the Homeless Coalition had reached 3% of its fundraising goal. Supporters are encouraged to contribute and be a part of the organization's success in providing crucial support and services to St. Johns County homeless children and their families.





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Photos by Anthony Richards



The Panthers' defense runs off the field after stopping the Yellow Jackets' two-point conversion attempt in overtime.



Senior cornerback Elisha Luckett kicked off Nease's comeback bid with an interception return for a touchdown to open the second half.

Comeback

Continued from 1

in the air, I just knew this was our chance to get back in it.”

From there, the defense was lockdown, and the offense established a rhythm, as Nate Harry threw for four touchdowns and 252 yards on the night, with two going to fellow senior Maddox Spencer, including the game-winner in overtime.

Down the stretch, Harry showcased ice

water in his veins and was not overwhelmed by the big moment at all, and in fact embraced it fully.

It was also a historic night for Spencer, who finished tying the school record with 15 catches in a game, while tallying 179 yards and hauling in two touchdowns.

As the game wore on it sounded more and more like a Nease home game, as the Panthers' faithful were on their feet and making noise as they could sense the comeback bid taking place, while the Yellow Jackets' fans struggled to find

moments to cheer about.

“We knew all along that if we made our adjustments we were going to come back,” Spencer said. “You don't know how much it means being on the sideline tired and then you hear the whole crowd start going. It really picks you up and makes you want to get back out there.”

The win was the first for the Panthers in the rivalry in seven years and is one that will also boost their ranking and send shockwaves throughout the state.

The Panthers follow up one tough

game with another, as they carry major momentum and move to No. 2 in Class 6A heading into district play at home against No. 4 Gainesville Buchholz.

According to Harry, the emotion of the win over rival St. Augustine is huge, but the page must also be turned quick to the next game.

“We definitely feel good after this win, but we can't get a big head from this,” Harry said. “There's still plenty of ways where we can continue to get better, while focusing on what's in front of us.”

Rosh Hashanah dinner planned at Chabad at the Beaches

A capacity crowd is expected at the Aaron and Blanche Scharf Chabad Center for Rosh Hashanah dinner on Wednesday, Oct. 2, following services at 7 p.m. Here's an opportunity to attend a new year community dinner on the first night of Rosh Hashanah, following services.

Enjoy a delicious Rosh Hashanah dinner with all of the traditional High Holiday foods, including honey-dipped apples, round challah and pomegranate seeds. The evening will be filled with great company and a warm, welcoming atmosphere, perfect for spending time with friends and family.

No one will be turned away for inability to pay. Email the rabbi and you will be welcome as a guest.

Dinner Couvert: Family \$180, adult \$36, military and student \$18, child \$18.

For sponsorship opportunities or to RSVP, contact Chabad @ the Beaches via email: info@ChabadBeaches.com or 904-543-9301. More information is available at ChabadBeaches.com/Holidays.

In addition to the dinner, Chabad @ the Beaches has posted its High Holiday Services schedule. They will be "warm, friendly and traditional," according to Chabad's executive director, Rabbi Nochum Kurinsky.



Organizers say that past years' services were a phenomenal success, with large crowds in attendance. Membership is not required to join. All are welcome, regardless of background or affiliation. Donations are always appreciated.

In addition, a special children's program will accompany most adult services. All prayers will combine the original Hebrew, as well as translated English.

"According to tradition, at the new year, the doors of heaven are open; G-d accepts all prayers, from every person," explained the rabbi. "It is in this spirit that we open our services to the entire community."

Services will be held on Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year (Oct. 2-4), as well as Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement (Oct. 11-12). They will be held at various times (as indicated below) at the Aaron and Blanche Scharf Chabad Center.

For more information or to RSVP, go to ChabadBeaches.com/Holidays or call 904-543-9301.

Chabad at the Beaches High Holidays Service Schedule

Rosh Hashanah Eve
Wednesday, Oct. 2
Evening Services 7 p.m.
Rosh Hashanah Dinner 8 p.m.

Thursday and Friday, Oct. 3 and 4
Morning Services* 9 a.m.
Children's Services 11 a.m.
Shofar Blowing & Musaf 12:30 p.m. (on Friday)
Mincha 7 p.m.

Thursday, Oct. 3
Mincha 7 p.m.

Friday, Oct. 4
Tashlich 6:30 p.m.
Mincha 7 p.m.

Yom Kippur
Friday, Oct. 11
Kol Nidrei Service 7 p.m.
Children's Services 7:15-8:15 p.m.
Saturday, Oct. 12
Morning Services* 8:45 a.m.
Children's Services 10:30 a.m.
Yizkor Memorial Services 11:30 a.m. (approx.)
Mincha Afternoon Service 6 p.m.
Neilah Closing Service 6:45 p.m.
Fast Ends & Grand Break-Fast 7:33 p.m.

**Note that doors open at 8:45 a.m. for preliminary prayers. Primary prayers get underway at approximately 10:30 a.m.*

Services will be held at:
Aaron And Blanche Scharf Chabad Center
521 A1A N., Ponte Vedra Beach
For more information and to RSVP call 904-543-9301 or go to chabad-beaches.com/HHolidays

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Vendors from local businesses made up a business expo prior to the start of the final Circle of Creation event.



KC Padgett, an independent consultant for Bemer Group was a speaker during the event.

Photos by Anthony Richards



Kelleah Speichinger of Spice Insurance Services compared being a business owner to operating a sailboat at sea.



Javonn Wright talked about how much more confident she has become since attending Circle of Creation.



Erin Kelly loves Circle of Creation so much, she even attended it on her birthday.

Showcase

Continued from 1

link, I feel welcome; it's about genuinely helping each other with what we have. That kind of support is rare, and it's what makes Circle of Creation so special."

Her favorite sessions that stood out to her during all the Circle of Creation sessions she attended were the ones focusing on pitching and expanding creativity, especially when put into groups.

"They challenged us to think outside the box and reminded me that business doesn't have to be cookie-cutter," Padgett said. "It's about pushing boundaries and growing."

Speichinger talked about her sailboat and described how similar sailing on the ocean can be to operating a business.

There are so many aspects to running a business just like what it takes to sail a boat successfully, and it starts



Attendees filled the lobby at the link for the final Circle of Creation event of 2024.

with having the right equipment on board and the support of a good crew.

However, just like with sailing, the seas can get rough and so can the business world at times.

"There is a piece of the boat that you don't see, and it's called the keel, which sits under the boat and weighs

7,000 pounds and sits six feet long and is there to help the boat act as a pendulum when the wind pushes it, so it stays steady," Speichinger said. "Your keel is the people you meet along the way to support you."

For Wright, she spoke about how she is not great with words, especially in front of people, but that Circle of Creation has brought her out of her shell and how much more confidence she has through her monthly interactions, both as a person and as a business owner.

"I first attended Circle of Creation last year, and I was immediately hooked," Kelly said. "I was able to make this part of my self-care routine, so it is listed as pink in my phone, which means it is non-negotiable."

It has even become something that means so much to her, that she attended a Circle of Creation event that fell on her birthday.

Circle of Creation has led to this year's EnterCircle, which is a five-day summit to be held at the link Nov. 12 to 16, with women's day and the Circle of Creation Awards being handed out on Nov. 15.

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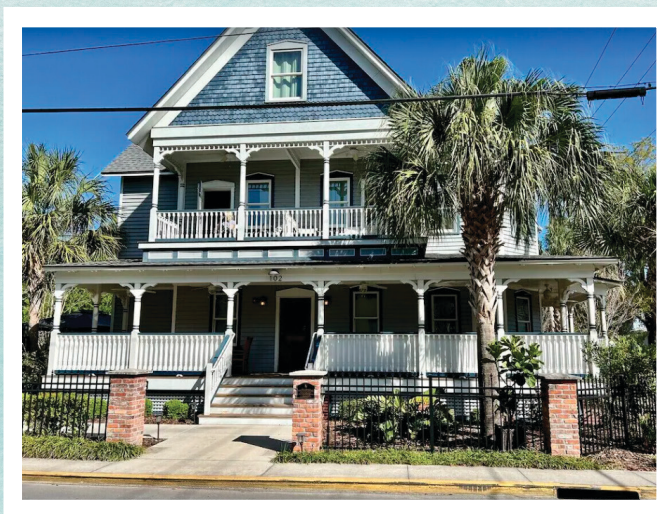
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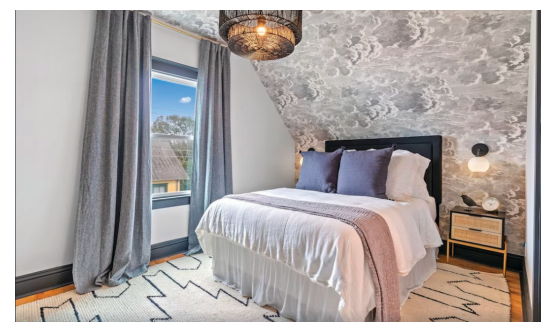
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St. Johns County honors World War II veteran Joe Shomo, 101

On Tuesday, Sept. 17, St. Johns County celebrated the remarkable life and service of Joe Shomo, a resident of St. Augustine and a World War II veteran, during a recognition ceremony held in the St. Johns County Administration Rotunda.

Shomo, who turned 101 on Aug. 21, was honored with a ceremony and a Certificate of Recognition presented during the Board of County Commissioners regular meeting. Family, friends and officials welcomed Shomo, who was provided a police escort by the St. Johns County Sheriff's Office.

Born in South Fork, Pennsylvania, on Aug. 21, 1923, Shomo grew up in Derry, Pennsylvania, where he developed a love



Contributed photos

for baseball and basketball. After graduating high school in 1941, he attended the University of Indiana in Pennsylvania until he was drafted into the U.S. Army

on May 24, 1943.

Shomo underwent basic training and specialized as a T5 radio repairman, serving in various locations, including Fort McClellan, Alabama, and Fort Monmouth, New Jersey. He was deployed to France, where he provided critical radio repair support during the war. Following his honorable discharge on Feb. 9, 1946, he continued his education, earning degrees in education and accounting.

In addition to his military service, Shomo had a successful career working for several notable companies, including IBM, Trans World Airlines, Mack Trucks, U.S. Steel and Hamilton Oil. He has lived in cities such as Baltimore, Jacksonville

and Littleton, Colorado. He married Marcella Shomo on July 21, 1960, and they enjoyed nearly 50 years together before her passing. In 1996, he made St. Augustine his home, where he continues to enjoy retirement.

The ceremony featured remarks from officials, including U.S. Rep. John Rutherford, St. Johns County District 1 Commissioner Christian Whitehurst, St. Johns County Veterans Council Chairman Bill Dudley and Ashley Cook, senior regional director for U.S. Sen. Marco Rubio. The St. Augustine High School Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps (JROTC) cadets were also present to honor Shomo for his dedication to serving the country.



40TH ANNUAL Caring★ Chefs

Celebrating its 40th year, Caring Chefs remains a beloved annual tradition in Jacksonville, bringing together the area's finest chefs, sommeliers, and brewers to offer their favorite bites and sips to guests and volunteers alike.

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 chsfl.org/caring-chefs

Humane Society celebrates Pin Up Paws calendar and auction

The St. Augustine Humane Society is celebrating the release of its 2025 Pin Up Paws Calendar with an evening of dinner, music and fun on Thursday, Oct. 24, at The White Room at 1 King St. in downtown St. Augustine.

The Sweet Things Pin Up Paws Party is accompanied by the Pin Up Paws Auction, a silent auction featuring various collectible items, experiences, services and more. The auction opens for online bidding on Oct. 4 and runs through Nov. 2. Both events raise funds to support the work of the St. Augustine Humane Society.

“We’re so excited to reveal this year’s Pin Up Paws Calendar,” said Carolyn Sindad Smith, executive director of the St. Augustine Humane Society. “And while it’s adorable and fun, it supports a truly critical mission. Every cent raised helps us provide services, food, training and more to heal animals in need, prevent overpopulation and create responsible lifelong pet guardians. Our goal for the Pin Up Paws Auction this year is \$14,000, and we have some exciting items up for grabs.”

The 2025 Sweet Things Pin Up Paws Auction is packed with fun experiences, useful gift cards and unique one-of-a-kind collectibles.

Two of the most sought-after items will

surely be signed guitars from two very famous animal advocates: the late Florida icon Jimmy Buffett and the reigning queen of pop, Taylor Swift. Most items are open to bid online, while some items will only be available for bid at the Pin Up Paws Party.

The event promises a delightful evening with

dinner, complimentary wine, live music by the House Cats Quartet, a silent auction, wine pull and more. The Sweet Things Pin Up Calendar will be unveiled and available for purchase at the party. Each guest will receive a copy of the 2025 calendar.

The Pin Up Paws calendar features 13 pets who received the most votes during open voting. Katherine, a black-and-white tuxedo cat, will grace the cover for the second year running. Cupcake, Lucy, Bix, Otis, Ginger, Mabel, Piper, Charlie, Sookie, Layla, Tucker and Harley are the 12 second-place winners who will represent the months.

All pets have completed a professional photo shoot with award-winning photographer Addison Fitzgerald. Fine artist and graphic designer Maribel Angel completes the calendar with whimsical designs and theming.

Tickets for the Pin Up Paws Party are \$145 per person and may be purchased at events. eventgroove.com/event/Pin-Up-Paws-Party-2024-91420.

“We’d like to shine an extra special light on one of our calendar winners, Sookie,” said Sindad Smith. “She was entered by a local rescue, Swamp Haven. Please consider giving this sweet senior pup a loving home.”



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2024 General Election November 5, 2024



Vicky Oakes
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- Deadline to request a vote-by-mail ballot to be mailed: **5 PM on October 24**
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Ximenez-Fatio House Museum awarded \$173,544 grant

The Ximenez-Fatio House Museum has announced that it has been awarded a \$173,544 Semiquincentennial Grant from the Historic Preservation Fund administered by the National Park Service, Department of the Interior.

“This generous grant from the NPS is essential to the completion of our two-year conservation/preservation campaign to have our museum in its best condition in time for the 2026 Semiquincentennial Celebration of the Declaration of Independence,” said Payson Tilden, executive director of the Ximenez-Fatio House Museum. “Our 226-year-old museum is one of only 31 remaining coquina and tabby structures in St. Augustine and we will be able to address the repair and restoration of many aspects of this remarkable building, showing visitors the craftsmanship needed to perform these very specific and unique processes which will preserve the building, its history, and its stories for many generations to come.”

The National Park Service has awarded \$10 million to historic sites and structures in nine states to celebrate America’s 250th anniversary.

Created by Congress in 2020 and funded through the Historic Preservation Fund (HPF), Semiquincentennial Grants fund projects that restore and preserve sites and structures listed on the National Register of Historic Places that commemorate the founding of the nation.

Grants from this year will support 19 historic preservation projects across nine states, including the Ximenez-Fatio House Museum.

“Since its founding, our nation has been shaped by an exceptionally diverse collection of cultures, events and places” said National Park Service Director Chuck Sams. “The Semiquincentennial Grant Program supports our efforts to present a more complete telling of our country’s history as we approach its 250th anniversary in 2026 and beyond.”

The Ximenez-Fatio House Museum is an original coquina structure in historic St. Augustine. Self-guided audio tours and guided tours are available Monday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. (last tour leaves at 3:45 p.m.).

The Fig Tree Gift Shop features a variety of items, including museum merchandise, fig jam from a historic fig tree on the property, books by local and Florida authors and a variety of souvenirs that make great gifts.

Ximenez-Fatio House Museum events are sponsored in part by the St. Johns Cultural Council and the St. Johns County Tourism Development Council.

The Ximenez-Fatio House is located at 20 Aviles St. It’s on the National Register of Historic Places and a Florida Heritage Landmark. The historic property was purchased in 1939 by The National Society of The Colonial Dames of America in The State of Florida. Go to ximenezfatiohouse.org for more details.

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Pre-K students enjoy Candy Land classroom

Pre-K students on the Bolles Lower School Ponte Vedra Beach Campus received a sweet surprise on Sept. 6 when teachers Melissa Nicholson and Kim Wingo transformed their classroom into a fun-filled, candy-themed delight.

The Bulldogs hopped into the colorful classroom on board game tiles and presented tickets to their own magical Candy Land to start the immersive, hands-on learning experience. They danced to “The Candy Man” to get the wiggles out before listening to Nicholson explain each of the educational centers they would participate in, ranging

from learning about the letter “C” and molding Play-Doh to weighing candy pieces and making gummy necklaces and shapes.

Bolles Lower School Ponte Vedra Beach Campus Head Stacey Hendershot joined in on the fun, working with students at various stations and encouraging them to engage with geometry, letter formation, fine motor skills patterning and more. Nicholson’s pet pig Pop also dressed up like cotton candy to celebrate the day!

Contributed photos



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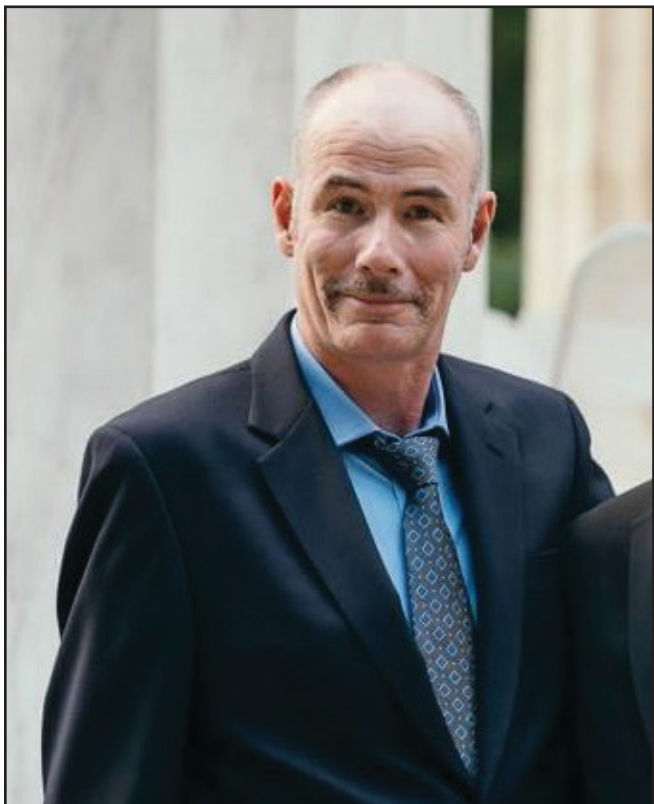
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OBITUARIES



Robert K. Hendry

Robert K. Hendry, beloved brother, son and uncle, died Saturday, Sept. 7, after a battle with bladder cancer. He was 69 years old. Locally in Ponte Vedra Beach he is survived by his brother Jim Hendry and wife Irene.

Robert, known as Bob and Bobby to his family and friends, was born in Dec. 1954 in Northport, New York, to

the late James M and Mary K Hendry. Bob was the middle of three sons, along with his older brother, James (“Jim”), and his late younger brother, William (“Billy”).

Bob lived in Northport NY until his mother’s passing in 2015. Bob then moved to Ponte Vedra Beach to be near his brother Jim and wife Irene. He lived in the Grand Cay Villas from 2015 until his passing.

Bob was a lifelong Yankees fan, but also embraced the Mets over the last 10 years. He loved decorating the exterior of his home for holidays — especially Christmas and Halloween. He was an avid fan of old television and film (vintage 1940s to early 1970s) — especially Westerns.

He loved his picturesque hometown of Northport NY with its quaint downtown, harbor, dock and park. His favorite time of year was Summer when many boats and small yachts would dock in the harbor. He loved bringing his mother there to enjoy it with him.

Bob was a gentle and caring soul that belied his 6’ 7” and 230 lb. frame. He was an incredibly honest, open, no “airs” person who was genuinely delighted by the simple things in life. Many of his friends here in PVB said he was a unique person.

He is survived by his brother Jim and wife, Irene; his sister-in-law, Celeste Mansfield; his doting nieces and nephews: Erica Hendry, James E Hendry, Ryan Hendry, and Kimberly Woods; as well as six grandnieces/nephews and many cousins and friends.

Funeral services will be held in the family’s hometown of Northport NY on Saturday Sept. 21st at Nolan Funeral Home in Northport, NY. He will lay in rest alongside his mother, father and brother in the family plot at St. Philip Neri cemetery in East Northport, NY.

DEATH NOTICES

Marcia Helen Booth

Marcia Helen Booth, 88, of Atlantic Beach, Florida, died Sept. 16, 2024. Arrangements by Quinn Shalz Funeral Home & Cremation Centre, 904-249-1100, www.quinn-shalz.com

William Arther Bull, Sr.

William Arther Bull, Sr., 83, of Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida, died Sept. 19, 2024. Arrangements by Quinn Shalz Funeral Home & Cremation Centre, 904-249-1100, www.quinn-shalz.com.

Patsy Ruth Burns

Patsy Ruth Burns, 95, of Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida, died Sept. 15, 2024. Arrangements by Quinn Shalz Funeral Home & Cremation Centre, 904-249-1100, www.quinn-shalz.com

Beverly Ann Koerner

Beverly Ann Koerner, 86, of Atlantic Beach, Florida, died Sept. 19, 2024. Arrangements by Quinn Shalz Funeral Home & Cremation Centre, 904-249-1100, www.quinn-shalz.com.

Lela Lazich

Lela Lazich, 60, of Jacksonville, Florida, died Sept. 10, 2024. Arrangements by Quinn Shalz Funeral Home & Cremation Centre, 904-249-1100, www.quinn-shalz.com.

Rose Mustillo-Yeager

Rose Mustillo-Yeager, 81, of Atlantic Beach, Florida, died Sept. 18, 2024. Arrangements by Quinn Shalz Funeral Home & Cremation Centre, 904-249-1100, www.quinn-shalz.com.

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1 "Medicare & You," Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, 2024. 2 "Aging changes in teeth and gums", medlineplus.gov, 4/17/2022. 3 American Dental Association, Health Policy Institute, 2020 Survey of Dental Fees, Copyright 2020, American Dental Association.

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DEATH NOTICES

Nancy O'Toole

Nancy O'Toole, 77, of St. Augustine, Florida, died Sept. 18, 2024. Arrangements by Quinn Shalz Funeral Home & Cremation Centre. 904-249-1100 www.quinn-shalz.com.

Matthew Francis Peters

Matthew Francis Peters, 36, of Jacksonville, Florida, died Sept. 20, 2024. Arrangements by Quinn Shalz Funeral Home & Cremation Centre, 904-249-1100, www.quinn-shalz.com

Anne M. Phinney

Anne M. Phinney, 91, of Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida, died Sept. 16, 2024. Arrangements by Quinn-Shalz Family Funeral Home & Cremation Centre. www.quinn-shalz.com. 904-249-1100

Theodora Blackwell Stone

Theodora Blackwell Stone, 98, of Neptune Beach, Florida, died Sept. 15, 2024. Arrangements by Quinn Shalz Funeral Home & Cremation Centre. 904-249-1100, www.quinn-shalz.com.

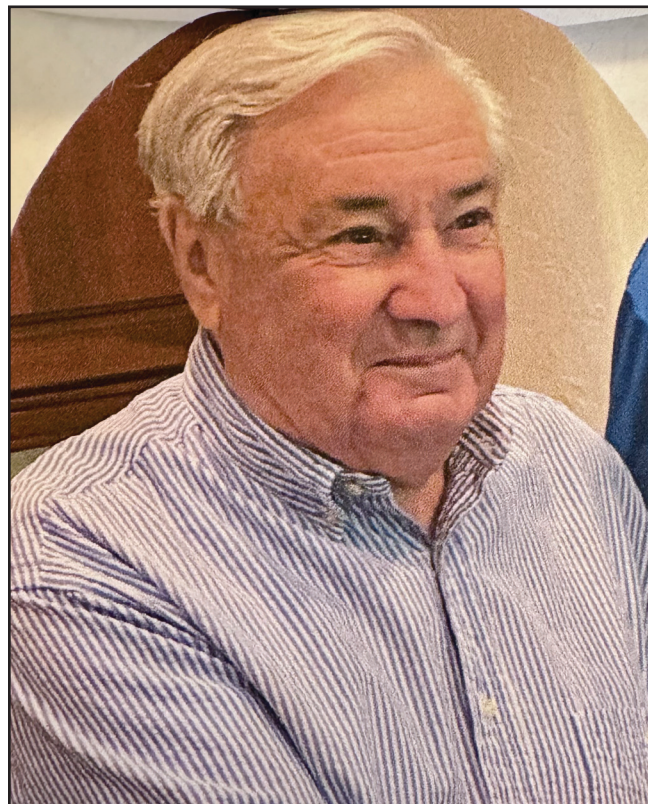
Reidunn Bergheim Petroni Strom

Reidunn Bergheim Petroni Strom, 77, of Atlantic Beach, Florida, died Aug. 20, 2024. Arrangements by Quinn Shalz Funeral Home & Cremation Centre, 904-249-1100, www.quinn-shalz.com

John Michael Sullivan

John Michael Sullivan, 88, of Ponte Vedra beach, Florida, died Sept. 19, 2024. Arrangements by Quinn Shalz Funeral Home & Cremation Centre. 904-249-1100, www.quinn-shalz.com.

OBITUARIES



Joseph "Joe" Scelzo

Joseph "Joe" Scelzo passed away on September 19, peacefully in his sleep.

Joe was a caring, loving, and generous father and husband.

He was a brilliant scientist with incredible financial acumen, but anyone who knew him remembers his great sense

of humor and laugh.

Born in NJ and living in NJ, NYC, PA, and the DC area, he moved to Ponte Vedra Beach and later Jacksonville.

Joe loved international travel, but his favorite place was Switzerland where he spent his honeymoon and returned every year.

A gourmet chef and wine enthusiast Joe enjoyed entertaining his friends at home. "The host with the most."

The family thanks the loving care given by the staff at The Windsor and Community Hospice for bringing comfort to him.

Surviving are his son, David and wife, Midge.

Any donations to the family's charity of choice are appreciated — The Players Senior Center, through:

St. John's County Council on Aging (coasjc.org) 180 Marine St., St. Augustine, FL 32084.

Please sign the online guestbook at www.pontevedravalle.com.



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Golf, pickleball tournament to help fight childhood cancer

For The Recorder

The Kate Amato Foundation is looking to fill the remaining spots for their second annual KATE KOMBO Golf and Pickleball Tournament, to be held on Oct. 11 at The Yards in Sawgrass. All net proceeds from this event will benefit The Kate Amato Foundation, whose mission is to fund innovative, nontoxic treatments for childhood cancer.

There is nothing typical about this unique tournament offering something for everyone. Twenty golf foursomes will play a shotgun start, 15-hole course, culminating in a shoot-out for the top teams. Meanwhile, 36 pickleball pairs will simultaneously compete on 12 courts in a waterfall format, combining round robin and single elimination. At the end of tournament play, all golfers and picklers will reunite at The Yards Greenhouse for further fun, fundraising, awards and a luncheon. There is even an option for spectators to attend, cheer and heckle throughout the day.

September is recognized as Childhood Cancer Awareness Month, a time to shine a light on the fight against pediatric cancer. Pediatric cancer is the leading cause of death by disease in children. Despite this grim reality, only 4% of total federal research funding is allocated to childhood

cancers. Additionally, the pharmaceutical industry's reluctance to invest in pediatric cancer research, citing the larger and more profitable adult cancer market, highlights the dire need for private funding. Events like KATE KOMBO are not just impactful in the community but essential in advancing progress and ultimately saving young lives worldwide.

“Each September we aim to raise awareness and inspire action around the importance of funding pediatric cancer research because true change begins with us. With limited funding and outdated treatment options, it's up to us to push for the advancements that will save children's lives,” says the Amatos, Jeff and Lisa, co-founders of Kate Amato Foundation. “Our signature KATE events allow us to rally the community and raise crucial funds, ensuring pediatric cancer research becomes a top priority. The overwhelming support from local businesses and our community shows that we can drive the change needed to improve treatment options and outcomes for children battling cancer. We're eager to finish September strong by selling out our upcoming KATE KOMBO event and hitting new fundraising levels.”

The inspiration behind Kate Amato Foundation stems from the heartbreaking loss of Kate Amato, Lisa and Jeff's



Contributed photo

daughter, who bravely fought cancer for two and a half years until she lost her battle in November of 2016 at only 11 years old. Witnessing the inadequacies of outdated treatments and the severe underfunding of pediatric cancer firsthand, Lisa and Jeff established the foundation to honor Kate's memory and continue the fight for other children.

As part of their mission, the Kate Amato Foundation awards grant funding to cutting-edge pediatric cancer research projects at some of the leading immunotherapy and cancer genomics research labs in the country, including: Duke University, Dana Farber Cancer Institute at Harvard Medical School, UCLA, Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP), The University of Colorado, Baylor Col-

lege of Medicine, Texas Children's Cancer Research Hospital, The University of Buffalo and Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center. To date, the foundation has awarded \$575,000 in grants to support revolutionary research projects to save young lives.

Additional sponsors and players for KATE KOMBO are still wanted, and registration for play is open until Oct. 4. The tournament will be held on Oct. 11 from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. at The Yards in Sawgrass. Registration includes team play for golf or pickleball, gift bags, brunch bar and Kombo Party. All levels of play are welcome. Registration prices are as follows: Golf foursome is \$1,200 and pickleball pair is \$300. Spectators are encouraged and tickets are \$50. Following the tournament, there will be a collective celebration for all players and spectators with complimentary lunch, live auction, prizes and an awards ceremony.

To learn more about sponsorship opportunities, go to kateamatofoundation.org/kate-kombo/

To volunteer at KATE KOMBO, go to kateamatofoundation.org/kate-kombo-volunteers/

To donate to the Kate Amato Foundation or learn more about participating in KATE KOMBO, go to KateAmatoFoundation.org.



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Chamber Connections

Leadership St. Johns Class of 2024

The Class of 2024 of Leadership St. Johns recently held their graduation ceremony and celebration to mark the end of their experience immersing themselves in the county's business, political and nonprofit communities.

Photo provided by the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce Foundation



September 2024



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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT/CEO



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

The power of connection in business and community

In today's world, the need for connection remains as crucial as ever — especially in business. The most successful businesses are built on not only innovative products or services but also strong relationships and meaningful connections. At the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce, we take pride in being a hub for vital connections between business owners, clients, government leaders, employees, the local community and beyond. For 120 years, the chamber has brought together professionals from various industries, creating a space where relationships can flourish and businesses can find mutual support.

Through Leadership St. Johns, local

professionals connect with each other and with St. Johns County leaders to gain a greater understanding of their community. This year's class brought their connections full circle by creating a fundraiser to support the SJC Chamber Foundation, which is home to the LSJ program. These leaders will apply their new knowledge and experience to their roles to strengthen the business environment and community in St. Johns County. You're invited to apply for LSJ Class of 2025 when applications open in November!

The chamber is committed to helping make St. Johns County a place where employees can live where they work. Our Attainable Housing Coalition advocates for more housing options for the workers that make our businesses thrive. We are sharing this message widely, including in recent presentations to leaders at Florida Blue in Jacksonville and at the statewide Florida Housing Coalition Conference in Orlando.

We also see important connections far outside our community. The chamber was recently part of a delegation from St. Augustine to Aviles, Spain, for the cities to celebrate 100 years of kinship, and we were thrilled to also welcome a delegation from Aviles in St. Augustine. The connection of these cities has opened the door for international business relationships and collaboration.

The chamber encourages businesses and the community to embrace the power of connection and engagement — to adapt to change, find innovative solutions and contribute to a vibrant, interconnected economy. These connections are what make St. Johns County thrive.

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

Chamber to mark 120th anniversary at annual end-of-year celebration



The St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce invites members and the community to mark its 120th anniversary at Celebrate!, an annual event to highlight achievements of the year and show appreciation to Chamber members.

This year's event will take on an early 1900s theme to mark the Chamber's establishment as the St. Augustine Board of Trade in 1904. Attendees can mingle with period reenactors, pause for an early-1900s-themed souvenir photo, explore a timeline of

the Chamber and the county's business history, snap a commemorative selfie, catch up with old friends and new, and enjoy live music, a plated dinner and cocktails in a luxurious setting.

The Chamber will also recognize the best of St. Johns County's business community, including Chamber Member of the Year, Ambassador of the Year and Economic Development Council Member of the Year.

Registration for the event is available on the Chamber's website at sjcchamber.com/events.

SJC Chamber Celebrate! 2024

Date: Thursday, Nov. 14
Time: 5:30-8 p.m.
Location: Hyatt Place St. Augustine/Vilano Beach, 117 Vilano Road, St. Augustine
Tickets: \$99 per person, includes dinner and drinks, entertainment, keepsake photo and more
RSVP and more information: bit.ly/celebrate_120



Leadership St. Johns class of 2024 marks culmination of successful experience

The class of 2024 of Leadership St. Johns recently held a graduation ceremony and celebration to mark the end of their experience immersing themselves in the county's business, political and nonprofit communities.

Leadership St. Johns is the cornerstone program of the St. Johns County Chamber Foundation. The program accelerates the leadership skills of business and community professionals by building relationships and enhancing their knowledge of St. Johns County.

This year's class of 23 members is the first under the SJC Chamber Foundation, now in its second year.

At the celebration, the class heard from St. Johns County Tax Collector-elect Jennifer Ravan, a member of LSJ class of 2021, with insight to what makes a good servant leader. Chamber board Chair Berta Odom and foundation board Chair Cecil Gibson also addressed the group.

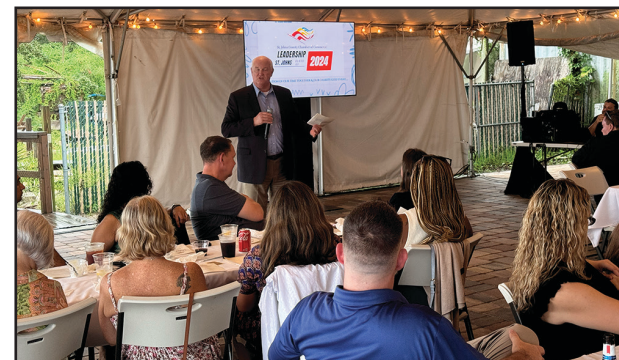
Each LSJ class creates a fundraiser to support a cause or nonprofit organization that makes a difference in St. Johns County. This year's class created a golf tournament to benefit the SJC Chamber Foundation and raised more than \$28,000 to support scholarships for future LSJ

members.

The application for LSJ 2025 will open in October, and the program runs January-September.

Learn more at sjcchamber.com/leadership-st-johns.

Photos courtesy of St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce



School superintendent explains need for budget increase at Chamber EDC breakfast

The St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce held its quarterly Economic Development Council breakfast on Friday, Sept. 20. Tim Forson, superintendent of St. Johns County School District, shared updates about the school system and what's needed to ensure St. Johns County retains its consistent "A" score and top statewide ranking.

The school district has proposed two referenda for the November general election ballot: one that will continue the current half-cent sales tax for another 10 years, through 2035, and another that would raise property taxes by one mill for four years. The sales tax continuation funds capital improvements for school facilities, and the millage increase would fund school operating costs like teacher salaries and educational programs.

Forson spoke about the need for voter approval of both of these referenda, saying that strengthening schools is a function of a community's quality of life.

He highlighted the increased demand on the county's educational system as the population grows, and the disparity in average teacher salary between St. Johns and neighboring counties. The millage increase would allow the school district to invest in hiring and retaining high-quality teachers and staff and make St. Johns a more competitive employer, he said.

The school district has used the half-cent sales tax over the past 10 years to fund construction of new schools and make critical renovations to others, Forson said. Extending this tax another 10 years will allow the school district to continue making facility improvements



Photo courtesy of St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce

Scott Maynard, senior vice president of economic development for the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce; Berta Odom, board president for St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce; Tim Forson, superintendent of the St. Johns County School District; Isabelle Renault, president and CEO of the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce; Dirk Schroeder, chair of the chamber's Economic Development Council Executive Committee.

in the face of rising construction costs, he explained.

The next Economic Development Council Breakfast will be Friday, Dec. 13, at Renaissance World Golf Vil-



lage Resort. The featured speaker will be David Altig, executive vice president and chief economic adviser for the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta. Interested attendees can register for the event on the chamber's website at sjcchamber.com/events.

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Photo courtesy of St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce

Annual Chamber board retreat focuses on strategic plan

The St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce held its annual retreat and strategy planning session for the board of directors and staff last month at St. Johns Golf & Country Club. Consultant Nancy Dering Mock facilitated the strategic planning work. The group held many important conversations, shared ideas and worked on the three-year strategic plan to continue the Chamber's work as an advocate for the St. Johns County business community.



Photos courtesy of St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce

Chamber joins St. Augustine delegation visit to Aviles, Spain

St. Augustine and Aviles, Spain, are celebrating 100 years as sister cities. In August, a delegation of St. Augustine city officials, along with St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce representatives, visited Aviles to get to know the city and the possibility of establishing business relationships with companies in Aviles.

Isabelle Renault, president and CEO of the Chamber, and Scott Maynard, senior vice president of economic development, learned more about the business community in Aviles and connected with the Aviles Chamber of Commerce to strengthen the business partnership between Aviles and St. Augustine.



A delegation from Aviles also visited St. Augustine earlier in September as part of the anniversary celebration.

Chamber After Hours

Doug Bell and the team at DJ's Clam Shack in St. Augustine hosted Chamber After Hours on Aug. 14. It was a great evening of networking and catching up, despite the rainy weather. DJ's Clam Shack is located on Hypolita Street in downtown St. Augustine.

Photo courtesy of St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce



Two businesses cut ribbons

Deka Lash and YogaSix St. Johns held ribbon cuttings July 10. Both businesses are located in Northwest St. Johns County. Deka Lash provides customizable lash and brow services, and YogaSix offers a variety of yoga classes for everyone from beginners to experts.

Photo courtesy of St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce



Donna Mancini hosts Chamber after hours event

Donna Mancini Interiors & Flooring hosted a Chamber after hours event at its location in Ponte Vedra as fellow Chamber members took part in the social event on Aug. 21.

Photo by Susan Griffin



Chamber After Hours at Freedom Boat Club

Freedom Boat Club Jacksonville, Jacksonville Beach & St. Augustine hosted the June 27 Chamber After Hours event.

Photo courtesy of St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce



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Chamber After Hours at Old Coast Pickleball

On July 18, Old Coast Pickleball hosted a very fun Chamber After Hours, where members could network while playing pickleball at the indoor, air-conditioned facility during the evening thunderstorms. Owners Tim and Ashley Owens are also breaking ground on a new, 12-court facility in St. Augustine, near the intersection of Dobbs Road and Kings Estate Road.

Photo courtesy of St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce



Hair Cuttery ribbon cutting

Hair Cuttery held its grand opening and ribbon cutting on July 19. The salon is located in the Treaty Oaks shopping center on S.R. 207 in St. Augustine, with a great team of colorists and stylists to serve the community.

Photo courtesy of St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce



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GJ Gardner Homes ribbon cutting

GJ Gardner Homes held its ribbon cutting and grand opening on July 26.

Photo courtesy of St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce



Dutch Bros Coffee ribbon cutting

Dutch Bros Coffee held its ribbon cutting and grand opening on Aug. 9. The business is located on U.S. 1 near the Palencia-International Golf Parkway intersection. The team serves up a variety of coffees, teas, shakes and more starting at 5 a.m. every day.

Photo courtesy of St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce




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Chamber After Hours at Wells Fargo

Wells Fargo hosted the June 26 Chamber After Hours event.

Photo by Susan Griffin



Ascension St. Vincent's 210 hosts Chamber before hours

Ascension St. Vincent's Hospital on County Road 210 hosted a St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce before hours event on Aug. 7. The event was another part of the hospital's busy summer which included celebrating their two-year anniversary ceremony.

Photos by Susan Griffin



Chamber After Hours at Real Property Management

Real Property Management Home Together hosted a fun Chamber After Hours event Sept. 11 with great networking, food and drinks. The business offers an affordable solution to managing real estate in St. Johns County with a focus on quality residential property management.

Photo courtesy of St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce



Chamber Before Hours at Hydro Med Spa

Hydro Med Spa hosted the July 10 Chamber Before Hours event. Founder, CEO and Clinical Director Travis Jeffords spoke to the special approach Hydro Med Spa takes to help clients look and feel their best with custom IV infusions, hormone replacement, ozone therapy, aesthetics, body sculpting and more.

Photo courtesy of St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce



Golf Cart World ribbon cutting

Golf Cart World, located at 100 Sterling Plaza Drive in Ponte Vedra, held a ribbon cutting July 29 to celebrate their opening with members of the community.

Photo courtesy of St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce



Chamber Before Hours at Hillary's Chicago Pizza

Hillary's Chicago Pizza in St. Augustine hosted a very tasty Chamber Before Hours event on Sept. 12. Members got their workday started with great networking and authentic Chicago-style pizza. Owners Hillary and Bruce Lake bring the love of pizza and history of being Chicagoans to St. Augustine. The restaurant is located on U.S. 1 near State Road 312 in St. Augustine. It also offers online ordering and catering.

Photo courtesy of St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce



Learning Experience ribbon cutting




The Learning Experience held a ribbon cutting on Sept. 13 at its new location in St. Augustine. Students from infants to preschoolers learn, play and grow through the unique L.E.A.P. curriculum.

Photo courtesy of St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce



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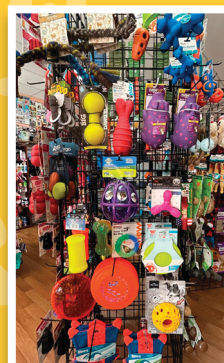


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Chamber After Hours at StretchLab

StretchLab in St. Augustine Beach hosted a great Chamber After Hours on July 24. Attendees had a fun night of networking and learning from the StretchLab experts about all of the benefits that come with increased flexibility and range of motion, no matter what activity you do.

Photo courtesy of St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce



Chamber Before Hours at Code Ninjas World Golf Village

Code Ninjas World Golf Village hosted Chamber Before Hours on Aug. 15 for fellow Chamber members. Owner Ryan Clark spoke about the importance of using technology to prepare children for the future. Clark, a member of the Chamber's Board of Directors, also owns Code Ninjas Ponte Vedra. At Code Ninjas, kids learn how to code in a fun, safe and social-learning environment where gaming is celebrated and STEM is cool.

Photo courtesy of St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce



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Chamber Before Hours at Mall 2121 and Buma Landscaping

Mall 2121 and Buma Landscaping hosted the Chamber Before Hours on July 11. Mall 2121, formerly the Ponce de Leon Mall, is now open, and owner Earl Glisson plans to fill the remaining spots with community-based businesses. The company uses a portion of rent it collects to help those in need locally, nationally and internationally. Buma Landscaping is locally owned by Seth Buma, who described how the company's approach to landscape design is to coach customers to envision the ideal landscape that will help them create the best memories in their home; then, the company executes that vision.

Photo courtesy of St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce



Longleaf Ribbon Cutting

Longleaf St. Johns Luxury Apartments held its ribbon cutting on June 26.

Photo courtesy of St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce



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Chamber at Noon at Marsh Landing Country Club

Marsh Landing Country Club was the setting for an informative joint Chamber at Noon with JAX Chamber. Experts from St. Johns County and the Florida Department of Transportation presented important information about our beaches and their impact on quality of life, businesses, tourism and more, with an ongoing focus on renourishment and resiliency planning.

Photo by Susan Griffin



Conquer Health Chiropractic ribbon cutting

Conquer Health Chiropractic held its ribbon cutting ceremony June 28.

Photo courtesy of St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce



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First Coast Headshots ribbon cutting

First Coast Headshots held its ribbon cutting on Aug. 7. Owner Gabriel Giannelli opened the new studio in downtown St. Augustine at the historic Treasury Building at 24 Cathedral Place.

Photo courtesy of St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce



FastSigns Ribbon Cutting

FastSigns held its ribbon cutting and reopening under new management on June 27.

Photo courtesy of St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce



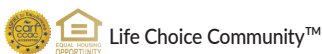
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Sawgrass Pet Resort celebrates expansion with dual ribbon cuttings

Sawgrass Pet Resort in Ponte Vedra Beach held a ribbon cutting and open house on Aug. 18 to celebrate their opening after adding an additional 2,000 sq. ft. boarding area and walking trail. The grand opening of Sunrise Vet at Sawgrass was celebrated with a ribbon cutting the same day. Sawgrass Pet Resort offers many amenities for dog owners, including boarding, daycare, grooming and training.

Photos courtesy of St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce



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Sugar Sugar Ribbon Cutting

Sugar Sugar — St. Johns held its ribbon cutting and grand opening on July 12. Sugar Sugar is located at 105 Nature Walk Parkway, Unit 107, off C.R. 210. It offers sugaring hair removal, spray tans, facials and brow services.

Photo courtesy of St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce



Social Society ribbon cutting

The Social Society held its ribbon cutting and grand opening on Sept. 16. The area's newest party supply store is now open in Nocatee, and owner Seri Kertzner has sourced everything you need to throw a fabulous party. In this fun and creative space, you'll find trendy gift ideas, pieces for everyday entertaining, a balloon bar with delivery options and more.

Photo by Anthony Richards



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Keep safe during storm recovery, cleanup

For The Recorder

September is traditionally the most active time for hurricanes and tropical storms. Once a storm passes through, the challenges are not over. There is still recovery and cleanup.

The Outdoor Power Equipment Institute (OPEI) offers tips to help everyone stay safe during recovery efforts:

Figure out where to start. Survey the property and the damage, as well as safety risks such as downed power lines or unstable structures. Consider what will be needed to clean up. You might need a chainsaw, portable generator, pole pruner, water pump or utility vehicle.

Use common sense when using outdoor power equipment. Take time to think through a strategy for cleanup efforts and use the appropriate equipment for the job. If necessary, call a professional landscape contractor or tree-care service for downed trees.

Use safety gear. Sturdy shoes, safety goggles, hard hats, chaps, reflective clothing and work gloves can help protect people cleaning up from a storm.

Follow manufacturer's directions for equipment operation. Operate your equipment safely and follow directions from the equipment manufacturer for safe usage. If you don't know how to use a piece of equipment, owner's manuals are often available online.

Only use outdoor power equipment that is in good working order. Make sure equip-

ment works well and that safety guards have not been disabled.

Trim trees safely. When using equipment such as chain saws or pruners, keep both feet firmly on the ground, and observe the safety zone, which means keeping bystanders and power lines (those above you and any that might have fallen down) at least 50 feet away from your work area.

Use safety precautions. Be aware of fundamental dangers that can occur. For instance, chainsaw kickback, which may happen when the moving chain at the tip of the guide bar touches an object, or when the wood closes in and pinches the saw chain in the cut. Always stand with your weight on both feet and adjust your stance so you are angled away from the blade. Hold the chainsaw with both hands. Never over-reach or cut anything above your shoulder height. Always have a planned retreat path if something falls.

Keep the right fuel on hand. Store fuel in an approved container. Use the type of fuel recommended by your equipment manufacturer. Use fuel with 10% or less ethanol in gasoline-fueled outdoor power equipment. (For more information: www.LookBeforeYou-Pump.com.)

Be battery ready. Recharge batteries only with the charger specified by the manufacturer. A charger that is suitable for one type of battery pack may not be compatible with another battery pack. Follow all charging instructions

and do not charge the battery pack or equipment outside the temperature range specified in the instructions. Charging improperly or at temperatures outside the specified range may damage the battery.

Ensure portable electric generators have plenty of ventilation. Generators should never be used in an enclosed area or placed inside a home or garage, even if the windows or doors are open. Place the generator outside and away from windows, doors and vents that could allow carbon monoxide to come indoors. Keep the generator dry, and make sure you have adequate outdoor-rated extension cords. Before

refueling, turn the generator off and let it cool down.

Drive utility vehicles (UTVs) with caution. Keep the vehicle stable and drive slowly. Do not turn the vehicle mid-slope or while on a hill.

Be aware of others. Keep bystanders, children and animals out of your work area. Do not allow other people near outdoor power equipment when starting the equipment or using it.

Listen to your body. Storm cleanup can be draining. Do not operate power equipment when you are tired. Drink plenty of water and take regular breaks.



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PAGE 38 THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 2024

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GUEST COLUMN

Paying down debt vs. investing

Written by/for Wells Fargo Advisors

Paying down debt is often difficult, and even more so in a challenging economic environment. You may be wondering which to tackle first — pay down your debt or invest for the future?

Balance is best

A balanced approach to wealth management serves both today's needs and tomorrow's goals. For some that may mean paying off some debt today while simultaneously investing for the future.

Your own needs and circumstances will be unique. The following guidelines can help you evaluate alternatives and find an approach that fits your situation and goals.

Don't forget your emergency fund

In addition to paying down debt and settling on an investment strategy, make it a priority to set up an emergency reserve. Traditional "rules of thumb" suggest setting aside three to six months or more of living expenses in traditional savings or very short-term, highly liquid, low-volatility investments.

Your future first

When making decisions about debt and investing, be a long-term thinker. Consider "what position do I want to be in 10 or 20 years from now?" Then evaluate what actions today will be most effective in helping you achieve your long-term financial goals.

For example, if you have high-interest debt that is compounding, this could eventually become a serious impediment to reaching your long-term goals. In contrast, you might not be in a hurry to retire low-interest debt, if the potential return on long-term investing would be greater.

When making decisions about debt reduction vs. investing, keep in mind that the need to eventually pay off principal is certain, but investment returns are not. Investment performance will vary over time, and it's possible to experience losses as well as gains. At the same time, it is well known that investors who start earlier benefit from compounding and "time in the market."

If you have the opportunity to participate in a retirement plan at work, and your employer makes matching contributions, that could be a compelling reason to prioritize investing up to the amount that the employer



will match.

Prioritize your debts

With your emergency fund and investment strategy in place, you can begin deciding on a strategy for reducing your debts. But how do you decide which debts to pay down first?

Mathematically, it makes sense to focus on paying off high-interest debts like private student loans and credit card debt first. Federal student loans and mortgages might be lower priorities because their rates are often lower and their terms longer. Vehicle loans might fall somewhere in the middle. Tax considerations may also come into play.

An alternative approach is to start with the smallest debt first. It might be motivating to get a "quick win" by paying off a smaller debt before beginning to chip away at a larger one.

Once you pay off one debt, add that payment amount to a different debt payment amount to accelerate its pay off.

This article was written by/for Wells Fargo Advisors and provided courtesy of Ponte Veda Wealth Management Group in Ponte Veda Beach at 904-273-7918.

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Ground broken for \$8M health and wellness center

For The Recorder

On Friday morning, Sept. 13, St. Johns County joined the West Augustine Historical Community Development Corp., the West Augustine Community Redevelopment Agency, the Central Florida Community Development Corporation and other partners for a groundbreaking ceremony celebrating the start of construction on the \$8 million West Augustine Health and Wellness Center.

The project has been a yearslong endeavor that will bring much-needed health care resources to the area's residents. Sixteen speakers addressed the large crowd of attendees, each telling a different part of the long journey to seeing the health center begin construction at 938 W. King St. and the dedicated cooperation between local, county and state governments necessary to make it happen.

"This is a demonstration and manifestation of what we can do when we come together ... to meet the fundamental needs of our community," St. Johns County Administrator Joy Andrews said.

Dwala Willis, co-chair of the West Augustine CRA Steering Committee, said it didn't matter to the West Augustine community how long it took; they were determined to make the dream a reality.

"There is no expiration date on hope," Willis said. "We continued to press on with purpose, and we pressed on with pride."

Greg White, founder and president of the West Augustine Historical Community Development Corporation, spoke of how the saying "a rising tide lifts all boats" doesn't apply when one boat has a hole in it; generations of redlining and underserving had left West Augustine with such a hole, but the health center will be a chance to fix it.

The West Augustine Health and Wellness Center is expected to open in October 2025.

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GUEST COLUMN

How might the 2024 presidential election impact markets? History may offer clues



By Chris Thompson

The 2024 presidential election is quickly approaching, and investors may be wondering if and how the outcome will impact the stock market and underlying investments. While every campaign cycle comes with its unique set of circumstances, we can turn to history as an indicator of how markets typically act in an election year. Here are a few trends investors should keep in mind.

Historic trends in election years. In general, market volatility trends higher early in an election year as candidates are being finalized and then again as the election nears, as investors react to the ebbs and flows of the news cycle and grapple with the unknown of what is to come. Following election day, as the winner becomes clear, market volatility

levels tend to normalize. (Ameriprise Financial: “Committee Perspectives: U.S. Election Guide” May 2024. Compiled by Ameriprise Global Asset Allocation Committee.)

The impact of incumbency. The candidate pool for presidency can further impact markets and volatility trends. Typically, volatility has been higher in election cycles where there has not been an incumbent in the running. Stock market returns have also been more favorable in years when an incumbent has been on the ballot, than when two non-incumbents have faced off. (Ameriprise Financial: “Committee Perspectives: U.S. Election Guide” May 2024. Compiled by Ameriprise Global Asset Allocation Committee.)

Policy changes. Historically, market returns tend to be stronger in the first two years of a returning president’s term as investors have experience with the administration’s policies. Returning administrations generally have more experience navigating political barriers and may be better equipped to see policy through. How much any presidential administration can accomplish is limited by policymakers in Congress and local and state legislatures — and their political party make-up is a pivotal detail of election years. History has not been as kind to markets as the administration’s second term passes its halfway point. During these last two years, there is limited time to implement policy, and investors and the American public may start looking ahead to the unknown policies of a new administration, becoming more sensitive to fiscal and policy uncertainty as the next election draws near. (Ameriprise Financial: “Committee Perspectives: U.S.

Election Guide” May 2024. Compiled by Ameriprise Global Asset Allocation Committee.)

Bottom line: Stick to the fundamentals and invest for the long term. Political cycles can be intimidating to investors as they look to prepare for the uncertainty that comes with the election year and beyond. Regardless of the political backdrop, financial markets are principally driven by growth in the economy, corporate profits and the direction of interest rates longer-term. Importantly, fluctuations in markets are normal, and it is usually beneficial to stick to the fundamentals. A diversified portfolio with a mix of different investments selected according to your goals and risk tolerance is key to avoiding potential overexposure to unnecessary investment risk. Diversification helps investors mitigate risks in their portfolios that may be caused by geopolitical circumstances, election volatility or policy changes.

It is normal for emotions to run high as you anticipate the uncertainty that an election, or an administration’s policies, may have on the economy or your portfolio. As an investor, it is understandable to consider the impact of an election on your investments, but remember it is only one short-term factor. Review your investment strategy and financial plan with a financial advisor who can help you stay attuned to your long-term goals.

Chris Thompson, CFP®, CRPC®, CMFA® is a Private Wealth Advisor and Managing Director with Ameriprise Financial Services, LLC. in Ponte Vedra, FL. He specializes in fee-based financial planning and asset management strategies and has been in practice

for the last 31 years. To contact him, www.ameripriseadvisors.com/chris.thompson, 904-380-2290 at 818 A1A Hwy North, Suite 301, Ponte Vedra, FL 32082.

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Bank of America boosts minimum pay to \$24 per hour

Bank of America recently announced that it has raised its U.S. minimum hourly wage to \$24 per hour, the latest step in the company’s commitment to \$25 by 2025. With the increase, the minimum annualized salary for full-time employees in the U.S. will rise to nearly \$50,000. The increase applies to all full-time and part-time hourly positions in the U.S.

A national leader

This move builds on the bank’s history of being a national leader in establishing a minimum rate of pay for U.S. hourly employees.

- In the last seven years, Bank of America raised the minimum hourly wage from \$15 to \$24 in 2024.

- With the increase to \$24, starting salary for full-time U.S. employees at the bank will have gone up by nearly \$20,000 since 2017.

Competitive pay, industry-leading benefits

“Providing a competitive minimum wage is core to being a great place to work — and I am proud that Bank of America is leading by example,” said Sheri Bronstein, chief human resources officer.

As a further investment in the team, 97% of Bank of America employees have received awards beyond regular compensation, mostly in the form of Bank of America restricted common stock. More than \$4.8 billion has been awarded since the program was introduced in 2017.

Bank of America also offers industry-leading benefits and employee programs for all. Additional benefits include, but are not limited to:

- 16 weeks of paid parental leave
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Fostering career growth and upskilling

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GUEST COLUMN

Are your heirs ready to receive an inheritance?



In the popular imagination, receiving an inheritance always sounds like a good thing — after all, who doesn't want a financial windfall? And inheritances can certainly be life-altering events. But they can cause challenges, so you'll want to help your heirs be prepared.

To assist in this preparation, try to address some key questions affecting your

heirs:

• **Do they know what's in your estate plans?** Your family and other heirs will be much better prepared to deal with an inheritance if they know what to expect. That's why it's so important that you share your estate plans with everyone involved. You need to let them know the wishes and decisions you've expressed in your will and other legal arrangements, such as a living trust. Of course, sharing this information doesn't necessarily mean that all your heirs will be completely satisfied with your choices — but at least they won't be surprised, and perhaps will be less likely to cause disputes when the time comes to settle your estate.

• **Will they know what to do with the money or other assets?** You may be planning to leave your grown children a sizable amount of assets, possibly including cash, stocks, real estate, IRAs, 401Ks or other types of valuable personal property. But this inheritance brings with it several possible questions: Do your heirs already have an investment platform

ready to accept inherited stocks? If you do leave behind rental property or a vacation home, can it be easily sold? These types of issues are generally not hard to resolve, but the more prepared your heirs are for their inheritance, the quicker they can take whatever actions are needed.

• **Are they prepared to handle any taxes that may result from the inheritance?** Unless you have a very large estate, your heirs likely won't face federal estate taxes. (In 2024, the first \$13.61 million of an estate is exempt from federal estate taxes.) However, other types of taxes may apply. A few states assess state inheritance taxes, and your heirs could incur federal and/or state income taxes when they withdraw money from inherited assets funded with pre-tax dollars, such as some retirement accounts. They could also face capital gains taxes when they sell inherited assets, such as stocks, for more than they were worth at the time of the inheritance. In any case, inheritance-related taxes can be complex, so you and your family and other heirs

should discuss these issues with your tax adviser.

• **Will they be liable for any outstanding expenses?** If you have developed a comprehensive estate plan, it's unlikely your heirs will be on the hook for any outstanding expenses, such as credit card balances or funeral costs. If you do still carry a mortgage, though, and you are planning on leaving your house to your heirs, they may want to be prepared to act quickly to sell it.

When leaving an inheritance, there's a lot involved — emotionally, financially and legally. So, do whatever you can to make the entire process as easy as possible for your loved ones. By communicating your wishes regarding the inheritance, and by considering all the issues that may arise, you can go a long way toward achieving the outcomes you desire.

This article was written by Edward Jones for use by Mike Wynn, Financial Advisor.

Bank

Continued from 39

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RIISING DEBT IS THE NEW REALITY

Debt continues to be a major concern for households across North America. The Federal Reserve Bank of New York Center for Microeconomic Data found total household debt reached \$17.29 trillion in the third quarter of 2023 in the United States. This upward trajectory has been going on since 2021 and is largely driven by mortgages, credit cards and student loan balances.

Canadian households also are in debt. In fact, according to CBC News, Canadians carried more debt in 2021 than people in any other G7 country, with the value owed

more than the value of the country's entire economy. As of the third quarter of 2023, Statistics Canada says the average household was spending around 15 cents of every after-tax dollar in service of debt, which equated to \$2.9 trillion across the country.

Research from financial services company Northwestern Mutual found that, excluding mortgages, the average personal debt per individual in 2023 sat at \$21,800, which was down from \$29,800 in 2019. Recent data from TransUnion, a credit reporting agency, confirms that the average credit card debt

across the U.S. has increased to \$5,733 per cardholder.

Business Insider calculations based on the latest data show the average borrower in 2023 had a monthly mortgage payment of around \$2,800 on a 30-year-fixed-rate mortgage. Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation reported the average monthly payment on new mortgages in the first quarter of 2023 was \$1,984, up 40 percent from 2019.

Individuals are being hit by high costs in all directions, which is compounding personal debt. Those concerned about their debt can speak with a financial professional as they seek to gain control of their finances.



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St. Augustine Distillery named 'Distillery Of The Year'

The American Distilling Institute (ADI) recently honored St. Augustine Distillery with its highest accolade, the Bubble Cap Award for Distillery of the Year, at its annual conference in Baltimore. ADI President Erik Owens presented the award to the distillery's founders and vice president of production, Philip McDaniel, Mike Diaz and Ric deMontmollin.

Introduced in 2010, the Bubble Cap Award recognizes the top distillery globally for excellence in spirits quality, innovation, transparency, authenticity, growth and community involvement. ADI's criteria include producing less than 100,000 proof gallons annually, being independently owned and distilling its own products.

"In 2014, Phil McDaniel had a dream to make whiskey and share it with the world," said Owens. "That passion drove him to make connections in his community and overcome every obstacle."

He highlighted St. Augustine's success in tourism, noting their attraction of 175,000 visitors each year as a significant achievement.

Owens also praised St. Augustine's impact on the craft spirits community and legislative progress.

"They have been an exemplary member of the craft spirits community, laying the groundwork to grow the number of distillers in Florida and engaging on the national level to make the U.S. a better place for distillers," he said. "St. Augustine's spirits deserve to be recognized on the world stage, as do the partnerships they have forged and the teams they have built."

Located in the Nation's Oldest City, St. Augustine Distillery is renowned for its artisanal spirits, including award-winning bourbon, rum, gin and vodka. The distillery's commitment to quality and innovation is reflected in their numerous awards



Contributed photo

The production team and founders.

and the acclaimed visitor experience, named the "No. 1 Whiskey Tour in North America" by the Drammie Awards.

The distillery operates from the Historic FP&L Ice Plant, a building originally constructed in 1907. Once silent and vacant, the Ice Plant was restored by the distillery's founders, earning the 2014 Award for Excellence for Reuse and Repurpose by the Urban Land Institute of North Florida.

Co-founder and CEO McDaniel has been a strong advocate for the craft distilling industry, driving legislation and

creating opportunities for craft distillers nationwide. His efforts have advanced not only St. Augustine Distillery but also the broader craft distilling community.

"We are deeply honored to receive The Bubble Cap award from the American Distilling Institute," said McDaniel. "Since our founding in 2012, our mission has been to create an immersive and educational experience for our guests and to craft some of the finest bourbon and finished bourbons in the world. This recognition is a testament to the hard work and dedication of our team and the invaluable

guidance from industry experts. We are thrilled to be in the company of so many amazing distilleries previously honored with this award. We remain committed to promoting craft distilling and its benefits for our community, the state of Florida and the industry nationwide."

As St. Augustine Distillery continues to grow and innovate, they remain dedicated to their principles and the community that supports them. This recognition as ADI's 2024 Distillery of the Year is a testament to their passion, advocacy and the exceptional quality of their spirits.

Edward Jones

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Dr. C. Cayce Rumsey III announces retirement

After decades of dedicated service in the field of plastic surgery, Dr. C. Cayce Rumsey III, founder of Ponte Vedra Plastic Surgery (PVPS), has announced his retirement. He leaves a legacy of innovative care for his patients and practice.

Rumsey, a Tuscaloosa, Alabama, native, entered private practice in 1993 and founded Ponte Vedra Plastic Surgery the following year. His specialties include cosmetic surgery of the face and body, with a particular interest in abdominoplasty surgery, various breast surgeries and facelifts.

Since the inception of PVPS under Rumsey's leadership, he has grown his practice of three staff members to 110 staff members, encompassing Northeast Florida with six locations in Nocatee, Ponte Vedra, Amelia Island, St. Johns and Gate Parkway.

A board-certified plastic surgeon since 1995, Rumsey has been a trailblazer in his field. He currently serves as chief of the Division of Plastic Surgery at Baptist Medical Center-Beaches in Jacksonville Beach and has held prestigious positions such as president of the Florida Society of Plastic

Surgeons and the Greater Jacksonville Society of Plastic Surgeons.

Rumsey began his education at the University of Alabama School of Medicine. He then pursued seven years of surgical training, culminating in a three-year plastic surgery residency and fellowship at the University of Florida in Gainesville and the University of Tennessee in Knoxville, respectively.

Throughout his career, Rumsey has been an active member of numerous professional organizations, including the American Society of Aesthetic Plastic Surgery and the American Society of Plastic Surgeons. He's also associated with the American Medical Association, Florida Medical Association, Duval County Medical Society, Florida Society of Plastic Surgeons, Jacksonville Society of Plastic Surgeons, is past chief of Plastic Surgery at Baptist Beaches, and he serves on the Board of Directors of the Florida Society of Plastic Surgeons.

For more information or to schedule an appointment with Ponte Vedra Plastic Surgery, go to pvps.com or call 904-664-1552.

Baptist Health earns Center of Excellence

Baptist Health has been designated an Antimicrobial Stewardship Center of Excellence by the Infectious Diseases Society of America (IDSA). The award recognizes the health system's commitment to advancing research in antimicrobial resistance and preventing the spread of drug-resistant infectious diseases within Jacksonville and beyond.

Baptist Health is one of only two health systems in North Florida to have earned the designation.

Antimicrobials such as antibiotics, antivirals, antifungals and antiparasitics are medicines to prevent and treat infectious diseases such as E.coli, flu and pneumonia. When these medicines are no longer effective in fighting infections, antimicrobial resistance (AMR) occurs. AMR is an urgent global public health threat. Antimicrobial-resistant infections are more difficult or sometimes even impossible to treat and can often result in a patient's need for intensive and prolonged care.

As an Antimicrobial Stewardship Center of Excellence, Baptist Health is enhancing the health and well-being of the community by promoting the responsible use of antimicrobials to prevent the development and spread of drug-resistant infections that can cause severe illnesses. Advocating for the proper use of these

medicines improves safety and outcomes by ensuring patients receive the most effective treatment for their particular illness.

"We're honored to be recognized as an Antimicrobial Stewardship Center of Excellence for our work to prevent the spread of drug-resistant infections," said Shalika Katugaha, MD, medical director of select specialties, infectious disease specialist at Baptist Health. "Antimicrobial resistance is one of the greatest global health threats. By championing the responsible use of antimicrobials, we're helping to create a healthier community now and for future generations."

The designation is granted to institutions that have successfully implemented antimicrobial stewardship programs led by infectious diseases-trained physicians and pharmacists. These programs integrate best practices to slow the emergence of antimicrobial resistance and optimize the treatment of infections.

The IDSA designation requires that institutions meet the high standards set by the IDSA and the Society for Healthcare Epidemiology of America in their evidence-based guidelines as well as guidelines set by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in its Core Elements of Hospital Antibiotic Stewardship Programs.

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PulteGroup golf tournament on Nov. 11

The Northeast Florida Division of PulteGroup has announced the third annual Building Hope Golf Tournament, sponsored by PulteGroup and benefitting Rethreaded, Feeding Northeast Florida, Five Star Veterans Center and Isaiah 117 House. The tournament is Monday, Nov. 11, at The Palencia Club in St. Augustine.

"Our Building Hope Golf Tournament will support the outstanding work of four incredible charitable organizations that are making a difference in our community," said Justin Cook, division president of PulteGroup's Northeast Florida Division. "We are looking forward to a fantastic day of golf at The Palencia Club's world-class Arthur Hills designed champion golf course, and we welcome everyone to join us as a player or a spon-

sor and support the vital missions of our benefit organizations."

Registration opens at 11 a.m. with a boxed lunch, followed by a noon shotgun start. The tournament features a four-person scramble format. Contests include Longest Drive and Closest to the Pin.

Sponsorship opportunities ranging from \$500 to \$10,000 are available. All entries include green fees, cart and range, boxed lunch, drink tickets, goodie bag and awards. Entries also include a dinner and reception with raffle opportunities following the tournament.

For sponsorship or team registrations, contact Katie Hensley at Katie.Hensley@Pulte.com or call 904-982-3566.

For more information about PulteGroup's Northeast Florida Division, go to pulte.com/jacksonville.

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Northeast Florida's housing market becomes more affordable

As fall approaches it is becoming more apparent that now is the prime time for buyers to make their move. The Northeast Florida Association of Realtors (NEFAR) Market Statistics report for August shows the housing market becoming more affordable and stable.

“During the culmination of the summer months, we continue to see an equilibrium forming in our Northeast Florida marketplace, typically considered to be about four to six months' supply of inventory,” said 2024 NEFAR President Rory Dubin.

Over Northeast Florida's six-county region, the median sales price for single-family homes dropped 3.7% to \$383,990 while the Home Affordability Index rose 6.2% to register at 69.

Month to month, closed sales in the six-county region dropped 8.0% to 1,777. Pending sales plummeted 30.6% to 1,295, while new listings decreased 6.5% to 3,097.

“Although closed and pending sales have decreased and inventory has increased, with the Fed predicted to enact several smaller rate cuts in their next several meetings, the trickle effect on mortgage rates should encourage buyers (and sellers) to be more active in the market,” he said.

Buyers should be happy to see an active inventory of single-family homes in the region rise 4.0% to 7,713, an increase over last month, and an 84.3% increase over September 2023. August's median for days on the market shot up 30.8% to 51 days.

“Despite the trend of price increases in the past years



now leveling off, Northeast Florida continues to be one of the best places for families, businesses and investors to focus of any metro area in the Southeast U.S.,” said Dubin. “It is more important than ever for these buyers, sellers, landlords and tenants to use the expertise and professionalism of a local Realtor.”

In St. Johns County, the August median prices decreased 5.2% to \$560,000 for single-family homes. The median days on the market increased 17.1 % to

65. Month-to-month, closed sales dropped 2.7% to 508, pending sales sank 31.6% to 333, and new listings declined 18% to 669. Active inventory decreased 2.6% to 2,133 homes, a 4.2-month supply. The Home Affordability Index rose 9.1% to 48, St. Johns County remains the most expensive place to live in the region.

In Duval County, the August median price of single-family housing was \$331,400, a 3.7% decline from the month before. The median number of days on the market in August was 44, 31.8% longer than in July. Month-to-month closed sales fell 8.6% to 874, pending sales decreased 33.1% to 640, and new listings rose 1.1% to 1,695 homes. Active inventory for the county increased 8.5% to 3,594 homes, a 4.1-month supply. In August, the Home Affordability Index reached 80.

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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Adventure Landing Jacksonville Beach prepares for 30th anniversary

Adventure Landing has announced the renewal of its lease extension, ensuring that Adventure Landing & Shipwreck Island Waterpark will continue to bring joy and entertainment to the Jacksonville Beach community through the 2025

season. As it approaches its milestone 30th anniversary, Adventure Landing has a series of special events planned to commemorate this significant achievement.

For three decades, Adventure Landing has been a cornerstone of fun and family entertainment in Jacksonville Beach, attracting approximately 500,000 guests annually and serving as the largest youth employer in Duval County.

2025 Season Highlights:

- 30th Anniversary Celebration: Special events and activities are being planned to mark this occasion.
- Haunt Nights: The popular Haunt Nights attraction is set to open this



October, promising thrills and chills for all ages.

- Booking for 2025 parties and events: Adventure Landing is now taking reservations for birthday parties and group events for the 2025 season.

• 2025 season passes: Season passes for the 2025 waterpark season will soon be available for purchase. Stay tuned for more details on how to secure your pass and enjoy unlimited fun all season long.

Adventure Landing has hosted thousands of events, including birthday parties, school programs, summer camps, military events, corporate gatherings and more. Its support for nonprofit organizations and community engagement remains strong.

The Adventure Landing team is dedicated to exploring future opportunities to expand their presence in the Jacksonville area, including plans to develop another water park location.

RV show set for Jax Equestrian Center

The Jacksonville Fall RV Show returns to Northeast Florida on Oct. 3-6 at the Jacksonville Equestrian Center, 13611 Normandy Blvd. Show hours are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Thursday through Saturday and 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Sunday.

Regular admission is \$10 for adults. Children 12 years or younger are admitted free. Tickets are available at the gate.

On opening day, Thursday, Oct. 3, seniors receive half-price admission. All active and retired military and first responders will receive half-off the regular admission price throughout the show.

More than 300 new and used RVs will be on display. Participating dealers include Blue Compass RV, Campers Inn of Jacksonville, D&H Truck Emporium and General RV Center — with more than 25 RV suppliers, campground



owners and other businesses at vendor booths during the show.

Finance and insurance company representatives will also be on hand to answer questions from guests considering

an RV purchase, and manufacturer's representatives will also offer special incentives for RV purchases.

The show offers fun, family-friendly atmosphere with music, concessions and giveaways ... and pet owners can bring their dogs if they are on a leash. Along with a DJ playing music throughout the event, a concession area will be available and a tram will be operated in the parking lot to transport guests to the entrance each day.

Also, a \$250 gift card will be awarded as a door prize for a lucky guest each day of the event.

For more information, go to neflrvdealers.com or contact the Florida RV Trade Association at 813-741-0488.

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Source: Barron's (May 2024) Barron's Top 250 Private Wealth Management Teams ranking awarded in 2024. This ranking was determined based on an evaluation process conducted by Barron's for the period from Jan 2023-Dec 2023. Neither Morgan Stanley Smith Barney LLC nor its Financial Advisors or Private Wealth Advisors paid a fee to Barron's to obtain or use the ranking. This ranking is based on an algorithm that includes client retention, industry experience, review of compliance records, firm nominations and quantitative criteria, including assets under management and revenue generated for their firms. Investment performance is not a criterion. Rankings are based on the assessment of Barron's, and this ranking may not be representative of any one client's experience. This ranking is not indicative of the Financial Advisor's future performance. Morgan Stanley Smith Barney LLC is not affiliated with Barron's. Barron's is a registered trademark of Dow Jones & Company, L.P. All rights reserved.

Mastercraft Builder Group completes two homes for Seamark Ranch

Since 2001, Seamark Ranch has offered love, protection and support to at-risk children in a family-centered environment. Their mission is to provide a traditional home where children can heal through individualized therapy, connect through faith and flourish with unconditional love. A key part of fulfilling this mission is having houses where full-time house parents can live with the children. MasterCraft Builder Group (MCBG) has just completed construction on two new homes for Seamark Ranch.

“There are currently over 1,700 kids in crisis in just the Northeast Florida region,” said Nathan Stanley, executive director for Seamark Ranch. “Thanks to the generosity of MasterCraft Builder Group, Seamark Ranch has now added two beautiful homes to serve the most vulnerable of these. Words cannot express our gratitude and thanks to Chris, Brad and their team!”

Seamark Ranch is a 465-acre campus in Northeast Florida that provides a traditional home environment for children who have experienced the impact of broken families. Married house parents live in the home full-time, providing a strong support system to the family unit.

The two new homes are designed to meet Seamark Ranch’s specific needs, accommodating large family units. Each house is 4,800 square feet with eight bedrooms and six-and-a-half baths and offers spacious living areas, modern amenities and outdoor



Contributed photo
The ribbon is cut on one of two homes recently built by MasterCraft Builder Group for Seamark Ranch.

spaces that encourage play and tranquility.

The houses feature energy-efficient systems and are constructed of durable materials. The two new homes join two other homes MCBG built in 2019, bringing the nonprofit to six homes total and providing more children the security of a supportive place to live.

MCBG’s Founder and CEO, Chris Shee, has made community giving a cornerstone of the company’s mission and has been a long-time supporter of Seamark Ranch. He recently provided the organization with stability and guidance as its interim executive director.

“Seamark Ranch is a mission that our company, my family and I love supporting,” said Shee. “My brother and I, through MasterCraft, have been able to help Seamark go from having two homes to now having six. It’s such an honor to have done that. However, we truly could not have done it without the help of our trade partners and suppliers. Essentially, we built four homes for the cost of three, which means Seamark Ranch has more money to help children in extreme need of a home and, more importantly, a family.”

MCBG uses its resources, expertise and connections to complete its philanthropic projects. The team was overwhelmed by the generosity of its trade partners, with 79 local businesses and organizations contributing to the homes’ construction.

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- Rate cuts are finally coming. However, a lot must go right for stocks to move higher through year-end¹
- 2024 Year-end Checklist²
- Committee Perspectives, Midyear Update: Can the momentum continue in the second half?³

Space is limited. Please make a reservation by calling **904-380-2302** or email sarah.blackley@ampf.com



Chris Thompson
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Private Wealth Advisor
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Wednesday, October 2 Pusser’s Bar & Grille 816 Hwy A1A N, Ponte Vedra Beach	Wednesday, October 9 Pusser’s Bar & Grille 816 Hwy A1A N, Ponte Vedra Beach	Wednesday, October 16 Murray Bros Caddyshack 455 Legacy Trail, World Golf Village	Wednesday, October 23 Julington Creek Fish House 112 Bartram Oaks Walk #102, St. Johns	Wednesday, October 30 Pusser’s Bar & Grille 816 Hwy A1A N, Ponte Vedra Beach
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¹ Rate cuts are finally coming. However, a lot must go right for stocks to move higher through year-end. Anthony Saglimbene – Chief Market Strategist, Ameriprise Financial, Weekly Market Perspectives – August 26, 2024

² AMP5492060.3 (8/2024)

³ Committee Perspectives – An Ameriprise Global Asset Allocation Committee publication – Midyear Update: Can the momentum continue in the second half?, Anthony M Saglimbene – Chief Market Strategist, July 8, 2024

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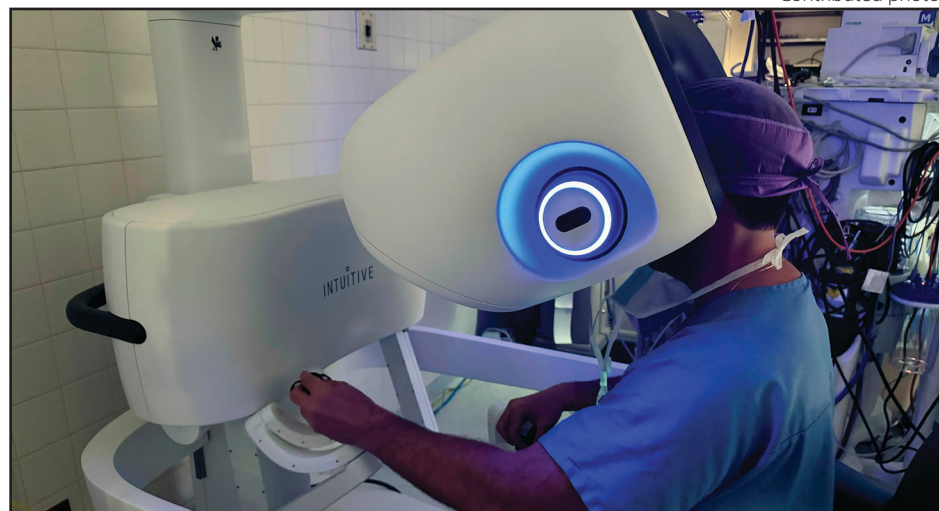
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Contributed photos



The da Vinci 5 robotic surgical system in use at St. Vincent's Riverside.



Dr. Martin Martino at the console of the da Vinci 5 system.

Ascension St. Vincent's Riverside unveils new surgical robot

For The Recorder

St. Vincent's Riverside is one of the first hospitals in the world to receive the da Vinci 5 robotic surgical system. This next-generation system enhances surgeons' surgical senses and increases access to minimally invasive robotic surgery for patients in their community.

"The da Vinci 5 reflects our commitment to providing state-of-the-art technologies that increase our patients' quality of care and experience at our hospital," said Scott Kashman, president and CEO of St. Vincent's Riverside. "Our surgeons and care teams look

forward to utilizing the system's best-in-class capabilities to improve the health of those in our community who need it most."

Da Vinci 5 builds on its predecessor's highly functional design, which has been used in more than 10 million procedures globally since its release in 2001, including nearly 20,000 at all four St. Vincent's hospitals.

The new system features more than 150 enhancements, including:

- A first-of-its-kind force-sensing technology that decreases damage to patients' tissue during surgery by 43%
- Improved accuracy and precision

• Next-generation 3D display and image processing enables surgeons to see more during procedures

• 10,000 times more computing power
 "The da Vinci 5 will enhance our ability to offer the highest quality of care with a minimally invasive approach for our patients," said Dr. Martin Martino, medical director, gynecologic oncology and advanced women's health chair, robotic surgery program at St. Vincent's. "This means patients will likely experience superior outcomes with less scarring and a faster recovery. This will allow our patients to be able to return to their families sooner.

The da Vinci 5 will be used by surgeons for many complex surgical procedures at St. Vincent's Riverside to help care for patients with both benign and malignant conditions. Surgeons remain in full control of every operation as the technology offers 3D vision and wrist articulation to surgeons. The da Vinci 5 was FDA-approved in March 2024.

St. Vincent's Riverside was recently named a Best Regional Hospital by the U.S. News and World Report's Best Hospital Rankings for 2024-25. St. Vincent's was also named a top 15 health system in the country for 2024 by Fortune and PINC AI.

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In the Arts



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THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 2024 • PAGE 47 www.PonteVedraRecorder.com



A striking creation in the "BRAject" exhibit.



Decorated bras displayed on special stands contributed by Marla and Bruce Kanehl.

'BRAject' much more than an art show

By Shaun Ryan

It's not often that an art exhibit has the power to save lives, but a new show hosted by the First Coast Cultural Center aims to do just that.

"BRAject" is a thought-provoking, whimsical collection of artworks using brassieres as their foundation in place of canvases. These creations, submitted by artists and artisans both locally and from around the country, demonstrate what one can do within a limited framework.

But, more importantly, the exhibit will increase breast-cancer awareness and help fund mammograms for those who are unable to afford them.

The cost of a diagnostic mammogram is about \$300, said Marlene Scheer, who is curating the exhibit.

"There are so many people here who are uninsured, underinsured, who can't afford it," she said. "Those are the ones that we're going to reach."

It's a cause that resonates with Donna Guzzo, president and CEO, First Coast Cultural Center.

"Since I had breast cancer, I've realized every day is a bonus," said Guzzo. "Mammograms are not to be afraid of; cancer is. Early detection is key."

The benefits of "BRAject" are already being felt. The show hasn't even opened yet and Scheer has heard from two people who got mammograms after all the publicity surrounding "BRAject" reminded them to do so. In both cases, she said, something was found.

In addition, donations are already coming in for Pink Ribbon Jax, the nonprofit chaired by "BRAject" partner Marica Pendjer.

The decorated bras will be available



Photos by Shaun Ryan

Blue butterflies adorn this entry.

for sale, with all proceeds going to Pink Ribbon Jax to pay for the mammograms. Bids will start at \$100 and increase at

intervals of \$25.

In all, there are 56 bras in the show, significantly more than the 15 Scheer had expected when she put out a call to artists to submit their work. Not only was the reaction strong within the United States, but the idea struck a chord globally.

"I've heard from plastic surgeons in Spain and Italy asking how they can help me," Scheer said.

Of the feedback she has received, perhaps the most frequent response was: "I want to help you save a life."

Among those who contacted Scheer were Marla and Bruce Kanehl, who made the stands used in the show to display the bras.

"BRAject" will run concurrent with

another show at the First Coast Cultural Center, "Women Supporting Women," a paper and fabric collage exhibition by New York artist Hollie Heller. The shows' opening will be 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Oct. 8. A short program is planned for 6:30 p.m. Peterbrooke Chocolatier will provide refreshments for this event, which is free and open to the public.

Also, visitors will have an opportunity to view "Nature's Palette," a collection of art pieces in adjacent galleries from The Discovery School students.

The exhibition will run until Nov. 19. First Coast Cultural Center is open 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. weekdays.

BRAJECT continues on Page 50

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Telling a story can also build bridges. A Classic Theatre (ACT) is reaching out into the community, bridging differences and celebrating shared values in an entertaining and engaging way by presenting plays that tell a good story.

ACT has announced next season's lineup of stories that will make audiences laugh, think, feel and perhaps see the world from a different angle.

The inaugural show in October will be "Bakersfield Mist" by Stephen Sachs, a thought-provoking comedy-drama that asks vital questions about what makes art and people truly authentic. This special production will be in partnership with The St. Augustine Art Association to celebrate their 100th anniversary in the Ancient City.

The December production will be "It's a Wonderful Life, A Live Radio Play" by Joe Landry. This beloved American holiday classic comes to captivating life as a live 1940s radio broadcast. This will be followed in March by David Lindsay-



Abaire's "Good People," a powerful and ferociously funny story that explores the struggles, shifting loyalties and unshakable hopes of living paycheck to paycheck.

The final main show of the season runs in May, as part of the Romanza Festival of Music and the Arts. "The Foreigner" by Larry Shue is a laugh-out-loud comedy of misunderstandings, misrepresentations and misdeeds that manages to take serious subjects and turn them on their heads.

In addition to these full theatrical productions, ACT is again offering a series of staged readings, which offer compelling stories in the more casual format of a dramatized reading.

In November, ACT will present "Admissions" by Joshua Harmon, a provocative look at college admissions is a no-holds-barred look at privilege, power and the perils of hypocrisy.

"Morning After Grace," by Carey Crim comes in January. It is an unconventional, big-hearted comedy which tackles love,

loss and new possibilities while coming to terms with growing older. It's an unexpected journey toward a new lease on life.

February offers "Who Am I This Time? And Other Conundrums of Love" by Aaron Posner, adapted from stories by Kurt Vonnegut, explores the complexities of love.

The last in the series of staged readings will be "Bite-Sized Theatre: An Evening of 10 Minute Plays," which will be in April. As the title states, it's a collection of short but complete (not excerpts) plays covering a variety of subjects.

The main productions will be performed at The Waterworks, 184 San Marco Ave., St. Augustine.

Staged readings will be performed at The Center for Spiritual Living, 1795 Old Moultrie Road, St. Augustine.

For more information and to purchase tickets go to aclassictheatre.org.

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THE FALCONAIRES
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 VISUAL ARTIST - LUANN DUNKINSON
Sponsored by Rotary Jacksonville-Oceanside



SUNDAY, NOV. 3 AT 4:00PM
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 VISUAL ARTIST - DENISE SAWYER-JOHNSON



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 VISUAL ARTIST - COLE COLLIER



Butterfield marks 25 years with special exhibit

For The Recorder

Butterfield Garage Art Gallery is celebrating its 25th year anniversary with a Silver Jubilee Exhibition in October.

The exhibition will display work by 53 artists, in a mixture of past and present members. This is a milestone for the gallery and the arts community in general; a veritable “Who’s Who” in the local art scene and beyond. This reunion of well-established fine artists highlights the vibrancy and resilience that exists in St. Augustine’s arts community.

The celebration kicks off on First Friday, Oct. 4, from 5 to 9 p.m. Meet the artists, enjoy memories and hors d’oeuvres, live entertainment by the House Cats and a champagne toast at 6 p.m.

Butterfield Garage Art Gallery is the brainchild of artist Jan Miller. Her vision was to create an artist-run gallery for professional artists that would encourage creative experimentation. She was affectionately dubbed “The Mama Cat” by the 12 artists who came together for their first meeting in late 1998. The gallery opened its doors in February 1999.

Since then, the gallery has provided its artists with the chance to grow and take advantage of opportunities that may come their way through exposure in a professional gallery. True to the gallery’s original mission, it continues to be a leader in the presenta-



“Roman Chewing Candy” by Beau Redmond

tion of traditional and contemporary visual arts in Northeast Florida, and to encourage the experience of direct accessibility and dialogue between artists and their customers.

Twenty-five years of success have allowed the gallery to establish its reputation for highlighting the area’s most distinguished professional artists, peers who are selected by a jury process and expected to exhibit their best work, as well as their experimental work and, once a year, their old work in the Annual Fine Art Garage Sale. Member artists share their process, contacts and camaraderie. They offer a dynamic and diverse array of styles with regular, changing exhibits. Many show their work in the St. Augustine Art Association and outdoor art festivals and answer calls for opportunities nationwide.

The exhibition will be on display through Oct. 31. The gallery is open daily, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.



“Rise up Sunshine” by Maribel Angel

For this event, Butterfield Garage Gallery welcomes back the following former artist members, spanning 1999-2024: Maribel Angel, Gerald Branch, Barbee Cunningham, Toni DeWitt, Joseph Paul Getchius, Hillary Gross, Xi Guo, Nancy Hamlin-Vogler, Ted Head, Wendy Mandel, Jan Tomlinson Master, Jan Miller, Sydney McKenna, Marcia Myrick Siany, Laura O’Neal, Rosamond Parrish, Laine Quinn, Beau Redmond, Juliana Romnes, Barbara Sarvis, Joe Segal, Theresa Segal, Teri Siewert, Jo Sinclair, James Sanford, Wendy Tatter and Angie Faye Ullmann.

The celebration continues during the month of October with Outdoor Art Studio Saturdays. Join Butterfield in its group events on the portico:



Contributed photos
“Upon the Dawning of the Day” by Jo Sinclair

Live Model with Still Life Event

1-4 p.m. Oct. 12

Former Energy Lab artist Tiffany will be the seated model with still life. Enjoy an afternoon of making art together in front of the gallery. Bring materials, drop cloth and easel, whatever you need. You can set up early.

Silk Screen Demo

1-4 p.m. Oct. 19

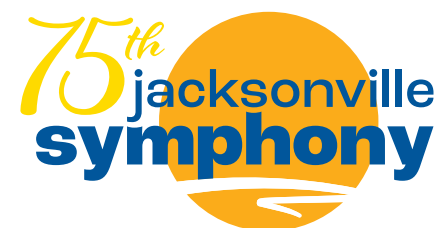
Silkscreen demo with Nancy Hamlin-Vogler and friends. Watch and participate as they print the Butterfield Garage logo on fabric and tote bags.



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GUEST COLUMN

Jacksonville Symphony's sublime season opener

By Matt Bickett

The Jacksonville Symphony proved Saturday night that it celebrates in grand style. Marking 75 years since the Symphony's founding, Music Director Courtney Lewis led one of the most monumental programs in the ensemble's history. The Symphony's full forces, joined by over 160 singers, immersed the near-capacity audience in a thrilling account of Gustav Mahler's Symphony No. 2, "Resurrection."

Symphony planners, seeing the culmination of two years of their planning efforts, acknowledged the importance of the work and of the occasion with a star-studded guest cast. World-renowned soprano Ailyn Pérez and Grammy Award-winning mezzo-soprano Isabel Leonard brought to the stage a distinguished presence. The Symphony's own cast of top-notch musicians held their own, staving off any risk of being overshadowed.

Following a rousing journey through the opening movement, Lewis's take on the second movement (referred to as the "Ländler" or "Austrian folk song" movement) demonstrated pure revelry in the warmth of the Symphony's string sound.

The strings' singing, resonant pizzicati was masterfully answered by harpist Kayo Ishimaru-Fleisher's balanced tone in the movement's final bow. Throughout, the strings' beautiful phrases clearly took inspiration from Lewis's most supple and charming conducting of the night.

The later thrills of the finale helped to look past the awkwardness in the reading of the third movement Scherzo. Despite the string section's masterful negotiation of the constant motion under concertmaster Adelya Nartadjieva's leadership, sincerity never quite gave way to Mahler's sardonic tone ("with humor," Mahler instructs the E-flat clarinetist). The interpretation struggled to identify the details in the Scherzo worth looking past. Balance between brass and strings was a constant struggle. As a result, one of the movement's most important details — the "death shriek" — ultimately fell flat.

In stark contrast, the collaboration developed into its most harmonious result in the symphony's fifth movement finale. Over the course of the movement, Lewis commanded the ensemble through unrelenting bouts of intense drama, both bombastic and whisper quiet. The force-

ful start of the finale recalled the opening minutes of the work, with the Jacksonville Symphony sounding its best at both points. Midway through the movement, despite difficulties of execution, offstage horns convincingly sounded a distant call of more to come.

From here, Lewis and the full ensemble relished in the finale's searching intensity balanced with a focused direction to the end. Lewis overcame pitfalls in the densely sophisticated score, giving meaning even to the potentially mundane spaces between the music's eruptions or inward retreats. Director of the Jacksonville Symphony Chorus Donald McCullough's expert preparation of the choral forces (representing the Jacksonville Symphony Chorus, the University of North Florida Chorale and the Jacksonville University Singers) elevated the performance to new heights, heard through the varied chorus's clear diction and disciplined control of its sound.

The evening reached its peak in the work's climax, the namesake "resurrection" moment, near the end of the finale. The combined efforts of 90 orchestral instrumentalists, over 160 singers, two

guest-star vocalists and the Bryan Concert Organ expressed an unforgettable musical celebration of more than just the occasion or the composer's score — this musical outburst seemed to celebrate life itself. In this nearly mythical moment, Lewis's full-body gestures evoked the sincere theatricality of Bradley Cooper's Leonard Bernstein depiction, conducting this same moment in Cooper's "Maestro" (the film also features guest mezzo-soprano Isabel Leonard). The work's narrative, the ensemble's sound and the conductor's gesture all combined to craft this sublime moment.

Before the performance, the guest list on stage included Jacksonville Mayor Donna Deegan. Deegan declared Sept. 21 Jacksonville Symphony Day to mark its founding on this day 75 years before. She remarked how the Symphony's presence distinguishes Jacksonville as a city, much like the city's professional football team. Given the once-in-a-lifetime performance the Symphony presented to local residents Saturday night, perhaps she might have made an understatement.

Matt Bickett is a musician and scholar living in Jacksonville, Florida.

BRAject

Continued from 47

After the show closes, "BRAject" will have two follow-up exhibitions.

It will be on display March 1 to April 26 at FemArt Gallery — Jacksonville Riverside. It will continue June 12 to July 9 at the Alexander Brest Gallery, Phillips Fine Arts Building at Jacksonville University.

As the bras are sold, more will take their place. Scheer said there continues to be much interest in creating these works. In fact, some artists have contributed more than one. For instance, PAM Jam (Poets, Artists & Musicians)



Photo by Paige Karpfen

"Bee Courageous" by Lisa Seymour

made three — titled Terra (Earth), Mare (Sea) and Cielo (Sky).

When the shows are complete, a coffee table book with photos of the bras will be published. It will also include the stories behind the creations.



Photo by Shaun Ryan

Simple, but effective.

"Everybody here has dedicated the bra to somebody and made a beautiful story," Scheer said.



Photo by Shaun Ryan

This creation doesn't sugarcoat the artist's message.

Scheer's creation, "Lilly's Garden," will include a story about her mother.

Presenting sponsor for "BRAject" is Jacksonville University's Linda Berry Stein College of Fine Arts.

For further information, go to pinkribbonsjax.org/braject.

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Sports



THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 2024 · PAGE 51

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Ponte Vedra High creating sports hall of fame

By Anthony Richards

Ponte Vedra High School's athletic programs did not take long to start winning, as they won a state title in girls soccer in the school's first year in 2009.

Since then, they have continued to win and have racked up their share of rings and trophies, so much so that those championships and players will soon have a special place of remembrance as the school is in the works to create the PVHS sports hall of fame.

To commemorate the creation of the hall of fame, members of the 2009 girls soccer team joined the 2024 girls soccer team for a reception and halftime celebration during the Sharks' football game against Beachside on Sept. 13.

According to Kate Zarczynski, whose daughter swims for the Ponte Vedra High swim team, said that the idea for the hall of fame first became a topic of discussion



Photos by Anthony Richards

To commemorate the creation of the hall of fame, members of the 2009 girls soccer team joined the 2024 girls soccer team for a reception in the gym on Sept. 13.

after the school had their 15th graduating class walk across stage last year.

Prior to the hall of fame being constructed, the banners for each title won were hung along the walls of the gym, but it did not seem to give the titles their true

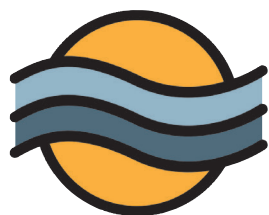


A display case helps tell several memorable stories and highlight state champions of Ponte Vedra High's past.



A list of every individual state champion in Ponte Vedra High's history now hangs on the wall next to the concession stand in the gym.

FAME continues on Page 52



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Brian Case turns the corner toward the endzone and Drew Price signals touchdown in the background.



Cam Tietze (No. 8) leaps to haul in a pass.



Robbie Grieco (No. 48) pressures Menendez quarterback Cash Downey.



The Sharks celebrated homecoming against Menedez.

DISTRICT PLAY UP NEXT

The Ponte Vedra Sharks and Nease Panthers both have a ton of momentum heading into the start of district play this week. The Sharks are riding high following a 40-0 victory over Menendez, while the Panthers asserted themselves as a state contender with a 35-34 comeback overtime win against rival St. Augustine High.

Photos by Anthony Richards



Fion Day (No. 28) had an interception on the night as the Sharks shut out the Falcons.



Jack Berquist stretches out to catch a deep pass.



Brayden Felder evades a Yellow Jackets' defender.



Nease linebacker Noah Hodge leaps in the air in pursuit of a ball carrier.



Dylan Rhoad of Nease flies in to make a tackle.



Nease defenders converge on a ball carrier.



Joe Miracle pressures St. Augustine quarterback Locklan Hewlett.

Fame

Continued from 51

justice.

“We thought about it, and this is just a much better way to make sure that the stories are captured,” Zarczynski said. “Because it’s not just the trophies, but the

people and the unique tales behind the accomplishment.”

Some of the memorable stories over the years that will now be featured as part of a display case tribute along the hall in the gym where players walk from the locker room to the court.

These stories include Nick Tronti being named Mr. Football in Florida and the

Class 5A player of the year in 2016; the story behind the Sharks being known as “Goalie U” in boys lacrosse due to five goalies being named All-Americans; and Nicolette Donovan and Taylor Funk being only the second pair of golfers in FHSAA history to win individual golf state titles from the same school in the same day.

Down from the display case, which is

bound to grow, will be a wall that will recognize many of the great athletes that have gone from PVHS to play in college.

Completion of the wall is currently in the works, but as you walk in the gym, there are now boards on each side of the concession stand, with one side being all the individual state champions, while the other side has all the team state winners.

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Find the words hidden vertically, horizontally, diagonally, and backwards.

- | | | | |
|-------------|---------|-----------|-----------|
| BOWL | ENJOY | MAIZE | SEASONING |
| BUTTER | EXPLODE | MICROWAVE | SNACK |
| CARAMEL | FAIR | MOVIE | SODA |
| CARNIVAL | FIBER | POPCORN | TASTY |
| COMBINATION | INFLATE | POPPER | THEATER |
| CONCESSION | KERNELS | SALTY | UNPOPPED |

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			1	2	3		4	5	6	7	8	9		
			10				11							
12	13		14					15						
16		17						18			19	20	21	
22								23						
24						25		26			27			
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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. "60 Minutes" network
- 4. Train line
- 10. Go quickly
- 11. Straightforward
- 12. Canadian province
- 14. At any rate (abbr.)
- 15. Genealogy
- 16. Make changes
- 18. Utter repeatedly
- 22. In a way, turned up
- 23. Type of ship
- 24. Agents of one's downfall
- 26. Not out
- 27. Something to scratch
- 28. Round water pot
- 30. Refreshing green fruit (slang)
- 31. Promotions
- 34. Primordial matters
- 36. One-time world power (abbr.)
- 37. Source of illumination
- 39. The content of cognition
- 40. An Arab ruler
- 41. South Dakota
- 42. Gnawed at with teeth
- 48. Hawaiian island
- 50. Smaller
- 51. Of a single person
- 52. Rigid bracelet
- 53. Barbary sheep (Fr.)
- 54. Not even
- 55. Specific gravity
- 56. Engage in petty bargaining
- 58. Boxing's "GOAT"
- 59. Split between parties
- 60. Notable offensive

- 2. Skewed views
- 3. Peacefully
- 4. Commercial
- 5. Auxiliary forces
- 6. Large mollusk
- 7. Take out again
- 8. Sharp and forthright
- 9. Knight (chess)
- 12. Source of fiber
- 13. Flesh covering some birds' beaks
- 17. Energy
- 19. Night monkeys genus
- 20. Small, sharp nails
- 21. Pleasant-smelling liquid
- 25. Affirms one's hold

- 29. CNN's founder
- 31. Texans can't forget it
- 32. "Oppenheimer" actor Matt
- 33. Expression
- 35. Vessel
- 38. Lacking poetic beauty
- 41. Tall, swift and slender dog
- 43. Sports personality Michelle
- 44. Robber
- 45. Liquefied natural gas
- 46. Snakelike fishes
- 47. The most worthless part of something
- 49. City in Crimea
- 56. Bad grades
- 57. Reichsmark

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

Level: Intermediate

Here's How It Works:

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

DOWN

- 1. A place to lounge



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