Easter Worship & Dining Page 8

SERVING PONTE VEDRA, ST. AUGUSTINE, THE BEACHES AND GREATER ST. JOHNS COUNTY

Thursday, April 10, 2025

PonteVedraRecorder.com

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Ocean Palms celebrates extraordinary volunteers

There was much to celebrate recently as Ocean Palms Elementary honored Lisa Farese at its Adult Volunteer of the Year and Connor Dean as its Youth Volunteer of the Year.

Farese, the parent of three (current and former) Otters, has been an active member of the Ocean Palms school community for the past seven years, most recently serving two years as president of the school's PTO.

In addition to the varied and numerous regular duties of PTO president, she helped to secure funding to sustain the school's STEM field study program; launched the Otter Raft program to welcome and orient new families; and spearheaded the realization of the Mike Parrish Storybook Path, a tribute to the school's first principal that inspires young readers and promotes a connection to the outdoors.

She has also served as Ocean Palms' press parent and spent several years organizing the school's Scholastic Book Fairs.

On April 3, at a celebratory event at Nease High School, it was announced that Farese has also been

VOLUNTEERS continues on **Page 11**

Business Weekly Featuring Meet Your Insurance Agent and First Coast Legal Eagles

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the link

Weekly Camps: June 2nd - August 8th Half & Full-Day Options Available





(904) 299-3671



425 Town Plaza Ave, Ponte Vedra, FL, 32081

Raising awareness, kindness through ice cream

By Anthony Richards

Ben & Jerry's in Nocatee teamed up with Bikers Against Bullies to remind the community to be sweet to people while offering them a sweet treat as part of the annual Free Cone Day on April 8.

For the second straight year, they partnered with Bikers Against Bullies to use the event not just to hand out free scoops of ice cream to show appreciation to their customers but also continue to make a positive impact within the community.

"We had a few incidences at the store with kids coming in and bullying our servers because we have our inclusivity flag hanging up in the store," said Jessica Shaw, Ben & Jerry's Nocatee owner. "I really like the way they (Bikers Against Bullies) handle it because it's not about right or left but it focuses on how we treat people. I just love



Children enjoy ice cream next to the "Bullydozer" during Free Cone Day at Ben & Jerry's in Nocatee on April 8.

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Serving Ponte Vedra and the Beaches since 1969





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THERECORDER

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Send us your news

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



Visit our new website at **www.pontevedrarecorder.com**

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

BRIEFS

County Commissioner Clay Murphy to speak

The Palm Valley Community Association will host a special meeting with the newly elected County Commissioner Clay Murphy on Monday, April 14.

As a result of the November election, the St. Johns County Commission now includes two newly elected members, Ann Taylor, representing District 5, and Murphy, representing District 3.

Murphy will share his priorities for 2025 and address the crucial quality-of-life issues impacting St. Johns County. These issues include residential and commercial development, infrastructure improvements and traffic and roadway conditions. There will be time for questions.

The Palm Valley Community Association invites all residents to attend and learn about the commissioner's priorities and share their thoughts and concerns.

The meeting will be held from 6:30 to 8 p.m. at the Palm Valley Community Center, 148

MOSH to host Jacksonville Science Festival

The Museum of Science & History (MOSH), in partnership with The Foundation Academy and Florida State College at Jacksonville, will host part of the 13th annual Jacksonville Science Festival, a student-driven event that celebrates the human endeavor of science. Student demonstrations and discoveries will be presented to the public.

The festival will take place in two parts — outdoors at Friendship Fountain, and indoors within the museum. STEAM presentations, student musical performances, a bounce house, interactive vendor booths, student demonstrations and more will delight guests throughout the day. Food truck alley will be full with delicious eats and treats for purchase.

The indoor event at MOSH will be free for the first 500 guests; general admission tickets will be available once capacity is reached.

The festival will be held 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday, April 12, at 1025 Museum Circle, Jacksonville.

Ponte Vedra library plans book sale

The Ponte Vedra Beach Library "Better Book Sale" will be held Saturday, April 12, and Sunday, April 13. Featured will be large coffee table books, vintage and collectibles books, children's books and a large collection of unique collectible DVDs, CDs and vinyls. The sale will be held in the glass conference room at the library during library hours, 101 Library Blvd., Ponte Vedra Beach.

Grief support group to meet

A grief support group meets on the third Wednesday of every month at St. Paul's Catholic Church in Room 107 of the Family Life Center, 578 First Avenue N., Jacksonville Beach. The group is for men and women grieving the death of a family member or friend. The next meeting will be at 7 p.m. Wednesday, April 16. For information, call Kathy at 904-553-8933.

Palm Valley Market every Tuesday

The Palm Valley Market is held from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. every Tuesday inside the Palm Valley Community Center, 148 Canal Road. The market offers fresh produce, baked goods, local honey, tea, seasonal treats, soap, jewelry, plants and more.

Family seining activity planned

Join a guided family seining activity from 9 to 11 a.m. Saturday, April 12, at Guana Tolomato Matanzas (GTM) National Estuarine Research Reserve.

Learn about the animals and their roles in Guana Lake by pulling a seine net and collecting species of fish, crabs and other marine life.

Meet at GTM Research Reserve Guana Dam, 505 Guana River Road, Ponte Vedra Beach.

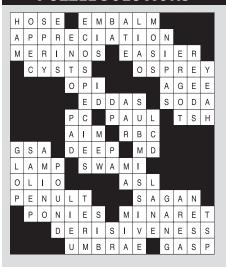
Register online at gtmnerr.org/calendars. The event is free, but parking is \$3 per vehicle. All necessary gear (waders and boots) will be provided. Hat, insect repellent, water and sunscreen are recommended.

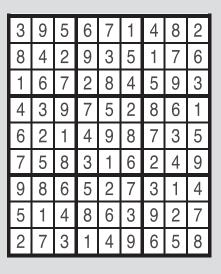
Adventures in the Estuary taking signups

This summer, young adventurers can dive into Florida's coastal ecosystems at Adventures in the Estuary, a hands-on summer camp at Guana Tolomato Matanzas (GTM) National Estuarine Research Reserve. Camp sessions will run throughout June and July, where campers will explore the wonders of estuarine habitats, learn about marine life and water conservation and discover the crucial role estuar-

BRIEF continues on **Page 3**

PUZZLE SOLUTIONS







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COMMUNITY NEWS 3

Briefs

Continued from 2

ies play in our environment.

The session dates are: June 2-6, June 9-13, June 16-20, June 23-27 and July 21-25. Camp times are 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Thursday, and 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Fridays.

Meet at GTM Research Reserve Visitor Center, 505 Guana River Road, Ponte Vedra Beach.

Drop-off is available between 8-9 a.m. Monday through Thursday, with pick-up between 3-4 p.m. On Fridays, camp ends early, and pickup is between 1-2 p.m. A \$50 late fee will apply for any camper picked up late.

— Compiled by Shaun Ryan

Register at gtmnerr.org/calendars.

Ponte Vedra man indicted in firearms case

U.S. Attorney Gregory W. Kehoe has announced the unsealing of an indictment charging Braden Huston Hobbs, 27, of Ponte Vedra with conspiracy to traffic firearms, conspiracy to deal firearms without a license, dealing firearms without a license, making a materially false statement to a licensed firearms dealer, conspiracy to distribute controlled substances — including 500 grams or more of cocaine, and possession of a controlled

substance with intent to distribute

If convicted, Hobbs faces a minimum sentence of five years, up to 95 years, in federal prison.

An indictment is merely a formal charge that a defendant has committed one or more violations of federal criminal law, and every defendant is presumed innocent unless, and until, proven guilty.

This case is being investigated by the

Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, the Internal Revenue Service — Criminal Investigation, the U.S. Secret Service, the North Florida HIDTA Tri-County Narcotics Task Force with the Florida Department of Law Enforcement, the St. Johns County Sheriff's Office and the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office.

It is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Elisibeth Adams.

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

KATHY'S GARDENING GUIDE

Landscape styles: tropical, coastal, Mediterranean

"A garden is a grand teacher. It teaches patience and careful watchfulness; it teaches industry and thrift; above all, it teaches entire trust." — Gertrude Jekyll



Kathy Esfahani

By Kathy Esfahani

Warm temperatures are officially here! Flowers are in bloom, and landscape work is in full swing. Are you considering a full landscape redesign or just a refresh for your yard? Here in Northeast Florida, many homes feature landscaping in the tropical, coastal and

Mediterranean styles.

A tropical landscape design is reminiscent of an island paradise — full of lush plants and lots of color! Most plants in a tropical landscape love the heat. For this reason, our Northeast Florida home is one of the most northern climates in which the tropical landscape style can be successful.

Tropical landscapes display plants and flowers overlapping and free-flowing. They include abundant varieties of green plants featuring various sizes and types of leaves as well as pops of vibrant color. Many designers add a water feature in a tropical landscape to further enhance the serene, oasis-like environment. When creating a tropical landscape, look for queen palms, Roebellini palms and

Sylvester palms. Consider surrounding the trunks with coquina shell or lava rocks. Add both variety and color with agapanthus, allamanda, apostle iris, arboricola, bamboo, birds of paradise, caladiums, crotons, flax lily, foxtail fern, Hawaiian ti, hibiscus, and variegated ginger.

Landscaping in the coastal style creates a relaxed, beachy atmosphere. Coastal landscaping takes an organic approach to landscaping with plants "blowing in the breeze." Clusters of grasses such as fountain grass or mulhy grass give a whimsical look and add movement in the landscape.

A coastal design often includes plants and flowers in whites, greens, blues and splashes of pink. This landscape may also feature climbing vines such as confederate jasmine on a trellis or pergola. In place of mulch, use coquina shell and plant blue agave — complement the combination with blue daze and foxtail fern. To develop a coastal landscape, use a mixture of the following: Bismarck palms, blue agave, blue daze, confederate jasmine, dune sunflower, dwarf fakahatchee, fountain grass, foxtail fern, gaillardia, gaura, muhly grass, queen palms, ribbon palms, Sylvester palms.

Mediterranean-style landscaping involves a lavish mix of palm trees and clean cut plants. The style displays a sculpted, maintained look and frequently features roses. A Mediterranean landscape design often incorporates "gardens within gardens." Pathways within the landscaping can lead to arbors, secluded areas of the garden, or water features. The Mediterranean style also includes climbing plants such as creeping fig on a trellis or on the side of the house. Use

Photo provided by Kathy's Creative Gardens & Nursery



Agapanthus

canary date palms, medjool date palms, and Sylvester palms as well as Asiatic jasmine, boxwood, creeping fig, crotons, podacarpus and roses to accentuate your Mediterranean look.

With all landscape designs, be sure to identify the sun versus shade ratios in your yard. Note the amount of sunlight needed for your selected plants and trees in order to place them in appropriate areas of the landscape. Finally, add annuals to any landscape for seasonal color within your design.

Happy Planting!

904-655-7373

Flower of the Week: Agapanthus

Please email Kathy at kathys.creative.gardens@gmail.com for any questions or gardening tips you would like to see in the future. For more information & ideas, visit our nursery in Ponte Vedra Beach! Kathy's Creative Gardens & Nursery 196 N. Roscoe Blvd.











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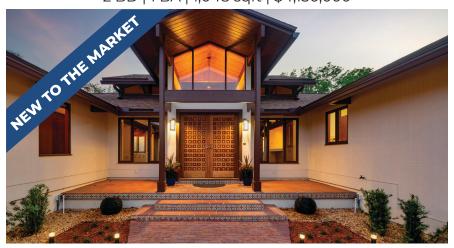
COASTAL OAKS IN NOCATEE 260 Topsail Drive 4 BD | 4.5 BA | 3,547 sqft | \$1,500,000



HARBOUR ISLAND IN MARSH LANDING 24550 Harbour View Dr 6 BD | 7.5 BA | 4,606 sqft | \$2,725,000



OCEANFRONT IN ATLANTIC BEACH 1963 Beach Ave 2 BD | 1 BA | 1,048 sqft | \$4,150,000



INTRACOASTAL HOME IN OCEAN FOREST 83 Tallwood Road

3 BD | 2.5 BA | 2,907 sqft | \$2,200,000

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6 ONE OF USPonte Vedra Recorder · April 10, 2025

Linda Benson is career development director for Berkshire Hathaway Home Services Florida Network Realty.



As told to Shaun Ryan

You are career development director for Berkshire Hathaway Home Services Florida Network Realty. What are your primary responsibilities?

As the director of career development, I have the privilege of supporting and guiding over 500 agents across Northeast Florida. My primary responsibility is to ensure our agents are equipped with the knowledge, skills and confidence they need to thrive in the real estate industry.

Together with the leadership team, I design and implement comprehensive training programs, curate educational resources and lead coaching sessions tailored to agents at every stage of their career — whether they are just starting out or are seasoned top producers.

Through Masterminds, workshops and one-on-one mentoring, we help our agents stay ahead of industry trends, navigate new laws and leverage technology to better serve their clients and grow their businesses.

The goal at BHHS FNR is to foster a culture of continuous learning and collaboration, empowering our agents to reach their full potential and achieve lasting success.

Did you have any kind of special training?

Throughout my career, I've naturally gravitated toward roles focused on mentoring, training and education. I have been in management positions since I was 19, spanning industries like hospitality and health care software. Each experience has strengthened my passion for delivering exceptional service and empowering others to perform at their best.

Before joining Florida Network Realty, I served as vice president of client services for a global health care software company, leading product implementations in hospitals worldwide. These diverse opportunities have shaped my commitment to guiding others and creating meaningful learning experiences.

How long have you held this position? Tell me a little about your career leading up to this.

I stepped into my current role in June 2024, but my journey with Florida Network Realty began in 2010 as a Realtor in the Avondale office.

In 2013, I became the managing broker for the Fleming Island office, and in 2019, my responsibilities expanded to include the Mandarin office, as well.

Before joining the company, I spent 15 years in the health care software industry, where I held various leadership positions. I also have a background in hotel management. Each of these roles has provided me with valuable experience and a diverse skill set that I use every day in my current position.

How has the real estate business changed over your career?

Since starting my real estate career in 2010, I have seen incredible changes, especially in how we market ourselves and our listings. Technology has transformed the industry — and it keeps evolving! Today, having a strong online presence and the right tools to create polished, engaging marketing materials is essential for success

Many people think last year's changes, following the lawsuit around representation and commissions, completely reshaped the industry. But the truth is, the heart of what we do has not changed. Providing exceptional service to buyers and sellers, upholding professionalism and guiding clients with care and expertise remain at the



Contributed photo

Linda Benson

core of our work. The difference is, we now have even better tools to make the process smoother and more efficient for everyone.

Are there core principles that do not change with the times?

Absolutely! One principle that will always stand the test of time is delivering exceptional service. Buying or selling a home involves many moving parts, and it is so important for Realtors to have the knowledge and skills to guide clients smoothly through the process — from the offer to closing day. That core responsibility has not changed, and it never will.

What do you like best about what you do?

I love watching the agents we bring on thrive in the business. It is incredibly rewarding to see them take the training and skills we provide, apply them and then succeed as Realtors. Their growth and success makes everything we do feel worthwhile.

I also enjoy the sense of collaboration among our agents companywide. It's amazing to see them consistently supporting one another, and I get to witness this every day in our classes and mastermind sessions. One of my favorite programs I lead is the "Embrace. Evolve. Excel." coaching program. It is a 12-week course de-

signed for experienced agents that empowers them to be the CEO of their business. We focus on building the right mindset and skill set to provide superior service to clients while also ensuring they take care of themselves and maintain a healthy work-life balance.

How long have you been a Jacksonville resident?

I moved to Jacksonville in September 1981. I was born and raised in Tullahoma, Tennessee, and lived there until I married my wonderful husband of 43 years. We moved to Jacksonville so he could attend the University of Florida in Gainesville. He actually rode his motorcycle to Gainesville for classes every day! We quickly fell in love with the beach, boating and the weather, and once we started our family, we knew Jacksonville was the place for us. It is home, and we've never looked back.

What do you like best about living in this area?

Jacksonville has so much to offer, with something for everyone to enjoy, and I've come to appreciate the beautiful weather, being outdoors, walking on the beach and spending time on the water. It is a great place to raise a family. Whether it's enjoying the symphony or visiting a corn maze in the fall with the grandkids, there's always something fun to do. My favorite thing is probably a beach day with the grandkids!

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Local churches plan Easter services

Easter is a holy day for Christians, celebrating the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. Churches and faith communities throughout the world gather for worship. Here are a few local churches' schedules for Easter and Holy Week.

CHRIST CHURCH

Christ Church and Iglesia de Cristo Episcopal, 400 San Juan Drive, Ponte Vedra Beach; Christ Church Among The Oaks, 120 Meadow Ave., St. Augustine. ccpvb.org

Palm Sunday Services (April 13)

- 7:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist: Rite I
- 9 a.m. Outdoor Celebration of Palm Sunday
- 11:15 a.m. Holy Eucharist: Rite II
- 12:45 p.m. Spanish Language Service
- 5 p.m. Contemplative Service

Holy Wednesday Service (April 16)

• 5:30 p.m.

Maundy Thursday Services (April 17)

- 5:30 p.m. Agape meal with Holy Eucharist and foot washing
- 7 p.m. Holy Eucharist with foot washing
- Prayer vigil

Good Friday (April 18)

- 7 a.m. Stations of the Cross
- Noon. Stations of the Cross
- Noon. Stations of the Cross at Vicar's Landing
- 3 p.m. Stations of the Cross
- 5:30 p.m. Children's Good Friday Service
- 7 p.m. Good Friday Evening Service

Easter Sunday (April 20)

 6:30 a.m. Sunrise Eucharist on the Beach: Ponte Vedra Inn & Club, 200 Ponte Vedra Blvd., Ponte Vedra Beach

This year, there will be shuttle bus service from Christ Church, the Winn Dixie parking lot and the Ponte Vedra Library parking lot beginning at 5:30 a.m. Park-



ing at the PV Inn & Club is extremely limited due to the current construction project. Brunch will be served in the dining room between 7:30 a.m. and 10:45 a.m.

- 7:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist: Rite I
- 9:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist: Rite II
- 11:15 a.m. Festal Eucharist: Rite II
- 11:15 a.m. Jordan Easter Service
- 12:45 p.m. Misa en Espanol

ST. FRANCIS IN-THE-FIELD

895 Palm Valley Road, Ponte Vedra stfrancispvb.org

Palm Sunday on April 13

- Christian formation for all ages starting at 9 a.m.
- Worship at 8 a.m. in the sanctuary and 10:30 a.m. at the Hope Pavilion

Maundy Thursday on April 17

• 6:30 p.m. in the sanctuary

Gethsemane Prayer Watch

- 8 a.m. April 17
- Noon April 18

Good Friday

- Noon April 18. Liturgy at noon in the sanctuary
- 6:30 p.m. Stations of the Cross at Hope Pavilion

Easter Vigil

• 6:30 p.m. Easter Vigil, April 19

Faster Services

- 7:30 a.m. Traditional Easter Worship Service
- 9:15 a.m. Family Easter Worship
- 11:30 a.m. Traditional Easter Worship Service

PALMS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

3410 S. Third St., Jacksonville Beach. palmschurch.org

Easter services on April 20:

- Sunrise Service at 6:30 a.m.
- Easter Worship Services at 8 a.m., 9:30 a.m., 11 a.m.

THE AME

1340C A1A South, St. Augustine. theamp.com.

Good Friday Community Worship,
 6:30 to 9 p.m. April 18

BRIDGE OF LIGHT CHURCH

96 Masters Drive, St. Augustine. mybridgeoflife.com

• Easter Sunday sunrise service at 6:45 a.m. April 20 at the St. Johns County Pier, St. Augustine Beach

CATHEDRAL BASILICA OF ST. AUGUSTINE

38 Cathedral Place, St. Augustine. thefirstparish.org

- Palm Sunday Mass and Blessing of the Fleet, noon to 2 p.m. April 13 at the St. Augustine Municipal Marina, 111 Avenida Menendez, St. Augustine
- Maundy Thursday Mass of the Lord's Supper, 6 p.m. April 17

CROSSWATER COMMUNITY CHURCH

211 Davis Park Road, Ponte Vedra. crosswaterchurch.net

- Good Friday Service at 7 p.m.
- Family Easter Services at 9 and 10:45 a.m. Easter Sunday

CRESCENT BEACH BAPTIST CHURCH

885 S.R. 206, St. Augustine. crescent-beachbaptist.com

• Easter Sunday sunrise service at 7 a.m. April 20 at the Crescent Beach

Ramp

FAMILY BIBLE CHURCH

4760 Palm Valley Road, Ponte Vedra Beach. familybiblepvb.com

- 6:30 Sunrise Easter Service (April 20)
- 7:30 Breakfast
- 9 a.m. Worship Service

MEMORIAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

32 Sevilla St., St. Augustine. memorialpcusa.org.

- Maundy Thursday Service with Holy Communion, 6:30 p.m. April 17
- Easter Sunday sunrise service at 7 a.m. April 20 in the courtyard

OCEAN PARK BAPTIST CHURCH

402 16th Ave. South, Jacksonville Beach. oceanparkbaptist.com

- Easter Sunrise Service: 6:45 a.m. Sunday, April 20. Seawalk Pavilion, 75 1st St. North, Jacksonville Beach
- Morning Worship: 10:30 April 20

OUR LADY STAR OF THE SEA CATHOLIC

545 A1A North, Ponte Vedra Beach. olsspyb.org

- Holy Thursday (April 17) Mass of the Lord's Supper at 7 p.m.
- Good Friday (April 18) Liturgy of the Passion at 3 p.m. Live Stations at 7 p.m. in the church
- Holy Saturday (April 19) Easter Vigil at 8:30 p.m.
- Easter Sunday (April 20) Masses at 7 a.m., 9 a.m., 11:30 a.m. 5 p.m.

PONTE VEDRA CHURCH

76 S. Roscoe Blvd., Ponte Vedra. pontevedra.church

- Easter Cantata: April 13 during 11 a.m. service
- Holy Thursday service: April 17, 7 p.m.
- Easter Sunday service: April 20, 11 a.m.

SERVICES continues on **Page 9**





Easter Egg Extravaganza is Saturday

The Social Society is teaming up with retail businesses in Nocatee Town Center for an Easter Egg Extravaganza from 10 a.m. to noon Saturday, April 12. The participants will host their own, festive activities and at each stop, families will receive an Easter treat.

Stop by The Social Society, 300 Pine Lake Drive, Suite E104, to receive an Easter Egg Map. Visit each of the participating businesses, including V's Barbershop, Chophouse at Nocatee, Toytopia, Clean Juice, Burn Boot Camp, Premier Martial Arts, Coastal Wine Market, Degree Wellness and more to learn about them, do some shopping or make a reservation and collect treats.

King of Pops will be onsite so visitors can enjoy their delicious treats.

Turn in completed maps at the end of

the block party to The Social Society for a chance to win a prize.

The Social Society will be applying temporary, Easter-themed tattoos and will have corn hole set up to play.

Christy Stevenson Photography will offer mini photo sessions. Book these sessions at: https://christy-stevenson-photography.studio.cloudspot.io/booking/v/ be kTCrJ7VXEPMxf5vekBJZacH1gDd.



Services

PONTE VEDRA PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

4510 Palm Valley Road, Ponte Vedra Beach. pvpc.com

- Palm Sunday Children's Program: 9 a.m. April 13, Fellowship Hall
- Maundy Thursday Service: 6:30 p.m. April 17. Sanctuary
- Easter Sunrise Service: 7 a.m. April 20. Mickler's Landing Beach
- Easter Worship Services: 9 and 10:30 a.m. April 20. Ponte Vedra Presbyterian Church

REDEEMER CHURCH

190 S. Roscoe Blvd., Ponte Vedra

Beach. redeemerpv.com

Sunday, April 20:

- 6:45 a.m. Outdoor Sunrise Service
- 8:30 a.m., 10 a.m., 11:30 a.m. Main Services on campus

SEASIDE CHURCH SUNRISE SERVICE

seasidechurchfl.com

• Easter Sunday sunrise service at 6:45 a.m. April 20 at Vilano Beach Ramp

ST. PAUL A.M.E. CHURCH

85 M L King Ave., St. Augustine.

• 6:30 a.m. Easter Sunday sunrise

ST. PAUL'S BY THE SEA EPISCOPAL **CHURCH**

465 11th Ave. North, Jacksonville

Beach. stpaulsbythesea.com

- Palm Sunday service: 10 a.m.
- Maundy Thursday service: 7 p.m.
- Good Friday services: noon and 7
- Easter Sunday: Easter Vigil at 6:30 a.m., Easter Day Liturgy at 10 a.m.

ST. PAUL'S CATHOLIC CHURCH

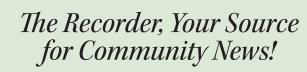
523 Pablo Ave., Jacksonville Beach. stpaulsjaxbeach.org

- Holy Thursday, April 17: Mass of the Last Supper at 7 p.m.
- Good Friday, April 18: Liturgy of

the Word and Communion at 3 and 7 p.m. Stations of the Cross at 6 p.m.

- Holy Saturday, April 19: Easter Vigil will begin at 8:30 p.m.
- Easter Sunday, April 20: Masses at 8 and 10:30 a.m. in the Main Church and the Fr. Kelly Athletic Center; 5:30 p.m. in the Main Church only. Mass at St. Peter's Mission at 9:30

— Compiled by Shaun Ryan





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Fred "Flash" Van de Perre, president and founder of USA, Bikers Against Bullies Worldwide, talks to attendees during the event.

Ice cream

Continued from ¹

working with them and that they're not pushing any agenda except to be kinder to each other."

Part of raising awareness about bullying and striving to empower individuals to stand up against it was having several bikers of the organization on hand to share stories and offer photo opportunities with the "Bullydozer," which according to Fred "Flash" Van de Perre, president and founder of USA, Bikers Against Bullies Worldwide, is probably the most well-known Can-Am



The event raised awareness about bullying and promoted empowerment.

with its paint job that makes it look like a bulldozer.

"Kids are constantly on the motorcycle, and they just love it because everyone thinks motorcycles are cool,"



Photos by Anthony Richards

Free Cone Day is an annual national initiative at Ben & Jerry's locations.

Van de Perre said. "Personally, I own 24 motorcycles, and about eight of those are dedicated to the kids and the mission. I have to re-paint them about every two years, but that's what it's all about."

He founded Bikers Against Bullies about 14 years ago and the idea came about in a very grassroots way.

"I was a single dad at the time and the counselor at my kid's school asked if I wanted to come and bring a motorcycle and be part of their anti-bullying day," Van de Perre said. "So, we came up with the name and made up about 10,000 stickers and in 30 days they were gone. It was supposed to be a one-and-done, but now here we are as the largest

free-standing anti-bullying campaign in America."

The initiative started at a school and to this day Bikers Against Bullies still offers free anti-bullying assemblies at schools who reach out.

The organization consists of roughly 27,000 bikers across the country, and they have held assemblies at thousands of schools over the years.

"We bring in motorcycles, music and we celebrate empowerment," Van de Perre said.

Any school looking to find out more or to schedule them for a future assembly can go to www.bikersagainstbulliesusa.com.

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Contributed photos

Lisa Farese, Ocean Palms Elementary School's Adult Volunteer of the Year

Volunteer

chosen as the St. Johns County School District's Adult Volunteer of the Year. This honor puts her in the running to be recognized at the level of Florida's state school board.

Tiffany Cantwell, Ocean Palms Principal, said, "Lisa's creativity, commitment and caring personality have fostered meaningful experiences for the students, families and staff at Ocean Palms. We are so happy to recognize



Connor Dean Ocean Palms Elementary School's Youth Volunteer of the Year

her contributions and celebrate the many wonderful things she has done for our school."

Nease High School sophomore Dean shares Farese's service mindset. For the past two summers, he has dedicated countless hours of his break to supporting Ocean Palms' campus readiness efforts.

While many would consider summer a time to kick back and relax, he has painted, assembled furniture and organized textbooks, among other tasks, to support the school in preparation to welcome students and teachers to a new



Ocean Palms Elementary School Principal Tiffany Cantwell with Lisa Farese and Connor Dean at the St. Johns County School District Volunteer Recognition Event on April 3.

academic year. He isn't afraid of some heavy lifting and takes on every task with a positive attitude and strong work ethic.

"Connor has become a reliable and trusted presence on our campus," said Cantwell. "In a time when many teens are focused solely on their own commitments, he chooses to serve his commu-

nity. Connor's quiet leadership, initiative and humility speak volumes about his character, and he reminds us of the difference one person can make."

In addition to his volunteer work, Dean balances a full academic schedule in Nease's Engineering Academy and plays pitcher and outfielder on the school's Junior Varsity Baseball Team.











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12 COMMUNITY NEWS







Behar made a guest appearance at Underwood Jewelers



Lika Behar items are available at Underwood Jewelers

Lika Behar makes an appearance Underwood Jewelers Trunk Show

By Holly Tishfield

On April 4 and 5 community members gathered at Underwood Jewelers in Ponte Vedra to meet renowned designer Lika Behar.

Behar is currently on tour at jewelry stores around the country greeting customers and displaying her dazzling new collection. The collection, she says, is inspired by nature and the natural world, crafted with natural gemstones and diamonds.

"I love what I do," Behar said. "Most of my work is completely hand done in my own studio in Istanbul, Turkey."

Her favorite pieces from the collection are those crafted in 22K and 18K gold, prized for their beauty and especially sought-after in today's market. She's also partial to any of her pieces made with turquoise.

One of her favorite pieces is the "Darkness and Light



Photos by Holly Tishfield

Behar's work takes inspiration from natural gemstones and diamonds

Rotating Pendant," crafted with cabochon onyx, crystal quartz and diamonds. She also loves the "Earth & Sky Rotating Pendant," which features a rotating design with cabochon crystal quartz and malachite on one side, and a turquoise and crystal quartz triplet on the other, accented with a carré diamond drop and additional diamonds.

"I try to be as unique and different as possible," Behar said. "What I love about them is that it turns, depending on your mood or how you let it do whatever it wants."

While she was only at the store for a short time, several standout pieces from her collection remain available for those who didn't get the chance to meet her in person. Shoppers can still explore and purchase her distinctive designs at Underwood Jewelers that reflect the craftsmanship and style that have made her a standout in the world of fine jewelry.





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Ponte Vedra Recorder · April 10, 2025 COMMUNITY NEWS 13



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14 COMMUNITY NEWS Ponte Vedra Recorder · April 10, 2025

Ambassador program offers unique pickleball opportunity

By Anthony Richards

The passion for pickleball has grown immensely in recent years and continues to reach new heights and now a local resident can share that passion with the rest of the county.

Pickleball in the Sun, the world's first pickleball marketing agency dedicated to elevating the sport's presence through brand partnerships and experiential activations, announced the launch of its exclusive ambassador program as part of its April celebration as National Pickleball Month.

The program is designed to engage passionate pickleball players from key cities across the United States to further promote the sport, foster community engagement, and build excitement around the rapidly growing pickleball move-

Players in 11 major cities will be chosen to serve as a pickleball ambassador representing the brand.

"We're excited to build a vibrant community of pickleball ambassadors who are not only passionate about the sport but also dedicated to expanding its presence nationwide," said Laura Gainor, founder and CEO of Pickleball in the Sun. "This program is about more than just exclusive gear and fun challenges.



Pickleball ambassadors will receive a curated Pickleball in the Sun ambassador kit full of branded gear.

It's about fostering deeper community connections, amplifying pickleball in key markets, and encouraging players to share their love for the sport."

As part of the representation, they will receive high-quality pickleball gear from top industry brands and a curated kit that includes an exclusive custom Pickleball in the Sun ambassador paddle from Ivy Cut, a JOOLA pickleball paddle, Franklin pickleballs, exclusive apparel by Kitch, OS1st pickleball socks, a subscription to Pickleball Magazine, gear from Trelle, and even more.

At the heart of the initiative, it is all about creating engagement with the ambassadors and their community to engage residents in new and creative ways that have yet to be explored.

An example of these engagement opportunities is the Pickleball in the Sun Passport, which is a gamified challenge booklet that encourages ambassadors to play at unique courts, organize local events and connect with others to grow the sport.

The Pickleball in the Sun ambassador program will select one ambassador from 11 cities with Jacksonville being included with other growing pickleball communities, such as Los Angeles, New York, Atlanta, Phoenix and Chicago.

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OBITUARIES



Cathy Dibble Raef

Cathy Dibble Raef, a beloved mother, sister, and friend, passed away in Fort Worth, Texas on March 7, 2025, just shy of her 74th birthday. Born in Dallas, Texas, on March 9, 1951, Cathy was a proud graduate of Lake Highlands High School, where her vibrant personality and warmth first shone through.

Cathy is survived by her devoted sister, Patti Irvin, and her two cherished sons,



Eric Raef and Ben Raef who graduated from Nease High School.

Known for her friendly nature, Cathy never met a stranger. Her love for the beach was matched only by her passion for engaging conversations. She lived and worked in Ponte Vedra from 1993 to 2015.

Cathy's spirit will live on in the hearts of all who knew and loved her. She will be deeply missed but fondly remembered.

CathyRaefCommemoration.Blogspt.

DEATH NOTICES

Connie Lee Adams Shea

Connie Lee Adams Shea, 78, of Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida, died March 15, 2025. Ponte Vedra Valley Funeral Home, Cremation Center & Cemetery – 904-285-1130 – www. pontevedravalley.com

Robert Mark Gupton, Jr.

Robert Mark Gupton, Jr., 86, of Ponte Vedra, Florida, died March 29, 2025. Ponte Vedra Valley Funeral Home, Cremation Center & Cemetery – 904-285-1130 – www.pontevedravalley.com

Gilda Pearl Magid

Gilda Pearl Magid, 96, of Jacksonville, Florida, died March 26, 2025. Ponte Vedra Valley Funeral Home, Cremation Center & Cemetery – 904-285-1130 – www.pontevedravalley.com

Daniel John Meyer

Daniel John Meyer, 81, of Atlantic Beach, Florida, died March 29, 2025. Ponte Vedra Valley Funeral Home, Cremation Center & Cemetery – 904-285-1130 – www.pontevedravalley.com

Douglas Alex Powers

Douglas Alex Powers, 79, of St. Augustine, Florida, died March 23, 2025. Ponte Vedra Valley Funeral Home, Cremation Center & Cemetery – 904-285-1130 – www.pontevedravalley.com

John Patrick Rowan

John Patrick Rowan, 86, of Jacksonville, Florida, died April 2, 2025. Arrangements by Quinn Shalz Funeral Home & Cremation Centre, 904-249-1100, www.quinn-shalz.com



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2025 Walk to Defeat ALS is Saturday

Every 90 minutes, someone is diagnosed with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), often called Lou Gehrig's disease. On Saturday, April 12, the local community will gather to support people living with ALS at the 2025 Walk to Defeat ALS Jacksonville presented by Duval Ford. The walk begins at 10 a.m. at UNF JB Coxwell Amphitheater, 1 UNF Drive, Jacksonville.

The Walk to Defeat ALS is the world's largest signature event focused on supporting people living with ALS

and their families. Through Walk to Defeat ALS fundraising efforts, the ALS Association has been able to dramatically accelerate the fight against ALS by funding the development of new ALS treatments, by discovering new ALS genes, by creating new global research collaborations and by significantly expanding access to ALS care.

Walk to Defeat ALS events are more than fundraisers. This is a movement that unites the community in support of those affected by ALS. Many who participate have a loved one battling ALS while others participate in memory of a loved one who has lost their fight. Some participate simply because they want to make ALS a livable disease for everyone, everywhere while we tirelessly search for a cure.

"The Walk to Defeat ALS in Jacksonville brings together the entire local community," said Calaneet Balas, president and CEO of the ALS Association. "We are united by a shared purpose

- to make ALS livable for all until we

find a cure. We are truly grateful for the incredible support of participants, volunteers and sponsors from Jacksonville who make this memorable event happen."

The event is emceed by Melanie Lawson of News4Jax. Sponsorships for the event are also available. Registered participants who raise \$100 or more will receive an exclusive Walk to Defeat ALS T-shirt.

Go to als.org/WalkJacksonville to register, donate or learn more.

St. Johns County launches video series

St. Johns County is launching a new video series, "Inside SJC," aimed at educating, engaging and empowering residents and business owners by showcasing the county's departments, services and key initiatives. The video series will roll out strategically, with each episode focusing on timely topics for the community.

"Inside SJC" will provide an in-depth look at how the county operates, the resources available to residents and the programs that contribute to making St. Johns County a vibrant and thriving community. From parks to libraries, the series will cover a wide array of subjects, offering viewers a comprehensive understanding of essential county services.

The first video, titled "Welcome to Inside SJC," is now available on the St. Johns County YouTube channel: youtube. com/@st.johnscounty.

The series will be released monthly, with each video timed to coincide with relevant seasonal topics.

Episodes of "Inside SJC" will be available through multiple channels to ensure broad public access. The series can be found on the county's website at sjcfl.us/ inside-sjc, and videos will also be shared across the county's social media platforms. Additionally, residents can watch the videos on the county's GovTV channel.

St. Johns County residents and business owners may watch, share and interact with the video series. Engage with the content on social media using the hashtag #Inside-SJC and share what you learn to inform others in the community.





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GUEST COLUMN

Taking a Stand on National Bunion Day

How Dovetail Orthopedics is using the 2nd annual celebration to build awareness of bunions

By Dr. Robert Santrock

April 15, 2025, marks the second-annual U.S. National Bunion Day and I am excited to use the day as an opportunity to dismantle the stigma surrounding the condition, correct misinformation and educate the greater Jacksonville community about the latest treatment options that can correct the deformity and get patients back to the lifestyles they enjoy — without an embarrassing and painful bump on their big toe.

There is a common misconception that a bunion is a callous or growth of extra bone on the side of the toe. However, the condition is caused by an unstable joint in the middle of the foot that allows the bone to drift out of alignment, resulting in a noticeable bump on the side of the big toe. Bunions are a complex and progressive condition that affects about one in four American adults 1. The condition



Contributed photo

Mild to severe cases

frequently runs in families and can affect someone regardless of their age, gender, shoe choice or lifestyle2,3. Many people with bunions experience pain, pressure or stiffness — the condition can restrict the types of activities people are able to participate in and limit the types of shoes they can wear4,5.

Many people with bunions assume they have to learn to live with foot pain, but modern treatment options can address the underlying cause of bunions and provide long-term relief. In the past, surgical bunion treatments were associated with long recovery processes and highly variable outcomes.6-8*

Over the last several years, more options have become available, providing patients with customized approaches for treatment that can restore foot alignment and mobility. It is incredibly fulfilling to be able to offer effective treatment options to patients who have suffered from bunion pain for months or even years and watch

them return to the activities they love, including running, dancing, or simply walking without bunion pain.

Recognizing the early symptoms of a bunion is critical to avoiding long-term discomfort and mobility issues. I advise individuals to monitor their foot health for the following symptoms and consult with a specialist if they experience:

• A noticeable bump forming at the base

BUNION continues on **Page 19**



Bunion

Continued from 18

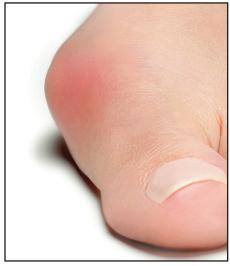
of the big toe

- Persistent pain or tenderness around the big toe joint, especially after standing
- Redness, swelling, or stiffness in the affected area
- Difficulty finding comfortable footwear due to changes in foot shape

This April 15, I hope that all members of the Jacksonville community who suffer from bunions feel empowered to work with a specialist to learn more about the treatment options available and identify which one best fits their lifestyle.

For more information about National Bunion Day, go to Lapiplasty.com. To schedule an appointment with me, go to DovetailOrtho.com.

Lapiplasty is a surgical procedure. Individual results may vary depending on age, weight, health and other variables. There are risks and recovery takes time. Risks include infection, pain, implant loosening and loss of correction with improper bone healing. If any of these occur, additional treatments may be needed. For more information on benefits, risks and recovery, go to Lapiplasty.com. TMC is not recommending any particular surgeon. Patients should make an independent



Bunion

determination regarding the qualifications of suitability of lapiplasty surgeons found at Lapiplasty.com/doctor.

- 1. Nix S, et al. J Foot Ankle Res. 2010. 27:3:21. 2. American College of Foot and Ankle Sur-
- 3. WebMD Website @2025.

geons (ACFAS) Website @2025.

- 4. American College of Foot and Ankle Surgeons (ACFAS) Website ©2025.
- 5. WebMD Website @2025.
- 6. Catanzariti AR, et al. J Foot Ankle Surgery, 1999 38:325-332.
- 7. Shurnas PS, et al. Foot Ankle Int. 2009. 30: 865-872
- 8. Jeuken RM, et al. Foot Ankle Int. 2016. 37:687-
- *Ranging from 3.6%-78% recurrence at an average of 2.4-14 years post-surgery

Symposium to address various disorders

There are currently a million Americans who have been diagnosed with Parkinson's Disease with 90,000 additional cases per year. Parkinson's is a neurological disorder that causes tremors, slowed movement, stiffness rigidity and more cognitive and noncognitive symptoms.

April is Parkinson's Awareness Month, a time when special attention is given to this incurable disease. During recent years many drugs have been created to help the patient control the symptoms. However, the relief these give the person with Parkinson's is temporary.

Parkinson's is a progressive condition. Some people with Parkinson's experience slow progression and can maintain a steady livelihood, while others progress at a faster pace. Each case is unique with different symp-

Jax Hope is a local organization that gives hope to people with Parkinson's. It does this by providing local resources, supporting support groups in the Jacksonville area. It also assists in starting exercise programs for people with Parkinson's. Jax Hope also hosts educational events and have a golf tournament each year to help fund these programs.

On May 3 in Fleming Island, Jax Hope will hold an educational symposium, focusing on Parkinson's, Alzheimer's, dementia and other movement disorders. Several neurologists specializing in movement disorders have been invited. There will be entertainment and food, and beverages will be served. This event is free and open to everyone, but registration is required.

To register, go to jaxhopeinc.org or call 904-801-5535.



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Contributed photo



The First Responder Peer Support Program serves 20 counties across Northeast and Northern Central Florida.

Shelly Castellano

Mental health support offered to 911 dispatchers

National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week (April 13-19) is a time to spotlight the true "first" responders.

Every day, dispatchers field emergency calls in real time as events unfold. But when they're in crisis, who is there for them? LSF Health Systems' First Responder Peer Support Program provides critical mental health resources specifically designed to support dispatchers and other first responders when they need help the most.

Statistically, first responders and dispatchers have higher rates of relationship issues, alcohol/drug abuse and suicide attempts and completions. In fact, accord-

ing to Blue H.E.L.P., more than 1,200 first responders in the United States have died by suicide since 2019. In Florida, there have already been two reported suicides this year.

Shelly Castellano, a 911 dispatcher in St. Johns County, said peer support is a necessary to stay level-headed call after call.

"You try to explain to your family the kind of day you've had and the toll it took on you," Castellano said. "They can empathize, but they can't fully understand the mental exhaustion you're feeling. That's why peer support is so important."

The First Responder Peer Support Pro-

gram serves 20 counties across Northeast and Northern Central Florida, providing first responders and their family members access to confidential, free mental health services

"Dispatchers are often the unseen lifeline in emergencies, managing intense situations while staying calm under pressure," said Dr. Christine Cauffield, CEO of LSF Health Systems. "It's essential for them to decompress and process the constant life-or-death calls. During this special week, we want to honor their dedication and remind them that mental health support is available."

All dispatchers need to do is call 211

and identify as a first responder. They will then be connected with a trained peer specialist within 24 hours. While some dispatchers and police departments offer internal peer support services, dispatchers may feel uneasy discussing personal struggles within their own agency. This program provides a trusted alternative where first responders can seek help without fear of judgment.

"We need to stay healthy, for our jobs and our families, because they depend on us," said Castellano.

First responders, or their family members, can visit StayFitforDuty.org or call 211 for more information.



Ponte Vedra Recorder · April 10, 2025 COMMUNITY NEWS 21

The Rotary Club of Ponte Vedra Beach in cooperation with The Ponte Vedra Recorder

2025 Local Heroes Awards Nomination Form

The Local Heroes Awards recognize individuals who give back to the community and reflect the spirit of the Rotary Club's motto, "Service Above Self." From volunteering with local charities to giving back through the arts, education, environmental protection activities or doing your job in an exemplary way, we seek to recognize the "unsung heroes" who make Ponte Vedra such a special place to live, work and raise a family.

To nominate someone, visit pvbrotary.org and complete the online form. Or complete this nomination form and mail it to the address below by April 18, 2025. For more information or any questions, contact Ponte Vedra Beach Rotary Club member Steve Crosby at stevecrosby101@gmail.com.

Nomination Submitted By:		
Name:		
Address:	City, State, Zip:	
Email address:	Telephone:	
Nominee Information:		
Name:		
	City, State, Zip:	
	Telephone:	
Title/Organization (if applicable):		
additional pages as well as a resume, article	s or other supporting materials (optional).	

Nomination Deadline: April 18, 2025

Email entries to: stevecrosby101@gmail.com
or mail to: Local Heroes Awards Committee
Rotary Club of Ponte Vedra Beach

P.O. Box 70
Ponte Vedra Beach, FL 32004
Or submit your nomination online at: pvbrotary.org

Thank you for your nomination!

DONNA Marathon Weekend makes a \$4M impact

The DONNA Foundation celebrated the 18th running of its signature DON-NA Marathon Weekend from Jan. 31 through Feb. 2. The annual race weekend, which includes 5K, half-marathon and full marathon distances, saw more than 7,300 athletes running or walking their way to in-person finish lines, with another nearly 200 individuals participating virtually — together, seeing an 18% increase year-over-year, surpassing pre-pandemic race volume.

Data collected by Visit Jacksonville shows this year's event attracted more than 11,000 visitors to Northeast Florida and generated more than \$4 million in economic impact to the area — a 9% increase over the prior year.

Last year, the organization took home several prestigious national and regional awards in addition to celebrating its 20th anniversary of serving breast cancer patients and families across the country.

The foundation's half-marathon, a signature event in the DONNA Marathon Weekend series, was ranked number four in the country for "Best Half Marathons" by USA Today's 10 Best Readers' Choice Travel Awards. This year, The DONNA Foundation was nominated again in both the "best half marathon" and "best marathon" categories — placing number 3 and number 4 in each



respective category.

"Running events are back and thriving — and we couldn't be happier to see it," said Amanda Napolitano, executive director of The DONNA Foundation.

"The popularity of DONNA Marathon Weekend is in large part attributed to the growing popularity of run clubs throughout Northeast Florida, and around the country. We are so happy that the world

of running is growing and becoming even more inclusive for athletes everywhere — for the second year in a row,

DONNA continues on Page 23











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Ponte Vedra Recorder · April 10, 2025

COMMUNITY NEWS 23

DONNA

Continued from 23

our 18-29 demographic grew by 7%. We are proud to welcome all athletes to our signature races throughout the year. Every participant makes a difference for those living with a breast cancer diagnosis."

DONNA Marathon Weekend is more than a series of races; it serves as a major fundraiser for The DONNA Foundation. For the 2025 race weekend, participating athletes and race champions raised more than \$205,000, surpassing the organization's \$200,000 goal for the event. Top fundraisers and teams were honored through an exclusive dinner during DONNA Marathon Weekend. Team FIS, Team Samantha — Just A Blip and Team Suction, along with individuals including Amy Mergen, Samantha Pappas and Lynn Roche, were honored this year.

In addition to individual and team impact, major philanthropic supporters The Predator Group and LUV Carwash were also honored for their commitment to The DONNA Foundation. The Predator Group, a Jacksonville-based billiards organization, was recognized for raising \$50,000 through its Shades of Pink fundraiser. LUV Carwash presented a check for \$20,644 and committed its support for The DONNA Foundation

and the DONNA CareLine Financial Aid Fund through 2026. Both organizations have made ongoing commitments to the foundation.

"At Predator Group, we believe in the power of community and are proud to share the impact of our partnership with The DONNA Foundation," said Brandy Cartwright, director of commercial and institutional marketing. "Through the sale of select products, we proudly supported their mission of providing hope, support and financial relief to individuals affected by breast cancer. This milestone reflects our commitment to turning passion into purpose, using our platform in the billiards industry to drive meaningful change. We are grateful to The DONNA Foundation for their tireless dedication and honored to stand beside them in this important cause. Together, we're showing how businesses and nonprofits can unite to create lasting impact."

DONNA Marathon Weekend provides the necessary funding to fulfil the foundation's vision of a world where breast cancer patients are freed from any barriers to their successful treatment. The foundation encourages everyone to get involved — no gift, pledge or volunteer opportunity is too small.

Registration for the 2026 DONNA Marathon Weekend events will open this summer. For more information, go to the donna foundation.org.

Rutherford, Neguse introduce school safety bill

On Wednesday, April 2, U.S. Rep. John H. Rutherford (R-FL-05) and Joe Neguse (D-CO-02) introduced H.R. 2577, the Preparing Leaders to Assess Needs (PLAN) for School Safety Act. This bipartisan bill would provide resources to states to establish school safety development centers to help schools conduct assessments of their safety, identify evidence-based solutions to improve safety and access state and federal grant funding.

"Every child has a right to feel safe at school," said Rutherford. "While I am proud of the significant federal resources Congress has made available for schools to help improve security measures across the nation, many of our schools are still struggling to find, apply and use these important resources. That's why I introduced the PLAN for School Safety Act with Rep. Neguse to help connect subject matter experts with school leaders to better facilitate participation in school safety programs and grants. As a former sheriff and lifelong member of law enforcement, I know firsthand that we must invest in security to prevent violence before it ever happens."

"In Colorado, far too many of our community members have lost a loved one to the tragic scourge of gun violence in this country," said Neguse. "To better protect our students and their schools, I am proud to join a bipartisan group of lawmakers in introducing the PLAN Act — a commonsense step to implement solutions proven to keep our kids safe."

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24 COMMUNITY NEWSPonte Vedra Recorder · April 10, 2025

Atwater residents share their stories, enrich their community

By Shaun Ryan

Every person has a story.

We've all heard that, but how often do we consider the stories of the people we encounter each day, stories that remain unspoken because no occasion to share them arises? And should such an occasion present itself, how much closer would people feel after listening to one another? What worlds would open up? What things would we learn?

It's the question at the center of a program launched recently at The Atwater, an apartment complex in the heart of Nocatee.

It began when Paula Felici, an Atwater resident for a year and a half, identified a need among her neighbors, a need to learn more about one another and become a true community.

Her answer was "Getting to Know You," a forum for residents to tell others a bit about their lives, hobbies, adventures and more. Begun in January, it was an immediate success and has since inspired Felici and her neighbors to welcome friends, family and the community at large to attend the presentations.

"We've had some unbelievably interesting guests," Felici said. "We are in awe of some of our residents here. I'm very proud of the program."

A diverse program

The Atwater is, by all accounts, a special place. Having opened just five years ago, it has won The Recorder's Best of the Best of Ponte Vedra multiple times. Occupancy stands at 98%, according to Felici.

Marcus Patterson, currently a leasing consultant there, said he was surprised when he first visited. Everyone was welcoming. Everyone was smiling. This was nothing like some of the places he had worked over the previous seven years.

Patterson said "Getting to Know You" provides people a "safe haven." They



Photo by Shaun Ryan:

Pictured from left are: Anthony Lizano, Kerry Burkhart-Weed, Jacqueline Fogg, Paula Felici and Marcus Patterson.

don't have to remain in their homes, isolated.

It aligns with Patterson's motto: "Live life, be happy and enjoy life."

The first presenter was a lawyer who was given a Lego piano kit and found a way it make it play music. About 20 people attended his speech, many with questions about his creation. Soon, people were volunteering to speak or recommending others they knew who had interesting stories to tell.

Kerry Burkhart-Weed and her husband had been living at The Atwater for a little more than two and a half years when "Getting to Know You" kicked off. She hadn't gotten involved much in her community, but Felici's program changed that.

"Her activities are really pretty interesting," Burkhart-Weed said. "People are so diverse and have such an interesting background. So, it's been nice coming to her events i

At Felici's encouragement, Burkhart-Weed — who is a UF IFAS Florida Master Naturalist — gave a presentation on a topic about which she has a great passion: preservation of the Florida sandhill crane.

A longtime volunteer with the Florida State Park System involved in shorebird and manatee monitoring, sea turtle educational tours, wildlife rescue and more, Burkhart-Weed had an encounter while living in Vero Beach, observing a family of Florida sandhill cranes in their nest. It fixed the species on her personal radar.

She went on to become the advocate behind the four signs posted on Nocatee Parkway about a year and a half ago educating motorists about the need to watch for these threatened birds, which often cross the roadway with their young. It was a long process to get the signs approved. She had to present data to both the county and to the Florida Fish

and Wildlife Conservation Commission. With the support of St. Johns Regional Audubon and Nocatee's community manager, she got the signs placed in strategic locations.

The importance of protecting Florida sandhill cranes has become more evident as construction and development have increased dramatically in St. Johns County. Roads separate the cranes' habitat, forcing them to travel back and forth between the uplands where they nest and the wetlands where they feed and roam.

Because the young cannot fly for their first two and a half months, neither do the parents; crane families walk everywhere together.

But educational signs are just a part of Burkhart-Weed's advocacy. She also distributes postcards bearing interesting and important crane information to area

ATWATER continues on Page 25

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Atwater

Continued from 24

businesses, which in turn make them available to customers.

And taking a cue from The Joffrey Ballet in Chicago, which choreographed a ballet based on the movements of the whooping crane — a famous but altogether different species than the sandhill crane — Burkhart-Weed hopes to convince a local troupe to create and stage its own ballet, this one on the behaviors of the Florida birds.

Her presentation at The Atwater was very successful.

"Everybody did love her presentation," Felici said. "There were people that already knew about it and were here because they were interested in it. But there were just as many people who knew nothing about it, and they were really fascinated."

Burkhart-Weed, who served an eightweek internship last year at the International Crane Foundation in Sauk County, Wisconsin, knows her stuff and intends to present a follow-up session in the near future.

"I'm hoping to bring more love to them," she said of the cranes.

Positive outcome

Another program speaker was Anthony Lizano, director of talent and culture for



Kerry Burkhart-Weed explains crane anatomy during a tour at the International **Crane Foundation.**

The PGA Tour. He has given three presentations so far and residents have been asking when he is coming back.

At one point in his life, Lizano had found himself asking what his purpose was — everyone else around him appeared to have one. The answer eluded him for about two years.

"One day, it just came to me," he said. "I'm very passionate about humans. I love people! I truly do. ... so it came to me that my life purpose is to help others reach their full potential."

It was a topic he explored during one of his presentations: purpose and joy.

Lizano sometimes hears from people who feel their lives are boring, that they simply do the same thing every day. His



Each of Kerry Burkhart-Weed's tours began with a short film and talk.

solution: Do something different!

"Maybe volunteer at Assisted Living," he suggested to one attendee. "Adopt someone who lives there, because you would bring them great joy."

Lizano has a very dynamic quality the kind found in the best motivational speakers — that captures his audience's attention, which may explain his appeal to the residents of The Atwater. He encourages others to live in the present

"Don't worry about the past," he said. "The past is gone. What can we do today



One of the Threatened Species Crossing signs along Nocatee Parkway. They were installed in December 2023. As no cranes have been struck by automobiles since the signs went up, they appear to be effective.

to make an impact in your life? What can we do to instill that in your everyday living?"

Coming up

"Getting to Know You" has about three or four presentations per month. Upcoming speakers include a woman who traveled to China and Korea to teach and an author who will discuss ways to deal

ATWATER continues on **Page 26**

















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26 COMMUNITY NEWS



Jacqueline Fogg and students from the school established by her mother

The next presentation, scheduled for

11 a.m. April 30, will follow the fascinat-

onetime Montessori teacher in Manhattan

ing experiences of Jacqueline Fogg, a

who went on to play an important role

in South Africa at the time of its historic

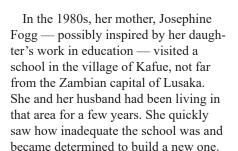
Atwater

with anxiety.

transformation.



Josephine Fogg, left, and daughter Jacqueline Fogg



And she was not shy about raising funds for it.

"She literally walked around the city



Jacqueline Fogg and Colin Powell

daughter said.

of Lusaka and banged on embassy doors

demanding money from all these ambas-

sadors — and they all gave it to her!" her

In 1986, Jacqueline Fogg visited her

"I went to Africa for three weeks, and I

stayed 25 years," she said. "In that time,

I worked under the Apartheid regime,

writing and producing educational TV

programs for the disenfranchised popula-

She saw firsthand the disparity between

the way white and black populations were

treated. Her budget was one-sixth the size of funding provided for white residents'

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mother in Zambia and then returned to

Africa the following year.

tions of South Africa."



Contributed photos

Jacqueline Fogg

programming. Still, she produced 186 educational TV programs in the Zulu language.

This had a profound effect, even on her translator, who "would sit and watch the rushes with me, and she would cry. She said, 'They're learning.'"

Her programs were greatly successful and won awards. In fact, in the years since, Fogg has gone on to make several movies.

Concluding this chapter in her life, Fogg went on to work as a contractor with the U.S. Department of State in the early '90s working with a program headed by former chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff Colin Powell. That's when Fogg remembered her mother's school, wondering whatever had become

"I went there, and the school had just flourished," she said. "Today, those kids have been to universities. Some of them are teachers. They have been to the United States, and my mother's honored in that village."

Fogg was also a witness in 1994 to South Africa's implementation of universal suffrage.

"What was so sad was: the previously disenfranchised population, they'd never voted. Ever," Fogg said. "So, you would have long lines of people registering to vote. And when the official vote came, they thought they'd all voted. So, they had to go back and line up for another 15 hours. They came in wheelbarrows and they came walking through the hills, and it was just the most extraordinary thing I'd ever seen."

Fogg was subsequently invited to President Nelson Mandela's inauguration

Asked what had started her down this path, Fogg replied, "Sometimes you just get a pull to do things in life."

When she gives her April 30 presentation, Fogg will have plenty of interesting things to discuss as well as some African artifacts to show.

The Atwater is located at 48 Pine Shadow Parkway, Ponte Vedra. For anyone wanting to attend a resident presentation, most of the parking at The Atwater is located around the back side of the building.

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GUEST COLUMN

The Importance of Estate Planning for All Ages

By Janice Richardson,

Marks Gray estate planning attorney

In today's uncertain world, the need for estate planning has become more crucial than ever. Regardless of age or situation, a well-structured estate plan can safeguard and preserve assets for beneficiaries. Whether you're a young adult just starting your career, a middleaged individual navigating the complexities of family life, or a senior looking to ensure your legacy, estate planning offers benefits for everyone.

Many young adults assume estate planning is something only older or wealthier individuals need to worry about. While young adults may not have accumulated significant wealth, estate planning isn't solely about distributing assets. It includes critical components like creating a living will, designating health care proxies and appointing a power of attorney. These elements become essential if you were to face a medical emergency or become incapacitated. Young adults

may want to ensure savings, retirement accounts, or even personal possessions are distributed according to their wishes. Additionally, if you have young children, choosing guardians through an estate plan is a key decision that cannot be delayed.

As careers progress and families grow, the stakes rise for the middle-aged. At this stage, you likely have accumulated more assets such as property, investments and retirement accounts. You may have a spouse, children, or other dependents who rely on your financial stability. Estate planning becomes not only about distributing assets but about ensuring financial security for your loved ones. One of the most important aspects of estate planning at this age is setting clear bequeathing goals. This includes clarifying what will be left to spouses, children, charities and others. Estate planning also addresses the tax implications and legal complexities of transferring wealth. While tax savings and probate avoidance are secondary considerations, they are important outcomes of a well-thought-out plan

For seniors, estate planning becomes an urgent priority. Estate planning helps ensure your life's work and accumulated wealth are distributed by your wishes. Most importantly, it allows you to shape the future of your family in meaningful ways. Seniors often face tough decisions. Will inheriting a large sum of money provide opportunities or disincentivize hard work? Should heirs receive inheritance in a lump sum, or would it be better to stagger the distributions? These are complex and deeply personal questions. Many seniors choose to include provisions for their grandchildren's education or make charitable donations in a tax-favorable way to benefit their heirs and society. Selecting an estate trustee can also help ensure assets are properly managed, minimizing family conflicts and ensuring responsible stewardship of wealth.

Throughout the estate planning process, the guidance of a skilled estate planning attorney is invaluable. The primary focus should not only be on sav-

ing taxes or avoiding probate costs, but on addressing the fundamental issues of asset distribution, family dynamics and long-term financial stability. By asking tough questions, estate planning attorneys help families confront the realities of their wealth and their desires for future generations. Experienced estate planning attorneys provide more than just technical knowledge — they offer peace of mind. Their expertise ensures the estate plan is tailored to meet your individual needs and goals, and their discretion allows them to handle sensitive family matters.

Estate planning is not a one-size-fits-all endeavor. By working with experienced estate planning professionals, you can make informed decisions about your future, avoid common pitfalls, and leave behind a well-managed, meaningful inheritance for future generations.

Janice Richardson is an attorney at Marks Gray where her practice focuses primarily on estate planning matters such as wills, trusts, wealth planning and tax planning.

Dealership presents \$205K check to Wolfson Children's

Subaru of Jacksonville presented its largest single gift yet to Wolfson Children's Hospital on March 28 with a \$205,000 check from the 17th annual Share the Love campaign.

Subaru of Jacksonville has committed nearly \$1.8 million to date to support a range of vital programs and services

including Family Support Services and Child Life, Rehabilitation, Child Passenger Safety and the Wolfson Children's Porter Family Children's Trauma Center.

Subaru of Jacksonville's support benefits patients like 3-year-old Kallam Achors. Diagnosed with craniosynostosis, a condition where the bones of the skull fuse

prematurely before the brain has finished growing, along with a cleft palate, Kallam began seeing specialists with the Wolfson Children's Hospital Snyder Family Cleft and Craniofacial Center at just three weeks old

Kallum has undergone multiple surgeries and receives ongoing therapy — including

physical, occupational, speech and feeding therapy — through Wolfson Children's Rehabilitation. Thanks to the expert care he receives at Wolfson Children's Hospital, Kallam is continuing to grow and thrive.

During this year's campaign, Subaru of

WOLFSON continues on Page 28

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America donated \$250 for every new vehicle purchased or leased between Nov. 21 and Jan. 2. Customers could choose from a list of national charities for the \$250 donation or Subaru of Jacksonville's hometown charity, Wolfson Children's Hospital.

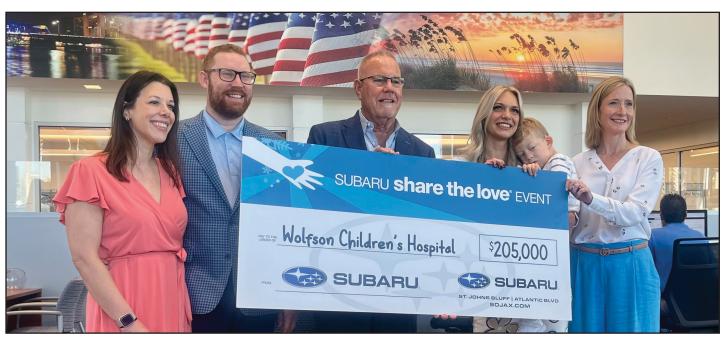
Regardless of the charity chosen, Subaru of Jacksonville gave an additional \$350 to Wolfson Children's Hospital for every new vehicle purchased or leased. On top of the \$350 per vehicle, Subaru of Jacksonville also added another \$50,000 to the overall donation.

This is the ninth year in a row that Wolfson Children's Hospital has been Subaru of Jacksonville's hometown charity.

Subaru of Jacksonville was the first major funder to support trauma services at Wolfson Children's, establishing the "Subaru of Jacksonville Porter Family Trauma Services Endowment" in 2016, creating a legacy of support for generations

To recognize their generosity, Wolfson Children's Hospital named the region's only state-designated American College of Surgeons-verified Level I Pediatric Trauma Center in the Porter Family's honor.

'Giving back to our community has always been at the heart of what we do," said Phil Porter Sr., owner of Subaru of Jacksonville. "For the past nine years,



Contributed photo

Alison Porter, Phil Porter Jr., Phil Porter Sr., Kearni Achors and son Kallam (Wolfson Children's Hospital patient), and Allegra Jaros, president of Wolfson Children's Hospital.

our partnership with Wolfson Children's Hospital has been incredibly meaningful, and we're honored to support the amazing work they do for children and families. Seeing the impact of these donations – whether it's funding life-saving treatments or simply bringing a smile to a child's face — reminds us why this commitment is so important. We're not just a dealership; we're a family, and this community is part

As a collaboration with Wolfson Children's Hospital and THE PLAYERS Cen-

ter for Child Health, Subaru of Jacksonville continues to host free child passenger car seat safety checks for the community on the first Friday of each month, helping to ensure children are safe on the roads.

Subaru of Jacksonville is also the presenting sponsor of Wolfson Children's annual summer toy drive, Christmas in July, as well as the Wolfson Children's Challenge, the hospital's annual race in January that raises critical funds for rehabilitation services.

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lifesaving care to children in North Florida and beyond when they need it most," said Allegra C. Jaros, president of Wolfson Children's Hospital. "Thanks to the generosity of donors like Subaru of Jacksonville and the Porter family, we're able to enhance a multitude of services, invest in cutting-edge technology and ensure that every child — no matter their background or their family's financial situation receives the highest level of specialized care."



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A CONSUMER'S GUIDE TO AUTO INSURANCE

Drivers need to be in possession of certain documentation in order to own and operate a motor vehicle legally. Naturally a driver's licence is necessary, as is a vehicle registration. However, drivers also need proof of automotive insurance to be able to operate their cars and trucks. Auto insurance helps protect a person's finances by covering the cost of bills resulting from accidents or other incidents involving vehicles. Navigating the basics of auto insurance can be a little tricky, but consumers can use this guide to gain a greater understanding of their policies and coverage.

What is automotive insurance?

Investopedia defines automotive insurance as a policy between a consumer and an insurance company that says the person will make payments, and in return, the insurance company agrees to cover the costs of medical bills, vehicle repairs and other property damage. Some types of automotive insurance are required by law, while others are optional.

Liability coverage

Most states and provinces require drivers to have liability insurance. This is the most basic coverage to legally drive a car. The Insurance Information Institute says liability insurance pays the other driver's medical, car repair and additional costs

Considerations when choosing health insurance

- Open enrollment period: Changing health insurance plans may only be allowed during specific periods, notably at the time of hire, after a major life change (marriage or birth of a child) or during a period known as open enrollment. Typically open enrollment starts in November and runs through January.
- Employer or state insurance marketplace:

Many employers offer health insurance to workers, and employees will be limited to the plans available. Those who do not get health insurance through an employer or people who simply want to see other options can shop their state's online marketplace, the federal marketplace, or private exchange to find a plan.

- Alphabet soup: Insurance jargon can be complicated and consumers will come across various abbreviations alluding to different offerings. Health maintenance organization (HMO), preferred provider organization (PPO), exclusive provider organization (EPO) and point of service plan (POS) are some types of coverage. Generally speaking, plans that require in-network doctors and referrals have lower out-of-pocket costs but less freedom to choose providers.
- Identify all the costs: A health insurance premium is the cost of the coverage, regardless of services used. This is the amount that an employer, employee, or a combination will pay each pay period. Copayments are fixed fees for certain kinds of office visits, other services and prescriptions due at the time of service. A deductible is the cost paid (after premiums) for services before insurance kicks in. Healthy individuals who do not visit the doctor often may want a higher deductible plan which

when the policyholder is at fault in an auto accident. Bodily injury liability, which applies to injuries that the policyholder and family members listed on the policy cause to someone else, is included in liability insurance. Policyholders can purchase more than the minimum required. Property damage liability pays for damage a driver may cause to someone else's property, such as vehicles, lamp posts, fences, buildings, or structures.

Collision coverage

Collision coverage pays for damage from a collision with another car, an object or a pothole, or from flipping over, says the National Association of Insurance Commissioners.

Comprehensive coverage

This coverage will reimburse a policy-

holder for damage to the vehicle that's not caused by a collision. This can include weather, fire, flooding, and hitting an animal.

Personal injury protection (PIP)

The III indicates this coverage pays for the treatment of injuries to the driver and passengers. PIP can cover medical payments, lost wages, and the cost of replacing services normally performed by the person who was injured in the auto accident. PIP may cover funeral costs in some cases.

Uninsured and underinsured motorist coverage

This coverage offers protection to policyholders who get in an accident with a driver who doesn't have insurance or has insufficient coverage to fully cover the costs of the accident, says Investopedia.

Premiums and deductibles

A premium is the total amount paid for the policy. It is determined by the coverages, policy holder's age and driving history, and a number of other factors.

Insurance policies typically have deductibles associated with them. This is the amount a policyholder has to pay out of pocket before the insurance kicks in and pays out. A higher deductible often means a lower premium.

Insurance policy terms typically are six months in length and will auto-renew at the end of the term. Motorists can keep an eye out for policy changes and costs at this time and decide if they want to stick with their insurance company or shop around.

Automotive insurance is needed to operate a vehicle, but costs will vary depending on the coverage.

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State Farm Florida Insurance Company, Winter Haven, FL

Poker series to kick off April 24

The Mission RunGood Poker Series is coming to bestbet Jacksonville, Northeast Florida's premier cardroom, from April 24 through May 4. This tournament features \$500,000 in guarantees with 10 poker events. Notable events include Event 1, \$400 NLH, with six flights and a \$200,000 guarantee, a \$360 NLH ladies only tournament, the RunGood Ambassador Bounty event, and the \$1,200 main event with three starting days and a \$300,000 guarantee, all streamed on betbestLive.

We are excited to welcome the Mission RunGood Series to bestbet Jacksonville," said Deb Giardina, vice president of poker operations at bestbet Jacksonville. "We had a very successful event with this group last year. They bring genuine fun and engaging sportsmanship with them. We look forward to more of the same energy to come."

The Mission RunGood Poker Series starts on April 24, with Flight A of Event 1, a \$400 No-Limit Hold'em tournament beginning at noon with a \$200,000 guarantee. All events are one day except for Event 1 and the main event. Event 1 is a fourday event with three starting days and six flights, allowing re-entry on the next, as well as the same, flight. All events will allow unlimited reentries within the registration period. Registration for the main event is open until the start of level 10.

The main event begins at noon May 1. The main event play will be live-streamed on the bestbetLive site. The Mission RunGood Poker Series also features a live-streamed Ladies Only No Hold'em event on April 30, with play beginning at 3 p.m.

For a full schedule, including satellites, go to bestbetjax.com/ poker/tournaments/destination-rungood-poker-series-2025. Multi-table satellites for the main event start April 15.

bestbet Jacksonville is located approximately 18 miles from the Jacksonville International Airport. Tournament participants can enjoy special room rates at Hampton Inn Jacksonville East Regency Square on I-295, just 1.5 miles from bestbet Jacksonville, by asking for a poker

Grocer raises funds for eight hospitals

This month, Southeastern Grocers, LLC (SEG), parent company and home of Harveys Supermarket and Winn-Dixie, is launching its two-week, in-store community donation program designed to raise vital funds for eight children's hospitals across the Southeast.

Now through April 15, Harveys Supermarket and Winn-Dixie encourage customers to donate \$1, \$5 or round up their total grocery bill at checkout. Every cent raised will directly support critical hospital programs, including family centered care, therapeutic activities, cutting-edge research, child advocacy and other vital services.

"Our commitment and compassion for the communities we serve inspires us to come together to support the children and

families who need us most," said Anthony Hucker, chairman, president and CEO of Southeastern Grocers. "With the support of our associates and customers, we can help local pediatric care facilities deliver the exceptional care our young neighbors deserve as they fight for a healthier future. Every donation is a step toward healing, a moment of comfort and a chance at a brighter tomorrow."

Funds raised through the grocer's community donation program will benefit eight children's hospitals including Wolfson Children's Hospital.

Since 2021, SEG and its customers have donated more than \$1.1 million to support children's hospitals in the Southeast.

Insurance

Continued from 29

could have lower premiums. Coinsurance may be another cost required on certain services to make up for what insurance doesn't cover. For instance, many plans pay 80 percent and then the individual is responsible for the remaining 20 percent. Plans also have out-of-pocket maximums that, once hit, would cover all future costs. Each of these costs merits consideration.

• Medication coverage: Make sure the health insurance plan covers the medications needed. Create a list of medications and note if brand name prescription drugs or generics are covered. If prescriptions are primarily generic, you may be able to choose from a wider array of plans.







The team at the Ponte Vedra Beach/Nocatee office



Realtors from the St. Augustine, World Golf Village and Palm Coast offices

Real estate business honors top producers



Metro offices of Avondale/Ortega and San Marco/San Jose

Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Network Realty recently celebrated the company's top producers during a special celebration at Bowing Oaks. The festivities honored more than 100 Realtors and their guests from the company's 11 branch offices located throughout Northeast Florida.

"Our talented, passionate and dedicated Realtors have made our company the market leader in Northeast Florida," said Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Network Realty President Ann King. "I am so grateful for their commitment, and I appreciate their contributions to our company's success."

For more information about Berkshire Hathaway Home-Services Florida Network Realty, go to Florida Network Realty.com or FLNetworkRealty.com.



The Beaches office

Home Watch business earns accreditation from national association



Home Watch business earns accreditation from national association Vicky's Helping Hands has earned accreditation for its Home Watch services from the National Home Watch

The NHWA was established in 2009 in order to establish and maintain the highest industry standards for Home Watch and absentee homeowner services throughout the United States and Canada. Home Watch is a visual inspection of a home or property, looking for obvious issues, which means that it "keeps an eye on things" at a

vacation or primary home while residents are away. All principals of NHWA Accredited Member companies are backgroundchecked, insured and bonded.

President and CEO Jessica Waugaman brings nearly 20 years of experience in nonprofit service, fundraising and event planning. Before taking over the company in 2021, she dedicated her career to making a difference in people's lives, working with organizations like Ascension St. Vincent's and the North Florida School of Special

Waugaman finds fulfillment in knowing her work helps others. She treats each home as if it were her own, ensuring care, attention and dedication in every project.

When she was 12 years old, Waugaman's family went on vacation and came home to a devastating flood. Their water heater had burst while they were gone, and no one had been there to catch it in time. They lost everything. That experience left a lasting impression on her. She has always wished they had someone checking on their home; it would have made all the difference.

Waugaman's background has given her a deep sense of purpose: helping people, building relationships and managing complex logistics. When she took over Vicky's Helping Hands, she saw it as an opportunity to continue that mission in a more personal, hands-on way. She helps clients manage their home vendors and projects,

and through Home Watch, she offers them security and peace of mind.

Having earned an associate of arts degree from Indian River State College, Waugaman has also held a Florida Real Estate License since 2005. This has contributed to her understanding of home care, property value, client needs and the importance of maintaining and protecting a home, especially when the owner is away.

Established in 1994, Vicky's Helping Hands serves Ponte Vedra Beach, Ponte Vedra, Atlantic Beach, Neptune Beach, Jacksonville Beach and Jacksonville. Waugaman can be reached at 904-502-9092 or vickyshelpinghands@gmail.com. Learn more at vickyshelpinghands.com.





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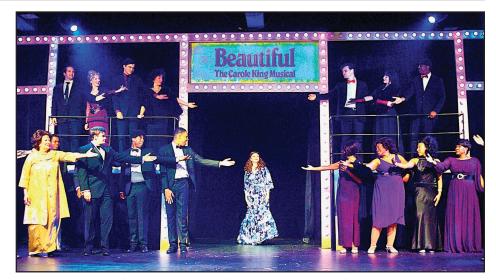
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Photos courtesy of Alhambra Theatre & Dining

"Beautiful The Carole King Musical" is showing at Alhambra Theatre & Dining through May 11.



Rachel Ann Kocher offers a memorable performance in her role as famed singer-songwriter

the musical ride that is Beautiful

By Anthony Richards

There's something about music that just feeds the soul and the story behind the music is a big part of it and what truly gives the musical notes its spirit and depth.

These are aspects that Alhambra Theatre & Dining captured to a tee in its production of "Beautiful The Carole King Musical," which opened at the historic venue on April 3 and will be performed through

The production follows the journey of singer-songwriter Carole King and how she discovered her career and what led to the inspiration behind her musical hits, such as "I Feel The Earth Move," Natural Woman," and "You've Got A Friend."

Each of those songs is guaranteed to bring even more life to the performance as they are well known and will prompt those in attendance to want to sing along and join in the melodic rhythm being shared on stage.

It is one of the unique aspects that musicals bring about, as although the performers on stage are the focus of the attention, the crowd can get involved by singing along and really show their appreciation for the performance and add to the fun and vibrant environment that the Alhambra has become known for.

Rachel Ann Kocher offers a memorable performance in her role as Carole King

and in many ways seems born to play the role and brought it to life with her portrayal.

When not performing on the Alhambra stage she is a competitive gymnastics, tumbling and Ninja Zone coach, and she is working on finishing up a degree in business administration, as she showcases her versatility and multiple talents every day.

Kocher was one of many beautiful voices that took to the stage to help bring the performance to life, and some of them were saddled with the responsibility of representing other famous singing groups, such as Terry Star, Zion Hall, Malik Harris and Darryl Beamon who portrayed The Drifters during the play.

It is always nice to have actors that have a certain familiarity with roles and that is exactly what Beamon brings to his role as a Drifter as the Jacksonville resident also performed in a rendition of "Beautiful" at Players by the Sea last year.

Memorable music is something that crosses the generations, which makes "Beautiful The Carole King Musical" a performance that the entire family can appreciate as they ride along with Carole King on her journey while in New York City as she searched for a place in the music world from ages 16 to 29.

Anyone looking to join the musical ride can buy tickets by going to www.alhambrajax.com.



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GUEST COLUMN

Symphony celebrates spring with Debussy, Tao, Stravinsky program

By Matt Bickett

In the warm sun of spring, ice falls from the wintery trees, crashing down as the once-frozen ground cracks opens. Nature announces the arrival of this season's listless heat with violent sounds — at least in colder climates, as Courtney Lewis, music director of the Jacksonville Symphony, explained at Friday and Saturday night's concerts. Under Lewis's baton, the Symphony celebrated the wonderful and at times terrifying changes of the season with a cohesive program of Claude Debussy's "Nocturnes," pianist Conrad Tao's new "Clang and Shudder" and Igor Stravinsky's classic "Rite of Spring."

But before the days of spring could lengthen, the program meditated on the winter sun's twilight in the three movements of Debussy's "Nocturnes." The winds took the lead with a clear sound and unified pace through the mysterious main theme of "Nuages." The winds' beautifully shaded tone colors, assisted by the room's acoustics, evoked more than just the shifting grays of clouds, also recalling the brighter hues of a Northeast Florida winter sunset.

The second movement, "Fêtes," captured the energy of its namesake festival but with a Parisian reserve appropriate to the score. Responsive strings and crispness in the muted trumpets foreshadowed the buzz to come in the second half of the evening's program.

With the final movement, "Sirènes," the women of the Jacksonville Symphony Chorus contributed the sound of these mythical creatures to the ensemble. The performance went in and out of the score's dreamy quality, the chorus at times disagreeing on tone quality and hesitant in Debussy's demanding phrases. The close of the movement left a suspenseful and unsettled mood, perhaps exactly as Debussy intended.

Next, Tao's newest work, "Clang and Shudder," received its world premiere with the Jacksonville Symphony. The piano concerto's premiere, featuring the piano almost throughout the entire work, accurately captured Tao's descrip-

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tion. Wild rhythms and repetitions conveyed the play of puppies and toddlers, extending the traditional techniques of classical composition toward an elemental curiosity.

At the same time, the score easily fixated on details, impressive and creative delights, losing track of a bigger picture appropriate to a lay audience. A coherent compositional voice could not emerge, but perhaps this was Tao's intent. In a world of carefully curated voices, the performance left conscious command for a music of the moment. While the music itself may have been unable to transcend the particular time of its composition, the composer's performance pointed to a different level of engaging the work. The score staged a turn from the wild music of puppies and toddlers to the political animality of Symphony concertgoer.

"Clang and Shudder" continued the program's seasonal focus in moments evocative of the icy themes of Icelandic composer Anna Thorvaldsdottir's work. Tao's glacial pace of musical development, with the bright sounds of extended techniques searing through, made us ponder our shuddering in the cold we've left behind as we looked to the "Rite of Spring" following intermission.

The Jacksonville Symphony boldly presented a timely and daring rendition of Stravinsky's classic. In the program's second half, the stage featured a much

larger cast (some of whose names we unfortunately did not learn), and the performance made the case for inviting this enhanced ensemble to return. The strings' larger presence brought a seriousness to the program that better balanced with the winds, who were freed to focus more on interpreting the intricate score.

The Symphony dutifully executed Stravinsky's saga of shifting meters and unpredictable harmonies, bringing us along for a raucous ceremony of springtime irrationality. Through the wails of exotic instruments and the skips of twitchy rhythms, the Symphony showed off its players' range of skill. This somewhat polite performance did not conclude with a rioting audience, unlike at the work's 1913 premiere, but did send us into a world of a melting status quo.

The Symphony's presentation of Debussy's "Nocturnes," Tao's "Clang and Shudder" and Stravinsky's "Rite of Spring" demonstrated that, as the ice of indifference falls away, our inevitable celebrations of the irrational and unpredictable come with sacrifices. Like Stravinsky, perhaps we ought to pay more attention to our ceremonies for deciding how we pay these. Although how we do so may cause onlookers to riot.

Matt Bickett is a musician and scholar living in Jacksonville.

Sunday at Stetson's concert is April 13

The next featured artist for the Sundays at Stetson's concert series will be John Dickie. The date is Sunday, April 13.

Music starts at 2 p.m. No reservations are necessary. A \$10 donation is suggested to help support the presentation of live local music.

Beluthahatchee is located a quarter mile south of Roberts Road, at: 1523 State Road 13, Fruit Cove. (The concert is held at the Hart House at the end of the short dirt road).

To schedule a tour of Beluthahatchee call 904-549-9444.

For more information, contact skf.concerts@gmail.com.

The Sundays at Stetson's concert series is sponsored by the Stetson Kennedy Foundation, Lullaby of the Rivers, Inc., St. Johns County Parks

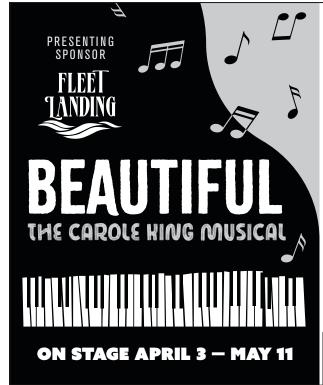
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34 IN THE ARTS





Contributed photos

Plein Air Paint Out set for April 23-27

Painting outside and capturing a scene just as it is in that exact moment is a tradition artists have revered for hundreds of years — and it's back in St. Augustine for the ninth year.

Presented by the St. Augustine Art Association (STAAA), artists are invited to participate in the annual Plein Air Paint Out, April 23-27. This time-honored method simply translates to "painting outdoors." Plein Air Paint Out brings diverse artists into the streets of St. Augustine, from the grounds of the Castillo de San Marcos National Monument to the beaches of Anastasia Island.

"In 2016, I worked with the staff to

revive this tradition, and in the spring of 2017, we successfully launched the event, ensuring that plein air painting remains a vital part of our artistic landscape," said Catherine St. Jean, artist and incoming STAAA board president. "Since the first Paint Out in 2017, it has become the St. Augustine Art Association's premier event, bridging our artistic history with the present. Each year, 70-plus artists from near and far set up their easels throughout the Nation's Oldest City, capturing its charm in real time while engaging with the public. This celebration of outdoor painting showcases the incredible talent of participating artists



and highlights the breathtaking beauty and deep history of St. Augustine."

More than just painting in the streets, there are multiple events throughout the week for artists and locals.

Works-in-progress and finished paintings can be viewed and purchased online and in-gallery from the STAAA's "Wet Room." The gallery will be open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily.

On Friday, April 25, at 12:30 p.m., meet and mingle with artists for a picnic and painting in the Radzinski Family Garden at the Lightner Museum, 75 King St. This event is free for registered plein

air artists and \$30 for nonartists (tickets include lunch).

On Saturday, April 26, at 11 a.m., come to the STAAA, 22 Marine St., for a free live painting demonstration with Plein Air judge Steven Walker, who will share his insights and expertise.

On Sunday, April 27, from noon to 3 p.m., enjoy a free pop-up exhibit at the St. Augustine Yacht Club, 442 Ocean Vista Ave., where artists will exhibit one completed work from the week. From 4:30 to 6:30 p.m., the exhibit will be judged in person for awards. Tickets are very limited and are \$35 for artists and \$50 for nonartists. Tickets include food and drink, and all artwork will be for sale.

Interested in painting en plein air? Register online today. Registration is \$55 for STAAA members and \$80 for nonmembers. Artists must be 18 years or older.

For more event information, to register to paint, or to purchase tickets, go to www.staaa.org/plein-air-paint-out.

Village Arts Framing and Gallery 50th Anniversary Celebration Open House Saturday, April 12 • 1-4 pm

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Photos by Anthony Richards

Attacking mindset leads to strong finish by Sharks on senior night

By Anthony Richards

Every senior wants to finish their final home game in the regular season in the win column, and for the Ponte Vedra Sharks' boys and girls lacrosse teams this year's senior classes were able to do just that as the boys defeated Oak Hall 11-4 and the girls squad beat the rival Nease Panthers 17-3 during a doubleheader on April 4.

These were the final home games of the regular season for both teams and although they will likely be playing in the Shark Tank once more during the postseason, this was the last scheduled contest for now, and they were excited to end the regular season on such a high note.

The girls honored their seniors prior to their game with a special ceremony on the field with their families prior to the action, while the boys had already held their



senior festivities in a prior home tilt, but playing one of their final games at home in a Sharks uniform still meant a lot.

The win over Oak Hall was a quality victory as the

Eagles are ranked No. 15 across all classes in the state and No. 51 nationally.

The Sharks led 5-3 heading into the fourth quarter and took control of the game down the stretch with a relentless attacking approach offensively, as they scored five straight goals in less than a two-minute period.

For the girls, they came out firing on all cylinders and displayed with their own offensive intensity as they jumped out to a huge lead thanks to goals by Jane Hardy, Lamb Toole, Ila Crowe, Abby Kaltman, Kaylee Clarkson and Gracie Madson, as they never looked back against the Panthers.

On a night that recognized the senior class, many underclassmen showcased their skill and showed that the future is extremely bright for the Sharks, as Crowe, Clarkson, Kaltman are all freshmen and Madson is a sophomore.













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Ponte Vedra baseball had a lot to celebrate during their 6-0 victory over the rival Nease Panthers on April 4.



Photos by Lucy Miller **Ponte Vedra senior Cole Rambler bats against the Panthers.**



A Nease baserunner dives back to first base on a pickoff attempt.

Dominant pitching, long ball highlight Sharks win over rival

By Anthony Richards

Good teams know how to take full advantage when mistakes are made by the opposing team, and the Ponte Vedra Sharks baseball squad showcased that during their 6-0 victory over the rival Nease Panthers at home on April 4.

It was a rough night for the Panthers defensively, as they committed four errors on the night, and it seemed to set the tone early as the Sharks scored four unearned runs in the first inning.

Unfortunately for the Panthers it was just one of those nights, as even when they got a strike out it happened on the same play as a passed ball by the catcher.

The Sharks pitchers took over from there as Storm Lickliter and Aspen McAdoo combined for a shutout as they allowed just two hits, and four walks scattered across seven innings.

Lickliter got the start on the mound for the Sharks and threw four strikeouts

in five innings, while McAdoo polished off the win pitching the final two innings and striking out five batters in the process.

Although the four early runs would have been enough with the dominant pitching on the night, the Sharks added to the lead in the third inning as Caleb Stanton launched a two-run homer that scored Cole Rambler as well.

Not only did Lickliter and McAdoo bring productivity on the mound but it also carried over to the plate as they both recorded an RBI in the contest as well.

Being aggressive on the basepaths was also something the Sharks conveyed with five stolen bases against the Panthers.

Senior Logan Bradley started for the Panthers and gave up just two earned runs on five hits with three strikeouts and a pair of walks in six innings.

With the win, the Sharks improved to a record of 12-8 and the Panthers dropped to 8-15.

Sporting JAX names first head coach of women's team

Sporting Club Jacksonville, the United Soccer League's Northeast Florida expansion franchise, has officially appointed Stacey Balaam as the first head coach of its women's Division One USL Super League team, which will kick off its inaugural season this August at the University of North Florida's Hodges Stadium.

As sporting director and head of soccer, Mark Warburton's first major coaching hire, the up-and-coming coaching talent brings a recent track record of success and player development to Sporting JAX. Most recently, she served as the associate head coach at Vanderbilt University, helping to lead the NCAA Top 20 program to historic achievements since 2023. Sporting JAX technical consultant and coaching legend in women's soccer at the University of Florida, Becky Burleigh, also assisted in the search.

"Finding the right leader as our first women's team head coach was crucial, and in Stacey, we have someone who embodies the values of Sporting JAX and has consistently displayed throughout her career," said Warburton. "Her passion for coaching, her deep tactical knowledge of the game, and her ability to connect and develop players set her apart. Through our conversations, it became clear that Stacey not only understands the magnitude of this opportunity but also embraces the responsibility of building a competitive and dynamic squad that will make our supporters proud."

"I am incredibly grateful for the opportunity to serve as the first head coach



Contributed photo

Stacey Balaam

of Sporting JAX's USL Super League Team," said Balaam. "The club has a clear ambition to not only provide opportunities for professional soccer careers but also to invest in developing young female talent at the academy level. The pathway that the club is building for aspiring players is something I deeply believe in, and I look forward to contributing to that vision. My goal is to cultivate an enjoyable, competitive and healthy environment where our talented squad can reach their full potential every day. We will strive for success in the inaugural season, set ambitious goals and grow together as a team that represents Jacksonville with pride and passion."

Originally from Suffolk, England,

Balaam spent the last two years as an assistant coach at Vanderbilt University where she focused on offensive strategy and player development. Under her leadership, the Commodores scored 45 goals last season, tied for the 10th most in a single season in program history and recorded their highest-scoring single game since 2019. Vanderbilt finished the season with 10 wins, earning a Sweet 16 appearance in the NCAA Tournament and their 13th appearance overall.

"Stacey is a consummate professional, and one of her strengths is her communication with the players and staff around her," said Darren Ambrose, head coach for Vanderbilt University's women's soccer team. "She is clear with her messaging, very detail-orientated, and her previous head coaching experience has given her a great understanding of what it takes to successfully manage a team. Her experience at Vanderbilt in a Top 20 collegiate program, combined with her passion for the game and experience as a former player in the USL, fully equips her to take this step up to the next level. We wish her the very best at Sporting JAX and in the USL Super

Prior to her time at Vanderbilt, Balaam served as head coach at the University of West Georgia where she guided the program to 40 victories in seasons, including the first berth of the Gulf South Tournament Championship in 2021. She also spent six seasons as an assistant at the University of North Georgia, where she helped the pro-

gram earn 91 wins and five NCAA Tournament appearances, achieving the highest national ranking in program history.

Balaam's influence extends beyond coaching as a former U.S. youth soccer scout who identified and evaluated top young players for National Youth Training Centers. Additionally, she served as a member of the NCAA Division II Women's Soccer South Region Advisory Committee in 2019.

As a player, she competed at a high level in the USL W-League. She captained the Atlanta Silverbacks and won the AW-League Championship in 2011, continuing as the team captain for the next two seasons. She was also a member of the U.S. U19 Women's National Team and a decorated athlete at Montevallo, where she was a two-time All-American, a four-time All-Conference honoree and was inducted into the school's Hall of Fame, as well as being named to the Gulf South Conference's All-Time Team.

Following the club's recent announcements of its multi-year partnership with adidas and the hiring of Mark Warburton as its new sporting director and head of soccer, Balaam's appointment reinforces Sporting JAX's rapid rise toward building a world-class organization and establishing a lasting legacy for women's professional soccer.

Season tickets for the USL Super League inaugural season are on sale now at sportingjax.com/tickets or by calling 904-863-KICK.

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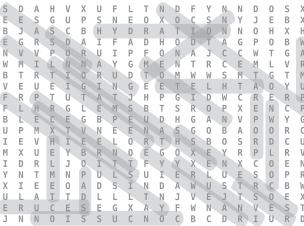
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NOTICE TO CREDITORS

THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR ST. JOHNS COUNTY, FLORIDA PROBATE DIVISION File No. CP25-0223 Division 59 IN RE: ESTATE OF FRANCES J. FOLEY, Deceased.

The administration of the estate of FRAN-CES J. FOLEY, deceased, whose date of death was January 11, 2025, is pending in the Circuit Court for St. Johns County, Florida, Probate Division, the address of which is 4010 Lewis Speedway, St. Augus-tine, FL 32084. The names and addresses of the personal representative and the personal representative's attorney are set

forth below. All creditors of the decedent and other persons having claims or demands against decedent's estate on whom a copy of this notice is required to be served must file their claims with this court ON OR BEFORE THE LATER OF 3 MONTHS AFTER THE TIME OF THE FIRST PUB-LICATION OF THIS NOTICE OR 30 DAYS AFTER THE DATE OF SERVICE OF A COPY OF THIS NOTICE ON THEM.

The personal representative has no duty to discover whether any property held at the time of the decedent's death by the decedent or the decedent's surviving spouse is property to which the Florida Uniform Disposition of Community Property Rights at Death Act as described in ss. 732.216-732.228, Florida Statutes, applies, or may apply, unless a written demand is made by a creditor as specified under s. 732.2211, Florida Statutes.

All other creditors of the decedent and other persons having claims or demands against decedent's estate must file their claims with this court WITHIN 3 MONTHS AFTER THE DATE OF THE FIRST PUBLI-CATION OF THIS NOTICE.

ALL CLAIMS NOT FILED WITHIN THE TIME PERIODS SET FORTH IN FLORIDA STATUTES SECTION 733.702 WILL BE FOREVER BARRED.
NOTWITHSTANDING THE TIME PERI-

ODS SET FORTH ABOVE, ANY CLAIM FILED TWO (2) YEARS OR MORE AFTER THE DECEDENT'S DATE OF DEATH IS BARRED.

The date of first publication of this notice is April 3, 2025.
Attorney for Personal Representative /s/ James E. Bedsole
JAMES E. BEDSOLE, ESQ.

FL. Bar No.: 500194 2450 Old Moultrie Road, Ste. 104 St. Augustine, FL 32086 Tel: (904) 797-8701 service@bedsolelaw.com Personal Representative /s/ Colm G. Folev COLM G. FOLEY 2108 West Giddings Street Chicago, Illinois 60625-1402 Legal 121155 Published 4/3/2025 and

4/10/2025 in St. Johns County Ponte



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

ATHLETE	GUARDS	PADS
CONCUSSION	HELMET	PREVENT
COOLDOWN	HYDRATION	PROPER
EXHAUSTION	INJURY	PROTECTION
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CROSSWORD														
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				62							63			

ACROSS

- 1. Garden tool
- 5. A way to preserve
- 11. Gratitude
- 14. Domestic sheep
- 15. Simpler
- 18. Cavities containing liquid
- 19. Large fish-eating bird
- 21. Ocular protection index
- 23. Phil , former CIA
- 24. Icelandic poems
- 28. Pop
- 29. Device
- 30. Actor Rudd
- 32. A pituitary hormone
- 33. Focus on an object
- 35. Corpuscle count (abbr.)
- 36. Young women's association
- 39. Not shallow
- 41. Doctor
- 42. Furniture
- 44. Hindu male religious teacher
- 46. Highly spiced stew
- 47. A way to communicate
- 49. Almost last
- 52. Astronomer Carl
- 56. Small horses
- 58. A slender tower with balconies
- 60. A disrespectful quality
- 62. Fully shaded inner regions 63. Short convulsive intake of breath

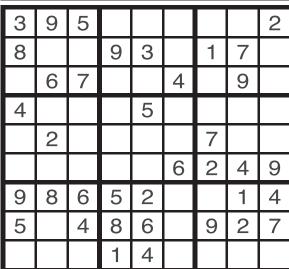
DOWN

- 1. Popular Sunday dinner option
- 2. Oil cartel
- 3. Agile
- 4. Greek goddess of discord
- 5. Genetically distinct variety
- 6. Indicates badly
- 7. Popular Mr. T character

- 8. Consumed
- 9. Chinese dynasty
- 10. NFL great Randy
- 12. Within
- 13. Palm trees
- 16. Fungal disease
- 17. Tall, slender-leaved plants
- 20. Affirmative! (slang)
- 22. A passport is one
- 25. Two outs in baseball (abbr.)
- 26. Swiss river
- 27. Deferential
- 29. Where a bachelor lives
- 31. Portable computer screen material
- 34. A crying noise of a bird
- 36. Sticky, amorphous substance

- 37. Starchy dish of dried tubers
- 38. Type of acid
- 40. Partner to "Ma"
- 43. 16 ounces
- 45. The Bay State
- 48. A well-defined track or path
- 50. Substitution
- 51. Defined period
- 53. Group of toughs
- 54. Region
- 55. Famed Scottish Loch
- 57. Blood relation
- 58. Not around
- 59. Recipe measurement
- 61. Father to Junior

SUDOKU



Here's How It Works:

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





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