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Senior Living  
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Thursday, May 8, 2025

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VOLUME 56, NO. 27 \$1.00

## Resilience coaches to host event locally in June

By Anthony Richards

The mind is a powerful thing and, for resilience coaches Stéphane and Shalee Schafeitel, understanding it is the ultimate key to unlocking every person's potential and allowing them to be the person they dream of being.

For the husband-and-wife team, also known as "Stéph & Shay," who have been named the "world's No. 1 resilience coaches" by Apple News, they spent 12 years researching various business leaders and athletes to find out the deeper aspects of what drove them to their success and put what they gathered into an award-winning bestseller called "Master Your Mindpower."

The couple moved to Nocatee about two years ago and will be sharing their message with the community they now call home and will be holding a Mindpower Breakthrough Live! event that will be held at the Sawgrass Marriott Golf Resort & Spa in Ponte Vedra Beach on June 5 to 7.

The three-day seminar will be discussing a variety of aspects to help those in attendance master their mind power, including eliminating mental and emotional barriers, re-programing old behaviors and patterns, and aligning one's principles with their passion and purpose in life, which the Schafeitels consider the three pillars of mind power.

"Someone wanting to master their

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## Circle of Creation hosts second session at the link

By Holly Tishfield

On Wednesday, April 30, community members joined at the link at Nocatee to attend the second session of the Circle of Creation series.

The series, which began its first of seven sessions in March, focused on how design thinking, emotional intelligence and AI can transform the way you approach challenges.

Business leaders and professionals from around the community gained insight on a process for creative problem-solving, emotional tools that can be used to lead with empathy and further tips on how to responsibly use AI in daily work.

Gurpreet Sania Misra, co-founder of the link and Sapna Foundation, opened the session by thanking attendees for their return, expressing



Photo by Holly Tishfield

THE LINK continues on Page 8

Guests attending the second session of Circle of Creation.

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THE RECORDER

- Hugh Osteen**  
COO/VP  
hugh@osteenmediagroup.com  
(904) 285-8831
- Susan Griffin**  
Publisher  
susan@pontevedrarecorder.com  
(904) 686-3938
- Shaun Ryan**  
Editor  
shaun@pontevedrarecorder.com  
(904) 285-8831, ext. 1202
- Anthony Richards**  
Reporter  
anthony@pontevedrarecorder.com  
(904) 285-8831, ext. 1207
- Holly Tishfield**  
Reporter  
holly@pontevedrarecorder.com
- Don Coble**  
Contributor  
don@claytodayonline.com
- Amber Anderson**  
Page/Graphic Designer  
amber@pontevedrarecorder.com
- Kristin Flanagan**  
Senior Account Executive  
kristin@pontevedrarecorder.com  
(904) 285-8831, ext. 1206
- Joe Wilhelm**  
Circulation Manager  
joe@osteenmediagroup.com  
(904) 300-5374

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BRIEFS

Seymour’s Bookstore plans special book sale

Seymour’s Bookstore in the Ponte Vedra Beach Library is having a May Days Lobby Book Sale starting on Friday, May 9, and running through May 24. Open all library hours, but the book sale will close at 3 p.m. on May 24. All Books (fiction, non-fiction, children’s, cookbooks), CDs, DVDs, vinyls are \$1.

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.

Farmers market open every Friday

The Ponte Vedra Friday Farmers Market takes place from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. every Friday at The Peace of Heart Community Farm, offering fresh produce, local farm goods and a welcoming space to connect with neighbors and small businesses.

This farmers market features fresh, organically grown produce; Florida grass-fed beef and pork; real local honey; pasture-raised chicken and eggs; wholegrain breads; gluten-free sourdough bread; natural botanical skincare; creations by local artisans and more in a family-friendly atmosphere

The Peace of Heart Community Farm is located at 14A S. Roscoe Blvd., Ponte Vedra Beach.

GTM Research Reserve plans Evening for the Estuary

Join Guana Tolomato Matanzas National Estuarine Research Reserve and Friends of GTM for Evening for the Estuary, a special event celebrating 25 years of conservation and research. This annual fundraiser will be held 6-9 p.m. Thursday, May 8, at Michael's at Hyatt

Place, 117 Vilano Road, St. Augustine.  
To register, go to [gtmnerr.org/calendars](http://gtmnerr.org/calendars).  
Former Action News Jax anchor John Bachman will serve as master of ceremonies.

Free concert offers bluegrass and more

The Friends of the Ponte Vedra Beach Library will present The Grass Menagerie on May 13. The group was formed nine years ago for audiences desiring the bluegrass feel but with an added factor-variety. The instrumentation lends itself to strict bluegrass-rooted music, but the music selection takes it to another level by including jazz, pop, rock and country. The concert in the FOL room in the library is free and is open to the public. Doors open at 6 p.m., concert at 6:30 p.m.

Essential Tremor Support Group to meet

Do you suspect you have — or a loved one has — essential tremor, a condition often involving the shaking of head, hands and or legs? ET is not Parkinson’s, though it’s similar but much more prevalent and not well known.

Attend a meeting of the Essential Tremor Support Group at 11 a.m. June 3 at the Baptist HealthPlace in Nocatee (400 Colonnade Road, unit 130, Ponte Vedra) to hear from Stephen Morio, territory manager for Insightec Focused Ultrasound, who will speak about an incisionless surgical treatment now offered in Jacksonville.

For further information or to RSVP, contact Jan Kary at [jkary@verizon.net](mailto:jkary@verizon.net).

Family seining activity planned

Join a guided family seining activity from 9 to 11 a.m. Saturday, May 10, 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](http://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.

— Compiled by Shaun Ryan

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# Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive

*National Association of Letter Carriers conducting nation's largest single-day food drive*

Saturday, May 10, marks the 33rd anniversary of the largest one-day food drive in the nation — the National Association of Letter Carriers' Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive.

Letter carriers are in the communities they serve every day and often come face to face with a sad reality for far too many, hunger.

Each year on the second Saturday in May, letter carriers across the country collect nonperishable food donations

from customers. These donations go directly to local food pantries to provide food to people who need our help.

Over the course of its more than 30-year history, the drive has collected more than 1.9 billion pounds of food, thanks to a Postal Service universal delivery network that spans the entire nation, including Puerto Rico, Guam and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

The need is great, but you can help. Currently, more than 44 million Americans are unsure where their next meal will come from. More than 14 million are children who feel hunger's impact on their overall health and ability to perform in school. Nearly 5.5 million seniors over age 60 are food insecure, with many who live on fixed incomes

often too embarrassed to ask for help.

This food drive's timing is crucial. Food banks and pantries often receive most of their donations during the winter holiday seasons. By springtime, many pantries are depleted, entering the summer low on supplies at a time when many school breakfast and lunch programs are not available to children in need.

Participating in this year's Letter Carriers' Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive is simple. Just leave nonperishable food

donations in a bag by your mailbox Saturday, May 10, and your letter carrier will do the rest.

Customers are encouraged to verify food collections with their letter carrier or by entering delivery ZIP Code at <https://www.nalc.org/community-service/food-drive/branch-lookup> for local NALC Branch coverage in their area. If the search tool does not return any results, contact the local Post Office or email [communityserviceshq@nalc.org](mailto:communityserviceshq@nalc.org).

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Stéphane Schafeitel



Photos courtesy of Stéphan & Shay

A Mindpower Breakthrough Live! event will be held at the Sawgrass Marriott Golf Resort & Spa in Ponte Vedra Beach on June 5 to 7.



Shalee Schafeitel

Resilience

Continued from 1

mind power, they first have to have a really solid foundation, and that means they understand their purpose, which is where we’re going; passion, which is how we’re going to get there; and principles, which are how we’re going to behave on the journey,” Stéphane Schafeitel said. “You have got to have a firm understanding of your ‘3 P’s,’ and what it all means to you, because that tells you who you are.”

The seminar is designed to take an

even deeper dive into the three pillars and look at the pillars within those, and how they can adapt and be fine-tuned for everyone regardless of age or background and what that person is seeking to get out of life.

“Too many people think that external factors are at the root of all those people’s success, and some individuals did have access to resources, but a lot didn’t,” Stéphane Schafeitel said. “Honestly it’s internal, and what we discovered was that any individual can find success as long as they master the six inches between their ears.”

According to Shalee Schafeitel, part of

the mastery is not just knowing what to do but then having the ability to repeat it every day moving forward, and it is that consistency that leads to ultimate success.

“How do you be consistent? Well, they have to utilize discipline,” Shalee Schafeitel said. “Like Arnold Schwarzenegger, it’s not easy to get that big and bulky, but it takes constant work every day even when you don’t feel like it or you don’t want to. It’s all about getting in control of your ‘mind power,’ as we call it.”

Having a seminar such as Mindpower Breakthrough Live! in the local commu-

nity is something they have been thinking about and wanting to accomplish since moving to the area.

“We feel like we’re setting down roots, and now we can really start meeting people and connecting,” Shalee Schafeitel said. “We feel like it can be a good tool for any local businesses or really just anyone wanting to win at life.”

Anyone wanting to learn more or buy tickets to Mindpower Breakthrough Live! can go to [www.mindpower-breakthrough.com](http://www.mindpower-breakthrough.com) and possible discounts may be available to local residents by emailing [hello@StephAndShay.com](mailto:hello@StephAndShay.com).

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GUEST COLUMN

Summertime can help in times of divorce

By Olivia Dodd  
Florida Women's Law Group

Divorce is never an easy decision — but it can be a powerful opportunity for a fresh start, especially during the summer. With its natural sense of transition, summer offers space, clarity and momentum — making it the ideal time to focus on what you want next.

Whether you're contemplating divorce or already in the process, this season can be your launchpad toward independence and a life designed on your terms. According to Heather Quick, owner, CEO and attorney at Florida Women's Law Group, summer is the right moment to prepare for your next chapter with intention.

Here's how summer break can be the ideal time to file for divorce while chil-

dren are out of school:

**Less Disruption to Children's Routine:** One of the primary concerns for parents contemplating divorce is the impact it will have on their children. By initiating divorce proceedings during the summer break, children can have time to adjust to the changes without the added stress of school commitments. They can transition to new living arrangements, schedules and routines more smoothly when they're not balancing schoolwork and extracurricular activities.

**Flexibility for Parenting Arrangements:** Summer break provides the flexibility to establish and adjust parenting arrangements without the constraints of the school calendar. Take advantage of the longer days and warmer weather to enjoy quality time with your kids and create lasting memories.

**Emotional Healing and Self-Reflection:** Divorce is a significant life transition that often involves a period of emotional healing and self-reflection for women. The summer break can offer a reprieve from the daily routine, allowing you to focus on self-care, introspection and personal growth. Use this time to rediscover passions, interests and goals that may have been overshadowed during the marriage.

While the decision to pursue divorce is deeply personal and should not be taken lightly, the summer break can provide a window of opportunity for women seeking to navigate this process with greater ease and support. By prioritizing your own well-being and the well-being of your children, you absolutely can use this season to lay the foundation for a happier

and healthier future.

If you're considering divorce and need guidance or legal support, give us a call at 904-595-8515. Our team of experienced attorneys are dedicated to advocating for women's rights and best interests. Take the first step towards a brighter future for you and your family today.

**Disclaimer: This article is for informational purposes only. The information provided in this article is not intended to be legal advice. If you have a legal issue, please contact a lawyer. Olivia Dodd is marketing manager for Florida Women's Law Group "Divorce for Women, by Women," 8771 Perimeter Park Court, Suite 101, Jacksonville. The office phone number is 904-241-0012.**

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# Nominations begin May 16

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YOU, our valued readers, will have the chance to nominate your favorite businesses in various categories online. Online voting begins Friday, June 20 after nominations are complete.

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*Erin Spalding has had a successful, multi-faceted career and is today managing broker for the Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Network Realty Ponte Vedra Beach/Nocatee Office.*

## Erin Spalding

### As told to Shaun Ryan

#### What are the responsibilities of your job?

I'm managing the office. I'm managing the budget. Making sure that we stay within our budget guidelines and are profitable.

On top of that, I am managing a little over 120 agents, independent contractors, plus our admin and our business partners.

My sole responsibility with my agents is to train them, coach them, mentor them, support them, be their biggest cheerleader. You know, whatever it takes to help them be successful in their business.

That's what I love and enjoy doing. That's what my passion's about, so it's very rewarding.

#### How busy is your office?

Our Ponte Vedra office is our highest producing office. We don't necessarily have the highest number of transactions because our offices that are averaging at a lower price point, obviously they have a lot more transactions.

But we're dealing at that high-lever price point. We have a lot of high-end clients and C-level professionals that expect the best of the best in their representation.

That's something that I love about this business model that Linda Sherrer [founder, president and CEO of Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Network Realty] set with our company, that we work as single agents. So, we have the highest level of representation for our clients.

I think the data speaks for itself. We are the leader in the luxury market share, and the leader for all the market share for all of Duval, St. Johns and Clay counties.

#### What can you tell me about your individual approach to this role?

Another thing I love about our office is we have outstanding professionals who impress me every day. I mean, the amount of experience they have, it's very humbling because, personally, I've only been in this business under six years.

Being able to lead this team with the wealth of knowledge they have, the experience they have, is very humbling. But we're not competitive with each other. It's so collaborative, it feels like you're part of a family.

Everyone's friendly. Everyone's willing to collaborate and help each other. That's part of our culture, and I'm super proud to maintain that and have agents feel comfortable and welcomed, no matter how often or how little they come to the office.

They're independent contractors. What they put into it is what they will get out of it. But I want them to feel comfortable when they walk through those doors.

My background was in private club

marketing for high-end luxury resort clubs, and I did a lot of presentations to real estate offices because I was selling a lifestyle. I partnered with Realtors. They're selling a home, but they're also selling a lifestyle. The Berkshire agents always stood out to me as being the most knowledgeable, the most welcoming — they just stood out. And so, when I became licensed — because that's what I finally realized I wanted to do — I chose Berkshire Hathaway because of that. The training and support it offers is unmatched, especially for newly licensed agents.

One of the hardest things starting out as a new agent in this industry is having confidence in what you're doing. That comes through practice, your training, through the support of your broker.

#### What should potential homebuyers know about this market?

One piece of advice I have for buyers in this market right now is to just be ready, because the market's going to change. What goes up must come down. What goes down will come up.

People are going to keep buying and selling real estate. That's always going to happen. But being ready, being prepared, being pre-qualified, talking with the lender, talking with your financial adviser if you have the cash reserves — but just be ready because when that home comes on the market, if it's priced right and if it's ready to move in, it's going to go quickly.

It also really depends on looking at the micro-market and not nationwide. Even a specific neighborhood, because things happening in Marsh Landing are very different from what's happening in The Plantation, or what's happening in Sawgrass Country Club, or what's happening in Nocatee. You really have to look at the micro-market.

Having a knowledgeable real estate adviser that can keep you up to date on what's happening, who can give you the data so that you can be knowledgeable and you can stay ahead of it.

#### Tell me about your background.

I was born and raised in Massachusetts. I wanted to go to a large school. I wanted to get out of state and meet new people. And I was lucky enough to be accepted to the University of Florida. I graduated in 2008 after four amazing years there.

My first job was in Jacksonville, working for a large recruiting company. I started as a recruiter and after three months was prompted into sales. Eventually, I found my way into the private club memberships and marketing position.

My first role with that was actually at Hammock Beach Resort in Palm Coast. They hired me to create a new membership level for them because this was after the



Contributed photo

Erin Spalding

market crash. This was in 2012.

So they hired me to create a new membership category, and that went really well.

... I moved to Tampa to be a director of membership for a private club there, but after six short months, I was recruited back to be the director of membership sales for the Ponte Vedra Inn & Club and the Lodge & Club. In 2011, my parents had followed me to Ponte Vedra Beach. So, we wanted to get back to the east coast of Florida. And it was a no-brainer to work for a five-diamond resort and club!

I did that for three years and had the opportunity to work from home and be a private club membership consultant. I did that for clubs out in Texas and South Florida. Hammock Beach actually hired me back to consult for their membership sales. They also wanted me to help with property management. Researching it, I was like: I really need my real estate license.

So, I pursued my real estate license and then just decided I was just going to do that full-time. I knew that Berkshire Hathaway was where I needed to hang my license and get the best training, the best support. My career just kind of took off from there with Berkshire.

I did leave Berkshire for a little bit. I was recruited to be an agent mentor. ... That was great. It was a lot of fun, and I realized how passionate I was about agent mentoring and helping others.

... After a few months, Berkshire Hathaway had leadership opportunities available, and I was able to come on as an assistant manager.

Then, we had another opening to be the managing broker.

#### What do you like most about living here?

I really love how Ponte Vedra Beach is upscale but has a laid-back side. It's luxurious without being overly flashy. I feel like people love the blend of affluence and relaxed coastal living.

Also important to me for building my family is, you know, the top-rated schools, and our weather here is great. Mild winters. Plenty of sunshine, so a great outdoor lifestyle.

But also the proximity to Jacksonville International Airport or St. Augustine to explore and indulge in the history.

#### How do you like to spend your free time?

I love spending time with my husband and my two kids. I'm blessed to have my parents 10 minutes away. My mother-in-law is also in Nocatee.

Very lucky to have their support and help with the young ones while I'm working full time and my husband's working full time.

We just adore our children and spending time with our family and friends.

Family's very important to us, and I feel like that's the type of manager that I am. And I feel like that's what my agents feel, is that they can call me anytime, they can come to me, they can talk to me about whatever, because it just feels like a family.

I'm just very grateful to be a part of this amazing company with our great leadership. ...



# Five honored at ROWITA Awards ceremony

The St. Johns Cultural Council has recognized five women for their contributions to the arts during the 2025 Dr. Gail Pflaster Recognizing Outstanding Women in the Arts (ROWITA) Awards ceremony, held at The Waterworks, 184 San Marco Avenue, in March.

This year’s honorees are Irene Arriola, Ellie Potts Barrett, Joanne Everett, Inez McDonald and Caren Umbarger. Each woman has made a significant impact on the cultural landscape of St. Johns County through leadership, education, philanthropy and artistic achievement.

### About the Honorees

- Irene Arriola has promoted local arts and culture for three decades as an advocate and volunteer, serving on both the Cultural Council’s State of the Arts Grant Committee since 2008 and the ROWITA Committee since 2011.
- Ellie Potts Barrett is an internationally recognized dancer, choreographer and educator who has taught and performed across the country and contributed greatly to local dance education since 1994.
- Joanne Everett has shown outstanding leadership in music education and serves as president of EMMA Concert Association, bringing world-class performances to St. Augustine.

- Inez McDonald has enriched the community with her philanthropy, supporting major cultural projects at the Lightner Museum, Limelight Theatre and other organizations.
  - Caren Umbarger is a musician, music educator and award-winning author whose work has contributed to the vibrancy of St. Johns County’s arts scene.
- Guests enjoyed live harp music by Susan Tice and food and beverages provided by Verdell’s Cooking & Catering. In keeping with tradition, each honoree received a hand-turned wood bowl created by award-winning St. Johns County wood turner Tina Minahan.
- Since 2021, the Cultural Council has commissioned resident women artists to craft unique awards for the ROWITA program.

The St. Johns Cultural Council established the Dr. Gail Pflaster ROWITA Awards in 2009 to recognize women who have made significant and lasting contributions to the arts in St. Johns County. The community is encouraged to submit nominations of women who have made lifetime contributions to the arts in St. Johns County through their work, leadership or philanthropic support.

Nomination applications for 2026 will open Nov. 1 and close Dec. 31 at [stjohnsculture.com/rowita-awards](http://stjohnsculture.com/rowita-awards).



Contributed photo

The 2025 ROWITA Award winners are, from left, Caren Umbarger, Inez McDonald, Joanne Everett, Irene Arriola and Ellie Potts Barrett.

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Circle of Creation takes place at the link at Nocatee



Parul Patel leading her session

# The link

Continued from 1

her hope at the evening’s outcome.

“Tonight is about elevating your potential, exploring bold ideas and building meaningful connections that last,” she said.

The interactive session was led by Parul Patel, who shared her insights in a presentation titled “From Empathy to Execution: Integrating AI and EI into Amazon’s Working Backwards Method.”

“If you only leave with one thing tonight,” Patel said to the audience, “I want you to get really comfortable thinking big.”

Patel is a transformational business leader with more than two decades of executive experience known for



Photos by Holly Tishfield

**Gurpreet Sania Misra giving opening remarks**

orchestrating multimillion-dollar growth and driving meaningful change across organizations of all sizes.

Patel has a track record of turning businesses around and building high-performing teams — experience she brings

from her time as managing partner at Avesa Partners and as former president of growth and strategy at Assessment Technologies Group.

At Slalom Consulting, she launched and scaled a new business unit that grew to more than \$80 million and introduced digital innovations. Before that, during her time at Accenture, she doubled a \$100 million practice and overhauled operations for more than 50 organizations.

During the session, attendees explored the Amazon Go store case study, uncovered the five steps to applying AI in design thinking and discovered how emotional intelligence (EI) fosters psychological safety — the bedrock of team building and innovation.

The next Circle of Creation event will take place on Thursday, May 29, from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at the link.

Register at: [eventbrite.com/e/circle-of-creation-womens-program-tickets-1254682030729?aff=oddtcreator](https://eventbrite.com/e/circle-of-creation-womens-program-tickets-1254682030729?aff=oddtcreator)

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# Tips offered to protect sea turtle hatchlings

Sea turtle nesting season officially began Thursday, May 1, and the Ponte Vedra Sea Turtle Patrol is calling on all beachgoers to be good neighbors to these ancient marine reptiles by following a few simple, turtle-friendly tips.

“Florida’s Atlantic Coast is a vital nesting ground for over 75% of the world’s population of loggerhead sea turtles,” said Sea Turtle Patrol permit holders Sandy Stam and Colette Crone. “We also welcome green, leatherback and Kemp’s ridley marine turtles to our shores. It’s up to us to share the sand responsibly and make sure their nesting journey ends with a safe start for the next generation.”

Because most marine turtles lay their nests during the night hours, trained sea turtle patrol teams conduct daily morning surveys to monitor activity. When a patrol discovers a nest, it is triangulated by



stakes and taped off to protect it. Beachgoers can do their part by remembering: “Clean, Dark, Flat.”

**Clean:** Leave only footprints! Sea

turtles search for a quiet and obstacle-free space to make their nests. This means no plastic, toys or leftover chairs remaining on the beach after dusk. If it didn’t origi-

nate naturally from the ocean, it shouldn’t remain on the beach.

**Dark:** Lights out, turtles are out and about! Nesting females and hatchlings find the ocean by following the light of the moon, and flashlights, phones or bright building lights can lead them astray, often with fatal consequences. St. Johns County enforces strict lighting rules to help keep their path clear and natural.

**Flat:** Your personal sandcastle or mighty hole to China might be a trap for a turtle. Before you leave, flatten sand sculptures and fill in holes. What’s fun for humans can be hazardous for a nesting mama or tiny hatchling.

If a sea turtle is seen nesting or a hatchling is discovered along the beach, report it to the permit holder listed on the nest marker or contact the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.



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# DONNA Foundation celebrates moms with matching gift challenge, 5K race

The DONNA Foundation recently announced a \$15,000 matching gift challenge supporting fundraising efforts for its annual Celebrate Every Mom campaign. THE PLAYERS Championship and Golf Fights Cancer, whose mission is to raise funds to make tangible improvements in the cancer-care experience for patients and their families, have pledged a \$15,000 matching gift for donations up to \$15,000.

The campaign will conclude with the annual DONNA Mother's Day 5K, the second event of the three-part foundation's Fearless Series, presented by Wingard. The race, which will start and finish at Friday Musicale, will be held on Saturday, May 10.

Funds raised through the DONNA Mother's Day 5K and the foundation's Celebrate Every Mom Fundraising Campaign will support The DONNA Foundation's mission to provide hope, support and financial relief to those living with breast cancer.

Approximately one in three patients served by The DONNA Foundation are mothers with children at home. By hosting this event on the Saturday of Mother's Day weekend, Foundation leaders hope to inspire moms everywhere to take steps toward understanding, improving and protecting their breast health — this and every year.

"Our annual DONNA Mother's Day 5K race is special for so many reasons," said Amanda Napolitano, executive director of The DONNA Foundation. "Supporting women and moms undergoing breast cancer treatment is



With Public Forum presented by



what we do year-round, but at this event, we get to honor them and every mom for all the hard work they do. We're excited to bring an educational component to the program this year, thanks to our partnership UF Health. This important information about breast health can be eye opening and, we hope, lifesaving. We hope to see you all then."

New this year, the UF Health Breast Center is bringing its popular Public Forum directed by Dr. Shahla Masood to the race day festivities. Immediately following the race, the program "What Everyone Should Know About Breast Health" will be presented over a free brunch inside Friday Musicale. Guests can choose to attend this free event by adding on to their 5K registration, or regis-

ter separately through the link below.

During the 30 days leading up to Mother's Day (April 10 through May 10), The DONNA Foundation is celebrating moms locally and across the nation through its Celebrate Every Mom campaign. Supporters can join in this effort by:

- Registering to run, walk or volunteer at the DONNA Mother's Day 5K. Participants will enjoy the DONNA 5K route through Jacksonville's beautiful Riverside neighborhood, starting and ending at Friday Musicale. The race begins at 8 a.m. Runners can choose to run in person or virtually their way, with time submissions open through Sunday, May 11, at 11:59 p.m.

- Attending the UF Health Public Forum "What Everyone Should Know About Breast Health." This free informational event is open to the public, but does require advanced registration. Masood will lead a panel of expert physicians over brunch. Add attendance on to your 5K registration, or register separately.

- Supporting the "Celebrate Every Mom" matching gift challenge by making a donation in support of the programs of The DONNA Foundation, starting a fundraiser or joining an existing fundraising team. You can double the impact of your gift this month thanks to THE PLAYERS and Golf Fights Cancer match.

- Partnering with The DONNA Foundation to become

DONNA continues on Page 11






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DONNA

Continued from 10

a sponsor of the 2025 DONNA Mother's Day 5K event. Sponsor and vendor opportunities designed to maximize brand exposure locally, regionally and nationwide to a unique and desirable demographic are available. Companies can also sponsor race registrations for employees.

• Celebrating all month with your participation in various events and third-party fundraisers, all dedicated to supporting The DONNA Foundation's mission.

Learn more about all of these ways to get involved at [thedonnafoundation.org/moms/](http://thedonnafoundation.org/moms/).

The DONNA Mother's Day 5K is the second event of The DONNA Foundation's 2025 Fearless Series, presented by Wingard, with the final event of the year, the DONNA 5K at TPC Sawgrass taking place in October.

Full details for The DONNA Foundation's 2026 Series, including the 19th Annual DONNA Marathon Weekend, Jan. 30 to Feb. 1, 2026, will be announced later this year.

Restaurants announce Mother's Day menus

CuliVino Hospitality Management and Consulting has announced its Mother's Day menus, available at Prati Italia and Town Hall on Sunday, May 11. Prati Italia at the St. Johns Town Center and Town Hall in historic San Marco are the Jacksonville restaurant concepts led by two-time James Beard nominee Chef Tom Gray.

Prati Italia is offering special brunch and dinner pre-fixe family-style menus, featuring sharable items the entire family will enjoy. Brunch is served from 10 a.m.

to 2 p.m. The cost is \$48 for adults, \$24 for children ages 5-12. Children age 4 and younger dine for free. Dinner is served from 4:30 to 9 p.m. The cost is \$75 for adults. A separate children's menu will be available. The pricing does not include beverages, tax or gratuity.

Note that Prati Italia's a la carte menu will not be available on Mother's Day. Reservations are encouraged.

Town Hall is offering its full a la carte menu on Mother's Day with a selection of

Town Hall favorites and featured specials including deviled eggs and shrimp & grits. Brunch is served from 10:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Dinner is served from 4:30 to 9 p.m. Reservations are encouraged.

For Prati Italia reservations, call 904-998-9744 or go to [pratiitalia.com](http://pratiitalia.com). Prati Italia is located at the St. Johns Town Center at 4972 Big Island Drive in Jacksonville. For Town Hall reservations, call 904-398-0726 or go to [townhalljax.com](http://townhalljax.com). Town Hall is located at 2012 San Marco Blvd., Jacksonville.

Chocolate is the finishing touch this Mother's Day

Mother's Day presents an opportunity for people to shower the special women in their lives with extra love and affection. There are many ways to show Mom you care apart from gifts and dining out. A homemade dessert featuring rich and creamy chocolate might be exactly what Mom needs to cap off a perfect day spent with her family.

This recipe for "Mint Chocolate Mousse" from "Chocolate: Deliciously Indulgent Recipes for Chocolate Lovers" (Ryland, Peters & Small) by Maxine Clark is ideal for mothers who love the taste of mint and chocolate. It's relatively simple to make, so it should be something that young children

can handle with a little help from an adult.

Mint Chocolate Mousse

Serves 4

- 5 ounces dark chocolate (60 to 70 percent cocoa solids), chopped or broken up into smaller pieces
- 4 to 6 chocolate covered dinner mints, chopped
- 4 eggs, separated
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 4 tablespoons heavy cream
- 1 teaspoon powdered gelatin
- 2 tablespoons chopped chocolate mint


sticks, or frosted mint leaves and 1 cup heavy cream, to decorate  
4 pots or dessert cups, for serving

Melt the chocolate with the dinner mints over a double boiler or in the microwave. Let cool slightly. Using an electric mixer, beat together the egg yolks and sugar in a large bowl until thick and mousselike, then beat in the melted chocolate-mint mixture.

Sprinkle the gelatin over 4 tablespoons water in a small, heatproof bowl and let soak and swell for 2 to 3 minutes. Put the

MOUSSE continues on Page 12

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# Alhambra offers Mother's Day special

Alhambra Theatre & Dining, 12000 Beach Blvd., Jacksonville, is offering a Mother's Day certificate, on sale now through Mother's Day. Mom can choose a show for two people for \$89; certain conditions and restrictions apply. Price doesn't include taxes or gratuity.

The venue will stage four shows to choose from.

"My Fair Lady" runs from May 15 to June 22. "Charlie and the Chocolate Factory" runs June 26 to Aug. 17. "Come From Away" runs Aug. 28 to Oct. 5. And "The Mystery of Edwin Drood" will run Oct. 9 to Nov. 9.

To purchase tickets, call the box office at 904-641-1212 or go to [sales.alhambrajax.com/MD25/?id=1318&code=TU](https://sales.alhambrajax.com/MD25/?id=1318&code=TU).

For information, go to [alhambrajax.com](https://alhambrajax.com).

# Mother's Day dove release follows workshop

Doves will be released on Mother's Day as part of an Alternatives to Violence workshop, to be held 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday, May 11, at Shine Massage & Spa, 353 6th Avenue South Jacksonville Beach.

This workshop will explore alternatives to violence. Participants will learn skills and techniques to manage conflict peacefully and effectively.


This in-person event provides a safe and supportive environment for participants to discuss and practice nonviolent communication. Whether you're dealing with personal relationships, workplace conflicts or community issues, this workshop will equip you with the tools you need to navigate challenging situations with grace and empathy.


For additional information on developing your own workshop at your school or office contact call/text: Jennifer Price 904-502-9385.

Donations are set at different levels. To get tickets, go to [eventbrite.com](https://eventbrite.com) and search for "Alternatives to Violence Workshop."

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## Mousse

Continued from 11

bowl in a pan of simmering water and stir until the gelatin has dissolved. Beat into the chocolate-mint mixture.

Working quickly, beat the egg whites in a clean, dry bowl until stiff but not dry, then fold into the chocolate mixture with a metal spoon.

Divide the mousse between the pots. Scatter with the chopped mint sticks, then refrigerate until set. Alternatively, whip the 1 cup cream and use to decorate the mousses, along with the frosted mint leaves. Leave at cool room temperature for about 20 minutes before serving.





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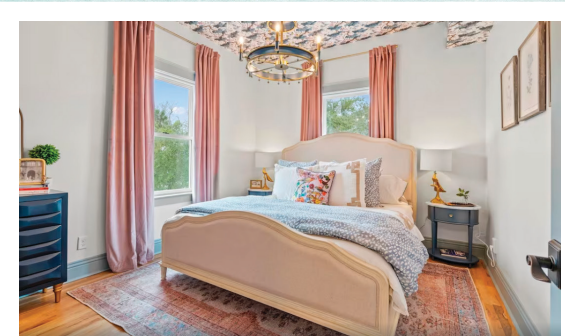
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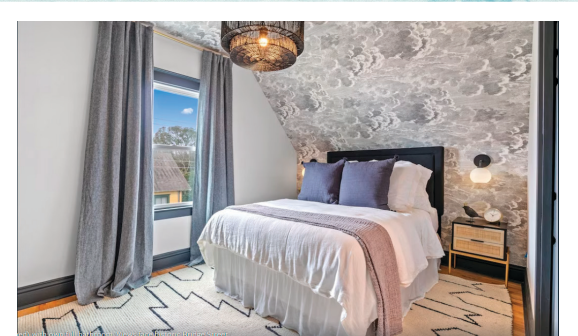
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# Speaker to relate experience teaching in China



Carole Holland

Carole Holland, a resident at The Atwater for only six months, has already made her mark on the community.

Her presentation on April 16 on “Teaching in a Foreign Country” fascinated her audience and elicited so much interest from the guests that she was invited back on Wednesday, May 14, to continue with her talk, focusing this time on teaching in China. Organizers expect this to be as captivating as her first lecture on Korea. The presentation begins at 11 a.m.

With a varied and extensive background ranging from teaching aboard to real estate sales to apartment complex management, Holland brings a wealth of knowledge and expertise to everything she does.

On April 16, she was the guest speaker at The Atwater’s “Getting to Know You” speaker program. She captivated her audience with her presentation on what it was like teaching English as a second language in South Korea.

The program is open to residents of The Atwater, their guests and the public. The Atwater in Nocatee is located at 48 Pine Shadow Drive, Ponte Vedra.

Reservations are not necessary. Light refreshments will be served. For further information, call 904-320-1056.



Carole Holland with her male students.

Contributed photos



Carole Holland with her entire class in front of the high school where she taught in China.



The high school in China where Carole Holland taught.

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# Nocatee Rotary Heroes receive awards

The Rotary Club of Ponte Vedra (Nocatee) along with its presenting sponsor IQ Fiber honored two first responders, a guidance counselor and a health care professional for their service during the past year.

St. Johns County Rotary Hero Firefighter of the Year, engineer Barry Dunn from Station 18 in Nocatee; St. John County Sheriff's Office Rotary Hero Deputy of the Year Dalton Spinks; Education Rotary Hero Shii McDuff, Valley Ridge Academy guidance clerk; and Rotary Health Care Hero Nancy Cross, transportation director at Starling at Nocatee were presented plaques.

The Fourth Annual Rotary Heroes Awards event was hosted by the Ponte Vedra Rotary Foundation, the charitable arm of The Rotary Club of Ponte Vedra. The awards were given in recognition of excellence in vocational service, which is one of Rotary's foundational values. The event coincided with the seventh anniversary of the club's chartering.

Many Rotarians, family and friends of the honorees attended the event at Crosswater Hall at Nocatee. Attendees included Sheriff Rob Hardwick and wife Kendell, St. Johns County Acting Fire Chief Dusty Wilson, Valley Ridge Academy Principal Angie Fuller, IQ Fiber executives and others.

Dunn was nominated by Lt. Mike Pepper, the 2022 Rotary Heroes Firefighter of the Year.

"Engineer Dunn consistently demonstrates extraordinary and exceptional accomplishment in all department functions," Pepper said. "He has been routinely recognized for performing above and beyond department expectations during his career with the St. Johns County Fire Rescue."

Spinks was introduced by his direct supervisor, Sgt. McDonnell, who said, "Dalton clearly stands out to me and his coworkers as someone who is naturally advanced in his knowledge, skill and ability as a law enforcement deputy."

McDuff is the coordinator of the Soaring High Program at Valley Ridge Academy. The program serves 100 students and focuses on children who need extra attention in school and in life as they come from challenging situations where success in school can be difficult.

"Shii's dedication, compassion and unwavering commitment to our students and families have made her an indispensable asset to our school community," said Fuller. "Her ability to connect with parents, build trust and create a safe space for them to share their needs is truly remarkable."

Cross was unable to attend. Charles Gomes, Starling at Nocatee's executive director, said, "Ms. Cross has consistently demonstrated exceptional leadership, dedication and a commitment to service that embodies the values of the Rotary

Club. She has gone above and beyond, showing remarkable dedication to helping others and improving the lives of our residents. Nancy works tirelessly, often sacrificing evenings and weekends to provide the highest quality of service to residents."

More than 90 people attended the dessert reception and ceremony held at Crosswater Hall.

Kelly Altosino-Sastre, Rotary Club of Ponte Vedra charter president and chair of the Rotary Heroes Awards committee said, "Our four Rotary Heroes are ex-

ceptional people who are role models of servant leadership. They have continually demonstrated service above self throughout their careers and this is Rotary's motto. It is fitting that they receive the

ROTARY continues on Page 16

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**IQ Fiber Co-Founder and CMO Kim Smithers, Leah Spinks, Rotary Hero Deputy Dalton Spinks, SJSO Sheriff Rob Hardwick, Sgt. McDonnell, Ponte Vedra Rotary President Karen Everett**



**Rotary Hero Firefighter Engineer Barry Dunn and Education Hero Shii McDuff**



**Acting Fire Chief Dusty Wilson, Rotary Hero Barry Dunn, and Station 18 firefighters**

# Rotary

Continued from 15

Rotary Heroes Awards.”

She added, “We are beyond grateful to IQ Fiber, our community partner for the second year in a row for being the title and presenting sponsor of this event.”

In addition to the plaques, a donation was made to the Apryl Showers Foundation in honor of Dunn, to America’s Gold Star Families in honor of Spinks, to Valley Ridge Academy’s Soaring High Program in honor of McDuff and to Pie in the Sky in honor of Cross. Also, a donation was made to Habitat for Humanity St. Johns in honor of IQ Fiber

Co-Founder and Chief Marketing Officer Kim Smithers.  
In addition to presenting sponsor IQ Fiber, other donors and sponsors were:

Branded Marketing Starling Luxury Living, Chef Paul Sebess of Le Pain de Paul and Ron Sutton, photographer. Several Rotarians also contributed to the event.



**Members of the Rotary Club of Ponte Vedra Nocatee**

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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.

Photo provided by Kathy’s Creative Gardens & Nursery

KATHY’S GARDENING GUIDE

Landscaping with Palm Trees

"May you never be too busy to stop and breathe under a palm tree." — unknown author



Kathy Esfahani

By Kathy Esfahani

Palm trees dot the landscape in our Florida home! If you are missing out on this great addition to your yard, the warm months of the year are a wonderful time to plant palm trees. Be sure to consider the space you have available, proximity to structures and the amount of sun and water in your desired area. Some palms remain small enough to be closer to a house while others will grow very large over time and need more space.

Although an established palm requires little attention, it is often necessary to trim these trees as the weather warms up (not during the dormant months of late fall through winter). It is important to properly remove any fronds that are entirely brown

and dry. They are weighing down the tree and should be cut at the base of the branch, close to the trunk or the soil depending on the type of palm. Be careful not to pull on branches as this can damage healthy parts of the tree.

We have several varieties of palms currently available at the nursery:

- Sylvester palms (Phoenix sylvestris): The Sylvester palm will be a large tree and, therefore, needs space to grow. They grow approximately 1.5 feet per year and can reach a maximum height of 40-50 feet. These palms are cold hardy, drought tolerant and moderately salt tolerant. Sylvester palms are one of the most popular palms in this area and easily recognizable by their diamond cut trunk.
- Queen palms: Queen palms have cascading fronds that blow beautifully in the wind. They can reach a height of 50 feet but fit in somewhat tight spaces because they grow tall and skinny. These palms feature bright glossy leaves and clusters of orange dates. Queen palms create a tropical feeling and are, therefore, popular around patios,

pools and other relaxing areas.

- Roebellini palms (pygmy date palms): Because of its size, this miniature palm tree is well suited to be planted closer to your home. Roebellini palms are slow growers with a maximum height of only 10-11 feet. They are popular at the end of driveways, outside front doors or as the centerpiece to a garden bed.
- Majestic palms: This palm loves the humidity of our Floridian climate. The fronds of a majestic palm can fan out to 15 feet wide. They are slow growers that tolerate some shade and thrive in naturally wet areas.
- European fan palms: These palms are slow-growing trees that can reach eight to 15 feet tall. European fan palms are hardier than most palm trees and can handle partial shade, colder temperatures and dry periods. They have finely textured fronds with colors ranging from green to silver.
- Bismarck palms: These silvery blue-green palms can serve as a centerpiece for your landscape. Bismarck palms have a thick trunk and fronds that can reach a span up to



Lantana

16 feet wide. Although this palm only grows one to two feet per year, it has the potential to eventually reach 60 feet tall.

- Sago palms: These wide-trunk palms are dark green and lush, remaining relatively close to the ground even after several years. It would take 50 years for a sago palm to reach 10 feet tall. They have a large cone of seeds growing out of the middle of the tree. Because these seeds are poisonous to pets, we tend to avoid using them in fur-friendly yards.

Be sure to check us out on Facebook — Kathy’s Creative Gardens & Nursery!

Flower of the Week: Lantana

Please email Kathy at [kathys.creativegardens@gmail.com](mailto:kathys.creativegardens@gmail.com) for any questions or gardening tips you would like to see in the future. For more information and ideas, visit the nursery in Ponte Vedra Beach. Kathy’s Creative Gardens & Nursery, 196 N. Roscoe Blvd. Phone: 904-655-7373.

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# Clerk's Office helps hundreds get back on the road

The St. Johns County Clerk of the Circuit Court and County Comptroller's Office has successfully concluded its participation in Operation Green Light, a statewide initiative aimed at helping residents reinstate suspended driver licenses and get back on the road.

Held from March 29 to April 12, this year's event, designed to reduce financial barriers and support residents in paying off court obligations, had a meaningful impact on the community:

- 189 cases were paid in full, giving many individuals a fresh start.
- 16 drivers became eligible to have their licenses reinstated.
- 309 payment plans were set up to suc-

cessfully transition cases out of collections.

- More than \$84,000 was collected during the event, satisfying outstanding court fees.

Brandon J. Patty, Clerk of the Circuit Court and County Comptroller, praised the turnout and outcome of the event. During Operation Green Light, clerks' offices across Florida waive collection surcharges on overdue court fines and traffic tickets under Florida Statutes 322.75.

For more information about Operation Green Light, or any of the other services available at the office, the Customer Care Call Center is available 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday-Friday at 904-819-3600 and by email at [clerk@stjohnsclerk.com](mailto:clerk@stjohnsclerk.com).



Contributed photo

The St. Johns County Clerk Customer Care Division

## St. Johns County to host public budget workshops

As part of St. Johns County's Strategic Plan goal of building community trust, the public is invited to participate in the budget workshop series for Fiscal Year 2026 held May 8-13. All budget workshops will occur at the St. Johns County Administration Building, 500 San Sebastian View, St. Augustine.

Each workshop will be broadcast live on the county's TV channel, GovTV, at [sjcfl.us/watch-govtv-live](http://sjcfl.us/watch-govtv-live). A recording of each workshop is scheduled to be available through video-on-demand on that webpage under the Other Videos Archive within three days of the completion of each workshop.

Limited in-person public seating will be available in the San Sebastian Conference Room. Additional public seating to watch it live on GovTV will be available in the County Auditorium in the Administration Building.

For more information regarding the budgeting process, go to [sjcfl.us/2026Budget](http://sjcfl.us/2026Budget).

GovTV is also available on Comcast Cable: Channel 3 in southern St. Johns County, Channel 29 or 261 in northern St. Johns County and Channel 26 in Jacksonville. It is also available to U-verse subscribers on channel 99.

Here is a schedule of the budget workshops:

- Thursday, May 8, 1 to 5 p.m. Health & Human Services, Office of Performance & Transparency, Purchasing and Contract Management, Economic Development, Public Works and Solid Waste.
- Friday, May 9, 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Building Services and Code Enforcement, Growth Man-

agement, Medical Examiner and Utility Services.

- Friday, May 9, 2 to 4:30 p.m. Health Department, Administration / Board of County Commissioners / Office of Management & Budget, Office of Intergovernmental Affairs and Office of Public Affairs.

- Monday, May 12, 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Library Services, Parks & Recreation, County Attorney and Management Information Systems.

- Monday, May 12, 2-4 p.m. Community Partners, including Community Redevelopment Agencies and Main Streets.

- Tuesday, May 13, 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Public Safety, Human Resources and Risk Management, Agricultural Extension Services and Veterans Services.

- Tuesday, May 13, 2-5 p.m. Facilities Management, Land Management, Emergency Management/ Coastal Management / Disaster Recovery and Tourism and Development.

After each workshop, the public can email their questions to [Budget@sjcfl.us](mailto:Budget@sjcfl.us).

Other key dates in the Fiscal Year 2026 process include:

- July 15: St. Johns County Board of County Commissioners (BCC) Meeting: The county administration presents the recommended budget, and the BCC sets the tentative millage rates.

- September TBD: Public hearings to adopt the budget.

County budgets from previous fiscal years are available for the public to view at [www.sjcfl.us/departments/office-of-management-and-budget](http://www.sjcfl.us/departments/office-of-management-and-budget).

## Clerk's Office launches program to honor veterans

The St. Johns County Clerk of the Circuit Court and County Comptroller's Office has launched a new initiative to recognize and honor the men and women who have served in the U.S. Armed Forces.

"Veterans have given so much for our country, and this is one small way we can give something back," said Brandon J. Patty, St. Johns County Clerk of the Circuit Court and County Comptroller. "The Salute to Service Program not only honors their sacrifice but also strengthens the bond between our veterans and the St. Johns County community."

After recording their DD-214 discharge document into St. Johns County's Official Records, veterans will be issued a free, official ID card that serves as verification. The Salute to Service Program also connects veterans with discounts and special offers from participating restaurants, retail shops, service providers and local attractions as a tangible "thank you" from the community.

To receive a Salute to Service ID Card, veterans must record their

DD-214 with the Clerk's Office.

The process is free and offered year-round. Once recorded, veterans will have their photo taken and their personalized ID card will be issued within seven business days.

Veterans can visit the office at the Richard O. Watson Judicial Center, 4010 Lewis Speedway, St. Augustine, between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. No appointments are needed.

Prefer an appointment to save time? The main office and two annex locations accept appointments during regular business hours. The Julington Creek Annex is located at 725 Flora Branch Blvd. and is open 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday. The Ponte Vedra Beach Annex is located at 151 Sawgrass Corners Drive and is open 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Mondays and Wednesdays. Appointments can be made online at [stjohnsclerk.com](http://stjohnsclerk.com).

For more information about the Salute to Service Program, including a list of participating businesses in St. Johns County, go to [stjohnsclerk.com/salute-to-service-program](http://stjohnsclerk.com/salute-to-service-program) or call 904-819-3600.

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# Senior LIVING

## FEATURING

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....AND MORE INSIDE!

THE RECORDER

THURSDAY, MAY 8, 2025






# The Blake holds grand opening


The Blake at St. Johns held its grand opening on Thursday, April 10, with a crowd of supportive community members and special guests, including Commissioner Ann Taylor, District 5, of the St. Johns County Board of County Commissioners. Attendees indulged in hors d'oeuvres, drinks, cocktails and raffles as they celebrated an official ribbon cutting. The Blake at St. Johns is a family-owned senior living community that specializes in assisted living and memory care for residents from Green Cove Springs, Fruit Cove, Nocatee, Ponte Vedra, Jacksonville, Hastings, St. Augustine, St. Augustine Beach, Mandarin, Fleming Island, Orange Park, Penney Farms and across the country. The facility is now leasing and invites interested future residents to schedule a tour on the website.

Photos by Susan Griffin






Runelon, DNP, APRN




Yolisma, ACNPC-AG




Saldy, MSN, FNP-BEC



Marcie, MSN, APRN

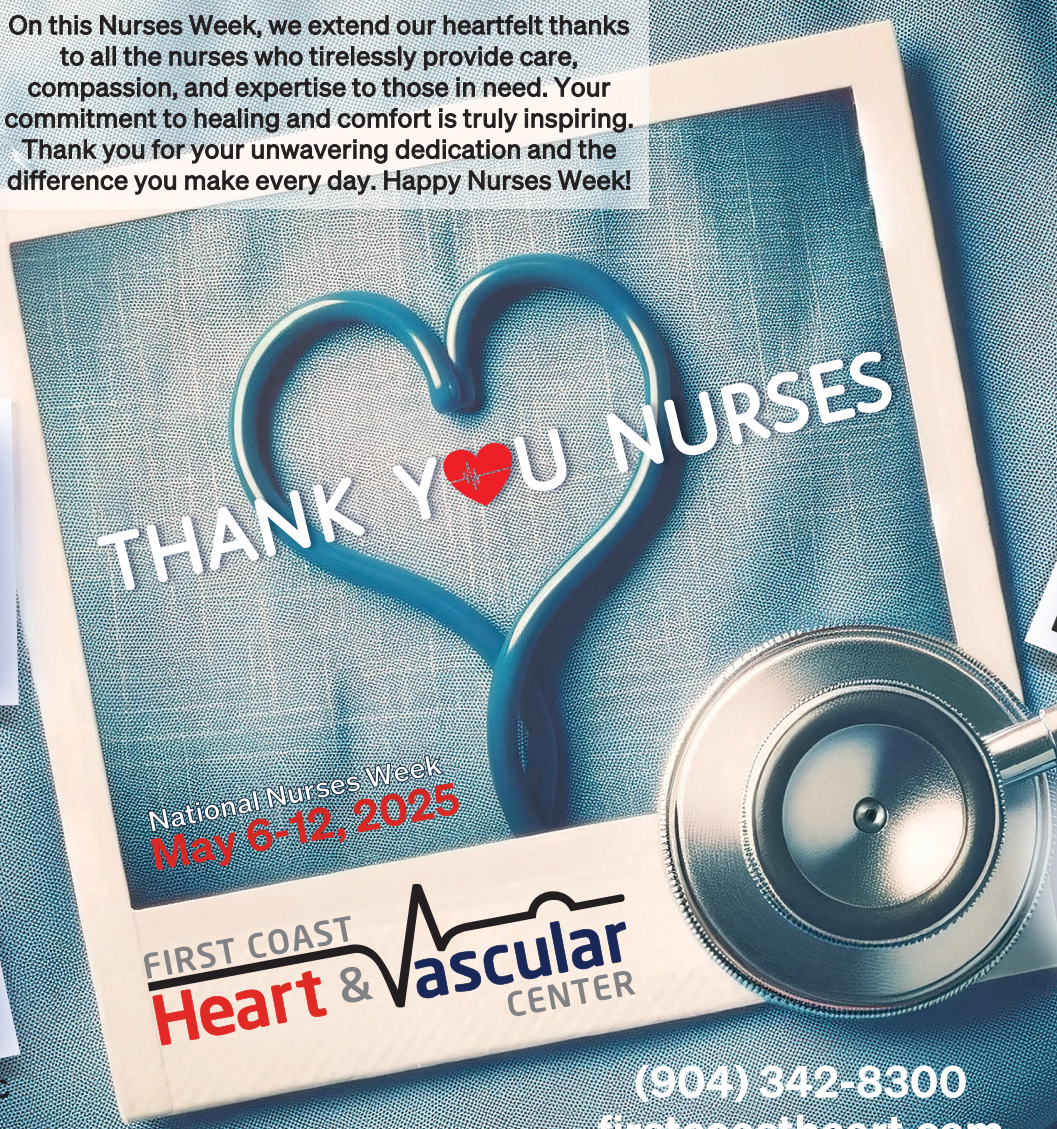


Tricia, APRN



Ivette, APRN, ANCC

On this Nurses Week, we extend our heartfelt thanks to all the nurses who tirelessly provide care, compassion, and expertise to those in need. Your commitment to healing and comfort is truly inspiring. Thank you for your unwavering dedication and the difference you make every day. Happy Nurses Week!







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# Rise at Nocatee has successful year

By Shaun Ryan

It's been a busy year for Rise at Nocatee, a new 55-plus luxury rental community located at 1200 Preservation Trail, Ponte Vedra Beach, just a mile from Nocatee Town Center. Announced in 2023, Rise at Nocatee welcomed its first residents last summer. Currently, its 178 apartments are 40% occupied and 45% preleased, but several are still available.

A grand opening and ribbon-cutting ceremony were held Jan. 9.

Rise at Nocatee is designed to foster a social, independent and welcoming environment. Among its amenities are: a cyber

café, creative arts workshop, game room, 24-hour fitness center, music and media lounge, yoga studio and heated resort-style pool. In addition, the community maintains a full calendar of activities for residents to enjoy. YMCA instructors lead yoga and strength classes. Meet and Greet and the Paint and Sip classes/events are currently in full force. Plans are under way to possibly add water aerobics classes, as well.

Among the other activities being planned are a summer pool party and Lunch and Learn with the American Red Cross, focusing on hurricane season preparations.

The property includes a 10,000-square-foot clubhouse, a pet park and pet spa, outdoor grilling stations, private and covered parking and more.

The two-building community houses one- and two-bedroom apartments, while prospective residents may sign up for notifications for three-bedroom apartments. The buildings are four and five stories tall with elevators.

Floor plans start at 683 square feet and go up to 1,538 square feet. The apartments have ceilings up to 10 feet, granite countertops, stainless steel appliances, washer and dryer, high-speed fiber internet service

and more.

For further information, go to [risepontevetra.com](http://risepontevetra.com), email [live@risepontevetra.com](mailto:live@risepontevetra.com) or call 904-341-5239. Leasing office hours are 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday; 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. Thursday; and 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday.

Rise, a real-estate company founded in Georgia in 1995, started out with student housing before branching out to apartment living and then multi-family properties. Eventually, Rise relocated its corporate office from Valdosta, Georgia, to Jacksonville.

## Memory enhancement program presentation planned

The public is invited to attend an informational presentation on IMEP, the Integrative Memory Enhancement Program, from 10:30 to 11:45 a.m. Friday, May 9, at the Bartram Trail Branch of the St. Johns County Public Library, 60 Davis Pond Blvd., Fruit Cove. To register to attend, contact presenter, IMEP Manager Susan Miller, at 904-729-9535.

Created by Council on Aging (COA), the IMEP program is a dynamic and in-

novative response to memory loss. IMEP is a structured, research-based program designed to integrate mind, body and brain connections to boost cognitive reserve and minimize the progression of memory loss or dementia. The program employs specific cognitive and physical exercises designed for seniors and utilizes healing modalities that support overall brain and body function.

IMEP provides a dignified, support-

ive and nonjudgmental environment for participants. A light-hearted atmosphere, authentic dialogue and engaging social interaction are the hallmarks of every IMEP class. Each day's class focuses on a different brain topic; for example, flexible thinking, spatial orientation, communication or reasoning. The day's activities then support and stimulate that brain function.

IMEP is offered in two-hour, three-hour and five-hour program formats at locations in St. Johns County in a relaxed classroom

environment that encourages camaraderie. The five-hour program includes lunch. The program is also available online for home use.

In addition, the IMEP program is being leased for use and successfully implemented by agencies that serve seniors throughout the United States.

To learn more about the IMEP program, go to [imepprogram.com](http://imepprogram.com). For more information and to register, contact IMEP Manager Susan Miller at 904-729-9535.



### Free Care For Caregivers

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## Activities for seniors with limited mobility

Physical activity is a valuable tool in the fight against chronic disease and other conditions. In fact, the Cleveland Clinic highlights physical activity among its nine ways to prevent disease in an effort to live a long and rewarding life.

Children, adolescents, young adults, and even men and women in middle age may not face too many physical hurdles when they try to exercise, but seniors are not always so lucky. Aging men and women

with mobility issues may wonder if they can reap the rewards of physical activity, and thankfully there are many ways to exercise even if getting up and going isn't as easy as it might have been in years past. Sometimes referred to as "aerobic exercise" or simply "cardio," cardiovascular exercise is an umbrella term that encompasses a wide range of physical

ACTIVITIES continues on Page 26

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GUEST COLUMN

# Sundays with my Dad

By Scott A. Grant



Scott A. Grant

One of the enduring memories of my youth is climbing into my Dad’s ’62 VW Bug with one working door and driving about an hour out into the farmlands of Indiana so that Dad could preach at the Groveland Presbyterian Church in a little town called Bainbridge. He went every other Sunday. That was all the good folk of Bainbridge could afford. It was a treat because I got to hear him preach. He was a powerful voice in the pulpit and a gifted storyteller.

After the service was over, we went to the general store on the corner, and he would buy us each a Coke for the drive home. The drive home was the best. On the way out, Dad was usually quiet. He was rehearsing his sermon in his head, and I left him alone. But, on the way back, we would talk. We talked about

history and religion and sometimes just baseball. It was great! In fact, I would argue that if you really want to get to know someone, get off social media and spend an hour or two in the car with them. You’ll learn a lot.

Decades later, dementia began to take my Dad’s mind, and we moved him into a nursing home. Every Sunday I would drive out to see him and I would talk. I would tell him about things he had done, things we had done together, things we had done as a family; and I would often talk about those Sunday trips out to Groveland.

Every year the doctors and nurses would tell me that this year would be his last. But, for five years he clung to life. Most of the time, I took my son, Alexander, with me. The two of them used to play a game. Dad would grab his grandson’s hand and Alexander would try to get away, and Xander would laugh and giggle: “He won’t let go. Grandad won’t let go!”

Over the years the dementia took his memory, his ability to speak and his ability to walk or even stand. It took his dignity. But, it could not conquer his

desire to live. And every Sunday for 228 weeks he would smile when we came.

In the end, he went into the hospital with pneumonia, and it was clear that the doctors and nurses would finally be right. This would be his last year. The doctors said, “Call hospice,” because he had no quality of life anyway. He had a second heart attack on Saturday afternoon, and it took most of what was left of his brain. As Saturday night slipped into Sunday morning, he lay in that hospital bed staring at me fiercely with his one working eye and clinging to my hand. He would not let go.

I told him that it was time for him to go be with Mom, his brothers and his own Dad and Mother. And I also told him that I would not trade those Sundays at the nursing home for anything and that this would be our last Sunday together. Sometime in the early hours of the morning before the sun broke the horizon, he let go of my hand and closed his eyes for good.

**Scott A. Grant is a local historian and author. He welcomes your comments at [scottg@standfastic.com](mailto:scottg@standfastic.com).**

## Did you know?

The benefits of exercise for seniors are innumerable. In order to get the physical activity they need, many older adults are turning to pickleball.

Pickleball combines elements of tennis, wiffle ball and ping-pong into an activity that is drawing new enthusiasts every day. Fans often say that pickleball is the most fun racket sport they have played.

With a smaller court than tennis and a lighter ball, pickleball is ideal for seniors who won't have to worry about the sport being too high-intensity.

The Medical University of South Carolina says pickleball is the fastest-growing sport today, particularly among seniors. The 2023 Sports & Fitness Industry Association Report on Pickleball says pickleball has attracted 8.9 million U.S. players of all ages and fitness levels. The SFIA report notes that the 65+ age group accounts for the second highest number of participants.





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# Brookdale celebrates Earth Day with first harvest



**By Anthony Richards**

Brookdale Southside, a Jacksonville senior living community hosted a special event on April 22 in honor of Earth Day where the community celebrated its brand-new Garden Club.

The Brookdale Garden Club kicked off the spring in March when it took over a newly dedicated space on the property and placed garden beds with various vegetables.

The new space was showcased during the event as they also enjoyed their first harvest of the season, which was its crop of radishes.

According to Jay Wilke, senior publicist for Brookdale Senior Living, one of the members was looking forward to her favorite sandwich, which included radishes, peanut butter and lettuce.



Photos courtesy of Brookdale Senior Living



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## GUEST COLUMN

# Move it or lose it: the benefits of ballroom dancing

By Anastacia Riordan

Need an entertaining form of exercise? Feeling disconnected from your partner? Have a family history of dementia, Alzheimer's or memory loss? Ballroom dancing can be a great medicine for all these concerns.

Ballroom dancing has been around for hundreds of years, starting in the 16th century as a way to socially engage and meet your community.

Each style encompasses a defined set of step patterns, allowing dancers to connect and move with any partner on the floor. For example, everyone who learns the waltz learns how to do a "box step"; this not only makes learning dances easier but practicing easier, too. Due to the repetitive nature of the steps, it is easy to come up with mnemonic devices, songs and pictures to help you remember where to go.

There have been many studies on how movement affects the mind. It's no secret that exercise releases endorphins into your body and consistent exercise has been proven to improve mental health. Dancing is no different in this regard; however, dancing comes with a few extra perks beyond just endorphins.

When you're dancing, your brain has to focus on music, tempo, proper movement and posture. With so many elements to focus on, the brain becomes stimulated in many different areas.

A German study comparing repetitive sports training versus dance training in the elderly shows the group experiencing dance training had a noticeable increase in brain capacity in more than 10 different areas of the brain; while the sport training group gained significantly less.

Consistently growing and stimulating these areas of the brain combat deterioration and have been proven to ward off dementia and Alzheimer's. As we age, we also lose balance, strength, flexibility and endurance; and it becomes difficult to find forms of sustainable exercise. Ballroom dancing is a great low impact way to exercise! Dancing exercises the same muscle groups as pilates, running and cycling all at once while still enjoying beautiful music and comfortable company.

Working out in the gym can become monotonous and sometimes lonely. Public gyms are also breeding grounds for insecurity and comparison. Partner dancing eradicates all of these concerns. In a studio, it is understood that we are all growing and expressing ourselves through our love of movement, so no matter where we are in our dance journeys, we are always cheering for, inspired by and encouraging the other dancers around us.

Additionally, we are all learning the same techniques and patterns so making friends becomes quite easy. Partner dancing is never a solo sport, it's built

right into the name — you need a partner. Whether it's a teacher, a loved one or a friend; we are creating social connections, a key in human survival.

A dance partnership is just like any relationship; it requires trust, understanding, time and connection. When partners dance together, they are working as one body, using each other's momentum, strength or flexibility to enhance the overall appearance of the partnership.

These nonverbal communications tune you into the other person's nervous system through a process called coregulation. The Department of Health and Human Services defines it as influencing and being influenced by each other's state of mind and body. Coregulation helps with responses to emotional stress, encourages

clear communication between partners and creates a stable support system.

Being acutely aware of your partner's movements and emotions creates a deeper connection and understanding of them. Many dance instructors and therapists agree that couples who dance together stay together.

So, whether you're looking to get in shape, sharpen your mind, connect with a loved one, or just to have fun; give ballroom dancing a try. It's more than just movement to music; it's a celebration of community, connection and personal growth.

So move it — don't lose it. Visit your local dance studio, and discover how transformative a step in the right direction can be.

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Activities

Continued from 22

activities that raise the heart rate and improve endurance. Seniors with mobility issues can look to various forms of cardio for inspiration as they seek to be more physically active without compromising their overall health.

- Walk your way to a healthier you. Walking is a form of cardiovascular exercise that is ideal for older adults with mobility issues because it need not be physically demanding and it's safe to walk just about anywhere. Walking in a place such as a local park can be particularly good for older adults because they can take periodic breaks on benches if aches, pains or stiffness is affecting their ability to keep moving.
- Take up swimming. Swimming might be tailor-made for seniors with mobility issues because it's a great workout and exercising in water tends to be less taxing on muscles and joints. The Cleveland Clinic notes that swimming promotes heart health, strengthens the lungs, helps to burn calories, and builds muscle, among other benefits. And many seniors find swimming is just as fun in their golden years as it was in their youth, which means aging adults might not face problems with motivation when the time comes to get in the pool.
- Use an exercise bike or portable pedal exerciser. Cycling is a wonderful exercise but one that seniors with mobility issues may feel is no longer possible. If doctors

advise against riding a traditional bike, an exercise bike or portable pedal exerciser can provide many of the benefits of cycling without as great a risk for accident or injury. A portable pedal exerciser can be carried to a park, where seniors can still spend time in the great outdoors, which is one of the most appealing reasons to get on a bike and go.

- Take beginner yoga or tai chi. Help-Guide.org notes that gentle yoga or tai chi can help to improve flexibility and reduce stress and anxiety. Though yoga and tai chi can provide as much demanding physical activity as individuals allow, beginner classes in each discipline don't require much movement but do provide enough for seniors hoping to be less sedentary.
- Even seniors with mobility issues can find safe and effective ways to be more physically active. Prior to beginning a new exercise regimen, seniors with mobility issues are urged to discuss activities with their physicians.

- tive without compromising their overall health.
- Walk your way to a healthier you. Walking is a form of cardiovascular exercise that is ideal for older adults with mobility issues because it need not be physically demanding and it's safe to walk just about anywhere. Walking in a place such as a local park can be particularly good for older adults because they can take periodic breaks on benches if aches, pains or stiffness is affecting their ability to keep moving.

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# Cypress Village resident honored with Pride of Penn State Award

The Cypress Village community is celebrating one of their own. Joan Fenton has been a resident alongside her husband Bill since 2020. She was recently honored with the prestigious Pride of Penn State award during the Penn State Alumni Jacksonville Chapter's Annual Banquet.

The recognition came as a complete surprise to Fenton, who was nominated and selected by the chapter for her ongoing ser-

vice, spirit and dedication to the values of Penn State. Ingrid Jakabcsin, chapter board secretary, reached out to Cypress Village ahead of the event to gather background on Fenton's incredible life and career.

Fenton, who once taught Latin and Greek mythology before becoming a college administrator in undergraduate admissions at Penn State, has remained a proud Nittany Lion since her own graduation. She and

Bill met at Penn State on a blind date and celebrated their 55th wedding anniversary shortly after moving to Cypress Village.

At Cypress, the Fentons are beloved members of the community, active in local events and known for their warmth, humor and commitment to giving back. Joan Fenton's honor is not only a recognition from her alma mater but a point of pride for all of the community who know and admire

her.

Cypress Village is a premier senior living community in Jacksonville, offering a range of services, including independent living, assisted living, memory care and skilled nursing. Cypress Village is committed to enhancing the quality of life for its residents through exceptional care, innovative programs and strong community partnerships.

# Retired and bored? How to make an active retirement a reality

Scores of people view retirement as a time in their lives when they aren't beholden to schedules and can finally indulge in hobbies and interests they'd been dreaming about while sitting in meetings or commuting to the office.

Staying active and engaged during retirement may take some creative effort, especially for those who were used to the regimented schedule of work. But the following are some ways to maintain your active engagement with the world after calling it a career.

- **Take that trip.** According to AARP, travel is one of the most popular things to do during retirement. Odds are there are places retirees have always wanted to visit, and the world is just waiting. Taking a tour or being part of a travel group can simplify

travel planning by leaving the organizing to someone else. Travelers just enjoy the ride.

- **Get moving physically.** The National Council on Aging says regularly engaging in physical activity a person enjoys can help prevent bone loss, boost immunity, improve mood, and even prevent chronic illnesses. Team sport participation is a top choice for seniors looking to stay active because sports provide physical exercise and also an opportunity to socialize with friends or teammates.

- **Maintain a consistent schedule.** Some people thrive when they know what is coming next. If you need a routine in order to be happy, establish a consistent schedule that works. For example, people can wake up at the same time each morning and eat



lunch during at the same time they did while working. Upon retiring, incorporate a daily plan for exercise if physical activity is not part of your traditional routine.

- **Try something new.** It is never too late to try a new activity, class, sport, or hobby. Challenging yourself can stimulate the mind and provide a pathway to new relationships. Individuals can even con-

sider going back to college. According to Kiplinger, New Jersey residents age 65 and older can take regularly scheduled courses tuition-free at the state's public colleges and universities, provided classroom space permits. There are similar programs in other states across the country.

- **Pick up a new language.** Learning a new language is a beneficial tool for seniors who are looking to maintain cognitive abilities. The National Institutes of Health says bilingualism has been linked to higher cognitive reserve, delay in dementia onset and better performance in executive control.

There are many ways for seniors to keep their brains and bodies active in an effort to overcome boredom and improve overall well-being.



  
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## Program helps prevent caregiver burnout

Adult caregiving in the United States is a significant and growing responsibility. In Florida alone, AARP reports that 2.7 million adults serve as unpaid family caregivers on top of their existing responsibilities. The growing complexity of caregiving affects the caregivers' own finances, health and well-being. As the Area Agency on Aging and the Aging and Disability Resource Center for Northeast Florida, ElderSource offers a free program aimed at relieving the stresses on local caregivers.

The Tailored Caregiver Assessment and Referral Program (TCARE) is designed to prevent caregiver burnout. Program participants are paired with trained specialists that provide them with strategies to reduce root causes of burnout and develop care plans customized for each caregiver's unique needs. It is free to participants, as the program is supported by a grant from

the Humana Foundation.

TCARE has been a major lifeline for Northeast Florida families since 2021, helping more than 220 caregivers to date. Aside from direct support provided by trained specialists, the program also connects caregivers with community resources that best meet their needs. It's a unique resource that enables caregivers to help loved ones age in place and delay nursing home placement, while also taking care of themselves.

Access to the free TCARE program is available to caregivers who are supporting a loved one who is age 60 or older and resides in Baker, Clay, Duval, Flagler, St. Johns, Nassau or Volusia counties. ElderSource currently has 90 free spots available in the program. Go to [MyElderSource.org](http://MyElderSource.org) or call 904-391-6647 to learn more about TCARE and sign up.

### GUEST COLUMN

## Tax credits would help caregivers

By Linda Levin, ElderSource CEO



Linda Levin

It's not often one's professional and personal life intersect so powerfully.

As CEO of the nonprofit ElderSource, a large part of my job is advocating for those who serve as family caregivers to older adults and adults with disabilities. We serve seven counties in Northeast Florida, but the need for caregivers is quickly growing nationwide.

I often hear directly from caregivers of the successes and struggles they face on a daily basis, and now I can speak on their needs firsthand. I have recently begun supporting my aging parents who are now in their 90s. Thankfully, they still live independently; however, I often step in to assist with transportation, grocery shopping and medical appointments. Adult children across the country are beginning to find themselves in a similar position as their parents age — working while caregiving.

The intersection of my roles as CEO and caregiver has given me a deeper understanding of the urgent need for a new bipartisan proposal in Congress that could provide much-needed relief to caregivers through a federal tax credit for

eligible working family caregivers.

The Credit for Caring Act, if passed, would provide up to \$5,000 in nonrefundable federal tax credits for eligible working family caregivers. It's a step in the right direction to give caregivers the support they need. The average caregiver in the United States spends more than \$7,000 in out-of-pocket costs each year.

An estimated 48 million caregivers in the U.S. provide support to a parent, grandparent, spouse or loved one, according to AARP. The unpaid labor and related expenses family caregivers shoulder each year amount to billions.

This legislation would support working caregivers even if the one they are caring for doesn't live in the same house, like my situation.

Caring for my parents has given me a deeply personal understanding of the emotional, physical and financial challenges families face when they take on this responsibility. Family caregivers — two-thirds of whom are women — juggle work, family responsibilities and all the demands of caregiving. The Credit for Caring Act would ease these challenges by providing much-needed financial support.

Please go to [MyElderSource.org](http://MyElderSource.org) to learn more about resources ElderSource provides to family caregivers and contact your elected representative to let them know how you feel about the tax credit proposal.





# Parade Participants

The staff and residents of Starling at Ponte Vedra took part in the JAX Beach Opening Day Parade on April 27, bringing joy and community spirit to the event. In preparation, residents and staff teamed up to decorate the Starling bus, which became a colorful centerpiece of their parade presence. While the leadership team walked alongside, waving to the crowd, memory care and assisted living residents enjoyed the ride, smiling and cheering from the bus windows. It was a day full of laughter, connection and celebration — and everyone is already looking forward to next year’s festivities!

Photos courtesy of Starling at Ponte Vedra



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GUEST COLUMN

## When did you last check your beneficiary designations?

Written by/for Wells Fargo Advisors

One of the easiest, yet often overlooked, components of an estate-planning strategy is designating beneficiaries. Those whose estate plan includes a will or trust may wonder why this step is important. Transfer of some assets — such as life insurance policies, annuities, IRAs, retirement plans and other employee benefit plans — can be based on beneficiary designations in place at your death. As your objectives for transfer may change over time, it is important to review those designations in context of your overall plan for asset transfer.

Confirm your designations align with your estate plan

Inventory your assets and determine which can have designated beneficiaries.

Review the designations in place to make sure your preferred beneficiaries are listed for each asset. Consider choosing a successor in case your designated beneficiary does not survive you.

If changes are needed, be sure to complete each form as indicated. Requirements may vary from one financial institution to another. For example, the custodian of a retirement plan may require a spouse’s signature, but a life



Contributed photo

insurance carrier may not. Similarly, some institutions may require a notarized original while others may allow you to complete the designation online.

As you acquire new assets, make sure to consider establishing beneficiary designations in alignment with your estate plan.

Identify any unintended implications to your overall estate plans

While creating designations may be a clear-cut process, identifying potential tax implications for your beneficiaries may not be so easy. Your tax and legal advisers can help you review your beneficiary designations to identify any unintended impacts to your beneficiaries.

Remember that your beneficiary designation forms are one piece in the larger

estate-plan puzzle you have put together. It is important to consider how those designations — which operate outside your will or trust — may impact your overall strategy. For example, if your objective is to evenly divide all of your assets among your decedents, a designation could change that balance.

Your tax adviser also can help you weigh options for transferring taxable assets. If charitably inclined, you may consider naming a tax-exempt organization as a beneficiary of a taxable asset, such as a qualified retirement plan or nonqualified stock options.

Revisit your designations

As with all documents in your estate plan, it’s a good idea to review your

beneficiary designations regularly. Not updating your forms to reflect life events such as a birth, death, marriage or divorce may mean that your wishes would not be reflected when your assets ultimately transfer.

Changes in the law may also create a need to revisit your beneficiary designations. Your tax adviser can help you understand how the latest changes may impact your objectives for transfer.

Key takeaways

Make sure you take the time to thoughtfully fill out beneficiary designations for eligible assets. Also, consider regularly discussing your plans with your

BENEFICIARY continues on Page 33

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# Sporting JAX bolsters front office with top hires

Sporting Club Jacksonville, the United Soccer League's Northeast Florida expansion franchise, has announced a wave of high-profile front office hires as the club ramps up its inaugural USL Super League season this August at UNF's Hodges Stadium. The club continues to expand with 10 new team additions, including sports industry veterans Bob Ohrablo and Marshall Happer, who bring decades of combined professional sports and business operations experience to Sporting JAX.

Ohrablo joins as an adviser to Sporting JAX President and CEO Steve Livingstone, bringing a track record of success and innovation in professional sports. A founding partner behind the rise of the Jacksonville Icemen, he played a pivotal role in reestablishing ice hockey on the First Coast, leading the team to record-breaking attendance, multiple playoff runs and successful franchise expansions, including the

Savannah Ghost Pirates, hailed as one of the most impactful debuts in ECHL history.

With more than 40 years of experience in sports marketing and management across major U.S. markets, Ohrablo will also foster corporate partnership development as Sporting JAX continues to build its premier soccer club.

Happer, appointed as the club's head of operations, is a seasoned executive with 30 years of experience across the NFL, XFL, NASL and FCF and will oversee all matchday and event logistics. He brings operational excellence shaped by senior roles with Frankfurt Galaxy (NFL Europe), Jacksonville Armada and, most recently, as vice president of sports operations with Fan Controlled Football.

"We are building more than a team — we are laying a foundation for a lasting legacy in Jacksonville," said Livingstone. "Bringing in top-tier professionals like Bob and Marshall,

along with key leadership roles and support teams will ensure we have the experience, talent and vision to position our club as a powerhouse in the USL, and will provide a first-class experience for our fans across Northeast Florida and beyond."

Also joining the leadership ranks:

- John Keitzer, a local executive with global and entrepreneurial leadership experience, as EVP of business management

- Vincent Buzzy, formerly with Top Golf and the Houston Texans, as manager of partnerships

- Anthony Ortiz, a dynamic retail expert from JD Sports, as manager of merchandise

Additionally, the club is expanding its ticketing sales and media teams:

- Alex Halloran (Duke Athletics, Jacksonville Jaguars), Brendan Keith (Houston Texans) and Harrison Pearle (PGA Tour) join the ticket sales and service team

- Riley Platt (UNF and FanSided) joins as fan engagement coordinator to elevate fan experiences

- Emerson Burris, (Razorback Sports Network, SEC Network, Fox Sports and Sporting KC) joins as team reporter and digital producer, will appear on the club's broadcasting platforms, lead content creation for social media channels and serve as the sideline reporter for locally aired matches

The continued front office expansion follows recent announcements of high-profile additions to the club, including Steve Fell as director of performance, Stacey Balaam as the USL Super League team's first head coach and Mark Warburton as sporting director and head of soccer.

Season tickets for the USL Super League inaugural season are on sale now at [www.sportingjax.com/tickets](http://www.sportingjax.com/tickets) or by calling 904-863-KICK.

## K9s For Warriors hosts St. Johns County Chamber After Hours

Contributed photo

Kiersan Cue and the organizing team are deserving of praise for creating a memorable evening of networking, culinary delights and beverages. The enlightening speech by Dan Bean, CEO of K9s For Warriors, provided insight into the organization's origins and its unwavering commitment to ending veteran suicide. Through the provision of highly trained service

dogs to military veterans suffering from PTSD, traumatic brain injury and/or military sexual trauma, K9s For Warriors enables healing and recovery. It is noteworthy that the majority of dogs are rescues, facilitating the formation of an unshakeable bond between the K9 For Warrior team. Graze Craze Charcuterie Boards & Boxes Ponte Vedra for the food the evening.



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# Meet Alma Flowers, Hospice Nurse

May is National Nurses Month, a time to recognize and celebrate the contributions of nurses across the country. This month, Community Hospice & Palliative Care spotlights Alma Flowers, a dedicated Registered Nurse whose remarkable career spans an impressive 62 years. Her journey began at the Brewster Duval School of Nursing in Jacksonville in 1959, marking the start of a lifelong commitment to compassionate care and professional excellence. Her career has been a testament to the evolution of nursing, encompassing diverse roles from acute psychiatric units to the compassionate realm of hospice care. Throughout her journey, Flowers has adapted to and contributed

to advancements in health care practices and policies. Her leadership was evident in roles such as nursing case manager supervisor and clinic supervisor for the Department of Health, culminating in her appointment as director of nursing before transitioning to hospice care in 2022. Beyond her professional achievements, her influence extends deeply into her personal life, where she raised two daughters and two sons who followed in her footsteps into the nursing profession. Her legacy is felt not only in the institutions she served but also in the lives she touched, both within her family and the broader community. Flowers’ story is an inspiring narrative of resilience, dedication and continu-

ous learning in nursing. Her experiences provide invaluable insights into the challenges and triumphs of the profession across decades, offering a beacon of inspiration for current and future generations of health care professionals. The team at Community Hospice & Palliative Care extended their deepest gratitude to all nurses in the community for their unwavering commitment and compassion, including the exceptional hospice and palliative care nurses, whose dedication ensures that patients receive the highest standard of care. For more information about Community Hospice & Palliative Care and its services, go to [www.communityhospice.com](http://www.communityhospice.com).

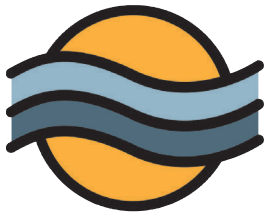
## Beneficiary

Continued from 31

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Photos by Melissa Marcarelli

The recent Hastings Cabbage, Potato, Bacon Festival

# Hastings Main Street shows signs of renaissance

Less than 10 years after facing much uncertainty, downtown Hastings is once again becoming a thriving community anchored in agriculture and the spirit of local entrepreneurship.

Hastings Main Street, a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, has a mission to revitalize the downtown area, foster growth and prosperity, and strengthen the community while maintaining its historic rural character. Its approach includes welcoming locally owned small businesses into the downtown corridor to spur economic growth while retaining Main Street's charm.

"The revitalization of downtown Hastings is a culmination of many collaborative efforts," said Jena Dennis, chair of the Hastings Main Street Board of Directors. "The property owners and lessees have made transformative updates while keeping the historic charm. The board's efforts to recruit locally owned small businesses have been extremely successful. And, of course, the community, who show so much support by patronizing downtown, attending events and continuing to advocate for Hastings."

"Owning a coffee shop wasn't a part of my plan, but it's turned out to be such a blessing for my family," said Chamane Williams, who owns Hastings Coffee Co. with her husband, Marcus, and their five children. "We love Hastings for the community, and our shop



Photo by Open House Optics

The Venue at Historic Stanton Ford Building

is our way of giving back to this amazing community. It's a place where people can come together, feel welcome and get to know their neighbors, my family included."

The unprecedented success of the downtown revitalization effort is quite astounding. Hastings went from having 80% of the properties vacant in 2023 to 90% occupied in 2025.

Downtown Hastings joined the Florida Main Street Program in 2024, part of the National Main Street Center. Florida Main Street is a technical assistance program that aims to revitalize historic downtowns and encourage economic development within the context of historic preservation.

Other wins come from the announcement of a new First Coast Technical College campus, the anticipated opening of The Venue, an events venue space on Main Street, in fall 2025, and an investment by St. Johns County in the form of the Hastings Community Center and Library Project.

To learn more, go to [HastingsFL.org](http://HastingsFL.org).



Hastings Main Street



Photos by Open House Optics

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# Foundation uses innovative procedure to give ALS patient gift of sight

Submitted by Gulani Vision Global Foundation

A local ALS patient, whose hands trembled to such a degree she could no longer insert contact lenses for her extreme vision problems, walked out of surgery with perfect vision — hugging her family, ecstatic that while ALS will eventually take her mobility, it will not take her sight.

Thanks to the Gulani Vision Global Foundation, she received LaZrPlastique, a next-generation laser eye surgery — completely free of charge. Handpicked from worldwide patients who traveled to Jacksonville for this pioneering procedure, she now has the clarity and hope to navigate her future with independence.

“This is more than just extreme vision correction; it’s independence, dignity and a fight against the limits of ALS,” said LaZrPLastique inventor and world-renowned eye surgeon Dr. Arun Gulani, founder of Gulani Vision Institute and president of Gulani Vision Global Foundation.

LaZrPlastique is transforming lives for patients who are not candidates for regular LASIK with zero blades, zero cuts and maximum precision, making vision correction for even extreme cases possible.

The Gulani Vision Global Foundation continues to push boundaries, giving futuristic surgery to those who need it most.

Photo provided by Gulani Vision Global Foundation



# St. Augustine competes in national grilling competition

St. Augustine resident Noel Sherrill from the St. Augustine LongHorn Steakhouse team knows how to bring heat to the competition. His grilling expertise and passion has him on the cusp of elite grilling status as he prepares to compete in the final round of LongHorn Steakhouse’s eighth annual Steak Master Series.

LongHorn Steakhouse’s Steak Master Series is a national competition that gives LongHorn Grill Masters from across the country the opportunity to put their skills to the test. Sherrill is one of seven finalists, out of thousands of participants, who will compete for a \$15,000 grand prize and the title of Steak Master Series Champion on May 15 during a one-day grill-off in Orlando.

Here are a few things to know about Sherrill, who has been a part of the LongHorn Steakhouse team for three years:

- Favorite menu item from LongHorn: Crispy Buttermilk Chicken Sandwich
- Favorite part about working at LongHorn: “Making great food and working alongside my manager, Eddy”
- Top grilling tip: “Pick the right cut for the applied temperature”

The Steak Master Series recognizes LongHorn Steakhouse’s commitment to quality while also celebrating the expertise of grill cooks across the brand’s 595 restaurants nationwide.

For more information about LongHorn Steakhouse, go to [LongHorn-Steakhouse.com](http://LongHorn-Steakhouse.com).



Contributed photo  
St. Augustine resident Noel Sherrill will compete May 15 in one-day grill-off in Orlando.

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St. Vincent's Southside



Contributed photos

St. Vincent's Clay County

# Ascension St. Vincent's Southside, Clay County earn 'A' grade

St. Vincent's Southside and Clay County have earned an "A" Spring 2025 Hospital Safety Grade from The Leapfrog Group, an independent national watchdog organization focused on patient safety.

The Safety Grade assigns an A, B, C, D or F grade to general hospitals across the country based on more than 30 measures of errors, accidents, injuries and infections as well as the systems hospitals have in place to prevent them.

"Safety is one of our foremost priori-

ties for our patients from the very first moment they enter our care," said Dr. Mario Pulido, St. Vincent's chief medical officer. "We strive to protect them when they are at our hospitals, in order to provide the best outcomes and security for patients and their families."

St. Vincent's Southside and Clay County are among 32% of hospitals nationwide to achieve a spring 2025 "A". In Florida, the hospitals are two of only 70 to achieve an "A". This is the third consecutive "A" grade for St. Vincent's

Clay County, dating back to spring 2024. This is the second consecutive "A" for St. Vincent's Southside, dating back to fall 2024.

The grading system is peer-reviewed and open to public scrutiny. Hospital Safety Grades are updated each fall and spring.

"Achieving an 'A' Hospital Safety Grade reflects enormous dedication to patient safety," said Leah Binder, president and CEO of The Leapfrog Group. "I extend my congratulations

to Ascension St. Vincent's, its leadership, clinicians, staff and volunteers for creating a culture where patients come first."

St. Vincent's was also recognized as a top 15 health system in the country for 2024 by Fortune and PINC AI.

To see full grade details for St. Vincent's hospitals, go to [HospitalSafetyGrade.org](https://HospitalSafetyGrade.org).

For more information about St. Vincent's, go to [healthcare.ascension.org](https://healthcare.ascension.org).

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# New tool helps clinicians better detect cancer

Surgeons at Baptist MD Anderson Cancer Center are advancing cancer care with the use of a new imaging agent to spot cancer in the lung that might have otherwise gone unseen. The visualizing agent illuminates cancerous tissue during surgery. This allows tumors to be removed with increased precision and in real time, improving patients' long-term outcomes.

When given via an IV prior to surgery, the imaging agent, called pafolacianine, binds to receptors on cancer cells, causing them to glow when viewed with a special infrared camera. By providing a clearer picture of the malignant tumor, surgeons can perform minimally invasive procedures to remove cancer with greater accuracy, achieving clean margins and reducing the risk of disease's recurrence. It also helps preserve healthy lung tissue.

In a Phase III trial, published in the Journal of Thoracic and Cardiovascular Surgery, the agent was safe and helped surgeons better locate tumors that they were unable to detect with traditional methods.

At Baptist MD Anderson, the agent is currently used by thoracic surgeons David Hall M.D. and Subrato Deb M.D. during lung wedge resections, a minimally invasive procedure that involves removing a small, wedge-shaped section

of lung tissue. These procedures are for patients with early-stage small primary lung cancer and for patients with other types of cancers, such as colorectal cancer, that have metastasized to the lung.

It is not unusual for cancers in other parts of the body to metastasize to the lungs.

"Lungs are like sponges," explained Hall. "Their spongy structure provides an ideal environment to trap and grow cancer cells circulating in the blood stream."

This imaging agent is helping find cancerous tissue that might not have appeared on pre-operative images.

"The research is showing that in around 8% of cases, it has helped surgeons spot a second, previously unknown cancerous lesion — and in real time so the tumor can be removed without delay," said Hall.

This was the case for one recent patient. After being diagnosed with lung cancer, the patient had the lower right lobe of her lung removed. Subsequent tests revealed the presence of cancer cells in her left lung. For the second procedure, Deb gave her the imaging agent, which revealed two cancerous tumors, one of which was not detected during pre-operative imaging.

"I feel so very fortunate to have

received the infusion that helped spot my hidden tumor and that it was able to be removed in one resection," said the patient. "We wouldn't have known it was there otherwise."

"Localization technologies like this are not only aiding in the detection of hidden tumors but also enhancing the precision of their removal," said Deb. "We are achieving clearer margins, which results in better outcomes for patients."

"This innovative tool is just one of the many ways we are using research, technology and innovation to advance cancer care in Jacksonville and beyond," said Bill Putnam M.D., medical director of Baptist MD Anderson. "By integrating recent advancements in science into clinical practice, Baptist MD Anderson continues to lead the way in providing patients with access to some of the most advanced treatment options available."

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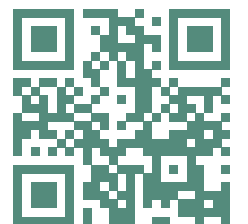


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# In the Arts

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www.PonteVedraRecorder.com

## Musical set during Northeast Blackout of '65

The next show in Limelight Theatre's Season 33 is a darkly comic rock fable set during the notorious blackout of 1965 that impacted parts of 10 states and Ontario. "Fly By Night," directed by Sherrie Provence, is a "star-crossed prophecy within a metaphysical musical."

The show runs May 9-25 on the theater's Inez McDonald Mainstage. The action takes place in New York City and concerns a melancholy sandwich maker

whose humdrum life is intersected by two entrancing sisters. This sweeping ode to young love is a tale about making your way and discovering hope in a world beset by darkness.

As a special promotion, anyone who lived through the blackout of '65 and wants to share their story will have a chance to be entered into a drawing for a ticket to every show in Season 34 — a \$250 value. To be entered in the draw-

ing, a person simply has to share their interesting, lived experience of the blackout on social media and tag the Limelight.

The show stars Heather Starling as Daphne, Daniel Starling as Harold McClam, Brian Johnson as Mr. McClam, Amanda Pazos as Miriam, Matthew Turnage as Joey Storm, David Buchman as The Narrator and Don Cupo as Mr. Crabble.

Tickets may be purchased at [www.limelight.ludus.com](http://www.limelight.ludus.com) or by calling the box office at 904-825-1164. Tickets are \$35.

Limelight Theatre presents at least three straight plays and five musicals each year. It also offers an education program with classes for adults and children. For further information, go to [limelight-theatre.org](http://limelight-theatre.org).

Limelight Theatre is located at 11 Old Mission Ave., St. Augustine.

## Women-centered comedy finds a home at improv

Amy Angelilli, owner and ringleader of Third Space Improv in downtown St. Augustine, is noticing a trend at her performance studio. The women are showing up and thriving in the improv and comedy space, where they are using their perspectives and experiences to craft unique and relatable entertainment.

Angelilli opened Third Space Improv in January 2024 as a place where people can come together to live in the moment, build self-confidence and make new friends.

"We're thrilled with how the community has embraced the concept and the space," said Angelilli. "As we've moved forward with classes and performances, I've had this wonderful influx of women who have used improv and comedy as a safe space for self-expression. Performance is all about putting yourself out there, casting aside self-consciousness and just flowing with the situation. It's incredibly freeing and builds these amazing bonds of trust and friendship."

Women have always held an important space in improv and comedy. Viola Spo-



Amy Angelilli, owner of Third Space Improv

lin, born in 1906 and widely considered the "Mother of Improv," used play mixed with theater techniques in her social work to transcend language, culture, gender and socio-economic barriers. Comedy pioneer Sophie Tucker started performing



Women are embracing the fun of improv.

in vaudeville acts in 1906, amusing audiences with cheeky songs that challenged societal norms about female beauty and restraint.

And Angelilli is here to help women dig deep and discover their unique voice —

and their funny bone.

Third Space Improv offers plenty of ways for new and aspiring performers of all persuasions to hone their craft. Magic

Contributed photos

IMPROV continues on Page 41



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# Symphony receives \$3M gift from Terry Family Foundation

The Jacksonville Symphony has announced reception of a \$3 million gift from the Terry Family Foundation. This gift will strengthen the symphony's long-term financial stability while enhancing both its artistic impact and performance space.

A portion of the funds will support the symphony's Pops Series. Another portion will contribute to improvements in Jacoby Symphony Hall, enriching the experience for guests and musicians alike. In recognition of this generosity, the Orchestra Level will be named in honor of the Terry Family Foundation.

The Terry Family's legacy of support for the Jacksonville Symphony is longstanding and profound. Prior to this gift, C. Herman and Mary Virginia Terry contributed a total of approximately \$3.3 million and provided invaluable leadership on the Jacksonville Symphony Board and Symphony Guild. Their historic generosity also made possible the naming of the Terry Theatre, a 600-seat recital and performance hall inside the Jacksonville Center for the Performing Arts.

In addition to their financial support, C. Herman and Mary Virginia Terry frequently attended concerts and had a close friendship with Roger Nierenberg, music director and conductor of the Jacksonville Symphony from 1984 to 1998, and then his successor, Fabio Machetti. Their love of the symphony continued throughout both of their lifetimes and was marked by continued enthusiasm and engagement.

"We are deeply grateful to the Terry



C. Herman and Mary Virginia Terry

Family Foundation for their remarkable generosity," said Steven B. Libman, president and CEO of the Jacksonville Symphony. "Their legacy will continue to inspire and elevate the symphony's work for years to come."

"On behalf of the foundation, we are happy to carry on and expand my aunt and uncle's support," said Betsy Cox, Terry Family Foundation president. "Not only did they enjoy attending orchestra concerts, they also believed that the Jacksonville Symphony was a vital investment in the Northeast Florida community — a sentiment still shared by the foundation as we continue their legacy of support. I continue to be impressed by the variety



Contributed photos

## The Jacksonville Symphony

of concerts and programs the symphony offers and have seen the artistry and community impact continue to grow."

"This gift is an outstanding investment in the symphony's future," said Courtney Lewis, music director of the Jacksonville Symphony. "Our musicians take great pride in performing in Jacoby Symphony Hall, and this gift will enhance the concert experience both on and off the stage. I am incredibly thankful for their belief in our

mission and their commitment to the future of symphonic music in Jacksonville."

"Both Herman and Mary Virginia were dedicated supporters of the symphony, attending performances regularly and championing its mission throughout their lifetimes," said Kathleen Shaw, executive vice president of the Terry Family Foundation. "This gift honors their enduring legacy and continued impact on the Northeast Florida arts community and beyond."

## Local author's novel named Foreword INDIES Book of the Year finalist

St. Johns-based author Stacey Horan has received a distinguished honor, as her novel, "A Place for Good and Evil," has been recognized as a finalist for the 27th annual Foreword INDIES Book of the Year Awards.

"A Place for Good and Evil" has been shortlisted in the mystery genre. Winners in each genre will be announced in June.

"A Place for Good and Evil" is the first book in Horan's Old City Mystery series, set in historic St. Augustine.

Here's a look at the plot: Three years ago, Sidney Stone's life changed forever. She had been a wife and mother one minute; the next, she was not. Now, in an effort to rebuild her life, she has set up shop as a private investigator. Sid reluctantly teams up with Leo Roberts, a teenager with the gift of communicating with the dead. When a big case is delivered to Sid by the county sheriff, the pair find themselves embroiled in a mystery that hits very close to home — the mystery

of what really happened to Sid's husband and daughter.

Horan is an award-winning author who writes about things that scare her, and her goal is to keep writing until nothing scares her anymore. In addition to her Old City Mystery series, she has penned seven young adult novels, including two paranormal thrillers and an adventure/mystery series. Horan also hosts The Bookshop at the End of the Internet podcast, which is dedicated to helping book lovers discover new authors and has more than 200 episodes available on most major podcast platforms.

"This recognition is especially meaningful because 'A Place for Good and Evil' is my debut adult mystery," said Horan. "It has been a joy to write the books in this new series and to set them in such a unique place like St. Augustine."

**FINALIST** continues on **Page 40**



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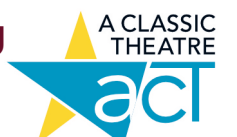


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# Sing Out Loud adds 3 acts to Live Wildly Showcase

Sing Out Loud Festival has announced the addition of breakout alternative star sombr, rising leftfield pop singer Sarah Kinsley and viral folk pop artist Brenn! to its highly anticipated Live Wildly Showcase on Sept. 20 and 21 at Francis Field in downtown St. Augustine. They join an already stacked lineup featuring Hozier, Beabadoobee, Vance Joy, The Teskey Brothers and more.

Tickets for Sing Out Loud Live Wildly Showcase are on sale now at SingOutLoudFestival.com, via the festival's official ticketing partner AXS.com or in person at The St. Augustine Amphitheatre Box Office.

Now in its third year, the Sing Out Loud Live Wildly Showcase continues its tradition of delivering an unforgettable weekend of live music in the heart of the Nation's Oldest City.

On Saturday, Sept. 20, Sarah Kinsley joins the powerhouse lineup of indie dream-pop phenom Beabadoobee, chart-topping folk-pop artist Vance Joy, enigmatic singer-songwriter Father John

Misty, the dynamic and boundary-breaking Maren Morris and viral sensation David Kushner.

On Sunday, Sept. 21, sombr and Brenn! join a bill headlined by international platinum-selling artist Hozier, soulful blues duo The Teskey Brothers, beloved indie rock band Rilo Kiley and the heart-felt songstress Gigi Perez.

## Meet the new additions

sombr is the moniker of 19-year-old Lower East Side native Shane Boose, who began producing music from a makeshift bedroom studio during the pandemic.

A graduate of New York's LaGuardia High, he fused classical training with a raw, emotional indie-rock style that found a massive audience online.

His breakout track "Caroline," written, produced and released at age 16, has now surpassed 40 million Spotify streams, paving the way for a steady rise in viral hits like "would've been you" and "back to friends." With more than 7 million monthly listeners and more than a million streams per day on his latest single, sombr recently made his Billboard chart debut.

Following a sold-out North American tour and a new deal with Warner Records, he brings his only Florida appearance of the year to Sing Out Loud.

Sarah Kinsley is a New York-based singer, songwriter and multi-instrumen-

talist known for lush, cinematic pop rooted in classical influence. A Columbia University graduate, she gained national attention with her debut album "Escaper," praised for its orchestral production and introspective songwriting.

Recently featured by NPR, The Guardian and Vevo, Kinsley continues to make waves on both sides of the Atlantic with immersive, sold-out shows and growing acclaim.

Brenn! is a 20-year-old folk-pop artist from Tuscaloosa, Alabama. His breakout single "4Runner" landed on major Spotify playlists and quickly racked up millions of streams, followed by another viral track, "Days On End."

In 2024, he released his debut EP, surpassed 100 million total streams and completed a sold-out tour including appearances at Lollapalooza and more. With back-to-back viral success, Brenn! is emerging as one of the most promising new voices in the genre.

Tickets are available now at SingOutLoudFestival.com, AXS.com or in person at The St. Augustine Amphitheatre box office, open daily from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Ticket tiers include single-day and two-day general admission, general admission plus, and platinum.

Saturday general admission is already sold out. Prices range from \$155 for general admission to \$835 for platinum with no hidden fees. Layaway plans are available for all tiers.

Sing Out Loud Festival's Live Wildly Showcase is more than just a music festival — it's a mission-driven event dedicated to protecting Florida's natural landscapes and wildlife. In partnership with the Live Wildly Foundation, \$10 from every ticket sold will go directly to land conservation efforts in St. Johns County.

Beyond the Live Wildly Showcase, Sing Out Loud Festival features a full month of programming, including free local artist showcases, ticketed events, artist development programs, the St. Augustine Record Fair and the St. Augustine Songwriters Festival. More announcements are on the way.

Sing Out Loud Festival is curated and produced by SJC Cultural Events, Inc., which operates the award-winning St. Augustine Amphitheatre, Ponte Vedra Concert Hall and the nationally recognized Fort Mose Jazz & Blues Series.

Sing Out Loud Festival 2025 partners with the Live Wildly Foundation and additional community partners St. Johns County Tourist Development Council, City of St. Augustine, St. Johns County, St. Augustine Distillery, Sunbelt Rentals, Bozard Ford, Champion Brands, Intuition Ale Works, St. Augustine, Ponte Vedra & The Beaches Visitors & Convention Bureau, St. Augustine Songwriters Festival, Flying Saucer Presents, AVL Productions, Jalaram Hotels and Embassy Suites by Hilton St. Augustine Beach.

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## Finalist

Continued from 39

As part of its mission to discover, review and share the best books from university and independent publishers, Foreword Magazine, Inc. hosts an annual awards program each year. Finalists represent the best books published in 2024.

"This year's submissions have truly impressed me with their depth and diversity," said Christopher Nesbit, INDIES Award director. "Each finalist stands as a testament to the remarkable talent and vision within the independent publishing world. The INDIES not only celebrates these exceptional literary works but also plays a pivotal role in connecting them with librarians and booksellers, ensuring that a rich variety of voices continues to thrive in the world."

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## Improv

Continued from 38

Mic is a monthly all-arts open mic performance where anyone can try their hand at their form of entertainment. Students Liz Bonacquisti and Lo Flaural have used Angelilli's improv classes and Magic Mic nights to combine their talents for art, storytelling and entertaining. Flaural is a master speed caricaturist, and during the act, she completes several speed drawings of audience members while Bonacquisti tells the story of their relationship and business.

Third Space celebrates women in comedy with a special all-female Stand Up Community Comedy Night at 8 p.m. Friday, May 9. Comedians from across the First Coast will showcase their most gut-busting and saucy content, so this one is just for the adults. Jacksonville comedian Sean Steel hosts the show, which features an all-female lineup including Alet Weist, Allie Owens, Alysse Stewart, JPaw, Kayla Mai and Wendy Gillis.

Third Space Improv offers regular improv and comedy shows, open mic nights and drag performances. Classes and training include a five-level improv school, comedy writing, workshops from visiting instructors, mixers, team building, corporate workshops, laughter yoga sessions, summer camps and more.

The space is also available to rent for public or private events. A full list of classes and performances can be found at [3rdspaceimprov.com](http://3rdspaceimprov.com).

# MOCA offers free access for military families, first responders

MOCA Jacksonville, a cultural institute of the University of North Florida, has partnered with CSX and Blue Star Museums to offer free admission to the families of active duty and former military and first responders from Armed Forces Day on May 17 through Veterans Day on Nov. 11.

The Blue Star Museum initiative is a collaboration between the National Endowment for the Arts, Blue Star Families, the Department of Defense and more than 2,000 museums nationwide that wish to show appreciation for military families who face multiple deployments and reintegration challenges.

To support this program, CSX partnered with MOCA Jacksonville to expand this free admission opportunity to include not only active-duty military, but also former military and first responders. This year, CSX provided additional support to expand the program to run through Veterans Day, while the Blue Star program ends on Labor Day, providing more than two months of additional free access.

"We are thrilled to extend our support to military families and the first

responder community through our partnership with MOCA Jacksonville," said LaSandra Boykin, community investments director at CSX. "Through our signature philanthropic initiative, Pride in Service, CSX supports hundreds of thousands of active-duty, veteran and first responder service members across our rail network, while also representing the pride the company has in serving our hometown of Jacksonville. MOCA is a Jacksonville treasure with something for everyone to discover, and this partnership underscores our commitment to military families and first responders by providing them with free access to the enriching experiences offered at the museum. This partnership allows us to show our gratitude and 'serve those who serve.' Thank you for your dedication to our community and nation."

Through its commitment to community building, MOCA Jacksonville provides access to arts and educational experiences for the entire community, introduces contemporary art to thousands of students in Duval County through school tours and family programming and supports local art-

ists through opportunities to exhibit, teach and enhance programming at the museum.

With an ambitious program schedule, MOCA provides a platform for community discussion and debate, critical and creative thinking and cultural exploration while acting as a vital community convener for creative conversation.

To access this program, bring valid military or first responder identification. Those who qualify are welcome to bring up to five family members. Learn more about visiting MOCA Jacksonville online at [mocajacksonville.unf.edu](http://mocajacksonville.unf.edu).

Operational support for MOCA Jacksonville is provided by the City of Jacksonville, the Cultural Council of Greater Jacksonville, the MOCA Jacksonville Board of Trustees, the MOCA Director's Circle and the University of North Florida.

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# Sports

THURSDAY, MAY 8, 2025 • PAGE 42

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The Nease Panthers' boys volleyball team defeated Bartram Trail High to win a district title on Thursday, May 1.



Dennis Rehm hammers a shot at the net.



The Panthers only lost one set in two games during the district tournament.

## Panthers finish strong, cruise to district title

By Anthony Richards

Nease High School only lost one set in two matches during their path to a convincing boys volleyball district title.

The Panthers swept the Bartram Trail High Bears in three matches during the championship tilt on Thursday, May 1, just two days after handing Beachside High a 3-1 defeat in a semifinal contest.

The outcome was not a surprise in many ways as the Panthers entered the district tournament as the top seed and defeated the Bears in their two prior meetings during

the regular season.

According to senior outside hitter Ryan Centeno, the team seemed to mesh well early on because they had a lot of returning players from a year ago, and that cohesion on the court just continued to grow throughout the season.

"We've got a great group of people here in the program, and it's just such a welcoming environment and an amazing community," Centeno said.

"We definitely improved throughout the year with both offense and defense, and just when it came to knowing our positions," senior libero Tristan Evans said.

Evans has been playing volleyball since elementary

school, and he has enjoyed it the entire way and now can graduate high school as a district champion.

With the win, the Panthers clinched a spot in the state tournament and will enter the playoffs with a record of 19-6.

However, even 19 wins and cruising to a district title has the Panthers wanting even more and they know that means continuing to hone the aspects of the game they can continue to improve.

"There's always something that we can improve on, no matter how many times we win," sophomore setter Brandon Centeno said.



Brandon Centeno handles a serve hit his way.



Owen Pytel lifts up the district championship trophy.



Jameson Haughey and Dennis Rehm combine to block a shot.



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# Sharks cross country squad receives rings

The Ponte Vedra High girls cross country team was awarded their state championship rings during a recent lacrosse playoff game. It was the second state title in four years for the senior class, who also won four straight district and regional titles.

Photos by Anthony Richards



# Constellation FURYK & FRIENDS tickets are available now

Constellation FURYK & FRIENDS presented by Circle K, one of Jacksonville’s premier annual sporting and community events, opened ticket sales on Thursday, May 1. Golf fans and families alike can look forward to an exciting experience filled with world-class golf, new entertainment options and activities for all ages at Timuquana Country Club on Oct. 3-5.

Tickets will be available digitally via Ticketmaster, with daily general admission starting at just \$25 (all fees included). General admission tickets include entry to tournament grounds and numerous fan attractions such as the always fun and popular Circle K Par-Tee Porch, Tailgate Village featuring football viewing, food trucks and craft beverages, as well as family-friendly areas like the Baptist Health Family Lounge and the Kids Zone.

Additional ticket information and policies:

- Youth 17 younger are admitted free to the tournament with a ticketed adult.
- College students are admitted free to the tournament with a valid college ID.
- Military members are admitted free of charge for active duty, military reserve, National Guard, military retirees, veterans and dependents with a valid ID.
- VyStar Patriots Outpost will once again provide complimentary access for military members and their families with views of the 7th green and 8th tee along with complimentary food and beverage (while supplies last)
- Tickets can be claimed at furyk.

spinzo.com/?group=military--magk or with a valid military ID at the gate. (Limit two tickets per ID)

New for 2025 is the Community Concert Series, taking place on the 17th hole immediately following the conclusion of Friday and Saturday rounds. Friday’s headline act will feature LOCASH, the celebrated country music duo known for their hits like “I Love This Life” and “One Big Country Song.” Saturday will welcome country favorites Love & Theft to the stage, featuring the No. 1 Billboard Country Song, “Angel Eyes.” Admission to these concerts is included with all Friday and Saturday tournament tickets.

“Music has always been at the heart of our tournament,” said Tournament Director Adam Renfroe. “It’s our way of bringing people together, celebrating the game and creating unforgettable memories for our fans. With the launch of our Community Concert Series, we’re beyond excited to give our fans the chance to enjoy live music on hole 17 after Friday and Saturday’s rounds.”

The event continues its tradition of community support, with proceeds from the event directly benefiting numerous local charitable organizations. Since the inaugural event in 2021, Constellation FURYK & FRIENDS has generated more than \$4.7 million for charity, impacting more than 75 local organizations.

Fans seeking an elevated experience can enjoy premium hospitality options such as Club 58 presented by Florida Blue, named after tournament host Jim

FURYK continues on Page 44

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# Sporting JAX teams up with adidas to unveil inaugural uniforms

Sporting Club Jacksonville, the United Soccer League's Northeast Florida expansion franchise, will collaborate with adidas to unveil its highly anticipated inaugural uniforms (kits) at a free Fan Fest on May 13 at the newly renovated Friendship Fountain in Downtown Jacksonville.

Hosted by Sporting JAX in partnership with the City of Jacksonville and PRI Productions, the landmark event will kick off with an official unveiling at 5 p.m., followed by the Fan Fest from 6 to 8 p.m. at Friendship Fountain, illuminated in bold Sporting JAX colors. Fans will get an exclusive look at the club's brand-new USL W League and League Two home and away kits during a high-energy runway show featuring Sporting JAX players modeling the fresh adidas designs on stage.

The free Fan Fest will also feature:

- Live music and entertainment by PRI Productions
- Food sampling from Sporting JAX partners, The Bearded Pig and Island Wing Company
- Beer tasting from Grace Note Brewing and free Pepsi products
- Player appearances and photo opportunities
- Merchandise including the new line of adidas swag and replica jerseys
- Sporting JAX giveaways, season ticket details and



more

"Unveiling our new adidas kits marks a defining milestone in the evolution of our club," said Steve Livingstone, president and CEO of Sporting JAX. "From the youngest players in our academy to our rising profes-

sional squads, these kits represent the passion, pride and heartbeat of our diverse community. We are honored to share this moment alongside our players and supporters as we look ahead and step boldly onto the field."

More than 10,000 players from the Sporting JAX Soccer Academy will be the first to wear the inaugural custom adidas kits featuring the brand's iconic three-stripe design, beginning in May 2025. The look will debut with the club's pre-professional USL W League and USL League Two teams as they take the pitch this summer.

This collaboration with the renowned brand will culminate in the highly anticipated Sporting JAX professional men's USL Championship and the upcoming women's USL Super League teams. The women's team will kick off its inaugural season this August at UNF's Hodges Stadium in its custom adidas kits.

Through this partnership, adidas will also supply a full range of match kits, training kits, coach wear and an extensive selection of fan wear to provide supporters with access to premium gear that represents the club's ambitious vision.

For more adidas Fan Fest updates, go to [sportingjax.com](https://sportingjax.com). Additionally, season tickets for the USL Super League inaugural season are on sale now at [sportingjax.com/tickets](https://sportingjax.com/tickets) or by calling 904-863-KICK.

## FURYK

Continued from 43

Furyk's historic PGA Tour single-round record. Club 58 offers exclusive food, beverages, stadium seating and superior views of multiple golf holes, along with enhanced concert viewing and extended bar service on concert nights.

Private cabanas adjacent to the 17th hole are also available, providing a luxurious experience with premier amenities



including all-inclusive food and beverages, views of Timuquana's signature par-3 and views of the Community Concert Series. Each private suite accommodates 14 people per day (Friday through Sunday) and includes mounted HD TVs, access to

premium restrooms, corporate branding and high-end furnishings by PRI Productions, including a bar rail facing the hole and soft seating inside. Contact Bo Powell at [bo@furykandfriends.com](mailto:bo@furykandfriends.com) for inquiries.



CHAMPIONS

Transportation to the tournament is convenient and complimentary, with options including the Circle K Water Taxi, departing every 30 minutes from the Winston Family YMCA in downtown Jacksonville, and free shuttle service from Orange Park Mall. Rideshare drop-off is also conveniently located near the clubhouse.

For ticket purchases, more information on hospitality options and more details about tournament activities, go to [constellationfurykandfriends.com](https://constellationfurykandfriends.com).



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**Legal 124711 Published 5/1/2025, 5/8/2025, 5/15/2025 and 5/22/2025 in St. Johns County Ponte Vedra Recorder newspaper**

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Docket No. NO24D0565DR  
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The Trial Court Probate and Family Court  
Norfolk Probate and Family Court  
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Galen Harris v. Thomas Blackburn  
To the Defendant:  
The Plaintiff has filed a Complaint for Divorce requesting that the Court grant a divorce for irretrievable breakdown. The Complaint is on file at the Court. An automatic restraining order has been entered in this matter preventing you from taking any action which would negatively impact the current financial status of either party SEE Supplemental Probate Court Rule 411. You are hereby summonsed and required to serve Patrick K Burke, Esq. Burke Levy, PC, P.O. Box 959, Westborough, MA 01581. Your Answer if any 20 days from the return date of this Notice, May 15, 2025. If you fail to do so, the Court will proceed to the hearing and adjudication of this action. You are required to file a copy of your Answer if any, in the Register of this Court. WITNESS, Hon. Lee Peterson, First Justice of this Court.

Date: April 2, 2025  
Register of Probate  
Colleen Brierly  
**Legal 122338 Published 4/17/2025, 4/24/2025, 5/1/2025 and 5/8/2025 in St. Johns County Ponte Vedra Recorder newspaper**

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**Major sculpture created in Mandarin**  
Harriet Beecher Stowe subject of work  
By Shaun Ryan  
A landmark work of art is taking shape in Mandarin — and the public will have an opportunity to view it and to witness the artist in action. The sculpture, "Harriet Beecher Stowe in Mandarin," is a bronze sculpture of the famous author, created by artist Shaun Ryan. The sculpture is being created in Mandarin, Florida, and will be the first of its kind. The sculpture is being created in Mandarin, Florida, and will be the first of its kind. The sculpture is being created in Mandarin, Florida, and will be the first of its kind.

**Post 129 sent pair to nationals as part of memorable year**  
By Anthony Richards  
Sending representation to both to Boys Nation and Girls Nation from the same area of a state is very unusual, but it is even more rare to have them both come from the same American Legion post. That was the case when Harley P. Black and Ben Black were chosen to represent Post 129 in Jacksonville Beach during the 2023 program, which included a trip to Washington, D.C. Ben Black, a Ponte Vedra High senior, spoke to the American Legion Auxiliary, Post 129 about the experience last year at Boys Nation on Feb. 1.

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T Z X O R G W Z U X E P F O I F G A R S  
O I F G F I G S L L R D E L T S W C L I  
G S Z G N I T T E S U G N E O A O E U N  
R M W Z R R O P P D S E H O D E E A I G  
A F R I G O H L N E O W S O W P M R D V  
P R C I H O T X S P P H E R U T R E P A  
H M T S T M I N G T X O X I X I V M U N  
E I A O Z X E W V H E X X C P F G A M G  
R N L D P L P H H O U A E P A F F C R L  
Z W L S S R L P U F S R E T T U H S S E  
O X C E I C G W I F L R W C H G N H P V  
O Z Z N N L N R C I R M V N N S D P X W  
M U T P U S V N D E T N A I F U A C Z Z  
R S I S E E U N G L E F X H D P L C D C  
O E H P F E X S I D X F S T O P T V Z E

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

ANGLE	ISO	SETTING
APERTURE	LENSES	SHOOT
CAMERA	LIGHT	SHUTTER
DEPTH OF FIELD	LIGHT METER	SMILE
DIGITAL	PHOTOGRAPHER	SPEED
EXPOSURE	POSING	TELEPHOTO
FOCUS	PRINTS	VIEWFINDER
F-STOP	PROOFS	ZOOM

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### CROSSWORD

1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8		9	10	11	12
13						14				15			
16						17				18			
19				20						21			
			22					23				24	
25	26	27		28				29				30	
31			32		33		34					35	
36				37		38				39			40
	41				42				43		44		
		45						46		47		48	
49	50		51				52				53		
54		55				56						57	58
59													
60					61					62			
63					64					65			
66					67					68			

**ACROSS**

- Two-person German submarine
- 60-minute intervals (abbr.)
- Database management system
- Vertical position
- American jazz singer Irene
- Ancient Greek City
- Former Senate Majority Leader Harry
- Japanese seaport
- Self-immolation by fire ritual
- Assigns tasks
- Beloved type of cigar
- Discounts
- Cambodian communist leader Pot
- Important football position
- Kilometers per hour
- Lentil
- Extremely angry
- Yellow-flowered European plant
- American state
- Some are made by rabbits
- Express with a head movement
- Affair
- Cured
- Youth organization
- 18-year astronomical period
- Automobile
- Focus a shot
- The NFL's big game (abbr.)
- Mouth
- Infections
- Curved pieces of a horse collar
- Shameless
- Assist in escaping
- Capuchin monkey genus
- Cold wind
- Retired Brazilian NBAer
- Tropical Old World tree
- Bulgarian city
- Speak indistinctly
- Soviet Socialist Republic
- Between-meal sustenance

- Line a roof
- Greek god of the underworld
- Software
- Large-headed elongated fishes
- Shag rugs
- Type of whale
- Lacking a plan
- Spill the beans
- Some is "heavy"
- One who has been canonized
- Indicate times
- Greeting
- Broadway actor Josh
- Seashore
- Indicates before
- Electrical power unit
- Destitute
- Drags forcibly
- Impropriety
- Word forms
- Equal to 10 meters

- Neither
- Computer language
- Practice of aging film or TV characters (abbr.)
- A woolen cap of Scottish origin
- A promise
- Challenges
- Official
- People living in Myanmar
- Notable tower
- Type of sword
- Vaccine developer
- Listing
- Summertime insects
- Concluding passage
- Guitarist Clapton
- Damp and musty
- Central nervous system
- Against

### SUDOKU

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

**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!

**Level:** Beginner

**DOWN**

- Not soft
- Sharp-pointed dueling sword





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