

Ponte Vedra Recorder



February 9, 2017
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PonteVedraRecorder.com



CancerKare event

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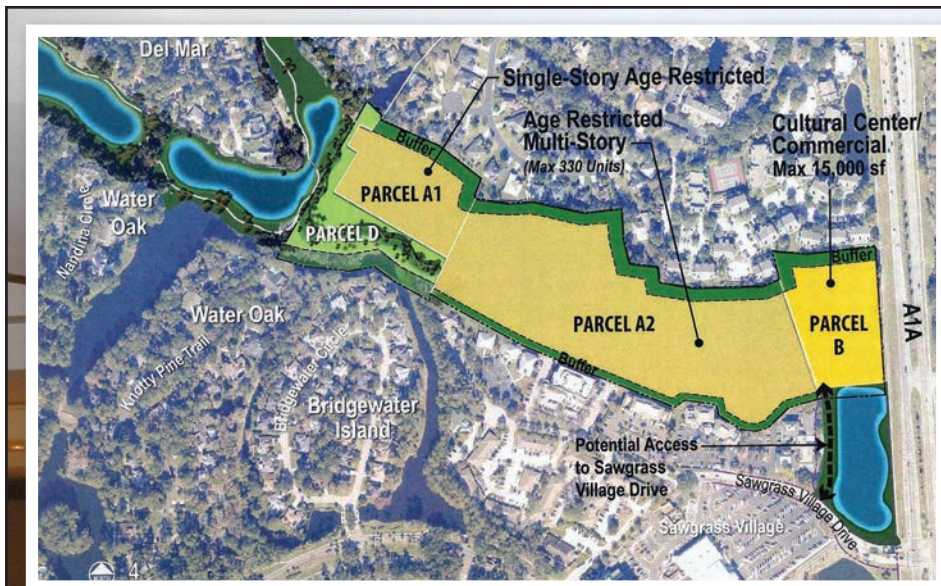
Valentine's Day gift guide

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Signing Day

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Sawgrass residents approve golf course agreement

Sawgrass Players Club residents await Monday's vote on whether to amend the community's covenants to allow Oak Bridge Club owner Alta Mar to sell 40 acres of the golf course for development. Residents voted overwhelmingly in favor of the agreement. Read more on page 5.

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Send us your news

We welcome submissions of photos, stories, columns and letters to the editor. Let us know what's happening. E-mail submissions to pvrecorder@opcfla.com or bring them by our office at **1102 A1A N., Unit 108, Ponte Vedra Beach.**



Visit our website at www.pontevedrarecorder.com

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

PUZZLE SOLUTIONS

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Solutions correspond to last week's puzzles.

WHAT'S THIS?



Do you know what this is?

Email your answer with your first and last name to jennifer@opcfla.com by Monday at 5 p.m.

All correct entries will be entered into a random drawing to win tickets for two adults and two children to the Jacksonville Zoo. In order to allow as many families as possible to win, participants are only eligible to win a ticket prize pack once every four months.

Several readers correctly identified last week's photo as Pearle Vision. Winner of the random drawing was **Sophia Bruno** – congratulations, Sophia! You may pick up your prize at the Recorder office during regular business hours.



ADOPT A PET

CAT OF THE WEEK

My name is Fantasia and I am a 2-year-old female cat who is looking for a new home. I was brought to the pet center because my owners abandoned me at a vet's office. I'm super sweet and love to be petted. As this animal was a stray there may be some traits that are unknown at this time. Come visit us today here at the pet center! #36463



DOG OF THE WEEK

My name is Bridget and I am a 3-year-old female terrier who is looking for a new home. I was brought to the pet center by some nice people who found me running around all alone



with nobody to call my own. I love to play outside and nothing makes my little tail wag like going on long walks and then coming home for a long nap. As this animal was a stray there may be some traits that are unknown at this time. Come visit us today here at the pet center! #36276

Any new pet being introduced to a new home will need time to adjust to their new environment. Please reinforce house-training and behavioral training and be mindful of interacting with other pets.

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Cat adoptions at the St. Johns County Pet Center are \$30 for males and \$40 for females. Dog adoptions are \$45 for males and \$60 for females. Adoption fees include microchipping, neutering/spaying, rabies vaccinations and shots. The pet center is located at 130 N. Stratton Rd., off US 1 between County Road 210 and International Golf Parkway. Business hours are Tuesday through Friday 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and Saturday 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. The center is closed to the public on Sunday. On Monday, the office is open by appointment only to claim a lost pet. For more information, please call the **St. Johns County Pet Center at (904) 209-6190.**



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FEBRUARY 18, 2017

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Task force to release traffic study results in April

By Jennifer Logue

The Citizens Traffic Task Force (CTTF) is wrapping up two years of research and study into the long-term traffic and roadway needs of Ponte Vedra and Palm Valley, and plans to release the results of its efforts at a public meeting in late April.

To be held at the Ponte Vedra Concert Hall, the meeting will feature a presentation by traffic consultants, who will discuss the study's findings and present recommendations on how to improve local roadways. The meeting will also

enable local residents to ask questions and offer feedback.

"Traffic in our community has become everybody's problem," task force Chairman Garry Phillips said. "If you think that's an exaggeration, try driving into the Ponte Vedra Beach community any weekday afternoon from 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. It's wall to wall traffic on A1A all the way from the JTP expressway to Solana Road."

Comprised of citizens and community leaders, the task force was created in 2014 as a way to gain consensus on how to

address the long-term traffic needs as the Ponte Vedra area's population continues to grow. According to county statistics, the population in the northern part of St. Johns County east of US1 has increased nearly 200 percent since 2000.

According to CTTF members, the group's traffic study examines all critical roadways from JTB to Mickler's Landing and from the Atlantic Ocean to the Intra-coastal Waterway. It will also incorporate data gathered for the 2016 North Ponte Vedra Beach Coalition study focused on roadways in the JTB, Marsh Landing and

Ponte Vedra Lakes areas.

Ponte Vedra Beaches Coalition President Jim Sabo said that local state and county officials are expected to attend the April meeting along with representatives from the Florida Department of Transportation.

"We encourage everyone to come and bring a friend," Sabo said. "This is the best opportunity to make your thoughts known and be a part of making near-term traffic flow improvements to a situation that is only getting worse."

SHORT TAKES

Boat Safety Course

The U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary's Jacksonville Beach Flotilla 14-04 will present a boating safety course Saturday, Feb. 18 at 8 a.m. at The Sea School located at 14180 Beach Blvd. in Jacksonville. Participants will learn in a classroom setting from experienced U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary instructors who will teach boating basics, including navigation, in-water survival and more. Any boat operator of a vessel powered by 10 horsepower or more in the State of Florida born after Jan. 1, 1988 must have in their possession a Florida Boating Safety Education Card. A federal and State of Florida course examination will be given after the class. Successfully passing the course will earn participants this State of Florida Boating Safety Education Identification Card. The cost is \$25 cash or personal check for training materials, which are kept by participants. Class begins at 8 a.m. and students are encouraged to arrive by 7:45 a.m. to complete the registration process. This is a full-day program with short breaks and half-hour lunch. Students are encouraged to bring lunch and refreshments. Contact Bill Vaughan, USCG Aux, FSO-PA at (904) 955-7077 or at botsafely04@gmail.com.

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PVPV/Rawlings holds ribbon cutting for new playground



The PVPV/Rawlings PTO celebrated the opening of the school's new playground with a ribbon cutting ceremony held Jan. 19.

Principal Caty Van Housen joined with PTO President Emily Stephens, teachers and school staff, and parents and students to officially cut the ribbon and break in the new equipment. Representatives from St. Johns County, school community partner Coastal Luxury Outdoors and playground equipment provider BYO were also on hand to mark the occasion.

The new playground was funded through donations raised at the school's annual Turtle Trot fundraiser organized by the PTO and sponsored by Coastal Luxury Outdoors.

PTO volunteers worked with BYO to customize the playground to meet the needs of PVPV/Rawlings students.



Photos courtesy of PVPV/Rawlings

Bolles students win Scholastic Art Awards

A group of 34 Bolles students won a total of 54 awards in the recent Northeast Florida Scholastic Art Awards competition, with 12 of the artworks selected to continue on to the prestigious National Scholastic Art Awards.

There were 12 gold key winners, 14 silver winners and 28 honorable mention awards from Bolles. An awards ceremony was held Feb. 4 at 10 a.m. at the Florida Theatre, followed by award exhibition at the Jacksonville Main Branch Library, where the Gold Key works were displayed. Silver Key and Honorable Men-

tion works were on digital display and at the Heather Moore Community Gallery at the Cathedral Arts Project Inc. Offices on North Laura Street.

Bolles artists who received a gold, silver or honorable mention award include XiaoXian (Lucy) Qu, Gold and Honorable Mention; Will Skinner, Gold; Yang (Angela) Sun, Gold; Kayla Fender, Silver; Jiayin Li, Silver and Honorable Mention; Ziyi Zhang, Two Silver, Honorable Mention; Emily Fender, Honorable Mention; Devon Haskell, Two Honorable Mentions; Tyler Wang, Gold and Silver and

Honorable Mention; Alexandra Bishop, 10 Honorable Mention and two Silver; Marlo Morales, two Honorable Mentions; Pam Sun, Two Golds; Tommy Ropp, Silver; Maya Cooper, Honorable Mention; Mikail (Meshia) Lachapelle, Honorable Mention; Vivian Moritz, Honorable Mention; Serena Scalcione, Two Honorable Mentions; Duncan Evans, Gold; Alex Hastings, Gold; Dominique Pacella, Gold; Kiera Geraghty, Silver; Salma Shaalan, Silver; Ananta Arora, Honorable Mention; Lewis Culver, Honorable Mention; Gabriela Landolfo, Honorable Mention; Claudette

Bryan, Silver; Desi Hambrock, One Gold, Two Silvers, Honorable Mention; Helen Milazzo, Gold; Annie Thanner, Gold; Alexis Andrews, Silver; and Brooke Bowmaster, Honorable Mention.

The Northeast Florida Art Association's Scholastic Art Awards is a blind adjudication competition during which works are juried by teams of art professionals, college professors and executive art directors. More than 1,700 works were entered, with fewer than 400 pieces selected for awards.

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Sawgrass Players Club residents give greenlight to golf course proposal

Vote to amend community covenants clears way for planned development

By Jennifer Logue

Sawgrass Players Club residents voted overwhelmingly Monday to amend the community's covenants and approve a proposed development agreement with Oak Bridge Club owner Alta Mar Holdings, clearing the way for Alta Mar to sell 40 acres of the golf course for development.

In the final vote tally confirmed by Marsh Landing Management following the Feb. 6 meeting held at the Sawgrass Marriott, residents voted 991 in favor of an agreement reached between the Sawgrass Players Club Homeowners' Association and Alta Mar, with 310 voting against. As a result of the vote, Alta Mar may now seek county approval for its plan to sell the back nine holes of the golf course for development as a cultural center and age-restricted continuing care retirement community. Proceeds from the sale would be invested back into the operation of the golf club and its remaining 12 holes.

Alta Mar's Jeff Miller – who owns The Oak Bridge Club with his partner and cousin, David Miller – said they were pleased by the vote results.

"We consider it a strong endorsement by the community of what Alta Mar has done, and will do, with the property," he said.

David Miller agreed. "I'm happy for the community," he said. "It was a resounding vote and I think that's just a show by the community of embracing what the vision is. Everybody's on the same boat and we're all heading in the same direction."

A year-long process

Sawgrass Players Club Master Association Board President Gerard Klingman began Monday's meeting by thanking community residents for actively participating in the nearly year-long process to consider, refine and review the agreement with Alta Mar. Noting that the community's covenants gave the board the right to approve the proposed agreement, Klingman said from the beginning the board pledged to abide by the decision of the community's residents.

"We decided to let the people decide," Klingman said. "I'd like to compliment you on your participation in this process leading up to this meeting. Typically, we get 25 percent participation (when seeking) a quorum; for this issue, we received over 60 percent."

Prior to conducting the final vote, Klingman detailed the process the master association board had undertaken during the past year, which included the creation of a nine-member ad hoc committee and a 14-member focus group that not only ac-

tively solicited input from residents of each Sawgrass Players Club neighborhood, but also worked with Alta Mar to refine details of the proposed agreement.

Once a tentative agreement had been reached, Sawgrass Players Club residents received a mailing in mid-January with a detailed report outlining the agreement and a proxy ballot to be returned by Jan. 30. Those who did not mail in a proxy ballot were encouraged to attend the Feb. 6 meeting, where they were encouraged to ask any remaining questions they had.

By the time Monday's meeting was held, 1,125 ballots had already been submitted. After answering a handful of questions from the standing-room-only crowd, master association board members asked residents who had not yet submitted ballots to do so. The results were announced within minutes.

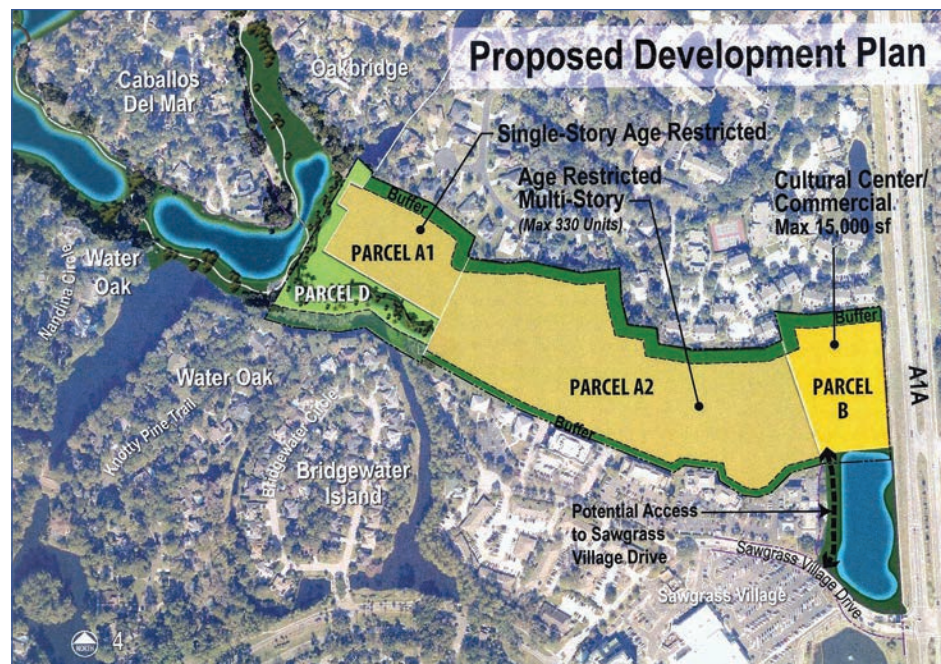
"I'm gratified that the vote was definitive," said ad hoc committee member and Water Oak resident Bill Haley. "Development can be disruptive and if managed poorly can greatly impact the quality of life and property values of the neighborhood," Haley said. "The ad hoc committee and task force worked hard to address our residents' very legitimate concerns."

As outlined in the proposed agreement distributed to community residents prior to the vote, the ad hoc committee worked with Alta Mar to reduce the size of the proposed development's Parcel A1 from 5.39 acres to 3 acres. Alta Mar also agreed to reduce the number of developed units from 396 to 330, install buffers and landscaping to protect homeowners' views and place \$2 million from the sale of the property into escrow to be used solely for improving the remaining 12 holes. In addition, the agreement extends the land-use restriction on the remaining 12-hole golf course through 2057 and stipulates that in the event the golf course fails to be maintained in an acceptable manner, its ownership will transfer to the master association at no cost to the community.

Growing support

With 76 percent voting in favor of the agreement with Alta Mar, Monday's special membership meeting seemed to represent a stunning turnaround in opinion from last spring, when hundreds of residents packed the same room at the Sawgrass Marriott to hear details of Alta Mar's plans. At that time, many residents expressed fear and anger over plans to sell and develop the golf course's back 40 – a move that some homeowners feared would ruin their golf course views and impact property values.

Several residents, however, said they believe Alta Mar's proposal presents the best



option for the golf course, which had fallen into disrepair and was deemed a "failed community asset" by its owners.

"We think all of the questions were answered and the ad hoc committee did an amazing job," said Bruce Barber, president of the Cypress Creek homeowners' association. "We wish the Millers good luck. It can only be an improvement."

Less enthusiastic over Monday's vote results were local residents who would prefer to see the golf course land preserved as a community park and botanical garden rather than developed.

"We are naturally disappointed and will continue to make the case," said Frank Levene, who owns a home in Hidden Oaks that abuts the golf course. Because Hidden Oaks is not located within Sawgrass Players Club, its residents were not able to participate in the vote approving the agreement with Alta Mar.

Hidden Oaks resident Jake Bestic noted,

however, that Monday's vote doesn't mean the current development plans are set in stone.

"The opportunity to acquire the 40 acres and preserve the green space as a public park is still a viable option," Bestic said. "The purchase price of the land will depend upon the type of land use approved by the county. We feel that a public park would be the best option for our entire community, its property values, and most importantly, it's the right thing to do."

David Miller said that while Alta Mar is still open to the park proposal – provided its proponents can raise the funds to purchase the property – the next step is for Alta Mar to seek county approval for the 330-unit development, a process he expects to take from six to nine months.

"I'm proud of our community," he said. "This resounding mandate allows us to stay on the path for the best outcome for the community. Everybody won."

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Throughout his 40-year career in education, Dane Gilbert has worked with countless at-risk students, helping them to stay on track for graduation and future success. After serving as principal of Fletcher and Terry Parker high schools, he is now director of the case management division for Communities In Schools, which places site coordinators in schools to work directly with students.

Dane Gilbert

By Jennifer Logue

What originally brought you to the First Coast?

I came from New Jersey to Jacksonville in 1973 to attend Jacksonville University. Following graduation in 1976, I remained in the area and was hired by the Duval County Public Schools as a physical education teacher at a local elementary school. In my second year, I was transferred to Finegan Elementary School in Mayport. There, I taught with Joe Reynolds and started to coach at Fletcher High School in the afternoons. My wife and I moved to the Beaches in 1980 and have lived there since, raising three children in our wonderful community and schools.

How did you become interested in education?

I had summer jobs working with kids in recreation programs and really enjoyed that. My first teaching job was at Normandy Elementary, and the principal, Nancy Dorian, encouraged me to pursue a master's degree in education leadership. I finished that at UNF in 1980. Most of my 36 years with DCPS was spent at the Beaches or Arlington area schools. I was fortunate enough to be at Fletcher High School in a variety of roles – soccer coach, dean of boys and finally as principal (2006-2012) to finish my DCPS career in my “dream job.” Prior to that assignment, I was also principal at Woodland Acres Elementary, Fort Caroline Middle and Terry Parker High School.

How did you become involved with Communities In Schools?

Upon my retirement from the Duval County Public Schools, I wanted to continue to work with students in some capacity and focused on employment with nonprofits. I applied for a posted position with Communities In Schools of Jacksonville and served as the site coordinator at Terry Parker High School, where the principal was a former student of mine. A couple of years later, I moved to my present position as director of case management. I was familiar with Communities In Schools from my experience with DCPS and always admired the wonderful, important work they've done for 27 years in Jacksonville.

What are your duties and responsibilities as director of CIS's case management division?

I manage about 34 site coordinators in three different programs: Student Enrichment Program, Achievers For Life and Bridge To Success. All of our site coordinators are embedded in their schools full time. I also work with our funders to ensure that the contract deliverables are being met. Our funders include the Duval County Public Schools, United Way, The Jim Moran Foundation and the DuBow Family Foundation. My experience with the school system is a benefit in this role.

What are some of the ways CIS works with at-risk youth to keep them on track to graduation?

Our site coordinators are sort of a blend of a counselor and social worker. They work individually and in small groups with their caseload of students and also assist with their families. They advocate for the students with the teachers and connect them with wraparound services provided by CIS or other partner agencies. We also provide our students and families with clothing, food and other needs. All of the efforts of the site coordinators are aimed at removing barriers that could impede the students' success at school and beyond graduation.



Photo by Jasmine Marshall

What is the most challenging part of or your role as case management director? The most rewarding?

The greatest challenge is keeping students focused and positive despite some traumatic events and daily living conditions that impact them educationally and emotionally. The spike in youth-related violence has a direct impact on the communities where our students and families live. The most rewarding part of my role is the opportunity to build trusting relationships with our students and observe the many success stories and truly life-changing moments for those students. Many of our students move on to

college upon high school graduation, and the majority of those are first-generation college students.

How do you enjoy spending your free time?

I still attend a lot of Fletcher athletic events – I have a son who is basketball coach – and I faithfully attend every Jags home game. I am blessed, too, that all of my adult children and grandchild are Beaches residents, and I'm extremely proud that they have all followed me and my wife into the education field. Other than family time, beach time is always enjoyed!

Donna Deegan to receive 'Rock of the Community Award' from Rotary Club of Ponte Vedra Beach



Donna Deegan

By Jennifer Logue

Award-winning journalist and philanthropist Donna Deegan will receive the 2017 "Rock of the Community Award" at the Rotary Club of Ponte Vedra Beach's annual "Mineral City Celebration," to be held Saturday, March 25 at the Ponte Vedra Concert Hall.

A three-time breast cancer survivor, Deegan has helped thousands of breast cancer patients through the creation of The DONNA Foundation and its signature fundraising event, 26.2 with DONNA, the National Marathon to Finish Breast Cancer. Proceeds from the event benefit the Mayo Clinic Breast Cancer Translational Genomics Program and the DONNA Foundation's programs to provide financial assistance to breast cancer patients. This year marks the 10th anniversary of the marathon.

"Donna Deegan has been an inspiration to so many First Coast residents," said Ponte Vedra Beach Rotary Club President-Elect Billy Wagner, the chairman of this year's Mineral City Celebration. "She has dedicated herself to helping others living with cancer, and the support her foundation provides to cancer research will impact countless lives around the world, making her amply deserving of the 'Rock of the Community Award.'"

The Mineral City Celebration is the signature annual fundraising event for the Rotary Club of Ponte Vedra Beach. Proceeds from the event benefit more than two dozen local nonprofit organizations and charities, including the Beaches Dial-a-Ride program, Mission House, BEAM, HEAL, the Council on Aging and more. For tickets or more information, visit www.mineralcitycelebration.com.

SHORT TAKES

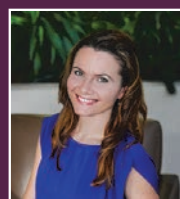
Beaches Museum to host 'Camo & Cocktails' History Happy Hour

The Beaches Museum's Beach Cruisers young professional group will host History Happy Hour to kick off membership for 2017.

Camo & Cocktails will be held at the Oesterreicher-McCormick Cabin in the History Park in Jacksonville Beach Feb. 9 from 6 to 8 p.m.

Guests will enjoy live entertainment, prizes for the best camo outfit, and author Michel Oesterreicher, who will be on hand to share stories of the cabin's early days. The event is free to Beach Cruiser members, with a suggested \$5 donation for non-members.

The Beaches Museum & History Park is located at 381 Beach Blvd. in Jacksonville Beach. For more information, call (904) 241-5657 or visit www.Beaches-Museum.org.



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Thomas Houston achieves rank of Eagle Scout

Ponte Vedra resident Thomas Houston celebrated his Court of Honor Jan. 18, when the Nease High School student achieved the rank of Eagle Scout.

As part of the requirements to achieve the Eagle Scout rank, Houston planned and executed a community service project: the construction of a rear patio at the Nocatee fire station for use by station personnel to relax, barbecue and eat meals. Patio furniture was also donated so the station's first responders can relax in between emergency response calls.

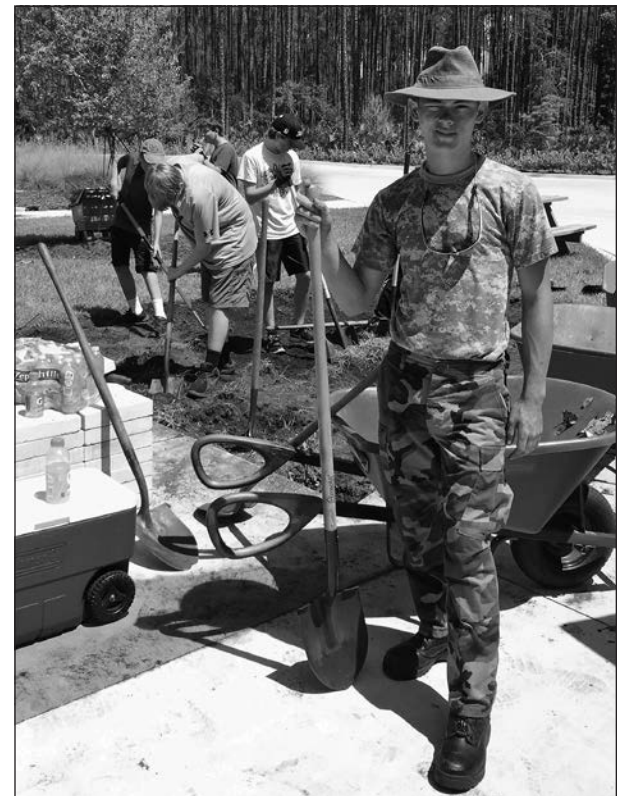
"After months of planning, fundraising, budgeting, and collecting supplies we finally went to work," Houston said. "We spent four weekends prepping the area, hauling dirt, laying and compacting pavers, and planting shrubs. It took a team effort to complete the project in the heat of the summer, but the scouts got it done."

Scouts also must hold lead-

ership positions in order to be eligible for Eagle Scout, Houston noted. "One of my favorites was senior patrol leader, in which I was charged to lead and guide over 100 active scouts," Houston said. "It was a learning experience, and yes, trying to keep them all in line is just as hard as you could imagine."

The son of Dr. Gil Houston and Dr. Karen Wolf, Houston is a member of Ponte Vedra Beach Troop 277. He is also a cadet in Nease's nationally recognized NJROTC program and a member of the Nease marching band. To Houston, achieving the rank of Eagle Scout demonstrates that a scout has developed the leadership, skills and maturity needed to make the world a better place.

"I would like to inspire young boys to join scouting," he said, "and those already participating to stay the course and reach for Eagle."



Thomas Houston makes Eagle Scout: Houston's community service project was building a patio at the Nocatee fire station. Photos provided by Karen Wolf

Ponte Vedra girl scout receives gold medal

2017 *Living Here* ON THE FIRST COAST

From the publishers of the award-winning Ponte Vedra Recorder and First Coast Register,

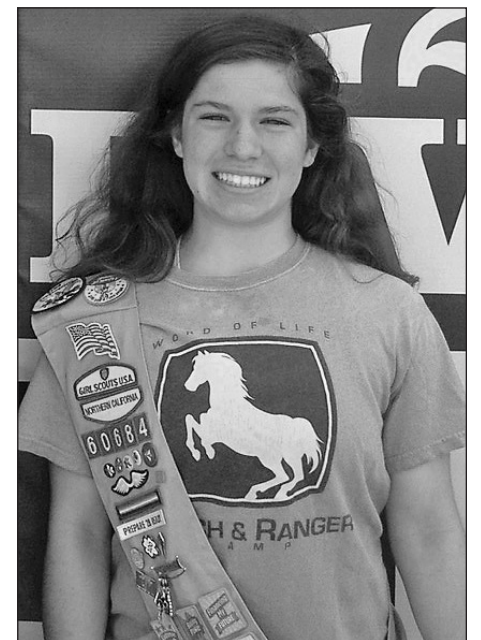
A resource for newcomers and long-time residents alike, LIVING HERE is a guide to the best neighborhoods of Ponte Vedra Beach, Nocatee, Jacksonville's Beaches, St. Augustine and Jacksonville.

Alexandra Austin-Christoforatos of Ponte Vedra was recently awarded the Girl Scout Gold Medal by the Northern California Council for her camp recycling program.

Previously, the camp – which hosts campers from around the world – did not recycle.

The gold medal is the highest award presented by the Girl Scouts of the United States for outstanding demonstration of a community project that has a global impact.

Austin-Christoforatos has also earned silver and bronze medals for projects benefiting ConKerr Cancer Pillowcases for Kids and St. Augustine's Betty Griffin Center. She also assisted her Brownie troop with a book drive for a child care center in Mayport.



SHORT TAKES

Hugs Across the County

Hugs Across the County is currently managing a number of programs to benefit St. Johns County children in need. Oceanside Cleaners is now a drop-off location for new and very gently-used clothing for K-12 homeless students who attend St. Johns County schools. Clothing should be clean and school-appropriate. Donations of new clothing, new underwear and new socks are also appreciated. Hugs Across the County also welcomes online donations through its website www.stjohnshugs.org. Hugs Across the County is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to providing assistance to St. Johns County's children in need, including the approximately 800 students considered homeless. To learn more about volunteer opportunities, email info@stjohnshugs.org.

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Tess Reiman named Cameron Impact Scholar

Ponte Vedra High senior one of 15 students nationwide to receive four-year, full-tuition scholarship

By Jennifer Logue

Ponte Vedra High School senior Tess Reiman has been selected as one of the 15 inaugural Cameron Impact Scholars – a national honor that will provide her with a four-year scholarship covering full tuition and all qualified expenses.

Awarded by the Bryan Cameron Education Foundation, the Cameron Impact Scholarship recognizes students who have not only demonstrated academic strength through a GPA of 3.7 or higher, but also exhibited strong leadership qualities and involvement in community service aimed at making a positive impact on the world around them.

Reiman will use the scholarship to support her studies at Davidson College, where she will play lacrosse.

“I am very humbled to be selected for this scholarship and I am grateful to the Bryan Cameron Education Foundation for this opportunity,” she said. “This scholarship allows me to pursue my goals to help people and make an impact. With the support of the Bryan Cameron Education Foundation, I will have the opportunity to meet other students from around the coun-

try who have made incredible impacts in their communities. I am excited to bounce ideas off of them, and I know they will encourage me to do my best in achieving my goals.”

Reiman has been recognized for her community service activities that began when she was just 13.

“I wanted to help Habitat for Humanity in Jacksonville Beach, but I was too young to build,” Reiman said. “I came up with Project Storybook, an idea to give new books to the kids who move into the Habitat homes. The program started with Beaches Habitat, then I expanded it to St. Johns County Habitat and Habijax. After a couple years, I spread it to various Habitat chapters along the East Coast and within college campuses.”

Reiman also started a club at her school to help Jacksonville Beach children who attend after-school programs at the Carver Center and Rhoda Martin Center. “We mentor the kids, help them with homework, play with them outside and hang out with them every Wednesday,” said Reiman, who in 2016 was honored as a “Local Hero” by the Rotary Club of Ponte Vedra Beach for her community service

efforts.

According to the Bryan Cameron Education Foundation, more than 2,500 students from all 50 states applied for the inaugural year of the Cameron Impact Scholarship. Following an online application process, approximately 70 finalists were selected for in-person interviews.

“We were both honored and humbled at the caliber and volume of interest in our program’s initial year,” Executive Director Amie Lucas said. “The depth of passion, ingenuity and overall potential for this next generation is incredibly heartening.”

Founder Bryan Cameron agreed. “One of the most worthy and impactful investments which one can make is in a young person’s education,” he said. “We recognize and are grateful to the institutions, teachers, families and citizens which contribute their time, talent, and treasure to help educate our nation’s youth. It is our honor to invest in the lives of our nation’s next generation of leaders.”



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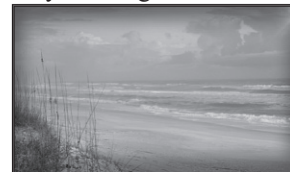
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OBITUARIES



Elinor Florence Lowrie Sampson

Elinor Florence Lowrie Sampson of Ponte Vedra Beach died Jan. 23. Elinor was born in Scranton, Pennsylvania on April 27, 1923. She lived in Pennsylvania until attending

Syracuse University, where she graduated with a major in Music and minor in Education. Her love of music and support for the arts was always present. Elinor was a guest pianist for the Jacksonville Symphony, a founder of Players by the Sea and a local piano teacher. Elinor also enjoyed being an active member of Christ Church. Elinor Sampson is lovingly remembered

by her children Charles Sampson and Judy Rowan, grandchildren and other family and friends. She is preceded in death by Wayne Lowrie (brother), James Sampson (husband), Jeff Sampson (son) and James Sampson Jr. (son). Elinor was buried in Waverly, Pennsylvania on Jan. 28.



Joan Griffiths

Joan Griffiths, 68, died Feb. 2, surrounded by her loving family. She loved playing Bingo at Mayport Naval Station, enjoyed softball and especially spending time with

her grandchildren. Joan is survived by her loving husband George T. Griffiths, Sr; children Dawn Paulus (Chad), Lori Armstrong (Edward Allen) and George T. Griffiths, Jr. (Klodiana); grandchildren Ashton, Courtney, Andrew, Harry and Abby; and several loving siblings, nieces, nephews and cousins. A visitation and graveside service was held Feb. 5 at Ponte Vedra Valley.



Beatrice Lorraine Buckles

Beatrice Lorraine Buckles died Jan. 31. Beatrice was born in Brookfield, Massachusetts in 1926 to the late John and Helen Rohan. Bea attended

school in Massachusetts, graduating from Clark University in Worcester. Bea later moved to New York City, where she worked in the airline industry for Irish Airlines and later Pan Am. It was during that time with the airlines that she met the love of her life, Dan Buckles. Dan and Bea were married in 1948 and lived in Farmingdale, New York.

Bea worked for AT&T as a long-distance operator while Dan was working in the clothing industry.

Bea enjoyed many passions including gardening, golfing and was an active member of Ponte Vedra Beach Club where she was a former WGA President. Bea traveled extensively with her husband Dan and later with her sister Rose, enjoying many cruises to exotic destinations. Bea was a longtime parishioner of Christ the King Catholic Church and later Our Lady of the Sea. Bea was the treasurer of the BCC&SS social club and a member of the Jacksonville Sister City organization. But Bea loved to dance! Bea and Dan spent many an enjoyable evening together dancing the night away.

OBITS continues on Page 11

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OBITUARIES

Continued from 10

Bea's true passion, however, was her family: first raising her three beautiful daughters and later her grandkids. The grandchildren brought Bea much pride and great joy. Bea is survived by her daughters Eileen and husband Dale Wendell of Ponte Vedra Beach; Cathy Stroud and husband Steve of San Antonio, Texas; and Linda Jacobs of Alpharetta, Georgia; sister Rose Marie of Orlando; brother John Rohan of Tampa Bay; grandchildren Dennis Wendell and wife Chassidy of Neptune Beach; Katie Wendell of Scottsdale, Arizona; Jaclyn Stroud of Austin, Texas; Danny Stroud of Denver; Ann Geoghagan of Tampa Bay; and Ryan Geoghagan of Alpharetta, Georgia.

A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated at 11 a.m. Friday, Feb. 3 in Our Lady Star of The Sea Catholic Church. Interment followed at Oaklawn Cemetery. In lieu of flowers, the family is suggesting donations to Wolfson Children's Hospital/Cardiac Dept. at www.foundation.baptistjax.com/givenow or McGraw Hospice at www.communityhospice.com. Please visit the online Tribute at www.quinn-shalz.com. Services were under the direction and care of Quinn-Shalz Family Funeral Home in Jacksonville Beach.



SHORT TAKES

Forward Leadership St. Johns

Forward Leadership St. Johns is seeking applicants for the 2017 Forward Leadership class, designed to equip active adults age 50 and over with insights and first-hand knowledge to enhance positive change in the community through advocacy and volunteerism. This six-week program will take students behind the scenes of education, healthcare, tourism, history and government in St. Johns County. To be held Wednesdays, Feb. 15 through March 22 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., the sessions will enable participants to meet with local leaders, including St. Augustine Mayor Nancy Shaver, Tax Collector Dennis Hollingsworth and Sheriff David Shoar. For more information on how to apply, call Sue Richerson, program manager, St. Johns County Council on Aging at (904) 209-3631.

Flourless chocolate cake class

Hot Shot Bakery of St. Augustine will offer gluten-free chocolate flourless cake baking classes at 2 p.m. Feb. 18 for adults and Feb. 25 for kids. Participants will bake and decorate a cake topped with chocolate ganache in a class of eight. Chef Sherry Stoppelbein leads with 30 years of baking and designing expertise. Registration is \$35 per person and includes hot apple cider for adults and lemonade for kids. Seats are by reservation only. For more information or to reserve, call (904) 824-7898. Hot Shot Bakery is located at 47 Cordova St. in St. Augustine.

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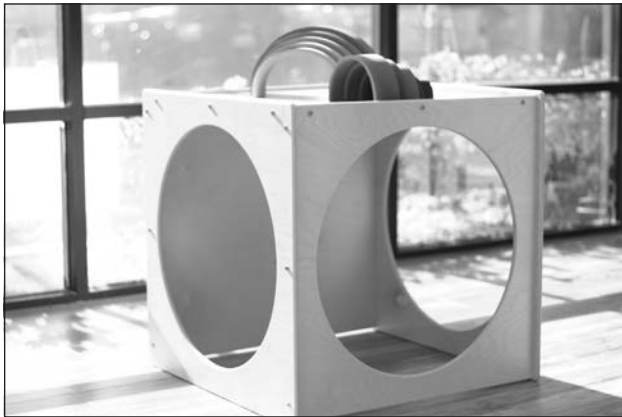
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PV2-LV35141

Ponte Vedra resident opens indoor playground



By Jasmine Marshall

In a playroom tucked off Palm Valley Road, sunlight filters through the east-facing windows, knocking colorful light off of snowflakes adorning the ceiling onto light wood floors.

The membership-based space, aptly dubbed “Pod,” is one of nostalgic whimsy. Notably absent are the battery-operated toys and bumper-framed computer tablets that parents, teachers and toy stores have opted for in recent times. In their place are specially fashioned, multi-purpose wood furnishings: a low-lying table and bench, a step stool that flips into a rocking boat and a miniature jungle gym dot the open area, encouraging simple play, organizational skills and discovery. The philosophy is what makes Pod, the brainchild of Ponte Vedra resident and owner Krystina Nelson, decidedly unique.

“Pod stands for ‘play, organize, discover,’” Nelson explained. “And that’s exactly what I want kids here to do – they organize their thoughts both physically and emotionally and discover wellness, new information and new ways to utilize their bodies in an environment of play.”

Nelson says the experience is one meant to allow care-



givers to let go of distractions and have an experience with their children. First conceptualized after her own twins turned 2 years old, Pod was created to act as a community outreach as much as a playroom. Nelson realized it could also give parents and caregivers in similar circumstances to socialize. With her background in teaching, Nelson naturally gravitated toward a profession in the realm of childcare to fill a need in her community – a place for babies and young children to play as they engaged in preschool preparation.

“We haven’t really had anything quite like this here,” she said. “With the change in climate and the rapid building and development of the community, I started thinking of how many young families in this immediate region needed a place to build relationships with one another and encourage unstructured play. This is something convenient and close to home.”

That unstructured play component is arguably the most important, Nelson said, as it fosters the innate need for children to be creative. It also explains why her selection of finely made toy furnishings errs on the side of simple.

“Unstructured play is just such a vital aspect because as society shifts, we are so overscheduled,” Nelson



Photos by Jasmine Marshall

Pod owner Krystina Nelson

said. “But kids have an inherent, intrinsic need to create and we must nurture that as parents and caregivers – so there’s no boundaries here, just open-ended activities and creative work, art and thinking and endless experiences to see what they’re capable of.”

Since opening in November of last year, Nelson’s vision of the center has continued to grow. More than just a play zone, Pod offers a variety of activities bolstered by the expertise of professionals. Among them are a dance class for baby-wearers, wherein new moms work with a master trainer on toning and strengthening; storytelling movement implementing the Reggio method of learning; and a ballet and tap dance for toddlers aged 2-4 years old. Nelson has also been working alongside local art teachers to launch a summer art camp and with Jacksonville Beach-based nonprofit Bach to Rock to cultivate a full curriculum music education program. In addition, Pod will house art classes in the spring, sign language classes taught by a certified educator from the Florida School for the Deaf and Blind and workshops for parents and caregivers.

It’s Nelson’s hope that the services Pod offers to members will facilitate not only learning for children but also space for parents to have time to build bonds with their children. Implementing programs that will allow them time with one another as they build creative and verbal skills, develop problem-solving abilities and dexterity, the curriculum will be tailored as the community evolves to better fit more needs.

In doing so, Nelson is compelled to create a positive framework for children to confidently develop healthy learning patterns, even as Pod becomes a distant memory as they grow.

“It truly takes a village to raise a child,” she said. “When children grow up, they may not know where they learned how to feel confident or how to work through problems, but I want them to feel confident that somewhere they learned that there’s a place where they can feel safe and loved and be themselves.”



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Sunset Rotary to host comedy fundraiser

The Rotary Club of Ponte Vedra Beach Sunset will hold a comedy fundraiser to benefit the service organization's charities.

To be held Saturday, April 1 at 6:30 p.m. at UNF's Robinson Theater, "Comedy for a Cause" will feature Jacksonville comedian Danny Johnson – a noted comedian who has performed with Chris Rock, Bob Saget, Billy Gardell and Richard Lewis – and a special guest comedian. In addition to the comedy show, the event will feature a silent auction, raffle drawing, hors d'oeuvres and cash bar.

Proceeds from the event will benefit The Rotary Foundation, which is celebrating its centennial in 2017, as well as Rotary's End Polio Now campaign. For more than three decades, Rotary clubs around the world have been working to eradicate polio, with just a handful of cases remaining today.

Tickets to "Comedy for a Cause" are \$45 per person. For tickets or more information, visit www.comedy4acause.org.



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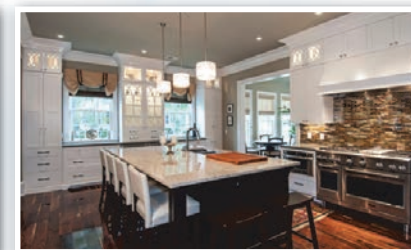
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Thursday, Feb. 9	Friday, Feb. 10	Saturday, Feb. 11	Sunday, Feb. 12
<p>Adventures in the Arts The Friends of the Library and Cummer Beaches will sponsor Adventures in the Arts, an art-oriented series of programs. The February program features photographer Craig O'Neal as he presents "Nature Adventures." This program will take place in the Ponte Vedra Beach Branch Library on Thursday, Feb. 9 starting at 2 p.m. The event is free and open to the public. For additional information, call Marianne Stein at (904) 280-2976.</p> <p>Ladies' Valentine's Luncheon Seminar A Ladies' Valentine's luncheon exploring financial topics will be held Thursday, Feb. 9 at noon at Sawgrass Beach Club. Hosted by UBS Account Vice President Heather Hayes, the event will address wealth and retirement planning for women. To RSVP or for more information, call (904) 280-6055 or visit ubs.com/fa/heath-erhayes.</p> <p>Free Preschool Music Classes Children and caregivers will experience singing, creative movement, simple instruments, finger plays and more during free preschool music classes. To be held Feb. 9 at First United Methodist Church, located at 225 E. Duval St. in Jacksonville, classes will take place at 9:15 a.m. and 10:15 a.m. for students 18 months to 2.5 years old and 11:15 a.m. for students 2.5-4 years old. Space is limited and pre-registration is required. Visit http://www.jaxchildrenschorus.org or call (904) 353-1636, ext. 1 to reserve a spot.</p> <p>Camo and Cocktails The Beaches Museum's Beach Cruisers young professional group will host History Happy Hour to kick off membership for 2017. Camo + Cocktails will be held at the Oesterreicher-McCormick Cabin in the History Park in Jacksonville Beach Feb. 9 from 6 to 8 p.m. Guests will enjoy live entertainment, prizes for the best camo outfit, and author Michel Oesterreicher, who will be on hand to share stories of the cabin. The event is free to Beach Cruiser members with a suggested \$5 donation for non-members. For more details, please call (904) 241-5657 or visit www.BeachesMuseum.org.</p>	<p>DONNA Expo The 26.2 with DONNA 10th anniversary weekend opens Feb. 10 with the DONNA Expo. Spend the day visiting exhibitors showcasing apparel, fitness gear, interactive displays and free samples. Registration for the weekend's marathon, half marathon, team relay and 10K, 5K and Family Fun Run will be available. The expo will take place from noon to 7 p.m. at the Prime F. Osborn III Convention Center at 1000 Water St. in Jacksonville.</p> <p>Photography of Jacko Vassilev Owner and curator of Lost Art Gallery Victoria Golden welcomes internationally acclaimed art and press photographer, Jacko Vassilev. A Bulgaria native, Vassilev specializes in 35mm black and white film photography, creating layered and detailed work that document human character. In an exhibit to be displayed through February, Vassilev's work showcases "vulnerable and breathtaking moments." The Lost Art Gallery is located at 210 St. George St., Ste. C-1 in St. Augustine.</p> <p>Coastal Wine Market Wine Tasting Coastal Wine Market hosts Friday wine tastings from 6 to 8 p.m. at 641 Crosswater Parkway, Suite B, Ponte Vedra Beach. Taste six wines for \$10. For more information, call (904) 395-3520.</p> <p>PV Professionals Networking Group The Ponte Vedra Professionals Networking Group meets Fridays at 9 a.m. at Watson Realty Corp., 615 Highway A1A, Ponte Vedra Beach. For more information, call Gloria at (904) 635-6103, visit www.pvpng.com or email pontevedrapng@gmail.com.</p> <p>Live Music at Table 1 Table 1 at 330 A1A N will host Tier 2 live starting at 7:30 p.m. in addition to the entertainment, guests can enjoy bar bites starting at \$7 and 2-for-1 well drinks, domestic drafts and house wine by the glass.</p>	<p>Dixie Melody Boys at Word of Faith Gospel quartet Dixie Melody Boys will perform at the Word of Faith Church, located at 1396 Chaffe Road South in Jacksonville. With a unique four-part harmony, the Dixie Melody Boys have received Grammy nods and numerous fan award nominations. This family-friendly musical event will take place Feb. 11 at 6 p.m. For more information, call (904) 888-2568 or visit www.dixiemelodyboys.com.</p> <p>'Art for Two: Traveling the World!' In the Cummer Museum's 'Art for Two: Traveling the World!' program, students will view art depicting different countries in Academic Splendor and the Permanent Collection, before returning to the studio to create an internationally inspired piece of art. Projects will be completed within one class from 10:30 a.m. to noon Feb. 11. This program is open to children ages 3-5 with an adult. Class size is limited. Cost is \$15 per pair for members and \$20 per pair for non-members. For more information, email education@cummuseum.org or call (904) 355-0630.</p> <p>Katz 4 Keeps Adoption Weekends Join Katz 4 Keeps Feb. 11-12 for a weekend adoption event helping cats and kittens find their forever homes. This event will be held from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Katz 4 Keeps facility located at 935B A1A North in Ponte Vedra Beach. For more information about this event or organization, call (904) 834-3223 or email info@katz4keeps.org.</p> <p>Science and History Boat Tour Jacksonville's Museum of Science History has partnered with the St. Johns River Taxi to host Science and History River Tours every Saturday. Guests will learn about the history of Jacksonville and the importance of the St. Johns as they cruise the river. Boats leave from the museum, located at 1025 Museum Circle in Jacksonville, at 1 p.m. and 3:30 p.m. Admission is \$15 for adults and \$12 for children. To learn more, visit www.themosh.org.</p>	<p>DONNA Marathon Weekend The DONNA Marathon Weekend is 10 years closer to the finish with its 10th anniversary race weekend to be held Feb. 10-12. Sunday, Feb. 12 marks the 26.2 with DONNA Marathon, half marathon and the team relay. Beginning at 7:30 a.m., run, walk or cheer during the DONNA Marathon, half marathon and team relay starting at THE PLAYERS Championship, ATP Tour Blvd. in Ponte Vedra Beach. The route meanders through Jacksonville's four Beaches communities ending at Mayo Clinic Jacksonville.</p> <p>LIFT: Closing Celebration The Cummer Museum's LIFT exhibition will come to a close Feb. 12, marking the 117th anniversary of the first performance of its namesake, "Lift Ev'ry Voice and Sing," in 1900. Guests are welcome to enjoy live music and visit with participating artists as they browse the exhibition one last time. The closing celebration will be held from noon to 4 p.m. For more information, call (904) 899-6038.</p> <p>Care Connection Volunteers Needed Adult volunteers are needed at Care Connection, located at 180 Marine St. in St. Augustine, to mentor young adult volunteers on weekend home improvement and minor repair projects for seniors who can no longer do the work themselves. Adult volunteers will help youths engage with seniors as they learn career skills and professional behavior in the field of community service. For more information, call (904) 209-3686 or email aleach@stjohnscoa.com.</p> <p>Collection Tour Join the Cummer Museum of Art and Gardens on Sundays for a guided tour of its permanent collection. The tour is free with the cost of admission. The museum is located at 829 Riverside Ave. in Jacksonville.</p>

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Monday, Feb. 13	Tuesday, Feb. 14	Wednesday, Feb. 15	Thursday, Feb. 16
<p>Hans Hofmann: Works on Paper Jacksonville's Museum of Contemporary Art will display "Hans Hofmann: Works on Paper" through May 14, featuring work by the acclaimed post-war abstractionist. In this exhibit consisting of more than 60 objects, examples of Hofmann's distinctive approach — among them self-portraits, figures, abstract pieces and landscapes — showcase the artist's growth and evolution. Centered around his modestly sized paper works, consisting of pieces at various stages of completion, the exhibition aims to provide audiences with an introduction to one of the most influential artists of recent history.</p> <p>Travel Training Program The Council on Aging's Travel Training program is designed to assist seniors in learning to ride the Sunshine Bus. Residents interested in expanding their transportation options or who would like to increase their confidence as a bus rider can receive assistance from trained volunteers in navigating routes, reading time tables and making transfers. Contact the mobility manager at the Council on Aging at (904) 315-6505 or email Katie Arnold at karnold@stjohnscoa.com.</p> <p>Adult Day Health Volunteers Needed Ponte Vedra Therapeutic Adult Day Health Care at 1050 A1A North is in need of a volunteer any weekday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. This volunteer will help participants in activities such as games, music, chair exercises and simple arts and crafts projects. Certified pet therapy dogs are also welcome. Call (904) 209-3686 or email aleach@stjohnscoa.com for more information.</p> <p>Lawn Service Volunteers Needed The Council on Aging is seeking volunteers for Care Connection at 180 Marine St. in St. Augustine. Lawn service volunteers are needed, including volunteers who will act as a job scheduler, job supervisor and equipment maintenance person. For more information, call the Council on Aging at (904) 209-3686 or email aleach@stjohnscoa.com.</p>	<p>Sunset Rotary Club Meeting The Rotary Club of Ponte Vedra Beach Sunset meets Tuesdays from 6 to 7:30 p.m. at the Hilton Garden Inn. Community leaders are welcome to attend. For more information, call club President Janeene Hart at (904) 412-5409 or email jwhart1208@gmail.com.</p> <p>Prenatal Yoga Share experiences with other women with empowerment through yoga, meditation, and guided visualization. This approach is gentle and safe for women in all stages of pregnancy. Participants are asked to bring a yoga mat, towel and water. The class will be held at 6 p.m. and there is a \$13 class fee per attendee. For additional information or to register, call (904) 202-5376 or visit baptistjax.com/ymca. Prenatal yoga classes will take place at the Y Healthy Living Center in the Ponte Vedra YMCA located at 170 Landrum Lane in Ponte Vedra Beach.</p> <p>Tapas Tuesday The Cummer Museum of Art & Gardens presents Tapas Tuesday at the Cummer Café. Every Tuesday from 5 to 7:30 p.m. take in the sunset on the Cummer Café patio while listening to local musicians with beer, wine or artfully inspired tapas for sale at the Café. Reserve your table by calling (904) 899-6022. For more information, visit www.cummuseum.org. The museum is located at 829 Riverside Ave..</p> <p>Life Enrichment Day Retreat Arbor Terrace Ponte Vedra hosts a Life Enrichment Day Retreat every Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Arbor Terrace Ponte Vedra, 5125 Palm Valley Road, Ponte Vedra Beach. The group is designed for those with memory changes who would like to stay active mentally, physically and socially. For more information, call (904) 834-7578 and ask for Ilene Thrasher or visit www.at-pontevedra.com.</p>	<p>Anti-Valentine's Day The Ponte Vedra Beach Branch Library will host an "anti-Valentine's Day" party for teens ages 13-18. "Uncelebrate" the holiday from 5 to 7:30 p.m. in the PGA Tour Media Room with a showing of zombie flick "Warm Bodies," board games and pizza. Teens are encouraged to bring a friend and dress in black and red. The party will also feature a raffle of the newly released "Warm Bodies" sequel, "The Burning World."</p> <p>Right Whale Lecture Guana Tolomato Matanzas National Estuarine Research Reserve Environmental Education Center will host a free lecture by Jen Jakush from 3 to 4 p.m. Feb. 15. The biologist will present a discussion on right whales, one of the most endangered whale species in the world. Jakush is a biologist with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission. Those interested in attending this lecture may register at www.gtmnerr.org.</p> <p>Toastmasters Club Toastmasters Club #5199 of Ponte Vedra Beach meets every Wednesday at 7:30 a.m. at the Players Community Senior Center. These meetings will help attendees improve public speaking and gain leadership skills. The senior center is located at 175 Landrum Lane. Email Carmen at carmenjsardinas@gmail.com for additional information.</p> <p>Chair Yoga St. Paul's By-the-Sea's youth ministries will host chair yoga classes Wednesdays at 11:30 a.m. Participants of all skill levels are welcome to join. St. Paul's By-the-Sea Episcopal Church is located at 465 11th Ave. N in Jacksonville Beach.</p>	<p>Derek Boyd Hankerson Lecture The Beaches Museum and History Park will host author, film director and producer Derek Boyd Hankerson as he presents a lecture on "Spanish Florida: The Original Underground Railroad." Hankerson's lecture will take place Feb. 16 at 5:30 p.m. at the Beaches Museum Chapel. Admission is free for members of the museum with a \$5 donation requested for non-members. For more details, visit www.beachesmuseum.org/events/60/boardwalk-talk-derek-boyd-hankerson.</p> <p>Coastal Community Senior Center Volunteers Needed The Coastal Community Senior Center located at 180 Marine Street in St. Augustine is in need of volunteers to serve coffee and lunch and to encourage participation in activities such as games and crafts Tuesday through Friday from 8:45 a.m. to 1 p.m. As volunteers will lead chair exercises, exercise enthusiasts and those with a background in physical education are preferred. Call (904) 209-3686 or email aleach@stjohnscoa.com for additional information.</p> <p>Yoga for Survivors at the Y Share a restorative experience as a yoga instructor certified by the Christina Phipps Foundation guides cancer patients, survivors, caregivers and others with range of motion and pain limitations through a gentle and safe yoga practice. This free event is open to the community. Call (904) 202-5376 or visit www.baptistjax.com/ymca to reserve a spot. The event will take place at the Y Healthy Living Center in the Ponte Vedra YMCA at 170 Landrum Lane. Class begins at 11:30 a.m.</p> <p>Free calendar listings for community groups and nonprofit organizations are published at our discretion on a space-available basis. Send your event at least 10 days before publication. Submit events to jasmine@opcfla.com, post online at www.pontevedrarecorder.com using the automated form or call (904) 686-3939.</p>

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Award-winning nature photographs to be displayed at Wild Birds Unlimited stores

Award-winning photographs from the Audubon Society's avian photography contest will be on display at the Wild Birds Unlimited stores in Fruit Cove and Jacksonville Beach in February and March.

Selected from more than 7,000 entries submitted from across America and Canada, the winning photos will be displayed at the Fruit Cove store from Feb. 24 through March 4. The St. Johns County Audubon Chapter will host a reception at the Fruit Cove store Monday, Feb. 27 at 6:30 p.m. to highlight the photos, offer advice on nature photography and provide information on the local chapter and its activities.

The Jacksonville Beach store will host the exhibition from March 6-16.

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Peterbrooke takes guesswork out of Valentine's Day with 'chocolate personality' quiz

For the past 34 years, Peterbrooke Chocolatier has been helping couples create memorable Valentine's Day celebrations with their handmade chocolate and Valentine's Day treats. This year, Peterbrooke is drawing on decades of "chocolate psychology" to take the guesswork out of Valentine's Day gift giving.

"People often fret about what to get their significant other for Valentine's Day," said Elizabeth Cordell Rice, marketing manager for Peterbrooke Chocolatier. "But some of the best gifts are simple, personal, gestures that come from the heart. And chocolate never hurts, either."

To that end, the team at Peterbrooke is unveiling a personality quiz to help gift givers find the best chocolate for their sweethearts. Available on Peterbrooke's Facebook page, the quiz will help people choose between five Valentine's Day favorites, including:

- Chocolate-Dipped Strawberries – for the Cupids and the passionate romantic
- Chocolate Covered Popcorn – for the one who's sweet, and just a little salty, but irresistible



- Valentine's Day Assortment Box - the original, a timeless celebration of classic love
- Chocolate Valentine's Basket – for those who like to have their cake and eat it, too. They care about the quality of what's inside.

- Chocolate Rose Bouquets – for those who are comfortable in their own skin. It's about the gesture...not about the gift

Peterbrooke is gearing up to dip more than 67,000 strawberries in chocolate for Valentine's Day this year, with a crew working 24/7 to ensure the tasty treats are available.

"In anticipation of last-minute shoppers, we are opening our stores early on Feb. 13 and 14 to make it easy for you to pick up a unique, chocolate specialty gift on the way to work," said Cordell Rice. "We also take pre-orders as a way for customers to skip long lines the closer it gets to Valentine's Day."

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Fiancés and Finances



Cheryl Barnett
Guest columnist

By Cheryl Barnett

Special to the Recorder

Nearly 40 percent of engagements occur during the holidays between November and February. While Valentine's Day tends to spark discussion of love and marriage, it can also lead to a less-desirable conversation about finances as a couple. According to the National Foundation for Credit Counseling, 68 percent of engaged couples have

negative attitudes toward discussing money with their fiancés. It has also been reported that monetary issues are the reason for a staggering 90 percent of divorces.

Instead of avoiding the money talk, it is important to foster a healthy relationship and sit down with your partner to discuss future financial planning before making a lifelong commitment. Here are a few tips to start that often-tricky conversation with your significant other and stay smart when following your heart.

Complete a financial wellness assessment

Before you say your vows, it is vital that your partner is fully aware of your financial situation. This can be achieved by completing a financial wellness assessment that shows detailed information about each other's current financial status. It is recommended that you consult with your own financial advisor before making any major decisions together.

There is nothing romantic about legal forms, but for those entering a second marriage, the only way to protect the assets you bring to the relationship is to create a pre-nuptial agreement, which will clearly delineate what is solely yours before marriage.

Consider yourself equals

Many couples begin joint finances with opposing financial backgrounds, and this difference may cause a divide between partners. The size of your paycheck does not determine your role in the family finances. Respect each other as equal partners, with an equal say in money management. When making big decisions regarding the joint account, make sure you are present as a couple to discuss and sign any major documents. Another option is opening a joint bank account for bills and shared expenses while keeping a personal bank account for individual spending.

Begin to build a budget

It can be difficult to move from a mindset of caring for

your own financial needs to balancing the needs of your spouse with your own. The best way to start is to merely keep track of all expenditures for a month or two and determine your household needs. After solidifying your joint needs, you can begin to talk about individual needs and wants. These can include items such as gym memberships, clothing costs and other items you may spend different amounts on. Having a weekly budget meeting can help you evaluate where you are in working toward your financial goals.

Define short-term and long-term goals

It is important to set goals that you can work toward as a couple. These long-term goals should be part of your financial plan. The plan can help you determine how soon you can buy a house or when to start a family. It can also help you plan for your child's college education and your retirement. When you have specific goals you are working toward each month, it can make budgeting an easier task. Some good beginning goals may be to pay off credit card debt, start a safety net savings

plan or begin saving for a down payment for your home. Those goals will drive your decisions on how to spend and save your money together.

Cheryl Barnett is senior vice president and private client advisor at First Tennessee Bank, specializing in the unique and complicated financial affairs of business owners, executives and professionals. First Tennessee Bank opened its Jacksonville office in 2014, focusing on services in commercial, commercial real estate, private client banking and wealth management.



Wine, Women & Wealth Feb. 9

Dating and relationship coach Mary Whitman Ortiz will be the guest speaker for a free "Wine, Women & Wealth" workshop to be held Thursday, Feb. 9 at 8081 Philips Highway, Suite 22 in Jacksonville.

The event will begin with a mix and mingle from 5 to 6 p.m. with wine and hors d'oeuvres, followed by the event from 6 to 7:30 p.m. Attendees will learn how to focus on building a connection and intimacy, fix their "man picker" and deal with conflict, particularly when it relates to money. Guests will also learn to understand their money personality and the financial tools to use in their relationships to minimize conflict.

Guests are encouraged to bring yoga mats, blocks or towels to donate to the evening's designated charity, Yoga 4 Change.

To register, visit www.eventbrite.com.



Wine,
Women,
& Wealth

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Why more couples are signing prenups before saying 'I do'



Lawrence Datz
Guest columnist

By Lawrence Datz

Special to the Recorder
Getting married on Valentine's Day has become a popular romantic tradition. Increasingly, however, couples are walking down the aisle with more than just rings and lumps in their throats.

Many also have premarital agreements, formerly known as prenuptial agreements. Indeed, 63 percent of attorneys reported that they saw an increase in couples seeking premarital agreements, according to a study by the American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers.

Despite the growing popularity, premarital agreements still elicit many misconceptions and negative attitudes. While they may not seem romantic, premarital agreements can provide significant benefits for marrying couples – in terms of financial security and the overall well-

being of their relationship.

What is a premarital agreement?

A premarital agreement is a contract made before marriage and in contemplation of the marriage possibly ending. Premarital agreements may cover a broad range of issues, such as division of assets and liabilities, alimony, and, to a limited extent, attorney's fees. However, the terms of premarital agreements also may be limited to a specific subject, such as ownership of a family business.

The agreement gives those entering into a marriage greater control over the financial outcome when their marriage ends. Without a premarital agreement, the result of a divorce depends on numerous factors. Changing laws, the quality of legal representation, and even the views of a judge can impact what happens. In death, premarital agreements can direct the terms of wills.

Who gets premarital agreements?

Many expect that premarital agreements are for wealthy fiancés trying to protect

family fortunes. Realistically, couples sign premarital agreements for more diverse reasons.

Couples who marry later in life might use premarital agreements to protect assets and wealth they previously accumulated. Others use them to assure children from prior marriages will inherit as designated in wills.

One should carefully consider the intended goals of a premarital agreement. Is it to protect a particular asset, such as a family business or gift? Or is it to reduce the financial insecurity for both partners after a potential divorce? Whatever the case, each person should be well informed and not feel pressured to sign.

How does one approach a prenup?

The most difficult part of a premarital agreement usually isn't the legal aspect. Rather, the difficulty is broaching the subject with a prospective spouse. Those considering a premarital agreement should discuss and pursue it far in advance of the wedding.

One of the most common questions about premarital agreements is whether

the agreement will withstand a challenge in court. A well-prepared premarital agreement should be as valid and enforceable as any other written contract. Because premarital agreements are complex and often have peculiar requirements, one should consult an attorney who has the appropriate skills and experience. While many lawyers can do a competent job, the most reliably qualified are those who are board certified in marital and family law by The Florida Bar.

Remember, marriage is not only an intimate romantic relationship, but also an intimate financial relationship. The success of these relationships is impossible to predict and, thus, includes risk. A little planning at the beginning certainly can reduce some of the uncertainties.

Lawrence Datz is a partner at Datz & Datz, P.A. with more than 30 years of family law experience. He is board certified in marital and family law, a fellow of the American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers and a master in the Florida Family Law Inn of Court.



Treat veterans to Valentine's breakfast to benefit Benghazi Tribute

Looking for a way to celebrate Valentine's Day with a special veteran? Treat your loved one to Valentine's Day breakfast Saturday, Feb. 11 at Applebee's at St. Johns Town Center.

To be served from 8 to 10 a.m., the breakfast will feature pancakes, sausage, scrambled eggs and choice of coffee, juice, soda or tea. The event will also feature prize raffles silent auctions and more.

Proceeds from the event will go to support the annual Benghazi Tribute to honor those lost in the Battle of Benghazi.

Attendees are also encouraged to donate breakfast tickets to

veterans in appreciation of their service and in honor of the veterans and heroes of Benghazi. An acknowledgment of donated tickets and expression of appreciation will be placed on the restaurant tables as well as on the Benghazi Tribute Facebook page. Donated tickets will be distributed through local veteran organizations.

Tickets are \$10 per person and are available for purchase online at <http://www.benghazitribute.org/sponsorship-and-donations/>. To volunteer or for more information, contact Beth Heath at (904) 705-6439.

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Shop local: Memorable Valentine's Day gifts for him

By Jasmine Marshall

The most memorable Valentine's Day gifts err on the side of unorthodox, and buying for guys comes with its own set of

challenges. Where cliched greeting cards, jewelry and chocolates may come to mind, consider instead these locally based businesses for gifts as timeless as they are unique.

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Tandy Leather Factory

www.tandyleather.com

Timeless and mature, custom leather goods pieced together by hand make for a functional and thoughtful Valentine's Day gift. With stock running the gamut from dye and hardware to conchos and belt buckles, Tandy Leather Factory offers products, kits and accessories to help find or create a gift with artisan flair. The leather outlet also offers February leathercraft specials throughout the month and classes and shows – among them basic carving and tooling, leather forming and pouch- and sheath-building – in its Jacksonville branch located at 9456 Philips Highway, Suite 6.

MusicMatters

Vinyls have seen a bump in the industry with the reintroduction of tangible music as a novelty and collector's item. For the music lover, consider the selection of St. Augustine's oldest record store, MusicMatters, for a choice of vinyls, CDs and music accessories both modern and classic. MusicMatters is located at 196 State Road 312.

The Edge Rock Gym

www.theedgerockgym.com

For more adventurous recipients, make a gift of an indoor rock climbing membership. Jacksonville's Edge Rock Gym offers day passes for its extensive indoor rock climbing wall for climbers at all levels of experience. The top rope, lead climbing and bouldering areas total more than 8,000 square feet of casual climbing space in addition to classes on rocks and ropes, basic movement and more. Special introductory packages include a day pass, top rope belay instruction, orientation and equipment can be purchased for \$25 and monthly membership rates begin at \$60. The Edge Rock Gym is located at 3563 Philips Highway Ste. 702 in Jacksonville.

John Craig Clothier

www.johncraigclothier.com

For a gift that toes the line of traditional and contemporary, consider a hand-picked set of essentials. Winter Park-based John Craig Clothier recently brought its menswear stylings to Sawgrass Village, among them button downs, neck-and bow-ties, pocket squares and essentials in patterns and prints that give the classic pieces a spin. John Craig's offerings also include sportcoats, leather goods and men's boutonnieres. John Craig Clothier is located at 280 Village Main St., Ste. 950 in Ponte Vedra Beach.



Cutter & Cutter to host glass artist Charles Lotton at exhibition of his work

Noted glass artist Charles Lotton will visit Cutter & Cutter Fine Art's Sawgrass Village gallery next week for a special exhibition of Lotton Family glass art.

To be held Monday, Feb. 13 from 5 to 8 p.m. at the gallery at 333 Village Main St. #640, the exhibition will feature museum-quality glass art by all four members of the Lotton Family in the form of vases, bowls, floor lamps and table lamps as well as hand-blown glass tables and chandeliers. The event will also feature complimentary sweets and a chocolate fountain courtesy of Peterbrooke Chocolatier.

"Our discerning neighbors in Ponte Vedra Beach can expect nothing but the best from us on the day before Valentine's Day," gallery owner Len Cutter said. "We have designed this large gallery with artists like Charles Lotton in mind. His creations merge beautifully with all the other artists we represent, and the Lotton Family name is recognized throughout North America.

"Their stunning art is worthy of your visit," Cutter continued, "and this event will be a pleasant surprise for a night out in Ponte Vedra's Sawgrass Village."



Charles Lotton

Photos courtesy of Cutter & Cutter



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Bill and Linda Adams with Donna Deegan, center, at the CancerKare Fund's inaugural "Night of Wine and Roses" fundraising event



Tia Charles, Bo Cure and Michelle and Doug Hawk

Photos by Jon Blauvelt

Ponte Vedra couple partners with The DONNA Foundation

New charity's first fundraising event benefits breast cancer patients

By Jon Blauvelt

A new charity created by a Ponte Vedra couple to support breast cancer patients with treatment costs recently partnered with The DONNA Foundation to hold its inaugural "Night of Wine and Roses" fundraising event.

Linda and Bill Adams, co-directors of the CancerKare Fund, hosted community members and several cancer survivors Feb. 2 at the Nocatee Welcome Center for live music, fine wine from Coastal Wine Market, gourmet hors d'oeuvres and silent and live auctions conducted by a professional auctioneer.

The event raised \$5,000 for the DONNA Foundation, which also helps underserved women with breast cancer who can't afford their critical needs during treatment. Founder Donna Deegan attended the event

to represent the foundation and show her support for CancerKare.

"I want to thank you all for putting this together," said Deegan, whose foundation has helped more than 10,000 women since its founding in 2003. "I can't tell you how much I love the women in this community, and the men. I'm thrilled that we're able to provide the services we do."

Linda Adams, a breast cancer survivor, shared her story and expressed her gratitude for the people and organizations that guided her throughout the treatment and recovery process – the very people who inspired the Adamses to establish the CancerKare Fund in January.

To carry on their legacy, the Adamses introduced and presented two awards: the "Breasty" award, which acknowledges individuals who contribute to the fight against breast cancer, and the "Fight for Life" award

for a breast cancer warrior.

Linda presented the CancerKare's first "Breasty" award to Ponte Vedra Plastic Surgery's Dr. Brett Snyder, who performed Linda's reconstructive surgery following her mastectomy and guided her through aftercare, surgery and recovery.

"He is warm, kind, caring," said Linda, who is currently cancer free. "When he met me, he made me feel cared for. All along that I cried he did not make me feel embarrassed."

In addition to the award, the Adamses presented Snyder with a bottle of his favorite wine as well as an oil painting of the wine completed by Bill Adams, who is a painter. Snyder responded with humility.

"I feel that I played a very small role," said Snyder, whose team offers its services in Ponte Vedra, Jacksonville, Amelia Island and St. Augustine. "I'm proud to accept this

on behalf of all of my patients."

Linda then presented the "Fight for Life" award to Zettie Beverly, a two-time survivor of breast cancer who also has rheumatoid arthritis – an autoimmune disease. In order to undergo chemotherapy, Beverly said, she had to stop taking her arthritis medication, which caused her to become extremely ill. Diagnosed with breast cancer in 2009 and 2012, Beverly delivered a straightforward message to the women at the event.

"Please get your mammograms," said Beverly, who only discovered her cancer via the imaging. "It is very, very important."

The Adamses plan to hold "Night of Wine and Roses" on an annual basis, increasing its number of attendees each year. Bill is planning to hold a one-man art show this coming summer that will also benefit the Donna Foundation.



Linda Adams presented the CancerKare Fund's first "Breasty" award to Ponte Vedra Plastic Surgery's Bill Snyder for his approach to breast cancer patients facing reconstructive surgery.



Phil and Gail Lamb, Linda Ash, David Bryan, and Zandra and Fernando Quintana

Nease scores big with SOUPer Bowl II, raises \$32,000 for First Coast Blessings in a Backpack

By Jon Blauvelt

A few days before the New England Patriots and Atlanta Falcons clashed in the NFL's Super Bowl, Nease High School hosted community members for a different type of "SOUPer Bowl" event to help address childhood hunger in St. Johns County.

For the second consecutive year, Nease transformed its cafeteria into a soup lover's paradise, with 22 local restaurants attending the event Feb. 2 to provide samples of their most popular chowders, stews and bisques. Raising more than \$32,000, the event benefited First Coast Blessings in a Backpack, a nonprofit organization that provides consistent weekend nutrition for children on the

federal free and reduced meal program. Funds from the event will be used by First Coast Blessings in a Backpack to provide food to underprivileged kids at Webster Elementary School in St. Augustine.

"The school it's going directly toward, Webster, is where I went," said Rohan Bhargava, a Nease junior and organizer of the event. "For five years, I was with those kids, and I saw what they had to put up with. For me to actually do something to help them means a lot."

Bhargava explained that children relying on the federal free and reduced meal program don't always have meals waiting for them when they go home after school. As a result, Blessings in a Backpack packs food items for these kids and sends it home with them on the weekends.

According to Nease parent and SOUPer Bowl organizer Patti Ann Farrar, there are approximately 600 kids in St. Johns County that depend on this food.

The SOUPer Bowl was founded last year, Farrar said, after she and a group of parents decided to establish a fundraising event to help Blessings in a Backpack raise awareness and funds for its cause. Since then, Nease has rallied around the SOUPer Bowl, Farrar said, noting that the more than 100 event organizers and volunteers include members of the school's hospitality and communications academies, International Baccalaureate (IB) students fulfilling their service hours and parents. Last year's event raised \$23,000.

Farrar said she's been overwhelmed by the groundswell of support from the

community, especially from the restaurants that have volunteered their time and food, such as Blue Bamboo, Palm Valley Outdoors and the Sawgrass Marriott, to name a few.

Nocatee resident JoAnn Vulcano also said she appreciates the support from the restaurants.

"It's a wonderful cause," she said. "It's a grand event. They do a great job."

Bhargava, who has been primarily planning the SOUPer Bowl along with six or seven students since November, encourages others to help address hunger in the community.

"The big problem is knowing about it and realizing almost anything you do helps," he said. "Anything you do is one step towards solving the problem."



Joe and Eve Janocko with Aletha Dresback, Chloe Dresback and Dawn GeEVERS



A group of SOUPER BOWL organizers



Community members eagerly await their soup samples at Nease's SOUPER BOWL II, which raised over \$32,000 for First Coast Blessings in a Backpack.



22 local restaurants attended Nease's SOUPER BOWL to provide samples of their most popular chowders, stews and bisques.

Photos by Jon Blauvelt

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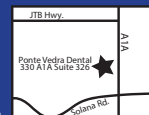
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Sisterhood of the Traveling Plants to present program on Western-themed flower arranging

Program to complement St. Johns Reads' 'True Grit' community reading selection

The "Sisterhood of the Traveling Plants" will return to the Ponte Vedra Beach Branch Library this month with a program on Western-themed flower arranging.

To be held Saturday, Feb. 25 at 1 p.m. at the library, the program will complement the St. Johns Reads community reading selection of the Charles Portis classic, "True Grit." Reading the book is

not required to participate in the flower program.

Sisterhood partners Marilyn Smith and Cathy Snyder will demonstrate how to incorporate a Western flavor into everyday floral arrangements. A raffle will be held for chances to win the arrangements created, and refreshments will be provided by the Friends of the Library.

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Chamber of Commerce establishes public policy committee

The St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce has formed a public policy committee (CPPC) aimed at helping the chamber react quickly to urgent business issues and advocate more effectively on behalf of the local business community.

Comprised of local business, community and governmental leaders, the committee will advise the chamber's board of directors regarding policy positions, help draft the organization's annual legislative agenda and assist with advocacy efforts at the local, regional, state and federal levels. In addition, the chamber's Economic Development Council (EDC) will work closely with the committee to support the organization's implementation of advocacy services and programs for its membership, including nonprofits and the community.

"We are striving to be the sturdiest advocate for the good businesses throughout our county, our region and beyond," Chamber President and CEO Isabelle Rodriguez said. "The formation of the CPPC is a natural progression of the chamber's business advocacy efforts. Hav-

ing the expertise and point of view from members representing different industries will strengthen and speed up our advocacy process. It will allow us to dive deeper on each issue and leave no stone unturned when representing our members."

Government Relations Manager Bob Porter said the CPPC will work closely with the Economic Development Council to make recommendations to the board and provide the chamber's governing body with a clear picture of any issue that may need to be decided.

"It is our intention to make sure the board of directors has all the necessary information and the expert opinions of the members of the public policy committee to make these very important and often difficult decisions," Porter said.

Public Policy Committee members include: Chairman Jason Barrett, executive vice president and chief administrative officer, Flagler Hospital; and members Michael Scine, CPA, Scine & Scine; Lou Noir-Jones, senior vice president, Wells Fargo; Bill Curtis, attorney, Law offices of Bill Curtis; Richard Lovelace, senior



St. Johns County Chamber photo

Members of the Chamber of Commerce's Public Policy Committee met with State of Florida CFO Jeff Atwater during a presentation held at Davidson Realty in World Golf Village. From left: Chamber President and CEO Isabelle Rodriguez, Rob Matthews, Atwater, Beth Sweeny, Bill Curtis and Victor Raymos.

vice president, commercial services, The Stellar Group; Len Weeks, owner, Len Weeks Construction-Design-Development; Mary O'Brien, owner, Keen, LLC; Rick Kendust, state and local government affairs manager, Northrop Grumman Corporation; Mark Nighbor, vice president, marketing and communications, Advanced Disposal; Mark Litzinger, director of

finance, budget and management, City of St. Augustine; Beth Sweeny, governmental relations coordinator, St. Johns County Public Schools; Rob Schlingmann, general manager, The Plantation at Ponte Vedra Beach; and Isabelle Rodriguez, president and chief executive officer, St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce.

MOVERS & SHAKERS



Diamond selected for Presidential Leadership Scholars program

K9s for Warriors CEO Rory Diamond is one of 60 professionals from around the nation selected to participate in the third class of the Presidential Leadership Scholars program.

DIAMOND Diamond will join other scholars from the private, public, nonprofit, military and academic sectors in the program, which draws upon the resources of the presidential centers of George W. Bush, Bill Clinton, George H.W. Bush and Lyndon B. Johnson. The program was scheduled to begin Feb. 7 in Washington, D.C., where scholars were to visit the National Archives, Mount Vernon and the White House Historical Association. Over the course of several months, scholars will travel to each participating presidential center to learn from former presidents, key administration officials, and leading academics. Participants will study and put into practice varying approaches to leadership, develop a network of peers, and exchange ideas with mentors and others who can help them make an impact in their communities.

Prior to leading K9s for Warriors, Diamond was a litigator

at two international law firms as well as a federal prosecutor for the U.S. Department of Justice. He also served as a briefing director for California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger and a deputy associate director at the White House for President George W. Bush. He was recently elected to the Neptune Beach City Council.



MASSEY

Massey elected to Tessitura Network board of directors

Jacksonville Symphony President and CEO Robert Massey has been elected to the Tessitura Network Board of Directors. The nonprofit organization includes more than 500 of the world's premier arts and cultural organizations utilizing the Tessitura Network technology to manage donor databases as well as ticket sales.

Massey is beginning his third year with the Jacksonville Symphony. During his tenure in Jacksonville, he has overseen new branding for the orchestra, expansion of its Masterworks and Pops programs and development of new programs such as Symphony in 60 and Symphonic Night at the Movies.

Massey holds a degree in Music from Boston's New England Conservatory and has held leadership positions with "The President's Own" U.S. Marine Band, the Washington Opera, the Phillips Collection, the Washington Bach Consort and Orchestra Iowa, where he served as CEO. He led that orchestra for six years before joining the Jacksonville Symphony.

"I'm honored to join the board of the Tessitura Network," Massey said. "I know the importance of providing innovative and strategic support to arts and cultural nonprofits in order for them to be both efficient and successful in every aspect of our work. I look forward to sharing the successful business models achieved in Jacksonville with an international audience."



MASSEY

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Not-so-powerful powers of attorney



Harry Pappas
Columnist

By Harry Pappas

Everybody should have a power of attorney (POA), which is a legal document that provides a designated individual the right to act on another person's behalf when making financial decisions. Adult children, when representing their parents, often use a power of attorney. They use this powerful document to make decisions for their aging parents when they are not capable of making sound decisions on their own. The most common decisions that the adult children encounter relate to money and this is becoming problematic in some states. For example, banks are witnessing situations where adult children, who are seeking to enrich themselves at their parents' expense, abuse a power of attorney. Suspicious of liability, some financial

institutions no longer accept the power of attorney documents. Regrettably, in some cases, adult children with the best intentions have to take legal action to enforce a document executed in good faith.

It is paramount to understand the differences between two types of powers of attorney. For instance, a durable power of attorney gives the designated person the authority to act on the parent's behalf immediately after the document is signed. To the contrary, a springing power of attorney does not generally provide the representative the authority until the parent becomes incapacitated. Most powers of attorney documents are "springing," which can create extra complications for adult children because they have to obtain a statement from a physician certifying that their parent is incapacitated. Recent medical-privacy laws can make it difficult for the doctor to communicate this information without authorization, leading to a Catch 22. On the other hand, the durable power of attorney does not encounter such problems.

It is vital that you identify the necessary hurdles that you might have to jump over to satisfy the POA requirements of your bank or financial service firm. Perhaps it might be a comforting fantasy to think that just because you have a valid POA that your institution will accept it, but regrettably, it is not reality.

The take home message to this critical estate-planning matter is to recognize that simply having your lawyer draft power of attorney may not be enough to accomplish what your power of attorney is designed to do. Therefore, I strongly suggest that you either utilize your financial service firm's power of attorney or have your institution review your POA now to determine if it is acceptable. However, just because it is satisfactory today does not mean it will be adequate forever. Pretty frustrating, huh?

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MOVERS & SHAKERS

Movers & Shakers

Continued from 26

sion's highest possible rating for professional ethical standards and legal ability. In order to achieve the ranking, attorneys must be reviewed and recommended by fellow members of the bar and the judiciary.

A practicing attorney in the state of

Florida for more than 30 years, Miller moved his firm to the Beaches in 1991. Active in the Beaches community, he is a past president of the Jacksonville Beaches Bar Association and the Beaches Business Association. Miller currently chairs the Circle of Success of the Jax Chamber of Commerce and is president of the Beaches Hospitality Network.

Women Business Owners to host 'Unstoppable' event

"Unstoppable: Say 'Yes' to the Opportunity!" will be the focus of the Women Business Owners of North Florida's 2017 signature event.

To be held Thursday, March 16 at the University of North Florida's Herbert Center, the seminar will begin at 1 p.m. with networking and a dessert reception. The program will begin at 1:30 p.m. and will include keynote presentations by Audrey Moran and Michele McManamon as well as four PechaKucha-style brief presentations from four additional women.

Moran is the senior vice president for social responsibility and community advocacy at Baptist Health in Jacksonville. Her broad and varied career includes serving as a top prosecutor at the state attorney's office to chief of staff for former Mayor John Delaney to the CEO of the Sulzbacher Center for the Homeless.

McManamon is the co-owner and operator of Sandler Training in Jacksonville. In 2014, she co-founded Operation New Uniform, a nonprofit committed to helping veterans develop the skills necessary to build upon their military experience and transition to the business world. In 2002, she was awarded the Woman Business Owner of the Year Award. She has also been named to the Top 50 Business of Influence, Top 25 Influential Women in Jacksonville and the Small Business Leader of the Year for 2013 – South Council. In 2016, McManamon served as chairman of THE PLAYERS Championship.

The WBO program will conclude with a networking reception at 5:30 p.m. featuring complimentary appetizers and a cash bar. Early-bird registration through Feb. 20 is \$50.07 for WBO members, \$65.07 non-members and \$35.07 for young professionals age 30 and under. Regular pricing after Feb. 20 is \$65.07 WBO members, \$80.07 non-members and \$40 young professionals. To register or for more information, visit www.wbonfl.org.

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SHORT TAKES

Right whale lecture

The Guana Tolomato Matanzas National Estuarine Research Reserve Environmental Education Center will host a free lecture Feb. 15 from 3 to 4 p.m. Biologist Jen Jakush will present a discussion on right whales, one of the most endangered whale species in the world. A biologist with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, Jakush received a bachelor's degree in marine biology from the University of North Carolina at Wilmington. She has worked with FWC's North Atlantic Right Whale Project since 2008. To register to attend the lecture or receive more information, visit the GTMNERR website at www.gtmnerr.org.



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PV2-LV35147

Shark boys advance to soccer regional finals

By Jerry Norton

Special to the Recorder

Three games ago, immediately after the Ponte Vedra Sharks lost in the district title soccer game against Matanzas, Ponte Vedra's boys' soccer coach Danny Villarreal proclaimed, "We'll be okay."

Apparently, the coach knew what he was talking about, for the Sharks – fresh off impressive wins over Paxon and Stanton – prepared to play in the regional finals while district champion Matanzas will watch from the sidelines.

Ponte Vedra traveled to Paxon last week and humbled the Eagles 5-1, although Paxon took an early lead off a corner kick at the 31-minute mark. The Sharks' first goal was an indication of what was to come. Carson King's looping throw-in from the left side of the Paxon goal handcuffed the Paxon keeper momentarily, then bounced behind him into the goal to even matters.

Jack Bingemann scored the go-ahead goal for the Sharks at the 16-minute mark on a melee in front of the Eagle cage, then Steven Sifontes padded the Ponte Vedra lead scoring at the 26-minute of the second half from an assist by Hans Lansing.

When Lucas Nomura was fouled in the box 10 minutes later, his PK beat the keeper low on the left side, putting Ponte Vedra up 4-1. Parker Romero finished the scoring

for Ponte Vedra when his long high direct kick found its way over the keeper's head and into the goal.

Last Saturday evening, the Sharks continued their drive for a repeat state championship when they faced the Stanton Blue Devils in the regional semi-final action. The Sharks dominated play for more than 20 minutes, but had nothing to show for it but a trio of "near miss" shots. Then at the midway point of the first half, Sifontes lined up for a direct free kick just outside the penalty area. His high shot not only made it over the wall of defenders, but also over the keeper's head as well to put the Sharks up 1-0. Sifontes also accounted for Ponte Vedra's other goal, a second-half masterpiece of footwork off a header from Donovan Crowley.

The Sharks had a final scoring opportunity with less than a minute to play when the Stanton keeper, who failed to make contact with the ball, took down Rendon Crowley in the box. Crowley had to be helped off the field and Bingemann took the resulting penalty kick. He aimed a low liner to the keeper's right side, only to have the goalie guess right and make the save.

Ponte Vedra played solid defense throughout, asking their keeper Brian Salzman to make just three serious saves – one on a direct free kick with seconds left in the first half.



Photos by Chris and Jerry Norton

#13 Hans Lansing heads up field for the Sharks against Paxon.



Brian Salzman makes another save against Stanton.



Brian Salzman #00 makes a save for the Sharks against Stanton.

WRESTLING

Sharks defeat Yellow Jackets, fall to Crusaders

The Ponte Vedra High School wrestling team defeated the St. Augustine Yellow Jackets Jan. 24 by a score off 40-33. Significant victories were scored by Tank Reed, 120 pounds, by pin; Ethan Baur, 145, by pin; and Evan Merry, 152, by major decision 17 to 9.

The following night, the Sharks traveled to the Bishop Kenny Crusaders and came up short in the win column, primarily due to forfeiting six points per weight class at 160, 170, 189; the final score was 54-24. Big winners for the Sharks included Gavin Riccobono, Preston Turner and Harrison Crowley, who pinned their opponents for six-point wins; and James Stanton and

Evan Merry, who showed their mettle by winning hard-fought two-point battles against experienced wrestlers.

In addition, two first-year wrestlers scored victories in JV matches that preceded the varsity contest. Riley Dimberg won in overtime, while Alex Kim hit a headlock to record a first-period pin.

On Jan. 27 and 28, the Sharks completed a busy week by competing in the Terry Parker Dual Meet Tournament, where Merry continued to shine as he went 4-2 with four pins with his two close losses being up a weight class at 160 pounds.

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PV2-LV35186

Season ends for Lady Sharks

By Jerry Norton

Special to the Recorder

The season ended too soon for the Ponte Vedra girls' soccer team after a heartbreaking 1-0 defeat at the hands of the Stanton Blue Devils in the regional semifinals last week at the Shark Tank.

The two teams sparred for most of the first half, with neither group owning a significant advantage – not surprising, considering how closely match the teams looked to be on paper.

Stanton scored the decisive goal at the nine-minute mark of the opening half, when a loose ball off a corner kick found the foot of a Blue Devil attacker behind Shark keeper Hannah Suder.

For most of the season, Ponte Vedra played outstanding defense, but offensively too frequently many of their shots on goal sailed wide or high of the mark, and last Tuesday's game was no exception. Fourteen minutes in, junior Piper Dotsikas banged a hard shot off the cross bar. She had similar bad luck on a hard shot at the start of the second half. The pattern continued when captain Julia Worman's header just missed wide left of the mark.

To make matters worse for the Sharks, the Devil keeper came up with a marvelous save on what might have been the tying goal with eight minutes left to play.

Following their win over the Sharks, the Blue Devils dispatched Gulf Breeze to earn a spot in the final four against Land O' Lakes on Feb. 10.



#10 Kia Hayes takes a shot at the Stanton goal.

Photos by Chris and Jerry Norton



Leah Cills tries to head the ball past the Stanton keeper



Molly Miller controls the ball for Ponte Vedra.

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BASKETBALL

Panthers top Sharks 55-50

Sharks again end regular season at 15-10

By Jim Moyes

Special to the Recorder

The Ponte Vedra Sharks will end their regular season with the same record as posted a year ago following their 55-50 loss to arch rival Nease last Friday night.

A near-capacity crowd packed the Shark Tank at the high school, watching as the Nease Panthers played an inspired and near-perfect 30 minutes of basketball. The Panthers were apparently on their way to a convincing victory as they led the Sharks by a commanding 44-34 margin with less than two minutes remaining.

The Sharks then employed a go-for-broke full court press on the visiting Panthers that culminated in turnovers and made baskets for Ponte Vedra. When JD Pirris made another one of

his patented driving layups to tie up the game at 44-44 with but seven seconds remaining, never had the noise level been higher at the PVHS gymnasium.

When an ailing Jack Shannon bravely took a charge against star Panther player Sam Guenther, it appeared all the momentum was on Ponte Vedra's favor heading into the four-minute overtime period. Guenther had been a thorn in the side all game long against the Sharks by pouring in 25 points. And when 6'6" shot blocked Aaron Cochrane joined Guenther on the bench with five fouls, it appeared bleak indeed for the large contingent of Nease followers.

After closing out the remaining moments in regulation with their stifling defense, the Sharks took the foot off the gas pedal during the overtime period.

Ironically it was a player who prepped but two seasons' back at Ponte Vedra High School that came to the rescue for Nease. Senior Addison Shaw, who played on the Ponte Vedra JV team two years ago, made a huge three-pointer one minute into the overtime period that gave the lead to Nease at 47-44.

Ponte Vedra, which ended the final moments of regulation on fire, then went into a deep freeze and began hastily firing deep three-point shots that consistently missed the mark. Forced to foul, the Panthers' Shaw and Ethan Ilagan made the Sharks pay by calmly netting six consecutive free throws to seal the Sharks' fate. A couple of late field goals by Pirris kept the Sharks close, but in the end, it was the jubilant Panther rooters who stormed the court, ignoring the pleas from vener-

able Shark PA announcer Ross Byers to "Please stay off the court!"

The entertaining contest showcased the talents of two of the best players in St. Johns County in the Panthers' Guenther and the Sharks' Pirris. Guenther tallied 25 points and his 16 points at the halftime break were more than the Sharks team total of 15.

The Sharks' 15-10 record to end the regular season mirrors last season's mark as they journeyed to Palatka Wednesday night to play the winner of Monday's matchup between Menendez and Matanzas, a pair of teams who split the pair of games earlier this season. If the Sharks came out victorious in Wednesday's game then they return to Palatka Friday for the district championship game.

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National Signing Day: Local student athletes make college choices official

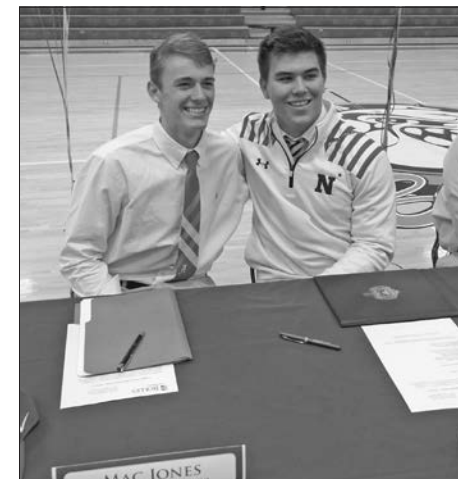
THE BOLLES SCHOOL



Student athletes at the Bolles School sign their letters of intent on National Signing Day Feb. 1. See full list for details.



Justin Mitchell (Harvard University), Brendan O'Neil (Bowdoin College) and E.J. Porter (Coastal Carolina University)



Photos courtesy of The Bolles School

Mac Jones and Jack Lundgren will play college football at University of Alabama and the United State Naval Academy Prep School respectively.

Bolles School student athletes that signed their national letters of intent at the school's National Signing Day event include:

- Mac Jones- University of Alabama- Football
- Jack Lundgren- United States Naval Academy Prep School- Football
- Cody Mercer- Air Force Academy Prep School- Football
- Justin Mitchell- Harvard University- Football
- Brendan O'Neil- Bowdoin College- Football
- E.J. Porter- Coastal Carolina University- Football
- Ahman Ross- Florida Atlantic University- Football
- Amari Terry- Air Force Academy Prep School- Football
- Leila Azari- Vanderbilt University- Soccer
- Taya Edwards- University of Kentucky- Soccer
- Leah Ferlin- University of South Florida- Soccer

NEASE HIGH SCHOOL

A complete list of Nease student athletes who signed their national letters of intent will be released following the school's spring signing day, according to the Nease Athletics Department.



Photos courtesy of Nease High School

Nease football players Adam Timmins (Southeastern University), Josh Parker (Stetson University), Michael Leisle (United States Military Academy) and Leighton Alley (Florida State University) sign their letters of intent alongside their parents and coaches.

PONTE VEDRA HIGH SCHOOL

Ponte Vedra High School student athletes that signed their national letters of intent at the school's National Signing Day event include:

- Nick Tronti- Indiana University- Football
- Marshall Few- University of Miami- Football
- Trevor Rolison- Valdosta State University- Football
- Quinton Brehm- Florida State College at Jacksonville- Baseball
- Zach Wedekind- Maryville University- Baseball
- Devin Naidoo- New Jersey Institute of Technology- Lacrosse
- Andrew O'Dare- Towson University- Lacrosse
- Clay Welch- Mercer University- Lacrosse
- Matt Keeler- University of Indianapolis- Lacrosse
- Spenser Slayden- University of North Florida- Golf
- Farley Callaghan- Florida Gulf Coast University- Softball
- Ellen Lecker- United States Naval Academy- Lacrosse
- Tess Reiman- Davidson College- Lacrosse
- Sydney Parker- University of West Georgia- Volleyball
- Mackenzie Morris- Florida Atlantic University- Volleyball



Fifteen Ponte Vedra High School student athletes made their college choices official at the school's National Signing Day event Feb. 1. See full list for details.



Ponte Vedra softball player Farley Callaghan signs her national letter of intent to play college ball at Florida Gulf Coast University.



Ponte Vedra golf captain Spenser Slayden with coach Mickey Leapley after officially signing with University of North Florida



Sharks lacrosse player Clay Welch commits to Mercer University.

Photos by Jon Blauvelt



Ponte Vedra football players Nick Tronti (Indiana University), Marshall Few (University of Miami) and Trevor Rolison (Valdosta State)

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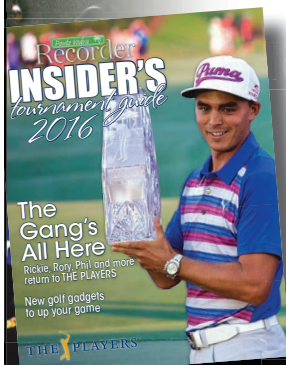
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Nease to host football recruiting fair



Nease high school will host a Northeast Florida football recruiting fair Monday, Feb. 13, with coaches and representatives from 40 high schools and 30 colleges expected to attend. Players and parents will have the opportunity to meet with the college coaches and representatives from 2:30 to 6:30 p.m. For additional information, please call the Nease football office at (904) 547-8286 or email Todd Nichols at Todd.Nichols@stjohns.k12.fl.us or Tim Krause at Timothy.Krause@stjohns.k12.fl.us.

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ACROSS

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6. Moray _____
9. United _____ Emirates
13. Piled up a debt
14. Cross country foot gear
15. Tequila source
16. UV light absorber
17. *Fala to F. D. Roosevelt
18. Andrea Bocelli, e.g.
19. *He also went by name Jack
21. *One of 4 to die of natural causes while in office
23. Hostile
24. Sub station?
25. Opposite of hence
28. With minimal sound distortion
30. *President submits one to Congress
35. River obstruction, pl.
37. Cyranò's distinctive feature
39. Covered with fungus
40. Wet nurse
41. Better then good
43. Christmas Day in France
44. Short skirts
46. Small European freshwater fish
47. Hefty volume
48. Whine
50. Jerk in Yiddish
52. Ides mo.
53. "For Pete's _____!"

DOWN

1. Get the meaning of something
2. Level to the ground
3. At another time, to Romeo or Juliet
4. Saddam Hussein's Islam
5. *Delivered at inauguration
6. Sports award
7. Augment
8. Like a ballerina
9. Wine quality
10. Hindu princess
11. Shakespeare's hometown river
12. Mountain in Germany
15. Nero's court
20. Faulkner's "As I Lay _____"
22. Priest's robe
24. Polio, e.g.

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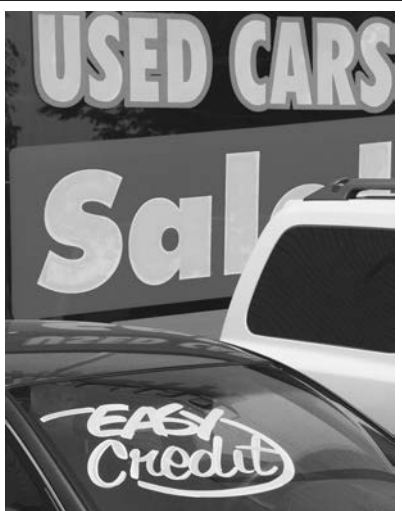
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