

Recorder

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YEAR IN REVIEW



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New puzzles

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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.**



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PUZZLE SOLUTIONS

S	N	A	G	S	S	A	C	F	L	I	T		
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9	8	2	5	3	1	6	4	7
6	3	1	7	9	4	5	2	8
4	6	5	2	1	3	8	7	9
2	9	7	4	5	8	1	6	3
3	1	8	6	7	9	4	5	2

Solutions correspond to last week's puzzles.

WHAT'S THIS?



Do you know what this is?

Email your answer to jonb@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.



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Eight readers correctly identified last week's photo as the Sushi House sign. Good job, everyone! The winner of the random drawing was **Donna McDonough**. Congratulations, Donna – you may pick up your prize at the Recorder office during normal business hours.



ADOPT A PET

CAT OF THE WEEK

My name is Smokey, and I am a 3 1/2-year-old male cat who is looking for a new home. I was brought to the pet center by my owner who could no longer care for me. Come visit me today here at the pet center! #21594



DOG OF THE WEEK

My name is Mama, and I am a 6-year-old female dog who is looking for a new home. I was brought to the pet center as a rescue from the island of St. Thomas. Come



visit me today here at the pet center! #40764

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

St. Johns County Pet Center

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 Road off U.S. 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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Exemplary Oceanfront Living on Ponte Vedra Blvd

This oceanfront estate is set on 1.45 acres and designed to capture expansive ocean views from almost every room. Luxury accommodations are provided with two owner's suites, one upstairs and one downstairs, 4 additional bedrooms each with ensuite baths, a separate study and a bonus/game room or 7th bedroom. **\$6,300,000**



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Linda Ostoski | 904.473.1515
LindaOstoski@WatsonRealtyCorp.com



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YEAR IN REVIEW

One of Us 2017

January



Len Cutter



Arun Gulani



Terri Mashour



Melinda Greenfield

February



Spencer Calvert



Dane Gilbert



Brian Dodds



Diana Machaby

March



Susie Mashour Rawlins



Suzan Lupton



Laura Baugh



George McCaughan



Jim Sheils

April



Rob Schlingmann



Ingrid Carlson



Tommy McDonough



Jared Rice

May



Jeff Plotts



Kevin English

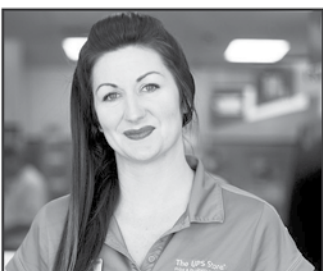


Kelly Hawkins



Shyam Paryani

June



Erica Vona



Steven Carn



Nicole Crosby



Carlos DelValle



Lisa Johnson Cook

YEAR IN REVIEW

One of Us 2017

July



Peter Reynolds



Quang Pham



Bo Cure



Cyndi King

August



Kim McNickle



Jack Wilbur



Gary Jurenovich



Jonathan Gibbs



Jim Moyes

September



Aimee Boggs



Dick Williams



Greg Wong



Barbara Matteson

October



Desiree Kotze



Ron Philo



Rosemary Takacs



John Mitsis

November



Jennifer Borocz



Felicia Cox



Megan Hulling



Cliff Nelson



Heather Quick

December



Lori Anderson



Bill Haley



Corky Heft

To watch video portions of some of these interviews, and to read more, visit pontevedrarecorder.com and click One of Us.



Photos courtesy of Lynn Damm Photography

Nick Tronti with his parents on senior night Nov. 4, 2016, before Ponte Vedra defeated Creekside 48-14

Nick Tronti: Mr. Football on and off the field

By Jon Blauvelt

Originally published Jan. 12

As the recipient of the 2016 Florida Dairy Farmers Mr. Football award, Nick Tronti is recognized as the state's top high school football player, but many of those closest to him say he's the complete opposite of your stereotypical jock.

"He's an extremely humble, thoughtful and caring human being," said Aaron Avery, quarterbacks coach at Ponte Vedra High School. "Every achievement he's ever had, he's tried to deflect and give credit to other people."

The senior quarterback led the Sharks on a magical playoff run that ended in a heartbreaking 35-33 loss to American Heritage High School in Ponte Vedra's first ever-state championship appearance. He passed for 3,333 yards and 34 touchdowns and rushed for 662 yards and 19 touchdowns throughout the season, which ultimately resulted in him being crowned Mr. Football in December 2016 by a statewide panel of high school football coaches and media representatives. Tronti won the award in convincing fashion, with 12 of the 23 first-place votes. He joins Nease's Tim Tebow (2005) as just the second athlete from St. Johns County to earn the award, and the sixth Jacksonville area athlete to do so.

"It's a tremendous honor," said Tronti, who was redshirted at Indiana for the 2017 season. "It means more to our team than anything, though. Those were the guys that got it for me."

Known for his competitiveness on the field, Tronti brings that same determination off the field to be the best person he can be.

He was an active member of Ponte Vedra High School's Best Buddies organization, which pairs students with special needs students to help them develop life skills. Tronti was paired with a special needs student, and the two ate lunch together every day. Along



Tronti looks downfield for an open receiver during Ponte Vedra's 51-19 playoff win over Yulee Nov. 11, 2016.

with others from the organization, Tronti also took her out to dinner and to fun activities outside of school. Tronti said he also taught her basic manners and skills, such as how to tip at a restaurant.

"I have fun hanging out with her," he said. "I don't do it just to do it. We have an awesome time. It's fun to give back to them because they love it, and it makes me feel good inside to give back to people like that."

Gordie Rolison, Ponte Vedra's defensive line coach and a special needs teacher at the high school, said Tronti impresses him with something every day.

"People look at Nick as the athlete he is," said Rolison. "He wants to beat you even if it's ping pong. I think he also wants to be a better person than you. He wants to go that extra mile to help people."

Tronti's compassion doesn't stop there. He demonstrates streaks of it throughout his life.

He lived in a neighborhood full of elementary and middle school kids who play flag football. Tronti said he regularly plays with them as the neighborhood's all-time quarterback.

"I try to do things that when I was that age would have been cool for other people to do for me," he said.

Ponte Vedra wide receivers coach Shane Bowers has a 10-year-old son who looks up to Tronti and others on the team. After one of the Sharks' games, Tronti learned that Bowers' son had a Junior Development League game the next day and told him he would go to the game to watch.

Bowers said Tronti followed through on his word. "He didn't show up for just the first quarter," said Bowers. "He stayed for the entire game. You don't see his care for other people very often."

Avery has similar anecdotes about the quarterback. He said Tronti texted him when he got married to congratulate him and when his daughter was born to make sure everything was OK. Avery said Tronti even bought his daughter her first Christmas ornament.

"It's day in, day out, every second of the day," said Avery. "That's who Nick is. It's always about the little detail in other peoples' lives."

Tronti's older brother Zach said this is the person he's always known.

"He's always just been a special kid," he said. "He's somebody that takes an interest in people. Despite all of his success on the football field, I think nothing has really changed or fazed him. He hasn't let that change who he is or what he's all about, and I really think that speaks to his character."

Mr. Football doesn't know any other way.

"I always want to do the right thing," he said. "That's probably the most important thing to me."

This story has been edited for the Year in Review edition. Please visit pontevedrarecorder.com to read the full story.

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Thursday, Dec. 28	Friday, Dec. 29	Saturday, Dec. 30	Sunday, Dec. 31
<p>Throwback Thursday at Corazon Cinema and Cafe “Scent of a Woman,” a film about a prep school student needing money who agrees to “babysit” a blind man, is showing at the Corazon Cinema and Cafe as part of Throwback Thursday at noon. Admission costs \$10, which includes a lunch package. Call (904) 679-5736 for more information. The Corazon Cinema and Cafe is located at 36 Granada St. in St. Augustine.</p> <p>Villa Zorayda candlelight tour Join Villa Zorayda this holiday season for its 8th annual Candlelight Tour, which is offered on select evenings during St. Augustine’s Nights of Lights. The museum is decorated for the holidays with a Christmas tree in the colors of the Zorayda red and gold. The tour starts at 6 p.m. and will take place at 83 King St. in St. Augustine. For more information, visit www.villazorayda.com/</p> <p>Weathering life’s challenges explored at Lifetree Café The general public is invited to learn about practical solutions for coping with unexpected hardship at Lifetree Café at Hope Lutheran Church Dec. 28 at 6:45 p.m. The program, entitled “Overcoming Hardship: A Father and Son Beat the Odds,” features a film by Patrick Henry Hughes and his father. Admission is free. This event will take place at 8570 Philips Hwy #104.</p> <p>Karaoke at Magnolia’s Pub Join Magnolia’s Pub for Karaoke with DJ Covert Thursday, Dec. 28 from 10:30 to 11:30 p.m. Magnolia’s Pub is located at 1190 Edgewood Ave S. in Jacksonville. For more information, visit www.magnoliapub.com.</p> <p>The Olde South Photography Series Exhibition Rick McAllister’s photography exhibition showcases structures representing a part of the past in the South, including cabins, barns, sugar mills, plantations, estate ruins, churches, cemeteries and forts. This exhibition will be on display at the Rotunda Gallery in the St. Johns County Administration Building, located at 500 San Sebastian View in St. Augustine, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday.</p>	<p>Coastal Wine Market wine tasting Coastal Wine Market & Tasting Room hosts Friday wine tastings from 6 to 8 p.m. at 641 Crosswater Parkway, Suite B in Ponte Vedra Beach. Taste six wines for \$10. For more information, call (904) 395-3520.</p> <p>Cannon Firing Demonstration at Castillo de San Marcos National Parks Service volunteers and personnel demonstrate a cannon firing at the Castillo de San Marcos museum / monument every Friday, Saturday and Sunday at 10:30 a.m., 11:30 a.m., 1:30 p.m., 2:30 p.m. and 3:30 p.m. Rangers and volunteers demonstrate the weapons and relate the experiences of the colonial Spanish soldier of 1740s St. Augustine. Firing times are subject to change depending on weather conditions and staff availability. Castillo de San Marcos is located at 1 S. Castillo Drive in St. Augustine.</p> <p>Small works holiday show Cutter & Cutter Fine Art of St. Augustine & Ponte Vedra Beach will host its Small Works Holiday Show through Dec. 31 at 25 King St. in St. Augustine. The exhibition features more than 200 original paintings in oil, acrylic, watercolor and pastel including works by local artists Lyn Asselta, Matthew Cutter and Estella Fransbergen. The gallery is open 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Sunday through Thursday and 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. Friday and Saturday; admission is free and all the art is for sale.</p> <p>‘Tidings of Jazz and Joy Tour’ at the Ponte Vedra Concert Hall The Ponte Vedra Concert Hall will host the “Tidings of Jazz and Joy Tour” featuring contemporary jazz pianist Keiko Matsui and saxophone journeyman Euge Groove with Lindsey Webster and Adam Hawley Dec. 29. Tidings of Jazz and Joy will feature a collaboration of holiday music and the jazz hits of each artist. The performance starts at 8 p.m.; visit www.pvconcerthall.com or call (904) 209-0399 to purchase tickets. The Ponte Vedra Concert hall is located at 1050 A1A N. in Ponte Vedra Beach.</p>	<p>St. Augustine Amphitheatre farmers market The St. Augustine Amphitheatre farmers market, which takes place every Saturday from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., features fresh produce, baked goods, seafood, handcrafted items and plants along with live entertainment. This event will be held at 1340 A1A S. in St. Augustine. Admission is free.</p> <p>Moon Mermaid at the St. Augustine Pirate & Treasure Museum The St. Augustine Pirate & Treasure Museum will welcome entertainer and author Moon Mermaid to the Pirate Museum courtyard. The creator of Moon Mermaid and the Treasure of Friendship will be reading and signing copies of her books beginning at noon. Born of the moon and the sea in the blue waters of the Mediterranean, the Moon Mermaid first surfaced in 2003 where she began entertaining humans as one of the world’s first solo performing mermaids. This event will take place at 12 S. Castillo Drive in St. Augustine.</p> <p>Jacksonville light boat parade This year’s Jacksonville light boat parade will take place Dec. 30 at 7 p.m. Visitors will line the banks of St. Johns River to celebrate the holiday season at the annual event, which takes place at the Jacksonville Landing. The event will feature a fireworks display to cap off the evening’s festivities. The Jacksonville Landing is located at 2 Independent Drive.</p> <p>Russ Nagel at The Comedy Zone Russ Nagel, known as America’s Funniest Biker, will perform at The Comedy Zone Dec. 30 at 7:30 p.m. Nagel has performed in a wide range of venues and shared a stage with top comedians such as Chris Rock and Bill Engvall. He has also appeared on The Nashville Network, A&E’s Comedy on the Road, Showtime’s Comedy Club Network, the WB, Spike TV and Comedy Central. The Comedy Zone is located at 3130 Hartley Road in Jacksonville.</p>	<p>New Year’s Eve Soirée and Anniversary Party Ring in the new year with live music, a champagne toast and a balloon drop at Lightner Museum’s historic pool area from 9:30 p.m. to 12:30 a.m. as the museum celebrates the 130th anniversary of the Alcazar Hotel and 70th anniversary of the Lightner Museum. The event will feature a cash bar serving spirits, wine and beer. Small bites will be catered by A Step Above Catering. Visit www.lightnermuseum.org for more information and to purchase tickets. The Lightner Museum is located at 75 King St. in St. Augustine.</p> <p>Beach Blast Off This annual New Year’s Eve fireworks display and entertainment event at the St. Johns County Pier will ring in 2018 with a host of festivities, including a kids zone, photo booth, food vendors and live music from 6 to 10 p.m. with a fireworks display at 8:30 p.m. Visit www.sabevents.com/beach-blast-off for more information.</p> <p>New Year’s Eve Celebration at Renaissance World Golf Village Resort Enjoy New Year’s Eve at Renaissance World Golf Village Resort with dinner served from 6 to 10 p.m. and live local music playing from 8 p.m. to midnight. The cost to attend is \$58 per person; call (904) 940-8000 for more information. The World Golf Village Resort is located at 500 South Legacy Trail in St. Augustine.</p> <p>Casa Marina Hotel 12th Anniversary New Year’s Eve Celebration Casa Marina’s New Year’s Eve Celebration will take place Dec. 31 from 7:30 p.m. to 2 a.m.; the cost to attend is \$127 per person including tax and gratuity. All guests must be at least 21 to attend. The celebration will feature a champagne toast, dinner and late night snacks along with a special New Year’s party menu. Tickets can be purchased at the hotel’s front desk or by calling (904) 270-0025. Casa Marina Hotel is located at 691 N. 1st St. in Jacksonville Beach.</p>

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Monday, Jan. 1	Tuesday, Jan. 2	Wednesday, Jan. 3	Thursday, Jan. 4
<p>Nights of Lights Selected by National Geographic in 2011 and 2012 as one of the 10 best holiday lighting displays in the world, St. Augustine's Nights of Lights features millions of white lights that create a magical atmosphere in the nation's oldest city. Tracing its origins to the Spanish tradition of displaying a white candle in the window during the Christmas holidays, the lighting reflects the city's history and illuminates the setting for lasting holiday memories. Nights of Lights will run through Jan. 31, 2018 at Plaza de la Constitucion on King Street.</p> <p>Henry Rollins at the Ponte Vedra Concert Hall The Ponte Vedra Concert Hall will host artist, actor, author and punk rock star Henry Rollins Jan. 1, 2018 at 8 p.m. (doors open at 7). Rollins will present his Travel Slideshow Spoken Word show featuring observations from his travels around the globe. Visit www.pvconcerthall.com or call (904) 209-0399 for more information and to purchase tickets.</p> <p>'Star Wars Episode VIII: The Last Jedi' at IMAX Theater Having taken her first steps into a larger world in 'Star Wars: The Force Awakens,' Rey continues her epic journey with Finn, Poe and Luke Skywalker in the next chapter of the Star Wars saga. This blockbuster is showing at the World Golf Hall of Fame IMAX Theater Jan. 1 at 12:30, 3:45, 7 and 10:15 p.m. Visit www.worldgolfimax.com for tickets and more information.</p> <p>First Day Hike & Beach Clean Up Anastasia State Park will host its annual First Day Hike & Beach Clean Up event Jan. 1 from 10 a.m. to noon. Visitors are invited to meet at the beach parking lot near Island Beach Grill to sign up for the program; park entry is free for participating volunteers. For more information, call (904) 461-2033 or visit www.floridastate-parks.org. Anastasia State Park is located at 300 Anastasia Park Road in St. Augustine.</p>	<p>Tapas Tuesday The Cummer Museum of Art & Gardens presents Tapas Tuesday at the Cummer Cafe every Tuesday from 5 to 7:30 p.m. View the sunset on the Cummer Cafe patio while listening to local musicians and enjoying beer, wine or artfully-inspired tapas for sale at the Cafe. Reserve your table by calling (904) 899-6022. For more information, visit www.cummermuseum.org. The museum is located at 829 Riverside Ave.</p> <p>High Tea at Cafe Alcazar Visitors are invited to immerse themselves in the full experience of the Dressing Downton exhibition with a special tea at Cafe Alcazar, located in the pool area of the Lightner Museum in St. Augustine. Teas will take place at 3 p.m. and 4 p.m. Sunday through Thursday and 2 p.m. Friday and Saturday until Jan. 7.</p> <p>WinterFEST 2017 Adventure Landing in Jacksonville Beach will transform its Shipwreck Island Water Park into a winter wonderland for the annual WinterFEST celebration. This year's festival runs from Nov. 18 through Jan. 8, 2018. The event will feature outdoor ice skating, an alpine ice slide, visits and pictures with Santa, s'more roasting and other attractions. Additionally, visitors can wind through a snowy village and enjoy window displays, hologram lights and decorations. Adventure Landing is located at 1944 Beach Blvd. Call (904) 516-9739 or visit https://jacksonville-beach.adventurelanding.com for more information.</p> <p>Portrait or observational drawing class This class will take place Tuesdays at the Murray Hill Art Center from 3 to 5 p.m. for observational drawing and 6 to 8 p.m. for portrait drawing. Participants will learn how to improve their drawing and how to use different media to enhance their artistic skills. The Murray Hill Art Center is located at 4327 Kerle St. in Jacksonville. Visit www.artleaguejax.org/classes/observational-drawing for more information and to purchase tickets.</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 help attendees improve public speaking and gain leadership skills. The senior center is located at 175 Landrum Lane in Ponte Vedra Beach. Email Lucy Reep at lucyreep@gmail.com for additional information.</p> <p>Yoga at church Join St. Paul's by-the-Sea Episcopal for Yoga every Wednesday at 11:30 a.m. Attendees are encouraged to bring a mat to this yoga class, which is suitable for all skill levels and ages. St. Paul's by-the-Sea Episcopal Church is located at 465 11th Ave. N. in Jacksonville Beach.</p> <p>Life Enrichment Day Retreat The Life Enrichment Day Retreat is designed for those with memory changes who want to remain mentally, physically and socially active while giving caregivers and loved ones some free time for themselves. This program is offered daily at Arbor Terrace Ponte Vedra, located at 5125 Palm Valley Road. For more information call (904) 417-7354 or email life_enrichment-group@yahoo.com.</p> <p>Winter Discovery Camps Jacksonville's Museum of Science & History (MOSH) will host Winter Discovery Camps Jan. 3-5, 2018. Camp topics will include Galactic Encounters and Super Spies for K through second grade, and Galactic Encounters, Ciphers, Code-makers and Code-breakers for third through fifth grade. Campers will also get to explore museum exhibits such as "Ancient Rome: Epic Innovators and Engineers." MOSH Winter Discovery Camps take place at the museum from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. For more information and to register, visit www.themosh.org. MOSH is located at 1025 Museum Circle in Jacksonville.</p> <p>Afternoon tea Enjoy an afternoon tea featuring seasonal sweets and classic favorites at the Corazon Cinema and Cafe Jan. 3 at 12:30 p.m.. Visit www.corazoncinemaandcafe.com for more information on tickets. The Corazon Cinema and Cafe is located at 36 Granada St. in St. Augustine.</p>	<p>Bettye LaVette at the Ponte Vedra Conert Hall The Ponte Vedra Concert Hall will host American rhythm and blues star Bettye LaVette live on stage Jan. 4 at 8 p.m. (doors open at 7). The Concert Hall is located at 1050 A1A N.; visit www.pvconcerthall.com or call (904) 209-0399 for more information and to purchase tickets.</p> <p>Yoga for Survivors The Y Healthy Living Center at the Ponte Vedra YMCA will host a "Yoga for Survivors" class Jan. 4 at 11:30 a.m. Cancer patients, survivors, caregivers and others with range of motion and pain limitations are invited to join in this gentle and safe yoga practice, which is free and open to the public. Call (904) 202-5376 or visit www.baptistjax.com/ymca to reserve a spot. The Ponte Vedra YMCA is located at 170 Landrum Lane.</p> <p>'Days of Heaven' at the Corazon Cinema and Cafe A hot-tempered farm laborer convinces the woman he loves to marry their rich but dying boss so that they can have a claim to his fortune. This film is showing at the Corazon Cinema and Cafe at noon. Tickets cost \$10, which includes a meal, popcorn and a small drink. The Corazon Cinema and Cafe is located at 36 Granada St. in St. Augustine, visit www.corazoncinemaandcafe.com for more information.</p> <p>Cummer Beaches lecture series: Women artists of the 19th century Cummer Beaches and the Beaches Museum & History Park will present the third talk of a lecture series on women artists from the Renaissance Jan. 4 from 6 to 8 p.m. For more information, contact Wendy Mayle by email at wmayle@cummermuseum.org or by phone at (904) 899-6007. This event will take place at the Beaches Museum & History Park Chapel, located at 381 Beach Blvd. in Jacksonville Beach.</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 ben@opcfla.com, post online at www.pontevedrerecorder.com using the automated form or call (904) 686-3939.</p>

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PV2-LV45741

February 2017



Photo by Jennifer Logue

Sawgrass Players Club residents await the vote on whether to amend the community's covenants.

Sawgrass Players Club residents give greenlight to golf course proposal

By Jennifer Logue
Originally published Feb. 9

Sawgrass Players Club residents voted overwhelmingly Feb. 6 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 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."

As outlined in the proposed agreement distributed to community residents prior to the vote, an 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

COURSE continues on Page 11

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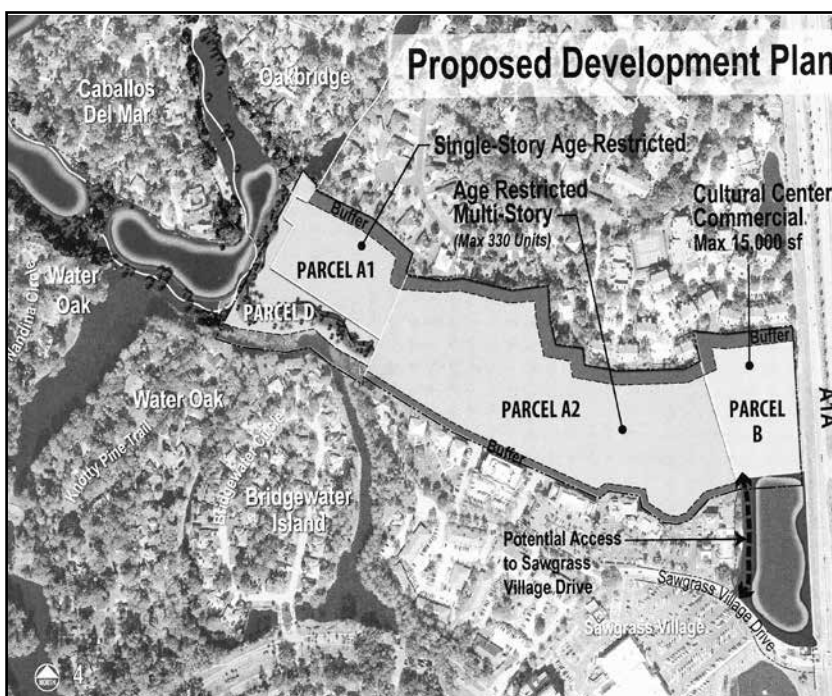
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Course

Continued from 10

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.

With 76 percent voting in favor of the agreement with Alta Mar, the special membership meeting Feb. 6 seemed to represent a stunning turnaround in opinion from spring 2016, 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

felt Alta Mar’s proposal presented the best option to address the situation with the golf course, which had fallen into disrepair and was deemed a “failed community asset” by its owners.

David Miller said that 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.”

This story has been edited for the Year in Review edition. Please visit pontevedrarecorder.com to read the full story.

Also, the Planning and Zoning Agency (PZA) recommended unanimous approval of the Oak Bridge plans in December. Read about the board’s decision at pontevedrarecorder.com.

Residents present plan to create ‘Ponte Vedra’s Central Park’

By Jennifer Logue
Originally published March 16

Jake Bestic recalled his reaction the first time he saw the proposed plans to develop 40 acres of the Oak Bridge Golf Club as a continuing care retirement community with hundreds of units.

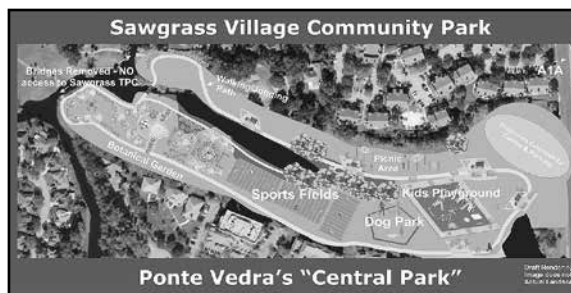
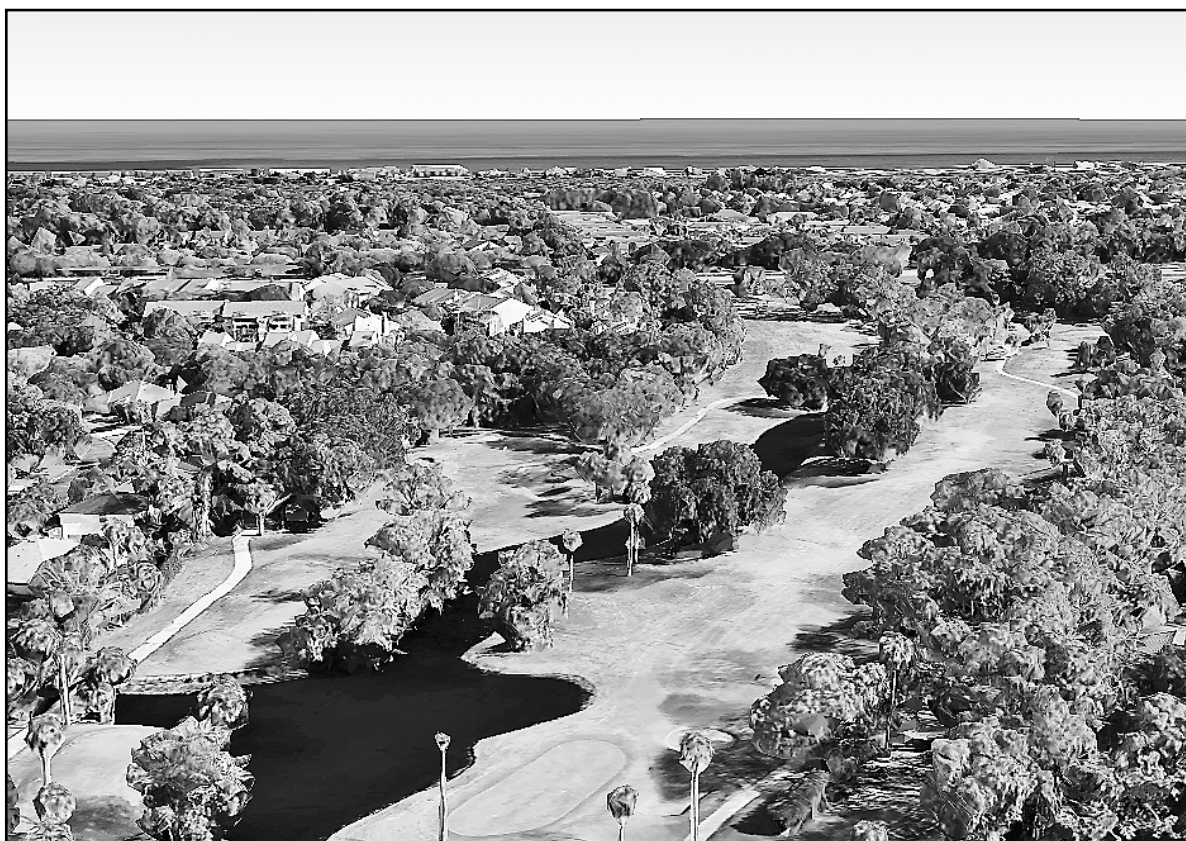
“I ... was absolutely mortified at the thought of having something like this on this beautiful piece of land,” Bestic said.

A local realtor, Bestic lives in the Hidden Oaks neighborhood, which abuts the part of the golf course slated for development. Since learning of the plans to develop the land, he and his neighbors have launched a grassroots campaign to purchase the property in question from golf course owner Alta Mar Holdings and preserve it as a community park and botanical garden. The group shared its vision with approximately 40 residents at a community meeting held March 7 at the Ponte Vedra Beach Branch Public Library.

The meeting followed a Feb. 6 vote by residents of Sawgrass Players Club to lift deed restrictions on the golf course, thereby enabling Alta Mar to move ahead with its proposal to sell the course’s back 40 acres for development. At the community meeting, however, Bestic stressed that the Players Club vote was by no means the last word on the property’s disposition.

“Nothing about this deal is set in stone,” said Bestic, noting that it will likely take an estimated nine months to a year before Alta Mar works through the regulatory process and the proposal makes it to the Planning and Zoning Agency. After holding public hearings on the plan, the PZA will forward its recommendation for approval or denial to the Board of County Commissioners.

In the meantime, Bestic and his neighbor, Frank Levene, are hoping to launch an aggressive fundraising campaign to raise the funds needed to purchase the land from Alta Mar. According to Bestic, the Hol-



land & Knight law firm is representing the group pro bono, working to draft an offer to purchase that would give the group a right of first refusal and one year to raise the funds needed to purchase the land. If the Board of County Commissioners approves Alta Mar’s development plans, that cost could range as high as \$16 to \$22 million.

Those figures don’t deter Bestic. “It’s doable,” he said. “There’s a lot of money in our town and there are lot of giving people in our town as well.”

Proponents of the park proposal say preserving the golf course land would fill a critical need for more open space in Ponte Vedra at a time when develop-

ment continues to increase the community’s density.

“We don’t have any central gathering places in Ponte Vedra Beach, period,” Bestic said, noting that many of the community’s recreational areas are located in gated communities or belong to private clubs. The golf course land, he continued, “is the perfect spot for the public park we want and need.”

Beyond the aesthetic and environmental benefits of a centralized park, supporters said, preserving the land as a park would prevent a new development from adding to Ponte Vedra’s traffic woes and affecting local property values.

The next step, group members say, is to gain widespread support across the community. Organizers have already launched a website – www.sawgrassvillagepark.com – where residents can learn more and sign a petition supporting the park proposal. The focus now, they say, is on spreading the word and gaining as much community support as possible to demonstrate the plan’s popularity and viability.

This story has been edited for the Year in Review edition. Please visit pontevedrarecorder.com to read the full story.

April 2017



Photo by Jennifer Logue

Residents ask questions of NFTPO staff regarding the proposed traffic improvements during a traffic study meeting April 25.

Residents voice opposition to traffic study recommendations at packed community meeting

By Jennifer Logue
Originally published April 27

A standing-room-only crowd of local residents packed the Ponte Vedra Concert Hall April 25, with many attendees voicing their opposition to the key recommendations included in a new Ponte Vedra Palm Valley traffic study.

Organized by the Citizens Traffic Task Force (CTTF) to present the North Florida Transportation Planning Organization's (NFTPO) draft recommendations, the meeting began with an open house during which attendees could watch a brief video summarizing the study's highlights, view blown-up photos of key intersections, ask questions and submit comments. That was followed by a formal presentation by NFTPO staff, who reviewed the report's key recommendations, which include widening portions of A1A to six lanes, adding a westbound off-ramp from the Palm Valley bridge to Roscoe Boulevard and replacing the Mickler roundabout with a signaled intersection.

While the meeting was the first formal presentation of the study's findings, it was clear from the public comments period that many of those in attendance had already read the report's recommendations and were there to express their opposition, particularly to any talk of widening A1A or Mickler Road.

Attendees expressed the belief that rampant development has caused Ponte Vedra's traffic woes, with one word repeated numerous times: Nocatee.

At the start of the public comment section, Tonie Laliberte asked why a road couldn't be built west of the Intracoastal Waterway

that would connect JTB to Nocatee, drawing a loud and sustained round of applause from the overflow audience.

CTTF board member Greg Leonard suggested, however, that Ponte Vedra's traffic problems are more complex and deep rooted than the development of the relatively new Nocatee community.

Leonard noted that in the past three decades, the county's population has skyrocketed 400 percent while Ponte Vedra's demographics have shifted from a majority of retired couples to families with young children, putting more cars on the road.

While those who spoke at the meeting expressed opposition to widening roads and replacing the roundabout, most acknowledged that Ponte Vedra has traffic issues that need to be addressed. Several residents described the difficulty they currently have entering and exiting neighborhoods located along A1A, such as Fairfield, Sawgrass Country Club and the Avalon neighborhood located near the on ramp to JTB.

Despite the negative reception to many of the traffic study's recommendations, meeting attendees thanked both NFTPO and CTTF representatives for the time they had invested in studying the issue. Residents also offered their own suggestions for addressing local traffic woes, including enforcing the speed limit on A1A, installing a traffic light at the entrance to Fairfield and the Sawgrass Country Club south gate and – the most popular suggestion with attendees – building a north-south road on the western side of the Palm Valley bridge that connects to JTB.

NFTPO and CTTF representatives stressed that the April 25 meeting was merely the latest step in a process that has many hurdles to clear before any recommendations are approved, funded and ultimately implemented. Leonard said the next step will be for the CTTF board to meet to review the feedback garnered at the meeting and share it with NFTPO. Once the draft study report is updated to reflect community input, funding would need to be obtained to finance the traffic improvements and secure any necessary rights of way before construction could begin.

CTTF also stressed that the task force was not there to advocate for the draft report's recommendations, but instead to serve as a communications resource, distributing information and actively seeking widespread community input.

"We're certainly not here to propose or encourage one outcome," Leonard said. "Ultimately, our goal is to reach into the community and get broad feedback about what type of change we are willing to tolerate in order to keep this community viable for ourselves, our children and our grandchildren."

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Kim wins 2017 PLAYERS Championship

By Kathy Bissell

Special to the Recorder

Originally published May 18

May 2017

While all the golfers everybody has heard of were ejected by Pete Dye's most well-known design at TPC Sawgrass, Si Woo Kim, a youngster originally from South Korea, showed them all how it should be done and became the youngest PLAYERS champion ever Sunday, May 14.

Until the week of the 2017 PLAYERS, Kim was the 71st-ranked player in the world. Now, he's the champion of one of the most important events run by the PGA Tour: THE PLAYERS.

"I'm very honored to be the champion for this amazing fifth major," Kim said through his translator. "Usually I'm very nervous, but last year I won one of the tournaments, and I could get the two years of exemption. Because of that, I can play aggressively, and I wasn't that nervous this year."

The most recent PLAYERS champ won by hitting fairways off the tee and by scrambling when he missed greens. His driving distance average was 295 yards for the week, and his driving accuracy was 69 percent of fairways for four windy days. In the final round, his greens in regulation number was only 44 percent, so it was his short game and his ability to hit recovery shots that separated him from the field.

Kim got up and in 10 times on Sunday, May 14, which was the key to his success. Three of those recovery shots



Photo by Don Christian

2016 Champion Jason Day (right) presents Si Woo Kim with THE PLAYERS Championship trophy.

were from greenside bunkers at the third, 10th and 11th, which could have costs him shots. However, his bunker technique was so good that the longest putt he had after getting out was five feet.

Louis Oosthuizen shot a 38 on the front and a 35 on the back for a 73. Sergio Garcia had a 41 on the front and 37 on the back for an uncharacter-

istic 78. Ian Poulter, who was without a PGA Tour card a month before the tournament, tried to push Kim, but was unable to match the youngster's skill.

To see the rest of the leaderboard players falling back was not as much of a surprise as it was to see Oosthuizen, Garcia and Poulter come up short of the mark. Basically, seven of the top eight going into the final round made

too many mistakes, and when Kim made a mistake he was able to recover in better fashion.

The youngster was the only man standing. He played like a true champion.

This story has been edited for the Year in Review edition. Please visit pontevedrerecorder.com to read the full story.

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June 2017

Nease baseball makes history, captures first state title

By Jon Blauvelt
Originally published June 8

Nease baseball (20-11) won its first-ever state championship in convincing fashion with an 11-0 shutout victory over Tampa Bay's King High School in the Class 7A title game.

Nease pitcher Leighton Alley was a force on the mound in the June 2 game, pitching a complete game in which he allowed only five hits and left nine men on base. With the victory, he picked up his eighth win of the season and 24th win of his career, which is a new Nease record.

"He's 'Mr. Reliable,'" said Panthers head coach Jeremiah Klosterman. "To have a guy like that to go to in the



Photo courtesy of Nease Athletics

The Nease baseball team gathers around its state championship trophy after defeating King High School, 11-0, on June 2, 2017.

state championship, you have to feel pretty good and confident going into that game."

Pitcher Eric Linder also played a major role in Nease's run, pitching strong outings for the team in all three regional games and in the state semifinal.

Nease's bats were relentless in the state title game, which didn't end until midnight due to two separate lightning delays earlier in the day. Kyle Huber led the Panthers for the second straight game, going 4 for 5 with five RBI in the championship, after he hit a key double and triple and scored the winning run in the semi-final game. Jayson Sowden went 2 for 3 with a walk and was also hit by a pitch. In total, the Panthers accumulated 14 hits off three Kings pitchers.

"They just had that confidence," said Klosterman. "They jumped on it from the get-go."

Sowden initiated the Panthers' offensive firepower in the first inning with a double down the left field line. A throwing error by the Lions later in the inning allowed Sowden to score from second. Alley sent in the final run of the inning on a two-out single, giving Nease an early 2-0 lead.

Moving into the second inning, Huber increased the team's lead to 4-0 after jacking a two-run homer to left field. The Panthers kept charging in the third, with Alley hitting a single and Jared Whittle stealing a base and then scoring off a Tyler McKay single. Jacob Allsup, who pinch ran for McKay, stole second base,

and then Cody Hargus scored him in with a single. Nease went into the fourth inning with a six-run lead.

The Panthers added a run in the fourth inning after Sowden singled, stole second and third base and ultimately scored off a Huber double. The action continued in the sixth when Huber scored in Sowden again on an RBI single after a similar sequence of events. Later in the inning, Jay Gallagher grounded out with the bases loaded, which allowed Huber to score from third base. Nease finished the game with two more runs in the seventh inning, due to RBI doubles from Chris Eichorn and Huber.

Following the win, Klosterman said it was an "up and down" season for Nease. The Panthers lost their first two and final three games of the regular season, he noted, and faced their fair share of adversity, with key players such as Patrick Irish, Alley, Sowden and Collin Garner suffering injuries amid a tough schedule of opponents. He noted that these experiences only made the team stronger, adding that the team's preparation has consistently improved because of the adversity.

Overall, the Nease coach said this is the result his team worked toward all season.

"It's tough to believe," said Klosterman. "To actually get it done, it's an amazing feeling."

This story has been edited for the Year in Review edition. Please visit pontevedra-recorder.com to read the full story.

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2017 IN REVIEW



December 2017



ST. JOHNS
COUNTY
CHAMBER
OF COMMERCE

Ponte Vedra
Recorder

YEAR IN REVIEW

St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce

Message from the President/CEO: 2018 and Beyond



Isabelle Renault

It's been more than three years since we announced our plan to Elevate, Innovate and Accelerate, which was adopted in 2014, and our successes have created the foundation for us to step forward as a much more proactive organization and leading business representative.

It has been a collective effort of staff, leadership and members, and as we move on to the next phase, our vision is

"...Our vision is to be a fierce advocate for our members' success and to increase our capacity to adapt. We will impact the ever-changing business reality with proactive solutions, and we will be a known influencer of public policy."

Isabelle Renault

President and CEO of the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce

to be a fierce advocate for our members' success and to increase our capacity to adapt. We will impact the ever-changing business reality with proactive solutions, and we will be a known influencer of public policy.

After gaining unanimous approval for the 2018 and Beyond plan from our board of directors, we are excited to continue increasing our capacity to predict and adapt to new challenges and opportunities, and to make a positive

impact on our community through our programs and our increasing influence in the business sphere, which includes those public policy agendas that may affect the way we do business.

An important aspect of our plan focuses on Ponte Vedra as our growth from simply hosting a visitors center to becoming a destination architect will help shape which tourism drivers in the area are marketed to potential visitors. After concluding the University

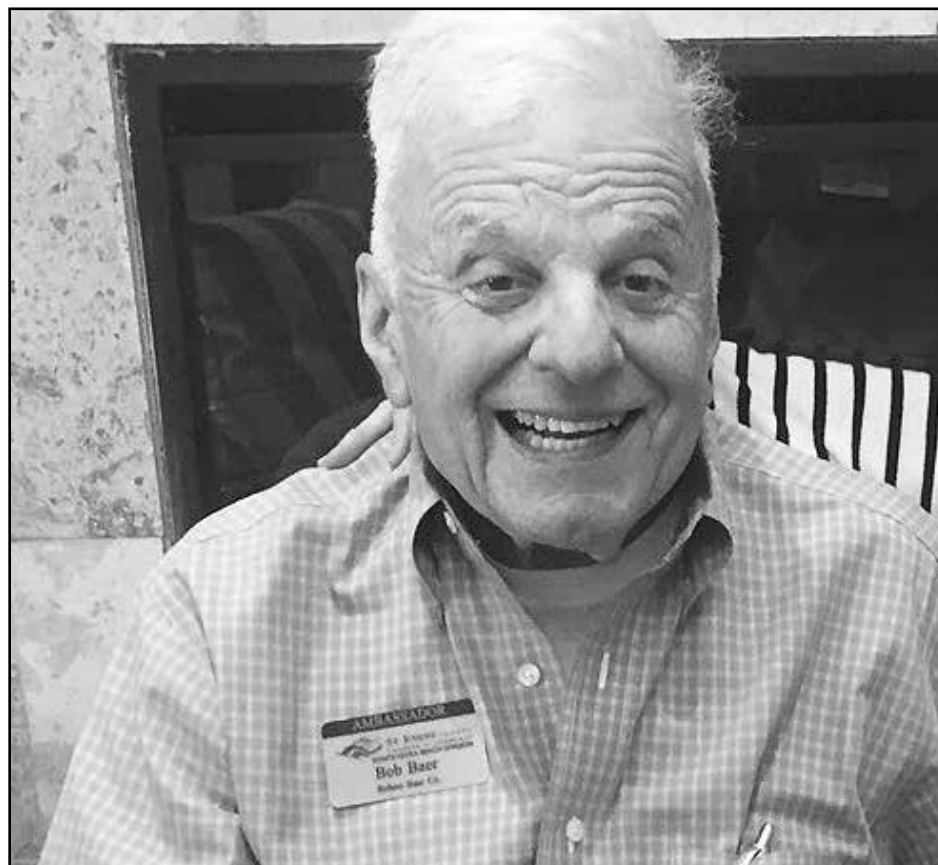
of Florida lead study commissioned in 2016, we are in the process of creating a product development working group comprised of stakeholders in Ponte Vedra's tourism industry to vet and accelerate the area's most valuable, current and/or new assets.

We've been through a lot in the last 15 months, including two hurricanes and the challenges brought on by rapid growth—especially in the north part of the county; and in response we are streamlining, planning and predicting. Yet the work we are doing as a destination architect is a great example of building from the foundation that—with your help—we created during Elevate, Innovate, Accelerate. So, as we continue to expand on that foundation, we hope that you continue in our never-ending mission to make St. Johns County a better place to do business.

To find out more about our new three-year plan, 2018 and Beyond, I hope you will join me in February for the Chamber at Noon, where I will present and answer the questions of those in attendance.

CHAMBER RECOGNIZES BAER FOR COMMITMENT TO ORGANIZATION

The Chamber of Commerce would like to thank Bob Baer for his membership and long-standing commitment to the organization. His dedication is greatly appreciated, and he has been an inspiration to all within the Chamber.



Meet the Ponte Vedra Beach Division Board of Directors for 2017-2018

The St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce welcomes the 2017-2018 board of directors for the Ponte Vedra Beach Division. The incoming board represents a broad cross-section of industries and individuals, each of whom brings years of professional experiences and business acumen to their board duties.

Chair: Susan Griffin, *Ponte Vedra Recorder*

Vice Chair: Rob Schlingmann, *The Plantation at Ponte Vedra Beach*

Secretary: Sarah Alexander, *Berkshire Hathaway Home Services Florida Network Realty*

Immediate Past President: Ed Mercel, *Coldwell Banker Vanguard Realty*

Board Member: Lori Adams, *cabi/Harbor View Advisors /TPC Sawgrass*

Board Member: Nancy Hallett, *Gateway Business Advisors*

Board Member: Janet Collins, *Sawgrass Country Club*

Board Member: Jennifer Belisario, *TPC Sawgrass*

Board Member: Jen Hendrich, *THE PLAYERS Championship, PGA Tour*

Board Member: Wiam "William" Battah, *Ruth's Chris Steak House*

Board Member: Gloria Dongara, *AAA- The Auto Club Group*

YEAR IN REVIEW

St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce

Message from the Director

Now that the holidays have passed, we turn our attention to reflecting on the past year.

Since becoming the division director in March, my time with the Chamber has been filled with countless highlights. The ongoing commitment from our past and current division board of directors, ambassadors and volunteers continues to be a key ingredient in the success of the Chamber.

Our signature events included, first, our Annual Membership Appreciations Awards in May where we recognized outstanding Chamber members going above and beyond the everyday. Our Annual Golf Tournament held in June attracted a full field of players—many of whom are business and community leaders throughout the region who were out swinging their clubs, networking and enjoying the great outdoors.

The 15th Annual Ponte Vedra Auto Show held in September featured more than 125 classics and new cars. The weather was absolutely perfect despite having to reschedule due to Irma. This Ponte Vedra tradition welcomed over 2,500 automobile



Toni Boudreaux
PVB Division Director

lovers and enthusiasts from across the Northeast.

Our Veterans Luncheon was a salute to veterans in business and featured Joe Padlo, who was named a Veteran of Influence by the Jacksonville Business Journal in 2016. Special guests also included Justin Justice, executive director of Operation New Uniform; Richard Tryon, Lieutenant

General, USMC (Ret), senior fellow in international leadership at Hicks Honors College at the University of North Florida; and a board member of the Wounded Warrior Project. Representatives from WWP and K9s for Warriors were in attendance.

Lastly, we rounded out the year with a little Jingle and Mingle, the Chamber's Ponte Vedra Beach Division holiday party this year held at a stunning home in Harbour Island. The evening was filled with beautiful music provided by the Jacksonville Symphony Youth Orchestras, setting the tone for a lovely evening celebrating all the wonders of the holidays.

As we head into the new year, I encourage residents and visitors alike to look at Ponte Vedra Beach with a fresh perspective, delighting in all the natural beauty that surrounds us while enjoying the multitude of pleasures that transform the ordinary into the extraordinary. We look forward to enhancing existing assets, such as outdoor recreation, arts and heritage, wellness and passive nature-based activities to create a more dynamic experience for everyone to enjoy. I look forward to seeing you out and about, and best wishes in the new year!

UPCOMING ST. JOHNS COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE PONTE VEDRA BEACH DIVISION (PVBD) EVENTS

PVBD Chamber Before Hours

Date/Time: Jan. 10, 2018, 8-9 a.m.

Location: Mainstream Boutique

Information: Enjoy your breakfast while networking among members and guests. This is a great way to start your work day with a little breakfast and conversation!

Cost: Free to members, \$5 for non-members

PVBD Joint Luncheon with JAX Chamber Beaches Division

Date/Time: Jan. 11, 2018, 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.

Location: Sawgrass Golf Club

Topic: State of our cities

Keynote speakers: Michael Wanchick, county administrator, St Johns County; Mayor Elaine Brown, City of Neptune Beach; George Forbes, city manager, City of Jacksonville Beach; and Mayor Ellen Glasser, Atlantic Beach

Cost: \$25 in advance, \$30 at the door

PVBD After Hours/Ribbon Cutting

Date/Time: Jan. 24, 2018, 5:30-7 p.m.

Location: New Life Healthcare

Information: Chamber After Hours is a PVBD event designed for busy professionals who can't get out of their offices or off the job until the close of business. Join us to network among members and guests. The host will provide beverages and delicious bites. Bring your business cards!

Cost: Free for members and guests

SJC Chamber promotes Porter, appoints Everett

To meet its new advocacy and economic development goals, the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce recently promoted Bob Porter to director of public policy and appointed Karen Everett as economic development manager.

Porter joined the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce in 2015 and previously served as executive director and CEO of Paws for Purple Hearts, an organization that trains and places service dogs with wounded warriors suffering

from post-traumatic stress or traumatic brain injury during combat in Iraq and Afghanistan. He has spent most of his career working in Washington, D.C., and his experience includes work as a Congressional staffer, serving as the director of government relations for the law firm of Collier Shannon & Scott and serving as vice president at the international business consulting firm headed by former Secretary of Defense William Cohen.

Everett has a background in economic

development and public relations and communications. She worked for the department of economic development for St. Mary's County in Maryland as the county's lead for business retention, expansion and recruitment. More recently, Everett was a senior account executive for Clockwork Marketing Services in Jacksonville, where she provided public relations services to multiple clients. She will work closely with the St. Johns County Economic Development Department.

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January 2017

Visit from acclaimed Spanish painter highlights Cutter & Cutter grand opening

Local residents had an opportunity to meet one of the art world's noted stars Jan. 20, when acclaimed Spanish painter ROYO visited Ponte Vedra Beach for the grand opening celebration of the Cutter & Cutter Fine Art gallery in Sawgrass Village.

The event featured a ribbon cutting ceremony with representatives from the Ponte Vedra Beach Division of the St. Johns County

Chamber of Commerce.

The artist, who traveled from Valencia, Spain, for the event, participated in the gallery's ceremony before visiting with guests and art collectors, who came to Ponte Vedra to view a special exhibition of works the artist painted especially for the occasion. In addition to attending cocktail receptions held Jan. 20-21, ROYO also signed copies of his book showcasing his works.



Photo by Jennifer Logue

Acclaimed Spanish artist ROYO joins The Cutter Family, gallery staff and representatives from the chamber of commerce as they cut the ribbon on the new Cutter & Cutter Fine Art gallery in Sawgrass Village.



SEASIDE BANK CELEBRATES 10TH ANNIVERSARY

Representatives from the Ponte Vedra Beach Division of the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce joined with Seaside Bank officials on Jan. 12 to celebrate the bank's 10th anniversary.

Photo courtesy of the Chamber of Commerce

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January 2017



Photo by Jon Blauvelt

Isabelle Renault, Chris Goerge, Wayne Hogan, Ed Mercel, Amanda Patch and Sarah Hewett

Attorney urges Chamber members to implement policies on distracted driving

Wayne Hogan, a personal injury attorney at Terrell Hogan Law Office, spoke to members of the Jacksonville Chamber of Commerce Beaches Division and the Ponte Vedra Beach Division of the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce at a Jan. 26 joint luncheon about the need for businesses to implement policies that prohibit cell phone use and other forms of distractions while driving.



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Photos by Susan Griffin

Sandra Ingram, Isabelle Renault, Ed Mercel, Marge Cirillo, Lin Jones and Felicia Cox

Small business trends the focus of 'Chamber at Noon' luncheon

Small business trends for 2017 was the focus of the Ponte Vedra Beach Division's "Chamber at Noon" luncheon Feb. 15 at Sawgrass Country Club.

The luncheon featured a presentation by Marge Cirillo of the University of North Florida's Small Business Development Center. Also on hand was St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce President Isabelle Renault, who presented a farewell gift to departing PVB Division Director Lin Jones, who relocated to Indiana.



Marge Cirillo of UNF's Small Business Development Center



Maury Lester and Adam Robinson



Meredith Forham Hughes and Steve Austin

CHAMBER CELEBRATES OPENING OF PIVOT CPAs NOCATEE OFFICE

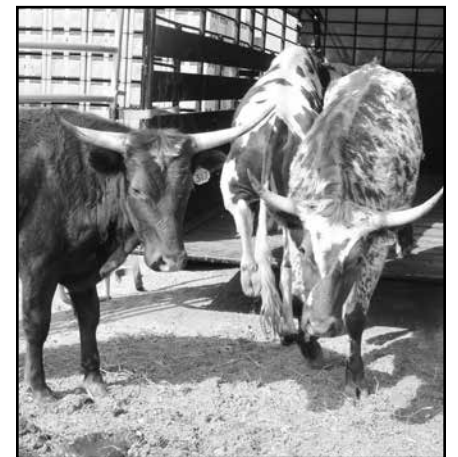


Photo by Susan Griffin

Members of the Pivot CPAs staff join with representatives of the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce's Ponte Vedra Beach Division on Feb. 28 to mark the opening of the firm's new Nocatee location with a ribbon cutting ceremony.

Morning on the Farm: EDC quarterly breakfast

The St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce Economic Development Council (EDC) held its quarterly breakfast Feb. 24 at Blue Sky Farms in Elkton. Florida Commissioner of Agriculture Adam Putnam served as the event's featured guest, discussing his priorities while in office, including fostering the growth and diversification



Farmer Jeb Smith brought his Florida cracker cattle to the event for attendees to see.

of Florida agriculture and expanding access to Florida's fresh produce and seafood.



Photos by Susan Griffin

Victor Raymos, Adam Putnam, Isabelle Renault and Jeb Smith

Chamber's PVB Division 'After Hours' celebrates opening of State Farm Insurance office

The St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce Ponte Vedra Beach Division held a ribbon cutting ceremony Feb. 22 for State Farm Insurance, which shortly before opened an office in Nocatee Town Center at 466 Town Plaza Ave.

In addition to the ribbon cutting, the Chamber hosted an "After Hours" social gathering at the State Farm office, which provided members with the opportunity to network and enjoy an evening of complimentary hors d'oeuvres and refreshments.



Photo courtesy of St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce

State Farm Insurance staff and St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce Ponte Vedra Beach Division representatives gather at the ribbon cutting ceremony.

Business leaders meet new Ponte Vedra Beach Chamber director

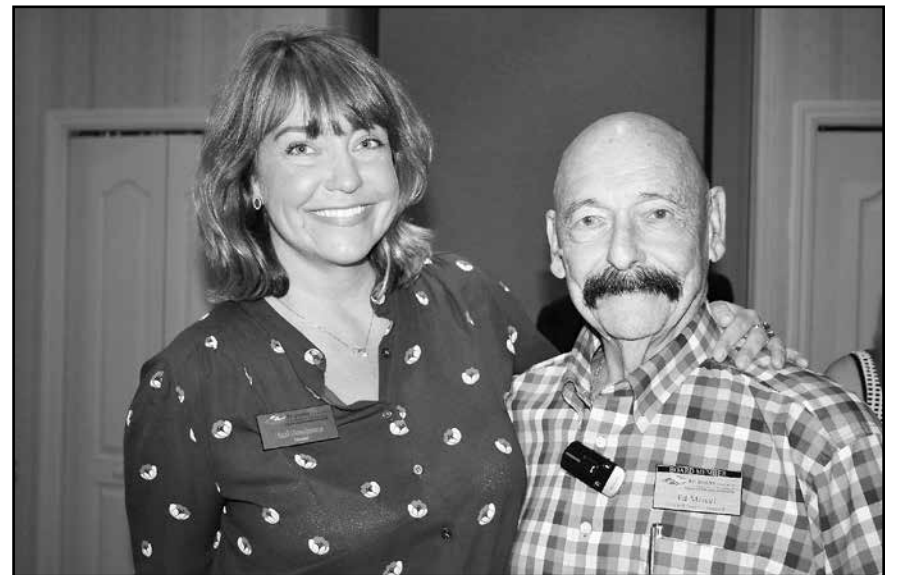
Local business and community leaders had an opportunity to meet the new director of the Ponte Vedra Beach Division of the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce on March 27, when the Hilton Garden Inn hosted an “After Hours” reception.

Director Toni Boudreaux met with

guests and shared with them some of her plans to strengthen the PVB Division, drawing on her background in fundraising and event management. Guests also had an opportunity to network with other business leaders while enjoying complimentary hors d’oeuvres and refreshments.

Dr. Rob Karol, Isabelle Renault, Toni Boudreaux, Ed Mercel, Carol Maurer, Ted Hayes, Kathleen Floryan, Anna Washington, Chuck Schoonmaker and Anette Saalman.

Photos courtesy of SJC Chamber



Ponte Vedra Beach Division Director Toni Boudreaux and former Board Chair Ed Mercel



Victor Raymos and Art Wildblood



Barry McDonald and Rob Schlingmann

March 2017

FirstAtlantic Bank hosts Chamber ‘Before Hours’

FirstAtlantic Bank welcomed local business and community leaders March 8, when the bank hosted a “Before Hours” networking get-together for the Ponte Vedra Beach Division of the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce.

In addition to networking, the event showcased the complete makeover of the bank’s financial center and featured a drawing for gift baskets as well as breakfast catered by KC’s Kitchen.



Photo by Susan Griffin

First Atlantic staff members join Ed Mercel (right), former chairman of the board of directors for the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce PVB Division, at the “Before Hours” social gathering March 8.

Jumbo Shrimp owner discusses power of branding at Chamber’s annual breakfast

Ken Babby, owner of the Jacksonville Jumbo Shrimp minor league baseball club, addressed the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce’s annual membership meeting March 9 at the Renaissance in World Golf Village.

The event offered Chamber members a chance to learn more about Babby’s creative approach to building successful brands.

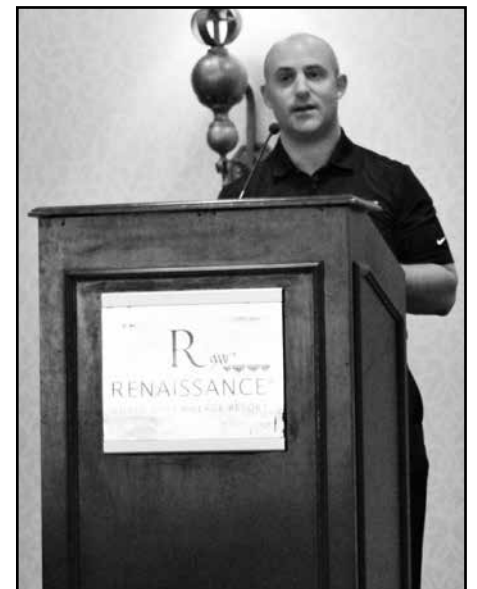


Photo by Susan Griffin

Jacksonville Jumbo Shrimp Owner Ken Babby

LE MACARON HOLDS GRAND OPENING



Le Macaron representatives gather with representatives from the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce’s Ponte Vedra Beach Division on March 11 for the French pastry shop’s grand opening celebration, which featured a ribbon cutting ceremony, face painting, balloons, a mime and more.

Photo courtesy of Le Macaron

April 2017

Rice: THE PLAYERS CHAMPIONSHIP is a boon to local economy

THE PLAYERS Championship is more than just a world-class golf tournament, Executive Director Jared Rice told local business leaders at an April 13 joint luncheon for the Jacksonville Chamber of Commerce Beaches Division and the Ponte Vedra Beach Division of the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce. It's an economic engine, he said, that pumps millions of dollars into the local economy while showcasing Northeast Florida to a global audience.

THE PLAYERS Championship Executive Director Jared Rice addresses members of Jacksonville Chamber of Commerce Beaches Division and the Ponte Vedra Beach Division of the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce.



Photo by Jennifer Logue



John Schaum and Ann Terrell

Photo by Susan Griffin

Arbor Terrace hosts Chamber 'After Hours'

Arbor Terrace Ponte Vedra hosted an "After Hours" event April 19 for the Ponte Vedra Beach Division of the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce. Chamber

members and guests enjoyed complimentary hors d'oeuvres and refreshments while networking with other business and community leaders.

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May 2017



Award recipients Felicia Cox, Len and Sonya Cutter, Sarah Alexander, Steve Carn (accepting on behalf of Advanced Disposal), Melissa Nelson (accepting on behalf of Victoria Long), Jamie McDonough (accepting on behalf of Chef Tommy McDonough) and Carla Miles.

Chamber of Commerce presents Member Appreciation Awards



ABOVE: Greg Voss and Steven Beyer tackle the Jenga tower.

RIGHT: Le Macaron provided sweet treats for the event.

Photos by Susan Griffin



The Ponte Vedra Beach Division of the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce recognized its most active and engaged members May 24 at its annual Member Appreciation Awards.

Held at Sawgrass Country Club, the celebration recognized members who actively participate in chamber events and initiatives. The 2017 Jeff Jenkins Community Service Award was presented to Advanced Disposal, while the Pat Morgan Outstanding Member Award went to Rob Schlingmann, general manager at The Plantation at Ponte Vedra Beach. The Board Member of the Year Award went to Sarah Alexander of Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices.

Additional award categories and their recipients included: Crushing It: Matt Price, Regions Bank; Going the Distance: Victoria Long, United Way; Key Contributor: Felicia Cox, Iberia Bank; Rookie of the Year: Carla Miles, Mainstream Boutique; Dedicated Service: Chef Tommy McDonough, Flavor Palette; and Spotlight Award: Cutter & Cutter Fine Art.

Sponsors of the Member Appreciations Awards event included Sawgrass Country Club, Pivot CPAs, the Ponte Vedra Recorder, VyStar Credit Union, Clean Getaway Car Wash and Le Macaron, which provided refreshments.



Kay and Steve Carn



Stephanie Bedsaul and Lynn Kettell-Slifer

May 2017

EDC panel: Businesses should prepare now for hurricane season

Learning the lessons of Hurricane Matthew was the focus of the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce's quarterly Economic Development Council breakfast held May 25 at the Renaissance in World Golf Village.

The event featured a panel discussion during which participants urged business leaders to take steps to prepare for potential future storms. Panelists included St. Johns County Administrator Michael Wanchick, St. Augustine Beach Police Chief Robert Hardwick, St. Augustine Fire Chief Carlos Aviles and Marge Cirillo of the Florida Small Business Development Center.



Photo by Jennifer Logue

Panelists Michael Wanchick, Chief Robert Hardwick, Chief Carlos Aviles and Marge Cirillo



Photos courtesy of Susan Griffin

Jennifer Belisario, Susan Griffin, Victoria Crawford, Christine Ondek, Gloria Dongara and Carol Maurer

Jacksonville, St. Johns County chambers of commerce host 'After Hours at THE PLAYERS'

Members of the Jacksonville and St. Johns County chambers of commerce got a head start on the festivities surrounding THE PLAYERS Championship when the two chambers hosted an "After Hours" event May 4 at TPC Sawgrass.

Held at THE PLAYERS Stadium Village, the event attracted an estimated 500 business and community leaders from across the First Coast.



Chris Guzewich, Scott Showalter and Kimberly O'Steen



Randall and Karina Coryell



Jackie Smith, Clare Berry and David Smith

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June 2017



Photo by Susan Griffin

Toni Boudreaux, Stephanie Bedsaul, Lynn Kettell-Slifer, Emily Slifer and Ed Mercel

Health Partners LLC joins Chamber of Commerce

Health Partners LLC, a functional medicine practice in Ponte Vedra Beach, celebrated joining the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce Ponte Vedra Beach Division with a ribbon cutting ceremony June 26.

Located at 100 Executive Way across from PVPV-Rawlins Elementary School, the practice provides area residents with a “relationship-focused” option that staff members say bridges the gap between traditional, prescription-based primary care and alternative treatment.



Photos by Susan Griffin

Karsten Jacobson, Sarah Alexander, Toni Boudreaux and Steven Beyer

Jacobson discusses economic perspectives at ‘Chamber at Noon’ luncheon



Sarah Alexander helps Toni Boudreaux select the door prize winner

The current economic climate was the focus of the Ponte Vedra Beach Division’s “Chamber at Noon” luncheon June 21 at Sawgrass Golf Club.

The luncheon featured Edward Jones financial advisor Karsten Jacobson, who discussed timely market topics and potential investment strategies.

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Wounded Warrior Project CEO provides Chamber of Commerce members with positive forecast for organization



Photos by Jon Blauvelt

St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce PVB Division Director Toni Boudreaux, Wounded Warrior Project CEO Mike Linnington and Jacksonville Chamber of Commerce Beaches Division Manager Kathy Sutton

At a July 13 joint luncheon for the Jacksonville Chamber of Commerce Beaches Division and the Ponte Vedra Beach Division of the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce, Wounded Warrior Project CEO Mike Linnington told local business professionals that he's optimistic about the future of the nonprofit organization, which offers a variety of programs and services for wounded veterans of military actions following Sept. 11, 2001.

The luncheon was held at the Sawgrass County Club.



Adam Petrus, Ellen Taylor and Lou Delaney

July 2017

Local officials share accomplishments from legislative session at Chamber's EDC breakfast

Providing bonuses for St. Johns County teachers, increasing statewide funding for mental health and substance abuse and revising and improving Enterprise Florida and Visit Florida were among the accomplishments of the 2017 legislative session shared by local officials at the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce's Economic Development Council (EDC) breakfast July 28.

Rep. Cyndi Stevenson, Sen. Travis Hutson, Rep. Paul Renner and St. Johns County Commission Chair James Johns provided these updates to business leaders from around the county at the Chamber event at the Renaissance hotel in World Golf Village.



Photos by Jon Blauvelt

Sen. Travis Hutson, St. Johns County Commission Chair James Johns, Rep. Cyndi Stevenson and Rep. Paul Renner participate on the EDC panel July 28.



Chamber President/CEO Isabelle Renault



Emily Stimler, John Eaton, Aaron Emmel and Kyle Murdock



Heather Sciertelli, Denise Hagan and Mary Ann Steinberg

July 2017



BHGRE LIFESTYLES REALTY OPENS NEW OFFICE IN NOCATEE

Better Homes and Gardens Real Estate (BHGRE) Lifestyles Realty staff celebrates the opening of its Nocatee office with a ribbon-cutting ceremony July 10, which was attended by representatives of the Ponte Vedra Beach Division of the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce.

Photo by Susan Griffin

Berkshire Hathaway hosts Chamber 'Before Hours' event

Sarah Alexander with Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Network Realty hosted a "Before Hours" networking event July 12 for the Ponte Vedra Beach Division of the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce.

Chamber members gathered at the real estate company's Ponte Vedra Beach office for conversation and a continental breakfast. Door prizes were given, and coffee and pastries were provided by Trasca & Co Eatery.

Alexander currently serves as the secretary of the Ponte Vedra Beach Division Board of Directors.



Photo by Susan Griffin

Toni Boudreaux, Ed Mercel, Sarah Alexander and Dr. Erika Hamer



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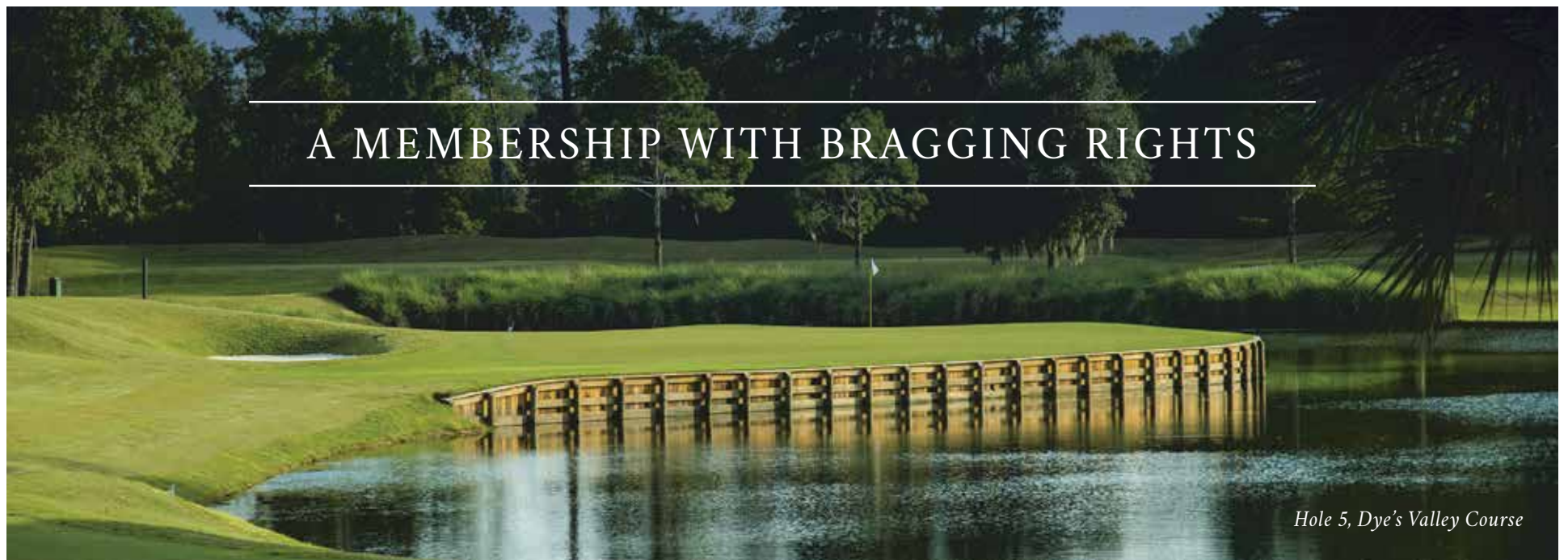
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July 2017

MY HOUSE FITNESS OPENS IN PONTE VEDRA BEACH



Photo by Susan Griffin

The My House Fitness team participates in a ribbon cutting ceremony with representatives of the Ponte Vedra Beach Division of the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce as part of the gym's July 27 grand opening event.



Photo by Susan Griffin

Rocky Nightingale, Kelly Green, Beth D'Augerot, Bryan Fazio and Jennifer Hooper

TPC Sawgrass hosts Chamber 'After Hours' event

TPC Sawgrass hosted an "After Hours" networking event for the Ponte Vedra Beach Division of the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce July 19.

After work, Chamber members

and their guests were invited to the TPC Clubhouse to chat, mingle and take in the views of the famed and picturesque golf course. Attendees were also served complimentary hors d'oeuvres and refreshments.

August 2017



Photo by Susan Griffin

Isabelle Renault, Richard Goldman and Toni Boudreaux

Ponte Vedra Beach Division provides tourism update at 'Chamber at Noon'

The Ponte Vedra Beach Division of the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce hosted speaker Richard Goldman at the Sawgrass Beach Club Aug. 16 for a "Chamber at Noon" event.

The Executive Director of the St. Johns County Visitors & Convention Bureau, Goldman presented "How Tourism Affects You" at the event, which was sponsored by the Browning Agency.

Pivot CPAS hosts 'After Hours' event for Chamber

Pivot CPAs hosted an "After Hours" networking event for the Ponte Vedra Beach Division of the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce on Aug. 23. Attendees enjoyed food and drink from food trucks and Victory Beer and St. Augustine Distillery, as well as music from Jim Kelly.



Photos by Susan Griffin

Brian Anderson, Jennifer Belisario and Mark Berman



MULLIGAN'S PUB HOSTS CHAMBER 'BEFORE HOURS' EVENT

The Ponte Vedra Beach Division of the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce gathered before work Aug. 9 for networking and refreshments at Mulligan's Pub in Ponte Vedra Beach.

Photo by Susan Griffin



George McCaughan, Clare Berry and Greg Totten

September 2017



Mark Becker sits inside his 1936 Chrysler C-9 Airflow Coupe, which was named the event's Wells Fargo Advisors Best in Show Classic.

1936 Chrysler C-9 Airflow Coupe wins top honors at Ponte Vedra Auto Show

Karen Everett, Ricki Taylor, Lori Adams and Cindy Bishop sell Auto Show apparel at the 15th annual event.

Photos by Susan Griffin



A 1936 Chrysler C-9 Airflow Coupe received the Wells Fargo Advisors Best in Show Classic award at the 2017 Ponte Vedra Auto Show Sept. 24, claiming one of the event's most coveted prizes.

Owned by Mark Becker, the acclaimed automobile was one of more than 150 classics and collectables on display at the 15th annual event hosted by the St. Johns County (SJC) Chamber of Commerce at the Nocatee Town Center.

In addition to Becker and his

coupe, Rob Sewell received the "Porsche for the Spirit of It!" award for his 1997 Porsche Carrera S, and Mitt Layton won the award commemorating the 50th anniversary of the Shelby Super Snake with his 1968 Shelby GT500KR. In total, participants vied for 31 awards at the Auto Show, which was presented by Fields Automotive. The event, which ultimately hosted about 3,500 visitors, was originally scheduled for Sept. 10 and postponed due to Hurricane Irma.

The Pineapple Corporation hosts Chamber 'After Hours' event

Luxury home builder The Pineapple Corporation hosted an "After Hours" networking event at one of its model homes at The Vista at Twenty Mile in Nocatee Sept. 27 for the Ponte Vedra Beach Division of the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce.

Attendees enjoyed conversation and building relationships while touring the model home.

The Vista at Twenty Mile is characterized by its Spanish architecture and is located in Nocatee's Twenty Mile neighborhood just west of the Intracoastal Waterway.



Spencer Calvert and Kurt Morgan



Amanda Johnson and Malcolm Anthony

Photos by Susan Griffin

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September 2017

PALM VALLEY PRIMARY CARE OPENS, JOINS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



Photo courtesy of the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce

The Palm Valley Primary Care team participates in a ribbon cutting ceremony with representatives from the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce on Sept. 29 to celebrate its opening and Chamber membership.

October 2017

PONTE VEDRA WELLNESS CENTER HOSTS CHAMBER 'BEFORE HOURS'



Ponte Vedra Wellness Center hosted a "Before Hours" event for the Ponte Vedra Beach Division of the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce on Oct. 11. Pictured above is Dr. Casey Means, Marissa Daniels, Dr. Erika Hamer (Ponte Vedra Wellness Center owner), Daniel Brauch, Daniel Tirado and Lejla Karic.

Photo by Ed Johnson

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October 2017



Photo by Jon Blauvelt

Bill Constain (front row, from left), Kathy Sutton, Rep. John Rutherford, Dustin Vaughn, Sandy Ford (middle), Steven Beyer (back row, from left) Toni Boudreaux and Suzan Lupton

Rep. Rutherford calls for procedural changes at Chamber luncheon to promote bipartisanship in Congress

U.S. Rep. John Rutherford told a group of local business leaders at an Oct. 19 luncheon in Ponte Vedra that two procedural changes must be made to mitigate the partisanship that currently characterizes Congress: Bring back earmarks and kill the rule in the Senate that requires 60 votes to end a filibuster and ultimately pass a bill.

Rutherford, R-Fla, delivered these remarks at the Sawgrass Beach Club to members of the Jacksonville Chamber of Commerce Beaches Division and the Ponte Vedra Beach Division of the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce.

HILTON GARDEN INN HOSTS CHAMBER 'AFTER HOURS'

Local business professionals networked and enjoyed refreshments by the pool at the Oct. 25 "After Hours" reception hosted by Ponte Vedra's Hilton Garden Inn and Mosquito Squad for the Ponte Vedra Beach Division of the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce. Pictured from left to right: Carol Maurer, Nikol DeWoody and Ted Hayes.



NEW FREEDOM BOAT CLUB LOCATION CELEBRATES OPENING



Photo courtesy of St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce

Representatives from Freedom Boat Club and the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce Ponte Vedra Beach Division participate in an Oct. 17 ribbon cutting ceremony to celebrate the opening of the new Ponte Vedra business.

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SJC Chamber President and CEO Isabelle Renault, PVB Division Director Toni Boudreaux and Chamber Sales and Marketing Manager Erin Cook

Recorder hosts Chamber 'After Hours' event

The Ponte Vedra Recorder hosted an "After Hours" event Wednesday, Nov. 29 for the Ponte Vedra Beach Division of the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce.

The event also served as an artist reception featuring art from various First Coast artists, as well as a holiday open house. In addition to networking, guests enjoyed food from KC's Kitchen and cupcakes from Sweet By Holly; music by Chase Rideman of Chillula; wine from Coastal Wine Market & Tasting Room and tastings from St. Augustine Distillery; door prizes and more.



ABOVE: Artist Bill Adams displays his work



LEFT: Event guests enjoy food from KC's Kitchen.

FAR LEFT: Kylie Trundle and Zoe Gombar from the St. Augustine Distillery

Photos by Jon Blauvelt

Starling at Nocatee hosts Chamber 'Before Hours'

Local business professionals in the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce Ponte Vedra Beach Division gathered at the Starling at Nocatee before work Nov. 8 for breakfast and networking.

Located across from Nocatee's Splash Waterpark, the Starling senior living community offers concierge living, assisted living and memory care services.



Photos by Susan Griffin

Isabelle Renault and Daniel Lewis



Pam Brunell, Ilene Thrasher and Lisa Atkinson



Starling at Nocatee Executive Director Megan Kennedy addresses the guests at the event.



THE PINEAPPLE CORPORATION CELEBRATES GRAND OPENING OF NEW MODEL HOMES IN VISTA AT TWENTY MILE

Representatives from The Pineapple Corporation and Ponte Vedra Beach Division of the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce celebrate the grand opening of new model homes in the Vista at Twenty Mile with a ribbon cutting ceremony held Nov. 9.

Photo provided by the Pineapple Corporation

November 2017



Photo by Samantha Logue

Justin Justice, Tim Crosby, Mollie Malloy, Joe Padlo, Dennis Volpe and David Godwin

St. Johns County Chamber salutes veterans in business

At a “Salute to Veterans” luncheon held Nov. 15 at the Hilton Garden Inn in Ponte Vedra, the Ponte Vedra Beach Division of the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce

treated local business and community leaders to several speakers, including keynote speaker Joe Padlo — a veteran of the United States Marine Corps.

OPULENCE OF SOUTHERN PINES OPENS IN SAWGRASS VILLAGE



Photo provided by St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce

Representatives from Opulence of Southern Pines and the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce Ponte Vedra Beach Division celebrate the opening of the new Sawgrass Village store with a ribbon cutting ceremony in late November.



CHAMBER ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL (EDC) BREAKFAST FEATURES REMARKS FROM NAR CEO STINTON

St. Johns County Chamber leaders gather following the Nov. 17 Economic Development Council breakfast at the Casa Monica Hotel in St. Augustine, which featured a keynote address from Dale Stinton, CEO emeritus of the National Association of Realtors (NAR). Pictured from left: Rob Matthews, president of Matthews Design Group and Economic Development Council chair; Isabelle Renault, president and CEO of the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce; Victor Raymos, CEO of the St. Augustine & St. Johns County Board of REALTORS & MLS and Mary O'Brien, chairman of the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors.

Photo courtesy of St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce

December 2017

SJC Chamber PVB Division holds 'Jingle & Mingle' holiday party

The Ponte Vedra Beach (PVB) Division of the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce held its “Jingle & Mingle” holiday party Dec. 6 at a private home in Marsh Landing.

Event attendees enjoyed networking opportunities, cocktails provided by St. Augustine Distillery and hors d'oeuvres from Sawgrass Events. The party also featured entertainment from the Jacksonville Symphony Youth Orchestras (JSYO) and a raffle and silent auction.



Mel and Felicia Cox



Malcolm Anthony and Isabelle Renault



Dave Danzeisen, Barry McDonald and Suzan Lupton

Photos by Susan Griffin



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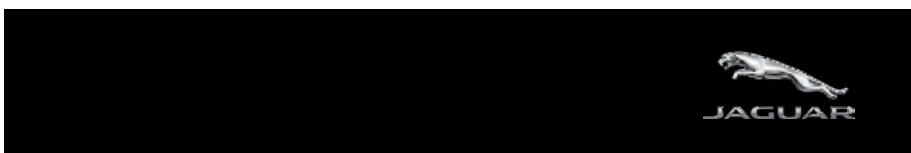
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SJCSD and CPPI hold 'topping out' ceremony to celebrate construction milestone of new K-8 school in Nocatee

By Jon Blauvelt
Originally published July 27

The St. Johns County School District (SJCSD) and construction management firm Charles Perry Partners, Inc. (CPPI) jointly hosted a “topping out” ceremony to celebrate continued construction progress of the district’s new K-8 school slated to open in Nocatee for the 2018-2019 school year.

Held July 20 at the school’s construction site at 2135 Palm Valley Road, which is adjacent to Nocatee’s Twenty Mile neighborhoods, the event featured the ceremonial placement of the last steel beam atop the structure, marking the conclusion of the school’s roof and a milestone for the CPPI contractors. District and CPPI representatives, as well as officials from architecture firm Harvard Jolly Architecture, signed the final beam before a crane lifted it atop the three-story building.

“It really has been a team effort, and it’s taken everybody putting in a lot of hard work and a lot of energy,” said SJCSD District 4 School Board Member Kelly Barrera during remarks at the beginning of the ceremony. “It really is going to benefit students, our families and the employees in our district.”

Up to 1,500 students are expected to attend the school, which is currently entitled “KK” until a permanent name is chosen. The building sits on 30 acres of property and consists of 190,000 square feet of operational space and 73 classrooms, according to SJCSD Executive Director for Facilities and New Construction Paul Rose. The school, Rose added, is being built and constructed to meet green building standards.

SJCSD Deputy Superintendent of Operations Cathy Mittelstadt explained in her remarks that the new facility is a product of the county’s continued growth in population, which she noted is rising by 5 percent each year. She added that revenues from the half-cent sales tax increase, which was enacted by St. Johns County voters in 2015 to support growing capital needs of the district, are helping to fund the school.

“We need new locations for students to perform and have an opportunity for great academic opportunities,” said Mittelstadt about the school, which will ultimately cost \$35 million to build. “Today is evidence of that progress as we continue to move forward.”

PARC Group Community Manager David Ray agreed that the school is necessary to meet the community’s growth.

“One of the major reasons people move to Nocatee is the school system,” he said. “Seeing this, seeing this school come online, is something very essential and very exciting for everyone.”

Nicole Cubbedge, SJCSD’s executive director for planning and government relations, elaborated after the ceremony that in addition to revenues from the sales tax increase, funding is also coming from school impact fees and school proportionate share mitigation fees, noting that the latter have only been a funding source for the district since 2008.

Will Inman, a CPPI employee in the areas of business development and project management, said the school property will include ball fields, abundant parking and easy access to Nocatee Parkway and Palm Valley Road. Overall, he said the facility will represent everything the district wants in a school, and that the “topping off” ceremony provided the district and CPPI with the opportunity to thank the contractors who worked in the peak of the Florida heat to construct their vision into a reality.

“It’s a significant day because it represents the amount of accomplishment we’ve done out here over the past eight months of construction,” said Inman, whose company hosted a barbecue luncheon for the contractors following the ceremony. “The point of today is to thank them. We’re honored that the school district could participate with us in encouraging and telling these guys how much we appreciate what they’ve done.”

This story has been edited for the Year in Review edition. Please visit pontevdrarecorder.com to read the full story.



Photo by Jon Blauvelt

Representatives from St. Johns County School District, Charles Perry Partners, Inc. and Harvard Jolly Architecture celebrate continued construction progress of the district’s new K-8 school in Nocatee at a “topping out” ceremony held July 20.

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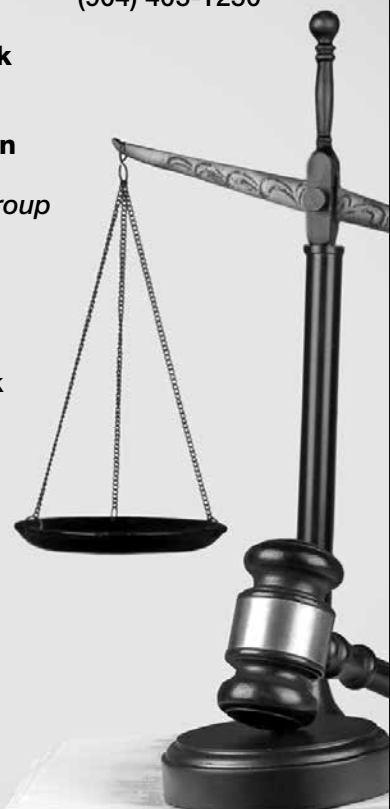
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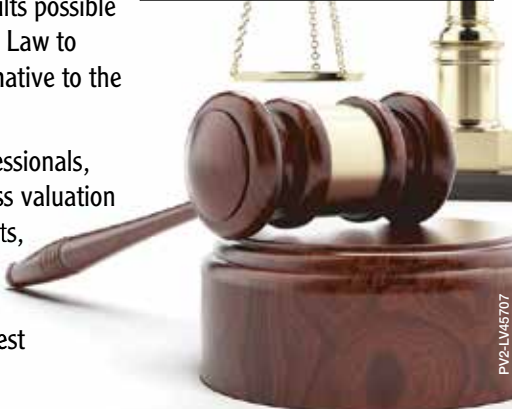
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PV3-LV45677

THE PLAYERS Championship to move to March, PGA Championship to May in 2019

By Samantha Logue
Originally published Aug. 10

In a joint announcement Aug. 8 at Quail Hollow Club in Charlotte, North Carolina, the PGA of America and the PGA TOUR confirmed that starting in 2019, THE PLAYERS Championship will be moved to March and the PGA Championship will be held in May.

TPC Sawgrass in Ponte Vedra Beach has been home to the THE PLAYERS Championship since 1982. The event has been held in May since 2007, but prior to that year, it was held in March. PGA TOUR Commissioner Jay Monahan assured that THE PLAYERS Championship would continue to thrive, regardless of the schedule change.

“THE PLAYERS Championship has grown in stature since we moved to May in 2007 and, regardless of the date, is clearly one of the premier events in all of golf—the best players in the world, a premier venue in THE PLAYERS Stadium Course at TPC Sawgrass, an unmatched fan experience and a significant charitable component that



Photo by Samantha Logue

THE PLAYERS Championship Executive Director Jared Rice holds a press conference at TPC Sawgrass to discuss moving THE PLAYERS Championship to March in 2019.

benefits the Jacksonville-area community,” Monahan said.

Following the announcement, THE PLAYERS Championship Executive Director Jared Rice held his own press conference at TPC Sawgrass to further address the impacts of the coming change on the tournament itself.

“We’ve already begun to think through how this affects our business—everything from fan experience to hospitality, and hosting structures ... and certainly volunteers,” Rice said. “We couldn’t deliver this tournament to fans and our players without the nearly 2,000 volunteers that we have. We’ve

already communicated the date change to them, and the response has been as positive as you hear from the commissioner and among our stakeholders.”

While exact dates for the 2019 schedule have yet to be announced, Rice said that he believed having THE PLAYERS in March would help with marketing the tournament. In terms of the tournament’s charitable involvement, Rice said that would not be affected by the change of schedule.

Although the NCAA Men’s Basketball Tournament is also scheduled to come to Jacksonville in March of 2019, Rice said he was confident that it would not adversely impact THE PLAYERS.

“THE PLAYERS Championship is the largest global event of this community,” he said. “We’ve talked about it before – the amount of attendees coming from outside the five-county area, the amount of coverage that comes from across the globe; that is not going to change.”

This story has been edited for the Year in Review edition. Please visit pontevedrerecorder.com to read the full story.

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THEME: THE 1990s

ACROSS
1. Had, with “thou”
6. Leaves in a bag
9. “_____ good example”
13. Chilled
14. Hole punching tool
15. John du Pont, e.g.
16. “Private Parts” and “Miss America” author
17. Hawaiian garland
18. Faster!
19. *Highest grossing movie
21. *Popular 1990s communication device
23. Digital location marker
24. Sty cry
25. Homer’s exclamation
28. Ticket leftover
30. Perform onychectomy
35. International Civil Aviation Organization
37. Please get back to me
39. Andean pack animal
40. Aldous Huxley’s drug of choice
41. Willow twig
43. Cain’s unfortunate brother
44. Like Desmond Morris’ ape
46. Of low density
47. Cosa Nostra and such
48. Entertained
50. Yanks
52. U Rah _____!
53. “Put that in your _____ and smoke it!”
55. *Swedish pop group, _____ of Base
57. *Human _____ Project
60. *Grunge fabric
64. Panthers
65. “Uh-uh”
67. Indian cuisine yogurt staple
68. High society
69. Genesis vessel
70. Audience’s approval
71. ‘70s hairdo
72. *Pamela Anderson’s husband
73. Rosetta Stone, e.g.

DOWN
1. *Conan debuted as one on NBC in 1993
2. Against
3. Weight watcher’s plan
4. Garbage disposal fodder
5. *Anna Kournikova’s domain
6. Barber’s supply
7. *Dolly
8. Cover story
9. a.k.a. porgy
10. Dublin land
11. Millimeter of mercury
12. Take your pick
15. Israeli monetary unit
20. Preface
22. *Emma Thompson in “Howard’s _____”
24. Eliminate
25. *Royal car crash victim
26. _____’s razor
27. 3-line poem
29. *This socialist state is no more, acr.

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Fill in the blank squares in the grid, making sure that every row, column and 3-by-3 box includes all digits 1 through 9.

31. Chowder ingredient
32. *Robert Reich, Secretary of _____
33. Single-cell animal
34. *Brandon or Brenda of “Beverly Hills, 90210”
36. Lyric poems
38. Paddington’s home country
42. Like something fit for a king
45. Remove from the throne
49. Not bright
51. Frightens
54. Prison-related
56. Perform in a play
57. *1991 war site
58. Arabian chieftain
59. *Operation Joint Endeavour mastermind organization
60. Type of fish net
61. Cairo’s waterway
62. Et alibi, abbr.
63. “Late Night” becomes “_____ Show”
64. One in a pod
66. Second person of be

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PV2-LV45709

September 2017

Palm Valley fatality among impacts of Hurricane Irma on St. Johns County



Photo by Susan Griffin

A home collapses in Vilano Beach due to erosion from Hurricane Irma.

By Jon Blauvelt
Originally published Sept. 14

The fatality of an elderly woman in Palm Valley was one of several consequences of Hurricane Irma that St. Johns County officials shared in a press conference Sept. 11.

Authorities said Barbara LaFountain, 75, died from a heart attack while attempting to protect herself from rising water in Palm Valley. No other details regarding the incident were released. St. Johns County Sheriff David Shoar said Palm Valley, overall, sustained significant damage from the storm.

St. Johns County Administrator Michael Wanchick noted the damage that St. Johns County experienced due to Irma was as bad if not worse than what was seen with Hurricane Matthew in October 2016. He said the county sustained coastal erosion and flooding in low lying areas, as well as downed trees and power lines. He attributed these results to the combination of over a foot of rain that fell upon the county and wind gusts in excess of 70 mph.

Shoar elaborated upon Wanchick's statement, saying that the county is dealing with an event that will transcend many others they've confronted in the past.

"Matthew was our frame of reference, which was mostly an event that impacted the barrier islands and coastal areas," said Shoar. "This particular storm impacted the entire county. From the northwest to the northeast to the southwest to the southeast ... nobody was spared."

Shoar also said in the press conference that Vilano Beach and St. Augustine Beach sustained "heavy devastation." Shoar called the overall situation a "herculean" task that will require synergy and collaboration to mitigate moving forward.

"We've got a catastrophic, statewide situation," said Shoar, who noted that the county will have less resources than last year with Matthew due to the wide-ranging impacts of this storm across Florida. "Now's the time for everybody to rally around the flag pole and help each other."

This story has been edited for the Year in Review edition. Please visit pontevedrerecorder.com to read the full story.

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October 2017

County commission votes to support PGA Tour's plans for new headquarters in Ponte Vedra

By Jon Blauvelt
Originally published Oct. 6

The PGA Tour has called Ponte Vedra Beach its home for 35 years, and it doesn't look like that will be changing any time soon.

The Board of County Commissioners (BCC) voted unanimously on Oct. 3 to support a \$2.8 million economic incentives program for the company to construct a new headquarters facility on its existing property along Palm Valley Road. The facility will ultimately consolidate the tour's 800 employees located at 17 office locations throughout St. Johns County into one space in Ponte Vedra, which is expected to be occupied by March 2020.

With plans to invest \$86 million into the construction of the estimated 210,000-square foot facility, the company anticipates hiring an additional 300 employees who will be paid an average wage of \$79,442, which is approximately two times the average wage in St. Johns County. According to county staff, the tour's financial investment would conservatively generate a net economic benefit of \$24 million to the county over a 20-year period and \$7 million alone to the county's general fund.

"The county, when it's done, is getting a 750 percent return on its investment," said District 4 County Commissioner Jay Morris at the hearing. "This is the biggest economic development and the biggest plus for St. Johns County that I've seen in the seven years I've been here."

The BCC supported the advance-



Photo by Stan Badz/PGA Tour

ment of the incentives program in April 2017, but the identity of the company it would be benefitting was made confidential during the due diligence process. At the time, the company was referred to as "Project Boilermaker."

In addition to the incentives program, the BCC approved the PGA Tour's requests to amend the Caballos del Mar Development of Regional Impact (DRI) and Players Club Planned Unit Development (PUD) to consolidate acreage and uses of the company's property into a unified Master Development Plan. This consolidation, county staff explained, will enable the company to convert previously approved multi-family residential units into office or commercial square footage to house the headquarters.

The BCC also voted in support of the PGA Tour's acquisition of the 1.8-acre piece of property currently housing the County Courthouse Annex on Palm Valley Road, which also includes a county-owned communications tower. The property will ultimately be used as one of the company's entrances to its new headquarters.

County Director of Economic Development Melissa Glasgow noted at the hearing that the PGA Tour evaluated other locations in the region and outside of the state throughout its due diligence process.

In explaining the incentives program, she said that the headquarters project is eligible for an economic development grant equal to four years of ad valorem taxes paid on capital improvements and tangible personal property, as well as up to 100 percent

of impact fees and water/sewer connection fees paid to the county. The total estimated value of the incentive is \$2,758,310, she said, with an estimated annual payout of \$440,320 and the first payment anticipated for fiscal year 2022. Glasgow added that the incentive also includes a state incentive that has already been approved.

"Economic development people like me stand ready to capture a deal of this magnitude," she said, "and that's another reason why the governor and the state in particular are keen on keeping this project here and encouraging their [the PGA Tour] expansion here in St. Johns County. This economic development project is one of the largest and most exciting to come before the county."

Some residents at the hearing, however, were not so supportive. Mary Kohnke called the incentives program and overall project "blatant favoritism of one developer over another." Tom Reynolds referred to it as "corporate welfare at its worst."

Following the hearing, PGA Tour Vice President of Integrated Communications Kirsten Sabia said the company was pleased to receive the county commission's final approval of the project.

"We look forward to continue working with the community and area residents, as well as investing in the overall growth of St. Johns County," she said. "We will share further details once a finalized plan becomes available."

This story has been edited for the Year in Review edition. Please visit pontevedrarecorder.com to read the full story.

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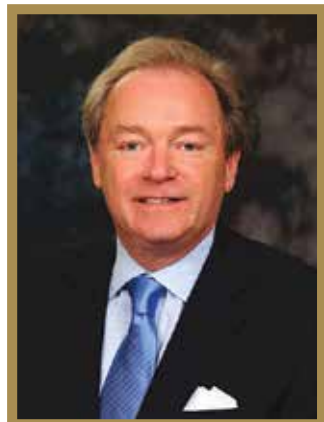
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PV3-LV45678

November 2017



Photo by Eric Morris

Ponte Vedra's girls volleyball team celebrates winning the Class 6A state title game against Bishop Moore Nov. 18.

PVHS girls volleyball team wins state title

By Jon Blauvelt
Originally published Nov. 23

Ponte Vedra's girls volleyball team claimed its first state championship in school history after defeating powerhouse Bishop Moore of Orlando Saturday, Nov. 18, at the University of North Florida.

The Class 6A state title match between the Sharks (25-5) and the Hornets (23-8) went down to the wire, with Ponte Vedra ultimately winning 26-24, 13-25, 25-23, 14-25 and 15-11. The victory represented revenge for the Sharks after the team lost to the Hornets in the state title match in 2016.

"It was awesome," said Sharks head coach Robin Mignery. "More of knowing what a powerhouse Bishop Moore is ... There's a Kentucky commit on the team, a Florida commit on the team. We don't have any of those big superstars. You see that, and we really do look like an underdog. That makes me so much more proud."

Gabby Keller and Paige Johnson each finished with 12 kills for the Sharks, while Lily Kinder and Erika Hendrickson each finished with eight. Kinder additionally contributed four blocks. Sophia Ervanian led the team in digs with 23, and also added an ace. Eve Beech contributed 15 digs and an ace. Savannah Fowler had 46 assists.

Mignery said her team's depth was a significant factor in the win over Bishop Moore and its success throughout the season, noting that she ultimately had a lineup of 10 girls that could take the court at any time and make a difference. The Sharks' coach also said the girls learned throughout the season to be patient and wait for the opportunity to capitalize on the other team's errors. That's what happened against Bishop Moore in the fifth set, she said, and the Sharks took advantage.

"I think they're obviously, genuinely

excited," said Mignery about her team's reaction to the win. "It was crazy. People were celebrating ... It's pretty sweet."

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December 2017

Ponte Vedra Corporation proceeding with litigation over Outpost property dispute

By Benjamin Naim
Originally published Dec. 21

Ponte Vedra Corporation (PVC) filed a “motion to lift abatement” in December concerning its Vista Tranquila development application on the Outpost property, which ultimately means the company is proceeding with litigation over the property dispute with St. Johns County.

According to PVC attorney Amy Boulris, the Gate subsidiary is suing St. Johns County because she said the county has refused to offer PVC an administrative interpretation on the organization’s proposed residential development — a 66-home subdivision planned to be built on the 99-acre conservation property known as the Outpost.

PVC, Boulris said, wants to know if its proposal aligns with the county’s current comprehensive plan before taking the matter to the Planning and Zoning Agency (PZA) and Board of County Commissioners (BCC). Boulris explained that the county tried to alter its comprehensive plan last spring before providing PVC with an administrative interpretation. Now, she said the county believes it doesn’t owe PVC a formal interpretation at all, which is why PVC is proceeding with litigation.

Boulris said going to court is a necessary step because the county is refusing to make a fundamental decision that will enable PVC to intelligently plan its property.



Photo by Carrie Resch

The Outpost property is located at the end of Neck Road and adjacent to the GTM Research Reserve.

Attorney Jane West, who represents the group opposed to PVC’s development known as Save Guana Now, said the company is trying to circumvent the law and avoid a public hearing by filing its recent motion and going to court.

“This is a strongly-worded motion that reflects the desperation of a party that isn’t getting its way,” West said in the statement. “Obviously, they are not pleased with the county’s position on the matter and instead of accepting the common-sense rules that apply to everyone else and going to a public hearing, they are digging

in their heels over a footnote that hardly provides the free-wheeling escape from the comprehensive plan that they are seeking.”

Boulris, however, believes Save Guana Now is misrepresenting her client.

“That’s what the Save Guana people are trying to peddle,” she said. “We’re not trying to avoid a public hearing process, we’re not trying to do an end run around the county commission, we’ve only come to court at all because we’re being blocked.”

According to West, the judge is allowing both parties to pursue a hearing under the current comprehensive plan, but PVC has been trying unsuccessfully to force a determination that the county “did not feel was appropriate or warranted.” As a result, West believes PVC is running back to the court instead of engaging the public.

“The notion that St. Johns County staff is somehow acting defiantly in pursuit of some hidden agenda is nonsensical,” she said. “Ponte Vedra Corporation has never had an issue obtaining variances or land use changes in the past – but here, they simply refuse to accept that they have to play by the same rules that every other property owner in the county is subject to.”

According to St. Johns County, a hearing is scheduled for Jan. 18 that will allow all parties to explain their position to the court.

This story has been edited for the Year in Review edition. Please visit pontevedrarecorder.com to read the full story.

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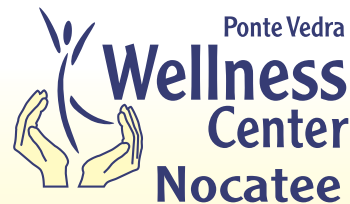
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