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The only home that sits atop the bluff next to the exquisite DuPont Mansion, this home shares the same breathtaking views of the formal gardens, the marina, & the St. Johns river. Wonderful & livable floorplan takes advantage of the home's premier location. 4 bedrooms & 4.5 bathrooms. **\$1,295,000**



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about this magazine

The First Coast Register is a bimonthly general interest magazine published by The Ponte Vedra Recorder and OPC News, LLC. The magazine can be found throughout the upscale areas of greater Jacksonville. For advertising inquiries call 904.285.8831.

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on the cover

The cover of this Register features a home in Pablo Creek Reserve that is currently on the market. Flip to page 10 for more. Photo by Mark Martelli.





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One of Us!

edited by JON BLAUVELT

photos by JON BLAUVELT

CHRISTY BUDNICK



Christy Budnick stands alongside the office bell, which is rung to celebrate company accomplishments, both big and small.

An Atlantic Beach resident, Christy Budnick is the president and CEO of Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Network Realty. Recently appointed to the position, Budnick is succeeding her mother and the company's founder, Linda Sherrer, who is continuing as the chairman of the firm.

Can you please briefly tell us about your background?

I joined the company in 2002 as branch manager of the company's Beaches office and was promoted to executive vice president of residential real estate in 2006. Prior to joining the firm, I worked for Bank of America as its vice president of sales and leadership training, where my team and I traveled the country working with the consumer finance division.

What's it mean to you to have been named president and CEO?

It really isn't about the title; it's about the vote of confidence from my mother, our team and the community at large. That meant the world to me. I am honored and humbled to continue the legacy that Linda has built.

You're assuming the role your mother has held since 1988.

What have you learned most from her?

Growing up in a real estate family in which my mother began her career as a single mother of two daughters, we had a front row seat to her work ethic. From my earliest memories, I remember just how hard my mother worked and that made a huge impression on me and molded who I am. Fast-forward to working with her as an adult, I've learned to lead with my heart, to always do the right thing since your integrity means everything and to take the time to celebrate every success, big or little and preferably in costume, with a hat!

What are your goals for the company?

Our overarching goals haven't changed a bit. They are:

1.) To create a platform for success for our Realtors and employees. Our goal is to remove obstacles for our agents, allowing them to spend their time creating and maintaining relationships. This also allows them to achieve harmony in their work and home life, which, as a family-run operation, we believe is very important.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8 ■



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Tour new and resale homes ranging from the mid \$500's to over \$2,000,000. Check in at The Plantation's clubhouse for home listings, maps, refreshments, community tours, and Beach House access.



Budnick (third from left) gathers with a group of her team members at the Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Network Realty office.

■ CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

2.) To create a seamless, one-stop shopping environment for our clients so that we maximize their time and savings, creating an overall better client experience. We recognize how busy our clients are and their desire to be able to handle contract to mortgage to closing under one roof, and we are proud to provide that service.

3.) To be a good corporate citizen. We love Northeast Florida and appreciate all that this city has done for us, and we feel that it is extremely important that we give back. For every closing, we make a donation to Dreams Come True, a local organization that provides “dreams” to children battling life-threatening illnesses. Over the last five years, we have donated over \$175,000 to this worthy organization. Additionally, we buy, collect, stuff and deliver hundreds of backpacks every year to ensure children begin the school year on the right foot. Then there are countless other charities we support; our team has such a huge heart and we love them for that!

What’s the future of the real estate market in Jacksonville? How is it changing?

Northeast Florida has a bright future in real estate. While we have seen 5 to 10 percent appreciation in nearly every area over the last several years, as interest rates tick up and



builder product helps to fill the inventory void, we feel that the market will achieve a steadier growth rate of 3 to 5 percent, which is sustainable and more “normal.” This will be good for buyers and sellers alike. Some sellers are worried about selling because they feel their buying choices are limited since inventory is so tight. It will also be good for buyers because there will be slightly more inventory to choose from and fewer multiple offer situations, which drive prices up, pricing some buyers out of the market.

What's your best advice for buyers and sellers in the local real estate market?

It really is a perfect time for both buyers and sellers for the reasons I mentioned before. For sellers, inventory is limited, which means if their home is priced well, in good condition and in a location that is desirable, they will likely sell quickly and very close to asking price. It's a great time to sell. For buyers, although home inventory is limited, builders are bringing more product, which means more choices. With rising interest rates, buyers who may be priced out of the market by a rate hike need to make their wish list and begin the buying process, which, on an existing home, typically takes 60 to 90 days minimum from finding the perfect home to closing.

What do you enjoy most about living on the First Coast?

I've lived in six different areas in Northeast Florida since I was 9 years old and have seen so much positive change. I love that we have the benefits of the ocean, the river and the Intracoastal and the outdoor life that comes with all of our waterways. I am so grateful that we are an NFL city. I feel that the Jacksonville Jaguars put our city on the map and we no longer have to answer the question, "So, where exactly is Jacksonville?" when talking



with people from outside the area. Between having an NFL team, the PGA Tour headquarters, the oldest city in the nation and a large military presence, we are privileged to call this city home. We are also fortunate to have such a strong medical presence with Mayo Clinic, MD Anderson and UF Health, the only Level 1 trauma program in Northeast Florida or Southeast Georgia. Each of these businesses bring notoriety to our area as well as transferees, further strengthening

our economy. The icing on the cake is that we live in sunny Florida but benefit from a change of season, which our neighbors to the south of us can't say. I wouldn't live anywhere else!

What do you like to do when you are not at work?

When I'm not at work, I enjoy spending time with my family on the beach, riding bicycles, playing golf or enjoying time with friends or grandparents. We are so fortunate to have both sets of grandparents within a few blocks of our home in Atlantic Beach. We also love to travel, and some people think it is funny that my mother and I live one block away from one another, work together and vacation together, but that's just the way we like it! Thankfully our husbands agree!

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A 7,630-square-foot house located at 5396 Bent Pine Cove Road in Pablo Creek Reserve is on the market for \$3.5 million.

Photos by MARK MARTELLI

Old meets new in

French-influenced home

by JON BLAUVELT

in Pablo Creek Reserve

A French-influenced, extravagant home in Pablo Creek Reserve that draws from hundreds of years of inspiration has just recently been placed on the market.

Currently owned by Nicholas Eklund, a real estate agent at First Coast Sotheby's International Realty from Minnesota, and his partner Dr. Josep Genebriera, a local dermatologist from Barcelona, Spain, the 7,630-square-foot house is located at 5396 Bent Pine Cove Road. According to Eklund, who designed the house, what makes it special is the fact that it brings together the old with the new.

"Probably the most unique aspect of the house is the merging of everything from 17th century furniture up to a kitchen that was inspired by the most modern German kitchens," he says.

Eklund and Genebriera, who live in the home with their four children, both enjoy traveling and have an affinity to France. The couple also loves modern design, while Eklund, in particular, has a passion for antiques. The house reflects those combined interests, resulting in what Eklund describes as a "baroque modern feel."



The gold tile wall of the master bedroom is a unique touch.



The house's backyard features a pool and enjoyable outdoor area.



This room features a grand piano that was built for Julie Andrews and a Russian Empire malachite table with a dore and ebonized bronze base, among several other attractions.



The movie theater



The game room

Walking through the home, you see this blend with design elements such as the ornate crown moldings on the ceilings and squared off 12-foot baseboards. Other unique features include the white and gold bathroom that draws from the design work of Jonathan Adler, and the gold tile wall in the master bedroom. In addition, the house's powder bath is progressive into the room with a sink, and upon opening a set of double doors, there's a toilet that "floats" in the middle of the room.

"It's supposed to be that conversation piece," Eklund says. "Something fun and whimsical."

Eklund has collected several antiques over the years that are found throughout the house. Next to the grand piano, which was built for Julie Andrews, sits a Russian Empire malachite table with a dore and ebonized bronze base. Most of the antique mirrors throughout the house are gilt French mirrors dating from the late 1700s to early 1800s. The oldest piece of art in the home is by Marco Basaiti and was painted somewhere between 1470 and 1535, says Eklund.



Nicholas Eklund and Dr. Josep Genebriera with their children
Photo by TAMARA GIBSON

The office is currently home to a variety of Japanese and Chinese porcelains. According to Eklund, several of them are from a Japanese potter named Makuzu Kozaan, who was the potter to the Japanese Imperial Court during the Meiji Period. Yet at the same time, modern art is seen with a Swarovski pointage set dragon sitting behind Eklund's desk that is handset with over 63,000 crystals of varying shades.

Overall, the house features five bedrooms but was designed so there can be seven; the theater room and game room can both be converted into bedrooms. Every bedroom has an en-suite bathroom and closets, and the house also includes three additional bathrooms. A gym, office, dining room, great room, garage, pool and walk through closets are among the other features.

The house is listed for \$3.5 million, and although Eklund is ready to move onto their next home and project, this one will always have a special place in his heart.

"A home like this is built to enjoy it," he says. "You do it because every day you go into this room, you want to look on the art on the wall, look around you and smile."

Compassion by the Sea

brings hope to the homeless



Photos by SAMANTHA LOGUE



Jacksonville Jumbo Shrimp mascot Scampi



Mike Triglia, Carmen Whisler, Sarah Spence and Mission House Executive Director Lori Delgado Anderson.



by SAMANTHA LOGUE

Mission House of Jacksonville Beach hosted its annual Compassion by the Sea fundraiser Thursday, Sept. 27 to support the homeless of Jacksonville's Beaches community.

"This is our only large event of the year," said Lori Delgado Anderson, executive director of Mission House. "We try to raise \$50,000, that's always our goal, but last year we raised almost \$70,000."

Held at the Casa Marina Hotel in Jacksonville Beach, the packed event featured food, live music performed by local band Cloud 9 and dozens of donated auction items up for grabs, drawing attendees from all over the Greater Jacksonville area.

"The community just comes out and really supports us,"

Anderson said. "They tell me it's the best party of the year, that we have the best silent auction items, the greatest band ... and we do this all because it supports our mission of getting the homeless in the Beaches area off the streets and into housing. That's our No. 1 goal, and as of right now, we got 73 men and women off the streets this year, so we're hopefully going to surpass our number last year, which was 94."

Preliminary estimates for funds raised at the event amounted to more than \$70,000, which will benefit Mission House's various outreach initiatives.

"It's a great community event," Anderson said, "and we appreciate everyone who sponsors us and helps us with this event, because it's really important."



Scott Hetzinger, Kim Hetzinger, Liz Neitzel, Keith White, Tracy White and Debra Neitzel



Jessica Dumas, Julie McKay, Helen Short and Kim Kristoff of Mission House



Joe and Helen Jackson



An attendee plays ring toss with bottles of wine to benefit Mission House



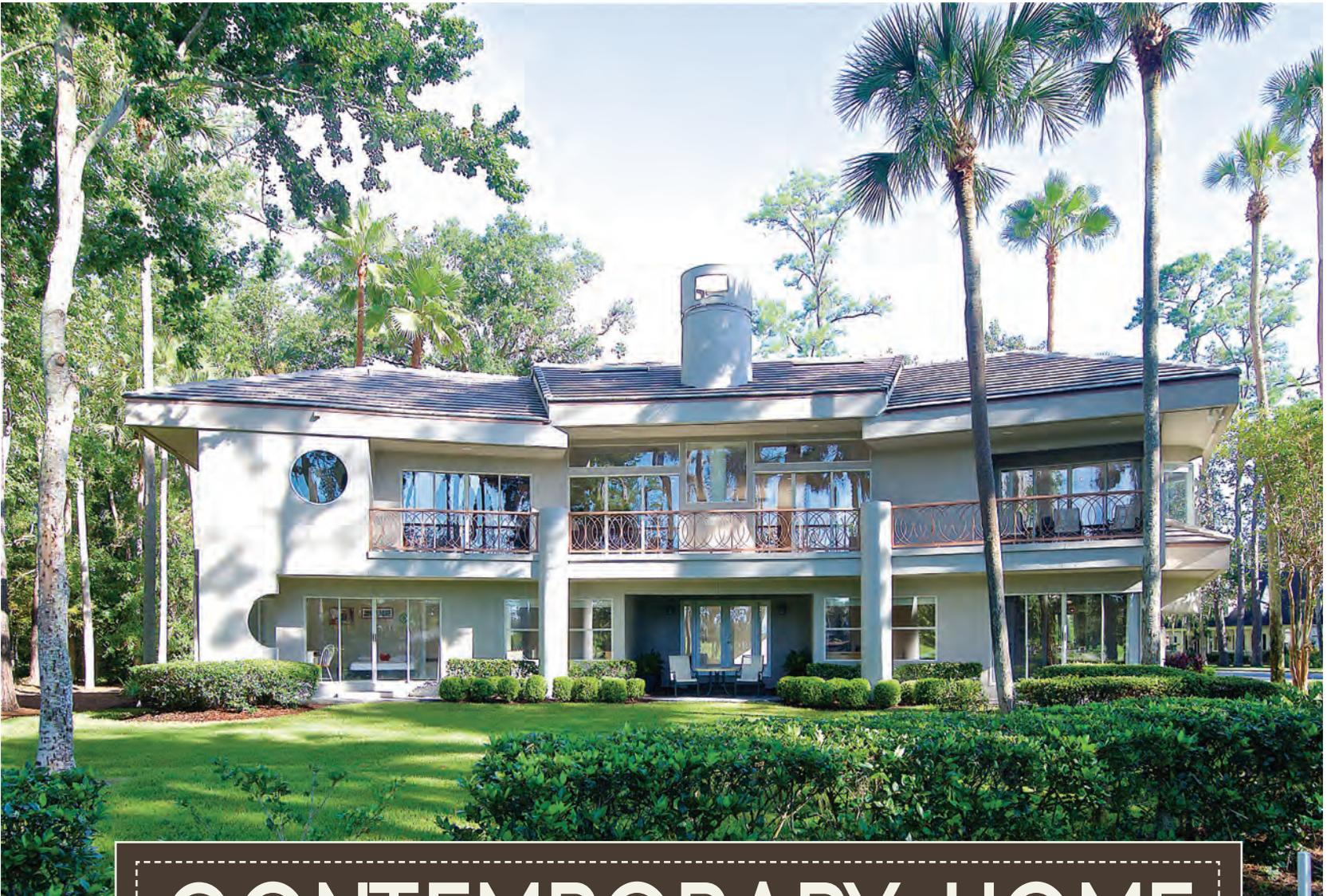
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CONTEMPORARY HOME

with golf course views for sale in Ponte Vedra

by JON BLAUVELT

A contemporary, Modernist-style house overlooking the No. 9 green of Dye's Valley Course at TPC Sawgrass is now on the market in Ponte Vedra Beach.

Located at 8125 Seven Mile Drive in the Sawgrass Players Club, the house has long been the topic of discussion by neighbors and those passing by because of its unique and forward-thinking architectural style. Built in 1990 by local builder Skip Oliver, who still calls the house his favorite, the two-story residence has walls of windows that face the golf course and dozens of trees, as well as a living area on the second floor with an extremely open plan.

"A lot of people talk about having flow in a house," says Clare Berry of Berry & Co. Real Estate, the listing agent for the property. "And boy this one does. Within the house, there's really nothing to limit your views, other than walls for privacy for bedrooms. Other than that, it's totally open."





A contemporary home with walls of windows and abundant views of the Valley Course at TPC Sawgrass in Ponte Vedra Beach is for sale for \$1,249,000. Photos by WALLY SEARS PHOTOGRAPHY

Upon arrival at the house, you immediately realize its uniqueness as you drive beneath the dining area, the floor of which forms a porte-cochere to a parking circle and rear-entry garage.

Entering the front doors, you find three bedrooms, two full bathrooms and a half bathroom in the garage, plus an outside shower. In addition to the living area, the second floor features

the kitchen, dining area, two bedrooms and two full bathrooms. In total, the house is 4,648 square feet.

“The living area flows beautifully from the kitchen, to the dining room, to the living room area, making it a perfect house to entertain guests,” current owner Jan Baljon says. “Having the master bedroom and a guest room on the upper floor and three other bedrooms on the floor below, ensures that children/teens and parents/adults each have their own space.”

Sitting on one-fourth to one-half of an acre, the house is surrounded by trees that serve as a buffer between the residence and the PGA Tour property and a few easements owned by the Sawgrass Players Club Association and St.



Johns County. Because of these easements, Berry says these trees likely aren't going anywhere, making the property even more special.

Overall, Berry says the form of the house takes advantage of its location, which is not always the case. Often, she says people find a house plan and piece of land they love, but the

plan doesn't necessarily take full advantage of what that lot offers. According to Berry, this plan does.

“It was designed for this lot to incorporate not only the golf course view down No. 9 on the Valley Course but also the surrounding forest,” Berry says. “So, no matter what window you look out of from the house, you see something beautiful. That's pretty unusual.”

Berry anticipates the next owners of the house to be people who are more accustomed to this style of home, because it is so open, contemporary and contrary to a typical Florida-style house. It's currently listed for \$1,249,000.

“It's unique,” Berry says. “So, it will be interesting to see who ends up with this house next.”



Bookshelves at UNF's Interfaith Center feature texts from a wide range of religious sources, from Christianity to Islam.



Matt Hartley, the associate director of UNF's Interfaith Center



The Interfaith Center is located at the University of North Florida, Building 2, Suite 1400. Photos by BENJAMIN NAIM

UNF INTERFAITH CENTER

attempts to bridge religious gap despite cultural divide

by BENJAMIN NAIM

The Interfaith Center at the University of North Florida is trying to bridge the religious and political divide between students on campus through events, meetings and dialogue.

According to the UNF website, the center engages students by promoting discussions on religious pluralism, supporting religious and non-religious identities and providing programs and services for students from varying backgrounds to come together.

Matt Hartley, the associate director of the Interfaith Center, says it's a place for students to express themselves and understand differing political and religious ideologies. Furthermore, Hartley explains that events promoted by the organization help facilitate informative conversations among UNF's diverse student body.

"We just had an event with a local organization called Global Jax," he says. "Global Jax brings international visitor programs to Jacksonville. This program was a group of Iraqi teenagers and their young adult men-

tors, about 15 in all ... they came to do an Interfaith workshop with us and we led them through the basics of what Interfaith means and how we do it here at the Interfaith Center."

Despite covering a myriad of sensitive issues at the Interfaith Center, Hartley says discussions among group members haven't boiled over into heated arguments due to well-trained student leaders and a specific set of guidelines.

"We major in having difficult conversations," he says. "There certainly have been moments of tension and for the most part they've been good moments of tension.

Moments of tension that reflect that we're actually expressing our disagreement about religion or politics or whatever the topic is."

Hartley notes that the Interfaith Center is intentional about teaching students to have difficult conversations in a respectful manner, without the discussion devolving into a shouting match. The group offers guidelines on interaction, practicing forgiveness and engaging in cultural understanding.

The main goal of the Interfaith Center, Hartley says, is to provide a space for stu-

dents to explore their own religious or nonreligious values while learning about worldviews that might differ from their own. Regarding interfaith dialogue, Hartley asserts that it is an important aspect of campus life, especially considering the political and religious divide in America today.

"You see the intense political divisions," he adds. "We see them right here in Jacksonville, on campus at UNF. Religion, interfaith in particular, is a way of building bridges between people who might see things differently but can find some common ground through shared values."

Additionally, the Interfaith Center features book shelves with literature from both religious and nonreligious sources. The idea, Hartley says, is to offer students a wide perspective on spirituality.

For more information on the Interfaith Center, which is located at the University of North Florida campus in Building 2, Suite 1400, visit www.unf.edu/interfaith-center, call (904) 620-5715 or email interfaith@unf.edu.



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WOMEN IN BUSINESS

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CHANDLER DESIGNS HOME

Wendy Chandler started Chandler Designs Home in 2007 after working for 10 years with a national home builder as the Design Studio manager. She found her niche working with numerous home builders creating award winning model homes throughout the first coast. Her passion has always been creating beautiful spaces not only for her builder clients, but personal clients as well. Most recently she and her husband built a wedding & event barn venue Chandler Oaks Barn, located in St. Augustine. Using her talent for design and his knowledge in construction they worked together to provide brides with a rustic elegant white barn that is absolutely breathtaking!

Although Chandler Designs Home & Chandler Oaks Barn, keep her busy she is not slowing down! She is excited about a new project coming in 2019 for the entrepreneurial woman who wants to network with other creatives. "I love meeting like-minded women who are not afraid to challenge themselves and take risks! I think there is a need for those of us who love to create & inspire to get together and share our talents with others. My workshops will provide creative women (or women who want to be creative) no matter what their profession or even if they are stay at home moms, the education and inspiration to follow their passion!"



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Women's empowerment social benefits

THE DONNA FOUNDATION

A group of First Coast businesses recently came together to host a women's empowerment social benefiting The DONNA Foundation.

Held at the Cultural Center at Ponte Vedra Beach on Sept. 13, the event was sponsored by Standfast Asset Management, Kinney & Sasso Attorneys at Law and Pivot CPAs. Attendees of the event enjoyed an evening of conversation, empowerment and networking, as well as champagne, hors d'oeuvres and a silent auction.

Donna Deegan was in attendance to represent her foundation. Established in June 2003, The DONNA Foundation is a 501C3 organization that provides financial assistance for the critical needs of those living with breast cancer. To date, the foundation has served more than 11,000 families by providing more than \$5 million dollars in relief. Visit thedonnafoundation.org for more information.



Wendy Ranson, Debra Smith, Scott Grant, Donna Deegan, Molly Lewis Sasso and Marie Lyon Carney



J.R. Roessl
Photos by SUSAN GRIFFIN



Sharon and Scott Grant



Dr. Kelly Huber



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Victoria Golden is the Owner of Lost Art Gallery and Sea Spirits Gallery & Gifts.

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Janet Johnson is committed to aggressively defending people accused in all criminal matters in state and federal court. In practice since 1994, she is a member of the Florida Bar, The Federal Bar, Colorado Bar, as well as the Florida Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers. She has been on the faculty of FACDL "Blood, Breath & Tears" annual DUI seminar. Ms. Johnson appears as a legal commentator on CNN, HLN, GMA, and Fox News. She has been awarded the very highest possible rating, the AV preeminent rating™, from Martindale-Hubbell® and was named a fellow to the prestigious Litigation Counsel of America™, as well as one of the ten best criminal defense attorneys nationally for client satisfaction by the American Institute of Criminal Law Attorneys.

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NEMOURS HOSTS

An Evening of Promise

TO BENEFIT CHILDHOOD DIABETES RESEARCH

by SAMANTHA LOGUE

Supporters of Nemours Children's Specialty Care in Jacksonville gathered Friday, Aug. 24 at the TPC Sawgrass Clubhouse in Ponte Vedra Beach for its sixth annual An Evening of Promise event.

Featuring cocktails, dinner, live music and both silent and live auctions, the event was held to benefit childhood diabetes education and research at Nemours.

"I'd like to thank each and every one of you who are here this evening, and particularly our sponsors," said Dr. Michael Erhard, Nemours Children's Health System's physician in chief for Florida operations. "Many have been with us for many, many years, some maybe for the first time, (but) it doesn't matter to us. We appreciate you

being on the journey, and tonight's a special evening for us as we really focus on one of our very significant programs here at Nemours in Jacksonville."

A pediatric health system serving patients in Delaware, Georgia, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Florida, Nemours aims to provide quality leadership, institutions and services for the purpose of improving children's health, regardless of their financial status. As part of that mission, Nemours funds research in a wide range of medical areas that impact children, including Type 1 diabetes.

In his remarks, Erhard voiced his gratitude toward THE PLAYERS Championship for not only helping to host the event, but also offering Nemours Children's Specialty Care a generous \$500,000 donation as part of the tournament's ongoing charitable initiatives.

PGA Tour Chief Operating Officer Ron Price, advising that he'd had the opportunity to witness firsthand the "life-changing care" that children receive at Nemours, said that THE PLAYERS Championship was honored to be able to give back to the community through the clinic.

"At THE PLAYERS Championship, we support over 300 charities from the proceeds of our event on an annual basis, and it's important to us that when we select charitable partners, we select partners whose good works both enrich and positively impact the people's lives in this community," Price said. "We could not have selected a more deserving partner than Nemours, and we're proud to join all of you in supporting and acknowledging the truly amazing work that they do."

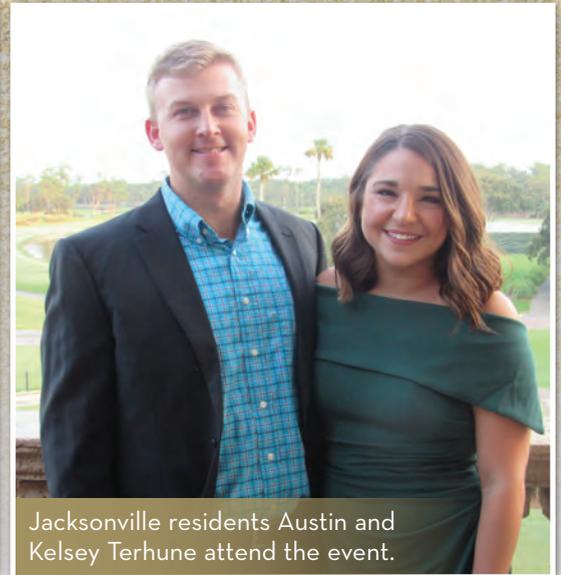


Nemours Chief Legal Officer for Florida Operations Hilary Keeley (center left) attends the event with husband Tom Keeley (from left), Alicia Booth Sprecher and Dr. Rob Sprecher.

Photos by SAMANTHA LOGUE



The Royals entertain attendees of An Evening of Promise, held Aug. 24 at the TPC Sawgrass Clubhouse in Ponte Vedra Beach.



Jacksonville residents Austin and Kelsey Terhune attend the event.



Scott Piersall and Angela Black enjoy cocktails on the veranda.



Lexi Lahiff, Morgan Slaughter and Brittany Fowler sell Kendra Scott products at the event to benefit Nemours.



Marilyn Vaca, Josh Wilson and Kellie and Josh Olmstead take in the fairways of THE PLAYERS Stadium Course at TPC Sawgrass.



Autographed items are auctioned off to benefit Nemours Children's Specialty Care in Jacksonville, including a Tim Tebow football jersey.

The Ponte Vedra Carlyle

THE PERFECT LOCATION FOR THE PERFECT LIFESTYLE

by JANET WESTLING

In real estate you often hear buyers and sellers talk about their location of their property. In fact, it is one of the most important factors in your real estate investment.

The Ponte Vedra Carlyle, a 47-unit condominium located at 600 Ponte Vedra Blvd., is located in the center of one of the most prestigious areas in Ponte Vedra Beach.

Built in 1995, across from the Atlantic Ocean in Ponte Vedra Beach, the Carlyle Condo offers its residents a unique experience with a personal concierge at the front desk to check in guests and monitor the gated security.

A superior location, the Carlyle is adjacent to the Ponte Vedra Beach Lodge & Bath Club fitness center and pool and just steps to the hotel and ocean.

Step inside Unit 109 at the Carlyle on the Boulevard. Experience a spacious, sophisticated and beautifully designed home in the heart of Ponte Vedra Beach.

This first-floor unit is warm and inviting, with 2,122 square feet and three bedrooms and two and a half bathrooms and an abundance of windows throughout. The grand living room features a gas fireplace and is flanked by built-in bookcases and French doors.



The grand living room of Unit 109 features a gas fireplace and is flanked by built-in bookcases and French doors.

Photos courtesy of JANET WESTLING



The Carlyle is located adjacent to the Lodge & Club, a AAA Four-Diamond boutique hotel in Ponte Vedra Beach.

Photo courtesy of GATE HOSPITALITY GROUP



Condos in the Carlyle feature a sophisticated design.



You can savor a morning cup of coffee in the roomy kitchen.

Savor your morning cup of coffee in your roomy kitchen and cozy dining space watching your favorite show. Invite your friends to join you at the beach, just steps away and dine at one of Ponte Vedra's finest resorts. In the evening watch the sunset off your veranda and retire in your stunning en suite master bedroom.

Enjoy all that Ponte Vedra Beach has to offer, with a membership initiation included to the Lodge & Club. The Lodge & Club, a AAA Four Diamond boutique hotel, opened its doors to guests and members in 1989. Its distinctive Old World charm and beautifully designed Mediterranean architecture attracts guests and members from all over the world.

Your guests can stay in one of the lodge's 66 oceanfront rooms and suites. In the morning, join them for a long walk on the beach, or a swim in one of the two heated pools and exercise in the fitness center next door to the Carlyle. Finish your afternoon with High Tea at the Lodge or dine in one of the Lodge's four restaurants.

About 34,000 residents call Ponte Vedra Beach home. Thousands come from around the world to play on its beautiful uncrowded beaches and enjoy world-renowned golf courses and tennis facilities each year. Visitors are often astounded to hear tales of Ponce de Leon landing on its shores as well as German saboteurs during World War II. Its past is intriguing, and its present is exciting.

Walk the beach, watch waves roll in from foreign shores and put a shell to your ear to hear whispers from the past. Then breathe deeply of the ocean breeze and you will catch a hint of Ponte Vedra living, which all will agree is simply the best.

This property is represented by Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Network Realty, listed by Janet Westling and offered for \$748,000.

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Chronicles of Centre Street

by JON BLAUVELT

As Fernandina Beach's main drag, Centre Street is home to fascinating anecdotes of the people, families and industries that shaped the charming, Southern town.

Thanks to the Amelia Island Museum of History, the First Coast Register recently took a tour of the street to learn more and share with readers the history behind some of the landmark buildings that line the road.

Photos by JON BLAUVELT



PALACE SALOON

Located at 117 Centre St., the Palace Saloon is the oldest, continuously operating bar in Florida. First built as a haberdashery in 1878, Louis G. Hirth bought the building in 1903 and transformed it into an upper scale drinking establishment for passing mariners. Adolphus Busch, the co-founder of Anheuser-Busch and one of Hirth's closest friends, helped to design the Palace Saloon, traveling from St. Louis to help oversee the project. Hirth's other friend was Asa Candler, the founder of Coca-Cola. As a result, the Fernandina landmark was the first hard liquor bar to begin serving Coca-Cola around 1905.

According to the bar's website, many of its original features still stand today, including inlaid mosaic floors, embossed tin ceilings, hand-carved mahogany caryatids (undraped female fixtures), a 40-foot bar lit with gas lamps and walls painted with six commissioned murals.



FERNANDINA'S FANTASTIC FUDGE

One of the most popular spots in town for visitors and residents alike, Fernandina's Fantastic Fudge, located at 218 Centre St., was previously a hardware store that sold wholesale and resale goods. According to the fudge shop's website, owner Steve Colwell, who had been making candy since he was a high school freshman in Michigan, discovered Fernandina while camping at Fort Clinch State Park. He moved to the town after college to open the shop and began renovations in 1988. Money was tight at first, so Colwell joined the construction crew for the building's renovation. He subsequently transformed the business from a one-man show into a regionally-recognized establishment, receiving coverage from Southern Living, the Travel Channel, Food TV and other publications and outlets.

POST OFFICE

Located at 401 Centre St., the downtown Fernandina Beach Post Office was officially dedicated as a federal customs house/post office in 1912. The Mediterranean-influenced building was designed by James Knox Taylor, the U.S. Treasury Department's supervising architect and the nephew of President Zachary Taylor. According to the Museum, a federal courthouse used to be housed there as well.



LESENE HOUSE

Built by Dr. John F. Lesesne in 1860, the Lesesne House, located at 415 Centre St., is the oldest residential home on Centre Street and one of the oldest homes in Fernandina Beach. Lesesne left the classical revival style residence and Fernandina during the Civil War and did not return. The property was purchased by the family of Judge John Friend, who had been appointed district tax commissioner after the war by President Andrew Johnson. Friend was a lawyer and served as a county commissioner and judge. At the time of his death in 1878, he was state senator-elect from Nassau County.

The house has stayed within the Friend family for seven generations but is currently for sale. The Museum is uncertain if its sale will end the tradition of the family.

The brick sidewalk adjacent to the house was made by the Friend family's slaves, according to the Museum. The double galleried home is constructed of hand-hewn lumber fastened with wooden pegs. The Museum believes it was built by shipbuilders.



NASSAU COUNTY COURTHOUSE

Across the street from the Post Office is the Nassau County Courthouse. Built in 1891, this landmark, at 416 Centre St., became famous after former U.S. Secretary of State and presidential candidate William Jennings Bryan delivered a stump speech from atop the Courthouse's balcony to local townspeople on a hot summer day. The fountain in front of the Courthouse is a replica of the fountain that once stood at the Egmont Hotel, the first tourist hotel in Florida that was built in the late 1870s.

ST. PETERS EPISCOPAL CHURCH

At the corner of 8th Street and Centre Street stands one of Fernandina Beach's most stunning structures, St. Peter's Episcopal Church. The church was built in 1882 in the Gothic Revival architecture style with lancet, arch-shaped windows, a steeply pitched roof, buttressed walls and a tower with a castellated parapet. The tabby walls are 18 inches thick and are overlaid with cement. The Museum believes the church was most likely built by shipbuilders to impress the townspeople.

According to the Museum, a Yellow Fever epidemic struck Fernandina in 1877, and windows in the church commemorate the children of the church who died, as well as the doctors who responded. Windows also honor famous figures of the town's history. In 1892, a fire severely damaged the church, leading to further construction of the church, making room for its Harrison pipe organ, among other features.



Vintage vendors and collectors converge for RUSTAPALOOZA



Photos courtesy of MARIA RIEBE



by SAMANTHA LOGUE

The rise of the vintage trend has had a major impact on home décor in recent years, and that doesn't seem to be changing any time soon. Here on the First Coast, families, collectors and designers of all kinds are forgoing the modern and futuristic for the more comfortable charms of the past, and come November, thousands are expected to gather for the Rustapalooza Vintage Markets in St. Marys, Georgia, to add to their growing collections.

"It's a big community event," says curator Maria Riebe, of Jacksonville. "The average attendance is 6,000 to 7,000 for the day, as far as shoppers go, so it's a big deal for little St. Marys."

Originally started by Riebe in 2012 as a small market in the back of Rusted: A Vintage Market in Jacksonville, Rustapalooza is now held twice a year in St. Marys, featuring the wares of 100 vendors from multiple different states.



"Beaux Studios, out of Orlando, they do vintage clothing and they're actually one of the sponsors of the show," Riebe says. "And then Cottle & Gunn is one of our largest sponsors. They're the ones that actually invited me to

(move the event) to St. Marys, and they've been a partner ever since."

Riebe adds that this year's event will not only offer attendees a chance to take home unique vintage finds, but will also feature food, live music

and a new theme, as well.

"The theme is Southern Coastal Christmas this year," she says. "We had a lot of requests last year for more holiday décor, so our vintage vendors are stocking up with more holiday items, like fall décor and Christmas décor."

Rustapalooza's Southern Coastal Christmas will take place Saturday, Nov. 10, from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. at 100 Ready St. in St. Marys. General admission begins at 10 a.m. and tickets are \$5 at the gate, though admission for children ages 10 and under is free. Tickets for 8 a.m. admission can also be purchased online.

"We do a thing called Early Pickin'," Riebe advises, "which is a \$10 ticket you can get online, and that lets you shop early from 8 to 10, before the crowds get there, and it's good for the rest of the day."

To learn more about Rustapalooza Vintage Markets or to purchase early admission tickets, visit www.rustapalooza.com.

Antique & Vintage

Contemplating antiques? Here's how to buy

Unlike the mass-produced merchandise of today, antiques have history, and their endurance through decades, if not centuries, is a testament to the quality craftsmanship and materials used to create these often timeless pieces.

Antiques also might be more affordable than many shoppers think. Savvy shoppers may find mid-range "brown furniture," which constitutes some antique wood pieces, more affordable than reproductions. Homeowners and apartment dwellers who want their rooms to stand apart often rely on antiques to provide a unique ambiance.

Antique shopping also is a "green" endeavor. Antiquing is an eco-friendly practice, putting to use items that have been recycled and reused.

Antiques also can be a good investment, as they generally retain their value while adding texture, contrast and personality to any room of the house.

Understanding antiques can take time, but even the novice can develop an eye for pieces that strike their fancy. And thanks to the

wealth of information about collectibles and antiques available online, shoppers have constant access to information about antiques at their fingertips. Shoppers may even be able to comparison shop on their mobile phones.

Mid-range antiques can be particularly easy to buy thanks to the available inventory. Novices may want to begin by exploring mid-range antiques. As they gain more knowledge and expertise, shoppers who covet antiques can move on to high-end pieces that are more expensive. Some antiques are put in the same category as fine artwork and are considered just as valuable.

Another reason to browse and shop antiques is to learn about the value of similar items homeowners may already own. For those looking to downsize a collection or simply liquidate an estate, antiquing is a great way to get hands-on experience.

Rummaging through antique stores or markets can be a relaxing experience as well. And many antique enthusiasts find shopping for antiques is like a treasure hunt to find that coveted piece and unearth a bit of history in the process.

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Nocatee business hosts acclaimed WINEMAKER

Coastal Wine Market & Tasting Room hosted Anne Bousquet of Domaine Bousquet wines on Sept. 18 for another installment of the Nocatee business' "Meet the Winemaker" series.

Attendees enjoyed the opportunity to engage with Bousquet — the CEO, co-founder and partner of Domaine Bousquet — and sample a variety of wines hailing from the Argentine winery.

The Bousquet family is originally from the city of Carcassonne in the South of France and has four generations of history in winemaking. In 1997, Domaine Bousquet relocated from France to the foothills of the Andes in Argentina to take advantage of the region's ideal



Coastal Wine Market & Tasting Room co-owner Steve Lourie and Domaine Bousquet CEO, Co-founder and Partner Anne Bousquet
Photo by SUSAN GRIFFIN

conditions for winemaking. The business' winery is located in the Gualtallary valley in Tupungato, Mendoza at an altitude of 1,200 meters (4,000 feet), making it one of the higher altitude vineyards in Mendoza and the world.

Wines from Domaine Bousquet can be found in over 50 countries around the world. Visit www.domainebousquet.com for more information. For more information on Coastal Wine, visit coastalwinemarket.com.

1970 Fiat 124 Coupe wins top honors at PONTE VEDRA AUTO SHOW

More than 170 classic and collectable automobiles were showcased at the 16th Annual Ponte Vedra Auto Show on Sunday, Sept. 9 in Nocatee.

Presented by the Fields Auto Group and hosted by the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce, the annual event was overflowing with attendees, car enthusiasts and vendors, making it the largest auto show in the event's history. The Best in Show Classic winner was awarded to Giancarlo Fruzzetti for his 1970 Fiat 124 Coupe, earning a perfect score of 100 points. This award was sponsored by Wells Fargo Advisors.

The Best in Show 60th Anniversary of Austin-Healey, sponsored by Meehan's Irish Pub, was awarded to Bill Young, with his 1960 Austin-Healey Bugeye. Charles Cordes, with his 2012 Porsche B59, was awarded the Porsche Jacksonville "For the Spirit of It!" award, sponsored by Porsche of Jacksonville. Celebrity endurance racecar driver Hurley Haywood was also in attendance signing books and taking photos with fans of all ages.

To see the complete list of award winners and highlights from this year's show, visit www.pvautoshow.com.



Best in Show winner Giancarlo Fruzzetti sits in his 1970 Fiat 124 Coupe at the Ponte Vedra Auto Show on Sept. 9 in Nocatee.
Photos by SUSAN GRIFFIN & JON BLAUVELT



LEFT: Charles Cordes drives in his 2012 Porsche B59, which was awarded the Porsche Jacksonville "For the Spirit of It!" award, sponsored by Porsche of Jacksonville.

ABOVE: Bill Young parades his 1960 Austin-Healey Bugeye, which was awarded the Best in Show 60th Anniversary of Austin-Healey sponsored by Meehan's Irish Pub.

Delicious Destinations

supports free medical care for those in need



Caroline Kelty and Therese Lee



The team from Mar-a-Lago gathers at Delicious Destinations on Sept. 8.



St. Vincent's Foundation President Jane Lanier addresses attendees of Delicious Destinations.



Sarah and Bert Brown
Photos by SUSAN GRIFFIN

The 17th annual Delicious Destinations was held Sept. 7-8 at the Ponte Vedra Inn & Club.

The celebration of inspired food and notable wines benefited St. Vincent's HealthCare's community outreach programs, which provide free medical care for children and adults in need throughout the area. The event, with a theme of "Paradise Found — The South Pacific," featured executive chefs from some of the most prestigious restaurants and resorts throughout the nation.

The first event, a demonstration-style luncheon complete with wine pairings, took place Friday, Sept. 7. The VIP Preview Reception was Saturday, Sept. 8. Guests enjoyed culinary masterpieces prepared by Ponte Vedra Inn & Club Executive Chef Hermann Muller. The main event was later in the evening on Sept. 8, when chefs from some of the nation's premier resorts showcased their culinary talents. Attending chefs hailed from Mar-a-Lago, the Ritz-Carlton

Denver, The Cloister, The Greenbrier and Montage at Palmetto Bluff, among others.

Southern Glazer's Wine & Spirits provided wines from select domestic and international vineyards. The event also included live and silent auctions, as well as a drawing of unique items including spa and restaurant gift certificates, catered dinners and weekend getaways.

Drs. Nina and Samer Garas, Neetal and Dr. Saumil Oza and Rebecca and Edward Witt Jr. served as chairs of the event.

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Jacksonville Humane Society celebrates pets with annual

A TOAST TO THE ANIMALS

by PARIS MOULDEN

The Jacksonville Humane Society (JHS) held its 20th annual A Toast to the Animals on Saturday, Sept. 22, at TIAA Bank Field to raise funds for the JHS Medical Fund, which serves homeless dogs and cats in need of extra veterinary care.

JHS, which has operated a no-kill shelter since 2014, serves more than 6,000 dogs and cats per year. According to the JHS, the average annual costs per pet is \$1,580 per dog and \$715 per cat, making fundraisers such as A Toast to the Animals and Mutt March vital to their success.

The annual fundraiser boasted a wide array of food, beer and wine and a silent and live auction. For the fifth year in a row, the event was chaired by Jacksonville Jaguars general manager Dave Caldwell and his wife, Joelle. During the event, it was announced the new shelter medical center would be named in honor of the Caldwells.

Other football-related items also brought in money for the medical fund during the live auction, with a Pro Bowl helmet signed by six Jaguars players going for \$3,000 and two tickets for Super Bowl LIII in Atlanta going for \$10,000. One of the biggest money-making items was a professional pet photo shoot that was auctioned off for \$7,500, along with a matching donation by the Caldwells for a \$15,000 total. The live auction raised \$43,300.

For more information on the Jacksonville Humane Society, visit www.jaxhumane.org.



Jaguars General Manager Dave Caldwell talks to the crowd at the 20th annual A Toast to the Animals benefitting the Jacksonville Humane Society on Sept. 22.



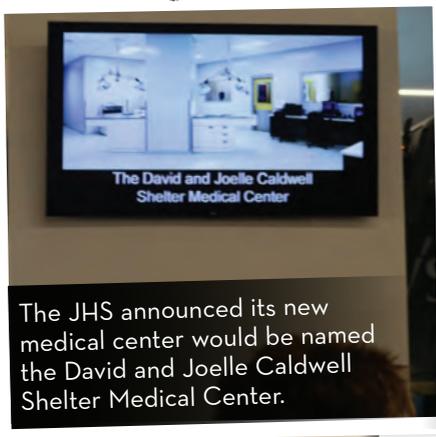
Dozens of items were up for auction at the event.



Television host and former Jaxson de Ville Curtis Dvorak auctions off a Pro Bowl helmet signed by six Jaguars players at the event.



A wide array of food options were offered at the event.
Photos by PARIS MOULDEN



The JHS announced its new medical center would be named the David and Joelle Caldwell Shelter Medical Center.



A Jaguars jersey signed by quarterback Blake Bortles was available at the silent auction.

Jacksonville Honey Bee Festival

offers sweetness of education, shopping and more



Bee Friends Farm recently celebrated National Honey Bee Day by holding the Jacksonville Honey Bee Festival on Aug. 18.

Held at the Jacksonville Fairgrounds, the event provided attendees with an opportunity to learn about the basics of beekeeping, shop with local vendors, taste honey and more.

The Buzy Bee Marketplace featured over 40 local artisans such as Apple Rose Beauty, Congaree and Penn, La Soucique Studio, Pawfection Bakery and Southern Blossom Florals, among others. The Bee a Kid Zone, hosted by Honey Bee A Keeper, a local company run by Teacher and Beekeeper Meghan Orman, provided kids with hands-on modules to learn about bee biology, and how honey is produced and discover more about the environment around them. The Honey Bee Educational Annex hosted engaging, educational speakers who discussed backyard beekeeping and mead making, among other topics.

Visit www.beefriendsfarm.com to learn more about Bee Friends Farm.



ABOVE: Attendees enjoy the Honey Bee Festival on Aug. 18 at the Jacksonville Fairgrounds.

LEFT: The team from Hive Alive Honey Brews, based in Ponte Vedra, attends the festival. Photos by SUSAN GRIFFIN

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BEAM OF LIGHT BEACH BALL

raises over \$100,000

by BENJAMIN NAIM

The Beaches Emergency Assistance Ministry (BEAM) held the BEAM of Light Beach Ball on Saturday, Aug. 25 at the TPC Sawgrass Clubhouse in Ponte Vedra Beach, raising \$104,665 in sponsorships, donations and ticket and auction sales.

Hosting just over 200 attendees, the event featured a silent auction, food, drinks, live music and more. BEAM Executive Director Lori Richards said the community has responded with tremendous support for the organization, and the Beach Ball will go a long way toward helping BEAM beneficiaries.

“The funds from this evening help BEAM with our emergency assistance, which is our core services,” she said. “It also fills in the gaps for our other programs, our path to wellness program for people with hypertension or diabetes, or our single parent project. We’re helping people who don’t even know what a credit score is to help them budget and get their finances managed.”

BEAM is in its third year of running its Beaches Community Food Bank, Richards added, where the nonprofit collects food from local grocery retailers to stock its pantries and deliver to low-income housing sites.

“I think what’s important to celebrate is that BEAM has had such growth over the past several years,” she said. “My predecessor Susan King did an amazing job of helping BEAM become what it is today.”

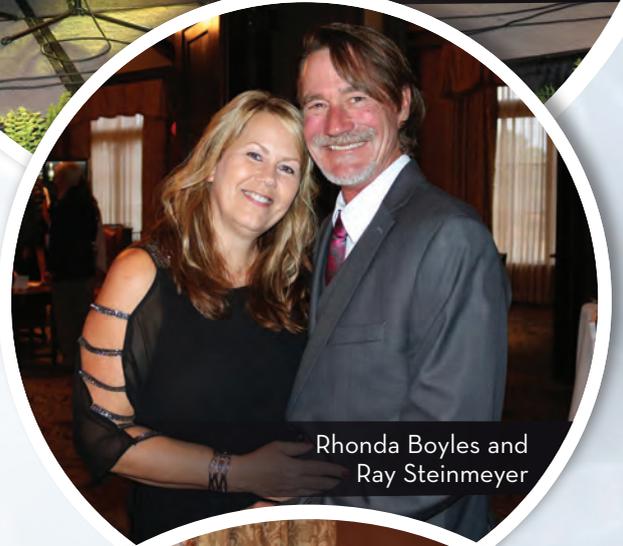
Richards asserted that the BEAM of Light Beach Ball will help the nonprofit continue to provide aid for those in need, especially families looking to get back on their feet.

“An event like tonight helps us make sure all the good things we’re doing, we can sustain into the rest of this year and the next,” she said.

For more information on BEAM, visit www.jaxbeam.org.



A band performs music for attendees at the BEAM of Light Beach Ball.



Rhonda Boyles and Ray Steinmeyer



Silent auction items are on display at the BEAM of Light Beach Ball.



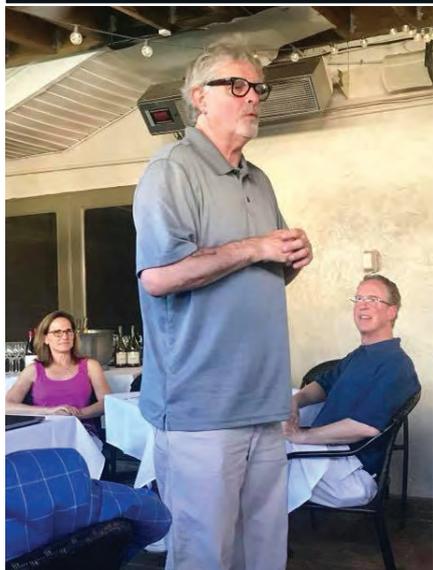
Georgette Dumont, Cord and Esther Byrd and Jennifer Stockman



David and Jane Jett
Photos by BENJAMIN NAIM

Cultural Center hosts dinner with artist **DENNIS CAMPAY** in Jacksonville Beach

by BENJAMIN NAIM



Dennis Campay talks about his life experiences, art and more at a special dinner event at Eleven South in Jacksonville Beach on Sept. 13. Photo courtesy of THE CULTURAL CENTER AT PONTE VEDRA BEACH

The Cultural Center at Ponte Vedra Beach hosted guests for a special dinner with artist Dennis Campay on Thursday, Sept. 13 at Eleven South in Jacksonville Beach.

Attendees enjoyed a four-course meal with the artist, who discussed his foray into the world of art, his most successful ventures and more.

Drawing is an important component of Campay's work, he noted, and the key to his paintings, sculptures and the creative process.

"I do cityscapes, which is a presentation of fine art, and they use a lot of materials from construction sites like plastic and metals," Campay said. "Then I started moving into different iconic images — the wrecked boats — that had to do with my father's heritage; the city, because I love the city. Everything I do is personalized."

Campay, a resident of San Marco in Jacksonville, also talked about his Dennis and Colette Campay Studio Art Scholarship offered at the University of North Florida.

"When I was in school the thing I remembered is I never had enough money for art supplies," he said. "I found out that a lot of college students are pretty much impoverished and they don't even have enough money to eat."

The scholarship, founded by Campay and his wife Colette, alleviates the financial burden on college students in the field of art to help them advance their academic careers.

Additionally, the Atlanta-native discussed contributing his artwork for a children's book, entitled "The Magician's Hat," which is authored by 2017 Super Bowl Champion and NFL player Malcolm Mitchell

"I thought we'd sell to 10 football fans," Campay said, "but we put 55,000 books in children's hands. ... We get sponsors who come in and get a bunch of books and give them to school districts."

Visit www.denniscampay.com and www.ccpvb.org for more information on Dennis Campay and the Cultural Center at Ponte Vedra Beach.

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A Passion for Personalities

First Coast interior designer combines creativity with client's character

by PARIS MOULDEN

The First Coast has a lot of natural beauty and unique locales of which to draw design inspiration, but one Northeast Florida interior designer prefers to let people's personalities guide her creativity.

Karen Rothen is an interior designer who works in Jacksonville, the Beaches and Ponte Vedra areas. She began her career in New York City, working primarily on commercial space planning and design, started her own interior design business after moving to Ridgefield, Connecticut, and relocated to Ponte Vedra Beach in 1999.

"We now call Nocatee home and I have been fortunate to work on more than 100 residences and commercial projects ranging in size from 2,000-to-10,000-square-feet throughout Jacksonville area beaches, Nocatee, Vilano Beach, Riverside and Naples, Florida," Rothen says.

Rothen has an extensive background in commercial design, including the redesign of The Restaurant at National Hall, a Relais & Chateaux hotel in Westport, Connecticut and establishing a Design Center for Beach Terraces. But residential projects are her primary focus — and passion.



Karen Rothen provides residential and commercial interior design throughout Northeast Florida. Photos courtesy of KAREN ROTHEN



“I’ll work with clients on projects that range from a simple refresh to an existing room in their house to building a home from the ground up, working alongside architects and engineers to ensure all the moving pieces come together as planned,” Rothen says. “I’m budget conscious and practical — keeping the kids and pets in mind when making selections. My goal is always to create a beautiful, livable space that my clients are happy to come home to each day.”

It’s also important to Rothen that the clients’ personalities shine through in her design.

“Finding ways for their passions, lifestyle and unique qualities to show through results in a truly custom space all its own created just for them,” she says.

The tremendous growth in and around Northeast Florida also provides more opportunities to try new things, and Rothen says there’s really almost nothing off limits.

“As far as design trends I am seeing — anything goes these days,” Rothen says. “Modern, cottage, splash of Bohemian — it’s all over the map. There is less Mediterranean inspiration in our area. In terms of architecture and floorplans, we’re seeing eliminating formal dining and living rooms for a more casual lifestyle. Home offices are also increasing in popularity as more people are working from home.”

While Rothen appreciates being able to explore her creativity and eye for aesthetics, it’s the impact her designs have on her clients that really excites her.

“I love it all,” she says. “But the reaction on my clients’ faces when a project is complete and seeing how our collective vision has come to fruition is my favorite part of all.”

Visit www.karenrothen.com for more information on Rothen’s designs and projects.

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celebrates classic Southern fare and culture

Just north of the First Coast, the Jekyll Island Shrimp & Grits Festival took place Sept. 14-16.

Presented by Southern Living, the coastal favorite event was held in Jekyll Island's National Historic Landmark District, combining classic Southern fare with family-friendly entertainment, an artists market, live music, a kids zone, food, a craft brew fest and more.

During the three-day event, attendees visiting the Southern Living Pavilion had a chance to watch several demonstrations given by experts on cooking, styling and florals. Event guests also enjoyed learning about local wildlife at the Georgia Sea Turtle Center Experience, as well as watching top chefs in Georgia compete for the title of "Georgia's Best Shrimp & Grits."

Visit www.jekyllisland.com for more information.



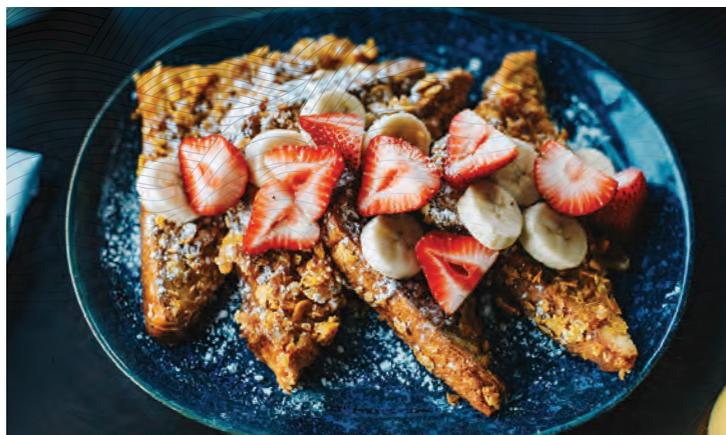
Attendees walk throughout the Jekyll Island Shrimp & Grits Festival, which took place Sept. 14-16.



Seven vendors provided shrimp and grits at the event.



Several bands provided entertainment throughout the three-day event. Photos by SUSAN GRIFFIN



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CHILDREN'S HOME SOCIETY TO HOST 35TH ANNUAL *Caring Chefs*



Staff from MOJO BBQ prepare sandwiches at last year's event.

Caring Chefs

Children's Home Society of Florida will host the 35th annual Caring Chefs on Sunday, Nov. 4 from 7 to 9:30 p.m. at The Avenues Mall.

More than 2,000 guests attend the event as they sample new foods, fine wines and craft beer while supporting Children's Home Society of Florida, along with 50 chefs. Tickets are \$70 and include food, beverage and live entertainment.

Established in 1902, Children's Home Society of Florida is the oldest and largest statewide organization devoted to helping children and families. Children's Home Society of Florida serves more than 50,000 children and family members throughout the state each year. Also every year, the organization helps more than 10,000 children and family members in the Northeast Florida region. To learn more about Children's Home Society of Florida's local efforts, visit chsfl.org/buckner. Visit chscaringchefs.com for more information on Caring Chefs.

The Ponte Vedra Recorder is proud to be a sponsor of this event.



Attendees of last year's Caring Chefs sample the various foods offered at the event.



An attendee enjoys an array of desserts.

Photos by BENJAMIN NAIM





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Director Rodrigo Moreno of "The Whole Movie" accepts the Best Overall Actor award on behalf of actor Javier "Andy" Zavala from Rendezvous Film Festival Director Kim Murray (center) during the ceremony and horror shorts screening at Jack & Diane's on Sept. 22.

RENDEZVOUS FILM FESTIVAL

hosts award ceremony at Jack & Diane's

by BENJAMIN NAIM

The 2018 Rendezvous Film Festival concluded Sept. 22 with an awards ceremony and horror movie screening at Jack & Diane's in Fernandina Beach.

Kim Murray, director of the festival, hosted the ceremony and delivered remarks at the beginning and end of the event. Prior to handing out the awards, Murray said she loved every film that was in the running and was thankful for her colleagues who helped put this year's festival together.

"Without this extraordinary team this would not have happened," she noted. "Please give them a round of applause, they made this all possible."

The overall award winners were:

- Best Overall Feature Film: "Fear Love and Agoraphobia"
- Best Overall Documentary: "The Defiant One"
- Best Overall Film: "The World in Your Window"
- Best Overall Short Film: "A Short Film by Andrew Coll"
- Best Overall Florida Film: "A Brilliant Monster"
- Best Overall Actor: Javier "Andy" Zavala
- Best Overall Actress: Linda Burzynski
- Best Overall Director: Alex D'Lerma.



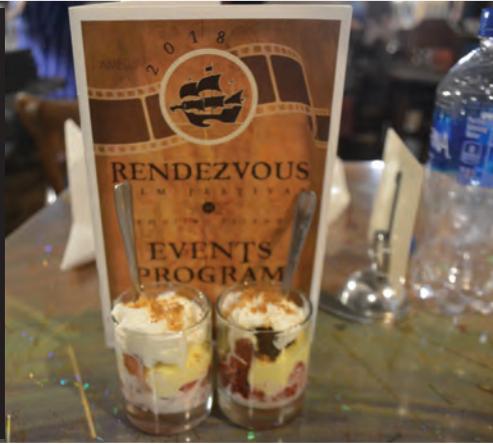
LEFT: Rendezvous Film Festival Programmer Wendy Keeling poses for a photograph.

BELOW: Hors d'oeuvres were available for attendees at the awards ceremony and horror movie screening in Fernandina Beach. Photos by BENJAMIN NAIM





ABOVE: Dimitri Pantchev, creator of "Brush...painted forward" and Joseph Spence, creator of "The Pea Shooter"



RIGHT: Jack & Diane's was the site of the awards ceremony and horror movie screening, which concluded the 2018 Rendezvous Film Festival.

"You were all amazing," Murray said after giving out this year's awards. "We submitted the list of nominations today and that was literally the first time the festival has ever done that, because the board was just so torn over the quality of films that you all sent us. We can't just not recognize all these wonderful films. Please know we loved everything you sent us and we can't wait to see what you send us in the future."

Following the awards ceremony, attendees enjoyed a screening of horror shorts to preview the Rendezvous Scare Fest, which will take place in October at AMC 24 Orange Park. One of the short films, "Jax in Love," chronicles a mysterious and lonely young woman named Jax whose car breaks down during a trip across the American West.

The annual three-day Rendezvous Film Festival includes workshops, parties and the opportunity to mingle with visiting actors and filmmakers. This year's event, which took place Sept. 20-22 (with a Sept. 23 brunch to cap off the festival), featured over 80 films as this year's selections. The festival screens short films, feature films, documentaries and more.

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Wolf's Museum of Mystery in St. Augustine is a full house of odd, creepy and downright terrifying collectibles. Photos by PARIS MOULDEN



Wolf's Museum

offers visitors a unique Howl-O-Ween treat

by PARIS MOULDEN

If you're looking for something to get you into the Halloween spirit, head to St. Augustine to check out a museum unlike any other.

St. Augustine is famous for its haunted history and ghostly encounters, but Wolf's Museum of Mystery offers something completely different. The museum, owned and operated by Wolfgang Von Mertz, known as Wolf, features a vast collection of unique items ranging from odd to downright terrifying.

Wolf has been compiling his collection for quite a while, inspired by the sights and people he's encountered traveling the globe.

"I've been a collector of unusual things for over 20 years," Wolf says. "I've traveled to many parts of the

world and was drawn to the different cultures, ideas of food, entertainment and their art. I guess the exotic collectibles were a way to remember the people and places of these trips."

Wolf took a seemingly unusual path to proprietor of a mystery museum. He graduated cum laude from Stetson University College of Law and received a Master of Law degree in International Law from Georgetown University Law Center in 2002, before joining the U.S. Air Force. He practiced law until 2014 before opening the museum, but Wolf says his career change isn't as random as it appears.

"More lawyers and doctors are collectors than you might think," he says. "I know the revenue source helped me fund my hobby and the job actually took me to some unusual



Don't be surprised to find live animals when visiting the museum, such as this not-so-scary and very friendly black cat.



One of the special galleries at Wolf's Museum is "An Alien Mortuary," which contains an iron lung from 1938.



Wolf's Museum features several themed rooms, including "Lizzie Borden's Bloody Boudoir," "A Shotgunned Sasquatch" exhibit and "The Cannibal Kitchen."



of Mystery

places or proximity to them like Salem, Massachusetts, and Fairbanks, Alaska. The collector in me was around way earlier than the lawyer and the latter only helped facilitate and enable the former."

The museum features a wide array of themed galleries, such as "An Alien Mortuary," "Lizzie Borden's Bloody Boudoir," "The Voo Doo Marie Laveau Alter" and "The Cannibal Kitchen." It's difficult to imagine where one can find the macabre keepsakes that make the museum special, but Wolf has it down to a science.

"On a good day, it can be as simple as the local flea market but generally the hunt is a little more challenging," he says. "Normally you have an idea of something you're interested in and, after research, you develop leads to a certain area. I was fascinated with shrunken heads at one time and that took me to Peru and Ecuador where the tribe called the Jivaro are located and produced them a long time ago. The details of such finds are an entire experience in and of themselves and the 'trophy' is the reward."

The museum doesn't just boast odd

artifacts and creepy collectables. An array of live animals is on hand to greet visitors.

"We have rats, cats, a chinchilla, a Chihuahua, even a chicken roaming the grounds," Wolf says. "Of all the money and time I invested into constructing this insane asylum, they remain the biggest draw more than the things themselves. Though people definitely are more jarred or shocked by the second level than the first."

The museum opened in St. Augustine on July 1, 2013, and, not surprisingly, actual wolves played a role in why Wolf decided to make St. Augustine his home base.

"When I was in the Air Force, we acquired two pet wolves and were stationed in Alaska," Wolf says. "When I retired back to where I had my bar license in Florida, this was as far north — and the coolest — part of the state I could get. St. Augustine was a frequent trip for us living in Jacksonville and as a tourist town, it was as simple of a decision as that. We live for our animals and modify our lives accordingly."

But for visitors excited to see Wolf's amazing display, this Halloween season is the perfect time. Wolf has plans to relocate at the beginning of next year, perhaps to another town. But for visitors who do make it to the museum, all they need to have a good time is an open mind, Wolf says.

"We are not political or judgmental people," he says. "We have developed a very endearing and loyal base of fans that are entertainers, movie makers, performers and just regular people that return every chance they get because we are what you see, with no corporate whitewashing or big brother to limit what we display."

"It's meant however to be neither too serious nor insulting but rather entertaining and the hope is people will leave here having learned something new, but also realizing that we are not all the same and that's OK," he adds.

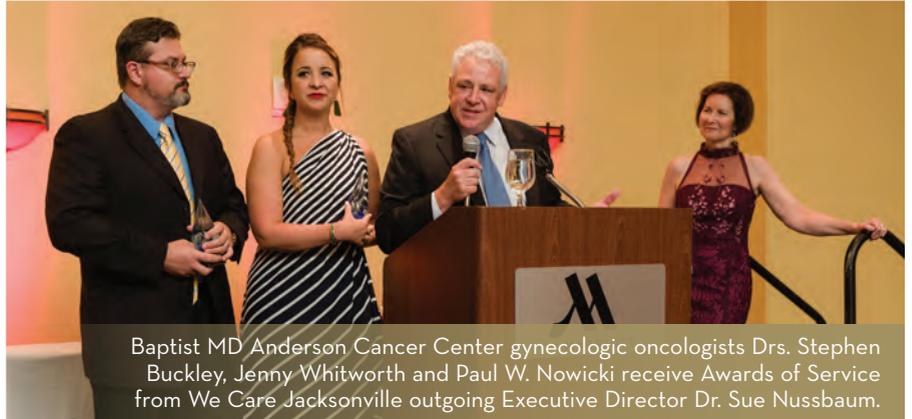
Wolf's Museum of Mystery is located 46 Charlotte St., in Historic St. Augustine. The cost is \$7 to enter. Visit wolfsmuseumofmystery.com for more information.

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Caring Awards Gala

To celebrate 25 years of hope, healing and care, and to honor the medical professionals who volunteer their time each year, We Care Jacksonville hosted the 2018 Caring Awards Gala on Aug. 25 at the Jacksonville Marriott Southpoint.

The event served a fundraiser for We Care and an opportunity to honor various community volunteers. Dr. Stanton Longenecker, an orthopedic surgeon at Jacksonville Orthopaedic Institute, received the Distinguished George S. Trotter Founders Award for his contributions to We Care and its patients. According to the nonprofit, Longenecker has personally donated countless hours and affected hundreds of Duval County's most vulnerable residents as a volunteer for more than 20 years. He has facilitated the volunteerism of other medical professionals, served as a We Care Board member for five years and was an early organizer and participant in the Physicians' Variety Show, a fundraiser for We Care.



Baptist MD Anderson Cancer Center gynecologic oncologists Drs. Stephen Buckley, Jenny Whitworth and Paul W. Nowicki receive Awards of Service from We Care Jacksonville outgoing Executive Director Dr. Sue Nussbaum.



LEFT: Dr. Michael Solloway, a psychiatrist at Baptist Health, receives an Award of Service from Dr. Sue Nussbaum.



RIGHT: Stanton Longenecker (right) receives the Distinguished George S. Trotter Founders Award from Dr. George Trotter.

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NOCATEE HAPPENINGS
Riverwood Women's Club raises more than \$7,400 for Alpha-Omega Miracle Home
The Riverwood Women's Club in 14th World Ponte Vedra at Nocatee field a luncheon and social on Nov. 18 at the American Club for benefit the Alpha-Omega Miracle Home.

COMMUNITY NEWS
Ponte Vedra resident's book on experiences with music stars picks up steam
Dr. Maurice "Bugs" Baines — a former record company assistant, U.S. Army sergeant, composer, producer, publisher and recipient of two Grammy Awards — is a 93-year-old Ponte Vedra resident and author whose musical journey began at the hillside school. His book, "Nine Stories About Nine People," is a memoir of his experiences working with famous artists such as Bing Crosby and Bob Dylan. The book, now it's being distributed around the U.S.

ONE OF US
One of Us: Craig Schoningher

SPORTS
Jaguars win first playoff game in 10 years, advance to divisional round against Steelers
The Jacksonville Jaguars are winners of a playoff game for the first time in 10 years and will play the Pittsburgh Steelers this Sunday at 2:05 p.m. in the divisional round of the NFL postseason.

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Freddie Webster, a senior clinical advisor for We Care Jacksonville, addresses the crowd after receiving an Award of Service. Photos courtesy of WE CARE JACKSONVILLE

The following medical professionals were also recognized with Awards of Service: Dr. Michael Solloway, a psychiatrist at Baptist Health; Freddie Webster, a senior clinical advisor for We Care Jacksonville; and Drs. Stephen Buckley, Paul Nowicki and Jenny Whitworth, gynecologic oncologists at Baptist MD Anderson Cancer Center.

In addition, the event honored Dr. Sue Nussbaum's retirement and her nine years of leadership as executive director of We Care Jacksonville and introduced the organization's new executive director, Susan King.

We Care provides specialty medical care to low-income, uninsured and homeless adults in Duval County. Visit wecare-jacksonville.org for more information.

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Color Our World



Cody Hinson, Ashley Blume, Tommy Rolewicz, Lindsey Rolewicz and Charlie Flynn



Pam Gray, Leigh Ann Gray, Carole Demery and Susan Bell

by JON BLAUVELT

Angelwood's Color Our World Gala was held Aug. 18 at the Sawgrass Marriott Golf Resort & Spa in Ponte Vedra Beach.

The event featured silent and live auctions, dinner and dancing, presentations about the nonprofit and more. The theme for the event, Color Our World, was chosen to emphasize the beauty that everyone brings into the world through their own unique gifts.

Remarks were made throughout the evening by Angelwood Executive Director Diane Tuttle and event co-chairs Mike and Natalie Rolewicz and Robin and Dan Wahby. The evening was highlighted by the live auction, which was colorfully emceed by state Sen. Aaron Bean. Items in the auction included a Color Our World original painting, a vintage Jaguars signed helmet, a lunch in Washington, D.C., with Congressman John Rutherford, a suite package for an upcoming Jaguars game, a stay at a luxury home in Arizona and club seats to a Florida State football game in September. An additional feature of the evening was a raffle for an IPPOLITA pendant necklace that was presented by Underwood Jewelers.

Angelwood provides services and programs to children, adults and families living with disabilities. Some of these programs include group homes, residential respite, summer day camps, a career development and education center and more. For more information, visit angelwoodjax.org.



Paul Lambert, Robin Wahby and Kerrie Slattery



Allen and Lynn Sparks and Loris Walker



Jimmy Tullis, Leah Lynch, Dawn Hudson and Curtis Long
Photos by JON BLAUVELT



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