

THE RECORDER

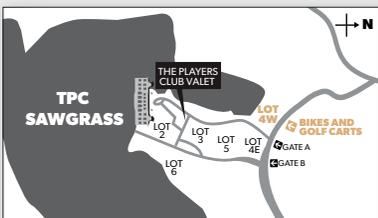


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February 16, 2023
Volume 54, No. 16
\$1.00

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PonteVedraRecorder.com



PLAYERS makes parking improvements
Page 10



Gift of Giving section
Page 17



INSIDE: CHECK IT OUT!
The Recorder's Entertainment EXTRA featuring TV listings, streaming information, puzzles and more!



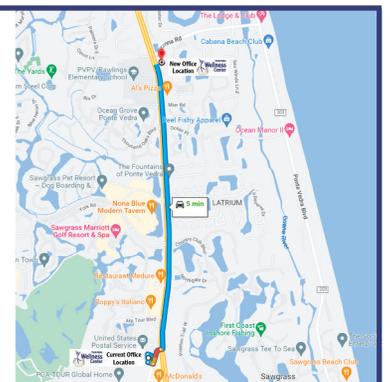
CHANGING THE WAY THE WORLD VIEWS AUTISM

Local residents with autism help harvest carrots from the garden at Peace of Heart Community, a nonprofit organization located at 14A S. Roscoe Blvd. in Ponte Vedra Beach. The produce is sold to the public with all proceeds benefiting the nonprofit. *Read the full inspirational story starting on page 18.*

Photo courtesy of Peace of Heart Community

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



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

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

BRIEFS

Palm Valley Road study underway

The North Florida TPO is assisting St. Johns County with a study of Palm Valley Road from the roundabout at Mickler Road to State Road A1A. The study will recommend ways to enhance traffic safety and reduce traffic backups. The purpose of this survey is to gather public input on current traffic issues and conditions along Palm Valley Road.

Those who live or travel within the study area are asked to answer the questions on a survey that can be found at <https://publicinput.com/palmvalley>.

Casino night benefits local nonprofit

Epic-Cure, a nonprofit that seeks to eliminate food waste through food rescue and distribution, is planning a "Speakeasy — Casino Night," 5-8 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 19, at Treasury on the Plaza, 24 Cathedral Place, Suite 111, St. Augustine. There will be wine, beer and cocktails, hors d'oeuvres, a photo booth, 50-50 drawing, silent and live auctions, casino tables and more. Live music by Chillula.

Proceeds benefit Epic-Cure. In about three years, a 100% volunteer team has rescued and redistributed more than 13.5 million pounds of food, feeding the hungry and contributing to the community.

For more information about Epic-Cure, go to epic-cure.org.

Workshop topic: re-emerging after COVID

A free in-person workshop, "Re-Emerging Post COVID: Tips & Tools for Success" presented by Coach J. Dianne Tribble is set for 10 a.m. to noon Thursday, Feb. 23, at Christ Church, 400 San Juan Drive, Ponte Vedra Beach, in Room 106 of the Formation + Arts Building. Sign-in and networking begin at 9:45 a.m. To register, send an email to potesen66@gmail.com. You will receive a confirmation email upon reserving your seat.

Palm Valley Market every Tuesday

The Palm Valley Market is held from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. every Tuesday inside the Palm Valley Community Center, 148 Canal Road. The market offers fresh produce, baked goods, local honey, tea, seasonal treats, soap, jewelry, plants and more.

Library speaker's topic is economy, stock market

The Speaker Series sponsored by The Friends of the Library, Ponte Vedra Beach, will present Gail Dudack, chief equity strategist for the Dudack Research Group, a division of Wellington Shields & Co., at 2 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 25, in the FOL room at the library.

Her topic is the 2023 outlook for stocks and a discussion on the U.S. economy and stock market.

The Dudack Research Group is an independent research firm that provides economic, quantitative and technical strategy and tools to mutual funds, hedge funds and private money managers. Dudack was a panelist on "Wall Street Week with Louis Rukeyser" for more than 20 years and on the PBS show "Wall Street Week with Fortune."

She has received several awards honoring her career and contributed to many documentaries and books on the stock market and the industry.

The program is free and open to the public. Doors open at 1:30 p.m.

St. Augustine coastal storm meeting planned

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will hold a public meeting Wednesday, Feb. 22, to present, discuss and gather public comment regarding its plans for a St. Augustine back bay coastal storm risk management feasibility study.

To be conducted in partnership with the city, the meeting will focus on potential measures to manage projected sea level rise, coastal storm damages, flooding, inundation, erosion and wave attack, which threaten infrastructure and contribute to public safety hazards.

The meeting will be held 6-9 p.m. in the City Commission Meeting Room inside the Lightner Museum, 75 King St., St. Augustine. No reservation is necessary. The public is urged to attend.

Public comment will also be collected via email at CESAJ-St.AugBackBayCSRM@usace.army.mil.

— Compiled by Shaun Ryan

DEATH NOTICES

Steven Paul Raby

Steven Paul Raby, 58, of Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida, died Feb. 11, 2023. Arrangements by Quinn-Shalz Family Funeral Home & Cremation Centre. 904-249-1100 www.quinn-shalz.com.

Jules E. Bernard, III

Jules E. Bernard, III, 78, of Ponte Vedra

Beach, Florida, died Feb. 12, 2023. Arrangements by Quinn-Shalz Family Funeral Home & Cremation Centre. www.quinn-shalz.com. 904-249-1100

Donald F. Blackburn

Donald F. Blackburn, 95, of Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida, died Feb. 4, 2023. Ponte Vedra Valley Funeral Home, Cremation Center & Cemetery

— 904-285-1130 — www.pontevedravalle.com

Robert H. Broadbent

Robert H. Broadbent, 91, of Jacksonville, Florida, died Feb. 6, 2023. Arrangements by Quinn-Shalz Family Funeral Home & Cremation Centre. www.quinn-shalz.com. 904-249-1100

PUZZLE SOLUTIONS

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Registration underway for Betty Griffin Center 5K Race

Registration is under way for The Run for Peace 5K, benefitting the Betty Griffin Center, which takes place at 8 a.m. April 8, at the St. Augustine Pier, located at 350 A1A Beach Blvd.

Runners and walkers can sign up at www.runforpeace5k.org through April 7. Registration is \$30 for adults and \$20 for students – and supporters can sign up to take part virtually for \$25.

Volunteers are also needed to assist in a variety of pre-race and race day activities. To volunteer, go to <https://signup.com/go/quJwrTe>.

“More than 600 runners and volunteers took part in last year’s race, helping us raise more than \$30,000 for our nonprofit agency,” said Betty Griffin Center CEO Kelly Franklin. “All of the proceeds help us provide services to survivors of domestic and sexual assault in our community, so we really appreciate everyone’s support of this important fundraiser.”

The presenting sponsor for the 2023 Run for Peace 5K is Women’s Care.

Additional sponsors include Brittany and Bill Horschel, KeHe Distributors, Jacksonville Jaguars Foundation, Douglas Elliman, The Kim Martin-Fisher-Jennifer Martin Faulker Group, Mastercraft Builder Group, VyStar Credit Union, Beaches Dermatology, Gordon Dental, Burkhardt Sales and Service, Preddy Law Firm, St. Augustine Beach Police, Ansbacher Law, iVenture Solutions, Lazzara Orthodontics, The Bailey Group, Flagler Health +, Embassy Suites by Hilton, Pearmid Properties, EasySociA-

bility, Gordon Dental and Don’s Friends, The Locals Guide to St. Augustine, Mellow Mushroom, Atlantic Automotive and Wayne Scott Fusco Photography.

There are still several sponsorship opportunities available at a variety of levels for businesses and individuals. For details, go to bettygriffincenter.org/sponsor-register-now-for-the-run-for-peace-5k-on-saturday-april-8 or contact Betty Griffin Center Development Director Kenlie Kubart at 904-808-8544, extension 207.

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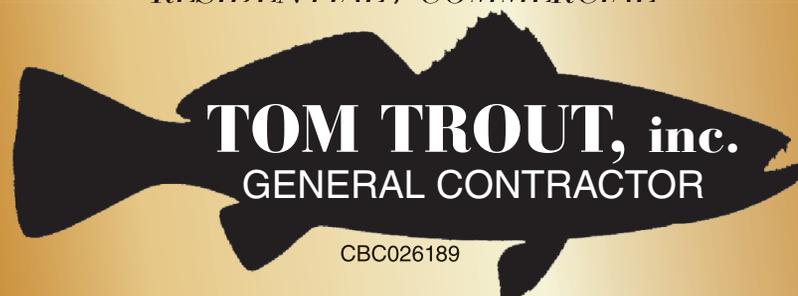
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3 Bedrooms, 4 Bathrooms, 1 Half Bathroom \$1,800,000



Marsh Landing Country Club

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5 Bedrooms, 4 Bathrooms \$1,500,000



Oceanfront Home on Ponte Vedra Blvd.

This oceanfront home on Ponte Vedra Blvd. with 110 ft. of ocean frontage sold for lot value only at \$10,500,000.



Amazing Vistas in Deercreek Country Club

Spacious living with pool/spa and lake-to-preserve views in Deercreek CC, making it ideal for easy commutes. Owner's suite is located on 1st floor along with living room, dining room, kitchen, butler's pantry, powder room, family room and office. Upstairs are 3 additional and spacious bedrooms, 2 full baths plus a flex space/theatre room. Sellers have many updates including fully renovated kitchen and bathrooms. Don't miss this one!!

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OBITUARIES

Donald F. Blackburn

Mr. Donald F. Blackburn passed away on Saturday, February 4, 2023, in Ponte Vedra Beach, FL. Born May 7, 1927, in Sioux Falls, SD, he was the son

of Bernice and Herbert Blackburn. He attended high school in Sioux Falls and briefly attended college before joining the American Forces in WWII, where he served in Japan.

Upon returning from the war, he mar-

ried his high school sweetheart, LaVonne Bacon, in 1947; they were married for 75 years. Don went to work for the Morrell Meat Packing Company for many years before transferring to Philadelphia, PA, with Morrell. He rose through the ranks then joined Gino's restaurant chain. After serving in many capacities with Gino's, Don started his own company, American Food Service, which supplied beef to Burger King. Don was the President and Chairman of the Board of AFS and rose to prominence nationally in the meat packing industry.

Don and LaVonne moved to Ponte Vedra Beach in 1995 and he continued with his hobbies of golf, gardening, birding, and fishing. But his major interest

was helping other people. Don joined the Ponte Vedra Beach Rotary Club and instantly become a pillar of service for the club. He earned the Arch Klumph Society Award for major donors. Don and long-time friend Bruce Barber put together plans and raised the funds necessary to build the Council On Aging Senior Center on Landrum Lane. Next, they put their efforts to building the Alzheimer's Center next to the Concert Hall. Don was a benefactor at Mayo Clinic and longtime supporter of many local charities. He was especially proud of his support of Lend an Ear, a refurbished hearing aid service. He was also a United Way de Tocqueville Society member.

Don was preceded in death by his

parents and two brothers. He is survived by his wife, LaVonne of Ponte Vedra Beach, FL; sister, Dorothy Judy of Sioux Falls, SD; daughter, Lynette Blackburn of Ponte Vedra Beach, FL; son, Brad Blackburn of Philadelphia, PA; and multiple nieces, nephews, great nieces and great nephews.

Services have been completed under the direction and care of Ponte Vedra Valley. Please sign the online guestbook at www.pontevedravalley.com.



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Becky Su Jager

Becky Su Jager, 71, passed away February 4, 2023. She fought hard but lost her battle to cancer. She was born in Jacksonville, Florida and was

a schoolteacher for 35 years in Jacksonville. Becky retired to Jacksonville

Beach where she was a schoolteacher at Seabreeze Elementary.

Becky graduated from Terry Parker High School then went on to college at North Florida College in Madison, Florida before graduating from Florida State University. Becky always remained a super devoted FSU fan. Becky was a member of the Wolfson Children's Hospital Auxiliary, where she volunteered. Becky always had a way of putting smiles on children's faces. Becky loved most of all spending time with her family,

planning events, attending reunions, and continuing family traditions, especially with all her cousins and nephews.

Becky was devoted to her now deceased parents, Kenneth and Marion; and her oldest brother Rick (Paula). Becky is survived by her sister Jennifer (David); brothers, Kenneth (Cora) and Chuck (Suzanne), nieces and nephew, Lacey, Heidi, Dylan, and Madison.

A memorial service will be held at 12:30 p.m. Saturday, February 25, 2023, at Quinn-Shalz Funeral Home, 3600

Third Street South, Jacksonville Beach, Florida.

In lieu of flowers you may donate in Becky's name to Wolfson's Children's Hospital or The Jacksonville Humane Society. Please visit her online tribute at www.quinn-shalz.com.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Samaritan's Purse thanks generous local residents

Editor:

I am writing to thank Ponte Vedra Beach-area residents for sharing the true meaning of Christmas with children in need this past holiday season.

Generosity throughout contributed to a successful shoebox gift collection season at drop-off locations for the Samaritan's Purse project Operation Christmas Child. Across the U.S., the project collected over 9.3 million shoebox gifts in 2022. Combined with those collected from partnering countries in 2022, the ministry is now sending nearly 10.6 million shoebox gifts to children worldwide.

Through shoeboxes — packed with fun toys, school supplies and hygiene items — Ponte Vedra Beach-area

volunteers brought joy to children in need around the world. Each gift-filled shoebox is a tangible expression of God's love, and it is often the first gift these children have ever received. Through the continued generosity of donors since 1993, Operation Christmas Child has collected and delivered more than 209 million gift-filled shoeboxes to children in more than 170 countries and territories. This year, Samaritan's Purse delivered its milestone 200-millionth shoebox, which was packed on a countrywide tour and then hand-delivered to a young girl in Ukraine.

Across Florida, shoebox packers often shop for deals on shoebox items throughout the year, and many serve at a

deeper level by becoming a year-round volunteer. Information about ways area participants can get involved year-round can also be found at samaritanspurse.org/occ or by calling 407-273-6112.

Although local drop off locations for gifts are closed until Nov. 13-20, 2023, anyone can still be a part of this life-changing project by conveniently

packing a shoebox gift online in just a few simple clicks at samaritanspurse.org/buildonline.

These simple gifts, packed with love, send a message to children worldwide that they are loved and not forgotten.

Casey Goodwin
Samaritan's Purse

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Stacey Hendershot is the Bolles Lower School Ponte Vedra Beach Campus head of school. She is an enthusiastic supporter of the students and a participant in the school's special activities. The local campus educates students in pre-K through grade five and has an enrollment of 243.

Stacey Hendershot



Contributed photo

Bolles Lower School Ponte Vedra Beach Campus Head of School Stacey Hendershot is seen with a group of happy students.

As told to Shaun Ryan

Tell me a little bit about Bolles Lower School Ponte Vedra Beach Campus.

The Bolles Lower School Ponte Vedra Beach Campus opened in 1999 and is a beautiful setting for young minds to grow. It offers exceptional education with a focus on the whole child for students from pre-K through grade five. The Ponte Vedra Beach Campus is a place where all students feel valued. Our teachers enthusiastically nurture and guide students to become the best possible versions of themselves. We offer strong academics, outdoor learning and vast opportunities in the arts. Students at Bolles are developed into leaders. They begin public speaking as early as pre-kindergarten, and our performing arts and visual arts programs encourage a growth mindset and creativity. Incredibly talented and caring teachers focus on experiential learning and also make the Ponte Vedra Beach Campus a great place to enroll children.

We offer students opportunities to shine on stage, in the classroom and on the field. Our Advantage program also allows students to sign up for after-school activities that include soccer, cheerleading, running club, chess, robotics, weaving, art, tennis, Chinese and even a unicorn club!

Students at the Bolles Ponte Vedra Beach Campus participate in multiple service opportunities throughout the year, and character development is infused into our days. We encourage manners in the lunchroom and have transformed the cafeteria into a “Bulldog Bistro,” so students feel that eating in the lunchroom is special. We

also host a “golden spoon” lunch each trimester to honor students who have displayed exceptional manners, and these students are treated to a special lunch!

Tell me about your role there. What are your responsibilities?

I am the Bolles Lower School Ponte Vedra Beach Campus head of school. This role allows me to guide curriculum decisions, mentor teachers, partner with parents and the community and lead our students as they develop into the leaders of our future. I manage the budget, partner with a fantastic security team to ensure the safety of our students and work closely with the communications department to share the amazing things happening on our campus.

What is your background? What led you to this career?

I am a lifelong learner with over 25 years of experience in elementary education. I began my career in the classroom, and I had extraordinary leaders who encouraged me to pursue a career in administration. I have taught grades one, two, four and five as well as physical education to grades K-5. I also served as a literacy and math intervention coach before moving into administration.

Do you have a philosophy of education or a specific approach that you employ?

I believe that it is our job as educators to develop confident, joyful, lifelong learners that will change the world. My approach is to build strong relationships with students, faculty, parents and the community. The diver-

sity of mind that comes together in our students, faculty and families makes us stronger, and I deeply value each perspective. Developing each child individually to become the best possible version of him/herself is a passion and one that every employee at Bolles shares.

What do you like best about what you do?

I love spending time in the classroom. Watching the phenomenal teachers in action and getting to know our students’ strengths and areas for growth is such a joyful part of my day. Listening, learning alongside them and sometimes dancing with them makes my heart happy, and I feel incredibly lucky to be part of this dynamic team.

Where are you from originally? What do you like best about living here on the First Coast?

I am originally from Michigan. I grew up on the Great Lakes and have always loved living near the water. Living on the First Coast is a dream! The weather is perfect, and the community is wonderful. Everyone is incredibly welcoming. Being part of the Bolles community and seeing my own children, as well as the students on our campus, thrive has been one of the best things about moving to Jacksonville.

How do you like to spend your free time?

I love to go for walks with my family and my dog Baily. We enjoy going to the beach, rock climbing and ice skating. I also love to read and soak up the Florida sunshine. Most recently, I have taken an interest in boxing.



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Congratulations to our January Leaders!



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

Photos provided by Kathy's Creative Gardens & Nursery

KATHY'S GARDENING GUIDE

Getting ready for spring

"To plant a garden is to believe in tomorrow." — Audrey Hepburn



By Kathy Esfahani

As temperatures start to warm up, we are reminded that spring is almost here and energized to begin tending to our gardens and landscapes!

February is an ideal time to plan your spring projects and prepare for planting. Keep these tasks in mind:

- The U.S. Department of Agriculture divides the country into planting zones (also known as growing zones). This classification provides guidance for what plants and trees are most suited in the various climates across the nation. Here in Northeast Florida, we are part of the 9A zone. For the most success, select plants that are recommended for zone 9A when adding to your landscape.



New mulch is an instant refresh for your landscape!

- Begin your spring preparations with a full clean-up! Clear any mounds of plant debris that may be in your garden beds, including any annuals you failed to remove last fall.
- February is also suitable for transplanting any plants or trees you've been planning to relocate. Remember to check for sunlight amounts in different parts of your yard as you move plants.
- As long as temperatures remain above freezing, plan for pruning in the coming weeks or early March. Prune plants down to where you see new green growth.

This trimming will help your plants produce maximum growth in the next few months.

- Fertilize flowers, plants and trees before higher temperatures are here to stay. Select fertilizers specifically designed for your plants, palms and/or citrus trees. Be sure to follow the instructions on the package.
- Prepare your lawn for the coming season but wait a few more weeks before mowing. Use warm days to check your irrigation system for broken or misdirected sprinkler heads. Once temperatures will remain above 65 degrees for 4-5 days, it is important to apply a pre-emergent weed killer to your lawn. Note: pre-emergent is not a "weed and feed" fertilizer; it is solely a weed treatment to help control weeds in your lawn throughout the coming season. For best results, it is important to time this application just as temperatures warm up!
- Weed landscape beds and add new mulch to refresh the appearance of beds



Flower of the Week

Alyssum

and help the plants prepare for spring. Mulch discourages weeds, moderates the soil temperature and creates cohesion throughout your yard.

- Clean and update your gardening tools for spring projects. Purchase new items for planned projects and refresh any tools you already have. Now is also a good time to sharpen any tools with blades.

Happy planting!

Flower of the Week: Alyssum

Please email Kathy at kcg.pvr@gmail.com for any questions or gardening tips you would like to see in the future. For more information & ideas, visit Kathy's Creative Gardens & Nursery, 196 N. Roscoe Blvd. The phone number is 904-655-7373.

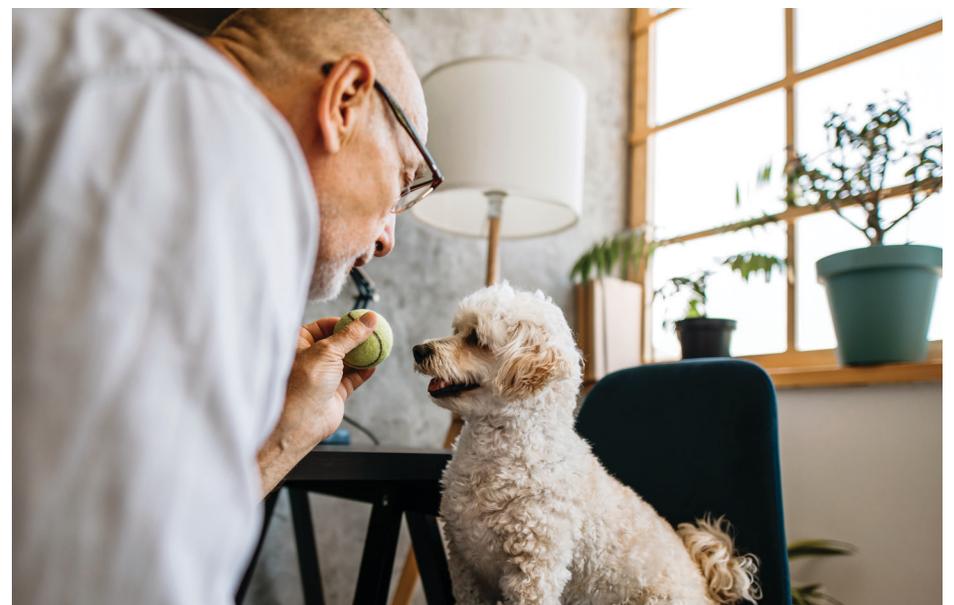



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Proposed development around Inn & Club discussed by MSD

By Anthony Richards

St. Johns County Commissioner Krista Joseph spoke to the Ponte Vedra Municipal Service District via speaker phone during their Feb. 13 meeting.

Some of the things she said she has been working on included crosswalk safety issues, especially around the Ponte Vedra Public Library.

She also mentioned the idea of using multi-purpose lanes on Mickler Road, which would allow for golf carts to be considered instead of just additional car lanes.

One of the big talking points during the meeting's public comments section had to do with the Ponte Vedra Inn & Club and The Lodge & Club's proposed unit development on their property.

The Ponte Vedra Inn & Club's future land use designations are commercial, residential B and residential C, while The Lodge & Club's designations are commercial and residential D.

There are about 55 acres proposed for redevelopment within the Inn & Club's property and 12.84 acres of redevelopment proposed within the Lodge & Club's

property.

The public concerns centered around making sure that the redevelopment does not over exceed certain parameters such as building height and they were also interested in the further details surrounding the proposed plans.

MSD chairman Al Hollon informed those in attendance that the final plans of the project are still being ironed out at the moment.

He also pointed toward the possible future Jack Pope position through the MSD as something that can help improve building compliance if approved.

In other news, trustee Brad Wester informed his fellow trustees and the public that he has been hounding the county about the traffic calming study they conducted along San Juan Drive.

According to Wester, county traffic engineer Clint Lynch will be sending him the complete results of the study in the coming days, but he let him know that all eight of the traffic counters they placed along the route came back as not requiring any traffic calming.

He will provide a written summary at the next meeting.

Trustee Kitty Switkes credited adjusted parking ordinance and the presence of Sheriff's deputies for the reduced number of cars parking along Ponte Vedra Boulevard in recent weeks.

"It's nice to drive down the boulevard and not have to stop every little bit down the road," Switkes said.

The other trustees were quick to agree with Switkes.

"I think a lot of the off-duty officers have gotten their bearings and have become more community patrol," Wester said.

The MSD approved a request from Switkes for \$2,000 as she works to get the flower beds back to where they were before the freeze earlier this winter, and just in time for THE PLAYERS in a couple of weeks.

Wester once again brought up a possible sidewalk constructed on the westside of Ponte Vedra Boulevard, at the only section along the roadway that he said does not have a sidewalk.

It has been something Wester has been

discussing with the county for a couple of years now and it had looked like in the past that the county was ready to back the project and the funding was seemingly sorted out.

However, there has been very little movement of late, as he has asked for a conceptual plan from the county with no luck.

He hopes that Joseph will help move things along again with the project from the county side of things.

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PLAYERS makes parking improvements

By Shaun Ryan

Those attending THE PLAYERS Championship this year may notice that a lot of improvements have been made in the parking arrangements.

According to Steven Wood, director of tournament operations for the PGA TOUR, the goal is to make fans' transit to THE PLAYERS a seamless experience.

"We have added more off-site parking locations for fans, with the most notable ones being in Nocatee where our new free shuttles will originate for Nocatee residents," he said.

A free shuttle will run continuously from Pine Island Academy, Valley Ridge Academy and Palm Valley Academy on Friday, Saturday and Sunday of tournament week. Information is available at theplayers.com/parking.

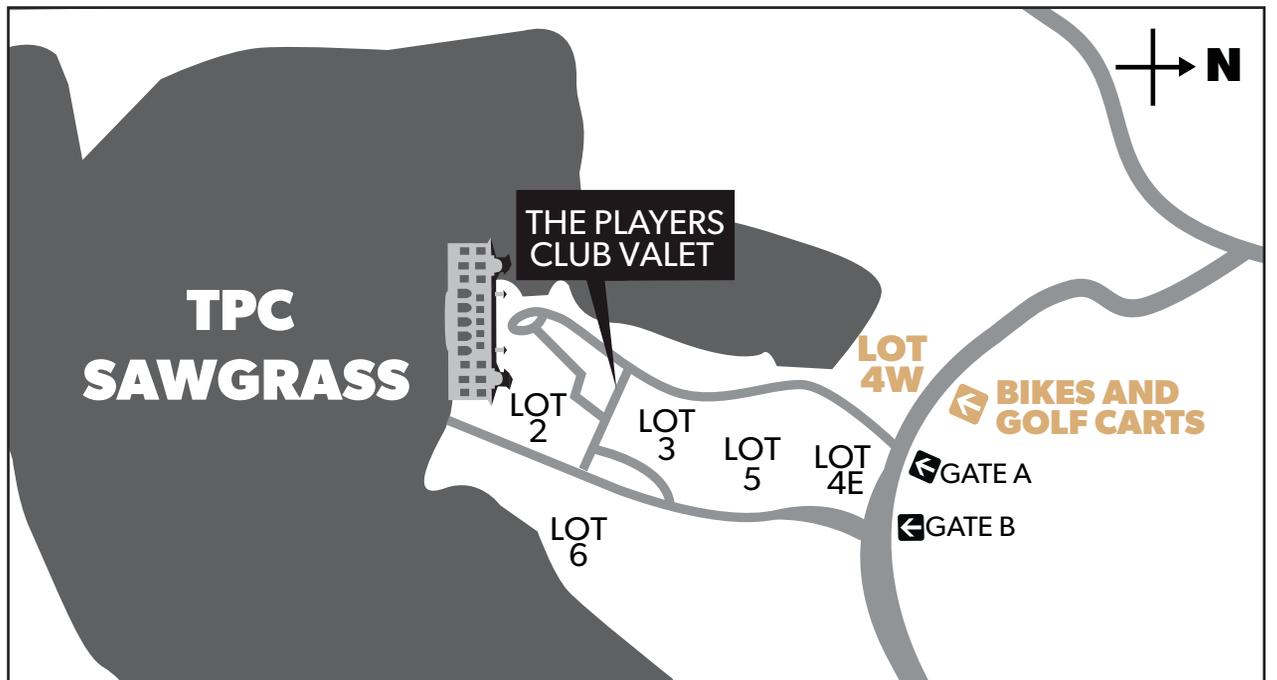
In addition, there will be free golf cart and bicycle parking.

THE PLAYERS staff has worked with St. Johns County to optimize traffic flow by rerouting traffic patterns in the surrounding area in addition to several infrastructure improvements on the property to help ease the flow of traffic.

"It is our goal that these developments will greatly reduce the number of cars on the road during the tournament," Wood said.

Some things will remain the same. The general lot is in the same location as before, and parking passes are still made available at theplayers.com/parking, where attendees can also find information on parking lot locations, shuttle times and rideshare options.

"We are always working to improve our fans' experience at our tournament, so following the completion of THE PLAYERS 2022, our team immediately began working



Map courtesy of THE PGA TOUR.

tirelessly to debrief and identify areas of Improvement," said Wood. "Last year, Mother Nature gave PLAYERS week all she had, and we were fortunately able to safely stage the event to completion. This experience gave us the opportunity to reflect on our transportation plans, which has led to improvements that will be reflected in the numerous infrastructure adjustments that will significantly improve our fans' experience getting to THE PLAYERS – rain or shine."

Attendees should note that on-site parking is not included in the price of the ticket and must be purchased in advance. Parking passes are digital. Because space is limited, Wood strongly recommended purchasing passes early before they sell out.

In addition, he recommended arriving early to avoid heavy traffic and encouraged passholders to add their mobile passes to their mobile wallets for easy access on the day of the tournament.

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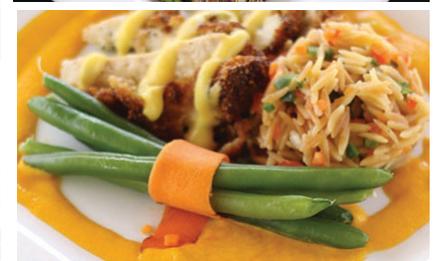
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Ocean Palms hosts fundraising fun

More than 20 teams lined up their boards and prepared to take home first prize as they tossed their way to success in the school's first cornhole tournament on Jan. 29. Families, friends and staff from Ocean Palms Elementary joined in for some competitive afternoon fun, all the while contributing the school's fundraising endeavors.

In fact, the event raised just under \$1,000 to support the school's Sunshine State reading program. With first place earning a popcorn or Popsicle party for their class, followed by second prize with 30 minutes of extra recess, and third prize, which gave the winner the opportunity to dress as the otter mascot for carline, it was a true toss off.



Families, friends and staff participated in OPE's cornhole fundraising event to raise money for books.



Contributed photos

The winners of Ocean Palms Elementary's first fundraising cornhole tournament.



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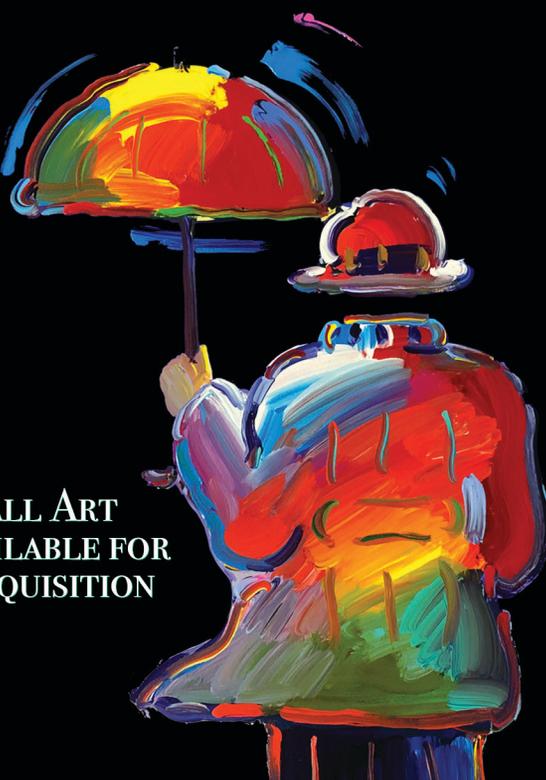
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FAMOUS PONTE VEDRANS

Betty Williams, Nobel Peace Prize Winner



By Scott A. Grant, JD

On Aug. 10, 1976, Betty Williams turned a corner on a street in Belfast in Northern Ireland and watched in horror as a car careened out of control towards

a helpless mother and her children. The driver of the car, Danny Lennon, a member of the Irish Republican Army, was dead. He had been shot by British soldiers, members of the Kings Own Royal Border regiment.

The car crashed into the McGuire family, killing all three children. Four years later, the mother, Anne McGuire, would take her own life. This was at a time in Northern Ireland known as “The Troubles.” Car bombings, riots and shootings would leave 3,600 people dead and over 30,000 injured. Violence ran rampant through the streets as members of the IRA fought to “free” Northern Ireland from British rule.

The wars in Northern Ireland lasted for nearly three decades. One event, where

British soldiers shot 28 unarmed civilians in the city of Derry is remembered in the U-2 song “Sunday, Bloody Sunday.” Eleven years earlier, John Lennon wrote a song of the same name about the same event.

Betty Williams had had enough. Frustrated by the mindless violence, she flew into action. Within two days, she had acquired 6,000 signatures on a peace petition. One of the planks on the petition read simply: “We want to live and love and build a just and peaceful society.” Two weeks later she led 20,000 on a peace march through a park in Belfast.

Together with an aunt of the dead children, Mairead Corrigan, she founded a group called Women for Peace. The name would later be changed to Community of Peace People. Her grassroots movement captured worldwide media attention. In 1977, just one year later, she and Corrigan were honored with the Nobel Peace Prize. Corrigan donated her winnings to the movement. Betty Williams kept hers

amidst some controversy. Corrigan and Williams never spoke again.

Betty Williams used the money and her celebrity to promote peace initiatives worldwide. In 1982, she met an American businessman named James Perkins at Disney World. At the time, Betty Williams was touring the country giving speeches where she urged those in attendance to “Yell for Peace!”

The pair were married on the 10th fairway of the Sawgrass Country Club under a “fern-trellis arch.” The ceremony was officiated by the Rev. Albert Wells of the First Presbyterian Church of Jacksonville. Betty and Jim lived in the Sawgrass development until his death in 2004. Betty then returned to Belfast. She died of pneumonia in 2020.

Scott A. Grant is a local author and historian. By day, he invests professionally. He believes in peace. scottg@standfast.com

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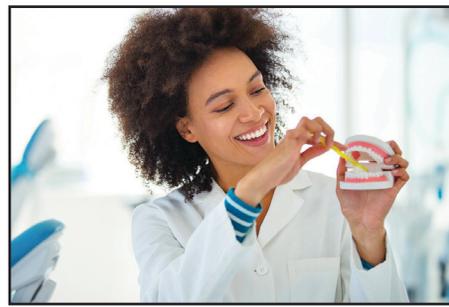
OUT WITH THE OLD
 IN WITH THE NEW

What dental hygiene does for overall health

Brushing and flossing your teeth may save you extra sessions in the dentist's chair each year, but the benefits of dental hygiene do not end with pearly whites. In fact, there's a direct correlation between oral hygiene and overall health.

Oral health offers clues about overall health, advises the Mayo Clinic. When a dentist or hygienist checks a person's mouth, he or she is getting a window into that person's overall wellness – including if something is amiss.

Dental hygiene matters because, without proper brushing and flossing, bacteria in the mouth can grow unchecked. Over time, that bacteria can infiltrate and break down the soft tissues in the gums and teeth, eventually leading to decay and



gum disease. Greenwood Dental Care in Illinois states that the bacteria from the mouth could travel into the bloodstream and elsewhere, causing a host of issues.

There's a high correlation between an unhealthy mouth and systemic diseases. Dentists who notice problems in their

patients' mouths may be able to predict potential illnesses elsewhere in the body, advising those patients to seek consultations with other healthcare providers.

Here's a deeper look at some of the correlations between oral health and overall health, courtesy of the Mayo Clinic.

- **Endocarditis:** When bacteria or other germs from the mouth or another part of the body spread through the bloodstream, they can attach to certain areas of the heart. This causes an infection in the inner lining of the heart chambers or valves.

- **Pregnancy and birth complications:** Periodontitis has been linked to low birth weight and premature birth.

- **Cardiovascular disease:** While it's not fully understood why, clogged

arteries, stroke and heart disease may be linked to inflammation and infection caused by oral bacteria.

- **Pneumonia:** Bacteria in the mouth may be pulled into the lungs, where it can lead to respiratory illness, such as pneumonia.

It's a two-way street with health and the mouth. Certain diseases can lead to issues in the mouth. HIV/AIDS may cause mucosal lesions in the mouth; those with osteoporosis may have weakened periodontal bone and tooth loss; and research has shown that diabetes puts gum health at risk.

Individuals should make oral health a priority, as it has a significant effect on their overall health and well-being.



The hows and whys of bad breath

hygiene may lead to gum diseases, such as gingivitis and periodontitis, which also can exacerbate bad breath.

- **Dry mouth:** When dry mouth, or xerostomia, occurs, salivary glands cannot make enough saliva to keep the mouth moist, states Harvard Health. Saliva helps flush away bacteria and food particles. Without saliva to wash them away, bacteria and debris can start to break down, leading to odor. Certain medications may cause dry mouth. Chewing sugar-free gum and using dry mouth aids can help moisten the mouth.

- **Food:** Certain foods are linked to bad breath. Notably, garlic, onions and some spices are absorbed into the bloodstream and have the potential to affect breath until they leave the system.

- **Dirty dentures:** False teeth, such as dentures and bridges, can collect bacteria, food and fungi if not properly cleaned. Improper cleaning can contribute to bad breath.

- **Tobacco products:** Tobacco can cause unpleasant mouth odors, says the Mayo Clinic. Smokers and oral tobacco users also are likely to have gum disease, which contributes to bad breath.

- **Sleeping with mouth open:** Like other causes of dry mouth, sleeping with one's mouth open dries out the mouth and can lead to what's often referred to as "morning breath."

- **Sinus illnesses or infections:** Small stones covered in bacteria can form in the tonsils and produce odor. Infections, chronic inflammation of the nose, throat

or sinuses can contribute to postnasal drip, which also causes bad breath.

Anyone with concerns about chronic bad breath should speak to his or her dentist about their condition. If the cause cannot be traced to oral hygiene, an individual may be referred to a general physician for a physical to rule out other issues.



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PAGE 14 THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 2023

— FEATURING —
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The many roles played by different types of lawyers

The legal profession casts a wide net. Lawyers and attorneys wear a number of different hats, and knowing how to distinguish between the many types of legal professionals can help people find the right fit when they're looking for legal representation or guidance.

• **Defense lawyer:** Thanks to Hollywood, the general public has a good idea of what defense lawyers do, even if most people will never need one. Defense lawyers defend people who have been accused of breaking the law. According to the Legal Information Institute, the Sixth Amendment guarantees the right to a defense lawyer. People accused of crimes who cannot afford to hire a private attorney can be assigned a public defender to represent them as the legal

process plays out.

• **Family lawyer:** Family lawyers specialize in many different areas. Some family lawyers may specialize in divorce cases, while others may specialize in child adoptions. Lawyers who specialize in domestic violence cases also may qualify as family lawyers.

• **Estate planning lawyer:** Over time, just about anyone might require the services of a lawyer who specializes in estate planning. These professionals help people with their wills and can help ensure asset transfers go as smoothly as possible. Estate planning lawyers also can help people establish trusts.

• **Personal injury lawyer:** Commercials for personal injury lawyers dot the television landscape, making these



professionals among the most recognizable legal professionals. Personal injury lawyers specialize in civil litigation while representing clients who may have been injured at work or in public or in another setting.

• **Real estate lawyer:** Homeowners utilize real estate lawyers when buying their homes. These lawyers can represent both buyers and sellers (though not both at the same time) as the parties negotiate the sale of a home, essentially serving as intermediaries between the two parties. Real estate lawyers are often present when closing documents are signed. Real estate lawyers also work on disputes between tenants and property owners.

Lawyers serve in various capacities and specialize in many different areas of the law. Knowing which professional to look to when in need can help people successfully navigate any legal issues that arise.



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Benchmarks of Success

A look at major career changes in the area.



Navitas Credit Corp. CEO to retire

United Community Banks Inc. and its wholly-owned subsidiary, Navitas Credit Corp., an industry leader in equipment financing, has announced that company founder Gary Shivers will retire as chief executive officer effective Feb. 28.

Shivers founded Navitas in 2008 and, over the last 15 years, grew the company to more than \$1.3 billion in assets, with new originations reaching a billion dollars per year. During his tenure, the company expanded into multiple equipment verticals, including office equipment, commercial furniture, HVAC, franchise financing and titled vehicles. The company has 196 employees and has established a strong sales and service presence with eight locations nationwide. In February 2018, Navitas was acquired by United Community Banks, one of the largest full-service financial institutions in the Southeast.

Shivers will remain a consultant to the board of United Community Bank and plans to stay active in the equipment financing industry.



Baptist Health names Katie Ensign to post

Katie Ensign has been named vice president of community investment and impact at Baptist Health. Ensign will succeed Melanie Patz, who served in this role for more than eight years before she was chosen as the new CEO of United Way of Northeast Florida.

Beginning March 1, Ensign will lead Baptist Health's efforts to improve the health of the community, contribute to the well-being of all community members, and eliminate health disparities through partnerships, civic involvement, responsible action and charitable service.

Ensign has dedicated her career to serving not-for-profit organizations. She most recently served as the vice president of placemaking and administration at the Jessie Ball duPont Fund in Jacksonville. Prior to joining the Jessie Ball duPont Fund in 2010, she served as president and CEO of Florida Philanthropic Network and before that, as vice president of programs for the Nonprofit Center of Northeast Florida.

Builders association installs Chris Wood as president

The Northeast Florida Builders Association (NEFBA) installed its 2023 execu-



Chris Wood

tive officers and board members on Jan. 23. Chris Wood of Riverside Homes will serve as the 79th president of the association for the coming year. Wood was presented with the gavel, representing the association's highest office of leadership, by his father and longtime association member, Rick Wood.

"The legacy of NEFBA is built on 79 years of industry leadership," Wood said. "This association has provided support and a collective voice for the home building industry in Northeast Florida. I am humbly honored to serve as president for the coming year and look forward to working with our board and members to extend NEFBA's contribution to the community."

McLaughlin named to Morgan Stanley President's Club

Morgan Stanley has announced that John McLaughlin, an executive director, financial advisor in its Wealth Management office in Ponte Vedra Beach, has been named to the firm's President's Club, an elite group composed of the firm's top financial advisors. The appointment recognizes McLaughlin's consistent creativity and excellence in providing a wide range of investment products and wealth manage-

ment services to his clients.

McLaughlin, who has been with Morgan Stanley Wealth Management since 2011, is a native of Columbia, South Carolina. He holds a bachelor's degree from the University of South Carolina. He currently lives in Ponte Vedra Beach with his family.



Matt Voskuil

TPC Sawgrass welcomes new executive chef

TPC Sawgrass, home of THE PLAYERS Championship, has welcomed its new executive chef, Matt Voskuil. With nearly three decades of experience, Voskuil will be responsible for managing the culinary operations for the entire property.

A native of Wisconsin, Voskuil joins TPC Sawgrass most recently from the Ocean House in Rhode Island where he served as the group executive chef since 2019. His prior experience includes leading culinary teams at The Chanler at Cliff Walk, The Venetian Resort, Aria Las Vegas and Bellagio, as well as being a part of the opening team for Joël Robuchon at the Mansion in MGM Grand, the first and only three-Michelin Star restaurant in Las Vegas.

— Compiled by Shaun Ryan

Atlantic Logistics to exhibit at trade show in Las Vegas

Atlantic Logistics, a Florida based transportation and logistics company, will be a featured exhibitor with company experts at CONEXPO-CON/AGG on March 14-18 at the Las Vegas Convention Center and Festival Grounds in Las Vegas, Nevada.

CONEXPO-CON/AGG is North America's largest construction trade show. It is held every three years and represents international asphalt, aggregates, concrete, earthmoving, lifting, mining, utilities, logistics companies and more.

Atlantic Logistics will have its infor-



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Tali Hooper



James Crichlow

mational display and team members at the show. In attendance will be Atlantic Logistics CEO Rob Hooper Jr., who is responsible for strategic direction and management of daily operations; Tali Hooper, the company's logistics specialist and customer relations representative;

Sean Gresham, senior logistics specialist responsible for specialized freight, overweight and over-height loads, refrigeration loads, high-value over-dimensional freight and large projects; Johnnie Greene, vice president of sales and chief operations officer, responsible for sales

and operations; and James Crichlow, marketing and communications director responsible for brand strategy, website content and design, advertising and public relations.

The group will host an informational and interactive display and participate with event attendees in sharing knowledge about technologically advanced shipping, hauling and trucking brokerage services.

Atlantic Logistics is headquartered at 3003 Claire Lane, Suite 303 in Jacksonville. The company website is shipatlantic.com.

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Community Hospice Foundation names new board members

New members were recently elected to the Community Hospice Foundation Board of Directors.

The Community Hospice Foundation, which is governed by a separate board, generates philanthropic and community support for patient care services, family needs and community programs. The foundation is also the main source of funding for Community PedsCare, a nationally recognized pediatric palliative and hospice program that provides life-changing services to more than 235 patients and their families each day.

Community Hospice Foundation is dedicated to advancing philanthropy to enable Community Hospice & Palliative Care to fulfill its mission and vision. Funds raised through the foundation enhance the quality of life for patients and families and support unfunded and underfunded patient care, outreach programs and services for those facing advanced illness and grief. Its donors make it possible to continue to provide community programs and compassionate care to all who need it, regardless of their ability to pay.

Members of the board of directors serve a three-year term and can be re-elected for two additional three-year terms.

The Community Hospice Foundation's new Board Members include:

- Jennifer Cleek is a project manager at MMI Inc., a robotics company dedicated to improving clinical outcomes for patients undergoing microsurgery. She and her husband Brian live in Ponte Vedra Beach with their three boys, Wyatt, Hudson and Theodore. She is president of the PTO at Ponte Vedra Rawlings Elementary School, volunteer basketball coach at the Ponte Vedra YMCA and assistant girls' basketball coach at Bolles.

- Lou Caldropoli recently retired from Swisher International where he worked for more than 27 years. At Swisher, he held numerous positions, including his last role as chief operations officer. He is a member of the St. Johns County Police Athletic League Board and the Finance

Council of the Diocese of St. Augustine. He and his wife, Lina, have four children and four grandchildren.

- Neill Lasher is a Realtor at Berkshire Hathaway Florida Network Realty and a lifelong resident of Jacksonville and Ponte Vedra Beach. She is a mother to Wyatt, and twins Lawton and Harbor. She is involved in the community as a member of the Development Council at Wolfson Children's Hospital and Baptist Foundation, as well as a committee member and former chair for the Wolfson Children's Challenge and co-chair for Halloween Doors & More.

- Pamela Steitz, who moved to Ponte Vedra Beach in 2000, is married to Bill with their three children Nicholas, Kevin and Alexa. She has worked in a multitude of volunteer capacities, including Community Hospice in 2005 during the inaugural year of Halloween Doors & More, Women's Leadership Council and Community PedsCare Respite Center Feasibility Study. She recently hosted an event where she raised more than \$75,000 for the Community Hospice music therapy program.

- Bret Catto is the vice president and general sales manager for Tom Nehl Truck Co. and oversees the new and used truck sales and the leasing division. He lives in Jacksonville with his wife, Susie, and their sons, Thomas and Matthew.

- Nancy Latinberg, a Jacksonville native, has raised her four children with her husband Richard. She volunteers with several local nonprofits using her expertise in public relations and event planning from her past career. She became active with Community Hospice during the inaugural Halloween Doors & More, joining the Community Advisory Board shortly thereafter. She developed the Teen Advisory Board, where members act as ambassadors to raise awareness and funds for the Community PedsCare program. She has also served as grant chair and president of the Women's Leadership council.



Contributed photo

The inaugural Vested Metals Golf Tournament will be held March 13 at the newly re-opened St. Johns Country Golf Club.

Vested Metals to host first charity golf tournament

Vested Metals International, a specialty metals and steels supplier based in St. Augustine, will host its first charity golf tournament in honor of their colleague and friend who passed away, John Mark Leach.

The tournament will take place at the newly-renovated St. Johns County Golf Club on March 13. With a love and deep connection to the game, Vested Metals hopes the tournament will advance their goal of raising and donating \$1 million to local charities over the next 10 years.

"It is important to us that we foster a culture that is passionate about service and economic development beyond our walls," said Viv Helwig, president and founder of Vested Metals. "Fundraising through a golf tournament is very fitting for our company. If it weren't for connections made through golf, Vested Metals International wouldn't be here today."

Helwig met Eric Lamm, an executive in the steel industry, through Steve Voguit. Voguit was both a former Flagler College professor of Helwig's and a former high school teacher and golf coach of Lamm's. Some 25 years after Lamm's high school graduation, he reconnected by chance with Voguit at the Slammer & Squire Golf Course. Upon learning Lamm was looking to

hire in Florida, Voguit introduced him to Helwig and the rest was history.

Beneficiaries of this year's event include: THE PLAYERS Championship Boys & Girls Club, Flagler College Cares: Emergency Relief Fund, St. John's Housing Partnership, Fellowship of Christian Athletes, Flagler Health Care Foundation, and Adaptive Dance Superstars.

The First Annual Vested Metals Charity Golf Tournament will take place March 13 at St. Johns Country Golf Club, 4900 Cypress Links Blvd., Elkton. The event will kick off at 1 p.m. with a shotgun start. The 18-hole, four-person scramble features the chance to win a car with a "Hole-in-One," a Longest Drive contest, and complimentary on-course snacks and beverages.

At 6 p.m., there will be a post-event reception to announce the winners, present contest prizes, recognize the beneficiaries and honor the Leach Family.

Tickets can be purchased at vestedmetals.net/golf.

Email golf@vestedmetals.net for sponsorship information. Sponsorship opportunities range from a single ticket to packages for 2-4 players. Donations are also welcome for those who cannot attend.

FIRST COAST EDITION | VOL. 3 NO. 4

ATTORNEY AT LAW

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THE
RECORDER



Photos courtesy of Peace of Heart Community

Several vegetables are grown in the garden throughout the year.

Those with autism find 'meaning' at Peace of Heart Community

By Anthony Richards

Peace of Heart Community is a local nonprofit that is changing the way dealing with autism is viewed by giving families an alternative option.

That option includes helping grow vegetables and tend to animals on a farm, which has been going on for seven years strong.

However, Peace of Heart is also a residential group home and has a day program for those with autism.

The group home is in its fifth year, while the enrichment program is in its third year, which shows the continued growth the nonprofit has made since

Howard and Amy Groshell came up with the revolutionary idea years ago.

According to Amy Groshell, the idea was inspired by their daughter who has autism and after she spent some time in another group home on the First Coast, they realized they wanted her closer to home.

That is when they decided to purchase the three and a half acres of land and create their nonprofit located at 14A S. Roscoe Blvd. in Ponte Vedra Beach.

"It was such a beautiful piece of land that had not been developed before," Amy Groshell said.

Since the garden was established, the produce grown is sold to the community with all the proceeds used to help support the charity as a whole.

"During COVID we got so many calls from parents asking if they could come out with their children and tour the property," Amy Groshell said. "It was so hard for them as parents to just sit at home watching their kids do nothing."

Peace of Heart really focuses on those with autism that are in their 20s and have aged out of school.

Nothing is far from what those involved with Peace of Heart Community are doing. As they plant, grow, weed



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COMMUNITY continues on Page 19



Peace of Heart Community started its enrichment program three years ago.

Community

Continued from 18

and water soil as part of the garden's maintenance.

"They do everything our staff does," Amy Groshell said. "Everyone talks about all the things those with autism can't do, but we're proving that there is so much more they can and are doing."

According to Amy Groshell, 80% of those working in the garden are accompanied by a parent but there are some who have high-functioning forms of autism and take part on their own.

One of the main benefits she has seen through their methods is the physical fitness that all those involved are getting.

"These kids never really get to be on a sports team, so coordination skills are really something that needs work," Amy Groshell said. "Some kids come out and can't lift a shovel at first, but in a couple of weeks they are doing all kinds of things. For you or I, we take those things for granted."

The confidence gained by those in the program is also something that always puts a smile on her face.

The ability to see everything come full circle by growing the produce and then selling it to the public makes them feel a deeper part of their community.

"For the first time in their life they are doing something that others are ben-

efiting from," Amy Groshell said. "It's meaningful for them to be on the other side of things instead of always being the ones receiving the help."

There are currently two with autism that are paid employees and part of the full-time staff at Peace of Heart, and it is a number she hopes to see increase in the future.

To help combat the hot summers in the garden in Florida the nonprofit's latest project is their enrichment pavilion, which will have a full kitchen and air conditioning once completed. Donations to help pay for the construction costs are needed.

Many of the volunteers Peace of Heart gets are high school students in search of community service hours for when they apply for scholarships and college.

Not only has there been interest from individuals, but local businesses have also reached out wanting to get involved and help the initiative in some way.

"The impact within the community has been even bigger than we expected when we first started," Amy Groshell said.

Large groups of volunteers are welcome from 9 a.m. to noon on Saturdays.

Anyone wanting to volunteer or donate can go to pohe.org and click on the "get involved" tab. Waiver forms can be filled out either online or on site.



Photo courtesy of Peace of Heart Community

Peace of Heart Community is a nonprofit in Ponte Vedra Beach that helps those with autism by having them help tend to a garden.



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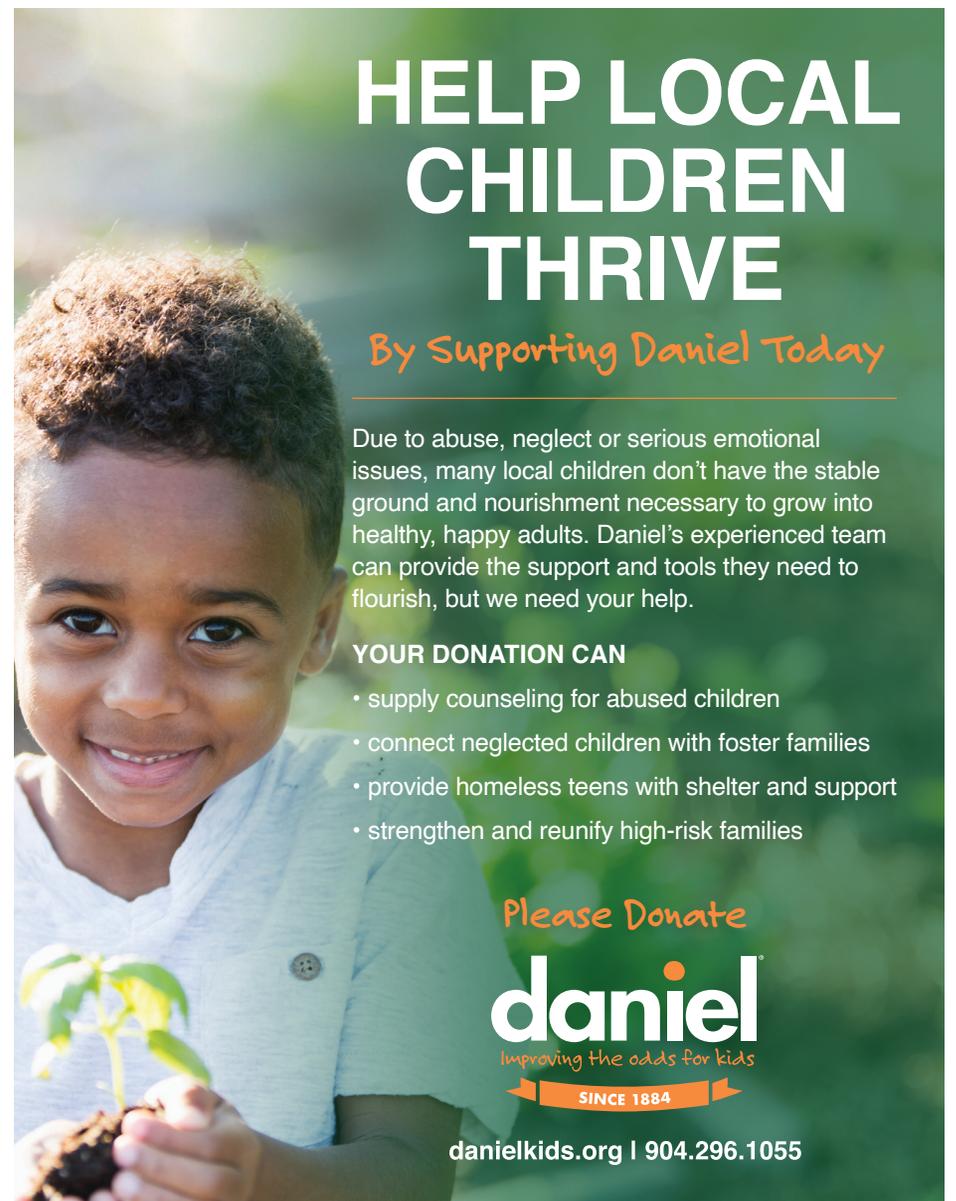
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Love Me True Rescue's mission evident in Ducky's story

Local nonprofit asking for donations to help with medical costs

By Anthony Richards

There are many cats that owe their lives to all those involved with the Ponte Vedra Beach nonprofit Love Me True Rescue, Inc.

The latest of these stories is that of Ducky, a cat that was recently rescued and cared for after he was found among a group of ducks, which is also how his name came about.

When he was found, he had a terrible odor and pus was coming from one of his legs, which had a severe bone infection.

He was admitted to an animal hospital and placed in a hyperbaric chamber and given antibiotics to help fight the infection and in the hopes of making the recovery process as quick as possible so that Ducky no longer has to go through

the pain he has been facing.

X-rays also found that he had several rocks in his stomach.

Dr. Hugh McClelland of Durbin Creek Animal Hospital and Dr. Louis Mack of Palm Valley Veterinary Center played vital roles in helping Ducky recover from all the adversity he was faced with.

Love Me True continues to post updates about Ducky on their Facebook page and all signs are that he has been responding well to the treatments.

However, it is still too early in the process for doctors to know if his leg will properly heal and be able to be saved or if he will eventually require an amputation.

Once his antibiotics course is completed more bloodwork and x-rays will be done to more about his status.

In the meantime, he continues to be taken care of by all sides, as the staff at Palm Valley Veterinary Center and his new foster family continue to watch over



Photo courtesy of Love Me True Rescue, Inc.

Ducky prepares to enter a hyperbaric chamber after Love Me True Rescue, Inc. found him among a group of ducks starving and with a broken leg.

DUCKY'S continues on **Page 21**

3rd Annual



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Ducky's

Continued from 20

him on a daily basis.

Love Me True continues to ask for donations from the community to help pay for Ducky's ongoing medical costs.

Ducky's story is just the latest in how nonprofits like Love Me True can make an impact by saving the lives of animals in need of assistance but without a home.

The mission of rescuing and rehabilitating cats from similar situations continues to be an ongoing issue and Love Me True plays a vital part in hopefully lessening the issue in the future.

Anyone interested in donating or getting involved with Love Me True and its mission can donate by going to lovemetruerescue.com or going to their Facebook page and clicking on the "donate" button at the top of the page.

Donations and inquiries can also be emailed to lovemetruerescue@gmail.com.

The Love Me True Rescue is located at 5150 Palm Valley Road, Suites 402 and 403 in Ponte Vedra Beach.



Photos courtesy of Love Me True Rescue, Inc.

Ducky watches through the window of a hyperbaric chamber.



X-rays found Ducky had several rocks in his stomach.

The cookies have arrived



Photos courtesy of Girl Scouts of Gateway Council

The Girl Scouts of Gateway Council held its annual mega drop at various locations throughout the First Coast, with St. Johns County's being at Menendez High School Feb. 4.



The mega drop is when girl scouts pick up the cookies that they will begin selling.



Thank you to everyone who attended & supported the Furyk Foundation Concert presented by SRS Distribution and Constellation FURYK & FRIENDS presented by Circle K! All proceeds from the concert & tournament have helped us to generate more than \$2.5 MILLION in charitable impact since 2021!

Your donations and proceeds have supported Family Links, Operation Shower, Blessings in a Backpack, Wolfson Children's Hospital, MaliVai Washington Youth Foundation, First Tee of North Florida, Beaches Habitat for Humanity, Jacksonville Humane Society, St. Johns Riverkeeper, Hope for the Holidays and many more!

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Soiree to help Catholic Charities feed families

Catholic Charities Jacksonville will host its Black & White Soiree from 6 to 9 p.m. Saturday, March 11, 2023. The event will be held at TIAA Bank Field's Lower East Club, and all are welcome to attend. The evening will include a cocktail reception with heavy hors d'oeuvres and an evening of dancing to live music from The Bay Kings Band.



Contributed photo

The Black & White Soiree will benefit Catholic Charities' Feed A Family initiative – a yearly push to sustain and expand the agency's hunger programs, which help

thousands of families in need. Tickets to the event are on sale now until Feb. 24. Those wanting to attend can purchase tickets online at ccbjax.org/blackandwhitesoiree.



Photo provided by Investing in Kids (INK)

RSM local office leaders and INK! staff and board members from St. Johns County gather for a donation of \$384,461 from RSM through Birdies Fore Love.

RSM donates \$384K to INK! through Birdies Fore Love

RSM US LLP ("RSM"), the nation's leading provider of audit, tax and consulting services focused on the middle market, continues to support the Northeast Florida community with the charitable giving initiative Birdies Fore Love and the RSM Foundation.

The company's 2022 milestone donation of \$384,461 will benefit the St. Johns Education Foundation, Inc. which operates as Investing in Kids (INK!)

In 2021, RSM donated \$351,721 to INK!, and in 2020, the donation was \$303,003 as part of Birdies Fore Love, a nationwide fundraising campaign related to The RSM Classic, a PGA TOUR event.

"At RSM, we have selected INK! as our local beneficiary," said Mike Vergo, office leader in Northeast Florida. "The company has a firm commitment to help educate young people as future business leaders. In addition to Birdies Fore Love, our local team volunteers with the nonprofit's Tools 4 Schools classroom supply initiative where we help teachers get the classroom resources they need. We are enthusiastic INK! cheerleaders," he said.

According to Donna Lueders, INK!'s executive director, the organization leads

efforts to directly benefit educators and students in the St. Johns County School District with a mission to provide innovative programs and classroom resources.

"We are very grateful to receive this record-breaking gift from RSM to promote the academic success of St. Johns County students through our programs and services," she said.

RSM supports the 88 cities nationwide and in Canada, where its employees, partners and principals live and work through ongoing volunteer activities and fundraising efforts. These efforts include Birdies Fore Love, a nationwide fundraising initiative related to The RSM Classic, a PGA TOUR tournament event for which RSM is the title sponsor.

During the past 12 years, RSM has donated \$32 million to national and local charitable organizations that support youth in the areas of education, hunger, housing and health. Each charity benefits from the funds raised locally by employees, clients, family and friends. With a match from the RSM US Foundation, the firm will give \$6.7 million directly to deserving charities designated by RSM offices in 2022 through Birdies Fore Love.

Save these Dates



Birdies for Charity is a fundraising program offered by THE PLAYERS Championship. Before March 8, enter your donation and guess the number of birdies you think will be made at THE PLAYERS 2023. The closest guess will receive a chance to win \$10,000, and River Garden will also receive a gift from the program.



Questions?
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Sontag Foundation celebrates progress in fighting brain cancer

Brain cancer researchers, area nonprofits receive grants

The Sontag Foundation hosted its 20th anniversary celebration dinner Feb. 7 at TPC Sawgrass as part of its annual scientific retreat, Feb. 6-9.

The event celebrated the Sontag family's commitment to donating an additional \$100 million to advance the foundation's mission: eradicating brain cancer and helping people navigate brain tumor diagnoses, overcome treatment obstacles and gain access to quality health care.

In 2014, the Sontags also established The Brain Tumor Network to provide free navigation services for those with a brain tumor.

At the Feb. 7 event, 10 brain cancer researchers were honored with \$100,000 grants to support their research. Also, 15 Northeast Florida nonprofits were honored with a \$10,000 grant apiece to support the services they provide, bringing the total over the years to \$10 million.

The keynote speaker was Dr. Alfredo Quinones-Hinojosa, chair of the Department of Neurologic Surgery and dean of research at Mayo Clinic, Jacksonville. He spoke on bridging the disparity of health care delivery through his nonprofit, mission:brain. (See mission:brain.org.)

To learn more about the foundation, go to sontagfoundation.org. To learn about The Brain Tumor Network, go to braintumornetwork.org.



Rick Sontag, co-founder of the Sontag Foundation with his wife, the late Susan Sontag, congratulates Operation New Hope Executive Director Reggie Fullwood, whose organization received a \$10,000 grant.



Rick Sontag speaks to attendees of his foundation's 20th anniversary celebration dinner on Feb. 7.

Contributed photos



Sontag Foundation 20th anniversary celebration dinner attendees gather at TPC Sawgrass for a photo.

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Another way to help is by attending the Black & White Soiree on March 11, which supports our Feed A Family initiative.

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I've lived in the Jacksonville area most of my adult life. I know there are many worthy organizations vying for donations this time of year, but I can personally attest to the fact that Children's Home Society of Florida is among the best and worthy.

”

In the Arts



Send your arts news to
news@pontevedrarecorder.com

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 2023 · PAGE 25 www.PonteVedraRecorder.com

Beaches Fine Arts Series to feature newly formed quartet



Beaches Fine Arts Series continues to celebrate its 50th anniversary season with the newly formed ESPRESSIVO! Piano Quartet giving its inaugural concert at 7:30 p.m. Friday, Feb. 24, at St. Paul's by-the-Sea Episcopal Church, 465 11th Ave. N., Jacksonville Beach.

The concert is free. Doors open at 6:45 p.m. and seating is first come, first served. A reception follows with an art exhibit by Elena Øhlander.

Three of the members of ESPRESSIVO! are familiar to local audiences. Jaime Laredo, violin, and Sharon Robinson, cello, have appeared in the Beaches Fine Arts Series three times in its history as the Kalichstein Laredo Robinson Trio.

When pianist Joseph Kalichstein died in March 2022 they decided to dedicate their season of music to his memory. Recently, they joined with Anna Polonsky on piano and Milena Pajaro-von de Stadt on viola to form the new quartet.

Milena Pajaro-von de Stadt has appeared twice in the series as a member of the Dover Quartet.

The quartet will perform works by Mozart and Brahms.

Meet the performers

Pianist Anna Polonsky is widely in demand as a soloist and chamber musician.

She has toured extensively throughout the United States, Europe and Asia. Major projects include participating in the European Broadcasting Union's recording of all Mozart's keyboard sonatas, and a solo recital at Carnegie Hall's Stern Auditorium inaugurating the Emerson Quartet's Perspectives Series.

At the age of 7, she made her solo piano debut at the Special Central Music School in Moscow. She emigrated to the United States in 1990. She earned her master's degree from the Juilliard School.

For over six decades, Jaime Laredo has excelled in the roles of soloist, conductor,



Contributed photos

ESPRESSIVO! Piano Quartet will perform Feb. 24 at St. Paul's by-the-Sea Episcopal Church as part of the Beaches Fine Arts Series. Members of the quartet are Sharon Robinson, Jaime Laredo, Anna Polonsky and Milena Pajaro-van de Stadt.

recitalist, pedagogue and chamber musician. Since his orchestral debut at the age of 11 with the San Francisco Symphony, he has won the admiration and respect of audiences, critics and fellow musicians with passionate and polished performances.

Laredo has recorded nearly 100 discs, including a Grammy Award-winning disc of Brahms Piano Quartets with Emanuel Ax, Isaac Stern and Yo-Yo Ma.

Laredo's stewardship of the New York String Orchestra Seminar at Carnegie Hall and the International Violin Competition of Indianapolis are educational pillars of the musical community.

Milena Pajaro-van de Stadt has established herself as one of the most sought-after violists of her generation. She has performed as orchestra soloist, in recitals and chamber-music concerts throughout the United States, Latin America, Europe and Asia, including an acclaimed 2011 debut recital at London's Wigmore Hall.

She was the founding violist of the Dover Quartet and played in the group from 2008 to 2022. At that time, the Dover Quartet was the winner of multiple awards at the 2013 Banff International String Quartet

Competition and 2010 Fischhoff Chamber Music Competition.

Cellist Sharon Robinson is recognized worldwide as a consummate artist and one of the most outstanding musicians of our time.

She divides her time between teaching and performing. She serves as co-artistic director to several prestigious chamber series across the United States and established the Cleveland Chapter of Music for Food.

Highly sought after for her dynamic master classes, she brings insight to her teaching from the combination of her lifetime experiences as a member of the Houston

Symphony Orchestra, Duke University's Ciompi String Quartet and the Kalichstein-Laredo-Robinson Trio, plus countless solo performances.

Elena Øhlander of Jacksonville is a visual artist and muralist. She earned her BFA in photography from The Art Institute of Jacksonville in 2014 and is pursuing her MFA in painting and drawing from the University of Florida.

For information about Beaches Fine Arts concerts, go to beachesfinearts.org.

For information about ESPRESSIVO!, go to espressivoquartet.com.



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05 | 07 | 23

Casa Marina Hotel
6 - 8pm



First Coast Cultural Center

For more information, visit:
www.firstcoastculturalcenter.org

Film to explore the subject of fear

A screening of Australian filmmaker Bill Bennett's new movie, "Facing Fear," will be held at 2 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 18, at Flagler College's Ringhaver Student Center, 50 Sevilla St.

Bennett is the writer, producer and director. Joining him will be Michael Sandler, author, speaker, coach and co-creator of the School of Mystics, and AWE, the Automatic Writing Experience, who is also in the film.

Bennett and Sandler will remain after the premiere for a Q&A session with the audience.

Bennett has made 16 feature films and several documentaries. His work has been recognized with two Australian Film Institute Awards (Australia's

Oscars) for Best Film and Best Director. He has won two Logies (Australia's Emmy) for Most Outstanding Documentary in television.

Two of Bennett's feature films were in official selection at the Cannes Film Festival and four of his feature films have been in official selection at Toronto. He has won numerous Best Picture awards internationally.

Recently, he wrote, produced and directed a theatrical documentary on fear called "Facing Fear." The film is currently in cinemas across the United States and is a follow-up to his highly acclaimed film on intuition called "PGS — Intuition is your Personal Guidance System," which screened to sell-out

crowds in 2018.

"Facing Fear" is the second in a series of five films proposed by Bennett, followed by a film on Hope, then one on Love. The last film will explore death.

While making "PGS — Intuition is your Personal Guidance System," Bennett realized that fear was the greatest inhibitor to intuition and began to ask himself what is fear and how does it work? And do we really need fear?

"I started out my journey choked with fear, now I'm no longer afraid," Bennett said.

Bennett sought out experts in fear management in a desire to understand how fear worked and how to best man-

age it. Through insightful interviews with Dr. Joe Dispenza, Michael Sandler, Dr. Bruce Lipton, Caroline Myss, Paul Selig, Lee Carroll (Kryon), James Van Praagh, Foster Gamble, Sister Jenna, Michael Tamura and Judith Richards, to name a few, Bennett explores facing fear through scientific and spiritual connections.

Sandler is a mystical teacher and the host of the "Inspire Nation Show," a transformational, self-help, spiritually focused YouTube channel and podcast.

Sandler is a former pro-athlete and near lifelong meditation practitioner in which two near-death experiences transformed his life.

Mural in Jacksonville to be dedicated

A vibrant, semi-permanent mural by nationally renowned public artist Ansley Randall, located at the intersection of San Marco Boulevard and Nira Street, Jacksonville, will be dedicated at noon Thursday, Feb. 16.

The project was initiated by District 5 City Council Member LeAnna Cumber and made possible by the city's public works crosswalk revitalization funding to complement asphalt crack repair and pavement coating work conducted by 1st Choice Engineering Construction & Development.

Randall's untitled design was informed by the local community to reinforce the neighborhood's identity and place while also brightening the pedestrian and driver experience.

She led the implementation over four days between the hours of 7 p.m. and 6 a.m. in early January. The 47-by-48-foot artwork is projected to remain for three years subject to traffic volume.

Randall, an artist based in Atlantic Beach, has been instrumental in championing designs reflecting Jacksonville neighborhoods. In 2017, she founded Jax Is Rad, a platform that highlights Jacksonville artists, musicians and businesses that contribute to the cultural identity of the city. While accomplished here locally, Randall's murals also enliven other major international metropolitan cities such as Miami, New York and Bristol in the United Kingdom.

"We are delighted to engage a broad audience of all ages through Ansley's



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vibrant artistry and are grateful for our partnership with the City of Jacksonville, which supported infusing public art into improvements that enhance the safety and walkability of the San Marco intersection," said Cultural Council Ex-

ecutive Director Diana Donovan.

The dedication will take place at noon in Conference Room 3B at Baptist MD Anderson Cancer Center, located at 1301 Palm Ave. near the new public art. Parking is available on level 3 or 4 of Parking Garage P4, accessible off Gary Street or Palm Avenue.

Randall began her career at Flagler College studying graphic design and fine art. Drawing inspiration from her immediate environment, textiles and fashion, her murals are often characterized by bright colors and mid-century-inspired shapes culminating in retro pieces designed to bring joy to those who experience them. Learn more at ansleyrandall.com.

The Cultural Council of Greater Jacksonville aims to enrich life in Northeast Florida by investing in Arts and Culture. Founded 50 years ago, the Cultural Council operates as a private, not-for-profit, 501(c)(3) organization staffed by professionals and governed by a volunteer board of directors. It provides a range of services to ignite the creative economy and to address the ever-changing needs of the arts and cultural sector and broader community.

Learn more at culturalcouncil.org.

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P.A.St.A. Art Gallery elects new board

The Professional Artists of St. Augustine (P.A.St.A.) Fine Art Gallery have announced the results of the elections for a new board of directors. The art co-op, founded in 1982 on 214 Charlotte St. is starting the new year with an extensive goal of enhancing the gallery's brand and mission for local and regional artists.

Valarie Pothier-Forrester was elected the P.A.St.A. Art Gallery's new president. She received a bachelors degree in art education and a master of arts degree from the University of Florida. She took course work at Penland and John C. Campbell.

She worked several years at the Florida Museum of Natural History and wrote curriculum for the Harn Museum of Art during her years as an art teacher for the School Board of Alachua County. Her love of painting outdoors has led her to become an avid plein air painter, participating in all of the St. Augustine Art Association plein air events over the years. She exhibits her St. Augustine plein air paintings, her vivid alcohol ink paintings and scarves at the gallery.

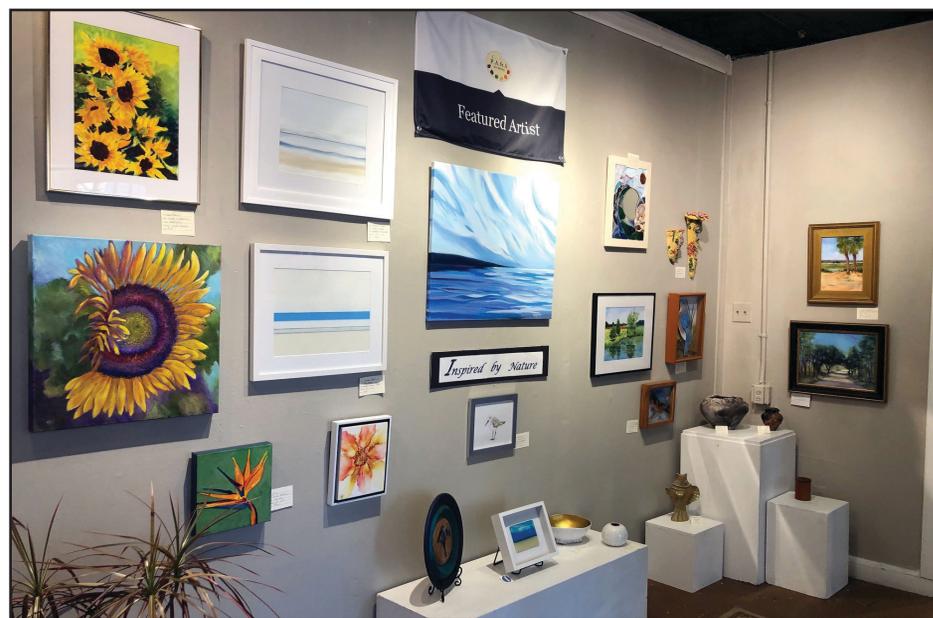
Ginny LeJeune, the new vice president, served as the P.A.St.A. secretary on the previous board. With a passion for art, she studied art and graphic design. She founded Creative Design and Upholstery, a furniture and soft surrounding design company in the 1990s. Combining her love of art and interiors, and influenced by the late Jeremiah Goodman, an artist known for his paintings



of famous interiors in an impressionist style, she began to paint interior paintings and selling her artwork. She shows her unique impressionist style of interiors, and has added a series of tonal landscapes to her work featured at the gallery.

Tina Minahan, the new gallery treasurer, can be found working a variety of local wood and turning it into beautiful bowls, plates and vessels. Her passion had always been woodworking, but it became serious in 2006 when she began working on a lathe. Sourcing her wood from local tree trimmers, neighbors, friends and lumber salvagers, she finds the beauty in the individual wood piece and highlights it in the end result of a perfectly turned-out wood work of art. She continues to expand her skill and knowledge of woodcraft through workshops and woodturning symposiums.

Sheryl Sherwood has been elected as the new secretary for the gallery. She has worked with visually impaired students at the Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind in St. Augustine. Combining her ex-



Contributed photo

P.A.St.A. Fine Art Gallery regularly features local artists.

perience teaching and her love of scripture, she has turned to clay as a way to express her artistic ambitions. Every pot is built one coil at a time, a conscious and meditative method. She fires using Raku or pit firing methods. Each pot expresses a message of faith, hope and love in its organic form, including movement, texture and carvings for visual and tactical appeal. All of her work includes a print/Braille card with an

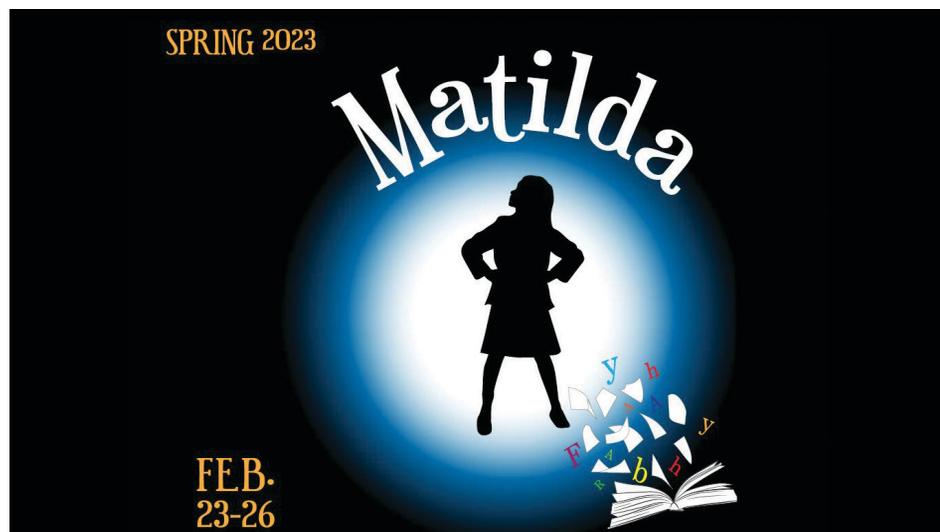
inspirational scripture.

The new board's agenda includes increasing community outreach and awareness through its growing roster of artists.

"We are in the planning stages of creating a destination art gallery for tourists and locals alike, with planned events, workshops and working artists in the gallery," said Pothier-Forrester.

Learn more at pastagalleryart.com.

Bartram Trail to stage 'Matilda'



The Bartram Trail High School Theatre Department will present "Matilda the Musical" Feb. 23 through 26 in the school's auditorium, 7399 Longleaf Pine Pkwy., St. Johns.

Inspired by Roald Dahl's beloved book, "Matilda" is a captivating masterpiece that revels in childhood innocence, imagination and friendship.

Performance dates and times are: 7 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 23; Friday, Feb. 24; and Saturday, Feb. 25. And 2 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 26.

Admission is \$15 for adults and \$10 for

students with a valid school ID.

All advanced tickets will be held at will call under the name of the patron who purchased the tickets online. Doors will open for seating 30 minutes before each performance. Seating is general admission, so plan accordingly.

Tickets will be available at the box office beginning one hour before each performance. The box office will accept cash or checks only.

For ticket information, go to bit.ly/3b9Vi1f.



DONNA Foundation celebrates the 16th running of Marathon Weekend

The 16th DONNA Marathon Weekend concluded Feb. 5 with more than 5,000 runners participating in person at events across the First Coast. Athletes from all 50 states and 10 countries laced up for multiple competitive race events, Feb. 3-5.

In celebration of The DONNA Foundation's 20th anniversary year, participants choosing to raise funds generated about \$250,000 so far this year in support of the critical programs of the DONNA Foundation.

In addition to traditional fundraising efforts, five-time DONNA Marathon women's champion Meaghan Murray-Neuberger participated in this year's event as the day's "Charity Chaser." Starting as the last participant on marathon on Sunday, Murray-Neuberger set out to pass as many athletes as possible, raising \$1 each time. By sprinting past 2,760 participants, she raised \$2,760 in partnership with PUMA.

This year's marathon Sunday, which took runners through a redesigned double-loop course across the Jacksonville

Beaches, saw all new overall champions for its 16th running.

DONNA Marathon Weekend's Sunday races, including the half marathon and sold out marathon events, extended through several First Coast communities, including Atlantic Beach, Neptune Beach and Jacksonville Beach. The start and finish line of both signature race events on Sunday was sponsored by Gilead Oncology.

"DONNA Marathon Weekend is truly one-of-a-kind," said Amanda Napolitano, executive director of The DONNA Foundation. "As we celebrated the milestone of 20 years of survivorship, impact and love over fear through The DONNA Foundation, and 16 years of our iconic races, we were able to reflect on where we are and how far we've come. We have celebrated with so many runners, walkers, survivors and spectators this weekend, and we know that while there will be more miles ahead, the destination is the same — the end of breast cancer."

Contributed photos



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Sports



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Late comeback falls just short for Sharks in district championship

By Jim Moyes

Trailing by as many as 13 points in the second half, the Ponte Vedra Sharks boys basketball team put on a furious rally late but fell just one point short in their 48-47 district championship loss to Oakleaf Feb. 10.

“Our team showed a lot of grit in the second half,” said assistant coach Antwain Conerly following the exciting contest.

Nobody showed more grit than four-year Ponte Vedra starter Nathan Bunkosky, who seemingly single-handedly carried the Sharks to the near victory over a red hot Oakleaf team who is now an amazing 23-1 on the season.

Playing with a heart as big as the center jump circle, the Ponte Vedra point guard left everything he had out on the court in the game’s final exciting minutes.

In the final quarter alone, Bunkosky had six points, three rebounds, three steals and an assist that nearly propelled the Sharks to victory.

However, it was an assist that he didn’t get credit for that might have been the turning point in the ball game.

With the Sharks trailing by a point with just over a minute left in the game, Bunkosky stole the ball and delivered a perfect pass to a teammate, but unfortunately the pass was fumbled and Oakleaf would take over possession.

Still, the Sharks and Bunkosky were

not done as he scored on one of his patented driving layups to cut the deficit to one.

The Sharks fouled with nine seconds remaining and Bunkosky pulled down the rebound and headed down court and passed the ball to Israel Nuhu near midcourt.

Nuhu and an opposing Knights’ player crashed into one another but there was no call as the ball went out of bounds with two seconds left on the clock, and the Sharks had their inbound pass deflected and the Knights survived.

The Sharks outscored the visiting Knights in every quarter but one, the second quarter, but that one quarter surely contributed to the defeat.

Trailing 14-8 after the first quarter, the Knights came out with their guns blazing and went on a 11-0 run, with nine of their points coming on three 3-pointers.

When the two-teams headed to their locker rooms at halftime the Knights had outscored the Sharks 20-6 in the second quarter to lead 29-20 at the break.

The Sharks played more than five minutes without top scorer Nuhu on the floor in the third quarter who had picked up his third foul.

Nuhu returned with less than two seconds left in the quarter and scored on a set out of bounds play on a perfect pass from Bunkosky to close the gap, 42-34.

Needing a spark, head coach Ben Wil-



Photo courtesy of Ponte Vedra High boys basketball

The Ponte Vedra Sharks will go on the road to play Wiregrass Ranch High in the first round of the state tournament after finishing as district runner-up.

son inserted sophomore David Sanchez-Berrera into the lineup.

Playing with a heavy heart after the recent passing of his father, Berrera came through with three free throws, a couple of offensive rebounds and some solid defense in the second half.

Bunkosky finished his heroics on the night with a game-high 18 points, eight rebounds, six assists and five steals.

His five steals moved Bunkosky into

a tie for first in career steals with former Sharks point guard Jackson Johnson, now the current head coach of Newman Prep in Boston.

Although the Sharks did not become district champions, their season has not come to a close, as they will go on the road to face Wiregrass Ranch High School down in Wesley Chapel in the first round of the FHSAA Class 6A state tournament.

THE PLAYERS Profiles: Jordan Spieth, Will Zalatoris, Adam Scott

With less than three weeks to go until the strongest field in golf reconvenes at TPC Sawgrass, THE PLAYERS Championship will profile three players each week to highlight the biggest storylines and set the stage for the 2023 championship. Jordan Spieth, Will Zalatoris and Adam Scott will be among those who arrive at THE PLAYERS coming off successful seasons in 2021-22.

Jordan Spieth

A 13-time PGA TOUR winner, Jordan Spieth won the 2022 RBC Heritage for his lone victory in 2021-22 and finished 13th in the final FedExCup standings before becoming the sixth player to earn a perfect 5-0-0 record in the Presidents Cup. In four starts during the 2022-23 season, Spieth’s best finish is a T13 at the Sentry Tournament of Champions. Set to make his ninth appearance

at THE PLAYERS, the native Texan will look to find the form that led to a T4 in his debut at TPC Sawgrass in 2014 – his only top-10 finish at the event.

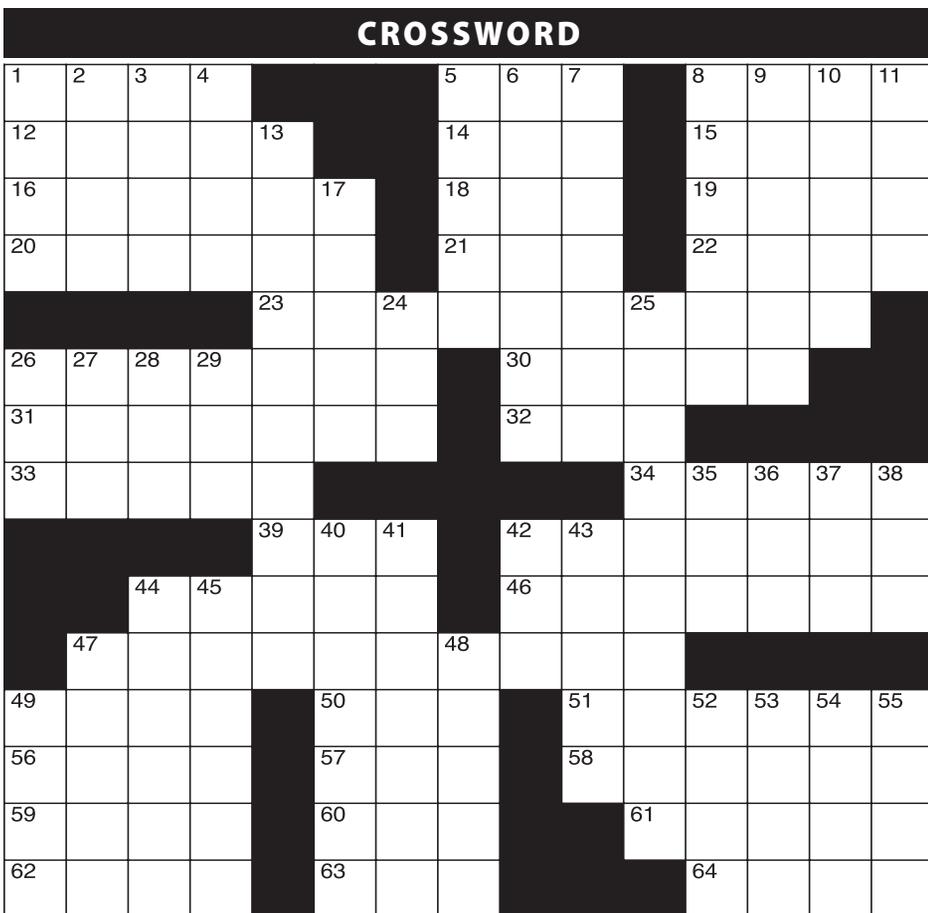
Will Zalatoris

Returning from a back injury that forced him to withdraw from the final two FedExCup Playoffs events, Will Zalatoris is aiming to resume his rise on the PGA TOUR after collecting his maiden victory in the Playoffs opener at the 2022 FedEx St. Jude Championship. The 26-year-old has also notched four runner-up finishes in some of the game’s biggest events, including the 2022 PGA Championship and U.S. Open. In three starts this season, Zalatoris finished T11 at the Sentry Tournament Champions, which marked his first start since August. Zalatoris made his debut at THE PLAYERS in 2021 and

has finished 21st and T26 in his first two starts, respectively.

Adam Scott

The second-youngest winner of THE PLAYERS at 23 years old, Adam Scott only needed 41 PGA TOUR starts before winning at TPC Sawgrass in 2004, which served as his second career TOUR title. Now a 42-year-old, Scott enjoyed a consistent season in 2021-22 that yielded five top-10s and his first trip to the TOUR Championship since 2019. Scott opened the 2022-23 season by playing in both Hawaii events, with a T21 at the Sony Open in Hawaii being his best result. The native Aussie will make his 21st career appearance at THE PLAYERS in 2023, where he owns four top-10 finishes inclusive of his breakout victory nearly two decades ago.



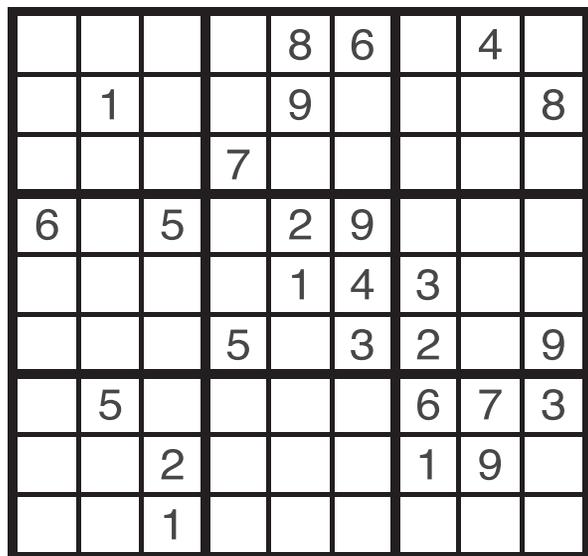
ACROSS

- 1. River in Tuscany
- 5. A way to represent
- 8. Rocker's guitar
- 12. Civil Rights group
- 14. Brew
- 15. Scratch
- 16. W. Asian country
- 18. The Eye Network
- 19. Clarified butter
- 20. Part of the Cascade Range
- 21. Downwind
- 22. A way to steer
- 23. Loop
- 26. Not ingested
- 30. Swampy coniferous forest
- 31. Musician
- 32. Signing
- 33. Containing iron
- 34. Part of a theorem or proof
- 39. Veterans battleground (slang)
- 42. Of enormous proportions
- 44. Italian city
- 46. Come before
- 47. Balm
- 49. Undergarments
- 50. Male parent
- 51. Ropes
- 56. Ear part
- 57. Investment vehicle
- 58. Dictator
- 59. Cain and ___
- 60. A type of code
- 61. Border river along India and Nepal
- 62. It's what's for dinner
- 63. Consume
- 64. Christian ___, designer

- 3. City in central Japan
- 4. Sorrels
- 5. Twinned diamond
- 6. Canadian province
- 7. Monetary units
- 8. Head honcho
- 9. Goddess of wisdom
- 10. Part of a play
- 11. Get rid of
- 13. Applicant
- 17. Bowling alleys have many
- 24. Explosive
- 25. "The Say Hey Kid"
- 26. Ultrahigh frequency
- 27. No (Scottish)
- 28. Make a mistake
- 29. Credit card term
- 35. Keyboard key
- 36. Woman (French)

- 37. In the middle of
- 38. Score perfectly
- 40. Coat a metal with an oxide coat
- 41. Deadly disease
- 42. A place to dock a boat (abbr.)
- 43. Belch
- 44. Member of U.S. Navy
- 45. "In ___": separate from others
- 47. Examine extensively
- 48. Adjust
- 49. Tattle
- 52. Actor Pitt
- 53. Gulls
- 54. Within
- 55. Exceptionally talented performer

SUDOKU



Level: Intermediate

Here's How It Works:

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

DOWN

- 1. Cuckoos
- 2. Skin issue

JAXUSL taps Mauricio Ruiz for dual business and technical role

Veteran head coach brings experience to cultivate NE Florida's new United Soccer League franchise

JAXUSL, the United Soccer League (USL) franchise group bringing men's and women's professional soccer to Northeast Florida, has announced that Mauricio Ruiz, former veteran head coach of Jacksonville University's men's soccer program, has joined the professional soccer organization in a fundamental business development role and will also advise and support the organization's continuing soccer operations efforts in a technical capacity.

Additionally, Ruiz will serve a vital role by cultivating relationships between JAXUSL and the First Coast's numerous youth and adult soccer clubs.

"We're thrilled to have a person of Mauricio's caliber and experience join JAXUSL," said JAXUSL President and CEO Steve Livingstone. "Along with his extensive knowledge and experience in college soccer and player development, Mauricio is well-known throughout the First Coast business and sporting community and a highly-respected leader throughout Florida's soccer community as a coach, mentor and passionate ambassador for the game."

"I'm humbled and excited to be a part of JAXUSL to bring pro soccer back to Northeast Florida," Ruiz said. "The First Coast is an exceptional market for youth soccer, and we have a passionate soccer community. Uniting our soccer landscape will be a key step to helping us accomplish our long-term goals to educate, develop and showcase our area's talent on a top stage."

Ruiz has considerable experience in identifying and developing young soccer talent. Among the players he has previ-

ously recruited and developed during his college coaching tenures are current US-MNT World Cup roster and MLS Toronto FC goalkeeper Sean Johnson and Hadji Barry, who broke the USL transfer record last year with his move from Colorado Switchbacks to Egyptian Premier League side Future FC.

Ruiz has also helped shaped the futures of several MLS Draft picks, including Deshorn Brown (currently playing for the USL Sacramento Republic), Kevan George (formerly with USL Charlotte Independence), Romario Williams, the number three pick overall in the MLS Draft (currently with USL New Mexico United) and Joe Amico (who played four seasons with USL Orange County SC).

Ruiz, who holds a U.S. Soccer Federation (USSF) "A" license in coaching, led Jacksonville University's men's soccer program from 2014 to 2022 and guided the program to the ASUN Conference Tournament title in 2021, which was the team's first NCAA appearance since 2008.

He joined the Dolphins after spending seven seasons at the University of Central Florida (UCF), where he assisted in developing the Knights into one of the top programs in the nation. In both roles, Ruiz helped his teams win on the pitch while developing his players' individual talents and drove crucial funding for the development of his successful programs.

JAXUSL is the operating company formed to bring and develop men's and women's professional United Soccer League franchises to Northeast Florida. The company's goal is to bring competitive USL Championship action to the First Coast by 2025 and to work with local authorities in the development of a 15,000-capacity stadium and training facility to host the club in Northeast Florida.

For more information, go to jaxusl.com.

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