

# THE RECORDER



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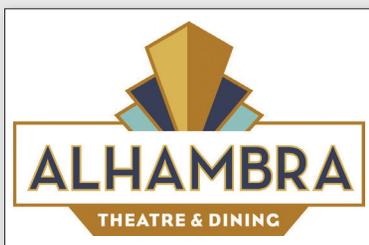
March 30, 2023  
Volume 54, No. 22  
\$1.00

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PonteVedraRecorder.com



**Connections**  
Page 15



**Arsenic & Old Lace**  
**Review**  
Page 34



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



Photo by Anthony Richards

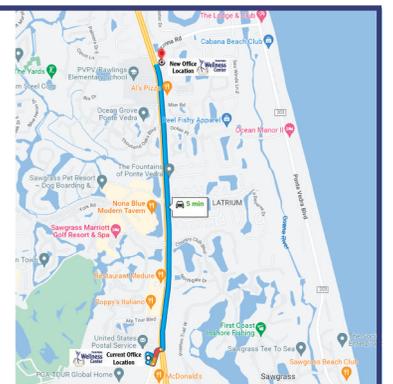
Senior Kate Mikle hits a double as part of a nine-run second inning that propelled the Sharks to a 15-0 win over rival Nease March 24. The Sharks finished with 19 hits in the game. *Read the full story and see photos from the Sharks' offensive explosion on page 36.*

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### New Office Location in Ponte Vedra Beach

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# INSIDE

One of Us

Page 6

Business Weekly

Pages 31-33

In the Arts

Pages 34-25

Sports

Pages 36-38



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## Send us your news

We welcome submissions of photos, stories, columns and letters to the editor. Let us know what's happening. 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](mailto: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](http://www.pontevedrarecorder.com)

Plus, find the Recorder on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/ThePVRecorder](http://www.facebook.com/ThePVRecorder)

## BRIEFS

### Essential Tremor Support Group to meet

Essential Tremor Support Group will meet at 11 a.m. Tuesday, April 4, at Baptist Health-place at Nocatee No. 130. Attendees will meet to share their journeys with ET. The featured speaker will be Stephen Morio, MHA with Insightec Focused Ultrasound discussing an incisionless treatment for ET patients who've not responded to medication. RSVP to Jan Kary at [jkary@verizon.net](mailto:jkary@verizon.net) or 202-438-6750.

### Local historian and author to speak

Scott Grant, a local historian and asset manager, will speak at 6:30 p.m. April 18 at the Ponte Vedra Beach Branch Library, 101 Library Blvd. Doors open at 6 p.m. Admission is free.

Grant's book, "The Merchant of Death is Dead: True Stories of the Progress of Humanity," gives readers an insight into the lives of famous people such as Alfred Nobel, Tommy Hilfiger, general James Doolittle, golfer Jack Nicklaus and many others, as well as famous events. Grant has a degree in economics and history, and earned a law degree from Rutgers University.

The event is presented by the Friends of the Ponte Vedra Beach Library.

### Palm Valley History Festival is April 22

The Palm Valley History Festival, celebrating the Community Association's 75th anniversary, will be held 1-7 p.m. Saturday, April 22, at The Palm Valley Community Center, 148 Canal Blvd.

This event will highlight the unique history, culture and fortitude of the original pioneer families of Palm Valley and feature popular storytellers and local authors signing their books, plus a variety of arts, crafts, activities, and moonshine tasting.

Local historian Scott Grant will share his newly created visual presentation about

the rich history of the greater Palm Valley area and its founding families. Learn about Spanish settlers, a British indigo plantation, moonshine-making sheriffs and Nazi spies. Enjoy an outdoor farmers market and live folk music.

For more information, call 904-285-2130.

### Christ Church announces April events

Christ Church, 400 San Juan Drive, Ponte Vedra Beach, is planning a couple of special events in April.

- Festival of the Arts, sponsored by the Creative Academy at Christ Church, will be held 5-8 p.m. Saturday, April 22. Tickets will be available at the door. Admission is \$35 per family or \$12 per individual, \$5 for children. Admission price includes food, drinks (alcohol is separate for purchase) and arts and crafts, quilting, musical performances, dance performances, face painting, etc. This event will be fun for the entire family. Questions: [Barbiekroberts@gmail.com](mailto:Barbiekroberts@gmail.com)

- Musical Review of Broadway show tunes: 7 p.m. Wednesday, April 26; 7 p.m. Friday, April 27; and 3 and 7 p.m. Saturday, April 28. Ticket prices range from \$20 to \$50. Directed by Cathy Dooley with choreography by Jocelyn Geronimo. Questions: [Barbiekroberts@gmail.com](mailto:Barbiekroberts@gmail.com).

### Democratic Club to meet

The Ponte Vedra Democratic Club will hold its monthly meeting on Tuesday, April 25, at the Ponte Vedra Library, 101 Library Road. Chat-and-chew is at 5:30 p.m. The meeting begins at 6 p.m. Featured speaker will be Florida Times-Union columnist and political observer Nate Monroe. For more information, email [jkary@verizon.net](mailto:jkary@verizon.net).

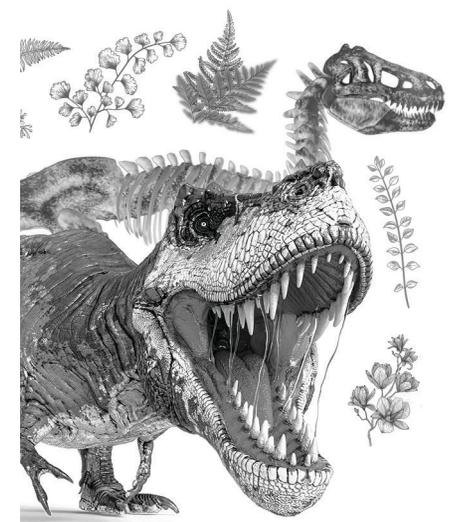
— Compiled by Shaun Ryan

## PUZZLE SOLUTIONS



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

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# TrailMark hosting Groove in the Grove Music Festival on April 1

The nature-first community of TrailMark is hosting Groove in the Grove, a day of live music and fun from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, April 1. The free music festival is family-friendly, pet-friendly and open to all.

Groove in the Grove will feature live music from Northeast Florida bands Smokestack (11:15 a.m. to 1:15 p.m.) and the Cumberland Band (1:45 to 3:45 p.m.)

There will be food trucks, including Hapa Li, Mama's Food, Saffron, Mister Softee, Tikiz Shaved Ice and Ice Cream, Twisted Okie and Pet Wants Jax, and a

beer-and-wine tent as well as a variety of beverages for purchase.

A family fun zone will offer face painting by Old City Facecraft, rock climbing and bungee jump, and the TrailMark Adventure Trail and playground are open to all. A market area with local vendors will feature jewelry, artwork, plants and more.

"We hope everyone will bring a lawn chair or blanket and plan to spend the day grooving in the grove at TrailMark," said GreenPointe Developers Marketing Director Gaynelle James.

Go to [eventbrite.com/e/2023-groove-in-the-grove-tickets-565650244107](https://eventbrite.com/e/2023-groove-in-the-grove-tickets-565650244107) to reserve free tickets.

TrailMark has been designed around its natural environment, creating opportunities for residents to connect with nature and their neighborhood. While at Groove in the Grove, visitors are invited to explore TrailMark's miles of trails and parks, community amenities center with beach-entry pool and model homes.

TrailMark's premier builder team, which includes Dream Finders Homes, Drees Homes, Lennar, MasterCraft

Builder Group and Richmond American Homes, offers single-family, one- and two-story homes in a conservation area setting priced from the \$300,000s to the \$900,000s.

Dream Finders Homes' Reverie at TrailMark, a 55+ community for active adults, offers single-family homes enhanced with abundant recreational amenities priced from the \$300,000s to the \$500,000s.

To learn more, go to [TrailMarkLiving.com](https://TrailMarkLiving.com).

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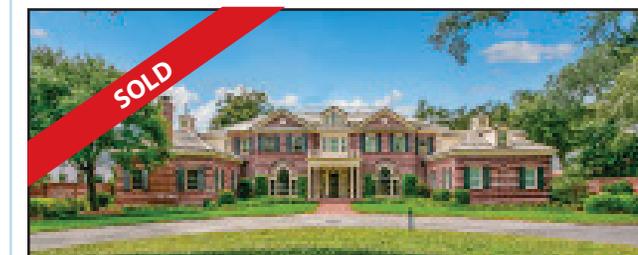


### Mandarin Riverfront Estate

Stunning 5.81 acre riverfront estate in Mandarin with 159ft of water frontage offering expansive views of the St Johns River.

The neo-classical designed home, with identical front and rear elevations, offers elegant finishes throughout.

**3 Bedrooms, 3 Bathrooms, 2 Half Bathrooms \$2,200,000**



### San Jose Riverfront Estate

Incredible doesn't begin to describe this gorgeous 3 story all brick riverfront estate home. Current owners custom built in 2003. Designed by well known Architect Richard Skinner. Gorgeous live oaks and lush landscape drape the more than 3 acres situated on a high bluff lot spanning 190' of St. Johns River Frontage

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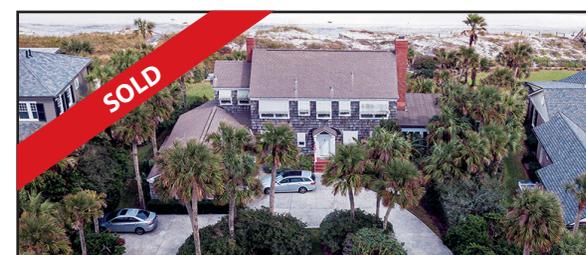
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### Oceanfront Home on Ponte Vedra Blvd.

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

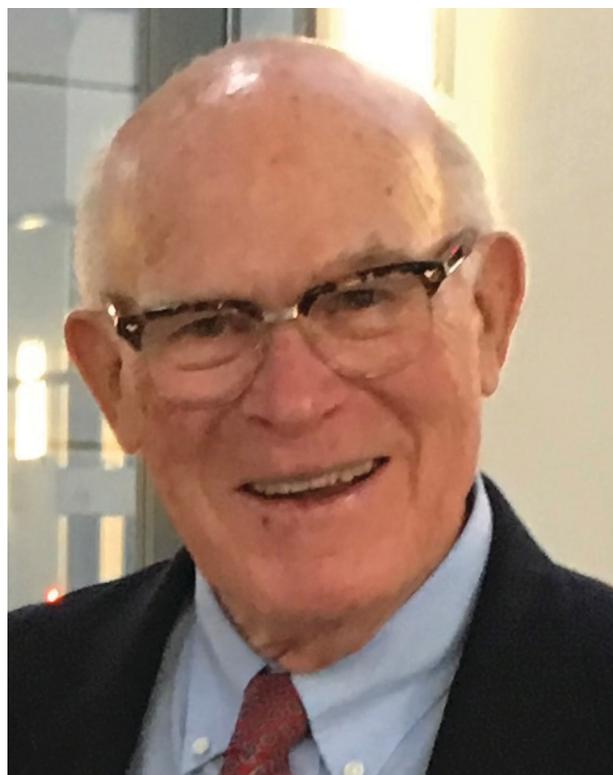


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**OBITUARIES**



**Stanley William Cairns**

Born July 16, 1930, in New York City and raised in New Rochelle N.Y. Attended New Rochelle High School, and The Taft School in Watertown, CT. Received a BSE in Chemical Engineering from Princeton University in 1952. He joined the sales department of Jefferson Chemical Co. — a subsidiary of American Cyanamid and Texas Oil Co.

In 1954, he joined the Navy and attended Officers Candidate School in Newport, RI. After receiving his commission in August 1954, he married Ruth (Pat) Thompson of Greenwich, CT, and they were moved to Pensacola, FL where he was enrolled in the Navy Flight Training program. He received his wings in March 1956 and served in an All-Weather Attack squadron with one tour to the Mediterranean aboard the aircraft carrier USS Randolph. After completing his military commitment, he returned to Jefferson Chemical Co. in New York.

In 1961 he was recruited by the Chemical Division of General Mills and the family was moved to Houston, TX where he became the District Sales Manager. Subsequent moves were made to Kankakee, IL as Sales Manager, and then to Minneapolis, MN headquarters as Director of Sales and Marketing. In 1973 he was recruited by the Commercial Products Division of S.C. Johnson in Racine, WI as its General Manager. He worked for S.C. Johnson for 20 years in a number of international and domestic management positions until his retirement in 1993 where he was the Vice President for North American Operations.

After retirement, he and Pat moved to Ponte Vedra Beach, FL where they built a home at Sawgrass Country Club. He served on a number of Country Club committees and became Board President in 1998. Stan enjoyed both golf and tennis and world travel with Pat., as well as boating and fishing at their condo in Treasure Cay, Abaco, Bahamas. With the warmer Florida weather, they decided to sell their Bahamas condo and purchase one in the North Carolina mountains.

In 2010, they decided to move to Vicars Landing Continuing Care Retirement Community in Ponte Vedra.

He lost Pat to lung cancer in 2013 but is survived by his three sons, Charles (Johanna) of East Troy, WI, Stanley (Ann) of Wayne, PA, and Jeffrey (Kirsten) of Palatine, IL, and eight grandsons, Paul of Daytona Beach, FL, Ted of Racine, WI, Alex (Kelsey) of Indianapolis, IN, Nate of Indianapolis, IN, Tyler of Madison, WI, Ian (Paulette) of Fort Smith, AR, Julian of Wayne, PA, Anthony of Palatine, IL and one great granddaughter, Cecelia of Indianapolis, IN. Please visit his online Tribute at [www.quinn-shalz.com](http://www.quinn-shalz.com).

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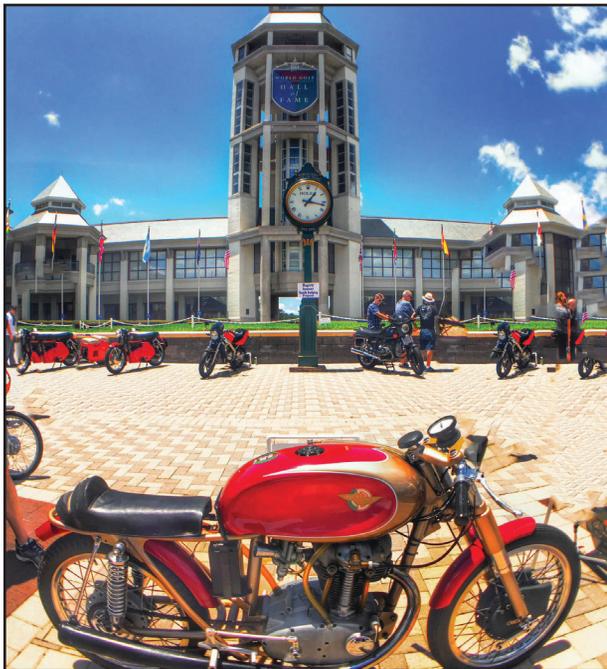
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Contributed photos



The 23rd Annual Riding into History Concours d'Elegance will be held at World Golf Village April 15 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.



Vicki Smith will be co-grand marshal at this year's Riding into History. She is a Motogiro d'Italia hall of famer.

# Grand marshals named for Riding into History showcase April 15

By Anthony Richards

The World Golf Village in St. Augustine is known as a place that has preserved the history of golf over the years, but it will also showcase some historic motorcycles during the 23rd Annual Riding into History Concours d'Elegance April 15.

The concours will be held from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the World Golf Village and will feature an array of makes and models of motorcycles 35 years and older.

This year's event will have a pair of grand marshals in AMA hall of famer and Barber Motorsports Museum consultant Brian Slark and Motogiro d'Italia hall of famer Vicki Smith.

"For anyone that isn't familiar with this event, it's a pretty wonderful weekend, great lunch ride to the ocean, a fun charity dinner and the show itself is right in the center of the World Golf Hall of Fame complex with bikes lined

up around the lake under shady trees," Smith said. "It's long been one of my favorite no miss weekends for years, and I am really happy to be able to contribute to the love and charity they have spread through the vintage motorcycle community over the last 22 years."

Entrants in the show will have the opportunity to participate in a ride through the back roads of historic Florida along with the grand marshals during a tour April 14 followed by a grand marshal banquet that night.

Space is limited for the tour and pre-registration is recommended to attend both the tour and banquet festivities.

There is no entry fee for qualified motorcycles to be part of the show, but each motorcycle must be registered and the deadline to enter is April 10.

All proceeds from the concours will go towards benefiting the nonprofit K9s for Warriors and their efforts to help team up service dogs with veterans.

Another unique tradition that has

developed since 2014 is the concours' youth judging program, which allows children 8 to 16 years old the chance to see what it's like to be in the shoes of a judge when looking at the motorcycles.

The goal of the program is to promote interest in vintage motorcycles among the next generation.

Parents with children interested in being a youth judge during the event can fill out the form by going to [ridinginto-history.org/youth-judging](http://ridinginto-history.org/youth-judging).

Although Riding Into History focuses on motorcycles 35 years and older, a new initiative will be introduced this year called "Under 35 is Alive."

The new class is for anyone 14 to 34 years old with a motorcycle that is also between 14 and 34 years old.

Just as the youth judging, the "Under 35 is Alive" concept is being implemented as another creative way to develop more younger motorcycle enthusiasts and get them involved with all that Riding into History presents.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

# Boy Scout hopes traffic survey will benefit community

To The Editor:

My name is Matthew Rattigan Jr. I am 12 years old and live in Ponte Vedra Beach. I am a member of Boy Scout Troop 277 and am working on my communications merit badge, which is required for me to advance to Eagle Scout. I have chosen to write a letter to the editor as part of my work to complete this merit badge.

I am writing to you in regard to the article dated March 23, 2023, titled, "New traffic survey available for Ponte Vedra Beach residents until April 8."

I think it is great that the Ponte Vedra Beach Citizens Traffic Task Force is conducting a survey to address traffic concerns in the community. Each morning, my dad drives me and my siblings to school down Palm Valley Road, and we see firsthand how the increased population and cars on the road have affected our commute. We see the same thing each afternoon on the way home. I do not want to see our town become a highway but understand that a growing community needs growing infrastructure to support it. I hope that this traffic survey will help improve our community, without bringing in a lot of construction. I like Ponte Vedra Beach the way it is, and I hope it will stay nice.

It would be great for the community to get involved and voice their opinion on this very important topic.

Thank you for your time and have a great week.

Sincerely,  
Matthew Rattigan Jr.

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Haleigh Tatko took a wedding gift and used it to help her form her own cookie company. The Ponte Vedra resident's business slogan is "pharmacist by day, cookie queen by night," as she shares her "day job" with being the owner of Tatko Cookie Co. She quickly learned that she had a knack for decorating cookies and prides herself in making them look their best for any occasion out there.

## Haleigh Tatko

### As told to Anthony Richards

#### Tell us about your background and where you are from?

I'm originally from South Carolina, having lived in the Greenville-Spartanburg and Charleston areas. I moved to Jacksonville in 2019 to finish my Doctor of Pharmacy degree from the Medical University of South Carolina. My husband and I quickly considered Ponte Vedra to be our new home, and we moved to Nocatee last year.

#### What led to the idea behind and creation of Tatko Cookie Co.?

Tatko Cookie Co. came about rather unexpectedly! I received a KitchenAid mixer and some baking supplies as wedding gifts in 2021. After dabbling in cupcakes, cookies and cakes, I decided to attempt decorating royal icing sugar cookies on a whim.

To my complete surprise, the skill of creating these decorative treats came naturally and brought me so much joy. I created Tatko Cookie Co. in order to channel my creative hobby and help others celebrate special occasions with customized cookies.

#### What are your goals and approach for the business?

My primary goal for Tatko Cookie Co. is to stay true to why I started this business from the beginning by finding joy in each project that I pursue.

Whether it's custom orders or holiday cookie sales, I want each client interaction and order fulfillment to support my creative freedom and bring happiness to myself and others.

#### What are the most rewarding parts of the business?

The most rewarding aspects of my business are working with repeat customers and receiving pictures of clients' family and friends enjoying my creations at their celebratory events.

There is something so special as a small business owner about a client trusting you to be their "cookie lady" on multiple occasions and sharing their experience with you with photos and feedback.

I also had the opportunity to be a vendor at the Nocatee Christmas Market this past holiday season. I met so many wonderful locals who took delight in my festive creations and have worked with me again since the event.

#### What kind of cookies do you specialize in?

I specialize in decorated royal icing sugar cookies, and I also enjoy making macarons.

#### What do you enjoy most about living in the Northeast Florida area?

Northeast Florida offers a beautiful and relaxing coastal atmosphere that reminds me of my time spent in Charleston, South Carolina, but what makes us feel at home in Ponte Vedra is the people.

I love getting to meet people from different backgrounds at various walks of life, and learning why they chose Northeast Florida to be their home. I feel very lucky to be a part of a community that enjoys supporting each other in their small businesses and specialized crafts.

#### What do you like to do in your free time?

My business "slogan" is 'pharmacist by day, cookie queen by night,' so Tatko Cookie Co. is a lot of what I do in my free time! I also enjoy going to the beach and taking golf cart rides with my husband and fur daughter, Bella.



A wedding gift led to Haleigh Tatko beginning Tatko Cookie Co.

Photo courtesy of Haleigh Tatko

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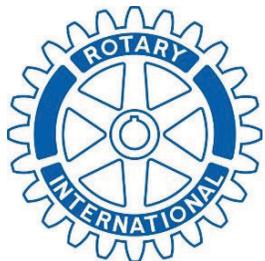


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The Rotary Club of Ponte Vedra Beach
in cooperation with The Ponte Vedra Recorder
2023 Local Heroes Awards
Nomination Form

Nomination Deadline:
April 15, 2023
Email entries to:
stevecrosby101@gmail.com
or mail to:
Local Heroes Awards Committee
Rotary Club of Ponte Vedra Beach
P.O. Box 70
Ponte Vedra Beach, FL 32004
Or submit your nomination online at: pvbrotary.org

The Local Heroes Awards recognize individuals who give back to the community and reflect the spirit of the Rotary Club's motto, "Service Above Self." From volunteering with local charities to giving back through the arts, education, environmental protection activities or doing your job in an exemplary way, we seek to recognize the "unsung heroes" who make Ponte Vedra such a special place to live, work and raise a family.

Please complete this nomination form and return it to the address below by April 15, 2023. For more information or any questions, contact Ponte Vedra Beach Rotary Club member Steve Crosby at stevecrosby101@gmail.com.

Nomination Submitted By:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Nominee Information:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Title/Organization (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

Nominee's activities and/or contributions to the community:

Please provide sufficient details so the nominating committee may give your nominee every consideration! Feel free to attach additional pages as well as a resume, articles or other supporting materials (optional).

Multiple horizontal lines for providing details on the nominee's activities and contributions.

Thank you for your nomination!

# 'Night in the Vineyard' event benefits programs to safeguard youth

The Monique Burr Foundation for Children will hold "A Night in the Vineyard" from 6 to 9 p.m. Tuesday, April 4, at SoNapa Grille, located at 2400 3rd St. South in Jacksonville Beach.

The signature event will feature live entertainment, auctions, gourmet food, curated wine pairings and great company, all in support of the foundation's mission to keep youth safe. April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month, and the foundation is dedicated to protecting children from all types of abuse, bullying, online exploitation and human trafficking through prevention education.

General admission tickets are \$150 per person and must be purchased in advance at [anightinthevineyard.com](http://anightinthevineyard.com).

Tickets include entry into the event, wine tastings, food, access to the live and silent auctions and live musical entertainment by Nashville recording artist Colleen Orender and singer-songwriter Paris Winningham, a finalist from NBC's "The Voice." Complimentary valet parking will be available for all guests. The number of tickets is limited.

All event proceeds will support the



Photo by Susan Griffin

Art was auctioned at last year's "A Night in the Vineyard."

foundation's prevention education programs — personal safety curriculum that educate and empower youth, and the adults in their lives, with strategies to recognize, prevent and respond to all forms of child abuse, bullying, exploitation and other types of child victimization.

The programs are comprehensive, evidence-based/trauma-informed and provide youth with universal strategies

to keep them safe, including five easy-to-remember safety rules. The programs are proven to be effective, and they are trusted by schools and parents.

Since its inception, the foundation has reached more than 9 million children with its prevention education programs. This second annual "A Night in the Vineyard" fundraising event will enable the foundation to raise much-needed funds to reach

more youth around the world and remove obstacles to safe communities.

The Monique Burr Foundation for Children expressed gratitude for its 2023 "A Night in the Vineyard" event sponsors, which include 4 Rivers Smokehouse, Blue Stream Fiber, Carlton Construction, Clockwork Marketing Services, Dominion Engineering Group, Dream Finders Homes, Drummond Press, The Fiorentino Group, Foley & Lardner LLP, Francis Ford Coppola Winery, Glisson Family Investments, Go Bright Marketing, GreenPointe Holdings, Hahn Family Wines, iPhotoBooth Jax, K & G Construction Co, Lennar, Lift Up Auction, MasterCraft Builder Group, NiteLites, Oceano Wines, Pacific Southern Wine Company, PRI Productions, Republic National Distributing Company, SoNapa Grille, Southern Glazer's Wine and Spirits, Tarpon Cellars, The Tim and Leah Chapman Foundation, TomaHook, Valencourt Construction, Waste Pro, West Coast Wines and 904 Happy Hour.

Sponsorship opportunities are still available. To learn more and lend support, go to [anightinthevineyard.com](http://anightinthevineyard.com).

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# Sixth Annual Apryle Showers Run set for April 2



Photo courtesy of Apryle Showers Foundation

This year marks the Sixth Annual Apryle Showers Run.

By Anthony Richards

The Sixth Annual Apryle Showers Run, considered Florida's fastest 10k run, is set for April 2 starting at 7:30 a.m. and will take place in Nocatee.

It will be a busy morning at the event, which will kick off with the runner's village opening at 6:30 a.m. and a kids' fun run following the 10k at 8:45 a.m.

One of the things that has led to the run's designation as "Florida's fastest 10k," is the course itself, which consists of a 6.2-mile loop through the Nocatee community that is wide open and predominantly flat, which makes for some fast times posted.

All proceeds raised during the event will go towards the Apryle Showers Foundation, which is a nonprofit organization doing its part to help cancer patients 30 to 55 years old.



The organization is named after Apryle Showers, and has honored her ever since it was started just months after she lost her battle with cancer at 38 years old.

The kids' fun run is free for all children 12 years old and younger it is roughly one mile long and will start and end at Nocatee Station Field.

Knowing how popular rucking continues to be throughout the Nocatee community, a special rucking division has been created along with all the various age groups for the 10k race.

Awards will be handed out at the end of the event to the top three finishers in each designated group, while prize money will go to the top three male and female finishers overall.

Three hundred dollars will go to the two overall winners, while \$200 will go to second place and \$100 for those who come home third overall.

Also new for this year is a 10k relay, which will involve two people teaming up to run or walk to the 5k distance each.

This is an initiative that could make the event even more fun and enjoyable for couples or families because they can truly complete 10k together as a team.

Runners are asked to park at Nocatee Station Field located at 400 Nocatee Center Way in Ponte Vedra Beach.

Volunteers are still being accepted to help with the event and the form to sign up can be found by going to the fastest10k.com/volunteer or can get involved by contacting Ryan Harrison by calling or texting 904-293-9630 or by emailing ryan.harrison@gmail.com.

Volunteering is a great way for students to get service hours.

The website has a place where anyone interested can donate and become a member of "Apryle's Army."



## NOTICE OF CERTIFICATION OF TAX ROLL

**Pursuant to Sections 193.122 and 197.323, Florida Statutes, Notice is Hereby Given that the Tax Roll for St. Johns County was Re-Certified to the St. Johns County Tax Collector on the 23rd day of March, 2023, for the Collection of 2022 Taxes, to reflect all changes made by the Value Adjustment Board.**

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# New scholarships established for Class of 2023 graduates

The St. Johns County Education Foundation, which operates as Investing in Kids (INK!), has announced the launch of a new online scholarship application portal for local seniors attending public high schools.

Go to [apply.ink-stjohns.org](http://apply.ink-stjohns.org) for eligibility requirements and criteria under the “Senior Scholarship” tab. A student may submit a single application online for multiple scholarship opportunities. The deadline to apply is Wednesday, April 5.

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INK! oversees more than 20 scholarships totaling more than \$50,000 in awards for post-secondary education including college, vocational or technical education. Award amounts range from \$1,000 to \$3,300. Scholarships available to graduating seniors include:

- Dr. Wayne Hartley Memorial Scholarship For The Academies with up to six awards in the amount of \$1,000 each, available to two graduating seniors from each of three local high schools including Allan D. Nease High School, St. Augustine High School and Pedro Menendez High School.
- Jack Hamilton Wheeler Scholarship with three total scholarships in the amounts of \$2,000, \$1,500 and \$1,000 awards to students pursuing college or vocational school.
- Laurie Bennett Ellis Scholarship offers one scholarship to a student majoring in education at a two-year or four-year college or university. For the Class of 2023, the scholarship award has been increased to \$1,250 by the Ellis Family.
- David Toner Scholarship awards one \$1,000 scholarship to a graduating senior

in St. Johns County who plans to attend Florida State University in the fall of 2023.

- Tucker McCarty Health Science Scholarship provides one \$1,000 scholarship to a student graduating from the Flagler Health+ Academy of Medical and Health Careers at Pedro Menendez High School.
- MacDonald Family Education Scholarship will award one \$1,000 scholarship to a graduating senior from Bartram Trail High School enrolling in college to pursue a degree in education.
- Lieutenant Colonel Sally MacDonald Memorial Scholarship will be awarded to a graduating senior who is an active member of a Junior Reserve Officer’s

Training Corps (JROTC) program in a St. Johns County public school providing one year of tuition equal to 30 credit hours at a Florida public state college.

- Investing in Kids Jumpstart Scholarships with up to 10 need-based scholarships awarded with the value equal to one year of tuition, 30 credit hours at a Florida state college.

Students can also submit applications in print form to INK! or through public school guidance counselors by the April 5 deadline. For more information or to request a paper scholarship application form, contact Jim Wheeler, INK! Director of Operations and Students Programs, at 904-547-7121 or email [James.Wheeler@stjohns.k12.fl.us](mailto:James.Wheeler@stjohns.k12.fl.us).




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# Fostering Connections is finalist for grants

Fostering Connections has been selected as a finalist for the CareSource Foundation Grant Challenge. Fostering Connections and other finalists now move on to a public voting stage. Supporters can vote now for the organization they believe is making the biggest impact. The public can vote once a day for the voting period, which ends on April 12.

“It is an honor to be a finalist for this prestigious grant,” Aubrie Simpson-Gotham, said Fostering Connections founder and CEO. “Being selected for this grant will provide the funding we need to build a digital learning platform that will allow our organization to bring our career skills, college readiness and life skills classes to youth impacted by foster care or trauma throughout the state of Florida, to help them have the skills they need to achieve economic self-sufficiency and thrive in life.”

Fostering Connections is a nonprofit organization that provides educational programs and scholarships to youth

impacted by foster care or trauma. Established in 2019, Fostering Connections provides services for students in pre-K through grade 12 in Duval, St. Johns, Putnam, Flagler and Volusia counties. In 2022, Fostering Connections served more than 300 youth across Northeast Florida.

The CareSource Foundation Grant Challenge was established to recognize organizations and programs that are making significant impacts on communities’ toughest health issues. Through the new initiative, the CareSource Foundation aims to inspire innovation on reducing health disparities and moving the needle on health equity.

Awards will be distributed with the top vote-getter receiving the grand prize. Competitions are held in various states with the focus varying from state to state.

All current competitions can be found at [caresourcefoundationgrantchallenge.com](https://caresourcefoundationgrantchallenge.com). Select the correct competition, click on it and then cast your vote.

# Ponte Vedra boys lacrosse to hold mulch fundraiser this weekend



Contributed photo

The Ponte Vedra High boys lacrosse team will hold their 14th annual mulch fundraising event April 1-2. Members of the squad will spread mulch at houses throughout the community to raise money for the program.

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# Boselli to receive award at Mineral City Celebration gala

Tickets are now on sale for the Mineral City Celebration gala sponsored by the Rotary Club of Ponte Vedra Beach and benefiting numerous Northeast Florida charities. Tickets may be purchased online at mineralcitycelebration.com.

This year's Mineral City Celebration will be held May 13 at the Sawgrass Marriott Golf Resort & Spa. It will feature a "Rat Pack" theme. Guests will be transported back in time to 1960s Las Vegas, when Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin, Sammy Davis Jr. and their friends held court at The Copa Room in The Sands Hotel.

In addition to cocktails and dinner, the evening will include entertainment by nationally acclaimed Frank Sinatra tribute artist Michael Dutra. The gala will also feature the "Luck Be a Lady Silent Auction," "It Was a Very Good Year Wine Pull" and "Let's Get Away From It All Raffle" for a luxury trip to Italy, Ireland, Las Vegas, Hawaii or

Belize.

Tickets for the trip raffle may be purchased on the event website.

## Honoring Tony Boselli

A special highlight of the gala will be the presentation of the 2023 Rock of the Community Award to Jacksonville Jaguars legend and Ponte Vedra Beach resident Tony Boselli. A 2022 Pro Football Hall of Fame inductee, Boselli will be honored for his devotion to the First Coast and his philanthropic efforts through The Boselli Foundation, which provides educational support and professional development for local youth and teachers.

"Tony Boselli is a true champion for local kids and families," said Rotary Club President Dr. Ronald "Doc" Renuart. "The Rotary Club created the Rock of the Community Award to recognize individuals who dedicate themselves to making a positive impact on Ponte Vedra Beach and the First Coast, and



Contributed photo

Jacksonville Jaguars legend Tony Boselli will receive the Rock of the Community Award at this year's Mineral City Celebration gala.

both on and off the field, Tony Boselli is amply deserving of this honor."

The Mineral City Celebration is the signature annual fundraising event for the Rotary Club of Ponte Vedra Beach. Proceeds from the event have benefited more than two dozen local nonprofit or-

ganizations and charities, including the Beaches Dial-a-Ride program, Mission House, BEAM, HEAL, the Council on Aging, PACE Center for Girls, Boys & Girls Clubs, K9s for Warriors and more.

For event tickets or more information, go to mineralcitycelebration.com.

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# St. Johns Stage Thespians 'egg' yards as part of fundraiser

By Anthony Richards

There are a number of ways to raise money but St. Johns Stage Thespians have found a unique approach to go about with its "egg my yard" fundraising initiative.

"My sister actually gave me the idea, as it was something she had been doing for years with her mission group in Ormond Beach," St. Johns Stage director and owner Mindy Dushane said.

The fundraiser is obviously associated with the Easter holiday, but what makes it so unique is that families in the community can pay for plastic eggs and the Thespians will then go and place the eggs around their yard for their children to then search for.

According to Dushane, the eggs will usually be placed at night so that they are there for the children to wake up to and search for the next morning.

Forty-six students from kindergarten to 12th grade make up this year's Thespians team, which is up from last year's roster count.

The money raised will go toward helping fund a possible trip to New York so the Thespians can compete at on the national stage, which seems like the next proper step since the program has found plenty of success at the state level in recent years.

That success is highlighted by them being voted Access Broadway's "best debut musical theater school" in 2022 and 2023, having recently returned from a competi-



Forty-six students from kindergarten to 12th grade make up this year's Thespians team, which is up from last year's roster count.

Photo courtesy of St. Johns Stage

tion in Orlando.

According to Dushane, the trip to New York for nationals would be a much more involved trip not only because it is a further distance than those in-state, but it also involves the logistics of transporting not just the 45 members, but also the stage props that they use as part of their act.

"We're just trying to get the word out anyway we can, because this group has definitely earned it," Dushane said.

However, it is not just money that the fundraiser is producing, but she has also seen how it has helped build the bonds of the cast even more.

She has seen this most in how excited the students are and how they have really gravitated to and fully embraced the "egg my yard" initiative.

"A lot of our kids are going to dress up as rabbits when they deliver the eggs," Dushane said. "It shows that they're really into the magic they are creating for these families."

The idea behind dressing up as rabbits is in case the children of the family's yard they are placing eggs in happen to wake up or look outside the window and see them.

"It is a true community fundraiser," Dushane said.



St. Johns Stage's mission is to provide a safe and creative environment for students in kindergarten to 12th grade who have a personal interest in the performing arts.

## Bishop to celebrate Chrism Mass during Holy Week

The Most Rev. Erik Pohlmeier, bishop of the Diocese of St. Augustine, will concelebrate with the priests of the diocese the annual Chrism Mass at 11 a.m. Wednesday, April 5, at the Cathedral Basilica, 38 Cathedral Place in St. Augustine.

The purpose of the Chrism Mass is to

bless the oils for sacramental use over the coming year in parishes, missions, chapels and hospitals of the 17-county region of the diocese.

The consecration of the sacred Chrism and the blessing of other oils are among the principal signs of the fullness of the

bishop's priesthood and are considered to be a sign of the close bond he has with the priests. During the Mass, the priests will renew their priestly commitments.

Pohlmeier will consecrate the Chrism through which the newly baptized are anointed and confirmed; he will bless the

oil of catechumens, by which candidates for baptism are strengthened to renounce sin and the devil, and the oil of the sick, for the healing of body, mind and soul.

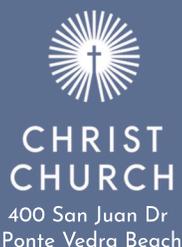
The Chrism Mass is open to the public and will be livestreamed at YouTube.com/DOSACatholics.



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**Brunch with the Bunny and Egg Hunt, April 1 • 10 a.m. - 12 p.m.**

**Palm Sunday, April 2 • 8:30 & 11 a.m.**

**Maundy Thursday, April 6 • 7 p.m.**

**Good Friday Prayer Vigil, April 7 • 12 - 1:30 p.m.**

**Easter Sunday, April 9**

**6:30 a.m. Sunrise Service, Oasis Garden**

**8:30 a.m., Sanctuary**

**11:00 a.m., Sanctuary/Online**

Easter photos will be available before and after the 8:30 & 11 a.m. services.

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# A Night at THE PLAYERS 2023

Photos by Susan Griffin and provided by St. Johns Chamber of Commerce Ponte Vedra Beach Division



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## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT/CEO



**Isabelle Renault**  
President/CEO  
St. Johns County  
Chamber of Commerce

The St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce and Ponte Vedra Beach Recorder are celebrating 10 years of Connections this month. From established sports icons like the PGA TOUR and THE PLAYERS to

fantastic local entrepreneurs like Ocean Sole, our Ponte Vedra members are great examples of the thriving and evolving St. Johns County business community. The Chamber has also grown along with you, and I'm excited for what's to come over the next 10 years.

Your Chamber continues to offer fantastic Chamber Before & After Hours and At Noon events, but you will see our public policy and economic development efforts more and more in headlines as we work to be a consensus builder on crucial

business and community needs.

The Public Policy Committee is researching policy solutions to ensure housing for our county's essential workers, such as teachers, health care and emergency personnel. Our Economic Development Council will be working to ensure the county's long-range plan includes space for industrial/business development. And the Chamber will be launching a 501(c)(3) this year to support communitywide programming in which the business community can make an impact.

The St. Johns County Chamber team and volunteers serve St. Augustine and its beaches, Ponte Vedra Beach, Nocatee and the ever-growing community of St. Johns. It's a big county, and our commitment is to meet you where you work. The St. Johns County Chamber is one of the best in the region because of you. We will be in your neighborhood soon, making meaningful connections for years to come.

**Isabelle Renault**  
President and CEO, St. Johns County  
Chamber of Commerce

## CHAMBER UPCOMING EVENTS

### April

- **Chamber Before Hours St. Johns:** April 5 at Slate Real Estate
- **Chamber Before Hours Ponte Vedra Beach:** April 12 at AAA
- **Networking 101 – Perfecting Your Pitch:** April 13 at Ascension St. Vincent's
- **Chamber at Noon Ponte Vedra Beach:** April 13 at Casa Marina
- **Historic St. Augustine Area Council Meeting:** April 14 at The Mission
- **Tourism and Hospitality Council Meeting:** April 20
- **Chamber After Hours Ponte Vedra Beach:** April 26 at Disc Centers of America PV
- **Chamber Business Mixer – Newcomer Event:** April 27 at Ascend Durbin Creek Crossing

### May

- **Chamber Golf Classic – Golf Tournament:** May 8 at Hammock Beach Resort
- **Chamber Before Hours Ponte Vedra Beach:** May 10 at Cabana Beach Club
- **Historic St. Augustine Area Council Meeting:** May 12
- **Chamber at Noon Ponte Vedra Beach:** May 17 at Ponte Vedra Library
- **Legislative Breakfast:** May 19 at Embassy Suites St. Augustine
- **BIZZed:** May 23
- **Chamber After Hours Ponte Vedra Beach:** May 24 at Modern Aesthetics

- **Chamber Pop-Up Shop:** May 26 at Peterbrooke Durbin Pavillion

### June

- **Women with Vision Council Meeting:** June 1
- **Chamber Before Hours Ponte Vedra Beach:** June 7
- **Networking 101:** June 8
- **Chamber at Noon Ponte Vedra Beach:** June 14
- **Tourism & Hospitality Council Meeting:** June 15
- **EDC Breakfast:** June 16
- **Chamber After Hours Ponte Vedra Beach:** June 21
- **Chamber Pop-Up Shop:** June 23

### July

- **Women with Vision Council Meeting:** June 1
- **Chamber Before Hours Ponte Vedra Beach:** June 7
- **Networking 101:** June 8
- **Chamber at Noon Ponte Vedra Beach:** June 14
- **Tourism & Hospitality Council Meeting:** June 15
- **EDC Breakfast:** June 16
- **Chamber After Hours Ponte Vedra Beach:** June 21
- **Chamber Pop-Up Shop:** June 23

For further information and to register at The St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce website, go to [sjchamber.com](http://sjchamber.com).

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# Ponte Vedra Beach Division Director Karen Everett Retires

Karen Everett, director of the St. Johns County Chamber Ponte Vedra Beach Division, has retired.

Everett has been a member of the Chamber for more than six years, starting as the economic development manager. In 2019, she was promoted to the position of director of the Ponte Vedra Beach Division. She was instrumental in the transition of the auto show, the execution of the destination architect plan, running the visitor center and the many division activities.

“Karen utilized her experience in corporate public relations to help give Chamber members the best service possible, and it will be hard to fill her shoes,” said Cham-

ber President and CEO Isabelle Renault.

“While I will miss seeing everyone at the Chamber events after retirement, I will still be in the area and will remain active in the community,” Everett said.

The Chamber staff gave Everett a fond farewell on Feb. 24, with a gathering at the TPC Clubhouse. They toasted her with good wishes, a gift basket filled with all her favorite things, and a birthday cake as her retirement coincided with her birthday.

Everett plans to spend her retirement traveling the world and spending time with her grandchildren, but she promises that she will come by an event or two in the future to say hello.



Photo by St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce

Karen Everett, front row, left, pictured with Chamber staff, recently retired as director of the St. Johns County Chamber Ponte Vedra Beach Division.



Photo by Susan Griffin

Karen Everett and Mark Ryan, director of sales and marketing for America's Choice, show off a cake marking Everett's retirement.



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State Farm Florida Insurance Company, Winter Haven, FL

# PLAYERS executive director addresses luncheon

THE PLAYERS Senior Vice President and Executive Director Jared Rice spoke about the upcoming 2023 event during a joint luncheon Jan. 11 hosted by the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce Ponte Vedra Beach Division and the Jacksonville Chamber of Commerce.



Photo by Anthony Richards

# America's Choice Title Company hosts Chamber After Hours, ribbon cutting

On Feb. 22, the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce Ponte Vedra Beach Division held its monthly After Hours event at America's Choice Title Company.

It also served as a ribbon-cutting event because America's Choice rejoined the Chamber after several years of absence.

The event was held at America's Choice headquarters at 171 A1A North in Ponte Vedra.

A large turnout attended the event at the company's newly remodeled building. Kathleen Floryan, chair of the Ponte Vedra Beach Division board of

directors welcomed everyone prior to the ribbon cutting.

Once the open house activities were underway, Christine Micieli, the president of America's Choice, addressed the crowd and thanked them for attending.

She mentioned that America's Choice Title Company is in its 22nd year of business serving the community in an unprecedented, efficient manner. Over the years, they have closed thousands of real estate transactions and have helped families achieve their dream of a great home to raise their families.

Photo by Susan Griffin



# Peace, Love and Little Donuts opens in historic downtown



Photo by St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce

Peace, Love and Little Donuts held a ribbon-cutting ceremony Feb. 14 at its location, 12 Cathedral Place, St. Augustine.

# Sawgrass Marriott hosts Chamber After Hours



Doug Gleason, Martha Gleason and Ericha Gore

The following photos are from the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce Ponte Vedra Beach Division Chamber After Hours event hosted by Sawgrass Marriott March 22.

Photos by Susan Griffin



Sawgrass Marriott staff members stand alongside Ponte Vedra Beach Division Chair Kathleen Floryan during the Chamber After Hours event.

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# Establishing an export plan the focus of EDC March breakfast

The following photos are from the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce's Economic Development quarterly breakfast March 24. The focus of the breakfast was ways to establish one's export plan and featured director and trade specialist Jorge Acre and Vested Metals International president Viv Helwig as guest speakers.

Photos by Susan Griffin



Nicole Briggs, Matt Price, Aimee Stafford and Mary O'Brien



Isabelle Renault, Jorge Acre, Viv Helwig, Orv Dothage and Scott Maynard



Latisha Akerele and Paige Stanton

## Tropical Smoothie opens new location



Photo by St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce

Tropical Smoothie held a ribbon-cutting ceremony on March 3 at their new location, 2375 State Road 16, St. Augustine.

## Wells Fargo opens branch in Nocatee



Photo by St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce

On Feb. 22, Wells Fargo cut the ribbon on its new branch, located in Nocatee at 152 Capital Green Drive, Suite 28. It was an afternoon of networking, food and celebration. Heather McDougal is branch manager.

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# Pepper's opens its doors



Photo by St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce

Pepper's Cocina Mexicana — St. Johns held its grand opening and ribbon-cutting on March 10 at its location, 55 Harpers Lane off Racetrack Road.

# Tersak's opens Silverleaf location



Photo by St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce

Tersak's Family Martial Arts Academy held a ribbon-cutting on Feb. 8 at its Silverleaf location, 70 Silver Forest Drive, St. Augustine.

# Disc Centers of America cuts ribbon



Photo by St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce

Disc Centers of America held a ribbon-cutting Feb. 3 at 1400 Marsh Landing Parkway, Suite 107, Jacksonville Beach. It was an afternoon of networking, food and celebration.

# Riddle Wellness holds ribbon-cutting for Ponte Vedra Beach location



Photo by Susan Griffin

Riddle Wellness officially joined the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce Ponte Vedra Beach Division with a ribbon-cutting ceremony Feb. 1.

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# Answer Aide ribbon-cutting



Photo by St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce

The St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce Ponte Vedra Beach Division joined David and Amy Kimble on Jan. 17 for a ribbon-cutting ceremony to commemorate the grand opening of their new office in Nocatee. Answer Aide provides an answering service for businesses.

# John Beard Gallery provides artistic Chamber 'After Hours'

The St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce Ponte Vedra Beach Division and the John Beard Art Gallery partnered to host an "After Hours" event. Many Chamber members attended the event and enjoyed a night of networking, food and drinks.



Photo by St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce Ponte Vedra Beach Division  
A great crowd was on hand at the John Beard Art Gallery, which hosted a St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce Ponte Vedra Beach Division "After Hours" event on Jan. 18.

# Cadence at Nocatee welcomed



Photo by St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce

Assistant Community Director Gretter Anderson and Community Director Brianna Houk wielded the scissors for the ribbon-cutting ceremony at the new Cadence at Nocatee apartments on Jan. 24. Members and ambassadors of the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce participated.

# Cravings and More Bakery opens for business



Photo by St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce

Cravings and More Bakery held its grand opening and ribbon-cutting ceremony on March 21 at its location at 4010 U.S. 1, No. 103, St. Augustine.

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# Coastal Compass hosts Chamber Before Hours

Coastal Compass Executive Office Suites hosted a Before Hours event for the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce Ponte Vedra Beach Division and its members Feb. 8.



Photo by Susan Griffin

There was a great turnout at the Chamber Before Hours at Coastal Compass's location at 4210 Valley Ridge Blvd. in Ponte Vedra.

# Cutie Pies opens



Photo by St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce

The St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce cut the ribbon on Feb. 10 to celebrate the opening of Cutie Pies Bake Shop located at 62 Cuna St., St. Augustine. Cutie Pies focuses on making made-from-scratch mini pies and other treats with the goal of satisfying anyone's sweet tooth.

# Hardage-Giddens opens at St. Johns location



Photo by St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce

Hardage-Giddens Funeral Homes held a grand opening and ribbon-cutting Feb. 16 for its newest location, 1285 St. Johns Parkway, St. Johns. Several people dressed up to embrace the "Roaring '20's" theme for the party.

# Flagler's Delaney speaks at Chamber At Noon

Flagler College president John Delaney was the guest speaker at the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce Ponte Vedra Beach Division's Chamber At Noon event Feb. 15 at Marsh Landing Country Club. He spoke about how the college benefits the county and the school's new classics program.



Photo provided by St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce Ponte Vedra Beach Division

Beth Sweeny, Isabelle Renault, John Delaney and Kathleen Floryan.

# Ponte Vedra Tap Room creates new vibe, franchise opportunities

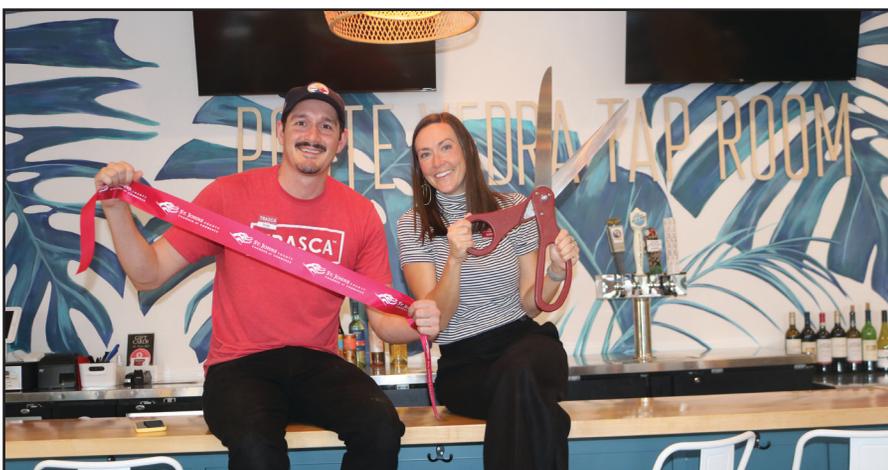


Photo by Susan Griffin

The Ponte Vedra Tap Room, 155 Tourside Drive, Suite 1510, Ponte Vedra Beach, held a ribbon-cutting recently to become a member of the Chamber.

# Compass Real Estate joins Chamber, welcomes new location

A ribbon-cutting ceremony was hosted by Compass Real Estate to celebrate their newest location at 601C A1A North in Ponte Vedra Beach and partnership with the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce Ponte Vedra Beach Division.



Photo by Susan Griffin

Compass Real Estate is now a member of the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce Ponte Vedra Beach Division.

# Tips for tax season was the 'chamber at noon' topic

The St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce Ponte Vedra Beach Division held a Chamber At Noon event March 15 at Marsh Landing Country Club. Certified public accountant Jennifer Howard, owner of Accounting Results and Consulting, was the guest speaker during the event. She spoke about being compliant with taxes and gave helpful record keeping tips.



Photo by Susan Griffin

Juan Carlos Balcazar, Jennifer Howard and Karina Coryell

# After Hours at THE PLAYERS

The following are photos from the joint After Hours event hosted by the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce and the Jacksonville Chamber of Commerce. The member event was held on THE PLAYERS grounds and took place March 2. Pictured: Kim Scott, Jimmy Briggs and Nicole Briggs.



Photo by Susan Griffin



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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.

**KATHY'S GARDENING GUIDE**

# Shrimp Plants

*"In all things of nature there is something of the marvelous."*  
— Aristotle



**By Kathy Esfahani**

The Shrimp Plant, or *Justicia Brandegeana*, is also known as the Mexican Shrimp Plant or "false hop." Native Americans believed Shrimp Plants provided protection from enemies, particularly during wartime. Shrimp Plants have been used in ceremonies in Caribbean and South American countries. Today, early research suggests that chemicals in these plants may have medicinal uses. Although Shrimp Plants are native to Mexico, these tropical beauties grow well in Florida.

A Shrimp Plant has green, oval leaves



**Shrimp plant, standard**

and can grow to be 2 to 6 feet tall. They are available as shrubs or standards (a "lollipop" shaped form similar to a small tree with a bare trunk and round ball of leaves and blooms at the top). Shrimp Plants love the heat but need regular watering! They may tolerate a bit of shade but prefer areas of full sun for best growth. Light pruning will remove long

stems to prevent them from sagging and keep the plant looking full.

Shrimp Plants earn their name from the elongated shape of their flower, resembling shrimp in the sea! They feature drooping blooms in pink, purple, and white and are closely related to the Golden Shrimp Plant with yellow blossoms. The blooms of a Shrimp Plant grow from "bracts" at the end of a stem. The bracts are initially white but turn pink with exposure to sunlight. Bracts continue to grow in a chain-like pattern until they fall off, reaching anywhere from a few centimeters to almost a foot in length!

Shrimp Plants give off a "shrimpy" smell to attract pollinators to small white flowers growing out of the bracts.

Once Shrimp Plants begin to bloom, they will produce flowers continuously throughout the spring, summer, and fall. In our north Florida area (planting zone 9), the plants will lose their leaves in the cooler months of the year but come back

Photos provided by Kathy's Creative Gardens & Nursery

**Flower of the Week**



**Golden shrimp plant**

the following spring.

Because of their constant colorful blooms, Shrimp Plants are an excellent choice for any sunny location in a landscape. They attract hummingbirds and butterflies to your yard, so place them where you can watch for these fluttering visitors!

Happy planting!

**Flower of the Week: Golden Shrimp Plant**

**Please email Kathy at [kcg.pvr@gmail.com](mailto: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.**

# Secret Garden Market returns April 1

The Secret Garden Market returns April 1 with offerings from local artisans and vendors.

Jenna Alexander Studio and Sunday Gathering Table are offering this collaborative experience from 5 to 9 p.m. at 73 San Marco Ave., St. Augustine.

The Secret Garden Market brings together vendors that specialize in unique, handcrafted products. The nearly 30 local vendors include artists, jewelers, garment makers, farm-fresh flowers, local honey and candles, as well as food and drink from Sunday Gathering Table. Music will be provided by DJ Zach Eng.

"It's fantastic to bring this event back, and we're thrilled to offer an all-new VIP shopping experience," said Jenna Alexander of Jenna Alexander Studio. "Shoppers

can take advantage of a private, ticketed shopping hour beginning at 4 p.m. I'll be doing live contour drawings during the VIP hour – it's something not to miss!"

Misty Lake, owner of Sunday Gathering Table, added, "Our menu is the perfect accompaniment to this event — delicious and approachable with a special twist. Food and drink will be available inside the restaurant with two additional bars outside, close to the shopping action. The additional space will provide a great flow."

The private shopping hour is from 4 to 5 p.m. and is a ticketed event. Tickets may be purchased at [jenna-alexander.com/pages/secret-garden-market](http://jenna-alexander.com/pages/secret-garden-market). The event from 5 to 9 p.m. is free and open to the public.

For further information, go to [jenna-alexander.com](http://jenna-alexander.com).



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# Creekside, Julington Creek teachers, students mark World Water Day

Students and teachers revealed new additions and upgrades to the outdoor learning classroom during World Water Day on March 22 at Julington Creek Elementary School, 2316 Race Track Road in Fruit Cove.

The outdoor space officially opened on World Water Day last year and was funded with grants provided by Wells Fargo and the Community First Cares Foundation through a partnership between the Consortium of Florida Education Foundations and local education foundation, Investing in Kids (INK!).

According to Donna Lueders, INK!'s executive director, teachers, administrators and volunteers continued to support the ongoing service-learning project and the second annual World Water Day celebration, in collaboration with the Academy of Environmental Sciences and the Teaching Academy at Creekside High School.

In 2022, Creekside High School students, teachers and volunteers opened the outdoor learning space and hands-on learning projects at Julington Creek Elementary School, including in-ground and raised garden beds, native landscaping and sensory learning experiences.

This year, Creekside students added a butterfly science chamber with screened-in room, more native plants and landscaping, and various species of regional butterflies. New totems were also built with a variety of highly tactile materials for exceptional student education (ESE) students at the elementary school.

According to the international nonprofit organization, Pure Water for the World, this year's World Water Day follows the campaign theme, "Accelerate Change." Locally, the program included academy and elementary school students in



Photos provided by INK!

**Creekside High School and Julington Creek Elementary students at Green ThumbsUp! Location.**

rotational learning groups with hands-on learning activities, including a Wacky Watersheds and Fun 2.0 space where students learn about the water cycle, and a Nifty Natives area featuring the importance of native landscaping in the community, and pollination through a student-developed sensory activity.

The Rock N' Roll activity encourages students to understand rock cycles, rock types and the importance of limestone in the development of the Florida aquifer. Sifting through Soils helps students learn about soil layers and the importance of soil resources in water filtration. Green ThumbsUp! features gardening basics and the opportunity for students to plant their own seeds.

St. Johns County 2020-21 District Teacher of the Year Alicia "Ali" Pressel initiated the place-based learning plan and outdoor classroom project in 2020 with Jeanette Murphy, Julington Creek Elementary School's principal. Pressel is an environmental sciences educator in the Academy of Engineering and Envi-



**A Creekside High School student in the butterfly science chamber.**

ronmental Sciences at Creekside High School.

Pressel implemented the World Water Day educational program focusing on water resources and water conservation with Creekside's Academy of Future Teachers instructor, Regan Ashker. Under the guidance of Pressel and Ashker, Creekside students implemented upgrades to the outdoor learning space, developed sensory learning experiences and designed new engaging lessons to share with younger students for this year's Water Day event.

Pressel has an extensive professional background in the classroom and previous work with the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, and sea turtle conservation efforts in North Carolina. She is a National Geographic Explorer among international experts who are groundbreaking scientists, conservationists, educators and storytellers. Pressel



**Julington Creek Elementary students at World Water Day, Wacky Watersheds.**

is a 2022 NEA Global Learning Fellow, 2021 Grosvenor Teaching Fellow, 2020 National Geographic Emerging Explorer and a LEED Green Associate with the U.S. Green Building Council.

At Creekside, Pressel sponsors the Environmental Club, Geospatial Mapping and other STEM initiatives, including project-based learning and outdoor field studies.

Future plans include the opportunity to implement similar learning environments and curricula at additional schools in St. Johns County.

"We look forward to continuing to work with Ali on innovative projects that positively impact student learning," said Donna Lueders, INK! executive director.

The St. Johns County Education Foundation, Inc., is located at 1 Christopher St. in St. Augustine. For more information, go to [ink-stjohns.org](http://ink-stjohns.org).



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# 100 attend Golden Pineapple Gala



Leigh Cort and Shelli McInnis at the gala.

Photos by Shaun Ryan



Russ DeFilippis entertains during the cocktail reception.

By Shaun Ryan

About 100 people filled the dining hall at Renaissance World Golf Village on March 22 for the Women’s Food Alliance 10th anniversary Golden Pineapple Gala Dinner.

The night began with a cocktail reception, during which celebrity guitarist Russ DeFilippis entertained. A popular gathering point was the Toro Things

photobooth, operated by Evelyn Toro. Also, guests enjoyed a complementary cocktail, “The Golden Pineapple,” hosted by the Culhane Sisters and 5 Sisters Spirit Vodka.

At last, the dining room doors were opened, and guests followed the red carpet to the main event.

GALA continues on Page 30

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# Gala

Continued from 29

Attendees enjoyed butler-style hors d'oeuvres followed by dinner and finally slices of the celebratory 10th anniversary cake created by Chef Nancy Slatsky. Sandy Nicolette made Golden Pineapple cookies for the event.

Sponsors were Slatsky of Mr. Greens Produce and Vickie Corder of HelmsBriscoe and Sustainable Events Network.

Bruce Hamilton, news anchor for WJXT channel 4, was the master of ceremonies for the program, which honored Women's Food Alliance members from each year of the decade, 2013-2022.

Eighteen women were honored in all. Women's Food Alliance founder and president Leigh Cort and Hamilton took turns reading poems about each honoree, who was then called to the stage to

receive a crystal award in the shape of a golden pineapple and to say a few words.

In addition, Cort assembled a contingent from Georgia and announced that they would carry on the mission of the organization in the Peach State.

The evening concluded with members gathering around the cake and singing "That's What Friends Are For."

The mission of the Women's Food Alliance is to cultivate and advance networking, education and collaboration for women in the culinary and hospitality industries in the Northeast Florida region. Cort launched the organization in 2013 with eight members. That has since grown to 150.

The membership regularly participates in a variety of events related to the culinary and hospitality industries.

This year also marks Cort's 40-year career in the hospitality industry.



Photos by Shaun Ryan

Attendees pose for a photo at the Toro Things photobooth.



Awards handed out were crystal golden pineapples.



About 100 people attended the Women's Food Alliance 10th anniversary Golden Pineapple Gala Dinner.



The celebratory 10th anniversary cake.



Attendees followed a red carpet to the dining room.

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PAGE 31

THURSDAY, MARCH 30, 2023



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Photos courtesy of Christie's Country Cuisine



Christie's Country Cuisine features homemade Southern cooking.



Nocatee resident Christie Leatherman is the owner of Christie's Country Cuisine.



Chicken and dumplings is a popular meal that she makes.

## Christie's Country Cuisine offers 'comfort food' delivered

By Anthony Richards

Cooking has always been a passion of Christie Leatherman's ever since she was a child, and now she has taken it a step further with the creation of her new business Christie's Country Cuisine.

She runs the business out of her home in Nocatee, with her kitchen being the headquarters where all her dishes are made.

The idea behind starting Christie's Country Cuisine and exploring entrepreneurship came about after she got laid off from her corporate mortgage job in September 2022.

"I had been in mortgage for 20 years, but the rates are still rising, which is crazy, and it was pretty hard to find a job," Leatherman said. "I love to cook and host and throw parties, so it was scary, but I just figured let's take this adventure and see where it rides."

Although she enjoys and can make all kinds of cuisines, she chose to specialize in homemade country cooking or "comfort food" as it is also known.

"I just love Southern food and always have. As a kid people would ask, 'What's your favorite food?' and I'd always just say Southern," Leatherman chuckled. "It's all about just trying to do something different."

One of the things she offers is not only making the food but also delivering it to people's houses, which she understands can be just as valuable to people today as getting a home-cooked meal. That combi-

nation is something she takes pride in.

"I know people are busy and I know what's it's like to be a working mom and having to come home after you've been in meetings all day and heels for 12 hours and then you've got to go make dinner," Leatherman said. "Maybe I can help."

Leatherman prepares all her meals the day of, and no leftovers are used. Instead, everything is made fresh and cooked to order.

She is always looking for new dishes to try to mix with the certain dishes that she has already spent years tweaking and has got the recipe down perfectly at this point.

"I try to always send thank you emails and ask for any feedback customers may have about the dishes," Leatherman said.

It helps that she has taste testers at home that she relies heavily on for honest feedback.

"I have four teenagers, two of which are teenage boys, so they'll eat," Leatherman chuckled.

She also understands how important it can be, especially as a home-grown small business, to create regular customers.

"When I go to make the deliveries, I've actually had some where it has been the start of an actual relationship and friendship," Leatherman said. "I try not to just drop off the food, but instead introduce myself and start a conversation. That has been the most rewarding part of it all so far."

That personal touch is something that sets Christie's Country Cuisine apart from

others and it is an aspect that she hopes people associate with her business just as much as they do the food she makes.

Being so new she has not yet found certain dishes that she would classify as favorites among the community, but she has received several orders of her chicken and dumplings.

She is aware that some may be looking for vegetarian options, so offering a vegetarian option is something she wants

to be able to implement each week.

Not only will Leatherman deliver to the neighborhoods within Nocatee, but also to the businesses as well.

"I want to also be able to get to the point where I can start really catering bigger events," Leatherman said.

For anyone interested in the latest menu items, go to the Christie's Country Cuisine page on Facebook.

### JUST SOLD!

What a pleasure it was to work with my neighbors Margaret Ann and John Brown on the listing of their beautiful water to golf home in our neighborhood of Old Barn. It went quickly under contract and our sales price of 2,180,000.00, is the highest price per square feet of the most recent sales in Old Barn. Old Barn Island used to be Ponte Vedra Beach's best kept secret, but not any longer. Just minutes to the beach, golf, tennis and fitness center, you can experience vacation living year round on Old Barn Island, your private oasis in a country club setting!



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# Feeding Northeast Florida receives \$500K through bank's employee booster initiative

Bank of America recently announced a \$175,000 donation, totaling more than 1 million meals to Feeding Northeast Florida, to address food insecurity in the Northeast Florida region.

Since the start of the pandemic, Feeding Northeast Florida has received \$500,000 from Bank of America's COVID-19 Employee Booster Initiative, equivalent to 3 million meals in the local area. In Duval County, 19% of residents are food insecure, higher than the state and national averages, according to Feeding Northeast Florida. As the effects of inflation persist, hunger relief organizations in Jacksonville and across the country are facing ongoing challenges such as increased demand for their services and rising food prices.

Bank of America is supporting its employees' health and safety while addressing one of the local communities' most critical needs. Through its employee booster campaign, Bank of America originally donated \$100 for each employee who recorded their COVID-19 booster by the end of Janu-

ary 2022, which totaled \$10.6 million. The bank restarted the campaign this past fall and donated another \$50 for each employee who registered a new vaccination — COVID-19 vaccine, COVID-19 booster or flu shot — by November to further address hunger relief in the communities it serves.

In addition, the second booster campaign included a \$1.5-million donation to international hunger organizations based outside of the United States.

Feeding Northeast Florida provided more than 23 million meals in 2022 — doubling pre-pandemic levels. One in seven people in the food bank's eight-county service area, including one in five children, face some level of food insecurity.

The food bank has worked tirelessly to secure food through local retailers, farmers, government programs and donations. Due to supply chain disruptions and other complications, the food bank has also purchased more food than ever before in order to help meet the increased needs in the communities

they serve.

Every \$1 donated helps the organization provide six meals to the community. With help from the bank's donation, Feeding Northeast Florida is providing more than 73,000 meals per day to individuals and families throughout the greater Jacksonville area.

"Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the need for healthy, nutritious food has been more significant than ever," said Susan King, CEO, Feeding Northeast Florida. "Thanks to vital donations from organizations like Bank of America, Feeding Northeast Florida has been able to double its efforts to get food in neighbors' hands during an uncertain time. We are grateful for the continued support of our community in this ongoing effort."

Nationally, the bank has committed nearly \$12 million dollars to food banks and hunger relief organizations through this effort. Since 2015, Bank of America has donated nearly \$150 million toward hunger relief efforts.

"Economic challenges not only

increased food insecurity challenges faced by many Jacksonville families, but also threatened the nonprofit organizations who deliver vital resources across our city," said Mark Bennett, president, Bank of America Jacksonville. "Our commitment to help strengthen the communities we live in and serve is unwavering, which is why we are investing in the health, safety and wellbeing of our teammates while also providing funds to help local organizations support our neighbors and fight food insecurity."

The company has encouraged staff to get COVID-19 vaccinations since summer 2021 and has offered incentives such as paid time-off and \$500 credits toward health benefit premiums.

In partnership with local nonprofits, Bank of America has also distributed more than 40.5 million masks, nearly 43,000 cases of hand sanitizer and 12.2 million gloves in local communities as part of its ongoing efforts to address health-related disparities accelerated by the pandemic.



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## Why you need a lawyer in your corner

One need not spend ample time to find depictions of lawyers on television and in films. Though such depictions are not always so rosy, most lawyers are reputable individuals who help people navigate the complicated matters of the law.

There are many instances when it is in a person's best interest to hire an attorney. The law is more nuanced than people outside the legal profession may realize, and having a person in one's corner who understands the ins and outs of the law is a wise move. The following are a handful of reasons why it pays to have a lawyer in your corner.

- Lawyers understand legal documents. Attorneys know that procedure is a major part of the law and the judiciary system. A lawyer will help to file the correct paperwork, fill out legal documents, contact courts, and engage in legal procedures in the correct fashion.

- Lawyers have access to experts. Attorneys have strong networks and can connect their clients with experts that support their efforts. For example, parents who are using a special education attorney to navigate 504/IEP plans can ask their lawyer to connect them with an education advocate, expert or tutor who can serve as a witness or reference.

- Lawyers ensure guidelines are followed.

A lawyer can be an asset when drafting a will or engaging in elder care arrangements. With legal, binding documentation, contestation of wishes is much more difficult and ensures that a financial legacy is put to use as intended.

- Lawyers know how to negotiate and settle. Heading to court isn't always the best outcome. Experienced attorneys likely have seen similar cases and scenarios and can make informed guesses about how your own situation may play out if it goes to trial. He or she may suggest a settlement or know a tactic that can work in your favor, particularly if it results in reduced legal fees.

- Lawyers can effectively lock horns with other lawyers. Individuals who choose to represent themselves are at a disadvantage when the other side has hired an attorney. To avoid this inequity of knowledge and experience, it's best to seek legal representation.

- Lawyers provide unbiased insight. When dealing with complicated family issues, such as estate planning, divorce or custody, it pays to have a third party who is emotionally detached from the situation to help guide decision-making.

Attorneys can guide people through all types of complicated legal matters and provide sound, unbiased advice.

# Benchmarks of Success



## Five Jacksonville Symphony musicians granted tenure

Five Jacksonville Symphony musicians have been granted tenure, a difficult and impressive status to achieve in the performing arts. Concertmaster Adelya Nartadjieva, who joined the symphony in the 2022-23 season, is among them. Joining her are: Igor Khukhua, violin; Jessica Hung, violin; Ben Fryxell, associate principal cello; and Kevin Karabell, principal trumpet.

Jacksonville Symphony musicians receive tenure though a lengthy process that begins from the moment of their first audition. While some musicians audition for yearly roles, those who have their eyes set on a more permanent seat in Jacoby Symphony Hall must continually perform at their highest caliber and consistently demonstrate their artistry in order to receive the coveted title of “tenured.”



## Mike Bruman named CEO of Navitas Credit Corp.

United Community Banks Inc. and its wholly owned subsidiary, Navitas Credit Corp., an industry leader in equipment financing, have announced the promotion of Mike Bruman, to CEO effective March 1. Bruman succeeds Navitas founder and CEO Gary Shivers.

Bruman joined Navitas in 2010 as chief credit officer, leading the company’s multiple credit divisions. In 2022, he was promoted to senior vice president and chief operating officer. He was responsible for managing the senior leadership team, which is comprised of all the key functional areas of the organization. Over the past year, under his leadership, Navitas has continued to experience record growth.

Prior to joining Navitas, Bruman’s 30-year-plus career in equipment finance began as a manager of credit and funding operations with Sequa Credit Corp., a small ticket equipment leasing company. He then joined AT&T Capital as a credit manager for the Northeast Region. In 1995, he moved to Copelco Capital to support credit in their major accounts and new technology division. In 1999, he accepted a position with CIT’s Vendor and Finance Group as credit officer to assist in the launch of their newly formed division. During his tenure at CIT, he was instrumental in helping grow the business into a multi-billion-dollar platform.



## Abbe Rice joins local real estate firm

Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Network Realty has added Abbe Rice to the Ponte Vedra/Nocatee

office.

According to the company, Rice came from another local brokerage with excellent negotiation and communication skills. In addition to her experience as a Realtor, Rice has an extensive career on Wall Street as an equity trader.

For more information, she can be reached at 617-943-0945, Abbe.Rice@FloridaNetworkRealty.com and ARice.FloridaNetworkRealty.com.

The Ponte Vedra/Nocatee office is located at 333 Village Main St., Suite 670, Ponte Vedra Beach. It is managed by Holly Hayes, who can be reached at 904-802-0432, Holly.Hayes@FloridaNetworkRealty.com and floridanetworkrealtycareers.com.



## Benson Turner joins local real estate firm

Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Network Realty has added Benson Turner to the Ponte Vedra/Nocatee office.

Turner has an extensive background in construction, remodeling and project management, making him an invaluable resource to his clients.

For more information, he can be reached at 850-443-5615, Benson.Turner@FloridaNetworkRealty.com and BTurner.FloridaNetworkRealty.com.

The Ponte Vedra/Nocatee office, located at 333 Village Main St., Suite 670, Ponte Vedra Beach, is managed by Holly Hayes, who can be reached at 904-802-0432, Holly.Hayes@FloridaNetworkRealty.com and floridanetworkrealtycareers.com.



## Cummer Museum appoints Kelly Harvey to post

The Cummer Museum of Art & Gardens has announced that Kelly C. Harvey will join the museum on April 24 as its new chief advancement officer. She comes to the museum from the Samuel P. Harn Museum of Art at the University of Florida,

where she has been the director of development and external affairs since 2015.

Harvey has more than 15 years of experience working in the museum and academic sectors. During her tenure at the Harn Museum, she led major fundraising efforts including transformational gifts, capital campaigns and endowment growth. Under her leadership in 2022, the museum exceeded its \$100 million goal as part of the University of Florida’s Go Greater comprehensive capital campaign.

She has a proven track record of securing gifts and grants from foundations, corporations and government entities, including The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, The Henry Luce Foundation and the National Endowment for the Arts. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in art history from James Madison University as well as a Master of Arts in museology from the University of Florida.

For further information about the Cummer Museum, including hours, go to cummermuseum.org.



## Chris Thompson earns military financial advisor certification

Chris Thompson, CFP, CMFA, CRPC, a managing director and associate manager with Ameriprise Financial Services in Jacksonville,

recently obtained the Certified Military Financial Advisor (CMFA) certification.

Ameriprise Financial partnered with Dalton Education to create the CMFA certification, which equips financial advisors with knowledge and expertise to help military members maximize resources and achieve their financial goals with confidence.

Thompson successfully completed the CMFA requirements that include more than 40 hours of training and learning development modules, which provide advisers a deep understanding of the unique life circumstances and the benefits available to veterans, active duty, Reserve, National Guard and their families.

Thompson graduated from Vanderbilt University on a four-year Navy ROTC

scholarship with a degree in economics and math. He has 30 years of experience in the financial services industry and is a Navy veteran.

Thompson can be reached at 904-380-2290 and ameripriseadvisors.com/chris.thompson.



## Sharon Thompson named Florida president for bank

United Community Bank has named veteran banker Sharon Thompson as president for the state of Florida.

Thompson was formerly the East Atlanta president in Georgia. Thompson steps into the Florida president role after her predecessor, Gideon Haymaker, announced his retirement last month.

Thompson joined United in 2019 as the president of the Central Atlanta Region. Since she joined United, Thompson has led the team to become one of the bank’s highest-producing locations.

Thompson is a veteran of the financial services industry. Prior to joining United, she served as a business banking manager for Wells Fargo, leading a team of top-performing bankers, credit analysts and business development officers. Her background also includes time spent in commercial banking and sales with BB&T.



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# In the Arts

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THURSDAY, MARCH 30, 2023 · PAGE 34

www.PonteVedraRecorder.com

## 'Matilda Jr.' to be staged

Apex Theatre Studio will present "Matilda Jr." March 31-April 2 at The Waterworks, 184 San Marco Ave., St. Augustine. Show times are 7 p.m. March 31, 11 a.m. and 5 p.m. April 1, and 2 p.m. April 2. Tickets are available at apextheatrejax.com/events.

"Matilda Jr." tells the story of a girl who dreams of a better life and the children she inspires will have audiences rooting for the "revolting children" who are out to teach the grown-ups a lesson.

Matilda has astonishing wit, intelligence ... and special powers. She's unloved by her cruel parents but impresses her schoolteacher, the highly loveable Miss Honey.

Matilda's school life isn't completely smooth sailing, however — the school's mean headmistress, Miss Trunchbull, hates children and just loves thinking up new punishments for those who don't abide by her rules. But Matilda has courage and cleverness in equal amounts and could be the school pupils' saving grace.

Packed with high-energy dance numbers and catchy songs, "Matilda Jr." is a joyous girl power romp. Children and adults alike will be thrilled and delighted by the story of the special little girl with an extraordinary imagination.

Admission is \$20. Tickets are available at apextheatrejax.com/events.

## REVIEW

# 'Arsenic and Old Lace' a hilarious romp

By Shaun Ryan

There's a myth going around that comedy must evolve if it wants to entertain today's audiences. This is often used to excuse course — and frequently profane — language, a facile gimmick employed to disguise a deficit in the comic's talent.

In fact, good comedy transcends the zeitgeist and provides skilled performers a timeless resource to provoke laughter from successive generations.

"Arsenic and Old Lace" is such a resource. The dark comedy, written in 1939 by Joseph Kesselring and subsequently staged on Broadway where it enjoyed a lengthy run, remains as funny today as it was on that opening night of Jan. 10, 1941.

Humorous lines, however, cannot by themselves ensure the success of a show like "Arsenic and Old Lace." They must be delivered with expert comic timing aided by carefully choreographed blocking.

And this is where the play, as presented at Alhambra Theatre & Dining, excels.

The Jacksonville venue's production features a strong cast of seasoned performers who expertly draw the audience into

the madcap world of the characters whose eccentricities faithfully follow an interior, if misguided, logic. Razor sharp timing — as in a nearly accidental poisoning of two characters and their split-second salvation — produces a moment of terrible suspense followed by relieved laughter as disaster is humorously dodged.

"Arsenic and Old Lace" tells the story of the oft-maniacal Brewster family. The protagonist, Mortimer Brewster, learns that his spinster aunts have been poisoning lonely old men, murders that they consider a mercy. The bodies — a dozen in all — are buried in the basement, much to Mortimer's horror.

When Mortimer's homicidal brother Jonathan drops in with a victim of his own, the hero is caught between protecting his beloved aunts and turning his brother in to the police.

All of this is further complicated by Mortimer's engagement to the girl next door, the daughter of a local minister.

A theatrical company is a team with each member contributing to the success of the whole. However, teams have standouts, as do casts. And it's worth mentioning some of the most noteworthy performances.

Hillary Hickam and Patti Eyer give flawless performances as the aunts. They are absolutely convincing. Never does one get the idea that they're acting. Their portrayal of sweet, well-meaning ladies provokes a genuine fear that the authorities will learn of their crimes.

As Mortimer, Shain Stroff is outstanding. As each absurdity of his plight is revealed, his reactions provoke absolute hilarity. Though the role demands a heightened level of theatrics, Stroff's performance is always grounded in the character. Each panicked response is wholly relatable as the audience sympathizes with Mortimer and the impossible situations in which he finds himself.

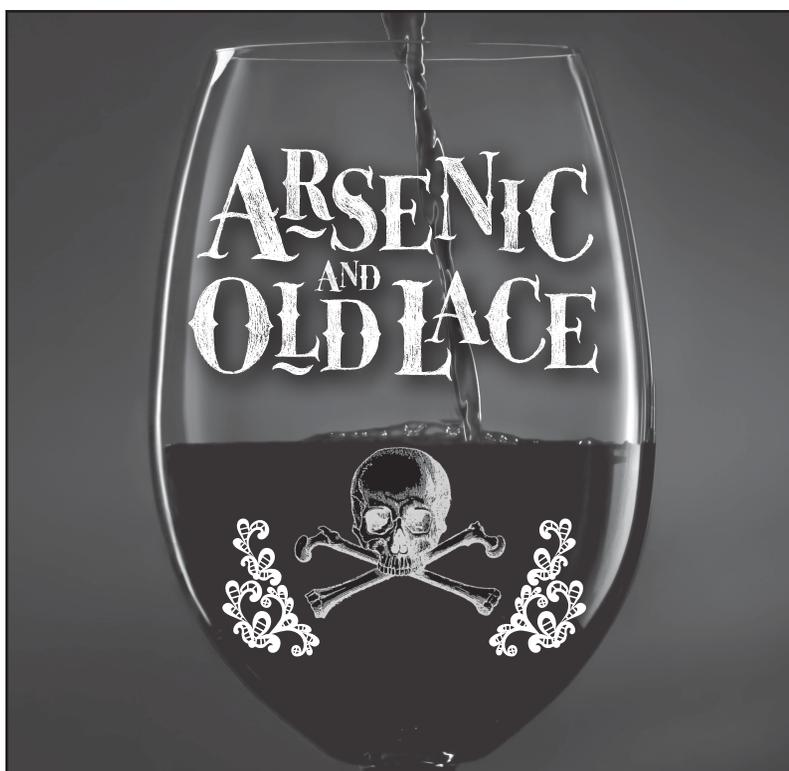
Alec Hadden delivers a strong performance as the brother who believes himself to be Teddy Roosevelt. The psychological malady in question may be a relic of a less-enlightened age, but Hadden's portrayal allows the audience to suspend its disbelief and enjoy the character's quirks.

Chad Conley's menacing portrayal of Jonathan helps the audience become invested in Mortimer's predicament. The antagonist's villainy is essential to the central conflict, and Conley carries it off perfectly.

Rounding out the cast are Savannah Elam, Kevin Roberts, Pete Clapsis, Jonathan Van Dyke, Joe Anderson, Noah Blohowiak, Thad Walker, Travis Young and Mel Nash.

Tod Booth's expert direction should not be overlooked. Much of what audiences are laughing at result from his instructions to the cast and decisions he made regarding how the stage is used.

Alhambra Theatre & Dining will present "Arsenic and Old Lace" through April 16. For information on showtimes, tickets, the menu and more, go to alhambrajax.com.



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# PoetFest returns to St. Augustine on April 14-16

The second annual St. Augustine PoetFest will kick off at 7 p.m. April 14 at Relámpago Coffee Lab, 74 Spanish St. with an open mic sponsored by the Flagler College English Department. Sign-up sheet out at 6:30 p.m.

Activities on Saturday, April 15, will begin at 8 a.m. with a guided meditation at the Alumni House labyrinth, to get everyone in the “write mood.”

On-campus activities for April 15 will include:

- 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. — Book bazaar and author signing table.
- Noon to 5 p.m. — Zine Zone events with a fanzine-making workshop at 1 p.m. (\$10 charge for materials. Limit 12 students).

• 9 a.m. to 3:15 p.m. — Six-hour open mic marathon featuring five Florida counties, author talks, workshops and panel discussions, a Florida poets showcase hour, a storyteller spotlight and a dramatic theater reading at the Markland House, Gamache-Koger Theater and outdoor courtyard at Ringhaver Student Center.

• 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. — Lunch-and-learn side hustle spotlight at the Brown Innovation Center.

The following presentations are in the Virginia Room on campus:

- 3:30 to 4 p.m. — Haiku spotlight presentation featuring winners of the third annual St. Johns Cultural Council Haiku Contest.

• 4 to 5 p.m. — Out-of-state spotlight: New York poet George Wallace.

• 5 to 6 p.m. — Jax by Jax: The First 10 Years with co-directors Erica Saffer and Darlyn Finch Kuhn.

• 6 to 6:30 p.m. — Out-of-state spotlight: Georgia poet Jimmy Broccoli.

• 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. — Two Rust Belt voices: featuring U.S. Beat Poet Laureate John Burroughs and Lucas County (Toledo) Poet Laureate Jonie McIntire.

• 7:30 to 9 p.m. — One hour keynote presentation featuring Michigan Beat Poet Laureate Joe Kidd with Sheila Burke, followed by meet-and-greet and book signing.

The weekend will also include three “PoetFest at Night” performances

presented by Hellthy and Bandturo at Sarbez, 115 Anastasia Blvd., St. Augustine. The shows will happen off-campus on Friday, April 14; Saturday, April 15; and Sunday night, April 16.

The \$10 cover charge will help support the performers.

All other events will be free of charge and open to all, thanks to the support of Flagler College, St. Johns Cultural Council and the Ancient City Poets. The St. Augustine PoetFest is a celebration of creative writing and reciting. It is St. Johns County’s official recognition of National Poetry Month, April.

For more information, go to [ancientcitypoets.wordpress.com](http://ancientcitypoets.wordpress.com).

# Rod MacDonald in concert at Sundays at Stetson's

The next Sundays At Stetson’s concert will feature Florida-based folk icon Rod MacDonald on April 2. This will be an outdoor concert, so no reservations required. Music starts at 2 p.m. The location is 1523 State Road 13, Fruit Cove. A donation of \$10 per person is requested.

Questions and comments may be sent to [skf.concerts@gmail.com](mailto:skf.concerts@gmail.com).

In the event of unfavorable weather the concert will be moved indoors where seating is limited to 45. No reservations, first come first served.

MacDonald was born in Connecticut and began singing professionally in New

York City neighborhood coffeehouses and Greenwich Village clubs in the 1980s, recording 21 songs now in the Smithsonian Folkways collection, such as “American Jerusalem,” “A Sailor’s Prayer,” “Every Living Thing” and “White Buffalo.”

Now living in South Florida, his songs on ecology, natural environment, social changes, romance and family life as a late-blooming parent have landed him on New Times’ “Ten Greatest South Florida Folksingers Of All Time” and The Palm Beach Post’s “Ten Magnificent Musicians of Palm Beach County” lists.

Learn more at [rodmacdonald.com](http://rodmacdonald.com).

Monthly Sundays at Stetson’s events are free, though a \$10 donation is recommended. Concerts are 2-4 p.m. and are held at Beluthahatchee Park.

The park opens at 1 p.m. with tours of Stetson Kennedy’s house and museum before and after the concert. Space is limited and reservations are required. To make reservations or get more informa-

tion call 904-206-8304.

Concerts are scheduled as follows: May 21, Scott Jackson and Joe Mark; June 11, Lee Hunter; July 9, Bob Patterson; Aug. 13, Woody Guthrie Tribute (NFFN); Sept. 10, Ashley Gang (25th anniversary); Oct. 8, Songs For Stetson; Nov. 12: Bear and Robert; and Dec. 10, Feed You Neighbors (NFFN).



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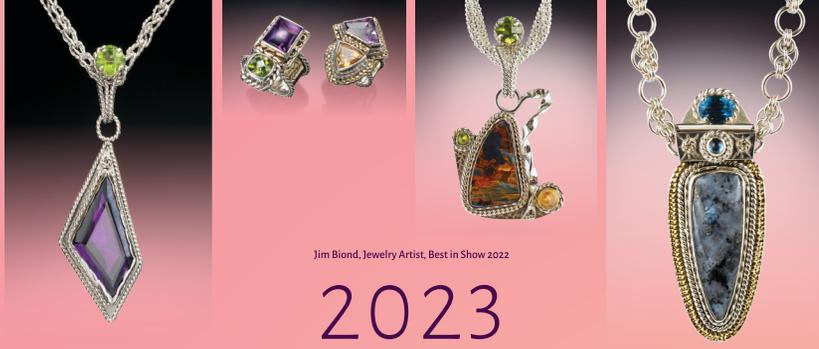
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# Sports



THURSDAY, MARCH 30, 2023 • PAGE 36

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## HIT PARADE:

### Nine-run inning catapults Sharks past Panthers

By Anthony Richards

Hitting can be contagious and the Ponte Vedra High softball team proved that to be the case during a 15-0 victory at home against rival Nease in four innings March 24.

Every Sharks' player that stepped to the plate in the game had a hit, including seven players with multiple hits.

The eventual outcome of the contest became clear after the Sharks (8-1-1) opened up a 10-0 lead thanks to a nine-run explosion in the bottom of the second inning.

Junior Madeline Prosser and senior Sarah Wicker led the way with three hits, while Prosser drove home a team-high four runs on the day.

Of the Sharks' 19 hits, six went for extra bases, including a pair of doubles for both Prosser and senior Kate Mikle.

Also hitting doubles in the game for the Sharks were junior Caiden Oliva and freshman Aoife Weaver.

Senior GiannaMarie Grub joined sophomores Drew Gardner and Maya Wiles as Sharks who also reached base with a pair of

singles.

Wicker proved not only to be valuable with a bat in her hands, but she was also the starting pitcher for the Sharks and improved to 5-1 on the season with her fourth shutout.

The five victories ties Wicker's career-high for wins in a season with many games left to play.

The Panthers (7-5) had a golden opportunity to score the game's first run after sophomore Miranda Harmon smoked a leadoff triple.

However, Wicker was not rattled and quickly found her groove and got out of the inning leaving Harmon stranded at third base.

Wicker allowed just two hits and struck out six in four innings of work, as she proved why she is the Sharks ace pitcher.

Junior Corinna Cioffi started in the circle for the Panthers and dropped to a record of 4-4. However, she was not helped at times by errors by the Panthers' defense that extended innings.

Photos by Anthony Richards



The Ponte Vedra dugout gets pumped up during a nine-run second inning against Nease March 24.



Sarah Wicker continued her memorable senior season with another impressive start for the Sharks.



Maya Wiles squares to bunt for the Sharks.



Junior Corinna Cioffi got the start in the circle for the Panthers.

Photos by Anthony Richards



Senior Maddox Johnson unloads a shot against Lucy Beckham March 24.



Canon Hauseman plays tight defense against a Lucy Beckham stick handler.

# Sharks trusting process as postseason approaches

By Anthony Richards

There is no doubt that Ponte Vedra boys lacrosse plays one of toughest schedules it can year in and year out.

It is truly a testament of where the program has gotten to following all the success it has had over the years.

Not only do the Sharks play some of the toughest teams in Florida, but they also play a number of quality opponents from outside the state, including six on the schedule this year.

The most recent of these battles was against Lucy Beckham High out of Mt. Pleasant, South Carolina, who are also a defending state champion of South Carolina.

“We played the state runner-up from Ohio on Monday and just came back from Maryland, where we played one of the top four teams in the nation,” assistant coach Matt Keeler said. “We’re building

something for the postseason, and you’ve got to trust in the process.”

However, on the night, the Sharks lost 12-10 despite jumping out to a 3-1 lead after the first quarter and extending it to 4-1 early in the second quarter following a beautifully placed long pass from goalie Jack Pelot to a wide-open Canon Hauseman who fired a shot into the back of the net.

It was the second quarter where the Bengals mounted their comeback and grabbed control of the contest after four straight goals, including one with 8.1 seconds remaining in the quarter that gave them a 5-4 halftime lead.

The comeback was aided by a couple of penalties by the Sharks which put them in a tough spot having to defend with their backs against the wall a man down.

“You’d like to stay out of the box whenever you can, but we also want our boys to work really hard and sometimes

you just slip and hit someone the wrong way,” Keeler said. “We had two stick penalties today and one unnecessary roughness, which can be hard to come back from.”

Pelot was greeted with high-fives and chest bumps by his teammates because they know how much of an extra dimension a goalie can be as a passer to help kickstart the offensive attack.

Both teams traded scores for the most part throughout the second half, but it was always the Sharks who were the ones doing the chasing on the scoreboard.

When they were able to answer scores and cut into the Bengals lead, it was often times senior Maddox Johnson who was called upon to make a play.

And a majority of the time he was able to deliver a goal and keep the Sharks within reach of the lead.

His goals were classic Johnson, as he used his blistering speed to shake off tight

defense before unleashing a heavy-handed shot on goal.

It was the third loss in a row for the Sharks, but one thing they could build upon moving forward was that they did not give up and continued to fight all the way until the end, as Johnson buried a hard shot just under the cross bar and fellow senior Corey Bloss snipped a shot for two of their five fourth-quarter goals.

“We’re a really resilient group through and through, and a lot of us coaches have been with these kids and seen it since they were 10 years old,” Keeler said. “These kids believe in themselves, and I think you saw that when we made a run there in the last three minutes.”

The Sharks were able to bounce back and reestablish their groove with a 12-7 win over Winter Park in the Third Annual Rivalry on the River held at Bolles School in Jacksonville March 25.



Jack Pelot makes a save in net.



Ponte Vedra's Clements Harper (left) battles during a face-off.

### CROSSWORD

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  - 12. Pleasure seekers
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  - 18. Fungal disease
  - 19. Sleepwalk
  - 24. Spielberg sci-fi film
  - 25. Seasonable
  - 26. Taxis
  - 27. Radio direction finder (abbr.)
  - 28. Thin, narrow piece of wood
  - 29. "Mystic River" actor Sean
  - 30. Ingenuous
  - 31. Musical composition
  - 33. Turkish surname
  - 34. High or hilly area
  - 38. Wilco frontman
  - 39. Pour it on pasta
  - 40. Electric car company
  - 43. Sea eagle
  - 44. Walk with difficulty
  - 45. Sign of healing
  - 49. Boy
  - 50. Protein-rich liquid
  - 51. Washington city
  - 53. Individual portion of TV series (abbr.)
  - 54. Thought over
  - 56. Scads
  - 58. News agency
  - 59. Standard
  - 60. Deadlock
  - 63. Pre-Columbian empire
  - 64. Removed
  - 65. French commune
- 6. Cut down in size
  - 7. Denotes past
  - 8. Larry and Curly's partner
  - 9. Samoyedic ethnic group
  - 10. Male parent
  - 13. Specific gravity
  - 14. Demeaned oneself to
  - 15. Rigidly
  - 20. Yankovic is a "weird" one
  - 21. Belonging to me
  - 22. Path
  - 23. Airborne (abbr.)
  - 27. Level
  - 29. Atomic #94
  - 30. Born of
  - 31. Midway between northeast and east
  - 32. Northeastern bank
  - 33. Defunct airline
  - 34. Having no purpose
  - 35. A low wall
  - 36. Swedish city
  - 37. Earn a perfect score
  - 38. Atomic #81
  - 40. Beginner
  - 41. Give off
  - 42. Incorrect letters
  - 44. Telecommunication service provider (abbr.)
  - 45. Idyllic
  - 46. Popular beer
  - 47. A way to fine
  - 48. Evildoer
  - 50. More withered
  - 51. Seventh note of a major scale
  - 52. Commercial
  - 54. Abnormal breathing
  - 55. Moved more quickly
  - 57. City of Angels
  - 61. Partner to Pa
  - 62. Equally

### SUDOKU

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

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. Large, dangerous animals
  - 2. Straighten out
  - 3. Family tree
  - 4. Large stinging paper wasp
  - 5. European river fish



Senior Braden Kessel is congratulated by Shark teammates at home plate following a mammoth home run to straightaway center field in the first inning.

# Sharks comeback against Knights falls just short

By Anthony Richards

The offense came alive for Ponte Vedra baseball during a back-and-forth 9-7 loss at home against Oakleaf High of Clay County March 24, in which both teams traded scoring blows throughout.

The seven runs the Sharks plated were the second-most runs the Knights (12-1) had surrendered to this point in the season.

The Knights got the scoring going with three runs in the top of the first. However, it did not take long for the Sharks to answer once they had their chance to step into the batter's box.

Senior Braden Kessel got the pitch he was looking for and blasted a home run to straightaway center field and just like that the Sharks scored a thunderous two runs and cut the deficit to one heading into the second.

The bomb was Kessel's fourth home run of the season, as he continued his memorable senior season.

The Sharks tied it up at 3-all with another run in the third, before the Knights scored six runs over the next four innings to take a 9-3 lead heading into the bottom of the sixth.

However, their lead was not as comfortable as it may have seemed and the Sharks' bats reignited with four runs in the final

two innings, but the comeback bid fell two runs short in the end.

Kessel was joined by fellow senior Ethan Yesensky, as the two each drove in a pair of runs in the game.

Junior Caden Eidam and sophomore Jack Ottesen led the team with two hits, including a double apiece, as the Sharks finished with three of their nine hits on the night being worthy of extra bases.

Ottesen and junior Matt Hoag both stole a base on the night, as not only did the Sharks look to be aggressive at the plate, but they also looked to carry that aggressive nature onto the base paths.

Starting on the mound for the Sharks was sophomore Carson Evanger, who allowed five earned runs on nine hits in four innings of work. He also struck out two batters en route to the young pitcher dropping to 0-2 on the season.

Yesensky provided relief for Evanger and held his own allowing just one earned run and three hits across the final three innings.

He was able to best the Knights' hitters on several occasions and finished with five strikeouts on the night.

Next up for the Sharks is a home contest against Orange Park March 31 beginning at 6:30 p.m. It will be the fourth consecutive game against a Clay County school.



Ponte Vedra's Matt Hoag slides safely into third base against Oakleaf.

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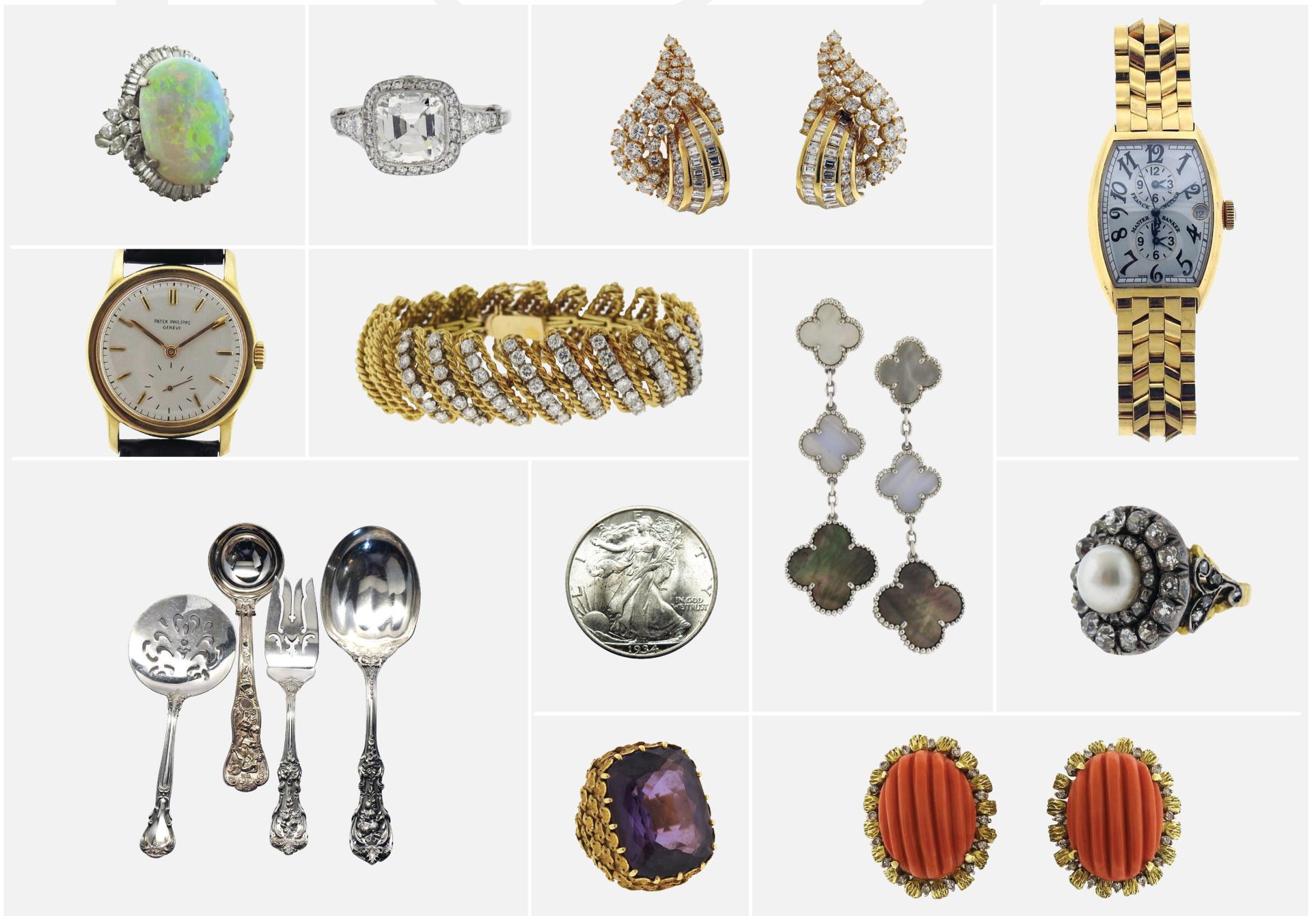
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