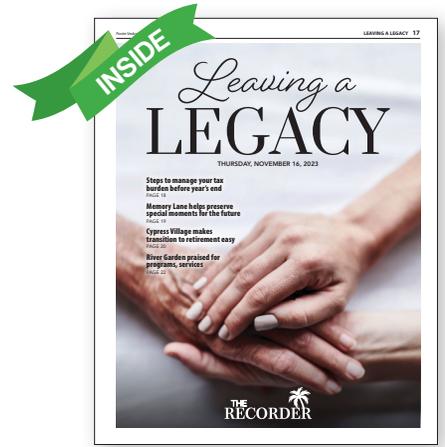


THE RECORDER



Leaving a Legacy
Page 17

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Thursday, November 16, 2023

PonteVedraRecorder.com

VOLUME 55, NO. 3 \$1.00

Redesign saves trees on Mickler

By Shaun Ryan

More than a dozen mature trees along the north side of Mickler Road have been spared following changes to the design of a road improvement project in Ponte Vedra Beach.

St. Johns County officials made the changes at the request of residents living in the vicinity of the project. County Engineer Duane Kent and representatives of the Public Works Department met with the residents at the site on Thursday, Nov. 9, to explain the changes.

Residents expressed their gratitude. "We're just extremely happy with the outcome," said Nicole Crosby, who lives on nearby Neck Road. "I was nervous going into this today,

TREES continues on Page 26

SIMPLY THE BEST

Porsche Speedster earns 'best in class' auto show honor

By Anthony Richards

Car enthusiasts are a hearty bunch, and that was proven with rows of cars and hundreds of people coming out to experience the 2023 Ponte Vedra Auto Show despite a cool and misty day on the First Coast.

One of the many who endured the elements was Henry Wilkinson of Atlantic Beach, and it paid off as his 1958 Porsche Speedster was named the show's "best in class" winner.

According to Wilkinson, the car has quite the story to go along with its sleek and retro styling.

"This is an old race car that was built by Miles Collier of the Collier Collection and was raced for years, including being an SCCA National car and it was recently restored and brought back to its original color," Wilkinson said. "We couldn't be happier with it, and it is just wonderful



Photo by Anthony Richards

Henry Wilkinson of Atlantic Beach and his 1958 Porsche Speedster were named the 2023 Ponte Vedra Auto Show's "best in class" winner.

and everything you would expect."

Wilkinson's appreciation for the car and its history is even more special and hits home with him having a racing background as well, as he began road racing in 1980 and he raced more than 12 years.

He won his first SCCA National race for

Sports Renault in 1984 and set the course record at the final Buckhorn Mountain hill climb that was ever run. He is a member of the Road Racing Drivers Club.

Wilkinson is not new to car shows and

AUTO SHOW continues on Page 8



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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 or bring them by our office at **1102 A1A N., Unit 108, Ponte Vedra Beach.**



Visit our new website at www.pontevedrarecorder.com

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

BRIEFS

PLAYERS offers golf equipment donation program

THE PLAYERS Championship has introduced a new grant program open to Northeast Florida nonprofit organizations. Through this program, THE PLAYERS seeks to expand access and equity to golf programs in under-resourced communities.

The program awards new equipment and resources to local golf programs based on merit and need.

"As a former instructor, I know firsthand how important it is to have proper equipment to successfully compete in this sport," said Lee Smith, executive director of THE PLAYERS Championship. "To have the opportunity to provide this resource is very exciting — not only for our population here in Northeast Florida, but for the sport of golf."

To be eligible for the grant, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Have 501(c)3 tax exempt status.
- Serve within the five counties in Northeast Florida.
- Fall within THE PLAYERS' charitable pillars (individuals and families are not eligible to apply for the program).

The championship is accepting applications for the equipment grant program; to access the complete guidelines and application, go to <https://www.theplayers.com/equipment>

Foundation plans Thanksgiving drive, sorting and delivery

The MaliVai Washington Youth Foundation is hosting its annual Thanksgiving drive and sorting events, supported by community partners. The foundation is dedicated to empowering youth in primarily the 32209 ZIP code, where many residents live near or under the poverty line and are in Health Zone 1. The Thanksgiving drive supports families in need for the Thanksgiving holiday with dinners for more than 100 families.

The sorting event will be 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Nov. 21 at MaliVai Washington Youth Foundation Youth Center, 1096 W. 6th St., Jacksonville. Deliveries will be made 7:30 to 10:30 a.m. Nov. 22.

Firm collects toys for annual program

Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida

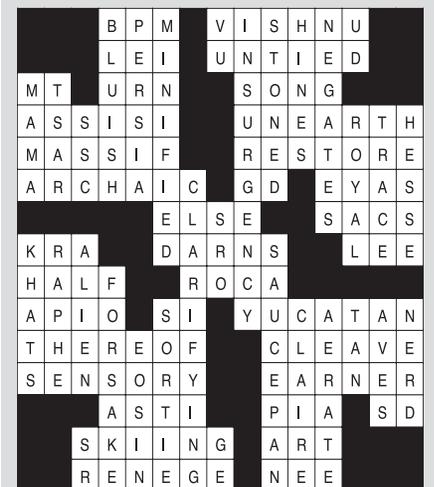
Network Realty is collecting donations for Toys for Tots, a program run by the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve.

The company's Ponte Vedra Beach/Nocatee branch office is collecting new, unwrapped toys until Dec. 11. The real estate firm is asking for unwrapped toys for children of all ages, newborn to teens. Gifts will be distributed to children whose families cannot afford to provide holiday gifts.

Community residents are welcome to bring

BRIEFS continues on Page 3

PUZZLE SOLUTIONS



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

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Winter Break Camps

'Tis the season to get Creative with STEM and Culinary Camps

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Briefs

Continued from 2

donations to the company's office in the Sawgrass Village Shopping Center, 333 Village Main St., Suite 670, Ponte Vedra Beach. Donations may be purchased online from the company's Amazon Wish List (Berkshire Hathaway HSFNR Toys for Tots) and shipped directly to the office.

"We are proud to support Toys for Tots, and we appreciate our amazing community members who give so generously to this wonderful cause," said Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Network Realty President Ann King. "Our team is thrilled to help Toys for Tots deliver some extra joy this holiday season."

Program offers bereaved Hope for the Holidays

Community Hospice & Palliative Care is offering Hope for the Holidays, a workshop will help attendees learn ways to cope with grief during the holiday season, determine what is right for them and their families and refocus energy on positive activities that honor and remember their loved ones.

Attendees will leave with a renewed sense of hope for the upcoming season.

The program will be offered from 11 a.m. to noon Saturday, Nov. 18, at Anne

and Donald McGraw Center for Caring of Community Hospice, 4715 Worrall Way Jacksonville.

Hope for the Holidays is open to the public. There is no charge to attend, but attendees should RSVP by calling 904-407-7001/toll free 800-274-6614 Ext. 7001.

Holiday Craft Fair planned

The Ponte Vedra High School Marching Band is planning a Holiday Craft Fair, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Dec. 9 at 1110 A1A North, Mickler Landing Circle. Local crafters, baked goods and raffles are planned for "The Most Wonderful Event of the Season." For information, email debbie@balloonprinting.com.

Explore the beach at GTM Research Reserve

Join volunteers at the Guana Tolomato Matanzas National Estuarine Research Reserve (GTM) for a beach exploration 9-11 a.m. Saturday, Nov. 18. Collect seashells, search for shark teeth and learn about coastal wildlife. Meet at GTM Research Reserve Visitor Center, 505 Guana River Road, Ponte Vedra Beach.

Wear comfortable closed-toe shoes. Hat, insect repellent, water and sunscreen are recommended. The event is free but online registration is required. To register, go to gtmnerr.org/visit/events.

Palm Valley Market every Tuesday

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

Extras sought for local movie

An independent film being made in Jacksonville, Green Cove Springs and Middleburg is in need of extras to appear in some scenes. The unpaid extras in "Rights of a Father" will appear in a courtroom audience and as protestors. "Rights of a Father" tells the story of a

couple faced with an unplanned pregnancy and whether the father has rights concerning the unborn baby.

Extras will be needed from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. on the following days and at these places: Nov. 19 at the historic courthouse, 915 Walnut St., Green Cove Springs; Dec. 2 and 9 at the current courthouse, 825 N. Orange Ave., Green Cove Springs.

Interested people should contact director Junior Ashwood at 757-870-9226 or by email at ashwoodjj@gmail.com for an interview.

— Compiled by Shaun Ryan

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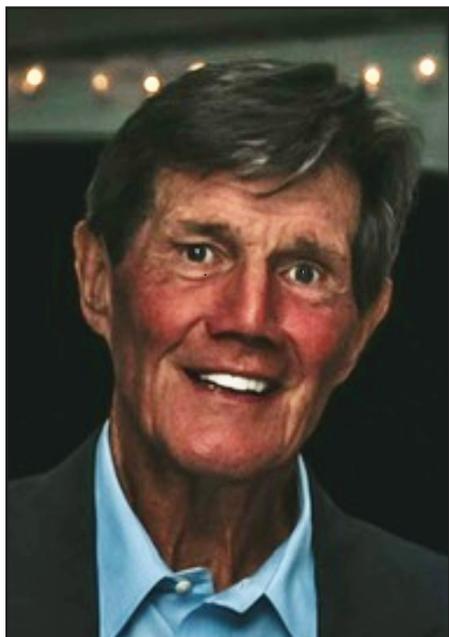
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OBITUARIES



Robert Oliver Wilhelm

Robert Oliver "Bob"/"Pop Pop" Wilhelm, 74, passed away on June 25, 2023, surrounded by his friends and family. It was a privilege to know him, to love him, and most of all to be loved by him.

Pop Pop was born on March 9, 1949 in Geneva, New York, and after short periods in New York, Connecticut, and Ohio, spent his childhood in Portola Valley, California. He moved to Ponte Vedra Beach in 1965 to the very neighborhood where he would spend nearly sixty years. He attended The Bolles School in Jacksonville, and upon graduation returned to California to attend Stanford University, where he played baseball. He graduated from Stanford in 1971, and despite being drafted by the California Angels, he

came home to attend law school at the University of Florida. After obtaining his law degree in 1974, he practiced as a trial attorney across Florida for thirty years.

Pop Pop was a man of extraordinary talents, and was an accomplished athlete even after his college baseball career. Tennis was his passion; he won the Ponte Vedra Inn & Club tennis club championship, and continued to play doubles at PVIC for the next fifty years and up to his final days. He was an exceptional self-taught musician who played and composed on the guitar, dobro, mandolin and ukulele, and performed in venues across Jacksonville, Ponte Vedra and St. Augustine for over fifty years.

Beyond his talents, Pop Pop was a man of exceptional integrity, principle and honor. He was brilliant and quirky, gen-

erous and kind. He was a true gentleman. He is survived by Darlene, his loving wife of 31 years; daughters Ann Clay and Natalie; and sons Mark, Oliver, and Evan. He was preceded in death by his parents, Oliver and Janet; brother Mark; and sisters, Lynn and Christina.

Join us for a celebration of Bob's life on Monday, November 20, 2023 at 5:30 pm at the Ponte Vedra Inn & Club tennis courts.

Please visit his Tribute online at www.quinn-shalz.com.

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DEATH NOTICES

Abhay Krishna Agrawal

Abhay Krishna Agrawal, 82, of St. Augustine, Florida, died Nov. 8, 2023. Arrangements by Quinn-Shalz Family Funeral Home & Cremation Centre. 904-249-1100 www.quinn-shalz.com.

Floyd J. Baker

Floyd J. Baker, 79, of Jacksonville Beach, Florida, died Nov. 2, 2023. Arrangements by Quinn-Shalz Family Funeral Home & Cremation Centre. 904-249-1100 www.quinn-shalz.com.

Jean A. Graeser

Jean A. Graeser, 91, of Jacksonville, Florida, died Nov. 4, 2023. Arrangements by Quinn-Shalz Family Funeral Home & Cremation Centre. 904-249-1100 www.quinn-shalz.com.

Miguel Angel Jimenez

Miguel Angel Jimenez, 63, of Jacksonville, Florida, died Nov. 9, 2023. Arrangements by Quinn-Shalz Family Funeral Home & Cremation Centre. www.quinn-shalz.com. 904-249-1100

Rebecca A. Aydelette

Rebecca A. Aydelette, 83, of Jacksonville Beach, Florida, died Nov. 8, 2023. Arrangements by Quinn-Shalz Family Funeral Home & Cremation Centre. www.quinn-shalz.com. 904-249-1100

Stephen E. Chase, Jr.

Stephen E. Chase, Jr., 57, of Jacksonville Beach, Florida, died Nov. 7, 2023. Arrangements by Quinn-Shalz Family Funeral Home & Cremation Centre. 904-249-1100 www.quinn-shalz.com.

George William Humann, Jr.

George William Humann, Jr., 81, of Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida, died Nov. 13, 2023. Arrangements by Quinn-Shalz Family Funeral Home & Cremation Centre. www.quinn-shalz.com. 904-249-1100

Victor R. Torres-Burgos

Victor R. Torres-Burgos, 86, of Jamestown, North Carolina, died Nov. 7, 2023. Arrangements by Quinn-Shalz Family Funeral Home & Cremation Centre. www.quinn-shalz.com. 904-249-1100



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Bulldogs clean up the beach

Bolles third graders from the Lower School Ponte Vedra Beach Campus headed to Mickler's Landing on Oct. 25 to clean up the beach with the help of their teachers and family members. Lower school science teacher Carolyn Houston also joined the group to teach them about marine life as they explored their environment along the shoreline.

Contributed photos




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Last year, the city of Jacksonville celebrated its 200th anniversary, though the history of the area goes back much further. Kate A. Hallock is chief of staff and communications director for the Jacksonville Historical Society, which helps preserve the past for the future.

Kate Hallock

As told to Shaun Ryan

Please tell me about your background, your education and how you found your way into your current position.

I grew up in the Midwest and received a bachelor's degree in journalism from the University of Missouri—Columbia (Go, MIZZOU!). After spending 35 years in marketing, I returned to journalism here in Jacksonville as managing editor for a neighborhood newspaper. In 2019, I did some freelance marketing work for the Jacksonville Historical Society and was offered a position starting in 2020 as marketing and communications director.

Have you always had an interest in history, especially local history?

I've always loved to read historical fiction, especially James Michener's books, but it wasn't until my husband and I moved to Jacksonville that I took a deeper interest in local history. That interest grew as I met more and more multi-generational Jaxsons covering a variety of stories.

For those who don't know much about Jacksonville history, especially among the many new residents moving here from elsewhere, can you share a few of the really cool things that might spark their interest?

Did you know that Jacksonville's single most significant catastrophe, to date, was the Great Fire of 1901? We have a really cool book in our bookstore about the fire by Wayne Wood, the historical society's historian-at-large. And Jacksonville's music history is incredible, which is why we are establishing the Music Museum at the Jacksonville History Center. Stay tuned, folks!

Tell me about the Jacksonville Historical Society. Does it offer any special events, activities or exhibits that readers would like to learn about?

Oh, this is easy! Coming up is our largest fundraiser, the 21st Annual Gingerbread Extravaganza. The exhibit runs Dec. 8-27 at Old St. Andrew's Church (next to the ballpark) at 317 A. Philip Randolph Blvd. Visitors will enjoy dozens of gingerbread creations by builders of all ages, and more than a dozen themed holiday trees decorated by the Junior League of Jacksonville, plus a fun gift shop! Visit jaxhistory.org for details. In the spring we



commemorate the Great Fire with a 5K run downtown on the Saturday closest to the date of the fire, May 3, 1901. This year the run occurs on May 4 and begins at Old St. Andrew's Church, one of four historic properties that we manage. We also offer monthly programs and lectures on a variety of historical subjects.

As chief of staff at the Jacksonville Historical Society, what are some of your responsibilities?

In addition to our chief executive officer, Dr. Alan Bliss, and myself, we have seven employees who keep the wheels turning at the historical society. I enjoy working with our office

administrator, an events coordinator, a digital productions coordinator, three staff in the archives department and the Merrill House Museum tour coordinator, who knows more history about the Merrill Shipyards and Merrill family than anyone I know. We also have a terrific group of volunteers as well as a rotation of UNF interns.

Are you a longtime resident of Jacksonville? What do you like best about living on The First Coast?

Although my husband, Bill, and I moved here in November 2011 (12 years this month!) and have lived on a 52-foot motor vessel ever since, my Jacksonville story began in 1957. When

I was a year old, my family moved here when my father became the pastor of a primarily Black congregation in Northwest Jacksonville. We were here for 18 months until the KKK drove us out because they didn't appreciate a white man shepherding a Black flock. Despite that rocky start 66 years ago, it was easy to return. I love Jacksonville's diversity!

How do you like to spend your free time?

What free time? Actually, I get my 10,000 steps each morning walking through Ortega, and I love leading a deep-water aerobics class at the Winston Family Y!



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Congratulations to our October Leaders!



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Lara Hoffman
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Matt & Naomi Wilkinson
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CROSSWATER VILLAGE

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COASTAL OAKS

This home features a formal dining room, office and upstairs bonus room. All on a preserve lot! 5 BR, 4 BA, 3,543 SF MLS 1256546 \$1,050,000
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BELLA NINA AT TAMAYA

Updated with paint & new carpet. Located on corner lot in a gated community. 4 BR, 3 BA, 2,233 SF MLS 1252967 \$725,000
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Auto Show

Continued from 1

it was not his first time claiming the top prize at the Ponte Vedra Auto Show.

“I’ve shown at Amelia (Concours d’Elegance) like 20 times, and I won this show about 10 or 12 years ago with a 289 Cobra,” Wilkinson said.

His years of doing car shows have also taught him that no day is ever the same, which is what makes it so interesting.

“I’ve learned a long time ago that with car shows, that there’s no way to know or anticipate so I always go in with very low expectations,” Wilkinson said. “If it goes well, it goes well, and if it doesn’t, it doesn’t.”

However, it proved to be his day, as his Porsche stood out in the eyes of the

judges.

“The quality of that car helped the judges decide that it was the best car,” Ponte Vedra Auto Show director Justin Felker said. “We didn’t go on anything else, not value or sentimental value, but we just simply said, ‘That’s the best.’”

Although Wilkinson got his start in the car world as a race driver, he credits Bill Warner for getting him involved with showing cars and the collector side of things when he started the Amelia Island Concours d’Elegance in 1996.

“Now that racing is over, it’s nice to be able to do this and stay in the car world,” Wilkinson said. “Everybody definitely knows everybody.”

According to Wilkinson, he continues to be amazed at the car culture that exists and continues to develop in the Northeast Florida area.



“It’s big and days like today show that,” Wilkinson said.

While some cars are strictly for shows, that is not the case for Wilkinson and his Porsche, as he intends to drive it around

and enjoys cruising it up and down State Road A1A down to St. Augustine and back on sunny weekend afternoons.

Photos by Anthony Richards and Susan Griffin



MSD process questioned by PVZAB member

By Anthony Richards

Megan McKinley was the lone attendee during the Ponte Vedra Municipal Service District meeting on Nov. 13 and spoke during the public comment portion of the meeting.

According to McKinley, who also serves as a member of the Ponte Vedra Zoning and Adjustment Board, she and several residents are disappointed in the process that was taken during the previous MSD meeting in October, which ended in an unofficial vote being taken where the majority of trustees voted in favor of the PUD application.

“It was a vote that was not properly noticed and therefore not in accordance with state law,” McKinley said. “I was very disappointed in the members of the MSD who took this action, disregarding the intense interest of the members of the community who did attend the meeting. Their (residents) disappointment has been voiced to me since that time and you can see that they are not at the meeting tonight, because they said, ‘Why bother? They don’t listen to us.’”

MSD chairman Al Hollon informed McKinley that he had sent a letter to the Commissioners advising them of what the board had done in four meetings discussing the issue as part of the agenda. He did

not send them a resolution because the vote taken was unofficial.

“I want to be factually accurate, and I decided on my own that four meetings was enough for this board to consider that matter and I didn’t want to put them through a fifth meeting, and that’s why I didn’t call a special meeting,” Hollon said. “It was within the parameters of the law.”

Hollon understands that it was a passionate issue for a lot of people on both sides and that he believes the MSD did its due diligence in dissecting all the information available to them.

“There are often issues like that where the public is going to have opposing viewpoints and there’s no way that you can reconcile some of those positions,” Hollon said. “I did what I thought was right.”

McKinley is the second resident with ties to the PVZAB to speak her mind about the process of the PUD application and how it was handled.

Jane Rollinson now a former member of the PVZAB, spoke concerning the PUD application and resigned following the Commission’s announcement due to the lack of consideration she believed it gave to the board’s recommendation during its decision process.

In this case, it was McKinley who voiced her displeasure with the MSD and the way

they went about unofficially supporting it. “Whether you were for or against it, the process is what is flawed,” McKinley said.

In other news from the MSD meeting, trustee Charles Callaghan informed the MSD that he has been in communication with Beaches Energy to turn back on 12 streetlights in the 400 to 500 block of Ponte

Vedra Boulevard, which had previously been turned off for sea turtle nesting season, which has ended.

The MSD also approved up to \$1,500 a piece to add two streetlights at darker sections of the roadway, with one at Le Master Drive and Poinciana Way and the other at 33 Corona Road.

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Get back in the game

Playing football with an injury usually makes it worse. It’s the same when you ignore a hernia, but the signs are easy to miss. Here are some hernia symptoms that often go unrecognized:

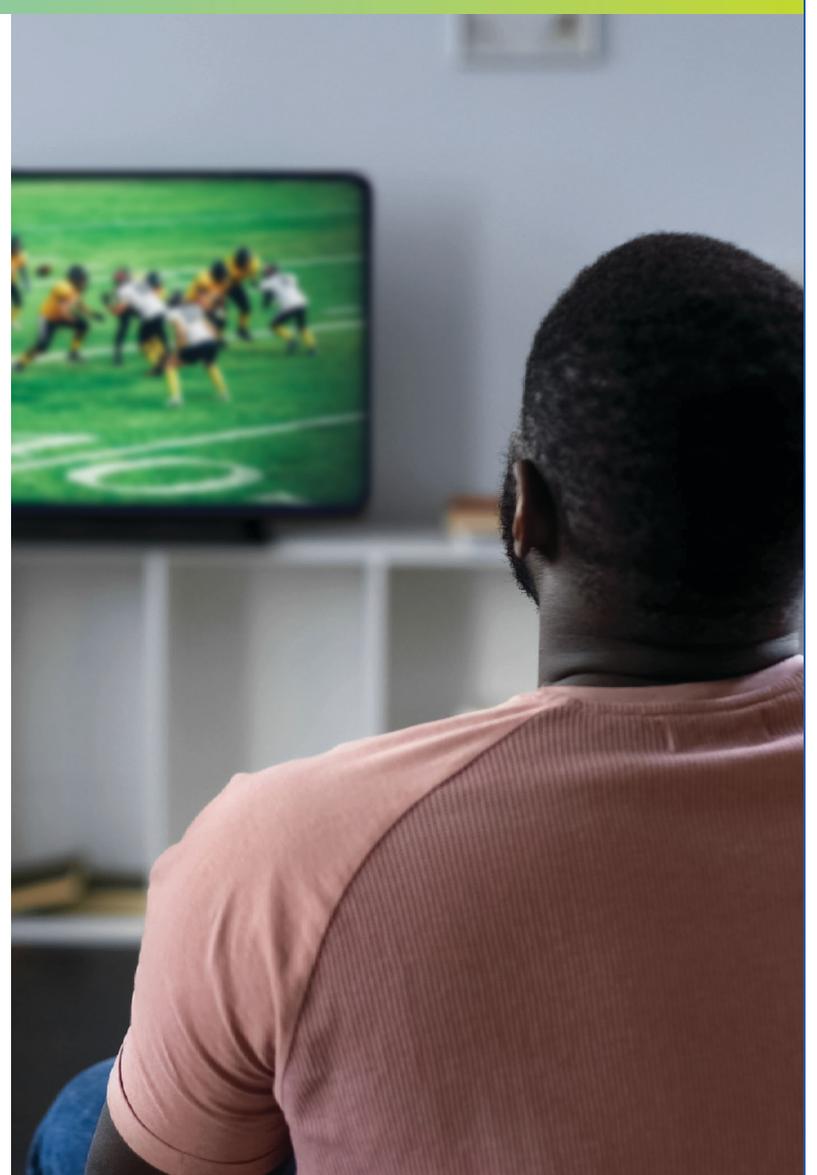
- Pain in the pelvic area
- Nausea and vomiting
- Fever
- Constipation
- Feeling full and bloated
- Heartburn
- Weakness and muscle fatigue in the upper leg or groin
- Pain when lifting or coughing

If left untreated, your hernia could grow, get more painful, or even become dangerous at some point. And a hernia won’t go away on its own. The good news is today’s minimally invasive hernia treatment options, including robotic-assisted surgery, can offer you fast recovery.

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Readers now have the chance to vote for their favorite businesses in various categories online, such as auto & transportation, home & finance, food & drink and more! Online voting ends December 4th.

Give your favorite business the recognition they deserve, and vote for them as the Best of the Best in their category!

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VOTING ENDS: December 4th

**WINNERS ANNOUNCED/
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**pontevedrarecorder.com/
bestofbeaches2023**



The finalists in action: Darlene Deo, Laura Player, Sherri Feldman and Eileen Grebe.

Pickleball event raises money for Alzheimer's Association

By Alicia Booth Sprecher

For anyone who plays a racquet sport like tennis, pickleball is a natural draw.

For tennis player Darlene Deo, a pickleball tournament was the natural way to raise money to fight a disease that profoundly affects her family.

Deo's father, George, was diagnosed with Alzheimer's in 2017 and since then, she's made a commitment to care for him and others who are fighting the devastating disease.

Deo, her best friend Eileen Grebe and teammate Kristen Lancaster cooked up a way to combine Deo's A1 Sawgrass Country Club tennis team, their fascination with pickleball and a desire to do something for the Alzheimer's Association.

The result was "Forgettaboutit!," a month-long pickleball tournament in November which raised \$3,710.

"We're Italian from the Northeast, that just seemed like the most appropriate

name," Deo said with a chuckle.

Despite the name, the experience was a memorable one.

"It made me very emotional, because honestly, I love everyone on our team and it was the best feeling to be able to know that we were able to give back," Deo said.

Twenty-four players took part, which included Deo's team and some close friends.

The tournament mostly took place on Eileen and Mike Grebe's driveway-turned-pickleball court and ended with a nail-biter of a final round and elaborate party at the Grebes' beachfront home.

Deo and partner Laura Player won the tournament but agree the best part of the experience was being able to raise money and awareness for the Alzheimer's Association.

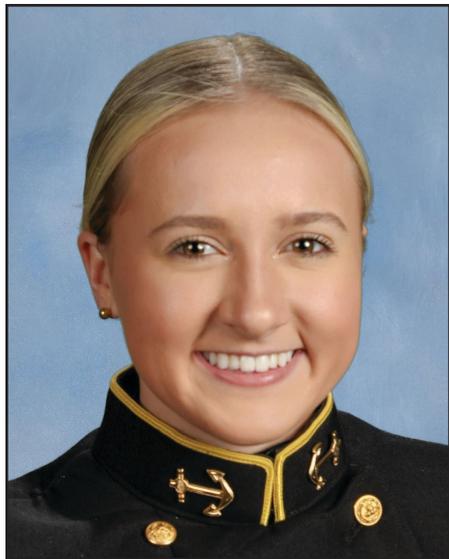
Plans are already in the works to expand the tournament next year and involve even more tennis/pickleball players from the region.



Sawgrass Country Club's A1 tennis team and others at the finals party, including Darlene Deo's father, George Deo

GUEST COLUMN

Naval Academy senior shares experience, inspires others



By Liz Thompson

My name is Liz Thompson. I was raised in Nocatee and attended Nease High School. My junior year, I applied and was accepted into the U.S. Naval Academy. I am now a 1/C (senior) Midshipman just months away from graduating as an officer in the United States Navy.

My time at USNA began on July 1, 2020: Induction Day. I-Day marks the beginning of Plebe Summer, a rigorous seven-week program that turns civilians into Midshipmen. I had a unique Plebe Summer experience due to COVID-19, which brought on its own challenges. Since my Plebe Summer, I have been able to lead as an instructor, also known as detailer, for the class of 2027, molding them into plebes that were ready to take on academic and military challenges.

In my time at the United States Naval Academy, I have also been able to lead the Navy Spirit Cheer team as the captain of the All-Girl squad and contribute as a photographer for the Lucky Bag yearbook.

At the Academy, I am an English major and I will graduate with a Bachelor of Science in May. On graduation day, I will also be commissioned as an officer in the United States Navy. In mid-November, every 1/C Midshipman (senior) is given their future career, known as “Service Assignment Day.” Throughout all four years, Midshipmen are striving to perform well physically and academically, as well as taking on leadership billets, forming relationships with mentors and maintaining a tight connection with their company (small group of classmates structured for accountability and mentorship) in order to have the best chance at receiving their desired service selection.

I hope to be selected as a Naval Flight Officer (NFO) where I will support and assist with navigation, weapon systems and flight operations in various Naval aircraft.

Over the last four years, I have par-

ticipated in many incredible military trainings, including spending a month on a destroyer and a month with a helicopter training squadron out of Norfolk, Virginia. My experiences have taught me a great deal about myself, others and service to this incredible nation. It has been inspiring to spend the last four years around people that share my priorities

and interests.

The campus, also known as the yard, is filled with eager individuals who are driven to excellence and hold themselves to a higher standard. They push me to be my best, whether it is physical training, competing in team activities or learning military traditions.

My experience at the Naval Academy

has reinforced my desire to help others be their best. As a member of the Brigade of Midshipmen I will continue learning from, and leading, those around me and then, this spring, I will take those skills into my career as a naval officer. I am committed to serve at least five years as a naval officer, and I am enthusiastic to serve my country in this way.

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Photo by Shaun Ryan

Soloist Madeline Rey, 16, performs the Chinese Dance with other young dancers.

Christ Church Nutcracker Ballet is Dec. 9

By Shaun Ryan

Christmastime on the First Coast just

wouldn't be the same without the Christ Church Nutcracker Ballet presented by Miss Felicia's Dance ministry. Fortunately, the ever-popular event returns Dec. 9 for the troupe's 28th annual performance.

About 150 dancers ranging in age between 3 (the show's cherubs) and 85 (instructor Felicia Rhoden herself) will take the stage at UNF's Lazzara Performance Hall to bring back the wonder of Tchaikovsky's timeless classic.

Like other presentations of The Nutcracker, this performance has its own personality. After much pleading by the young dancers, Miss Felicia — who has been dancing strictly classical ballet since

she was 4 — relented and allowed them to include a bit of hip-hop in the performance — so long as it remained dignified and classy.

That said, small variations won't change the essence of The Nutcracker. It's still the story of a girl who goes on an enchanting journey, meeting a number of whimsical characters amid an eclectic assortment of dances.

Rehearsals began in mid-August, everyone focused on recreating the high-quality experience audiences have come to expect.

"We're working," said Miss Felicia. "Working, working, working to try to

make it a good, fun evening for everybody."

She started the series 28 years ago after moving to Ponte Vedra Beach from Atlanta. At first, she had only 17 young dancers and, she said, "it grew and grew and grew and grew and grew." The first productions were held at the church, but the cast outgrew that and it was moved to larger and larger venues, finally landing at the Lazzara theater, which opened in 2001.

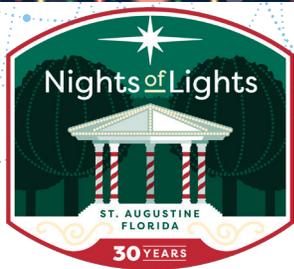
Still, Miss Felicia tries to limit the size of the cast because it is important to her to know each and every child in the show. They do not have to be members of Christ Church, and in fact come from all around the area. Generally, they range in age from 3 to 18, though some dancers return from college to participate.

One of the most important aspects of the Christ Church Nutcracker Ballet is that all of the proceeds go toward good causes associated with children.

It supports an orphanage in Bolivia. It supports Dreams Come True. It supports pediatric hospice. And it supports St. Jude's Children's Hospital.

"It's just a wonderful thing to be able to write those checks after each Nutcracker and send them out to help these children and help their families," Miss Felicia said.

Tickets for the Christ Church Nutcracker can be purchased at missfeliciasdance.com or christchurchdancers.ticketspice.com/the-nutcracker-winter-2023. The Dec. 9 show begins at 6 p.m. Doors open at 5 p.m. The UNF Lazzara Theatre is located at 1 UNF Drive, Jacksonville.



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Ayla's Acres, Underwood Jewelers team up for trunk show, adoption event

Contributed photos



Christy Bromberg, Clayton Bromberg, Loretta Swit and John Rutkowski during the cocktail party to open the trunk show Nov. 2.

By Anthony Richards

Ayla's Acres No-kill Animal Rescue and Underwood Jewelers held its annual Lagos trunk show raising money for the nonprofit organization on Nov. 2-4.

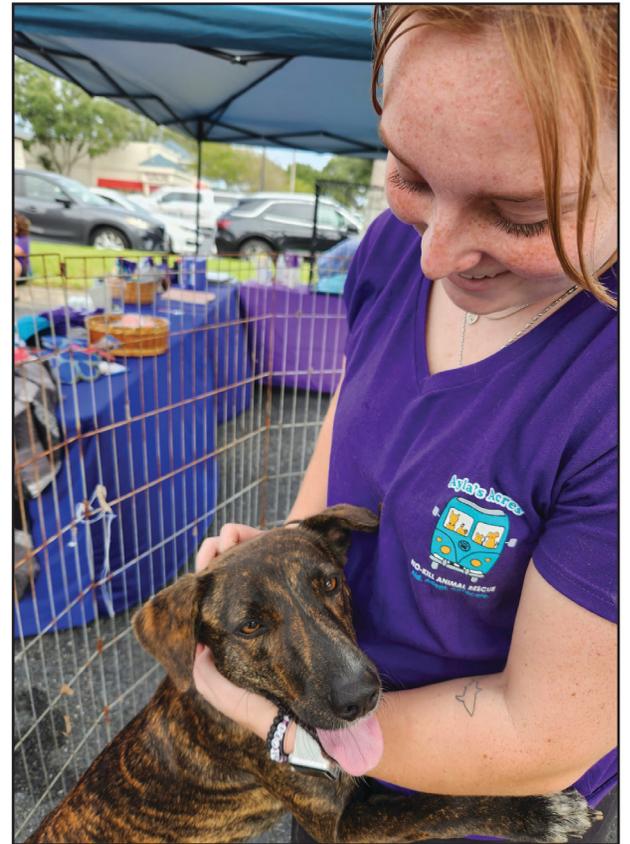
It consisted of a three-day event that included a cocktail party to kick things off Nov. 2 featuring animal activist Loretta Swit, who is known for her acting work as Major Margaret "Hot Lips" Houlihan on the hit T.V. series "M*A*S*H" and wrapped up with an animal adoption event on Nov. 4.

The event has been going on for about a decade now and it is a partnership with Underwood Jewelers that Ayla's Acres executive director Fran Charlson is grateful for.

"We are looking to introduce our animals to the community and let them know what our process is, because it's a little different from other rescues," Charlson said. "It's more like a meet and greet because we don't have same-day adoptions."

The process includes filling out an application and having references that go with it along with a veterinary and home check.

According to Charlson, the in-depth process taken is done so that each animal receives the best home possible and to make sure those interested in adoption are doing it for the right reasons.



A pet adoption event was held in the Underwood Jewelers Ponte Vedra Beach location parking lot in partnership with Ayla's Acres on Nov. 4.

AYLA'S continues on Page 16

Miss Felicia's Dance
presents the
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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

Celebrate Thanksgiving with flowers

"Flowers are like friends; they bring color to your world." — Unknown



By Kathy Esfahani

As you prepare your home for Thanksgiving celebrations, remember to include flowers as part

of your decor! Use flowers in table centerpieces and arrangements. Be sure to highlight tables, shelves and mantles in all areas where family and friends may gather, such as the entryway, kitchen, living room and dining room. Arrange flowers in vases, hollowed-out pumpkins, baskets or cornucopias. Surround the flowers with candles, pumpkins, fruits, fall-colored leaves, berry branches and other seasonal decor.

Flowers suitable for Thanksgiving arrangements come in bold colors such as yellows, oranges, reds and purples.



Thanksgiving centerpiece

Consider these popular choices for your Thanksgiving decorations:

- Sunflowers feature bright, golden petals that stand out in an arrangement. They symbolize joy and gratitude. These cheerful blooms will leave a lasting impression on your guests!
- Daisies are available in a wide range of colors and have a pleasant scent to add floral notes to your Thanksgiving aromas. Their dainty blooms add a softness to your arrangement and an intimate feeling for your gathering.
- Asters come in a variety of styles,

and their blooms show off slim petals in many colors. They are considered to be a symbol of love and patience.

- Roses come in a wide range of colors, including purples, oranges and yellows, perfect for the Thanksgiving season. Their timeless elegance has a general appeal and symbolizes romance.
- Carnations add a soft touch to your holiday decor and will last a long time after cutting. They feature blooms in yellow, red, purple and white suitable for adding to any arrangement. These flowers represent the true meaning of the season.
- Mums are a traditional fall favorite! These plants feature bountiful blooms in yellows, oranges, reds and whites. Larger plants can stand alone or be a centerpiece for seasonal decor while smaller mums are perfect to include in a bouquet.
- Calla lilies feature a trumpet-shaped flower that stands out in an arrangement. They are available in a variety of colors including a deep

Photos provided by Kathy's Creative Gardens & Nursery

Flower of the Week



Sunflower

purple tone that provides a contrast to traditional yellows and oranges.

Happy decorating, and have a wonderful and blessed Thanksgiving holiday!

Flower of the Week: Sunflower

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

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Photos by Anthony Richards

Professional golfer Billy Horschel and Feeding Northeast Florida CEO Susan King answer questions as part of a national First Tee Innovators Forum at the PGA Tour's Global Home in Ponte Vedra Beach on Nov. 9.

Horschel shares philanthropic experience at First Tee forum

By Anthony Richards

Professional golfer Billy Horschel was the guest speaker at a First Tee Innovators Forum held at the PGA Tour's Global Home in Ponte Vedra Beach on Nov. 9.

He spoke to 28 teens from across the country, who spent four days coming up with an idea for a community service project that they would then return to their hometowns and work on implementing their projects with help from the First Tee and its partners.

Horschel shared he and his wife Brittany's commitment to helping local nonprofits, such as Feeding Northeast Florida and it led to them starting their own Horschel Family Foundation within the past year.

The teens in attendance asked questions and picked Horschel's brain about what it took to start the foundation, including their driving forces behind wanting to get and stay involved in the local community.



Horschel talks with First Tee participants from across the country.

"It's about seeing the lives you have impacted over the years," Horschel said.

He shared with the teens how he and

his wife first got involved with Feeding Northeast Florida years ago because they looked at their children and thought how fortunate they are to have

all that they need to eat, but they could not imagine the thought of some children not being as blessed and wanted to do what they could to help fix that.

"It's about finding something that touches you and really means something to you," Horschel said. "For us that was providing food to those families in need, but for you it could be something else. When you're passionate about it, you're going to want to see it through no matter what."

However, Horschel stressed that although being a professional golfer may allow him the ability to help even more because of the platform that he has, anyone with a cause in their heart can make a difference.

"Some of the smallest steps lead to the biggest gains," Horschel said.

While he was in the middle of answering questions he looked out the window and saw Feeding Northeast Florida CEO Susan King and called

Ayla's

Continued from 13

“Some people will do all that process ahead of time before they meet, and then we can do it the same day, but we still need all of that done,” Charlson said.

The animals they have as part of their organization have already been through a lot of change in their lives and the goal is to find them an environment that can be steady and consistent for years to come.

“It’s a lot like buyer’s remorse, where you find something in the store and then the next day, you’re like, ‘Why did I buy that?’” Charlson said. “The same things can take place when getting an animal, and in the contract they sign we do tell them that if they have to return an animal, to make sure to bring it back to us. We only have about a 2% recidivism rate because of how we do our process.”

The best way to reach out if interested in the adoption process is by going to aylasacres.org. There are dog and car applications for both adoption and to be a foster home, which is something they are always looking for people to volunteer for as well.

One of the things Charlson takes the most pride in is that they are a no-kill rescue, which means that they can get full at their facilities if they reach the proper number that they can care for.

However, more foster homes for animals means the rescue can house more animals itself, which is why she is always looking for anyone interested in fostering animals.



Contributed photos

Members of Phi Alpha Omega spending time with Sweetie during the adoption event.

“Right now, we’re full so if we don’t have fosters I can’t take anymore animals in,” Charlson said. “We have about 50 fosters in this area right now, but there’s always room for more.”

Horschel

Continued from 15

her in, so she stopped by and joined the session in impromptu fashion.

She was asked by one teen what the key is to handle the fear of failure that can creep in?

According to King, the challenge is something you just have to embrace, and it is actually not as hard as it seems if the ultimate goal is fueled by passion.

“If you’re driven by passion, then failure or success is not a thing,” King said. “All that matters is the mission at hand and why you are doing it. Just like anything else, you will learn from your past experiences.”

Both Horschel and King reiterated throughout that perseverance is probably the most important thing to have when starting or operating a nonprofit.

“It’s going to get tough along the way, but we all have it in us to push through,” Horschel said.

The 28 teens attending the forum were selected based on academic achievement, community service, chapter involvement, leadership, essay responses and letters of recommendation.

The purpose of the event was to encourage participants to become innovators in their respective communities, culminating with each teen presenting the plans for their project.

“Our participants have produced creative and impactful community service projects since this event launched, addressing issues like food insecurity and environmental sustainability,” First Tee CEO Greg McLaughlin said.

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Leaving a LEGACY

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 2023

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**River Garden praised for
programs, services**

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GUEST COLUMN

Steps to manage your tax burden before year's end



Submitted by **Christopher Thompson**

Taxes are a critical expense category in retirement and the clock is ticking on making timely, tax-saving moves before year's end. If you're retired, now is a good time to take a closer look at your investment portfolio and determine if any changes are appropriate.

Keep in mind that some changes may need to be implemented by Dec. 31, 2023 to avoid negative tax implications — which is all the more reason to get started today.

Here are five steps to consider:

Actively manage retirement plan distributions

All distributions from workplace retirement plans made with pre-tax contributions are subject to tax at your ordinary income tax rate. For IRAs funded with after-tax contributions or annuities, the

portion of the distribution attributable to earnings growth inside those accounts is subject to tax. You want to balance distributions from pre-tax and after-tax accounts to avoid moving into a higher tax bracket (if possible), which would increase your tax liability. Utilizing tax-free Roth IRA distributions to fulfill your cash flow needs is one way to help manage your tax burden.

Be aware of RMD rules

If you turn 73 in 2023, you have to begin taking required minimum distributions (RMDs) from traditional IRAs or workplace retirement plans with the first RMD due by April 1, 2024. Beginning in the 2024 tax year, RMDs must be taken by Dec. 31. That means if you wait and take your first RMD in 2024 before April 1, you will have two RMDs in 2024. To check when RMDs start for you (based on your birth year), visit [IRS.gov](https://www.irs.gov).

Make tax-smart charitable gifts

If, like most people, you don't itemize tax deductions and claim a standard deduction on your tax return, you can make charitable contributions and generate tax savings using other strategies. If you are age 70½ or older, you can arrange qualified charitable distributions (QCD) from your IRA, which go directly from the IRA custodian to the qualified charitable organization. This approach is beneficial if you must take RMDs and don't need the money for your own needs because you can avoid claiming the RMD as taxable income by directing the QCD to a qualified charitable organization. Individuals can direct up to \$100,000 in gifts to qualified charities from their IRAs annually (that number will be indexed



to inflation beginning in 2024). Another option is to gift appreciated assets, such as stock, to a charitable organization. By gifting the asset, you avoid realizing the capital gain that would result from selling it. Your tax burden can be reduced while supporting a favored cause.

Consider tax harvesting

If you do not yet collect Social Security (you have until age 70 to begin) and are not yet age 73 (to begin RMDs), it might be time to tap some investment gains in your portfolio. Realizing gains by selling appreciated assets (in taxable accounts) will add to your tax burden this year, but can help lower your tax liability in future years when other sources of income kick in. You can also look for opportunities to sell positions at a loss and offset some of your capital gains.

Manage your Medicare premiums

Along with managing your tax burden, strategically maneuvering income streams can help you stay below thresholds that could result in higher premiums for Medicare Part B. Single people with income over \$97,000 and married couples with incomes exceeding \$194,000 (2023 levels) might have to pay higher Medicare Part B premiums in 2025 as a result. If you can keep income below those levels, you may maintain the most favorable Part B premium. Even if your income is higher, there are multiple premium tiers based on income level, so any steps you can take to limit your income in a given year may help reduce your premium.

If you are seeking to implement these or other significant tax-saving strategies, be sure to check with your financial and tax advisers for confirmation that the

measures you are implementing are appropriate.

Christopher Thompson, CFP®, CRPC®, CMFA® is a Financial Advisor and Managing Director with Ameriprise Financial Services, LLC. in Jacksonville FL. He specializes in fee-based financial planning and asset management strategies and has been in practice for 30 years. To contact him, www.ameripriseadvisors.com/chris.thompson, Chris.thompson@ampf.com, 904-380-2290, 4601 Touchton Road E, Suite 3120, Jacksonville FL 32246. Certified Financial Planner Board of Standards Inc. owns the certification marks CFP®, CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER™ and CFP certification mark (with plaque design) in the U.S.

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Photo by Susan Griffin

Regent and Pam Ducas are the owners of Memory Lane.



Contributed photo

Memory Lane is located on Baymeadows Way in Jacksonville.



Contributed photo

Customers relax in Memory Lane's preview room to watch video they recorded many years prior

Memory Lane helps preserve special moments for the future

By Shaun Ryan

As the holidays near, our attention turns to buying gifts for friends and family. But it's often a struggle to think of something they will like.

Memory Lane, 8431 Baymeadows Way, Jacksonville, has the perfect solution: precious memories once thought lost because they are preserved in old media suddenly made accessible again.

Imagine sitting with family over the holidays and watching highlights of days gone by, hearing voices of loved ones we hold dear in our memories, smiling at

video of our younger selves.

Once, we recorded these memories on film, slides, videotape or audiotape with the idea they would never be lost. But technology changes and many of us have realized too late that, years later, we have no way to share these precious moments. Our projectors and slide carousels, our Betamax machines and tape decks have fallen into disrepair or been lost in a move.

And that's where Memory Lane comes to the rescue. This, the only brick-and-mortar digitizing business in Northeast Florida, can copy VHS tapes, VHS-C's, 8mm tape, mini DV's, DVDs, Hi8, Beta format

video and U-matic three-quarter-inch tape onto USB flash drives and DVDs. It can also save sound recordings, such as those recorded on vinyl records, cassettes and reel-to-reel tapes, onto CDs.

It can also digitize 8mm, Super 8 and 16mm film, as well as photos and slides. And it can even color-correct those slide images that have turned orange over time.

The only thing Memory Lane does not do is restore damaged photos or work with negatives.

Memory Lane owners Regent and Pamela Ducas bought Easy Edit Video nearly a year ago and rebranded it in March. They

have all the equipment needed to transfer these memories into modern forms.

They also maintain a comfortable preview room, where people are welcome to watch their old tapes before deciding what they want to have digitized.

This service helps customers to ensure that their memories will continue to be available and be shared with future generations.

Memory Lane is open from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. weekdays and by appointment on Saturdays. The phone number is 904-730-9999. For further information, go to memorylanejacksonville.com.

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Cypress Village makes transition to retirement easy

Cypress Village is a continuing care retirement community with a one-time paid entry fee offering a full continuum of care. As a life care community, Cypress Village makes any transition from independent living to assisted living, memory care and long-term care simple as a resident's health needs change.

The retirement community offers independent living apartments and houses, assisted living, memory care and skilled nursing as well as inpatient and outpatient rehabilitation, all on the campus. Cypress Village also offers houses for

sale on the real estate market, which is unique to this community, as well.

The community is located west of the Intracoastal Waterway in a natural setting of 120 acres, surrounded by lakes and nature and walking trails. The address is 4600 Middleton Park Circle East, Jacksonville.

With a location near activities in the community, Cypress Village has been attractive to active retirees for more than 30 years.

It's adjacent to Mayo Clinic Jacksonville and Windsor Parke Golf Course.

It's just minutes from the Atlantic Ocean, Ponte Vedra Beach and Jacksonville Beach. Jacksonville International Airport is just 45 minutes away.

Downtown Jacksonville — just 30 minutes away — is home to the Jacksonville Symphony, the Florida Theatre and the Jacksonville Jaguars.

Shopping at nearby St. Johns Town Center is always popular. And Cypress Village is only about 30 minutes to historic St. Augustine, the oldest city in the United States and rich in cultural, dining and tour opportunities.

Amenities at Cypress Village include:

- Indoor, junior Olympic-size heated pool with Jacuzzi feature
- Business center and computer lab with wireless internet access
- Full-service salon and nail spa
- Fitness center
- Instructor-led fitness classes
- More than 30 resident-led activities, groups and clubs
- Full-service shuttle and private car transportation to doctor's appointments and shopping
- Walking, biking and jogging trails
- A croquet court
- A nine-hole putting green
- A bocce court
- 24-hour security and emergency call system
- On-site wellness clinic and dental office

There is a fully stocked library, a private art studio and a billiards area.

The community also offers several dining options, from elegant dining to more casual choices. Here's a look:

- 4600 East: Waterside fine dining, reserved dinner seating
- Middletons: Buffet dining for breakfast, lunch or dinner
- Private Dining Room: Lakeside dining room to cater to elegantly appointed private functions
- Loon's Nest Bar & Grille: Casual dining, fully stocked bar and indoor and outdoor patio seating
- Sandpiper Café: Convenient, home-made take-out menu. Deli and convenient-store options
- Banquet program: Host a dinner party for friends, a birthday or anniversary event

Cypress Village also has its own work shop, where residents will find hand tools or power tools as needed. These are available for use in members' homes and are suitable for most projects, from small repairs to major furniture making.

The community also has its own app, which allows residents ease of access to information and assistance throughout the day. It gives access to program calendars, fitness schedules, outings and more.

Cypress Village has won awards and recognition from a number of sources.

It has earned The Joint Commission's Gold Seal of Approval for Skilled Nursing Accreditation. U.S. News and World Report named Cypress Village the "Best Nursing Home & Short-Term Rehabilitation" for three years in a row. MemoryCare.com named Cypress Village to its



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Cypress Village

Continued from 20

top 14 communities in Jacksonville.

Apartments range in size from a 503-square-foot studio to a 1,863-square-foot, three bedroom/three bath option. Fees reflect the sizes.

Floor plans vary for home sites. There are patio homes with two bedrooms, two baths and a one-car garage. There are garden homes with two to three bedrooms, two baths and a garage for one to

two cars. There are also fairway homes, with two to three bedrooms, den, two to two-and-a-half baths and a two-car garage.

Both homes and apartments are appointed with newly renovated designer décor: tile floors in kitchen and baths, luxury vinyl wood floors, GE appliance package, quartz stone counters, faux wood blinds, ceiling fans, designer lighting and more.

For further information on Cypress Village, go to cypressvillageretirement.com.



What will happen when you die?

Who will handle your financial and personal affairs? Who will make arrangements for your funeral, burial or cremation? Will they know what to do and will they be financially prepared? Death isn't easy to think about in terms of ourselves or the ones closest to us, but it is an inextricable part of life. It's what makes our lives and what we do in them important and valuable.

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- *Protecting assets from long-term care or illness.*
- *Single cash payments or affordable monthly payments.*
- *Everyone qualifies for burial insurance or cremation insurance regardless of age or health status.*

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River Garden praised for programs, services

By Shaun Ryan

Northeast Florida is rich in facilities, organizations and programs that serve the aging population, so much so that it can be daunting to determine which are the best. That's why official recognition and awards are so helpful in identifying them.

Here, River Garden Senior Services rises to the top.

This not-for-profit, mission-driven community agency was launched in 1946 and offers an array of elder care programs and services on its 40-acre campus in the Mandarin area.

It is one of only two agencies in the Sunshine State to have been awarded the Governor's Gold Seal Award for Excellence in Long-Term Care every year since the award's creation in 2002.

This award, established by the Florida State Legislature, recognizes premier quality nursing homes that have exceptionally high standards and display excellence in the quality of care delivered to their residents.

It's an exclusive club. Of the more-than-700 nursing homes in the state, only 10 are recognized with this award.

Before receiving the award, the facility must undergo a rigorous examination to ensure strict regulatory compliance and the provision of enhanced programming and services. In addition, representatives of the Governor's Panel on Excellence in Long-Term Care make a site visit to the facility.

To qualify, River Garden had to demonstrate:

- A high-quality care ranking among all regional nursing homes
- Financial soundness and stability
- An excellent record with the state's Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program
- Evidence of community involvement
- A stable workforce
- "Best practices" in elder care

On the occasion of the latest award presentation on March 26, Chief Executive Officer Mauri Mizrahi said, "Our staff dedicates



Contributed photo

The Governor's Gold Seal Award for Excellence in Long-Term Care was presented in March by Kimberly R. Smoak, deputy secretary of health quality assurance at the Agency for Health Care Administration, to Dr. Lawrence Goldberg, River Garden Hebrew Home board president.

RIVER GARDEN continues on Page 23

SARA BETH FRAZIER

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River Garden

Continued from 22

themselves every day to being the best, and they deserve a round of applause for this success.”

But this is not the only recognition River Garden has received.

On Tuesday, Nov. 14, U.S. News & World Report released its Best Nursing Homes results. River Garden received an overall rating of 4/5.

In addition, River Garden has consistently been rated a 5-star community by the Agency for Health Care Administration and by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services for high-quality nursing home services, promoting health and improving the quality of life.

Beyond that, River Garden has earned the Joint Commission’s Gold Seal of Approval for Nursing Care Center Accreditation and Post-Acute Care Certification.

The River Garden campus includes:

- River Garden Hebrew Home, a 180-bed skilled nursing and rehabilitation facility
- The Coves at River Garden, an 80-unit independent living community
- River Garden Home Health Care, a Florida-licensed, Medicare-certified home health agency
- River Garden Rehab, which provides short-stay rehabilitation and outpatient physical, occupational and speech thera-

pies

- River Garden Adult Day Care
- The Albert Z. Fleet Geriatric Training Center
- The River Garden Foundation

On Saturday, Nov. 18, the foundation will conduct its annual gala, which is a major fundraising event for River Garden Hebrew Home.

The theme, “Pura Vida,” translates to “Pure Life” or “real living,” and it reflects joy and well-being. It was selected as indicative of the quality of life provided daily to River Garden residents.

The first of these annual galas was held in October 1993 and was so popular that it was sold out even before the invitations could be mailed! More than 500 guests attended.

The River Garden Board of Trustees established this elegant community event to promote the foundation’s mission and provide philanthropic support for River Garden Hebrew Home. It has since been recognized as a premier event in Jacksonville.

This year’s community partner honoree is Baptist Health.

For further information on this event, call 904-886-8430 or email foundation@rivergarden.org. For more information on River Garden, go to rivergarden.org or watch the video at youtube.com/watch?v=yy52aweow5M.

River Garden is located at 11401 Old Saint Augustine Road, Jacksonville.

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Contributed photos

OPE students welcomed Ollie back to Ocean Palms after his cross-country journey!

Ocean Palms Otter Run raises \$90K

This year, Ocean Palms Elementary School embarked on its annual Otter Run with school mascot, Ollie, at the helm. Starting on Sept. 25, he set off on an imaginary journey across the country, fueled by none other than the students at Ocean Palms. Moving one mile per minute classes participated in P.E., he traveled to New York, Alaska, California, Arizona and more. All the while,

this otter community raised money for the school — \$90,000, in fact.

During the final leg of the journey, students participated in the Otter Run, donning class-themed costumes and running the final laps to bring Ollie home! Ollie arrived safely home, and the students celebrated hitting their fundraising goals with crazy hair and hat day, by

duct taping administration to the wall at lunch, and with a sumo wrestling face off among teachers and staff!

Phil Squatrito from Training for Warriors led the school at the pep rally before the run and also oversaw the run with health and fitness inspiration. Additionally, Fishman Pediatric Dentistry sponsored this high-energy event.



OPE students ran laps at the school's annual Otter Run to bring Ollie home and to raise money to support the school.

DAR honors Vietnam veterans

By Viky Divertie

The Ponte Vedra Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) hosted a luncheon Nov. 7 to honor Vietnam veterans who are in some way affiliated with their chapter. The keynote speaker was Tony D'Aleo, president of Chapter 1046 of the Vietnam Veterans of America who served in the U.S.M.C. from 1966 to 1970.

The honorees were given a certificate and a lapel pin with the engraving, "A Grateful Nation Thanks and Honors You" embossed on the back side.



Contributed photo

At the luncheon a separate "Missing Man" table was set in remembrance of the 58,281 men and women who lost their lives in Vietnam. Pictured are the 15 honorees including Sidney Anderson, Donald Campbell, Arthur Corsano, Alva Hollon Jr., William Maroney, Evn Myette, James Peterson, Paul Simick, Lloyd Stowers, Richard VanBrederode, Jerry Wouters, James Wylie, Terrence

McManus, Patricia Bradford for Gregory Bradford, Mary Glover for Jack Layman and Tony D'Aleo.

DAR is a nonpolitical, genealogical women's service organization whose purpose is to promote historic preservation, education and patriotism. For more information, go to DAR.com or contact regent.darpontevedra@gmail.com.

Trees

Continued from 1

because I was worried we were still going to lose a lot of trees. It sounds like the number of trees they've saved is just astounding.”

The project will create dual left-turn lanes from Mickler Road onto State Road A1A, a left-turn lane from Ponte Vedra Boulevard onto southbound A1A and an additional through-lane on northbound A1A.

The dual turn lanes will require a segment of Mickler Road be widened.

However, the original design called for that widening to be extended westward, tapering to the road's current width at the intersection with Neck Road, 1,500 feet from the A1A Intersection.

That widening would have accommodated a new left-turn lane into the Portofino condominium complex and 12-foot drainage swales near the Mediterra community, west of Portofino. The total project would have necessitated removal of about 36 trees and possible catastrophic stress to others, including some majestic live oaks.

At a Sept. 26 meeting with county officials, residents insisted there was no need for the Portofino turn lane as there are only 20 units there.

County officials agreed to re-examine



Photo by Shaun Ryan

St. Johns County Engineer Duane Kent speaks to residents about changes to a project along Mickler Road.

the design and meet again with residents in about 30 days. In the meantime, the contractor would address other portions of the project.

The proposed turn lane into Portofino and the drainage swales were eliminated, and the taper no longer nears Mediterra, ending instead just past the Portofino entrance.

The design modifications also address a pedestrian crosswalk at the intersection of Mickler Road and A1A. At the Sept. 26 meeting, residents said cars often failed to stop at the crosswalk.

The crosswalk, which runs from the northwest curb to a pedestrian “island,” will be relocated slightly to the north to improve its visibility to southbound

traffic turning left onto Mickler Road. Currently, motorists encounter the crosswalk only after committing to the turn.

To learn more about the project, go to datahub-sjcpwd.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/SJCPWD::capital-improvement-projects/explore. Zoom the map to the project area and click on it.

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Making customers' dream designs become reality

By Anthony Richards

River Stonework & Design can help create a path where a person's creative ideas are realized,

Phillip Raposo started the company providing professional stonework and pavers for their clients in 2007. The business is located at 8570 Philips Highway in Jacksonville.

"We wanted to promote an outdoor living lifestyle by enjoying the contact with nature, neighbors and family," Raposo said.

According to Raposo, from the very beginning the mission of the business was to promote the wellbeing of our customers.

"We are committed to valuing our employees, listening to our clients, and operating under the ideals of moral integrity, quality and accountability," Raposo said. "This commitment leads our paving contractors to provide the highest quality service and promote unforgettable moments for our clients."

And he believes that nothing creates wellbeing much better than being outside and enjoying the fresh air, especially in a place like Florida.

That belief is still as strong today as it ever has been, and it remains the primary reason why he enjoys doing what he does



Photos courtesy of River Stonework & Design

Phillip Raposo started River Stonework & Design in 2007.

for a living.

He felt like the best way to get people to enjoy and spend time outside is to help them accomplish a much more comfortable environment in which to spend their outdoor time in.

Raposo immigrated from Brazil and learned to speak English and is now living the "American dream" and thriving as a business owner in his new home of the United States.

"Our journey wasn't easy, but it fueled

our passion for excellence," Raposo said. "We handpick team members who share our drive. No outsourcing here, we have our own skilled crew, trusted and proven."

This is something that has spread to the nearly 40 employees and subcontractors that take part in certain projects.

"We take care of everything from the design and construction, down to the flowerpots," Raposo said. "No detail is overlooked, which gives our paving con-

tractors a leading edge over the competition."

According to Raposo, the array of design options they offer is not the only thing that sets the company apart, as they also strive for there to be quality and accountability associated with each project.

"Accountability is a key to success in the construction business," Raposo said. "Every customer should feel special, understood, valued, and above all, they should feel like they're your only customer. It's more likely that your customer will be a repeat one if you treat each and every one this way."

Their commitment to making sure their customers have the best experience possible also includes offering a five-year warranty, budget-friendly options and helping a customer discover what the best project is for their needs and budget.

"We strive to help you to achieve the outdoors of your dreams," Raposo said. "We provide all assistance to regular loans and private payment plans domestically. We strongly believe it is possible to do business based on trust and goodwill."

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Jacksonville company offers multiple services to upgrade homes

When it's time to replace windows or doors or transform the exterior of a home with new siding or paint, it's best to seek out experienced professionals to get the job done right.

Koehler Home Improvement, a service-driven residential company in Jacksonville, offers solutions to homeowners throughout the area. It's locally owned

and operated, so it prizes its reputation, which is built on referrals from satisfied, repeat customers. The company focuses on building long-term relationships with its clients and says that no job is too big or too small.

Koehler offers energy-efficient solutions, products that will enhance the look of a home and functionality that will

make any space more livable. It offers free, on-premise estimates for any of its services.

Koehler is known for the quality of its expert window and door replacement services, whether at a home or business. In fact, it is one of the highest rated window and door installation companies in Jacksonville.

The company can address single-hung, double-hung, sliding, casement, awning, picture or even custom windows. It can also install sliding doors, French doors, bifold doors, multi-slide doors and fiberglass entry doors.

The company also offers a variety of siding options in different materials which are more durable, and sometimes less expensive, than wooden siding. The siding materials Koehler uses are also energy efficient. For those looking to sell their home, new siding will help increase its value.

When hiring someone to install new siding, wise homeowners want contractors with years of experience who have the right tools for the job. And, unlike some DIY jobs, siding installation is definitely not one that a homeowner should attempt alone.

Koehler Home Improvement uses JamesHardie siding.

A good paint job will enhance a home's curb appeal and help preserve its exterior from damage due to the elements.

Koehler provides exterior painting



services that include pressure washing, caulking, sealing, patching and painting or trimming. It uses two of the best brands: Benjamin Moore and Sherwin Williams.

Another service the company offers is the application of Roof Maxx, an environmentally friendly, natural oil treatment for asphalt roofs that can extend their lifespan by five years per coating.

This revolutionary new technology soaks old, brittle shingles with micro-beads in a plant-based, food-grade, nontoxic oil. It restores the shingles' flexibility to better protect the home.

Koehler Home Improvement's array of services addresses the many aesthetic and functional issues that homeowners will want to stay abreast of.

The company is located at 6005 Powers Ave., No. 105, Jacksonville. The phone number is 904-580-3777 and email is sales@koehlerhomesinc.com.

For further information, go to koehlerhomesinc.com.



Photos provided by Koehler Home Improvement



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Service watches over neighbors' homes

Hibiscus Home Management has earned accreditation from the National Home Watch Association for the third year. The association was formed in 2009 in order to establish and maintain the highest industry standards for Home Watch and absentee homeowner services throughout the United States and Canada (nationalhomewatchassociation.org).

Home Watch is a visual inspection of a home or property, looking for obvious issues, which means that it is a service that “keeps an eye on things” at your vacation or primary home while you are not in residence. All principals of the association’s accredited member companies are background-checked, insured and bonded.

Originally from Pittsburgh, Shon Fleming has been a resident of St. Augustine for 18 years. He has a background in engineering and construction and has a master’s degree. Fleming currently manages a team of engineers in the field of utility construction.

Born and raised in St. Augustine, Karissa Fleming spent 13 years as an ocean lifeguard for St. Johns County, with an additional two years as a professional EMT/firefighter. She holds a bachelor’s degree in business, with an emphasis on

marketing, now specializing in HVAC/R products for contractors.

During the initial phases of the COVID-19 pandemic, The Flemings worked from home, with more time to enjoy walking around their community. They couldn’t help but notice how many unoccupied homes they came across. It was brought to their attention that one such “snowbird” neighbor later discovered their hot water tank had leaked for three months, which unfortunately resulted in a house full of mold.

With experience in building construction, the Flemings saw an opportunity to prevent something like this from happening to other neighbors. This marked the birth of Hibiscus Home Management. Karissa Fleming, with a long history of focusing on accident prevention, quickly coined their slogan, “Trust us to keep watch.”

Hibiscus Home Management serves Ponte Vedra Beach, St. Augustine, St. Augustine Beach, South Ponte Vedra Beach and Vilano Beach. You can reach them at 904-792-9322 or at info@hibiscushomemanagement.com. Learn more from their website, at hibiscushomemanagement.com.

Improving storage in common areas

Increasing storage capabilities at home is a popular goal among many homeowners and renters. Despite how much space a person may have at home, there's often a desire to have more or maximize the areas that are there.

People often turn to external storage facilities to house their belongings when space is at a premium at home. Others may focus their organization energy on closets, garages and basements to free up room. But common areas around the home also can provide additional sources of storage.

Living room/family room

Living rooms and family rooms are areas of the home where people spend many hours. These tend to be multifunctional spaces where people entertain, lounge and even enjoy movies or gaming. Possibilities in these living spaces that can create extra storage include furniture that serves double-duty. For example, a storage ottoman adds decorative appeal but also can be filled with board games or books. Cabinet-style TV stands may not be as streamlined as mounted versions, but they're ideal places to stash games, remote controls and other accessories.

Entryway

An entryway or mudroom can quickly succumb to clutter. When organizing such a space, think about the needs of the household. A storage bench will be a place where everyone can sit to put on shoes, and then stow footwear underneath when not in use. A wall-mounted rack can hold the current season's jackets or sweaters, as well as purses or backpacks for easy access. A shelf with some hooks can store keys or hold a basket to store the daily mail.

Hallway and closet

Closet organization systems can be the unsung heroes in closets utilized by multiple members of the family. These customizable components can be sized accordingly for the space, and then configured as needed with a balance of shelves and hanging racks. An out-of-the-way nook or long hallway can be enhanced with a bookshelf to hold photo albums or that library that only continues to grow as new reading material is acquired.

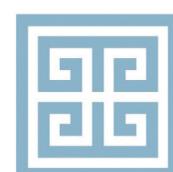
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Baptist Health CEO named to Florida Trend's 'Florida 500' list

Michael A. Mayo, president and CEO of Baptist Health, was named to Florida Trend magazine's "Florida 500" list of the state's 500 most influential business leaders across 60 sectors.

When compiling the list, the publication sought out leaders whose impact goes beyond their businesses and into their respective communities. Those who "others in their communities or industry sectors turn to for leadership or who set a standard for best practices in their sector," according to Florida Trend.

Mayo was among 27 leaders included in the "Life Sciences" category.

Selections are organized using broad economic categories from the U.S. Department of Commerce, with the number of honorees in each category being roughly proportional to that category's share of the state's gross domestic product.

"It's an honor to be included in the 'Florida 500' list of leaders," said Mayo. "Particularly as it champions community impact because the community is at the heart of everything we do at Baptist Health, including training the next generation of health care leaders to advocate for the needs of the communities in which they live and work."

Mayo has been the president and CEO of Baptist Health since June 2021 and has more than 32 years of health care executive experience. As CEO, he leads more than 14,000 team members and



Michael A. Mayo is president and CEO of Baptist Health.

Contributed photo

more than 2,000 medical staff in the delivery of high-quality, coordinated care and services focused on improving the health and well-being of the people of Northeast Florida and Southern Georgia.

Committed to the education and training of future health care leaders, Mayo has served as an adjunct professor at the University of North Florida, Brooks College of Health since 2017.

He earned his Doctor of Health Administration from the Medical University of South Carolina, his Master of Science in health care administration from Texas Woman's University and his Bachelor of Science in human resource management from the University of Alabama.

He is board-certified in health care management and a fellow with the American College of Healthcare Executives. He was elected to the Board of Governors of the ACHE Class of 2022. Mayo has served as the ACHE Regent for Florida — Northern and Western, on the Healthcare Executive Editorial Board and on the Regents Advisory Council.

He currently serves as a state delegate of Regional Policy Board 4 (Southeastern U.S.) with the American Hospital Association and is due to begin a three-year term as a member of the organization's Board of Trustees in January of 2024. He also serves on the Florida Hospital Association Board of Trustees, representing Region 2.

Mayo also holds several community leadership positions, including University of North Florida Foundation Board, Dean's Council of UNF, adjunct professor, Master of Health Administration program at UNF Brooks College of Health, Board of Directors with Jacksonville Chamber of Commerce and Board of Directors at Community Hospice & Palliative Care.

CycleBar to open franchise in St. Johns County

CycleBar, a premium indoor cycling franchise, is officially opening on Nov. 24 at 205 Bartram Market Drive, which is located off of Race Track Road, behind Durbin Park.

CycleBar St. Johns will celebrate its opening with free rides for local community residents, offering a great opportunity to become familiar with its studio, class formats, retail boutique and benefits for its community members.

CycleBar St. Johns says it provides the ultimate indoor cycling experience. With concierge-level service and premium amenities, CycleBar creates an immersive, multi-sensory experience where riders feel welcomed, empowered and energized after every class.

World-class instructors coach, motivate and enlighten riders, helping them find community and achieve their fitness goals in state-of-the-art CycleTheaters, accompanied by adrenaline-pumping CycleBeat playlists. The overall experience helps to improve riders' performance, reach their goals and change lives one ride at a time.

Bringing CycleBar to St. Johns is Susanne Krivanek, whose passion is helping others to achieve their goals in work and life. She said she is thrilled to bring this brand to St. Johns.

"As a busy professional and parent, I realize how difficult it can be to find time for fitness, mental wellness and community engagement," she said. "With CycleBar, you can accomplish all these

priorities to maximize your time and health."

Krivanek relocated to St. Johns in 2021, fulfilling a lifelong dream of living in Florida and incorporating more of her passions into her life while helping others do the same. She spent most of her life in the Philadelphia area and brings a wealth of expertise in leadership and organizational development, as well as a love of cycling.

Talie Zaifert, CycleBar St. Johns' general manager, is the passionate host of the CycleBar experience.

"As someone who lives in Saint Johns, I'm excited to promote the dynamic world of indoor cycling to our vibrant and growing community," she said. "Not

only is this a great workout, it's also incredibly fun! I also love that CycleBar St. Johns has both a community and social focus at its core. Our members will have the ability to connect with others, broaden their network and give back to the community through CycleGives events."

CycleBar St. Johns offers pay-per-class, month-to-month memberships and premium activewear merchandise. Riders will enjoy complimentary shoes, filtered water, towels and lockers for each class. For more information about the studio and to sign up for classes, go to CycleBar St. Johns, follow @CycleBarStJohns on Instagram and/or Facebook, or call 904-494-8301.

GUEST COLUMN

Invest more confidently in volatile markets

Written by/for Wells Fargo Advisors

When financial markets fluctuate, perhaps in reaction to world events, inflation or a change in interest rates, even the calmest investors can start to question their financial strategies.

But volatile markets can present opportunities to review and reaffirm investment strategies, says Tracie McMillion, head of global asset allocation strategy for Wells Fargo Investment Institute.

“Financial markets are frequently volatile — that’s their nature,” she says. “Even so, during periods of uncertainty, investors may start to question their investment decisions. Having a plan in place can provide the guard rails to help steer through and beyond the volatility.”

In addition to reaffirming and focusing on your plan, here are some strategies you can use to help weather economically turbulent times.

Match your investments to your time horizon

The simplest way to feel more comfortable about your investments is to align them with your financial calendar,



no matter what happens in the financial world this month or year.

For example, do you need some of your money fairly soon or want it close at hand in case of an emergency? If so, McMillion says you should consider investments such as cash holdings and short-term bonds that shouldn’t lose much, if any, value over the short term.

On the other hand, if you won’t need some of your investment money until you retire multiple years in the future, equities or longer-term bonds are worth a closer look. Those investments carry more risks but also offer potentially better returns.

Know what to expect from your investments

Some investors lose confidence because they don’t fully understand how their investments work. In that case, McMillion says, some knowledge of typical asset behavior is a good thing.

Consider reading up on different types of investments and asking questions of your financial adviser. Once you know how your investments are more likely to perform in certain financial markets, you can help ensure that your investment strategy is in line with your tolerance for risk.

Tune out the noise

By “noise,” McMillion means the constant barrage of financial reports and other news events from the 24/7 news media. “Investors usually don’t need to react to the everyday financial news, no matter how topsy-turvy things may seem,” she says. Keep your long-term goal in mind.

Regularly revisit your plan

There’s no such thing as a completely set-it-and-forget-it investment strategy, McMillion says. It’s always smart to check in regularly with your investment adviser.

“Your life circumstances may change,

or your financial goals could shift,” she says. “You’ll feel much more confident that your investments are doing their job if you review them regularly with your adviser.”

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This article was written by/for Wells Fargo Advisors and provided courtesy of Jamie Seim, CFP, Senior Vice President – Investment Officer in Ponte Vedra Beach at 904-273-7917.

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Company offers unusual means to see Nights of Lights

The holiday season is here, and in St. Augustine, the annual Nights of Lights celebration will soon illuminate the historic city.

From Saturday, Nov. 18, to Sunday, Jan. 28, visitors can experience the sparkling lights like never before with Seaside Adventures family-friendly adventure vehicles.

Started in 2020 by husband-and-wife team Tommy and Crystal Horton, Seaside Adventures rents Slingshot and MOKE vehicles as a unique way to

explore downtown St. Augustine and St. Augustine Beach. The business won the Tripadvisor Travelers’ Choice Award in 2022.

This month, its latest “fun utility vehicle” will hit the streets — the Arcimoto Electric Vehicle, a three-wheeled, open-air and no-doors driving experience. This safe and zippy “FUV” is a groundbreaking and environmentally friendly transportation option that combines the benefits of a motorcycle and a compact car.

This holiday season, Seaside Adventures invites the public to celebrate with a special Nights of Lights Photography Tour. From the comfort of their Christmas Cars, visitors experience the glow of downtown St. Augustine while photographers moving alongside capturing the groups at iconic landmarks.

The Christmas Car, a MOKE all-electric recreational convertible, allows four riders. Reservations can be made at seasideadventures.com/nights-of-lightscd7696e9.

For those wanting to explore the town on foot, Seaside Adventures invites them to their shop for free cocoa, coffee and cookies during the entire season of Nights of Lights.

Seaside Adventures also offers rentals of two- and four-seater Slingshots, a three-wheeled, open-air autocycle perfect for taking in the sites; additional MOKE vehicles; the SandSurfer Electric Skateboard, a fat-tire skateboard perfect for the beach that is easy and fun to ride; and trusty ol’ bicycles.

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Benchmarks of Success

A look at major career changes in the area



Judy Ashouri

Wolfson Children's welcomes pediatric heart specialists

Pediatric electrophysiologist Judy Ashouri M.D., pediatric cardiac intensivist Kaushal Dosani M.D. and pediatric cardiologist and cardiac imaging specialist Umakumaran Ponniah M.D. have joined the C. Herman and Mary Virginia Terry Heart Institute at Wolfson Children's Hospital. The addition of the three new pediatric cardiac specialists continues the expansion of Wolfson Children's heart services across Northeast Florida and the region.

Ashouri received her medical degree from the University of Florida College of Medicine in Gainesville. Dosani received his medical degree from Dr. D. Y. Patil Medical College and Research Center in Mumbai, India. Ponniah received his medical degree from Karnataka Medical College in Hubballi, India,

and a master's degree in pediatrics from the Institute of Child Health at Dr. M.G.R. Medical University, Chennai, India.

Ponniah has undergone advanced cardiac imaging training and serves as the director of non-invasive imaging at Wolfson Children's Hospital.



Meredith Livingston

Livingston named resort's director of sales and marketing

Sawgrass Marriott Golf Resort & Spa has promoted Meredith Livingston to director of sales and marketing for the resort. She will lead a team in strategizing and executing

all group and leisure sales efforts and marketing initiatives.

Livingston has been with the Sawgrass Marriott Golf Resort & Spa since March 2019, formerly serving as director of revenue management. She played a critical role in helping to lead the resort through the pandemic, with the turnaround culminating in the most financially successful year in the resort's history in 2022.

Livingston brings more than 26 years of hotel experience to the role. Her journey with Marriott began in 2007 at the Sheraton Nassau Beach Resort in The Bahamas.

Livingston holds a Bachelor of Science degree in hotel and restaurant management from the University of Houston, Conrad N. Hilton College of Hotel and Restaurant Management.



Sarah Lawrence

Sawgrass Marriott Golf Resort & Spa hires senior marketing manager

Sawgrass Marriott Golf Resort & Spa has named Sarah Lawrence its new senior marketing manager, responsible for developing and executing marketing plans for the resort, which has 514 rooms and more than

90,000 square feet of venue space.

Lawrence brings nearly 20 years of marketing experience in various industries to the role, including extensive experience with golf organizations including The PGA Tour Club and PGA Tour Superstore. She also recently served as the marketing manager for Franklin Street in Jacksonville.

Lawrence holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in sports management from Flagler College in St. Augustine.



Jamie Shelton

Shelton appointed to Citizens Property Insurance board

On Oct. 4, Gov. Ron DeSantis announced the appointment of Jamie Shelton to the Citizens Property Insurance Corporation Board of Governors.

Shelton is the president of bestbet Holdings Inc.

He is the former chair and a current member of the Jacksonville University Board of Trustees, a board member of the Jacksonville Chamber of Commerce, and the finance chair and board member of the Jacksonville Civic Council. Shelton earned his bachelor's degree in accounting from Lipscomb University and his master's degree in business administration from the University of Memphis.



Megan Weinstein

Ronald McDonald House Charities names Weinstein to post

Megan Weinstein has been appointed chief development officer for Ronald McDonald House Charities of Jacksonville. She will lead its strategic fundraising, impact and delivery of mission.

Weinstein previously served as chief development officer at Boys & Girls Clubs of Northeast Florida.

Prior to that, she spent 20 years with national nonprofit organizations, including American Heart Association and The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society, overseeing major gifts, community and corporate partnerships and communications.

Natkin named to Ability Housing post

Ability Housing, a nonprofit developer of affordable multifamily housing, has appointed Maureen Natkin its development and engagement director. She brings more than 13 years of nonprofit leadership experience to the position.

Natkin is responsible for driving the organization's fund development and communications strategy and activities. Her priorities include identifying appropriate revenue strategies and securing resources through private donations, philanthropic grants and

other charitable revenue sources to sustain and grow the organization's capacity for service. She also guides outreach to internal and external stakeholders.

Natkin previously served as the COO and Philanthropic Director of the World Affairs Council of Jacksonville.



Matthew A. Zuino

Zuino recognized by Becker's Hospital Review

Matthew A. Zuino, executive vice president and chief operating officer of Baptist Health, was recognized by Becker's Hospital Review on its list of "Hospital and health system COOs to know" for 2023.

The publication honored a total 75 individuals for their highly strategic approaches to leading the "ideation, development and implementation of initiatives that enhance operational efficiency at their organizations."

Zuino has more than 25 years of leadership experience within the health care industry. He joined Baptist Health in July 2017 as president of physician integration, where he was responsible for the recruitment, integration and retention of an employed provider group consisting of more than 420 physicians and 200 nurse practitioners and physician assistants. He assumed his current position in January 2020.



Vince Penza

Vince Penza welcomed to real estate firm

Realtor Vince Penza has joined Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Network Realty.

Penza holds a bachelor's degree from the University of Toledo and was a four-year starter on the football team. As a college athlete, he

learned the importance of hard work, dedication and communication. Additionally, he coached football at Washington State University while taking additional education towards a master's degree in special education.

For more information, Penza can be reached at 330-501-0114, Vince.Penza@FloridaNetworkRealty.com and VPenza.FloridaNetworkRealty.com.

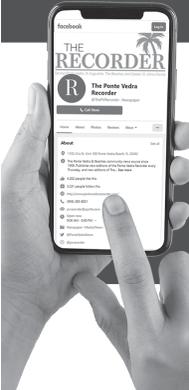
The Ponte Vedra/Nocatee office, located at 333 Village Main St., Suite 670, Ponte Vedra Beach, is managed by Holly Hayes, who can be reached at 904-802-0432, Holly.Hayes@FloridaNetworkRealty.com and floridanetworkrealtycareers.com.

— Compiled by Shaun Ryan

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Folk musician Jordan Tice to perform Nov. 18

Photo by Jacqueline Justice

For more than 25 years, the Gamble Rogers Folk Festival has celebrated the indelible mark its namesake left on folk music. Now in its second year, the “Live From The Waterworks” Concert Series celebrates Rogers' legacy by showcasing musicians that echo his hallmark talents — fingerstyle guitar artistry and storytelling.

The Gamble Rogers Folk Festival and the St. Johns Cultural Council co-present this monthly series of Saturday concerts through June 22 with support from the St. Johns County Tourist Development Council. The next performance is 7-9 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 18, at The Waterworks, 184 San Marco Ave. in St. Augustine, and features singer and guitarist Jordan Tice.

“This concert series is a wonderful tribute to Gamble,” said Jim Carrick, Gamble Rogers Folk Festival president. “Our goal is to feature a blend of experienced and up-and-coming artists. You’ll see some performers who are familiar to longtime fans, who perhaps even collaborated with Gamble, while others will become new favorites.”

Jordan Tice is a singer, songwriter and guitarist who combines witty, well-crafted

songs with skillful fingerstyle and flat-pick guitar playing. Folk music fans may recognize Tice as a member of the instrumental bluegrass supergroup Hawktail or for his guest performances with musicians like comedic great Steve Martin. His music is playful, introspective and philosophical

Tice will be joined by special guest Patrick McGonigle, fiddler with The Lonely Heartstring Band, one of the Northeast's most popular new progressive bluegrass bands.

Opening the show is Noan Partly, a self-taught indie-folk musician with deft picking skills who blends Americana with jazz, grunge and psychedelic influences to create a dreamy and vulnerable sound. Her storytelling encourages the listener to look inward and revel in the unknown.

Tickets for the Nov. 18 concert may be purchased at gamblerogersfest.org.

“These performers help build the momentum up to the festival,” said Carrick. “Live From The Waterworks’ helps provide the necessary funding for us to support local musicians. We focus on helping mold folk musicians from youth by offering student



clinics and featuring young performers on a special stage at the festival.”

“Live From The Waterworks” supports the Gamble Rogers Folk Festival, a three-day event held every spring at the St. Johns County Fairgrounds. Beginning Friday,

April 12, and continuing through Sunday, April 14, the festival commemorates the life and music of Gamble Rogers while keeping the folk music tradition alive for future generations by encouraging and supporting young musicians.

Florida Chamber Music Project presents Mozart Nov. 19

Florida Chamber Music Project will present a string quartet and a quintet in its Nov. 19 performance at the Beaches Museum Chapel at the Beaches Museum at 505 Beach Blvd., Jacksonville Beach.

Samuel Barber’s String Quartet, Opus 11 and Mozart’s String Quintet in G Minor will make up the program.

“Our audience may recognize the Barber pieces from the movies ‘Platoon’

and ‘Elephant Man,’” said Artistic Director Susan Pardue. “Like all Mozart string quintets, the String Quintet in G minor is a viola quintet which means that it is scored for a string quartet and extra viola. We will be joined by our colleague and Jacksonville native Romona Merritt on this piece.”

Prorated season tickets for the five remaining concerts are still available and

cost \$135. There is also a three-concert flex ticket purchase for \$81. Season tickets, advance tickets and flex passes can be purchased at flchambermusic.org. Single tickets are \$30. All tickets are available for purchase through Eventbrite. Single tickets are also available for purchase at the door, as are student tickets at a cost of \$10.

Beaches Museum Chapel is wheelchair-

accessible and has free parking along Pablo Avenue near 4th Street North of Beach Boulevard. All concerts begin at 3 p.m.

The Florida Chamber Music Project was founded 11 years ago by violist Susan Pardue. Members include violinists Patrice Evans and Ann Hertler and cellist Laurie Casseday. All are members of the Jacksonville Symphony.

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Comedy show to feature Mayberry character impersonators

Dads 4 Life will present a night of comedy Saturday, Nov. 18, at Parkwood Church in Jacksonville featuring Rik Roberts as Barney Fife and Allan Newsome as Floyd the Barber from Mayberry.

Roberts is from Nashville. He has impersonated Barney Fife from “The Andy Griffith TV Show” for more than 25 years. His comedy can be seen and heard on SiriusXM, Pure Flix, Dry-Bar Comedy and The Mike Huckabee Show on TBN. Most recently, he was featured in the movie “Mayberry Man” (now streaming on Amazon Prime and available to view at MayberryMan.com).

Newsome performs across the country impersonating Floyd the Barber from “The Andy Griffith TV Show.” Most recently, he was cast in a lead role in the movie “Mayberry Man.” The Huntsville, Alabama, resident has interacted with fans of the TV show

since 1992, running websites like MayberryBarber.com.

Tickets for the show are \$20 if purchased online and \$25 at the door. The church is located at 7900 Lone Star Road.

Doors open at 6 p.m., and the show runs from 7 to 9 p.m.

You can also purchase access to the private livestream for \$10.

Tickets are available online at dads4life.com.

Dads 4 Life was formed in 2004 by Keith Jowers and has grown to more than 25,000 followers worldwide through their social media outreach. Within its 19-year history, Dads 4 Life has “encouraged, enhanced and enriched dads in building what they believe is their greatest asset on earth ... their children.”

Dads 4 Life offers several outreach programs. Learn more at dads4life.com.



Third Space Improv Adventure Project

Art grants go to local artists

St. Johns Cultural Council has announced the recipients of the Fall 2023 State of the Arts Grants. The grants, presented annually, are available through funds raised by the sale of “State of the Arts” specialty license plates and have provided more than \$150,000 of support to arts organizations and individual artists in St. Johns County.

The most recent grantees are:

- **Third Space Improv Adventure Project:** The grant will provide funds for an accessible stage to support ongoing improv classes, student showcases and performances.

- **Lenny Foster:** The funds will pay for supplies, printing and marketing for a photography exhibition featuring images of unhoused people in St. Augustine captured by renowned local artist Lenny Foster. Foster plans to raise awareness about the individual humanity of his subjects and to raise funds for those in need.

- **Morgan Kelly:** Morgan Kelly presents an original puppet show for young audiences which explores and observes the ecosystem of local creeks and streams,



Contributed photos

Lenny Foster

through the eyes of a young child, with costs supported by this grant. The show will be presented at local library branches in collaboration with the St. Johns County Public Library System and tag! Children’s Museum of St. Augustine.

- **Sebastian Middle School:** The grant funds will be used to purchase materials for “The Sew Must Go On,”

- where art students learn about sewing while creating 3D sculptures of food.

- **Picolata Crossing Elementary School:** Material costs and instructor fees for third-through fifth-graders will be funded with the grant for students to participate in a fully staged theatrical production as part of an afterschool program.

- **The Dance Company:** The grant funds will provide registered therapist fees for dance and movement therapy classes at locations for individuals with intellectual disabilities.

The 2023 State of the Arts grant recipients will be honored at the annual Holiday Open House at The Waterworks, 184 San Marco Ave. in St. Augustine, 4:30 to 6 p.m. Dec. 7. The event is free and open to the public.

For more information on the grants, go to stjohnsculture.com/grants-awards/state-of-the-arts-grant.

To support the arts in St. Johns County by purchasing a “State of the Arts” license plate, go to dos.myflorida.com/cultural/info-and-opportunities/florida-arts-license-plate.

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Sports



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SUTTON, GRALL FIND 'PERFECT FIT' FOR VOLLEYBALL FUTURES

By Anthony Richards

The Ponte Vedra High School volleyball program has produced its share of college talent over the years and now two more names can be added to the list, as middle blocker Chelsea Sutton signed to the University of Tennessee and outside hitter Ava Grall committed to Gettysburg College in Pennsylvania.

For both players, they found themselves looking back at their playing careers to this point and reminiscing about all the memories and relationships they have developed along the way.

"I think about where I started and all that I've been through leading up to this point with all the friends I've made and all the coaches I've had," Grall said. "All that support and time that they've put in for me has really helped me get to where I'm at."

What made it even more fitting that both Sutton and Grall were sharing their signing day together was the fact that they have pretty much been teammates

since they started playing volleyball competitively.

"I was just looking back and telling her the other day that when we started she was so bad, because she was just like this walking tree," Grall chuckled. "But you also saw all the potential she had and knew that she was going places. As a teammate I got to see her progress to that D-1 level."

For Sutton, the opportunity to play at an SEC school is a dream come true and she has known that Tennessee was the place for her.

"I committed last year, so knowing that its finally here now is pretty crazy to think about," Sutton said. "Everyone told me that I was going to fall in love with the school immediately, and I wasn't sure if that would happen, but I literally walked on campus and after talking with coaches and players, I just knew that was where I wanted to be."

Sutton will graduate Ponte Vedra High early and be a spring enrollee at Tennessee, which will allow her to get a head start and get adjusted to college



Photo by Anthony Richards

Chelsea Sutton and Ava Grall signed to play college volleyball during a ceremony on Nov. 8. Sutton will be going to the University of Tennessee and Grall to Gettysburg College.

life and the volleyball program.

It was a similar feeling for Grall during the recruiting process, who just felt at home in her conversations with coaches and the minute she stepped on campus for the first time.

"Gettysburg was the first college I ever called and the first one I visited, so it always had a special place for me," Grall said. "Then I met the coaches, and

VOLLEYBALL continues on Page 37

Five Sharks sign to play college lacrosse



Photo by Anthony Richards

Jack Pelot, Tanner Parlette and Egan Funke signed to play college lacrosse during a ceremony Nov. 8.

By Anthony Richards

Each year the Ponte Vedra High lacrosse programs hold a signing ceremony on the night of signing day and this year they had five students sign athletic scholarships, three boys and two girls during the early signing day period on Nov. 8.

Those from the boys program included Jack Pelot (University of Pennsylvania), Tanner Parlette (Stoney Brook University) and Egan Funke (Oberlin College), while the girls program was represented by Lily Mosser (University of South Florida) and Lily Toole (Anderson University).

The signing ceremony was held at Mr. Chubby's Wings in Ponte Vedra Beach, as family members and teammates flooded a corner of the restaurant to watch their friends and loved ones make their college intentions official.

For some, such as Funke, the road

has been filled with adversity along the way, as he battled through injuries during his high school career but never lost sight of his dream of playing college lacrosse.

"I've always had the aspirations to play in college ever since I was a young kid, because my dad played in college and my brothers have always been on the lacrosse route to playing in college, so I was kind of born into it, but definitely not forced at all," Funke said. "I love lacrosse and it's been my go-to sport for some time now."

He credited head coach Chris Polanski for helping keep him focused on what was at stake even when things were in flux as he recovered from getting injured in the middle of the recruiting cycle.

"I've had Coach Po as a coach since I was barely able to stand up and he's

LACROSSE continues on Page 37

SHARKS FACE UNDEFEATED BUCHHOLZ IN SECOND ROUND

By Anthony Richards

The Ponte Vedra Sharks football team has a goal of practicing on Thanksgiving Day, because it means that they are still playing meaningful games at that time of year, and they are one win away from achieving it.

However, that one win will have to come against arguably the toughest opponent they faced all season, when they travel to take on Gainesville Buchholz on Nov. 17 at 7:30 p.m., and it is not even that much of an argument.

The Bobcats enter the contest undefeated with a record of 11-0 and are the top seed in Region 1-4S and are fresh off a 59-0 victory over Mosley in the first round.

In fact, the Bobcats have been so dominant this season that the closest margin they have come to being defeated is 14 points and their offense has not been held to less than 30 points in any game.

Although that may seem like a daunting task, it is one that the Sharks' defense is surely up to embracing and if any defense is ready for it, the Sharks would be the one, as they have only allowed 30 points in one game and that was last

week's opening round contest against Creekside.

The Sharks are only giving up 15 points per game and have three shutouts during the season, so something will have to give in this strength versus strength matchup.

The game will feature some of the best running backs in the state as among the primary weapons offensively for the Bobcats is a pair of thunder and lightning running backs in Quinton Cutler and Myles Graham.

Cutler is a quick and explosive back that has game-breaking ability any time he gets the balls in his hands and the Bobcats will look to get him the ball both rushing and through the air, while Graham, who also plays middle linebacker, presents more of a physical presence and can be hard to bring down.

However, the Sharks have junior running back Brian Case, who averages 102.5 yards per game and has accounted for a whopping 21 touchdowns on the season.

Defensively, stopping the run is the No. 1 priority for the Sharks, and it is something they struggled to do against



Photo by Anthony Richards

Ponte Vedra's Brian Case (No. 27) had a huge game in the opening round against Creekside and will look to continue that production in round two.

the Knights a week ago, as they were able to gash the Sharks for some big gains, especially in the second half.

If the Sharks can make the Bobcats work for yards on the ground and grab an early lead, that could be the recipe for a successful night.

All season the Sharks have been able to disrupt offenses with a relentless amount

of pressure, which could frustrate Bobcats' quarterback Trace Johnson, who is talented but still just a sophomore.

Trailing is not something the Bobcats have done much of this season and it will be key for the Sharks to put them in those uncomfortable situations if they wish to pull off the upset and keep their postseason run going.



The Ponte Vedra girls swim team won their third straight state title Nov. 11 in Ocala.



The Nease boys swim team repeated as state champions.

Photos courtesy of Kate Stollenwerck Zarczynski

Sharks, Panthers complete defense of swim state titles

By Anthony Richards

It was a successful state championship defense for both the Ponte Vedra girls and Nease boys swimming teams at the state meet in Ocala on Nov. 11.

For the Sharks, it was the third straight state title the program has won and the second consecutive for the Panthers.

The Sharks controlled the girls team competition and finished 100 points ahead of second place, thanks to six gold medals along the way.

Their gold medal count included winning all three relay events, in which they were the only school across the entire state to do so at this year's state tournament.

Kate Pelot, Annabelle MacAdams, Syd-

ney Player and Sophie Fox won the 200 medley relay, and then the 200 freestyle relay was won with a team of Fox, Penny Zarczynski, Pelot and Valentina Fraga, which also set a new school record.

However, that was not the only school to fall during the state competition, as five school records were supplanted on the day, including in the 400 freestyle relay and the team of Fraga, Lily Doyle, Ainsley MacAdams and Zarczynski.

History was also made by the Sharks with three individual winners, which was the most they had ever had at the state tournament.

Those individual winners were Doyle in the 500 freestyle, Pelot in the 100 backstroke and Annabelle MacAdams in the

100 breaststroke. Doyle and Annabelle MacAdams each set a school record in the process.

Zarczynski finished runner-up in the 100 butterfly and broke the school record with her fourth-place finish in the 200 freestyle.

The Nease boys squad, led by coach Gus Calado held off Lawton Chiles High School to win by a margin of more than 60 points en route to their repeat victory.

The Panthers' 400 freestyle relay team made up of Luke Zardavets, Jack Mainville, Walker Lanoue and Brandon Gear took home gold with an automatic All-American time and a new school record.

Other top finishes that racked up the points for the Panthers included the 200 freestyle relay squad of Mainville, Gear,

Lanoué and Declan Costello coming home in second and earning a new school record.

Mainville also finished runner-up in the 50 freestyle and 100 freestyle, while Zardavets showcased his versatility with a runner-up finishes in both the 200 individual medley and 100 breaststroke, setting new school marks in each.

Aaron Sorlie continued to prove himself as a diver with a third place in the diving competition.

For the Nease girls, they did not come home without some gold as well, with Charlotte Driesse repeating as state champion in the 200 individual medley. She also placed second in the 200 freestyle and broke school records in both events.

Volleyball

Continued from 35

I knew it was a perfect fit.”

Sutton has heard that the biggest difference between the college atmosphere compared to high school is that it is very business-like, and she cannot wait to experience that herself.

“We basically just signed contracts today and there’s an expectation from them that you will work hard and give them your very best,” Sutton said. “I’m ready to kick it up to that next level.”

They each recognized how important being part of the Ponte Vedra High girls volleyball program meant to them and how it helped prepare them for the next level.

According to Grall, she feels ready for anything that the college level has in store.

“I’ve heard a lot of people say that the ‘real work starts now,’ and it’s really exciting to see what that will be like,” Grall said.



Their volleyball teammates were on hand to share in the signing day excitement.

Photo by Anthony Richards

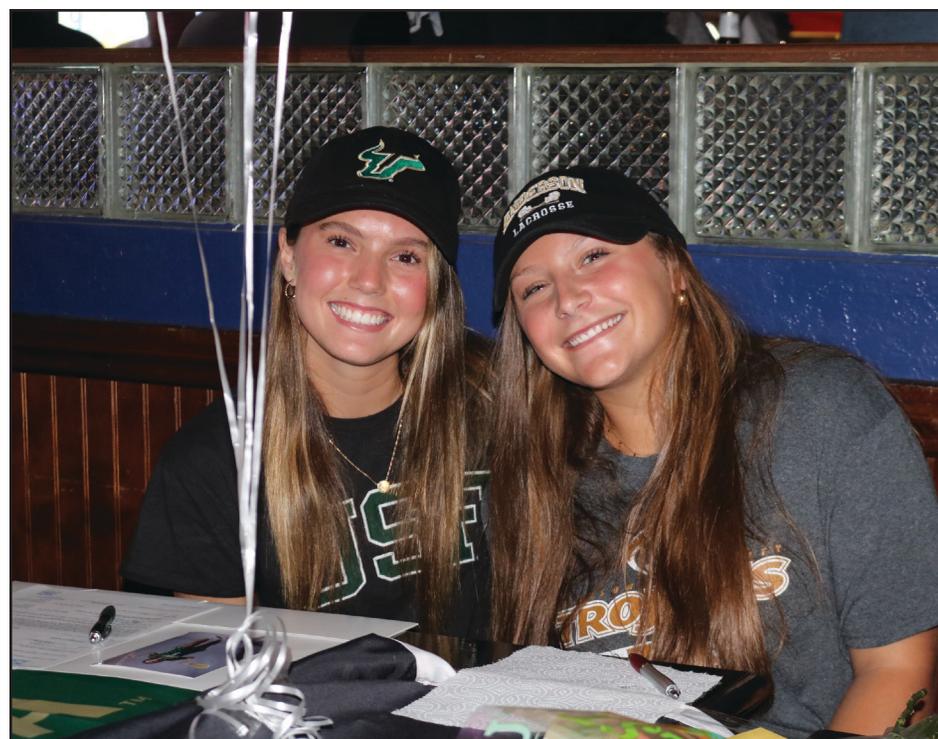


Photo by Anthony Richards

Lily Mosser and Lily Toole are all smiles after signing their college letters of intent to play lacrosse.

Lacrosse

Continued from 35

been the most helpful, because you’re able to talk to him about more than just lacrosse,” Funke said. “I was really uncertain about where I was going to end up, but he helped me level my head and realize that I could bounce back.”

Mosser is preparing to walk into a unique situation at the college level, as she will be a member of the inaugural season for the South Florida girls lacrosse program next year.

However, it is a challenge she is excited about to be on the ground floor and helping a program get its start.

“That’s one of the main reasons why I signed there, because I knew I wanted to be a part of something really special,” Mosser said. “I want to be a part of building that legacy.”

Each player has been playing lacrosse for a while now and had an idea that

this day would be coming, but now that the day had finally arrived, it was a little surreal for each of them.

Pelot plays goalie, which is a position he has called his own for years now and he will continue to be tasked with protecting the net at the college level.

“I remember about eight or nine years ago when the coach said come out if you want to play goalie, so I gave it a shot,” Pelot said. “I made the first save and I knew it was the spot for me. I honestly believe that it is 60% mental, and the name of the game is keeping that steady mindset.”

Parlette has given playing in college a lot of thought since he first verbally committed to Stoney Brook, and he is ready for what awaits.

“I know it’s a big change for sure and everyone is going to be bigger, faster and stronger, so I just have to keep training and get ready for a year from now when it’s my turn to go against those big boys.”

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CROSSWORD

			1	2	3		4	5	6	7	8	9		
			10				11							
12	13		14					15						
16		17						18				19	20	21
22								23						
24						25		26			27			
					28		29				30			
31	32	33			34				35			36		
37			38			39								
40					41			42		43	44	45	46	47
48					49				50					
51									52					
			53						54				55	
							56				57		58	
							59				60			

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ACROSS

1. Beats per minute
4. Hindu deity
10. Polynesian garland of flowers
11. Not chained to
12. Metric ton
14. Tall, rounded vase
15. Musical composition
16. St. Francis of ___
18. Discover the location of
22. Compact group of mountains
23. Mend
24. Not current
26. Atomic #64
27. Young hawk
28. Or ___
30. Pouches
31. Southern Thailand isthmus
34. Mends with yarn
36. Downwinds
37. One of two equal parts of a divisible whole
39. Italian archaeological site
40. Cold appetizer
41. Yes
42. Peninsula
48. Of that
50. A way to divide
51. Relating to the physical senses
52. One who makes money
53. ___ Spumante (Italian wine)
54. Inconvenience (abbr.)
55. South Dakota
56. Snow sport
58. The products of human creativity
59. Change mind
60. Born of

DOWN

2. Former name of Iran
3. Made smaller
4. Type of meter
5. Revolt
6. Killed with rocks
7. Gregory __, US dancer
8. Nullifies
9. Home to the Flyers
12. Female parent
13. Pre-1917 Russian emperor
17. Outsourcing (abbr.)
19. Regal
20. Line
21. Hermann __, author of "Siddhartha"
25. Clearing up
29. No seats available

31. Leaves of an Arabian shrub
32. Groove in organ or tissue
33. Not of this world
35. Cooking device
38. Forget
41. Operational flight
43. Actress Danes
44. Poke holes in
45. A way to discolor
46. Shouts of welcome or farewell
47. Pharrell's group
49. Red fluorescent dye
56. Jr.'s dad
57. Electronics firm

SUDOKU

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

Level: Beginner

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. Similar to the color of a clear unclouded sky



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