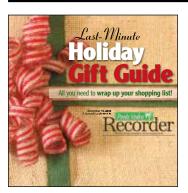


December 15, 2016 Volume 46, No. 50

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Last-minute gift ideas

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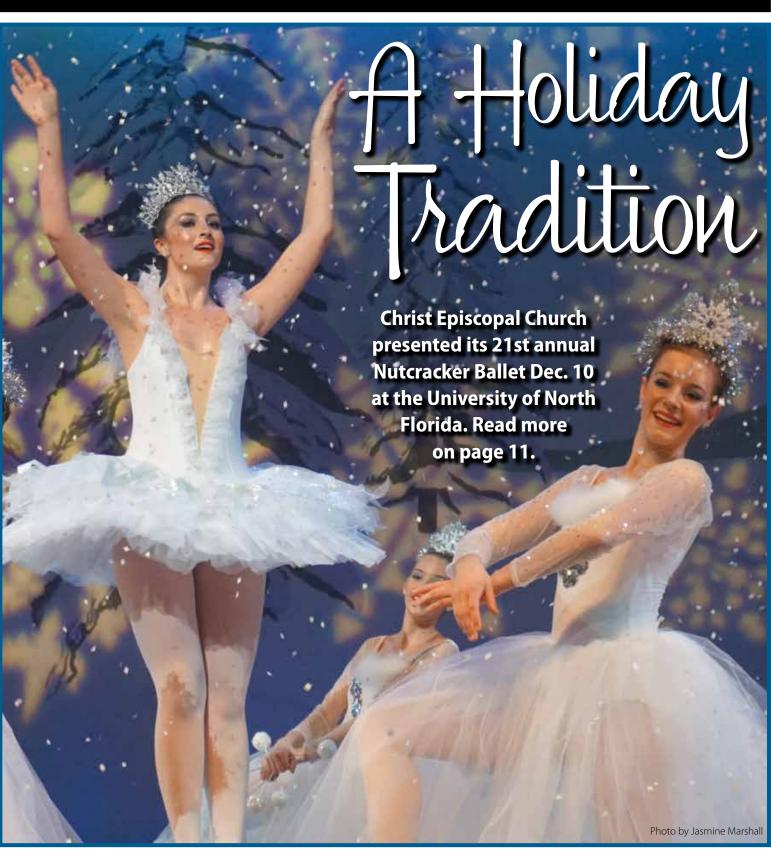
New retail coming to Nocatee

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Serving Ponte Vedra and the Beaches since 1969





-Franklin D. Roosevelt







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WHAT'S THIS?



Do you know what this is?

Email your answer to jennifer@opcfla.com by Monday at 5 p.m.

All correct entries will be entered into a random drawing to win tickets for two adults and two children to the Jacksonville Zoo. In order to allow as many families as possible to win, participants are only eligible to win a ticket prize pack once every four months.

No one correctly identified last week's photo as the Four Points by Sheraton in Jacksonville Beach. Better luck this week, readers!

Don't forget — incorrect but entertaining guesses might also be rewarded with a trip to the zoo.



ADOPT A PET

CAT OF THE WEEK

Hi, there! My name is Snickers the cat and I am a 2-year-old female torti tabby who is looking for a new home! I was brought to the pet center as a stray. I'm super friendly and snuggly and I love to give kisses and rub all





DOG OF THE WEEK

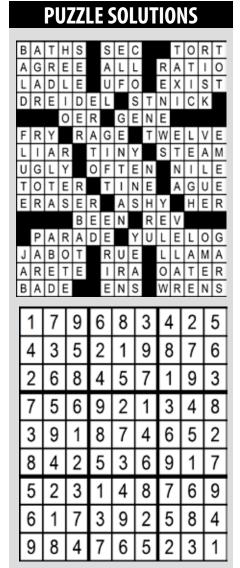
Hi, there! My name is Bongo and I am a 4-year-old male lab mix who is looking for a new home. I was brought to the pet center as a stray because I was wandering around all alone with nobody to care for me. I love to snuggle and play outside and nothing makes my tail wag faster than when

we get to go on a walk! As this animal was a stray there may be some traits that are unknown at this time. Come visit us today here at the pet center! #35522

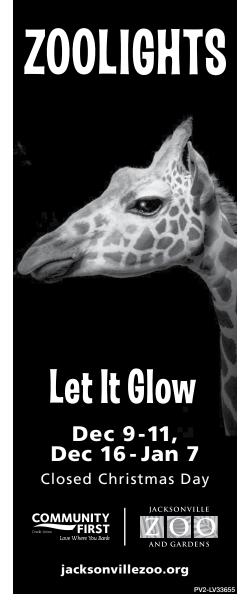
Any new pet being introduced to a new home will need time to adjust to their new environment. Please reinforce house-training and behavioral training and be mindful of interacting with other pets.

St. Johns County Pet Center

Cat adoptions at the St. Johns County Pet Center are \$30 for males and \$40 for females. Dog adoptions are \$45 for males and \$60 for females. Adoption fees include microchipping, neutering/spaying, rabies vaccinations and shots. The pet center is located at 130 N. Stratton Rd., off US 1 between County Road 210 and International Golf Parkway. Business hours are Tuesday through Friday 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and Saturday 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. The center is closed to the public on Sunday. On Monday, the office is open by appointment only to claim a lost pet. For more information, please call the **St. Johns County Pet Center at (904) 209-6190**.



Solutions correspond to last week's puzzles.



'Coffee with a Cop' breaks down barriers between elected officials, residents

By Jon Blauvelt

St. Johns County residents recently had the opportunity to meet with Sheriff David Shoar and County Administrator Michael Wanchick at an informal meet and greet session in St. Augustine called Coffee with a Cop.

Held at City Bistro Tea House & Coffee Company Dec. 9, the session's goal was to provide residents with a relaxed environment to approach their elected officials, ask questions, discuss community issues and build relationships. The event also included Commander Scott Beaver and Sergeant Jim Priester from the sheriff's office.

"It's a good opportunity," said St. Augustine resident Ken Edel. "You get to actually meet the people you've elected or the people who are working for your community. It's great to put a face to the name, especially when you don't always see the deputies around."

Like many other residents at the event, Lisa Farese simply came to thank the men. Hurricane Matthew impacted her neighborhood, and she said the county

was extremely responsive and helpful in dealing with looters.

"Until the trash was picked up, we had a lot of people in our neighborhood trying to sift through the trash," she said. "It was really uncomfortable. They added extra patroling and were always right there."

Edel's wife, Sharon, came to Coffee with a Cop to share with officials the subtle racism she has experienced since moving recently from Tallahassee to St. Augustine, and to thank them for making her feel safe amid those issues.

"As an African American woman, I need to be able to look at someone in uniform or driving by and know that I'm ok because they're there," she said. "This (event) was just a good opportunity to look one in the eye and say thank you for all you do because I'm a new resident, and they have consistently made me feel safe."

In addition, residents asked about permitting and building activity post-Hurricane Matthew as well as a few questions

COFFEE continues on **Page 5**



Commander Scott Beaver from the St. Johns County Sheriff's Office speaks with a group of residents at Coffee with a Cop.



WATSON COLLECTION



Overlooking the water, this traditional home

has expansive space on the first floor with all

bedrooms and additional flex space room

present on the second. The backyard also

hosts fruit trees that produce sweet plums



HIDDEN HILLS CC \$509,975

One of the most beautiful and largest lots in Hidden Hills Country Club overlooking the Signature 11th green and the 12th tee box will be this beautiful to be constructed home by Vintage Estate Homes. Approximately 4,000 sq ft of luxury featuring 4 bedrooms, 3.5 baths, theater room, wine closet and so much more. MLS 856314



PALENCIA \$949,000

Located on one of Palencia's premier streets, this former Arthur Rutenberg model home is perfect for entertaining with an expansive lanai with resort style pool, spa, waterfall, fireplace and summer kitchen. MLS 857713



PABLO CREEK RESERVE \$986,000

Nearing completion, this lake front property will feature 6 bedrooms, 5 full baths and more than 5,000 square feet of luxury living. The covered lanai will be perfect for relaxing after a long week with a outdoor fireplace to stay warm on colder nights. MLS 857203



and peaches. MLS 856967

OLDE OAKS

\$275,000







4 Community News



Roman centurions guard the gates to ancient Bethlehem.



Photos by Jennifer Logue

Bakers offer their fresh-baked bread to Bethlehem's visitors.

Ponte Vedra Presbyterian presents 25th 'Bethlehem Visit'

Thousands flock to annual Christmas tradition

By Jennifer Logue

An estimated 15,000 people traveled back in time more than 2,000 years last week, as Ponte Vedra Presbyterian Church hosted its 25th annual "A Bethlehem Visit"

Visitors from across the First Coast and as far away as Georgia traveled to Ponte Vedra Beach for the annual extravaganza, which transforms the church's property on Palm Valley Road into an impressive life-sized model of ancient Bethlehem. So large were the crowds, in fact, that dozens of full-size school buses shuttled the thousands of visitors from the TPC Sawgrass parking lot down the road to the church, the flow of visitors moving with Disney-like efficiency thanks to the assistance of some 200 volunteers.

"Our pastor likes to say we'll see anywhere from 10,000 people to 2 million," quipped volunteer Sharon Hawes, who has been participating in the Bethlehem event for 18 years.

Hawes welcomed guests outside the church sanctuary, where visitors first enjoyed a brief program featuring musical performances and a welcome from Senior Pastor Richard Cooper.

"It's just a wonderful city," Cooper said of the recreated Holy Land guests were about to visit. "We tried to replicate what we thought Bethlehem would have been like 2,000 years ago."

Cooper then shared the gospel message with visitors before a live performance of "O Holy Night." As the doors to the sanctu-

ary opened, parents accompanied by eager children ventured out into the darkness.

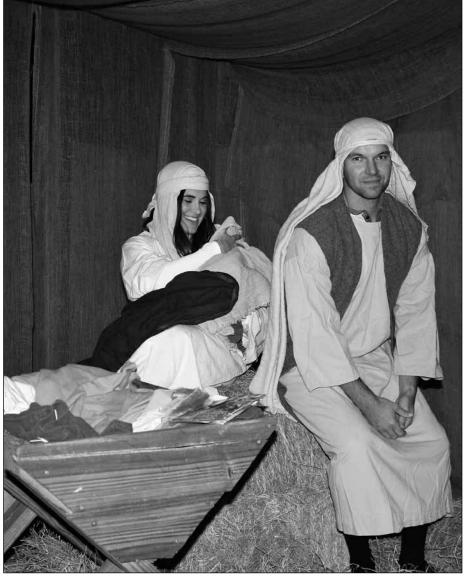
"I'm going to see baby Jesus!" a child exclaimed, clutching his father's hand tightly.

Ancient Bethlehem

As the modern-day pilgrims progressed down the church path, they were greeted by two Roman centurions on horseback, who sternly ordered the crowds to keep moving. Soon, visitors approached the towering gates of Bethlehem - also guarded by centurions – and passed into the ancient city. Visitors mingled with residents costumed as merchants, who called out to passersby to sample their wares and purchase goods. Children gravitated to the live chickens, lambs, goats and other animals on display throughout the city, which also featured some of the less positive aspects of ancient life, including lepers begging at the side of the road and a live slave auction.

But the highlight was the opportunity to visit the stable where Mary and Joseph cradled the infant Jesus. After passing out of the city, guests enjoyed cookies and hot chocolate around a roaring bonfire before boarding buses back to the 20th century.

Church volunteers said the Bethlehem experience is an annual event that church members look forward to each year. They also echoed the comments of Pastor Cooper, who during his welcome remarks expressed his thankfulness that "after 25 years, God continues to bring people here" to hear the gospel and experience the birth of Christ.



Visitors lined up to see Mary, Joseph and baby Jesus.

Save Guana Now hosts guided nature hike fundraiser

By Jennifer Logue

Local residents had an opportunity to experience the beauty of Ponte Vedra's Guana Preserve recently, when the Save Guana Now group hosted a guided hike through the preserve as a fundraiser for its efforts to prevent development of the Outpost.

Master Naturalist and Save Guana Now Co-Founder Gary Coulliette led participants along one of his personal favorite hikes through the preserve, explaining both the history of the area and its flora and fauna along the way. According to Save Guana Now Co-Founder Nicole Crosby, the two-mile hike began on the yellow trail and meandered through a canopy of old-growth hardwoods, past a freshwater marsh and along the Intracoastal Waterway upon the site of the Juan Andreu Mincoran settlement.

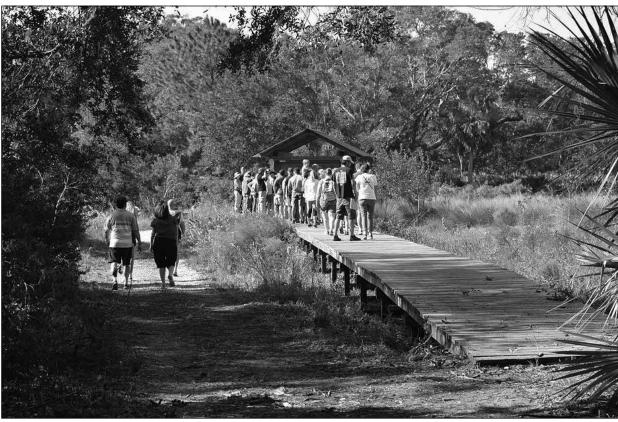
We saw indigo plants which are descendants of the original plants that were raised for making dye centuries ago," Crosby said. "We also saw a beautiful salt water lagoon and we walked to Shell Bluff. The views were breathtaking."

Hikers also ventured down the preserve's blue trail to the mile-long boardwalk on the west side of the freshwater marsh to enjoy the area's scenic views.

Crosby said the nature hike was the first of many outings the Save Guana Now group plans to hold in order to raise funds for its quest to prevent the 99-acre Outpost property from being developed. The Ponte Vedra Corporation (PVC) – a subsidiary of Gate Petroleum – submitted a planned unit development (PUD) application to build a 77-home subdivision to be known as "Vista Tranquila" on the property located at the end of Neck Road in Ponte Vedra. Area residents and naturalist groups have opposed the development, however, and PVC has since filed a lawsuit against St. Johns County, asking the courts to force the county to act on its PUD application.

Plans for future fundraising outings, Crosby said, include dog walks, a bird watching excursion, bike trips, a photo walk led by a professional photographer, and a kayak/canoe/SUP trip past the Outpost property.

We all share a deep concern," Crosby said, "about the impact that construction and habitat loss at the Outpost would have on this beautiful preserve that almost completely surrounds the 99 acres slated for development."



Photos courtesy of Save Guana Now

Hikers enjoy a guided tour of the Guana Preserve.





LEFT: Master Naturalist and Save Guana Now Co-Founder Gary Coulliette explains the flora and fauna to hikers.

Coffee

Continued from 3

regarding traffic.

Wanchick said the session was a great demonstration of the strong and healthy relationship between the sheriff's office and the county administrators.

Residents Greg White and **Derry Greene** speak with St. **Johns County Administrator** Michael Wanchick at Coffee with a Cop.

> Photo from Jon Blauvelt

"One of the things that makes the county such a great place is the level of cooperation not only between the county and the constitutional officers like (Shoar), but the county and the cities, the chamber of commerce, the school board, the nonprofits, the private sector, etc.," said Wanchick. "You don't turn that on in a hurricane. You don't learn how to do that in the middle of a natural disaster. You



cultivate those relationships at events like today." Shoar agreed. It's very unusual for sheriffs in the state of Florida, he said, to get

along so well with their county adminis-

"It's all about relationships," said Shoar. "It's all about selflessness, and if you put your community and your constituents above yourself, you'll always come out on top."

Sergeant Priester found the session to be a welcome change from the encounters they usually have with residents.

"I think it's better than us being behind them with our blue lights on," he said. "We're in a neutral area where they can let their guard down, and we can let our guard down and talk to them about their

Coffee with a Cop is a nationally popular initiative that was started by a police department in Hawthorne, California in 2011 in an effort to better understand the needs and concerns of community residents. Over the past five years, police

departments and sheriff's offices have adopted the practice for their respective communities.

Officials from the St. Johns County Sheriff's Office say they hope to host Coffee with a Cop on a monthly to quarterly basis moving forward.



As CEO of LCPS Management, Bruce Jones oversees the Vicar's Landing retirement community in Ponte Vedra Beach as well as Glenmoor in World Golf Village. He is married to Dr. Jessica Jones, director of family ministries at Grace Anglican Church, and they are the parents of Hannah, 12, and DB, 9.

By Jennifer Logue

What are your primary duties and responsibilities?

I am responsible for the strategic and operational management of our Continuing Care Retirement Communities (CCRC) and related entities. A CCRC provides independent living homes, assisted living and skilled nursing care on one campus. Vicar's Landing and Glenmoor provide one meal per day in the contracted rate in our fine dining restaurant or Blue Heron Café, in addition to weekly housekeeping and linen service, 24 hour per day security, transportation services, all maintenance, wellness and rehabilitation services and a full range of activities.

How did you come to work with seniors?

Upon entering college, I intended to be a physician. After graduating from UCF, though, I changed my focus and decided to focus on a Master of Business Administration degree from Rollins College. My first career involved various positions in a Real Estate Investment Trust that invested in senior housing assets. I noticed that the people running the buildings I was analyzing were having more fun than I, so I decided to become licensed as a Nursing Home Administrator. I then ran a free-standing nursing home in Gainesville before coming to Vicar's Landing as director of health services. In that role, I was responsible for our skilled nursing, assisted living, wellness clinic, rehabilitation services and home health agency. Four years ago, I was asked to assume the role of CEO of the organization.

Describe a typical day overseeing Vicar's Landing and

Part of the fun of this job is that there is no typical day. I enjoy business strategy and operations, so I enjoy planning for the growth of our organization. I then can walk through the campus and interact with a number of very interesting people with varied backgrounds. I can get back into our health care areas and see the compassionate, high-quality care our residents get to live their lives as independently as possible to the very end. It's a highly rewarding position and I feel very honored to have this

What is the most rewarding part of your job? The most challenging?

The most rewarding part of the job is being a part of a premier community. We have fascinating residents, a committed and compassionate staff and a beautiful setting. The most challenging part of this job is the occasional loss of one of the wonderful people with whom I have built relationships. However, it is made easier knowing they received the best care and services possible to enjoy their life to the very end.

How has the senior housing market changed since Vicar's Landing was founded in the 1980s?

There have been three major changes that affect the business. First, the health care reimbursement environment has changed significantly. We offer Medicare services to our residents and after the first of the year, we will be able to open our doors to non-residents. The myriad regulations pertaining to the provision of nursing



Photo by Jennifer Loque

and rehabilitative care can take a great deal of time and money to administer.

The second difference is the shift away from corporate pensions to personal savings. That makes planning for a move to a retirement community a bit more difficult – especially after the ups and downs we have experienced in recent years in the housing and financial markets.

Finally, we are seeing more for-profit companies entering senior living, mainly in assisted living. While many do a nice job and provide a nice product, they do not share our same mission-driven focus.

Are there any charitable organizations with which you're involved that you'd like to highlight?

Vicar's Landing and Glenmoor are both 501(c) 3 notfor-profit organizations and provide beneficial care to those who outlive their assets and educational programs for staff. Just this year, the parent organization, Life Care Pastoral Services, took over Lend an Ear Outreach, an amazing, mission-driven organization that provides refurbished hearing aids at low or no cost to those who would otherwise not be able to afford them. Lend an Ear collects donated hearing aids, has them sterilized and refurbished and then Dr. Jane Burns, our audiologist, provides free hearing tests and fittings.

Vicar's Landing has also partnered with the St. Johns County Council on Aging in their Ponte Vedra Memory Care Center. The COA does amazing work throughout the county and provides senior centers, transportation, memory enhancement and daycare programs, Meals on Wheels and more.

We also provide transportation services for the annual SenioRITAs tennis tournament. We enjoy being a good neighbor to the Ponte Vedra community!

How do you enjoy spending your free time?

We spend a great deal of time with our children's activities, including baseball, horseback riding, art, music and more. I enjoy spending time with my family, reading and watching movies when we can all sit down together!

It is a strange world we live in. This last election campaign was a good example of how citizens can feel left "out of the loop" so to speak

Several media organizations were perfectly willing to deal with whatever deceit, smut or misdirection of issues that came their way and ignore issues of national vulnerability.

While the public, the politicians and various government agencies discussed the

thousands upon thousands of government emails and reports of the hackers of various other nations that have secured direct access to them, the public seemed to lack the access to them that both our friends and those who oppose us have. Reports in the media stated that Russia, China, North Korea and Iran have done so. It is likely that our friends have also taken similar actions to determine an understanding of the hazards of such security

breaches can have upon their interests.

Those messages with security classifications and known to all others are to be denied to the general public. What is so important that cannot be shared when "all others " have access to this knowledge?

While Wikileaks and others have released much of the information, just where is the

news media? Will those who shared such information with the maids, family members and spouses who received such sensitive information without security clearances be held responsible for their reckless actions? Is there any assessment of the damage done and the lives at risk of ourselves and our friends?

- Henry C. Warner







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Rotary Club President Michael Bruce and wife Rebecca (at right) dine with Kathryn and Merlaine Latham, wife and mother of Jacksonville Beach Mayor Charlie Latham.



Linda and Dick Williams (at left) with Charlotte and John Drake

Rotaract, Rotary Club conduct holiday toy drive for Children's Home Society at Alhambra's 'A Christmas Story'



Photos by Jennifer Logue

Event organizers Rachael Daven (left) of Beaches Rotaract and MJ DeNardo of the Rotary Club of Ponte Vedra Beach welcome guests as Alhambra Managing Partner Craig Smith looks on.



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By Jennifer Logue

The Alhambra Theatre & Dining's sold-out production of "A Christmas Story" provided a fitting backdrop for the Beaches Rotaract Club's second annual holiday toy drive last week.

The beloved tale of 9-year-old Ralphie and his quest for a Red Ryder BB gun for Christmas echoed the toy drive for children in need, as the Alhambra lobby was filled with hundreds of toys and gifts of clothing, blankets and other necessities for donation to the Children's Home Society of Florida. The gifts were donated by Beaches Rotaract members, who joined with members of the Rotary Club of Ponte Vedra Beach Dec. 8 to make the toy drive the focus of the clubs' joint holiday outing to the Alhambra.

In addition to offering adoption and counseling services, the Children's Home Society (CHS) provides foster care and services for neglected and abused children.

Rotaract Club member Rachael Daven – who who organized the Alhambra event in collaboration with MJ DeNardo of the Rotary Club of Ponte Vedra Beach and a team of volunteers from both clubs – noted that CHS has more than 1,200 children in their program who were in need of

Christmas gifts as well as basic clothing and hygiene items.

"Our (Rotaract) club wanted to make a special emphasis on helping these children this year," said Daven, adding that The CSI Companies sponsored the event and gift drive. "Many of the children they pick up have nothing but what they are wearing. They really touched our hearts and we wanted to do something for this special group of children."

In addition to the toy drive, the event featured raffles and a live auction conducted by Alhambra Managing Partner Craig Smith that featured Jaguars tickets, wine baskets, gift certificates, weekend getaways and more.

CHS Charitable Giving Director Myra Martinez thanked attendees for their support of the organization's mission.

"It's just amazing," she said. "We could not do what we do if it wasn't for groups like Rotaract and Rotary."

Those sentiments were echoed by the Alhambra's Smith, who said he was pleased the dinner theatre was able to host the Rotary event.

"When I bought the Alhambra I realized there was so much we could do to help others," Smith said. "Rotary taught me 'service above self.""



Matt Montoya and Douglas Crescimanno of the Beaches Rotaract Club collect donated toys and gifts for the Children's Home Society at the Rotaract/Rotary Club holiday outing at the Alhambra Theatre & Dining.

Newcomers of the Beaches group holds holiday party

The Newcomers of the Beaches group held its annual holiday party Dec. 6 at Sawgrass Beach Club.

Newcomers of the Beaches is a social club open to women who have recently moved into the area or have recently been divorced, widowed or retired. Women new to the Beaches area meet friends at various activities and volunteer at events.



Donetta Heligman, Bonnie Chandler and Kay Berquist



Photos submitted by Barbara Gressa

Sherry Bennett, Patti DePace, Nancy Ziolkowski, Maria DiClemente and Carol Gander



Russ and Judy Adams



Bessie Lambert, Cindy Stoffer and Brooke Hoberman



Kathleen Wilson, Karen Tackoor, Greg Tackoor and Joe Wilson

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Ponte Wedra Club PR ealty





SAWGRASS 3BR/3BA • \$699,000 Susan Fort or Tyler Ackland



PONTE VEDRA BEACH Homesite • \$725,000 Suzie Connolly



ATLANTIC BEACH Suzie Connolly



MARHS LANDING 5BR/6BA • \$1.550.000 Jayne Young/Gwinn Volen



MARSH LANDING 3BR/2.5BA • \$626,000 Kathleen Florvan



S. JAX BEACH 3BR/2BA • \$799,000 Olivia or Brent Seaman



ST. AUGUSTINE 4BR/2.5BA • \$342,900 Kathleen Floryan





JAX BEACH



JULINGTON CREEK Olivia or Brent Seaman

PONTE VEDRA BEACH

4BR/3.5BA • \$785,000 Jo Mitchell

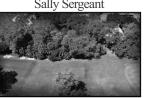
ONTE VEDRA BEACH

3BR/3BA • \$499,000

Patti Armstrong



PONTE VEDRA BEACH 3BR/3BA • \$1,350,000 Sally Sergeant



AVALON LOT .39 Acres • \$775,000 Valerie Shaw or Mary Faulds



PONTE VEDRA BEACH 3BR/3BA • \$1,375,000 Sally Sergeant



AGLE BEND ISLAND 5BR/6.5BA • \$1,150,000 Chris Knight



PONTE VEDRA BEACH 4BR/3.5BA • \$584,000 Kathleen Floryan/Cyndi King



MARSH LANDING 6BR/5BA/2HB • \$1,349,000 Michael Curet



FRUIT COVE 5BR/5.5BA • \$2,950,000 Jayne Young/Gwinn Volen



NEPTUNE BEACH 3BR/2.5BA • \$1,795,000 Jayne Young/Gwinn Volen



MARSH LANDING CC 4BR/4.5BA • \$1,495,000 Susan Fort or Tyler Ackland



PONTE VEDRA BEACH 3BR/2.5BA • \$1,115,000 **Bob Kroner**



PONTE VEDRA BEACH 5BR/4.5BA • \$2,345,000 Charlene Cosgrave



PONTE VEDRA BEACH 3BR/3BA • \$389,000 Jayne Young/Gwinn Volen

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OBITUARIES

Dr. Paul R. Ocken

Dr. Paul R. Ocken, 77, died Nov. 30, 2016. Paul was most recently a resident of Ponte Vedra and counts Watchung, New Jersey; Nantucket, Massachusetts; and New York City as former homes.

Paul was born on July 11, 1939, in the Bronx, New York, where he was known as "Pinky," a stickball-playing kid who was a full 6'2" and 200 pounds at 12 years old. Paul parlayed his size and athleticism into football and wrestling scholarships at

Stuyvesant and Trinity high schools and then to Springfield College. His coaching career was derailed by academics and science, however, and after graduating college in three years he worked as a research associate, partially under Nobel Prize-winner Dr. Severo Ochoa. He received his Ph.D. from NYU in 1966 and M.D. from the New Jersey College of Medicine and Dentistry in 1973. In 1974, he was awarded a research grant from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to continue his groundbreaking research on cataracts. Paul moved into private

practice in 1976, helping to build and lead a successful ophthalmology practice in northern New Jersey. He maintained his commitment to teaching throughout his career, which included an assistant professorship at Rutgers University.

Paul was an avid golfer (four holes-in-one), scuba diver (explored the Great Barrier Reef) and sailor three notorious accidents with his boat, "Ram-Bam"). Paul and his wife enjoyed 51 years of traveling, cooking, socializing and raising a large and loving family together.

He is survived by his wife Lynn; his three children, Michele Wolfson (Michael), Matthew Ocken (Rachel) and Libbi Cinti (Darren); and his grandchildren Ben, Jonah, Lila, Jack, Wylie, Piper, Tate and Georgia.

A private celebration of Paul's life was held at Sawgrass Country Club, where he enjoyed many years of cigars, drinks and sunsets at the ocean's edge. The family asks that in lieu of flowers donations be made either to the Children's Glaucoma Foundation or the Fresh Air Fund.

Please visit our online tribute at www.q uinn-shalz.com. Services are under the direction and care of Quinn-Shalz Family Funeral Home



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WINTER 2017 OPEN HOUSE DATES

Lower School (PreK-5) Open House for Parents Whitehurst Campus | January 10, 2017 9 a.m.

Lower School (PreK-5) Open House for Parents Ponte Vedra Beach Campus | January 13, 2017 9 a.m.

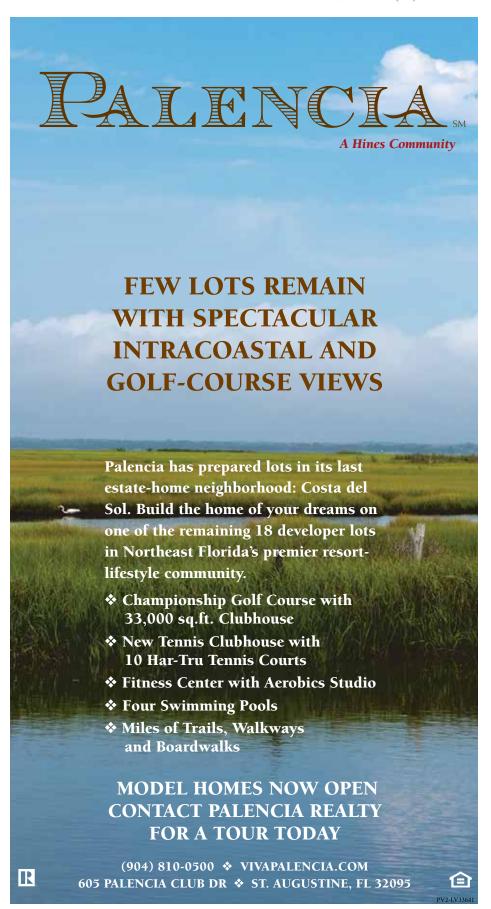
Upper School (9-12) Open House for Parents San Jose Campus | January 6, 2017 at 8:30 a.m.

For more information and to reserve your space at one of our many Open Houses, visit www.Bolles.org or call (904) 256-5030.

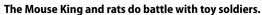
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Whitehurst PreK-5
Bartram 6-8 | San Jose 9-12

Day and Boarding School from PreK through Grade 12.











Kiana Lubbers and Peter Guarno perform the Spanish Pas De Deux.

Christ Episcopal Church presents 21st annual production of 'The Nutcracker'

By Jasmine Marshall

The stage was a flurry of snowflakes, fairies and lights Dec. 10, when Miss Felicia's Dance at Christ Church presented its annual performance of "The Nutcracker" in the Lazarra Theater at the University of North Florida.

Celebrating 21 years running, the show featured a selection of new holiday numbers in addition to the traditional ballet, whimsy and storytelling for which it is known. Dancers performed remixed renditions of classics such as "Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairies." In addition to jazz, tap and contemporary dance numbers, the show added a spin to the time-honored story.

Dance instructor, producer and director Felicia Griffin-Rhoden has continually cultivated the growth of the ministry, acting as both director of the dance ministry and director of Liturgical Dance at the Ponte Vedra based church. During her tenure, the

production's cast has grown from fewer than 20 to hundreds of dancers. With its performance, Rhoden said that many members of her dance ministry feel the holidays have officially begun.

"This show has grown so tremendously, it's something the community looks forward to every year," she said. "Most of these dancers have been with us for a very long time, so it's like a big family. They're dedicated to creating a wonderful show and they're loyal to one another."

The show has become a long-running tradition for the community, with many of the dancers returning year after year, Rhoden said. Rhoden added that several of the evening's performers had been with her since the very start of their dance careers – some as young as 3 years old – and performed through high school before later returning as adults.

Most notably, however, the performance symbolized the nature of the season: one

of givin

As is tradition for the dance ministry, this year's rendition of "The Nutcracker" benefited a number of charitable causes, with Community PedsCare, Dreams Come True and the Amistad Orphanage in Bolivia among the charities helped by the show.

"The performers are gathered here to raise money for children in need," Rhoden said. "They dance for the children who cannot dance.

"There are some things about this show that change each year," she continued. "A different dream comes true each time. But what stays the same is that this event is about giving, and we always have a crew of wonderful people working on this production who are willing to help make that happen."





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PV2-LV336



Photos by Jasmine Marshall





Photos by Jennifer Logue

Nease Rho Kappa officers Gabrielle Tinny, Tanvi Padalkar, Aislinn Harnett and Mannat Thakur



Nease students are inducted into the Rho Kappa Social Studies Honor Society.

Nease High School inducts students into Rho Kappa Honor Society

Twenty students were inducted into the Nease High School chapter of the Rho Kappa National Social Studies Honor Society last week.

In a ceremony held Dec. 5 in the school's media center, chapter officers Gabrielle Tinny, Tanvi Padalkar, Aislinn Harnett and Mannat Thakur formally inducted the students into the honor so-

ciety, lighting candles symbolizing truth, knowledge, wisdom and service.

Teacher and chapter advisor Jerry Lanford said the Rho Kappa National Social Studies Honor Society recognizes student excellence in a variety of academic disciplines that fall under the umbrella of social studies, including history, geography, government, economics and psychology.

"It incorporates all these disciplines that show us where we've been and where we're going," Lanford told attendees. "Participation (in Rho Kappa) creates our future leaders, and that's who these guys are."

Nease students inducted into the honor society included Jesse Gatewood (Grade 11), Kerry Simpson (12), Katharine Logue (11), Marc Moreira (11), Timothy Tom-

kunus (11), Lena Caramagno (11), Gerald Huang (11), Jonathan Valyou (11), Tyler Lingor (11), Ashton Wood (11), Jacob Hunt (11), Mack Davis (11), Hiba Aslam (11), Sierra Vidales (11), Julia (Jules) Maddalena (11), Hunter VanScoy (11), Paige Hopper (11), Chris McDonough (11), Tiffany Nyugen (11) and Asha Jama (12).



Ponte Vedra Recorder · December 15, 2016

































Photo courtesy of Brette Reiman

Ponte Vedra Democratic Club Members Lynn Wadelton, Amy Zobel, Bill Turnstall, Barbara Haugen-Hodes and Laura Atkinson at the recent fundraiser for Hugs Across the County

Ponte Vedra Democratic Club holds fundraiser for St. Johns County students in need

The Ponte Vedra Democratic Club recently held a fundraiser to benefit underprivileged St. Johns County students during the holidays.

The organization raised more than \$600 and collected food items for Hugs Across the County, a nonprofit organization that provides food, clothes, school supplies and other items to local students in need. The fundraiser was part of the nonprofit's greater Holiday Hunger Project to ensure that students who receive free school breakfast and lunch programs don't go hungry over holiday break.

Hugs Across the County has been collecting a list of kid-friendly food items that don't require parent supervision or electricity from organizations like the Ponte Vedra Democratic Club. The list of needed items includes cereal, crackers, peanut butter, Pop Tarts,



Donations for the Holiday Hunger Project

applesauce, granola bars and Chef Boyardee-style meals.

To supplement their efforts, Hugs Across the County is also accepting donations online at bit.ly/hugsdonat.

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Interested candidates please call Susan Griffin at 904-686-3938 and email your resume to susan@opcfla.com.



PV2-LV3367



Recorder file photo

A teen was hit by a car Monday while skateboarding on Ray Road. The accident occurred not far from the intersection of Ray Road and US1, where two Nease High School students were critically injured in a car accident last month, prompting a public outcry for a stoplight to be installed.

Teen hit by car while skateboarding near Nease High School

By Jennifer Logue

A 17-year-old boy was medflighted to UF Health Jacksonville Monday after he was hit by a car while skateboarding near Nease High School.

The St. Johns County Sheriff's Office reported that Kristian Edward Mensching was skateboarding from the apartments located across the street from the high school shortly after 1:30 p.m. Dec. 12 when he was struck by a car traveling west on Ray Road.

According to witnesses – who said the car was traveling at approximately 25 miles per hour – Mensching never stopped to wait for oncoming traffic. Mensching was not a student at Nease, the sheriff's office said.

Traffic Unit deputies continue to investigate the accident, which occurred not far from the intersection of Ray Road and US 1, where two Nease High School

students were critically injured in a car accident last month.

That accident prompted renewed calls from the community for a traffic light to be put at the busy intersection. Two Nease High School students initiated petitions calling for installation of a stoplight, which the Florida Department of Transportation says it has fast tracked in response to the public outcry.

In an interview with the Ponte Vedra Recorder following last month's accident, FDOT spokesman Ron Tittle said the proposed traffic signal had received funding for fiscal year 2017-2018, which begins in July 2017, but the agency hoped to expedite the design and review process to speed up the light's installation

The two-lane Ray Road is the sole point of access to Nease High School, which at the start of the school year had an enrollment of 2,193 students.

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Sheriff's Office arrests two on prowling charges, investigates rash of car burglaries, auto theft

A 20-year-old man and a 16-year-old male juvenile, both from Duval County, were charged with loitering and prowling early Sunday morning in Ponte Vedra Beach.

The adult, identified as Denzel Stefan White, 20, Jacksonville, was taken to the St. Johns County Jail in lieu of \$1,250 bond, while the juvenile was turned over to juvenile iustice authorities.

The investigation began Dec. 11 at 2:45 a.m., when a deputy attempted to conduct a traffic stop on a 2015 Kia for allegedly running a red light at A1A North and ATP Tour Blvd. According to the sheriff's office, the driver began to drive erratically and entered the southbound lane of A1A while traveling northbound and then stopped on top of shrubbery in the median. The two occupants fled the scene and the vehicle became engulfed in flames. A computer check revealed that the vehicle had been reported stolen from Duval County, and deputies began a search of the area for the two occupants.

While searching for the individuals, the two suspects were found hiding in a



WHITE

dumpster on the property of the Sawgrass Marriott. While the deputy could not positively identify the two as the same individuals who fled from the stolen vehicle, the two could not explain why they were hiding in the dumpster

and were taken into custody on loitering and prowling charges.

Car burglaries and theft

Deputies also are investigating four car burglaries and an auto theft that occurred in Ponte Vedra between Saturday evening and Sunday morning. The stolen vehicle – a 2013 black Chrysler Town and Country van with Florida tag BTXI81 – was taken from the driveway of a home on Dolphin Boulevard East. Another vehicle at that residence, along with two others nearby, were reported burglarized during the same time frame.

In addition, a resident in the first block of Red Snapper Lane also reported a car burglary. Among the items stolen was assorted currency, DVDs and a pair of sunglasses.

There was no sign of forced entry into any of the vehicles.

Sheriff's deputies say it is unknown at this time if the two suspects are connected with the auto burglaries, as district detectives are continuing the investigation.



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Thursday, Dec. 15

Friday, Dec. 16

Saturday, Dec. 17

Sunday, Dec. 18

Yoga for Survivors at the Y

Share a restorative experience as an experienced yoga instructor certified by the Christina Phipps Foundation guides cancer patients, survivors, caregivers, and others with range of motion and pain limitations through a gentle and safe yoga practice. This free event is open to the community. Call (904) 202-5376 or visit www.baptistjax.com/ymca to reserve a spot. This event will take place at the Y Healthy Living Center in the Ponte Vedra YMCA at 170 Landrum Lane. Classes will run Dec. 15 and 22 at 11:30 a.m.

Savvy Job Hunters Ministry Workshop

The Savvy Job Hunters Ministry is wrapping up 2016 with two presentations by Dr. Priscilla Berry, adjunct lecturer at Hough Graduate School of the University of Florida; and Cari Andreani, associate dean of academic affairs. Keiser University. The workshop will take place Dec. 15 from 9 a.m. to noon at Christ Episcopal Church's Parish Center Conference Room. These workshops are free to attend. RSVP to Cindy Corritore, ccorritore@christepiscopalchurch.org, or Pastoral Care Office, 904-285-7390 ext. 231. For more information, contact Pam Ottesen at pottesen66@gmail.com. Christ Episcopal Church is located at 400 San Juan Drive in Ponte Vedra Beach, Park on the upper deck to enter the second floor conference room.

Grief Support Group

A grief support group meets on the third Thursday of every month at St. Paul's Catholic Church in room 102 of the Family Life Center, located at 578 First Avenue North in Jacksonville Beach. The group is for men and women who are grieving the death of a family member or friend. The next meeting will be on Thursday, Dec. 15. For information, call Kathy at (904) 553-8933 or Catherine at (904) 247-0665.

ZooLights

Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens' ZooLights returns for the holiday season with thousands of LED lights, moving sculptures, lighted treats and animal silhouettes. This show includes work by student-artists from the University of North Florida, a fairy village and a lighted train in addition to carousel rides and a 4-D theater. ZooLights runs from Dec. 16 through Jan. 7. The event will not be open Christmas Day. To learn more about show times and ticket prices, visit www.jacksonvillezoo.org/zoolights.

Downtown Dazzle

The Jacksonville Children's Chorus (JCC) will present its second annual holiday celebration by illuminating the outside of its 225 East Duval St. office with lights synchronized to recorded songs of the season performed by JCC. Holiday, Christmas and Hanukkah songs will be broadcast on 94.5 FM radio. Downtown Dazzle continues through New Year's Eve. Each night, 12-minute presentations run from 6 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. The synchronized lights are designed by Darren Hufty, who, along with Miller Electric, brings the building and the downtown block to life. For more information, contact Carolyn Audije at carolyn@jaxchildrenschorus.org.

PV Professionals Networking Group

The Ponte Vedra Professionals Networking Group meets Fridays at 9 a.m. at Watson Realty Corp., 615 Highway A1A S. in Ponte Vedra Beach. For more information, call Gloria at (904) 635-6103, visit www.pvpng.com or email pontevedrapng@gmail.com.

Coastal Wine Market Wine Tasting

Coastal Wine Market will host a Friday wine tasting from 6 to 8 p.m. at 641 Crosswater Parkway, Suite B, Ponte Vedra Beach. Taste six wines for \$10. For more information, call (904) 395-3520.

St. Gerard Campus Fashion Show and Silent Auction

The St. Gerard Campus will host its 33rd Annual Fashion Show and Silent Auction at the World Golf Village Renaissance Resort on Saturday, Dec. 17 from noon to 3:30 p.m. The event will benefit the pregnant teens and new teen mothers of St. Gerard Campus High School. Tickets are \$40 per person. The show will feature fashions, holiday attire and sportswear from leading fashion brands modeled by men, women and children. A gourmet lunch will be served, and the show will also feature door prizes, raffle prizes, entertainment and a grand prize drawing for \$5,000. For ticket information or sponsorship opportunities, call (904) 829-5516 or (904) 797-9437.

Christmas Bake Sale

The Ponte Vedra United Methodist Women's Christmas Bake Sale will be held Saturday, Dec. 17. from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. The community is invited to view the baked offerings at the church located at 76 S. Roscoe Blvd. in Ponte Vedra Beach. This sale will feature a wide variety of cookies and baked goods made by church members. All proceeds go to support local charities such as Hart Felt Ministries, Mission House and Sulzbacher Center.

Gingerbread House Event

Hot Shot Bakery will host a Gingerbread House event Saturday, Dec. 17 beginning at 2 p.m. Decorate and finish a gingerbread house to take home for the holidays in a class of eight with the guidance of Chef Sherry Stoppelbein. The cost is \$35 per person, which includes a Wassail beverage for adults and lemonade for kids. The class is by reservation only. For more information or to make a reservation, call (904) 824-7898. Hot Shot Bakery N Cafe is located at 47 Cordova St. in St. Augustine.

St. Augustine Ballet's 'The Nutcracker'

The Saint Augustine Ballet will present its annual production of The Nutcracker Sunday. Dec. 18. This rendition features the mischievous mice, dancing dolls, sparkling snowflakes and dancing for which the classic is known. Its multi-generational cast is comprised of student and professional dancers as well as several local celebrities. Performances will be held at 1:30 p.m. and 7 p.m. on both show dates, Saturday, Dec. 17 and Sunday, Dec. 18. Tickets can be purchased online at www.tututix.com/saintaugustineballet, by phone at (855) 222-2849 or at the venue one hour prior to the show. The event will be held in the Lewis Auditorium at Flagler College, located on Granada St. in St. Augustine. For ticket prices, a seating chart and show information, visit www.saintaugustineballet.com/tickets

December in the Park

The Beaches Museum and History Park will host "December in the Park," throughout the month. The buildings of the History Park will be lit and the tree is decked. The Foreman's House, the Historic Chapel, and its newly opened Oesterreicher-McCormick Cabin will take visitors back to Christmas of an earlier time with period décor. There will also be a model train display in the Mayport Depot transformed into the "Polar Express" with a seasonal layout. For hours and more information, visit www. beachesmuseum.org.

Cummer Collection Tour

Join the Cummer Museum of Art and Gardens on Sundays for a guided tour of its permanent collection. The tour is free with the cost of admission. The museum is located at 829 Riverside Ave. in Jacksonville.

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PV2-LV33667

Monday, Dec. 19

Tuesday, Dec. 20

Thursday, Dec. 22

A Celtic Christmas

The Beaches Museum Chapel Concert Series and Lazzara Family Foundation will present a Celtic Christmas featuring Ed Miller with Jil Chambless and Scooter Muse. The three will perform their Annual Celtic Christmas Concert Tour of the Gulf states, concluding at the Beaches Chapel on Monday, Dec. 19. Two performances will be held at 5 p.m. and 7 p.m. with tickets available at \$20 per person. Price is \$25 on day of show. To purchase tickets, visit the event page at www.beachesmuseum.org.

Travel Training Program

The Council on Aging's Travel Training program is designed to assist seniors in learning to ride the Sunshine Bus. Residents interested in expanding their transportation options or who would like to increase their confidence as a bus rider can receive assistance from trained volunteers in navigating routes, reading time tables and making transfers. Contact the mobility manager at the Council on Aging at (904) 315-6505 or email Katie Arnold at karnold@ stjohnscoa.com.

Enchanted Christmas Village

The Keeler Property will be alight with Christmas through Dec. 31 with the opening of the Enchanted Christmas Village. Featuring more than one million Christmas Lights, the village brings together an immersive holiday experience for First Coast families. Guests can visit several attractions on the property, including a nativity scene, Santa's vacation home, ice sculptures, Santa's workshop and more. To learn more and to purchase any day passes or event tickets, visit www.jacksonvillechristmas. com. The Keeler Property is located at 17255 Normandy Blvd in Jacksonville.

Leaves: Recent prints and sculpture by **Donald Martin**

A selection of Northeast Florida-based printmaker Donald Martin's recent prints and sculpture are on display at Jacksonville's Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA) through Jan. 22. The longtime resident focuses on the natural world, creating block prints illustrating native plant and animal forms in abstract, natural and realistic contexts. MOCA is open from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. from Tuesday through Saturday, from noon to 5 p.m. Sunday and from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. Thursday. MOCA is located at 333 North Laura St. in Jacksonville.

Tapas Tuesday

The Cummer Museum of Art & Gardens presents Tapas Tuesday at the Cummer Café. Every Tuesday from 5 to 7:30 p.m. take in the sunset on the Cummer Café patio while listening to local musicians with beer, wine or artfully inspired tapas for sale at the Café. Reserve your table by calling (904) 899-6022. For more information, visit www.cummermuseum.org. The Museum is located at 829 Riverside Ave., Jacksonville.

Sunset Rotary Club Meeting

The Rotary Club of Ponte Vedra Beach Sunset meets Tuesdays from 6 to 7:30 p.m. at the Hilton Garden Inn. Community leaders are welcome to attend. For more information, call club President Janeene Hart at (904) 412-5409 or email jwhart1208@gmail.com.

Life Enrichment Day Retreat

Arbor Terrace Ponte Vedra hosts a Life Enrichment Day Retreat every Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Arbor Terrace Ponte Vedra, 5125 Palm Valley Road, Ponte Vedra Beach. The group is designed for those with memory changes who would like to stay active mentally, physically and socially. For more information, call (904) 834-7578 and ask for Ilene Thrasher or visit www.at-pontevedra.

Jacksonville Beach Pier Dance

Rock Solid Law will present the 19th Annual Jacksonville Beach Pier Dance benefiting the Beaches Emergency Assistance Ministry (BEAM) Wednesday, Dec. 21 at 5:30 p.m. at the Casa Marina Hotel and Restaurant. The event will feature performances by Baystreet as well as current and former Atlantic Beach Elementary students. Admission is at least one unwrapped toy and one non-perishable food donation. To make dinner reservations, call (904) 270-0025. Seating is limited. The Casa Marina is located at 691 1st St. North in Jacksonville Beach.

Wednesday, Dec. 21

Volunteers Needed

Ponte Vedra Therapeutic Adult Day Health Care at 1050 A1A North is in need of a volunteer any weekday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. This volunteer will help participants in activities such as games, music, chair exercises and simple arts and craft projects. Certified pet therapy dogs are also welcome. Call (904) 209-3686 or email aleach@stjohnscoa.com for more information.

Life Enrichment Group

This group is designed for those with memory changes who want to remain mentally, physically and socially active, while giving caregivers and loved ones some free time for themselves. This program is offered daily, serving Jacksonville Beach and Ponte Vedra area. For more information call: 904-417-7354 or email life_enrichmentgroup@yahoo.com

Well-being Wednesday

During and after the Mid-Week Market in Bull Park, free well-being classes will be held at the Adele Grage Cultural Center. Qigong classes, including Tai Chi, are now available Wednesday mornings at the Adele Grage Center from 9:30 a.m. to 10:30 am. Instructors and speakers are encouraged to contact the department of recreation and special events at (904) 247-5828 for more details about providing the community with well being information and classes.

COA Annual Christmas Luncheon

Celebrate the holidays with a Christmas luncheon at River House hosted by the Council on Aging Thursday, Dec. 22 at 11:30 AM. Festivities begin at 10:30 AM, with entertainment, singing and Santa Claus. Reservations are required for lunch and a \$6 donation is requested. For more information, call (904) 209-3655 to RSVP. The community is invited to this event.

Complimentary Vision Screening

Vision is Priceless, a community resource for improving the health of First Coast families, will provide complimentary vision screenings at THE PLAYERS Community Senior Center on Thursday, Dec. 22 from 9 a.m. to noon. For additional information, contact Darlene Mahany or Marian Ashton at (904) 280-3233, or visit the Council on Aging website www.coasjc. com. THE PLAYERS Community Senior Center is located at 175 Landrum Lane in Ponte Vedra

Deck the Chairs

Deck the Chairs returns to Jacksonville Beach's Seawalk Pavilion for its third year in support of the Volunteer Life Saving Corps of Jacksonville Beach. This holiday celebration features lifeguard chairs aglow with Christmas lights in addition to the festivities, music and food trucks the Pavilion is known for year-round. This year's Shine Hope & Peace Light & Music Spectacular features programmed music, animated lights and projections across the pavilion stage every Friday, Saturday and Sunday on the hour from 6 to 9 p.m. No show will be featured on Christmas Dav.

Free calendar listings for community groups and nonprofit organizations are published at our discretion on a space-available basis. Send your event at least 10 days before publication.
Submit events to jasmine@opcfla.com, post online at www.pontevedrarecorder.com usi the automated form or call (904) 686-3939.



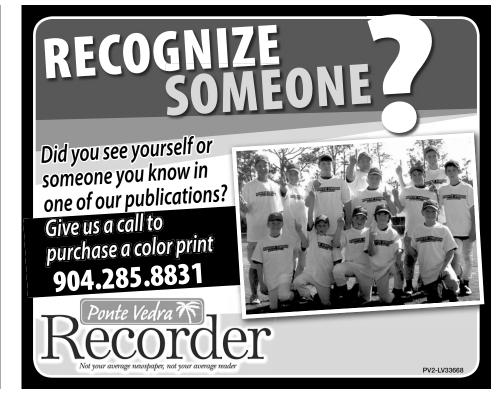
Friday, December 23rd & **December 24th is sold out** 5:00 - 9:00 PM

\$74.00++ Adults \$23.00++ Kids 6-12

New Year's Eve Dinner
Enjoy Chef's specials, champagne & live music with friends and family as you kick off the start to 2017!

> Saturday, December 31st 5:00 - 9:00 PM

For complete information on our dining and social events, visit our website at http://www.tpc.com/sawgrass-dining. ore information or to make a reservation in NINETEEN or for a Social Event, please contact the dining room at 904.273.3238



OBITUARIES



David Ward Bowler

David Ward Bowler, 72, died Nov. 29, 2016, after a two-year battle with cancer. David leaves behind his loving wife of 48 years, Babs; daughters Kaki (Tim)

and Christi (Bill); Babs' son Doug (JoJo); grandchildren, Kelsey, Jack and Phebe; siblings Lucy, John (Susan), Mary (Bob), and Peggy (George); and 26 nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his parents, Jack and Margaret and brother-in-law Kurt.

David is a Jacksonville native. Raised in Riverside, he attended St. Paul's

Catholic School and Bishop Kenny High School. He then attended Villanova University for one year before he was drafted into the military to serve during Vietnam. He became a Marine reservist. He continued college at Palatka Junior College where he met the love of his life, Babs. Their courtship was long distance while David completed his undergraduate degree at the University of South Florida in Tampa. Later he would receive his MBA at the University of North Florida. David and Babs married in 1968 and settled in Jacksonville Beach.

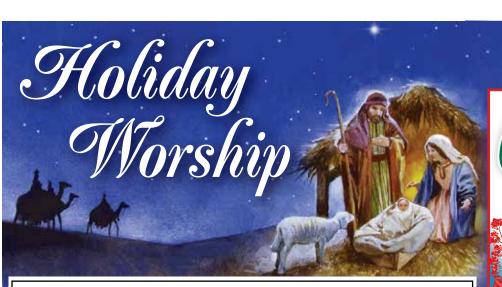
David's entrepreneurial and adventurous spirit led him down several career paths, from insurance claims to real estate development. He started a solar power company in the 1970s, ran a liquor store in the 1980s and owned and tinkered on a 10-unit apartment complex in Jacksonville Beach from the 1990s until this past year. He was handy and color blind. He was a jack of all trades

First and foremost, David was a family man. His daughters think he hung the moon. And his favorite title was "Grandaddy." He was a father figure to his nieces and nephews, tenants and countless others. He'd drop anything to fix your plumbing problem or watch his offspring's sporting events. His favorite activity was to take his family sailing.

He will be missed beyond comprehension and is leaving big shoes to be filled by his son-in-laws. A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated Dec. 5, 2016, in Our Lady Star of the Sea Catholic Church with Rev. Monsignor Keith Brennan and Rev. William Kelly as celebrants.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be sent to Beaches Emergency Assistance Ministry (BEAM) www.jaxbeam.org/donate, 580 Sixth Avenue S., Jacksonville Beach, Fla. 32250. Please visit our online tribute at www.quinn-shalz.com. Services under the direction and care of Quinn-Shalz Family Funeral Home.





Christ Episcopal Church

Come Celebrate Christmas with us!

Christ Church Ponte Vedra

400 San Juan Drive Ponte Vedra Beach 904-285-6127

Christmas Eve

2:00 p.m. Traditional Main sanctuary

2:00 p.m. Contemporary with toddler pageant Contemporary worship center

4:00 p.m. ContemporaryContemporary worship center

6:00 p.m. Traditional with Christmas pageant Main sanctuary

8:00 p.m. Festival Main sanctuary

10:00 p.m. Festival Main sanctuary

Christmas Day

10:00 a.m. Traditional Christmas Eucharist Main sanctuary

Christ Church

San Pablo 2002 San Pablo Road

Jacksonville

Christmas Eve

7:00 p.m. Candlelight Eucharist

Christ Church Serenata Beach Club South Ponte Vedra Beach

Christmas Eve

3:00 p.m. Informal Christmas Eucharistoceanfront with music at Serenata Beach Club

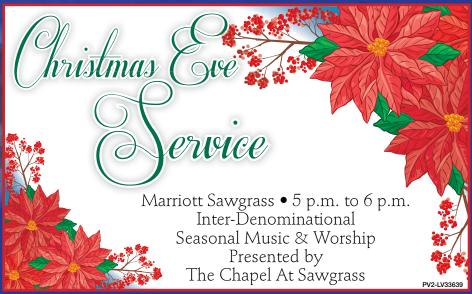
Amalel and the Night Visitors

January 8, 7 p.m. Christ Church Ponte Vedra An opera in one act by

Gian Carlo Menotti

christepiscopalchurch.org

PV3-LV33697





CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES

5PM - A SERVICE FOR CHILDREN & FAMILIES

7PM AND 9 PM

A CANDLELIGHT SERVICE WITH CHOIR AND JSO STRINGS

11PM - A COMMUNION CANDLELIGHT SERVICE WITH JSO STRINGS & TENOR MATHEUS COURA & BARITONE WIL KELLY

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DECEMBER 25, 2016 AT 11AM

SPECIAL SERVICE OF COMFORT & JOY

DRESS IN YOUR COMFY PAJAMAS AND SLIPPERS AND SING YOUR

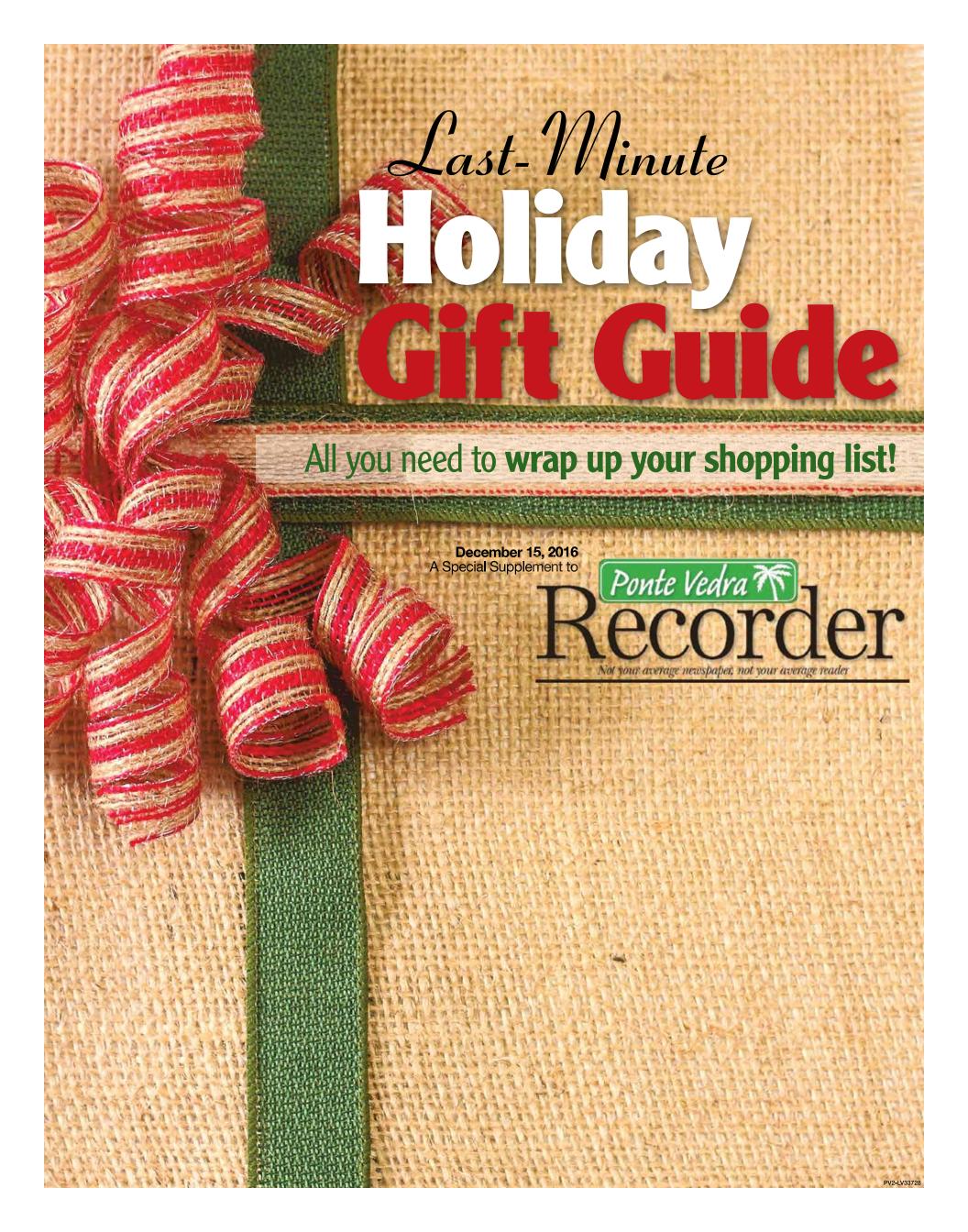
ESS IN YOUR COMFY PAJAMAS AND SLIPPERS AND SING YOU FAVORITE CHRISTMAS HYMNS

All are welcome!

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PV2-LV33795



GIFT IDEA: PRESENTS WITH A PURPOSE

The gift of giving

By Jasmine Marshall

With the holidays quickly approaching, gifting season is well underway. North Florida suffers for no shortage of giving, and local nonprofits offer local shoppers the unique ability to give two-fold by giving charitably.

For the golf enthusiast

The Ponte Vedra Beach Rotary Club invites the community to "Chip in for Youth" with a gift for the golf lover this holiday. The club is promoting goodany-day tickets for next THE PLAYERS Championship 2017, to be held the week of May 9. Each ticket costs \$50, saving as much as \$15 off the value of daily admission, and 100 per cent of each ticket sale goes to children's charities. The PGA Tour also returns \$25 of each ticket sold to the Rotary Club, which will use the money to support numerous local charities including youth programs by BEAM, Deck the Chairs, youth exchange programs and more. Proceeds will also benefit Rotary International's End Polio Now campaign, with the remaining \$25 of each ticket going to The First Tee. To purchase tickets, visit www.chipinforyouth.com and use code "PVBROTARY."

For the foodie

The Sulzbacher Center offers a gift that feeds recipients and people in need. The center's "Good Night" themed gifts feature a tin full of holiday cookies named for I.M. Sulzbacher and crafted from his favorite recipe – white chocolate chip macadamia nut. Also among the center's gifts are cards adorned with illustrations by children living at the center. Cookies and cards can be purchased at www. sulzbachercenter.org/fundraisers/give-agood-night. The proceeds provide housing and assistance to the homeless.

The Sulzbacher Center is Northeast



Recorder file photos

First Coast No More Homeless Pets

Florida's largest provider of services for homeless men, women and children. The four-star charity serves meals and provides shelter, health care and children's programs in addition to job placement assistance and life skills. To learn about other ways to help the Suzbacher Center, visit www.sulzbachercenter.org.

For the animal lover

Look no further than First Coast No More Homeless Pets (FCNMHP). The North Florida-based nonprofit responsible for reducing the area's euthanasia rate by more than 90 percent since 2002 credits its staff, volunteers and the help of the community for the achievement. With events such as its Mega Pet Adoption days formed in partnership with shelters and rescues from all over the region, locals can add to the 12,000 lives already saved by the program since 2012.

Community members can help FC-NMHP any number of ways, from volunteering and purchasing Memory Tiles to shopping FCNMHP affiliate stores

online for Christmas gifts. And just before Christmas, on Dec. 19, the organization will host another Mega Pet Adoption event where attendees will have an opportunity to give local pets the greatest gift of all – a forever home.

To learn more about ways to help FC-NMHP, visit www.fcnmhp.org.

First Coast No More Homeless Pets, Inc. is a 501(c) 3 nonprofit organization.

Helping children

Toys for Tots has helped bring Christmas to underprivileged kids for nearly 70 years. The Marine Toys for Tots Foundation was founded as an official mission of the Marine Corps Reserve and an official activity for the U.S. Marine Corps, and its inception has resulted in more than 512 million toys delivered to upwards of 237 million children.

With several hundred drop-off locations around the country, First Coast residents all along the river will have ample opportunity to help bring toys to less fortunate children.

The foundation asks for toys in addition to supplemental gifts for older age groups, such as bath sets, cosmetics, backpacks, electronics and wallets. Toys for Tots will not distribute realistic-looking toy weapons or food gifts. To find a local Toys for Tots drive location, visit www.toysfortots. org.

Helping families

The Beaches Emergency Assistance Ministry is no stranger to the Jacksonville Beaches community; since its inception in 1985, the ministry has assisted community members in need of food and help with finances through specialized programs, a 6,500 square-foot garden and food pantry. In 2015 alone, more than 18,000 children and adults were helped by BEAM's services, more than half a million pounds of food was distributed to BEAM families and 855 children received school supplies, clothing and shoes through its school supply drive.

Shop BEAM for holiday gifts that go back into the community; for the cook or organic enthusiast, BEAM's Grace Garden Cookbook includes recipes inspired by the ministry's own garden and categorized by growing season.

For the fashionista, browse the offerings at BEAM's Jacksonville Beach and Atlantic Beach thrift stores, or its newly opened "department store" style thrift store at 7North.

Locals looking to give this season can also help BEAM's mission by volunteering at its Grace Garden, which supplements the ministry's food pantry, and at its BEAM Thrift locations, including the newly opened 7North, all of which provide a stream of revenue that funds BEAM's programs. Gently used items – such as clothing, houseware and furniture – can also be donated to the thrift stores.

To learn more about BEAM's volunteer opportunities, visit www.jaxbeam.org.

Last-minute gifts, discounts abound at Betty Griffin Center Thrift Store

The Betty Griffin Center is offering daily discounts on items during its "12 Days of Christmas" promotion through Friday, Dec. 23 at the nonprofit agency's Julington Square thrift store.

"People throughout the community donate many items to our thrift stores throughout the year," said Betty Griffin Center Executive Director Joyce Mahr. "So we felt the holiday season offered a



great opportunity to give back to those residents."

According to store Manager Suzanne Stigletts, the thrift store will feature

several items at extreme mark-downs each day that will be promoted on their Facebook page and in the store. All sales will help support the Betty Griffin Center, which provides emergency shelter and services for residents experiencing domestic or sexual abuse in St. Johns County.

The Julington Square Thrift Store is one of two the Betty Griffin Center

operates in St. Johns County, which help provide funding for the nonprofit agency.

To learn more about the Betty Griffin Center's "12 Days of Christmas," visit the agency's at https://www.facebook.com/BettyGriffinCenter.

The thrift store is located at 445 State Road 13 in the Wal-Mart Shopping Plaza

GIFT IDEA: STRESS REDUCERS

Soothe brings international massage service to Jacksonville

International on-demand massage service Soothe will bring its services to the First Coast on Dec. 20, adding the River City to its areas of service across the United States, Canada and the U.K. where customers can see certified massage therapists in their homes, offices or hotels.

The company will open its doors just ahead of the Christmas holiday, bringing with it several viable options for the last-minute gift of relaxation. Soothe offers deep tissue, Swedish, sports, couple and prenatal massages at 60, 90 and 120 minute sessions starting

"We're pleased to serve the residents of Jacksonville and its visitors," said Soothe's Founder and CEO Merlin Kauffman. "Everyone deserves to have a massage after a long day at the office or while on vacation, either as a gift to oneself or another."

Soothe's massages tackle a variety of problem areas, the company says; its pre-natal option helps lessen pregnancy discomfort, aches, swelling and stiffness, while a massage tailored for

athletes targets fatigue, flexibility and endurance. Others work to decrease stress levels, relax or energize clients.

Kauffman created the company in 2013 while at Harvard Business School during a period when he was frequently traveling and found it difficult to schedule a massage appointment outside of standard business hours. What started as a solution to his own problem has grown into a business, with the number of certified massage therapists on the platform having tripled since

"Our growth is really due to the experience our massage therapists deliver," Kauffman said. "They provide spa-quality treatments without the hassle of finding parking or dealing with traffic. In addition, our massage therapists earn three to four times more than the industry standard. Soothe is extremely proud to provide flexible work opportunities for therapists."

For more information about Soothe's rates, massages and gift options, visit www.soothe.com or call 1-800-960-

Giving back can be good for your heart health

By Dr. Anthony Magnano

Special to the Recorder

Holidays are a time for giving back to the community, and while the benefit of volunteering may seem clear, there's one advantage many people don't know about: boosting your health. Research has shown that volunteering not only improves mental well-being but also can impact your physical health – including lowering blood pressure and lengthening lifespan. Here's how helping others can help your heart.

The health benefits of volunteering

Although most forms of charitable giving are linked with positive effects on mental health, volunteering is also associated with physical health benefits.

A study from Carnegie Mellon University found that adults 50 and older who volunteer on a regular basis were 40 percent less likely to develop high blood pressure than non-volunteers. High blood pressure is an important indicator of health, as it can lead to a number of complications, including increased risk of heart attack, heart failure, stroke

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MAGNANO

and coronary artery disease. Another study from Health Psychology found that participants who volunteered regularly had a decreased mortality and a longer lifespan in general.

Why they are linked

The reasons for why volunteering may lead to health benefits are still being studied, but there are several theories. Volunteer work can increase physical activity, especially for older adults who are retired and less active. It also may reduce stress, which has significant effects on blood pressure and overall heart health.

Researchers are also trying to identify the characteristics of volunteering that provide the greatest benefits. For example, multiple studies have found that

volunteer work must be performed on a regular basis to result in health benefits. In the Carnegie Mellon University study, participants only had lower blood pressure if they volunteered 200 hours or more per year. Other studies have noted health benefits beginning at 100 hours of volunteering per year.

Another important and particularly interesting factor is intention. The previously mentioned study from Health Psychology found that participants had a longer lifespan only if they volunteered for altruistic purposes. Those who volunteered for self-oriented reasons had a similar lifespan to non-volunteers.

What you can do

With the holiday season underway, now is the perfect time to start volunteering at a local food drive or shelter. Or, make a New Year's resolution about

charitable giving for 2017. Pick a type of volunteering you are passionate about, but also consider which type is the best fit for you. Mentally stimulating activities, like serving as a tutor, may be helpful for those who want to maintain their cognitive skills, while more physical activities, like working at an animal shelter or hospital, could be better for those looking to maintain or improve heart health.

Whichever kind of philanthropic activity you choose, rest assured you are making a positive impact in others' lives, with the possible perk of enriching your health in the process.

Dr. Anthony Magnano is a Ponte Vedra resident and cardiac electrophysiologist at St. Vincent's Medical Center Riverside. For more information on Dr. Magnano and his specialty treating atrial fibrillation, visit AfibJax.com.

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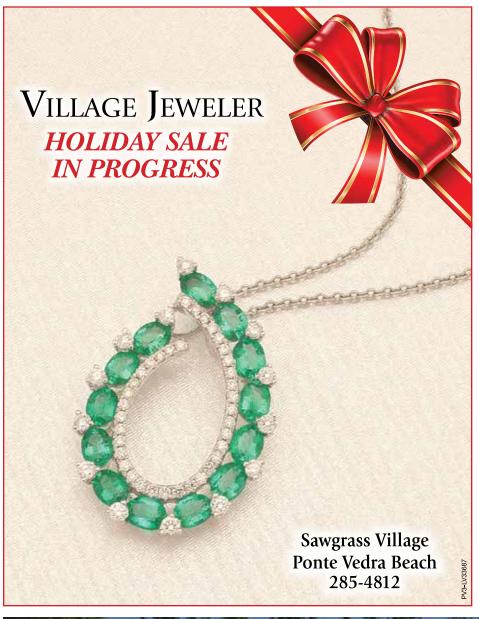
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HOLIDAY SHOPPING

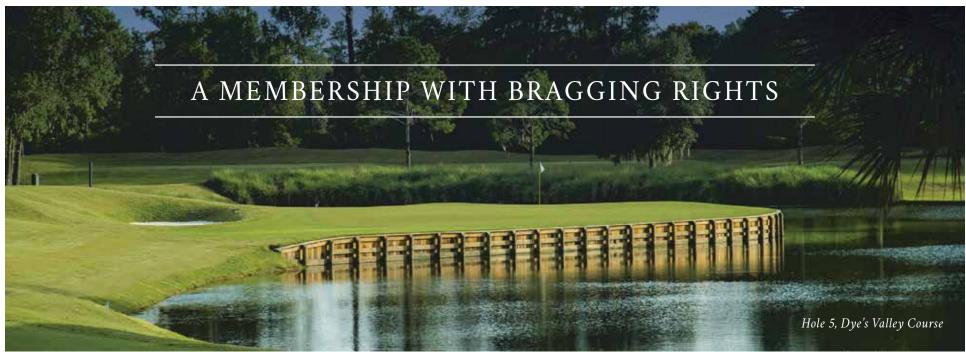


Santa Claus is coming to town

St. Nick to make appearances at The Shoppes at Ponte Vedra

Santa Claus and his favorite elf will be at The Shoppes at Ponte Vedra from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. every Saturday leading up to Christmas Day. Children young and old are welcome to visit them and share their

Christmas wishes. Like last year, Randy Pickering, assistant manager of the local Hilton Garden Inn, will don the iconic red suit, and Guest Services Agent Jeanette Perry will act as his assistant.



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GIFT IDEA: TRAVEL





Photos courtesy of Leigh Cort

Manhattan Tower: An oasis of mid-century hospitality

Travel Specials

View the holiday lights along the waterways of Fort Lauderdale. Manhattan Tower is currently offering two complimentary tickets to the water taxi to guests staying three nights or more – a \$52 value. Hop on and hop off right from the Manhattan **Tower dock. This** promotion is . available through Jan. 15, 2017; use promotional code PVRMT701 when booking.

By Leigh Cort

Special to the Recorder

It's a blue-and-white morning from the verandah overlooking Florida's Intracoastal Waterway. A warm breeze and gentle sunrise pull me from my plush blanket to step outside and inhale a soothing beginning to my day at Manhattan Tower – considered by many to be the best-kept secret vacation spot in bustling Fort Lauderdale. Shhh...it's a jeweled hideaway that's only been here since the early 1950s!

Although Fort Lauderdale has been tagged the "Venice of America" – with nearly every street, home and neighborhood positioned on coveted waterways – somehow you have to find your own hush-hush place to enjoy a moment of tranquility and call it home. It's not always found inside a 40-story hotel or resort, where you're just a number on the door with a pocket of plastic keys.

Only two blocks from Fort Lauderdale's 23-mile beach that is dotted with chic properties adorning the shore and skyline, I discovered Manhattan Tower and was transported back to a timeless and colorful past. Designed by the innovative and famed mid-century architect Charles McKirahan, the story as a corporate retreat began with its pedigree: It was a masterpiece of design for General Motors executives.

No bellmen needed here. It was convenient to pull up to the classic front door and enter a tropical courtyard, pool and gardens. I was swept into a vintage vibe everywhere I looked



– from the streetside pool to the Intracoastal waterfront patio. Eclectically stylish and extremely interesting, the patio swept the hotel's entire property with umbrella tables, chaise lounges, bronze sculptured animals, pots of flora, an awning-covered barbecue area and an open vista of flamboyant yachts cruising by.

Meeting owners Russel Dion and Joseph Caffey in the hotel's library explained the tasteful furnishings and antiques. They owned an antique gallery for 30 years on Las Olas Boulevard, allowing them to collect a wide variety of unusual treasures that now fill the hotel and gardens. Guests find this a constant source of wonder and amusement – riches with a "story" gathered from international travels mixed with newer acquisitions and fascinating art. They have created a setting that is quiet, low-key and elegant – only a few blocks from Fort Lauderdale's hub of activity.

Imagine 13 studio, one- and twobedroom apartments from which to choose! Russel and Joseph reside on the third floor, while guests often take up residence for weeks at a time on the first and second floor. Their focus is to provide a level of service and comfort in each apartment that includes a thoughtfully provisioned kitchen for more lengthy visits. My linens were plush, the bathroom vanities and accoutrements caringly arranged, and all of the suites spacious!

At Manhattan Tower, there is sociability unlike staying in a large hotel, especially when the water taxi stopped at our dock to take us up and down the Intracoastal to fine and fun dining, shopping, beaches, museums and sightseeing. Unquestionably the best way to see this beautiful city is along the water: their tours are a magical combination of tours plus transportation. Within minutes of my call, a water taxi captain also became our guide and historian. It's hard to believe that for \$26 per person we could cruise for the entire day and night (senior rates are lower). Your water taxi ticket is

also a passport to excellent savings at many boutiques, attractions and restaurants. Suggestion: Begin with a three-hour round-trip route to become familiarized with the many stops and let the crew offer advice on places to disembark that will make your vacation personalized.

By late afternoon each day I felt compelled to return to Manhattan Tower's loggia – a covered terrace connecting the courtyard with the waterfront – with the most handsome little bar. It's a lovely place to meet other guests, enjoy a cocktail and decide on the night's restaurant or club.

With hundreds of dining options minutes from our hotel...and many recognized for culinary excellence and integrity, I was a bit overwhelmed with the vast genres but I enjoyed the nightly "hunt." Reviews and themes included: waterfront, rooftops, five-star hotels, celebrated chefs, 24/7 bistros, pubs, sustainability, rustic fish camps, beautiful people, special-occasion and bring your Platinum AmEx!

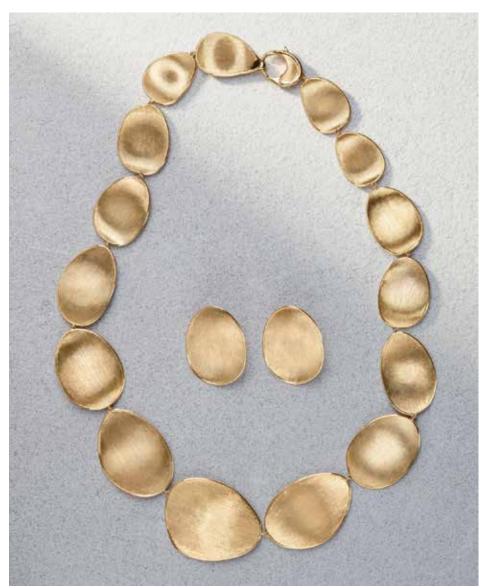
As the days passed quickly by, I couldn't help remembering the sight of our resplendent first view of the glittering water. I wished we were staying for another fortnight so that I could get to know Fort Lauderdale more deeply. I dreamed of a window to gaze out of, a comfy sofa to sit in — I felt the romance here for a reason. I had to plan my return visit ... There is a hidden story to tell which will unfold as I listen to the Gordon Jenkins musical masterpiece "Manhattan Tower."

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GIFT IDEA: DINING

3 Palms Grille opens in The Oak Bridge Club

Locally sourced menu, contemporary décor highlight new restaurant open to the public

By Jennifer Logue

Oak Bridge Club Owner Jeff Miller recalls dining with a friend in the club's newly opened 3 Palms Grille when a longtime Sawgrass Players Club resident walked in.

"He took one look and said, 'I can't believe this place – I've seen it through the good and the bad and this is the

nicest it's ever been!'" he

Such reactions are common, Miller said, among longtime residents, who appreciate the full extent of the restaurant's transformation. Gone is the bright-green carpeting and snack bar-style furnishings from the 1980s

DINING continues on **Page 25**

3 Palms Grille at The Oak Bridge Club

254 Alta Mar Ave., Ponte Vedra Beach Lunch: Tuesday – Saturday, 11 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Happy Hour/Bar Bites: Tuesday – Sunday, 3:30 to 7

Sunday Brunch: 11 to 3:30 p.m. (904) 686-2128 www.3palmsgrille. com

3 Palms Grille features an interior dining room with a warm, contemporary décor.





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Tempura Roman artichokes

Dining

Continued from 2

and in their place is an elegant yet comfortable dining space with indoor seating for 65 and outdoor lake view seating on the patio for 115.

The result of a partnership between Oak Bridge owners Jeff and David Miller and the culinary teams behind Eleven South and Cap's on the Water, 3 Palms Grille is now open to the public, serving lunch, happy hour bar bites and Sunday brunch, with dinner service expected to begin early in the new year. With a full menu of appetizers, soups, salads, sandwiches, entrees and desserts ranging from \$5 to \$18, 3 Palms' menu was designed with the desires of both Sawgrass residents and the general public in mind, the owners say.

"Our idea was to make sure people knew we wanted to be a part of the community as well," owner John Nagy said. "We really worked on listening to their input on what they wanted in terms of quality, hours of operation and price point, and we came up with this kind of menu."

Vernon's at Sawgrass Marriott to offer special Christmas, New Year's Eve dining

The Sawgrass Marriott Golf Resort & Spa will feature special holiday dining menus at its Vernon's restaurant this season.

The restaurant will feature a Christmas buffet from 12:30 p.m. to 6 p.m. on Christmas Day, offering a traditional holiday meal with a Southern twist. In addition to parsnip pear soup with chestnuts, St. John's crab legs, curry butternut and carrot bisque and a variety of salads and other starters, the buffet will feature turkey roulade, citrus infused ham, seared grouper, lamb-baked ziti and chicken with a variety of side dishes and desserts. The buffet price is \$65 for adults and \$24 for children ages 6 to 12.

On New Year's Eve, Vernon's will offer a six-course prix fixe "2017 Countdown Dinner" overlooking the resort lagoon featuring Ahi tuna crudo, rosemary-infused chicken, pan-seared scallops with truffle risotto, braised short ribs and chocolate decadence for dessert. The special prix fixe menu is available for \$99 per person.

The Sawgrass Marriott Golf Resort and Spa is located at 1000 PGA Tour Blvd. in Ponte Vedra Beach.

From Spanish grilled octopus and tempura Roman artichokes to fresh fish Francese and oyster mushroom risotto, the 3 Palms menu offers a sophisticated take on casual dining. Traditional fare such as a steak burger and Cuban panini share space on the menu alongside truffle parmesan frites, a roasted beet and goat cheese salad and ahi tuna tartare

"We think of ourselves as a seasonal restaurant," Nagy said, "with fresh food, fresh fish and locally grown produce."

Nagy credits the restaurant's décor to his wife and partner, Karen Thomas, and Vivian de Raad, who with husband Bernard make up the creative team behind 3 Palms Grille.

"Karen and Vivian spent a lot of time creating a modern concept," he said. "It has a bit of a modern feel but it doesn't feel cold. It feels very warm. It was their concept to make it feel that way."

The restaurant's indoor/outdoor bar extends to the lakefront dining patio, where patrons can enjoy a meal or drinks around the fire pit in the evenings.

Already the restaurant is winning positive reviews from local residents, David Miller said.

"People love having a community gathering place where they can go to have a drink and a nice meal."

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26 Last-Minute Gifts

GIFT IDEA: TIME TO A WORTHY CAUSE

Jim & Tabitha Furyk Foundation packs 3,000 bags of food for local children in need at 'Hope for the Holidays' event

By Jon Blauvelt

For the fifth year in a row, the Jim & Tabitha Furyk Foundation organized a group of community volunteer to pack bags of food for local, underprivileged children to ensure they don't go hungry over the holiday school break.

"It's a way that they can help out the community and teach their children about giving back and about how others aren't quite as fortunate," PGA Tour golfer Jim Furyk said at the foundation's Hope for the Holidays packing event Dec. 8. "It's really cool to see everyone come out and support it."

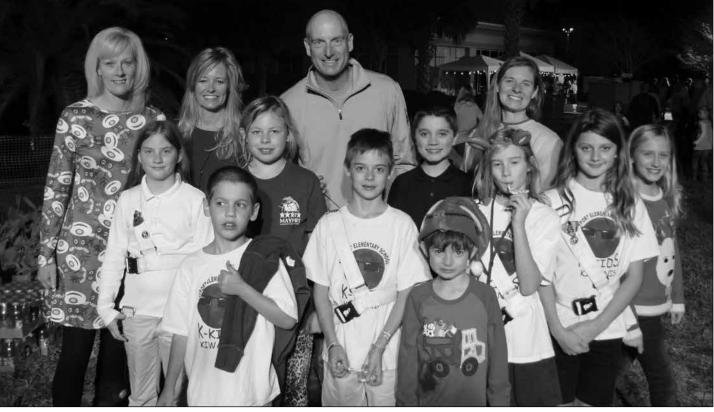
Due to an increase in funding from sponsors – which include Interline, Web. com and AT&T – support from the PGA Tour and partnerships with Publix, Target, Pepsi and Walmart, the foundation has dramatically increased the number of bags it can pack from 500 in 2011 to 3,000 this year.

Held in the parking lot adjacent to the businesses at the intersection of A1A and Mickler Road, the assembly line-like packing event was reminiscent of a 1950s Ford plant: methodical and efficient. The only major difference was that this assembly line was substantially more lively and festive. Adorned in Christmas reds and greens, volunteers wearing Santa hats started the packing process by grabbing a bag and then moving down the line to fill it with one of each food item -15 to be exact – including ham, chicken broth, green beans and more. After collecting each of the items, volunteers then ended the process by tying the bag and placing it with the others, which were soon lifted into the back of a truck. The process continued until the 45,000 food items disappeared from the tables, and the 3,000 bags were packed and ready to go in the trucks. It took less than 90 minutes.

The Furyks emphasize that this experience provides families with a hands-on opportunity to truly understand what it's like to give during the holidays.

"A lot of the schools will say, 'send in \$5, and we're going to do this,'" Tabitha Furyk said. "So the kids go to their moms, ask for \$5, hand it off to their teachers and that's all they know about giving. We're giving kids an opportunity to give back to kids."

From the trucks, the foundation distributed most of the food to 13 Duval County schools and nine St. Johns County schools, specifically to students that are enrolled in the federal free and reduced meal program. Since these students rely on the school's subsidized meals, they usually don't have enough food at home to eat during the holiday break. For Jim Fu-



Photos from Jon Blauvelt

Jim and Tabitha Furyk (center) with a group of volunteers at Hope for the Holidays



Volunteers pack their bags with food at Hope for the Holidays.

ryk, delivering the food to these students is the highlight of the project.

"The best part about being part of any charitable organization is actually getting to see it first hand," he said. "The first time we visited a school, we went in and you could see the kids whispering and pointing. They know we're the folks that provide the backpacks and the food that they get to take home. I'm not the guy that plays golf."

In addition to the schools, the foundation distributed the food to local nonprofits and educational programs including First Coast Blessings in a Backpack, Mali Vai Washington Youth Foundation, Hugs across the County, Alden Road Exceptional Student Center and the Anthony J. Stinson Association for Change.

Sara Moores sits on both the local and national board for Blessings in a Backpack, which is a national nonprofit organization that provides consistent weekend nutrition for children on the federal free and reduced meal program. She said the foundation's Hope for the Holidays project is addressing a real need in the community.

"What a lot of people don't realize is your friends and your neighbors could be

part of those children who we are actually feeding," she said. "They're not aware that hunger is a real issue here in Duval, St. Johns and Clay counties. We are reaching that need here and getting food to the children. It's a wonderful opportunity for the community to come together to help itself."

Brette Reiman is the founder of Hugs Across the County, a local nonprofit organization that provides emergency assistance to children in need who attend the St. Johns County schools. Reiman agrees with Moore that there is a need for the foundation's work. Before Hurricane Matthew, Reiman said, there were about 800 students in St. Johns County considered homeless. Now, that number is closer to 1,000. Consequently, Reiman is hugely supportive of the Furyk's efforts.

"I think what they do around the country is phenomenal," Reiman said.
"They're role models to tiny organizations like mine. Huge hearts. All of what they do is incredible."

The Jim and Tabitha Furyk Foundation was created in 2010 to help children and families in need. By providing project-specific funding to charitable organizations, the foundation has been able to supply food to over 73,000 food-insecure students during the school year, and pack and deliver 10,000 holiday meals.

"It's a great feeling to know that in Ponte Vedra and in Jacksonville, we have such a giving community that wants to help out," Tabitha Furyk said. "It's really heartwarming."

GIFT IDEA: CONCERT TICKETS

Willie Nelson, Dwight Yoakam to perform at St. Augustine Amphitheatre



NELSON

Tickets are now on sale for Willie Nelson & Family, who will perform with special guest Dwight Yoakam on Tuesday, March 7 at 7 p.m. at the St. Augustine Amphitheatre.

Nelson previously performed at the amphitheatre in 2014. With a career spanning 60 years and 200 plus albums, the iconic Texan is the creative power behind the historic recordings of "Crazy," "Red Headed Stranger" and "Star-



dust."

Yoakam has sold more than 25 million albums worldwide and is a 21-time nominated, multiple GRAMMY Award

SHORT TAKES

Jacksonville Children's Chorus auditions

The Jacksonville Children's Chorus will hold auditions Thursday, Dec. 15 from 5 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Guests are not required to bring a prepared audition piece. During the process, a conductor will listen for the singer's ability to match pitches, to learn a simple tune and to hold one's voice part against others. Auditions are by appointment only. Visit the website at www.JaxChildrensChorus.org/audition or call (904) 353-1636 to schedule an appointment.

winner. He has 12 gold albums and nine platinum or multi-platinum albums, with five of those albums topping Billboard's Country Albums chart. Nearly 40 of Yoakam's singles have charted, with 14 peaking in the Top 10.

Tickets range from \$39.50 \$124.50 and are available at the St. Augustine Amphitheatre and Ponte Vedra Concert Hall box offices, www.ticketmaster.com, all authorized TicketMaster outlets or by phone at (800) 745-3000. For more information. visit www.staugamphitheatre.com.

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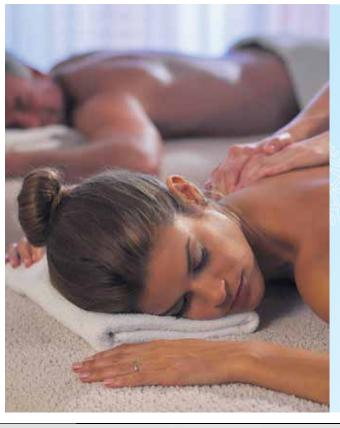
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HOLIDAY SHOPPING

Amelia Island hosts 'Dickens on Centre' holiday festivities

From Dec. 8-11, Amelia Island once again transformed its historic Centre Street in downtown Fernadina Beach into a 19th-century Christmas village for its annual "Dickens on Centre" holiday event.

Recalling the yuletide celebrations of Charles Dickens' Victorian England, the downtown experience included horse-drawn carriages, characters and entertainers, festive lights, holiday décor and a variety of dining and entertainment options.

In addition to the downtown restaurants, shops, galleries and other local businesses that participated in the festivities, period street vendors sold handmade crafts and traditional British holiday treats such as meat pies, Scotch eggs, sausage rolls and more.

The "Dickens on Centre" events were complemented by the island's popular Holiday Home Tour and Bed & Breakfast Holiday Cookie Tour.



Photos from Susan Griffin

Amelia Island's historic Centre Street in downtown Fernadina Beach is transformed into a 19th-century Christmas village for "Dickens on Centre."



Photos from Susan Griffin

Amelia Island inns hold annual Holiday Cookie Tour

Six of Amelia Island's inns opened their doors Dec. 10 for the annual Holiday Cookie Tour. Guests had the opportunity to view the inns' holiday decorations and sample their signature cookies.

Visitors also enjoyed complimentary horse-drawn carriages and trolley rides from inn to inn.



Holiday decorations in the Hoyt House

HOLIDAY SHOPPING

Cutter & Cutter
Fine Art offered
a \$1,500 Lotton
glass bowl,
\$1,800 original
Simon Bull
painting and
\$875 work of
art by Thomas
Arvid as part
of the event's
"Stocking
Stuffer" promotion.





Photos by Jennifer Logue

Visitors enjoy horse-drawn carriage rides, holidy music, hot chocolate, cookies and more at the "Oh What Fun" holiday event at Sawgrass village.

'Oh What Fun!' holiday festival enlivens Sawgrass Village

By Jennifer Logue

Ponte Vedra Beach was alive with holiday spirit Dec. 10, when Sawgrass Village hosted the "Oh What Fun!" celebration.

Held in partnership with the Ponte Vedra Woman's Club, the daylong event featured a myriad of holiday activities to make shoppers and patrons feel merry and bright. From horse-drawn carriage rides and hot chocolate and cookies, to live entertainment and the sounds of Christmas carols filling the air, Sawgrass Village welcomed patrons to visit local restaurants and merchants for special holiday promotions and activities. The Scout & Molly's boutique, for example, offered visitors the chance to decorate their own shopping bag while enjoying the shop's "jingle juice" and pink chocolate-covered strawberries. Village Jeweler, meanwhile, shared Belgian chocolates and cookies with shoppers, while Cutter & Cutter Fine Art founding partner Matthew Cutter conducted a painting demonstration outside the new gallery.

A popular highlight of the event was the "Stocking Stuffer" promotion whereby guests could visit participating retailers and restaurants to view specially selected "stocking stuffer" items on display. Guests then marked their favorite items from eight shops on a specially printed "stocking" card for a chance to win all the items listed.

There was also plenty of comfort and joy for the kiddies at the "Oh What Fun!" event: In addition to face painting and holiday sweets from Peterbrooke Chocolatier and other shops, kids had an opportunity to share their Christmas wishes with Santa Claus. And for those tots too shy to tell Saint Nick in person, kids could post their letter in Santa's Mailbox, located near Nona Blue.

The spirit of giving

The "Oh What Fun!" event also had a charity component: Through the "Spirit of Giving" raffle, visitors could purchase raffle tickets to win dozens of prizes from Sawgrass Village retailers and restaurants. Proceeds from the raffle will benefit charities supported by the Ponte Vedra Woman's Club, including the Florida School for the Deaf and Blind, St. Gerard's home and school for pregnant teens and St. Augustine Youth Services





ABOVE: Reeghan Lester, 7, tells Santa what she wants for Christmas at the Oh What Fun event.

LEFT: Donna Jawor and Peggy Halliburton of the Ponte Vedra Woman's Club sell tickets for the "Spirit of Giving" raffle to benefit local charities. 30 Last-Minute Gifts

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GIFT IDEA: BOOKS



Photo submitted by Janet Westling

FOX & Friends Host Brian Kilmeade joins Janet Westling (right), her daughter Allison Ferebee and grandson Scott at the book signing for Kilmeade's best-selling "Thomas Jefferson and the Tripoli Pirates."

FOX News host visits Marsh Landing home for book signing

Fox & Friends host Brian Kilmeade visited Marsh Landing Dec. 10 to sign copies of his best-selling book

"Thomas Jefferson and the Tripoli Pirates: The Forgotten War that Changed American History."

Hosted by Realtor Janet Westling, the private book signing event was held at a Marsh Landing home at 24578 Harbour View Drive that is currently for sale, affording guests the opportunity to view both the home and receive a copy of Kilmeade's book.

Available in both hard cover and paperback, "Thomas Jefferson and the Tripoli Pirates" recounts President Jefferson's deployment of the U.S. Navy to blockade Tripoli in order to stop North African pirates who were capturing American ships and enslaving their crews – an international conflict that foreshadowed the current threat to America posed by ISIS and other terrorist groups.

"I like to bring American stories to people – stories people don't know about – and bring them forward," said Kilmeade.

"That was my goal."



www.bestframers.com

Advanced Disposal's flag retirement program collects more than 4,500 flags in second year

Advanced Disposal has retired more than 4,500 American flags collected this summer as part of its annual flag retirement program, an increase of 77 percent over 2015, the company reporters.

The free service is offered to communities in its service area.

"Respectfully retiring the American flag is a great way to show our appreciation of the 'stars and stripes' and all it stands for," said Advanced Disposal CEO Richard Burke.

"We're proud to be an American company and honored to offer this service to our customers and the communities we serve. I want to thank everyone who participated, as well as the team members that made it possible."

All Advanced Disposal locations collected old, worn, torn and faded American flags for proper retirement. The cotton flags were burned while the nylon flags were repurposed into new nylon material that can be made into another American flag.

The program ran from June 1 through Sept. 11, and the company plans to reintroduce the program next year. For more information, visit www.Advanced-Disposal.com/RetireYourFlag.

Jacksonville Beach Pier Dance

Rock Solid Law will present the annual Jacksonville Beach Pier Dance Dec. 21 at the Casa Marina Hotel and Restaurant.

The event will be the 19th celebration benefiting the Beaches Emergency Assistance Ministry (BEAM), a community service serving low-income residents in the Jacksonville Beaches communities with the operation of a food pantry, social services and other programs. Admission is at least one unwrapped toy and nonperishable food donation.

Reservations can be made by calling (904) 270-0025. Seating is limited. The Casa Marina is located at 691 First St. North in Jacksonville Beach.

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Advanced Disposal intern and flag retirement program collection coordinator **Amanda Holsinger** with a few of the flags collected for honorable retirement

Photo courtesy of Advanced Disposal



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Samuel Francis colors a picture to mail to Santa Claus.



Lilla Vane creates a bracelet of her own with red and white beads in the depot.



Cameron Francis attends the Polar Express event.

Polar Express chugs through the Beaches Museum and History Park

By Jasmine Marshall

The faintest of train whistles and the jingle of bells welcomed children and families to The Polar Express at the Beaches Museum Dec. 9-10 for an afternoon of holiday festivities.

Around the park, several stations added up to one grand tradition of keeping a Christmas dream alive for local children. With the History Park decked in holiday décor, guided pathways beckoned visitors to the 1903 Pablo Beach Post Office, where children were given the opportunity to write or draw letters and pictures to send to Santa. The Mayport East Coast Railway Depot hosted its interactive model Polar Express on the upper deck, featuring a miniature train zipping through a winter wonderland complete with Christmas trees and presents

On the lower level, guests were invited to make Christmas presents of their own with beads and ribbon, while the East Coast Railway Foreman's House #93 housed Santa and "his favorite reindeer" for photographs.

Rounding out the activities were a showing of "The Polar Express" inside the Dickinson Gallery and a trip through the inner workings of the 1911 Steam Locomotive 4845 – the event's own Polar Express – courtesy of Conductor Michael Chavalire, who showed children how to ring its bell.



Photos by Jasmine Marshall

Conductor of the Polar Express Michael Chevalire







A miniature Polar Express zooms past Christmas trees and carolers



"I've got snow in my shoes!" Nocatee kids enjoy playing in the "snow."

Nocatee families enjoy 'Breakfast with Santa and Mrs. Claus'

Nocatee's Splash Waterpark was transformed into the North Pole Dec. 10, as Santa and Mrs. Claus visited Florida to hear the Christmas wishes of local children

Families enjoyed breakfast on the

water park's event lawn before visiting with Santa and Mrs. Claus to share their Christmas wishes. Kids also had an opportunity to play in some seasonal "snow" the Clauses brought with them for Florida kids to enjoy.



Photos by Jennifer Logue

David Weekley's Zespedes model

The Outlook holds grand opening event

By Jennifer Logue

Nocatee held a grand opening event for The Outlook at Twenty Mile Dec. 10, marking the opening of the newest neighborhood in the fast-growing master-planned com-

Visitors had an opportunity to tour five model homes from the neighborhood's builders, which include CalAtlantic, David



The interior of David Weekley's Zespedes model home features a winding staircase, cathedral ceilings and an expanded outdoor living area.



Benjamin and Nicholas Coltvet of Nocatee's Willowcove neighborhood visit with Santa and



Kristin, Cooper and Wyatt Silberman of Twenty Mile eniov a visit with Saint Nick and the missus.



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Photo by Jennifer Logue

ICI's Brooke model



Visitors enter the Monroe model by Providence Homes at The Outlook at Twenty Mile.

Grand Opening

Continued from 3

Weekley, ICI and Providence Homes. In addition to taking tours of the model homes, guests enjoyed lunch from a number of food trucks, a Gather2Game truck and other family-friendly activities.

With homes starting in the mid \$300s, The Outlook at Twenty Mile features a variety of home styles and sizes. The David Weekley Zespedes model, for example, offers more than 3,500 square feet, four to seven bed-

rooms, four to six full baths, a half bath and a three or four-car garage. ICI Homes' Brooke model, meanwhile, offers 3,608 square feet, five bedrooms, three full baths, one half bath and a three-car garage. Both the Zespedes and Brooke are among The Outlook's model homes available for touring.

The Outlook is the newest neighborhood to join Nocatee's Twenty Mile community. Located near the Intracoastal Waterway, the neighborhood's homes will feature water or preserve views and follow the rustic "Old Florida" style of other Twenty Mile neighborhoods.



The Anniston by CalAtlantic Homes

Business Hursday, December 15, 2016



Chamber of
Commerce holds
Ponte Vedra
Beach Division
holiday party

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www.PonteVedraRecorder.com

New retailers to join Nocatee Town Center

By Jennifer Logue

Three retail stores, a fitness center and a sub shop will be coming to Nocatee Town Center in 2017.

Artsy Abode, Gwen Berlin, GNC, Jersey Mike's Subs and Orangetheory Fitness have committed to occupy a new building currently under construction at the intersection of Capital Green Drive and Settlement Drive. According to Regency Centers Senior Leasing Agent Patrick McKinley, the new building is expected to be completed in May 2017, at which time the new tenants will be able to move in or complete any additional build out needed for their particular business.

McKinley said the new businesses complement Nocatee Town Center's existing offerings, particularly through the addition of more retail shops. GNC is a well-known retailer of health and wellness products, while Gwen Berlin is a women's clothing and accessories boutique. Artsy Abode offers distinctive home décor, gifts, jewelry and more.

It's a trend that Regency expects to continue.

"The market continues to grow, which is great," McKinley said. "As retail demand increases there'll continue to be more retail space. We're actively working with tenants right now for almost all the (available) space, and we're looking forward to announcing more new tenants in the future."

The announcement of new retailers follows a plethora of new businesses that have gravitated to Nocatee Town Center. In the past few years, the area has welcomed a wide variety of businesses, from



Nocatee
Town Center
continues to
grow with the
announcement
of five new
retailers slated
to open there in
2017.

Photo courtesy of Nocatee

restaurants and wine shops to doctor's offices, hair salons and a dance studio. Several new buildings are currently under construction, with Starbucks and Tijuana Flats among the announced tenants ready to join the Nocatee Town Center business community.

Central to the town center's growth, developers and leasing agents said, is the growth of the Nocatee community itself. In November, the master-planned community surpassed the 5,000-home mark, with

NEW continues on **Page 39**

Pappas' top 10 noteworthy tidbits



Harry PappasColumnist

If you were a fan of Late Night with David Letterman, you remember that each night Letterman would present a list of 10 items, compiled by his writing staff that centered on a common theme. Thanks to Michael A. Higley and his remarkable subscription service, By the Numbers, below is my top 10 list that should raise some eyebrows. Drum roll please...

10. The average 30-year fixed rate mortgage over the last 45 years is

8.26 percent. The average 30-year fixed rate mortgage as of Nov. 17, 2016 was 3.94 percent (Source: Freddie Mac).

9. Only five banks had failed in the United States year to date through Nov. 15, 2016, on pace to be the fewest number of bank failures in our country since 2007, when just three banks failed. Over the seven years from 2008 to 2014, 507 banks failed, an average of 72 per year (Source: Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation).

8. The year 2017 will have a Republican in the White House and Republicans controlling both the U.S. House and the U.S. Senate. Over the last 80 years, the S&P 500 had gained +11.7 percent per year (total return) when the same political party controlled the White House and Congress. (Source: BTN Research)

7. Twenty of the last 25 Decembers have produced a positive total return for the S&P 500. The average December performance since 1991 is a total return gain of +1.78 percent (Source: BTN Research).

6. University of Pennsylvania Finance Professor Jeremy Siegel said he "wouldn't be surprised to see a 1,000 point drop in the Dow" following Donald Trump's victory on Nov. 8, 2016. Instead, the Dow Jones Industrial Average gained +515 points from the election through the close of trading on Friday, Nov. 11, 2016. (Source: BTN Research).

5. When the Chicago Cubs beat the Detroit Tigers in the 1908 World Series finale, the game took one hour and 25 minutes. When the Chicago Cubs beat the Cleveland Indians in the 2016 World Series finale, the game took four hours and 28 minutes (Source: Major League Baseball).

4. Of the American taxpayers (50.4 million out of 92.7 million returns) who reported adjusted gross income of less than \$50,000 during the 2014 tax year, 54.4 percent legally did not pay any federal income tax (Source: Internal Revenue Service).

3. Kevin Chappell made \$4.5 million on the PGA Tour this year in 27 starts, winning zero times. Arnold Palmer and Johnny Miller made a combined \$4.6 million on the PGA Tour in their careers, winning 87 tournaments, including nine Major championships (Source: PGA).

2. It was eight years ago (Oct. 16, 2008) that Warren Buffet wrote his "Buy America, I Am" op-ed article in the New York Times. Buffett encouraged investors to "be fearful when others are greedy, and be greedy when others are fearful." Buffett's letter was released less than five months before the stock market bottomed on March 9, 2009, ending a 57 pecent decline of the S&P 500 (Source: New York Times).

I love it when complex matters are simplified so we all get it. For example:

United States Tax Revenues: \$2,170,000,000,000

Federal budget: \$3,820,000,000,000 New Debt: \$1,650,000,000,000 National Debt: \$14,271,000,000,000 Recent budget cut: \$38,500,000,000

Now, remove eight zeros and pretend it is your household budget.

Annual family income: \$21,700 Money your family spent:\$38,200 New debt on your credit card: \$16,500 Outstanding balance on credit card: \$16,500 Total budget cuts that you are proud of \$385!

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MOVERS & SHAKERS



Members of the Womens Food Alliance – Seated: Tammy Cipriani, Leigh Cort, Dana Stallings and Belinda Hulin. Standing: Allie Olsen, Monica Stouder, Sherry Stoppelbein and Kathleen Hurley. Not pictured: Rebekah Lowry and Nancy Slatsky.

Hurley joins Womens Food Álliance board

Kathleen Hurley has joined the advisory board of directors for the Womens Food Alliance. The former owner of the Casa de Suenos bed and breakfast, Hurley joins the board of professional hospitality members that currently includes WFA Founder Leigh Cort; Tammy Cipriani, Woody's Bar BQ; Dana Stallings,

Jax Kitchen and Kilwins (Town Center); cookbook author Belinda Hulin; Allie Olsen, SimplyStAugustine.com; Monica Stouder, Monica Lea Photography; Sherry Stoppelbein, Hot Shot Bakery and Datil B Good; Rebekah Lowry, Casa Marina Hotel; and Nancy Slatsky, Swiss Chalet Fine Foods.

MOVERS & SHAKERS continues on Page 37



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Business Weekly 37

MOVERS & SHAKERS

Continued from 36



HOCHSPRUNG

Hochsprung joins Haven Hospice/VNA as CFO

Anne Hochsprung has joined Haven Hospice and the Visiting Nurse Association & Hospice of the Florida Keys as chief financial officer

Hochsprung previously served for 16 years at CFO for Suncoast Hospice/Empath Health in Clearwater, Florida.

"Anne is a very valuable addition to the Haven and VNA/HFK team," said Gayle Mattson, president of Haven and VNA/ HFK. "Anne shares our passion for providing Floridians with the very best hospice, palliative care and home health services that we have to offer."

A certified public accountant, Hochsprung received her bachelor's degree from Bradley University. She is active in national organizations including the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization (NHPCO) and the National Association for Home Care & Hospice Care (NAHC).

"Haven is a regional provider that continues to expand, which is evident from the recent partnership with VNA/HFK," Hochsprung said.

"I am excited to help further our mission of honoring life by providing comfort, care and compassion to patients and families."



ALMEIDA

Almeida joins Freedom **Boat Clubs' National Marketing Advisory** Council

Lisa Almeida was one of eight Freedom Boat Clubs' franchisees recently named to the franchisor's National

Marketing Advisory Council. The owner of Freedom Boat Clubs Jacksonville & St. Augustine, Almeida was recognized during the company's national conference held Nov. 13-17 in Sarasota.

"Freedom Boat Club of Jacksonville & St. Augustine is very proud to be actively engaged in the work of the National Franchise Marketing Advisory Council," she

"By working together with other top marketers in our business and with our corporate marketing team, we collectively are able to positively impact the success and continued growth of Freedom Boat Club."

Keys receives historic preservation award

Dr. Leslee Keys, Flagler College director of historic preservation and special initiatives, recently received the inaugural University of Florida Historic Preservation Distinguished Alumni Award for her work on advancing the discipline and profession through practice, research and service.

Keys has devoted more than three decades of professional experience to the field of historic preservation. She holds

a doctorate in historic preservation from the University of Florida and has taught at Florida State College at Jacksonville, the University of Louisville, Barry University and Flagler College.

She has served on numerous committees, including the Hotel Ponce de Leon 125th Anniversary committee, the Flagler College 50th Anniversary Steering Committee and is a past president of the Florida Trust for Historic Preservation. In 2015, she published "Hotel Ponce de Leon: The Rise, Fall, and Rebirth of Flagler's Gilded Age Palace,'

a book that details the historic building's transformation — from opulent luxury hotel in the late 1800s to its current state as a private, liberal arts college.

Brvan elected first woman chair of YMCA of Florida's First Coast

Peggy Bryan has been elected chair of the Metropolitan Board of Directors for the YMCA of Florida's First Coast. Bryan, who previously served as vice chair, is the first

MOVERS & SHAKERS continues on Page 39



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Photos by Jennifer Logue

St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce President and CEO Isabelle Rodriguez (right) presents Ponte Vedra Recorder Publisher Susan Griffin with the Chamber Member of the Year Award.



Photo courtesy of SJC Chamber of Commerce

Sponsors of the Ponte Vedra holiday party for the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce

Chamber of Commerce holds Ponte Vedra Beach Division holiday party

Recorder Publisher Susan Griffin honored as 'Chamber Member of the Year'

By Jennifer Logue

The Cutter & Cutter Fine Art Gallery in Sawgrass Village was the setting for the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce's "Holiday Merriment Party" for its Ponte Vedra Beach Division.

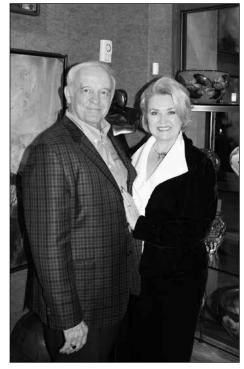
Guests enjoyed cocktails, entertainment and a buffet provided by Chef Tommy McDonough of Flavor Palette as they viewed the gallery's art displays and networked with other business and community leaders.

A highlight of the event was the presentation of the chamber's top two awards. St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce President and CEO Isabelle Rodriguez presented the Grace Hayes Ambassador of the Year Award to Lori Adams. Named in honor of longtime Ponte Vedra Recorder Editor Grace Hayes, the award recognizes a chamber ambassador who continually supports member businesses and the efforts of the chamber.

An independent Cabi fashion consultant, Adams thanked the chamber for its support of her business and the benefits chamber members receive to help them grow and succeed.

"Membership has its privileges!" Adams said.

The Chamber Member of the Year Award, meanwhile, was presented to Ponte Vedra Recorder Publisher Susan Griffin. The vice chair of the Ponte Vedra



Len and Sonya Cutter with some of the Charles Lotton art glass available at Cutter & Cutter Fine Art.

Beach Division board, Griffin stressed the decades-long relationship the Recorder has enjoyed with the chamber.

"As Ponte Vedra's community paper since 1969, we've worked hand in hand with the chamber to highlight and support local businesses," Griffin said, "and I'm very honored to receive this award."



Chef Tommy McDonough of Ponte Vedra Beach's Flavor Palette provided the food for the Chamber of Commerce holiday gathering.



Isabelle Rodriguez and Lori Adams

Photo by Susan Griffin

MOVERS & SHAKERS

Continued from 37

woman to hold the position.

"We are fortunate to have a proven civic leader like Peggy, who has been a tireless advocate for the Y and our goal to strengthen communities through youth development, healthy living and social responsibility," said Eric Mann, president and CEO of YMCA of Florida's First Coast. "Her leadership and deep interest in building a stronger First Coast are enormous assets to not only the organization, but everyone who calls Jacksonville home."

A Jacksonville native, Bryan has received numerous awards for her philanthropic activities, including the Florida Times-Union's 2014 EVE Lifetime Achievement Award. She was also instrumental in the fundraising efforts for the new Winston Family YMCA, as well as the building of Gateway's new outpatient/administration facility.

Previously, Bryan served as president of Learn to Read, PACE Center for Girls, Greenscape of Jacksonville, Leadership Jacksonville and Youth Leadership Jacksonville. In addition, she serves on several other local boards, including the Community Foundation for Northeast Florida, Cummer Museum of Art and Gardens, the Y's charter school—Tiger Academy and more.

"It's an honor to serve as chairwoman of the Y's Metropolitan Board of Directors," Bryan said. "The wide diversity of Y programs throughout the First Coast significantly strengthens the foundations of our community and touches so many people's lives, getting to be a part of this dynamic force is a very real privilege."

New retailers

Continued from 34

1,000 of those homes sold during 2016 alone. That growth has made Nocatee the third fastest-growing master-planned community in the nation.

"The Nocatee lifestyle is truly unparalleled and the community continues to add over 100 new families each month," noted Richard Ray, president of The PARC Group, Nocatee's master developer. "With the addition of retailers in the Nocatee Town Center, Nocatee residents continue to benefit from an enhanced and expanded lifestyle."

And with that expansion, officials say, will come additional businesses, if residents patronize Nocatee Town Center.

"The community continues to grow at a rapid pace and if that continues you'll see more retail," said McKinley. "It really is important for the community support local retailers."

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Time runs out on Sharks

Sharks fall to American Heritage Patriots 35-33

By Jerry Norton

For 48 minutes, the underdog Ponte Vedra Sharks battled valiantly against nationally ranked American Heritage for the District 5A state title. The Sharks matched the heavily favored Patriots touchdown for touchdown, but found themselves trailing by a pair of extra points 35-33 as the game headed into its final minute. Before the Sharks could mount their typical final game-winning drive, time ran out on their remarkable bid for an undefeated championship season.

Ponte Vedra showed early on that they belonged in the title game despite what odds makers were predicting. They took the opening kickoff and scored on the second play of the game, a brilliant 75-yard catch and run pass play by Marshall Few and Nick Tronti. An elusive snap cost the Sharks the extra point. It was an unfor-

tunate error that would ultimately lead to their defeat.

Sharks Coach Matt Toblin, showing immediately that he did not intend to play conservatively, called for an on-sides kickoff. Connor McDonough pounced on the ball for Ponte Vedra and Tronti's high-powered offense was back on the field. This time the Sharks needed four plays to score. A handoff to Hal Swan for short yardage, a 20-yard pass to Few on the same pattern that went for the first touchdown, a quarterback keeper good for five and a swing pass to Swan covered the final 15-yards for a touchdown. With nine minutes left in the quarter, the Sharks led 13-0 and the Patriots had not yet run a single play.

The Patriots had to be shocked by this upstart team that was not ranked in the

SHARKS continues on **Page 41**



Photos by Chris and Jerry Norton

ABOVE: Marshall Few heads for the end zone with a bevy of Patriots in hot pursuit.

LEFT: Marshall Few outmaneuvers the Heritage defenders for a completion and a touchdown.



Sharks

Continued from 40

top 200 nationally, but it did not prevent them from playing catch-up. This time they were prepared for the Sharks' ensuing on-sides kick and quickly covered the remaining 63 yards to pull within 13-7.

With a second and 15 from their 15-yard line, an intentional grounding penalty inexplicably pushed the Sharks back to their own one-yard line, forcing a punt that resulted in good field position for the Patriots. Heritage drove on the ground for the go-ahead score at the four-minute mark of the first quarter.

The Patriots' powerful D-line sacked Tronti for a 10-yard loss but he bounced back up to complete a pass to Kit Connelly for 10 yards. Still the Sharks were forced to punt again. Heritage moved to the red zone on their next possession, but the Sharks' defense forced a turnover on downs as the quarter ended.

After Ponte Vedra went three and out, the Patriots took a 21-13 lead despite a touchdown saving tackle on the prior play by Noah Solaun.

Tronti then engineered an 11-play, 70-yard drive that featured the diverse Shark offense. Runs by Swan, a keeper by Tronti and passes to Jake McGuire and Few put

Ponte Vedra within one, 21-20. Few's second catch of the drive in which he wrestled the ball from the Patriot defender produced his second touchdown of the game.

Ponte Vedra held Heritage at bay for the final three minutes of the half. JB Shepherd's pass defense on the final play of the half was key. The Sharks went to the locker room trailing 21-20 and feeling confident.

The third quarter saw the Sharks force a Heritage punt. Few then caught a pass good for 10 yards and a first down at the Patriots' 39. Facing a fourth down at the Patriots' 33, Chris Howard's attempt at a 50-yard field goal sailed wide of the mark.

Heritage controlled the ball for the remainder of the quarter before scoring on the first play of the fourth quarter. They led 28-20, still a one score game.

Once again the Sharks showed their mettle. Tronti hit Few for nine yards, then Swan for 10. Facing a third and 10, Tronti connected with McGuire who made a magnificent leaping catch good for 12 yards. Tronti went back to McGuire for 10 more yards then found Swan open for 25 and a first down at the Heritage five. Tronti then scored on a keeper to make the score 28-26. The Ponte Vedra attempt at the two-point conversion failed.

A breakdown on kickoff coverage gave Heritage the ball at the Shark 25. They



Photos by Chris and Jerry Norton

Hal Swan celebrates his touchdown against Heritage.

quickly answered the previous Shark touchdown to move in front 35-26 - a two-score lead with five minutes to play.

The "never quit" Sharks battled back. Tronti ran for four yards drawing a personal foul for a late hit by the Patriots. Tronti ran twice more for 12 yards and a first down at mid-field. The successive keepers by the Shark quarterback had to help spring Swan for 15 yards and a first down at the Heritage 35. Now it was time for JD Pirris to make two big plays. He pulled in a pass for 12 yards, then another for eight more. Tronti finished the drive

slipping through a huge hole for the score. Ponte Vedra kicked the PAT and trailed by two 35-33 with three minutes remaining and needing a field goal to win. But time was not on their side.

After Ponte Vedra's on-sides kick-off attempt failed, the Sharks needed a defensive stand. They got it but not before the Patriots made a big first down. A bad snap then pushed Heritage back 20 yards but precious seconds ticked away before the Patriots finally punted. Time ran out on the Sharks before they could run another play.



#1 JD Pirris catches a Tronti pass for a first down.



Nick Tronti has lots of running room for the Sharks.



Kit Connelly pulls in a pass for a Shark first down.



Sharks now at full strength after 2-2 start

By Jim Moyes

Veteran Head Coach Bud Beech has to be pleased to have a 2-2 record after playing the first four games of the basketball season without his All-Area player from the previous season, JD Pirris.

BASKETBALL

Pirris will now join the basketball team after starring on Ponte Vedra's state runner-up football team that concluded their storybook season in an epic state championship game last week in Orlando.

Also joining Pirris will be two other football players, 6'3" junior Zach Summers and 6'1" sophomore Reese Russi. The addition of this trio will be welcome news for Beech and the Sharks, as two regulars could be lost for an

undisclosed time with injuries suffered in games this past week.

Will Mons, who led the Sharks with a game-high 13 points in an earlier 66-49 victory over Clay, went down with a knee injury in the Sharks' 81-59 loss to Bartram Trail. Dean McCarthy then became the next Shark casualty, when he incurred a nasty ankle injury in the Shark's thrilling 84-82 Friday night victory over Palatka.

Fortunately for Shark followers, both of their victories were district contests, including the win at home against perennial power Palatka. Disappointed that their Friday night game with Palatka could not be moved to another date, the Shark players took out their frustration of not being able to watch their fellow football classmates play for a rare state championship in Orlando with their best effort of the young season.

Three returning regulars from the Sharks' final-eight team of 2015-16 notched career highs in Friday's 82-80 win against Palatka. Eston Hensley led all Shark scorers with 24 points, 18 of them coming in the opening half. The Sharks pulled away from their district rivals in the decisive fourth quarter by pouring in a robust 28 points, with Chris Tomacewski and Jack Shannon combing for 19 of the period points.

Shannon would end the night with a career-high 20 points while the energetic Tomacewski tallied 16. Just as he did last year in a road victory against arch rival Nease, Tomacewski was clutch in the fourth quarter as his 10 points put a dagger in the Panthers' hopes for victory.

Yet another Shark set a personal high when promising sophomore Ben Houser chipped in with 15 points. Senior playmaker Mike Nicandri played a huge role in the important victory with his canny ball handling while dribbling through the always intense Palatka pressure defense.

The Sharks can now set their sights on improving on their young record with the addition of Pirris to the starting lineup.

As a junior, the 6'2" guard averaged better than 16 points a game; Pirris saved his best for last when he averaged a whopping 25 points a game during the Sharks' improbable playoff run that ended in an overtime road defeat at Zephyrhills.

Coach Beech is hopeful that the Sharks can extend their current record with a pair of district victories this week, both games contested at the friendly Shark Tank.

Menendez visited Shark Country this past Tuesday while district newcomer Matanzas will visit Friday Dec. 16, when the game will immediately follow the junior varsity contest that tips off at 6 p.m.



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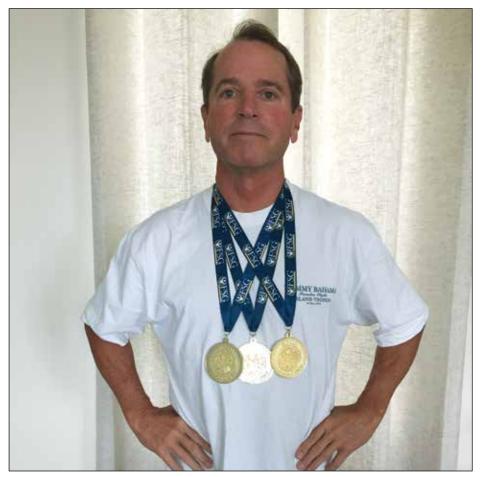
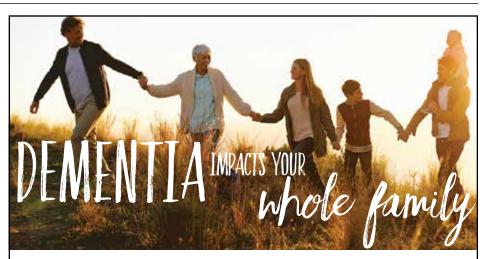


Photo courtesy of Blake Stichter

Ponte Vedra resident Blake Stichter recently competed in the Florida Senior Games State Championship, held Dec. 3-4 in Clearwater. Stichter captured three gold medals at the games, winning the 50, 100 and 200-yard breastroke competitions in the 60-64 age group. He will compete in the National Senior Games to be held in Birmingham, Alabama in June.



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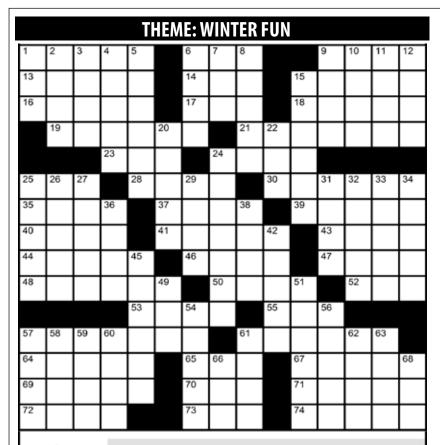
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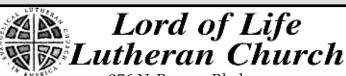
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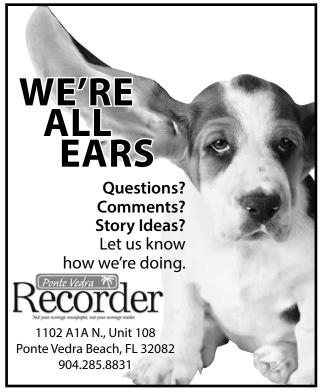
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