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75 cents

PonteVedraRecorder.com

Recorder

Not your average newspaper, not your average reader

WELCOME BACK



Area seniors gathered June 24 for a 'welcome home' party at THE PLAYERS Community Senior Center, which had been closed over the past year to protect people from the pandemic.

For more, go to our Senior Living section on pages 11-22.

Photo by Shaun Ryan



INSIDE: CHECK IT OUT!

The Recorder's Entertainment EXTRA featuring TV listings, streaming information, puzzles and more!

Beaches Coalition discusses efforts at in-person meeting

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Independence Day celebrations in Nocatee

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Send us your news

We welcome submissions of photos, stories, columns and letters to the editor. Let us know what's happening. Email submissions to pvrecorder@opcfla.com or bring them by our office at **1102 A1A N., Unit 108, Ponte Vedra Beach**. Submissions may be published in the paper, on our website or on our social media platforms.

Visit our website at www.pontevedrarecorder.com



Find the Recorder on Facebook at www.facebook.com/ThePVRecorder

ADOPT A PET

CAT OF THE WEEK

Hello my name is Raya. I am a 4-year-old female domestic short-hair cat. I am smaller than average, but that means I can cuddle closer.



I am very friendly and good with other cats. I am looking forward to a real home and a family I can call my own. Come visit me at the Pet Center today! #59311



DOG OF THE WEEK

Hello! My name is Martha! I am a 5-year-old tree-walking coonhound. I came to the shelter as a stray. I am good with other dogs, but I will need some training as the Pet Center feels that I was

probably an outdoor dog. I am calm and ready to find a forever home. I am heartworm positive, therefore my adoption fee is sponsored by The Friends of the St. Johns County Pet Center and when you welcome me into your home, you won't be sorry because I will be grateful you found room in your heart to rescue me. #59115

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

St. Johns County Pet Center

Cat adoptions 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 Road in St. Augustine, off U.S. 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.**

BRIEFS

Rep. Rutherford Introduces the Freedom to Fly Act

On Thursday, July 1, U.S. Rep. John Rutherford (FL-04) introduced H.R. 4296, the Freedom to Fly Act. This legislation would prohibit the Transportation Security Administration from requiring vaccine passports or proof of COVID-19 vaccination for domestic flights. "The TSA has no right to compel American travelers to disclose sensitive health information," Rutherford said. "This includes vaccination records, or so-called 'vaccine passports.' Our freedoms as Americans must not be sacrificed under the guise of public safety." U.S. Sen. Rick Scott (R-FL) has introduced a companion bill in the Senate.

St. Johns County Public Library system returns to regular services hours

The St. Johns County Public Library System has returned to regular service hours at all facilities. In addition, the Bookmobile has resumed regular service from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, and the library's online reference service, Ask a Librarian, has extended service hours from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Saturday. For more information on

library hours, the Bookmobile's schedule, or the Ask a Librarian service, go to www.sjcpls.org or call your local branch library.

Ponte Vedra Beach Branch Library holding book club, adult coloring class

The Ponte Vedra Beach Branch Library's Book Club and Coloring Club, both for adults, are returning this summer. These are the first two monthly programs the library is bringing back with more to come as the year progresses. Meetings will be held in the FOL Community Room for both clubs through the end of 2021.

For the Adult Coloring Club, the library will provide the coloring pages, coloring implements, bottles of water and relaxing music, although attendees are welcome to bring their own coloring implements.

Book Lovers Book Club

11 a.m.- noon, Friday, Aug. 13, FOL Community Room

"Nine Perfect Strangers" by Liane Moriarty
Adult Coloring Club

2-4 p.m., Friday, July 23, FOL Community Room

2-4 p.m., Friday, Aug. 27, FOL Community Room

For more information, email ascrawford@sjcfl.us or call (904) 827-6950. Registration is not required and there is no cap on attendance.

PUZZLE SOLUTIONS

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

Solutions correspond to last week's puzzles.

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Hugh Osteen

Florida Market Manager
hugh@opcfla.com
(904) 285-8831

Susan Griffin

Publisher
susan@opcfla.com
(904) 686-3938

Paris Moulden

Page Designer/Reporter
paris@opcfla.com
(904) 285-8831, ext. 3943

Shaun Ryan

Reporter
shaun@opcfla.com
(904) 285-8831, ext. 3941

Anthony Richards

Reporter
anthony@opcfla.com
(904) 285-8831, ext. 3943

Don Coble

Contributor
don@opcfla.com
(904) 686-3939

Ed Johnson

Senior Account Executive
ed@opcfla.com
(904) 285-8831, ext. 3940

Kristin Flanagan

Account Executive
kristin@opcfla.com
(904) 285-8831, ext. 3950

April Snyder

Sales Assistant
aprils@opcfla.com
(904) 285-8831, ext. 3937

Joe Wilhelm

Circulation Manager
joe@opcfla.com
904-300-5374

Subscription Rates, Bulk Mail:

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Voting open for Best of the Best of Ponte Vedra contest

The Ponte Vedra Recorder is holding its third annual Best of the Best of Ponte Vedra contest, covering ZIP codes 32082 and 32081.

Readers currently have the chance to vote for their favorite businesses, professional services, organizations and more in nearly 250 categories online. From best new business to best charity event, best real estate agent to best personal trainer and best seafood to best boutique, the categories run the gamut and are sure to include your favorite things.

Votes can be made on the website at pontevedrarecorder.com/bestof2021.



Voting will take place until July 26, during which each person can vote once per day in as many categories as he or she wants. The nominees who receive

the most votes will be named 2021 Best of the Best of Ponte Vedra. Nominations and voting are completely free and open to the public.

The Best Of platform on The Recorder's website will feature lists of nominees in an easy-to-use format.

Winners will receive a free framed certificate and a Best of the Best of Ponte Vedra window cling. Each winner will also be listed in our Best of the Best of Ponte Vedra special section and on the winner's website.

Winners will be notified by Recorder staff after votes are counted.

Nominees can participate in advertising packages that promote their entry by expanding their listing to feature additional details on the business.

For more information or to find out how to get your nominated business or product involved in promotions that will be going on throughout the contest cycle, email susan@opcfla.com or call (904) 686-3938.

Vote for your favorite business, service, person, restaurant or product now at www.pontevedrarecorder.com/bestof2021.

DeSantis signs major conservation legislation

Gov. Ron DeSantis has signed the Florida Wildlife Corridor Act, which went into effect Thursday, July 1.

The legislation will dedicate \$300 million to preserve migratory routes within the Florida Wildlife Corridor, which includes North Florida Land Trust's Ocala to Osceola (O2O) wildlife corridor project.

It will also commit \$100 million to Florida Forever, the state's land conserva-

tion program.

The Florida Wildlife Corridor includes more than 18 million acres of land, 8 million of which remain unprotected. The O2O wildlife corridor is a critical component of the Florida Wildlife Corridor.

North Florida Land Trust leads a partnership made up of public and private

CONSERVATION continues on **Page 4**

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Stunning Riverfront Estate

Riverfront/SanMarco. Instantly makes you feel you've been swept away to a chateau in France. Exquisitely designed with extensive custom finishes, this 10,204-sq.-ft. home is a masterpiece in design and built for entertaining. **5 Bedroom, 6 Bathrooms, 5 Half Bathrooms \$6,200,000**



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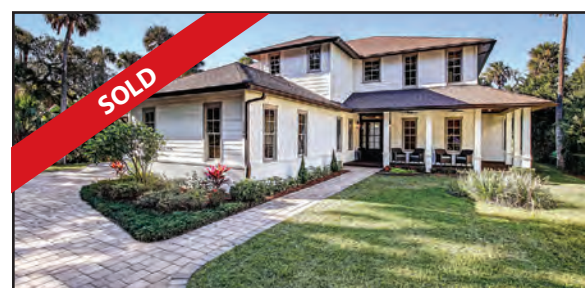
Live east of A1A in this updated move-in-ready home ideally located in old Ponte Vedra. Renovated interiors with wood floors, shiplap details, custom built-ins, and coastal accents. The kitchen features white cabinetry, open shelving, quartzite countertops, a farmhouse sink, and a gas stove. The fenced-in backyard features a screened-in porch, outdoor patio, and room for a pool. **3 Bedrooms, 2 Full Baths, 1 Half Bath. \$890,000.**



Ultimate Atlantic Beach Lifestyle

Live the ultimate beach lifestyle in this midcentury modern on double corner lot just one block from the ocean and only 6 blocks from Atlantic Beach Town Center. Large open great room and kitchen with barn door pantry looks onto private backyard with pool and outdoor kitchen. Spacious master, 3 additional bedrooms & bathrooms plus laundry upstairs. **4 Bedrooms, 4 Bathrooms, 1 Half Bathroom. \$3,600,000**

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Beaches Coalition back to in-person meetings, emphasizes grassroots

By Anthony Richards

The Ponte Vedra Beaches Coalition held its first in-person meeting since the COVID-19 pandemic took mass affect in the United States in March 2020.

More than a year later, there was a certain excitement and smiling faces shared by the majority of those in attendance for the June 30 meeting in Ponte Vedra Public Library's conference room.

Janet Patten, chairwoman of government affairs with the St. Johns Civic Roundtable welcomed everyone back as the guest speaker.

The roundtable is a network of citizens, as well as neighborhood, community and homeowners' associations who join forces with the betterment of the county in mind.

Patten stressed to the crowd the importance in establishing grassroots initiatives that can help both spread a message and create an avenue to have ideas shared.

"I'm a big advocate for grassroots," Patten said. "It does work."

According to Patten, one of the goals of the Roundtable is to stay updated on the issues that are being talked about at the county and state levels, so that the residents of those areas can remain informed and therefore be able to make recommendations to elected officials.

The Roundtable meets monthly and is planning to



Photo by Anthony Richards

Janet Patten, chairwoman of government affairs with the St. John's Civic Roundtable was the guest speaker during the Ponte Vedra Beaches Coalition's first in-person meeting since March 2020.

meet again in-person possibly in September. Links to the emails of elected state officials can be found at sjcroundtable.org.

Patten prompted all residents to get involved about the

issues they are passionate about within the community and not to be afraid to reach out to their officials in office, because that remains the best way for their worries and concerns to be heard.

"Issues can take a while to percolate, but they eventually get there," Patten said.

According to Patten, no matter what the issue is, the larger the group fighting for it, the higher chance it has of being heard and looked into.

Patten pointed out state Rep. Cyndi Stevenson as an elected official who has done a great job of late advocating for the local area, including helping secure \$3.5 million to help with Ponte Vedra beach renourishment and another \$1.6 million specified for improvements to Mickler's Landing and Marsh Landing.

"The county right now has no vision, we're just growing," Patten said. "We're trying to get the county to think more long term."

Something that has her hopeful that a potential shift in approach could be starting to take place is the fact that the county has talked about holding a growth management workshop possibly sometime in October.

Coalition president Lisa Johnson Cook added that she had heard the county was even expressing an interest to do a couple of workshops per year.

"These workshops are just another way for us to speak out," Patten said.

Coalition paying close attention to FEMA berm project

By Anthony Richards

The FEMA emergency berm project recently approved by the St. Johns County Board of County Commissions was a major talking point during the Ponte Vedra Beaches Coalition meeting on June 29.

Coalition board member Vicki Corlazzoli provided those in attendance with updates on the project.

According to Corlazzoli, some residents have been concerned that the project may raise the height of the dunes. However, she eased those worries by stating that the details of the project specify that the dunes will not be higher than the current crest, which is 13 to 15 feet.

The project will require 380,000 cubic yards of sand to be hauled to the Ponte Vedra portion of the project from a source located in Keystone Heights, which was estimated during the meeting to be about 19,000 trips over the length of the planned 76-day project.

Despite the increase of heavy-loaded traffic, Corlazzoli said no questions were asked during the county town hall she attended on June 22 about the impact that extra wear and tear could have on the local roadways being used.

She assured attendees that she would look into it and try to have an answer at the next coalition meeting on July 26.

Once the project starts in September,

Mickler's Landing Beachfront Park will be closed weekdays but open on weekends.

A traffic plan will be implemented that will include lane closures and detours through the length of the project as well.

According to coalition president Lisa Johnson Cook, who has owned beachfront houses, in the past homeowners have had to pay for dune upkeep, so FEMA stepping in to aid is not typical.

The reason FEMA is getting involved is because they classify the dune situation as an "emergency" project that needs to be handled as a top priority.

The damage to the dunes still stems from the impacts felt along the shoreline from Hurricane Matthew in 2016 and Hurricane

Irma in 2017.

Corlazzoli stressed to the coalition crowd that the project's contractors have listed the safety of beachgoers as something they are very cognizant of.

An example of this includes the use of police escorts to transport the trucks hauling sand on the beach to the work site within easements that will have been placed.

Johnson mentioned that one of the more confusing aspects people in the community were having trouble with was that some were under the impression that the restoration projects going on up and down the beach were linked to the berm project.

Corlazzoli clarified that the two projects are separate from one another.

Conservation

Continued from 3

organizations dedicated to conservation and land management along the O2O, which is a 1.6 million-acre corridor of public and private lands that connect the Ocala and Osceola national forests.

"The Florida Wildlife Corridor Act and the funding for Florida Forever is a huge step forward for conservation and for the work we do to conserve environmentally sensitive lands within the O2O and in other Florida Forever project areas," said

Jim McCarthy, North Florida Land Trust president.

He said conservation was important for not only protecting and preserving wildlife habitats but also for protecting water quality in the state.

"This state funding provides an opportunity for conservation that may not have been possible otherwise," said McCarthy. "We thank the governor and all our representatives who were instrumental in passing this legislation."

The Florida Wildlife Corridor Act will also connect land needed for flood and sea-level rise resiliency and will protect areas

that provide vital drinking water sources for most Floridians.

North Florida Land Trust said it will be working closely with its partners to continue the mission to preserve lands within the O2O. Those partners include the state DEP's Division of State Lands, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Camp Blanding, Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission, U.S. Forest Service and county governments.

The money dedicated to the Florida Forever program could also be instrumental in preserving 541 acres in Marion County known as Big Pine Preserve. The land

is part of the Longleaf Pine Ecosystems Florida Forever project area which makes it eligible for funding through the Florida Forever program in 2022.

The nonprofit land conservation organization is also working with private timberland company Weyerhaeuser on a possible sale of a conservation easement on 50,000 acres of timberland within the O2O.

North Florida Land Trust is a not-for-profit organization that seeks to protect the natural resources, historic places and working lands (farms and ranches) throughout north Florida. For further information, go to nfft.org.

New YMCA branch planned for Durbin Park

Facility will be built on Flagler Health+ campus

By Shaun Ryan

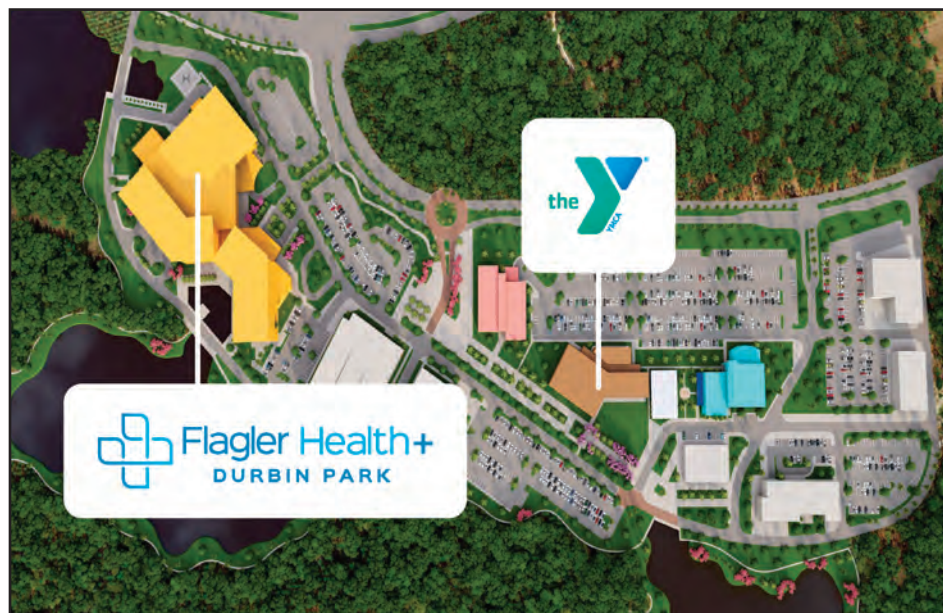
The YMCA of Florida's First Coast has announced plans to open a new branch in Durbin Park, one of St. Johns County's fastest growing communities.

The new location, anticipated to open in 2023, will be one of the First Coast YMCA's largest facilities and a part of Flagler Health+'s new 42.5-acre health and wellness campus.

The Durbin Park branch is expected to be between 40,000 and 50,000 square feet, larger than either Ponte Vedra or Nocatee branches. The three branches will be located within 20 minutes of one another, giving area residents a choice of location.

"This is a great opportunity for us," said Eric K. Mann, president and CEO of the YMCA of Florida's First Coast. "It's an area that we've been looking at for a while."

While the new branch will offer first-class programs for better health and well-being for all, it will also provide a safe place for kids, adults and families to gather and become more connected with



This map shows the location for the new YMCA on the Flagler Health+ campus at Durbin Park.

Contributed photo

their community, according to First Coast Y officials.

In addition to fitness equipment and group exercise studios, the branch will feature an indoor aquatics center and an outdoor pool as well as an indoor track and expansive outdoor fitness amenities, including an airnasium like the one at the Nocatee branch.

The YMCA in Durbin Park will also offer camps, swim lessons, youth sports, family programs, a teen center and Kid-Zone.

"The Y is more than a place to work out," said Mann. "We're a place of community. Of course, members will have access to state-of-the-art wellness equipment and facilities designed to serve all

demographics, but there will be so much more. Bringing our programs to growing communities such as Durbin Park enables us to expand our reach and help more individuals live healthier lives while also strengthening all our operations across Northeast Florida and ultimately, build a stronger, healthier First Coast."

In the last decade, Durbin Park has grown nearly 40% and is projected to continue growing at an annual population growth rate of 3.28%. Designed with this growth in mind, the YMCA in Durbin Park expects to serve thousands of residents.

"The YMCA is a family organization, and so if you look at the population that's moving there, you have a lot of young families, but at the same time, we serve active older adults, as well," said Mann. "So you'll have a mix of demographics."

"We are thrilled about our partnership with the First Coast YMCA and the premier destination we're building together," said Jason Barrett, president and CEO of Flagler Health+. "Once complete, residents will have one-stop access to wellness programs that will ultimately work together to build a healthier community."

YMCA continues on Page 7

Training U attendees receive laptops courtesy of forum sponsors

By Shaun Ryan

About 50 area student-athletes attending a career forum in March recently got a big surprise when the forum's sponsor presented them with free laptop computers.

Training U Powered by CDW was designed to introduce high school students to career opportunities beyond the sports they play. Forum participants gleaned insights from successful athletes, interacted with career professionals and spoke with representatives of several colleges.

Because the forum coincided with THE PLAYERS Championship, attendees were able to tour the stadium course. The tour was led by PGA TOUR employees from CORE, one of the TOUR's employee resource groups. CORE established the Training U forum in 2018.

Marsha Oliver, vice president of community and inclusion for the PGA TOUR, said the forum's goal is to "inform and inspire student athletes about the wide variety of job opportunities and careers available throughout sports."

"When we think about aspiring athletes who want to be in the game, we also want to show them that there are a myriad of careers that are also within the sport," said Oliver.

During this year's program, presenting sponsor CDW and its technology partner Intel delivered a surprise. CDW's North Florida field sales manager, Troy



Troy Okerberg, North Florida field sales manager for CDW (left) presents a ceremonial check for \$25,000 to Kathy Schofield, Northeast Florida Regional STEM2 Hub executive director, during this year's Training U Powered by CDW.

Contributed photo

Okerberg, presented a \$25,000 donation to Northeast Florida Regional STEM2 Hub to support the nonprofit's mission of reducing technology barriers that impede youth from reaching their potential.

"We're working on equitable access," said Kathy Schofield, Northeast Florida Regional STEM2 Hub executive director, "making sure that no matter what

ZIP code you're in, you've got access to these skills that really open the door for personal economic prosperity."

STEM2 Hub — in part an acronym for "science, technology, engineering, math" — works with school districts across a seven-county region to close the "digital divide." Schofield estimated that tens of thousands of local students lack access to

a computer at home — especially where, at the end of the school year, district-owned computers must be returned.

At the forum's conclusion, during the "Fireside with Firsts" discussion, PGA TOUR professional and CDW ambassador Harold Varner III announced that the \$25,000 donation would be used to purchase computers for each of the attendees.

CDW is a technology and solutions provider that helps its customers with hardware, software and service needs.

The computers were delivered in June to the students, who were from St. Johns and Duval county schools or participants in First Tee or the MaliVai Washington Youth Foundation.

CDW representatives were able to participate in the computer distribution.

"For me, it's super-rewarding to be able to kind of see the donation in action," said Okerberg.

Reflecting on the event, he called it a proud moment for CDW.

"We find it so important to interact and support organizations in our local community where we live and work," he said. "We definitely share the belief that all students should have access to technology to pursue their educational and career aspirations. Our donation to STEM2 Hub reflects that belief."

As in the past, the forum centerpiece was a panel discussion, "Beyond the

TRAINING U continues on Page 7

Jeffrey Servello has served with the U.S. Navy for the past 19 years and is currently taking command of the USS Paul Ignatius. He and his wife Jennifer have lived in Ponte Vedra for the past two years.

Cmdr. Jeffrey Servello

As told to Shaun Ryan

When did you first know that you wanted to join the U.S. Navy? Did someone inspire you?

I knew from a very young age that I had wanted to live a life of service. My mother spent 50 years as an educator serving as a teacher, counsellor, vice principal and principal, and my father served in the Navy for 22 years. Their service, in particular my dad's service in the Navy, really inspired me to serve our country in the naval service.

Tell me about your career. Where did you start and how you have advanced through the ranks? Can you tell us what ships have you served on?

My active duty career began in May of 2002 when I graduated from the United States Naval Academy. From there my family and I have been stationed all over the world having lived in Hawai'i, Annapolis, Norfolk, Bahrain, Newport and Mayport.

In my 19 years I have served in five ships, taught at the Naval Academy, did personnel management in Memphis and taught other Surface Warfare Officers in Newport.

I began my career as a division officer in USS Port Royal serving as the fire control officer, auxiliaries officer and damage control assistant. I served as my department head tours as the chief engineer in USS Nitze and USS Leyte Gulf. Upon completion of my department head tours, I served as the commanding officer of USS Squal and most recently served as the executive officer in USS Paul Ignatius prior to taking command this June.

You will be taking command of the USS Paul Ignatius soon. That's a significant achievement. How does it feel to be given such great responsibility?

It is incredibly humbling to have the opportunity to command a warship. I have been blessed to serve with absolutely fantastic men and women during my career and to be in a position to pay that forward by helping others unlock their potential while serving our country is a dream come true.

What do you like best about the career you've chosen?

Without a doubt the people. I have seen many awe-inspiring things while serving at sea, but the relationships and lifelong friendships that have been forged working with sailors as they overcome seemingly insurmountable odds to achieve their goals or help others in need has made my career worthwhile.

What advice do you have for any young people who are considering a career in the U.S. Navy?

I would offer that anyone considering a career in the Navy know their "why." There are many rewarding reasons to join the Navy, but it is also a challenging lifestyle that you cannot fully appreciate until you are living it for yourself. Knowing "why" you want to serve and frequently revisiting that "why" will give you a sense of purpose that will carry you through the difficult times.



Photo provided by Cmdr. Jeffrey Servello

You have lived in Ponte Vedra for two years. What do you like best about making a home in this community?

There is so much to love about living in Ponte Vedra. The weather, the scenery, our awesome neighbors have all contributed to make this our favorite duty station so far!

How do you like to spend your free time?

I love to spend my free time golfing. If I am unable to golf, then I am likely thinking or dreaming about golf. I also enjoy reading and spending time outdoors at the beach or rucking.

YMCA

Continued from 5

Flagler Health+ broke ground on its newest health and wellness campus in Durbin Park in June. The campus is located between Interstate 95 and State Road 9B. The property was purchased from Gate Lands, the real estate subsidiary of Gate Petroleum Company.

The new Flagler Health+ campus and the new YMCA are expected to open in 2023.

ELM has been selected as the architect of record for the new YMCA following an extensive bid process.

“The Y’s programs and services foster community connections, create new opportunities for youth and provide support that will positively change the lives of area residents,” said Doug Baer, First Coast

YMCA Metro Board chair. “We believe the new YMCA in Durbin Park will not only serve its local community and residents but will also help bridge gaps in community needs across Northeast Florida for generations to come.”

As a nonprofit organization, the Y relies on donations from community members, partners and organizations. The Y has launched a \$7 million capital fundraising effort to pay for the new YMCA in Durbin Park.

“We really rely on the community’s support for our projects as a nonprofit organization, so we hope that the community will respond and help us bring this great asset to the Durbin Park community,” Mann said.

The capital campaign is chaired by Darnell Smith. Other members of the cabinet include Rusty Newton, David Alban, Marty Fiorentino, Mike Santarone, Shelly

Boynton, Peggy Bryan, Mark Bailey, Doug Baer and John Carey.

“Carrying out the YMCA’s cause of strengthening the First Coast is made possible by the support of our incredible community,” said Smith. “Donations of any size put us closer to our goal of building this new facility and creating healthier lives.”

Additional campaign details will be announced in the coming months. To learn more or support the First Coast YMCA, go to fcymca.org.

For more than 110 years, the YMCA of Florida’s First Coast has been providing men, women and children of all ages and from all walks of life opportunities to build stronger bonds, live healthy and become more engaged with their communities.

The Durbin Park branch will be the 16th First Coast YMCA location, in addition to its charter school and Camp Immokalee.

Training U

Continued from 5

Sport: Igniting Passion for a Profession,” moderated by Donna Orender, Orender Unlimited CEO, Generation W founder and former WNBA president.

Panelists included seven-time Olympic medalist Shannon Miller, ESPN golf analyst Michael Collins, Wimbledon finalist MaliVai Washington and two-time PGA TOUR winner Len Mattiace.

Participating students also spoke with “career champions” — a sports physician from St. Vincent’s Health System, the Brentwood Golf Course general manager, the head of marketing for the Association of Tennis Professionals, general manager for the Jacksonville Jumbo Shrimp, head of marketing for the Jacksonville Jaguars and deputy general counsel for the PGA TOUR.

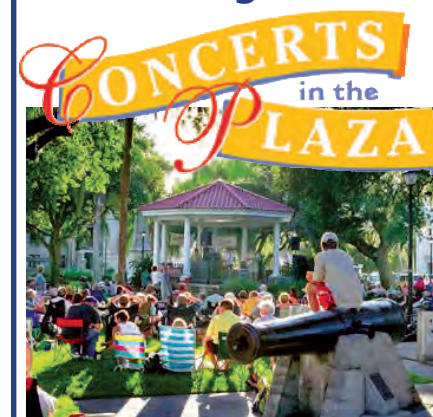
In addition, students met with representatives of Edwards Waters College, the University of North Florida, Florida State

College at Jacksonville, Jacksonville University and Navy Region Southeast. Florida State College awarded one student a \$500 scholarship.

Computer donations like this one have proven critical to the mission of Northeast Florida Regional STEM2 Hub. Previously, the PGA TOUR donated 500 computers when it was planning to replace them. Recently, TIAA also donated 300.

To learn more about Northeast Florida Regional STEM2 Hub, go to stem2hub.org or call Schofield at (904) 502-0958.

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Florida Boys State elects two Nease students among state, legislative officers

Florida American Legion Boys State, Florida's premier youth leadership program, recently announced the election of constitutional officers, legislative leaders and Supreme Court justices for its 77th session, which included two Nease High School students.

The two Nease students were Nate Fagen, who was elected chief financial officer, and Khush Gandhi, who was elected commissioner of agriculture.

Vincent Lahera of Lecanto High School (Citrus County) was elected governor.

Those elected on a statewide ballot were sworn in June 25. Gov. Lahera also appointed seven members of the Boys State Supreme Court. Over the course of two days, these officers and justices of the Boys State legislative branch will oversee mock sessions designed to further educate delegates about Florida's government.

"While the election of officers is an exciting moment for all 352 delegates, the true heart of the program are the



Photo provided by Florida American Legion Boys State

Nease's Khush Gandhi (left) and Nate Fagen (second from right) were among the newly elected officers for the Florida American Legion Boys State 77th session.

mock sessions," said Florida American Legion Boys State Director Forrest D. Boone. "Delegates pass bills, hear judicial cases and respond to simulated crises and will end the week with a deeper appreciation of our democracy and the importance of good governance."

State officers and legislators are elected by their peers, but nominated by their two mock parties — the Nationalists and the Federalists. These mock parties educate delegates about Florida's two-party system and allow them to craft their own platforms and beliefs.

Brother and sister earn rank of Eagle Scout

Brother and sister Grant and Marina Mitchell received their Eagle Scout rank at their Court of Honor on Wednesday, June 9, at Our Lady Star of the Sea Catholic Church.

The Eagle rank is the highest award in the Scouts BSA program. Grant and Marina were joined by family, friends, teachers, fellow scouts and leaders. They were honored with a certificate from the Military Order of the World Wars and state Rep. Cyndi Stevenson joined as a guest speaker. The Order of Arrow members within their Troops presented the Four Winds ceremony, along with the Trail to Eagle and the Voice of the Eagle.

Marina Mitchell is with Troop 291, chartered by PVUMC. She was one of the original founding members when this all-girl Scouts BSA troop was started in February 2019. The group started off with 13 girls and now has 24 girls in the troop with three patrols. Marina was a Girl Scout prior to Scouts BSA and earned the Bronze Award in GSA. She wanted to move to Scouts BSA because of the ability to learn leadership, life skills, their outdoor programs and be listed as a female Eagle Scout. Some of her leadership roles in scouting include senior patrol leader, assistant senior patrol leader, troop guide and scribe. Her Eagle project was two picnic tables and five benches for the Duval Audubon Society in Orange Park.

Grant Mitchell is with troop 288, also chartered by PVUMC. Grant started scouts as a Tiger in Cub Scouts with Pack 291 (also at PVUMC). He earned his Arrow of Light



Photos provided by J. Lacey Taylor

Sister and brother Marina and Grant Mitchell pose with a cake during a celebration for both obtaining the rank of Eagle Scout.



Marina Mitchell's Eagle Scout project was two picnic tables and five benches for the Duval Audubon Society in Orange Park.



Grant Mitchell's Eagle Scout project was four picnic tables for Alice B. Landrum Middle School in Ponte Vedra Beach.

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

KATHY'S GARDENING GUIDE

"The flower that follows the sun does so even in cloudy days." — Robert Leighton



HURRICANE PREPAREDNESS WITH YOUR LANDSCAPING

As hurricane season is underway, here are some tips to help minimize damage at your home.

Kathy Esfahani
Columnist

■ Make sure all tree limbs are primed high — elevate canopy of tree and remove any dead limbs.

■ Remove debris or miscellaneous items from yard. When winds begin to pick up, it will help minimize flying objects that can affect your home.

■ Stake any plants or trees that are top heavy such as standard bottle brush or standard cassia, and any topiaries.

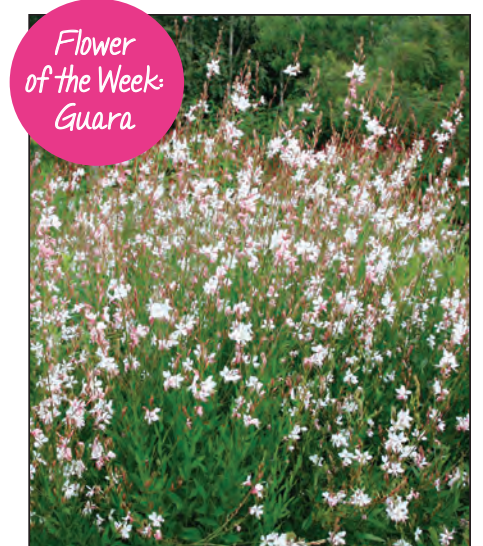
■ Remove yard decor such as pottery, trellises, yard art, swings and lawn furniture, if possible. Otherwise secure or anchor down in preparation of high winds.

■ If there is a hurricane near, turn off all irrigation as there is already too much water, which can cause roots to loosen and trees to fall, as well as disease problems. Don't forget to turn irrigation back on after 3-4 days of no rain.

■ Always know where your water main is located and how to turn off in an emergency. If there is a special tool needed to turn off, you can grab one at Home Depot on your next trip.

Email Kathy at kathys.creative.gardens@gmail.com for any questions or gardening tips you would like to see in the future.

Kathy's Creative Gardens & Nursery is located at 196 N. Roscoe Blvd. in Ponte Vedra Beach. (904) 655-7373.



Flower of the Week: Guara

Photo provided by Kathy Esfahani



BIG TURNOUT FOR NOCATEE'S ANNUAL GOLF CART PARADE



The fourth annual 4th of July Golf Cart Parade in Nocatee on Saturday, July 3, was a big success, featuring more than 600 decorated carts that took part in the parade. The event started at Nocatee Station Field and went around the Splash Water Park, the Nocatee Town Center communities and Willowcove. Spectators also lined the streets and cheered on the participants.

Photos by Susan Griffin

NOCATEE CELEBRATES 4TH OF JULY WITH PARTY



Photos by Susan Griffin

Nocatee residents and their guests enjoyed a Fourth of July party at Nocatee Station Field on Sunday. The event included live music by Let's Ride Brass Band, food from a variety of local food trucks and a special fireworks display, which was contributed by numerous neighborhood HOAs within the Nocatee community.

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ROTARY CLUB OF PALM VALLEY HOLDS PASSING OF THE GAVEL CEREMONY



Photo by Susan Griffin

The Rotary Club of Palm Valley held its Passing of the Gavel celebration on Tuesday, June 29. Pictured (from left) is the new slate of officers: Carol Maurer, Janeene Hart, Paula Roderick, incoming president Zeke Paxton, Kristine Westmoreland, Wayne Banyas, past president Horton Hickerson, Cyndi King and Dave Howie.

OBITUARIES

James Alexander

James Alexander, 92, of Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida, died July 3, 2021. Ponte Vedra Valley Funeral Home, Cremation Center & Cemetery – (904) 285-1130 – www.pontevedra-valley.com

Thomas Ferguson

Thomas Ferguson, 87, of Jacksonville, Florida, died June 28, 2021. Ponte Vedra Valley Funeral Home, Cremation Center & Cemetery – (904) 285-1130 – www.pontevedra-valley.com

Joy Hunt

Joy Hunt, 79, of Ponte Vedra, Florida, died July 1, 2021. Ponte Vedra Valley Funeral Home, Cremation Center & Cemetery – (904) 285-1130 – www.pontevedra-valley.com

Lorraine Agnes McNulty

Lorraine Agnes McNulty, 85, of Jacksonville, Florida, died June 27, 2021. Arrangements by Quinn-Shalz Family Funeral Home & Cremation Centre. www.quinn-shalz.com (904) 249-1100

Norma Sanders

Norma Sanders, 87, of Jacksonville Beach, Florida, died June 26, 2021. Ponte Vedra Valley Funeral Home, Cremation Center & Cemetery – (904) 285-1130 – www.pontevedra-valley.com

Ronald Somerville

Ronald Somerville, 100, of Jacksonville, Florida, died July 3, 2021. Ponte Vedra Valley Funeral Home, Cremation Center & Cemetery – (904) 285-1130 – www.pontevedra-valley.com

Richard “Rich” Strom

Richard “Rich” Strom, 48, of St. Augustine, Florida, died July 1, 2021. Ponte Vedra Valley Funeral Home, Cremation Center & Cemetery – (904) 285-1130 – www.pontevedra-valley.com

Paul Jeffery Wood

Paul Jeffery Wood, 61, of Jacksonville, Florida, died June 22, 2021. Arrangements by Quinn-Shalz Family Funeral Home & Cremation Centre, (904) 249-1100, www.quinn-shalz.com.

Scouts

Continued from 8

and crossed over into troop 288 in February 2018. He is a recruiter for his troop, getting many boys to join troop 288. Some of his leadership roles in scouting include senior patrol leader, assistant senior patrol leader, patrol leader, assistant patrol leader, historian and chaplain aide. His Eagle project was four picnic tables for Alice B. Landrum Middle School in Ponte Vedra Beach.

Both Grant and Marina attended National Youth Leadership Training and are both in BSA’s Order of the Arrow. They

both attended Sea Base high adventure camp this past spring break, where they sailed on sailboat for the week. Marina was with a contingent for the World Scout Jamboree in 2019. They would have been with a contingent for the National Jamboree this year, but it was postponed due to COVID-19. They have performed many hours of service with the scouts and their church and have earned the Roman Catholic Emblem of Faith — Ad Altare Dei for Troops. Grant has also earned the Cub Scout religious medal, Parvuli Dei.

Marina is one of 1,000 young women across the nation that have made the list of inaugural female Eagle Scouts 2020.

Chartered in 1989, in 28 years Troop 288 has been home for more than 100 scouts to earn the Eagle ranking. Ponte Vedra United Methodist Church is home to Troop 288. For more information on Troop 288 and Troop 291, go to www.troop288PVB.org or www.troop291pvb.org.

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Area seniors gathered June 24 for a 'welcome home' party at THE PLAYERS Community Senior Center, which had been closed over the past year to protect people from the pandemic.

Ponte Vedra senior center reopens

By Shaun Ryan

The Council on Aging's PLAYERS Community Senior Center held a grand reopening open house Thursday, June 24, as it prepared to welcome area residents back after the pandemic.

Center Coordinator Alison Vitti said people have missed going to the center, which had been closed for more than a year to protect the health and safety of senior participants during the COVID-19 outbreak.

News of the reopening generated a lot of interest.

"We've been getting phone calls daily," Vitti said. "They're very excited to come back. And we're so happy to have them."

The event had a '40s theme, with red, white and blue decorations and piano music by Donnell Miniard. While there, attendees were able to register for upcoming programs and meet Vitti, a longtime volunteer who took over the coordinator position in June.

For now, the center will be open on Thursdays only, though there is a plan to increase program offerings over time.

Initial programs will include tai chi, arts and crafts, brown-bag bingo, Wii bowling, book club and more. In addition, Vitti will continue to teach her chair yoga class. Advance registration for programs is required as space is limited.

The center has been a popular place for seniors to gather. They enjoy the parties thrown there, as well as the live music and speakers. They also like to use the center's



Photos by Shaun Ryan

Decorations were of a patriotic theme for THE PLAYERS Community Senior Center reopening open house.

computers so they can get access to the internet.

The reopening is part of a careful, phased approach implemented at the six senior centers throughout St. Johns County. Vitti said the center has been busy getting ready for the reopening.

"It's been a long and very difficult year for all — especially for seniors," said COA Executive Director Becky Yanni. "We are thrilled to be able to reopen our centers so that our community's seniors



ABOVE: Donnell Miniard (right) performed musical selections on a piano for the grand reopening of THE PLAYERS Community Senior Center. Miles Stonesifer (left) took some time to chat with Miniard between sets.



LEFT: Patriotic cupcakes were among the treats offered to attendees for THE PLAYERS Community Senior Center reopening open house.

can get back to enjoying each other's company and living life to the fullest."

The Ponte Vedra Beach senior center is supported in part by a grant from Republic Services, a local waste management services provider. As a nonprofit organization, COA also relies on donors from the community to keep the center running and serving local seniors.

The COA is in need of that support as it rebuilds its centers and program offerings.

For further information go to www.coajc.org or call 904-209-3700. For information on free, upcoming events, sign up to receive COA's weekly e-newsletter at www.coajc.org/sign-up.

THE PLAYERS Community Senior Center is located at 175 Landrum Lane.

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Cypress Village hosts 4th annual Putters Tournament

Event raised money for K9s For Warriors

Cypress Village hosted its fourth annual Putters Tournament on the Cypress Green on Friday, June 11.

The event included 40 putters, and an additional 50 spectators were there to watch the games, while enjoying hot dogs and hamburgers fresh off the grill. Prizes were awarded for lowest scratch score, low net score for Cypress Putters members and low net for nonmembers. Overall, residents loved the opportunity to mix and mingle and enjoy a day outdoors with friends and family.

Resident Jerry Sanda and the Cypress Village Putters coordinated the tournament for the fourth year after its initial conception in 2017. Initially, the group created the tournament as a great opportunity to showcase residents' skill and to simply have a fun day out on the green. The weather was perfect at the boathouse as residents and guests watched the tournament unfold, while enjoying a drink or hamburger, along with live music.

This year, the Cypress Village Putters wanted to use the tournament to raise awareness for a local charity, K9s For Warriors, a Ponte Vedra-based nonprofit



TOURNAMENT continues on **Page 15**



Participants and spectators at the putting tournament were treated to live music.



The Putters Tournament trophy was on display at the Cypress Village event.



ABOVE: Putters compete in the fourth annual Putters Tournament at Cypress Village on June 11.

LEFT: K9s For Warriors trainers, with service dogs, attend the golf event at Cypress Village to discuss the nonprofit's mission with residents and guests.

Photos provided by Cypress Village



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Cypress Village residents enjoy the cookout at the putting tournament.

Tournament

Continued from 14

that seeks to end veteran suicide and help veteran service members. K9s For Warriors rescues and trains shelter dogs to be paired as service dogs for warriors with service-connected post-traumatic stress-related disorders. The nonprofit had a tent at the event and members were able to talk with residents about the services it offers and even had some dogs and trainers present during the tournament. Cypress Village residents donated more than \$2,500 to the group to be

able to help veterans and the rescue dogs at the facility in Ponte Vedra Beach. The Cypress Village Putters Club is one of more than 35 resident-led clubs, groups and activities at Cypress Village. The group meets weekly on the green for a quick nine holes and all skill levels are welcome. The group is open to all residents, and everyone has a great time “puttering” around the green. Cypress Village is a Jacksonville-area continuing-care retirement-care community that offers residents numerous services, amenities and multiple levels of care. For more information on Cypress Village, call (904) 223-6100.



Photos provided by Cypress Village

Representatives of Cypress Village present a check to K9s For Warriors. Cypress Village raised more than \$2,500 from its annual Putters Tournament to donate to the local nonprofit.



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Starling resident celebrates 102nd birthday

By Shaun Ryan

When Dorothy “Dot” Coy was born, life expectancy for women was 56. But today, just having celebrated her 102nd birthday, the resident of Starling at Nocatee Assisted Living & Memory Care is still going strong.

“It’s pretty amazing,” said grandson Matt Coy, who was visiting during her birthday party on June 25. “It’s hard to fathom what she’s experienced compared to what I’ve done in half the time with everything that her generation went through — the wars, the Depression — it’s amazing.”

The year was 1919. The most popular car was the Ford Model T. A first-class postage stamp was 3 cents. And American women were still a year away from being granted the right to vote.

Dorothy was given one of the three most popular girls’ names at the time. She was one of 11 children, and her family lived on a farm in Chambersburg, Pennsylvania.

Located in Amish Country, it was a place not significantly impacted by the events of the nation and world.

“We were happy,” Dorothy recalled.



Photo by Shaun Ryan

Dorothy Coy celebrated her 102nd birthday June 25 at Starling at Nocatee Assisted Living & Memory Care with members of her family gathered around. From left are: sitting, Matt Coy and Dorothy Coy; standing, Jennifer Coy, Chanel Peddicord holding baby Willow, and Cameron Coy.

BIRTHDAY continues on Page 17

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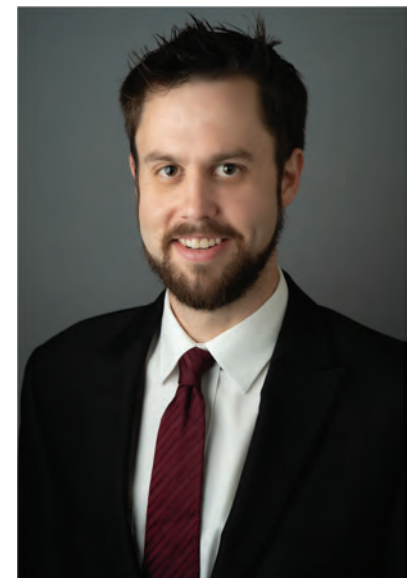
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Photos by Shaun Ryan

Amanda Jones, memory care director for Starling at Nocatee Assisted Living & Memory Care (right) holds out a birthday cake to 102-year-old Dorothy Coy. At left is grandson Matt Coy.

A LOOK AT 1919

- The Treaty of Versailles was signed on June 28, officially ending World War I.
- Bread cost 9 cents per loaf
- The pop-up toaster was invented
- The average weekly income was \$25.61
- Walt Disney was 18 years old.
- Mother Teresa was 9.
- The U.S. population was 104.5 million
- The “Barney Google” comic strip debuted
- Born: Nat King Cole, Malcolm Forbes, Eva Gabor, Liberace, Jack Palance, Jackie Robinson, Andy Rooney.
- Died: L. Frank Baum, Andrew Carnegie, Theodore Roosevelt



Dorothy Coy looks at the birthday cake she shared with another resident of Starling at Nocatee Assisted Living & Memory Care on June 25.

Birthday

Continued from 16

“We didn’t know anything about the Depression. That didn’t mean anything. We had everything we needed in the country.”

She remained in Chambersburg until her marriage, when she joined her new husband in nearby Shippensburg, Pennsylvania.

She worked in a factory for a while, but then she and her husband owned a restaurant, which she largely ran herself while her husband sold insurance. After they sold the restaurant, Dorothy Coy went to work in the food service department for the Shippensburg Area School District.

Over time, she worked her way up to become the district’s superintendent for food service, a position she eventually retired from.

She and her husband had three boys, one of them the father of Matt Coy, who made his home in North Carolina until recently when he moved his family to Northeast Florida.

With so few relatives remaining in Pennsylvania and so many of her grandchildren, great-grandchildren and great-great-grandchildren now living on the First Coast, she was ready to make the move to St. Johns County.

“We went and picked her up on May 22,” said Matt Coy. “We brought her to Starling on May 30, 31.”

He was pleased with the selection of Starling, saying it was better than the Pennsylvania facility his grandmother had been in.

“I think the level of care is definitely appropriate,” he added.

As for Dorothy Coy, she said having family nearby was “heavenly.”



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Passing assets to grandchildren through a generation-skipping trust



Dan W. Armstrong
Guest Columnist

Passing assets to your grandchildren can be a great way to ensure their future is provided for and a generation-skipping trust can help you accomplish this goal while reducing estate taxes, and also providing for your children.

A generation-skipping trust allows you to “skip” over the generation directly below you and pass your assets to the succeeding generation. While this type of trust is most commonly used for family, you can designate anyone who is at least 37.5 younger than you as the beneficiary (except a spouse or ex-spouse).

One purpose of a generation-skipping trust is to minimize estate taxes. Estates worth more than \$11.7 million (in 2021) have to pay a federal estate tax. Twelve states also impose their own estate tax, which in some states applies to smaller estates. When someone passes on an estate to their child and the child then passes the estate to their children, the estate taxes would be assessed twice — each time the estate is passed down. The generation-skipping trust avoids one of these transfers and estate tax assessments.

While your children cannot touch the assets in the trust, they can receive any income generated by the trust. The trust can also be set up to allow them to have some say in the rights and interests of future beneficiaries. Once your children pass on, the beneficiaries will have access to the assets.

Note, however, that a generation-skipping trust is subject to the generation-skipping transfer (GST) tax. This tax applies to transfers from grandparents to grandchildren, even in a trust. The GST tax has tracked the estate tax rate and exemption amounts, so the current GST exemption amount is \$11.7 million (in 2021). If you transfer more than that, the tax rate is 40%.

The trust can be structured to take advantage of the GST tax exemption by transferring assets to the trust that fall under the exemption amount. If the assets increase in value, the proceeds can be allocated to the beneficiaries of the trust. And because the trust is irrevocable, your estate won't have to pay the GST tax even if the value of the assets increases over the exemption amount.

Generation-skipping trusts are complicated documents. Consult with your attorney to determine if one would be right for your family.

Dan W. Armstrong is an attorney based in Ponte Vedra Beach. He specializes in elder law, estate planning and corporate law.

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COA announces 18th annual Champions for Elders Golf Tournament fundraiser Aug. 16

Council on Aging invites the community to participate in its 18th annual Champions for Elders Golf Tournament on Monday, Aug. 16, at Slammer and Squire, World Golf Village.

The local nonprofit organization has been serving seniors and caregivers in St. Johns County for the past 48 years, and the golf tournament is its largest fundraiser of the year. Sponsors are invited to bring a team of four to enjoy a day of golf followed by a celebratory luncheon or participate as a sponsor off the course and support the important work COA does every day for elders and caregivers.

COA provides an extensive array of services for area seniors including Meals on Wheels, independent-living services, case management, memory care, adult day care, paratransit transportation, prescription assistance and more. The organization also offers opportunities for socialization and lifelong learning at their six senior centers located throughout the county. In addition, COA offers programs

to support the needs of local caregivers, providing counseling, education, support groups and respite care. As a nonprofit organization, COA relies upon donations to support its work.

“We are fortunate in St. Johns County to live in a community that is committed to being there for our elders and caregivers,” said COA Executive Director Becky Yanni. “We rely upon the generosity and good will of members of the community to make this possible. Our annual Champions for Elders golf tournament is crucial to our ability to serve.”

Participating team sponsorships are available with a \$2,500 donation. Event sponsorships are available starting at a donation of \$250 and include signage and publicity during the event. For sponsorship and registration information, contact COA’s Sandy Hollett at shollett@coasjc.org or (904) 209-3697.

For more information on COA’s extensive range of services for seniors and caregivers, go to www.coasjc.org or call (904) 209-3700.



Council on Aging Executive Director Lori Anderson (left) is presented with a check from CBV Cares board member Nancy Hammond on behalf of Coldwell Banker Vanguard Realty CBV Cares, a local Realtor group that supports Beaches area nonprofits.

Photo provided by Carole Bayer

Beaches Council on Aging receives grant from Realtor group CBV Cares

Local Realtor group CBV Cares representative Nancy Hammond presented Beaches Council on Aging Executive Director Lori Anderson a grant check for \$500 for the nonprofit’s Dial-A-Ride program on Thursday, June 24.

The Dial-A-Ride program was designed to meet the need for seniors and disabled persons in the Jacksonville Beaches area.

“We focus on senior well-being by transporting them to doctor appointments, grocery shopping, etc.,” Anderson said about the program. “We also transport dialysis patients

to their treatments. We are supported by our Beaches community and have been operating for 46 years. These funds will help keep our wheels turning!”

For more information on the Dial-A-Ride program, contact at landerson@beachesdiala-ride.org or (650) 743-3232. The Council on Aging and Dial-A-Ride program is located at 281 19th Ave. South in Jacksonville Beach.

For more information on the Coldwell Banker Vanguard Realty Group CBV Cares, contact Chair Carole Bayer at cbayerrealtor@gmail.com or (904) 860-5000.



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Vicar's Landing presents scholarships to student employees

Vicar's Landing Retirement Community in Ponte Vedra presented scholarships for more than \$315,000 to its student employees this year. Awards of \$2,500 to \$5,250 were given to assist with education, including to two daughters of employees.

Scholarships are used for expenses related to college, trade schools, English as a second language, nursing school and others.

Martine Slemp, chair of the scholarship committee, announced the amount to the membership, and thanked her committee: Carolee Bertisch, Sue Foley, Jim Marx, Jim Munsonn, Laurie Reeves and Jim Van Vleck.

A substantial portion of the funding comes from generous donations by Vicar's members, associate members and others. For this past year, donations were made by friends and relatives of the following members, who designated the Scholarship Funds as their memorial: Ralph Chilton, Walter Goetz, Bud Roemhild, John Slemp and Van MacDonald.

Contributions were also received in memory of Dean Beckwith, George Bockmeyer, Charles Gamble, Admiral David Frost, Mary Hoban, Mary Linden, Charlotte Miller, Betsy Mills, Ron Giddens, Joy Ward and Mary Emma Wilson.

Vicar's Landing Boutique, although restricted by COVID from holding a sale open to the public, earned more than \$50,000 through sales to residents and donated to the fund. Committee members were: Rose Murdock, Ginny Elliot, Sue Foley, Kay Zolezzi, Sherrie Russell, Wanda Keyser, Sandra Burnaman and Jean Cowell.

Scholarship winners received certificates and brochures honoring them.



Thanh Ngo holds her scholarship award certificate.



Faye Weeder and Shelby Neitzel hold their scholarship award certificates.

Photos provided by Vicar's Landing



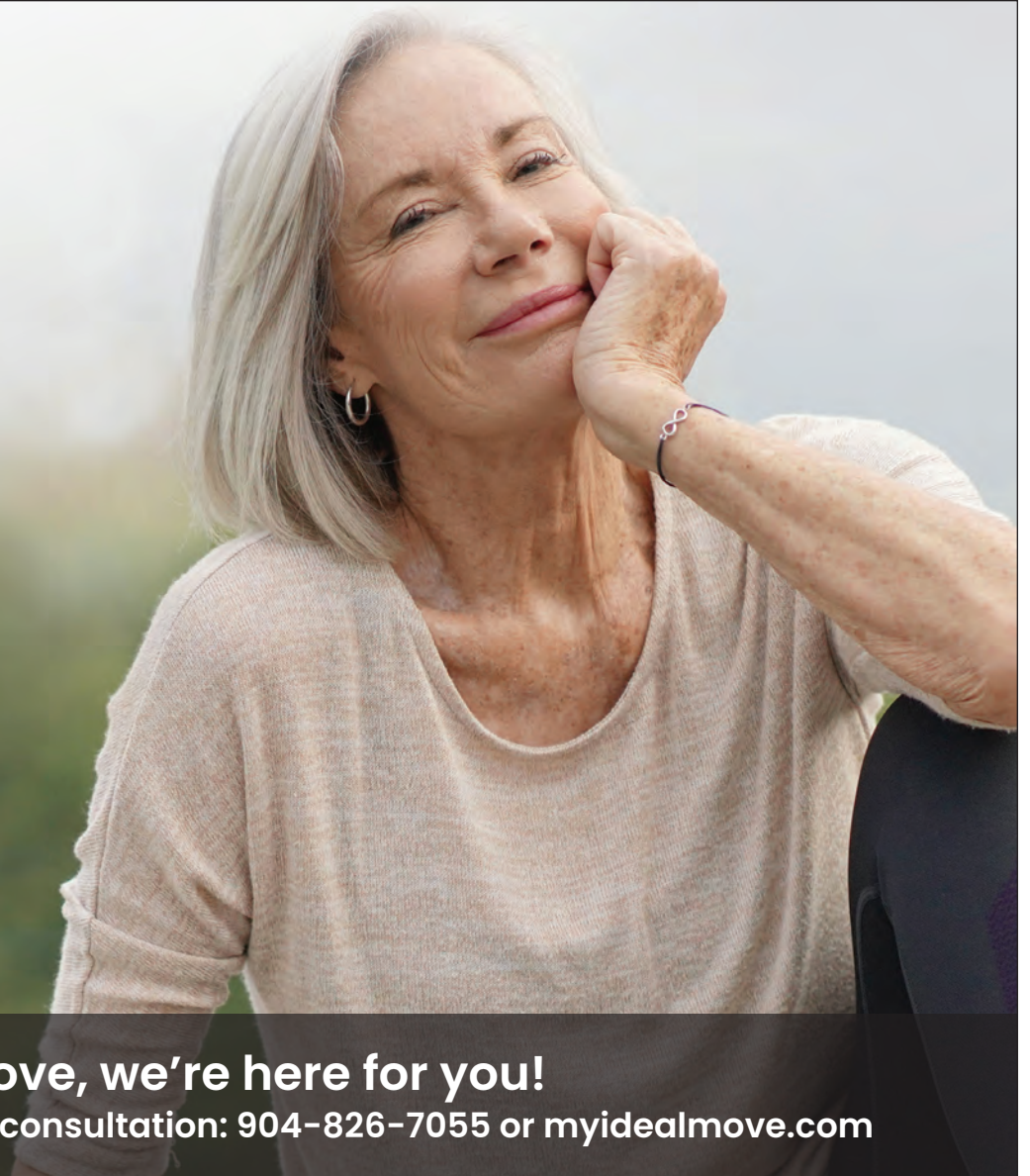
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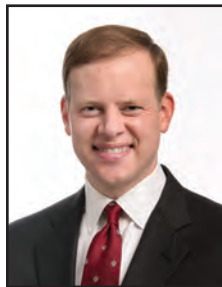
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How to know when cataract surgery is right for you



Dr. McGregor N. Lott
Florida Eye Specialists

Data from the Centers for Disease Control estimate U.S. cataract cases have risen by 10 million since the year 2000, causing a rise in demand for cataract surgery in Jacksonville and across the country.

Cataract surgery is one of the most common procedures performed in the U.S. As demand for surgery has increased, around 4 million procedures are now

performed every year.

Cataracts are a clouding of the normally clear lens of the eye. They are a normal part of aging and can begin to develop even in a young individual in their 40s and 50s. Now is the perfect time to review the signs of cataracts and how to know when cataract surgery may be right for you.

THE SIGNS OF CATARACTS

Despite being one of the most common eye diseases in the world, cataract disease often goes unnoticed at first. This is due to the lack of pain and subtle loss of sight. Signs of cataracts include cloudy or blurry vision, sensitivity to light and glare, difficulty driving at night, trouble reading the fine print, double vision and frequent changes in eyeglass or contact lens prescription.

The longer cataracts are left untreated, the more difficult it is to restore vision. We recommend that patients ages 55 and older have a comprehensive dilated eye exam at least once every two years. In addition to

cataract, your eye care professional can check for signs of age-related macular degeneration, glaucoma and other vision disorders.

HOW TO KNOW WHEN IT'S TIME FOR CATARACT SURGERY

Cataracts develop slowly and painlessly over time, but they can grow to the point where they can get in the way of living an active, independent life.

With all the time we spend looking at phones and other devices, traveling, playing golf and reading, our vision needs are more demanding than ever. Fortunately, cataract surgery offers patients the opportunity to not only restore vision, but to possibly see better than ever before. It can reduce dependency on glasses and make daily activities like reading and driving easy again.

With advances in technology, cataract surgery today is safer and provides better outcomes than ever, so patients can have surgery at younger ages. That means you don't have to live with impaired vision. The time for cataract surgery is when you are ready to see clearly again.

NEW TECHNOLOGY AND CATARACT SURGERY OPTIONS

The technology for cataract surgery has come a long way in recent years, so it's important to discuss your options with your eye surgeon. One of the ways cataract surgery has improved is through a technique called laser cataract surgery.

Unlike traditional cataract surgery, where a scalpel is used to make an incision in the eye by hand, laser cataract surgery is computer guided. This results in a safer, gentler procedure. The laser also creates a

more precise and accurate outcome, which allows eye surgeons to correct a wide range of vision problems, including astigmatism, far- and near-sightedness at the time of cataract surgery. This gives you the option to correct two eye conditions with one procedure and reduces the need for glasses.

In addition to laser cataract surgery, the latest technology in premium cataract surgery are the advances in intraocular lens (IOL) technology. An intraocular lens is the artificial lens that is implanted in the eye during cataract surgery after the eye's cloudy natural lens has been removed.

While surgeons have been using these lenses for decades, today's versions offer crisper, higher quality vision and more function than they've ever provided before.

With the many kinds of intraocular lenses now available, eye surgeons can choose the best fit for each patient. At Florida Eye Specialists, our practice focuses on each individual's needs in order to choose the best lens. We see patients that need better vision during night conditions, patients who have had prior refractive surgery, golfers who may need better vision during daylight hours and more. We try to customize the lens to the patient's lifestyle, as it's not a one size fits all.

If cataracts are impacting your daily life, you don't need to live with impaired vision or wait for surgery. Make an appointment with a cataract consultant today.

Dr. McGregor N. Lott, M.D., is an ophthalmologist at Florida Eye Specialists, the first practice in Northeast Florida to introduce laser cataract surgery. For more information on Dr. Lott and his specialty treating cataracts, visit FloridaEyeSpecialists.com.

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- Bingo
- Movies

The Adult Day Program at River Garden accepts clients 2-5 days/week.

To make an appointment or for more details, call (904) 288.7858 or visit RiverGarden.org.



Contributed photo

From left: Tony Nason, VP of operations, PulteGroup; Rusty Smallwood, operations manager, Building Homes for Heroes, Inc.; Staff Sgt. Jerry Majetich; Mary Ella Majetich; Jack Mead, field manager, Del Webb/PulteGroup; and Dan Reynold, VP Construction Operations, PulteGroup.

Northeast Florida builder breaks ground on mortgage-free home for wounded veteran at Del Webb Nocatee

U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Ellis “Jerry” Majetich had already received the life-changing news that PulteGroup is building him a new mortgage-free home through its Built to Honor program. Now, Majetich and his family have officially broken ground on their future home at Del Webb Nocatee in Ponte Vedra. This is the first Built to Honor home donated in a Del Webb community, which is designed for active adults ages 55 and older.

“Del Webb Nocatee is the perfect place for the Majetich family to call home,” said Dan Reynolds, vice president of construction at PulteGroup’s North Florida Division. “They will be part of a strong community, including fellow veterans, who have already extended a warm welcome to them – before construction has even begun on their new home. We are so excited for the wonderful new memories the family will create together when they move in later this year.”

Receiving a special introduction to Del Webb Nocatee, a crowd of residents and soon-to-be neighbors lined the community streets to warmly welcome Majetich and his wife Mary Ella as they saw their future homesite for the first time. Being built specifically for them, the single-story home is designed to meet all of Majetich’s needs.

“It is truly an honor for our team to build this home for Staff Sgt. Majetich and thank him for his dedication and service to our country,” said Tony Nason, vice president of operations at PulteGroup’s North Florida Division. “We are so excited to be working with Jerry to build a home that is fully accessible and that will vastly improve his quality of life.”

Majetich joined the military out of Kennewick, Washington, in 1988 because he wanted to better his life while serving and protecting his country. He served for nearly 20 years, including a stint in the

Marine Corps, before being honorably discharged in 2007.

While riding in a vehicle convoy as part of a large battalion, Majetich’s vehicle was struck by an IED, causing severe injuries. In the firefight that ensued, he was shot four times before being airlifted out for emergency care. He suffered burns on more than one-third of his body, including his face and scalp, the loss of his ears and nose, right hand and fingers on his left hand to amputation, the removal of part of his intestines and stomach, a fractured spine, fractured left foot and bullet wounds in his right shoulder and right leg. He also suffers from post-traumatic stress disorder and a traumatic brain injury. Since his initial injuries occurred, he has undergone more than 80 surgeries to date.

For his service to his country, Majetich is the recipient of numerous awards and medals, including the Bronze Star, Purple Heart, Joint Service Commendation Medal, Army Commendation Medal (5th Award), Army Achievement Medal (3rd Award), Navy Marine Combat Action Ribbon and Navy Unit Commendation.

“Nothing has ever been given to us; everything we have we’ve worked for,” Majetich said. “We are both still overwhelmed with emotions — so thankful for everyone who is a part of this. To try to put our feelings into words is impossible, but we’re going to strive to pay it forward for the rest of our lives.”

This will be the second home dedicated in the greater Jacksonville area through PulteGroup’s Built to Honor program. The home is being awarded in partnership with Building Homes for Heroes, a national nonprofit organization committed to rebuilding lives and supporting the men and women who were injured while serving the country during the time of the wars in Iraq or Afghanistan. For more information about Built to Honor, go to builttohonor.org.

Business Weekly

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Meet your local mortgage lender: Some simple tips to cut mortgage expenses

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www.PonteVedraRecorder.com



Photo by Shaun Ryan

Anxiety Treatment of Florida offers anxiety sufferers a chance to get their lives back. Pictured from left are administrators Michael and Ann Bloomquist and board-certified psychiatric nurse Eileen Voorhees.

Anxiety treatment program called 'life-changing'

Nocatee residents offer treatment locally and across Florida

By Shaun Ryan

Anxiety disorders affect 40 million adults in the United States every year, according to the Anxiety & Depression Association of America. And experts say these disorders have grown more prevalent since the beginning of

the COVID-19 pandemic.

Now, a treatment program that has proven to be effective in arresting anxiety has come to the Sunshine State. It's called TERRAP (an acronym for Territorial Apprehension), and it's the focus of Anxiety Treatment of Florida, which Nocatee residents Ann and Michael Bloomquist recently opened.

The program runs between 10 and 12 weeks and is presented in steps. By the fourth "chapter," anxiety levels are reduced by at least 40% to 50%,

according to Eileen S. Voorhees, a board-certified psychiatric and mental health nurse who is currently training therapists for Anxiety Treatment of Florida.

"This program is life-changing," Voorhees said.

Ann Bloomquist learned about TERRAP from Voorhees, who had owned a franchise in New Jersey. Voorhees had helped her overcome her own struggle with anxiety, and

ANXIETY continues on Page 24

Jody Boudreau receives award from TPC Network

Jody Boudreau, a club administrative assistant at TPC Sawgrass, has been named the 2021 recipient of the TPC Network's annual A. James Clark Award.



Jody Boudreau

In honor of A. James Clark, a longtime member of the PGA TOUR's Golf Course Properties Advisory Board, this annual award is presented to an employee who upholds the values of the TPC Network and who exemplifies his same qualities, including commitment, strong work ethic and inspirational leadership.

Each TPC Network club submits one nominee for the award and a winner is selected by a committee. The network has more than 1,500 employees.

Since joining TPC Sawgrass in July 2019, Boudreau has made a positive impact in her regular work. However, it was her compassion, patience and guidance during the COVID-19 pandemic that earned her this recognition.

"In just a short amount of time, Jody has made an immediate impact in her role, elevating the standards of this position," said Derek Sprague, general manager of TPC Sawgrass. "Working directly with department heads and managers of more than 300 employees daily, Jody is operating on a large scale but still manages to be incredibly personable."

Growing up in Rochester, New York, Boudreau began her professional experience as an account manager at Tobin & Associates Inc. prior to moving to Charlotte, North Carolina, to work at Wikoff Color Corp. as a human resources coordinator.

AWARD continues on Page 24

Ponte Vedra Beach Resorts appoints Kate Swantak national sales manager

Kate Swantak has been appointed national sales manager at Ponte Vedra Beach Resorts, which comprises the historic Ponte Vedra Inn & Club, a AAA Five-Diamond Resort, and its sister company The Lodge & Club Ponte Vedra Beach.

Swantak comes to the resorts from Casa Monica, a St. Augustine-based Marriott Autograph Collection, Kessler Collection, hotel, where she was group sales manager. "We are delighted to welcome Kate to



Kate Swantak

our team," said Craig Schoninger, director of sales and marketing at Ponte Vedra Beach Resorts, Ponte Vedra Inn & Club. "A star sales professional, she has been consistently recognized as a top performer at the Kessler Collection hotels, as well as in her previous roles managing

sales, catering and wedding venues across national accounts."

With 20 versatile, inspiring oceanfront venues, the two Ponte Vedra Beach resorts represent the premier sales organization for luxury hotels and resorts in the meeting, incentive, convention and exhibition industry.

Ponte Vedra Inn & Club boasts a dedicated conference center and more than 25,000 square feet of event space, while The Lodge & Club Ponte Vedra Beach

offers an ambiance reminiscent of a grand Mediterranean villa.

"I am thrilled to have joined my dream resort company," said Swantak. "With enthusiasm in travel and meetings fast returning, I cannot wait to tell our cherished story to many new and repeat clients!"

As national sales manager, Swantak will oversee bookings at both Ponte Vedra Inn & Club and Lodge & Club Ponte Vedra Beach.

Award

Continued from 23

She then relocated to Greensboro, North Carolina, where she held previous positions including employee relations administrator at Culp Inc. and payroll and benefits administrator at Precision Fabrics Group.

Throughout her experience, Boudreau discovered her natural passion for helping others, which led her to her current

role at TPC Sawgrass. Living in St. Johns with husband Steve and son Troy, Boudreau enjoys being outdoors and can usually be found gardening, biking, walking and playing golf.

“I feel extremely honored to have received the A. James Clark Award, as there are many deserving and dedicated team members I interact with every day,” said Boudreau. “This is truly an amazing group of people. Everyone here makes my job enjoyable, and I feel in turn that allows me to excel in what I do.”

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Anxiety

Continued from 23

now Bloomquist said she is excited to offer the program here.

“I know it works,” she said. “I’ve done it myself.”

At this time, Anxiety Treatment of Florida is offering TERRAP via Zoom, though group sessions will be conducted at pre-arranged locations. Zoom will allow participants from anywhere in the state to access the program.

Though the Bloomquists are administrators of the Florida program, actual therapy will be conducted by specially trained and licensed counselors who also have their own practices. Anxiety Treatment of Florida has a contract with Psych Ed Connections in Nocatee, so if medication is desired, it can be ordered by a psychiatrist.

Through TERRAP, participants learn life skills that allow them to conquer anxiety.

“When the program’s over, we have a 95% recovery rate,” Voorhees said.

Anyone who has experienced an anxiety attack knows how debilitating it is.

“The heart starts to pound, the stomach gets tight – you can’t even digest food – your throat feels like it’s closing up, your vision gets blurry, you can’t think straight, you don’t know what to do next,” Voorhees said. “It feels like your whole body is out of control.”

These attacks generally happen after a change that causes a stress overload, according to Voorhees.

One area of concern is the psychological effect of COVID-19 on children, many of whom do not want to return to school.

“The ones that even are a little bit anxious anyway with their personality have found the comfort of home,” said Voorhees, “which has turned out to be disastrous, because now we have to get them back out there, and they’re not coming back.”

“So many of the parents that I run into say that, please, bring the program, work with the kids,” said Bloomquist.

Bloomquist worked as a special education teacher in the New York area until she had children. She stayed home with them for 25 years, but once they had grown, she needed somewhere to turn her attention and talents.

“I was looking for something special just to help people,” she said. “That’s my calling. And I was given this wonderful opportunity to purchase the TERRAP program for Florida. I’m thrilled, because I know it works if you follow the program, and I’m happy to help the people recover.”

To learn more about Anxiety Treatment of Florida or to schedule an appointment, go to www.terrappflorida.com or call (904) 930-7670.

NOTE: This is an abridged article. To read the entire article, please go to pontevedrarecorder.com.

Janet E. Johnson, P.A.

Criminal Defense Attorney

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

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Simple ways to cut mortgage costs

Monthly mortgage payments are the biggest single expense for many homeowners. So it's understandable why plenty of homeowners would love to trim those costs.

A host of factors determine how much homeowners pay for their mortgages each month. The cost of the home, the amount of the initial down payment and property taxes, which are often folded into monthly payments, will factor heavily into the cost of home ownership. While homeowners may feel as though there's little wiggle room to cut the costs of their mortgages, there are several ways to do just that and potentially trim years from the life of a home loan.

■ **Make bi-weekly payments.** Making bi-weekly instead of once-a-month payments can save homeowners substantial amounts of money. A year's worth of once-a-month payments equates to 12 payments per year. But homeowners who pay on a bi-weekly basis will make 26 half payments, or 13 full payments, per year. That extra annual payment can be applied directly to the principal, dramatically reducing how much homeowners pay in interest over the life of their loans.

■ **Stop paying PMI.** Homeowners whose initial down payments are less than 20 percent of the sale price will have to pay private mortgage insurance,

or PMI. But once the balances on such mortgages falls below 80 percent, homeowners can cancel such insurance. Homeowners may also be able to stop paying PMI by having their homes reappraised.

■ **Refinance the loan.** Refinancing a loan also can save homeowners substantial amounts of money each month. Homeowners are typically eligible for lower interest rates when refinancing their loans, meaning they will pay less in interest each month. However, refinancing is not free, so homeowners should first check the going home interest rates and examine their credit scores to see if the interest rate they're likely to get upon refinancing will save them money. The cost of refinancing might be more than homeowners can save.

■ **Request a tax reassessment.** Real estate values increase and decrease, and homeowners who feel their homes have decreased in value can request that their homes be reassessed. Homeowners whose homes are assessed at a value lower than the current value can expect to pay less each month in taxes.

Homeowners hoping to cut mortgage costs have various options at their disposal. Talk to your mortgage broker or provider to find out what options may be available to you.



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In the Arts



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Cultural Center to present leaders in the art and performance at the link launch

The Cultural Center at Ponte Vedra Beach will commemorate the formal arts opening launch of the link from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. Thursday, July 15.

The link, located at 425 Town Plaza Ave. in Nocatee, is designed for adults and children to learn-play-think-do and participate in activities that follow a wide variety of art and education themes.

In March, Raghu Misra, the link's founder and innovator, and Donna Guzzo, Cultural Center president and executive director, announced their collaboration to create imaginative and cultural events for children, adults and families at the new, technologically advanced building designed to service startups, small businesses, individuals and their families.

"Our goal is to create a place for innovation and the arts, and to showcase a myriad of activities," said Guzzo. "On July 15, we've scheduled family-friendly events to appeal to an extensive variety of interests."

Throughout the link building, a full day of activities will feature Cultural Center members and staff with poetry readings, artists painting and displaying their work with live demonstrations, ballet dancers and opera singers in performance. The Mi Son Salsa band will perform, as will musicians from a variety of music genres. There will also be fashion shows, speakers, exhibits, displays and more.

Additionally, the Cultural Center will produce ongoing exhibitions at the link with local, regional, national and international artists, events, art classes, lectures, workshops and children's programming to include summer and winter camps, after-school programs

CULTURAL continues on Page 27

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

PAM JAM, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

- Sharon Schöll and Zena Grover, 10 a.m.
- Tesi Wong & Midge Scelzo, 10:05 a.m.
- Carolee Bertisch and Ellen Diamond, 11 a.m.
- Carol Folsom and Marla Kanehl, 11:05 a.m.
- Susan Calfee and Marlene Scheer, noon.
- Loretta Leto (reading Anne Starling poem) and Sharon Warner, 12:05 p.m.
- Visual arts live demo by Marisa Yow, teacher, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.
- Violin by Peter Goricki, student, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

From 2 to 4 p.m.:

- PAM poets at top of the hour for 10 min.
- Ellen Diamond in the immersion room (Tuscany 360-degree video) visual arts live demo, teacher
- Regina Torres, opera singer to accompany Ellen Diamond, 1-2 p.m.
- Anna Washington, visual arts live demo of pet portraits
- Todd and Theresa Rykaczewsky, artistic directors, Word Revolt Gallery (Robot Intro and Ballet Talk)
- Roberto Forleo, The Florida Ballet performance
- Luis Abella, St. Augustine Ballet performance

From 6 to 8 p.m.:

- Ruth Van Alstine, North Florida Poetry Hub – 10 min. top of the hour; poetry and table set up with poetry writings available to attendees.
- Ellen Diamond, Susanne Schuenke, Enrique Mora, Theresa Rykaczewsky and Eloy Castroverde with artists talks.
- Maura Delgado, saxophone performance
- Sabrina Krisberg, cello performance

From 8 to 10 p.m.:

- Mi Son Salsa live band
- Dr. Arun Gulani, Gulani Vision Institute and fashion designs on the runway in collaboration with the Cultural Center
- Avid Smith, guitarist (Indian sitar), Academy of Music and Art performance
- Lindsey and Loreal Liske, Academy of Music and Art performance

Apex to present 'Little Women' at Flagler College

Apex Theatre Studio will continue its summer season with the musical adaptation of "Little Women" at 8 p.m. Friday, July 9, and Saturday, July 10, at Lewis Auditorium on the campus of Flagler College, 16 Granada St. in St. Augustine.

Based on author Louisa May Alcott's life, "Little Women" follows the adventures of four sisters, Jo, Meg, Beth and Amy March.

Produced nationally and internationally, "Little Women" has been praised by critics for its ambition in adapting such a well-known story for the stage. The story is brought to life in this musical filled with personal discovery, heartache, hope and love.

The cast features students from Apex Theatre Studio's advanced musical theater workshop and adult teaching artists. The role of Jo March is played by Malorie Sievert, a rising sophomore at Elon University's musical theater program. The role of Professor Bhaer is played by guest artist Matt Morgan, lecturer in vocal performance at the University of Florida.

The production is under the direction of Justin Anderson, associate artistic director at Atlanta's Aurora Theatre. Tickets are \$25.

Further reservation and ticket information can be found at www.apextheatrejax.com/events.

UPCOMING SHOWS

THE SOUND OF MUSIC

August 12 - September 26

.....

YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN

September 30 - November 7

Local nature photographers to discuss work at Beaches Museum

Join Beaches Museum and the Timucuan Parks Foundation for a discussion with Will Dickey and Tom Schifanella on "Land and Air: The Nature Photography of Will Dickey and Tom Schifanella" at 6:30 p.m. Thursday, July 15 at the Beaches Museum.

Discover Jacksonville's wilderness parks through the lens of award-winning photographers Will Dickey and Tom Schifanella as they share the inspiration

PHOTOGRAPHY continues on Page 27

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Country singer-songwriter Jamey Johnson to perform at Amp on July 10

The St. Augustine Amphitheatre announced singer-songwriter Jamey Johnson and special guest Whiskey Myers will take the stage at The Amp on Saturday, July 10, for a full-capacity concert.

An aa-time Grammy-nominated singer-songwriter, Johnson is “one of the greatest country singers of our time,” according to The Washington Post. He is one of only a few people in the history of country music to win two Song of the Year Awards from both the Country Music Association and Academy of Country Music.

His 2008 album, “That Lonesome Song,” was certified platinum for 1 million in sales, and his 2010 ambitious double album, “The Guitar Song,” received a gold certification.

In addition, he won two Song of the Year Trophies, for “Give It Away” and “In Color,” both from the Academy of Country Music and the Country Music Association. He has received tremendous praise from The New York Times, Rolling Stone, The Wall Street Journal and other publications, many of which have hailed his albums as masterpieces.

In 2012, the Alabama native released his fifth studio album, a tribute project to late songwriter Hank Cochran. The

Grammy-nominated “Living for a Song: A Tribute to Hank Cochran” paired him with Willie Nelson, Alison Krauss, Emmylou Harris, Ray Price, Elvis Costello, George Strait, Vince Gill and Merle Haggard.

In 2013, the Nashville Scene’s 13th annual Country Music Critics’ Poll named it the year’s best album.

Genre-bending band Whiskey Myers have played more than 2,500 live shows since its emergence in 2007 and sold out 95% of its headlining shows during the most recent year of touring to ever-increasing crowds. The band’s self-produced fifth studio album, “Whiskey Meyers,” out now on the band’s own Wiggy Thump Records, debuted atop the Country and Americana/Folk sales charts, at No. 2 on the Rock chart and No. 6 on the all-genre Billboard 200 chart. The self-titled project follows previous album, “Mud,” which reached No. 1 on the iTunes country chart.

Tickets for Jamey Johnson and special guest Whiskey Myers are on sale at The St. Augustine Amphitheatre box office and online at Ticketmaster.com. The box office is open 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Thursdays and Fridays, and 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Saturdays. For more information, go to www.theamp.com.



Photos provided by the Beaches Museum
A nature photograph by Will Dickey

Photography

Continued from 26

and techniques behind their spectacular images of Northeast Florida’s natural wonders. Dickey presents wildlife, land and seascape views on the ground while Schifanella offers a birds’-eye view captured by drone. A book signing will follow the presentation.

This event will take place in-person at Beaches Museum, located at 381 Beach



An aerial photograph by Tom Schifanella, taken via a drone.

Bldv. in Jacksonville Beach with limited attendance. Social distancing and masks are required. It will also be available virtually through Zoom.

The event is part of the Beaches Museum and the Timucuan Parks Foundation’s exhibit, “Celebrate & Explore Our Wilderness Parks.” This event is free to museum members with a \$5 suggested donation for nonmembers.

For more information about this exhibit or the discussion, go to www.beaches-museum.org or call (904) 241-5657.

Cultural

Continued from 26

and adult programming among the many opportunities to bring artistic life to the region.

Guzzo said, “The link is paving the way for a partnership that is visionary. There is a natural fit between both our organizations as we want to nurture creativity and originality.”

For more information, contact Callie Johnson, Cultural Center community connections manager at 904-280-0614 ext. 1202 or email cjohnson@ccpvb.org.

For further information about Cultural Center memberships, classes, programs and services, go to ccpvb.org.

The Cultural Center at Ponte Vedra Beach is located at 3972 3rd St. South in Jacksonville Beach. Hours are 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday, with after hour appointments available.

THEME: MOTTOS AND SLOGANS

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ACROSS

1. 1965 march site
6. Bottle top
9. Dried up
13. Can't see the forest for this?
14. *___ You Need is Love
15. ___-upper
16. End of a poem
17. Filmmaker Spike
18. Like a good athlete?
19. **Tastes So Good, Cats Ask for It by Name"
21. *"The Quicker Picker Upper"
23. Duke of Cambridge to Prince of Wales
24. Blood vessel
25. The Jackson 5 1970 hit
28. Plural of velum
30. Havanese or Pekingese
35. High school formal
37. What the phone did
39. Abrupt increase
40. *___ John's: "Better Ingredients. Better Pizza."
41. Working shoelaces
43. Island east of Java
44. Shockingly graphic
46. Hurtful remark
47. Design detail
48. Canine's coat
50. Law school prerequisite, acr.
52. a.k.a. Tokyo
53. Muscovite or biotite
55. Uber alternative
57. *"Let's Go Places" advertiser
60. *"Can You Hear Me Now?" advertiser
64. On the fritz
65. Wharton degree
67. Upholstery choice
68. Bell-bottoms bottom
69. Emergency responder, acr.
70. Prenatal test, for short
71. Medieval Northern European
72. Be obliged
73. Reconnaissance, for short

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Fill in the blank squares in the grid, making sure that every row, column and 3-by-3 box includes all digits 1 through 9.

11. Count on
12. Before, poetically
15. Floras' partners
20. Apathetic
22. Crude fuel
24. Flavoring from Madagascar
25. *"Think Different" advertiser
26. Former Milwaukee Brewer All Star Ryan
27. Dried coconut meat
29. *"Betcha Can't Eat Just One" advertiser
31. Drinking establishments
32. Blind alternative
33. Checked out
34. *"So Easy, a Caveman Can Do It" advertiser
36. Disfigure
38. African migrants
42. Actress turned princess of Monaco
45. Lower a rank
49. Ignited
51. Tooth decay agent
54. Tarantino in his own movie, e.g.
56. Biotic community
57. Story "of Two Cities"
58. October stone
59. Nomad's round house
60. Flower holder
61. Dietary mineral
62. Medley
63. Ne
64. *"It's Finger Lickin' Good"
66. *"The Ultimate Driving Machine"

DOWN

1. Part of a flute
2. Marine eagle
3. What malevolent and levorotary have in common
4. Jellicles' cries
5. Isaac of science fiction fame
6. Burnt metal residue
7. India pale ___
8. Annapolis frosh
9. Leo or Virgo, e.g.
10. Sign above a door

Sports

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www.PonteVedraRecorder.com



Photo provided by Nicole Greene

PVHS alum Nicole Greene holds up her third-place medal from the women's high jump competition at the U.S. Olympic Trials in June.

Former PVHS standout Nicole Greene aims at medical career after Olympic narrow miss

By Anthony Richards

Nicole Greene just missed out on becoming the first high jumper from Ponte Vedra High School to make the U.S. Olympic team, but she has a pretty good backup plan in the form of medical school.

Despite finishing third in the women's high jump at the U.S. Olympic Track and Field Trials a couple of weeks ago and achieving not one, but two personal best marks during the final round of competition at historic Hayward Field in Eugene, Oregon, she came up just short of clearing the Olympic standard height required to automatically secure a spot.

Her second personal best was 6 feet, 4 inches, which would have been good enough in recent years to qualify for the Olympic Games, but the standard was raised to 6 feet 5 inches for this year.

"Getting 6-4 has always been the mark you want for all of the Olympics I've seen," Greene said.

According to Greene, only 13 women

have cleared 6 feet 5 inches and her 6-4 jump in the final would put her in a tie for 19th in the world.

However, the remaining Olympic spots in Tokyo were decided by taking the highest non-qualifiers from the top 32 in the world ranking, where Greene sits 58th.

Personal records are always an impressive feat, but what makes Greene's accomplishment at the U.S. trials even more so is that she did it while studying for the Medical College Admission Test (MCAT).

"You can do more than you think you can and more than you say you can," Greene said.

Although balancing both was challenging, it is one that Greene fully embraced.

"I've always said that I'm not just an athlete or a student, I'm both," Greene said. "Making it to the finals would have been great."

GREENE continues on Page 29

Nease OL Sam Dec commits to play football, serve country at Army

By Anthony Richards

Many high schoolers commit to universities to play their specific sport at the college level, but for Sam Dec, his commitment to play football at the United States Military Academy means that and so much more.

The Nease senior verbally committed to Army via Twitter on June 29 and not only will he get the opportunity to continue playing the sport he loves, but he has also

committed to serving and defending the country he loves.

"It's just a great feeling overall, because since middle school it has always been a distant dream, so it's great for it to be actually happening," Dec said.

For Dec, his decision came down to choosing between several schools, such as Navy, Air Force, UMass, Colorado State and Arkansas State.

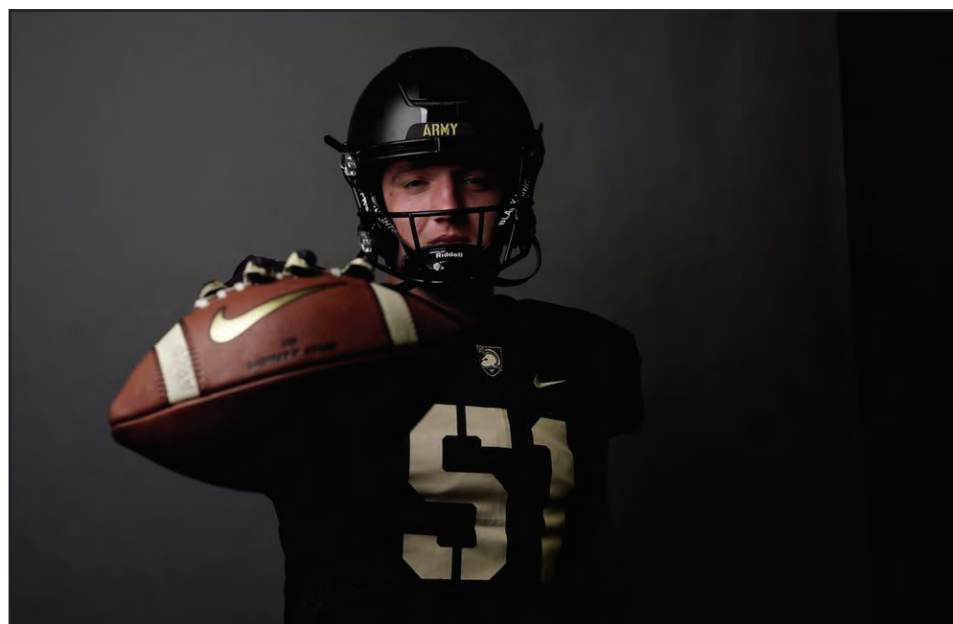


Photo provided by Sam Dec

Nease senior offensive tackle Sam Dec verbally committed to play football at Army via Twitter on June 29.

DEC continues on Page 29

Legislation allows college athlete compensation

Following Gov. Ron DeSantis' signature on HB 845 that allows college athletes to be compensated for their name, image or likeness (NIL), on July 1, Commissioner of Education Richard Corcoran was joined by Rep. Chip LaMarca and Florida State University quarterback McKenzie Milton, along with fellow teammates, as he signed a contract with Miller's Ale House to be paid for the use of his NIL. Florida is one of the first states in the nation to allow student athletes to earn compensation for their NIL.

Many college athletes leave school in debt, despite giving their time and risking injury to play sports they love at their schools. Ninety-nine percent of these athletes will never earn a meaningful professional income in their sport. For the short time these student athletes are participating in college sports, they will now have the opportunity to earn income for the commitment they make on the playing field.

"Thanks to Gov. DeSantis' leadership on this long overdue commonsense policy, more than 11,000 college athletes throughout Florida will finally be allowed to

gain financially for the use of their name, image or likeness," Corcoran said. "These athletes deserve the recognition that comes with their athletic success and upholds Florida's commitment to be a driving force for fairness in college athletics. I also want to thank Rep. Chip LaMarca and our legislative leaders for their support of this bill."

Corcoran was joined by Luis Pardillo, CEO of Dreamfield, a Florida-based startup that will create jobs and opportunities for college athletes in Florida and across the nation. On June 30, the NCAA, which oversees college athletics, approved suspending restrictions on payments to athletes for things such as sponsorship deals, online endorsements, personal appearances and to allow entering into agreements with agents without jeopardizing their college eligibility.

"Thank you to our leaders in Florida like Rep. Chip LaMarca, Commissioner Richard Corcoran and Gov. Ron DeSantis for creating a pro-business environment for startups like Dreamfield to be possible, and also for now clearing the way for our college athletes to join us in the free mar-

ket," Pardillo said.

Senate Bill 646 was passed during the 2020 Legislative Session to allow for athlete compensation and House Bill 845, passed in the 2021 Legislative Session, affirmed the effective date as July 1.

"I am very grateful to have had the opportunity to work with our state leaders to make today possible for all collegiate athletes across Florida," Milton said. "I look forward to see what all of my peers can now accomplish, and what we at Dreamfield can do to support them."

On June 10, 2021, the state Board of Education approved Rule 6A-14.0582 that outlines the requirements and procedures to allow intercollegiate student athletes within the Florida College System to earn compensation for the use of their name, image or likeness. The rule also requires all student athletes to complete financial literacy and life skills workshops. The Florida Board of Governors, which oversees the state university system, will enact similar regulations.

"When we drafted this legislation, it was all about fairness for collegiate athletes, from men's football to women's softball,

and every single athlete in between," LaMarca said. "And every time I pictured an athlete having this opportunity in the great State of Florida, I pictured someone with the humility and honesty of McKenzie Milton. Having had the opportunity to spend some time with this young warrior, I realized that this is the type of individual that would be the face of this change. We leveled the playing field in Florida and athletes like McKenzie chose us over the other 49 states to enter the free market."

SB 845 also prohibits state funds from being used to join or maintain membership in an association whose decisions or proposed decisions are a result of, or in response to, actions proposed or adopted by the legislature, if such decisions or proposed decisions will result in a negative fiscal impact to the state. The Board of Governors must notify any association if the association's actions or proposed actions may require public postsecondary institutions to withdraw from such association.

For more information about the Florida Department of Education, go to www.fldoe.org.

Dec

Continued from 28

According to Dec, choosing between the military academies was extremely difficult, because they each possessed something special.

However, he always felt a connection with Army from the first time he toured the campus.

"That was my first visit, and I had a really good feeling going away," Dec said. "It felt like a really good fit for me."

Dec primarily plays along the offensive line at the tackle spot and was recruited to do so at the next level as well.

"I've always thought of the o-line as being pretty selfless," Dec said. "I think that fits with my personality, because I'm not really one that needs to be in the spotlight."

He started playing football when he was about 7 years old and in recent years has really found his place along the offensive line, using his 6-foot-4-inch and 250-pound frame to his advantage.

He is a three-sport athlete for the Panthers, also playing lacrosse and basketball.

"I've always been pretty big," Dec said. "I'm not so much thick as I am tall."

It is one thing to have the size and physical makeup, but the area where he has seen the most improvement over the years is with the mental side required to be successful in the trenches.

"My overall understanding of the game has grown," Dec said. "When you're coming from middle school it can hit you like a brick wall trying to learn all those new plays and terminology. Knowing your blocking assignments is half the battle."

According to Dec, he was the lone returning starter on last year's team and was surrounded by a bevy of young players, who he hopes will help the Panthers take a step forward with a year of experience under their belts.

Dec planned to make his college decision during the



Photo provided by Sam Dec

Sam Dec stands on the field of Michie Stadium with his dad Matthew Dec during a recruiting visit to the United States Military Academy on June 11.

summer, and now that he has, he is excited to just focus on his senior year at Nease.

"It definitely is a big relief because the recruiting process can be very overwhelming at points," Dec said.

Greene

Continued from 28

She knew from an early age that she wanted to have a career in a healthcare field because both her parents are doctors.

"Watching them over the years, they were great inspirations," Greene said.

She first attempted track and field in sixth grade while at Episcopal School in Jacksonville after her mother suggested she go out for the team because she was running and skipping around the house all the time.

Sprint events was how she got her start, but by the time she got to PVHS she turned her focus more and more to the high jump and wound up competing in college at the University of North Carolina.

Greene had until June 29 to clear the 6-5 standard in competition, and she was determined to not go down without a fight, so she made the trip back from Oregon and a week later took part in the JAC Golden Southeast Classic hosted by Bolles School in Jacksonville.

The last stitch effort was not enough as she cleared 6 feet 2 inches.

Although she will not get the chance to compete in the Olympics, she has represented her country on the international stage, including finishing fifth at the 2016 IAAF World U20 Championships in Poland and finishing eighth at the 2019 Pan American Games in Peru.

"Most of the things that come to you will come when you least expect it," Greene said. "Always have patience and don't let anyone say what you can and can't do. That's up to you."

Greene does not know if she will attempt another run at the Olympics in four years, but she is looking forward to a medical career and that is where her attention will now shift.

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