

Your Community Voice for 50 Years

PONTE VEDRA



December 23, 2021
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75 cents

PonteVedraRecorder.com

Recorder

Not your average newspaper, not your average reader



MERRY CHRISTMAS

Season's greetings to all our readers! You will find lots of holiday joy throughout this week's issue. Cover photos: Deck The Chairs, Nights of Lights, Santa visiting the link, the Nocatee Light Show and a very tall nutcracker at the link's Holiday Party.

Photos by Shaun Ryan, Anthony Richards and Susan Griffin



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



REMEMBERING A LEGEND
Community bids farewell to Sterling Joyce.
See page 22

SPORTS
Sydney Gomes of the Nease girls basketball team has surpassed 2,000 points.
See page 28



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One of Us

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Send us your news

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



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BRIEFS

School Employees of Year selected

The 2021-22 School-Related Employees of the Year have been selected from each of the district's 43 schools, along with three district representatives. School-related employees are essential to the successful operation of a school or school district office.

These nominees were chosen for the significant contributions they have made in their schools and community and to the school district as a whole. Criteria for the award includes exemplary job performance, dedication on the job, interpersonal skills, leadership ability, in-service/training to upgrade skills and contributions to the school and school district environment.

School-Related Employees of the Year for local schools are: Courtenay Page, Alice B. Landrum Middle School; Nicole Cooks, Allen D. Nease High School; Kathleen MacGilvray, Ocean Palms Elementary School; Nelson Chute, Palencia Elementary School; Alice Fasula, Palm Valley Academy; Kathleen Tompkins, Pine Island Academy; Daniel Clark, Ponte Vedra High School; Bradson Ephraim,

PVPV/Rawlings Elementary School; and Joy Calvo, Valley Ridge Academy.

Real estate company gives gifts to children in foster care

Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Network Realty is helping to make the holidays extra special for 80 Northeast Florida children in foster care.

The company's Metro Offices of Avondale/Ortega and San Marco/San Jose took part in Family Support Services of North Florida's annual Be an Angel holiday drive, an effort to make Christmas special for First Coast children in out-of-home care. Angels buy gifts from a child's wish list or make a monetary donation so that the children receive Christmas presents they would not otherwise be able to enjoy this time of year.

Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Network Realty Realtor Kimberly Waterhouse managed the real estate firm's campaign. With the support of the Metro team, she collected and purchased gifts to make Christmas wishes come true for 40 children in foster care.



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Florida's First Lady announces expansion of Hope Ambassadors Clubs

Florida First Lady Casey DeSantis announced Friday, Dec. 17, that 100 Florida schools have started Hope Ambassadors Clubs in 39 school districts. This represents a 300% increase from the 25 Florida schools that participated during the 2020-21 school year.

In addition, the First Lady announced a donation of \$100,000 from Simply Healthcare Plans Inc. (Simply) to benefit the statewide Hope for Healing Initiative, which will help support Florida's Hope Ambassadors.

Hope Ambassadors is a partnership between the state Department of Education, Volunteer Florida and now 100 middle and high schools. The program was launched by the First Lady in December 2019 with the goal of creating a setting where students can volunteer, mentor their peers and help foster kind and compassionate environments.

In the pilot program, which began in the 2020-21 school year, 25 schools started Hope Ambassadors clubs, with more than 300 student participants.

"As the First Lady, I have made it a priority to travel throughout Florida to learn more about our schools, students

and families," said Casey DeSantis. "Through my visits with parents in the state and as the mother of three young children myself, I know that parents need and want a safe, healthy and happy learning environment for their children. It is heartwarming to see the Hope Ambassadors program grow so quickly to meet the needs of our faculty, students and parents. These new clubs will create positive settings for children to volunteer, mentor their peers and help foster kindness. I am overjoyed by the drive and compassion of Florida's youth."

Students may seek the guidance of a teacher or counselor to help start a Hope Ambassadors Club at their school and participate in community projects, service events and after-school activities that show how simple acts of kindness can change lives – both peer mentors and those they would be helping.

Each participating school receives \$500 to develop and launch a Hope Ambassadors Club.

"At Simply, we're focused on ditching the stigma tied to mental health and ensuring our youth receive the proper resources and care to strengthen their

mental health," said Holly Prince, Florida plan president of Simply. "We're excited to team up with First Lady Casey DeSantis to deliver support in a meaningful way."

"The team at Volunteer Florida is looking forward to working with each of these 100 clubs and supporting them as they lift up their peers, their schools and their communities," said Volunteer

Florida CEO Corey Simon. "Volunteerism is a core component of the Hope Ambassadors Initiative, and I've seen firsthand the tremendous impact it can have on a community."

For a list of the Hope Ambassadors Clubs or to learn more, go to fldoe.org/hopeambassadors.

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OBITUARIES

Ruth K. Reid



Ruth K. Reid

Ruth K. Reid, age 94, passed away peacefully Sunday morning, December 5, 2021, at her home in Ponte Vedra Beach, FL. She was born in Pittsburgh, PA on May 14, 1927, to the late Edward W. and Matilda (Matchertz) Kartlick.

After high school, Ruth attended Westminster College in New Wilmington, PA and then graduated

from the Chamberlain School of Retailing Fashion, a two-year fashion/business college in Boston, MA. Upon completing her studies, Ruth accepted a position as Executive Secretary to the president of Forest Oil Corporation in Bradford, PA. It was there that she met the love of her life, David I. Reid, a young businessman. They were married on October 2, 1954 and shared a wonderful life together until David's passing 52 years later.

Ruth's love of her daughters was equaled only to that which she had for her grandsons. She was so proud of her grandsons and adored them deeply. She would light up with a huge smile when she was able to spend time with them at her home or playing golf.

Ruth was an active member of every church she belonged to, serving as a Deacon, singing in the choir, and enjoying the many friends she made. She was honored with the Woman of the Year Award

in 2015 at the Hyde Park Presbyterian Church in Tampa, FL. Additionally, she volunteered for various organizations throughout the years, including Meals on Wheels, Blood Bank, hospital Candy Strippers, Prime Timers and Philanthropic Education Organization (P.E.O.), a pioneering organization advocating academic opportunity and equality for women around the globe. For fun, Ruth loved going to the theater, traveling and was adventurous to try new activities. She enjoyed golf, learning the game at age 63, and was proud that she got a hole in one before she retired from golfing in her 80s. She was a competitive game player, and especially enjoyed bridge which she still played this year. She was an avid cookie baker and a warm, gracious hostess, who delighted in entertaining her family and friends.

Ruth is the beloved mother of Karin Reid Lee and her husband Roger, Peggy Reid Rhodes and her husband Michael Gartland; dearly loved grandmother of David E. Rhodes and Brian R. Lee; and Aunt to many nieces.

Ruth was preceded in death by her cherished husband, David, and parents, Edward and Matilda, brothers Edward Kartlick, Jr. and Richard Kartlick, and son-in-law, Roger E. Rhodes.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to P.E.O. Chapter Q, a philanthropic organization that provides educational opportunities for women worldwide, or a charity of your choice.

PEO Address: Susan Zepko, Treasurer PEO Chapter Q, 3809 W San Luis Street, Tampa, FL 33629

DEATH NOTICES

Mary Louise Farrell

Mary Louise Farrell, 93, of Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida, died Dec. 10, 2021. Ponte Vedra Valley Funeral Home, Cremation Center & Cemetery – 904-285-1130 – www.pontevedravally.com

Mary A. Fiore

Mary A. Fiore, 91, of Ponte Vedra, Florida, died Dec. 14, 2021. Arrangements by Quinn-Shalz Family Funeral Home & Cremation Centre. 904-249-1100 www.quinn-shalz.com

Leonard "Jay" Langfelder

Leonard "Jay" Langfelder, 88, of Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida, died Dec. 10, 2021. Ponte Vedra Valley Funeral Home, Cremation Center & Cemetery – 904-285-1130 – www.pontevedravally.com

Alexander J. Shumay

Alexander J. Shumay, 70, of Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida, died Dec. 8, 2021. Ponte Vedra Valley Funeral Home, Cremation Center & Cemetery – 904-285-1130 – www.pontevedravally.com

Dr. David Deal Snyder

Dr. David Deal Snyder, 90, of Jacksonville, Florida, died Dec. 10, 2021. Ponte Vedra Valley Funeral Home, Cremation Center & Cemetery – 904-285-1130 – www.pontevedravally.com

Edward Tamburro

Edward Tamburro, 67, of Ponte Vedra, Florida, died Dec. 13, 2021. Ponte Vedra Valley Funeral Home, Cremation Center & Cemetery – 904-285-1130 – www.pontevedravally.com

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Bolles Ponte Vedra Beach Campus students harvest carrots

Some of the youngest gardeners on the Bolles Lower School Ponte Vedra Beach Campus harvested dozens of carrots last week during Carolyn Houston's science class. The hands-on lesson included an outdoor excursion to the campus' raised

garden beds, where students learned how to properly pull carrots from the ground. They later observed the colorful roots in the lab. The carrots will later be used to prepare students' healthy lunch menus in Ponte Vedra Hall.



A Bolles student digs up a carrot



A Bolles student shows a carrot she harvested.



Bolles students hold up the carrots they harvested.

Contributed photos

Student named Bolles Ponte Vedra Campus Principal for the Day

Emelia Slaughter, class of '31, assumed her duties as Principal for the Day on the Bolles Lower School Ponte Vedra Beach Campus on Dec. 10.

Her full day of work included visiting every classroom on campus, covering the front desk, taking phone calls and being a positive, encouraging campus leader. Bolles Lower School Ponte Vedra Beach Campus Head Stacey Hendershot said

Emelia did an "amazing" job.

Emelia was named to the position through her parents' participation in a "Wheel of Fortune" game at The Bolles Fund Kick-Off party this fall.

Bolles Lower School Whitehurst Campus Head Christy Lusk said she has two Principals for the Day lined up to take over her position in the early days of 2022.



Photo provided by Bolles Lower School Ponte Vedra Beach

Principal for the Day Emelia Slaughter conducts business at Bolles Lower School Ponte Vedra Beach.

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Chaz Huguenard Jr. is vice president and financial advisor at IberiaBank/First Horizon, which is a position he recently took over after years in the business working for Merrill Lynch. He is in the midst of overseeing the launch of private client banking and wealth management services at IberiaBank/First Horizon. He and his family moved to Ponte Vedra Beach in 2014 and they love the combination of warm weather, while still maintaining a variation of climates and seasons throughout the year.

Chaz Huguenard Jr.

As told to Anthony Richards

Tell us a little about yourself and your background?

My family and I relocated from Indiana in 2014 to Ponte Vedra Beach, and we've been super happy with that decision. We were just looking for what everyone else looks for when they move to Florida, which is great weather.

What was the path like to becoming vice president, financial advisor at IberiaBank/First Horizon?

I started working in a bank and began looking into the various paths that could be taken.

I decided what I wanted to do in 2014, which is also when we made the move to Florida. I recently joined IberiaBank/First Horizon after being at Merrill Lynch for years.

How has the transition been since joining IberiaBank/First Horizon?

It has been great to be at the forefront of launching private client banking and wealth management services for the very first time at IberiaBank/First Horizon.

I was brought in to help lead this charge and implement these services to the people in Jacksonville and the surrounding areas.

It is a great opportunity to showcase something new and fresh to the local community.

What do you enjoy most about the job?

Being able to get in on the ground floor of this exciting opportunity was too good to pass up. I now have the ability to work and play here in Ponte Vedra Beach and in the same community as where we live and call home. Things are even better than expected.

The core of our business is based on relationships and gaining trust through the advice you give.

Generally, people think of these financial services as a plan in place for when anything in life comes up.

People rely on us as their primary adviser. It is great to know that you can really help people and that you are their first call.

What are some of the challenges you've faced?

The merger is a bit of a marketing challenge because people are used to the IberiaBank name and First Horizon is a much broader clientele.

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

There are great people here and great people arriving every day to the area. I have two children and the schools are fantastic. It is a great place to raise a family.



Photo courtesy of IberiaBank/First Horizon

Chaz Huguenard Jr. is overseeing the launch of private client banking and wealth management services at IberiaBank/First Horizon.

Also, being from Indiana I wanted some variation in the weather, which you just don't get the farther south you go.

What do you like to do in your free time?

My two sons are very involved in local sports, so much of the free time my wife Jennifer and I have

revolves around supporting them in their recreational activities.

Coby plays on a basketball team at the Y and Cameron is a member of the Landrum Middle School football team.

We also enjoy taking advantage of having the beach close by.



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The First Noel

Christ Episcopal Church held first service on Christmas Eve, 1951

By Maggie FitzRoy

Holiday cheer rang out, and joy and excitement filled the air in Ponte Vedra Beach on Christmas Eve, 1951. The first service at the new Episcopal church in the heart of the community was about to begin.

It would take place in candlelight because electricity had not yet been installed. And the pews hadn't arrived yet. But after months of construction, the small sanctuary building was ready — a dream come true for many devout churchgoers who'd collectively worked to establish a Christian place of worship in the then-tiny town.

"People helped in many ways," to get ready for that service, wrote one of the leaders, James "Jimmy" Randolph Brown, in a Dec. 17, 1976, Ponte Vedra Recorder article commemorating the 25th anniversary of Christ Episcopal Church. "Many days just before Christmas you'd see 20 or 30 people working around the church ... picking up trash, planting things, sweeping floors. It was truly a wonderful, warm experience."

In 1950, Ponte Vedra Beach was so small that Episcopalians attended church at St. Paul's by the Sea in Jacksonville Beach. But around town, many chatted among themselves about wanting to worship closer to home.

So, one day after church, in the spring of that year, Jimmy Brown's wife, Myra, decided to do something about it. She held a meeting on the porch of the Brown

family home at 306 Ponte Vedra Blvd. to discuss the possibilities, and the gathering lasted for hours. The group included Bonnie and Ed Vreze, Hinkie and Rod Gilliland, Hettie Rowe and several others.

Before long the effort took off with the enthusiastic support of the Rt. Rev. Frank A. Juhan, bishop of the Diocese of Florida.

By the fall of 1950, the land, designs and funding were in place. And a groundbreaking was planned for February 1951.

"We set Christmas Eve as a target for completion," wrote Jimmy Brown, then president of the Ponte Vedra Community Association. "The Bishop wondered, 'Do you think you can make it by Christmas?' We replied, 'If you say a little prayer for us, we will.' 'Good,' [he said], 'I'll reserve the date.'"

Randy Brown, Jimmy and Myra's son, remembers well that first service, officiated by Bishop Juhan. He was 16 and served as the only acolyte. He's been attending Christ Church ever since, and this year, in celebration of the church's 70th anniversary, plans to serve as an acolyte again at the 8 p.m. Christmas Eve Service.

"The pews didn't get here on time," Randy Brown remembered fondly in an interview. "It was all folding chairs. I had to kneel on plywood and it hurt my knees. Mother had a beautiful rosewood table she inherited from her father," which she donated for that service. She also brought family heirloom candelabras

and made the drapes to go over the table.

"I remember many nights when I went to bed, Myra still working on the altar cloths, and she'd be working on them again when I got up in the morning, as if she hadn't been to bed at all," Jimmy Brown wrote. "It was one of the most beautiful services ever held in Christ Church. Both of us agreed ... we talked about it often ... that helping with the be-

ginning of Christ Church in Ponte Vedra was one of the most wonderful experiences of our lives."

"This little church — this big church now — was born on my mommy and daddy's front porch," Randy Brown says. "I grew up in this church. It's been a big part of my life."

And he's never forgotten the first service, held Christmas Eve, 1951.



Contributed photos

The Rev. Sandy Juhan, first rector of Christ Church, acolyte Randy Brown and the Rt. Rev. Frank Juhan, bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Florida preside over the dedication of an expansion at Christ Church in 1955.



Bishop Frank Juhan, Bishop Hamilton West, the Rev. E.H. Harrison of St. Paul's by the Sea, Harry Fulenwish, James R. Brown, Mrs. Duffield (Hettie) Rowe, Edwin H. Vrieze Jr., Albert Allen, Donald Topping, Fred Woolverton Sr., Byron C. Crawford and choirs from St. Paul's by the Sea are seen at the site dedication for Christ Church on March 11, 1951.



The original church as it appeared in 1951.



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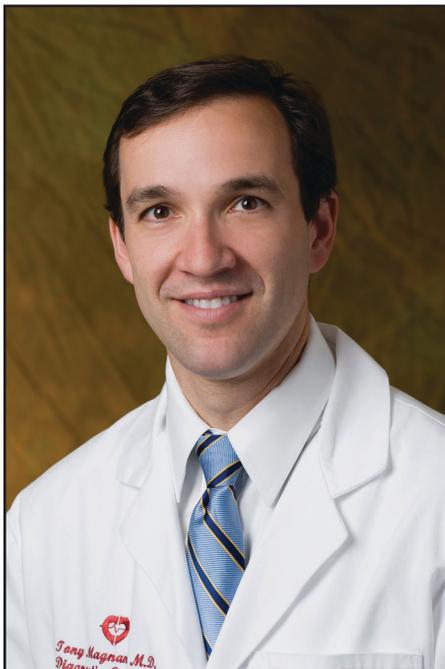
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Heart-healthy habits for a happy holiday



Dr. Anthony Magnano

By Anthony Magnano, M.D.,
Ascension St. Vincent's Riverside

It's the most wonderful time of the year, but unfortunately some of our holiday habits can pose increased risk for our hearts. Research from the American Heart Association has shown a spike in cardiac events during the holiday season, with more people dying from heart attacks between Christmas and New Year's than any other time.

While there are always more errands to run, parties to go to and foods to enjoy this time of year, make it a priority to protect your heart. By preparing a few healthy habits, you can reduce your risk for conditions like heart attack, arrhythmias, heart valve disease and stroke. Here's how you can keep your heart happy and healthy throughout the holidays and beyond.

Know the Signs and Don't Delay Care

During such a busy time of year, it can be easy to dismiss early warning signs of a heart condition or think that a check-up can wait until after the holiday. No one wants to miss out on holiday fun or family time, but sometimes delay can cause heart damage to increase. That's why it's



crucial to know the signs of emergency cardiac events like heart attack or stroke and take action at the first sign.

For stroke, remember the acronym B.E.F.A.S.T. That stands for loss of balance, eyes (loss of vision), face drooping, arm weakness, speech difficulty, time to call 911. Chest discomfort is the primary sign of heart attack, though it may present as more of a dull, heavy pressure or even be absent altogether. Additional symptoms of heart attack include shortness of breath and aches in the arms, back, neck, jaw

or stomach as well as other parts of the upper body. If you are in any sort of distress, such as severe respiratory difficulty or severe lightheadedness, call 911 for help. The sooner you seek medical attention, the better your outcome will be.

Maintain a Healthy Diet

It may be tempting to indulge over the holidays, but consuming large amounts of food high in saturated and trans-fat, cho-

MAGNANO continues on Page 20

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NEW YEAR'S DAY: 12PM to 8PM

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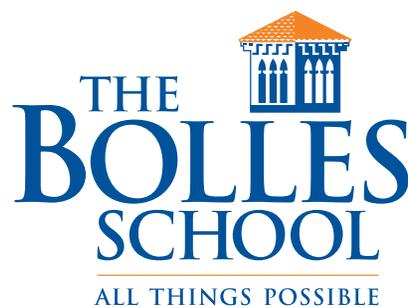
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Baptist Medical Center Beaches named high performing hospital for maternity care

Baptist Medical Center Beaches has been recognized as “high performing” in maternity care by U.S. News & World Report. This is the first time U.S. News has published a list of Best Hospitals for Maternity.

To be recognized among the Best Hospitals for Maternity, hospitals had to excel on multiple quality metrics that matter to expectant families, including complication rates, C-sections, whether births were scheduled too early in pregnancy and how successfully each hospital supported breastfeeding.

Only one-third of the hospitals evaluated by U.S. News for maternity care earned a “high performing” rating.

“All families deserve to be informed on how hospitals perform on key indicators of quality, which is why U.S. News has compiled and published a trove of maternal health data from hospitals across the country,” said Ben Harder, managing editor and chief of health analysis at U.S. News & World Report. “The hospitals we’ve recognized as high performing meet a high standard in caring for patients with uncomplicated pregnancies.”

Baptist Beaches earned a “high

performing” rating in Best Hospitals for Maternity. “High performing” is the highest rating U.S. News awards for that type of care.

“When it comes to the birth of your child, you want to choose a hospital that you can trust,” said Baptist Beaches Hospital President Joe Mitrick. “Being recognized by U.S. News shows how dedicated the OB/GYNs and team members are at Baptist Beaches – providing expert medical care and the best possible experience for moms, babies and their families.”

Unique to the U.S. News site, participating hospital profiles are a one-stop shop and include a variety of relevant offerings for parents-to-be, including key measures of safety, alongside services and amenities, like private rooms, valet parking and availability of child birthing classes.

The evaluation looks at hospital data relating to only uncomplicated pregnancies, not high-risk pregnancies. Participating hospitals responded to a survey from the U.S. News health analysis team in spring of 2021, which reflects data from 2019. Participation was voluntary.



Contributed photo

Baptist Medical Center Beaches has been recognized as “high performing” in maternity care by U.S. News & World Report.

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Grinch theme prevails at Jingle Balls Tournament



Contributed photo

Winners of the 15th annual Jingle Balls Tournament celebrate.

TPC Sawgrass Valley Girls and their guests enjoyed the 15th annual Jingle Balls Tournament on Tuesday Dec. 14. Teeing off on Dye's Valley Course to the 12 Days of Christmas Golf with a theme of "How the Grinch Stole Christmas," the ladies played a four-person shamble with prizes for closest to the pin, closest to The Grinch, best dressed and winning scores.

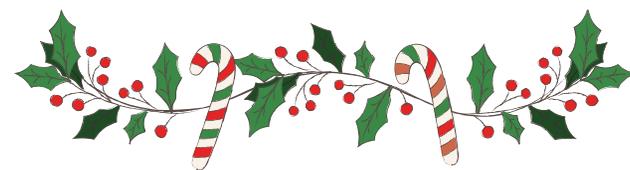
Chairing the event were Sharon Gibbons, Kristin Jewell and Judy Adams with decorations by Maureen Sullivan.

The winning teams were Shane Estock, Kristin Jewell, Maureen Sullivan and Darlene Deo and Maria Ayala, Pong Mattiace, Dot Peck and Jane Rollinson.

Closest to the pin was Jane Rollinson, closest to the Grinch was Sunni McCarty, and best dressed was Teresa Strecker as Cindy Lou Who.

After golf, the players enjoyed dinner in the club's Sunset Room; there was a wedge salad, sweet potato fries, grilled balsamic Brussels sprouts, beef on focaccia bread and decorated cookies. The special cocktail of the evening was a created "Grinch Punch."

The Valley Girls play at TPC Sawgrass on Tuesdays and have six special events per year. The next event is the couples "No Divorce Open" scheduled for February 2022, just in time for Valentine's Day.



A beach Christmas

The Beaches Town Center in Neptune Beach showcases its holiday spirit with a giant Christmas tree. Nothing says holidays at the beaches more than a Christmas tree surrounded by palm trees.

Photo by Anthony Richards



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The link throws festive holiday party

Though Santa Claus is a very busy guy this time of year, he took the time to visit the link Saturday, Dec. 18, for the facility's holiday party.

Kids were invited to fill out wish lists or bring their own from home. In fact, there was a special "Santa Mailbox" on site that Santa could load on his sleigh and take back to the North Pole following the party.

Kids could also get their photos taken with Santa and the Grinch.

The party also featured outdoor carnival-style games and entertainment, LEGO robotics fun with Coach Ivan, tumbling fun with Coach Reilly, Christmas cookies, hot chocolate and Grinch Punch. Kids also had an opportunity to ride the Choo Choo Train.

SAPNA Academy presented a "Polar Express" skit on the link stage, and there was a Christmas concert performance by the Kelly and Scott Quintet.

Also, attendees had a chance to see the winning entry in the link's Gingerbread House Competition.



This elaborate architectural wonder won first place in the link's Gingerbread House Competition.



The Nutcracker towers above the crowd at the link's recent holiday party.



A small child, looking for all the world like Cindy Lou Who, meets The Grinch at the link's recent holiday party.



The Kelly and Scott Quintet entertains at the link's recent holiday party at Flagler Health+.

Photos by Susan Griffin

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Displaying holiday cheer

The following photos from this year's Deck the Chairs display at Jacksonville Beach. Over the years the initiative has become a staple of the holidays for the beach communities with several local businesses and schools getting involved.

Photos by Anthony Richards



Mrs. Claus visits newborns at Flagler Hospital

Santa is very busy this time of year, but Mrs. Claus has a bit more free time on her hands. Friday afternoon, she paid a visit to Flagler Hospital and visited some of the brand new babies. She was able to confirm that they are all on the Nice List.



Photo provided by Flagler Hospital

Mrs. Claus visits with Quinnlee.

Nocatee glows with brightly colored lights

The Nocatee-A-Glow event will be on display through Dec. 30 at Spray Waterpark.

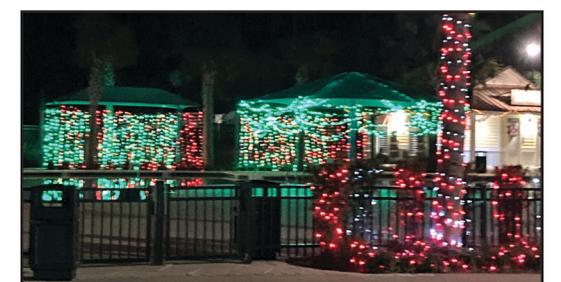
The event features entertainment for local residents and visitors to enjoy amid the community's bright light display. There are also two musical light shows: "Christmas Classics" and "Merrily Modern Christmas."

Adults age 21 and older can also stop by the Blue Water Bar at the Spray Waterpark between 6 and 9:30 p.m. Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays through Dec. 26. Beverages include wine and seasonal craft beers.



Photos by Susan Griffin

Bright lights give Nocatee a festive glow throughout the month of December.





Inventory shortages, high prices plague homebuyers as year comes to close

Rising prices and lagging affordability continued to plague First Coast homebuyers as the year 2021 concludes.

In November, the median sales price of single-family homes in six Northeast Florida counties hit \$350,000, a 4.3% increase from a month ago and a 22.8% increase from November 2020. Meanwhile, the region's condominium and townhouse markets for November reflected a similar rising swell with a combined median sales price of \$231,445, which is 4.4% more from October 2021 and a 22.2% increase from November last year.

“As we wrap up this historic year in real estate, the trend of inventory shortages continues and will go with us into 2022,” said Missi Howell, president of the Northeast Florida Association of Realtors. “Active inventory is down, not only from this time last year, but also last month.”

Howell was referring to a 1.3-month supply of single-family homes – an active inventory of 2,934 single-family units throughout the region in November – a 16.1% drop since last month and a 31.4% drop from November 2020.

Particularly telling was the rise of the average price per square foot in single-family housing to \$183 – a dramatic escalation from \$147 in November 2020.

“The price per square foot of single-family homes increased 24.5% from a year ago, but only .5% from last month, a welcome sign of stabilization,” Howell said. “Prices are not expected to go down, but at least into the first quarter of 2022, wild price increases should remain in check unless we have an unexpected surge in demand as we saw during the first and second quarter of 2021.”

Northeast Florida's affordability index for single-family homes dropped to 101 in November, a 3.8% decrease from October 2021 and a 19.2% decline from November last year. This is another indication that affordable housing is becoming increasingly difficult to obtain as prices continue to rise on the First Coast.

In the single-family housing market, St. John's County's November median sales price hovered at \$479,000. Active inventory of single-family homes dropped 14.9% to 675 units – a 1.3-month supply.

Homes spent a median of 24 days on the market and sellers received 99.7% of their listing prices.

In the Ponte Vedra Beach North region of the county – the least affordable in Northeast Florida with an affordability index of 25 – the median sales price was \$1,430,875, a 13.6% leap from a month ago and a 27.3% increase from last year.

Duval County had 1.2-month supply of inventory of single-family homes in November, a drop of 40.9% from a year ago and an 11.8% decline from last month.

Countywide there was an active inventory of 1,501 single-family units for sale with a median sales price of \$312,750. Homes spent a median of 21 days on the market and sellers received 99.5% of their sales price.

Clay County also experienced a rise in sales prices of single-family homes, boasting a November median sales price of \$337,647, a 3.8% rise from October 2021 and a 32.4% climb from last November. With only a month's supply of inventory, Clay County's active inventory rested at 355 single-family homes. Homes spent a median of 15 days on the market and sellers received 100.2% of their listing prices with 31.9% closing over list price.

Active inventory in Nassau County was 205 single-family homes, a 2.3-month supply. The county's median sales price was \$385,995, and its affordability index was 91.5. Homes spent a median of 20 days on the market and sellers received 99.6% of their listing prices with 22.7% closing over list price.

Putnam County continued to be the most affordable area in Northeast Florida with an affordability index of 193. Putnam's median single-family home sales price of \$183,000, which represents a 4.7% drop from October's median of \$191,990. Putnam had an active inventory of 157 single-family homes, a 3.2-month supply. Homes in Putnam County spent a median of 35 days on the market and sellers received 97.6% of their listing price with 20.4% closing over the asking price.



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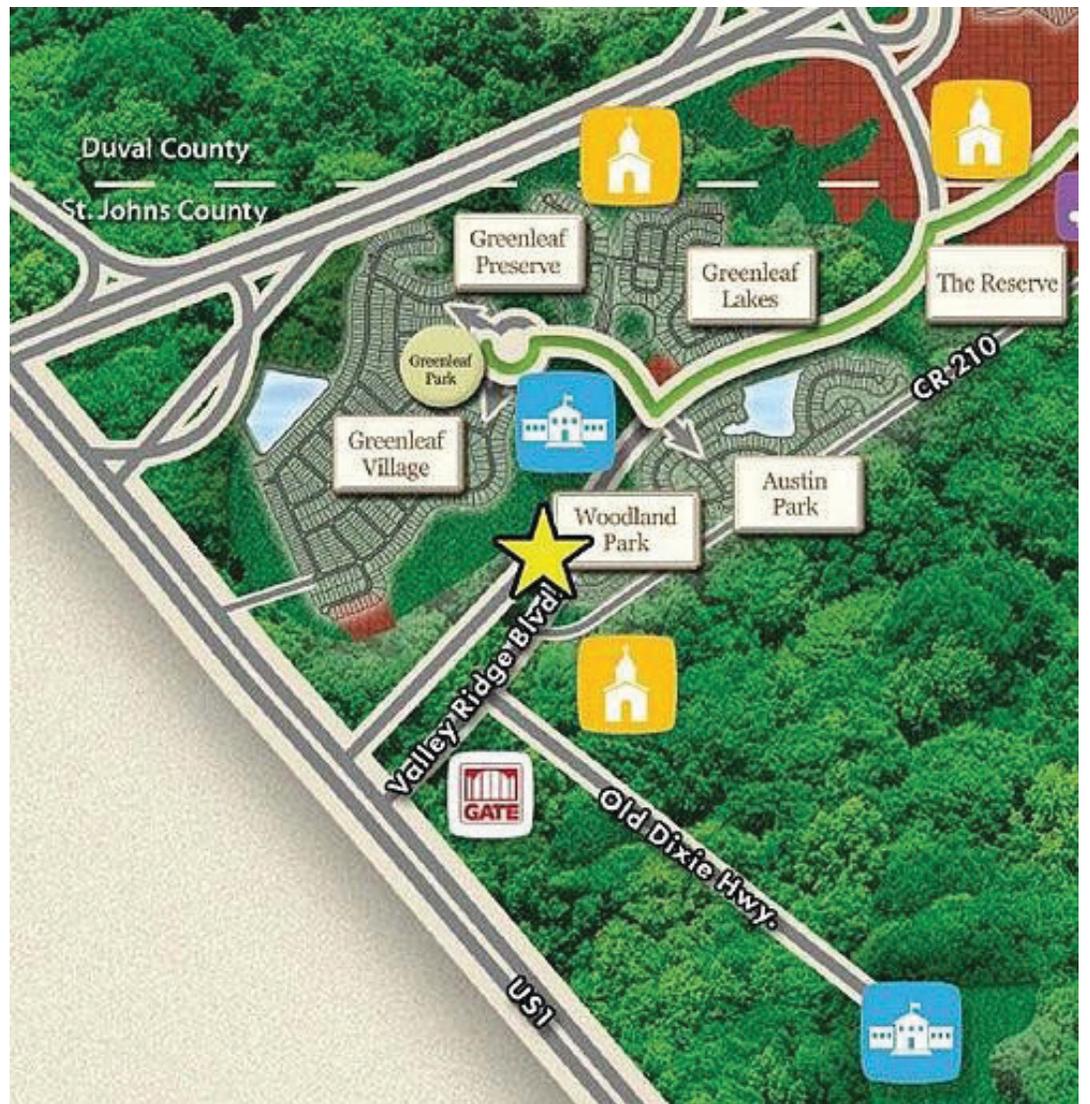
New neighborhood coming to Nocatee

Providence Homes has announced plans for a new neighborhood, Woodland Park at Nocatee, which will consist of 65 two-story townhomes ranging from approximately 1,300 to 1,900 square feet. Providence Homes will begin selling in the summer, with models expected to open later in the year.

“We are thrilled to bring Woodland Park to Nocatee,” said Sean Junker, president and COO of Providence Homes. “Over the past year the townhome market has grown significantly, eclipsing 10% of all home sales in the United States for the first time. We are excited to offer the option to Nocatee buyers looking for the ease of living afforded by this type of community.”

Woodland Park will offer maintenance-free exteriors for those looking to reduce the number of items on their to-do lists. The neighborhood will be located within walking and biking distance of Nocatee Town Center.

After being named the “Best Community to Live” and “Best Place for Kids to Have Fun” in The Ponte Vedra Recorder’s 2021 Best of the Best of Ponte Vedra, Nocatee has more coming in 2022. Next year is expected to see the arrival of Añejo Cocina Mexicana, Premier Martial Arts, interactive educational toy store ToyTopia, Titan Up Fitness and Settler’s Pond, a new recreational amenity for Nocatee residents.



Woodland Park at Nocatee will consist of 65 two-story townhomes.

Image provided by Providence Homes



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Contributed photos

Area Realtors pack meals for the Hunger Fight Pack-a-Thon at the University of North Florida on Dec. 1.

Realtors provide thousands of meals for hungry in Northeast Florida

Approximately 300 members of the Northeast Florida Association of Realtors (NEFAR) packed nearly 75,000 meals for hungry children, seniors and families in Northeast Florida during the NEFAR Charitable Foundation's Hunger Fight Pack-a-Thon on Dec. 1.

The event was held in the ballroom of the Adam W. Herbert University Center at the University of North Florida.

The event was funded with a \$25,000 donation to Hunger Fight from the NEFAR Charitable Foundation. In addition to the 74,256 meals the Realtors bagged up and boxed for Hunger Fight, the donation also covered a gift of 2,545 books for preschoolers that will be part of the nonprofit's efforts to combat illiteracy in the region.

"Hunger Fight is one of our members' favorite annual events," said association President Missi Howell. "Realtors know that communities are more than houses, and making sure our area children have nutritious food when they are not in school is just one of the ways we love to give back."

The event in 2021 marks the fourth time the association has contributed to Hunger Fight through a Pack-a-Thon event and the first time it has contributed to Hunger Fight's new Feed-the-Need-to-Read program, which now runs in conjunction with its Feed-the-Backpack program.

The backpack program provides nutritious meals to Title I elementary school children and their families, while the new reading program provides colorful, age-

appropriate books to underserved preschoolers in daycare centers throughout the region.

"Hunger Fight is all about giving back to those who are not as fortunate as us," said association President-elect Mark Rosener. "Sometimes those folks are in a temporary situation or, for some, it is long-range, but the point of the matter is that we are impacting peoples' lives and providing nourishment and food and one of the basic human needs. And for us to get together as a Realtor group and make that impact is really cool. Human beings for the most part always feel better when they are doing something for others, and Realtors do that every day. But to be able to do it in that big a way, as a group collectively, is a big deal."

PLAYERS chair speaks at Realtors' breakfast

Nearly 100 members of the Northeast Florida Association of Realtors (NEFAR) gathered at The Plantation at Ponte Vedra Club house to hear THE PLAYERS 2022 Tournament Chairman Matt Welch speak during the NEFAR Ponte Vedra Council's

final breakfast meeting of the year.

Several members of the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office were also present to receive a collection of teddy bears donated by the Realtor community for use in various police interactions with children.



Photos provided by Northeast Florida Association of Realtors

Realtor Elise Beard and PLAYERS Tournament Chairman Matt Welch.



NEFAR Ponte Vedra Council Chairman Lisa Sawyer and Tiffany Mayer.



Teddy bears donated by NEFAR members to the Duval County Sheriff's Department.

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'Tees' the Season

Past PLAYERS chairs make surprise donations to local nonprofits

Each year, THE PLAYERS Championship's Red Coats (past tournament volunteer chairs) conduct surprise visits to non-profit organizations throughout Northeast Florida to present charitable donations as part of their Red Coat Grants.

This year, the Red Coats are spreading holiday cheer to several local nonprofits with surprise donations. Here are five of the 51 total recipients of Red Coat Grants this year.

On Dec. 6, the Red Coats served dinner to residents of Gabriel House of Care, which provides affordable lodging in a "community of healing" to adult cancer and transplant patients and their caregivers who come to Jacksonville for life-saving treatments and procedures.

While sharing a meal with the residents, the Red Coats surprised the organization with a \$2,000 grant to support its services and programs, specifically funding to allow patients to stay longer while receiving treatments; support for its

programming, which helps patients and caregivers in reducing stress; and lodging for its veteran residents.

Gabriel House of Care is located at 4599 Worrall Way, Jacksonville.

On Dec. 7, the Red Coats surprised Angelwood with a \$7,500 grant to support the construction of a coffee café, a new program that serves children, adults, seniors and families living with intellectual and developmental differences.

The coffee café will help Angelwood's program participants to gain marketable vocational skills, such as handling cash and credit transactions, customer service, communication and interpersonal skills with peers and customers, as well as how to take instruction and direction from a supervisor.

The Red Coats brought supplies for the café, including hot cocoa for program participants, staff and volunteers.

Angelwood is located at 11251 Phillips

PLAYERS continues on **Page 21**



Photo provided by THE PLAYERS Championship

The Red Coats surprised Angelwood with a \$7,500 grant on Dec. 7.



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Magnano

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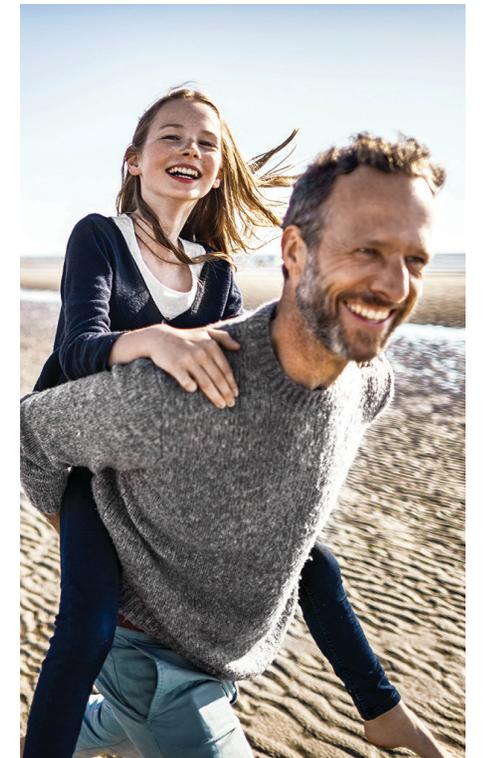
lesterol, sodium and added sugars can put your heart at risk. The few extra pounds gained over the holiday year after year could have a lasting effect. Obesity is a known risk factor for heart attacks. One tip I always suggest is that before you put food on your plate, analyze the spread and choose which foods you will eat or skip. Remember, everything in modera-

tion. You can still enjoy your favorite holiday food while eating smart.

It's also important to be aware of a condition that doctors call "Holiday Heart Syndrome." Binging on alcohol can lead to palpitations, irregular heartbeats and even atrial fibrillation in otherwise healthy individuals. Listen to your body and stay aware of any unusual symptoms you may experience, especially after a big meal. Call your doctor and get medical care right away if you notice anything out of the ordinary.

Stick to Your Meds

The holidays get busy, and people often forget to get prescription refills or bring their medicines when staying with family. Try a medication chart to stay on top of it or set reminders on your phone. No matter the time of year, always continue taking your medications as prescribed, and seek medical attention if you have any new or concerning cardiac symptoms.



Manage Stress

With people to shop for, travel and family parties, there's little time to stop, breathe and relax. Stress can constrict blood vessels, raising blood pressure and increasing risk for conditions like heart attack, stroke, atrial fibrillation and heart failure. Staying active is a great way to reduce stress and help keep off that extra holiday weight. Even moderate exercise can help with holiday stress; for example, take family walks so you can stay active together.

Enjoy the holiday season to the fullest by committing to your heart health. Be mindful of possible heart symptoms, manage your diet, medications and stress, and never delay care if you need it.

Dr. Anthony Magnano is a Ponte Vedra resident and chief of cardiology at Ascension St. Vincent's Riverside. For more information on Dr. Magnano and his specialty treating Atrial fibrillation, go to [Healthcare.ascension.org](https://www.healthcare.ascension.org).

Dear loyal readers,

As 2021 draws to a close, we'd like to thank you for your readership and continued support this year and every year since we became Ponte Vedra's hometown paper of record in 1969.

Being a community's source of local news and information is a great responsibility. Our staff works tirelessly to bring to you thoughtful, in-depth articles on important issues that matter to you and your neighbors. Along the way, we try to spotlight some of the inspiring and uplifting people, events and happenings that make Ponte Vedra and the Beaches such a wonderful place to live, work and raise a family.

But we couldn't do it without you. We thank you for your news tips, your readership, your advertisements and most of all, your commitment to our community. It is our privilege to serve you.

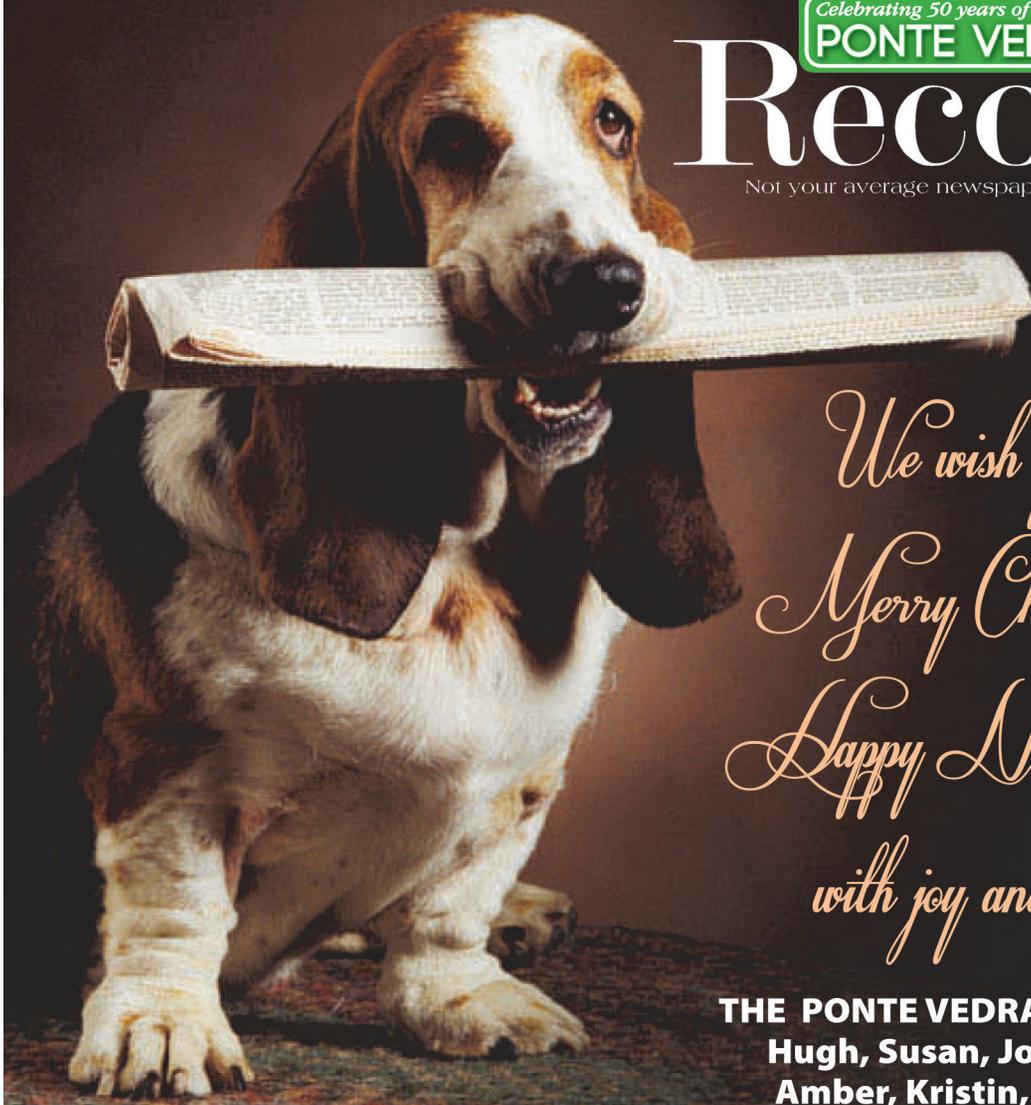
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The Red Coats surprised The Giving Closet Project with a \$10,000 grant on Dec. 17.



The Red Coats surprised the Gabriel House of Care with a \$2,000 grant on Dec. 6.

Photos provided by THE PLAYERS Championship

PLAYERS

Continued from 19

Parkway Drive East, Jacksonville.

On Dec. 9, the gingerbread-decorating contest for participants from Sanctuary on 8th Street concluded. The contest was hosted by the Red Coats. Earlier this month, participants received gingerbread

kits and collectively worked on their houses.

After the judging, participants were surprised with a \$7,500 grant to purchase playground equipment for the program's new community center.

Sanctuary on 8th Street expands opportunities for children and families in need through education, social services, recreation and the arts. It is located at 120

E. 8th St., Jacksonville.

On Dec. 17, the Red Coats wrapped presents and assembled care packages for beneficiaries of The Giving Closet Project (GCP), a nonprofit located on the campus of Martin Luther King Jr. Elementary School in Jacksonville that provides basic needs resources for school communities and social service agencies that work directly with homeless and low-income youth and their families.

During their visit, the Red Coats presented a \$10,000 check to the organization, and the funds will be used to support the program's expansion, especially as demand for its services has continued to increase.

On Dec. 18, the Red Coats delivered more than 100 PLAYERS-themed doughnuts provided by Mini Bar to the campers, staff and volunteers at Camp I Am Special's Winter Day Camp in St. Johns. While the campers enjoyed these treats, THE PLAYERS 2022 Tournament Chairman Matt Welch drove up in a new six-seater golf cart, which the organization can use for transporting its campers. Camp I Am Special is operated by Catholic Charities Jacksonville, which provides

a variety of services to those in need, including adoption/pregnancy services, emergency assistance, workforce development programs, immigration services, assistance for those with disabilities and more.



The Red Coats surprised Sanctuary on 8th Street with a \$7,500 grant on Dec. 9.

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Photos by Anthony Richards

Former Jacksonville Jaguars wide receiver Jimmy Smith shared a story on stage about his close friend Sterling Joyce.

'Unofficial mayor of Jacksonville Beach' remembered

Joyce's life, legacy celebrated at ceremony

By Anthony Richards

Sterling Joyce's life was celebrated with a ceremony and toy drive at Seawalk Pavilion in Jacksonville Beach Dec. 15.

It was clear throughout the night of the impact Joyce made on others over the years and the lasting legacy he will continue to have even years after his death.

Joyce died Dec. 2, just a few days from his 72nd birthday.

One of the things he loved to do was to give back and one way he accomplished this was with his annual toy drive designed to provide a joyful Christmas to local children and their families through the Beaches Emergency Assistance Ministry.

"He would want us to carry on that tradition of caring for each other in our beach community," BEAM Director of Development Gracie Simendinger said.

That tradition of giving continued in his honor and Joyce's children, Tanya and Rod assured that it will continue for years to come.

They also informed the crowd on hand that they will be officially starting the Sterling Joyce Foundation to help preserve everything their father stood for.

"We had some good conversations before he passed away, and we're going to continue his legacy," Rob said. "Everyone knows him as someone with a big smile and who was always caring about others, but he was an even better father."

Tanya Joyce heard several people ask

her father over the years, how it is that so many people love him?

Sterling's response was often "the best way to get people to love you is to love them back," which is one of the things she will remember most about her father.

Former Jacksonville Jaguars wide receiver Jimmy Smith was on hand to remember Sterling, who had become a close friend to him over the years.

"The last four months Sterling started calling me every Monday," Smith said, as he began to get emotional. "However, sometimes I was busy, and I didn't always answer, and I wish now I could have those Mondays back. We need to remember to acknowledge the time that we have with the ones that we have."

The emotions continued as a sampling of the fashion shows Joyce was accustomed to having as part of his fundraisers took place.

The show included two children who came out in their dresses and stood at the end of the stage and threw white rose pedals and candy into the crowd as a tribute to Joyce.

Jacksonville City Councilman Rory Diamond presented a framed proclamation to Joyce's children that recognized their father's compassion toward the communities at the beach throughout the years and the fact that he was known as the "unofficial mayor of Jacksonville Beach."



Jacksonville City Councilman Rory Diamond presented Sterling's children, Tonya and Rod Joyce, with a proclamation recognizing him as the "unofficial mayor of Jacksonville Beach."



Children took part in a memorial fashion show and threw white rose pedals and candy to those in attendance.



Toys were donated and will go to BEAM, a nonprofit helping children and families in need in the local beach communities.



Charlie Walker plays the guitar during the ceremony.



Music was played throughout the event, including several Christmas jingles.



A ceremony and toy drive was held to celebrate the life of Sterling Joyce at the Seawalk Pavilion at Jacksonville Beach Dec. 15.



Santa Claus made an appearance and handed out candy canes to children in the crowd.



Brenda David sang at the event.

Pictures With Sterling

By **Scott A. Grant**

The Beaches lost one of its biggest legends recently. For the past quarter century no one has defined our area more than Sterling Joyce. For as long as many can remember, he has been the unofficial “Mayor of the Beaches.”

People were drawn to the man. When he had an event, they came, bearing gifts for the unfortunate. They came hoping to get their picture taken with the living legend. Hipsters jostled for position. Pretty girls lined up for the opportunity. There were always pretty girls. Sometimes it was fun just to stand back and watch them pose.

Getting your picture taken with Sterling has been a literal rite of passage for thousands of beach residents for decades. Everyone remembers their first time. “It felt like I had arrived,” one prominent resident commented. Few missed the opportunity.

No one can say for sure how many thousands of photos were taken of Sterling. He is probably the most photographed person in Jacksonville. The advent of social media and cell phones created a frenzied demand for that coveted picture. Sterling patiently posed

with each of us in turn. He was truly a gentleman.

Sterling used his celebrity for good. He came from a modest background. He remembered when times were hard. Every event benefited those who were less fortunate. Getting Christmas presents into the hands of children who might otherwise get nothing was a special passion.

When we were struggling to erect a monument to 19 heroes who died by an act of war right off our coast, he got involved. “I like what you are doing, young man,” he told me. He often called people young man. The day of the big event dawned dark and cold and rainy and wet. No one wanted to come. But they came anyway because Sterling was going to be there.

Jimbo Stockton says Sterling Joyce is in a better place, that he is “dancing with Jesus.” I like that image. Sterling loved to dance. But it makes me wonder; do they have selfies in Heaven? It’s comforting to imagine, but it feels a little heretical. But if they have them there, like they do here, I hope my Mom and Dad get one with Sterling.

Scott A. Grant is a local author and frequent contributor to the Recorder.



Photos provided by Scott A. Grant

The author with local legend Sterling Joyce, right.



Everyone wanted to have their photo taken with Sterling Joyce, left. The author is at right.



No one knows how many people have had their photos taken with Sterling Joyce, center. The author is at right.

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Flagler Health+, UF Health collaborating to expand care, training initiatives

Flagler Health+ and UF Health have announced plans to collaborate on an expansion of graduate medical education programs and an array of clinical services across Northeast Florida, including new primary care sites in St. Johns and Flagler counties.

The two organizations are also discussing an exclusive collaboration to provide pediatric emergency care and subspecialty services on Flagler Health+ clinical campuses.

“UF Health has a long track record of bridging scientific discovery with clinical advances that improve the lives of countless patients and of training the next generation of health care providers,” said David R. Nelson, M.D., senior vice president for health affairs at the University of Florida and president of UF Health. “We are excited about our shared vision with Flagler Health+ to take health care to the next level and look forward to our ongoing discussions as we collectively continue to focus efforts across all our missions to deliver outstanding care

for area residents.”

UF Health is exploring bringing its family practice residency programs to the Flagler Health+ Durbin Park and St. Augustine campuses. Additional graduate medical education programs in a variety of specialties also are under consideration. Plans also include having medical, nursing, pharmacy and physician assistant trainees rotate at the various campuses.

Together, Flagler Health+ and UF Health plan to deliver the highest level of clinical quality and safety at all Flagler Health+ clinical campuses, Nelson said.

UF Health has identified several key clinical services to potentially offer at the Flagler Health+ Hospital at Durbin Park, either on-site or through consultative or telehealth access, including burn care, endocrinology, gynecologic subspecialties, nephrology, neonatology, neurology, oral/maxillofacial surgery, ophthalmology, otolaryngology, plastic surgery, podiatry and psychiatry.

UF Health will continue its existing collaboration pro-



Contributed photo

Flagler Health+ and UF Health plan to collaborate on an expansion of graduate medical education programs and an array of clinical services across Northeast Florida.

viding neonatology and neurology services at the Flagler Health+ Hospital St. Augustine campus.

In addition, the health systems plan to work together

FLAGLER continues on **Page 25**

JOSE FELICIANO

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Flager

Continued from 24

to develop and implement a value-based population health delivery system in the Flagler Health+ market area.

The Durbin Park campus of Flagler Health+ is situated on 42.5 acres between Florida 9B and Interstate 95 in northern St. Johns County.

Plans include the construction of a new Flagler Health+ hospital as part of a comprehensive health and wellness campus that furthers the Flagler Health+ vision to advance the physical, social and economic health of Northeast Florida communities.

“This collaboration provides a great deal of flexibility and opportunity to advance the care missions of our two organizations today and in the future, while also preserving the 130-year legacy of Flagler Hospital,” stated Flagler Health+ President and CEO Jason Barrett. “Our shared commitment to providing compassionate, quality care and achieving world-class outcomes serves as a solid foundation for bringing premier health and wellness offerings across greater Northeast Florida.”

Development of the Flagler Health+ campus at Durbin Park has been under way since 2020. It is anticipated that vertical hospital construction will begin in summer 2022 with an opening in summer 2024.

Local textile designer unveils fiber-and-dry-goods line

An artist, lover of textiles and environmentalist at heart, Courtney Krug has spent most of her life searching for a way to bring together her three passions. Now, Krug has announced the launch of her fiber-and-dry-goods line, AT300NELSON.

AT300NELSON is a textile design firm that specializes in one-of-a-kind fabric sold by the yard as well as made-to-order pieces such as ottomans and pillows – all enveloped in fabric hand-designed by Krug.

“After a decade of boomeranging back and forth from Florida to California and everywhere in between, my husband, Jake, and I chose to move home to be close to family and so I could start AT300NELSON,” said Krug, a Northeast Florida native who completed studies in fashion design at Otis College of Art and Design in Los Angeles. “My time on the West Coast, specifically in the Santa Cruz Mountains, as well as the encouragement of my dad and growing up surfing both coasts, have all influenced my designs.”

Krug’s work begins with pen or pencil on paper. Once she’s mastered her design – heavy in organic details, architectural lines, high contrast, stacking patterns and block print inspiration – she recreates it on canvas and prepares it for print. Her designs are brought to life on a naturally-woven, certified linen and cotton blend



Photos by Christina Karst

Courtney Krug shows some of her textile designs.

from Belgium using third-party certified dyes free of any metals or California Prop 65 chemicals.

“The work itself is such a journey,” Krug said. “Building a product line that all works together for the colors and the prints to be cohesive is an undertaking. I have spent years creating this body of work and freely admit that nearly half of my designs didn’t make the final cut.



AT300NELSON specializes in one-of-a-kind fabric by-the-yard as well as made-to-order pieces like ottomans and pillows.



Courtney Krug’s fabric is heavy in organic details, architectural lines, high contrast stacking patterns and block print inspiration.

Although my home furnishings are limited to ottomans and pillows (for now), my fabrics can be ordered to render your vision. Shower curtains, headboards, window treatments and bedding are just a few of the possibilities. Fashion is so fickle. I chose to create a building block through patterns of shapes and colors that may remain as timeless and open as you make them.”

For further information, go to at300nelson.com.



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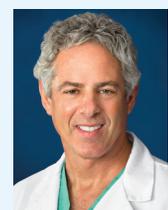
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St. Augustine art organizations merge

Photos provided by Bonnie Hayflick and St. Johns Cultural Council



Diane Bradley, St. Augustine Art Association board president, and Christina Parrish Stone, St. Johns Cultural Council executive director, are seen at a recent event. The Cultural Center is providing marketing support with the recent merger of the association and Art Galleries of St. Augustine.

The St. Augustine Art Association is assuming management of the longtime local art gallery and artists organization Art Galleries of St. Augustine (AGOSA) to continue its operations, which includes art galleries, studios, museums and artists located in St. Augustine.

The St. Johns Cultural Council is providing marketing support.

The formal announcement was made during an event held at the Art Association on Dec. 8 among members and invited guests of the Cultural Council,



Teri Tompkins, an artist at St. Augustine Art Association, attends a recent event in front of her artwork, "Love in the Afternoon," acrylic on birch panel.

Art Association and AGOSA. Attendees participated in holiday activities, networking and a viewing of the current exhibit, "Florida Wild," a vivid display of art that explores a wide range of creative interpretations of Florida's wild side from the plants and animals to the wilderness and waterways. The exhibit will run through Dec. 31.

Christina Parrish Stone, the Cultural Council's executive director, said she

MERGE continues on **Page 27**

St. Augustine Film Festival passes on sale



The 12th annual St. Augustine Film Festival will be held Jan. 20-23 at three venues — Lewis Auditorium and Gamache-Koger Theater at Flagler College, and the Alcazar Room at St. Augustine City Hall (Lightner Museum). More than 50 independent and international films will be screened. Passes are on sale at staugfilmfest.com.

The film festival is organized by Gregory von Hausch, CEO of the Fort Lauderdale International Film Festival. Films will include dramas, comedies and documentaries from all over the world, as well as films from independent U.S. filmmakers.

"We are so excited to be back in person screening films in beautiful downtown St. Augustine ... enjoying film festival openings and parties," said von Hausch. "The January 2021 festival went virtual during the COVID-19 pandemic, and we are thrilled to celebrate filmmaking with audiences in 2022. However, we will still offer some virtual options for those not quite ready to join us in person."

The St. Augustine Film Festival has a reputation of showing films that aren't usually available in North Florida. The

films chosen are created by independent filmmakers from around the globe.

The film guide at staugfilmfest.com has descriptions of all the films, including the filmmaker, actors, a film trailer, the run time and the festival schedule.

All-access passes are \$150 and include admission to all films at all venues; access to all virtual screenings; and admission to all events, including the Jan. 18 Harbor Cruise, the Jan. 20, dinner at Lightner and the Jan. 22 party at Colonial Quarter.

Volunteers are needed to help at all screenings. To volunteer, contact Leslie Lacika at leslacika1@gmail.com. An orientation session will be held prior to the festival, where volunteers will get an official festival crew T-shirt. Volunteers will receive free tickets to attend films playing at Lewis Auditorium for those who commit to at least two four-hour shifts over the weekend.

Founding sponsors are Arnold and Barbara Grevier, Allen and Cathie Altman and Shirley and Kenneth Walker. For the 2022 St. Augustine Film Festival, festival sponsor opportunities also include parties and individual films.

For sponsorship information, go to www.staugfilmfest.com/sponsors or contact Michel Pawlowski at michelpawlowski1@comcast.net.

For further details, go to staugfilmfest.com.

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Concerts for a Cause raised more than \$73,000 for St. Augustine Youth Services.



The Dec. 11 Concerts for a Cause event featured country music singer Easton Corbin with special guest Crawford & Power.

Concerts for a Cause raises \$73K for St. Augustine Youth Services

The third in a series of fundraising concerts, Concerts for a Cause raised \$73,179 for St. Augustine Youth Services (SAYS), a local nonprofit that shapes the future of Florida's at-risk youth by providing coaching, counseling and care in family-style therapeutic group homes and outpatient community services.

The sold-out event at Tringali Barn at Heritage Farms welcomed American country music singer Easton Corbin with special guest Crawford & Power on Saturday, Dec. 11.

"Our first Concerts for a Cause back in March raised \$34,000 for Investing in Kids (INK!), and our second concert in May brought in \$72,000 for Alpha-Omega Miracle Home," said Chris Shee, owner of Tringali Barn at Heritage Farms and founder and CEO of MasterCraft Builder Group. "With the support of our community and the generosity of our

sponsors, we're thrilled to have hosted another sold-out show and break our fundraising record for SAYS."

The next Concerts for a Cause event will be held on April 9 and will feature The Marshall Tucker Band, an iconic American rock band from South Carolina that will be celebrating its 50th anniversary next year.

Shee plans to hold Concerts for a Cause concerts three or four times per year with each event benefitting a different local nonprofit organization.

"We are continuously humbled by Chris Shee," said Alex Mason, director of fundraising and marketing for SAYS. "His kindness and generosity are unmatched. Thanks to Chris, we are able to continue to raise funds for our Independent Living Village, which in turn builds hope for our youth that are transitioning out of foster care. Our Independent

Living Village will provide affordable housing and resources to youth transitioning into adulthood. Thanks to Chris Shee, Clays for a Cause and Concerts for a Cause, we are one step closer to setting

our transitioned youth up for success by providing them a home and mental health support."

Merge

Continued from 26

is pleased to be working with Jennifer Flynt, St. Augustine Art Association's administrator, and AGOSA leadership to present exhibitions of local, regional, national and international artist members, and help with awareness about the impact the arts have on the city's culture.

All AGOSA activities will now be administered through the Art Association located at 22 Marine St. in St. Augustine.

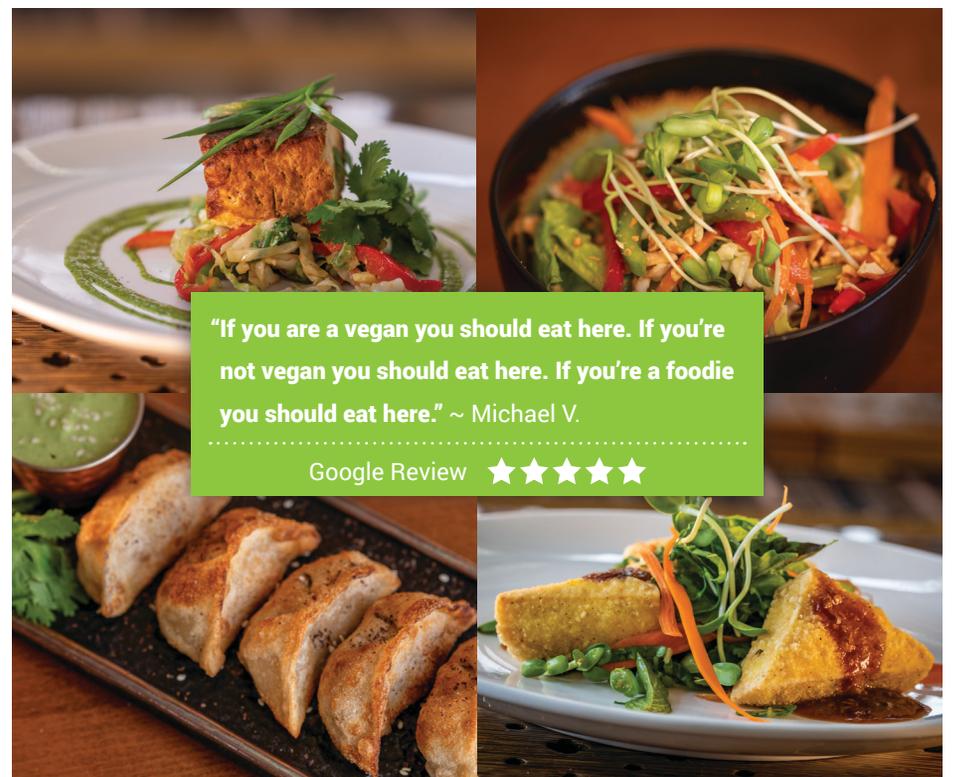
"We will continue to focus on attracting locals and visitors to renowned events such as First Friday Art Walk, Nights of Lights and all of the AGOSA member galleries and studios that operate locally

along with the website, brochures, funding, events, networking and more," said Flynt.

AGOSA has sustained its goal to promote and enhance the arts in the area with more than 20 galleries and dozens of artists that comprise the vibrant and historic art culture of St. Augustine as an "art destination."

The mission of the Cultural Council is to support local artists and arts organizations and to promote St. Johns County as a premiere destination for cultural travelers.

For more information about The St. Augustine Art Association, call Flynt at 904-824-2310 or email info@staaa.org. The websites are staaa.org and stjohns-culture.com.



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Sports



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Gomes surpasses 2,000 points, eyes county record

By Anthony Richards

Sydney Gomes had high expectations for herself and the Nease girls basketball team heading into her senior season and so far early season success has been the result.

Gomes entered the season knowing that she was approaching 2,000 career points and that she would likely have a shot at it fairly early in the season.

She wound up reaching the mark on the road against rival St. Augustine Dec. 7.

“I knew it was coming, but I wasn’t too focused on it, because it has been all about growing as a team,” Gomes said.

However, her goals do not stop there, and she has now turned her attention to the possibility of setting the St. Johns County record for career points, which she is less than 200 points away from achieving.

“If you would have told me I would be in this spot a couple of years ago, I would not have believed you,” Gomes said.

Two thousand points is a lot, but Gomes gives the credit to her ability to grow as a player by learning to score in a variety of ways instead of being one-dimensional.

She is a threat to score with her jumper, driving to the lane and from the beyond the arc.

According to Gomes, she has worked on getting more of her teammates involved and as a result her assists have increased this year as well.

She is averaging 19.9 points, 6.6 rebounds, 4.9 assists and 3.4 steals per game.

Although she eclipsed the 2,000-point threshold on the road, she was recognized prior to the Panthers’ home game against Menendez Dec. 13.

“It was nice to share that moment with the home fans,” Gomes said. “Everyone at Nease has been do instrumental and involved in the support of girls basketball here.”

Gomes played her freshman and sophomore basketball seasons in Staten Island, New York before moving with her family to northeast Florida and joining the Nease program last year.

“It’s been two of the best years of my life,” Gomes said. “The coaching staff has really seen the potential in me.”

She has signed to play basketball at Florida Southern College in Lakeland, which will allow her to realize a dream of playing at the next level that she has had for some time.

Gomes has had a basketball in her hand for as long as she can remember, and she has been playing competitively since third grade.

Although her senior season has started with a bang, she understands there remains a lot of work to be done, as the Panthers attempt to win a district title after coming so close a year ago.



Sydney Gomes is less than 200 points away from breaking the county career record.



Photos courtesy of Sydney Gomes

Sydney Gomes was recognized for reaching 2,000 career points, along with head coach Sherri Anthony on the court in front of the home fans prior to playing Menendez Dec. 13.



Sydney Gomes shares her accomplishment of 2,000 career points with her family.

Shark teammates sign with military academies Pirris, Henne set to face each other next four years

By Anthony Richards

Luke Pirris and Will Henne have been teammates for years, so it would be a little weird if they lined up against each other, but that will be the case while they play college football the next four years.

Pirris signed with the United States Naval Academy and Henne signed with the United States Air Force Academy during a celebration at Mr. Chubby’s Wings in

Ponte Vedra Beach Dec. 15.

After being teammates for years, the two will now be facing each other the next four years as part of the annual three-way battle for bragging rights and the Commander-in-Chief’s Trophy along with the United States Military Academy.

“It’s pretty crazy to think about, because Will has been one of my best friends since I was kid,” Pirris said.

“When the clocks ticking it will be absolute war, but I’m sure afterward we’ll be able to laugh about it, just like when we were kids after games.”

Tommy Zitiello also played for the Sharks and is currently a freshman defensive back playing at Army.

“We’ll have guys all over the place,” Henne said.

For Henne, Air Force was his “dream

school” and had been ever since he lived in Hong Kong with his family growing up.

“We lived near the airport and I always to go there and watch the planes land and take off,” Henne said. “I got transfixed with planes and I’ve also always felt the need to serve my country, so the Air

TEAMMATES continues on Page 29



Photos by Anthony Richards

Ponte Vedra teammates Will Henne and Luke Pirris both signed to play FBS football during a celebration at Mr. Chubby's Wings Dec. 15. Henne signed with Air Force and Pirris with Navy.

Teammates

Continued from 28

Force Academy was a perfect fit.”

Henne has spent time both flying actual planes and running through situations on the simulator.

“It’s a different experience when you’re actually up there compared to when I’m on the simulator at home,” Henne said. “It’s an adrenaline rush and a fun time for sure.”

Henne will be a punter for Air Force, which is a craft he took upon himself to work on and improve in recent years.

“My eight-grade team at Landrum (Middle School) needed a kicker, and I had played soccer before, so I started trying to kick,” Henne said. “It felt natural, so I started really working on my punting midway through freshman year, and it kind of grew from there.”

He competed in the National Invitational Scholarship Camp over the summer, which is considered a premier

showcase for punters, kickers and long snappers, and charted well.

Pirris had committed to Navy prior to the start of his senior season, and he never wavered from that initial decision.

However, he did admit that he was some nerves and anxiousness when he woke up that morning, knowing that the day had finally come to put pen to paper and make it official.

“I always knew Navy was going to be the place ever since I visited there,” Pirris said. “I couldn’t have been more excited to write my signature down on that piece of paper. This is a once and a lifetime opportunity and a life changing experience.”

Pirris hopes to make his mark on the team from the start, whether that is having a role on defense or contributing on special teams.

“My goal is to get on the field,” Pirris said. “I know it’s going to be tough, but I wouldn’t have gone there if I knew it was going to be easy. I’m going there to better myself.”



Luke Pirris leads the Sharks onto the football field while carrying an American flag.

CROSSWORD

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8. Ex-Miami Heat player Dwyane
12. Pomegranate seed
13. Actor Chris O'_____
14. Pacific Crest Trail walker
15. Country dance formation
16. Wished undone
17. Popeye's sweetie
18. *Sudden Impact*: "Go ahead, _____"
20. Arm part
21. Gold unit
22. Parabola, e.g.
23. San Joaquin Valley city
26. Hangs out with
30. Unit of electrical resistance
31. *Star Wars*: "Stay in _____ formation"
34. Mr. Jinx's (of "Meet the Parents") cry
35. Clay and silt deposit
37. Camel debris
38. Japanese sword fighting
39. Was aware of
40. Come into sight
42. *Independence Day*: "I belong in the _____"
43. *The Dark Knight*: "Why so _____?"
45. Common allergen
47. Cup alternative
48. Bird-made fertilizer
50. Sketch
52. *On the Waterfront*: "I coulda been a _____"
56. El Dorado-related
57. Tabernacle Choir's home state
58. Contributed
59. Star Wars attacker
60. Unidentified aircraft
61. Prep for publication
62. Ladder step
63. Tropical American cuckoo
64. Part to play

DOWN

1. Precedes storm?
2. Soprano's song, e.g.
3. *Mean Girls*: "On Wednesdays, we wear _____"
4. Makes smooth, as in hair
5. Dutch cheese
6. *Darkest Hour*: "I have nothing to offer but blood, toil, tears and _____"
7. _____ Walker, American Girl doll
8. *Field of Dreams*: "If you build it, he _____"
9. Related
10. Deity, in Sanskrit
11. "... _____ he drove out of sight"
13. Fungus damage (2 words)
14. Meryl Streep's "The _____"
19. Supernatural life force, pl.
22. Query
23. *Who Framed Roger Rabbit*: "That's all, _____!"
24. Côtes du _____, wine region
25. Mideast V.I.P.
26. Soreness
27. Kidney-related
28. *Princess Bride*: "You killed my father. Prepare _____"
29. Bound by oath
32. "Lights out" tune
33. Nile reptile
36. *Finding Nemo*: "Just keep _____"
38. Danish money
40. Two before Oct
41. Lack of enthusiasm
44. 1/16th of a pound
46. Not two years but three, e.g.
48. Coped (2 words)
49. Freshwater eel, in Japan
50. Comics character Little _____
51. Fe
52. Caribbean island country
53. Carpenter's joint
54. Like a fairytale stepmother?
55. Network of nerves
56. Acronym, abbr.

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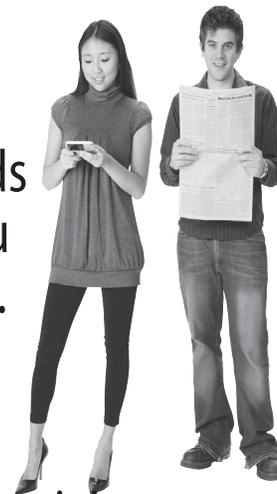
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