

# THE RECORDER



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October 13, 2022  
Volume 53, No. 50  
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Serving Ponte Vedra, St. Augustine, The Beaches and Greater St. Johns County

PonteVedraRecorder.com



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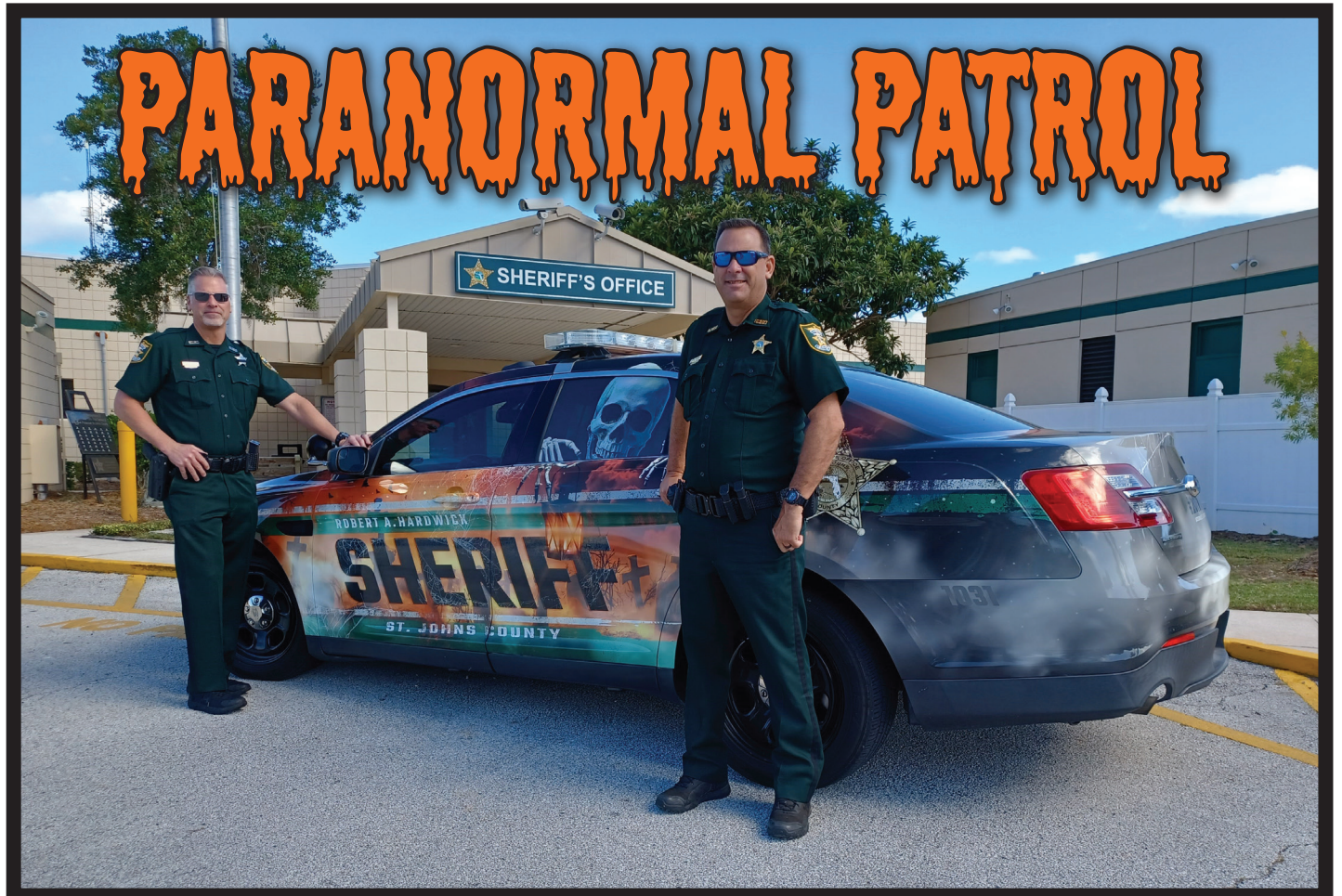


Photo by Shaun Ryan

Speeders beware! If you see this St. Johns County Sheriff's Office patrol car in your rearview mirror, you might want to slow down. The Halloween-themed vehicle, specially wrapped for the holiday by #201WRAP, has been out generating excitement for Sheriff Hardwick's Haunted Jail. Pictured with the car is Deputy John Van Wagner, left, and Capt. Bobby Dean. Turn to page 22 to read more about the Haunted Jail.

**entertainment EXTRA**

From Ella Faria to an exclusive preview of the new season of 'The Top Gun'... featuring local news and more!

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

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# Send us your news

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



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## BRIEFS

### Taxpayer guide to county finances introduced

St. Johns County Clerk of the Circuit Court and Comptroller Brandon J. Patty has presented the second edition of the award-winning Popular Annual Financial Report (PAFR), "Tracking Your Tax Dollars: A Guide to St. Johns County's Finances," to the Board of County Commissioners.

The report features key highlights from the lengthier Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR), a yearly accounting of the county's finances and budget. Designed to be straightforward and reader-friendly, the PAFR illustrates St. Johns County's financial picture for fiscal year 2020-21 and includes how residents' tax dollars are collected, spent and invested.

The 20-page booklet also offers economic information and noteworthy trends on demographics, housing, taxes and more.

The PAFR is accessible online at [stjohnsclerk.com/pafr](http://stjohnsclerk.com/pafr). Printed copies will be available in mid-October by request at the St. Johns County Clerk of the Circuit Court and Comptroller, Richard O. Watson Judicial Center, 4010 Lewis Speedway, in St. Augustine.

The Annual Comprehensive Financial Report includes the financial statements for the Board of County Commissioners, Clerk of the Court, Property Appraiser, Sheriff, Supervisor of Elections and Tax Collector. The full report is available online at [stjohnsclerk.com/county-annual-financial-report/](http://stjohnsclerk.com/county-annual-financial-report/).

### THE PLAYERS Championship focus of special event

Council on Aging has announced that a special event will be held on Thursday, Oct. 13, at COA's THE PLAYERS Community Senior Center in Ponte Vedra Beach. Members of the public are invited to attend the event, which starts at 11 a.m. for golf festivities sponsored by THE PLAYERS Championship.

Meet PLAYERS employees, take part in an outdoor putting competition and enjoy golf-themed activities. PLAYERS staff will be on-site for approximately three hours on this day interacting with the senior center participants and Ponte Vedra Beach community.

Refreshments will be provided and prizes for different activities will be awarded.

THE PLAYERS Community Senior Center

is located at 175 Landrum Lane, Ponte Vedra Beach.

To learn more about the center, go to [coasjc.org/ponte-vedra-center](http://coasjc.org/ponte-vedra-center) or call 904-209-3659.

### Deputy to speak at Coastal Friends luncheon

Deputy Sheriff Jonathan Wagner from the St. Johns County Sheriff's Office, Community Relations Unit, will be the guest speaker at Coastal Friends' next monthly luncheon from 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Nov. 2 at Marsh Landing Country Club, 25655 Marsh Landing Parkway, Ponte Vedra Beach Deputy. Wagner will speak about fraud prevention and personal safety issues. A question-and-answer period will follow his talk.

The luncheon is open to all members of Coastal Friends, their guests and anyone interested in joining this ladies social club, which formed in 1998. In honor of the upcoming Thanksgiving holiday, Marsh Landing's chef will serve a lunch consisting of a mixed green salad, turkey and stuffing with mashed potatoes, gravy, cranberry sauce, green beans and pumpkin pie for dessert. The cost to attend the luncheon is \$25 and reservations must be made in advance. Contact the luncheon chairman at [bartshar@comcast.net](mailto:bartshar@comcast.net) as soon as possible since the deadline to sign up and get your \$25 check in the mail is Oct. 28.

For details on how to join Coastal Friends, contact [brookemeister@msn.com](mailto:brookemeister@msn.com) or go to [coastalfriends.wildapricot.org](http://coastalfriends.wildapricot.org).

### Explore the beach

Join volunteers at the Guana Tolomato Matanzas National Estuarine Research Reserve (GTM) for a beach exploration from 9 to 11 a.m. Saturday, Oct. 15. Collect seashells, search for shark teeth and learn about coastal wildlife. Meet at the GTM Research Reserve Visitor Center, 505 Guana River Road, Ponte Vedra Beach. The event is free but online registration is required. Register at [secure.lglforms.com/form\\_engine/s/pIw4sjpgRY8D-BB7kK7oSrQ](http://secure.lglforms.com/form_engine/s/pIw4sjpgRY8D-BB7kK7oSrQ).

Wear comfortable closed-toe shoes. Hat, insect repellent, water and sunscreen are recommended.

## PUZZLE SOLUTIONS

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9	8	3	6	5	7	2	1	4

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# Briefs

Continued from 2

## Goodwill seeks donations to help hurricane victims

Goodwill Industries of North Florida is seeking donations to help Southwest Florida after Hurricane Ian.

Donations made to any of the 39 Goodwill locations across North Florida will be monetized and shared with those affected by the hurricane through sister Goodwills in Southwest Florida. To find a Goodwill location, go to [goodwilljax.org/find-location](http://goodwilljax.org/find-location).

## Annual Halloween CARnival is back

Jump in your car or golf cart for a drive-through Halloween CARnival, a fun family event from 9 a.m. to noon Oct. 22 at Baptist HealthPlace at Nocatee, 400 Colonnade Drive, Ponte Vedra. There will be treats and giveaways for adults and kids, interactive themed stations, Halloween music and more. Don't forget to wear your costume. There is no cost for this event, but visitors need to sign up for a time slot to save a spot in line. To purchase your tickets, go to [eventbrite.com/e/halloween-carnival-baptist-healthplace-at-nocatee-tickets-405406761537](http://eventbrite.com/e/halloween-carnival-baptist-healthplace-at-nocatee-tickets-405406761537).

Plan to spend about 15 minutes in your vehicle and stay in your vehicle at all

times. Bring your own bag for trick-or-treating.

## Pin-Up Paws Party set for Nov. 4

The St. Augustine Humane Society is planning its 12th annual Pin-Up Paws Party, featuring the 2023 Pin-Up Paws Pet Calendar. All proceeds support programs and services that keep pets and their humans together. This year, 140 pets entered the contest and campaigned for their big break — a chance to be featured in the 2023 calendar Pete Melfi with The 904 Now has signed on as honorary chair and is bringing his unique brand of hosting skills to serve as emcee for the event.

The Pin-Up Paws celebration begins at 6

p.m. Nov. 4 at the Renaissance St. Augustine Historic Downtown Hotel.

Tickets are \$95 per person and include dinner, complimentary wine and a free Pin-Up Paws calendar. The silent auction features stunning jewelry pieces, spa treatments, resort stays and guitars signed by Tom Petty & The Heartbreakers, Prince and the members of the Eagles. The evening also includes a wine pull and music by Rob Peck and the Matanzas Inlet Allstars.

Contact [development@staughumane.org](mailto:development@staughumane.org) for more details, go to [www.staughumane.org](http://www.staughumane.org) or call 904-829-2737, ext. 111.

— Compiled by Shaun Ryan

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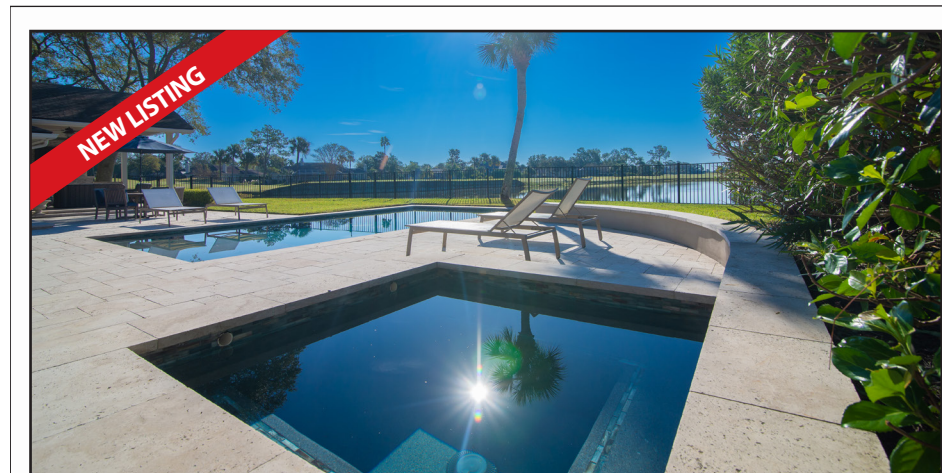
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# Whitehurst: No Plan B if surtax fails

By Shaun Ryan

On Nov. 8, St. Johns County voters will either approve or reject a proposed one-cent sales surtax designed to fund countywide public infrastructure and improvements.

At a Monday, Oct. 10, public meeting hosted by the St. Johns County Civic Roundtable, County Commissioner Christian Whitehurst described what is at stake.

In February, the county released a list of 34 capital projects that would require the surtax to get the necessary funding. The projects include road improvements, alternative transportation facilities, infrastructure for law enforcement, emergency services, public parks and recreation facilities, libraries, storm water management and coastal erosion management.

Ponte Vedra area projects include: Mickler Road, roundabout to A1A (cost: \$14 million); Palm Valley Road, Roscoe Road to the roundabout (cost: \$15 million); Pine Island Road at U.S. 1, signalization (cost: \$1.5 million), Nocatee Park (cost: \$16 million) and Nocatee Library (cost: \$12 million).

The total cost of all the projects on the list comes to \$500 million.

Whitehurst said he has spoken with

county staff to resolve the gap between what is needed and available funding.

“I’m finding we just don’t have the money to improve things that you are asking, demanding that I improve as your elected official,” he said. “Out of a sense of pure frustration, and just the fact that the numbers don’t work, I voted yes to put this on the ballot.”

People have advocated for cuts to the budget and elimination of waste, though they generally do not cite where they believe the cuts should be made.

Whitehurst said, as a business owner, “I know how to cut waste. I’ve looked at it. I can’t find the waste.”

He cited some reasons that the county is experiencing the funding deficit.

In response to the 2008 recession, the state mandated a rollback in property taxes by 1 mill, which cost the county \$57.1 million. At the same time, the Board of County Commissioners added \$25,000 to the Homestead Exemption, which removed \$188 million from the county budgets between 2008 and 2021. Also, the recession cost the county another \$79 million due to a devaluation of property.

Then, in 2011, the commission, hoping to spur growth, reduced impact fees on residential development by 25%. In 2018,



Photo by Shaun Ryan

**St. Johns County Commissioner Christian Whitehurst speaks about the proposed one-cent sales surtax during a public meeting Monday, Oct. 10.**

the county raised impact fees to their statutory maximum, but these fees continue to be insufficient due to the effects of inflation. A residential development may agree to fund a road widening at the current cost, but if the project doesn’t happen for several years, that widening will cost significantly more and the developer’s portion of the funding is then insufficient.

Asked what happens if the referendum is rejected, Whitehurst said, “There is no Plan B. I’m not going to raise your

property taxes, which would be the only other option.”

In fact the shortfall could simply grow more severe.

“This \$500 million list of needs will inevitably turn into a billion dollar list of needs and will turn into a \$1.5 billion — we’re talking a decade, two decades down the road,” Whitehurst said. “This list of needs will grow not only in the number of things that we have to improve but in the dollar amount as inflation does what inflation does.”

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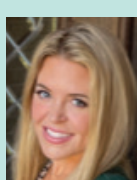
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All properties listed are in Ponte Vedra unless otherwise noted.

After having a career as a hair stylist for more than 20 years, Tracie Rampley began her own custom hat company in 2013, called *Embellished Designs*. She puts her own personal touch into each hat and takes pride in the fact that no hat is ever the same. She is also very active in the community and tries to give back every chance she gets ever since moving to Ponte Vedra Beach in 2011.

## Tracie Rampley

### As told to Anthony Richards

#### Tell us a little about yourself and your background.

I've lived in Ponte Vedra Beach since 2011 and in 2013 I started my custom hat business *Embellished Designs* and have really grown it from the ground up.

I'm as country as cornbread having grown up on a farm 30 miles south of Chattanooga, Tennessee, in Northwest Georgia.

I definitely came from a humble beginning and I have always had a passion for helping others. My mom was a single parent, and we always gave back any way we could.

#### What led you to designing hats?

I was a hair stylist for over 20 years before getting into hats.

It all started when somebody came up to me at the Ponte Vedra Garden Club and asked who did my hat. I told her that I made it myself and the next thing I knew I was being asked by multiple people if I could make one for them.

The business had grown to the point where I was making 48 hats within a six-month span prior to COVID-19.

I would always make my own style, so I knew I had a designer's eye. My hats are made out of my home.

#### Is there a certain type of hat you specialize in?

I do custom only at this point and they are all originals. I don't make any hats look the same.

You can't find me at a store or online. It is as grassroots an operation as it gets.

Prior to making a hat for someone it is important for me to see the outfit they plan to wear with the hat and give advice on what would be best in a hat to complement that look.

It is so important because I'm all about flow from your head to your toes. I'll tell them to get what they want to wear, and we'll build the hat around that.

People think that they can't wear a big hat, but that's not the case. Anyone can wear any sized hat as long as it fits on their head. If you can dream it, then I can create it.

It's about a two-three-week turnaround time to complete a hat and nobody touches the hats throughout the process but me.

Kentucky Derby parties are a busy time for hat orders, but I also do weddings and themed parties.

#### What do you enjoy most about your job?

I still get cold chills each time when they try a hat on for the first time. I take pride in my hats and in the people that wear them.

If they are going to wear it to a charitable event, one of the things I'll do is give 10% of the profit from the hat's sale to that specific charity. I will also donate hats to be auctioned off at certain charity events.

#### What are some of the other ways you are involved within the community?

I have always tried to help young people understand that their mistakes do not define them. I have mentored young women and inner-city kids and am an angel ambassador with Angels and Doves Anti-bullying.

I have also been a voice against domestic violence and



Photo courtesy of Tracie Rampley

**Tracie Rampley started her business *Embellished Designs* in 2013, where she makes one-of-a-kind custom hats out of her home.**

love to go on Christmas day and feed the less fortunate and spend my time with other who don't have a lot.

I've been focusing a lot on the younger generation of late.

#### What advice would you give to the next generation of fashion designers?

I was a tomboy growing up and spent a lot of time driving motorcycles and dirt bikes. One day in middle school I started to get intrigued by fashion and it has been a love of mine ever since.

I would encourage anyone who has an interest in fashion that if you have a thought, to go with it and go buy

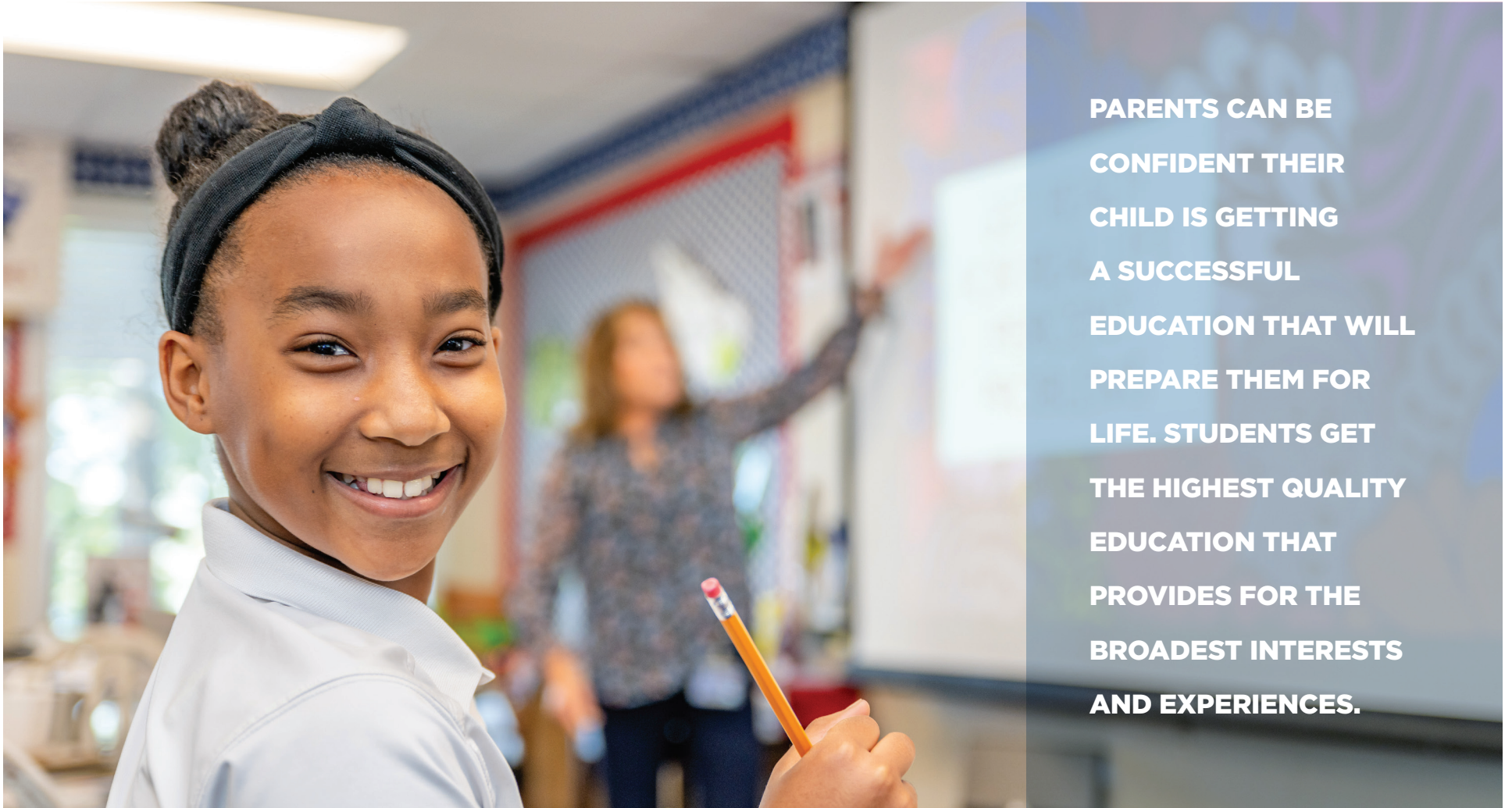
some material to make it happen and remember to never give up.

Any young people interested in getting started or with questions about getting started with their fashion idea can email me at [tracierampley@embellisheddesigns.com](mailto:tracierampley@embellisheddesigns.com). That is also the best way to reach me regarding hat questions.

#### What do you love most about Ponte Vedra Beach?

I love this area because it's just a little beach town. I enjoy offshore fishing, fashion and mentoring is the most important thing for me as a human.

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# After decade of asking, Palm Valley sidewalk plan appears in place

By Anthony Richards

Persistence has paid off for the Palm Valley Community Association in its quest to get a more cohesive sidewalk plan in place.

Jayne Evans, director of the Palm Valley Community Association, was one of the guest speakers during the Ponte Vedra Beaches Coalition meeting Oct. 10.

She updated those in attendance regarding the Palm Valley sidewalk plans and where they are in the process.

According to Evans, the path for a much-needed sidewalk project down Palm Valley Road has been a minding one and has been something residents have been pushing for a decade.

However, now is the closest they have ever been to seeing a sidewalk project be implemented for the area.

“The objective of the sidewalk from the very beginning has been to improve road safety for everyone involved,” Evans said. “The plan is to build a ‘continuous’ sidewalk on the westside of Palm Valley Road.

According to Evans, the word “continuous” is key and has been used as a sticking point throughout the St. Johns County Commission’s discussion process.

As the plan, will look to connect where existing sidewalks end with the new sidewalk project, so that a



### Ponte Vedra Beaches Coalition

continuous sidewalk will stretch once completed.

“This is how modern communities are built,” Evans said. “We know how hard it can be to retro fit older communities, but it is something that needs to be done.”

The additional sidewalks will not only benefit those who walk along them, but it will also make the roadways safer for vehicle drivers as well.

In April, the project got a big boost after awarded \$800,000 in state funding thanks to the help of Rep.

Cyndi Stevenson’s representation in the state legislature.

“That money was what eventually secured the project,” Evans said.

The county has agreed to offer up \$1.35 million, and Evans expects them to begin putting out proposals for bids on the project later this month.


The sidewalk section between Landrum Lane and Canal Street had a head start in the past, but phase 2 will include Canal Street all the way north where the PGA Tour sidewalk ends.

Evans hopes that by fall 2023 there will be shovels in the ground and construction of the project will be fully underway.

The plan for the project is constantly changing, especially when it comes to finding better ways to upgrade the safety aspect of things.

That includes not just building a sidewalk, but also considering all of the other safety concerns that remain even by helping eliminate some of them with the sidewalk.

“We are still looking into safe ways to cross from the west and east sides of the street, because there are some portions of sidewalks on the other side as well,” Evans said.



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# Furyk Foundation provides musical instruments to private school band

The Guardian Catholic School music program received a big boost recently thanks to The Jim & Tabitha Furyk Foundation. The nearly \$16,000 gift brings a host of percussion instruments as well as new keyboards and xylophones.

“There are so many amazing things Guardian Catholic School is trying to accomplish and, given our foundation focus on specific projects, this is a perfect match,” said Tabitha Furyk. “Learning to read music truly gives these students an opportunity to grow their future and being able to give them these instruments and watch this program grow will be amazing. We’re glad to be part of it.”

The Furyks have been dedicated supporters of Guardian for many years and were moved to action upon learning of the desire to expand the Guardian music program, a goal of the school’s new music teacher, Winston Timmons. Much of The Furyk Foundation’s gift went toward efforts of establishing a drumline.



Contributed photos

**The Jim & Tabitha Furyk Foundation recently provided percussion instruments, keyboards and xylophones to the Guardian Catholic School music program.**

“Having a drum line at Guardian will further round out our program, and bring so much excitement to our sport-

ing events,” said Timmons, who joined Guardian Catholic last year after graduating from Edward Waters University

where he served as drumline leader. “Helping children as young as first grade to read music and understand the fundamentals often fuels a lifelong passion for music. I’m excited to start my own traditions at Guardian including a band program; my vision is to get more and more kids to learn about music.”

“On behalf of the Guardian Catholic School Board of Directors, we wish to thank The Jim and Tabitha Furyk Foundation for their tremendous support for Guardian’s music program,” said Jane Lanier, board chair. “Because of Tabitha and Jim’s generosity, our students have many new musical instruments, and they are learning to read music — even our second graders! Quality educational opportunities like this found at Guardian give every child an opportunity to succeed. The Furyk’s tireless work for children, particularly the most vulnerable, is recognized and appreciated by all of us at Guardian.”

## OBITUARIES



### Frederick W. Fair

Frederick W. Fair passed away on October 5, 2022. He was born in Brockton, MA, on March 14, 1947, and grew up in the Hanover/Norwell area of Massachusetts.

Fred served in the U.S. Navy for 4 years. One of the ports he visited while at sea was Mayport Naval Station. After discharge, Fred decided to return to Florida and took up residence in Jacksonville, FL in the Beaches area. He studied to become a Master Plumber and received his certification and opened Fair Plumbing. His business continues to

offer its services to this day.

Fred enjoyed the camaraderie of his many friends throughout his life and considered fishing one of his favorite pastimes. He was a member of the American Legion.

Fred is survived by his loving wife Sallie; daughter Jacqueline Brooks (John); granddaughter Danielle Brooks; brothers Steven and David and sister Lynette. He was predeceased by his sisters Michelle and Francine.

A Gathering of family and friends will be held at Quinn-Shalz Family Funeral Home, 3600 Third Street South, Jacksonville, FL 32250, on Friday, October 14th, from 6 to 8 p.m.

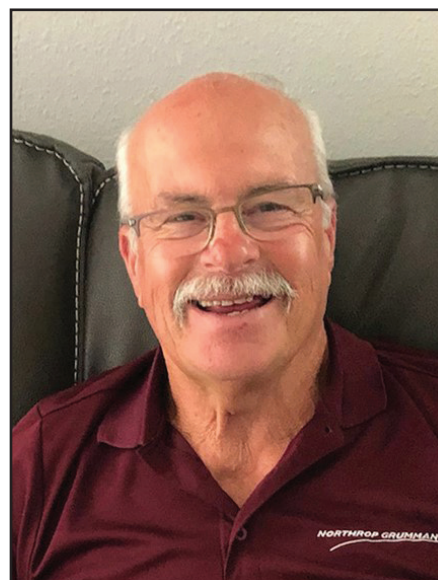
A Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated on Saturday, October 15th, at 11 a.m., in St. Paul’s Catholic Church, 523 Pablo Ave., Jacksonville Beach, FL 32224. Reverend William Kelly will be the Celebrant.

In lieu of flowers donations may be made to Mayo Clinic, c/o Victoria Algeria, 4500 San Pablo Road, Jacksonville, FL 32224. Please visit his Tribute online at [www.quinn-shalz.com](http://www.quinn-shalz.com).

Arrangements by



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3600 Third Street South, Jacksonville Beach, FL 32250  
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### Peter Dillon Hannigan

Peter Dillon Hannigan, 72, passed away peacefully on October 8th, 2022, surrounded by his wife and 3 children. He was born Feb 2nd, 1950, in Rockville Centre, NY to William and Marguerite Hannigan. Upon turning 18, Pete proudly served 2 years with the Army in Vietnam. After his service, he became an Industrial Engineer and spent 46 years working for Northrup Grumman, retiring in 2014. In 1997, he relocated his family to Ponte Vedra Beach, FL.

Pete was a devoted husband to his wife Laura of 47 years, whom he loved dearly. He was regularly overwhelming her with his collectibles by bringing home various “gifts.” In addition, he loved to spend time with his 3 boys. They would often go golfing or bowling together, shoot clays and go hunting. Once retired, Pete bought an offshore fishing boat and loved to spend time with his boys out on the water. Sure

enough, something on the boat always needed fixing, which fueled his desire to “tinker” with the boat.

Pete, like his father, was incredibly skilled at fixing anything mechanical. Throughout his life, he was always working with his hands as he enjoyed the challenge of getting something back to working order. He was always there for his kids when they needed assistance with projects on their homes. He also never turned down a chance to help others, enjoyed making friends and talking politics. He was a passionate Yankee fan who raised his boys to carry on this family tradition as well.

Pete is survived by his loving wife, Laura; sons Peter (wife Leah, granddaughters Cailyn and Alex), Matthew (granddaughters Braelyn and Brooklyn) and Thomas. Brother Bill and sister Mary.

A visitation will be held from 6 to 8 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 13th, at Quinn-Shalz Family Funeral Home, Jacksonville Beach. In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation to the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society.

A Catholic funeral mass will be celebrated at 11 a.m. Friday, Oct. 14th, at Our Lady Star Of The Sea Catholic Church, Ponte Vedra Beach, FL with Father Larkin as Celebrant. He will be laid to rest at Jacksonville National Cemetery. Please visit his online Tribute at [www.quinn-shalz.com](http://www.quinn-shalz.com).

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# SBA loans could help hurricane survivors

FEMA may refer survivors of Hurricane Ian to the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) with information on how to apply for a disaster loan. Homeowners, renters, business owners and certain nonprofits may be eligible. It's important to submit the loan application as soon as possible.

If your application is approved, you are not obligated to accept an SBA loan but failure to return the application may disqualify you from other possible financial assistance from FEMA and State of Florida.

SBA disaster loans are the largest source of federal disaster recovery funds for survivors. SBA offers long-term, low-

interest disaster loans to businesses of all sizes, private nonprofit organizations, homeowners and renters.

SBA disaster loans cover losses not fully compensated by insurance or other resources. Survivors should not wait for an insurance settlement before submitting an SBA loan application. They may discover they were underinsured for the deductible, labor and materials required to repair or replace their home.

People may apply online using the Electronic Loan Application (ELA) via the SBA's secure website at [disasterloanassistance.sba.gov](https://disasterloanassistance.sba.gov) or by visiting a Disaster Recovery Center. Paper applications may be requested by calling the SBA Customer Service Center at 800-659-2955. Those who are deaf, hard of hearing or have a speech disability may dial 7-1-1 to access telecommunications relay services or send an email to [disastercustomerservice@sba.gov](mailto:disastercustomerservice@sba.gov). There is no cost to apply for an SBA disaster loan.

SBA disaster loan specialists are available to speak with homeowners and renters at all Florida Disaster Recovery Centers, which are open seven days a week from 9 a.m. until 6 p.m.

Homeowners may be eligible for a disaster loan up to \$200,000 for primary residence structural repairs or rebuilding.

SBA may also be able to help homeowners and renters with up to \$40,000 to replace important personal property, including automobiles damaged or destroyed in the disaster.

Learn more at [fema.gov/disaster/4673](https://fema.gov/disaster/4673).

For the latest information on Florida's recovery from Hurricane Ian, go to [floridadisaster.org/info](https://floridadisaster.org/info) and [fema.gov/disaster/4673](https://fema.gov/disaster/4673). Follow FEMA on Twitter at FEMA Region 4 (@femaregion4)/Twitter and at [facebook.com/fema](https://facebook.com/fema).



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# Students clean up Jax Beach



Contributed photos

Students from all around the area turned out recently to clean up Jacksonville Beach.

Beaches Go Green hosted a huge community cleanup this past weekend in Jacksonville Beach with more than 640 volunteers who cleaned up more than 84 bags of trash and more than 18,000 cigarette butts.

Several local schools were represented from St. John's and Duval counties, including local colleges, high schools, middle schools and elementary schools, too.

Community sponsors provided funding for environmental education programs as well as prizes and

food for volunteers. Community partners included: Mayo clinic, THE PLAYERS Championship, ATP, Native Sun, Jax Beach Brunch Haus, ERC, TIAA BANK, Florida Blue, State Farm, Surfing Evolution & Preservation, SIC Cups, Tobacco-free Jacksonville, News4Jax Positively Jax, Salt Life Food Shack, O-Ku Sushi, The Local Box, Yoga Mix, the Mini Bar Donuts, Donatos Pizza, Wonderbird, Bold Bean Coffee, TacoLu, Peterbrooke Chocolate AB, Southern Swells Brewery, iRocker stand up paddle boards and Dunsel Recycled Sail Bags.

### Here are a few statistics:

- 643 volunteers times two hours equals 1,286 hours. That multiplied by \$29.95 (value/hour) equals \$38,515.70 volunteer value
- 84 bags of trash times 20 lbs./each equals 1,680 lbs. Add to that 500 lbs. large items at \$1.20 (trash value/pound) equals \$2,616 trash abatement contribution.
- This equals a \$41,131.70 contribution to the community.
- 18,896 cigarette butts were collected.

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# Hamer celebrates 18 years of treating patients like family

By Anthony Richards

Dr. Erika Hamer opened Ponte Vedra Wellness Center 18 years ago and since then she has seen her practice grow in a variety of ways.

Not only has the practice grown in the number of patients it has helped over the years, but it has also grown its standing within the community.

“Being involved in the community is a big thing for me,” Hamer said.

One of the ways she has chosen to be involved is through her relationship with the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce.

She has been a past chair of the Chamber and has also held several other positions over the years ever since joining the Chamber.

Ponte Vedra Wellness has hosted many before hours events, which are opportunities for networking created by organization for its members.

“Before I even opened my doors, I joined the Chamber,” Hamer said. “It was something I always knew would be important.”

She has also spent time in Rotary in Ponte Vedra in the past.

“Being part of groups like that is great because you get to know so many people from across the community,” Hamer said.

Wanting to help others find solutions to their physical problems is something that has always been a passion for Hamer.

Which is why she takes pride in the fact that she and her staff approach patients with a personal touch.

“We’re all about good patient care and producing good outcomes,” Hamer said. “It’s like treating your family.”

She has always been one to set goals and have an idea of where she wants to be in the future and looking back she is more than happy with how everything has transpired over the past 18 years.

Any many ways, she has experienced not just meeting her goals, but surpassing a majority of them, including opening a second location in Nocatee.

“Expanding was not necessarily one of the goals, but things change as people’s needs change,” Hamer said.

Being able to keep up with the latest ways for education is key, especially

when it comes to the difference in a person’s well-being.

Eighteen years is a long time, which is why she cherishes her regular patients who have, some of which have been going to her practice since the very beginning.

“We have a personalized touch that can be felt by patients as soon as they walk through the door,” Hamer said.

Hamer has always taken it upon her-

self to represent in the community as a female business owner and she does have a daughter herself.

I would just like for all the young girls out there to remember that they can do anything they put their minds to, regardless of what that may be.

“It’s a lot of hard work along the way, but it totally worth it in the end,” Hamer said.



Erika Hamer opened Ponte Vedra Wellness 18 years ago.



Erika Hamer performs a procedure on a patient.

Photos courtesy of Ponte Vedra Wellness

# Ponte Vedra Woman's club welcomes newest charities to speak

By Anthony Richards

There are several local charities that the Ponte Vedra Woman's Club helps to support through their club's fundraising efforts, and representatives from two of those charities spoke at a recent club meeting.

Two of the newest charities the club is supporting were recent guest speakers at a September meeting, as Karen Burke, clothing coordinator for Hugs Across the County, and Karen Correale, with Port in the Storm, spoke to club members about what the services they offer and some of the ways people can get involved even further.

Both organizations focus on helping children in the local community, but just go about doing so in a different way.

Because they are nonprofits, they rely so heavily on volunteers and funding from the community to allow them to do what they do to offer help to others.

"It means everything to have that support," Burke said. "We were both talking earlier about just how generous our communities are. For as much need as there is, it seems like somebody is always there to help fill the gap. We never take it for granted."

Hugs Across the County's goal is to make sure children across the county have what they need to succeed in life, and that includes making sure they have a lunch to eat at school or enough clothes to wear throughout a week.

The focus with Port in the Storm is set primarily on teenagers who are homeless within St. Johns County.

"We'll put a need that we may have on Facebook, and the next day we have the



Photo by Anthony Richards

Karen Burke with Hugs Across the County and Karen Correale with Port in the Storm were guest speakers at the Ponte Vedra Woman's Club's September meeting.

donations already coming in," Correale said. "This community is just so generous, and we couldn't do what we do without them."

It is a tradition of the Ponte Vedra Woman's Club to give back to certain charities each year and Hugs Across the County and Port in the Storm are two of the newer organizations that the club has partnered with this year.

"We are one of the wealthiest counties around, but they need in the community is so huge," Correale said. "There are 800 homeless or unaccompanied students in the county, and they've identified one in

every school in the county."

According to Burke, many people believe that poverty is only found in certain

CHARITIES continues on Page 19

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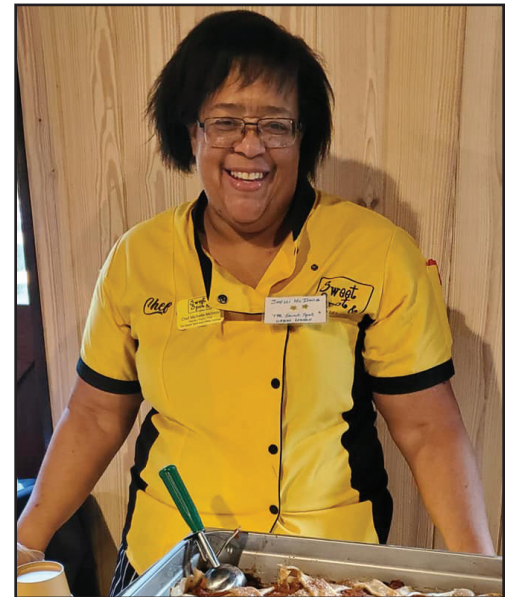
# A Night at the Barn: An evening of culinary delight and jazz

Members of the Women's Food Alliance gathered Sept. 26 at The Barn at Palm Valley, 531 N. Wilderness Trail, Ponte Vedra Beach, for "Welcome Back — A Night at The Barn @ Palm Valley."

The Women's Food Alliance cultivates and advances networking, education and collaboration for women in the culinary

**BARN** continues on **Page 17**

Photos by Leigh Cort



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# Barn

Continued from 16

and hospitality industry in the Northeast Florida region.

The event featured an international dinner, with dishes from Korea, Puerto Rico, Italy, the American South and Great Britain, highlighting the talents of local chefs. And there was an all-American curated wine collection. Music was provided by jazz vocalist Lisa Kelly and JB Scott.

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

Photos by Leigh Cort



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

**KATHY'S GARDENING GUIDE**

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By Kathy Esfahani



Kathy Esfahani

As the temperatures drop to the low 80s (or maybe even 70s!), we start to feel hints of fall in our Northeast Florida home! It is cooling off enough to return to the garden, but what is best to plant now for seasonal color?

Many flowers that wilt in the summer heat enjoy the cooler temperatures of Florida's fall and winter. Although annuals need replanting every season, they show off vibrant colors throughout a landscape. Consider adding celosia, dianthus, Dusty Miller, marigolds, pansies, petunias, snapdragons and violas to your garden and/or containers now for color in the coming months. There are



**Flower of the Week**

**Marigolds**

also perennials that will bloom now and return again next fall. In our area, look for firespike, geraniums, mums, pentas and salvia.

Shrubs and other plants can also be added to your landscape alongside these flowers. Plants that feature colorful foliage include crotons and loropetalum. Shrubbery can provide color and fill in throughout your yard. Holly and other shrubs that produce berries attract birds looking for food as they migrate through



Photos provided by Kathy's Creative Gardens & Nursery

**Fall colors**

our area. These berries also remind us that the holidays are right around the corner!

Although Florida may not see the changing fall leaves of trees in cooler climates, there are trees that provide seasonal color in our area. Now is a good time to plant the trees that you have been considering for your landscape. Ideas for trees that feature fall color include bottlebrush, cypress and maple.

When you prepare your garden for new fall planting, be sure to enrich the soil with organic matter. This step allows plants to find and retain nutrients that help them grow and produce beautiful blooms. If desired, add a slow-release fertilizer or organic compost to support

your new plants. And, as always, don't forget to water regularly!

The coming months are the dryer season in our area, so you will need to maintain moisture throughout your gardens.

Visit us at the nursery to select plants to add fall color around your home! Happy planting!

**Flower of the Week: Marigolds**

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

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Photo by Anthony Richards

Members of the Ponte Vedra Woman's Club collected items that were donated to Port in the Storm during its September meeting.

## Charities

Continued from 15

areas of the county, but during her time with Hugs Across the County she has found that there are major needs that exist throughout the county as a whole.

"We deliver clothing and emergency food to every single school in the county," Burke said. "It's just everywhere."

According to Correale, Port in the Storm does not just offer a shelter for

homeless teens, but they also have various initiatives designed to help them learn how to interview and put a resume together with the goal of helping them find a job, which will begin their path to a more stable future.

"Our overarching theme throughout our program is that we are housing focused," Correale said. "We don't want you to have to stay with us. The 'home-ward bound' program is all about giving them the tools to succeed."

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# Pumpkin patch pops up at Lord of Life Lutheran Church

The charming Great Pumpkin Patch has returned to Lord of Life Lutheran Church, covering nearly an acre of the front lawn with pumpkins for the month.

Boy Scouts and other volunteers helped unload the pumpkins and boxes of gourds on Friday, Oct. 7, and were ready to start selling immediately. The patch will run every day until Oct. 31. Hours of operation will be weekdays from 1 p.m. to dusk; Saturdays from 9 a.m. to dusk and Sundays from 11 a.m. to dusk.

New this year will be hayrides, face painting and a craft for kids on every weekend. Inside the church will be gourds, mini pumpkins, a backdrop for selfies and baked goods.

Another star of the patch is the church's famous fresh pumpkin pies made on site using pumpkins from the patch. The demand has grown annually, and the church estimates it will bake about 200 pies this year which come in two sizes.



"This is our largest fundraising event of the year and we've chosen to support two charities this year with 20% of the proceeds from pumpkin sales," said Deb Nye, the Lord of Life Lutheran Church coordinator of this signature fundraising event. "Due to Hurricane Ian, we will

be supporting the Florida Disaster Fund that our First Lady, Casey DeSantis, has encouraged the public to give to, and we also want to support a local charity, Hugs Across the County, which helps St. John's County students in crisis, whether homelessness, food insecurity or clothing."

Several handheld wagons will be available to cart pumpkins to cars. Pumpkins are priced by their height using a measuring tape that goes from the stem down around the bottom of the pumpkin and back to the top of the stem.

Lord of Life is located at 276 N. Roscoe Blvd., in Ponte Vedra Beach. It is part of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, one of the largest Christian denominations in the United States, with more than 10,000 congregations across 50 states. Lord of Life's website is LordOfLifePVB.org; on Facebook @lordoflifepontevedra or Instagram @lordoflifepvb.

# Florida Mobility Week Events planned

The state of Florida is celebrating its annual statewide Mobility Week on Oct. 21-28.

Mobility Week is a cooperative effort by the Florida Department of Transportation and its partner agencies to promote awareness of safe, multimodal transportation choices. During Mobility Week, counties, cities and transportation agencies host events and offer special promotions to encourage Floridians to try new transportation options.

St. Johns County Council on Aging (COA) will offer the following events during Mobility Week:

**• The Sunshine Bus Company Giveaway Days (all week Oct. 21-28)**

The Sunshine Bus Company will offer multiple giveaways during Mobility Week to include: one adult bicycle, one child's bicycle, one annual pass and one

monthly pass.

To view Sunshine Bus schedules, go to sunshinebus.net or ask your driver. Questions? Call Customer Service at 904-209-3716.

**• COA Paratransit No Co-pay Days (all week Oct. 21-28)**

COA Paratransit, the paratransit option in St. Johns County, is offering free fare, no co-payments, for all paratransit trips during Mobility Week. To view St. Johns County mobility options, go to coasjc.org/transportation.

**• Giveaway includes two portable grocery carts with seating**

For questions regarding transportation in St. Johns County, contact customer service/reservations at 904-209-3710 or go to coasjc.org/transportation.

For more information on Mobility Week, go to MobilityWeekFL.com.



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# Haunted Jail is the place for hair-raising fun

By Shaun Ryan

If you're looking for a good scare this Halloween season, the St. Johns County Sheriff's Office has cooked up some ghoulish fun that you'll definitely want to check out.

Sheriff Hardwick's Haunted Jail is located in the old county lockup, which adds to the realism — and creepiness — of the attraction. Courageous souls will venture through a dark labyrinth that features truly spine-tingling horrors with a unique judicial and law enforcement theme. We don't want to give away all the surprises but suffice to say this is no place to become a "lifer."

Once visitors have survived the shocking climax of this portion of the attraction, they move on to areas featuring villains from some of Hollywood's biggest horror films. Here, your nightmares will come to life.

Visitors will breathe a sigh of relief when they finally exit the Haunted Jail and are met with the cheery sight of food trucks. There will also be special, nonalcoholic Halloween-themed beverages for kids and adults.

"It will be a good time," said Capt. Bobby Dean. "You'll get food, drink and a scary time and all at a safe address here by the Sheriff's Office."

The various departments of the St. Johns County Sheriff's Office have been working to create the Haunted Jail for some time. From the start, they've had help from the Limelight Theatre, which has supplied actors to portray the characters and experts in the theatre arts and theatrical make-up to help enhance the attraction's effectiveness.

In recent weeks, the Sheriff's Office has been drumming up support for the Haunted Jail with its haunted



This inmate has been behind bars so long his ribs are showing.



Michael Myers takes a seat on Old Sparky.

Contributed photos

patrol car. The car features a scary wrap, created by #201WRAP, 1515 County Road 210, St. Johns.

"We just said we wanted a haunted patrol car," said Dean. "Next thing you know, they were giving us renderings, and within a couple of weeks we had a haunted patrol car show up."

In addition, the car emits a ghostly fog.

"We've been using it," Dean said. "We've been going to high school football games. And who knows? On Halloween, we might do traffic stops with it."

HAUNTED JAIL continues on Page 23



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A couple of scary ghouls invited the public to Sheriff Hardwick's Haunted Jail.



Contributed photos

Pennywise the Clown welcomes visitors to Sheriff Hardwick's Haunted Jail.

# Haunted Jail

Continued from 22

Sheriff Hardwick's Haunted Jail will be open 6-11 p.m. Oct. 21, 22, 28 and 29. It is located at 4025 Lewis Speedway, just across the street from the St. Johns County Courthouse. Note: Children under 14 years of age must be accompanied by an adult.

When visitors arrive, they should turn into the courthouse parking lot, 4010 Lewis Speedway. Signs will show the way. Then, deputies, members of Explorer Post 911 and public service assistants

will guide visitors safely across Lewis Speedway to the Haunted Jail.

While there will be a limited number of on-site tickets for sale, it's best to purchase admission online. Tickets are \$20 and can be purchased at [sjsjo.org](http://sjsjo.org). Click on the "Haunted Jail" image and then on the "Select a Date" button.

Because no taxpayer funds are used for the Haunted Jail, sponsors play an important role in creating it. Anyone who would like to be a sponsor or make a donation should contact PIO Peret Pass or Cpl. Greg Suchy at 904-824-8304.

The event is a fundraiser for the Sheriff's Office Special Teams Association.

Money raised will purchase necessities for the K9 units, SWAT team and groups like that.

To see Sheriff Robert Hardwick's arrest of Michael Myers in a funny video promoting the Haunted Jail, go to [sjsjo.org](http://sjsjo.org) and click on "Haunted Jail."



## GREEN YOUR HALLOWEEN

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Invest in REUSABLE decorations to use yearly! Skip the cheap plastic decor & the glow sticks (which are toxic)

**COSTUMES**  
Get CREATIVE & be UNIQUE! Make your own costume. Reuse old costumes, THRIFT or trade with friends.

**PARTIES**  
Green your party! Think REUSABLE plates, utensils, cups & decorations & say NO to serving single-use & single-serving items! Serve seasonal & locally sourced food!

**TREATS**  
Buy goodies that are "Fair Trade" certified & have sugar from sustainable sources. Treats in boxes can be recycled! Consider handing out useful items like pencils/erasers, reusable straws or even canned drinks! Non-food items are appreciated by families with allergies!

**TRICK-OR-TREAT BAG**  
Use a bucket, pillowcase, backpack or a reusable grocery bag. Skip the plastic pumpkins (unless you already have one then please reuse it!)

**PUMPKINS**  
Buy pumpkins from local farms or a farmers market. Try carving or decorating fun alternatives like squash & pineapples.

**COMPOSTING & RECYCLING**  
Plan ahead to compost Halloween treats & pumpkins. Recycle boxes in your curbside bin and thin flexible plastic packaging at the local grocer. Pumpkins make snacks for animals.





**ST. JOHNS COUNTY**  
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*Eddie Creamer*



## NOTICE OF CERTIFICATION OF TAX ROLL

**Pursuant to Sections 193.122 and 197.323, Florida Statutes, Notice is Hereby Given that the Tax Roll for St. Johns County was Certified to the St. Johns County Tax Collector on the 13th day of October, 2022, for the Collection of 2022 Taxes Pending Value Adjustment Board Changes.**

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# Business Weekly

For MORE business news, go to [facebook.com/ThePVRecorder](https://www.facebook.com/ThePVRecorder)

PAGE 24 THURSDAY, OCTOBER 13, 2022

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## Pink Ribbon Jax creates awareness, relief with mammogram initiative

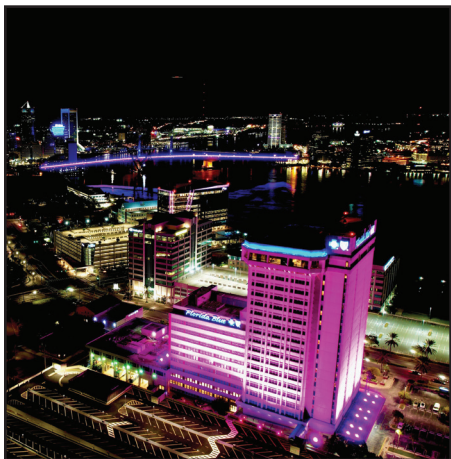


Photo by Eric Tewey

Downtown Jacksonville has partnered with Pink Ribbon Jax to light up certain buildings and bridges pink during October.

**By Anthony Richards**

Pink Ribbon Jax continues to do its part as a nonprofit organization to not only raise money to help people get checked for breast cancer, but also to raise awareness about it.

Every month is an important time to shed light on these issues, but with October's designation as Breast Cancer Awareness Month, they seek to use the platform as another opportunity to spread the word about what all they are striving to do.

The group is an all-volunteer outfit and all the money they raise is intended to stay in Jacksonville to help both women and men in their fight with breast cancer.

According to Pink Ribbon Jax committee chair Marica Pendjer, there are

men who get breast cancer and that is not something that should be forgotten.

"That's why I call them our 'warriors in pink,' because it includes both men and women," Pendjer said. "If you have the tissue, you can get the disease."

The focus of the organization in recent years has honed in on helping those in the community who can not afford to get tested for breast cancer.

That is why most of the funds raised goes towards purchasing mammograms for people who do not have the means to do so through a partnership with Baptist Health and Mayo Clinic of Jacksonville.

"If it comes down to someone having to decide whether to feed their family or get a mammogram, we want the burden of

that choice to not have to be made," Pendjer said. "This is one of those cancers that we can detect, and we believe everyone should have that option."

Last year, Pink Ribbon Jax raised more than \$2.5 million and according to Pendjer, all of the money stayed in the local community.

"I think that really resonates with the people," Pendjer said.

Through their efforts they were able to offer 1,500 free mammograms for people in need last year.

"That's a lot of lives and families being touched, because it's not just a sole battle," Pendjer said. "One in eight

INITIATIVE continues on Page 25

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Photo courtesy of Pink Ribbon Jax

The Jacksonville Transit Authority has wrapped a couple of its buses to support Breast Cancer Awareness Month.

## Initiative

Continued from 24

women will get breast cancer during their lifetime.”

The organization’s goal this year has been to raise funding for 1,650 free mammograms in conjunction with their 16th anniversary since the creation of the group in 2006.

Not only do the mammograms offer people an answer to whether they have cancer or not, but with it comes a huge sense of relief that they do not have to worry about the unknown.

“The peace of mind to know that they can go on with the rest of their lives,

especially when it comes back negative, is such a special thing that we can give them,” Pendjer said. “To live with that worry day-to-day like that has got to be unreal.”

Anyone interested in finding out how they can take advantage of the free mammogram program or getting involved with the organization can go to their website at pinkribbonjax.org.

“We’re just trying to make a difference and touch people’s lives,” Pendjer said.

One of the organization’s marquee events will be its Pink Ribbon Soiree, a benefit presented by Fields Automotive Group and scheduled for Saturday beginning at 7 p.m. at Jaguar/Land Rover Jacksonville.

# Tikka Bowls and Tacos opens

The Tikka Bowls and Tacos team and family recently cut the ribbon on the new business. The St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce held a ribbon cutting on Thursday, October 6th. The business is located at 155 Fountains Way Suite 4, St Johns. The restaurant offers Indian fusion tacos, burritos and bowls, curries, chicken wings and more. For more information, go to [tikkabowlsandtacos.com](http://tikkabowlsandtacos.com).

Photo provided by the SJC Chamber of Commerce



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# In the Arts



Send your arts news to  
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THURSDAY, OCTOBER 13, 2022 · PAGE 26 www.PonteVedraRecorder.com

## ‘First Coast Dancing with the Stars’ raises \$114K for Beaches Fine Arts Series

WJCT Studios, Beaches Fine Arts Series’ “First Coast Dancing with the Stars” presented 10 local celebrities, coupled with 10 professional dancers competing for the mirror ball trophies on Sept. 17. In close competition, the winners were:

**Champion:** Brandice Acree-Landing dancing with pro Sean Anthony.

Acree-Landing is vice president of ERG Global Strategy and employee advocate director for All-state. Anthony is owner of Studio 904.

**First Runner Up:** Dr. Avis Chen Boulter dancing with Christian Bastian.

Boulter is a pediatric anesthesiologist at Nemours Children’s Specialty Care.

Bastian is a professional dancer at Dance Alday.

**Second Runner Up:** Michiko Black dancing with Aleksei Alekseev.

Black, a former professional ballerina, has won national competitions and owned Ballet Studios.

Alekseev is a co-owner of Ballroom Dance Academy.

The event is made possible by the contributions of many businesses in the Jacksonville area, along with the help of volunteers, as well as the team at WJCT.

At the VIP party, Orsay provided an array of hors d’oeuvres, followed by a buffet dinner with Seasons 52, Blue Bamboo, TacoLu, Congaree and Penn, Hamburger Mary’s, The Courageous Spoon, Patrick Lorenzo Catering and SoNapa Grille providing an exciting display of great food. Southern Glazers provided beverages for the event.

Aiding the stars in preparation for their showcases on the dance floor were Tan Like a Celebrity, along with hair and makeup by Carmen Flota, Ashleigh Smith and Tara Berry.

For more information: [Firstcoastdwts.org](http://Firstcoastdwts.org).



Contributed photo

“First Coast Dancing with the Stars” participants gather for a photo.

## Symphony extends contract with music director

The Jacksonville Symphony has announced that Courtney Lewis, music director, and the Board of Directors have agreed to extend his contract through June 30, 2027. Lewis has served as the Jacksonville Symphony’s music director since 2015, a position permanently endowed by Haskell in 2009. This will be

his third contract extension.

Currently in his eighth season as music director, Lewis has designed an ambitious plan to enrich the surrounding community with innovative symphonic programming, creating the highest quality of art possible. Throughout his tenure, Lewis has dramatically reimagined the sym-

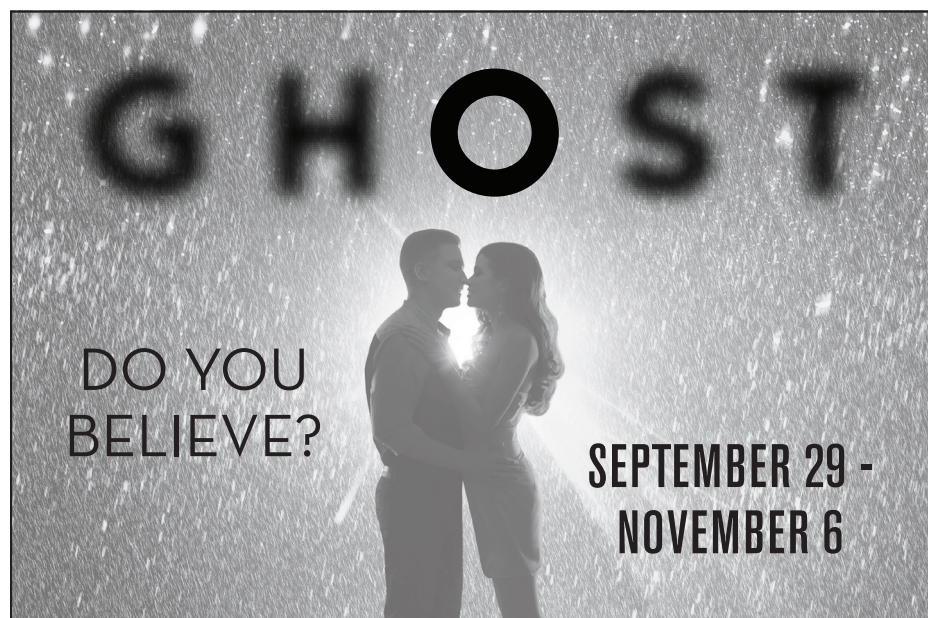
phony’s musical offerings, reinvigorated the symphony’s long tradition of commissioning works from today’s brightest composers, and championed more diversity within the orchestra.

“The board is thrilled that Courtney has agreed to extend his role as music director of the Jacksonville Symphony,” said

Don Baldwin, chair of the Jacksonville Symphony’s Board of Directors. “He has transformed and uplifted our orchestra to be at the forefront of artistic excellence and I know I speak for the entire board when I say that we’re excited to see where he leads this organization in the coming seasons.”

Anchored in the belief that music holds the power to transform lives, Lewis has established himself as one of his generation’s most dynamic conductors. In recent seasons, Lewis has made debuts with the Nürnberger Symphoniker, Hallé Orchestra, San Diego Symphony, Aspen Music Festival and the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, led the Australian Youth Orchestra on tour, and led the Minnesota Opera in their revival production and Naxos’ recording of “Silent Night,” composed by Kevin Puts. In August 2022, Lewis led the Los Angeles Philharmonic at the Hollywood Bowl.

Lewis’ previous seasons with the Jacksonville Symphony have featured a greatly expanded repertoire, including works of Gustav Mahler and Anton Bruckner, a Sibelius symphony cycle, Thomas Adès’ Asyla, Ligeti’s Piano Concerto and Timo Andres’ The Blind Banister. Lewis has also collaborated



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# Science fiction, ancient aliens subject for writers meeting

Americans have long been intrigued by the possibility of visitors from another world — past and present. Award-winning science-fiction and fantasy author Arthur Doweyko examines the evidence behind these beliefs in his presentation, “Ancient Archeology, Aliens, and Good Science Fiction,” at the FWA Ponte Vedra Writers meeting, 10 a.m. Saturday, Oct. 22, at the Ponte Vedra Beach Branch Library, 101 Library Blvd., Ponte Vedra Beach.



Arthur Doweyko

Doweyko will provide examples of visits by ancient aliens and the impact he says they’ve had on our culture and how they provided ample material for science-fiction writers. He’ll then move on to explain how writers can use these subjects for compelling plots in their stories.

Doweyko wears many hats. As a scientist, he invented novel drug design software and shares the 2008 Thomas

Alva Edison Patent Award for the discovery of Sprycel, an anti-cancer drug. Novels include “Algorithm” (2010 Royal Palm Literary Award (RPLA)) and “As Wings Unfurl” (Best Pre-Pub Sci-Fi 2014 RPLA); “Anthologies: My Shorts” (13 short stories, published 2017, Bronze 2019 RPLA) and “Captain Arnold” (Second Runner-up 2021 Book of the Year, RPLA).

He has published more than two dozen short stories in various venues, most of which have garnered awards. In addition, he received the 2021 L. Ron Hubbard Illustrators of the Future Award.

The Ponte Vedra Writers group is part of the Florida Writers Association, a statewide, nonprofit organization dedicated to the support of both aspiring and published writers in any genre.

The Oct. 22 meeting is free and open to members and nonmembers alike. For information on FWA go to [floridawriters.org](http://floridawriters.org).

## Symphony

Continued from 26

with distinguished guest artists on the Jacoby Symphony Hall stage, including violinists Anthony Marwood and James Ehnes; pianists Conrad tao, Lang Lang, Inon Barnatan and Jonathan Biss; and soprano Renée Fleming.

A passionate opera conductor, Lewis introduced symphonically staged productions of “Hänsel und Gretel” in 2017, excerpts from “Götterdämmerung” with Christine Brewer and Jay Hunter Morris in 2018, “Don Giovanni” in 2019 and “La Bohème” in 2022. In 2023, he will conduct “The Magic Flute.” Since his debut in November 2008 with the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra, Lewis has appeared with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Vancouver Symphony and RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra of Ireland among many other high-profile orchestras. He served as assistant conductor of

the New York Philharmonic, associate conductor of the Minnesota Orchestra and Dudamel Fellow with the Los Angeles Philharmonic.

From 2008 to 2014, Lewis was also the music director of Boston’s acclaimed Discovery Ensemble, a chamber orchestra dedicated to giving concerts of contemporary and established repertoire at the highest level of musical excellence while also bringing live music into the underprivileged parts of Boston through workshops in local schools.

Born in Belfast, Northern Ireland, Lewis began his musical journey as a chorister before studying composition with Robin Holloway at the University of Cambridge and clarinet with Dame Thea King. After completing a master’s degree at Cambridge with a focus on the late music of György Ligeti, he attended the Royal Northern College of Music, where his teachers included Sir Mark Elder and Clark Rundell.

### ON STAGE

A roundup of musical acts appearing before Nov. 14 at local venues

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For further information about each act, go to [pvconcerthall.com/events](http://pvconcerthall.com/events).

- **Bob Mould** — 8 p.m. Oct. 14
- **Steve Vai** — 8 p.m. Oct. 21
- **Pablo Cruise** — 8 p.m. Oct. 23
- **Steep Canyon Rangers** — 7 p.m. Nov. 4
- **Joe Satriani** — 8 p.m. Nov. 9
- **Fortunate Youth** — With special guests Passafire and Joe Samba. 6:30 p.m. Nov. 10
- **Hayes Carll** — 8 p.m. Nov. 12

- **The Head And The Heart** — With special guest Shakey Graves. 6:30 p.m. Oct. 13
- **Gov’t Mule & Old Crow Medicine Show** — 7 p.m. Oct. 14
- **Trace Adkins** — 7 p.m. Oct. 15
- **Lauren Daigle** — With special guest Blessing Offor, 6 p.m. Nov. 2 and 3.
- **Alabama** — With special guest The Red Clay Strays, 6 p.m. Nov. 4 and 5
- **Adam Sandler** — For mature audiences. 7:30 p.m. Nov. 10
- **Bonnie Raitt** — With special guest Marc Cohn. 7:30 p.m. Nov. 12.

— Compiled by Shaun Ryan

**ST. AUGUSTINE AMPHITHEATRE**  
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Tickets may also be purchased at [ticketmaster.com](http://ticketmaster.com).  
For further information about each act, go to [theamp.com/events](http://theamp.com/events).

Image from The Amp  
**Steve Vai will perform at the Ponte Vedra Concert Hall on Oct. 21.**

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# Sports



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## Girls basketball clinic focuses on mentorship, fundamentals

By Anthony Richards

Jessica Spencer-Gardner has yet to coach her first game as the head girls basketball coach at Ponte Vedra High, but she has already done her best to establish what she hopes is a lasting mark.

Ponte Vedra High hosted a girls basketball clinic Oct. 8 in the school's gym. The clinic was broken up into two segments with the morning session consisting of middle school-aged girls and the afternoon session focusing on younger ages.

"I just see a need for girls basketball opportunities in our area," Spencer-Gardner said. "That's why we wanted to really build up the younger girls out there in our community. My goal is to use basketball to help build the next generation of strong and confident female leaders."

Not only did the clinic concentrate on growing the love of the game among the community's youth, but it also gave members on the current high school squad the chance to teach and interact with those future Sharks.

According to Spencer-Gardner, there was so much to be gained from the day by everyone taking part.

"The Ponte Vedra High basketball players are phenomenal leaders and players, so to put them in position to be role models for the younger generation is great," Spencer-Gardner said. "This game has given me so much and it's full of life lessons to be learned."

The message throughout the clinic was clear that although basketball was the reason they were all there, it was about much more than just the game.

"When you're face-to-face with those little girls, you realize the impact you can



Former high school and college coach Charsea Clark provided a few words to the groups as special guest at the clinic.



Current members of the Ponte Vedra High girls basketball program served as instructors during the clinic.

have on their lives," Spencer-Gardner said.

Each player in the high school program, both varsity and junior varsity, were on hand and serving as an instructor at any of the various skill stations set up around the gym.

Also helping was Charsea Clark, who had spent years as a coach at the high school and college levels, most recently last year as an assistant coach for the University of North Florida women's basketball program.



Ponte Vedra High School hosted a girls basketball clinic Oct. 8.

Photos by Anthony Richards

Not only did Clark offer up her expertise and tips as an instructor, but she also provided some word of inspiration and advice for the girls during a portion of the clinic.

Clark emphasized the importance of having a relentless work ethic and approaching the game with respect and a selfless attitude.

"I've really been focusing on leadership with my girls and what it means to be a leader," Spencer-Gardner said. "This gives them an opportunity to be in



A participant works on her dribbling skills.



Being unselfish and working as a team was one of the clinic's messages.

a leadership role and to lead by example and use their words to uplift."

Spencer-Gardner took over as head coach of the Sharks in April and since then she has experienced a smooth transition as she's worked on building her relationships with her players.

"I'm a relationship-driven coach, so I told the girls from day one that I will be there for them 100%," Spencer-Gardner said. "We've done a lot of team bonding early on and I've had a blast with them. They are just such a great group of girls."

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# Triathletes compete at event on Mickler's Landing

The fourth annual Game On! Ponte Vedra Beach Triathlon presented by Bowen, Hanes, & Company Inc. took place Sunday, Oct. 9, at Mickler's Landing. More than 350 triathletes participated in the Olympic- and Sprint-distance races

that began at sunrise.

Participants swam in the waters of the Atlantic Ocean, biked on the peaceful roadways of A1A through Guana River State Park and ran by the well-manicured homes on Ponte Vedra Boulevard. The

spectacular views, pristine beaches and natural running environment of Ponte Vedra Beach make the Game On! Race Event popular among athletes.

Game On brought athletes from all over the Jacksonville/St. Augustine area.

Additionally, 19 states were represented at the event.

Game On! Race Events will return to Mickler's in May and October 2023. For more information, go to [GameOn-RaceEvents.com](http://GameOn-RaceEvents.com).

Photos by Cory Knowlton/Fixed Focus Photography



Ponte Vedra Triathlon athletes gather on the beach Oct. 9 after the event presented by Game On! Race Events.



Ponte Vedra Triathlon competitors waded out into the Atlantic Ocean during the Oct. 9 event.



A competitor crosses the finish line at the Ponte Vedra Triathlon on Oct. 9.



A Ponte Vedra Triathlon competitor runs on Ponte Vedra Boulevard during the event.



A triathlete rides through Guana River State Park during the Ponte Vedra Triathlon on Oct. 9



A triathlete remains focused during the Ponte Vedra Triathlon on Oct. 9



A triathlete celebrates finishing the running portion of the Ponte Vedra Triathlon.



The triathletes complete the swimming portion of the event. Photo by Jim Anderson



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1	2	3	4			5	6	7		8	9	10	11	
12				13		14				15				
16					17	18				19				
20						21				22				
				23		24				25				
26	27	28	29					30						
31								32						
33										34	35	36	37	38
				39	40	41		42	43					
		44	45					46						
	47						48							
49					50				51		52	53	54	55
56					57				58					
59					60					61				
62					63						64			

**ACROSS**

1. Towards the mouth or oral region
5. A way to season
8. North-central Indian city
12. Emaciation
14. Actress de Armas
15. A way to score in basketball
16. Odd
18. Scripting languages on IBM machines
19. A right of local jurisdiction
20. Hard, colorless compound
21. Diving seabird
22. Wild goat of the mountains
23. Not shortened
26. Someone who learns from a teacher
30. Is inclined
31. Still asleep
32. Antidepressants (abbr.)
33. Town in Surrey, England
34. Indian music patterns
39. Birth control means
42. People tend to be on one
44. A way to keep meat moist
46. Home of the Crimson Tide
47. Pasta type
49. Late 1990s rapper
50. One circuit of a track
51. Surrounded by water
56. Late "Growing Pains" actor Thicke
57. Married couples say it
58. Drool
59. Sicilian city
60. Airline worker perk (abbr.)
61. Grayish-black mixture
62. Systems, doctrines, theories
63. Midway between east and southeast
64. Athletes who get paid

3. Cain and \_\_\_
4. Hindu female deity
5. Islamic calendar month
6. Changes posture
7. More stubborn
8. Give work to
9. Round maps of the Earth
10. Gathered fallen leaves
11. Popular credit card
13. Separation of church and state
17. Founder of Sikhism
24. They \_\_\_
25. Where you find the milk
26. Institute legal proceedings against
27. The neural structure consisting of the brain and spinal cord
28. Expresses surprise
29. Have a debt to
35. Businessman

36. State on India's western coast
37. Practice of managing financial risks (abbr.)
38. Patty Hearst's captors
40. Put into service
41. 10-year periods
42. Crony
43. Surgical clamp
44. Leave unable to move due to lack of wind
45. Where rockers work
47. Valleys
48. Ancient lyric poem
49. Wise men
52. It lights a room
53. Assert
54. Fifth Roman Emperor
55. Ancient Greek city in Thrace

### SUDOKU

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

Level: Beginner

**Here's How It Works:**

Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

# WEEK 8 FOOTBALL PREVIEW

## Panthers start clean slate, district play against Bulldogs

**By Anthony Richards**

This time of year is all about district play and paving a path to the postseason in high school football.

For the Nease Panthers, that path begins this Friday at 7 p.m. as they travel to take on the Flagler Palm Coast Bulldogs (4-3, 1-0) to open their district season.

Although the season has not gone as the Panthers would have hoped to this point with a record of 1-6 and having lost their share of close contests.

However, according to head coach Collin Drafts, Friday's matchup marks a clean slate for the Panthers, as they begin essentially a "new season."

The offense has found its way in recent weeks, and they are doing so by establishing a rushing attack, which in turn has opened opportunities in the passing game off of play-action.

The Panthers have scored 31 and 41 points in the past two games and have done so without Samuel Milton who has been out with an injury.

However, during his absence Camryn Smith has stepped up in a big way and begun to showcase his vision and skills as a running back.

Senior Da'von Patterson has also received some carries out of the backfield and is an explosive threat to score any time he touches the ball.

If Milton returns this week, it will give the Panthers a potent trio of backs against the Bulldogs.

The questions for the Panthers of late have been on the defensive side of the ball, where both the players and coaches know they cannot continue to give up 50-plus points like they have in the past two games.

A win for Flagler Palm Coast would secure them the district 4-4S title after already having defeated Ponte Vedra 20-17 Oct. 3.

The Sharks are riding high after their late-game heroics and 32-31 victory over Bishop Kenny Oct. 7.

They look to keep those winnings ways going on the road against Ocala Trinity Catholic (4-2) at 7 p.m. Friday.

Grit and determination can be the difference in which teams have success down the stretch at the end of seasons.

The Sharks (3-3) have showed plenty of both with late drives by the offense in clutch moments in the last two games.

That is a good sign moving forward, as the offense has proven not to be fazed during the pressure-packed points of a game.

A large reason for that continues to be the play of quarterback Ben Burk, who has taken complete command of the offense since the bye week and he will look to continue that progression against the Celtics.



**Camryn Smith of Nease has come up with big performances on the ground in recent weeks.**



**Ponte Vedra's Ben Burk scrambles away from defenders.**

Photos by Anthony Richards

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