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The First Coast Register
INSIDE

Serving Ponte Vedra, St. Augustine, The Beaches and Greater St. Johns County

Thursday, April 25, 2024

PonteVedraRecorder.com

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County commission approves park, public library for Nocatee

By Anthony Richards

A park and public library will be coming to the Nocatee community in a couple of years following a recent decision by the St. Johns County Board of County Commissioners to approve the project.

Residents will begin to see progress being made sooner rather than later with construction of the project expected to start later this year with completion estimated by the end of 2026.

The new facilities will be built on 49 acres of land donated to the county by the Davis family and The PARC

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

Event raises funds for INK!, Ocean Sole

By Shaun Ryan

The Art of the Possible, held Thursday, April 18, at Asado Life waterfront restaurant in St. Augustine raised funds for two important local causes: the St. Johns County Education Foundation, which operates as Investing in Kids (INK!), and Ocean Sole, a nonprofit based in Ponte Vedra Beach and Kenya.

It was a full evening, featuring exceptional fare from the Asado Life chefs, a silent and live auction of several collectable and experiential treasures, a photo booth, custom selfie station, door prizes and live music by Brad Newman.

Cathy Newman, INK! executive director, described the mission of the organization founded 30 years ago.

"We support the public school district here in St. Johns County," she said, "so all 50,000 students, all 6,000-plus employees, which includes about 3,600 teachers and instructional staff."

One of those attending the event was Tina Hemby, this year's St. Johns County



Photo by Shaun Ryan

Cathy Newman, INK! executive director, left, speaks to the guests. At center is Ocean Sole CEO Erin Smith. At right is INK! Board Chair Holly Hill.

Teacher of the Year.

"I'm just so excited about participating in the fundraiser because INK! does so much for our community in the education field as far as helping students and helping teachers," she said. "INK!'s just amazing. It's a really good cause."

Hemby teaches eighth grade pre-algebra at Millcreek Academy. She has been a teacher for 29 years, 10 of which she has served in St. Johns County.

Ocean Sole CEO Erin Smith described

EVENT continues on Page 8

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

BRIEFS

Extract Juicery plans open house

Extract Juicery, 104 Ashourian Ave., Suite 104, will hold its ribbon-cutting ceremony at 4 p.m. Friday, April 26, with the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce as part of a two-day grand opening celebration for the new business.

Here are some details:

- First 50 guests in line at 8 a.m. Saturday, April 27, will receive a \$50 credit for future purchases
- Meet and greet with Jacksonville Jaguars No. 20 Daniel Thomas with a purchase
- Raffle prizes include free juice cleanses, autographed football, Apple Watch, Lululemon Gift Card
- Delicious juices, smoothies, acai bowls, salads and more

For more information, go to extractjuicery.com.

Beach cleanup is Saturday

The Guana Tolomato Matanzas National Estuarine Research Reserve (GTM) will conduct a beach cleanup on Saturday, April 27. Meet at 9:30 a.m. at the GTM Research Reserve Visitor Center, 505 Guana River Road, Ponte Vedra Beach, where gloves and trash bags will be provided. Participants will be directed to a specific beach for cleanup. Hat, insect repellent, water and sunscreen are recommended.

Email Candace.Killian@FloridaDEP.gov to participate.

Archaeological presentation planned

The Archaeological Institute of America — Jacksonville Society will meet at noon Saturday, April 27, in Building 51 at the University of North Florida to hear a free lecture by Master student Alex Diaz from Florida State University.

The title of his lecture is "Crafting bones: an analysis of a worked bone assemblage from a Mississippian mound complex in Northeast Florida."

Refreshments will be served afterward in the anthropology lab. On Saturday, parking is free. For more information, contact Melva Price at 904-241-9411 or go to aiajaxsoc@gmail.com.

Local kids coloring contest winners

Two Jacksonville children were named win-

ners in Charlotte, North Carolina-based Meridian Waste Acquisitions' 5th Annual Brightening the World Earth Day Coloring Contest.

Advika S. won first place and Ansley P. won third place in the age 8-10 group.

Winners will receive a rosette ribbon, a T-shirt imprinted with his or her personal winning artwork, and a garbage truck plaque engraved with his or her name, placing and Brightening the World Meridian Waste branding. The winners' artwork can be viewed at

BRIEFS continues on Page 7

PUZZLE SOLUTIONS

H	A	M	S	S	H	O	E	S	M	A	U	L
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6	8	4	2	7	9	1	5	3
1	7	9	4	3	5	6	8	2
5	2	3	6	8	1	7	9	4

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St. Johns County OKs purchase of 36 acres in World Golf Village

By Shaun Ryan

St. Johns County Commissioners voted 4-1 Tuesday, April 16, to purchase 36.07 acres of property at the core of World Golf Village in what Commissioner Henry Dean characterized as temporary ownership.

“We’re serving as a transitional agent,” he said, predicting that the county would not likely retain ownership for more than a year.

The purchase price is \$5.5 million and includes \$202,500 for the inventory of the Hall of Fame, the IMAX Theater and the PGA Tour Production Building. The purchase

also includes the lake, common area and parking spaces. The county already owns the Hall of Fame structure.

The cost of property closing is estimated at an additional \$50,000.

The lone dissenting vote came from Commissioner Krista Joseph.

In July 2022, the World Golf Foundation informed the county of its intention to move the World Golf Hall of Fame to Pinehurst, North Carolina, its original home. The Hall of Fame had been located in St. Johns County since 1998.

As of Dec. 31, 2023, operations had

ceased at the Hall of Fame and the 64,113-square-foot building was conveyed to the county. The theater measures 17,865 square feet, and the production building measures 32,329 square feet.

The county sought public input and has been under agreement with the foundation to continue operation of the theater.

This action terminates a 1991 tourist development agreement and a 1995 ground lease. The PGA Tour and World Golf Foundation have requested to lease back the production building until March 2025 in order to move the production operations

to the PGA Tour Global Headquarters in Ponte Vedra.

Funding for the purchase includes reallocation of \$2 million in American Rescue Plan Act funds and \$2 million from the 2019 Capital Improvements Fund that had been approved for construction of a library in that community.

The commission also voted to apply \$1.55 million from public building impact fee reserves to the purchase.

Further information on the county’s plans for the property are expected to be made public in May.



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Welcome to this charming custom-built home nestled in the highly desired area of Old Ponte Vedra, offering unparalleled privacy with lush landscape and gorgeous golf course views. The property boasts just under a half an acre, with a large circular drive, side-entry garage and no immediate neighbor to the north. The first floor has 2 bedrooms with ADA compliant doorways and barrier free showers in both full baths and the second floor has 2 more ensuite bedrooms. The mature trees and landscaping provide shade and privacy, creating a tranquil oasis right outside your door.



300 Cloisterbane Drive

5BD | 4 BA | 3651sf | 2-Story | \$790,000

This stunning 2-story home boasts 5 bedrooms and 4 bathrooms spread across 3651 square feet of living space. The main level features a spacious living area, fully equipped with a gourmet kitchen with a center island for casual dining. Main floor bedroom and full bath was smartly included as an in-law suite with a pocket door for added privacy. Sliding glass doors lead to a screened lanai with a summer kitchen, and a paver patio extending to a firepit area, offering tranquil views of the lagoon and lush preserve. The second floor offers a luxurious primary suite plus three additional bedrooms, 2 full bathrooms, and a large bonus room.

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Nocatee

Continued from 1

Group, who are the developers of the Nocatee community.

The vote by the board of county commissioners was unanimous and authorized an estimated \$123 million plan to construct five regional parks and community centers across the county, and the Nocatee project is included as part of the larger picture.

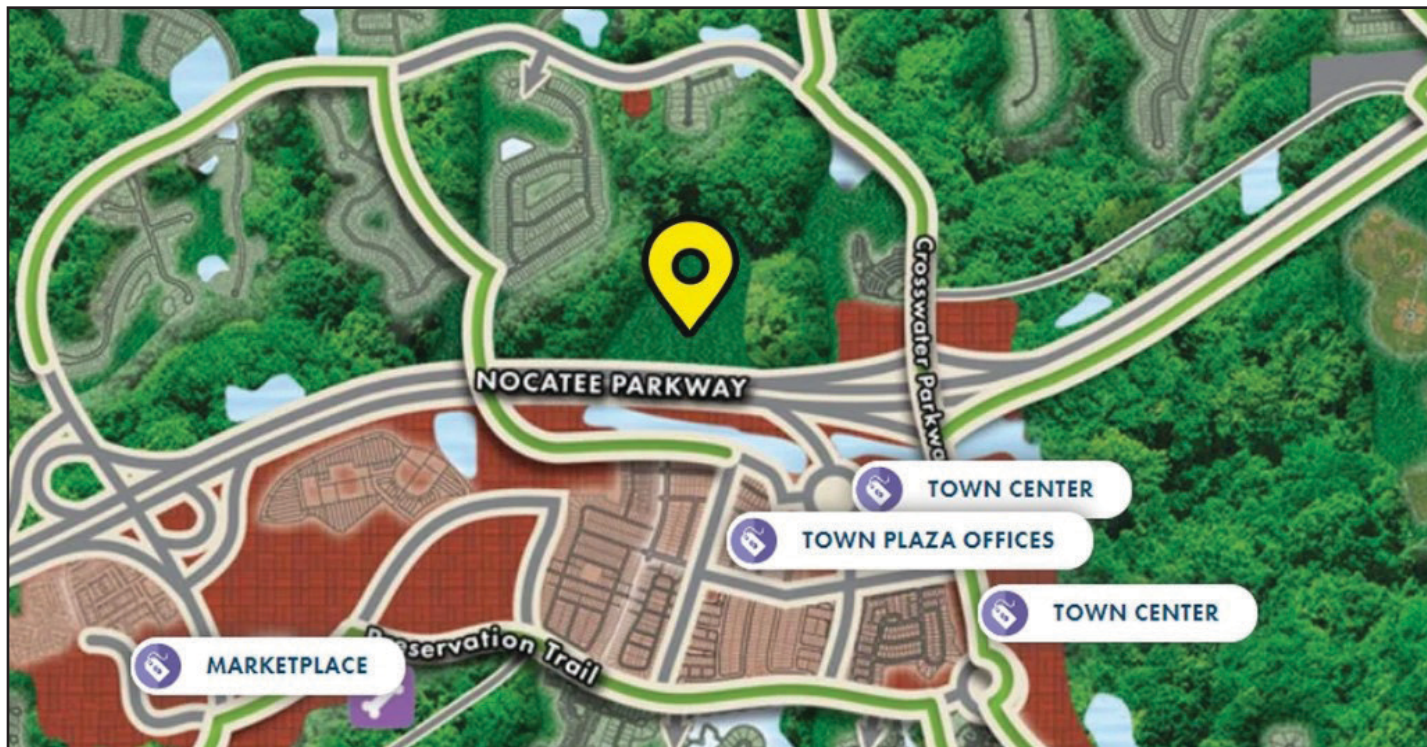
The Nocatee project will account for an estimated \$43 million of the \$123 million overall plan.

The northeast community park in Nocatee will feature several amenities for residents, including baseball, softball, soccer and other multipurpose fields, as well as pickleball and sand volleyball courts.

However, the park will be more than just a place to play various sports, but also a place intended for the entire family to come out and find something to do and enjoy a day together.

There will be several activities available for residents, such as a children’s splash pad, picnic pavilions, a fishing pond with kayak dock, climbing wall and plenty of play areas and paved walkways around the grounds.

A community center with indoor space will also be part of the park property



intended to support the county’s supervisor of elections.

The park’s plans also include the construction of a full-service public library branch to be included as part of the county’s library system and serve the needs of the community’s 32,000 residents.

“The PARC Group thanks the St. Johns County commissioners for making this project possible,” said Rick Ray, CEO of The PARC Group. “We espe-

cially appreciate the efforts of commissioners Christian Whitehurst and Henry Dean for championing the addition of a full library, a long-awaited and welcome addition to the Nocatee Community.”

The next step in the project will be a financing package which will be presented to the BOCC for consideration at a future meeting date, according to St. Johns County Administrator Joy Andrews.

The county suggested that no prop-

erty taxes will be used to pay for the construction costs, as it plans to use a combination of existing accumulated impact fees paid by developments and debt issuance to fund the projects.

The plan, combined with previous financial commitments to parks, means that St. Johns County has invested \$200 million over the next five years into countywide parks and recreation facilities to support various programs and services.

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Work-life Balance - June 12, 2024 5:30-7:30 PM
Tools for Marketing and Sales - July 10, 2024 5:30-7:30 PM
Tour to Non-profit - August 14, 2024 5:30-7:30 PM
Local Business Tour - September 11, 2024 5:30-7:30 PM
Closing Awards Ceremony - October 9, 2024 5:30-7:30 PM

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Contributed photos



Teens create butterfly garden at the link

Members of the Teen Club at the link in Nocatee have once again demonstrated their commitment to community and creativity. Led by Jeff Tawney, director of operations, the club embarked on a remarkable project in early February: the creation of a butterfly garden on site at the link. With passion and dedication, they envisioned, designed and budgeted for this beautiful addition to their surroundings.

Their efforts received a fortuitous boost when Tawney connected with two Lowe's representatives involved in the construction of a new store near the Beachwalk community off County Road 210 West. Impressed by the club's charitable endeavors and inspired by the butterfly garden idea, the representatives eagerly offered their support, inviting the Teen Club to submit a wish list.

Thanks to the generous contributions

from five local Lowe's stores, the garden dream became a reality. Teen Club members rolled up their sleeves, cleaned up the space, prepared the area and tirelessly worked for four days until the project was completed.

The butterfly garden now stands as a serene place of reflection, featuring a rock river, vibrant planter boxes, colorful flowers and inviting park benches. Symbolizing beauty, grace and transfor-

mation, the butterfly motif holds a special significance, often seen as a sign of angelic presence and guidance in life.

In a touching tribute, the garden was dedicated to "Amma," the mother of one of the link's founders, adding a deeply personal touch to this communal space.

If you have teenagers who would like to be part of such impactful projects, consider joining the Teen Club. Reach out to jeff@thelink.zone for more information.

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Travon Walker is from Thomaston, Georgia, but also calls Jacksonville and Northeast Florida home since being drafted No. 1 overall by the Jacksonville Jaguars in the 2022 NFL Draft. Not only has he made an impact on the field, but he has also strived to do his part to make an impact off the field as well by starting the Travon Walker Foundation following his rookie season.

Travon Walker

As told to Anthony Richards

Tell us a little about yourself and your background.

I'm from a small town called Thomaston in Georgia, which has a population of just over 7,000, so my whole community basically helped raise me and they poured everything they had into me and rallied behind the kids.

To have people like that in your life and career to push you is everything.

The textile mill is the main job for a lot of people in my town and it is made up of people that know what it means to work hard for what they want.

One of the main things about growing up in a small community like that is that you learn that it takes a village and without all that support over the years I wouldn't be where I'm at.

Was football always a passion of yours?

My first love was basketball and it always just came easily for me, and I also ran track in high school.

But God, family and football have always been at the root of everything for me. That's what it has always been all about.

My high school team won 73 straight games, and I'm not sure but I think it may still be the record today.

Without the hard work and commitment over the years, there wouldn't be any of the success I've had and I wouldn't be where I'm at today.

What are the goals of your foundation?

We want to be there to provide a leadership role for the kids and to remind them to be where their feet are, because it's important to not get too far ahead and just focus on where you're at that specific time.

Whatever it is they are involved with, we want them to remember to attack it and go after their dreams and that goes for anything in life.

You can go a long way if you have this approach.

What are your plans for the future of the Travon Walker Foundation?

It's the little things that make all the difference, and to see the smiles on the faces of those the foundation helps is everything.

Jacksonville is the next place I want to spread this love and joy to, since that has become another home for me.

I have high hopes and just want to keep helping as much as we can. I am excited



Contributed photo

Travon Walker has embraced Northeast Florida as his home and a community he is determined to give back to more and more since the Jaguars drafted him in 2022.

to see the number of communities we are involved in over the next 10 to 15 years.

Do you ever find yourself looking back at all that you've accomplished and your journey to this point?

I'd be lying if I said I don't look back on it and think who would have ever thought I'd be where I'm at.

It has been even more than I could have

imagined. To be a No.1 draft pick and have the chance to play in the NFL, I'm just truly blessed is all I can think about every time.

But I also know that I'm not where I want to be yet, and that there's so much more potential out there to even further have an impact.

At the end of day, I'm just trying to be the best man and family man possible.

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

I don't see how anyone couldn't love Jacksonville.

It's all about the scenery for me, because I'm all about a clear mind and nothing helps that better than the natural sights you can find around here.

I'm a country boy at heart, so I like fishing and all that kind of stuff as well.

Laws are in place to make everyone on roadways, sidewalks safe

By Anthony Richards

There are several Florida laws in place to make sure residents are safe while walking, riding a bike or driving on the roadways.

And although automobiles are responsible for sharing the road with cyclists, there are certain rules of the road that are in place but are still not widely understood.

As an example, bicycles are considered vehicles and therefore are required to follow all the traffic laws in place by Florida law just as someone driving a car would.

These rules include coming to full stops and looking both ways at stop signs and riding in the same direction as the automobile traffic on the road.

This differs from those walking or running on roadways, who the law insists must do so going in the direction opposite of the automobile and bicycle traffic.

The idea behind the difference is because it is considered safer for the person walking or running along the road because they would have the opportunity to see veering traffic heading toward them and would be able to react and avoid it in a



timelier manner than if they were going with traffic and it could save their life.

Walkers and runners are advised to wear reflective clothing at night and/or a light to give a greater opportunity to be seen, especially from a distance.

Pedestrians do have the right of way over all vehicles, but whenever possible it

is recommended that they use sidewalks when available to decrease the safety risks.

Any cyclists riding on a sidewalk should yield the right of way to pedestrians walking or running along it, and drivers are required by law to provide at least three feet of distance or more when driving alongside or near cyclists.

Golf carts are a popular vehicle choice in the Ponte Vedra Beach area, so it is important to remember that they are seen by the law as the same as any other vehicle, so they must also follow all traffic laws in place, such as stopping at stop signs and being directed by traffic signals.

And just as with an automobile, it is illegal to be underage and not licensed to drive.

The law also requires all golf carts to be licensed and insured if they share the public roadways.

The Ponte Vedra Community Association continues to work closely with the Ponte Vedra Municipal Service District and St. Johns County officials to continue to advocate for the more sidewalks in order to continue the growth of roadway safety measures in the area.

Briefs

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MeridanWaste.com/EarthDay.

Library to offer resources for moms, infants

The Ponte Vedra Library and St. Johns CARES, Inc. are collaborating on a St. Johns community drive and event for infants and mothers. Throughout the month of May, donations of needed infant items, such as diapers, baby wipes, formula/baby food and diaper cream can be dropped off by the public at the Ponte Vedra Beach Library Branch. The donations will be distributed to organizations in St. Johns County with families in need.

On May 9, a Resource Fair for Moms & Babies will be held from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the library and will include information on various topics, CPR training, a pediatrician and more.

— Compiled by Shaun Ryan



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The mouth-watering cuisine at Asado Life included Parrilla Roasted Prime Picanha, house-made Argentinian Malbec Infused Chorizo and Signature Spiced All Natural Chicken Thighs Chimichurri. A vegetarian option was also available.



Guests have a bit of fun with a foam shark prop for a special photograph.

Event

Continued from 1

how her organization pays about 1,000 people for the many discarded flip-flops they collect from beaches along the Indian Ocean and then pays about 100 Kenyan artisans to fashion the flip-flops into colorful animal sculptures to sell.

Ocean Sole's mission is to clean polluted beaches, build conservation awareness, connect people through the artwork and generate funds to benefit low-income communities.

The cuisine was a mixture of gaucho-inspired cooking methods and modern fine dining. Asado Life is located at 173 Shipyard Way on the shores of the San Sebastian River.

Sponsors for the event were GreenPointe Holdings, Old Town Trolley Tours, Leonard's Photography, All American Air Charitable Foundation, The Volen Group — Keller Williams Luxury International and Grand Canyon University.



Photos by Shaun Ryan

St. Johns County Teacher of the Year Tina Hemby dances with an Ocean Sole sculpture as a camera rotates 360 degrees around her.



Ocean Sole CEO Erin Smith, right, speaks with guests about the nonprofit's work.



Guests mingle during the Art of the Possible event.



Ocean Sole CEO Erin Smith describes her nonprofit's mission.



Guitarist and singer Brad Newman entertains attendees.



Guests enjoy a delicious meal at Asado Life.



An Asado Life chef prepares a dish for the event.

WALKERS RIDGE IN SAWGRASS COUNTRY CLUB

Step inside 52 South Nine Drive and experience a unique custom designed home that is perfect for entertaining family and friends. The cozy entrance to the foyer welcomes you to an open concept dining room, and light filled living room, and sunroom, that reveals one of Sawgrass Country Clubs waterfront views with a Northeastern exposure. This completely updated home with the master on the first floor is simply gorgeous! With 2294 square feet of design this 3-bedroom 2 1/2 bath coastal traditional is light, and spacious, with a unique floor plan that connects the new Chefs kitchen, and breakfast room, to the dining room, office and spacious 2 story living room, with a wood burning fireplace. Minutes to the beach and golf course. Enjoy country club living that is simply the best! Offered for \$949,000.



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New apartments expand workforce housing options

The highly anticipated grand opening of Flagler Crossing at St. Augustine Apartments took place on Thursday, April 18, marking a significant milestone in the journey toward more accessible housing in St. Johns County.

Developed by Jacksonville-based Corner Lot, this project not only showcases a commitment to quality living spaces but also underscores the pressing need for workforce housing solutions in one of America's fastest-growing communities.

The grand opening celebrated phase one of Flagler Crossing, which consists of 330 units spread out over 11 buildings. A hundred of those units are designated as workforce housing, which means tenants can receive reduced rent for those units based on their income level.

Throughout the project, there will be no less than 150 units dedicated to workforce and affordable housing. The AMI (Average Median Income) associated with these units will range between 80% of the AMI and 10% below the market. At least 50 of the units will be set aside in perpetuity. The remaining units will be available for a minimum of three years.

Each unit features granite countertops throughout, stainless steel appliances, a full-size washer and dryer, custom cabinetry, luxury vinyl tile in all areas except bedrooms, a single basin sink and subway



Contributed photo

Local officials cut the ribbon on Flagler Crossing.

tile kitchen backsplash.

All residents will have access to a resident lounge in the clubhouse, a resort-style swimming pool with cabanas, a 24-hour indoor/outdoor fitness center, scenic views of the San Sebastian River from outdoor lounge areas, Luxor One package lockers and EV charging stations.

Flagler Crossing Apartments represents

a culmination of years of collaboration between Corner Lot and the community. With a vision to provide sustainable and affordable housing options, Corner Lot has crafted this development to cater to the diverse needs of St. Augustine residents.

“Workforce housing is not only a buzzword in our industry, but it’s become a

part of our passion in building up our city and its surroundings,” said Andy Allen, Corner Lot CEO. “Having an amazing option along the San Sebastian River near downtown St. Augustine, we feel like we have knocked this one out of the park in partnership with the city and our community. Thanks to all of our partners, investors and especially my team. Onward to Phase Two!”

The importance of workforce housing cannot be overstated in St. Johns County, where, like other fast-growing communities across the country, the cost of living continues to rise. Through initiatives like the Live Local Program, Flagler Crossing Apartments aims to provide essential support to local essential workers like first responders, medical staff and teachers. This enables them to live closer to their workplaces and fosters a stronger sense of community.

Corner Lot recognized the team at Group 4 Design Inc. for their design work and Summit Contracting Group for their dedication in bringing this project to fruition.

The grand opening celebration featured guided tours of the apartments, remarks from community leaders and an opportunity to connect some of the residents who call Flagler Crossing home, along with the team behind the project.

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Alligator Farm marks Earth Day with 'Party for the Planet'

Residents install hundreds of new plants to benefit native wildlife

By Jennie Flinn

More than 300 people showed up for "Party for the Planet" at the St. Augustine Alligator Farm Zoological Park on Saturday, April 20. Instead of marveling over impressive reptiles, the partygoers meandered through Camp Croc, a somewhat-unknown area of the farm, as part of a global celebration held just before Earth Day.

Other than the large oak trees providing the perfect canopy of shade and a small wildflower garden, there had never been much to see in Camp Croc, an area used for field trips, camps and community events. But "Party for the Planet" provided an opportunity to enhance the landscape by adding hundreds of native plants.

With an "if you build it, they will come" philosophy, the Alligator Farm used the event to enlist help from the community. People showed up ready to get their hands dirty and install native plants. In return for their efforts, attendees got to take home some of these beneficial plant species.

"Today was a big success," said Trevor Mia, the Alligator Farm's curator of education. "With help from the public, we got all of the new, Florida-friendly and native plants in the ground. While exotic plants thrive in Florida's climate, they do not provide the necessary resources for native animals to survive. We wanted to add mostly native species to create hotspots for pollinators, such as butterflies and birds."

The event included fun, hands-on activity stations for all age levels. Kids decorated "toad abodes," which are spaces for amphibians to seek shelter. While they were busy adding artwork to their houses, Alligator Farm educator Taylor Evans explained how the houses would provide a safe space for native species like the Southern toad and oak toad, and maybe even the Southern leopard frog after a big rain.

Other giveaways included nature journals, pencils containing seeds that can be "planted" when they get too short for writing, native plant seeds with terra cotta starter pots, stuffed animal indigo snakes and even bird-friendly frozen hot chocolate.

Mia said he met one family from Pennsylvania, but most were local.

"A lot of people came specifically for this event and were eager to learn more about plants and our native species and get to take some home to try in their own yards," he said.

The Freeney family drove down from Fernandina Beach and helped install several tropical sage plants, a favorite of

butterflies, hummingbirds and other pollinators.

"We recently moved here from Hawaii, so we are just starting to learn all about Florida's native plants," said Karri Freeney.

In addition to the Alligator Farm stations,

there were booths highlighting partnerships that help the farm continue the education component of its conservation mission.

Kelly Tesiero, founder of Nurture Nature and a landscape designer, had a table adorned with wildflowers, enticing guests

to stop by and learn how to propagate plants and transform a basic backyard into a flower-filled space that attracts birds and butterflies. She showed people how to plant

EARTH DAY continues on **Page 12**

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Photos by Jennie Flinn via Instagram, @pluffmudgirl



Trevor Mia, St. Augustine Alligator Farm Zoological Park curator of education, carries native cordgrass plants to be added during 'Party for the Planet' on Saturday, April 20. More than 130 facilities across North America threw a 'Party for the Planet.' All participating zoos and aquariums are accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA), and the Alligator Farm has been accredited since 1989.



Alligator Farm educator Taylor Evans, left, shows off toad abodes created with Ponte Vedra residents Mary Flinn, center, and Quinn Ruppert. Kids were able to take home these amphibian habitats to put in their own yards and provide shelter for native species such as the Southern toad, oak toad or leopard frog.

Earth Day

Continued from 11

swamp twinflower, a blooming and shade-loving groundcover that will perform well under the oaks.

Leading up to Saturday's event, Tesiero had been tasked with completely reimagining two acres within Camp Croc. She creatively repurposed two old boats and a large crocodile tail prop from a former

display at the Alligator Farm. She incorporated flowing pathways and selected plants that show how native species can look beautiful, bring in more wildlife and require less care than traditional ornamentals. More than 700 plants were added to the area as part of Tesiero's vision for guests to explore nature.

"Camp Croc is even more magical now, and it will be a great place for children and adults to connect to nature and learn about easy backyard conservation measures that

have a positive impact on the environment," Tesiero said.

St. Johns County Parks and Recreation Department also had knowledgeable representatives at "Party for the Planet."

Supervisor of Outdoor Recreation Kelly Ussia and naturalist Will Pate conducted gardening demonstrations and assisted people with adding vegetable plants into raised planter boxes. They explained how to use the county's website to register for kayak trips, beach walks, nature journaling

classes and other outdoor adventures, as well as a special workshop on May 18 with Nurture Nature on how to propagate native plants to boost biodiversity.

Of course, no Alligator Farm event would be complete without live animals! Everyone made time to see Bowser, a female gopher tortoise that is one of the farm's ambassador animals, educating people about the importance of protecting

EARTH DAY continues on Page 13



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Photos by Jennie Flinn via Instagram, @pluffmudgirl



The Freeney family of Fernandina Beach (from left: Croix, Karri, Violet and Steve) were excited to participate in the Alligator Farm’s ‘Party for the Planet’ on Saturday, April 20. The family recently moved from Hawaii and helped install native tropical sage plants that benefit native pollinators.



Nurture Nature founder Kelly Tesiero, left, gives Tony Nelson of Amelia Island a quick lesson on propagation during ‘Party for the Planet’ on April 20 at the St. Augustine Alligator Farm Zoological Park. More than 700 plants were installed as part of Tesiero’s vision for the farm’s Camp Croc area, including many native firebush and tropical sage to give visitors special encounters with hummingbirds, butterflies and other native pollinators.

The Alligator Farm received and has held its Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) accreditation since 1989. AZA is an accrediting body that oversees the standards of animal wellbeing in the Americas, and their accreditation is considered the gold standard of animal care in the world.

Earth Day

Continued from 12

this keystone species whose burrows are utilized by more than 300 different animals.

Eastern indigo snakes were also popular with Saturday’s visitors. They’ve been listed as “threatened” since 1978 under the Endangered Species Act, so it was a rare opportunity to see one up close and learn

how the Alligator Farm is helping them recover.

What began in the late 1800s as a small exhibition of Florida reptiles, the farm has grown into a thriving zoological park with a focus on conservation and education. There’s no need to worry if you missed “Party for the Planet” because the Alligator Farm will continue to hold events that make it fun to learn about native species and why it’s important to protect and

restore their natural habitats.

The following partners supported and contributed to “Party for the Planet”: Florida Wildflower Foundation, St. Johns County Parks and Recreation Department, Nurture Nature founder Kelly Tesiero, Southern Horticulture and Kaiser’s Deli. Funding for Saturday’s event was provided by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums and Disney’s Conservation Fund.

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Valley Girls Golf League hosts event at TPC Sawgrass



Jane Rollinson and Meghan Heinshon.

The Valley Girls Golf League held its annual women's member tournament at TPC Sawgrass on April 2. Both 18-hole and 9-hole twosomes competed for low gross and low net prizes. The theme was Winner, Winner, Chicken Dinner which included a wonderful chicken dinner to go along with the golf play.

Contributed photos



Gina Fishman and Kim Ordoneo.



Lori Adams, Jackson Koenig and Shane Estock.



Jane Maxwell, Denise Bench, Dot Peck and Michelle DuFresne.

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Featuring

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Creekside High Engineering Club preparing future industry leaders; cultivating a culture of service *page 22*

Charity motorcycle event helps veterans *page 23*

A Night in the Vineyard raises \$175K for Monique Burr Foundation *page 25*



Dog adoption, jewelry take center stage during trunk show

Underwood Jewelers and Ayla's Acres teamed up to host a David Yurman trunk show to benefit the no-kill animal shelter. The events included a cocktail reception with special guest Loretta Swit, known for her performance on the comedy T.V. series M*A*S*H, on April 18 at the Underwood Ponte Vedra Beach location.

A dog adoption event was then held in the Underwood Jewelers parking lot on April 20, also at the Ponte Vedra Beach location.


Photos by Susan Griffin



Contributed photo

John Rutkowski and Loretta Swit.

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Rotary joins Earth Day beach cleanup



The Rotary Club of Ponte Vedra Beach took part in the Earth Day cleanup event at Jacksonville Beach hosted by Beaches Go Green. Some students from the club's Early-Act program also joined the initiative.

Contributed photos



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Chemo Noir One Mile, wine tasting takes to the beach June 15

By Anthony Richards

The 2024 Chemo Noir One Mile and Wine Tasting event is scheduled for June 15 with the race beginning at 10:30 a.m. near the Jacksonville Beach Pier.

Check-in for the race will be from 9:30 a.m. to 10:15 a.m. and will take place at Casa Marina in Jacksonville Beach.

The race route will consist of a half-mile run or walk, depending on preference down the beach and then the half-mile return trip back to the start/finish line.

As has become the tradition at the event, the halfway turn and water station will be known as “Tara’s Turn,” in dedication of Tara Newton Richardson, who was one of Chemo Noir’s first supporters and a valued friend of the organization.

As the name hints, a wine tasting event will follow the race at the Casa Marina courtyard where wine samples and vendors will be from 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

The social event afterward will also be where the race awards and raffle winners will be announced.

All participants will receive a signature Chemo Noir race hat as well as merchandise from other participating sponsors.



Photo by Susan Griffin

This year’s Chemo Noir One Mile and Wine Tasting is scheduled for June 15.



Betty Griffin Center awarded alliance grant

The Ponte Vedra Women’s Civic Alliance has announced the recipient of its 2023-24 grant. Kelly Franklin, CEO of Betty Griffin Center, is pictured here accepting grant funds from alliance board members Jodi Furr, Joan Davey and Annemieke Holder at the alliance’s general meeting on Feb. 8. The funds will support the center’s Rape Crisis Unit at Flagler Hospital.

The Ponte Vedra Women’s Civic Alliance awards an annual \$10,000 grant to a 501(c)3 organization in St. Johns County or a 501(c)3 organization that serves the beaches area including Ponte Vedra Beach, Jacksonville Beach, Neptune Beach or Atlantic Beach. The alliance is accepting applications for its 2024-25 grant from May 1 through June 30. Inquire at pvwca.org.

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Free youth football camps are one of the ways the Travon Walker Foundation looks to give back.



Thanksgiving and back-to-school drives have been held by the foundation.

Contributed photos

Travon Walker Foundation looks to expand into North Florida

By Anthony Richards

Jacksonville Jaguars linebacker Travon Walker has always been thankful for the life he had growing up and the support he had from both his family and residents that make up the small town of Thomaston, Georgia.

He credits his hometown for helping to make him who he is today, both as a football player and a person, and when he was

thinking about starting the Travon Walker Foundation after his rookie season in the NFL, he knew he wanted children to be the focus of the organization.

“The main thing growing up in a small community is that I know how it takes a village of support,” Walker said. “I knew I wanted to give back that support that I got to the kids now.”

The goal of the non-profit organization is to provide environments for children

to identify their strengths and their passions and direct them toward that through encouragement and support.

Although starting a foundation had been something he had tossed around in his mind for a while, he made it official following his rookie season with the Jacksonville Jaguars and he is proud of what his foundation has been able to do in slightly more than a year.

According to Walker, using his status as

a professional football player is something that he is fully aware of and understands that it is a powerful platform that he can use to truly make a difference.

“Where I come from there just aren’t too many people that make it big and have the tools to give back like this,” Walker said.

The Travon Walker Foundation has held several events in Walker’s hometown

FOUNDATION continues on Page 20

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Humane society looks for help with influx of kittens

By Anthony Richards

The Jacksonville Humane Society is asking for the community's help in saving the lives of underage kittens.

So far in 2024, JHS has taken in 407 kittens, and 236 of those came in the last 30 days.

The humane society has served an additional 121 kittens and 17 mother cats through its Kitten Krusader program.

However, there are ways that the public can help, the first and perhaps most vital role that can be played is by being a temporary foster parent by bringing kittens into their homes and raising them until they are eight weeks old.

At eight weeks, the kittens will go back under the care of the humane society, and they will be offered up for adoption by the public. JHS provides all medical care along with food and other supplies.

Foster homes save the lives of kittens of all ages, as some kittens are too young to eat on their own and require feeding from human helpers every few hours.

Others are able to eat on their own and just need socialization from humans, especially if the goal is to get them adopted, it is key to get them used to being around and associating with humans.

Occasionally kittens will come to the shelter with their mother and a foster home provides a safe place for her to



Contributed photo

So far in 2024, the Jacksonville Humane Society has taken in 407 kittens, and 236 of those came in the last 30 days.

raise her kittens with minimal intervention from the foster family. No matter the age, foster homes provide the supervision and care needed for kittens to survive and thrive.

Generally, the younger the kitten is the more supervision and care is required by a foster parent.

Older kittens do not need constant care but still benefit from the comfort of a home rather than being in the shelter envi-

ronment until they are of adoptable age.

JHS encourages people interested in adopting a kitten to consider fostering as well.

Foster families receive special perks, including their "pick of the litter" to adopt a kitten in their foster care once they are of age and a waived adoption fee for their first kitten adoption.

"This is our busiest time of year for kittens, and it isn't going to slow down any

time soon," said Jacksonville Humane Society CEO Denise Deisler. "However, there is no place like Jacksonville when it comes to helping pets in need. We are excited to welcome new volunteer foster parents to this amazing community of helpers."

Community members are also asked to remember "don't kidnap," which is a slogan used by the humane society that highlights recommendations when kittens are found.

In many cases, it is a person's first instinct to grab the kitten and take it home, but JHS advises to stop, watch and wait for the mother cat to return.

A kitten's best chance at survival is to stay with its mother cat; she is likely nearby and waiting for you to leave. Information with the "don't kidnap" campaign can be found on the JHS website at jaxhumane.org.

Community members who are not able to foster but still want to help kittens in need are encouraged to donate kitten care items to JHS.

The most-needed items can be viewed and ordered directly from the JHS Amazon wish list and shipped to the shelter. The wish list can be found on the website.

For information on becoming a foster parent, donating, or adopting, go to jaxhumane.org or call 904-725-8766.

Foundation

Continued from 19

and in Georgia, including offering free football camps and doing back-to-school and Thanksgiving drives to make sure children and families have the materials and foods they need.

A free youth football camp is scheduled for June 15 in Thomaston, Georgia, with

the goal of providing hands-on instruction in a positive and leadership-filled environment.

"It's the small things that can take some of the stress away for people and mean everything," Walker said.

He also has an eye on the foundation's future which includes expanding with more events in Jacksonville and the Northeast Florida area to go along with the efforts in Georgia.

"To see the smiles on the faces of those the foundation helps is everything," Walker said. "They don't even have to say anything, you know because their expressions tell you everything. Jacksonville is the next place I want to spread this love and joy."

According to Walker, he also sees the foundation eventually reaching the point where they venture into going beyond just children but also helping provide job aids

for adults looking for work.

Just as when Walker was growing up his family continues to be by his side and supporting him in everything he does, including the foundation.

"Without my family I don't think I could run my foundation," Walker said. "My family and I are a collective one and we've come together along with our communities to give back to the places we call home."



The Grazie Gala

Join Mission House for our second annual Grazie Gala where we look forward to a night of dancing, refreshments, games and community as we celebrate our victories of 2024 and share our goals for 2025.

Tickets will be available soon through our website, and will support our vital Crisis Care and Clinic Programs, providing essential services of meals, showers, case management and healthcare to our most vulnerable neighbors.



Saturday, October 5, 2024
The Yards at TPC Sawgrass
254 Alta Mar Dr,
Ponte Vedra Beach, FL 32082
6 - 9 PM







Contributed photo

The Traven Walker Foundation is looking to expand into Jacksonville and North Florida to accompany its work in Georgia.

Contributed photos



Friends of The Amp mark 15 years

The St. Augustine Amphitheatre is a state-of-the-art, internationally recognized performing arts venue consistently ranked amongst the top amphitheatres worldwide. Musical icons including Bob Dylan, Stevie Nicks, John Legend, Robert Plant, Aretha Franklin, Willie Nelson, Bonnie Raitt and hundreds more have taken the stage. Locally, a group of volunteers has been working to bring greater visibility and usage by the community.

The Friends of the St. Augustine Amphitheatre (FOSAA) is a not-for-profit 501(c)3 tax-exempt organization created in 2009 that is committed to keeping The Amp a place where residents are welcome – a mis-

sion that is now in its 15th year.

“FOSAA has been privileged to not just witness but contribute to the tremendous success of the St. Augustine Amphitheatre,” says Mark Ramirez, president of the FOSAA Board of Directors. “While The Amp is known internationally for being a top-rate music venue, our mission is to ensure that it remains an accessible asset to the community that has built, renovated and supported it. Generations of St. Augustinians have foundational memories that include attending the historic ‘Cross and Sword’ show, tasting fresh produce at the markets, or learning an instrument at our summer camps. FOSAA looks forward to inspiring

new generations.”

FOSAA was founded by the late Marc and Carol Gladstone, the late Jack Wentz, Barb Wentz and Dottie Acosta, who later served as president and is a lifetime member. They built the group from the ground up, with a vision to help improve the St. Augustine Amphitheatre as a destination for headline musicians while preserving the space for community enjoyment.

FOSAA awards grants to nonprofit organizations and schools wishing to rent The Amp for their events or to bring children to cultural events there, free of charge. It sponsors two annual summer camps for children: the Music and Art Camp for el-

ementary school and Camp Rock for middle and high school students.

Additionally, the group sponsors, funds and presents events like movie nights, community concerts and high school graduations; distributes complimentary tickets to nonprofits serving local families in crisis; and provides financial grants to music and art teachers in Title 1 schools for supplies and instruments.

FOSAA operates independently from The Amp but enjoys a close, collaborative relationship. The group was pivotal in enhancing The Backyard Stage, providing funding

THE AMP continues on Page 24

connection to

purpose



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Creekside High Engineering Club preparing future industry leaders; cultivating a culture of service

Kevin Davenport and the Creekside High Engineering Club are regular volunteers with the St. Johns Housing Partnership (SJHP). Building ramps and helping rehab homes for the elderly, veterans and disabled is just part of their story.

"Kevin is one of our biggest supporters. He has responded when a call goes out to help us fulfill our mission. He organizes and brings the Engineering Club members out in force to really make a difference in our community," noted SJHP Executive Director Bill Lazar.

Davenport has been organizing volunteer teams of students wearing shirts that say "Live Generously" to work on SJHP projects for 14 years. "

"The volunteer experience not only offers students firsthand experience, but also instills a culture of service that stays with many of them throughout their personal and professional lives," noted Davenport, a teacher at Creekside in the Engineering and Environmental Science Academy.

He is the sponsor of the Engineering Club. He also works after school with the ACE mentoring program, FIRST Robotics Team 8775, National Technical Honor Society, Interact Club and Society of Women in Engineering.

Two of Davenport's former students at Creekside, Dylan Scanlon and Gavin Glocke, are enjoying success in their chosen fields.

Scanlon said he always knew he wanted to be in design or engineering. He was in one of Creekside's first graduating classes. Davenport became his instructor in his junior year.

"The program was more centered on civil engineering in those days. We learned AutoCAD. I was able to get an internship with Matthews DCCM Design Group between my junior and senior years," remembers Scanlon.

He went to work for Matthews after graduation. The firm collaborated with him on achieving his educational goals.

He attended Florida State College at Jacksonville and the University of North Florida where he received his civil engineering degree.

Scanlon stayed connected with Davenport, looking for ways he could help and give back. He volunteers with the Ace Mentor program at Creekside and Pedro Menendez High School.

A project engineer at Matthews, Scanlon works on projects ranging from stormwater, roadway improvements and other commercial, residential and hospitality designs.

"My time and experience at Creekside prepared me for where I am today. The academy gave me a basic knowledge of civil engineering," he said.

Glocke is in his last semester at UCF in Orlando, graduating next month. He chose UCF because of his interest in the aerospace industry.

"I have always had an interest in math and science and felt engineering was the way to go. I joined the academy in my first year. That is when I heard about the Engineering Club," Glocke said.

He was part of most of the ramp projects the club built for the St. Johns Housing Partnership during his four years at Creekside.

"Ramp projects allow you to go through an entire building process including removing old ramps. Building ramps for people with disabilities and the elderly gave us experience in cutting the wood, digging the post holes, and making sure making sure the construction was level and sturdy.

Glocke said he also enjoyed being part of Project Innovation while in high school. Teams would brainstorm innovative ideas turning them into a project and making a presentation. Valuable experience included team building and problem solving.

Contributed photos



Charity motorcycle event helps veterans

When retired Staff Sgt. Karlton Berry experienced a career-ending training accident that left him paralyzed, his life changed abruptly and drastically. With the help of Hometown Hero's Ride, his way forward is becoming clearer. Created with the goal of helping North-east Florida's wounded warriors and veterans, this year's ride, held on Saturday, April 13, drew more than 320 riders and raised just over \$63,000. These funds have helped Berry find the mind and the means to embrace life and reconnect with

nature and himself. "Karlton's story is one that continues to inspire me," said Mike Minter, event organizer and senior builder with Master-Craft Builder Group, one of the sponsors of the event along with Adamec Harley-Davidson. "He wanted to explore equine therapy to help him work through his PTSD. The process to have that approved through the VA can take months, sometimes longer. We believe if a veteran has the courage to ask for help, they should receive it immediately. Our scholarships

help provide that immediate care, and it has been a game changer for Karlton. In fact, Vicki with RiseUp is the one who alerted us to his accessibility needs at home, which we were able to take care of right away. We've seen him change and grow into someone full of life and hope, and that's what this is all about." With \$18,000 raised through the Hometown Hero's Ride being used to renovate Berry's bathroom, the space will become wheelchair-accessible and provide critical therapeutic devices.

Another \$20,000 will be donated to HorsePlay Therapy's RiseUp for Veterans to create scholarships for equine therapy, a tool that has been lifesaving for heroes battling with PTSD. The remaining funds will be used to assist first responders and military veterans injured either on or off the job who require mobility tools like wheelchair ramps and other accessibility needs. Minter's hope is that the event will

MOTORCYCLE continues on **Page 24**

A Community of Healing

Ashley and Ryan stand strong by their mother Diane's side during her recovery from her treatment for lung cancer.



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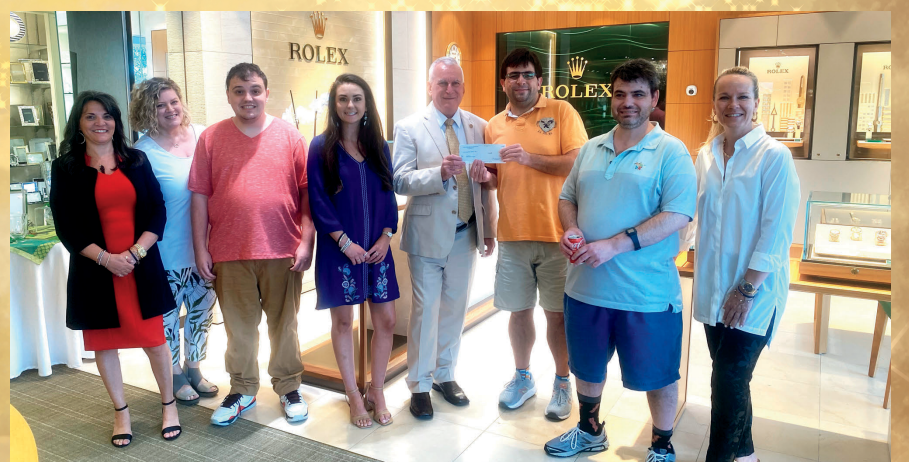
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Contributed photos

Motorcycle

Continued from 23

continue to grow to where they can financially assist four or five veterans each year.

“The third annual Hometown Hero’s Ride was special in so many ways that it’s hard to put into words,” said Krissy Barkas, executive director of Northeast Florida Builders Association’s Builders Care. “Yes, we had a record year with the amount of money we raised, but having Staff Sergeant Karlton Berry there, seeing him smile and enjoy the day, was worth all the hard work that goes into putting an event of this magnitude together. With the funds raised this year, we can modify his bedroom and bathroom to make them both wheelchair-accessible and help other local veterans and first responders as well.”

The Hometown Heroes Ride is an

annual charitable motorcycle event in St. Johns County that supports selected Florida First Coast veterans and first responders in need. The ride is presented in coordination with the Veteran Enforcers Motorcycle Association St. Johns County Chapter, Adamec Harley-Davidson of St. Augustine and Northeast Florida Builders Association’s Builders Care. To become a sponsor or vendor for next year’s event, taking place in April, or to learn more, go to hometownherosride.com.



Contributed photo

The Amp

Continued from 21

for a new roof and stage improvements.

Grant awards are funded by membership dues from FOSAA members, corpo-

rate sponsors and other fundraisers, like guitar raffles. Guitar raffles will be at the following shows: Brothers Osborne (April 25), Bad Religion and Social Distortion (April 26), Megan Moroney (May 17) and JJ Grey (May 25-26). Raffle tickets are \$10 each or three for \$25.

Club

Continued from 22

He points to Davenport’s emphasis on professionalism, mentoring through the ACE program, understanding the concepts of design software, and stressing the importance of resume writing as helping shape his future success.

A summer internship as a systems engineer with Northrop Grumman in Utah paved the way to a full-time job with the company after graduation. Glocke looks

back at Creekside as the start of something good.

Engineering Academy students dive into a rich curriculum that exposes them to several branches of the field including civil, mechanical and environmental engineering, as well as manufacturing, and robotics.

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Photos by Susan Griffin



Jennifer and Jason Ryan



Ed Burr

A Night in the Vineyard raises \$175K for Monique Burr Foundation

The Monique Burr Foundation for Children's annual charity fundraiser, A Night in the Vineyard, at SoNapa Grille in Jacksonville Beach raised \$175,000 during the event.

All proceeds from A Night in the Vineyard supported the nonprofits prevention education programs, which are personal safety curricula that educate and empower youth, and the adults in their lives, with strategies to recognize, prevent, and respond to all forms of child abuse, bullying, exploitation, trafficking, and other

types of child victimization.

"We appreciate everyone who attended and supported the third annual A Night in the Vineyard fundraising event," said Tanya Ramos-Puig, Monique Burr Foundation CEO. "The support enables MBF to provide programs that safeguard the promise of childhood and forge a world where every child thrives free of abuse and trauma. Prevention is not merely an act but a journey of relentless advocacy, education, and support. We are thankful to the many sponsors, donors and guests

who joined us to support MBF's mission to keep youth and our communities safe. Together, we can turn the tide against child abuse and work towards the hope of a better future that has inspired MBF for almost three decades."

MBF Programs are making a difference in the lives of youth, protecting them from bullying, digital dangers, various forms of abuse, exploitation, and human trafficking through prevention education. Over the last year, MBF has increased its efforts to ensure cost is not an obstacle or barrier

to accessing MBF Prevention Education Programs and partnering with schools across the nation to create a culture of safety in their communities.

A Night in the Vineyard guests enjoyed wine tastings, gourmet food by SoNapa Grille, conversations with winemakers and wine aficionados, access to live and silent auctions, live musical entertainment by the Band Be Easy, Bold City Classics and Nashville recording artist Colleen Orender, and great company, all in support of MBF's mission to keep youth safe.



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Is your HVAC system ready for summer?

By Shaun Ryan

Hot and humid weather is right around the corner, so this is the best time to make sure your HVAC system is up to the challenge.

Zach Collins, co-founder with wife Crissy of World's Greatest Heating & Air, recommends an annual maintenance, which should suffice if done correctly. While no company can guarantee an HVAC system won't eventually fail, proper maintenance is important.

In fact, spring and fall are the offseason, and many HVAC businesses will offer specials on the work.

One of the most important issues is duct leakage. Collins' team can seal ducts from the inside using Aeroseal technology, which also removes human error from the equation.

One important thing residents can do to extend the life of their system is change the filter monthly. In fact, the better the filter, the more critical it is to change it. Dense filters trap more dust and pollen, but that also means they can clog up more frequently. And a clogged filter will restrict airflow, which could actually damage the equipment.

Collins recommends installing a one-inch-thick filter with a MERV rating of 8.

But what should you do when your HVAC system stops working? Suddenly, the home is stiflingly hot. And homeowners with young babies or elderly parents will be tempted to react emotionally. That could open the door to an expensive mistake.

A system will last between 10 and 20 years, but many homeowners take them for granted until a crisis hits.

"Air conditioning in this area is not something you want to be reactive on," said Collins. "That's when you make emotional decisions."

And emotional decisions can lead to dissatisfaction.

It's a good idea to consider the age of your equipment, whether it cools or warms properly, whether your energy bill seems high and the quality of your air is sufficient. Make a list of what you may need, and what you might like to have. Take the time to find a contractor you trust while everything is working well; ask questions, get answers and approach your HVAC status logically. Make sure the contractor is licensed and insured and has received all the proper training to both install and service the equipment.

Collins highly recommends getting at

least three estimates before having the work done.

When purchasing a new system, it's very important to get the right size. Numerous factors contribute to what professionals call the home's "tonnage."

"If you oversize it, you won't dehumidify properly," Collins said, "and if you undersize it, it's not going to keep up."

Collins, who has been working in this field for 26 years and is licensed in three states, said each state is different. If you were able to move a "3-ton" home from Northeast Florida to Arizona with the same orientation, square-footage and foliage, it might only be a "2-ton" home there.

For more information about World's Greatest Heating & Air, which serves communities throughout Northeast Florida, go to worldsgreatesthvac.com.

Owner's suite renovation ideas to create luxury spaces

An owner's suite is a sanctuary for homeowners. While the largest bedroom in the home typically is dubbed the "owner's suite," it cannot be classified as a suite unless there is an adjoining bathroom. An owner's suite also may have many more unique features that individuals may want to incorporate into a

remodel. Here are some ideas to consider.

- **Upgraded closet:** A spacious, walk-in closet that has built-in shelves, drawers and rods can improve the functionality of the bedroom. Drawer dividers and other components also can optimize space.

- **Sitting area:** In large suites, homeowners may have the potential to set up

a sitting area in one portion of the room away from the bed. This area can have a sofa, chairs, chaise, or other furniture and make for an ideal spot to read and lounge. Some people also enjoy having a television adjacent to the sitting area.

- **Fireplace:** Fireplaces add a unique ambiance to bedrooms and make for cozy

spaces in which to cuddle up. While a traditional, roaring wood fire is one option, there is much less mess and fuss with a gas fireplace. Some gas fireplaces may not even have to be vented, and they can be turned on with the flip of a switch.

SUITE continues on Page 28

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Pacetti Road Self Storage facility opens

This week, Pacetti Road Self Storage opened its state-of-the-art indoor, temperature-controlled self-storage facility at 3645 Pacetti Road, St. Augustine.

The new storage facility boasts 82,836 square feet of leasable storage, divided into 644 storage units ranging from modest 5-by-5-foot units to large 12-by-40-foot

units.

The facility's temperature-controlled storage units are an excellent option for those storing antiques, appliances and documents. Drive-up storage units are also available for convenient access when storing bulky items such as furniture. Some indoor units have the protection of tem-

perature control, coupled with the ease of access of a drive-up door.

Designed for storing large RVs and boats, Pacetti Road's 14-foot-tall drive-up storage options have keyless, motorized door openers, and tenants can choose between depths of 30 and 40 feet to accommodate their needs. Other vehicle storage

options include outdoor car, truck, trailer, RV and boat parking.

The facility is within the World Golf Village area. Given its strategic proximity to major highways, including Interstate 95, accessing the facility is straightforward and convenient.

Pacetti Road Self Storage has covered loading and unloading areas that allow tenants to move their belongings comfortably in any weather. The gated and fenced facility prioritizes safety with security features, including keypad access, 24/7 recording cameras, on-site management, and Nokē Smart Access. With Nokē Smart Access, a keyless entry system, tenants can use their smartphone as a digital key for easy access to storage.

Pacetti Road Self Storage simplifies the reservation process with user-friendly on-line rentals. For those desiring personalized support, assistance is available via the web, by phone or by visiting the facility during office hours.

For more information or to reserve a unit, go to PacettiRoadSelfStorage.com or phone 904-204-9291.

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Suite

Continued from 27

• **Luxury bath:** Owners can turn the en suite bathroom into something out of a spa. A steam shower; heated floors; separate area for the toilet, closed off from the rest of the bathroom; and dual vanities and sinks can make this a place that screams luxury and comfort. Do not forget dimmer switches for lighting, and even the inclusion of some new aromatherapy technology for increasing the potential for relaxation.

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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

Shrimp Plants

"In all things of nature there is something of the marvelous." – Aristotle



By Kathy Esfahani

The shrimp plant, or *Justicia Brandegeana*, is also known as the Mexican shrimp plant or "false hop." Native Americans believed shrimp plants provided protection from enemies, particularly during wartime. Shrimp plants have been used in ceremonies in Caribbean and South American countries. Today, early research suggests that chemicals in these plants may have medicinal uses. Although shrimp plants are native to Mexico, these tropical beauties grow well in Florida.

A shrimp plant has green, oval leaves

and can grow to be two to six feet tall. They are available as shrubs or standards (a "lollipop" shaped form similar to a small tree with a bare trunk and round ball of leaves and blooms at the top). Shrimp plants love the heat but need regular watering. They may tolerate a bit of shade but prefer areas of full sun for best growth. Light pruning will remove long stems to prevent them from sagging and keep the plant looking full.

Shrimp plants earn their name from the elongated shape of their flower, resembling shrimp in the sea. They feature drooping blooms in pink, purple and white and are closely related to the golden shrimp plant with yellow blossoms. The blooms of a shrimp plant grow from "bracts" at the end of a stem. The bracts are initially white but turn pink with exposure to sunlight. Bracts continue to grow in a chain-like pattern until they fall off, reaching anywhere



Shrimp Plant Standard

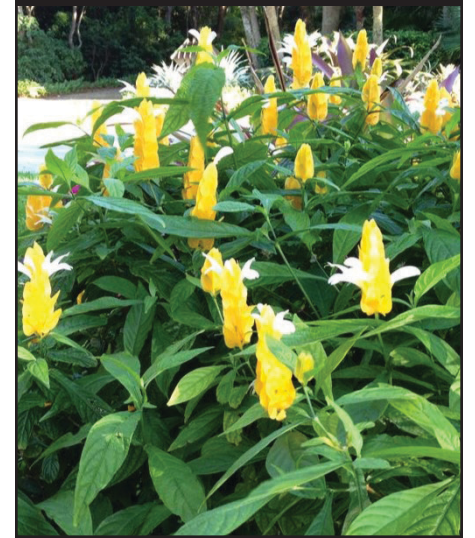
from a few centimeters to almost a foot in length!

Shrimp plants give off a "shrimpy" smell to attract pollinators to small white flowers growing out of the bracts. Once shrimp plants begin to bloom, they will produce flowers continuously throughout the spring, summer and fall. In our North Florida area (planting zone 9), the plants will lose their leaves in the cooler months of the year but come back the following spring.

Because of their constant colorful blooms, shrimp plants are an excellent choice for any sunny location in a

Photos provided by Kathy's Creative Gardens & Nursery

Flower of the Week



Golden Shrimp Plant

landscape. They attract hummingbirds and butterflies to your yard, so place them where you can watch for these fluttering visitors.

Happy planting!

Flower of the Week: Golden Shrimp Plant

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

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Features to consider for a relaxation-themed bathroom remodel

Homeowners want to view their homes as a respite from all that goes on outside their doors. Indeed, turning a home into a residents-only retreat can ensure everyone looks forward to walking through the front door at the end of the day.

One of the more popular ways to turn a home into one's own personal retreat is to upgrade the bathroom. A renovated bathroom can completely transform how individuals feel about their homes. The following are some features to consider when remodeling a bathroom with relaxation in mind.

• **Open shower:** An open shower is a visually stunning addition to any bathroom. Such showers give a bathroom a more open look, thanks in part to the fact that these modern features do not feature a door or require the use of a shower curtain. The result is a clean look that many people associate with a luxury hotel. When speaking with a contractor about an open shower install, homeowners can ask about a half-wall to safeguard against water splashing out of the shower. In addition, a heat lamp can help ensure residents stay warm until they're ready to leave the bathroom.



• **Heated features:** Additional features to keep everyone calm and warm can be considered when upgrading the bathroom. Radiant flooring can ensure everyone's toes remain toasty, and the installation of such a feature can eliminate

the need for floor mats and bath mats that some homeowners may not like. Commit further to the heat theme with a heated towel rack, which is another feature associated with luxury hotels that can be just as enjoyable at home.

• **Soaking tub:** An open shower creates an instant feeling of luxury, but few things are more suggestive of relaxation than a soaking tub. A long day at school or the office or a day when winter winds are howling outside is made much better with a good a soak. The National Kitchen & Bath Association notes that luxury bathrooms featuring soaking tubs are wildly popular, and that vaunted status is undoubtedly due to the relaxing benefits of a good soak.

• **Skylight:** Even if the goal of a luxury bathroom is to leave the outside world outside, allowing some natural light inside is a great way to add a little extra calm to the room. Floor-to-ceiling windows may seem appealing in brochures or advertisements, but such features do not create the sense of privacy many people prefer in their bathrooms. One or two skylights can create that sense of privacy and still allow for natural light to enter the room, making this an option that provides the best of both worlds.

These features and more can help homeowners transform their bathrooms into luxurious, relaxing respites from the outside world.



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Business Weekly

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Prati Italia expansion a winner with patrons

By Shaun Ryan

In some ways, the pandemic served as a kind of litmus test, identifying which businesses had the ability and imagination to pivot in the face of adversity and which did not.

Among those in the former category is Prati Italia, a family-owned Italian restaurant in Jacksonville's Town Center. At a time when people wanted to get out of the house and enjoy a good meal but were unable or reluctant to dine in enclosed areas, Prati Italia offered — created — a solution: an outdoor pavilion where the air was clear and healthy and patrons could socialize with confidence.

The pavilion's growth in popularity, post-pandemic, might be attributed to serendipity, but it also demonstrates foresight. It has become yet another reason patrons are drawn to this restaurant.

"Everybody was focused on a lot of different things through the COVID time period," said co-owner Sarah Marie Johnston. "A lot of the elements that were born out of the stresses of how to adapt became things that people really enjoyed in the long run. The response has been amazing."

Not that Prati Italia didn't already have outdoor seating. It's always had a sizable patio and outside lounge, but Johnston and husband Chef Tom Gray realized they needed more of it.

The pavilion seats 70 for dining but can be configured for 100 if needed for groups or events. The raised deck features new furniture and shade screens and overlooks a small lake and fountain.



Prati Italia co-owner Sarah Marie Johnston, seated, and dining room manager and group sales coordinator Caitlin Abel are seen in the restaurant's pavilion.

Photo by Shaun Ryan

The restaurant's interior is divided into numerous areas distributed over two floors. In addition to dining rooms on both levels, there is an upstairs lounge, private dining and meeting areas, bar areas, an open kitchen and temperature-controlled wine cellar.

Designed by the owners and Atlanta-based design firm ai3, the restaurant won the People's Choice Award in 2016 from the American Institute for Architecture Florida for its unique, "eco-aware" and efficient use of space.

Gray and Johnston built and opened the restaurant in 2013 as Moxie Kitchen and Cocktails. They rebranded it Prati Italia in 2020. The name means Italian meadows, a nod to the meadowland that formerly occupied the property.

The menu changed with the name and is focused on handmade pastas and pizzas, though Prati Italia also serves steak, fish and poultry. In addition, it maintains a vegan, vegetarian and gluten-free menu.

It is open for lunch 11 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Friday and Saturday, brunch 11 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Sunday, and dinner 4:30 to 9 p.m. Sunday through Thursday and 4:30 to 10 p.m. Friday and Saturday.

Happy hour is 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. weekdays, and patrons will find craft cocktails and local beers among the offerings.

"We're always trying to focus on the local, and handmade, handcrafted as much as possible," Johnston said.

Prati Italia is located at 4972 Big Island Drive, Jacksonville. To learn more, see the menu or make reservations, go to pratitalia.com.

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Lisa Barton Team hosts Chamber after hours



Photo provided by the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce

The St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce Ponte Vedra Beach Division held an after hours event on April 17 that was hosted by the Lisa Barton Team with Keller Williams Realty Atlantic Partners at their Sawgrass Village location.

Lori Adams, Cabi clothing representative, co-sponsored the event, and it was a great opportunity to meet and mingle with other local business representatives.

Photos by Susan Griffin



Lori Adams and Lisa Barton co-hosted the April St. Johns County After Hours.



Karen Patino, Elaine Raby, Trudy Toche, Lori Adams and Ricki Taylor.



Lisa Barton, Andy Scott and Karina Coryell.

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St. Johns Food Service Managing Partner Craig Smith stands amid the many items stocked in the warehouse.



St. Johns Food Service Managing Partner Craig Smith stands next to one of the business's trucks.

St. Johns Food Service partners with festival

By Shaun Ryan

When Alhambra Theatre & Dining owner Craig Smith and several business partners acquired St. Johns Food Service in 2023, they hit the ground running.

"We did a major study of what our customers and prior customers felt about us, and our competitors, and we used that data to guide where we want to go," Smith, managing partner, said in announcing the purchase from former owner Melvin McQuaig.

The St. Augustine-based broadline, full-service food purveyor launched a new website and newsletter and focused on a rebranding, which included a cultural shift.

In less than a year, that shift is bearing fruit. Smith pointed to an elevation in employee morale and a new appreciation of the customer.

"Everybody says, 'Oh, the customer's important,'" Smith said. "It's one thing to say it. It's another to live it."

More tangibly, St. Johns Food Service has increased the number of items in its warehouse from about 1,400 to about 1,800, with the ability to access more if needed. It has also added a truck, increased employment and created a new logo.

And this year, it will celebrate its 75th anniversary during the upcoming St.

Augustine Food + Wine Festival, for which St. Johns Food Service will serve as a sponsor.

A 'fun business'

The business was incorporated by Dr. Ronald F. Jackson in 1949 as St. Johns Frozen Foods. It rented frozen locker space to local restaurants. As Jackson saw a need for food service products, he added product lines and sold them to restaurants throughout the area.

Eventually, the market grew to service customers in Jacksonville, the Beaches, Palatka and Palm Coast.

In 1980, the business moved into its current facility at 4 Louise St., St. Augustine.

Still, despite an increase in area restaurants, the business's revenues seemingly plateaued in recent years.

Looking to retire, McQuaig approached Smith about buying the business.

Smith had had experience with rebuilding area businesses, most notably the Alhambra, which he purchased in 2009. At the time, revenues had dipped more than 1,000% from its peak years in the early 1980s. Under Smith's leadership, the theater-and-dining establishment has seen record revenues, year-over-year growth of more than 20% and an email database of more than 130,000 opt-in subscribers. With longtime business partners Joel

Slotnick, Jeff McKusker, Bob Fleckenstein, Bill Barnett and Gary Smith, Smith took over ownership of St. Johns Food Service.

"It's a fun business and a fun, growing segment in a town that's arguably one of the fastest growing tourist spots in the Southeast," he said.

In fact, running the Alhambra gave Smith plenty of insight into the receiving end of the food service business. The venue spends about \$1 million a year in groceries and feeds about 12,000 people each month.

St. Johns Food Service has more than 200 customers and provides all types of food, paper goods, cleaning supplies, takeout packaging, utensils, condiments and more to restaurants, hotels, caterers and group events like those at churches, schools, civic clubs and other organizations. Even big chain establishments who have their own vendors can drop by should they run out of something.

Festival food

Learning that the St. Augustine Food + Wine Festival had an opening for a sponsor, St. Johns Food Service stepped up, fulfilling one of the goals Smith had set for the company upon assuming his new role: Create a deeper involvement in the First Coast hospitality community.

The business will be an official food

service partner for the festival, which will be held May 8-12 at various venues throughout the area. St. Johns Food Service will co-sponsor the Harvest Awards and People's Choice Harvest Awards.

"We're all so excited about it, because of the camaraderie and the help we're able to provide to these folks," said Smith. "We want them all to win!"

The business's involvement will give it the opportunity to partner with 24 restaurants, many of which are not yet among its customers.

"It might be the best thing we do in 2024," said Smith.

And during the festival's Grand Tasting on May 11, it will conduct 75th anniversary festivities at its own tent for its customers, prospective customers and VIPs.

When talking about St. Johns Food Service, Smith exhibits the kind of infectious, energetic optimism for which he is known whenever speaking to Alhambra patrons.

"I look forward to the next few years and what the future will bring," he said.

To learn more about St. Johns Food Service, go to stjohnsfoods.com or call 904-824-0493. For further information about the St. Augustine Food + Wine Festival, go to staugustinefoodandwine-festival.com.

In the Arts



Send your arts news to
news@pontevedrarecorder.com

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"Aviles Street" by Rosamond Parrish



"Marine Street" by Fritz K.

Exhibit explores 100-year history of art association

With 100 years of history in the books – or on the canvas – the St. Augustine Art Association (STAAA) is celebrating its centennial with an art show spanning the century.

"Reflections" explores the storied history of the association by featuring works from past and present artists. One of the longest operating art associations in the nation, it was founded in 1924 and comprised of members, some who helped change the course of art in the nation. These artists were forward thinkers who saw the importance of incorporating diversity into the organization.

The exhibit will be hosted at the St.

Augustine Art Association, 22 Marine St., St. Augustine, and online at staaa.org from May 3 through June 2.

"When I look at the artwork in our permanent collection and at the art we have on our walls today, it's obvious that St. Augustine is, or rather has been for a long time, a wellspring for creative talent," said Jennifer Flynt, executive director. "I am always shocked, and at this point I shouldn't be, by the quality and diversity of the artwork that comes through the gallery each month. The artists here in St. Augustine were once called 'The Lost Colony,' and I think it's time that notion of St. Augustine's art being lost or forgotten gets changed. We're

pleased to host this exhibit that showcases some of these past artists and reflects on the quality and depth we have today."

The exhibit will feature contemporary works alongside historic pieces from the association's permanent collection. These include images by photographer F. Victor Rahner, who was a charter member of the association's 1924 original group and pioneer in color photography; Elizabeth Warren, who produced beautiful etchings, but was known professionally as E.B. Warren, to disguise her gender; and her husband, Tod Lindenmuth, who was moved to capture the landscapes and beaches of Northeast Florida; and an artist and patron

to Flagler College, JoAnn Crisp-Ellert. These are just a few of the pivotal figures in the association's long history. Artists of all ages, skill levels and backgrounds participate in association exhibits, revealing the depth of creativity and talent in Northeast Florida.

For the information and exhibit updates, go to staaa.org/event/reflections-2.

Contributed photos



"100 Years STAAA Celebration" by Lori Sweet



"Fiesta" by Celia Reid

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Cultural Council director to retire

The St. Johns Cultural Council, which promotes arts, culture and heritage in St. Johns County, recently announced that Christina Parrish Stone will retire from her role as executive director at the end of the current fiscal year on Sept. 30, after a dynamic and highly successful five years of leadership.



Christina Parrish Stone

The Cultural Council's Board of Directors has initiated a comprehensive process to select a new executive director. Parrish Stone will provide consulting services after her retirement to ensure a smooth transition.

"It has been an absolute privilege to lead the St. Johns Cultural Council and help advance the organization's mission," she said. "My years in St. Augustine have been the most rewarding of a long career, and the hard-working Cultural Council staff and board have been a joy to work with."

During Parrish Stone's leadership, the Cultural Council experienced remarkable growth and dramatically increased the support it provides to local artists and cultural organizations, while elevating St. Johns County's marketing to cultural travelers.

Highlights of her tenure include negotiation of a new five-year contract to provide destination marketing services for the county; an agreement with St. Augustine to lease and activate The Waterworks as a venue for arts, culture and heritage programming; work with St. Augustine Beach to secure National Register status for the St. Augustine Beach Hotel; expanding and improving the county's Art in Public Spaces program with support from the National Endowment for the Arts; and dramatically increasing funding for individual artists and arts organizations through new and expanded grant programs.

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Act II will include Broadway's best duets and scenes of love and marriage to make for an enjoyable evening of laughter and song.

This production features ACT alums Jason Whitfield, Anna Vera, Dexter McDaniel, Jessica Racaniello, Joseph Stearman, Erika Weber, and David Abraham, as well as new faces Jeff Schaeffer and Jeanne Di Muzio Walti.

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Sports



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The Sharks and Panthers battled for the district championship on April 17.



Ed Houston of Ponte Vedra makes a move against Zachary Azotea of Nease.

Sharks continue to improve at right time with district title over Panthers

By Anthony Richards

The Ponte Vedra Sharks ended the season in a familiar spot as district champions and with momentum heading into the state playoffs following a 13-3 victory over the rival Nease Panthers in the district title game on April 17.

The Sharks were able to grab control of the contest from the onset and led 8-1 at halftime thanks to a beautiful pass from senior Lad Harper to sophomore Matthias Schulz and three goals in less than a minute from senior Ryan Ward.

“We’ve definitely found our groove for the season,” Ward said. “We’ve got a great group here and we’re all really playing at a high level, and we’re excited to see how far it takes us.”

As the Sharks extended their lead, they controlled the possession battle and outshot the Panthers 20-6 in the first half, while senior goalie Jack Pelot stopped five of six shots he faced.

“One of our big things at the beginning of the season was turnovers, but as a team and in practice we’ve minimized that,” Ward said.

The tone set in the first half remained throughout the match, as another senior Cannon Hauseman struck a couple of times in the second half, using hard hops off the ground to get the ball passed the opposing goalie.

With the win, the Sharks improved to 13-6 on the season and although the squad had an up and down season at times during the regular season, that ad-



Jack Pelot lifts up the district champion trophy for his teammates to see.

Photos by Anthony Richards

versity experienced is starting to pay off.

“Sometimes you look for progress in wins and losses, and maybe it hasn’t felt like we’ve been progressing at times, but we’ve been making huge strides throughout the season and it’s kind of all catching fire at the same time right now,”

Ponte Vedra head coach Chris Polanski said. “It’s nice for the boys to put it together on the scoreboard and for the boys to get some affirmation that there is real progress.”

The Sharks were able to get several bench players in the game in the fourth

quarter due to the big lead, and those minutes are something that could pay dividends in the playoffs.

“It’s extremely important for two-fold, which is one, just to get them ready be-

TITLE continues on Page 37

Mastoridis named Nease athletic director

Chris Mastoridis has been named Nease High School's new athletic director.

Mastoridis was born in Montreal, where he developed a love of hockey. His family moved to Florida, and he graduated from St. Augustine High School and attended Flagler College, where he played baseball for a year while completing his bachelor's degree in physical education and recreational management.

He later moved to the Northeast and earned his master's at Springfield College in Massachusetts. He moved to Long



Chris Mastoridis

Island and worked in business development/health care and coached both baseball and softball but soon realized that there was nowhere that provided formal training for baseball and softball athletes that had a dedicated teaching curriculum.

After developing a business plan, he raised capital and found two partners who helped him open the first of two

20,000-square-foot training facilities in the New York metro area that was geared to helping baseball and softball players improve their speed, strength and skill level to pursue college and professional careers in the sport.

In 2017, Mastoridis sold his interest in the training facilities and returned to St. Augustine.

He has a very strong understanding of what it takes to create a successful program, a calm demeanor and is supportive of all the teams, coaches and Booster Club. His goal for Nease is to be recog-

nized as one of the top places to play in St. Johns County. He has high standards for the coaches, players and teams.

He wants to tap into the boosters and alumni support for Nease that exists today and expand that support for tomorrow. He refers to the Canadian John McCrae quote, "Take up our quarrel with the foe: To you from failing hands we throw the torch, be yours to hold it high," saying it carries a timeless message of duty and honor and encourages the next generation to embrace the fight where their predecessors left off.

PGA Works Collegiate Championship returns to TPC Sawgrass

The PGA Works Collegiate Championship, known as the most culturally significant championship in collegiate golf, features Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs) and other Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs) from all over the country. There will be Men's Division I and Division II team divisions, a Women's Team division, as well as individuals representing their schools and playing for Men's and Women's titles.

Here's a look at the 2024 schedule of events and locations:

Youth Day & Junior PGA Works Round 1

When: 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Saturday, May 4
Where: TPC Sawgrass Stadium Course/Practice Facility, 110 Championship Way, Ponte Vedra Beach
What: 100 juniors, ages 8-14, will take part in a day full of golf activities with PGA of America golf professionals

PGA Works Beyond the Green

When: 7:30 to 11 a.m. Sunday, May 5
Where: PGA Tour Global Home, 1 PGA Tour Blvd., Ponte Vedra Beach
What: Beyond the Green annually provides a great opportunity for the golf industry to connect with under-represented student-athletes and inspire their interest

to pursue a career in the business of golf and beyond. Beyond the Green will partner with Jacksonville community organizations, including The PGA Tour, to provide students access to industry leaders, executives and influencers to help inspire and welcome them into the industry workforce.

Junior PGA Works Round 2

When: 1-6 p.m. Sunday, May 5

First, Second and Final Rounds

When: Tee times begin at 8 a.m. at Dye's Valley and 10:15 a.m. at Stadium; Monday, May 6, to Wednesday, May 8

Where: TPC Sawgrass Stadium and Dye's Valley golf courses

Awards Presentation follows final round, approximately 6:30 p.m.

The PGA Works Collegiate Championship was founded in 1986 by the National Negro Golf Association, when HBCUs did not have the same post-season championship opportunities that existed for other institutions. Today, the championship retains its founding vision to open doors for student-athletes from HBCUs and other athletes from diverse backgrounds.



Photo by Anthony Richards

Both the Sharks and Panthers earned a spot in the state playoffs.

Title

Continued from 36

cause depth is very important, but also because we have a culture of being all in, and to be able to let them go and play is huge."

There has been a lot of success associated with the Sharks' program over the years, but winning titles is not something that ever gets old for the group.

"If your only goal is to win a state championship, well only one team out of 170 or something will win it, so being able to celebrate the accomplishments along the way is very important," Polanski said. "My message to the boys and the coaches was to enjoy this one because it may look easy at times but it's not and there's a lot of hard work that goes into it."

The Sharks enter the state tournament as the No. 2 seed in region 1 of class 2A and will face Creekside at 7 p.m. on April 26. The Panthers earned a spot as the No. 4 seed in the region and will host Fletcher at 7 p.m. on April 27.

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CROSSWORD

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8	9		10	11	12	13
14					15						16			
17					18						19			
20				21		22				23				
			24		25				26					
27	28	29		30				31			32	33	34	
35			36			37				38				
39					40				41					
42					43			44						
45				46			47				48			
			49				50				51			
52	53	54				55				56		57	58	59
60					61				62		63			
64					65						66			
67					68						69			

ACROSS

- Excessively theatrical actors
- Footwear
- A way to disfigure
- Exchange rate
- Hawaiian wreaths
- North-central Indian city
- Bungle
- Extremely angry
- A short note of what's owed
- Criminal organization
- Mimic
- Try to grab
- U.S.-born individuals
- Some are covert
- Order of the British Empire
- Don't know when yet
- Payment (abbr.)
- Winged angelic being
- Variety of Chinese
- A way to be anxious
- Famed wrestler Hulk
- Partner to cheese
- Slang for sergeant
- Canadian flyers
- Actress Ryan
- Highly unpleasant vapor
- Halfway
- Cool!
- Consume
- Salts
- Upper bract of a floret of grass
- Housepet
- Cavalry-sword
- Symbol of a nation
- Frocks
- Used to carry food
- Portuguese folk song
- Sharp mountain ridge
- Ireland
- Where golfers begin
- Greek mythological sorceress
- Fluid suspensions

- Bulgarian capital
- Japanese title
- Capital of Zimbabwe
- Giraffe
- A mixture of substances
- Midway between south and southeast
- Staffs
- Turkish title
- Type of acid
- Thin, flat strip of wood
- Russian river
- Ribonucleic acid
- Partner to flow
- Airborne (abbr.)
- Earthy pigment
- Genus of earless seals
- "Key to the Highway" bluesman
- By or in itself
- Hot fluid below the earth's surface
- Partner to trick
- British Air Aces

- Ammunition
- Supervises flying
- Health care for the aged
- Flanks
- Millimeters
- Where wrestlers perform
- Not around
- Flightless bird
- Bell-shaped flowers of the lily family
- Expressed concern for
- Satisfies
- Flew off!
- Wings
- Load a ship
- Vigor
- British title
- Whiskeys
- ___ Adams: founding father
- Body of water

SUDOKU

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

Level: Intermediate

Here's How It Works:

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

DOWN

- "Mad Men" leading man
- Water (Spanish)
- Annoy



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