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## Spring BRIDAL

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**FEBRUARY/MARCH 2024**

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The photo of the bride on the cover was provided by Sarah Hedden Photography.

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# ONE OF US

## Adam Beam

as told to **SHAUN RYAN**  
Contributed photo

**I**n January, ImagineCare, a joint venture between Spark Pediatrics and CareSource, announced the appointment of Ponte Vedra resident Adam Beam as CEO. Beam is a seasoned manage care executive with more than 18 years of experience in both the public and private sectors.

**In order to understand your new role, it's important to first understand the organization you work for. Tell me about ImagineCare and its components, CareSource and Spark Pediatrics. What are they and what does this partnership allow them to do better together?**

ImagineCare is a joint venture between Spark Pediatrics and CareSource. Spark Pediatrics, they've been in Florida for 12 years, primarily serving children with complex needs — and also providing home health services throughout the entire state of Florida. CareSource is a national managed care organization. They've been serving Medicaid members for over 30 years.

Basically, ImagineCare brings together one of the most well-respected providers in Florida backed by a health plan with the best operations in the country.

**Who are recipients of these services?**

Our focus will be on Medicaid recipients throughout the state.

**As CEO of ImagineCare, what will your responsibilities be?**

I'll oversee the entire plan, report up through the board of directors and ensure that we provide quality care and services to the state's most vulnerable constituents.

**Will you interact separately with CareSource and Spark Pediatrics or will you be more independent of those partners?**

I'll be with both since it is a joint venture. I'll be working hand-in-hand with both organizations.



**Tell me about your background, your education and career to date.**

Prior military. Was stationed at Tyndall Air Force Base in Panama City, Florida. When I got out, I worked in Kentucky. I worked for other health plans similar to CareSource. And then, spent seven years in private equity, serving Medicaid members. Moved to Ponte Vedra close to six years ago for work. I was doing Medicaid work in the state of Florida. And then, joined CareSource about two-and-a-half years ago, primarily focusing on the eastern region of the United States, which has led me up to this point.

I'm on the board of the Northeast Florida Boys and Girls Club and work a lot crisscrossing the state, focusing on building community-based organization relationships. I think we've donated over \$1 million so far just working with other organizations. Episcopal Children's and Fostering Connections are some examples.

We're really dedicated to serving the community.

**What do you like best about what you do?**

I think it's just being part of an organization that's innovative and really trying to get beyond just clinical needs of our members; really looking at the social, behavioral pieces that are all just very important in holistic care.

Also, we have a deep understanding around the whole health of the family and not just of the individual, and really wrapping around services and other community coordination for our members to ensure that their quality of life in Florida is just great.

**You've stepped up to help those in need.**

We've created some amazing partnerships throughout the state. For instance, with the Crisis Center of Tampa Bay. We gave them a \$50,000 grant to help more survivors [of human trafficking]. ... Eighty-eight percent of survivors report that they've interacted with health care providers while being trafficked without receiving appropriate intervention. So, we feel compelled to join this fight against human trafficking, and I think that's a big part of what we're bringing to Florida. To ensure that we can really help the fight against human trafficking.

With ImagineCare's support, the Crisis Center of Tampa Bay can provide longer-term human trafficking care coordination.

Mid-Year Halftime Shows, where we're replenishing students' school supplies ... We go in and we're working with students within some of our communities, and then giving them new book bags, paper, pencils, pens, and then just replenishing the supplies, because we feel there's an urgent need to replenish and secure students' academic success.

Overall, the most fulfilling part about what I do is fulfilling the mission of ImagineCare while knowing that I'm dedicated to improving the community's health. There could be no greater responsibility.

**Where do you come from originally?**

I'm from Louisville, Kentucky.

**What do you like best about living here?**

We love Ponte Vedra. My wife reminds

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Lisa Keller launched her business, Fleur de Lis Boutique Florida, in 2023 after years working in the fashion industry.



Fleur de Lis Boutique Florida sells jewelry and accessories, as well as the latest fashions.

# SPRING FASHION: WHAT TO WATCH FOR

## New boutique offers variety of fun ways to shop

story and photos by  
**SHAUN RYAN**

Women who want to keep up with the latest fashion trends and, especially, what works best for them are discovering Fleur de Lis Boutique Florida. That's because business owner Lisa Keller knows what she's talking about. She has spent her entire life in the fashion world.

And that's no exaggeration. When she was just 2 years old, her mother began to dress her in fancy apparel, and Keller's love of clothing and style has only increased since.

"I remember telling my parents as a teenager, 'I'm going to fashion school in New York City,'" she said. At the time, it was quite a declaration. In her small town south of Buffalo, fashion was not something her contemporaries cared about.

Her parents attempted to temper what might have seemed like an adolescent pipe dream, but Keller was not dissuaded.

"I went to the Fashion



A mannequin at the boutique

Institute in New York City," she said. "I didn't have interest in anything else."

For several years, she worked for David Yurman, one of the country's top luxury jewelry brands. She went on to work for Kenneth Cole, this time as the liaison between the brand and the manufacturer in Hong Kong.

After marrying and having a family, she became a rep and stylist for Stella & Dot, a jewelry company. That job introduced her to the world of in-home pop-up shops, a business model that would play an important role in the years ahead.

Keller's family was living in New Jersey when, two

years ago, her husband was diagnosed with stage 4 cancer. It clarified their priorities, especially after Keller's husband had to quit his job on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange. First, they decided that the time had come to move to Florida. Second, Keller recognized she would have to convert her in-home sales pastime into a full-blown business.

That's when Fleur de Lis Boutique Florida was born. At first, sales were all online, but Keller quickly added the pop-up shops with which she was so familiar.

"Women love them because it's an easy excuse to get girls together and shop," she said.

One of the unique services she offers is personal styling.

"It's not just walking into a shop and somebody says hello and then you're on your own," she said. "I get to know them. I get to know what colors they like, what colors they look best in."

She learns about her customers' lifestyles and makes suggestions.

In December, Fleur de Lis Boutique Florida added something new: a physical location at the link in Nocatee, though it's important to note that services there are available by appointment only.

Keller also participates in vendor events, where she brings racks of clothing and her ever-popular hot-pink try-on tent.

### WHAT'S IN

Keller pointed out a few colors that are going to be really popular this spring. She predicted that red would be big, as would shades of blue — especially what is known as "dusty blue."

"Last year, it was hot pink," she said. "Hot pink was everywhere. It's still relevant, for sure, but these other colors are kind of taking over. The Pantone color of 2024 is light peach. Of course, there are different takes on that."

A trending accessory is bows, especially bows worn in the hair as in times past. Keller even intends to add bow earrings to her stock.

"And super-feminine things like lace are really big," she added. "Florals are always really big for spring, too."

To order from Fleur de Lis Boutique Florida online, schedule an in-home pop-up shop or personal styling session or to make an appointment to visit Keller's space at the link, go to fleurdelisboutiqueflorida.com or contact her through Instagram Messenger or Facebook Messenger.

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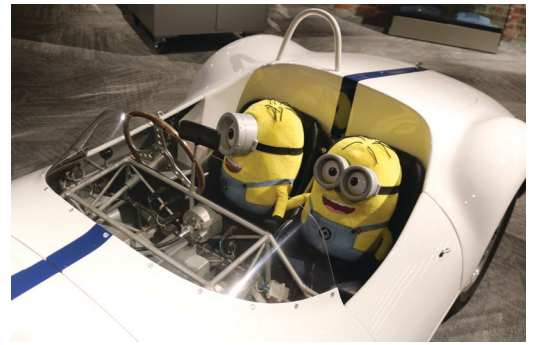
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The Brumos Collection hosted the C.A.R.S. event, which served as a fundraiser for Community PedsCare and Every Child Counts.



A pair of stuffed Minions in the cockpit of a vintage Maserati.



It was the second time the event was held, and it is expected to become a tradition every two years.

# COOL CARS HELP RAISE FUNDS FOR CHILDREN IN NEED

## The Brumos Collection hosts Community PedsCare, Every Child Counts fundraiser

story and photos by ANTHONY RICHARDS

Members of the local community came together with the goal of making big differences in the lives of children battling sickness and their families during the C.A.R.S. event supporting Community Hospice & Palliative Care's PedsCare program, which specializes in pediatrics.

It was the second time the event was held, with the first taking place in 2022, as the goal is to have the fundraiser every two years.

The C.A.R.S. acronym stands for Children Are Rockstars, so it was only fitting for the event to be hosted by The Brumos Collection on San Pablo Road in Jacksonville, which featured various race cars from across the decades displayed throughout the



The Brumos Collection's 35,000-square foot facility featured cars across generations of racing, from sports car champions to Indy 500 winners.

35,000-square foot facility.

Annie Tuttle, executive director for The Foundation for Community Hospice & Palliative Care.

"Our Community PedsCare program is one of our largest unfunded programs," Tuttle said. "We take care of our local children who are in our hospice program and dealing with life-limiting and life-altering conditions. It helps families to deal with one of the most challenging situations they will be faced with in their lives."

Ring Power was the presenting

sponsor for the event, as Ring Power senior vice president Kevin Robbins and his wife Paige are huge supporters of Community Hospice.

"Kevin is the chairman of the Community Hospice board, and they help bring people from all over the country to this event," Tuttle said. "This program wouldn't exist if it wasn't for the gifts from our donors and the support from our community."

According to Tuttle, the money raised on the night will go toward helping the needs that arise with families, but there are also plans for construction of a pediatric community center for families to use.

"This is pretty much the first fundraiser that will help go toward that project," Tuttle said.

The center will be located at Hadlow office off Sunbeam Road in Jacksonville and will have many benefits that will come along with its construction.

"Right now, we don't have a communal area or space of any kind for our families to come together, and we try to have like coffee and

CONTINUED ON PAGE 9 ■



## CARS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

conversations and grief support groups for siblings, but there's just limited space for that," said Catherine Nichols, a pediatric nurse practitioner with Community PedsCare. "The new center will have dedicated rooms for music, arts, sensory exploration and all that kind of stuff."

Proceeds from the event also benefited Every Child Counts, which is an educational facility for children with learning, developmental and physical disabilities in The Bahamas.

"We have been traveling to The Bahamas for many years, and I got introduced to the people there at Every Child Counts that run the school," Kevin Robbins said. "In 2019, Hurricane Dorian hit there and literally wiped the island out after nearly 26 hours of a category five hurricane, so we're trying to do our part to help them get back."

It has taken some time, but after much hard work and support, Every Child Counts is back up and running and the light can be seen at the end of the tunnel, according to Acting Administrator Nicole DeNardin-Russell.

"We've been able to rebuild, and this is now the first year after COVID and



Ring Power senior vice president Kevin Robbins (center facing) has a conversation with attendees on the night. Ring Power was the presenting sponsor for the event.

everything that we've been able to do a full program again," DeNardin-Russell said. "We can finally say that we are back and are finally ready to move forward."

One thing for sure is that the event seems to be a hit and has already shown signs of growth, which means more money available to be donated and help out those in need in the community.

"We had so much success last time, but this year has been just crazy the amount of people that want to come in here and be a part of it to support us," Kevin Robbins said. "We should hopefully be able to double the proceeds that we pass along."

## BEAM

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

me we're never going to move. We love all the normal things, like the beaches and access to the parks — there are lots of things to do outside — but I think what we like most of all is our community. We've just really come to fall in love with a lot of the individuals in the community. We love everything about where we live.

I have two kids. They're thriving. Both of them play three or four sports throughout the year. There's never time off here!

### How do you like to spend your free time?

We're always doing road trips on the weekends, exploring all of the different beaches and natural parks within the state.

That's pretty much it. We've really focused on kind of check-marking the entire state. We'll go down to the Keys or even around the Panhandle.

Most of our time is eaten up with kids lacrosse or wrestling or football. But when we get those precious weekends, we definitely take advantage of it.

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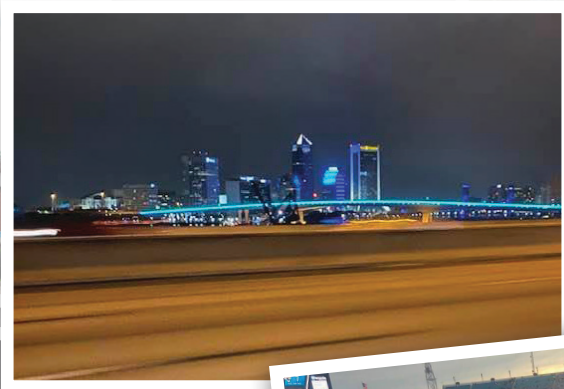
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# FACES OF *The First Coast*



Faces Of The First Coast is an exclusive feature for First Coast Register readers to get to know prominent business leaders in Northeast Florida's coastal communities.

*If you would like to be featured in Faces of the First Coast, please contact us at (904) 285-8831.*

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Clareberryrealestate.com

Lucky me! I have been a Realtor in my home, Northeast Florida, for nearly 40 years. I grew up in Jacksonville and moved to the beach in my 20s. I studied architecture and interior design in college, feeding my love of homes and style. After graduation, I worked in media, where I learned the art of listening and asking questions, marketing and advertising.

In 1985, I transitioned from media to real estate, joining Watson Realty's Ponte Vedra office. It was meant to be! Serving customers by customizing promotions for their homes and researching housing options for buyers is exciting. The reward of finding a seller or a buyer the perfect home is what keeps me charged up about real estate. In 1990, I moved to the original Marsh Landing Realty, where I learned about lots and builders and the development process.

In 1993, I opened my own brokerage, Berry & Co. Real Estate. Our first listing was The Ponte Vedra Carlyle, 48 new condominiums on Ponte Vedra Boulevard. That was an exciting time – new residences in a premier location, with Lodge membership included for every purchaser!

Berry & Co. Real Estate continues to be a robust general brokerage. We have helped hundreds of buyers and sellers with their residential real estate needs. We take pride in our market knowledge – it is the foundation for the extra level of service we provide our customers.

My customers describe me as “one of our most trusted advisors”... “responsive, kind and honest”... “always felt we were in good hands”...”stands out from the rest regarding professionalism, true customer satisfaction and a real passion to do things the right way.” I help make buying and selling real estate efficient, enjoyable and rewarding by applying my knowledge and insights for the benefit of my customers.

While homebase for our office is Ponte Vedra Beach, we also are active in neighboring Jacksonville Beach, Neptune Beach, Atlantic Beach and Nocatee as well as greater Jacksonville. Our real estate market is ever-changing and always intriguing. I'm grateful for the challenges and opportunities each new day brings.



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Sculptor Brenda Council works on one of the children in the Harriet Beecher Stowe monument. A local child, Beckham Morgan, was the model.



Local child Eviin Wilson, a descendant of Walter Anderson, one of the oldest African-American families in Mandarin, was the model for this sculpture.



Sculptor Brenda Council works on the future bronze installation of "Harriet Beecher Stowe in Mandarin."

# CELEBRATING HARRIET BEECHER STOWE IN MANDARIN

## Bronze sculpture to commemorate famous resident

story by **SHAUN RYAN**  
photos by **OLIS GARBER**

**F**ollow Mandarin Road as it winds beneath a Spanish-moss-laden canopy of live oaks and you will come across a small structure, once the general store and post office for the riverside village after which the road is named. It's here, inside this unassuming building, that an acclaimed artist has been laboring since early December to create a work of artistic and historic significance.

Brenda Mauney Council, now living in North Carolina, returned to the community where she grew up to create the world's only life-sized sculpture of one of Florida's most famous residents: Harriet Beecher Stowe.

Stowe, who first arrived in Mandarin in 1867, spent 17 winters here, and her contributions to this community

cannot be overstated.

The sculpture, initially fashioned in clay to be later cast in bronze, depicts three figures: The famous author and abolitionist seated on a bench opposite two boys — one Black, one White — who sit on an overturned orange crate. Stowe points to a page in an open book, teaching her charges their ABCs. One boy inscribes his name on a small slate and the other proudly holds his up for the instructor to see. The students are laborers in the orange groves of Mandarin, and they represent the many children of the community who would have gone uneducated but for Stowe's work in creating the village's first school.

When complete, the bronze sculpture, titled "Harriet Beecher Stowe in Mandarin," will be installed in Walter Jones Historical Park, just up the road. Installation is tentatively set for sometime in the fall.

### AN INSPIRED PROJECT

"I grew up in the Mandarin area, so I always knew about Harriet Beecher Stowe's legacy here and her work,"

said Council. "I had been thinking about the very fact that a sign on the side of the road and an exhibit at the museum, as great as they are, weren't enough. I wanted to bring her into a life-sized setting so that people would be encouraged to learn more about her."

Stowe is best known for her landmark 1852 novel "Uncle Tom's Cabin," which educated readers about the evils of slavery and inspired people to put an end to it.

"It changed this country in a profound way," said Council. "No other writer has that distinction. That's why creating this monument to her is so important for Jacksonville and the United States. The whole nation should know her story, and it should be perpetuated generation to generation."

Council decided upon the sculpture's composition after reading Stowe's 1873 collection of essays regarding her life in Mandarin, "Palmetto Leaves."

She proposed her idea to the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 14 ■

Mandarin Museum & Historical Society and began working on the sculpture on Dec. 8. Over the following two months, Councilll worked nonstop, 10 hours a day. On weekends, she welcomed the public to visit the Historic Mandarin Store and Post Office and watch her create the work.

The sculpture, finished in mid-February, has been moved to Seagrove, North Carolina, where a foundry is transforming it into the completed bronze monument.

## 'A TRUE SERVANT'S HEART'

Harriet Elisabeth Beecher was born June 14, 1811, in Connecticut, the daughter of a prominent minister. She later relocated to Cincinnati, Ohio, where she wrote stories and sketches and, in 1836, married the Rev. Calvin Stowe. The Stoves moved to Maine in 1850, where both were critics of slavery and supporters of the Underground Railroad.

Harriet Beecher Stowe's famed novel was published two years later, after first being serialized in a newspaper. In its initial year, "Uncle Tom's Cabin" sold 300,000 copies, ranking second only to the Bible.

After the Civil War, Stowe was in Laurel Grove (later Orange Park) buying some land for her son to farm. She crossed the St. Johns River to pick up her mail and discovered Mandarin, where in 1867 she bought 30 acres of land and moved into a house on the waterfront.

Here, she helped raise the money to build the first Freedmen's Bureau, which provided clothing, food, medical services and shelter to emancipated African-Americans. She established a school for Black children, purchasing the land herself and hiring the first teacher. She also raised money to build the Church of Our Savior, which had Tiffany windows. (It was rebuilt after the original was destroyed in 1964 in Hurricane Dora.)



Rosamond Allen, a direct descendant of Harriet Beecher Stowe, left, stands next to sculptor Brenda Councilll.

"She had a true servant's heart," said Councilll.

Stowe wintered here through 1884, after which she returned to Connecticut. She died July 1, 1896, in Hartford.

Stowe's fame lives on today. Recently, the Florida Commission on the Status of Women selected her as a 2023 finalist to be considered for the Florida Women's Hall of Fame.

## MURALS AND MORE

Councilll is a native of North Carolina but grew up a Floridian after her father, an executive with the Seaboard Coast Line Railroad, was transferred here in 1960.

She had her first art exhibit in 1963 at the age of 7 as a result of lessons she was taking after school at the former Children's Art Museum (now the Museum of Science and History). She won a competition with her painting of Charles Adrian Pillars' iconic 1920 bronze sculpture in Memorial Park, "Spiritualized Life and Winged Victory."

"I've painted most of my life," Councilll said, "but that first thing I painted was a sculpture!"

Councilll studied art at the University of North Florida and the former Florida Community College at Jacksonville (now FSCJ), ultimately moving to New York in 1987, where she opened a large studio and gallery. She made a name for herself as a painter of ceiling murals, including a large work for the David H. Murdock Core Laboratory Building.

That work prompted television personality Martha Stewart to label her "Michelle-angelo."

"I transitioned to sculpture about five years ago," Councilll said. It was something she'd actually returned to, having sculpted early in her career. She has also created a bronze sculpture of famed Impressionist Elliott Daingerfeld, which is installed in Blowing Rock, North Carolina, where she lives. She's also been commissioned to create a women's suffrage monument for the State of Ohio.

## FROM CLAY TO BRONZE

In creating the sculpture of Harriet Beecher Stowe, Councilll took great care with the details. The names etched into the slates held by Stowe's students were selected from actual genealogical records.

The bench upon which Stowe sits is wide enough so that visitors can sit next to her and have their photos taken.

A photographer and videography



Brenda Councilll's model of the proposed sculpture.

have been documenting the progress of the sculpture.

The process Councilll uses to create the sculpture is called "lost wax." She makes the sculpture from an oil-based clay. This is sent to the foundry, where a rubber mold is made. Wax is poured into that mold, which is then peeled away, revealing a perfect replica of the clay original.

A ceramic mold is made around the wax version. After that hardens, molten bronze is poured in, displacing the wax and filling every crevice. When that second mold is broken away, the bronze sculpture is revealed. It's polished and a special patina is added.

"This will last for thousands of years," said Councilll. "That's why we chose bronze as the element for this sculpture. We want it to outlast us for many generations."

The project has the approval of the City of Jacksonville and the Florida Communities Trust. It has also won the endorsement of Joan D. Hedrick, the author of the 1995 Pulitzer Prize-winning biography, "Harriet Beecher Stowe: A Life."

"It is entirely fitting that such a monument be placed there," Hedrick stated. "It will celebrate one of America's most prolific and influential writers ... [and] commemorate Stowe's profound love of Florida."

## SEEKING SUPPORT

The creation of such a large bronze sculpture is not an inexpensive endeavor, and the museum welcomes donations. It hopes to raise \$150,000 to fund the project.

Donors at the \$2,500 level and above will be recognized on a permanent plaque located near the sculpture and will be invited to a private cocktail reception.

Anyone interested in making a donation can find more information at [mandarinmuseum.org](http://mandarinmuseum.org). They can also contact Executive Director Brittany Cohill at 904-268-0784 or [director@mandarinmuseum.org](mailto:director@mandarinmuseum.org).

To learn more about the artist, go to [councilll.net](http://councilll.net).



Blue Jay Listening Room offers a variety of events, from concerts to comedy nights.



Blue Jay Listening Room prides itself on offering a unique opportunity for local musical talent to be heard.

# COOL, ECLECTIC ATMOSPHERE CREATE MUSIC LOVERS' HAVEN

story by **ANTHONY RICHARDS**

photos courtesy of **BLUE JAY LISTENING ROOM**

## Unique approach brings acts, fans to Blue Jay Listening Room

**T**he Blue Jay Listening Room has been a place that prides itself in offering local music talent a unique place to play their music and showcase their talent and has been doing so for more than six years.

"I just got tired of seeing friends of mine that were forced to play bars and restaurants, and a lot of the time nobody was even listening," said Cara English, owner and operator of Blue Jay Listening Room. "I want to establish a place where local artists could sing their original music and not just covers."

More than half a decade later and English believes she has achieved the goal she set out to accomplish but also knows there is so much more out there.

"I didn't invent the 'listening room' concept, but I just helped bring it to the area and it has been embraced in a big way," English said. "I actually recently visited Nashville for an Americana fest there, and I was talking to musicians there and some of them knew of the Blue Jay Listening Room when I mentioned it to them, which is amazing."

The reputation that Blue Jay has continued to develop over the years has



The vibe created at Blue Jay Listening Room is one for music lovers by music lovers.

begun to make waves not just locally but it is also beginning to spread throughout the music world.

However, that does not surprise English at all, because she knows how special the Blue Jay Listening Room can be for all those who step foot inside the building or on stage.

"Part of what has set Blue Jay apart is just the way we treat our musicians and artists," English said. "Kindness goes a long way, and that is reflected in how we do business."

Some of the goals English has for the future of the operation is that she plans to start a podcast within the next year and never quits searching for even bigger and better shows to put on.

Although new acts are always important, English has never lost sight of the regular groups that have become mainstays at the listening room over the years, and some have been taking

the stage since it opened.

Some of the top acts associated with the Blue Jay Listening Room include Corey Kilgannon, Howdy and Rambler Cane.

"I feel lucky to be considered his (Corey Kilgannon) 'home base,'" English said. "He (Rambler Cane) is destined for great things."

One of the things noticed when attending a show at Blue Jay Listening Room is that the crowd is very knowledgeable when it comes to music and is entrenched into the show and the musician on stage.

"I never wanted to own a bar, and I often refer to Blue Jay as an anti-bar," English said. "We ask that people silence their phones during the show, and it creates a quite intimate and freeing setting. I want people to feel comfortable, like they're in their cool and eclectic living room listening to music."

One of the local music events English looks forward to each year is Florida Fin Fest, which is scheduled to take place Sept. 13 and 14 at the Seawalk Pavilion in Jacksonville Beach.

The two-day event will feature two stages, the main one and a Blue Jay Listening Room one.

The Blue Jay Listening Room also has jazz jam every Tuesday, comedy nights on the second Thursday of each month and a songwriter's night collaboration on the fourth Thursdays.

"You just never know what you're going to get," English said.

# THE ARGYLE RESTAURANT HOLDS RIBBON CUTTING, PREVIEW DINNER

photos by **SUSAN GRIFFIN**

**C**hef Jonathan Blackford & Kristie Blackford owners of the Argyle Restaurant celebrated joining the St. John's County Chamber of Commerce with

a ribbon cutting ceremony on February 5th.

Immediately following the ceremony, the restaurant hosted a special media preview dinner showcasing special menu items and craft cocktails.



General Manager Ravin Buzzell makes a mean "Smoked" Old Fashioned

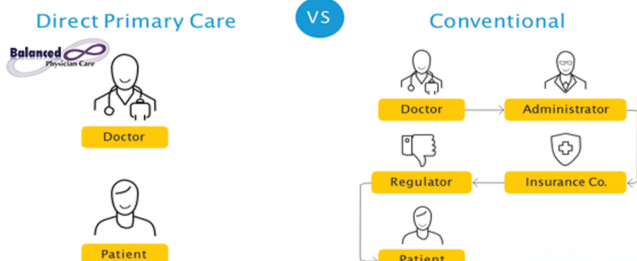
MORE PHOTOS ON PAGE 17 ■

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# ARGYLE

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 16



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Victoria 1883 in New Smyrna Beach, one of Florida's grand homes, is now an inn.



The firepit surrounded by towering bamboo.



The artistry of darks and lights, luxury and history in the living room.

[ wine & dine ]

## PACK YOUR PORTMANTEAU

# VICTORIA 1883: ESCAPE INTO A GRAND EPOCH OF FLORIDA HISTORY

story by **LEIGH CORT** photos courtesy of **VICTORIA 1883**



Leigh Cort

Setting the scene for a love story isn't always easy. If you're determined to remember every moment while staying somewhere that captures your heart and imagination, Victoria 1883's lush plantings, majestic oaks and meandering Indian River in New Smyrna Beach is an inspiring spot to land.

One could create a story about the getaway as a delicious recipe for lingering images of history. Victoria 1883's tale could be compared to a beautiful symphony of musical interludes throughout the inn's 140 years. Perhaps it's compared to a colorful canvas that plays with the artistry of transforming a lovely home into today's masterpiece of innkeeping! But is there really an inn of such supreme surprises and beauty?

New Smyrna Beach seduced visitors for centuries with its extravagant natural setting of tropical climate and grand villas like Victoria 1883 that depict the dazzling 19th century when residents and visitors delighted in the complexity of contrasts. From prehistoric Indian-shell middens dating from 800 to 1561 A.D. to massive sugarcane plantations in the 1700s, family sagas dominated history books. The Civil War, cotton plantations, timber era and grand hotels volleyed for historic prominence along with archaeological studies and the Great Depression.

Arriving on the shore of the soothing Indian River, with its banks of mangrove thickets, you can often see playful dolphins and manatees steps from the inn's circular front driveway. Its heavenly setting is nestled beneath the hundreds-of-years-old live oak trees reminding you it's possible to escape into another century, a more peaceful time where families lived their lives "in the moment."

On any day, without leaving the Victoria, one can stroll the intriguing property, walk through the arbor, sit at the firepit in giant chairs, enjoy the private dock for fishing, read volumes of American history or just watch the river and relax.

Fabiola and Peter Spooner stumbled upon this fabulous historic gem and fell in love with its legacy. They revel in the knowledge that they are only the sixth owners in its 140-year tale. Together their story is sprinkled with determination to preserve one of Florida's grand homes where guests indulge in their own dreams of romance, a special celebration, a posh wedding or just a respite from work where you vacation like royalty.

Once you've selected one of the seven exquisite rooms or suites named after family members of the original home (Eliza, Emma, Henry and more), you will be thrilled with your

CONTINUED ON PAGE 20 ■



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VICTORIA

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 18

choice. But remember: you might be lured to see their other accommodations that have been impeccably designed and decorated with international artisans' furnishings and art. Their master theme is "chiaroscuro," creative plays of color in a dark/light scheme.

The Spooners noticeably selected 17 colors that explore the contrasts with woods, leathers, nature themes and wallpapers. Even the luscious bed linens (bamboo sateen) and bathrobes carry their signature "V" embroidered white on white. Take a tour of the inn as though you were visiting a renowned art gallery — everything carries forward the black-and-white theme of modernist prints and photographs, line drawings and heart-stopping masterworks.

Breakfast is another special moment at the Victoria 1883. The casual dining room welcomes you with beautiful music and one of Fabiola's culinary surprises, accompanied by fresh fruit, baked sweets and heavenly coffee. Nothing is left to chance. It's an elegant beginning to your day either chatting with other guests or taking breakfast in the garden. If you're staying on the second or third floors, you will love the private elevator that makes each day easy to navigate with your luggage or just to enjoy this fun way to not climb the grand staircase — whether visiting for an overnight or arriving with an entire wedding party of gowns, ensembles, tuxedos, slippers, hair stylists, makeup artists and boxes of accoutrement! The elevator is fabulous!



PHOTO BY LEIGH CORT  
The entrance to the Garden  
Dining at Riverpark Terrace

RIVERPARK TERRACE

Historic inns promise a different style of vacation that pairs perfectly with out-of-the-ordinary dining. With a surplus of options in New Smyrna Beach and surrounding towns, visitors can dip deeply into researching their palates' delight. Nearby, on South Riverside Drive, a very short drive or lovely stroll from Victoria 1883, you'll find Riverpark Terrace, a magical restaurant that will immediately steal your heart. Once you step

onto the winding brick path, you'll feel the magic of intricate stonework, sculptures in the garden and the uniqueness of the property that welcomes you to dine outside or in.

Owners Mary Jane Finn and Beth Bay also fell in love with this "refuge from the stresses of life" when they purchased it from the prior owner who was a well-known local artisan of the Clay Gallery, transforming it into Riverpark Terrace in 2017. Its presence in "The Art District" couldn't be more appropriate. Their food is true culinary artistry. Friends in New York for 30-plus years, they have worked diligently, bringing Chef Andre Compres into the restaurant's spotlight with an exciting new dining experience to New Smyrna.

Riverpark Terrace contributes importantly to the town's current moniker, "foodie dining Mecca." Combining their multi-dimensional big-city talents and careers, the restaurant's popularity continues to explode as they live

CONTINUED ON PAGE 21 ■

## VICTORIA

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 20

their philosophy of “keeping it fresh, keeping it local and keeping it irresistible.”

Whether selecting the most unbelievable English pea soup, tuna tataki or mozzarella frita, you must order wisely since the menu will tempt you long after you’ve dined; you’ll be counting the days until you return

again for their 36-hour pork chop brined in black tea ... served with heirloom roasted carrots.

If Sunday brunch brings another dimension of a vacation, Riverpark Terrace is very popular for discerning brunchers. The short rib skillet with onions, peppers, red potatoes and sunny side-up egg is a favorite. Sinful desserts are curated from The Bake Shop as Riverpark Terrace wows locals and visitors to enjoy top quality food, craft cocktails, live music and an enchanting setting you’ll never forget.

Learn more at [riverparkterrace.com](http://riverparkterrace.com)

New Smyrna Beach could lure you to leave Victoria for another day or evening and explore boutiques, poke into art galleries, hike along wide ocean beaches, dine in a multitude of casual cafes and chef-inspired restaurants or adventure on the waterways in a kayak. The balance of history and contemporary lifestyle is delightfully appealing.



PHOTO BY LEIGH CORT  
36-hour black tea-brined pork chop from Riverpark Terrace.



PHOTO BY LEIGH CORT  
Razor clams with bay scallops and Maine lobster.

### THIRD WAVE CAFÉ

If you’re a true foodie, you’ll save your evenings to dive deeply into another dining surprise within a short drive from the Victoria 1883. It’s the do-not-miss Third Wave Café & Wine Bar. Locals know how fabulous it is — and visitors will feel like locals when they find it — hidden through a narrow canopy of age-old trees. Here, it’s an intriguing feast from morning ’til night. Celebrating its 10th anniversary in March 2024, Kathryn, Wayne and Nate Lundberg exemplify what a real

family restaurant means, when everyone plays a vital role from barista and sommelier to handyman, server, bartender or gardener.

They have poured their hearts into Third Wave Café. Family stories could become a book about farming sorghum and growing passion fruit on Maypop Farm. They have grown this little 1920s building into one of the most in-demand hot spots for folks who love the casualness of dropping in, knowing their service and food will wow them every time.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 22 ■



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## VICTORIA

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 21

Be prepared to applaud Chef David Moscoso's expertly outrageous cuisine. Winning the Smart Catch award of the James Beard Foundation for multiple years and receiving accolades from Wine Spectator Awards of Excellence, the awards sound showy, but here you don't need to dress for the occasion. The spotlight is on Chef's unbelievable food! His legacy came from parents who bestowed their own heritage upon him: his father's Ecuadorian roots, an artist who created bold colorful canvasses, and his mother's farming family, instilling her kindness and respect for animals and the land that nourishes.

David's style is fittingly identified as Classic Basque Fusion. His gifted passion is a tapestry of abundant portions paired with star-quality presentations. There is nothing shy about Third Wave Café's menu; Chef's powerful influences from grilling and smoking to raw flavors reflect his career of learning from international culinary mentors. His menu is a



The hidden speakeasy of Victoria 1883.

cornucopia of excitement that delivers everything it promises.

Begin with Moroccan Date Night (creamy mascarpone, Medjool dates, pecan pesto, aged balsamic, crisp baguette) or Shrimp Gambas (blackened butter-sauteed jumbo Key West pink shrimp, garlic, chilies, Calabrian oil crispy baguette). For the hearty appetite, share the pastrami Angus beef rib — bone-in, seven-day brine, smoked Angus beef, sauerkraut, marbled rye, million-island dressing, house mustard blend and datil pepper pickles! Consider the decadent New England razor clam with Nantucket Bay scallops and Maine lobster — garlicky butter and house-made

rosemary focaccia.

Chef's oak-fired pizzas, rotating features (seafood and meats) from the smoker, salads, sandwiches and crepes — there is nothing humdrum that you've experienced in the past. He's lovingly passionate about thrilling guests.

Learn more at [thirdwavensb.com](http://thirdwavensb.com).

### HIDDEN SPEAKEASY

If you feel the inclination to turn back the clock, don't fight it. Not only does Victoria 1883 open a window into the bygone style of golden-age travel, but their "speakeasy" is an opportunity to revive the luxury of old upper-class families. Put glittery chandeliers and grand staircases aside; there is everything "unintentionally" meaningful about Victoria 1883 and their secret speakeasy. Don't overlook it! This is a noteworthy historic property that hasn't yet received many international awards, but they're on the way. It's a modernist getaway, a sophisticated stay tucked inside a century of transitions. When you leave, you'll feel as if you, too, were a piece of this grand epoch of Florida history!

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# EVENT HIGHLIGHTS ST. AUGUSTINE RESTAURANT'S NEW MENU



Heirloom Beets

photos by **SUSAN GRIFFIN**

**O**n Feb. 7, Cordova Coastal Chop-house & Bar in St. Augustine held a private event to spotlight the restaurant's new and unique culinary offerings. The restaurant, at 95 Cordova St. inside the Casa Monica Resort & Spa, was recently renovated.

The evening began with welcome drinks and passed hors d'oeuvres in Sultan's Pavilion. A five-course pairing dinner in the private wine room, featuring dishes enriched with Moroccan and Spanish influences, followed. It emphasized Executive Chef Rob DeGrassi's new menu.

In addition to the wine room, the restaurant has 145 indoor seats, a lounge and a private dining room — which can accommodate about 20-24 people.

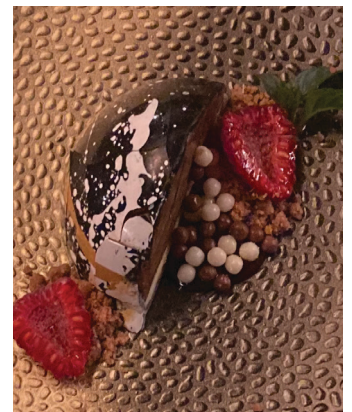
To view the Cordova Coastal Chop-house & Bar menu and hours go to [cordovachophouse.com](http://cordovachophouse.com).



Sultan's Pavilion



Florida Grouper



Chocolate Mousse Trio



A chef at the Omni Amelia Island Resort prepares a dish during Amelia Island Food Week.



The Decantery on Centre Street is Amelia Island's wine, craft beer and cocktail lounge.



Salt Restaurant at The Ritz-Carlton Amelia Island offers first-class food options.



Amelia Island has an eclectic mix of culinary options.

## FOODIES UNITE FOR A DELICIOUS TIME AT AMELIA ISLAND

story by **ANTHONY RICHARDS**  
Contributed photos

**A**melia Island held its 16th annual restaurant week Jan. 19-28, where it featured nearly 30 restaurants that offered lunch and dinner options throughout the 10-day period.

The participating restaurants included a nice sampling of the food choices that Amelia Island has to offer, but there are more than 90 restaurants throughout the area that each offer their own uniqueness that helps make it an experience and not just another meal.

The definition of a foodie is someone who has an interest in the latest food fads and is likely to plan their next trip or vacation around where they are planning to eat instead of maybe some of the more typical tourist stops.

Well, foodies, have no fear, because Amelia Island has everything you will need to enjoy a perfect food-inspired getaway.

According to the Amelia Island Welcome Center, there are certain food stops that are a must on any visit either

for a weekend trip or longer.

Some coveted lunch spots include T-Ray's Burger Station, which is a local staple and offers delicious burgers and has a lot of charm as it is located in a former service station. However, a wide range of options from fried bologna sandwiches to fried shrimp are offered.

Here in the South, comfort food has to be a part of any trip and Pogo's Kitchen offers just that with a menu that has been inspired by the food cultures from Memphis, Tennessee, to Havana, Cuba.

There are many spots to choose from in downtown Fernandina Beach, including Burlingame Restaurant, which is a good dinner spot with an eclectic ambiance of its own as the building is a restored 1940s home.

Another unforgettable dinner will come from Salt Restaurant at The Ritz-Carlton Amelia Island and is considered among the top of the food experiences the area has to offer with a AAA Five Diamond rating.

It gets its unique name because the restaurant is known for using 40 different types of salt from around

the world to add in-depth and unique flavor to its dishes.

The Salt chef's table experience can be booked to provide a memorable view of the Atlantic Ocean and the sand dunes along the shoreline, which adds quite the visual to accompany the first-class cuisine.

Finally, a couple of top-notch breakfast spots include Garden Street Bistro and Sunrise Café at the Omni Amelia Island Resort.

They both offer something different as the Garden Street Bistro offers breakfast all day, so those breakfast-for-dinner eaters are covered as well, and the Sunrise Café is known for its "morning table" buffet, which is sure to start any breakfast lover's day off the right way.

And being a foodie is not just about what you eat but also what you drink, and The Decantery on Centre Street is Amelia Island's wine, craft beer and cocktail lounge.

Remember to tip kindly and treat all servers with kindness, because after all they are a major part of the foodie experience.





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# THE RIGHT HAIR STYLE

## for the big day

### Mac Hair Studio specializes in extensions, color and weddings

story by **SHAUN RYAN**  
photos courtesy of **MAC HAIR STUDIO**

Prospective brides often have very specific ideas regarding the look they want to project on their big day. They want to know that their hair will be perfect, both during the festivities and in the photographs they will cherish in the years to come.

And that means identifying stylists they can trust to bring their dreams to life.

It's a responsibility that Margaret Misener and her team at Mac Hair Studio take very seriously.

"You want it to go flawlessly, as flawlessly as possible," said Misener. "No surprises on somebody's wedding day. It's all about making the bride special for that day. It's all about meeting her needs."

Toward that end, Misener has a process. It begins when the prospective bride fills out an intake form on the salon's website ([machairstudio.com/services/wedding-hair-and-makeup](http://machairstudio.com/services/wedding-hair-and-makeup)), followed by a consultation. It's important to Misener that stylist and client click.

"I always encourage them: Please go check somewhere else, because you have to be comfortable with the person who's doing your hair," she said. "It makes it easier for the bride, and it just makes the day go so much nicer."

Misener always creates a storyboard for the wedding so everyone is speaking the same language throughout the process. The bride-to-be typically sends Misener a photo of herself and one showing how she would like to look — frequently derived from places like Instagram — and Mac Hair Studio works to "meld" the two looks.

It's important to consider the shape of the woman's face, as well as the style of the dress.

"We might have to determine: Does that look fit that dress and that hair?" said Misener. Every woman is unique,



Mac Hair Studio has earned the respect of its clients for creating the right look.



Mac Hair Studio specializes in hair extensions, among other services.

and what works on a model in a photograph may not necessarily work for the bride.

Misener typically creates the style on a mannequin and sends a photo to her client for approval.

Then, before wedding day, a bride-to-be has a trial session. She gets her hair and makeup done, giving Mac Hair Studio staff an opportunity to rehearse and the client a chance to see how everything will look.

On the day of the wedding, the salon

team and the bridal party gather for the real event. A bridal photographer is on hand to document the important day. (See [lyndseyannephotography.com](http://lyndseyannephotography.com).)

### BEYOND WEDDINGS

Misener launched Mac Hair Studio in 2001 after years of training and experience. The "Mac" is derived from her maiden name, MacKinnon, and the logo comes from her homeland, Scotland. Among those with whom she has trained is Vivienne Mackinder, former international artistic director for Vidal Sassoon.

"I've kept up that relationship throughout the years, and now all of my girls follow her program and her teaching," Misener said.

The salon, which consists of three buildings, has been at the same location since it was opened: 3831 Hendricks Ave., Jacksonville. It is, at once, both a neighborhood salon and one that attracts clientele from all over Northeast Florida, including celebrities, though that's certainly not a prerequisite.

"Everybody is equal when you walk through the front door," Misener said. "Everybody deserves the same type of service."

The stylists train extensively to perfect their precision cutting skills. The salon uses Äz, Keune and Kevin Murphy product lines.

One of the studio's biggest offerings is hair extensions, which has become very popular in recent years. Mac Hair Studio works with two notable companies to provide this service: the highly regarded *hairtalk* extensions and *Beauvoir*, which offers high-quality virgin extensions.

Consultations are also necessary before working on extensions.

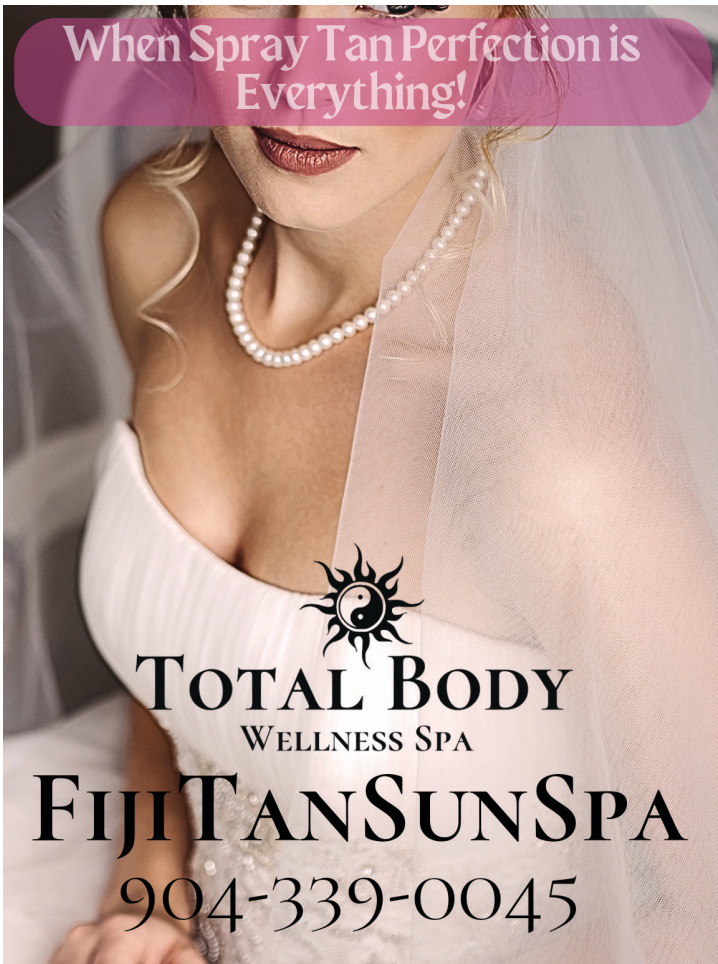
"I take pride in having highly skilled, good consultations that lead to good results," Misener said.

The team at Mac Hair Studio also excels at hair color.

"In today's world, color is your bread and butter," said Misener. "It's what you have to be good at ... We really do a lot of training on different techniques of hair color."

To learn more, Mac Hair Studio can be found at [instagram.com/machairstudio](http://instagram.com/machairstudio) and [facebook.com/MACHairStudio](http://facebook.com/MACHairStudio), as well as its website: [machairstudio.com](http://machairstudio.com).

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# A NEW WAY TO CELEBRATE

## The link hosts vow renewal receptions in its immersive studio

Contributed photos

The link, an innovation center in Nocatee, has announced the launch of its vow renewal receptions, hosted in their 360-degree immersive studio. Breaking away from tradition, the link provides couples with an unforgettable way to celebrate their love story.

The immersive studio, the largest of its kind in the nation, boasts eight projectors fusing imagery onto 1,000 square feet of canvas screens. This cutting-edge technology enables couples and their families to take a journey through their love story, showcasing the moments that led to their union. From the first date to the wedding day, every detail is brought to life.



The link's newest offering, vow renewal receptions, features the work of top regional chefs.

The link's dedicated team of storytellers works closely with couples to curate and design personalized displays. The

display showcases a collection of photographs, panoramic and 360-degree visuals, important dates and significant locations in the couple's story.

This exceptional experience ensures that family and friends, who may have missed significant moments and milestones otherwise, now have the opportunity to be present and share in those memories. Whether children were unable to attend the wedding or certain family members missed witnessing a proposal, this innovative concept brings everyone together to relive and celebrate.

The receptions can hold up to 30 guests. The link collaborates with top regional chefs to provide a private dining experience, elevating the celebration with a meal tailored to the couple's preferences.

With the arrival of new immersive technology, this experience is on time for the digital age. It is ideal for those who crave adventure and want to share their story in a unique way that cannot



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The link is located at 425 Town Plaza Ave., Ponte Vedra.

be replicated elsewhere.

For more information on how the link can elevate a couple's ceremony, contact Jeff Tawney, director of operations. Tawney can provide additional details, schedule tours of the venue and immersive studio, and discuss the various options available.

The link is an innovation center located in Nocatee, committed to anchoring the community while fostering creative and fulfilling interactions. With event and coworking spaces, along with engaging programming for entrepreneurs, innovators, children and families, the link has something for everyone. Learn more about the space at [thelink.zone](http://thelink.zone). For tours, visit 425 Town Plaza Ave., Ponte Vedra.

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# GET UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL

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## Jacksonville Zoo offers unique family fun experiences

story and photos by  
**ANTHONY RICHARDS**

**T**here are plenty of fun adventures to have throughout the year on the First Coast, but the Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens is one that can be a blast for the entire family no matter what time of the year it may be.

For years, the exotic animals at the zoo have captured the imagination of both children and adults and they currently have 150-plus animals making up its list for patrons to have the opportunity to view.

After all, seeing photos of animals such as a lion, elephant or giraffe is amazing, but they do not compare with witnessing these majestic animals firsthand and



in-person.

The Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens does an elaborate job in their layout making

it easily maneuverable throughout the park from exhibit to exhibit, and there are even stops along the way to grab some food and drink from their food court areas, which are highlighted by restaurants and the Mombasa Gift Shop, where souvenirs to remember the experience can be found.

Many of the same animals that can be seen at the zoo can be found in stuffed animal form in the gift shop, so children can bring a version of their favorite animal home with them. What a way to cap a fun day.

Wheelchair and stroller rentals are available to help make the trip around the park a little easier, because there will be a good share of walking required during a visit.

However, the zoo's train is something to keep in mind as well and provides a nice option of transport with stops

CONTINUED ON PAGE 31 ■



## ANIMALS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 30

throughout the park. Riding the train will require an additional cost, as it is not included as part of the entry ticket price.

Although the zoo experience is plentiful, there are also several ways to get even more up close and behind the scenes.

These behind-the-scenes experiences include African elephant painting, where a group of up to four people will go behind the scenes at the elephant habitat and will interact with animal care specialists that will explain how they train the elephants with interactive

painting demonstrations.

The painting experience is \$300 and a unique piece of artwork from the day will be able to be brought home by those who take part.

There are many bird exhibits at the zoo, but there are several additional experiences that present guests the opportunity to help zoo staff feed the birds.

These unique bird feeding experiences include interaction with Magellanic penguins, a southern cassowary named Brisbee and a flock of greater flamingos.

Another unique experience is the Visayan warty pig encounter, where guests can brush and give back scratches

to the warty pigs at the zoo.

According to the zoo, it is an enriching experience for both the animals and the people, as the warty pigs love any chance they get to receive a good back scratch.

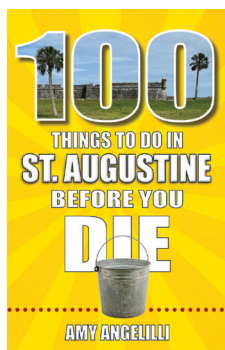
And finally, guests can take part in an experience that is truly local, as they can tour the zoo's manatee critical care center, which is also the facility's largest local conservation initiative.

The cost of the behind-the-scenes experiences varies from \$240 to \$280, depending on which experience it is. Attendees must be at least 5 years old and groups of up to four people are allowed.

# ST. AUGUSTINE RICH IN THINGS TO DO

Local author lists 100  
ideas for visitors and  
residents

story by **SHAUN RYAN**



When Reedy Press contacted Amy Angelilli about writing a St. Augustine edition for its “100 Things to Do Before You Die” series, the local entrepreneur quickly realized how daunting the task would be —

because the Nation’s Oldest City simply has too much to offer.

“A hundred is nothing in a town like this,” Angelilli said. “It’s a small town that never quits.”

In fact, her list got to 100 “in the blink of an eye.”

“It was kind of worrisome to me, because there were places I wanted to write about that didn’t make it in,” she said.

In fact, because it took two years from concept to print run, some of her initial choices closed and new ones appeared on the scene.

“Up until press time, I was still adding and subtracting,” she said.

“100 Things to Do in St. Augustine Before You Die” is filled with not-to-be-missed experiences. Readers will find sites from the city’s 459-year history, unique dining spots, entertainment venues, recreation options and suggestions for shoppers.

While longtime residents will recognize much of what’s included in the book, there will no doubt be a few surprises. For visitors and new residents, consulting the guide is a great way to easily identify those indispensable experiences.

Though this is Angelilli’s first book, she has been writing throughout much of her life, including stints on her high school and college newspapers. Original-



PHOTO BY SHAUN RYAN

Amy Angelilli with her book, “100 Things to Do in St. Augustine Before You Die”

ly from Philadelphia, where she worked a wide range of jobs and launched an animal welfare agency, she later moved to Denver.

At about age 30, she discovered improv, which is often associated with stage performance but can be used to enrich the lives of practitioners.

“Improv is about being able to pivot and being resilient and being able to go in a different direction than you had imagined,” Angelilli said.

In fact, having worked in a number of jobs across a broad spectrum of disciplines and being forced many times to redirect her efforts after being faced with layoffs, she said she has basically been learning improvisation in real life.

While living in Denver, she underwent foot surgery and spent long immobile hours staring out the hospital window at the endless snow. She began to search for small, culturally vibrant beach communities.

“I wanted to be in a place that was active all year long and that had a good arts community and had access to airports,” she said.

The research paid off. She moved to St. Augustine in 2015.

Here, she launched The Adventure Project, a teambuilding, bonding and development company built around improv.

It began at the Limelight Theatre, but due to the pandemic and later to storm damage, The Adventure Project was forced to move first to an art gallery and then a yoga studio. It did find its way back to the Limelight Theatre eventually. Then, in January, Angelilli launched

Third Space Improv under The Adventure Project umbrella in a former yoga studio at 200 Malaga St., Unit 7, St. Augustine. Her new business is a five-level improv training school.

For more information about classes held at Third Space Improv, go to [adventure-project.com](http://adventure-project.com).

Among her many pursuits, Angelilli is managing editor at [visitstaugustine.com](http://visitstaugustine.com).

“I’m the red pen,” she said. “I look for inconsistencies in style and look for opportunities to write about things. I like being there, because I hear about things before other people do.”

In fact, this was probably the reason Reedy Press contacted her.

“100 Things to Do in St. Augustine Before You Die” is available from Amazon, as well as [reedypress.com](http://reedypress.com). Angelilli will also have some copies for sale at upcoming book-signings.

## BOOK SIGNINGS

- 10:30 to 11:30 p.m. March 9. Anastasia Island Library, 124 Sea Grove Main St., St. Augustine Beach. 904-209-3730. Free and open to the public.
- 5:30 to 7 p.m. March 11. Gypsy Cab Co., 828 Anastasia Blvd., St. Augustine. 904-824-8244. Open to the public, though the event is ticketed and there is an admission fee.
- 5-9 p.m. March 28. Spinster Abbott’s, 61 San Marco Ave., St. Augustine. 904-679-5985. Free and open to the public.



# THE PLAYERS 50TH ANNIVERSARY QUICKLY APPROACHES

story and photo by **ANTHONY RICHARDS**

**I**t is less than a month from THE PLAYERS and that means things are kicking into high gear as TPC Sawgrass continues to transform to host the mass crowd it is expected to welcome onto the grounds throughout tournament week.

THE PLAYERS executive director Lee Smith expressed his excitement as the event gets ever closer during a recent media day event in the TPC Sawgrass clubhouse.

One of the big talking points heading into this year's event is that the tournament will be celebrating its 50th anniversary.

"What we're excited about from the 50th standpoint, is to explore some of the unexplored stories and continue to talk about the fact that we've never had a back-to-back champion, but also Jack Nicholas won three out of the first five," Smith said. "We're obviously going



THE PLAYERS executive director Lee Smith speaks during media day at TPC Sawgrass on Feb. 5.

to have some on-site branding and a retail capsule built into the fan shop."

There may be some fans that did not know that TPC Sawgrass was not the sole home in the history of THE PLAYERS, and in fact it had several venues where it was played, including the first held in 1974 at Atlanta Country Club.

"It is a story that we're really leaning into," Smith said. "We went to Atlanta Country Club where the first event was held and we're going to host their leadership down here during the tournament. Recognizing those things is what we've been really having a fun time with."

THE PLAYERS is scheduled for March 12-17 and will include many of the traditions fans have become accustomed to including the military appreciation concert.

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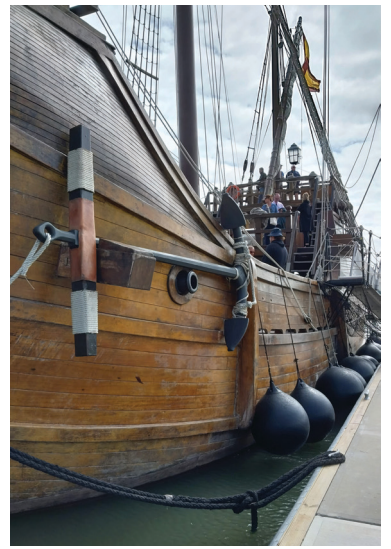
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# REPLICA OF 1519 SHIP VISITS ST. AUGUSTINE

story and photos by  
**SHAUN RYAN**

**A** full-sized replica of Ferdinand Magellan's flagship, Nao Trinidad, arrived at the St. Augustine Municipal Marina in February and plans to remain in port until March 31, offering tours from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. daily.

The 200-ton ship measures 93 feet in length, 26 feet in width, with a 10-foot draft and 80 feet from waterline to the top of the main mast. It was completed in 2018 in Huelva, Spain, by master carpenters.

"Most of the ship is built of wood," said

project manager Brenda Parra. "We also have some fiberglass. The masts are made of steel, just for safety reasons."

The wood is primarily iroko, from Africa, which is a very hard wood that resists decay, and therefore insects.

The current crew consists of five professionals and five volunteers.

"The original Magellan crew was about 50 men, so it was way more crowded," Parra said.

On its first outing, the ship sailed around Spain, France and Portugal and visited ports in Italy. It arrived in the Western Hemisphere just as COVID-19 struck

and had to return to Spain. Two years ago, it set out again and sailed to ports up and down the East Coast, as well as the Great Lakes.

Admission is \$15 for adults, \$5 for children and \$35 for a family of four or more. Tickets can be purchased on the dock and online at [tickets.velacuadra.es/selection/timeslotpass?productId=10229189661463](https://tickets.velacuadra.es/selection/timeslotpass?productId=10229189661463).

The marina is located at 111 Avenida Menendez.

"We hope we have a lot of visitors and people come and enjoy the ship," said Parra. "We're more than happy to be here."





Steel City Rovers



Sharon Foy Baird



Blue Lotus

# CELTIC MUSIC & HERITAGE FESTIVAL SET FOR MARCH 9 AND 10

Contributed photos

**T**he St. Augustine Celtic Music & Heritage Festival will be held from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. Saturday, March 9, and 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Sunday, March 10, at Francis Field, 29 W. Castillo Drive in downtown St. Augustine. This event is produced by Romanza-St. Augustine, Inc.

The award-winning festival will include more entertainment on a second stage. This year's additional performances include Mickey Sweeney, the 2023 winner of the National Hammered Dulcimer Championship, who will play and offer educational information about the dulcimer.

The First Coast Highlanders, the official Celtic Festival host band, will offer a workshop about the history and various types of bagpipes; Blue Lotus World Dance Co. will entertain audiences with their Celtic dances; St. Augustine's renowned pirate magician Capt. William Mayhem will perform comedy, magic and mayhem; and notable historian and lecturer John Miles will present the topics, "The Viking Invasions of the British Isles" on March 9 and "Blarney Stones and Banshees: The Magic of Old Ireland" on March 10.

The Steel City Rovers, a main stage attraction, will present a workshop at 2:15 p.m. March 9 and 10 on the second stage with, "How to Create Effective Tune Medleys." The highly specialized feature of Celtic music will include the band members explaining the linking of tunes to create effective, energetic medleys and the topic, "Why is this part of the Celtic Culture?"

The group will explore ways to create effective medleys through tune selections, timing shifts, key changes



Visitors gather at the Augustine Celtic Music & Heritage Festival.

and segues for Celtic and other music enthusiasts to explore many tools used to inspire the ancient and much-loved style of music, dance and rhythms.

The second stage host is Sharon Foy Baird, who has performed at talent shows, folk music festivals, showcases, benefit concerts and classical music concerts. She has served as chair and hostess for the Milford, Connecticut, Fine Arts Council's Performance Coffeehouse series for five years.

Her favorite performances from more than 50 roles on stage, screen and commercials include "The Admirable Crichton" at Long Wharf Theatre, "Rainbow" at a Yale University theater, "A Streetcar Named Desire," "Picnic" and "All My Sons" for the Alliance Theatre.

She has produced "The Muppets take Manhattan" and worked as voiceover talent for numerous industrial projects and companies with the brands Lego, Dove and Masterbrands.

Currently, she performs in St. Augustine as a history teller for the Historic Tours of America's History Museum and Oldest Store Museum.

The Celtic Festival main stage offers top international and U.S. Celtic bands offering traditional and Celtic rock

music. The extensive music line-up includes festival favorites Albannach, Dublin City Ramblers, Jamison, La Unica, Seven Nations, Steel City Rovers and Syr, with Emmet Cahill returning after a five-year absence.

Appearing for the first time at the festival will be Grammy-nominated Gaëlica and the Mudmen, renowned as the "Canadian Celtic Rock Warriors." Chad Light is the main stage host and emcee.

St. Augustine's four centuries of Celtic heritage will be highlighted during the festival's Highland Games at 10 a.m. March 9 and 10 at Francis Field with athletes demonstrating and testing their strength and endurance.

The Celtic Festival also features bagpipe music jams, Celtic food, unique artisan crafts, imported merchandise and games for children. VIP tickets for the festival on March 9 and 10 may be purchased online at [celticstaugustine.com/tickets](http://celticstaugustine.com/tickets) and at Ann O'Malley's Irish Pub, 23 Orange St. in St. Augustine. General admission one-day tickets are also available for purchase at [annomalleys.com](http://annomalleys.com) and at the event gates for cash only during the festival.

The Original St. Patrick Parade begins the festivities at 10 a.m. March 9.

For more information about the St. Augustine Celtic Music & Heritage Festival, go to [celticstaugustine.com](http://celticstaugustine.com).

The Augustine Celtic Music & Heritage Festival, Highland Games, and St. Patrick Parade are produced by Romanza-St. Augustine, Inc., a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation. Proceeds of the Celtic Festival help promote the arts, culture and heritage in St. Augustine. For more information about Romanza Festival of Music and The Arts, go to [romanzafestivale.com](http://romanzafestivale.com).



The 29th Annual The Amelia is scheduled for Feb. 29 to March 3 at the Golf Club of Amelia Island.



A 1964 Ferrari 250 LM was named best in show Concours de Sport at last year's event. The Ferrari 250 Touring class is among those featured this year as well.



A variety of makes and models will be on hand during the four-day event that will be The Amelia in 2024.

# LONGTIME NASCAR OWNER RICK HENDRICK TO BE HONORED AT THE AMELIA

story by ANTHONY RICHARDS photos courtesy of THE AMELIA

## Pikes Peak cars also featured as part of 29th annual event

For nearly three decades The Amelia has been one of the premier Concours d' Elegance with car aficionados coming from around the country and the world to be a part of it.

That will remain the case this year for the 29th annual event coming in a couple of weeks.

At the end of the day what makes it so unique is the quality of cars and the variety of makes and models that will grace the property of The Ritz-Carlton Amelia Island during the four-day showcase Feb. 29 to March 3.

This year The Amelia's featured honoree will be Rick Hendrick, who is a legend in the motorsport's realm as a 14-time NASCAR Cup Series champion as owner of Hendrick Motorsports and chairman/CEO of Hendrick Automotive Group.

As part of the featured honoree, a special display of some of the iconic cars in his collection will be part of the show, including the Chevrolet Camaro ZL1, which

competed at the 24 Hours of Le Mans last year as part of the Garage 56 project.

During his decades of racing, Hendrick has had iconic drivers on his teams, such as Jimmie Johnson, Jeff Gordon and Dale Earnhardt Jr, just to name a few.

More than 250 vehicles will take part in this year's show and will be competing for various awards in a number of classes, with the most coveted being "best in show," which is awarded by the judges to be the top vehicle across all categories.

There will be 32 classes this year focusing on specific makes, eras or types of vehicles.

Some of the featured classes in 2024 will be 250 Ferrari Touring, Bugatti Type 57 and Cars of Pikes Peak.

The Ferrari 250 model was built between 1952 and 1964 and became popular in the hearts of both race fans and car lovers as it captured the hearts of many for its performance on the streets and on the racetrack.

Similar to the Ferrari 250, the Bugatti Type 57 was also popular and bodied in six different designs between 1933 and 1939.

Unlike the other two featured classes that focus on a specific type of car, what

makes the Cars of Pikes Peak category unique is that it will highlight an array of vehicles from all makes and models that have competed in the event throughout the years.

These cars will likely be like nothing else on display at the 2024 show, because it took a uniquely crafted vehicle to make it up Pikes Peak and all its twisting turns throughout the 12-mile course that climbs 4,720 feet in elevation during the process.

There is a reason why it is known as "The Race to the Clouds," and why it continues to be the world's most famous hill climb.

The actual Concours d' Elegance will be on March 3 from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at the Golf Club of Amelia Island, but there are plenty of chances to take part in the festivities, as on March 2 there will be the Cars & Community event once again, which will feature more than 500 vehicles and offers a more casual atmosphere than the day after does.

Tickets for the event can be purchased by going to [ameliaconcours.com/event/tickets](http://ameliaconcours.com/event/tickets) and selecting the day and event.

Various seminars will also be held throughout the four days with more info available online.



THE PLAYERS held its annual charity shootout on Feb. 12, as five celebrities took shots at the famed Island Green at TPC Sawgrass to raise money for various charities.



Actor Andy Buckley gives some words of encouragement to former NBA slam dunk champion Dee Brown.

# CELEBRITIES TAKE AIM AT FAMED 'ISLAND GREEN' FOR CHARITIES

photos by ANTHONY RICHARDS

**T**HE PLAYERS continued its tradition in the weeks leading up to the tournament by hosting its charity shootout on Feb. 12. Five celebrities from former athletes to actors took part in seeing how close to the pin they could hit shots at the famed No. 17 Island Green at TPC Sawgrass. The charities represented included The Furyk Foundation, Guardian Catholic Schools, The Foster Closet, Tesori Family Foundation and Operation New Hope.



THE PLAYERS Executive Director Lee Smith introduces the celebrities during the event.



Former Jacksonville Jaguars kicker Josh Scobee steps up to the tee.



It was an event full of golf, laughs and raising money for good causes.



Three-time Major League Baseball all-star Daniel Murphy goes face-to-face with No. 17 at TPC Sawgrass.

# SCENES FROM SAVANNAH

photos by **SUSAN GRIFFIN**

A city filled with character, history, arts, ghostly haunts, great food, Southern charm — Savannah makes a charming weekend getaway, just a short drive from the First Coast.



The iconic "Bird Girl" - a photo of the statue appeared on the cover of John Berendt's book "Midnight in the Garden of Good & Evil." She is currently on display in her own special exhibit room at the Telfair Academy.



Bronze statue of the late Savannah native singer-songwriter Johnny Mercer located in Ellis Square.

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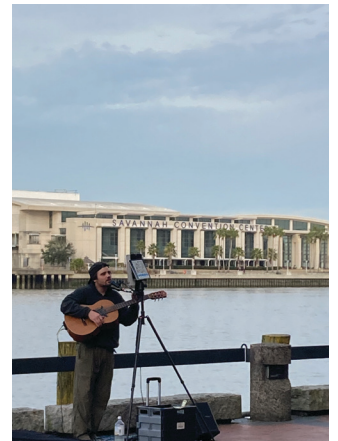
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A large advertisement for the Register's Spring Home & Garden issue. The background is a collage of gardening-related images: orange pots, various flowers (yellow, pink, red, purple), and garden tools (shovel, trowel) on dark soil. The text is overlaid in white and black.

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