



# THE RECORDER

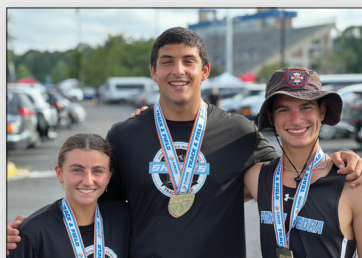
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Serving Ponte Vedra, St. Augustine, The Beaches and Greater St. Johns County

PonteVedraRecorder.com



**Sand Castles**  
Page 15



**Track team wins state title**  
Page 52



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



# Floating to the finish

Photo by Anthony Richards

The Rotary Club of Ponte Vedra held its annual Rubber Duck Race on May 21. Many kayakers helped in the effort of corralling 3,000 rubber ducks after they were dropped into the Intracoastal Waterway from the Palm Valley Bridge. *Read the full story and see photos from the annual event on page 10.*

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# INSIDE

One of Us

Page 6

Business Weekly

Pages 46-49

In the Arts

Page 50-51

Sports

Pages 52-53



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## Send us your news

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



Visit our new website at [www.pontevedrarecorder.com](http://www.pontevedrarecorder.com)

Plus, find the Recorder on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/ThePVRecorder](http://www.facebook.com/ThePVRecorder)

## Send us your nominations for Best of the Best of Ponte Vedra



The Recorder has launched its fifth annual Best of the Best of Ponte Vedra contest, covering ZIP codes 32082 and 32081.

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

Nominations can be made on the website at [pontevedrarecorder.com/bestof2023](http://pontevedrarecorder.com/bestof2023).

Anyone can nominate a business or person, and there is no limit to the number of nominations each person can submit.

Online voting will begin once nominations are complete. The nominees who receive the most votes will be named 2023 Best of the Best of Ponte Vedra. Nominations and voting are completely free and open to the public.

The Best Of platform on The Recorder's website will feature lists of nominees in an easy-to-use format. Nominees can participate in advertising packages that promote their entry by expanding their listing to feature additional details on the business.

Winners will receive a free certificate and a Best of the Best of Ponte Vedra window cling. Each winner will also be listed in our Best of

the Best of Ponte Vedra special section and on the winner's website.

Winners will be notified by Ponte Vedra Recorder staff at the end of July.

For more information or to find out how to get your nominated business or product involved in promotions that will be going on throughout the contest cycle, contact publisher Susan Griffin, email [susan@pontevedrarecorder.com](mailto:susan@pontevedrarecorder.com) or call 904-686-3938.

## PUZZLE SOLUTIONS



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

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# D-Day, World War II veterans set to be remembered during banquet

By Anthony Richards

The 79th anniversary of D-Day and the Battle of Normandy during World War II is coming up on June 6 and the We Can Be Heroes Foundation is set to hold its annual banquet in remembrance of that day.

This year's event will take place on June 6 at the Salem Centre Auditorium located at 7235 Bentley Road in Jacksonville with a social beginning at 5:30 p.m. followed by dinner at 6 p.m. and a special presentation at 6:30 p.m.

The foundation not only remembers the heroic and fateful day in history that D-Day was, but it also does its part to honor all the heroic World War II veterans who served during the ceremony.



Featured guests of honor at this year's event will include Retired United States Navy Capt. Gregory Streeter, D-Day veteran Floyd Chester "Chet" Galbraith and World War II veteran Julian Myra.

All of which will talk about their experiences during the battle and the war and look back at the heroes that came forward during that day.

As part of the ceremony, those in attendance will be able to meet the local person who helped spearhead the efforts to erect a Navy memorial at the site of

D-Day at Utah Beach in Normandy, France in 2008, after there had not been one for six decades prior.

Those planning to attend the event are asked to invite World War II veterans they may know as their guests to the ceremony, as it is a day in place to honor them and their sacrifice.

Seating is limited and tickets are \$30

per person or \$155 for a table of six and \$205 for a table of eight. Veterans and Gold Star families receive a 10% discount, as well as any tickets donated to veterans.

Reservations for the event can be made by going to [wecanbeheroes-foundation.org](http://wecanbeheroes-foundation.org) or by emailing [beth@wecanbeheroesfoundation.org](mailto:beth@wecanbeheroesfoundation.org).

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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

# Gardening Trivia

"An optimist is the human personification of spring." — Susan J. Bissonette



Kathy Esfahani

### By Kathy Esfahani

There is so much to learn about gardening! Test your knowledge with these fun trivia questions (answers below):



Kathy's Creative Gardens & Nursery

1. Which U.S. state produces the most oranges?

- A) California; B) Florida; C) New Mexico

2. What plant has UV-absorbing components that enable it to produce a natural sunscreen?

- A) Aloe Vera; B) Sunflower; C) Agave

3. Lavender symbolizes \_\_\_\_\_.

- A) Devotion; B) Royalty; C) Grief

4. What plant can grow up to 12 inches in a single day?

- A) St. Augustine Grass; B) Kudzu; C) Potato Vine

5. A study by NASA found that the \_\_\_\_\_ plant can remove indoor air pollutants.

- A) Orchid; B) Aloe; C) Spider

6. What common liquor is made from the Agave plant?

- A) Rum; B) Gin; C) Tequila

7. When should spring flowering bulbs be planted?

- A) Early Autumn; B) Summer; C) Spring

8. What can be sprinkled in the soil

around tomato plants to grow sweeter tomatoes?

- A) Sugar; B) Baking Soda; C) Coffee Grounds

9. What flowering plant can regenerate from a single piece of its stem, root or leaf?

- A) Hibiscus; B) Zinnia; C) Begonia

10. Plants respond to sounds such as music or human speech.

- A) True; B) False

11. The average strawberry has \_\_\_\_\_ seeds on the outside of its fruit.

- A) 50; B) 200; C) 350

12. What does the orange tree symbolize?

- A) Cleansing; B) Reward; C) Welcome

13. What plant can change its leaf color depending on the light it receives?

- A) Hawaiian Ti; B) Croton; C) Hydrangea

14. What plant uses phytoremediation to break down toxic substances in the soil?

- A) Sunflower; B) Azalea; C) Podocarpus

15. Which of the following plants is

Photos provided by Kathy's Creative Gardens & Nursery



Flower of the Week

### Melampodium

known for its ability to catch insects?

- A) Shrimp Plant; B) Venus Flytrap; C) Daylily

Happy planting!

### Flower of the Week: Melampodium

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

- Answers
- 1. B) Florida
  - 2. A) Aloe Vera
  - 3. A) Devotion
  - 4. B) Kudzu
  - 5. C) Spider
  - 6. C) Tequila
  - 7. A) Early Autumn
  - 8. B) Baking Soda
  - 9. C) Begonia
  - 10. A) True
  - 11. B) 200
  - 12. C) Welcome
  - 13. B) Croton
  - 14. A) Sunflower
  - 15. B) Venus Flytrap



Foot and ankle pain doesn't have to be your normal. But how do you know when it's time to see a doctor?

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Mark Gould, MD

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# High school facilities to open to public Wednesdays during summer

By Anthony Richards

Even though school will be out this summer, the St. Johns County School District has announced that it will be allowing the use of high school facilities to the public at certain days and times during the summer.

As part of the announced program, certain Wednesdays from 6-8 p.m. will allow for public high school in the county to open their track, tennis courts and outdoor basketball courts to the public for during those two-hour periods.

The program is part of the school board's continued push to put the community's health and wellness initiative at the forefront by offering residents an additional place to go to get exercise and maintain a healthy lifestyle during the summer months.

The specific days the facilities will be open include every Wednesday in June and July with the lone exception being July 5, due to its proximity to the Independence Day holiday.

Facilities on campus that will remain closed to the public are baseball/softball

fields, batting cages, gymnasiums, and stadium fields or multi-purpose fields.

Although the stadium is open to public use, there will be rules in place, as the facilities will not be open to host any organized practices or games.

Any sport-sponsored or fee-based training will also not be permitted to take place on the grounds.

People will not be able to bring their pets with them property and all other school board policies will apply during that time as well.

All facilities and campuses will be opened at 6 p.m. on the designated Wednesdays and locked at 8 p.m.

Having the facilities open from 6-8 p.m. will also give people time to get home from work and still have time to use the facilities, while also being late in the day so that the heat is not as overwhelming.

The high schools where facilities will be opened will be Ponte Vedra, Nease, Bartram Trail, Beachside, Creekside, Toco Creek, St. Augustine and Pedro Menendez.

# Teacher gets SPACE scholarship

Shannon Johnson, science teacher at Episcopal School of Jacksonville, Beaches Campus, has received the Space 2023 Scholarship to attend the Space Port Area Conference for Educators at NASA this summer. The scholarship was awarded to only 11 educators in the state of Florida and was provided by the Astronaut Memorial Foundation and Florida Space Grant Consortium.

The Space Port Area Conference for Educators (SPACE) aims to serve teachers from across the nation by providing professional development opportunities and high-quality STEM instructional resources. Attending educators spend three days at The Center for Space Education developing curriculum and forming relationships. Educators will be given the opportunity to be immersed in the operations of Kennedy Space Center — including keynote sessions with astronauts,

launch directors and other space icons, as well as behind-the-scenes tours of Space Port Operations.

“I am thrilled that I will be given the opportunity to learn about current and past space travel directly from NASA astronauts, launch directors and other NASA educators,” said Johnson. “This is a once-in-a-lifetime experience that I will benefit greatly from and will be able to share with my students when we return to school in the fall. I am most excited about the following opportunities: getting to fly over the Space Florida Launch and Landing Facility and runway, the opportunity to tour behind-the-scenes areas of Kennedy Space Center, participating in a STEM class that will take me through the process of space-settlement design and also getting to build a Neutral Buoyancy Lab virtual reality model and underwater research habitat.”

★

## D-Day Remembrance and “Tribute to Heroes” Dinner


Honoring World War II Veterans

# Tues., June 6, 2023

**Salem Centre Auditorium • 7235 Bentley Rd., Jacksonville**  
**5:30PM Social | 6:00PM Dinner | 6:30PM D-Day Anniversary Presentation**

*Guests of Honor: CAPT Greg Streeter, USN Ret., Naval Order, Jacksonville*  
*D-Day Veteran Floyd Chester “Chet” Galbraith*  
*Unsung Hero Nominees*


- Opportunity to meet and dine with World War II and other U.S. Veterans, Gold Star Families, Unsung Heroes, and the Atlantic Coast Young Marines.
- Reserve a dining table in memory or in honor of a D-Day, World War II, and other U.S. Veterans, First Responder or Unsung Hero you know or admire. Tables can be reserved for your family, group, or organization. A table placard honoring your hero will highlight your table.
- Please invite World War II Veterans you know to come as our guests.



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Cross Regions Group President and CEO David Ergisi has been a part of the local commercial real estate development community for many years. His company stresses the importance of honesty and solid business principles and has been involved in several major projects over the years. After a series of devastating earthquakes struck Turkey and Syria in February of this year, Ergisi launched Cross Regions Disaster Relief Fund to help the victims.

## David Ergisi

### As told to Shaun Ryan

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

I moved to Jacksonville, Florida, from the Northeast in 1998, and I have been a resident since. I have been in commercial real estate since 2007. I started the Cross Regions platform in 2014. In less than 10 years, Cross Regions has developed and grown to be one of the fastest growing and most successful real estate companies in Florida.

#### Tell me more about the Cross Regions Group, what it does and what it specializes in.

Cross Regions Group is a multifaceted company headquartered in Jacksonville that specializes in commercial real estate services. The company's areas of expertise include commercial real estate and development, construction, property management, leasing, tenant representation, brokerage, acquisitions and advisory services. The company delivers best-in-class services and results and can fulfill numerous business requirements and needs. I founded Cross Regions Group in 2014.

#### What do you like best about working in this career?

I love creating spaces through real estate developments that serve our community in many sectors, such as health care and many others. As we create these developments, we enhance the quality of life, bring services into the neighborhoods, create employment and ultimately increase the overall quality of life. It is very rewarding to know that these developments not only enhance lives, but serve communities for generations to come.

#### Tell me a little about the Cross Regions Disaster Relief Fund.

After February's destructive earthquakes in Turkey, I established Cross Regions Disaster Relief Fund, Inc., a non-profit organization, to aid and support victims of the earthquakes. I immigrated to the United States from the country of Turkey at age 18. This devastating tragedy hit home ... the center of the Earthquake struck Kahramanmaraş, where I was born. We are collecting monetary donations to provide disaster relief aid and support rebuilding efforts in Turkey.

#### Many of us don't really know anything about the earthquakes beyond what we've heard on the news. Can you offer some insights that might help readers truly appreciate the need of the people there?

Millions of people have been placed out of their homes, lost their jobs and, more sadly, lost loved ones. It is going to take generations for the communities to be rebuilt, jobs to be created and for lives to get back to normal, whatever that new normal is going to look like. For the people of Turkey, their lives have changed and will never be the same.



#### I understand you are matching the first \$100,000 of the donations. How will donations to the relief fund be used to help those impacted by the earthquakes?

It will go towards building a school or a health care facility. My funds will be deployed alongside the donations we collect. I intend to dedicate more funding each year in efforts to continue rebuilding the desperately needed facilities.

#### How can readers make donations to the fund?

To learn more about the Cross Regions Disaster Relief Fund and to donate online, visit [www.crossregionsrelief.com](http://www.crossregionsrelief.com).

[crossregionsrelief.com](http://crossregionsrelief.com).

#### On a lighter note, what do you like best about life here on the First Coast?

The people, specifically the kindness of people. While the First Coast has grown rapidly in recent years, it still has a feel of an intimate community where we respect and care for each other.

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

I don't have a lot of free time, but in the time I do have I like to travel and work out. I recently began taking lessons for kickboxing and golf.





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[esj.org/summer](https://esj.org/summer)



# EPISCOPAL CONGRATULATES



# THE CLASS OF 2023!



*Members of Episcopal School of Jacksonville's Class of 2023 were admitted into the following colleges and universities:*

American University	Florida Gulf Coast University	Savannah College of Art and Design	University of Michigan
Appalachian State University	Florida Southern College	Sewanee: The University of the South	University of Mississippi
Arizona State University (Main Campus)	Florida State College at Jacksonville	Southern Methodist University	University of Missouri (Columbia)
Auburn University	Florida State University	Stetson University	University of New Hampshire (Main Campus)
Ball State University	Fordham University	Syracuse University	University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Barry University	Full Sail University	Tallahassee Community College	University of North Carolina Wilmington
Baylor University	Furman University	Texas A&M University	University of North Florida
Belmont University	Garrett College	Texas Christian University	University of Oregon
Berry College	George Mason University	Texas State University	University of Pennsylvania
Birmingham-Southern College	Georgetown University	Texas Tech University	University of Pittsburgh (Pittsburgh)
Boston College	Georgia Institute of Technology	The College of William and Mary	University of Rhode Island
Boston University	Georgia Southern University	The Ohio State University	University of Richmond
Butler University	Guilford College	The University of Alabama	University of Rochester
Case Western Reserve University	Hampden-Sydney College	The University of Tampa	University of South Carolina
Catholic University of America	Harding University	The University of Tennessee (Knoxville)	University of South Florida (Main Campus)
Citadel Military College of South Carolina	Haverford College	The University of West Florida	University of Southern California
Clark University	Indiana University (Bloomington)	Tri-County Technical College	The University of Tennessee (Knoxville)
Clarkson University	Jacksonville University	Trinity University	University of Utah
Clemson University	Liberty University	Union College	University of Virginia (Main Campus)
Coastal Carolina University	Louisiana State University	United States Naval Academy	University of Washington (Seattle Campus)
College of Charleston	Lynn University	University of Alabama at Birmingham	Utah State University
Colorado Mesa University	Mercer University	University of California (Berkeley)	Valdosta State University
Colorado State University (Fort Collins)	Miami University (Oxford)	University of California (Los Angeles)	Vanderbilt University
Colorado State University (Pueblo)	Michigan State University	University of California (San Diego)	Villanova University
Cornell University	New York University	University of Central Florida	Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University
Culinary Institute of America	North Carolina State University	University of Colorado Boulder	Wake Forest University
Dartmouth College	Northeastern University	University of Delaware	Washington and Lee University
Davidson College	Northwestern University	University of Denver	Washington University in St. Louis
Denison University	Oglethorpe University	University of Florida	Wingate University
DePauw University	Penn State University (University Park)	University of Georgia	Yale University
DigiPen Institute of Technology	Penn State University (World Campus)	University of Kentucky	
Drexel University	Providence College	University of Louisville	
Eckerd College	Purdue University (Main Campus)	University of Maine	
Elon University	Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute	University of Maryland (College Park)	
Emory University	Rice University	University of Massachusetts (Amherst)	
Fairfield University	Rochester Institute of Technology	University of Miami	
Flagler College	Rollins College		
Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University	Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College		
Florida Atlantic University	Samford University		
	Santa Fe College		







A front loader dumps 3,000 rubber ducks from Palm Valley Bridge during the annual Rotary Club of Ponte Vedra Rubber Duck Race.



The rubber ducks race to the finish line.

Photos by Anthony Richards

# Rotary duck race continues building tradition

By Anthony Richards

The Rotary Club of Ponte Vedra held its annual Rubber Duck Race, which serves as the community organization's largest fundraiser each year, and the result was 3,000 rubber ducks being dumped from a front loader from the Palm Valley Bridge into the Intracoastal Waterway.

Money raised from this year's event went toward four beneficiaries, which included the Rotary Club Foundation, Learn to Read St. Johns, Bit of Faith Ranch in Ponte Vedra and Port in the Storm in St. Augustine.

"The duck race has been going on for close to a decade now, but the Rotary Club of Ponte Vedra took things over about five years ago," said Gary Smith, who served as chairperson of this year's duck race. "We raise about \$20,000 to \$25,000 annually."

According to Smith, the duck race had run in the lazy river at Nocatee Splash Park, but this year marked the third since making the venue change and dropping the ducks off the Palm Valley Bridge and into the Intracoastal Waterway.

"We figured it would be a much more exciting way to go about it, but it also takes a lot to put this thing together, with a lot of people helping out along the way," Smith said. "It takes a lot of people from our Rotary

Club to help out. We started planning this event back in October."

Due to the continued growth of the event, Smith and the Rotary Club already have their focus set on reaching a minimum of \$50,000 raised next year.

"This is the premier event for our Rotary Club and it's only going to get bigger and bigger," Smith said. "There are a lot of duck race drops throughout the country that are huge and we're aspiring to be there, because we want to raise as much money as we can for all these good causes."

Another way the event gives back is not only through the money it raises from selling rubber ducks, but also by coordinating with Ponte Vedra High School's National Honor Society students, who help in the efforts to sell ducks and get the word out in the months leading up.

"They raised thousands of dollars this year in duck sales," Bob Wiltfong, Rotary Club of Ponte Vedra president, said. "Every time we checked the sales, there was always at least \$35 from a Ponte Vedra High School supporter, so they did phenomenal this year and we couldn't have done it without them and the next generation getting on board."

The event looks from the outside like a large-scale production, but there is even more behind the scenes that goes in to making it a fun event for the entire family.



There were fun games for families to take part in prior to the start of the race.

"That is a huge element, but we also had to get all the permitting and permissions to do this," Wiltfong said. "You even have to measure tides to make sure the tide is going the right way," Wiltfong said. "It's quite the undertaking, but totally worth it."

The top prize to the winning duck once again this year was two roundtrip tickets by Southwest Airlines to any location in the United States.

No rubber ducks were left behind as a swarm of kayakers and boaters circled to corral each of the ducks from the water at the end of the event.



Several kayakers converge to collect the ducks after the race.



Three thousand rubber ducks took part in the race.



Contributed photos



Pictured from left: bestbet Marketing Director Adam Hunt, Greg White and American Legion 194 Post Commander Derry Greene.



Kids enjoy their new playground.

# bestbet St. Augustine donates \$15K to safe space for children

bestbet St. Augustine recently supported the West Augustine Historical CDC/Kids Safe with a \$15,000 gift to assist in creating a safe and engaging space for children in the West Augustine community.

“bestbet is proud to give back to the

community and support in the safety and well-being of these young students in the West Augustine community,” said bestbet President Jamie Shelton. “We are very happy to partner with and support the efforts of Greg White and his organization.”

“We can’t thank Jamie and bestbet enough for their generous donation to assist us in getting our project completed in a timely manner,” said White, founder of West Augustine Historical CDC. “We are thrilled our project is now complete and love seeing the smiles on children’s

faces as they enjoy the new playground.”

For more information or to get involved with the West Augustine Historical CDC/Kids Safe Zone, contact American Legion 194 Post Commander Derry Greene or Greg White at 904-377-4159.



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# Elected officials give update on issues

By Shaun Ryan

Members of the community had an opportunity to hear directly from elected leaders Friday, May 19, during the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce Legislative Breakfast. The event was held at Embassy Suites by Hilton St. Augustine Beach Oceanfront Resort.

Panelists included state Rep. Cyndi Stevenson, County Commissioner Christian Whitehurst, St. Augustine Mayor Nancy Sikes-Kline and St. Augustine Beach Mayor Don Samora. State Sen. Travis Hutson was invited but could not attend.

Whitehurst said that, among the county's many needs, none is greater than transportation and infrastructure. Protection for natural environmental resources and workforce housing were also top concerns.

Addressing housing, Whitehurst emphasized that members of an "essential workforce" — he mentioned nurses, firefighters, law enforcement and teachers — need a place to live. For many workers, the costs of housing and rent in St. Johns County are prohibitive.

Whitehurst said that, three days before this year's legislative session, the county held a transportation summit where staff laid out the county's needs before Hutson, Stevenson and U.S. Rep. John Rutherford.

The effort bore fruit. This year, with



Photo by Shaun Ryan

**St. Johns County Commissioner Christian Whitehurst speaks during the recent St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce Legislative Breakfast. Seated next to him are St. Augustine Mayor Nancy Sikes-Kline and St. Augustine Beach Mayor Don Samora.**

elected officials going to bat for the county, the Legislature provided \$59 million for transportation and coastal protection.

About \$15 million of that would go toward an extension of County Road 2209 to International Golf parkway from Silverleaf Parkway. This route, when complete, would take pressure off U.S. 1 and I-95.

According to Whitehurst, the county also received \$25 million to construct an engineered beach with a vegetative dune system at North Ponte Vedra Beach to protect it from coastal storms.

He said he is sometimes asked why the county keeps putting sand back on the beach only to have it washed away. His response: The financial impact of not

renourishing the beach would be in the millions, in part due to lost property values and mitigation of saltwater intrusion into freshwater areas.

Funding has also been allocated to the county for a change at the intersection of U.S. 1 and County Road 210A to eliminate a high-risk railroad crossing. The state has committed \$6 million and that makes the county eligible to apply for a \$22 million Federal Railroad Crossing Elimination Grant.

Another \$6 million will fund improvements to State Road A1A intersections.

"Anybody who travels along A1A understands that the road has been congested for many, many years," Whitehurst said. "These intersection improvements

will certainly improve traffic flow through and around that area."

In addition, \$2 million will go to reconstruction and signalization of the intersection of Pine Island Road and U.S. 1.

Sikes-Kline reminded attendees that St. Augustine City Manager John Regan will retire June 2. He and his replacement, David Birchim, were in attendance at the Chamber breakfast.

Sikes-Kline also addressed homelessness and panhandling in the city. She assured attendees that St. Augustine is trying to address the problem, though in some cases its hands are tied.

"It's a deeply rooted problem in our society right now," she said.

She said the city is working on creating a drop-in center that would give homeless people a place to go.

The city is also looking at the possibility of creating an area of affordable housing off Holmes Boulevard.

Samora spoke about short-term rentals in his city and the possibility of putting utilities underground.

Stevenson described newly passed legislation that requires golf cart operators under the age of 18 to have a learner's permit or driver's license when on public roads. Those over 18 will also need some form of photo ID, though they won't need a driver's license.

She listed some other actions taken during this year's session: increased funding for education, increased parental choice opportunities through voucher systems, increased health care funding and more than \$250 million for affordable housing programs.

In addition, she noted that the state allocated \$4 billion to hurricane recovery.

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# Link celebrates its teen volunteers

By Shaun Ryan

On Tuesday, May 16, the link held its Teen Volunteer Appreciation event to thank the approximately 75 local teenagers who helped with programs over the past year.

The link, located at 425 Town Plaza Ave. in Nocatee, is an award-winning smart building at the forefront of embracing technology for smart work spaces, event spaces and experiences. It hosts a number of events that give volunteers an opportunity to serve their community and earn volunteer hours, which they can use toward National Honor Society, Bright Futures Scholarships, ROTC and more.

Jeff Tawney, director of operations, oversaw the volunteer program.

“These dedicated volunteers play a crucial role in our organization by helping us organize and execute various events and conferences, such as Kids Night Out, summer camps, EnterCircle and more,” Tawney said.

Last year, the summer camp program alone generated about 3,600 volunteer hours. The Kids Night Out program generated an additional 1,600 hours. This year’s volunteers were students at Allen D. Nease, Beachside, Ponte Vedra and Toco Creek high schools.

“Witnessing the growth and transforma-

tion if these remarkable young people is truly inspiring,” said Tawney. “Through their involvement, they gain confidence, acquire valuable new skills and undergo the transition into responsible young adults.”

Lauren Wenzloff, a graduating senior at Nease, had been volunteering with the link since December 2020.

“I would say this place has definitely given me the leadership skills that I have developed over the last few years, to the point where I was promoted to a lead volunteer,” she said.

Helping to run the kids’ programs has proven beneficial to Lauren, who is planning a career in pediatric nursing.

Sisters Maggie and Hannah Seifart, grades eight and 10 respectively, volunteered with various summer camps, such as robotics, dance and culinary.

“It was a lot of fun,” Hannah said.

They also helped with after-camp care, where some kids stay and have fun until their parents can pick them up.

“I think it’s really been good just being able to watch the kids and become more of a leader,” Maggie said.

“I definitely think it taught me patience with kids,” Hannah added. She has been babysitting for many years, but learning to manage larger groups of kids has



Contributed photo

Several of the link’s teen volunteers attended the catered event.

proven beneficial to her. In addition, she said volunteering helped her learn time management.

Emre Ulger, a graduating senior at Nease, volunteered with the cooking camps and after-camp care, as well as Kids Night Out, where he got to play games with the kids.

He said he especially liked getting to know the other volunteers.

“Everyone was nice,” he said.

Like the others, he said the experience helped him develop his leadership skills. In fact, in response to a questionnaire, the teens said the experience helped them become leaders and learn patience and understanding.

Asked if they would recommend the link to others, 100% responded with a yes.

Parents and teens interested in the link’s volunteer opportunities can send an email to [jeff@thelink.zone](mailto:jeff@thelink.zone).

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Ponte Vedra High seniors Mary Kate Reynolds and Sarah Wicker received biotech scholarships of the several recognitions they received during the school's awards night on May 16.



Reynolds on stage receiving an award.

Contributed photos

# Reynolds, Wicker receive PVHS biotech scholarships

By Anthony Richards

Of the many Ponte Vedra High School seniors that received awards and scholarship recognition during the school's annual awards night on May 16, two were handed out scholarships with a focus on biotechnology.

Sarah Wicker and Mary Kate Reynolds both came up on stage to receive scholarships they earned through their hard work and dedication within the PVHS

Academy of Biotechnology and Medical Research.

Wicker received the Pham Biotechnology Scholarship, while Reynolds was awarded the Parrish Biotechnology Scholarship.

Reynolds will be attending the University of Florida and chose it because of the school's focus on STEM and being known for having excellent agriculture and biotechnology departments.

"I just loved the school, and it was always important for me to stay here in Florida," Reynolds said. "They have so many good undergraduate programs and because I have this biotechnology certification that they allowed me to get in this academy, I can go in and do undergrad research as a freshman or sophomore. I'm hoping to utilize that."

Both have been in the program and worked toward the scholarship during their last four years of high school and have developed such a passion for the field that they are now ready to turn their attention toward a possible career in the growing industry.

"A lot of what we've learned in the academy is very cutting edge, because biotech is a field that was just formed I believe in the '90s, so a lot of what we work with is very new," Wicker said. "It's the future of modern genetics and modern biology so to be at the forefront of that scientific expansion is what gave me my

passion to do research."

Wicker will be attending Wellesley College in Massachusetts and she is leaning towards focusing on the route of biomedical engineering. She will also be playing softball at the college.

Parents, teachers and fellow classmates may understand the sacrifice and hard work that has gone into getting to this point, but for someone outside of her inner circle to recognize it takes it to another level for Wicker.

"I've always been good at this class because it's something I love learning about, but the recognition for all your hard work is also something that I'm eternally grateful for," Wicker said.

As for many seniors, the awards ceremony was just the next step as they prepare for their next journey in life as they head off to college in the fall.

"I'm a little bit nervous to head off to college, but I know I'm well prepared for what's to come," Reynolds said.

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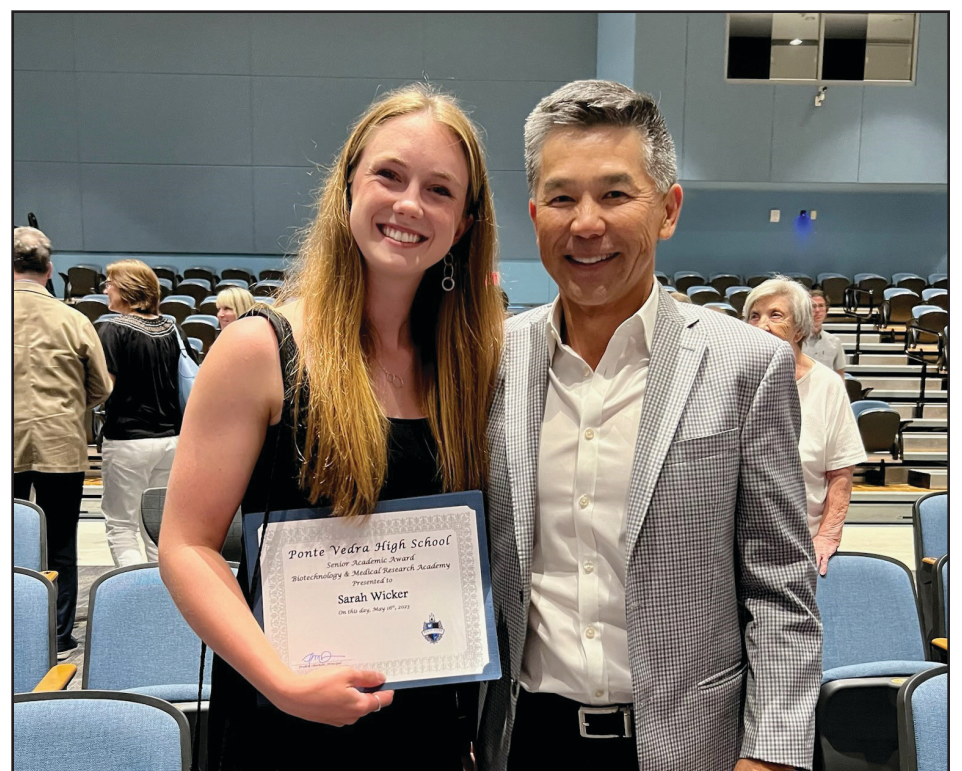
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Wicker with Quang Pham, who presented the biotech scholarship she received.



# Sand Castles

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## IN THIS SECTION:

- ◆ Forging ahead under challenging circumstances *Page 16*
- ◆ Estate offers magnificent possibilities *Page 20*
- ◆ Oceanfront home offers terrific views *Page 23*
- ◆ Home at 197 Admirals Way South has it all *Page 24*
- ◆ Women's Board raises critical funds for Wolfson Children's Hospital *Page 30*
- ◆ Large home positioned for good views of sunrise, sunset *Page 31*
- ◆ Roscoe Boulevard home is tops in waterfront living *Page 32*
- ◆ An excellent oceanfront escape awaits *Page 36*
- ◆ Discover the epitome of coastal living at 969 Ponte Vedra *Page 41*
- ◆ **AND MORE!**

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**Janet Westling**  
Contributing Editor

### By Janet Westling

Welcome to our “Spring into Summer” issue of Sand Castles! This spring, the weather has been one of the most unusual spring times with highs and lows all over the place that are simply unpredictable!

The same could be said for the real estate market.

Despite higher interest rates, the interest in our state could not be higher.

The influx of buyers from New York to California has been one of the main drivers in this market, along with an inventory that remains extremely low.

David Johnson, mortgage officer with Ameris bank, gives insight to the current market in our area that is still attracting buyers relocating to Florida, a

# Welcome to the ‘Spring into Summer’ issue of Sand Castles

state with low taxes, great weather and beautiful beaches.

Northeast Florida is also home to some of the greatest medical centers in Florida and our region. The Wolfson Children’s Hospital is ranked nationally as one of the best children’s hospitals for neurology and neurosurgery in 2022-23 and is the second largest children’s hospital in Florida. Women’s Board president and contributing writer Kendra McCrary shares the history of the Women’s Board and its commitment to raising money and awareness to this exceptional children’s hospital in our community.

The Jacksonville Jewish Federation and Foundation of Northeast Florida shares the story Hate Ends Now — The Cattle Car Experience about a fully immersive experience of two Holocaust survivors, Hedy and Nate. “Southern NCSY has partnered with the nonprofit ShadowLight to take visitors inside an exact replica of a cattle car used to transport Jews to concentration camps during the Holocaust.”

District 4 School Board member Kelly Barrera, in her latest column, shares insight into the opportunities our students have to learn about the Programs of Choice that offers over two dozen special programs of choice that enables students to pursue their indi-

vidual interest at a deeper level.

The Sawgrass Women’s Club presented their annual Fashion Show and Luncheon on April 19 at the Sawgrass Country Club Member Clubhouse, featuring the theme “A Century of Couture!”

I used to say that Ponte Vedra Beach is Florida’s best kept secret — that is, until now.

Alastair Gray once wrote about, “Florida’s hidden gem for prime homes, Ponte Vedra Beach.” He went on to say, “The area known as ‘Jacksonville’s Malibu’ can offer country clubs, gated communities and golf courses.”

Miami city planner, Melissa Hage vacationed here with her family in 2019 and wrote about her stay in her blog, “Ponte Vedra: The allure of the beach town.” According to Ms. Hage, “Ponte Vedra is a charming beach town that figured out how to make comfortable roadways with space for everyone with lush landscaping, bright green colors, wide sidewalks, bike lanes, narrow lanes for moving traffic and large homes up and front alongside the roads and it shows.”

“The last leg of our summer road trip,” wrote Hage, “was a sleepy beach town, (Ponte Vedra) with an unbelievable wow factor.”

In this issue, nine Realtors share their stories about their amazing new listings

each with their own wow factor from the oceanfront to the Intracoastal and in between!

Travel explorer and Ponte Vedra resident Joe Bryant writes about his recent “Trip with Friends” that was purchased through a silent auction benefiting the First Coast Cultural Center. Jerusalem was the first destination in Israel followed by the Sea of Galilee, Capernaum, Magdala the Jordan River and Nazareth. Their adventures continued in Greece with stops in Santorini, Mykonos, Crete and Athens.

With the football season almost upon us, the Jaguars’ Brian Sexton column gives insight into where the franchise is headed into the future.

Food expert Chef Shane Cheshire offers some great healthy ideas for bruschetta, with “Tuscany in the Florida Sunshine,” perfect for summer entertainment.

In closing, our home is our castle, and at the beaches it is our castle in the sand. From palm trees to sand dunes, and golf courses to resort living, Jacksonville, Ponte Vedra and the beaches communities offer the most desirable living in Northeast Florida.

**Janet Westling, Realtor, CIPS, GRI, Luxury Collection Specialist, Berkshire Hathaway HSFNR, Sand Castles creator and contributing editor. [www.janetwestling.com](http://www.janetwestling.com)**

## MARKET WATCH

# Forging ahead under challenging circumstances

### By David Johnson

The mortgage industry is on the front line of the economy. Topics such as inflation, consumer price index (CPI), interest rates, affordability, first-time homebuyers and supply and demand are discussed daily at dinner tables, boardrooms and press conferences. There remains significant uncertainty for consumers, investors and businesses leaders, with everyone wondering what the future holds for our national and local economies, and how economic changes will impact their future plans.

Many residents of Ponte Vedra Beach and St. Johns County are seeing positive signs in our local economy and real estate market. We hosted a successful THE PLAYERS Championship golf tournament again this year; another PGA building is rising on Palm Valley Road; and we are seeing land, even close to A1A, being used for new

single-family detached homes. Additionally, Nocatee continues expanding outwards with commercial and residential developments east to the Intracoastal Waterway, west to U.S. 1, and south towards Palencia.

This is not to say that challenges do not exist. While new apartments have been built in areas like Nocatee, the cost of home ownership is too expensive for many first-time homebuyers. Especially given rising prices and interest rates, purchasing in the local Ponte Vedra Beach market is a challenge.

In this time of uncertainty, it is helpful to compare the year over year 2023 April new home sales statistics for Duval and St. Johns counties.

- Duval county April year over year sales were down 21% at 1,289, compared to 1,646 last year\*
- St. Johns County April year-over-year sales were down 17.5% at 662, compared to 802 last year\*\*



This local data certainly follows the state and nationwide trends. After seven Federal Funds rate increases in 2022, recent data shows existing April year-over-year home sales statewide are down 20.5% year over year, which

is 3% higher than St. Johns County and 1% lower than Duval County\*\*\*, indicating that St. Johns County is faring better amid than its larger neigh-

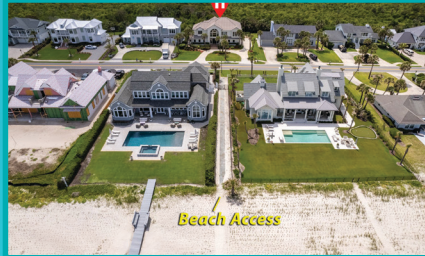


**INTRACOASTAL**



**191 N Roscoe**  
Listed for **\$6,499,000**  
by Katie Hughes Johnson

**5,057 SF, 5 Bedrooms, 5.5 Bathrooms**  
Exquisite Estate Home along the Intracoastal Waterway is situated on almost 3/4 acres on desirable Roscoe Blvd. With over 5,000 sf, 5 bedrooms, 5.5 bathrooms, office & large bonus room, the home is elegantly designed for entertaining guests while comfortably accommodating family.



**722 Ponte Vedra Blvd.**  
Listed for **\$3,550,000**  
by Katie Hughes Johnson

**4,012 SF 4 Bedrooms, 3.5 Bathrooms**  
Stunning views of the Ocean from this impeccable Pool home located on prestigious Ponte Vedra Blvd. Situated across from the ocean and backing to the Guana preserve, take in breathtaking ocean views from the east and amazing sunsets in back! A 10' deeded beach access is directly across the street.



**469 Golf View Circle**  
Listed for **\$2,195,000**  
by Katie Hughes Johnson

**3,247 SF, 4 Bedrooms, 4.5 Bathrooms**  
Brand new construction by Barnett Custom Homes in Old Ponte Vedra and East of A1A to be completed Winter 2023/2024. A short bike ride or walk to the white sand beaches of the Atlantic Ocean and the 5 Star Ponte Vedra Inn & Club.



**150 B N. Roscoe Blvd.**  
Listed for **\$1,370,000**  
by Katie Hughes Johnson

**2,626 SF, 3 Bedrooms, 2.5 Bathrooms**  
Situated on a private 1.67-acre estate lot with 100' footage along Roscoe Blvd., this coastal designed home has been recently renovated. Recent updates in 2023 include a new roof, exterior paint, interior paint, white oak wood flooring, complete new kitchen, bathroom updates & designer lighting.



**189 Canal Blvd.**  
Listed for **\$1,699,900**  
by Katie Hughes Johnson

**3,278 SF, 5 Bedrooms, 3.5 Bathrooms**  
Brand new construction by Barnett Custom Homes to be completed Winter 2024 is situated on over a third acre lot in Ponte Vedra Beach! This modern farmhouse designed home is 3,108 square feet, 5 bedrooms, 3.5 bathrooms and a large upstairs bonus room.



**UNDER CONTRACT**

**105 Diego Lane**  
Listed for **\$1,974,900**  
by Katie Hughes Johnson

**4,041 SF, 5 Bedrooms, 5 Bathrooms**  
Absolutely stunning coastal contemporary home in Ponte Vedra Beach with over 4,000 SF, 5 bedrooms, 5 bathrooms, and large bonus room plus a loft and 3 car garage plus only 5 min drive to the beach! Clean architectural elements like the open staircase with stainless steel bars & wood handrail will impress!



**3000 La Reserve Drive**  
Listed for **\$575,000**  
by Katie Hughes Johnson

**1,594 SF, 3 Bedrooms, 2 Bathrooms**  
Adorable beach bungalow East of A1A in desirable Fiddlers Marsh. This 3-bedroom, 2 bathroom home has been updated throughout with coastal inspired finishes including a white kitchen with shaker cabinets, quartz countertops & stainless steel appliances.



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**31 Cat Rd.**  
Listed for **\$10,500,000**  
by Kelley Cressman & Katie Hughes Johnson

**8,775 SF, 6 Bedrooms, 7.5 Bathrooms**  
The ultimate waterfront lifestyle is now available in this elevated intracoastal estate home under construction. Get ready to be blown away! Unobstructed water views combined with the highest level of construction and design are noted throughout this 3-story, almost 9,000 square foot home with elevator.



**331 S. Roscoe Blvd.**  
Listed for **\$4,999,999**  
by Kelley Cressman & Katie Hughes Johnson

**6,982 SF, 7 Bedrooms, 6.5 Bathrooms**  
Welcome home to this exquisite estate home on the Intracoastal Waterway with 100' along prestigious Roscoe Blvd. The brand-new dock built in 2022 has a large covered area & 16,000 lb lift to hold up to a 35' boat plus a Kayak Lift & small boat or jet skis. Relax by the pool, spa & summer kitchen overlooking the water & nature. Take a short drive to the Guana Preserve to Kayak, the Atlantic Ocean, & the Intracoastal in your backyard!



**PENDING TO CLOSE**

**405 S Roscoe Blvd.**  
Listed for **\$7,700,000**  
by Kelley Cressman & Katie Hughes Johnson

**6,982 SF, 7 Bedrooms, 6.5 Bathrooms**  
This almost 3-acre commercial property has over 250 ft of Intracoastal waterway frontage in Ponte Vedra Beach. The property, currently in a no wake zone, has 7 floating finger docks that provide 14 slips that can easily be equipped with a boat lift. This property is ideally situated between the fast-growing community of Nocatee and the prestigious coastal community of Ponte Vedra Beach. Note 2 parcel #s:0680200000 & 069626000

**KHJ**  
**Katie Hughes Johnson**  
**TEAM**



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Photo by Susan Griffin

## JACKSONVILLE JAGUARS

# These Jaguars

Photo provided by Brian Sexton



By Brian Sexton

I think it's reasonably apparent that these Jaguars are not those Jaguars.

And by these Jaguars I mean that bunch that looked like those Jaguars for most of the first nine weeks of the 2022 season but found traction in November when quarterback Trevor Lawrence found his NFL form in come-from-behind wins against the Raiders, Ravens and Cowboys.

There is an expectation that these Jaguars will win the AFC South. Those Jaguars talked about competing for the division title in years past but lacked in enough areas that what they were really talking about was getting lucky.

There is an expectation that these Jaguars will contend with the Bills, Chargers and Bengals and perhaps find a way past Patrick Mahomes and the Chiefs.

There is an expectation that these Jaguars will from now on be one of the best teams in the NFL and not those Jaguars who always seemed to be at the forefront of free agent spending and the top five picks of the draft every spring.

That change is already underway. The Jaguars had very little choice in allowing free agents such as right tackle Jawaan Taylor and edge rusher Arden Key to leave this spring, which has never really happened for this franchise but is part of the free agent lifecycle. The presence of Lawrence and the best free agent classes in team history in 2021 and 2022 set up 2023 to be a more moderate process in Jacksonville. You'll take it when you have Christian Kirk, Zay Jones and Evan Engram in your

line-up ... all three arrived in 2022.

The Jaguars 2023 NFL Draft Class is the best indicator of where the franchise actually is. Picking No. 24 and outside the top 10 picks for the first time since 2018 they played the long game waiting to see how the board would unfold and then when it fell their way, they played it even longer. General Manager Trent Baalke moved back to No. 25 with the New York Giants and then again to No. 27 with the Buffalo Bills and still ended up with offensive tackle Anton Harrison. They loved the player and the person, and it obviously filled a critical need with the loss of Taylor to Kansas City. As important they added more draft picks, which helped them fill out their roster with guys they wanted in Jacksonville.

On days two and three of the draft they plowed forward with a franchise record 13 picks and found other future starters in tight end Brenton Strange from Penn State and safety Antonio Johnson from Texas A&M.

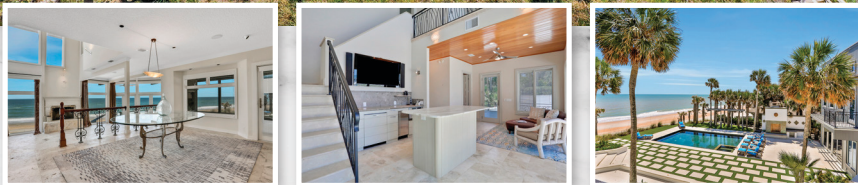
They also added players who will fill a role in running back Tank Bigsby from Auburn, edge rusher Yasir Abdullah from Louisville, defensive lineman Tyler Lacey from Oklahoma State and slot receiver Parker Washington from Penn State.

Look, that's a good draft haul all by itself, not sexy, but solid. The 2021 class that added Lawrence, running back Travis Etienne, cornerback Tyson Campbell and left tackle Walker Little was the sexy class. Everything now is to build around that foundation and this 2023 class accomplishes that mission.

Baalke and head coach Doug Pederson weren't finished though, taking flyers on six more players including offensive tackle Cooper Hodges from Appalachian State who will move inside and play guard, cornerback Christian Braswell from Rutgers and Derrick Parrish who played defensive end at Houston but will transition to fullback in Pederson's scheme.

These Jaguars added a lot of quality football players in last month's draft. Is it a star-studded class? Probably not. Let's face it, few are that don't add a quarterback. But it has a few starters, a few role players and a few swings for the fence and that's what these Jaguars will attempt to do every spring as long as they have their franchise quarterback.

It's too early to tell what this class will be but it sure looks like it will offer depth across the roster, which builds the competition level on the field and makes a team better.



## Ultimate luxury beachfront retreat!

Experience luxury beachfront living with this stunning estate atop 1.5 acres. Enjoy panoramic views of the beach with 167' ocean frontage, from the highest elevation on the street - and take comfort in the 2 sturdy concrete sea walls. The marble interiors are breathtaking, with a large kitchen and living room with 2 butlers pantries and wine conservatory. Entertain in style with the expansive deck space throughout the property, complete with a pool and hot tub, astroturf backyard, and outdoor kitchen and grille area. The guesthouse provides the utmost privacy and comfort, perfect for hosting family/friends. Additional features include an observatory deck to view the stars, 2 car garage with workshop, and plenty of storage space throughout.



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GUEST COLUMN

# A look back over the 2022-23 school year



**By Kelly Barrera**  
District 4 School Board Representative

As the school year comes to close, it is such fun to celebrate the hard work of our students, faculty, staff, volunteers, community and business partners and school leaders! Significant effort goes into making each school year successful, and we are incredibly fortunate to be a part of a community that values education.

Our mission in the St. Johns County School District is to inspire good character and a passion for lifelong learning in all students, creating educated and caring contributors to the world. It is always exciting to see that mission unfold, as our students cross the graduation stage to begin the next chapter in their journey.

Of course, in a large school district

such as ours that serves students from preschool through postsecondary education, there will always be challenges. Yet we continue to maintain a culture of continuous improvement as we seek opportunities for innovation. We know we will not always get every situation right, but we remain committed and focused on our mission — our students.

An example of this is a new partnership our school district's Early Childhood Services department has formed with First Coast Technical College's (FCTC) Early Childhood Services post-secondary program. Through this partnership, our youngest students will receive enhanced learning opportunities, as will our future educators.

The FCTC campus has long hosted the Tech Tots PreK childcare program, whereby secondary school students enrolled in the college's Early Childhood Education program worked with Tech Tots children. Over the past few years, however, the Tech Tots program has experienced declining enrollment. To provide a deeper and richer experience for our secondary students and to better serve the students in our community, the school district added two classrooms: a Head Start class serving students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds and an Exceptional Student Education (ESE) Intensive Support classroom.

As a result, FCTC students now have a hands-on learning laboratory that provides three different environments: Tech Tots for child care, Head Start for community-based education and ESE for children with disabilities and special needs.

Moving forward, there are plans

to expand the size and scope of this program. This will include offering after-care hours, parent education classes and on-site family engagement opportunities. Future plans also include increasing programming to provide St. Augustine High School Career Academy students enrolled in the Teaching Academy with the opportunity to engage in authentic and meaningful experiences within the three different types of classroom environments.

In other FCTC news, the college recently hosted an Inaugural Transition Services Fair, with 35 local vendors and agencies that provide services and support to individuals with disabilities. More than 200 people attended the fair, where students and families were able to ask questions and learn about the different programs and available community resources.

### School accreditation

In addition to completing the 2022-23 school year and planning for the 2023-24 school year, our school district has completed the accreditation process that occurs every five years. We were

pleased with the initial results. This summer, we will take a deep dive into the full report and digest the feedback that was shared in the many stakeholder group sessions. This information will assist us in moving forward with our strategic planning process over the next several months.

I am so appreciative of our students and families, teachers, staff, volunteers, business and community partners and school leaders. While this year has had its challenges, I am grateful for your positive commitment to helping move our schools and community forward. Our focus on inspiring good character and a passion for lifelong learning in our students guides us each day, and I am committed to serving you and making our school district the very best.

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The oceanfront estate at 1083 Ponte Vedra Blvd. is the epitome of luxurious coastal living.



The family room boasts panoramic views of the ocean and 20-foot ceilings.

# Estate offers magnificent possibilities

By Elizabeth Hudgins and Sarah Alexander

The oceanfront estate at 1083 Ponte Vedra Blvd. is the epitome of luxurious coastal living. Spread across 1.67 acres of land, this grand estate sits upon a 33-foot bluff and boasts 175 feet of ocean frontage. Built by Benchmark Home in 1997 with masonry construction, the home features multi-level oceanfront Saturnina patios with pool and spa amply bolstered by an expansive seawall plus geotube dune protection.

The private drive, lush with Florida fauna, brings you to the circular motor court equipped with dual two-car garages for

ample parking. Its elegant foyer opens to a spacious living room with soaring 15-foot-plus ceilings and grandiose floor-to-ceiling windows, offering stunning panoramic views of the Atlantic Ocean.

This estate features a total of five bedrooms and five full- and two half-bathrooms, with a palatial owner's suite and two guest bedrooms with ensuite baths on the first floor.

Large home office with custom built-ins is located just off the owner's suite. The chef's kitchen with dining nook, opens to the family room with yet more panoramic views of the ocean and 20-foot-plus ceilings. Built for entertaining, this home is

fully equipped with a formal dining room, guest powder room, refrigerated wine closet, butler's pantry and wet bar with icemaker — all situated around the oceanfront living spaces, so no matter where you are, the ocean view is there. Upstairs, find a spacious living space featuring a wet bar and dining nook, in addition to two guest bedrooms, also with ensuite baths.

The outdoor living space is easily accessed with the owner's suite, living room and family room wrapped around the upper-level oceanfront patio. Additional covered outdoor patio space off kitchen has summer kitchen and pool half bath. Walk down to the lower level and bask

in the sun or soak in the pool and hot tub after a long day.

This oceanfront estate in Ponte Vedra Beach is a rare find, built to last and perfect for those looking for exclusive waterfront living, style and tranquility. With its stylish design, optimal layout, countless custom features and prime location, this estate is a must-see for anyone searching for that ultimate coastal mansion.

**Represented by Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Network Realty**  
**Listed by Elizabeth Hudgins and Sarah Alexander**  
**Offered for \$10,250,000**



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# Show features 'A Century of Couture'

The Sawgrass Women's Club presented their annual Fashion Show and Luncheon on April 19 at the Sawgrass Country Club Member Clubhouse.

This year's theme was "A Century of Couture!" The Fashion Show celebrated everything from pearls to para-

chute pants. Many attending club members came dressed in their favorite fashion decade.

Sawgrass Country Club Fitness and Tennis staff started the show by modeling some new pro shop merchandise. They were followed by Sawgrass Women's Club mem-

bers modeling fashions from local boutiques, A'Propos, Rosie True and Lemon Twist. Each store also offered shopping at the event in their boutique pop-up shops.

The Sawgrass Women's Club Fashion Show, a decades-old tradition, was another huge success!

Contributed photos



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The front of the home at 1411 Ponte Vedra Blvd.



The living room of the home at 1411 Ponte Vedra Blvd.



A view of the pool at night.

# Oceanfront home offers terrific views

By Bill Irwin and Tina Webster

Nestled along the pristine shoreline atop “Mt. Ponte Vedra,” this oceanfront home boasts a perfect balance between casual living and refined elegance.

With panoramic views of the Atlantic Ocean, this property offers an ideal setting for relaxation, entertainment and everyday living. The warm and welcoming ambiance invites one to unwind and enjoy the coastal lifestyle from sunrise to sunset. From the spacious living areas to the expansive outdoor spaces, including at least one family member’s favorite location, “The Perch,” this home offers a unique blend of luxury and comfort.

“1411 Ponte Vedra Blvd. had the best location with views of both the ocean and

Guana marsh, sunrise to sunset, with a casual deck experience,” said the homeowner. “We could see our family in that house.”

High-end architect Mark Macco was hired to bring the owners’ vision to life, a modern and contemporary home which maximizes stunning 360-degree views of the Ponte Vedra Beach coastline and Guana Reserve.

“By living in it for a few months prior to construction and approving our architect’s plan, we were able to determine what we wanted to do and the look and feel of the place we wanted to create,” said the homeowner. “Both of us were leaning towards an open, cleaner look bringing color from art on the walls and some furniture. We also wanted to bring in a more modern

look to the kitchen, bar and bathroom areas as well as make them more functional. The two new towers of windows brought the light in and views to both sides of the house, and the pool was a must.”

When asked what they would miss most about this oceanfront home, one homeowner said, “The simplicity and decorative elegance that made this house extremely comfortable and easy to function in. I think a new homeowner would appreciate the interior space and openness. The kitchen and bar are easy to entertain in. Every time I went upstairs or walked on the balcony overlooking the living room I was awed by the openness and views.

“I will forever miss the incredible views seen from every room in the house. Every

day those views changed whether due to the ocean being tranquil or roiling, providing the beach with a pristine or sculptural effect.

“The moon rising and its reflection on the sea and the sun rising with its reflection as well was breathtaking. The ever-changing sunsets. I guess you could say it was always interesting, never boring. I would think any new owner would be captivated as we were 24/7.

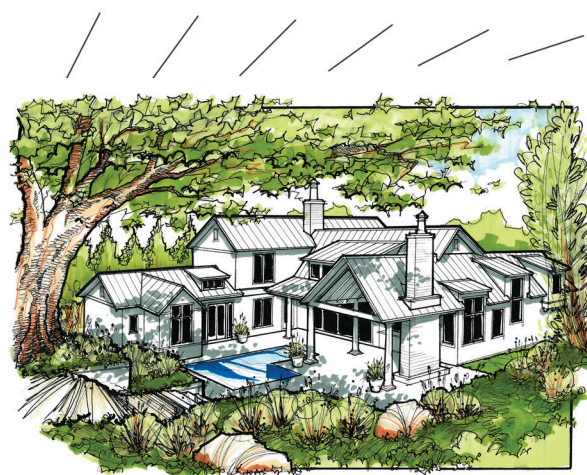
“I would not change a thing! This house was so manageable and truly became a best friend. Why change when it works so well?”

**Represented by Berkshire Hathaway HSFNR  
Listed by Bill Irwin and Tina Webster  
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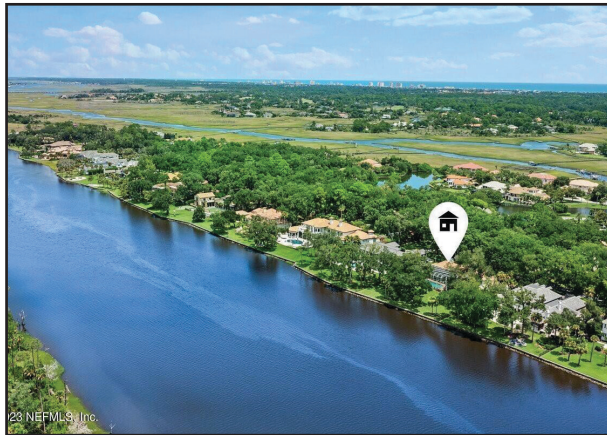
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The exterior of 197 Admirals Way South



This aerial view shows the location of 197 Admirals Way South.



The interior of 197 Admirals Way South

# Home at 197 Admirals Way South has it all

By **Brian Massey**  
Ponte Vedra Club Realty

Nestled among the majestic moss-covered oaks along 140 feet of the ICW in the exclusive Harbour Island community of the premier Marsh Landing Country Club, one is greeted by the magnificent oak canopies that line the streets to the front door of 197 Admirals Way South, Ponte Vedra Beach.

This home, custom built by Jeff Chefan of Scottsdale, Arizona, begins with the grand entry double doors, opening to breathtaking views of the ICW through

the floor-to-ceiling windows. Soaring 20-foot coffered and tray ceilings in the formal living and dining rooms and marble floors (Crema Marsal) flow throughout the first floor living areas.

The spacious kitchen and family room areas also feature views of the ICW from every vantage point. The chef's kitchen has custom-built kitchen cabinetry, Sub-Zero refrigerator, dual dishwashers and walk-in pantry.

The airy primary owner suite features a wall of windows and double doors that lead out to the screened-in pool area. The master suite boasts a his-and-her bath with shared double entry shower and gen-

erous his-and-her closets. The first floor also has a wine room, media room, large custom office and ensuite bedroom.

Upstairs, via the marble staircase is a large bonus/game room that accesses the second story balcony overlooking the pool and ICW. Three additional ensuite bedrooms and ample storage complete the second story. Stroll out to the large paver screened-in patio that opens to a beautiful, serene pool with a waterfall and a built-in outdoor kitchen. Sit and enjoy your morning coffee while taking in the sizable private backyard and be swept away by the sounds of nature or the breezes flowing through the majestic oaks.

A large circular paver driveway and a side driveway provide plenty of parking in addition to the four-car garage. Concrete tile roof with 50-year life. Steps away from the home is the 40-foot boat slip with direct access to the Intracoastal. The home is protected along 140 feet of ICW by a concrete bulkhead. Whether you are a golfer, tennis player, boater, fisherman or just enjoy the sounds of nature in your surroundings, this home has it all!

**Asking \$3,995,000**  
**Listed by Brian Massey and Steve Martinez**  
**Ponte Vedra Club Realty**

## Dreamy

### Ponte Vedra Beach Oceanfront

Nestled along the pristine shoreline atop "Mt Ponte Vedra", this oceanfront home boasts of a perfect balance between casual living and refined elegance. With panoramic views of the sparkling blue ocean, this property offers an ideal setting for relaxation, entertainment, and everyday living. The warm and welcoming ambiance invites you to unwind and enjoy the coastal lifestyle from sunrise to sunset. From the spacious living areas to the expansive outdoor spaces, including "The Perch", this home offers a unique blend of luxury and comfort. In 2017-2018, high-end architect Mark Macco was hired to bring the owners vision to life, a modern & contemporary home which maximizes stunning 360-degree views of the Ponte Vedra Beach coastline and Guana Tolomato Matanzas National Reserve.



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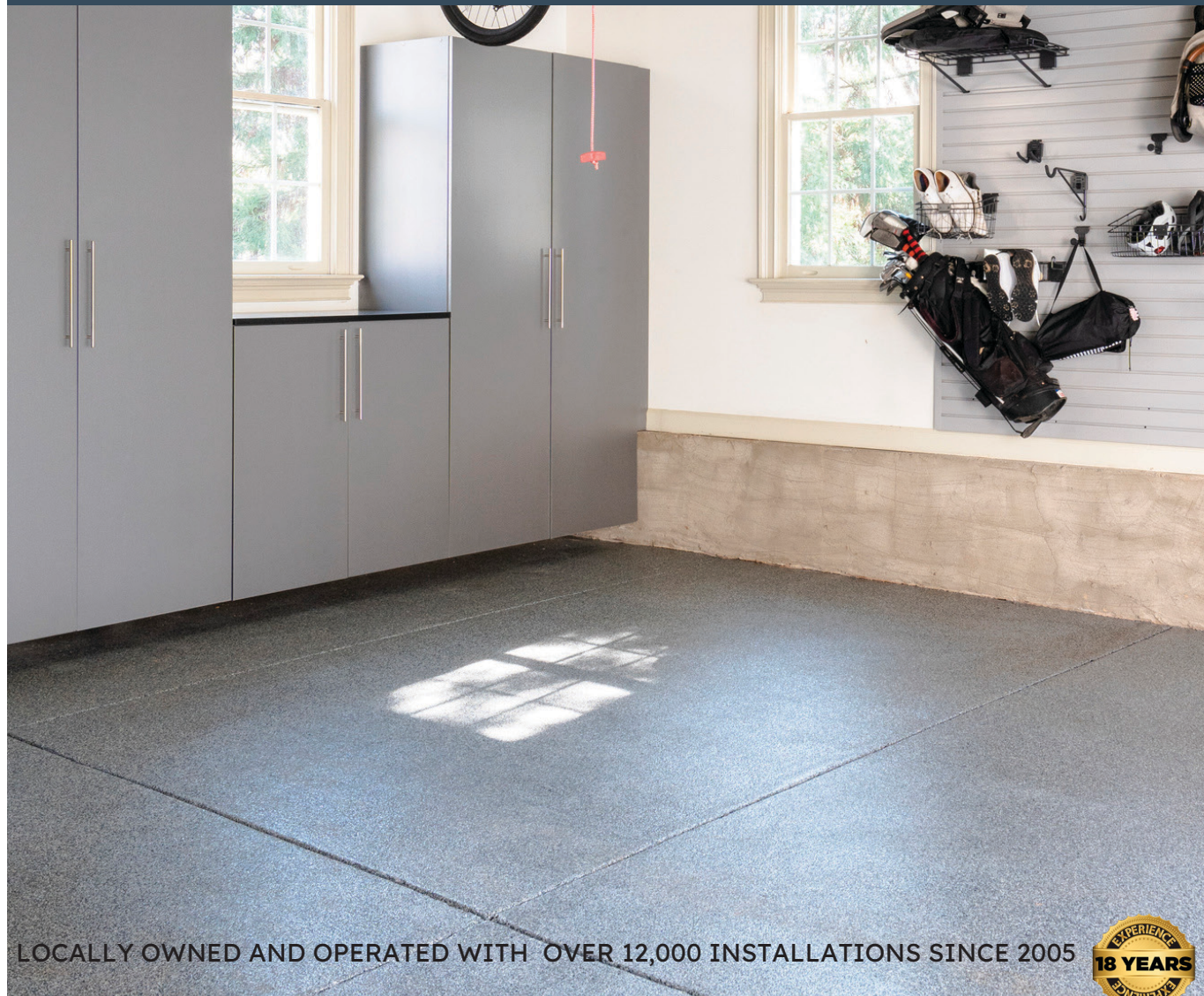
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The garage is large enough to accommodate up to seven cars.



The interior of the home at 7625 Founders Way.

# One-level masterpiece with 7-car garage sure to amaze

By CiCi Anderson

Visitors are wowed when they step into this unbelievable “like new” home where no expense was spared on this custom renovation and large addition, including top-of-the-line finishes and upgrades.

Right away, the visitor is impressed by the massive open living area with 13-foot-high ceilings, skylights and Brazilian walnut hardwood floors.

Chef’s kitchen features modern, high-gloss cabinets with push opening, oversized drawers, built-in pantry

for electric accessories with Subzero fridge and freezer, Bosch induction cooktop, large oven plus half-size steam oven.

The indoor/outdoor entertaining space is a dream with 19-foot sliding-glass doors that pocket behind the walls to give you that Florida lifestyle bringing the outside to the inside.

Enormous, covered lanai areas with custom summer kitchen and massive pool bath with shower. Incredible saltwater pool with rock waterfall and enormous screen enclosure. The home sits on 3/4 of an acre with a pri-

vate backyard that backs up to a tidal creek for some fun on paddle boards, kayaks or fishing.

And then the garages: magazine worthy and any car aficionados dream garage and private office. The combined spaces can hold seven cars and are equipped with AC and insulated garage doors.

The upstairs even has a large office/flex space above. Currently, part of the space is separated as a playroom or TV room but the wall can easily be taken down to expand to the full seven-car garage. In addition, the ga-

rage ceilings are high enough to add car lifts if so wanted.

This five-bedroom, four-bath, one-level home won’t last long. Don’t miss this opportunity to own this dream home inside the gated community of Marsh Landing in Ponte Vedra Beach with “A” schools and close proximity to all the clubs and beaches.

This property, located at 7625 Founders Way is represented by Marsh Landing Realty and listed by Cici Anderson and Jenna Fisher and offered for \$2,299,000.

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The interior of 89 Dewees Ave., Atlantic Beach.



The exterior of 89 Dewees Ave., Atlantic Beach.

# Take a look at 89 Dewees Ave., Atlantic Beach

By Jennifer Sexton

Far from cookie-cutter, this William Morgan home is one of his most modest yet most ingenious designs.

It is located 200 steps from the ocean in Atlantic Beach, was built in 1961 and has been owned by the original residents until 2020.

When the new owner purchased this

home in 2020 it underwent an extensive renovation. It was important to keep the integrity of the home but modernize it to be more functional and updated. It's now a three-bedroom, three-and-a-half-bath home boasting 2,100 square feet and overlooking an outdoor oasis with a heated pool and spa.

The home is two-story stacked concrete masonry. There are wood

beams, tongue-and-groove ceilings, the original wood-burning fireplace and clerestory windows set into the structural depth of the beams to let in massive amounts of sunlight.

The front part of the home has a one-bedroom apartment ideal for an in-law, or friends when they come to visit. It can be closed off or added to the main house. All of the features keep the mid-

century Modern vibe in mind, boasting a two-story great room, a downstairs suite, along with an upstairs suite and loft. Features include terrazzo floors, soaring ceilings, Sub-Zero and Wolf appliances with a beautiful kitchen and elegant white baths.

This unique property is worth the look. It is the perfect second home, dual living or primary residence.

## Thank you to all my clients for your trust!

### From St Augustine up the Coast to Atlantic Beach & over the Intracoastal



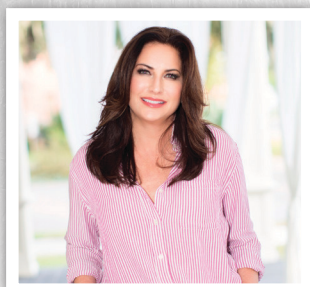
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Photos provided by Joe Bryant



The Amigos at the Western Wall



The River Jordan

# Trip to Greece, Jerusalem proves life changing

By Joe Bryant

We're the three amigos — Dr Deb Blanton, Kelley Bost and Joe Bryant. We just completed a fabulous trip that was purchased at the silent auction at The Celebration of the Arts annual fund raiser put on by the First Coast Cultural Center.

Our travels first took us to Jerusalem. A challenging six-hour guided walking tour inside the walls of the "Old City of Jerusalem" brought history to life and introduced us to the delicious "street food" that is a staple.

Freshly made daily and served family style: hummus, cucumber, tomatoes, tahini, falafel, olives, Shawarma (rotisserie lamb or beef wrapped with vegetables in warm bread). Our Jewish tour guide's depth of knowledge regarding world history, the influence of Jesus, the USA and all religions of the region was quite impressive and at 75 years old, his ability to walk for six hours up and down the uneven streets was equally impressive.

A car ride tour to the Sea of Galilee,

Capernaum, Magdala the Jordan River and Nazareth took two-and-a-half hours through the desert. It was interesting to learn the "old" roads and aqueducts built by the Romans are still being used today.

Jerusalem (Old and New cities) is 49 square miles with a population of 1,140,000. The land is hilly, and everywhere you look, there are multi-story buildings, all looking alike, that house the population.

On our last evening we were in search of a nice glass of wine and made our way to the Waldorf Astoria, which was a treat. While sipping, we talked about how this trip was life changing. And the ability to travel now feels like a gift.

On to the Greek Isles, first starting in beautiful, peaceful Santorini. The Villa Liliun is at the top of the mountain overlooking the majestic views of other islands and the Aegean Sea. Life in Santorini is all about slowing down, daily consumption of fresh organic food (including eggs, orange juice, seafood, pasta, great local wine), enjoying

people and reflecting on life.

We quickly adapted and allowed our new friend, Elisa, to advise us. A sunset catamaran tour and a tour of the oldest winery on the island and many hours of pool and hot tub with that view was just perfect. There is little rain in Santorini. The grape vines are small and low to the ground. The vines absorb water from the salt air. The rocky ground is volcanic soil. The wine is light, refreshing and has slight mineral undertones. Delicious!

As we traveled on, we found the friendly people, fresh food and good wine was also abundant in Mykonos, Crete and Athens. Mykonos and Santorini are similar in architecture with interesting buildings painted white with blue or gray trim. Mykonos has a vibrant night life. The locals in Mykonos and Athens had many questions about the USA and expressed their desire to visit.

In Athens, Hotel Electra has a beautiful view of the Acropolis from their world-class restaurant on the top floor. We enjoyed fresh dishes, such as squid ink pasta with octopus and beef cheeks

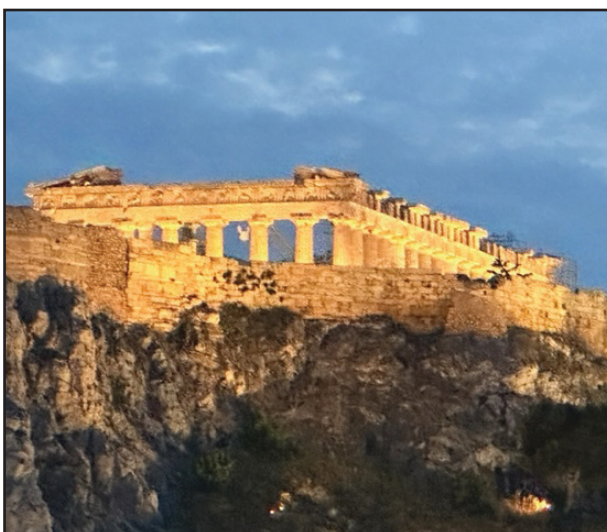
from the local beef farm. We booked a bus/walking tour of many sites including the Acropolis, Athens National Museum, Olympic Stadium, the Athens library and two of the oldest learning institutions in Athens.

The tour guide explained that Athens, being the first known democracy in the world (introduced in 6 B.C.), was the example used by our founding fathers to create our system of democracy. Also, the disciplines of philosophy, high learning, healthy lifestyle, exploring new ideas and diplomacy were incorporated early on and are still encouraged today. Paul was able to introduce Christianity in Athens during his travels because the Athens way of life explored new ideas openly.

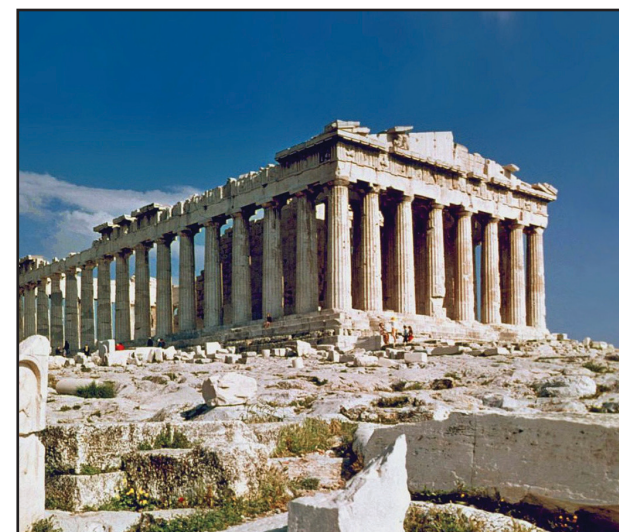
It was so wonderful to travel again and talk to people from all over the world. There was very little talk of politics or any subject that is divisive. Everyone was happy to be exploring the world and grateful to be past the COVID pandemic. It really felt like shutting a door behind you and walking into a happier place.



The Sea of Galilee



The Acropolis, as seen from the author's hotel restaurant.



The Parthanon





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**120 OLD PONTE VEDRA DR.**

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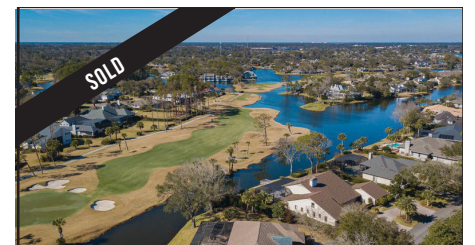


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Private 1.67 acre oceanfront estate sits upon a 33 ft. bluff with 175 feet of frontage on the Atlantic Ocean. Elegant open floorplan with 15' ceilings, 5 spacious bedrooms, each with ensuite bath, and multi-level oceanfront patio with pool & spa. Offered for \$10,250,000.



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Kids Kare Mobile ICU



Contributed photo

Crew Shea

# Women's Board raises critical funds for Wolfson Children's Hospital



**Kendra McCrary, The Women's Board of Wolfson Children's Hospital**

The Women's Board began 50 years ago in a beautiful home in San Marco when a small group of women committed themselves to ensuring that the neophyte Wolfson Children's Hospital would soon have the very best equipment available to care for our community's infants and children.

These visionaries were called together by Ellen Cavert after her granddaughter, Abby Martin, the infant twin of Ray and Richard Martin, passed

away shortly after her premature birth in 1972 as the hospital had only the medical equipment to care for a single baby.

Then, Wolfson Children's Hospital was just a small unit in Baptist Hospital along the St. Johns River. Now recognized among America's Best Children's Hospitals by U.S. News & World Report, Wolfson Children's Hospital has grown to 276 beds and cared for more than a million children.

The Women's Board is now 400 members strong and has raised more than \$35 million for equipment and facilities at Wolfson Children's Hospital. Funds raised have supported trauma services, mental health care, neonatal intensive care and more.

Wolfson Children's is the second-largest chil-

**FUNDS** continues on **Page 34**

## The story of Crew Shea

Britten and Jay Shea were over the moon when they learned they were pregnant with their first child. It also was important to them to choose a Baptist doctor to have easy access to Wolfson Children's Hospital. That foresight is something Britten and Jay are thankful for to this day.

The final trimester of Britten's pregnancy found her dealing with high blood pressure. Weekly blood pressure checks revealed her amniotic fluid levels were dropping rapidly. Unable to bring the fluid back to a safe level, doctors knew that labor should be induced immediately. On Nov. 10, 2020, Crew was born four weeks early.

Shortly after birth, the attentive team in the newborn nursery heard Crew making unusual noises and discovered that the baby was born with an underdeveloped lung that had filled with fluid. Unable to breathe

**CREW SHEA** continues on **Page 34**

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The home's western side.



The home's front.

# Large home positioned for good views of sunrise, sunset

By Katie Hughes Johnson

This impeccable pool home located on prestigious Ponte Vedra Boulevard offers stunning views of the ocean.

It is situated across from the ocean with deeded beach access directly in front of the home and the Guana preserve in the back. One can enjoy breathtaking ocean views and sunrises from the east and excellent sunsets out back.

Natural light is abundant throughout from the large, picturesque windows. The views upstairs are captivating as the home is perched above

the trees.

The home has more than 4,000 square feet, four bedrooms, three and a half bathrooms, office and a game room.

Designed to maximize views, the floor plan is flipped with kitchen, living spaces, master bedroom and office upstairs while three secondary bedrooms, two baths and the game room are downstairs.

Residents have easy access to both floors using the elevator.

An oversized, three-car garage with storage will hold cars and beach gear.

The circular drive allows for additional parking.

An expansive outdoor area features a pool with water feature, large paved area, covered patio and outdoor shower. The backyard is supported by a marine-grade retaining wall installed in 2015.

An elegant kitchen has custom-wood cabinetry, gas cooking, stainless appliances including a built-in refrigerator, wall oven and warming drawer. The kitchen sink has views of the ocean. A fully equipped bar has two wine refrigerators and a beverage

cooler ready for entertaining. From the kitchen there is an outdoor staircase leading directly to the pool area.

Situated with easy access to the five-star Ponte Vedra Inn & Club, it is a bike ride away from the Ponte Vedra Lodge. JTB is only a few minutes away for travel into the city. The home is zoned for A-rated St. Johns County schools.

**722 Ponte Vedra Blvd. Ponte Vedra Beach**  
**Offered by Katie Hughes Johnson at RE/MAX Specialists PV for \$3,600,000**  
**4 bedrooms and 3.5 bathrooms, 4,012 SF**

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An aerial view of 331 S. Roscoe Blvd.



The interior of 331 S. Roscoe Blvd.



The pool at 331 S. Roscoe Blvd.

# Roscoe Boulevard home is tops in waterfront living

By Kelley Cressman and Katie Hughes Johnson

RE/MAX Specialists PV

Waterfront living at its finest!

Welcome to this exquisite Roscoe Boulevard barrel-tile roofed home with 100 feet of waterfront access on the Intracoastal Waterway. Imagine waking up to the sounds of dolphins playing in the water, watching an eagle catch its next meal, or catch a glimpse of a beautiful yacht cruising by on the way south for the winter.

These are frequent occurrences for those living on the waterway along Palm Valley.

From Roscoe Boulevard, pull through the black-iron-gated entrance with its lighted white columns and lush tropical landscaping to a large brick paver circle driveway and a three-car attached garage.

Step inside through a stunning double wooden door, which has exquisite iron and glass detailing. Once inside this almost-7,000-square-foot, masterfully designed Dean Russell Mediter-

ranean home, let your eye take you in every direction, following the timeless travertine stone floors.

This plan features five bedrooms, including a spectacular master bedroom, office, game room and four-and-a-half bathrooms, all on just the first of three levels.

Travel up the wooden staircase to the second level to find a large bonus room with new custom wooden floors, a full bathroom and niche/work station. Up a few more steps and one discovers a home gym. On the third

floor, there is a full bathroom, large bonus room and new custom wood floors, multiple walk-in closets, another home office and a balcony with sunset and water views. The balcony is one of the sellers' favorite spots in the home.

**331 S. Roscoe Blvd.**  
**Offered by Kelley Cressman and Katie Hughes Johnson at RE/MAX Specialists PV for \$4,999,999**  
**7 bedrooms, 6.5 bathrooms, 6,982 square feet**



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Contributed photos



This property at 723 Ponte Vedra Blvd. offers breathtaking ocean views.



The interior of 723 Ponte Vedra Blvd. opens to a dining room with vaulted ceiling and a cozy lounge with ocean views and more.

# Ponte Vedra Beach home called ‘spectacular’

By Laura Bishop and Kim Bright

Imagine for a moment watching the sun come up from your back patio and, later, you can drift off to sleep with the sounds of the Atlantic Ocean as your playlist.

Welcome to this magnificent custom oceanfront estate on the sand in Ponte Vedra Beach with breathtaking ocean views and timeless Hampton-esque architecture. Built in 2014 by Heritage Homes and featuring only the very best appointments and craftsmanship, the expansive two-story residence provides comfort for all with six bedrooms and

six baths in approximately 5,041 square feet.

Impeccably maintained grounds include a private bridge that leads directly to the sand, a pool with Baja shelf, a spa for 12 or more, and lush landscaping.

The interior is even more spectacular. Opening to a dining room with vaulted ceiling and a cozy lounge with ocean views, a generously sized kitchen impresses with blue glass-paneled custom Bishop cabinetry that mimics the ocean just outside the window.

Enjoy an island that seats 10, quartz

and stainless-steel countertops, white subway tile backsplash, top-tier appliances, including a Bertazzoni range, and a large walk-in pantry with antique Belgian doors from the 1700s.

A big bay window with beach views complements a first-level owner’s suite that hosts a spa bath with marble tile and a bonus/media room continues to a separate area with eight built-in bunk beds. Rich details include beamed ceilings, a fireplace mantle from Yale, custom vanities, extensive use of Pella hurricane-rated windows, wide-plank white oak and French limestone floor-

ing, crown molding and chandeliers designed in Europe.

Introduced by an expansive driveway, the estate displays a distinctive gambel roof and wood shake siding individually dipped for consistent color. High-end dining and shopping are close by, excellent schools serve the community, and golf courses and clubs are moments from home.

**This property at 723 Ponte Vedra Blvd. is represented by Compass Florida LLC, listed by The Bright Bishop Group and offered at \$15,200,000.**

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**ODOMS MILL BEAUTY**

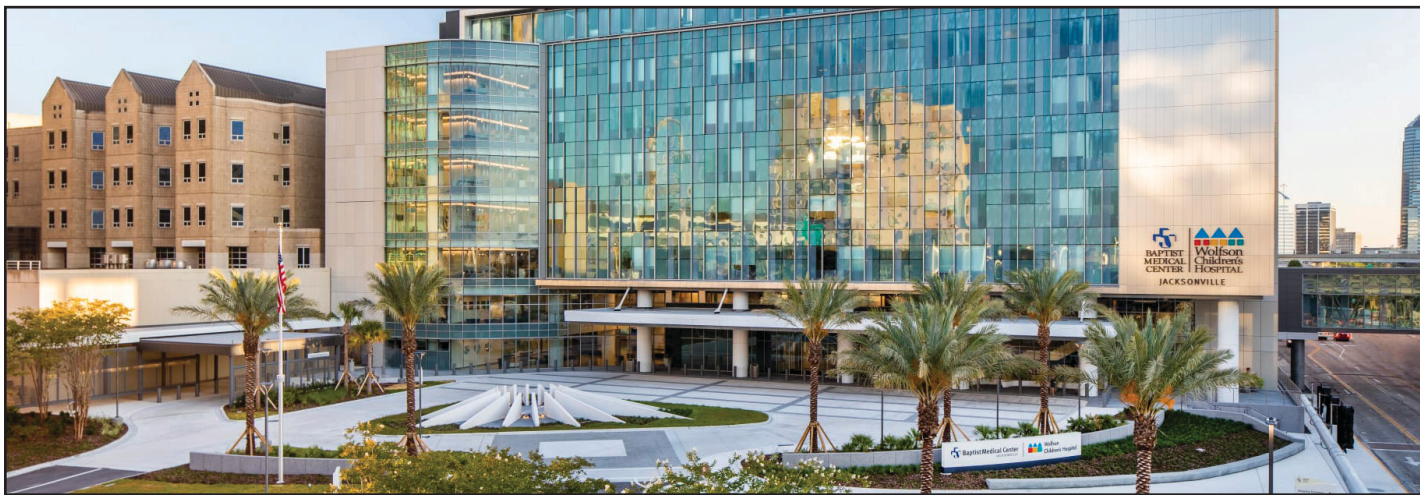
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Borowy Family Children's Critical Care Tower, Wolfson Children's Hospital

## Funds

Continued from 30

dren's hospital in Florida and the only children's hospital between Orlando and Atlanta, one of the fastest-growing regions in the country. With specialty centers located as far as Daytona, Tallahassee, Valdosta and Brunswick, getting children the care they need often involves transporting them to Jacksonville.

The Women's Board has committed to raising \$1.5 million for a new Kids Kare Mobile ICU, a neonatal and pediatric critical care transport vehicle. The Kids Kare ambulance will be equipped with everything needed to transport critically ill children of all ages, including monitors, defibrillators, IV pumps and medications, infant isolettes with warmers and respiratory equipment. Kids Kare ambulances and helicopters transport around 3,000 infants and children each year to Wolfson Children's Hospital. Of these, 15% are newborns who need neonatal intensive care services.

"Every time I see the Kids Kare

THE WOMEN'S BOARD  
WOLFSON CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL



Borowy Family Children's Critical Care Tower, Wolfson Children's Hospital

ambulance when I'm driving in the community, I am grateful for the work of The Women's Board," said Women's Board President Kendra McCrary.

"Grateful, because I've met some of the children and families whose lives have been changed, and even saved, because of the hospital's mobile services. And

## Crew Shea

Continued from 30

on his own, Crew was transferred to Wolfson's neonatal intensive care unit (NICU).

The next 10 days were a waiting game for everyone. Thankfully, Crew was able to fight his way back to normal lung capacity. As many other NICU parents will tell you, the babies have the best medical care while the parents also receive attention.

"The nurses were incredibly helpful," Britten recalls of those long days and nights during COVID's lonely isolation.

The skills and newborn care the nurses imparted left Britten and Jay feeling more prepared than they ever imagined as first-time parents. They also feel huge gratitude for Wolfson Children's Hospital as they watch their 2-year-old charm all with his daily antics.

grateful for the incredible mobile medical team that provides those services. Their stories motivate me to do all in my power to support the work being done at Wolfson Children's."

To fund this lifesaving ambulance, The Women's Board produces two major events that together raise \$1 million each year: First Coast Design Show, North Florida's premiere antiques, garden and art show held the first weekend in December; and The Florida Forum speaker series featuring heads of state, business heavyweights, entertainers, pundits, sports heroes, artists and more.

Wolfson Children's is vital to our community, and The Women's Board continues to be committed to our mission to raise funds and awareness of this very special hospital.



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Contributed photos



# Style prevails at Live Oak Lane home

By Patti Armstrong

Doug and Carolyn Stone met on a blind date and are still going strong 50 years later! Talk about style! They have it. Vintage, cool, luxurious, light, airy and fun describes their style and their home at 1845 Live Oak Lane, Atlantic Beach.

Vaulted tongue-and-groove ceilings, dramatic wood-burning fireplace, large windows letting in the

light and the outdoors. An architect designed this home, and the details are exceptional.

Six different porches to relax on and enjoy the majestic oaks that make this area of Atlantic Beach special. Downstairs features living, dining and kitchen and a separate space off the living area that can be used as an office, library, TV nook. French doors lead to the spacious deck with room for dining and entertaining.

Upstairs you will enjoy the primary bedroom, including a loft that can be used for exercise, an art space or office. There's a walk-in closet, and the primary bath has a jacuzzi tub.

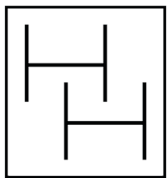
There are two more spacious bedrooms, a hall bath and more decks so you can enjoy the surrounding nature. Also, there is additional space on the landing that the current owners use as an office.

All this within walking distance to

the beautiful beaches. Ride a bicycle to the town center for lunch, dinner or shopping. Bike or take a golf cart with your little ones to Atlantic Beach Elementary.

The property is located within walking distance to the exquisite Atlantic Beach Country Club.

**Represented by Compass FL**  
**Listed by Patti Armstrong**  
**Offered for \$1,395,000**



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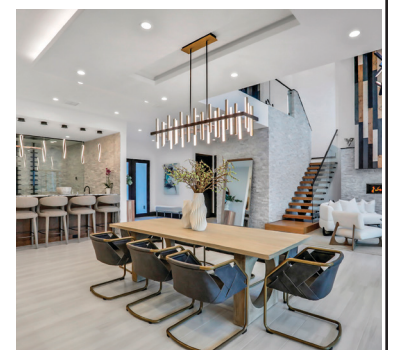
HANA HUNTER

217A S ROSCOE BLVD  
 Ponte Vedra Beach  
 \$5,999,995  
 7 Beds | 7 Baths | 5,500 SF

This newly constructed contemporary custom Ponte Vedra Beach home is designed with consideration of natural light & spectacular views of the Intracoastal waterways. A modern example of Florida waterfront luxury living, featuring soaring ceilings, large windows, natural finishes, glass railings, and a floating staircase. A true Chefs kitchen with integrated custom cabinetry, a glass climate controlled wine cellar, sophisticated office space, & private guest ensuite complete the first floor.

The primary suite includes 14 ft. ceilings with a private lanai overlooking the water below, is connected by a second family room and three additional bedrooms. The backyard features a saltwater pool & spa, outdoor summer kitchen, and a large dining space to entertain after a full day on the water.

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Contributed photos



The condominium home is located on the ninth floor at Oceania.



A view of the ocean from the balcony.

# An excellent oceanfront escape awaits

By Michelle Mousin

Engel and Volkers

Welcome to this beautiful open-concept condominium home with oversized balcony to take in the sweeping views from the ninth floor. Porcelain tile throughout with wood look LVP in the primary suite, large walk-in closet and access to the balcony has you waking up looking and hearing the surf.

The guest room has an ensuite bath. The kitchen has all newer stainless appliances and a view of the ocean looking to the living area

and balcony.

It has a new HVAC and water heater, so all it is turn key to move in and enjoy. All this in a very well-located, modern building.

The home is close to shops and restaurants in Atlantic Beach. The building also includes a resort-style pool and fitness center with sauna. This building allows one week rental ability, if that is desired.

**Oceania**  
**1415 1st St. North, No. 903**  
**Jacksonville Beach**



The living room in the Oceania condominium home.

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# Tuscany in the Florida Sunshine

By Chef Shane Cheshire

Taste Catering: Barn Yard Farms

Ambling through the warm, sun-filled garden this morning, I felt the dew setting around me with the fragrance of fresh tomatoes and the tacky feel of cucumbers hovering around the towering sunflowers surrounding me. These incredible sensations made me ponder something special and unique in the excellent flavor combinations that encompassed me. I immediately began to think of the light and refreshing traditional Italian treat of bruschetta.

Italy claims it as their bruschetta, this delicate and tasty pleasure dates back to the Roman Empire. Historically it was bread made with no salt, a day old, and doused with the oil from olive farmers to test the quality of their oils. And thus, we have bruschetta! Over time the Italians adapted it into their own, rubbed in fresh garlic and topped the crusty bread with an array of cured meats, or vegetables and fresh herbs.

With evolution still kicking in, we here in America tend to toast

whatever bread we can find and top it with marinated tomatoes, garlic, basil and some delicious cheese, such as what I prefer, a delectable burrata. I'm here to take it to an even more elevated state. Let's forget the bread and cheese all together, add some fresh garden cucumbers, and use this historical dish in any way we see fit! Well, maybe not the burrata!

From a simple gift as an amuse bouche to a tasting spoon. To the topping of your favorite sea swimmer, lavishly covering a delightful chard yard bird, or even toss it with your favorite pasta Alfredo. This versatile recipe can fill you with tremendous joy and a sense of summertime and might even intrigue your understanding of some history.

So, with no haste, run out, scoop up your ingredients from your local farmers and let's make it for whatever summertime occasion it calls for.

As the French say, Bon appetite! And as always from Taste Catering and Barn Yard Farms, I wish you well, and God bless!

## Summertime Bruschetta

Yields approximately 5 cups

- 10 medium Roma tomatoes
- 1/2 seedless cucumber
- 2 large garlic cloves, peeled
- 1/2 cup olive oil
- 1/2 cup aged balsamic vinegar
- 2 oz Barn Yard Farms Micro Basil
- Fresh cracked sea salt and cracked black pepper to taste.
- Top off with balsamic reduction drizzle to make it even more amazing!

Combine all ingredients in a large bowl. Slice Roma tomatoes 1/4 inch thick, then medium dice. Slice cucumbers 1/4 inch thick and then medium dice. Press the garlic or fine dice. Add olive oil. Add balsamic. Rough chop micro basil, saving some, whole, for garnish. Salt and pepper to taste. Toss well, cover and refrigerate for 24 hours.

Serve on or with anything you like!



Photo provided by Chef Shane Cheshire

Summertime Bruschetta

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Contributed photo

Southern NCSY has partnered with the nonprofit ShadowLight to take visitors inside an exact replica of a cattle car used to transport Jews to concentration camps during the Holocaust. The car will be brought to stadiums, museums, Jewish campuses, high schools, universities and neighborhoods, bringing the consequences of intolerance to life. To learn how to sponsor a program, go to [hateendsnow.org](https://hateendsnow.org).

# Hate Ends Now: The Cattle Car Experience

By Jennifer Rensch

Jewish Federation & Foundation of Northeast Florida,  
Foundation Manager

As my colleague and I drove up to the LJD Jewish Family and Community Services parking lot, my stomach churned as I saw the cattle car from a distance. I wasn't sure exactly what to expect — only an innate feeling that it would be something I would never forget. Stepping inside, the very first thing I noticed was the black footprints painted onto the wood beneath me — a variety of sizes — ones that matched mine and ones that would have matched my 5-year-old daughter. The ShadowLight representative gave us a short introduction explaining this was an exact replica of the cattle cars which were used by Nazis to shuttle Jews to concentration camps, at 100 people per car. I looked around and counted the mere 20-something of us that were currently cramped into the space and shuddered at the thought. The representative closed the door behind us, and the interior darkened even in the daytime, with only tiny slivers of light making their way

through the cracks.

As the video started, I began to understand why this is described as a “fully immersive” experience. The images are projected all around you, covering and moving life-like along every wall of the car — in such a way that you feel right in the middle of these men, women, children and babies and right in the middle of the fear and violence and pain they suffered. If a picture is worth a thousand words, this experience was worth an entire history book.

The film itself follows the stories of two survivors, Hedy and Nate.

“The boxcar plays heavily in my mind because that's the transition from being a human being to becoming a number which they could dispose of at their own will,” a now-elderly Nate shared in his interview.

I found it impossible not to cry for Hedy as she recounted being separated from her mother upon reaching Auschwitz, looking into her eyes for what would be the final time. None of her family survived the concentration camps, but she did. In fact, we learned, she was there on-site touring with the

exhibit, in her 90s, willing to be loud and brave in sharing her horrific experiences for the sake of making sure that history is never repeated.

At that moment, I reflected honestly on times in my life, as someone who attended both Protestant grade school and a public university, when I knew I was witnessing antisemitism right in front of me. From the time I shrugged off that “joke” involving Jewish tropes by a high school friend, to the time I once listened to a college professor passively propagate an anti-Jewish conspiracy theory and wondered if anyone was going to say anything ... and at that moment, I felt ashamed — ashamed that I hadn't always been loud and brave in the face of bigotry and ashamed that I hadn't always realized that this is my fight, too.

The greatest value that I have gained from my education and career in nonprofit and social justice is that standing up to hatred and bias in any form is everyone's fight — even more so for those who enjoy the privilege of being the majority — if we are to ensure that Hedy's mission is honored.

Working for the Jewish Federation & Foundation for the past four years, I've become much more acquainted with Jewish life than I was prior; I've been very lucky to be invited to many Shabbat dinners, and I now make it a point to try to do my daily mitzvah.

However, I believe of far more importance to being the kind of ally that I hope to be, lies in what I teach my daughter as she grows up. While she is still a bit young to learn about the atrocities of the Holocaust, I teach her about acceptance and tolerance and try to introduce her to different beliefs and traditions in the little ways that she can grasp thus far. This past winter, our family lit the menorah, taking the opportunity to teach the kids that Chanukah is not actually “Jewish Christmas,” but actually a completely unrelated celebration involving the Maccabees and the miracle of oil that never ran out. But as she gets older, I can promise that she will be taught the exact truth about what happened to Hedy and Nate, and how it is imperative that she be part of a better future that takes part in never forgetting so that it can never happen again.





## Market Watch

Continued from 16

bor Duval and the state during this slowdown.

Even with today's market challenging homebuyers, Ponte Vedra Beach and St. Johns remain attractive. With a state-leading public school system, low crime rates and proximity to beaches, we are poised to weather these slower times well and see activity pick up as the economy shifts. Also, during this time, we are seeing the higher-priced beach home market along the coastline remaining active.

Some residential mortgage analysts expect interest rates to moderate and begin dropping this year. Freddie Mac reports a current interest rates average of 6.39%, which is down from 7.08% on November 10, 2022, a significant drop in six months that many hope will continue\*\*\*\*.

An encouraging, related update is the decline in the nation's inflation rate to 4.93% in April\*\*\*\*, which was at its lowest level since April 2021. High inflation was the impetus for the rising interest rate path the Federal Reserve began travelling last year.

In summary, like markets across the nation, the Ponte Vedra Beach real estate market has slowed, albeit less than our neighbors year over year. While interest rates and inflation do remain high, we all continue to watch for indications that the Federal Reserve will taper off rate increases, as this will contribute to the lowering of mortgage interest rates. This will be an important marker for anyone looking to buy

or sell: from first-time homebuyers to current home owners who want to move but feel "stuck" knowing that purchasing a new home means incurring a much higher interest rate than their current home. While uncertain economic circumstances persist, Ponte Vedra Beach, and St. Johns counties are faring better than others and remain exceptional areas to live, work, and thrive.

**David Johnson is a Mortgage Banker with Ameris Bank, NMLS #1446956.**

### FOOTNOTES:

\* <https://www.redfin.com/county/451/FL/Duval-County/housing-market>

Redfin, Duval County Housing Market

\*\* <https://www.redfin.com/county/491/FL/St-Johns-County/housing-market#demand>

Redfin, St. John's County Housing Market

\*\*\* <https://www.redfin.com/state/Florida/housing-market>

Redfin, Florida State Housing Market

\*\*\*\* The Mortgage Reports, Mortgage Interest Rate Predictions by Paul Centopani May 18, 2023,

<https://themortgagereports.com/32667/mortgage-rates-forecast-fha-va-usda-conventional>

\*\*\*\*\* YCharts.com, US Inflation Rate

[https://www.ycharts.com/indicators/us\\_inflation\\_rate#:~:text=Basic%20Info,in%20price%20over%20a%20year](https://www.ycharts.com/indicators/us_inflation_rate#:~:text=Basic%20Info,in%20price%20over%20a%20year)

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Jennifer Vincelet

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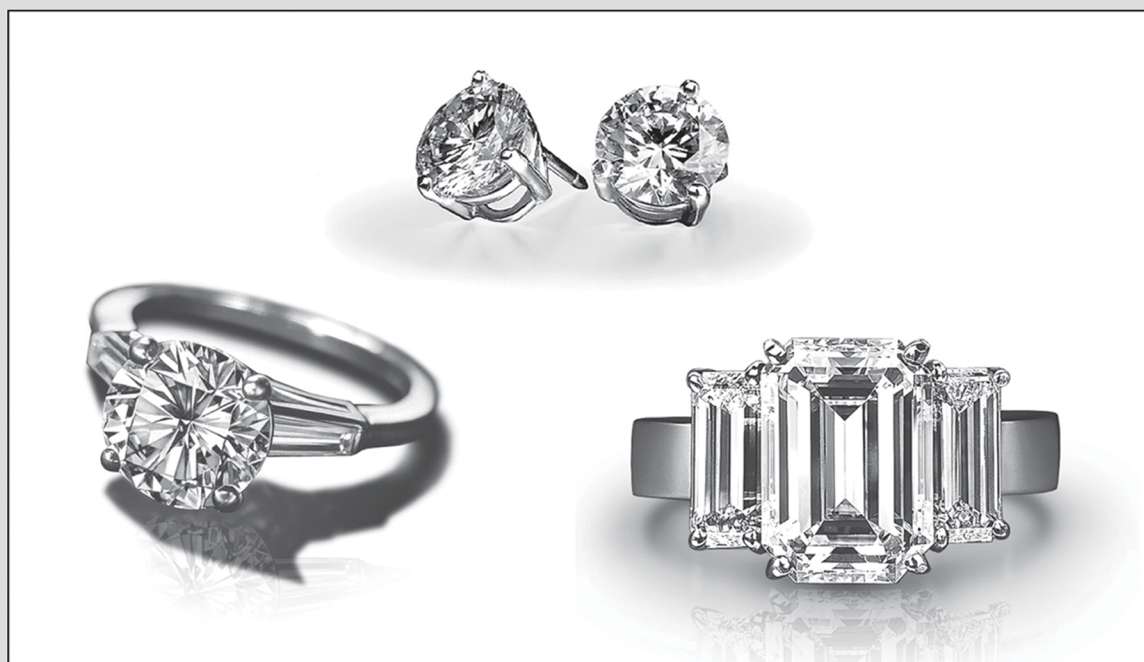
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# Discover the Epitome of Coastal Living at 969 Ponte Vedra Blvd.

Contributed photos

By Anne-Marie Mitchell

Indulge in the pinnacle of beachfront luxury living at 969 Ponte Vedra Blvd., a stunning estate perched atop 1.5 acres of pristine coastline in Ponte Vedra.

With breathtaking panoramic views of the beach and an impressive 167 feet of ocean frontage, this extraordinary property offers a lifestyle that is truly unparalleled. Situated at the highest elevation on the street, every aspect of this home has been meticulously designed and crafted to create an ambiance of refined opulence.

As you enter the property, you are immediately greeted by a private driveway that winds its way through a lush nature preserve. The serene surroundings shield the home from the sounds of traffic, creating a sense of tranquility and seclusion. The driveway itself is beautifully landscaped, with native plants and trees adding to the natural beauty of the estate.

The interiors of this beachfront estate are a testament to luxurious living. Exquisite marble finishes adorn the living spaces, creating an aura of timeless elegance. The grand open living room and spacious kitchen provide the perfect setting for entertaining guests. The kitchen is a chef's dream, featuring not one, but two lavish butlers' pantries, which are equipped with a wine conservatory and a laundry space, combining functionality with luxury. The kitchen also boasts an informal living room, creating a comfortable space to lounge while breakfast



or meals are being prepared.

The master bedroom is a masterpiece, and visitors are struck by the spaciousness and natural light that pours in from the large windows. The room is complete with a stairway leading up to a "Romeo and Juliet"-style balcony, which overlooks the bedroom and provides a stunning view of the ocean.

An additional staircase leads to the observatory deck on the roof of the home, where one can stargaze under clear Florida skies. The master bedroom also boasts a luxurious bathroom, complete with a soaking tub with panoramic views, walk-in shower and dual vanities.

The guesthouse on the property provides a private retreat, perfect for hosting family and friends. Sliding glass doors open up to the outdoor deck space, where one can revel in the sparkling pool and views



of the pristine coastline.

The outdoor spaces have been thoughtfully designed, with an astroturf backyard, an outdoor kitchen and grille area. Descend the deck stairs, and you'll find yourself stepping onto the sandy beach, where you can enjoy the soothing sounds of the ocean, collect sharks' teeth, or go for a scenic jog.

Don't miss this rare opportunity to experience ultimate luxury beachfront living at 969 Ponte Vedra Blvd. Book an exclusive showing and embark on a journey of refined coastal living, where every moment is imbued with the grandeur of the ocean and the splendor of this remarkable estate.

**Represented by Yellowfin**  
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Cute clean, new floors, NEW ROOF! Concrete block home on cul-de-sac in highly desirable Sawgrass TPC! North exposed home features a tropical private fully fenced backyard. Enjoy cool evening breezes on the screened covered lanai. Water the budding flowers & plants from your irrigation well. Home features a brand new architectural shingle roof, new flooring, new lighting, plus new insulation to help keep utilities bill low. Home comes equipped with new kitchen appliances and also features hurricane shutters! Gather the family around the stone fireplace w/ open floor plan to kitchen/dining area. HVAC recently cleaned and checked, as well as garage doors serviced. Just a short walk to the Yards for a game of pickleball or round of executive golf then dinner at 3 Palms! Offered for \$649,000

### QUEENS HARBOR CUSTOM HOME



1205 Windsor Harbor Dr., Jacksonville  
 6BR/5BA - 6480 SF

This custom Home sits 14 feet above sea level overlooking expansive, breath-taking, water-surround views. Tropical & breezy elements define the lifestyle of this well-appointed Mediterranean home. Situated on almost 1 half acre, this beautiful home boasts not only a private circular drive w/ 4 car garage, plus large fenced yard featuring paving stones, a tropical pool, cabana bath, hot tub, pool deck, and 20 foot boat dock! NEW ROOF! 2 story stone foyer featuring custom built wrought iron & Saturnia staircase. Gracious primary suite w/ private bath, large closets. 2 laundry rooms, downstairs private guest suite, wine cellar! Upstairs features 4 bedrooms w/ Jack & Jill Baths + huge upstairs retreat w/ balcony. Offered for \$2,550,000.

### MARSH LANDING



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165 Greencrest Dr., Ponte Vedra Beach  
 4BR/4BA - 3401 SF

Classic one story Mediterranean pool home! Welcome home to loads of natural light, high ceilings, rounded corners, and exquisite architectural details. Perfect for entertaining. There are three large disappearing glass sliders that surround the pool deck and create a tropical feel of nature throughout the main living areas. The home has lots of privacy and a spectacular view overlooking the lagoon from the pool deck. The present owners have lived in the home since 1995 and have lovingly cared for it. The home has never flooded and is all on one level. Great bones and a designers dream...the possibilities are endless. More details coming soon - should be in the MLS by the end of May.



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Contributed photos



The Boy Scout team from Troop 277 that assisted with this project.



The Scouts in action.

# Scout project revives church narthex with new tables

Boy Scout Jake Hilley of Troop 277 came to the rescue of Lord of Life Lutheran Church in Ponte Vedra Beach when he approached them to ask about any project he could take on, to reach his Eagle Scout rank. The answer: tables.

The little church that was once a stable, has been using picnic tables in its narthex that were also created by Boy Scouts more than a decade ago. They were functional and had multiple uses during its Pumpkin Patch, but many were falling apart.

On two recent weekends, Hilley and a handful of Boy Scouts, troop leaders led by Jamie Kranking and parents came out to build five sturdy, farmhouse-style tables, using pressure-treated wood with notched bases, side stretchers, boxed aprons and windowpane finishes on the durable composite tops.

“These tables could be sold at an outdoor furniture store, they are so well made and beautifully designed,” said Sheila Kolesaire, the church council president. “We are delighted to have

tables that are easy for aging congregation members to sit down at as well as women in dresses or skirts. It was a bit of a challenge with aging picnic tables that had attached benches.”

This is one of several Eagle Scout projects at Lord of Life in the last year. Only 4% of Boy Scouts achieve Eagle rank, the highest level in Scouts. It requires a project with significant scope, planning, fundraising and leadership.

“I was happy to do this project and learned a lot about woodworking, design,

cutting, precise measurements and assembly,” said Hilley. “It was great to see the finished tables and know they’ll be used every week.”

Lord of Life Lutheran Church is part of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), a church of about 4 million members. Its roots date back through the mid-17th century when early Lutherans came to America from Europe. It is located at 276 Roscoe Blvd. N. in Ponte Vedra Beach.

## Nominations Now Open!



The Ponte Vedra Recorder, celebrating 54 years of community news excellence, will launch our fifth annual BEST OF THE BEST of Ponte Vedra, 32081 & 32082.

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Photos by Anthony Richards



Josephine Trinca was the oldest member, at 101 years old, at this year's Centenarian Luncheon at THE PLAYERS Community Senior Center and was honored with a rose and a special commemorative plaque.



Josephine Steiner shares a few words of wisdom with the crowd that she has discovered during her last 100 years.

# Secrets to a happy life shared during centenarian luncheon

By Anthony Richards

Birthdays are always a special day whether you are a child or an adult, and the St. Johns County Council on Aging did its part to honor residents who have had celebrated many birthdays over the years with their annual Centenarian Luncheon at THE PLAYERS Community Senior Center May 18.

There were two centenarians in attendance as Josephine Trinca was recognized for being 101 years old, while Josephine Steiner was 100 years old. They both received a rose and a plaque remembering the ceremony.

"Keep active and have a daughter that drives you nuts," Trinca chuckled as she gave her secret to a long life.

For Steiner, her 100 years went by so fast, which must have meant she was having a good time throughout it all.

"I can't believe how fast it went, but it's still going and I'm thankful for that," Steiner said.

Nineteen others 90 years of age or older were also honored and presented with a rose as part of the event.

Of those in their 90s, many had secrets to a happy life that they had discovered

over the years, such as 95-year-old Vera Combs, who stressed the importance of taking things one day at a time and not getting too far ahead of ourselves.

"The most important thing is to stay joyful in the Lord and be careful how much you eat and drink because you could lose your balance on the dance floor," Susan Kuntz, 95, said.

The event was held in loving memory of Don Blackburn who passed away February 4.

According to master of ceremonies Bruce Barber, Blackburn played an instrumental role in helping THE PLAYERS Community Senior Center get its start 16 years ago.

A portrait of Blackburn and his wife LaVonne hangs on the wall at the entrance of the center.

"Don positivity did not want a funeral, instead he said, 'Why don't we just get together and have a lunch at the senior center,' so this is Don's opportunity to say thank you to all of you," Barber said to those in attendance.

Together, Barber and Blackburn went around and spoke to several senior citizens in the area and got ideas about what they were most in need of and then they

went to the St. Johns County Commissioners at the time to try and get something approved that filled the void.

The result was eventual additional community support from local businesses such as the PGA Tour, and approval and construction of THE PLAYERS Community Senior Center.

"We needed a place where we could all

get together and congregate for days just like this," Barber said.

Members of Ponte Vedra Beach Rotary were on hand volunteering during the event by helping serve lunch and give roses to those being honored.

Barber closed the lunch with his signature phrase of "see you next year," to the crowd to close the ceremony.



An honor guard presented the national and state flags for the reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance prior to the event getting underway.



Members of the Rotary Club of Ponte Vedra Beach were on hand to serve food and present roses during the event.

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# Baseball Outing

The Palm Valley Rotary Club team thoroughly enjoyed their recent annual baseball outing. They appreciated the stadium's classic game time buffet, relaxing outdoors in each other's company and watching the Jacksonville Jumbo Shrimp take on the Norfolk Tides at 121 Financial Ballpark.

Contributed photo



# Jumbo Shrimp CEO speaks at luncheon

More than 50 members attended The Churchmen's luncheon on April 20 at Marsh Landing County Club.

Since it was April, they celebrated the start of the baseball season. Ken Babby, the CEO of the Jacksonville Jumbo Shrimp was the luncheon speaker. Babby told his life story, growing up in a baseball family. After college he worked for the Washington Post. With changes in the ownership at the Post, he decided to follow his lifetime

passion. So he bought a minor league baseball team. He has been the CEO of the Jumbo Shrimp since 2015 and has achieved great success in boosting the team's image and driving increased attendance.

Babby's two-fold mission is to create a memorable, unique, affordable and enjoyable fan experience, and maximize the opportunity to effect change in the community through charitable, wellness and education initiatives.



Contributed photo

Pictured from left are Peter Karpen, John Ekdahl, Ken Babby, Quentin Walsh and Craig Wantoch.

# Episcopal Children's Services CEO announces retirement

Following a long career of public service and leadership, Chief Executive Officer Connie Stophel has announced her retirement from Episcopal Children's Services (ECS), the second largest nonprofit in Northeast Florida. Stophel has informed the board of trustees of her decision to retire at the end of the year.



Connie Stophel

Since 2003, Stophel has been leading ECS as the chief executive officer; however, her career with the agency spans more than 30 years. With most of her professional career dedicated to Episcopal Children's Services, the agency has dramatically increased its revenues from \$13 million to \$98 million and expanded the service area to 14 counties in Florida after humble beginnings of a single child care center in 1966.

Stophel's commitment to excellence, superb leadership and dedication to innovation are only exceeded by her passion for the mission of creating opportunity for the children served by the agency to reach their full potential in life.

Episcopal Children's Services continues to be recognized as one of the largest nonprofits in the region and the expansion of its programs proves the commitment to excellence and quality. The work of the agency is consistently recognized by the Office of Head Start, demonstrating the agency's dedication to quality and effec-

tive programs and services.

"I am grateful to have served the Northeast and Central Florida community for more than 30 years and I am excited about the future of Episcopal Children's Services," Stophel said. "I am still and will always be invested in the mission and will work to ensure that all children reach their fullest potential."

Upon learning of Stophel's planned retirement, the board developed a search committee and has retained a national search firm with experience placing nonprofit leaders in large, leading organizations similar to Episcopal Children's Services. The search process is underway with the goal of having a new CEO in place no later than January 2024.

Episcopal Children's Services serves more than 27,000 children and their families in 14 counties in Florida. ECS offers School Readiness, Head Start and Early Head Start programs in St. Johns, Baker, Bradford, Clay, Duval, Nassau, Putnam, Marion, Dixie, Gilchrist, Lake, Levy, Citrus and Alachua counties.

ECS uses a research and best practices to help families ensure their children enter school ready to learn. Talented, dedicated teachers and staff work proactively with children from birth to age 5 and their families to build a strong educational foundation.

# PulteGroup's Centex brand returns to area

PulteGroup, one of the nation's largest homebuilders, is expanding its brand and product portfolio to serve first-time homebuyers in Northeast Florida. The company is announcing the return of its Centex brand in Jacksonville with the announcement of its newest community, Wells Landing.

"Wells Landing will offer affordably-priced homes with exceptional value to help more homebuyers realize the dream of homeownership," said Justin Dudley, vice president of land acquisition for PulteGroup's Northeast Florida Division. "Our Centex brand offers high-quality homes with included features that are designed to meet the needs of first-time buyers, and we are thrilled to reintroduce this offering to the Jacksonville market."

Wells Landing is a new construction community that will be comprised of 218 one- and two-story single-family homes

on 50-foot homesites at completion. The community will offer six home designs perfect for first-time homebuyers and growing families. Construction of two model homes will begin this spring and open in late summer. Wells Landing will have no CDD fees and low HOA fees.

Located in West Jacksonville off Morse Avenue east of Blanding Boulevard, Wells Landing is in the heart of the city, with close proximity to NAS JAX, Cecil Commerce Center, Downtown Jacksonville and I-295. Residents will enjoy convenient shopping and dining at Argyle Village Shopping Center and nearby access to the St. Johns River and outdoor recreation.

Those interested in Wells Landing are encouraged to join the VIP List for community updates. For more information, call 904-720-4271 or go to [centex.com/homes/florida/jacksonville](http://centex.com/homes/florida/jacksonville).



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PAGE 46

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## Butler Snow adds two attorneys with new Jacksonville office

Butler Snow LLP has announced that Emily F. Magee and Bailey N. Williams have joined the firm's Public Finance, Tax Incentives and Credit Markets practice group with a new office in Jacksonville. The addition of Jacksonville, the firm's 28th location and its first in Florida, comes just weeks after Butler Snow announced it was expanding into the Huntsville, Alabama, market and that it had formed a new strategic alliance with Maynor & Stiers LLC, a federal government relations firm.

"We are thrilled to welcome Emily and Bailey to Butler Snow and our national public finance practice," said Christopher R. Maddux, chair of Butler Snow. "This is another exciting moment in the firm's strategic expansion efforts as we continue growing to better serve our clients across key markets and practices."

Magee has extensive experience in public finance, health care finance and structured lending. She serves as bond counsel, disclosure counsel, underwriter's counsel, lender's counsel, borrower's counsel and trustee's counsel for tax-exempt and taxable financings, including governmental capital improvements and infrastructure, utilities, airports, seaports, affordable housing, senior living facilities, private and public hospitals, multi-state health systems, higher education charter schools, 501(c)3 organizations, industrial



development, community development and redevelopment projects.

Magee also often represents national and regional financial institutions and non-bank financial companies in a variety of structured lending transactions.

Magee has earned several distinctions throughout her career, including recently being selected by her peers for inclusion in The Best Lawyers in America for Public Finance Law (2023). She was previously recognized as a regular fellow of the American College of Bond Counsel and selected for Chambers USA: America's Leading Business Lawyers (2013-2022) as well as Florida Trend's "Legal Elite" (2017).

Magee received her bachelor's degree from Florida State University and earned her Juris Doctor from the University of Georgia School of Law.

Williams joins with experience in

public finance and health care finance. She represents clients as bond counsel, borrower's counsel and lender's counsel in connection with a variety of tax-exempt and taxable municipal and corporate bond financings across various industries, including health care and senior living facilities, charter schools and affordable housing.

Prior to beginning her legal career, Williams worked as a market analyst at a Washington, D.C.-based data analytics firm.

Williams received her bachelor's degree in economics from Florida State University. She received her Juris Doctor and Master of Laws in international and comparative law from Duke University School of Law.

Butler Snow's new Jacksonville, Florida, office is located at 6022 San Jose Blvd. South.

### The difference between lawyers and attorneys

Individuals who work outside of the legal profession cannot be blamed for thinking the terms "lawyer" and "attorney" are interchangeable. However, there is a subtle difference that distinguishes lawyers from attorneys and vice versa. The difference between lawyers and attorneys has a lot to do with where they work. According to the legal professional recruiting platform LegalJobs, an attorney is a legal professional with a law degree who practices law in court. While lawyers finish law school and pass the bar exam, they do not necessarily practice in a courtroom. Such professionals may serve as legal advisors or consultants in lieu of practicing in court.

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## ATTORNEY AT LAW

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# Davidson Realty adds 2 Realtors to team

With more than 30 years of experience, Davidson Realty has a reputation for dependability in Northeast Florida real estate. And with a full complement of talented Realtors, Davidson is a full-service office ready to guide buyers through the home-buying process in Jacksonville, Ponte Vedra, St. Augustine and throughout St. Johns County. The office recently announced the addition of two seasoned Realtors, Angela Strauss and Mike Kryachun.

Strauss joins Davidson Realty with more than 25 years of experience. She built a solid foundation at the University of Miami, where she earned her bachelor's degree and MBA. In addition to being a real estate agent in Florida, she is also a real estate broker in California.



Angela Strauss



Mike Kryachun

She has dedicated her career to helping her clients navigate the real estate market, both residential and commercial.

“Two of my great passions in life are home remodeling and gardening,” said Strauss. “It gives me an edge in the real estate market. I can really look at a property and see its intrinsic value, what it can or can't be. This is extremely beneficial,

whether I'm working with a first-time homebuyer or a client looking to expand their investment portfolio. That's what I love about being a real estate professional — helping my client find a property that can become their dream home or business.”

Kryachun's introduction to the world of real estate was an organic process, with all of his previous life experience leading him to Davidson Realty. He was raised with a strong appreciation for foundational skills. His childhood was spent learning all about mechanics from his father. As a young adult, Kryachun went on to hone his skills in framing homes and crafting fine cabinetry, before realizing his talents could best be used in real estate.

“As one of 12 children, I'm used to absorbing a lot of different input all at once,” laughs Kryachun. “I enjoy working with clients to flesh out exactly what their needs are. My background helps me examine a property from a very technical perspective, which in turn means that I can really assist my clients in understanding what they're looking at and, more importantly, what they can expect.”

Davidson Realty was founded in 1989 by Jim and Sherry Davidson. Leaders in the Northeast Florida market, they have a dedicated and professional group of Realtors and support staff to assist clients with their real estate needs.

To see Davidson's full roster of real estate professionals, go to [davidsonrealty-inc.com/team/davidson-realty](http://davidsonrealty-inc.com/team/davidson-realty).



Contributed photos

# Treylor Park Launches New Restaurant in St. Augustine

PB&J chicken wings, cheesesteak egg rolls, fried chicken apple pie sandwiches — local diners and tourists can enjoy fresh takes on Southern classics like these and more at the newest Treylor Park restaurant, set to open in St. Augustine by the end of the month.

Treylor Park Restaurant Group co-

owners Trey Wilder and Rick Kunzi have had their eyes set on the Ancient City for almost a decade. The duo plans to build off the winning formula of four prior Treylor Park locations across Northeast Florida and South Georgia.

“Where St. Augustine is right now, you can feel this new energy coming in with

the culinary and hospitality industry,” Kunzi said. “There's a lot of great, new businesses opening, very similar to the scene in Savannah nine years ago when we opened the first Treylor Park.”

The new location will offer unique dining experiences for every kind of guest. Inside, a double-wide diner design

creates an atmosphere like the inside of an upscale airstream trailer, including a curved metal ceiling and chandeliers over the bar. Guests who prefer dining al fresco will enjoy a large back patio with pergola, perfect for St. Augustine's year-

**RESTAURANT** continues on **Page 48**

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## GUEST COLUMN

# Build your portfolio on a solid foundation

Written by/for Wells Fargo Advisors

Asset allocation can be to investment planning what the foundation is to a house or the chassis is to a car. It's what everything else is built upon. And just as important as constructing a house on a firm foundation, having the right asset allocation can be vital to helping you work toward your financial goals.

Although the name may sound intimidating, asset allocation is just a technical term for a rather simple concept. It's merely how your portfolio is divided up among different types of investments, such as stocks, bonds and what are called "cash alternatives."

## How it works

Using asset allocation to build a portfolio designed to help you reach your long-term goals requires taking three primary factors into consideration:

**Goals.** These are simply what you're investing to achieve. For many of us, a major goal is to enjoy a financially secure retirement. If you have younger children or grandchildren, helping them afford higher education without building a mountain of debt is likely another goal. Or maybe you'd also like to make a luxury purchase — such as buying a vacation home or dream car or taking an exotic vacation — down the road.

**Time horizon.** One reason why knowing your goals is important is because it helps determine your time horizon (how

long you have until you need to tap into your investments). If you're 28, for example, and want to retire at 68, your time horizon is 40 years. Simple as that.

**Risk tolerance.** Your risk tolerance is the amount of volatility in your portfolio's value you're comfortable with. If you find you can't sleep because you're worried about your investments — especially when there's market volatility — you probably need to adjust your asset allocation to suit your risk tolerance.

## Putting the pieces together

With those factors in hand, you can begin to piece your asset allocation together. The primary building blocks, at least to begin with, are likely to include:

**Stocks.** Historically, stocks have

offered attractive returns, but along with those returns, there have also been periods of volatility. If you're young, you generally have a long-time horizon — especially when it comes to retirement. That may allow you to have a larger allocation to stocks because you have longer to ride out any short-term market volatility that occurs.

**Bonds.** One reason investors like bonds in a portfolio is because their prices have historically been relatively stable. By owning bonds, an investor's aim may be to help manage his or her portfolio's overall value when there's volatility in the stock market. The larger the proportion of bonds, the more steady

PORTFOLIO continues on Page 49

## Restaurant

Continued from 47

round sunny weather.

For takeout meals, a new self-serve kiosk concept will be introduced for grab-and-go customers.

"We're constantly refining the way we present our food, our menus, the interior, the flow," said Wilder. "We're always working on it. It's humbling to see the growth and success of Treylor Park over the years, especially in such a tough industry. That's why we continue challenging ourselves to provide the best dining

experience possible."

As with previous Treylor Park locations, the family-friendly menu offers an elevated vision of Southern comfort food that feels distinctly off the beaten path. That's because partners Wilder and Kunzi aimed to create a culinary journey full of adventurous dishes that diners can't experience anywhere else.

"It's all about keeping people interested and excited," said Kunzi. "That's how we've built and maintained such a following. Take our PB&J chicken wings. The initial thought makes people go cross-eyed until they find out we use an Asian peanut flavor, paired with our homemade peach jam as a dipping sauce. They're not your mom's PB&J with the crust cut off. They've got their own intellectual flavors."

Along with the Southern food comes a focus on Southern hospitality, Wilder explained.

"Approachable comfort is something we strive for," he said. "With so many people from different walks of life and areas of the country coming in, we love when they have that comfort here. You



can sit down and feel like you're in our home."

Located at 61 Spanish St., Treylor Park has ample inside and outside seating for large groups and private events. For menus, hours and directions to Treylor Park St. Augustine, go to [treylorpark.com](http://treylorpark.com).



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## Portfolio

Continued from 48

the portfolio's overall value should remain. Keep in mind, however, that bonds' returns have been significantly less than stocks.

**Cash alternatives.** These are relatively lower-risk, lower-return investments. On the upside, they can be easily be converted into cash when it's needed. On the downside, their returns may not even keep up with inflation.

Of course, there are many other investments to consider, many with varying degrees of historical risk vs. return. Just remember that you should intend for each type of investment to play a particular role, such as providing the potential for

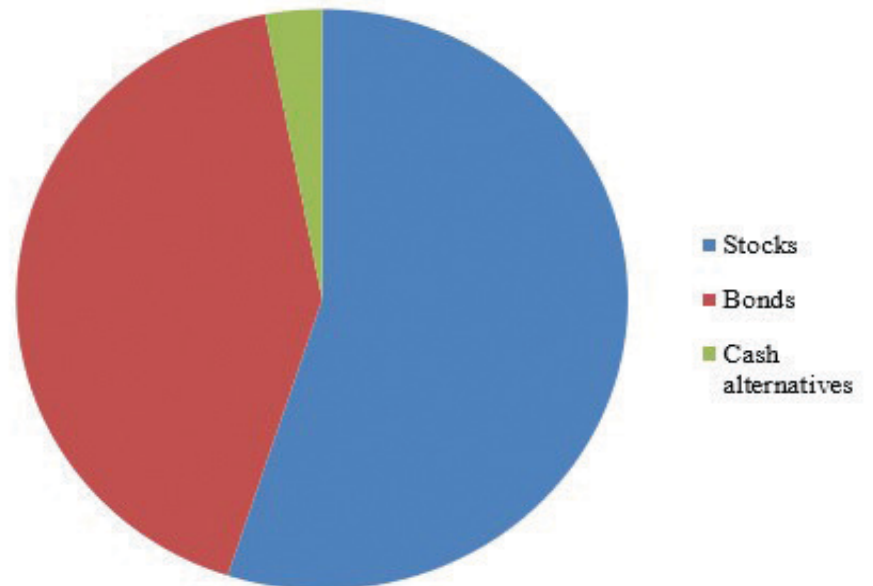
growth or income or stability, in your overall allocation, and you need to understand the risks involved.

Once you've decided on the types of investments to include, you need to determine how much of each is appropriate. If you're looking to grow your investments' value, you'll likely have a larger stock allocation and a smaller one for bonds. The result would be a portfolio with more potential volatility than one with a larger proportion of bonds. You should ask yourself if that's a trade-off you're comfortable with.

### Get help if you need it

Although asset allocation is a relatively simple concept, you can see it has lots of "moving parts." That's one reason why many investors opt to work with

## What a sample asset allocation may look like



a professional financial advisor. If you decide to seek help, look for an advisor who will first get to know you and then help create an investment plan that's built around (what else?) an appropriate asset allocation.

Asset allocation cannot eliminate the risk of fluctuating prices and uncertain returns.

**This article was written by/for Wells Fargo Advisors and provided courtesy of Jamie Seim, CFP, Senior Vice President – Investment Officer in Ponte Vedra Beach at 904-273-7917.**

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# In the Arts

Send your arts news to  
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THURSDAY, MAY 25, 2023 · PAGE 50

www.PonteVedraRecorder.com

## Beaches Fine Arts Series to present Jacksonville Symphony Orchestra on May 26

Beaches Fine Arts Series closes its 50th anniversary season of concerts featuring performers from its history by presenting the Jacksonville Symphony Orchestra in a concert of patriotic music, celebrating Memorial Day weekend on Friday, May 26. The orchestra has appeared 16 times in the series, more than any other ensemble.

The music will begin with “America the Beautiful” and conclude with a Festival Overture on “The Star-Spangled Banner,” and the concert will include famed pieces by Strauss, Copland and James Weldon Johnson. Doors open at 6:45 p.m. for the 7:30 p.m. concert. Arrive early for seating for this free performance.

A champagne reception follows the concert, with an art exhibit by Lisa Lofton.

In its 73 seasons, the Jacksonville Symphony has brought exceptional music to listeners in the community, across Florida and far beyond. Annually, it reaches more than 113,000 individuals with more than 125 performances.

The orchestra maintains a roster of some of the world’s finest musicians in performances

that continue to reach new levels of artistic excellence.

Lofton is the president of the Art Center Cooperative Inc. and the vice president of the Jacksonville Artists’ Guild. She is also a member of the Art League of Jacksonville.

She enjoys the use of a variety of mediums but works primarily with acrylic on canvas. Her current works depict Jacksonville and Florida. Her paintings are influenced by the architecture, people, landscape and industry of her city and state. Her bright illustrative style invites an emotional connection to a time and place.

Lofton enjoys the combination of bright acrylic colors, washes, charcoal, resin and ink. She is continuing to work on an ongoing series titled, “Vintage Florida. She has been commissioned to depict local buildings, cityscapes and Jacksonville iconography.

The concert will be held at St. Paul’s by-the-Sea Episcopal Church, 465 11th St. North, Jacksonville Beach.

For more information, go to beachesfinearts.org.



Contributed photo

The Jacksonville Symphony Orchestra

## Jacksonville Symphony Announces Inaugural Jazz Concert and Series

The Jacksonville Symphony will hold its inaugural Jazz Concert on June 4. Curated by the symphony’s principal tubist James Jenkins and featuring the newly

formed Jacksonville Jazz Collective, this one-of-a-kind program spotlights hits from big bands to iconic composers and features very limited, general admis-

sion seating as Jacoby Symphony Hall is transformed into an intimate jazz club.

“This special concert will deliver the wide variety of colors, sounds and styles

that characterize the sheer magnitude of jazz as a genre,” said Jenkins. “We’re all very excited to present the opportunity for folks to experience this wonderful art form in a space and venue designed specifically for acoustic music.”

The featured musicians for this performance are members of the Jacksonville Jazz Collective, a newly formed group of local talent curated by Jenkins.

“As one of music’s most expressive and inventive genres, jazz has contributed to and been a reflection of American culture for decades,” said Steven Libman, president and CEO. “We are delighted to bring jazz to the Jacksonville Symphony and cannot wait for audiences to discover even more of what Jacksonville’s musical culture has to offer.”

The June 4 performance is also an exclusive sneak peek at the 2023-24 Season’s Jazz Series, the first of its kind for the symphony. The new series will feature three performances: a big band concert, a trio performance and a grand finale featuring acclaimed trumpeter Terence Blanchard.

For more information and to secure tickets, go to JaxSymphony.org.

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# Local author takes readers back to 1900 Paris Exposition

In his latest novel, “When the Old World Was New,” Benjamin Walker allows readers to travel back in time to experience the excitement of the 1900 Paris Exposition, a world fair, through his characters’ eyes.

His latest book picks up where “Return of the Native Son” (2018) ends and spans from about 1900 to 1918 at the end of World War I.

Even though it is a sequel to “Return of the Native Son” and the fourth book in the Jones family series, it stands on its own as it tells a whole new story with tiny glimpses into the past.

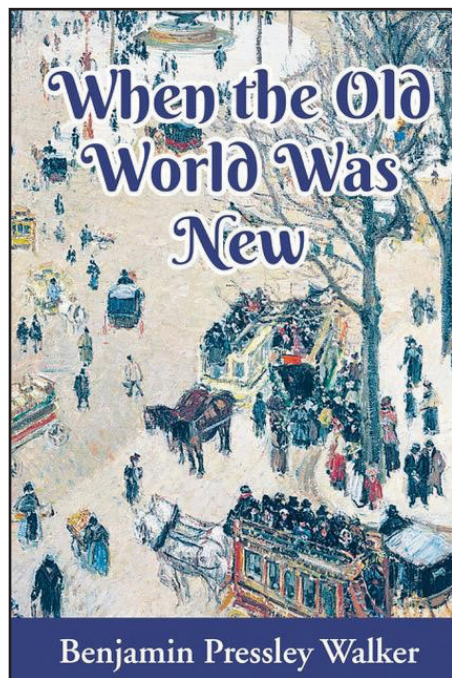
“Antonio Jones Jr. (Tony), is the third generation of Jones’,” said Walker. “He was raised by his mixed-race father who was a Union Army officer who passed for white and his mother who was white. His mother who was from Georgia was a teacher at the Penn School. Tony went to the Penn School and became very educated and got into Harvard. But after going to Harvard for a bit, he decided he wanted to become an artist and dropped out of Harvard and headed to Paris. He didn’t have much luck and returned to Georgia and met the daughter of a plantation owner and they fell in love.”

That didn’t sit well with the community because they were a mixed-race couple.

“People didn’t like that and they had a lot of problems,” Walker said. “The Ku Klux Klan tried to kill him, but he escaped and they ran off to Paris so he could try to establish himself as an artist. That is where this book picks up.”

In order to escape the bigotry of the South, as a character in the prologue of the book says, they were headed to the “new old world.”

Walker’s book, “When the Old World Was New,” allows the readers to take a peek inside Paris in the 1900s as the streets rumble with construction and dirt swirls in the air in preparation for the 1900 Paris Exposition as well as the excitement of the characters interacting with new inventions such as electricity, electric lights, steam locomotives, Ferris wheels, telephones, motor cars, moving sidewalks and more.



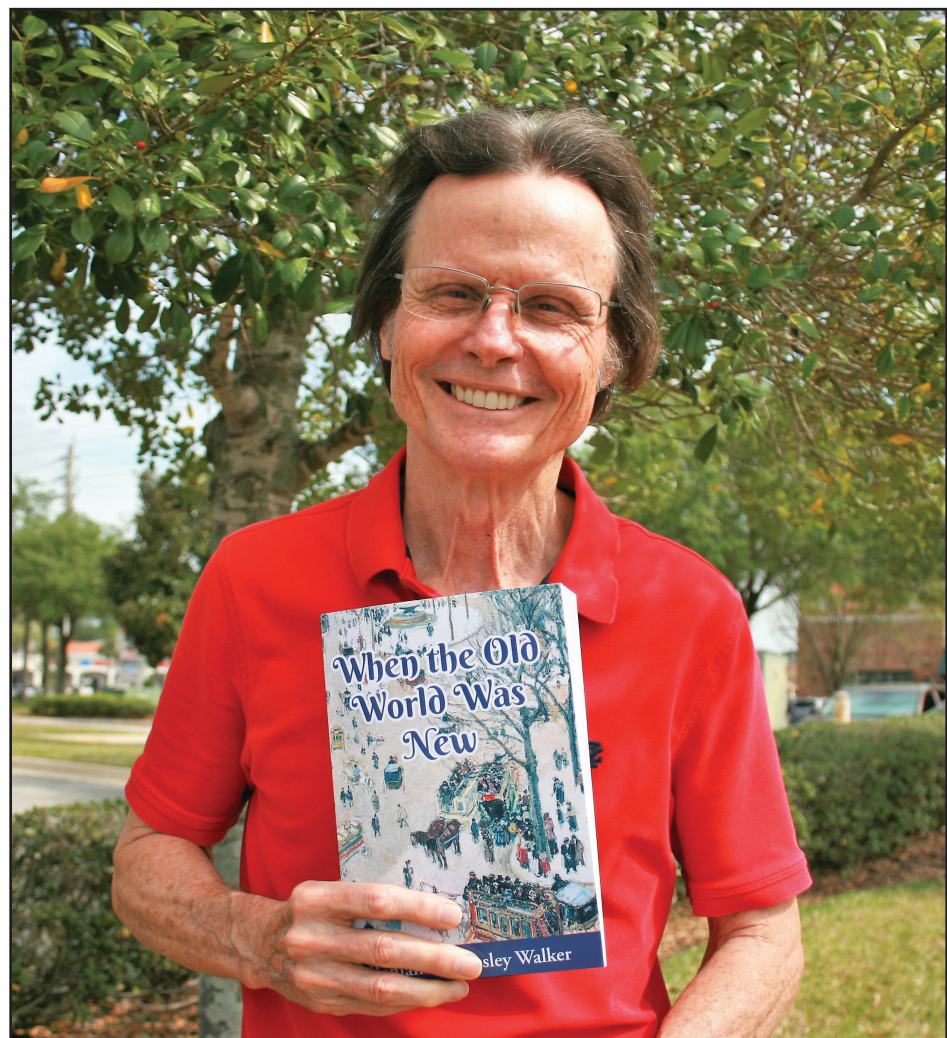
“When the Old World Was New” by Benjamin Walker

The exposition also paved the way for many artists such as Monet and Matisse, to have the opportunity to make a name for themselves by entering work into the exhibitions and contests, so it was a perfect opportunity for the main character Tony to arrive and stake his claim.

Tony’s wife, Jackie, was an actress but wasn’t finding opportunities in Paris because she couldn’t speak French, so she traveled to London to try to continue her stage acting there and she becomes quite successful. While she is gone, Tony meets a woman named Madame Goldman who becomes his benefactor and helps launch his career.

According to Walker, many twists and turns transpire throughout the book that causes the reader to laugh out loud or say “I knew it!” “When the Old World Was New” is filled with colorful characters with deep pockets and deep secrets, some of which are not revealed until the very end.

The book has a great deal of French in it, but the response from the other characters usually makes it easy to understand what was said and if not, readers might learn a little French in the process.



Contributed photos

Author Benjamin Walker with his latest novel.

The story follows the effects World War I had on Paris itself, all of the characters, as well as their careers.

Walker spent time in France several times, but most recently from September 2021 to April 2022 absorbing the culture and language.

“So, I spent seven months in the South of France,” he said. “I got to know my landlady, who was American, pretty well. She married a Frenchman and raised her two children there.”

His previous landlady runs a book club in France once a month and recently she had some exciting news for him.

“She sent me an email saying ‘When the Old World Was New’ is in all the book stores and all her friends are read-

ing it,” he said. “I went online with my distributor, Ingram, and saw that they had sold more copies in France than in the U.S.”

“When the Old World Was New” is available at Jaminpress.com, Amazon.com and Barnes and Noble bookstore.

Walker, who lives in Jacksonville, is a graduate of the University of the South in Sewanee, Tennessee, as well as San Francisco State University, where he received an M.A. degree in creative writing.

Walker has a book signing lined up at the Book Loft in Fernandina from 1 to 3 p.m. June 3.

Future book signings will be posted on jaminpress.com.

# Arts event raises \$95K for educational programs

This year’s Beaches — A Celebration of the Arts annual fundraising event held on May 7 at Casa Marina Hotel in Jacksonville Beach raised \$95,000 to support educational programs at First Coast Cultural Center. The nonprofit is a gathering place to learn, experience, and appreciate the arts and culture in its many forms.

For more than 28 years, the organization has provided opportunities for adults, children and families through classes, exhibits, programs, music therapy services

for children with disabilities, activities, and memberships open to the local community and beyond.

This year, the elegant oceanfront arts gala generated funding for the nonprofit and provided positive economic impact in the region through support for local businesses, individuals and nonprofits.

For more information on the First Coast Cultural Center, go to [firstcoastculturalcenter.org](http://firstcoastculturalcenter.org).

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# Sports



THURSDAY, MAY 25, 2023 • PAGE 52

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Photos courtesy of Ponte Vedra High Athletics

The Ponte Vedra High boys' track and field squad won the first team state title in school history this past weekend at UNF.

## Sharks win school's first team track and field state title

*Lebowitz, Jackson, Madaffari  
win individual golds*

By Dipak Rajhansa

The Florida high school track and field season concluded last weekend at the University of North Florida's Hodges Stadium and the Ponte Vedra Sharks boys' team won the state championship withstanding a late charge from Miami Belen Jesuit Prep and Miami Northwestern.

The state championship meet was the culmination of a season that could be described as both impressive and improbable; it marked the first track and field state championship in school history and the first for any St. Johns County team in a decade.

The boys' path to a team championship was predicated on strong performances in the field events, and that was where the Sharks proved dominant.

Led by senior co-captain Nathan Lebowitz, the Sharks scored 48 points in the field events – enough points alone to secure the championship without scoring a single point in the running events.

The competition began with the boys shot put and the Sharks struck early. Junior Jake Guarnera led the charge finishing second with a school and personal record of 58 feet 2 inches, which beat his previous record by nearly seven feet.

He was followed by Lebowitz, who also had a personal record with a throw of 56 feet 9 inches to finish in 3rd place and senior Layne Swafford finished 6th with a throw of 53 feet.



The Sharks' three individual gold medalists included Bella Madaffari in girls javelin, Nathan Lebowitz in boys discus, and Vinny Jackson in boys javelin.

Junior javelin thrower Vinny Jackson, who was seeded third entering the meet, unleashed an enormous throw of 187 feet on his very first attempt to secure the gold medal for the event and set both personal and school records in the process.

In the discus, Lebowitz successfully defended his 2022 state championship with a throw of 183 feet 10 inches.

The Sharks added points in the pole vault with senior Landen Scott earning 3rd place with a vault of 13 feet 9.5 inches, followed by senior Henry Gainer finishing fifth with the same height and junior Nick Desanto placing eighth with a jump of 13 feet 3 inches.

As the action turned to the track, the Sharks scored in the first event with the team of Ricky Circelli, Grant

Doherty, Davis Brown and Colby Green finishing with a school record time of 7:59.72 for fifth place in the 4x800 meter relay.

The only other Shark to reach the podium in the track portion was senior Wyatt Rogers finishing eighth in the 400-meter hurdles with a time of 56.35 seconds.

The lady Sharks also had success at the meet and were headlined with junior Bella Madaffari, won the state championship with a javelin throw of 116 feet 8 inches.

Also earning all-state honors were two relay teams, as the 4x800 team of Lily Darnell, Sofia Bushkell, Hilarree Vega and Daisy Ross finished eighth with a time of 9:41.20 and the 4x400 team of Sasha Crowe, Darnell, Maya Richards and Mia Chigounis crossing the line in a school record time of 3:58.09 and also finishing eighth.

Both teams are coached by Zane Guile, who is completing his ninth year as head coach of the Sharks.

"We have a group that had a dream to win a state championship this year," Guile said. "The dedication, hard work and selflessness exhibited by this group was on display all season. We tell our athletes that 'yesterday's greatness is today's average,' and try to inspire them to achieve their very best on the track and in life. The athletes that buy into our system very often achieve outstanding results.

PVHS athletic director Michael Harrison also commented on the season, "I'm excited for the accomplishments of this team. Coach Guile and coach Circelli have created a team environment that reflects the image we expect of all our athletes. Winning is great, but demonstrating great character and sportsmanship is the ultimate compliment I can give these great student athletes."



# SWIM, BIKE AND RUN TO VICTORY



The spring edition of the 2023 Game On! Ponte Vedra Triathlon took place May 21 at Mickler's Landing Beach Park in Ponte Vedra Beach. Joe Ventura of Ormond Beach won the Olympic triathlon overall, while Kristen Vlaun of St. Johns was the highest finishing female.

Photos by Randy Lefko



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<p><b>Private Party Line Rates</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$14.00 1 week • \$23.00 2 weeks</li> <li>• \$31.00 3 weeks • \$37.50 4 weeks</li> </ul> <p>Add lines \$2.15 each (Couches, TV's, Beds, Household Items, Etc.)</p>	<p><b>Commercial Line Rates</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$22.50 1 week • \$39.00 2 weeks</li> <li>• \$55.50 3 weeks • \$70.00 4 weeks</li> </ul> <p>Add lines \$2.15 each (Animals, Cars, Renting or Selling a Home or to Advertise Your Business or Services)</p>	<p><b>Employment Spotlight/Real Estate</b></p> <p>1x2 (2"x2") \$40.50/1 wk • \$70.00/2 wks. • \$100/3 wks. 1x3 (2"x3") \$61.50/1 wk. • \$112.00/2 wks. • \$150.00/3 wks. 2x2 (4"x2") \$82.00/1 wk. • \$153.00/2 wks. • \$200.00/3 wks. 2x3 (4"x3") \$123.00/1 wk. • \$225/2 wks. • \$300/3 wks.</p>	<p><b>Business &amp; Worship Directory</b></p> <p>1.5 x 2 \$55.00/month 1.5 x 4 \$96.52/month 1.5 x 6 \$149.52/month</p> <p>Rate Guide for: <i>The Recorder</i></p>
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www.pontevedrarecorder.com

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**Assets located in:** Opa Locka, FL 33054  
Surplus parts, supplies, machinery, equipment and vehicles.  
Auction will consist of drilling bits, drill tools, cable and rotary equipment, core drilling machines and supplies, warehouse equipment, hand tools, power tools, compressors, milling equipment, office furniture and equipment, warehouse equipment, vehicles, crew boats used in drilling, vast amount of hardware, drill rigs, and so much more.

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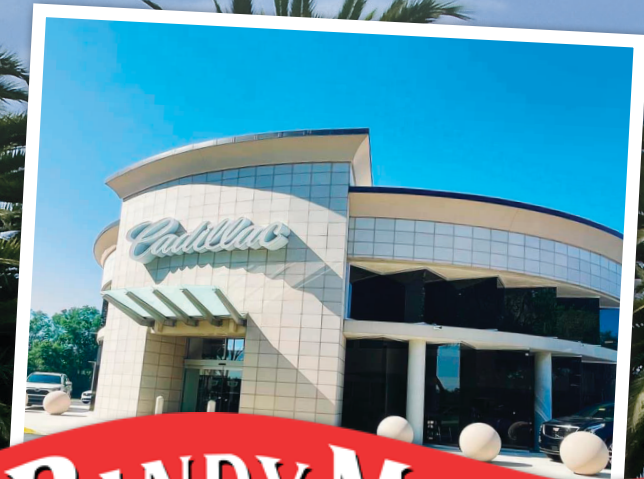






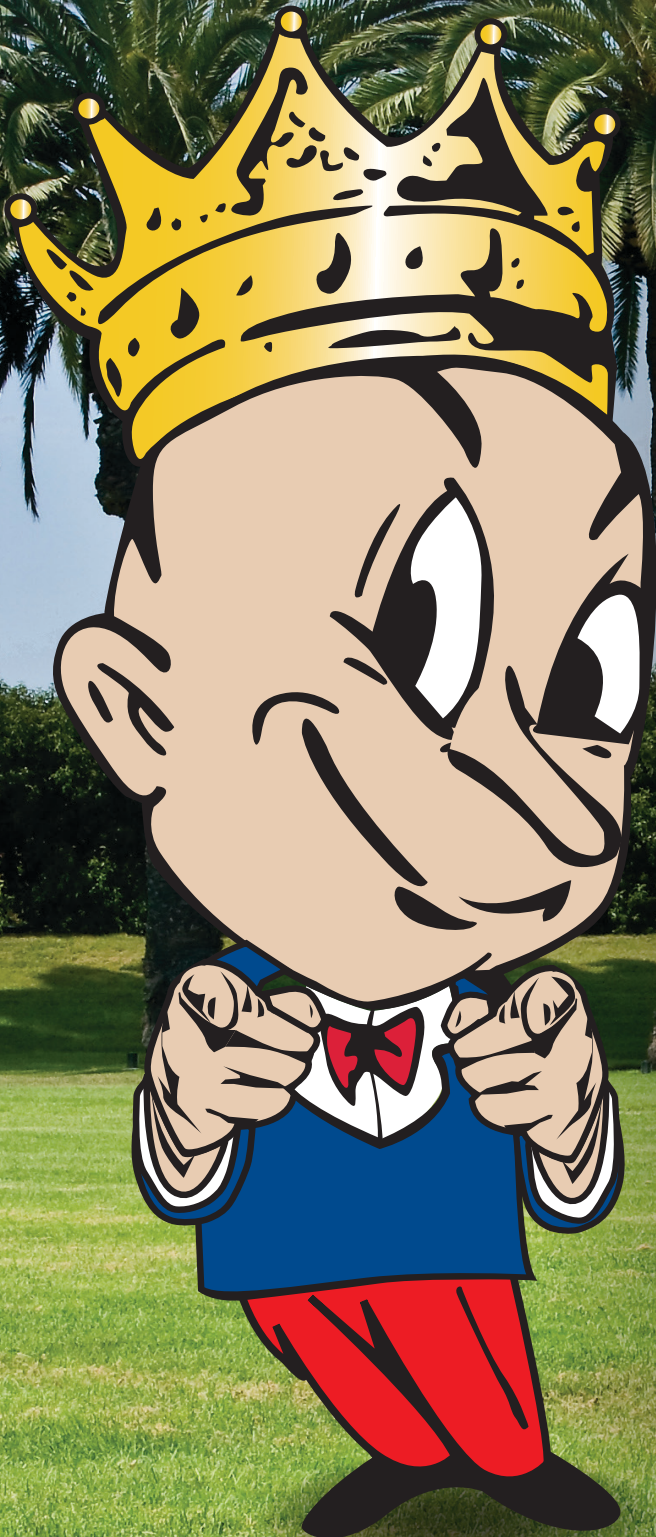
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