

**Gift of Giving - Local Nonprofit Guide** Page 18

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## Home sales down from December

#### **By Shaun Ryan**

The housing market in the six counties of Northeast Florida is improving for prospective buyers, according to statistics from January released this week by the Northeast Florida Association of Realtors.

But single-family home prices remain high, especially in St. Johns County, where the median price was \$519,000 — still, a reduction of 6.8% from December.

Indicators show promise. The region's median price actually decreased by 2.2% to \$375,000 and the median number of days on

SALES continues on Page 3



# Celebrities take aim at famed 'Island Green' for charities

Furyk wins on shot within three feet of hole

#### By Anthony Richards

THE PLAYERS continued its tradition in the weeks leading up to the tournament by hosting its charity shootout on Feb.

Five celebrities from former athletes to actors took part in seeing how close to the pin they could hit shots at the famed No. 17 Island Green at TPC Sawgrass.

The charities represented included The Furyk Foundation, Guardian Catholic Schools, The Foster Closet, Tesori Family Foundation and Operation New Hope, with each receiving \$5,000.

Hitting it closest to the pin was professional golfer Jim Furyk, who due to his prowess as a golfer was required to

**ISLAND GREEN** continues on **Page 5** 



Photo by Anthony Richards

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



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#### **BRIEFS**

#### **Explore the beach at GTM Research Reserve**

Join volunteers at the Guana Tolomato Matanzas National Estuarine Research Reserve (GTM) for a beach exploration 9-11 a.m. Saturday, Feb. 17. Collect seashells, search for shark teeth and learn about coastal wildlife. Meet at GTM Research Reserve Visitor Center, 505 Guana River Road, Ponte Vedra Beach.

Wear comfortable closed-toe shoes. Hat, insect repellent, water and sunscreen are recommended. The event is free but online registration is required. To register, go to gtmnerr.org/visit/events.

#### **Palm Valley Market every Tuesday**

The Palm Valley Market is held from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. every Tuesday inside the Palm Valley Community Center, 148 Canal Road. The market offers fresh produce, baked goods, local honey, tea, seasonal treats, soap, jewelry, plants and more.

#### Public meetings for county plans begin Feb. 20

As St. Johns County embarks on an aggressive public engagement effort for community participation in an update of its Comprehensive Plan and a new Strategic Plan, meeting dates have been announced, as well as other opportunities to participate. Community meetings will be held from Feb. 20-22, with additional meetings in different parts of the county to be scheduled in March.

Upcoming meetings will be:

- Feb. 20, 6-7:30 p.m. at Pacetti Bay Middle School Auditorium, 245 Meadowlark Lane
- Feb. 21, 6-7:30 p.m. at Southeast Branch Library, 6670 U.S. 1 South
- Feb. 22, 6-7:30 p.m. at Ponte Vedra Concert Hall, 1050 A1A North

The dates and locations for March meetings will be announced later.

The Comprehensive Plan is a document required by the state to be evaluated for updates at least every seven years and is designed to guide the future actions of a jurisdiction. For St. Johns County it will present a long-range vision for a community's future with long-range goals, objectives and policies.

The Strategic Plan is the county's attempt to engage the public to develop strategic priorities and guide the allocation of resources in the future.

In addition to the in-person meetings, the county has announced the availability of public kiosks throughout the community with printed copies of the Comprehensive Plan survey. Those locations are:

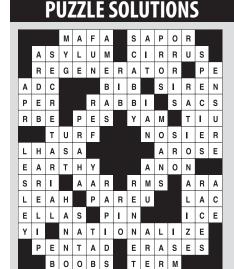
- Anastasia Island Branch Library, 124 Sea Grove Main St.
- Bartram Trail Branch Library, 60 Davis Pond Blvd.

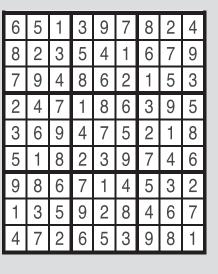
- Hastings Branch Library, 6195 S. Main St.
- Main Branch Library, 1960 N. Ponce De Leon Blvd.
- Ponte Vedra Beach Branch Library, 101 Library Blvd.
  - Southeast Branch Library, 6670 U.S. 1 South
- St. Johns County Utility Department, 1205 S.R. 16
- St. Johns County Permit Center, 4040 Lewis Speedway
- St. Johns County Auditorium, 500 San Sebastian View

The public can also access the Comprehensive Plan at SJCPlanUpdate.com to provide feedback through an online survey and interactive idea wall, as well as download and electronically share the printed version of the survey.

— Compiled by Shaun Ryan

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#### Sales

Continued from 1

the market increased by 24.4% to 56. Other data supports this trend. The active inventory rose by 22.1% to 5,638 homes, which represents a 5.2-month supply. Also, new listings were up by 53.6% to 2,853 homes.

Typically, January is a sluggish month for real estate, so this data is not surprising.

Association President Rory Dubin noted that there were 1,081 closed sales, a decrease of 30.6%, and there were 1,284 pending sales, a 7.3%

decrease.

Figures for this month, if they follow tradition, will see a change.

"February is customarily a strong month for Northeast Florida and results this month will indicate if we are seeing normal seasonality or a greater overall shift in the marketplace," Dubin stated.

In St. Johns County, the median days on the market increased 25.6% to 76, with closed sales decreasing by 37.5% to 277 and pending sales decreasing by 4.7% to 344. Meanwhile, new listings shot up 78.6% to 784.

At the same time, the active inventory of single-family homes rose by 20%

to 1,640, which is a 5.9-month supply.

Duval County followed the same general trend. The median price for a single-family home in January was \$324,945, a decrease from December of 2.5%. The median days on the market rose to 50, a 35.1% increase.

Closed sales decreased by 21.4% to 574, and pending sales fell 11.9% to 632. At the same time, the active inventory rose by 24.1% to 2,627 homes, which is a 4.6-month supply.

For buyers, the best indicator may be the Home Affordability Index, which measures whether a typical family earns enough to qualify for a mortgage on a typical home — based on current interest rates, the median income and median house prices — assuming the buyers make a 20% downpayment.

A score of 100 indicates that this family would have precisely the income needed to qualify. A higher number indicates that the family has more than enough. A score lower than 100 means that the family would not qualify.

Across Northeast Florida, the index is 70, an increase of 3.7%. In Duval, the index is 81, and increase of 4.5%. In St. Johns, the index is just 51, though still an increase of 10.9%.







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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**

# **Bush daisies: Brown but not dead!**

"If we had no winter, the spring would not be so pleasant." — Anne Bradstreet

#### **By Kathy Esfahani**



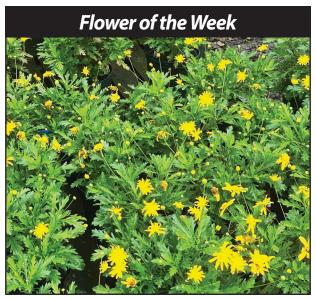
Kathy Esfahani

Many of us are frustrated with the appearance of our beautiful flowers and trees.

Winter's cooler temperatures can be challenging for our favorite heatloving plants. But do not despair — many of the flowers and trees that look so sad at the moment are not dead! Do not pull them up or

cut off the brown leaves. These brown areas can help protect the plants against future cold temperatures. It is best to wait until frost season is completely over before pruning.

Bush daisies are a perfect example of plants that may be currently brown and cold but will return beautifully in the spring. You can help your bush daisies stay warm by piling 3 inches of new mulch on the plant's root zone. (Begin at the main stem of the plant and cover the ground outward under the canopy of the leaves) When warmer temperatures are here to stay, cut down the brown stems and leaves to make room for new growth.



Photos provided by Kathy's Creative Gardens & Nursery

#### **Bush daisy**

This will also be a good time to apply an all-purpose fertilizer to help the plant begin to grow.

Once spring and summer arrive, bush daisies will thrive and produce yellow flowers all season long. These plants are native to Africa but quite happy here in

our North Florida climate. They are recommended as a Florida-friendly landscaping plant because they are low maintenance and can withstand our cooler temperatures. Bush daisies prefer areas of full sun and are moderately drought-tolerant once established. They need well-drained but moist soil; be sure to water newly installed plants regularly and then as needed long term.

Bush daisies feature dark green, lacy leaves and bright yellow blooms. They are beautiful when planted in large groups but also bold enough to stand alone. Bush daisies are sometimes considered a ground cover as they can grow 2-3 feet wide and may self-propagate from seeds that drop around the primary plant. Use them to add color to rock gardens, highlight the border of a garden bed or foundation, or fill in containers with other flowers. Bush daisies brighten any spot you choose and may attract butterflies to your landscape!

Be patient — spring is coming soon.

Flower of the Week: Bush daisy

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



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### Island Green

hit at a different hole location that was more difficult being just beyond the front

However, he proved why he is a major champion with a shot that dropped two feet and eight inches from the hole.

Each participant was given a couple of shots each during two rounds.

Dee Brown, who played at Jacksonville University and was the 1991 NBA slam dunk champion had the lead after the first round of shots with a mark of three feet and five inches from the hole, followed by former Jacksonville Jaguars kicker Josh Scobee who hit a shot that settled five feet and 11 inches from the

Furyk represented The Furyk Foundation, while Brown was swinging for Operation New Hope and Scobee for Guardian Catholic Schools.

"I've been running their (Guardian Catholic Schools) charity golf tournament for the past 10 years, and we do it at either Deerwood Country Club or Timucuan Country Club," Scobee said.



Photo by Anthony Richards

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

According to Scobee, he has been a regular at the event and enjoys coming out every year to give No. 17 his best shot, however, even though he's been doing it for years, the nerves are always there when he steps up to the tee box.

"The nerves are there regardless," Scobee said, "Sometimes you just forget every swing tip you've ever had, and you just get up there saying, 'Please just let

me hit the ball.' Next year I just suggest we have some music going to try to help drown out the sound of our heartbeats (when they are about to hit)."

An intimate crowd of family and friends were on hand to watch with many people from the various charities involved there to root on their associated celebrities, such as actor Andy Buckley, who represented The Tesori Foundation.

"I've become great friends with Paul and Michelle Tesori over the last half a dozen years, and they were kind enough to say, 'Come on down, Buckley," he said. "They're a great bunch of folks and it's such an easy thing to say yes to."

Buckley is best known for his role as David Wallace on the television sitcom 'The Office." and even wore a Dunder Mifflin shirt to the event, which was the fictional paper company he worked for in the series.

The sun was out and it made for beautiful weather for the event and for the players as it was also not that windy, which makes No. 17 even more challeng-

"It's gorgeous out here, and with all the stands set up, you really feel like you're a bit of a stick," Buckley chuckled.



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#### **Just Listed: Ponte Vedra Beach Oasis**

Step into this centrally-located Summerfield home and you'll instantly feel at ease; light fills the high spaces, and the views are serene. The primary bedroom features a walk-in closet, renovated bathroom and a private study/ exercise room with walls of storage. Two more bedrooms have interesting architectural features and built-ins, and the office has excellent storage. This is a find, close to beach access, shops and schools. \$985,000.









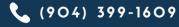


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Lesley Brawn is a licensed Florida Realtor with 25 years of experience working in corporate business operations. From her office at the link, she serves both sellers and buyers, mostly in St. Johns and Duval counties. She places a very high value on family, collaboration, integrity and faith. She also leads a group for businesswomen.

# Lesley Brawn

#### As told to Shaun Ryan

#### Tell me about Lesley Brawn Real Estate.

My individual branding is Lesley Brawn Real Estate, but Game Changer Realty is the umbrella. I represent residential. That would be condominium, single-family, town homes and also short-term rentals.

#### Do you have any specialties?

My specialties are first-time homebuyers, women in business and anyone who really values a collaborative working relationship.

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

What I love is new constructions. I will put on a hard hat. I will put on a vest. I will put on work boots. I will get in the dirt.

I love to see a project start from just a bunch of weeds and sand to becoming a dream for buyers.

I also just love being a part of the emotional process and knowing that there's a lot of excitement, there's anticipation, there's anxiety ... but just being there to say, "Listen, we've got this."

But I'm a realist. I'm not in this business to just tell people what they want to hear just to either get the business or close the deal.

My integrity means more to me than earning a commission, because I not only represent my own personal brand, I represent the brokerage, and I want people to know that however the transaction goes, at the end of the day, it was honest and it was just filled with integrity and honesty.

#### Do you represent buyers or sellers or both?

I represent both. Not always in the same transaction. People ask me: What's your marketing strategy? And I will tell them that my marketing strategy is one word: price.

If the home is not priced correctly, nobody's going to come look at it.

When people go on the Zillows or the realtor.coms or the Redfins, they're looking at not only the aesthetic appearance of the home, they're looking at the price.

For buyers, I always try to temper their expectations. I want them to be excited. But one of the first things I always talk about to buyers is, again, price. What can you afford?

I always try to let them know: Here are some other things that you may need to consider when purchasing a home. With a single family, it may be taxes. Landscaping, upkeep. CDD. HOA. I always make sure that all of those things fall in line with what they can afford.

And, with sellers, I always check to see if they're purchasing something new. What do we need to list this house at in order for them to make that transition?

#### How can people contact you and learn more?

Folks can contact me via email, phone, text message. Also I am on social media. I'm on Instagram. I post about what's going on in the daily life of real estate.

I am a new member of the St. Johns Chamber of Commerce. And I am involved in quite a few networking groups. I also lead a women-in-business networking group twice per month, Xperience Connections.



Photo by Shaun Ryan

Realtor Lesley Brawn operates her business out of the link in Nocatee.

#### How long have you been in this business?

I have been in business for almost two years. but I have been a Realtor in my mind since I was 12 years old.

Back in the days when the Sunday paper was delivered and you had the comics, you know? My sister would take the comics, and I would take the real estate section. I would scan the listings in different areas, and I would look to see: What types of properties at what price points are in one area versus another? I was really just trying to figure out: What does the market look like if my mom ever wanted to purchase a home?

And I was always obsessed with floor plans. I took architectural design and drafting courses in high school. I was able to put together a full set of buildable blueprints when I was 15. I modeled them after a Florida-style home, so I don't know if that was a premonition.

I went to a Boston University. Worked at a very prestigious private equity firm. For years, climbed the corporate ladder. But, the love of real estate was always with me.

I have been in a part of global companies for the longest time, most recently as an executive assistant to CEOs. That's kind of my niche. CEOs, CFOs, CHROs and boards of directors. Traveling globally. I think that

level of patience, attention to detail and diligence has done nothing but serve me well as I navigate this market.

#### How long have you lived here?

Moved down in January of 2018.

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

I love that there are different pieces, pockets of diversity that are coming into this area.

People are discovering it, and people are really crafting it to be not just a showpiece of the PARC Group, but a showpiece of humanity.

I've always lived near the coast. I have never lived more than 10 miles from the ocean. So, I love being near the water

But really the evolution of what's happening, not only here in Nocatee, Ponte Vedra, but how it's happening along Northeast Florida is the biggest piece of excitement for me. And I'm so excited to put my stamp on it.

EDITOR'S NOTE: This is an abridged version of the interview. To read the entire article, go to pontevedrarecorder.com.



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# MSD pushes for no-parking ordinance, next stop is county

#### **By Anthony Richards**

The creation of a no-parking ordinance along San Juan Drive just took a step closer to becoming a reality following a unanimous vote in favor of it by the Ponte Vedra Municipal Service District during its February meeting.

The vote allows for the next step in process to take place, which will include trustee Brad Wester and MSD attorney Wayne Flowers working on putting together an interlocal agreement that will then be passed along to representation with St. Johns

County to be vetted through their proper channels.

If passed by the county, the no-parking ordinance would go into effect for the length of San Juan Drive from Solana Road to Ponte Vedra Boulevard.

According to Wester, the next step also includes the trustees meeting individually with the county commissioners and working to get the issue on the docket at a future county commission meeting.

The no-parking ordinance is expected to be similar to that of the one in place along

Ponte Vedra Boulevard.

"San Juan has a lot more curves along its route compared to the boulevard," Wester said. "For safety and circulation purposes, it shouldn't be used as a parking lot, which is what it is right now."

Many residents were on hand during the meeting to comment on the parking situation during the public comments section of the meeting prior to the vote taking place.

Some residents who live along the roadway had questions about how an ordinance would impact them having a party at their residence.

Any no-parking ordinance will not completely limit the use of the roadway for parking by residents who are having a party or a certain occasion that will require an excess of people.

However, they will be required to apply for a permit with the county in order to get that approval.

"That's done quite a bit on the boulevard and Deputy (John) Tedder can attest to that," Wester said.

The push for a no-parking ordinance would not be directly linked to the sidewalk project along the route that has also been approved by the MSD and they are in the

process of working out details with the county.

"They are separate projects, but they both have safety in mind," Wester said.

Wester and Flowers have been in talks with the county about drafting an agreement, that would have the MSD paying \$200,000 in total, with \$150,000 going toward a larger phase of the project and \$50,000 for the smaller phase.

In other news from the meeting, the county is working on revising a new comprehensive plan and town hall meetings and input from the residents will be taken highly into consideration.

According to MSD chairman Al Hollon, major revisions to the current comprehensive plan have not been made since the mid-1990s.

An online survey is available for residents to complete, and more info is available by going to sjcplanupdate.com.

Also, trustee Kitty Switkes informed her fellow trustees that the lot at Sunset Park that was in question and required cleaning has been completed.

"It looks great now," Switkes said. Now that it is cleaned up, landscape crews will continue to maintain it.







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# The Hangar ready for another 'party' in year two

The highly anticipated return of what has been dubbed "the party of the weekend" is just a few weeks away, and tickets are on sale for the 2024 iteration of The Hangar Amelia Island.

With an incredible line-up of automobiles and aircraft promised, guests will have plenty to view as they sip their cocktails and stroll the tarmac.

The sunset aperitivo will take place on the eve of the 29th Annual The Amelia, the famed Concours d' Elegance on March 2 from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. at the spectacular Bent Wing Flight Services, Fernandina Beach.

Eventgoers can anticipate a show stopping displays of horsepower with cars set to be featured, including a 1966 Ferrari 206 S Dino, 1955 Mercedes 300 SL



Contributed photo

This year will mark the second annual The Hangar on March 2.

Gullwing, 1966 Porsche 906 and a 1987 Porsche 962, as well as a large stable of super and hypercars.

Highlights from this year's curated exhibition also include historic aircraft such as a 1938 Lockheed 12A,300S and an Albatross N51ZD.

New partners joining this year include VistaJet, who will display two aircraft from their impressive business jet fleet, a Challenger 350 and a Gulfstream G450. Roger Dubuis will bring a collection of rare contemporary haute horlogerie for guests to view, including their justreleased Excalibur Spider Pirelli, fueled by adrenaline and crafted with winning motorsport tire rubber.

For a fun twist, guests are invited to compete at their "pit stop" and race against the clock to swap out the timepiece colorway—meanwhile, automotive partners joining include Rolls-Royce Motor Cars and McLaren, who will display the 750S and their next-generation hybrid supercar-the Artura.

This year, The Hangar is pleased to incorporate an exciting new alignment with Hagerty and The Amelia, enhancing the weekend's offerings to those traveling to Amelia Island for the annual festivities.

"We are thrilled to bring the second edition of The Hanger Amelia to what is the largest and most important weekend gathering of car collectors and enthusiasts on the East Coast, and we are pleased to have this year aligned

with Hagerty and The Amelia to ensure attendees of the weekend will find it to HANGAR continues on Page 12

Scientific

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# Jax Beach set to continue sandcastle contest tradition

#### **By Anthony Richards**

One of the common things associated with going to the beach is building sandcastles, and Jacksonville Beach has been taking this to the next level with a contest for the several decades now.

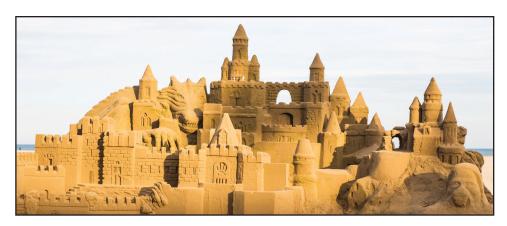
The 45th Annual Jax Beach Sandcastle Contest will be held on April 27, but although it may not be beach season quite yet, the registration process has already begun for those wanting to take part.

The contest will take place at 2:30 p.m. on the beach just north of the Jacksonville

Registration ends March 1, so there are only a couple of more weeks to get involved in this local beach tradition.

Anyone interested can go to Jacksonvillebeach.org and type "sandcastle contest" in the search box to find the registration, which they will have to print and fill out and drop off at the Jacksonville Beach Parks & Recreation Office located at 2508 South Beach Parkway. The office is open weekdays from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

There will be several categories, based on both age and the number of people competing. They include eight years old and



younger, ages 9-12 and ages 13-16. In each of those categories there can be up to three children on a team.

There will also be a family entry and a group category, which can each have up to five builders of any age.

The registration fee to compete is \$200 per group and all fees must be paid by the end of the registration period on March 31. Fees must be paid by cash or check and submitted to the parks & recreation office, just like the registration form itself.

All participants will be contacted via email once the registration period comes to an end.

Judges will be on hand to observe and rate the sandcastles during the competition with

their ratings deciding the winners of each

The criteria the judges will be looking for is a sandcastle's design difficulty, craftsmanship and overall appearance. Together they will make up the final score.

What makes the contest unique is that the construction does not have to be limited to types of sandcastles but can be sculpted to anything that a group's imagination can come up with, as long as they are using sand as the sculpting material.

Any equipment may be used to help in the creation process, including sand buckets, shovels, and tools such as packers, cutters, tamps or points.

## Family pier pass OK'd

The St. Johns County Board of County Commissioners unanimously approved the Parks and Recreation Department's move to establish an annual family sightseeing pass for the St. Johns County Ocean and Fishing Pier, 350 A1A Beach Blvd., St. Augustine Beach, at the regular Feb. 6

The annual pass will give families the opportunity to visit the pier an unlimited number of times for the price of \$50. The pass will be valid for two adults in the same household plus their children.

"This is going to make it more affordable for families, especially large families, to visit our pier," Recreation Pier Coordinator Tracy Leahy said. "Now they can come to the pier and have the pass paid off in just a few visits, so when people have some spare time on their hands they can come take in a sunset with the family and enjoy this great sightseeing destination right in our back-



# First graders create light and shadow experience

In the science and technology labs at Jacksonville Country Day School, first graders embarked on a journey of creativity and exploration during their Makerspace Deep Dive. Students integrated their classroom studies of animal biomes with their scientific unit on the study of light and shadows to create a breathtaking museum-like immersive experience that left both parents and fellow students in awe.

Here's how they did it:

Each group carefully selected an animal they learned about from their class-assigned biome. Using black paper, the students took to drawing their chosen animals with incredible attention to detail and accuracy and cut out the end result. Using flashlights to create shadows of their animals, the students traced their creations on a larger scale. A massive white sheet of paper served as the canvas for the biome, where each group thoughtfully placed their animal, recreating a harmonious ecosystem.

The grand finale took place in the school's auditorium, where special light effects were employed to bring the animal shadows to life. The room was bathed in different colored lights, each strategically chosen to highlight the unique characteristics of each biome.

What set this Makerspace Deep Dive apart was the captivating light and shadow experience that these young learners crafted, unlike any other. The makerspace curriculum at JCDS seamlessly integrates global studies, project-based learning, and service learning into the science units of study, providing students with an enriched educational experience that goes beyond traditional classroom learning much like this one.

Contributed photos







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## Effect Medspa brings lifestyle approach with ribbon cutting

#### **By Anthony Richards**

For Kelly Ingram-Mitchell, experiencing the ribbon cutting of Effect Medspa & Lifestyle Practice in St. Johns was a thrilling moment, because she knows the hard work that went into making the business a reality.

"We actually purchased the building a year and half ago, and we pretty much gutted the place and just left the four walls standing," Ingram-Mitchell said.

One of her approaches with the business is to make it a personal one for her clients, because it has been a personal journey for her to this point.

"I live in St. Johns and am only about three miles from the location, so this is where I call home, which makes it special for me," she said.

Making sure to make people comfortable by instilling that homey feel also went into the design of the building, which includes a back porch area that was built on as part of the building, with the goal of offering a relaxing place and one where her patrons can get away to think if they need to.

"I'm an entrepreneur by trade, so I'm also really big on supporting the local businesses out there," Ingram-Mitchell said. "I understand that it's the little things and the



Effect Medspa & Lifestyle Practice held a ribbon cutting ceremony at its location at 651 State Road 13 in St. Johns.

relationships you build that make all the difference."

As the name of the business implies. they are more than just a spa, and it is the promotion of a healthier lifestyle that is at the forefront of Ingram-Mitchell and her staff's goals.

"Our primary focus is to help you preserve true health and beauty both inside and out," Ingram-Mitchell said.

Some of the tools they use to help

achieve their approach to a better and healthier beauty include treatments, such as Botox cosmetics and Dermal Fillers to customized facials and laser treatments.

Being a med spa means that the majority of treatments they perform and offer are medical grade, which is one of the ways they hope to stand out from other forms of

"We're not a resort spa, and we want to make sure people understand that when

they come in," Ingram-Mitchell said.

That message was surely received by much of the community, as a couple hundred people came out to visit Effect during their ribbon cutting day, according to Ingram-Mitchell.

"We had people just stopping in and saying hi, just because they were curious or had driven by and seen us building and wanted to see for themselves and know what went in here," Ingram-Mitchell. "It was so great to see and experience the support that is out there."

Ingram-Mitchell has a background in physical therapy, and she used that previous experience when forming her staff, which consists of three nurse practitioners, two aestheticians, a spa manager.

"I want our experience to be different, because I want people to know that we're taking your skin and your skin health," Ingram-Mitchell said. "If you don't take care of your skin properly, it doesn't matter what procedures you do. Education and making sure people know what to do is important to us."

Effect Medspa & Lifestyle Practice is located at 651 State Road 12 in St. Johns, and they are open 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday, Wednesday and Friday and 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. Tuesday and Thursday.



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# Hangar Continued from 9

be the best year of Amelia to date, with so much to see, do, and enjoy,"said cofounder Shamin Abas.

Co-founder Jeffrey Einhorn added, "once again, we're throwing the party of the weekend at Amelia and upping the ante with an incredible exhibition of exotic and rare cars which will wow even the most seasoned collector, as well as an array of spectacular aircraft, both vintage and new.

"We look forward to welcoming our guests to take it all in, drink in hand, and be ready to party—with great food and live music," Einhorn said.

Advance Pole Position tickets are available for a limited time at \$295.

From Feb. 19, tickets will be offered at \$350, with a portion of sales benefitting Friends of Fernandina Aviation.



The Hangar offers vintage and new cars and airplanes featured.

# CARING FOR KIDS



Samantha Minton, managing director for the First Coast Chapter of Blessings in a Backpack, accepts a donation from Palm Valley Rotary Club members Janeene Hart, Waine Banyas and Dave Gleason. The club's recent Caring for Kids raffle raised these funds to support local charities.

# MOSH plans sensory night

The Museum of Science & History (MOSH) invites families and individuals to enjoy exclusive access to explore the museum for its monthly Family Sensory Night, 6-8 p.m. Friday, Feb. 16. As part of the organization's MOSHH-HH... initiative, Family Sensory Nights allow guests to experience the museum in a sensory-friendly environment with modified sound and lighting.

Admission is \$5 per guest, free for children age 2 and younger. Advanced tickets are available at themosh.org/ event/family-sensory-night. Walk-up admission will be available as space

Visitors can interact with featured vendors and service providers, meet critters from the Florida Naturalist's Center and experience an array of sensory activities. This month's theme will feature vendors and organizations that offer sensory-inclusive summer camp options for families. The Jacksonville Public Library will also be on site with storytime activities.

A sensory space will be set upon the first floor, equipped and staffed by We Rock the Spectrum. Sensory support kits with activities, fidgets, headphones and more are available at the front desk for temporary loan to guests during the evening thanks to the Center for Autism and Related Disabilities; the University of Florida's Early Steps program also serves as a sponsor, providing ongoing support of this monthly event.

MOSH is located at 1025 Museum Circle, Jacksonville.



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Contributed photos

Pictured at the event: Board Member Kellie Roby, Ponte Vedra Church Lead Pastor Jacquie Leveron, Board Member Brittany Kleffner and Director/Duval County Jordan Whitmarsh.

# Church raises funds to help teen moms

Ponte Vedra Church, located at 76 S. Roscoe Blvd., held a fundraiser on Saturday, Feb. 10, to raise money for Young Lives, a nonprofit organization with an office in Jacksonville Beach. It helps teen moms who choose to keep and raise their babies. Young Lives develops teams of caring adults to build relationships with teen moms and their children.

More than \$1,700 were raised during this fundraiser.

Gatherings for the girls, their babies and children provide fun, practical help, life-skills training and a safe place to hear about hope and God's unfailing love. Young Lives fosters emotional, social and spiritual needs of young mothers as they raise the next generation.

More information and a way to make donations to this mission can be found at jaxmetroyounglives.younglife.org or call 904 402-2686.

Ponte Vedra Church is a Bible-based, mission-driven congregation with an emphasis on supporting local communities. Worship services are held at 11 a.m. Sundays. Small Bible study groups meet throughout the week.



Ponte Vedra Church members gather for brunch.

# County OKs agreement for pedestrian lights on A1A

The St. Johns County Board of County Commissioners has approved an agreement between St. Johns County and the Florida Power & Light Co. to execute and deliver LED lighting and installation of "H.A.W.K." beacons at four pedestrian crosswalks located on State Road A1A at Treasure Beach Road, Green Street, Matanzas Inlet and Nease Beachfront Park to improve public safety.

The device, called a H.A.W.K. (High-Intensity Activated CrossWalK) beacon, is a type of traffic signal designed to improve pedestrian safety at mid-block crossings. These signals operate in a yellow-red flashing-red sequence to alert motorists that pedestrians need to cross the road.

This sequence helps to regulate traffic flow and ensure that motorists are aware of pedestrians crossing the road. Unlike traditional traffic signals that operate on a fixed schedule, H.A.W.K. signals only activate when a pedestrian pushes the crossing button. This on-demand activation ensures that the signal is only used when pedestrians need to cross, reducing unnecessary stops for motorists when no pedestrians are present.

"The H.A.W.K. systems will be a great addition to these four intersections in the county to help ensure pedestrian safety," said Public Works Director Greg



Contributed photo

Pictured is a H.A.W.K. system in use on State Road 207.

Caldwell. "This is a top priority when improving infrastructure, and we're excited to partner with FDOT and FPL to do it."

The Florida Department of Transportation and St. Johns County have participated in an agreement for state highway

lighting maintenance and compensation for several years and the cost and reimbursement is included within the Public Works annual budget.

FDOT has informed the county of its intent to place street lights at four additional locations. As per the agreement,

the county will assume the maintenance responsibility related to these new street lights, which will be located adjacent to new H.A.W.K. crosswalks located at State Road A1A at Matanzas Inlet, Nease Beachfront Park, Treasure Beach Road and Green Road.

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# Chamber creates foundation to serve community

The St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce has announced the creation of the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce Foundation, a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization with the mission to serve the entire community through leadership opportunities, workforce education and economic development programs.

The Chamber established the foundation to expand its programming and culture of philanthropy beyond the business community. The foundation's primary focus areas will include:

- Leadership St. Johns: The premier professional leadership development program in St. Johns County, Leadership St. Johns has fostered the growth of hundreds of business and government employees for more than 20 years. The foundation seeks to create a permanent scholarship fund to support Leadership St. Johns.
- Disaster relief: The foundation will create an emergency relief fund for businesses to support recovery from natural disasters or economic downturns.
- Workforce development: Through partnerships with local educational institutions, the foundation will support the development of a highly skilled workforce and the creation of an employment pipeline of local work-



**Cecil Gibson** 





**Isabelle Renault** 

ers for St. Johns County businesses.

"The St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce Foundation is a natural extension of the chamber's work to promote a vibrant, diverse business environment in St. Johns County," said Isabelle Renault, chamber president and CEO. "The foundation opens new avenues for programs and philanthropic work to make a difference in the community at large as we work to strengthen our business community."

The foundation will be led by a board of directors comprised of business leaders in the county. The founding members include Board Chair Cecil Gibson (Ameris Bank), Vice Chair Orville Dothage (Northrop Grumman), Secretary/Treasurer Erika Alba (Woolsey/ Morcom), Nancy Dering Mock (Nancy Dering Mock Consulting) and Chamber President and CEO Isabelle Renault.

"The community will benefit tremendously from the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce Foundation," Gibson said. "By offering education and leadership development, along with the relief fund, the foundation's work will create opportunities for both individuals and businesses to thrive in St. Johns County."

The chamber invites its members and the community to celebrate the newly established foundation at a fundraiser kickoff event at 5:30 p.m. April 25 at bestbet St. Augustine, 800 Marketplace Drive, St. Augustine. The event will feature a poker tournament and reception; sponsorships and tickets are available by contacting the St. Johns County Chamber.

More information about the foundation is available at sjechamber.com/foundation.

# Spanish Food and Wine Festival returns Feb. 29

Celebrate St. Augustine's rich Spanish heritage through food, wine, music and culture at the Spanish Food and Wine Festival. Foodies, history buffs and oenophiles will be on cloud nine with the offerings and historic atmosphere. Tickets are now on sale.

When Pedro Menendez landed on the shores of Florida's eastern coast, he brought with him the 4,000-year-old Spanish tradition of winemaking. Spanish wine has long been revered worldwide; the Romans admired it so much they had vintages exported across their empire. Spain has more hectares of grape vines than any other country in the world and, with its high altitude, produces some of



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the freshest, most balanced wines. They pair perfectly with the rustic tapas found in the bodegas and tapería of Spain.

Beginning Feb. 29 and continuing through March 2, the St. Augustine Spanish Food and Wine Festival offers a delicious look at the influence of Spain on food and wine at various locations at Flagler College and the Lightner Museum.

The event features wine, spirits, tapas tastings and luxurious dining prepared by the city's finest culinary experts and served in the most beautiful, historic venues.

Every year, the St. Augustine Spanish Food and Wine Festival donates to local charities. Since the festival began, more than \$380,000 has been donated. This year's St. Augustine Spanish Food and Wine Festival supports the Flagler College Hospitality and Tourism Management program. The funds provide valuable academic scholarships, study-abroad experiences and professional development opportunities.

Tickets for the 2024 St. Augustine Spanish Food and Wine Festival are:

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- Tapas Wine & Spirits event on Feb. 29: \$150
- Grand Tasting General Admission on

Or, purchase tickets to both for \$225. VIP Weekender tickets, which include admission to the Feb. 29 Tapas, Wine and Spirits event, the March 1 Cava Reception & Wine Pairing Dinner and the Grand Tasting VIP Experience on March 2 are

Partners of the event include Bank of America, Radzinski Family, Michael's, The Treasury on the Plaza and Pesca

For more information or to purchase tickets, go to Spanishwinefestival.com.

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# Dillard's spring fashions luncheon highlight

Coastal Friends is planning "A Tasteful Tee Off to Spring" fashion show from 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. March 6 at Marsh Landing Country Club, 25655 Marsh Landing Parkway, Ponte Vedra Beach.

Dillard's is the sponsor this year. The models for the fashions and accessories will be Coastal Friends members showcasing such brands as Lilly Pulitzer, J. McLaughlin, IBKUL, Eileen Fisher and Antonio Melani — Dillard's exclusive private label brand.

Dillard's Assistant Store Manager Kimberly Pond will be the emcee and Lisette Colebrooke, visual manager, will be busy behind the scenes helping to make sure all goes smoothly, along with their resident makeup artist, Rebecca Miller, from Chanel.

Additionally, Dillard's will donate two high-end gift baskets as raffle tickets: one filled with ladies' fragrances and the other with luxury skin-care products. Coastal Friends will make a donation to "Make-A-Wish Foundation of Central & Northern Florida" on behalf of Dillard's.

The luncheon is open to the community, members and guests of Coastal Friends. The cost to attend is \$25. As seating is limited for this very popular event, reservations must be made in advance; contact the luncheon chairman (bartshar@comcast.net) as soon as possible. The luncheon menu will consist of caesar salad, chicken marsala, roasted red potatoes, asparagus and chef's choice for dessert.

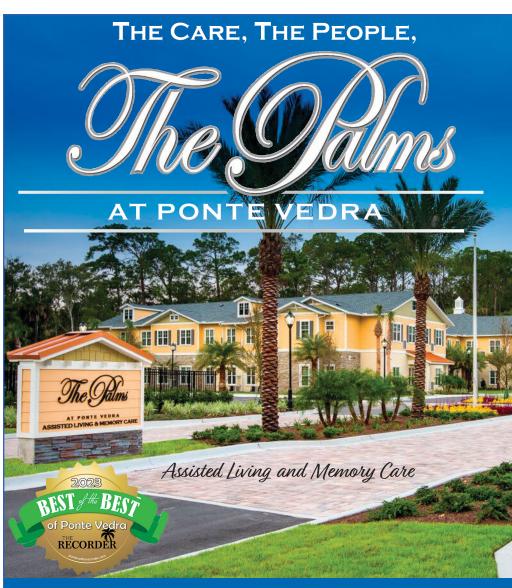
Coastal Friends, formed in 1998, is a social group of women who live in Ponte Vedra Beach, Nocatee, Jacksonville, Jacksonville Beach, Neptune Beach, Atlantic Beach, St. Augustine and the surrounding area. Some of the activities offered are: adventures and outings, book club, bunco, canasta and canasta lessons, happy hour, lunch in, lunch out, mah jongg and wine socials. Luncheons are held on the first Wednesday of every month, except for July and August. New members are welcome throughout the year.

# Peace of Heart donation



Contributed photo

Palm Valley Rotary Club members Waine Banyas and Janeene Hart present a donation to Peace of Heart Co-Founder Howard Groshell and spokesperson Josh Murphy. The club's recent Caring for Kids raffle raised these funds to support local charities, such as Peace of Heart, whose vision is to create an environment where those with autism can realize a meaningful life. Peace of Heart offers an atmosphere of love, happiness and belonging where all life is valued, voices are heard and talents are developed to make a difference in the world.



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## Merger addresses a critical need for those who are struggling

Feeding Northeast Florida (FNEFL) announced on Monday, Feb. 12, its merger with longtime partner Renewing Dignity, an organization whose mission is to eliminate "period poverty" through menstrual product distribution, education and advocacy. The organization will now be known as Renewing Dignity: A Program of Feeding Northeast Florida. The merger is effective

as of Jan. 1 of this year.

More than 260,000 people suffer from some level of food insecurity across the 12 counties the nonprofit food bank serves. Often, food insecurity serves as an indicator of other needs that are difficult to meet for families and individuals. In Florida, more than 785,000 struggle to access menstrual products. Nationally, two in

five people struggle to purchase necessary period products — across the First Coast, that's where Renewing Dignity steps in.

The partnership between the two organizations began in 2019 in response to a shared concern among local nonprofit agencies about the lack of menstrual products for those facing homelessness or income insecurity. Feeding Northeast Florida played a crucial role as a distribution partner, using the organization's expertise, bulk purchasing power and distribution channels to provide essential products to individuals and families in need.

The organizations have worked together to raise funds and awareness, as well as purchase, transport and warehouse period products to be distributed through the nonprofit's extensive network of agency partners and dedicated distributions.

Moving forward, period products will be widely distributed across the 12 counties the organization serves.

"The need in our community is high - and not just for food assistance," said Susan King, president and CEO of Feeding Northeast Florida. "So many of our neighbors struggle to make ends meet, and often that means a choice between buying necessary medicines, paying rent and buying food. What we often forget is that these cuts can filter into other areas of need as well, and that includes period products. We are grateful for the partnership we have

had with Renewing Dignity, and we are looking forward to the increased difference we can make by bringing them under the FNEFL banner, making period products a staple of our distribution events. We could not do the important work we do without partners like Renewing Dignity — and this new chapter will take us even further to meeting the needs of our friends and neighbors in the counties we serve."

Much of the program's daily operations will remain unchanged through the merger. Feeding Northeast Florida, already serving as the sourcing, warehousing and distribution partner, will take on the administrative and advocacy responsibilities formerly overseen by Renewing Dignity, including maintaining restrictions on funds raised for the program. An advisory committee, consisting of former Renewing Dignity board members, will remain actively involved in advancing the mission.

"I am honored to continue to help guide Renewing Dignity as we make the transition under the umbrella of Feeding Northeast Florida," said Jan Healy, founder of Renewing Dignity. "Our longstanding partnership with the leading food bank in our area instills great confidence in this next phase of the organization."

For more information on the merger and how Feeding Northeast Florida helps those in need in the 12-counties it serves, go to feedingnefl.org.



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The Community Action Team (CAT) program offers parents and caregivers of youth ages 11-21 with significant mental health issues a safe and effective alternative to out-of-home placement.

The Coaches Program is dedicated to assisting youth who face unique challenges, such as a lack of support network, behavioral health issues, and difficulty accessing essential mental

proper tools and support every youth can thrive, regardless of their circumstances.

Mobile Response Team (MRT) provides assessments for youth in crisis, significantly reducing involuntary youth hospitalizations (Baker Acts) in St. Johns County

MRT is available 24/7 in St. Johns County, by calling 9-1-1 or 9-8-8.

BENEFITING MONIQUE BURR Join us this April to commemorate Child Abuse Prevention Month and support the Monique Burr Foundation for Children, a nationally recognized nonprofit headquartered in Jacksonville, dedicated to protecting children from all types of child abuse, bullying, online exploitation, and human trafficking through prevention education.

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## Jaguars show support for female athletes with scholarships

The Jacksonville Jaguars, through the Jaguars Foundation, announced that they will be accepting applications for the DREAM BIG Scholarship to support high school female football athletes pursuing higher education. The announcement coincides with the celebration of National Girls and Women in Sports Day, Feb. 7.

"As the popularity of girls' flag football gains steam in the state of Florida and throughout our country, 'girl power' is more than a tag line as these athletes are proving that they can 'dream big' to reach their goals," said Whitney Meyer, Jaguars senior vice president and chief community impact officer. "We are proud to once again provide opportunities for postsecondary education, continuing athleticism through collegiate play and potential future as professionals in the sports arena through the Jaguars DREAM BIG Scholarship."

In its second year, the Jaguars Foundation will award three \$3,000 scholarships. The application is currently open and will accept applications through Wednesday, April 10.

Recipients will be contacted directly in April by a member of the Jaguars Foundation and will be recognized at the Jaguars NFL Draft Party at EverBank Stadium on Thursday, April 25.

To be eligible, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Graduating high school senior in the state of Florida.
- Female high school senior participating in flag or tackle football.
- Plan to enroll in full-time undergraduate program at an accredited college or university.
- Plan to pursue a career that positively impacts sports.

"The girls flag scholarship played a pivotal role in supporting my college journey at the University of North Florida. It significantly alleviated the financial burden, allowing me to focus on my studies and pursue my academic goals with greater ease," said Hadiya Bakhtari, 2023 DREAM BIG scholarship recipient. "I'm truly grateful for the invaluable assistance it provided. I am so happy that there is a scholarship like this for girls who play football because it provides a great opportunity while also recognizing the student athlete."

Girls flag football is a program of Jaguars PREP, a commitment to growing the game of football through Northeast Florida by removing barriers of accessibility, encouraging health and safety, building strong character amongst participants and enhancing opportunities and resources for youth and high school football athletes.

Through the program, the Jaguars host multiple events for high school athletes,

including girls flag football events.

Later this month, the Jaguars will host the Girls Flag Football Preseason Classic, a tournament-style event with more than 45 area high school on Feb. 16-17, and the Girls Flag College Showcase, a combine for girls' flag athletes to be seen by NAIA college coaches and scouts on Feb. 18.

Both events will take place at EverBank Stadium and Daily's Place Flex Field.



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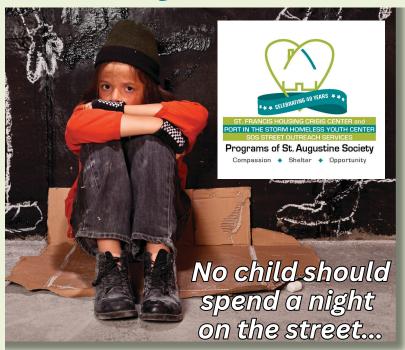
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# New children's behavioral health unit opens

Leaders with Baptist Health, Wolfson Children's Hospital, Baptist Behavioral Health, and The PLAYERS Championship Village, Inc. held a ribbon-cutting ceremony on Feb. 9 to open Wolfson Children's new Behavioral Health and Wellness Unit.

The 20-bed unit will double the number of beds available to children and adolescents needing inpatient behavioral health

The unit opened to patients on February 12 and will help reduce wait times for behavioral health inpatient beds by 50%. The unit is funded, in part, by a \$3 million gift from The Village and a \$5 million state appropriation approved by Florida lawmakers and Governor Ron DeSantis last year.

"Many may not be aware of the scarcity of hospital beds for children and teens who have a critical need for mental and behavioral health care," said Michael A. Mayo, DHA, FACHE, president and CEO of Baptist Health, which includes Wolfson Children's Hospital. "Unfortunately, the 66 beds that are available between Jacksonville and Orlando are not enough to meet the growing need for inpatient behavioral health care services in Northeast Florida, and we are grateful to all who have helped us meet the demand for this vitally important care by adding 20 pediatric behavioral health beds."

The inpatient unit is located on the third



Wolfson Children's Hospital held a ribbon cutting ceremony on its new behavioral health and wellness center on Feb. 9.

floor of Wolfson Children's Hospital in space previously occupied by the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit, which relocated to the Borowy Family Children's Critical Care Tower in 2022.

It joins the 14-bed Larry J. Freeman Behavioral Health Unit on the first floor of the J. Wayne and Delores Barr Weaver Tower and an eight-bed behavioral health pod in the main Wolfson Children's Emergency Center.

"Wolfson Children's new Behavioral

Health and Wellness Unit will significantly expand our capacity to care for children and adolescents needing hospitalization for behavioral health care. We know the need for behavioral health services is increasing, and our new inpatient unit will not only help save lives, but it will serve as a safe and comforting space for our patients as they receive the care they need," said Allegra C. Jaros, MBA, president of Wolfson Children's Hospital. "We are grateful to THE PLAYERS Championship Village Inc. and

state lawmakers, who recognize the importance of addressing mental health conditions in our most vulnerable community. Wolfson Children's can continue to provide compassionate and individualized care for our patients and families thanks to their support of this new behavioral health unit."

The funding from The Village was announced last spring and builds on a relationship between Baptist Health and THE PLAYERS, which extends more than a decade. In addition to the \$3 million gift from The Village, THE PLAYERS provided a \$1 million gift in 2011 and \$2 million in

2016 to benefit child health, wellness and injury prevention programming at THE PLAYERS Center for Child Health at Wolfson Children's.

"THE PLAYERS Championship Village has a long history of ensuring that young adults in our community have the right foundation for success and we are hopeful this gift will have a life-changing impact for youth in need of behavioral health services for many years to come," said, Jim Marlier, a board member of THE PLAYERS Championship Village, Inc.

Over the past 50 years, THE PLAYERS and The Village have supported more than 300 nonprofit organizations across Northeast Florida. THE PLAYERS Championship will take place this year March 12-17,

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# UF Health St. Johns nurse honored with DAISY Award

Gillian Tarbett has been honored as the UF Health St. Johns DAISY Award recipient for the fourth quarter of 2023. Tarbett was recognized for providing superb care to a patient and for the emotional support she gave to the entire family.

The DAISY Award is an international program that rewards and celebrates the extraordinary compassion and skill nurses give daily. Tarbett, a registered nurse on the fifth floor at UF Health Flagler Hospital, was nominated for the exemplary care she provided, not only to the patient but also in calming his wife and his daughter, who had rushed to St. Augustine from Orlando.

"She was extremely knowledgeable, articulate, personable and wise," wrote Lenus Sutherland in his nomination letter. "She allayed my daughter's fears and tirelessly answered my questions and concerns."

Tarbett's care impressed Sutherland, who has spent his entire career in the field of health care technology, not only with her clinical knowledge of his treatment plan but in the demeanor she employed, which left him in the best possible space for recovery.

"Her medical education was obviously solid and wide-ranging," Sutherland wrote. "Her communication skills were superb, and her interactions with fellow health care team members left us all feeling like the care I would receive from any of them was to be trusted.

"It was a privilege to see her in action and to be under her expert care."

Tarbett was honored that her patient recognized her compassion and goal of making his stay as comfortable as possible

"It's such an honor," said Tarbett. "I tell my patients, 'We know no one wants to be here, you're in pain, it's scary waking you up all hours of the night,' so if I can just make it a little bit better, that's my goal.

"I want to be that nurse who gets to know her patients. If I can help ease that fear just a little bit, it makes my heart happy."

"Gillian's care of Mr. Sutherland is representative of the total care we strive to provide each of our patients," said Carlton DeVooght, president and CEO



Contributed photo

Gillian Tarbett is the most recent recipient of the UF Health St. Johns DAISY Award.

of UF Health St. Johns. "She provided the physical and emotional care that Mr. Sutherland needed in his time of duress. UF Health St. Johns focuses on each and every patient's experience when they are with us, and Gillian represents exactly what we endeavor to accomplish."

In recognition of this honor, Tarbett received a stone-carved "Healers Touch" trophy, a DAISY winner's pin, a gift basket and a \$200 bonus.

Tarbett's nomination was among 50 recognitions submitted in the fourth quarter of 2023 by patients, their families and UF Health St. Johns team members.

The DAISY Award for Extraordinary Nurses is part of The DAISY Foundation's program to recognize the superhuman efforts nurses make every day.

The not-for-profit DAISY Foundation, based in Glen Ellen, California, was established by J. Mark Barnes and his family in memory of his son J. Patrick Barnes. Barnes died at the age of 33 in 1999 from complications of idiopathic thrombocytopenic purpura, a little-known autoimmune disease. The nursing care he and his family received while he was ill inspired this unique means of thanking nurses for making a profound difference in the lives of their patients and families.

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www.PonteVedraRecorder.com

# Real estate business achieves \$1.4B sales volume in 2023

Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Network Realty has announced that the company achieved \$1.4 billion sales volume in 2023. The company celebrated its spirit of excellence and its Realtors' highest honors and achievements at the Agents are Forever 2023 Annual Awards celebration.

The celebration reimagined a James Bond theme of "Diamonds are Forever" to "Agents are Forever" for the purpose of showcasing and honoring its loyal Realtor team.

"Our Realtors, managers and support team members are dedicated industry leaders and professionals with an enduring commitment to their clients, the community and our company, and I'm so appreciative of their loyalty and their contributions," said Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Network Realty Founder and Chairman Linda Sherrer. "Our company's success is a result of the impact made by our Realtors, employees and business

The event brought hundreds of real estate professionals together at Deerwood Castle to applaud a year of triumphs, teamwork and exceptional achievements.

Realtor Anita Vining of the San Marco



Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices President Ann King, left, and Founder and Chairman Linda Sherrer, right, celebrate with Realtor Anita Vining, who was named the company's top producer.

Metropolitan office led the company as the top producer with \$56.8 million in closed volume. Vining is the company's top sales agent with 47 sales and top transaction agent with 98 transactions.

In addition to recognizing Vining for her success in 2023, she was presented with the Berkshire Hathaway HomeSer-

vices 25-year Legend Award, recognizing individuals and teams who achieve Chairman's Circle awards for five, 10, 15, 20, 25 and 30 consecutive years, meaning they consistently rank among the top 2% of sales associates in the network. Realtor Lee Elmore also received the 10-year Legend Award and Realtors Kathy Coletti and Beverly Brooke earned five-year Legend awards.

The company's other 2023 top producers

• Realtor Stefanie Bernstein of the St. Augustine office was named the company's top listing agent with 30 listings.

- The Hudgins and Alexander Team of the Ponte Vedra Beach office was recognized as the top producing team with \$51.7 million in closed sales volume.
- The Ricci Group of the St. Augustine office was named the top sales team with 63 sales, top transaction team with 128 transactions and top listing team with 35
- Realtor Amanda Rodriguez of the Avondale Metropolitan office was named "rookie of the year" with a closed volume of \$3 million. She also achieved the Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Honor
- The Avondale/San Marco Metropolitan office, under the leadership of Josh Cohen, received the top office/Chairman's Cup award, which recognizes success in a number of categories, including client feedback, selecting talent, listing sides, closed sides, per person productivity, closed volume and profitability.

"I am so proud of Forever Agents, who demonstrated unparalleled commitment to achieve their goals in 2023," said Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Network Realty President Ann King. "At the Forever Brand, our intention is to do more in 2024, making dreams come true for our clients, colleagues and the community."

For more information about Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Network Realty, go to FloridaNetworkRealty.com or FLNetworkRealty.com.



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Stephen Joost, left, is the new majority owner of Cap's On The Water, and Bernard De Raad will remain as an owner.



Photos provided by Cap's On The Water

The sunset as seen from Cap's On The Water

# Cap's On the Water announces new ownership

Cap's on the Water, an award-winning waterfront restaurant known for its coastal cuisine and sunset views, recently announced Stephen Joost as majority owner. Bernard De Raad, who purchased the establishment in 1999, will remain as an owner to manage daily operations. Joost and De Raad also plan to develop several full-service, coastal restaurants together.

Joost is a founding partner of the Jacksonville-based chain Firehouse Subs. After he and his partners sold the company in 2021, he became an investor in Yoga Den, the largest privately-owned yoga brand in Northeast Florida. He says his goal has always been to return to

restaurants, having spent the last 30 years in the business.

"I've been blessed to be a part of the restaurant industry in Jacksonville for the last 30 years, but I'm not finished yet," Joost said. "I wanted to build another restaurant company, but never imagined this opportunity or that I would find such a perfect fit with Bernard. It is an honor to own an iconic restaurant like Cap's on the Water and continue the legacy that Bernard and his team have built."

Joost's new company, Southside Rita LLC, is named in honor of his mother Rita Joost, a Jacksonville philanthropist who died in 2019.

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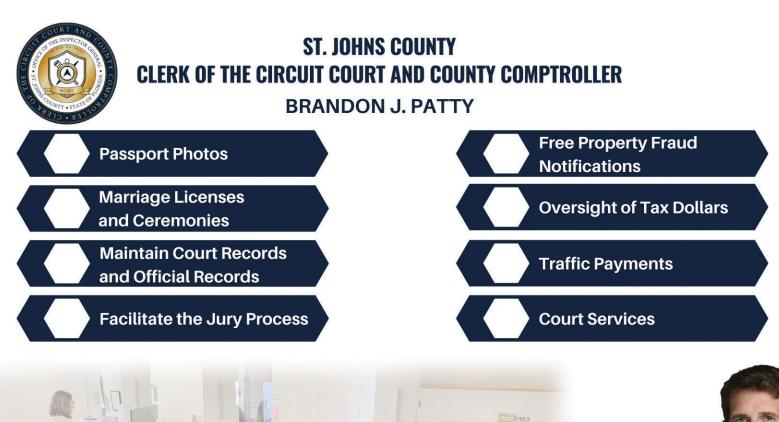
De Raad and his wife, Vivian, purchased Cap's on the Water 25 years ago and are the visionaries behind its reputation for upscale dining and chef-driven recipes in an "Old Florida" setting on the Intracoastal Waterway.

The restaurant is known for its unique service culture, long-tenured employees and devoted guests. Much of the menu is made from scratch, including the cocktails, which are hand-crafted by a house mixologist. Some of the "Cap's Classics" include the top-selling Sesame Seared Tuna, Calamari Vilano and Pear Ravioli, as well as real, Southern-style fried seafood

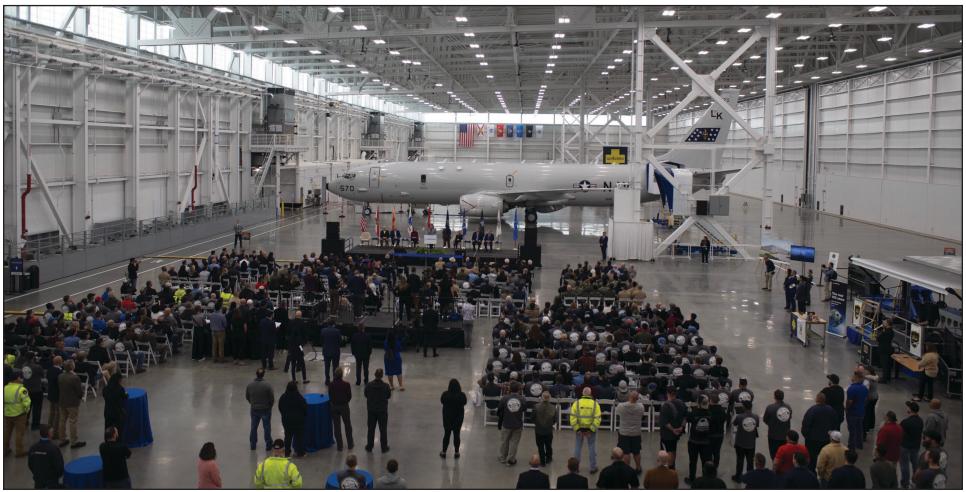
De Raad said the key to the new partnership is Joost wanting Cap's on the Water to stay the same. It also allows the partners to focus on bringing new restaurants to St. Augustine.

"Stephen believes in the culture and philosophy we have built at Cap's and will ensure that it remains intact and that is very important to us," said De Raad. "My fingers are always itching, and I have been dreaming up ideas for future concepts for years. We share a vision of opening new, iconic restaurants that use the same proven model as Cap's on the Water."

The duo expects to announce its first concept later this year.







Contributed photos

The new Boeing hangar in Jacksonville.

# New Boeing facilities to support military aircraft

Boeing has opened a new maintenance, repair and overhaul (MRO) hangar for military aircraft and a component operations repair facility in Jacksonville.

The site expansion is expected to create more than 300 iobs

The 385,000-square-foot MRO hangar is designed to help Boeing better serve its military customers, including the U.S. Navy and U.S. Air Force, with state-of-the-art maintenance and repair support.

"This new facility enables us to strengthen the support to our customers' operational readiness and grow our skilled workforce within the Jacksonville community," said Rhiannon Sherrard, Boeing Jacksonville executive site director.

Spanning 275,000 square feet with more than eight hangar bays, and an additional 110,000 square feet of office and support space, the new area can accommodate up to eight P-8 multi-mission maritime patrol aircraft. The ramp area can accommodate up to 14 fighter jets, or two wide-body and five narrow-body aircraft.



Dignitaries cut the ribbon on the new facility.

The facility will further enable Boeing's work upgrading warfare capabilities and mission readiness for P-8, in addition to maintaining F/A-18 Super Hornets for the U.S. Navy's Blue Angels as well as F/A-18 structural repairs and avionics upgrades for fleet aircraft. Addition-

ally, Boeing will perform upgrades to KC-46 jets.

Over time, the facility will incorporate new technologies such as autonomous aircraft inspection, which streamlines processes and enhances efficiency by reducing aircraft downtime and increasing safety and quality measures for military operators.

Boeing also announced the opening of its new 150,000-square-foot component operations repair facility, located adjacent to the MRO facility. That building will work on flight control surfaces and parts in support of F/A-18 and KC-46 aircraft and will be fully operational in the coming months.

Since 2018, Boeing has contributed more than \$600,000 to the Jacksonville community. During the event, Boeing announced a new \$50,000 grant to the Communities in Schools Jacksonville Student Enrichment Program and \$50,000 toward Veterans Florida's Veteran Employment and Training Services.

The new facilities bring the total Boeing site footprint to more than 546,000 square feet.





#### **GUEST COLUMN**

# Should you change investment strategies?

#### Written by/for Wells Fargo Advisors

You may take a "set it and forget it" approach to investing. But, over time, life events, the timing of when you need the money and market events are likely to compel you to revisit your strategy. Here are some things to consider when they arise.

#### **Dealing with life events**

Events, both expected and unexpected, like the following could cause a change in your long-term goals and time horizon:

- Graduation
- Marriage, divorce, or remarriage
- Birth of child or grandchild
- Change in health status
- Job loss, retirement, or early retirement
- Death of a loved one

These types of events may prompt you to revisit your investment strategy, and in fact, they may be good reasons to make changes. Do you need to reprioritize your investment goals, spending, or how much debt you need to pay down?

Before you reallocate your invest-



Jamie L. Seim, Matthew D. Guevara, Evonne T. Heykens and Stephen T. Foody.

ments, remember to plan with the same careful consideration you gave to creating your original investment strategy.

#### Responding to market action

In addition to life events, you may want to revisit your investment strategy when there's market volatility. Is that college tuition/mortgage/vacation payment nearer than you anticipated, mak-

ing you realize that you may need to be more conservatively invested?

It is worth noting that your time horizon for needing the money is the key factor here. Avoid making emotional decisions based on today's 24/7/365 news cycle. It can be tempting to react to the headlines when you might be better off simply riding out the volatility if you have a longer time horizon.

That doesn't mean you should never respond to market action. However, it's often a good idea to think long and hard before you change or, at the extreme, abandon your strategy.

This article was written by/for Wells Fargo Advisors and provided courtesy of Ponte Vedra Wealth Management Group in Ponte Vedra Beach at 904-273-7918.

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Images provided by St. Johns Cultural Council



Lenny Foster, Christina Parrish Stone, Michael Henry Lee and Chris Bodor were the judges in the second annual haiku contest.

A poet reads her haiku from a past contest.

# Bartram focus of haiku contest, deadline is March 1

St. Johns Cultural Council, which promotes arts, culture and heritage, has announced its Fourth Annual Haiku Contest.

Local poets of all ages are invited to submit up to three haiku inspired by William Bartram's travels in St. Johns County through the online application portal at https://form.jotform. com/230044722386048.

Applications must be submitted on or before March 1 and the following guidelines apply.

Applicants must be residents of St. Johns County. Each may submit up to three haiku, and the theme of this year's contest is the "250th Anniversary of William Bartram's Travels in St. Johns County."

Haiku need not mention the words "William Bartram," "St. Johns County" or "Florida." However, the work should be inspired by the natural landscapes, flora, fauna, and ecology of St. Johns County. Although haiku are not usually titled,

submissions must provide titles to assist in identifying the work. Additionally, all haiku must be previously unpublished and original.

A selection committee will choose three first place haiku, one each in the following categories with students from 5 to 9 years of age, students from 10 to 12 years of age, students from 13 to 17 years of age and adults from 18 years and older.

Authors of the first place haiku will each receive a \$100 prize, and the win-

ning haiku will be published on St-JohnsCulture.com, in the organization's electronic newsletter, and in the AC PAPA Literary Journal. The selection committee will also recognize up to eight honorable mentions (two haiku in each category) that will also be published on the website and in the newsletter. Each author of an honorable mention haiku will receive a \$25 gift certificate.

HAIKU continues on Page 27



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# **Lumen Repertory** Theatre to present compelling drama

The Lumen Repertory Theatre's inaugural production of its 2024 season will be the compelling drama "A Small Fire" by Obie Award winner Adam Bock. This evocative play, directed by Brian Niece, will feature the Jacksonville local Brooks Anne Meierdierks as Emily Bridges in a performance that promises to move audiences.

This poignant story highlights the resilience of human connection in the face of adversity. Described as a theatrical combo plate, the play offers a mix of raucous humor and unexpected emotional depth. It is a bold look at the notion that some bridges just won't burn.

"A Small Fire" follows Emily Bridges, a woman who has fiercely controlled her family, her work and her life, but suddenly begins to lose her senses. As she navigates this uncharted territory, the play beautifully explores the unpredictable nature of life and the resilience of human spirit. It's a story that resonates with the bold theme of Lumen Repertory Theatre's season, inviting audiences to engage with the strength and vulnerability of the human condition.

The strong physicality and unique approach to live performance that the professionals of Lumen Repertory Theatre are becoming known for will be on full display. In this second year of Northeast Florida's only fully professional, regional, repertory theatre company, "A Small Fire" sets the tone for a groundbreaking slate of bold and transformative journeys.

Performances of "A Small Fire" begin Friday, Feb. 16, and run through March 2 in the historic San Marco Church at 1620 Naldo Ave.

"In our inaugural season, we illuminated some of the possibilities for

Continued from 26

Authors of the winning haiku will be selected and notified no later than March 29 and recognized during St. Augustine PoetFest on April 13. The event will be held at Flagler College, Ringhaver Student Center, 50 Sevilla Street, Virginia Room, second floor.

To learn more about Bartram, go to history.domains.unf.edu/floridahistoryonline/ projects-proj-b-p-html/projects-bartramhtml and floridamuseum.ufl.edu/naturalists/bartram.



Courtesy of the Lumen Repertory Theatre

world-class, professional theatre here on the First Coast," said Niece. "For season 2024, we are unflinchingly raising the heat on a bold theme that is sure to delight, provoke and open the door to even more possibilities for artists and audiences alike."

In addition to Meierdierks, the cast includes James Webb, Bill Ratliff and Pauleen Conde. The production team includes Niece as sound designer, Josh Andrews as stage manager, Claire Cimino as set and production designer, Mike Livingston as lighting designer and Cathy Dooley as costume designer.

For more information on "A Small Fire," the season ahead and how to purchase tickets, go to lumenrep.org.

All performances are at 7:30 p.m. The show dates are: Feb. 16, 17, 22, 23 and 24, and March 1 and 2. Tickets are \$45, \$20 for students with valid student ID.

# Author to share writing secret



**Shutta Crum** 

Shutta Crum writes books for children and poetry for adults. She's also an acclaimed storyteller, retired librarian and teacher. She knows what successful books for all ages should include and will share it in her presentation, "The Four Hs: What Every Book for the Young (and Old) Must Have," at the Ponte Vedra Writers group meeting at 11 a.m. Saturday, Feb. 24, at the Ponte Vedra Beach Branch Library.

Shutta (pronounced Shut-Uh) comes from a long line of Kentucky storytellers and uses her skills to not only win awards and delight audiences - including being invited to participate in the 2005 White House Easter Egg Roll but as an educator. In her talk to the Ponte Vedra Writers group, she'll discuss the importance of including these key elements — the Four Hs, which are Heart, Hurt, Hope and Humor.

"Whether you are writing wordless books or door-stopper volumes for young adult/new adult readers, these concepts are core concerns." said Shutta.

Using a wide variety of examples for readers of all ages, she'll illustrate how successful writers weave these elements into their stories.

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

The Feb. 24 meeting is free and open to members and nonmembers alike. For information on FWA, go to floridawrit-



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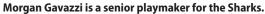
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The Sharks reached 20 wins and won a district title, but have their sights set on much more.

# PLAYOFF HOOPS ARE UPON US



Sharks send boys and girls to states after winning district titles

#### **By Anthony Richards**

It was a clean sweep of district basketball titles for Ponte Vedra High School, as both their boys and girls teams took home the honors.

First, it was the girls squad, which defeated Beachside to win the district championship, 52-45, on Feb. 9 and the boys followed it up a day later with a 79-73 victory over Oakleaf to claim the second title in as many days.

The Sharks proved that they could win in multiple ways, as the girls outlasted the Barracudas in a defensive slugfest, while the boys team won a shootout against the Knights.

On both occasions the offense and defense came up big for the Sharks when it needed to the most and that will be something they will lean on as they prepare to



Photos by Anthony Richards

Kennedy Rosendahl and the Sharks are looking for a deep playoff run.

embark on a state playoff run.

The win got the boys to 20 wins on the year, and with an overall record of 20-7, they enter the Class 6A tournament as the No. 2 seed in their region, with Wiregrass Ranch occupying the top seed.

The Sharks will face-off against Tal-

lahassee Lincoln (18-6) on Feb. 15, as the Trojans make the long trip along Interstate-10 for the matchup.

If the Sharks win, they could square off in a rematch against No. 3 Oakleaf in the second round or No. 6 Gainesville, depending on that game's outcome. Either

way the Sharks will have home court advantage for the contest.

The girls squad finished with a record of 19-8 and have followed a similar path as their boys team counterparts, as their district title also earned them the No. 2 seed and they will matchup against Spring Hill Springstead (21-4) in the opening round.

Although Springstead achieved 20 wins and has a better record than the Sharks, it was the Sharks tough schedule along with the district title that helped them be deserving of a No. 2 seed in the eyes of the FHSAA.

It is that strong schedule which they are also hoping will come into play now that the postseason is here, because all the tournaments and games against top competition during the season is something that head coach Jessica Spencer-Gardner and her staff will surely be hoping pays dividends.

After all, the playoffs present a unique test, because every team deserves to be in the tournament and there are no longer any games where there will be room for error.

The best teams in the state are all that is left at this point and it will only get more difficult, and the intensity will only wrap up with each round they advance further.

If the girls defeat Springstead, they will play the winner of No. 3 Beachside and No. 6 Tallahassee Lincoln, so just like the boys, they could also be confronted with a rematch of the district championship just a week or so later.

# **Professionals win 33rd Underwood Cup**

In a final day that harkened back to the American heroics at the 1999 Ryder Cup at Brookline Country Club, the team of 12 Northern Chapter PGA professionals overcame a seemingly insurmountable five-point deficit entering the final day singles matches to pull off a stunning victory in the 33rd edition of the Underwood Cup at Timuquana Country Club.

Down 8½ to 3½ with just 12 singles points available, captain Mike Broderick's professionals won eight matches and tied two to grab a 12½ to 11½ victory. It was their second Cup win in the last two years. Those two wins followed a drought of only one win (2016) in the previous 12 Underwood Cups.

The tone for the singles' session was set early when Zach Vinal, Clint Avret, Taylor Davis and Stephanie Connelly-Eiswerth put full points on the board with wins in the second-through-fifth matches, and Jake Etherton added a half point in the sixth match.

In the second match out, Vinal was in deep trouble going four down through four. He would right the ship, however, making six birdies the rest of the way to capture an inspiring 1 up win that proved to be the beginning of a highly improbable comeback by the professionals.

Amateur Chase Baldwin intervened with a 2-and-1 victory over Hayes Farley in the seventh match to halt the slide. But that would be his team's final full point. The pros went on another 4½-point tear, with four wins (Jennifer Borocz, Blanton Tessin, Roman O'Rourke and Aaron Russell) and a halved match (Josh Wolfe) over the final five head-to-head matches.

The Cup was still in doubt though with two points hanging in the balance only to see Josh Wolfe eke out a tie with Tyler Brown in the 10th match on the long par-4 finishing hole that was playing into a stiff north wind. A few moments later, Roman O'Rourke would two-putt from 60 feet to win the final match 1 up despite Toby Ragland's valiant birdie chip-in effort at the home hole.



Contributed photo

Professional Captain Mike Broderick, left, Clayton Bromberg of Underwood Jewelers and Amateur Captain Mike Del Rocco, right.

The professionals were captained by Broderick of Deerwood Country Club and the Amateurs by Mike Del Rocco of San Jose Country Club. Broderick's assistant was Jack Aschenbach of the North Florida Junior Golf Foundation. Fellow San Jose member, Mark Taylor, assisted Del Rocco.

The Underwood Cup mirrors the Presidents Cup and Ryder Cup. It features the elite players among Northeast Florida PGA professional and amateur golfers.

Underwood Jewelers, with Underwood

president Clayton Bromberg serving as honorary starter and host of the postevent luncheon and awards ceremony, is the title partner and has been all 33 years

The matches are conducted by the Northern Chapter of the North Florida PGA and supported by the Jacksonville Area Golf Association (JAGA) and Florida State Golf Association (FSGA).

Other Underwood Cup partners are Cutter & Buck, Devant & Pukka/ Chandler Altman, Don Poag and Chip Holcombe Brands.

#### in Mike Del Rocco, right.

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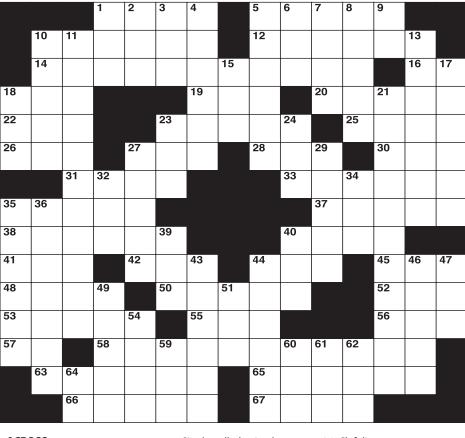
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- 1. Gene type
- 5. Persian male given name
- 10. Type of protection
- 12. Cloud
- 14. One who returns to life
- 16. Gym class
- 18. General's assistant (abbr.)
- 19. Baby's dining accessory
- 20. Enchantress
- 22. Prefix denoting "in a"
- 23. Spiritual leader
- 25. Cavities
- 26. Relative biological effectiveness (abbr.)
- 27. Foot (Latin)
- 28. Sweet potato
- 30. Pharaoh of Lower Egypt 31. Land
- 33. More inquisitive
- 35. Dog breed: \_\_ Apso
- 37. Stood up
- 38. Direct and uninhibited
- 40. Authorless
- 41. Blocking type of drug (abbr.)
- 42. Retrospective analysis (abbr.)
- 44. Root mean square (abbr.)
- 45. Macaws
- 48. Actress Remini
- 50. Polynesian wrapped skirt
- 52. City of Angels hoops team (abbr.)
- 53. Fitzgerald and Baker are two
- 55. Bowling alley must-have
- 56. A way to cool down
- 57. Ethnic group in Asia
- 58. A way to alter 63. Set of five
- 65. Removes from the record
- 66. Dummies
- 67. Set period in office

#### **DOWN**

- 1. DC Comics superhero
- 2. Brew
- 3. Play



**CROSSWORD** 

#### 4. Single-celled animals

- 5. Rough to the touch
- 6. Small island (British)
- 7. Often noted alongside cons
- 8. Preparation of rootstock
- 9. Atomic #44 10. Egyptian unit of capacity
- 11. About secretary
- 13. Particular groups 15. Poke fun at
- 17. Make certain that something occurs
- 18. Financial term
- 21. Justify
- 23. Arbiter
- 24. 007's creator
- 27. Czech name for Prague 29 Groans
- 32. American time
- 34. No seats available
- 35. \_\_ Stahl, journalist

- 36. Cleft lip
- 39. Talk incessantly
- 40. Expresses atomic and molecular weights (abbr.)
- 43. A part of a river where the current is very fast
- 44. Curdled milk
- 46. Running competitions
- 47. A team's best pitcher
- 49. Carthaginian explorer 51. World-renowned city
- 54. Most common Japanese
- surname
- 59. The bill in a restaurant 60. They \_\_\_
- 61. City of Angels football team (abbr.)
- 62. Distinctive practice
- 64. One quintillion bytes

#### **SUDOKU** 5 3 8 2 3 1 4 9 3 4 8 5 2 6 5 8 2 9 5 8 7 4 5 9 8 7 4 1 2 3 6

#### Here's How It Works:

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



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