



# Ponte Vedra NewsLine

JANUARY 2018 Volume 5 Issue 1

Ponte Vedra, Palm Valley, Nocatee and South Ponte Vedra Beach

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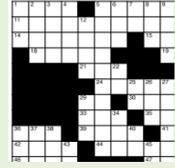
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Ocean of Sound goes to state



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Puzzles

## Writers helping writers in Ponte Vedra

By Angela Higginbotham  
angela@floridanewslines.com



Photos courtesy Vic DiGenti  
Author Susan Calfee, Regional Director and author Vic DiGenti, and author Jane Wood.

The Ponte Vedra Writers group of the Florida Writers Association is one of about 50 writers groups across the state of Florida coming together to encourage, teach and inspire writers of varying backgrounds. Monthly meetings held at the Ponte Vedra Beach Library focus on many different writing genres. Members of the Florida Writers Association and visitors have the opportunity to learn tips on increasing book sales, editing, preparing a book for self publishing, networking and other topics of interest. The writer's group often welcomes accomplished speakers to offer encouragement to both published authors and those just starting out.

"We are lucky to get people to come from outside of the area to come speak to us, as well as local people," said Northeast Florida Writers Association Regional Director Vic DiGenti. "These speakers are highly qualified and offer a tremendous amount of knowledge to the group."

Writers cont. on pg. 9

## Riverwood Poker Club and United States Marine Corps Reserve collaborate on fifth annual toy drive

By Angela Higginbotham  
angela@floridanewslines.com

Year after year, the Riverwood Poker Club and the United States Marine Corps Reserve have brought a smile to so many children. Thousands have had new toys to enjoy over the holiday season as a result of the great collaboration between the Riverwood Poker Club, part of Del Webb in Nocatee, and the United States Marine Corps Reserve during the fifth annual Toys for Tots drive.

Former Riverwood Poker Club president Bob Finger created the first toy drive and over the years, the effort has become a huge and highly anticipated success. The Del Webb community of Nocatee has become the

largest non-corporate donor to Toys for Tots in both St. Johns and Putnam counties. Each year



The toy drive concluded at a large gala event inside the community's clubhouse ballroom in mid-December.

Toy donations started being received immediately following Thanksgiving day and the drive concluded at a large gala event inside the community's clubhouse ballroom in



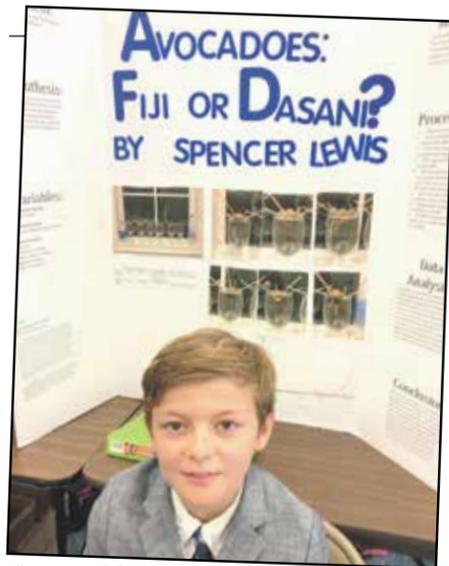
Photos courtesy Riverwood Poker Club

The Del Webb community of Nocatee has become the largest non-corporate donor to Toys for Tots in both St. Johns and Putnam counties.

the toy drive has become bigger and more successful than the previous year.

mid-December. United States Marine Corps dignitaries, uniformed Marines, and approximately 300 guests joined in on the gala. Known as the best party in Del Webb, guests enjoyed a sit down dinner and a presentation of the toy drive's success.

Toy Drive cont. on pg. 9



Photos courtesy Alexis Magnano  
Spencer Lewis with his project at the 2017 Landrum Science Fair.

On Friday, Nov. 17, Alice B. Landrum Middle School held its annual science fair. Landrum students presented their original scientific projects spanning a wide range of topic areas, including

## Landrum Middle School Science Fair showcases original projects

By Alexis Magnano  
mail@floridanewslines.com

categories such as Behavioral Science, Life Science, Chemistry and Physics. Forty-five projects were judged in four different categories and 20 projects were awarded honors:

Seventh grader Katie Shapiro earned top honors in the Behavioral Science category with her study entitled "Impact of a Low, No-Added Sugar Diet on Fitness Level." Eighth grader Benjamin Graham's project, "What Makes a Secure Password?" was awarded second prize. Caroline Maxwell won third prize for her project "Reaction to Motion With Color in Peripheral Vision." Maggie Benfield and Matthew Sides and

Bella Brinson were all awarded Honorable Mentions.

In the Life Sciences category, seventh grader Sai Prakash took first place with her study entitled "Plants Grow Better With Neem Oil Compared to a Synthetic Chemical Pesticide" and seventh grader Alexis Magnano was awarded second place for "Hotter, Wetter, and More Acidic: How Could Climate Change Impact Planaria Regeneration?" Victoria Wolker-Kraljic's project "A Spectrum of Light: How Does Light Color Affect Plant Growth?" was awarded third prize, while Lauren

Science Fair cont. on pg. 6

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# take 5

## St. Johns County Audubon offers Children's Shorebird Nesting Program

St. Johns County Parks and Recreation has partnered with the St. Johns County Audubon to offer a free Children's Shorebird Nesting Program on Saturday, Jan. 13, 2018, from 10 a.m. – 12 p.m. at Nease Beachfront Park, 3171 Coastal Hwy. in Vilano Beach. This program is for children third grade and up who will learn about the unique birds that nest along local beaches. In addition, children will participate in activities that mirror what the real bird biologists do to protect local nesting sites. For more information or to register, contact Kelly Ussia at [kussia@sjcfl.us](mailto:kussia@sjcfl.us) or (904) 209-0335.

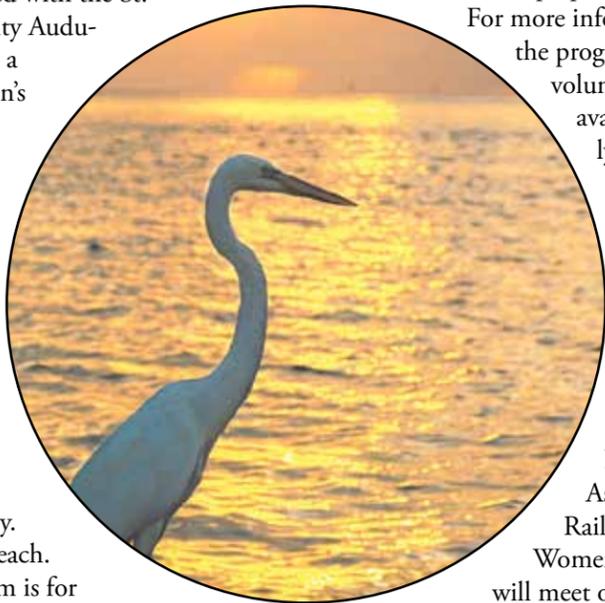


Photo courtesy MetroCreative

seeking volunteers during tax season, Jan. 16 – April 15, 2018. Opportunities include greeters, tax preparers and site coordinators to help with the RealSense tax preparation program.

For more information about the program and the volunteer positions available, visit [bit.ly/realsensesjc](http://bit.ly/realsensesjc) or call (904) 829-9721.

## Railway business women to meet

National Association of Railway Business Women (NARBW) will meet on Thursday, Jan. 25 and continuing on the fourth Thursday of each month throughout the year. The January guest speaker will be Edwina Robinson, who will speak about domestic violence. The organization is open to women who are currently or formerly employed, or a relative of someone in a railroad or railroad-connected industry. To RSVP or for more information, contact [narbiejax14@yahoo.com](mailto:narbiejax14@yahoo.com) or (904) 945-0943.

## Current events discussion group celebrates milestone

Current Events, the discussion group that meets each week on Monday morning at Donovan's Irish Pub on Phillips Highway on US Highway 1 at 10 a.m., recently marked its third anniversary. Starting initially with just a few participants in 2014, the group now attracts on average 20 or more people who gather to discuss events that are in the news. Such discussions normally generate strong views and on occasion conflicting exchanges; however, the group at Current Events maintains a civility that respects the views of those with whom they disagree without being disagreeable. The group has no affiliation with any political, religious or cultural organization. There are no requirements or restrictions on participants — only a desire to participate in a casual discussion of events that are in the news. A fee of \$3 is charged to cover morning coffee, nibbles and room rental. All are welcome. Contact Allan Silberman at [ADSilby@yahoo.com](mailto:ADSilby@yahoo.com) for more information.

## St. Augustine Film Festival kicks off New Year

The St. Augustine Film Festival runs Jan. 18 – 21, 2018 at three venues: The Corazon Cinema and Café with three screening rooms; the large Lewis Auditorium at Flagler College that seats nearly 800, and the intimate Gamache-Koger Theater in the Ringhaver Student Center at Flagler College that seats just over 100. The St. Augustine Film Festival features dozens of foreign and independent films and will bring film directors, producers, writers, and actors into town to showcase their films prior to wider distribution — or for some foreign films — the only time they'll be seen outside their country. Visit [www.StAugFilmFest.com](http://www.StAugFilmFest.com) for more information or to purchase film passes.



Photo courtesy MetroCreative

## Tax season volunteers needed

United Way of St. Johns County is

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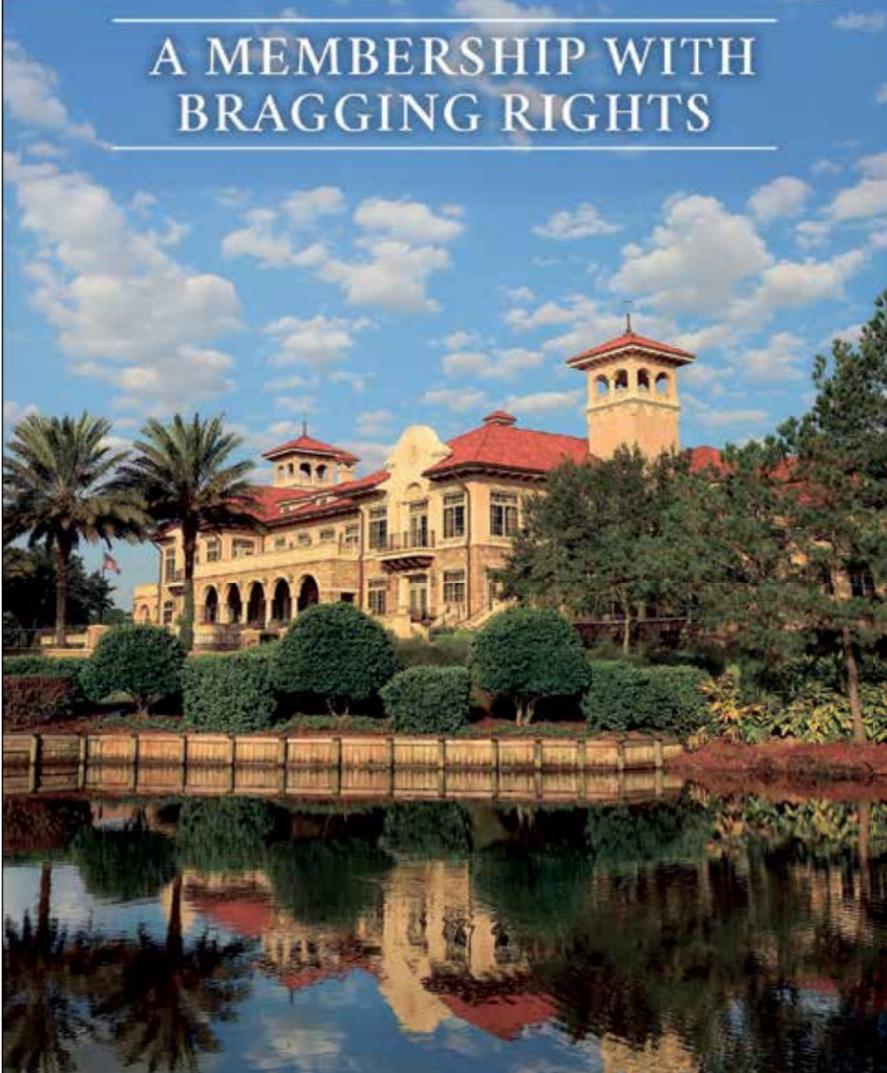
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# around town

save the date!

**Feb. 3, 2018 Fight For Air Climb to benefit American Lung Association**  
8:00 a.m. - Bank of America tower, downtown Jacksonville  
[http://action.lung.org/site/TR/Climb/ALASE\\_Southeast?pg=entry&fr\\_id=16325](http://action.lung.org/site/TR/Climb/ALASE_Southeast?pg=entry&fr_id=16325)

**February 8 Shorebird Walk at Matanzas Inlet with St. Johns County Audubon Society**  
9 a.m. - 11 a.m. - Matanzas Inlet West Parking Lot, 8655 A1A S., St Augustine  
[www.stjohnsaudubon.com](http://www.stjohnsaudubon.com)

**February 17 ALJ Saturday Cartooning and Illustration Classes**  
12 p.m. - Balis Community Center, 1513 Lasalle St., Jacksonville  
<http://artleaguejax.org/classes/murray-hill-art-center/cartooning-illustration-class/>

**February 24 Chocolate and Beyond, sponsored by RSVP**  
2 p.m. - 4 p.m. - First Coast Technical college, 2980 Collins Ave., St. Augustine  
[www.rsvpstjohns.com](http://www.rsvpstjohns.com) or (904) 547-3952

**February 24 Monster Jam**  
7 p.m. - EverBank Field  
[www.monsterjam.com](http://www.monsterjam.com)

**March 2 - 4 World of Nations Celebration**  
Metropolitan Park

**March 3 Northeast Florida Veg Fest**  
Riverside Park  
[www.nfvegfest.org/](http://www.nfvegfest.org/)

**April 14 Relay for Life of North St. Johns**  
12 p.m. - 10 p.m. - Bartram Trail High School  
[http://main.acsevents.org/site/TR/RelayForLife/RFLCY18SER?pg=entry&fr\\_id=86383](http://main.acsevents.org/site/TR/RelayForLife/RFLCY18SER?pg=entry&fr_id=86383)

**2nd Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) Ponte Vedra Chapter meeting**  
10:45 a.m. - 1 p.m.  
[pontevedrachaptersdar@aol.com](mailto:pontevedrachaptersdar@aol.com)

**Parents with Hope (support for parents who have lost a child)**  
6 p.m. - 8 p.m.  
Ponte Vedra Valley, 4750 Palm Valley Road  
[www.pontevedravalle.com/grief-support](http://www.pontevedravalle.com/grief-support)

**3rd Toastmasters Club #5199 Ponte Vedra Beach**  
7:30 a.m. (repeating event on Wednesdays)  
Players Community Senior Center, 175 Landrum Lane  
[carmenjsardinas@gmail.com](mailto:carmenjsardinas@gmail.com)

**4th U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Flotilla 14-7**  
7:30 p.m.  
St. Augustine Yacht Club near the St. Augustine Lighthouse  
(904) 460-0243

**5th GTM Research Reserve new volunteer orientation**  
10 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.  
Environmental Education Center, 505 Guana River Road  
(904) 823-4500

**January 6th - 7th Katz 4 Keeps cat adoptions**  
11 a.m. - 3 p.m.  
935B A1A North  
(904) 834-3223 or [katz4keeps.org](http://katz4keeps.org)

**8th Current Events Discussion Group**  
10 a.m. (repeating event on Mondays)  
Donovan's Irish Pub, US Highway 1  
[adsilby@yahoo.com](mailto:adsilby@yahoo.com)

**Ponte Vedra Beach Municipal Service District Meeting**  
6 p.m. - 7 p.m.  
Ponte Vedra Beach Branch Library  
[www.pvmsd.org](http://www.pvmsd.org)

**9th Lilies of the Valley widow support group**  
11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.  
Ponte Vedra Valley, 4750 Palm Valley Road  
[www.pontevedravalle.com/grief-support](http://www.pontevedravalle.com/grief-support)

**Adult Coloring Club**  
1 p.m. - 4 p.m.  
Ponte Vedra Beach Branch Library  
(904) 827-6950

**Jan. 9th- Feb. 13th Northeast Florida AHEC Quit Smoking Now class**  
Tuesdays, 6 p.m. - 7 p.m.  
Flagler Hospital Wellness Center  
Free; call (904) 482-0189 to register

**11th St. Augustine/Jacksonville Newcomers Club Trivia evening/dinner**  
5:30 p.m.  
Contact Lea for name of restaurant and to be added to attendee list  
(904) 829-0643 or (904) 814-9612

**Relay for Life of North St. Johns kick off meeting**  
6:30 p.m.

Allen D. Nease High School  
[http://main.acsevents.org/site/TR/RelayForLife/RFLCY18SER?pg=entry&fr\\_id=86383](http://main.acsevents.org/site/TR/RelayForLife/RFLCY18SER?pg=entry&fr_id=86383)

**Palencia Bridge Club plays Party Bridge**  
11 a.m. - 3 p.m. (repeating event on Thursdays)  
Donovan's Irish Pub, 7440 US Highway 1  
Diane Tamplin, (904) 808-7326

**American Association of University Women (AAUW) Author Luncheon**  
11:30 a.m.  
Amici Italian Restaurant, 1915 A1A South, St. Augustine.  
RSVP by Jan. 4: (904) 940-7379 or <https://staugustine-fl.aauw.net/>

**12th Food Truck Friday**  
6 p.m. - 9 p.m.  
Nocatee's Splash Waterpark

**13th Polar Plunge**  
8:30 a.m.  
Nocatee's Splash Waterpark

**15th Beaches Toastmasters Club**  
7 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. (Repeating event on Mondays)  
Baptist Hospital Beaches, Wilson Epstein Building  
[cgsml3@yahoo.com](mailto:cgsml3@yahoo.com)

**16th Newcomers of North St. Johns luncheon**  
11 a.m.  
Cimarrone Golf and Country Club Clubhouse  
RSVP by Jan. 6, [sjaird@comcast.net](mailto:sjaird@comcast.net)

**23rd Ponte Vedra Beach Library Book Club: "The Rent Collector" by Cameron Wright**  
3 p.m. - 4 p.m.  
Ponte Vedra Beach Branch Library  
(904) 827-6950

**31st First Coast Card Club - adult card players**  
1:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.  
Ponte Vedra Beach Branch Library

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## Storm damage assessment follow-up for real property scheduled

By NewsLine Staff  
mail@floridanewslines.com

Appraisal teams from the St. Johns County Property Appraiser's office will be in the field beginning Jan. 2, 2018, for the entire month of January, performing follow-up damage assessment to properties damaged by Hurricane Matthew and Hurricane Irma. Appraisal teams will be looking specifically at properties where damage was reported to the property appraiser's office, properties upon which appraisers discovered damage through field visits, and areas that were most prone to damage from the storms.

According to St. Johns County Property Appraiser Eddie Creamer, the follow-up assessments will determine whether all repairs have been completed and the home is able to be occupied as of Jan. 1, 2018, and assessed values restored for tax year 2018. If unrepaired damage still exists, or the home is unable to be occupied, damage assessments will stay

in place for the tax year 2018 and be adjusted to reflect the current condition of the home.

"If you reported damage to your home from either storm to our office, or one of our appraisers visited your home to assess damage, there is no need for you to contact us," said Creamer. "However, if your property was damaged from either Hurricane Matthew or Hurricane Irma and you received no adjustment in value in 2017, and the damage is still evident or the home is unable to be occupied as of Jan. 1, 2018, please contact my office so that I may send an assessment team to your home."

Call the property appraiser's office at (904) 827-5500 if you have any questions about these follow-up visits, or damage assessment in general and how it affects property values. Visit [www.sjcpa.us](http://www.sjcpa.us) for more information.

### Briefs

#### Annual Character Counts! Run/Walk scheduled

The Character Counts! 6 Pillars 6K/3K Run/Walk will be held on Saturday, Feb. 3, 2018, at 9 a.m. The run/walk will begin and end at Palencia Elementary School located at 355 Palencia Village Drive. Walkers and runners will enjoy a course running through the neighborhoods of Kensington and Las Calinas and can choose to participate in the 6K (3.73 miles) or 3K (1.86 miles) distance.

Race proceeds will support Character Counts! initiatives throughout the St. Johns County School District. The run/walk is open to all ages, and the top three winners will be awarded in each of the age categories as well as the overall male and female finishers. A cash donation will be awarded to the top three to five schools with the most registrants. All race registrants will receive a tech t-shirt and lots of other goodies from area businesses and organizations. At the finish line, each race participant will receive a commemorative dog tag which is the fourth design in its series.

Registration fees are \$30 prior to Feb. 2 or \$35 on race day for the 6K and \$25 prior to Feb. 2 or \$30 on race day for the 3K. Visit [www.racesmith.com/races/](http://www.racesmith.com/races/)

[CHARACTERCOUNTS.html](http://CHARACTERCOUNTS.html) for registration forms and more information.

#### BRASS installs new president

The incoming 2018 board of directors of BRASS (Beaches Residents Actively Supporting the Symphony) welcomed Katheryn Hancock as the new president. She succeeds outgoing president, Michael Imbriani, who has led the organization for nearly four years with a deep passion for and commitment to the BRASS goals. More than \$350,000 has been raised through BRASS special events and donated to the Jacksonville Symphony Orchestra during Imbriani's presidency.

BRASS was founded in 1990 to support the Jacksonville Symphony Orchestra by fostering orchestral music appreciation, promoting concert attendance, providing financial support and facilitating music education.



Photo courtesy Leigh Cort  
Incoming president, Katheryn Hancock, and past president, Michael Imbriani, passing the BRASS Baton into 2018.

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## Ocean of Sound places ninth in 4A Division at state championship

By Marianne McNee  
mail@floridanewslines.com

The Ponte Vedra High School Ocean of Sound capped its 2017 marching band season with a ninth place finish out of 14 schools in the competitive 4A Division at the FMBC State Competition on Nov. 18 in Tampa. This year is only the second time the PVHS Band has performed in the state event, following last year's debut.



PVHS Marching Band Color Guard Captain Jasmine Zhai (front row, in costume), brother-sister Drum Majors, junior Riley Jett (left, second row), senior Ryker Jett (right, second row) and Band Captain Ashley Rickman (middle, third row) stand at Retreat with the PVHS seniors in the State Competition Semi-Finals on Nov. 18, 2017.

Second-year PVHS Band Director Jermaine Reynolds was very pleased with the Ocean of Sound's presentation of its 2017 show, "Jack" based on the classic fairy tale "Jack and the Beanstalk."

Band for coming through in another big moment. They poured their hearts and souls into 'Jack' and it showed on the field."



Photos courtesy Robert Leverock  
The PVHS Ocean of Sound performs on Saturday, Nov. 18, 2017 in the semi-finals of the FMBC State Competition at Plant High School in Tampa.

"The Band had a fantastic performance at state. It was our best run of the year, which is saying something as we've had other good runs this season, earning the Grand Champion awards in the Middleburg Echoes of Excellence Regional Competition and the Fleming Island Golden Eagles Classic event," Reynolds said. "I'm very proud of the

and they finished 12th out of 12 schools in the 4A division.

"I'm grateful for all the hard work everyone has put into this year's program. It's been a great year," Reynolds said.

This performance marked the final marching band show for the 23 graduating seniors.

Reynolds pointed out that the state competition is the toughest championship of the year and the judges mark against a very high standard. Last year was the first year PVHS ever competed in the state event

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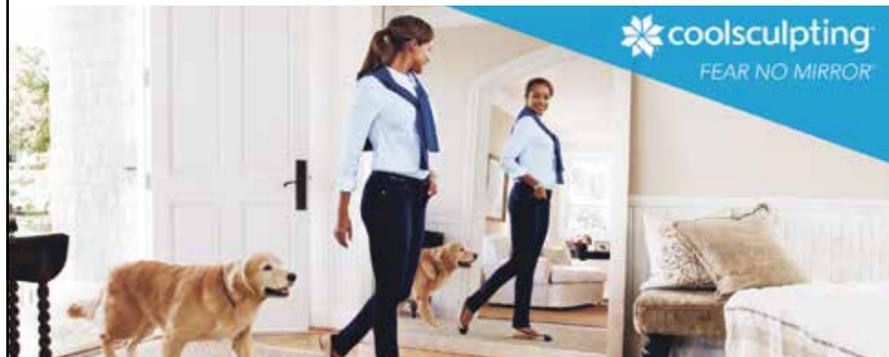


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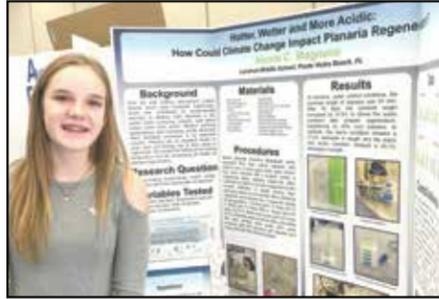


**Science Fair** cont. from pg. 1

Minx-Tomlinson, Andrew Hamm and Audrey Hackett were each awarded Honorable Mentions.

Eighth graders Aya Afsh and Rhoda Tawk were awarded first place in the Chemistry category for their project, "Which Tea has More Fluoride: Expensive Cheap?" Theodore Maddox was awarded second place for his study "How does a Different Form of Sucrose Effect the Length of a Carbon Tower?" and Caroline Gentile also won second place her project "Got Gas?"

The Physics category had the most projects. There were two first place winners: Alison Rhoads with her study, "The Effect of Angle on Inclination on Solar Power Output" and Broc Obner for his study "Cloud Chamber: See the Unseen." There were also two second place winners: Gabriel Rigdon for her project "Why Is the Ice Melting Faster than Normal?" and Noam Ben Simon for his study "The Rieman Hypothesis." For third place, Landon McIntosh was recognized for his study "Image Generation through Machine Learning" along with Carissa Talbert with her



Seventh grader Alexis Magnano was awarded second place for "Hotter, Wetter, and More Acidic: How Could Climate Change Impact Planaria Regeneration?"

study "A Magnetic Cure for Leukemia." Matthew Hendrickson and Matthew Andersen each received Honorable Mention awards.

Category winners and other selected high-scoring projects will advance to the Regional Science Fair on Feb. 6, 2018 at First Coast Technical College in St. Augustine. Winners at that competition could earn the opportunity to compete in the 63rd State Science and Engineering Fair of Florida, to be held March 27 – 29, 2018 at the Lakeland Center in Lakeland.

*Alexis Magnano is a seventh grade student at Alice B. Landrum Middle School.*

## Dance team captain may be future Rockette

By Jesse Hagy  
mail@floridanewsline.com

As a sophomore at Ponte Vedra High School, Caroline Schwalbe was voted "Most Likely to be a Rockette." Perhaps that's not too surprising; Schwalbe has been dancing since her mother introduced her to ballet when she was just three years old, and as a senior now at PVHS, she is captain of the school's Splash Dance Team.

"I love dancing at football games and being able to cheer on our team," Schwalbe said.

The team does much more than support other sports; it competes in its own events as well, traveling twice a year to Orlando, where regional and national competitions are held.

"I like how it's challenging and you can always work to better tricks," she said of the challenge that dance poses. "The dance world is very competitive and you always have to keep working to improve your technique because in the dance world perfection doesn't exist."

On her own, Schwalbe has danced for the Make-A-Wish Foundation and raised money to grant a wish for a little girl who was having a heart transplant and who wanted to go to Disney. Whether it's for charity or sport, Schwalbe is in perpetual motion, as unlike some sports that run for a designated season, dance consumes her schedule year round. She stays in shape by stretching daily outside of practices and rehearsals.



Photo courtesy Cady Studios  
Caroline Schwalbe is captain of the Splash Dance Team at Ponte Vedra High School

While dance has helped Schwalbe help others, it's also taught her a few things about herself.

"I've learned the responsibilities that come with being a leader," she said. "I am captain this year and it is important to stick to a schedule so we can use our time efficiently because we juggle performances for football, basketball, sidelines, band cadences and pep rallies along with getting our competition dances ready, which are jazz and hip hop. It's also about being a motivator when girls get tired or frustrated."

She's also learned the importance of preparation. Dancing in front of an audience can be nerve wracking, whether it's in a pep rally or a national competition. Schwalbe deals with the pressure by taking comfort in her preparation and reassuring herself that she has practiced and knows the dance inside and out.

Ponte Vedra Beach is a long way from Radio City Music Hall, but perhaps Schwalbe's classmates know what the future does hold for her. With her drive, talent and ambition, she may indeed realize her dream of high-stepping with the Rockettes.

*Jesse Hagy is a student at Ponte Vedra High School.*

### Five Things about Caroline Schwalbe

**Favorite song:**  
"September" by Earth Wind and Fire

**Favorite dancer?**  
Misty Copeland

**Favorite musical or movie?**  
The Sound of Music

**Favorite type of dance?**  
Jazz

**Favorite class?**  
Chemistry

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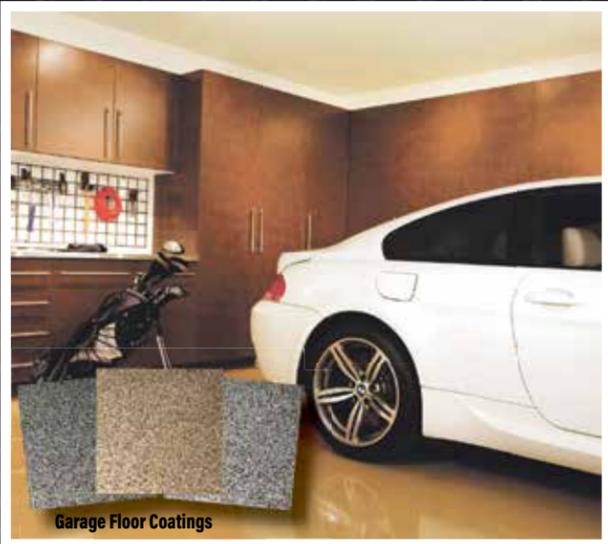




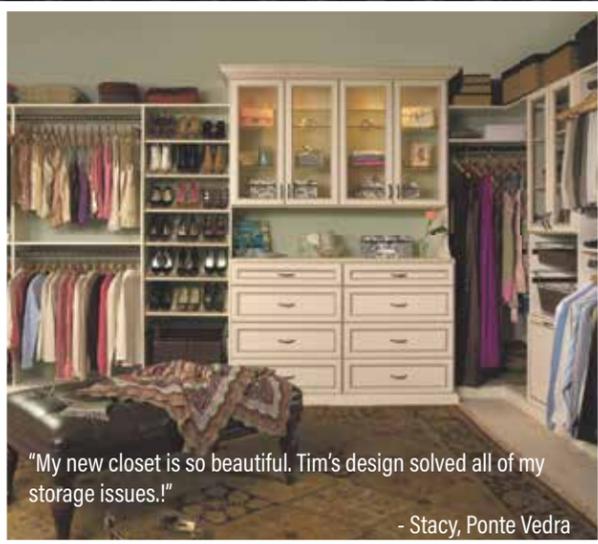


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# ST. JOHNS Business Monthly

## MarketInsight



### 'Tis the Season

Scott Grant  
ScottGrant@StJohnsBusinessMonthly.com

The ink was barely dry on the Declaration of Independence when disaster struck our fledgling Republic. British Regulars landed in Long Island and nearly destroyed George Washington and his Continental Army. The plan of battle was designed by General James Grant, the former governor of Florida who once owned and operated an indigo plantation in Ponte Vedra near Guana. Grant's plan was flawless and sent the Americans reeling back to Manhattan. Washington barely escaped. American soldiers seeking to surrender were slaughtered by Hessian troops. Later Washington would escape to New Jersey where Cornwallis would chase him all the way across the state into Pennsylvania. George Washington and our new Republic were humiliated. Many expected that neither would survive that first long, cold winter.

What we now call the United States needed a miracle. Washington had with him some young lads from Cape Cod commanded by Colonel Glover. They called themselves "Glover's Amphibians" and had already worked miracles. It was Glover's men that ferried Washington and his army from Long Island to Manhattan, from Manhattan to New Jersey, and from New Jersey to Pennsylvania. Washington needed him again. The father of our country had an audacious plan. He would have Glover ferry his troops across the Delaware River and attack the Hessians quartered in Trenton on the day after Christmas. The code word that night was "victory or death." Washington took the British by surprise, driving the Red Coats from New Jersey and saving the Revolution and his career.

There is something about this holiday season leading into the New Year that fills us all with hope for a brighter future. Everything seems possible. All of our dreams can come true. The promise of the New Year beckons us into a lustrous future. It has not always been obvious in the moment, but that future has always been brighter than anyone in the moment ever imagined. Seventy-six years ago this December, the future did not look bright at all. The Japanese had just bombed Pearl Harbor and we were plunged into a war for which we were woefully unprepared. German submarines were already on the way to our shores to sink our ships and kill our sailors. It did not seem like a good time to invest in stocks, but it was.

Today, again, the future seems uncertain. Will there be jobs? Will people be needed? Will we rip our nation, even our world, apart in a sea of acrimony? The answer is no. Our future is as bright today as it ever has been, possibly brighter. Civilization always advances. America always advances. One of the ways to measure that advance is by charting the advance of the stock market. Since that scary Christmas 76 years ago, the stock market has risen inexorably. If you expect that things will suddenly change, that civilization will suddenly collapse — you're wrong. Everyone who ever made that bet, lost. I give a popular speech about a submarine attack 75 years ago off of Jacksonville Beach. The speech always ends with the same words: "Never bet against the United States of America and never bet against the stock market."

*Scott A. Grant is President of Standfast Asset Management in Ponte Vedra Beach. He welcomes your comments or questions at [scottg@standfastic.com](mailto:scottg@standfastic.com).*



Photo courtesy Lorie Shvets

## United Way board serves Thanksgiving meal to Armstrong residents

On Monday, November 13, United Way of St. Johns County board members came together to serve nearly 200 meals to residents in the Armstrong community. Members of the Board of Directors have committed to serving this Thanksgiving meal in Armstrong for eight years. Melinda Peoples at SEA Community Help Resource Center, First Baptist Church of Armstrong, Chef Gaynor and her culinary students at First Coast Technical College, Mojo Old City BBQ and Bono's were all responsible for the success of the event. Pictured are Tony Bernados, Kelly Green, Suzanne Brown, Bobby Crum, Lisa Payne, Cynthia Williams, and Melissa Nelson.

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## This 'n That

By Mims Cushing  
mail@floridanewsline.com

### All I Wanted for Christmas...

So. Christmas is done for another year. I truly hope you opened a present that you wanted. I did not. I had my eyes on that Salvator Mundi (“Savior of the World”) by Da Vinci. I don’t have a single Da Vinci on my walls.

I figured it would make a nice conversation piece if I ever had a neighborhood coffee klatch. I’d pour coffee and pass shortbread cookies.

“Have you seen my DaVinci? It’s in the family room near the TV. Come

take a look,” I’d chat, airily pointing in the direction of where my favorite handyman had centered it over the fireplace.

Heck, it would be perfectly safe in my home. I mean, I do live in a gated community. The painting would have made a nice companion piece for my artwork from a fellow in Westport, Conn., who paints scenes of Nantucket and Cape Cod. It’s decently framed.

The history of this painting is so complicated it makes the eyes blur. Ponte Vedra NewsLine would have to add an extra page to the newspaper if I’d written about it. The short version of the money trail is that DaVinci sold for \$450.3 million on Nov. 15, 2017 at a Christie’s auction. I’ve read that \$50 million of that amount went toward “fees.” Is that like shipping and handling?

The bidding war lasted 19 minutes. It’s a tiny fellow, this painting, only 15” x 17” and is 500 years young. It was owned by King Charles I and went missing for many years. At one point in the ‘50s a man picked it up for less than \$200. (Did I get that right? Yes, I did.) He bought it for that paltry sum at an estate sale — well, as least it wasn’t at a yard sale.

At another estate sale, jumping ahead to 2005, it sold for less than \$10,000. Then in 2011 a Swiss art dealer bought it for \$80 million. Now we’re talking serious money. That is its provenance, more mundanely known as “history.” In 2013 it was sold for \$75 million to a Swiss dealer and later to a Russian collector for \$127.5 million.

Prior to the sale this past year at Christie’s, it took six men four years to prove to the art world that it was legit. They used x-rays and infrared and ultraviolet technology. Perhaps they gave it a CT scan and MRI for good measure.

Scholars found that the painter used lapis lazuli, a rare blue pigment as expensive as gold back when Da Vinci was out and about. Blue is my favorite color, the predominant one in my house. This painting is meant to be with me.

One art historian came up with this snarky comment “The composition is not a Da Vinci. It’s good studio work... but very damaged.” What a spoilsport. What a killjoy!

Oh well. I was looking forward to popping it gently off the wall one Sunday and nestling it in a cozy quilt in the back of my SUV. I’d lovingly drive it over to my church to let the folks have a look-see.

The good news is my birthday is right around the corner so there’s still hope. Happy New Year everyone.

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## Get to Know . . .

### Lenny Unitas

By Ken Gillespie  
mail@floridanewsline.com

Many know Lenny Unitas from his part time job at Publix in Nocatee's Market Square. For three or four days every week over the past three years he's been heading over to the store where you'll see him bagging shoppers' groceries at checkout. At the age of 90, Unitas is the "senior" employee. His ever present smile and friendly, helpful manner is valued by both regular customers and newcomers. Unitas especially enjoys working side by side with teens who fondly call him Grandpa.

Unitas's story is all about personal renewal. Just three years ago he acted on a life long desire to play a musical instrument by learning to play the organ. His living room features an elegant Lowry organ which he plays for personal pleasure as well as to please his wife Ann and her brother David. A lover of the outdoors, he and Ann owned a boat for many years and was an active member of Jacksonville's Power Squadron, where he served as commander. Giving up his sea legs only recently, he now stays fit through walks with his four-footed companion Hattie.

Unitas is a Pittsburgh native and brother of famed Baltimore Colts quarterback Johnny Unitas. Not yet fully retired, his varied work career includes time as a coal hauler, steel fabricator, driver of 18-wheelers (ask him about the freaky time a train's

caboose rammed him), a door-to-door salesman, an insurance broker, a grocery produce manager, and owner of a Firestone tire franchise along with his brother. Whew — and he's not finished yet!

**Q: What do you like about living in Nocatee?**

A: People here are friendly and welcoming. We moved from a nearby golf community and having the security of a gated development in Del Webb is important. This location is terrific with every shopping and leisure convenience just a few minutes away. Having golf cart access to nature trails and extra wide sidewalks gives us easy mobility. Nocatee is a physically pretty community that showcases Mother Nature's beauty.

**Q: Any advice for your juniors about staying young at heart?**

A: Remain physically active, get out of the house often, and mingle with people of all ages. I long ago learned to place a high value on my health, when I suffered a heart attack some 40 years ago. Today I'm the only surviving male in my family; all the rest suffered cardiac problems. My dog Hattie drags me out three times daily and helps keep me



Photo courtesy Ken Gillespie  
Nocatee resident Lenny Unitas

socially active by meeting other walkers and dog owners.

**Q: Describe yourself in just a few words.**

A: (Reluctant to answer, Unitas's wife Ann took the lead by saying he is personable, optimistic, caring and frugal. On that last point he spends little on himself but will buy anything Ann desires. He delights in shopping for her).

**Q: What little known fact or life experience might surprise people about you?**

A: Well when we were kids, I accidentally caused a bullet to hit my brother in the leg. Fooling around I tossed a live bullet into a burning fireplace. It exploded and embedded in Johnny. I carried him four blocks to the doctor. Looking back it sure didn't hurt his football career none!

**Writers** cont. from pg. 1

Forensic specialists, mystery writers are frequent guest speakers and specific writing formats are often discussed. Panelists provide insights into how their book was crafted and how to keep the reader turning pages.

For more information on joining a meeting, visit fwapontevedra.blogspot.com or contact Vic DiGenti at vicdig@mac.com.

**Toy Drive** cont. from pg. 1

"In addition to toys, money donations are also collected. We were able to present to the United States Marine Corps Reserve's Toys for Tots drive, a check for \$3,200 and close to \$9,000 in toys," said Riverwood Poker Club event planner Marie Ford.

The gala event was catered by Davoli's Catering, decorated by Celebrity Event Decor and entertainment was provided by Cloud 9 Band.

With approximately 114 members, the Riverwood Poker Club hosts tournament style Texas Hold'em on Friday afternoons and in the evening on the second Wednesday of each month for Del Webb residents. Lessons are provided every Friday at 11:30 a.m. in the ballroom. Orientation is required before play and prizes and bonuses can be won. Visit [www.dwpontevedra.net](http://www.dwpontevedra.net) for more information.

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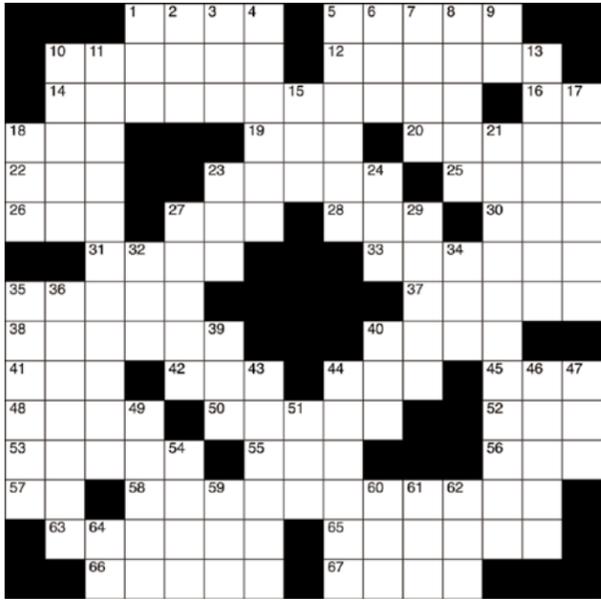
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# Puzzles

Answers to puzzles on page 2  
Provided by MetroCreative



**CLUES ACROSS**

1. Isodor \_\_, American Nobel physicist
5. One a day keeps the doctor away
10. Extents
12. Noticing
14. Scriptural
16. Star Trek character Laren
18. "The Crow" actress \_\_ Ling
19. Not good
20. Measures gold
22. TV network
23. Wasting
25. Money in Ghana
26. Young girls' association
27. Title of respect
28. High schoolers take this test
30. Crunches federal numbers
31. Wild or sweet cherry
33. Celestial bodies
35. Fruit of the oak tree
37. Royal Navy ship during WWII

**CLUES DOWN**

1. Seafood
2. Incan god of mountains
3. Ritzy LA neighborhood \_\_ Air
4. Line that connect points of equal pressure
5. Audience-only remarks
6. Chest muscle (slang)
7. Pointed top
8. Lavender
9. Linear unit
10. Knives
11. 2016 World Series champs
13. A way to arrange
15. Talk
17. Serving no purpose
18. Container
21. Breathes new life into
23. Beloved dog Rin Tin \_\_
24. A bag-like structure in a plant or animal
27. Yemen capital
29. Sacred book of Judaism
32. Make a mistake
34. Wrestlers wrestle here
35. Respiratory issue
36. In league
39. Resinous insect secretion
40. Unhappy
43. Turbulent area of a river
44. Neglectful
46. Sours
47. Calendar month (abbr.)
49. Grooves
51. Sony Pictures Television
54. Monetary units
59. Command right
60. 1,000 cubic feet
61. Expression of triumph
62. Dinner jacket
64. The first two

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 D L O H S E R H T J I N D E X C L A M S  
 B E L E C T R O L Y T E S O L V C R E I  
 P M U S C L E U T I U C R I C T C U S S  
 C A R D I O V A S C U L A R I R I C D C T  
 V L A C T I C A C I D H B V O E O N I A  
 L F O I I A H T U N C S I S N H N E N N  
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 S E O T S O N D D I I T O A C C I T H E  
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 R I Y E E I E O S A P I B B O Y U I S R  
 T B G C A S L T I H S O O R X D O O I L  
 S I E N F T C N I Y R R E H O N U J L B  
 U L N O U A I N H E E R J O G H S L A O  
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**WORDS**

- ACTIVITIES
- AEROBIC
- AGONIST
- ANAEROBIC
- BODY
- CALISTHENICS
- CARDIOVASCULAR
- CIRCUIT
- CLASSES
- CONCENTRIC
- CONTINUOUS
- CORE
- CROSS-TRAINING
- ELECTROLYTES
- ENDORPHINS
- ENDURANCE
- EUSTRESS
- FLEXIBILITY
- IMPACT
- INDEX
- INTENSITY
- INTERVALS
- JOINTS
- LACTIC ACID
- LEAN
- MASS
- MUSCLE
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**A. 14 3 26 8 19 14**  
 Clue: Wellness

**B. 3 6 3 23 1 9 7 3**  
 Clue: Physical activity

**C. 17 15 4 24**  
 Clue: Physical structure

**D. 16 3 9 20 14 19**  
 Clue: Mass

## Salt Water Fishing

By Capt. Kirk Waltz  
 mail@floridanewslines.com

**Boat talk**

The beginning of the New Year around our parts typically signals the end of our fishing season and the beginning of our winter. Though Old Man Winter to our neighbors to the north is much longer and usually a lot colder, it still gets cold in these parts. The cooler temps around here do keep many folks from venturing onto the water and enjoying the outdoors — but it's a great time of the year to get that maintenance done on your boat and trailer.

To get started, do an assessment of your boat trailer by climbing around it to look for wear and tear. Bearings on the axle can be a game changer, so I would start there. Lube the axle bearings or change them should you hear any grinding noise coming from the wheels when you move. Check the light wires to ensure there are no frayed edges that could cause a light failure. Check for worn or damaged trailer tires and in some cases look for nails or screws that have become lodged in the tires. Sometimes things get stuck in the tires that don't cause it to deflate, but down the road will cause failure. Check for cracked light fixture lenses that will lead



Photo courtesy Capt. Kirk Waltz  
 Take advantage of the cooler temperatures this time of year to do some maintenance on your boat and trailer.

to failure or even an accident. Look for worn or damaged boat winch straps and replace them if necessary. Check your ball connection to the vehicle to ensure it's not bent or damaged. I recently had the ball screw bend due to some rust that had degraded the actual hitch extension.

Hop in the boat and check your screws by grabbing a screwdriver/ratchet wrench and checking to see if the screws/bolts are tight. Repeated bumping of waves and swells to the boat can loosen screws and bolts, which can lead to failure of some components. Check your switches and pumps to ensure they are in good working order. Check your navigation lights to ensure they work properly. Change your engine oil, filters, and lube it with the factory recommended products. Crawl under the boat and look for spider cracks and dings that can take on water. Give the boat a good cleaning and open all the hatches to check for damage. A good wax will ensure prolonged life and ease of cleaning for future use. Replace worn and out of date flares, life jackets, and safety gear.

If you are not qualified or don't want to

attempt these repairs, there a few reputable boat dealers like Atlantic Coast Marine locally that can do those repairs for you. Remember if you take care of your investment it will last longer. Have a Happy New Year.

Capt. Kirk Waltz, charter boat captain, Coast Guard maritime instructor, and local radio talk show host, can be reached at

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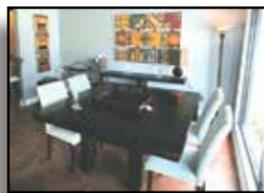
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