

Ponte Vedra NewsLine

APRIL 2021 Volume 8 Issue 4

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

A Florida NewsLine Publication



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BFF Best Furry Friend



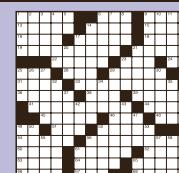
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Council on Aging announces new Nocatee Community Senior Center

By NewsLine Staff
mail@floridanewslne.com

The Council on Aging's (COA) newest senior center, the Nocatee Community Senior Center, at the Flagler Health+ Health Village at Nocatee, opened on March 23. This new center is designed for adults older than 60 who live in St. Johns County, enjoy staying active, being social, and living a healthy lifestyle.

"We are grateful to be able to offer new programs to the thriving senior community in Nocatee," shared COA's executive director, Becky Yanni. "After a difficult year for all, we are excited to meet new people, welcome them to the COA community, and introduce them to all COA has to offer."

The senior center is the product of a partnership with Flagler Health+, which has provided the space for the new center. The senior center has also received support from a generous grant from Republic Services, a waste and recycling service provider in St. Johns County.

The Nocatee Community Senior Center offers the following programs and activities:

- Upcoming Speaker Series: Tuesdays from 1:30 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.
- Doctor's Corner Lecture Series: Wednesday, April 7 from 9 a.m. –

Senior cont. on pg. 13

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New surf club catches some waves



Photo courtesy Ivy Scott

Ponte Vedra Boardriders board member Cierra Warner.

By Tiffany Merlo Phelps
mail@floridanewslne.com

Don Wight began surfing competitively when he was 12 years old. It didn't take long for him to not only love the sport, but also to love the ocean and want to protect it.

"Being surfers, the ocean is a huge thing for us. You want that area to be clean and safe for everyone," said Wight, who grew up in Ponte Vedra Beach. "We are trying to preserve it."

This is one of several reasons that Wight started the Ponte Vedra Boardriders Surf Club in August, which falls under the Florida Boardriders organization. It was a perfect opportunity to bring the community together, compete in contests, organize beach clean-ups, assist the sea turtle patrol and offer surfing lessons, said Wight.

"We are a nonprofit organization with goals such as growing our local surf community and promoting environmental stewardship," said Wight.

The club now has 60 members, and they have attended three Florida Cup Series contests thus far, competing against St.

Augustine, Jacksonville Beach and the Space Coast. Members pay a \$50 annual fee and, if they wish, compete by age divisions.

"We have a pretty good mix of ages and talents," said Wight, who owns Shark Pods, a small eco commerce business that sells shark repellent lanyards designed to protect surfers. "Surfing is a great community sport. We all come together and root for the club and our community. The rivalry between clubs is great."

Cierra Warner, former Surfing America East Coast Champion and current Ponte Vedra Boardriders board member, agreed.

"I value the fact that this brings the community together, and it brings a team aspect to what is traditionally a very individual sport," said Warner. "It was a lot of fun and a bit of a learning curve to have Ponte Vedra represented."

Warner, one in a family of six children, was seven years old when she and two of her siblings jumped on boogie boards at the beach to convince their surfer father that they were indeed ready to surf.

Enter the "liquid shredder" — the first surfboard that Warner and her two brothers were given. They practiced religiously after school. Today Warner gives surfing lessons full-time, something she began to simply fill a gap during the pandemic.

"It took off, and I enjoy it so much," said Warner, who offers lessons to everyone but mostly mentors girls. "I love building relationships with these girls and getting to see them grow and reach their goals."

Wight said another event, the Crossroads Cup, is being planned for May at Mickler's Beach and more details will soon be announced. Also, skate and movie nights are in the works.

"We do compete, but we like to stress that this is also for fun. There are so many different ways to get involved and to raise awareness," he said.

Siblings Maggie and Tucker Demsey are both members and love the opportunity to compete and to learn from other surfers.

Surf cont. on pg. 8

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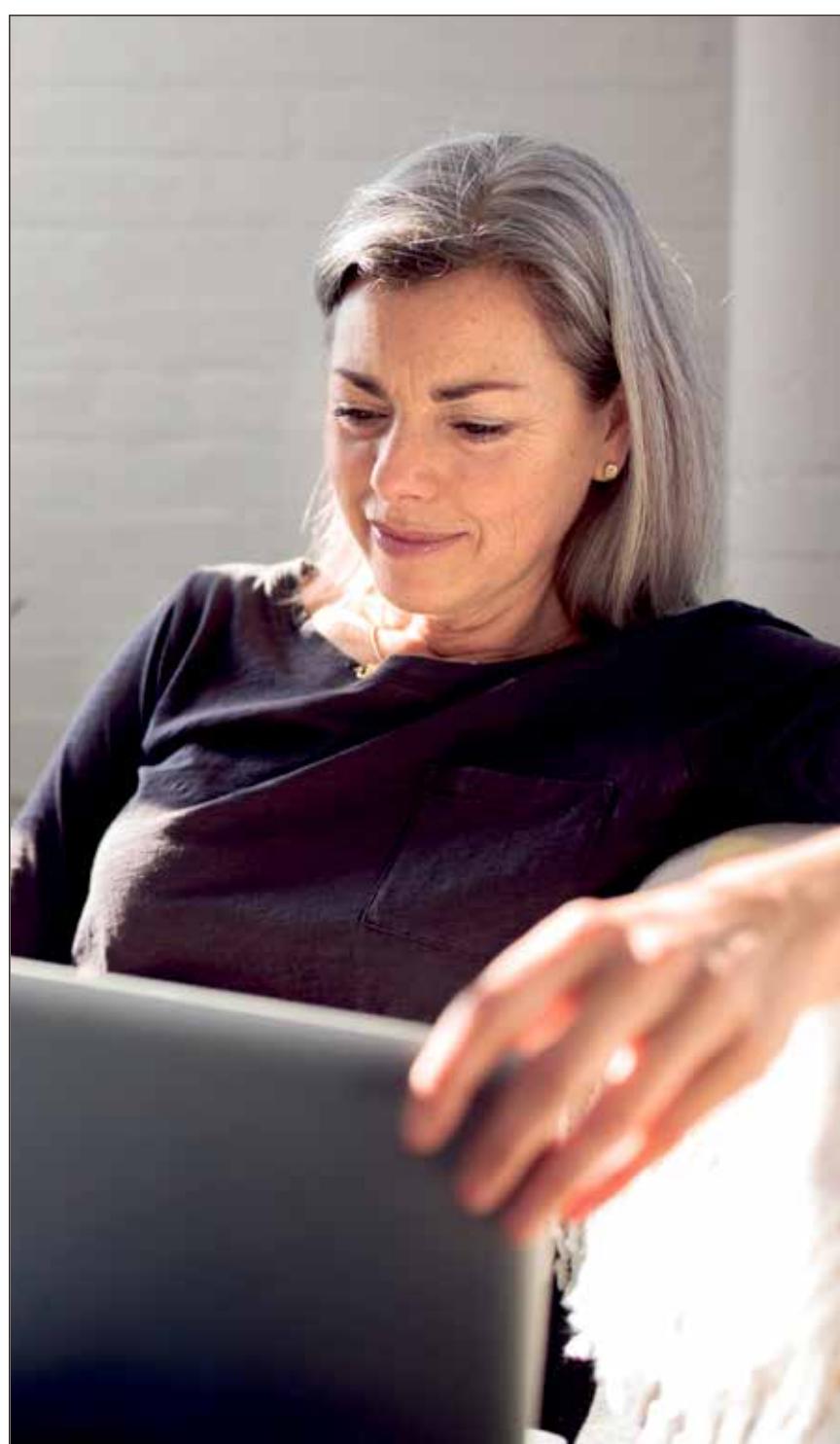
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BFF Best Furry Friend of the month

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ST. JOHNS Business Monthly

Are you interested in promoting your business in St. Johns Business Monthly, a feature section included in both The CreekLine and Ponte Vedra NewsLine? Call Linda 904-607-5062

MYSTERY PHOTO



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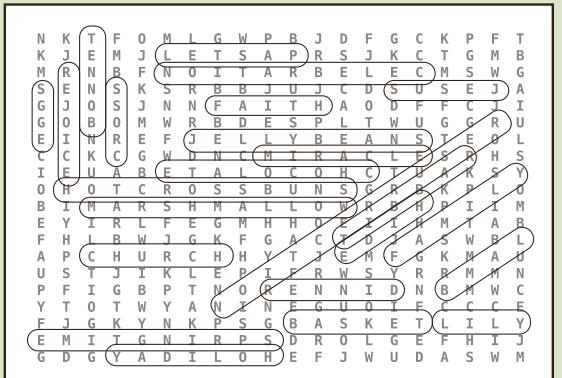
Last month's Mystery Photo was Ponte Vedra Presbyterian Church. Our winner was Molly Paul. Congratulations!



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Answers
to our
Puzzles
PG 16



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Sheriff Hardwick and Youth Resource team visit Cunningham Creek

By NewsLine Staff
mail@floridanewslines.com

On Thursday, Feb. 4 Sheriff Rob Hardwick and his Youth Resource team visited students in the Sound Connections® Music Therapy program at Cunningham Creek Elementary School to learn more about this outreach initiative. Sound Connections® Music Therapy is provided to six elementary schools' Exceptional Student Education departments in the St. Johns County School District by the Cultural Center at Ponte Vedra Beach.

During his visit, the sheriff and his team participated in a variety of music therapy activities to promote improved motor skills, communication skills, social skills and teamwork. They didn't miss a beat when handed drums and Boomwackers to work and play alongside the students. There was much laughter and discussion throughout the morning, which resulted in new relationships formed between the students and the team.

Music therapy, an allied health profession, is the clinical and evidence-based use of music therapy interventions by

a board-certified music therapist to address the physical, emotional, cognitive, and social needs of individuals. Sound Connections® started more than 15 years ago when Minda Gordon, MT-BC, now manager of the program, approached Cunningham Creek Elementary to volunteer as the parent of a student at the school. The teachers quickly saw the benefit of music therapy and forged a connection with the Cultural Center at Ponte Vedra Beach, which has actively raised close to \$1,000,000 over the last 15 years to support the program.

"The Cultural Center is proud to support this program. There are measurable results in place. We have heard the stories from participating parents; we have seen the love and dedication from the therapists first-hand. Music therapy works!" said Donna Guzzo, Cultural Center at Ponte Vedra Beach president and executive director.

The program has three board-certified music therapists who serve more than



Photo courtesy Minda Gordon

Sheriff Rob Hardwick's team participates with the students.

300 students at Ocean Palms, PV/PV, Valley Ridge Academy, The Webster School, Cunningham Creek Elementary, and Osceola Elementary.

Gordon and the other therapists are not employees of the school district; rather, their services are provided at no cost to the district or the parents through the Sound Connections® Music Therapy program, which is fully funded by grants and

donations from the community. Sheriff Hardwick generously offered support for the program through the Friday Food Truck program at the courthouse.

For more information about Sound Connections® Music Therapy, or to donate to the program, contact Minda Gordon at minda.gordon@stjohns.k12.fl.us or visit <https://ccpvb.org/arts-outreach/outreach-programs>.

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Farmers Market celebrates Mardi Gras

Photo courtesy Nocatee
The Nocatee community got Jazzy at the Nocatee Farmers Market: Mardi Gras on Saturday, Feb. 20. There was live music by Let's Ride Brass Band, a stilt walker, specialty Mardi Gras drinks by Marlin and Barrel, and shopping with more than 70 local vendors.



Dan Pierson

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with St. Johns County School Board Member Kelly Barrera, District 4

Q: What can you tell us about the zoning process that is now in progress for High School III and how does it impact District 4?

A: We began the zoning process on March 23. The three plans that were submitted to the school board are available on the school district website, along with a dedicated email address for parents to comment and offer suggestions on the plans. The public will also have the opportunity to comment at our board meetings prior to the June 8 meeting, when we will adopt a zoning plan.

High School III is located within the Twin Creeks Development, off County

Road 210. Other possible attendance zone changes relate to West End at Town Center and River Landing, both in Nocatee.

Q: Do you have an update on graduations for the Class of 2021?

A: Yes. We are very excited to be able to offer in-person graduation this year at TIAA Bank Field. Nease students will graduate on June 3 at 7 p.m. and Ponte Vedra High School students will graduate on June 5 at 7 p.m.

Q: Looking ahead to next school year, what plans are in place so far?

A: As of now, and definitely subject

to change, the plan is to go back to traditional brick and mortar school for the St. Johns County School District for the 2021 – 22 school year. Parents who desire online education for their children can utilize St. Johns Virtual School or Florida Virtual School.

As we move towards the end of the school year, I feel we are so fortunate to live in a community that prioritizes education and the very best for our students and teachers.

Q: A couple of months ago, we discussed the adoption of new state standards or BEST (Benchmarks for Excellent Student Thinking). Do you have any updates?

A: English Language Arts will be the first standard that we tackle and I want to reassure parents that as we roll out the new standards, our curriculum team will have lots of information for them, so that they

can understand the changes and facilitate the learning of their students.

Q: Do you have anything else to share with District 4?

A: I'd like to give kudos to three Ponte Vedra High School students who received awards at the virtual History Fair on March 8. Congratulations to Katie Shapiro, who earned first place for her senior paper entitled "How the Telegraph Helped the Union Win the Civil War" as well as Lola Oden and Olivia Howe, who earned first place for their senior group exhibit, "How Tattoos are Used to Communicate in Asian-Pacific Countries."

Q: How can our readers contact you?

A: They can email me at kelly.barrera@sjohns.k12.fl.us or call me at (904) 547-7510.



Q&A with St. Johns County Commissioner Jeremiah Blocker, District 4

Q: Can you bring us up to date on where the county is in the annual budget process and also what your priorities are?

A: We are beginning the budget process now, with workshops scheduled to begin in May where we will address the county's needs going forward. The Board of County Commissioners will receive a proposed budget from the County Administrator for us to consider. I hope to address public safety, to include the sheriff's office and fire and rescue, infrastructure needs, and parks and recreational space.

Q: When are the workshops scheduled and will there be the opportunity for public comment?

A: The workshop dates are May 19 – 21 at the County Administration Building. Specific locations within the building and times will be available on the county website (<http://sjcfl.us/>) as the dates approach. The public is welcomed and encouraged to attend.

Q: What can you tell us about the recent goals that the County Commission wants to implement?

A: We tasked the County Administrator, Hunter Conrad, to come up with measurable goals for the county. He presented five goals to us at our meet-

ing in mid-March and the commissioners adopted them as presented. In no particular order, the goals are: Financial Stewardship; Economic Development; World Class Living; Customer Service; and Infrastructure. We expect these goals to define our community and we will use them to measure our success.

Q: How is the county proceeding with Covid vaccinations?

A: We continue our vaccination efforts. At this time, more than one in five St. Johns County residents are fully vaccinated. I'd like to give kudos to our great staff who made this happen.

Q: Do you have any Town Hall meetings scheduled?

A: We are hoping to have one in May

or June. We are trying to find a facility to safely handle the number of people we expect might attend. More details will be forthcoming, possibly in next month's article.

Q: Do you have anything else to share with District 4?

A: We are looking forward to the 200th anniversary of St. Johns County during the month of July. We will celebrate St. Johns County being the oldest county in Florida.

Q: What is the best way for our readers to contact you?

A: Readers can email me at bcc4j-blocker@sjcfl.us or call me at (904) 679-2620.

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with St. Johns County Property Appraiser Eddie Creamer

Q: What can you tell us about the latest ongoing project at the property appraiser's office?

A: Initially, this started as a review of all property tax exemptions in the county that had been granted to property owners over time. We were making sure the filed exemptions were still valid ... after potential marriages, divorces and the purchase of property in other states. We completed this project and are now monitoring it going forward.

The second part of the project was to identify property in the county that we believe might qualify for an exemption, but the property owner didn't apply for one.

Q: How did you identify these potential missed exemptions?

A: We used all publicly available data to ensure property owners are getting the exemptions they are entitled to. For instance, we used US Census data, information from the State of Florida, the IRS, the US Postal Service, the Veterans Administration and other age and demographic data to learn more about the property owners. As far as we know, we are the first property appraiser's office to use data science to identify property owners for this purpose.

Q: What did you find?

A: We have identified approximately 2,000 property owners who may qualify for an exemption that they are not claiming. This is more than we expected. We think most are probably due to people just not understanding the exemptions available to them.

Q: What will you do with this information?

A: In mid to late March, we will be mailing out 2,000 postcards to these property owners. The postcards will be specifically addressed to the property owner and will contain the type of exemption we believe they might be entitled to. The postcard instructs the property owner to contact our office immediately so they can apply for their exemption this year.

My constitutional mandate is to make sure if you are qualified for an exemption, you should get it. This is especially important for low income seniors and veterans. Hopefully I will have an update on this next month for this column.

Q: What is the best way for our readers to contact you?

A: Readers can email me at Eddie@sjcpa.us or call me at (904) 827-5500.

Virtual Black History exhibit published by Clerk of the Circuit Court's Office

By NewsLine Staff
mail@floridanewslne.com

St. Johns County Clerk of the Circuit Court and Comptroller Brandon J. Patty has announced the publication of an exhibit focusing on events involving local Black residents via recorded documents in the county's deed books.

"The African American community has a rich and complex history in St. Johns County that sometimes is overshadowed by our Spanish roots," said Clerk Historian, Dr. Susan Parker. "Leveraging the Clerk's vast archives can bring to light some surprising and enlightening stories from our past."

"The history of our county is a tapestry of individuals and families all seeking to build their lives," said Patty. "Our office

is charged with recording and maintaining significant life events, like those found in the exhibit, and we're honored to be able to share these important documents with the public."

The clerk's office began recording documents when Florida became a United States territory in 1821. Residents would bring their original documents to the clerk's office to be recorded, the clerk would enter the information verbatim and return the original document to its owner. Parker, the clerk historian, was able to locate records showing free Blacks purchased, sold, and mortgaged property and enslaved Blacks who were bought, sold, and mortgaged.

Visit <https://stjohnsclerk.com/black-history-exhibit/> to access the exhibit.

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April

What's Going On in Ponte Vedra? A modified calendar of events

Community Calendar

Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR), Ponte Vedra Chapter, will meet on April 6, from 10:45 a.m. – 1 p.m. Contact pontevedrachapterns-dar@aol.com for additional details.

Newcomers Alumnae will hold its monthly luncheon on Wednesday, April 7 from 11 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. at Marsh Landing Country Club. The event will feature guest speakers Maria Mark and Paul Herman from Beaches Watch, a non-profit civic organization providing information on local and state government decisions that affect the future of northeast Florida beach communities. The cost for this luncheon is \$23 and social distancing guidelines will be followed. Contact brookemeister@msn.com or visit newcomersalumnae.wildapricot.org for more information.

The Ponte Vedra Democratic Club will host its next meeting by Zoom on April 14 at 6:30 p.m. The meeting will feature Ambassador Nancy Soderberg,

current University of North Florida professor, former US Senate staffer, and former Congressional candidate discussing “The Legislative Branch.” Contact Jan Kary at (202) 438-6750 or janetkary@gmail.com for more information and the Zoom meeting information.

Northeast Florida AHEC announces a free **Matter of Balance Class for people 60 years and older**. Attendees will have fun while learning practical fall risk management strategies and exercises to increase balance and strength at this online, live webinar on Tuesdays and Thursdays, April 15 – May 13 from 9:45 a.m. – 11:45 a.m. Call (904) 482-0189 for more information or to sign up.

A community Shred-It event will be held on April 17 from 9 a.m. – 11 a.m. at Lord of Life Lutheran Church, 276 Roscoe Blvd. N. in Ponte Vedra Beach — perfect for just after the tax deadline. You can

watch your papers be shredded on a camera mounted on the side of the truck. Donation of \$25 per person requested.

Nocatee announces the following events, open to the public: the Spring Fling Farmers Market on Saturday, April 17 from 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. at Town Center Field, Roscolusa Songwriters Festival on Saturday, April 24 from 3 p.m. – 8 p.m. and Food Truck Friday, April 30 from 6 p.m. – 9 p.m. at Splash Waterpark.

First Coast Florida Lifestyles Newcomers Recreation Card Club will host card playing at a pizza/Italian restaurant in St. Augustine on April 18. Arrival is at 12:45 p.m and card games will begin at 1:30 p.m. Masks must be worn while playing cards and two items must be purchased to satisfy restaurant management. Call the club organizer at (904) 829-0643 (no texts) to RSVP or for information about the club. The club is open to

both men and women and is a smoke-and drug-free club.

The Newcomers of North St. Johns will host a meeting and luncheon on Tuesday, April 20 at 11:30 a.m. at Epping Forest Yacht Club, 1830 Epping Forest Drive in Jacksonville. Doors will open at 11 a.m. The event will feature a program on the history of Epping Forest. The 58-acre estate, featuring beautiful gardens, luxurious riverfront mansion and yacht harbor, was built in the mid-1920s by successful industrialist Alfred I. DuPont. The cost for the luncheon and program is \$30 for members. All reservations must be received by April 13. Contact Sue Aird at sjaird@comcast.net to register.

The Savvy Job Hunters Ministry Zoom Workshop, “Vowels for Job Seekers and Advanced Networking Strategies” will be held on April 23 from 10 a.m. – 12 p.m. Email nwhite@christepiscopalchurch.org to register.

Vicar's Landing at Oak Bridge breaks ground

By NewsLine Staff
mail@florianewsline.com

Vicar's Landing officially broke ground on its new campus, Vicar's Landing at Oak Bridge, on March 18. The design and sales center will open soon. Due to significant sales demand in recent months, Vicar's Landing at Oak Bridge has also made additional residential units available for sale, expanding the footprint of the previously stated Phase I plans.

“Today is a significant milestone in the expansion of the original vision created more than 30 years ago with Vicar's Landing,” said Bruce Vorsanger, chair-

man of the board for Life Care Pastoral Services, Inc., the parent company for Vicar's Landing. “That vision has resonated so strongly with the population we are privileged to serve that Vicar's Landing has been fully occupied for years.”

The 235 total residential units at Vicar's Landing at Oak Bridge consist of 175 independent living homes, which are available as apartments and duplex or triplex cottages, 42 assisted living residences, and 18 memory care residences. At groundbreaking, the cottages

Oak Bridge cont. on pg. 16



Photo courtesy Vicar's Landing

Sherrie Tatham, President, Vicar's Landing Members Council; Tess Crosby, Director of Marketing, Vicar's Landing; Dale Pirkle, COO, Vicar's Landing; The Reverend James Cooper, Rector Emeritus of Christ Episcopal Church; Bruce Vorsanger, Chairman of the Board, Life Care Pastoral Services, Inc.; Darren Roy, CFO, Vicar's Landing; Mark Bonner, Chairman of the Board, Life Care Ponte Vedra Inc.; and Bruce Jones, CEO, Vicar's Landing at the groundbreaking on March 18.

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Scout from Troop 288 earns Eagle rank

By NewsLine Staff

mail@floridanewslne.com

The journey to Eagle began in first grade for Adam Lassonde. A Connecticut Cub Scout in Troop 390, he and his family moved to Florida and he crossed over into Troop 288 in fourth grade. He achieved the highest rank in scouts, Eagle, in his 10th grade year on Dec. 2.

The journey to Eagle involves far more than attending meetings. On his journey, Lassonde held several leadership roles, contributed more than 150 hours of service to his community, attended numerous trips including the high adventure Philmont, earned 23 merit badges and organized and completed an Eagle project. His project benefited St. John Paul II Catholic Church where he managed the building of a 20' long by

8' wide bridge over a concrete spillway. This bridge is the first part in creating a walking path around a retention pond for prayer, meditation, and the stations of the cross. The building of the bridge was achieved with 230 service hours and 24 helpers. Lassonde raised more than \$7,800 for the project, donating back \$5,000 to St. John Paul II Catholic Church.

Lassonde's Eagle Court of Honor, recognizing his new rank, was held on Feb. 5. In attendance were his parents, current and former Scout Masters, and fellow scouts.

Chartered in 1989, in 28 years Troop 288 has been home for 115 scouts to earn the Eagle ranking. Ponte Vedra United Methodist Church is home to Troop 288. Visit www.troop288PVB.org for more information.

Surf cont. from pg. 1

"I like being a part of the Ponte Vedra Boardriders because it allows me to grow as a surfer and a person by helping others find the love for the sport while

representing Ponte Vedra Beach," said Maggie, 14. "I like the contests because it is a team effort, and it is so good for us to see how generations of surfers come together to compete."



Photo courtesy Lacey Taylor

Eagle Scout Adam Lassonde on the bridge he had constructed for his Eagle Scout project at St. John Paul II Catholic Church.

Maggie and Tucker both have been surfing for five years, and they have both competed in the Eastern Surfing Association contests. Maggie made it to the semi finals and finished in the top

eight on the East Coast. Tucker finished fourth in the "Under 16" division in his first contest.

"I like being a part of the club because I can learn from surfers of all ages. I like how the contests bring the surfing community together from Jacksonville Beach to the Space Coast," said Tucker.

Trasca & Co Eatery is the club's first sponsor and hosts club meetings. More sponsors are needed, said Wight, adding how grateful he is to Trasca for immediately being so supportive.

Email pv@floridaboardriders.com for more information.



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MarketInsight



Life is mostly froth and bubble

Revolution and espionage of the industrial variety

By Scott Grant
ScottGrant@StJohnsBusinessMonthly.com

In 1778, Samuel Slater went to work at the textile mill near his hometown in Derbyshire County, England. He was just 10 years old. In those days there were no child labor laws in England or America either. The family farm was struggling, and Samuel was expected to help. The mill was owned by Joseph Strutt and Richard Arkwright. Arkwright is famous for inventing an automated way to make cotton thread called the "water frame." The water frame was powered by a wheel that turned in the river near the falls. It turned a gear that powered all the machines in the factory. A single, Arkwright machine did the work of 96 people and produced a stronger, finer thread because of increased tension. Thread spun the old-fashioned way was done by hand and called home-spun.

Four years later, Samuel's father died, and the family sold him to Strutt as an indentured apprentice. Samuel was a bright boy and learned all there was to learn about operating a mill. Great Britain treated the water frame, and other textile machinery, as a national secret. They had a law banning any of the machines, or plans for the machines, or anyone employed in the industry, from leaving the country. America wanted this cutting-edge technology. New England entrepreneurs offered a bounty for anyone who could deliver the cutting-edge technology into their hands. Samuel read about the bounty one day in an old copy of the Philadelphia Enquirer.

Slater possessed a keen memory. Over the course of his apprenticeship, he learned everything he could about the manufacture of finished cotton thread or yarn. In 1789, he memorized schematics on the machines and headed to America.

Legend says he dressed as a farmer to avoid detection as he snuck on board the ship. He told no one of his plans, not even his mother. In America, Slater met a man named Moses Brown. Moses and his partners had acquired a woolen mill in Pawtucket Rhode Island. They wanted to convert the factory to the manufacture of cotton cloth. They had acquired an Arkwright machine, but could not make it work properly. Slater promised to build a factory that produced as good a yarn "as they do in England" or he would take nothing for his work.

Slater made the water powered spinning machines work and in no time, the partnership was spinning out high-quality cotton thread and huge profits. Brown made so much money that he endowed a College in Rhode Island. They still call it Brown University today. Samuel Slater's share of the profits made him wealthy enough to strike out on his own. He set up his own mills and factory towns across New England, like Slatersville, Rhode Island. Back in his hometown in England, they called him "Slater the Traitor."

Slater's first hires were children aged seven to 12. He hired five boys and two girls to operate 72 spindles. Initially, the children were paid 33 cents a week. Later, Slater would add entire families to his work force. Hiring entire families became known as the "Rhode Island System." Women and children were a staple of the workforce in the mills of the 19th Century. In 1824, Slater increased the work-day and cut wages for his all-female work force by 25 percent, arguing that their wages were extravagant. The next day, 102 female workers took to the streets, blocking the entrance to Slater's Mill. Protestors marched through the streets making "excessive noise" and shouting, "every imaginable term of abuse or in-

sult." The event is remembered as the first strike in American history.

Samuel Slater had six children with his first wife and was one of America's first millionaires when he died in 1836 at the age of 67. Before he died, President Andrew Jackson called him the "Father of American Manufacture."

Scott A. Grant is a local author, historian, columnist, and speaker. He is president of Standfast Asset Management in Ponte Vedra Beach. He welcomes your comments or questions at scottg@standfastic.com.



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Summer Camp and Activities Guide



Summer fun activities and camp guide

Looking for exciting and educational activities to keep the kids active this summer? Ponte Vedra NewsLine is helping make your planning a little easier. Read on for a list of local attractions, activities, and summer camps to check out for fun and memorable experiences. (Note that some of the activities might be virtual.)

St. Augustine Aquarium
www.saaquarium.com
 2045 State Road 16, St. Augustine,
 Florida 32084
 (904) 429-9777

Bricks 4 Kidz
www.bricks4kidz.com/florida-saintjohnscounty/camps/
 (904) 814-7401

Code Ninjas
www.codeninjas.com/fl-saint-johns/camps
 (904) 500-2633

Barnes and Noble Story Time
 Mandarin
<https://www.barnesandnoble.com/h/bn-storytime>
 (904) 886-9904

University of North Florida Youth Sports and Fitness summer camps
www.unf.edu/recwell/camps/
 (904) 620-2998

Jewish Community Alliance Summer Camps
jcajax.org/camp/
 (904) 730-2100

MOSH (Museum of Science and History)
themosh.org
 1025 Museum Circle, Jacksonville
 (904) 396-7062

Stoked To Surf Camp
www.stokedtosurfcamp.com
 Aqua East 1850 A1A South, St. Augustine
 (904) 501-4446

Castillo de San Marcos National Monument
www.nps.gov/casa/index.htm
 1 South Castillo Drive, St. Augustine
 (904) 829-6506

Marineland Dolphin Adventure
marineland.net
 9600 Oceanshore Blvd., St. Augustine
 (407) 563-4701

Cummer Museum of Art and Gardens
www.cummermuseum.org
 829 Riverside Ave., Jacksonville
 (904) 356-6857

Sweet Pete's Factory Tour
www.sweetpetescandy.com/collections/toddlers-young-children
 400 N. Hogan St.
 (904) 376-7161

Adventure Landing jacksonville-beach.adventurelanding.com/groups/day-care-summer-camp/
 1944 Beach Blvd. Jacksonville Beach
 (904) 246-4386

St. Augustine Alligator Farm Zoological Park
www.alligatorfarm.com
 999 Anastasia Blvd., St. Augustine
 (904) 824-3337

Tree Hill Nature Center
www.treehill.org/
 7152 Lone Star Road, Jacksonville
 (904) 724-4646

Lowe's Kids' Workshops
 Various locations around Jacksonville and St. Augustine
www.lowsesbuildandgrow.com

Catty Shack Ranch Wildlife Sanctuary Tours
www.cattyschack.org/
 1860 Starratt Road, Jacksonville
 (904) 757-3603

St. Augustine Pier Splash Park
www.staugbch.com/community/page/splash-park-pier
 350 A1A Beach Blvd., St. Augustine

Fort Clinch State Park
www.floridastateparks.org/fortclinch
 2601 Atlantic Ave, Fernandina Beach
 (904) 277-7274

Washington Oaks Gardens State Park
www.floridastateparks.org/parks-and-trails/washington-oaks-gardens-state-park
 6400 N Ocean Shore Blvd, Palm Coast

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Begin planning kids' summer recreation now



Photo courtesy MetroCreative

Summer school recess will be here before you know it. Make sure you're prepared for camp and other recreational programs.

By NewsLine Staff
mail@floridanewslines.com

Summer school recess will be here before you know it. Make sure you're prepared for camp and other recreational programs. Parents thinking ahead to swimming pools and days lounging on the beach can put their daydreams to practical use by planning ahead for their youngsters' summer vacations.

Youth recreational programs and summer camps can bridge the gap in care between

the end of school and the day when classes resume. Due in part to high demand, parents who want to place their kids in summer rec programs or summer camps should be vetting such programs and camps well in advance of summer. The following are a handful of tips for moms and dads who want their kids to have fun and fulfilling summers.

- Ask for recommendations. Speak with fellow parents and trusted friends about where they send their children. Personal recommendations can be

helpful, providing firsthand insight into a particular camp or program. Schedule appointments to visit camps that fall within your budget. Take your son or daughter along so he or she can get a sense of what camp will be like.

- Explore all options. Camps come in more flavors than ever before. Certain camps may be faith-based ministries while others may focus on particular sports. Band camps and art camps may appeal to creative kids. Also, there

are plenty of general-interest camps that offer various activities without narrowing in on any particular one.

- Inquire about camp schedules. While many camps are flexible, day camps do not have the same level of flexibility as after-school programs. Arrangements will need to be made if care is required after regular camp hours. Speak with camp staff to see which types of after-hours programs, if any, are available.
- Determine your camp budget. As varied as program offerings may be, camps also can vary greatly with regard to cost. Government-run camps may be less expensive than those offered by private companies. Find out if a particular organization subsidizes a portion of camp costs. Scouting programs often have a dedicated camp and may offer affordable options for scouts. Martial arts schools and dance centers frequently offer camp schedules.

If camp seems out of reach, look into local summer recreation programs at parks or schools. Such programs may not be as extensive as those offered by camps, but they can quell kids' boredom and keep children occupied during the day.

In addition to camp, remember to plan for some free days so children can just enjoy some downtime. Such days can break up the monotony of a routine and provide kids and families time to relax together.

SUMMER cont. from pg. 10
St. Augustine Lighthouse and Maritime Museum

[www.staugstinelighthouse.org](http://www.staugustinelighthouse.org)
81 Lighthouse Ave., St. Augustine
(904) 829-0745

St. Augustine Pirate and Treasure Museum
www.thepiratemuseum.com/
12 S. Castillo Dr., St. Augustine

Kids Bowl Free
Various Jacksonville locations
www.kidsbowlfree.com

Ripley's Believe It or Not Odditorium
www.ripleys.com/staugustine/
19 San Marco Ave., St. Augustine
(904) 824-1606

Ft. Caroline National Memorial
www.nps.gov/timu/learn/historyculture/foca.htm
12713 Fort Caroline Road

St. Johns County Public Library Summer Events
Various locations. Check online for updated events throughout the summer
www.sjcpls.org

Jacksonville Public Library Summer Reading Program
Various locations. Check online for updated events throughout the summer.
www.jaxpubliclibrary.org

St. Augustine Wild Reserve Tours
www.sawildreserve.org
(904) 940-0664

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*Registration deadline Friday June 11

Week 2: Monday June 28-Thursday July 1 (Friday July 2-Rain Makeup Day)
*Registration deadline Friday June 18

Week 3: Monday July 12-Thursday July 15 (Friday July 16-Rain Makeup Day)
*Registration deadline Friday July 2

Week 4: Monday July 26-Thursday July 29 (Friday July 30-Rain Makeup Day)
*Registration deadline Friday July 16

Half-Day Camp (9am-12pm) Ages 5-15
Non-Member \$245/wk
Member \$215/wk

*\$100 deposit per child required for Non-Members refundable up to registration deadline

Full-Day Camp (9am-3pm) Ages 5-15
Non-Member \$445/wk
Member \$395/wk

9:30-9:30am Check-in/T-Shirts/Dynamic Stretching/Warm-ups
9:30-10:45am On court drills
10:45-11am Oreo/Lemonade break
11am-12pm On court drills and games
12pm Pick up for Half-Day Campers
12-12:45pm Lunch (Bring your own except for Thursday Pizza Party)
1-2pm Pool Games/Activities
2-3pm On court Matchplay/Team Games/Pick up

Schedule

Dan Carozza
USPTA Pro
Camp Director
dcarozza@planetswim.org



904.285.7545
300 Davis Park Rd, Ponte Vedra FL 32081
www.PlanetTennisClub.org

Briefs

Conserve water in April

April has been formally recognized as Water Conservation Month in Florida for the past 21 years, as April is typically a dry month when water demands are higher due to springtime planting.

"Recognizing Water Conservation Month helps to encourage water users to take simple steps to conserve water," said St. Johns River Water Management District Executive Director Dr. Ann Shortelle. "Individually and collectively, we can make a difference. It starts with changing old habits and can be as easy as following watering restrictions, checking automatic sprinkler systems for leaks and replacing landscape materials with drought-tolerant plants."

The District has provided funding for numerous projects designed to promote increased water conservation, including more efficient fixtures and irrigation systems, moisture sensors, smart irrigation controllers, and irrigation audits. Since 2014, the District has provided funding for 171 public water supply and agricultural conservation projects, saving approximately 20.2 million gallons per day.

More than half of all residential water use is outdoors for lawn and landscape irrigation. Watering wisely year-round promotes healthier lawns and landscapes and can save thousands of gallons of water per month, as well as save homeowners money. Overwatering a lawn can promote weeds and insect pests, as well

as weakened grass roots.

Following Districtwide lawn watering rules helps ensure the efficient use of water for landscape irrigation. The rules specify the days when residents and businesses may water. These days depend on whether the property has an odd or even numbered address.

The rules allow irrigation up to two days a week, before 10 a.m. or after 4 p.m., from March 14 to Nov. 6, 2021, and up to one day a week during the cooler months of Eastern Standard Time.

Visit the Water Less campaign website at WaterLessFlorida.com for more tips on saving water.

FDOT adds new interactive features to FL511

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) has made upgrades to the Florida 511 (FL511) Advanced Traveler Information System in order to provide the most innovative product for road users ahead of the 2021 hurricane season. Customers using FL511 will see new features including live streaming video, map legend enhancements, and a voice interaction feature on FL511 platforms.

New to FL511.com is a live streaming video feature so passengers can view current driving conditions on all interstates, toll facilities, and other major Florida routes. This improvement provides real-time views of many of the state's roadways. Users can now select certain camera feeds and click the "Show Video" button to view a full live stream. The

additional live streaming video functionality to the FL511 system is just another aspect of the department's commitment to keeping the public informed about its roadways. Additionally, drawbridge crossings were added to the website's map legend to show when drawbridges are raised and may be impacting traffic. At this time, the Brickell Avenue Bridge in Miami is the first drawbridge to be displayed on the FL511 website.

In addition, the FL511 Mobile App has a voice interaction feature, which provides real-time traffic information in a viewable format. Motorists can request traffic information for a city, county, or roadway. The mobile app provides directions with travel times to any destination in Florida and real-time traffic information on incidents, congestion, construction, closures on interstates, toll roads, and other major roadways.

To continually offer the most efficient, innovative product, FL511 will evolve solely to digital platforms starting this month. FL511's phone Interactive Voice Response system will transition to the mobile app, and the department encourages motorists to download the free FL511 mobile app or visit FL511.com to use as a planning tool to obtain real-time traffic information.

Motorists are encouraged to have a passenger check FL511 for traffic updates or stop at a rest area facility before checking FL511. Visit <http://wbt.dot.state.fl.us/ois/Florida511/index.htm> for more information.

Art in Public Spaces exhibit features local artists

St. Johns County's Art in Public Spaces program is hosting the "Outside the Box" art exhibition through April 29 at the County Administration Building, 500 San Sebastian View. Hosted in partnership with the St. Johns Cultural Council and Art Box, the exhibit, which features more than two dozen talented St. Johns County artists, has artwork in a variety of mediums including paint, photography, and woodworking.

In addition, four of these featured local artists created large-scale murals specifically for this exhibit to represent and showcase the beauty of St. Johns County.

Visitors are invited to view the exhibit from 8 a.m. – 5 p.m., Monday through Friday. Visit www.historiccoastculture.com to learn more about the St. Johns Cultural Council.

Electric vehicle fast-charging ports now in St. Johns County

Florida Power & Light Company (FPL) has just completed three new electric vehicle (EV) charging port locations in North Florida, including one in the World Golf Village area of St. Augustine. All locations are fast-charging stations, which are compatible with most EVs and can charge many batteries to near full capacity in less than 30 minutes.

Designed as a pilot program to promote the use and adoption of EVs, the FPL

Briefs cont. on pg. 16

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Get to Know ...

Brandon Mosley

Nocatee resident Brandon Mosley's faith drives everything that he does. He believes in taking care of the people around him, doing the right thing and leading with love and compassion. It was from this space that he and his friend Chris Gambino tossed around an idea to start a podcast aimed at inspiring and encouraging everyone — dudes sharing cool stories about local folks. The "Dudeology Show" began in June 2020 and has covered a wide range of topics such as sports, fitness, cool gear, supporting the military, post traumatic stress disorder, financial tips and summer travel. Guests have included an ultramarathoner, veterans, a sports medicine expert, world record breakers and new business owners. Former guest and University of Kentucky track star John Richardson joined the podcast in September 2020, bringing his performance training experience to the table. Richardson, also known as the social media director, is one of less than 2,000 people ever to have broken a four-minute mile and is also a competitive triathlete. Mosley said Richardson suggested hosting adventure races as part of the podcast and offers a unique performance coaching perspective. Gambino, he said, is the "magician and executive producer" of the show, using his home as the studio where he makes all the talking "fit for consumption." Mosley, who works for a biotech company, is quick to give credit to Gambino and Richardson,

adding that he simply makes sure the questions get answered in a way that is efficient and easy to digest. With 26 episodes published in less than one year and 6,000 listeners or viewers, plus a foreign social media presence, the dudes have arrived.

Q: Explain how adventure racing works.

A: We had our first adventure race, DudeOdyssey (challenges and courses are themes from The Odyssey), in December 2020 all around the Nocatee Preserve. We hope to have another one this fall. It is a mix of hiking, kayaking and mountain biking with two person teams. It includes a two-mile run, a four-mile trek, a three-mile kayak and 15-mile bike ride with physical and mental challenges (problem-solving) along the way. The whole race (average completion time around four hours) is filmed with commentary and interviews. Chris does all the video production, John is on the course, and I am like the "host." I always joked with my wife that my dream job would be reality TV host, the DudeOdyssey race let me fulfill that dream.

Q: Explain your partnership with Mission: Morale.

A: We like the idea of doing more and being better citizens. We partnered with Mission: Morale, a nonprofit that sends customized care packages to deployed sailors, as a way to publicize their goal of honoring the military. Each box has a name on it with cool items, personalized letters and specific things that you need when you are deployed, targeting folks who often don't receive much in the mail. We want to use the outlet of our show to be able to



Photo courtesy Brandon Mosley
Brandon Mosley

help any organization like this and to support them.

Q: Name one experience that shaped your life.

A: I enlisted in the Army right out of high school. I wish that I could say that it was out of some deep desire for service. I just wanted to get out of Central Florida and see the world. If I had to pick one experience from my life that has enabled me to differentiate myself professionally and given me perspective, this is it. It gave me a mental toughness and grit. I served for four years.

Q: What brought you to Nocatee?

A: My job brought us here six years ago, and my wife, Cheryl, has family ties to the area. We loved the proximity to the ocean. The beach is big for my family (our children are 17, 14 and seven). We love to go on adventures.

Q: What is the main take away from Dudeology Show?

A: There is no ordinary. Everybody has the ability to be extraordinary.

[Author's note: Check out Dudeology Show on Spotify, YouTube, iTunes or any preferred platform. Visit dudeologyshow.com for more information.]

Get to Know ...

Interested in being featured? Email Martie Thompson at editor@FloridaNewsLine.com



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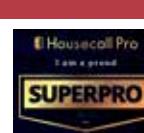
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Senior cont. from pg. 1

10 am. with Dr. Lou DeMaria, MD, retired geriatrician, "Keeping Yourself Safe While Taking Medication."

- Tai Chi: Wednesdays from 1:30 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.
- Art Studio and Beading: Wednesdays from 9:30 a.m. – 11 a.m.
- "Matter of Balance" Health and Balance Improvement Programs: Wednesdays from 1 p.m. – 3 p.m.
- Caregiver Support Group: Starting in April. For more information, contact COA's Paulette Kozlowski at caregiving@stjohnscoa.com or (904) 209-3674.

Registration for programs is required, as seating is limited and walk-ins are not permitted. To register for courses, send your name and program name to nocateecenter@stjohnscoa.com to reserve your place. For the health and safety of participants, masks and social distancing will be required.

Visit www.coajc.org/nocatee-center/ or call (904) 209-3700 for more information.

SCORE cont. from pg. 9

The Cottage Food Law allows food entrepreneurs to operate small food businesses and produce a variety of food products that are low risk from a food safety standpoint, if prepared properly in an unlicensed and uninspected kitchen, while protecting public health to the greatest extent possible.

"Introduction to Government Contracting"

April 14, 10 a.m. – 12 p.m.; free Registration Link:

<https://score.tfaforms.net/17?EventID=a105a000006v1Be>
This live online workshop is a beginner level course and is a must for anyone thinking about or already doing business with the government.

"The Business Plan - What is It and Why Do I Need One?"

April 17, 9:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.; free Registration Link:

<https://score.tfaforms.net/17?EventID=a105a000006dFAV>

"How Square Can Help Run Your Business Including Payroll"

April 20, 5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.; \$15 Registration Link:

<https://score.tfaforms.net/17?EventID=a105a000006dFzE>
Learn about the Square system, how it works and if it might be a fit for your payroll needs in this Q&A and demo session.

"Overcoming Obstacles to Goal Achievement"

April 22, 5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.; free Registration Link:

<https://score.tfaforms.net/17?EventID=a105a000006dFAF>
Learn to pinpoint the real obstacle and how to create a strategy that will put you back on track.

"Understanding Affiliate Marketing to Earn a Supplemental Income"

April 27, 5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.; \$15 Registration Link: <https://score.tfaforms.net/17?EventID=a105a000006dFz9>

Visit www.jacksonville.score.org for more information.

New Honeybees join The Kindness Klub



Photo courtesy Cyndie McKinney

At a pinning ceremony held on March 7, new Honeybees joined The Kindness Klub, a middle school girls' social club plus service organization all in one. Like a sorority for middle school girls, The Kindness Klub has monthly social events called "Girlfriend Time" and monthly community service events called "Bee Giving" events. Palm Valley Academy sixth grader Skyler McKinney started The Kindness Klub because she wanted a place where girls could encourage each other to be kind and to make their community the best place to live. She also wanted to create a club so new girls would feel welcomed and be able to make friends.

when moving to Ponte Vedra and Nocatee. The Honeybees consist of girls from Palm Valley Academy, Valley Ridge Academy, Landrum Middle as well as virtual and home schooled girls, and will soon include girls attending the new Pine Island Academy. They have participated in various activities including feeding the homeless, playing bingo with the elderly, cleaning the beach, hosting a lemonade stand to benefit a burn center, collecting toys and food for children in need and making cards for the children's hospital. For more information call or text (904) 483-1433 or visit the group's Facebook page.



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Beaches Go Green helps youth athletes reduce plastic pollution



Photo courtesy Beaches Go Green

Young soccer players with Ponte Vedra Athletic Association and their new reusable water bottles.

By NewsLine Staff
mail@floridanewslne.com

Through its Reusable Bottles for Sports Program, local nonprofit Beaches Go Green connects a local sponsor with a school or community sports team to provide team branded reusable bottles to young athletes. The group aims to inspire a greener world with less plastic pollution.

The most recent success is a partnership with Flagler Health+ and Ponte Vedra Athletic Association — Beaches Go Green has distributed more than 1,200 SIC brand stainless steel water bottles for athletes to use instead of single-use cups and plastic bottles.

Ponte Vedra Athletic Association teams, including Jaws Lacrosse, Riptide Lacrosse, Storm Soccer, JDL Football, baseball and wrestling, have all received a reusable bottle as part of each athlete's uniform. Athletes are strongly encouraged to use these reusable bottles over single-use plastic at practices and games.

"Every sports season, our trash cans are overflowing with single-use plastic beverage bottles around our fields," said Ponte Vedra Athletic Association lacrosse president Chris Greco. "We recognize that recycling is only a small part of the solution and by providing our PVAA athletes both education and alternatives (to plastic), we are creating awareness and making changes for the better of the planet."

Partnering with local organizations like Flagler Health+ is a key component of the Reusable Bottles for Sports Program. Local partners cover the cost of the bottles and donate them to a local school or sports team through this Beaches Go Green effort.

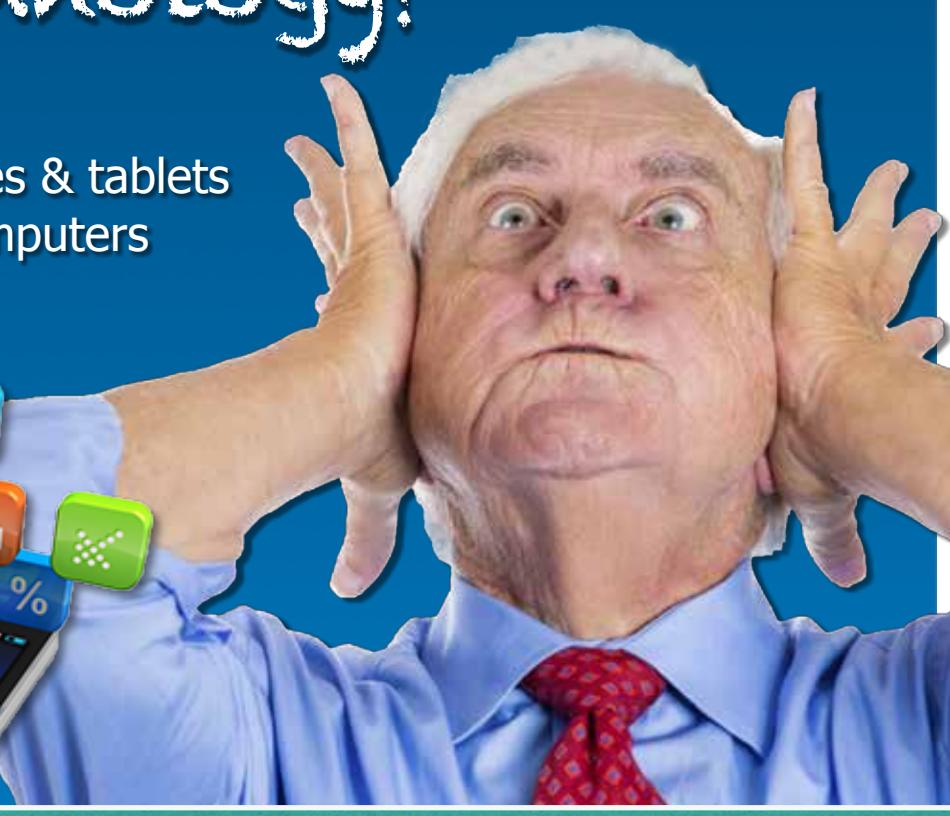
There are multiple goals for the Reusable Bottles for Sports Program. The first goal is to create awareness in the community about single-use plastic pollution. The second objective is to inspire a change in personal habits by encouraging reusable items over single-use. Third and perhaps most important, Beaches Go Green aims to protect children from the potential harm that chemicals in plastic can leach into bodies.

"We recognize that drinking and eating from plastic not only has health implications for the planet, but it can have serious effects on our own health," said Anne Marie Moquin, founder of Beaches Go Green. "Plastic leaches chemicals into our food and drinks when it's heated or as it breaks up into microplastics. These chemicals, often found to be endocrine disruptors, mimic hormones in our own bodies and can be especially harmful for adolescents."

Visit www.beachesgogreen.org or email annemarie@beachesgogreen.org for more information.



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Early registration available for St. Johns County Schools

By NewsLine Staff
mail@florianewsline.com

The St. Johns County School District began early registration for the 2021 – 22 school year March 1. This registration is only for children new to the school district, including those entering kindergarten.

Early registration can be completed online at <http://www.stjohns.k12.fl.us/student/>

enrollment/ or by visiting the student's assigned school website. To find the assigned school, enter your street address on the Attendance Zone Locator at www.stjohns.k12.fl.us/zoning/.

To be eligible for public kindergarten in the St. Johns County School District, children must be five years old on or

before Sept. 1 and must reside in St. Johns County.

Other requirements for registration:

- Birth certificate/Guardianship Documents
- Documentation of a health examination performed within one year of enrollment

- Proof of completed required immunizations on Form DH680

- Proof of residence per the Residency and Guardianship Policy located at www.stjohns.k12.fl.us/student/residency/

For additional information on registration, contact the Student Services Department at (904) 547-7598 or the assigned school.

Ambassadors show first responders gratitude

By Lisa Farese
mail@florianewsline.com

Ocean Palms Elementary School students, both past and present, as well as organizations throughout the community collaborated on a special project to thank area first responders. Seventy-five special "thank you" gifts were sent to four fire stations and sheriff offices in the area.

From reusable water bottles, to snacks to create a to-go snack bar, to reusable bags and gift cards to local eateries, these heroes were recognized for their dedication to our community.

In addition to the current fifth grade student ambassadors, two Ponte Vedra High School students, both former ambassadors, also helped lead the cause. Belle Benson inspired the cheerleading squad at the high school to donate snacks for the responders. Additionally, Grayson Rigby helped assemble the gifts and deliver them.

Local organizations that also contributed to the cause included Beaches Go Green, Coastal Luxury Outdoors, Smoothie King and Firehouse Subs.



Photos courtesy Lisa Farese

First responders at Station 10 with thank you gifts.



First responders at Mickler with Ponte Vedra High School cheerleaders.



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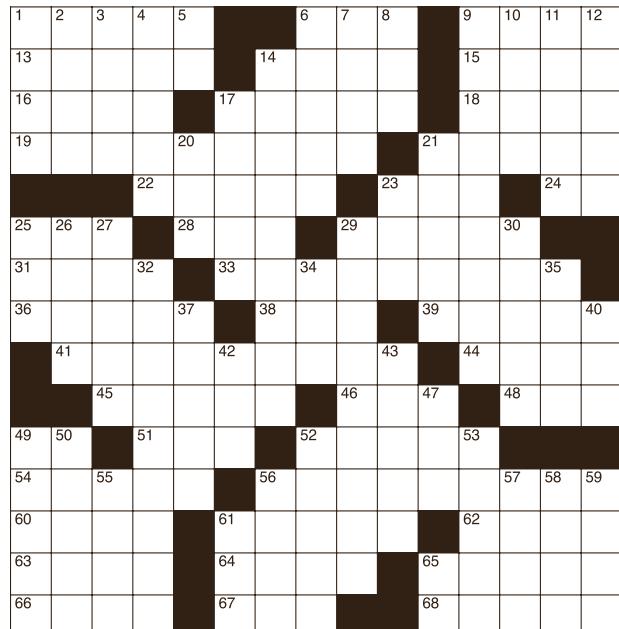
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Puzzles

Answers on page 3
Provided by MetroCreative



CLUES ACROSS

- One who manufactures
- Science degree
- Database management system
- Desert
- Inventor Musk
- Welsh valley
- Round Dutch cheese
- Saying
- Comedian and TV host
- Uppermost portions of the brain
- City in Transylvania
- Where astronauts go
- Men's hairstyle
- Indicates position
- One point east of due south
- Businessmen may have one
- Grass part
- Running back Gurley
- Unwavering
- Options
- Annoy

CLUES DOWN

- Greek mountain
- Pastas
- Fishes
- Wrap
- Potentially a criminal (slang)
- Seize
- The Constitution State
- Upset
- 1991 men's Wimbledon champ
- Central Chinese province
- Predisposition
- A notice of someone's death
- One-time Kentucky Rep.
- Swiss river
- Dried-up
- Finger millet
- Allan Poe
- German river
- Brew
- Kenyan river
- CLUES DOWN
- Millisecond
- Acts as military assistant
- Knot in a tree
- Husband-and-wife industrial designers
- The Ocean State
- Point the finger at
- Parts in a machine
- Midway between northeast and east
- Portray precisely
- Blister
- Mental illness
- Nose of an animal
- What students receive
- Semitic peoples
- Beats per minute
- Family of drugs
- Atrrocious
- Type of microscope (abbr.)
- or bust
- Icelandic poems
- A citizen of Pakistan
- Very pale

- Metric linear unit
- Sea eagle
- Biblical judge of Israel
- Isaac's mother (Bib.)
- Sino-Soviet block (abbr.)
- Cool!
- Large hotel room
- Type of boat (abbr.)
- Picked
- Type of hookah
- Attack
- Directs
- Belgian WWII resistance fighter
- Finished negotiation
- Heroic tale
- Middle Eastern country
- Protein-rich liquids
- Malaysian Isthmus
- Spielberg's alien



Solve the code to discover words related to Easter.
Each number corresponds to a letter.
(Hint: 22 = U)

- A.** **6 16 9 12 15 6 22 14**
Clue: Constant and steadfast
- B.** **21 10 13 10 22 17**
Clue: Full of happiness
- C.** **2 16 17 12 2 26**
Clue: Spring Christian holiday
- D.** **7 22 3 3 13**
Clue: Hopping animal

EASTER TIDINGS WORD SEARCH



Find the words hidden vertically, horizontally, diagonally, and backwards.

WORDS

BASKET
BONNET
CELEBRATION
CHOCOLATE
CHURCH
CROSS
DINNER
EGGS
FAITH
FAMILY
HIDE
HOLIDAY
HOT CROSS BUNS
JELLY BEANS
JESUS
LAMB
LILY
MARSHMALLOW
MIRACLE
PASTEL
RABBIT
REJOICE
RESURRECTION
SPRINGTIME

Oak Bridge cont. from pg. 7

are 90 percent sold out with only three remaining. Additionally, the first of four independent living apartment buildings, or flats, is 70 percent sold, prompting Vicar's Landing at Oak Bridge to release the second apartment building for sale, which was previously slated for Phase II. Independent living homes range from 1,400 sq. ft to 2,400 sq. ft.

The 2,100 sq. ft. design and sales center at Vicar's Landing at Oak Bridge, located at 5000 Sawgrass Village Circle, will provide future residents the opportunity to feel as if they are standing within the developed property itself through the use of visuals and technology. In the design and sales center, which directly overlooks a portion of the property, residents

can explore floor plans and customize all aspects of their new home, including fixtures, finishes, kitchen and bathroom amenities, and other features.

"Our original vision for Vicar's Landing was to provide a dedicated place to fulfill our mission and ministry of serving the aging population in Northeast Florida," said Rev. Dr. James Cooper, Rector Emeritus of Christ Episcopal Church, who played a significant founding role at Vicar's Landing. "I am grateful and humbled to see how, after all these years, that focus and ministry continues to this day. Vicar's Landing isn't just a place to retire; it's a place of community to celebrate and continue enjoying the blessings that have led to long, well-lived life."

Briefs cont. from pg. 12

EVolution program is installing more than 1,000 charging ports at more than 100 locations across Florida, including major roadways, large employers and popular tourism destinations. This initiative will increase the availability of universal EV charging ports in Florida by 50 percent.

Four new St. Johns County fast charging ports are located at Gate Petroleum at 3011 International Golf Parkway in St. Augustine.

Visit www.fpl.com/energy-my-way/evolution.html to view all charging locations.

Church's food pantry available

Ponte Vedra Presbyterian Church, located at 4510 Palm Valley Road, has

a food pantry available to anyone in the community who is in need. Due to the generous support of the congregation and the church's partnership with Feeding Northeast Florida, the food pantry offers a variety of items, including fresh produce, meats, dry and canned foods as well as toiletries, paper products, laundry detergent and dog and cat food (all subject to availability). Pick up hours are limited and must be scheduled in advance. For more information and to sign up, contact jzapala@pvpc.com or call the church at (904) 285-8225 and leave a message.

Ponte Vedra Presbyterian Church also delights in sending Care Packages to Deployed Soldiers. If you have the address of a soldier, send it to jzapala@pvpc.com.

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Travel

Returning to Pittsburgh: My birthplace

By Debi Lander
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All my family were born in Pittsburgh, but my parents, brothers, and I moved to Virginia when I was two. We continued to make road trips to visit my grandparents until the late 1960s when they died. What I remember most vividly is my grandmother sweeping the soot that settled on her front porch every morning and evening. It looked like someone shook black pepper over everything.

During the 1940s – '50s, Pittsburgh produced half of the national steel output, an industrial hub for coal mining and steel manufacturing. But the region suffered from air pollution. A renaissance to clean up the city began in the 1960s. Today there are no operating steel mills, except for a few smaller plants in the suburbs. The economy now thrives on education, health care, and small manufacturing.

To explore my past, I spent the first night in a hotel directly across from Magee Hospital — my birthplace. I didn't feel I needed to go inside but was happy to see the hospital was still around.

The area, known as Oakland, features the

University of Pittsburgh and its highlight, the Cathedral of Learning. The Neo-Gothic structure is not a church but a 42-story skyscraper. Construction began in 1926 and took about 10 years to complete the classrooms and offices. The main floor contains 31 National Rooms, created to celebrate the ethnic diversity of the local communities. These fascinating classrooms include intricately carved woodwork and cultural symbols.

Take the elevator to the 36th floor, near the top, to gain some campus panoramic views. I couldn't leave without stopping by what used to be Forbes Field, the Pittsburgh Pirates' former stadium. Sports fans will remember the miracle-winning home run hit by Bill Mazeroski to end the 1960 World Series. The stadium no longer exists, but the historic left field brick wall, where Mazeroski's ball flew, remains. Nearby, stop into Posvar Hall to see the glass-encased location of home plate.

I then made a detour to the suburbs to see my grandparents' home in North Braddock. I understood the town had deteriorated, but it felt bittersweet to see



Looking down on the Point.

many structures abandoned or in ruins; however, life continues in my grandparents' place, and I viewed it much as I remembered.

Enough nostalgia, I continued my adventures in the very walkable downtown, entering native son Andy Warhol's art museum. The museum tells his life story and the progression of his creative talents. Of course, the famous soup can paintings and Marilyn Monroe pop-art prints caught my eye.

I found the Senator Heinz History Center, contrary to what you might expect, a light-hearted and fun place. It graphically shows the Heinz company's development, famous for their pickles and ketchup and other Pittsburgh notables and landmarks: Carnegie and Mellon. One room is devoted to Fred Rogers, who filmed "Mr. Roger's Neighborhood" shows in Pittsburgh.

The 'burgh remains a city with strong ties to sports teams, and the history museum gives fans their respect. Watch video footage, see priceless memorabilia, and enjoy interactive displays. I took a selfie and placed it on a replica Honus Wagner baseball card.

To understand Pittsburgh's part in colonial history, head to the Point or Point State Park, the confluence of the Allegheny and Monongahela Rivers at the Ohio River's head. Fort Duquesne was built



Photos courtesy Debi Lander
Cathedral of Learning.

there by the French in 1754, but they destroyed it in 1758 when the English approached. Fort Pitt replaced it between 1759 and 1761.

Across from the Point lie the current sports venues: Heinz Field where the Pittsburgh Steelers play, PNC Park, the Pirates baseball stadium, and nearby the National Hockey League Pittsburgh Penguins see action in PPG Paints Arena.

I loved finding my roots and discovering the now vibrant and clean Pittsburgh.

Visit www.bylandersea.com to read more of local travel writer Debi Lander's stories and travel tips.



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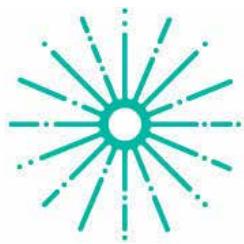
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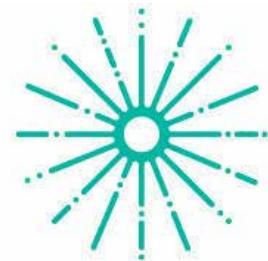
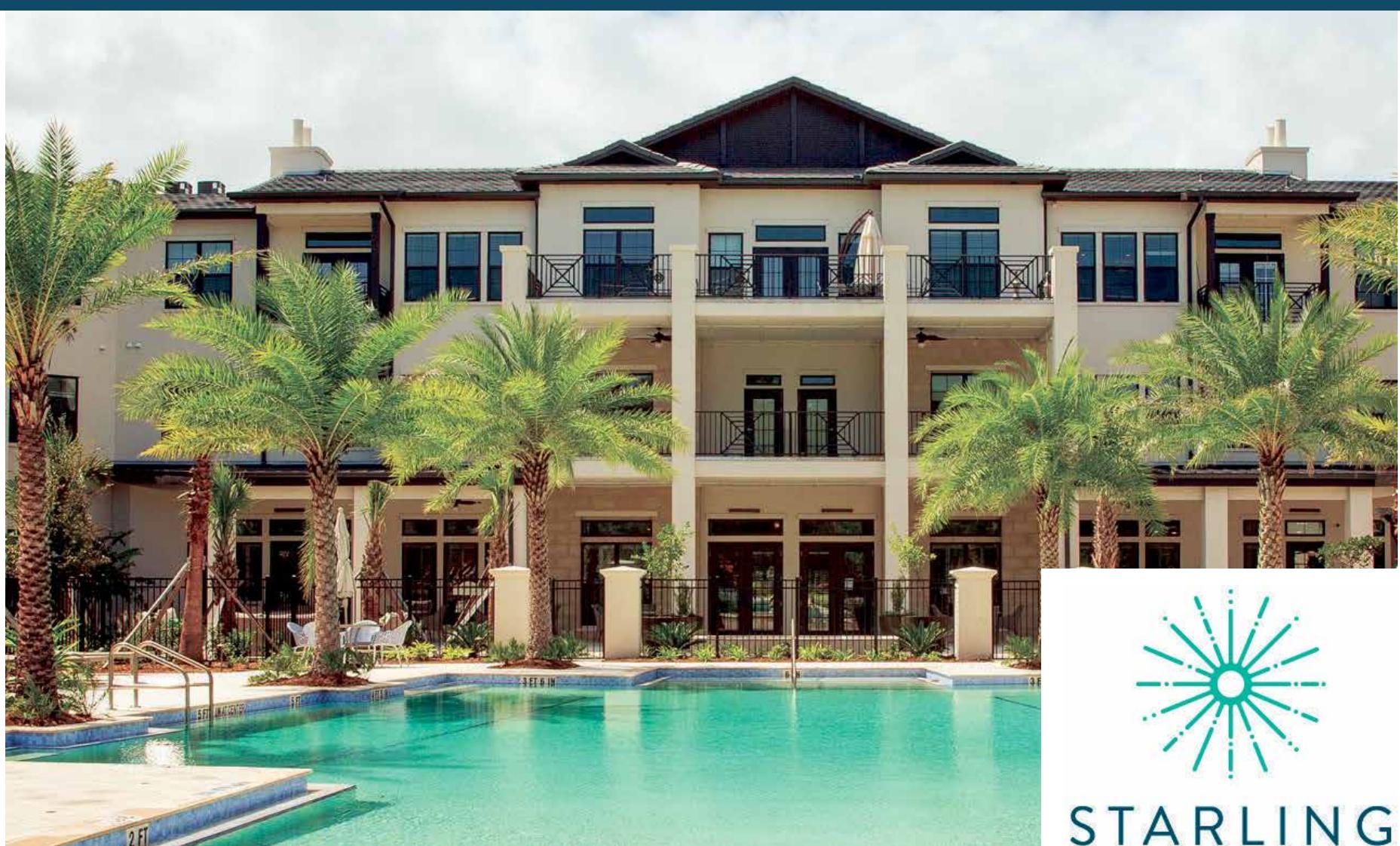
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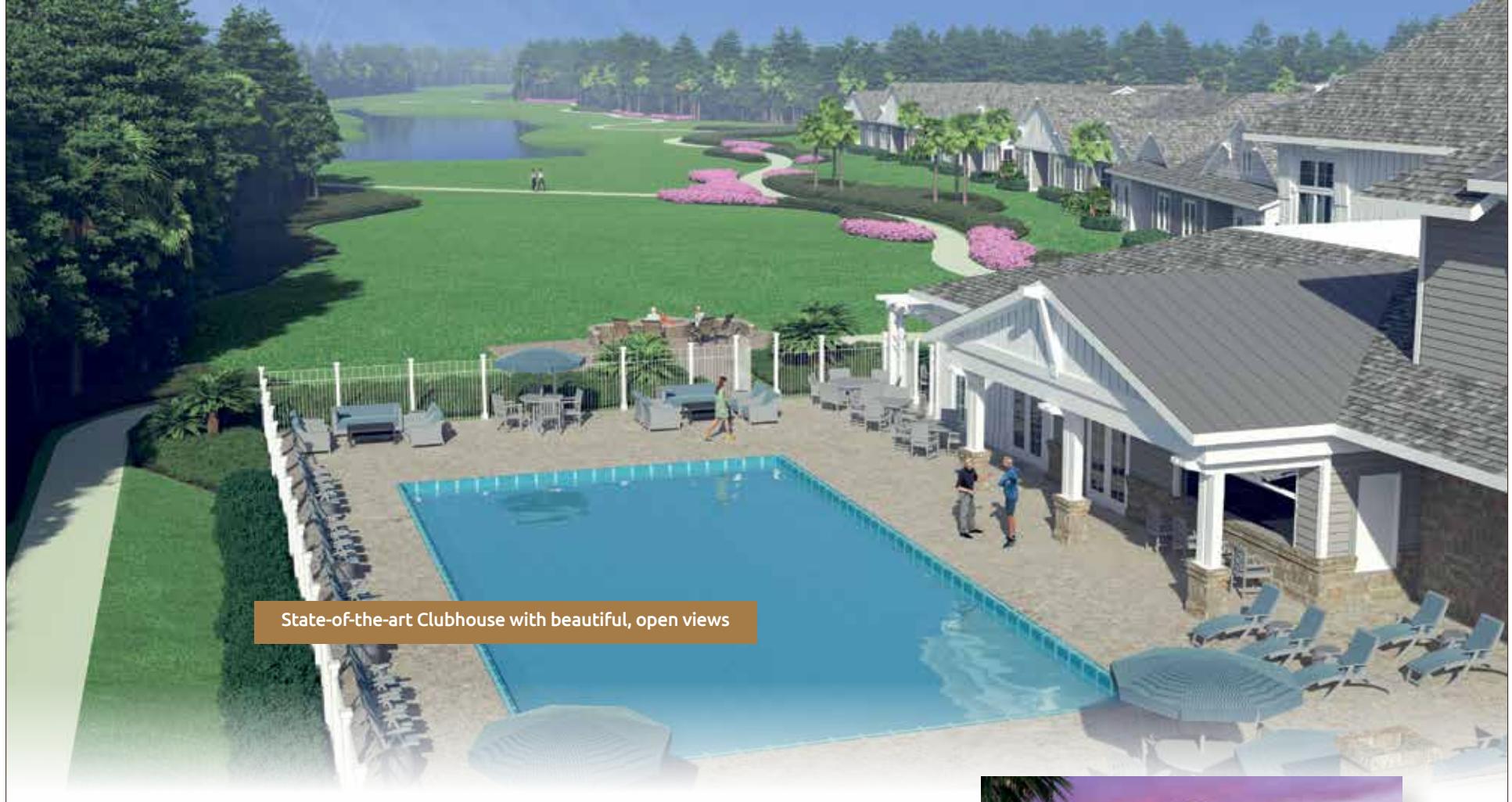
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