December 2022 Volume 1 Issue 8

A Florida NewsLine Publication



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Photos courtesy Bill Jones Christmas tree in Pier Park.

# **Surf Illumination** set for Dec. 3 at Pier Park

By NewsLine Staff mail@floridanewsline.com

The holiday season gets into full swing in St. Augustine Beach on Saturday Dec. 3 when the St. Augustine Beach Civic Association and the City of St. Augustine Beach present Surf Illumination, now in its 19th year. This event includes the lighting of the city's Christmas tree, photos with Santa and Mrs. Claus, face painting, a balloon twister, a temporary tattoo artist along with something new this year — pirates.

"We've cultivated a relationship with a pirate crew that was interested in doing a toy drive for foster children in St. Johns County. That conversation led to a new and fun piece to our Surf Illumination Festival," said Civic Association President Bill Jones. "The pirate crew will be taking pictures with kids and adults in

**Surf Illumination** cont. on pg. 5

Florida NewsLine 450 State Road 13 North Suite 106 PMB 101 St. Johns, FL 32259

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# page 5





# The Sounds of the Season: St. Augustine Orchestra celebrates 61st season

By Tiffany Merlo Phelps mail@floridanewsline.com

While St. Augustine Orchestra members come from every walk of life, they are united by one passion: the love of making music and sharing it with others.

"Community-based orchestras like the St. Augustine Orchestra are comprised of musicians from disparate backgrounds — from amateurs that started playing their instrument in school, but gravitated to careers outside of music but still wanted to engage with a group, to retired and current professional musicians that have spent their entire lives in music," said Maestro Scott Gregg, artistic director since 2016. "It's a unique group of people that make the experience very special."

This year marks the 61st season for the St. Augustine Orchestra with a special focus on expanding its reach into the community through a performance series at Tocoi Creek High School. Band students at Tocoi Creek will assist with set up.

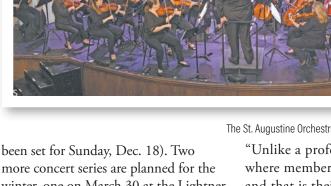
"Every year brings something new, and this year is no exception," said Allyson Breger, St. Augustine Orchestra executive director. "This is an effort to branch out and garner a larger audience."

Another highlight of the season is a holiday event, Sounds of the Season, being held at Kelly Farm on Dec. 16.

"It is a gorgeous property, a 90-acre working farm," said Breger. "This will be our annual holiday event now and will include multiple events such as Tea with Mrs. Claus and Breakfast with Santa."

Sounds of the Season will include a silent auction, concession offerings, VIP and general seating.

Breger said performing outside comes with its own set of challenges and risks, but it is a beautiful venue and an opportunity to share a holiday pops concert with the community (a rain date has



The St. Augustine Orchestra under the direction of Scott Gregg.

more concert series are planned for the winter, one on March 30 at the Lightner Museum and one on March 31 at Tocoi Creek High School. The spring series will be held on May 10 and May 11 at the Lightner Museum, finishing the 2022 - 23 season.

The March performances will be Masterworks (classical music) while the spring performances will be Pops (music heard in a more popular setting).

The Lightner Museum provides a unique venue for the orchestra, and it is a tight fit to get a full orchestra (50 to 55 musicians) on stage, said Breger. Gregg said that the orchestra plays in what would have been the deep end of the pool, so that "the audience is on a natural rake up to the shallow end."

"The atmosphere is quite special, and the acoustics are surprisingly pleasing. We have a great time playing there," said

The St. Augustine Orchestra is a notfor-profit, semi-professional orchestra located in St. Augustine. Public and private concerts are held during the season, which runs from September through

Breger said the members make the orchestra special, and she continues to be impressed with their incredible dedication.

"Unlike a professional symphony where members are paid to practice and that is their job, our community group Is voluntary. They practice at home, and they attend rehearsals," said Breger. "It is amazing how much our members give because they want to make music."

Maestro Gregg, she said, leads in a positive and encouraging manner.

"Scott has elevated us. He brings out the best in us musically," she said.

Gregg said that concerts are the culmination of weeks of rehearsal for the orchestra, once a week for seven to eight weeks before a concert series.

"Of course, my own preparation is well in advance of even the rehearsals with planning a program that makes sense and is artistically gratifying for the orchestra and audience alike," he said. "I have to know what I'm doing as a conductor before I ever stand in front of the orchestra, and the orchestra has to know what it's doing before ever sitting in front of an audience. So, by the time we get to a concert, hopefully all the hard work is over and we can enjoy the experience."

[Author's note: For more information about the St. Augustine Orchestra, visit www.stagustineorchestra.com.]



### **Briefs**

### **Phone calls from Santa coming soon**

The St. Johns County Parks and Recreation Department and the North Pole are holding their annual Santa calls. Parents with children aged eight years and younger, residing in St. Johns County, can sign up to receive a phone call from Santa Clause this holiday season. Calls may be scheduled from 6 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. on Tuesday, Dec. 6, Wednesday, Dec. 7, or Thursday, Dec. 8.

Visit https://tinyurl.com/bdz2y9d5 to register.

### Public Library System's Food for Fines program returns

The popular Food for Fines program returns this year to St. Johns County libraries and bookmobiles. An opportunity to eliminate most library fines, Food for Fines will run through Monday, Dec. 19. The food items collected will be used to stock the St. Johns County Health and Human Services (HHS) Food Pantry, providing food for St. Johns County families in need.

A donation of one non-perishable, unexpired food item will remove \$1 of fines from a patron's library record. This fine-reduction program applies only to overdue fines and patrons may bring in as many items as needed to reduce overdue fines. Fees related to damaged or lost items are not included in the Food for Fines program. Any library user is welcome to make donations and food may be dropped off at any of the St. Johns County library branches or bookmobiles.

Last year, St. Johns County residents provided more than 3,500 non-perish-

able items through the "Food for Fines" program. Visit www.sjcpls.org for more information about this program and other services of the St. Johns County Public Library System.

### A new take on "The Nutcracker" to be presented

Christmas Fantastique will be presented on Thursday, Dec. 22 at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. at Lewis Auditorium in downtown St. Augustine during its famous Nights of Lights festival. The original production by Zoika's Dance reimagines the classic holiday story of "The Nutcracker" and features contemporary dance styles including hip hop, tap, jazz, acro, and modern dance, as well as classical ballet. A choir of young vocalists will perform before each show, with signing provided by deaf interpreter Amanda Villalobos.

Director and choreographer Zoika Garcia is a former professional ballet dancer and owner of Zoika's Dance school in St. Augustine.

"I feel very strongly that dancers of contemporary genres deserve a Nutcracker of their own," Garcia said. "Our production is inclusive of many exhilarating contemporary dance forms including hip hop, tap, and modern, as well as classical ballet."

Garcia has called upon the talents of professional dancers to join the cast of young dancers on stage. Professional dancers Jenne Vermes (tap, contemporary), Sean Mansfield (tap, hip hop), Amaani Grant (hip hop, tap, contemporary) and Katie DeAcutis (hip hop, contemporary) are featured in the

production. Young St. Augustine dancers Sophia Budd and Emmett Kelly will dance the roles of Clara and the Prince. Claudia Mueckay and Jake Karger will dance the roles of Sugar Plum Fairy and Cavalier.

Garcia and the cast of 65 performers are also looking forward to sharing the magic of Christmas Fantastique with local foster children, children from the Betty Griffin House, and students from the Florida School for the Deaf and Blind, who will receive complimentary tickets.

Visit https://28186.danceticketing.com/r/events/ to purchase tickets.



Photo courtesy Zoika's Dance.

### St. Johns Housing Partnership director receives national award

St. Johns Housing Partnership Executive Director Bill Lazar has received the Jean Diggs Weatherization Champion Award from the National Association for State Community Services Program. This award is presented at the association's Annual Conference to individuals who are true champions for the cause of weatherization. The St. Johns Housing

Partnership has been a weatherization provider in Northeast Florida since 1998.

"We always want to be at the front end of building industry trends. Our weatherization training has always been a key part to our success. Working in hot humid climates has more challenges with mold mildew and indoor air quality," said Lazar.

The Department of Energy's Low-Income Weatherization Assistance Program administered by St. Johns Housing Partnership works to increase the energy efficiency of homes owned or occupied by low-income persons by reducing their total residential energy expenditures and improving their health and safety.

The St. Johns Housing Partnership not only rehabs homes, but is building new green certified homes and infill rental property for low-income households. Energy and water conservation along with accessibility are the baseline of St. Johns Housing Partnership green building certifications.

Lazar has built his career around improving substandard housing and providing clean, safe, affordable housing. He attributes a major part of that to the training he has shared over the years from weatherization.

For more information on the St. Johns Housing Partnership Weatherization Program contact the St. Johns Housing Partnership at info@sjhp.org or (904) 824-0902.

**(9)** (f)



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450 State Road 13 North Suite 106 PMB 101 St. Johns, FL 32259 (904) 886-4919 www.FloridaNewsLine.com

#### **Publisher**

Mark Pettus

Publisher@FloridaNewsLine.com

#### **Editor**

Martie Thompson

Editor@FloridaNewsLine.com

### Bookkeeper

**Emily Whitehead** 

Accounting@FloridaNewsLine.com

#### **Social Media**

SocialMedia@FloridaNewsLine.com

### **Advertising Sales**

Linda Gay

Linda@FloridaNewsLine.com

(904) 607-5062 cell

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Best Furry Friend of the month

### Breed:

Tibetan Terrier Mix

Favorite Activity:

Walking around the neighborhood seeing all my "friends" (humans and other dogs)

Favorite Treat:

**Cucumbers** 

Favorite Friend:

My mama

How Your BFF Got Their Name:

Was rescued as "Bro" and my family changed my name to Bruno



Do you have a cute pet? Send us your pet's picture and the answer to the five questions above before the 10th of the month. Also tell us you saw the BFF contest in St. Augustine NewsLine.

Your pet could be our BFF of the month and appear in St. Augustine NewsLine!

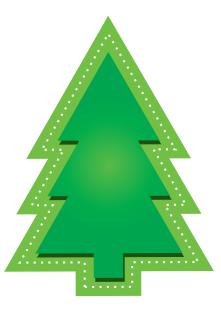
Email editor@floridanewsline.com to enter your pet.



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# Happy Holidays!

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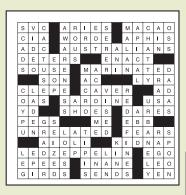
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- **4** What's Happening in St. Augustine
- **5** General Election wrap up
- 8 School Briefs

### MYSTERY PHOTO



Can you guess where this is? Submit your answer to: mail@FloridaNewsLine.com.

Last month's Mystery Photo was the Spanish Constitution monument in the Plaza de la Constitución. 7



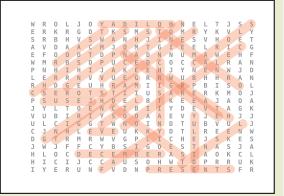
Answers

Puzzles

PG 6



A. holiday B. Santa C. celebrate D. jolly



The PLAYERS Championship March 7-12, 2023

The "go to" fan guide for THE PLAYERS

Official tournament information from the PGA TOUR

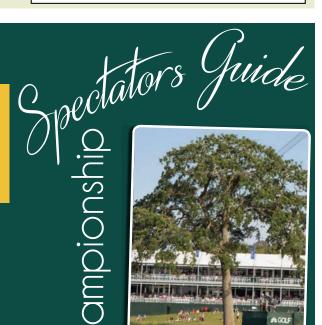
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# December,

# Community Calendar What's Happening in St. Augustine

'd: Gullah Geechee Heritage Festival, presented by the St. Johns Cultural Council, will be held on Dec. 3 from 12 p.m. - 5 p.m. at Armstrong Park. The event is free to attend and food and beverages will be available for purchase. The festival will celebrate 450 years of West African influences on the St. Johns County communities of Spuds, Elkton and Armstrong through music and dance performances, cooking and craft demonstrations and presentations from a variety of cultural organizations. Visit www.historiccoastculture.com for more information.

6th: R.E.A.D. Book Club featuring this month's theme, a reread of a favorite book from 2021 – 2022, will be held at the Southeast Branch of the St. Johns County Public Library, 6670 US Highway 1 South, on Dec. 6 from 10:15 a.m. – 11:15 a.m. Registration at sjcpls.org is required for these events.

10th:The St. Augustine Genealogical Society will meet on Dec. 10 at 1 p.m. at the Southeast Branch of the St. Johns County Public Library, 6670 US Highway 1 South. Visit https://stauggensoc.org/ for more information.

10 th: 11th annual Santa Suits on the Loose 5K to benefit St. Augustine Youth Services, a walk/ jog/run that begins at the St. Augustine Pier, will be held on Dec. 10 at 8 a.m. Register at www.racesmith.com; the price per participant is \$35 through Dec. 9 or \$40 the morning of the race. Last year participation was roughly 1,200 "Santa" themed runners, making it the third largest race in St. Johns County. All race proceeds are used by SAYS to support mental health programs and help provide "normal life experiences" to their clients.

10 th: "Messiah Born" holiday concert will be presented by the St. Augustine Community Chorus at the Cathedral Basilica in Downtown St. Augustine on Dec. 10 beginning at 7:30 p.m. There will also be a matinee performance at 2 p.m. on Dec. 11. This 74-year tradition will include the Youth Chorus and a chamber orchestra. Visit www.staugustinecommunitychorus.org for more information.

13 th: Holiday ornaments crafts for all ages will be hosted by the Main Library and the St. Johns Cultural Council on Dec. 13 from 1 p.m. – 3 p.m. at The Waterworks next to the Main Library, 1960 N. US Highway 1 South. Supplies are provided by the Friends of the Main Library and the drop in event is free and open to the public. More information is available at www. sjcpls.org.

14th: St. Augustine Film Society Holiday Party will be held on Dec. 14 at 7 p.m. at Temple Bet Yam, 2055 Wildwood Drive. Enjoy an evening of Christmas-themed short films, fun games, and prizes. Film Society members are free, \$8 for non-members. Contact staugustine-filmsociety@gmail.com for more information.

15th: Holiday Storytime and Cookie Decorating will be held at the Southeast Branch of the St. Johns County Public Library, 6670 US Highway 1 South, on Dec. 15 at 6 p.m. The evening will include a short holiday-themed storytime and cookie decorating. As supplies are limited, registration is required; visit sjcpls.org.

be held on Dec. 15 from 5 p.m. - 7 p.m. at The Waterworks next to the Main Library, 1960 N. US Highway 1 South. There will be a short ceremony to honor this year's award-winning recipients of the St. Johns Cultural Council's State of the Arts grants followed by a program of holiday musical entertainment and light refreshments. Visit www. sjcpls.org for more information.

17th: Beach Exploration with GTM Research Reserve

docents will be held on Dec. 17 from 9 a.m. - 11a.m. The hike begins at the GTM Research Reserve Visitor Center, 505 Guana River Road. This is a "Beaches 101" experience the entire family will enjoy. Visit gtmnerr.org for more information.

22nd:Christmas Fantastique, presented by Zoika's

Dance and featuring local and professional dancers, will be staged on Dec. 22 at Lewis Auditorium, 14 Granada St. in St. Augustine. Show times are 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. Visit https://28186.danceticketing.com/r/events/ for tickets.

Have an event you'd like included in our community calendar? Email the information to editor@floridanewsline.com. Deadline is the 10th of the month for the next month's issue.

# Welcome to the new



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### **Guest Column**

### **General Election wrap up**

By St. Johns County Supervisor of Elections Vicky Oakes
The Nov. 8 General Election in St.
Johns County was a success with 64.8
percent of registered voters turning out

### Here's how the votes were cast:

31,673 Vote-by-mail Ballots

54,180 Early Voting Ballots

59,118 Election Day Ballots

A heartfelt thank you to the incredible elections team of approximately 500 staff and volunteers it took to conduct the election. This included front desk staff, warehouse staff, voting technicians, poll workers, vote-by-mail staff, IT and GIS staff, temporary staff, and our community partners who allowed their locations to be used as polling places. We are so grateful for your dedication and service to St. Johns County and our community.

Our polling places were busy places on election day. All locations were fully staffed with workers and plenty of ballots. Upon opening, many of our locations had lines, but that is normal with so many voters stopping by to vote on their way to work. Our poll workers really appreciated voter patience throughout the day as they worked diligently to process votes and get them in and out as quickly as possible. A few of our locations even had lines at 7 p.m., but every voter in line was able to cast their ballot before heading home for the night and one location even stayed until 7:45 p.m. to ensure every vote was cast.

Eight of our precincts processed over 2,000 voters on election day. Some of our busiest election day locations included:

2,414 voters at Village Church, 4229 Pacetti Road, St. Augustine

2,387 voters at Celebration Lutheran Church, 810 Roberts Road, St. Johns

2,327 voters at St. Francis in the Field, 895 Palm Valley Road, Ponte Vedra Reach

2,191 voters at The Clubhouse at Beacon Lake, 850 Beacon Lake Pkwy, St. Augustine

2,158 voters at Switzerland Community Church, 2179 State Road 13 N., St. Johns

2,058 voters at Good News Church, 1357 Wildwood Drive, St. Augustine

2,028 voters at RiverHouse at River-Town, 140 Landing St., St. Johns

2,010 voters at The Palencia Club, 600 Palencia Club Drive, St. Augustine

Congratulations to those who won their elections and will begin their terms soon. There were many long hours put in on the campaign trail so I know there were a lot of weary people happy to see 7 p.m. arrive on Nov. 8; however, our work at the Elections Office never ends. We will take a short break for the holidays, but 2023 is our year of planning for the 2024 elections and implementing new list maintenance laws to improve the accuracy of our voter rolls.

There will be three elections in 2024 including the March Presidential Preference Primary, the August Primary and the November General Election. With such a busy year, we cannot start planning soon enough to ensure St. Johns County voters have safe, accessible, and successful elections. I sincerely hope you and your loved ones enjoy a peaceful holiday season. We will see you again in 2023 with more election news!

**Surf Illumination** cont. from pg. 1 front of their pirate ship; there will be mermaids and some dance performances too."

Surf Illumination is a free event. The Art Studio will be open, hosting a special holiday show and sale and local art will be on display and available for purchase throughout the evening. There will also be more than a dozen vendors selling holiday gifts, art and crafts. Food and beverages will be available for purchase. Surf Illumination happens Dec. 3 at Pier Park from

4 p.m. – 7 p.m. The tree lighting will take place at dusk, usually around 5:45 p.m.

The St. Augustine Beach Civic Association is an all volunteer organization that has served the city for more than 42 years. Individual memberships are just \$20 per year and Corporate and Family Memberships are just \$30 annually. Memberships can be purchased at The Sunshine Shop on Beach Boulevard during regular business hours, at the Surf Illumination event on Dec. 3 and online at www.sabca.org.





# St. Johns County Property Appraiser Eddie Creamer

### Q: How have storms Ian and Nicole impacted the work of your office?

A: Late in the season, we have had two reasonably severe storms. Many property owners have unfortunately had damage to their homes. After Ian, our office reached out to affected homeowners to see what we could do to help, assessment-wise and then did the same thing after Nicole.

# Q: Will property owners see a decrease in their property taxes this year if their homes sustained damage?

A: There is no relief available for the payments due for this year, but depending on the severity of the damage and whether repairs are made by Jan. 1, 2023, there may be some relief for next year. I'd ask that homeowners who have received communication from our office please respond, and if you haven't heard from us and have sustained damage, please contact us so we can assess the property as early as possible next year. Of course, also don't hesitate to contact our office with any questions.

Q: Can you explain Gov. DeSantis' executive order as it pertains to tax payment due dates for homeown-

### ers impacted by the storms?

A: After Hurricane Ian, the governor issued an executive order delaying payment of property taxes for those properties either destroyed or uninhabitable. This only affects properties in counties named by FEMA, of which St. Johns County is one.

Note that this just delays payment by extending the deadline to pay to June 1, 2023; it does not eliminate or reduce the taxes due for 2022. The discounts for early payment are extended as well. While the governor has not said if this will also include properties destroyed or severely damaged by Nicole, our expectation is that the executive order will be amended to include Nicole. Be sure to stay tuned.

The governor has gone on to say he plans to call a special session of the legislature in December to address property taxes as a result of these late season storms.

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

A: Our office is located at 4030 Lewis Speedway Ste. 203, (904) 827-5500. It is open Monday – Friday, 8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m. Also, readers can email me at Eddie@sjcpa.us or call me at (904) 827-5500.



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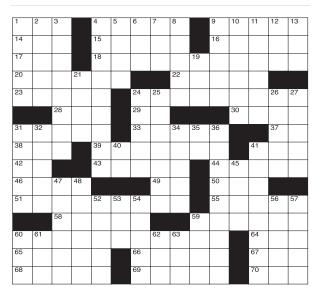
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Answers on page 3 Provided by MetroCreative



HRISTMAS WORD SEARCH

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### **CLUES ACROSS**

- 1. Product or (abbr.)
- 4. Zodiac sign
- 9. S. China seaport
- 14. Former OSS
- 15. Early English printer 16. Aphid genus
- 17. General's assistant (abbr.)
- 18. Aussies
- 20. Dissuades
- 22. Make law 23. Drench
- 24. Soak in a liquid
- 28. Male child 29. It cools your home
- 30. Small constellation
- 31. To call (archaic)
- 33. Explores beneath the Earth
- 37. Commercial 38. W. hemisphere organization
- 39. You can find it in a can

- 41. "Land of the free'
- 42 36 inches
- 43. Footwear 44. Challenges
- 46. They hold things together
- 49. Of I
- 50. Partner to flow
- 51. Not connected by kinship
- 55. Worries
- 58. Garlic mayonnaise
- 59. A way to take by force
- 60. Legendary English rockers 64. Your consciousness of your
- own identity
- 65. Fencing swords
- 66. Silly
- 67. Actor DiCaprio
- 68. Encircles with a belt
- 69. Mails a message 70. Longing

### **CLUES DOWN**

- 1. Horse mackerels
- 2. It can be viral
- 3. Prickly plants 4. Consciousness
- 5. Type of sarcoma
- 6. Tax collector
- 7. Sun up in New York
- 8. One who scorches 9. Influential psychotherapist
- 10. Situated at an apex
- 11. Communicative
- 12. Forearm nerve 13. Former CIA
- 19. Folk singer DiFranco
- 21. Employee stock ownership
- plan 24. Large-scale
- 25. School environment
- 26. Remove
- 27. Male parents 31. Large rodent

- 32. Weighed down
- 34. Held tightly
- 35. route: going there 36. Explains again
- 40. Exclamation of surprise
- 41. Courteously
- 45. Lying down 47. Judge
- 48. Forcefully took
- 52. Loosely compacted sediment
- 53. High mountain
- 54. Portable conical tents
- 56. Cereal grass
- 57. Dining utensil 59. Thoughtful
- 60. Helps you walk
- 61. Indicates near 62. Midway between northeast
- 63. Local area network

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# \*

Determine the code to reveal the answer!

Solve the code to discover words related to Christmas. Each number corresponds to a letter. (Hint: 17 = A)

18 **26** 13 5 17 23 A.

Clue: Special day

В. 19 17 22 25

Clue: Bearded gift-giver

15 8 18 8 3 7 **17** 25

Clue: Engage in fanfare

Clue: Happy and cheerful

D. 21 **13 18** 18

### **HEALTH & FITNESS**

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

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N C Ι В Ι

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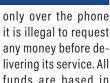
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# Get to Know...

By Tiffany Merlo Phelps mail@floridanewsline.com

# Pam Hatch



Photo courtesy Pam Hatch

By Tiffany Merlo Phelps mail@floridanewsline.com

Pam Hatch has one requirement for her family members when it's Mother's Day or Christmas: no gifts necessary, but everyone must play pickleball with mom. Luckily, her adult sons, Carson, 27, and Andrew, 25, and husband Jim all willingly comply — with Carson and Andrew usually winning the game. "We used to win, but the boys got better," said Hatch. "You naturally get better. Go play, you will get better." Hatch, who moved to St. Augustine two years ago from Jacksonville, used to be an avid tennis player until she tore her ACL in 2017. Sidelined with the injury, Hatch found it very difficult to not play tennis. When she did try to play, she was constantly afraid of further injury. That's when a friend introduced her to pickleball in 2019. After one introductory class at Ortega United Methodist Church in Jacksonville, Hatch was hooked.

It wasn't long before she began to teach others how to play, both to share the sport and to teach friends so she would have more people to play with. "When I saw the joy on people's faces, it really made my day. It really is easy to learn and offers a lot of socialization. It can change peoples' lives," said Hatch, who also taught people how to play at Westside Baptist Church. Next Hatch became a USA Pickleball Ambassador to help grow the sport, train players, and share the economic impact of the sport. "We work with city and county representatives to show them how much revenue they can have in the city and county when you build pickleball courts," said Hatch, who also teaches at the Treaty Park courts and a handful of other developments in the area. "Neighbors invite neighbors to play. It builds such a sound sense of community," she said. Hatch plays or teaches pickleball every day and she said she would never turn down a chance to play — indoors or outdoors (though she favors outdoor play).

# Q: You mentioned that there are a lot of nuances to pickleball. Could you share some examples?

A: Pickleball is easy to learn but hard to master. The nuances of the game

make it challenging. Your court position is important. The degree that you hold your paddle, and your body position are equally important. Where is your paddle and are you in the ready position? Make sure the paddle is out front because the game is out front. The no volley zone is a big equalizer. And you don't have to move around a lot. Pickleball is more about short movements and keeping your body balanced.

### Q: Talk about your job as a Selkirk Pickleball Brand Advocate and your connection to Go Pro Tennis and Pickleball in Jacksonville.

A: I am a branch to the Selkirk tree, which is based in Idaho. I help promote their product (pickleball paddles). I love the quality of the paddles and the customer service. I do Selkirk demo days, so that people have a chance to use the paddles. With Go Pro, I can lead people to buy local. Go Pro, located at St. Johns Town Center, also allows players to take a paddle home and try it to decide if it is the right one for them.

### Q: What other hobbies do you have?

A: I love gardening, hanging out at the beach, riding bikes, and kayaking with friends and family. We love the beach vibe of St. Augustine, the people, and the food.

# Q: Why do you think the sport of pickleball continues to grow in popularity?

A: Here is the thing about pickleball: it is multigenerational, multicultural and families can do it. It is connecting. It offers a great connection to people who you may not otherwise get to know. It is also very encouraging. I can teach anyone how to play in one hour. You form a community and a strong friend base through pickleball, people who really care about you.

### Q: What is your life philosophy?

A: Gratitude and appreciation. I am grateful that my health allows me to do this, and I appreciate the people around me. I am respectful of others and treat others as I would want to be treated. That is how I roll.

# Health&Wellness Guide

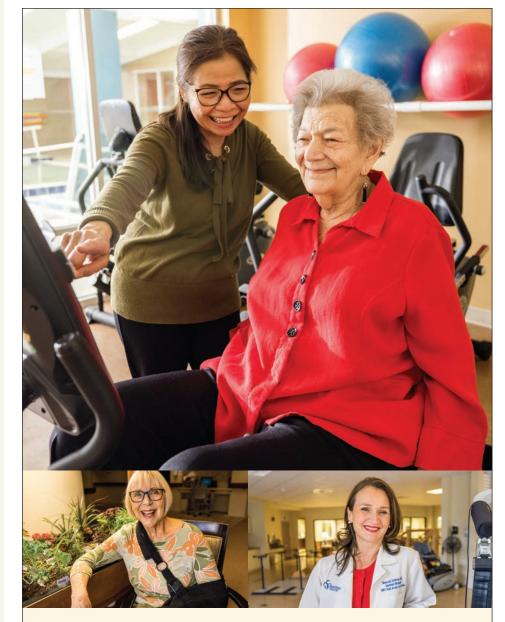
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### **School Briefs**

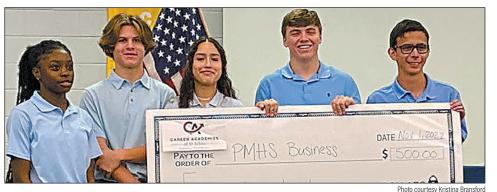


Photo courtesy Donna Ott Ketterlinus students enjoyed meeting local police officers at Coffee with a Cop.

### **Ketterlinus Elementary School**

Coffee with a Cop was a beautiful way to start the morning with parents, students, and staff gathered on the front porch of Ketterlinus Elementary. Attendees ate donuts, sipped coffee, and

more importantly, spent time talking with local Police Officers. Several Ketterlinus students showed up with homemade thank-you notes and artwork for the officer. DOS Coffee & Wine donated the coffee.



Ja-Bri Stewart, Nathan Carr, Maria Perez, Ben Johnson, and Ethan Mobley.

### **Pedro Menendez High School**

Pedro Menendez High School VyStar Academy of Business students placed third in the district Project Innovation competition. This competition promotes project-based exploration of innovative concepts and the application to solve problems within our community or the world. As students of the Business and Entrepreneurial Principles class they developed the "Autospotter" as "The Next Generation Of Weightlifting."

# Sebastian students learn STEM is everywhere

By Frankie Portelos mail@floridanewsline.com

Once a year, the Jacksonville Icemen host an early game geared towards schools and students. Sebastian Middle School was lucky enough to have almost 100 students attend this year's event held on Nov. 8, 2022. Field trips have been difficult this year due to a shortage in bus drivers, but the Jackson-ville Icemen pulled through and were able to pay for two private coach buses for Sebastian's students.

The focus of the event was STEM in sports. Oftentimes, when students think about sports — whether playing or watching — they are not thinking about the engineering and design that goes into practically every aspect of a

game. From the puck or ball, to the equipment and field, STEM is everywhere. Prior to attending the event, the students in Sebastian's TEM classes engaged in Everfi.com's modules relating to science, technology, engineering and math in hockey. As the STEM coach of the school, I know the goal was met when a student made the statement at the end of the game, "Wow Mr. Portelos, I didn't realize that STEM is literally everywhere." Sebastian Middle School is a STEMcertified school and looks forward to engaging its students in additional real world applications. The school's Lego robotics team has been inspired by the Icemen and have designed a hockey stick-holding robot to help complete their missions for this year's competition.



Photos courtesy Frankie Portelos

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