

# Ponte Vedra NewsLine

AUGUST 2021 Volume 8 Issue 8

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

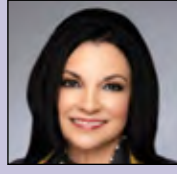
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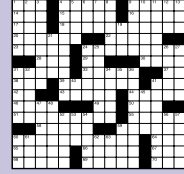
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Photo courtesy Vicar's Landing

Bobbie West celebrates her 105th birthday.

## Vicar's Landing member celebrates 105th birthday

By NewsLine Staff  
mail@floridanewsline.com

On July 9, Vicar's Landing retirement community honored Bobbie West on her 105th birthday. West joined Vicar's Landing 25 years ago. The Vicar's Landing Members Association hosted a special reception for all members and guests to thank her for all she has meant to this community

West was born on July 11, 1916

**Birthday** cont. on pg. 9

## Nocatee community lifts up family

By Tiffany Merlo Phelps  
mail@floridanewsline.com

Southern California natives Collin and Kelci Jager felt called to move to Florida in 2018. It was an overwhelming feeling that they cannot explain. They both researched where to live in Florida separately, and they both found Nocatee. Everything seemed to fall into place as they moved into Coastal Oaks in December 2019. Their four surfer sons made a seamless transition.

Then life changed dramatically after one August day in 2020.

That was the day that the Jagers' two older sons were passengers in a bad golf cart accident, setting off a series of life-changing events that would lead to some incredibly painful times; however, Kelci Jager is quick to point out the undeniable silver linings that developed from that visit to Baptist South's emergency room — silver linings that would be revealed over time.

Fourteen-year-old Lucah broke his arm in the accident and required multiple surgeries. The oldest son, 16-year-old Ian, suffered head trauma. Ian's medical exam at Wolfson Children's Hospital revealed a two-inch brain tumor that required immediate surgery.

While the accident was horrific and traumatic, Kelci Jager saw it as a blessing in disguise because Ian's brain tumor was found. He had no symptoms, so it would likely not have been found until he was very sick. Ian's tumor was removed and was benign, and Lucah has healed. Both boys are mostly back to normal, according to their mom.

At the time of the accident, the Jagers



Photo courtesy Kelci Jager  
The Jager family

The couple, both self-employed, soon found another silver lining: what it means to have a community of friends, neighbors and strangers rally behind you.

"They watched our kids, they cleaned our house, did our laundry and brought us dinner for weeks," said Kelci Jager. "They just carried us. It was incredible, and so nice to see. We would not have had this type of community support in California."

Just as life began to return to normal for the family, life took another unexpected turn in January 2021 as Collin Jager was diagnosed with a very rare and aggressive form of leukemia. He has since undergone intense chemotherapy and is in phase three of a five phase treatment plan (a May bone marrow biopsy came back showing zero cancer cells which Kelci Jager said means that her husband does not need a stem cell transplant).

"Again, my world was shattered. I was devastated and heartbroken. But this community came to my rescue a second time. The amount of love and support we have received from neighbors and

**Jager family** cont. on pg. 10



Photo courtesy Kelci Jager

Collin Jager at Lace Up for Collin, the May 5K fundraiser that was held in Nocatee for him.

found themselves with two children in the hospital and two children at home and no family in town. Covid further complicated matters.

"My world was crashing around me. It was so surreal," said Kelci Jager, adding that she and her husband could not be at the hospital at the same time because of Covid restrictions.

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*Tracey Kuczinski  
The Senior Advocate*

# Back to school is nearly here



Photo courtesy Shelley Howard

School buses will soon be back on St. Johns County roads.

By Martie Thompson  
editor@floridanewsline.com

The minivans, bikers, walkers and school buses will be back soon — the first day of school in St. Johns County is Monday, Aug. 16. This year, two new schools will welcome students for the first time: Toco Creek High School in the World Golf Village area and Pine Island Academy in the Nocatee area. These two schools, necessary to combat overcrowding in the northern part of the county, bring the total number of traditional K-12 schools in the district to 40.

According to the St. Johns County School District, the student count as of June 10, 2021 was 43,985 students, a 1.6 percent increase over the previous year — even in the midst of the pandemic. St. Johns County continues to be one of the fastest growing school districts in the state. Kindergarten enrollment in particular is expected to increase, since last year's kindergarten class was smaller than usual, perhaps due to COVID.

Friday, Aug. 13 is the districtwide “Meet the Teacher Day,” where every school is encouraged to have personnel present to meet students; however, schools can, and most do, schedule their own day or stagger them by grade level sometime during the week before school starts. The district encourages parents to check their school's website for the most accurate information.

In addition to the two new schools, there are some other changes coming for the 2021 – 2022 school year. There will be a youth resource deputy from either the St. Johns County Sheriff's Office or a local police

department in every school starting this year. Previously, there were a few instances with a representative from a private security company at a school with a shared school resource officer between a couple of schools.

Health and safety protocols have changed from last year, with the removal of the face mask mandate and daily temperature checks being the most notable. According to the district, face masks will be optional in school and on district transportation. Desk shields will no longer be a mandatory feature of all classrooms, but will be used as appropriate when needed for health and safety protection. Teachers are still asked to maintain social distancing of students and keep seating/desks three feet or more apart to the extent possible. Adequate supplies of hand sanitizer and soap and water will be available.

*[Editor's note: Be sure to check the St. Johns County School District's prevailing safety protocols and standards as of the first day of school, due to the fluidity of the COVID situation. Visit [www.stjohns.k12.fl.us](http://www.stjohns.k12.fl.us) for more information.]*

There is still time to register your child for school, if you have not already done so, and the district recommends that parents do this as soon as possible. Parents may access information regarding registration requirements and their child's attendance zone by visiting the school district website at [www.stjohns.k12.fl.us](http://www.stjohns.k12.fl.us) and clicking on the “Parents & Students” tab. Additional information on registration and school attendance zones may be obtained from the Student Services Office at (904) 547-7797.

# When it's time to call in a tutor

By NewsLine Staff  
mail@floridanewsline.com

Busy schedules, hybrid learning and demanding coursework have affected students' academic performance over the last year-plus. The months since a pandemic was declared in March 2020 have been unlike any other, and confronting the academic challenges of the pandemic may have adversely affected some students' grades.

A recent report from the Fairfax County Public Schools Office of Research and Strategic Improvement in Virginia found the number of middle and high school students with two or more failing marks increased by 83 percent in the first quarter of the 2020 – 2021 school year compared to the year prior. But students' grades may slide or they may find certain school work overly challenging even in normal years. Since many parents have not seen a periodic table or had to solve high school math problems in decades, tutors may be just what students need to regain their academic footing.

Failing grades are not necessarily the most notable indicator that students can benefit from the services of a tutor. The Princeton Review says 25 percent of high school students say homework is their biggest source of stress, and homework progress can help parents determine if it's time to call in a tutor. Students who find their homework is taking too long, particularly double or triple the amount of time it once required, may need some extra help. Here are some additional indicators that a tutor may be needed.

- Declining test scores: Some students are simply poor test takers, but a gradual or sudden decline in test scores may indicate students are having trouble mastering material. Teachers can pinpoint if certain concepts are overly challenging to students and notify parents if there are any problem areas.
- Poor time management or focus:



Photo courtesy MetroCreative

Tutors can be valuable resources for students who need some one-on-one attention to master general learning concepts or reinforce skills for key tests or projects.

Students who are struggling may have their attention drift or they put off doing tasks because they don't grasp the assignments.

- Lack of homework help at home: Parents may have prior commitments during the times of day when their children are doing homework. Even when parents are home, they may discover that the concepts covered in school are not being taught in the ways parents learned them and they may have difficulty assisting their children. Tutors can step in and help students when parents cannot.
- Learning disorder: Certain students learn differently from others due to a diagnosed or undiagnosed learning disorder. A child who is struggling with reading, phonics, spelling, and writing may have dyslexia, according to the tutoring experts at Dyslexia Practitioner NJ. Tutors who specialize in learning disorders can assess and address learning conflicts and tailor instructions in ways that can help students overcome those challenges.
- Students “shut down” or say they “hate” school: Disinterest in school or expressions of hating going to school may be indicative of academic struggles in the classroom, says the Princeton Review. Some students get so frustrated they simply give up. Tutors can solve learning puzzles and help get students back on track and reignite their interest in school.

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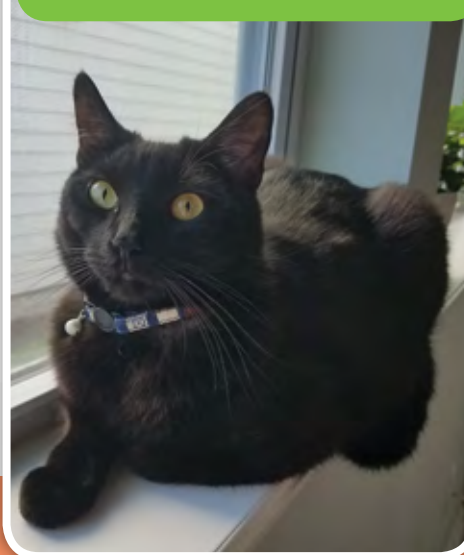
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# BFF Best Furry Friend of the month

## Meet Haku!



**BREED:**

American shorthair

**FAVORITE ACTIVITY:**

Playing with a mouse toy and finding birds through the windows.

**FAVORITE TREAT:**

Any salmon-flavored treat

**FAVORITE FRIEND:**

Daigo

**HOW YOUR BFF GOT HIS NAME:**

From the Japanese movie, "Spirited Away"

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Do you have a cute pet? Send us your pet's picture and the answers to the five questions above before the 10th of the month. Your pet could be our BFF of the month and you could win a Gift Certificate! Does your business cater to pets? Would you like to sponsor our contest? Email editor@floridanewsline.com to enter your pet or sponsor the BFF contest.

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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

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

Last month's Mystery Photo was the Marsh Landing Business Park. Our winner was Allicia Smith. Congratulations!

### CRYPTO FUN

Determine the code to reveal the answer!

Answers: A. educate B. lesson C. degree D. teacher

Answers to our Puzzles PG 10

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with St. Johns County Sheriff Rob Hardwick

**Q: With the start of school on Aug. 16, can you share some details about the Youth Resource Deputies assigned to schools from your office?**

**A:** This school year, we will have 51 deputy sheriffs, five corporals, five sergeants, one lieutenant and one captain from the St. Johns County Sheriff's office that will be working for the St. Johns County School District. We now have a deputy sheriff in every school in St. Johns County (including two from the St. Augustine Police Department for schools in St. Augustine). The school district covers 70 percent of the salary and compensation of these employees and the SJSO covers 30 percent, since during the summer when school is not in session, we assign these deputy sheriffs to the beaches or to the Community Engagement Department.

**Q: Why do you think it is so important to have deputy sheriffs in schools, besides safety reasons and the Florida law which required this in light of the shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in 2018?**

**A:** This is a time for us when we can have a positive influence in students' and parents' lives. From pre-K through high school, we can educate parents and students about what we do. At the end of last school year, I visited every school and met with the principal and office staff. This gave me the opportunity to find out if our deputy sheriffs were doing a good job and the response I received was overwhelmingly positive. These deputies are developing personal relationships with students. I'd like to challenge our community to get involved with the deputy sheriff at their school if they haven't already. Stop by their office and introduce yourself.

**Q: What else are you doing to foster relationships with students?**

**A:** One of the cool things we are doing is the vehicle wrap for the deputy's car at the high school. All the funds for this are privately donated. It started with Bartram Trail and St. Augustine High School, and plans are in the works for Nease, Ponte Vedra, Creekside and Pedro Menendez. The graphic design for these eye-catching cars is created by the students, so that leads to even more community buy-in.

We really have one of the best relationships between the sheriff's office and the St. Johns County School District. I can't brag enough about what a great job the school district does.

**Q: What other programs do you offer for kids?**

**A:** Our PAL program in St. Johns County actually operates under the same captain as the youth resource deputies with the school district. We offer boxing, cheer, flag football, dance, lacrosse and baseball. I invite the community to get involved with this league.

Also, we have our Explorer program for those youth who might be interested in a career in law enforcement. We have 50 kids right now and a waiting list. They meet every Monday night and have uniforms and rank structure. This is a great recruiting tool as these kids can eventually become deputy sheriffs.

**Q: What is the best way for our readers to contact you with any questions or suggestions about this article?**

**A:** They can email me at sheriff@sjso.org or call me at (904) 824-8304. Also, our website, www.sjso.org has a wealth of resources, from alarm registration to Crime Stoppers to our Neighbors app.



with St. Johns County Commissioner Jeremiah Blocker, District 4

**Q: Can you give your thoughts on the FEMA berm that will be coming to Ponte Vedra area beaches soon?**

**A:** This berm will act as a barrier, a temporary protective measure, and impact northern Ponte Vedra Beach. This emergency berm project will require some closures of Mickler's Beach for access during the week, but it will be open on weekends when the project begins in September. I'm excited for this because not only is there cost sharing with the federal government paying for the vast majority, but also because it will benefit the area and the county.

County Fire and Rescue to make sure our beaches have adequate coverage this summer for public safety. We have all been beefing up our efforts.

Also, we celebrated the 200th anniversary of St. Johns County in July. St. Johns County and Escambia County in the panhandle are the two oldest counties in the state. This is an important time to recognize the unique history of St. Johns County and all the men and women of different backgrounds and cultures who have helped make this a great place to live.

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

**A:** Still on the topic of the beach, we have been working with the St. Johns County Sheriff's Office and St. Johns

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

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

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**www.floridanewsline.com**



**with St. Johns County Supervisor of Elections Vicky Oakes**

**Q: Several months removed from last November's election, can you share some analysis and statistics from St. Johns County?**

**A:** The first thing that struck me was that so many voters cast ballots ahead of Election Day — only 15 percent of our voters went to the polls on Election Day to cast their ballots. We had a very smooth Election Day even though eight precincts still had more than 1,000 voters processed. We had the third highest voter turnout in the state with 85 percent of our registered voters casting ballots.

**Q: Do you have a breakdown of how votes were cast?**

**A:** Via Vote by Mail, we had 74,972 ballots requested and mailed to voters; 57,676 ballots were voted and returned to us (33 percent of the total). We had 13 days of Early Voting in 10 locations in the county; 338 poll workers were needed and 93,261 voters cast ballots (52 percent of the total). On Election Day, 39 polling locations with 438 poll workers were in place so that 26,730 voters could cast ballots (15 percent of the total).

**Q: Why do you think voting in St. Johns County went so well, even in the midst of the pandemic?**

**A:** There are a number of reasons that I think Florida got it right: Florida law allows a Vote By Mail

ballot to be mailed to a voter upon request;

Florida law allows processing of Vote by Mail ballots prior to Election Day. Our Canvassing Board, which counts these ballots, began meeting weekly or sometimes twice a week on Oct. 9;

We require signature verification on every Vote By Mail ballot;

Early voting was very convenient;

Voter ID is required when voting in person;

We utilize ePollbooks, which makes an automatic update in a voter's record when a ballot is cast (either by mail or in person). This prevents a voter from voting twice; Party poll watchers are allowed to observe the conduct of the election at the precincts during Early Voting and Election Day;

Our Canvassing Board processes are open to the public; anyone can attend and observe our processes;

Our elections are open and transparent — and have been for years.

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

**A:** Readers can email me at [voakes@votesjc.com](mailto:voakes@votesjc.com) or call me at (904) 823-2238. Our website, [www.votesjc.com](http://www.votesjc.com) also has a wealth of information.



**Q&A with St. Johns County Clerk of Circuit Court and Comptroller Brandon Patty**

**Q: When will it be possible to get passports at our county annexes in northern St. Johns County again?**

**A:** Passport application services at the Julington Creek Annex (725 Flora Branch Blvd.) and Ponte Vedra Annex (151 Sawgrass Corners Drive) resumed on Monday, July 19, 2021. The annexes are open for processing passport applications by appointment only, which are available between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. on weekdays. Passport applicants are encouraged to call (904) 819-3632 to schedule an appointment and verify which application must be completed before coming to the clerk's office annex.

**Q: Can you give an update on the redaction rule changes in civil cases?**

**A:** Based on a recent Florida Supreme Court amendment to Florida Rule of Judicial Administration 2.420 regarding access to court records, "the clerk shall not be required to identify and designate information as confidential," in circuit civil, county civil, and small claims court documents. Filers are now responsible for ensuring any confidential information contained in court records are appropriately identified for redaction. This only applies to small claims, county civil, and most circuit court civil cases.

**Q: Do you have anything else to share?**

**A:** Our office has published the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) for fiscal year 2020. The Comprehensive Annual Financial Report is an in-depth report that includes all county financial information such as statements, assets, revenues, expenses, and tax collections. Also, for the first time ever, St. Johns County published a Popular Annual Financial Report (PAFR), which summarizes the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (which is more than 400 pages) and explains the county's finances in layman's terms. Both reports are accessible on our website, [stjohnsclerk.com](http://stjohnsclerk.com).

**Q: What is the best way for our readers to contact you or your office?**

**A:** A lot of questions can be answered by visiting our website, [www.stjohnsclerk.com](http://www.stjohnsclerk.com), which is most commonly used to pay traffic citations or search court records. A little known fact is that it also has an option to report government fraud or abuse, as the clerk's office is a government fraud/waste/abuse auditor. People can also call our main office at (904) 819-3600.



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# August

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

### Community Calendar

**The Jacksonville Camera Club** will feature Michael Cenci, a wildlife and nature photographer, at its meeting on Wednesday, Aug. 4. Another meeting on Aug. 18 will feature the results of the second triannual print competition. There will be a social hour prior to each 7 p.m. meeting. The August outing will be held at Little Talbot Island's Black Rock Beach on Aug. 14. Visit [jax.jaxcameraclub.com](http://jax.jaxcameraclub.com) for more information and meeting location updates.

**Christ Church Creative Academy** presents "A Wrinkle In Time" on Aug. 5, 6, and 7 at 8 p.m. in the courtyard at Christ Episcopal Church, 400 San Juan Drive. The production is directed by Jason Collins and written by Morgan Gould, from the book by Madeleine L'Engle. All performances are open to the public. Thursday includes an opening night premiere party; tickets cost \$40. RSVP to [Barbiekroberts@gmail.com](mailto:Barbiekroberts@gmail.com), pay at the door. Friday and Saturday performances are \$20, pay at the door (cash or credit). Visit [christepiscopalchurch.org](http://christepiscopalchurch.org) for more information.

**GTM Research Reserve** will host a guided exploration hike on Saturday, Aug. 7 from 9 a.m. – 11 a.m. Meet at the GTM Research Reserve Trailhead Pavilion (west of Guana Dam), 505 Guana River Road. Wear comfortable, closed-toe shoes. The event is free but parking is \$3 per vehicle. Visit [gtmnerr.org](http://gtmnerr.org) for more

information and to register.

**Nocatee** announces the following events, open to the public: Sounds of Summer Music Series on Saturday, Aug. 7 from 6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. at Nocatee Station Field; Farmers Market on Saturday, Aug. 21 from 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. at Nocatee Station Field; and Food Truck Fridays on Aug. 13 and Aug. 27 from 6 p.m. – 9 p.m. at Nocatee Station Field. Visit [www.nocatee.com/events](http://www.nocatee.com/events) for more information.

**The Ponte Vedra Democratic Club** will host a complimentary summer social at Pusser's Bar and Grill, upstairs terrace, in Ponte Vedra Beach on Saturday, Aug. 7 from 6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. Email [janetkary@gmail.com](mailto:janetkary@gmail.com) for more information about the club. To RSVP for this free event, register at <https://bit.ly/3em6SVq>.

Northeast Florida AHEC will host a free **diabetes empowerment exercise program** via an online live webinar for people 60 years and older on Mondays, Aug. 9 – Sept. 20, from 9 a.m. – 11 a.m. (excluding Labor Day). Attendees will learn how to develop better nutrition and exercise goals. Call Northeast Florida AHEC at (904) 482-0189 or (877) 784-8486 to register.

**The St. Johns County Civic Roundtable** will meet on Monday, Aug. 9 at 12 p.m. and feature Mike McCabe, Esq., who will present an

educational discussion on homeowner associations. This meeting will be via Zoom video conferencing. Email [info@sjcroundtable.org](mailto:info@sjcroundtable.org) to register for the meeting or for more information about the St. Johns County Civic Roundtable.

**First Coast Florida Lifestyles Newcomers Recreation Card Club** will host board games (Rummikub or suggestions) at Kookaburra Coffee in St. Augustine on Sunday, Aug. 22. Arrival is at 2:15 p.m. and games will be played beginning at 2:30 p.m. Masks must be worn while playing and one item 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.

Northeast Florida AHEC announces a free **Tools to Quit Tobacco Class**, which includes free nicotine patches, gum or lozenges on Tuesday, August 24, from 10 a.m. – 12 p.m. at Flagler Health and Wellness Center, 120 Health Park Blvd. in St. Augustine. Call (904) 482-0189 for more information or to sign up.

**The Ponte Vedra Beaches Coalition** will meet on Aug. 30 from 10 a.m. – 12 p.m. at the Ponte Vedra Beach Branch Library. Visit [www.pvbcoalition.org](http://www.pvbcoalition.org) for more information.

## State Rep. Cyndi Stevenson to host mobile office hours

By NewsLine Staff  
[mail@floridanewsline.com](mailto:mail@floridanewsline.com)

For the convenience of residents of District 17, State Representative Cyndi Stevenson will host "Mobile Office Hours" throughout House District 17 during the month of August:

Aug. 18, 2021 from 10 a.m. – 12 p.m. at the Ponte Vedra Branch Public Library (101 Library Blvd., Ponte Vedra Beach, FL 32082)

Aug. 19, 2021 from 10 a.m. – 12 p.m. at the Bartram Trail Library Branch (60 Davis Pond Blvd., Fruit Cove, FL 32259)

Aug. 23, 2021 from 10 a.m. – 12 p.m. at the St. Johns County Convention Center at World Golf Village (500 South Legacy Trail, St. Augustine FL 32092)

Aug. 24, 2021 from 10 a.m. – 12 p.m. at the Anastasia Library Branch (124 Sea Grove Main St., St. Augustine Beach, FL 32080)

Aug. 25, 2021 from 10 a.m. – 12 p.m. at the St. Johns County Main Library Branch (1960 N. Ponce De Leon Blvd., St. Augustine, FL 32084)

To set an appointment, contact Frank DiMarco at [frank.dimarco@myfloridahouse.gov](mailto:frank.dimarco@myfloridahouse.gov). Presently, Rep. Stevenson and her staff are preparing for the 2021 – 2022 Legislative Session; Committee weeks begin the week of Sept. 20.

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# ST. JOHNS Business Monthly

## Market Insight



### "Bullet Bob" Hayes: The World's Fastest Human

By Scott Grant  
ScottGrant@StJohnsBusinessMonthly.com

As the Olympic games return to Tokyo for the second time this summer, it is worth remembering that the first time the games were held in Tokyo, the star of the show was Robert Lee Hayes of Jacksonville, better known as "Bullet Bob," the world's fastest human.

In 1964, before cheering multitudes, Hayes ran away from the competition twice, to win gold medals in the 100 meters and the 4x100 meter relay. Hayes is the greatest athlete Jacksonville has ever produced and the only person in history to win an Olympic gold medal and a Super Bowl ring.

Hayes thought of himself as a football player who just happened to be very, very fast. After graduating high school, he enrolled at Florida A&M in Tallahassee to play football for legendary Rattlers coach Jake Gaithers. Gaithers, it was reported, liked his players "mobile, agile, and hostile."

The Tokyo games were postponed that year until October, the middle of football season. The Rattlers needed Hayes. Coach Gaithers needed Hayes. President Lyndon B. Johnson was concerned that Hayes might get hurt playing football and be unavailable for the Olympics. He phoned Coach Gaithers to express his concern.

LBJ needn't have worried. Bob Hayes was ready. He won his first gold medal in the 100 meters. Despite protests, he ran in the inside lane. That did not stop him. Joe Frazier, the gold medal winning boxer, who would go on to battle Muhammad Ali, lost one of Hayes' track shoes shortly before the finals. That did not stop him either.

Bob Hayes literally ran away from the field and set two Olympic records in the process. His time of 10 seconds flat was a record at the time and remains the fastest time ever run on a cinder track. He also won that race by the largest margin of victory ... ever.

Coach Gaithers once proclaimed Bob Hayes as "the fastest man who ever

lived." He might be right. In the finals of the men's 4x100 relay, Team USA fell behind. When Bullet Bob got the baton, the US was in fifth place. The French were leading. Hayes turned in a heart-stopping 8.6 second final leg to seize the gold. That time is still a record. The LA Times called it "the most astonishing sprint of all time."

After the Olympics were over, Hayes returned to A&M and finished the football season. The Rattlers won their second straight Orange Blossom Classic. That bowl game, held annually in Miami, was considered the Negro National Championship. He went on to be one of the first blacks in the Senior Bowl in January of the next year. Before the game, a New York Times headline announced, "North Pins Hopes on Halting Hayes," adding "Namath also poses problem." The game ended in a 7-7 tie. The South moved the ball but could not score. Late in the game, Hayes caught a 53-yard touchdown pass from Joe Namath that evened the score.

Almost a year earlier, the Dallas Cowboys had invested two "futures picks" in future stars Bob Hayes and Roger Staubach. Hayes paid off immediately. The fastest human on earth led the NFL in touchdown catches each of his first two seasons. Bullet Bob Hayes revolutionized NFL defenses. No one could cover him. He was too fast. Opponents invented zone coverages designed to contain Hayes.

Staubach took a little longer to pay off for the Cowboys. He had to serve three years in the Navy first — but when he and Hayes got together, they made history. Staubach was the star, but Hayes was still an important player when Dallas won its first Super Bowl in January 1972.

*Scott A. Grant is a local columnist, author, speaker, and historian. By day he is a fiduciary asset manager and president of Standfast Asset Management. He welcomes your comments or questions at scottg@standfastic.com.*

## Hurricane preparedness tips for businesses

By Marge Cirillo  
mail@floridanewsline.com

As small businesses across the country advance along their reopening journeys, owners are hyper-focused on getting customers back through their doors, dividing their attention between marketing to repeat patrons and appealing to prospects. But with so many other areas of business to focus on to get their spaces fully functional — from managing daily operations, to ensuring their businesses are following updated safety and sanitation protocols — recent Tropical Storm Elsa showed us that business owners need a disaster plan strategy that's as efficient as it is informative.

Given everything else owners are working on to get their businesses back on their feet, developing a disaster strategy may sound like a big undertaking, but it's an essential step for small businesses — and one that can set them up for a future of success. I researched some plans and I think I found one that looks like it could be very helpful in any situation. It's from the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health and hope you complete it (visit <https://tinyurl.com/fz3ynvb>)

The Florida Small Business Development Center (FSBDC) provides assistance with marketing and business plans for small businesses in addition to financials and business continuity. Here are some hurricane preparedness tips for businesses:

**Develop a Comprehensive Plan.** An effective hurricane survival plan should be written down and reviewed annually. This plan should address policies and procedures for employee safety regarding hurricanes, business continuity and contingency plans in the face of damage to the business's facilities and policies for dealing with employees, customers and vendors.

Some of the key elements of an effective plan are:

- Conditions that will activate the plan
- Chain of command
- Emergency functions and who will perform them
- Specific evacuation procedures, including routes and exits
- Procedures for accounting for personnel, customers and visitors
- Equipment for personnel

### Determine procedures and individual crisis management responsibilities.

Identify which personnel are required to be on-site in the days surrounding a hurricane, as well as who is essential to business function, whether required on-site or not. Be sure to communicate areas of responsibility for key staff and how to perform their emergency-response duties effectively.

**Coordinate with others.** Understand the hurricane response plans of other businesses in your area as well as police, fire department, hospitals, and utility companies. It is also helpful to communicate with suppliers, shippers, and others with whom you regularly do business.

**Prepare employees.** Communicate your hurricane plan with all your staff; obtain all emergency contact numbers for employees and ensure understanding of roles, responsibilities and expectations for every employee.

Review emergency plans annually. Assess changes in your business or to the community that may affect your hurricane response plan and make the necessary changes each year.

*Marge Cirillo is the Florida Small Business Development Center consultant for St. Johns County. She can be reached at [m.cirillo@unf.edu](mailto:m.cirillo@unf.edu) or (904) 209-1295.*

## We are pleased to announce Chris Thompson has joined Ameriprise Financial.



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

# ST. JOHNS Business Monthly



Call or email Linda Gay  
[Linda@FloridaNewsLine.com](mailto:Linda@FloridaNewsLine.com)  
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# Consignment boutique celebrates grand opening



Photo by Martie Thompson

Hudson & Grace, an upscale children's consignment store located in Panther Plaza near Nease High School, held a ribbon cutting ceremony on Friday, June 25 as part of a grand opening celebration. The store is the brainchild of owners Kellyann and Tommy Costanzo, who saw the need for such a store in the area. Items are all pre-owned and sizes range from infant to size 14. The store also offers shoes, books, games, and baby gear in addition to clothes. Unique features inside the store include coffee and candy bars — and a child-sized library, where children may read or play while parents shop. Each quarter, the Costanzos will select local families to assist with the 10 percent of all sales that they set aside in a special fund. The Costanzos are committed to being a part of the community and this is their way of giving back



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# North Florida Junior Golf Foundation announces 2021 scholarship recipients

By NewsLine Staff  
mail@floridanewsline.com

The North Florida Junior Golf Foundation, Northeast Florida's premier junior golf tour, has announced the 2021 recipients of its annual college scholarship awards — \$24,000 in scholarship funds have been awarded to five female junior golfers and junior golf tour members who have upheld the values of the foundation and demonstrated a high level of academic achievement and a strong commitment to community involvement.

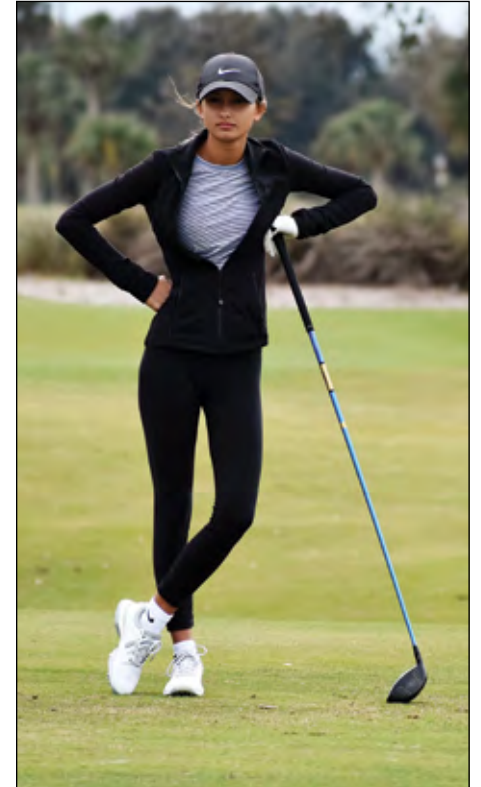
Each year, the North Florida Junior Golf Foundation provides scholarships to deserving young men and women who display outstanding character and devotion to furthering their education. Since 2006, the foundation has presented more than \$180,000 in scholarships and has raised nearly \$300,000 for future foundation and junior golf scholarships. Applicants are evaluated based on the following criteria: academic performance, extracurricular activities, personal statements, applicant interview, North Florida Junior Golf Foundation activity, community involvement and financial need.

The 2021 scholarship recipients from St. Johns County are as follows:

**Bill Straub Sr. Scholarship: Kenzie Heba (\$10,000)** Heba, of St. Augustine, graduated from Bartram Trail High School with a 3.83 GPA and will attend the University of West Florida, where she will play on the women's golf team and plans to study nursing. Heba joined North Florida Junior Golf Foundation in 2017 and competed in 45 events.

**NFJGF Scholarship: Thanya Arasu (\$8,000)** Arasu, of St. Johns, graduated from Nease High School with a 3.52 GPA and will attend Ohio University, where she will play on the women's golf team and plans to study biological science with hopes of becoming a physician. Arasu joined North Florida Junior Golf Foundation in 2018 and played in 52 events.

**Northern Chapter PGA Scholarship: Ashley Huffman (\$2,000)** Huffman, of Ponte Vedra Beach, graduated from St. Johns Virtual School with a 3.94 GPA and will attend Jacksonville University, where she will play on the women's golf team and plans to study marketing.



Photos courtesy North Florida Junior Golf Foundation  
Kenzie Heba



Marissa Cardenas

Huffman joined North Florida Junior Golf Foundation in 2018 and competed in 37 events.

**Henry Tuten Gator Bowl Pro-Am Scholarship: Marissa Cardenas (\$2,000)** Cardenas, of St. Augustine, graduated from Nease High School with a 3.85 GPA and will attend Florida Southern College, where she will play on the women's golf team and plans to study graphic design and marketing. Cardenas joined North Florida Junior Golf Foundation in 2015 and competed in 84 events.

Visit <https://nfjg.org/scholarships/> for more information.



Thanya Arasu

# Life

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## Get to Know ...

By Tiffany Merlo Phelps  
mail@floridanewline.com

### Donna Guzzo

Donna Guzzo has spent the last 30 years working in the non-profit sector, fueled by the desire to help people and to be around others who share her life philosophy. “To me, it is the donors. Being around people who want to do something good is what attracts me to this industry. It is a donor-driven philosophy — they have skin in the game,” said Guzzo. Becoming the president and executive director of The Cultural Center at Ponte Vedra Beach three-and-a-half years ago, Guzzo found herself surrounded by inspiration and an opportunity. “I feel so fulfilled in this position. I am not an artist, but I have always loved art. I am applying my business side to this small non-profit to bring it to the next level,” she said, adding that she loves to fundraise. In the process, Guzzo said she has learned to really “feel” the art, something she accomplished by spending time in the Cultural Center’s galleries early in the morning just to experience the art alone and to hear the artists’ message more clearly. That has shaped her perspective on art more than anything else, and it is a habit that she continues at two new locations that the Cultural Center now calls home: Jacksonville Beach (in the Trader Joe’s shopping complex) and Nocatee (The Link). In January, the Cultural Center opened its new headquarters in Jacksonville Beach as a way to reach more artists, students and art lovers in Northeast Florida. The Nocatee location made sense, she said,



Photo courtesy Donna Guzzo  
Donna Guzzo

because Nocatee residents were responsible for a large percentage of activity at the former Ponte Vedra Beach location.

**Q: What is your mission for The Cultural Center at Ponte Vedra Beach now that you have studios in both in Jacksonville Beach and Nocatee?**

**A:** I can only see growth and success at both locations. By having a presence in both Duval and St. Johns County, I can apply for grants in both places which means more art programming and outreach programs such as artist openings, music workshops, visual arts classes (“the bread and butter of the cultural center”) and camps for children. The Sound Connections Music Therapy program for children with special needs has expanded from four St. Johns County schools to six, including two Title 1 schools. It is provided at no cost to the school district or parents, and three nationally-board certified music therapists use music experiences to help children reach educational goals. The expansion is supported by the Delores Barr Weaver Legacy Fund and The Community Foundation of Northeast Florida.

**Q: Where did you grow up?**

**A:** I grew up in Miami with most of my family members being teachers and administrators. My mother was always helping in the community, and I always went with her. That passion grew early on to help others.

**Q: Explain the Kick Start program.**

**A:** The Kick Start after school visual arts program kicked off at the beginning of the school year at Palm Valley Academy with two classes and at Osceola Elementary, a Title 1 school in the southern part of St. Johns County. We are going into our second year with Kick Start, and it fits with our mission to bring art into the lives of young people. The kids have loved this program, and they have a great relationship and communication with their art teachers.

**Q: What is your educational and work background?**

**A:** I am a Certified Nonprofit Executive, Certified Development Executive and Certified Nonprofit Consultant. I am the founder, president and executive director in charge of operations for the Language Exploration Enrichment, established in 2003 in the St. Johns County School District. This has been an adjunct position all these years.

**Q: What saying are you known for at work?**

**A:** “Success is imminent.” This came to pass when I first took over as executive director as we went through some growing pains. No matter how difficult the task was or what we were facing, I would always say that success is imminent. And it was. I like to get straight to the point. Share your dream, and tell me your plan to get there. Give me your complaint, and now let’s solve the issue.

*[Author’s Note: For more information about The Cultural Center at Ponte Vedra Beach, email dguzzo@ccpvb.org.]*

**Get to Know ...**

Interested in being featured? Email Martie Thompson at [editor@FloridaNewsLine.com](mailto:editor@FloridaNewsLine.com)

**Birthday** cont. from pg. 1

in Brooklyn, NY. She was married to her husband Ward for 61 years before he died while living at Vicar’s Landing. Bobbie West still lives in her apartment in independent living and she is well known in the Vicar’s community as everyone’s role model.

West became a newspaperwoman at the age of 16 and now serves as a writer for the Vicar’s Voice, a newsletter written twice a month for members and wait list members. She has served on numerous Vicar’s Landing Member Association committees. She still writes and directs plays which are performed in the Vicar’s Landing Auditorium. She swims most days and is a major contributor to Vicar’s Landing weekly Legacy Writers’ class. She loves to dance, but only to fast music. West is also known for wearing high heels in the dining room and a number of other things that make her so special. She is a caring individual who visits the sick in the community’s health center.

The celebration reception in Vicar’s Landing’s auditorium was filled to a capacity crowd of members who enjoyed a toast of champagne to this special lady and all she has meant to those who live there. A favorite local pianist and entertainer, Gene Nordanm, entertained the audience.

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# Church to host relationship workshops

By NewsLine Staff  
mail@floridanewsline.com

Access Church has scheduled a series of workshops intended to help improve dating and marriage relationships — as well as how to find the right person. The six-week series, which begins Aug. 15, is called “Love, Dates and Heartbreaks” and will feature the church’s teaching pastor, Andy Stanley. Topics to be covered over six Sunday mornings include:

- Seeking and becoming the right

- person.
  - Moving from relationship reality to relationship dreams.
  - Five rules for dating.
  - Learning from relationship mistakes.
  - Handling heartbreak.
- “At Access Church, we are for you and your relationships because we believe God is for you, regardless of your story. This is a place where you can belong before you believe,” said Lead Pastor Rich Barrett. “Instead of telling you what to think, we want to help you and your whole family

make friends, grow in faith, and live with purpose.”  
Besides helpful, practical teaching and great music for adults, the church also offers amazing environments for kids and teens, who will enjoy fun time with friends and leaders who love them while parents enjoy free coffee and the one-hour service.  
Jenny Felix, mother of five children, said, “We love our church! The message is always incredible, the music is awesome,

they are the most welcoming bunch of people, and my kids beg to go every Sunday.”  
With the start of a new school year, there’s no better time to build church into the family routine. Access Church meets in person every Sunday at Liberty Pines Academy. Each Sunday there are two opportunities to join in: 9 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. Attendees should be sure to stop by the #ForStJohns table for free t-shirts, mugs, and stickers.

# Rotary Club members help keep Nocatee clean

By NewsLine Staff  
mail@floridanewsline.com

About 10 people took part in a litter pickup event sponsored by the Rotary Club of Ponte Vedra in Nocatee on Saturday, July 17. Under the tag line “Keeping Nocatee Looking Sharp,” local Ponte Vedra Rotarians, their family members and a Teen Achiever from the Nocatee Y hauled away an estimated 10 bags of litter from the Crosswater Parkway between the Town Center and Conservation Trail.

The group gathered at the Nocatee Welcome Center at 8 a.m. where they were given safety vests and supplies by David Ray, Nocatee Community Manager. They then spread out in teams along one of

Nocatee’s main thoroughfares collecting whatever trash they found along the way.

Event organizer Denny Baldwin, Community Service Chair of the Rotary Club of Ponte Vedra, said his club organized the event as a way to help the local community.

“Nocatee is a beautiful place that our members call home,” Baldwin said. “This community does a fabulous job of picking up after itself, but with so many people making Nocatee home, it’s inevitable that some litter is going to accumulate along such a busy road.”

Baldwin said one of the Rotary Club’s guiding principles is “Service Above Self.” A few weeks ago, Ray spoke to the Rotary

Club of Ponte Vedra during one of its regular Tuesday morning meetings. That’s when Baldwin approached him about the

possibility of doing a service project for Nocatee. The two men settled on the litter pickup event.



Photo courtesy  
Ponte Vedra Rotary volunteers at the litter pickup event

## Council on Aging announces 18th annual Champions for Elders golf tournament

By NewsLine Staff  
mail@floridanewsline.com

Council on Aging (COA) will host the 18th annual Champions for Elders golf tournament at Slammer and Squire in World Golf Village on Monday, Aug. 16, 2021. The local nonprofit organization has been serving seniors and caregivers in St. Johns County for the past 48 years, and the golf tournament is its largest fundraiser of the year. Sponsors are invited to bring a team of four to enjoy a day of golf followed by a celebratory luncheon, or participate as a sponsor off the course and support the important work COA does every day for elders and caregivers.

Council on Aging provides an array of services for area seniors including Meals on Wheels, independent living services, case management, memory care, adult day care, paratransit transportation and prescription assistance. The organization also offers opportunities for socialization and lifelong learning at their six senior centers located throughout the county. In addition, COA offers programs to support the needs of local caregivers, providing counseling, education, support groups and respite care. As a



Photo courtesy Council on Aging  
The Red Harvest Management/VanRysdam Team, one of the participating teams at the 2020 COA Champions for Elders Golf Tournament Fundraiser.

nonprofit, 501(c)(3) organization, COA relies upon donations to support its work.

Participating team sponsorships are available with a \$2,500 donation. Event sponsorships are available starting at a donation of \$250, and include signage and publicity during the event. For sponsorship and registration information, contact COA’s Sandy Hollett at shollett@coasjc.org or (904) 209-3697. Visit [www.coasjc.org](http://www.coasjc.org) or call (904) 209-3700 for more information.

## Rotary Club of Palm Valley announces annual scholarship winner

By Paula Roderick  
mail@floridanewsline.com

Members of the Rotary Club of Palm Valley recently met at Nona Blue Restaurant in Sawgrass Center to celebrate the memory of their past president, Jeff Hart, and to present a scholarship in his honor to a local high school student. This year, that honor went to Nease High School senior, Shivam Shah.

The Jeff Hart Memorial Service Above Self Scholarship program is open to juniors and seniors at Nease and Ponte Vedra high schools. It recognizes the applicant who best represents the Rotary International motto of “Service Above Self” and those qualities of service which Hart exemplified in his own life. A founding member and past president of the Rotary Club of Ponte Vedra Beach Sunset (now Palm Valley), Hart dedicated his life to his family, the local and international communities, his faith, and our nation.

This year, despite the impact of the pandemic, student Service Above Self Scholar-

ship applicants still found many creative ways to continue to serve our community and beyond our shores. The 2021 winner, Shivam Shah, founded and directed two new clubs at Nease High School to respond to the needs he saw. Working together with local charity A Hope, Shah started I-Impact and under his direction, he and his team raised more than \$30,000 for youth education and \$10,000 for the Pace Center. Some of the youth education funds are destined for computer labs in India. Again under Shah’s leadership, his organization raised funds to provide more than 22,000 masks and 2,500 hygiene kits, as well as 440 food kits for needy children in India. He also founded and directed Youth in Business, a three-week summer camp to teach students business concepts, which now has more than 20 chapters.

These, together with many other service contributions, coupled with his academic success as an IB student, and devotion to his family, were outstanding reasons to select Shivam Shah as the recipient of the Jeff Hart Service Above Self Scholarship for 2021.



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# Travel

## Discovering Spokane and the Palouse

By Debi Lander  
mail@floridanewsline.com

The state of Washington lies opposite from Florida on the map, much too far to drive. So, I flew some 3,000 miles to land in Spokane. The city sits near the state's eastern border with Idaho. I found a sparkling downtown: streets without trash, graffiti, and no homeless people.

Riverfront Park, the site of the 1974 World's Fair, sat directly across my hotel. The following day, I took to the meandering walkways within the 100-acre site. I couldn't help but run into the largest Radio Flyer red wagon in the world. I felt like I'd been dropped into the movie set of "Honey I Shrunk the Kids." Built in 1989 as part of the "Centennial Celebration of Children," the vintage toy replica stands 12 feet tall. The mammoth wagon can fit 300 people, and the handle provides a fun way to slide down to the ground.

The sound of thundering water pulled me along, and I soon found Spokane Falls. It's the most significant urban waterfall in the country. The double-tiered falls rest next to a natural amphitheater that's enveloped by a metal structure — rigging that looks like an oversized spider web. Behind it, a round glass-enclosed building featured a vintage carousel. And I spied a gondola overhead, but it wasn't running that morning.

The real reason behind my trip was to see a region called the Palouse, about 75 miles east. As I approached, I began to understand why the area attracts so many photographers. The landscape features large round and rolling hills, somewhat like Tuscany, but the hills are not as steep and with very few trees. According to a BBC article, my friend and Seattle resident Amanda Castleman wrote, "The Palouse was formed over a period of 2,500 years, when massive ice dams shattered in Montana, releasing 2,000 ft-high surges towards the Pacific. The 65 mph torrents gouged lakes and canyons and exposed ancient lava formations. These stark and stunning swaths — known as the Channeled Scablands — still pierce the agricultural idyll of the Palouse today.

"The Ice Age floods also pooled fine, fertile dirt — sometimes 200ft deep — that the wind eventually swept into dunes."

Wheat farms covered the hills, the crop bright green and low to the ground in mid-June. The Palouse produces up to 100 bushels per acre or 125 million

bushels a year — twice the national average. Occasionally, vibrant, almost neon fields of golden canola blossoms intersect. The seeds are crushed to produce canola oil.

Steptoe Butte, a state park, is the highest



Photos courtesy Debi Lander  
Palouse Falls close up.



Sunset from Steptoe Butte.

spot in the area at 3,612 feet. The butte affords an ideal location for taking sunrise and sunset photos, as you can easily walk around the 360-degree summit. The photographer's problem, during summer, comes from the timing of those events. Sunrise occurs around 4:30 a.m., and sunset at about 8:30 p.m., making for long days.

One evening I ventured to Palouse Falls, about a two-hour drive, on two-lane, curvy roads. In the middle of nowhere, the falls dramatically shoot out of a canyon wall and drop 180 feet. An underground river creates a dramatic setting. Unfortunately, the sunset looked blah, but the falls deserve a visit.

In the Palouse, old and new barns, grain elevators, and tiny towns dot the countryside, providing more rural photo options. If you are into photography or geology, the Palouse is a must-see; otherwise, a drive through this unique landscape is all you'll need.

Visit [www.bylandersea.com](http://www.bylandersea.com) to read more of local travel writer Debi Lander's stories and travel tips.

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**John**, Resident at  
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**JOHN LEE HAINES**  
John Lee Haines, formerly of Rockport, Ind., passed on December 21, 2020 at his home in Orlando, Fla., surrounded by his loving family after losing his battle with cancer. He was preceded in death by his mother Marjorie K. Haines, who passed in 1982 and his father John W. Haines who passed in 1948. He was a loving husband and father. His survivors include his wife of 36 years, Ann Carter Haines; his brother, David Haines (Dinah), of Louisville, Ind.; six children: Lee Ann Dalton of Naples, Fla.; Mark Petrus (Callen) of Havana, Fla.; John D. Murphy (Kim) of Orlando, Fla.; Matthew Petrus (Angela) of Coral Springs, Fla.; Tim Petrus of Jacksonville, Fla.; Jeremy Petrus (Josh), of Ft. Lauderdale, Fla.; 10 grandchildren and 18 great grandchildren. He graduated from Rockport High School 1958 and was later a partner in H&B Customs (stands for Haines & Rybicki), a local car repair and customization facility. A memorial is planned at a later date in his hometown of Rockport and following his wishes place on the banks of the Ohio River, which he loved.



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## Grand opening celebrated at the link



Sheriff Rob Hardwick, Melissa Corbin Nelson, Raghu Misra and Donna Guzzo.



the link.

On July 15, the link in Nocatee celebrated its grand opening. the link is a venue where members come to Learn-Play-Think-Do; it anchors residents and community life and fosters and facilitates creative and fulfilling interactions of thought, productivity, and human development by providing solutions and space for people to thrive holistically.



Art piece from Ocean Sole.

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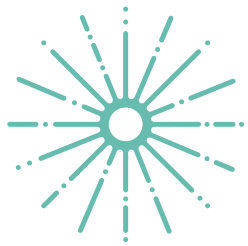


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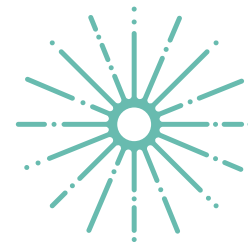


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