

THE FIRST  THE ONLY

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Magazine[®]



Peter W. Busch and
Ashley Albers are

**BREWING
CHRISTMAS JOY**



The Hope for Families Center provides a safe place for homeless families to rebuild their lives and learn to create a sustainable future for themselves and their children.

PHILANTHROPY

Gift Exchange

IT'S THE PERFECT TIME OF YEAR TO EXPLORE OUR GIVING OPTIONS ... AND REAP THE REWARDS



BY JEFFREY R. PICKERING

It's the holiday season, and I am fairly certain there is one topic that is likely on many people's minds. It's been on mine. The topic? Gifts. Some of us manage the process of gift-giving by making a list. Others wing it.

The former usually brings what consulting firm McKinsey & Company describes as

"customer delight." This has the power to elevate a relationship and amplify loyalty. Think Ritz-Carlton luxury hotels and resorts.

The latter, however, is likely to result in something equivalent to the sleeping accommodation offered to Molly Ringwald's character in the 1984 coming-of-age comedy

Sixteen Candles when her bedroom is overtaken by visiting grandparents and their Chinese exchange student. "Sofa city, sweetheart."

As a father and husband, I have experienced both outcomes in my many years of gift-giving. Delight when I do my homework, plan ahead, and get it right. Disappointment

INDIAN RIVER INSIGHTS



The Hope for Families Center is undergoing a transformation that will double the amount of space for homeless families to find shelter.

when I don't.

Fortunately, when it comes to giving gifts to children or a spouse, there are plenty of opportunities to succeed. If I fall short, there is always next time.

When it comes to making gifts to charity, however, achieving a positive outcome is not always as simple as it seems. Mistakes can have unintended consequences for the nonprofit organization, for the eventual beneficiary of the charity's programs or services, and sometimes even for the donor.

In our community, there are several tools and resources available to help donors avoid mistakes and make the most

of their charitable giving. If you find yourself thinking about making a gift to charity as year-end approaches, one or more of the following suggestions might help make your giving experience more satisfying—even delightful.

For starters, you might consider using an online tool developed by Indian River Community Foundation to help donors find, learn about, and give to more than 100 local 501(c)3 nonprofit charitable organizations serving Vero Beach and the surrounding Indian River County communities. It can be found by visiting the Community Foundation's website (ircommunityfoundation.org) and clicking

**TREASURE COAST
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Can You Help?
StopHunger.org



Habitat for Humanity helps residents achieve homeownership with help from volunteers and their own hard work.

“Nonprofit Search.”

Here you will find information about each organization’s governance, management, finances, and programs. Combined with the annual print edition of *Vero Beach Magazine’s Time and Treasure: Guide to Better Giving*, the Nonprofit Search is a powerful tool that provides the peace of mind of knowing your gifts are going to causes that meet the highest standards for transparency, accountability, and, most important, results.

If you have lived here for more than a few years, it is likely that you already have your own list of charitable organizations that are important to you. Last year, there were more than 900 public charities to choose from, 200 of which earned more than \$50,000 in revenue and filed an IRS Form 990 as a tax return. With so many causes to choose from, however, sometimes it helps to have a broader understanding of the community overall and the needs of our residents.

This was the motivation behind a recent collaboration among the Corbett Foundation, Indian River Community Foundation, United Way of Indian River County, Indian

River County Hospital District, and the School District of Indian River County to publish the report “Community Needs Update in 2025.” The research methodology involved two perception surveys of a representative sample of the county’s population, along with a comparative data analysis using publicly available sources.

Following similar trends from 2020 and continuing with information from the community-needs database Indian River Indicators (indianriverindicators.org), the 2025 “Update” reported a growing, aging, and diversifying population in our county. Adults over age 65 continue to represent the fastest-growing age demographic, and Hispanics account for the fastest-growing race or ethnicity. The coastal resort and agricultural aspects of the community are still prevalent, but population growth and potential development are starting to influence these characteristics.

Overall, results in the 2025 “Update” indicate that two-thirds of the survey respondents believe the quality of life of Indian River County is headed in the right direction, including the quality of health care services. Despite relatively

Treasure Coast Community Health Oslo Pediatric Center

PROJECTED TO CARE FOR
15,000
CHILDREN
ANNUALLY

20,000 SF
BRAND NEW
PEDIATRIC
FACILITY

1,200 SF
PHYSICAL,
OCCUPATIONAL,
& SPEECH THERAPY
SPACE



*Join us in Building
Healthy Futures*



TREASURE COAST
COMMUNITY HEALTH
Foundation

INDIAN RIVER INSIGHTS

high satisfaction overall, however, specific areas of concern include the following:

- Health care access and affordability, especially among target subgroups such as lower-income families, women under 50, and parents with children living at home
- Quality childcare and early childhood education access and affordability
- Low wages and transportation to maintain well-paying jobs
- Housing affordability
- Public safety, specifically concerns of some residents about violent crime, and concerns overall about infrastructure related to traffic and pedestrian safety



Childcare Resources of Indian River works to provide affordable high-quality childcare and early education to local families.




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One outlier observation from the research included public emphasis that maternity services are a necessity for local public health and safety, and that public funds should be used for this purpose. Another was the contrast between the overwhelming success of an A-rated K-12 public school system that ranks fifth in Florida and is led by Florida's Superintendent of the Year, David Moore, and the one-third of the population still unsatisfied with its performance.

A conflicting comparison was also observed between the 19 percent decrease in the number of homeless people counted in the annual one-

day "point in time" survey and the near-20 percent year-over-year increase in the number of homeless students counted at some point during the school year.

So, if after making your own list and checking it twice, the topics of maternal and infant health, public education, or homelessness stand out, further investigation might be needed before making a charitable gift. Each is a clear example that solutions to community challenges are not as easy as they might seem on the surface.

The full findings of the 2025 "Update" indicate positive trends and hard-earned progress in our community's




Childcare Resources is currently undergoing a large expansion.

overall health and well-being, made possible in part by substantial contributions from government, private enterprises, and the nonprofit sector. Lower rates of infant mortality, more yearly doctor visits, improved reading and math proficiency, record

numbers of high school graduations, rising median household incomes (due mostly to high-paying jobs in finance, insurance, and medicine), and fewer reported incidents of domestic violence. These are all "wins" worth celebrating.

With almost half of our



Best selling author of 16 books including Presumed Innocent & Presumed Guilty and Co-Executive Producer of Apple TV+'s most-watched drama


Laura (Riding) Jackson
FOUNDATION

Presents

SCOTT TUROW

at our 3rd Annual Speaker & Fundraiser Event

JANUARY 13, 2026
THE EMERSON CENTER
VERO BEACH



HAPPY HOUR

Serve time with Scott! Limited to 25 guests

INCLUDES RECEPTION, SIGNED BOOK, & TICKETS TO MAIN EVENT

5:00pm - 6:00pm
\$250

MAIN EVENT: WE PUT SCOTT IN THE WITNESS BOX


and QUESTION HIM RELENTLESSLY!

OUR HOST & AUDIENCE JOINTLY ACT AS LEAD INVESTIGATORS

6:30pm - 8:00pm
\$60

BOOK SIGNING 8PM Bring your own or buy one on site

Tickets & More Info



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772-569-6718 scottturowevent

INDIAN RIVER INSIGHTS

county's households living either in poverty or one pay-check away from it, however, prosperity for all remains elusive. This is where the Apostle Paul's words to the Ephesians challenge those of us who find ourselves better off to do something ... well ... better.

"It is more blessed to give than to receive." (Acts 20:35)

This is the inspiration behind two Community Foundation clients who found themselves less interested in the public recognition associated with their charitable giving and more motivated by the good they could do.

Several years ago, this husband and wife followed the advice of their attorney

at Gould Cooksey Fennell to terminate their private foundation and begin giving anonymously through a donor-advised fund aptly named the Acts 20:35 Fund.

"When we set up our private foundation and started making grants," the wife says, "we found out that a private foundation is not so private."

"Giving anonymously is more in line with our values," the husband adds.

Since then, the couple has quietly distributed millions of dollars in grants to dozens of local charities helping to alleviate the suffering of vulnerable individuals and families in our community.

For them, they say, "It's



Youth Guidance Mentoring Academy trains teens and young adults in the construction trades and culinary fields.

what Jesus would do." They don't need to say much more, because their gifts say it all.

For me, sometimes Jesus can be a tough act to follow. Other inspiration helps.

"Let this be my annual

reminder," sings Craig Finn of the post-punk ensemble The Hold Steady. "That we can all be something better."

We try. We fail. We learn.

We give. We get more in return. 🙏

Advice for what matters most, when you need it most

Congratulations to **Morgan Petersen Wealth Management** for being named to the *Forbes* "Best-in-State Wealth Management Teams" 2025 list. Published on January 9, 2025. Rankings based on data as of March 31, 2024.



Morgan Petersen Wealth Management

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2025 *Forbes* "Best-in-State Wealth Management Teams" list. Opinions provided by SHOOK® Research, LLC and is based on in-person, virtual and telephone due-diligence meetings and a ranking algorithm that measure best practices, client retention, industry experience, credentials, compliance records, firm nominations, assets under management and Firm-generated revenue (investment performance is not a criterion because client objectives and risk tolerance vary). SHOOK's rankings are available for client evaluation only, are not indicative of future performance and do not represent any one client's experience and available for investor help in evaluating the right financial advisor and not an endorsement of the advisor. Compensation was not received from anyone for the rankings study. Past performance does not guarantee future results. Details available at the SHOOK Research website. SHOOK is a registered trademark of SHOOK Research, LLC.

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