

METRO



City Council member Terrance Freeman, at left, takes the oath of office in June 2021 to become council vice president with his wife, Rachel, and his daughters at his side. Freeman became council president the following year. He announced Thursday he will undergo treatment for prostate cancer.

BOB SELF/FLORIDA TIMES-UNION

Freeman faces cancer treatment, 'thankful it was caught early'

Council member: Men should get examined

David Bauerlein
Jacksonville Florida Times-Union
USA TODAY NETWORK

Jacksonville City Council member Terrance Freeman's announcement he will undergo treatment for prostate cancer puts a spotlight on the importance of early detection and points out the higher toll that prostate cancer takes on Black men.

Freeman, who is one of six Black council members, said Thursday he will

start treatment next week and expects he will miss some City Council meetings, but he and his family are "thankful it was caught early."

His announcement came two weeks after City Council approved a resolution filed by Freeman that recognizes September as prostate cancer awareness month. Freeman said when council unanimously backed that resolution that his father had undergone prostate cancer treatment.

"My father was a prostate cancer survivor and as I've gone through life lately, I've learned more and more about how much it ravages and impacts the African-American community here in the

city," Freeman said at that City Council meeting. "You're going to see a huge advocate in myself moving forward, and this is yet the first step in this journey we're taking."

Rahman Johnson, who also is a Black member of City Council, said he is an at-risk person himself based on his own family history. He said both of his grandfathers died from prostate cancer as did his father and all of his father's brothers. Johnson said he's been getting tested since he was 30.

"I'm so honored that council member Freeman put this legislation forward be-

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Fusion of flavors



Chef Jean Marie Josselin is putting the final touches on his soon-to-open new restaurant, Rustica at Saint Johns, in SilverLeaf Commons near St. Augustine.

BOB SELF/FLORIDA TIMES-UNION

French-born chef, a pioneer of Hawaiian cuisine, to offer international flavors at up-scale restaurant in St. Johns

Teresa Stepzinski
Jacksonville Florida Times-Union
USA TODAY NETWORK

A French-born chef known for regional Hawaiian cooking is bringing his unique fusion of global flavors such as Japanese-style chicken meatball skewers, braised beef cheeks and poached scallop ravioli to St. Johns County.

Chef Jean Marie Josselin is preparing to open Rustica at Saint Johns at 70 Silver Forest Drive, Suite 115, in SilverLeaf Commons near St. Augustine. Josselin is considered among the pioneers of regional Hawaiian cuisine and is the author of "A Taste of Hawaii: New Cooking from the Crossroads of the Pacific."

Rustica will join the growing St. Johns County upscale and fine dining scene that includes year's openings of 1912 Ocean Bar & Rooftop at the Cabana Beach Club of Sawgrass Marriott Golf Resort and Spa as well as Argyle at The Yards in Ponte Vedra Beach.

After more than 30 years of cooking and leading kitchens in Hawaii and elsewhere, Josselin, who recently moved to St. Johns County with his family, is almost ready to launch his first Northeast Florida restaurant.

Rustica will offer flavors from around the globe inspired by his experiences in Hawaii and travels, Josselin told the Times-Union.

"What we're going to do is mostly fusion. We're going to have a little bit of Indian, a little bit of Chinese, a little bit of Japanese and a little bit of French. All of it combined into a nice package, inventive and creative," he said.

Simply put, Rustica will showcase food Josselin likes to eat and enjoys creating.



Tombo Ahi Sashimi Citrus Ponzu is among the signature dishes from Chef Jean Marie Josselin, who moved his family to St. Johns County after more than 30 years of cooking and leading kitchens in Hawaii and elsewhere.

RUSTICA/PROVIDED

"Our goal is to create a restaurant that has a neighborhood feel but with regional and national stature. We want to be recognized as a top Florida establishment with a unique view on fine dining, with a service that is comfortable, friendly and knowledgeable," Josselin said. They also want Rustica's cocktail and wine program to be "modern, interesting and evolving," he said.

Josselin hopes to open the 150-seat restaurant soon but no date has been finalized.

On the menu at Rustica

Local, seasonal and sustainably sourced farm-to-table ingredients will be a priority at Rustica. Josselin believes in "community-based partnerships with our farmers, ranchers and other vendors to help create a viable local economy."

Josselin said their menu of fusion dishes is unique.

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Mark Woods
Columnist
Jacksonville Florida Times-Union
USA TODAY NETWORK

At nearly 80, climbing Everest and outliving family history

When I grow up, I'd like to be like Jerry Maida.

And by that I don't mean I hope to be such a good student that I'll be accepted to medical school before I even graduate from college, go to Tanzania for a medical mission, serve in the Navy as a flight surgeon, start a practice in Jacksonville, take a gamble on some new technology and end up as one of the pioneers of LASIK in America.

It's too late for that.

And while I'm certainly impressed by what Dr. Maida did in his first 60 years, the reason we ended up having a long conversation recently had more to do with what he *didn't* do until his late 50s and all that he has done since. Not that I presume to match those accomplishments, either. But I have been thinking about them — and more broadly the topic of longevity.

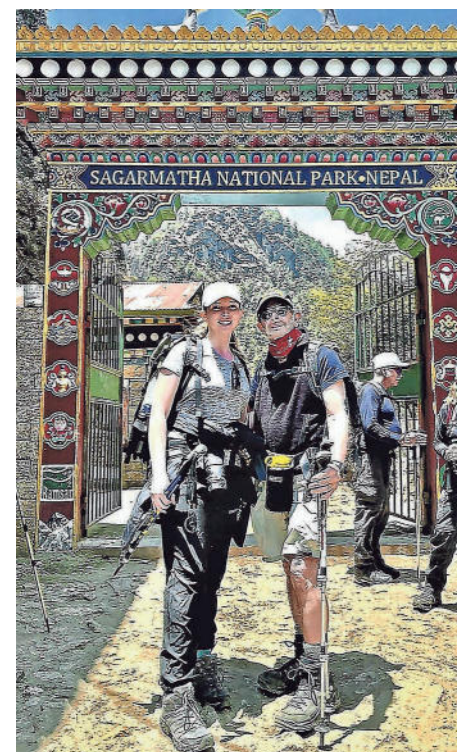
Maida, who will turn 80 in November, recently returned from his eighth trek into Mt. Everest area.

This time his group — "Maida Mountaineers," as they call themselves — included his oldest grandchild, Ella Porter.

"I felt like it was a tough hike for me at 24 years old, so I couldn't imagine doing it at 79," she said after returning to New York.

Maida emphasizes that he didn't summit the highest peak in the world. He doesn't want anyone to get that impression. But what he did — what he has done in the last 25 years — is fairly

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Jerry Maida and his granddaughter, Ella Porter, at Sagarmatha National Park in Nepal.

PROVIDED BY JERRY MAIDA

Backroom Briefing: The twilight of Enterprise Florida

Jim Turner
NEWS SERVICE OF FLORIDA

TALLAHASSEE — The doors are ready to close on Enterprise Florida, the business-recruitment agency long targeted by state House leaders.

Members of the Enterprise Florida Executive Committee this week signed off on the dissolution of the agency's board as of Sunday, as required by a bill (HB 5) approved by the Legislature this spring.

Many of the agency's responsibilities are shifting to the Florida Department of Commerce, with a new non-profit organization set up to work on international business recruitment.

"I just have to say that the transition is moving along. It's moving smoothly. The staff has been just extraordinary in their efforts and what they're doing," Enterprise Florida President Laura DiBella said. "Everybody's working basically two jobs now, their old job and the new job. It's been a pretty heavy lift for the entire team."

Since 2017, when then-Speaker Richard Corcoran described business incentives as "corporate welfare" and "de facto socialism," House leaders have targeted spending by Enterprise Florida and other public-private agencies.

This year's legislation, signed May 31 by Gov. Ron DeSantis, liquidates Enterprise Florida by Dec. 1 and moves contracts and data of more than 20 programs to the Department of Commerce.

The law also directs the department to contract with a direct-support organization, which will be called Select Florida, to work on international trade.

The new organization is picking up 15 Enterprise Florida staff positions — in-

cluding at least 13 current employees. DiBella will serve in a part-time capacity for Select Florida.

The legislation directs \$5 million to the non-profit. About \$400,000 in revenue generated by Enterprise Florida sits in a trust awaiting Select Florida to begin operating in October.

Enterprise Florida has spent about \$7.6 million this year, of which \$5 million went to the Florida Sports Foundation to help the Greater Miami Convention and Visitors Bureau prepare for the 2026 FIFA World Cup soccer tournament.

Miami is one of 16 North America cities that will host matches.

The Associated Press reported Tuesday that more than 100 FIFA jobs involving legal, audit, compliance and risk-management services are moving from the organization's Swiss headquarters to Coral Gables in advance of the tournament.

On the map

With Gov. Ron DeSantis on the road campaigning for president, Lt. Gov. Jeanette Nuñez has taken a more-visible role. And on Monday, she announced construction plans for four Southwest Florida projects that are part of the \$7 billion Moving Florida Forward transportation program, which DeSantis championed.

Nuñez, during the appearance in Fort Myers, said the program — speeding construction on 20 projects — is a new way "to manage the unprecedented growth that Florida has been experiencing."

"What we've seen is the result of the governor's leadership," Nuñez con-

tinued. "People are flocking to Florida. And they're coming to enjoy not only the great leadership, but its pretty climate and the great beaches."

To pay for the program, \$4 billion will be moved from general revenue to the State Transportation Trust Fund and \$3 billion will be borrowed.

The Southwest Florida plans announced Monday included an early 2025 start date on rebuilding the Interstate 75 interchange at Pine Ridge Road; a spring 2027 start for projects involving State Road 29; and a fall 2027 start to expand 18 miles of I-75 from Golden Gate Parkway to Corkscrew Road.

The projects were previously in the Department of Transportation's long-range plans without identified start dates.

As the week progressed, the Department of Transportation posted additional Moving Florida Forward projects. They included:

- Fall 2024: I-75 interchange reconstruction at Fruitville Road in Sarasota County and widening part of State Road 70 in Manatee County.
- Late 2024: Reconstructing Interstate 4 from ChampionsGate to Osceola Parkway and the interchange of I-4 and State Road 33 in Central Florida.
- Spring 2025: Widening I-75 between Wildwood and Ocala.
- Fall 2025: Reconstructing U.S. 301 as it crosses Florida's Turnpike between Wildwood and Sumterville in Sumter County.
- Summer 2025: Adding two tolled express lanes to part of Interstate 275 in the Tampa Bay area.
- Fall 2026: Widening I-4 from U.S. 27 to ChampionsGate in Central Florida.
- Late 2027: Improving the Interstate

95 interchange at U.S. 1 in Volusia County.

Payments instead of passes

In approving a new budget Wednesday, the Central Florida Tourism Oversight District board included \$3,000 annual stipends for employees and some retirees to replace a decades-old practice of providing Walt Disney World passes.

The move to eliminate the park perk had drawn heat from district firefighters, who supported Gov. Ron DeSantis' efforts over the past year to revamp the leadership of the special district that includes Disney properties.

District officials argued the passes were a self-serving measure by Disney that funneled tax dollars from the entertainment giant back into the parks.

The debate about the perks was among the latest twists, including state and federal lawsuits, for the district, which succeeded the former Reedy Creek Improvement District amid a feud between DeSantis and Disney.

Social media post of the week

"(Acting DeSantis chief of staff Alex) Kelly was asked if he was aware of the history of discrimination against Black voters; he said it was 'before my time'. Plaintiff's attorney Greg Diskant: But you're in charge of education policy, right? That includes drafting African-American history standards. Kelly: Yes." — The Tributary editor Andrew Pantazi (@apantazi) on the opening day of a trial in the legal challenge to a congressional map that DeSantis pushed through the Legislature last year.

Popular downtown gastropub expanding to south Jacksonville

Gary T. Mills
Jacksonville Florida Times-Union
USA TODAY NETWORK

A downtown restaurant popular with lunchtime and late-night crowds is expanding to Jacksonville's Southside.

Spliff's Gastropub — which debuted in 2015 at 100 E. Forsyth St. near the Florida Theatre — plans to open in the coming weeks at 14985 Old St. Augustine Road, Unit 108, according to recent building permits and the restaurant's social media posts. There, it will join Casa Maria Mexican and Rosalina's Italian Restaurant and Pizzeria at Ash Properties' Durbin Crossing Shoppes near Bayard.

In addition to its selection of 24 craft brews, Spliff's is known for its unique twist on (and uniquely named) traditional comfort foods like mac 'n cheese, Hot Pockets, sandwiches, burgers and more.

- Menu highlights include:
- The Duval Dirty Bird (\$15): Seasoned chicken thigh, applewood smoked bacon, pepper jack, green leaf lettuce, tomatoes, habanero aioli
 - The Big Spliff (\$15): Steak, provolone cheese, green leaf lettuce, onions, tomatoes, habanero aioli
 - The Patty Melt My Face (\$16): Two third-pound patties, cheddar cheese, Swiss cheese, grilled onions, garlic dill aioli on a toasted kaiser roll
 - The Trust Fund (\$18): Two third-

pound patties, goat cheese, candied bacon, crispy onion strings, Porcini balsamic glaze, white truffle oil, sun-dried tomatoes, lettuce, garlic dill aioli on a toasted kaiser roll

- That's All Folks mac n cheese (\$17): BBQ pork shoulder, grilled onions, smoked Gouda cheese.
- The Jumbo Shrimp mac n cheese (\$17): Cajun garlic shrimp, bacon, tomatoes, spinach, Parmesan.
- The Goodfellas Pocket (\$15): Pepperoni, mozzarella, parmesan, sun-dried tomatoes, chopped basil, fresh garlic, green goddess dip in a puff pastry pocket
- The Shorty Pocket (\$15): Cajun seasoned shrimp, applewood smoked ba-

con, parmesan, spinach, fresh garlic yum yum dip in a puff pastry pocket

Earlier this year, Spliff's signed a lease for another location, a 4,100-square-foot space at The Reef, a new luxury rental apartment and mixed-use complex at 2753 Mayport Road in Atlantic Beach.

"We are ecstatic to continue expanding our Spliff's brand to the beaches. We feel the Mayport area will be a great fit for Spliff's food, drinks and overall vibe," said Jason Hunnicutt, partner at Spliff's GastroPub, in a news release at the time. "This will be a great option for lunch, dinner and late-night dining. We look forward to serving the Reef Apartment and the surrounding area."

Median sales prices for a Florida home was \$415,000, Realtors report

NEWS SERVICE OF FLORIDA

The industry group Florida Realtors last week released a report that said the statewide median sales price for single-family existing homes in August was \$415,000. Here were the median sales prices by metropolitan statistical area:

- Naples-Immokalee-Marco Island: \$732,000
 - Miami-Fort Lauderdale-West Palm Beach: \$607,500
 - North Port-Sarasota-Bradenton: \$520,190
 - Orlando-Kissimmee-Sanford: \$434,075
 - Crestview-Fort Walton Beach-Destin: \$428,450
 - Tampa-St. Petersburg-Clearwater: \$419,995
 - Port St. Lucie: \$415,690
 - Cape Coral-Fort Myers: \$405,810
 - Jacksonville: \$386,995
 - Sebastian-Vero Beach: \$375,000
 - Panama City: \$374,000
 - Punta Gorda: \$371,500
 - Palm Bay-Melbourne-Titusville: \$369,000
 - The Villages: \$360,000
 - Deltona-Daytona Beach-Ormond Beach: \$358,990
 - Gainesville: \$355,900
 - Lakeland-Winter Haven: \$336,000
 - Pensacola-Ferry Pass-Brent: \$330,000
 - Tallahassee: \$322,128
 - Ocala: \$289,750
 - Homosassa Springs: \$284,745
 - Sebring: \$280,000
- Source: Florida Realtors

Fusion

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"I think if you are going to open a restaurant you may as well try to bring something to the scene. There are a lot of good restaurants but you know you have to bring something that is different as well. Copying is not really what I like to do," he said.

- Some of his signature dishes:
- Chicken Tsukone: Japanese-style chicken meatball skewers brushed with tare and served with sunchoke hummus and chicken truffle jus
 - Tandoori Prawns with local rice risotto and herb chutney
 - Yuba Cannelloni with an avocado mousse and curry leaf kohlrabi pea-shoot salad
 - Braised beef cheeks with polenta and braising jus

Other featured offerings include poached scallops ravioli with Yuzu butter sauce and Tobiko, brisket pie with buttermilk barbecue sauce, whole grain mustard and creme fraiche, and seared cobia with artichoke, cannellini beans, Minestra bouillon and pancetta, the menu shows.

Rustica also will have a seafood bar with a selection of fresh oysters, sushi, sashimi and Tataki. Desserts such as a creme puff of the day, as well as white



The exterior of soon-to-open Rustica at Saint Johns restaurant. Chef Jean Marie Josselin is putting the final touches on his new restaurant in SilverLeaf Commons near St. Augustine. BOB SELF/FLORIDA TIMES-UNION

chocolate mousse Millefeuille, are on the menu.

Culinary journey

Josselin, a native of Chamonix, France, inherited his love of cooking from his grandmother whom he helped in the kitchen during his childhood.

"My grandma inspired me 100 percent. My grandma was an incredible cook. That lady was whipping up meals like nothing and I can still taste them after all these years. ... Fish, rabbit, pork. She was always cooking something and it was always delicious," Josselin said.

As a teenager, Josselin became an apprentice at a Chamonix bistro and then attended Lychee Hotelier de Paris culinary school. When he graduated, Josselin became a line cook in Paris,

Freeman

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cause as men, it's something that we don't talk about enough," Johnson said.

The American Cancer Society estimates that in 2023, there will be about 288,300 new prostate cancer cases and 34,700 deaths from the disease. Those most risk are Black men and men over the age of 65, along with those who have a family history of prostate cancer,

according to the resolution passed by City Council.

Freeman, who was re-elected in March to a second four-year term as an at-large council member, is the immediate past president of City Council. He currently is chairman of the Rules Committee.

"It is important to me to be transparent about where I am with this diagnosis and acknowledge that I will miss council meetings in the months ahead," he wrote on X, the social media platform formerly known as Twitter.

launching his lifelong culinary career that brought him to the United States in 1982.

Josselin worked his way up the culinary ranks to lead resort hotel kitchens nationwide. He's opened seven restaurants in Hawaii and Las Vegas since Hawaii became his home base in 1984.

In 1995, he was featured in a segment of the Great Chefs of Hawaii television series. His cookbook, "A Taste of Hawaii: New Cooking from the Crossroads of the Pacific," which celebrated the fusion of culinary cultures, was originally published in 1992.

Josselin, 60, relocated his family to St. Augustine about 1½ years ago. The move, he said, was prompted in part by his 12-year-old daughter's goal of pursuing a career in NASA's space program. They chose St. Johns County for the quality of its school system and proximity to NASA, he said.

The move also afforded him an opportunity to open Rustica and introduce his fusion cooking to Northeast Florida.

"Rustica is something that all my years of experience and all my traveling and the food that I like to cook and things I wanted to try," he said.

Josselin said Rustica initially will be open only for dinner from 4 to 10 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday and closed on Monday. Weekend brunch will be added as Rustica settles in, he said.

He encouraged men to schedule an exam because prostate cancer is "100% treatable when caught early enough" before it worsens and becomes life-threatening. He wrote that Black men are 2.5 times more likely to die from prostate cancer than white men are.

"We can do better," he wrote. "We can save lives."

As for his own outlook, he described his wife, Rachel, and his family as "my rock. We are going to fight with every ounce of energy we have — and we are going to win."