



## Funeral for JFRD engineer Freeland will be Saturday

METRO, 1B



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## Lawmakers quick on vaccine fight

### Special session could end as early as today

**John Kennedy**

Capital Bureau | USA TODAY NETWORK – FLORIDA

TALLAHASSEE — Florida's Republican-controlled Legislature pushed ahead Tuesday with efforts to blunt President Biden's vaccine requirements for businesses amid a growing host of

questions about risks attached to the move.

The House and Senate are poised for final votes on four bills sought by Gov. Ron DeSantis that defy the Democratic president and support the governor's stands against mask mandates in schools and vaccine requirements on employees of local governments.

While the special session called by DeSantis could end as early as Wednesday, with the governor assured of vic-

tory, outnumbered Democrats warned about possible consequences of ignoring federal standards and the confusion the measures could bring to Florida workplaces.

State Rep. Carlos Guillermo Smith, D-Orlando, said Florida hospitals, nursing homes and other health facilities risk losing millions of dollars if they ignore a federal rule that all staff are vaccinated by Jan. 4.

"This bill creates a tug of war be-

tween federal and state laws, with our health care providers being the rope," Smith said. The federal rule is being challenged in federal court in Missouri by 10 Republican-led states, but remains in place.

Another rule by the U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration has been temporarily halted by a court, but became the primary driver of DeSantis'

See **LAWMAKERS**, Page 2A



RH Jacksonville, a luxury home furnishings store featuring an upscale rooftop restaurant, is set to open Friday at St. Johns Town Center in Jacksonville. BOB SELF/FLORIDA TIMES-UNION

## Luxury retailer RH Jacksonville opens Friday at Town Center

**Teresa Stepzynski**

Jacksonville Florida Times-Union  
USA TODAY NETWORK

Dazzling.

RH Jacksonville, the luxury home furnishings store opening Friday at St. Johns Town Center is dazzling from the moment you walk in the front doors.

Its "wow factor" extends from its namesake cheeseburger served at its rooftop restaurant to the elegant hand-crafted chandeliers bathing the first-

floor lobby in a warm, welcoming glow.

The three-level store boasts a rooftop garden with comfy outdoor couches and chairs plus a view of the Town Center area. Inside, individual galleries showcase classic to modern furnishings as well as decor, including hand-crafted artwork from glass artist Allison Berger and others.

RH Jacksonville, The Gallery at Town Center — its official name — at 4831 Village Shops Way is designed to be a destination — an elegant, memorable desti-

nation.

Whether for a fresh, ingredient-inspired breakfast, lunch, brunch or dinner in the restaurant, a relaxing glass of wine in the rooftop garden or serious shopping in the galleries, the atmosphere is welcoming.

Two decades after Jacksonville shoppers said they wanted Restoration Hardware at the then-newly opened St. Johns Town Center their wish has be-

See **RETAILER**, Page 4A

## Jury fails to reach verdict after 1 day

### Rittenhouse murder trial continues on

**Michael Tarm, Amy Forliti and Tammy Webber**

ASSOCIATED PRESS

KENOSHA, Wis. — The jury at Kyle Rittenhouse's murder trial deliberated a full day on Tuesday without reaching a verdict over whether he was the instigator in a night of bloodshed in Kenosha or a concerned citizen who came under attack while trying to protect property.

The case went to the anonymous jury after the judge, in an unusual move, allowed Rittenhouse himself to play a minor role in the selection of the final panel of 12 people whose job was to decide his fate.

Rittenhouse reached into a raffle drum and drew numbered slips that determined which of the 18 jurors who sat through the case would deliberate and which ones would be alternates.

That task is usually performed by a court clerk, not the defendant.

The jury will return Wednesday morning to continue its work.

Rittenhouse, 18, faces life in prison if convicted as charged for using an AR-style semi-automatic rifle to kill two men and wound a third during a night of protests against racial injustice in Kenosha in the summer of 2020. The former police youth cadet is white, as were those he shot.

Rittenhouse testified he acted in self-defense. Prosecutors argued he

See **JURY**, Page 6A

## Retailer

Continued from Page 1A

come reality.

But let's be clear. It's not a hardware store. And it's not your father's Restoration Hardware anymore either.

It's RH — a destination meant to be experienced. Any furniture store can sell a sofa. RH sells a lifestyle.

Located in the southeast corner of the sprawling retail center, RH Jacksonville spans 70,000 square feet of indoor and outdoor space. It features the rooftop restaurant and park, Wine Bar, RH Interior Design Firm & Atelier, RH Interiors, RH Modern and RH Outdoor.

The store is unlike any other at Town Center.

That difference is evident outside and inside. The building is "conceptualized as a transparent, contemporary structure." It has retractable glass panel walls to let in natural light and fresh air.

The building's exterior features a charcoal-grey Venetian plaster. On Levels 1 and 2, the gallery features an expanse of glass-and-French doors. They open onto lush garden courtyards, terraces and a progression of towering Zehdi date palms.

Live plants, such as giant banana palms, as well as trickling fountains, can be found throughout the store to create a sense of serenity.

RH Jacksonville reflects the vision of company chairman and CEO Gary Friedman, whose philosophy is "blurring the lines between residential and retail, indoors and outdoors, home and hospitality."

The target audience is the luxury shopper, but Friedman has emphasized that hospitality is the core of the RH brand.

Guests can begin their RH experience with a glass of wine, a signature bellini, cup of coffee or espresso then explore the first and second levels before dining at the restaurant.

### Galleries showcase luxury goods, artwork

**Level One: RH Interiors.** Shoppers enter through a 25-foot threshold of retractable glass and steel doors, then continue to the gallery's central hall, which has 14-foot ceilings and chandeliers providing soft lighting.

The gallery features RH's best-known furnishings and decor such as its Cloud



**RH Jacksonville, a luxury home furnishings store with a rooftop restaurant is in the final stage of preparations ahead of their upcoming opening Friday at the St. Johns Town Center in Jacksonville.** PHOTOS BY BOB SELF/FLORIDA TIMES-UNION



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Sofa. Six-to eight-foot-long and really soft, the Cloud Sofa, can cost up to nearly \$10,000. It's become popular in TikTok videos. Architectural Digest reports the couch is a favorite of celebrities, including Kendall Jenner and Kerry Washington.

A grand, double floating staircase spanning nearly 40 feet leads to the upper floors. (Elevators also are available.)

Natural light pours in from a huge skylight three floors overhead. In addition, handblown Serenella Chandeliers hang 54 feet overhead to showcase a composition of gilded antique mirrors cascading down the stairwell to create an endless reflection and further illuminate the way.

**Level Two: RH Modern and RH Interior Design Firm & Atelier.** It focuses on more modern furnishings, textiles, light fixtures and decor. Contemporary art from the GENERAL PUBLIC for RH Collection features almost 400 works from acclaimed artists around the world.

Longtime art collector and actor Portia de Rossi founded GENERAL PUBLIC with a goal of bringing good art to more people. Her company uses "ground-breaking 3-D technology" to make that happen by capturing every nuance of brushwork, texture, and technique to authentically reveal the artist's hand.

RH Jacksonville is among the first design galleries to preview Berger's lighting collection. Her glassworks include chandeliers and wall sconces.

RH Interior Design Firm & Atelier is an interactive 5,000-square-foot studio providing professional design services. There also is the RH Rug Showroom, and specialized galleries for luxury window treatments, bed and bath linens, and bath hardware.

### Rooftop restaurant offers ingredient-driven menu

**Level Three: Restaurant.** Likely a top destination for more than a few RH Jacksonville visitors and shoppers, it's dedicated to the rooftop restaurant with its adjoining park, Wine Bar and RH Outdoor.

The restaurant was inspired by the

great classical gardens of Europe. There is a skylit garden escape beneath an atrium with retractable glass walls, chandeliers and heritage olive trees. A large fountain serves as the centerpiece of the dining room.

The park will have RH Outdoor lounge spaces defined by "a layered composition" of sculptured evergreens, overhead shade canopies and trickling water features.

The menu will be driven by fresh ingredients.

Among the most popular items is the lobster roll (\$30) with drawn butter, mayonnaise and Old Bay seasoning. The lobster meat is piled high and spills out of the bun.

Also popular is the RH Burger (\$20) with sharp American cheese, pickles, onions and Dijonaise with the option of adding avocado or thick-cut pork belly bacon for an additional charge.

The menu also features shareable boards, salads and entrees such as Burrata with oven-roasted tomatoes and charred sourdough, shaved vegetables with baby greens and pecans, roasted chicken with garlic and olive oil potato purée. There also will be "elevated takes" on such classics as ribeye steak and truffled grilled cheese.

Entree prices range from \$20 to \$59 depending on the dish.

The Wine Bar offers a "carefully curated" selection of vintages and champagne selections from around the world. There will be 40 wines by the glass as well as limited production offerings from some of Napa Valley's respected small vintners.

The RH restaurant expands the Town Center's upscale restaurant options, which already include The Capital Grille, J. Alexander's, Cantina Laredo, Bazille at Nordstrom and Prati Italia at neighboring Markets at Town Center.

### Two decades in the making

In 2000, when the St. Johns Town Center project was announced, the Times-Union asked its readers what stores and restaurants they wanted to see at Jacksonville's newest shopping destination.

Among their requests was Restoration Hardware. In 2003, two years before the Town Center opened, Restoration Hardware was on the list of planned stores. On Friday, nearly two decades later, RH Jacksonville is finally a reality.

RH Jacksonville will be open from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. daily.