



John and Jan Hirabayashi

Cummer opens gardens, French Moderns exhibit

The Cummer Museum of Art & Gardens rolled out a reception fit for the finest of museums, as patron of the Ponce de Léon Society gathered to re-open the gardens and preview the latest exhibit, FRENCH MODERNS: MONET TO MATISSE, 1850 – 1950.

READ MORE, **PAGE 20**

Twins share sweets and smiles for a good cause



Instead of “getting” for their third birthday, Beck and Flora Grace Sacks, twin son and daughter of Meg and Jonathan Sacks, “gave,” inviting friends and family to an ice cream birthday party. Mayday Ice Cream of San Marco generously agreed to donate a portion of proceeds from ice cream sales June 2 to The Will King Foundation, which helps children with congenital heart disease by bringing them from developing countries to Wolfson Children’s Hospital to receive life-saving heart treatment. San Marco residents Courtney and Taylor Hughes created the foundation in memory of their 96-day-old son, Will King, who suffered from enterovirus.

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Construction to begin on San Marco Crossing



Rendering of Chance Partners newest San Marco Crossing, as one looks toward the northwest.

By Marcia Hodgson
Resident Community News

San Marco Crossing, Chance Partners’ newest Jacksonville development, will begin construction on its two-building, 486-unit housing community in July.

The approximately \$86 million project is being developed jointly by EJV Capital LLC and Chance Partners on nearly nine acres of land that was formerly home to Southside Assemblies of God church in San Marco. The area, which consists of three parcels, is certified as an “Opportunity Zone” under the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017, which offers investors attractive tax benefits when they invest to create economic growth in lower income areas.

“We are excited to partner with Chance Partners on San Marco Crossing, which will bring high-quality multifamily units to this growing area and create a significant number of construction jobs as well as permanent property management positions. We believe small businesses in San Marco will also benefit from the added economic vitality that results from the spending power of about 700 expected new residents,” said Neal Wilson, EJV co-founder and chief operating officer, in a press release.

Jeff Rosen of San Jose, principal with Chance Partners, agreed. “San Marco Crossing will be a significant catalyst in connecting the historic San Marco Square with the revitalization occurring along Atlantic Boulevard

and further into the San Marco East mixed-use corridor,” he said.

The development is expected to open its doors to residents in the fourth quarter of 2020, with the total project being completed by summer 2021. A formal groundbreaking will be held in late August or early September, said Rosen.

San Marco Crossing will consist of two four-story multifamily buildings each with its own parking garage that will cover nearly two city blocks. The north building, which will be located between Olevia Street and Bertha Street, will consist of 290 one-, two- and three-bedroom apartments, while the

STORY CONTINUES ON **PAGE 2**

Oath of Allegiance inducts 20 new citizens



Former Mexican citizen Orlene Nevado is happy to finally be an American citizen as she celebrates with her daughter, Isabella, in San Marco Square after her naturalization ceremony at Theatre Jacksonville June 13.

READ MORE, PAGE 40



Caroline Bentley with Louis Joseph and Allison Doerr

Low-country boil sets tone for Fish With Clay fundraiser

The Captains Meeting for the 12th annual Clay Roberts Memorial Inshore Slam was a must-attend event June 14 at Mudville Grille, where a low-country boil hosted by Louis Joseph and his staff kicked off the Father’s Day weekend fishing competition in style.

READ MORE, **PAGE 19**

Four-legged to no-legged pets star in annual show



Meg O’Malley shows off her kitten, Sugar Bear, at the annual Colonial Manor Pet Show.

READ MORE, **PAGE 41**



San Marco Crossing

FROM PAGE 1

southern building, which will lie between Bertha Street and Mitchell Avenue, will hold 196 apartments. Each building will have many amenities, including its own leasing office, co-working space, fitness center, resort pool, bikeshare and doggie spa. Nearly every apartment will have a balcony, and ground-floor units will each have their own patios or porches. “San Marco Crossing has been designed to be a pedestrian community taking advantage of its walkability to San Marco,” said Rosen.

San Marco Crossing’s general contractor is Live Oak Contracting of Jacksonville. Dynamik Design Partners of Atlanta served as the architect. Kimley-Horn of Jacksonville is the civil and environmental engineer with landscaping provided by Pittman Landscape of Jacksonville and financing provided by Ameris Bank and Valley National Bank.

“We’re thrilled for San Marco Crossing to begin,” said Rosen. “It’s been a couple of years working with the church, assembling the parcels, working alongside the community and with Councilwoman Lori Boyer through the entitlement process. We are

Rendering of Chance Partners newest development, San Marco Crossing, as viewed towards the south. Chance Partners’ other Philips Highway development, San Marco Promenade, can be seen in the background.

thrilled to be able to provide essentially two full city blocks of housing this close to San Marco and to really activate the entrance people will use to come off I-95 and down Atlantic Boulevard and to be able to get it all together. We are excited for how this will impact the whole neighborhood in a positive manner.”

San Marco Crossing comes on the heels of Chance Partners’ neighboring project, San Marco Promenade. As a gated multifamily residential community adjacent to Philips Highway, the first phase of San Marco Promenade will boast 284 one-, two-, and three-bedroom apartments and will be open to residents in January 2020. Once San Marco Crossing is complete, Rosen said he expects his company to turn towards building out San Marco Promenade’s final phase, a 226-unit development on the south end of its property near Alexandria Oaks Park.

“We’d like to see the first phase get open and leased up,” he said. “It will allow us to make any design changes and react to the marketplace as we see residents get in and we get their feedback.”

Letters TO THE Editor

Patriotic reader shares thoughts about U.S. flag

I thought you may like to use my poem, “Our Amazing American Flag,” in the July issue as we celebrate Independence Day.

William Shuttleworth
San Marco

Our faithful flag flutters freely
flapping away in the clear blue sky,
it’s vibrant colors of red, white and blue
swelling up tears in our eyes.

Handstitched stars shining in a circle
of thirteen brought this nation to birth,
she’s grown to exhibit fifty –
proving her remarkable worth.

Today turmoil threatens within and
without, yet she still proudly flies,
boldly standing as a beacon of truth
in a world somehow twisted by lies.

She’s often sparked the hearts of youth,
who soon choose to defend her in war,
urgently persuading all Americans –
its freedom we’re fighting for!

Her rustling red stripes ripple on out
like blood spilled on overseas sand,
where men in uniform strive for freedom,
both for home and foreign land.

Old Glory stands for our diligent founding fathers
as we salute these visionary patriotic souls,
so keep this “One Nation Under God”
flying high on those flagpoles!

Also, let’s not forget that awful day
back on that horrific September Eleven,
but be faithful to our beloved flag
‘til it waves us on to heaven.

Timely topic provides help for overgrown trees

Thank you for the timely topic of the June column, “You Asked For It.” Thanks to you, I was able to contact FDOT and was referred to their maintenance contractor about an overgrown segment of sidewalk along SR 13 [San Jose Boulevard] where it has become difficult to walk.

Love the paper! Serves a great need in our community for local news and features. Keep up the good work!

Pam Korn, San Jose

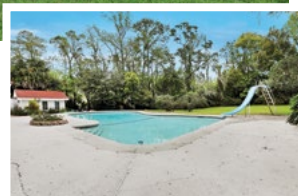
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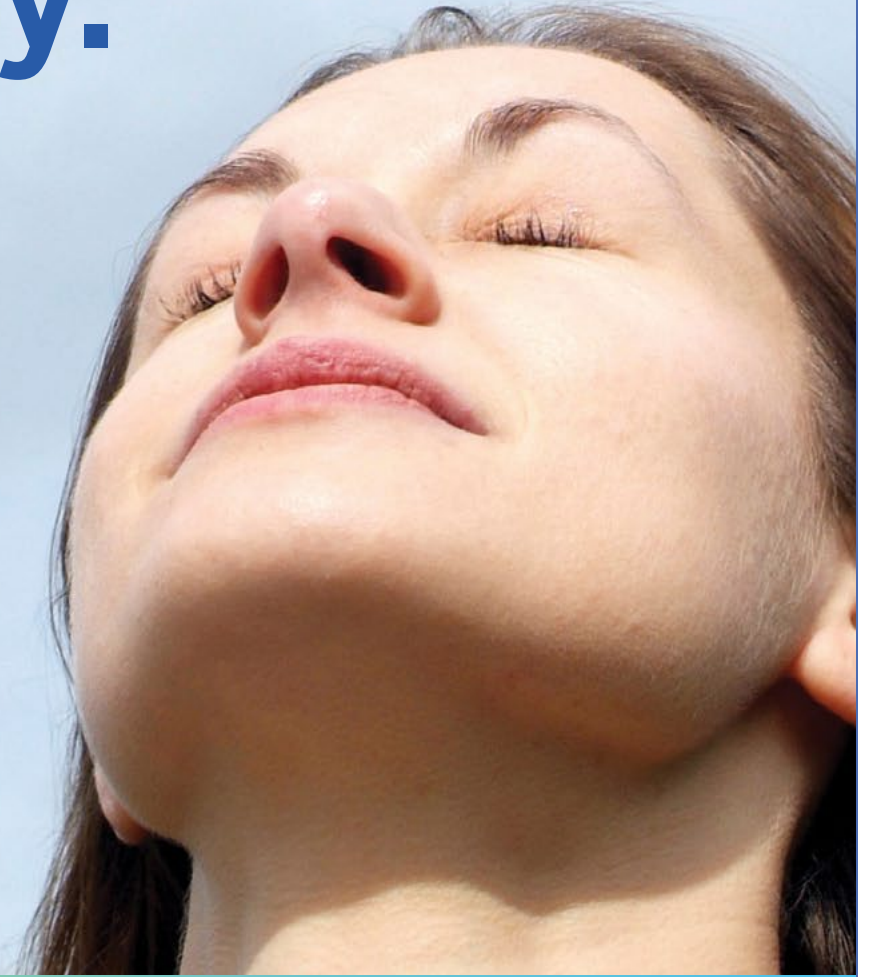
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BAPTIST **ENT** SPECIALISTS

City wins grant to alleviate San Marco train delays

By Marcia Hodgson
Resident Community News

“If you want to make San Marco Train laugh, tell us your lunch plans,” was a tweet found on the San Marco Train Twitter account June 14. The satirical movement to “Make America Late Again,” was founded by Jack DeYoung, digital director at Nuera Marketing in San Marco and voiced by his San Marco Train Twitter account, which has more than 1,600 followers. It illustrates the frustration felt by many downtown workers and residents who are forced to wait anywhere from three minutes to three hours daily for a train to pass at one of seven train crossings within San Marco and the Southbank.

Thanks to a \$17.6 million grant obtained from the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), motorists may not be delayed by idle trains in San Marco in the not-so-distant future.

In early June, Jacksonville Mayor Lenny Curry revealed the City had been awarded the grant through the federal government’s Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) Program to resolve traffic congestion caused by slow-moving and stopped trains and to improve safety at railroad crossings in the San Marco and Southbank area. The grant was written by newly elected District 5 Councilwoman LeAnna Cumber, a transportation specialist from San Marco, and jointly submitted by the Florida Department of Transportation, the City of Jacksonville, the Jacksonville Transportation Authority, Florida East Coast (FEC) Railroads and CSX. The CRISI grant program helps leverage private, state and local investments to support safety enhancements and general improvements to infrastructure for both intercity and freight railroads, according to the Notice of Funding Opportunity connected with CRISI grants.

“This is a really good example of the private sector, the City, JTA and state and federal agencies getting together to really solve a lot of these issues,” said Brian Hughes, a San Marco resident who serves as Mayor Lenny Curry’s chief of staff. He added that as the economy keeps improving, more and longer trains will be on the tracks exacerbating the problem in the future.

The grant application, which was titled “Mitigating Jacksonville’s Freight Train-Vehicle/Pedestrian/Bicycle Conflicts,” addresses challenges created by four major railroads – CSX, FEC, Union Pacific and Amtrak – interchanging within Jacksonville’s urban core. The project aims to alleviate

“chokepoints” on the Southbank and in San Marco where traffic jams are often caused by trains unable to move due to congestion in the train yards, north of downtown near the Prime Osborn Convention Center, said Hughes.

The project plans to eliminate the approximately seven-mile “dark space” that covers the distance between FEC’s Bowden Rail Yard, near Philips Highway and JTB, and the FEC and CSX Beaver Street interlocking area and the southern end of the CSX Moncrief railyard, by installing a 7,000-foot pocket track so that trains can cross the railroad bridge over the St. Johns River in a timely manner and safely wait on the north side of the river, eliminating blockages near Baptist Medical Center and Wolfson Children’s Hospital. “In layman’s terms the pocket track is what we would call a parking lot – an extra piece of track that runs parallel to the existing track and is long enough to hold a waiting train in the train yard so that traffic flow does not stop on the Southbank,” said Hughes.

The grant will also pay to modernize 10 rail switches and connective track primarily used for FEC traffic and Class I interchanges, upgrade signal and track at joint CSX/FEC Beaver Street Interlocking and install Centralized Traffic Control improvements on more than 5.35 miles of FEC track and at all road crossings. This will include the installation of “quad gates,” – four-armed gates at the Atlantic Boulevard and Emerson Street crossings – which will better prevent motorists from driving around the crossing barriers, Cumber said.

The cost of the project is \$35.3 million, with half funded by the Federal Railroad Administration. The balance will be matched by FDOT, which will pay \$13.7 million, and the City of Jacksonville, JTA, CSX and FEC, entities that will each kick in \$978,875.

“Thirty-five million is a huge investment, but clearly USDOT understood the importance to the community,” said Cumber. “A big part of the application was showing all the different players putting in match money. By FDOT putting in a significant amount, it was very evident this wasn’t the brainchild of one or two people. It was something that the whole community wants and needs.”

From the Bowden Rail Yard, trains heading south to Miami almost never stop, said Cumber. “It is a conveyor belt that runs from Jacksonville to Miami and back, a straight shot,” she said, noting to cover that area, FEC has an “electronic map” to determine exactly where the trains are located. However, there is no electronic map for



Traffic on Hendricks Avenue in San Marco can back up for nearly two miles when a train forced to halt before going onto the railroad bridge over the St. Johns River.

trains heading north from Bowden Rail Yards. “Going north from JTB to the train bridge over the St. Johns River is called a dark space. Someone from FEC at Bowden uses a landline to call a guy at CSX for permission to send the train north to their rail yards at Beaver Street and Moncrief. He’s like an air-traffic controller, but once the train has the go-ahead and is gone, there is no visibility,” Cumber said, adding if a problem or sudden congestion exists in the Moncrief rail yard, CSX calls a halt before the train crosses the river requiring it to wait until it gets the all clear. “It could be a three-minute fix or a three-hour fix. They won’t allow the train to cross the river because there is no room in the Beaver/Moncrief yard to store anything. When the train waits, it can block up to seven railroad crossings depending on how long that train is,” she said.

Cumber said she recognized the problem soon after she moved to San Marco and over the years has worked diligently to find a solution, especially as president of the San Marco Preservation Society in 2016 and later as a transportation consultant to the city and the railroads. “Blockages are not good for the economy, and they are a safety issue USDOT is very concerned about,” she said, adding that if drivers or pedestrians get frustrated and decide to walk over the train when it is stopped, delays are extended because officers from both the railway and the Jacksonville Sheriff’s Office are required to walk the entire length of the train to ensure things are safe before the train can roll again.

When Cumber asked Carmen Patriarca, regional administrator of the southeastern region of FRA, to come from Atlanta to go

“high railing” with her along the tracks in a specially retrofitted SUV to observe the situation first hand, CSX required them to stop for more than 45 minutes on the railroad bridge, making them late for an appointment with the mayor. “It was great. We were sitting there looking at the dolphins when Carmen asked, ‘How often does this happen?’ I said, ‘Pretty much every day. Sometimes it’s a couple of minutes and sometimes it’s 30 minutes or longer.’ He couldn’t believe it. He said he would do everything in his power to get us the award,” she said.

Also critical to the grant’s success was the mayor’s insistence that finding a solution was a high priority, especially since the rail delays directly impact Southbank residents’ quality of life and the safety of people heading to Baptist Medical Center. “Our attention was on ambulance reroutes to Baptist. It was clear we have been lucky that that inaccessibility to the medical for those lengthy durations hasn’t yet caused serious calamity in the health of a person as far as we know,” said Hughes.

“The federal funding for the railroad improvements is extremely good news for Baptist Jacksonville, Wolfson Children’s Hospital and for the entire San Marco community. I have joined others in seeking to obtain these funds by writing letters,” said Hugh Greene, FACHE, recently retired president and chief executive office of Baptist Health, who wrote a personal letter to the U.S. Secretary of Transportation. “The historical delays and blockages have adversely affected access to our campus, including those being brought by rescue vehicles. I am grateful to all, including Councilwoman LeAnna Cumber, who have achieved this result.”



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City Council defers vote on half-cent sales tax

By **Kandace Lankford**
Resident Community News

Despite the Duval County School Board's strong push to get the proposed half-cent sales tax to fund repairing, renovating and replacing district schools on the ballot this November, the issue was glaringly absent from the June 25 City Council meeting agenda – their last session before the summer break.

While the School Board wanted to trudge forward with the plan to hold a special election this November to put the plan before the voters, the majority of City Council members and Jacksonville Mayor Lenny Curry have expressed trepidation about the timing, saying the plan doesn't contain enough details and needs to be thoroughly vetted.

After going through the City Council's Finance Committee and then the Rules Committee on June 18, the final consensus was to defer action until the new Council members are installed so they may have the opportunity to weigh in and vote as to whether and when the half-cent sales tax should be put on the ballot, ergo the absence of Bill 2019-380 from the City Council meeting agenda.

Though the School Board members have repeatedly said "the time is now" and have urged City Council to put the tax to a vote, the School Board itself has yet to vote to approve its own plan. The board has deferred doing so until July.

According to the School Board's master facilities plan, the proposed sales tax expected to raise approximately \$1.9 billion, would be used to construct 28 new schools across the district, facilitate 20 school consolidations (impacting 40 schools), fund \$1.08 billion in major school repairs, and remove 438 portables. Those changes would decrease the average age of school facilities in Duval by approximately 11 years – from 44 years to 33 and would result in a decrease of nearly 3,200 student seats.

Reducing student seats is important because doing so will provide a more accurate calculation of school capacity. The state sets capacity numbers, which are generated in to a Florida Inventory of School Houses, or FISH, report. For example, if a school has a FISH of 1,000, it is designed to accommodate 1,000 students. The capacity of a school is determined by the original design of each room. The report assumes every room is a classroom, and doesn't register portables, labs and other types of learning environments. As a result, schools appear to have more

student seats available are actually available, causing overcrowded schools.

Approximately 16.9%, or \$321,818,485, of the \$1.9 billion dollars is slated for District 3 schools, with \$188,432,503 for new construction, \$132,670,332 for maintenance, renovation and security, and \$715,650 for demolition. The plan, specific to District 3 (which covers Council District 5), calls for eight new replacement schools, \$167 million in major school repairs and the removal of 82 portables, resulting in a 15-year reduction in building age (from 54 years to 39 years) and a 1% increased utilization from 88% to 89%.

"To fund the plan, the school board proposed a half penny sales tax for the next 15 years; this would cost the average household just \$6 per month. But, before the voters can weigh in, City Council must approve the referendum to go to the ballot box. And if Council pushes the referendum to 2020, Jacksonville is that much farther in the hole, having spent millions in taxpayer money on emergency repairs that will be demolished, all while children wait," said Ashley Smith-Juarez, School Board representative for District 3, in an excerpt from a letter emailed to The Resident. "I do not want to see the taxpayers spend approximately \$20,000,000 in annual maintenance to avoid a special election that will cost the school district roughly \$1 per citizen. Why?"

Schools in *The Resident's* readership area will be affected as follows: Safety and security upgrades and deferred maintenance are proposed for Alfred I. DuPont Middle (\$10,551,171), Douglas Anderson School of the Arts (\$13,645,066), Landon Middle (\$6,124,505) and Samuel W. Wolfson Senior High (\$16,206,067). Hendricks Avenue Elementary will undergo a renovation with a 10-classroom addition (\$11,978,930) and San Jose Elementary will be replaced onsite (\$20,487,120).

Mayor Curry agrees with those who say the plan needs more work. He said would like to see year-over-year revenue projections, the total project cost and then a cost analysis per location, including transparent accounting. "Doing this financial planning now will ensure we are asking taxpayers for the exact amount necessary and not hurting the credit rating of city and county government."

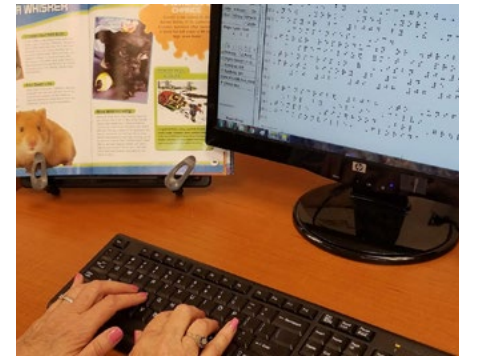
He added that charter schools should be included in the plan and that his office and the City Council, School Board and teachers and parents need to work as a team to make the plan better. "Together we owe it to Jacksonville's taxpayers and families to lay out a plan that is financially prudent and well thought out."

Braille training classes offered at The Temple

For over 60 years, the Temple Sisterhood at Congregation Ahavath Cheshed has sponsored a program to teach Braille, a form of written language designed for the blind and visually impaired. This program teaches volunteers to convert printed books into Braille versions used by the Florida School for the Deaf and Blind, other institutions serving the visually impaired, and individuals who make special requests. These services are provided at no cost to all recipients.

During 2018, the program's volunteers have contributed more than 18,000 hours, producing 377 books and other projects totaling more than 77,000 pages in Braille. Based on the Points of Light Foundation economic impact calculator, that volunteer time equates to \$433,944 in donated value.

The 2019-20 Braille class for volunteers will start on Thursday, Sept. 5. This is a nine-month program on transcribing text into Braille or converting illustrations into tactile graphics. Classes will be held every



Keyboard and braille screen used to transcribe text into Braille

Thursday from 9:30 a.m. to noon, September through June. Course graduates can go on to be certified as Braille transcribers by the U.S. Library of Congress. The program is open to both men and women of all faiths.

An orientation meeting will be held at 10 a.m., Thursday, Aug. 29, at Congregation Ahavath Cheshed, 8727 San Jose Blvd. For more information, contact Lynnette Taylor (904-466-2129 or dandltaylor@att.net), Holly Cleveland (904-463-0357 or holly.cleveland@att.net), Nancy Cohen (248-250-2406 or r4cohen@gmail.com), or Candace Richardson (904-607-7619 or candacerichardson@att.net).

Gem and mineral society to celebrate 60th anniversary

The Jacksonville Gem and Mineral Society, Inc., will host a celebration for its 60th anniversary, Saturday, July 20, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., at the San Marco Library and Balis Community Center, 1513 Lasalle St.

The nonprofit was formed in 1959 and its oldest and longest active member, Craig Hamilton, said he joined at age 16 after he had started collecting at age 12. "I bought a box of three specimens from the old Children's Museum for a quarter and got hooked," he said.

The society, which is a member of the Southeast Federation Mineralogical Societies, has a museum at 3733 Crown Point Rd. and holds meetings, socials and classes. For more information visit jaxgemandmineral.org.



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New legislation to alleviate flooding inspired by San Jose development

By Marcia Hodgson
Resident Community News

For many residents of the historic districts, the devastation experienced from Hurricane Irma's floodwaters was a wake-up call also heard by City of Jacksonville officials and Council representatives.

Members of the Storm Resiliency and Infrastructure Development Review Committee, an ad hoc advisory group established by Mayor Lenny Curry and City Council President Aaron Bowman, have worked diligently to write legislation amending the Floodplain Management Ordinance and City's zoning code, and revising the Planning Department's Red Book to improve both the maintenance and preservation of wetlands and floodplains, drainage and stormwater requirements to aid in the resiliency of the St. Johns River and Duval County.

Led by Committee Chair Sam Mousa, former chief administrative officer under Curry, and Vice Chair Lori Boyer, former District 5 Councilwoman, Ordinances 2019-331 and 2019-375 were filed with the City Council before both left office.

Several elements addressed in the legislation, which amends Chapter 652 of the City's Floodplain Management Ordinance, came as a response to the flooding ordeal suffered by residents in the Christiana Forest subdivision, adjacent to the San Jose Estates development on San Jose Boulevard, said Boyer, noting the new rules will apply to all of Duval County.

After suffering from standing water and soggy grass in their back yards for nearly two years, property owners from two neighboring residences filed a lawsuit Oct. 23, 2018 against the developer of San Jose Estates LLC seeking compensation to cover damage to their properties due to the developer's apparent refusal to properly fix a faulty stormwater drainage system on six parcels of land fronting San Jose Boulevard.

Drainage addressed in new bill

Five aspects of the new legislation address resident complaints Boyer received about the development of the San Jose subdivision.

First, it expands the survey area considered when designing drainage systems so that they will handle all water flowing onto the site from adjacent properties. "When you design a retention area, the requirement has always been that you can't impede natural flow," said Boyer. "Now it will be that when you design a drainage system, it has to accept all the offsite drainage coming from other properties that it would have accepted historically. The post-development condition has to be the same as the pre-development condition for the external properties," she

said. "This provision states when you are designing the drainage system, you need to look at a bigger surrounding area, not just the immediate adjacent boundaries."

Second, it addresses the time frame for the completion of the installation of the drainage system and the required maintenance of drainage (MOD) plan. "It's not just a question of whether the drainage system will work, but the amount of time spent from the time developers start making a mess by taking down trees and filling in the land to the time the drainage system is in place and working. Now you will have to provide upfront a plan as to how you are going to maintain an adequate drainage system for the surrounding area during the time of construction," Boyer said.

Third, developers will either be required to use A-3 type of soil, which is often used in road construction, or pay for a soil permeability study. "You can't fill with muck, clay or soil that doesn't drain well and impacts the quality and the flow of water onto neighboring properties. You either use A-3 or you prove to us the kind of soil you are using won't impact the groundwater flow on adjacent properties," Boyer said. "We couldn't say anything about what happened at San Jose Estates because we had no regulation that said this is bad filler. We just allowed fill."

Fourth, the new legislation views the "10-set," the site development approval permit, differently if the site lies in a floodplain. Currently, the 10-set has a five-year life span, while the floodplain permit lasts only 180 days. The new legislation treats the 10-set permit as the floodplain permit, causing it to expire within 180 days.

"You can get an extension, but what this means is if you are doing construction in a floodplain, you need to get it done, or you will have to come back for an extension and explain to the City why it is not done," Boyer said. "It recognizes that a floodplain is a lot more sensitive site than an upland area. Developments in the floodplain have a more direct impact on the neighbors than if you build somewhere else. This way, the City has a tool, a way to address interim challenges," she said, adding an inspection report will be required every six months to determine if the work is ongoing or abandoned, and whether maintenance, drainage or other issues need to be addressed.

Fifth, the committee plans to install new rules for tree removal on newly developed sites once it receives final results of a federally funded independent review of

Jacksonville's urban canopy and its effect on stormwater and water quality. Changes in the tree regulations will be added to the Planning Department's Red Book, she said. "If you take out a bunch of cypress trees, for example, we want to know if there is a formula for how much water the cypress trees absorbed," Boyer said. "If the trees are not going to be there, then that has to be considered in whatever design of mitigation you are going to do. There are many more things the committee is doing, but these are some ways we are addressing the questions and concerns that I saw raised by the adjacent neighbors at San Jose Estates," Boyer said.

Ordinance 2019-331 requires new construction or extensive renovations in a floodplain to be two feet above base elevation instead of the present standard, one foot. It also establishes a 25-foot setback for construction from floodways located on the FEMA map.

"If you are in San Marco or Riverside and you tear down an old house, you can't build the new one at grade if you are in a floodplain on a slab," said Boyer, noting new homes will need to be raised up from the site. "We want to make sure over time – because these houses don't just exist for 20 years but more like 50 to 100 years – as we experience flood events and tidal increases, the homes and businesses won't flood," she said.

Also, because floodways are channels where water runs out during storms, Boyer said it is important they remain unobstructed, hence the new 25-foot setback restriction to ensure breathing room on either side of the floodway. "Our goal is not to prevent the land from flooding as much as it is to make sure the people are safe," she said. "What we are talking about is new construction or demolition and reconstruction. We are not asking people to raze their existing homes."

Zoning changes

In Ordinance 2019-375, which will amend the City's zoning code, the committee has drafted legislation to establish impervious surface standards for development, which will regulate the amount of land covered by structures and parking lots that make it difficult for water to soak through. Currently, the City only regulates the amount of land covered by buildings and does not care whether property owners pave the entire site. "We will be like Jacksonville Beach,

Atlantic Beach and St. Johns County – everyone else," Boyer said. "The importance of the impervious surface standard is not to tell somebody they can't build a patio. It is to make sure when the drainage system for that property is designed, it will be designed as if the entire impervious surface coverage was built out.

"The standard is that you can cover 80% of your property with stuff that can't drain," Boyer continued. "When the first house goes into a subdivision, you are only covering 45% with the driveway, sidewalk, and house and patio, but the drainage system for that subdivision has to be designed to cover 80%. We want the drainage to be overbuilt because we recognize that over time people are going to come in and add a summer kitchen. Whether it's a commercial property and they build it in the beginning or a development that is done in phases, it doesn't matter. We've got to make sure they have a system designed that serves the whole parcel. We want to have global standards to make sure the design matches up with reality."

Although the committee received "good information" from the Army Corps of Engineers and Jacobs Engineering, a firm hired by the Jacksonville Electric Authority (JEA) to study the impact of tidal increases and sea-level rise on JEA infrastructure, it was unable to resolve bulkhead heights, drainage and outfall heights for city infrastructure. Boyer said the Public Works Department will distribute an RFP (request for proposal) to hire an engineering/design firm to help.

"We just completed the new bulkhead in Riverfront Park and part of Sam Mousa's comments in the meeting were that we should actually – right now while the concrete is fresh – add an extra portion to it because two years from now we will probably have to rebuild the whole bulkhead. But what height do we add to it? One foot? Two feet? We realized we really need more information.

"One of the things the committee has been very sensitive to is that a lot of these measures increase the cost of construction and the cost of homes," she continued. "While we don't want to make things unaffordable, we are trying to protect public health and safety. There is a positive benefit to all this, which is that these regulatory changes get us FEMA points on a scoring system – the CRS (Community Rating System). FEMA rates communities based on their regulations, and the rating gets you a discount on your flood insurance premium. We believe all these things will increase the available discount to property owners. We hope we are not only offsetting the increase in costs, but in the end making it less expensive for the property owner, because flood insurance is paid every year while the costs of construction are paid only once."

"Our goal is not to prevent the land from flooding as much as it is to make sure the people are safe."

– Lori Boyer, District 5 Councilwoman



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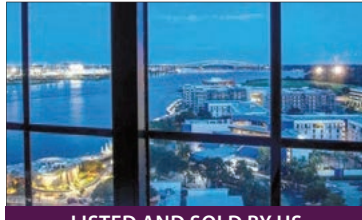
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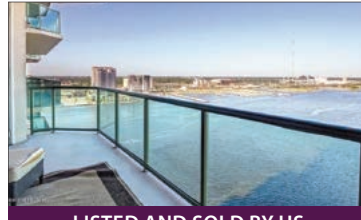
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1431 RIVERPLACE BLVD # 1408
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SOLD by Josh Nugent and Zack Williams! BEST PRICE EAST FACING UNIT @ THE PENINSULA! Amazing Eastern St. Johns River Views! Italian cherry kitchen cabinets and KitchenAid appliances. Beautiful Italian marble baths. Includes 1 assigned, covered parking spot and 1 assigned storage locker.



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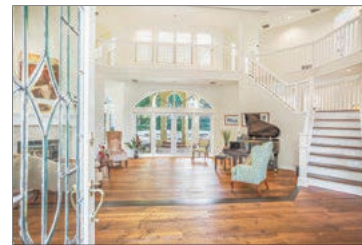
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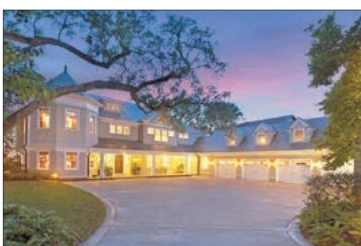
You must see the beautiful changes made in this gracious home. Situated on high and dry lot offering pool and backyard space for play area. Motivated seller's made improvements including gorgeous hardwood flooring throughout and newly painted interior. Downstairs guest suite perfect for visiting family or friends.



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4010 CORDOVA AVE
4/3-2,810 sqft.

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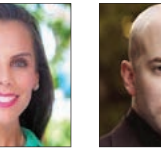
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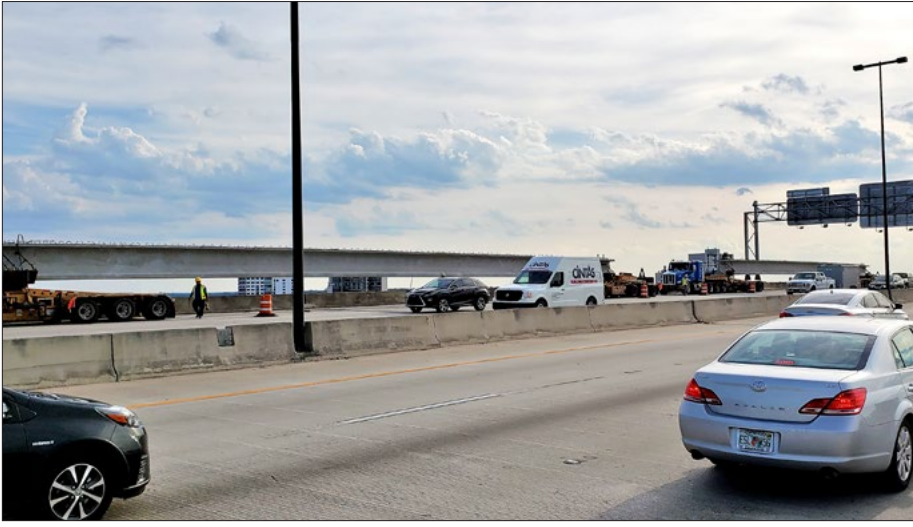


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Large sections of the pedestrian bridge were staged on I-95, in preparation for placement June 26

Work on Fuller Warren shared-use path is on schedule

Much progress is being made as far as the Florida Department of Transportation's Fuller Warren Shared-Use Path project is concerned.

"We are really, really on schedule right now," said Daryl Goss, community outreach specialist for the Florida Department of Transportation. "We're over half-way complete. We expect to have the project completed in late 2020."

The project will add an additional lane to Interstate 95 heading both southbound and northbound across the Fuller Warren Bridge, expanding the road from three to four lanes in each direction. Also included in the project is a shared-use path along Interstate 95 southbound for pedestrians and bicyclists that will be parallel to the southbound lanes. A 10-foot shoulder, a standard barrier and tall fence will separate walkers and cyclists from speeding traffic along the bridge.

The shared-use path that will connect the Riverside and San Marco neighborhoods

also includes Riverside Arts Market aesthetics on the Riverside shared-use path off ramp as an accommodation for art in public places. Architecturally decorative lighting features along the path will also be installed. New bridge elements on the shared-use path will mirror current bridge elements with special Riverside Arts Market and Cummer Museum artistic features, according to the FDOT website.

At press time, beams were being set on the western side of the bridge, said Goss. "Piers have been constructed on the east and west sides of the bridge. On the eastern side, the piers are constructed, and the beams are set." Although work is occurring on the east, west and middle portions of the bridge simultaneously, they are further along on the eastern side and the western side than they are in the middle, he said, noting there will still be another round of setting beams all across the river.

Bill to regulate short term vacation rentals withdrawn

By **Kate A. Hallock**
Resident Community News

After spending months serving on a committee to address the issue of illegal short-stay vacation rentals and then more months drafting and redrafting a bill to regulate what he has called "the wild West of Airbnb," immediate past District 14 Councilman Jim Love was, to his regret, unable to take the bill to the finish line.

"After much thought and great input from constituents I admire and organizations I respect I have decided to request withdrawal of the Short Term Rental Bill 2019-238," Love said in an email to Council President Aaron Bowman June 5. "After two rounds of trying to get it right I have come to the conclusion that this subject requires more thought and input and I am out of time. The Short Term Rental subject is too important to rush. It needs to be done and it needs to cover all the bases and unfortunately both versions did neither.

"I urge the new Council to take this up in a thoughtful way and do what's best for Jacksonville," Love continued. "That has always been my mantra."

When Love introduced the bill to City Council's Land Use and Zoning (LUZ) Committee June 4 it was with the intention the committee would hold a public hearing June 18, take action and then have the full City Council act on it June 25 so that the bill could be finalized, one way or the other, before Love's term ended June 30.

"The biggest reason for getting this done is to have contact information and for us, the government, to know how many people are doing this [renting out rooms and homes]," said Love at the LUZ meeting. "Right now, they are not registered anywhere, and it would make it a lot easier to collect taxes. Only 36 out of more than 2,000 [STVRs] are currently paying taxes. It also impacts the homestead exemption, so the property appraiser's office would like to know who is doing this."

City Council voted 14-0 June 11 to have the bill withdrawn, thus eliminating the need for action by LUZ.

After introducing a draft of Bill 2019-238 at a community meeting May 6 and a Planning Commission meeting May 9, Love was influenced by feedback to amend the original draft, which would have required short term rental property owners to have 24/7 onsite representation and to provide off-street parking, two regulations that created an uproar from STVR hosts.

The revised bill introduced to City Council May 15 was, in the eyes of residents unhappy about living next door to STVR properties,

substantially watered down and did not protect their rights.

In the days prior to his decision June 5 to withdraw the bill, Love received requests from Riverside Avondale Preservation's Board Chair Nancy Powell and Executive Director Warren Jones, and from incoming District 14 Councilmember Randy DeFoor to withdraw the bill.

"We have serious concerns about the process that this bill has taken to shortcut the proper hearings and/or citizen information meetings that will sufficiently inform the community about the potential impact of this bill on the future of our residential communities," read the letter from Powell and Jones.

"The Short Term Rental subject is too important to rush. It needs to be done and it needs to cover all the bases and unfortunately both versions did neither."

– Jim Love, immediate past District 14 Councilmember

"Some mistakenly believe that this is an issue specific only to Riverside and Avondale, which it is not. The bill will cover the entire city except for the Beaches, and it will change the zoning for every residential community in the city. San Marco, San Jose, Springfield, Ortega, Murray Hill, Arlington, Mandarin, Baymeadows and Southside communities and beyond will all be impacted."

RAP also urged the Council to reconvene or re-form the Subcommittee to "finish the work that was started and issue the report that was promised, and to be thoughtful about allowing sufficient time to prepare a legislation that will balance the various interests, and for the public to become aware of, and understand, the impacts of whatever legislation is put forth."

DeFoor, who had received a copy of the substitute bill on June 3, also wrote to Love asking for it to be withdrawn.

"I commend you for turning the attention of the community to this issue," she said. "In reaching a correct result for Jacksonville, it will be important that a process be used to allow maximum citizen input by all affected parties, as well as to study the successes, and failures of communities which have confronted this issue elsewhere. The time remaining in your term will not allow a full consideration of these issues, and haste will not be the friend of a good result. The best product requires the best process."

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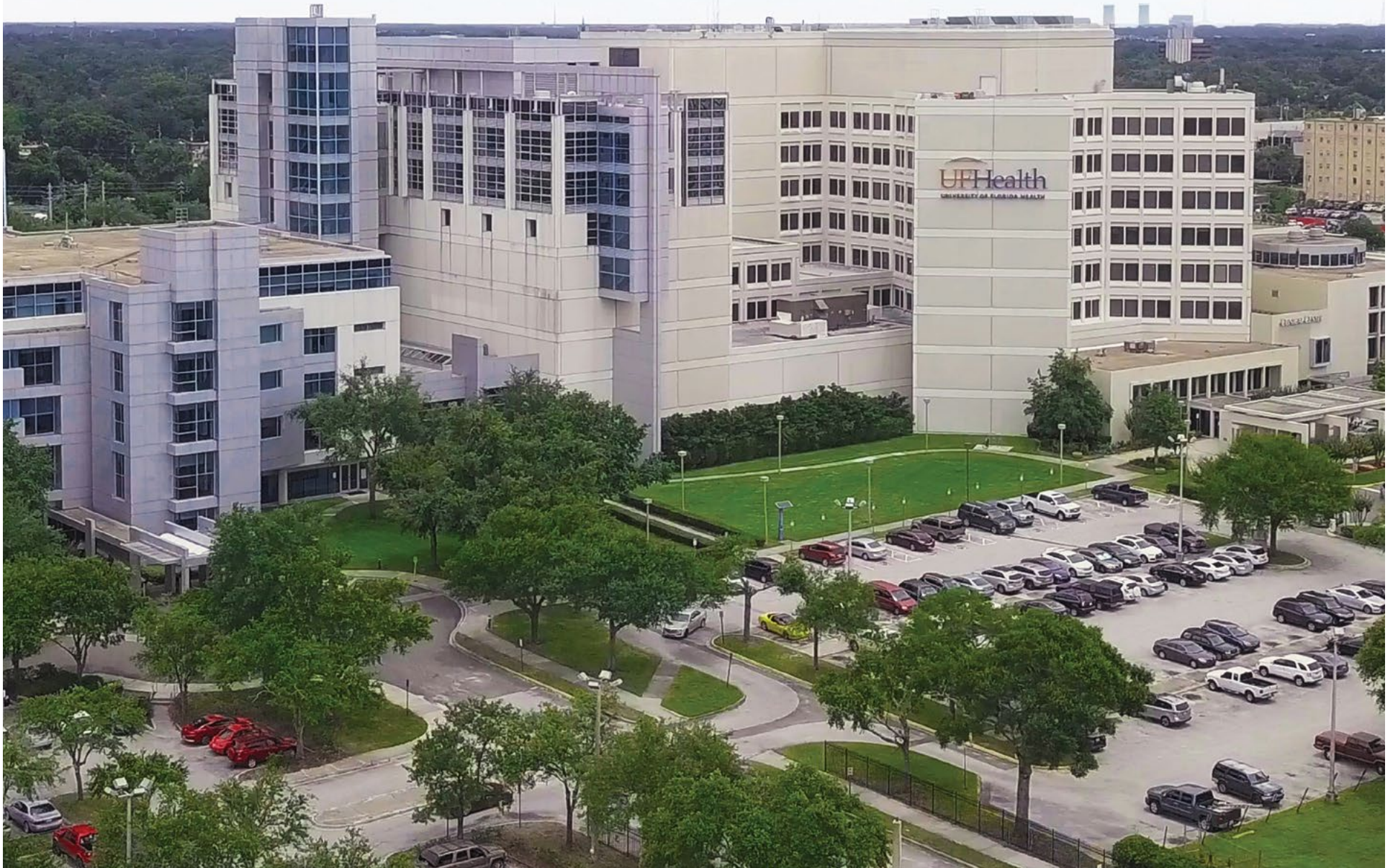
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International artist brings color to San Marco Square

By Marcia Hodgson
Resident Community News

A painter with international fame has used the exterior wall of Grape and Grain as his canvas to bring life and color to San Marco Square.

Remi Rough, a street and gallery artist from South London, was commissioned by Grape and Grain owner Jonathan Davis and Art Republic Co-Founders Jessica Santiago and George Georgallis, to paint the wall June 15 and 16. Art Republic is a Jacksonville nonprofit that curates spaces that actively contribute to human health and performance by combining innovations in art, design, technology and wellness, according to its website.

The San Marco mural is the 37th Art Republic-sponsored street work to be painted in Jacksonville. Other works can be seen in Springfield and within the Downtown core, with several painted in June on the VyStar Building downtown.

"This is something we wanted to do for our city – to make it something of a living museum where you can just walk around and see wonderful pieces of art throughout our city," said Art Republic's Mark Ferreira of Riverside, who assisted Rough with the work.



Art Republic Artist Director Darryl Green with London Artist Remi Rough, Art Republic Founders Jessica Santiago and George Georgallis and Art Republic Assistant Mark Ferreira of Riverside

The mural comes on the heels of a spruce-up effort for Balis Place, the street between Grape and Grain and the San Marco Theatre, led by E. Zimmerman Boulos of San Marco.

In May, Boulos enhanced the area by raising \$12,000 from 20 residents including Davis and his brother, Ryan, and partner Frank Sanchez and securing a \$4,500 donation from the San Marco Preservation Society to repair the sidewalk alongside the theater and simplify the landscaping.

The sidewalk never slanted properly, causing a constant pool of water to gather, making it wet and muddy for people to walk through, said Davis, noting with the spruce-up, he and his partners envision putting

outside seating in the area and occasionally closing the street, City willing, for outdoor events. "It's really great real estate. Once it is well lit, colorful, and there's outdoor seating and the landscaping is beautiful, it will be very different from the dark alleyway it was three years ago when it was constantly wet and muddy," he said.

The Davis brothers and partner Sanchez, owners of the San Marco Theatre, paid to trim the trees and put up string lights between the Grape and Grain building and the theater to add to the area's new festive appeal. Also supportive of the project were former San Marco Theatre owner David Blue, and nearby building owners Eddie Fink and Keith and Joyce Kimball, who own the Grape and Grain building.

"For many years I thought that side street between the buildings looked like an afterthought and that somebody should do something about it," said Boulos. "I finally realized that I was that somebody. The area was very dark at night and felt unsafe, so Lori Boyer had some additional street lighting added to the area," he said, referring to San Marco's former District 5 City Council representative. "Once I was finished, I was approached by Jonathan Davis and his brother, Ryan, about the possibility of doing a mural on the side of the Grape and Grain building. Jonathan said international artist Remi Rough was coming over from London to do a downtown project for VyStar and that he would like to pay him to do his building while he was in town."

Davis said the idea for the mural was born in March when he attended an out-of-town wedding and bumped into his old friends Jessica Santiago and George Georgallis, co-founders of Art Republic. At the wedding, he learned they were painting murals for VyStar in downtown Jacksonville, and he was able to discuss the idea of painting a mural in San Marco Square. On behalf of Grape and Grain, he gave a donation to Art Republic, and they agreed to organize the painting of the mural.

"I've always felt that San Marco and the Square could use something like that. You've got classic buildings, classic architecture, which are art in and of itself," said Davis. "I told Jessica and George, 'I've got the perfect wall for you.' They said to do something in San Marco would be an absolute dream, and we started to work on it from there."

Davis sent Rough photos of the Square and surrounding neighborhood before receiving sketches and color palettes back and then approached the San Marco Preservation Society with his plan. SMPS rejected the first design saying "we'd like to



Original art by London Artist Remi Rough covers the walls of Grape and Grain on Balis Place.

do something a little differently that could tie in better with what we feel the building is," Davis said, noting after a color adjustment switching the pink and black palette that was "more like South Beach," to more Tuscan colors, the board agreed wholeheartedly.

"The first color scheme was too dark for the Square," added Boulos. "I had my wife, Terry, and several of the designers here at OE&S come up with some alternate color palettes representing the Art Deco and Art Nouveau eras. Remi took those into consideration and came up with a second palette, which we chose to go with, because the colors were less saturated and more in keeping with the area."

"My biggest thing was making sure the design wasn't something that was going to be offensive to anyone, and the geometric colorful design we decided on would be hard to offend anyone. I think it's amazing. I was standing out in front of it the other day and no less than six people came up to take photos of it," said Davis, adding visitors will most likely be drawn into the Square just to see the work of an artist of Rough's international stature. "Pictures of this will be shared, tens of thousands or hundreds of thousands of times. It will bring recognition not only to the artist and the artwork, but also to San Marco."

Linzee Ott, president of the San Marco Preservation Society, said her organization fully supported the mural. "We want to highlight the arts. We've already got so much art all through Jacksonville, and we want to showcase that in San Marco," she said. "The San Marco Preservation Society has had some conversations about a potential competition or sponsorship of a local artist. That's something we would like to see more of – art on our walls or wherever we can get it," she said. "We weighed in on the scheme and the colors on this one. We offered our feedback on

the overall atmosphere and characteristics of San Marco. We want consistency. We have our identity and our history but at the same time we want to be a young, fun, new and hip community as well. I think there is a perception among the historic communities of Jacksonville that San Marco maybe a little older and a little more traditional and conservative than Riverside or maybe Springfield. I think this will help people to see San Marco differently."

Davis said logistics – especially time and rainy weather – were a big reason Rough did not paint the entire wall. He said plans are in the works to bring Rough and another artist back in November to paint something "super complementary" on the rear half of the building.

Although many who have seen the mural voiced the opinion that Bank of America perhaps should do something similar on its blank wall that faces the Square, Davis said he wasn't sure if putting up additional murals should become a trend in San Marco. "I think you take things one step at a time," he said. "Do I think it would be great to turn every open wall in San Marco Square into a canvas? Probably not. I think you need to do things one at a time. Find the right artist, find the right canvas, find the right artwork and then go from there. Things change. Times change. I think this one piece is fantastic. We will tackle the next one when the opportunity presents."

As he was painting, Rough said he enjoyed working in San Marco. "I did some research on the area, and it's kind of like going back into time," he said. "It reminds me of Hill Valley in the movie, 'Back to the Future.' The mural is very abstract, but that's what I do. They wanted to do it here because this is such a lovely wall – so blank and boring. It's nice to be able to give people free art. Instead of having to pay five pounds for entry, for everybody here, it's free."



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Beach Buggies offer free rides in San Marco



Nina Cliff exits the Beach Buggy van after taking a trip from 1st Place Sports to Southern Grounds Coffee House June 15.

By Marcia Hodgson
Resident Community News

If you live in San Marco, it is now possible to make your way anywhere from River Oaks Road to the Southbank without taking your car out of your garage.

Beach Buggies—San Marco, an offshoot of Beachside Buggies, the transportation company that provides free rides throughout the Jacksonville beaches, has arrived.

The service officially started up June 14 and is sponsored by several local hotels and some members of the San Marco Merchants Association.

The baby-blue buggies that were initially used in San Marco were ones that normally ferry passengers at the beach, said Billy Chenoweth, co-owner of Beachside Buggies. By the end of June brand-new, 10-seat passenger vans will be on the ground servicing San Marco, he said, noting that there was a delay in their being shipped from Japan.

"Business is picking up quickly," Chenoweth said on June 15 as he sat behind the wheel of one of two vans that ferry residents



Beachside Buggies Co-owner Billy Chenoweth stops to pick up passengers in front of Southern Grounds Coffee House June 15.

and tourists around San Marco Square and the Southbank.

"Today is our first Saturday. We expect a lot of riders today. The hotels are starting to get on board by send us a lot of riders and a lot of people off River Oaks Road are using us, which is good, and right at the border of our cutoff area. So far, our ridership is about half and half – half residents and half tourists," he added, noting that things get busy on the Southbank around 5 p.m. when residents at The Strand, The Peninsula and San Marco Place decide to go to dinner.

Residents and visitors to San Marco can call for a free ride by installing an app called Beachside Buggies on their smartphones. When loaded, the app will display a map of San Marco and the rider's precise location if they are within its boundaries. The transit company offers its shuttle service through San Marco Square and the Southbank as far south as River Oaks Road, as far east as Kings Avenue, and as far west as the river. All of the Southbank is covered by its service.

All rides are free, but tips for the drivers are greatly appreciated.

The service is offered Sunday through Thursday, 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. and Friday and Saturday, 11 a.m. to midnight.

"This is fun, and it's very convenient," said Nina Cliff, who was shopping in San Marco June 15. "I drove in from Southside and found a parking place early and never had to move my car. It was great being able to explore more of San Marco than I might have if I had been forced to move my car to find another place to park."



Downtown cathedral hosts special performance

"Celebrating America," a special one night-only musical performed by the All-American Boys Chorus, will be held Thursday, July 25, 7 p.m., at St. John's Cathedral, 256 E. Church Street. The 49-year-old nonprofit chorus includes over 100 boys ages 8 to 15 from Southern California. The stop in Jacksonville is part of a cross-country tour and St. John's Cathedral's excellent acoustics promises the show will match some of the other venues, such as the Kennedy Center, Walt Disney World and the U.S. Naval Academy. Visit jaxcathedral.org for tickets.

Residents share what it takes to draw them to public hearings

By Marcia Hodgson, Resident Community News

In a follow-up to an article in the June issue concerning the hoops citizens may jump through to learn when and where public hearings are being held on issues that may affect their neighborhood, *The Resident* asked residents in the historic neighborhoods if they have ever attended a public meeting downtown and, if so, what was the issue about. If they have never attended a public hearing, what issue would be important enough to draw them to the meeting, and how are they most likely to receive information about the issues and be notified of public meetings?



Yes. It was before City Council, and it was about getting a liquor license for Town Hall. I was part of the group that opened Town Hall. We needed a variance to get the liquor license

because of the churches. It was my job. There are orange signs on the street. I think I put up the one for Town Hall. I guess I get my information that way unless I'm working on a project.

– Jerry Mullen, St. Nicholas



No, I have not. I would think it would have to be something to do with the development of Downtown, like on the Northbank, Southbank or The Landing. That would make sense to me.

Maybe Springfield, something along those lines, development-wise. I live in The Peninsula. They send me an email or a newsletter or there is something in the elevator that would suggest it. That's how I would find out. I would not seek it out. It would have to find me.

– Bobby Hartley, Southbank



Yes. It was in front of City Council regarding the budget. I sat on the JCC as the mayor's appointee, so we were doing some budget-based meetings. I knew about it

through our meetings. If I were to go about some other issue, I would learn about it online. I would look for it on the city website. If I go to anything else, zoning or building issues in San Marco would be of interest. Anything regarding budget. Those are my biggest concerns.

– Jill Bechtold and Lily, San Marco



No, because of scheduling for my job. If I went probably the issue would be traffic. It is very hard to get from one place to another. It takes me a half an hour to go somewhere where it should

only take 15 minutes. I'd find out about it maybe online, in the newspaper or social media like Facebook. It's a good thought to check the city website, but I've never thought about it until now.

– Jan Lucas, St. Nicholas



Yes. It was a Land Use and Zoning meeting in the City Council chambers on the construction process for the WaWa that is being built at Emerson and Spring Park. I went there because we're from Philadelphia and we love WaWa, and I wanted to speak in favor of that WaWa being built in case there was someone who would be speaking something negative about it. I first heard it was going to be happening through a post on the website NextDoor.com. First it was NextDoor social media and I got a link to the city website from NextDoor. It's complicated to go to meetings like that because in the agenda for that meeting, it was only one small item on an agenda that seemed to go on forever. A lot of the items on an agenda like that are tabled, and they don't do anything about them, but still they are listed, and it lasts for pages. It was very hard to search. I've found a lot of the city sites are hard to navigate, and when you finally find the agenda it's also hard to navigate. But I showed up. I may have lucked out more than anything else. I didn't speak. I went there to speak, and I don't know what happened, perhaps they just didn't have the time. But when I go to these things – I've been to several before the County Commissioners in St. John's County about beach nourishment because we had a house there – I tend to speak a lot.

– Joe Honeycutt, San Marco



I have not because my work schedule hasn't permitted me to attend. If I were to go, it would probably be to hear about development in the downtown area. I'd like to see them do something wonderful with The Landing. I've been to Baltimore and seen theirs and to San Antonio and seen theirs, and I think it has a lot of potential. It's a good question as to how I would find out about a meeting. I don't think they are well publicized. I listen to NPR, and I do think they have a lot of information, but one of the downfalls in Jacksonville is that there is no central place to really go to get information on meetings, protests, and marches – things like that. It's kind of hit or miss. I get most of my information from the radio, but this is important because you want the people in the community to be active, and it seems that you always find out after the fact of the meeting. Things that were happening with JEA were slipping through when it was for sale or when they were going to take down the access ramps to go over the Hart Bridge because they don't want to obstruct a view. These are important issues for the city and for people who want it to grow and be successful. They should have a central place for information. Definitely.

– Jacqueline Ranart, Empire Point



Yes. I've gone to about 10, but I don't think I've spoken at any of them. The most recent were the waterfront activation meetings that Councilwoman Boyer was convening. This is a subject about which I feel passionate. We have a lot of water, obviously, in Jacksonville. It is a new topic and a new initiative. I was very excited about the content and Councilwoman Boyer did a terrific job in providing information to the community, so they are great meetings. They were logistically easy for me to get to. It was worth my time for me to participate and attend these. To be honest, I'm on Lori Boyer's email list. That made it very easy. I also follow the City of Jacksonville on social media, and they post a lot of those meetings. I think I've seen them on a combination of Facebook and maybe Instagram stories.

– Linzee Ott, San Marco



No. I would love to go to one of the meetings if they have public meetings regarding the future of Downtown and what they feel goes in next and what doesn't go in next. I would love to go to something like that. Honestly, I'm not really sure how you find out about those meetings, and how you get to them. I supposed if a friend said they were going to a meeting, I would go, but I never have anybody who tells me that, and I'm not sure how you would begin to find out about it. I did see something on Facebook that Matt Carlucci was trying to get a group together. Is there a community bulletin board somewhere? I would be more likely to go if there was an easy way to find out about these meetings and what they are talking about.

– Mary Jaycox, San Marco

ASK THE EXPERT

MEDIEVAL LESSONS IN TRADE POLICIES

The first railroads were built by the same people who built the manual tramways. They built the tramways with the same tools and jigs as the wagons. The wagons were built so their wheels would fit in the ruts of England's ancient long-distance roads. Those ruts were made by the Roman war chariots when they occupied England. And those chariots were built to fit the rear ends of two horses. So, if you struggle with change, you are not alone! This also illustrates the importance of understanding history's nuts and bolts.

In order to properly probe new trade policies, we must first go back to Northern Germany in the early 1600s. This was the age of guilds. Blacksmith guilds, leather guilds, shipping guilds, etc. Guilds ruled trade and the flow of information in their respective fields. During this same time, the printing press spread in availability and ease of use. In Northern Germany, there were two cities, separated by a mere 60 kilometers. One of these cities put domestic quotas in place for foreign merchants and only allowed the guilds to print and disseminate information, placing barriers on trade. The other city favored open use of the press and allowed the capital markets to freely flow without restriction. The first city was once the most powerful member of the Hanseatic League and was regarded as being equal with Rome, Venice, and Florence. That city is Lubeck, Germany. It now has a population of 200,000 and an economy mainly based on tourism. The second city is Hamburg, Germany. It is currently the second largest city in the country, the third busiest port in Europe, and was the seat of Germany's first stock exchange. Trade policies matter.

The United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement, also known as the USMCA, either named by the former Secretary of Defense, United States Marine Corps General James Mattis, or Victor Willis of the Village People, is one such trade policy we must look deeper into to understand the benefits and hindrances. The great positives of this deal are the protections on intellectual property and updating the rules on digital products, both of which are vital foundations to establish when modernizing any new trade deal and is an important framework moving forward as the United States is the primordial cauldron in these areas. However, the agreement is riddled with non-tariff trade barriers such as regional content requirements. Restrictions on where cars can be manufactured is an example.

The United States has benefitted from being the barrierless economy driven by capitalism. Our growth, innovation, and standard of living has been and is currently unmatched. As new change comes and fresh policies are created, we must view those through the lens of history in capital markets. This is the only way we will know if our 4 feet 8.5-inch-wide train tracks are taking us down the path of Lubeck or Hamburg.

Caleb Cronin is a financial advisor with Raymond James & Associates, Inc. Opinions expressed in the attached article are those of the author and are not necessarily those of Raymond James. The information has been obtained from sources considered to be reliable, but we do not guarantee that the foregoing material is accurate or complete.



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COMMUNITY & NEWCOMERS GUIDE

HISTORIC Life

2019-2020 Edition
Available this July



Unmatched personal service keeps clients loyal

Whether you call it personal banking, private banking or concierge banking, IBERIABANK Vice President Tanya Guydos has raised the bar for financial customer service in Northeast Florida.

When Guydos learned she would be charged with closing the bank's Ortega branch in 2018, she went the extra mile to help clients with a smooth transition to the Downtown or Ponte Vedra Beach location. She did more than step outside the box to find a solution, she threw out old notions of personal banking and went above and beyond to create ways to meet clients' needs.

By offering a variety of ways to handle deposits and other services, Guydos was able to retain the majority of her Ortega branch clients and, as a result of her highly personal service, has received many, many referrals from loyal clients.

"Closing the Ortega branch was very emotional," said Guydos. "It was family to me. I made good friends and had strong relationships that I was reluctant to lose, but we worked it out by offering remote deposit capture, mobile banking, courier services, or I visited clients personally to help them with their financial needs."

Guydos describes herself as a hand holder and laughed when she said her associates claim she holds on with both hands; but her approach to customer service sets her apart. Everyone is made to feel at home when they visit IBERIABANK's

Bay Street office downtown. They enjoy cheerful greetings, refreshments, and personal time with Guydos to catch up on her clients' lives.

"Our personal service and the way we treat our clients set IBERIABANK apart from other financial institutions here," said Guydos, who is known to have stashes of her clients' favorite sweet treats hidden in her desk drawer. "What sets us apart here is that we have that community bank touch. We're able to meet with clients, come up with creative lending solutions, make decisions locally, and look at different ways of doing it."

She even works as a de facto travel agent for clients, dispensing advice and recommendations for travel abroad to ensure they have access to their funds when and where they need it. "I get texts from clients when they are traveling overseas and have problems accessing their accounts," said Guydos. "It doesn't matter what time of day it is, I get on the phone and we make it happen. There's nothing worse than being in a strange country and not having access to your money."

Guydos humorously refers to herself as the bank's historian. After working for Merrill Lynch for more than 10 years, she was hired to start the flagship branch of Florida Bank Group's Jacksonville office in 2006 and then the opening of the Ortega office in 2009. "I can tell you who the



original shareholders and board of directors were," she said. "I still have many clients who have stayed through all of the mergers and acquisitions, who still call accounts by old and forgotten names, but I know exactly what they are talking about."

After Florida Bank Group was acquired by IBERIABANK in 2015, Guydos was involved in the changes in products and services, ensuring a smooth transition for her clients. She remained at the Ortega branch until it closed in August 2018, then moved to 135 W. Bay Street, where she is apt to meet clients on the corner of Hogan and Bay Street as they circle the block for

parking or require a quick transaction. "It's funny that we know our client's cars and can spot them before they even call the main line. It seems like I'm the local dispatcher - 'Mr. Smith coming up Bay...'. They appreciate that - it makes them know we value their time and their business."

"We really do go the extra mile for our clients," said Guydos. "They are why we're here. They take priority. People like to come here because they know they are going to be treated well. The personal touch - being there for our clients even on evenings and weekends - is what it means to be a community bank."

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*Poindexter to partner
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Attorneys Tad Delegal and James Poindexter

Attorneys Tad Delegal and James Poindexter of Delegal Law Offices, P.A. have partnered to form Delegal & Poindexter, P.A.

A graduate of Florida Coastal School of Law with a certification in business law, Poindexter, a native and resident of San Marco, joined Delegal's law firm as a law clerk in 2011 and was made an associate in 2015 when he was admitted to the Florida Bar. He also holds a Master of Business Administration degree from Jacksonville University. Licensed to practice in both Florida and Georgia, Poindexter currently serves as co-chair of the Jacksonville Bar Association's Government Relations Committee, executive board member of the Jacksonville Bar Association's Young Lawyers Section, and is treasurer of the National Employment Lawyers Association, Florida Chapter.

Delegal founded his law firm in June 1999. Over the past 20 years, he has built a labor and employment law practice that specializes in professional license defense, public and private employment litigation, non-compete disputes, employment and severance agreement negotiations, as well as public and private whistleblower claims in Jacksonville. Delegal, a San Jose resident, is the only member of the Florida Bar who is board certified in both Labor and Employment as well as State and Federal Government and Administrative Practice. Since 1991, he has served as president of the Jacksonville Bar Association (2017-2018) and currently serves as Chair of the Florida Bar State and Federal Administrative Law Certification Committee. He is also a member of the American Board of Trial Advocates.



Rufus Pennington, Daniel Iracki, Stefano Portigliatti, Janeen Kirch, David Thompson, Matthew Posgay, Howard Coker, Charles Sorenson, John "Jake" Schickel, Lindsay Tygart, Fraz Ahmed, Joel Harris

Coker Law attorneys named Super Lawyers, Rising Stars

Twelve attorneys at Coker Law have been selected to the 2019 Florida Super Lawyers and Florida Rising Stars lists. Each year, no more than 5% of lawyers in the state are selected by the Super Lawyers research team to receive the honor of being named a Super Lawyer. Only 2.5% are selected to be a Rising Star, which is composed of attorneys 40 years or younger, or who have been in practice for 10 years or less.

Four of the six attorneys named to Super Lawyer status practice in the area of Personal Injury – General include Howard C. Coker, Matthew N. Posgay, John "Jake" Schickel, and Charles A. Sorenson.

Rufus Pennington practices in the area of Professional Liability and Lindsay L. Tygart in the area of Personal Injury – Medical Malpractice.

The 2019 listing marks 14 years of receiving the distinction of Super Lawyer for Coker Law partners Coker, Schickel, and Sorenson, 11 years for attorney Pennington, and 10 years for partner Posgay.

The attorneys selected as Florida Rising Stars 2019 include Fraz Ahmed, Joel Harris, partner Daniel A. Iracki, Janeen Kirch, Stefano Portigliatti and David Thompson, all of whom practice in the area of Personal Injury – General.

**Women United lead way
in community change**

United Way Northeast Florida's Women United signature event, Up Close & Personal, took place May 16 at the University of North Florida. The event featured an all-female panel of honorees who shared personal, philanthropic and professional insights through intimate table discussions. Over 100 attendees came to network with Women United members and others leading the way in community change.

The honorees included Assistant Chief Lakesha Burton, Jacksonville Sheriff's Office; Katie Ensign, senior program officer, Jessie Ball duPont Fund; Iris Ivana Grant, CEO and founder, Genesi Group, Inc.; Dr. Diana Greene, superintendent, Duval County Public Schools; Dawn Lopez, Action



Honorees for United Way of Northeast Florida's Women United Up Close and Personal 2019

News anchor; Vicki Miller, president, National Provider Network – UnitedHealthcare Networks; Lisa Palmer, president, chief financial officer and director, Regency Centers Corporation; Jane Scofield, chief

financial officer, 121 Financial Credit Union; Xiao-Yu Song, global head of research and development, Johnson & Johnson Vision, and Sol Wynter, chief business partner, Stream of Services.

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Harby celebrates 40th year in family business

Hugh Harby, third generation owner at Harby Jewelers on the Southbank, marked 40 years with the family business in June. He joined his parents, George and Ethelyne, in the company in 1979 after graduating from the University of Florida. Harby earned his Graduate Gemologist degree from the Gemological Institute of America in 1980 and returned to Jacksonville to promote advancements in the industry.

“We started with high tech gemology equipment, then in 1989 we computerized our business. This was a big deal at the time. We became one of the first jewelers in Jacksonville to have a website,” said

Harby, whose grandfather founded the company in 1926.

Harby’s father passed away in 2002 and his mother recently celebrated her 92nd birthday. His son, Brad, joined the family business in 2007 as a fourth-generation jeweler. “I hope Dad enjoyed working with me as much as I enjoy working with Brad,” Harby said. “After 40 years, I am happy to say that I still enjoy what I do.”

Harby Jeweler’s is located on the 25th floor of Riverplace Tower, 1301 Riverplace Blvd., and has provided generations of Jacksonville residents with high quality and distinctive jewelry and loose gems for 93 years.



Hugh Harby, right, with son Brad, next generation leadership at the Southbank-based jewelry firm.

San Marco minister joins OneJax

Kyle Reese, former senior pastor at Hendricks Avenue Baptist Church (HAB) and longtime OneJax board member, has joined OneJax, an institute of the University of North Florida, as deputy director. He began his new position May 6.

In that position, Reese is responsible for providing leadership and management including implementation of the OneJax Board’s Strategic Plan and participating in policy making, financial management, community relations, fundraising, operations, programs and management of staff.

Reese has held his position at HAB since 2006 and joined the OneJax board in 2010. During that time, he chaired the Interfaith Committee and, together with Nancy Broner, OneJax executive director, hosts “Faith Matters,” a quarterly one-hour call-in show on WJCT 89.9-FM. The show discusses topical issues in and around the First Coast through the lens of faith.

Reese will continue at HAB as interim pastor while the congregation undertakes a search for a new head pastor. Reese also



Kyle Reese

serves on the Board of Baptist Health and the Rotary Club of San Marco as well as a moderator of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship. Reese has a Doctor of Ministry in Preaching from Northern Seminary, a Master of Divinity from George W. Truett Theological Seminary at Baylor University and a bachelor’s degree from Wayland Baptist University.

Wolfson Children’s Hospital Bass Tournament reels in more than \$300,000

More than 1,000 anglers in around 600 boats took part in the 30th Annual Wolfson Children’s Hospital Bass Tournament, a three-day event recognized as the largest bass fishing tournament in Florida and the second largest in the country. Proceeds of more than \$300,000 will support Wolfson Children’s Hospital’s heart surgery program and the new partnership with UPMC Children’s Hospital of Pittsburgh.

“This is what it’s all about,” said Tournament Chairman Brian Seay of Miller Electric in Jacksonville. “Giving back to our community and helping the children and families. I guarantee that at some point in your life, you will have your own story about Wolfson Children’s Hospital or will know someone who does.”

The Wolfson Children’s Hospital Bass Tournament began in 1989, when the director of the Plant Facilities department of Baptist Medical Center Jacksonville, along with several others, wanted to raise funds for technological advancements at Wolfson Children’s Hospital. Today it is the largest tournament in the state raising money for kids.



Wolfson Children’s Hospital President Michael Aubin (right) introduces tournament ambassadors Michael Scheibe (center) and Copal Lipnosky (left).



Posters of children served through Wolfson Children’s Hospital’s heart surgery program line the grounds at the annual bass tournament May 16-18.

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This 2,200-square-foot condo was fully remodeled last year and includes hardwood floors throughout and extensive crown molding for a touch of elegance. Single-floor living offers three spacious bedrooms, two baths, and a private balcony accessed from both the living area and the master bedroom. Public areas include a riverfront pool, party room with kitchen, and a card room. One underground parking space and storage unit included. Monthly condo fees of \$600 are among the lowest around for the urban lifestyle. Recent building improvements include new roof and elevator, a complete landscaping upgrade, new emergency generator and state-of-the-art fire alarm system, while LED lights in all common areas help the plaza go “green.”

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Southside United Methodist welcomes new pastor

The congregation at Southside United Methodist Church will welcome a new pastor on Sunday, July 7.

The Rev. Phillip Short is taking over for Rev. Bruce Jones, who headed the worship at Southside Methodist for the past 12 years. The United Methodist Bishop of Florida, Ken Carter, recently reassigned Jones to lead a congregation in Vero Beach.

Known to his congregants as "Pastor Phillip," Short has been an ordained minister for 32 years, having served churches throughout Florida including in Tampa (Palma Ceia), Seffner, Lake Wales, Stuart and Miami (Coral Gables). He was born in Tennessee but spent most of his life growing up in Leesburg, Florida.

Short earned an associate degree from Emory at Oxford, a bachelor's degree from Auburn University and his master's degree from Candler School of Theology at Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia.



Carmen, Giova and Rev. Phillip Short

Joining Short in San Marco is his wife of 30 years, Giova. Their grown daughter, Carmen, resides in Charlotte, North Carolina.

Short said he is looking to "find out what God is doing in the church and in the community and then getting the church to join Him." As a pastor, he has a heart for sharing the Good News, making disciples, doing mission work, and networking with other Christians and churches that desire to do the same. He said he and Giova are "very excited" about walking with Christ in and with the Jacksonville community while making it "home" in the process.

English-inspired neighborhood bar comes to San Marco



Posting House owners Stuart and Jude Green

With shows from Brit Box streaming exclusively on the "telly," Posting House is San Marco's new English-inspired neighborhood bar, a modern take on the traditional English pub.

Managed by San Marco's Riley Leuthold and owned by Stuart and Jude Green, natives of England who moved to San Marco five years ago from the Cotswolds, Posting House is meant to bring a comfortable, modern neighborhood bar experience to Hendricks Avenue near San Marco Square. With a curated list of craft brews, select wines, and gourmet small bites, it offers an intimate space for neighbors to relax and gather at the bar or in comfortable chairs to recharge after a busy day. In addition to its main room, Posting House also offers a semi-private room known as a "snug" with a TV as a place to host smaller groups or to just watch the game.

"We are trying to capture the atmosphere of an English pub and translate it to how it would work in our neighborhood. We want this to serve San Marco. We are not

trying to bring our culture here. We are trying to merge the two things together," Jude explained.

"In this neighborhood, people really love each other. They love their neighbors. We felt they needed more places to be with them in a conversational setting. We've never experienced the kind of people that look out for each other and enjoy being involved in each other's lives before we moved here," she said, adding that the idea for Posting House stemmed from Friday afternoon gatherings with her neighbors in her front yard. "So we are trying to do that on a larger scale here," she said. "We still do it, but it got too big and it was too much, so we thought, well, we're onto something," Jude said.

"We are not a restaurant. This is the place where you come before dinner or after dinner," she continued. "We're open until midnight Friday and Saturday, but most of the time it's Happy Hour, pre-dinner and post-dinner with more of a party vibe on Friday and Saturday."



NEFAR CEO William "Glenn" East presents a check to Haven Hospice's Jeanette Barber, volunteer, Clay Dzioba, volunteer coordinator and Sharon Jones, vice president of development

Charity fishing tournament nets nearly \$30,000 for Haven Hospice

For the 16th consecutive year, the Northeast Florida Association of Realtors (NEFAR) held its catch-and-release Charity Bass Fishing Tournament and Family Fun Day in Palatka to benefit Haven Hospice. The April 27 charity event saw 129 two-person fishing teams compete for prizes while raising \$28,826. Since its 2004 inception, NEFAR has raised and donated \$383,593 to Haven Hospice.

"NEFAR's annual Charity Bass Fishing Tournament is a highlight of our community affairs efforts," said Jeanne Denton-Scheck, NEFAR president. "We are happy to not only be involved in our communities, but also to be able to support the important end-of-life services provided to patients and their families by Haven Hospice."

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Pajcic attorney elected to office with justice association

Curry Pajcic was elected an officer of the Florida Justice Association at the FJA's annual convention in June. He will serve as secretary of the FJA for the 2019-2020 term. A resident of Ortega, Pajcic was also honored with a prestigious Golden Eagle for his contributions to the organization.

"It is an honor to serve as the Secretary of the Florida Justice Association, fighting for the rights of everyday Floridians. I pledge to be there to defend and preserve the constitutional rights of all of our citizens and guarantee they have access to justice," said Pajcic, a personal injury trial lawyer with the Law Firm of Pajcic & Pajcic since 1998.

FJA is dedicated to strengthening and upholding Florida's civil justice system and



Curry Pajcic

protecting the rights of citizens and consumers in our state. The organization works in the legislative, political and public arenas to ensure that Floridians know and understand the importance of their rights to justice and to make certain that these rights are safeguarded and protected.

Cantor Carrie Barry joins The Temple

After spending more than a year without a Cantor, Congregation Ahavath Chesed welcomed Cantor Carrie Barry into its fold on July 1.

Barry will provide song leadership, musical and Judaic teaching for congregants of all ages at The Temple. She will also lead the B'nai Mitzvah program and serve as co-clergy for both pastoral care and all life cycle events.

As Cantor, Barry brings more than a decade of experience to her new position as well as warmth of heart and disposition, creativity and innovation, according to Goldie Lansky, executive director. Rabbi Elizabeth Bahar, senior rabbi of the congregation said she is looking forward to the spiritual experiences they will create together. "Her strong vocal skills with the ability to sing in a variety of styles will infuse our worship. She encourages the congregation to sing with her as we praise God together."



Cantor Carrie Barry

Before coming to Jacksonville, Barry served several Florida congregations where she instituted cantorial concerts and religious school worship experiences. "I created a Rock Your Soul Shabbat monthly worship service with a band made up entirely of talented temple members. I am so excited to join with Friday Night Live, the Temple's congregant-led

vocal and instrumental group. Coupled with the Chorale, we will make music!" she said.

Raised in Coral Springs, Barry attended Vassar College in New York and received her Bachelor of Arts in Religion with both general and departmental honors. Upon graduation, she received her masters degree from Hebrew Union College—Jewish Institute of Religion Debbie Friedman School of Sacred Music in New York City.

Prior to coming to Jacksonville, Barry served the congregation at Temple Dor Dorim in Weston, Florida. Moving with her to Jacksonville is her husband, Ian, and their two sons, Blake and Eli.

Doggy day care focuses on making dogs happy, healthy and whole

After suffering a massive heart attack that nearly took his life, Mark McKenzie decided to change gears and do something that he enjoyed – taking care of dogs. In June he opened Central Bark, a doggy day care franchise with a focus on making dogs happy, healthy and whole.

Located at 5614 San Jose Blvd., Central Bark bases its programs on behavioral science, ensuring that furry family members gets the proper combination of play, mental stimulation and rest. In addition to day care, Central Bark also offers overnight stays, a dog salon and spa, enrichment classes, such as agility training, and a dog retail boutique.

McKenzie chose the San Jose location because there wasn't a doggy day care in the area, and it is close to I-95 and convenient for commuters in route to and from work. The community has been very responsive and supportive – a lot of people



Mark McKenzie and friend

have stopped in after passing by and seeing that the business was open.

"We are so happy to be here. We want to take care of dogs, make their lives better, and send them home happy at the end of each day," McKenzie said.



Maureen Mercho and Michelle Braun, of United Way of Northeast Florida with George Smine, Salesforce.org; Iris Ivana Grant, Genesi Group; Susan Towler, Florida Blue; Todd Mollitt, Baptist Health, and Lynne Smith, United Way Worldwide

Social good, sales unite to creating culture of impact

United Way of Northeast Florida and Salesforce.org teamed up to present an opportunity to explore innovative employee engagement strategies at the Jessie Ball duPont Center May 15. Over 100 attendees gathered to listen to experts from Salesforce.org discuss with a panel of community experts how companies in Northeast Florida are evolving their corporate social responsibility strategies. Participants also learned from industry leaders how innovative technology and philanthropy are transforming the workplace and engaging employees.

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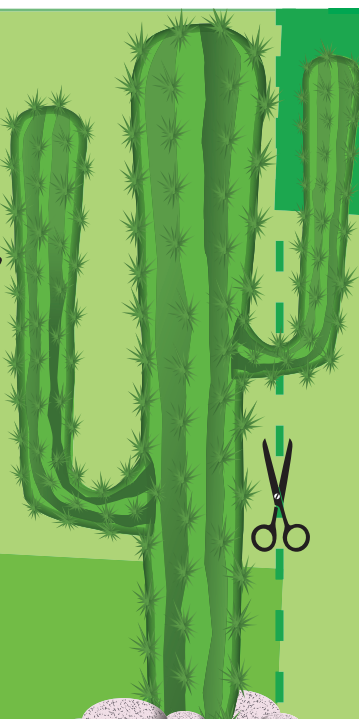
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Annual inshore slam was a grand slam for all anglers

In memory of their son and brother, Gary and Terry Roberts and their daughter, Casey, hosted the 12th Annual Clay Roberts Memorial Fishing Tournament, which raises funds for a scholarship in Clay's name for a graduating Bishop Kenny High School senior.

A total of 82 anglers registered for the competition, held June 15. Forty-one teams (including Juniors) weighed in fish, and 15 slams were weighed in at Beach Marine. The Captains Meeting was held the evening prior at Mudville Grille, where fishermen and their guests enjoyed a low-country boil.

The American Electrical Contracting team swept the slam, with Matt Lewis placing first at 12.04 lbs., Ron Schurr in second at 12 lbs., and Ashley Paulk third with 11.12 lbs.

Red winners included last year's scholarship winner, Connor Sidman, with a 7.67 lb. red as part of the Miller Electric Company team; Chris Kellem, Mandy Bowers Allstate Insurance, at 7.14 lbs., and Jeff Pope, Sleiman Enterprises, with a 6.95 lb. red for third place.

In the trout category, Bob Morris of Atlantic Coast Marine, took first with a 6.01



Matt Lewis, first place slam winner, with his daughter



George Harms, first place flounder winner



Bob Morris, first place trout winner, with his son and wife



Connor Sidman, first place red winner



James Schroeder, Junior Angler first place winner, with Terry Roberts

Photos by Aaron Mervin

lb. trout; Robert Girgis, The Fish Company, came in second at 5.07 lbs., and James Wray, TDG Plumbing Services, third at 4.05 lbs.

Flounder winners included George Harms, Bubba Burger, with a 3.71 lb. win, David Merry, Fluid Technologies, at 3.17 lbs., and Virgil Woofter, George P. Coyle & Sons, with a 2.67 lb. flounder.

First place in the Key Auto Company Junior Anglers, of which there were nine competing, was awarded to James Schroeder for his 5.69 lb. red, while Gavin Altman

pulled in a 3.65 lb. red for second place, and Talon Bordelon snagged a 2.11 lb. flounder for third place.

In River Or Ocean awarded the 12th Clay Roberts Memorial Scholarship to Lindsay Miller on May 23. Miller, a graduating senior at Bishop Kenny, was selected by the Scholarship Committee as the student who best emulated Clay Robert's spirit and values. She plans to attend Tallahassee Community College this summer and FSU in the fall.



Casey, Gary and Terry Roberts (Photo by Aaron Mervin)

Fine artist draws inspiration from local tree canopies

Former Naval engineer and fine art painter Kristin Cronic exhibited her art at a solo show at the Jewish Community Alliance, where nearly 100 attended an opening day reception June 2. The exhibit, which ran through June 25, was the second of a two-part show called "Canopies." The first part was held at St. John's Cathedral during the month of May.

Cronic said she had been painting nights and weekends for about five years while serving in the Navy. The weekend after she left the service, at seven weeks pregnant with her second child, her Pottsburg Creek home was flooded during Hurricane Irma. It was then she realized she needed to make a commitment to painting.

"This body of work highlights the trees of Northeast Florida, but it tells a bigger story. In our life, we are in a constant cycle of pursuing the unknown, taking risks, and then returning to baseline, only to begin again," said Cronic, whose parents are Ortega residents John and Patty Otterson. "I grew up under the canopy of oaks in Jacksonville, and when I returned after 10 years of serving in the Navy, I realized those trees represented a reference point to how much I had grown as a person in that time. Painting them became meditative and I began to see my own past with clarity. It is my goal for this body of work to inspire the viewer to either take the next leap, or to reflect on a recent risk they have taken."



John and Patty Otterson with Caleb and Kristin Cronic

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Modern American diner is a true classic

Trademark diner dishes with a next-generation flair are what you will find on the menu at the newly opened Derby House Diner in 5 Points. The landmark building at the corner of Park and Margaret Streets has been transformed into an eatery that throws back to the classic diner days, yet it has a modern interpretation.

The diner décor includes retro-style features such as a service counter with stools, tables with aluminum ribbed edges, vinyl seats and chrome accents throughout, and the menu offers traditional favorites such as grilled cheese sandwiches, patty melts and more. Vegan, vegetarian and gluten free options are also available.

“It’s classic diner food elevated in quality. We’ve taken a diner menu and made it appeal to all dietary needs,” said Chad Munsey, who co-owns the restaurant with Michael Schmidt. The two, who grew up in Jacksonville, also own the Bearded Pig restaurant in San Marco and Rec Room, a bar-arcade, also in 5 Points.



Chad Munsey and Michael Schmidt

When the space where the diner sits became available, they decided to take action. “It’s such an iconic space – we knew it needed to be a diner,” said Munsey. “We felt like we could breathe new life into it.”

Derby House Diner serves lunch on Mondays and lunch and dinner Tuesday through Sunday. Brunch is served on weekends from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Pajcic & Pajcic welcomes back former law clerk

Elizabeth “Betsy” Cardenas has joined The Law Firm of Pajcic & Pajcic as an attorney after three years with a Jacksonville insurance defense firm. Prior to that, she was a judicial staff attorney with the Fourth Judicial Circuit Court of Florida.

Cardenas has an undergraduate degree in social work from the University of Georgia and a law degree from Florida Coastal School of Law, graduating magna cum laude. While in law school, Cardenas worked as a law clerk at Pajcic & Pajcic, served as a legal extern with the Honorable James Klindt, magistrate judge for the Middle District of Florida, and as a judicial extern for the Honorable Roberto Arias, a Duval County judge.



Betsy Cardenas

Sotheby’s International Realty opens Palm Coast office



First Coast Sotheby's team of real estate professionals

First Coast Sotheby’s International Realty, local affiliate of Sotheby’s International Realty, the well-known international real estate company synonymous with luxury real estate worldwide, added to their family of North Florida locations with the opening of their Palm Coast office.

“The Palm Coast market is the perfect fit for our company because there are so many exquisite waterfront properties and private golf communities which have appeal to

buyers from around the world,” said Lou Izzo, co-manager and managing partner. “Plus, there is a sense that Palm Coast is on the verge of being ‘discovered’ and we want to be at the forefront of marketing this special oceanside community.”

First Coast Sotheby’s International Realty has been serving Florida’s First Coast since 1975. In addition to the new Palm Coast location, the company has offices in Jacksonville, Fernandina and Ponte Vedra Beach.

Ponce de León members enjoy cocktails in the garden

Members of the Ponce de León Society kept cool on a warm summer evening June 24, sipping cocktails in the beautifully renovated gardens of the Cummer Museum of Art and Gardens, and perusing the “French Moderns: Matisse to Monet 1850 – 1950” exhibition, which opened last month and runs through Sept. 6. The Society was founded in 1996 to recognize the museum’s highest level donors.



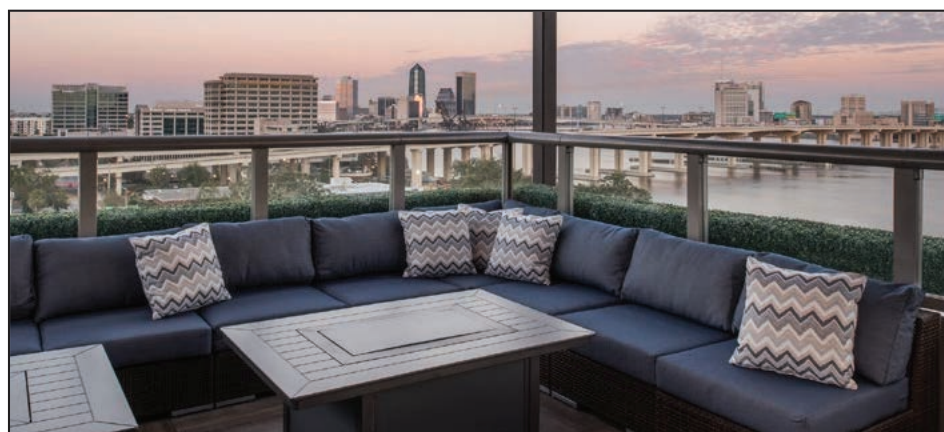
Jody Brandenburg, seated, with his wife, Janne, right, her daughter and son-in-law, Lorelei and Juan Carlos Figueroa



Gil Pomar with Nancy Pomar and Connie Read



Robert Tonsfeldt and Diane Cannon



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If it's September, it must be Delicious Destinations!

The 18th Annual Delicious Destinations – a five-star epicurean experience and fundraiser for the St. Vincent's HealthCare Foundation – will take place Sept. 6-7 at The Ponte Vedra Inn & Club. Gourmet food and fine wine connoisseurs have already made reservations for the most anticipated weekend of the year, so savvy diners mustn't hesitate to reserve their spot today.

Each year at the event, top chefs from around the country and local culinary superstars show off their finely-honed skills while contributing their time and talent to support community outreach programs at Ascension St. Vincent's.

Led by event partners The Ponte Vedra Inn & Club and Southern Glazer's Wine & Spirits, Delicious Destinations benefits Ascension St. Vincent's Mobile Health Outreach

Ministry, which includes rural outreach, urban outreach, and pediatric outreach.

"Our Mission is to help those in need, and we fulfill it year after year in large part because of Delicious Destinations, which brings together some of the most compassionate people in our region," said Virginia Hall, president of the St. Vincent's HealthCare Foundation. "Each gift to Delicious Destinations could provide a school physical that ensures a child can keep learning in the classroom, an educational book for a family who could not afford one, a vaccine for a homeless man to keep him out of the emergency department, free medication for a woman who is struggling to control her blood pressure, and so much more."

Event co-founder Hermann Muller, The Ponte Vedra Inn & Club's executive chef,



Delicious Destinations Committee

has often said, "There is a soft spot in every chef's heart for the opportunity to give back to the community while showcasing what they do best." As host chef for the 18th consecutive year, Muller will coordinate the visiting chefs and the menus, resulting in a foodie experience like no other.

Not to miss

On Friday, Sept. 6, the Celebrity Chef by the Sea Luncheon begins at 11:30 a.m. at the Ponte Vedra Inn & Club and will feature Chef Nathan Beriau, executive chef at Montage Palmetto Bluff, who will demonstrate recipes, ingredients and techniques, while Chef Muller, executive chef at The Ponte Vedra Inn & Club, with his team will serve the luncheon guests.

Muller will then hold culinary court Saturday, Sept. 7, at 6 p.m., at the VIP Preview Reception, an exclusive event where guests

will enjoy a wine tasting as they sample complementary culinary masterpieces prepared by Muller.

The main event, Delicious Destinations – A Gourmet Food and Wine Tasting, will follow at 7 p.m., featuring creations by chefs from the nation's premier resorts and pairings by Southern Glazer's Wine & Spirits. In addition, the silent and live auctions at Delicious Destinations offer friendly competition for those hoping to place the winning bids for enticing packages such as uniquely catered dinners, weekend getaways, and more.

To become a sponsor of Delicious Destinations or to make reservations for any of the events, contact Lauren Corley or Vanna DeLorenzo in the St. Vincent's HealthCare Foundation at (904) 308-7306, Lauren.Corley@Ascension.org or Vanna.DeLorenzo@Ascension.org, or visit deliciousdestinationsjax.com.



2019 Delicious Destinations Co-Chairs (left to right): Dr. Michael Brumback & Jenny Parker Brumback, Alan & Heather Creel, and Christopher & Aly Leeper



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Nemours/Wolfson welcome new endowed chair of pediatric surgery



Dr. Gary Josephson, Michael Aubin, Linda Wilkinson, Anna Neal, Beth Langley, Dr. Robert W. Letton, Jr., Kathy Letton, Katherine Forester, Robin Love, Erin Wolfson, Karen Wolfson and Julie Howard.



Beverly Wingate and Paris Owens, administrators with Nemours Children's Specialty Care, Dr. Gary Josephson, Nemours chief medical officer, with Valentino Ford, director of surgery for Wolfson Children's Hospital



Holly Peek, Dr. Karen Shimshak, with Dr. Jerry Bridgman, Wolfson chief medical officer and Dr. Carolyn Bannister

By Marcia Hodgson
Resident Community News

By holding a reception June 10 on the Kid's Walk that connects Wolfson Children's Hospital and Nemours Children's Specialty Care, the Women's Board at Wolfson Children's Hospital selected the perfect kind of symbolism to welcome Dr. Robert W. Letton Jr. into his new role as both the Albert H. Wilkinson, Jr., M.D. Endowed Professorship in Pediatric Surgery Chair and as chair of the departments of surgery for both Nemours and Wolfson.

"This represents the kind of symbol of the connectivity between Wolfson Children's and Nemours Children's Specialty Care," said Michael Aubin, president of Wolfson Children's Hospital, referring to the glass-enclosed bridge that connects the two facilities across I-95. "We are linked together, and our services are about how we go about every day to save children's lives and make their lives better. This is the link that allows us to go back and forth all day long to make that happen," he said before remarking that Letton's appointment is really an "extra exclamation point" in how great the relationship between Wolfson and Nemours is.

Letton, a board-certified pediatric surgeon, was previously the medical director of the Pediatric Trauma Program and director of Extracorporeal Membrane Oxygenation (ECMO) Program at Children's Hospital of Oklahoma in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma,

where he was also the Paula Milburn Miller Endowed Chair in Pediatric Surgery. He received his undergraduate degree from Davidson College in North Carolina and his medical degree from the University of Kentucky College of Medicine. After completing his general surgery residency, including a year as the Bradshaw Research fellow at Wake Forest University School of Medicine, he spent an additional two years of training in pediatric surgery at the University of Oklahoma. Letton also served in Kuwait and Germany with the U.S. Army Reserves medical corps.

"Dr. Letton's experience and national reputation in pediatric surgery and trauma will further enhance our already wonderful programs," said Dr. Gary Josephson, chief medical officer of Nemours Children's Specialty Care. "His passion for our mission in caring for children, and his interest in promoting research, education and clinical care will assure we will provide the region with the most innovative models in caring for the children and families we serve."

"I never had the great fortune to meet Dr. Wilkinson. I hope to live up to his commitment to clinical excellence, which I've heard all about as well as his legendary compassion and respect for, not only the patients and their families, but also everyone involved in helping to take care of the children regardless of how large or small their role might have been perceived in the process," said Letton. "I truly appreciate the

opportunity to be here as the first Albert H. Wilkinson, Jr., M.D. chair of surgery, and I will not take lightly the responsibility of establishing a precedent and legacy of excellence that he would have been proud of. Just like the walkway we are standing on, this endowment is truly representative of what we can accomplish when two great institutions with similar goals and dreams – Nemours, Wolfson – come together. As the chair of surgery at Nemours, I look forward to continuing to grow the partnership with Wolfson Children's Hospital as we strive to become the center of pediatric subspecialties regionally and nationally."

Aubin said the Albert H. Wilkinson, Jr., M.D., Endowed Professorship in Pediatric surgery was one of three ways the Women's Board had chosen to honor Wilkinson and his legacy as one of the first and finest pediatric surgeons in Jacksonville. Wilkinson oversaw the transition of Nemours in Jacksonville from a small children's hospital to a large multi-specialty outpatient care clinic and laid the groundwork for the partnership between Nemours and Wolfson Children's as it stands today. In 2013, Wilkinson died at the age of 86. To honor his memory, The Women's Board is raising \$4 million over five years to fund not only Letton's endowed position, which will enable him to lead and improve pediatric surgery in Jacksonville into the future, but also to build a trauma center at Wolfson and spur on innovation by purchasing

robotic surgical equipment so the pediatric hospital can pursue non-invasive surgery. All three elements were especially important to Wilkinson during his tenure as a pediatric surgeon at Nemours, Aubin said. "Albert would say, if you are not innovating, you are standing still," said Aubin in his opening remarks. "He was a big proponent to develop minimally invasive surgery and robotic surgery in the future. A robot is a million dollars so the Women's Board committed \$1 million so we could do it."

In addition to Aubin, also speaking before the crowd were Wilkinson's son, the Honorable Gary Wilkinson, Letton, and Josephson. Women's Board Executive Director Sally Parsons joined Josephson in literally presenting an academic chair, inscribed with the title of his new position, to Letton to mark the event of his becoming the first Albert Wilkinson, Jr., M.D. Endowed Pediatric Surgery Chair.

Also attending the event were Wilkinson's wife, Linda, and his daughters and some of their children; Hugh Greene, president and CEO of Baptist Health; Don and Karen Wolfson; Dr. Warner Webb, who was Dr. Albert Wilkinson's longtime medical partner, and his wife, Sherry; Katherine Forrester, president of The Women's Board; Councilman Jim Love and his wife, Robin, who is a Women's Board member; and Dr. Eric Sandler, chairman of the board of Wolfson Children's Hospital, among others.



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pressure, a perfect quality for the courtroom. Betsy has also worked as a staff attorney for the 4th Judicial Circuit and she cut her teeth on the defense side working in one of Jacksonville's premier insurance defense firms. We are thrilled to have her back and know she is happy to be here.

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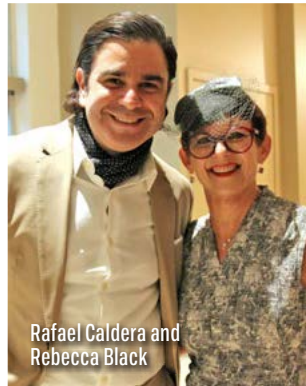
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Un temps bon était eu par tous: A good time was had by all

Decked out in the fashions of early 20th century France, patrons of The Cummer Museum of Art and Gardens were treated to an exclusive first look at the new exhibit, "French Moderns: Monet to Matisse, 1850-1950," June 13. The last of three dinner parties this season raised funds to support the Riverside museum. Almost 300 guests mingled throughout the museum and its gardens while an artist painted the scene as it unfolded. The canvas is available for purchase as a nice memento of the evening.

No one went home hungry

Executive Chef John Kirby of San Jose Country Club and Executive Chefs Darrell Moore and Jeffery Harris of the 12 top culinary artists competing in the 14th Annual Taste of Golf competition at the 3 Palms Grille at the Oak Bridge Club at Sawgrass. Moore was also the 2018 Judge of North Florida.

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Epping Forest Yacht and Country Club Executive Chefs Darek Stennes and Tim Turner with Justin Santos



Jerry Townsend, Sr. with Precious Townsend and Carmen Townsend



Donning periwinkle jackets to commemorate their Champions of Hope golf tournament win last year were John Haley, Victor Blanco, Steve Sullivan and Lee Creasman

by from Taste of Golf event

ek Stennes and Tim Turner of Epping Forest Yacht and Country Club were among at TPC Sawgrass Clubhouse June 6. Winning the event was Chef Ryan Moore of ages' Choice winner last year. The event netted more than \$100,000 for The First

Champions for Hope color the evening purple

Guests colored the evening purple as they gathered to celebrate the Funk-Zitiello Foundation's 3rd Annual Champions of Hope gala at the TPC Sawgrass Clubhouse June 7. Hosted by Tommy and Judi Zitiello - Fred Funk was out of town - the regal event was held to benefit the J.T. Townsend Foundation and pancreas cancer research at the Mayo Clinic. Several former Jaguar players were among the crowd that enjoyed tunes from The RiverTown Band during the sumptuous dinner dance. The JT Townsend Memorial Choir serenaded the group during the opening prayer.



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Gabriel House of Care hosts premiere of “2HEARTS”

Gabriel House of Care hosted the premiere of the Hollywood movie “2HEARTS” April 6 at the Downtown Library Conference Center. Jacksonville is among three cities, along with Los Angeles and New York City, chosen to host premieres. Money raised from the premiere benefited Gabriel House of Care.

“2HEARTS” is an independent film based on the paralleling lives of Jorge Bacardi, a fourth-generation member of the Bacardi Rum family, his wife, Leslie, and his 19-year-old organ donor Christopher Gregory. This romantic journey unites two families whose lives become connected and changed forever through Jorge’s need for a double lung transplant and Christopher’s decision to be an organ donor. The Bacardis provided the lead gift to build Gabriel House of Care to honor Christopher and to help other organ transplant families with affordable housing in a community of healing setting.



Honorary chairs Jorge and Leslie Bacardi

“This is a tremendous recognition for Gabriel House of Care and the work we do as well as an amazing opportunity to promote the Jacksonville film industry,” said Valerie Callahan, executive director, Gabriel House of Care. “It was very special evening that honored both Jorge and Christopher and their lasting legacies through Gabriel House.”

The film was produced by Silver Lion Films veteran Hollywood producers and brothers Lance and Conrad Hool and written by screenwriter Veronica Hool. The cast includes actors who have appeared in shows such as “Once Upon a Time,” “Designated Survivor,” “Narcos” and “Riverdale.”

Knights of Columbus help make dreams come true at Zoo

Thirty members from six Councils of the Knights of Columbus volunteered to grill hamburgers during Dream Night at the Jacksonville Zoo June 7.

Every year during Dream Night volunteers from many organizations in the community donate their time, talent and tangible goods to provide a wonderful and joyous evening for special needs children and their families.

Over the years, the Knights of Columbus have played an integral role in the event by donating their time and grills to cook 3,000 hamburgers to pass out to the families. This year, Knights from Fr. Maher Council 648 in Murray Hill, St. Paul’s



Knights of Columbus members from Bishop Kenny Council 1951 in San Marco include Kim Ashley, Scott Thompson, Scott Collins, Steve Lloyd, Joe Rogers, Dick Collins. Not pictured: Rich Holtz

Council 15312 in Riverside, Council 17029 in Wesconnett, Bishop Kenny Council 1951 in San Marco, St. Luke’s Council 10626 in Middleburg and St. Patrick’s Council in North Jacksonville were represented among the many volunteers.

Mystery Trip party offers dinner getaways

Three lucky winners were whisked away for a unique dining experience by plane, yacht, or car before rejoining The ILRC’s (Independent Living Resource Center) annual fundraiser June 8 at Malone Air Charter. Limos provided by Tom Bush Family of Dealerships ensured guests rode in style to dinner at River City Brewing, enjoyed a cruise on the St. John’s River, or flew to St. Augustine for dinner at Columbia Restaurant.

For the other 150 guests who missed this year’s chance for a mystery trip, there were live and silent auctions, wheelchair art created during Abilities in Art at the Riverside Arts Market, and other unique items, including a mystery wine box, from local artisans and businesses – which raised over \$27,000 all in the name of helping those with disabilities.



Tyler Morris, Angela McKinley and Pam Sohn with Samantha Rodgers, Bubba Miller and Margarita Maldonado



Maria Dykman, and Christy Young-Beneat won a mystery trip by yacht at the annual fundraiser for The ILRC (Independent Living Resource Center) June 8. The women enjoyed catering by Biscottis aboard the catamaran Now and Zen.



Danielle Frei, Jose Morales and Toccarra James



Angela Merritt and Tammy Evans with Rebecca Black, Monica Hernandez and Denise Palmer

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San Marco couple transforms 1929 Tudor into Cape Dutch showplace

By Marcia Hodgson
Resident Community News

For “serial renovators” Bill and Mary Jaycox, the transformation of 913 Sorrento Road from a 1929 English Tudor into a South African Cape Dutch-style home was one of the hardest projects they’ve ever worked on.

In January 2018, the San Marco couple moved into their new residence, with its commanding perch on the shores of Lake Marco. The pressure to move quickly was on because their home at 1840 River Road had suffered substantial damage from Hurricane Irma’s floodwaters, requiring a speedy restoration of its first floor. Sold to a couple from Colorado shortly after the storm, the Jaycoxes had less than four months to purchase a new home and finish the River Road restoration.



Bill and Mary Jaycox with their dogs, Moose, and puppy, Jasper

Immediately after moving into the Sorrento Road property, they began demolition. As workmen tore down walls to recreate the first-floor kitchen and living area, the couple was forced to live for eight months in the first-floor master suite with their dog, Moose.

“The house is one thousand times different than it was before. This is the hardest project we’ve ever done,” said Bill, a professional architect, who has partnered with his wife, an interior decorator, to renovate six to seven homes during past 30 years. “Every time we do a project there are always challenges and changes. It’s a good thing I do this for a living and Mary is good at what she does, because otherwise it would be too hard.”

Mary agreed. “We started ripping out the walls the day after we moved in. As they were coming down, we were designing it, which is not a good way to do it. But we were under so much time pressure that we had to do it that way. We would spend every weekend figuring out the tops of capitals on columns, then they would build them on Monday. This was probably the toughest house we have ever tried to transform,” she said about the renovation which ran into several hundred thousand dollars. “The challenges in this house were unbelievable.”

Prior to living on Sorrento Road, the couple had renovated homes on Cordova Avenue, Barcelona Avenue, Alcazar Avenue and River Road. “We’ve turned one-story houses into two-story houses and vice-versa. We’d already lived in Italian-, Tudor-, and Spanish-style homes so we thought it was time to do our Cape Dutch house,” said Mary. “We haven’t torn down any of our



913 Sorrento Road as it looks today

homes, but we have radically renovated them all,” added Bill, noting 1840 River Road was originally a red brick Georgian house that they converted into an upside-down Italian villa, where the second floor houses the kitchen, master suite and living area allowing residents a spectacular view of the river from 10-feet up, while kids’ rooms, the garage, and storage area were on the ground floor.

Adding to the situation’s complexity was that Jaycox and his wife had worked on two renovations back-to-back in the months before and planned their daughter’s wedding in the midst of the upheaval. When Hurricane Irma hit, Jaycox had nearly finished renovating the old St. Francis Animal Hospital building on Mango Place, where he added a second story to create a contemporary office building to house his architectural firm. Although he and Mary had put their River Road home up for sale a few months before Irma rolled in, they were forced to speedily restore the ground floor before the new owners arrived to close on the house. “Even though it was a disaster, there was a blessing because Bill still had a team of contractors over at his office,” said Mary. “Other people had to wait months for contractors while their homes got worse with the mold. Within a week our house was gutted to the studs. During the process, we lived upstairs.”

As 1840 River Road’s closing deadline neared, the couple searched for a house in San Marco that could be transformed into the contemporary Cape Dutch Colonial home they dreamed of. They purchased 913 Sorrento Road, a four-bedroom, three-and-a-half bath home, for \$825,000, according to the Jacksonville property appraiser’s website. “We were looking for something we could work with,” said Bill. “This one had substantial structure and was on a

beautiful lot, which commands the whole corner of the lake. We liked the idea we could open it up to the lake.”

One reason the home so desperately needed to be renovated was of the six rooms downstairs only one, the two-story sunroom, had a lake view. “Nobody ever looked at it and asked, ‘Why would I put a lot of money into this – redo the kitchen – and make it so there is no view of the water?’” said Bill.

Many of the rooms were “quirky,” he said. Although the house was a Tudor, it had a lot of art deco elements in it. The living room had tray ceilings only 7.5-feet high, and the dining room ceiling was equally low with a dome in the middle painted with clouds, cherubs and blue neon lights.

Upstairs, a closet was missing in a guest bedroom. Tall windows in the former master suite – a room with no corners and built-in cabinets – allowed no space for a bed or other kinds of furniture. Another bedroom with walls paneled in Honduran mahogany was an obvious study, and both full bathrooms were adorned in 1929 black tile with the former master bath having its toilet placed right next to a sunken jacuzzi tub. The upstairs master bath looks somewhat like an “Egyptian temple,” said Mary, noting that, like the master bedroom, it has no sharp corners. “A lot of these rooms weren’t very functional. I think that’s why nobody bought this house,” said Bill. So far, they have added a closet to the guest bedroom and replaced the windows in the upstairs master with smaller ones so that a bed can fit underneath. They also have plans to pull out the sunken tub and replace it with a shower and toilet room.

A third-floor loft provides a comfortable “man-cave” with spectacular views of San Marco Lake.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 29

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The exterior of 913 Sorrento Road before the renovation



913 Sorrento Road as seen from Marco Lake today



913 Sorrento Road as it looked in the 1920s



913 Sorrento Road as seen from Marco Lake in the 1920s

Off the downstairs master bedroom suite was a wooden bridge that led to a large uncovered wooden sundeck atop two boat slips on the lake. “It looked like a marina, it was so big,” said Mary, adding they will probably take the sundeck down and just have a covered single boat slip. “If you were in this room (the master bedroom), all you saw was the dock and handrail. You couldn’t really see the water,” said Bill. Meanwhile, the first-floor master bath has an octagonal window in the shower looking out toward the lake, but no tub. “That’s where I saw my first alligator, when I was in the shower looking at the lake,” said Mary. Adjacent to the master bedroom is an outdoor hot tub, which they will keep. An unusual short hallway also connects the master bathroom with the garage.

“So many people looked at this house when it was for sale and said it was so crazy, funky and weird. One person described it as feeling like they were on a cruise ship. It had stainless steel rods instead of more decorative home-like banisters,” said Mary. “There were walls everywhere downstairs, and we wanted an open concept floor plan. We saw we could remove those walls and make it into what we were looking for without too much trouble.”

On the ground floor, the couple kept the original cast-stone fireplace, front door, and built-in bar, which they relocated within the living room. They removed all the walls separating the six ground floor rooms to make one large open living space. They also removed the wall separating the kitchen from the living area, rotating and reusing a bank of expensive cherry cabinets made by Palazzini Brothers, Inc. The goal was to allow the lake to be viewed from the kitchen, said Bill.

The adjacent breakfast room was transformed into a sizable laundry room. They

closed off the laundry room entrance to a staircase leading upstairs, allowing access to those stairs from the living room only. “The house was oriented so that the kitchen and the breakfast room overlooked the garden and fountain on the east side. The rest of the house was kind of internal,” said Bill, “We put in a 2,000-pound steel beam through the middle of the house and took all the load-bearing walls out.” They also brought some decorative Red Tidewater Cypress beams circa 1940, that were left over from their initial River Road home renovation 15 years ago, to use in the living room. The result is a wide-open comfortable living and dining space. “We’ve already had a party for 80 people, and it flowed beautifully,” said Mary.

Sixty-seven windows, most originally installed in 1929, were replaced. Substituted with new energy-efficient windows were large, single panes that spanned two stories in the sunroom. “We literally had to smash them and let them fall to the ground. They were just plate glass,” said Mary. “It was a two-story glass box, but we needed to change the proportions because they were not substantial enough,” said Bill, estimating the windows alone cost at least \$100,000. “We know how to squeeze every last bit of juice out of a dollar, so we get a lot for our money when we go shopping for building supplies. Also, we have no contractor. Bill acts as the contractor. That probably saved us \$100,000 right there,” Mary added.

Upstairs the couple removed a set of French doors leading to a loggia so the former master bedroom would have more wall space, then they removed half the balcony and took down a large diamond-shaped crystal chandelier that was blocking the lake view.

Although they have not yet turned their sights to the 1,400-square-foot first-floor



Second-floor French doors were removed as was part of the former balcony. The work of art behind the Kudu trophy is wallpaper selected by Mary Jaycox



The Jaycoxes can entertain more than 80 guests comfortably in their grand living/dining area



A side deck off the master suite is a comfortable place to read the paper in the morning.

master suite, that will be next. The master suite leads onto a new outdoor Brazilian redwood deck they installed in place of the wooden bridge. It faces the lake and provides the perfect place to enjoy a morning cup of coffee.

Although they normally agree on most everything, the couple nearly had a “knock-down, drag-out” fight about whether to get rid of a spiral staircase in the living room. Mary wished to preserve it. Bill felt it blocked the view and wanted it removed. “I bring a different perspective from Bill,” Mary explained. “I was adamant the stairs had to stay.” With a spiral banister that’s beautifully faux painted to look like marble, Mary ended up winning the round.

Meanwhile, outside, they added a Cape Dutch front façade, filling in an octagonal front window in the upstairs master bath. The entire exterior was covered with white

waterproofing cement because the original bricks were leaking profusely. “People think we painted the house white, but we didn’t. There is no paint. Nothing,” Bill said.

They also added a front-yard gathering place with swing chairs, which was Mary’s idea, to share wine in the evening with their neighbors, and grassed over a gravel amphitheater in the side yard. “Before, the yard was separated into three compartments – a gravel amphitheater, a wooden bridge and a paver patio,” Bill said, noting sod was laid down April 1, just in time for their daughter’s wedding.

When all renovations are finally done, this house will likely be their forever home. “We’ve matured enough with our taste and our design that this is ultimately where we’ve been heading for years,” Mary said.

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World War II veterans share their stories

By **Kandace Lankford**
Resident Community News

The day Edward Baker graduated from high school is one he will never forget. In one hand was his diploma and in the other was his military induction orders. World War II was in full swing and he had been drafted into the U.S. Navy. The year was 1943. "I was an 18-year-old boy and didn't know too much about what was going on," said the San Jose resident. "I was young and looking for a little adventure anyway, so I didn't worry about it."

Baker was assigned to the Garfield Thomas, a destroyer escort that provided escort service against submarine and air attack for Navy vessels and convoys. "We dropped hundreds and hundreds of bombs," Baker said. "It was our job to protect the convoy."

He recalled how tedious it was to get 190 ships through the isthmus when the Navy was building a force to stop the invasion that was coming from the English Channel. "Having a whole bunch of ships made us a sitting duck because the ships had to line up and wait their turn to go through."

The only time he recalled being afraid was when a German submarine launched a torpedo at his ship with a dead aim. A buddy of his up on the bridge saw the torpedo coming, but it stopped short of the ship as the submarine succumbed to the depth chargers that had been dropped just moments before the torpedo was launched.

As a Detroit native, one of Baker's boyhood dreams had been to attend the University of Michigan after graduating from high school – a dream he never had the opportunity to fulfill. It just so happened that one of the first friends he met in the military was an all-state football player from Ann Arbor, Michigan.

"We were marching one time with everything we owned. It was 2 o'clock in the morning and I couldn't take another step farther, so I just threw my stuff on the ground. This guy behind me turned out to be the guy from Ann Arbor. He picked it up and threw it over his other shoulder – he was pretty strong," said Baker. "I was tired and wore out, but it didn't bother him none. He picked it up and said, 'Come on. Let's get going.' He helped me get through that march. Not too long after that, we were on the ship and he fell overboard and drowned. It broke my heart."

Another experience that Baker defined as "stomach churning" still haunts him to this day. Some of the military transport

ships used during the war were old merchant ships that weren't necessarily in tip-top shape. One of them had engine problems and fell out. Baker's ship was the closest to them and was commanded to go out and stay with them, with the caveat that if the engine wasn't repaired within two hours, they had to leave. "We had to leave them, and that still bothers me," he said in an anguished voice. "It was hell to pull away and leave them there – it just didn't seem right."

Although he didn't choose to go to war, Baker, now 95, has no regrets about his three years of military service. "I was willing to serve my country, wherever they put me. I was proud to be an American," he said. "I was lucky to go there and come back in one piece."

For Violet Keels of San Jose, it was her adventurous spirit that prompted her to volunteer through the American Red Cross to help with the war effort. At the age of 21, she was in her last semester of college to be a business teacher when she decided to do something different. "I didn't want to teach to begin with and this was my chance to do something that I thought would be worthwhile. I've never regretted it," she said.

The 97-year-old has a vivid recollection of what transpired during that time and recalls with clarity even the tiniest details. She started with the American Red Cross in England, near Liverpool, but she wasn't satisfied with being so far removed from what was going on. "I told them I wanted to go where the action is, and they transferred me to Paris where I was with the 82nd Airborne Division."

Keels and three other girls moved from base to base with the 82nd Airborne Division. Each girl had her own club and her own driver. Women who volunteered for the Clubmobiles were popularly referred to as "Donut Dollies," since one of their biggest tasks was making doughnuts for the servicemen.

Delivering doughnuts, coffee, and cheer to enlisted men was a big part of her job, but more importantly, she listened to them and got to know them. "I encouraged them to keep in touch with home," she said. "Several came back and said, 'My mother was so glad to hear from me,' which made me feel like I was doing a good job."

When enlisted men came back from the bombing raid in German-occupied Nijmegen, Holland, Keels met them at the train, offered them coffee and refreshments and invited them to the club that night. She had a big sister-like protective



Violet Keels and Edward Baker, residents at Starling of San Jose, recall World War II as if it happened yesterday.

instinct when it came to the soldiers, most of whom were younger than her.

She often wrote letters to home, giving accounts of her days and experiences in Europe. She recalled getting a response from her mother, asking her to write on only one side of the paper. For safety reasons, Keels' letters were screened before they were mailed. Portions of her letters were being cut out and her mother couldn't understand them.

Crossing the ocean for the first time was one of Keels' most harrowing experiences. The ship's captain detected a submarine, so he cut the engine and the ship sat still for four hours. "We had gone the northern route, and the captain told us that if anything happened, we could only survive for about five minutes in the cold water. The other girls and I agreed that if the ship went down, we would stay aboard and go down with it rather than getting in the water and letting something eat us," she chuckled.

D-Day was another unforgettable experience. "We were told to stay in our quarters. We were not allowed out because they were still dropping V2 bombs over London.

It was scary. We sat there and held our breath and prayed that nothing would happen to us. We lost so many people – it was terrible."

Berlin was her last station. She and the three other girls that served the 82nd Airborne Division had the distinction of being the first American women in Berlin after the war was over. Upon leaving Berlin, she received the warmest welcome home.

General James Gavin saw that Keels and her three cohorts came back with the division. They were greeted in New York City with a ticker tape parade, followed by a special dinner at the Waldorf Astoria. "He thought enough of what we had done to talk to the Red Cross and have us come back with the men," she said. "Even though it was us four girls with all those men, they knew what we were doing – we were there to help, not to pick up a man."

She served for a little more than two years but the memories have stayed with her throughout her life. "It was difficult in a lot of ways – there were a lot of sad things, but the good things made up for it. I always tried to encourage the men that things would get better."



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After reviving a ‘dying parish,’ Assumption’s Father Fred retires

By Marcia Hodgson
Resident Community News

After 17 years at the helm of Assumption Catholic Church and School, Rev. Frederick R. Parke – lovingly known to parishioners as “Father Fred” – is ready to retire.

As of July 1, the longtime parish priest handed over Assumption’s reins to Father Jason Trull, former pastor at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic Church in Palm Coast, Florida.

“I feel that we have been greatly blessed, and I have been greatly blessed in these 17 years here at Assumption,” said Parke in an email. “I would have liked to stay longer, but my health simply would not permit that. I leave here with mixed feelings: sadness in parting with a great gathering of people and joy as I look forward to some rest and unstructured time ahead. I will make myself available to other parishes as my health allows in the fall for weekend help, but I intend to keep my distance from Assumption so as to allow my successor to become established as the new pastor.”

During Parke’s tenure as priest, Assumption Parish has grown both in its physical plant and spiritually. When he arrived at the St. Nicholas church in 2002, he discovered an uninspired congregation and a church campus in disrepair. “The rectory was in very bad condition and the church was in poor condition. The school had around 325 students and people told me that the word was that Assumption was a ‘dying parish’ because everyone had moved to the suburbs,” he said, noting the 5:30 p.m. Mass was attended by less than 200 parishioners and collections ranged between \$8,000 and \$11,000 weekly.

Parke went to work, first moving Mass to 4 p.m., which immediately quadrupled attendance. He also began “listening sessions” around the parish, allowing any organization or neighborhood group to host one. “I attended 14 sessions. The rule was I did not want to hear about what happened before me, but rather their hopes for the parish going forward. I also said I would not comment on what I heard. The only talking I did was to tell them about myself to let them get to know me,” he said.

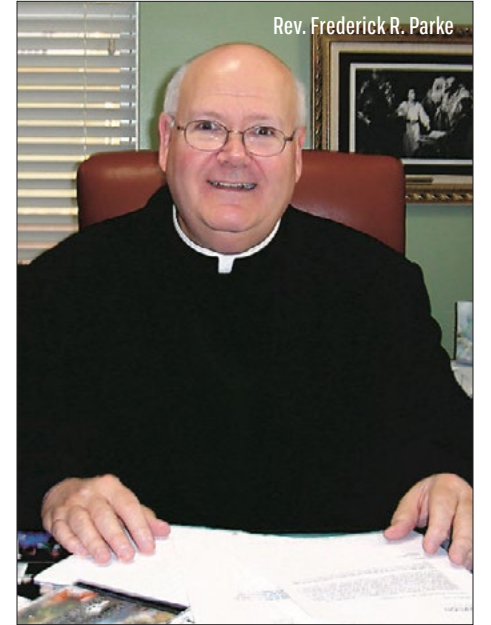
Through the listening sessions, Parke learned there was a need for a gym/family center and church members were worried about school registration, poor liturgies and a general lack of enthusiasm. He made the school, gym/family center his first priority and soon sought to engage an architect, who donated his services, to design a courtyard with a statue of Christ in the quadrangle between the main building, hall and middle school and convent area. Paving, planting and lighting came to the quadrangle in his second year.

To help resolve the spiritual issues and get things on track he brought Perpetual Adoration ministry to Assumption. “As soon as that ministry got going, the parish began to blossom as well as the school,” he said. “I account all improvements to Adoration.”

Within a few years the income and size of the parish doubled, and the school began to grow along with activities and ministries. Also, during his tenure, the Servant Sisters of the Home of the Mother took residence in Assumption’s upper convent, a gym/parish family center was built, and 23 more classrooms were added. In the church, additional restrooms were

“I feel that we have been greatly blessed, and I have been greatly blessed in these 17 years here at Assumption.”

— Rev. Frederick R. Parke



built, air-conditioning equipment and the roof was replaced, the interior was decorated, including a redo of the altar area and a new baptismal font. “Today, the church, which was built in 1950, is essentially a new building,” he said, noting the work came from three large donors who gifted \$1 million.

Parke’s last “brick and mortar” project was the construction of a new Adoration Chapel, which was donated by a single parishioner. The cost was \$400,000, and it was completed in one year. The former chapel space was transformed into an “Apparitions Memorial Hall” with four statues of apparitions of the Blessed Mother and 800 engravable marble panels for memorialization.

He also brought in professional cantors to bring dignity to the liturgy “in keeping

with the traditional norms of celebration,” and insists on holding an annual Fall Festival to make money and bring the parish together on the church campus.

In addition to reaching members by greeting them after most services, during coffee hour, and through a full breakfast put on by the Men’s Club once a month, Parke started a welcome reception in the rectory twice a year to greet new members.

“On average we register 20 to 30 new members each month. I sign a welcome packet that is mailed to them. A printed invitation is sent separately followed by a personal call. Sadly, only a small percentage attends the receptions. I think some Catholics feel they might be asked for a donation or something if they attend. People who do attend are pleasantly surprised,” he said.

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San Marco author learns about life through care of disabled son

By Marcia Hodgson
Resident Community News

The life that Chris Gabbard shared in his new book, "A Life Beyond Reason: A Father's Memoir," would seem like a nightmare to most people. Yet within his memoir, the Colonial Manor resident goes beyond a feel-good story about how to make lemonade if life hands you lemons. Instead he recounts how, by diligently caring for his cognitively impaired, physically disabled son, he was able to learn to the real meaning of love, replacing his life's ambitions and his strong belief that an "unexamined life is not worth living" with the understanding that his son was a person deserving of life.

An associate professor of English at the University of North Florida, Gabbard has lived in the San Marco area since 2001. After his son, August, died at the age of 14, he spent more than four years writing his memoir about their life together and the insights his family learned from caring for him. His book, recently published by Beacon Press of Boston, may be of special interest to residents in the San Marco area, many of whom often spotted August as he stood upright in a gate-trainer in front of his home on Old San Jose Boulevard.

Although most may not have known August intimately, more than 100 in the community attended his 2013 memorial service, which was held under a tent in the front yard of Joe and Suzanne Honeycutt's home near the Duck Pond, next door to the Gabbard residence. Gabbard will read excerpts of his work at a book-signing event held at San Marco Books on Wednesday, July 11 at 6:30 p.m.



Just before Father's Day, San Marco's Chris Gabbard shows off a box of his book, "A Life Beyond Reason: A Father's Memoir."

Life took a dramatic left turn for Gabbard and his wife, Ilene, in 1999, when August was born at a high-end San Francisco teaching hospital and medical mistakes were made. "His was a botched birth," Gabbard said, noting "all signs were normal" up until August was born. The outcome was a boy inflicted with brain damage (Hypoxic Ischemic Encephalopathy) who was forced to live as a spastic quadriplegic – a person immobile and unable to crawl or hold himself up in a chair without being strapped in. August was also cortically blind, and so severely impaired he had the cognitive abilities of a three-month old, unable to speak, feed or dress himself, or to go without wearing a diaper for his entire life. In fact, August might still be alive and 20 years old today if, in 2010, he had not had complications from an implanted device inserted in his body with the purpose of reducing his spasticity, Gabbard said.

Prior to August's birth, Gabbard had been an academic on the fast track, having earned his Ph.D. at Stanford University. At that time, he was a disciple of Enlightenment thinkers with a firm belief in reason and the reliability of science. "I used to think if you can't examine your life, then your life is not worth living, but now I say it's the life without love that is not worth living," Gabbard said. Life after August was born became especially hard, not only because of his son's condition, but also because a California law made it impossible for Gabbard and his wife to sue for malpractice. The Gabbard family, which two years later included daughter Cleo, struggled financially after moving to Florida because it took several years for August to obtain a Medicaid waiver from the state to assist with his humongous medical bills.

The transition from feeling that caring for August was ball-and-chain to loving life with him was not instantaneous, Gabbard said. "If I were a younger man, and you told me this was my future, I would have run screaming, torn my hair out, and said there is no way I'm going to do that. The rational thing would have been to smother him with a pillow. That's why the book is called "A Life Without Reason." That was something I had to think about. If I was a reasonable person, I would have smothered him, and nobody would have known the difference because he was so impaired. But I didn't want to smother him. He gave me too much joy. He made me think, as a professor, about what makes us human and whose life is worth living," he said. "I had wanted to be a great scholar with my publishing and my teaching when I got my Ph.D., but I realized that couldn't happen because of August. The time demands were too great.



Chris Gabbard and his son, August, sit in their San Marco breakfast room before August's death in 2013.

Then I had an epiphany. I decided to become a great dad instead."

Gabbard said he learned many things by caring for August including patience and how to let go of life's ambitions. "You have to be patient when you take care of someone like this because you have to be his hands and feet," he said. Caring for him "slowed down time, so you felt like you were living in a different time zone," he said. "You have to learn to be patient or you will tear your hair out and all you can do is seethe with anger, but I was never angry with August because I always felt I was on his side. The things that happened to him were not his fault. He didn't cause this to happen. He was the victim of these things happening to him. I always felt like he and I were a team."

Explaining August's medical problems and his family's legal difficulties trying to

receive compensation from the medical community that caused his condition are sub-themes of the book but not the main one. "My real reason for writing this book was that I wanted to tell of the joy of living with him and my experience being with him," Gabbard said. "He was a delightful little creature, even though he couldn't see, and he could hardly move. He laughed a lot and was a very joyful, jolly little fellow. He was quite a delight to be with, and I never felt when I was taking care of him that it was pointless," he explained.

"The book is dedicated to Harriet McBryde Johnson, who said, in the context of a New York Times article, that taking care of a disabled child can be a beautiful thing. I remember when I first read that saying 'What?' but soon after, I said to myself, 'I'm going to make this a beautiful thing. I'm going to make this into a work of art.'"



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THE WAY WE WERE: MARY JANE BLANCHARD

BY KAREN J. RIELEY
RESIDENT COMMUNITY NEWS

Mary Jane Blanchard has many memories of growing up on Felch Avenue and in San Marco; hanging out with two close girlfriends; teachers who inspired her to become a teacher; and classmates and friends, some of whom help her today, because she is now homebound.

Mary Jane's mother, Dorothy Louise Burrell, moved to Jacksonville from Wellborn, Florida, in Suwannee County after she graduated from high school in the early 1940s. Dorothy's sister, Bessie, followed her, and they lived together in a rooming house on Laura Street. Eventually, Dorothy's other sister, Lois, moved to Jacksonville, too, and lived at 2158 Felch Avenue.

"The sisters moved to Jacksonville to work and send money back to help the family," Mary Jane said.

Her grandparents, Edith Knight and Marsdon Wynn, were sharecroppers who originally settled in Suwannee County. They followed their daughters to Jacksonville in the late 1950s.



Mary Jane Blanchard in the yard of the house she grew up in on Felch Avenue in 1977

"Aunt Betsy had one of the first daycares and kindergartens in Jacksonville – Burrell's Kindergarten and Nursery," Mary Jane said.

Mary Jane's mother met her father, J.O. Blanchard, through friends from Suwannee County, and they married in 1946. They moved from Jacksonville to McAlpin in Suwannee County and had three girls, Edith born in 1953; Mary Jane, born in 1954; and Mimmie, born in 1957.

In 1966, Mimmie was in a Jacksonville hospital with a staph infection for more than a month. Mary Jane's mother worked all day in the Live Oak hospital and then drove to Jacksonville to spend the night with Mimmie. To add to the family's stress, Mary Jane's father had a nervous breakdown and left the family.

"It was just too much for my mom to handle, so when I was 12, we moved in with my grandmother in Jacksonville," Mary Jane said. Her grandmother lived at 1904 Felch Avenue. Her Aunt Lois had bought a house

next to her own home as an investment. She rented it to Mary Jane's mother, and they lived there until a house at 2051 Felch became for sale. When the house at 2041 Felch became for sale, Mary Jane's mother bought it as rental property. Mary Jane has lived in that house a couple of times through the years; it was sold in 2012.

Mary Jane's mother lived in the 2051 Felch Avenue house until she moved to Mandarin in 1985, when Mary Jane and her second husband bought the house from her mother and lived there until 1991.

Mary Jane met her two best friends when she started sixth grade in Jacksonville – Vicky Hill Crowell and Karen Keisling. "Vicky lived in Ardsdale, I lived on Felch and Karen lived on Arbor Lane." The girls rode bicycles together in the area just south of Craig Creek in San Marco that was once known as Oriental Gardens.

The girls occasionally sneaked over to Philips Highway, too. "Felch dead-ended into a big huge vacant lot owned by the railroad. We could cross a big ditch and then the railroad track and end up at Philips Highway." Mary Jane remembered the boys in the neighborhood building forts and playing in the vacant lot.

"Philips Highway had shopping center then with a Pantry Pride on one end, J.M. Fields on the other end, Montgomery Wards toward the back and all kinds of little shops in between," she said. "There was a slot car track where guys would race."

The girls loved to visit San Marco shops, too. "I saved my lunch money so that I could buy a cookie at Mim's Bakery or nice but inexpensive gifts at Geisenhoff's Gift Shop." She also remembers ladies' clothes at Nancy Scott and Boluns, shoes at Utsey's, fabulous material at The Silk Shop and beautiful silk flowers at Peterson's 5 and Dime.

Mary Jane started at Hendricks Avenue Elementary School halfway through her sixth-grade year. Coming from a Suwannee



Jeanette as a toddler



Mary Jane Blanchard's mother, Dorothy Louise Burrell Blanchard; her daughter, Jeanette Marie Danson; her grandmother, Edith Knight Wynn; and Mary Jane Danson (at that time)

County elementary school that had only 65 students, Hendricks Avenue was a major change. She found herself in Lillian Walker's home room.

"I had always been a smart kid and was double promoted. But, thank God, my mother put me back in my regular grade because she knew public school in Jacksonville was going to be so different," she said.

Lillian taught language arts in the cafeteria with an overhead projector which Mary Jane had never seen before. "They were so far ahead of what I had learned that I was terrified, but Lillian stayed after school with me and caught me up."

Lillian planned fun projects for her students, like the country report that each student did. Lillian also had each student write a letter and address it for Lillian to mail to the student at a later time. "Lillian's daughter found a stack of those letters after her mother died and through Facebook was able to reunite some people with their letters," she said.

Lillian was famous for her operettas. The Spring 1966 operetta was "Babes in Toyland." Every afternoon two casts and a chorus rehearsed. Everyone got to participate in some way. Mary Jane was a toy shop worker.

She moved to Landon Middle School in the seventh grade. She found it exhausting to go up and down the stairs to class. "I had to go lay down and rest in the dean's office almost every day. I told my mother I needed lighter shoes."

When she started receiving Cs on her report card, she knew something had to change. "I had never made Cs before, and I knew it was because I was staying home sick so often," she said. "I told myself that

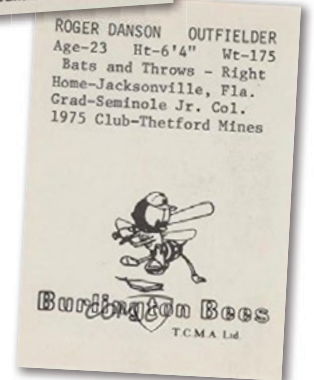
I had to stay at school or people would think I was dumb."

It wouldn't be until she turned 30 and almost died, in 1984, that she was diagnosed with myasthenia gravis, a chronic autoimmune neuromuscular disease that causes weakness in the skeletal muscles. "Before my diagnosis, people would tell me I was just depressed or anxious," she said.

When Mary Jane became a library aide in eighth grade, she met the boy who would become her first husband, Roger Danson. He was in ninth grade and played baseball.



Roger Danson baseball card, 1976



CONTINUED ON PAGE 35

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Mary Jane Blanchard's high school senior photo

for Hendricks Avenue Baptist Church, where Mary Jane is a member and used to be a bell ringer, until her disease prevented her from doing that.

After a year teaching at West Jacksonville Elementary School, Mary Jane's favorite teacher, Lillian Walker, made sure she got accepted at Pine Forest. "It was my privilege to teach with Lillian for about five years."

Mary Jane remembers other great teachers who inspired her to become one. Leland Mims and a Mr. Barkey (she doesn't remember his first name) team-taught civics in her-ninth grade year at Landon.

Lloyd Bragoz taught American literature at Wolfson. "He taught us how to write academic papers with really good sources," Mary Jane said.

Emory Cook taught AP American history at Wolfson. "We learned so much about original sources. We had to really know our stuff. Every day he would come to class, perch on the corner of the desk and tell us stories."

Bill Lyne started teaching at Wolfson High School in 1969. In 1972, Mary Jane was in his political science class of handpicked students. "We had the only political science class in Duval County at the time," she said.

Mary Jane participated in the first high school presidential mock convention at the Civic Auditorium organized by Lyne. High school students from the entire county participated. Presidential candidates Shirley Chisholm and John Lindsey, and Oscar winner Warren Beatty for George McGovern addressed the attendees.

"I just loved teaching at Pine Forest," she said. "It was a fifth- and sixth-grade center then. All of the students were from the neighborhood. They went to Hendricks or San Jose Elementary, then Pine Forest for fifth and sixth grade, and Landon for seventh grade. We had a really good PTA and so much support from families. Lillian did



Mary Jane's 1984 wedding to Bruce Carte

Mary Jane and Roger both went to Wolfson High School after Landon. She remembers that Wolfson had no air conditioning and no windows. "It was on a cow pasture and when it rained the building smelled like a cow pasture," she said.

The couple dated through her senior year. Mary Jane graduated in 1972 and went to Stetson University, and Roger started playing Minor League Baseball. She had scholarships to attend Stetson but decided to enroll at the University of North Florida after her freshman year. She graduated in three years with the goal of becoming a teacher.

They married in 1973 and had a daughter, Jeanette Marie, in 1975. For six-and-a-half years they traveled the Southeast wherever Roger needed to go to play baseball. Then they divorced in 1979.

Jeanette Marie attended Landon, Stanton, and Wolfson, before moving to Durham, North Carolina for her senior year. She graduated from UNC-Chapel Hill. Now Jeanette Yates, she is communications director

operettas there, too. Claybel Phares played the piano and handled the music. The sixth graders did the operetta, including those from Loretta Elementary School."

After five years, while still teaching full-time, Mary Jane attended UNF at night to get a degree in accounting. "I thought I needed to make more money to support myself and Jeanette," she said. She found a job with a CPA. "I was working six or seven days a week, and while I loved learning about accounting, I didn't like the work. After that I went to Prudential and worked as a claims examiner for two years. Then I went back to teaching at Long Branch Elementary in 1984."

She and Bruce Carter got married in 1984 when she was transferred to R.B. Daniels

Elementary, where she only taught for a few weeks. "I had been married to Bruce for just a month," Mary Jane said. "I got up one morning and passed out in the shower. Bruce took me to the doctor's office who said my blood pressure was extremely low. I ended up in the hospital for three months and had to give up teaching."

Mary Jane's disease may keep her from getting out and about as she wishes, but she hasn't let it isolate her. Her girlfriend from junior high school, Valerie (Westbrook) Bennett helps Mary Jane now by buying her groceries and checking on her in the handicapped accessible condo in which she now lives. She stays in touch with friends and family on Facebook and on the phone and is a lifelong learner.

HARDAGE-GIDDENS

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– In Memoriam –

Minerva Rogers Mason

December 15, 1925 to May 11, 2019

One of Jacksonville's greatest hostesses is gone.

Minerva Rogers Mason of Riverside, a philanthropist known for her hospitality and her ability to "throw a good party," passed away at St. Catherine Labouré Manor in Riverside May 11 at the age of 93.

A native of Riverside, Mason was born to Mary Harrell and Walter Ford Rogers in Riverside Hospital. She grew up in the former Florida Yacht Club building on St. Johns Avenue, which her parents had bought to make into their home. She attended school at West Riverside Elementary, John Gorrie Junior High, and Robert E. Lee High School, and went on to graduate from Pine Manor Junior College in Wellesley, Massachusetts, and Randolph-Macon Women's College in Lynchburg, Virginia, while continuing to nurture close ties with the friends she grew up with.

"Mama was a great friend and kept in close touch with people she had gone to grade school with," said her daughter, Marcy Moody of Riverside. "She enjoyed a monthly brown-bag lunch with grammar school friends up until she could no longer drive in her late 80s."

On September 16, 1948, she married Raymond Knight Mason, a good friend from high school who grew up in 5 Points before moving to Grand Avenue in Ortega as a teenager. They had four children, Walter Rogers Mason, Varina Mason Steuert, both now deceased, Moody and her brother, Raymond Knight Mason, Jr. of Riverside. They were married for just over 70 years.

Raymond's family owned the Mason Lumber Company in Jacksonville. In addition to running his family's business, Raymond Mason also founded the Charter Oil Company and served as chairman, president and chief executive officer until 1987.

Mason and her husband had a home in Avondale on Richmond Street for 25 years. They were very friendly with Edward Ball, brother-in-law to Alfred I. duPont, and through his acquaintance purchased Epping Forest, former home of duPont and his wife, Jessie Ball duPont. They moved into the duPont mansion in 1972 and lived there 11 years, until 1984 when they sold the mansion to Gate Petroleum so that Herb Peyton could develop it into the Epping Forest Yacht and Country Club. During their tenure at Epping Forest, Mason entertained many national and international dignitaries including King Hussein of Jordan, the Shah of Iran, President Anwar Sadat of Egypt, President Gerald Ford and Comedian Bob Hope. "My mother hosted many local charity functions at Epping," said Moody. "She loved entertaining and always seemed to be planning something for someone or some group."

Mason was very involved in a variety of civic organizations including Junior League of Jacksonville, Wolfson Children's Hospital, Jacksonville University, St. Johns Country Day School, the Jacksonville Symphony Association Guild, the Friday Musicale, the Delius Association, the American Cancer Society, the Watsonia Garden Club, and the National Society of the Colonial Dames of America in Florida. She and her husband also generously supported the Cummer Museum of Art and Gardens, bestowing a \$5 million gift to the museum in 2006. "It was a leadership gift included in phase one of a campaign to make improvements to the Cummer campus," explained Moody.

"Minerva Rogers Mason was a dedicated member of our museum and a stalwart supporter since the Cummer Museum of



Minerva Rogers Mason

Art and Gardens opened in 1961," said Adam Levine, president and CEO of the Cummer Museum. "Mrs. Mason and her family have continued to support the Cummer for the past 58 years. Her daughter, Marcy Moody, serves on our Board of Trustees and has sustained the Mason family's legacy of supporting the arts. That legacy will be celebrated for generations to come."

In 1968, the Masons accompanied Edward Ball to Ballynahinch Castle in Ireland, falling in love with the place. They acquired control of the property soon after, and Mason managed the Ballynahinch Castle Hotel, Inc. until 2013 when for health reasons she and her husband sold their control and retired from international travel, said Moody.

"During my mother's tenure, she renovated the hotel into a first-class establishment. She was a great entertainer and hosted many parties with notable public and private figures. She and my father were granted citizenship in Ireland as a thank you for their extensive contributions to the economic well-being of Connemara where Ballynahinch was located. She had turned around a failing hotel, and then, by hosting so many events and parties at Ballynahinch with influential and important people, she sparked an economic resurgence in the area."

What Mason enjoyed most was traveling, said Moody. "She was always planning a trip, taking a trip, coming back from a trip, or talking about a trip," she said. "She loved to go to places and see new things. She liked variety. She was curious about everything and wanted to learn about everything everywhere – different cultures, places, people. She made friends wherever she went, and by her example showed the rest of us how to do that, too," she said, noting her mother always kept her family in mind when she planned her excursions, often including her children and/or grandchildren. "When we encountered various travel problems like lost luggage and a cruise ship that lost electricity and had to return to port just hours before setting sail, she kept her high spirits and showed us how to find the silver linings and enjoy whatever happened. In that case, she found an alternate vacation spot and off we went later that day.

"She was always respectful, generous, and kind to everyone, everywhere," Moody continued. "And she was always grateful to come home with a renewed appreciation of what being an American means. During her lifetime, I think she really did go everywhere and do everything that her heart desired."

Mason is survived by her husband, Raymond Knight Mason of Riverside; her brothers Walter Ford Rogers of Neptune Beach and Henry Darwin Rogers of San Jose; her daughter Marcy Mason Moody (Tom) of Riverside and son Raymond Knight Mason, Jr. (Cabeth) of Riverside; five grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

John William Donahoo, Jr.

December 28, 1938 to May 28, 2019

A native of Jacksonville, John William Donahoo Jr., an Ortega resident, attended Robert E. Lee High School, the University of Florida, Stetson University, Jacksonville University, Cumberland School of Law, and Boston University. Although he spent his professional career in the areas of law and banking, serving the legal community faithfully and treasuring the relationships he built with many clients, Donahoo also served his community willingly and touched many lives through his years of service. The many tributes paid to Donahoo speak volumes about a man who will be missed by many.

"I first got to know John when I was probably 5 years old. My mother taught him in the Sunday School class at our church and came home noticeably impressed with this fine young man. He was enough older than me growing up that he was a sort of larger-than-life kind of guy that little kids looked up to. He never changed, people always looked up to him as a larger-than-life person with a larger-than-life heart and it reached out to everybody. As the years went by that impression and respect I had spread to my siblings and then all our children and then all our grandchildren. I can't think of anybody in town who was more well-known and more highly regarded among our family from generation to generation.

– **Douglas J. Milne, Esq.**

"John and I were friends for 40 years and he never missed an opportunity to help someone if he knew they needed it. He was so dependable, reliable and always was looking after somebody else, less after himself, always after somebody else."

– **Robert Shircliff**

"Trying to capture John's most stalwart qualities – dignity, honor, integrity, joy, loyalty, and more – is hard to put in words because they were never in a passive sense. John was like a 3-D printer – he brought flat words and qualities to life with a gusto and depth rarely witnessed. His gracious, humble demeanor belied a quiet, steadfast strength that spoke volumes to we who knew him well. Best of all, he never let a few tears deter him from expressing the passion and love he felt for his family or projects he held dear."

– **Peggy Bryan**

"Mr. Donahoo may have fathered two children, but he helped raise so many more. He was a father to all of us who grew up with John and Katherine. He taught us all how to love our spouses, our children, our Lord, our friends, and ourselves without reservation or hesitation. Every action he took was clothed in God's grace. While I was not his son, I will always remember him as 'Pops.'"

– **Eugene B. Nichols, Esq.**

"John was a past chair of our St. Vincent's Foundation Board and just a man you could count on. He loved the Daughters of Charity; he would do anything for the Sisters. As chairman he was a hard worker and he would always invite other people to come and learn about our mission and he would tell them about the Sisters."

– **Jane Lanier, St. Vincent's Foundation**

"John Donahoo was one of those members of our Episcopal community who helped to forever alter the history of the school in the best way possible and the contributions he made will affect generations. His giving spirit, care of and kindness to others, and loyalty marked a man of deep faith, respected and beloved by all who knew him."

– **The Rev. Adam Greene, Head of School at Episcopal**



John W. Donahoo, Jr. (Photo by Laura Evans)

"John loves God and served God in so many ways. He never missed a Sunday in church. He helped to start a philanthropic fund which serves at the discretion of the Archbishop of Canterbury so that the Archbishop could do specific poverty relief work as he traveled the globe. John loves his city and his family. His legacy will live on for many generations."

– **The Very Rev. Kate Moorehead, St. John's Cathedral**

"John Donahoo was my beloved friend who introduced me to Jacksonville and to St. John's Cathedral. He loved his family, his Lord and his church. I will miss taking long walks with my beloved friend, as well as kneeling beside him in church."

– **Frank Cerveny, former Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Florida**

"When we came to Jacksonville in 1972 as Dean of St. John's Cathedral, I vividly remember John opening wide his great big arms and welcoming us with his enormous bear hug. Oh, the goodness of John Donahoo – often behind the scenes, working late at night on clergy tax returns, never charging a cent for his years of service. He travelled a million miles back and forth to Camp Weed and the Cerveny Conference Center, being sure it was built to his high standards and it remains so to this day."

– **Emmy Cerveny**

"A particular recollection I have on the life of John W. Donahoo, my dear friend, is that he served as a Trustee of the Scalise Trust, and from 1992 through 2015, annually made charitable gifts principally to St. Vincent's Foundation, but also to the Friday Musicale Scholarship Fund, to the Sisters of St. Joseph, to Morning Star School and to St. Pius School."

– **Bill Joos**

"John gave a clear witness to the sustaining power of Christ in his life on a daily basis. He once said, 'The greatest privilege is being with the people, seeing the body of Christ at work around the globe, and finding ways and resources to help those who need our support.'"

– **Bishop Samuel J. Howard, Episcopal Diocese of Florida**

John was pre-deceased by his parents, John W. and Jeanne R. Donahoo, and his sister Jeanne D. Clapp. He is survived by his wife of 50 years, Patricia Hamilton Donahoo; his children, John III (Gina) and Katherine D. Nott (Chris); and five granddaughters: Libby, Abigail and Anna Donahoo; Kaitlyn and Lauren Nott. He is also survived by his brother, Tom Donahoo (Hazel), brother-in-law, Bill Hamilton (Janie), sister, Nancy H. Zimmerman (Jeff), as well as many nieces, nephews, great-nieces and nephews.

– In Memoriam –

Rita Hettler Joost

January 17, 1927 to May 29, 2019

Rita H. Joost, one of the founding members of the Salvation Army Women's Auxiliary and its Celebrity Chefs Luncheon, was laid to rest June 7 in what one Auxiliary member described as one of the most "personal" Catholic services she had ever attended.

The special Memorial Mass that celebrated Joost's life was held at Assumption Catholic Church after a private burial at Hardage-Giddens Oaklawn Cemetery.

During the service, after reading from the Old Testament Book of Proverbs, her son Stephen Joost said, joking, "And she wouldn't change her hair for anyone!"

Joost's coiffure was legend among friends and fellow members of the Auxiliary and the Point La Vista Garden Circle.

"Rita had a standing hair appointment every Thursday at the same beauty shop as did my mother-in-law, Betty Lee. You never saw a hair out of place. She was known for that signature hairstyle and uplifting spirit. She led by example and was an inspiration to our organization," said NeeCee Lee, a member of the Salvation Army Women's Auxiliary.

Described as passionate about the Auxiliary and active until a few months ago, Joost helped found the nonprofit in 1985, along with Sally Evans and Darleen Unger. "As our ambassador, she set the tone greeting all guests and new members with a 'kiss and chocolate kisses.' She was tiny in frame, but her impression was huge," Lee continued.

Unger concurred, saying "Rita made others feel good about themselves; that is a true gift from God. Her determination, her optimism, and her strong faith inspired us all."

The Salvation Army was almost always top of mind for Joost, who pioneered the idea of buying Celebrity Chef tickets to stuff in Christmas stockings, according to Lee. Joost also promoted the Salvation Army to other organizations.

"She was a force of nature," said Cheryl Dewberry, a member of the Point La Vista Garden Circle. "Rita was an enthusiastic and faithful member of the Garden Circle and much beloved by fellow members. She encouraged the club to make donations to the Salvation Army during the holidays."



Rita H. Joost

Ever the Southern gentlewoman, Joost was very diligent in acknowledging others who opened their homes for meetings or when she had observed someone in an act of service for The Salvation Army, said Lee.

"I loved her voicemails as she personally called everyone who made contributions to the Celebrity Chef Tasting Luncheon," Lee said.

Paula Moore, a next-door neighbor in Joost's Point La Vista neighborhood since 1997, said Joost was considered the matriarch of the neighborhood "She was one of the most vibrant women I've ever met; she was feisty in the best sense of the word. She never met a stranger and we all loved her," said Moore. "It's hard to imagine a neighbor with that kind of impact on people."

Rita H. Joost, 92, was preceded in death by her parents, Henry Leo and Emma Jane Clausen Hettler; her husband, Hobart Hare Joost Sr. in 2004; a daughter, Rita Joost Isaacs in 1996; sister, Margaret Anna Hettler in 1999; sister, Helen H. Dick in 2013; and twin sister, Renee H. Rucker on December 23, 2017.

She is survived by her daughters, Helen Joost O'Neal (Michael) and Catherine Teynac Joost, Port St. Lucie; sons, Hobart H. Joost, Jr., William H. Joost, Sr. (Lisa), Thomas E. Joost (Barbara), and Stephen C. Joost, Sr. (Nicole); sister-in-law, Dolly Coppedge; 15 grandchildren; 9 great-grandchildren; and many nieces and nephews.

Janet Faye Bulls

March 12, 1933 to May 12, 2019

A great gardener who loved spending time outside among the various flowers that she nurtured, Janet Faye Bulls passed away peacefully in her home May 12 at the age of 86, after living in Jacksonville for almost 70 years.

A San Marco area resident who worked as a teacher's aide at Spring Park Elementary School for 30 years, Bulls is remembered



Janet Faye Bulls

by her daughter, Gayle Bulls Dixon of San Jose, and other members of the Bulls family as a dependable, consistent woman who loved to sew and had small pairs of scissors in every room, enjoyed crossword puzzles and traveling the world, loved celebrating holidays with her family and never forgot to send birthday or holiday cards, according to a memory logged on the Dignity Memorial website.

Many of the other memories the family recalled on the website revolved around Christmas and included celebrating Christmas

at her house, her unexpected jokes at Christmas dinner, her dressing at Christmas, her "Christmas cards that we always got in the mail even when we got older," celebrating the holidays with her and all the yummy food, decorating, and parties.

Bulls was kind to anyone she was around. Her smile would broaden, especially when the

whole family came together. She was a great listener and would think nothing of just sitting in the living room until 2 a.m. talking, family members recalled. "What I will miss is the part of me that was better just knowing she was there," wrote one family member.

In addition to Dixon, Bulls is survived by her sisters, Garnett Alexander and Evelyn McCleney, her children, Frederick Bulls, Jr., Gary Bulls, Wanda Bulls and Frances Moesner, as well as nine grandchildren and 10 great-grandchildren. She was preceded in death by her husband, Frederick Bulls.

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Author relays message of hope for foster kids

By Marcia Hodgson
Resident Community News

Few can imagine what it might be like to live the rags-to-riches life of Christina Meredith. A native of New York, who moved with her family to St. Augustine as a young girl, Meredith suffered every kind of abuse – emotional, physical and sexual – under the thumb of her cruel and sadistic mother only to end up in the foster care system. After aging out, she became homeless, working more than one job while living in her car before eventually making her way to California where, as fate would have it, she would be spotted by a pageant recruiter and crowned Ms. California in just a few years.

Meredith, author of the memoir, “Cinder Girl,” never dreamed her life would turn around in such a way, and now is working to share her story and reform the way government handles foster children. She held her audience in rapt attention during a “night of conversation” sponsored by San Marco Bookstore at Southside Baptist Church May 13. The book-signing event gave listeners the opportunity to hear the story about Meredith’s

determination to overcome hardship and help others know they are not alone and that they, too, can achieve their dreams.

After she won the Ms. California beauty contest in April 2013, Meredith didn’t latch onto the modeling contracts or commercial opportunities that other beauty queens normally gravitate toward. Instead she took the “long way around,” writing a book and working to become the face of foster care by publishing her memoir and going on a national book tour. Her mission is to change the way foster youth are handled throughout the United States, and she now travels the country speaking as a mental health advocate and foster care activist. “I’m going to change this nation, one child at a time,” she said.

When her mother once locked her in a closet and denied her food for days, Meredith fought against thoughts of suicide. Later, through foster care, she got a taste of what normal family life was like, only to be passed from family to family and returned to her abusive mother’s custody in between. The Junior ROTC program at Nease High School became her lifeline and fostered her dream of one day becoming a commissioned Army

officer. Yet, she suffered the cruel devastation of having her hopes dashed when she was denied an ROTC scholarship after her high school graduation.

“The Lord has a way of turning all your hardships, turning all your mistakes, your failures into something beautiful,” she said, adding that through years of hard work and trauma therapy, she is now realizing her dreams. Today she travels the country speaking at conferences and on television talk shows, and lobbying Congress for mental health policy reform and more appropriations for the foster care system.

“I will literally be the face of foster care reformation in 2020. Foster care reform is going to change our communities on a social and economic level,” she said, adding that 80% of all prisoners are former foster kids, 70% of the males who age out of the foster care system end up committing felonies, and 60% of foster-care females between the ages of 16 and 19 become pregnant. “Foster care children have PTSD double the amount that veterans do,” she claimed. “The system puts them perpetually in the prison system and the welfare system. We are doing a disservice to our displaced children and our orphans. It’s an absolute sin that we are giving billions of dollars to different countries in the world without taking care of our orphans first. There are half a million people in our nation that are not being served, and I was one of them,” she continued. “It’s despicable, and we all have an obligation to serve them. That’s what I am bringing to the forefront.”

Meredith is in the process of setting up the Christina Meredith Foundation, a Jacksonville-based 501(c)(3) and charter school that will “focus on advocacy for foster



Christina Meredith

care reform in its entirety and to ensure that youth who have experienced abuse or are in the foster-care system receive basic necessities, education, quality healthcare, and advocacy that will foster resilience and allow them to flourish into independent adults,” according to her website.

Meanwhile, she has realized her ROTC dream. She enlisted in the Army five years ago at age 28 and serves as a sergeant while she earns her bachelor’s degree in political science with a focus on foreign affairs. In December 2019, she will receive her commission as an Army intelligence officer and plans to eventually run for office.

“You can’t quit,” she said. “It’s very, very hard to accomplish the tasks that God has given you, but that’s your purpose, that’s your fuel, that’s what you were made for. It’s what keeps you up at night and gets into your head as you sleep – your calling. If I had killed myself when I was 13 and locked in that closet, where would I be now?”

“It’s very, very hard to accomplish the tasks that God has given you, but that’s your purpose, that’s your fuel, that’s what you were made for.”

— Christina Meredith

St. John’s Cathedral bookstore hosts First Monday book club

There wasn’t an empty seat to be found at the First Monday Book Club June 3. The brand-new book club is open to the public at St. John’s Cathedral Bookstore, 221 E. Church St. The book club is perfect for those who work downtown or live in one of the surrounding communities and want to connect with others over their lunch hour. Led by Sandi Dunnivant, the book discussion lasts one hour, 12 – 1 p.m., all participants bring their own lunch and a dessert is provided by the bookstore.

The club kicked off with discussion about the book, “Grateful,” by Diana Butler Bass. In July, the group is discussing the latest book from Barbara Brown Taylor, “Holy Envy: Finding God in the Faith of Others.”

In September, the group will read and discuss “The Way of Tea and Justice,” by

Becca Stevens, in anticipation of the author’s visit to St. John’s Cathedral September 22. Stevens is an author, speaker, priest, social entrepreneur, founder and president of Thistle Farms. After experiencing the death of her father and subsequent child abuse when she was 5, Becca longed to open a sanctuary for survivors offering a loving community. In 1997, five women who had experienced trafficking, violence, and addiction were welcomed home.

You’re invited to join the discussion; space is limited so RSVP to cathedral-bookstore@jaxcathedral.org before the end of each month. Books are available for purchase at the Cathedral Bookstore and a portion of proceeds supports Cathedral Outreach ministries.




Laura Eldridge, Ruth Cook and Susan Lloyd with Kathryn Bissette, bookstore manager, Ginny Brock and Bonnie Burton

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With **John D. Young**
Associate Professor of History Flagler College



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Relations between Jews and Christians in medieval Europe were developed in their workaday interactions and attempts to comprehend and categorize the rival religion. These ideas were captured in texts written by rabbis and their Christian counterparts, to warn their congregations’ about the errors of “the other” and to encourage faithfulness to their respective tradition. This lecture will treat both Jewish perceptions of Christians and Christian perceptions of Jews in a comparative fashion, using evidence from religious texts like the *Sefer Chasidim* and Christian sermons.



John D. Young is the Kenan Distinguished Associate Professor of Liberal Education and History at Flagler College in St. Augustine, Florida, where he has taught since 2008. He has also been a visiting professor at the University of Würzburg and a research fellow at the University of Dresden, both in Germany. He holds doctoral and master’s degrees in medieval studies from the University of Notre Dame, a graduate diploma in Jewish studies from the University of Oxford, and a bachelor’s degree in history from Brigham Young University.

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Community invited to play doctor with robotic surgical system

Former patients and members of the community had an opportunity to try a machine that is only accessible to top surgeons when Baptist Medical Center Jacksonville hosted an interactive, hands-on robotic surgery experience June 3 in the lobby of the hospital. The robotics experience was also available to community members, former pediatric patients and their families in the lobby of Wolfson Children's Hospital June 4.

The robotics experience came on the heels of a special celebration. On May 15, Dr. Stephen Buckley, a gynecologic oncology surgeon at Baptist MD Anderson Cancer Center, celebrated his 2,000th robotic surgery with the da Vinci® Surgical System. The milestone is met by only 0.5% of all da Vinci® surgeons nationally and was celebrated with cake by Baptist Medical Center Jacksonville President Michael Mayo, Buckley's surgical assistant Debra Motycka, PA-C Gynecologic Oncology, and other members of the operating room staff.

The da Vinci® Surgical System allows surgeons to convert traditionally open

procedures, done with a large abdominal incision, to minimally invasive procedures. Through the interactive exercises, visitors were able to demonstrate that the robot has more flexibility than a human wrist in making precise movements. During the open house, visitors had the opportunity to manipulate the da Vinci Xi's robotic arms through a console, attempting to put rubber bands on colorful spikes.

"I was an early adopter of robotic technology," said Buckley, who completed his first robotic surgery on the da Vinci® system in 2006. "I knew this less invasive approach would allow women to avoid unnecessary pain, minimize complications and recover more quickly. So, I was all-in from the beginning."

Because of Buckley's advocacy for the first da Vinci® Surgical System, pediatric patients at Wolfson have also benefitted since 2006 with pediatric urologist Michael Erhard, M.D., a physician with Nemours Children's Specialty Care, the first to perform a robotic procedure on a child using the original da Vinci® robot, a precursor to the 22 robots Baptist Health has invested in throughout its healthcare system.

To standardize robotic procedures across the health system, Baptist Health most recently purchased three new da Vinci® XI Surgical Systems for Wolfson Children's Hospital, Baptist Medical Center Beaches and Baptist Medical Center South. Other robots in its line-up include a Stryker Mako® for partial knee replacement, total knee replacement and total hip replacement, two Mazor Robotics Renaissance® Guidance Systems for minimally invasive spine surgery and 12 Xenex Disinfection Services "germ-zapping" robots for sanitation.



Dutchen Oclon, administrative assistant to Dr. Stephen Buckley, tests out the da Vinci® Surgical System while Weston Snow, a clinical territory associate for Intuitive Surgical, maker of the da Vinci® robot, watches her progress on the big screen.



Dr. Stephen Buckley, Debra Motycka, PA-C Gynecologic Oncology, and Baptist Medical Center Jacksonville President Michael Mayo celebrate Buckley's 2,000th robotic surgery using the da Vinci® Surgical System.



Dr. Stephen Buckley watches as his former patient, Delaney Williams, tests out the da Vinci® Surgical System.

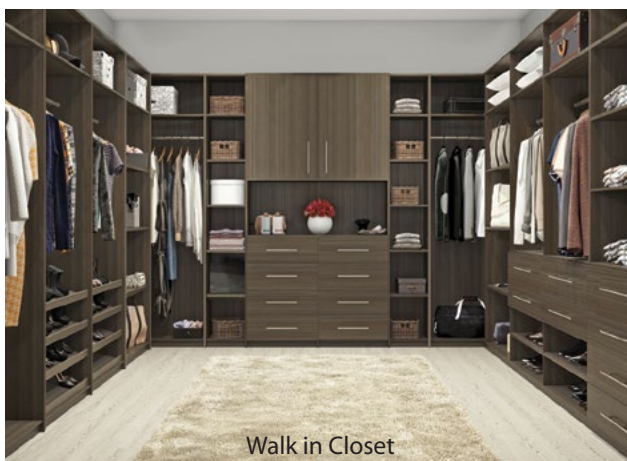


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America's newest citizens celebrate World Refugee Day in San Marco

By Marcia Hodgson
Resident Community News

When the World Refugee Day Committee and the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) requested to use Theatre Jacksonville as its venue for its naturalization ceremony June 13, Michelle Kindy, the theatre's general manager, did not hesitate to say yes.

"From a personal perspective, I became a citizen in 2007, so I have been where these folks have been," said Kindy, a native of Canada. "When they told me that they were doing the rest of the World Refugee Day celebration at Southside Baptist Church but had no place to do this part, I knew we could say yes. People who run businesses within the Square here act as partners and friends. It's never a surprise when its someone in the Square looking to partner to make something happen for someone else in the community. Me saying yes was not only because we could do it, but also because our partner, Southside Baptist Church, needed it so they could do the rest of World Refugee Day, because, unfortunately, they can't do the (naturalization) ceremony in a church. The irony is that we are currently performing 'Sister Act.' The fact that behind our curtain is a full cathedral set is not lost on me. Fortunately, the set is not consecrated so we don't have to worry about it," she laughed. "We would definitely partner again for this if they ever ask."

As part of a celebration of World Refugee Day, USCIS administered the Oath of Allegiance to 20 of America's newest citizens during a special ceremony at the theatre in San Marco on June 13. Although World Refugee Day is observed on June 20 internationally each year, Jacksonville celebrated on June 13 because eight to nine similar celebrations were to be conducted in June throughout the State of Florida this year.

There was nary a dry eye in Theatre Jacksonville's auditorium as the new citizens collectively took the oath, sang the national anthem, the Star-Spangled Banner, and accepted their official citizenship documents on the stage one at a time. This year the citizenship candidates were a diverse crowd, originating from 14 different countries including Afghanistan, Burma, Cuba, Ethiopia, India, Iraq, Jamaica, Mexico, New Zealand, Nigeria, the Philippines, Turkey, Venezuela and Vietnam. In 2018, USCIS naturalized more than 750,000 people from countries all over the globe, according to a press release.

"This ceremony means so much," said Nina Frank, an employee of Lutheran Social Services, who served on the World Refugee Committee. "These people are taking the time to become Americans, the country where I'm from. That they want to become part of this nation is just amazing to me. I'm so proud to be an American and to witness this event. To have this in San Marco is beautiful because the ceremony and the celebration are within walking distance of each other. San Marco is part of the history of Jacksonville and being in the middle of that is really good."

After the ceremony, the new citizens and their families received American flags and paraded through San Marco Square to join the special World Refugee Day Celebration at Southside Baptist Church, where the theme of the festivities was "Entrepreneurship: Investing in OUR CommUNITY."

"The day is to honor and bring attention to the refugees in our community," said Patti Grogan, director of refugee services for the Florida Department of Children and Families. "The refugees are here from all over the world because they were forced to flee from their home countries. Jacksonville has been a wonderful community in inviting and embracing refugees when they come



Lutheran Social Services Volunteer Greta Apilstoli (in red), World Refugee Day Committee Member Hind Chalio (in purple) and Elaine Carson, better known as "Mrs. P," founder of World Relief in Jacksonville, stand with some newly minted American citizens after a naturalization ceremony at Theatre Jacksonville in San Marco June 13.

here. Over many, many years, Jacksonville has become one of the most diverse refugee communities in the State of Florida. All who come here become part of the community and engage with their neighbors."

During the World Refugee Celebration 15 graduating high school seniors, who were refugees, were honored and special awards were distributed. Dr. Leslie G. Kaplan, director of the Hicks Honors College at the University of North Florida received the Community Impact Award. Mi Nge of Burma and Mohammed Tarek Alrez from Turkey received Inspiring Youth Awards. Two families that suffered severe hardships on their way to the United States - Balthazar Batachoka and his Congolese family of eight and Mohammed Ali Nur and his family from Eritrea - received the Resilience Award.

Dan W. Daly of San Jose, a member of Lakewood Methodist Church, earned the Volunteer Award for his work with several churches. Daly has taught English classes, provided transportation, and mentoring, and

offered all types of donations and food to needy refugee and immigrant families since 1990. He recently provided transportation to 31 children from Denis Court and Stone Mount Apartment complexes to San Jose Baptist to participate in the Stars Program.

Also, during the celebration, Newdline Fidele sang "Istwa Dwol," the Dancers of Peru demonstrated "Tondero," and Jacksonville Sings, a chorus at UNE, performed. Vendors from agencies helpful to refugee families also set up booths and distributed information during the event.

"It is a big honor for us to be able to host this for the second year at Southside," said Senior Pastor Dr. Gary Webber. "As a church committed to seeing people of every nation and tribe brought together, it is a picture of what heaven is going to be like and gives us an opportunity to practice that right here, by having all these wonderful folks in our facility. We are just delighted to be part of the city-wide celebration of the refugees God is bringing to Jacksonville."



Christine Cousart of New Zealand happily waves an American flag as one of the United States' newest citizens after taking the oath of citizenship during a naturalization ceremony at Theatre Jacksonville in San Marco June 13.



Twenty people from 14 different countries promised to leave their homelands behind as they took the Oath of Allegiance to the United States during a naturalization ceremony at Theatre Jacksonville in San Marco June 13.



Twenty of America's newest citizens and their families paraded through San Marco Square to Southside Baptist Church after a naturalization ceremony at Theatre Jacksonville June 13.



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FHSAA recognizes Episcopal for sportsmanship

The Florida High School Athletic Association (FHSAA) announced last month the Episcopal School of Jacksonville is one of 15 recipients in the state for the 2018-2019 Fred E. Rozelle Sportsmanship Award.

“I am proud of our ESJ coaches and student-athletes for receiving this recognition. Our coaches emphasize treating opponents, officials and teammates with respect in both victory and defeat,” said Andy Kidd, Episcopal athletic director. “We understand that high school athletics only last a short time, but the lessons learned can benefit a student-athlete the rest of their life. I feel this recognition from the FHSAA is evidence that our coaches are teaching life lessons that will benefit our student-athletes for years to come.”

The award recognizes member schools that promote sportsmanship both on and off the field and is given to schools whose athletic teams demonstrated exemplary sportsmanship during the regular season as well as during FHSAA State Series competition. Episcopal has received this award from the FHSAA five out of the past six years.

“Aladdin” premiere welcomes special guest

The San Marco Theatre had a surprise guest at the May premiere of the movie “Aladdin,” when Princess Jasmine arrived before the start of the showing. The celebrity princess visited and took pictures with the many little girls, such as Piper Davis and Weslyn Graves, who also came in costumes. In addition to the meet and greet, the theater hosted a large sidewalk chalk party to kick off the event attended by over 130 people.



MaKenzie and Olivia Baggs show off Maggie the bearded dragon.



Asher the Great Dane greets many admirers during a neighborhood pet show May 18.



Emiliano Makros shows off his rabbit, Caramellow.



MJ Varcholick, Sarah Puckett, Viola Varcholik and Anna Leonard show off their pets.



Viola Varcholik and Lillian Davis feed Rocky, a 17-year-old Sulcata tortoise.



Monarch butterflies enjoy nectar plants in the butterfly tent at Dr. Sharon Leonard's home.



Dr. Sharon Leonard shows off Gypsy, an American Miniature Horse, during a neighborhood pet show at her home in Colonial Manor May 18.

Neighborhood show allows for close encounters between residents and pets

A tortoise, a bearded dragon and an American Miniature Horse were just a few of the pets that took part in Mike and Sharon Leonard's annual neighborhood pet show May 18.

More than 100 friends and neighbors gathered in the front yard of the Leonards' Colonial Manor home to show off their pets in what could have been easily mistaken for a traveling petting zoo.

Assisting with the show was Suzie Puckett, Sharon Leonard's sister, who came down from Valdosta, Georgia, with several of her pets, to help with the event. Neighborhood children were also invited to bring their animal buddies for show and tell.

Emiliano Makros showed off his rabbit, Caramellow, Olivia Baggs brought Maggie, a bearded dragon, and special guests, Jennifer Pfeiffer and her daughter, Brooke, showed their therapy

animals, Gypsy, an American Miniature Horse, who is already certified and Asher, a one-year-old Great Dane, who is taking the certifying test very soon. “They will start traveling together for pet therapy,” said Sharon Leonard. “Jenny calls them the ‘Dog and Pony Show.’”

For the past five years, the Leonards have set up a tent in their front yard in April to hatch Monarch butterflies. This year the tent was established between April 13 and May 20, taking the Monarchs through their birth cycle from egg to caterpillar to chrysalis to butterfly. This year they released more than 50 adult Monarchs into the world. The tent was set up for viewing during the pet show, allowing children and their parents to have a close encounter with the butterflies.



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R2D2 visits Assumption students

Before school ended, Assumption Catholic School students attended a STEM presentation with a real working R2D2. Tom Richter and his son, Preston, started building R2D2 in 2008. It all started when the family's youngest son, Mike, wanted a robot that could make his bed and clean his room.

Richter, an Electrical Engineer, was up for the challenge to build a robot even though it wouldn't be able to complete Mike's desired tasks. A big Star Wars fan, he had wanted to build R2D2 for a while, so he and Preston jumped right in and started building the droid. They would work on it periodically, taking breaks when interest waned, or family commitments took precedence. It was very challenging at times for both of them.



Preston Richter with R2D2

While the plans to build R2D2 are online, most of the parts are not available, so the Richters used a CNC (Computer Numeric Control) router to make approximately 75% of the droid parts, ordering some of the larger parts, such as the aluminum dome and skins, due to desired durability. They finished the droid build in 2014 and had a great time building it together.

Ring of bell marks end of elementary school

San Jose Episcopal Day School sixth graders graduated May 24. The graduation chapel and luncheon culminated a week of special events honoring the Class of 2019, including a faculty versus sixth grade volleyball game and the traditional "Ring of the Bell" ceremony where the 28 sixth graders took turns ringing the chapel bell, marking the completion of elementary school.



Children of Episcopal alumni graduate

The Episcopal School of Jacksonville graduated 22 legacy alumni May 18. Alumni and their graduating seniors were invited to a special breakfast on Saturday morning before Commencement at the Alumni House.

Legacy Alumni include Jack and David Barksdale '84; Stela and Brett Chepenik '90; Zoe and Charles Cobb '83; Cole Crane and Dianne Morse '77; Kirby, Paul '89, and Heidi Luebke Dent '88; Maggie and Scott Gallagher '92; Sidney Gibbs and Lanier Drew '76; Margaret and Charles Gibbs '87; Alexander

and Annie Hughes Goldfield '86; Jack, Ed '80 and Meredith Wachtel Hines '90; Ward and Stephanie Athey Jarvis '91; Ben and Will Ketchum '84; Xander and Michael Magevney '87; Bond and John Magevney '89; Dougie and Doug Milne '86; Olin, Jim '80, and Heather Rainey Moseley '88; Connor and Niels Murphy '88; Henry and Fred Page '85; Curry and Curry Pajcic '87; Nick, Rob '86, and Kristan David Podvia '88; Lillie and Arnie Tritt '81, and Emily and Michael Waters '80.

Jim Moseley '80, Olin Moseley and Heather Rainey Moseley '88 with Meredith Wachtel Hines '90, Jack Hines, and Ed Hines '80 (Photo by Laura Evans Photograph)

San Marco girl receives Tom Coughlin Jay Fund Foundation scholarships

Gillian Vaughan, a San Marco resident and graduate of Paxon School for Advanced Studies, is one of 17 recipients of a scholarship from The Tom Coughlin Jay Fund Foundation. Two others from Jacksonville also received scholarships, including Payton Titus and Bryce Williams.

The annual college scholarships for cancer patients and survivors were established to offer hope beyond cancer, providing financial support so cancer patients and survivors can attend college and live out their dreams. Each recipient will receive \$2,000, renewable for up to an accumulative \$8,000 over four years.

This is the largest number of scholarships the Tom Coughlin Jay Fund Foundation has awarded in a single year. Winners are chosen based on leadership ability, academic record, moral character, and financial need. Since 2002 the Tom Coughlin Jay Fund Foundation has awarded 81 scholarships totaling \$510,500 to cancer patients and survivors in New York, New Jersey, North Florida, and South Georgia.

Vaughan was diagnosed with osteosarcoma just three months after starting her freshman year of high school. Immediately following her diagnosis, she underwent surgery to remove a malignant tumor and a significant portion of her femur. Vaughan continued chemotherapy and physical therapy to learn how to walk again with a knee replacement and a titanium rod in her upper leg. She plans to attend University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill to pursue her degree in nursing.

Williams, a graduate of John Stockton Elementary School, was diagnosed with osteosarcoma in December 2009. He graduated from Stanton College Preparatory



Gillian Vaughan

High School and will attend Emerson College to pursue a Global BFA in film. While Williams lost his left leg due to cancer, he has overcome the odds, not letting his physical loss get in the way of his dreams. He is currently the only amputee swimmer in Duval County.

Titus, an Arlington resident, was diagnosed with Hodgkin's lymphoma during the middle of her junior year. She underwent several cycles of chemotherapy but remained positive throughout it all. Titus attended Paxon School for Advanced Studies where she maintained a 4.66 GPA, was ranked 8th out of 302 students, and ended her high school career as a four-time varsity letter recipient for swimming and diving. She will attend the University of Florida in the fall to pursue a degree in journalism and sports media.




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Building home builds teamwork, new friendships

Submitted by Britt Hester

For one week in June, 15 members of Hendricks Avenue Baptist Church made San Raymundo, Guatemala their home as they built a house for a family in need of adequate shelter. The church partnered with the organization Casas Por Cristo (Houses for Christ), which has locations in Guatemala, Mexico, Nicaragua, and the Dominican Republic. Casas Por Cristo works with local churches in these countries to identify families whose housing needs are substandard and often detrimental to their overall health and well-being. Casas Por Cristo, with the help of the local church, selects families through an application process that helps them clarify particular needs and set them up with a team to come build their home.

Once a family and a build team are paired together, the process of planning the trip begins. In the case of Hendricks Avenue Baptist Church, their team began planning for this June 9-15 trip over a year in advance. Team members were required to attend team meetings, acquire passports for travel, receive proper immunizations, and contribute to the trip financially. Through this long-term commitment, the team grew closer together and were able to work together seamlessly on the worksite.

After orientation on Sunday night, the team began the process of laying the foundation for the house on Monday. After a long day of leveling the ground for concrete, the group was forced to push the project back a day in order to allow team members to rest. Tuesday ended up being concrete day in addition to the first wall of the house



Members of Hendricks Avenue Baptist Church prepare the ground for a foundation.

being built. Wednesday included more walls, siding, and rafters for the roof. Thursday, the final day of the build, included installing the tin roof, windows, and electricity. After a long day that included a heavy afternoon rain shower, the group completed the build and had the privilege of presenting the Xuya Family with the keys to their new home.

While the process of building a house in four days was challenging, the group was blessed by the hospitality of the family, the teamwork it took to complete the build, and tremendous gratitude of the family during the presentation ceremony. Through this partnership, lives were changed and impacted forever through the simple act of giving up a week to help someone else.



From foundation to tin roof, members of Hendricks Avenue Baptist Church built this house in four days.

The group hopes to pursue similar mission endeavors in the future, and through these trips, help teenagers and adults alike see the world through a different lens and forever be changed.



Members of Hendricks Avenue Baptist Church at Iglesia de San Raymundo, a Catholic Church in the heart of San Raymundo



Members of Hendricks Avenue Baptist Church pose in front of the house they built in Guatemala for the Xuya family.

Morning Star graduates first high school class

Class of 2019 to go down in history

On the evening of May 23 Morning Star's first three high school graduates received their diplomas and secured a place in the school's history. The inaugural commencement ceremony, with Bishop Snyder High School graduates, was held at the Thrasher Horne Center in Orange Park.

Morning Star is the only special education school in the Diocese of St. Augustine and one of three schools in Jacksonville that have high school grades available for families with children with learning disabilities. Morning Star is the only one providing a Catholic education.

The Class of 2019 includes Ricardo Foster, Madison Wingerter, and Anthony Rein. Ricardo hopes to attend the University of North Florida after graduation to become a teacher. Madison will attend Santa Fe College in Gainesville to study zoology, and Anthony will attend Florida State College at Jacksonville next year with hopes of becoming a geologist.



Anthony Rein, Madison Wingerter, Bishop Felipe Estévez of the Diocese of St. Augustine, Jean Barnes, principal of Morning Star and Ricardo Foster (Photo by Woody Huband)

Morning Star's high school program was made possible through support from the "Building a Brighter Future" capital campaign. Now in its second year in the new Archbishop Joseph P. Hurley building, the high school is at capacity and has a wait list for next year.

"There's almost no words to describe what it means to the faculty and staff to see these kids who have been at the school for so long finally be able to graduate from our high school," said Jean Barnes, principal of Morning Star School. "We've come so far, and this is just the beginning."

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Douglas Anderson quartet named national finalist

The competition strings quartet from Douglas Anderson School of the Arts was named one of seven finalists in the prestigious 2019 American Prize Competition for Chamber Music in the national high school division.

The DA foursome, named the Ariose Quartet, was the only ensemble from Florida to receive the Finalist designation (no individual places were awarded).

The quartet, all seniors at DA, is composed of violinists Saejin Albright and Lilah Dees, violist Breanna Lang, and cellist Nathan Ealum. They had previously won top prize at the Jacksonville University College of Fine Arts Ensemble Competition.

The American Prize Competition is a series of nonprofit national competitions in the performing arts, sponsored since 2009 by Hat City Music Theatre, Inc. in



The Douglas Anderson Ariose Quartet includes Saejin Albright, Lilah Dees, Breanna Lang and Nathan Ealum

Connecticut. The other high school finalists were from larger metropolitan cities such as San Francisco, Chicago, New York City, and Dallas.

“I was so honored to have made it into the American Prize Competition,” said Lang. “It is the next level for me musically, and it will propel me into my university music studies next fall.”

San Marco graduates return to HAE

In a tradition that must be truly inspiring to the students at Hendricks Avenue Elementary School, approximately 30 high school graduates who claim the historic grammar school as their alma mater strolled through its hallowed halls May 30.

The graduates, many of whom were wearing their commencement caps and gowns, high-fived the HAE students. They also had fun catching up with their elementary school classmates and greeting their former teachers.

“Seeing all my old classmates and teachers after seven years was very special,” said



With many adorned in commencement robes, Class of 2019 high school graduates returned to Hendricks Avenue Elementary to walk the halls of their alma mater.

Olin Moseley, a Colonial Manor resident and 2019 graduate of Episcopal School of Jacksonville. “As a rising college freshman, it was nostalgic to spend some time back where it all started. I’m glad to know I will always have a home at Hendricks!”

Summer travel abroad creates lasting memories for students



Students from Episcopal School found China an interesting place to visit.

The Episcopal School of Jacksonville’s Global Learning Programs kicked off the summer with trips to China, Italy, and France. Students on the trip to Italy focused on photography and art, attending the Biennale in Venice, visiting Florence, Cinque Terre, and Milan. Students were able to process their film at an art school in Florence, see the Boboli Gardens, Uffizi, Accademia Gallery, and attend a service at Basilica di San Miniato al Monte.

Students in China started in Beijing, visiting Tiananmen Square, the Forbidden Palace, Temple of Heaven, and the Beijing Opera, as well as the Great Wall of China. They then headed to Xi’an, spending a day biking on the city walls, exploring, and sampling all kinds of dumplings, before heading to Shanghai.

The trip to France began with a homestay as part of an exchange program with Lycee St. Félix La Salle. Students then visited Les Machines de l’île, viewing the machines and riding the carousel. They took a river cruise to see the chateaux and took a historical walking tour of Nantes, then headed to Paris and Normandy before returning to the United States.



Episcopal School students visit Nantes, France during an exchange program.



Episcopal School students take a summer trip to focus on art and photography in Italy.

Golf association trust awards nine scholarships

Nine recent high school graduates received a scholarship from the Jacksonville Area Golf Association (JAGA) at a banquet held June 13 at Queen’s Harbour Yacht & Country Club.

The recipients are children or grandchildren of a JAGA member or an employee of a JAG member club. This year’s awardees include Abigail Cobb, a Providence School graduate who plans to attend the University of North Florida and is affiliated with the Jacksonville Golf and Country Club; John Fewell, Stanton College Preparatory School, University of South Carolina, Hyde Park Golf Club; Patrick Libby, The Bolles School, Furman University, Hidden Hills Country Club; Samantha Maguire, Creekside High School, Atlantic University, St. Johns Golf and

Country Club; Cierra McKenzie, Stanton College Prep, Florida State University, Timuquana Country Club; Leslie Moore, Mandarin High School, Florida State University, San Jose Country Club; Christopher Ryan, Bishop Kenny High School, Marquette University, Deerwood Country Club; Todd Roy, Creekside High School, Clemson University, Julington Creek Golf Club, and Sara Schneider, Duncan Fletcher High School, Florida State College Jacksonville, Sawgrass Country Club.

Each recipient was awarded a \$1,000 scholarship for each semester of the 2019-2020 year. Scholarships are renewable each semester based on meeting certain criteria, including a minimum grade-point average. Currently there are 25 scholars who are receiving \$1,000



Abigail Cobb, Cierra McKenzie, Christopher Ryan, Todd Roy and Patrick Libby; not available: Leslie Moore, John Fewell, Sara Schneider and Samantha Maguire

per semester, for a total of eight semesters from JAGA. Since the JAGA Scholarship Trust was formed in 1974, JAGA has awarded approximately \$1.8 million to more than 375 deserving young students.



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Debutante season opens with Magnolia Ball

The 2019 Debutante Coterie season opened on June 14 as 15 young ladies were introduced to society during the Magnolia Ball at Timuquana Country Club. The debutantes will take their final bow on Saturday, December 21 at the annual Christmas Ball held at the Florida Yacht Club. The coterie includes (front) Nancy Grace Hudmon, Cameron Perry Walker, Sarah Margaret Terry, Mary Elizabeth Fraleigh, Caroline Elon Daw, Kelly Frances Tyre; (back) Katherine Atkins Baker, Caroline Elizabeth White, Sophia Rushton Singletary, Emilyn Adams Ropp, Marlo Adrienne Morales. Not available: Amelia Marie Still, Mobley Grace Surface, Catherine Russell Terry, Isabella Hart Upchurch.

(Photo courtesy of Janet Masterson Photography)



Wolfson Class of 1969 celebrated their 50th reunion with a tour of their alma mater.

Wolfson Class of 1969 recognizes “Leaders of the Pack” with scholarships

When the Samuel F. Wolfson High School Class of 1969 discussed how to celebrate their 50th reunion, they decided to dream big. Their big dream, a scholarship for seniors in the Wolfson Class of 2019, became a reality when they awarded four \$2,500 scholarships to seniors recognized as “Leaders of the Pack.”

Scholarship Committee Co-chairs Chris Parker and Connie Crabtree Wiggins are quick to point out the scholarship was a class effort. It was fitting that the class members met the scholarship recipients when they toured Wolfson for their 50th reunion weekend.

“We had no idea at the beginning of this journey what our results would be. Seeing and hearing the joy and gratitude from Enna, Amaya, Keneil and Andrea will always hold a special place in our hearts and memories,” said Wiggins.

In addition to initiating the scholarship, they have issued a challenge to future classes to follow their lead. They would like for the



“Leaders of the Pack” Scholarship Committee and recipients: Connie Crabtree Wiggins, Amaya Yip (UNF), Keneil Gibbs (UF), Enna Bedak (UNF), Andrea Angio (UNF), Chris Parker and Nancy Brannon Brant; not available: Ed White

scholarship to become an annual part of future 50th reunion celebrations.

Wolfson Principal Chris Begley agrees. “The alumni/school partnership with the Class of ‘69 is an example for all classes to follow. They collectively and unselfishly gave \$10,000 in scholarships to four very deserving students. They also put together a professional marketing plan for other alumni classes to follow in hopes they too will partner with the school. This is an amazing example of Wolfpack Pride.”

Indeed, the Class of ‘69 is leading the Pack. The Class of 1970 has taken their challenge and has started raising funds for a Leaders of the Pack Scholarship to celebrate their 50th reunion.

Students take on ‘character’ roles

Assumption Catholic School first grade students, Class of 2026, spent one of the final days of the school year dressed as a character from a favorite book, and shared a short summary of the story with their classmates and parents. Assumption had three first grade classes this past year, taught by Ann Fletcher, Jennifer Jardine and Jessica Allen, who was out on maternity leave for the final days of school.



First grade students from Jennifer Jardine's class



First grade students from Ann Fletcher's class



First grade students from Jessica Allen's class

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Bishop Kenny grad earns top honors at boot camp

By Marcia Hodgson
Resident Community News

Master Chief Petty Officer Kevin Harris of the Bishop Kenny Naval Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (NJROTC) said he was “not surprised” to hear Seaman Steven McAdams of Riverside had received Top Sailor laurels from Recruit Training Command (RTC) Division 216 earning the Navy Club of the United States Military Excellence Award during a ceremony in Great Lakes, Illinois May 31.

“I saw he was focused and dedicated to the program here at Bishop Kenny High School,” Harris recalled, noting the 2016 Bishop Kenny graduate was the lead training officer in the school’s ROTC senior year and supervised its competitive drill teams. “He was very outgoing and always looked forward

to helping an individual out. He would go out of his way to make sure the freshmen were on track or anybody in the community as far as that goes. He was also our department training officer, which meant he trained the whole unit. Anytime we have one of our cadets excel it puts a big feather in the program itself,” he continued. “I wouldn’t be surprised if in the not-to-far-off future he leaves the enlisted ranks and goes officer.”

Receiving the award was both a happy and poignant experience for McAdams, who had received news that his father, Christopher McAdams of Riverside, passed away May 6, in the midst of his eight-week boot-camp experience, where his training included physical fitness, seamanship, firearms, firefighting and shipboard damage control, lessons in Navy heritage and core values, teamwork and discipline.

“I got called down to the chaplain’s office, and he had a Red Cross message saying that my dad had a massive heart attack and passed away soon after,” McAdams said. “I was able to go home and spend a little time with my family. It was incredibly hard to come back to boot camp and stay focused and stay with the training while finding a way to stay mentally tough even when it felt like everything was crumbling around me. All through boot camp I was just trying to survive,” he continued, noting he was especially surprised and honored to receive the award. “I had a lot of stuff that challenged me, and I wasn’t pushing for any sort of award. I was just trying to stay focused on keeping my head up and doing my absolute best for my family back home.”

Christopher McAdam’s death was totally unexpected and shocked the entire family, said McAdam’s mother, June, noting her husband would be especially proud if he had lived to see his son earn top honors at RTC, an experience more than 35,000 recruits take part in annually.

The Military Excellence Award is the top award presented to the No. 1 recruit of their graduating training group. It is awarded to the recruit that best exemplifies the qualities of enthusiasm, devotion to duty, military bearing, and teamwork. The award placed McAdams at the pinnacle of today’s newest sailors, and he was also awarded a flag letter of commendation for his accomplishments, according to a press release.

Prior to joining the Navy, McAdams attended the University of West Florida in Pensacola, and graduated from Florida State College Jacksonville with an Associate of Arts degree. While at UWF, he formed a sailing club with his fiancée Victoria Clark of Pensacola.

“I joined the Navy to chase a dream,” McAdams said. “The Navy has been something that I have always been interested in, especially for the past few years.”

McAdams will start his Naval career in Pensacola when he trains to become a Cryptologic Technician.

“I had lots of people push me and motivate me,” McAdams said, noting he credits Recruit Division Commanders, Electrician’s Mate 1st Class Rubin Fletcher, Damage Controlman 1st Class Cody Osgood and Sonar Technician (Surface) 2nd Class Caren Ramirez for their



Top Sailor Steven McAdams



McAdams and his family celebrated in Great Lakes, Illinois. From left, Victoria Clark, Steven McAdam’s fiancée, Nathan McAdams, Steven McAdams, June McAdams and Aaron McAdams.



Vice Admiral Mary Jackson, reviewing officer at the Recruit Training Command, gives Steven McAdams a gold watch with the Navy Seal as an award for graduating as Top Sailor on May 31.

leadership and guidance. “From my fiancée always having my back to all my fellow shipmates that sat down with me one on one and helped me to see that constantly moving forward was the best way to go.”

His mother agreed. “We are very ecstatic and pleased that he got this honor,” June said. “I’m so very proud of the man Steven has become.”

Charity helping charity: nonprofits donate time, money to help youth

By Susan D. Brandenburg
Resident Community News

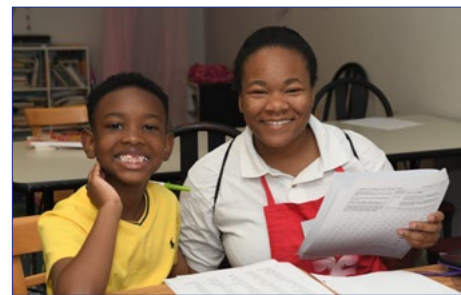
The Carpenter’s Shop Center Summer Camp was buzzing with activity on June 17 when more than 30 Teen Tutors met with the Center’s elementary school campers (K-6th grades) to begin an intensive one-on-one summer reading program sponsored by READ USA. The Teen Tutors, trained and funded through a grant from the Kids Hope Alliance, came prepared to work daily with campers for five weeks to improve their reading skills over the summer.

In addition to the teens, wearing their red READ USA aprons, the Carpenter’s Shop Center had another Monday morning visitor in red. Anne Nimnicht, a past-chairman of the annual PLAYERS Championship golf tournament, made her inaugural visit to the Center. Wearing her traditional Red Coat denoting her status as chairman, Nimnicht was taken on a tour of the Center

and observed several summer camp activities, including a STEM demonstration on dry ice clouds by Pastor Clint Wilder, an exciting real estate venture underway by the middle schoolers, Teen Tutors pairing up with their students, and much more.

To thank Nimnicht for the generous Red Coat donation from the 2019 PLAYERS Championship, Dr. Cheryl Wilder showed Nimnicht the 1985 bus, “Old Yeller,” that will now be replaced as a result of the Red Coat donation. “Old Yeller has been delivering students to the Center for many years now,” said Wilder, adding that the aged bus was more than ready to be retired.

“We are so grateful for our many community partners,” said Cheryl Wilder. “The generous donations of time and treasure from READ USA, the Kids Hope Alliance, the Red Coats, and so many others, are greatly benefitting the 120 children served by this Center year-round.”



A Teen Tutor helps a summer camper improve his reading skills.



Anne Nimnicht shows Pastor Clint Wilder’s students how dry ice clouds disappeared when she clapped her hands.



Teen Tutors work with READ USA to keep students ahead in reading during the summer.

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