

Resident

COMMUNITY NEWS



The Very Rev. Kate Moorehead poses in the interior of St. John's Cathedral where photos of church members are now taped to the pews. During this time of COVID-19, church members have spent their Sundays watching services online, but on May 3, they decided to take an extra step and not only join the service in spirit but also to fill the pews with their photos as a surprise for the clergy. "The sight of the photos made me cry," said Moorehead. "We are all there together, just in a different way." [READ MORE, PAGE 16](#)

Stimulus bills offer monetary relief to struggling businesses, nonprofits

By Jennifer Edwards
Resident Community News

Sensitive to the plight of small businesses, many of which have struggled to survive since the Coronavirus pandemic descended in March, Jacksonville City Council members voted unanimously May 26 to offer a financial lifeline to help kickstart their endeavors to reopen.

The bill, which was introduced by District 5 Councilwoman LeAnna Cumber of San Marco and co-sponsored by 10 council members, sets aside \$9 million to create the city's Small Business Relief Grant Program,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 14

Celebrating our 2020 Graduates



Bishop Kenny graduates safely social distanced during their in-person ceremony on the waterfront in William Johnston Stadium May 23.

FOR MORE SEE PAGE 37

Photo courtesy of With the Wind Productions

Hanging with my bestie

Jane Slater with her pup, Annie, (left) joins Stovall family dog Erin Noel (middle), and Janet Rodriguez with her dog, Cody, (right) as residents of Jacksonville's historic districts who have found working alongside their furry best friends has helped in dealing with the social isolation of the Coronavirus pandemic.

VIEW MORE, PAGE 27



Nonprofits face uncertain future due to COVID-19

By Marcia Hodgson
Resident Community News

A "Wild West" kind of climate has affected many businesses since the Coronavirus descended in March, but perhaps no other group has been as heavily impacted as Jacksonville's nonprofit sector.

Many of Jacksonville's charitable organizations were holding their own until COVID-19 hit, leaving the Nonprofit Center of Northeast Florida, Jacksonville's vital support system for the region's not-for-profit entities, scrambling to figure out what is needed to assist its clientele as it works to safely re-open and re-enter the economy.

In a State of the Sector talk given on the Zoom video conference platform May 14, Rena Coughlin, CEO of the Nonprofit Center, discussed the state of the nonprofit sector pre- and post-virus with members of the Planned Giving Council of Northeast Florida.

"We need to understand what indicators we should be measuring to determine how well a nonprofit will emerge from this recessionary economy," said Coughlin, noting the Nonprofit Center has been hosting weekly COVID-19 resource calls, flash polls, and has set up four subcommittees to create and collect resources for the sector. It also has been asking nonprofits to fill out a "changes in the sector" survey so it can "better get a handle on everything as we move into a summer with lots of unknowns."

"It's important to take the survey because it's important that we benchmark what the sector is doing. I've been approached by funders and by those in local government who have been basically accusing the sector of not taking advantage of the relief that has been offered," she said.

Pre-COVID State of the Sector

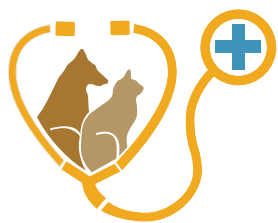
Coughlin began her talk by giving analysis and an overview of the nonprofit sector in Northeast Florida, which has been done in partnership with research funding from the Jessie Ball duPont Fund. Using information gathered from 990 and 990EZ forms from the Internal Revenue Service, Coughlin said there are 8,027 nonprofit organizations on the First Coast, but that 6,336 do not file a 990 form, so their data has not been used in the analysis. Instead data is derived from the 1,320 organizations that filed in 2016.

There has been substantial growth in the 18-year span from 1998 until 2016, when the sector grew from

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

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Publishers' Note

A different kind of Memorial Day is behind us – one filled with the need to wear masks, have stay-at-home barbecues, and the need to socially distance from neighbors. The one thing that never changed was the recognition of our fallen. We are thankful for the sacrifice they have made while serving our great nation, may those that paid the ultimate price rest in peace.

And as we head into Summer, we want to illustrate our immense gratitude to all the people that make publishing a newspaper in Jacksonville's historic neighborhoods so enjoyable and remarkable, from advertisers to readers alike.

In this edition of *The Resident Community News* we celebrate the graduates from the class of 2020 on pages 37-46, the furry creatures that keep us company as we work and play at home on page 27, and, just in time for Father's Day, a story on page 22 by Jennifer Edwards that celebrates the countless deserving dads that live in our historic neighborhoods.

We have also included Nonprofit Center CEO Rena Coughlin's assessment of the State of the Nonprofit Sector, a talk given

to the Planned Giving Council of Northeast Florida that our Managing Editor, Marcia Hodgson, was fortunate enough to hear. Please read her story that starts on the cover of this edition.

In being mindful of the uncertain future faced by many not-for-profit institutions in Northeast Florida, we want to remind you that tangible support for those organizations can be given through *The Resident's Connecting-by-Caring Campaign*.

The campaign, which is a new take on the pay-it-forward principle, allows you to provide a win-win opportunity by both assisting your favorite charity or small business while also supporting *The Resident Community News*, a fiercely local news source that covers the nonprofit sector better than any other media outlet in Jacksonville. With a direct-mailed circulation of 30,000 households on both sides of the St. Johns River, advertising in *The Resident* allows you to apply the "multiplier" effect to your gift to the organization.

For more information on how you can make a difference, please call Debra McGregor at 904-885-6031 or Seth Williams at 904-885-6849.

Pamela and Seth Williams



Photo courtesy of Headshots Studio

We dedicate this issue of *The Resident* to a wonderful family man, pharmacist, entrepreneur, small business owner and friend to so many. Gary Roberts will be missed by everyone he came in contact with, may God rest his soul.



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SOLD

4717 APACHE AVENUE

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AVONDALE

3557 HEDRICK STREET - \$670,000

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SOLD

1928 MORNINGSIDE STREET

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AVONDALE

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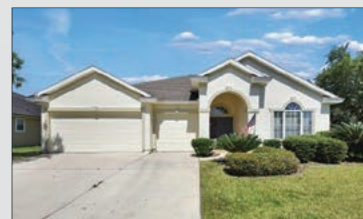
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Nonprofits uncertain future FROM PAGE 1

427 organizations to 1,320. She attributed the growth to better IRS enforcement, and noted Duval County is the “900-pound gorilla” with 902 nonprofits, including several that serve multiple counties. Nassau County has 68, Baker County, 11, Clay County, 102 and St. Johns County, 237, signifying it is a particularly high growth area with many new sports and recreation organizations.

One project the Nonprofit Center is working on is assisting the U.S. Census in numbering hard-to-count populations, she said. “Having a vital nonprofit community in these counties makes our ability to reach out to hard-to-count populations much easier. I think that is another way to think about the impact of the nonprofits. We know we are the most trusted to work in a community, so when it comes to a project like completing the census, having a strong nonprofit community is truly helpful,” she said.

Since 2012, the First Coast has added 51 education nonprofits serving clients from birth to grade 12. Second was religious organizations with 44, followed by human services general with 38, general health with 33, sports & recreation with 30, and arts and culture with 28. Currently, the First Coast has 3.99 nonprofits per 1,000 people, she said, noting that the average in the United States is 3.98. “The numbers may sound large. What I hear from my peers is ‘Wow, there are so many nonprofits, how are we all going to survive?’ But when you look at the number per capita compared to other states and the U.S., we aren’t any different, so it seems to be consistent,” she said.

Nearly 50% of the nonprofits in Northeast Florida fall within five groups by mission: Religion, 9.8%, health general 9.7%, human services general 9.4% and arts and culture 8.9%. One of the smaller groups is international with 5.6%, which Coughlin said she expects to shrink down even further in the future due to the federal government’s recent crackdown on immigration. “We lost two affiliates that did refugee resettlement in our community, and I don’t think that will be easier in the future with the Coronavirus. That will be a number we want to watch,” she said.

Viewing aggregate revenue and aggregate assets among the 501 (c) 3s there seems like a strong balance sheet, she said, especially if you look at employment. Altogether the nonprofit sector boasts \$8.56 billion in revenue, \$7.33 billion in assets, and 72,188 nonprofit employees, making the sector the third largest civilian employer in Northeast Florida. However, most organizations are small, with 72% pulling in less than \$500,000 in revenue. Only 5.2% have more than \$10 million in revenue, followed by 14.7% with revenue between \$1 million and \$10 million, and 8.1% with revenue between \$500,000 and \$1 million.

“When we take out nonprofit health institutions from the statistics, we see a huge

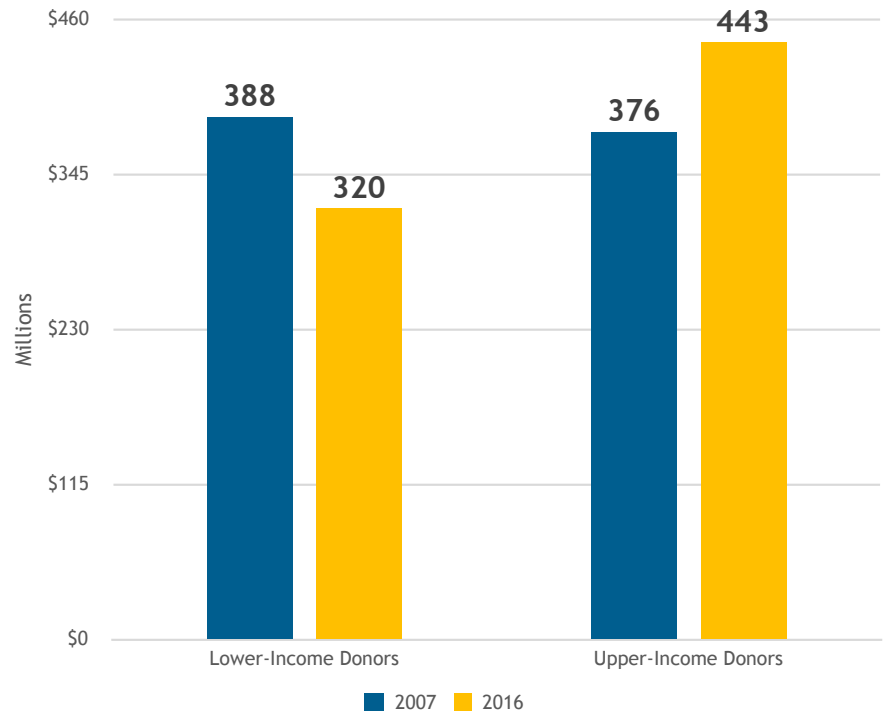
drop in all of those numbers – 72,188 employees goes to 28,483, while the \$8.56 billion in revenue goes to \$2.72 billion, she said, adding that of the 15 largest First Coast nonprofits, only three – Step Up for Students, Wounded Warrior Project, and Jacksonville University – are not health related. “There’s the sector, and there’s the sector with health institutions,” she said.

Of the three ways nonprofits are funded – earned income, government funds and contributions – locally 69% of all funding for First Coast nonprofits comes from earned income with 5% from government funds and 22% from contributions. Meanwhile, if one excludes the health nonprofits from the equation, the picture changes dramatically. Only 27% of those nonprofits survive on earned income, while government funds make up 14% and contributions play a much bigger role of 55%. “This is important to think about as you assess the long-term impact of the Coronavirus pandemic on nonprofits,” she said.

In 1998, approximately 31% of all nonprofits operated in the red, and the number in 2017 – pre-COVID -- is slightly higher – 35%. In the recession of 2002, the number soared to 42% only to be outdone by the Great Recession of 2008 when the number rose to 44%. Since its height in 2009, the numbers have fluctuated slightly downward hovering around 37% and 38% most years, until its lowest in a decade came to 34% in 2016, with 2017, ticking slightly upward before COVID-19 hit. “What this doesn’t tell you is that although they closed the year in the red, it could be by \$3.58, \$3 million or \$580,000. We have no idea. However, this is an important trend line for us because you can see it follows almost exactly the economic trend line. In 2001, after 9/11, we had a recession, and the number spiked to nearly 42% of organizations closing the year in the red. We’ve had a gradual trend line down to 33% just in time for the Great Recession, when we had a peak of nearly 45% of nonprofits in the red. We also saw a steep decline in their asset base, which means they were digging into their assets to survive the recession. I believe this has left them weaker as they enter this next difficult period. This trend line has never come back to pre-recession levels, which is worrisome, Coughlin said.

Contributions paint a similar picture, indicating that individual wealth has not fully recovered from the Great Recession. Considering data based on polling IRS forms of individuals with itemized deductions, contributions were just under \$1 billion in the pre-recession year of 2007, and by 2016, they are at \$1,014,379, just slightly above the 2007 level. What’s really concerning is that when viewing the average gross income of those donors, its slightly down when you

Aggregate Giving Adjusted for Inflation



consider all donors but is considerably less for upper income donors, dropping from an average of \$679,067 in 2007 to \$493,838 in 2016, she said. “There’s a 30,000 drop in the number of persons who itemized on their tax form as donors from 2007 to 2016,” she said. “That’s a tremendous decrease. What we don’t know is if those donors are contributing in some other way or have established a donor advised fund, or are giving online and not recording it, but I think to some extent it is a true decrease.”

It is also important to note that the bulk of giving to nonprofits has shifted dramatically to upper-income donors in the decade from 2007 to 2016. With the numbers adjusted for inflation, in 2007, lower-income donors gave approximately \$388 million, which was just slightly above gifts from upper-income donors of \$376 million. This changes dramatically in 2016, with lower-income donors falling to \$320 million, while upper-income donors climbed to \$443 million. “Upper-income donors, even though their average gross income has not rebounded, are making up the difference,” she said, noting lower-income donors have an adjusted gross income (AGI) of less than \$100,000, while upper income donors have an AGI of more than \$200,000.

COVID-19 impact

Although it may seem like nonprofits may be in for a bloodbath as the COVID-19 economy marches on, it may not all be bad news, Coughlin said.

In recent polling done by the Nonprofit Center, 74% of the nonprofits said donors had reached out to check on them, while 20% were providing advocacy for the sector and 30% offered to provide nonfinancial support, and 23% said they had received

some kind of help or assistance from their donor partners. Of note is that 39% of donors have offered to convert program funding to operations funding. “I think this is a critical and bold move for many funders,” Coughlin said.

Much of this has to do with “trust philanthropy,” a new concept which promotes a higher level of trust between nonprofits and donors, especially when it comes to trusting the organizations they have invested in will make the right decision when using their funds during extraordinary circumstances in a different way than specified. Trust philanthropy is currently being pushed by the Council on Foundations, which is offering a pledge to be signed by both donors and organizations, said Coughlin, adding the Community Foundation of Northeast Florida has signed the pledge.

This is important considering the dramatic changes many nonprofits have been forced to make due to COVID-19. In a recent survey, 34% of nonprofits said they have converted to all virtual operations, while 28% have formed a hybrid way of operating by using both in-person and virtual methods. Meanwhile, 14% of the nonprofits have closed operations except for essential services, and 14% have stayed fully in-person operationally by occupying their physical office space. Only 4% reported that they have entirely ceased operating.

COVID-19 has also taken a toll on staffing. Nearly 30% of the nonprofits polled said they have laid off or cut staff, which is an increase from the Nonprofit Center’s first flash poll done just after the crisis started when that number was below 15%. “We are seeing this number inch up every time we ask,” said Coughlin.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 5

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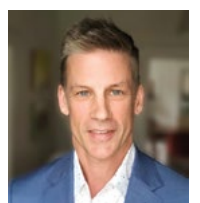
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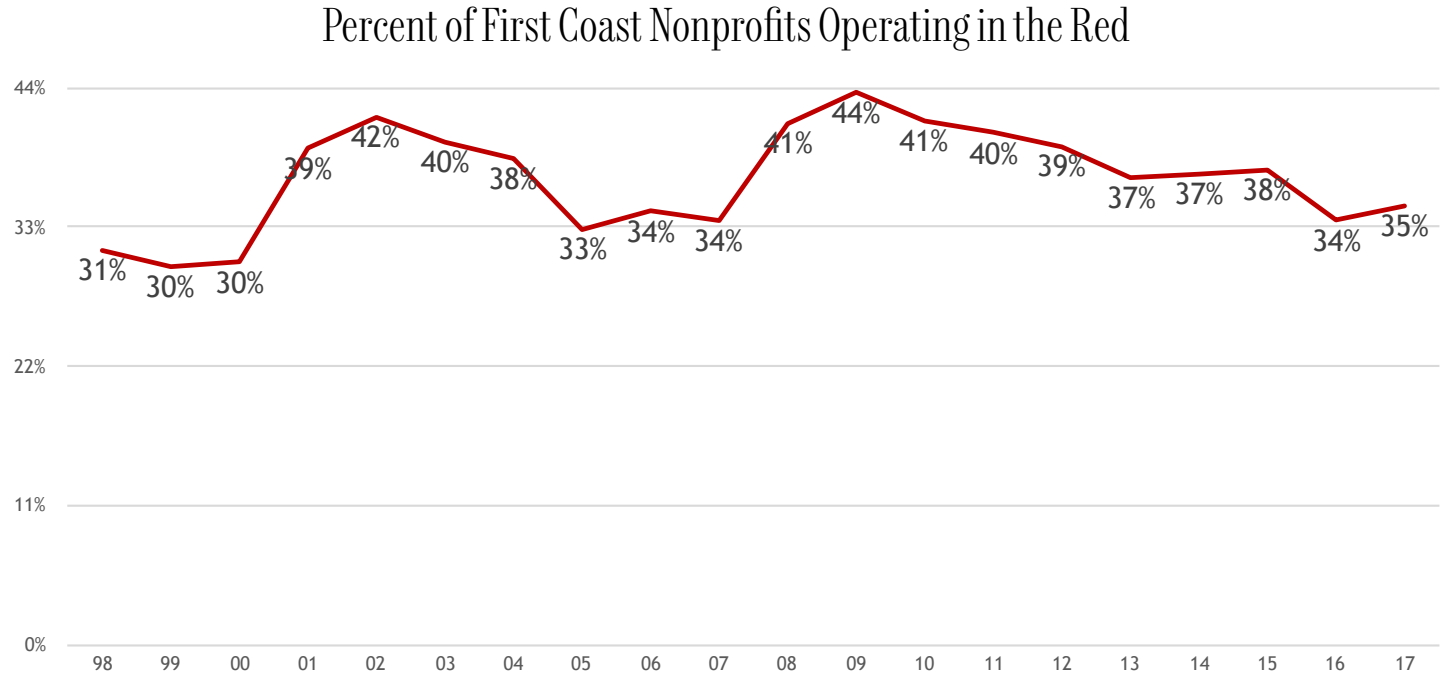


And 50% of the nonprofits said revenue has been lost during the pandemic due to the forced cancellation of fundraising events, while 30% said they had lost revenue due to their inability to deliver services.

But most impactful is the loss of volunteers, many of whom were fulfilling staffing rolls. Nearly 40% of the nonprofits are suffering due to a loss of volunteers, while 28% said there has been an increased demand for their services, and 33% said converting to a virtual world has been significantly difficult.

Contrary to what many funders and governmental officials believe, First Coast nonprofits – the majority of which earn \$500,000 or less – have been applying for the lifelines that have been offered by the local and federal government. Of the nonprofits recently polled by the center, 67% have applied for the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) while 3% were planning to apply. Of the organizations that applied, 91% were successful in getting a grant, while 9% were still waiting to hear. “I had to say I’m blown away by this statistic,” Coughlin said. “The absolute angst and terror we were all confronted with to meet the PPP deadline, and it seems now there was a significant amount of success in the sector,” she said, also noting that 33% also applied for help from the City’s VyStar small business loans, the First Coast Relief Fund, or Eidl (Economic Injury Disaster Loan).

Also, of interest will be how stimulus checks from the federal government will impact the nonprofit sector. “It’s almost as if we have a micro laboratory to see how universal basic income could influence the demand for services,” Coughlin said. “I know the First Coast Relief Fund had a significant drop in their requests for assistance immediately after stimulus checks went out. Perhaps there is a way for us to think about the future with direct service, direct income support that allows



the nonprofit sector to respond to the community need.”

Coughlin also said that Mari Kuraishi, president of the Jessie Ball duPont Fund, reported during a recent webinar that many nonprofits have assumed donations would decrease during the pandemic, but a poll indicates most donors have no intention of decreasing their giving. “Where the truth lies, we will have to stay tuned to find out,” she said.

“Depending on your revenue streams, ability to work remotely, the services you provided, and whether you were forcibly able to connect with the community or not – all of that has made a huge difference and has pointed out how complicated the nonprofit sector is,” said Coughlin. “It’s clear to me that it has taken longer for us to come back from the 2008 recession, so what will happen and how long will it take to come back from the Coronavirus recession? No one knows.”

Connecting-by-Caring is how you can help

COVID-19 has forced many nonprofits to dramatically change the way they do business, with many converting from in-person organizations with many volunteers to virtual operations. Although it is too early to determine what long-term affect the pandemic’s seismic change will have on the health of the nonprofit sector, it is obvious that nonprofits need extra support as they navigate through unsettled economic waters. And there is a way you can help. By supporting *The Resident’s* Connecting-by-Caring Campaign, it is possible to support nonprofits that care for the most vulnerable in our community while also supporting the community newspapers that cover the sector closely and provide the best that fiercely local journalism has to offer. A creative look at the paying-it-forward principle, the Connecting-by-Caring Campaign allows you to both assist your favorite charitable organization while also supporting the neighborhood newspaper you love. Instead of simply giving a monetary donation directly to a nonprofit, we ask that you entrust that money to our publication so we can design, write, edit, and complete a marketing campaign of your choosing. This kicks into action the “multiplier” effect by doubling or tripling your impact as your message is delivered directly into 30,000 households in Jacksonville’s historic neighborhoods. For more information about the campaign and your role in it, please contact Debra McGregor at 904-885-6031 or Seth Williams at 904-885-6849.

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Construction rolls along despite pandemic

By Jennifer Edwards
Resident Community News

One of the few silver linings of widespread COVID-19 closures is that when fewer people are on the road it makes it easier to complete construction projects, such as the build out of Southern Grounds, a coffee restaurant planned for the Shoppes of Avondale, and other City projects long in the works for the area.

Southern Grounds Coffee is on track to open on time in the fall and after a somewhat easier construction phase because of less pressure to compete for parking spaces. It's just one of a few projects benefitting from the double-edged sword of reduced traffic and parking pressure, as people work and stay home to prevent the spread of the virus.

The 7,200-square foot combination coffee shop, wine bar, market and art gallery in construction on St. Johns Avenue will eventually hold 187 seats. Adjacent to Biscotti's, it replaces some smaller, vacant stores, including a former ice cream shop and an import business, and the construction is going at a clip, said Edward Skinner Jones, who owns the property. Once it's open, it

will be the third location for Southern Grounds, after its locations in San Marco and Neptune Beach.

"The construction workers have the full use of parking because there were no parking conflicts," Jones said. "It's worked out to everyone's benefit since the restaurants are closed and the stores are closed. We're trucking along." At the end of April, crews with the Angelo Group had put up the block wall. By the first week in May, they were putting on the steel trusses, with plans to install the roof that first week.

"The block and the steel was the main mess and that got completed before stores opened back up," Jones said. He expected that Southern Grounds would be open in the early fall, the same timeframe as anticipated before the closures. "We've really had no slowdowns since we started," he said.

However, that doesn't mean there is going to be a grand opening just yet, although a soft reopening of some businesses such as restaurants had him optimistic.

"For the month of April, I think everyone has been focusing on how to survive," Jones said. "The grand opening was not on the top of our minds. We had no idea when things would open up again. At the existing Southern Grounds, we have outdoor seating and I think it will work in our favor. I assume things will be open in the fall."

Along with private projects underway, the City of Jacksonville is also continuing some construction projects in the area, including finishing a bridge replacement on Lakeside Drive in Ortega and rehabilitating a canal that meanders through several blocks near Willow Branch park. Both are proceeding on time, said Robin Smith, chief of Engineering and



Work on the build out of Southern Grounds Coffee & Co. in the Shoppes of Avondale has been easier because construction workers have not had to compete for parking due to the Coronavirus pandemic.

Construction for the City's Department of Public Works. In general, less traffic makes things a little easier.

"Managing roadway projects, of course, there's less vehicles on the road, less traffic to deal with," he said. "It's not a burden on the contractors. The fewer cars there are on the road, the fewer we have to interact with. You still have to do what you have to do, but there are less people in your way."

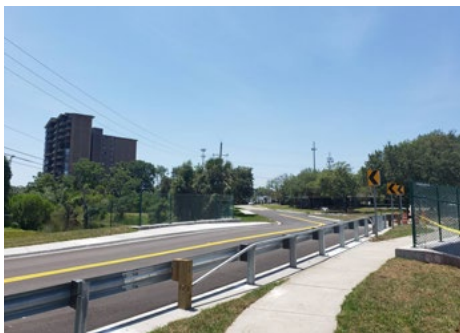
One of the projects the City is currently completing is work on Lakeside Drive in the area of Roosevelt Boulevard and near Ortega Park, formerly known as Roosevelt Square. In October, 2018, the City Council approved a repaving and bridge replacement project, partially because a Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) evaluation found that the 59-year-old bridge was structurally deficient and at the time was serving an estimated 14,000 trips per day, according to *Resident* reports at the time. The bridge had been replaced by

early May, but workers were still doing additional work on both sides and replacing sidewalks, Smith said. The bridge was later reopened, in mid-May.

"They have two or three more months before they are finished there," he said. "The bridge has been replaced but they are working on sidewalks (on either end of the bridge). They are replacing some water mains and some new sidewalks. In 90 days, we should be getting close to a substantial completion."

Workers are also completing a project along Willow Branch Canal, which weaves through Willow Branch park and along several blocks outside of the park. The work is being done in several phases, Smith said. The canal project currently involves replacing a bulkhead and another phase will be announced after the City finds funding.

"We have been working closely with the residents, so they know what to expect," Smith said.



Lakeside Drive opened up, as the long anticipated bridge replacement came to fruition in late-May.

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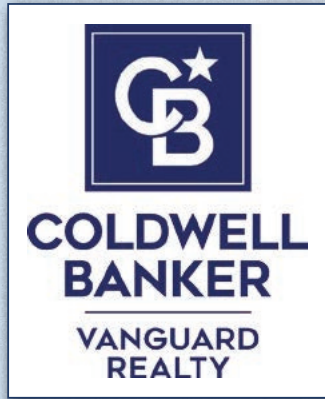
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Varsity Athlete



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DUKE UNIVERSITY
Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering,
Certificate in Innovation & Entrepreneurship,
History Minor

THIS MONTH'S FEATURED LISTINGS



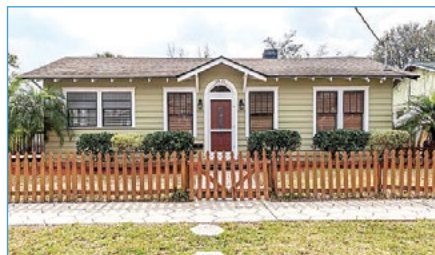
1846 MARGARET ST 9A - \$279,000
2 BR | 1 BA | 1 HBA | 1,313 SQFT.
Listed By Ed Akers



3002 RIVERSIDE AVE - \$699,000
4 BR | 3 BA | 1 HBA | 3,677 SQFT.
Listed By Wade Griffin



3629 VALENCIA RD - \$619,000
4 BR | 3 BA | 2,537 SQFT.
Listed By Alan Aptheker



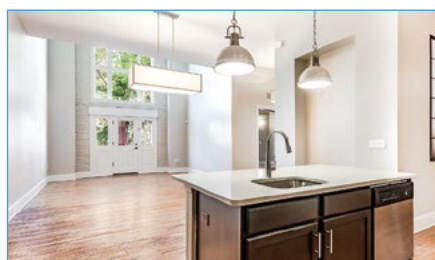
2816 SELMA ST - \$275,000
2 BR | 2 BA | 1,175 SQFT.
Listed By Tony Caribaltes



1276 RENSSELAER AVE - \$220,000
3 BR | 1 BA | 1,113 SQFT.
Listed By Tony Caribaltes



1254 HOLLYWOOD AVE - \$499,000
4 BR | 4 BA | 2 HBA | 2,508 SQFT.
Listed By Tony Caribaltes



2525 COLLEGE ST 1115 - \$389,900
2 BR | 2 BA | 1,823 SQFT.
Listed By Leslie Rios Wilkins



3032 SAINT JOHNS AVE - \$1,299,000
3 BR | 2 BA | 1 HBA | 4,034 SQFT.
Listed By Wade Griffin



1520 DONALD ST - \$494,000
5 BR | 3 BA | 3,176 SQFT.
Listed By Matthew Jarvis



1635 LAKE SHORE BLVD - \$248,400
4 BR | 3 BA | 1,929 SQFT.
Listed By Erin King



1839 WOODMERE DR - \$1,395,000
4 BR | 2 BA | 2 HBA | 4,284 SQFT.
Listed By Wade Griffin



4045 GILMORE ST - \$179,900
2 BR | 2 BA | 962 SQFT.
Listed By Sherry Faircloth



906 GREENRIDGE RD - \$1,325,000
5 BR | 4 BA | 1 HBA | 4,234 SQFT.
Listed By Joi Perkins



4726 PRINCESS ANNE LN. - \$565,000
4 BR | 3 BA | 3,332 SQFT.
Listed By Anne Rain



4724 MERRIMAC AVE - \$129,500
2 BR | 1 BA | 841 SQFT.
Listed By Seth Kimball



3515 RIVERSIDE AVE - \$499,500
3 BR | 2 BA | 1 HBA | 2,280 SQFT.
Listed By Wade Griffin



1127 N LIBERTY ST - \$394,750
4 BR | 3 BA | 1 HBA | 2,406 SQFT.
Listed By Ed Akers



2871 DOWNING ST - \$254,400
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Oak Street repaving project to include bike lanes, eliminate parking

By Jennifer Edwards
Resident Community News

The City of Jacksonville will begin repaving Oak Street this summer, and residents and business owners are helping shape what the area will look like after the project is done.

Right now, City officials are considering reducing the size of the lanes of traffic and adding bike lanes after the paving is done between Margaret and King Streets. It won't take much to change the traffic flow, just choosing where to put down the markings after the project is done. Yet, that might mean less parking for businesses in an area where parking is at a premium, leading District 14 Councilwoman Randy DeFoor to request a parking study.

The City already has plans and the budget to repave Oak Street and could use the final phase of the project – marking the road – to reconfigure traffic flow and add bike lanes. Right now, the intention is to narrow the lanes of travel and add bike lanes to both sides. However, the plans also call for doing away with the parallel parking along the road, and that has businesses in the area concerned about where their customers will park.

The City wants to connect the bike lanes with the Emerald Trail, a network of walking and biking paths on the south and north banks of the St. Johns River that are part of a public-private partnership aimed at making the City more accessible to non-vehicular traffic.

“Oak Street will ultimately connect in with the Emerald Trail, it's a project going on in Jacksonville, about 17 miles of multi-use paths,” said Karissa Moffett, City bicycle and pedestrian coordinator, during a Zoom meeting hosted by Riverside Avondale Preservation (RAP) April 30. She said Oak Street would also connect with the Fuller Warren pedestrian bridge, slated to be finished at the end of summer or early fall this year.

RAP hosted the Zoom meeting with City officials, neighbors, and business owners to discuss the possible changes. In attendance were District 14 City Councilwoman Randy DeFoor, RAP Executive Director Warren Jones, City Chief of Transportation Division Laurie Santana, Chris LeDew, chief traffic engineer with the City Public Works

Department, and Moffett. The meeting ran long as residents asked questions about the project, which is in an area that's a mix of businesses and homes.

Many were happy about the possibility of biking more safely, and some business owners said they would love to encourage their clients to bike to their businesses. Others were concerned about how their clients would be able to find a spot to park if parking was reduced in the area.

Healy Dwyer, a participant at the meeting, said she lives close to the proposed project and liked the idea of being able to bike more safely.

“I just wanted to voice my support,” she said. “I live two streets behind Oak right behind 5 Points. I bike and walk to King Street and 5 Points, and I usually bike to get my hair cut. I think one of the biggest blockers to biking somewhere is (bikers) don't feel safe. I get honked at a lot by people. It is a stressful experience. I think adding a bike lane is a great idea. I'm really excited about it.”

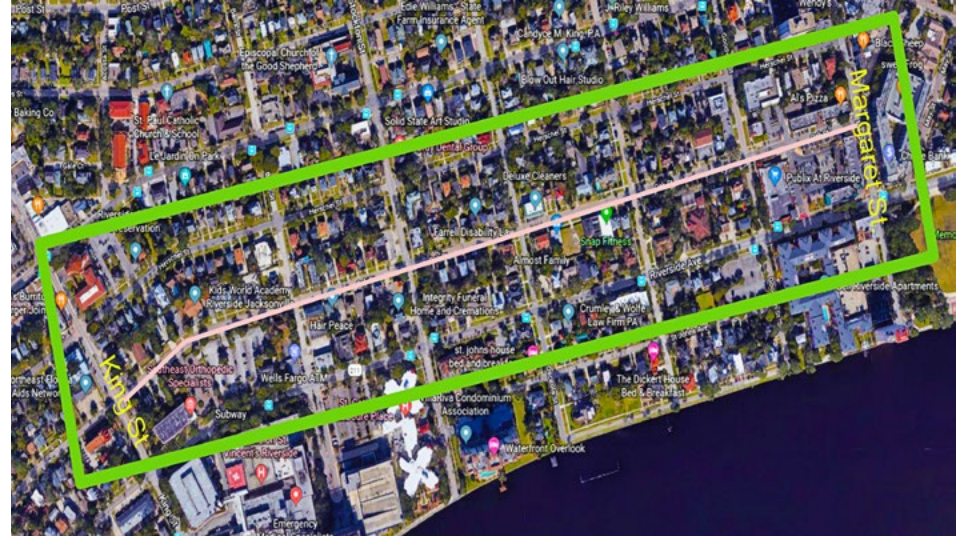
The section of Oak Street under consideration fronts several businesses, including Hair Peace and the law firm of Finnell, McGuinness, Nezami and Andux, as well as Publix in Riverside. After construction and restriping, the parking would be shifted to one side of the road and the car travel lanes would be reduced from 20 feet to 10 feet. The City chose Oak Street because it is filled with residents and businesses, and the new paths would encourage active participation, Moffett said.

Patrick McGuinness of Finnell, McGuinness, Nezami and Andux, located at the corner of Oak and Goodwin Streets, had questions about parking.

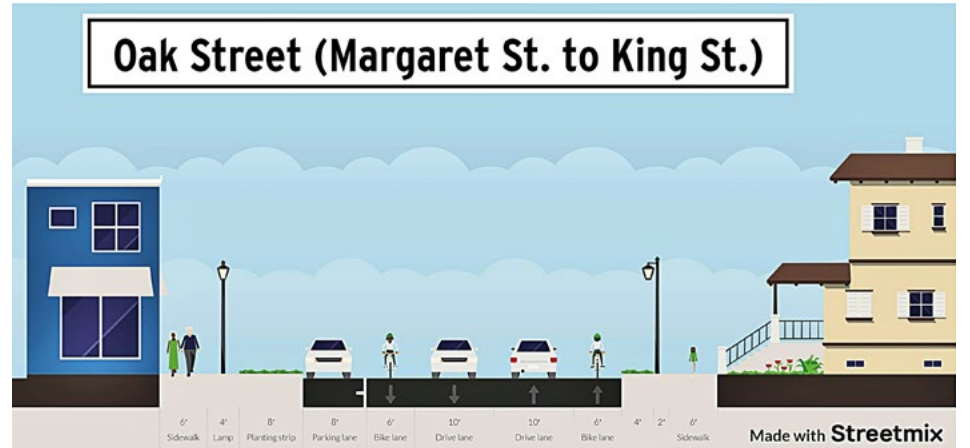
“We have people coming and parking in our office lot because the parking is inadequate. If you remove half of it you are putting people out of business,” he said during the Zoom meeting.

Jack Shad, another meeting participant, said he liked the idea but was also worried about parking.

“This is a great corridor to get down toward Publix,” he said. “I'm very happy with the project. I do want to talk about parking. That's what everyone talks about



The City will begin repaving Oak Street this summer.



After the City is done repaving Oak Street, the City proposes to narrow travel lanes, add dedicated bicycle paths, and remove parallel parking on one side of the street.

when you change the roadway.” Shad said he works out of the Delgado building at Oak and Barres, a 100-year-old mixed-use building with no on-site parking and near a popular gym.

In the end, DeFoor requested that the City get more information about the parking patterns in the area to get a better feel for what impact the loss of parking might have.

LeDew also fielded questions about speeding in the area. Several people asked about possibly dropping the speed limit through posted signs. LeDew explained that narrowed lanes might fix what posted speed limits cannot – narrower lanes give people unconscious cues to slow down, while posted speed signs need to be enforced.

“The speed limit is 30 miles an hour. That is the default speed limit in all residential areas,” he explained. “Right now, this project has no plans to lower the speed limit. The problem is not that 30 miles an hour is too fast, the problem is that peoples' speeds are higher than 30 miles an hour. I would encourage stepped-up law enforcement. Also, if the neighborhood wants to (ask for) traffic calming, we have a program where that could be done by petition where the residents pay for part of that. If there is a demonstrated safety problem, if we could do research and show that there is a crash problem due to speeding, there is a possibility we could also implement some other traffic calming measures to lower the speed limit.”

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5758 HYDE GROVE AVE
\$175,000
4 BD 2 BA 1,943 SF



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UNDER CONTRACT

4244 JILLIAN DR
\$170,000
3 BD 2 BA 1,314 SF



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4564 ORTEGA BLVD
\$420,000
3 BD 3 BA 2,664 SF



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3 BD 2 BA 1 HBA 2,066 SF



1431 RIVERPLACE BLVD, 1905
\$655,000
2 BD 2 BA 1 HBA 2,123 SF



2970 ST JOHNS AVE, 7E
\$620,000
3 BD 2 BA 1,822 SF



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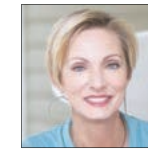
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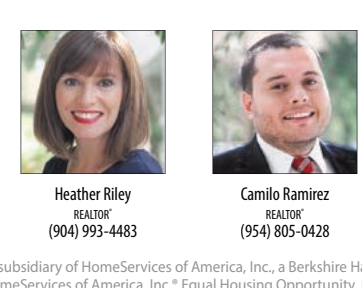


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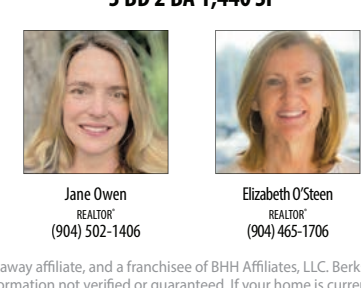


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2 BD 1 BA 901 SF

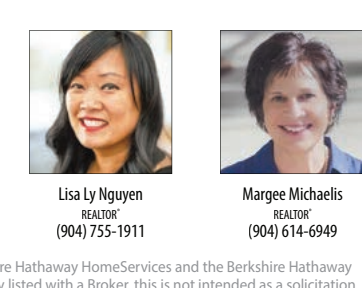


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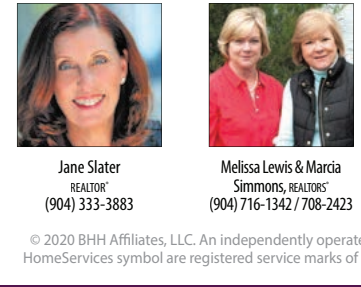
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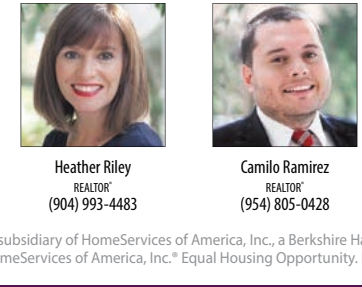


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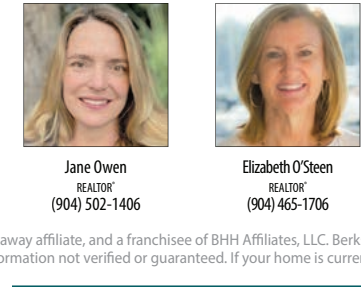


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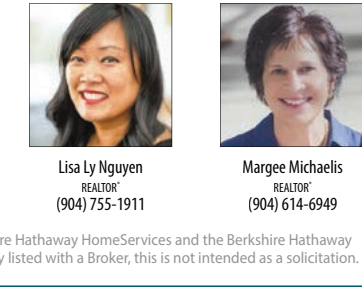


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Brooklyn area booms with residential, retail growth

By Jennifer Edwards
Resident Community News

Scott Riley fondly remembers his time living in the Brooklyn area, located between Five Points to its south and LaVilla and Downtown to the neighborhood's northeast. About four years ago, he lived in a tiny 600-foot studio apartment in the multi-family complex called 200 Riverside, next to Unity Plaza. It was a place with amazing fourth-story views of Downtown. He could walk down from his apartment to restaurants in the complex and take daily strolls over the Main Street and Fuller Warren bridges safely.

Riley, now a San Marco resident, recently reopened his longtime business, Stellers Gallery, in its former home: San Marco Square. But he said he loved living in Brooklyn and would still be if he was single – even though he hardly recognizes the area.

“It’s exploded since I left,” he said. “I don’t get over there much anymore, but when I do go over there it’s amazing, the restaurants and the shops. And, I loved walking Downtown. I walked every day from my apartment, every day straight to town. Those were some fun times for me.”

If Riley and other visitors think Brooklyn is packed now, they should wait another year and gauge again.

While the area already has a retail center, Brooklyn Station, with a Fresh Market grocery store and various other services, retailers and places to eat, it’s poised for tremendous growth in the retail, employment and residential sectors in the next year or two. This year alone, there are at least half

a dozen major projects either starting, in the process of completion, or nearly complete. They are all acting synergistically to accomplish some major City goals: a diverse residential population; more jobs; more employers; more retailers; and more parking.

Each goal builds on the others, said the City’s Downtown Investment Authority (DIA) CEO Lori Boyer, who is helping shepherd and, with DIA, to incentivize projects for the area.

“To me, Brooklyn is a great success story, and it’s what we want to see in the other districts downtown,” Boyer said. “Brooklyn has really taken off, and I have to give kudos to W. Alex Coley with Hallmark and 220 Riverside, and the initial shopping center (Brooklyn Station) because both those were the pioneer projects and a lot of everything else came behind it. You always have to have those pioneer projects first. Obviously, the commercial office growth was strong before that and has been forever. But those were the first that took us in the neighborhood and the community, residential and community.”

Here’s a look at what’s coming to the area, including expanded parking, a hotel, several new employers and two new multi-family residential complexes that will target different demographics.

Multifamily residential

Boyer said the City’s goal for Brooklyn is to offer a mix of housing that will serve multiple types of workers and residents.



Vista Brooklyn, 200 Riverside Avenue, is shown in mid-May.

“What you’re seeing here are everything from luxury apartments to workforce housing to lower income housing,” Boyer said. “The idea with all of those is that you can support the entire demographic span of the community. You might have individuals who are working in some of those office buildings at an executive level who are looking to downsize and who want to live close to work and a walkable community. You might have young millennials who want to live close to work, or you may have service staff that support all these areas, whether they work in restaurants or service. Our goal downtown is to make sure we serve all those demographics in proximity to where they work and shop.”

Vista Brooklyn

Bristol Hallmark Holdings LLC is developing a 10-story, 308-residential unit at 200 Riverside Avenue, according to City documents. When it’s complete, the building will

include a rooftop pool and deck, a fitness center and 14,000 square feet of retail space that could attract retail tenants who could then potentially employ Brooklyn residents. The project likely won’t be complete this year; the website says spring 2021, although Vista Brooklyn is currently pre-leasing. Boyer says developers are branding the units as luxury and marketing to higher-end occupants. They will command rent of \$2.15 to \$2.20 a square foot, in excess of some other area residential projects.

The Lofts at Brooklyn

Vestcor’s Lofts at Brooklyn Ltd. is developing a 136-unit, five-story structure at the corner of Chelsea and Jackson streets. While Vestcor has not returned requests for comment about the project, its website states that the building should be complete and open in early 2021 and will offer studio, one-, two- and three-bedroom apartments. It is also slated to have a fitness center, lounge, and picturesque views. Boyer said that the slab was poured in mid-May and workers were proceeding on the framing at that time. She also said that the units would be workforce housing, and developers would be taking advantage of some credits for low-income renters.



Renderings of the Lofts at Brooklyn, 190 Chelsea St.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 11

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Rendering of a new dialysis center rising at Roselle and Park streets.

The Dialysis Center

In May, work was nearing completion on The Dialysis Center, a 12,000-square-foot facility situated on .77 acres at Roselle and Park streets, according to City documents. Based in Nashville, Tenn., the developer is Dialysis Clinic Inc. (DCi), a nonprofit that treats people with end-stage renal disease, according to its corporate site. DCi also has a Jacksonville presence, with a center on Union Street.

DCi did not immediately return request for comment at press time, so there was not an indication yet of how many the clinic would employ.

“I think this is an additional piece of the puzzle,” Boyer said. “Ultimately, we would like to see a centralized medical innovation campus somewhere Downtown. If that were to happen, all of these ancillary facilities play a role in that. Those are one of our target industries, the medical technology and medical support.”

FIS New World Headquarters and Florida Blue

Executives had hoped to break ground in May on the new FIS headquarters, which in February was expected to bring up to 1,800 employees to the Brooklyn area by 2029, a little more than 12,000 of whom

were current Jacksonville FIS employees with an average salary of \$85,000. Now, crews building the 12-story, 350,000-square-foot office are more likely to see a groundbreaking in June, Boyer said. When the headquarters is done, it will supply 1,380 additional parking spaces for its employees and allow the use of at least 130 for the public after work hours and on weekends and holidays.

Meanwhile, the nearby Florida Blue parking garage at the corner of Park and Forest streets had a completion date of March 2021 but may be completed sooner, Boyer said. It will supply a minimum of 750 spaces for night and weekend parking. Parking is essential to develop retail and employment in the area, she said.



The Florida Blue parking garage at Park and Forest streets may be done this year.

Brooklyn Place

Southeast Investment Inc. is constructing a retail strip called Brooklyn Place. It will be located next to the retail center Brooklyn station and span 11,708 square feet while accommodating five retail tenants in four retail bays, according to renderings submitted to the City and other City documents. Like the existing retail already there, it will front Riverside Avenue. Construction is fully under way, and Boyer said she expects the strip may be done completely by the end of this year.



Residence Inn by Marriott, 357 Oak St.

Residence Inn by Marriott

The 135-room hotel at 357 Oak Street is also rising quickly. Boyer said it’s needed for travelers doing business in Jacksonville’s corporate offices and for family members of new residents. Hospitality projects being built now have an advantage, because they were financed before the COVID closures and will likely open after a COVID vaccine is found – and before new hotel projects can get financing, she said.

Overall, Boyer counts all the new projects as a win for the Brooklyn area and a possible model for other areas Downtown. Riley, the former 200 Riverside resident, also thinks it’s a positive for his old neighborhood.

“I think the growth is probably very, very fun, and every time I go there it’s packed,” he said.



Brooklyn Place, a retail strip, fronts Riverside Avenue.

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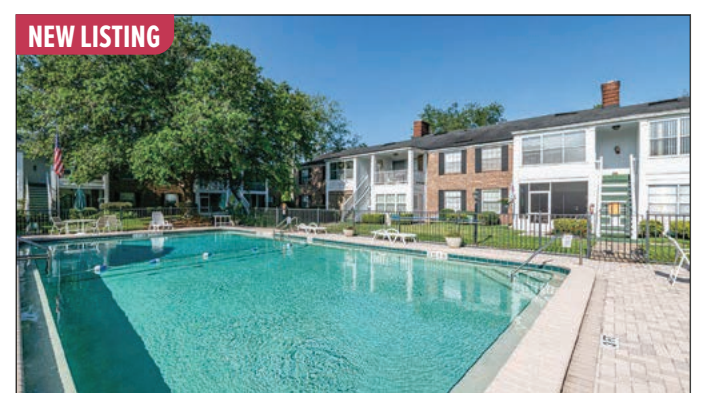
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Opinions differ on COVID insurance claims for small businesses

By Jennifer Edwards
Resident Community News

Small business owners across the country who have been devastated by loss of revenue and/or employee work productivity due to COVID-19 are now left wondering whether their insurance policy covers their losses. Locally, some in the insurance business say no, while other attorneys say, “definitely maybe.”

At-Large Group 4 City Councilmember Matt Carlucci, a State Farm insurance agent, says it is highly unlikely virus losses would be covered, although it would be nice if they were.

“Loss of income would never apply to a Coronavirus pandemic or anything that has to do with health, not that I’ve experienced in my 42 years in the property and casualty insurance business,” he said. “It would be much more fun to say that it is covered, but it’s not, which is sometimes why people buy disability insurance, Aflac (supplemental insurance), and in the awful event of a life event, they might buy business life insurance. In the event of COVID interrupting a business, and businesses suffering a loss of income because of the Coronavirus, I don’t know of any property and casualty policy covering it.” Carlucci said, adding in his experience, policies pay loss of income for physical loss, such as if the business burned down or was damaged by a tornado or by some other means.

But Bradley Bodiford disagrees. An attorney with the Jacksonville firm Terrell Hogan, Bodiford and other local attorneys dispute Carlucci’s view, and Bodiford said that unless a business policy has a virus

exclusion – which the insurance companies started putting in policies after several pandemics in the last century – there was room to potentially be reimbursed. He said that he and other local attorneys have been reviewing policies and about a third of the policies they reviewed did not have an exclusion. The collective number they reviewed by the last week of May was about 20.

“Even if there isn’t a virus exclusion, it doesn’t mean there’s a slam dunk, but we think potentially there is a path forward for you, and potentially a large amount of money, and the sustainability of your business,” he said. The effect of the virus can be likened to other cases that the courts have ruled on, case law that sets a precedent – and could be designated as a physical loss, depending on how local, appellate, and possibly the Florida Supreme Court see it, he explained. In his view, the virus makes physical businesses uninhabitable, leading to a physical loss, and in Washington State and across the country, several businesses have filed lawsuits on the same premise.

“But it’s up to the judges to make this jump,” Bodiford said. “We will probably start seeing opinions across the country in three to six months. I imagine one judge will see it one way, and one will see it the other way. If all the mid-level appellate (appeals) courts agree, it wouldn’t go up to the State Supreme Court. There are a lot of ifs,” he said.

In the meantime, there is one concrete step business owners can take if they’re seeking reimbursement, he said: Have an attorney review the policy.

Parks committee goal: Get every park a ‘friends’ group

By Jennifer Edwards
Resident Community News

Community members, park advocates and Riverside Avondale Preservation (RAP) members are teaming up to elevate public parks and green spaces throughout Riverside and Avondale.

Some parks, such as Boone Park South and Memorial Park in Five Points, already have ‘Friends’ groups that lovingly care for, clean up and reforest them, while many other parks – especially the small, “pocket” parks -- have not yet had the same level of community engagement. Pamela Telis, founder of Friends of Boone Park South, hopes to help change that. She is joining with Kim Clontz, as co-chairs of RAP’s new parks committee.

There are more than 400 parks in Jacksonville, according to the City of Jacksonville’s parks department, and Clontz said 26 of those are within the Riverside-Avondale District. They measure from a tenth of an acre up to 26 acres, and some of them have active corps of recognized volunteers while others do not. In some cases, there are volunteers that haven’t been officially recognized. A recently released RAP study, authored by members, looked at how to encourage volunteerism in the parks in partnership with the city.

Telis, who lives across from Boone Park South, is very active in helping to maintain and enhance the park with new trees. She wants to make it possible for others to do the same.

“The city has over 400 parks,” she said. “They can’t do it all with their funding and staff. I started looking into other cities with friends of parks (groups) and realized that we need to create resident-based support for our local parks if we want them to be better supported and maintained.”

During meetings with RAP members, Telis said she realized more vision was needed regarding the parks in the area. “We saw the opportunity to think in a much bigger way about all of our parks,” she said. “I thought, why don’t we get together once or twice a year and share thoughts, resources, solutions, volunteers and tools. I thought, it would be more efficient if we could work together. That was my ultimate goal.” Telis said she would like the park committee to emphasize the pocket parks, the little bits of earth that add value and enjoyment throughout the neighborhood.

“I think our little small pocket parks are the total gems of the neighborhood. They are a gem, a brilliant idea,” Telis said. “They

are just such special places. I think with a little bit of love they could be even better – some flowers, some benches, making sure they are maintained, making sure the garbage is addressed.” She pointed to Stone Park on Lechlade Street, an oval park surrounded by bungalows and now the site of a community garden.

“The community said, ‘wouldn’t it be fun if we had a community garden?’ And the city said ‘no, we already have one on Park street, use that one.’ But they persevered, and I am proud of them. It is right in their front yards, and they have 12 raised beds. They have a water spigot. I can just picture on a wonderful September evening, people looking out and seeing a neighbor, grabbing a little glass of wine ... that is a perfect example of bringing people together in a small neighborhood.”

She also pointed to Yacht Basin park, where the married couple known for their striking murals, Kate and Kenny Rouh of RouxArt, used to live and do mosaic work. There’s a koi pond now, she said, and the space is charming. There’s also Native Park #1, filled with all-native plants, labeled with their names. Telis also wants to bring awareness to the multitude of plaques throughout the parks that commemorate past residents.

Clontz, who started the nonprofit Friends of Jacksonville Playgrounds, is working on implementing the parks committee ideas, and making it easier to form friends’ groups. She said the reason there are so few friends of parks groups is because there had been a requirement that the groups carry insurance.

“We are trying to re-establish that connection so people in the city know that there is an active volunteer group,” Clontz said noting that one roadblock to the plan is the city’s requirement that friends groups hold insurance. “If someone wants to help out a park, nobody wants to get insurance,” she said.

Clontz has been in touch with Daryl Joseph, director of the City Parks, Recreation and Community Services Department, and District 14 City Councilwoman Randy DeFoor about the problem. “We told them here’s the holdup. This is why the friends groups aren’t moving forward, because no one wants to be responsible for monthly insurance premiums. Daryl said by June 1 he would get with risk management to see how we can adjust this.”

Clontz also said the eventual goal will be to get every park a friends’ group, even if the group is composed of just one or two people for the smaller parks.

“It’s kind of on hold until June 1,” she said.

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Former Roosevelt Square taking shape as Ortega Park

By Jennifer Edwards
Resident Community News



Crews make visible progress on transformation of Ortega Park.

Builders are tirelessly working on renovation and construction at Ortega Park, the former Roosevelt Square retail center that contains a Publix, Stein Mart, Ulta Beauty, and other stores.

Publix, which anchors the center, is also near the end of a \$930,000 interior renovation project.

Dwaine Stevens, director of community relations for Publix supermarkets, said that renovations were “obvious” and ongoing but would create a larger grab-and-go area and cheese and olive bar and expanded seating and be done sometime in June. City documents also show the addition of a family bathroom.

“There remains continued exterior remodeling of the shopping center by the landlord,” Stevens added in an email. The remodeling is a separate product undertaken

by the Atlanta-based Dewberry Group, the property owner.

Along with exterior remodeling, RLH Construction LLC crews have completed drainage projects, paving, and are working on the construction of at least three new buildings.

Dewberry Group bought the declining Roosevelt Mall in 1997 and redeveloped it into a 300,000-square-foot retail center, according to the Dewberry site, which also touts its Publix as one of the national company’s top-10 highest grossing stores. Now, Dewberry plans to multiply the space to 700,000 square feet, add a “pedestrian engagement area” and construct what it calls Class-A

multi-family units. Dewberry has renovated the retail complex three times before, in 1999, 2003 and 2019, according to its site.

In the meantime, crews have over the past few years demolished Charles and George’s Car Wash and the Belk department store in preparation for opening up the plaza, filled in existing drainage ponds, created right of way access, and gotten the go-ahead to begin construction of several shell buildings at the cost of many millions of dollars.

The City issued building permits in early May for RLH to begin construction on site of the shell buildings. Building C will comprise 4,565 square feet of retail space at a cost of \$1.2 million; Building D is to be constructed at 4411 Roosevelt Boulevard at a cost of \$1.5 million and will contain 4,703 square feet of retail space, and Building F will be substantially larger, with 24,077 square feet on a little more than half an acre. The cost for Building F was unclear from the documents. The City issued the permits May 5 and, according to signs posted around Ortega Park, developers plan to lease the spaces as they become available.

In the meantime, one retailer was happy to comment about the changes to the beloved retail center. A corporate spokeswoman for Stein Mart, one of the complex’s largest and most tenured retailers, had positive things to say about the retail center.

“We’ve been in Roosevelt Square Shopping Center since 1998 and love being a part of this community,” Linda Tasseff, director of external communications and investor relations for Stein Mart corporate, wrote in an e-mail. “The project is interesting, but not expected to significantly impact us. Our business is mostly influenced by what we do for our customers, every day.”

She said that the store underwent extensive renovations and improvements in 2018 and extended its lease through 2029, and no renovations were planned at this time.

Dewberry Group has not responded to requests for comment or information about the project.

Visit www.ResidentNews.net to view renderings and site plans.

Business Grants FROM PAGE 1

a plan that will distribute payments of up to \$2,000 to Duval County businesses that can show they have lost at least 25% of their revenue due to COVID-19. The intent of the bill is to assist qualifying businesses in paying rent, mortgages, or other fixed expenses.

The grant program mirrors another city stimulus program that has so far provided \$1,000 in assistance directly to 40,000 Jacksonville residents who most need it. The plan has been so successful, Council members also voted May 26 to add \$5 million to expand it. That plan granted debit cards to Duval County residents who earn less than \$75,000 a year, have lost at least 25% of their income due to the pandemic, and need help with mortgage, rent and utility payments.

The city’s nonprofit community was also not left out of the Council’s largesse May 26. The Council appropriated \$1 million toward the First Coast Relief Fund, which is administered by the United Way of Northeast Florida, to help nonprofit organizations serve individuals and families in need during a community crisis.

“We now have a safety net under almost every segment of our population,” said Group 4 At Large City Council Member Matt Carlucci after the meeting.

The Small Business Relief Grant program is not to be confused with the loan program offered by VyStar in partnership with the City of Jacksonville to assist in keeping businesses afloat. There the city’s contribution to the Small Business Lending Program was between \$20 and \$30 million, and was to be used to provide a combination of grants, interest payments, and potential aid toward

the principal of loans to small business owners, with some elements tied to employee retention, according to VyStar’s website.

In contrast, Cumber’s small business bill, officially called Ordinance 2020-0247, provides grants to business owners and is meant to assist Duval County companies that have been operating at least a year and employed less than 100 employees as of Feb. 29, 2020. District 14 City Councilwoman Randy DeFoor also filed an amendment, which passed, allowing self-employed, sole proprietors, and those working from home, to also qualify.

“I’m very excited that we could get together as a council and help,” Cumber said. “I think this is a boost for those small businesses who need it. I’m happy I could sponsor some legislation and happy that my colleagues are all supportive, and we came out with a great bill.”

Carlucci said that an application portal could be online as soon as Wednesday, June 3.

Before the vote, Cumber said City administrators were prepared to get the program online quickly.

“I think addressing fixed costs like rent and mortgage is one way the City can help,” Cumber said. “They are hard to negotiate, you have to pay them in the end, everything else can pretty much fluctuate. I thought it would be a good idea to help them with their rent and mortgage. Council has done the same thing for individuals. We want to keep people in their homes, we want to keep people in their businesses.”

Cumber said the money funding the program would come from \$9 million already appropriated by the city for Coronavirus relief. Originally, that city funding was going towards the VyStar loan program and would

pay the interest on emergency small business loans. It was part of a \$26 million City package that over six years would pay for 10% of the principal on the loans if businesses retained their employees. However, when the City was able to get \$159 million in federal relief, it was able to use federal funds instead of City funds, she said.

“I wanted to take that \$9 million and put it back into small business relief,” Cumber explained. “I really hope that it can give folks a shot in the arm and a little relief as they are really starting and trying to come back. We can’t solve all of the issues, nor is that the role of government in my mind. But I think we are in extraordinary times. I think helping with those hard, fixed costs to get people over the hump is really important and a really good use of taxpayer funds.”

Cumber also said residents could do their part by patronizing local businesses to “get those businesses back up and running.”

DeFoor said her amendment to the bill was to address business owners who have fallen through the cracks for all other types of aid, both federal and city.

“What I’ve heard loud and clear from constituents is that 1099s have been left out, not just of the previous VyStar relief act but also the CARES act. Both required brick and mortar as well as employees,” she explained. “For VyStar, you had to have two or more employees. I wanted to make sure that those (self-employed) individuals and sole proprietors who did not have employees and/or work at home can also get relief. I think it obviously will provide relief to small businesses such as restaurants and service industries. It’s going to be very helpful, and we want that, we want to help as many people as possible.”

Carlucci also supported the bill.

“Even though it’s coming out of our operating reserves, I think we can afford that to happen during this emergency, and I think Councilwoman Cumber is putting a safety net underneath some people who for some reason or other didn’t qualify for some of the other relief bills,” he said. “I think she is capturing a lot of people who fell through the hole and is providing safety nets (through the bill).”

The other relief bill that passed unanimously was Ordinance 2020-243, sponsored by District 9 City Councilman Garrett Dennis, that added \$5 million to a City program that gave \$1,000 to individuals through pre-paid debit cards that the City was still distributing in May. Carlucci said the money would come from an “overaccumulation” of money for permits and fees. “We might be charging too much for those,” he said, noting the fees were for different aspects of the building process and are in excess of what the City Building Department needs to support itself.

Meanwhile, Ordinance 2020-0248, which will assist nonprofits, was sponsored by District 6 City Councilman Michael Boylan. It will help nonprofits that directly serve clients in need of such things as food, housing, medical care, and other necessities.

“It helps the programs of the nonprofits, not the nonprofits themselves. You can make an application directly to the nonprofit,” he said.

“I’m very supportive and pleased with the support my colleagues have given me and given this bill,” Boylan said. “And I certainly support Councilwoman Cumber’s bill. The small businesses have fallen through the cracks in this process. They can’t get unemployment money from the state, and although they get individual relief, that’s not helping their business any.”

Turners Underseal helps Ortega residents' respiratory issues

Joe and Tracy Markley bought their 1,850-square-foot mid-century home in Ortega more than five years ago, but it wasn't until recently that Joe started to make a connection between his frequent sinus issues, breathing problems and constant sneezing and his home, surrounded by water and infiltrated by Florida humidity. He had started doing some research on Nextdoor, he explained, trying to figure out how to handle the dampness that seemed to be seeping in and causing health problems. That's where he learned about Turners Underseal.

"I never had a crawlspace before or issues with humidity or moisture in my crawlspace," the Ohio native said. "We moved into the house and from the start, my wife and I have both had some kind of respiratory illness, sinus issues, constantly sneezing. We've been dealing with this for five years. I installed a dehumidifier and it helped with the moisture in the house, but we kept getting the stale odors that, as it came out, came from the crawlspace. I did quite a bit of research and saw a lot of recommendations on Nextdoor for Turners Underseal. Chris Turner came over and spent an hour and a half educating me on the differences between the encapsulation and dehumidifying the floor and ceiling."

That's when the couple decided to hire Turner to sanitize and install a system to keep the crawl space below the home dry. After learning more about the issue, Markley chose against encapsulating the space, a common remedy, and Turner himself adamantly opposed it for the crawl space – the

empty area beneath historic homes meant to allow access to plumbing and infrastructure. Encapsulation involves sheathing the area in plastic, which Turner says traps moisture and creates liquid pockets where sickness-producing mold can flourish. Turner instead uses various techniques including a mechanical drying system that keeps the space under the house sanitary and dry.

Markley said that when Turner came to the house to get a read on the interior condition of the home, the humidity level was more than what would cause the flooring to

"We moved into the house and from the start, my wife and I have both had some kind of respiratory illness, sinus issues, constantly sneezing."

buckle over time from air saturation. The couple also knew they wouldn't want their grandchildren breathing unsafe air.

"He was pretty convinced that he was going to make a big difference," Joe Markley said. "He came and sprayed the whole underside and then came and did the whole install. Legitimately, when I would get up in the morning, I could breathe in and there was a cracking in my chest, like (an) asthmatic."

But a little more than week after a treatment by Turners Underseal and "The crackling in my chest has gone, the sneezing has gone. So far, I've been satisfied," Markley said.



In addition to the Turners Underseal Dry Crawlspace System, Turners Underseal also does sub-floor sanitizing, permanent wood sealing and home air quality inspections. For \$300 off installation services, contact Chris Turner at (904) 903-9569, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 7:30 p.m., or check out Turners Underseal at turnersunderseal.com

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The Salvation Army forced to close Child Development Center

Effective May 4, The Salvation Army of Northeast Florida has made the difficult decision to cease the operations of its child development center. The child development center had been in operation for 21 years, but in the height of COVID-19, The Army was forced to reassess the viability of the programs and decided to close it down permanently.

It had been The Salvation Army's goal to help children reach their full potential. The nonprofit intends to do whatever it can to assist the employees affected by this decision and will help families, who had children enrolled, to find alternative programs. The Army will continue to offer scholarships to families of the Towers Center of Hope and other families in need that wish to put their children in accredited learning centers, said Antoinette Vitale, a spokesperson for The Salvation Army.

All other Salvation Army of Northeast Florida programs will operate as usual and continue to meet the daily needs of the most vulnerable populations.

"After much deliberation, thoughts, and prayers, we decided to close the Child Development Center. Since 1891, The Salvation Army has provided numerous services to meet the needs of men, women and children in Jacksonville and surrounding communities. We will continue providing housing to the homeless, food for the hungry, emergency assistance for those in crisis, character building programs for the youth, and a myriad of other services in our communities. We are only able to do the most good, to the most people, in the most need, because of the generous support and resources from our donors, partners and friends. We are so grateful to all who enable us to serve the 'whosoever daily,'" said Major Keath Biggers, administrator for The Salvation Army serving Northeast Florida.

Filling the pews in the time of Coronavirus

Although parishioners have not been allowed to worship together in person at St. John's Cathedral since the advent of COVID-19, church members surprised their clergy by pasting their photos in the pews to give a boost to their priests as they livestreamed the services online May 3.

Figuring out how to worship with your community of faith when you can't come to church is something church leadership at St. John's has had to figure out rapidly with the onset of the pandemic, said The Very Rev. Kate Moorehead, dean of the cathedral. The following are some things she said she has learned so far:

1. Worship can happen virtually, but we must be very careful to sing, sit, stand, and respond in prayer so it does not become entertainment. You can either watch worship or you can participate in it. We ask our viewers to light a candle, to set up a home altar by their computer, to pray aloud the responses and to eat bread with us. In this way, we hope that



As the Coronavirus pandemic continues, the members of St. John's Cathedral may not literally be in the pews each Sunday, but thanks to their photos, now taped to the seats, they can better support their clergy in spirit.



Members at St. John's Cathedral are encouraged to take an active part of the service at home.

God will actively engage with them in worship and they will not just sit back passively and watch. Worship is not a movie or a TV show, it is living engagement with your community and with God.

2. Worship online has to be briefer and more intimate. The long ancient liturgies that have been beautifully executed for centuries don't come across well virtually. So, we must be ancient and beautiful but also concise and vibrant.

3. Love does transfer online. This last week, some of our faithful put pictures of our people up taped to the pews. In a few weeks, we will add photos of our loved

ones who have died and who also are still with us. As one person said, "The cloud of witnesses is now in the cloud."

4. People are engaged and active. They are bringing food in for the hungry, they are giving, they are praying and contacting one another. The church is very much alive, even without our building. On our altar every Sunday, we now place flowers from someone's garden.

"The church is alive. It is vibrant and holy and growing and changing. The early Christians worshipped in each other's homes. And here we are, returning to our roots, at home with one another and with God," Moorehead said.



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Barbara Colaciello



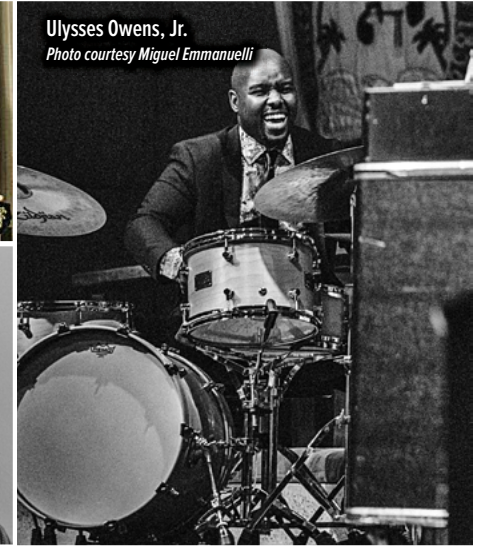
Rebecca Levy
Photo courtesy of Shana Skelton



Richard Colado
Photo courtesy of Andrew Carroll



Bob Moore



Ulysses Owens, Jr.
Photo courtesy Miguel Emmanuelli

Art Ventures bestows 18 grants to celebrate 30th anniversary

Eighteen Northeast Florida artists, including five from Jacksonville’s historic districts, were recognized with Art Ventures grants of \$3,500 each as The Community Foundation for Northeast Florida celebrates three decades of investing in our local cultural community. The individuals selected for the 2020 awards include visual artists, writers, composers, choreographers, musicians, and photographers chosen for their demonstrated talent as well as their aspirations to refine an aspect of their craft.

This year’s 18 grants represent the largest number bestowed on individual artists ever made in one year, and in conjunction with 12 awards being made to small arts organizations, fulfill the Foundation’s pledge to honor Art Ventures’ 30th anniversary with a record 30 grants.

“Months ago, when deciding to mark the historic Art Ventures milestone 30th anniversary by greatly increasing the number of grants made in 2020, our goal was to highlight the importance of investing in the

local arts community,” noted Nina Waters, president of The Community Foundation. “Little did we know when we made these plans that the COVID-19 pandemic would exact such a toll on local artists, and we are delighted we can help support this vital part of our cultural community. Their rich contributions to Northeast Florida are an important reason we love living here.”

The 18 individual artists represent the largest multi-disciplinary pool of grantees in the initiative’s history, a testimony to the depth of artistic talent in Northeast Florida. They include: Barbara Colaciello, Richard Colado, Laura Colomb, Nancy Hamlin-Vogler, James Joshua Hansbrough, Rebecca R. Levy, Alisha Lewis, Roxanna Lewis, JoAnne Maffia, Christina Mastrangelo, Franklin Matthews, Aisling Millar McDonald, Bob Moore, Ulysses Owens Jr., Ebony Payne-English, Theresa Segal, Marisella Veiga, and Hurley Winkler.

Colaciello, Colado, Levy, Moore and Owens have ties to Jacksonville’s historic neighborhoods.

Colaciello is a well-known writer and performer in Northeast Florida, and artistic director of BABS’ LAB, a performance and training center in the CoRK Arts District. The grant will allow her to fund a new work examining caregiving, women’s heart health, and the healing power of the arts.

Colado, an Avondale-based song writer and musician, has toured throughout the U.S. and Europe and recorded with a variety of musical ensembles. The grant will help him complete a recording of *Bones*, Colado’s original music with Northeast Florida themes.

Levy, of Avondale, is co-founder and artistic director for Jacksonville Dance Theatre, the contemporary modern dance company. She also serves as the Director of Dance at FSCJ. The grant will support her in choreographing an original piece called *Disorder*, an evocative work about mental illness.

Moore, of San Marco, is a composer of sacred music who has published more than 300 choral and instrumental works which are performed across the country. The

grant will support his presentation of a concert of original work to be recorded for production.

Owens, of Avondale, is a graduate of Douglas Anderson School of the Arts and an international Grammy Award-winning jazz musician and educator. He is also the founder of the nonprofit, Don’t Miss a Beat, a Jacksonville arts after-school program empowering ‘At-Hope’ children. The grant will allow him to fund production costs for a live recording of the musician’s ensemble, *The Ulysses Owens Jr. Big Band*.

In addition to the individual artist grants, the Art Ventures initiative also supports small arts organizations. To date, nine art organizations have received 2020 Art Ventures grants, including: 5 and Dime Theatre, Clamour Theatre, tag! Children’s Museum, Limelight Theatre, Florida Chamber Music Project, Amelia Island Chamber Music Festival, Jacksonville Dance Theatre, Hope at Hand, and Don’t Miss a Beat. Three additional grants will be made in the fall.

Neighbor lauds care in which tree company saves birds

Submitted by **Fred Dale**

It started with a decaying water oak in my neighbor’s backyard, one I kept a suspicious eye on each hurricane season. The old wily fella was falling apart, and I’d been told that older men have issues with trees—that they want to clear them out without provocation. Not this time. When I heard my neighbor was finally taking down the mighty tree turned hazard, I was happy.

In the process of its disassembly, though, John Hamilton (of John Hamilton Tree Service), discovered an unexpected issue with the tree—namely a family of Red-bellied Woodpeckers who were housed within a hollowed-out limb.

To his credit, Hamilton took the issue to my neighbor, and they set out to find a

solution. A crane was brought in to take down the larger limbs, and they took care to lower the heavy, occupied limb, so as not to wreck the life within.

My neighbor constructed a wooden box and attached it to a twelve-foot beam, a make-shift habitat. They carried the limb up, and straddled it across the perch box, bird-entrance hole facing up.

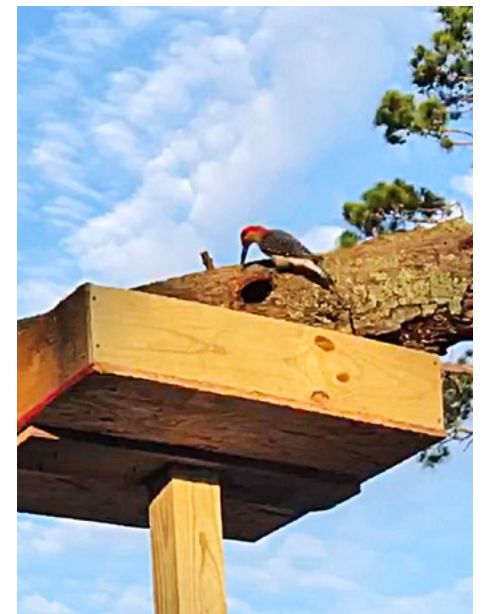
When I saw the culmination of their effort, heard the sound of the chicks within—the mother bird going about her life, adapting—I was moved the way I’ve heard other people say they are moved by something out of the blue. They did this. These guys. On a day when our pandemic selves felt up in the air, they saved some birds. They rescued a family.

It is worth noting, the conservation status of the Red-bellied Woodpecker is listed as “of

least concern.” They are a common bird. Yet that didn’t matter to Hamilton and his crew, which leads me to ask, how many others would have made this same complicated choice?

For weeks now we have all adapted to new ways of getting along. We have learned different versions of fear and love. I’ve felt guilty going the wrong way down an aisle at Publix and have apologized profusely for doing so. But they took their time, acted humanely, and built something to save something.

It can be catastrophic, these changes to our habitats—the disease in the tree and the one rooting through our world. It is as simple as this: parents want to feed their children, have a safe place to come home to. This small, well-thought out act reminds us of the care we should all take with love—where we house it, and how we preserve it.



A tree surgeon’s kindness saves a red-bellied woodpecker and her family.

Visit ResidentNews.net to view the video.



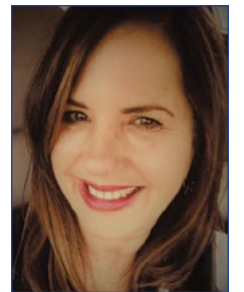
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Baptist receives 'A' rating in patient safety

All four Baptist Health adult hospitals – Baptist Jacksonville, Baptist South, Baptist Nassau and Baptist Beaches – have received 'A' ratings in the spring 2020 Leapfrog Hospital Safety Grade, a national distinction recognizing achievements in providing the safest health care for patients.

Baptist was one of only 867 hospitals in the United States to receive the highest grade.

"Our 'A' ratings show that we are committed to providing safe, high-quality patient care in all situations," said David Rice, MD, senior vice president and chief quality officer for Baptist Health. "Our health care teams are dedicated to collaboration and open communication – two keys to success in achieving the highest quality standards in our hospitals."

Baptist Health's safety and quality protocols have been further enhanced during the COVID-19 crisis through many additional measures. Separate respiratory care units for COVID-19 patients, designated staff and equipment for COVID-19 rooms, and the use of advanced UV technology for decontamination are among the many safety reinforcements the health system has implemented.

"Patients can have peace of mind that their safety always comes first, especially as we move toward resuming all of our regular medical services," said Rice.

The Leapfrog Group is an independent national watchdog organization committed to health care quality and safety. The Leapfrog Hospital Safety Grade assigns an A, B, C,

Straight **A's** for Baptist Health!

All four Baptist Health adult hospitals received 'A' patient safety ratings from The Leapfrog Group, an independent national organization committed to health care quality and safety.



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D or F grade to hospitals across the country based on their performance in preventing medical errors, infections and other harms among patients in their care. Developed under the guidance of a national expert panel, the Leapfrog Hospital Safety Grade uses 28 measures of publicly available hospital safety data to assign grades to more than 2,600 U.S. acute-care hospitals twice per year. The Hospital Safety Grade's methodology is peer-reviewed and fully transparent, and the results are free to the public.

"As the nation copes with a challenging pandemic, our gratitude extends to hospital leadership and health care workers everywhere for their tremendous dedication," said Leah Binder, president and CEO of The Leapfrog Group. "We hope this 'A' helps to thank the people who work and volunteer for Baptist Health. They are role models in putting patients first, and their service has been extraordinary in our country's time of need."

Raymond James advisor named to top women's list



Patricia S. Otterson

Patricia S. Otterson, CIMA® senior vice president, Investments, of Otterson-Allison Wealth Management Group of Raymond James, was among the Raymond James-affiliated advisors named to the *Forbes* list of America's Top Women Advisors. The list, which recognizes advisors from national, regional and independent firms, was released near the end of April.

To be considered for the *Forbes* list, advisors were required to have a minimum of seven years' experience and were chosen based on several factors including revenue trends, assets under management, compliance records, and industry experience. They were also favored because they encompass best practices in their work and in their approach with clients. Out of approximately 32,000 nominations, only 1,000 advisors, or 3 to 4 %, received the award.

Otterson, who joined Raymond James in 2009, has more than 38 years of experience in the financial services industry. The services she provides include individual portfolio management, wealth accumulation strategies, and retirement planning.

Community Foundation receives gift to support First Coast Relief fund

The Community Foundation for Northeast Florida received a \$500,000 gift from The Humana Foundation that will be directed to Florida's First Coast Relief Fund to aid pandemic response in the community. With the funds from The Humana Foundation, Northeast Florida will be better positioned to respond to those who need assistance to recover and rebuild from this crisis.

The Humana Foundation's \$500,000 gift is in addition to a \$100,000 contribution from Humana to United Way of Northeast Florida for Florida's First Coast Relief Fund in the earliest days of the pandemic as part of its Bold Goal partnership with the Jacksonville market.

"The impact of a grant of this size cannot be underestimated," said Nina Waters, president of The Community Foundation for Northeast Florida. "Every week, we and our partners in Florida's First Coast

Relief Fund struggle with the extraordinary needs presented by our nonprofit community as they try to respond to their clients who are hurting. The Humana Foundation's generosity will help alleviate the strain on our neighbors and fellow citizens."

Since mid-March, Florida's First Coast Relief Fund has granted more than \$2.4 million to 75 local nonprofits in the six-county area. Applications continue to come in, and new grants are awarded weekly.

The Humana Foundation's gift to The Community Foundation for Northeast Florida is part of The Humana Foundation's historic April 30 announcement to commit \$50 million to coronavirus relief and recovery efforts to a select group of organizations supporting essential workers, food security, behavioral health and local communities.


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Rice promoted as Baptist Chief Medical Officer

David Rice, MD, has been selected to serve as senior vice president, chief medical officer and chief quality officer of Baptist Health. In his new position, Rice will be responsible for oversight of clinical quality, patient safety, and performance improvement, across a network of more than 200 points of care. He has served as Baptist Health's chief quality officer since 2015 and will continue in this role, in addition to serving as chief medical officer.



David Rice, MD

Rice officially assumed the new role following the May 4 retirement of Keith Stein, MD, FCCM, FCCP, who has served as chief medical officer since 1999.

"David's ability to bring interdisciplinary teams together to elevate clinical care makes him an outstanding selection for Baptist Health's chief medical officer and chief quality officer," said Elizabeth Ransom, MD, FACS, executive vice president and chief physician executive at Baptist Health. "In this role, he will continue to advance the quality and safety achievements of the organization, streamline physician infrastructure and oversee performance improvement across the system."

Rice has seen tremendous success as a leader in providing strategic direction to advance quality and safety initiatives across inpatient and outpatient settings. Under his leadership, all adult hospitals in the Baptist system attained Leapfrog Hospital Safety

"A" grades and Wolfson Children's Hospital was named as one of 10 Top Children's Hospitals in the nation. The efforts he championed also increased Hospital Compare star ratings to "4 star" and "5 star" hospitals. Other notable health system recognitions under his tutelage include the "2017 100 Top Hospitals" and "2017 Everest Award" by Truven Health Analytics, "2017 Patient Safety Excellence Award" by Healthgrades and "Magnet Designation for Excellence in Patient Care."

Recently, Rice led the implementation of Enhanced Recovery After Surgery (ERAS)

pathways at Baptist Health. ERAS is an innovative, evidence-based approach to surgery that changes the long-established routines before, during and after surgery to help people recover faster and decrease their time in the hospital following surgery.

Rice joined Baptist Health in 2001 as a hospitalist for Baptist Primary Care, and has served in successive leadership roles including medical director of utilization management and as the founding chief medical officer of Baptist Physician Partners (BPP), a clinically integrated network of more than 900 local providers.

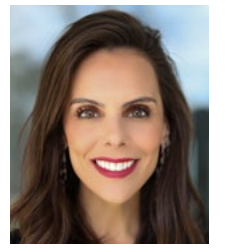
Rice earned his Doctor of Medicine from the University of Florida and his Bachelor of Science from Florida State University. He completed his residency at Orlando Regional Medical Center, where he served as chief resident of Internal Medicine. Currently, he is pursuing an Executive Master in Healthcare Leadership degree from Brown University.

Involved in the community, Dr. Rice currently serves on the Florida State University College of Medicine Alumni Board and has previously served as president of the Board of Directors of We Care Jacksonville and board member of Quality & Patient Safety Committee for the Florida Hospital Association, Environmental Protection Board and Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation (JDRF).

Fattahi, Steilberg named top producers for Berkshire Hathaway



Allison Steilberg



Julia Fattahi

Julia Fattahi and Allison Steilberg of the Avondale office were on top when Berkshire Hathaway Home Services Florida Network Realty announced its top producing agents for April 2020.

Fattahi received recognition as the top listings, sales and transactions producer while Steilberg received top production honors.

"Congratulations to our top producers, each of you have risen to the top of your profession," said Christy Budnick, Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices president and CEO.

Meanwhile, the company's founder and chairman, Linda Sherrer, added, "You have consistently set a high standard in both professionalism and within the industry with performance and knowledge. Congratulations to our April top producing agents!"

Riverside Craft Beer Festival, Rotary, raise \$80,000 for Community PedsCare

Thanks to the success of the popular annual Riverside Craft Beer Festival and the participants and donors who supported it, Riverside Rotary Foundation was able to donate \$80,000 to Community PedsCare. Riverside Rotary conducted the festival in February at the Riverside Arts Market, and the donation was revealed later, at a Zoom celebration April 22.

Community PedsCare provides services for children with life-limiting and life-threatening conditions, from



A Riverside Rotary donation to Community PedsCare was awarded during a virtual celebration conducted on Zoom. Top row: Brent Ross, Audrey C. Moran, Casey Bulgin, Paul Sandefer, Amy Davis; second row, Leah Stapleton, Callie and Beau Hugo, David Martin, Claire and Grant Smith, Edward Howard; third row: Judy Sparks, Kevin Kuzel, Nick Pulignano, Tim Gaskin, Gene Morris; fourth row: Robert Dickson, Skyler Russell, Jordan Marchman, Sandy Ralston; bottom row: Chris Berdy, Jessica Chapman, Patrice Austin, Jeff Thompson, Valerie Davis. Not Pictured but attending George Atchley, Nate Damron, Margaret Ann Dixon, Hayes Howard, Holt Graves, Tom White

the ages of birth through 21, and is a part of Community Hospice and Palliative Care. The nonprofit's mission is supported entirely by the community, said Audrey Moran, festival chair for the 7th Annual Riverside Craft Beer Festival.

"Every year I am truly amazed at the community support this wonderful event receives. Each year as we plan, it is our goal to spread awareness around our true mission for the festival, which is to impact the lives of the children and families of Community PedsCare," Moran said.

"Because there isn't any government funding or insurance available for children in palliative care, community support through donations and awareness is vital for their continued success. Since 2016, the Riverside Rotary Foundation has donated over \$400,000 to Community PedsCare," she said. "We are very proud to be a part of this impact and look forward to growing this number in the years to come!"

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Nemours names Enterprise Chief Development Officer



James "Jim" Digan

James "Jim" Digan will begin his new role as Enterprise Chief Development Officer for Nemours Children's Health System in July. He will be responsible for strategic leadership and guidance for the health system's fundraising across its five-state footprint, including portfolio development, staff management and leadership engagement for all of Nemours' philanthropic pursuits. Digan will be based at Nemours' headquarters in Jacksonville.

"Jim is one of the most accomplished and respected development professionals in the country," said Dr. R. Lawrence Moss, chief executive officer and president of Nemours Children's Health System. "Over a distinguished 25-year career in academic health systems, Jim has consistently exceeded expectations and set a standard of excellence for himself and his teams. He will be a tremendous asset to Nemours in achieving our goal of transforming children's healthcare to deliver the healthiest generation of America's children."

Digan joins Nemours from Baylor College of Medicine, where he currently serves as the president of Baylor Medical Foundation and senior vice president of Institutional Advancement at Baylor College of Medicine in Houston. Prior

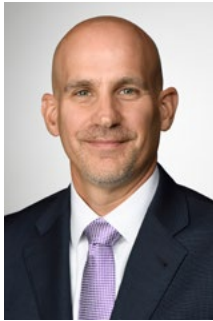
to his current positions, Digan held major leadership positions in development at Nationwide Children's Hospital, Rochester General Health System and Children's Hospital of Philadelphia.

He has made numerous national contributions to his field through the Association for Healthcare Philanthropy, the Woodmark Group, the Juvenile Diabetes Foundation and others.

Digan is a graduate of Colgate University and has continually contributed his talents to furthering that institution for decades. His career accomplishments also include other academic and development positions, including director for the Zweig Foundation, a private family foundation established to improve society by supporting the environment, education, and healthcare.

Ascension St. Vincent's Riverside has a new president

Jon D. Cooper was selected in May to helm Ascension St. Vincent's Riverside beginning June 15, after nearly 20 years of experience leading hospital operations and directing operations at skilled nursing facilities, rehabilitation hospitals, urgent care centers and outpatient rehabilitation facilities. Earlier in his career, he worked in Jacksonville's Brooks Rehabilitation. Cooper received his bachelor's degree in marketing from Indiana University and his MBA from the University of Toledo in Ohio. In 2020, he was honored with the Healthcare Hero Award (leader category) from Louisville (Ky.) Business First. He is a longtime volunteer with Habitat for Humanity.



Jon D. Cooper

For the past seven years, Cooper has been president and chief administrative officer at Norton Audubon Hospital in Louisville. Prior to that, he served in other leadership roles at Norton Healthcare, including vice president of operations at Norton Women's and Children's Hospital, system vice president over surgical, orthopedic and spine services, and vice president of operations at Norton Audubon Hospital and Norton Suburban Hospital.

Lawyer pays it forward to reward selfless acts of kindness



Bill Andrews hands Jennifer Boston, proprietor of a Riverside hot dog stand, a check.

In response to a firm-wide "Tell Us Something Great" pay-it-forward initiative, GrayRobinson attorney Bill Andrews of Avondale, gave \$500 to Riverside hotdog stand owner Jennifer Boston in recognition for her selfless acts of kindness during the COVID-19 pandemic.

GrayRobinson's initiative came together after the firm heard many great stories of their employees helping others in their local communities, even as they were adjusting to a new way of life under Governor DeSantis's "stay at home" order. To show appreciation for its employees' kind acts, GrayRobinson held a firm-wide nomination process where winners were selected from each of the 15 offices and given a donation to pay it forward to a charity of their choice in their local community.

In the Jacksonville office, many employees were supporting others so they collectively

selected Andrews to choose how the office would pay it forward. Andrews immediately thought of Boston and gave not only the \$500 from the firm but also a personal donation to her.

"I have known Jennifer Boston, affectionately known as Hot Dog Jen, for about 20 years," said Andrews. "Hot Dog Jen runs a hot dog stand at the corner of Park and King and has done so for many years. We are Facebook friends, and I saw on her Facebook page that she did not want anybody to be hungry, so she invited them to come by her stand and get a free hot dog. She even said that if they cannot come by the stand, to personal message her and she will bring one to them, no questions or names needed. I was very touched by that post and went by and made a financial contribution myself."

Freedom Boat club gets new top staffers

Freedom Boat Club of Jacksonville and St. Augustine has a new manager at the helm and a new director of administration and member service.

Mark Vickers has been promoted from membership executive to a new leadership post as general manager for the organization's three local clubs in Jacksonville Beach, Julington Creek and St. Augustine, and the Canada native plans to ensure that members get the most from their membership. The club offers boating experiences that don't require owning a boat.

Meanwhile, Lindsay Sheffield was the client and community relations director before recently being appointed to a newly formed position. She is now the director of administration and member service and is responsible for managing social media and member and partner communications. With this promotion,



Lindsay Sheffield



Mark Vickers

Sheffield will also be managing the accounting and marketing departments of the club.

The promotions are part of a management restructure that Freedom Boat Club officials are implementing as they continue growing their organization and all three club locations. The club offers an alternative to boat ownership. More details can be found at www.freedomboatclub.com.

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A procession of Jeeps and motorcyclists made an appearance at Ascension St. Vincent's Riverside to thank medical staff fighting against COVID-19.

Jeepers! Jeep parade cheers on front-line medical staff

By Jennifer Edwards
Resident Community News

What started out as a fun idea to get Jeep enthusiasts together and celebrate health care workers turned into a 94-vehicle procession of Jeeps and Harleys May 2, as Jeep groups from all over Jacksonville joined more than a dozen hog riders in a trek to Ascension St. Vincent's Riverside and several other area hospitals.

John Coffey, Ascension safety officer at Ascension St. Vincent's Riverside, loves to ride with his wife in Jeep meetups, and helped create the parade after he saw a video of a similar procession in Orange Park. What began with a few Facebook posts ended up with drivers from multiple groups, including Jacksonville Jeep Meet, North Florida Jeep Meet, No Boundaries Jeep Crew Unleashed and others gathering forces and then driving for six hours along a route that began at St. Vincent's Riverside and wended to Baptist Medical Center Jacksonville before moving on to Ascension St. Vincent's Southside and Baptist Medical Center Beaches before finishing up at Baptist Medical Center South.

The idea was to show appreciation for, and solidarity among, all health care workers on the front lines against COVID-19.

"I had no idea how many were going to show up; it could have been five people," said Coffey, who rode in the front with his wife, Cindy, in their 2007 Jeep Wrangler JKU, followed by 78 other Jeeps and 15 motorcycles. "I said y'all (Harley riders) can bring the noise at the end, and they were very happy about that. It was very emotional. Everyone felt really good about doing it. That was the driving factor behind it."

Amy McCall Switzer, another participant with Jeep club No Boundaries Southeast, said she and her husband, Keoni, went the extra mile to make sure their audience felt

appreciated. Her husband is Hawaiian, so they dressed up their 2012 Jeep Rubicon with flowers and a sign that said "Mahalo," which means thank you, and she wore pineapple sunglasses.

"It was amazing," she said. "It is a big deal to us to be able to do that and show our appreciation for what they're doing."

In fact, participants enjoyed the ride and the reactions – from cheers to tears – so much they plan to do another parade to other area hospitals including UF Health Jacksonville, UF Health North and the Mayo Clinic.



Amy McCall Switzer and Keoni Switzer, two participants in the parade, have several friends who are nurses or otherwise on the front lines in the fight against Coronavirus

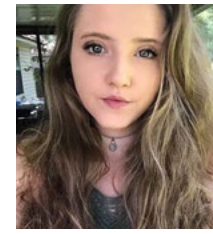
"I got a specific story from Baptist that a lot of their staff was lining the windows because they couldn't come outside," Coffey said. "I heard from one side people felt really good. From the other side, there were a lot of tears, happy to be recognized and appreciated."

Ascension St. Vincent's Riverside officials appreciated the Jeep groups' efforts.

"We are blessed to have people like John as part of our health ministry and the broader community," said Tom VanOsdol, president and CEO of Ascension Florida and Gulf Coast. "I know those who were able to see our neighbors come together in this fun and unique way were deeply moved. This trying time is made easier for all of us through acts of kindness like this one."

Women's Food Alliance honors Emily Slatsky with Blossom Award

The Women's Food Alliance (WFA) bestowed its 'Blossom Award' honorarium to Emily Slatsky, a young deserving hospitality professional, in April. The Blossom Award recognizes new members who represent the best of what hospitality can be. Slatsky fit the bill for her perseverance and passion for each job she has tackled in the past five years, said Leigh Cort, WFA president.



Emily Slatsky

'Blossom Award' winners are granted Honorary Membership in the Women's Food Alliance when they possess the following hospitality criteria such as: have a positive attitude, exude a warm welcome, display a professional style in their chosen career, offer gracious service, possess proficient communication skills, represent a well-groomed woman.

By the time Slatsky was 18, she began her journey into the hospitality industry in Jacksonville Beach and Ponte Vedra

Beach. Her five-year path gave her a broad education including organic cafes, farmers markets, restaurants, and culinary schools.

Slatsky works for Sprouts Farmers Market. Prior to her current position, she spent two years at Earth Fare, where she worked in the produce

department, specialty foods and then on to food and wine. Slatsky had the perfect personality to also do demos each weekend, giving her the opportunity to sample new and unique products. This included wellness items, too, while she educated their customers with information that she gathered for herself. As she starts a new chapter in hospitality, she has developed a very passionate interest in nutrition and using food as medicine.

"The Women's Food Alliance is an incredible way to connect with and be inspired by women who love the same things as me! I am so excited to be a part of it" said Slatsky.



The Women's Food Alliance Advisory Council consists of Sandi Galloway, owner Sandy Galloway & Associates; Rebecca Reed, executive pastry chef, Black Sheep Restaurant Group; Nancy Slatsky, chef, manager, JAX Cooking Studio; Leigh Cort, president Women's Food Alliance; Cindy Stavely, executive director, St. Augustine Pirate/Treasure Museum; Kelly Mabry, owner Tropical Smoothie; Amy Morales, creator, Sweets for the Soul; and Carol Maurer, sales manager, Hilton Garden Inn Ponte Vedra Beach.

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Deserving Dads

By Jennifer Edwards,
Resident Community News

There are countless numbers of dedicated fathers in Jacksonville's historic districts, and, unfortunately, *The Resident* can only recognize a handful. They are from different walks of life and parenting stages, but every Dad said there is no joy greater than their children. Happy Father's Day to them and to all you Dads reading.



Jason Eddy

Jason Eddy with Lillian, Corrina, Amoreena and Jerry

Jason Eddy, managing partner at the ever-popular Restaurant Orsay on Park Street in Avondale, has always made life work with a hospitality schedule that doesn't run 9 to 5. Eddy, who is 38, began working in restaurants when he moved out of the house after high school, and his wife Sherron worked for a decade in them, too. Now, the couple has four children – Jerry, 13, Amoreena (which means little love), 10, and twins Lillian and Corrina, 6.

"And, we have managed to raise children throughout this weird scheduling we have," he said with satisfaction. "Most fathers do work, and they work a traditional schedule, but I got to spend a lot of time with them in their formative years" by working around his non-traditional schedule.

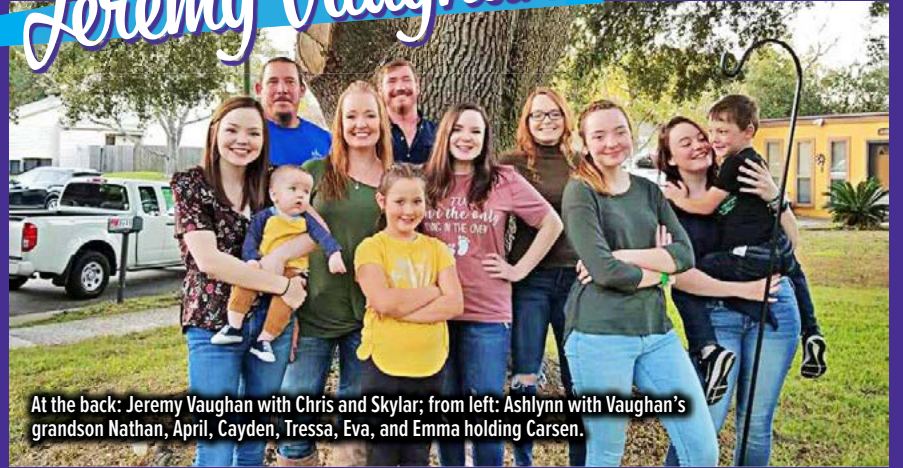
With the COVID-19 restaurant closures and quarantines, Eddy has had to navigate an unprecedented economic climate and find ways to make his work and family life fit

again. Luckily, Sherron works from home with Florida Virtual, the online schooling platform. Closures mean more work for him, but they also mean his wife has more time at home now, when she would usually be out in the field doing testing. That's helpful for the family, which Eddy also tries to involve in the restaurant.

"Our industry furloughed so many people. I was putting in 60 to 70 hours a week with the furloughs, but lucky she was home to help," he explained. "One of the downsides is that I haven't been home to help. With four kids and trying to do your job, it's a challenge. But you find a way to do it. You figure it out."

One of the greatest benefits to his job is including the kids. His oldest daughter has spent some time in the kitchen, learning to make macarons and other dishes, and the family as a whole gets to eat there together so they can see the

Jeremy Vaughan



At the back: Jeremy Vaughan with Chris and Skylar; from left: Ashlynn with Vaughan's grandson Nathan, April, Cayden, Tressa, Eva, and Emma holding Carsen.

As a plumber and estimator for Terry Vereen Plumbing, Jeremy Vaughan covers a wide range of territory, from Fernandina Beach on down to Flagler Beach, but that's just one of his two most important roles. The other role is as a father in a real life version of the Dennis Quaid flick "Yours, Mine & Ours."

Vaughan and his wife are parents to eight children between them: Chris Hales, 25, Tressa Hales, 24, who are "Irish twins" born the same year, nine months apart, as well as Ashlynn Hales, 21, Skylar Hales, who turns 20 in June, Emma Hales, 15, Eva Hales, 13, Cayden Vaughan, 9, and Carsen Vaughan, 6. And, the family is expanding. Ashlynn is married with a baby of her own, Tressa is married with a baby on the way, and her sister Skylar is expecting, too.

Meanwhile, the school-aged Eva, Cayden and Carsen live at home with the couple, and Emma and Skylar live with their father in North Carolina.

Having such a large family is a blessing, Vaughan said, and he's glad that he and

his wife just bought a five-bedroom house to allow enough space for when the family can all get together.

Vaughn, who grew up in Ortega, said that the family still at home enjoys its time together best out on the water, tubing and boating down Black Creek near Green Cove Springs. Because she is working remotely at her position of case manager with Morgan and Morgan, his wife is there to help with homeschooling, so that hasn't been a challenge.

"I'd say the biggest challenge is Christmas, and one of the biggest joys is seeing everybody and getting together with the whole family," he said. "We make it work, my wife is great, she handles a lot and I am usually out in the field working." His family is central to his life, and for that, he thanks his father, Stephen Vaughan, father of three boys and a retired Navy Master Chief. The younger Vaughn said his father "showed me and my brothers the love of family is what matters the most in life."

fruit of their father's labor, and that of Orsay's staff. And now, when Eddy gets a Monday and a Thursday off, the kids are around a lot more.

"They don't have their play dates, they are not going to Granny and Papa's," he explained. "I have been able to spend a lot more time with them than normal. We've done yard work and been outside, we work on Scouting projects like learning to start and maintain a fire. It's been nice on my days off."

As a partner in a position of leadership and a father of four, he likes to give younger fathers advice from time to time.

"One thing I like to talk to new Dads about is that once (kids) turn 5 and go to school, you do have less time with them. Restaurants in general, people will look at your profession with a bit of a stigma. But the pockets are there, and you make it work."

E. William Nash IV



William Nash IV with Laurie, George (on shoulders), William V, James and wife, Leanna.

Antiques restorer and appraiser E. William Nash IV is a father of four and a managing partner in Riverside's E.W. Nash & Son, LLC, which he runs with his own father, E. William Nash III. Normally Nash is concerned with the restoration and conservation of antiques and fine art, but during the second week of May, Nash and his family were about to embark on something entirely new: Chickens.

Father to Laurie, 11, William V, 6, James, 4, and George, 1, Nash and his wife, Leanna homeschooled before the quarantine and school closures, so there hasn't been much disruption to school and normal routines, he said, noting daily bike and stroller rides through their Avondale neighborhood as well as movie and popcorn nights – his favorite – are regular activities in the Nash household. But when the closures were followed by the death of the family's 14-year-old lab, Nash said he knew it was time for a long-awaited pursuit that could help the family heal and create lasting memories.

"We said, 'OK, if we are not doing a puppy, we are going to do the chickens,'" he explained. "We were hoping to get one of each breed so we can tell them apart because the kids have all these crazy names picked out."

Nash spent a couple of years researching chickens and looking at coops online, most of which are too small for more than one or two chickens. He's also building the coop himself, an act of love and sweat.

"It's a normal neighborhood-sized back yard, and I took the back corner of it, where it's shaded and carved out a space. It's been a challenge building it and digging down a foot with all the hardware, the cloth and (predator) proofing," he said. "With all those kids, we go through a lot of eggs, but we are doing it more for the experience. But the eggs are a plus."

Even finding the chicks was a challenge. Apparently, there has been a run on chicks, and he had to call around only to discover that feed and hardware stores keep selling out, possibly due to so many people with more time on their hands during quarantine. At

one point, Nash said he called Tractor Supply and found the store did have chicks, but they were gone before the family could get there.

Persistence paid off, however. By the end of the first week in May, he'd scored six – two Rhode Island blues, two Buff Orpingtons and two Barred Rocks.

For Nash, the project is part and parcel of the love and joy of being a father and a husband. He and Leanna were high school and college sweethearts and have been married 13 years.

"I think the coolest part is seeing the love that you have with your spouse get manifested in these other little people, and you get to share your life and home with them, and it is an extension of your love for your wife," he said. "To me, of all the things in my life that I want to do and am going to do, this is my greatest accomplishment. That is the greatest thing I could ever do, is have kids."

And now, they'll have eggs, too.

Continued on page 24

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Matt Tucci



Matt Tucci, Lola, Matthew, Isabella and Tammy Tucci.

Matt Tucci has built a long and successful career with Hardage-Giddens Funeral Homes and Cemeteries, which oversees 16 funeral homes and cemeteries. As the Market Director there, in the most normal of times, he has a full plate of responsibilities during the day and also acts as a first responder for families who have just lost a loved one because, Hardage-Giddens is open 24-7. Now, as a father and as a first responder during the Coronavirus crisis, he is feeling the impact more than ever.

Tucci lives with his wife Tammy, a former cheerleader for the University of South Carolina and the Carolina Panthers, who works with government contractor MAXIMUS Federal, and their three children: Matthew, 16, a Bishop Kenny student, and Isabella, 14 and Lola, 10, both of whom attend Assumption Catholic School.

Normally, they would be spending their free time as a family doing what they love best: Going out on their boat. The family lives near Ortega on the Cedar River.

But since the closures, Tucci and his wife have had to juggle their demanding jobs with helping their children with virtual schooling, a sentiment echoed by most of the Dads interviewed for this feature.

"It really takes a big strain on the parents trying to answer and teach the children what they are learning," he said. "I think the biggest challenge, even with mathematics, is to give a 10-year-old an assignment and they don't have anyone to ask, they are used to asking a teacher and instead they keep asking the parents and it is constant interruptions. We are lucky my wife works from home."

Add to that, the quarantine. For the family decided that better off social distancing vacation home than out on family time or traveling to and from was home by Monday himself coping by 5:30 a.m. and working his trips confined.

Now, he plans to be easy to maintain so kids an incentive to off the social media.

Chris Hardison & Keith Johnson

For fathers Chris Hardison and Keith Johnson, fatherhood is a precious, hard-earned accomplishment and the most important role among several. The married couple owns Design Additions in the Shoppes of Avondale, and besides running the business, they are both elementary school teachers adapting to virtual teaching during the Coronavirus closures.

They accomplish all this while also helping their own children, 11-year-old Addison Johnson-Hardison and 9-year-old Aiden Johnson-Hardison, with their own virtual schooling at John Stockton Elementary.

"It's a balancing act, there are always balls in the air, and you are trying to keep everything afloat," Hardison said. "Obviously, the children are priority. We have a staff of three or four ladies. They are amazing. They watch the shop while we are not able to be here during school hours."

Hardison, an art teacher agreed. "My greatest joy is seeing them grow and teaching them new things. I fall on the creative side of showing them how to create things, how to do things, seeing them blossom. Addison, our daughter, will be starting LaVilla School of the Arts. She has a passion for music and a natural talent. Our son is more of a free spirit - different personalities, different challenges."

Johnson said the couple adopted both children at birth, but that entailed a lot of paperwork, and a lot of waiting. Addison was born in California, where it was legal for the couple to adopt, and so they had to establish a residence there while also living in Jacksonville and tending to their growing business. After Addison was born, Aiden was born to the same mother and the couple got the chance to adopt him, too.

"It's quite a blessing that their birth mom was the same," Johnson said. "It was quite an emotional experience. As far as being a dad there is no comparison. I had always wanted to be a dad but, given the circumstances, I wasn't sure it was possible. Taking caring of them is the best thing that ever happened for us."

Both men are savoring the experience, aware that time is precious.

"Being a Dad - the time goes by so fast," Johnson said. "When I was a kid, my parents would tell me to savor every minute because in the blink of an eye, kids are adults and they are going off to college. It seems like just yesterday we brought them home and now they are 9 and 11. It's awesome."



Keith Johnson and Chris Hardison with Addison Johnson-Hardison and Aiden Johnson-Hardison

Hampton

Hampton Barnes he will celebrate Mary at the end like to be a son a A Candle Bar in Barnes. But what like to be a father

But that will child of this year, when child, a boy. The thrilled to be exper

"It's a little scar but it's really exci this crisis, we know before she deliver might have to be we won't allow a be that close to th still want to take can't have as muc

But that hasn't joyously. "Really right no in our house. I ha

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challenge of family separation during the first few weeks of the closures, the fact that Tammy and the children would be distancing in Lake Murray, S.C. in a way they own there. That meant Tucci missed during the week and spent his weekends from South Carolina. Luckily, the family celebrated Father's Day, but until then, he found himself working extra hours, getting up by 5 a.m. until 5 p.m. or 6 p.m., and keeping the car at the gas station and grocery store. "I want to get back on the family boat, where it's fun and give the kids something to be diligent in school. Plus, it gets them away from that is nearly every parent's bane."

"We do everything from wake surfing to wake boarding, pulling them behind on inner tubes. As people social distance, people who have boats get out on the water. You have the freedom to do things out on the water. It's a good time to bond with your kids and make sure their homework's done."

His children's success in school, and both his daughters' success in competitive cheer, has brought him his proudest moments as a Dad.

"They are all engaged, they all want to go to college. My daughter does competitive cheer. I think the success of their academics has brought the greatest joy. Being a Dad has its challenges like every other Dad. You always want your kids to have something a little bit better than you do."

Hampton Barnes

Hampton Barnes knows what it's like to be a husband; he celebrated his third anniversary with his wife on June 1st of the year. He also knows what it's like to be a business owner. He owns Wick: A San Marco with his mother, Kristanna. What he doesn't know – yet – is what it's like to be a father.

Hampton and Mary will probably have to quarantine for 14 days from us. I guess we'll have many strangers, friends or family to see the baby until we know we are safe. We're taking our precautions and be safe. We really want to have hands on, with our family members."

Now, we are mostly cleaning out the space to have an office that we are turning into a



Hampton Barnes with Mary Barnes, who is pregnant with the couple's first child

nursery. We're getting everything out of there and getting all the things we need, like a crib and whatnot, which can be a little bit hard at this time with not knowing what's available and shipping times." Barnes said his wife is mostly in charge of that, while he and his mother are back to cautiously serving a reduced number of customers at their custom-scent shop on Hendricks Avenue.

However, he and his wife have picked out some baby boy names together.

What are they?

No one will know until sometime around Sept. 30, he said. It's a surprise.

Dr. Eric Sauvageau

For Baptist Health's Dr. Eric Sauvageau, the decision to have children began with Frida, a labradoodle he wasn't sure he wanted.

Now the father of Eve, 9, and Eloise, 8, he recalled that early in his marriage, his wife, Elizabeth, tried to persuade him to adopt a dog, but Sauvageau, a naturalized citizen originally from Montreal, wasn't too keen on the idea. As a neurosurgeon, he knew that his on-call schedule was unpredictable and chaotic, making it hard to care for a dog. So, he kept coming up with reasons to block the idea.

"I never had a dog myself," he explained. "My wife had a Labrador before. I kept saying they shed, finding excuses, but she found a labradoodle and said they don't shed, and I had no argument at that point." He said it was after the dog joined their family and he realized that his wife would take care of Frida despite the unpredictability of his schedule, that he understood the two were ready for children. Not too long after that, his children were born in Columbus, Ohio, about a year apart.

Sauvageau said his wife is the reason he can be both a successful father and a successful physician.

"I think it was really important to me that when we got engaged and married that I would marry a partner that would help me be the best father I can and be really focused on my work," he explained. "At home, I am more like the entertainer, which I like. It's kind of unfair sometimes. My wife has to put the rules and the limits, but I love to play with kids and have fun with them."

He said that even though his schedule means his family sometimes takes a backseat to the patient he is treating at the moment, being a Dad is the ultimate responsibility and a path to self-discovery.



Dr. Eric Sauvageau and his wife, Elizabeth, with Eve and Eloise

"Fatherhood is the most precious thing on so many levels, it's the most important role," he said. "You have those little creatures and you try to guide them, and it makes you realize what kind of person you want to be. It helps you help yourself, and you are their guide. You help them find happiness and find their way."

And right now, amid the closures and the extra time in his schedule from scaled-back visits, he's finding happiness with his daughters in different ways: unstructured play in the backyard, tennis with Eve and engineering LEGO creations with Eloise, which brings him back to his own childhood.

"To some extent, I think it's the silver lining of the last two months (during COVID-19)," he mused. "We have been doing a lot of things we don't do enough of usually, like board games and puzzles. It's a lot of fun, all of us being there." And that includes Frida, who still lives with the family.



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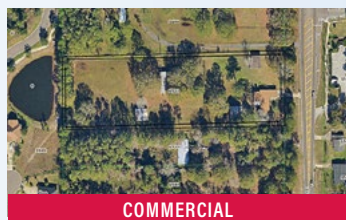
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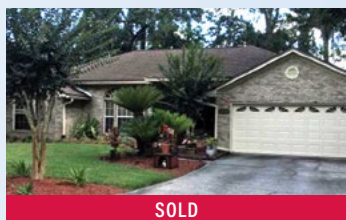


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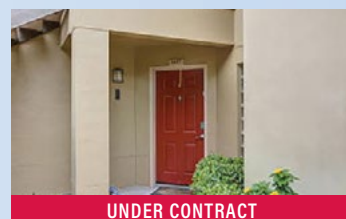
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"But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without a trace of partiality or hypocrisy. And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace for[a] those who make peace." James 3:17-18

Bishop Felipe Estevez invited Fr. Blair Gaynes to become the shepherd of the Basilica of the Immaculate Conception Parish in early 2017. He had previously been the pastoral associate at Resurrection and Blessed Trinity Catholic Church and at that time, he relinquished his duties with the diocesan Vocation Office. In July 2017, he assumed the role of Pastor while also using his more than 30 years of experience in Youth & Young Adult ministry, education and social services to continue his ministerial and administrative leadership of Campus Ministry. Fr. Blair, prior to being ordained in 2012, had worked in the Diocese for several years during which he was able to use his gifts as an instructor for teachers and parish catechists religious certification, lead spiritual and formation retreats, as well as being a Spiritual Director.

For Fr. Blair, this scripture passage has been a guiding light since the early years of his conversion. His deeply personal encounters with the Living God became the foundation for unshakeable faith that has been guided by Scripture and aided through the teachings and the living tradition of the Church. He believes that disciples of Christ must be faithful to the essential teachings of the Church, understood and enlivened, through genuine encounters with Christ. That the individual Christian and the Church together must also read the signs of the times and appropriately adapt the message of the Gospel to enable others to encounter Christ, to embrace the 'Universal Call To Holiness'. He believes a parish community must grow in desire and ability to consistently and authentically LIVE the FAITH, LOVE as CHRIST, LEARN the FAITH, and LEAD as CHRIST. That we should be unimpeded in making Christ present through evangelizing actions that are rooted Love of God and inspired by Love of neighbor.



Father Blair Gaynes



First United Methodist Church
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Grace in Uncertain Times

We all love a sense of order and predictability and its comfort, however, crises, chaos, and, yes, just life itself can bring about the most unpredictable circumstances. Circumstances that disrupt our sense of order and control. This can be frightening and disheartening yet, as believers, we are called to live faithfully in such uncertainty.

I am reminded of a moment in early Christian history when things radically changed for all who followed Jesus. This was certainly a time of distress and challenge, to say the least: Jesus had been crucified, buried, and now his body was missing. Life was hard for the disciples struck with grief and uncertainty. According to Luke 24: 13-35, two of them traveled to Emmaus. As they traveled and shared words of grief with one another Jesus joined their journey walking with them. He asked them questions that directed them to spiritual practices that came to shape the lives of all believers. He challenged his disciples to focus on the truth in Scripture rather than circumstances.

Scripture is a reminder of who we are and who our God and Father is. Studying Scripture daily is a comfort in times of uncertainty. When you are confronted with the chaos of life and pandemics in particular and overwhelmed by feelings of grief, loneliness, and pain, you need to remember that Scripture remains the foundation of our hope and our healing. So as you all continue your journey in this unsettling season, remember and seek out the Word of our Lord. Draw near in sacred spaces and prayer, open your eyes, and see the grace of God all around us, for He is with us.



Rev. Tiffany McCall



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Right now they need your help and support! Please consider donating to one of our CDJ churches, by going to their websites to help sustain the spiritual and historical foundation of our city.

Once again as a community, we face great challenges: the loss of life sustaining jobs; the loss of loved ones; feelings of isolation; fear of the unknown; and the daunting task of change. Let the rebirth commence! Consider now, as we are all doing, how to steward and prioritize your gifts. Please give of your time, talents and money where you are called.

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Our lives have been turned upside down in just a few months. We are facing the greatest epidemic of our lifetimes. What will the future hold? Now is a time for hope.

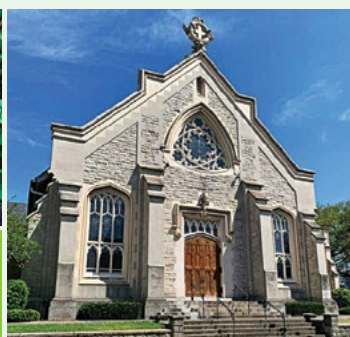
Here in the Cathedral District, we were so excited to welcome over one thousand people to our Christmas in the Cathedral District event. People who had never been inside our historic churches walked in and stood in awe in the face of their beauty.

When the virus hit, we didn't stop. While everyone was locked in their homes, we planted 60 trees. It was a visible sign of the hope that we have in Jesus.

Hope is not something determined by external circumstances. Hope comes from God alone and we will have hope as long as we have life. We hope that we will be able to welcome you again soon to our beautiful historic district and to the churches who worship there.



The Very Rev. Kate Moorehead



Historic Mt. Zion AME Church
www.hmzjax.org

"...By Our Love."

"A new commandment I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you also must love one another. 35 By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you love one another." John 14:34-35 NIV

We are Historic Mt. Zion African Methodist Episcopal Church. Moved by God to love humankind as family. This narrative serves as a link to our past, and a bridge to our future for we are bond by Christ Spirit to Love our neighbor as Christ loves.

As an African born in America during the inception of the Civil Rights Movement, my parents raised my four siblings and me on the principle that God is Love. It is God's love that drives my pastoral and community ministry.

As I witness the resurgence of hate crimes and the divisiveness within our nation, fueled by fear and ignorance especially during the pandemic (Covid-19) health crisis, I often wonder, where is the Love?

In Dr. Martin Luther King's book Strength to Love, "It's difficult for most not to become cynical, vindictive and to retaliate. It's human nature. But, that does not give humankind a License to disrespect, disregard, demoralize the disenfranchised. "Returning hate for hate multiplies hate, adding deeper darkness to a night already devoid of stars. Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate, only love can do that."

As I reflect on a recent morning walk with my wife, she reminded me of a timeless hymn "We Are One in the Spirit." A Christian hymn written in the 1960s by then-Catholic priest, the late Fr. Peter Scholtes. It is inspired by John 13:35. The title of the hymn They'll Know We Are Christians By Our Love originates in a phrase that non-believers used to describe Christian believers of the early Church: "Behold, how they love one another."

We are Historic Mt. Zion African Methodist Episcopal Church. We are in community with the Cathedral District and thus we are Stronger Together.



Rev. Victor D. Cole, M. Div.



First Presbyterian Church
www.fpcjax.org

Peace

There is a famous painting of a stormy sea, dark clouds, large waves and fierce lightning. In the middle of the scene is a large rock with waves crashing against it, and in the middle of the rock is a small cleft. A closer look inside the cleft reveals a grassy patch surrounded by beautiful flowers. And there in the middle of the flowers, amid the violent storm, is a dove sitting calmly on her nest!

Most people long for the peace represented by that dove. But peace seems elusive in a world that is anything but serene, especially in this Covid-19 season.

Jesus once said to His disciples: "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid" (John 14:27).

Let us learn from the dove in the painting, sitting calmly on her nest as the storm raged. Better yet, let us learn from Jesus and receive His peace. Because of His atoning death on the cross for sinners, we can experience peace with God through faith in Jesus Christ (Romans 5:1). We can also experience abiding peace in an unsettled world as we keep our minds fixed on the Lord (Isaiah 26:3).

Amid the storms of life, may His peace be yours. Shalom!

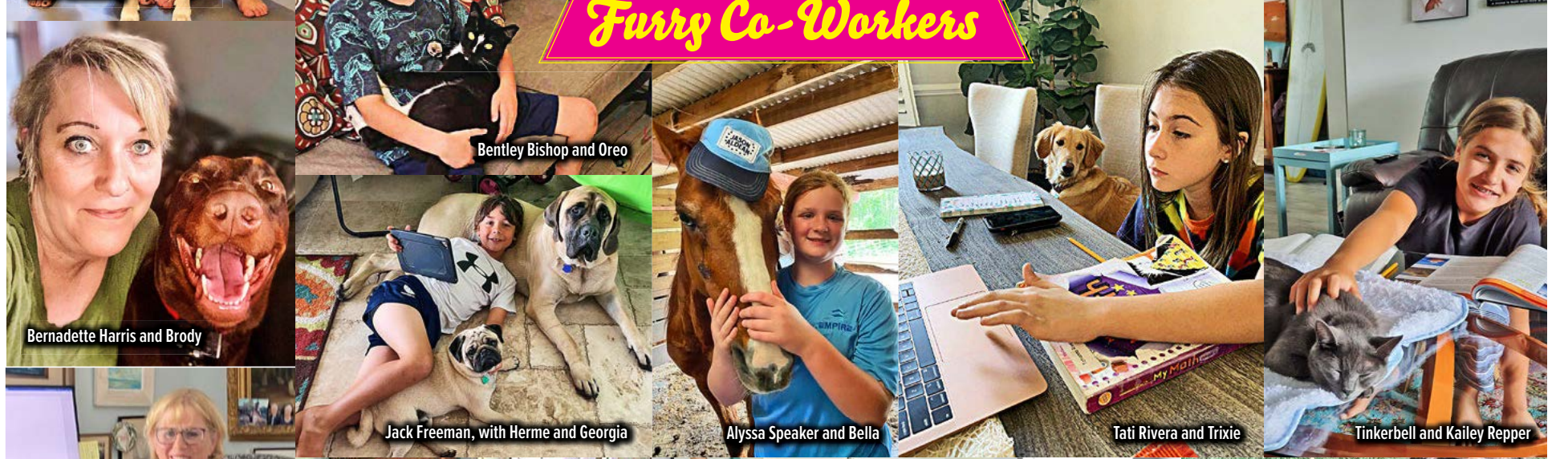


Rev. Dr. Michael "Scott" Luckey





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Wolfson pet therapy program celebrates 25 years

When experienced pet handler Linda Dunn moved to Jacksonville, she approached numerous hospitals about starting a pet therapy program. When she shared this vision with Wolfson Children's Hospital leaders, they saw it as an innovative way to improve patients' experiences. Dunn promptly joined the Wolfson Children's Auxiliary, established the program, and made the hospital's first pet therapy visit in May 1995 with her Labrador retriever, Jenni.

In May 2020, the Wolfson Children's Hospital Pet Therapy Program celebrated its 25th anniversary. In that time, pet therapy dogs and handlers have visited thousands of patients and families to provide emotional support during their hospitalization. To commemorate Pet Therapy's contribution to Jacksonville's children and families, Mayor Lenny Curry proclaimed May 15, 2020, to be Wolfson Children's Hospital Pet Therapy Day.



Wolfson Children's Hospital's original therapy dog, Jenni, owned by Linda Dunn



Catie and Dick Wallace with therapy dog, Candy

Today, the auxiliary has a roster of 13 certified pet therapy teams, each made up of one handler and one dog, with one more duo in training.

"Our Pet Therapy Program is a unique and important part of how we care for our patients," said Michael D. Aubin, FACHE, president of Wolfson Children's Hospital. "These remarkable dogs and owners reduce anxiety for and bring comfort to our patients, their families and our team members the moment they walk in the door. The bonds our patients and therapy pets form are evidence of how important the program becomes to them during their stay."

Pet therapy is an evidence-based way to support children's healing, no matter the reason the children are in the hospital. Studies show that spending time with a certified therapy dog triggers the release of endorphins, which eases pain and discomfort, lowers blood pressure, and reduces levels

of the stress hormone, cortisol. When patients need to practice their motor skills or learn to walk again, providers can call on therapy dogs to motivate them to practice walking, petting, and reaching to tug or toss toys. Wolfson's pet therapy teams not only visit patients, but also provide support to nurses, physicians, and other providers during special events, like Nurses Week. Baptist Health also offers pet therapy visits at two of its locations thanks to 15 handler and dog volunteer pairs.

Pet Therapy Chair and volunteer handler Jeanne Shober said she and her dog Bear have seen the benefits of pet therapy firsthand.

"Nearly every child we visit has a beloved pet at home that they miss terribly," Shober said. "Sharing our dogs with the children, their parents and the staff helps to bring smiles and a touch of happiness to their day. Sharing our pets is also rewarding to the handlers and their dogs. It's such a privilege for us to be a part of this wonderful hospital."



Jeanne Shober with Bear

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Animal House

By Julie Kerns Garmendia Resident Community News

Celebrating bees & beekeepers in June

June is the time to celebrate everything to do with bees, specifically June 22-28, the week designated to celebrate the nectar-seeking wonders, promote beekeeping and publicize the critical food-chain importance of fragile pollinators: birds, hummingbirds, butterflies, moths, bats, beetles and small animals.

Apiologists – honeybee experts – want to inform the public about threats to pollinators and protective actions to save them. Super-pollinators, like honeybees cultivated by backyard beekeepers, are environmental workhorses that pollinate flowering plants, trees, fruits, vegetables, and nuts and seeds essential for feeding people and wildlife. One honeybee can pollinate thousands of flowers per day.

The wild and managed honeybee role in the food chain is undisputed, yet the population is decreasing, according to scientific studies. Experts blame pesticide use, pests, diseases, and stress caused by shrinking sources of their only foods: pollen and nectar from flowers. Those hazards are compounded by the bulldozing of wild lands for development, destroying critical habitat. Altogether, these factors may have already set into motion a catastrophic future scenario for pollinators, unless there is change.

One cause for hope is the increasing popularity and regulatory and community acceptance of urban beekeeping. Urban beekeepers manage backyard beehives and nurture pollinators in compliance with state and local guidelines. Even a few colonies help maintain the genetic diversity of healthy bee populations, according to Brent Weisman of the Florida Master Beekeeper Program and the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services.

Two of approximately 200 local beekeepers are Marilyn Young, whose bees reside in St. Nicholas and Glen St. Mary, and Suzy Faggard, Ortega beekeeper. Young and Faggard became beekeepers through their love for gardening and nature. Both care about environmental issues and support conservation in their own backyards.

Young recently described how the sight and sounds of her honeybees as they contentedly hum around their backyard hives, add endless enjoyment, relaxation, and fulfillment to her daily life. An event held at the Jacksonville Arboretum in 2008 first alerted her to the plight of pollinators.

“That program was so eye-opening it was a turning point in my life. I wanted to get

back outdoors every day and enjoy nature again like when I was a child growing up,” she said. “I wanted to plant, garden, learn about agriculture and pollinators. As an adult, with increased responsibilities over time, I felt so far removed from nature. Beekeeping changed that.”

Excited about a hobby that combined conservation with gardening, Young researched the tiny, flying insect-animals with velvety colorful bodies. Of approximately 20,000 bee species, honeybees were first brought to America and managed by European settlers. They measure 15 millimeters long and fly at approximately 15 mph. They perform a “waggle” dance for other bees, that communicates GPS directions to nectar sources up to 3.5 miles from the hive. Honeybees live up to five months, have a heightened sense of smell and dislike loud noise, or glaring lights. Highly sensitive, they display distinctive moods.

Young completed the University of Florida, weekend “Bee College” held at Marineland, (now online). She joined the Jacksonville Beekeepers Association monthly meetings and educational programs at the McDuff Avenue Duval County Extension office. There she met local beekeepers, made friends, and compared notes before the purchase of her first hives and bees.

Both Young and Faggard said anyone with a little free time and enough space can keep bees. One hive is permitted on smaller than a one-quarter acre lot, or up to three hives on a quarter-acre in Florida. They stress the necessity to first review Florida Department of Agriculture regulations, HOA rules or local restrictions regarding beekeeping. Faggard cautioned that beehives should sit far from property boundaries, safely separated from neighbors, children, pets, or farm animals.



Suzy Faggard

Florida Department of Agriculture registration, certification and inspection are required. Costs for two hives average \$500-\$600, with \$10 registration fee. Expenses can be recouped by private sale of nutritional honey or homemade beeswax products, (Florida Cottage Food Law).

Young said she was amazed when her small colony yielded 100 pounds of honey. She said a common misconception is that honeybees require specific flowers, plants or trees. Bees are expert foragers who find what they need wherever available. They feed on flower pollen and nectar as they collect both, for transport back to the hive, where it is used for food, beeswax and honey production. During their travels bees continuously fertilize thousands of plants with pollen caught on their bodies.

Beekeeping also provides mental health benefits recognized by beekeepers and valued by therapists. Whether it is the common challenges of life experienced by everyone, or more serious, unexpected trauma, there is relief, release and a peaceful escape in time spent with bees.

The concentration and focus required to manage beehives, harvest honey or process beeswax showed therapeutic benefits for military veterans with PTSD, Traumatic Brain Injury or mental health conditions, according to the Bees4Vets program. Bees4Vets teaches beekeeping to reduce stress, anxiety, and depression among participants. Beekeeping increases relaxation, imparts a sense of accomplishment, and provides an independent business opportunity. A formal study of the program’s therapeutic benefits is underway.

“When I walk out to check on my bees it becomes an instant unplugged moment. No cell phone, no technology. A complete change of pace that’s so relaxing. I slow down. I check on one hive at a time to see how everything is progressing,” Young said. “I go straight into ‘bee world’ where I forget stress. It’s not like work at all and brings so much enjoyment. I went from not knowing how to grow anything, to a productive garden as soon as I cultivated honeybees and attracted native bees.”

Young said that beekeeping is an inclusive hobby rewarding for persons of all ages. Beekeeping is also manageable for disabled and blind beekeepers. There is some heavy lifting; assistance may be needed for movement of wooden box hives and honey.

Suzy Faggard, a retired cytotechnologist (examines cells for cancer), is an Ortega



Marilyn Young

Master Gardener whose tropical jungle backyard is a pollinator paradise and her personal oasis. An adventurous world traveler, she’s now pleased to be known as the lady to contact, who will gladly drive any distance to carefully relocate unwanted butterfly caterpillars for homeowners.

In 2010 on her daily walk, Faggard’s curiosity was sparked by a beehive on a church property. That sighting led to a hobby more fascinating than anything she imagined for her retirement.

“That hive belonged to Marlin Creiter, 94, a local beekeeper, who agreed to locate one of his hives outside of my bedroom window. I spent hours watching those bees. The next year I bought my own two hives. It’s a learning process like anything else. Bees are intelligent, complex, and fascinating,” Faggard said. “I’m a different kind of beekeeper because I’m happy with just one hive. I love to check on them up to five times a day, and I like to give all my honey away.”

Despite her skirmishes with pests like hive beetles, wax moths, and mites, Faggard said the rewards of beekeeping are worth the challenges. Last year was the best, most productive year she and her bees have ever had. She said her current residents are gentle and calm, unlike her first two hives, which she described as angry all the time. Faggard and Young both said their bees do not recognize or respond to them like pets, but probably know their scent, which calms them. Bees typically only sting if threatened or to protect their hives.

Both ladies recommend the beginner beekeeping classes and educational programs offered by Jacksonville Beekeepers Association or Clay County Beekeepers Association. The University of Florida offers beekeeping classes and a Master Beekeeper Program.

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In Memoriam

Frances Bartlett Kinne

May 23, 1917 to May 10, 2020

A trailblazer in education, both in Jacksonville and throughout the world, Dr. Frances Bartlett Kinne, matriarch of Jacksonville University, passed away May 10 at the age of 102. She was only two weeks shy of her 103rd birthday.

A small-town Iowa girl, who had a love for music and literature, Kinne rose to become the first woman to

receive a doctorate from the University of Frankfurt in Germany, and later became the first female dean of a fine arts college in the United States and the first woman to serve as president of a Florida university – Jacksonville University – as well as the first chancellor of JU.

In Jacksonville, she was also the first female member of the Downtown Rotary Club and of the River Club and was the inaugural winner of the EVE Award. In 1973 she received the first Florida Governor's Award for the arts. She is also a Florida Women's Hall of Fame inductee and is listed on 24 different Who's Who lists, including Who's Who in the World.

In 2000, her autobiography, *Iowa Girl: The President Wears a Skirt*, was published, which included forewords by Bob Hope, Charlton Heston and Winston Churchill, grandson of Britain's former prime minister.

"Dr. Frances Bartlett Kinne leaves behind an incredible legacy," said Jacksonville Mayor Lenny Curry. "She was an inspiration for women across the globe. Not only was Dr.



Kinne and incredible educator, administrator, accomplished musician, and author, she was the first female university president in the State of Florida, and the second in the United States. She paved an important path for women everywhere, and she will be greatly missed."

Born in Story City, Iowa, to Bertha Olson Bartlett, who ran the town library and Charles

M. Bartlett, who published her hometown newspaper, Kinne graduated from high school in 1934 and attended Iowa State Teachers College in Cedar Falls, which is now known as the University of Northern Iowa. She took piano lessons at Iowa State University in the summers, and later received her Bachelor of Music Education degree from Drake University. After graduation, she worked as a public-school music teacher and as a choral and instrumental conductor for several central Iowa schools.

In World War II, she became a U.S. Army entertainer and served as a United States Army Hostess at Camp Crowder in Missouri, eventually becoming the head hostess in a program that served 70,000 servicemen.

Once the war was over, Kinne served as recreational director at a V.A. hospital in Kansas, which was where she met her first husband, Lt. Colonel Harry Kinne. The couple lived in China in 1948 and were forced to be evacuated to the country's interior during the communist revolution. Later, during the Korean War, her husband was

posted to General MacArthur's staff, and she served as director of music and assistant entertainment director for the Far East Command for the U.S. Army's Special Services.

In 1955, her husband was posted in Germany, and Kinne completed her Ph.D. at the University of Frankfurt. In 1958 the couple moved to Florida, where her husband accepted a position in the Florida National Guard and Kinne became involved with Jacksonville University.

She initially joined the riverfront college as a humanities professor, a position she only expected to hold for a short time. However, her tenure ended up spanning 62 years.

In 1960 she founded JU's College of Fine Arts, and nine years later she rose to become dean of the program, before taking over as president of the university in 1979, a position she held for a decade. During her tenure as president she established the Davis College of Business, the Keigwin School of Nursing, and eliminated the university's debt within 18 months of her appointment. In 1983, she launched the university's 50-year Golden Anniversary Campaign and raised \$16 million for the school.

"Fran was absolutely a once-in-a-lifetime mentor. What's remarkable about her is that she represented that role to literally hundreds and hundreds of people," said JU President Tim Cost, who added she was famously known on campus as "capturing the lady in red."

"She had rare and special gifts that she was able to share. Her combination of enthusiasm, optimism, and pragmatism was unrivaled in any leader I've had the pleasure of working with in my 40 years since graduating from college."

Kinne raised the national profile of JU by inviting world-famous celebrities to visit the school, including President Gerald Ford, Bob Hope, Jack Benny, Charlton Heston, Duke Ellington, Linus Pauling, Margaret Mead, Ross Perot, and Arthur Fiedler,



Dr. Frances Bartlett Kinne with Hollywood superstars Jack Benny (left) and Bob Hope (right)

conductor of the Boston Pops. She also convinced George Steinbrenner, owner of the New York Yankees, to have his baseball team play an exhibition game against JU's collegiate team as a fundraiser for the school.

Upon her retirement as JU president, she was immediately elected as first chancellor of JU by its board of trustees.

JU named her Professor of the Year in both 1961 and 1962, and Business and Professional Women's Clubs of Greater Jacksonville granted her the Distinguished Achievement Award. She was also named by President Ronald Reagan to chair the President's Council of Independent Colleges and Universities of Florida. On Nov. 1, 2012, the City of Jacksonville proclaimed Dr. Frances Bartlett Kinne Day.

"Dr. Kinne was an excellent connector, mentor and role model for JU students through their undergraduate years and beyond," said Nina Waters, president of The Community Foundation of Northeast Florida and an alumna of JU.

Cost agreed. He said every holiday season, when he would visit with Kinne at her home, he usually found her to be in the middle of corresponding with more than 2,000 JU alumni that stayed in regular touch with her. "To see the joy and gratitude in her interactions with our graduates was unforgettable," he said.

Kinne was preceded in death by Col. Harry L. Kinne, her first husband who died in 1981, and Col. M. Worthington Bordley Jr., her second husband who died in 1996.

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In Memoriam

John Patrick Stone

June 10, 1921 to March 18, 2020

A true American hero and member of The Greatest Generation is gone.

John Patrick Stone, an infantry unit commander in the Marine Corps who experienced heavy combat during World War II, passed away quietly under hospice care March 18 in his Avondale home at the age of 99. Stone had the distinction of being born in his home in Ashtabula, Ohio, and dying in his home in Jacksonville, said his son, Frank Stone.



The founder of Carpet Concepts, Inc. in Avondale, Stone got his start at Dubard's Carpets in 1952. He later separated from his partner at Dubard's and established his own first store at 210 West Forsyth Street in 1966. Later he had a carpet store in the Buckman Ulmer and Mitchell Building before moving his establishment to Avondale. He also opened a store in Regency. He retired from

the carpet business in 1965, and he and his wife bought a summer home in Western North Carolina, which they enjoyed for many years. "After he retired, he would walk from his home to our store on Herschel Street every day until he was in his 80s," said Mark, noting it was at least a three-mile trek roundtrip.

Stone was very philanthropic with his time, said Frank. He was one of the original members of the WJXT board of directors, a board member of the Child Guidance and Speech Correction Clinic, and a board member of the Boys Service Council, which later was named Big Brothers. He had a big heart when it came to fatherless children, and in 1970, he was designated Big Brother of the Year for Duval County.

Because his father had been an itinerant farmer in Ohio and his mother had died when he was very young, Stone, who was one of nine children, was raised by his older siblings, said Frank. "I think he was trying to fill the void he had when he was growing up. I can remember him bringing some of the children he mentored to our house. Years later, people would come into our store as adults and tell us how much it meant to them that Dad had mentored them in their lives."

"I can remember him bringing some of the children he mentored to our house. Years later, people would come into our store as adults and tell us how much it meant to them that Dad had mentored them in their lives."

— Frank Stone

Stone also served several terms as president of the Jacksonville Executive Association. For over 10 years he was the moderator for the Great Books Foundation and was recognized for seven years of service by the Duval County Public Library. "When I went to join a local business group, he told me 'Don't go in there halfway. Get in there and get involved,'" said Frank.

He was also a longstanding member of St. Paul's Catholic Church in Riverside and an avid tennis player who played at Boone Park for over 50 years, only quitting the game when he turned 90 years old.

"I played tennis with John on weekends at Boone Park for many, many years," wrote Ronald Cohen in Stone's online guest book. "John never made a bad line call. He was always upbeat, and there never was a disagreement. It was a real honor to be one of his tennis buddies."

Survivors include Stone's six children, John P. Stone Jr., Alva Theresa Stone of Tallahassee, William T. Stone (Janan), Frank H. Stone (Eva), Christopher P. Stone (Nita) and Mark A. Stone (Carlisle). He is also survived by 13 grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren.

Although he rarely talked about it, Stone led the last infantry company formed by the Marines during the war. His outfit was engaged in heavy combat in Okinawa and suffered the greatest number of casualties of any regiment in Marine Corps history, with 75% of his men killed or wounded. He was awarded the Silver Star for gallantry in action, the Bronze Star for heroism, was entitled to wear the Combat "V" Ribbon, and was awarded the Presidential Unit Citation, along with numerous other medals and campaign ribbons. He was also a recipient of the Purple Heart, an award he finally received years later in the 1990s.

"On Okinawa, when he was in combat, a mortar shell landed right next to him, but he was lucky because it didn't explode," said his son, Frank. "However, some of the coral from the island broke off and he was injured in the ear. They put him in a field hospital and gave him penicillin for three days before shipping him back to the front lines. Years later, Dad was in the grocery store and ran into someone who had served with him. The man asked him if he had ever gotten a Purple Heart for that injury," Frank continued. "Dad didn't care about things like that, although he did have several medals. But the guy got in touch with Rep. Tillie Fowler who put it all in motion. Dad ended up getting the Purple Heart sometime in the 1990s, and it was one of the few times I saw Dad break down and cry," he said, noting the medal was bestowed at Naval Air Station Jacksonville with more than 100 Marines in attendance. "Seeing all the young Marines in their dress uniforms made him think about all the young men who died in his platoon."

As the leader of his unit, Stone kept a notebook in battle where he jotted down information about his fellow soldiers, especially details about how they were injured or killed. He would then send letters to their families," said his son, Mark. Years later, a trunk filled with his wartime correspondence was found, and Stone donated it to The Institute on World War II and The Human Experience in Tallahassee. His correspondence at the museum was later discovered by the producers of NBC's Dateline television program "The Greatest Generation Lives On," and he was selected as one of three WWII veterans featured by Tom Brokaw on June 17, 2001.

A native of Ohio, Stone graduated from Georgetown University, and it was in Washington D.C. that he met his wife of more than 60 years, the former Alva Tupper Heintz of Avondale, who predeceased him in 2011. After his college graduation, he nearly became a Secret Service agent, but when that fell through, he went to work for a furniture company in Philadelphia and later another store in Maryland, where he began selling carpet. When the company was closed suddenly by the Internal Revenue Service, Stone assisted collection agencies in collecting on the bad debt. Later he and his family moved to Jacksonville.

ASK THE EXPERT



Celebrating your passions

Matt Tucci

Jacksonville Market Director, Hardage-Giddens Funeral Homes and Cemeteries

Q: I'm a United States Veteran. What kinds of memorial benefits are available to me and my family?

A: First of all, thank you for your courageous, selfless service to our country. As a veteran, you may qualify for burial benefits through the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), and it's essential to find a funeral or cemetery provider that understands these benefits and can help you design a memorial that not only reflects your personality and passions, but also honors your legacy of service and commitment. The following benefits may be made available to veterans and their survivors, as supplied by the VA:

- Burial and plot interment allowances
- Headstones and markers
- Military honors
- Burial flags
- Presidential Memorial Certificate (PMC)

Q: How do I file for Veterans memorial benefits?

A: Ensuring that all available Veterans benefits are received is very important. Keep in mind that, like Social Security benefits, Veterans benefits are not paid automatically; you must apply for them. Here's what you will need when filing for Veterans benefits:

- Death certificate
- Discharge papers (DD-214)
- Marriage certificate
- Birth certificate(s) for Veteran's minor child(ren)
- Receipt of itemized funeral bill

A knowledgeable provider can walk you through this process and help you coordinate every detail of a final tribute that truly celebrates the life it represents.

Design a memorial that not only reflects your personality and passions, but also honors your legacy of service and commitment.

Q: What else does your funeral home do to honor Veterans?

A: We're proud to be part of a nationwide network that serves more Veterans than any other funeral service provider. We work year-round to help Veterans and their loved ones understand and obtain memorial benefits at informational seminars, and we are proud to partner with community programs like the We Honor Veterans Program and the Homeless Veterans Burial Program. We also host and participate in annual Memorial Day and Veterans Day celebrations. And, to help you plan, our funeral home offers a Veterans Planning Guide filled with useful information about the benefits available to you and how to apply for them, as well as a place where you can organize and record your final wishes. You can contact us to receive your complimentary planning guide today.

If you have more questions, visit your local funeral provider. They are a good source of information for funeral, cremation and cemetery options.

Matt Tucci is the Jacksonville Market Director with Hardage-Giddens Funeral Homes and Cemeteries, which serves the greater Jacksonville area. For more information, Matt can be reached at 954-821-7103 or visit him at the Hardage-Giddens Funeral home in Mandarin, 11801 San Jose Blvd, Jacksonville, FL 32223 San Jose Blvd. or email matthew.tucci@dignitymemorial.com

THE WAY WE WERE: DR. WILLIAM CORDELL MASON III

BY MARCIA HODGSON
RESIDENT COMMUNITY NEWS

REFLECTING ON A 50-YEAR CAREER FILLED WITH MEDICINE AND MINISTRY

Reflecting on his 50 years as a hospital administrator for Baptist hospitals worldwide, Bill Mason realized his career was the perfect mix of medicine and ministry.

The San Marco resident has held leadership positions at Baptist Health in Jacksonville for 40+ years, from 1978 until October 2020. During that time, he kickstarted and oversaw the growth of Baptist Medical Center – Jacksonville from a small city hospital into a much larger regional health system in Northeast Florida.

Mason credits his highly successful career to the influence of his two grandfathers who lived in Fairhope, Alabama, where he grew up – Dr. William C. Mason, a dentist and a pharmacist who served as temporary town doctor when the only physician was called away during World War II, and Rev. Dr. William H. Evans, former pastor of First Baptist Church.

“When I went away to college at the University of Louisiana in Lafayette, my two grandfathers sat me down because I couldn’t decide what I was going to be,” Mason recalled. “They said, if you don’t know if you want to go into medicine or ministry, study pharmacy and that will buy you four years until you decide what you want to do.”



Rev. Dr. William H. Evans and his wife, Laeuna. Evans was pastor of Alabama’s Fairhope Baptist Church where Mason’s parents were married in 1935 and where Evans baptized Mason in 1946.

“He said the word administration derives from two Latin words Ad and Ministrare, which means to serve and to minister, as in hospital administration, which I had never considered before. He said in the Catholic Church the Pope’s role is to serve the servants who are the nuns and priests

who are then serving Christ’s children, and it goes back to the Bible where Jesus said ‘he who would be chief among you must first be your servant.’ He said, the same is true in hospitals. The CEO is the servant of the servants of the hospital – doctors and nurses, technicians, pharmacists, lab workers, housekeepers, and dietary workers. The hospital administrator as the chief executive really means you are the chief servant of the servants, if you do it right,” he said. “I looked at it that way, and that was the cornerstone of my whole career.”

Married to his first wife, Mona, and with two babies to provide for after his college graduation, Mason was trying to figure out how he could afford to get a master’s degree in hospital administration, when, thanks to the recommendation of Baumhart, he was offered the opportunity to join the State Department’s U.S. Agency for International Development as a foreign service officer in Manila, Philippines. His assignment was to assist in rebuilding the country’s hospitals and medical schools. During 1966-1969, as part of the Southeast Asia desk, Mason was also sent to South Viet Nam as a civilian advisor.

As an aide-de-camp to Ambassador Sterling J. Cottrell, he ferried important dignitaries such as Sen. Ted Kennedy to view refugee camps, a role which was often fraught with danger. “I never went out in the boonies or even shaved in the morning without my .45,” he said, noting the Viet Cong tunneled under the barracks and were on the verge of sneaking in to cut the Americans’ throats when the tunnel was inadvertently discovered by the Marines.

But it was during the Tet Offensive, when Mason’s village was mortared that he had his second “life-changing” experience.

Before his eyes, small children were brutally injured, and Mason’s role was to serve at Can Tho Hospital as the triage officer deciding who would receive treatment and who would be left to die. “One little fellow lost his leg. Another was blinded and lost his arm, and there was this little girl, Troung Minh, whose left arm was so badly mangled the only way to save it was to take skin from her abdomen and graft it onto her arm,” he recalled, adding that the brilliant Army surgeon who saved the little girl’s life was Dr. Herschel Douglas, a man who much later became chief surgeon at Jacksonville’s University Hospital. “When Dr. Douglas died, his wife asked me to do the eulogy,” Mason said.

“There were 197 casualties. People were bringing handcarts full of bodies with people dead and alive and just dumping them in front of the hospital and then running back to get more. One young woman was pregnant. Her leg was missing,



Bill Mason, his infant daughter, Holly, and his son, Steve, and wife, Mona, ride an elephant through the jungle in Bangalore, India in 1977.

and she was bleeding to death but in labor and I had to decide which pile to put her on. We took her into the hospital to have her baby. The baby lived, but unfortunately, the mother died,” he said.

The traumatic experience earned Mason the Meritorious Service Medal and led Mason to decide it was time to pursue his masters in hospital administration. Through his military connections, Mason was able to receive a scholarship to Trinity University Hospital in San Antonio, Texas, where he received his degree and did a residency at Baptist Hospital in Beaumont, Texas. Beaumont is where he learned of opportunities in hospital administration in Baptist Mission Hospitals around the world. “This is where my 50 years started, right there,” he said.

Although he was invited to remain on the staff in Beaumont, Mason decided to become chief executive officer of a Baptist hospital in Africa. “Seeing those kids injured in Can Tho during the war really shook me to the core, and I thought, I’ve been through all this with people killing each other, I think I need to go spend my life helping poor people and the children in those countries,” he explained.

To get initiated into Baptist hospital mission work, Mason first attended Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, where he took courses in Christian ethics and Biblical archeology. He also received cultural and language training at the Baptist Mission retreat at Calloway Gardens in Georgia, and at Brackenhurst Conference Center, an old British Hotel in Nairobi, Kenya, where he spent eight months learning Swahili.

In his four years heading Baptist Hospital in Tanzania, Mason was responsible for the care of 380 patients. Food was often scarce, requiring him and a crew to head out in two Land Rovers onto the plains of Serengeti, where he would shoot six to eight animals, such as impala, to feed his family and patients. “It wasn’t really hunting because the animals were just everywhere,” he said.



A government game warden asked Mason to shoot an old rogue hippo in Lake Rukwa. The old hippo with an abscessed tooth was killing villagers. “We put him out of his misery,” he said.

Wanting to provide a turkey dinner for his family during their first African Thanksgiving, Mason recalled heading out in search of the iconic bird. When he realized there are no turkeys on the Serengeti, he shot an ostrich instead. “I had no idea how big they were,” he explained. “We spent half a day field dressing it, and it took four of us to pick the carcass up and put it on the Land Rover. It weighed 300 pounds.” Because of the bird’s size, his wife was unable to cook it in the house, so he steamed it in the hospital’s autoclave sterilizing unit and carved off the meat. “We doctored it up, but it was not edible. The patients wouldn’t eat it, and the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 33

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The Mason family arrive in Kenya so that Bill can attend Swahili language school in 1972: Mike, Mona, Steve, Becky, and Bill

German Shepherds we had to guard the hospital wouldn't eat it, so we ended up just burying it," he remembered.

After four years in Africa, Mason was called to Bangalore, India in April 1974, where he oversaw the construction of a new Baptist hospital. The President of India was present at the hospital's dedication, and Mason's youngest daughter, Holly, was the first American child born within the medical facility.

During this time, Mason was also called to serve as a regional consultant for Baptist hospitals in Yemen and Rhodesia, two locations where he was called to fill in as CEO after hospital administrators were murdered by terrorists as they performed their work.

Mason later returned to the United States and was working at a hospital in Alabama, when his aunt, Lois Smith, an active member of Hendricks Avenue Baptist Church, asked him to speak to her congregation about his hospital work. During that visit, on December 2, 1977, his third life-changing experience occurred because Dick Malone, the new CEO of Baptist Medical Center Jacksonville just happened to join the church that Sunday.

"He had been here a few weeks and had already decided he was going to clean house and build his own team," Mason said. "After church that day, Dick invited me to come

down to the hospital and have lunch with him, and the rest is history."

As chief operating officer, Mason ran Baptist Medical Center while Malone served as CEO and chairman of the board, working closely with the Southern Baptist Convention, which owned the facility. Later Baptist legally separated from the Convention. After two or three years, Mason officially became CEO when Malone died of leukemia in the early 1980s.

Since then, Mason has shepherded Baptist and its extensive building programs. It was his vision to bring the first Life Flight Program to Jacksonville. "That came out of my experience in Viet Nam," he said, noting the air ambulance had ferried 22,000 patients over 37 years without an accident. During his tenure he built the Pavillion, an obstetrical hospital in 1985, the Baptist Cancer Center and Eye Institute in 1986 (which is now the Hill Breast Center), the Jacksonville Orthopedic Institute which housed 32 surgeons in 1987, Baptist Hospital at the Jacksonville Beaches in 1988, Baptist Hospital in Nassau County in 1989, Wolfson Children's Hospital in 1993, a 225-bed Heart Hospital in 2001, and the Baptist South Hospital in 2003. "I built just about one a year," he said.

Mason also set up the Baptist Foundation in 1985 and its \$23 million Campaign for Construction to build Wolfson and considers



William and Juliette Mason on their wedding day in April 1973

the children's hospital's ribbon-cutting one of his finest hours. He is proud First Lady Barbara Bush was able to attend the Oct. 23, 1993 ceremony, joining his mother, Sybil Evans Mason, and his second wife, Juliette, then head of the Baptist Foundation, who he married in April 1993. The children's hospital, which is adjacent to Baptist Medical Center, represents a Children's Health Consortium between Baptist, Nemours Children's Specialty Care, and University of Florida Medical School Jacksonville.

From its inception in 1985 to 2018, the Foundation has built an endowment of more than \$100 million, he said proudly. Baptist Health also donated the first radio-equipped ambulance in Paraguay to the Baptist hospital there.

Also, during his tenure, he bought four city blocks of San Marco homes so that Nemours and Ronald McDonald House could be built in close proximity to Wolfson. And Mason joined Jeff Wadsworth of Nemours in placing the golden spike on the glass skybridge that connects the children's hospital with Nemours across I-95.

Mason took the lead during Baptist's 1995 merger with St. Vincent's Hospital, where he served as President and CEO of the Baptist/St. Vincent's Health System, which grew to 1380 beds, 12,000 employees and eight hospitals, the biggest health system in the Southeastern region. The merger lasted until 2002 when the Daughters of Charity sold St. Vincent's to Ascension Health.

Also inspired by his two "doctor" grandfathers, Mason had on his bucket list to earn a doctorate of his own. He entered a doctoral program at the University of North Florida in 1997 earning a degree in Health and Education Leadership in 2002, and taught hospital administration in UNF's graduate school for several years receiving the College of Education and Human Services "Alumnus of the Year" award in 2005.



Bill Mason during his first staff meeting at Baptist Medical Center in 1978

Officially retiring from all Baptist boards and committees in October 2020, until that time, Mason continues to serve on four different Baptist Health boards of directors – the Foundation Board, as chair of the Baptist AgeWell Institute, and on the boards of Social Responsibility and Community Health. "Right now, I'm still working at Baptist. I'm there every week," he said.

Mason said he often thinks of Winston Churchill's words when he reflects back on his career: "To each in their lifetime comes a special moment when they are tapped on the shoulder and offered a chance to do a very special thing, unique to them and fitted to their talents. What a tragedy if that moment finds them unprepared for that which could have been their finest hour."

"With the support, encouragement, and love of my family, I was prepared when that special moment came in my life. I am humbly grateful," he said.



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Mourning a loved one during the Coronavirus pandemic

By Marcia Hodgson
Resident Community News

When it comes to mourning the death of a loved one, “there is no textbook way to grieve,” said Jody Brandenburg, president of Hardage Giddens Funeral Homes and Cemeteries, which owns 10 funeral facilities including Hardage-Giddens Riverside Memorial Park & Funeral Home and Hardage-Giddens Oaklawn Chapel & Cemetery in San Marco. His words perfectly describe what funeral directors in Jacksonville’s historic neighborhoods have encountered during the recent Coronavirus pandemic.

During a time when residents are advised to wear masks, use hand sanitizer, and remain six feet away from each other, when death comes, surviving families have discovered the art of mourning has greatly changed as well.

Many families have opted to hold graveside committal services, which have been limited to only 10 mourners, while postponing memorial and celebration of life services until the stay-at-home orders and restrictions on group gatherings are lifted, according to Brandenburg and two other funeral directors in Jacksonville’s historic neighborhoods – Cameron Naugle, owner of Naugle Funeral Homes & Cremation Services in San Marco and Riverside, and Greg Williams of Integrity Funeral Homes and Cremation Services in Riverside and Fernandina Beach.

Funeral homes also have adopted Zoom, social media, and other on-line technologies to conduct funerals, share messages of condolence, and store historical information into perpetuity.

During the Coronavirus crisis, funeral services are considered essential businesses by state officials. When state and city leaders at first issued stay-at-home orders, funerals and committal services at cemeteries were limited to only 10 mourners. With the issuance of phase 1 by governmental officials in May, as a way to normalize business on the First Coast, funeral guidelines are “unlimited” as long as they adhere to social distancing measures are maintained, said Brandenburg.

Prior to the change that occurred in mid May, Naugle said he measured the seating

of his chapel and determined he could seat two mourners on either end of the front row, one in the middle of the second row, two in the third row, one in the fourth, and so forth in order to keep everyone six feet apart. “That way we can seat 32 people in our chapel safely. I figure that is a good compromise,” he said.

Meanwhile, Hardage-Giddens tried to keep its numbers at graveside committal services low, while stressing social distancing, Brandenburg said. “If there are more that want to come, they can drive by in their cars and roll their windows down so they can feel apart of it,” he said.

As of this writing, Naugle said most cemeteries continued to limit graveside mourners to 10, and Jacksonville’s National Cemetery had stopped all services completely. “The casket can go to the National Cemetery, but it’s only drop-offs, no families are allowed, and no honors are rendered,” he said. “It’s kind of disappointing, but that’s what they’ve decided to do. They are promising to do make-up services at later dates.”

The restriction to only 10 graveside mourners caused some families to become more creative. “I did a service at Jacksonville Memory Gardens and one sister showed up with her 10 people and she did a service, and after she left, her sister came with her preacher and her 10 people and did a service at the graveside for 10 minutes. Then a third sister came, and she did a service at the graveside for 20 minutes with her people. Something like this was never a thing before,” Naugle said. “We try to find something that works for the family as well as the cemetery.”

The use of Zoom, an online meeting platform, has allowed more family members to participate in the ceremony while at home, said Naugle, who recalled such a graveside service at Evergreen Cemetery. “I brought my cell phone and tripod, and we set it up off to the side. We had 15 additional family members join 10 minutes before the service,” he said, noting a family member also recorded it. “After the service, we uploaded the recording to our website so those who couldn’t make the Zoom meeting or were in a different time zone could watch it.”



Greg Williams of Integrity Funeral Home & Cremations adjusts a camera to use during a Zoom funeral.

Families are satisfied with Zoom because communication goes two ways, he said. “Some family members wanted to talk. I know it was strange that the cell phone was talking, but they got to talk, and that was important,” Naugle said, noting it is a way for family members to give testimonials.

As of this writing, Integrity Funeral Homes had not yet conducted a Zoom funeral but has the capacity to do so, Williams said, adding that before the pandemic he had livestreamed services overseas so family members could experience celebrations in real time.

Hardage-Giddens also livestreams services to worldwide locations and provides copies of the service afterward. “It is almost like an online guest book,” said Brandenburg, whose company also uses Making Everlasting Memories (MEM.com), an online memorial website, where obituaries, stories, and information can be placed in perpetuity.

Brandenburg, Naugle and Williams said the pandemic has not caused their companies to change the way they prepare bodies. All staff wear PPEs (personal protection equipment—gowns, masks, face shields and gloves) during preparation. “Since the HIV crisis years ago, everybody has changed their procedures,” Brandenburg said. “We have universal precautions in place. This is nothing new for us because we’ve been up to speed,” he said, noting Hardage-Giddens also has an additional set of universal precautions it abides by.

Families with loved ones who die of COVID-19 often opt for cremation or direct burial, Naugle said. “We had one COVID case that was a direct burial. We took the body, which comes in two very thick pouches (body bags) from the hospital, and we transferred it directly to a casket and buried it,” he said. “That’s probably the safer way to handle it if the family chooses burial. I haven’t

seen anything that says you can’t embalm it, or that after it’s been embalmed that you can’t let people view it, but for safety’s sake and erring on the side of things we don’t know, we’ve been recommending direct burial.” As of this writing, his funeral home had only handled six COVID cases, he said.

Although his funeral home had not yet served any COVID cases, his team is prepared to when and if the time comes, Williams said. “We know exactly what to do to squash the virus.”

All three men mentioned social distancing has been rough on client families during the pandemic.

“I’m a Southern Baptist. We hug, we shake hands, and we hug again,” said Williams. “It’s devastating, especially for families who want a hug and can’t get it.”

Naugle agreed. “We are a touchy, feely industry, and sometimes you want to give people hugs because you feel bad for them. The way it is today, you are not able to,” he said. “It has been tough. I had a family member who looked like she was going to cry. I asked her, ‘what’s wrong?’ and she said she just wanted to hug her brother but realized she shouldn’t at this time. It’s just a sign of the times.”

“Many people will be planning life-story celebrations after this is over so they can have the strength of having people around them,” said Brandenburg, noting each Hardage-Giddens location has a special calendar reserved to schedule future memorial services. “Even with the delay, celebrations are important. Although this is unprecedented, I think people need the recognition and celebration of a life well lived. It is important to recognize the person who has passed away, and it doesn’t just have to be the most prominent person in Jacksonville. Everybody is comforted by being surrounded by friends. There is no time limit on it.”



Mourners practice social distancing during a funeral service in the Naugle Schnauss Funeral Home’s Riverside chapel.

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COVID-19 testing on homeless reveals no positive cases

When it comes to Coronavirus, Jacksonville's homeless population has been told it has a clean bill of health.

During the week of May 4, Sulzbacher partnered with UF Health Jacksonville to administer tests at every local homeless service provider including Sulzbacher downtown and Sulzbacher Village, Trinity Rescue Mission, The Salvation Army, Clara White Mission, Hubbard House, City Rescue Mission and both Urban Rest Stop locations. The testing came through a partnership with the national nonprofit Community Solutions. Jacksonville and Phoenix, Ariz., were the only two cities in the nation chosen

by Quest Diagnostics where all homeless people would be tested for COVID-19.

In Jacksonville, the group tested 679 people, and Quest Diagnostics confirmed that all tested individuals did not have COVID-19. Everyone was negative. The protocol for people who test positive is to isolate at home, however, people experiencing homelessness have no home, and group-living facilities like shelters cannot provide the needed level of separation.

Led by Changing Homelessness, the homeless service providers were able to leverage their existing relationships with area hotels to provide private rooms for anyone who tested positive for the virus. Local hospitals were also able to discharge homeless people who needed to be quarantined to these hotels. Initial funding for the hotels came from the City of Jacksonville Urban Rest Stop grant, along with funding from private donors such as the United Way's First Coast Relief Fund.

A second 'Pop-up' Urban Rest Stop was established at The Salvation Army building on Church St. This enabled more street homeless to have a safe place to be during the day while having enough space to social distance.

The group established a community homeless protocol that included medical screening at all shelters and both Urban Rest Stop locations. Both medical and non-medical staff pitched in to screen every person entering any of the agency's campuses. Staff exhibited unparalleled courage and dedication – nurses, doctors



Medical staff from Sulzbacher and UF Health Jacksonville administered tests at every local homeless service provider in Jacksonville during the week of May 4.



Sign at an Urban Rest Stop for the homeless

and caseworkers in full protective gear reaching out to help, doing health screenings, taking temperatures, and setting up tents outside to do so. Using tablets and telehealth, frontline workers had 24-hour access to a Sulzbacher Provider if a patient needed to be escalated due to symptoms. The protocol included social distancing requirements, education from the CDC posted at all facilities, setting up two motels for those that needed to be quarantined, having staff available at the hotels and delivering three meals a day. The result of the collective effort was to keep the entire population of people in Jacksonville who are experiencing homelessness safe from the spread of the virus.

Along with rest of the nation, Jacksonville is struggling with a severe lack of personal protective equipment (PPEs) for staff and

clients. The collective group mounted a strategic effort to secure the needed supplies, leveraging every source possible. As the only provider with a health center, Sulzbacher was instrumental in securing supplies, including having volunteers sew masks at home, and obtaining donations of hand sanitizer from area businesses who had shifted their manufacturing to respond to the need. At the beginning of the crisis, there were no tests. The only people who could get tested initially were those that had cars.

The COVID testing at each location was coordinated through Sulzbacher's Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) in conjunction with each shelter. Both Sulzbacher and UF Health plan to publish research around this testing.

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Kate Wilkerson – Wagner College

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Hannah McCarthy – Franklin and Marshall College
Viki Wood – Queens University of Charlotte
Emily Mayher – Loyola College of New Orleans

SAILING

Chris McCollum – Jacksonville University

GOLF

Tommy Bishop – Hampden-Sydney College

SOCCER

Mason Doherty – Sewanee: The University of the South
Paddy Prendergast – Piedmont College

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Max Evanson – Northern Michigan University

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Jr. Residents 37

Sievert named as Presidential Scholar in the Arts

Mallorie Sievert, a senior at Douglas Anderson School of the Arts was named one of six from Florida to be part of the 56th class of U.S. Presidential Scholars and the only scholar from Jacksonville.



Mallorie Sievert

The May 21 announcement was made by U.S. Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos. She recognized 161 high school seniors for their accomplishments in academics, the arts, and career and technical fields. Sievert was named as one of only 20 Presidential Scholars in the Arts and the only one in theatre.

"It is my privilege to congratulate the Presidential Scholars Class of 2020 on their outstanding academic achievement, community service, and leadership," said DeVos. "These exemplary young people have excelled inside the classroom and out. And, while they are facing unprecedented challenges as they graduate from high school into a world that looks much different than it did just a few months ago, their determination, resilience, and commitment to excellence will serve them well as they pursue their next steps."

The White House Commission on Presidential Scholars selects students based on their academic success, artistic and technical excellence, essays, school evaluations, and transcripts as well as evidence of community service, leadership, and demonstrated commitment to high ideals. As directed by Presidential Executive Order, the 2020 U.S. Presidential Scholars are comprised of one boy and one girl from each state, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico, and U.S. families living abroad, as well as 15 chosen at-large, 20 scholars in the arts and 20 scholars in career and technical education.

Donations overflow from Episcopal's remote Celebrating Service Day

A global pandemic did not stop folks from the Episcopal School of Jacksonville from giving to the less fortunate. The school's first remote Celebrating Service Day April 21 resulted in such an avalanche of donated goods that Episcopal was able to help two food pantries instead of just one. Benefitting from the largesse were St. Mary's Episcopal Church food bank and Mandarin Food Bank.

"The pandemic has made our need to help others in our community even more critical. Food pantries are serving more individuals and families than ever before," said The Rev. Teresa Seagle, school chaplain.

Episcopal's buses were parked at the St. Mark's, Beaches, and Munneryn campuses from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. April 21 for donations. Donors brought goods – like non-perishable foods and hygiene products – and were able to do so without coming into contact with anyone or touching any surfaces.

Episcopal annually holds Celebrating Service Day, and all students, faculty, and staff contribute thousands of hours of community service at organizations around Jacksonville. This year, because of the pandemic, the event was held remotely.



Andy Kidd, Episcopal athletic director, with his daughters Emily and Maggie, who both attend St. Mark's Episcopal Day School

Creating a time capsule to remember COVID-19

To make sure, 25 years in the future, that Riverside Presbyterian Day School students will be able to understand what the Coronavirus pandemic was like, first and second grade students at the school decided to create, Front Porch Stories: A Time Capsule from 2020.

"I wondered, what if we made something to help RPDS remember the significance of this time? A gift... to the future first and second grade classes of 2045... a gift that won't be opened for 25 years," said Samantha Stokes, a lower school science teacher at RPDS.

"The pandemic of 2020 will stay marked in our memories for the rest of our lives," Stokes said. "It affected almost every part of our daily lives. Someday, though, this will all be a memory – something that happened in the past that we all got through, together. This terrible time will end, and we will emerge into the world to resume our lives."

In forming the time capsule, RPDS's first- and second-grade students included



Harris Lott



Hope, Daire, and Hector Keymer

future letters to themselves, interviews, reflections on the passing of time, and items they believed would tell the story of this unprecedented time, such as toilet paper and masks. Stokes also ventured out to each

student's home for a front porch distance picture to capture the essence of this time period. Students in the year 2045 will be asked to open the time capsule that will be buried on the RPDS campus.

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Front: Jodasea "Jojo" Peterson, Taylor Bailey, Meracle Smith. Middle row: Elio El Hajj, Luke Williams. Back row: Raphael Cenicerros, Lorenzo Hall, Simon Mankins, Daniel "Danny" Rogers



Graduates of the Class of 2020 at Morning Star School.

Morning Star celebrates second graduating class

Nine very proud students in bright red caps and gowns received well-earned diplomas during an intimate commencement ceremony celebrating the 2020 class of Morning Star School, a Catholic educational facility that serves children from kindergarten through 12th grade with learning differences including intellectual and developmental challenges.

The in-person graduation event was a special time for the special school as it was only the second in the Morning Star's history. The graduation ceremony would normally have taken place at Bishop Snyder High

School, whose students often serve as mentors to the Morning Star students. However, due to the Coronavirus pandemic, it seemed prudent to offer Morning Star students a small celebratory gathering on their own campus May 21.

Seven of the students were in Morning Star's original high school class and began their studies as freshmen, even before their high school facility was finished, while two joined the class as sophomores. Elio El Hajj began his academic work at Morning Star in the first grade, and Jodasea "Jojo" Peterson, has been with the school since third grade.

Even with the pandemic, parents were treated to a host of graduation activities. Official cap and gown photos of the students were taken May 19. On May 20, Morning Star graduates joined Bishop Snyder High School seniors at a special evening baccalaureate Mass at St. Luke's Catholic Church. Faculty, graduates, and two family members were invited to join the small, unique commencement ceremony in front of Morning Star School May 21. CDC social distancing guidelines were followed during all events.



Morning Star graduates walk single file to the graduation ceremony in front of their school May 21.



Fishweir parade allows grads to thank teachers

Parents of Fishweir Elementary School's 5th grade graduates show their appreciation to faculty members and school administrators when they planned and executed a creative graduation parade May 22.

The families decorated vehicles with posters inked with thankful phrases of praise, along with well-wishes for their teachers and school officials. One local parent, Betty Jordan, led the parade, after having been selected as the lead car for her outstanding design aesthetic, a Fishweir fish, complete with a dorsal fin, eyes, lips

and a tail trailing behind. Jordan, who also doubles as the school's crossing guard, Received help in decorating her car from her twin graduates, Chase and Meya, who were seen waving out of the back window.

"I wasn't expecting to be the lead car, but they [other parents] said that we should lead because we're a fish," said Jordan, gleefully. A big kid at heart, she said she had fun helping the children team up to bring gifts and a big card signed for their teachers, some of whom they may never see again as they move on to middle school.



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Letter TO THE Editor

Student shares appreciation for remote teaching

Dear Resident Editor,

I want to share my experience with distance learning during the Covid-19 crisis. My name is William Wright, and I just finished 8th grade at Episcopal School of Jacksonville. During my spring break, the school announced that we would not be coming back to campus but instead do remote learning. At first, I was excited about not going to school, but after a few weeks I realized that I would rather go back to school to see all my friends and teachers. We did remote learning through Zoom and Google Meets and met everyday from 8:05 am – 3:25 pm. I thought my school did a great job trying to make it feel like we were actually at school. We rotated through our normal school schedule and met with all our teachers and classmates everyday. The hardest part of remote learning was looking at a computer all day and focusing on the teacher through a screen. However, it was the best that we could do during this crisis, and I appreciate all the hard work and planning my school did during this time.

Sincerely,
William Wright
St. Nicholas

St. Mark's celebrates graduating seniors



Louisa Holyer and Greyson Meeker were two of seven children who virtually passed the offering plate during the service.

Although St. Mark's Episcopal Church has been offering virtual services on its website, YouTube and Facebook since March 22, recently, the Ortega church thought outside the box on strategies to recognize its graduating seniors and youth during Youth Sunday service, a beloved St. Mark's tradition held annually in May.

St. Mark's capitalized on the tech-savvy nature of children and youth by asking them to submit videos

representing various aspects of the service, including welcomes, virtual plate passing, and acceptances of St. Mark's annual Father Bob Award. In addition to video submissions, photos and the names of graduating seniors were displayed during the service. The service concluded with a pictorial slideshow highlighting spiritual journeys from members of the Class of 2020 at St. Mark's.

"We received positive feedback from many of our parishioners who were greatly touched by the Spirit through the music and visuals of our youth in the service," said Rev. Tom Murray, rector, St. Mark's Episcopal Church.

One parishioner wrote, "I believe we were blessed by new experiences that may become new traditions. Since I don't have any family among the youth and children of the church, the video showcasing them was a virtual way for me to share their St. Mark's journeys. What a treat! Thanks to all!"

To view the service, visit stmarksjacksonville.org/virtual-worship and click on the "May 3, 2020 – Youth Sunday" video.



The Stewart family virtually welcome participants to Youth Sunday from their home.

Parents, I understand enrolling your child in a new school is a big decision. Some are concerned that Jacksonville Classical Academy is brand new school with no established reputation. We are one of over 20 successful Hillsdale Barney Charter School Initiative schools. More than 90% of these BCSI graduates go on to a 4-year college or university, double the national rate!



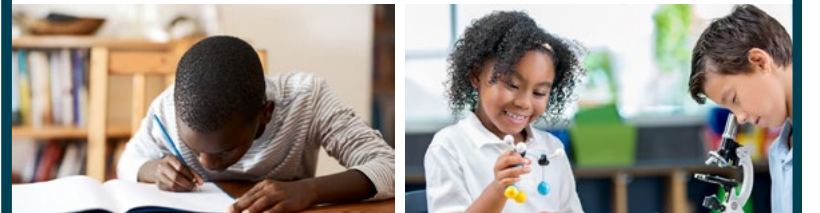
Dr. David Withun
Head of School

Another uncertainty for parents is the possible disruption to their children's schedules and social lives by transitioning to a new school. However, I am particularly excited about JXC's first year. Since all students are new to the school, no student will feel left out.

Seats are available in K-6 right now. Get in on the ground floor for a world-class education in a state-of-the-art facility with expert faculty members! We add a grade each year so your children can attend one school through 12th grade. A waitlist is imminent and this rare opportunity will cease. Get off the fence, **The Time to Enroll is Now.** All the best, *Dr. Withun*

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THE BOLLES SCHOOL



Anne Ruperto – Co-Valedictorian

Ruperto intends to take a gap year to explore internship and research opportunities before attending Harvard University. She has a long list of academic honors – too many to mention here – but a few include National Merit Scholar, National AP Scholar, and the U.S. Presidential Scholarship, the Carter Stubbs Drake Goad Award by earning five or more gold medals on the National Latin Exam, and eight first places at the Florida Junior Classical League Regional Latin Forum. For community service, Ruperto logged more than 100 hours volunteering at the Museum of Science and History. She also served MaliVai Washington Youth Foundation and the Greek Orthodox Youth Association. The only girl on her all-boys travel ice hockey team, she was captain when it placed third in the state championship. A two-time team qualifier for the USA Hockey Girls Nationals, she received Most Improved Player and Hardest Working Player laurels at ProAmbitions Hockey Camp at Boston University.



Rishi Misra – Co-Valedictorian

Misra was accepted to Princeton, Yale, University of Chicago, The Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania, and Duke, but finally settled on Yale, where he will pursue his interest in the life sciences, business, philosophy, and ethics. At Bolles, he was president of the National Honor Society, president of the Bolles Environmental Club, a pancreatic cancer researcher at the Mayo Clinic's Cell Adhesion and Metastasis Laboratory for two years, regional vice president of the Florida Junior Classical League, played soccer for both Bolles and the Jacksonville Armada. He placed first in the undergraduate research competition at ASCB| EMBO, world's largest cell-biology conference, where he was the only high school student among college undergraduates and medical students. A National Merit Scholarship recipient, he received five gold medals or perfect scores on the National Latin Exam. A finalist at the 2020 Regeneron International Science & Engineering Fair, he and has published cancer research in MCoC, an international cell-biology journal.



Yash Gulani – Salutatorian

Accepted at Brown University, Gulani plans on studying public health and economics on a pre-med track. At Bolles, he served as president of his class all four years. He was also president of the Latin Club and Latin Honors Society. Apart from school, he was heavily involved in his local Indian community's youth committee. "Since the sixth grade up until now, I have met so many teachers and fellow students who have impacted my life in so many ways. In response to the Coronavirus, it has been difficult being unable to live out what was supposed to be the best days of our high school careers. Missing events such as sporting events, prom, and honor society inductions have put a damper on the year for sure, but above all the health of myself and my fellow peers comes first. I know we will get through this even stronger and find a way to celebrate our achievements."

BISHOP JOHN J. SNYDER HIGH SCHOOL



Abigail Wilson – Valedictorian

First in her class, Wilson is graduating with a 4.429 GPA and will attend the University of Florida next fall, where she will study biology and health sciences. In high school, she has served as president of the National Honor Society and was also a member of the English National Honor Society, Mu Alpha Theta National Math Honor Society, Rho Kappa National History Honor Society, the Science National Honor Society and the Spanish National Honor Society. "While the end of this year has certainly not been 'normal,' with us missing out on prom and grad bash, I still am thankful that we have the opportunity to graduate in person and see our friends one last time. In a way, I've actually enjoyed this time, because I feel online schooling better prepares me for the college-setting, and it makes being able to graduate with my friends all the more special."



Michael Baugh – Co-Salutatorian

Boasting a 4.411 GPA, Baugh will be on his way to the University of Florida next fall and is planning to major in chemical engineering. At Bishop Snyder, he was a member of the National Honor Society, Mu Alpha Theta National Math Honor Society, Rho Kappa National History Honor Society, the Science National Honor Society, and the Spanish National Honor Society. "The last quarter of senior year, the material felt faster paced yet less significant," he said. "I guess it did not seem as important with other worries in minds and finals out of the question."



Sarah Kersten – Co-Salutatorian

Committed to St. Mary's College in Notre Dame, Indiana, next fall where she will study nursing, Kersten shares Salutatorian honors with a 4.411 grade point average. In addition to memberships in the National Honor Society, English Honor Society, Mu Alpha Theta National Math Honor Society, Rho Kappa National History Honor Society and the Spanish National Honor Society, Kersten was secretary for the school's Student Government Association. She was also the 2020 recipient of the Cardinal Club Student Athlete Award and was on Snyder's volleyball and soccer teams. "Having the final months of my senior year with my classmates stripped away was unanticipated and difficult to grapple with. As graduation approached, I realized the Class of 2020 has accomplished so much. It now comes down to taking this experience with us as we move forward, learning from it, and striving to accomplish even more in the future."

CONTINUED ON PAGE 41

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BISHOP KENNY HIGH SCHOOL



Kathleen Yarborough – Valedictorian

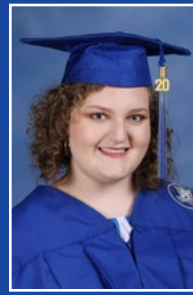
Headed to University of Florida next fall where she will major in public relations with an eye toward law school, Yarborough graduated with a 4.55 GPA and earned memberships into the National Honor Society, as well as the Latin Rho Kappa, and Science Honor Societies. She participated in Anchor Club, Catholic Athletes for Christ, and Latin Club. Yarborough achieved honor roll every quarter of her high school career and had straight A's in 11 advanced placement courses and was named AP Scholar with Distinction in 2019 based on her AP exams. She logged more than 200 hours of community service in four years and is involved in her parish church. A gymnast for North Florida Gymnastics, where she is team captain, Yarborough achieved level 10 in the sport and has qualified for state and regional gymnastics competitions. As a member of her school's swimming and diving team, she placed 13th in the state diving competition.



Gabriella Hitti – Salutatorian

Hitti ended the year with a 4.53 GPA and had high honors for all four years at Bishop Kenny. She is a Joe Berg graduate, a National Merit Commended Scholar, a National Hispanic Scholar, member of the National Honor Society, National Latin Honor Society, and earned the AP Scholar Award, the Wofford Scholar Award, and the UNF Diamond Scholarship. She participated in Medical Club, Spanish Club, Science Club, and The Society of St. Vincent de Paul. She will attend the Hicks Honors Program at the University of North Florida as a pre-med chemistry major. "To me, graduating high school is simultaneously nerve-racking and exciting. Sure, we will get to move on we our lives to learn about the actual world, but I will miss all the memories of high school: the excellent teachers, the diverse student body, and the familiarity of the school itself. Many of my favorite memories were made during these four years," she said.

ROBERT E. LEE HIGH SCHOOL



Lauren Hamner – Valedictorian

Graduating with a 4.80 from Lee's Early College Program, Hamner not only received her high school diploma but also her Associate of Arts degree from Florida State College in Jacksonville. During her high school years, she was a member of Lee's bowling team, Bible club, Future Business Leaders of America, the National Honor Society and Mu Alpha Theta Math Honor Society. She was also voted "Most Intelligent," by her senior class. She plans to attend Florida Southern College this fall.



George Hunt – Salutatorian

With a 4.78 GPA and an Associate degree from Florida State College Jacksonville in hand, Hunt is planning to attend Florida Agricultural & Mechanical University this fall. At Lee, he was a member of the Senior Class Council, NJROTC, the track and field team, Future Business Leaders of America, the National Honor Society and the National Technical Honor Society. Popular with his senior class peers, he was also crowned Mr. Robert E. Lee 2019-20 and was voted "Most Intelligent" by the Class of 2020.

DOUGLAS ANDERSON SCHOOL OF THE ARTS



An Tran – Valedictorian

A visual-arts major, Tran will head to the University of Florida to study architecture next fall. At DA, Tran received the following laurels: National Gold Scholastic Art and Writing Award, Scholastics American Visions Nominee, and Arts for Life, MVP Science and Top 10 awards. She accrued 275 hours of community service, and was a member of the National Honor Society, National Arts Honor Society, Robotics Club, Mu Alpha Theta National Math Honor Society, and Marathon High, a running club that prepares members to run a 13.1 half-marathon. "Graduating from DA is rewarding knowing all the effort I put into balancing arts and academics have finally come to fruition. We will not be known as the unlucky class that experienced a pandemic, but the class that stayed resilient, connected, and creative despite the odds. We are the class that overcame a pandemic on our way to academic success."



Samuel Pabon – Salutatorian

As a future University of Central Florida student who plans to major in mechanical engineering, Pabon majored in visual arts at DA and took home several end-of-the-year awards: All-Star Senior, National Merit Finalist, National Merit University of Central Florida Scholarship, AP Chemistry award, Seal of Biliteracy, and Top 10 award. Pabon tallied 300 hours of community service and was a member of the National Honor Society, the National Art Honor Society, Mu Alpha Theta National Math Honor Society, Rho Kappa National History Honor Society, the National Spanish Honor Society, the National Science Honor Society, Robotics Club, Yearbook Club and Marathon High. "Four years of work has prepared me to make my own masterpieces. Besides determination, passion, and proficiency, DA has granted me individuality," he said. "Graduating means there is no mold for my future. I will keep my head up; life is not meant to be a masterpiece, it's a work in progress."

THE EPISCOPAL SCHOOL OF JACKSONVILLE



Ashton Body – Valedictorian

Graduating with a 4.93 GPA, Body plans to attend Harvard next fall with her eye to eventually going to medical school and becoming a surgeon. For the past two years, she has conducted research at the Mayo Clinic through the SPARK program, which is how she completed most of her community service hours. As a freshman and sophomore, she played volleyball for the Eagles, and just took up lacrosse her senior year. "Graduating from Episcopal means a lot to me as it has become such a tight-knit community," she said. "It is such an amazing place where I have been lucky enough to compete in science fairs and learn so much from such a caring and passionate faculty, but also where I could impulsively play lacrosse with my friends for the first time this year. Overall, I am extremely grateful for my time at Episcopal, and I can't wait to see what the future holds!"



Sarah Madison Clark – Salutatorian

Earning a 4.9 GPA, Clark will attend Vanderbilt University where she plans to major in pre-med molecular biology. A member of the Cum Laude Society, National Honor Society, National Chinese Honor Society, National Art Honor Society, Clark received several NEFAA Scholastic Art and Writing Awards. As a freshman she played volleyball, receiving the Coach's Award. As an upperclassman, she was a JV and Varsity cheerleader, and the recipient of the JV Lisa Lampe Rogers Excellence in Cheer Award. For four years, Clark served as an Eagle Ambassador, serving the admission department as tour guide. In the Angels for Allison Club, she was on the Student Leadership Council and co-president as a senior. Clark was Dynasty Club president, and active in community service. Working for the Jacksonville Humane Society, Clark fostered three litters of kittens. She played with children at Nemours Children's Specialty Care and served as a counselor for Beaches Episcopal School summer camp.



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| Appalachian State University | Colorado State University | Guilford College |
| Arizona State University | Columbia College, Chicago | Hampden Sydney College |
| University of Arizona | Columbia University | Harvard College |
| Auburn University | Creighton University | Hawaii Pacific University |
| Ave Maria University | Dartmouth College | High Point University |
| Babson College | Davidson College | Hobart and William Smith Colleges |
| Bard College | Denison University | Howard University |
| Barry University | University of Denver | University of Illinois,
Urbana-Champaign |
| Baylor University | DePaul University | Indiana University, Bloomington |
| Belmont University | DePauw University | University of Iowa |
| Berry College | Earlham College | Ithaca College |
| Birmingham Southern College | Eckerd College | Jacksonville University |
| Bishop's University | Edward Waters College | James Madison University |
| Boston College | Elon University | Kennesaw State University |
| Boston University | Embry Riddle Aeronautical University | University of Kentucky |
| Brown University | Emory University | Lafayette College |
| Butler University | Flagler College | Lake Forest College |
| Cal Poly San Luis Obispo | Florida Atlantic College | Liberty University |
| Cal State San Marcos | Florida Gulf Coast University | Louisiana State University |
| University of California, Davis | Florida Institute of Technology | Loyola University, Chicago |
| University of California, Irvine | Florida International University | Loyola University, New Orleans |
| University of California, San Diego | Florida Southern College | Lynn University |
| University of California, Santa Barbara | Florida State College of Jacksonville | Macalester College |
| Carroll University | Florida State University | Manhattan College |
| University of Central Florida | University of Florida | Mercer University |
| College of Charleston | Fordham University | Miami University (OH) |
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 University of Montana
 Morehouse University
 Mount Allison University
 Muhlenberg College
 North Carolina A&T State University
 University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill
 North Carolina State University
 Northwestern
 University of North Florida
 Northeastern University
 Northern Michigan University
 Nova Southeastern University
 Oglethorpe University
 Oklahoma State University
 University of Oklahoma
 Old Dominion University
 Olivet Nazarene University
 Oregon State University
 Oxford College of Emory University
 Pacific University
 Palm Beach Atlantic University
 University of Pennsylvania
 Penn State University
 Piedmont College
 Presbyterian College
 Purdue University
 Queens University of Charlotte
 University of Rhode Island

Rhodes College
 University of Richmond
 Ringling College of Art & Design
 Roanoke College
 Rollins College
 Roosevelt University
 Samford University
 San Diego State University
 Santa Clara University
 Sante Fe College
 Savannah College of Art & Design
 Sewanee: University of the South
 Skidmore College
 University of South Carolina
 University of South Florida
 University of Southern California
 Southern Methodist University
 St. Thomas University
 Stetson University
 Tallahassee Community College
 University of Tampa
 Temple University
 University of Tennessee, Knoxville
 Texas A&M University
 Texas Christian University
 Texas Wesleyan University
 United State Military Academy,
 West Point
 University of Oregon
 Vanderbilt University
 Virginia Commonwealth University
 Virginia Military Institute

Virginia Tech
 University of Virginia
 Voorhees College
 Wagner College
 Wake Forest University
 Washington & Lee University
 Washington College
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 College of William and Mary
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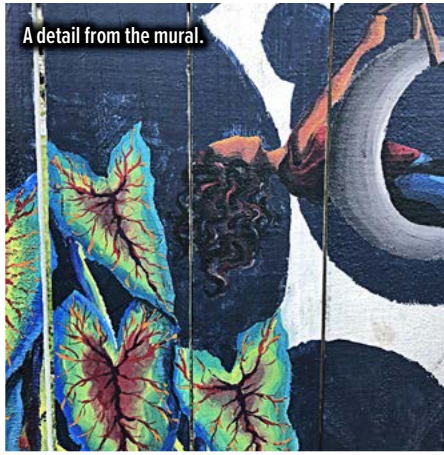


Proud as a peacock, mural expands on Talbot Street

By Jennifer Edwards
Resident Community News

A group of young artists and Douglas Anderson School of the Arts graduates are teaming up to make Avondale a little more beautiful. Among them are Masseal Outley, Bryn Glennon, Hanna Hadzic, Corey Kreisel, Ramses Allen, and Jamie Shoemaker, all of whom have taken on a project to expand the peacock mural at Talbot Avenue and Park Street. The artists are funding their public art through Kickstarter, said Ron Rothberg of Peacock and Park Studios, which is located near the mural.

The installation is spearheaded by Corey Kriesel and Ramses Allen, who are taking an active role in bringing art to public places. The goal of the installation is to enhance the neighborhood and bring people together through art. The mural expands on the colorful, spread feathers of a peacock, created in 2017, according to the Kickstarter page called Avondale Mural. The feathers create the canvas and



Masseal Outley at work, crafting public art.



Masseal Outley, Bryn Glennon (standing), Hanna Hadzic, Corey Kreisel, Ramses Allen and Jamie Shoemaker have taken on a mural project on Talbot Avenue.

the backdrop for “a bold dive into a new world,” Kriesel wrote of the project.

“We don’t know exactly where we will land, but we put our faith in art, nature and the belief that every dive we face in life will be met with a feathery embrace, that every challenge and storm is an opportunity to weather it with dogged perseverance, grace and beauty,” he said. Near the end of May, the Kickstarter page had surpassed its \$800 goal by \$166. The artists expected to be done by early June.

Readers become leaders thanks to free books

Thanks to the PTA at West Riverside Elementary, sponsoring families and READ USA, every student at the historic elementary school will have plenty of free books to read this summer.

“Readers are Leaders!” That is the usual call and response heard this time of year at book fairs hosted by a local nonprofit READ USA. The organizations’ mission, to expand book ownership for students and spread the joy of reading, is usually promoted by book fairs strategically hosted at the end of the school year to encourage reading over the summer to help students maintain academic gains.

When the pandemic shut down schools and libraries across the county, the nonprofit quickly pivoted to ensure access to books for every student attending a Title 1 school in Duval County. Partnering with Duval County Public Schools and Scholastic Books, READ USA launched a virtual marketplace.

Thanks to the generosity of the West Riverside Elementary PTA and several



Maggie and Joey Caron hold up their free books

families, enough money was raised to bring the program to the school this year. Every student got to choose 3 titles to add to their home library. All books were shipped directly to student homes and were met by excitement from students.

Minecraft and car-dines offered at Riverside Avenue Christian Church

Although it has been offering virtual worship at 11 a.m. each Sunday on Facebook since the Coronavirus shutdown began, Riverside Avenue Christian Church has been finding fun ways for its youth to connect virtually and in-person while ensuring everyone stays safe.

“Our youth and children have a Minecraft realm that our Director of Youth Ministries facilitates. We will also be playing a church-wide game of “car-dines” (similar to the game “sardines”) where families will begin in the church parking lot, one car will hide in the Riverside Avondale neighborhood, and the other cars will try to find their car. Once found, they will gather around it until the last person gets there and then we begin

again. We are excited to find a way to come together without having any physical contact. We are also hoping that Lightning McQueen will show up!” said Rev. Penelope Erin Dickey, senior pastor.

In offering virtual worship each Sunday, Riverside Avenue Christian continues to record segments of the service from the participants’ homes to model appropriate “safer at home” behavior, Dickey said. “We will continue to follow the recommendations of the CDC and will wait to do in person worship until the benchmarks for reopening have been met such as 14 days of declining cases and widespread testing. Even once we are in person, we will make modifications to reduce contact,” she said.

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Week 3 - June 15-19
Week 4 - June 22-26
Week 5 - July 6-10
Week 6 - July 13-17
Week 7 - July 20-24
Week 8 - July 27-31

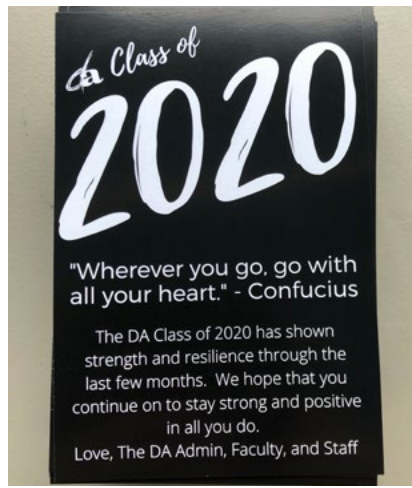
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Keeping with tradition at Douglas Anderson

Due to COVID-19, the long-standing tradition of having the senior class parade out of school on its last day, was not possible so the faculty modified the ritual to fit the times. DA hosted a car parade for its seniors, who decorated their cars and turned into the bus loop to start the parade. Each member of the Class of 2020 got a special gift from the school's administration, faculty, and staff before driving through the bus loop with their teachers cheering them on. The parade was live streamed on Facebook so families could watch. Of the 296 students graduating from Jacksonville's arts magnet this year, 250 participated in the parade, said DA Principal Melanie Hammer.



Sign congratulating the senior class at Douglas Anderson School of the Arts



DA Principal Melanie Hammer hands a gift to Abby Webber, a member of the senior class



Senior gifts from the DA administration, faculty and staff



Jennifer Turbyfill, chair DA Dance Department; Rhonda Stampalia, Christa Sylla and Kathy Keel



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St. Johns seniors were accepted to the following colleges and universities:

- | | | | | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|
| American University | Eckerd College | Georgia Southern University | Ohio University | Stetson University | University of Nevada (Las Vegas) |
| Appalachian State University | Edward Waters College | Hampton University | Old Dominion University | Stony Brook University | University of New Haven |
| Arizona State University | Elon University | Indiana University | Oxford College of Emory University | Texas Christian University | University of North Carolina (Chapel Hill) |
| Auburn University | Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University | Ithaca College | Pace University | The University of Alabama | University of North Florida |
| Baylor University | Flagler College | Jacksonville University | Pennsylvania State University | The University of Tampa | University of Notre Dame |
| Belmont University | Florida Atlantic University | Lynn University | Piedmont College | The University of Texas at Austin | University of Pennsylvania |
| Berry College | Florida Gulf Coast University | Michigan State University | Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute | The University of West Florida | University of Providence |
| Bethune-Cookman University | Florida International University | Middle Tennessee State University | Rocky Mountain College | University of Central Florida | University of South Carolina |
| Brown University | Florida Southern College | Mississippi State University | Rollins College | University of Colorado Boulder | University of South Florida |
| California State University (Long Beach) | Florida State University | Montana State University | Rutgers University | University of Connecticut | University of Virginia |
| Carroll College | Fordham University | Montana State University (Billings) | Saint Mary's University | University of Florida | Valdosta State University |
| Clemson University | Fort Valley State University | Neumont College of Computer Science | Samford University | University of Maryland | Vanderbilt University |
| College of Charleston | George Mason University | New College of Florida | Seton Hall University | University of Massachusetts (Amherst) | Wake Forest University |
| Colorado State University | George Washington University | North Carolina State University | St. John's University | University of Miami | Washington College |
| Cornerstone University | Georgetown University | Northwestern University | St. Francis Xavier University | University of Mississippi | Washington State University |

Episcopal celebrates uncrowded 50th commencement ceremony



There was no crowding when 143 seniors and their families attended graduation ceremonies at the Episcopal School of Jacksonville May 23 outside on the school's River field. Each student and guest practiced social distancing and were seated at least six feet away from each other. It was the school's 50th commencement ceremony, because when students first attended the school in 1967, sophomores were the oldest group. Each year, the school has added a grade making the first graduation class to matriculate in 1970.

Social distancing was practiced during the Episcopal School of Jacksonville's 50th Commencement ceremony May 23 on the school's River Field.

Three from Stanton named as National Merit Scholar finalists

Three students from Jacksonville's historic neighborhoods have been recognized as National Merit Scholar finalists.

Sarah Penland of Riverside and Kaylee Conrad and Andrew Lopez from San Marco were among 24 students at Stanton and 15,000 nationwide to be considered for a National Merit Scholarship.

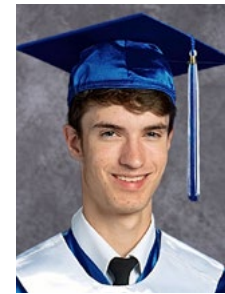
The National Merit® Scholarship Program is an academic competition for recognition and scholarships that began in 1955. Approximately 1.6 million high school students enter the program each year. High school students can

become eligible for the program by first taking the Preliminary SAT (PSAT)/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (NMQT). Approximately 15,000 semifinalists advance to finalist status. Within the finalist group, winners are chosen for the Merit Scholarship based on their abilities, skills, and accomplishments. About 7,500 finalists will be selected to receive a scholarship between the beginning of March and mid-June.

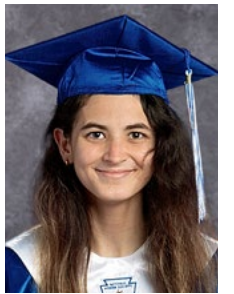
Lopez is planning to attend Wharton School of Business at the University of Pennsylvania in the fall. Conrad and Penland plan to attend the University of Florida.



Sarah Penland



Andrew Lopez



Kaylee Conrad

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1261 CHALLEN AVE - \$639,000
5 BR / 4 BA / 2,811 sqft.

Downstairs Master BR, Cook's kitchen with high end appliances gas cooktop , 42" cabinets and large open area perfect for entertaining. Gas fireplace in family room, 3BR/2BA up plus bonus area. totally fenced yard with 2 car attached garage. Hardwood floors throughout. This home is a true gem and move in ready.



2005 HERSCHEL ST 1 - \$339,500
2 BR / 2 BA / 1,600 sqft.

Large first floor unit in a beautifully restored classic building in 5 Points. Truly a gem from the original proportions and layout to the fabulous renovation. Kitchen has granite and stainless appliances, formal living room w/gas fireplace, french doors to private patio. Formal dining room plus office/sitting room off master suite.



13140 RIVERGATE TRAIL E - \$289,900
4 BR / 2 BA / 2,023 sqft.

Beautiful all brick home in the heart of Mandarin! The living room features vaulted ceiling, a wood burning brick fireplace, and French doors that open to a screened-in patio. Decorative dentil crown molding in dining room. Kitchen with breakfast nook has granite countertops and stainless steel appliances. No HOA and new roof in 2019!



8104 SUMMER BAY CT - \$174,900
2 BR / 2 BA / 1 HB / 1,248 sqft.

Gated community townhome located in Summerfield at Baymeadows, close to UNF, FSCJ, Town Center and more. Spacious kitchen, indoor laundry, screened patio, crown molding, chair rail, tiled back splash in master shower, upgraded carpet, 16" tile in wet areas, stainless steel appliances, private bathrooms! New Roof 2020. Seller to provide warranty.



2263 ST JOHNS AVE - \$950,000
6 BR / 3 BA / 1 HB / 4,471 sqft.

This Spanish style home with elevated front porch has river views and breezes. The entry hall has pocket doors leading to ample living, kitchen and dining rooms in addition to downstairs office/5th bedroom and half bath. Recently renovated guest loft with full kitchen located above a two car garage.



2449 PIRATE CT - \$435,000
3 BR / 2 BA / 2,308 sqft.

Heated and cooled saltwater pool and private canal access with dock and boat lift, navigable to the ocean! The interior of this home has a formal family room, dining room, living room with fireplace off the kitchen. Enjoy the screened in Florida room perfect for entertaining.



2111 POST ST - \$399,000
4 BR / 1 BA / 1 HB / 2,376 sqft.

1912 Prairie style historic home. 3 fireplaces, pocket doors, 1 year old roof with architectural shingles, zoned HVAC, new kitchen with butlers pantry, inground pool, hardwood floors, original fixtures. This was on the 2009 Tour of Homes. Blocks from the St Johns River, 5 points, Riverside and Memorial Parks.



4702 RAMONA BLVD - \$312,000
4 BR / 3 BA / 2,115 sqft.

Main house has historic charm with modern conveniences with original hardwood floors, fireplace, updated kitchen and baths, expanded closets, and open front porch. The guest house features 1 bedroom, 1 bath, kitchen, large living area and closet. Full sized extra lot could easily accompany a pool, private garden or playground.



4242 ORTEGA BLVD 16 - \$225,000
2 BR / 2 BA / 2,000 sqft.

Spacious Upstairs Condo in the Heart of Ortega. Features large open living spaces, Living - Dining Combo, parquet flooring in the sunroom area and kitchen, carpet in bedrooms and living spaces, bright and airy enclosed sunroom, stainless appliances, lots of storage, overlooks the courtyard, and flexibility for a 3rd Bedroom. Located near Roosevelt Blvd, Ortega Village, NAS and Stockton Park.



2206 OAK ST A - \$1,395 (Residential)
1 BR / 1 BA / 800 sqft. / \$1,395 security deposit

RIVERSIDE 2ND FLR FURNISHED APARTMENT FOR RENT. Triplex on corner of Oak - Large living/dining combo, new kitchen (R/R/DW), CHA, hardwood floors, approx. 600 sf, shared washer/dryer, sec system, storage, \$1395 sec dep, 1 year lease, no pets, non-smoking, water included [OV gg/fm] available July 1. FULLY FURNISHED UNIT!



2034 HERSCHEL ST - \$1,475 (Residential)
2 BR / 1 BA / 1,224 sqft. / \$1,450 security deposit

RIVERSIDE 2ND FLOOR APARTMENT FOR RENT. 2 BR, 1BA, living room, dining room, kitchen (R/R), NEW CHA, washer/dryer, large screened Porch, approx 1250 sf, private entrance, den w/built-in bookshelves, wood floors and carpet, non-smoking, 1 year lease, no pets [AVK sh/fm] available now



4257 TIMUQUANA RD - \$1,800 (Residential)
4 BR / 2 BA / 1,913 sqft. / \$1,900 security deposit

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