

Resident

COMMUNITY NEWS



Neighborhood parks provide perfect moments of peace, tranquility

In the ongoing season of COVID-19, the great outdoors provided friends Emily Bellock, Lindsey McNalty and Kelly Lamoureux time to enjoy an August sunset in Seminole Park with their furry friends Millie, Jameson, Darla, Finley, Bourbon and Fiddich. The 'Under the Table Gang' gathers frequently to let the dogs dip into the Ortega River, play countless games of fetch, all the while providing a socially distant outing among friends.



RAP, city officials discuss removal of 75 trees from Willowbranch Park

By Lilla Ross
Resident Community News

Many Riverside and Avondale residents were shocked to learn recently that the city project to restore the Willowbranch Creek canal could mean the removal of 75 trees from Willowbranch Park, which prompted Riverside Avondale Preservation to seek a meeting with city officials.

The plans for the canal restoration along Willowbranch Creek between St. Johns Avenue and Olga Place were drawn up in 2018. The goal of the project is to shore up existing bulkheads, combat erosion, and decrease the chance of flooding.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 9



Denise Brennan Fleming

Plexiglass and masks, the new norm at school

Donning a mask, Denise Brennan Fleming greets students from behind a wall of plexiglass at Riverside Presbyterian Day School. Students from throughout Jacksonville's historic districts headed back to their classrooms in mid-August while taking precautions for COVID-19.

SEE MORE BACK TO SCHOOL, PAGE 42

PASTRY CHEF WINS SWEET PRIZE

Foodies throughout Jacksonville's historic neighborhoods were able to cheer one of their own when a pastry chef from a Riverside restaurant group took home top honors and a \$10,000 prize on the Food Channel's prestigious show, "Chopped: Sweets."

Rebecca Reed, a pastry chef for the Black Sheep Restaurant Group, which encompasses Restaurant Orsay in Avondale, Black Sheep in 5 Points, and Bellwether restaurant downtown, flew to New York to compete against three other contestants on the show March 4, just days before the city was shut down for COVID-19. The program aired locally Aug. 25.

Going head-to-head against her competition, Reed was asked to whip up delicious tropical-



themed desserts within 30 to 45 minutes from a basket with four mystery ingredients.

Reed holds a Master of Pastry Arts degree with honors from New York City's French Culinary Institute and has called Jacksonville home for the past eight years. Prior to working with the Black Sheep Restaurant Group, she was a pastry chef at Matthew's Restaurant and Rue Saint Marc in San Marco.

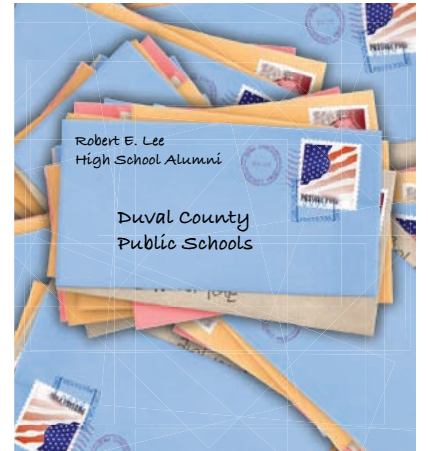


Sunflowers cheer park patrons

Artists Keith Doles and Zac Freeman rest in front of the mural they painted on the Park Street bridge in Willowbranch Park Aug. 22.

READ MORE, PAGE 38

Alumni fights school renaming



Lee alumni have formed a political committee to fight the Duval County School Board as it aims to rename Robert E. Lee High School.

READ MORE, PAGE 38

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Letters TO THE Editor

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The Resident, a focus of good news in the community

Three years ago, when I joined St. John's Cathedral as director of marketing and communications, I contacted *The Resident Community News* about taking out a monthly advertisement. The Cathedral is downtown, outside of the delivery area of the newspapers, but many of our parishioners live in these areas. Advertising in the paper has been a great fit for us. The paper not only features news about our community, but it's also the one paper that people tell me they read from cover to cover each month.

On the editorial side, the reporters at *The Resident Community News* have done a fabulous job featuring news from the Cathedral about people and businesses in the communities that surround downtown Jacksonville. When we hosted a luncheon to celebrate the lifelong friendship of three Cathedral members who have shaped our community, Seth Williams and Marcia Hodgson came to cover the event. Marcia wrote a standout piece, "Celebrating Sisterhood through Philanthropy and Community Leadership" (Jan. 2020). She also has covered events at the Cathedral Bookstore featuring partnerships with Jacksonville nonprofits including Rethreaded, Angels for Allison, City Rescue Mission and the North Florida School for Special Education.

In addition, as a Riverside resident, I thank you for your excellent work and your continued commitment to focusing on the good news in our community!

Nancy Purcell
Riverside

Reader congratulates *The Resident* on 13 successful years

Congratulations to *The Resident Community News* on 13 years of existence! Your monthly newspaper is the third and most successful journalistic publication of historic Jacksonville. During the 70s, we had *The West Side Story*, and around the 80s and 90s, there was *The Express*.

In January 2007, *The Resident* published its inaugural edition, which covered news in the Westside historic neighborhoods of Riverside, Avondale, Ortega, and Murray Hill. The following year, the paper began publishing an additional Southside edition, concentrating on San Marco, San José, and St. Nicholas. This two-edition reach presently covers the central Jacksonville neighborhoods south of Downtown near the St. John's River.

In a time when daily newspapers are losing money to the Internet, *The Resident* is bucking the trend by specializing in historic neighborhood news, sponsored by a healthy amount of school, business, charity, and real estate advertising. The story themes are impressively wide in scope. They include art, health, music, business, politics, religion, education, city projects, local history, resident opinions, civic organizations, and architectural preservation.

The slogan of *The Resident* reflects its key to success: "Fiercely local news...fiercely loyal readers." Rather than resurrecting the general, county-wide coverage of the disappearing daily, *The Resident* concentrates on the historic neighborhoods of the city's center. Such hyper-local news on a monthly basis allows for more in-depth and informative reporting of local issues. This specialization is part of a growing trend towards niche journalism.

So, I propose a toast to the continued success of *The Resident*. Our neighborhoods have dreamed of having a viable, local publication since the Disco Age. Now, with *The Resident*, it looks like the third time's the charm.

All the best!
Marcos Protheroe
Avondale



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Resident disputes need for mandated vaccinations

In response to the letter in the current issue of the San Marco *Resident* titled "Children need wellness appointments, vaccinations," I wonder if the good doctors are aware of the unexpected benefits of the drop in these visits and the accompanying vaccinations. It seems that, according to CDC statistics listed in "Lessons from the Lockdown: Why are so many fewer children dying? A White Paper from Health Choice by Amy Becker and Mark Blaxill (June 18, 2020), "amid near universal lockdowns, roughly 30% fewer children died. ... Virtually the entire change came from infants. Somehow, the changing pattern of American life during the lockdowns has been saving the lives of hundreds of infants, over 200 per week." And later in the paper, the authors reach the following conclusion: "What no one would have predicted in advance of COVID19 is that the extreme lockdown response has produced a natural experiment that actually calls into question the very actions—widespread, mandated vaccines for all—that the infectious disease and public health community have been pushing for years."

Thanks!
Diane Royal
St. Nicholas

Thanks expressed for Open Doors program

Many difficult funding decisions had to be made by the Florida legislature this year as the COVID-19 pandemic has continued to impact the state's economy. Not all worthy projects received support. A well-earned and deserved thank you goes to Representative Cord Byrd whose sponsorship of the Open Doors Outreach Network ensures continuation of comprehensive services to sex trafficking victims ages 10-24 not only in NE Florida (Duval, Nassau, Clay and St. John's Counties) but in 32 counties overall in areas besieged by the cruelty of traffickers. Byrd's passionate involvement not only in his home base but his statewide view makes a lot of sense since Florida ranks third in

U.S. in human trafficking cases behind only California and Texas (according to the Human Trafficking Hotline).

We are especially proud that the Open Doors program, conceptually developed by the Policy Center and The Children's Campaign and through partnership with Voices for Florida has served 193 survivors since 2017 from Florida's First Coast. Statewide 923 victims have received timely and essential intervention services.

Thank you to Representative Byrd for being an amazing champion. Your support truly makes a difference to NE Florida's and all of Florida's most vulnerable children and young people.

Vicky Basra, president & CEO, Delores Barr Weaver Policy Center
Lawanda Ravoira, president emeritus, Delores Barr Weaver Policy Center
Roy Miller, president & CEO, The Children's Campaign
Linda Alexionok, president & CEO, Voices for Florida
Robyn Metcalf, Open Doors Statewide director, Voices for Florida

Masks are required in all Duval County Public Schools

I just wanted to alert you of a correction that should be made to the article "Uncertainty Haunts Educators," that appeared in both the Riverside and San Marco *Resident Community News*. In this article, it is mentioned that DCPS (Duval County Public Schools) is not requiring masks, but only encouraging them. As a high school teacher, it terrifies me to think that parents and students would be under the impression that masks are not mandatory in an enclosed classroom with 30 other people. If you have a way to make corrections, please update this part of the article.

Thank you,
Jessica Blair

Editor's Note: At the time our reporter, Lilla Ross, contacted DCPS she was referred to the county's reopening plan, which was in the process of being approved by the Duval County School Board and the Department of Education. The plan did not specify that masks would be required, only that they would be provided. The latest policy now specifies that face coverings are required on the school buses and in school. The best way to slow the transmission of COVID-19 in a school setting is to require all staff and students to wear face coverings throughout the day. Kindergarten through second grade students will be issued a clear plastic face shield, which may be used in addition to or instead of a cloth face covering. Students with disabilities or medical conditions that prevent a face covering may also use a clear plastic shield or another reasonable accommodation. Face coverings will not be required in P.E., recess, band, music, and other classes in which the facial covering is an obvious impediment to learning activities.

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The Resident is a monthly newspaper mailed to homeowners in Riverside, Avondale, Ortega, Murray Hill, San Marco, San Jose and St. Nicholas. For advertising information please call 904.388.8839. Editorial submissions are welcome, but subject to editing at the publisher's discretion. Facts and statements expressed in the editorial content are not necessarily those of The Resident. All content is copyrighted and may not be reprinted, copied or reproduced without written permission from the publisher. ©2020. Locally Owned and Operated

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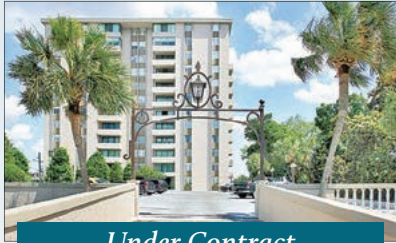
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WALTER WARE
(904) 759-8882



Under Contract

2970 St. Johns Ave. #3B - \$429,000
2BR / 2BA / 1,480 sqft.

Renovated riverfront condo! Timeless kitchen with luxe appliances, marble counters, & wine cooler



New Listing

3520 Point Pleasant Rd - \$2,750,000
5BR / 5BA / 1HBA / 5483 sqft.

Exquisite riverfront estate perched high above the river in San Jose on a 1.98 acre lot.



New Listing

2970 St. Johns Ave #2B - \$325,000
2BR / 2BA / 1,480 sqft.

Beautiful unit with views of the river to the south and east! Pretty wood floors, beautiful moldings and clever features.



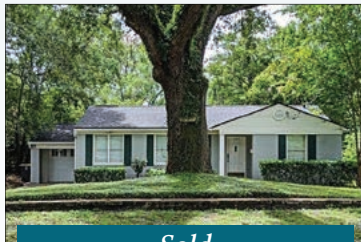
ELIZABETH MEUX
(904) 704-1576



Sold

36 Village Walk Dr.
2BR / 2BA / 1HBA / 2,213 sqft.

Village Walk at Sawgrass patio home in a fantastic location!



Sold

1724 Geraldine Dr.
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Ortega

4545 Iroquois Ave. - \$439,000
3BR / 2BA / 2,047 sqft.

Gutted & renovated! Brand new open kitchen, enlarged family room, renovated laundry room. Great master suite.



Sold

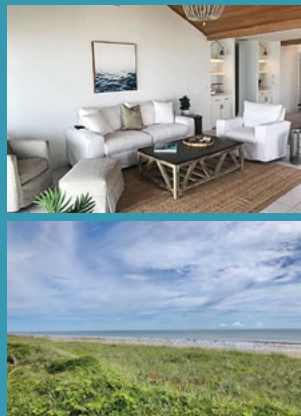
4828 Ortega Blvd.
3BR / 3BA / 1HBA / 3,041 sqft.

Beautiful home with access & frontage on Arapahoe. Interior just repainted, gorgeous upgrades since last sale.



TOM SANDLIN
(904) 237-0458

Featured Listing



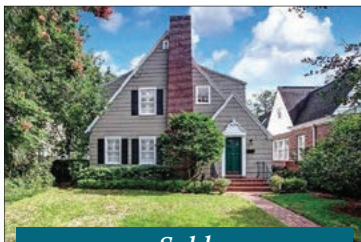
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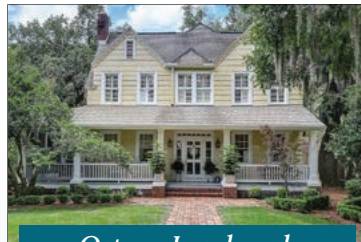
TED MILLER
(904) 463-1731



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3708 Hedrick St.
3BR / 2BA / 1HBA / 2,111 sqft.

Great new price + new roof, wiring, and sod! Immaculate home with income potential 1/1 garage apt.



Ortega Landmark

4612 Ortega Blvd. - \$1,299,000
4BR / 4BA / 3,448 sqft.

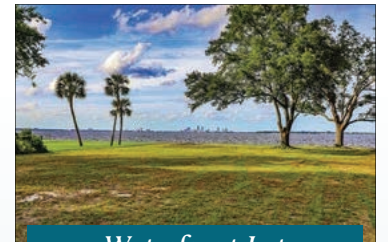
An Ortega icon! Beautifully updated to honor the historical character of the home while bringing it to the 21st century, this is a truly rare find.



Sold

5017 Ortega Forest Dr.
4BR / 3BA / 1HBA / 3,850 sqft.

2-owner Clyde Harris custom home on a corner lot.



Waterfront Lot

3855 Timuquana Rd. - \$1,299,000
1.25 Acre Lot

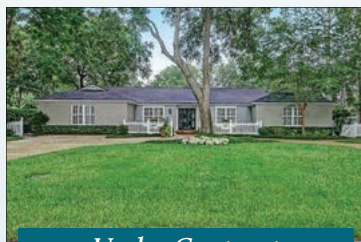
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4BR / 3BA / 3,022 sqft.

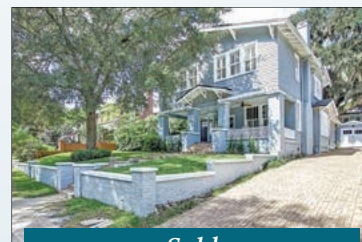
Incredible opportunity next to the TCC driving range! Renovated home with split bedrooms, Cronk Duch-designed pool.



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Rare opportunity in Ortega Terrace! Beautifully updated on a manicured .5 acre lot with 3-car garage.



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City bond sale generates record \$245 million for capital improvements

The City of Jacksonville recently sold \$245 million worth of municipal bonds at an average interest rate of 2.22%, a new record for the City, Mayor Lenny Curry's office announced Aug. 21. Within this bond issue, the City was also able to save taxpayers more than \$25 million by refinancing higher rate bonds at substantially lower rates.

These actions allow the City to keep costs low, increasing money available for critical priorities, including public safety, infrastructure, libraries, parks and more. Achieving a strong showing in the bond markets may have come as result of Curry's and City Council's commitment to prudent budgeting, reducing debt, strengthening reserves, and reforming pensions in recent years.

"I am thrilled that citizens are reaping the benefits of having a fiscally-responsible government and encouraged to continue working toward further improving Jacksonville's financial health," said Curry. "The low rates will help us conserve our resources to address needs across the city. I am thankful for the leadership of my administration, as well as the partnership and foresight of the members of City Council."

Interim City Council President, Sam Newby agreed. "It is a great day for the city of Jacksonville. Not only have we saved the taxpayer over \$25 million, we are generating funds to improve our citizens' overall way of life," Newby said. "I am eager to see these dollars spent to improve public safety, infrastructure, libraries, parks, etc., in our most underserved communities. We have been discussing the need to improve these components of our city. Now, we have a jump-start in making happen. Congratulations to Joey Greive, Randall Barnes and Paul Barrett and the finance team for their tireless efforts in this endeavor."

Bonds are used to assist with funding capital development projects in neighborhoods around the city.

City Council approves zoning for Riverside Village

By Lilla Ross
Resident Community News

The Jacksonville City Council approved the rezoning of four parcels on Riverside Avenue near Memorial Park that will allow the development of Riverside Village, with two restaurants and several residential units.

The property, owned by Dr. Frank Schiavone, was rezoned as a Planned Unit Development (PUD) to allow for a liquor license for one of the restaurants. The buildings are currently vacant.

District 14 City Council member Randy DeFoor introduced an amendment capping the seating at both restaurants at 260.

With four buildings within the PUD, the plan is to turn Building 1, a two-story yellow brick building, into seven residential units, Building 2 into a 200-seat upscale restaurant with 45 seats outdoors, Building 3 into a 60-seat restaurant with no outdoor seating, and Building 4 into a duplex.

The original plan called for two restaurants and office space, but since the economic fallout from the Coronavirus pandemic, Schiavone decided to turn the office space into residential.

Riverside Village, though welcomed in principle, raised issues for a number of Riverside residents who live in the vicinity.



Building 1, a two-story yellow brick building will be turned into seven residential units.

They were concerned about traffic, density, parking, noise, and pedestrian safety.

Schiavone's attorney, Paul Harden, had several meetings with Riverside Avondale Preservation (RAP) to work out the issues and agreed to reduce the number of seats in the restaurants and shorten the hours of operation. He also agreed to not amplify music outdoors or use the property as a bar or night club.

Outdoor music was of particular concern to people who live in condos and single-family residences adjacent to the property.

Harden cited River & Post down the street as a comparable development, but resident Mary Jarratt said it doesn't have adjacent residential.

"All the neighbors want an appropriate infill. This could be advantageous infill if it

is well done. I think it'll be popular if it's done without excess intensity," Jarrett said at the Aug. 18 Land Use and Zoning Committee meeting. "The more seats, the more pressure on parking and traffic and people walking across the street with a blind curve."

Warren Jones, executive director of RAP, said the project is of major concern to the neighborhood.

"We advocate compatible land use, but this is a neighborhood. It's a sensitive project because it's across the street from Memorial Park," Jones said.

Retired architect John Montgomery said he was "vehemently opposed" to the project because it is "out of balance with the surrounding community and will create an unwelcome bottleneck and endless circling for parking."

Traffic and parking were also a concern for residents like Dennis Harkins, who live on side roadways like Lancaster Street.

"I believe the restaurants could be a benefit if they are an appropriate size. It would be nice to do this within the existing zoning with a variance."

"Lancaster is a small street with limited parking," Harkins said. "This project changes the nature of the daytime community to a night-time operation with additional strains on parking."

Post Street brewery approved by City Council

By Lilla Ross
Resident Community News

The Post-Modern Brewery project was approved last month by the City Council and final plans are being drawn up to renovate the long-vacant building into a craft brewery.

Home brewers Andrew Suslak and Brandon Merkle, owners of the property at 2951 Post Street, hope to open the brewery and taproom next spring.

The 1,400-square-foot building, built in 1935, was once part of a chain of Pure Oil gas stations before being turned into the Purple Petunia, a flower shop, which went out of business 20 years ago.

Jack Shad, agent for the owners, said the building needs to be completely gutted.

"It still has a fuse box and it's never had central heat or air," he said. "They're going to have to replace the wiring and plumbing. It's going to take a while."

But when the brewery opens it will have 64 seats with 24 outside. Nearby residents asked that outdoor sales be stopped by 10 p.m. and that there be no amplified music outdoors, which the owners agreed to.

"We worked closely with RAP and addressed almost all their concerns. The neighborhood was very supportive and it was approved unanimously by the Land Use and Zoning Committee and the City Council," Shad said.

"This is a tough time for craft breweries. The hope is that by the time they finish up we're in a better situation regarding being completely open," he said.

Craft breweries around Florida have been closed except for take-out since June 26 when the state banned on-site consumption of alcohol because of the coronavirus. They have been fighting the closure, which does not apply to bars that serve food, but Gov. Ron DeSantis has stood firm on the decision.

Several Jacksonville craft brewers predicted that if the ban stays in place much longer, a number of breweries will go out of business.

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Deadline nears for developers to determine future of The District

By Lilla Ross
Resident Community News

San Marco's Peter Rummell and Michael Munz, partners in Elements Development, have until Sept. 30 to make a decision about the future of their 30-acre Southbank project The District.

First unveiled in 2014, The District is an ambitious proposal to transform the riverfront land formerly occupied by JEA's Southside Generating Station into a multi-use development of residential, retail, office, and hotel space, enhanced by a marina and waterfront park.

In 2018, the City Council approved a redevelopment agreement that would give Elements \$56 million in property tax rebates. The rebates, called Recaptured Enhanced Value or REV grants, are 75% of the property taxes and are dependent on how much of The District is built and added to the tax rolls.

The city committed to paying \$26.5 million to construct 3.5 acres of park space, a 1,900-foot Riverwalk extension with bulkhead, a boardwalk trail, 100 parking spaces and three road extensions.

In 2018, the projected completion date was the end of 2022.

More than once, Munz said that ground-breaking was only a few months away. But so far, not a shovel of dirt has been turned.

"To say this has been a complicated, expensive, and time-consuming process would be an understatement," Munz said. "We have spent more than any other private sector developer in terms of the planning stages to move this 30-acres forward as a mixed-use master planned project in downtown."

Munz says that so far Elements has spent \$9 million on the project to build a multi-use development that would include 950 residents, 147 hotel rooms 134,000 square feet of retail, 200,000 square feet of office space and a 125-slip marina.

The much-anticipated project has been mired in delays and obstacles.

Development rights were entwined with the Northbank and had to be untangled. The state had to sign off on JEA's \$20 million environmental cleanup of the former Southside Generating Station. An unconventional financing scheme that generated controversy was withdrawn and a more conventional one proposed.

"No one is more motivated than us to move forward in some form and fashion for all the time and money spent."

— Michael Munz, Elements Development

The latest delays occurred this year. January 13 was the deadline for the company to issue bonds to finance the infrastructure, transfer property to the city, and submit the permits for the horizontal construction.

But on Jan. 9, Rummell sent the Downtown Investment Authority a letter saying that "due to the drawn-out marketing process and the fact that this is a complicated mixed-use urban project, we find ourselves in a position of not being able to meet the upcoming deadline."

DIA CEO Lori Boyer granted them an extension until April 13.

But in March, the Coronavirus pandemic hit, bringing the city and the economy to a standstill. Elements requested a suspension of performance deadlines, citing a "force majeure" provision.

Boyer started the clock again Sept. 1, citing the resumption of business activity. She has the authority to grant Elements another 90-day extension if they can show they are making progress. They have until Sept. 30 to do it.

If they can't make the case, the redevelopment incentives approved by the city in 2018 will expire. Since Elements owns the

property, it could seek another redevelopment agreement with the city or do something else entirely, Boyer said.

Boyer said she hopes Elements can demonstrate that it is making progress because the city stands to get four acres of riverfront property for the Riverwalk extension and park.

"There's a real public interest to getting that property," she said. "There is a value to keeping it alive. I'm not sure there's a lot to be gained by a termination."

Munz said they have every intention of continuing the project and that much has been accomplished.

Engineering design has been completed for the horizontal infrastructure that includes the bulkhead, parks, roads, parking and landscaping. Permitting is currently in progress.

"We're working diligently to determine the proper next step. COVID-19 is presenting a lot of problem on a lot of levels. We're carefully analyzing where we are and where we need to be," Munz said. "No one is more motivated than us to move forward in some form and fashion for all the time and money spent."

"Due to the drawn-out marketing process and the fact that this is a complicated mixed-use urban project, we find ourselves in a position of not being able to meet the upcoming deadline."

— Peter Rummell, Elements Development







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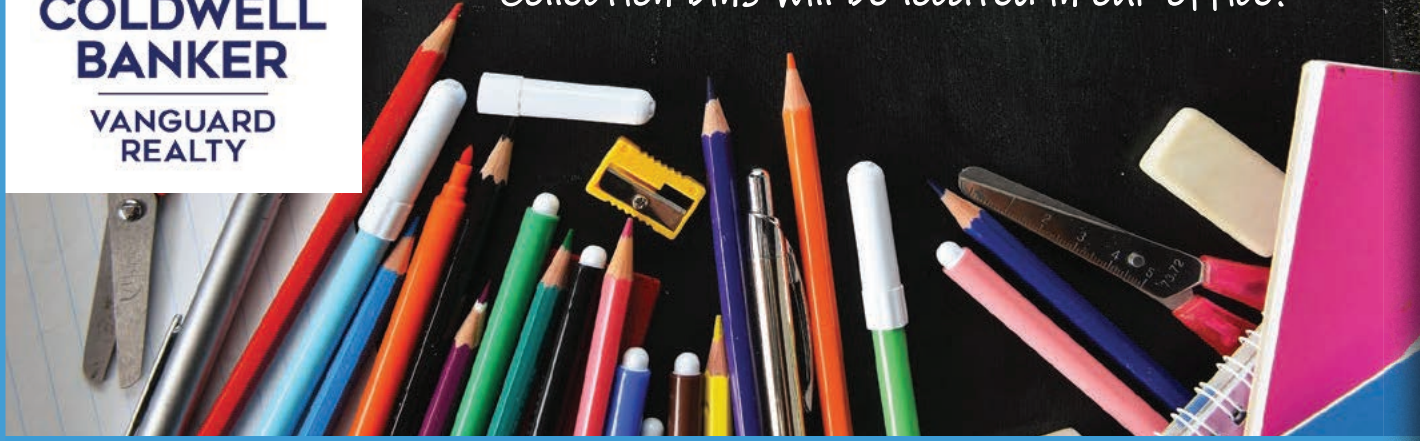






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UNDER CONTRACT

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2375 SEMINOLE RD - \$2,297,000
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1127 N LIBERTY ST - \$389,950
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Ortega store to close as Stein Mart files for bankruptcy

By Marcia Hodgson
Resident Community News

After several years of struggling to find its financial footing, Stein Mart, a discount department store whose headquarters is a fixture on Jacksonville's South Bank, fell victim to the COVID-19, as the pandemic caused it to file for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection Aug. 12.

Included in the bold move is the company's plan to permanently close nearly all of its 281 brick and mortar stores within 30 states in the United States. Included among the closures will be the recently renovated emporium within the Roosevelt Square shopping mall in Ortega. The Roosevelt Mall is currently under construction and in the process of being rebranded as Ortega Park. Located at 4399 Roosevelt Blvd., the store in Ortega is one of five Stein Mart stores in Jacksonville.

The Ortega store, which has been a longtime anchor within the Roosevelt Square Mall, is in the process of closing, according to a sales associate. Everything in the store is 10% off except for fragrances and fine jewelry with some items in the men's department lowered to 30% off, she said, noting the store was completely renovated last year. The store is just beginning to liquidate its merchandise and no date has been set to when it will finally close its doors, she said.

The company filed voluntary petitions for relief under Chapter 11 of the Bankruptcy Code in the United States Bankruptcy Court for the Middle District of Florida - Jacksonville Division.



The Stein Mart store in Ortega

In July 2019, the company received a delisting notice from the Nasdaq Stock Exchange and was given six months to regain compliance. Handicapped with a highly leveraged balance sheet and interest burden stemming from a special dividend issued in its first fiscal quarter of 2015, the company barely turned a profit the next year and operated at a loss in 2017 and 2018 partly due to its inability to attract national brands, manage inventory and keep prices competitive, according to Businesswire.

Stein Mart is also evaluating strategic alternatives including the potential sales of its eCommerce business and related intellectual property, according to a press release.

"The combined effects of a challenging retail environment coupled with the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic have caused significant financial distress on our business," said Hunt Hawkins, chief executive officer of Stein Mart, Inc. "The company has determined that the best strategy to maximize value will be a liquidation of its assets pursuant to an organized going-out-of-business sale. The company lacks sufficient liquidity to continue operating in the ordinary course of business. I would like to thank all of our employees for their dedication and support."



The approach to 5 Points, seen here from Park Street, will change as construction begins Aug. 31 on the streetscapes during the execution of the 5 Points Concept Plan.

Road work commences in 5 Points

By Marcia Hodgson
Resident Community News

A portion of the 5 Points Concept plan, which has been in the pipeline since 2013, is about to become a reality.

Residents and business owners in the 5 Points area of Riverside received notice from the City of Jacksonville in late August that road improvements were slated to begin Aug. 31, weather permitting, and continue until the Spring of 2021.

The scope of the project will include, but is not limited to, a reconstruction of Lomax Street as a one-way street southeast bound between Park and Oak Streets and of the iconic 5 Points intersection where Lomax meets up with Margaret Street and Park Street. The purpose of the redesign of Lomax Street is to create a more walkable district and eliminate the congestion caused by the prominent 5 Points intersection.

Included among the work will be concrete and asphalt removal, drainage removal, roadway construction, concrete pavement, new traffic signals and utility adjustments,

sodding, pedestrian crosswalks, benches, bike racks, landscaping, and more, according to information obtained from the city.

Kirby Development, Inc. is the contractor hired by the City Public Works Department to do the work.

During construction, the contractor is obligated to maintain pedestrian access to the businesses within the area receiving the road improvements, according to the city.

The Jacksonville City Council unanimously approved finding for the project in Sept. 2019 and the work had originally been slated to begin in January 2020.

District 14 City Councilwoman Randy DeFoor, with the help of Mayor Lenny Curry's administration, secured \$820,000 in funding for the start of the project, which is part of a multi-year 5 Points Improvement Plan totaling \$1.5 million. The scope of the concept plan also entails improvements to Park Street at Post Street, Post Street at Margaret Street, three blocks on Margaret Street, and two crosswalks on Park Street opposite from the Sun Ray Cinema and on Margaret Street south of Oak Street.

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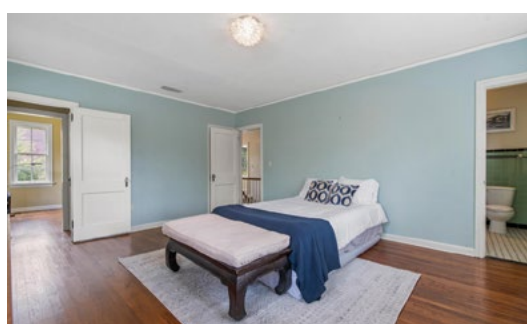


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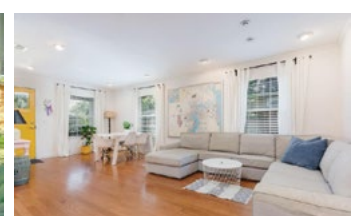
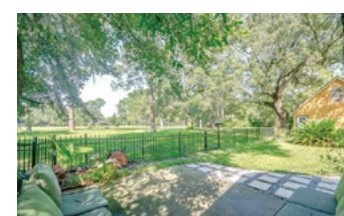
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Removal of 75 trees from Willowbranch Park

FROM PAGE 1

The \$831,115 project is in Phase II during which part of the canal near Willow Branch Avenue and Olga Place has been enclosed to allow the installation of a large cement pipe.

RAP Executive Director Warren Jones, several members of the Riverside Arts Market and Jimmy Orth, executive director of the St. Johns Riverkeeper, met with City Council member Randle DeFoor, Public Works Director John Pappas and Robin Smith, chief of engineering and construction on Aug. 27 to discuss several other issues, including:

The bridges: Three bridges over the creek will be temporarily removed and replaced during the project. The Oak Street bridge is scheduled to be replaced as part of the installation of a bike lane and Jones said it seemed redundant to have work done on that bridge in two projects.

The bridge work will be done in future phases and there is still time to modify the plan to address RAP's concerns, Pappas said.

Water quality: RAP is concerned that runoff from the construction site will hurt the water quality in the area and cause more

silt to build up in the Yacht Basin, which has never been dredged.

Pappas said Willowbranch Creek is part of a larger drainage field that extends from 5 Points to Avondale and that he will start conversations with local and state entities like the Army Corps of Engineers and the Department of Environmental Protection to see what needs to be done for the basin.

Resiliency: The restoration plans were drawn up before resiliency became an issue. RAP wants to know if the project can be modified to bring resiliency, re-channelization and sustainability standards to the project. This, too, can be addressed in future phases of the project, Pappas said.

As for the trees, the city officials said that, too, can be revisited.

"They are going to see what they can save, especially the hardwoods," Jones said. "Many of the trees are in the path of the work and have to come out."

The plan suggests the trees will be replaced with cabbage palms, but Jones said they would prefer shade trees. The city said it will



come up with a list of the trees to be replanted. But they said the trees adjacent to the canal cannot have big root systems that could damage the canal infrastructure.

The Olga Street area needs to be rehabilitated with trees and sod, Jones said.

"They are going to work on the Olga area first and get that put back into shape and then work on the Riverside park of Willowbranch," Jones said.

The city worked on the Riverside and Olga areas first because the canal was most deteriorated at those areas, Jones said.

"There is no schedule for starting the next phases, which allows us an opportunity to work together on how we can reimagine that work to take into consideration what it might look like, especially around the park," Jones said.

After the city agencies have revisited the plan, city officials will have another meeting with RAP, Jones said.

Council member DeFoor also is looking at convening a public meeting about the issue.

"It was a very good start to a community conversation," Jones said.

Plasma sought from recovered COVID-19 patients

As COVID-19 cases continue to increase, the need for convalescent plasma is on the rise. LifeSouth is partnering with medical centers in Florida, Georgia, and Alabama to find plasma from blood donors who have recovered from the virus to help critically ill patients fighting the virus.

Convalescent plasma is the liquid portion of blood collected from blood donors who have recovered from COVID-19. Recovered patients form antibodies, these antibodies are found in plasma. Convalescent plasma therapy is considered an investigational drug by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and is widely used as a treatment by doctors in many local hospitals to help severely

ill coronavirus patients. When transfused, the antibodies can help patients recover against the virus.

LifeSouth is now testing all successful blood donors for COVID-19 antibodies in search of convalescent plasma. Healthy blood donors who may have been exposed or recovered from COVID-19 are asked to donate. As part of the normal blood donations process, a test will be performed on the donor's blood to determine if antibodies are present in the plasma.

Dr. Chris Lough, LifeSouth's vice president of Medical Services, explained that no nasal swab is used on blood donors. "Unlike a test to determine if someone currently

has the COVID-19 virus, the antibody screen we use tests a blood sample collected during donation," said Lough. "Individuals should understand that we are not testing for the live virus itself. If you are interested in knowing if you are infected with COVID-19, you should visit your physician or locate a public testing site."

Convalescent plasma donors must be fully recovered from the virus and symptom free before coming to LifeSouth to donate.

LifeSouth asks for help spreading the word to those who have recovered from COVID-19. Potential donors should visit www.lifesouth.org or call 888-795-2707 to schedule an appointment.

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Alumni forms committee to save name of Robert E. Lee High

By Marcia Hodgson
Resident Community News

What's in a name? Quite a bit. Just ask the alumni of Robert E. Lee High School.

Built in 1927 to meet the needs of a growing city, Lee High School in Riverside joined Andrew Jackson High and Julia E. Landon High as three Jacksonville high schools constructed the same year to replace Duval High School, an edifice built in 1873 as the city's original secondary institution for white students.

Dedicated to Robert E. Lee on January 19, 1928, Lee's birthday, the school has established a proud tradition of academic and athletic excellence, particularly in the sport of football, over the past 93 years. As a historic school still operating at its original location, Lee has graduated 92 senior classes and a conservative guesstimate of 35,000 students from its hallowed halls on McDuff Avenue.

And Lee's alumni, many of whom have gone on to become celebrated athletes, politicians, and musicians, continue to show love for their alma mater, both in spirit and financially. Not only are class reunions well attended, the alumni annually donate the interest from a special fund established to help the school after a fire ravaged its facility in 1988.

So, it comes as no surprise many of Lee's alumni were outraged when Duval County Public School Board Chairman Warren Jones spearheaded a motion to rename Robert E. Lee High, along with five other Jacksonville schools named for Confederate soldiers.

"I went to Lee as did my father, mother, and aunts and uncles," wrote Randy Rhoden '66 in a letter to the school board. "I actually had a teacher that taught my dad. Changing the name makes no sense."

Beverly Baker '81 agreed. "I graduated from Robert E. Lee as did my siblings, husband, parents, his parents, and his siblings. I would like to add my name to the growing number of people speaking out against the plan to change the name of Robert E. Lee High School as part of a larger mission to erase the association of Confederate soldiers and officers across the country," she wrote. "Lee has always had a very strong alumni association, a group that raised hundreds of thousands of dollars after the fire in 1988. I doubt that the alumni support will continue after the name is changed. Please do not cave to the demands of the mob culture. Preserve Robert E. Lee High School."

Hearing hue and cry from many classmates, six Lee alumni – Norman Abraham '56, Melanie Amos Love '79, Robert Lawrence '80, Joey Stevens '84, Patti Fraser Price '80 and William "Pat" Geer '67 – decided to do something. The grassroots group formed a political committee and website,



Robert E. Lee High School alumni Norman Abraham '59, Melanie Amos Love '79, Robert Lawrence '80, Patti Fraser Price '80 and Joey Stevens '84, and William "Pat" Geer '67 (not pictured) have formed a political committee to fight the Duval County School Board's plans to remove the names of Confederate soldiers and other objectionable historical figures from nine public schools.

SavetheSchoolNames.org, to fight the school board's initiative, and is in the process of raising tax deductible contributions to hire legal counsel to observe the process and file a lawsuit if necessary, said Lawrence.

"Our fight is not against the history," said Love. "It doesn't have anything to do with it. It's to maintain our identity as alumni of Lee High School."

"We will do whatever is necessary," said Abraham.

Healing a 'fractured' city

In a June 16 letter to the Duval County School Board, Jones called for six schools – Robert E. Lee High, Joseph Finegan Elementary, Stonewall Jackson Elementary, Jefferson Davis Middle, Kirby-Smith Middle, and J.E.B. Stuart Middle – to be renamed, and the school board voted unanimously to begin the renaming process.

"We have come to a place and time in the history of our city that we must begin the process of renaming all the schools named for a confederate soldier. This effort can help to heal a city that is fractured. In following the lead of our mayor, who is boldly removing all confederate monuments, it is high time that we do the same," he wrote. "Renaming of existing schools provides a unique opportunity to further develop an identity of the Board and its schools. Renaming of schools must also support the District School Board's mission, vision and core values and meet the best interest of the school's students."

In a July 7 letter to the school board, District 3 School Board Member Ashley Smith Juarez went further, requesting the board consider adding three more schools to its renaming list – Andrew Jackson High, Jean Ribault High, and Jean Ribault Middle. At its Aug. 4 meeting, the school board voted, 6-1, in favor of beginning the process.

"We began with six schools named for confederate officers. We should continue

with schools that are named for people responsible for systematically marginalizing and killing indigenous people. Examining the names of existing schools provides a unique opportunity to further develop an identity of Duval County Public Schools and the Board, including listening and communicating our values," Smith Juarez wrote.

Darryl Willie, who represents School Board District 4 where the additional schools are located, voted against the plan expressing concern that renaming the additional three schools might "dilute" the focus on racial justice. "I have not heard the need is dire to change these names," he said, adding that it was not the right time."

Timing and the high cost of renaming each school are two of many reasons not to rename the schools, said members of the Save The School Names committee. It estimates a cost of at least \$2 million to change the names of the nine schools, although the school board estimated it could be done for less than \$1 million. "It cost \$350,000 to change to name of Nathan Bedford Forrest High School to Westside High School, and that was six years ago," said Price, adding that money came from the taxpayers.

"Warren Jones said, 'Now is the time.' Well, our theme is 'now is NOT the time,'" said Stevens emphatically. And thousands of Lee alumni agree with him, he said. More than 2,000 alumni have been in touch with the committee, Price said, and 1,309 members had joined the Save the School Names Facebook group by the end of August.

Alumni concerns

And the group has other concerns as well.

Jones' proposal was a "last minute kind of whim" based on the current political climate, which has been propelled by social activism, said Love. "We are very strongly opposed to the name change but not for

CONTINUED ON PAGE 11

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any social justice reason or any political reason," she said. "We feel the heritage and culture of the alumni of Lee High School is at risk of being invalidated and erased. Figuratively speaking, an imaginary question mark will be in place of Robert E. Lee High School on diplomas, lettermen's jackets, class rings, and in college acceptance letters. This is distressing to people who have graduated because we will essentially have an alma mater that no longer exists. This is not about the man the school was named after. It's about the alumni," she said.

The group also pointed to Westside High School, formerly named Nathan Bedford Forrest High, after a Confederate general and the first Grand Wizard of the Ku Klux Klan, which was renamed by the Duval County School Board in 2014. Forrest High had a thriving alumni association before renaming, but once the name became Westside, the alumni group no longer existed, said Abraham.

He also noted that colleges and universities associate Robert E. Lee High with quality academics and athletics based on its 93-year history. "You put a new name out there and they will question that immediately and wonder, 'Who is this?'" Abraham said. "There will have to be some identification with the new name, where there was no need of identification with the old one."

The group acknowledges that the majority of Lee High's current student body is African American but does not believe the students have a problem with the name, as is evidenced in their scholastic achievements this year resulting in \$13 million in scholarships. "They have Lee pride," said Stevens. "Someone I know said they stopped by at graduation and saw the students getting

"We are strongly opposed to the name change but not for any social justice reason or political reason. We feel the heritage and culture of the alumni of Lee High School is at risk of being invalidated and erased."

— Melanie Amos Love '79

their pictures taken by the sign. I've never heard of any graduate during the last 10 years say they thought of the school in a negative way. People who keep raising the issue never attended the school."

Lawrence agreed. "Many of the black students are star athletes, and they would be singing and dancing and doing the Lee High School dance."

"Many of our graduates are academic and music leaders. I can never remember hearing a minority student say, 'I would learn so much better if I didn't have Robert E. Lee hanging over my head,'" said Price.

Academic outcomes

To defray the cost to the taxpayers of renaming the schools, the Jacksonville Public Education Fund (JPEF) has created a special fund to allow community members to support the renaming effort through tax-deductible donations. "Research shows students are better able to learn when they feel welcome and represented at school," said JPEF President Rachael Tutwiler Fortune.

The Save the School Names Committee disputes Fortune's claim that academic outcomes would be improved if the names

of the schools are changed. "We ask them to give us some proof that changing the names will influence those positive academic outcomes," said Price. "They have yet to convince us that kids are not doing well in the classroom because of the name on the sign out front."

Love added that Forrest High was a C school before it was renamed and is still a C school now as Westside High. "There are 23 schools in Duval County that are D or F schools, and of those schools 15 are not named after any person, six are named after African Americans, and two are named after Confederates. We feel the school board's motivations are groundless," she said, noting Lee High and Andrew Jackson High are B schools, Kirby Smith Middle and Finegan Elementary are A schools and, in all fairness, all four should be removed from the renaming list., she said.

The school board's move is an "opportunistic grab" when there are much greater needs and priorities the board should be focusing on such as readying the schools for COVID-19, improving curriculum, funding teacher's supplies and higher pay, and infrastructure repairs as many schools are "crumbling," she said.

Truancy is a problem at Lee High today, the group admitted. With a current

enrollment of 1,800 students, the school sports a truancy rate of 33% or 600 students, said Price. "Those students are on a trajectory for failure, because if they aren't in school, they are probably not doing good things," she said. "Any money being raised (by JPEF) would be much better spent on a truancy officer and programs to get them back in school. That is what is going to improve student success."

Although the committee would like the school board to drop the renaming idea immediately, it feels at a minimum Duval County Public Schools Superintendent Dr. Diana Greene should hold several community town hall meetings to discuss the issue and allow the public to have a say. In the meantime, Lee alumni have flooded the school board with nearly 200 letters denouncing the plan and fear many letters in support of their view have never been heard by the school board members.

The committee also wants to raise awareness of the issue by drawing alumni and others to its website, where it hopes to educate people in all aspects of the issue, including dates the school board will discuss the issue as well as other information.

"We want Warren Jones to host a public forum and be willing to field questions regardless of how uncomfortable they are," said Price, while Lawrence added, "And we don't want him to have it at 10 a.m. Tuesday morning. We want it to be held at a time when people can attend." Stevens concurred. "I'd like to see it on a city-wide ballot. It would never pass," he said.

"We feel our school is different from every other school in the county because we have the resources with the alumni that has graduated and the money that we give back to the school each year," Abraham said. "This is just the beginning."

FOR ALUMNI LETTERS, CONTINUE TO PAGE 12




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Letters TO THE Editor

Residents debate need for name change of Robert E. Lee High school and others

It seems to me we are getting to a point of being too politically correct in our actions and thoughts. Let's take away all that may offend someone, and all will be better with the world. You know we can try to hide or remove history but in doing so you offend me and many, many others. The name Robert E. Lee to me means memories, friendships, athletic competition, strength, principles, ideals, academics, and love for our school, and what it stands for. Don't infringe on my rights by taking away a part of my history. The name Robert E. Lee, for God's sake, isn't meant to be prejudicial toward anyone. It stands for the "Fighting Generals." It's me and my fellow classmates, so please do not try and make things better by removing my high school's name and my pride in it.

Have you also considered the huge economic explications involved by erasing the name Robert E. Lee? Do we really need to fund this proposal when our schools are already underfunded for academic needs? Put our monies into things that make sense not into something that is going to take away from academic strength and betterment for students. After all isn't it supposed to be about our students? Leave the name as it stands "Robert E. Lee High School."

Robert Mitchell Cox

Robert E. Lee High School Class of 1966

Sometime around the Great Fire of 1901 and the rebuild of Jacksonville, Downtown, Springfield, LaVilla, and parts of San Marco and Riverside, the Duval County Public Schools came into being and continue to this day and will probably go on into the future. Recently there has been a lot of talk about the need to spend money renaming nine schools that are named for historic personalities such as Robert E. Lee, Andrew Jackson, and Jean Ribault. Yet all these schools in the eyes of the city have less controversial monikers - numbers that identify them to maintenance crews and other city officials.

Duval County Public School No. 18 (Central Riverside Elementary) is one school I will use as an example. When the staff at Public School No. 18 needs a door repaired (or anything repaired such as a/c or plumbing, etc.) they submit a call for repair to the school maintenance department where a request is made for D.C.P.S. No. 18. There is nothing on the work order with the name Central Riverside Elementary. This holds true for every school in the system. The maintenance guy goes out, fixes the door, and completes the work order. Then the work order goes to accounting where someone tallies the cost of parts, labor, and all of this is done under the name of D.C.P.S. No. 18.

When a new school is needed, the location, size, kind (elementary, middle or high school) is determined and plans are drawn up, and it will go out to bid as Public School No. XX, not as a named school.

In a recent move, Duval County Public School Board members voted to consider the renaming of nine public schools, who have been named after officers in the Confederate Army or others who were involved in the slave trade in their lifetimes. The renaming of Nathan Bedford Forrest High School (known to the city as D.C.P.S. No. 241) to Westside High in 2014 cost approximately \$350,000 taxpayer dollars. The current superintendent (in one report) said six of the public schools, of which Robert E. Lee High School is one, could be renamed for under \$1 million. By my math, renaming the six schools might come in as high as \$2.1 million. Yet, as with Nathan B. Forrest High School, in the city's eyes, the school is still named for a number - it is still D.C.P.S. No. 241.

The School Board Policy 8.59 Naming or Renaming Schools, Section IV seems to be ignored: a. "The name of the school shall not be of a person living or deceased)." In the case of Robert E. Lee High School and the others, maybe "we" the people of Duval County need to say no to the school names and just go with Duval County Public School No. 33, a high school with a football team named "the Generals."

In closing, \$2.1 million Duval County taxpayer dollars can be better spent on fixing our older and younger schools. If we are to change the names of these nine schools, why not let them all - and the entire public-school inventory - be named after their numbers? Spend the money once and for all in simplifying the names of the entire inventory, not just the nine schools. Let's do it now and have the entire process once and done!

Michael Key

Former Riverside resident

Lee High School has been a well-respected institution in Jacksonville for over 90 years! To date, three generations of my family have graduated from Lee. I urge the School Board not to change the name of Lee High.

Where does this political correctness stop? Do we change our city's name back to Cowford?

Cleveland T. Farnell

Ortega

Robert E. Lee Class of 1972

My name is Ruth Dellinger and I graduated with the class of 1995. I'm writing to share my voice in hopes that we will not bother trying to change the school's name, Robert E. Lee.

Please know that I'm beyond heartbroken at the thought of trying to change anything about our name. On top of the many historical reasons to preserve his name and our high school's current name, it's way too costly.

Ruth Dellinger

Robert E. Lee High School Class of 1995

If a school makes people sad or angry because it celebrates a truly destructive time in US history, then the name should be changed....:) Some of my friends believe they will lose a part of their identity if the name is changed, but they need to foster a healthier sense of identity that's centered around their positive accomplishments and positive relationships with others, and not with a school they attended 20, 30, 40 or 50 years ago. They'll get over it.

Katie Kuehner-Hebert

Former Murray Hill resident

Robert E. Lee High school 1978-1980

Changing the names of schools, bases, other public buildings, and the destruction of memorials of historical figures, mainly Confederate soldiers has gone too far. Past presidents, Union generals and soldiers and many others were slave owners or their families were. What are we going to do? Tear all memorials down? Rename all public places? Change the name of WASHINGTON DC and all cities, including JACKSONVILLE, that have any connection to the past? We cannot obliterate history; we learn from it. Enough already. IT HAS GONE TOO FAR!

Michael Beaugh

Robert E. Lee High School Class of 1965

I am definitely opposed to a name change for Robert E Lee High School. Our history as a great nation should not be rewritten nor erased. The dark points in our history, as well as our brilliant moments, must be taught and remembered accurately, so that we can continue to strive for our more perfect union.

What does a name change do for equality and justice? Nothing. It costs money, appeases a few, but does not move the needle one bit towards addressing any of our nation's current unrest.

Claudia Mally

St. Nicholas

Proud graduate of Robert E. Lee High School Class of 1962

I am a proud 1958 graduate of Lee High School. I received an excellent education at Lee. But I strongly feel it best to change the name of the school.

I loved Lee High School, not because of its name, but because of its faculty and staff. They gave me a start in being an adult, a chance to be effective, and a love for growing and developing as a human being. Lee High prepared me to earn three degrees and become a critical thinker, not because of its name but its faculty.

Change the name, honor Frederick Douglas or Harriet Tubman. Be creative, take the risk. They would make me just as proud.

Kim Porter Ph.D.

Robert E. Lee High School Class of 1958

CONTINUED ON PAGE 13



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Letters TO THE Editor

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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12

My wife Betty and I are writing in opposition to changing the name of Robert E. Lee High School as alumni of the classes of 1966 and 1967 respectively. We met at Lee, married and have been married 51 years. As graduates of Lee, we are true Generals as are so many of the young students we have met over the years. It was a great school when my wife and I attended.

My oldest son attended Lee until he, a friend of mine, and I were attacked by black students and non-students hanging out at night after a football game. This occurred in the 1980's. We decided we did not want our kids to be harassed like that, so we moved to the Ed White school district. Two of our children graduated from Ed White and the other from Stanton. Lee went through a bad time during that period and then came the fire. So many of my classmates donated funds for the reconstruction after the fire.

My son and I visited Lee during my class of 1967 50th reunion in June 2017 and the school was first class at that point. We were greeted by faculty and students, most were black. They loved the school and the legacy of the Lee Generals. When students and faculty were asked about the name, they expressed their support of the name, and they truly loved the school as much as we did.

Now because of outside influences, the school board is considering a name change again. This was attempted before by City Council and the outcry was loud and clear, do not change the name.

I have talked to Dr. Greene at various Jax Chamber meetings, and she is proud of the improvements in the district for the students. The board should continue that improvement by focusing on repairs of the schools that need facility upgrades such as Fishweir and Bayview Elementary Schools. In addition, curriculum should include American history to educate students about the Civil War and the role of General Lee and others made on life as we know it. Let us not waste money trying to change the school names to appease those who have no history with the schools and some no history of Jacksonville.

As taxpayers, we do not want to pay for any name changes and even if you secured private funding, the funding should go to improving education and not changing school names. Those who attended should have a say and our two votes are against any name change.

William "Pat" Geer
Robert E. Lee Class of 1967

Betty Pemberton Geer
Robert E. Lee Class of 1966

As a second-generation alumnus of Robert E. Lee, whose daughter also graduated from the school, I am writing to OPPOSE any name change to the school.

Robert E. Lee High School is a much-honored institution, named for an honorable historic figure and changing the name of the school would dishonor its long history and those of us who graduated.

Please carefully consider the harm which would be done in changing the name of this school given its deep and enduring roots in the community.

James S. Davis
Graduate, Robert E. Lee High School

On October 2, 1865 after the war, Robert E. Lee signed an Oath of Allegiance to the United States of America. The document was "misplaced" and not found until 1975 when his citizenship was fully restored by the US Congress.

So, what is the main criterion for the name changed association with the Civil War? If so, then tens of thousands of us must change our surnames since we have beloved ancestors who fought in the Confederacy and some owned slaves. Take the name away and a great conundrum is opened.

Hemming Park must be renamed. The Isaiah Hart bridge must be renamed. William Pope DuVal was a supporter of slavery. So, the county must be renamed. Jacksonville must be renamed as well as Jacksonville University. Countless streets must be renamed.

What shall the School Board do with all the trophies and awards that dedicated black and white students earned for Lee High? The trophy cases must be emptied. Robert E. Lee High will become just a brick building on South McDuff Avenue.

And strong alumni support will quickly fade into nothing.

The greatness that began on Lee's birthday on January 19, 1928 when Lee High was dedicated will come to an end. And for what? What will be gained and what will be lost? These questions must be answered.

Dr. Robert Fore
Proud member of Lee's largest class ever, the Class of 1965

I wish to express my stance on changing the name of my beloved school. I'm very much against it! My two older brothers and my sister also attended Lee High and always spoke of the honor of going there. I don't think we should change our history, but we can learn from it.

John Rukab
Robert E. Lee High School Class of 1966













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JTC Running donates \$50,000 toward Emerald Trail design



Before and after photos of the Emerald Trail's S-Line Connector and its improvement to the community.

Groundwork Jacksonville announced on Aug. 6 that it had received a \$50,000 donation from JTC Running, a Northeast Florida promoter of healthy lifestyles through running, fitness, and fellowship. The donation will help to fund the design of the Emerald Trail S-Line Connector which completes an unfinished 1.3-mile section of the existing S-Line Rail Link from 12th St. and Boulevard near Andrew Robinson Elementary School, to E. 21st St. The total design cost, to be shared equally by Groundwork and the City of Jacksonville, is estimated to be \$860,000.

In June, Groundwork unveiled the design of the Emerald Trail LaVilla Link connecting Brooklyn to LaVilla and the S-Line. Construction of the LaVilla Link will begin later this year with an expected opening of fall 2021. Together, the S-Line Connector and LaVilla Link will form a six-mile contiguous trail enabling runners, walkers, and cyclists to travel from Brooklyn to Norwood Plaza, near Gateway Mall.

One of the points of interest along the S-Line connector is the Phoenix Arts District, a 100,000-square-foot

warehouse space spanning across a 4.5-acre campus space that will be converted into workshops, studios, apartments, event space, galleries, restaurants and more.

"JTC Running has been a tremendous ongoing supporter of the Emerald Trail," said Kay Ehas, CEO of Groundwork Jacksonville. "We are exceedingly grateful for JTC's generous monetary contributions as well as the group's advocacy for safe urban spaces to run, walk, and cycle. Their support is truly helping make this endeavor possible," she added.

The S-Line is a 4.8-mile rails-to-trails multiuse path that runs from Myrtle Avenue just north of Beaver Street to 44th Street. The S-line was an abandoned length of CSX railroad Right-of-Way — appropriately in the shape of an "S" — that was acquired by the City to create an urban greenway. It is now part of the planned 30-mile Emerald Trail.

JTC Running played a key role in launching the Emerald Trail project in 2018 by helping to underwrite the Emerald Trail Master Plan with a \$50,000 donation. "The Emerald

Trail personifies our mission of bringing people together through running and recreation and does so in a way that beautifies our city through greenscapes and creating a safe place for people and nature to co-exist," said Larry Roberts, president of JTC Running. "We are proud to partner with Groundwork Jacksonville and support this project, which greatly enhances our city overall."

The Emerald Trail is a public-private partnership between the City of Jacksonville and Groundwork that will connect 14 of our city's historic urban neighborhoods to downtown, the St. Johns River, McCoys Creek, and Hogans Creek. When completed by 2029, the trail will link 16 schools, two colleges, and 21 parks among other destinations like restaurants, retail and businesses, with an additional 13 schools and 17 parks located within three blocks of the trail. A catalyst for neighborhood revitalization, economic development, recreation, tourism, mobility, and improved community health, it is hoped that the Emerald Trail will transform Jacksonville's urban core.

Wolfson volunteers distribute backpacks at Ribault High

Aubrey Miller, Teri Oldfield, Sherri Vroom, Megan Denk, Tamela Smith-Swanson and Jade Swanson, who are a mix of volunteers from the community and Wolfson Children's Hospital, joined together to assist with Wolfson's first Drive-Thru Back-to-School Bash at the Wolfson Children's Health Center at Ribault High School Aug. 1. During the event, families had the opportunity to learn about health resources available through Wolfson Children's Health Center at Ribault, which was created by the hospital to give students in the underserved community access to health care. The students and their parents or legal guardians received a free backpack, school supplies, a face mask as well as a hot dog, chips, and drink through the drive-thru



line. They also received educational resources to take control of their health, including information on enrolling children in health insurance and asthma education. The center is supported by Duval County Public Schools, the Duval County Department of Health, Sulzbacher Center and Full Service Schools of Jacksonville. The Back-to-School Bash was sponsored by Wolfson Children's Health Center and the Jean Ribault High School Class of 1985.

Republican women celebrate 19th amendment



Back row: Troy Winn, Hilary Knapper, Carol Tegho, Kim Black, Jalene Holden, Karen Olen, Brenda Edwards, Cindy Collins, Crystal Draper, Helen Gialombardo, Antoinette Jones. Front row: Lisa Glennon, Ann Teague, Karen Bridgham, Stephanie Boyette, Katherine Crow-Nichols, Jenell Flynn, Norma Vargas, Billie Husk, Lori Henderson, Betty Bentley, Patti O'Neal, "Susan B. Anthony" Wanda Bosworth.

Susan B. Anthony was the special guest during the Republican Women's Club of Duval Federated luncheon Aug. 13 at the Southbank Hotel, which was formerly the Lexington Hotel.

The luncheon celebrated the 100th anniversary of the 19th amendment and women's right to vote. Rick Mullaney, founding

director of the Public Policy Institute of Jacksonville University was the featured speaker. Wanda Bosworth, past president of the Republican Women's Club of Duval Federated, dressed in a period costume and made a presentation about suffragette Susan B. Anthony.



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Longtime shop owner celebrates 43rd anniversary

In what has often appeared to be a revolving door of merchants at The Shoppes of Avondale, there is one shop owner who has stood the test of time.

Hooshang Harvesf, Ph.D., owner of Hooshang Oriental Rugs and Gallery, is celebrating his 43rd year on the popular Avondale commercial strip.

Affectionately known as the “Mayor of Avondale,” Harvesf opened his store on September 15, 1977, and is the longest running business in the Avondale Shoppes that has remained under the same owner, name, and location.

“What I like is that the area has always been maintained,” said Harvesf, noting that when he first arrived in the Avondale shopping area retailers far outnumbered the restaurants and ladies often came to shop all day.

All the rugs in Hooshang’s store are painstakingly made by hand, he said, adding that he does business locally, nationally,



Hooshang Harvesf, Ph.D.

and internationally. “What we have here you will not find anywhere else in the country,” he said. Also, of note is his arrangement of unusual and unique nut-crackers, which are featured at Christmas time in what is one of the most visited window-displays in Jacksonville.

“I can’t say enough how much I love Avondale and its people,” Harvesf said. “I love what I do. My dad always told his children to get an education first and then do whatever it is that you want to wake up in the morning and go to it. To this day, I can always say, I love to do what I’m doing.”

Republicans gather in Clay County

Ortega’s Sharon Light, president of the Republican Women’s Club of Duval Federated, enjoyed a barbecue courtesy of Judson Sapp, candidate for United States Congress District 3, at Spencer’s Farm in Clay County Aug. 8. Former advisor to President Donald Trump, Roger Stone was the featured speaker. Stone, a convicted felon, had his sentence commuted by Trump after he was convicted on seven counts of witness tampering and lying to investigators in a bid to protect the president during the Mueller Investigation. Trump granted the pardon saying Stone was the victim of the Russian hoax.

More than 300 attended the cookout, which also included 20 horses and 10 guinea hens. “Mr. Stone came from South Florida



Judson Sapp, candidate for U.S. Congress District 3, joins Sharon Light, president of the Republican Women’s Club of Duval Federated and Roger Stone, former advisor to President Donald Trump during a barbecue at Spencer’s Farm in Clay County Aug. 8.

to support the campaign for President Trump and Judson Sapp,” said Light, who was a special guest representing Duval County and its Republican women. “Great food was bountiful and there was good fellowship with Republican Party members from several counties. Roger Stone is a great speaker and held the attention of the many attendees,” she said.

Pariani joins Memorial Park board

The Memorial Park Association welcomed Frederick “Rick” Pariani, Jr., of Avondale, as a new member of its board of directors. Pariani will serve a three-year term, filling a vacant board position and will serve as chair of the Landscape and Grounds Committee.



Rick Pariani

“Twenty years after moving to North Florida in 1997, we found an architectural wonder in Avondale and an even more wonderful neighborhood,” said Pariani. “Memorial Park Association serves with pride and compassion to ensure the beauty, prominence and heritage of our community’s most cherished example of public commons, crafted by our nation’s first landscape architects. I hope to serve the association commensurate with their legacy of stewardship of the great Olmsted Brother’s 1924 park design.”

Pariani holds a degree in landscape architecture from the University of Georgia and retired from a 42-year career in regional, national, and international project design, primarily in Georgia and Florida. His projects have included retail/commercial/office developments, resort and entertainment venues, residential and mixed-use communities, recreation, parks, and golf course focused amenities, as well as environmental and public-sector projects,

and preservation and public-access initiatives.

Projects of local note include World Golf Village in St. Augustine, where Pariani was design and development director from 1997 to 2012 for the project’s common areas, as well as pro bono community work for the Episcopal School of Jacksonville, the Jacksonville Country Day

School, West Riverside Elementary School, Hemming Park, and Boone Park, among several other projects.

Additionally, Pariani has worked on a golf course in Taiwan; Centennial Olympic Park in Atlanta, Ga., as well as other 1996 Centennial Olympic venues; Universal Studios, Orlando, and Fountain Plaza, Fort Lauderdale, among others. Pariani is also serving as a board member for Riverside Avondale Preservation. He is a former board member of Friends of Hemming Park, and a former member of the Emerald Trail Steering Committee and of the Cultural Council of Jacksonville’s Art Selection Panel.

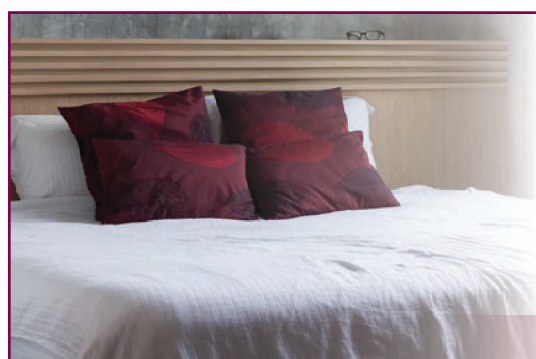
“Rick’s outstanding credentials and his involvement with the Riverside Avondale neighborhood made him an obvious choice to fill the position and allow us to tap into his vast experience in landscape architecture,” said Tim Burleigh, MPA president.

St. Mark’s provides diapers, groceries to those in need

St. Mark’s Episcopal Church in Ortega recently held a successful diaper and formula drive for Community Health Outreach (CHO) and food drive for St. Mary’s Episcopal Church in Springfield. Parishioners and St. Mark’s virtual Vacation Bible School participants donated over 40 bags of groceries and 25 boxes of diapers! St. Mark’s also presented checks to both organizations in support of their missions.


According to Virginia Pillsbury, CHO assistant director, Community Health Outreach’s Baby Luv program went from providing 3,500 diapers a month in March to 20,000 per month in April, May, and June. The Rev. Beth Tjoflat, vicar for St. Mary’s, noted that St. Mary’s food pantry has doubled the number of people it serves since COVID-19. According to Tjoflat, some clients had never before stood in a line at a food pantry.

“St. Mary’s and CHO are important ministries in our community,” said the Rev. Tom Murray, rector, St. Mark’s Episcopal Church. “We are blessed to be able to partner with both organizations and are grateful for the outpouring of support from our parishioners to assist their efforts.”



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Diane Dodds

New director to head Assumption Early Childhood Learning Center

A new face will greet the students at the Early Childhood Learning Center at Assumption Church this fall. Diane Dodds has taken over the position of director, which was previously held by Kristen Spears. Spears decided to transition back to the classroom and will be teaching in Assumption School this fall.

Dodds moved to Florida from New Jersey in 2017. With more than 20 years of experience in education, she has previously taught 3-6-year old students, mentored new teachers, worked as a consultant to private schools and has been the head of school at two Montessori schools. She has also taught CCD and vacation Bible School in her parish in New Jersey.

Dodds earned a bachelor's degree in economics from Brown University and a master's degree in education from St. Catherine University.

She is an avid reader, swimmer, and enjoys knitting. She and her husband, Terry, have been happily married since 1988 and enjoy spending time with their two adult children, David and Adam.

"Diane comes to us with a wealth of experience, and as I sensed when I interviewed her, a great joy and love for the faith," said Fr. Jason Trull of Assumption Catholic Church.

Lakeshore resident takes helm of Morning Star School

A familiar face is taking the helm of Morning Star School, a Catholic school that serves students with learning and intellectual challenges.

Elaine Shott, a Lakeshore resident who has worked at the school for more than two decades, is taking over for longtime principal Jean Barnes. Barnes served at Morning Star School for 30 years and plans to remain involved as a board member.

Shott has worked at Morning Star School for 23 years, 10 as a junior high teacher and 13 as assistant principal.

She has a Bachelor of Arts in Business Administration from Flagler College, a master's degree in educational leadership from Walden University in Minneapolis, Minn., and a certification to teach special education from the University of North Florida.

"I am thrilled to lead our Morning Star community into a new school year," said

Shott. "The current situation has placed many additional health protocols and safety measurers for our staff and students, but we are committed to keeping everyone safe, healthy, and focused. About one third of our students have elected to learn from home. To help our students and prepare for e-learning needs throughout the year, we have developed a unique learning platform making the virtual classroom an easy transition for all students, and providing a more inclusive environment for our distance-learning students."

Shott said is ready to take on the challenges that lay ahead. Trained to work with children who have learning and intellectual differences, she and her staff intend to work with each child to help them through this difficult time caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. "As a non-profit Catholic school,



Elaine Shott

I am hopeful for the continued community support that the school receives every year to fund the many needs and growth of our special education school," she said, noting everyone at Morning Star is excited about the new outdoor fitness center that is to be completed this fall.

Clay Eye Physicians and Surgeons expands to Middleburg

Clay Eye Physicians and Surgeons recently expanded its services to Middleburg, making this its fifth location and third in Clay County. This new office is located on the St. Vincent's Medical Center-Clay Campus, and its address is 1658 St. Vincent's Way, Middleburg, FL 32068. The new office will provide patients with five comprehensive exam rooms, and it anticipates seeing new patients in early September 2020.

"With growth comes expansion," said Eric King, practice administrator with Clay Eye. "We are very intentional when positioning ourselves within a new demographical area. Our objective is to serve the medical needs

of Middleburg and surrounding areas by extending our comprehensive eye care services to areas that need additional ophthalmology support. Our services range from routine eye exams to surgical services. We have sub-specialists in the areas of cornea, retina, glaucoma, oculoplastics and pediatrics, which makes it possible for patients to remain within our practice rather than have to seek a specialist elsewhere," King said.

Clay Eye Physicians and Surgeons offers comprehensive eye care in the following specialties: Glaucoma Surgery, Diabetic Eye Disease and Macular Degeneration, Laser

Cataract Surgery, Laser floater lysis, Cornea Surgery, Medical Retina, Retinal Surgery, LASIK Surgery, Cosmetic Eye Procedures, Pediatric Ophthalmology, and Pediatric Eye Exams. In addition, they offer Routine Eye Exams, Contact Lenses, and Boutique Eyewear for the entire family.

Clay Eye Physicians & Surgeons was established in 1977 and is now a 13-physician group. They currently have offices in Orange Park, Fleming Island, Mandarin, Riverside and Middleburg. If you would like more information about Clay Eye, please contact (904) 272-2020, or visit their website at www.clayeye.com.

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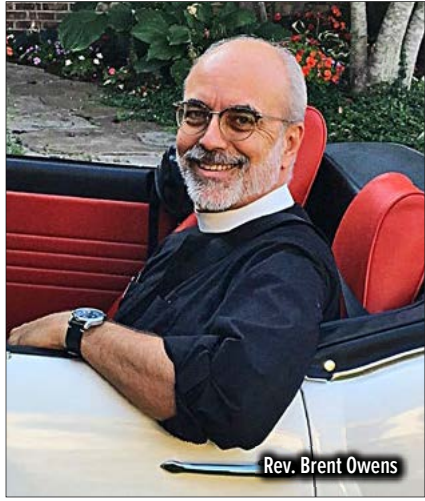
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New rector to join Church of the Good Shepherd



Rev. Brent Owens

The vestry of the Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd unanimously and enthusiastically elected the Rev. Brent Owens to take over as its new rector. He will join the church on Monday, Oct. 19.

Owens and his wife, Malinda, will be moving to Avondale from Christ Church Cathedral in Lexington, Ky., where he served as associate dean since 2012 until earlier this year when he took time off for a sabbatical. Prior to Christ Church, Owens served parishes in Macon, Ga., and Scottsdale, Ariz. Before his ordination, he worked as a board-certified trial attorney for law firms in South Florida.

Owens received a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Analysis from Indiana University, and a juris doctor from Stetson University College of Law. His Master of Divinity degree is from Episcopal Theological Seminary of the Southwest in Austin, Tex. He was ordained to the priesthood in 2005.

Owens and his wife have three children, Jillian, Brad, and Mason, and one grandson, Adam.

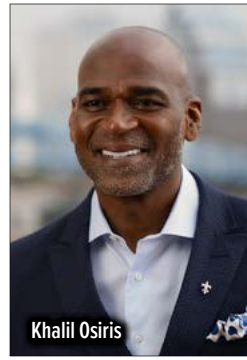
To illustrate what he hopes to bring to the Church of the Good Shepherd religious community, Owens referred to a quote from Henri-Frederic Amiel (1821-1881): "Life is short, and we do not have much time to gladden the hearts of those who make the journey with us. So, be swift to love and make haste to be kind. And the blessing of God will be with us now and forever."

Cathedral hosts talks on racism, healing

On consecutive Wednesdays throughout July and August, Khalil Osiris, founder of the Reflecting Freedom Network, sponsored a program of discussions entitled "Truth & Reconciliation Conversations" at St. Johns Cathedral.

During the conversations, Osiris said it was his goal to invite members of the Cathedral to share their thoughts and feelings about racism and to discuss what they could do to address it in the church.

"This summer, the overlapping crises of COVID-19 and civil unrest have focused new attention on the systemic impact of racism. For many people of color, George Floyd's murder by police officers is a poignant reminder of the intersection between racism and injustice. It's a topic that evokes anger, fear, guilt, as well as hope for healing and reconciliation," said Osiris, who then quoted



Khalil Osiris



Khalil Osiris, founder of the Reflecting Freedom Network discusses racism and with Megan Cochran, District 14 City Councilwoman Randy DeFoor, and District 10 City Councilwoman Brenda Priestly Jackson.

Nelson Mandela: "In the end, reconciliation is a spiritual process, which requires more than just a legal framework. It has to happen in the hearts and minds of people."

"The Truth & Reconciliation Conversations initiative is based on the belief that forgiveness takes one person, reconciliation two," Osiris continued. "The conversations we had at the Cathedral highlighted the importance of listening to others, especially people who don't share our views or experiences. By listening, we learned things about others that reminded us of our shared humanity.

By sharing our stories, we deepened our relationships with each other.

We started an important conversation. I hope it inspires others to join the work of facing racism and healing together."

The conversations are available as a playlist on St. John's Cathedral's YouTube Channel. St. John's Cathedral will continue the conversations on Wednesday nights in the fall with a film and discussion program called Sacred Ground.

For more information call St. John's Cathedral at (904) 356-5507 or visit jaxcathedral.org.

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Fourteen attorneys from Coker Law have been included in the 2021 listing of *The Best Lawyers in America's* 27th edition. Included within the listings are attorneys Howard Coker, Dan Iracki, Matthew Posgay, Jake Schickel, Charles Sorenson, Steve Watrel, Rufus Pennington III, Fraz Ahmed, Chelsea Harris, Janeen Kirch, Chase Sorenson, Aaron Sprague, David Thompson, and Lindsay Tygart.

The Best Lawyers in America is one of the oldest, most well-respected attorney-ranking services in the United States, and to be included in the publication is a great reflection of the dedication these 14 legal professionals have to practicing law.

This marks the 21st year for Coker, founding shareholder and president of Coker Law to be recognized in *The Best Lawyers in America* for his work in the category of Personal Injury Litigation. He is board certified by The Florida Bar in Civil Trial Law and has demonstrated tireless service and consistent commitment to both professional and community organizations.

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Rev. Art McClellan and Susan Norville sit among the smiling faces, prepared for a socially distant Sunday worship experience.

Ortega Church re-opens for in-person worship during COVID-19

Following 12 weeks of online-only worship, Ortega Church re-opened its sanctuary for in-person worship June 21.

Challenges persist as the community and the world continues to endure the longer-than-expected COVID-19 season. The recent decision to return to in-person worship was not taken lightly by the leadership at Ortega Church and was planned with the utmost concern for the safety of those who choose to gather for in-person worship. Church leaders believe with the largeness of the sanctuary space and the church's adhering to safe-gathering protocols re-opening is an acceptable addition to ongoing live-stream worship services.

Safe-gathering protocols include mandatory masks, six-foot social distant seating,

ample availability of hand sanitizer, as well as conducting "touchless worship" – no hugs, no handshakes, no hymnals. The Sanctuary is sanitized between services as well as the constant cleaning of entry-points on Sundays. Ortega Church continues to monitor governmental, medical, and denominational sources to ensure a safe worship experience and could return to online-only worship should local and state safer-at-home requirements be restored.

Ortega Church is currently hosting live Sunday worship at 10:30 a.m. in its sanctuary and online for those unable to worship in-person. The live stream, as well as the re-broadcast of Sunday worship are found at www.ortegaumc.org.

Soluna Yoga's relaxing salt room beneficial to respiratory wellbeing



Relaxing in the salt room at Soluna Yoga and Spa is the perfect respite during COVID-19.

In this time of COVID-19, it is essential to keep respiratory health in check. One good way to maintain the health of your lungs is a dry-salt therapeutic treatment at Soluna Yoga and Spa. Dry salt therapy helps to reduce or prevent symptoms of cold, flu, and seasonal allergies while boosting the immune system and elevating overall wellbeing.

A session in Soluna's salt room can be as relaxing as a day near the sea, yet without the annoyance of sand and sunburn. A 45-minute stretch relaxing with a friend or spouse in the zero-gravity chairs while enjoying Soluna's dry-salt therapy can do as much good to your respiratory system as a day spent breathing ocean air.

"It's as if we've brought the beach to Riverside. It's the same feeling as when you go to the beach," said Dori Thomsen, co-owner of Soluna Yoga and Spa. "Being in the salty air makes your skin and breathing cleaner and clearer."

For a mere \$39, clients can enjoy nearly an hour of privacy and coziness in Soluna's halotherapy chamber, lined with softly lit salt bricks. "It is instant ZEN the moment you walk in. Relaxing in our salt room is like relaxing in pure paradise," Thomsen said, noting that the medical-grade salt particles, pumped into the air, provide clients with both internal and external benefits.

Salt, which is super absorbent, anti-bacterial, and anti-inflammatory, assists in absorbing allergens, toxins and foreign substances from the lungs and respiratory tract. By reducing inflammation and opening airway passages, dry salt therapy has a positive impact on people suffering from allergies, asthma, bronchitis, cystic fibrosis, and COPD.

Meanwhile, externally, the dry salt absorbs impurities to benefit the skin by regulating the skin's micro-circulation and assisting those who suffer from acne, psoriasis, eczema. Smaller salt particles reach beneath the skin's surface to absorb moisture, while larger particles absorb bacteria and foreign substances on the epidermis. The dry salt accelerates cell rejuvenation and improves skin rigidity.

The treatments have also been found to assist with sleeping disorders, fatigue, and bring relief to migraines and headaches.

In partaking of a halotherapy treatment, comfort is key. The salt particles have no negative affect on clothing or work attire making it possible to enjoy a session during a lunch break or any time during the work day, as well as on weekends. Many clients don shorts and a tank top to enjoy Soluna Yoga and Spa's most frequently booked spa package, the "sweet and salty" combo, which consists of a massage followed by a relaxing halotherapy session in the salt room.



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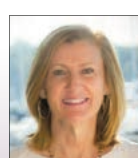


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New doctor joins team at Clay Eye Physicians

Clay Eye Physicians & Surgeons recently welcomed John R. Bullock, M.D. to their practice. Bullock joined Clay Eye after completing his Oculofacial Plastic Surgery and Orbital Disease Fellowship at Allegheny General Hospital in Pittsburgh, Penn.

“I grew up in North Florida and received my medical degree from the University of Florida in Gainesville. Believe it or not, I had my very first eye exam as a child at Clay Eye 20-plus years ago by Dr. Harris. My education and training have really brought me full circle, and I am excited to be back home in Jacksonville. I knew that Clay Eye was the perfect fit for me, as its approach to patient care is exactly the model I was looking for. I welcome the opportunity to continue Clay Eye’s mission of providing high quality and compassionate eye care to the people of Northeast Florida,” said Bullock.

Dr. C. M. Harris, founder and ophthalmologist at Clay Eye agreed.

“It’s true, I was the doctor that gave Dr. Bullock his first eye exam. His dad and I were in the Navy together and we’ve kept in touch over the years. When Dr. Bullock decided on pursuing ophthalmology as his specialty, I continued planting the seed for



John R. Bullock, M.D.

him to join our practice once he completed his training—and here we are. His training and fellowship in oculoplastics are a great addition to our team. He brings a full complement to the existing care of patients who need eyelid surgery, lesions and reconstruction; tearing disorders/tear duct surgery and blepharoplasty.”

Clay Eye Physicians and Surgeons offers comprehensive eye care in the following specialties: Glaucoma Surgery, Diabetic Eye Disease and Macular Degeneration, Laser Cataract Surgery, Laser floater lysis, Cornea Surgery, Medical Retina, Retinal Surgery, LASIK Surgery, Cosmetic Eye Procedures, Pediatric Ophthalmology, and Pediatric Eye Exams. In addition, they offer Routine Eye Exams, Contact Lenses, and Boutique Eyewear for the entire family.

DESC Defenders goes “Virtual”, engage loyalists

The battle to fight poverty requires super-human strength, so when funds are short, fundraisers rally and call in talented locals who know how to fight the good fight. This year, a virtual event, complete with Princess Pantaloons and Captain Underpants’ narration and caricatures, brought superheroes in to rally guests online and engage viewers.

The annual DESC Defenders event went live Aug. 20, as volunteers, board members and staff welcomed guests to learn more about the mission, the hard work being done day to day and the miracles that take place in the basement of the First Presbyterian Church at 215 North Ocean Street.

As videos streamed and leaders began to describe their roles, they thanked loyal patrons as guests pledged donations for work boots, food for families, electric bills, groceries, rent and more. As donations rolled in, guests continue to watch as a competition for “best video” played out, submitted by talented fans of the mission,



DESC Executive Director David Clark tapes his introduction to loyal fans who tuned in for the virtual event.

which earned a match in donations from one of our city’s top donors, Mrs. Delores Barr Weaver.

Since 1981, the Downtown Ecumenical Services Council or DESC, has fulfilled many needs in a never-ending battle to reduce homelessness and help locals get on their feet, serving thousands in our community annually. To learn more about DESC watch the entire presentation by visiting www.facebook.com/DESCjax/videos/751118695651475/.



A screen grab features board member Julie Handley as she presents her portion of the evening’s festivities.



Board Secretary Pam Prier announced a gift from Mrs. Delores Weaver, the match for the top fundraising teams from the clothing center.

Cathedral creates “Pony Express” fundraiser

Thanks to COVID-19, the Stewardship & Development Council at St. John’s Cathedral knew it was facing a strange pledge season. Desiring to create a fundraising campaign that would build community, meet the church’s financial needs, and bring everyone together, it discovered the answer in a good, old-fashioned Pony Express-style campaign and called it “Count on Me.”

Just as the Pony Express helped spread important news to bind the nation during the Civil War, the Count-on-Me Pony Express campaign helped members of the Cathedral join together in this time of pandemic.

Approximately 50 team leaders – the Pony Express riders – were sent out with satchels from the Cathedral

to all corners of the Jacksonville metro area on Aug. 9. Each team leader had a delivery list of 8-10 households along with pledge cards and information. The leader brought the satchel to the first home on the list. After the recipient filled out the pledge card, sealed it, and placed it back in the satchel, he or she passed the satchel on to the next person. To add a little fun, participants were encouraged to snap a selfie and tag it with #SJCCountonMe.

All satchels were returned to the Cathedral by Aug. 30 for a special Ingathering Sunday. With only three weeks on the road, this was the fastest and most unique pledge drive ever.



Harriett Meyer, the Very Rev. Kate Moorehead, dean of St. John’s Cathedral, and Laura Eldredge stand on the sidewalk near the “satchel” pick up station.

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Knight, Swann join Groundwork Jacksonville board



Ann-Marie Knight



Steve Swann

Groundwork Jacksonville (GWJax) is pleased to welcome Ann-Marie Knight and Steve Swann to its volunteer board of directors. Knight is vice president of community engagement and chief diversity officer for University of Florida (UF) Health Jacksonville. Swann is city engineer for the City of Atlantic Beach.

“Groundwork is fortunate to have Steve and Ann-Marie join our growing Board. Ann-Marie’s experience in community engagement and health equity, and Steve’s environmental and water quality expertise will bring valuable technical knowledge to our group while their passion for our mission expands Groundwork’s reach and advocacy in the community,” said Groundwork Jacksonville Board Chair Kristina Nelson, partner at Finger, Nelson & Maguire, PLLC.

At UF Health, Knight is responsible for the development of external and internal activities that contribute to improvements in the long-term health of the community and the reduction of health disparities. She also provides vision and leadership for the diversity, inclusion, and equity efforts across the Jacksonville enterprise. She previously served as the community engagement administrator for Mayo Clinic Jacksonville, directing community investments and employee engagement.

A retired Navy veteran, Knight began her healthcare career at Naval Health Clinic Pearl Harbor, Oahu, Hawaii, and ended her military care here in Jacksonville at Naval Hospital Jacksonville. Knight holds a Master of Healthcare Administration degree from Baylor University and a Bachelor of Business degree in finance from University of North Florida (UNF).

Knight is a fellow of the American College of Healthcare Executives and serves as the regent for the North and Western Florida chapters. Locally, she serves on the board of directors for the Non-Profit Center of Northeast Florida and has served

as vice-chair on the City of Jacksonville’s 2019-2020 Charter Revision Committee, the JAX Chamber Board of Governors, and is an alumnus of Leadership Jacksonville, Class of 2016.

Swann is a professional engineer with more than 30 years of environmental and agricultural engineering experience. Prior to joining the City of Atlantic Beach, Swann spent 25 years with Applied Technology & Management, Inc., a multidisciplinary engineering consulting firm, working on water resources and engineering projects for municipal, industrial and agricultural clients throughout coastal areas of the southeast U.S. and in over 26 countries. He began his career as an intern with the Jacksonville Electric Authority (JEA), followed by five years in the Florida Department of Environmental Protection’s Northeast District Office as a permitting and compliance engineer.

Swann’s primary areas of expertise include dredging design and permitting, water quality evaluations, nutrient management planning, stormwater and wastewater treatment system design, wetland system restoration and construction and environmental impact assessments. He holds both undergraduate and graduate degrees in environmental engineering from the University of Florida.

Swann currently serves on the Board of Directors of the Friends of the Guana Tolomato Matanzas National Estuarine Research Reserve, Jacksonville International Airport Community Redevelopment Agency, and the South Atlantic Fisheries Management Council Migratory Pelagic Species Advisory Panel. He also previously served two terms on the Jacksonville Waterways Commission.

New principal appointed at Ruth Upson Elementary

When students started school at Ruth N. Upson Elementary Aug. 20, a new principal was at the helm. Faith Roberts-Graham has been appointed principal of the historic Murray Hill school. She takes the place of Dr. Yvonne Skinner.

Roberts-Graham has been with the Duval County Public School system for 14 years and has focused her career with a specific concentration in literacy development and early enrichment opportunities for students. In the past she has served for four years as an elementary assistant principal and two years as an elementary instructional reading coach. This is her first year as a principal of an elementary school.

“It is a privilege and honor to be a part of the Upson family. I look forward to continuing the long legacy of academic excellence with each member of our school’s community,” she said in a newsletter to the school community.

Roberts-Graham said the theme for school this year will be “learning is magical.” As an educational leader, she said it is vital that everyone connected with the school – students, teachers, and parents – be excited to be there. “This attitude enables everyone to meet the challenges of academic excellence in a positive, safe, fun, and nurturing environment. It is my belief, when all stakeholders work together as one, nothing but greatness will arise,” she said.

Because of the Coronavirus pandemic, Roberts-Graham said this year may be slightly different than other school years. To ensure the school will have a healthy and effective learning environment, plexiglass in the front office and desk shields in grades 3-5 have been installed. Communal water fountains have been secured with paper bags/tape until they are safe to use. Also, school officials will conduct daily



Principal Faith Roberts-Graham

temperature checks, focus on hand washing, as well as maximize classroom space to allow for social distancing, implement “Calm Classroom,” a school-wide mindfulness program, schedule changes for students’ rotation during resource, lunch, recess, and hallways to aid with social distancing, and add more cleaning routines within each classroom.

“At Upson, our top priorities will be on health, safety, the social/emotional well-being of our school community and Standard Based Instruction to close any learning gaps created by distance learning this past spring, or the lack thereof due to extenuating circumstances. Our hallways have been empty for a long time and are aching for the energy and smiles that come with the presence of children. We have been working very hard throughout the summer to prepare our building for a magical new year! Our theme this year is “learning is magical.” We will continue to provide academic experiences for our students that are rigorous, relevant, and executed safely,” she said.

Former councilman joins Historical Society board

At its July Board of Directors meeting, the Jacksonville Historical Society (JHS) welcomed William H. Bishop as a new member of its Board of Directors.

“The history of a community serves as its collective memory,” said Bishop when asked why he was interested in serving on the JHS board. “It reminds us of who we are, where we’ve been, and can help guide us to where we’re going. A community’s architecture is the physical manifestation of that history and its condition expresses how we feel about it. The Jacksonville Historical Society’s tireless work to preserve and promote our history and all of its manifestations is vital to telling our story and instilling pride in our community.”

Bishop, a practicing architect since 1983, has served as vice president and chief operating officer for Akel Logan Shafer, PA for the past 28 years. His professional accomplishments include the rehabilitation of the historic Main Post Office building in downtown Fernandina, rehabilitation of historic post office buildings in several other cities in Florida and Georgia, the design of Pope Vocational High School and the Kirk Memorial Auditorium renovation at the Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind, as well as Duval County Florida Highway Patrol District Headquarters,



William H. Bishop

and renovation of the FSCJ Downtown Campus Main Street Building.

A strong believer in public service, Bishop served on the Jacksonville City Council from 2007 to 2015 and was actively involved in the effort to bring the USS Charles Adams to Jacksonville as a naval ship museum. He is also a past board member of the Riverside Avondale

Preservation, the Meninac Club, and the Jacksonville Community Council Inc. (JCCI), where he chaired a study committee on affordable housing in Jacksonville. He is currently chair of the Southside Businessmen’s Club and serves on the board of directors of Scenic Jacksonville.

Professionally, Bishop is a member of the American Institute of Architects, a past president of AIA Florida, a past board member and corporate secretary of the Mellon C. Greeley, AIA Foundation, Inc., a charitable foundation of AIA Jacksonville. He is the recipient of the 2013 AIA Florida Hilliard T. Smith Silver Metal and AIA Jacksonville’s 1997 John W. Dyal Memorial Award for Community Service.

Bishop holds a Master of Architecture and a Master of Business Administration from the University of Detroit Mercy, and earned his Bachelor of Science in Architecture from Lawrence Technological University in Southfield, Mich.

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Jax Speech and Hearing Center gets a virtual boost



Makeup artist and photographer Renee Parenteau demonstrates on her model, Laura Grippa, as her sister-in-law, Jennifer Grippa looks on.

MAKEUP, MASKS AND MOSCOW MULES SELLS OUT

A recent online 'virtual' event brought women a safe, but stylish COVID-19 distraction, as Jax Speech and Hearing rolled out its most recent fundraiser. At a social distance and ready to learn the tricks of the trade, ladies listened and watched intently online as makeup tips and personalized approaches to a flawless face were revealed and demonstrated by Renee Parenteau Aug. 27.

Parenteau, a local photographer and professional make-up artist opened her studio to the video series, where sessions were limited to 20 guests, for a \$50 fee. She helped ladies discover their most glamorous looks, as bottomless Moscow Mules flowed, despite the masks during the event titled *Makeup, Masks and Moscow Mules*.

The Jacksonville Speech and Hearing Center is located at 1010 N. Davis Street, in Suite 101. The organization serves all individuals with hearing, speech and/or language disorders in our community with the highest quality professional and compassionate care. To learn how you can make a difference in our community and give the gift of communication, visit <https://shcjax.org/make-a-difference/donate/> today.

Santa appears virtually at Wolfson Christmas fundraiser

Santa may have stayed in the North Pole this year, but that did not stop generous donors from making Wolfson Children's Hospital's 9th annual Christmas in July fundraiser a success. During the virtual toy drive, which ended July 31, 2,820 new toys for patients were donated at an estimated value of \$25,660, and the hospital received \$10,975 in monetary donations that will allow Child Life specialists to purchase developmentally appropriate toys for children throughout the year.

Santa Claus and his elves usually deliver toys to Wolfson Children's patients in person the morning of July 25, but amid COVID-19 precautions this year, Santa made a special Christmas Eve Facebook Live appearance instead. He called for toys to be donated via the Christmas in July Amazon registry and financial donations on [ChristmasJuly.com](https://www.ChristmasJuly.com).

Christmas in July began as a way to restock the hospital's toy closets in the summer, when they typically run low. Toys are vital to children's development and their ability to cope while in the hospital. For Child Life specialists, who work directly with young patients to offer comfort, distraction, and age-appropriate education about their procedures, toys are their most important tools.

"Even in the midst of a pandemic, when we are all experiencing different levels of uncertainty, our community still showed up for its children," said Michael D. Aubin, FACHE, president of Wolfson



Although he stayed in the North Pole, Santa made an appearance during the Christmas in July fundraiser at Wolfson Children's Hospital July 25.

Children's Hospital. "To our patients, these toys are much more than just Legos and craft sets. Our Child Life specialists use toys to help these children feel normal and develop on track while they're in our care. We deeply appreciate everyone who donated."

Those who wish to donate toys year-round can do so by visiting the Wolfson Children's Hospital Amazon registry. To make a contribution to Wolfson Children's Hospital throughout the year, please visit [wolfsonchildrens.org/ways-to-give](https://www.wolfsonchildrens.org/ways-to-give).

Students receive bags of school supplies from Riverside Park UMC

COVID-19 was no match for Jane Riechmann and her Outreach Committee crew from Riverside Park United Methodist Church when it came to making sure local children have all the supplies they need when they go to school this fall.

Unlike previous years, the church's Rockin' Back-to-School at Riverside Park UMC



Riverside Park UMC member Kelli Neufeld, who is a teacher at Crystal Springs Elementary with Principal Todd Simpson and an assortment of backpacks for grades PreK through 5.

event was not held on its usual first Saturday of August in Riverside Park. This year, there was no bounce house, no visit from the firemen on the hook-and-ladder truck, no St. Vincent's free physicals and shots, no haircuts, no ID's being done and no representatives from the library or scouts. Although COVID-19 managed to eliminate the annual festivities, it was not able to discourage Riechmann and Beth Joyner, from filling the backpacks and handing them off to fellow church members Susan Bush and Kelli Neufeld to distribute.

This year the backpacks went to students at Bayview Elementary and Crystal Springs Elementary, Lakeshore Middle School and Robert E. Lee High School, with one going out to a very special little girl on the Northside. When she was purchasing school supplies at the Dollar Tree, Riechmann met the little girl's mother who mentioned that her preschool-aged daughter would love one. Riechmann asked for her address and promised to personally deliver a suitable backpack full of age-appropriate school supplies to her at her home a few days later.



Riverside Park UMC member Susan Bush with two teachers from Bayview Elementary, Tiffany Dowling and Georgette Litze

When she called, she discovered the mom was in the hospital, so Riechmann made her way up to the Northside to drop off the backpack to the little girl at her grandmother's house, only to discover, the girl's mother had since died in the hospital. "I'm glad I was able to get it to her daughter," Riechmann said. "She was the kind of person who needed it and deserved it."

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Cultural Council announces art awards nominees



Geexella



Laurie Hoppock



Marie Hane



Mark Krancer



Rebecca Levy



Ulysses Owens



William McMahon

Nominees for the Cultural Council of Greater Jacksonville's 44th Annual Arts awards have been selected and several of the artists are familiar faces in the city's historic neighborhoods.

In all, 28 artists have been nominated including William McMahon, Maria Hane, Geexella, Rebecca Levy, Ulysses Owens, Laurie Hoppock, and Mark Krancer.

The theme of this year's awards ceremony is Bridges: Connecting Arts, Business, and Community. The virtual event will be live-streamed Wednesday, Sept. 2, on the Cultural

Council's Facebook page and website as well as on WJCT's Facebook page and website from the Jesse Ball DuPont Center and hosted by Tenikka Hughes, anchor of Action News Jax. Al Emerick, founder of ValueMapping, will serve as co-host.

This year's evening has added a People's Choice Award, which will be chosen via online voting throughout the event with the winner announced at the conclusion of the program. Candidates for the people's choice honor include Nikesha Williams, Word Revolt, Eleana Ohlander and William McMahon.

The following are nominees for the eight other awards:

Helen Lane Founders Award: Maria Hane, Jenny Hager and Shawana Brooks and Roosevelt Watson III.

Robert Arleight White Award for Advocacy: Geexella, Toni Smailagic and Ulysses Owens.

Art Educator Award: Amandy Holloway, Laurie Hoppock and Rebecca Levy.

Business Award: Jacksonville Aviation Authority (JAA), Jacksonville Transportation Authority (JTA), VyStar Credit Union.

Small Business Award: PETRA, VOID Magazine, and EU Jacksonville.

Art of Giving Award: Tomas Vercher, Ted and Alexandra Stein, and Mark Krancer

Art Innovator Award: Mr. Al Pete, Paul Bourcier and Nicole Radiez

Community Impact Award: Nicole Holderbaum, Marguerite Richardson and Basma Alawee

Theatre Jacksonville to offer fall educational programs

Registration is now open for Theatre Jacksonville's fall educational programs for adults and children in both individual and group virtual options.

For adults, the theatre is partnering with two NYC-based acting and voice coaches – Dorothy Bishop and Jean Tait, to offer one-on-one virtual sessions, all from the comfort of your own home. Bishop is experienced in audition prep, comedy, and interpretation of songs, with a specialization in music theater and pop voices. Tait specializes in audition prep and will be working with students to find new depth in monologues, while strengthening acting technique.

For children ages 7-16, Theatre Jacksonville is offering online Creative Connectivity for Kids classes. Each 10-week class costs \$250 and begins the week of Sept. 14. One-on-one virtual coaching for children and teens is available in vocal/musical theatre and acting/monologue, with instruction provided by Theatre Jacksonville experts. For more information or to register for adult one-on-one coaching sessions, virtual coaching for children or Creative Connectivity classes, visit www.theatrejax.com or call (904) 396-4425.




Steve St. Amand to retire from Junior Achievement

Junior Achievement of North Florida President and CEO Steve St. Amand is retiring after 20 years of service. St. Amand plans to step down from the position on Dec. 31, 2020. He will be honored for his service with an induction into the Junior Achievement of North Florida Hall of Fame.

St. Amand has been overseeing Junior Achievement's (JA) programs throughout 26 counties in Florida since Jan. 1, 2001. During his tenure, he has grown JA of North Florida's program reach from 6,841 students in 2001 to 62,355 students in the 2018-2019 school year and 48,100

students in the most recent school year where in-class education was cut short by the pandemic. Over St. Amand's 20 years of service, 601,193 young people from kindergarten to 12th grade in North Florida received Junior Achievement financial literacy, workforce readiness and entrepreneurship programs.

JA of North Florida has won many awards over the years, but St. Amand is proudest of the local initiatives he created that used JA programs to meet community needs, such as JA Girl\$, JA Boy\$, and JA Work\$. JA Girl\$ has been replicated throughout the country and in four foreign countries. It also won the Met Life Foundation for Entrepreneurial Excellence.



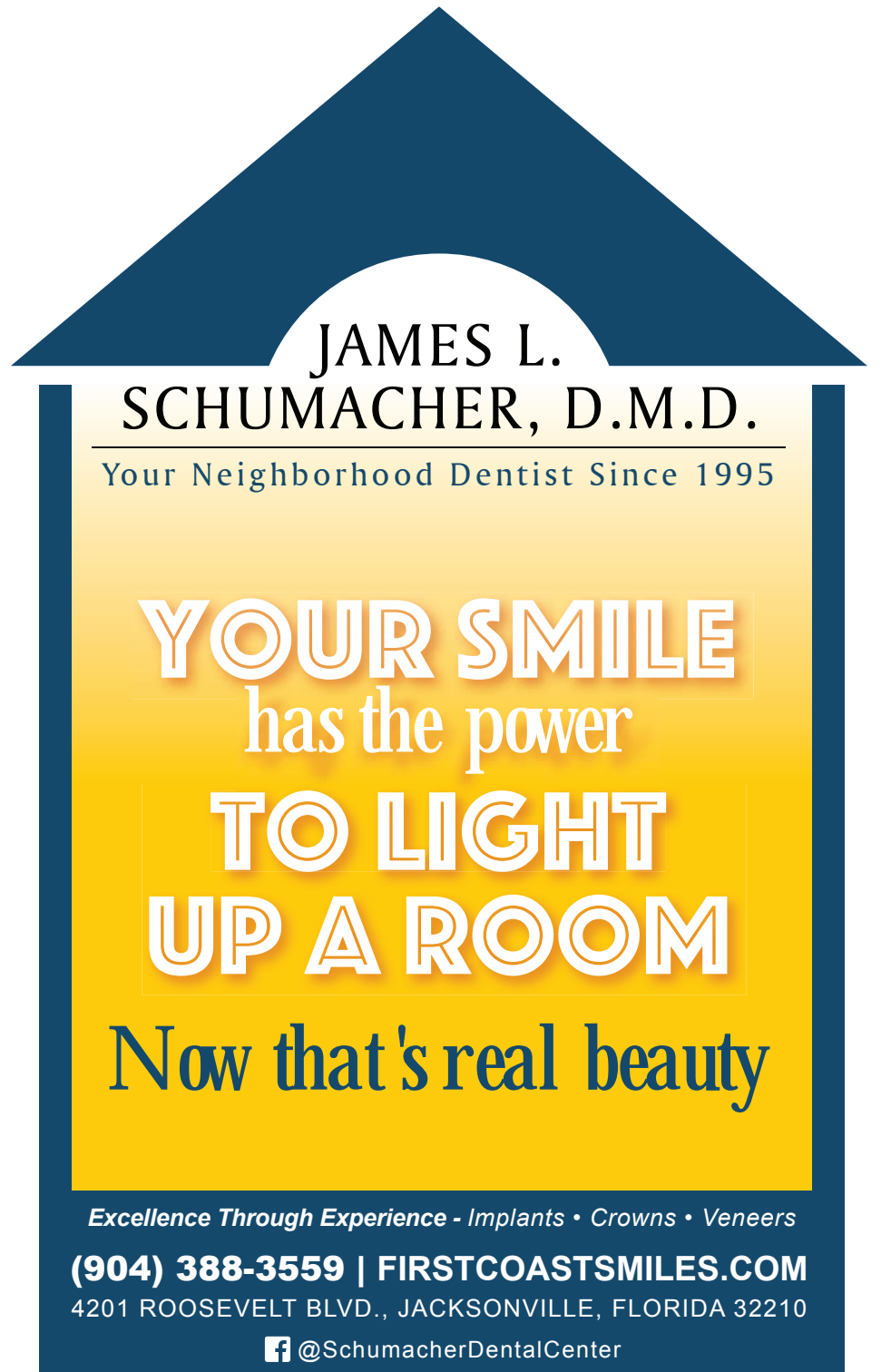
To my friends in Florida State House District 15, in November we will face a decision on who will represent us in Tallahassee. Rep. Wyman Duggan and I have overlapping districts and it seems appropriate to share with you why I believe he is a leader we can trust and in whom we can be proud.

Most city council members do not have much involvement with their state representative, but Wyman and I have had a very high level of interaction due to issues of Resiliency throughout our District and derelict boats in the Ortega River. Wyman filed state legislation on the derelict boat issue and continues to assist in locating funding on the resiliency issues. In summary, Wyman has been hard at work for all of us and is worthy of our support.

Respectfully,

Randy DeFoor
City Council Representative District 14

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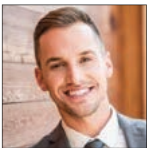
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Social distancing Season Calendar of Events

Daily feeding at the Clara White Mission

When: Any Monday in September
8:30 AM to 10 AM
Where: Clara White Mission,
613 West Ashley Street,
Jacksonville, 32202

The Clara White Mission is a 116-year institution in the Jacksonville community. Known for feeding the homeless and veterans and with your continued help, it will continue to do that. Thank you for your time and caring hearts. Questions or comments about volunteering at this particular event, email Merle Wright at volunteering@clarawhitemission.org or call at 904-354-4162 ext.1100.

Down on the Farm with Clara White Mission

When: Any Thursday or Friday in September
10 AM to 1 PM
Where: 4850 Moncrief Road

Volunteers are needed to harvest, plant, and clean vegetables for the Clara White Mission, a 116-year institution that feeds homeless and veterans in Jacksonville. Any questions and comments contact Merle Wright at volunteering@clarawhitemission.org or call 904-354-4162 ext. 1100



Delicious Destinations "Dine In Edition"

Ascension St. Vincent's Community Outreach
When: September 12 | 6 PM
Where: Virtual and free to the public: visit www.givestvincents.org/deliciousdestinations

Presented by Miller Electric, the signature event will be held virtually and free to the public. Chef Hermann Muller of the Ponte Vedra Inn & Club and Chef Darek Stennes of The River Club will provide step-by-step instructions for attendees to cook an elegant, three-course meal from the comfort of their own homes. Registered participants receive an ingredients list ahead of the event.

44th Annual Arts Awards

Cultural Council of Greater Jacksonville

When: September 2, 2020 | 7 PM
Where: This free live-streamed, virtual event can be seen on the websites and Facebook pages of The Cultural Council, WJCT and Downtown Vision's September virtual Art Walk.

Hosted by Tenikka Hughes and Al Emerick, this event will combine award presentations, appearances from distinguished members of the community, moving and impactful performances, and more including an online auction, pre-awards cocktail party and virtual Zoom party. For event information go to www.culturalcouncil.org/44th-annual-arts-awards.html

The Swingin Shindig

Sanctuary on 8th Street

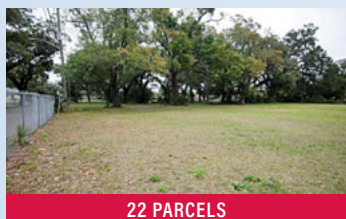
When: September 17, 2020 | 6-8 PM
Where: Virtual Event, visit sanctuaryon8th.org

Join in online to hear great music, participate in an online raffle and consider making a donation which will benefit the Sanctuary on 8th Street, a place of hope for the children of Springfield since 1992. Get into the theme with delicious New Orleans dinner recipes you can make at home. Visit our website at sanctuaryon8th.org



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22 PARCELS

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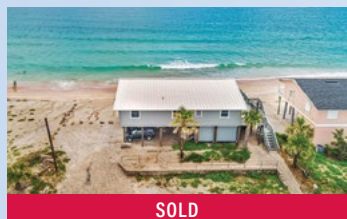
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14th Annual Inshore Slam Fishing Tournament

Anglers for a Cure, Inc.

When: September 25, 2020 | before 6 pm
September 26, 2020 | 4 pm
Rain date: Sept. 27, 2020

Where: Vilano Beach Boat Ramp



This fishing tournament is in loving memory of Doug Carroll. In a continued effort to right colorectal cancer, proceeds will benefit the Borland-Groover Clinic Foundation for research and education. Mandatory Captains meeting followed by a cookout will be held at The Bait Shack, 101 Vilano Causeway in St. Augustine. Live music, a prize drawing, breakfast and lunch included for tournament participants.

Transformations 2020 – Covid Edition

When: September 30, 2020 | 12pm

Where: Virtual event, visit SulzbacherJax.org

What started as a humble shelter that served meals has grown into an organization that has helped literally thousands of homeless get their lives back on track. This free virtual event celebrates 25 years of housing, healthcare & hope. Featured will be musical performances by the Jacksonville Symphony Orchestra & others!

For more information visit SulzbacherJax.org or call (904) 568-8351



18th Annual Buddy Walk

Down Syndrome Association of Jacksonville

When: October 17, 2020

Where: Northeast Florida and Southeast Georgia

Instead of a large-scale gathering, the nonprofit is supporting Buddy Walk teams as they host personalized celebrations. Participants are encouraged to walk one mile on the day of the event to raise funds to support those with Down syndrome. Team captains will host personal, socially distanced events for their teams that follow state and CDC guidelines. To register contact DSAJ.org.

The Home That Daniel Built: An Evening Under the Pavilion

When: October 3, 2020 | 6pm

Where: Daniel Residential Campus, 3725 Belfort Rd, Jacksonville, 32216

A fun-filled evening benefiting the Glyn S. Cook Memorial Scholarship Fund and campus cottage renovations to raise funds to give youth in crisis the tools they need to heal and become productive members of our community. Proceeds will support educational scholarships for formerly homeless teens and pay for essential renovations to the children's cottages.

The 11th Annual Dine with the Swine

CJ Acres Animal Rescue Farm

When: October 3, 2020 | 6-8 PM

Where: 5728 Jones Creek Road, Keystone Heights, FL 32656

An all-inclusive, catered five-course vegan meal with wine pairings for ages 21 and older is by advance ticket purchase only. Tickets at \$43.75 per adult are available on the website: www.cjacres.org. Current social distance recommendations and all safety precautions will be followed. Each guest will receive an etched wine glass as a thank-you gift.

Margarita J'Ville

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Northeast Florida

When: November 6, 2020 | 7pm - 10pm

Where: Mavi Waterfront Bar & Grill, Jacksonville Beach

Key West will come to Jacksonville when Big Brothers Big Sisters of Northeast Florida hosts its Margarita J'Ville fundraiser. Live music, delicious island-inspired cuisine, and sip-free flowing margaritas will be offered while enjoying picturesque views and Jimmy Buffet vibes. Proceeds support Big Brothers Big Sisters' work in assisting youth in realizing their potential through the power of mentorship.



2020 Festival of Flight

The Allison Brundick Haramis Foundation (Angels for Allison)

When: October 18, 2020

Where: Stockton Park

Join a memorial service remembering Angel Children, to be followed by a Festival that is family friendly and free to attend. The nonprofit is returning to where the first Festival of Flight was held at Stockton Park. The event will include games, crafts, music, food, and dancing. There will also be a raffle.

2020 National Philanthropy Day

AFP First Coast

When: November 19, 2020 | 11:30 am

Where: Virtual Event, visit community.afpnet.org/afpfirstcoastchapter/npd48/content168

AFP First Coast's 2020 National Philanthropy Day celebration will go on. The virtual event will honor donors, volunteers and professionals in the nonprofit, civic and service sectors whose gifts of time, expertise, and resources contribute to the quality of life in our communities. The event is a fundraiser for the First Coast Chapter of the AFP to provide scholarships to further individual members' professional development.



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Life Flight celebrates the big 4-0

Life Flight, Baptist Medical Center's air ambulance, celebrated 40 years of continuous service on Aug. 3.

The helicopter service, which takes off from a landing pad atop Baptist Medical Center Jacksonville, had an auspicious debut. Four minutes after it officially went into service in 1980, the French-built, single engine helicopter was called to airlift a Fernandina Beach man who had fallen into a vat of corrosive liquid. Later that same day, during the official dedication ceremony for the five-passenger helicopter, Life Flight was dispatched to its second mission – transporting a sailor based at Mayport Naval Station, who had been severely injured in a diving accident.



A BO-105 Eurocopter flies over Jacksonville in 1995

During its first year of operation, Life Flight flew 641 medical missions, with more than half of its patients being flown directly to area emergency centers. Over the past 40 years, Life Flight has safely transported more than 25,000 adult and pediatric patients in Northeast Florida and Southeast Georgia, serving all five Baptist Health hospitals and three of its four Baptist/Wolfson Children's Hospital satellite emergency rooms.

When it debuted in 1980, Life Flight was the second air ambulance in the state and

one of only 40 in the nation. Richard Malone, Baptist Medical Center's executive director at the time, was instrumental in getting Jacksonville's inaugural air ambulance service off the ground. Before coming to Baptist in 1977, Malone was involved in a trail-blazing hospital-based helicopter project sponsored by the U.S. Department of Transportation.

Life Flight was the first rotor-wing air ambulance in the state accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Medical Transport Systems (CAMTS) and the first in Jacksonville to carry blood products.

"CAMTS accreditation is highly regarded in the air medical industry and represents the hard work of the entire Life Flight staff, crew members, pilots, mechanics, leadership and medical directors," said Brad Elias, MD, Life Flight's current medical director and an emergency medicine physician at Baptist Jacksonville.

"When Life Flight first started at Baptist Medical Center it was cutting edge," recalled Richard Stromberg, MD, an emergency medicine specialist at Wolfson Children's Hospital and Life Flight's third medical director. "Life Flight's establishment marked an enormous change in how certain kinds of emergencies were handled because we suddenly had very rapid transport."

Baptist Health currently contracts its emergency air medical transport services through Air Methods Corp., the largest provider of air medical transport services in the United States. Life Flight 1, the latest in a long line of medical helicopters that have called Baptist Health home, has been stationed at Baptist Medical Center South since 2017.

The helicopter service employs four Life Flight pilots, eight flight nurses and paramedics, a mechanic, and a medical director.



The Life Flight helicopter sits on its pad at Baptist Medical Center Jacksonville

"We fly trauma and medical patients from the scene to the hospital, or hospital to hospital transfers," said Dane Taylor, FP-C, senior clinical base supervisor for Air Methods Jacksonville and a senior flight paramedic for Life Flight since 2007. "Medical calls range from heart attacks and strokes to high-risk pregnancy complications. We never know what the day will bring and nothing we do is routine."

Life Flight 1, a Bell 407GX, flies within a 150 nautical-mile radius of Jacksonville and carries one patient. The standard crew configuration is one pilot, one flight nurse, and one flight paramedic. The aircraft is outfitted as a self-contained critical care unit and contains a hook-up to an incubator for transporting newborns and sick babies with Kids Kare's Neonatal and Pediatric Transport Teams, a service of Wolfson Children's Hospital.

Other life-saving equipment on board include defibrillation and pacing capabilities to treat life-threatening cardiac episodes;

multiple dual-chamber infusion pumps to deliver fluids; video laryngoscope for airway management; blood products; and LUCAS chest compression system.

Sam Young, PMD, manager of EMS Support and System Emergency Preparedness for Baptist Health and a former paramedic, flew on several different Life Flight helicopters over the years. "The original Life Flight was a single-engine helicopter. Then we transitioned to a series of twin-engine models," said Young, who flew on and off from 1985 to 2001. "It was an honor to serve aboard Life Flight and a very rewarding experience."

"The medical care rendered by the Life Flight crew is comparable to that of any Intensive Care Unit," added Dr. Elias, who has served as Life Flight's medical director for more than a dozen years. "Whether it's a complex medical patient or a severely injured trauma patient, Life Flight nurses and paramedics rise to the challenge."

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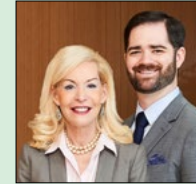
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As head of CastleWise, Tom York has an economics degree from the University of Florida and has held senior-level positions in finance and insurance throughout his career. He most recently served as the president of Clear Payment Solutions before branching off to start up CastleWise Realty & Insurance, and he holds the Chartered Property and Casualty Underwriter (CPCU) designation, which is one of the most highly regarded certifications in the insurance industry. He also has a wealth of experience in real estate and insurance having previously worked on the carrier side with Tower Hill Insurance Group of Gainesville and Citizens Property Insurance in Jacksonville. He is extremely familiar with Jacksonville's historic communities, having lived in Riverside for the past 10 years with his wife, Andria and two daughters, Meara, 5, and Tessa, 10 months.

How to find your castle and protect your kingdom

CastleWise Realty & Insurance President Tom York has a motto: "To find your castle and protect your kingdom."

As the principal of Jacksonville's newest realty that offers a one-stop experience allowing clients to buy or sell a home while taking care of all insurance needs under one roof, he offers this advice: "Consolidating your contact points for everything related to your largest investment only makes sense. I started CastleWise because I felt that the service and attention to detail in both the insurance and real estate industries was lacking and I wanted to fix that. Over time, I've seen both industries fall prey to acquisition and franchise, and a lot of the personal experience you would expect has all but disappeared," he said.

In both real estate and insurance, it is important that technology make things easy for the customer, he said. "Our firm offers an option for a fully touchless and electronic experience. Because it is important to have easy access to information on both your

"I started CastleWise because I felt that the service and attention to detail in both the insurance and real estate industries was lacking and I wanted to fix that."

— Tom York, CastleWise

home purchase or insurance renewal, the fact that documents from both agencies can be bundled together on an app like the one CastleWise provides for both iOS and Android users, helps to simplify matters and make things easy for the customer," he said.

"Technology should be used as a supplement to enhance a customer's experience instead of replacing the critical human-to-human interaction so vital when buying a home or deciding on necessary insurance. People should have their semiannual risk

reviewed with their insurance agent more than once a year, in person, on Zoom, or over the phone, to ensure that their personal risk management program is structured effectively," he said, noting all that comes standard to CastleWise customers. "Life changes a lot throughout the year, and we want to make sure that we stay in lock step with our customers."

In order to find the right product at the right price to meet a client's individual need, it is important to have the right insurance agent, one that is able to check the offerings presented by as many different insurance carriers as possible, he said, noting his firm has access to more than 20, and that number is growing every month. Unparalleled market access is key, he said.

And because each individual client is different, the kind of coverage and amount of insurance will vary from each person, so it is important to work with an agency

CONTINUED ON PAGE 29

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“The key is working with a group that takes a consultative approach to your needs. If you haven’t talked to your insurance agent in the past year and don’t know their name, that’s a sign it may be time to make a change.”

— Tom York, CastleWise



like CastleWise, which offers a wide variety of coverage including personal auto and homeowners to commercial liability and even kidnap and ransom insurance. “It all boils down to the agent experience,” he said. “The key is working with a group that takes a consultative approach to your needs. If you haven’t talked to your insurance agent in the past year and don’t know their name, that’s a sign it may be time to make a change.”

Understanding that many first-time home buyers may not know where to start, York recommends selecting an agent that can offer personalized customer service and is committed to getting the best deal for the client. What they should look for is an

agency like CastleWise, that has a stable of friendly, talented, and experienced agents who are able to draw on an intimate knowledge of North Florida’s neighborhoods and can offer exceptional guidance during every step of the homebuying process. “It is important not only to have a professional assist in the search for the right property, the agent should remain at the client’s side during home tours, negotiations, and the closing, to ensure the entire journey is hassle-free and enjoyable,” he said.

In selling a home, it is important that the agent do a complete market analysis of the neighborhood to determine the ideal selling price. Clients should also expect agents to assist them in professionally staging their

home, he said. And once a buyer and seller come to a decision, it is important that a managing broker and full-time deal coordinator be on-site to assist so that scheduling, contracts, and closings come together seamlessly, he added.

Selecting the right agent, is perhaps the most important aspect in buying or selling a home. It is important to make sure they have familiarity with the neighborhood as well as the education, qualifications, and experience to serve you well, he said.

A firm should have expertise in all areas of the region in which it serves, so that its knowledge-base covers a wide variety of neighborhoods and price-points, he said. CastleWise’s current offices are based in

Southside at 7220 Financial Way, Suite 300, just off J. Turner Butler Boulevard, with expansion plans for offices in Avondale and Atlantic Beach.

“As with any business, success depends on the quality of the agents and employees, and the quality of those who serve the company often depends on the compensation they receive,” he said. “You get what you pay for,” he said. “From the very beginning, at CastleWise it is our intention to always pay our agents and employees better than the rest of the market,” he said. “It’s important that both consumers and agents see the same benefits in doing a transaction – value, access to technology, and top-tiered support, which is what you get at CastleWise.”

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Tom York, CPCU | President

Question: If a vaccine was developed tomorrow, would you take it? Or would you wait to see the results of the initial tests and trials? Or would you not take it at all?

By Marcia Hodgson, Resident Community News



Absolutely not. I wouldn't take it. I've never had a flu shot in my life. I don't want to introduce something into my system that could be toxic. They have to add things into the vaccinations to help them progress through your system and those particular items, mercury and aluminum, are toxic to our system. I know there are different kinds of mercury and people say, 'I used to play with mercury' This is not the kind of mercury that is really healthful. In this pandemic, the results have been skewed. We don't know what the results are from the testing. The testing has been 90% I've heard, then I've heard 80%. We don't really know the facts of how many tests are false positives. The hospitals are at a huge advantage to say that somebody has COVID when they don't. They actually get more money if somebody dies of COVID versus if they die of a heart

attack or something else. The facts are so skewed, and nobody really knows the honest facts. This is more of a practice for a pandemic that might be coming that could be four times worse. I've heard from the researchers. I am in school. I'm getting a Master of Science in health psychology. I've been studying this for the last two years. I just don't think this is the pandemic that we've all been led to believe it is.

— JANE COLLAR



I would not take it at all because less than half of 1% of anybody has shown any symptoms to actually have any repercussions of anything like dying or anything like that. I find it unnecessary.

— MARK JOSEPH



I wouldn't take it because it's my personal opinion it should be an option and not mandatory. I wouldn't take it because there are more people recovering than not. I don't think it is needed.

— MISTY KLINE



I would not take it at all, and my reasoning is that it's just like the flu, we don't know a whole lot about it. I get a flu shot and I still get the flu. It is just not worth the risk for me to make my body sick if I don't have to.

— ZOE UPRIGHT



I am a cancer patient so I would definitely want to wait for the testing results. I am not against it. I just would not be sure of how it would react to the other medications that I am on currently. I am definitely for getting a vaccine.

— BLAKE CRENSHAW



I would wait to see the results. We have to know if it works, and if it works on us, and for what population it works, and for how long it works and whether there are any long-term side effects. Something that is rushed this quickly, it is impossible to know the long-term side effects.

— GREG PRZYBYSZ

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I would definitely wait and probably still be hesitant. I think because it hasn't been out long enough, I don't want to be a guinea pig. It's like our grandkids are in Texas, and I'm still unsure if we should go see them. My thought is, they've been quarantined, and we've been quarantined, and at my age, if I get it and die with it, I've seen my grandkids. I guess I'm very hesitant. I'm just not real big on putting things into my body. I try to stay very healthy. I don't want to be a guinea pig, and I don't know what it is. But I do know there are other people out there who will do it. So, I will wait, and I probably still wouldn't do it.

— PAM BACK



I would wait to see the results. I think in developing a vaccine you need to see what the long-term effects are and the negative effects of the vaccine. If everything is fine, I would absolutely take it.

— ZACH IACOPUCCI



Yes, I'd take it, but I'd give it a month to see the result. It sounds smart to see how other people react before I would take a vaccine. I'm for taking it, but I'm for somebody else walking through that gate before me.

— ROB FEAGIN



I would not take it at all. I'm just not big into vaccines. I think they have run this one through so fast, too, that I don't have a whole lot of confidence in it.

— BOBBY BACK



I would wait to see the results of the tests. I can't trust it right now because it's so new. I would definitely wait until there is probably at least a year to see how it panned out. We just don't know if there are going to be any negative effects of getting that vaccine. I just wouldn't want to expose myself to something that we just don't have enough research on.

— MINDI MEYER AND COOPER



I would definitely take it right away. It can't hurt, and I think it would speed along the process of learning something about it faster for the sake of everyone. I think we will all suffer some from it, but I think beginning to take it is the smart thing to do. Everybody takes the same risk at the same time, which is sort of altruistic.

— SCOTT DORMAN



I'd wait to see the effects. What if you grew a tail or something? I'd want to wait and see what happened. If other people want to take it, they are voluntarily taking it if they want to. I will let the other people who want to take it and think that's a good decision, they can take it and we can all see if it affected them or not.

— ALEX MEYER



I don't know. I don't know how to answer that. I would call my mother and ask her what I should do. That's exactly what I would do.

— ASHLEY OLIVER



I'd get the vaccine right off the bat because it's a pandemic and I think we all need to do our part.

— STEVE COLLAR

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In Memoriam

Rosa Ann Cooke Kasell

November 23, 1936 to August 1, 2020

Rosa Ann Kasell, longtime former secretary of Avondale Baptist Church and a resident of Avondale for nearly 65 years, passed away peacefully at her home while under hospice care Aug. 1.

Known for her true Southern hospitality, infectious laugh, and devotion to her family, Kasell, who was known by her middle name "Ann," struggled with congestive heart failure and COPD and was cared for in the home of her beloved daughter and only child Betty AnnKasellCoyle.

A native of Charlotte, N.C., she was the daughter of Neal Leon Cooke, Sr., and his wife, Willie Lou Cagle Cooke. She moved to Jacksonville in 1956 to begin a career at Southern Bell and took up residence in a boarding house near Memorial Park in Riverside. It was there that she met the love of her life, John Richard Kasell, and soon after they were married on December 29, 1956. "They got married in the boarding house, and my grandmother made her wedding dress," said Coyle. "My grandmother was a fantastic seamstress. She made all my clothes when I was growing up."

Kasell's husband, John Richard, was a banker and helped to open Barnett Bank in Murray Hill before eventually becoming president of the bank's branch in San Jose. Kasell worked for "Ma-bell," and Carolina Casualty Insurance Company, but ended her career when her daughter was born. During her time as a housewife and stay-at-home mother, Kasell remained active with volunteer work, serving the local blood bank and fundraising for the Jacksonville Children's Museum, which later became the Museum of Science and History on the Southbank.

Coyle was in high school when Kasell began her true professional calling as secretary at Avondale Baptist Church, where she served



for 24 years. "During her tenure at the church, Mom was the go-to and problem solver," said Coyle.

Kasell was also a talented pianist who began teaching her daughter piano when she was 3 years old, allowing for Betty Ann to eventually become a church pianist and substitute organist at the church.

She was also known to be extremely hospitable, and often entertained young singles from the church in her home. Many were Navy pilots from Naval Air Station Jacksonville, and to this day, a few still remain in contact with her family, said Betty Ann.

"Ann was very cordial and very welcoming to both friends and foes alike," said Terence Coyle, Kasell's son-in-law. "I don't think she ever met anybody that

she didn't bring into the house to say, 'how can we help you?' She was always looking to meet other people's needs and was very quiet about it," he said.

Betty Ann agreed. "It got to the point where they would just come over as if it were their home, and my mother would feed two or three of them dinner every night," she said.

One of the young people Kasell entertained in the 1970s was Blair Horner, who expressed appreciation for Kasell's hospitality by writing a memory in her online obituary guest book. "I first met the Kasells at Avondale Baptist Church back in 1978. On my first visit to the church, Ann and Richard welcomed me. Soon I was regularly being invited, along with some of the other young adults at church, to their home. The Kasells treated me like family. Ann was to this day the most gracious host and sweetest person I have ever met. Her kindness is a good example of what it means to be a Christian," Horner wrote.

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In Memoriam

Arthur Chester Skinner, Jr.

February 20, 1922 to August 7, 2020

Philanthropist Arthur Chester Skinner, Jr., who played a major role in the development of Jacksonville's southside, passed away peacefully in his sleep of natural causes Aug. 7.

Referring often to himself as a simple "country farmer," the always humble Skinner was so much more than that. Throughout his 98 years, he was first a family man who relished raising his children and giving back to his community. During his life he worked as an engineer, operated a successful dairy business, served on multiple community boards, gave abundantly to his alma mater, The Bolles School, and generously contributed to the growth and expansion of his hometown, Jacksonville, which he dearly loved.

Born on February 20, 1922, Skinner grew up in South Jacksonville at a time when the lands to the south and east of the St. Johns River were mostly woods, marsh, or sand dunes.

Skinner's family had ties to Northeast Florida for more than a century. His father, Arthur Chester Skinner, Sr., built the first house on Old Kings Road South, when Old St. Augustine Road was still made of brick and University and San Jose Boulevards were dirt roads.

In 1926, when Skinner was 4 years old, his parents attended the grand opening of the San Jose Hotel, which is now the main building on Bolles' San Jose campus, said John Trainer, Skinner's longtime friend. Skinner often shared with Trainer his vivid memory of the evening. "It was a major opening, black tie, on New Year's Eve. Mr. Skinner remembered that his parents were getting dressed up to go, and his father complained to his mother that he really didn't want to put on a tuxedo," Trainer said.

It was just a few years later after the elegant San Jose Hotel went bust that the building was transformed into the headquarters of Bolles, a military school. Skinner's father, who ran a dairy, signed his son up and paid for his tuition by supplying the school with milk, said Trainer. At Bolles, Skinner excelled in both athletics and academics, graduating in 1940 as class valedictorian, class president, battalion commander, and honor cadet, all achievements he rarely, if ever, mentioned to his family. "We didn't even know he was valedictorian until we walked into Bolles Hall and saw his picture hanging on the wall," said his daughter, Kathy Skinner Newton. "He never told us. We had no idea at all. He was very humble."



Upon graduating from Bolles, Skinner continued his education at Georgia Institute of Technology, where he competed in basketball, baseball, track, wrestling, and football, playing as a lineman for the Yellow Jackets in the 1943 Cotton Bowl against Texas. Earning a Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering in three years, he was again named valedictorian of his class. Years later, in 1999,

Georgia Tech inducted him into its Engineering Hall of Fame.

Throughout his life, Skinner credited his education at Bolles and Georgia Tech with opening his eyes to a whole new world for which he was very grateful. "Bolles did a lot for me with a prodigious education, introducing me to the military and great athletics," Skinner told *The Resident* in April 2020. "It truly was the beginning of my awareness of the world and all its opportunities."

A member of Georgia Tech's ROTC program while in college, Skinner joined the U.S. Army immediately after graduation and was sent to Fort Monroe to serve in a coastal artillery unit where he was trained in the new field of radar technology. There he led the charge of making design modifications, testing, and assembling super-secret radar units, as well as training personnel. After six years of Army service, he was discharged at the rank of second lieutenant.

Upon returning to Jacksonville, Skinner took a job with Reynolds, Smith and Hills, a local engineering and architectural firm before joining his brother, Charles Brightman Skinner, in forming Meadowbrook Farms, a wholesale and retail dairy company. After selling the business in 1985, Skinner successfully committed his time to several family-owned enterprises – farming and cattle, timber operations, real estate, and investments. At that time, he was instrumental in the planning and donation of family lands for the University of North Florida campus, J. Turner Butler Boulevard, Interstate 295, St. Luke's Hospital, and the A.C. Skinner Memorial Youth Baseball Complex, which was named in honor of his late father.

Skinner also served the Jacksonville community as a director of American National Bank and a founding director of Memorial Hospital. But perhaps closest to his heart was The Bolles School, which he supported generously both as a trustee and ardent champion of its athletic programs.



A. Chester Skinner, Jr. and his children: back row: Rusty Newton, Kathy Newton, Chip Skinner, Jenifer Skinner, David Skinner. Front row: Erin Skinner, Chris Skinner, A. Chester Skinner, and Kim Skinner.

"No single individual has done more for the Bolles community throughout its history than A. Chester Skinner Jr.," said Bolles President and Head of School Tyler Hodges. "His commitment to the school began during Bolles' earliest years when he led his peers as class president and valedictorian and continued unwaveringly through the decades through innumerable volunteer positions, campus projects and work in all areas of school life. Mr. Skinner tackled projects with the goal of strengthening and improving our programs and kept a keen eye on the campus needs until his passing at age 98. He has enriched our school in many ways, and always did so with determination, commitment, and humility. Our community has lost a great man, alumnus and friend."

Skinner was a life-long member of Riverside Park United Methodist Church, which was where he met his wife of 45 years, Katherine Godfrey, who died in 1996. The couple had four children. He later married Constance Stone, who was also a member of Riverside Park UMC. His four children, Arthur Chester "Chip" Skinner III, Katherine Skinner Newton, David Godfrey Skinner, and Christopher Forrest Skinner as well as his 15 grandchildren and 27 great grandchildren all attended Bolles.

And while he was a frequent spectator at Bolles plays, recitals, and sporting events, he was a football fan first, and a close friend of Coach Corky Rogers, said Trainer, former Bolles head of school. "My wife, Alice, and I would sit with him at football games. Most of the time our team would be pretty far ahead, and I would say, 'Mr. Skinner, are we feeling sorry for the other team yet?' He would say, 'no, not yet.' Often, we would get accused of running up the score, which Corky opposed. Corky would put in his second string, then third string, and on occasion we would still be running up the score and I would ask, 'Mr. Skinner, are we feeling sorry for the other team yet?' He would say, 'no, not yet, but we're getting close,'" Trainer recalled.

"He was one of the most enjoyable people I've ever had the privilege of working with. He was amazing, optimistic, and always supported and encouraged others. He was a great patriot and loved our country," Trainer

continued, adding that Skinner was responsible for installing flagpoles in the front and rear of Bolles Hall as well as ensuring that the school's Skinner-Barco football stadium was built to his specifications.

A man who enjoyed working with his hands, Skinner very talented in carpentry, constructing benches and other additions to the Bolles' stadium in his backyard workshop. He also crafted five children's playhouses, all in different architectural styles, for the families of each of his children and a niece, where he personally designed and drew the plans, said his daughter, Kathy, noting her Victorian playhouse came complete with a fireplace, a mantle, a ceiling fan, and two working bay windows. "They were beautiful works of art," she said.

But most important, Skinner was a man filled with humility, the kind of person whose spirit endeared him to everyone he met. "I'd take him to the Mayo Clinic, and he would know the guy who pushed his wheelchair – where his child went to school and who is wife was. He'd know the same of the woman who drew his blood and of the doctor he went to see," Kathy said, adding he mowed grass and often picked up trash on the Bolles campus. "Somebody once told me when they were Bolles they saw my father was on a stepladder changing a lightbulb and thought he was the custodian," she said.

"He was very interested in other people. He gave 110% to everything he put his mind to. He always had time for you and made you feel special. He never missed an opportunity to tell you how proud he was of you. I think he had an impact on a lot more people than we realize. Several people have told me that he was like a second father to them," she continued.

Since her father's death, Kathy said many people have reached out to her family to share how her father inspired them. "One person shared this: 'Your dad never told, he showed and calmly expected us to watch, learn, and follow suit. He taught me that no matter your background, no matter your status, set a goal, and work hard. If you are willing to do this, you will earn the respect of those around you.' I thought that summed up very well who he was," she said.



One of five unique playhouses A. Chester Skinner built for his grandchildren.



Members of the Skinner family wear tee shirts denoting "Papa ...The Man ... The Myth ... The Legacy," as they gather with their family patriarch, A. Chester Skinner, during the Christmas holidays.

In Memoriam

James Frank Surface, Jr.

March 15, 1938 to July 17, 2020

James Frank Surface, Jr., a “rainmaker” in every sense of the word both professionally and personally, passed away suddenly of a heart attack July 17. He was 82.

Known as “Big Frank” to his family and friends, Surface was a larger-than-life kind of guy who worked as a successful corporate lawyer and entrepreneur, founding several lucrative businesses including the former Stand N Snack franchises, Lakeshore Dry Storage Marina, Costa Verde Plaza and Vista de Mar, the first condominiums in Jacksonville Beach, and Vesta Property Services, which is headquartered in Riverside. Most of all, Surface was a man of integrity and the kind of family man who adored his wife and three sons, Frank III, David, and John, their wives, and made it a point to nurture a special relationship with each of his eight grandchildren.

“He built a life that was as big as his imagination and did things a lot of people only sit and think about,” said his long-time business partner Bryan Simpson of Ortega. “Things happened with him. He was a doer in business and in his private life. He saw opportunities when others saw trouble or confusion. He was a pretty remarkable man.”

His daughter-in-law, Heather Surface, agreed. “He went from being Superman to just gone,” she said, noting he worked hard up until the last and his death came as a surprise to many. “He was strong, honorable and kind, just the best person I’ve ever known. He was very positive and very supportive. He was Mr. Everything, and then he was gone.”

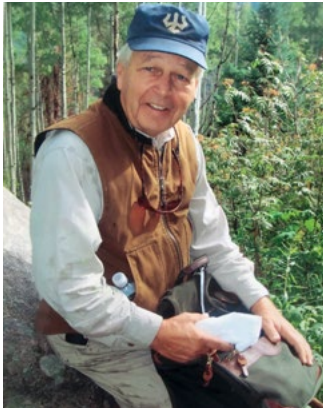
A native of Salem, Virginia, and the youngest child of John Frank Surface, Sr. and his wife, Myrtle, Surface made his way to Jacksonville at an early age after his father was appointed area sales manager for the Jergens Soap Company.

A life-long Christian who was raised by a “tough-as-nails” mother, Surface had two older sisters, Bobbi and Jackie. After his father died when he was 21, his mother remarried Admiral Herman S. Duckworth, a man Surface adored.

As a child, he attended West Riverside Elementary, John Gorrie Junior High, and Robert E. Lee High School, and it was there he began life-long friendships with Bob Feagin, Tom and John Donahoo, Kirby and Tommy Alexander, Kim Weller, and Charlie Commander among others. Feagin’s father, Robert, former president of Florida Publishing Company and founder of The Players Championship, was his mentor.

Surface’s first job at a young age was as a pin setter in a bowling alley where the current Shoppes of Avondale are located, said his son, David. “He would sit above the pin area and then drop new ones by hand into a cradle which was then lowered to the floor,” he said. “Before school he also had two paper routes having earned enough money to buy a Vespa and thus improving his efficiency. When he was older, he worked summers as an electrician’s mate at the old Jacksonville Shipyards downtown.”

A 1956 graduate of Robert E. Lee High School, Surface excelled at academics, athletics, especially football, and served as captain of the basketball team. He often told of playing football for Lee and catching a pass “backwards” for a touchdown against Andrew Jackson High School during the annual Thanksgiving



James Frank Surface, Jr.

matchup in the Gator Bowl, recalled Frank III, his son.

Surface graduated from Washington and Lee University in Lexington, Virginia, in 1960 with a Bachelor of Science degree in business management. In college, he was president of the student body, dorm counselor, a member of Omicron Delta Kappa fraternity, and captain of the basketball team, where he proved himself to be a

determined defender against future National Basketball Association greats such as Hot Rod Hundley, Hal Greer, and Jerry West, who he proudly held to a career-low point total while wearing worn-out Converse shoes that exposed his feet, said Frank III. “Frank also guarded Hal Greer from Marshall College who went to the NBA and was a big-time star for Philadelphia,” said Simpson. “Frank said, ‘I knew I was between him and the basket, but he jumped right over me, over my head.’ But Frank stood steadfast and ready to block him.”

Washington and Lee University was always close to his heart. Following in his footsteps, all three of his sons attended the prestigious school. Later he served on the school’s board of trustees for nearly a decade and was sworn in as rector in 1997, serving in that position for six years. As an alumnus, he was also a founding member of the school’s Institute of Honor, which was established in 2000, and chaired his 50th reunion, which endowed the Class of 1960 Professorship in Ethics. He was committed to supporting his alma mater’s student-run honor system, which provides an all-encompassing system of trust on campus.

While attending Washington and Lee, Surface met the love of his life, Sally Holcomb, a student at nearby Hollins University, and they married in 1961. Later Sally worked as a librarian at the University of Florida, while he attended law school at UF, eventually graduating with honors. During this time, Surface also served in the ROTC/Army Reserve in the Judge Advocate General’s Corps at Camp Blanding. “One story he told was of leading his Army convoy on an unauthorized drill onto the beach in South Ponte Vedra and then north past the Ponte Vedra Inn and Spa,” remembered David. “It was during the Cuban Missile Crisis, the scene created quite a panic, yet he somehow was able to avoid getting disciplined by his superiors.”

Following law school, Surface began his career as a practicing attorney at Mahoney, Hadlow, Chambers and Adams, where he eventually became managing partner of the firm. It was there he met Simpson in March 1968, who had been assigned to work with him. “It was a great gift to me, that assignment,” said Simpson. “He was blowing and going. He and some of his friends acquired three sandwich shops and in another four or five months they had taken those sandwich shops public. They paid \$600,000 for the sandwich shops and had taken the idea and franchised it nationwide raising \$10 million. Then five months later, that same \$600,000 purchase was valued at \$55 million.”

The sandwich shops became the Stand N Snack restaurant chain – home of the Big Frank hot dog – and that was just the first of many successful business ventures he implemented during his life including Adcom Metals and Lakeshore Dry Storage Marina. He also pioneered the construction



James Frank Surface, Jr. and his family in Africa in 2018

of several condominium buildings – Vista del Mar and Seascape – in Jacksonville Beach with partners Charlie Commander, George Dickerson, Joe Hixon, and Simpson. “When we went to the lenders some didn’t even know what a condominium was when we started,” said Simpson.

“He was a magician with spread sheets. He would take up an idea, make some assumptions and the next thing you knew he had a great looking pro forma and the energy to push it through. He was busy, energetic, and swinging for the fences hitting a lot of good balls,” said Simpson, who worked with him on the condominium projects. “He was a doer and he stayed a doer his whole life. He was a rare combination of intellect, energy, persuasiveness, determination, and imagination. He was the most fun partner you could have been associated with, and we were business partners for 50 years.”

In the 1970s, Surface and his partners also formed the Bold City Travelers, which chartered jets to transport hundreds of skiers each year to most of the western resorts, a business that continued for 15 to 20 years, said Archie Jenkins of San Jose, his close friend from college. Surface first met Jenkins, who graduated from Landon High, briefly in 1953 when they played basketball against each other in high school, but the two became fast friends at Washington and Lee when they pledged the same fraternity. “Frank and I would often race head to head down the long slopes until one day we were forced to stop by our wives who, for fear of injuries, threatened to leave us,” Jenkins said.

When his sons, Frank and David, played football at Washington and Lee, Surface took time off from his law practice to go to Lexington and teach at the school’s law school as an adjunct professor just so he could watch the games and practices. “He taught a law seminar that he devised on law and entrepreneurship, and it was perfect for him,” said Simpson. Surface also served on the Institute for Honor Council, which promotes the school’s honor code and student self-governance, which he firmly believed helped to develop character and honor in young men and women.

Surface finished his law career Of Counsel with LeBoeuf, Lamb, Green and MacRae. Later he decided he wanted to embark on something new so he co-founded Vesta Property Services, where he served as chairman and chief executive officer for the past 25 years. Under his leadership, Vesta grew into one of the largest property management companies in Florida, providing community and amenity management, financing, and ancillary services to master-planned residential communities.

Always a champion for Downtown Jacksonville, Surface was involved in many civic initiatives. “He gave himself credit – unconfirmed – for suggesting the name

of the old Jacksonville Landing,” said David Surface.

Active in the community, Surface served as a founding member of St. Mark’s Episcopal Day School, the Jacksonville Zoological Society, Enterprise Florida and Central Jacksonville, Inc. He was also chairman of several local boards including Leadership Jacksonville, the March of Dimes Campaign, and the Jacksonville Charter Revision Commission, as well as serving on the board of The Bolles School, St. Mark’s Episcopal Church Foundation and the Jacksonville Chamber of Commerce.

A man who liked to keep his good friends close, Surface was a member of two local monthly lunch groups, the No Purpose Lunch Group (NPLG) and the Good Guys Club, which he enjoyed for more than 30 years.

He enjoyed hunting ducks at Maryfield Plantation, his property in southeast Georgia. And he and his wife loved to travel and generally took a big trip once a year visiting Asia and Europe. In 2018, the Surfaces treated their large extended family to a trip to Africa for three weeks.

As a man who loved to fish and dive, Surface began taking his family boating in the Bahamas in the early 1970s, first to Walker’s Cay and Bimini in his boat, Sundancer, and later to Elbow Cay on the Sunbird,” David remembered. Over the decades, the excursions turned into guy trips, with many of his friends, such as Jenkins and Royce Hough. “The adventures in the Bahamas were legend,” said Jenkins. “We would have the families with us in the early years, but when we then became more adventure-some we wanted to go into the far reaches where fishing and diving was better and less crowded. There was a paucity of infrastructure where we cruised, so the families stayed behind, and our cruises became guy trips, and we experienced a more modern Robinson Crusoe lifestyle living off sea creatures and speared lobster, fish of all varieties, land crabs, which we’d procure, clean, cook and eat within one to two hours. It was fresh seafood for sure. Frank did all the heavy lifting in all phases, except for cleaning up!” he said, noting on one trip they spotted a white lobster while diving and decided to found the White Lobster Society, a Bahamian enthusiast group, which became a cult of sorts with initiation, bylaws, and traditions. He also helped form Hopetown Rising, a non-profit organization that provides hurricane relief funds to the Abaco Islands.

Surface also loved cooking and was famous for his key lime pie. Simpson recalled a time in the islands when he was making a pie and discovered there were no ingredients for the crust. “We had no graham crackers or anything else, so he made a crust out of crushed up M&Ms. It was delicious,” Simpson recalled. “He never let little hurdles slow him down.”

Riverside resident begins litter collection campaign

By Marcia Hodgson
Resident Community News

If there is one thing that really bothers Jane Riechmann, it is when people throw trash, particularly cigarette butts, on the sidewalk or street.

“If I could have a penny for every cigarette butt I’ve picked up, I would be a millionaire,” said the Beau Rivage resident, noting she often walks along St. Johns Avenue from Mallory Street to The Shoppes of Avondale picking up litter and marvels at the number of cigarette stubs on the ground near the bench at the corner of Talbot Road and St. Johns Avenue. “There is a trash can within five feet, but do the people smoking use it? No way. I want to put a sign there that says, if you are going to put your butt on the bench then put your cigarette butt in that can. In fact, I’d like to have signs made up that say that to hang on all the benches in town,” she laughed.

Riechmann is serious about one thing – there is a litter problem in Riverside and Avondale that needs attention. To alleviate the issue, she has begun a grassroots campaign to encourage fellow residents to keep the community looking its best called UnGRITTY the RIVER CITY. It is a program she has started to clean up her neighborhood. “I have named the program UnGRITTY the RIVER CITY in hopes that a catchy title might add encouragement for participation,” she said. “I am asking residents to take along a grabber and several plastic grocery bags whenever they go out walking so that any trash noticed can be removed. If that is too big a task, I encourage everyone to at least pick up the litter outside his/her home to the street and even in the street if litter is spotted there.”

So far, Riechmann has discussed UnGRITTY the RIVER CITY on NextDoor and with Riverside Avondale Preservation



Board Chairman Brooks Andrews in the hopes that RAP will include her message in its newsletter. She is also trying to get her idea across by word of mouth and has found most people to be supportive.

“I plan to go to shopping areas such as the Shoppes of Avondale, 5 Points, Brooklyn, and Murray Hill to see if I can get merchants to participate by cleaning the area in front of their stores daily. Shops in Europe do daily cleaning and even wash the sidewalks. Just blowing an area and moving the litter to the street is not the answer,” she said.

A former teacher who taught in Duval County for 27 years at four elementary schools – Ramona, Hyde Grove, Beulah Beal and Central Riverside – Riechmann gave up teaching to work as a senior account executive in domestic sales for eight years before retiring in 2004. When she is not picking up trash, she loves to travel, read books, and is an active member of her church, Riverside Park United Methodist. She also volunteers by working in local food pantries and for PACE Center for Girls.

To learn more about UnGRITTY the River City and how you can help, contact Riechmann by email at ungrittytherivercity@gmail.com.

Name that tune: Public invited to name music museum

The Jacksonville Historical Society and a task force dedicated to building a music history museum that will firmly set Jacksonville as the birthplace of many genres of music, including Southern Rock, invite the public to participate in a contest to name the venue.

One part museum, one part intimate performance venue, the unnamed venture will leverage the memories and memorabilia of people who lived through the birth of Southern rock and roll, as well as pay homage to the giants in the blues and jazz genres in Jacksonville’s African American community.

“Jacksonville was a pioneer in blues, jazz, rockabilly, and was the birthplace and launchpad for Southern Rock,” said Dennis Whittle, JHS board member. “By looking back, we provide a foundation to invent the future. In addition to looking backwards, the museum is intended to be a launching pad: What music genres will Jacksonville pioneer next?”

The museum will provide an opportunity for visitors to travel through the history of blues, jazz, Country and Rockabilly to Southern Rock that originated in Jacksonville.

The public is invited to participate in establishing a name for the music history



The Jacksonville Historical Society is inviting the public to participate in naming and branding a proposed music history museum and performance venue.

Photo courtesy of the Jacksonville Historical Society

museum and performance venue, as well as by donating artifacts from music performers who came from Jacksonville or paused here for a time and who subsequently contributed to the rich history of American music that has its roots established in Jacksonville.

Ideas for the name of the museum may be submitted to the Jacksonville Historical Society no later than Sept. 30, 2020. Visit jaxhistory.org for link to survey. The Jacksonville Historical Society and task force will make the final decision but will acknowledge the person(s) whose idea ultimately leads to establishing the venue’s name, brand, and identity.

To contribute items to the museum, contact the Jacksonville Historical Society at (904) 665-0064 or email archives@jaxhistory.org. To donate online, visit jaxhistory.org/donate-now/

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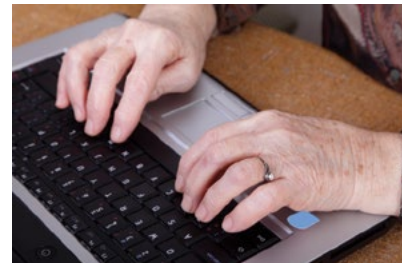
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THE WAY WE WERE: CYNDY IRA REYNOLDS

BY MARY WANSER
RESIDENT COMMUNITY NEWS

A value system instilled by her family and the loyalty of lifelong friends are what have shaped and molded Cyndy Ira Reynolds of Avondale. "I feel like a mixture of so many bright and intuitive and lovely people," she said.

Reynolds is the daughter of Dr. Gordon H. Ira, Jr., the Jacksonville native who had a cardiology practice with his father in the historic St. James Building that now houses City Hall. Her mother, Stephanie Diuguid Kuhling of Atlantic Beach, was raised in Rochester, N.Y., and is a retired psychotherapist from Oak Park, Ill..

Reynolds's parents met in 1953 over Christmas break from Duke University and married the following July at St. Mark's Episcopal Church in Ortega. Reynolds, their only daughter, was born in Durham, N.C. in 1960 while her dad was fulfilling cardiology fellowship training at Duke after having served two years in the Navy in Charleston, S.C. In 1962, the Iras moved to Algonquin Avenue in Ortega where Reynolds spent most of her youth.

"Life on Algonquin Avenue was idyllic," Reynolds said. Even Hurricane Dora in 1964 didn't taint her memories of her time there. Floating in a rowboat in the flood and eating peanut butter and jelly sandwiches by candlelight after sunset quelled any fear.

Whether perched on the banana seat of her pink Schwinn with the flower basket, playing Kick the Can on the lawn, or climbing fruit trees in the backyard, Reynolds always knew when it was time for supper by the special tune whistled out the front door by her dad. Sometimes, she'd be at a neighbor's house with friends putting on a circus for which they'd handwritten invitations and charged admission.

In addition to her father's whistle, "The sound of my youth is the pool in action at the Florida Yacht Club," Reynolds said. Her summers were spent there swimming, sailing, and playing tennis. When not at the club, she could be found at the intersection of Edgewood Avenue and Roosevelt Boulevard in the Edgewood Theatre watching a movie or on Corinthian Avenue in Ortega at either Carter's Pharmacy drinking an ice cream soda or across the street at Banner Grocery signing a tab for a Little Debbie snack cake. Begrudgingly, she took ballroom dance lessons at the studio of Thelma Johnston Baggs while most other girls were taking ballet.

Reynolds said that as she was growing up, she felt fortunate to have grandparents nearby, only 10 minutes away in both directions—Dr. and Mrs. Gordon H. Ira, Sr. on Challen Avenue in Avondale and Mr. and Mrs. Stephen Diuguid on Pirates Cove Road in Ortega. That's pronounced 'do good,' she instructed. "It's a palindrome."



1999 Wedding: back row: John Dawson, Robert Utsey, Dylan Morgan, Bill Buckingham, Glenn Taylor, Mickey Freeman; front row: Jennifer Trout Porter, Tyler Pirrung Alden, Mary Ellen Hulsey Brown, Clicker Hamilton Morgan, the late Dr. Gordon Ira, Jr., Cyndy Ira Reynolds, Beth Ingham Smith, Christian Ferguson Pierre

The Iras had settled in Jacksonville in the 1930s when Reynolds's grandfather began his medical practice. Grandpa Diuguid ended his career in quality control for Birds Eye®, a food processing company, and retired here in the 1950s. Reynolds remembers fondly many mornings that he would drive her to school when she'd miss the bus. "I was raised by my parents and their families, and I'm so grateful for that," she said.

As a child and as an adult into her 40s, Reynolds spent a lot of time with her grandmothers, both of whom lived to be 99 years old. "If that is not the ultimate blessing, I don't know what is," Reynolds said. "I am such a conglomerate of those two women." On one side, comes her lightheartedness, and on the other, her creativity.

Reynolds's schooling began at Harriet Ross's Ortega Kindergarten and proceeded to St. Johns Country Day School for elementary. After a move to Arden Street in Avondale as a pre-teen, Reynolds went to



Cyndy and Grandpa Diuguid 1968

junior high at the Bolles School and graduated from the Episcopal School of Jacksonville in 1978. She remains friends today with many of her former classmates, including the twins Marianne Montgomery Hofheimer and Alison Montgomery Bartz. There's also Frances "Clicker" Hamilton Morgan, whom Reynolds refers to as her "best gal." They met on Algonquin Avenue when they were three years old. Both had brothers as siblings, and there were so many boys in the neighborhood, that the two girls "stuck together like glue," Reynolds said. When she got married in her dad's backyard on the St. Johns River, Clicker and many other of her classmates-turned-friends were there.

Reynolds's business degree in hotel management from the University of Denver led to a 35-year career with Marriott International, managing eight different hotels, moving her throughout the



Cyndy with Grandma "Boppie" Anis Ira

CONTINUED ON PAGE 37



Cyndy and Stephen Ira - Riverside Presbyterian Choir

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Cyndy Ira and her brothers, Stephen, Greg, and Cliff. Christmas 1969.

country—Denver, Fort Lauderdale, Long Island, Atlanta, Chicago, and Milwaukee. She'd come back home to visit family and friends multiple times per year, but she missed being with them regularly. So, she and her husband, H. Perry Reynolds III, made a two-year retirement plan. In October 2015, they bought an Avondale house on Challen Avenue, just one block away from where she used to spend time as a child with her Ira grandparents. In April 2017, they returned for good. "I love being back in Jacksonville," she said.

Although officially retired, Reynolds runs a small pottery business, using the name Cirama Pottery and More. She sells her wares on weekends at Riverside Arts Market under the Fuller Warren Bridge and at Master Gardener Plant Sales. She learned to throw pottery on a wheel and became fairly proficient at it while taking classes in an old barn when she lived in Milwaukee. When she returned to Jacksonville, she and her dad took a class together at Murray Hill Arts Center, where she now belongs to a weekly group, playing in the clay with Cookie Davis and friends.

One of the delights about being back home is the quality time spent with her parents. Before her dad passed away in 2019, she had helped him set up a pottery studio

in his garage, complete with wheel and kiln, where they created ceramic pieces together. Recently, wearing face masks, she and her mom rummaged through a box of Reynolds's baby clothes. She also visits friends with whom she went to school. "Life is all about precious moments, even in times of COVID," she said.

After a nearly 40-year absence, Reynolds notices many changes around Jacksonville. Using her GPS is always a surprise, as the infrastructure makes it easier than she had remembered to get around town. "I no longer assume I know the fastest way to get from point A to point B," she said. And when she left for college, the fanciest mall had been Regency Square, which she recalled as special because that's where her Grandma Ira, whom she called Boppie, would take her for birthday lunches at Lums. There was no St. Johns Town Center. She misses Embers, the rotating restaurant that used to top the JEA building. Today, she spends time in multiple shops and restaurants in Avondale and 5 Points. She is grateful to see that Edge City, a women's clothing boutique, and Dreamette, an ice cream shop, still stand.

Reynolds has also been impressed with the cultural offerings now available in Jacksonville, like the FSCJ Broadway Artist Series at the Florida Theatre and the Florida Forum Speaker Series hosted by Wolfson Children's Hospital. She holds multiple local memberships—Cummer Museum, National Society of the Colonial Dames of America, Artist Guild, and The Art Center Cooperative (TAC). As a master gardener, it's no surprise that she works within the community alongside the Garden Club.

She engages in local affairs, retains friendships that span five decades, and has family ties that go back nearly a century. "It is a wonderful feeling to be home again," Reynolds said of Jacksonville.



Back row - Anis Ira, Stephanie Diuguid Kuhlring, Ginny Diuguid; center row - Gordon Ira Sr., Gordon Ira Jr., Stephen Diuguid; front row - Anis Ira Daley, Phil Diuguid



Stephen, Cyndy, Greg, Cliff 1965



Cyndy Ira, age 2



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A stunning statement of resurrection

By Marcia Hodgson
Resident Community News

Everything is coming up sunflowers now that two local artists have finished the AIDs Memorial mural on the side of the Park Street bridge over Willowbranch canal.

Keith Doles and his assistant, Zac Freeman, both artists with workshops in the Cork Studios, painted the bright, cheery mural on the historic bridge in late August. "We're hoping to create a somewhat realistic sunflower garden," said Doles, who designed the mural. "The concept is a memorial for people who have passed away from HIV/AIDS. I've had some relatives of mine pass away from HIV, so this is special to me."

Freeman said he relished doing the mural, even though no one in his family has died of HIV/AIDS. "I've always thought this park was beautiful, and as soon as I heard

the project was being done in Willowbranch, I was in," he said.

Painted on a bright blue background, the sunflowers, which are different sizes, sit in a field of green, and the names of local residents who have died of HIV/AIDS will be written in the center of the larger posies, he said. After the mural is finished it will be covered with a transparent sealant to protect it from vandalism or graffiti, Doles said.

More than 5,000 Jacksonville residents have died of HIV/AIDS, said Richard Ceriello, and organizer with the AIDs Memorial Project of Northeast Florida in Willowbranch Park, which will be in full view of the sunflower bridge once it is built. "We will add the names to the flowers of the (deceased) local individuals who lived within a block or two of this park," Ceriello said.

Although several local artists submitted proposals to paint the mural, Doles was selected because of the quality of his artwork, Ceriello said. "We had this blank wall, some of it was covered with graffiti, which was pornographic. We wanted to come up with something that was uplifting. How could you not be inspired by a blue wall filled with sunflowers? It's a stunning statement of resurrection."



Keith Doles and Zac Freeman



Using an auger, Dan Hutton digs the holes while Knight Ratliff, Gary Lambert, Richard Ceriello, Jordyn Simon and Janette Ratliff assist with the planting in Willowbranch Park Aug. 22.

Parenting Willowbranch's Centennial Garden

Willowbranch Park's Centennial Garden began to take shape as volunteers with Plant Parenthood planted a variety of greenery in a boggy area of the park Aug. 22. Leading the way were Wally Ericks, Dan Hutton, and Plant Parenthood founders, Gary Lambert, Richard Ceriello, and Theresa Parlato, but several others from the neighborhood helped out as well. The group was excited to receive a hand from Jordyn Simon and Knight Ratliff, who dropped their basketball game on the park's nearby court to lend a hand along with Ratliff's mother, Janette, who also joined in.

Plant Parenthood is an online LGBT gardening club dedicated to socializing as it focuses on developing and celebrating gardening arts among members of the Jacksonville LGBT community regardless



Plant Parenthood founders Richard Ceriello, Gary Lambert and Theresa Parlato

of whether they have a green thumb. The group is assisting in beautifying Willowbranch Park by building a garden near where the future Aids Memorial Project will be installed.



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The Benfield Group, a dynamic duo in local real estate

Curating experiences and lifestyle in the sales process

For Heather Benfield and her husband, David, real estate is much more than just transactions. They know they are guiding others through one of the biggest decisions to be made in life. It is important to them to make sure nobody goes through any purchase or sale alone, and they focus on providing concierge-level service to their customers. They live, work, and enjoy life here and want the best for everyone that places trust in their hands.

The Benfield Group has also focused on the development of a marketing approach all their own and delivers style and substance through blogs, social media, and videos. They provide useful advice on local hubs of activity and cultural resources to help out-of-town buyers feel welcome and informed. When choosing a home, discovering these resources is huge.

For over 10 years, Heather worked in marketing, programming, and events for neighborhood non-profits, including Riverside Avondale Preservation (RAP), Springfield Preservation and Revitalization Council (SPAR), Riverside Arts Market (RAM), and Mandarin Museum and Historical Society. In these roles, she became familiar with processes at several of the city's departments, and she uses that knowledge when working with her customers. Her enthusiasm for Jacksonville's historic neighborhoods can be seen whether she is explaining the COA process or recommending a place to eat.

The Benfields know how to achieve a balanced working relationship, to the benefit of their clients who also seek the balance in

negotiations and real estate prowess. While Heather focuses on marketing, paperwork, and research, David is out front, working hand in hand with buyers and sellers, negotiating the best deal.

"He's a fantastic communicator," said Heather. "When people are in tense situations, he's very level-headed and going to fight for what's best for our client. His ethics are very important, he always handles things in the most respectful manner," she continued. "And we're both used to creative problem solving, which is critical in this job."

Together, the team finds their passions and talents suited for the real estate field and its ever-evolving services. The right mix of qualities has created a successful business model for the Benfields, and they are poised and ready to help make your experience as seamless and prosperous as possible. Achieving the work-life balance doesn't always happen for business owners, but this couple has found their calling in the real estate field.

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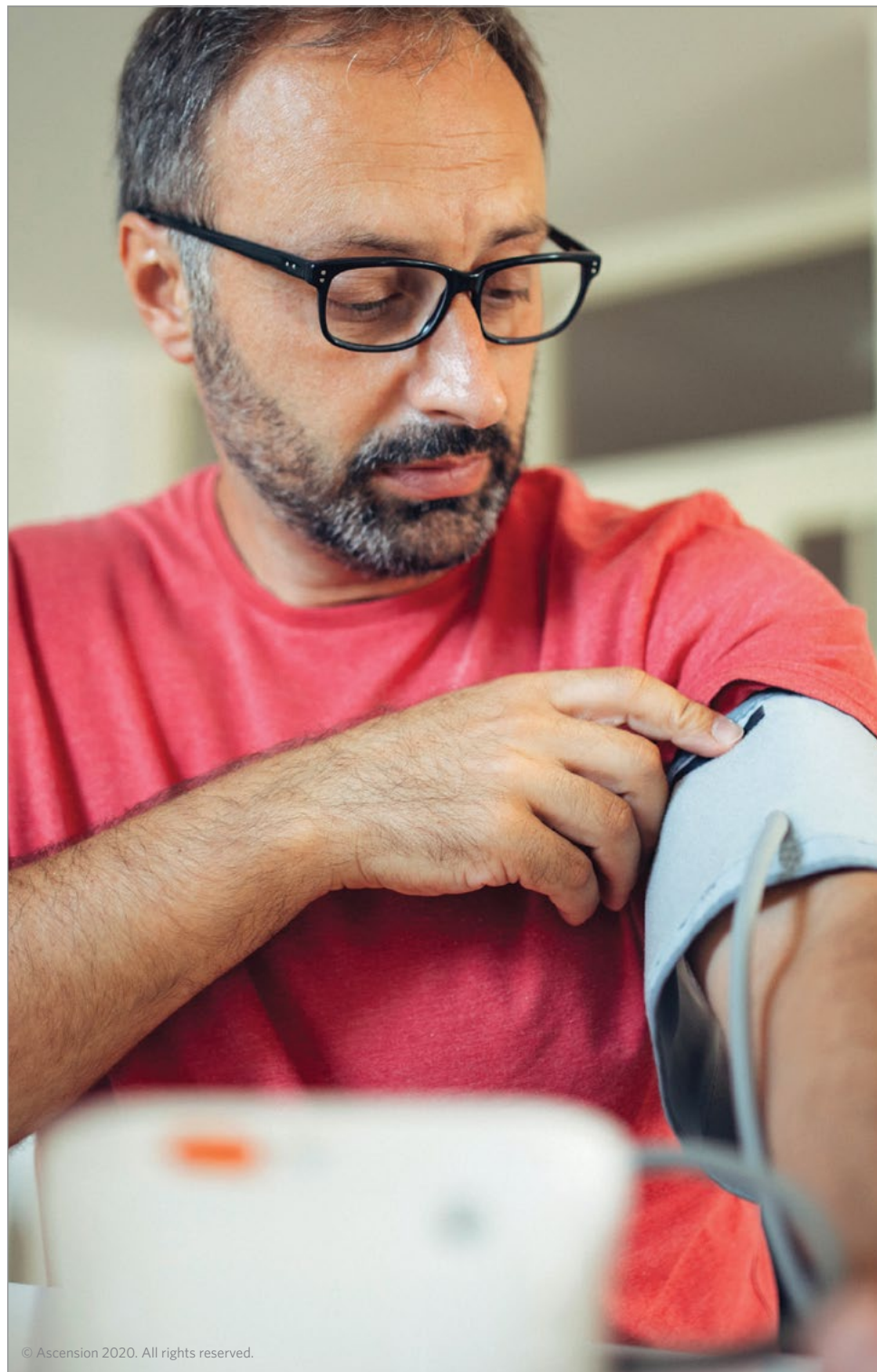
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"When people are in tense situations, he's very level-headed and going to fight for what's best for our client. His ethics are very important, he always handles things in the most respectful manner. And we're both used to creative problem solving, which is critical in this job."

— Heather Benfield



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Sanctuary on 8th Street copes with pandemic with more than a little help from its friends

Like nearly every nonprofit in Jacksonville, The Sanctuary on 8th Street in Springfield has learned to be nimble and flexible when coping with the coronavirus pandemic of 2020.

“For kids who already face economic and educational challenges, the virus made it even more difficult to keep them on track with school,” said Executive Director Rick Cartlidge. “Even as Jamie [Stater, the Sanctuary’s associate director] worked out the kinks to deliver online classes and tutoring, we knew many of the families didn’t have the technology required for distance learning.”

Fortunately, Duval County Public Schools announced that all students in need of a laptop could receive one through the school system, and even keep it throughout the summer, helping several Sanctuary families to access distance learning, according to Stater. Sanctuary staff and volunteers organized pick-ups of school supplies and activities to ensure all students would have the tools to participate.

Further, to help the students stay on track academically, Stater and Cartlidge check in with the students via texts or phone calls. “We also have a private Facebook group for the families to help with schoolwork and share resources,” Stater said.

Additionally, Cartlidge and Stater were concerned about meals for the 50 students from about 32 families in an area that has been identified as a food desert. The week after schools began to shut down in mid-March, the Sanctuary began a weekly food distribution. “Food donations are supplemented with groceries bought from monetary donations,” said Stater. “Typically we give fresh fruit and vegetables, bread, and boxes of macaroni and cheese or ramen noodles.”

Local businesses, churches, and Sanctuary supporters have rallied with donations of school supplies, food and paper products,



The Junior League of Jacksonville created microwave meal kits for students at The Sanctuary on 8th Street.

much appreciated by families facing loss of employment related to the economic shut-down. During Summer Camp at the Sanctuary, members of the Junior League of Jacksonville put together microwave meal kits for the students, including kid-friendly recipes and a gift certificate to White Harvest Farms.

An integral part of keeping students occupied and intellectually stimulated during summer break, summer camp began virtually in early June, then shifted on campus after two weeks, but after the virus cases began to climb in early July, staff went back to virtual camp for the remainder of the summer.

“This shows how great the Sanctuary on 8th is,” said Peter Gunnlaugsson, Sanctuary board member. “It adjusts and adapts and remains committed to the mission of serving the kids and families of Springfield. It’s great to see the kids’ smiling faces – a reminder of what is important in life.”

Shift for the Shindig

But, while its concerns are first and foremost the needs of its after-school program’s students and their families, the Sanctuary’s bottom line is also never far from Cartlidge’s thoughts.



Leslie Jones and Ralph Hubbard, operators of Now and Zen Sailing Charters, have adapted the cruise experience to include safe practices.



“Our biggest fundraiser for the past 20 years has been the Shindig,” Cartlidge said. The Shindig for the Sanctuary is usually held in September at the Garden Club of Jacksonville, and has included dinner, entertainment, a silent auction and a raffle. “We thought there might be a possibility we could hold it again as we traditionally have, but it became clear in June that the virus wasn’t going away,” said Cartlidge, who said he and the Sanctuary’s Board of Directors needed to re-think their paradigm.

As many other nonprofits are doing, the Sanctuary decided to shift from what they’ve done in the past and go virtual with the Shindig this year. “Thanks to a board member, the Swingin’ Shindig will be broadcast live from the Marina at Ortega Landing, where

the House Cats, a jazz quartet, will perform on Thursday, Sept. 17 at 6 p.m.,” said Cartlidge. In lieu of a silent auction, an online raffle will be held for a four-hour river cruise for six people, donated by the owners of Now and Zen Sailing Charters, with gourmet picnic baskets donated by Biscottis.

For details about the Swingin’ Shindig, visit the Sanctuary’s website (sanctuaryon8th.org) or Facebook page (facebook.com/Sanctuaryon8th), then be sure to tune in on Sept. 17 for some great jazz and a chance to win a catered cruise on the St. Johns River.

To lend a hand to the Sanctuary on 8th Street, consider donating imperishable food items, school supplies or make a monetary gift online at sanctuaryon8th.org/donate/.

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Animal House

By Julie Kerns Garmendia Resident Community News



Andrea Johnson with the horses Amanda and George

CARING FOR RESCUE ANIMALS PROVIDES REJUVENATION FOR BUSY VOLUNTEERS

Their large dark eyes question as they push soft muzzles over the worn wooden fence, blow hot breath onto outstretched hands, and deeply inhale the scent of strangers. The horses, Amanda and George, who is named for the character in the children's book, "Curious George", are the official welcoming committee for CJ Acres Animal Rescue Farm, which is named after CJ, a beloved dog. Like every animal at the farm, endangered or harmed by humans, these trauma survivors remain friendly and interested in people. Volunteers from both historic districts, who serve at CJ Acres, have found not only a way to help animals and promote animal welfare, but also a rejuvenating escape into rural Northeast Florida.

Kim Lamb of Fairfax Manor, who has volunteered at CJ Acres for 10 years, found the non-profit, all-volunteer organization through Volunteer Match. She said that its time and schedule flexibility made it possible for her to escape to the country and help care for the animals. Like many who visit the farm, she unexpectedly also found a best friend.

"My heart melts the moment I see adorable Opie, who is the sweetest, gentlest donkey. But it's not just Opie. All the goats, pigs, horses, cows, sheep, chickens, ducks, and turkeys want our attention and love. They enjoy belly rubs, have friends and relationships among themselves and with us, and like to be talked to," Lamb said. "Turkey was the last meat I had not given up, but after I met Tom Turkey out at the farm, with his funny personality that can't be ignored, that was it. It was easy to stop eating turkey after I got to know Tom."

Lamb's personal herd includes her German shepherd named Bunny and her rescue cat, Edward. She is a RailPros project manager.

Andrea Johnson learned about CJ Acres at the Jax Veg Festival and despite her busy career as an accounting internal auditor for a Riverside firm, she has made time to volunteer. The little girl who dreamed of becoming a veterinarian, now wishes she could pull on her dirty farm boots more often.

"I love driving to the farm... leaving the hectic pace of daily life and work behind to slow down. It's incredibly beautiful out there any time of year, with floating butterflies

and birds singing, crickets chirping, buzzing insects, and frogs croaking. We can see stunning sunsets, wide clear night skies and endless stars. Time flies when I'm working with the animals. I always have a feeling of gratitude that I can help in a variety of ways, from feeding or cleaning stalls to public events, doing whatever is needed along with other volunteers of all ages and backgrounds," Johnson said.

Lee Sackett, founder of CJ Acres and animal rescuer for 30 years, relocated his farm animal rescue from North Carolina to rural Clay County in 2003 for better weather. This former advertising executive operates the closest farm animal rescue to Jacksonville and responds to emergencies throughout the Eastern U.S. and nationwide. He is FEMA-certified for disaster rescue and has coordinated with PETA.

Sackett has instant recall of rescue situations and details about each animal – all named – who reside on the farm. Thanksgiving turkey refugees are obvious; other stories are painful to hear. Animals come from law enforcement confiscations, cockfighting rings, hoarding, abandonment, abuse or neglect, removal ordered by an HOA, landlords, and community or zoning restriction violation authorities.

Owners lose their land, become ill or die, and families may not want any animals left behind. Individual rescuers or organizations close or reach capacity. COVID-19 has increased calls for help from owners who unexpectedly lost income and can no longer afford to keep their animals, Sackett said.

As a child, Sackett was never permitted to have a pet. He was told that when he became an adult, he could have as many animals as he desired. At the first opportunity, he literally "bought the farm" and began to fulfill his personal mission to help animals. The result is a modern-day Dr. Doolittle – a laid-back comedian whose funny jokes and positivity lighten the difficult topics of abuse, abandonment, cost of care and placement for large animals with potentially longer life spans.

"The number of animals in need of rescue, ongoing care and rehabilitation for potential adoption, grows every year. Medical care and food are most costly. Regardless of national crises that cut donations or cancel fundraisers, the monthly bill for 10,000 pounds of grain and produce to feed the 125 residents of the farm must be paid. Bread, canned food, and treats cost extra," Sackett said.

The CJ Acres team is committed to promote responsible animal stewardship, compassionate consumption and to share information about vegetarian and vegan diets. They work

to bring people and animals together, to interact and communicate through pre-scheduled, socially distanced farm tours, family friendly activities, events, or a variety of volunteer opportunities for big-hearted people ages 18 and older.

Interaction and communication with farm animals can surprise some people. They learn that every animal has an individual personality and traits just like any beloved domestic pet dog or cat, said Lamb and Johnson. Getting face-to-face with a friendly farm animal can influence attitudes toward meat consumption and the treatment of food animals, in a respectful, informative way.

Sackett has only one rule for new residents – to play nice. Wide open spaces, plentiful food, consistent training, verbal guidance, re-direction, and the occasional squirt from a water bottle result in feral cats, chickens, and former cockfighting roosters living peacefully together. Words for desired behaviors such as "stall," are taught to simplify work for volunteers, and each species has its own set of verbal commands to avoid command chaos.

For any animal to make it to safety at CJ Acres, Sackett said the stars must align and they basically hit the lottery, because most are destined to be consumed for food or to become a product ingredient in North America or elsewhere in the world. Even unwanted horses, or excess wild mustangs rounded up from Western states for auction, may be bought for a few dollars per pound by "kill buyers", and transported out of the U.S. to Canada for slaughter under the most inhumane conditions imaginable.

Moodini, the 1,500-pound Brahma steer who thinks he is one of the resident mustangs, escaped being "processed" at an Oviedo slaughterhouse by smashing a gate and hiding in a neighborhood backyard. Because he had no ear tag, chip, or brand he was able to be legally claimed by rescuers.

Sackett said that residents "get healthy, then educated" at the farm with some clearly set on higher education. George, the horse who is on the logo, is the longest resident. He takes delight in opening doors by crunching the doorknob. He is especially pleased if he can lock volunteers in or out. George can also turn the water and lights on and off. Opie the donkey is currently focused on how to use keys left in doors.

CJ Acres relies on community support from mailed checks or online donations through its website. It welcomes volunteers, as well as individual or corporate sponsors. Any assistance is greatly needed and appreciated and there are free or low-cost ways to support their mission, the farm and animals, Sackett said.

The 11th Annual Dine with the Swine fundraising event will be held at the farm on Saturday, Oct. 3, from 6 – 8 p.m. The all-inclusive, catered five-course vegan meal with wine pairings for ages 21 and older is by advance ticket purchase only. Tickets at \$43.75 per adult are available on the website. Current social distance recommendations and all safety precautions will be followed. Each guest will receive an etched wine glass as a thank-you gift.

CJ Acres is grateful for its support partners: Publix, which has donated leftover produce for more than a decade; Disney, Southwest Airlines, Whole Foods, Starbucks, Ethos Vegan Kitchen, Kirschner's Korner, Unicorn Web Development, Carpe DM, and the Clay County Fair.

Contact CJ Acres by email at info@cjacres.org, its website at www.cjacres.org or www.facebook.com/cjacresanimalrescuefarm. The website provides ways to donate, support, attend volunteer training, schedule a free guided tour, or view its wish list. All donations are tax deductible. Checks may be mailed to CJ Acres Animal Rescue Farm, 5728 Jones Creek Road, Keystone Heights, FL 32656.



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RPDS welcomes back students

At least 400 students were enrolled when Riverside Presbyterian Day Preschool opened its doors Aug. 11 to begin its school year. With COVID precautions in place, the majority of parents chose the brick-and-mortar option for their children with only 10% selecting RPDS's "Riverside Remote" distance learning option.



Ben and Sam Atchison



Anne Wilson with Frank and Gibson McDonald



Jameson and Sabrie Duss

First school day goes off without a hitch at Bolles

The first day of school on all four campuses and in home-based classrooms around the world went off without a hitch – successfully launching the historic 2020-21 school year at The Bolles School.

The Bolles Lower School Whitehurst and Ponte Vedra Beach Campuses, as well as the Bolles Middle School Bartram Campus, opened the year in a "Operating Scenario 2," with classes held on campus with synchronous online instruction available for students wishing to take classes from a distance. The Bolles Upper School San Jose Campus is in "Operating Scenario 3," meaning half the student body is on campus each day while the other half participates in at-home learning. Facilities and classrooms on all four campuses have been redesigned for appropriate physical distancing, including the addition of partitions and relocation of some classrooms to larger spaces.

"Thanks to the hard work and diligence of our faculty and staff this summer, we are well prepared for a safe and healthy return to campus," said Bolles President and Head of School Tyler Hodges. "I am grateful for the opportunity to learn together during this unusual season – we are ready for a safe and productive school year."

The focus on health and safety is paying off. The Bolles School has a higher enrollment number this year than last year, with numbers expected to grow as prospective student paperwork is processed in the weeks ahead.

On the first day of school, students practiced new arrival protocols on each campus, including arrival health screenings. Prior to campus entry, all students must have their temperature taken from their vehicle. They also must answer a standard set of questions regarding their physical condition, symptoms, and any known exposure to COVID-19. All faculty and staff also must answer the same questions and log their temperature before beginning each workday.



Trinya, a third grader on the Bolles Whitehurst campus, begins classwork at her newly partitioned desk on the first day of school Aug. 13.



Two students on the Bolles Middle School campus make their way to the Pratt Library on the first day of school Aug. 13.



Ellie, a junior, and Bobby, a senior, head to class on the first day of school at Bolles Aug. 13.



Abby, a third grader prepares to start school at Bolles Whitehurst campus Aug. 13.

Masks are mandatory on all Bolles campuses this year. Students also are getting used to new classroom seating charts, physical distancing standards and new class dismissal and arrival bells that allow for adequate spacing between classes. Many classes enjoyed connecting with classmates learning from home via large screens and video technology.

Half of the Class of 2021 enjoyed the Senior Breakfast, an annual tradition hosted by the Bolles Parent Association. Clad in black dresses and shirts, tiaras and sunglasses, students convened at a distance on the Bolles River Campus for grab-and-go breakfast snacks and camaraderie. The second half of the Class of 2021 enjoyed the festivities Aug. 14.

WJCT News 89.9

LIVE with Melissa Ross

First Coast Connect is an hour-long call-in program that features local newsmakers, civic and community leaders, artists and people planning a variety of events across Northeast Florida.

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Children learn about Jesus' miracles at church VBS

More than 50 children participated in virtual Vacation Bible School (VBS) hosted by St. Mark's Episcopal Church this summer. Children who preregistered received all the needed supplies through contactless pickup, and then interacted with videos throughout the week to learn the day's Bible story, create a craft, engage in a science experiment, and enjoy a themed snack. Families submitted photos and videos throughout the week to share their experiences with the congregation.

According to the Rev. Tom Murray, St. Mark's rector, the church has been leading a week-long summer Vacation Bible School for 40+ years. This year's theme, "A Summer of Miracles", focused on one of Jesus' miracles each day. "I am grateful for how our parishioners adapted to continue this tradition and provide a fun VBS," he said.



"Emma has had a great week participating in VBS," said one parent. "It has been a much-needed uplifting and happy time!" Another wrote, "It was really well put together and very user friendly!! The Bible story was great! Thank you, guys, so much for doing this!"

All are welcome to participate in St. Mark's virtual VBS! Simply visit stmarksjacksonville.org/vacation-bible-school and click on the day of the week to watch the videos and learn all about Jesus' miracles!



Ellie, John, William and David Stewart enjoy virtual Vacation Bible School at St. Mark's Episcopal Church

Student ambassadors welcome new Episcopal students



An Eagles Ambassador leads a group of new students around the Munneryn campus Aug. 12.

The Episcopal School of Jacksonville welcomed new students to its Munneryn Campus Aug. 12 with Eagle Ambassadors assisting students as they toured around campus, found their lockers, set up their technology, and met their advisors.

During the new student orientation, the campus chaplain blessed all parts of the campus with holy water, including the inside and outside spaces. "We will be praying for all that will happen in these spaces and for our faculty, staff, and students who will inhabit them," said The Rev. Teresa Seagle, school chaplain. The blessing event follows a St. Mark's campus tradition, and the Munneryn and Beaches campuses joined in the tradition this year, as all three campuses are now one school.

The faculty and staff at Episcopal's St. Mark's campus welcomed students back to school during the week of Aug. 10 for a Meet-the-Teacher event and for the first day of school for the Early Learning program



Lauren Stroud, a student at St. Mark's Episcopal School

and Pre-K classes. During Meet-the-Teacher, students learned new routines for the school year. Air hugs, socially distanced desks in classrooms, new hand-washing routines when entering and leaving classrooms, temperature checks, facial-covering rules, and, of course, many, many smiles were apparent during the event.

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Caroline Giddens honored with Mary Award



Caroline Giddens, a 2020 graduate of Bishop Kenny High School, was a recipient of the Ascension St. Vincent's Foundation's 2020 Mary Award in the philanthropy/volunteerism category.

Given to high school seniors, the Mary Awards honor exceptional young women in the Jacksonville community. Giddens logged more than 450 community service hours volunteering with Camp I Am Special. She received \$1,000 as a cash award and will be invited to the 2021 Mary Awards event.

"After my first day with my camper at Catholic Charities Camp I Am Special, I realized that camp was going to be my second home," Giddens said. "At camp, I find that I experience a happiness unlike anything I have ever experienced before, which is the overwhelming feeling that comes from doing what God created me to do."

During her tenure at Bishop Kenny, Giddens was involved in the schools Anchor and Interact Clubs. She also focused her attention on community events such as dance marathon, Rise Against Hunger, and

the Donna Marathon. She is currently attending Florida State University.

The Mary Awards seek to empower young women while supporting Ascension St. Vincent's Foundation in its core values of service to the poor, reverence, integrity, wisdom, creativity, and dedication. The prestigious award is meant to recognize young women who serve as positive role models for young people. By demonstrating positive values, lifestyle, and leadership the Mary Awards seek to shine light on these young women as they lift society up. The Ascension St. Vincent's Foundation has long been an advocate for women of all ages, and their important role in the fabric of society as civic, volunteer, and business leaders.

Three graduate from University of the South

Three residents of Jacksonville's historic districts have graduated from the University of the South.

Jed Philip Henrichsen, James Knox Kerr IV, and Lillian Carr McCrary were awarded degrees during the university's 2020 commencement ceremonies May 10. The graduation exercises were held on-line due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Henrichsen received a Bachelor of Arts in history. He is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Neil L. Henrichsen of Ortega.

Kerr received a Bachelor of Arts degree in economics, cum laude. He is the child of Dr. and Mrs. James Knox Kerr III of Avondale.

McCrary earned a Bachelor of Arts in English. She was also named to the Dean's List for the Spring 2020 term. To earn a place on the Sewanee Dean's List, a student must earn a minimum grade point average of 3.625 on a 4.0 scale. She is the daughter of Kendra and Thomas Parker McCrary of Avondale.

Camp Sunshine shines blessing on Angels for Allison



Camp Sunshine counselors and campers from the first week of camp including Allison Brundick Haramis' cousins, Elizabeth Moore and Danielle Groff.

As with many nonprofits, COVID-19 has not been kind to Angels for Allison, requiring the Jacksonville-based charity to call a pause to all its fundraising efforts for several months. However, one ray of light has been Camp Sunshine, a day camp led by high school students across Jacksonville, which for the past seven years has supported the nonprofit that is dedicated to assisting with funeral expenses and other costs associated with the loss of a child.

This year, Camp Sunshine donated \$10,945 to Angels for Allison, proceeds derived from the day camp that was held at Ortega home of the Rachels' family for three hours each day over two weeks in June and July. This year, 31 girls ranging in age from 5 to 10 enjoyed arts and crafts, baking, daily dance parties and painting Angels for Allison's signature metal angels. The week finished up with a swim party. As an

opportunity for young women to lead, the camp celebrated Allison's spirit and the secondary mission of The Allison Brundick Haramis Foundation – to create a welcoming and inspiring environment for service to others and to cultivate the future of philanthropy through focused programs for youth participation and leadership.

Sadly, since January, the nonprofit has been called on for support by over 70 local families who have experienced the loss of a child. Camp Sunshine, which is led by teen volunteers was a blessing and helped keep the nonprofit operational over the summer. Founded in 2010 in memory of Allison Brundick Haramis, who tragically died in a car accident at the age of 15, the organization has provided financial assistance to more than 550 Northeast Florida families who have lost a child. To learn more about Angels for Allison, visit www.angelsforallison.org.

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Andrew Smith, Wright Bowyer, Jackson Morreale, Henry Morreale, Charlie Morreale, BenDeVino, and Harrison Spencer hunt for biblical clues.

Scavenging for God's word

What do sandcastles, prayer rocks and giant Jenga sets have in common? To youth at St. Mark's Episcopal Church, they all represent stops on a recent scavenger hunt throughout the Ortega neighborhood.

Each stop on "The Great Hunt" contained a Bible verse paired with a themed activity that youth completed before moving on to their next destination. For example, on stop 5, youth read Matthew 7:26, "And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man who has built his house on the sand." Youth were then challenged to build a sandcastle and take a photo to document their participation.

According to Nicolas Mandolini, St. Mark's director of youth ministry, the youth steering committee brainstormed various ways for youth to safely connect in-person during a time where much is virtual. The Great Hunt was a good opportunity for



Reagan and Sam Grant take part in "The Great Hunt," at St. Mark's Episcopal Church

youth to be together in an open-air environment while learning about God's word in a fun, age appropriate way.

Students who completed The Great Hunt were rewarded with gift cards to Chick-fil-A and, of course, biblical bragging rights!

Schools prepare for safe year amidst pandemic



Matt and Karen Worsham with Luke Worsham and Ronnie Worsham

With its school in the "yellow phase" – elevated risk, transmission is trending upward – of its level of community transmission, the Riverside Presbyterian Day School (RPDS) community prepared its facilities for a new academic year in the time of COVID-19.

Added to the school facility this year are social distancing floor markers, classroom desk shields, campus signage, hand sanitizer stations, and plastic shields in the high-traffic areas, such as the front desk of the building.

Some RPDS alumni and families even helped build structures to improve the

facility, such as a staircase for Pre-K students to use so they can enter/exit immediately outside and don't have to enter and exit their classrooms from the interior hallways. Assisting with the steps were ELC Steam teacher Jennifer Sherlock, her father, and children, who are all RPDS alumni.

Outdoor hand-washing stations were also built by RPDS families, including sixth-grade teacher Karen Worsham and her husband, Matt, and Worsham's father-in-law who owns Worsham construction, and kindergarten teacher Courtney Bryan and her husband, with assistance from Custom Marine Components.

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Grit University internship is lucrative for two college students

Two local college students received a deep dive into the world of business by running their own show as the directors of Grit Camp, a summer sports camp located at Riverside Presbyterian Day School. Designed to teach mental, physical, and emotional resilience to young people, the camp was the inaugural venture of Grit University, a summer internship program designed to help college-age students start and run their own business while learning and implementing time-tested life and success principles.

Colby Harris of Fernandina and Dylan Tedder of San Marco spent the summer at



Brian Corbin, Dylan Tedder and Colby Harris on the last day of Grit Camp.

Grit University headquarters in San Marco. Their daily schedule included waking up at 5:40 a.m., taking a cold shower, working out from 6 a.m. to 7 a.m., meditating, enjoying breakfast at a local restaurant, setting up running camp from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. each day, marketing and promoting Grit Camp, selling corporate sponsorships for the camp, doing outbound sales for an online company, Towerclimber.com, reading five motivational/self-help books, and journaling. Each intern received a salary of \$250 per week for 10 weeks to oversee eight weeks of camp, one week of training and one week of paid vacation. They also each received an additional profit-sharing check of \$3,500, bringing their summer earnings to \$6,000.

In all, 207 campers enjoyed the experience, and for an additional charge provided more than \$10,000 to the local economy by eating lunch in the 5 Points area. Meanwhile 15 high school students volunteered as counselors, earning 250 services hours and over \$5,000 in profit. In all, the camp generated over \$35,000 in revenue from the campers.



High school students who served as counselors at Grit sports camp included Caroline Grace Posgay, Laurel Day, Cameron Day, Ryan Vogel, Jack Bogan, Caroline Cavendish, Colby Harris, Dylan Tedder and Davis Ellis. Not pictured: Catherine Hunt and Kurt Greiner.



Brian Harbin and Colby Harris celebrate Harris's summer earnings check



Hunter McCaig with Dylan Tedder, Suzanne Tedder and Dale Tedder, associate pastor of Southside United Methodist Church.

Assumption welcomes back students

The Coronavirus pandemic caused Assumption Catholic School to change its tradition of having parents accompany their children onto campus the first day. This year, to make things special and welcoming, school officials hosted a car line welcome. Nuns from the Servant Sisters of the Home of the Mother convent joined priests from Assumption Catholic Church and school faculty members and students along the line of cars entering the campus to welcome the students back.

This year Assumption has 500 students enrolled with 60 participating in its distance learning program. Also

new to the school is Diane Dodds, who has taken on the role of director for Assumptions Early Childhood Learning Center, which is also on campus.

"We had eighth-grade ambassadors who attended our kindergarten orientation and then were here the first few days to help walk in their new friends. Made it easier for parents to drop them off. No parents are allowed on campus right now to help with contact tracing for COVID," said Jennifer Soulby, who works at the school. We have 500 students and only 60 are participating in our Distance Learning program."



Students hold welcome signs as their peers return to school.



Fr. Eric Stelzer of Assumption Catholic Church blesses a classroom



Nuns from the Servant Sisters from the Home of the Mother convent welcome Assumption's distance-learning students



Fr. Jason Trull of Assumption Catholic Church blesses a classroom



A welcome sign greets students as they return to Assumption Catholic School.

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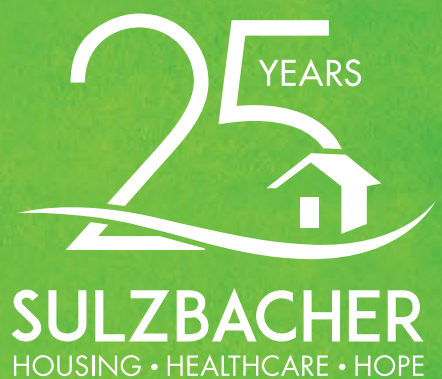
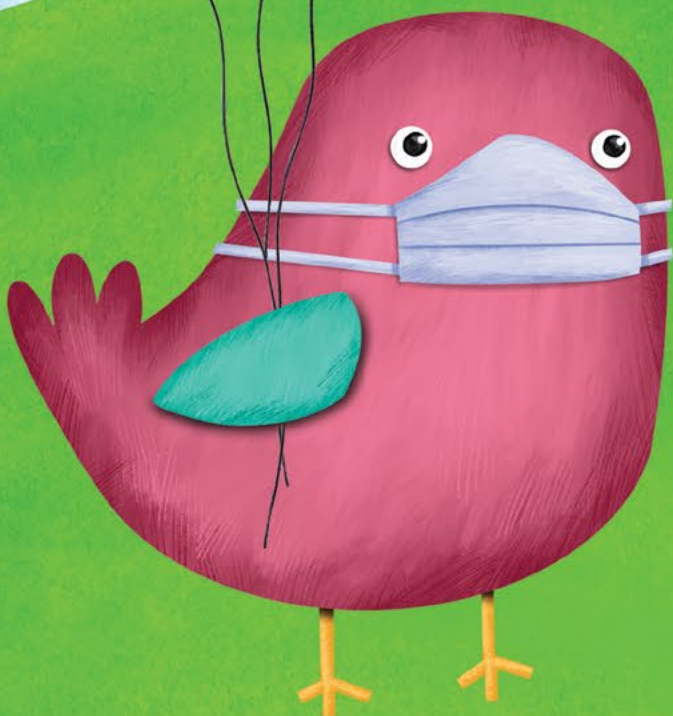
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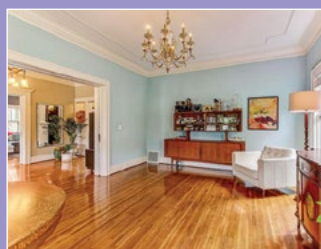
Spacious Upstairs Condo in the Heart of Ortega. Features large open living spaces, Living - Dining Combo, parquet flooring in the sunroom area and kitchen, carpet in bedrooms and living spaces, bright and airy enclosed sunroom, stainless appliances, lots of storage, and overlooks the courtyard.



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2263 ST JOHNS AVE. - \$850,000
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.



1070 WILLIS DR. - \$235,000
3 BR / 2 BA / 1,712 sqft.

Please come see this attractive 3 bedroom, 2 bath, 1712 square foot home in historic Murray Hill. Large master suite w/ walk-in closet, central living area, expansive family room, dining, and kitchen (R/R/DW). Fresh paint in and out with beautiful hardwood floors. Efficient Syr old CHA. Fenced rear yard. Attached garage.



3434 BLANDING BLVD 152 - \$108,000
1 BR / 1 BA / 708 sqft.

SUPER CUTE! Nicely appointed 1 Bedroom, 1 Bathroom on ground floor with large screened in porch overlooking cedar river. Enjoy the waterfront lifestyle without the headaches. Dock and clubhouse are just some of the amenities that this community has to offer. Gated entrance. Centrally located close to NAS Jax and the Riverside/Downtown areas. You won't want to miss out on this one!!



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