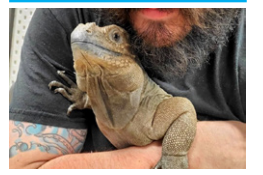


LOCAL FOLK
SEE PAGE 21



THE WAY WE WERE
SEE PAGE 30



ANIMAL HOUSE
SEE PAGE 32



STUDENTS FUEL THE FUNDING FOR HENDRICKS AVENUE ELEMENTARY

BY MARY WANSEER
Resident Community News

Friends of Hendricks successfully hosted their annual walkathon dubbed, "Just Keep Walking" at Hendricks Avenue Elementary School, Feb. 25-26.

While the format for February's walk was a bit different this year due to COVID-19, students were able to participate and have fun while raising funds to benefit their classmates and teachers.

"Thank you to the generous donors and local business partners, as well as Hendricks families who made walkathon 2021 so successful!" said Erin McCall, secretary for the friends group.

Though the walk is typically held on a Saturday with parents and students together on one track, this year found the walk held over the course of two weekdays during school hours and on two separate tracks. Friends of Hendricks is a non-profit organization made up of parents, teachers, and volunteers that help to raise funds to ensure an exemplary education for the student body.

FEEDING NORTHEAST FLORIDA HOSTS VICE PRESIDENT KAMALA HARRIS FOR DISCUSSION ON FOOD SECURITY

SEE PAGE 5

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IMAGE COURTESY OF RELATED GROUP

Riverfront Renaissance

Project slated to refresh skyline on Southbank

Over the past two months, the highly anticipated project set to replace River City Brewing Company on the Southbank had been taken back to the drawing board. After some tough scrutiny over the project's highest and best use, as well as its size and scope, developers illustrated a willingness to get creative and come to the table for compromise.

The constructive critiques and clarifications from DDRB [Downtown Development Review

Board] board members had caused the development team to go back to the drafting table and bring forth changes that would eventually please those skeptical of the initial concept, gaining a sweeping 7-0 vote in favor of the plans, March 23.

The latest changes that were rolled out included reimagined spaces, both in terms of the floor layouts, unit counts and floorplans, as well

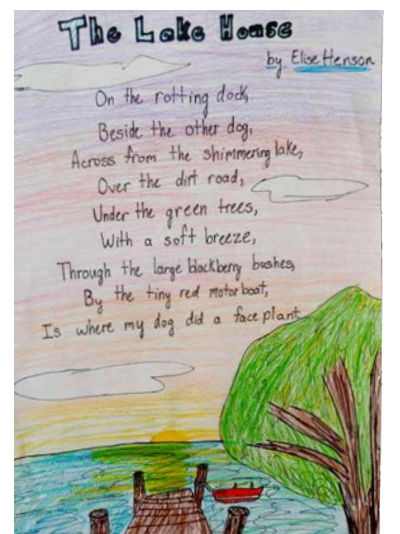
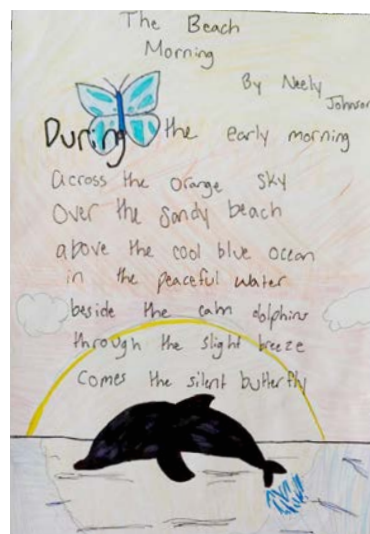
as courtyards and building amenities for residents. Cindy Trimmer, a partner with Driver, McAfee, Hawthorne & Diebenow, PLLC., the firm representing the interests of Related Group, made mention of the fact that the building has been 'completely redone' to accomplish the mutual goal of moving ahead with the riverfront parcel's progression.

STORY ON PAGE 8

A WAY WITH WORDS

Fifth Grade students from Assumption Catholic school finished their Preposition Poems. Their teacher, Vicki Yazdiya chose three to share with the community for National Poetry month.

SEE PAGE 22



45

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PUBLISHERS' NOTE

A season of change is upon us. Spring is here and COVID's major impact seem to be falling like the leaves before the renewal of blossoms and buds, which is a welcome sight all over our wonderful neighborhoods.

With this Spring renewal comes a symbolic shift in priorities due to our experiences over the last year. In March, we looked back on the anniversary of the nationwide shutdown, one that changed routines forever for some, temporarily for others, but certainly left no one unscathed in some fashion.

It has been refreshing to tell the stories of people aiding one another, whether it is lending a hand by feeding others, providing housing, donating toiletries, or clothing and raising funds. We are fortunate that The Resident News gives us the ability to give in a way that can multiply its effects by our direct mail distribution of almost 30,000 residents every month. Especially when our readership is generous, considers others, and takes great pride in sharing the burden, neighbor helping neighbor. It is gratifying to make such a positive impact and we feel fortunate to be the conduit to this amazing community we all call home.

Spring is a welcome seasonal change and we are happy to welcome our newest addition to The Resident News, Carolyn Snowden. Creative, local talent is found by way of the works of Carolyn this month for National Poetry Month. We received several submissions that appear in the pages of this issue. We hope you enjoy the value in these simple, yet well composed literary works. We welcome Carolyn to our staff and we are excited to add her poetry to the pages of your community newspaper every month.

In closing, we hope you have found the silver lining over the course of the last year, when all of us had to realize what is important, what is worth fretting over, and how we are going to work towards building a better tomorrow as we move through this season of change together.

It's great to be smiling at one another in passing. It's time to get back to a better, more prosperous economy while also remembering the importance of what we've learned through the pandemic. Be caring, be careful and be kind.

Pamela and Geth Williams



NOTE FROM THE PASTOR

I don't know about you, but I'm tired. Real tired. A deep-creak-in-the-bones kind of tired. Whether you are someone who has rarely left your house in the last year, or have found everything going on blown far out of proportion, the last year of life has worn us all down. As a pastor coming into a new congregation, I am trying to be as excited and as energetic as my heart and mind are, but at times my body chooses not to play along. With all of the turmoil that our church has gone through as well in

the last few years, I know the people I love here are tired as well.

As we're approaching Holy Week, I've realized that we've lived most of the last year in Holy Saturday. A tragedy has occurred, and we sit in an exhausting unknown, not quite sure of what's to come. Sure, we can believe what Jesus said – that there's such thing as resurrection, life after so much death – but how do you know in the in-between-time?

The truth is, if I take Holy Saturday seriously and try not to cheat because I read ahead, I couldn't tell you for sure what Sunday holds. All I can do is take it on faith that Jesus said was he was going to do, and that these tired bones will witness new life, in all of its excitement and awe and, as we see in the Gospel accounts, even a little terror, because even the most guaranteed of miracles will shock us.

My prayer for you, for me, for South Jacksonville Presbyterian, and for all of our churches, is that we run towards what comes after this Coronatide, our long Holy Saturday. That boldness may overcome exhaustion, and a need to hold onto a broken and sad past will give way to all the excitement and awe of what has been promised in time. It may be frightening, but theirs is a promised miracle on the other side. Blessings to you, dear friends, and a Happy, holy Easter!

Pastor Adam Anderson

HELP OUR HEROES GET THE TRAINING THEY NEED

Cardiac arrest is a leading cause of death, with more than 350,000 out-of-hospital cardiac arrests occurring each year in the United States.

The American Heart Association annually trains over 22 million people how to properly perform CPR. We do this because we know that bystander CPR is often the difference between life and death for someone who suffers sudden cardiac arrest. Moreover, it is critical that the bystander perform CPR as quickly as possible. For every minute without CPR, survival from a witnessed cardiac arrest decreases 7-10 percent. By the time the paramedics arrive, it is often too late.

In my position, I am fortunate to hear remarkable stories of individuals who have survived cardiac arrest. In many instances, the reason they are alive to share their story is not because someone nearby knew CPR. Rather, someone nearby dialed 9-1-1 and was walked through how to perform CPR.

Unfortunately, those who call 9-1-1 in Florida may be speaking to a dispatcher who does not know what is called TeleCPR – CPR over the telephone. HB 397 and SB766 will ensure all dispatchers are trained and able to coach bystanders to perform CPR, and we ask you to please support this legislation.

We have a saying at the American Heart Association: "Heroes aren't born, they are trained." Let's make sure our emergency dispatchers are trained to be heroes.

Amber Wilson / Executive Director, First Coast American Heart Association

RESIDENT WANTS BIKE ROUTE SAFETY DURING CONSTRUCTION

My son attends Landon Middle School and rides his bike to school daily. Yesterday morning, he returned home about 10 minutes after leaving because he can't safely get to the police officer who directs traffic and acts as a crossing guard. I witnessed kids walking through a muddy and unsafe construction site in an attempt to reach the crossing where the police officer controls traffic.

Regency – the developer of the Publix in San Marco – or the City has barricaded the entire block where the new Publix is being built and the sidewalk doesn't exist on Atlantic any longer. I am a parent who is very happy that his child loves to ride his bike to school, along with many other. I would say this is a lawsuit waiting to happen and needs to be addressed immediately – and DAILY – by the Regency (the developer) and the City of Jacksonville.

I reached out to Councilwoman Cumber's office and the response from her assistant is that she reached out to the School Board and JSO. I was disappointed, however, that she didn't mention that she is reaching out to Regency Centers and whoever is in charge of policing their project space and its impact on the neighborhood during construction. If Regency doesn't take action daily, they are being negligent in mitigating their risk at their peril. I'm sure the lawyers will be circling with business cards in hand when something bad happens. I don't see this as the School Board's responsibility as they can't control much outside of their campus.

The school bell rings a little before 8am and again a little before 3pm every day, and when that happens, Regency and the City of Jacksonville need to know that there is no excuse for not providing safe passage for the students even if that means additional safety officers. This project is slated to be complete by Mid-2022 which is a lot of school days that Regency and the City need to plan for.

Concerned Resident of San Marco / (name withheld for privacy)



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Trust your gut and put your fears behind you.

Lynn Sherman
Director of Community Engagement
Co-chair of African American Employee Resource Group

African Americans are about 20% more likely to get colorectal cancer and about 40% more likely to die from it than most other groups.

Don't put off a colorectal cancer screening – it could help save your life.

When colorectal cancer is found at an early stage, before it has spread, the survival rate is about 90%, according to the American Cancer Society. Unfortunately, only 40% of colorectal cancers are found at this early stage. If you are African American and at higher risk, you may be eligible to get screened sooner.

Colonoscopies or Cologuard

Colonoscopies, considered the gold standard for colon cancer screening, are not as intimidating as you may think – they require some at-home prep followed by a brief 30-minute procedure that involves diagnosing and in some cases removing any polyps found in your colon. For those with average risk, you may also be eligible for a Cologuard screening, which detects altered DNA and blood in your stool. Cologuard screenings can be done entirely at home. If a positive test result is found, you will be referred for a diagnostic colonoscopy, which could mean an out-of-pocket cost.



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SEPTIC TANK FUNDING TO BETTER HEALTH OF RESIDENTS, ST. JOHNS RIVER

BY JENNIFER EDWARDS
Resident Community News



The City and JEA are teaming up this year to make good on a promise to protect the beauty and health of the St. Johns River, which defines and molds the historic neighborhoods. Contaminants in the river have long been a concern, especially for residents who boat on it, bike and walk to it, or pay a bit of an upcharge to dine in restaurants where they can view it. But for years, outdated septic tanks throughout Jacksonville have been leeching contaminants that can cause sickness.

In 2016, the City began a program to take out the tanks but ran out of funding. This February, thanks to new funding from both the City and JEA, many septic tanks that have been leaching fecal coliform bacteria into the water table are being removed. The bacteria have been making its way into the river's silvery waves for years, and in 2016, the City approved a project to provide infrastructure to connect those with septic tanks to City-provided water and sewer. The program will take a while, but to restart it the City of Jacksonville leaders earlier this year announced they were putting aside \$14.3 million and JEA was adding another \$12.5 million to ameliorate the problem.

Fecal coliform bacteria are microorganisms associated with the intestinal track of warm-blooded animals and that can contaminate waterways and drinking water, according to the St. Johns County RIVERKEEPER. Tributaries of the St. Johns River often contain dangerous levels of these bacteria due to the failing tanks as well as poorly treated wastewater, broken sewer lines and animal waste. In the Lower Basin of the river, which extends from Welaka to Jacksonville, most of the 75 streams listed as impaired due to elevated levels of the bacteria are in Jacksonville.

There is not enough funding yet to remove all of the failing septic tanks in the area and provide hook ups. The City/JEA

project is currently targeting neighborhoods in the City's Northwest. But some on the City Council hope to extend the program sometime soon into the historic neighborhoods.

"We have 5,000 septic tanks in our district, and the area I am most concerned about is the Lakeshore area," District 14 City Councilwoman Randy DeFoor said. "I am hopeful that can be addressed sooner versus later. That would have to happen after the other three neighborhoods."

At the moment, the three neighborhoods prioritized for the septic tank phase-out include the Biltmore neighborhood, where more than \$17 million was already used to complete the project, the Beverly Hills neighborhood, where \$38 million is allocated and is currently underway, and, now that additional funding has been secured, the project could expand to the Christobel community, according to a City news release.

District 8 City Councilwoman Ju'Coby Pittman said in a news release that the project has been in the making 50 years.

"As the Councilwoman of District 8, the City needs to make good on the 50-year commitment via consolidation and resolve the broken promises to the residents. They have waited long enough for this project to be completed and come to fruition."

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Keep Jacksonville Beautiful Commission 2021 Calendar of Annual Projects & Events

- Keep Jacksonville Beautiful 38th Anniversary Event and KJB Awards Ceremony**
TBD
- St. Johns River Celebration Cleanup**
March 20, 2021
 8 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
 Various sites around Duval County
- July 5th Beaches Cleanup**
 7 a.m. - 9 a.m.
 Atlantic Beach at the ocean
 Beach Boulevard at the ocean
 Seagate Avenue at the ocean
- International Coastal Cleanup**
September 18, 2021
 9 a.m. - 11 a.m.
 Various sites around Duval County
- Right Whale Litter Cleanup**
Nov. 6, 2021
 8 a.m. - 10 a.m.
 Seawalk Pavilion
 1st St. North
 Jacksonville Beach, FL 32250
- America Recycles Day**
November 11, 2021
 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.
 Prime Osborn Convention Center*
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Keep Jacksonville Beautiful thanks St. Johns River Celebration Cleanup Site Captains for their dedication and hard work at the 26th annual St. Johns River Celebration cleanup held at 44 locations with 400 volunteers around Duval County on March 20th!

<p>GREAT JOB!</p> <p>Jonathon Addington Janelle Ames William Armstrong Katie Blandford Aleizha Batson Felicia Boyd Kevin Brown Shanell Davis-Bryant</p>	<p>Barry Burton Steve Crosby Dr. Willie Crosby Chris Buckley Carol D'Onofrio Nick Duin Andy Fraden Charles Baxley Garrison Kevin Gartland Mike Getchell</p>	<p>Janice & Jim Green Alan Hall Don Hall & Margaret Johnson Abigail Jones Bill Karlavige Jose' Lazzcano Lassie Lee Lorraine Lee Melissa Long</p>	<p>Jim Love Julie Lyons Margaret Meier Bryan Mickler Gary Pickel Brian Pavek Kim Perry Byron Robinson Juanita Senior Steven Sherrill</p>	<p>Alicia Smith Carolyn Tatum Emma Tatum Shannon Valenzuela Mayda Velez Rosemary Wesolowski Kathy & Ralph Wicklund Travis Williams Randy Wishard</p>
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*** Dates and location of events are subject to change.

FEEDING NORTHEAST FLORIDA HOSTS VICE PRESIDENT KAMALA HARRIS FOR ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION ON FOOD INSECURITY

CONVERSATION HIGHLIGHTED HOW THE AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN (ARP) IS HELPING TO PUT FOOD ON THE TABLE FOR LOCAL FAMILIES

Feeding Northeast Florida (FNEFL) hosted United States Vice President Kamala Harris at its headquarters for a roundtable discussion about food security, March 22.

The discussion was held during Harris's visit to Jacksonville as part of the Help is Here tour, and focused on the theme of helping to put food on the table. Participants included Susan King, President and CEO of Feeding Northeast Florida; U.S. Representative Al Lawson (FL-05); Florida Commissioner of Agriculture Nikki Fried; Jacksonville City Councilwoman Joyce Morgan; Duval County Superintendent of Schools Dr. Diana L. Greene; and Jacksonville City Councilman Garrett Dennis.

The group talked about how food insecurity has impacted Northeast Florida during the pandemic, ways that the American Rescue Plan (ARP) is helping to address the hunger crisis and strategies to ensure everyone can access fresh, healthy food.

"FNEFL is thankful for the support and leadership of President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris to ensure the American Rescue Plan of 2021 included critical nutrition investments to help people facing hunger," said King. "Our food bank has seen a 129% increase in people needing emergency food assistance since the start of

the pandemic, and our struggle is reflected in every food bank nationwide. Nationally, the Feeding America network reports a 55% average increase in the need for emergency food assistance. We are honored to be given the opportunity to discuss food insecurity and the impact of COVID-19 on our community with Vice President Harris."

FNEFL estimates that 326,000 individuals experience food insecurity on some level every day across its service area. In 2020, the food bank served 2.8 million people and distributed 30.8 million pounds of food — an 82% increase since 2019, equaling 84,500 meals per day. The organization expanded its operating partner agency network from 200 to 300, and increased its logistical capabilities to manage the volume.

"The Feeding Florida food bank network is at the forefront of innovative distribution methods created in response to COVID-19. We appreciated the opportunity to share this work with the Vice President during her visit, and discuss how we've been able to provide consistent and reliable food support every day," said Robin Safley, Feeding Florida Executive Director. "Our food banks will need the continued support from the administration to meet this increased demand."



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE WHITE HOUSE




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MAYOR AND LOCAL LEADERS FOCUS ON REVITALIZING DOWNTOWN AND URBAN CORE

BY KAREN J. RIELEY
Resident Community News



“We now have a focused effort on what needs to be done relative to downtown, although I do not think we have landed on what will represent progress outside of restoring historic buildings, which isn’t a bad thing.”

**- Dr. Irvin PeDro Cohen,
executive director of LISC Jacksonville**

Talks about Downtown Jacksonville revitalization may seem like a case of déjà vu, but community and business leaders are tackling the issue with energy and vision.

Mayor Lenny Curry and six Jacksonville business owners and local leaders held meetings in February and March to discuss ways to improve the urban core. The working group is led by John Rood, founder and chairman of The Vestcor Companies that redeveloped The Carling and 11 East Forsyth into apartment buildings and has recently completed four new projects Downtown.

“After a 2018 Chamber of Commerce trip to Denver, I came back really excited about revitalizing empty buildings in Jacksonville the way that Denver had successfully done,” Rood said. Talks with the Mayor at the end of 2020 resulted in a working group that is

soliciting public input on how to make downtown more livable and workable in the next two years.

Beautification, maintenance of public owned property, lighting, riverfront parks, regularly scheduled activities, resolving the homeless issue, transportation, and bike/street safety have been discussed. Activities suggested included festive events such as laser and fireworks shows; food trucks; a permanent, large farmer’s market; and regular outdoor concerts.

Working group members, in addition to Rood and Mayor Curry, include Gary Norcross, FIS corporate chief of staff; Nat Ford, JTA CEO; Aundra Wallace, president of JAXUSA Partnership; Jack Hanania, Hanania Automotive Group founder & CEO; and Ed Burr, founder & CEO of GreenPoint Holdings LLC.

Their input, as well as recommendations from other Downtown stakeholders and from surveys conducted by employers with downtown employees, such as FIS, Vystar and Vestcor, will be compiled into a prioritized list of actionable items that can be accomplished in two years.

Developer Alex Sifakis, president, JWB Real Estate Capital, owns Sweet Pete’s, the two buildings just north of it and the Porter House Mansion. JWB also built 18 apartments made from shipping containers in the Cathedral District.

“Young people want to live in an urban, walkable environment so having a vibrant downtown is critical to the future success of business,” Sifakis said.

Lori Boyer, CEO of the City’s Downtown Investment Authority, is staff person to the working group. The DIA is in the midst of the five-year update of the Business Investment Strategy and Community Redevelopment Area Plans for the Northbank and Southbank.

“The DIA plans focus on the vision for Downtown and larger strategies and incentives, as opposed to the types of issues being considered by the working group,” said Jordan Elsbury. “For example, homelessness must be addressed from a City-wide rather than

just a Downtown perspective, because our goal is not simply to move people from one neighborhood to another, but to provide more lasting and meaningful solutions.”

“DIA’s focus on achieving a critical mass of residents is so important, because that mass helps support retail and makes the Downtown market self-sustaining,” Elsbury said. “Public parks, trails and civic attractions along with retail create energy and vitality.”

“There are about 5,000 apartments in Downtown Jacksonville currently. The goal is to get the number to 10,000 for enough base for restaurants, grocery stores and other services that people need to live downtown,” Rood said.

Downtown revitalization is a challenge for Jacksonville, according to Rood, because of several factors, including that it is a consolidated city with large undeveloped parcels of land that are less expensive to develop, rental rates for offices and apartments are lower than most other cities, and construction costs are rising.

Boyer lists 10 formal revitalization plans that have been developed since the early 90s, beginning with former mayor Ed Austin’s River City Renaissance program in 1993. Austin’s plan is often referred to as the first large-scale effort to revitalize Downtown.

Former mayor John Delaney’s Growth Management Task Force Recommendations plan in 1997 was followed by John Peyton’s Brooklyn Neighborhood Strategy Plan 2004; River Dance: Putting the River in River City, a 2005 study by now-defunct Jacksonville Community Council Inc.; the 2007 Downtown Action Plan; and Celebrating the River: A Plan for Downtown Jacksonville issued in 2009.

Alvin Brown, during his tenure as mayor, produced the Downtown Business and Investment Plan that incorporated Northbank and Southbank community redevelopment plans and a business investment strategy adopted by City Council in 2015.

The plan that evolves from the current working group will be the fourth one under Mayor Lenny Curry’s leadership.

“The McCoys Creek project, The Emerald Train, extensions of the Riverwalk, addition of boat docks and marinas, enhancement of riverfront parks and public spaces, restoration of two-way streets, and redevelopment of the SS Generating Station Site and, likely, the Shipyards as examples of progress that has been built upon prior plans and recommendations,” said Boyer.

“My first conversations about downtown started in the seventies with Mayor Hans Tanzler,” said Mike Tolbert, corporate and political consultant, who managed re-election

campaigns for Tanzler and former mayor Jake Godbold and was a member of both former mayors’ staffs. “Tanzler shut off 77 outfalls that carried millions of gallons of raw sewage straight into the St. Johns River in Downtown.”

“One of the biggest barriers to downtown progress is the absence of a shared and continuous vision, in large part because we change mayors every four or eight years,” he said.

“Scenic Jacksonville is conducting a brief survey of our supporters to get their ideas, which we will submit to the Task Force,” Nancy Powell, the nonprofit’s executive director, said. “Our preliminary ideas center around providing activities that utilize our great waterfront and basic amenities to attract people downtown and making our streets friendly and well-maintained.”

Powell and her husband have lived in Avondale since 1990 and raised their three children there. “We love the historic homes, parks, trees and walkability. And we’re close to downtown so it’s easy to get to the symphony, The Florida Theatre, or the Jaguars games.”

“Having lived at the Berkman Plaza and worked in Downtown Jacksonville for more than a decade, I am happy to see a group talk about projects that may have an immediate impact,” said Michelle Barth, advancement and external affairs associate director for the Jacksonville Symphony. “The faith community, sporting and special events, and very significantly, the arts, have long brought hundreds of thousands of visitors to downtown each year. All of these things help to bring together our community.”

Kelly Rich, executive director of the Springfield Preservation and Revitalization Council, said, “Springfield’s success is Downtown’s success [and vice versa]. I would love for these discussions to include surrounding neighborhood leaders for brainstorming partnerships.”

“As the president of the duPont Fund and a relatively new Jacksonville resident, I think potential quick wins are walkability, bike and scooter friendliness, and deregulation of public spaces like sidewalks and Riverwalk extensions to encourage and support creative public uses and activation,” said Mari Kuraishi. She said she lives in Avondale because she loves the architecture, its commitment to preserving the history of the community and “its kissing canopies of street trees.”

The public is invited to offer suggestions and comments by emailing palmerk@coj.net. Updates are available at www.downtownjax.com or by directly contacting Cantrece Jones (cjones@adgmark.com), president of Acuity Design Group who is leading the public outreach efforts.

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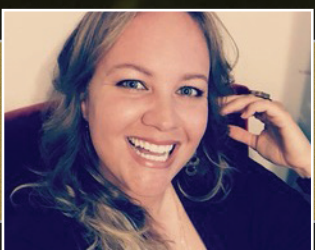
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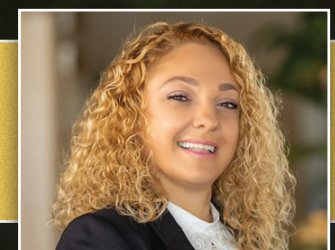
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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1...

RIVERFRONT RENAISSANCE

According to DIA [Downtown Investment Authority] Executive Director and former Councilperson for District 5, Lori Boyer, things have been moving in the right direction for the project.

“DDRB appreciated the modifications for the enhanced corridor to the river, it was more compatible with the site,” she shared. It eliminated the ‘closed in’ effect that can occur when developing parcels along an area that offers views to a river, or other valued assets for the public. Along with the corridor widening, the site is smaller, taller, and narrower on this next phase, which Boyer applauded as well.

Other key points that pleased the DDRB and DIA officials was River City’s proposal to run a ‘Ship’s Store’ adjacent to the existing boat ramp, as well as giving up a portion of park space that will increase the size of St. Johns River Park, often referred to as Friendship Fountain Park. An agreement between the City and the lease holder to reconstruct docks and maintain the fuel dock, as one of the only fuel providers along the St. Johns River downtown, was an important amenity to maintain. According to Boyer, it has become an essential element of the site, along with a portion of public dockage and transient slips.

Boyer also emphasized the importance of Related Group’s willingness to

accommodate those who were constructively critical of the initial plans, citing the “high quality, respectful developer” that she believes will be a true asset moving forward, in light of a growing riverfront skyline, which has been a priority for city leaders.

IN REVIEW, THE FINER POINTS

Plans call for an 8-story building with 325-residential units, an adjoining 8-story garage with 535 parking spaces, and a restaurant concept (yet to be conceptualized and submitted for review) on the ground floor, which is said to offer seating outdoors, increasing the ability to enjoy dining and entertainment offerings.

The new lease holder, RD River City Brewery LLC, had entered into a contract back in 2020 to assume the remaining 77-years on a ground lease of 99-years from Maritime LLC. The latter lease agreement was established back in 1998, after it was inked with the City of Jacksonville.

According to its website, Related Group is a real estate development group that has enhanced skylines with real estate development characterized by innovative design, enduring quality, and inclusive living. The firm is based out of Miami, FL, but has offices in Orlando, Tampa, Atlanta, Texas, Arizona, Las Vegas, Mexico, Argentina, Brazil, and Panama.



TOP RIGHT IMAGE: Updated renderings of the East facing façade, the direction facing St. Johns River Park and the Friendship Fountain was a large question mark for DDRB board members. Related Group team members went back to the drawing board and provided relief [or façade projections, versus flat fronted] along this portion of the development along with other measures - to the pleasure of the voting board – and subsequent approval.

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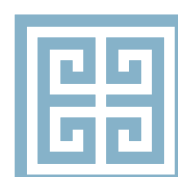
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WOLFSON CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL PHOTO EARNS SPOT IN NATIONAL EXHIBIT

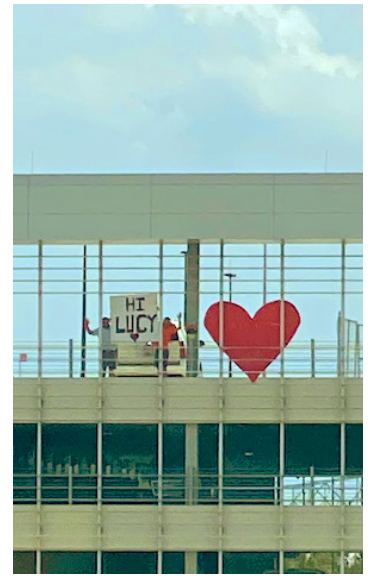
THE CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION GALLERY SHOWS THE STRENGTH AND UNITY OF CHILDREN'S HOSPITALS DURING THE PANDEMIC

A photograph that tugged at the heartstrings of people throughout the Jacksonville area is now part of a national photo series highlighting the resilience of children's hospitals and patients during the COVID-19 pandemic. This year's Children's Hospital Association (CHA) photo exhibit, entitled "Stronger Together: Children's Hospitals During COVID-19," showcases how children's hospitals adapted during the pandemic, while still delivering the highest quality of care.

While the annual CHA photo series is typically a competition judged by experts in the field of photography, this year's gallery features at least one

image from every submitting hospital as a show of solidarity. The photo from Wolfson Children's Hospital is one of nearly 400 submitted from 51 children's hospitals across the country.

"Even in the face of a pandemic, our patients and families found ways to show immense strength," said Michael D. Aubin, FACHE, president of Wolfson Children's Hospital. "Though it seems like the world stopped, children still fight health battles every day and need the expert care only children's hospitals can provide. We are honored to have this photo displayed alongside images from across the country, as we really are all in this together."



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A BIBLICAL GARDEN GROWS IN JACKSONVILLE



Dr. Larry Kantor, Goldie Lansky and Reverend Dr. Bez in front of the Date Palm planted in honor of Goldie's many years of service to Congregation Ahavath Chesed. Lansky is holding a gold-painted shovel that Dr. Bez made especially for her.

"We are pleased for the opportunity to share The Temple's meaningful garden with our neighbors and other houses of worship. We hope it will offer visitors a sense of true Biblical history as we bring a little bit of the past alive."

**- Gene Meyers
Executive Director**

Congregation Ahavath Chesed announced the construction of a Biblical Garden in front of its sanctuary. Funding for the project is provided by the Dr. Larry & Kathy Kanter Jewish Preservation Fund and Temple Congregants. Reverend Dr. Ed Bez, of the Biblical Gardens Society – USA, is furnishing design and construction supervision.

On Wednesday, March 17 at 12:00 noon, the garden's centerpiece Date Palm was planted to honor Goldie Lansky, for her 12 years of dedicated service as Executive Director, prior to her recent retirement. Cantor Carrie Barry will lead a dedication ceremony at the garden on Saturday, March 20 at 6:30 PM, prior to the Havdalah Service.

As sponsor of the project Dr. Larry Kanter commented: "The biblical garden is a joint effort between church and synagogue. It will add an educational and spiritual experience to the Jacksonville community." Regarding the garden's design, Dr. Bez commented: "Fostering a feeling of connection with both the natural and biblical worlds is one of my primary goals in the development phase of The Temple's Bible garden project."

David Kaufman, President of the Board of Trustees stated: "It's a privilege for our congregation to be the setting for this special garden. Ours and one being constructed at nearby Christ the Messiah Church, are the only Biblical Gardens on the First Coast." The gardens, designed to complement each other, will stand as commitments to interfaith cooperation and understanding.

Gene Meyers, Executive Director of The Temple said, "we are pleased for the opportunity to share The Temple's meaningful garden with our neighbors and other houses of worship. We hope it will offer visitors a sense of true Biblical history as we bring a little bit of the past alive."

Chartered in 1882, Congregation Ahavath Chesed is one of the oldest reform synagogues in the USA. It is firmly rooted in tradition yet focuses clearly on the present and future of Judaism.

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ACKERMAN CANCER FOUNDATION RECEIVES BREAST CANCER GRANT



The Ackerman Cancer Foundation, found in 1997 by Medical Director, Dwr. Scot Ackerman, is now the proud recipient of a grant that will help thousands of patients with basic needs when faced with a cancer diagnosis. The new funds were awarded by the Florida Breast Cancer Foundation (FBCF), a group that will help cover bills and expenses for 50 breast cancer patients during the fight ahead.

In a typical calendar year, the Ackerman Cancer Foundation will cover thousands of dollars in transportation and housing assistance, meals and groceries, support and educational programs, and necessary basic needs which break down common barriers patient face when battling cancer.

“Patients shouldn’t have to choose if they should put food on the table for their family or getting treated, and often times patients are put in very tough spots,” said Dr. Ackerman. “Often, I see patients putting the needs of their family first and delaying their treatment, Ackerman Cancer Foundation supports patients in need and helps eliminate barriers to care.”

Ackerman Cancer Foundation patients are faced with financial burdens and the Foundation helps to identify and relieve the patient’s stressors. The recent grant award will afford the Foundation the ability to deliver 100% of the proceeds to patients, where the funds are needed most for struggling families.

“Treatment can keep patients out of work, add unexpected expenses, and ultimately cause financial burden that can delay further treatment,” says Ackerman. “Ackerman Cancer Foundation has always been dedicated to helping our patients navigate these challenging barriers, and we are excited to be working with the FBCF to provide even more assistance to our community.”

For more information about how you can help support the FBCF, visit www.floridabreastcancer.org and to learn how you can help patients via the Ackerman Cancer Foundation visit www.ackermancancerfoundation.org, or call Ryan Ali, Foundation Director, at (904) 880-5522.

NEW DOWNTOWN CHAPEL MARRIES EVERYONE, WELCOMES ANYONE



St. Nicholas resident Selecia Young-Jones is an open-minded woman, she is also motivated to offer an equal opportunity for couples that wish to marry. Whether you are gay, straight, or otherwise, the door to your wedding ceremony is now open in Downtown Jacksonville.

Having recently opened her business April 1, she’s now operating the Rainbow Wedding Chapel and welcomes all walks of life through her doors inside Maddy D’s at 440 West Adams Street, directly across from the Duval County Courthouse.

When the Duval County Clerk of the Courts office refused to marry anyone

if they were going to have to officiate same-sex marriages back in January of 2015, the policy was to cancel courthouse wedding ceremonies for all. Following the passage of same-sex marriage in Florida, citizens lost the ability to marry in a quick, efficient, and official ceremony downtown at or near the Courthouse. It became obvious to Selecia that she wanted to help people get married and proudly declare – ‘Until death do us part’ – while officiating special moments in the lives of those served.

Since those rulings’ years ago, COVID-19 has now entered the picture, making it even more difficult to register your marriage license. Due to backlogs and

virtual court proceedings, the barriers to nuptials seemed to be growing, or at least being made more difficult. Selecia saw a chance to offer a solution.

Due to the increase in red tape and difficulty, she decided to open her own wedding chapel nearby the Federal Courthouse and Rainbow Wedding Chapel, as part of the Rainbow Mobile Notary and Nuptials Wedding Officiants Network, is now up and operating. Visit the Facebook page at [rainbownotaryandnuptials](https://www.facebook.com/rainbownotaryandnuptials) for more information or visit rainbow-weddingchapel.com, or by calling 904-Rainbow.

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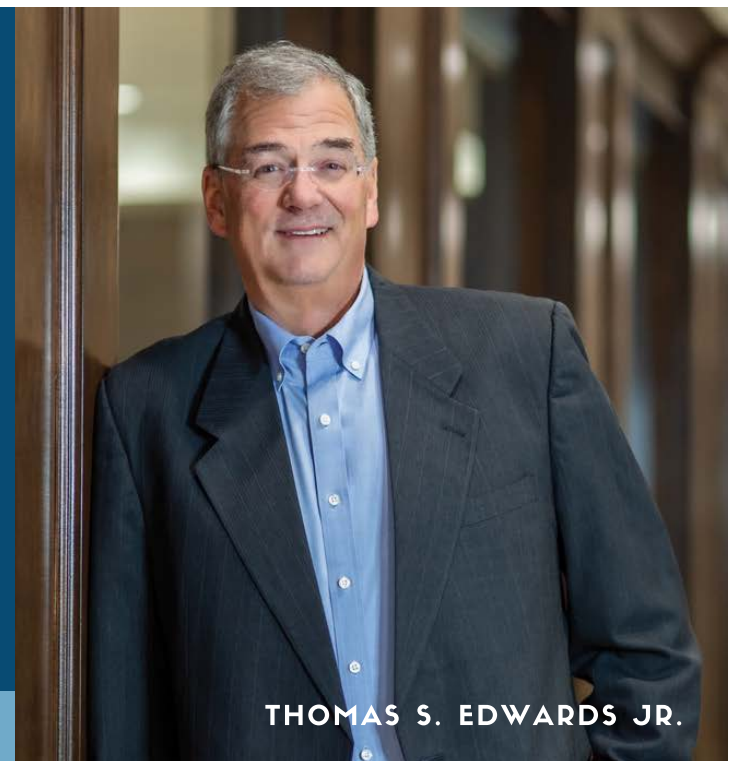
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TERRY'S COOKING, SO YOU DON'T HAVE TO



Terry's Kitchen celebrated a 20th anniversary!

It was March 1, 2001 when Terry Roberts opened her doors on the west side of Jacksonville. "I appreciate all the wonderful people that have come to my store and how many wonderful friendships I have been so blessed to make over these 20 years," she said.

At Terry's Kitchen, breakfast casseroles, dinner entrees, and desserts are freshly prepared and then frozen. The meals are meant to go from freezer to oven to table. "So, you can have a homecooked meal without spending all your time in the kitchen," Roberts said.

In addition to offering fresh frozen meals for pickup, Terry's Kitchen caters food and will deliver large orders for local events. "Everything travels beautifully," Roberts said. She's heard that her meals have traveled as far as New York, Washington, and even the Bahamas.

"I've always enjoyed cooking," Roberts said, especially for friends and family. She began her business by making chicken pot pies at home, and it grew from there. She said of her late husband, "He helped me fulfill my dream." Gary Roberts, a pharmacist, was a native of Jacksonville who passed away in May of last year.

Their teenage son, Clay, had passed away in 2007. The family maintains a memorial scholarship in his name at Bishop Kenny High School. Their daughter, Casey, now helps her mom at the store.

In earlier days, Roberts had been a dental assistant. But she wanted work that would allow her time to be with her children, to accompany them on field trips. As they grew and needed her less, she thought to herself, "Well, I can't clean house all day," so, she turned her passion into her business.

JACKSONVILLE HISTORICAL SOCIETY WELCOMES PAUL BOURCIER AS MUSIC HISTORY COORDINATOR

The Jacksonville Historical Society recently hired Paul Bourcier to serve as the nonprofit's new Music History Coordinator.

Alan J. Bliss, Ph.D., and chief executive officer for the JHS, stated he and the Board of Directors welcome Bourcier's expertise in helping to implement the music history museum project, which was announced to the public in June 2020.

"One of the primary duties of this new position is to refine a mission and vision for the music history museum, including a well-articulated collections development plan and a set of goals for exhibits and programming," said Bliss. "By engaging Paul in this role, the Jacksonville Historical Society is well positioned to execute its intent to bring a first-class music museum to our city, where the roots of many musical genres are found."

The museum will leverage the memories and memorabilia of people who lived through the birth of Southern rock and roll in the late 1960s, according to Bliss. "But there is a lot more to Jacksonville's music history," he added. "The music of Lynyrd Skynyrd and the Allman Brothers Band stands on the shoulders of giants in the blues and jazz genres in Jacksonville's African American community."

Bourcier spent four years as Curator at Jacksonville's Museum of Science & History, bringing to life exhibits such as "Neighborhoods," "Mission: Jax Genius," and "The Legacy of Lynching: Confronting Racial Terror in America."

"I admire the work of the Jacksonville Historical Society in preserving the history of a multifaceted city," said Bourcier when asked why he was interested in joining the JHS. "Music history has fascinated me since I was a teenager. I relish the opportunity to explore this topic in a regional context and help JHS share stories that inform and inspire."

Prior to moving to Jacksonville in 2016 and joining MOSH, Bourcier served as Chief Curator for the Wisconsin Historical Society for 26 years. He began his career in curatorial positions at New York's Adirondack Museum and the Rhode Island Historical Society. Bourcier's resumé includes more than 100 exhibits and many collections management projects. He also edited two editions of Nomenclature, a professional cataloging standard recognized throughout North America.

Bourcier holds a Bachelor of Arts in geography from Clark University and a Master of Arts in American history and certification in museum studies from the University of Delaware.



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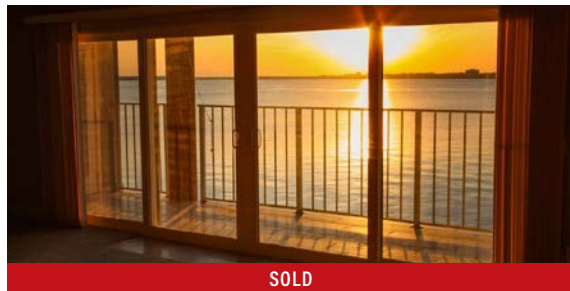
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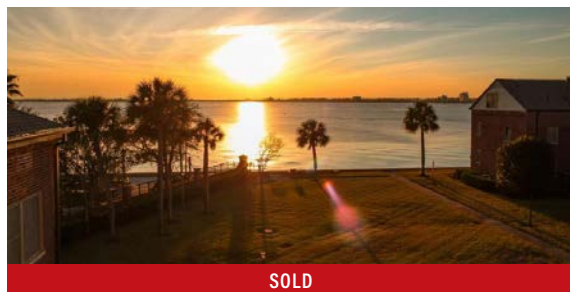
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B.O.D.Y. Wellness & Fitness has opened its doors at 2258 Atlantic Blvd. in the St. Nicholas neighborhood.

Owned and operated by Aneka Smith, the gym features a holistic approach to a fit and healthy lifestyle including classes and coaching in fitness, nutrition and wellness.

Smith is a Certified Fitness Trainer through the International Science and Sports Association. She holds multiple certifications including one in Specific Nutrition.

“I developed my love of fitness taking ballet lessons and doing gymnastics as a young girl!” said Ms. Smith. “When I finished my degree at UNF, I found health and wellness was what I wanted to do for myself and for others. After 8 years working as a trainer in other gyms, I decided it was time to open my own. This is a challenging time to start a new business, but I think people are beginning to feel the need to get up and moving again. I’m already getting inquiries from new clients.”

Ms. Smith is also a personal trainer with a variety of subscription packages available. Masking, social distancing, thorough cleaning between sessions and all COVID-19 protocols are followed in the gym.

Overcoming personal weight challenges twice in her life, Ms. Smith specializes in weight loss and body sculpting. To learn more, visit the gym’s website at bodywellness.fitness, or email bodywell.fitness@gmail.com, or by calling Ms. Smith at 904-993-0108.

ASCENSION ST. VINCENT’S FIRST HEALTH SYSTEM IN FLORIDA TO OFFER NEW CLINICAL TRIAL FOR COPD PATIENTS

Ascension St. Vincent’s is the first health system in Florida to participate in a clinical trial for an investigational treatment option for patients who have frequent Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) exacerbations, also known as lung attacks.

The AIRFLOW-3 Clinical Trial is evaluating the safety and effectiveness of targeted lung denervation (TLD), a bronchoscopic intervention designed to disrupt pulmonary nerve reflexes, which may reduce COPD lung attacks. Ascension St. Vincent’s began enrolling patients in the trial in February.

Pulmonologist Dr. Jose Soto-Soto and team recently successfully treated a COPD patient with TLD therapy in an hour-long outpatient procedure at Ascension St. Vincent’s Riverside.

“Many of our COPD patients experience lung attacks that can’t be controlled with their inhaler medications,” said Dr. Soto-Soto. “As doctors, we should embrace the development of interventional therapies that can potentially stabilize COPD patients and help reduce their risk of exacerbation. We are excited about the potential of using this investigational treatment for some of our patients as part of this clinical trial.”

COPD is a group of diseases like emphysema and chronic bronchitis that can cause breathing-related problems and block airflow. Symptoms include frequent coughing or wheezing, shortness of breath, trouble taking a deep breath, and producing excess phlegm, mucus, or sputum. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, millions of Americans have been diagnosed with COPD and more than 50 percent of adults with low lung function didn’t realize that they had COPD, so the actual number could be even higher.

“We always want to keep advancing the level of high-quality, personalized, and compassionate care that we provide,” said Ascension Florida and Gulf Coast Chief Clinical Officer Dr. Estrellita Redmon. “When any of us have a healthcare need, we want to have options for treatment, so we’re grateful for the opportunity to offer this exciting new option to qualifying patients. Individuals who participate in this clinical trial are potentially helping improve COPD care for patients everywhere.”

The AIRFLOW-3 Clinical Trial is enrolling COPD patients in up to 25 centers across the U.S. and additional centers in Europe.

Patients with moderate-to-severe COPD, high symptom burden, and a history of COPD flare-ups may qualify for the clinical trial. Patients who think they may qualify can learn more by calling (904) 308-5761. To learn more about Ascension St. Vincent’s, visit www.jaxhealth.com.



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Hurricane season is approaching. Secure the proper insurance now.

As hurricane season approaches, it's imperative that homeowners and renters secure the proper insurance coverage ahead of time, amending base policies with specific endorsements where necessary.

"Insurance carriers will restrict binding or adding new coverage once a hurricane is within a certain geographic distance of the state. So, it's best to review your policy while there is no hurricane approaching. That time is now," said Tom York, President of CastleWise Insurance Group in Southside.

"A lot of people don't have any idea what their policy covers and what it doesn't," said York. It is best to work with a trusted professional to evaluate your homeowners insurance policy, but should you decide to do it on your own, here's what to look for:

- **Carrier stability** – Recently, a host of Florida insurance carriers received downgrades in ratings. If the insurance carrier of your homeowners policy is downgraded below the minimum threshold set forth by your mortgage company, you may be out of compliance.
- **Ordinance or Law Coverage** – Most standard homeowners policies provide limited protection should a structure, particularly an older one, require major repair or demolition and reconstruction with upgrades to comply with building ordinances and city codes in the event of damage. "This coverage is shown as a percentage. It can be as low as 10% of the dwelling coverage, but it is usually 25%. In older homes, like those found in Ortega, Riverside, Avondale, and San Marco, I recommend it be increased to 50% by endorsement," York said.
- **Water Damage Coverage** – Many carriers are lowering or removing this coverage to protect themselves due to the frequency of these claims, which include burst pipes and leaking roofs and air conditioners. Houses built more than 40 years ago are especially affected by these coverage changes.

- **Guaranteed Replacement Cost Coverage on Dwelling** – In the event of a total loss, this coverage could avoid your being underinsured, as it guarantees that the policy will pay for the full cost of replacing the home, even if that amount exceeds the policy limits. It's important to note that not every state or every insurer has this provision available.
- **Appropriate Dwelling Coverage** – It's not only your house itself that needs to be insured but also any attached structures, like a garage, as well as built-in appliances, like a water heater. It is particularly important for condominium owners to be aware of this coverage, as the walls may or may not be covered by your master policy.
- **Personal Property Replacement Cost** – There are two types of personal property coverage, and the difference involves depreciation of items.

- **Actual Cash Value Coverage** – This is not the amount you paid for an item or the cost to replace that item in the event of loss. This is the amount the item is worth today, which is equivalent to its cost new minus its depreciation.
- **Replacement Cost on Contents Coverage** - It covers the cost to fully replace your personal possessions that are damaged or destroyed by a covered loss. It covers items like televisions and furniture, regardless of when you purchased them, regardless of their depreciation.

As an independent agent, CastleWise uses a multitude of carriers to underwrite their policies. Whether it's a home you own, a dwelling you rent, or a condo you occupy, CastleWise will provide a coverage evaluation to inform you of what protection you have and where you are left exposed to risk. York and his team can write a new policy or endorse a current one. They write personal lines coverage throughout the state of Florida and commercial lines nationally and internationally.



TOM YORK



Let Tom York and his team help you review your coverages. The office is open M-F 8-6. Call (904) 717-1616 or email TYork@CastleWiseServices.com to make a phone, Zoom, or in-person appointment. CastleWise Insurance Group, LLC is located in Southside at 7220 Financial Way, Suite 300.

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PLANNED GIFTS SUSTAIN FUTURE MINISTRY



“The biggest challenge we face in getting planned gifts for our organizations is that nonprofits by necessity focus on their need for annual gifts throughout the year.”

- Kellie Ann Kelleher-Smith
Director of the Jewish Federation & Foundation of Northeast Florida



One of the major benefits of planned gifts is that they provide a promise of future funding for an organization. They allow a nonprofit to plan ahead and budget for the future, including for economic crises. For example, “Coping with COVID-19: Insights from Church Leaders” by Ministry Brands about the pandemic’s impact on church giving reports that, overall, almost 60 percent of respondents indicated that a reduction in giving income is one of the top challenges facing their church. Planned gifts can buffer the negative effects of unexpected crises.

“The Jewish Federation & Foundation’s goal is to work cooperatively with all Jewish institutions in the area in a communal approach,” said Kelleher-Smith. “We recognize that a donor may be supporting a number of nonprofits annually but want to focus planned gifts to benefit one organization specifically.”

Some nonprofit professionals worry that planned gifts will cannibalize annual giving to their organizations. However, planned giving has actually been found to trigger a 75% increase in annual gifts, according to FreeWill estate planners.

“I try to show what the impact of planned gifts can be and that the foundation is here to support our organizations, not take money away from them,” Evans said.

Planned gifts officers love stories about donors who appear to be of modest means and who make no or small annual gifts but then leave large planned gifts in their will. Kelleher-Smith recalled the story of a donor who made small gifts and then nine years later made a \$10 million planned gift to the hospital where she was working.

“There’s a perception that you have to be a millionaire to make a planned gift, but that’s not true,” Hart said. She shared a story about “Gail,” who said she didn’t have anything to give and owned nothing of value but her house worth \$70,000.

“I asked her to think about what a \$70,000 might mean to an individual and told her that would make an equally significant difference to the Salvation Army.”

“Planned gifts come in all sizes,” Kelleher-Smith said. “I talk about our shared faith tradition and remind donors of the story of the widow’s mite in the bible. She gave everything she could.”

Panel members noted that planned gifts actually seem to be on the increase during COVID-19.

“I worked with a 60-year-old who wanted to create a memorial legacy fund for his parents because he was afraid he might die from COVID,” Kelleher-Smith said.

BY KAREN RIELEY
Resident Community News

weight of the cross and death out of compassion for others, a powerful example of caring and compassion for all of us, Christian or otherwise.

The Planned Giving Council of Northeast Florida’s March meeting shared ideas and examples with its members of how planned gifts can impact faith-based nonprofits, their donors and those they serve. Tania Yount,

chief development officer for Barnabas Center in Fernandina Beach, moderated remarks by Celeste Hart, associate planned giving director, Florida Divisional Headquarters, Salvation Army; Kellie Ann Kelleher-Smith, director of the Jewish Federation & Foundation of Northeast Florida; and Cliff Evans, planned giving officer of the Diocese of St. Augustine’s Catholic Foundation.

“The biggest challenge we face in getting planned gifts for our organizations is that nonprofits by necessity focus on their need for annual gifts throughout the year,” Kelleher-Smith said. “We work to educate donors on the difference between annual gifts and planned gifts and why a faith ministry needs both types of gifts.”

An annual gift is a contribution made to a nonprofit organization or higher education institution, provided on any given annual basis. It funds the nonprofit’s regular and ongoing expenses.

A planned gift is any major gift, made during lifetime or at death as part of a donor’s overall financial and/or estate planning. Some planned gifts provide lifelong income to the donor. Other gift plans use estate and tax planning to provide for charity and heirs in ways that maximize the gift and/or minimize its impact on the donor’s estate. These include gifts of equity, life insurance, real estate, personal property, or cash.

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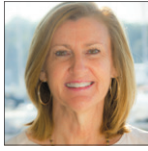
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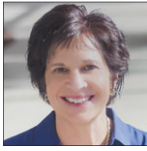
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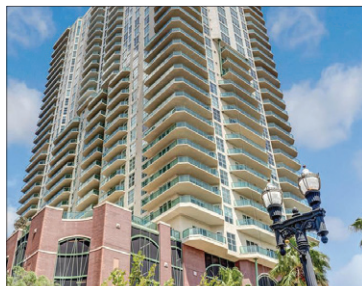


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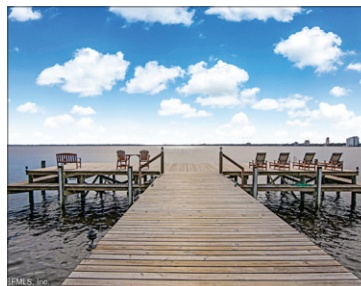


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6 BD / 1,876 SF



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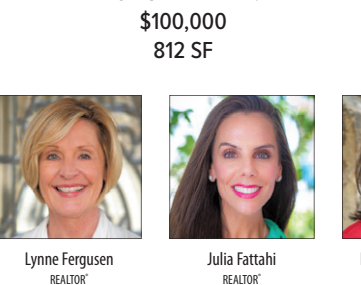
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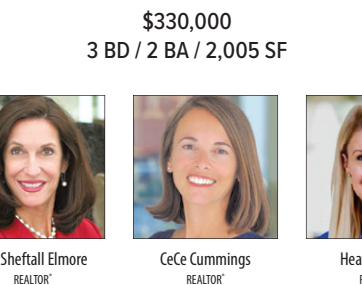


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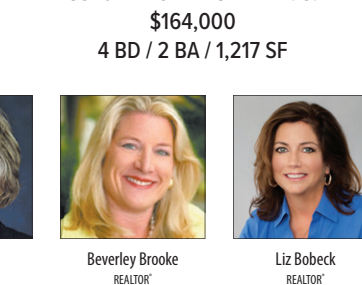
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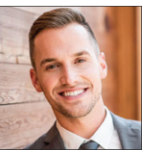
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WE CAN BE HEROES FOUNDATION BRUNCH A HUGE SUCCESS



LEFT: Ryman Shoaf, Cliff Leonard, Beth Heath; RIGHT: Atlantic Coast Young Marines Color Guard

The We Can Be Heroes Foundation hosted its spring Tribute to Our Heroes Brunch at the Salem Centre Auditorium in late March with the room filled to capacity (given the current COVID restrictions). Unsung heroes from around the country were recognized for their sacrifices for the good of their neighbors, their country and its future. The event featured a catered brunch followed by young Marines from the Atlantic Coast Young Marines formally presenting the Colors. Many tables were labelled with the names of a Veteran or community hero, donated by their loved ones to honor them. Two special heroes in attendance were Jacksonville World War II Veterans Frank Pupura and John Connelly. In addition to being recognized at the brunch, each unsung hero is delivered the Foundation's Unsung Hero Lives Here yard sign. The event concluded with presentations from Hillsdale College Professor Dr. Adam Carrington on America's freedom and Concerned Veterans for America Coalition Director Jimmie Smith on endless wars. Sponsors of the event included Americans for Prosperity, Concerned Veterans for America, and K9S for Warriors.

RETHREADED EXCEEDS FUNDRAISING RECORD GOAL DURING VIRTUAL MUKTI GALA

February 27, 2021, was a night to remember for the organization, Rethreaded. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the company made the decision to host their annual Mukti Gala virtually. With the hard work of the Rethreaded team, with the support of Sight and Sound Productions and Emcee Geoff Cowan, Rethreaded was able to beat their fundraising goal of 265,000.

The organization surpassed its fundraising goal and raised \$323,000 by the end of the evening. Everyone who virtually attended the gala was able to participate in the silent auction the week leading up to the event. During the event, a thrilling live auction took place with incredible prizes like a private plane ride to Savannah and a getaway to Blue Ridge, Georgia, to a couple lucky winners. Guests had a blast texting in their photos to appear in the virtual program presentation. This new feature allowed everyone to feel like they were enjoying the event together, even while they were apart.

During the event, the auctioneer and Emcee Geoff Cowan stated that he "has never seen generosity like this" in his many years of emceeing events. Founder and CEO of Rethreaded, Kristin Keen, could hardly contain her excitement as donations continued to roll in throughout the evening. The entire Rethreaded team was blown away by Todd Taylor, Co-founder, and Chief Executive Officer T2 Advertising Inc, who generously gave over \$70,000 to the organization.

Rethreaded is grateful to everyone who watched the gala from home, participated in the silent and live auction, and donated. Due to Mukti's success, the organization will now be able to hire more survivor employees in 2021.



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RIVER CITY DANCING WITH THE STARS

The Jacksonville Children's Chorus hosted River City Dancing With The Stars. The event was hosted both in-person and live streamed for virtual audiences.

River City DWTS featured local stars partnered with professional ballroom dancers as they competed to be River City's favorite dancer while also raising money for the JCC. All the dances kept the audience dancing in their seats while also impressing the star panel of judges.

After a night full of dancing and singing showcases, the winners were finally determined. Third place was awarded to John Thompson, Financial Advisor at Wells Fargo, for his fun swing dance. Second place was awarded to Susana Cruz, Broker, AON, for her upbeat salsa dance. The overall winner of River City DWTS was awarded to Allison "AllieMcDeal" Hollander, bestbet Poker Show Host, for her dramatic Tango.

At the end of the night, all the contestants collectively raised a total of \$95,813.71. All proceeds from River City Dancing with The Stars will benefit The Jacksonville Children's Chorus' ongoing programming and scholarship funds.

LUTHERAN SOCIAL SERVICES HOSTS FIRST SATURDAY FOOD GIVEAWAY



Lutheran Social Services (LSS), in partnership with Helping Florida and Clear Health Alliance, hosted a Saturday mobile food pantry on March 20. The food pantry was open to anyone in need and included 1,600 pre-packaged food boxes to be distributed on a first-come, first-served basis. The event took place at LSS headquarters, located at 4615 Philips Hwy in Jacksonville.

"Our pantry serves more than 2,000 households every month, but we know there are families missing out on much-needed food assistance because they work during the week," said Bill Brim, LSS Executive Director. "Thanks to our partnership with Helping Florida and Clear Health Alliance, we are able to offer this special Saturday food giveaway. We are committed to distributing as much nourishment as possible to our neighbors in need, and we hope food-insecure families will hear about this event through local media outlets and join us."

LSS feeds hundreds of local families every week through its regular pantry, which is open five days a week, Monday through Friday.

"Our pantry serves more than 2,000 households every month, but we know there are families missing out on much-needed food assistance because they work during the week"

- Bill Brim, LSS Executive Director



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LOCAL FOLKS

KEN GODWIN

BY MARY WANSER
Resident Community News

When not playing hide-and-seek or make-believe with his six-year-old granddaughter, Emilia, Ken Godwin is tending to bluebirds around town.

His bluebird passion began in 1980 while an employee of Southern Bell Telephone and Telegraph Company. His position there made him a member of the Telephone Pioneers of America, a corporate volunteer organization that had an environmental committee. The group's chairman had the idea to join a nationwide project and take care of the Southeast with a goal of placing a bluebird box at every mile marker on the interstate. "It was a crazy idea because without monitoring the boxes for years and years, the impact was temporary. But it got hundreds of people involved. So, it was worthwhile," Godwin said.

The alleyway between the Jacobs Building and the 400 Building was a prime spot for picking up scrap lumber, mainly old pallets, which the Pioneers would turn into birdhouses for the project. Their intent was to protect the eastern bluebird, a specific species east of the Rockies. They differ from the other two species of bluebirds in North America, the western and the mountain, not only in their location but also by their coloring.

Godwin described the iridescent blue of their backs. There's a refractive quality to the fibers of the feathers. "They glow like the colors on a CD," he said. It's particularly noticeable in a ray of morning sun in springtime.

In the late 1980s, the Florida Times-Union ran an article about Mildred Dixon, a member of the Duval Audubon Society. "I was enthralled, so I called her up," Godwin said. He admitted to her that, at nearly forty years old, he had never seen a bluebird. Dixon invited Godwin on a drive with her to Callahan in Nassau County to see the bluebird trail that she and other society volunteers had created.

Once Godwin witnessed the birds, the trail, and Dixon's work, "I started doing everything she did," he said. In those days, the bluebird box perches were made by cutting off the tops of two-liter, plastic Coke bottles, filling them with cement, inserting a metal pole, and burying them in the ground once cured. The poles were oiled with a mixture of axle grease and turpentine to keep the ants off and the raccoons from climbing up.

After Dixon showed Godwin what to do, he built approximately 300 bluebird boxes. He contacted his fellow Southern Bell employees who had a rural ZIP code and gave each one a nesting box. Then, in 1995, the company transferred Godwin to Atlanta where he purchased a house next to a high-tension power line that ran along a wildlife corridor and began erecting boxes on towers there. It took almost four years before they began filling in with bluebirds rather than other species.

Godwin's next experiment was seeing if he could attract bluebirds to his Atlanta "Leave It to Beaver neighborhood." He built 100 boxes and placed them around town. Amazingly, he found the birds liked living in the ones atop street signs near curbs. Godwin believes they felt safe there because passing traffic would keep prowling predators at bay.



Ken Godwin in a photo taken in February of 2021

In 2012, Godwin's job transferred him back to Jacksonville. He brought with him some scrap lumber and what he had learned in Atlanta. Through 2020, he had placed throughout our neighborhoods approximately 80 boxes per year. He looked for green spaces, like athletic fields and campsites. Hurricane Irma, though tragic, was a windfall for Godwin. He and his friend, Al Benson, salvaged lumber from washed up docks to build birdhouse kits.

Godwin told what makes a bluebird box different from a standard birdhouse by recalling what Lawrence Zeleny, founder of the North American Bluebird Society (NABS), had taught the public back in 1976. The only way to save bluebirds from extinction, since starlings were taking over all the natural cavities, was to build artificial woodpecker holes, entrances that could not exceed 1 1/2 inches in diameter. His solution is still used today. "That's the magic thing," Godwin said. If squirrels get to the holes, they will chew them out to double that size, allowing others to enter and kill the bluebirds. Locally, the English house sparrow is an invasive species.

Boxes should be monitored every couple of weeks to make sure sparrows haven't invaded and to gather science data for submission to The Cornell Lab of Ornithology to assist with their NestWatch program. Godwin and his wife, Carolyn, ride around town monitoring boxes, but it's a big job. They are looking to recruit more help than they have now. They need builders, monitors, and folks to place boxes in their yards. He'd like to have a "yard of the month" vote for those who are willing. Godwin is also interested in presenting the slideshow he has created to homeowners' associations.

Those interested in bluebird-saving efforts can contact TWO5327@me.com. Be sure to indicate "BLUEBIRD" in the reference line.

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ROSES ARE RED, ALWAYS BE GRATEFUL, NATIONAL POETRY MONTH HAPPENS IN APRIL

BY CAROLYN CANTRELL SNOWDEN
Resident Community News

When I think about big moments in my life, there are of course the predictable ones: graduations, my wedding day and the births of our two daughters. But, one of the biggest moments actually occurred in the Spring of 1987. I was just a typical 11-year-old in Martha Milton's fifth grade classroom at Riverside Presbyterian Day School. A poetry unit was introduced to us that would set a course for my life that I could never have imagined. Not only were we challenged to pick out and memorize a poem individually to present to the class, but both the fifth and sixth grades combined created original works to be published together as a keepsake. A flame was ignited inside me and I have written poetry ever since. I now have a personal poetry collection that spans my days growing up here in Jacksonville to my college days at the University of Alabama and all the way to the present, my mid-forties.

Below are several Poems submitted by local readers in our neighborhoods in celebration of National Poetry Month, I hope you enjoy them as much as I did.

I could not be more excited to now have the opportunity to work with The Resident, engage with other local poets and share a few poems to celebrate April's National Poetry Month! If you are a local poet who has interest in submitting your poetry, you can do so by sending an email to my attention at editor@residentnews.net



Forever and Ever, Amen

*"I remember my mother's prayers,
and they have always followed me.
They have clung to me all my life."
- Abraham Lincoln*

My Dearest Son, As with Abraham of old,
when mother's prayers he did behold,
Could it be, with every breath
her prayers did guide him so that death,
when it did sting,
was left behind, a mortal thing?
As Abe did with his life, should we
let God our guide and comfort be?
Else all is naught...
and life is fraught
with insufficient answers.

For God, who made us each His child,
loves us with depth and height so wild
and joyful, too; and yet He gives a choice...
it's yours... so take it, LIVE!
my son, in grace and love
and peace that comes as gentle dove,
to save and heal and hold and wrap
His arms around you... as in my lap
you, as a babe, did I.

My prayers for you will never die, my dearest,
for you see that I can say you are a Godly man,
as only God and Mother can (with certainty!)
and if, per chance, it's help we need,
then let us see it as a seed
of hope and glory, sown in grace
till dark glass yields us face to face...
As I, then still, pray for you.

By: Cathleen Lee

dawn

Morning is dawning
Wind stirring in my garden
Birds singing loudly
-
Rain
-
Soft rain, now welcome
Dry earth drinks it thirstily
Hope for growth at last

By: Linda Ross

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Wondering

On this quiet night,
I look at my bare feet stretched
out in front of me in the grass,
and I wonder beyond myself.

-

Through an opening in my mind,
I see past my yard
and my neighbor's house.
I see across my town, until,
slipping silently beyond my country,
I cross the ocean that divides.

-

I come to a place where there is
a woman in a hut in Uganda.
She is looking at her bare feet stretched
out in front of her on her sleeping mat,
and she is wondering beyond herself.

-

Through an opening in her mind,
she sees outside her hut,
and past her neighbor's hut.
She sees past the animals
fenced in for the night,
she sees across the desert,
beyond the land she knows,
until she crosses the world.

-

And she is imagining
that I might be here,
wondering about life,
like she is.

-

"Hello, there," we say,
"How wonderful to meet you."

By: Janis Kinley

Untitled

This heart is burning,
Hottest red and sunray orange.
The heat of memory, long forgotten dreams.
I thought they were ashes, but silly me.

I'm so worthy, yeah.
So deserving of this inferno.
Passion licks my skin, burning hot tendrils dancing.
You're the center of this blaze.
Destroyer of walls built to withstand.
They crumble at your feet, tiny pebbles mean nothing.

With you here it's brand new days.
Cradle this ember, this heart of mine.
Breathe life, stoke this fire.
Let this love rival the sun.

By: Keiralynn Packard

Mowing the Lawn in Jacksonville, Florida

In the shower, flecks of grass stick,
reluctantly wash down your body
into the drain they will later clog.
Day made blessed by two showers
because you mowed the lawn, weeded,
smelled dirt, near-copper scent of red bricks.
Whispers of gray roots you pulled from
the black sand of dirt. Two or three tugs
awakened the lawnmower to churn St. Augustine grass.
Two or three tugs with bent knees, weeks spent
handling tree arms in miniscule. These root systems,
small and dusty and gray are precious
even as they rise from earth,
drawn between your fingers.

By: Olson

Hanging On

Political chess games,
A national divide.
Plummeting deeper in debt,
While our borders are tried.
Frustrated parents,
Our children, behind.
Depression cases still climbing
With pandemic combined.

How do we stay optimistic,
That these nightmares are gone
One day as we struggle,
To keep hanging on?

By: c.c. Snowden

begin here

Little children know
animals know
sick people know
handicapped people know
poor people know
suffering people know

if you're fake or not.

If you want to learn
who you are,
look deeply
into the mirror
of their eyes
and see.

You'll know.

By: Janis Kinley

In the National Library in Cairo

a fifteenth-century folio, ink
and color on paper—mint green, sandy
red, sky blue. The Seduction of Yusuf.
He arrives at her door, she leads him in.
Pulls him through seven more, locking each
behind. There seems no release. She looks him
in the eyes, tar pools lit by fire. Slides
the gown down her arms. Her skin promises
radical relief. A rushing sound—wind
stirs the desert—and he turns. He flees, and
every bolted door springs free.
We lean in, to see the lines more clearly.
There's no sound, but the echo of our checking.
The dunes reach long into the night.

By: Liz Robbins

The Last Poem

The final pairs of animals herded up the plank as the rain begins: there is no need for repetition. Only the sound of water filling the Earth, the animals quieted for a time by silence and gentle rocking. When I was young, I had no voice, I filled my mouth with the sounds of others. When I aged, I spoke, I had to, I couldn't stop, I couldn't know I existed unless others listened. Now I am old, and what I hear grows dimmer in the early sun, and I quiet my thoughts for the treble of the mourning dove. This is the last poem, written from her faraway call. Now the pairs raise their voices and I celebrate them, my body already transforming into water and earth. The most beautiful notes of all! Water and earth.

By: Liz Robbins

24 JUNIOR RESIDENTS

RESIDENT COMMUNITY NEWS | APRIL 2021

SPARTAN GIRLS WIN 10TH CONSECUTIVE STATE SOCCER CHAMPIONSHIP TROPHY



PHOTO CREDIT: JOHN CABRERA

On Wednesday, March 3, the girls' varsity soccer team of St. Johns Country Day School won their 10th consecutive state championship trophy.

The Spartans 6-0 defeat of Ft. Myers' Canterbury School began when St. Johns scored two goals in the first two minutes of the game. By the half, Mia Sadler '21 had scored twice and Paige Crews '21 once, leaving the Spartans with a 3-0 lead. Goals by Bella Pontieri '22, Julia Boaventura '22, and Maddie Moody '21 after the half marked the shutout victory. "I am so proud of this team and everything we've accomplished. We truly are a family," said Crews.

The team officially has cemented their #DecadeOfExcellence and set a new state record for number of consecutive titles. The team now holds 13 total state championship titles, gaining ground on Thomas Aquinas that holds 15. "We're closing in on them!" said Regan Minners, Director of Communications at St. Johns.

"I'm numb. These girls really delivered," said Coach Mike Pickett.



Episcopal Science Fair Winners Miranda Dora, Daniel Delong and Sally Barksdale

BARKSDALE, DELONG AND DORA WIN EPISCOPAL SCIENCE FAIR

Sally Barksdale, Daniel Delong and Miranda Dora were the winners of the Science Fair held at Episcopal School of Jacksonville in late January.

Barksdale took home top honors in the senior biological category with a project titled, "Machine learning to predict cancer treatments with genetic biomarkers. Delong and Dora both took top honors in the senior physical category. Delong's project was titled: "A robotic arm with computer vision to manipulate objects." Doro's project was titled, "Lead removal with silver nanoparticles."

The projects were displayed on the Kirwan Flag Plaza on the Munneryn Campus after school, where the judges interviewed the students. The judges – Tess Peterson, Peter Blumeyer, Jason Marks, and Isaiah Nields – are all graduates of Episcopal. They said they were impressed with the students' creativity, presentation skills, and scientific reasoning.

First, second and third place winners as well as those receiving honorable mention presented their projects at the Regional Science Fair, a four-day, hybrid event, Feb. 20-23.

Other place winners are as follows: Senior Biological: Second place, Tom Commander – Nanoparticle-based hypothermia; Second place, Jordan Harrow – Environmental buffers in freshwater; Third place, Matthew Schinsing – Mite eradication on bees; Honorable mention, Natalie Rabil – Lead nitrate toxicity to amphipods; Honorable mention, Isabella Buschini – UV light on chicken embryos; Honorable mention, Ariel Largen – Comparison of online learning vs. in-person learning.

Senior Physical: Second place, Julia Kagiliery – Novel method of water analysis; Third place, Jace Bankston – Shark skin denticles on rockets; Third place, Sean Ramsey – Martian construction materials; Honorable mention, Chris-John Griffith – Electrical stimulation of earthworms; Honorable mention, Cole Nigro – Zinc analysis in lettuce; Honorable mention, Jackson Whitchurch – Measuring UV-C for disinfection.

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STUDENTS CHOSEN FOR JACKSONVILLE HONOR CHOIR



Gabriel Rodman, Marco Chua, Xzavier Moya, TJ Vallecser, Zane Moya, Euan Pascual and Jayden Register from St Paul's Catholic School were chosen to represent their school at the Jacksonville Honors Choir on Saturday, April 10th at Riverside Park United Methodist Church.

SEVEN BISHOP KENNY STUDENTS ACHIEVE EAGLE SCOUT RANK



FRONT ROW LEFT TO RIGHT: Sean Meisler, Matthew Bailey, and Andrew Russell
BACK ROW LEFT TO RIGHT: Aden Dreher, Joey Eichler, Ryan Spinelli, and Adam Shalley

Seven Bishop Kenny High School students who represent six scout troops throughout Jacksonville have achieved Eagle Scout rank, the highest honor awarded to any scout. The 2020-2021 recipients are Sean Meisler '21, Matthew Bailey '21, Andrew Russell '21, Aden Dreher '22, Joey Eichler '21, Ryan Spinelli '23, and Adam Shalley '23.

This distinguished rank, established in 1912, takes years to achieve. One of many requirements is the planning, development, and completion of a significant service project, which must include the leading of volunteers to help execute it successfully.

These young men instituted a variety of projects that address needs within the community. All are funded by the boys' donated labor at no cost to the public.

Meisler designed and built an information board with wildlife and park activities for First Christian Church of the Beaches.

Bailey built an agility course for the dogs at K9 Services German Shepherd Rescue in Green Cove Springs.

Russel built and installed a shooting bench for the Atlantic Beach Police Station.

Dreher designed and installed a military memorial path outside San Juan del Rio Catholic School.

Eichler designed, built, and installed ten bird feeders and five bird houses for Westminster Woods Retirement Center.

Spinelli designed and built a fire pit and four benches for North Florida School of Special Education.

Shalley remodeled an art room for Geneva Presbyterian Church and converted it into a new religion space for the church community to use.

Bishop Kenny congratulates all!

CAMPUS COMMUNITY SERVICE DAY REACHES HUNDREDS



Episcopal celebrated its annual Community Service Day March 23 on all of the school's three campuses. This year Fine Arts students performed pop up shows across the city; advisories tackled individual group service projects and made more than 200 Easter baskets for Community Hospice PedsCare; students cleaned up campus and the beach; made cards for those incarcerated, sick, in nursing homes or hospice; made toys for homeless pets; packed food, learned about hunger, and assisted Farm Share, Hunger Fight, and UCOM, among other activities. In total, students contributed more than 2,400 hours of community service in one day.



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INAUGURAL DIVERSITY CELEBRATION WEEK A SUCCESS



Olivia Farah, Teressa Elhaji, Skylar Fick, Winston Peele, Arisa Nakamichi and Frankie Alvarez

Bishop Kenny High School observed its first Diversity Celebration Week in its 69-year history February 22-26. Organized by the Diversity Student Union, the week included a variety of daily activities, beginning each morning with student-produced announcements featuring the designated culture of the day.

Winston Peele '22, founder and president of the Diversity Student Union and Student Government vice president, spearheaded the celebration week in collaboration with the other DSU officers: vice president Jasmyne Roberts '21, executive assistant Arisa Nkamichi, historian Jamia Nesmith '21, historian Shadia Noureldin '21, and public relations coordinator Olivia Farah '21.

"Diversity week was a great opportunity for the students to see the amazing impact people from different backgrounds contributed to the world," said Teresa Elhaji '21, Middle Eastern and Arabic community co-chair. The club officers are already talking about next year's event and how they will utilize the feedback from a survey administered the week after DCW concluded.

"We hope to expand upon the celebration next year to bring more diverse activities such as dancing, and games to bring more fun and joy to the week," said Arisa Nakamichi '22, Asian and Island Pacific community chair. As listed on the school's website, the Diversity Student Union's mission is to promote and increase awareness and appreciation for all racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds on campus and in the community. DSU members seek to build relationships with their peers by breaking down barriers which lead to prejudice and encouraging unity which leads to acceptance.

Peele said, "The number one idea would be to connect with the Clara White Mission to work specifically with the growing homeless community in the downtown area." Principal Todd Orlando said he was impressed by the dedication and work of the DSU. He is honored to work with these students as they critically and thoughtfully address the issues of diversity and racial inclusivity at Bishop Kenny. "I am proud of our students on the DSU who have worked very hard to raise awareness about cultural diversity, and I am looking forward to the continued progress we are making as a community."

'NANNY'S NATION' CLUB RAISES FUNDS FOR ALS



Jessie Pearson was inspired by the charitable work her Maryland-based camp friend Sophie Rubin accomplished in honor of her grandmother, "Nanny," who passed away after a battle with Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, or ALS. Rubin began a group called "Nanny's Nation" that successfully raised money and awareness for the disease through walks organized by the ALS Association. Pearson thought the service effort would be well received by the Bolles community and endeavored to bring "Nanny's Nation" to Jacksonville this school year.

"I decided to bring Nanny's Nation to Florida to continue to support people that suffered like [Sophie's] grandmother," Pearson said. "I am thankful for the people who have joined my club and are ready to help make a difference."

Pearson said the mission of the Bolles club is to provide knowledge and educate others about the horrors of ALS and to fundraise and support families who suffer from the disease. Pearson is the president of the club, and its officers are: Georgia Avert, vice president; Sophia Stromberg, secretary; Jackson Brill, treasurer; and Anna Turner, technology officer.

The club's inaugural Nanny's Nation Walk for a Cure was held January 17 at Bolles. Participants were led on a campus walk with music and celebrated at the finish with snacks and drinks. Students donated \$20 to the organization to be part of the walk and received a Nanny's Nation t-shirt and face mask. The club raised more than \$500 for ALS.

Pearson said she has a few ideas for club fundraising this spring. She also is encouraging club members to attend the National ALS walk in Jacksonville this April.

Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) is a progressive, fatal neuromuscular disease that slowly robs the body of its ability to walk, speak, swallow and breathe. The life expectancy of a person with ALS averages two to five years from the time of diagnosis.

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A GLIMPSE INTO THE EUCHARISTIC PROCESSION AT ASSUMPTION CATHOLIC SCHOOL



Sisters: (front left) Sr. Karen, Sr. Marina, Sr. Grace (front center) Sr. Kelly (behind from left) Sr. Sasha, Sr. Megan, Sr. Paulette and Sr. Kira

that the students could adore Him, love Him, and enjoy the true peace that only comes from being in His Presence. This is the 4th year that a Eucharistic Procession has taken place on campus; “It’s becoming a tradition,” confided one of the teachers smiling, “and the students look forward to it every year; They say, ‘When are we going to do the adoration walk?’”

Jesus began His procession route at 9:30am in the Church where the Kindergarten, 1st, and 2nd grade students were gathered to adore Our Lord. He then processed to the cafeteria, where the 5th and 6th grade students were gathered. “It was exciting to know that Jesus was coming, when you heard the bells ringing, you knew that Jesus was near!” At each altar vocal prayers were said, a Gospel reading was read, petitions were read by students and teachers. The week before students made pennant banners and wrote the intentions they carried in their hearts to be presented before the Lord. As Jesus passed by, the students’ colorful pennant banners joyfully swayed in the cold wind; it seemed as though Our Lord reiterated His words in the Gospel, “...great is your faith! Let it be done as you wish” (Mt. 15: 28).

Our Eucharistic Lord proceeded to the school courtyard where the 3rd and 4th graders were eager to see Jesus. “It was cold outside, but it didn’t matter because we were with Jesus,” one of the 3rd graders shared after the procession.

Exclamations of love and thanksgiving like, “I love you, Jesus,” and “Thank you, Jesus,” were heard from the Pre-K students stationed outside the Early Childhood Learning Center as they waved handkerchiefs with joy as Jesus passed by their classrooms.

The final altar station was the gym where the 7th and 8th graders were already prayerfully preparing their hearts for Jesus’ coming, as the 8th grade choir led them in song.

“When Jesus came there was so much peace,” one of the 8th graders shared bubbling over with joy, “It was different from going to the Church for Adoration because today Jesus came to us and was walking on our campus - and that was really special.” We give thank to the Lord for pouring out so many graces in the hearts of these students and that these graces may extend to their families as well!

“A what?” one might ask.

“Anyone who had truly fallen in love can understand why Catholics believe that Jesus is truly present in the Eucharist,” one of the religious sisters at Assumption ardently explained. “His love is infinite and love does crazy things; since He is God, His love goes beyond our human reasoning and He chose to transform bread into Himself so that He could be with us until the end of time.”

The Eucharistic Procession is kicked off during the first school day of Catholic Schools Week. The Servant Sisters of the Home of the Mother collaborate with the Assumption Catholic Church and the school to organize this truly amazing event at the school. Covid Restrictions turned out to be a blessing in disguise as it gave us the opportunity to change things up a bit for this year’s procession. Whereas in past years Jesus only processed amongst the students in the gym, this year the students were stationed at 4 different locations throughout campus.

Father Jason Trull, pastor of Assumption Catholic Church, processed with the Eucharist throughout the school campus so

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Photo credit: John Cabrera '22



GIRLS 2A STATE CHAMPIONS! 10 IN A ROW

MOST CONSECUTIVE STATE CHAMPIONSHIP TITLES

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Mike Pickett

ASST. COACH:
Cody Slaughter

Alexis Agramonte
Savannah Berrang
Julia Boaventura
Kennedy Brown
Abigail Campbell
Kaiya Cooper

Paige Crews
Chloe Crews
Alexis Drumm
Calliann Holshouser
Ava Johnson
Mia Johnson

Hannah Lemieux
Gianna Lentini
Lauryn Mateo
Roxy Mathews
Kiera Moisan
Maddie Moody

Ava Morin
Nyamma Nelson
Cece Nowicki
Isabella Pontieri
Sophia Pontieri
Brooke Remolde

Ellie Rosenau
Sydney Schmidt
Gigi Sessions
Kamryn Towers
Lauren Weiss
Natalie Wilson

JASMYNE ROBERTS NAMED FLORIDA DAIRY FARMERS CLASS 4A GIRLS PLAYER OF THE YEAR



CHARLSEA CLARK

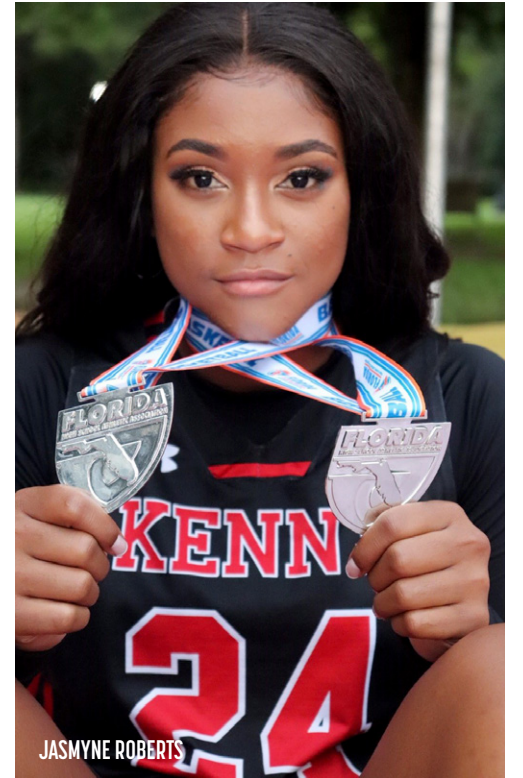
"I love playing guard because I can shoot or make a move and attack the basket to score."

- Jasmyne Roberts

Jasmyne Roberts, BK Class of '21 received a new title on Tuesday, March 16, Florida's Best in Class 4A girls' basketball. Roberts is committed to play basketball for the University of Miami in the Fall. Roberts transferred to BK as a sophomore and has been the starting guard since 10th grade. Roberts stated, "I love playing guard because I can shoot or make a move and attack the basket to score." Roberts, who is the team captain, finished the year with 2,224 career points and 1,005 rebounds. She has a full life outside of basketball and is very involved in Crusader activities. She is a Kairos leader, a member of the Diversity Task Force, and co-founder of the Student Diversity Union. "I love playing basketball at BK and it has given me the opportunity to grow as a person, and even more importantly, to play for an amazing coach. Coach Clark pushes me every single day to perform at the highest level and to become a stronger leader." said Roberts.

Her goal is to major in communications and become a network sports broadcaster following a successful basketball career.

The Crusader basketball team is led by Coach Charlse Clark and she truly leads by example and takes her "We over Me" philosophy into every aspect of the game with her players. The Crusaders have been very successful with Roberts leading the team and accumulated three district titles, three regional titles, three final four titles, and two state runner-up finishes. Clark has been head coach at BK for six years with a 112-61 overall record and finished second in voting for Class 4A Coach of the Year. She values her players as individuals, but mandates that they always play as a team and work for the greater good of the program. She stated, "We had one of the toughest schedules in the state for a reason of wanting to prepare for this moment. So, I'm able to see past the state loss and be so proud for our school and our program."



JASMYNE ROBERTS

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JSA offers hope and inspiration to parents of children with autism



NICK WITH GIRLFRIEND



MICHELLE & MARK DUNHAM

April is World Autism Month with Autism Awareness Day designated as April 2. For the Jacksonville School for Autism (JSA), however, April 2 is one of many days in its ongoing mission to put “Autism in Action” each day. For the past 16 years, the school has served students with autism spectrum disorders (ASD) ranging in age from three through 25 years old.

“JSA focuses on acceptance, not just awareness,” said Michelle Dunham, the school’s executive director. “We see every student beyond an autism diagnosis and assume their intelligence to uncover their individual and unique abilities.”

JSA reports that one in 50 children have autism; one in 140 cannot speak. Boys are nearly five times more likely than girls to have autism. Autism is on the rise and is now the fastest-growing developmental disorder in the United States.

For Dunham, autism is a deeply personal story of raising a child with this diagnosis. In 2000, her husband, Mark, and she learned that their son, Nick, had autism.

“The child we knew was gone in an instant, and so were our dreams for his future,” Dunham said. The Dunhams decided to go from “impact to inspiration,” and founded JSA.

Since then, JSA has grown from a grassroots school of two students and one teacher to now supporting 60 students from six counties and more than 50 teachers and therapists.

“We have some families who have moved across the country to receive the lifechanging services for their children,” Dunham said.

According to JSA, by 2030 it is projected that one in two boys will be diagnosed with autism. There is no medical detection or cure for autism and it can cost a family \$60,000 a year, on average, in managing it. JSA works with families to create a lifechanging environment for students to believe in themselves and achieve their best.

JSA provides program in early childhood development, academic/behavioral classroom models, clinical therapy, enrichment classes and a vocational Supportive Transition & Employment Placement (STEP) program designed to give young adults the skills necessary to be successful and productive members.

“One of our most critical needs is to have space for all the on-campus vocational training and enterprises for our rapidly expanding STEP program,” said Dunham. “Life span services are critical to support our aging population of young adults to ensure a future full of hope and independence.”

The school’s five-year plan has been to find a permanent school home. It purchased a building in February 2020 only three weeks before the school had to shut down due to COVID-19.

“We faced the serious threat of laying off our staff and potentially losing our new school campus,” Dunham said. She credits the generosity of grantors, individual donors and loyal supporters for raising nearly \$700,000 to keep the school going and growing. The school opened back up for school in August 2020 in its new school building.



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THE WAY WE WERE: BOB AND MELODY BACHMAN

BY MARY WANSER
RESIDENT COMMUNITY NEWS

Bob and Melody Bachman have history here. But it didn't begin with them.

Bob's mom, Margaret Ruth Kelly-Bachman, grew up from the age of 3 in a house her dad had built on Alcazar Avenue in Grenada. She was a student at Hendricks Avenue Elementary School when it was still new. Her mom, Bob's maternal grandmother, Margaret Kelly (she named her daughter Margaret Ruth), was a teacher there.

Bob's father, Bob Bachman, Sr., was a basketball player for Landon High School, class of 1955. That's where he met Bob's mother. They married while they were students at the University of Florida. Bob was born in Gainesville while his dad was in his last year of pharmacy school there.

A year after their son was born, Bob, Sr. and Margaret Ruth moved back to Jacksonville. Bob, Sr. bought a pharmacy from Hugh Sellers in the Nasrallah Building on Park Street, which is now called Whiteway Corner. Bob, Jr. attended Holiday Hill Elementary and Landon Middle School. At the age of fourteen, he moved with his family from Jacksonville to Tampa.

Melody is a native Tampa girl who spent much of her young life and many holidays visiting grandparents and extended family in the Jacksonville area. Her paternal grandparents had emigrated from Syria to Jacksonville. Her dad, Herbert Nasrallah, was born and raised here. He attended Robert E. Lee High School in the late 1940s and played on their basketball team before marrying her mom, Rachel.

Melody's maternal family was from Macclenny, just west of Jacksonville, and they did all of

their shopping in Jacksonville because there was nothing in Macclenny back then.

In addition to grandparents and stores, Jacksonville held another attraction for Melody. "My favorite cousins were here, the Prices," she said of the four children born to her father's sister, Aunt Gloria Nasrallah-Price, and her husband, Uncle Henry Price, a Jacksonville builder.

It was a blind date in high school that brought Bob and Melody together. He was a senior at King High and she was a junior at the Academy of the Holy Names, both in Tampa. The two went out for the first time with Bob's swim teammate and Melody's best girlfriend. The four went to the theatre to see Airplane before enjoying a pizza afterwards. According to Melody, their attraction was "pretty much" instantaneous. Bob invited her the following morning to go waterskiing at his grandparents' lake house in Carrollwood.

While they were dating, Bob and Melody learned of their families' intertwining. As a young boy, Bob's dad used to watch Melody's teenage dad play basketball for Lee. There was a six-year age difference between the two. Further, when Bob's father was a grown working man, the building in which his pharmacy was located was one that had been built by Melody's paternal grandfather. Grandpa and Grandma Nasrallah lived a few doors down from that building. As a pre-teen, Bob would work on Saturdays for his dad at the pharmacy. One of his chores was to deliver the monthly rent check to the landlord up the block. He was paying Melody's grandmother. This all happened long before Bob and Melody ever met as high schoolers in Tampa.



Bachman Family October 9, 2020

After high school, Bob attended the University of Florida as a marketing major. He pledged to Sigma Alpha Epsilon. Melody attended one year of college in Valdosta, Georgia and three more at Santa Fe in Gainesville to become a dental hygienist.

After college graduation, they each continued living separately in Gainesville while Bob extended his schooling for a building construction license, the same career field that Melody's grandfather, father, and uncles had pursued.

They married at an episcopal church in Tampa on September 24, 1982. A reception followed at the Tampa Women's Club on Bayshore Boulevard. "It looked kinda like My Big Fat Greek Wedding," Melody said, alluding to the blockbuster movie of 2002 and referring to her large, Arabic family with 26 first cousins.

After two years as a married couple in Gainesville, Bob and Melody decided on a move to Jacksonville for its building industry opportunities. Melody was pregnant with their first child at that time. Her labor began on moving day. So, their son, Joshua, was born in Gainesville while Melody's mom unpacked moving boxes in an apartment on Old Kings Road in Jacksonville, awaiting the

new parents and baby. Five months later, the young family moved into a house bought in Miramar. Now, 35 years later, Bob and Melody still live there. In the interim, they had two more children, both girls, Natalie and Hannah.

Melody put her dental hygiene degree to good use, working for eight years with Dr. Craig Kelly, a dentist located on Hendricks Avenue in San Marco. She quit when Hannah was born. For the past 28 years, she's been



Hannah, Natalie, and Joshua Bachman



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Bob and Melody Bachman September 24, 1982

building custom homes, before the elder retired three years later. Today, the company is known as Bachman Distinctive Homes. For the past seven years, Melody has been working there with Bob. “She’s been great. She was the part of the business that I was really missing,” Bob said, repeating the words of his good friend. Distinctive builds as well as renovates. The latter has become more popular since the housing crash of 2008.

Raising three children in Jacksonville in the ‘80s and ‘90s led to a lot of long-term, close-knit relationships for the Bachmans. “You always meet your really good friends through your kids,” Bob said. All three of their children attended Southside United Methodist Preschool. That’s how they met the Andrews and the Boyers. Joshua played baseball for HAB, Hendricks Avenue Baptist, and that’s how they met the Carluccis. All three families’ lives remain interwoven. Melody misses that they don’t do as much together as they used to due to COVID restrictions.

In addition to the people, the Bachmans love the reputable schools here in Jacksonville,

with Pampered Chef, doing in-home cooking demonstrations. For her expertise, she’s earned multiple trips around the world through the company’s incentive plan. She and Bob have been able to visit countries like France, Italy, Germany, Spain, Austria, and more.

Aside from a brief break, Bob has worked in residential construction for his entire career. He was with a few large companies before a three-year stint on staff at Operation New Hope, a nonprofit started in 1999 by his fraternity brother, Kevin Gay, a Jacksonville native. Bob’s job there was gutting old homes and building them new again. From there, Bob went to another local nonprofit, Jacksonville Housing Partnership, and ran their construction department.

In 2006, Bob went into business together with Melody’s Uncle Henry Price,



Melody and Bob Bachman June 5, 2019

San Marco Square, and the overall neighborhood feel. They do a lot of walking around the area and are active members of Lakewood United Methodist Church. They like that the neighborhoods don’t change too much due to overbuilding like is seen in other areas. “You can’t really overbuild because you’re landlocked, which is not a bad thing. That’s been really beneficial to us because we do a lot of renovating of homes,” Melody said.

Over the years, the Bachmans have noticed many changes south of them in Mandarin and surrounding areas. Bob remembers as a young boy taking Sunday afternoon drives with his family to Mandarin because that was in the woods.

Bob and Melody’s three grown and married children live in Orlando within minutes from

each other. “So, it’s easy when we go down to visit them,” Melody said. They have given the couple a combined total of five grandchildren. A natural question they’re often asked is whether Grandma and Grandpa Bachman will move to Orlando from Jacksonville. “But this is where our friends are, and it’s easy to get to Orlando to visit. They like their space, and we like ours,” Melody says in reply.

When the grandchildren are a little older, Melody hopes to revive an old Christmas Eve tradition of the entire family and neighborhood friends gathering at Bob and Melody’s Miramar home for a party with homemade eggnog from a generations-old family recipe as the highlight. But in the interim, the Bachmans are content with the Orlando commute.



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PET REPTILES & AMPHIBIANS- INSTANT WOW FACTOR

BY JULIE KERNS GARMENDIA
Resident Community News

They may not be furry or cuddly, but legal pet herptiles (reptiles and amphibians), are fascinating pets. They have unique skin, scales or shells, odd physical features, unexpected colors and mesmerizing behavior. Their striking appearance or almost-alien, “wow factor”, immediately attracts attention. They include common pet reptiles like lizards, snakes, turtles or tortoises, and amphibian frogs, toads, newts and salamanders, among many others. Reptiles are cold-blooded, air-breathing vertebrates (possess a backbone), that move

on their bellies or small, short legs and are usually covered with scales or bony plates. These egg-layers are classified as part of the dinosaur family and include some of the most ancient animal species alive on Earth.

Amphibians are also cold-blooded vertebrate animals, but most have moist, smooth skin. They are distinguished by an aquatic, gill-breathing, larval stage, followed by a lung-breathing stage on land. They lay shell-less eggs in water or wet areas, and resemble an animal somewhere between fish and reptiles.

Despite the description of a “reptilian brain”, limited to a primitive drive that controls bodily functions, continuing research shows that some herptiles can learn, be trained and adapt to environments. They dwell on dry land, in water or both. Depending upon age and species, they are carnivores, herbivores, insectivores or some combination during their lifetimes.

Shane Smith works fulltime in a Jacksonville pet shop and specializes in herps. His childhood hobby catching frogs and toads led to his first pet snake at age ten. Formerly active-duty coast guard, now a reservist, Smith will soon complete an environmental sciences degree, intent on a wildlife biology career. A former member of the Milwaukee Area Herpetological Society, among the largest in the U.S., Smith raised funds for herp conservation, rescue and educational outreach.

At the pet shop, Smith loves talking to children and answering questions about herps and the environment. Smith said it is crucial to educate children about animals,

wildlife and the environment, so they will become knowledgeable adults, who understand and care about conservation and the need to protect all species and habitat.

Smith’s unusually-broad perspective on herptiles is not only as a longtime herp owner, and pet shop staff, but also as a former employee of a major venom collection lab. Only a few labs worldwide extract poisonous venom from the venom glands of snakes for use in scientific, medical and antivenom research, and for manufacture of medications and antivenom.

“All snakes, captive-bred legal pets or native wild snakes, especially venomous snakes, suffer the consequences of widespread myths and misconceptions. They are too often labeled as bad animals that should be killed. Most people don’t know that snake venom is used for research by toxicologists and pharmaceutical companies to create life-saving medications, including antivenom for snake bites in humans or animals. Venom components are used in medications for treatment of strokes, heart conditions, brain injury, hypertension, blood disorders, Alzheimer’s disease and other ailments,” he said.

Chuck Smith, president of the Jacksonville Herpetological Society, moved to Florida forty-five years ago specifically because of his serious pet herptile hobby. He said that Northeast Florida has the ideal climate for keeping pet turtles, frogs, snakes and lizards indoors, seasonally outdoors or in outdoor climate-controlled enclosures.

“Herptile pets require time, alot of care and education about various species. I’ve been a herp owner and active herpetological society member for decades. The strongest message I have is to discourage people from taking reptiles and amphibians out of the wild, even species that are legal to possess in Florida,” he said. “Learn as much as possible about any reptile or amphibian before you purchase that animal and only purchase or adopt from a reputable, licensed pet store, breeder or rescue organization. Ask questions. Verify that the herptile is legally bred and born in captivity and not removed from the wild, including eggs.” When Smith isn’t tending to his extensive herp family, he is an indoor tropical plant expert who works for a local plant nursery. President of the Jacksonville Herpetological Society, he presents educational programs to community groups and homeowner associations.

Cayle Pearson, Jacksonville Zoo Assistant Curator of Herps, Birds & Others, planned to attend veterinary school until he went to work in a pet shop, where he immediately



Shane Smith with his pet Rhino Iguana, Phillip.

“was hooked” on the reptiles. He said that when handling herptiles, strict cleanliness, sanitization and hand-washing are necessary to avoid any possibility of bacterial infection or diseases that can be transmitted to humans. Anyone with an open wound should never handle herptiles; never eat or drink around them.

Pearson cares for the zoo’s herptiles and birds, and is part of multiple conservation projects to save endangered herps and the habitats they require to survive. Pearson noted persistent public misunderstanding about the value of all herp species.

“Every animal plays a vital role in the ecosystem. If we lose even one, their predators are affected and that ripples down, adversely impacting the food chain,” he said. “Herptiles, birds, bats, snakes, all provide pest, insect and rodent control. Beneficial resident snakes, like black racers, king and rat snakes routinely prey upon or prevent venomous snakes from moving in.”

Pearson said most people falsely believe that common Florida animals like snakes and alligators are prone to bite or attack by nature. In most interactions, however, unless cornered or threatened, they usually flee or freeze, and desperately try to completely avoid humans. Alligators that have been fed, however, lose their fear of humans and behave aggressively in constant search of more food. In all cases, widely avoid, never approach and keep children and pets safely away from snakes or alligators.

Herptile experts note it is imperative to learn as much as possible about any herptile pet before purchase, especially the expected

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Habitat requirements differ; some prefer flat spaces with hiding places, while others climb horizontally. Secure, escape-proof housing is essential, as is protection from other pets, children or predators if housed outdoors.

Although herptiles may not require the same daily care or exercise of other pets, they cannot survive neglect. It is also important to understand that herptiles may prefer never to be handled, might routinely hide or become stressed with human contact, including normal household noise and activity.

If a herptile or other nonnative pet owner can no longer care for or no longer wants their exotic pet, or if they possess an illegal exotic, nonnative or wildlife animal, the Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC), holds periodic Exotic Pet Amnesty Day events throughout Florida. Individuals can surrender exotic or illegal animals free of charge, with no penalties or prosecution, to authorities.

The goal of these amnesty events is to prevent release of exotics, invasive (nonnative) or illegally-held animals into the wild. Most exotics, and any animal housed and fed as a pet, usually cannot survive in the wild. If they do survive and breed, or prey on native animals and birds, they threaten survival of those native animals, the stability of the

adult size, age expectancy (varies greatly, but can range from 3 – 50+ years), lifetime housing and dietary requirements. Young, small herptiles may rapidly outgrow typical pet store tanks. Cold-blooded herptiles require strictly controlled environmental conditions to maintain body temperature through external sources. Unable to pant, shiver or sweat to increase or reduce body temperature, herptiles must move to find their optimal temperature. Learn before purchase, which herptiles are best for a first-time owner.

Besides constant temperature control, herptiles need special lighting, humidity, misting, water, hiding and basking spots. Their diets are diverse and species-specific.



SCUTES Turtle Rescue founder Danielle D'Amato and her husband Pete Bis hold two common pet reptiles: on left/Pete - Red-Footed Tortoise, on right/Danielle - Sulcata Tortoise.

Fortunately, Danielle D'Amato, local founder of SCUTES (Sustainable Care & Urgent Treatment for Every Shell), is an FWC licensed wildlife rehabilitator who can legally rehabilitate injured or ill turtles. She has created a Go Fund Me site to purchase acreage for a gopher tortoise refuge in Northeast Florida. D'Amato is a herpetologist, marine and wildlife biologist, who works for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. She and her husband and co-wildlife-rescuer, Pete Bis, are US. Navy veterans. She presents educational programs to the community regarding gopher tortoises, diverse wildlife and conservation issues.

National Gopher Tortoise Day, April 10, 2021, promotes awareness and protection of a reptile keystone species, the gopher tortoise - federally protected under the Endangered Species Act. A keystone species is a critically important wild animal that other species depend upon for survival. Their elimination would drastically and negatively impact the ecosystem. Gopher tortoise burrows are twenty-five feet deep and provide shelter to approximately 350 other species.



Calla Titterington, 7, with Phoebe, her super-friendly Bearded Dragon.

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**ALLIE
 JEAN
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 GODFREY**

*FEBRUARY 15, 1929 –
 MARCH 21, 2021*

Godfrey passed away on Sunday, March 21, 2021. She was born on February 15, 1929 in Lake City, Florida, married Ed Godfrey on January 26, 1952, then moved to Jacksonville.

Jean retired as a Personnel Officer for the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers. She graduated from Columbia High School in Lake City and attended college for one year at Aurora College in Illinois.

She will be remembered as a perfect example of a "Southern Lady" who always put others first, showed love, kindness and concern for all,

loved God, her family and friends and was a great cook!

Jean leaves behind her son, James Edward Godfrey and his wife, Izumi (Bali, Indonesia), daughter, Pamela Godfrey Kibler and her husband, Rick (Jacksonville), her grandsons, Brian Reese Kibler (Jacksonville) and Scott Richard Kibler (Orlando), and her brother, Bobby Tompkins and his wife, Linda Gail (Lake City) along with many nieces and nephews. She is predeceased by her brothers, Eddy Tompkins and Lamar Tompkins, mother, Alma Tompkins, and father, William Kendrick Tompkins.



**JAMES
 BLANTON
 DAVIS**

*FEBRUARY 19, 1942 –
 MARCH 16, 2021*

James Blanton Davis, 79, of Jacksonville, Florida died peacefully on Tuesday, March 16 at his home. He was married to the love of his life, Sandra Anglin Davis for 58 years.

James was born February 19, 1942 in Albany, Georgia. He was the son of the late Floyd Edwin Davis and Sara Elizabeth Fincher Davis. He grew up in the small town of Doerun, Georgia where his first jobs were cutting grass, delivering newspapers and working in his father's hardware store. He was a graduate of the University of Georgia obtaining a Bachelor of Arts in Business Administration in 1967 and a Masters in Marketing in 1972. James held several managerial positions in his career before opening his own specialty accounts payable auditing firm JB Davis Associates in 1980. In 1992, he became a Data Manager for Howard Shultz & Associates before retiring in 2001.

Over the course of his life, James was President of the Georgia 4H Club, he was a member of the Future Farmers of America, the Lions Club and Indian Guides as well as coaching little league soccer. In his spare time, he was an accomplished woodworker making fine furniture and toys. He was a voracious reader of novels, history and the daily newspaper. In his early adult years, he enjoyed photography, bowling, roller coasters and was a trick water skier. He will most be remembered for his keen story telling ability, humorous one-liners and the way he worshiped each of his grandchildren. James was happiest when at least one of his grandbabies was piled up in his lap or playing nearby. He always had a ready hug for his children and grandchildren upon arrival and departure.



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