



Mr. and Mrs. Claus greeted children in San Marco Square during the festival.

San Marco Art Festival returns to Balis Park



Reet Bilanchone, Nesti Tona, Rula Carr and George Foote

Artists and art lovers filled San Marco's Balis Park the weekend following Thanksgiving — Nov. 26 and 27 — for the 24th annual San Marco Art Festival.

The art featured at this free festival covered a variety of mediums, from paint and printmaking to fused glass and metal sculptures. More than 20 artists participated.

Artist Nesti Tona was the winner of the 2022 San Marco Art Festival Poster contest and his art was featured on posters advertising the festival.

Traffic on either side of Balis Park remained open throughout the weekend, allowing impromptu stops from motorists who happened to be passing by San Marco Square as well as guests who planned a visit to the festival.



LEADING LADIES

The Association of Fundraising Professionals (AFP) First Coast Chapter National Philanthropy Day Co-Chairs Brittany Fowler (left) and Kacie Smyth led the festivities during the 2022 National Philanthropy Day Luncheon at the Hyatt Regency Jacksonville Riverfront Hotel, Nov. 14.

SEE MORE ON PAGE 6



THE POWER OF PINK

Marica Pendjer and Kelly Wood were among the special guests at Underwood's Jewelers in San Marco for a recent trunk show benefitting Pink Ribbon Jax.

SEE MORE ON PAGE 30

RESIDENTS URGED TO REPORT NOXIOUS ODORS, CONTACT OFFICIALS

City officials are encouraging citizens to continue making odor complaints, even while the residential study is ongoing. District 14 City Council Member Randy DeFoor said the study sensors can be moved if calls reporting an odor provide evidence for a better location. Reporting the odor while it is active will also help pair the complaint with incoming data from the study. Neighbors can help officials track any noxious odors by calling in a complaint by phone to 630-CITY (2489) or electronically at www.myjax.custhelp.com. Readers can also email odor@residentnews.net to share tips for future stories.

Churches Provide Hunger Relief



Five local churches joined forces Nov. 13 for the CROP Hunger Walk, held at South Jacksonville Presbyterian Church (SJPC). SJPC, Faith United Methodist, Hendricks Ave Baptist, Geneva Presbyterian and St. Mark's Episcopal participated in the event.

One quarter of the funds raised went toward local support through United Community Outreach Ministry. The other 75% went to Church World Service, an international organization that provides life-saving support like emergency food, along with the seeds, tools and programs to help families feed themselves in the future.

Storage Wars Return

SMPS prepares Town Hall meeting to discuss PUD request for self-storage facility

A Town Hall meeting is in the works for the San Marco community to weigh in on the newest development regarding the proposed multi-unit self-storage facility for the Southbank area.

A bill was first introduced in 2021, sponsored by Council Member Reggie Gaffney, The Resident reported, "to permit self-storage facilities in portions of the downtown overlay where they're prohibited today, provided the facilities meet strict design standards..."

The bill was later withdrawn this past July after being met with strong opposition, both from the community and city council members. The Resident reported, "Opponents of the bill argued for months that relaxing the overlay's existing prohibition on self-storage facilities would welcome conflicts with the existing and very active neighborhoods of high-density residential, restaurant, retail and recreational land uses."

Attorney Steven Diebenow represents the Atlanta-based developer wishing to install the storage facility in the San Marco area. After the withdrawal of the bill, Diebenow now plans to use a Planned Unit Development (PUD) approach instead.

"The [San Marco Preservation Society] has invited the applicant to present the plans for the PUD request at our board meeting in January," said SMPS President Lauren Carlucci. "We also plan to host a town hall meeting in January where all residents can listen to the presentation, ask questions, and give feedback on the proposed project. Community engagement matters..."

The closed meeting presentation at SMPS is scheduled to take place on Jan. 9, prior to a public hearing before the City Council, though at the time of print, it was unconfirmed whether or not the Town Hall would take place before the public hearing as well.

A date has yet to be confirmed for the January Town Hall meeting. The Resident will report on updates as they become available.



TOPS ON THE TEES

It was a big day for Daniel Kids, as the organization celebrated the 22nd Hank Haynes Golf Classic, Oct. 24, at San Jose Country Club. The 1st Place Low Gross from Florida Pension Group of John Pomroy, John Hudson, Landon Strickland and Steve Carter were on hand during a day of successful fundraising and festivities that raised more than \$186,000 to benefit the nonprofit.

SEE MORE ON PAGE 40

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Merchants Association provides security in the Square for holiday season shopping

'Tis the season for holiday shopping and the San Marco Merchants Association (SMMA) is inviting shoppers to the Square to enjoy safe, enjoyable strolls ahead. Following a recent lapse in security, a new company has been contracted to take care of holiday shoppers and the merchants, ensuring the safe passage for patrons and visitors.

"The San Marco Merchants Association... takes great pride in serving our community," wrote SMMA President Scott Wohlers in an e-mail. "One of the many ways we do this is by providing security services for all of our members. We recently changed service providers, so you should start to see Proteus Protective Services patrolling the San Marco Square. With Proteus we have four randomly-timed patrols of the Square daily, as well as 24/7 dispatch to all members throughout greater San Marco. We wanted to let everyone know of these changes, especially with the holiday season starting. SMMA works hard to make sure the square is clean and safe for everyone to enjoy."

"Proteus Protective Services is proud to partner with the San Marco Merchants Association to provide top tier security patrol and response services to the members and the area," wrote Proteus Protective Services Deputy Chief of Operations Sean Saunders. "Proteus takes pride in partnering with the community and we are happy to be serving the San Marco community in this great city."

According to Wohlers, pedestrians can report any incidents to local vendors, who will then notify the security guard on duty or, alternatively, they can contact the non-emergency line with the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office (JSO). That telephone number is 904-630-0500.

What's SUP, Jacksonville?

Exclusive look at new logo for Fuller Warren Shared-Use Path



Riverside and San Marco residents and visitors will soon be able to follow brightly-colored signs to the Fuller Warren Shared-Use Path (SUP) once it opens to the public. Wingard and Riverside Avondale Preservation (RAP) have given The Resident an exclusive peek of the new logo.

Wingard Founder and Chief Creative Officer David Wingard said this was a "passion project" for the agency. Playing on the letters for the shared-use path acronym (SUP), he said the design is a nod and salutation to the communities connected by the bridge.

"It allows you to kind of say, 'Hey what's up San Marco; what's up, Avondale,'" he said. "So that connection, that conversation that could get started with the foot path was part of the thinking and the concept."

Wingard has worked with several Jacksonville organizations, businesses and institutions. Having recently returned to the Five Points neighborhood, Wingard said his agency volunteered to design this logo as a way of getting "reengaged" with RAP and community goings-on.

"I think that Wingard not only cares about our downtown urban core neighborhoods, but they understand it..." said RAP Executive Director Shannon Blankinship. "Really, I think, [they] are themselves excited about the connectivity to San Marco, so bringing them on as our partner in the creative side of all of this was an easy decision."

According to the Florida Department of Transportation, there is no official opening date for the Fuller Warren SUP at this time.

Red Kettle kicks off the Holiday Season



Major Keith Biggers accepts a \$5,000 check on behalf of Publix Supermarkets courtesy of Chris Norberg, Community Relations Manager and Justin Ferencic, Assistant Store Manager of the Publix at Roosevelt Square.

Tradition runs deep as the familiar Red Kettle and ringing of the bells remind us that the holiday season is upon us. The Salvation Army's fundraising initiative continues to draw dollars and support from more than 52 locations in Northeast Florida, helping to close the gap for many in need. This year's theme is "Love Beyond"...Love beyond hopelessness, love beyond hunger and love beyond disaster.

The kickoff took place at Publix at Roosevelt Square, Monday, Nov. 18 where gratitude reigned supreme as Publix rolled out a \$5,000 check to help make the season bright. Mike Buresh, chief meteorologist with Action News Jax helped to emcee the kickoff, which also included a live shot at the gathering of supporters, board members and other media on hand to spread the good word.

"Whenever you ring a bell you are helping provide meals for those less fortunate, providing shelter for the homeless, providing food in someone's pantry who's running low on groceries - helping expectant mothers with shelter and case management - assisting those who have been affected by disasters, placing holiday meals on the table and gifts under the tree for local children," said Major Keith Biggers.

To learn more about how you can volunteer, call 904-443-9478 or visit registertoring.com, pick a time and location to sign up and resources will be made available. The Red Kettle campaign and bell ringing will be ongoing through Christmas eve, or Dec. 24.

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Public dollars for nonprofits scrutinized, funding announced

BY KAREN RIELEY
Resident Community News

Increased scrutiny and accountability have forced the hand of the Jacksonville City Council to change the way in which it funds local nonprofits. In the process of implementing change, however, the Public Service Grants (PSG) process that provides funds to help Jacksonville's most vulnerable adults and families has been upended.

On Sept. 28, 2021, when City Council approved requests for pandemic-related economic harm from nonprofits run by four of its council members, some community members, including The Community Foundation for Northeast Florida and the PSG Council, cried foul. The perception was that council members were using their position to fund pet projects.

The Community Rehabilitation Center, a nonprofit run by Council member Reggie Gaffney, received \$500,000. Clara White Mission run by Ju'Coby Pittman, also a Council member, received \$100,000, as did Read USA run by Terrance Freeman and Boys and Girls Club of Northeast Florida where Kevin Carrico is vice president.

By receiving those funds directly from City Council, those nonprofits circumvented the work of the PSG Council, the advisory body of 15 community volunteers that was formed by the city of Jacksonville in 2016 to ensure that tax dollars are wisely spent. These volunteers commit countless hours of their time to screen and vet detailed applications from nonprofits.

The public backlash caused the City Council to propose legislation to require nonprofit organizations that employ City Council members to compete for city grants in the same public service grant (PSG) process that other nonprofits must follow. In addition, those nonprofits must now turn over financial documents about their operations if they want city dollars. The legislation also adds reporting requirements for council members' roles, as well as that of their spouses and children, in nonprofits. On Nov. 22, 2021, the legislation passed 14-1.

Early in 2022, Matt Carlucci, who is the City Council liaison with the PSG Council, introduced legislation that would set aside \$7 million for the PSG Council to distribute to nonprofits, a major increase in funding over the PSG Council's previous budget.

"City administration said it could only do \$5 million, so we split the difference at \$6 million, still a significant increase over the \$3.5 million given to the PSG Council for distribution in 2021," said Carlucci.

The increased PSG budget generated excitement and hope in the nonprofit community and elicited a record number of program applications — 74 programs totaling \$9.1 million in requests, according to Beth Mixson, PSG Council vice chair.

"In previous years, there was great frustration and disappointment when agencies scoring in high 80s and 90s out of 100 were not funded due to funds being awarded to higher scoring agencies," Mixson said.

While the new PSG process rule was well-intended, it did cause an unintended wrinkle this year. Nonprofits that had been receiving direct

contracts without competitive evaluation now needed to apply to the PSG Council by its July 1 deadline, just like the other nonprofits. When some failed to do so, City Council members expressed concern that these organizations would receive no public funds from the 2022-23 city budget to provide their services.

In response, city administration suggested that two separate rounds — one for those previously funded through the PSG process and a second for those who had been receiving direct contracts — should be created, with \$4 million for the first round and \$2 million for the second.

The PSG Council expressed concern that the 74 nonprofits that had already applied would not be able to apply in the second round. They questioned why City Council asked to have more applications included without increasing the \$6 million available for public service grants.

"The nonprofits who had previously received direct funding from the city requested a total of \$1.8 million from the PSG Council, essentially meaning that the pot of money available to all other nonprofits barely increased at all," said Mixson.

City Council members who wanted to give additional nonprofits an opportunity to apply argued that doing so gives the city a more competitive group of proposals possible for delivering services to those most in need in Jacksonville. Some City Council members and PSG Council members have expressed concern that favoritism to certain nonprofits may be at play.

Carlucci encouraged the PSG Council to agree that, only for this first year after the new

legislation change, the application process should be opened up again for the first week of October "just in the off chance that somebody was a direct contract receiver and not used to how to apply through the PSG process."

Agencies that missed the original deadline could submit applications in a second window during the first week of October, but agencies that had already submitted applications could not resubmit enhanced applications. The PSG Council approved the compromise 9-5.

"The [PSG] Council looked at the situation as the lesser of two evils," said Bob Baldwin, PSG Council chair. "We thought [Carlucci's] proposal would be better than a two-step process and two levels of funding."

"I believe the City of Jacksonville must support and enforce a process that is fair to nonprofits who follow the rules, to taxpayers who expect their hard-earned dollars to be spent equitably and to the hardworking volunteers [on the PSG Council] who committed many hours of work in good faith to the process," said Nina Waters, president of The Community Foundation for Northeast Florida.

"This was an issue that was always going to be resolved in City Council, so you have to appreciate both the administration's willingness to work with the PSG Council and the PSG Council's attempt to stick to the process. Compromises are rarely pretty," said Rena Coughlin, CEO of the Nonprofit Center of Northeast Florida.

The new deadline was Oct. 7. The City of Jacksonville Public Affairs Office reported that

CONTINUED ON PAGE 5 ...

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the following 11 agencies submitted PSG grant proposals during the second application period: Northside Community Involvement Inc., Yoga 4 Change, READ USA Inc., The Jericho School for Children with Autism, The Villages of Hope, Edward Waters University, Cathedral District, Total Beauty Institute, Revitalize Arlington Inc., M.A.D. D.A.D.S. Jacksonville and Catholic Charities Bureau Inc.

Of these 11, three had been receiving direct contracts from the city prior to this year. During review, the PSG Council has denied Edward Waters College's application for its New Town program. M.A.D. D.A.D.S. Jacksonville and READ USA, Inc. also applied for PSG funding for the first time this year.

"Sometimes direct contracts are a good thing, but the number of organizations getting direct contracts was getting out of hand. People should compete and the best should be awarded the dollars," Carlucci said.

"There are cases in which direct allocations to nonprofits are necessary," Mixson said. "Examples would be Hubbard House that helps victims of domestic abuse and Jacksonville Legal Aid. They both provide unique services limited by the state to one agency per area."

Over the years, the PSG Council has shifted its focus from funding a broad swath of human services agencies to now focusing on acute services like homelessness, prevention services such as rent assistance and parenting classes, and diversion services served through case management.

The agencies decide in which categories their various services best fit and then submit a separate application for each service. Their services must serve adults and families, but not children. Agencies that are seeking funding for services for children only can apply to Kids Hope Alliance, which is also funded by the city.

On Nov. 15, the PSG Council voted to allocate funds to 52 programs for Jacksonville nonprofit organizations, totaling \$6 million. The awardees were broken down into three categories: Priority Need A ("Acute," which received 30% of funding), Priority Need B ("Prevention and Diversion," with an allocated 40% of funding) and Priority Need C ("Self-Sufficiency and Stability," with 30% of funding). For a full list of PSG recipients and their allocated funds, please visit www.coj.net/departments/finance/office-of-grants-and-compliance/public-service-grants and select "FY 23 PSG Awards."

Veteran needs assessment survey results released

BY MICHELE LEIVAS
Resident Community News

The results for the 2022 Northeast Florida Veteran and Family Needs Assessment Survey have been released.

Launched on Aug. 10, the anonymous online survey remained active until Sept. 25. It was open to active duty service members, veterans, family members, caregivers and employees of veteran/military service organizations. The survey was launched by the City of Jacksonville in partnership with Texas-based nonprofit Endeavors, the Combined Arms Institute and the University of North Florida's Northeast Florida Center for Community Initiatives.

On Nov. 15, representatives of Endeavors, the Combined Arms Institute and the University of North Florida's Northeast Florida Center for Community Initiatives presented and discussed the results of the survey, which was taken by nearly 1,500 participants.

"The veterans needs assessment, or survey, has been an incredibly useful tool to identify what our veterans need and help us to create a plan to address their needs," said City of Jacksonville Deputy Chief Administrative Officer Dr. Charles Moreland. "The results presented here today will provide data-driven insights about the current social services landscape for our veterans. They will also help facilitate funding opportunities and partnerships with the City, State and other service providers. The research will be incredibly useful for creating sound planning, policy decision-making that will carry well into future administrations here in the city of Jacksonville."

Dr. Jeffrey Will, director of University of North Florida's Northeast Florida Center for Community Initiatives discussed a graph depicting reported veteran needs

in a variety of categories, with the top three being dental and vision services and assistance with VA claims.

This data, he said, "suggests that health and wellness are the most important needs of veterans in the study."

Other categories included general medical and hearing services, volunteer work, veteran groups, mental health, legal aid, peer support, education, rent/mortgage, entrepreneurship, home improvement, food, employment, transportation, caregiver support, homelessness, addiction treatment and childcare.

Will also added more than 20% of respondents reported "no needs at all."

The survey also highlighted gaps in services where mental health issues were concerned — including depression, anxiety, PTSD, traumatic brain injuries and substance abuse disorders. For example, Will noted, more than a quarter of respondents with PTSD diagnoses — nearly 30% of respondents — were not receiving assistance for it. More than 40% of survey participants reported depression or anxiety diagnoses; 15% of them were not receiving assistance.

"We have a need," he said. "We have diagnoses out there but there's still some gaps in those services."

Wrapping up his analysis, Will called the report "54 pages of opportunity."

"Veterans in this study indicated a variety of needs, of significant need," he said. "They often expressed difficulty in getting help. There are clear avenues for improving the lives of veterans based on this data and I believe that we have the impetus to actually get there."

Endeavors Director of Business Operations Benjamin Miranda, Jr. called this data "the foundation" for what will come next, adding many conversations are in store with the City, County and service providers.

"We needed to get this information in front of us to be able to really make a good judgement decision of what is next," he said.

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AFP FL, First Coast Chapter recognizes award winners at National Philanthropy Day Luncheon



Gary and Nancy Chartrand with their family after being honored with the AFP FL, First Coast Chapter's Lifetime Achievement Award.



June and Vincent Schuppert



James Richardson, Alex Benavides and David Clark



Samantha Mayo with Candace Monroe and Erin Mangan

The Association of Fundraising Professionals (AFP) FL, First Coast Chapter hosted its annual National Philanthropy Day Luncheon at the Hyatt Regency Jacksonville Riverfront Hotel on Monday, Nov. 14.

The 2022 National Philanthropy Day (NPD) award honorees included Gary and Nancy Chartrand (Lifetime Achievement Award), the Jim and Tabitha Furyk Foundation (Outstanding Foundation), Josh Nichols (Next Generation Award), the Borowy Family (Outstanding Philanthropist), Jim and Elaine Stallings (Outstanding Champion of Diversity), ThompsonBaker Agency (Outstanding Small Business or Civic Organization), Ring Power Corporation (Outstanding Corporation) and Debbie Buckland (Outstanding Volunteer Fundraiser).

AFP is a global organization dedicated to advancing "philanthropy through advocacy, research, education and certification programs." There are approximately 30,000 members and more than 240 chapters worldwide.



Lawrence Nicolas and Lindsay Layendecker



Chris Altman and Caelan Rienhardt



Dabrielle Dean-Rector with Sarah Henderson, Dave Cognetta and Jackie Hadley



A guest list of 640-plus attendees packed the ballroom at the Hyatt Regency Jacksonville Riverfront Hotel.



Jeff Davitt and Ed Lombard

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Local real estate market shifts to more normalcy

Jacksonville still one of Florida's hottest markets

BY KAREN RIELEY
Resident Community News

With the pandemic in the rear view mirror, the real estate market has reached a tipping point, transitioning from a seller's market to a buyer's market throughout 2023, according to some local real estate professionals. At the same time, however, housing inventory still remains very low while buying demand is high in Jacksonville, especially in the historic districts. Experts predict that, as a result, 2023 will be a neutral market, good for both buyers and sellers.

"During the pandemic we witnessed an unprecedented buying frenzy with double-digit multiple offers, transactions routinely closing over list price and buyers waiving inspections," said Jeff Chefan, vice president and managing broker for One Sotheby's International Realty. "As interest rates increased, the pace [of buying] slowed. Consequently, inventory is accumulating, which means buyers have more choices. That, in turn, has the effect of leveling the playing field."

Months' supply refers to the number of months it would take for the current inventory of homes on the market to sell given the current sales pace. Historically, six months of supply is associated with moderate price appreciation, and a lower level of months' supply tends to push prices up more rapidly.

According to Josh Cohen, managing broker/coach for Berkshire Hathaway Home Services Florida Network Realty Metro Offices of Avondale/Ortega — San Marco/San Jose, Jacksonville's supply of homes is about 3.2 months, which is still indicative of a strong market that tips toward sellers.

"There is still plenty of demand to satisfy the increase in supply," Cohen said. "Northeast Florida really has a 'special sauce.' Companies and [workers] continue to locate here. Quality of life, economic viability, beaches, healthcare,

schools, cost of living, fishing, golf — Northeast Florida is truly paradise."

Heather Buckman, broker/owner, Cowford Realty & Design, notes that the housing market is full of people in transition.

"People get married, have children, children move away, or a job relocation occurs," she said. "None of that goes away because interest rates are at 7% or because housing prices are high."

Buyers will be more empowered in 2023, according to Buckman.

"They will likely have more leverage to ask for closing cost assistance or perhaps negotiate on the price. It's way more fun to be a buyer now," she said.

Clark LaBlond, general manager for Legends of Real Estate, also predicts a more balanced market in 2023.

"Buyers will have more options and homes will possibly stay on the market for a longer time," he said. "Buyers, sellers and realtors all have short-term memories. While interest rates are not at recent low figures, they are nowhere near historic highs," LaBlond said.

"We should start to see [interest] rates come down by the second quarter of 2023. Buyers shouldn't let current rates scare them off from getting the home they want now, because they can always refinance when rates come back down," said Neil Bridgers, sales manager and realtor for Watson Realty Corp.

"The historic districts should remain strong even with increases in interest rates. They have seen larger-than-market-average increases in pricing," said LaBlond. "Historic areas offer a variety of home sizes and styles, more green spaces and price points that will provide buyers and sellers greater options to match their purchasing power and desire to sell. The location of the historic districts also makes them desirable for lifestyle balance and commuting."

Research shows that the pandemic caused some workers to reassess their employment status and led some employers to modify their work-from-home policies. The result has been that more people are free to choose

to live in a location not necessarily dictated by where their employer is located.

"Florida has always been a highly desired destination for retirees, and increasingly it is the targeted location for people in all stages of life for a variety of reasons," said Chefan.

"Jacksonville is a net-positive market in terms of people moving here. We have quite a number of people who want to move here from other states and from South Florida because it has gotten so crowded," Ted Miller, president and managing broker, Miller & Company Real Estate, said.

“ Jacksonville is a NET-POSITIVE market in terms of people moving here. We have quite a number of people who WANT to move here from other states and from south Florida because it has gotten so CROWDED ”

- Ted Miller
president and managing broker,
Miller & Company Real Estate

Both historic and new home sales should continue to hold their value into 2023, according to Miller. He has noticed that new listings recently have hit the market and sat for a little while, however.

"With higher interest rates and economic uncertainty, buyers are being a little more cautious. If they don't have any competition from other buyers, they may offer a lower price and negotiate," Miller said. "On the other hand, I'm not expecting big drops in prices partly because there is still such low inventory."

"The last 24 months have seen double digit appreciation rate, often 20% to 30% and more in some instances. That isn't sustainable," Chefan said. "As the market returns to normal, the pace of home value appreciation rates should also. Historically, primary homes have appreciated at 2% to 4% per year on average."

Buckman sees the market going into 2023 as good for sellers.

"The best thing to do is to readjust expectations. It is taking about 40 days on the market now to get a house under contract. If you price

your home based on comps, and it's not selling, be prepared to make price adjustments or use other strategies to make your home appealing," she said.

For example, Buckman recommends a 2-1 rate buy-down to some of her customers who want to sell their homes. A 2-1 buydown program is a type of financing offer to reduce a buyer's interest rates for the first two years of a mortgage. The buyer's interest rate is reduced by 2% the first year and 1% the second year.

By the third year of the mortgage term, the interest rate goes back to the original interest rate on the loan. But with a 2-1 buydown, buyers have reduced payments for the first two years.

"As the supply and demand pendulum recalibrates and the market adjusts to higher interest rates, we very well could see some values start to correct," Buckman said.

"One thing is for sure: The housing market is very different than what occurred in 2008, so concerns about a market crash can be put to rest," she said. "This is important for buyers to hear. If you are waiting for the market to crash so that you can go out and find a deal, you're likely going to be waiting a very long time."

Cohen stresses the importance of sellers meeting with a real estate agent early on to put together a game plan about staging, enhancing curb appeal and considering a pre-listing inspection.

"Make sure to handle all the key 'four-point' items like roofing, plumbing, electrical and HVAC," he said. "Some insurance companies will not insure homes that have roofs exceeding 15-20 years of life."

"Home insurance in Florida is one of the most difficult to get and most expensive in the United States right now," Miller said.

Chefan also advises buyers to hire a well-trained realtor to avoid missing any opportunities, overpaying or acquiring a property without a thorough inspection.

"Buyers benefit if they adopt the mindset that they are 'marrying' the home but only 'dating' their mortgage, because a mortgage can always be refinanced. Real estate professionals can connect their buyers with lenders who evaluate their specific circumstances and offer a variety of solutions including specialty mortgage products, fixed and adjustable-rate mortgages," said Chefan.

"The reality is that we are still in a sellers' market as we head into 2023," Cohen said. "Talk to your agent about making a stronger offer closer to the list price and asking the seller to contribute toward your closing costs and prepaids. Ask for discount points which buys your interest rate down."

Bridgers reminds sellers that the market isn't like it was in 2021.

"You are better to start too low in this market than to start too high and then have your listing go stale. If you are priced too low, the market will let you know by bringing you multiple offers above list price. If you trust the guidance of your local expert, you will more than likely be priced just right," he said.



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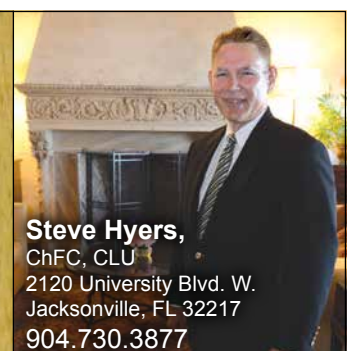
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Redrawn maps submitted to the court in redistricting lawsuit

BY MICHELE LEIVAS
Resident Community News

The lines have been drawn in the ongoing legal battle for what will be the new City Council District Map for the City of Jacksonville.

After several days of meetings, culminating in a six-hour Special Council meeting on Friday, Nov. 4, the Jacksonville City Council voted on a newly-drawn district map to submit to the court for consideration.

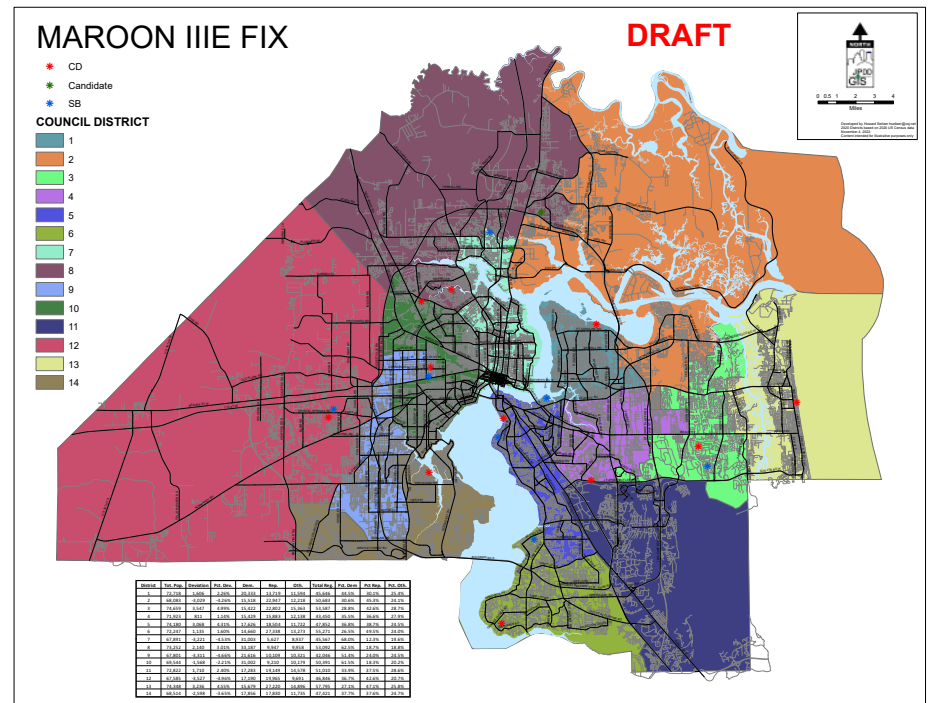
The Jacksonville branch of the NAACP, Northside Coalition of Jacksonville, Inc., Florida Rising Together, Inc. and the ACLU of Florida Northeast Chapter — along with 10 citizens — filed the lawsuit against the City of Jacksonville in May of this year claiming the existing district map, based on the 2011 redistricting map, was unconstitutional and violated the 14th Amendment.

In an order issued in October, the court agreed.

“The evidence that the Challenged Districts are the product of intentional race-based decision-making is largely un rebutted and compelling...” wrote U.S. District Judge Marcia Morales Howard.

In that same order, the court set the Nov. 8 deadline for the City Council to submit a new map that does not “use race as a predominant factor in the design of any district...”

To comply with that order, the City engaged the services of Dr. Douglas Johnson, president



Visit www.residentnews.net for a larger version. Map courtesy of City of Jacksonville.

of National Demographics Corporation and expert in districting and redistricting.

“We brought in experts to make sure that we’re not gonna present you with a map that’s unconstitutional,” said General Counsel Jason Teal at the meeting. “And so we’re comfortable with whatever map...But we’re not gonna put something in front of you that we don’t think the court won’t ultimately accept.”

Johnson presented a series of maps — Orange, Lime and Maroon — to the Special Committee on Redistricting.

District 2 with “some territory north of it” moving to District 7, among various other alterations.

Council Member Randy DeFoor argued passionately to keep the historic neighborhoods of Riverside, Avondale and Ortega in District 14, initially voting against the map along with Council Members LeAnna Cumber (5), Joyce Morgan (1) and Brenda Priestly Jackson (10). When it became evident that the council ran the very real risk of having nothing to submit to the court by the pre-determined deadline, however, DeFoor made a motion to reconsider after consulting with Johnson and Duval County Property Appraiser Jerry Holland about the possibility of reuniting Ortega with its historic neighbors.

“There just — there’s no way we can make a move of Riverside and Avondale into 14, which breaks my heart,” she said. “In honor of you and all the hard work that you’ve all done, I make a motion to reconsider.”

Jackson remained the sole opponent to Maroon Map IIIIE Fixed.

Once the map was submitted to the court, Teal explained the plaintiffs would also have the opportunity to review it.

The court order provided a deadline of Nov. 18 for the plaintiffs to submit any objections as well as their own map(s). They submitted three for consideration. These three maps can be viewed at <https://www.aclufl.org/en/jacksonville-plaintiffs-map-city-council>.

According to a statement on ACLU of Florida’s website, the maps submitted by the plaintiffs reflect districts that “are logical and compact, as the City Charter requires,” the “lines respect neighborhoods, follow major geographic boundaries, and preserve genuine communities of interest” and dismantles “the racial gerrymandering that has violated Black Jacksonville residents’ rights to equal protection of the laws, while also complying with the Voting Rights Act and protecting representation.”

“This is about Black voters being able to express themselves — their clout, their power and their influence to the extent of their demographic position in the City,” said Northside Coalition of Jacksonville’s Ben Frazier. “Jacksonville is 29.9% Black. We wanna have influence in all the City Council Districts.”

“Unfortunately the City didn’t take into account, in its consideration initially, the voice of the people,” he added. “They already made up their mind what its gonna do and they didn’t listen to us at all.”

Per the court order, the City had until Nov. 28 to file a reply supporting its submitted map and any arguments against the plaintiffs’

PENNY PREVILLE



“The evidence that the Challenged Districts are the product of intentional race-based decision-making is largely un rebutted and compelling...”

- Marcia Morales Howard
U.S. District Judge

“I started from scratch,” Johnson said at the meeting, explaining the origin of the Maroon map. “I essentially took the major roads, the rivers, the tributaries, the freeways and the CPAC regions and developed the Maroon Map looking at all those factors, equal population and trying to keep each council members — each current council member in their current district. So that was the start of the Maroon Map.”

Based on the requests and adjustments suggested by council members, Johnson then created six variations of the Maroon Map iterations — Maroon Map IIIA thru F, which were the maps the committee discussed that Friday.

Maroon Map IIIIE Fixed emerged as the map that accommodated the majority of requests made by council members, though it was not met with unanimous support.

In this map, the District 14 communities of Avondale and Riverside would move to District 10 while Ortega remained in 14. The areas for Districts 7 and 8 swapped places and San Mateo would remain in



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Riverside Presbyterian Launches Riverside Cornerstone Capital Campaign

Renderings for Mary Lou Davis Family Life Center Unveiled



Rendering of the Mary Lou Davis Family Life Center

Riverside Presbyterian Church and Riverside Presbyterian Day School (RPDS) publicly launched their Riverside Cornerstone Capital Campaign on Oct. 24. A key component of the campaign, the Mary Lou Davis Family Life Center, will be the centerpiece of the campus, housing church, school and community activities. In addition to funding the Family Life Center and reimagining and enhancing the Rice Sports Zone, the Riverside Cornerstone Campaign will support three important endowment funds that will give the church and school essential, long-term, and stable funding sources for facilities, mission opportunities and scholarships.

For upwards of 10 years, Riverside Presbyterian Church and Day School officials have been working to build a Family Life Center in the interest of creating a lasting impact on the Riverside community. The silent phase of the campaign began November 2021, with an original campaign goal of \$6 million.

“From the amount of enthusiasm we received, we realized we could raise that goal and really make this a very meaningful investment in the school’s and church’s future. It’s now at \$7.5 million and we are all confident with that goal,” said Doug Walker, RPDS director of advancement.

“The most exciting part about all of this is seeing the potential of what this all means, not only for the school and church community, but the external community, as well. That’s a big part of what the Family Life Center is going to be about. It will include an outreach component that allows us to offer ministry activities to our neighbors. This aspect leans into values of both the church and school. There is a tremendous amount of support for that, and we are just on the cusp of tapping into the real energy and excitement of this campaign.”

Fundraising efforts will continue beyond the groundbreaking, set to begin as early as the first quarter of 2023.

Luxury real estate brokerage coming to San Marco in 2023



Engel and Völkers First Coast Owner/Broker Corey Hasting is looking forward to joining the San Marco community in Feb. 2023. This will be his sixth location in Northeast Florida.

Engel and Völkers, a luxury real estate brokerage, is planning to open a new office in San Marco.

Engel and Völkers First Coast Owner/Broker Corey Hasting opened his first office in Jacksonville Beach in April 2018 and since then, within the Engel and Völkers global network of more than 1,000 locations, Hasting’s franchise has become “the most awarded Florida franchise in company history.”

Scheduled to open late January, early February next year, this will be the sixth franchise location in Northeast Florida.

“I knew that if I could structure it to be different than every other brokerage, then I knew we would have a lot of success,” Hasting said the same day his new Ponte Vedra Beach office opened. “But like I said before, if you had told me we’d have this much success this quickly, I don’t know if I would have believed you.”

Hasting has searched for the perfect San Marco location for roughly two years.

“We’ve always wanted to be there because we always want to have shops where our advisors live, work and sell and San Marco is just an amazing place,” he said.

Hasting embarked on this journey with a mission to “...break the mold of how real estate was done in Northeast Florida” and hopes this new San Marco office will help him continue doing just that.

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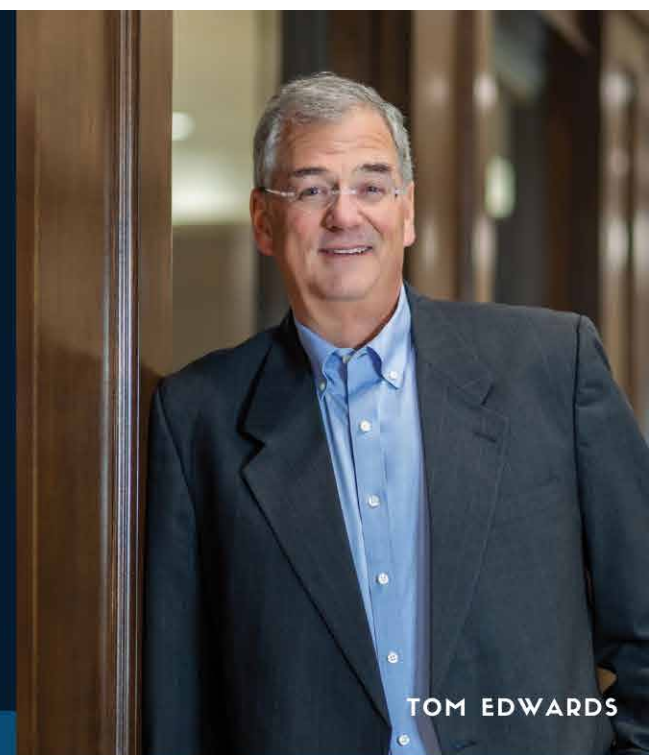
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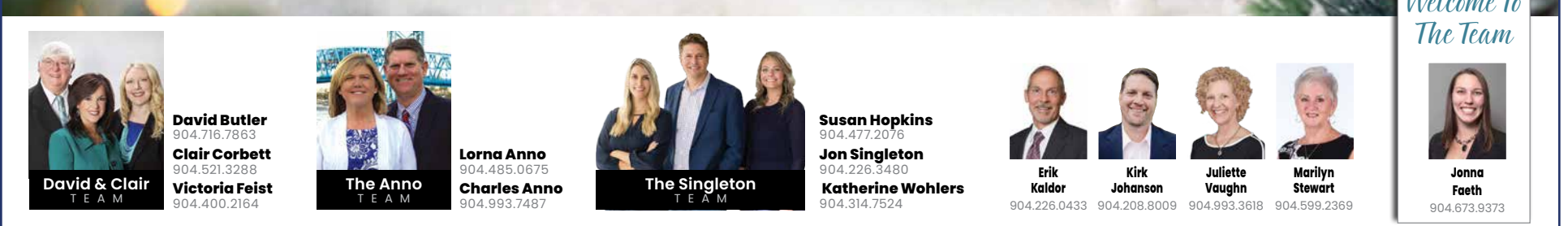
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Talbert Named to Board for American Heart Association First Coast



Memorial Hospital CEO Bradley S. Talbert, FACHE

HCA Florida Memorial Hospital CEO Bradley S. Talbert, FACHE, has been named to the board of directors of the American Heart Association First Coast. The American Heart Association (AHA) is a nearly 100-year-old voluntary organization dedicated to building healthier lives, free of heart diseases and stroke.

“With heart disease being the No. 1 killer worldwide, and stroke ranking second globally, it is an important time

to be serving on this board,” said Talbert, whose term will run through the 2023 fiscal year. “I’m proud to be able to make meaningful contribution on the board. This leadership opportunity allows me to leverage my healthcare experience in a way to make a positive impact on our community.”

The 2022 First Coast chapter leadership contains 18 board members, including chairwoman Elana Schrader, senior vice president of Health Care Services and president of GuideWell Health at GuideWell, and board president Dr. Fred Kusumoto, electrophysiologist and Director of Heart Rhythm Services at Mayo Clinic of Florida.

The AHA has invested more than \$5 billion in research, making it the largest not-for-profit funding source for cardiovascular and cerebrovascular disease research, second only to the federal government.

San Marco East plaza to be 100% leased



NAI Hallmark, a leading commercial real estate brokerage and property management firm in Jacksonville, announced that San Marco East Plaza, located at 3563 Philips Highway, is now 100% leased. NAI Hallmark’s Managing Partner Christian Harden and Vice President Patrick Carney have finalized six separate lease transactions totaling more than 162,000 square feet of previously vacant space or renewals of existing tenants on behalf of the landlord, Prescott Group.

San Marco East Plaza is a seven-building, 375,000-square-foot suburban office complex located at the intersection of Emerson Street and Philips Highway (US-1). On the I-95 / Emerson Street interchange, the property bookends

Jacksonville’s South Metro Business District, providing a centralized location. Prescott Group purchased the property in 2019 and has successfully repositioned the property with its rebranding campaign and investment of significant capital improvements aimed toward enhancing the work experience of current and future tenants.

“It is a pleasure working with Prescott Group,” said Carney. “San Marco East Plaza is a prime example of what can be achieved in the suburban office market with continued investment to remain competitive in the marketplace and be a desirable destination for tenants and workforce.”



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VyStar invests \$2.25M in Jacksonville Zoo

Innovative SkyScape entrance will carry VyStar name



Design work by Dasher Hurst Architects and Prosser Inc.

Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens made significant progress on its \$52 million REZOOVENATION campaign to make improvements to the institution with a \$2.25 million investment from VyStar Credit Union for the VyStar SkyScape, the centerpiece of a new zoo entrance. The open-air roof structure will stand 50 feet high and cover 25,000 sq. ft., with nods to education and conservation efforts.

“We are proud to partner with Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens to create a truly one-of-a-kind entrance that can be experienced and enjoyed by everyone in our community,” said VyStar President/CEO Brian Wolfburg. “As the name suggests, the VyStar SkyScape will inspire residents and visitors of all ages to think big and to dream big.”

The VyStar SkyScape will house admissions, guest relations, retail, food and beverage space, a stage, VIP lounge, meeting spaces, and a full-service catering kitchen. It will transform with state-of-the-art immersion screens broadcasting educational messages and event visuals.

“The VyStar SkyScape welcomes guests in a unique way, and will be first of its kind in zoos and aquariums. As a longtime partner, we are excited for VyStar Credit Union’s support as we solidify our efforts to inspire our kids, grandkids, and broader community for years to come. We appreciate and celebrate all our generous donors who have joined this campaign so far, and look forward to continuing this momentum as we share our plans broadly with the public,” said Zoo President and CEO Jeff Etting, Ph.D.

REZOOVENATION Honorary Chairs J. Wayne and Delores Barr Weaver made the \$3 million lead gift for Manatee River, which will be the first “impression habitat” after entering the SkyScape. As an expansion of the current Manatee Critical Care Center – one of only six acute-care facilities in Florida – the Manatee River habitats won’t just beautify the VyStar SkyScape entrance, but will also allow the zoo to treat up to 21 manatees at a time.

Mayo named to Florida Hospital Association Board of Trustees



Michael Mayo, president and CEO of Baptist Health of Northeast Florida.

Michael A. Mayo, DHA, FACHE, president and chief executive officer of Baptist Health of Northeast Florida, has been named to the Florida Hospital Association’s (FHA) 2022-23 board of trustees, representing the 23-county Region 2 in a two-year term. The FHA board is elected by more than 200 member hospitals and health care systems.

“Early in my life, my father taught me the value of hard work, dependability

and ‘showing up’ to do what must be done. I look forward to working with my fellow FHA board members to help ensure we are investing in the people, technology and innovation needed to meet our Florida community’s evolving needs and expectations,” said Mayo.

In addition to his FHA board appointment, Mayo has been recognized locally as a 2022 Ultimate CEO. He serves on the board of governors for the American College of Healthcare Executives, and is a state delegate with the American Hospital Association, where he is involved in policy issues that affect the care and health of communities in the Southeast region.

“It’s a privilege to work with this incredible group of Florida hospital leaders, and I thank them for their service,” said FHA president and CEO Mary Mayhew. “Each of our trustees cares deeply about ensuring timely, appropriate, and excellent health care to every Floridian and creating and sustaining a world-class system of care that leaves no one behind. The FHA’s strength comes from a board committed to solving problems, working together and having one voice speaking up for patients and communities.”



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Candidates emphasize need for change at first mayoral debate



Hank Cox, past president, Rotary Club of Jacksonville and former president of the Florida Bar, moderated the luncheon debate from the podium.

BY SAMANTHA FLOM
Resident Community News

A desire for change was the common message shared by all the mayoral candidates at the Nov. 21 debate hosted by the Rotary Club of Jacksonville.

Held at the Jacksonville Marriott Downtown, the event offered candidates an opportunity to share their perspectives on an array of issues, including education, crime, economic development and management of the St. Johns River.

STEMMING CRIME

On crime, most candidates agreed that a proactive approach was best, stressing the importance of maintaining a positive relationship between the sheriff’s office and the public.

“I think it’s very important for the mayor’s office to set the example and to work with the sheriff’s office,” Democrat and former First Coast News anchor Donna Deegan said. “And I think it’s very, very important to open some lines of communication that have, frankly, been closed off for too long.”

Likewise, Republican City Councilman Al Ferraro and Democratic state Sen. Audrey Gibson echoed that sentiment, with the latter highlighting her degree in criminology and suggesting that officers police the areas where they are best known to residents.

Meanwhile, on the matter of funding, Republican City Councilwoman LeAnna Cumber and Deegan both said they supported fully funding the sheriff’s office, while Omega Allen, a general contractor who is running unaffiliated, said she felt some funds may need to be reallocated to ensure they were being used efficiently.

DEVELOPMENT AND THE RIVER

When it came to economic development, Gibson said her focus as mayor would be on small businesses throughout the city.

“When the neighborhoods are thriving, when crime is low, when we have livable communities, everybody will want to bring their business to Jacksonville,” she contended.

However, many candidates expressed that a change was specifically needed downtown. “Downtown is the heart of every major city,” Allen said. “Jacksonville has heart trouble and it’s in need of a transplant.”

Outlining a need for “residential, retail, entertainment and reliable transportation,” she added, “When we establish those things ... Jacksonville will become the city we all hoped it would be.”

Further, candidates on both sides of the aisle agreed that the St. Johns River is a resource the city has yet to take advantage of from a development standpoint.

“We have this amazing asset with dolphins and manatees and nobody uses it,” Cumber noted. “And that is one of the biggest problems. We need to start giving people choices to boat to on the river.”

Likewise, Deegan agreed that increased access to the river is needed, but cautioned, “We’re not going to have those dolphins and manatees in our river forever if we don’t start taking better care of it, so that’s priority number one.”

Another concern she raised was flooding and the need for fortifications to protect against rising waters.

Sharing in that concern were Ferraro — whose district is split by the river — and Democrat Theresa Ann Richardson, who said that as mayor, she would appoint a committee to address flooding and other issues associated with Jacksonville’s waterways.

“That’s our big seller — our water,” she said. “That’s what’s going to attract businesses to come here.”

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EDUCATION

The issue on which the candidates differed most was education.

Republican candidate Frank Keasler Jr., who said he would like to create a program to teach students that they were “created with a purpose,” noted, “I know from living here 50 years, the mayor’s program is usually the way that the [school] board goes, or at least there’s clear ear of the board to the mayor’s voice.”

Others, however, said they would defer to and support the vision of the school board and superintendent.

“I think the biggest thing that you can do from the mayor’s office for our public schools is to support our duly elected school board,” Deegan said. “I don’t think we see too much of that right now, and I would like to see our mayor’s office support what our schools’ superintendent is trying to do with our schools. And frankly, I think she’s done a fantastic job given everything that she’s had as challenges over the past several years.”

While Allen seemed to agree with that perspective, it was not shared by Cumber, who said: “Our school system’s failing our kids. Our reading scores have gone from 60 to 47% in six years.”

Holding that the mayor has a responsibility to ensure the city’s students are properly educated, Cumber added, “We need to get back to basics and get these literacy rates up in this city.”

Meanwhile, Richardson and Gibson both expressed support for an increase in teachers’ pay, with Gibson noting that the mayor could serve as an advocate for teachers with legislators in Tallahassee.

The state senator also referenced the DeSantis administration’s recent crackdown on the presence of critical race theory in state textbooks, holding that those policies have adversely affected the teaching of history in public schools.

On the other hand, Ferraro stressed that supporting parental rights and promoting the “traditional teaching” of necessary life skills

— like balancing a checkbook — were the way forward.

A NOTED ABSENCE

One fact that loomed large over the event was that Republican Daniel Davis and independent Darcy Richardson declined to participate. Davis is also a member of the Rotary Club of Jacksonville, the Club that hosted the event.

In her closing remarks, Cumber addressed the elephant not in the room, stating, “Let’s be honest and let’s talk about who’s not here today: Daniel Davis.”

Davis, a former city councilman and state representative, entered the race in September after months of speculation.

Describing Davis as a “career politician,” Cumber charged: “He thinks he’s already won.”

That’s why Daniel’s not here, because he thinks it’s owed to him. I disagree, and I think he is easy to beat if we all get together.”

And on that last point, she may be right. According to an Oct. 31 University of North Florida Public Opinion Research Lab poll, 45% of registered, likely voters said they had yet to choose a candidate, of which 53% were Republicans.

Further, while Deegan led the pack in that survey at 22%, support among the next three candidates was fairly even, with Davis at 7% and Cumber and Gibson tied at 6%.

Jacksonville’s mayoral election will be held on March 23. To avoid a run-off, one candidate must receive a majority of the vote, but if the UNF poll’s results are any indicator, it seems the mayor’s office is still very much up for grabs.



Bill Sorenson, past president, Rotary Club of Jacksonville, led the meeting and delivered the opening remarks for the first Mayoral debate of the 2022-23 election season. Seated to his right were the slate of the seven participating candidates.



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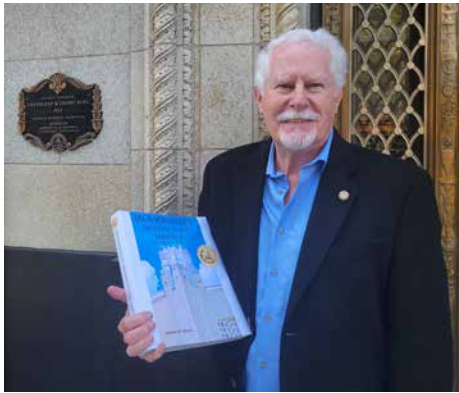
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A legacy in stone, on paper:

Historian Wayne Wood releases new book celebrating Jacksonville's architectural history



Wayne Wood

BY MICHELE LEIVAS
Resident Community News

Jacksonville historian Dr. Wayne Wood has written a new book about the city's historical architecture and notable landmarks.

Titled "Jacksonville's Architectural Heritage: Landmarks for the Future," the book will be released in early December and pays homage to the iconic buildings and landmarks that have helped define Jacksonville's landscape and architectural identity.

If the title sounds familiar to some, it's because Wood published an earlier book of the same title in 1989, but thanks to several factors — including the technological and

publishing advancements since then — Wood said the book releasing this month is "the book I always wanted to write."

Following the success of his 1989 book, Wood said he was repeatedly approached to release a new edition, though for many years he was "recalcitrant" to do so "because as an artist, once you've done something, it's not as enjoyable to do the same thing over and over again. It's always wonderful to create new things."

Still, with Jacksonville approaching its bicentennial year and the opportunity to feature more buildings and landmarks in a new book, Wood wasn't able to get the idea out of his head until, he said, he finally decided, "Heck, let's do it."

For the next year and a half, Wood worked with a "small advisory committee," including Joel McEachin, former supervisor of the Jacksonville Historic Preservation Committee and the chief researcher for Wood's 1989 book, and photographer Mark Krancer who worked as principal photographer with a team to take the 1,300-plus photographs featured in this new volume — all of which are in color, unlike the book's predecessor.

"The original book back in '89 — like I said, we had dozens, if not hundreds of people work on it — this book, because of modern technology, being done with computers, it's been a very small advisory committee of people who've helped with it and basically have done the entire book with the help of Joel and the photographers, we've done it ourselves," Wood said. "So it's very rewarding

and very — I just feel like it's one of my major achievements to have a book published that'll be part of the legacy of Jacksonville for generations to come."

Wood is looking forward to introducing people to some of the city's newer historical buildings — buildings that, in 1989, hadn't reached the 50-year threshold to be considered historic and were, therefore, not included in the book — as well as younger buildings he feels will become significant influences in Jacksonville's architectural and historical identity.

"There are buildings that are very new — buildings that are barely 10 years old in this book but because they're significant and they'll stand the test of time, at least in my opinion as Jacksonville's chief architectural historian, we need to celebrate these buildings and chronicle them now so that like I say, 100 years from now, this book is gonna still be out there," he said.

Wood has also taken this opportunity to feature historically and culturally significant landmarks that are not necessarily buildings. Compiled into a section titled "Unusual Structures," this includes "the Treaty Oak to sculptures to things that can only be seen from outer space and just amazing parts of Jacksonville's visual landscape that mostly are unknown that are going to be a wonderful pleasant surprise when people see some of the unique, sometimes quirky but always pretty amazing things that we have in our midst that are truly part of our visual landscape even though they're not really buildings."

He hopes this book will also serve as a reminder for the community and the architects of tomorrow that the "buildings that are being built today, we want to encourage them not only to be wonderful works of art that we share as a community visually but also buildings that are worthy of preservation in the future."

The book has been underwritten by the Jesse Ball duPont Fund and supported by donations from Preston Haskell and the Ida M. Stevens Foundation. The Jacksonville Historical Society (JHS) is publishing it and, as JHS Chief of Staff and Communications Director Kate Hallock wrote in an e-mail, all book sale proceeds will benefit the society.

"The potential for more than \$100,000 in book sale revenue will have a huge impact on the Jacksonville Historical Society's annual budget, especially in 2023 as we focus fundraising efforts on the Casket Factory/Music History Museum project," Hallock wrote. "This is the second major book in two years authored by Wayne Wood to benefit the historical society; the other was 'LIFE: The Untold Story of Charles Adrian Pillars,' which debuted in December 2020. Both books are rich in history and images, and will make excellent holiday gifts."

"Jacksonville's Architectural Heritage: Landmarks for the Future" will be available for purchase at all local bookstores, as well as the Jacksonville Historical Society and, of course, online.

Details surrounding book signings and other events will be made available on the JHS website.




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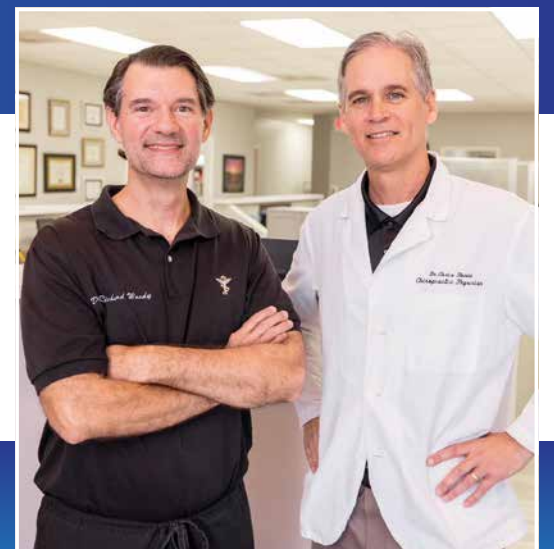
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Women’s Grapevine giving circle donates nearly \$4,000 to Jax chapter of Once Upon a Room

Jacksonville Women in Business for Good (JWBG), a new Grapevine giving circle, has raised and donated nearly \$4,000 to the Jacksonville chapter of Once Upon a Room (OUR-JAX), a nonprofit organization dedicated to “enriching the lives of seriously ill, hospitalized children and teens.” According to a press release, the donation was made “at the close of Quarter 3, the group’s first operational period.”

The press release explained the donation will help OUR-JAX continue to “transform sterile hospital rooms into ‘personalized, fun and cozy spaces.’”

“This donation by your organization comes at a fun time! While we have been busy fulfilling weekly personalized room requests, we are also working with Wolfson on our ‘Boo to You’ Halloween project. On October 31, we’ll provide every patient hospitalized

at Wolfson (160 total) with festive decorations, games, activities, spooky comfort items, a lighted Jack-O-Lantern and lots of Halloween crafts and goodies to makeover their rooms and play. Our Women’s Council members will be there all day to help bring the smiles,” wrote OUR-JAX’s Barbara DeWitt and Tina Toomey, both executive co-chairs, in the release. “We are thrilled to receive this contribution, which will support this project, and sincerely appreciate the members of Jacksonville Women in Business Grapevine.”

Since its formation this past spring, JWBG has already raised nearly \$8,000. Beyond this donation to OUR-JAX, the group has raised nearly all of its next goal of \$5,000 for Q4. The press release added that the group “...will meet in December to collaboratively decide where Q4’s funds should be directed.”



PHOTO COURTESY OF JWBG

Jacksonville Women in Business for Good founding members Amelia Smith (San Marco resident), Sonya Morales-Marchisillo (business located in Holiday Hill area), Shara Mandy (business located in Arlington) and Christine Morrison (business on the West Side).

Annual Gingerbread Extravaganza Celebrates 20 Years

The 20th Annual Gingerbread Extravaganza returns Dec. 8-27 in the historic Old St. Andrew’s Church. New this year is Kids Day, Sunday, Dec. 11, 11 a.m.-5 p.m., which will feature photo ops with Santa Claus, face-painting artists, balloon art and food trucks. Opening and closing times vary by day, and school or seniors’ groups are available in the mornings by reservation.

The annual holiday event includes dozens of handmade gingerbread creations from builders of all ages in five judged categories: Historic Structure, Fantasy, Traditional, Religious, and Bicentennial. Visitors will also enjoy holiday trees lavishly decorated by the Junior League of Jacksonville, a scavenger hunt, and a holiday shop with baked goods, books and gift items. The event is the biggest fundraiser for the 93-year-old Jacksonville Historical Society.

“The Gingerbread Extravaganza is a beloved Jacksonville holiday tradition,” said Alan J. Bliss, Jacksonville Historical Society CEO. “This year we celebrate the 20th annual extravaganza in Jacksonville’s bicentennial year, making it even more special.”

The event is funded in part by a grant from the Delores Barr Weaver Forever Event Fund, major donations from VyStar Credit Union, the Jaguars Foundation/1st Downtown Jacksonville, 904 Happy Hour, the Jess and Brewster J. Durkee Foundation, and many other local philanthropists. The event is also supported by the Cultural Council of Greater Jacksonville.

For schedule and tickets, visit jaxgingerbread.com. For group reservations, contact info@jaxhistory.org or call (904) 665-0064. Parking is free in the grass lot along Duval Street next to the ballpark. The event is closed Dec. 12, 18-19, 24-25.



First-time builder Kenda DeFord took home Best in Show at the 19th Annual Gingerbread Extravaganza in 2021.

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Pine Castle celebrates 70 YEARS – and capital campaign milestone

Pine Castle had more than one reason to celebrate at its 70th Anniversary Celebration BBQ on Saturday, Nov. 5.

Held at its campus on Spring Park Road, the BBQ was attended by more than 750 guests. During the festivities, Pine Castle announced it had not only met but exceeded its \$2.25 million capital campaign, Pathway to Possibilities.

The campaign "...involved renovating nearly every space on campus, including the 40-year-old kitchen and cafeteria, all classrooms, the Production warehouse, walking track and fields, basketball court, outdoor restrooms, administrative kitchen, and other necessary projects."

The capital campaign was comprised of fewer than 100 "major donors" and nearly 400 donors "that contributed less than \$5,000, including nearly 300 first-time donors to Pine Castle."

Pine Castle expressed its gratitude to all the donors who helped it achieve this milestone success, adding that contributions from "two family foundations" enabled it to invest "\$50,000 with a curriculum consultant to create custom curricula for our two-Pathways, which are the Pathway to Life Enrichment (non-working participants) and the Pathway to Community Employment" as well as "pay off a debt that resulted from the financial crash of 2008, now making Pine Castle a debt-free mortgage agency."

Founded in 1952, Pine Castle is an organization dedicated to serving adults with "intellectual and development differences (IDDs) and providing support to their families across Northeast Florida."



S O C I A L



Mike Langton with Sandra Hull, James and Laura Langton

St. Johns Riverkeeper hosts 21ST ANNUAL Oyster Roast

St. Johns Riverkeeper hosted its 21st annual Oyster Roast on Friday, Nov. 18. Guests enjoyed good food and tunes while taking in the curated grounds of the Garden Club of Jacksonville, which hosted the event at its riverfront location in Riverside. Dubbed the organization's "most impactful fundraiser of the year," the event featured live music by local cover band Spice & the Po' Boys and Goliath Flores, food by Biscottis, oysters from Fisherman's Dock and included a raffle and silent auction for guests. The Oyster Roast is supported by a grant from the Delores Barr Weaver Forever Event Fund.



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Lisa Rinaman and Wayne Young



Max Needell, Sarah Gushanas, Gina Stoney and others



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John and Sally Ragsdale with Dr. John Trainer

Jacksonville Humane Society hosts 24TH ANNUAL "Toast to the Animals"

The Jacksonville Humane Society (JHS) celebrated its 24th annual "Toast to the Animals" — touted as Jacksonville's "premier charitable tasting event" — on Wednesday, Nov. 9.

Originally scheduled for September this year, the event was postponed because of Hurricane Ian and moved to last month.

This year, the event recognized and celebrated "Jacksonville Philanthropist and former JHS Board Chair, Kristine Cherek and Kirk Larsen," both of whom have "made an indelible impact on the lives of countless people and animals, thanks to their support of the Jacksonville Humane Society and other charitable organizations."

Additionally, the evening recognized the society's "Kitten Crusaders" — veterinary partners, including VCA All Animal Hospital of Orange Park, San Marco Animal Hospital, Mandarin Animal Hospital, Your Home Vet, First Coast No More Homeless Pets and Durbin Creek Animal Hospital, that work with JHS to place kittens with Good Samaritans rather than surrendering them to a shelter.

The event was held at the TIAA Bank Field in downtown Jacksonville. All proceeds from the evening will benefit the JHS Medical Fund, "which helps us to provide lifesaving medical care to animals suffering from illness or injury."



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Lakewood United Methodist Church Hosts 12th Annual Cardboard City

Proceeds benefit Family Promise of Jacksonville to alleviate homelessness

Lakewood United Methodist Church hosted Family Promise of Jacksonville's 12th Annual Cardboard City. More than 120 people attended the evening event, with 50 spending the night in tents, cars or even cardboard box shelters to call attention to the homelessness issue. The event has raised more than \$280,000 for Family Promise of Jacksonville since its inception.

In Jacksonville, more than 3,200 students were homeless during the 2020-2021 school year. The city also had the fifth highest rent increase in the United States in the third quarter of 2021.

"Rising rent, inflation and more have families on the edge of the fiscal cliff. We break down the barriers families face, giving them hope for the future. With your help, we continue to change lives with 80% of our families returning to stability in housing," said Lakeshore resident Mark Landschoot, executive director at Family Promise.

"Families are the hidden homeless. They are living in motels, couch surfing, or even in cars. Tragically, 30% of America's homelessness are families with children."

The group learned how Family Promise provides resources for families, and works with them to alleviate barriers. Lakewood UMC served a simple meal, food-line style. Attendees also experienced The Social Service Maze, an interactive challenge in which participants navigate social services stations, staffed by human services students from Florida State College at Jacksonville, to get the resources needed to move from homelessness to stability.



Children from Lakewood United Methodist Church ready to spend the night at Cardboard City.



Stanton College Prep Family Promise Club members Tejua Vegi, Sage Peterson and Lindsay Johnson were on hand to participate.



Lakewood United Methodist Church members David and Michelle Johnson set up for spending the night.

North Florida School of Special Education celebrates 30 years at Farm to Cocktail event

The North Florida School of Special Education (NFSSE) hosted its Farm to Cocktail Donor Reception at Berry Good Farms on Oct. 6.

More than 100 guests gathered for the event, which also celebrated the school's 30th anniversary — marked by the 2021-22 school year — with the theme "You Are the Reason."

"It is so rare in my experience of serving and giving to not for profit organizations that you become such a part of the actual community," said NFSSE Board Member Tammy Spriggs. "At NFSSE, you can't help but look forward to engaging with the campus, the teachers and our students."

"It's always amazing to me to hear about the different paths that lead people to our school, from families to friends, those who share a love of education, and some who just want a place to serve," added Sally Hazelip, head of school. "This party is always one of my favorite nights of the year. It's a beautiful evening spent with friends celebrating how we have grown."



Corky and Kit Thomas.



Michael Miller and David Miller.



Board Member Kevin English, Debra English, and Board Member Tim Cross.



Board Member Tammy Spriggs with Deborah Spriggs, James Spriggs and Tony Jones



Lee and Ann Sory Meadows with Bruce and Judy Homeyer

PHOTOS COURTESY OF NFSSE

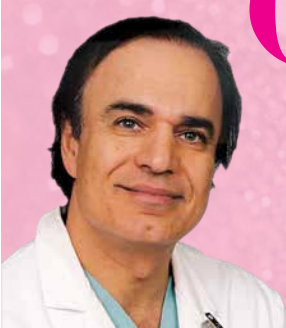
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A day for the dogs

St. Philip Neri's Animal Ministry hosts annual Family Pet Fair and Blessing of the Pets

St. Philip Neri Ecumenical Church's Animal Ministry hosted its 9th annual Family Pet Fair and Blessing of the Pets on Saturday, Nov. 12.

Bishop John Oliver oversaw the blessings of the pets at San Marco's Fletcher Park. Families could enter their pets in the "Best in Show" contest or treat them to a mini spa session at the Green Dog Spa

booth for a free nail trim and ear cleaning and spruce up their style with a free Pet Fair bandana. Dogs and their owners also had the opportunity to participate in a group training session or get free training advice from Ruff to Ready Dog Training owner and certified trainer Amanda Lunsford.

Beyond that, the day offered food, fun, shopping (for pets and their humans) — and families could even adopt and take home a new furry family member.

The Animal Ministry is a non-profit outreach of St. Philip Neri Ecumenical Church with a mission to "support rescues and programs that benefit shelter animals and to provide resources, support, comfort, pastoral care and love to God's creatures and the individuals who love and care for them."



The ninth annual Blessing of the Pets charity event was held in San Marco's Fletcher Park on Nov. 12. It is hosted by the St. Philip Neri Animal Ministry.



Pet owners flocked to Fletcher Park.



Mary Larson brought her dog, Buffy.



Big blessings for a little dog.

Sunset serenades and champagne:

The Civic Orchestra of Jacksonville hosts sixth annual gala

The Civic Orchestra of Jacksonville hosted its annual gala at the Epping Forest Yacht Club on Thursday, Nov. 3 at 6 p.m. The evening for the sixth annual Orchestration of Food, Wine and Music began with a sunset, riverfront serenade by a Civic Orchestra quartet and a champagne toast before guests moved inside for dinner accompanied by more live music.

"Not only does the annual fundraiser help support Civic in providing eight to ten free classical concerts for all ages in areas of town that do not typically have such access throughout the year, this event provides a space for Civic Orchestra of Jacksonville musicians,

sponsors, family foundations and community patrons the opportunity to interact with one another in a more intimate and personal setting through a shared, elevated experience centered around music, food, wine, and hopefully the creation of many new and memorable connections," said Civic Orchestra of Jacksonville Board Member Angela Dawn Bussone.

The Civic Orchestra of Jacksonville will host its next free concert on Dec. 11 at 5 p.m. Conducted by Marguerite Richardson, "American Home" will be performed at LaVilla's Ritz Theatre (829 N. Davis Street).



Throughout the evening's sold-out event, guests were treated to live musical ensemble performances from members of the Civic Orchestra of Jacksonville.

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LOCAL FOLKS

Audrey and Sean Mangum

BY MARY WANSER
Resident Community News



Sean and Audrey Mangum

Meet the Mangums! Newly wed. And new to San Marco.

Audrey and Sean both grew up in Jacksonville, but in different parts—Audrey in Ponte Vedra and Sean in Mandarin. They met in middle school at Providence, a Christian college prep school. According to Sean, they saw each other five times before they liked each other. Then, he left Providence for Landon. “We parted ways as star-crossed middle schoolers,” he said.

This past March, Audrey and Sean married. Soon afterwards, they bought their San Marco home, knowing they wanted to stay in Jacksonville, but in a different part than they were each used to. “We love that San Marco feels like a super small town in Jacksonville, which is funny,” Audrey said.

They began attending Aspire Church almost immediately after their move, as it’s so close to their new house. They were warmly welcomed and quickly made friends within the congregation, including with some people who work there and who helped Audrey land a part-time receptionist position there. Audrey is also working online with Liberty University toward a master’s degree in counseling. “Aspire’s great,” said Sean. He is the owner of Seal Team Jax, a paver sealer and pressure washing company. “It’s full-time plus a little bit,” he said. The paver sealing is a niche market that fills his schedule.

Outside of church and school and work, the Mangums have an array of interests. “Audrey’s favorite thing is making friends with goats,” Sean said because his wife so enjoys petting zoos, farms, and animals in general. Audrey thinks that Rocky, their Havashu, could be considered a “rescue dog” because they rescued her from Audrey’s sister. “It’s really her nephew,” Sean said.

The Mangums play pickleball at Southside Park, but not competitively, and they spend a lot of time biking along the river on their beach cruisers. That’s still a little bit of a sore subject though because their original



Rocky and Audrey Mangum

set, one red and one blue, was stolen right off their front porch. Audrey assumes the lock wasn’t high quality enough, and Sean suspects wire cutters were used. The bikes have since been replaced, now with a better lock and a new Ring Video Doorbell installed. Rocky is the one who benefitted from the ordeal because one of the new bikes has a bigger basket than before. She’s no longer “spilling out like a cupcake,” as Sean had described it.

On their new bikes, the Mangums are on a mission. Their goal is to ride to the Square, eat at every restaurant, and buy one thing from every store. Not all on one trip, of course. “Make the rounds around the square” Sean calls it. It’s their Bucket List in addition to being a way to support their new community. They estimate that they’ve hit half of the establishments so far. According to Sean, they’re saving Brew for last. And because they recently became interested in candle making, Audrey has added Wick to their list.

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Underwood's Jewelers raises funds for Pink Ribbon Jax

Underwood's Jewelers presented Pink Ribbon Jax (PRJ) with a check at a trunk show on Wednesday, Nov. 9, at its San Marco location, to support the non-profit organization's mission to "raise funds for local breast cancer research, mammography and patient services."

This is the second year the San Marco location has participated in these fundraising efforts, with its Ponte Vedra counterpart participating for several.

The two locations were able to raise approximately \$400,000. In addition to other fundraising efforts throughout the year, both Underwood's Jewelers Ponte Vedra and San Marco locations also hosted three-day trunk shows that donated 10% of all sale proceeds to PRJ.

While PRJ normally focuses on both patient services and research with Baptist Health and the Mayo Clinic, respectively, PRJ Chair Marica Pendjer explained that for the last two years, the organization has "focused strictly" on mammograms.

"After COVID we realized — and even during COVID — that people weren't getting them," she said. "They weren't going to medical establishments and trying to get mammograms..."

With so many families facing job losses during the pandemic and, by extension, losing healthcare benefits, Pendjer added, "We thought if someone had to choose between feeding their family or getting a screening, we wanted to take that choice off the table..."

A mammogram costs PRJ roughly \$300, Pendjer said, and that screening could have ripple effects beyond a single person.

"That's one life potentially saved and an entire circle of family and friends saved from loss," she said.



Theresa Warren with Greta Holmes and Sabrina Mackey



Melissa Hirenese with Jason Simpson, Lee Ann Mengel, Clayton Bromberg, Marica Pendjer, Besty Dixon, Valerie Brown and Kelly Wood



Dr. Judella Haddad-Lacle with Jessica Davis



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DePaul School hosts Dining for Dyslexia fundraising event

On Wednesday, Nov. 16, Jacksonville's DePaul School of Northeast Florida (DSNF) hosted its Dining for Dyslexia at the Timuquana Country Club.

Keynote speaker for the event was Dr. Tracy Alloway. A psychology professor at University of North Florida, Alloway has authored several books, hosted TED Talks and "advocate[s] for children with learning differences," said Dr. Chanley Dudley. The evening featured other speakers as well, including students and parents.

With one in five children struggling with dyslexia, DSNF "specializes in the data driven, Orton-Gillingham approach to multisensory learning, reaching outcomes for its students that are unparalleled."

DSNF opened in 1980 "by a group of Jacksonville parents who realized Northeast Florida desperately needed a school for kids with dyslexia" with a mission to "to teach children the way they learn so they can succeed in education, and eventually, in fulfilling their life's work as members of our community." What began as a weekend program gradually evolved into a summer program and, eventually, two years later, officially became a full-time school. Today, the school offers grades two through eight.

The proceeds raised at the Dining for Dyslexia event will go toward DSNF's capital campaign of \$3 million "to grow the school."



Chanley Dudley, MD, with her husband, Tommy Dudley.



Speakers, Dr. Tracy Alloway and Chanley Dudley, MD.



Board of directors Kelli Votaw and Dr. Amber Oliveira with Teacher and Social Media Manager, Teri Modisetti.



Amy Arbuckle along with Neely Thomas, Annie Bryan and Kathryn Keefe.



Former board member Pete Holterman with current board member Kelli Votaw.



Current DePaul School Board of Directors - Chanley Dudley, Dan Kolbensschlag, Frank Mangin, Amber Oliveira, Trina Carver, Rosy Culpepper, Nancy Barnard and Kelli Votaw.

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Community building result of Concert in the Park



Helping man the SMPS booth were Dustin and Michelle Lang with Dalton Tolliver, Lindsay Ott, Leah Rand and SMPS President Lauren Carlucci



Parents Zach and Kara Cohen with Jen and Tyler Woodling and a crew of little people enjoying the festivities.



Ashley Feil with Lindsey Poole



Mack Volk with Wade and William Meyer

Locals came out in big numbers to party and jam, while children played and adults sipped wine and enjoyed a gorgeous sunset in Fletcher Park. The San Marco Preservation Society (SMPS) delivered a great time and achieved its goal to build a stronger community, as families and friends rocked the night away, Friday, Nov. 4 at the little park off Atlantic Boulevard.

Concert in the Park, the free family concert series, drew a great crowd that kicked off the weekend to the musical stylings of San Marco local Grant Nielson, followed by the opening headliner Hello Celia, who brought out all the stops to entertain the local crowd.

SMPS partnered with Town Hall Restaurant to offer curated picnic packages for pre-order, while newcomer Bar Molino came out for its first installment to offer select appetizers at the event. Wine and beer are always generously poured during the concert series and were made available for guests with a suggested donation.

For any group or business looking to engage and participate as a sponsor, tables can be ordered in advance of any Concert in the Park, as a limited number of VIP reservations are available that will include a reserved table and chairs for eight. If your company values the San Marco community, joining SMPS with a membership or a sponsor package for marquis fundraisers helps to further its mission. Email info@smpsjax.com if you're interested in becoming a sponsor, or adding your company to the roster of local businesses that help San Marco remain a desirable destination. More details for upcoming events can also be found on the SMPS Facebook event page.

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Sip & Shop Raises Key Funds for DLC 'Passport'

BY SUSANNA P. BARTON
Resident Community News

San Marco neighbors and local businesses partnered for a successful pre-holiday fundraiser benefitting Riverside- and Ortega-based nonprofit Developmental Learning Center. The Sip & Shop with Leila's Boutique helped raise more than \$2,000 for DLC, which provides education and on-site therapy services for children with special needs and severe medical complexities.

Held November 15 at Joe and Suzanne Honeycutt's Duck Pond home, the Sip & Shop raised funds and momentum for the organization at a critical time. DLC recently lost its annual \$50,000 United Way contribution due to a change in its giving protocol. This inspired DLC board members to reimagine and maximize the organization's fundraising strategies — including its upcoming "Passport shopping fundraiser." The event has been a mainstay in the Riverside/Avondale area for many years and is making the switch to San Marco venues in 2023.

San Marco neighbors and businesses have taken an all-hands-on-deck response to the challenge. While DLC board member and volunteer Allison Sample was researching the possibility of moving Passport to San Marco, San Marco

boutique owner Leila Williams offered her women's clothing inventory for a seed money-raising shopping event. Neighborhood and business owner momentum continued to build. Maggie Jensen, a Realtor at 904 Home Group, got her company to sponsor the Sip & Shop. Then the Honeycutts offered their home, sent invitations from their extensive address book and offered to match donations from the evening up to \$5,000.

"And here we are — on our way to making up for the \$50,000," Sample said.

DLC has been a priority for the Honeycutts and other San Marco neighbors for very personal reasons. Suzanne and husband Joe, a DLC board member, "inherited" amazing neighbors with a shared driveway when they bought their Duck Pond house more than a decade ago. Chris, Ilene, Clio and August Chazan Gabbard lived next door. Son August was a student at DLC Nurse and Learn, a ministry that allowed Chris and Ilene to continue with their careers and for August to be loved and stretched in his development. DLC was a true God-send, the Honeycutts recalled.

"When August died a few weeks before he turned 15, Ilene and Chris held his service in our front yard on the Duck Pond," Suzanne Honeycutt said. "All of the neighbors came and we wept and celebrated his life together because that's the way this neighborhood is. We stand together. It is our honor to host

this evening and celebrate August and the best neighbors in the world."

Williams said neighborhood relationships are what inspire successful fundraising for important community causes — and why her store supports them.

"As a small business owner in the Square for over 19 years, we have gotten to know our customers, on more than a professional level," Williams said. "So, it's throughout those relationships, that we are able to give back and support causes that are near and dear to them through events like this."

Realtor Jensen said as important as it is for people to love their homes, it is important for working parents to know their children love their homes away from home. This was the inspiration behind her involvement in the recent fundraiser.

"Not all daycares, schools or special needs facilities are the havens we wish them to be," Jensen said. "It is up to us to take ownership of our ability to serve these communities with our time and resources."

Because of the overwhelming support friends and volunteers found for DLC in their neighborhood, organizers are moving DLC's Passport fundraiser to San Marco on Saturday, April 1, 2023. The tagline for Passport is "Shop Local. Go Global." It will include a day of shopping in historic San Marco and a drawing for a \$2,000 travel voucher.



Event organizers and neighbor friends Regina Soeey, Ashlea Joplin, Allison Sample, Liz Paige, Maggie Jensen and Suzanne Honeycutt



Leila along with volunteers for the event

State K9 teams competition raises funds to help law enforcement K9 units



Obstacle Course Winner Konnor Acres (Florida Highway Patrol), Hardest Hitting Winner Ashton Boyster (Jacksonville Sheriff's Office) and Fastest Winner Geoffrey Pubillones (Florida Highway Patrol)

K9 teams from across the state participated in K9s United's inaugural Law Enforcement K9 Competition on November 13 at the Bishop Kenny High School Athletic Complex. K9s United is a national nonprofit based in Jacksonville and dedicated to supporting law enforcement K9 units by giving them the best equipment, amenities and quality of life during and after their service and by memorializing those who give the ultimate sacrifice.

The competition showcased the remarkable skills of police dogs that protect and serve communities every day. The teams competed in a timed obstacle course meant to mimic situations the officers and dogs may encounter on the job, including a timed obstacle course, vehicle bailouts, car window jumps, tunnel crawls, wall jumps and an apprehension obstacle. The day also offered family activities.

"At K9s United, we understand how important these skilled dogs are for the safety of our communities," said Debbie Johnson, founder and president of K9s United. "That's why we want to showcase some of the state's heroic K-9 teams so Northeast Florida neighbors can see firsthand how these talented dogs respond under pressure."

Participating Florida K-9 teams included the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office, St. Johns County Sheriff's Office, Flagler County Sheriff's Office, Taylor County Sheriff's Office and the Florida Highway Patrol's Jacksonville, Orlando and Ocoee departments.

Winners of the Obstacle Course were Konnor Acres and K9 Ace from the Florida Highway Patrol. Ashton Boyster and K9 Kenzo from the Jacksonville Sheriff's office won Hardest Hitting. Winners in the Fastest category were Geoffrey Pubillones and K9 Rico from the Florida Highway Patrol.

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JUNIOR RESIDENTS

Heart of Music Joins Episcopal Arts Program

The Heart of Music is joining the Episcopal School of Jacksonville's (ESJ) Partners in Arts program for the 2022-23 school year. The Heart of Music is a non-profit organization whose mission includes providing opportunities for young musicians to learn, create and perform alongside professional musicians.

Episcopal began the Episcopal & Jacksonville: Partners in Arts program in 2018 to connect with and support local artists and art organizations in an effort to strengthen the connection between the school and local artists, galleries, and companies, as well as to produce high-quality performances and exhibitions that generate educational and cultural connections. Past Partners include Jacksonville Dance Theatre (JDT), Barbara Colaciello of Babs' Lab, Indigo Art Therapy, and the Cummer Museum of Art and Gardens.

"Art making is by nature collaborative. ESJ is blessed with one of the most beautiful and fully equipped proscenium stages in the city. We want to be an effective resource for art making, cultural advancement and community engagement," said Katie Lebharr Black-Bowling '95, Director of Fine Arts.

The Partners in Arts collaboration will include a Christmas performance by The Heart of Music on Dec. 16, featuring a 50-piece orchestra and singers performing favorite Christmas songs and original instrumental pieces. A children's symphony orchestra will guest perform, including ESJ students from the strings programs on the Munnerlyn and St. Mark's Campuses. Performance times are 6:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. in the Deming Theatre. Tickets are \$20-40 and are available at www.heartofmusic.art.

Local Schools Win Big at Cross Country Championships



Episcopal girls cross-country team

Several local varsity cross country teams topped the charts at the Florida High School Athletic Association cross country championships at Apalachee Regional Park in Tallahassee Nov. 5-6. Episcopal School of Jacksonville's girls cross country team finished second in the state in the 2A division under the direction of coach Stacy Brunell. Bolles placed first for both the boys and girls teams in the 2A division, and Creekside High School in St. Johns took home top spot in the boys 4A division.

Bishop Kenny Raises \$12K for School Impacted by Ian



Bishop Kenny High School's students and community raised \$12,000 for fellow Catholic school Bishop Verot High School (BVHS) in Fort Myers, Florida, following BVHS's nearly direct hit from Hurricane Ian. Many BVHS families suffered catastrophic loss and damage, prompting fundraising efforts from Bishop Kenny's Campus Ministry and Student Government. The funds were raised in just two weeks, and the money was sent directly to BVHS to address immediate needs for their school community. BVHS's namesake, Bishop Augustin Verot, was the first bishop of the Diocese of St. Augustine.

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RPDS Students Create Art for a Cause

Riverside Presbyterian Day School fifth graders Savannah Meyer, Malloy Haley and Olivia Davis were selected as winners in the Angels for Allison art contest. The Allison Brundick Haramis Foundation board of directors selected 12 angels out of more than 200 entries from local third to fifth grade students. Their art will be featured on the Angels for Allison limited notecard set sold throughout the year, as well as the official Angels for Allison stationery.



(L to R): Savannah Meyer, Ashlee Collins (RPDS Art Teacher), Malloy Haley and Olivia Davis

16 Bolles Students Commit to College Athletics

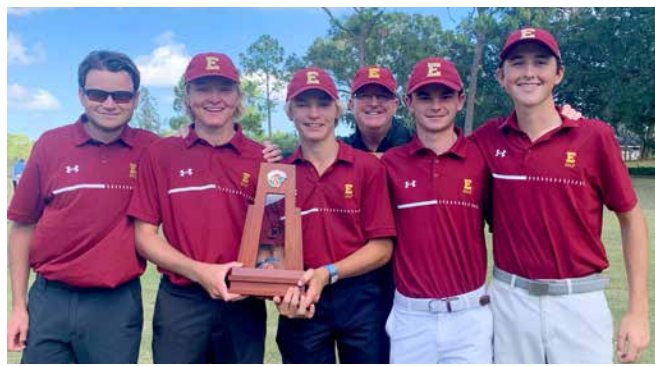


San Marco residents Grace Albaugh, Montana Freeman, Andrew McGraw and Aidan Ryan, and San Jose residents Jillian Candelino, Elizabeth Csikai, Garrett Jobe and Aidan Paro were among 16 Bolles student-athletes representing nine different sports who were honored on Nov. 9 for committing to a particular college or university to continue their athletic and academic careers.

Family, friends, classmates, coaches and faculty gathered in McGehee Auditorium on the San Jose Campus for the commitment ceremony. This was the first of three college commitment ceremonies for Bolles to recognize student-athletes, with others planned in February and April 2023.

Baseball — Will Studebaker, Niagara University; Crew — Avery Goldknopf, Clemson University; Boys' Cross Country/Track & Field — Daniel De Monte, Boston University; Andrew McGraw, Colgate University; Aidan Ryan, University of Tennessee; Girls' Cross Country/Track & Field — Katherine Campos, Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University; Jillian Candelino, University of Tennessee; Elizabeth Csikai, Emory University; Boys' Lacrosse — Caleb Coleman, University of Vermont; Garrett Jobe, Queens University of Charlotte; Boys' Swimming — Will Heck, North Carolina State University; Kayden Lancaster, University of Louisville; Aidan Paro, University of Louisville; Girls' Soccer — Annalise Cannada, University of Kentucky; Girls' Swimming — Montana Freeman, Colorado State University at Pueblo; Volleyball — Grace Albaugh, Georgetown University

Episcopal Boys Golf Wins Regionals



Episcopal boys golf team

Episcopal School of Jacksonville's boys golf team won the Florida High School Athletic Association (FHSAA) Region 1 Championship at Marsh Landing Country Club. Leading the way for the Eagles and capturing medalist honors was junior Henry Robards who shot two-under with a 70. The team shot a total of 298, six shots ahead of the closest team. The team now advances to the FHSAA State Championships at Mission Inn Resort in Howey-In-The-Hills.

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Fabulous '50s



First-graders at Assumption Catholic School on Atlantic Boulevard celebrated the 50th day of school with a throwback to the '50s. The students dressed in styles of the era, played games, and ate classic diner fare like french fries and ice cream floats.

Troop 252 Helps Those in Need



The Boy Scouts of Troop 252 recently held a food drive with a goal of 252 items to honor their troop number. They exceeded their goal, collecting a total of 260 cans and other grocery items. All goods were donated to St. Matthew's Catholic Church's St. Vincent de Paul to serve those in need.

Troop 252 Life Scout Alex L. also led the scouts in completing his Eagle Scout project at Pine Castle, which serves adults with intellectual and developmental differences. Alex, alongside fellow scouts and siblings, directed the construction and painting of five wooden picnic tables for the facility. The newly built, freshly painted tables were completed just in time for Pine Castle's 70th anniversary celebration.



Excellence Across Four Pillars

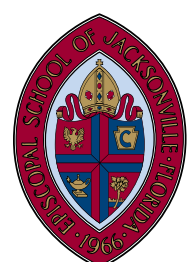
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EPISCOPAL
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SJEDS students donate funds, canned goods to St. Mary's Episcopal Church Food Pantry



SJEDS sixth graders and their "Can City," consisting of the 2,000-plus dry and non-perishable goods all grades collected during a week-long service project.

Students at San Jose Episcopal Day School collected more than 2,000 non-perishable food items during a "friendly, week-long" service project to see which class could contribute the most. SJEDS sixth graders then created a "Can City" — a construction built entirely of the dry and canned goods that were donated to St. Mary's Episcopal Church Food Pantry.

Additionally, sixth graders presented Mother Beth Tjoflat a check for nearly \$2,100 — the proceeds from the annual Halloween "candy gram" fundraiser. Also benefiting the church's food pantry, this donation "...will make a very

tangible impact on the local community," explained an SJEDS press release. An SJEDS alumna herself, Mother Beth spoke of compassion and kindness, as well as the impact and service the food pantry provides.

"This is where I got my start and it is wonderful to see so many students and families giving back to our community," she said while accepting the students' donation.

All Saints for Assumption



Children, faculty and staff of Assumption Catholic School celebrated All Saints' Day by dressing up as their favorite saint, and participating in a parade throughout campus for all its K-8 students. All Saints' Day, or All Hallows' Day, falls the day after Halloween. It recognizes all the saints of the church, both known and unknown.

A great weekend for great futures

Boys & Girls Clubs of Northeast Florida raise more than \$400,000 in Great Futures Weekend

PHOTOS COURTESY OF BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS OF NORTHEAST FLORIDA



Boys & Girls Clubs of Northeast Florida President & CEO Paul Martinez poses with Club members from McKenzie's Beaches Boys & Girls Club after they completed the 5K at the 13th Annual McKenzie's Run.



More than 1,100 runners and walkers gathered Saturday at TPC Sawgrass for the 13th Annual McKenzie's Run to help Boys & Girls Clubs of Northeast Florida raise \$400,000 through the Great Futures Weekend.

The Boys & Girls Clubs of Northeast Florida raised more than \$400,000 during its Great Futures Weekend on Friday, Nov. 18 and Saturday, Nov. 19 at THE PLAYERS Stadium Course on TPC Sawgrass in Ponte Vedra Beach.

On Friday, more than 100 golfers participated in the 2nd annual Great Futures Golf Classic; Saturday saw more than 1,100 walkers and runners participate in the 13th annual McKenzie's Run.

"Our Great Futures Weekend serves as a message of hope for our kids and teens in the community," said Boys & Girls Clubs of Northeast Florida President and CEO Paul Martinez in a press release. "When they see how many people come out to support them and their dreams, they are encouraged to reach their full potential through the support and resources we give them every single day at the Club."

McKenzie's Run is named in honor of McKenzie Noelle Wilson and it is through its partnership with the McKenzie Noelle Wilson Foundation that the Boys & Girls Clubs of Northeast Florida continue "McKenzie's legacy by providing local young people, ages 6-18, with a safe place to go after school and during the summer at McKenzie's Beaches Boys & Girls Club and McKenzie's Camp Deep Pond."

Sponsors for the Great Futures Weekend include THE PLAYERS, the Church of Eleven22 and the McKenzie Noelle Wilson Foundation.

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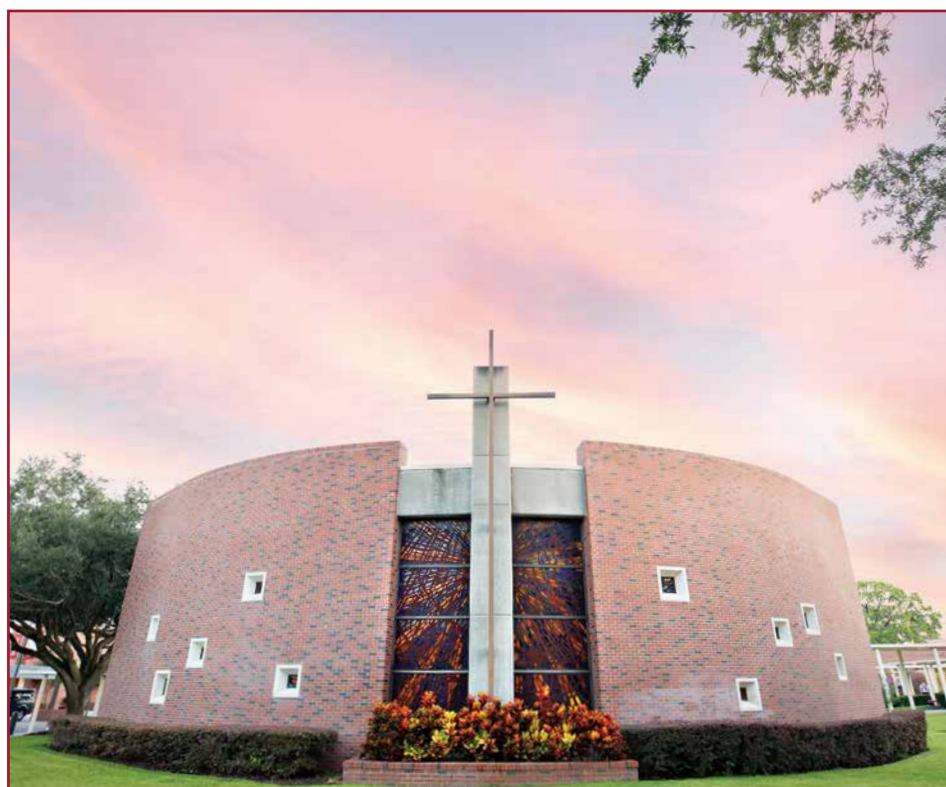
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DA DuBow Theatre

Winter Percussion Concert
Dec. 13, 7 p.m.
DA DuBow Theatre

Vocal Choral Concert
Dec. 15, 7:30 p.m.
Church of the Good Shepherd
1100 Stockton St., 32204

Discovery Youth Bank of Northeast Florida – Winter Concert
Dec. 15, 7 p.m.
DA DuBow Theatre

Audition Dates for 2022-23:
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EXTRAVAGANZA:
Feb. 10, 2023

A perfect season:

Landon Lions girls volleyball cap off perfect season with city championship victory



PHOTO COURTESY OF RYAN CASEY

Principal Ryan Casey and the Landon Lions girls volleyball team, who celebrated a perfect season, capping it off by winning the Duval County Middle School Volleyball Championship on Nov. 14.

Perfection may be difficult to obtain, but the Julia Landon College Preparatory and Leadership Development School girls volleyball team has done just that with a perfect season, clinched with its recent victory at the Duval County Middle School Volleyball Championship on Nov. 14.

This was the third consecutive year the Landon Lions made the City Championship. Julia Landon College Preparatory and Leadership Development School Athletic Director D. Michelle Bourgholtzer said it is the fourth overall since the series began in 2013, adding that the Lions were the only team out of 25 Duval County Public School Middle School teams to finish the season undefeated.

“The Landon Lions volleyball team and its undefeated championship season has been an exciting team to watch for spectators and an amazing example for our community,” wrote Principal Ryan Casey in an e-mail. “I am proud of the tremendous leadership that they show on and off the floor, they are incredibly well coached and they enjoy themselves and they win with dignity and grace. This team is a true example of the student athlete at Julia Landon college prep.”

The City Championship match MVP was seventh grader Mae Abernathy.

Assumption boys', girls' basketball victorious at Diocesan Championships



Assumption Catholic School's boys' and girls' basketball teams each competed in the Diocesan Championships at Bishop Kenny on Oct. 26. The girls' team, defending their title from last year, made it a repeat championship. The boys' team also took the top spot, winning their first championship game since 1998.



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National Signing Day at Bishop Kenny



(L to R) Bishop Kenny's Ally Cavanaugh, Sarah Seabrooke, Maria Candelora, Sophia Rueppell and Garrett Corbett commit on National Signing Day.

Five Bishop Kenny student scholar athletes signed college scholarships on National Signing Day, Nov. 9.

Ally Cavanaugh signed to play volleyball for the University of Georgia. Cavanaugh currently holds the BK record for career kills with 1,240. She was named the Florida Dairy Farmers Class 4A Player of the Year in 2020 and named to the FACA All-State Team in 2020 and 2021.

Sarah Seabrooke will be attending Rollins College on a volleyball scholarship. She was a member of the 2020 State Championship Team and a member of the 2022 State Final Four Beach Volleyball Team. Seabrooke was also named to the AVCA All-American watch list in 2022.

Maria Candelora signed to swim at Sienna College. Candelora is a three-time state qualifier, placing 3rd in the 200-freestyle relay in 2021. She was named to the FACA All-County Team the past three years and awarded team MVP in 2020.

Sophia Rueppell will compete at Kennesaw State on a basketball scholarship. She was a member of the District and Regional Championship Team in 2022, was named to the 2nd All-State FACA Team in 2022, and led the Crusaders in assists in 2022.

Garrett Corbett signed a baseball scholarship to pitch at Jacksonville University. He was a member of two District Championships in 2021 and 2022. Corbett was named to the First Team All-City Squad, and he received the Pitcher of the Year Award his sophomore and junior year.

Local Schools Win Big at Scholastic Chess Tournament



Julia Landon College Prep's K-8 and K-12 winners.



Hendricks Avenue Elementary School's winning K-5 team.

The Fall Scholastic Open chess tournament was held at San Jose Catholic School on Nov. 12, welcoming 72 players. San Marco's Hendricks Avenue Elementary School had two team winners, bringing home top awards in the K-2 and K-5 sections. Julia Landon College Prep won the K-8 and K-12 sections, with additional individual accolades. In the "Catholic Cup" subdivision, San Jose Catholic School took top honors. The Landon team also recently finished second in the National Chess Day tournament at MOSH in October. Five more tournaments are on the schedule for this school year, and more information can be found at scholasticchess.org.

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‘Dolled up and dapper’ The Healing Hearts Project hosts ‘20s themed Pour Your Heart Out event

The Healing Hearts Project (THHP) raised nearly \$47,000 at its fifth annual Pour Your Heart Out fundraising event.

Held at Jacksonville’s Friday Musicale on Oct. 22, the sold-out event featured a three-course dinner with wine pairings catered by Biscuits in Avondale. Keeping with the event’s “prohibition-era” theme, signature cocktails were created and provided by Brian Reed from downtown’s The Volstead. Other participating vendors included Intuition Beer, Burlock & Barrel, Manifest Distillery and Citrus Distillery.

THHP is a Jacksonville-based nonprofit organization that provides support for “patients and families from Wolfson Children’s Hospital and UF Pediatric Cardiology... who are affected by congenital heart disease (CHD).”



Brandon and Donya Marshall



Heart moms and board members, Nicole Garrett, emcee Tiffany Maddox, Stacey Merritt and Joy Parman



Tanahill Glen, Marcie Lee, Sarah Lynch, Diana Davis, Tonya Hardaker and Stephanie Walter

"Lead To Win" Author Carla Harris Helps Raise Nearly \$1 Million For Scholarships



Melissa Nelson and Patrick Geraghty present Carla Harris with her Mayoral Proclamation.

PHOTO COURTESY OF HEAD SHOT STUDIOS

Carla Harris, celebrated author, Wall Street executive, and Obama-appointed chair of the National Women’s Business Council, was the keynote speaker at the Nov. 8 “Lead to Win” event held at the Florida Blue Convention Center. Attended by more than 600 people, including state and city officials and community leaders, the

event raised nearly \$1 million for educational scholarships for Guardian Catholic School. The funds will further bolster Harris’s alma mater’s ability to provide access to an excellent education for all children, regardless of their ZIP code.

“The outpouring of generosity from our community is incredible, and we simply can’t thank Carla enough for sharing her many gifts of time, treasure and guidance with Guardian and our students,” said Sister Dianne Rumschlag, head of school. “She’s an incredible role model, one who truly has not forgotten her roots and understands the importance education plays in building a successful life.”

Hosted by GuideWell and Florida Blue President and CEO Patrick Geraghty, and presented by Florida Blue, the event included an invocation from Bishop Erik Pohlmeier from the Diocese of St. Augustine, a conversation between Harris and Geraghty, a proclamation from the City of Jacksonville declaring Nov. 8 “Carla Harris Day,” and surprise announcements from the Delores Barr Weaver Legacy Fund and Florida Blue.

During the luncheon, Delores Barr Weaver announced a \$250,000 gift to Guardian, which was matched with a \$250,000 check from Florida Blue. The gifts will fund an endowed scholarship at Guardian in perpetuity.

“Education and health go hand in hand. In line with our commitment to help end generational poverty in critically underserved communities across the state, Florida Blue is proud to match the \$250,000 donation from the Delores Barr Weaver Legacy Fund to create an endowed scholarship that will provide opportunities for deserving children in the Jacksonville community to attend Guardian,” said Geraghty.

Fundraising on the links: 22nd annual Hank Haynes Golf Classic a success

The 22nd annual Hank Haynes Golf Classic was teed up for a fun day of friendly competition on the links to raise funds benefitting the children and families served by Jacksonville non-profit Daniel, and participants did just that.

Held on Oct. 24 at the San Jose Country Club, the event raised more than \$186,000. It is named for Caldwell “Hank” Haynes, who was both a civic leader and Daniel trustee and “dear friend” to the organization for nearly four decades.

Daniel has been a local institution for nearly as long as Jacksonville has been a city. Originally founded as an orphanage in 1884, it evolved over the years into what it is today. Its namesake is Auxiliary Sanitary Association President Colonel James Jaquelin Daniel, who “worked tirelessly to combat the [Yellow Fever epidemic of 1888] and coordinate volunteer efforts.” Daniel ultimately died from the sickness he fought so hard against and the organization adopted his name in memoriam in 1893 when it became the Daniel Memorial Home for Children.

Today, Daniel is an organization that “helps nearly 5,000 children and their families each year with a wide variety of innovative and nationally-recognized programs.”



Jaquelin Daniel Cook, Victoria and her husband Tuwaun. Photos courtesy of Daniel.



1st Place Low Net Winners from Birken Flooring: Stephen Birkelbach, Bob Berg, David Birkelbach, David and Lesley Wells.



Daniel Trustee Members: Jim Griffin, Shep Colledge, Honorable Timothy Corrigan, Hal Houston, Brian Coughlin, David Winslow, Lesley Wells, Betsy Cox, David Ashley, Kirby Griffin, Jaquelin Daniel Cook, Madison Shelly, and Jim Thompson.

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FROM MY EMPTY NEST PERCH

BY SUSANNA P. BARTON
Resident Community News

If you want to be part of a particular worship community, faith denomination or practice in our neighborhoods, good news — you have options. And 'tis the season to talk gratitude for that.

It is highly likely you live within short walking or driving distance of a church, temple, synagogue, mosque or meetinghouse that suits your holy aspirations. If private spirituality or basking in nature or pondering the existence (or not!) of a higher power is your more your bag, that's praiseworthy — and accessible, too, thanks to the parks and green spaces and waterways that have long been the soul of our beautiful neighborhoods. These spaces are where miracles happen — what a privilege to live in and around something so fundamental.

Since December is the seasons of miracles and faith in our neighborhoods and those around the world, I'll share gratitude for mine.

I grew up as a Christian Scientist in San Antonio, Texas in a neighborhood much like ours — historic homes, near Downtown, a diverse community of lovely people. My husband David was raised Catholic, attending St. Matthew's Catholic Church and Sacred Heart School in Jacksonville's Ortega area. So, when we decided to get hitched as mid-20-something-college-lovebird-know-nothings, we picked the Episcopal Church as our religious middle ground. Seemed easy enough. The Episcopalians we knew liked to think and pray and party — they could be our people! On July 13, 1996, we took our Florida Episcopalian marriage counseling and Catholic guilt to Texas, where we were wed in the newly built Alamo Heights United "Methodome" Church, by my dad's Presbyterian minister cousin Ralph and with a melodious litany of my favorite Christian Science hymns. Facts, religious pluralism is never boring.

We chose to worship locally at All Saints Episcopal Church, which — no bias here — was (and still is) the most rockingest Episcopal Church in town. Great people, meaningful lessons, just a mile from our house. It's a small, unassuming brick church tucked under the oak trees on San Jose Boulevard that has always attracted a loving, "come as you are" mixed-bag crowd — our kind of community. (One I need to return to after a long COVID-inspired absence.)

When the kiddos came along, they were baptized and later confirmed in the church and we dragged them to Sunday School. On occasion, I taught the class. No one ever wanted to fully behave during church, so often these Sunday excursions would end with exasperated car sermons on why their pew infractions were an unholy embarrassment. Church was not always fun, but it was our family goal to plant a seed and hope the children would one day blossom spiritually in their own way and on their own terms.

I soon realized I needed to bloom my own spiritual seed and see about getting baptized and confirmed in the Episcopal

Church. Having a church family was great, but I wanted to join-join the church, like become an official member of it. Something was moving me toward that decision, and I went with it.

Trouble with the Episcopal Church is you can't just join-join. You have to go through an actual PROCESS, which, in All Saints' case, meant taking confirmation and baptism classes and attending a Discovery retreat weekend. This made me groan and harrumph inside. I am not a "retreat person." I don't prefer getting all Kumbaya over stuff, especially church and my own spirituality — it seems so prescribed and hokey and blech. I'm more of a Lone Ranger, piet-inside-ity kind of person. But it seemed attending this retreat was my destiny if I wanted to be "official" with the church, so I reluctantly signed up.

The most off-putting part of the retreat happened the first night. We were challenged to write down three whole things we wanted to pray for during the weekend retreat. Three. Whole. Things. In haste and annoyance, I rattled off three low-hanging recipients of my weekend prayer mojo:

- Memories of my mother. My mom died when I was 20 and I had pushed any good thoughts of her so far down into my mind that I could barely recall the sound of her voice or what she looked like. Now a mother, I craved those memories so I could better model her in my parenting.
- Those darn kids, I guess.
- Oh, and David — who was holding down the fort all weekend with them while I "retreated."

Feeling like I was really checking boxes at this dumb retreat, I settled into the weekend agenda and — surprise, surprise — got a lot out of it. I learned more about my church, I connected spiritually with people I liked, and I felt the peace of leaning into my faith a little more. There were meaningful lessons and a-ha moments that I couldn't share details about today if I tried. But I can tell you this: a miracle happened afterward.

When I arrived home on Sunday post-retreat, David and the kids were there to greet me at the door. They looked happy. The Lord would definitely approve of this moment, no SMH or car sermons about bad pew behavior today. They were content — and jittery excited about something.

"You will never believe what I found while you were gone," said David, who had spent the retreat weekend downloading a collection of music from CDs and cassette tapes to our "mainframe" computer hard drive. The kids grabbed my hand and led me through the house toward the garage, where I was urged into to our Volvo station wagon.

My little family and I sat there expectantly in the car. David, Ben, Marley — they were beaming. To the children's delight, David held up a very 80s looking cassette tape and popped it into the car's cassette player. That's when the sweet sounds of miracle rang out from the speakers and filled the everywhere around me with that peace you read about, that peace that passes all understanding. It was my mother's voice — it was my 8-year-old voice, too, and my father's, and my twit little brother's. Somehow in the stack of dusty CDs and cassette


tapes, David had discovered an old tape — a Pre-Facetime audio letter of sorts — that my parents had made for their friends in Scotland. It included updates on what our family was doing at the time, piano performances and remembrances — but most of all, it was a tangible, audible, very plastic answer to prayer. The memories of my mother I had so half-heartedly prayed for during that "off-putting" retreat were delivered, in cassette ribbon glory, by the three other people on that "annoying" prayer list.

So that's my little neighborhood miracle story — just one of a bajillion or more happening on a daily basis in communities all over the world, ours included and especially. As Albert Einstein said, "There are only two ways to live your life: One is as though nothing is a miracle. The other is as though everything a miracle." I think it's our own Good News experiences and belief in something outside ourselves that truly define "Resident Community." American Franciscan priest and writer Richard Rohr defines it as something fundamentally universal — that we are all united in our humanity and holiness regardless of what church we attend, what spiritual tenets we believe or how well our kids behave in the pews. (Thank, God!)

"What the world wants, and people need, are people who believe in Something — Something that will lead them to the good, the beautiful, the true and the universal," Rohr wrote.

It is in that spirit that I offer gratitude in this space for our neighborhoods' abundance of faith communities. In so many instances (but not all!), these are the places where miracles are happening. Whether you and your family are celebrating Christmas, or Hanukkah, Kwanza, Winter Solstice or simply Life and Nature this December, Happy that! Like our front door banner says, "Merry Everything!" And during this time of expectation and observance and reflection, look for the miracles. We are fortunate to live in and next door to them every day! Hallelujah. Hallelujah. Hallelujah.

Please keep Susanna Barton on your prayer list, lol, she needs all the help she can get. She has lived in a house on Granada Park with her husband David, their children Ben (The Bolles School '18, Washington & Lee University '22) and Marley (The Bolles School '20, Sewanee The University of the South '24), and their super annoying geri-dogs for 25-plus years. She has written for The Jacksonville Business Journal, The Resident, Jacksonville University and The Bolles School during her professional life in Jacksonville and is now exploring the realms of early retirement. She really enjoys embarrassing-mom-walk exercising later in the morning, napping, reading and catching some rays when she's not watching terrible reality television, particularly Dr. Pimple Popper. Each month, she will share reflections on neighborhood qualities for which she is grateful.



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Community comes together to help WWII vet achieve a goal



Rufus McClure and family

San Marco resident Rufus McClure was a paratrooper who served during WWII in a special division that was trained to invade Japan. “I was in Europe when President Harry Truman gave the orders to drop atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. After that, the war was over. Instead of getting shipped to Japan to possibly be killed, I got to go back to New York and party.”

Following his military service, McClure attended college and then landed a teaching position in the English department at Bolles. He taught there for decades before his 2000 retirement. As a way to keep active when not in the classroom, McClure would walk Jacksonville’s bridges. “I started doing it in 1998. Heaven knows how many times. It has to be in the thousands,” he estimated.

But in the spring of 2021, McClure began experiencing shortness of breath. He turned to Baptist Health. Dr. Venkata Sagi determined the cause to be a faulty heart valve that wasn’t

opening correctly, which restricted proper blood flow. The solution, according to Dr. Ruby Satpathy, was a transcatheter aortic valve replacement, a minimally invasive procedure that avoids the need for open-heart surgery.

Following the procedure, McClure quickly left the hospital to begin his recovery and his participation in cardiac rehabilitation. He was doing so well that in late August he set a goal to walk across the Acosta Bridge on September 24. He told the rehab staff, “There’s no better day than my birthday.” It would be his 97th. At 1,645 feet in length with a steep incline on each side, the Acosta would not easily be walkable for a 97-year-old recovering from a heart valve procedure. But McClure was determined.

Mary Condorodis, the rehab coordinator, vowed to walk with him, as did others from the team of professionals. “He has such amazing exercise ambitions. We all really stepped it up once he set the birthday goal and started making sure he was doing incline during his time on the treadmill to prepare,” Condorodis said.

The walk plan had expanded to include some people from the AgeWell Center, and McClure invited family members to join them. They formed a crowd of nearly 30 who gathered at the bridge’s base on the San Marco side. They commenced their climb to McClure’s refrain, “Class is in session!”

McClure paused a moment halfway over for a few photos before approaching the descent. Aside from all the fanfare, there was something else very different about McClure’s September bridge walk. His beloved wife, Mariam, wasn’t by his side. She had passed away in December 2021; her funeral took place on the couple’s 66th wedding anniversary. But as stated by Carolyn Stift, McClure’s

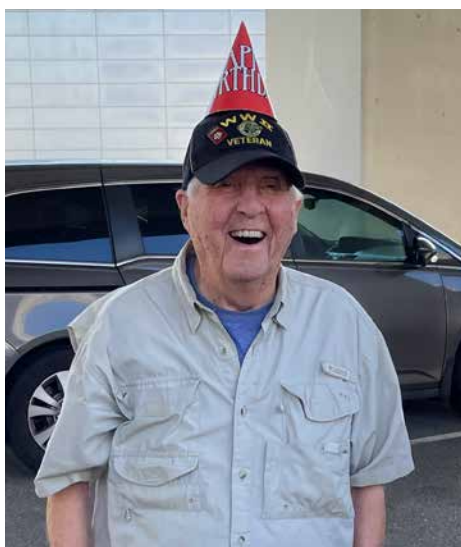
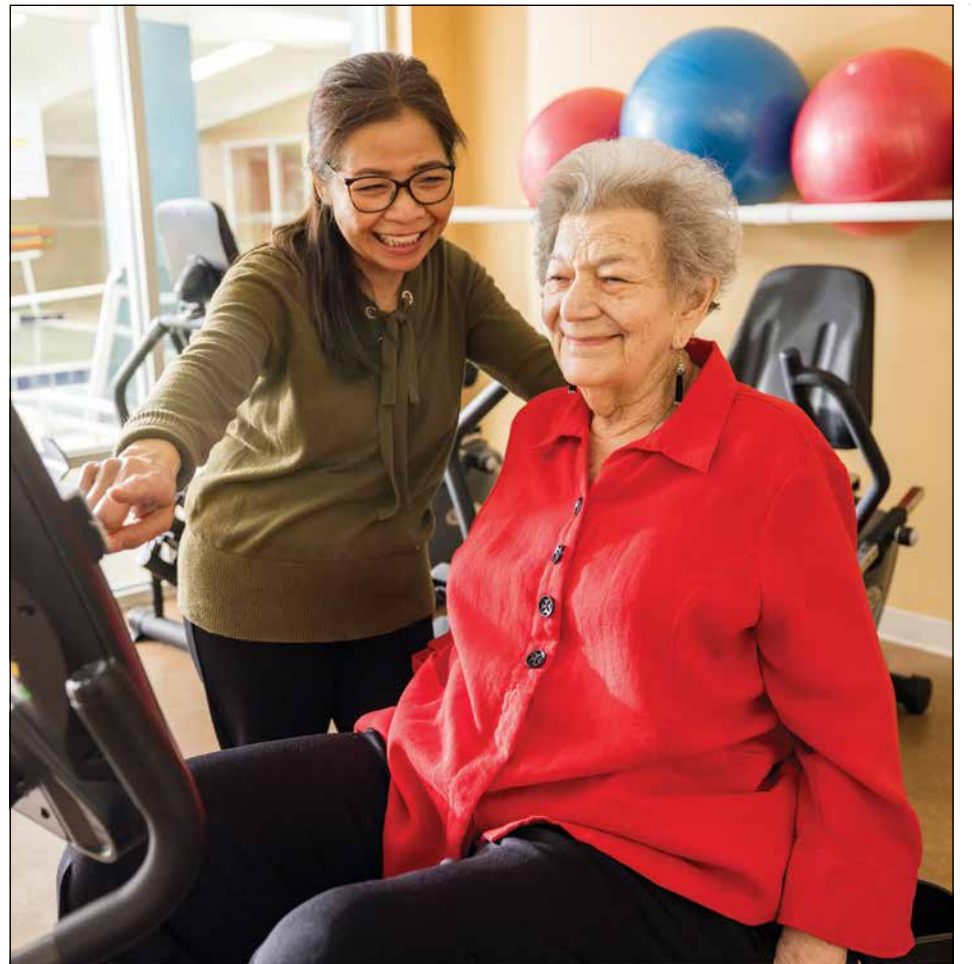
cardiac rehab therapist, “We knew she was there at the top of the bridge. She was there in spirit.”

Awaiting on the Brooklyn side was a Jacksonville Fire and Rescue Department crew, honking an engine’s horn in celebration. The firemen offered McClure a ride back over the bridge in their truck. “Thank you, but I’ll walk,” was the reply of the determined McClure as he headed up the incline.

Cake, champagne, cowbells, and balloons greeted the walkers as they returned to the San Marco side, all in celebration of McClure’s

successful heart procedure, accomplishment of his goal, and his 97th birthday. “We have to come back next year for your 98th!” declared one of his sons. McClure agreed and is even considering crossing the Acosta again on his 100th birthday. But in the meantime, his new goal is to be the oldest person to walk the Fuller Warren Bridge pedestrian-friendly path once it opens. His cardiac rehab team is committed to helping him.

“You don’t come across people like Rufus every day,” said Condorodis. “I’m amazed by him.”



Rufus McClure before his birthday bridge crossing

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THE WAY WE WERE

Marlene Goodwin

BY MARY WANSEER
Resident Community News

Marlene Goodwin is a Jacksonville native, as were her father and his parents. She entered the world in 1936 at St. Vincent's Hospital. She was the youngest of seven children and had a sister 18 years her senior who served as a second mom.



Marlene Goodwin, Lee High, 1954

Growing up on Colonial Avenue in Lakeshore, Marlene enjoyed playing hopscotch outside. "I absolutely loved going to school and growing up here," she said. A cheerleader, Marlene lived close enough to Lakeshore Elementary School that she could walk there through ninth grade. Marlene did ride a bus though to get downtown on Saturdays to dine on Woolworth's Blue Plate Special. "I remember the Blue Willow divided plates," she said. Afterwards, she enjoyed the bouncing ball singalongs at the Florida Theatre. Sometimes, she and her friends played spin the bottle.

After Lakeshore Elementary, Marlene attended what was then called Robert E. Lee High School for 10th, 11th, and 12th grades. In the 10th grade is where Marlene met Tom Sandlin, Sr. "The most significant thing about high school is that I was going with my high school sweetheart, and he ran track," she said. The couple would eventually marry, have three children together, and then divorce after 23 years.

Marlene belonged to a sorority in high school, and it was all about football games and parties. She and her friend Cynthia Segraves and sometimes Linda Wood would hop in Cynthia's Willys Jeep Station Wagon, a British vehicle that had been Americanized by switching the steering side. "We took the seats out of the back of the wagon, so it would hold maybe ten people after school," Marlene said. Popular places to drive to for milkshakes

were the Sandwich Inn and Tad's Restaurant. They liked drive-in movies, too.

Even though Cynthia's dad had owned the Shell filling station at the corner of Ingleside and St. Johns Avenues, he still insisted that his daughter pay for her own gas. So, the group of friends would take turns each contributing a quarter, which would cover nearly a gallon of gas at that time. Close to seven decades later, "our class continues to remain bonded," Marlene said, and she continues to be involved with organizing their reunions.

After Lee's graduation in 1954, Marlene went straight to work at Federal Reserve Bank before switching jobs to work for the Navy. Not a military service member herself, Marlene landed a position at Naval Air Station, conducting interviews of military personnel for household moves when they were being transferred.

As a young married couple, Marlene and Tom lived in an Avondale apartment before buying a house in Lakeshore. As their family grew, they bought a home on a corner lot in Venetia. "It was a great place to bring up a family," Marlene said. There were 17 or so neighborhood children who would gather in their yard to play after school. Marlene, a stay-

at-home mom, would gather with the other mothers and chat.

Though Marlene's marriage had ended in divorce, the couple remained friends, even serving together on a Lee reunion committee until Tom's passing. After the divorce, Marlene had returned to the workforce, this time for a man named Carl at Reynolds and Reynolds near her Venetia home.

Bob Goodwin was a retired lieutenant commander in the Navy, a pilot from New England, who had been stationed in Jacksonville during the Korean conflict. A job offer brought the father of three back to Jacksonville many



Marlene Goodwin, 2022



Linda Wood in front of Cynthia Segraves's Willys Jeep Station Wagon



Mr. Segraves, owner of Shell filling station, 1950s

years later. In 1981, Bob was a divorcee living in Avondale, and a mutual friend, Tesch Brundick, introduced him to Marlene.

Marlene, at that time, was a single mom raising three children and a dog. Her terminally ill mother was living with them. Marlene was also working fulltime outside the home at Reynolds. "I was not thinking about dating anybody at all. But I still had time for him," Marlene said of Bob.

Bob and Marlene dated for three years before marrying in 1984. Bob had proposed to Marlene on Valentine's Day via a billboard on Old Route 17 at the approach of Roosevelt Boulevard, across from the Bank of America. Inside a huge heart, the sign read, "M, Will you? B." Marlene had driven by the sign early in the day but hadn't noticed it. Bob had to draw her attention to it later that evening on their way to dinner. The following day, the billboard initials had been filled in with their names, Marlene and Bob. Added was, "Yes!" It remained up for a month. During that time, their engagement story had been printed in the local newspaper. "If you can put it on a billboard, I can have a newspaper story," Marlene told Bob.

Before they married, Marlene became a member of Bob's church, Riverside Presbyterian. She still enjoys fellowship there today and has volunteered in several capacities over the years, as did Bob until his death in 2010. "I need that fellowship with others," she said.

While married to Bob and after retiring from Reynolds and Reynolds, Marlene developed an interest in antiques, and she started working in an antique and gift shop. She began making her own particular line of jewelry out of flow blue porcelain. "I am passionate about the color blue," she said. Today, she sells her unique pieces at Design Additions on St. Johns Avenue and belongs to an international collectors' club where she used to be director of an entire division.

Her entrepreneurial spirit and her interest in antiques, Marlene believes, were inherited from her aunts. Marlene's mom had two older sisters; one owned Wainwright Florist downtown. Her mother's other sister, Bess Morris, was an antique dealer and appraiser in San Marco. "We would frequently go to her shop and spend time," Marlene said. These are women who

had grown up in the late 1800s and "were way ahead of their time as entrepreneurs," Marlene said.

Marlene is now grandmother to six, including those of her blended family. She lives in Ortega and takes daily walks through the neighborhood near her apartment complex.



Marlene and Bob Goodwin, 1984

As she walks past what used to be the German American Club on Lakeside Drive, now the Ortega River Club, she recalls that she had spent her 16th birthday there with her friend Joyce Mangles, whose family held membership.

"I've lived in Jacksonville all my life. I absolutely love where I live. I just don't know that there's anywhere else that can compare," Marlene said.

When asked how she is able to keep her energy levels so high to do all that she continues to do, Marlene said, "Life is about choices for all of us. And I've been blessed with good health. Being involved and participating for as long as you can nourishes you."



Marlene Goodwin with 4 of her 6 grandchildren

IN MEMORIAM

Catherine “Kitty” Gish Williams

NOVEMBER 8, 1929 — NOVEMBER 1, 2022



Kitty had a long and varied career that began when she was a teen working in her father’s store, Nick’s 5 & Dime, on N.Davis Street. She attributed her strong work ethic to her entrepreneurial parents. She worked as a court reporter for Chief Counselor J.M. Lorimier Jr. at the Jacksonville Juvenile Court. Kitty and her husband owned and managed Del-Mar Photography Studio on West Forsyth in downtown Jacksonville. She also worked for Irwin Marketing Research. Kitty and Joe partnered again in real estate—Kitty held her real estate license until she was in her late 80’s. She worked for 20 years at St Vincent’s Medical Center until she retired at the age of 79. Kitty found much joy in caring for patients in Nuclear Cardiology/Radiology departments. She made lifelong friends throughout her career.

Kitty loved being a mom to Kim Williams Forister, Mark Williams and Kara Williams, and being a grandmother to Niki Forister. She was active and supportive in the lives of her children and their friends, whether as PTA president, volunteer, chaperone, chauffeur, compassionate listener, or confidante. Kitty always had a close and loving relationship with each of her children. They loved her dearly and their daily phone calls and frequent visits brought much joy to her life.

Kitty and Joe shared a special love for their granddaughter Niki. Kitty (Nana) and Niki loved spending time together, could talk on the phone for hours, they had a very close relationship and a deep trust in one another. Kitty was supportive and proud of her granddaughter.

A creative seamstress, she loved making beautiful clothes, holiday costumes and party gifts. She was an artist, loved painting and sketching. Long before Beanie Babies, neighborhood children loved taking home her beanbag animals. Her giving nature and devotion to children continued throughout her life; a week before she passed away, she threw a Kilwins ice cream party for all the children on Thornwood Lane.

Kitty and Joe had bought her parents’ home on Thornwood Lane in San Marco, where Kitty lived as a teenager. Daughter Kara returned

to Jacksonville to be with Kitty when Joe passed in 1998. They remained housemates and best friends for the rest of Kitty’s life, traveling together, enjoying one another’s friends, even both working at St. Vincent’s for a time. One of Kitty’s favorite trips was going to Europe - visiting relatives, catching the London underground tube to see Les Misérables at the Palace Theatre, and attending the once-a-decade Oberammergau Passion Play in Bavaria, Germany.

Kitty was a lifelong learner and remained active, attending classes at the YMCA, UF/IFAS Extension, St. Vincent’s Club 55 and more. She was a PBS fan, watching everything from nature shows to dramas to news and enjoyed discussing it all with family and friends. She was a poll worker for years and was making get-out-to-vote phone calls from home the week she passed. She enjoyed traveling, great memories were made on family trips to Hawaii, Sanibel Island, N.C. Mountains, Tennessee, and New York City. She enjoyed visiting her relatives through the years in Doerun, GA., Reno, NV, Westport, CT., and Texas. She loved Broadway shows, Symphony concerts, National Public Radio (NPR), classical music, Frank Sinatra, reading, cooking (her kibbeh and rolled grape leaves were renowned), “Sunday Morning” on CBS, church, her Lee High School reunion luncheons, dinner and trips with her ESP (Extra Special People) church group. She also loved dark chocolate, meditation music and prayer.

Kitty Williams exuded faith, grace, love, and joy. She was intelligent, wise, warm hearted, and sincere. She radiated kindness, warmth, and love for everyone. Kitty had a gift of making everyone feel special. She had a keen sense of humor, a beautiful smile, and a wonderful laugh.

She was very independent and proud of her self-sufficiency and positive attitude. She beat cancer three times and tackled other health problems with a positive mindset. Her doctors called her a walking miracle. Special thanks to Dr. Eduardo Balbona, Dr. Leann Fox, RN Christine Bromley, Dr. Daniel Wyzan and so many others. Kitty appreciated you all.

Catherine “Kitty” Gish Williams leaves a legacy of love for others that will endure for eternity. Her presence and love of life will be greatly missed by those who knew her.

She is preceded in death by her parents, sisters - Shirley Gish Griffin and Marie Gish Rhodes, and brother David Gish. She is survived by her three children - Kimberly Forister (Wayne), Kara Williams, Mark Williams, and granddaughter Nicole Forister, nieces and nephews, and extended family.

A Memorial Service will be held at 1:00pm on Sunday, December 18, 2022, at South Jacksonville Presbyterian Church, 2137 Hendricks Avenue, Jacksonville Florida 32207.

Kitty will be laid to rest next to her husband W. Joe Williams at a private burial in Doerun, Georgia.

“Rather than mourn the absence of the flame, let us celebrate how brightly it burned.”

Let’s comfort one another with favorite memories, of sharing times when we were all together. Let’s celebrate the spirit of one very special life, so in our hearts the flame with burn forever.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that any memorial contributions be made to the following charities in Catherine “Kitty” Williams’s honor. Alzheimers Association (Kitty was a caregiver for many years for her mother who had Alzheimers) or Downtown Ecumenical Services (DESC).

Alzheimers Association, Central and North Florida Chapter, 14010 Roosevelt Blvd. Suite 709, Clearwater, Florida 33762 407-951-7992

DESC — Downtown Ecumenical Services (descjax.org) 215 N. Ocean Street, Jacksonville Florida 32202. 904-358-7955

Memories and Condolences may be shared at Hardage-Giddens Oaklawn Chapel and Cemetery on Kitty’s Memory Wall www.hardagegiddensoaklawnchapel.com or www.dignitymemorial.com

If you cannot join us in person; join us via live stream at: <https://bit.ly/watchsjpc>. South Jacksonville Presbyterian Church - 1:00pm, Sunday, December 18, 2022

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IN MEMORIAM

Mary Virginia Terry

PASSED PEACEFULLY ON OCTOBER 29, 2022



BY MARY WANSER
Resident Community News

Mary Virginia Terry died peacefully in her Ortega home on October 29. Her surviving family includes two sisters-in-law as well as several nephews and nieces, one of whom is Jacksonville resident Betsy Cox.

Mary Virginia was born to the Williams family in Quitman, a small city in South Georgia. She grew up there before attending Valdosta State University, where she earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in the field of social sciences. She had been working as a history and economics teacher when she met C. Herman Terry, who had also grown up in Quitman and who was a graduate of the University of Georgia's School of Commerce. They married soon after, while Herman was working for Commercial Investment Trust Corp. When the company transferred him to its Jacksonville office, the Terrys moved and made this city their home.

As a couple, the Terrys were extraordinary benefactors who made significant contributions to the arts, children, healthcare, and education. In the early 1980s, the C. Herman & Mary Virginia Terry Foundation was established.

In 1988, the Terrys helped launch the initial capital campaign to bring a Ronald McDonald House (RMH) to Jacksonville and, since then, had offered ongoing support. The Terry Family Campus is named in their honor. "Mrs. Terry was a generous and caring woman. She had a tremendous impact on our organization and the entire Jacksonville community. She will be greatly missed, but fondly remembered,"

said David Shaffer, CEO of RMH Charities of Jacksonville.

There are also many buildings that bear the Terry name, not only in Jacksonville, but throughout the Southeast. They include Jacksonville University's Terry Concert Hall, Terry Heart Institute at Wolfson Children's Hospital, Ascension St. Vincent's Mary Virginia Terry Cancer Center, and University of Georgia's C. Herman and Mary Virginia Terry College of Business.

Mary Virginia continued their charitable work long after her husband's 1998 passing. "She was an extraordinary and strong woman to carry on the legacy that she and Herman left in our community and beyond. What a blessing she was," said Jane Lanier, a close friend who had spent many holidays with Mary Virginia.

Mary Virginia contributed to medical research and scholarship funds. She had been a board member for the Salvation Army, the Sulzbacher Center for the Homeless, the Women's Guild of the Jacksonville Symphony, and Mayo Clinic Florida Leadership Council among other organizations. She helped make the MOSH 2.0 expansion project possible. The lists are as long as her heart was wide. Wherever she saw great need, she did her best to make a difference.

Mary Virginia regularly contributed to more than 30 organizations. She won the 2002 award for Outstanding Philanthropist from the Florida First Coast Chapter of the Association of Fundraising Professionals. She received honorary doctorate degrees in humane letters from Jacksonville University in 2003 and from the University of Georgia in 2009. And yet, Mary Virginia Terry was a humble woman who touched individual lives as deeply as she touched entire establishments.

Sandra Corbett was one of those individuals. "I had the privilege of working for Mrs. Terry for over 36 years, and with each passing year, my admiration and love for her grew. Her philanthropy and generosity extended far beyond those organizations which have been made public. From her I learned so much about life and dealing with its many facets. She was a kind, compassionate, and witty lady and I shall miss her greatly," said Sandra.

In addition to all her charitable activities, Mary Virginia had a recreative side. She loved reading, gardening, and traveling. She annually attended the Georgia-Florida game, and no one will ever know for certain whether she was secretly cheering for the Bulldogs over the Gators, or vice versa. When not at the beach, she enjoyed time in the mountains, even skiing in Lake Tahoe. In 2015, she joined a few other select 'Grand Dammes' of giving, appearing as a cover girl for the Resident Community News Group's premiere issue of Circles Social Datebook & Charity Register. What fun she had! In her presence, the photographers, staff, and publishers did as well. "Mary Virginia was always kind, courteous and gracious; obliging countless requests to help carry our community forward - her giving nature and effort to assist others is a legacy that will impact many generations to come," said Seth Williams, publisher of the news group.

Hardage-Giddens Riverside Funeral Home made arrangements for Mary Virginia. A service and reception were held on November 4 at Ortega United Methodist Church before her remains were returned to Georgia for burial next to her beloved Herman. As a memorial, please consider contributing to the charity of your choice.

Joyce Hazouri

JUNE 12, 1943 - NOVEMBER 9, 2022



On November 9, 2022-Heaven gained an angel and the matriarch to four generations of a loving family.

Joyce "Jo" Hazouri born in Brunswick, Georgia on June 12, 1943. Survived by her dedicated husband (Richard) of nearly 60 years, her two children: Dana (Steve) Edmonds and Rick (Tamara) Hazouri, her sister Brenda Welman, 5 grandchildren, 6 great grandchildren and multiple nieces and nephews.

Richard and Jo had a love that is impossible to put into words. They fell in love during their teenage years, dated almost eight years and the rest is history. From early on in their relationship, they would dance to old music, walk to movies and ride around town-just looking for a reason to be together. That love was displayed to everyone who knew them.

Jo was the definition of "The Golden Rule". She treated others better than she treated herself while always putting others' needs before her own. Having battled multiple back and hip surgeries as well as cancer, she dealt with chronic body pain but you would never know it. She NEVER complained! You would see her wince, ask her if she was okay-and the answer would always be the same: "I'm fine." or, "I'm good." If she thought that you might need something, she would be the first to jump out of her seat to get what you needed. Just ask her grandkids. When you visited her at her home, there was rarely a five-minute span where she didn't ask you if you wanted something to eat or "Do you want some tea?" That was her. If there was an opportunity to serve, she was all in. From all the rummy games, Sunday Dinners, tight hand squeezes and a good left punch, our Wife, Mother and Sittie will be forever missed!

Funeral services were held on Wednesday, November 16, 2022 at Hardage-Giddens, Oaklawn Chapel, 4801 San Jose Boulevard with Rev. Terry Gore officiating and interment at Oaklawn Cemetery.

Michael Mosley

JULY 30, 1960 - OCTOBER 8, 2022



Michael was born at St. Vincent's hospital on July 30, 1960. To the parents of Charles Mosley Jr, and Jacqueline Underwood Tyler. He was a lifelong resident of Jacksonville, Florida and attended Central Riverside Elementary School, John Gorrie Junior High School, and graduated from Robert E. Lee High School. He was a member of the Lee High School varsity football and baseball teams and lettered three years in each.

After graduating high school, he attended Gulf Coast Junior College in Panama City, Florida where he was a member of the baseball team. After two years at Gulf Coast, he received his associates degree, and returned to Jacksonville, Florida to attend Jacksonville University. While at JU he was a member of the baseball team which gained notoriety as the Easton Flyers for leading the nation in home runs. He was drafted by the Baltimore Orioles and played two years in the minor leagues which culminated with a Southern League Championship in 1985.

After his baseball career, he went into the entertainment industry where he managed The Tides Restaurant in Seaside, New Jersey. After New Jersey, he returned to Jacksonville where he was part owner and manager at Shades Nightclub in Orange Park. After several years he left Shades to go into business with his father in the medical billing business under Physicians Account Manager. He established his own billing business, Healthcare Resources of Jacksonville and was president/chief financial officer until his death on October 8, 2022.

He is survived by his Father, Charles Mosley; Mother, Jacqueline Underwood Tyler; Stepmother, Willa Mae Mosley; Son, Cameron Michael Mosley, Stepsister, Suzanne Drudge; along with many aunts, uncles, cousins, and long-term friends.

Funeral services were held on Saturday, October 15, 2022 at Hardage-Giddens, Oaklawn Chapel with interment at Oaklawn Cemetery, 4801 San Jose Boulevard, 32207.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in Michael's memory to either: <https://www.k9sunited.org/about> Or <https://www.5starveteranscenter.org/about-us>

Happy Holidays

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The Holidays are a time for reflection, giving thanks and spending time with those we love and cherish...

Thank you for the placing your trust in our hands as you celebrate the most treasured moments in life. Our team wishes you and yours a prosperous season ahead, thank you for your business.

"Hardage-Giddens shares its Core Values of Respect, Integrity, Enduring Relationships, and Service Excellence and thanks you for Generations of families served here in Jacksonville and the surrounding areas. Please allow us the honor in creating a lasting Celebration of Life for many Generations to come."

Jody Brandenburg, President
Matt Tucci, Director of Operations

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**THE WOLFSON CHILDREN'S
CHALLENGE**

55K Ultra | 55K Relay | 30K Run | 1-Mile Fun Run

Saturday, January 28, 2023

121 Financial Ballpark



Register now for the 55K Ultra Marathon, 30K Run, and 1-Mile Fun Run, or get a team of friends for the 55K Relay Run. Visit WolfsonChildrensChallenge.com to sign up and learn more.



All proceeds benefit Wolfson Children's Hospital, helping to provide funds for the latest technology in patient care.

BENEFITING PATIENTS OF
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