

Riverside – Avondale – Ortega – Murray Hill



### MCGALA MASQUERADE DRAWS DONORS, PATRONS

Kelsey and Sally Hendricks of Avondale attended the Mardi Gras McGala, held May 21, at the Sawgrass Marriott. Read more, page 26.

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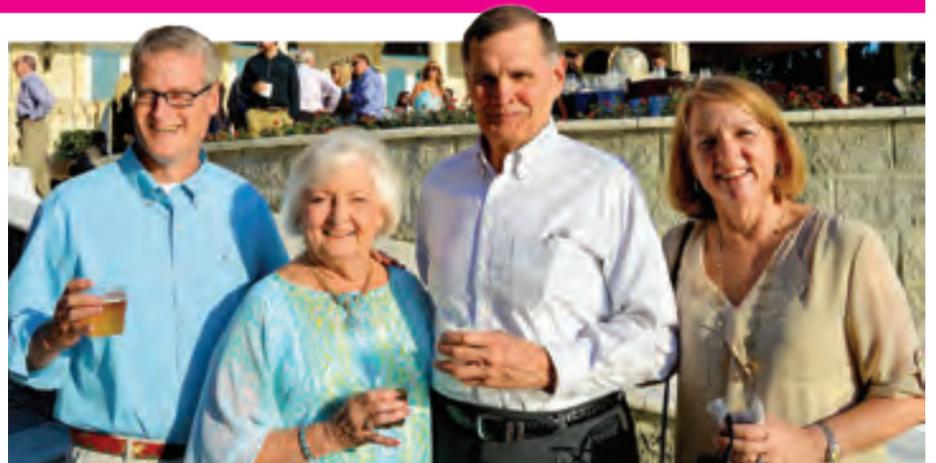
## REVELLERS HOT TO TROT FOR NYQUIST

Shelley Miles Stillers, Kara Heer Heldenbrand and Lorin Cleghorn were all decked out in Derby Day attire at a neighborhood party on Race Day. **READ MORE, PAGE 24**

## DESPITE PROTEST, ROOST PASSES

Residents staged a protest May 2 against The Roost, despite the fight, the proposed development passed unanimously in City Council May 24. The former Deluxe Dry Cleaner and Launderette on Oak Street may remain in the news as one local group proposes a legal battle beyond Council Chambers. Read more on page 8.

Riverside resident Robert Williams protests against The Roost.



### SPECIAL EDUCATION GETS LARGEST BOOST TO DATE

Bobby Farnell, Linda and Ray Van Landingham, and Mary Stewart Farnell enjoy the breeze at the annual River Hops benefit. **READ MORE, PAGE 27.**

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Chapter President Jeffrey Davitt with Courtney Weatherby-Hunter, Maggie Hightower and TriciaRae Stancato

### FUNDRAISING PROFESSIONALS GATHER, PLAN FOR FUTURE

The First Coast Chapter of the Association of Fundraising Professionals (AFP) got together to share a few laughs, enjoy some tasty food, and plan for the near future. The Brooklyn location of the Burrito Gallery played host as members shared stories, introduced new group members and shared announcements related to future events. Founded in 1986, the AFP Florida First Coast Chapter represents over 160 fundraising professionals at over 95 organizations.



### STUCK IN THE MIDDLE

The real question about the 5 Points intersection was the survival of the trademark traffic signal. Merchants, residents and city officials came together to create best possible plans for future of the 5 Points Concept Plan. Read more, page 4.

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**Letters to the Editor**

The City Council has now approved the Roost Restaurant on Oak Street acting after the restaurant was reviewed and approved by the Planning Commission and the Land Use and Zoning Committee. It is time for the residents of Riverside to move forward and welcome this great addition to the neighborhood.

I am the owner of the commercial building across the street from the proposed site of Roost. At the time my partners and I purchased the building in 2004, Oak Street was largely a blighted area in need of revitalization. Over 10 years later, it remains blighted with empty buildings, parking lots with broken asphalt, and offices with perpetual "for rent" signs. All of this, of course, interspersed with some fine homes and apartments.

Riverside, like all good neighborhoods, has a story, but history and heritage should not be confused. History is the past. Heritage is all about how to give relevance to the past. In order to move Riverside forward to insure it remains an economically healthy neighborhood which meets the demands of people, especially those in their 20's and 30's (because it is those people who are the future of the neighborhood), it is necessary to mix existing character with new concepts.

Roost is a perfect fit consistent with the character of the historic neighborhood. The proposed plans show that it will be a beautiful space that maximizes the preservation of the historic architecture. Making a neighborhood livable means giving people places to settle into. A place to go to eat, drink, and socialize. Roost will surely do that. Roost will also enhance the reputation of the neighborhood as a walking neighborhood because it is the kind of place many people will walk to. Finally, Roost will bring in more tax dollars and create jobs, both essential elements of a thriving, livable historic neighborhood.

There are many examples of similar neighborhoods in other cities where the heritage of the neighborhood has been preserved while at the same time permitting businesses such as restaurants that serve alcohol in order to insure that an old neighborhood can be economically and socially vibrant. Shady Side in Pittsburgh is one such example. Many homes in Shady Side date from the 19th century, and many have been restored as homes, offices, or bed-and-breakfast inns. Just like Riverside, these beautiful homes exist alongside condos and apartments. Commercial establishments (restaurants, retail stores, and bars) are interspersed within the places people live. Are there parking issues in Shady Side? There are. But that is a sign of economic vitality. It is a sign of a neighborhood where people want to live and to work.

We should embrace what will surely be a welcome change from decrepitude to a well thought out meeting and gathering space that will be done in a first-class manner. Residents who think another developer will come along with a different plan are dreaming. This is not your grandparents' or even your parents' Riverside. Businesses such as Roost offer the chance for preservation and revitalization. Without entrepreneurs like the partners behind Roost, Oak Street will remain largely a rundown street well into the future. I am confident that many of the people who have opposed Roost will become its biggest fans once the restaurant is given a chance. Let's put divisiveness aside and welcome Roost to Oak Street.

Sincerely,  
**Charles Johnston**

I just cannot get over how beautiful the porch looks. Anita's and Blend did an amazing job [in the Front Porch Makeover]. Every time I back out or pull into my driveway I just have to drive slowly and admire it. The makeover has inspired me to do some other much needed projects inside and outside our house.

I always love reading *The Resident* to find out what's going on in the neighborhood. Keep up the great work!

**Sheryl Pulley**

I just got my copy of *The Resident* and I am so excited to be the winner [of the Best Advice Mom Ever Gave Contest]. Thank you, my mom is going to be so pleased! What a nice Mother's Day addition.

**Caitlin Harkins**

Thanks to the printing of a letter by *The Resident* and thanks to Jim Love and COJ public works who responded to the article in *The Resident*, we now have signs prohibiting parking at the end of Beverly Avenue adjacent to Starbucks.

Good Job!  
**Norman Young**

**Correction**

In a story about the Riverside Children's Art Center's 10th anniversary celebration in the May issue, we inadvertently stated the youth drama program was led by Suzanne Stout. The youth drama program was founded by Suzanne and Jeff Hess, members of Riverside Avenue Christian Church, according to Beverly Alexander, board chair for the art center.

"The Riverside Children's Arts Center was started 10 years ago through the dedication of the Hess family, Suzanne Stout, the original steering committee members, Richard Hull, its current director, Kelly Paterno, and the congregation of Riverside Avenue Christian Church," said Alexander. "It continues today in its mission to 'See Kids Shine!'"

We regret the error.

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# Proposed 5 Points Concept Plan still in flux

## Councilman Love holds meeting to work through issues

By Kate A. Hallock  
Resident Community News

If there's one thing nearly everyone in 5 Points agrees about, it's keeping the iconic beacon in place as the neighborhood landmark. What splits the community is the kind of traffic infrastructure that might be built around it.

When concerns arose recently about the possibility of the 5 Points beacon being sacrificed for the intersection improvements, some members of the 5 Points Merchants Association began to explore the idea of a roundabout, with the beacon permanently installed at the center.

In a meeting called by District 14 Councilman Jim Love May 19 at the Whiteway Deli to discuss the beacon and the possibility of building a roundabout at the 5 Points intersection, more than 40 people expressed differing opinions about what kind of facilities would best improve the iconic intersection. Many touted the roundabout as the best way to combat a perceived danger for pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists currently entering it from any of five lanes of traffic, while others expressed the belief a roundabout would increase the danger for pedestrians attempting to cross any of the five streets.

Presently traffic enters the intersection at the heart of 5 Points two ways from Margaret and Park Streets and one way from Lomax Street with the beacon sitting somewhat off-center in the middle.

### Enter the concept plan

When merchants and residents of historic 5 Points took a walking tour three years ago with city leaders, civil engineers and traffic planners, they had three simple goals in mind. First, improve pedestrian access in the 5 Points retail area. Second, improve pedestrian and bicycle safety throughout 5 Points and, third, accomplish the above with no loss of parking spaces.

The concept plan for a 5 Points Streetscape, drawn up by Tocknell Planning Services and EnVision Design+Engineering, went one step further, recommending Lomax Street be changed to a one-way street eastbound, providing a wider sidewalk for outside dining.

For more than a year, in 2013-2014, there were at least a dozen meetings at which interested parties reviewed the proposed drawings, yet some expressed concerns that traffic might increase on Margaret Street and that there would be no appreciable gains in parking.

Finally, in mid-2014, it appeared nearly everyone was on board with the proposed \$4 million streetscape proposal, which had the approval of the Jacksonville Historic Preservation Commission and Riverside Avondale Preservation. Next up was approval by City Council to put \$750,000 into the 2014-2015 budget for the design phase and construction drawings.

However, beyond a \$99,000 line item for follow-up design and engineering studies in the 2014-2015, the 5 Points Concept Plan was not funded for the first phase, nor did it make it into Mayor Lenny Curry's 2015-2016 budget.

All seemed quiet with the 5 Points Concept Plan as proponents waited for indicators that the project would be funded, if not within the 2016-2020 Capital Improvements Plan, then shortly thereafter.

### Difference of opinion

As the May 19 meeting progressed, it was clear two major issues were at the forefront: preserving the landmark and improving pedestrian safety. One camp felt a roundabout would accomplish both. However, some pointed out how confusing and potentially dangerous the historic intersection can be. "A confused driver is the enemy of a pedestrian," said Robin Lumb, who works for the City of Jacksonville as its policy director.

Still others shared statistics over a ten-year period to prove the opposite. A crash analysis created by Signal Four Analytics

software using crash data provided by the Florida Highway Patrol showed two bicycle and four pedestrian accidents – with no fatalities – had occurred at the 5 Points intersection in the past 10 years.

"It's one of the safest intersections in the city," said Bill Bishop, architect and a former City Council member, who is in favor of a roundabout. "5 Points works because it's confusing."

Not everyone agrees with Bishop.

Those involved with development of the original concept plan, including Lumb, a 5 Points resident and former City Council member, and Stephen Tocknell of Tocknell Planning Services, indicated a roundabout would not fit within the right-of-way parameters surrounding the five-way intersection nor would it automatically preserve the beacon.

"It is essential to preserve the beacon as the iconic landmark for 5 Points," said Lumb, "It will be preserved, but will be moved about seven feet," he said, adding the flashing light atop the beacon was not up to Florida Department of Transportation standards. "We might be able to add back the neon sign," said Lumb, referring to signage that had existed on top of the beacon within the past 50 years.

Tocknell noted the currently proposed "simplified intersection" was better than a roundabout. To create a better environment for pedestrians something needs to be done with traffic before it got to the 5 Points intersection, he said. "If you tighten everything up, you slow the traffic down," said Tocknell, referring to the addition of a median on Park Street at Margaret Street. "A roundabout is counterproductive."

Lumb, speaking for Mayor Curry's chief administrative officer, Sam Mousa, said the City would not fund a roundabout.

"Sam feels it is traffic-centered, not pedestrian-centered, and a roundabout will change the character of 5 Points," he said.

Once the merchants were reassured the iconic 5 Points landmark was not in jeopardy of being removed, thoughts turned to other ways to improve pedestrian safety and accessibility. Although the proposed concept plan shows curb cuts and crosswalks as close as possible to the entrances of each of the five streets coming into the complicated intersection, several at the meeting said motorists speed up once they have negotiated it.

Christina Wagner, Rain Dogs co-owner, was particularly upset over the traffic on Margaret Street toward Riverside. "The crosswalk at Regions Bank is dangerous," she said, adding she has almost daily near-misses with motorists when she walks across the street.

Cheryl Corrado, Derby on Park, offered a welcomed suggestion. "Can we not put in raised crosswalks?" she asked. Lumb agreed, suggesting the crosswalk also be raised at the Sun-Ray Cinema.

Ron Root, a local property owner, suggested reversing the direction of the proposed one-way Lomax Street, making it one-way westbound toward the 5 Points intersection. "It would slow traffic down approaching the intersection and could also provide a staging area for deliveries," he said. Root also cautioned against ideas of making Margaret Street one-way, stating it would create significant back-ups between Riverside Avenue and Herschel Street.

Public Works Operations Director Bill Joyce indicated he would take ideas back to Waitz & Moyer, the civil engineering firm hired by the City for the project. Councilman Love will schedule a subsequent meeting to review those changes.



The most current design of the proposed improvements to the 5 Points intersection, prior to changes discussed by a gathering of 5 Points merchants and community members.

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# Funding in jeopardy for weekend trolley

## Use it or lose it

By Kate A. Hallock  
Resident Community News

Residents and visitors to the Riverside/Avondale Historic District need to step up usage of the weekend night trolley if the sponsored service is to continue past August.

The Riverside/Avondale Night Trolley currently runs every Friday and Saturday from 6 p.m. to 2 a.m., thanks to sponsorships by 14 local businesses and restaurants. Those sponsorships will run out at the end of August and were a requirement by the Jacksonville Transportation Authority (JTA) to expand the service from monthly to weekly.

Currently the trolley averages 150 to 200 trips each weekend, but to continue as a viable public transportation option long term, trolley ridership needs to reach an average of 500 trips per weekend.

Avondale resident Dylan Phillips has been working on the logistics of a trolley since its inception. In fact, it was Phillips' mobile app which led District 14 Councilman Jim Love to a dialogue with the JTA to begin the service on a monthly basis two years ago.

"The trolley was designed as a solution to the unique transportation problems in the Riverside Avondale neighborhoods. Specifically, Riverside Avondale consists of several pockets of small commercial strips within a largely residential district," said Phillips. "This creates a unique lifestyle nestled next to the St. Johns River. As several of these small commercial strips have become entertainment districts in the last few years, we have struggled to find a balance between customer parking and resident concerns in the adjoining residential areas."

### Evidence for a trolley

About five years ago, Phillips and Riverside Avondale Preservation (RAP) surveyed the customer base at several neighborhood businesses, primarily restaurants, and found over 50 percent lived in the immediate neighborhoods. During the same period, Avondale residents were pushing back at the proposed Mellow Mushroom on St. Johns Avenue over concerns about lack of adequate parking in the area. The contentious issue led Councilman Love, in part, to initiate a parking study by the City of Jacksonville, which focused on the Park

and King Streets commercial district and the Shoppes of Avondale.

The outcome of the survey and the study was a variety of possible solutions, including encouraging walking or bicycling to nearby destinations, valet parking service, and a dedicated trolley route. A short-lived valet service was trialed around the same time the Riverside Avondale Trolley began a trial service in January 2014 to run the first weekend of each month.

After six months, the JTA made the trial a permanent service and then, a year later with promises of financial support, the JTA agreed to expand the service to every weekend. Under the ad hoc committee leadership of Alan DeVault, partner in Black Sheep restaurant and, at the time, president of the 5 Points Merchants Association, RAP sought – and found – business sponsors to financially support the trolley.

### Consider the benefits

Despite the 14 businesses who help defray costs through advertising, community support through increased ridership is needed to keep the service humming along past summer's end. Proponents of the night trolley tout three-way benefits, for riders, residents and retailers.

"The Jacksonville community needs to support sustainable public transportation systems in our neighborhoods if we are to grow as a city with vibrant, walkable districts," said Riverside resident Alexandria Klempf, director of development for Forking Amazing Restaurants. "Some people may not be ready to ditch their cars completely, and that's okay. Initiatives like the Riverside Avondale Night Trolley offer a huge benefit to the community they serve."

In addition to the community benefit, riders of the trolley also enjoy perks. A STAR card or mobile trolley pass at some area restaurants can result in free glass of wine, discounted draft beers, wines and cocktails, or even 10 percent off the check.

Not only does it benefit the rider for convenience, but also local businesses and residents who live in the Riverside and Avondale community, according to Klempf. "The Night Trolley encourages economic growth by bringing new customers into existing local businesses," she said. "It can help cut down the parking issues, because it eliminates the need to move cars from one restaurant or bar to the next, and it also provides a unique opportunity to meet your fellow neighbors in a fun, casual environment."



The Riverside/Avondale Night Trolley runs a circular route of more than 40 stops each Friday and Saturday night.

The Night Trolley makes more than 40 stops throughout the neighborhood residential and commercial districts, hitting 5 Points, Park and King, the Shoppes of Avondale, the Brewery District, Stockton and College, and the St Johns Village area.

"My two-year-old daughter loves the trolley. Our daddy-daughter dates involve dinner at European Street, sweets at Biscottis and walks in Memorial Park," said Phillips. "I can track the trolleys' locations in real time on my smart phone, and gather her up without long waits at the bus stop. To her, it is always a big adventure. And for me as well."

Klempf, who calls herself a "trolley cheerleader," supports a scenario that would take a rider from a Riverside residence to EverBank Field.

"No parking fee, no parking hassles. Just public transportation, doing what it should: making it easier for you to enjoy the assets of your city," said Klempf. "This scenario is a possibility. But if we do not use and support the current Night Trolley and other neighborhood public transportation systems, we will never see a sustainable public transportation system evolve in our urban core."



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# Local entrepreneur putting handprint on 5 Points



While a lot of hoops are to be jumped through and red tape dealt with, Steve Williams has a dream for an Oak Street property that may re-purpose a shipping container similar to this concept.

By *Kate A. Hallock*  
Resident Community News

Although still working through his due diligence on the property at 1030 Oak Street in 5 Points, entrepreneur Steve Williams has a dream for the spot where Richard's Sandwich Shoppe served breakfast and lunch since 1980.

Richard Abboud, owner of the popular lunch spot, entered into a tentative agreement with Williams in April to sell the property. The restaurant's last day of business was May 27.

Closing on the 6,250 square-foot lot is scheduled for June 3 if all stars align. Williams, along with his father, Roger Williams, hopes to put in a gourmet sand-

wich shop or an establishment similar to the Butcher and Bee, a company with restaurants in Charleston, South Carolina, and Nashville, Tennessee.

"It's not a slam dunk yet," said Steve Williams, CEO of Harbinger Sign and owner of Florida Mining Gallery, about the purchase. "It's a dream for sure," he said, referring to the possibility of putting in a restaurant that could incorporate the trend in re-purposing shipping containers.

Williams also owns the former Peterson's 5 & Dime, at 1037 Park St., which is behind Richard's Sandwich Shoppe, and where he has put his first handprint on the 5 Points neighborhood.

The Park Street building dates back to the 1920s and formerly housed a tea company, a hardware store, F.W. Woolworth, a 5 & Dime under three names, a variety store and flower shop and, in its more recent incarnation, Fuel Coffeehouse.

Williams purchased the vacant building in 2015 with the intention of finding a restaurant tenant. Hoptinger Bier Garden & Sausage House, which has a location at Jacksonville Beach and another in St. Augustine, will lease the ground floor and rooftop, where the beer garden will be located.

The German/American restaurant is scheduled for a late summer opening, according to Aaron Meisenheimer, managing partner in Hoptinger's.



The Fans and Stoves Antique Mall closed on Park Street May 21. Grand opening at its new location on Lomax Street will be July 1.

## Miami developer vetting restaurant groups

By *Kate A. Hallock*  
Resident Community News

While the Fans and Stoves Antique Mall building at 1059 Park St. was still being emptied of its tenants, Miami-based developer Jeff Morr began contemplating what type of cuisine may eventually be served from the 5 Points building at the corner of Park and Lomax.

Morr is working with real estate broker Matthew Clark to find the right tenant to add to the 5 Points dining and drinking options, which currently number 30 or more food and/or beverage establishments.

*"Fans and Stoves is still occupying the building, and I certainly don't want to disturb them."*

— Jeff Morr

"I'm currently considering three restaurant groups. I believe one will be the lucky tenant, and any of the three would be a benefit to the community," Morr said.

Morr bought the 6,000-square-foot antiques building a year ago, and is patiently waiting for occupancy so he can begin renovating the building for a new restaurant tenant.

"The facade renovation will occur simultaneously with interior renovation," said Morr. "Fans and Stoves is still occupying the building, and I certainly don't want to disturb them."

Most of the Fans and Stoves antiques vendors are moving to a new location at 800 Lomax St., while others have opened booths at 5 Points Vintage, across the street at 1046 Park. Fans and Stoves will hold a grand opening July 1 after a soft opening later this month.

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# City Council approves controversial restaurant, 13-5

## Love, Boyer introduce zoning code amendments to prevent similar development

By Kate A. Hallock  
Resident Community News

With just one more hurdle to overcome, The Roost, a restaurant proposed for development in a Riverside neighborhood, may become the next go-to place for dinner.

On March 17 the Planned Unit Development (PUD) 2016-55 received unanimous approval by the Planning Commission, which removed certain conditions made by the Planning and Development Department in its staff report.

In early May, after nearly 14 hours of hearings over two days, the Land Use and Zoning Committee (LUZ) returned some of those conditions before giving property owner Anthony Saleeba and developers Ted Stein and J.C. Demetree a 5 to 2 vote of approval and sending it on to City Council. Only District 14 Councilman Jim Love, in whose district the property is located, and District 5 Councilwoman Lori Boyer voted against the PUD.

City Council approved the PUD on May 24, in a 13 to 5 vote, with Love, Boyer, John Crescimbeni, Bill Gulliford and Joyce Morgan opposing the bill. Morgan had previously voted for the bill as a member of LUZ.

"We are ecstatic that in all four steps of the process the city agreed with our vision for the building. It has been great today having neighbors reach out to express their excitement to finally have something in that run

down building," said developer Ted Stein. "We cannot wait to get this project moving forward and bring the neighborhood a café that makes them proud."

But despite approval by all three quasi-judicial bodies, The Roost still is not a done deal. It may have to go before the Circuit Court to plead its case. The opponents, Kevin Pettway, who lives across the street, and Positive Riverside Optimized Urban Development (PROUD) said they planned to file a suit with the Fourth Judicial Circuit Court of Florida in the near future.

"Councilman Love and Councilwoman Boyer gave well-reasoned and substantive arguments against, for which we thank them both, while supporters of the bill remained uncomfortably silent," said Pettway. "In the end, we have always felt that our best chance to defeat this bill lay not in the political arena, but in the law, where we hope our case will be heard without political bias, and where we are strongest. We are absolutely committed to protecting all of Jacksonville's historical communities by overturning this destructive bill."

Pettway's next-door neighbor, Roxanne Henkle, was also appreciative of the minority of Council members who voted against the bill.

"I am very heartened and grateful for the City Council members who voted against this flawed bill. This small group's dissenting vote against this development is encouraging, because this small number of Council members reviewed the difficult planning issues to make sound and smart development decisions. They showed courage in voting against this PUD that was rife with

flaws, but heavy on political influence," said Henkle. "I am encouraged and appreciative that we have City Council members who did look at the evidence and weighed in wisely on a choice that would have long-term consequences to historic overlays in other portions of our fair city of Jacksonville."

### Ultimate loophole: PUDs?

Much controversy has surrounded the proposed 150-seat restaurant since Stein and Demetree unveiled their plan in November 2015 to Riverside Avondale Preservation (RAP) and nearby residents, some of whom feel the PUD is a blatant disregard of zoning codes and the Riverside Avondale Overlay, which is intended to protect Residential Character Areas – where the predominant uses are residences – within historic districts.

"RAP is disappointed that the City Council decision allows isolated zoning with this PUD, without regard to the underlying zoning," said Nancy Powell, RAP board member and zoning committee chair. "This undercuts the stability provided by the 2008 Zoning Overlay and ignores key policies and operative provisions of the 2030 Comprehensive Plan, which in turn sets a bad precedent and threatens the integrity of zoning laws and land use provisions not just in Riverside, but across Jacksonville."

During each hearing for Bill 2016-55, proponents claimed The Roost will preserve a historic building, and end blight in that block of Oak Street, while opponents, including nearby residents, stressed the PUD is a precedent-setting weakening of zoning protections for historic districts such as Riverside, Avondale, San Marco and Springfield.

The notion that perhaps the Riverside Avondale Overlay should be changed to address such perceived weaknesses was raised at the second session of the special LUZ hearing by District 8 Councilwoman Katrina Brown, who noted she had not seen anything in the Riverside Avondale Overlay which would exclude a PUD.

"Based on having an Overlay, has the neighborhood opposed any other PUDs or would this be the first opposed by the neighbors?" she asked during the May 9 LUZ special hearing.

In the hearing, William Killingsworth, director of the Planning and Development Department, stated that 11 PUDs had been approved since the Riverside Avondale Overlay was enacted in 2008, however, a city spokesperson later said that was an error. Actually 10 PUD rezonings have been approved, among them new development of the Black Sheep Restaurant in 2010, Five Points Village in 2012, and Pinegrove Deli's

expansion in 2015. The other seven were for CRO (commercial/residential/office) uses: Cummer Museum of Art & Gardens, Black Hive Tattoo, townhomes on Ernest Street, offices on Riverside Avenue, the John Gorrie Condominium, a parking lot behind the Blind Rabbit restaurant on King Street, and the mixed-use St. Johns Village, which has not been developed.

"Will the Overlay be revised to exclude any future PUDs to prevent any changes or will it still be an open opportunity for another applicant?" asked Brown.

Brown's questions spurred other council members to consider whether there were holes in the Overlay. Among them was Crescimbeni, an At-Large Councilman who is not a member of LUZ.

"The Overlay needs to be revisited," said Crescimbeni. "This exercise has certainly pointed out what I see is a glaring omission of what was intended that can be easily circumvented."

### Amendments to zoning code proposed

Following the LUZ committee's approval of The Roost, there was an almost immediate filing of three ordinances, which would amend Municipal Code Chapter 656 (Zoning Code) to strengthen zoning laws in historic districts.

On May 18, District 14 Councilman Jim Love filed ordinance 2016-366 to "specify applicability of the Riverside/Avondale Overlay to all zoning districts, including planned unit development districts."

"We need to add teeth to the Overlay regarding PUDs," said Love. "The Roost is the first PUD we didn't manage to find a compromise. That's one reason I didn't vote for it."

The proposed ordinance to amend the city's zoning code includes requirements that future PUDs submitted in Riverside and Avondale as rezoning applications shall be mixed-use, contain a residential component of at least 50 percent of the square footage and reside on at least two acres of contiguous land. The amendment would apply to all rezoning applications submitted on or after July 12, 2016.

Also on May 18, Boyer submitted ordinance 2016-368 to address off-street parking, loading, and the use of parking credits, which were part of the controversy over the proposed restaurant. The issue with The Roost dealt with parking credits based on the historic use of the building as a dry cleaning operation, which required far less parking spaces than would a 150-seat restaurant, according to testimony by Jack Shad, an expert witness on behalf of PROUD.

Continued on page 9



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Shad stated zoning codes indicated the former Deluxe Cleaning operation was classified as light industrial, which overstates the parking credit. "It appears they are short by 13 spaces and all parking should be onsite," said Shad at the LUZ special hearing on May 4.

In response, Steve Diebenow, attorney representing Saleeba and the developers, stated parking regulations are not laid out in the Overlay, but are spelled out in Part 6 of the Zoning Code. Shad's parking calculations include credits for a prior use of the building, which ceased long ago, according to Diebenow.

Boyer's bill on parking credits is intended to clear up the ambiguities in the Zoning and Code and the Riverside Avondale Overlay. A working draft of the bill indicates parking credits will not be allowed for spaces that are not provided during existing use of a building but are needed for a repurposed use, such as a dry cleaning operation versus a restaurant.

Riverside Avondale Preservation, along with some residents who were involved with creating the Overlay nearly 10 years ago, is involved in the changes to code.

"We look forward to working with Councilman Love on changes to the overlay that will help clarify development expectations in the neighborhood, particularly as it relates to the use of planned unit developments (PUDs)," said Adrienne Burke, RAP executive director.

"RAP will continue to actively advocate for appropriate scale and intensity with the goal of achieving a vibrant, livable community for residents, businesses and property owners," said Powell. "We have always felt that The Roost is a good concept in the wrong location, but could benefit all by instead locating in a properly zoned commercial district."

Seeking to protect San Marco in a similar manner, Boyer also filed ordinance 2016-367 on May 18, to support San Marco by Design, a neighborhood action plan developed by the San Marco Preservation Society to provide guidance to developers and the city's Planning and Development Department. Boyer's bill states "no PUD rezoning shall be allowed that waives or alters any development standard established in the Overlay."

## New dermatology center to come to Brooklyn neighborhood

By Marcia Hodgson  
Resident Community News

The Brooklyn neighborhood got another boost thanks to a dermatologist's intention to build a new medical center in a revitalization zone near the corner of Rosselle and Park Street. Dr. Scott Warren of First Coast Mohs Skin Center purchased the properties at 600 and 616 Park Street for \$1.3 million through 600 Park Street LLC in December and January. Warren intends to build a two-story 12,164-square-foot medical office building on the site, said project architect Jeff M. Lane of Lane Architecture in Riverside.

The property signifies an expansion of Warren's dermatology practice, which is headquartered at 6890 Belfort Road, said Ortega's Jeff Thompson of Jeff Thompson Construction. First Coast Mohs Skin Center also has locations in Mandarin and at the Beach, he said.

The first floor of the building will house the skin center, which will offer "Mohs" treatment, a technique that removes cancerous tissue with minimal effects to healthy tissue, according to a Feb. 23 letter submitted by Lane to the DDRB staff. Also on that floor will be a small retail area where Warren intends to sell skin care products, Lane said.

The second floor will comprise professional office space, which will be leased, he said.

In a phone interview, Lane said conceptual design has been completed, but the building's interior details are still on the drawing board. A Mediterranean-style building with a stone or stone/stucco veneer is planned, with a mansard roof, which will conceal a flat roof where the mechanical system will be located, according to Lane's letter to the DDRB. "The client's other buildings have a Spanish character to them," Lane said in a telephone interview. "He wants to continue that theme."

"Riverside Avondale Preservation has been following our design with a lot of interest," Lane said, noting that the property rests within the Downtown overlay. "Architecturally, we are going to try to blend in as sympathetically as we can," he said.

In the conceptual design, two code deviations were requested - one for parking and the other for streetscape. Both were grant-



A front and side rendering of the new First Coast Mohs Skin Center

ed, Lane said. Included in the plan is a parking lot in the rear of the building with 57 spaces, up from 18 required in the overlay. The skin center also plans to take advantage of six on-street parking spaces, bringing the total amount of parking to 63 spaces.

The total cost of the project has yet to be determined, and, so far, no timeline has been established for its completion, Lane said. In choosing the location, Warren received no tax or other kind of incentives from the city, Thompson said, noting he expects the project to be completed sometime in 2017.

The city issued demolition permits to Thompson in early March, and already the two parcels have been cleared. The site was formerly home to a McDonald's restaurant, the wallpaper division of Brinton's Paint Company, and later served as a storage facility for a bank. "The building will be wonderful once it is done," said Thompson.

Although he did not want to speak for

Warren, who was unavailable for comment, Thompson said the property is attractive because it is on Riverside's doorstep. With the CubeSmart storage facility at 645 Park Street, the area has already proven to be ripe for revitalization, he said. Also, First Coast Mohs Skin Center will be just a few doors down from the new Gate station, with easy access to the Forest Street exit of Route 95. "From that exit you will be able to reach his place in less than two minutes," Thompson said.

The dermatology practice is just one of several new developments planned for the area adjacent to the historic Riverside area. A Gate gas station is planned for the corner of Park Street and Forest Avenue where Two Doors Down was formerly located, and a Jimmy Johns restaurant, which was recently renovated, is located next to Warren's property.

"We see new development everywhere. The whole Brooklyn area is blossoming and has so much potential," said Lane.



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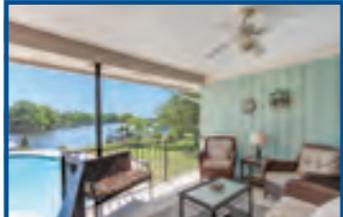


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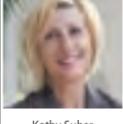
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2/2-990sqft. Location! Location! Location! Wonderful riverfront 14 unit complex nestled between the Shoppes of Avondale and Five Points in Riverside. This affordable, quiet, private upstairs flat boasts wood floors in living areas.



**1648 OSCEOLA ST - \$550,000**  
5/3-3,775sqft. Live in the midst of the vibrant Riverside Neighborhood & walk or bike to 5-Points & King Street to enjoy the eclectic mix of dining, shopping & entertainment.



**1666 PERSHING RD - \$264,000**  
3/1-1,350sqft. This is an amazing home! Surrounded by beautiful boxwoods and hydrangeas, this house is updated and ready to be enjoyed by the new homeowners. Gorgeous granite countertops sparkle in this new kitchen.



**4214 GARIBALDI AVE - \$359,000**  
3/2-2,665sqft. Elegant, spacious home SITUATED ON ONE AND ONE HALF LOT! Great walkability! Walking distance to Timuquana Country Club. New Roof in 2015. Newer downstairs A/C, Exterior freshly painted in 2015.



**1524 DONALD ST - \$340,000**  
5/3-2,642sqft. \$10K PRICE REDUCTION! Great price for this much square footage in Avondale! Some updating needed - Ask about renovation financing. Walking/biking distance to shops of Avondale.



**1863 WOODMERE DR - \$999,000**  
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**2970 ST JOHNS 4E - \$445,000**  
3/2-1,822sqft. Rarely Available! Spacious fully renovated move-in condition unit at Beau Rivage. Beautiful tree top and St Johns River views from almost every room as well as the balcony. Gleaming hardwood floors through out all areas.



**3873 OAK ST - \$299,000**  
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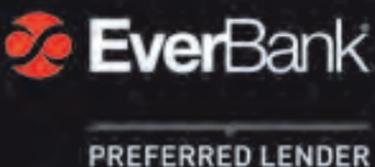


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# Timuquana Country Club to host its second USGA championship

In 2019, just four years shy of its 100th anniversary, the course at Timuquana Country Club will host its second golf championship. Designed in 1923 by Donald Ross against the backdrop of the St. Johns River, the course will be the venue for the 2019 U.S. Women's Amateur Four-Ball Championship and was also the scene for the U.S. Senior Amateur in 2002.

The United States Golf Association (USGA) selected Timuquana Country Club as the host site for the 2019 U.S. Women's Amateur Four-Ball Championship, scheduled for April 27-May 1, 2019.

"The Jacksonville Sports Council is thrilled to partner with the United States Golf Association and Timuquana Country Club on this exciting event. It is our mission to elevate our city by bringing in top-notch sports and entertainment activities," said Alan Verlander, executive director/COO for the Jacksonville Sports Council. "This event is a great example of what we can accomplish when all our local sports agencies work together. We are excited to welcome the USGA and these elite women to Jacksonville in 2019 and hope to host many more great championships in the future."

The course was renovated in the mid-1950s by Robert Trent Jones, Jr. with subsequent alterations by George Cobb and Dave Gordon. In 1996, Bobby Weed led another major renovation that improved drainage and

irrigation. Among other changes, more than 800 trees were removed, helping to restore the course to its original design. Additionally, in 2011, the course was re-grassed in 2011 and the No. 11 green was reshaped.

"The Four-Ball is a newer event for the USGA and a popular amateur format, so there will be a lot of interest in it," said Nick Napoleon, Golf Chairman at Timuquana Country Club. "It's a good fit for us, we're tucked away in a nice historic area. We'll need a couple hundred volunteers, but I think we can get them. We have a good base to build from," he said, referring to a senior event hosted 14 years ago.

Timuquana hosted the 2002 U.S. Senior Amateur, won by Michigan resident Greg Reynolds, who has since moved to Jacksonville and is an active Timuquana member. The club has also hosted several USGA qualifiers, including five U.S. Amateur sectional qualifiers. It will host its first U.S. Open sectional qualifier on June 6. Additionally, Timuquana has hosted the Southern Amateur and Florida State Amateur.

"Timuquana Country Club is once again honored to host a USGA national championship," said Steve Melnyk, 2019 U.S. Women's Amateur Four-Ball Championship co-chairman and 1969 U.S. Amateur champion. "By all accounts, the 2002 U.S. Senior Amateur at Timuquana was an overwhelming success



Timuquana Country Club

and well received among all competitors. We now look forward to hosting some of the game's finest female amateurs on our wonderful Donald Ross design for the 2019 U.S. Women's Amateur Four-Ball."

The 2019 U.S. Women's Amateur Four-Ball marks the 25th USGA championship contested in Florida. Upcoming championships

in the Sunshine State include the 2016 U.S. Women's Amateur Four-Ball at Streamsong Resort; the 2017 U.S. Women's Mid-Amateur at Quail Creek Country Club in Naples; the 2018 U.S. Amateur Four-Ball at Jupiter Hills Club in Tequesta; and the 2018 U.S. Senior Women's Amateur at Orchid Island Golf & Beach Club in Vero Beach.

## New sewer mains installed along Timuquana

The Jacksonville Energy Authority will soon wrap up construction to replace approximately 2,900 feet of sanitary sewer force main along Timuquana Road from Ortega Farms Boulevard across the Ortega River to a JEA sewer pump station located near Ortega Forest Drive.

The \$1,547,000 project, which began Jan. 28, 2016, is on track to reach its sched-

uled July 31 completion date, according to Gerri Boyce, JEA media specialist.

Although construction occurs in the City's rights of way and easements, the contractor, Calloway Contracting, Inc., is required to close one lane of traffic while the pipe is being installed.

Restoration of the project area will begin after the sewer main has been installed. Upon completion of the project, any existing pavement, grass, curb, gutter, driveways or sidewalks affected during construction will be returned to its pre-construction condition, according to project information on the JEA website.



Sanitary sewer force main pipes line Timuquana Road near St. Peter's Episcopal Church prior to installation during a six-month JEA project.

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# Look who's coming to Girls' Day Out!



After receiving a mammogram on live TV in 2013, Amy Robach revealed on *Good Morning America* that she had been diagnosed with breast cancer. Hear her story at the 2016 Girls' Day Out.

Also featuring chef Mai Pham, owner of Lemon Grass and Star Ginger restaurants, featured in Food Network's *My Country, My Kitchen* and author of *The Flavors of Asia*.

**2016 Girls' Day Out Chair:**

Patricia Calhoun, MD

**Inspiring Break-Out Sessions:**

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- Weight Management** – Pam Rama, MD
- Hip & Knee Pain** – Brett P. Frykberg, MD
- Joint, Bone & Muscle Health** – Megan Manthe, MD
- Stress Management** – Mona Shah, MD
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- Headaches & Migraines** – Erin Doty, MD

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# JTA named outstanding public transportation system

By *Kate A. Hallock*  
Resident Community News

The Jacksonville Transportation Authority (JTA) has been named the 2016 "Outstanding Public Transportation System" by the American Public Transportation Association (APTA), and will receive the achievement award at the association's annual meeting in Los Angeles, California, September 11-14, 2016.

The news was announced on May 18 at the JTA's State of the Authority luncheon for city leaders.

The JTA operates Jacksonville's public bus service, ferry service, downtown automated Skyway and paratransit service. The Authority also plans, designs and builds roads and bridges.

With a total of 874 square miles, Jacksonville has the distinction of being the largest city by land mass in the United States. The JTA has played a pivotal role in Jacksonville's growth and economic development by providing critical service to thousands of public transit dependent residents in Florida's largest city by population.

The JTA encompasses 850 employees, 200 buses and trolleys, 26 community shuttles, 97 paratransit vehicles, and an automated people-mover with an annual \$230 million budget.

## Mobility Corridors initiatives announced

Also announced at the luncheon was the Tier 1 Keystone projects for the JTA's Mobility

Corridors / Complete Streets initiative and the Tier 1 Operational/Safety projects.

Keystone projects would showcase "complete streets," while Operational/Safety projects represent "quick fixes" that can provide immediate safety and operational improvements at a lower cost. The projects are tiered based on the available \$9 million in MobilityWorks funding to be allocated between "Keystone" projects (\$7 million) and "Operational & Safety" enhancements projects (\$2 million), according to the JTA.

Of the 14 Tier 1 projects selected for preliminary engineering and design work, the Blanding Boulevard/Park Street corridor, for which a community charrette was held in January 2016, was listed as number five out of nine on the Operational/Safety projects priority list.

The Cassat/Normandy/Lenox Corridor was listed as number three of the five Tier 1 Keystone projects, for a traffic study on Lenox Avenue to determine future lane requirements between Normandy and Cassat Avenues, reducing travel lanes from four to two, including median installation and bicycle lanes.

According to the JTA, each of the priority projects have been selected based on a variety of factors including contribution to safety and multimodal access, support of ongoing neighborhood planning initiatives, public health and community livability, economic development, and the potential for leveraging other funding sources for future implementation.

The JTA Board of Directors met May 20 and approved the Complete Streets report and priority recommendations.

# City aims for Bicycle Friendly Community designation

By *Allison Perna*  
Resident Community News

Bicyclists from City Cycle, ZenCog Bicycle Company, Champion Cycling, Open Road Bicycles and Lakeshore Bicycles descended on Hemming Park on May 20 to celebrate National Bike to Work Day and bring attention to Jacksonville's own growing bicycle scene.

"[The event] encourages residents to try bicycling for the first time while also highlighting demand for safe, accessible and practical routes for all modes of transit," said Mark Atkins, president of the North Florida Bicycle Club.

With less than half a percent of its population bicycling to work, Jacksonville ranks 34 out of 50 major metropolitan cities for commuter cyclists, according to the Alliance for Biking and Walking's 2016 Benchmarking report. Yet the city ranks

number one in the United States in bike/pedestrian fatalities at nearly 51 per 10,000 commuters, according to the report.

However, as cyclers streamed into the park, one got a sense of what Chris Burns, chair of the Jacksonville Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee, described as "an explosion of alternative transportation," right here in Jacksonville.

This explosion, along with the need for improvements to bicycle safety infrastructure, has led to current updating of Jacksonville's Bicycle Pedestrian Master Plan and an intent to achieve Bicycle Friendly Community designation by the League of American Bicyclists by Dec. 31, 2017.

Although there's a lot of room for improvement, according to Alice Gould, manager of City Cycle on Park Street, she said she thinks Jacksonville has the momentum it needs to continue making positive change. Gould pointed to the San Jose Boulevard resurfacing project, improvement in connectivity and more support through city government as just a few of the reasons to be optimistic about where positive change is heading.



Jack McGarry, Holt Tucker, owner of Avondale Open Road Bicycles, Josh Flores, John Morrison, Chris Burns, chair of the Jacksonville Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee, and Jackie Morrison took time for a photo in Hemming Park while celebrating their big day.



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# Abandoned bicycles serve good purpose for new lives

By Kate A. Hallock  
Resident Community News

Officers in the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office's Zone 4 Walking Beat know firsthand crime often occurs when someone lacks gainful employment. They also know getting and keeping a job depends on having reliable transportation to a bus stop or to the workplace. If you don't have a car, a bicycle can be the next best thing.

Earlier this year, Zone 4 officers, under the command of Chief Larry Gayle, put into place a bicycle deployment program to help reduce bicycle thefts in Riverside. While the outcome was very successful – bike thefts were reduced by 50 percent and they recovered 20 percent of the 75 bicycles stolen over a four-month period – the added bonus was community outreach to men who need transportation the most.

On May 6, beat officers Patrick Meyer and Jason Mosley were joined by Gayle and Sergeant Dennis Pellot at Riverside Tradition House, 2911 Riverside Ave., to present to residents at the house three bicycles used in the program.

"This is a proactive approach of the Walking Beat unit to establish our community focused partnership," said Pellot in an email to Paul Bremer, of the Riverside Avondale Neighborhood Watch group. "Jason [Mosley] and Patrick [Meyer] have gotten permission from the Sheriff to make these donations a regular event to people in need in this area."

Officer Meyer explained the bicycles used in the deployment were found items, but were not able to be traced back to the owners. After the deployment was completed, he and Officer Mosley were given the option of donating them or destroying them. Meyer, who repaired and cleaned the bicycles, said the bikes were too expensive to throw away.

"We made contact with Leigh Johnson, manager at Tradition House, which is set up for people with alcohol or substance abuse who are trying to re-integrate into society," said Meyer. "You have to have a job and a lot of them don't have a license and could put the bikes to good use."



Jeff Feldman, Thomas Norton, Sergeant Dennis Pellot (back), Billy Megill, Leigh Johnson, Kevin Kuzel (back), Chief Larry Gayle, Officers Pat Meyer and Jason Mosley.

*"This will be helpful for residents to get around. If they have driver's licenses they may not have a vehicle. Having access to some wheels will be very helpful."*

— Leigh Johnson, manager at Tradition House

"This will be helpful for residents to get around," said Johnson, who noted the residents of Tradition House have always had good relations with the force and don't cause trouble in the community. "If they have driver's licenses they may not have a vehicle. Having access to some wheels will be very helpful."

Meyer and Mosley hope to continue the bicycle deployment and the gifting of the used bicycles to Tradition House or other charities. "We're constantly looking for the ability to connect with our community, especially the Riverside area. We feel a close connection. I went to Riverside Presbyterian Day School"

said Gayle. "I found out Tradition House is an outreach of Riverside Presbyterian, so being able to help my alma mater and doing something like this for the community, by helping guys get on the right track, means a lot."

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# Support strong for CCA at local chapter barbeque

The Sadler Point Marina on Jacksonville's Ortega River basin played host to the local chapter of the Coastal Conservation Association (CCA), May 5. The evening's festivities included a barbeque dinner courtesy of Monroe's BBQ, free beer from Bold City Brewing Company and wine. Ticket purchases included a 1-year membership to CCA, the barbeque dinner and table gifts.

The evening included live and silent auctions, entertainment from the Supernatural Duo band and great prizes from raffle drawings. The mission of CCA is to conserve, promote and enhance the present and future availability of coastal resources for the benefit of the general public. CCA has applied nearly \$2.7 million to marine habitat projects, including an inshore reef in the St. Johns River back in 2014.



Rod, Tyler and Greg Brock enjoy family camaraderie at the banquet



Committee Member Charles Holt with CCA Regional Director for CCA of Florida, Nick Pectol



Matt Cline, Payton Scheppe and Gretchen Henson



Jason Richards, Sheena Salmon and Chris Herms



"Opposing Forces" by Hanna Jubran has found a new home in Hemming Park.

# Modern art aficionado donates sculpture to Hemming Park

By Kate A. Hallock  
Resident Community News

Coming on the heels of the Cultural Council of Greater Jacksonville's awards gala celebrating 40 icons of arts and culture, one of those 40 honorees has donated a sculpture from his private art collection to Hemming Park.

Preston Haskell, of Ortega, and founder of Haskell Company, has permanently relocated a 15-foot-tall painted steel sculpture, called "Opposing Forces" by Hanna Jubran, from the Regions Bank parking lot to the entrance of Hemming Park at the corner of Laura and Monroe Streets. The move took place on May 18.

"This magnificent work of art will provide a colorful welcome to visitors at the Laura Street entrance to Hemming Park and serve as an artistic symbol of the great changes that are happening in the park," said Wayne Wood, Friends of Hemming Park board president.

"Opposing Forces" was one of three

sculptures in the 13-piece Sculpture Walk Jax I, a Cultural Council Spark Grant project in 2014.

"I bought the piece from Sculpture Walk and have been waiting until Hemming Park was ready to receive it," said Haskell. "This will be its new, permanent home."

Sculpture Walk Jax II, a year-long temporary outdoor exhibition of large-scale sculptures, is currently on display in Main Street Park until September 2016.

"Opposing Forces" is from a series of sculptures by Jubran, a sculpture professor and sculpture area coordinator at East Carolina University in Greenville, North Carolina. The series deals with the concept of gravity and the four elements of Earth, Water, Fire and Wind in our universe on the micro to the macro level, according to a statement by Jubran. "It expresses the cycle of life, growth and opposing forces in our universe with the interplay of line, form, space and colors. These elements are seen in a variety of forms and colors as they occur in nature," he said.

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# Hope Haven touches countless lives over 90 years

By Marcia Hodgson  
Resident Community News

For the past 90 years Hope Haven has been a lifeline for children and families with special needs. On April 14, the children's clinic celebrated 90 years of helping children gain confidence through its educational and therapeutic services by hosting a party at its 4600 Beach Boulevard location and unveiling its new logo.

The logo, a multi-colored butterfly, which accompanies the Hope Haven motto, "where hope transforms families," describes the "transformative journey" many families find when they utilize any one of Hope Haven's many services, said Jenny Kobin, chairman of the Hope Haven Board of Directors during the anniversary event. Clinic personnel make a point of emphasizing what individuals with disabilities can do and not the opposite,

Kobin said. "Our tagline emphasizes the focus we have on the positive," she said.

The logo also commemorates the transformation Hope Haven has made over the past 90 years, beginning first in 1926 as a Children's Hospital on the banks of the Trout River, where it served as a "pre-ventorium" for nutritionally and medically deprived children and later as a full-service children's hospital on Atlantic Boulevard to its role today as an interdisciplinary diagnostic and treatment center providing services to children with physical, intellectual and developmental disabilities.

"You may know us as Hope Haven Children's Clinic, and before that as Hope Haven Children's Hospital. Like any organization, we've transformed. Today, we're Hope Haven," said Joanne Robertson, CEO of the children's facility. "We remain focused on ensuring that children realize their full poten-

tial. To do that, we have an incredible team of professionals who treat clients like family and provide specialized services and educational opportunities. Such services include evaluations for autism, ADHD, and Down syndrome. We also have individualized tutoring, special needs therapies, after-school programs and even job placement services for young adults with special needs," she said.

During the anniversary celebration, participants enjoyed tours of the Hope Haven facility and listened to Joy Parman tell how her family found Hope Haven's evaluation of daughter, Kennedy, diagnosed with Down syndrome, to be a game-changing experience. "We fell in love with the way they access the children," Parman said, noting Hope Haven focused on how Kennedy could reach her full potential.

Serving as emcee for the festivities was Jon Heymann, CEO of Jacksonville's Children's



Hope Haven CEO Joanne Robertson with Councilman Scott Wilson and Board Chair Jenny Kobin

Commission. "Without Hope Haven's critical services many of our community's children would fall through the cracks," Heymann said. "As a community, we are fortunate to have Hope Haven as a valued partner providing a pathway for children and families to achieve successful outcomes."

## Episcopal celebrates milestone anniversary

The Episcopal School of Jacksonville celebrated the culmination of its 50th Anniversary year with a formal gala event April 30, held under tents by the St. Johns River on the school's Munnerlyn Campus.

The black-tie affair began with a cocktail reception on the Regan Plaza, dinner on the River Field, with after-dinner music provided by The Chris Thomas Band. The event was led by Chairs Julie McQuiddy, Pamela Steitz and Kristen Schmidt Seay, during the school's annual reunion weekend.



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For more than 30 years, Century Ambulance has depended on Earnest Air & Automotive, Inc. to maintain its fleet, and owner Kenny Earnest's motto – *We specialize in anything from fleets to families – couldn't be more appropriate.*

Automotive maintenance is all Earnest has known and done. After graduating from Sandlewood High School, Earnest went to work for Chrysler Dodge, where he became a master technician and turned "a ton of industry training" into business for himself.

"It started as a mobile unit, and I would go on locations to fix the cars and ambulances," said Earnest. "As my clientele grew, I knew I needed to expand my team and equipment. So I could be the best in the business, I decided to open a brick and mortar."

Century Ambulance was one of Earnest's first clients in 1983 and continues to be his largest customer today. Because it's so critical to maintain the highest level of technology and services to keep a fleet of ambulances running, Earnest Air & Automotive has the ready resources to offer the same amount of care and attention to your personal vehicle – every bit as vital for you and your family's safety.

Earnest and his automotive technicians



Kenny Earnest

use state-of-the-art diagnostic equipment – including the newest Snap-on scanner, oscilloscope, and smoke machine, as well as Identifix, one of the best software solutions in the industry for diagnostics – to quickly and accurately pinpoint the problem.

"Automotive work can get expensive, and we know it is never money people are planning to spend, so we want to be sure we diagnose the issue right the first time," said Earnest. "Once we know what the problem is, we give our customers an honest estimate, so they can decide whether they are ready to proceed with the repairs."

The best work may start with the best equipment, but it doesn't stop there. Earnest believes in training and certifica-



tion for all of his employees, in all aspects of automotive repair, including engine repair, automatic transmission and trans axle, manual drive train and axle, suspension and steering, brakes, electrical and electronic systems, heating and air-conditioning, and engine performance.

"I was a certified Master Tech when I was one of our main mechanics. Now, I work to oversee the work of my guys and ensure the company has the resources needed to be the best," he said. "Our four mechanics are ASE-certified (The National Institute for Automotive Service Excellence) in all aspects of automotive repair."

Given the climate in Northeast Florida, air conditioning has always been an

Earnest Air & Automotive specialty, and an important service in hot Florida summers, but it is not all they do by any means.

Earnest Air & Automotive is a full-service automotive repair company that can handle all of your automotive needs, whether for your personal vehicles, old or new, or your company's fleets. They are a one-stop shop for everything except body work.

In a nutshell, why should people take their vehicles to Earnest Air & Automotive?

"Because we live up to our name: Earnest Air & Automotive," said Earnest. "We are earnest about our business and have built our reputation on honest and dependable service to our friends, family, and the community we live in."



Earnest Air & Automotive, Inc. is open Monday to Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. and on Saturday by appointment. It is conveniently located at 5825 Lone Pine Road, Jacksonville, FL 32216. Contact Kenny Earnest at (904) 730-3500, by email at [earnestairauto@gmail.com](mailto:earnestairauto@gmail.com) or visit the website, [www.earnestairandauto.net](http://www.earnestairandauto.net), for more information.

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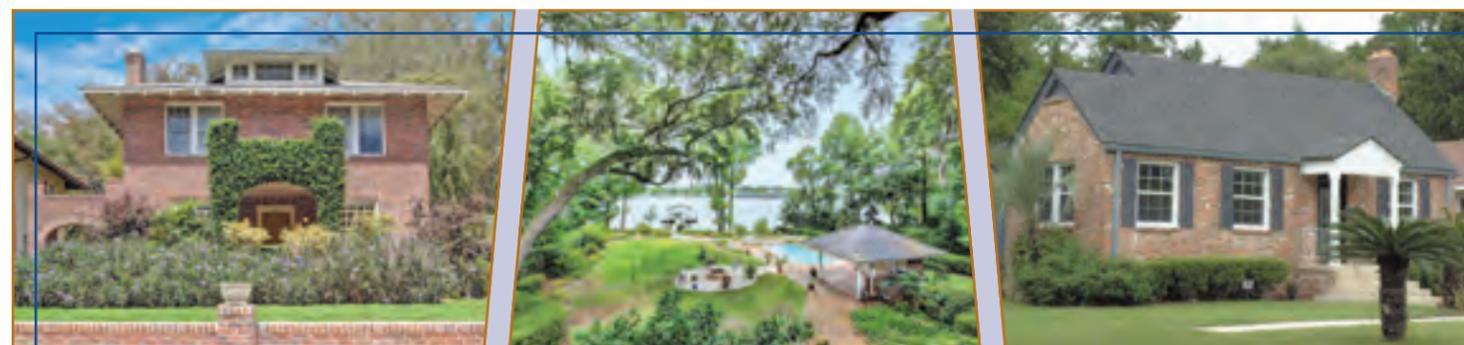
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# MOVERS & SHAKERS



Norma and Hayes Basford

## Ripple in mental illness help becomes a wave

Three years ago the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Jacksonville barely made a ripple in the pond of non-profits serving the North Florida area.

A new Board of Directors, a re-organization, and countless hours of work by volunteers have resulted in this group winning the coveted Agency of the Year Ripple Effect Award for 2016 from Mental Health America.

"It is a well-deserved award and was not a hard decision. The depth and amount of services are all done by volunteers, and the leadership of Hayes and Norma Basford over the past years is commendable," said Denise Marzullo, MHA Northeast Florida President and CEO.

Eleven awards were presented at a dinner reception May 3, appropriately Mental Health Awareness Month. Award winners include Conchetta Latimer, Dzenana Racic, Julio Gracia-Ruiz, Patricia Barton, Pat Hogan, The Honorable Karen Cole, Rep. Charles McBurney, Melissa Ross and Tara Wildes, as well as the organizations Full Service Schools and NAMI.

Hayes Basford, president of the Board during the re-organization, and Norma Basford, education coordinator, received the award on behalf of the group. Norma Basford is also a finalist for the Eve Award for introducing a program called "Ending the Silence" at schools, which helps reduce the stigma surrounding mental illness.

## Waters, Mallot honored at Leadership Jax gala

Leadership Jacksonville welcomed more than 380 guests to its Celebration 2016 at the Jessie Ball duPont Center on April 26. The annual fundraiser honored community trustees Nina Waters and Jerry Mallot.

"We are thrilled so many attended our 21st annual celebration to honor two outstanding community leaders," said Jill Langford Dame, chief executive officer of Leadership Jacksonville. "Nina and Jerry are both well-deserving of this recognition of their efforts to make Jacksonville a great place to work and live."

Nina Waters, Leadership Jacksonville Class of '91, serves as president of The Community Foundation for Northeast Florida, Inc., Florida's oldest community foundation and also the state's largest. Prior to joining the Foundation, Waters served as executive director for the PACE Center for Girls Jacksonville.

Jerry Mallot, Leadership Jacksonville Class of '95, is the executive vice president of the JAX Chamber and president of JAXUSA Partnership. Mallot led the formation of a seven-county economic development program to expand high-wage jobs in northeast Florida.

Proceeds from Celebration 2016 support Leadership Jacksonville youth programs including Youth Leadership Jacksonville and the Collegiate Leadership Experience.



Susan Edelman, Nina and Lex Waters



Delores Barr Weaver, Nina Waters



Sarah and Jerry Mallot



Poppy Clements

## Women's Board member named to hospital board of directors

Wolfson Children's Hospital Board of Directors has named Poppy Clements, of Ortega, former chair of the Florida Forum and current member of The Women's Board of Wolfson Children's Hospital, to its board.

Clements is also vice chair of the board of the Jacksonville Public Education Fund. She serves on the board of trustees for Baptist Health Foundation and previously served on the board of City Year Jacksonville and The Bridge of Northeast Florida. She and her husband, Rob Clements, chairman and CEO of EverBank Financial Corp., were recipients of the 2016 Guardian of the Arts award by the Cathedral Arts Project.

NEIGHBORS & NEWCOMERS

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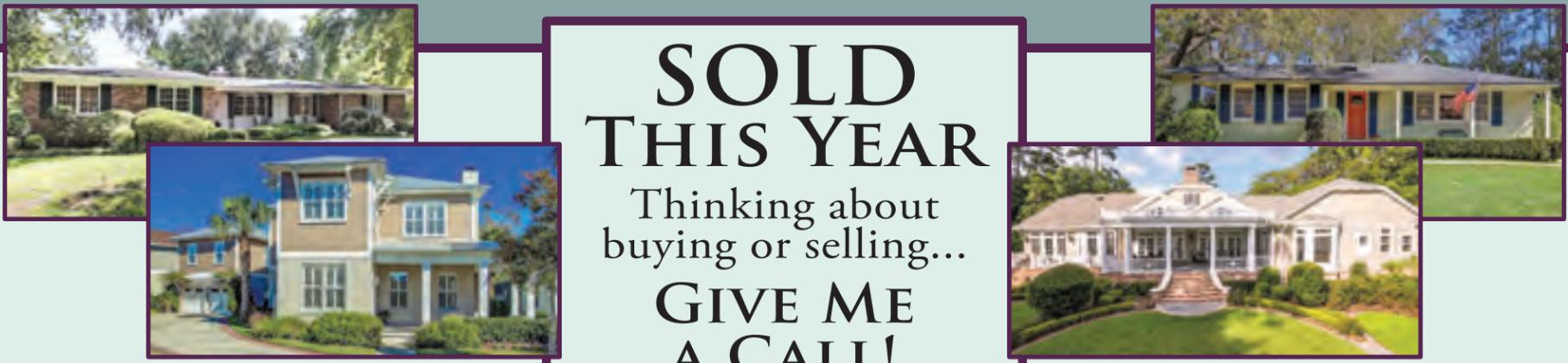
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## Feeding Northeast Florida gets help from Chamber, funds from PGA TOUR golfer

JAX Chamber employees, 40 in all, spent part of the Chamber's quarterly "day of service" volunteering at the Feeding Northeast Florida's distribution center. The staff sorted, bagged and packaged dry goods and fresh produce on April 28, processing 19,343 pounds of food, which will provide meals for 16,557 people.

"There is a fundamental human need to feed hunger, and we're grateful to the Chamber for their support today. By giving their time, each volunteer is making an impact to reduce hunger across the 17 Northeast Florida counties we serve," said Luke Layow, president and CEO, Feeding Northeast Florida.

During THE PLAYERS Championship May 12-15, three-time PGA TOUR winner Billy Horschel donated \$23,000 to Feeding Northeast Florida, \$1,000 for each of his 18 birdies and \$5,000 for the eagle he made during the tournament. Fans were encouraged to meet his challenge by donating online, resulting in \$6,700 for Feeding Northeast Florida.



Billy Horschel with his Feeding Northeast Florida-branded golf bag



JAX Chamber employees volunteer at Feeding Northeast Florida's Northwest Jacksonville distribution center on April 28.



Doris and Nathaniel Fisher, with ChiChi

## Riverside couple serve up peanuts, Southern style

A true Southerner won't "dilly dally or fiddle faddle around, but will light out" to Old Roosevelt Road just north of McDuff Avenue to K&N Quick Stop and pick up a passel of boiled peanuts.

No need to get gussied up. Just skeddaddle on over to the roadside stand, where Doris and Nathaniel Fisher and their little dog ChiChi will give you a warm greeting and a bag of goobers that don't cost an arm and a leg.

If you get a hankerin' Monday through Saturday from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m., mosey on over and pick up a big ol' bag of regular or Cajun style, mouth waterin' peanuts. Sure as you're foot high and born to die, your hand will be in the bag before you get out of the parking lot.

Three years ago the Fishers moved from Tampa and settled in Riverside to start a new life. Nathaniel, almost 69, had lost partial vision in one eye, was retired from working for Gate Convenience Stores, and the couple wanted to be closer to two of their grown children. "God gave me a vision to just open up a little peanut stand," said Nathaniel. "We are trusting it will flourish."

Doris explained everything just fell into place within the last month. "A man had the trailer for sale and even gave us \$100 off the price," she said. "God just took care of the rest and we got set up."

The entrepreneurs are positive and upbeat about their new endeavor, so don't be slow as molasses - ease on by for some goober peas, and you'll be grinning like a possum eatin' a tater!



Mary Fisher, Wayne Wood and Joanelle Mulrain

## Jacksonville PR chapter celebrates 60th anniversary

Twenty past presidents of the Jacksonville Chapter of the Florida Public Relations Association (FPRA) gathered with many other chapter members and guests at the Riverside home of Dr. Wayne Wood May 17 to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the chapter's charter.

Originally named the Gator Chapter, on May 10, 1956, S.E. Lorimier was elected general chairman and Walter A. Ketcham vice chairman at the chapter's first organization meeting. The FPRA, established in 1938, is one of the oldest public relations organizations in the United States. The statewide organization has nearly 1,500 professional and student members, which make up 15 professional and 11 student chapters.

A portion of the proceeds from the celebratory event will fund scholarships for FPRA First Coast student members at Jacksonville University.

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# It's awards season for Anna Dooley of Greenscape

For years Anna Dooley, executive director of Greenscape in San Marco, has been known as Jacksonville's "tree lady" for her hard work to improve Jacksonville's urban tree canopy. In April her tree-planting efforts received national recognition when the Arbor Day Foundation honored her at its 2016 Arbor Day Awards April 30 in Nebraska City, Nebraska.

Dooley received the foundation's Lawrence Enersen Award, a prize that recognizes an outstanding individual who has "had a positive impact on the environment due to their lifelong commitment to tree planting and conservation at a local level."

Dooley was one of two individuals along with 15 organizations and companies recognized by the Arbor Day Foundation during a ceremony at Lied Lodge & Conference Center. Former award winners include Nobel Peace Prize winner Wangari Maathai, Maryland Governor Martin O'Malley, and the United States Forest Service.

The Arbor Day awards were not the only recognitions Dooley received in April. The Late Bloomers Garden Club awarded her with the Garden Club of America's Zone Civic Improvement Commendation, and the Cummer Museum of Art & Gardens presented her, on behalf of Greenscape, with the 2016 Ninah May Holden Cummer Community Partner Award for building artful connections between people and the environment.

"It's a big deal for me. It's a national award. I'm like, 'wow!'" said Dooley in a telephone interview. "I've lost all my humility now. I'm so proud of it. What I think is most newsworthy about this is that the Arbor Day Foundation hung the flag of the State of Florida in the Lied Lodge, its beau-



Anna Dooley and her daughter, Sarah, pose after planting a ceremonial tree in Arbor Lodge State Park in Nebraska City, Nebraska. The tree planting was part of the 2016 Arbor Day Awards festivities.

tiful Arbor Foundation facility in Nebraska City, and it will hang there in my honor for a whole year. To recognize the whole state of Florida in Nebraska has touched me more than anything," she said.

Since 1997, Dooley has served as the executive director of Greenscape, a non-profit grassroots group that has planted nearly 350,000 trees in Jacksonville since it started 40 years ago. Through her work at Greenscape, she has inspired public and private partnerships and motivated thousands of individual volunteers to help transform Jacksonville's urban greenspace.

"I think my greatest reward is seeing trees getting planted in Jacksonville," Dooley said. "That's what it is all about for me, but getting the recognition has been great."



Anna Dooley with Matt Harris, chief executive officer of the Arbor Day Foundation

*New shop offers local cheeses, as well as imports*



Jennifer Harvey

Murray Hill residents and businesses welcomed a "grate" new shop to the neighborhood last month. Grater Goods Cheese & Charcuterie, owned and operated by Jennifer Harvey, held its grand opening May 6-7 at 1080 Edgewood Ave., next to Bernie's Wine Stop.

Harvey, who had worked in the transportation industry for 25 years, decided to parlay her love of food, cooking and entertaining into her first retail venture. After studying the specialty food market, she realized there was no free-standing cheese shop of this type in Jacksonville.

Customers can "try before they buy" Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10:30 a.m. to 7 p.m. Call (904) 203-8533 or visit [www.gratergoods.com](http://www.gratergoods.com) for more information.

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### 3759 Hunter Street

Nice 2BR/2BA brick bungalow on a double lot. Living room with gas fireplace, dining room, large open eat-in kitchen, hardwood floors, and new large deck off of the kitchen area. 1,288 sq. Ft. \$224,000



### 1661 Riverside Avenue, #405

1,117 sq. ft., 2BR/2BA open loft living in the heart of Historic Riverside. Located on the top floor with Memorial Park views from the living room, master bedroom and the private patio. \$199,900



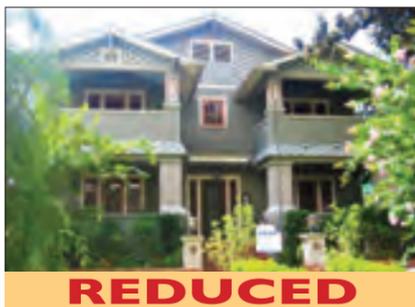
### 1028 Osceola Street

One of a kind 3BR/3BA rusticated block Craftsman located in the heart of 5 Points. 60' wrap porch, 10' ceilings w/picture molding, and off-street parking pad for 3 cars. 2,800 sq ft. \$369,000



### 4433 St. Johns Avenue

Perfect 2BR/1BA starter home or a good investment opportunity. New kitchen, concrete floors, gas fireplace, gas stove, central air and heat. 1,112 sq. Ft. \$129,000



### 2030 Herschel #3

2BR/2BA. Three-time award winning renovation featuring leaded glass colonaded bookcases that divide LR from DR. richly stained woodwork and many other built-ins. 1,211 sq. ft. \$325,000



### 3027 St. Johns Avenue

Restored home across street from St. Johns River, within walking distance of Shoppes & Restaurants of Avondale. 2-car garage with an apartment serving as a complete guest house. 5BR/4.5BA and 4,317 sq. ft. \$849,999



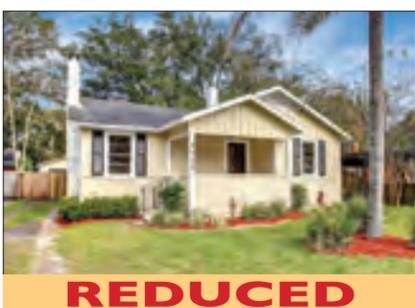
### 2884 Olga Place

Spacious 2BR/1BA bungalow in great walkable area near Willowbranch Park, King St. and Avondale shops. Inside utility room. Fenced yard completes the package. \$154,900



### 918 Ingleside Avenue

3BR/1BA Brick bungalow in the heart of Murray Hill. This home has been very well cared for and it shows! Large screened in porch, two car garage on an extra deep lot. 1,822 sq. ft. \$159,000



### 4753 Post Street

This charming 2BR/1BA with open front porch, fireplace, and gleaming hardwood floors throughout. Fenced back yard with detached garage and large patio. 1,034 sq. ft. \$137,000

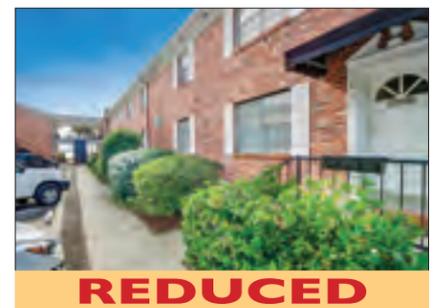


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### 1846 Mallory #5

This charming 2BR/2BA condo on the St. Johns River at the end of Mallory Street, River Ridge Condominium is a 14 unit all-brick enclave in a lovely, private setting. 990 sq. ft. \$141,000

# Local clothing designer holds first show, supports Year Up

Young women seeking higher education or gainful employment got a boost from local clothing designer, Joy Lee, who donated a portion of her first fashion show's proceeds to Year Up Jacksonville, based at Florida State College Jacksonville.

Lee's Murray Hill boutique, MOMNI, previewed 20 outfits from four special collections May 8 at the Garden Club of Jacksonville. Guests enjoyed hors d'oeuvres and cocktails by Black Sheep as they took in MOMNI's first summer inventory.

Year Up Jacksonville is an intensive year-long college program, composed of six months of technical training and professional skills development, followed by a six-month internship with one of its local business partners. Students earn college credits and are paid a stipend during both phases of the program. Lee will provide store credit in the form of a lesson in dressing for business for some of Year Up's young women, who will also take home an outfit of their own.



Grace McCullough, left, models a creation by MOMNI owner Joy Lee, right



## Garden club roots strengthened with new officers, board

New officers and board members Walter Bryant, Donn Elliott, Steve Blajian, Robert Roman, Jim Lewis, John MacLean; back, Tim Burleigh, Courtland Hunter

The Men's Garden Club of Jacksonville held its annual installation of officers and new board members May 2, electing Walter Bryant president. Other officers include Robert Roman, vice president, Jim Lewis, treasurer, and Jim MacLean, secretary, all of Riverside/Avondale.

The new board of directors was also installed with the new officers. Board members include Steve Blajian, Tim Burleigh of Riverside, Jimmy Johns, Sam Costello and Courtland Hunter.

John Searcy was honored with the Arthur Simpson Award for outstanding service to the club, promotion of gardening and community service. The award had taken an inadvertent hiatus when the plaque was misplaced for about 15 years, according to past president Donn Elliott. It was unearthed from among boxes of archived material Elliott received after the former historian had passed away.

The Men's Garden Club, established in 1945, meets the first Monday of each month at 7 p.m. at the Garden Club of



John Searcy was honored with the Arthur Simpson Award for outstanding service to the club, promotion of gardening and community service.

Jacksonville, 1005 Riverside Ave. The club's annual picnic will be held June 5 at the home of member Russ Snyder.



William Kuntz

## Kuntz honored for work in malpractice law

Ortega Forest resident William Kuntz, a Smith Hulsey & Busey Managing Shareholder and member of the law firm's Board of Directors, has been named "Lawyer of the Year" for his work in Medical Malpractice Law – Defendants, by Best Lawyers magazine.

### NEW RIVERFRONT LISTING/ORTEGA



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## New pet hospital opens on Westside



Dr. Charles Moreland, Joseph A. Strasser, Mary Lou Russell, Karen Meader, and Rick DuCharme cut the ribbon at the May 9 grand opening of a new animal hospital on Cassat Avenue.

The first 500 pet owners to visit the new Mary Lou Russell Animal Welfare Complex and the Joseph A. Strasser Veterinary Hospital at 464 Cassat Ave. were treated to a free rabies vaccine and exam for their dogs and cats as part of the veterinary hospital's grand opening May 9.

Present at the ribbon cutting were Mary Lou Russell and Joseph A. Strassers, major donors who made the facility possible; Rick DuCharme, executive director of First Coast No More Homeless Pets (FCNMHP), which runs the facility; Karen Meader, Petco Foundation representative,

and Dr. Charles Moreland, representing the Office of the Mayor of Jacksonville.

The 10,000-square-foot state-of-the-art animal hospital will employ approximately 30 people and, as one of the largest veterinary hospitals in the country, serve 300 pets daily.

The Jacksonville Pet Food Bank, which donates pet food to income-qualified pet owners, will operate out of the new Cassat Avenue location. Profits from the veterinary hospital will help support FCNMHP programs, such as the targeted spay/neuter surgery program, adoption events and the pet food bank.

## Wedding bells to ring in June for Avondale couple

Amy Marie Fishking, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. William Fishking of Jacksonville, and Jason Allen Rinehart, son of Mr. and Mrs. Jack Rinehart Jr. of Saint Augustine, announce their engagement with plans to be wed on June 24, 2016 at the Casa Marina Hotel in Jacksonville Beach.

Fishking graduated from The University of South Carolina Upstate and holds a bachelor's degree in elementary education. She is employed by Duval County Public Schools where she works as a second-grade teacher.



Amy Fishking and Jason Rinehart

Rinehart has a bachelor's degree in architectural engineering from the University of Miami and is employed by JEA as a transmission and substation engineer.

## Bradford, Poling announce engagement

Tarryn Lee Bradford and Brandon Ryan Poling have announced their engagement to be married. Wedding plans are in the early stages.

The couple both grew up in Ponte Vedra and attended Allen D. Nease High School a year apart.

Bradford, daughter of *The Resident* publisher Pamela Bradford and the late Timothy Bradford, and stepdaughter of *The Resident* publisher Seth Williams, attended the University of North Florida and holds a degree in English. She is the New Business Development Manager for The Resident Community News Group, Inc.

Poling, the oldest son of Keith and Sharon Poling of Ponte Vedra, is a client services representative for Estes Forwarding



Tarryn Lee Bradford and Brandon Ryan Poling

Worldwide (EFW). He is a graduate of Elon University, from which he holds a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration.

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## A NOTE FROM ONE OF THE OWNERS

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# Revellers keep party tradition going for Derby

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

For Avondale resident Alan Weldon, the annual Kentucky Derby party is, hooves down, his favorite.

On Derby Day, May 7, Mystic Revellers Captain Mark Holley hosted the 11th annual race party for about 150 people at his home on Edgewood Circle.

“Revellers has been keeping the Mardi Gras tradition going in Jacksonville since 1923,” said Weldon. “But as an equine veterinarian, this is my favorite party.”

A member of Ye Mystic Revellers, the 93-year-old social club that annually hosts one of the largest balls in Jacksonville, Weldon said nearly 800 attended the Revellers’ February 2016 Mardi Gras party at the Jacksonville Fairgrounds. The Kentucky Derby party is one of several events hosted by the Revellers.

“We had our biggest hat competition ever, mint julep was flowing (secret Weldon family recipe), a huge open bar with Kentucky’s best Bourbons (including Pappy Van Winkle), massive projection of the race (the most exciting two minutes in sports) as well as live music,” said Weldon, who started throwing Derby Day parties with his wife, Beth, in 1987.

“Some friends said it would make a great party for Revellers about a decade ago and it has just grown by leaps and bounds,” he said.

Weldon said some of the proceeds from the party’s race auction are donated to a charity at the end of the year. Jason Harrell and Jay Carney were the winners of the auction, having “bought” Nyquist as their racehorse.



Hosts Mark and Ivy Holley



Leigh Bryan



Shelley Miles Stillers, Alan Weldon



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only benefits our seriously injured clients, but other deserving members of our community that the law firm cares so much about.



Steve Pajcic has been honored as the 2016 "Lawyer of the Year". He was surprised with the honor at

the Jacksonville Bar Association's annual Law Day luncheon. It's in recognition of his dedication, tireless efforts and continuous commitment to the community. Steve was praised for his philanthropic efforts, especially when it comes to education.



There was a great celebration at Pajcic & Pajcic for our Dreams Come True child Ayden! The adorable 6-year-old is battling Spina Bifida. Ayden is definitely not shy. He fit right in at the office and got the entire staff to join him in a dinosaur growl. Curry Pajcic has been involved in this wonderful organization for many years. Dreams Come True fulfills the dreams of local children with life threatening illnesses.



Congratulations to seven Jacksonville Sheriff's Officers who completed a 250 mile plus bike ride in honor of police officers who died in the line of duty. The Policy Unity Tour was from Virginia to Washington, D.C.



The Pajcics, who are avid bike riders themselves, sponsored our local officers for this important event.



Pajcic & Pajcic represents individuals and families who have suffered serious personal injury or wrongful death due to the fault of others. Pajcic & Pajcic has eleven AV rated "preeminent" attorneys and is one of the few firms on Martindale-Hubbell's list of Top Ranked Law Firms in the Southeastern United States to receive the perfect 5.0 rating in client satisfaction.





Laura and Bill Hardaker with Susan and Hal O'Steen



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# SOCIAL R



Todd and Lexi Wurtz with Sarah and Dr. Andrew Simonson

## Changing lives in the name of burgers and fries

Ronald McDonald House Charities of Jacksonville held its annual McGala May 21, as the Sawgrass Marriott transformed into a Mardi Gras masquerade. The organization specializes in creating a "home away from home" for children and their families undergoing challenging treatments at local pediatric hospitals.

This year's gala celebrated the nonprofit's ability to ease the emotional and financial burdens associated with healthcare and lodging. The honorary chair of the ball was hailed by RMH executive director, Diane Boyle, as a "champion" for the organization as she honored long-standing leader, Ryan Schwartz.

Schwartz has helped to develop the dream of the expansion of the current facilities at the Ronald McDonald House in San Marco as capital campaign chairman and remained committed to the cause throughout the process. The RMH of Jacksonville is currently working toward a final leg of completion of the construction that has taken the facilities from 24 rooms to a 54-room facility. The newly minted C. Herman and Mary Virginia Terry Campus will be unveiled in the coming months.



Taylor Belshouse, Angie Horsley, Marissa Ierna and Amy Christus



Honorary Chair Ryan Schwartz with Holly and Jeff Tyrrell, Marty Flack and Karen Case



Co-chair Myron Pincomb with Mindy and David Dickson



Mark and Traci Jenks with Haydee and Jeff Smith

## Delivering for those in need of hearing, speech assistance

The Jacksonville Speech and Hearing Center got a big boost from supporters as the nonprofit treated guests to a beautiful night on the banks of the St. Johns River. The annual fundraiser, Finfest Rolling on the River, was held at the Timuquana Country Club May 21.

Thanks to generous sponsors, event organizers and donations from silent and live auction items, the evening was a hit for the organization. The co-chairs

for the evening were Myron and Amanda Pincomb and the honorary co-chairs were John and Gena Delaney, Dawn and Al Emerick, Robert and Margaret Hill, as well as John Falconetti and Shannon Miller.

The Jacksonville Speech and Hearing Center provides services and relief to those struggling with hearing loss and hearing impairment, along with speech related assistance. The world of communication for many Jacksonville residents is made possible through the work of the Springfield-based nonprofit.



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# REGISTER



Cinda Sherman with Preston Haskell



Gina and John Donahoo



Gary McCalla with Melanie Jensen and Jim Cox



River Hops hosts Elaine and Mike Ashourian with Sally Hazelip, executive director of North Florida School of Special Education

## Donors enjoy riverfront view at 7th Annual River Hops

The orange sun setting over the St. Johns River made a spectacular backdrop for the 7th Annual River Hops benefit May 7. Held at the spacious riverfront home of Elaine and Mike Ashourian of Granada, the event was a fundraiser to support the North Florida School of Special Education.

During the evening, guests enjoyed cocktails and gourmet pairings from several of the finest chefs in Northeast Florida. Included among the culinary artists were Chef Brennan Pickren of Ovinte, Chef Ezekiel Mears of Il Desco, Chef Christopher Cohen of Bistro AIX, Chef Ian Lynch, executive chef of Forking Amazing Restaurants, and Chef Brett Swearingen of Berry Good Farms at the North Florida School of Special Education.

Intuition Ale Works provided several specialty craft beers including El Guapo Mexican-style Lager, Jon Boat Coastal Ale, Wheelhouse Brown Ale, Easy on the Eyes Session IPA, Boneshaker Imperial Pilsner as well as white and red wines.

Live music by Dustin Bradley as well as silent and live auctions entertained the guests.

Approximately \$76,000 was raised – the largest amount to date – to support the school and its mission to improve the lives of students with mild to moderate intellectual disabilities through the achievement of academic, vocational and social skills.

## Cultural Council celebrated best and brightest

The iconic 17th island green at the Tournament Players Championship appropriately painted the backdrop for the Cultural Council of Greater Jacksonville's annual Arts Awards. Thanks to generous sponsors, including the TPC and presenting sponsor Regions Bank, the 40th

Annual Arts Awards celebration was one to remember. The undertaking was a work of art in itself, with a photojournalistic journey through the iconic faces behind the arts and culture scene in Jacksonville. Local photographer Renee Parenteau captured 40 of the top honorees in a crafted exhibition fit for the occasion. The event was attended by over 625 artists, advocates and friends of arts, culture and creativity May 7.



Charles and Elli Zimmerman



Tim and Stephanie Cost with Betsy Lovett and Ward Lariszy



Robin and Dave Albaneze, Cyndi and Kent Schmidt with Blake and Kaitlyn Weatherly

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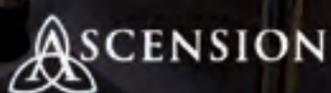
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## 4th annual Wiffle Golf benefits JALA



Curt, Aidan, Ellis, Maggie, Curtis, John-John and Curry Pajcic

The Law Firm of Pajcic & Pajcic hosted its 4th Annual Happy Hour and Wiffle Golf on the Backyard Nine to benefit Jacksonville Area Legal Aid. The May 22 event, held at Steve and Anne Pajcic's home, offered a \$6,000 cash prize for a hole-in-one on Hole Number 6, the Dock Hole, which was won by Thomas Lloyd. An additional \$6,000 will be donated in Lloyd's name to JALA.

The course, with two par 5s and three par 3s, involved real golf shots, including putting and plays about as tough as a player's home course. Rounds at TPC were among the prizes for "closest to the pin" and lowest gross score. Pajcic & Pajcic also matched all entry fees, hole sponsorships and donations with a donation to JALA. As it did last year, the event raised \$40,000 for JALA.



Bill Burns and Robyn Sieron



Hole-in-one winner Thomas Lloyd with JALA president and CEO Jim Kowalski

## St. Mark's holds County Fair fundraiser

Residents from all around enjoyed a "grand ol' time" at the County Fair-themed dinner and auction in support of St. Mark's Episcopal Day School. Guests at the sold-out event held April 23 on the school's campus enjoyed a delectable meal catered by Pastiche, entertainment by emcee Curtis Dvorak, mobile silent auction bidding, and a lively live auction with auctioneer Steve Walt. Country chic attire and decorations set the mood for the fun and festive evening. The event raised \$70,000, which will directly support the school's programs and academics.



Amy and John Summerlin



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Event Co-chairs Ellen Magevney, Ginger Kurlas, Kerry Stiegler



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# Very special day for very special children

## Cummer hosts 21st annual VSA Festival

By Kate A. Hallock  
Resident Community News

For the 21st year in a row, the Cummer Museum of Art & Gardens invited nearly 2,000 elementary school students with disabilities into its galleries and onto its meticulously groomed gardens.

Over a four-day period during the first week in May, 1,286 volunteers welcomed 1,807 students and 617 teachers and chaperones from 39 schools to enjoy art, music and nature at the Riverside museum during the 2016 Very Special Arts Festival.

Carefully escorted from art station to station, the boys and girls were introduced to fine art in a way they would probably not experience if not for the VSA Festival.



Students from LaVilla School for the Arts mime for visitors at the Very Special Arts Festival.

“This is a place where children of varying abilities can be successfully engaged in their own personal creative expressions, experiencing art in the museums, listening to live musicians perform for them,” said Hope McMath, executive director of the Cummer.

VSA is an international organization, a sister organization to the Special Olympics, founded more than 35 years ago by U.S. Ambassador Jean Kennedy Smith. The local affiliate is housed at the Cummer, which began small in 1995 with a two-hour festival, serving a couple hundred children with 50 volunteers.

The Cummer is the only museum in the country that conducts the Very Special Arts festival within its walls.

“Someone asked ‘Don’t you get nervous with all these people in the museum at one time?’” said McMath. “We’ve gotten used to that now, but the year we started we were in between executive directors, so there wasn’t really anyone who could say no.”

All the activities developed are adaptive for the disabilities, said McMath, noting the art projects in the galleries directly link to the art on the walls. “There is a very specific curriculum we develop each year and it’s done in the schools before the kids get here,” she said. “This is not just a school field trip. It’s more than that to be meaningful.”

In fact, the curriculum is totally different



Elementary school students with disabilities enjoy the tactile sensation of one of the gardens at the Cummer.



Cummer curator Holly Keris, with volunteers Candace Bridgewater in the back, Cathy vanBrederode, Mary Summers, Rachel Kamm, Holly Green, Joyce Hanson

every year so that for students who come back each year the experience is new and fresh. “We’ve only repeated two activities during those 21 years,” said McMath. Twenty years of assessments indicates 97 percent of the teachers who have participated in the festival said it exceeded their expectations and met their education goals.

“The Cummer VSA experience is one of my favorite field trips,” said Candace McIntire, teacher of deaf and hard of hearing first and second graders at Central Riverside Elementary School. “My students look forward to it all year. They thoroughly enjoy ‘getting their hands dirty’ by creating different art pieces. The staff is always so friendly and accommodating.”

Citi Group has been the lead presenter of the festival for the past 20 years, with additional sponsors, partners, underwriters and in-kind supporters. According to McMath, the bus bill is the largest expense. “We will have hired over 90 buses to make this happen. Accessible buses are very expensive,” she said.

The festival is free to the schools which

are selected to participate. Within two days of opening registration, the list is filled with students from public and private schools within a five-county area. Some years the waiting list has been as high as 1,800, according to McMath.

“We’re always thinking about expanding, but it takes financial resources and expansion of the volunteer corps by 400 people, and there’s a capacity concern,” she said. “We’re also open to the public while we’re doing this, which is interesting as people have no idea what they’re walking into, but it’s free during this week.”

The most important thing the students leave with, said McMath, is being in a place that is very different than their routine place and being surrounded by people who are different from people they see every day.

Half of the volunteers have served in prior festivals. Most are not educators, but come from corporations, such as Citi, book clubs and garden clubs, and universities. “The message to the volunteers is ‘Be authentic, be open, be vulnerable, be loving, and you’ll be just fine,’” said McMath.

### What Aging Should Be...

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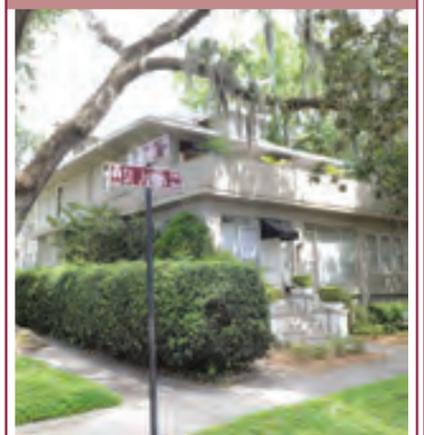
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## Great Electric Challenge will keep the lights on

Move over, Captain Underpants! There's a new superhero in town.

Commander Current, portrayed by Sam Mitchell, joined Captain Underwear, also known as Robert Reid, and Downtown Ecumenical Services Council (DESC) to bring dignity to families in need, many of whom are on the brink of homelessness and must choose between paying for food, rent or electricity.

The Great Electric Challenge took place at Mellow Mushroom May 17 in the Shoppes of Avondale, and raised nearly \$30,000 to keep the lights on.

"Summer is coming and electric bills are rising, which is why The Great Electric Challenge is so important," said Beth Wilson, DESC clothing manager. "With the proceeds from this event, we will be able to help 120 local families avoid homelessness and get back on their feet this summer."

Commander Current, Captain Underwear and sports guru Cole Pepper hosted the family-friendly event, which encouraged parents to bring children dressed in their favorite superhero costumes. If you couldn't make the event, visit <http://greatelectricemergency.com/> to donate.



Elizabeth Meux of Berkshire Hathaway Home Services poses with Commander Current and Captain Underpants.

### Nemours supporters gather, celebrate testimony

Special guests were invited to the Ortega riverfront home of Betsy Lovett, as the hostess welcomed Nemours donors, supporters, staff and a pair of parents who shared an uplifting story.

The group learned more about the lifesaving care delivered to children at Nemours Specialty Care in Jacksonville, in particular, the story of a strong, resilient child by the name of Leila Charboneau as told by her loving parents, Becky and Tim. The family had struggled to keep Leila healthy as she underwent rigorous testing and procedures to solve a chronic ear infection. Her mother, Becky, while holding back tears and difficult memories said, "A mom will do more research than the FBI," as she recounted her efforts and search for answers.



Betsy Lovett with Eric and Loli Loveless

The Charbonneau family is a reflection of the work and tireless dedication of the Nemours staff, as an eventual diagnosis of hydrocephalus was abated by brain surgery. Early in her life, Leila's parents were told that their daughter may never walk, or talk and she would be delayed most of her life. Today, Leila is doing gymnastics and playing the violin, defying the odds thanks to the physicians at Nemours and the donor contributions that fund lifesaving work every day.



Andrew Siebert with Randi Guthard, Cheryl and Kevin Barnett



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# Costumed canines take the stage at Arf Barket

Riverside Arts Market's semi-annual Arf Barket was the place to be May 7, where pets – and many owners – were decked out in their finest or funniest costumes. The event draws from all over Jacksonville and beyond. In the crowd was Riverside Avondale Preservation's new executive director, Adrienne Burke, and her family, who reside in Fernandina Beach.

The costume contest included 10 canines, who pranced across the stage as Emcee Matt Pittman announced each one. The prize was awarded to Buffy, and owner Sharon

McElwee, of Middleburg, who were dressed 1950s style in poodle skirt, saddle shoes and bobby socks and granny glasses.

The event was likely the last Arf Barket to be coordinated by RAM director Krysten Bennett, who earlier last month announced her resignation after four years – and nearly 200 Saturdays – at RAM's helm. Riverside Avondale Preservation announced it would seek candidates for the position of Senior Manager of RAM, reporting to Burke.



Sharon McElwee with first place winner, Buffy, dressed in 1950s style



Mystra Tillotson with her long-hair Chihuahuas, Reecies Piecies and Charité



Nico, dressed as a Beanie Baby, came in third in the Arf Barket Costume Contest. Nico's owner is Daniel Walden of Riverside.



Margaret Everidge gets a kiss from Miss Ellie, owned by Chic Acosta



Noah Burke with Maddy, dressed as the Queen of Hearts



Glenda Seitz with her 7-year-old greyhound, Chad, who she adopted from the track



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# Women's Board announces Florida Forum



## Speaker series to feature powerful lineup

The Florida Forum Committee of the Women's Board of Wolfson Children's Hospital has put together an exciting speaker lineup for its 2016-2017 season, with something for everyone.

The speaker series kicks off on October 25 with Dr. Ben Carson, world-renowned

pediatric neurosurgeon at Johns Hopkins Children's Center, New York Times best-selling author, syndicated columnist, and candidate for the 2016 Republican presidential nomination.

Also in the political vein, the January 30, 2017 speaker will be Megyn Kelly, a key figure in Fox News' coverage of the 2016 presidential primaries. A former litigator, Kelly is host of Fox News Channel's The Kelly File, and was named one of Time magazine's most influential people in the world in 2014.

The season winds up on March 13, 2017 with hometown favorite, Tim Tebow, a two-time national football champion and Heisman Trophy winner. After a career in the National Football League, Tebow founded the Tim Tebow Foundation. He currently co-hosts the SEC network's SEC Nation, a traveling pre-game show.

For more information on the Florida Forum or to purchase tickets, visit [www.FloridaForum.com](http://www.FloridaForum.com) or call (904) 202-2886.

### The Florida Forum Committee:

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# New digs for intellectually/developmentally disabled in Southside

## New community center named for mother of Avondale resident

By Marcia Hodgson  
Resident Community News

Thanks to The Arc Jacksonville, intellectually and developmentally disabled adults now have a place to call their own. With much fanfare and many tearful moments, The Arc Jacksonville Village, a \$22 million private community, held its grand opening and ribbon cutting in Southside May 18.

Built on 17 of 22 acres leased to The Arc

Jacksonville for 99 years, the Village comprises 96 one- and two-bedroom apartments as well as a clubhouse with pool, cafeteria and multipurpose rooms and will house 120 residents.

The Arc Jacksonville Village is the realization of a “dream 10 years in the making,” said The Arc Jacksonville President/CEO Jim Whittaker in his opening remarks. In addition to Whittaker, several other speakers took the podium at the opening ceremony, including Florida Senator Aaron Bean, Audrey Moran, chair of the Jacksonville Chamber of Commerce and senior vice president at Baptist Health, Martha Sawyer of San Marco, whose son, Tommy, is a Village resident, as well as Village resident Destiny Carter and her mother, Felicia.

Ben Davis of Avondale, a major donor, unveiled the name of the new Mary Lou Davis Community Center, a clubhouse named for his deceased mother. Jaguars Quarterback Blake Bortles announced a gift of \$40,000 from his foundation to The Arc Jacksonville and shared ribbon-cutting duties with Davis.

Three model apartments decorated by San Marco interior designer R. Ward Lariscy were also on display during the grand opening.

The Arc Jacksonville Village is touted as the first of its kind in the United States. It combines affordable, independent living with an on-site support staff and 24-hour security. The format of The Village encourages its residents to interact with each other and offers



Jaguars quarterback Blake Bortles and Ben Davis cut the ribbon during the grand opening of The Arc Jacksonville Village May 18. Looking on are Village resident Kristie Gabel; Blake Wilson, EverBank CEO and president; Senator Aaron Bean and Jim Whittaker, The Arc Village CEO and president; front: Village residents Destiny Carter and Michael Williams.

them the chance to take advantage of recreational facilities, churches, and employment in the surrounding neighborhood. Including benefits, earned and income from investments, each resident’s earnings cannot exceed \$26,640. Rent on the apartments ranges from \$190 to \$525 per month, although the estimated cost of expenses may be as high as \$1,244 per month once utilities, food and personal expenses are factored in.

During his opening remarks, Whittaker said The Arc Jacksonville is considering building a new YMCA on the remaining acreage of their property so the residents, as well as the public, can more easily take advantage of its programs.

The 32-acre property had originally been donated to the state on the condition that it benefit people with disabilities. Construction, staffing and other expenses have been financed by a state grants, tax credits and a capital campaign, which has raised \$ 6 million to date.

“We’ve all been to ribbon-cuttings,” said Bean in his remarks. “This ribbon cutting is different. You will get goose-bumps. It’s a flood of hope and opportunities for a population that hasn’t felt hope and opportunities like this before.”



Village residents Moira Rossi and her fiancé Nick Kowalchuk join their friend Robert Brown, also a Village resident, and Rossi’s parents, Bernadette Moran and Frank Rossi of Avondale at the grand opening of The Arc Jacksonville Village May 18.



Ben Davis and Jim Whittaker, president/CEO of The Arc Jacksonville, shake hands after the name of The Arc Village’s new community center is unveiled. The Mary Lou Davis Community Center is named for Davis’s mother.

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# Ten women honored as 'unsung sheroes'

Women, Words and Wisdom 2016, presented by the Women's Center of Jacksonville May 17 at the Junior League of Jacksonville's Riverside House, featured WJCT's First Coast Connect host/producer Melissa Ross as guest speaker. The annual event focused on 10 women, Unsung Sheroes, nominated by community organizations.

Those honored include Marilyn Dill, nominated by Rethreaded; Leanne McKnight Prendergas, nominated by the Jacksonville Women Lawyers Association; Mimi Tipton, nominated by the League of Women Voters; Kathy Suarez, nominated by Children's Home Society; Mary K. Nelson, nominated by Phi Beta Sigma; Jewel Flornoy, nominated by Zeta Phi Beta; Linda Pomerantz, nominated by the Jacksonville Chapter of Hadassah; Nancy Chamblin, nominated by the Uptown Civitan Club; Hattie Andrews, nominated by Southeastern Grocers, and Florence Haridan, nominated by the Jacksonville Women's Business Center.



Jackie Glass, Sally Suslak, Alicia Grant, Teresa Miles, the new executive director for the Women's Center of Jacksonville



Dawn Musallem, Lisé Everly, Betty Carley



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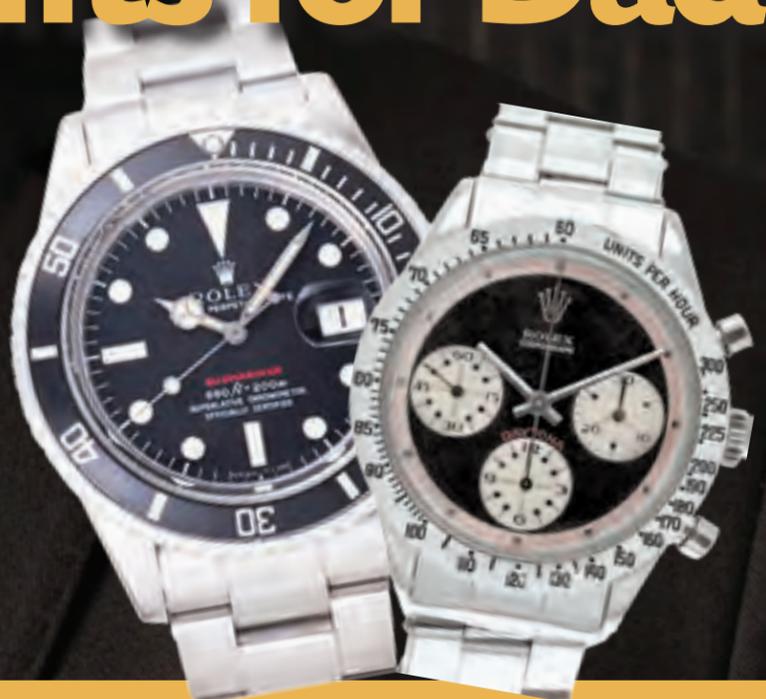
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— In Memoriam —  
**Gary P. Larson**  
 January 19, 1951 – May 5, 2016

Gary P. Larson, 65, of Normandy Village, passed away tragically on May 5, 2016. He was born in Sheboygan, Wisconsin on January 19, 1951, graduated from North High School, and married Christine 'Chrissy' Bifano on September 1, 1978.

Larson Rug Cleaning was established in 1981 by Larson who operated it with one of his sons, James, who will carry on the family business. Larson was an active member of Oakleaf Christian Fellowship in Orange Park. He was also the founder of First Coast Prison Invasion.

"Gary Larson touched many lives through his steadfast faith and his love of Christ," said a client, who wished to be unnamed. "He definitely 'threw his nets on the other side of the boat,' as he so often reminded me was Christ's directive to His disciples. 'It's easy,' he said, 'to preach the gospel to those who already know Christ. It's sharing Christ's love with those who don't know Him that really furthers God's Kingdom.' And that's what Gary did, especially in his prison ministry. He will be missed by those of us here, but there is great rejoicing in heaven!"

Larson was a hard-working businessman and loyal to all his customers, a true man of integrity.

"What a blessing to share life with Gary Larsen! And did he ever share life! A text, a call and Gary was on his way. He was dependable like that," said Emmy Cerveney. "He could lift heavy furniture singlehandedly, roll up a huge rug and pop it in his white van as if it were a Kleenex. He was strong like that. He would return a worn rug in but a few days in mint condition. Gary's service was impeccable. Carpet cleaning was his specialty, but even more important was his relationship with his customers. We were his friends. And even more important than his ability to renew a rug was the light and life he brought into your home."

Longtime client Joan Haskell also spoke highly of Larson, his honesty and Christianity.

"It's funny, but as I was thinking about Gary, God put Paul of Tarsus into my thoughts. Paul was a tent maker. Gary Larson cleaned rugs. Paul had an incredible work ethic, so did Gary. Paul was passionate about his Lord, so was Gary," said Haskell. "For 30 years Gary cleaned our rugs. He was always fair, always honest, always open to the Holy Spirit, always ready to talk about his spiritual walk, always ready to pray about anything I was struggling with."

Larson was survived by his wife, Chrissy; his five children, Jeremy Matthew Larson of Sheboygan, Wisconsin, James Edward



Larson and his wife Angela of Jacksonville, Joanna Larson Jones and her husband Forrest of Kansas City, Missouri, Garrett Alexander Larson, and Lily Dale Larson of Jacksonville; two grandchildren, Maggie and Benjamin Larson, his two brothers, Peter Larson and Barbara of Sheboygan, and Michael Larson and Stephanie of Sheboygan, along with two nieces, and the rest of his family and friends. His parents, Edward Ludwig and Marion Imig Larson of Sheboygan, preceded him in death. Gary was buried on May 11, 2016, at a private family gathering.

A celebration of life service was held on May 22 at Evangel Temple Assembly of God. Donations to help offset expenses may be made at [www.ocfax.com/gary-larson](http://www.ocfax.com/gary-larson).



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# Cancer survivors enjoy evening out by the river

Relay For Life Riverside hosted a cancer survivor's dinner April 29 at the Marina at Ortega Landing for approximately 30 survivors, caregivers and family members. Guests enjoyed music by the Junco Royals and a brief talk by cancer survivor Rebecca Joyce.

"A wonderful evening of good food, music and celebration!" said Rebecca Joyce, the 2016 Relay For Life of Riverside Survivor/Caregiver Committee Lead.

Also attending was parenting and children's book author L.R. Knost, whose daughter, Rebekah Moore, was the marketing lead for the April 30 Relay For Life event. Knost, who has a rare neuroendocrine cancer, was the keynote speaker at the event at Unity Plaza. She is also the founder of Little Hearts/Gentle Parenting Resources.

The event was catered by A1 Catering with centerpieces from American Beauty Florist in Riverside. Raffle items were donated by area merchants, including Bryant's Bloomers, Snap Fitness, Timed Exercise and Jeepherder 4x4.



Bunny Manning and Kellie Ann Kelleher, executive director for Hope Lodge



Survivor Debbie Sluder, with daughter Addie Hall



Twelve-year survivor Betty Hodges with husband, John



Tyler Morris and Sabeen Perwaiz Sayed

# Mystery trip winners pack suitcases for destinations unknown

The Mystery Trip Suitcase Party hosted April 16 by the Independent Living Foundation raised \$20,000 to support the Independent Living Resource Center (ILRC), which empowers people with disabilities to live independently in our community.

In its third year, hosted annually at Malone AirCharter, the event provides attendees the chance to win three mystery trips by car, boat and plane to undisclosed dinner locations. Trip sponsors were Tom Bush BMW (drive away), Brooks Rehabilitation (sail away) and Farah & Farah (fly away).

The ILRC, which has served Jacksonville since 1978, provides programs such as the Brooks Temporary Loan Closet, which loans out durable medical equipment to those in need.



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# NEVER TOO OLD

Thanks to healthier lifestyles many seniors have the energy to explore new activities and hobbies, often taking up something secretly yearned for earlier in life. *Never Too Old* takes a look at senior residents who are thinking out of the box and stepping out of their comfort zones. If you know someone who has a similar story to share, send information to editor@residentnews.net.

## 101-YEAR-OLD WOMAN TAKES FLYING LEAP

By Peggy Harrell Jennings  
Resident Community News

No one ever really told Helene Bunnell of Ortega to “go take a flying leap” but that’s what she has been doing since childhood.

To celebrate her 101st birthday on April 20, Helene completed her fourth sky diving adventure on April 23 at Skydive in Deland, Florida.

“Mother planned to jump on her 90th birthday, but she got impatient and jumped on her 88th and 89th too,” said her son, Richard Bunnell. “We had a jump planned for her 100th birthday but she was sick. This year Mother, myself and my son Brian jumped. It was his first time and I think he was more excited than she was. She just takes things as they come.”

Richard explained that Helene saw barnstorming pilots after World War I and was inspired. The government sold many of the biplanes, and pilots bought them to do aerobatic stunts and give people rides.

“She has never been afraid of heights,” he said. “She helped Dad roof a 40-foot high silo after World War II. She would have had a plane if we had the money.”

Helene went up in an airplane for the first time in 1924 when she was nine years old. She was so inspired by the experience that she took a parasol and leaped out of



Helene Bunnell, 101, comes in for her landing.

the third floor window of her parents’ home in Pennsylvania.

“Fortunately, there were bushes and snow so she wasn’t hurt,” said Richard. “She did get in trouble with her parents though. It’s sort of a family joke she was more in trouble for leaving the window open and letting all that cold air in.”

This year the Bunnells took their flying leaps one at a time, youngest to oldest, so they could watch each other descend.

“It is a tandem jump from 13,000 feet, so Mother and her dive partner did a flip and

then went about 110 or 120 miles per hour until he popped the chute,” said Richard.

Helene said jumping is more interesting than sitting around eating cake and drinking punch, but she is content to leave it at four jumps. The family is waiting to see if she will be recognized by the Guinness Book of World Records for the distinction of being the oldest female tandem jumper.

While some might be concerned at the thought of their elderly mother taking such a risk, Richard is nonplussed. “I grew up with it so I thought it was nor-

mal and nothing about his grandmother surprises Brian,” he said.

Most amateur skydivers whoop and laugh when they landed, but Helene didn’t even crack a smile. “It was good – like it always is,” she said in a matter of fact manner as she shrugged.

“My grandmother taught me you are never too old to have fun,” laughed Brian, her grandson. “This jump was a lot more intense than I thought it would be, but she landed like she was coming out of the library.”



Mission accomplished!

*“My grandmother taught me you are never too old to have fun.”* — Brian Bunnell, grandson



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# The Way We Were Len and Vicki Burroughs

By Julie Kerns Garmendia  
Resident Community News

Murray Hill gained two of its strongest supporters when Len Burroughs and his wife, Vicki, moved to Jacksonville in 1972. As busy professionals with no children, most of their spare time was spent renovating the Ingleside home they bought in 1976. Then, in the early 1990s, two changes that would greatly alter the community turned them into determined activists for Murray Hill.

“We joined Murray Hill Preservation Association (MHPA) in 1990 when Vicki became concerned that during the review and reapportioning of City Council districts, it was proposed Murray Hill be removed from District 14 (which includes Riverside and Avondale), and be included in District 9. She asked me to get involved because Murray Hill is much more like the historic districts than the District 9 communities to the North and West,” said Len. “We stopped that change, and Murray Hill remained part of District 14. That was the first time I spoke before the City Council.”

Len said his good friend and Ingleside neighbor, Chuck Mann, 81, was his mentor in becoming involved in resolving community issues.

The second proposed change that activated the Burroughs and MHPA mem-

bers occurred a few years later when the United States Postal Service tried to require curbside mailboxes in Murray Hill. The USPS planned to stop front-door delivery to individual residences.

“We fought the postal service hard on that and prevented curbside mailboxes,” said Len, who is the longest-serving MHPA board member. He has served on the board since 2000 and was vice president for several years.



Vicki Burroughs, Janet Irvin, Lynda Waddington and Donna Kaneer freezing at a tennis match in Boone Park in 2013.



At Lake Louise in the Canadian Rockies, 2015

Len, 67, and Vicki, 69, stay informed and are passionate about anything that affects their community. Len’s authoritative, radio-announcer voice commands attention and although never a public speaker, he was surprised that during the many times he spoke before the City Council in support of Murray Hill issues he was never nervous.

The couple’s favorite neighborhood activities have been coordinating events to promote Murray Hill and bring the community together. Favorite memories are the groundbreaking May 5, 2004 on Edgewood Avenue as part of the Edgewood Avenue Improvement Plan, and planting the new medians. The \$300,000 project was a joint effort between the city, JEA and MHPA to beautify Edgewood Avenue between Plymouth and Mayflower Streets, and transform its appearance.

A favorite event they’d like to see revived is the festive Evening on Edgewood holiday celebration which was held in the 1990s. At that time, Edgewood Avenue was closed off, wreaths and decorations hung, luminaries lit, fire trucks carried dignitaries, and horse-drawn carriage offered rides to residents.

concern because they are cleaned four times annually by volunteers. We’re encouraged that adjacent businesses are helping.”

The Burroughs said they fell in love with their mid-1920s Prairie Style home on Ingleside Avenue when they saw it in a realty listing. Correction, they fell in love with the exterior of the two-story, dark reddish-brown brick home, purchasing the two-bedroom, one-bath home for \$28,500.



Wedding, June 6, 1971

“It had no central heat or air, just a working fireplace and space heater. Its incredible woodwork was hidden under about eight layers of white paint. We saw beautiful heart pine and oak because two things were left unpainted: one downstairs window frame where the air-conditioner was and the fireplace mantel. The sub-floor and upstairs floors are heart pine. The stairs, banister and downstairs floors are all oak,” Len said. “When I chipped some paint off the baseboard we saw it was originally varnished so at least the paint could be removed. It took us two years working on it together to strip and refinish everything.”

Fortunately Len grew up in Birmingham, Alabama, learning woodworking and refinishing from his late maternal grandfather, Eugene Jordan. Jordan was a tinsmith skilled in carpentry. The Burroughs, who are happiest doing things together, divided tasks during the home renovation. Vicki took charge as interior designer and assistant, while Len handled construction and contracted workers.

They remodeled the downstairs breakfast nook into a second bathroom, installed central heat and air and completed two additions over the years. First they added a



Len Burroughs and Vicki Johnson, 1968

The Burroughs said they are concerned about future over-development in Murray Hill, and of Edgewood Avenue becoming congested and crowded. They believe it is important that appropriate development be managed.

“We’re the next Park and King, 5 Points or Avondale. Our property values are rising. More people are moving here and renovating properties. We need to plan more parking and preserve the open spaces and passive parks we still have,” said Len. “Future maintenance of the islands is an ongoing

Continued on page 43

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500-square-foot great room onto the back of the home. Then they converted a deck and screened porch into a 160-square-foot dining room large enough for a dining room table that comfortably seats 12 to 14 guests. They enjoy hosting dinners with tennis and biking friends and are part of a monthly dinner group that has been dining in each other's homes for 35 years.

The Burroughs moved to Jacksonville for Len's career in the pest control business. Although Len was offered tempting career opportunities to leave Jacksonville, the couple stayed in Murray Hill, and he retired from Ecolab Commercial Pest Control in 2011 as the Northeast Florida District Manager. Vicki worked 34 years as a medical secretary.



Len rode in Donna Bike to Fight Breast Cancer in 2012, 2013 and 2014. He and other North Florida Bicycle Club members made and wore pink tutus.

If you see an extremely fit senior riding the streets of the historic districts on a specialized Roubaix bike, it's probably Len. He has been biking for 50 years either by himself, with Vicki or with members of the

North Florida Bicycle Club (NFBC), which he joined in 2010 to support the group. Since his retirement, Len said he bikes four to five days a week, 35 miles a day with the club. He's been a board member since 2012, general director for two years.

In the best shape of his life since college, Len broke the treadmill during his last stress test. When the medical technician told him, "Okay, this is ridiculous, you can stop now," Len wanted to see how long he could run. The treadmill gave out before he did.

"It's much safer to ride with a group. Your job is keeping yourself and everyone else safe. A psychologist friend of mine calls it the 'herd mentality.' You're always looking out for your herd," Len said. "This is the greatest group of people, plus the health benefits of biking. Diabetics start biking, get in shape and no longer have diabetes, likewise high blood pressure."

The Burroughs' favorite bicycle ride is the Jacksonville-Baldwin Rail Trail or NFBC-sponsored Sunday Social rides, which last two to four hours and are easier. Len is the leader of these rides, which tour the historic districts, parks and Southbank. Beginners are welcome.

Len has been a member of the Southwest Citizens Planning & Advisory Committee (CPAC) since 2003, when he was appointed by former Mayor John Peyton. He has been a member of the Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) since 2014.

Vicki is originally from Rockford, Illinois and of Swedish descent. In 2002, after her father, Clifford Victor Johnson, died, her mother, Ingeborg, visited more frequently. In 2008 Ingeborg moved into the Edgewood Condominiums in Murray Hill, a few blocks from her daughter.

"My mother emigrated from Sweden at age six. An artist, she painted many oil

paintings that hang in our home," Vicki said. "Mother designed and sewed my sister's and my clothing, including our wedding dresses and headpieces. She grew vegetables, herbs and was a gourmet cook." During the last few years of her life, Ingeborg developed Alzheimer's disease, and Vicki cared for her mother until she died at age 93 in 2015.

Vicki said she loves gardening. She and Len have painstakingly created a lush oasis in their large backyard. She's a photographer and Cummer Museum member. She plans to begin mosaic classes at RouxArt on Edgewood Avenue and attends Jacksonville Symphony Coffee Series Concerts with her neighborhood friend, Joan Potter.

A 35-year tennis player at Boone Park where she played 20 years with the Working Women's B Team, Vicki now plays friendship doubles with three different groups of friends who travel from other areas of Jacksonville and Amelia Island.

The Burroughs are Alhambra Dinner Theatre season ticket-holders and are members of the Jacksonville Zoo. They

frequently travel and have visited the Grand Tetons and Yellowstone in 2014 and Banff, Alberta Canada in 2015. This summer the couple will drive to Rockford, Illinois for a memorial service for Vicki's mother, then plan to tour Iowa. They enjoy getaways to their house on Lake Mitchell in Clanton, Alabama, as well as visiting their extended families.

Len's sister was the late Jennie Jordan Burroughs, a well-known resident of Avondale. She was a beloved kindergarten teacher at Venetia Elementary for many years. Jennie died in 2002 at the age of 51 from Lupus and complications. She often sang with a Bluegrass trio that performed locally.

The Burroughs will celebrate their 45th wedding anniversary in June. The couple's immediate plans include more leisure and less activism. They are delighted and encouraged that younger Murray Hill residents are becoming involved, proactive and showing community leadership.



Biking in Stanley Park, Vancouver, BC

# Dementia:

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# Jr. Residents



Wes Myler, Reedy Monahan and Will Weinbecker

## Youth sailors compete in San Francisco

Three boys who competitively sail as part of the Year Round Youth Sailing Program at the Florida Yacht Club were the first sailors in the area to attend the prestigious U.S. Optimist National Team Trials in San Francisco, held in early April.

Reedy Monahan, of Ortega Forest, Wes Myler, of Ortega, and Will Weinbecker, of St. Nicholas, sail competitively as part of the Year Round Youth Sailing Program at the Florida Yacht Club.

To attend the event, Monahan, Myler and Weinbecker needed to finish in the top 25 percent in one of 11 major Regional or National Regattas. They joined the top 250 Optimist Sailors in the country to

spend four days on the windy and rough San Francisco Bay waters.

Weinbecker was the top finisher of the group and made the Gold Fleet, which is the top one-third of the racers at the event. Because of his performance, Weinbecker was invited to join the U.S. Optimist Development Team, and will travel and practice for the next year with the top 60 Opti sailors in the country.

If you would like more information on FYC's Summer Waterfront Programs or year-round sailing programs contact Jodi Weinbecker at (904) 677-4860 or email [jweinbecker@thefloridayachtclub.org](mailto:jweinbecker@thefloridayachtclub.org).

## Avondale high school senior wins foreign exchange scholarship

Will Taylor, age 18, has been awarded a scholarship to study and work in Germany for a year through the Congress-Bundestag Vocational Youth Exchange. Only 25 high school seniors are awarded this scholarship each year.

Taylor, of Avondale, is an active member of CISV (Children's International Summer Village) Jacksonville, a nonprofit that educates and inspires action for a more just and peaceful world through international educational programs.

"I started with CISV as an 11-year-old when I went to a CISV Village in Brazil and lived with kids from 11 other countries for a month," said Taylor. "Since then, I have participated in CISV programs in Costa Rica, Denmark, the Faroe Islands, Illinois and here in Jacksonville. I'm very excited to spend a year between high school and college, learning German, living with a host family and working in various internship positions."



Darci Hirth, Eric Ciotti, Caroline McMullen, Will Taylor and Trey Marks at the U.S. delegation table in 2012 at a CISV Summer Camp in the Faroe Islands

This program is supported, as well as funded, by the United States Congress and the German Bundestag and offers graduating high school seniors the opportunity to live with a German host family, participate in a training or school program, and gain experience working abroad through an internship with a German company.

It's easy to get involved in CISV. Youth can participate in monthly service and social activities. Join the text group by texting "@cisvbjax" to 81010. More info about the organization is available at [www.cisvjax.org](http://www.cisvjax.org) or by email [cisvjax@gmail.com](mailto:cisvjax@gmail.com).

## Catholic students celebrate Jubilee Year of Mercy

On May 10, St. Matthew's Church and School held a Eucharistic Procession of students, families, and faculty through the Doors of Mercy and around the church. This unique procession took place during the Jubilee Year of Mercy, which was declared by Pope Francis as a time for asking for God's loving mercy and to show mercy to all those around us. The Jubilee Year of Mercy started in December 2015 and will continue through November 2016.



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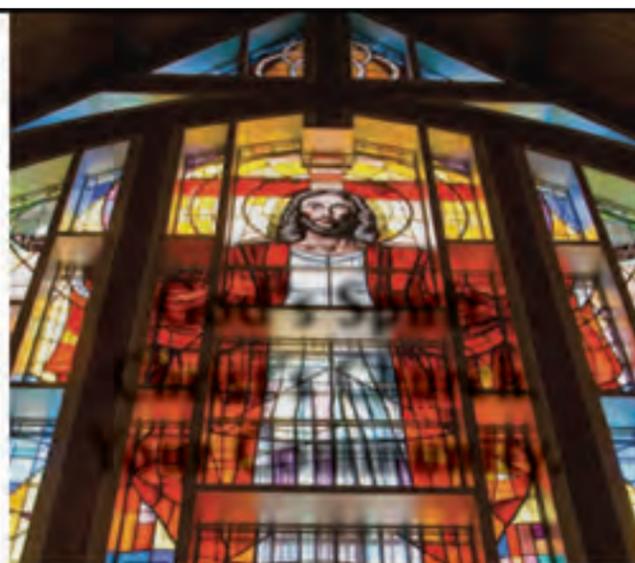
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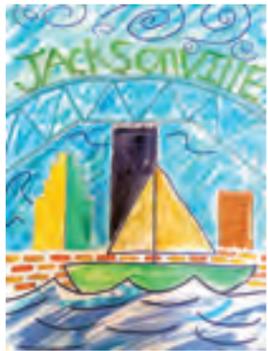
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## Student artwork showcased at new restaurant



The artwork of several Riverside Presbyterian Day School students has been selected for display at the new Brixx restaurant, opening this month at 220 Riverside Ave. Sixth graders Lyman Starmer, Grady Gillam, Francesca Borghese and Audrey Gunnlaugsson will have their art permanently showcased in a tile mural exclusive to this location. The artwork, which represents the city of Jacksonville, is a collaboration with Kate Rouh of Roux Art Mosaic.

Lyman Starmer, Grady Gillam, Francesca Borghese and Audrey Gunnlaugsson



By Lyman Starmer



By Grady Gillam



By Francesca Borghese



By Audrey Gunnlaugsson



### Child's Day Out Dance

Thirteen students in Child's Day Out (CDO) Avondale's after-school dance program put on a dance recital for friends and families to celebrate the end of the school year. "This is one of the many after school programs that we like to offer to our parents because we feel that it allows our children for the opportunity to further develop their social skills and increase their level of confidence," said Cindy Lawrence, director at CDO.



Sheryl Brantley and Nancy Wood

### Learning Specialist Team director receives Excellence in Education award

Sheryl Brantley, director of the Learning Specialist Team at St. Mark's Episcopal Day School, was named the 2015-2016 recipient of the Nancy N. Wood Excellence in Education Award. Faculty and staff nominate peers, which are reviewed by an award selection committee from the Board of Trustees.

The Board established this award in 2001 in honor of former headmistress Nancy N.

Wood to recognize and reward teachers or staff members who consistently and unselfishly go above and beyond normal expectations of time, energy, and devotion in working with students.

Brantley graduated from Liberty University in Lynchburg, Virginia, with a Bachelor's degree in Developmental Psychology and a Master's in School Administration and Supervision.

A certified teacher as well, Brantley has been teaching at St. Mark's for 15 years, and now leads the Learning Specialist Team, which is dedicated to enhancing the St. Mark's educational experience by working closely with students, families, and teachers across all aspects of the curriculum in kindergarten through sixth grade.

### Local school stands test of time; celebrates 100 years in education

By Kate A. Hallock  
Resident Community News

It's not every year that a school gets to celebrate a centennial anniversary.

Those words from Dinah Stewart, principal of Central Riverside Elementary School, kicked off a day-long celebration on May 19, beginning with posting of the colors at 9 a.m. on the school lawn.

After acknowledging distinguished guests, which included former principals and teachers, Duval County School District and City



Central Riverside Elementary School students participate in a 100th birthday celebration on the school's front lawn.

Council officials, and representatives from local churches which support the school, Stewart turned the microphone over to third-grade student Tallena Huffman, who delivered remarks on behalf of the student body.

"Our school is actually excellent because of the dedicated teachers and staff, the hardworking students and not to mention Central Riverside has an awesome playground," said Huffman.

"The teachers at Central Riverside are amazing. They try as much as they can to teach us fun ways to learn by playing different educational games. They have a great sense of humor, which really makes learning fun, and they are always coming up with ways to improve our education so we can get into great middle, high schools and colleges.

"The students are Central Riverside are such great friends to each other. We work together as partners or in groups to help one another. We play and share together and even set examples for one another, especially for students new to Central Riverside.

"I am honored to say I attend the school. Eventually, when I graduate, I will leave knowing I have what it takes to be successful in life," said Huffman.

During the celebration, a new school flag was dedicated and will be posted each day with the United States flag and the state flag.

After confetti cannons were shot, the guests and older students assembled in



Third-grade student Tallena Huffman offers remarks on behalf of the student body at the Central Riverside Elementary School 100th birthday party.

the auditorium to hear local historian Dr. Wayne Wood speak about the beginning of the school. Wood's presentation was followed by Ralph Coleman, music teacher, who took the assembly through a pictorial timeline of world events, fashion, music and other aspects of the period from 1916 to 2016.

### Young gardeners learn floral display, bees are next

The Budding Gardeners Youth Camp met May 7 at the Garden Club of Jacksonville to create floral designs to present to someone they love on Mother's Day.

Sponsored by the San Marco Garden Circle, the theme of the camp, "To Mom, With Love," focused on learning how to arrange fresh flowers and greenery in a teacup. Mary Green read a story about family love, and campers also made a special card to include in the design.

The next camp will be held during National Garden Week. Campers in first through sixth grades will learn about bees in a special camp on June 11 at 10 a.m. at the Garden Club, 1005 Riverside Ave. Class size is limited to 20 campers. To pre-register your child, call (904) 355-4224.



Abigail Maierhoffer and Jodie Dinkins with floral designs

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Ruth N. Upson Elementary School third graders playing recorders at Maple Street Biscuit Company (Photo by Nancy Beecher)

## Arts and music celebrated with family night out

Ruth N. Upson Elementary School celebrated Arts and Music in the Square during Family Night Out at Maple Street Biscuit Company, which opened with a special dinner menu for students, families and faculty and provided a showcase for students' art work and musical talent.

Upson music teacher Margaret Curry and art teacher Kimberly Hamby worked with their students to put on the evening's program and exhibit on April 20. The Murray Hill restaurant was packed with guests, and half of the proceeds from food and beverage sales during the evening benefited the school.



Palm tree by Hannah Kwaak, fifth grade (Photo by Nancy Beecher)

## Students show off acting, dancing skills in a play and a ballet

On May 6 and 7, the Fishweir Elementary Drama and Dance Departments, co-directed by Cecelia Futo and Claire Futo, presented a dual-performance of *Little Women*, Louisa May Alcott's timeless tale of life, love, and loss in Civil War-era New England, followed by *Swan Lake*, a ballet classic depicting the age old struggle between good and evil.

The costumes were originally hand-made to fit adults. "They had to be fitted, deconstructed, reconstructed, altered and embellished to fit eight- to 10-year-old children," said Claire Futo. "It took Cecelia three months to re-make every article of clothing for the 24 cast members."

The performances, presented to sold-out audiences, received rave reviews.



Emily Wheatley, Vanessa Norona, Burlin Frohock, and Malina Bowles in a pas de quatre in *Swan Lake*



Simone Dillinger (Meg), Austin Shepard (John Brooke), Sara Lester-Norman (Marmee), Hope Looney (Laurie), Mia Jorgensen (Amy), Jude Simmons (Professor Bhaer), Kennedy Green (Aunt March), and Aiya Forbes (Jo)



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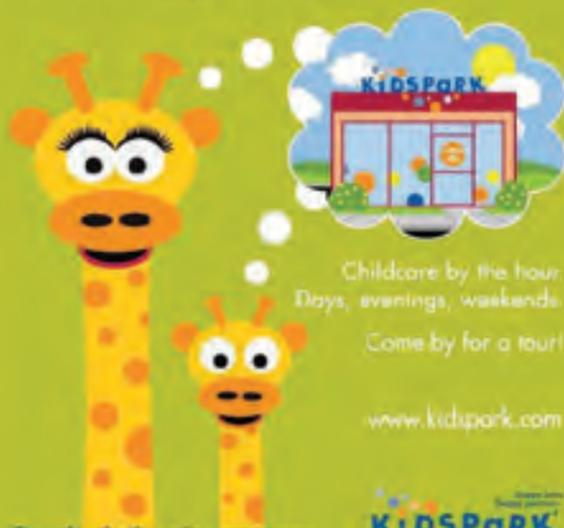
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## Ortega students enjoy marine science field trip

Fifth-grade students from Ortega Elementary School learned how to gather water samples, collect observational data on dolphins, manatees and shore birds, and discern the impact of natural and man-made changes along the St. Johns River on May 16.

Ortega Elementary School is one of 71 Duval County Title 1 schools participating in the STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts, mathematics) Cultural Passport Program, which includes a field trip with the St. Johns Riverkeeper on board the St. Johns River Taxi.

The trip leader was Riverkeeper Community Engagement Coordinator Justina Dacey, who also works as Education Specialist with elementary, middle and high school students on programs related to water, rivers and their ecological connections.

The field trips run from September to November and again from March to May. At the end of the school year, nearly 4,300 students will have participated in the program, which is sponsored by CSX to fill in the financial gap between federal funding and the cost of the program.



Justina Dacey, St. Johns Riverkeeper Education Specialist, adjusts the straps of Eric Jones' life vest while Kayden Adams looks on.

## Avondale resident wins gold at International Science Fair

Avondale's Ann Maris Walton and her partner, Sneha Reddy, both sophomores at The Bolles School, took home the gold during the International Sustainable World Energy, Engineering and Environmental Project Olympiad (ISWEEEP), April 27-May 1 in Houston, Texas.

Walton and Reddy were the only gold medal winners at ISWEEEP from Northeast Florida, producing one of only two projects from the state of Florida to win gold medals at the international level.

The girls' project was titled, "The Effects of Sulforaphane on Hyphal Connections

on Mycorrhizal Fungi." They competed in the fiercely competitive category of Environmental-Management and Pollution. In addition to the gold medal, the students were awarded \$6,000 scholarships to North American University in Houston, Texas, as well as a cash award of \$1,500.

The project was one of 385 projects from 62 countries displayed at the George R. Brown Convention Center. The competition drew 564 student researchers and 300 teachers.

Walton and Reddy set a school record by being admitted to the competition through a rigorous application process. Invitations for United States students to participate in ISWEEEP is usually based on performance at regional and state science fairs. The girls' application was reviewed by ISWEEEP organizers for content, safety, rigor, originality and real world environmental application.



Sneha Reddy and Ann Maris Walton

Less than one percent of participants who compete in the event are accepted through the process of application, said Bolles science instructor Brad Bullington. Walton and Reddy's win marks the first time Bolles students have applied for contest participation and won a gold medal.

## DA student selected to attend GRAMMY camp



Tyler Fine

Tyler Fine, a sophomore at Douglas Anderson School of the Performing Arts, is one of 142 talented and lucky high school students from 117 U.S. cities in 30 states to be selected to attend the 12th annual GRAMMY Camp program.

Fine will attend GRAMMY Camp Los Angeles, June 18-27, in the audio engineering track. The Riverside resident is one of two DA students to achieve this honor this year; the other is Skyler Nolan, a junior who lives in Fleming Island. It has been 10 years since a DA student was accepted to the camp.

Each student applicant is asked to submit a video essay regarding their goals and why they feel going to Grammy Camp will benefit their lives and careers. They also submit two video/ audio samples of their work.

"All those thousands of hours have paid off," said Fine. "This is one of the most gratifying moments of my life."

Fine's experience at the University of Southern California's Thornton School of Music will culminate in a media project.

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# Scouts win award planting school garden

Fifth-grade students in Girl Scout Troop 834, based at St. Mark's Episcopal Day School, have earned the highest honor a Junior Girl Scout can obtain. They will receive the Girl Scout Bronze Award by cleaning up and installing new plants in a garden area at Ortega Elementary School.

As part of the project the 14 Scouts were required to discern a need in the community and figure out a way to fulfill the need. Upon learning a garden area at Ortega Elementary School was in disrepair, the girls decided they would help fellow students. The girls planned what was needed to do the work, discussed plant options, and listened to an expert in the field to learn important gardening/plant tips. San Marco resident and community volunteer Betty Taylor taught the troop about basic horticulture and landscape design.

Under the leadership of Jennifer Dickson and Tanya Leonard, co-leaders, the girls pulled weeds, removed old plants, spread



Work day at Ortega Elementary School

dirt, spread mulch and pine straw and planted an array of plants to beautify the area. To finish the project, the Scouts developed a worksheet describing the different kinds of plants and what they need

to thrive. The worksheet will be handed off to the Garden Club of second and third graders at Ortega Elementary so they may properly care for the plants beginning in August when school resumes.

## Taking care of Mother Earth

In honor of Earth Day April 22, 30 families joined Fishweir Elementary School principal Kimberly Dennis, teachers and PTA members to spruce up the campus, getting about an hour's worth of work done before a sudden storm had all running for cover.

The students picked up trash around campus, while parents weeded flower beds, trimmed hedges and laid new mulch. The garden club students worked on the butterfly garden, which is in the center courtyard. The school's community partner, The Loop Pizza Grill, brought water and cookies for all volunteers.



Kindergarten students Caroline and Leighton Edwards, Brayden Brideson, Daisy Hardaker and Ryan Pridenville gloved and ready to pick up litter.

## Rotarians award Youth Leadership scholarships

Cameron Perry Walker, Andrew Culver and Mary Caroline Gillam of the Ortega area were among 12 Bolles School students selected by Rotary District 6970 to receive 2016 Rotary Youth Leadership Awards. As part of this scholarship, students will attend a leadership retreat June 16-19 at the University of North Florida with students from other schools around the First Coast. The camp is an intense, all-expense paid, four-day experience, where students will reside in the UNF dorms and most activities will occur on campus.

The other nine Bolles students who won the award are Amelia Still, Chloe Bryan, Hannah Mendelson, Jacob Piatt, Leah Scott, Sameer Khawaja, Summer Schreiner, William Levinson and Yasmin Brophy.



Cameron Walker



Andrew Culver



Mary Gillam

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# Local teens take superhero personas to new heights

By *Kate A. Hallock*  
Resident Community News

Coming soon to a theater near you and ... in Kenya.

“The Pride Part II,” a locally produced Christian film, debuts first at the Murray Hill Theatre this month and then heads overseas for its international debut later this summer.

The superhero-themed films were produced by D-Life Ministry, a youth group at St. John’s Presbyterian Church in the Fairfax neighborhood.

Both “The Pride Part I,” which is 19 minutes long, and its 16-minute sequel will be shown back-to-back on Saturday, June 11 at the Murray Hill Theatre. After a 6 p.m. red carpet arrival of cast and crew, the film starts at 7:15 p.m.

The first film, produced primarily in downtown Jacksonville, was created in August 2014 and premiered April 2015. Two months later, Director/Producer Ashley Smith went into production with the sequel, adding two more to the cast of 10 high school actors.

The primary location for D-Life’s second film was Craig Airfield, where much of the action was filmed against a green screen, and also included sequences around some expensive private jets. Scenes were also shot in a private home and at the church, where the superheroes were filmed flying in front of the green screen.

Reed Hanigan, a seventh-grade student at The Bolles School, and the youngest cast member, celebrated his birthday on location. “He turned 13 going 80 miles per hour

down a runway in an orange Corvette,” said Smith, who was driving.

Although the cast practiced for several weeks, actual rehearsals were three days and the film was shot in four days. “It felt like being in summer camp because we got to relax between scenes, joke around and had a good time,” said Lane Montgomery, a ninth grader at St. John’s Country Day School.

## Love overcomes

The theme of rejection and redemption in “The Pride Part II” draws on at least two Biblical parables, “The Lost Sheep” and “The Prodigal Son.” Cast member Abigail Hunger leaves her superhero friends for a terrorist organization, betraying them and, in the process, loses her identity.

“The theme shows acceptance even though she betrayed us,” said Sierra Stone, a sophomore at Florida State College Jacksonville. “She ran away from the group, found new friends with the terrorists, and started working with them. We fought for her until she realized we were always there for her.”

For Andrew Russell, a ninth-grade student at Paxon School for Advanced Studies, the message was about remembering who you are. “In this intergenerational film, it’s just remembering who you are and even though you stray, you can return and always be with God,” he said.

“Our students have a platform to share,” said Smith, who said a Christian television station in Nairobi, Kenya, will air both films in August. “My hope is the film



The cast of The Pride Part II: Reed Hanigan, Merri Jones, Lane Montgomery, Jada McGhee, Abbey Crainshaw, Pete Russell, Abigail Hunger, Karsten Hunger, Sierra Stone, Ashton Hanigan, John Wright Stanly, Andrew Russell



Ashley Smith, director, in Film Crew shirt; John Wright Stanly poised on hood of car; Master Bill Chiodo, stunt choreographer in bed of truck, and John Harrett (with leaf blower), stunt driver and sound engineer

piques their interest and then they will be interested in hearing from the cast and crew as they share [pre-recorded] parts of their testimony and their faith in God.”

After spending two years in a row producing the short films, Smith and the D-Life youth will take a year off. “I think there will be a Pride Part III before this group graduates and goes off to college,” he said. “We’ve invested in the costumes and equipment to be able to make more films in the future.”

Although the superhero actors are all teenagers, the “bad guys” and crew consisted of adults, some who are parents, others who are members of the church, and others

from the community, such as Tae Kwon Do masters Bill and Evan Chiodo, who coordinated stunts and fight scenes, Jeff Green, director of photography, and Tony Nasrallah, stunt driver and camera boat operator.

“Part of why we do this is that it’s an opportunity for the students to interact with other generations and form friendships even, in some cases, starting on a peer level. When you leave youth ministry behind and enter into adulthood, where do you fit in?” asked Smith. “It’s helping them make that transition, within the church and outside, so they are comfortable working with and talking with adults.”

## Young pianist wins state competition

Wil Wilkinson, a fifth-grade student at Riverside Presbyterian Day School, beat 25 other soloists in state finals hosted by the Florida Federation of Music Clubs. He competed earlier in a local competition, where he earned superiors in solo and concerto piano.

Wilkinson is no stranger to the piano, as he has been playing for three and a half years. He has competed at the state level on four occasions, totaling seven events of solos, concertos and quartet, and has placed in the top three six times.



Wil Wilkinson

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Ghostbusters Adam Edens, David Parsons, Mike Vanderburg, Alan Wittkamp and Matt Blocker



Brenna Matthews, dressed as pop idol Hatsune Miku and placed second in the teen category at the Comic Con costume contest at Willowbranch Library May 7.



Xelana Roberts, winner in the adult category, dressed as Link from the Legend of Zelda, and Nat Krasowski, dressed as Pizza Man.

## All things comic, from superheroes to ghost hunters, at library

Comic Con was hosted at Willowbranch Library for the first time May 7, when superhero fans of all ages were thoroughly entertained by comic book characters. A visit by the Jacksonville Ghostbusters enthralled attendees, who posed for photos with the team.

Author Natalie McGriff shared parts from her latest Moxie McGriff adventure, "Moxie McGriff Saves the Library." Natalie, 8, and her mother, Angie McGriff, co-wrote the Moxie McGriff series to help girls gain self-confidence. Their first book was a 2015 One Spark winner.

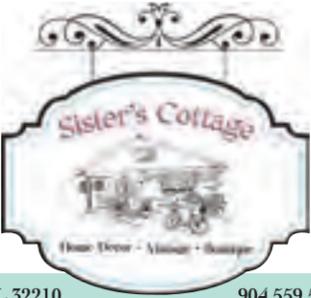
Other events included a costume contest, a cosplay workshop, and a green-screen photo booth with a selection of backdrops.



Comic Con judges Christian Purser (back), Henry Steiner, Art Zima (front), Jenna Esposito.



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[cancer.org/treatment/supportprogramsservices/hopelodge/jacksonville](http://cancer.org/treatment/supportprogramsservices/hopelodge/jacksonville)

"Two years ago I discovered a tumor. Driving an hour every day to treatment and back would have been so draining. Staying at Hope Lodge meant I could rest and heal. When Tom and I put our estate plans together, we decided to support projects that improved the quality of life for others. Hope Lodge was a beautiful fit. We're giving back the gifts that were given to us – healing and hope."

*- Leone, Hope Lodge major donor*

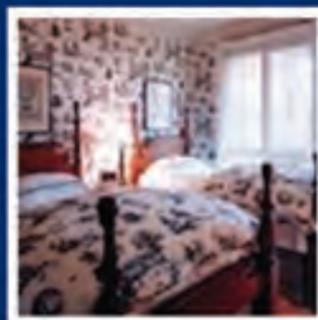
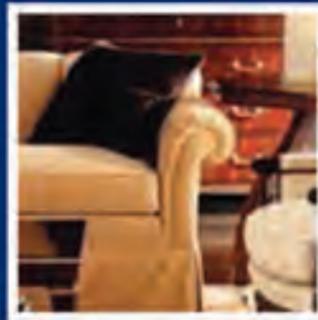
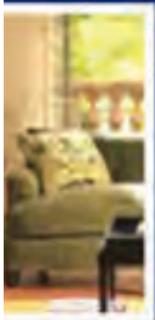


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To learn more or get involved, contact Kellie Ann Kelleher, Campaign Director, at [kelliann.kelleher@cancer.org](mailto:kelliann.kelleher@cancer.org) or 904-391-3606.

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