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Resident

COMMUNITY NEWS

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Lights up the night

Balis Park in the San Marco Square was alive with the sounds
of the season as the Hendricks Avenue Elementary Choir and
the Southside Baptist Church Bell Ringers treated listeners to
a special evening, including the highly anticipated 'Window
Display Contest' announcement and the lighting of the tree.
Olive Boutique won the award for 'Most Elegant', dazzling the
judges for the 2012 holiday season.

The lighting of the tree marks the beginning of the season in
the Square, where events throughout the month are slated for
the enjoyment of everyone citywide.

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The American Board of Plastic Surgery, 1998*

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Quiet zones may be solution for San Marco's train horns

Local resident hopes to begin grassroots movement

BY STEVE DiMATTIA
RESIDENT COMMUNITY NEWS

A train's whistle blowing in the night is nostalgic for some. But for San Marco residents living within earshot, the only nostalgia is for loss of peace and quiet and a good night's sleep.

"The train horns are a significant problem. I put phone conversations on hold until trains pass," said San Marco resident Kevin McLaughlin. "There are 30 Florida East Cost Railways movements between their station on Bowden Road and the St. Johns. With ten crossings, and Federal Railroad Administration regulations dictating a 2-long-1-short-1-long pattern at crossings, the horns are blow-



ing 1,500 times a day."

McLaughlin appealed to city, state and FEC officials to have the Landon Avenue crossing near his home closed. But he is still awakened by trains crossing at Atlantic and Hendrix avenues.

To address the problem, he lobbies for "quiet zones," or rail line sections that contain crossings at which train horns are not routinely sounded. Wayside horns – stationary horns mounted at crossings rather than on trains – are another option. They sound warnings that motorists at crossings hear, but do not carry far beyond. The cost can be \$100,000 or more per crossing.

City, state and railroad officials must coordinate in order to institute such solutions. A quiet zone study was completed for San Marco in 2006, but costs proved prohibitive to moving forward. District 5 Councilwoman Lori Boyer said she

has not had many inquiries but thinks it is a "worthwhile project" if the issue grew momentum.

McLaughlin plans to grow that momentum through a grassroots effort by creating a Facebook page and educating residents and city officials about solutions. He also has an ally in developer Steve Cissel, who said that he feels quiet zones are a "worthwhile investment, good for the community and property values."

"People ask, 'aren't you used to the noise by now?' I tell them it's like getting use to a toothache," McLaughlin said. "This could be one of the biggest quality of life improvements if the city moved forward on quiet zones."

Contact Kevin McLaughlin:
kmclau4@comcast.net

Contact Lori Boyer:
lboyer@coj.net or 904-630-1382

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Street re-openings a holiday gift to San Marco Square merchants

BY KATE A. HALLOCK
RESIDENT COMMUNITY NEWS

San Marco Square is a must-do for great shopping, amazing dining and some of the best backdrops for the family photo album during the holidays. While these amenities are always abundant, the best part for this year is the timing of new business openings and the completion of the latest phase in the re-development of San Marco Blvd. With traffic lanes open in both directions a week before Thanksgiving, navigating the Square has never been easier and there is an overall excitement about the future of San Marco.

That bright future includes several new businesses that have recently opened or will soon open, including The Parlour, The Grape & Grain Exchange, Aardwolf Brewing, and the Maple Street Biscuit Company. The trend to grow, serve and sell local produce is burgeoning in San Marco and these restaurants and shops are on the bandwagon.

All Spiced Up's Ana Hernandez is also one of several merchants who seem to be filling the bill of San Marco residents' desires for local foods and products. She has recently partnered with five restaurants from The San Marco Dining District (Taverna, Bistro Aix, Matthews, bb's and The Grotto) to offer specialty rubs and blends used by the chefs of those restaurants. For a time, some of the proceeds from sales of those seasonings at All Spiced Up and at each restaurant will help fund the maintenance of Balis Park on the

Square.

The Balis Park maintenance fund was also given a terrific boost last month through the annual Autumn in the Park Farm to Table reception and dinner. More than 150 people attended the event sponsored by Anita Vining of Prudential Network Realty and created by Anita Morrill of Empty Nest Events, along with chefs from Taverna (Sam Efron), Bistro Aix (Tom Gray) and Café Nola (Kathy Collins). Also participating was Bob Smith, with a signature drink from The Grape & Grain Exchange, and new craft brewer Aardwolf Brewing Co.

Despite some concerns for the next phase in development, merchants are looking at the bright side of the changes, knowing they will have a solid foundation for the future to grow upon their newly designed median and restructured Balis Park.

Diane Martin, president of the San Marco Preservation Society, said "Petticoat-Schmitt Civil Contractors did a spectacular job with all the challenges they've had to open the north-bound lane in time for the holidays. The merchants really appreciate that!" She added, "And the up-lights on the Date Palms are gorgeous at night. When the

expansion of Balis Park is completed and the benches, trees, bike racks and personalized bricks are in, San Marco Square will be THE place to be!"

Area merchant Forrest Brewer, proprietor of The Wardroom Ltd. gift shop, is pleased with the results thus far. "The construction company delivered on its promise to open the street for the holidays," he said. "Although – the construction didn't hurt us as much as we feared it would this summer; our business was actually up from last year. I think they handled it well."

According to city officials, the next phase of the streetscape and redesign should be underway the first business day in January. When asked about the impending two-to-three month construction, Brewer fast-forwarded to the outcome, saying "it will be great for special events at the Square, relieving the San Marco Merchants Association of the cost of blocking off the streets" for events such as the annual Holiday Magic (see sidebar) when the Square will be filled with holiday festivities from sleigh rides and bounce houses to carolers and Santa and Mrs. Claus.

Regarding the cost to block off the streets for special events, Doug Skiles

of EnVision Design and Engineering, noted that after completion the fees charged will instead be put towards SMPS and Balis Park.

Hernandez, of All Spiced Up, agreed that foot traffic has picked up since the first of November but also has concerns about the construction planned for early January to remove vehicle traffic through-way between Atlantic Boulevard and San Marco Boulevard at Balis Park.

"I think we (the merchants) will have to think outside the box to bring in the business," she said. For example, Hernandez hosts a monthly Visiting Chef event at the shop, demonstrating how her spices, blends, salts and seasonings can be successfully substituted for any recipe's grocery store ingredients.

Last month's Shop Small Saturday was heavily promoted locally and provided a jumpstart to holiday sales to help put area merchants in the black as they head into the normal winter retail doldrums potentially exacerbated by resumption of construction.

Ending on a positive note from the former SMPS president: "When the whole thing is done, it will be amazing. The next phase will happen during the slowest period of retail year. The positive impact will far exceed expectations," Skiles said. When asked about the perceived concerns about parking, he observed, "We rival any shopping center in Jacksonville for parking. You won't always get a spot right in front of the door...even at a mall."



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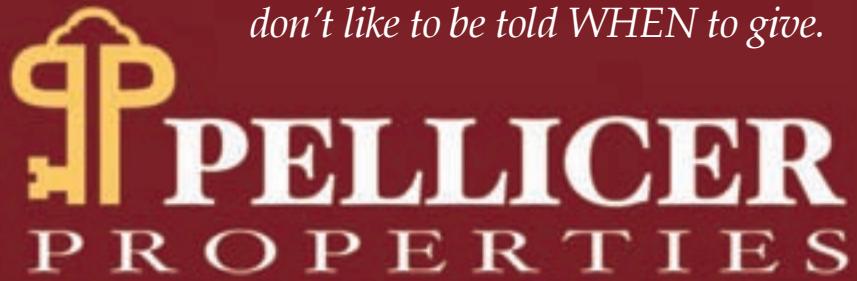
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Talk about getting a fresh start in the New Year — the new Balis Park in San Marco Square promises to redefine the neighborhood shopping area with green space and safer pedestrian passages.

The San Marco Preservation Society, San Marco Merchants Association and other volunteers launched a charge to raise funds for the project last month.

The Autumn in the Park farm to table fundraising dinner at nearby Davin Park helped mobilize support.

During the dinner, volunteers shared ways the community could support the effort and ongoing maintenance expenses. One of the organization's biggest fundraising pushes is the sale of personalized brick pavers, bike racks, Live Oak trees and park benches. Brick pavers are being sold for a \$100 donation, but bike racks and Live Oak trees with donor plaques will cost \$1,000 and park benches with donor plaques cost \$2,000.

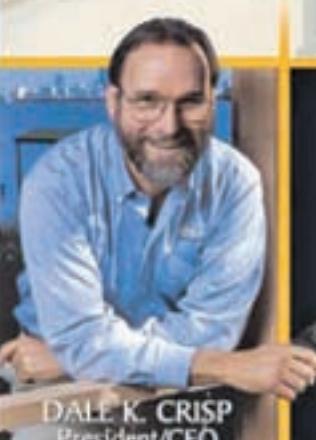
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Davin Park's beautiful setting home to the Balis Park Fundraiser

Bridging holiday traffic

While San Marco Boulevard traffic is much smoother now during the holidays with construction crews opening both lanes in and out of the square, potential neighborhood traffic concerns are ahead as the Overland Bridge construction is expected to begin in early 2013.

The state Department of Transportation released details of the various phases of the project last month during a community meeting at its Riverside headquarters.

Construction milestones for early 2013 to late 2013 include the following in phase 1, according to a document from the FDOT.

- Remove median barrier wall from the Fuller Warren Bridge south in order to place temporary barrier wall for shifting traffic in preparation for widening

- Begin widening the southern approaches of the Fuller Warren Bridge and the elevated roadway known as the Overland Bridge (overpass of Hendricks, Kings and Montana avenues)

- Begin widening I-95 south of Philips Highway

- Begin construction of the northbound parallel service road

- Begin reconstruction of the southbound parallel service road south of the Overland Bridge

- Begin reconstruction of the I-95 overpass over the FEC railroad near Baptist Medical Center

- Begin construction of entrance ramp from westbound Atlantic Boulevard to the northbound parallel service road

- Begin construction of exit ramp from northbound I-95 to Atlantic

Boulevard

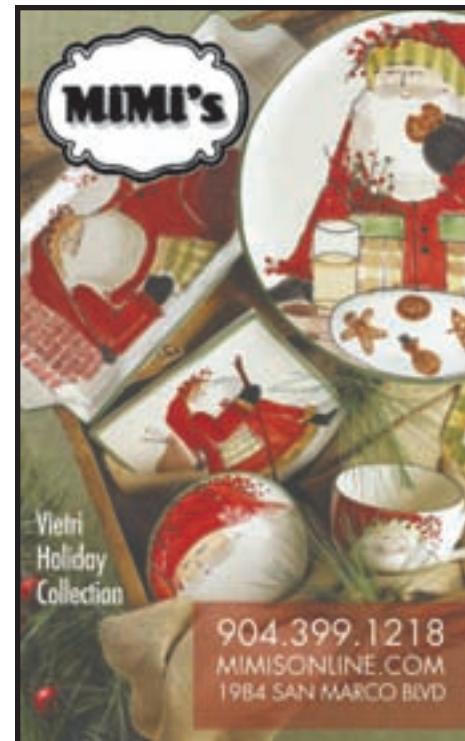
- Begin construction of exit ramp from the southbound Acosta Bridge Expressway to Gary Street
- Begin construction of ramp from southbound I-95 to the southbound parallel service road
- Complete the construction of the outside eastbound lane on Atlantic Boulevard at I-95
- Construct noise wall along I-95 northbound on the north end of the existing wall
- Begin construction of drainage ponds near Naldo Avenue and Alamo Street

According to FDOT, all I-95 traffic will be shifted to the outside lanes from the Fuller Warren Bridge to Atlantic Boulevard to north of Emerson Street. The southbound parallel service road traffic will be shifted to the inside lanes.

The Overland Bridge project, which has a contract amount of \$157.8 million, begins 2,300 feet south of San Diego Road and ends at the St. Johns River. FDOT Spokesman Michael Goldman said work would begin in January on the 1,255-day project. The scope of work includes: the replacement of the Interstate 95 Overland bridge; reconstruction of I-95; reconfiguration of the interchange at Atlantic Boulevard and Philips Highway; construction of a new parallel service road for northbound traffic; reconstruction of a new parallel service road for southbound traffic; a widening of the Fuller Warren bridge at the southbound portion adjacent to the Southbank (not over the river); and the widening of San Diego Road bridges.



Front row: Chef Kathy Collins (Café Nola), Anita Morrill, Kiley Wynne Efron (Taverna), Nathan Asaro (Stacole Fine Wines)
Back row: Mitch Woodlief (The Grotto), Chef Tom Gray (Bistro Aix), Chef Sam Efron and Brian Binniker (Taverna)
Photos by Heather Stine



Autumn in the Park sponsor Anita Vining, Prudential Network Realty, and planner Anita Morrill, Empty Nest Events, drew an SRO crowd from all over Jacksonville for the third annual Farm to Table event in Davin Park to benefit San Marco's new Balis Park. Over 150 attended the fundraiser on a perfect autumn afternoon, enjoying a signature drink from Bob Smith of The Grape & Grain Exchange, playing a game of bocce ball, and listening to live music by B.A.S.H. before sitting down to candlelit dinner prepared by chefs from Café Nola, Taverna and Bistro Aix.

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Neighborhood rallies for Hurricane Sandy relief efforts

Churches, schools and individuals across the neighborhoods have been reaching out to those affected by last month's wrath from Hurricane Sandy and the subsequent Nor'easter.

Episcopal churches on both sides of the river and Downtown have been raising funds for Episcopal Relief and Development, which provides assistance and recovery aid to devastated areas. A group of donors from St. Mark's Episcopal Church in Ortega offered to match all gifts made to ERD by Dec. 31.

Ortega United Methodist Church, located on Roosevelt Boulevard, supported relief efforts in a tangible way. With support from the community, church congregants filled a semi-trailer with supplies for victims at a United Methodist Church in Bloomfield, NJ. Residents loaded the truck with food, water, toiletries, blan-

kets and clothes. Bloomfield UMC runs a shelter in the area and the goods helped refill their supply.

Duval County Public Schools Superintendent Ed Pratt-Dannals launched a district-wide student collection effort last month for residents in the Northeast. Mayor Alvin Brown joined BI-LO and Winn-Dixie in support of the initiative, alongside JEA, JAXPORT, the Jacksonville Transportation Authority and the Jacksonville Aviation Authority. Nonperishable food bins were located at city buildings and at the city's Veterans Job Fair at the Prime Osborn last month. BI-LO and Winn-Dixie donated two tractor trailers full of canned and bottled foods.

"Duval County Public Schools is proud to partner with the City of Jacksonville in this initiative to collect essential items that will aid in the

recovery process for the families and individuals who have suffered loss from the inclement weather," said Superintendent Pratt-Dannals. "I strongly encourage Duval County public schools and all employees to do their part in contributing to the fundraising efforts to help those who have been affected by Hurricane Sandy."

In San Jose, Congregation Ahavath Chesed pointed concerned residents to the Union of Reform Judaism's Hurricane Relief Fund. The URJ's Hurricane Relief Fund helps provide relief to congregations, families and communities in the area.



Cohen to be installed as Temple's assistant Rabbi

BY SAM GRISWOLD

"It is funny how life's tangents can become our paths," said Rabbi Matthew Cohen, the new Assistant Rabbi at Congregation Ahavath Chesed. "I always saw myself as married. I always hoped to raise a family. The rabbinate, on the other hand; this I never expected."

Rabbi Cohen became the Temple's new Assistant Rabbi in early July, but his official installation ceremony will

be at 10:30 a.m. on Dec. 15. Playing a leadership role in the ceremony will be Rabbi Marc Kline of Temple Adath Israel in Lexington, Kentucky.

"I learned more about being a rabbi from him in my year as a rabbinic intern than I did in four years in school," Rabbi Cohen said. "He taught me how to love my congregants — and give lots of hugs — and inspired me to think deeply about what I write and teach before I do it."

Cohen credits his friend and men-

tor with helping to get him through rabbinical school.

Cohen's Installation Ceremony will include a creative Shabbat Morning worship experience with both the Temple Chorale and the Temple's teen band, the Jew Crew, participating.

Cohen's Transition Committee, co-chaired by Joanne Cohen and Brian Mendelson, will host an open Kiddush luncheon after the service.



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Guests crowd Baptist for peek at new Weaver tower

The hallways at Baptist Medical Center on Jacksonville's Southbank were buzzing last month during the first official tours of the hospital's newest building, the J. Wayne and Delores Barr Weaver Tower.

It was all hands on deck as hospital administrators, staff and medical leaders provided tours for the media, hospital staff and community members. San Marco residents Michael Mayo, president of Baptist Medical Center, and Wolfson Children's Hospital President Michael Aubin led tours and answered questions about the 339,404-square-foot, 11-story building.

Employees began moving into the new tower late last month and patients are expected to begin receiving care at the building on Dec. 8. The first surgeries in the new tower are scheduled for Dec. 10.

The new tower has many features that are firsts for the area medical community, including intra-operative imaging capabilities for both children and adults. The new tower has 167 beds in private patient rooms, each with 300 square feet of space to accommodate family-centered care.

The building was designed by Stanley Beaman & Sears and Batson-Cook was the construction manager. Tilden Lobitz Cooper provided engineering services.

On the children's floors, the floors and rooms are decorated in a biosphere theme that showcases photographs and art of the river, ocean, grassland, forest, mountains and sky. A special nod is given to the hospital's San Marco surroundings — a photo of an ostrich, to honor a former tenant of the area — an ostrich farm. Other more poignant



The new J. Wayne and Delores Barr Weaver Tower at Baptist. Photo by Michael LeGrand.



Michael Aubin, left, listens to a demonstration of the new intra-operative imaging surgical suite at the hospital.

neighborhood tie-ins are rooms in honor of past Wolfson patients. One set of rooms on a children's floor is named in honor of Bolles student and San Marco resident Jonathan Soud, who passed away two years ago.

Work from neighborhood artists and others from around Jacksonville also is showcased prominently throughout the building.

Highlights of the new tower include expanded children's and adolescent behavioral health services, state-of-the-art neurosurgical and cardiovascular surgical suites, the Baptist Neuroscience Institute, new children's hematology/oncology/bone marrow transplant center, adult oncology and large patient rooms.

The tower was named after philanthropists J. Wayne and Delores Barr Weaver, who gave a \$10 million gift to Baptist Health this fall. The building's name was the idea of Baptist Health officials, not the Weavers.

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Sean Kelly placed on leave during planning department investigation

Efficiency of planning department questioned, but Kelly's role unclear

BY STEVE DiMATTIA
RESIDENT COMMUNITY NEWS

What began with two city council members seeking to increase efficiency at the city's planning department apparently led to the forced paid administrative leave of Chief of Current Planning Sean Kelly and an ensuing investigation.

While council members Lori Boyer and John Crescimbeni have been clear about their planning department concerns, less clear is why Kelly was targeted for an investigation. Also unclear is the nature of that investigation.

In an Oct. 22 memo, Director of Planning and Development Calvin Burney advised Kelly the city was "conducting a workplace investigation"

and he was on paid administrative leave. Kelly was directed "not to contact any city employees or enter your workplace facility" and "to be available to return to the workplace to assist in this investigation when contacted." The investigation's focus was not specified and Burney referred all questions to Mayor Brown's spokesperson, David DeCamp.

"We are limited in what we can say because the investigation is still in its fact finding phase," DeCamp said. "Due process must be followed so it would be inappropriate to comment at this time."

Tad Delegal, Kelly's lawyer, said that he and Kelly met with city human resource representative Gail Hill, and lawyer Mary Jarrett, on Oct. 30 where Kelly was asked to describe various planning department procedures. They were scheduled to meet with human resources again on Nov. 6, but the city cancelled.

"We haven't heard back from the city. I'm encouraged that they are not going too quickly and didn't act sooner. My hope is that they are conducting their investigation and concluding no wrong doing on Sean's part," Delegal said.

Boyer, who is Land Use and Zoning Committee chair, said she never targeted Kelly.

"All I was doing was pointing out issues that I felt we needed to get a handle on. Maybe my concerns pushed

Director Burney in that direction [of targeting Kelly] but that was not my intent," she said. "Sean is experienced and competent, but there are nonetheless concerns about some department procedures. Do they go back to Sean? I don't know."

While he did not specifically name Kelly, Crescimbeni made no secret of his lack of confidence in some planning department employees.

"I have had long-standing issues with the planning department, particularly with certain employees and the performance of their duties," he said during a recent phone interview.

Boyer identified three concerns, two of which she addressed during a joint LUZ/Planning Commission meeting June 17: Too much flexibility in the way desired conditions to planned unit development rezoning are recorded and preserved, and LUZ not receiving enough information about the rationale for recommendations from Planning Commission meetings regarding approval or disapproval of items.

Boyer suggested creating formal PUD rezoning guidelines so LUZ does not inadvertently convert a condition which the Planning Commission intended to be inviolable into a site plan or narrative item that can be modified without LUZ or even Planning Commission approval. But in a recent phone interview, Boyer indicated the issue persists.

"There are still issues with the PUD process, PUD modifications and enforcement," she said.

Regarding LUZ's need to know more about Planning Commission deliberations, including rationale and vote tally, several possible solutions were aired at the June 17 meeting. Chief among them was that LUZ could view video and other detailed information of Planning Commission meetings online.

However, a sharply worded email dated Oct. 11 to Kelly from Sandy Simmons, Burney's administrative assistant, indicated posting of information was not meeting expectations.

The email directed Kelly to "...make sure your staff understands that it is a must and very important that the [Planning Commission] site be kept up to date," noting that excuses such as "I don't have rights" and "I don't know how" were no longer going to be tolerated because proper training had been

implemented.

"Please handle it in the Current Planning Division and use me only as a last resort, but be mindful, my last resort may not mean the same as your last resort so as the chief, however you decide to handle it makes no difference, it is just the way it is being handled now is absolutely not working. My job now is to make sure it does not get back to the director's level," Simmons wrote in the email.

"That email just reflects the stress everyone was feeling. Sean shared the frustration, recognized those problems and worked hard to address them," Delegal said.

Boyer's third concern, discussed at an Oct. 15 meeting convened by her and Crescimbeni to address "pending legislation to combine current planning and community planning departments, as well as LUZ issues and zoning procedures," centered on zoning notice procedures regarding public notices allegedly not being followed. Three developments were cited: the proposed Mellow Mushroom restaurant in Avondale, Harbortown, a marina community on the Intracoastal Waterway at Atlantic Boulevard, and 5 Points Village, a shopping center in 5 Points.

Delegal, as well as attorney Steve Diebenow, who represents Mellow Mushroom and 5 Points Village, refute the allegations, arguing that there were either pending decisions that warranted delay in notification, honest oversight on the part of planning department personnel not overseen by Kelly, or that the notice issues are without merit.

"Sean is a real professional who knows zoning code as well as anyone in the city. There are allegations that he is 'on the side of developers,' but I can tell you that he's ruled as much for neighbors and neighborhoods as for developers," Diebenow said.

While these and other issues about planning department procedures have been questioned, any direct connection to Kelly's culpability has apparently yet to be proven.

"There's clearly frustration with the way the overall department functions. Sean is also frustrated with some of the structural problems. He also wants a more open, transparent process. But nothing that I've seen suggests he did anything but comply with department procedures," Delegal said.

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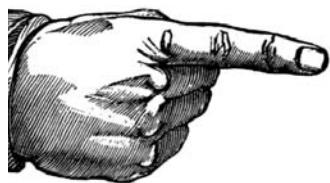
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POINT/COUNTERPOINT

Continue mobility fee moratorium or not?

There is an important citywide debate currently taking place regarding the 2030 Mobility Plan, or, more accurately, the mobility fees associated with it. The plan reduces vehicle miles traveled and encourages alternate modes of transportation by “incentivizing” development in the urban core where infrastructure already exists to support growth. It integrates land development with transportation planning and has an impact fee system that funnels money from development back into the same area where the development took place to be used for capital projects.

TONEY SLEIMAN Mobility fees, not now

Mobility Fees are significant enough to make a new development infeasible. There are a number of projects that would not have gone forward if the City of Jacksonville did not impose the original moratorium. I have a project that I spent two years negotiating a lease on because of the imposition of taxes and fees, including the Mobility Fee. Simply put, it made no economic sense to develop the property until our city had the foresight to impose a temporary moratorium. This allowed enough relief for an out-of-area business to operate in Jacksonville, while saving me enough money not only to build a new store but also create jobs for local residents.

As part of the development I was required – at my cost – to install retention ponds, water lines, sidewalks, new traffic signals, new turn lanes, even a new roadway which would ultimately be accessible to all area residents. At the time the land was vacant property, deriving minimal property taxes for the city. The costs associated with the infrastructure improvements I was required to provide exceeded \$6 million. These costs covered not only the materials needed to build these facilities, but also the salaries of engineers, architects, construction workers and the city inspectors who reviewed the development. Jobs were created and some positions funded simply by this development going forward.

But more than just those construction jobs, real full-time jobs were also created. The company employs more than 150 people. Additionally, revenue for the city was created. A new store can easily generate an additional \$1.5 million in taxes and contribute almost \$200 thousand in property taxes and fees during its first year. That translates to more than \$27 million over a 20-year period. On top of that, the first year wages created exceeds another \$6.6 million being funneled into our local economy. That's over \$8 million in revenue for the city in year one alone.

Compare those amounts to a mobility fee and you can see why it makes sense to incentivize private industry to proceed with development. By offering temporary relief from these fees

the city can substantially increase its Ad Valorem Tax Rolls, which otherwise continue to decline, as well as capture dollars that are needed for the General Fund and put our citizens back to work.

I believe the Mobility Fee is an improvement over the concurrency system and a step in the right direction. **I do not favor** abolishing the Mobility Plan. I advocate the extension of a temporary moratorium while Jacksonville residents recover. It's actually quite simple, and I have the numbers to prove it. I can pay as little as \$10 thousand a year in real estate taxes on a vacant property and let it just sit, or I can develop it and pay hundreds of thousands of dollars annually and for years to come, while creating jobs. I only hope those that oppose a moratorium do not have children or grandchildren seeking employment during these times.

DOUG SKILES The time is now

Quality never happens by accident. Quality of living is no exception.

Vital to this quality are the places we inhabit and the ways we travel between them. Imagine a city that fosters a strong sense of community, where we have more reasons to help each other than to isolate ourselves and fight each other.

It seems that Jacksonville is heading in the opposite direction. We have become a city entirely dominated by automobile travel, with neighbors battling over where we park our cars.

It doesn't have to be that way.

The Mobility Plan was created to achieve the Neighborhood Vision Plans of 2003-2010, which spoke to strengthening neighborhoods and providing reliable, safer travel in our city. Where we spend our lives and how we get there are inextricably linked. It is difficult to have “walkable” neighborhoods that rely entirely on automobile travel.

As the mobility fee gains momentum we will see new bike lanes, safer pedestrian ways and road improvement projects. The plan fully funds a streetcar connecting Downtown with Riverside/Avondale, reducing the need for automobile use.

One month after the plan was approved in September 2011, city council voted for a one-year mobility fee moratorium to stimulate the local economy. That moratorium ended on October 19, 2012. There are some who think it should be continued for another year. Others disagree.

The Resident invited two developers at the heart of the debate to present their perspective. Toney Sleiman, president/CEO of Sleiman Enterprises, is for a continuation of the fee moratorium. Doug Skiles, president of Envision Design + Engineering, is against a moratorium. Their opinion – your decision.

The enforcement of the mobility fee gives developers reason to rebuild in existing areas. With abundant vacant office space and outdated shopping centers needing complete redevelopment, we can bring life back to struggling neighborhoods. These projects would have very low, if any, mobility fee required.

A developer choosing to locate at the fringe of the city will have considerably greater impact on the road system in the future and will be subject to a higher mobility fee to fund future transportation projects.

Those who want another mobility fee moratorium argue it has created jobs by making otherwise impossible projects possible. The city lost over \$3 million during the moratorium period. Should we continue to lose revenue so a handful of developers can build projects while we forego the revenue from the majority of projects that could have paid the fee?

The St. Johns Town Center area has its own transportation fee and it hasn't stopped development. New projects

paid a combined \$647,620 in transportation fees. Why were these projects able to pay the fee, and those outside unable to pay the fee?

St. Johns County exceeded Duval County in single-family home building by 50% during the moratorium period. This was accomplished while charging an average impact fee of \$11,795 per home. Homebuyers paid this fee because of quality. Most felt St. Johns County had better schools and safer neighborhoods.

Infrastructure construction creates jobs too, and has a multiplying effect into the future by encouraging development in strategic areas.

Hard decisions are easily deferred; however, history does not forgive laziness. There will always be a reason to wait, until we find ourselves here again, wondering why we wasted so many years. It comes down to quality of life. What type of community do we want to live in? And when is the time to do something about it?

I believe the time is now.

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Bar establishes Rinaman award

The Jacksonville Bar recently established the James C. Rinaman Jr. Public Service Award honoring one-time San Jose area resident and local attorney, James C. Rinaman Jr.

His family was in attendance during the Bar association's November luncheon.

The first recipient is Paul Renner, an active reserve officer with the Navy



who is a shareholder with Milam Howard Nicandri Dees & Gillam, P.A.

O'Steen dealerships host food drive

O'Steen Volvo and Volkswagen are hosting a food drive to help stock the shelves of the Second Harvest North Florida food bank and feed families in need this holiday season.

This year is the third annual food drive hosted by the O'Steen dealerships, and organizers hope donations surpass last year's amount.

Customers donating at least five nonperishable food items will receive a \$25 discount coupon on any service or parts order for any vehicle make or model at O'Steen Volvo. O'Steen Volkswagen

offered \$20 Simons Mall gift card for bringing in two nonperishable food items to the dealership during service appointments on "Black Friday".

Both dealerships will be collecting food through Dec. 20. O'Steen Volvo and O'Steen Volkswagen are located at 2525 and 11401 Philips Highway.

Second Harvest North Florida provides food to more than 170,700 individuals every year or an estimated 31,400 weekly and covers the largest geographic area of any Florida food bank.

Area residents take mark at McKenzie's Run

The Third Annual McKenzie's Run was a highlight of November, bringing scores of runners and students to EverBank field for a fun morning of health and exercise. This year's race captain was Jaguars Quarterback Blaine Gabbert. The run honors Bolles student McKenzie Noelle Wilson, who passed away in 2010, and raised funds for The McKenzie Noelle Wilson Foundation. The foundation's mission is "to help young people recognize their full potential by providing programs that encourage caring for others, giving to those in need and growing in their own spiritually." This year, the race took on added dimension as many race participants remembered 10-year-old Bolles student Ryan Perry during the event. Students who were "running for Ryan" during the race donned green shirts in honor of Perry, who died in an accident this fall.



Above: Fifth-graders from The Bolles School ran for Ryan during the race.

Below: From Team RPDS at McKenzie's Run are San Marco residents Caroline Grace Posgay, Isabella Wright, Abby Beaver and Morgan Chupp.

(Photos from Suzanne Posgay and Laura Carriere)



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Philanthropic giving reaches new heights in Jacksonville

BY SUSANNA P. BARTON
RESIDENT COMMUNITY NEWS

J. Wayne and Delores Barr Weaver, former Jaguars owners and philanthropists who have homes in the Riverside and San Jose areas of the city, have been on a philanthropic binge during the past several months that is changing our community for the better.

This summer, the Weavers presented a check for \$750,000 to support the Jacksonville Symphony Orchestra's music education program. In September, the Weavers converted their Weaver Family Foundation into a \$23.7 million advised fund at The Community Foundation in Jacksonville called the Weaver Family Foundation Fund. Their giving influence continued through the fall with an announcement of Women's Giving Alliance grants to women and girls' behavioral health programs at three local organizations, as well as a \$1 million gift to HabiJax.

In November, their generosity took philanthropy to new heights at Baptist Health, where the hospital system announced a \$10 million gift — the largest in the hospital's 57-year history.

The hospital's new 11-story building, set to receive patients this month, will be named the J. Wayne and Delores Barr Weaver Tower.

Their largess continued when The Community Foundation in Jacksonville announced on Nov. 28 the gift of \$50 million by Mrs. Weaver to establish the Delores Barr Weaver Fund, the largest single fund at The Community

Foundation, which ranks among the largest private foundations in Northeast Florida.

The new fund will invest in organizations and activities that help to improve a community's quality of life and, more importantly, that of its people in need. "In the words of Teddy Roosevelt, 'This country will not be a good place for any of us to live in unless we make it a good place for all of us to live in,'" said Mrs. Weaver at the press conference.

It is the largest gift to The Community Foundation in its 48-year history. The Delores Barr Weaver Fund's first — and likely its largest — grant is a \$6.6 million award, to be paid out over three years, to support the new Delores Barr Weaver Policy Center.

The center, which will be headed by Dr. Lawanda Ravoira, will provide research, training, education and advocacy in support of the needs of girls in the juvenile justice system.

The policy center is the next step in advancing the strategic goals adopted by the Justice for Girls: Duval County Initiative Leadership Council. The council received initial funding from the Women's Giving Alliance. Weaver, and other citizen leaders in Jacksonville, has been a member of the Leadership Council since its 2007 inception.

While the Weavers' giving stands out, they are not the only individuals in Jacksonville sharing the wealth. At the recent Philanthropy Day Luncheon in downtown Jacksonville, many local individuals and organizations were recognized for their generosity. Ortega resi-

dents J.F. and Peggy Bryan were honored as outstanding philanthropists and longtime community supporters. Linda and Vince Ferrigno also were local standouts.

Giving abounds throughout the community. That same week, HabiJax announced a \$1 million donation from Ortega philanthropists Ann and David Hicks. In October, new Jacksonville Jaguars owner Shahid Kahn announced that the Jaguars and the Boy Scouts of America-North Florida Council had launched the "Every Boy Deserves a Chance" Matching Gift Campaign. The Jaguars Foundation will match dollar-for-dollar for every donation made, up to \$100,000. Kahn's motivation? He was a Boy Scout, and one of his most memorable experiences was from an International Boy Scout Jamboree in Athens, Greece. The campaign is the North Florida Council's first capital and endowment campaign.

And while it wasn't a million-dollar campaign, residents gathered en masse last month for the 3rd Annual McKenzie's Run to raise important funds for the McKenzie Noelle Wilson Foundation. Just before school started, 10-year-old Caroline Giddens asked her friends to bring new socks or underwear to her birthday party in lieu of a gift. Together the girls made a donation to the Foster Closet, a group providing clothing for local foster children.

Those who have worked on philanthropic initiatives with the Weavers say there is something all of us can learn from the Weavers about the importance

of giving back.

Hugh Greene, president and CEO of Baptist Health, said there are three "takeaway" dimensions of the Weavers' generosity that are applicable to all givers — no matter what the fiscal level.

"The first one is their model of generosity — how they've been willing to give in a special way in light of their resources and how they've focused their giving," Greene said. "Whether it's \$100 or \$10 million, the Weavers remind us to care for those who are on the fringes of our society."

Secondly, Greene referenced the Weavers' genuineness, who did not want or seek out recognition for their gift to Baptist Health.

"Putting their name on the building was our idea, not theirs. Clearly, we all need to get beyond ourselves and not be driven by recognition, but by genuinely caring for others and trying to make a better community in which we live," he said.

The third lesson, Greene continued, is courage.

"The Weavers' choices are not always what everyone else is doing," Greene said. He referenced behavioral health. "It's not something openly talked about and something that is pushed over into a taboo category. The Weavers are willing with their giving to go to places that others may not go."

May we all be like Weavers in our own ways and make life better for those less fortunate in a way that exhibits generosity, humility and courage.

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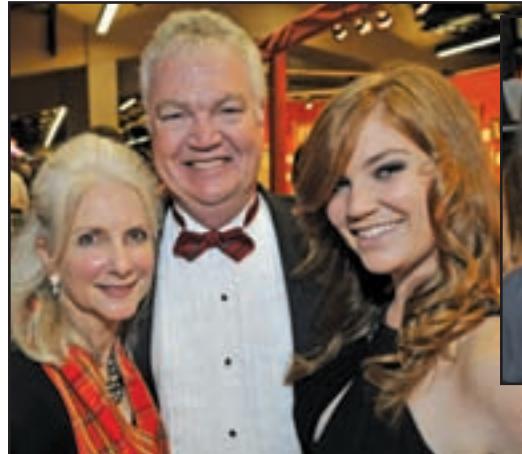


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This year's event showcased the Scottish theme and the participation as enthusiasm continues to grow. As T. Wayne Davis, honorary chairman of twenty-three years put it; it's been a pleasure to help create, "what has become one of the premier events in North Florida's social and charitable calendar."

After all, better health for the nation's children must begin in every community across the nation and a fine example was illustrated Nov. 29, 2012 at the Prime F. Osborn Convention Center in the great city of Jacksonville.

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Arts festival draws visitors rain and shine

San Marco area residents turned out for the annual Arts Festival on the Square, despite Saturday's brisk weather and thanks to Sunday's very sunny contrast. The Square was lively with early holiday shoppers, baby strollers and dog walkers, and folks just enjoying the warm day. And, it was an opportunity for San Marco Preservation Society president Diane Martin to talk about the positive changes around the corner.

"Lots of people stopped by the SMPS booth to see the drawings of the changes, and everyone is very excited! Balis Park will be expanded to become a beautiful, larger park, with almost twice as much green space," said Martin. "When the left turn lane and signal are removed and replaced with grass, the Lion fountain will be in the same park as the gazebo, and pedestrians will no longer have to cross seven lanes of traffic to get to the other side. San Marco will be more pedestrian friendly, and motorists will finally be

aware that pedestrians have the right of way!"

San Marco residents Bill and Maryjane Morell, who purchased a brick for the Lion fountain to support Balis Park, have been regulars at the festival for as long as it's been offered. "You'll find some of the nicest things here that you won't see just anywhere," said Bill Morell. Apparently John and Jill Mero of St. Nicholas agree: "We're not leaving until we buy something. We just have to narrow it down!" First timers Patrick and Marty Kern, who live just around the corner, came to the festival both days and said they love it.

It wasn't just the festival's vendors who moved product for two days. Merchants around the Square also reaped the benefits of the destination event, showing their wares to visitors from inside and outside the San Marco area. Debbie Jones and her daughter Summer enjoyed sampling at Ana Hernandez's All Spiced Up shop of gourmet spices, condiments and honey.



Jill and John Mero

Left: Patrick and Marty Kern dog sitting Biscuit Frick

Below: Diane Martin, President of San Marco Preservation Society, with volunteer Rosemary Robie



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WATERFRONT 4/3, dock w/boat lift, expansive river views, fireplace, granite kitchen. \$365,000. #624911 David Butler & Clair Corbett (904) 521-3288

Community Santa Party!

Saturday, December 8th
11a.m. until 2p.m.
5443 San Jose Blvd.



Happy Holidays!



AVONDALE BUNGALOW, circa 1927, woodburning fireplace, walk to Boone Park & Orsay Restaurant. \$185,000. #642299 Jill R. Mero (904) 210-8366



LUXURY NEW HOMES from the high \$300's, La Terrazza, a gated community, Epping Forest membership included. Suzanne Cash (904) 962-7477



ELEGANT CONDO 2/2, active adult community. Elevator to private corner retreat w/lake views. \$220,000. #624783 Cheryl Feazell (904) 415-4543



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Happy Holidays from MAC Hair Studio



Colin Stuart, Lindsey Misnar and Margaret Misnar



Mac Hair Studio is moving forward, and we could not have done it without the support of our clients. Each of us at MAC appreciates your loyalty, and have enjoyed being a part of your life. Thank you for making our dreams come true!

On November 29th we celebrated the opening of our new addition to the salon, MAC Boutique. It will provide a place for us to expand our services such as wedding preparations, mother/daughter days, makeup and hair clinics, or accommodate anyone that wishes to have their appointment in private.

Landscape Designer, Cindy Burns, designed a beautiful garden, reflecting Margaret Misnar's Scottish heritage. This garden creates a peaceful get-away for clients and a wonderful backdrop for our photographers, Lyndsey Misnar and Paco Alacid. A big thanks as well to Contractor, Gerry Tisdale, for his hard work and dedication to the project.

We have hopes to use this expansion for educating women about health and beauty. To kick off the New Year, Melissa Kingston from Definitions Gym, will teach a class on nutrition January

"It has always been my passion to educate young professionals in my business." Margaret Misnar said.

17th. We are excited about teaming up with our local businesses to bring important information to our clients and guests. Go to our website for more information at www.machairstudio.com

As of December 1st, we introduce Betsy Weiss to the MAC family. Betsy is a very accomplished massage therapist; we are thrilled to have her join our team. In addition, Monique Trainer and Lyndsey Misnar join us as our receptionists.

"Christmas has always been my favorite time of the year." Margaret said, *"I enjoy decorating and creating an atmosphere of Christmas cheer."*

Again, thank you for business and have a happy New Year from all of us at MAC.

Wishing you healthy hair day specials! Stock up your stockings with these great deals!

All hair & skin care products:

- **Buy 2 items get the 3rd 30% off**
- **Buy 3 items get the 4th 50% off**



Offers good through December 24th, 2012.
Some gift packages have expiration dates

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Don't know what to get your wife for the holidays? WE DO!

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BUSINESS PROFILE

Harby Jewelers

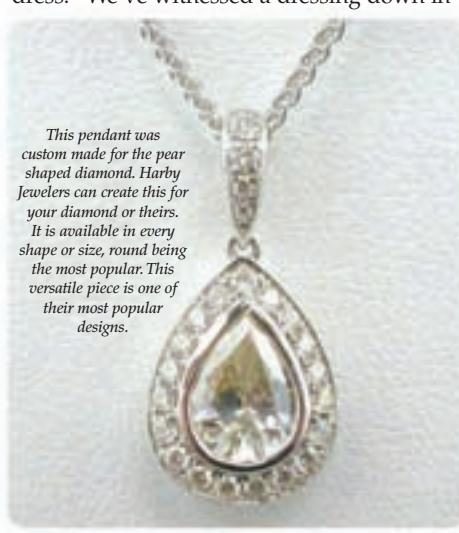


This pair of diamond earrings incorporates many classic details into one earring. The very center of the earring has a mosaic design hand cut with diamonds. There are nine diamonds in the center of each earring designed to create a large Asscher cut diamond look. Then micro-pave set around these diamonds is a small row of round diamonds. This earring creates the look of a large pair of diamond stud earrings without looking like everyone else. This earring requires a lot of expertise both in design as well as diamond cutting. It is a lot of "diamond look" at a more reasonable price point.

The four most dreaded words a man will hear this time of year are "Oh, honey, surprise me!" The best advice for the gift-giving guy this year? Go to Harby Jewelers!

That's because he'll likely never see a look of disappointment on her face when she unwraps a gift of diamonds from Harby Jewelers. This year the demand is for pendant necklaces and earrings because they offer such variety.

Pendants and earrings – whether dangles or posts – allow more freedom with casual dress. "We've witnessed a dressing down in



This pendant was custom made for the pear shaped diamond. Harby Jewelers can create this for your diamond or theirs. It is available in every shape or size, round being the most popular. This versatile piece is one of their most popular designs.

society, with fewer occasions that call for large, elaborate pieces of jewelry," said Hugh Harby, president of Harby Jewelers. "People are not as formal and want items that are more flexible for both formal and casual dress."

The all-diamond look is practical, especially in earrings, because women will wear them any time, with any type and style of clothing. "Jewelry designers have moved on this," vice president Brad Harby noted. "In this economy, people want pieces they can wear all the time."

You also see colored stones used a lot more, usually in pendants but also in rings and earrings, often encircled by diamonds. "Some of our designers will buy colored stones and design pieces around them," Brad said. For many years the focus was on the three major colored stones – rubies, emeralds and sapphires – but many designers now use tourmalines, spinels, and pink or yellow sapphires, offering some unique and unusual pieces.

"Women also like to have multiples: several sets of earrings and a variety of pendants in their collection," noted Hugh. "Another area in jewelry where we are seeing a growing demand is gold necklaces, typically longer pieces, 24 to 36 inches, in yellow gold, but they tend to be lighter and more open in design, not as heavy as the gold necklaces of the 1980s."

For the procrastinating holiday shopper, Harby Jewelers is open on Saturdays in December.



What Women Want for Christmas



This pendant features a soft open filigree design around a very unusual and rare natural pink spinel. The detail and the open design create a timeless look. Harby Jewelers can also create a personalized version for any colored stone, as well as any diamond, yours or theirs.

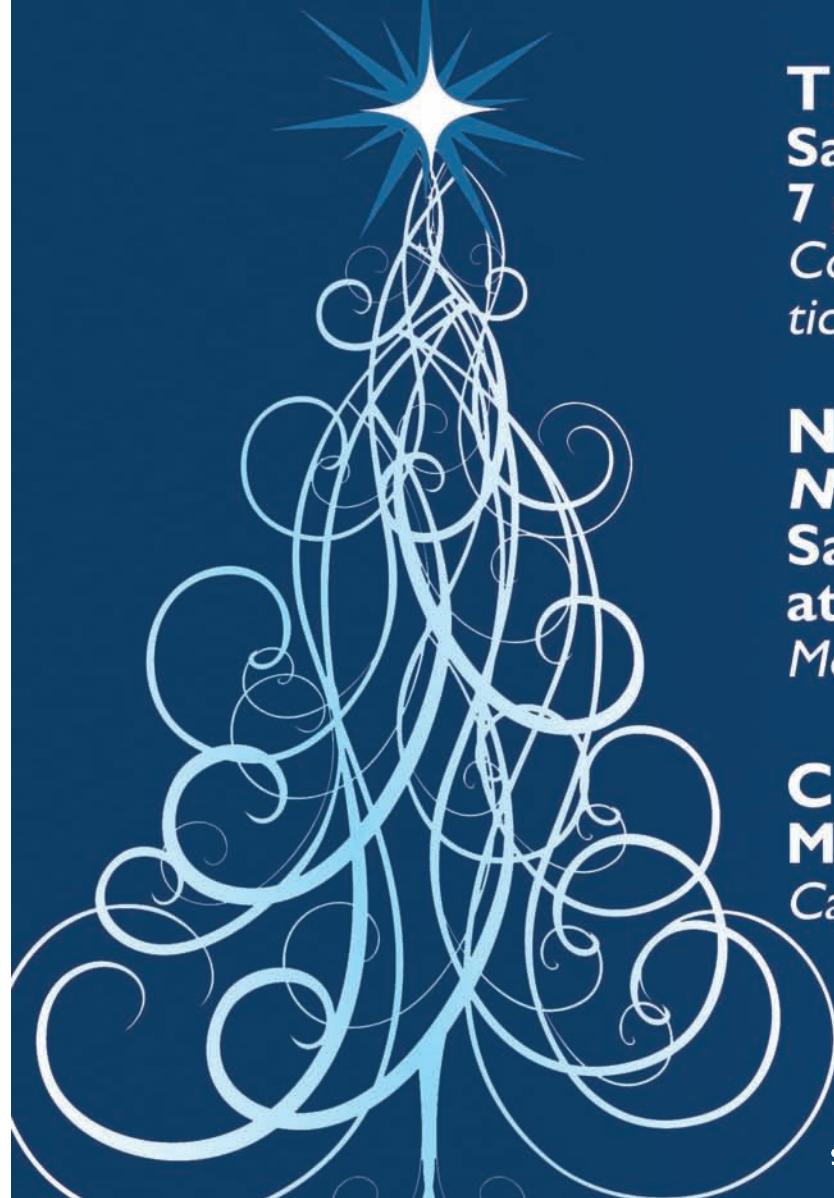


The dangle earring has become one of the hottest fashions in the industry. For many years, dangles had an image problem. Not anymore. Harby's most popular earring today is one that not only dangles, but has motion to it as well. This pair is designed with a Euro-wire clasp adding increased movement and style.

Harby Jewelers is located at 1301 Riverplace Boulevard, the 25th floor of Riverplace Tower. Holiday hours are Monday-Friday, 9:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Saturday, December 1, 8, 15 and 22 from 9:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. Preview the diamond and jewelry selection at www.harbyjewelers.com. Appointments not required, but accepted: (904) 346-0641.

December at Southside Baptist

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CHRISTMAS EVE

Monday, Dec 24, 6 pm

Candlelight Communion Service



A Century of Shopping

Photos Courtesy of Jacksonville Historical Society www.jaxhistory.com and Southbank Sojourn



BY SUSANNA P. BARTON
RESIDENT COMMUNITY NEWS

The approach of Christmas and Chanukah means holiday shopping is well under way. For those shoppers who keep their holiday shopping dollars local their retail adventures can be far more uplifting than a trip to the mall or big box store. You may enjoy local holiday tunes performed by area school children and church choirs; in-and-out purchases made at local stores on the way home from work; short lines and happy shop-

pers; distinctive, often locally made gifts; and store owners who are grateful you're there — and who know you by your first name.

While the "go local" or "buy local" movement has been a recent marketing phenomenon, it is certainly not new to neighborhood retail. Area residents have been patronizing the community's stores, restaurants and retail centers for decades.

From the early- to the mid-1900s, neighborhood retail centers like 5 Points, Park & King, Murray Hill, the Shoppes of Avondale, San Marco

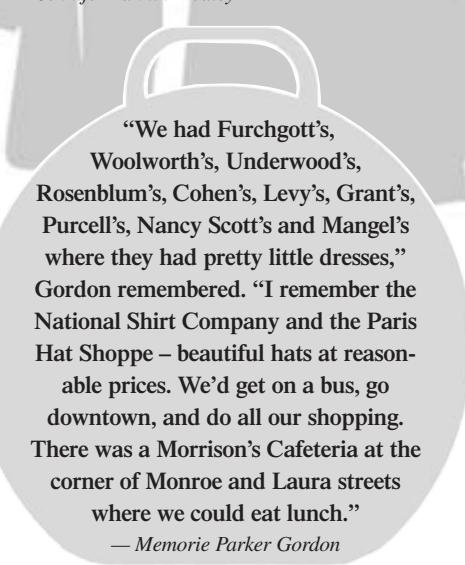
Square and St. Nicholas were the only places to shop outside of Downtown. With more people utilizing bikes, streetcars and their own feet as primary modes of transportation, these neighborhood shops and restaurants were the place to trade. As the car and urban sprawl made places outside of the neighborhoods more accessible, shoppers had other options for their retail dollars. But community stores and restaurants still held a special appeal and nostalgia that continues to flourish today.

So this holiday, check your list and check it twice. But before you fill up your gas tank and head out to the mall, remember how the local stores and businesses in the neighborhood, such as The Wardroom in San Marco Square, have been keeping the community spirit alive for decades. We hope these reflections of local residents' shopping adventures over the years will inspire you to go local with your gift giving.

Many of these memories are excerpts from our popular monthly columns, The Way We Were, by Victoria Register Freeman and Laura Jane Pittman. The photographs are courtesy of Southbank Sojourn and the Jacksonville Historical Society. To join the membership of the Jacksonville Historical Society or purchase these photos — or thousands of other images, — call (904) 665-0064 or visit www.jaxhistory.com.

"I remember riding my bike up to San Marco Square in the late 1970s and early 1980s and shopping at Peterson's Five and Dime. We would go through the bins and bins of candy with just a few cents in hand, and come out with a bag full of candy. We also used to do the same at the Zippy Mart in Miramar, which is where Watson's Martial Arts is currently. We would often eat lunch at the counter at Lakewood Pharmacy, where Tijuana Flats is now, and finish off the meal with homemade milkshakes. Our shoes were always bought at Lester's in Lakewood or Utsie's in San Marco, where we would ride a small merry-go-round while our mom paid. Boyer's Bakery and Dipper Dan's in Lakewood is where we would go for a treat. I so remember Pic 'n Save! It was there all the through the mid-late '90s. I used to stop there often on the way home from my teaching job on the Northside to grab necessities. There was also an A&P Grocery, I believe in Miramar. Also, a Goodyear Tire right in Miramar where the Blockbuster was several years back."

— Jennifer Fannin Medley



— Memorie Parker Gordon



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"Lakewood Shopping Center was a place the family frequented. Loyd would go to Lakewood Pharmacy every Saturday with friends to have a banana split, and for a time, Harding worked at the Lakewood Children's Shoppe. They also liked Clark's Market for meat (the current site of Mojo BBQ), dress shops French Novelty and the Vogue (where Winn-Dixie is), the record shop — where Loyd would buy 45 rpm singles of Top 40 hits — and Dipper Dan's for ice cream." — Reminiscences of Dorothy Harding and daughter, Bette Loyd

"We have four generations of families shopping here," said Forrest Brewer, proprietor of The Wardroom at San Marco Square. "There's a tradition on Holiday Magic night...all the generations of families, including their dogs, come out and visit the store — even if it's overflowing — to wish us a Merry Christmas."

"Opened in 1958, Southgate for a couple of years was the largest and most modern shopping center in the Jacksonville suburbs. Stores like Grants, Woolworth, Walgreen's and Lerner's Dress Shop drew in shoppers who wished to avoid downtown hassles. And, hey, let's not forget about Toy Town and its magnetic power over kids citywide. One of my most vivid memories of Southgate Plaza in the 1960s is a huge carnival there with wild animals in cages. Just curious—does anybody remember the crowds standing outside McDuff Appliances, mesmerized by some of the first color televisions most of us had ever seen?" — Reminiscences from David Gum



"From time to time, Mark would watch Jacksonville artist John McIver painting on the banks of the St. Johns River. And although the family loved the convenience of St. Nicholas — there was a medical clinic close by on one corner of Atlantic, an A&P (now the site of Curry Thomas Hardware) on the other, and a drugstore at the site of Mudville Grille — some bulldozers in the San Jose Forest area caught Coughlin's eye." I developed the bug for designing and building houses when we were in Houston. So I asked around and found out they were building a new neighborhood. We went tromping around in boots and work clothes to pick out our lot," she smiled. "We built on Saragossa and were the third house in the neighborhood." — From Alice Coughlin's reminiscences

"When

I was little, my pediatrician, Dr. Palmer's office was above the theater in 5 Points.

If we were good at our doctor's appointment, we got to pick out a treat at Goode's Bakery and Preston's 5 and Dime, followed by a walk to the duck pond. [I also remember] Fran's Children's Shop, Lakewood Toy Store, Dipper Dan's in Lakewood and Mim's Bakery in San Marco. During the summer, it was double or triple features at the San Marco Movie Theater." — Kimberly Cody Waterhouse

"I remember the 'thrill bridge' on River Road. We would beg our carpool driver to go over it fast on the way home from South Jax Presbyterian Preschool. We would go to Worman's in San Marco, where European Street is now) every Sunday for salami and rolls. I remember a store in Lakewood, near where Winn-Dixie is now, and all they would sell was blue jeans. And there was a game room, when PacMan and Donkey Kong were big, in that small strip of stores in Lakewood between where the Shell Station and Rosenblum's is now. Lots of happy memories." — Angela Lopez



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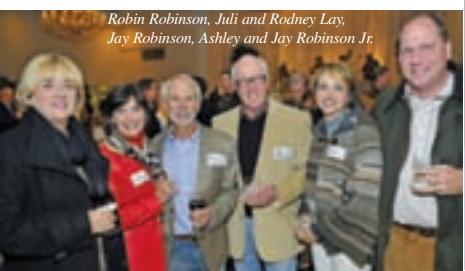
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A PEARL OF AN EVENING AT OYSTER ROAST

River lovers and supporters of the St. John's biggest advocacy agency, The St. Johns Riverkeeper, came out to dine on Oysters and sample culinary creations, Nov. 16. The annual party draws from all reaches of the city as an outstanding silent auction, Oyster dinner and infamous cold weather 'snap' always arrive on time, making it a brisk one to remember.

Robin Robinson, Juli and Rodney Lay, Jay Robinson, Ashley and Jay Robinson Jr.



SIGNATURE EVENT DOUBLES FUNDS RAISED

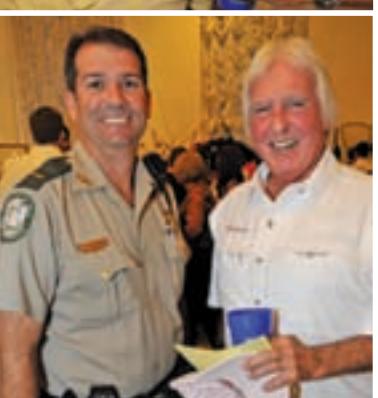


HOOKED ON COASTAL CONSERVATION

The Garden Club of Jacksonville was the perfect spot for The Coastal Conservation Association North East Chapter's 22nd Annual Banquet & Auction. Conserving and protecting Florida's marine resources was the lure. The dinner and live auction event, presented by Merrill Lynch Bank of America on Nov. 1, included a silent auction and raffle in addition to the dinner and live auction.



Nathan and Kat Miller with Mary Claire and Ted Miller and Mark Anderson



WGA MEMBERS CELEBRATE GRANT ANNOUNCEMENT



Riverside resident Delores Barr Weaver, one of the five founders of the Women's Giving Alliance, spoke during the group's annual meeting in late October. The event, held at the University of North Florida's University Center, set the stage for an announcement of this year's grants from the group. The grants total more than \$316,000 and are awarded to the following recipients serving women and girls: PACE Center for Girls; I.M. Sulzbacher Center for the Homeless; Volunteers in medicine; and the Women's Center of Jacksonville. The grants will help each group improve mental health concerns for women and girls they serve.

TASTEFUL BENEFITS NFSSE'S 20TH



Supporters of the North Florida School of Special Education packed Riverside's Daryl Bunn Studios on a November Friday evening to celebrate the school's 20th anniversary, enjoy students' artwork, and taste the food and drink offerings from Biscottis, Designed Events, Inc., Liz Grenamyer Catering, NFSSE Culinary Arts Team, Merryvale Vineyards, Pacific Southern Wine Co., and Republic National Distributing Company.

Bill and Rita Demarest and Richard photo Kate

**Santa's Gone Green
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Christmas, bring in
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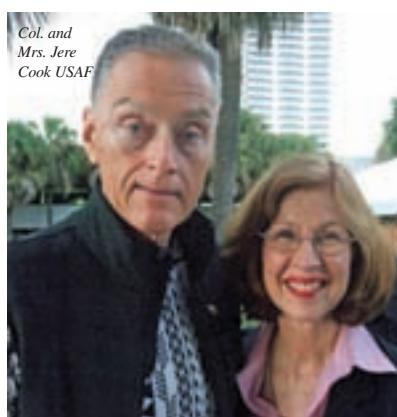
Signature Chefs Auction, held last month at The Florida Yacht Club for more than 200 guests, raised \$126,000 for March of Dimes — a figure double the revenue from 2011, according to event organizers. Honorary Chairs Susan Gentry of San Jose, along with her daughter Alison Gentry Hiers, DVM and

committee, headed by Amy Harrison Turci, the event was outstanding," according to March of Dimes Northeast Florida Division Board Chair Scott Coble. "We are deeply grateful to our sponsors and everyone who donated to this year's Signature Chefs Auction."

Nancy Chartrand and Meredith Chartrand Frisch of the Chartrand Foundation were all integral in the success of the event. "Thanks to the generous support of Jacksonville businesses that provided wonderful items for the silent auction and the outstanding leadership of our volunteer

GOOD COVERAGE: FESTIVAL THRIVES IN NEW TREATY OAK LOCATION

Residents enjoyed fine food and wine for a great cause last month under the historic branches of the Southbank's Treaty Oak. Catholic Charities hosted its 9th Annual Festival d'Vine at Treaty Oak Park, coordinating with local distributors to provide more than 200 sample wines for guests. The event also featured many area restaurants including Akel's Deli, Athen's Café, bb's, Biscottis, Bistro Aix, Burrito Gallery, Carrabba's Italian Grill, Chardonnay's Catering, Havana Jax, Indochine, Matthew's Restaurant and Catering, Mojo BBQ, Orsay, Pizza Palace, Sivada's Cupcakery, Stonewood Grill & Tavern, Sweet Pete's, Taverna, The Grotto Wine and Tapas Bar, The Loop, The Wine Cellar and Uptown



Tony Fiaro, Bob and Patty Kemper and Shirley Fiaro



Market. Freudian Slip provided a musical setting for the outdoor evening, which raised money for Catholic Charities Emergency Assistance Program.

IT CELEBRATES

*d Joanne Cellar, Ginny and Richard Dostie
ck Dostie*

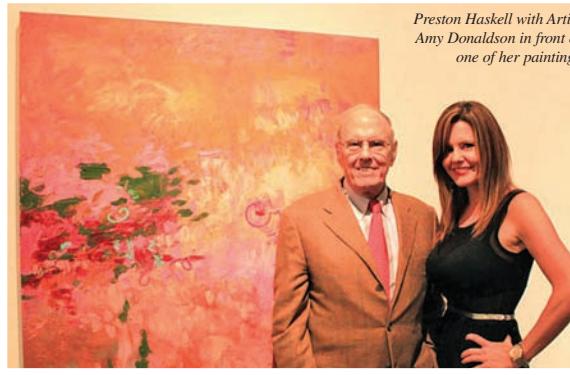


CUNNINGHAM COUTURE 10TH ANNIVERSARY



Valued clientele and special guests enjoyed a unique and scrumptious spread at Linda Cunningham's 10th Anniversary Party in San Marco. The week's events included daily discounts on clothing, jewelry, accessories and Linda's salon collection at the boutique on Kings Avenue.

SUCCESS AT THE SOIREE, CELEBRATING 50



Preston Haskell with Artist Amy Donaldson in front of one of her paintings



Irene Lazzara, Dean Bill Hill, and Linda Stein

The College of Fine Arts at Jacksonville University celebrated its 50th anniversary Nov. 19. The CFA Soiree, co-Chaired by Linda Berry Stein and Irene Lazzara, was an urban-style spectacle with more than 500 people in attendance sporting their hottest urban chic attire. Along with celebrating the 50 years of the college, the school helped recognize Dr. Frances Bartlett Kinne, who founded the College of Fine Arts and served as its Dean for

18 years, and celebrated her 54th year in association with the University.

Jacksonville University is committed to elevating the ability of its talent through comprehensive academic programs, believing Jacksonville needs to attract, retain and grow its creative capital through stronger education systems, respectful legislation, and a strong quality of life.

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Barbara Swindell.

Strong Roots that Spread Throughout the Community.

You could say Barbara Swindell was born to be in real estate. Her company, RiverPoint Real Estate is a product of three generations of experience in the industry. Barbara's father was a Broker, Barbara has been a REALTOR/Broker since 1977, and Barbara's daughter, Carrie Atkins is a REALTOR, as well. It's easy to see why Swindell, who grew up right here in San Marco, knows her business, and her neighborhood. RiverPoint Real Estate was established in 1983, and Barbara is proud to say that 95% of her business comes from the many satisfied customers who simply share their RiverPoint experience with friends and acquaintances.

Barbara attributes her success and outstanding referral rate to one rule, the "Golden" one. She does unto others what she would like others to do for her. "I just wanted to give people the kind of experience I would expect if I were buying or selling my home, because it is the most important purchase or sale of your life". Barbara is sincere when she says real estate isn't just a transaction to her, "It's more about getting to know your customer and

being interested in their needs at the deepest level", she adds. "Even though the industry term is 'real estate', and we always talk about 'location', this business is more than that", Barbara says. "The bigger part is understanding the intrinsic qualities of a neighborhood and finding the perfect match for customers". And, she's quick to add that it's the part she loves most about her career. Having lived in Jacksonville and in San Marco all her life, her real joy comes from helping people find the right fit for their lifestyle because not all neighborhoods are the same. "I've seen this city change and evolve and there probably isn't one neighborhood that's exactly like another."

Knowing the city's neighborhoods inside and out is a real advantage for Swindell and her team.

Barbara has also worked with the Employers Relocation Council since 1987 assisting people from all over the world in finding just the right home in Jacksonville. "Helping newcomers find a home in our beautiful city makes my career so rewarding," says Barbara. "When someone

is new to the city it's even more important to work with a person who really knows all of Jacksonville's unique nuances, she adds.

Throughout her real estate career, she's seen the real estate market bound and rebound, interest rates rise to an astounding 16% and fall to almost 3%. Sticking to her Golden Rule principle she's flourished through it all. Barbara says she grateful for every moment in her 35 plus year career. It's helped her to grow professionally and along the way she has met many wonderful people and made numerous great friends. Her many satisfied clients and astounding referral rate is proof to that. For Barbara Swindell and her RiverPoint Real Estate team, there isn't a shortcut in this business. It's listening, learning, and investing the time it takes to really get to know your client. Most of the time she stresses, you have to dig in and do the work. Judging from her success, Barbara's roots are indeed strong and deep, no wonder she's helping to grow big dreams all over Jacksonville.

Barbara W. Swindell is Broker/Owner of RiverPoint Real Estate, located at 3215 Hendricks Avenue. She lives in San Marco with her husband of 52 years, Bob Swindell.

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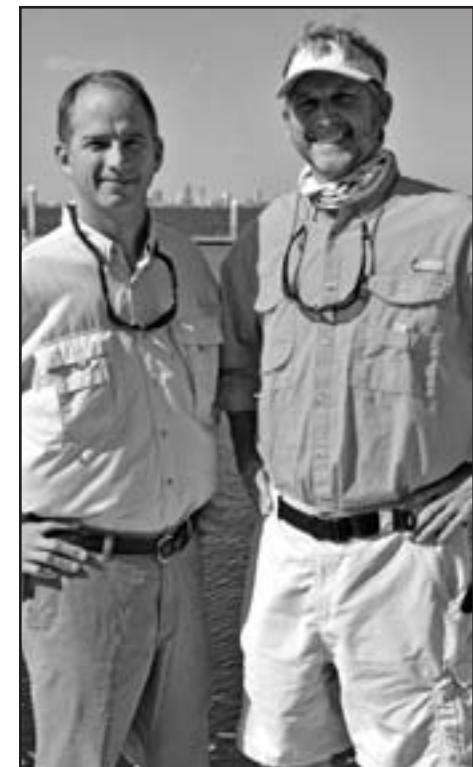
BY NATHAN & TED MILLER

Scrolling through pictures on my cell phone taken over the past year I am reminded how fortunate we are to live in such a great part of Florida. An occasional glance through an old photo album such as this can serve as a reminder of great times shared with family. Additionally, it can inspire us to take a few moments to think and to dream what the next destination will be.

With the closing of 2012, we wanted to share some of the great photos that have been sent to us over the past year.

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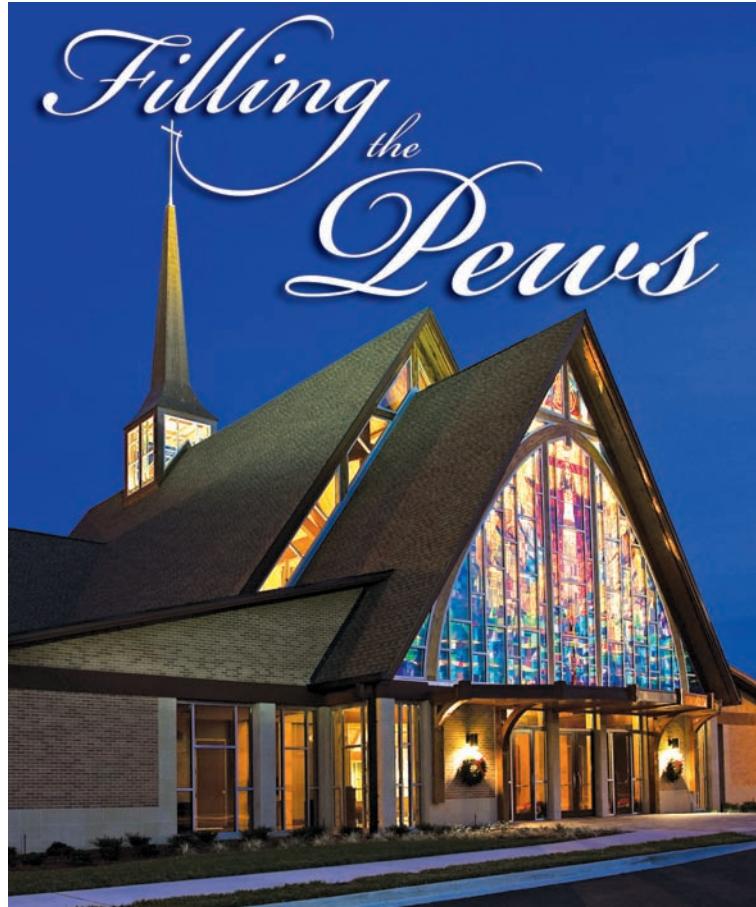
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BY JULIE KERNS GARMENDIA
RESIDENT COMMUNITY NEWS

The Most Wonderful Time of the Year as the beloved Christmas carol goes, guarantees an over-loaded church calendar with high congregational and public expectations. A season rich with opportunity for faith groups to minister far beyond their membership, most plan months in advance to deliver messages: of faith, salvation, hope, love and peace, inclusiveness, tolerance, charity,

mercy and goodwill. Voices and traditions differ; the desire to touch hearts and minds for the good of all remains universal.

With the spiritual message, special music and multiple services to meet diverse ages, interests and needs, comes the challenge of reaching the public. Newsletters, mailings and advertising are complemented by interactive websites and social media, exponentially increasing outreach. Congregations offer free movies, speakers, youth or

senior activities with transportation, social or group community service events. Interfaith groups coordinate joint activities to attract believers and the uncommitted, non-denominational or casual visitors, youth, seniors, singles, couples, divorced, widowed or bereaved individuals.

joint service of Advent Lessons & Carols with All Saints Episcopal Church - December 9th, 6 p.m., St. Mark's. A simpler service is Dec. 12, Birthday for Christ, a program by the children. For those in pain from illness, bereavement, employment or addiction issues, Dec. 21st (winter solstice) is The

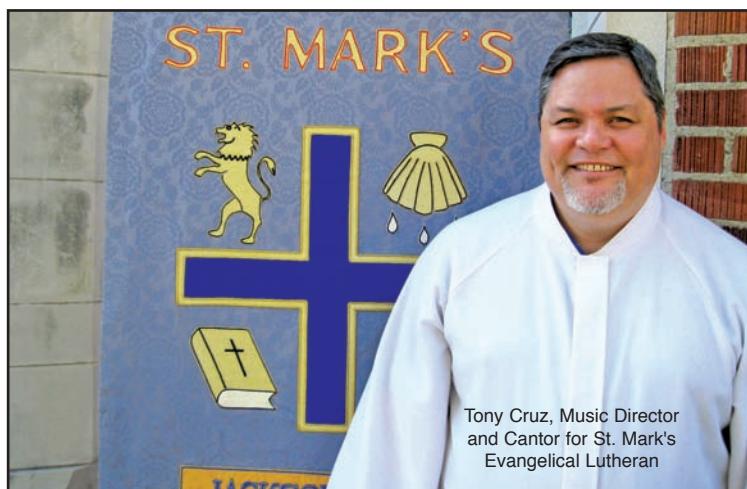
foster universal values of treating neighbors as self to better the world, freedom of religion, human rights, worldwide literacy (key to tolerance and peace), the Passover message of sharing that none go hungry, the belief that a good person who does right receives salvation," Sam Griswold said. Griswold is Temple Membership/Marketing Coordinator.

Hendricks Avenue Baptist Church commemorates the 5th anniversary, on Dec. 23, of the 2007 fire that destroyed the church. As a result of that tragedy and the community outpouring of support and assistance, the holiday season holds additional meaning for the congregation. The new sanctuary was dedicated January 2010.

"The choir will present special music on Dec. 23, a combined service, 10:30 a.m. The more informal family and children's service is 4:30 p.m., with the beautiful, traditional Service of Lessons & Carols at 11 p.m., Christmas Eve," Laraine Humbert said. Humbert is pastoral assistant at the church.

Congregation Ahavath Chesed focuses more on Chanukah than typical Jewish tradition because it precedes Christmas. They utilize e-blasts, newsletters, social media, interfaith celebrations and community service for adults and youth.

Riverside Presbyterian, St. Matthews Catholic Church and St. Catherine's Episcopal have longstanding traditions to mark the holy season and year-round community service opportunities to share



Tony Cruz, Music Director and Cantor for St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran

San Marco's St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran, Congregation Ahavath Chesed and Hendricks Avenue Baptist Church look forward to the seasonal opportunity to connect with members and attract visitors. Websites provide complete service and event schedules.

"Our Advent and Christmas music complement scripture readings in services; our holiday season extends to January 6th, the Feast of the Epiphany. Interfaith worship distinguishes our 5th annual

Longest Night: a quieter service with healing elements," Tony Cruz said. Cruz is St. Mark's Director of Music Ministries/ Cantor.

"As a reformed Judaic congregation we are inclusive and welcome everyone. We

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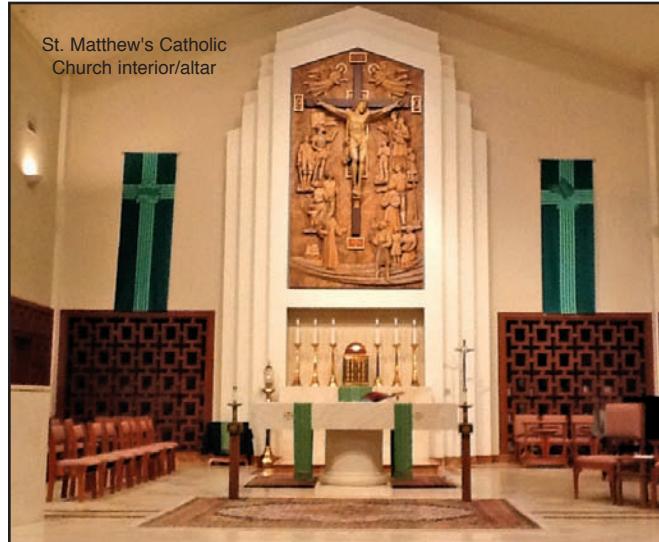
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St. Matthew's Catholic Church interior/altar

Director of Communications.

St. Matthew's Catholic plans extra masses, special music and a single service on Christmas Sunday, 10:30 a.m. Their mission of community service includes: Giving Tree Angels - parishioners adopt a needy child or family; year-round serving and providing dinner, clothing or other needs

at Sulzbacher Center, St. Francis Soup Kitchen (Immaculate Conception Catholic Church) or City Rescue Mission.

"We focus on helping people not as blessed, not just during the holidays but year-round and welcome visitors to join us in church and in service to others," Madelyn Roberson said. Roberson is St. Matthew's Parish Secretary.

St. Catherine's Episcopal is a neighborhood family-oriented church serving the Westside, also with a strong focus on community service year-round through their Rosa Brannen Food Pantry, homebound, nursing home and hospital ministries. At Christmas they invite the community to attend holiday worship and activities, then consider joining their church family, according to Marian Daniel, parish secretary.

"We invite visitors to join us in traditional activities, including

► with visitors.

"Riverside Presbyterian has beloved traditions people cherish, like the annual Christmas Concert & Dinner, first Sunday of December,"



Cliff Thomas said. "We have a strong belief in social ministries, helping the Salvation Army and through our Caring Tree Sunday (12/9), members adopt needy children to provide whatever they need. We urge all to pause and be still, despite the holiday rush, as together we journey through Advent to Christmas." Thomas is RPC



"As a reformed Judaic congregation we are inclusive and welcome everyone."

-Sam Griswold, Temple Membership/Marketing Coordinator

Greening of the Church, Sunday before Christmas or in worship at Christmas Eve services for families and children, 4:30 p.m., or 11:00

p.m., both with Communion," Daniel said. "All are welcome Dec. 30, 9:30 a.m. for the Nine Lessons & Carols with Holy Communion."



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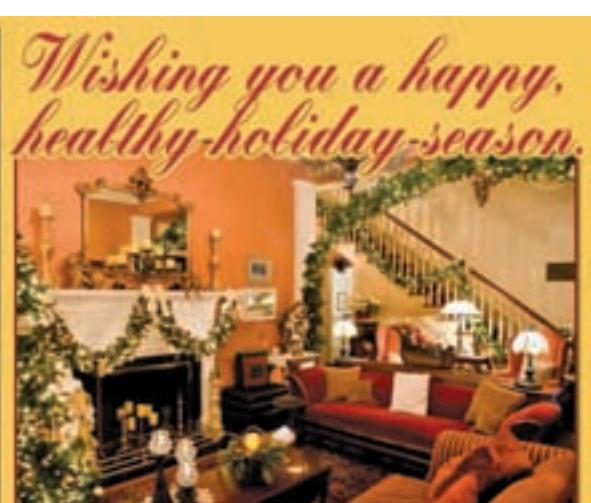
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Community Nutcracker: The not-so-over-the-hill gang



BY PEGGY HARRELL JENNINGS

Neither heart surgeries, cancer, torn ligaments, ruptured tendons, arthritis, aching rotator cuffs, tendonitis, degenerating discs, back surgery, broken toes or dare I mention it — age — will keep some of the more senior dancers from performing in one of the most beloved holiday traditions of all time, The Community Nutcracker Ballet.

On Dec. 7 and 8, the Florida Theatre will reverberate with Tchaikovsky's magnificent score as this dedicated group of dancers take the stage for the not first, not tenth — but the 21st time. The group of dancers — which includes Dr. George Trotter, Curtis Evelyn, Rosalyn Evelyn, Sue Barry, Geraldine Travis and Peggy Harrell Jennings — has a combined 120 years of Nutcracker

experience in this production alone!

Although most of the longtime participants are Riverside, Avondale or Ortega residents, the gang has honorary members in The Evelyns and Dr. Avis Chen Boulter, residents of "the other side of the river."

Peggy Harrell Jennings started taking regular ballet classes when she was nine years old. At an average of three classes per week, 48 weeks a year, 32 plies (deep knee bends in a turned out position for you non-dancers) per barre — that's 3,608 plies per year. She gives a conservative estimate that she has accomplished 200,000 plies in a lifetime of dance. At an age when playing the role of the Grandmother is not really "playing", Harrell who is a breast cancer survivor and has experienced ruptured tendons and a torn ACL says, "No wonder my knees hurt!"

Curtis Evelyn, at 60-plus years, has maintained his slim, muscular physique through dance training. Although having his share of back problems from partnering — try catching a 100 pound girl as she flies through the air and lifting her over your head (numerous times) — Curtis has overcome his pain over the years. His love of dance has prevailed over all minor and major physical aggravations. Look out Emmett Smith!

George Trotter, celebrating his 21st year as Herr Drosselmeyer, has danced many roles. He only recently relinquished grueling pas de deux from his repertoire. Debbie Peters Rankin, Community Nutcracker Party Scene artistic director and owner /director of Baggs Studio of Ballet notes that Trotter embodies the character to the point that his role as a primary care doc may be his alter ego instead of the other way around.

Curtis and Rosalyn Evelyn, whose love affair and subsequent marriage was made in Nutcracker heaven, have graced the stage as guests and as the Rat King and Rat Queen in party scene for numerous years. Their menacing manner and Rosalyn's beautiful, mysterious presence in the first scene contribute to the drama of the upcoming Battle scene directed by Beth Marks.

Sue Barry has been a regular on the stage since Community Nutcracker's beginnings as a party guest as well as dancing the roles of Grandmother and the maid. She hasn't let little things like skin cancer or vein surgery hold her back.

"Each year is like a reunion — some of the dancers in the Party Scene have been together in this ballet for over 20 years — we are old friends," she said. "Changing roles and adding new performers each year adds to the fun. It's like going to a real party. You get all dressed up and hang out with your friends but the food is fake and the glasses are empty."

Weeks after open-heart surgery and five by passes, Trotter was back in class at Baggs Studio of Ballet wearing a heart monitor.

"George would be happy if he died on a stage," quipped fellow dancer Curtis Evelyn.

Each of the Not so Over the Hill gang trains at Baggs on Tuesday nights from 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. in an adult ballet class taught by Ms. Peggy. They can be found after class at European Street on Park Street continuing their lively dance discussions.

Who knew that this commitment to dance and to Community Nutcracker Ballet would forge friendships that have lasted longer than most of the other performers have been alive?

Nearly 120 years after The Nutcracker's first performance in December of 1892, the curtain rises on six dancers whose 120 years of dancing experience has cemented friendships based on mutual respect, dedication, commitment to their art and a "No whining" policy.

Neither illness, injury, surgery nor accidents has kept the Gang from performing in The Community Nutcracker at the beautiful Florida Theatre.

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In Memoriam

Sarah "Sallye" Matthews Bayer

BY OLGA BAYER
RESIDENT COMMUNITY NEWS

At age 94, and barely 5 feet tall with shoes on, Sallye Bayer – Mama Sallye to me – may have been short in stature but she was larger than life when it came to wit, wisdom, kindness, generosity and love.

Not too long ago when we were planning her 90th birthday party, she insisted we keep it small and simple. But she had more friends than she thought, and in the end, 94 out of 100 people came to her celebration. And the few who couldn't make it called to let us know why!

No one appreciated a good laugh more than Sallye. She had a knack for remembering and telling jokes, and cracking up after the punch lines. She demonstrated her sharp wit on many occasions. But one incident that always makes me smile concerns a certain piece of jewelry she wore.

Ever since the popular movie "10," the number 10 has come to symbolize the ideal woman. Sallye's husband of 60 years – I called him Papa Joe – gave her a pendant with the number 9 ?. It wasn't a 10, because as Joe said, "nobody's perfect." When a friend bragged that her husband had given her a necklace with 10 ?, Sallye quipped, "Remember, mine is from my first husband and yours is from your third."

Sallye rarely missed a Sunday in the 50 years that she attended Southside United Methodist Church. She loved the Heritage Sunday School Class, United Methodist Women, JOY group, Bible studies and Wednesday night suppers. She was a member of San Jose Country Club and played golf into her 80s.

Sallye enjoyed lunching with friends every week, and stayed busy crocheting baby hats for the hospital, solving Sudoku and crossword puzzles, and working jigsaw puzzles daily with daughter Becky. She used her MacBook to Skype her daughter



in Ecuador, was a voracious reader, and followed all kinds of sports. She kept records and lists of everything – from guys she dated to what she served for Christmas dinner.

Sallye and Joe were high school sweethearts who grew up in Tennessee. Sallye graduated from Ward-Belmont, and Joe graduated from and played football for Georgia Tech. They were married in Louisiana in 1941. Joe's army years and career as an engineer at Southern Bell kept them on the move, but in 1956 they settled permanently in the San Jose area, and raised three children.

Over the years, Sally and Joe opened their hearts and home to share holiday dinners with people who had no place to go. Sallye reached out to friends, neighbors, even new acquaintances, inviting them to church. Her favorite poem was "Sermons We See" by Edgar Guest, and I cherish the handwritten copy she gave me. She set a good example for our family, and we all will miss her very much.

Sarah "Sallye" Matthews Bayer was born in Nashville, Tenn. in 1917 and died Oct. 14, 2012. She was pre-deceased by her husband, Joe Bayer. She is survived by daughters Joanne Falcony (Guido), Ecuador, and Becky Colangelo, Jacksonville; and Tommy Bayer (Olga), Jacksonville, and numerous grandchildren and great-grandchildren.



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The Way we Were

The Landon High School Alumni Association & Memorabilia Room

BY LAURA JANE PITTMAN
RESIDENT COMMUNITY NEWS

If you mention the word "Lionette" to an older resident this side of the river, chances are they will know exactly what you are talking about. Chances are they either were a Lionette or had a sister, cousin, aunt, mother, grandmother, or friend who was.

The Landon Lionettes were the "best precision drill team Jacksonville ever had," recalled Carolyn Knopf Graham, Landon High School Class of 1944, a member of the Landon High School Alumni Association board of directors and a former Lionette herself. And you can find a plethora of Lionette photos, pins, and paraphernalia in the Landon High School Alumni Memorabilia Room – along with anything else you can think of from the bygone days of one of Jacksonville's premier high schools.

Landon High School was one of three high schools in the city, along with Jackson and Lee. And Fletcher



was at the beach," said Reed Tillis, who graduated from Landon in 1953. Tillis is also a member of the alumni association board of directors and helps maintain the school's memorabilia room along with Graham.

Landon High School, which opened its doors in 1927 and had its last graduating class in 1965, taught and shaped Jacksonville young people through war, depression and many generations of students.

The first graduating class in 1928 was made up of former Duval High School and Immaculate Conception School students, who came together to form Landon High School. There are Landon graduates represented in every major profession in the city, from businessmen and women to doctors to lawyers to judges to politicians. At least three Landon High School graduates went on to become president of their classes at the University of Florida.

After the school was converted to a middle school in the mid-1960s, there was a need for a place to store the high school stuff – hence, the Landon High School Memorabilia Room was born. It

is housed in an office suite near Regency Square Mall on Atlantic Boulevard and is the birthplace of the Landon High School Alumni Newsletter, which is sent monthly to more than 550 alumni. The newsletter is sometimes more than 10 pages long and is full of letters and memories sent in by graduates, along with alumni information and obituaries.

"Mark Blankfield started the memorabilia room, and Carolyn has been helping maintain it since 1988," said Tillis. "We have yearbooks dating back to 1930 and going all the way up to the last graduating class. People who graduated in the earliest years have written down their memories and submitted pictures. In 1932 to 1937, the school didn't produce a yearbook to save money because of the economy."

The room has books, photographs, paintings, uniforms, blankets, pins, rings – even a wooden paddle hanging on the wall that reminds Tillis of people yelling "Ow!" from the office when it was in use.

For Graham, a wall of Lionette photos and albums of the group's impres-

sive football game formations evoke memories of director Kathleen Turner.

"We would gather each Monday, and she would lay out what we would do on Friday. By Friday night, we had to be ready with our tennis shoes spotless," Graham laughed. "She would sit up in the bleachers and could tell who was out of step. If you danced perfectly every time and never missed a step, you received a special pin."

Graham and Tillis visit the room several times a week to organize the memorabilia, work on the newsletter and receive visitors. Landon High School alums often drop in to reminisce, look through items in the room or donate their own personal items to the collection. Occasionally, people come in looking for pictures and information about parents or grandparents.

The Landon High School Alumni Association also hosts regular meetings – getting together for breakfast at a local restaurant and hosting all-alumni spring and holiday parties. The functions have had attendees from as far back as the graduating class of 1930.

The 2012 Holiday Party will be held on December 15 at San Jose Country Club. For more information about the Landon High School Alumni Association or its memorabilia room, contact Graham at (904) 724-2951 or Tillis at (904) 704-2252.

If you or someone you know is age 70 or better and has a history of living in the San Marco/St. Nicholas/San Jose areas, please send contact information to Laura Jane Pittman at Ljpittman@comcast.net to be considered for a future WWW column.

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Photo by
Christie Whitehead
Photography

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All the artwork was created by a child living at the Sulzbacher Center

In a Word Faith

BY DR. THOMAS SPACKMAN
STAKE PRESIDENT
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Saints (Hendricks Avenue)*

(Editor's note: The Resident is asking local pastors and faith leaders to sound off on three words during the holiday season over the next three months: faith, peace and love. This month, we address faith.)

Faith can mean several different things, but I'd like to consider it as a principle of action. Perhaps this is best

explained by a story.

Many years ago in the era of the steam locomotive, a young Gordon B. Hinckley worked for the railroad and frequently rode these huge, fast, and dangerous trains as they threaded through the mountain passes of the west. He spoke of these experiences in 2002 as President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Often he had wondered how the engineer dared the long journey through the night. Then he came to realize that it was not one long journey, but rather a constant continuation of a short journey. The engine had a powerful headlight that made bright the way for a distance of 400 or 500 yards. The engineer saw only that distance, and that was enough, because it was constantly before him all through the night into the dawn of the new day.

Faith is like the light on that locomotive. On our journey through life "we take one step at a time. In doing so we reach toward the unknown, but faith lights the way. If we will cultivate that faith, we shall never walk in darkness."

We are all children of a loving Father in Heaven. His plan for life is that each of us would learn through our experiences to choose good instead of evil. Though the sacrifice of Jesus Christ we can be forgiven of mistakes and be given divine strength each day to do better. The faith that these things are true is like a bright light that helps us step forward despite uncertainty or doubt.

I recently had a bout of the shingles, which I soon found out to be something many have experienced. As I slowly began to recover, I struggled to regain my former state of moderate fitness. The first day a 15-minute walk left me exhausted. The next day I was able to go for 20 minutes. Gradually, and with persistence over several weeks, I regained my former

endurance. I had not known that recovery would take as long as it did, but faith helped me to persist and keep going each day. I also have a renewed empathy for those who are dealing with such physical trials.

The Bible tells us that faith can move mountains. Faith also builds character – but only when faith becomes an action word in our lives. As we choose to be optimistic, to take on problems that are difficult, to help someone in need, to offer a word of cheer to someone who is down, we are stepping forward into the unknown with faith that our actions will make the world a better place. And if we persist in following that light one step at a time, we will make a difference for good.

Thomas Spackman is chair of anesthesiology at Mayo Clinic Florida. He is ecclesiastical leader of nine congregations as Stake President of the Jacksonville Florida East Stake (Hendricks Avenue) Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Temple, Center partner for Holiday Mitzvah program

BY SAM GRISWOLD

Congregation Ahavath Chesed and the Jacksonville Jewish Center have joined forces to make sure the Holiday Mitzvah program continues. The 24-year volunteer effort makes sure 400 individuals who receive home-delivered meals will have a hot meal on Christmas Day.

"After meeting with folks from Aging True, Rabbi Jesse Olitzky and I agreed that the Temple and the Jacksonville Jewish Center would support this effort," said Wiatt Bowers, Holiday Mitzvah co-organizer and chair of the Worship Committee at Congregation Ahavath Chesed. "We see this as a great opportunity for the two synagogues

to work together for the betterment of the larger Jacksonville community. Christmas is also the perfect time, as our assistance allows the regular Meals-on-Wheels caregivers, most of whom are not Jewish, to be with their families."

Since its inception in 1988, the Holiday Mitzvah program has prepared and delivered more than 8,500 meals to homebound elderly and the disabled. It is a great way for Jews in Jacksonville to practice the Jewish concept of Tikkun Olam, or making the world a better place.

Temple organizers are seeking volunteers for the delivery efforts on Dec. 24 and Dec. 25.

"The meals will be cooked and packed at Temple the morning of Dec. 24. We will need about 30 volunteers that day," Bowers said. "We will also need about 30 drivers to deliver on Christmas morning."

For more information on participating, contact Holiday Mitzvah co-chairs Mike Elkin at (904) 343-6329 or Rhoda Goldstein at (904) 268-8124.

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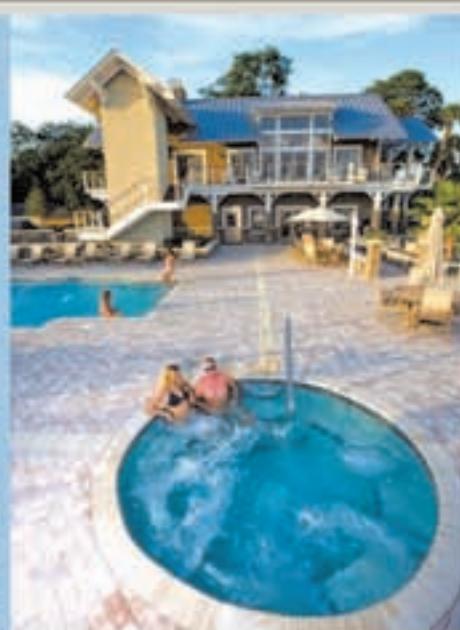
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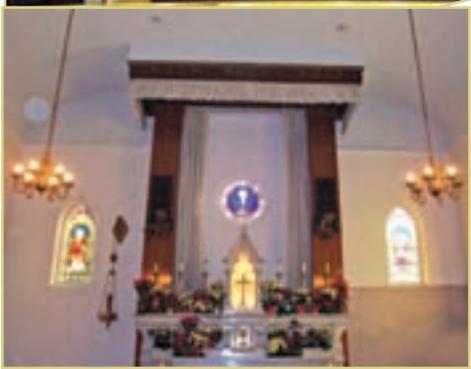
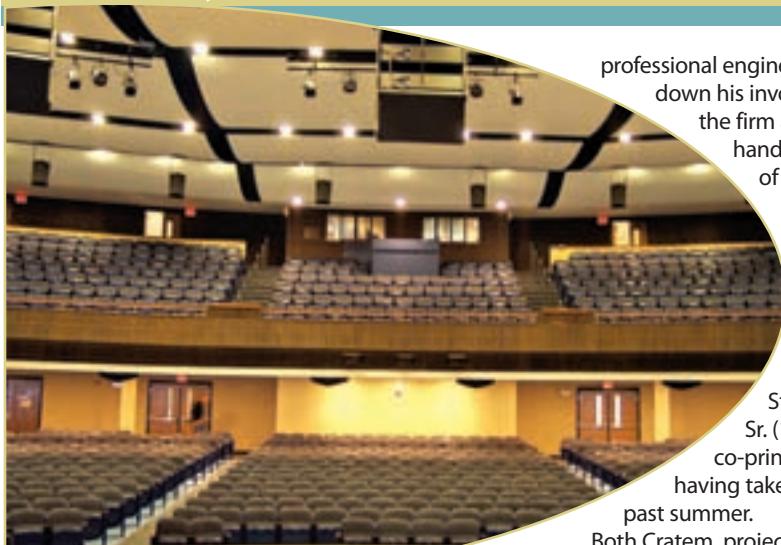


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professional engineer is winding down his involvement with the firm and recently handed over the reins of the company.

For the future, the emphasis is on "& Associates". Long-time associates David P. Cratem (17 years) and Stephen C. Quina, Sr. (15 years) are now co-principals of the firm, having taken ownership this past summer.

Both Cratem, project manager, and Quina, electrical engineer and a certified professional engineer (P.E.), are Jacksonville natives and both attended the University of South Florida. But though their roots are local, as are many of their projects, the firm's work has taken them all over the United States. In fact, Quina is a registered P.E. in Georgia, Alabama, Tennessee, Minnesota, Oregon and California as well as in Florida, in order to work on Owens-Corning projects around the country.

One of their "close-to-home" projects was the re-lighting of Atlantic Boulevard in San Marco, from the Lion fountain to the railroad tracks, and they worked collaboratively with the San Marco Merchants Association. "There was a lot of good input from the area merchants," said Quina.

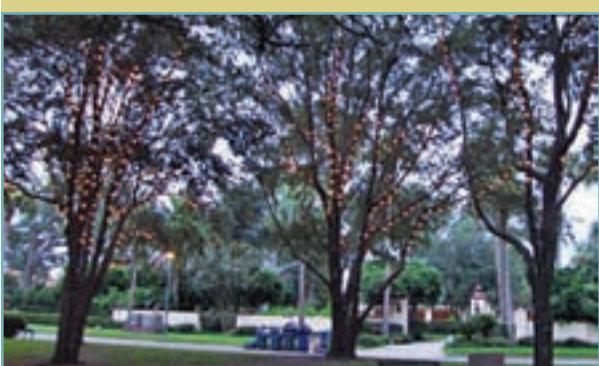
Other local projects include electrical alterations to the Gate Riverplace Tower on the Southbank, as well as lighting for Stockton Street Town Center, the Ortega River Bridge,

and the Riverwalk's Northbank and Southbank; interior lighting for Hendricks Avenue Baptist Church, San Jose Catholic School and Temple Ahavath Chessed; and numerous projects for area schools.

"We've had a contract for the past seven years with Duval County Public Schools," said Cratem. "We manage six to eight projects per year for the School Board and recently upgraded technology wiring for Ribault High School and Lake Forest Elementary, both of which are the first in Duval County to get CAT 6A wiring."

Transition of the company's ownership from Searcy to Cratem and Quina has not changed a thing. "We plan to continue our existing business relationships and look for new ones," said Quina. "We were recently selected for an open-end contract with the Gainesville Community Redevelopment Agency, which allows us to be selected for projects without going through a bid process."

Although affected by the economic downturn of 2008, the small company of five hopes to be in a position to hire two more people in the next couple of years. "We may be small, but our diversity in backgrounds allows us to work on a wide variety of projects," Cratem noted.



For nearly three decades, the San Jose-based firm John Searcy & Associates, Inc. has consulted with local and national architectural and engineering firms on electrical systems projects in the educational, recreational, institutional, commercial and industrial sectors.

The roots of the firm go back even further, though, when John V. Searcy started practicing in this field in 1957. Today, the 84-year-old

John Searcy & Associates, Inc. (Electrical Engineers) is located at 2700 University Blvd. West, Ste. B-4, Jacksonville, FL 32217. Office: 904-739-1231. Website: www.searcyengineering.com



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GO GIVERS

Dr. Leslie Kaplan



BY JULIE KERNS GARMENDIA
RESIDENT COMMUNITY NEWS

Leslie Kaplan was introduced to CISV (Children's International Summer Villages) when her two sons, Alexander, 15, and Jeremiah, 13, participated in the cross-cultural program to promote peace and understanding among youth.

Both boys traveled to Denmark to stay with host families. Leslie teaches Folklore & Folklife at UNF and her husband Philip, a UNF History Professor, have supported and volunteered for the organization continuously since 2007. The couple's youngest child is daughter Elinor, 5, and the family has a rescue cat, Coraline.

"I believe in the mission and have been a volunteer recruiter for CISV, finding adult and college-aged leaders for the programs, recruiting children to participate, selecting the kids and then matching children with adults," she said. "My involvement goes deeper

because of the local CISV – Faces of Jacksonville program started by former City Council President Lad Daniels. This local effort applies concepts of the international program to bring local diverse communities together for better understanding and the good of the city."

Through Faces of Jacksonville Kaplan learned that her ZIP Code, 32207, is one of the biggest resettlement areas in the entire Southeast, except Miami. This is largely due to Lutheran Social Services of Northeast Florida and World Relief Jacksonville which assist many immigrants: both are located near Emerson and Philips Highway.

"I am UNF's Interim Director of the honors program and teach a class for incoming freshman – Immigration & National Identity. Through my volunteer work with CISV and Faces of Jacksonville I learned how many immigrant groups have settled here. There are individuals and families from Bhutan, Burundi, Burma, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Iran, Iraq and Syria among others," she said. "I realized my interests had coalesced and by connecting these diverse groups, all would benefit."

Kaplan's students perform a service project as part of their class and interact with the refugees by mentoring, tutoring or through activities like coaching soccer. She has been amazed at the mutual enrichment of integrating the cross-cultural program with her

students.

"I've watched how my students have grown through meeting people from all over the world, without need for travel or even a plane ticket. They get so much from the experience, and vice versa. Immigrant kids – who are often isolated at school due to differences in appearance, language, clothing, eating habits, etc. – are helped academically, socially. Simultaneously, they are influenced towards higher education and set on a path toward success," Kaplan said.

To clearly explain CISV is difficult, according to Kaplan, because the term "camp" has a preconceived meaning to most Americans. The camp concept of CISV actually refers more to a refugee camp.

"In some of the local apartment complexes where these refugees live it is like walking into another country," she said. "They are trying to build new lives and want to retain their own cultures, while adapting to a new life...the mission of CISV brings us all together and by involving youth we are training the leaders of tomorrow while bringing awareness and understanding of cross-cultural differences."

The Kaplans moved from Mandarin to San Marco in 2005 to enjoy the walking/ biking lifestyle as a family. They especially enjoy biking over to the Riverside Arts Market where they meet Saturdays at 9 a.m. at the bike valet. Families gather there to bike the historic district, visit a playground and stop to enjoy coffee for the adults and snacks for the kids. Kaplan said families from San Marco, Springfield, Riverside and Avondale join the outing.

On the home front, they renovated

their Hendricks Avenue 1948 Spanish-style Bungalow and especially enjoy the yard. Four garden beds produce an abundance of herbs, fruits (tons of blueberries) and vegetables. Fruit trees add to the edible landscape.

"We are probably known for having a 'messy', but yummy yard...everything growing there is feeding someone or something including our family, neighbors, or wildlife. We are supporters of Slow Food First Coast which promotes local fresh, natural and wholesome foods," Kaplan said. She serves on the board of Slow Food First Coast and leads the volunteer nutrition committee for J. Allen Axson Montessori School where her daughter Elinor is a student.

"I especially enjoy taking fresh fruits and vegetables, including raw herbs like fennel and even raw spinach for the children to try. Surprisingly when one or two kids try something the others all ask to try some too, so it's a wonderful, easy way to introduce them to new tastes," she said.

The Kaplans like to have a date night, walk to a local restaurant and then through the neighborhoods to the river to watch the sunsets. They attend services at Congregation Ahavath Chesed and support the local Lutheran Social Services and World Relief organizations.

Future plans for the Kaplans include their annual summer trip to Europe, where they are based in Athens, Greece and accompanied by Leslie's students. Leslie will teach topics regarding modern Greece, and Philip will teach ancient Greek history to the students for five or six weeks of overseas study.

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PAY IT FORWARD

How can you help?

Editor's note: This month, we continue a new feature at The Resident that we hope inspires residents to be change-makers for community good. "How can you help?" will profile a local nonprofit organization and showcase ways to support it. It is our sincerest hope that by creating awareness of local needs, we can all help generate positive solutions, funds and help for those in our community who deserve it most.

Organization:
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network of independent community blood centers responsible for nearly half of the nation's blood supply. TBA has been enriching lives since 1942 and is a non-profit community blood center licensed by the FDA and accredited by the AABB.

Opportunities to help: The Blood Alliance is critically low on O-Negative blood, the universal donor. If you are not a donor, please consider it.

How to raise your hand: To make an appointment to donate, visit the organization's website at www.igiveblood.com or use the group's free iPhone and Droid app at iDon8 or call The Blood Alliance at (888) 99-TBA HERO.

Nonprofit grant distribution now quarterly

San Marco-based Brunet-Garcia is awarding its popular re:solveSM grants on a quarterly basis. The local firm had been offering charitable organizations the opportunity to achieve pro-bono marketing, advertising and public relations services annually.

This year the agency will review grant applications in December, March, June and September. The grant funding amounts start at \$5,000.

Applications for the agency's third annual initiative are now available online at

www.brunetgarcia.com/resolve. The application for December award selections was Nov. 1. The March application deadline is Feb. 1, the June application deadline is May 1 and the September application deadline is Aug. 1, according to a company announcement.

One application will be reviewed per organization per calendar year. A panel of Brunet-Garcia employees will review each application. Those selected for a grant award will be notified at the end of the quarter during which they apply.

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Politics, faith intersect at area forum

San Marco dentist, Dr. Sol Brotman, addresses a question during the interfaith forum. Fr. Tom Deppe, District 5 City Council Representative Lori Boyer and Warda Ali listen to his perspectives; Photo by Bill Eyer



A panel of local lay members of area faith groups — many with firsthand experiences in the political realm — gathered last month to discuss faith and politics at All Saints Episcopal Church.

District 5 City Council Representative Lori Boyer was one of the seven participants on the panel, which included individuals from the Anglican, Muslim, Jewish, Episcopal, Shia Ismaili and Mormon faith traditions. In addition to Boyer, panelists were: Dr. Parvez Ahmed, UNF Associate Professor of Finance; Warda Ali, Florida Coastal School of Law student/law clerk; Dr. Sol Brotman, Sol G. Brotman DDS; Dr. Matthew T. Corrigan, UNF Political Science & Public Administration Chair; Rev. Tom Deppe, All Saints Episcopal Church; and Dr. Kathleen Thomas, former candidate for U.S. Senate in Illinois.

Local blogger and longtime journalist Tricia Booker moderated the panel discussion.

Brotman, a San Marco dentist who helped pen the original Human Rights Ordinance for the city of Jacksonville,

shared his perspective on the ordinance revision issue. The ordinance was the subject of much public debate and eventually failed to pass the City Council vote in recent months.

Corrigan, who has provided commentary on many local elections over the years, noted how the presidential candidates' faith beliefs did not factor as prominently in the 2012 elections as had been expected.

All participants explained how important it is for politicians to separate their faith beliefs from government work — and address the greater community impact and constitutionality of various issues. In a hypothetical example, Ahmed described that while his religion forbids him to drink, he would still have to follow the law if he were in an elected role governing liquor licenses.

The evening ended with a reception in the church hall, where the discussion continued. The Fifth Promoting Peace Through Understanding Interfaith Forum is slated for spring.

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Jr. Residents

Election 2012: Students weigh issues, gain perspectives

Schools across the neighborhood got a firsthand perspective of the country's political process last month, and learned the importance of voting and understanding the issues.

At San Jose Catholic School, students at each grade level learned about elections as part of their curriculum. Rick Mullaney, director of the Jacksonville University Public Policy Institute, made a presentation at the school to help put their studies into perspective.

"We want to make sure that they understand the political process from an early age," said Carolyn Moore, San Jose's American History teacher, adding that many of the students at San Jose will be able to vote in the next election.

Mullaney's visit was the culmination of an elections curriculum that included watching and analyzing the debates, watching CNN Student News and reading the New York Times' UpFront magazine and participating in a debate with their history teacher. On Nov. 6, the students also engaged in a school-wide election.

Mullaney reminded the students how fortunate citizens of the United States are for experiencing a presidential transition "done lawfully and peacefully. We take that for granted in this country — but it's extraordinary," he said.

San Jose Catholic School wasn't the only institution hosting politically motivated events. At The Bolles School, students in the school's Young Democrat and Young Republican clubs hosted a mock debate at the school's San Jose campus. The clubs' members debated



three topics: how to revive the economy, the Dream Act and how to deal with the threat Iran poses to the peace and stability of the Middle East.

Students at the Bolles Bartram Campus held a mock election during lunch periods. And on Nov. 6, students at the school's Whitehurst Campus hosted "America Is" Day that included a Color Guard from Mayport Naval Station, a bomb disposal robot from NAS Jacksonville, the ceremonial band from NAS Jacksonville and members of the Florida National Guard. During the event, students played American sports, "American Bandstand", wrote letters to military personnel serving overseas, watched classic news reels, launched model rockets, and molded "Proud to be an American" buttons.

Students in the third through sixth grade at Riverside Presbyterian Day School graders cast their votes during the school's recent Florida Student Mock Election. Earning 83% of the 200 votes cast at RPDS, the Romney/Ryan ticket won the election at RPDS.

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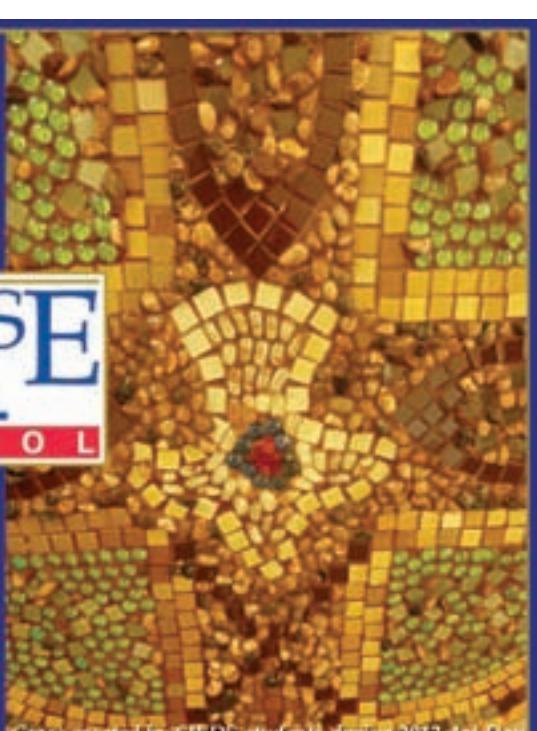
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Students unite for community building day



The entire student body, faculty and staff of Episcopal School of Jacksonville recently participated in Unity Day, a community-building event organized by the school's Student Senate.

The morning opened with an all school assembly in the Semmes Gym and a prayer by Associate School Minister Kevin

Day. The assembly then split into 23 groups that were a mix of students from all grades, faculty and staff. Each group was led by a staff or faculty member.

Groups participated in games that fostered discussion around inclusion, community, reconnection and disconnection, gossip and leadership. Groups also discussed the topic assigned to them, such as "encouragement," "honor," "thanks," and "patience," and "joy."

During lunch the Senate provided ice cream for everyone and tablecloths with markers were in the Buck Center. Students, faculty and staff wrote what they were thankful for on the table clothes.

The Student Senate plans for more events like this throughout the year to further strengthen the Episcopal community, especially between all grades and between faculty, staff and students.

San Jose CAP pride!

San Jose Catholic School was the only school in Jacksonville to participate in the Civil Air Patrol's Aerospace Connections in Education program and is one of 17 in the state of Florida. In late October, students enjoyed watching an Honor Guard from Craig Field present the American flag, and a student anti-bullying skit performance that followed. The focus of the morning was to celebrate Character, Academics and Physical Fitness with a strong push toward STEM education. The day concluded with a brisk walk around the school and a Popsicle treat provided by the Home and School Association. This is the school's fifth year in the CAP's ACE program.



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Young scientists tour research labs

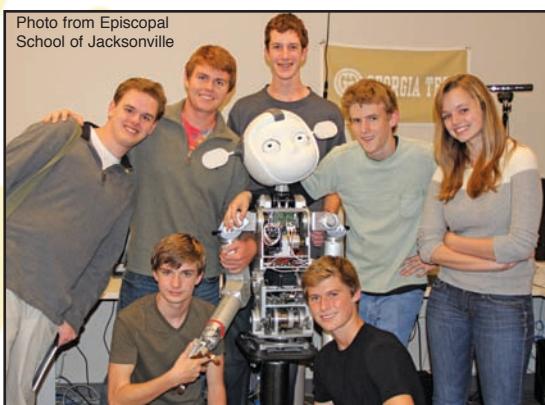
Episcopal students in the Honors Science Seminar spent two days in Atlanta, touring a variety of research labs at Georgia Institute of Technology. The labs were selected based on the relevance of their work to the science projects that the students will be doing this year.

The research topics included psychology, muscular dystrophy, genomics, robotics, nematodes, thermal energy and tumor inhibition.

Students gained knowledge in their fields of interest and made valuable connections with potential mentors.

"I enjoyed the fact that we visited a wide variety of laboratories, because they not only gave me insight into my own project, by also into the ideas of my peers," said Ortega resident Elizabeth Smithwick.

Two of the lab tours were conducted by GT researchers who are also Episcopal graduates — Daniel Smith '06 and Daniel



Murphy '07. Both Daniels are continuing to research in the field of work that they started while they were enrolled in the Honors Science Seminar at Episcopal.

"The work ethic, joy and passion displayed by the grad students and researchers motivated me to persevere through any obstacles and mishaps that my project may encounter," shared Riverside resident, Sid Yarlagadda.



A red fire engine roared up to Southside United Methodist Preschool last month — but luckily, it wasn't for an emergency. The firemen from Station 13 in San Marco Square were there for a visit with the smallest neighborhood students. The firemen addressed fire safety and the importance of having an escape plan in case of a fire in their homes. We are all thankful for the fire and police officers who serve our community!

Putting out fires



Brooke Dukes and Fireman John
Left: Miss Marti and Ms. Chris' classes with Fireman John. Photos by Kelly Murphy

Photo by Kelly Murphy

A life of purpose starts with perspective.



What child is this?

Students from Southside United Methodist Preschool find plenty of room at the inn during a recent petting zoo outing.



Photos by Kelly Murphy

Young fan gets birthday surprise

Cal Leonard, a San Jose Catholic School student and football player, is a fan — a major fan, of Dominic Suh of the Detroit Lions. On his birthday last month, Leonard was surprised with a personal visit to the field with Suh and his name in lights on the EverBank scoreboard. With his family in tow, including grandfather Jim Citrano Sr., Leonard enjoyed an afternoon at the game with friends on his special day.



San Jose resident Jim Citrano with grandson, Cal Leonard
Photo from Kara Citrano Leonard

Moral sensibility, work ethic, curiosity and self-discovery lead students at Episcopal to become not only successful, but solid — thinking for themselves with a larger view in mind. This is what Episcopal's broad and balanced experience is all about.



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ST. MARVELOUS

When your mother has open heart surgery, you can feel pretty helpless. Just ask Tim Mertz. His mom was being treated at St. Vincent's Open Heart Recovery Unit—a special unit created solely for open heart patients. It's the only one of its kind in Jacksonville. Nurse Suzanne Dedmon went the extra mile for Tim's mom. Actually, he said she went an extra 150 miles. He wrote us insisting we put her on all the billboards around town as St. Marvelous. Tim says Mom is back home in Georgia and doing great thanks to the "marvelous" care she received. Meanwhile, Suzanne's trying to get used to her new title!

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