

Middle School students from Episcopal School of Jacksonville depict **Holiday Joy**

Holiday Gift Guide see page 13

# Resident

See more of their art on page 25



Brooke Baldwin, San Marco, 7th grade



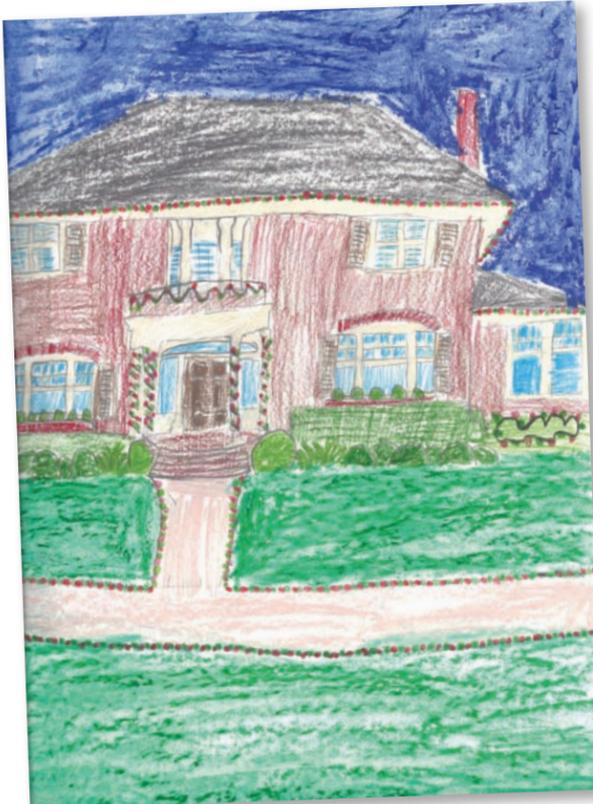
Anne-Charles Zimmer, Ortega, 7th grade



Mark Mori, Ortega, 7th grade



Charlotte Rosenberry, Avondale, 7th grade



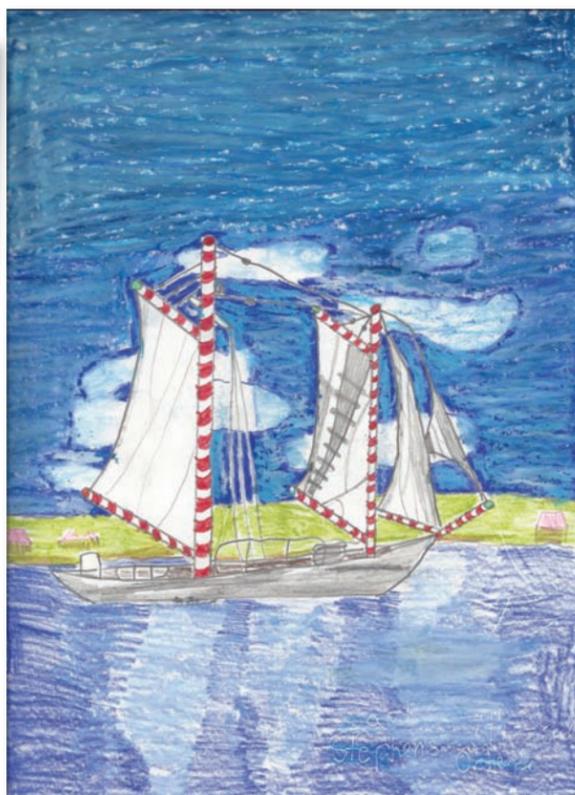
Spencer Hule, Avondale, 7th grade



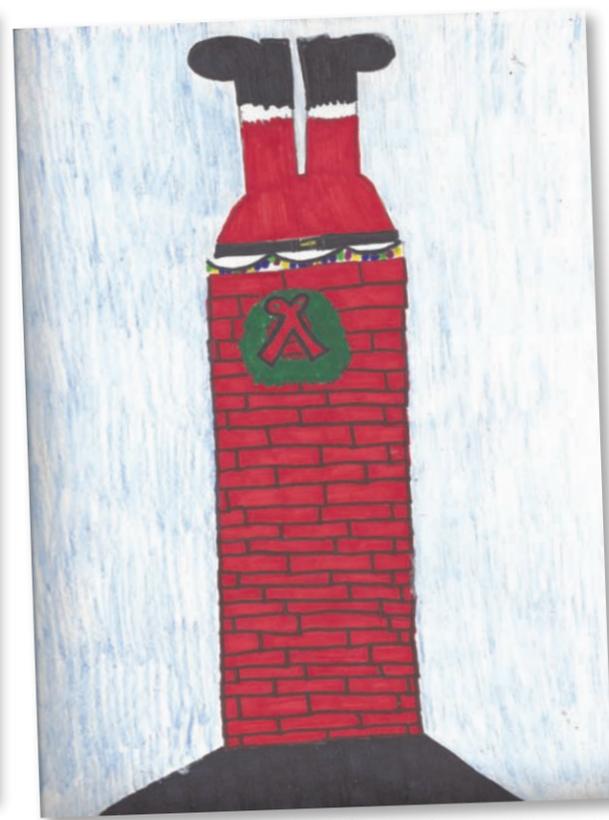
Ella George, Fairfax Manor, 7th grade



Alexis Foster, San Marco, 6th grade



Jack Stephens, Ortega, 7th grade



Hannah McCarthy, Ortega, 7th grade

# Attitudes of Gratitude

Last month many of us celebrated moments of thanks in a traditional holiday that focuses on food, drink and the company of loved ones in celebration of the many blessings we receive throughout the year.

This month the seasonal energy continues to flow as we prepare for more holiday moments of giving, receiving and being a positive part of the changes we seek in our community.

One of the best gifts you can give your loved ones, friends and your community is to share your own "Attitude of Gratitude" when you gather together.

As *The Resident* wraps up its seventh year in publication, we remain continually grateful for everyone involved in making this newspaper possible. The people that help create

it are near the top of our list, but most of all we appreciate the advertisers who sustain it.

Without the collaborating contributions of designers, writers, our editor and sales representatives we would not be able to share news and other stories about our neighbors.

And without your support of our advertisers, we would not be able to engage with nearly 60,000 readers each month.

The next time you visit a small business in the neighborhood, thank them for making *The Resident* possible.

In the meantime, our staff would like to share with you their own Attitudes of Gratitude.

*-Pamela Bradford Williams, Seth Williams, Publishers*



**I'll never stop being grateful for...** God's blessings of good health, great friends and the opportunity to serve the community through my job.

**When I was a kid, I didn't realize how grateful I should have been for...** my uncles and the many others who fought in World War II and the Korean War to ensure our country's freedom and our basic rights – including our First Amendment's freedom of the press!

*- Kate A. Hallock, Editor*



**I'll never stop being grateful for...** my health and family. It's something that we can all take for granted until we don't have it anymore.

**When I was a kid, I didn't realize how grateful I should have been for...** my parents. They actually did understand, even when I screamed "You don't understand!" They instilled into me who I am today, and I so appreciate that. I can only hope my children feel the same...one day!

*- Debra McGregor, Director of Sales*



**I'll never stop being grateful for...** time. Every new day is another chance to be happy and share that, learn something new, tackle challenges, forgive and forget, recall precious memories, hold family and friends close, live a life that makes a difference.

**When I was a kid, I didn't realize how grateful I should have been for...** bookworm parents who read to me and a loving grandmother who never stopped buying me books and telling me I could be or do anything in this world.

*- Julie Kerns Garmendia, Staff Reporter*



**I'll never stop being grateful for...** my mother. That may seem clichéd, but she is my lifeline. She has given me a life that I could have never accomplished alone. Growing up in the newspaper business I was raised watching her work tirelessly and now I get to work alongside of her. It's just in our blood. The greatest part about all of it, is that the best gift she ever gave me, my seven-year-old sister Sophia Marie, gets to be the one watching from the couch these days.

**When I was a kid, I didn't realize how grateful I should have been for...** naps! Now trying to find time for a nap, let alone actually being able to shut off your brain to fall asleep for less than an hour, is hard to come by. Too bad we can't make it a regular part of the work day.

*- Tarryn Bradford, New Business Development*



**I'll never stop being grateful for...** my partner, family, friends and clients that appreciate me and my creativity.

**When I was a kid, I didn't realize how grateful I should have been for...** the sacrifices, unconditional love and generosity of my parents that allowed me to be the person I am today.

*- Joe Babret, Art Director*

**I'll never stop being grateful for...** the zany large family I grew up in.

**When I was a kid, I didn't realize how grateful I should have been for...** homemade Christmas presents like the song book my dad made for me with his original songs and pictures inside.

*- Nancy Lee Bethea, Editorial*

**I'll never stop being grateful for...** being an American. You can travel anywhere in the world, but you will never find a better place to call home. The opportunities and freedoms we experience every day of our lives should never be taken for granted. God bless America!

**When I was a kid, I didn't realize how grateful I should have been for...** the carefree childhood I had. Life was safer for children back then and gave us greater independence. I was allowed to ride my bike everywhere and explore the world with my friends – as long as I was back home in time for dinner. The experiences and possibilities were unlimited!

*- Robin Robinson, Editorial*

**I'll never stop being grateful for...** the opportunities I've had...the ability to travel extensively all over the continent has opened my eyes to so many different ways of living and working. I'm also eternally grateful for my family members who have always supported my off-the-beaten-path explorations, if sometimes skeptically.

**When I was a kid, I didn't realize how grateful I should have been for...** how slowly time passed. Whole years fly by now and it's only getting faster!

*- Katie Smith, Photography*

**I'll never stop being grateful for...** my wonderful friends and family, and that I have a great job with wonderful co-workers!

**When I was a kid, I didn't realize how grateful I should have been for...** what a wonderful mother I had and still have.

*- Sandy Rea, Accounting*

**I'll never stop being grateful for...** having such good friends that care about me and stick by me through the highs and lows of life.

**When I was a kid, I didn't realize how grateful I should have been for...** the advice that my father gave me, which I use to this day.

*- Bryan Arnold, Technical Support*

**I'll never stop being grateful for...** my children. I am not sure there are words to convey how thankful I am to have them in my life. They have taught me more than anyone else about enduring, unconditional and genuine love. I can't think of anything else that matters more.

**When I was a kid, I didn't realize how grateful I should have been for...** my Catholic education. It strengthened the foundation of my faith, blessed me with lifelong friends and even introduced me to my husband!

*- Lara Patangan, Editorial*

**I'll never stop being grateful for...** my loving husband, children and grandchildren.

**When I was a kid, I didn't realize how grateful I should have been for...** my parents who encouraged my eccentricities and talents in so many ways – even giving me a bedroom that had been a kitchen to be my own studio with cabinets, a sink, a place to write and paint and dance and dream.

*- Peggy Harrell Jennings, Editorial*

**I'll never stop being grateful for...** the constant love and support of my family: my husband, Jesse, and our two amazing doggies, Hades and Sweetums.

**When I was a kid, I didn't realize how grateful I should have been for...** each and every person in my family and every joyous moment spent together.

*- Danielle Smith, Graphic Design*

**I'll never stop being grateful for...** my family. I enjoy spending time with my children and I am grateful for my wife's patience.

**When I was a kid, I didn't realize how grateful I should have been for...** family gatherings. I miss getting together with my extended family, eating too much, playing ping pong and card games.

*- Joe Birch, Graphic Design*

**I'll never stop being grateful for...** my health. While it probably sounds like quite a routine response, each time I encounter an individual who is struggling with a health issue, I am reminded of how lucky I am to start every day feeling good and being able to do whatever I want.

**When I was a kid, I didn't realize how grateful I should have been for...** being raised by two parents who were committed to providing a sound and stable foundation for my sisters and me. I always assumed everyone was basically raised the same way. The older I become, I have come to realize that many of my peers grew up quite differently than I did. Thank you, Mom and Dad!

*- Liz Birch, Director of Web*

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—WNYC

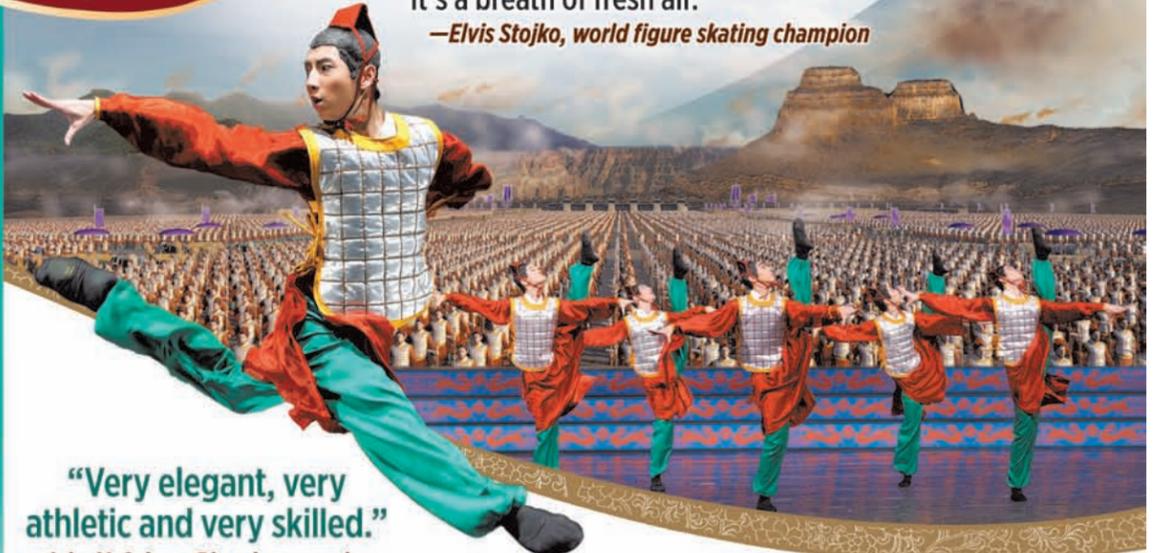


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—John McColgan, Riverdance producer

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—Christine Walevska, master cellist

**T**HERE ARE RARE MOMENTS in history when a show, a book, or a piece of art takes its viewer to a whole new realm. Boundaries previously thought unmovable, like those between the stage and the backdrop, are erased and reinvented, never to be the same.

Watching Shen Yun Performing Arts is witnessing just such a moment. Alongside its mesmerizing choreography and live orchestra combining Eastern and Western instruments, Shen Yun's ingenious animated backdrops are leaving the entertainment industry astounded.

"Going to the theater and the movies at the same time," is how Robert Stromberg, Academy Award-winning production designer for Avatar, described it. "It was so inspiring, I think I may have found some new ideas for the next Avatar."

What Shen Yun's projection designs do is

seamlessly synchronize all aspects of the performance. The costumes' colors, specific dance movements, drums, lighting, particular notes played by the orchestra—are all timed with animated movements on an enormous digital backdrop

"It starts off very simple," said Mike Hogue, who animated movies from Titan A.E. to Anastasia and television shows like George of the Jungle. "Then when you all of a sudden have these surprises of people coming out of the screen, it's just, 'Oh my gosh, okay, this is something really different, really innovative.'"

When Shen Yun comes back to Jacksonville on Jan. 24-25, its newest innovations will be on full display. Come and experience a riveting journey, in which China's 5,000 years of legends and myths come to life in vivid detail through Shen Yun's awe-inspiring performances, with its explosive digital techniques, synchronized movements, and expressive powers.

**"It is beyond divine beauty..."**

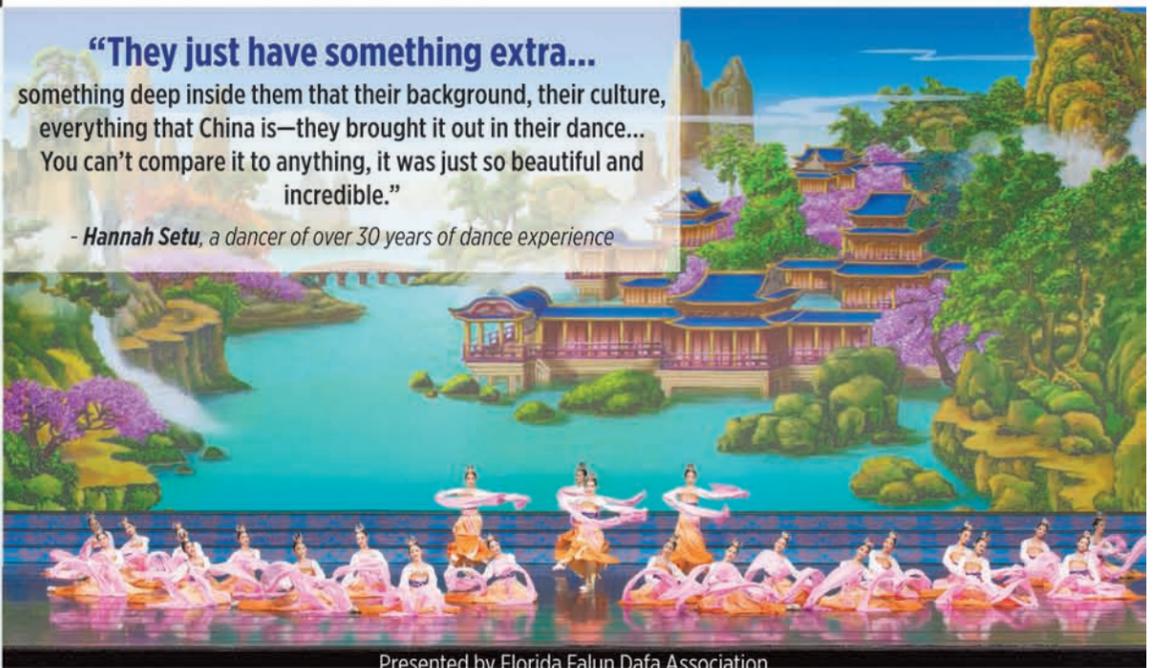
it is divine touch, divine sight, divine hearing, and divine speech—it is all the divine that comes through... I felt the angelic spirit come the moment the curtain opened and there was a light. And I felt it in everything, in the movement, and especially in the living dancers' faces. ... In describing it to my friends, it is spirit in performance. It is the divine in a performance through dance and song."

—Robyn Ridgley, writer, producer, and former Congressional executive

**"They just have something extra..."**

something deep inside them that their background, their culture, everything that China is—they brought it out in their dance... You can't compare it to anything, it was just so beautiful and incredible."

—Hannah Setu, a dancer of over 30 years of dance experience



Presented by Florida Falun Dafa Association

# Think local first

By Kate A. Hallock  
Resident Community News

Given the impact that the fourth quarter has on most retail businesses – for some, it ensures their survival for the following year – shopping locally during the holidays is all important for independently-owned shops, restaurants, boutiques and bars.

It's great that the last Saturday in November is recognized as Small Business Saturday, but really, shopping locally all year round provides many continuing benefits to our community.

Jeff Milchen, former executive director of Reclaim Democracy and co-founder of the American Independent Business Alliance (AMIBA), notes that independent local businesses employ a wide array of supporting services. "They hire architects, designers, cabinet shops, sign makers and contractors for construction. Opportunities grow for local accountants, insurance brokers, computer consultants, attorneys, advertising agencies and others to help run it. Local retailers and distributors also carry a higher percentage of locally-made goods than the chains, creating more jobs for local producers," he stated in an essay on the subject.

Though Milchen lives in Bozeman, Mont., he strikes a chord all over the country when it comes to supporting local small businesses.

"When asked to name our favorite restaurant, café, or shop, we almost always cite a unique local business (look at the results in any "Best of" polls as proof). We embrace the idea of distinctive

businesses with local character, but often forget their survival depends on our patronage," he noted. "It is easy for us to get so consumed by efficiency that we forget how much of our lives we spend eating out, shopping, and doing other business. We owe it to ourselves to consider the quality of our experience, and ask if we benefit when we choose a community-based business."

Make sure your money goes to individuals who pay taxes in your community...not to multi-national companies. More local people – your neighbors – will have a better holiday because you shopped locally.

## What to buy

Gifts bought at the Shoppes of Avondale, 5 Points, the Park and King retail corridor, on Murray Hill's Edgewood Avenue, or in San Marco Square this holiday season ensures that your money is reinvested in the community, creating retail diversity and helping those historic districts maintain their unique appeal.

Check out our centerspread on local merchants. It showcases ideas for great holiday gifts from local businesses.

What's not to love about gifts from a local artist or jewelry maker?

Don't forget about those chocolates, cakes and cookies created by local bakeries.

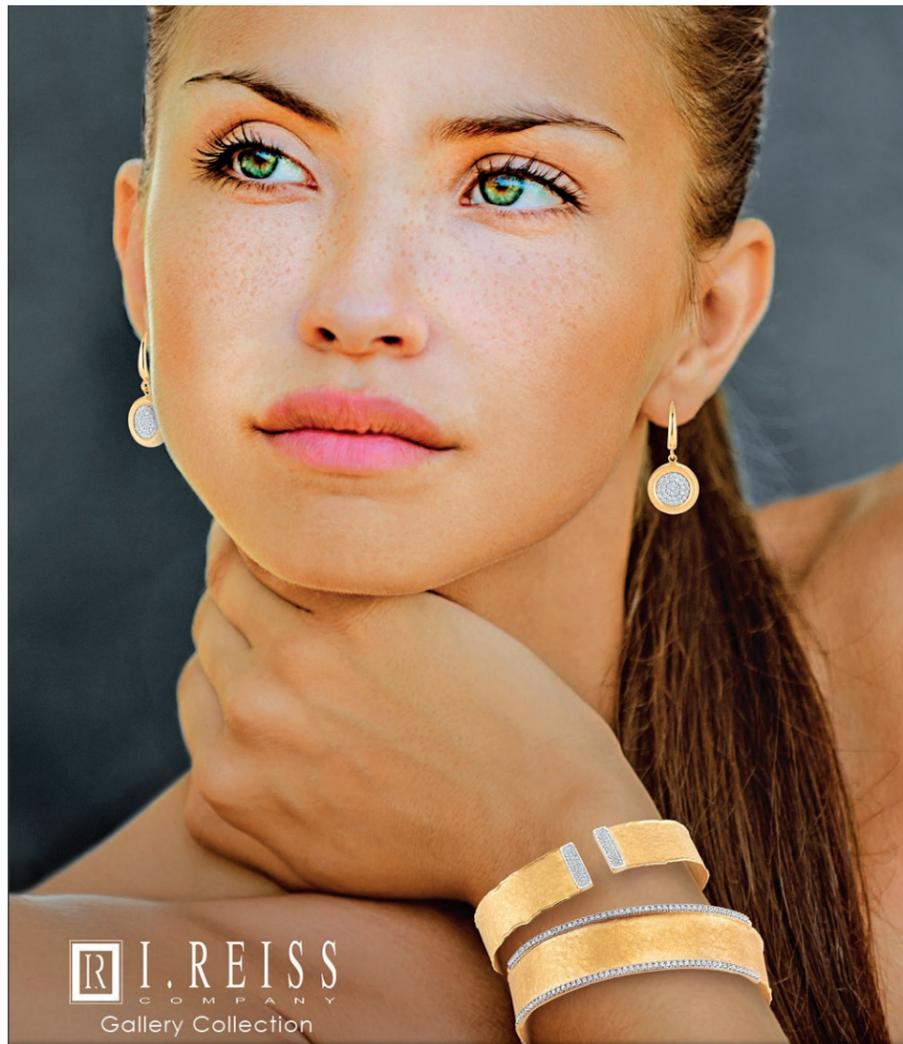
Buy gift cards from the neighborhood café or salon.

Decorate your home for the holidays with flowers and greenery from the florist around the corner.

# Top 10 reasons to buy local

While former Late Show host David Letterman may have popularized the absurd in his Top 10 Lists, chances are he may have been a bit more serious about this one. Choose any one of these reasons why you should do your holiday – and every day – shopping from an independent business and you're sure to get your own drum roll.

- 10 Local independent shops invest more in our communities and are proportionately more generous in their support of local charities, schools and community events.
- 9 Local shops sell a wide range of great products at affordable prices.
- 8 Shopping local saves you money, the least of which is the gas to take you to and from mega-malls and shopping centers.
- 7 Shopping local retains our communities. Without shops and services, the neighborhood becomes a residential development.
- 6 Shopping local retains our distinctiveness. Local businesses can respond more quickly to the needs of local customers than a corporate-controlled chain store.
- 5 Shopping local saves the environment. Refer back to Reason 8; long car and bus journeys adversely expand our global footprint.
- 4 Local shops are for everyone, and are important for those without transportation.
- 3 Local shops value you more. Shop proprietors greet you by name and remember your favorite perfume or wine, your dress size and the names and ages of your children.
- 2 Shopping local saves services. When shops disappear so do hairdressers, banks, restaurants, etc.
- 1 And (cue the drum roll) the Number One reason to patronize the shop around the corner instead of the Big Box chain store: Shopping local creates jobs for local people who in turn spend in the local community.



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# Shoppes decorate windows for charity

By Peggy Harrell Jennings  
Resident Community News

The annual Christmas in Avondale event rings in the season of joy and fun for the entire family, with singers and dancers, gingerbread houses, face painting, sleigh rides and Santa.

In addition to all these activities, the shops will compete in a window decorating contest sponsored by the Avondale Merchants Association. Enticing Christmas scenes are sure to be even more sparkly and enchanting than usual.

Danielle Vanover, chair of the planning committee said, "We strive to have a neighborly feeling in the midst of the larger community. It's a way of giving back to our customers and the entire community." A \$100 donation to the charity of choice for the merchant who takes 1st place will be awarded during the Christmas in Avondale event on Dec. 6, from 4-9 p.m.

Avondale window decorations have been admired and appreciated for years but this is the first time in many years for an official contest. A panel of judges from the Merchants Association will have a difficult decision to make. Most displays are up before Thanksgiving and the decorated trees, beach scenes, snowflakes, nutcrackers and toy soldiers march parents and children alike into the festive atmosphere of a small town old-time Christmas.

Samantha Wyatt of Avondale Gift Boutique said, "We haven't decided on our theme but we have been around for 30 years and we are very traditional so our window display will reflect that. We think of all we have and what others do not have so if we win we will donate the \$100 prize to the Sulzbacher Center." J Ashley Boutique is setting up a Winter Wonderland of "cool stuff with penguins" and Hooshang Harvesf of Hooshang Oriental Rug Gallery will have his 100-plus nutcrackers in the window as he has done for decades.



Windows from holidays past reflect the child-like wonder of Christmas.



Vanover said that Exit Realty will provide most of the judges and will not compete in the competition so that judging will be unbiased. Windows must be up by Dec. 3 and although there is no public voting everyone is sure to have a favorite. She emphasized cheerfully, "Just because we [Exit Realty] aren't competing doesn't mean we won't be decorating our windows."



# Nutcrackers from all over the world

By Kate A. Hallock  
Resident Community News

The oldest running business in the Shoppes of Avondale may also have the oldest running holiday window display. If that's not an annual tradition looked forward to by shoppers and passers-by, there's probably no other in the historic district that is.

In 1977 Hooshang Harvesf, Ph.D., opened his Oriental rug shop at 3571 St. Johns Ave. and has owned and operated this same business at this same location for 37 years. "There may be one or two other businesses that were in the Shoppes earlier," said Hooshang, "but not under the same ownership or same name."

Hooshang was strategic in his decision to choose space in the Shoppes. "It was the place to be at that time," he said. "The neighborhood, the type of shops used to be a destination of unique shops. It was somewhat exclusive."

One year after opening his doors to offer residents one-of-a-kind rugs – unique, affordable imports directly from eight countries – Hooshang started collecting nutcrackers. "It started when I bought a pair of Superman nutcrackers I saw in New Orleans in 1978," he said.

Shortly thereafter he started to display a collection that grew and grew. Now he displays a hundred or more of his nearly 500 piece collection, hand chosen for his shop's holiday window.

Hooshang remembers a time when interior decorators from major department stores judged a holiday window contest. "We had a lot of interior design businesses here in the Shoppes then," he recalled. "They would walk up and down with clipboards and judge the display as a group."

In thinking about the nature of businesses in that two block stretch of St. John's Avenue, Hooshang noted that once it was mostly owner-operated retail businesses with few restaurants. "The area is changing from retail to entertainment, so the challenge now is to keep a balance," he said. "The restaurants are helpful because they give us exposure."

The neighborhood resident's love for the Shoppes of Avondale area is evident as he concluded "For me it starts in Avondale and it ends in Avondale."





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# LET'S SHAKE THINGS UP!

Is that store-bought eggnog in your glass looking a bit lackluster?

We thought so. The good news is, you don't have to be a professional bartender to kick your holiday cocktails up a notch.

We've compiled simple recipes from a few of the hottest bars and restaurants in the hood—so simple, in fact, that you can easily make them at home.

## PELE'S HOT BUTTER rum

### Batter:

- 4 oz soft butter
  - 1/2 cup dark brown sugar
  - 1 tsp cinnamon
  - 1 tsp ground nutmeg
  - 1/4 tsp allspice
  - 1 tsp vanilla
- Cream together and Refrigerate

### Drink:

- 2 tbsp batter
  - 1.5 oz dark rum
- Fill with hot water and stir  
Top with whipped cream and ground nutmeg



## MOJO 4'S Pear Pressure

### Build in a mixing glass:

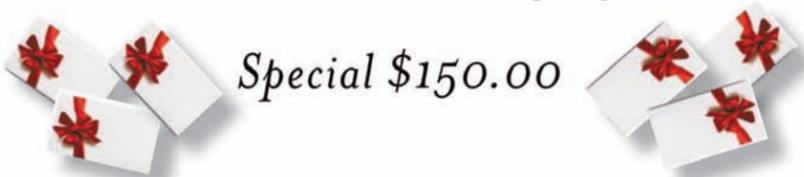
- 1 oz. New Amsterdam Gin
  - 2 oz. pear puree, rosemary agave, lemon juice mixture\* shake
  - 1 oz. La Marca Prosecco strain
- garnish with ground clove  
\*puree is a homemade recipe- see MOJO for details  
Serve in an old fashioned glass



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1/2 oz cinnamon simple syrup  
1/2 oz Licor 43 Liqueur  
1.5 oz Tazo Chai Latte  
Scoop of canned pumpkin pie  
Splash of half and half  
Shake well and garnish with a  
caramel brown sugar rim



### O'BROTHER'S POSITIVELY PECAN PIE

1.5 oz Pecan Pie Whiskey  
1 oz Bailey's Irish Cream  
Top with whip cream  
and a cherry



### MOSSFIRE'S BERRY MERRY COSMO

1.5 oz Smirnoff Cranberry Vodka  
1/2 oz triple sec  
6 oz frozen raspberry lemonade  
juice concentrate  
1/2 cup ice  
Mix all ingredients in blender  
and garnish with blend of dried  
cranberries and granulated sugar  
on the rim



### ORSAY'S LOWER EAST CIDER

1 oz Martin Miller's Gin  
1 oz House infused Apple Brandy  
.5 oz Lemon Juice  
.5 oz Demerara Syrup  
1 dash Black Walnut Bitters  
Shake and strain into a rocks  
glass with fresh ice.  
Top with Crispin Cider.



### SIDECAR'S GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PAST

2oz Michters toasted bourbon  
1oz Bauchant orange liqueur  
1/4oz St Elizabeth All Spice Dram  
1/4oz Turbinado syrup  
2 dashes of Abbotts bitters  
Combine all ingredients in mixing  
glass with ice and stir 40x.  
Strain into a coupe glass and  
garnish with a lemon twist.



### BLUEFISH'S UPPER EAST SIDE OF AVONDALE

Luxardo Liquor washed  
martini glass  
2 oz. Knob Creek Bourbon  
1 oz. Carpano Antica  
1 dash of orange bitters  
1 dash of Angostura bitters  
Finish with one imported  
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# How do you enjoy a rich holiday season without spending a lot of money?

By Katie Smith  
Resident Community News



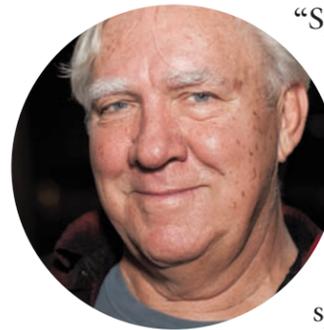
“The whole thing about Christmas is you shouldn’t spend a lot of money. Thanksgiving, my family always makes ornaments together. I make

decorations with found items, like wreaths from bamboo. I’m more proud of the things I make than the things I buy. I’d rather donate to a charity than buy things no one needs. It shouldn’t be a competition.” *Ryan Ali, Avondale*



“I stopped believing in commercialized holidays. The point of the season is to be around the ones you love. My family has a tradition of going camping together around the holidays.”

*Jess Montoya, Riverside*



“Spending a lot on gifts is a relatively new phenomenon. Things like family and service are what’s important. People used to get an apple and a special dinner with their family!”

*Ron Johnson, Avondale*



“I make handmade decorations and spend a lot of time with my friends and family.”

*Nicki Marshek, Riverside*



“I do mechanical things for my family. Someone always needs a car repaired or a toy assembled around the holidays.”

*Mark O'Connor, Riverside*



“Kimberly Clarke Salon, where I work, cuts hair for the homeless at Trinity Rescue Mission during the holidays. This is our 6th year. And we hang our tree upside down! It’s symbolic of the faith behind Christmas, rather than it being simply decorative.” *Stephanie Vandelugt, San Marco*



“Seven years ago, my family started collecting coats and blankets for the homeless. We pick up pastries at Costco, make ten gallons of hot cocoa and coffee, and go to Hemming Plaza on Christmas morning with the coats, blankets, and about 200 backpacks. We go back every few weeks on Sundays throughout the winter. My mom and several other people have gotten involved, and we have lots of community support. I wanted to teach my kids Elise, Samuel, and Perry that Christmas isn’t about what you get, it’s about what you give to others.”

*Cristie Powers, Riverside*



“Lots of chocolate, and riding bikes with friends for Luminaria.”

*Billy Sheehan, Riverside*

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“I spend quality time with my relatives. The gifts don’t matter as much as being together.” *Forrest Brewer, San Marco*



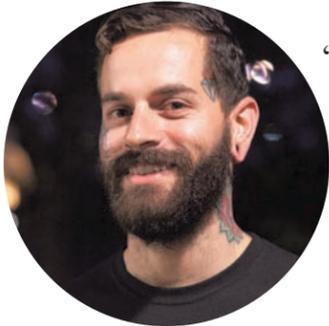
“Homemade dark beer and spicy food!” - *Fred Ellis, Murray Hill*



“We always fry a turkey, and the whole family goes to the movies together.” *Kaleigh Norman, San Marco*



“When the holidays approach, I look back over the year, what’s happened and how it’s affected me. I try to give back, to help other people who aren’t as lucky as I’ve been. I try to be close to my family, resolve any problems, and remember my close friends and let them know how important they are. The holidays are a time for introspection and showing appreciation for your loved ones. I’m grateful for my friends’ support; you have to let people know that you’re thankful to have them around. Don’t let the holidays take you over with being busy and rushing around. Time goes so fast and you’ll miss it.” *Julio Cesar Mendez, San Marco*



“I used to cook in a fine dining restaurant, and I still love to make a big meal for friends at home.” *Cory Lippel, San Marco*



“We do a Christmas Eve potluck dinner and a matinee movie on Christmas Day with the whole family. We always go on a Christmas hike and Jim later makes a painting based on a photo taken that day.” *Jim and Mimi Pearce, San Marco*



“I make things for people!” *Laurel Anderson, San Marco*



“I have time off school around the holidays, so I make plans with friends from across town who I don’t see much.” *Alex Kaplan, San Marco*



“I do a lot of my shopping on Etsy.” *Eva Matthews, San Marco*



“We don’t worry about giving lots of presents. I’m an artist, so I paint, or make gifts. I always get a small tree to decorate with my family.” *Adam Thomas, San Marco*



“My friends and I all do a big potluck meal at the biggest house.” *Jassen Carter, Riverside*



“We set a limit for gift spending and pull names from a hat. No one goes into debt. But my favorite holiday is Thanksgiving – cooking for the family and sharing thanks. We send cards to the people who have been special blessings to us throughout the year.” *Barbara and Mike Newman, Avondale*

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# Community Calendar

## CHS Annual Toy Drive

Through Dec. 12, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Children's Home Society, 3027 San Diego Road  
Collecting toys and clothes for children who are neglected and abused; contact Sarah Smith at (904) 493-7797 or SarahN.Smith@chsfl.org to donate, sponsor a child, or for a list of needed items.

## Men's Garden Club

Mon., Dec. 1, 7 p.m. meeting, Garden Club of Jacksonville, 1005 Riverside Ave.  
Topic is spring gardening; speaker is Terry DeValle, urban horticulture agent.  
Contact Donn Elliott, (904) 635-7318, sweetwoodfarm@hotmail.com

## 13th Annual Gingerbread House Extravaganza

Dec. 3 - 23, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturdays, Old St. Andrews, 317 A. Phillip Randolph Blvd. across the street from Veterans Memorial Arena  
Showcases gingerbread and confection creations from traditional houses to animals and fairy tale themes. Adults \$5, children 3-16 \$3 suggested donations. For more information, (904) 665-0064 or gingerbread@jaxhistory.com

## Ponte Vedra Plastic Surgery Holiday Open House

Thurs., Dec. 4, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., 2105 Park Street, Suite D  
Ponte Vedra Plastic Surgery Holiday Open House will host an open house with special discounts, product demonstrations, give-aways and a complimentary holiday latte bar.

## Art & Antiques Show

Dec. 5-7, begins at 11 a.m., Prime Osborn Convention Center

A show themed "Boxwoods and Bow-ties" will feature vintage and postmodern art and antiques, along with lectures and workshops, all to benefit the Women's Board of Wolfson Children's Hospital. An opening night party will be held Dec. 5. (904) 202-2886

## Christmas in Avondale

Sat., Dec. 6, 4 p.m. to 9 p.m.  
Fun for all ages: photo booth, gingerbread houses, face painting, silent disco, Christmas movies, live music and more. Sponsored by the Avondale Merchants Association

## Christmas Performance

Sat., Dec. 6, 6 p.m. to 8 p.m., at the Shoppes of Avondale  
St. John's Presbyterian Church choir and praise band will perform on the street during the annual Christmas in Avondale

## Holiday Wrapping in San Marco

Sat., Dec. 6, 13, and 20, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., Sun., Dec. 21, 1 p.m. to 5 p.m., 1996 San Marco Blvd. in front of San Marco Theatre.  
Donations for wrapping will provide veterinary care through St. Francis Animal Hospital for pets in need. For information, visit [www.SaintFrancisAnimalHospital.org](http://www.SaintFrancisAnimalHospital.org)

## The Polar Express

Sun., Dec. 7, 3 p.m., Times-Union Center for Performing Arts, 300 Water St.  
Experience the timeless tale of Chris Van Allsburg's *The Polar Express* as the Jacksonville Symphony brings the book to life with an orchestra, chorus and vocalist. [www.Jaxsymphony.org](http://www.Jaxsymphony.org)

## Holiday Concert at All Saints

Sun., Dec. 7, 6 p.m., All Saints Episcopal Church Sanctuary, 4171 Hendricks Ave.  
Dr. Timothy Snyder conducts the choirs of Jacksonville University in a glorious tapestry of favorite holiday motets, solos and Christmas Carols from around the world sung by the choir with a special audience sing-along as well. Reception follows in the Parish Hall. Free and open to public. Visit [www.allsaintsjax.org](http://www.allsaintsjax.org) for more information or call (904) 737-8488.

## Women's Christmas Brunch

Mon., Dec. 8, 9:30 p.m., Southside Methodist Church, 3120 Hendricks Ave.  
Guest speaker is author Courtney DeFeo. \$6/person; RSVP at [www.southsidemethodist.org](http://www.southsidemethodist.org)

## Joy of Kosher Cooking Demo / Book Signing

Thurs., Dec. 11, 5:30-7:30 p.m., Winn-Dixie, 1520 W. University Blvd.  
Meet Chef Jamie Geller, author of *Joy of Kosher*, at a cooking demo, tasting and book signing event. For details, [www.winndixie.com/chanukah](http://www.winndixie.com/chanukah)

## Jax Holiday Bash

Thurs., Dec. 11, 5:30-9:30 p.m., Unity Plaza, 220 Riverside  
Zany holiday event to benefit Unity Plaza park as well as several children's charities. Includes Celebrity Ugly Holiday Sweater Fashion Show, casino, bands and more. Register at [www.jaxholidaybash.com](http://www.jaxholidaybash.com)

## Christmas Drive-Thru Movie

Fri., Dec. 12, 6-9 p.m., 2922 Corinthian Ave. CenterState Bank will host a movie night, showing *The Polar Express*, serving popcorn, hot chocolate and cookies. Santa Claus will be available for photos (\$15 for a 5x7)

## 23rd Annual Community Nutcracker

Fri., Dec. 12, 8 p.m. and Sat., Dec. 13, 2 p.m. & 8 p.m., The Florida Theatre, 128 E. Forsyth St.  
This holiday tradition sponsored by Walgreens benefits Dreams Come True. For tickets call (904) 355-2787; visit [www.jaxnutcracker.org](http://www.jaxnutcracker.org)

## Children's Christmas Party of Jacksonville

Sat., Dec. 13, 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., Prime Osborn Convention Center, 1000 Water Street  
Largest one-day toy giveaway in the area; up to 8,000 children to receive a new toy. Open to children in need age 12 or younger, first-come, first-served. Event begins with a ribbon cutting by Santa Claus. For details, call (904) 350-1616.

## Holidazzle

Sat., Dec. 13, 10 a.m. to 9 p.m., Riverside Arts Market  
With extended holiday shopping hours, this nighttime experience with holiday-themed activities, holiday lights and short format Christmas family classics on a 32' big screen on the River Stage, is a unique event on the river. Winter brews, wine and holiday cocktails, hot chocolate and other treats will be available.

## Christmas at the Airport

Sat., Dec. 13, 1-3 p.m., Main Terminal, Jacksonville International Airport  
Students from the piano department of Douglas Anderson School of the Performing Arts will perform Christmas music and classical pieces at the airport.

## Jingle Bell Rock

Sat., Dec. 13, 3 p.m., Thrasher-Horne Center for the Arts, 283 College Dr.  
Fast-paced, fun-filled show is a high-energy celebration of the holiday season, with classics like "Sleigh Ride" and "Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree" plus an appearance by Santa.

## Santa Paws Coming to Town



Sun., Dec. 14, 2 p.m. to 6 p.m., St. Francis Animal Hospital, 2107 Mango Pl.

Bring pets and entire family for a photo with Santa. \$10 donation for digital image; \$15 includes a print. Donations provide veterinary care for family pets in need. For information, visit [www.StFrancisAnimalHospital.org](http://www.StFrancisAnimalHospital.org)

## Luminaria in San Marco

Sun., Dec. 14, Live Nativity: 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., corner of Hendricks and Arbor Lane  
Sponsored by San Marco Preservation Society; contact Alejandra Cole (904) 993-1225 regarding the Live Nativity.

## Christmas Lessons and Carols

Wed., Dec. 17, 6 p.m., St. Mark's Episcopal Church, 4129 Oxford Ave.  
Candlelight readings, choir-led carols and music tell the Christmas story from Genesis to Christ's birth. Dinner follows at 7 p.m. For information, call (904) 388-2681.

## Granada Park Holiday Hayride

Thurs., Dec. 18, 5:30-8 p.m., Granada Park  
Santa will be available for photos at 6 p.m. Hayride \$15 per family. For more information, call Angela Lopez at (904) 399-3391 or Amy Stapleton at (904) 571-8323.

## A Blue Christmas Service

Thurs., Dec. 18, 7 p.m., Avondale United Methodist Church, 1651 Talbot Ave.  
Candlelight service of Christmas renewal for those who feel blue during this time of year. For more information, (904) 389-1175.

## Swamp Radio Christmas



Sun., Dec. 21, 3 p.m., The Florida Theatre, 128 E. Forsyth St.

First-ever live Swamp Radio holiday show celebrates what makes the holidays special in Northeast Florida through stories, music and interviews. For tickets, visit [floridatheatre.com](http://floridatheatre.com) or call (904) 355-2787.

## Riverside/Avondale Luminaria

Sun., Dec. 21, at dusk through the streets of Riverside and Avondale. Purchase \$6 luminaria kits (6 bags, candles and sand) at 2623 Herschel St. beginning Dec. 6; Saturdays 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Sundays 1-4 p.m.

## Christmas Carols on the River

Sun., Dec. 21, 6:30-7:30 p.m., Stinson Park by Ortega River Bridge  
Live music. Bring a lawn chair and flashlight. Contact Ortega United Methodist Church, (904) 389-5556 or visit [www.ortegaumc.org](http://www.ortegaumc.org)

## Luminaria Handbell Concert

Sun., Dec. 21, 7 p.m., Avondale United Methodist Church, 1651 Talbot Ave.  
Enjoy the Christmas spirit with a cup of hot cocoa or cider and a short bell concert before the annual luminaria festivities.

## Symphonic Christmas Eve

Wed., Dec. 24, 10:30 p.m., Trinity Lutheran Church, 1415 S. McDuff Ave.  
Pre-service Christmas music by members of the Jacksonville Symphony Orchestra followed by 11 p.m. worship. Works from Bach, Saint-Saens and local composer Bob Moore.

## New Year's Benefit Concert

Sun., Jan. 4, 3 p.m., Trinity Lutheran Church, 1415 S. McDuff Ave.  
Bring in the New Year on Sunday afternoon January 4th at 3:00 pm, 2015, with the Pena Trio, members of the Jacksonville Symphony under the direction of Jorge Pena. Open to the public to help support the Honduras Ministry Team's medical/evangelistic mission trip.

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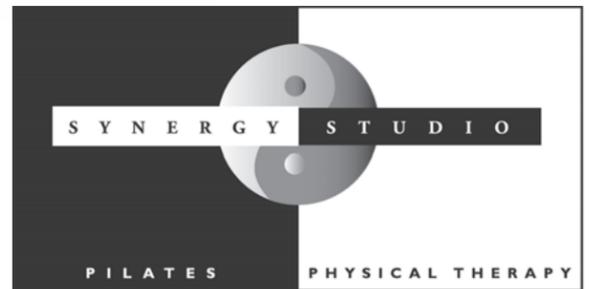
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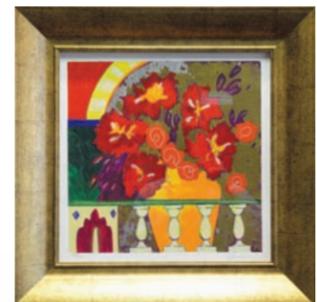
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# Holiday Wine Pairings

*To complement your best holiday dinner ever, local purveyors of wine share recommendations for pairings with a variety of entrées, sure to please every palate seated around your holiday table.*

## Specialty wines for gourmet vegetarian

\$9.99 – Oyster Bay Chardonnay 2013

\$14.99 – Claire Moindrot Sancerre 2012

\$18.99 – La Crema Monterey Chardonnay 2012

The bright acidity and grassy notes of the Claire Moindrot Sancerre pairs nicely with the earthy richness of the hazelnuts and sage in a vegetarian Hazelnut Cranberry Roast En Croute. The crisp structure of La Crema Monterey Chardonnay cuts through the savory puff pastry outer layer of the roast. The Chardonnay's lemon zest flavor complement the cranberries and ginger in this vegetarian favorite holiday centerpiece. The fresh, ripe fruit flavors of Meyer lemon, peach and tangerine in this Oysterbay Chardonnay pairs nicely with and balance the savory, richness of the vegetarian sausage in the Hazelnut Cranberry Roast En Croute. – *Jack Robison, Grassroots Natural Market*



## Wine for a ham dinner



\$14.49 – Foss Marai Prosecco

\$25.99 – SA Prüm Wehlener Sonnenuhr Riesling Kabinett 2011

\$56.99 – La Spinetta Barbaresco 2009

“You can go a variety of directions when pairing for a ham dish. The Prosecco, an Italian sparkling wine, is not just for celebration; it's very food-compatible. The German Riesling is perhaps the most traditional pairing for wine – slightly sweet, and tart. The Barbaresco, from northwest Italy, is burgundian in approach: delicate, light bodied, with finesse. With ham or pork, you want a wine that won't overpower it.” – *Bernie Zitomer, Bernie's Wine Stop*

## Gobble, gobble – good for turkey

The Rosé provides a light, clean, food-friendly and approachable flavor, with refreshing acid and floral notes. The acid helps cleanse the palate so you can keep eating! The Gewürtztraminer is similar to but spicier than a Riesling, with a crisper finish. For a traditional pairing, you can't go wrong with turkey and Pinot Noir. – *David Joudi, Riverside Liquors*

\$7.99 – Protocolo Rosé 2013

\$14.99 – Amity Vineyards Gewürtztraminer 2011

\$26.99 – Cristom Pinot Noir 2011



## When only beef will do

\$15.99 – Andezon Côtes du Rhône Red 2012

\$18.99 – Stickybeak Cabernet Sauvignon 2010

\$24.99 – Susana Balbo Signature Malbec 2011

“The tannins in red wine are softened by the fat in a rich steak. Depending on the amount of fat and the degree of doneness, you may want a more or less tannic wine.” – *Cassie Bosworth, W90+ Avondale*



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# A local tradition: Gingerbread House Extravaganza

By Emily Liska  
Executive Director, Jacksonville Historical Society

Jacksonville Historical Society's Gingerbread House Extravaganza, a local holiday tradition, showcases gingerbread houses and confection creations made by area pastry chefs and everyday citizens. Riverside resident Joann Purdie is this year's Extravaganza chair.

Local residents and businesses are taking an active role in the Downtown event. Whitney and Mollie Belle McGuire created a gingerbread replica of their new home on Arapahoe Avenue in Ortega. Whitney recalls creating gingerbread houses with her mother when she was a child and wanted her daughter, Mollie



Grace Pyburn, Anthony Saleeba, Jack Pyburn and Javier Neret determine the number and size of gingerbread pieces needed to cover the base structure of the San Jose Episcopal Day School's gingerbread creation.



Belle, to enjoy the same experience.

Returning to the Extravaganza for a second year is the third grade classroom of Drew Haramis of St. Mark's Episcopal Day School. This year's class constructed a replica of the Ribault Monument in celebration of the French colony that was founded in North Florida 450 years ago.

Professional pastry chefs from Let Them Eat Cake on St. Johns Avenue baked and sculpted a Harry Potter-themed creation. "The chefs at Let Them Eat Cake are talented builders and we're thrilled to include them in the show," said Purdie.

Purdie said she's very excited about an iconic piece of Riverside that is featured in the Extravaganza. She offered the hint that the structure in question is 90 years old and involves a park. She said she's particularly eager to see this piece of area history interpreted in gingerbread and confection.

San Jose Episcopal students in Grades

3-6 created the confection replica of their historic San Jose campus using gingerbread, candies and other edible confections and put the school, playground and church in a Christmas setting.

Julie Pyburn, mother of San Jose Episcopal students Grace and Jack, stepped forward to direct the older students with a project mock-up before actual construction. Parish member, 1959 graduate of the school and long-time baker Bette Loyd worked with the students on actual construction.

The Gingerbread Extravaganza runs December 3 through December 23, except Sundays at Jacksonville Historical Society's Old St. Andrews, 317 A. Philip Randolph Boulevard, across from the Veterans Memorial Arena. It's open 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily, and at 10 a.m. on Saturdays. A charity event, a donation of \$5 per adult and \$3 for children over three is suggested. Parking is free.

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# Annual toy giveaway draws volunteers, gives hope

By Julie Kerns Garmendia  
Resident Community News

Known as the largest one-day toy giveaway in the Jacksonville area, the Children's Christmas Party was founded in December 1999 by Travis and Margaret Storey of San Jose. The event provides toys for needy Jacksonville children, according to Diane Halverson, executive director. Support comes from 40 sponsors, approximately 700 volunteers, JSO, military and generous citizens. Last year 7,300 children received toys.

Halverson, a longtime volunteer, now serves as part-time paid consultant/event coordinator for the party. She also volunteers for The Arc Jacksonville, Ronald McDonald House and Wolfson Children's Development Council and personally hosts wellness retreats for mothers of critically ill or disabled children.

Her concern for ill children began in her own family, where three siblings died of Cystic Fibrosis. Halverson's husband Steve, Haskell Company CEO and President, supports her community activities and is himself a veteran volunteer. The couple have lived in San Marco 15 years.

"I watched my mother care for my siblings and be a rock for other parents of critically ill children. Later after her Alzheimer's diagnosis, my father cared for her 14 years until her death...I know what families endure when a loved one is ill. The weight of the world is on their shoulders," she said.

Christmas was an important holiday for



Laura Edwards

Diane's family. She remembers attending Cystic Fibrosis family holiday events where children received wrapped gifts.

"I remember one gift we opened was a donated book with torn pages, written all over...it was an awful feeling. It's important to me that every child at the Christmas Party receives new gifts," she said.

Christmas Party volunteer Laura Edwards of San Marco visited senior citizens as a young child because her father was CEO of several Methodist retirement homes. She is Wells Fargo Senior Vice President for Commercial Banking.

"My dad had the biggest heart for the elderly. I got that from him. From an early age I'd visit and sing for residents at retirement homes. It meant so much to them," Edwards said. "Growing



Diane Halverson with Joan Lamer, Party Event Coordinator

up in an agricultural small town, the backbone of this country, is why I've volunteered for the Greater Jacksonville Agricultural Fair since 1996. I also help Metro Kids Konnection because I want to ensure there are funds for children from Jacksonville's Northwest quadrant to attend after-school programs."

Edwards said it's important to remember that children, adults and elderly who are in need or lonely, need help year-round, not just during the holidays.

Volunteer Deidre Brearley of Avondale, Haskell Company Lead Corporate Recruiter, fundraises to purchase scooters for the Children's Christmas Party. She coordinates Haskell's Toy Drive and fundraises for Cathedral Arts Project. Brearley is a mentor for the Big Brothers Big Sisters Northeast Florida Beyond



Deidre Brearley

School Walls program, volunteers with Habitat and Green Apple Day of Service going into schools to paint, landscape, build gardens and talk about nutrition and conservation. She likes helping with any river clean-up along the Riverwalk.

"My grandparents were always helping neighbors and everyone shared the load... that's just the way I grew up spending many summers with them in rural Virginia. I'm thankful for the example they set for me," Brearley said.

The Children's Christmas Party of Jacksonville 2014 - Christmas in the City - will be held Sat., Dec. 13, 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., at the Prime F. Osborn III Convention Center. It is open to children in need age 12 or younger, on a first-come, first-served basis. The event begins with a ribbon cutting by Santa Claus.



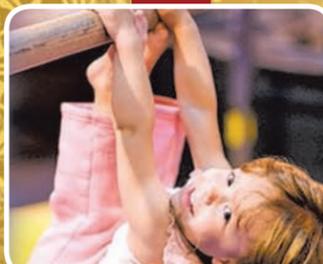
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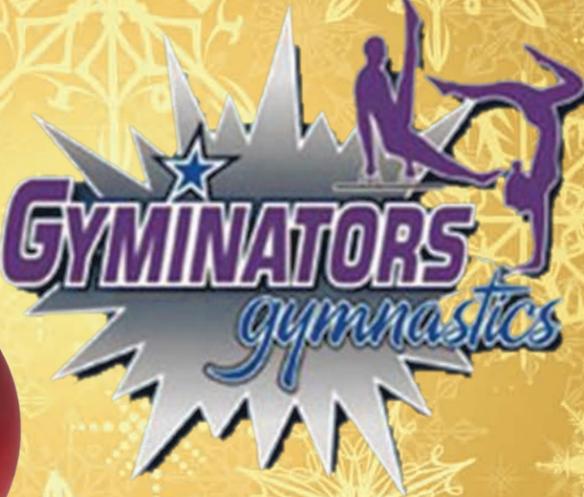
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# World's greatest hobby on holiday display

From tiny sheep no bigger than a toddler's thumbnail to exactly scaled replicas of the Wabash Cannonball, miniature railroaders recreate scenes from life so realistic and enticing that viewers long to shrink from behemoth proportions and wander into these amazing dioramas.

Toy train and model train enthusiasts share a common link – the love of all things trains. Whether collectors, operators or both, the Toy Train Collectors Association and National Model Railroad Association promote enjoyment of the hobby through meetings and conventions and set standards of compatibility for gauge and scale.

During the holidays the Toy Train Collectors of Jacksonville will share their

By Peggy Harrell Jennings  
Resident Community News

train set ups at the Museum of Science and History (MOSH) Dec. 10 through Jan. 3. Kristi Taylor, Communications Manager of MOSH said, "We are delighted to partner with Toy Train Collectors of Jacksonville – their holiday display adds so much energy and life to our lobby."

Whether creating a diorama with glittery snow and lights for a two-year-old daughter "just to see her eyes sparkle" or an immaculately detailed museum-worthy world with trees and structures made from scratch, model railroaders agree that if you have patience and imagination, it's fun, creative and absorbing work. Here are the stories of five men who find the hobby gratifying and all-consuming.

## Small toys for big boys

Ortega resident John Allen's creative approach to the space problem for his HO scale train (1:87) consisted of designing a 75-foot track bed out of plywood and metal brackets mounted about a foot and a half from the ceiling of his Florida room. The train disappears into the laundry room wall then magically reappears out of a tunnel on the other side of the room!

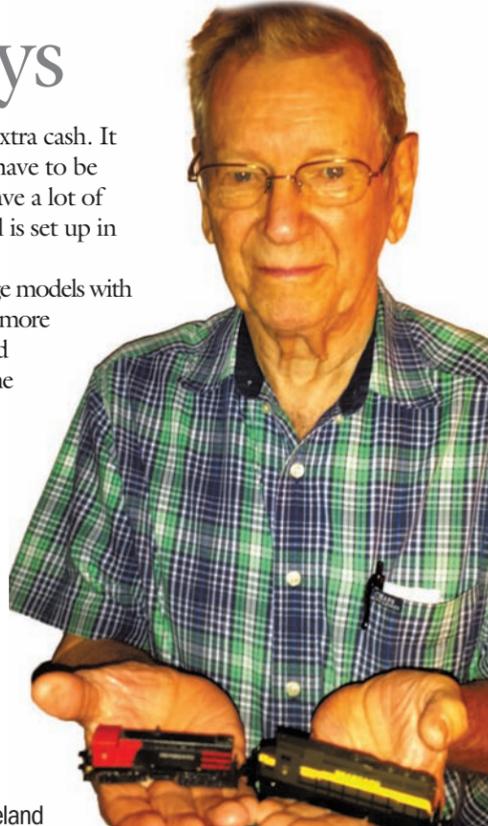
Having the track mounted eliminates the need for structures or landscaping but keeps all the excitement of bells and whistles and the familiar "chugga, chugga, chugga" of the train rounding the bend. This man with all the toys said, "I never had a train as a child and I always wanted one. This one is fun – kind of a big boy toy."

Allen's neighbor, Bill Copeland, a retired Seaboard Coastline Engineer, just can't seem to get enough of trains. He spent 37-1/2 years driving a 50-foot plus locomotive and now drives one about five inches long. Over the years he has constructed two N scale model layouts saying he wanted a hobby that was "just for me." For new hobbyists he

recommends: "Have a little extra cash. It can get expensive. Also, you have to be a real stickler for detail and have a lot of patience." The present model is set up in his garage.

Copeland prefers the N gauge models with a 1:160 ratio because "they are more complex and realistic in a limited space; they are super detailed" he said. "This one took about two or three years to finish."

Careful, cautious and focused are qualities required of these model builders – and an encyclopedic knowledge of railroad history. These railroaders have solved the problem of condensing the excitement and romance of the rails into a small space.



Bill Copeland



John Allen

## Lone wolf railroader creates urban layout

While many train modelers enjoy the club experience, Elvin Howland doesn't belong to a train club. "I'm a lone wolf," he said, spending about six or eight hours each week with his unusual HO scale train set-up. "It's about 95 percent done; you can always keep adding and re-doing," he explained.

Inspired by a map of St. Louis, the San Jose resident has created a double-level model with about 20 industries in the St. Louis area during the 1950s to 1970s era. His engine is radio controlled, his trees and most of his structures are built from scratch and many he "went out and measured in the field for accuracy."

Howland doesn't have a space problem because he houses his set-up in a storage facility. Up rolls the door and his visitor gets a glimpse into how Gulliver felt when he met the Lilliputians. Charming little cows and sheep graze in the National City Stock Yard, a kitten smaller than a pencil eraser perches on the fence at the



Elvin Howland

imaginary railroad president's house. The less-than-one-inch lady of the house is getting into her scale-sized Cadillac.

Interesting businesses like Union Starch and Refining, St. Louis Gas and Coke, Philips Petroleum and Monsanto are just a few industries recreated in authentic detail. "Most models have mountains and countryside," Howland said. "I've gone a little bit in the opposite direction with an urban setting."

Inspired when he was given a model

caboose years ago, Howland now has over 40 years in railroad modeling. He builds and designs layouts, does kit and scratch building, custom box car detailing for other railroaders and has written and published a book titled "Rails Across Michigan." His father worked for the railroad in Michigan and during childhood this lone wolf lived about five miles from the train tracks and could hear the steam whistles howling in the distance.



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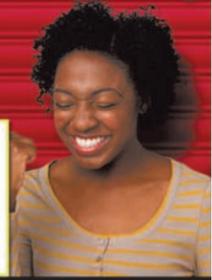


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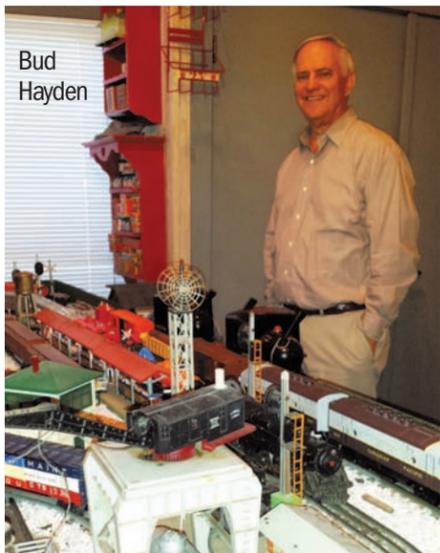
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# Barreling down the tracks back to boyhood



Bud Hayden

As founder and president of Toy Train Collectors of Jacksonville, Bud Hayden of San Marco stays busy in his train room with meetings, organizing shows and maintaining his pre- and post-war Lionel trains.

This passion for trains is in his blood. His dad and granddad were conductors, his wife Mary's granddad was a railroad man and one of his son's and a daughter have inherited the obsession.

Hayden's train room is floor to ceiling with carefully catalogued train cars, engines, track, and equipment for repairs. Memorabilia covers the walls in the form of framed photographs and prints of trains, the Jacksonville Terminal, advertisements and even an

original Roy Acuff record of the "Wabash Cannonball." Hayden's mother said that his first copy of the record was "worn out from playing it so much."

"I loved my trains as a child," Hayden shared. "This hobby is really a way to buy back your childhood." Hayden's mother encouraged his interests by driving him to the stop near where San Jose Panera's is now, handing him up to his conductor grandfather, then racing to beat the train to the station where she could pick him up.

Hayden loves to talk trains as he gestures to his collection of 125 engines and about 500 box cars and cabooses, saying "I just love this." It is evident that he does and his enthusiasm makes

one want to run right out and start collecting. He has vast knowledge about the miniature trains, especially Lionel, the manufacturers, the history. One amusing story concerns Lionel's introduction of a pink engine to entice girls. "That was a marketing disaster!" he said.

Hayden emphasized that his present day passion includes going to markets, looking for rare variations, and learning all the time - "knowledge is key." He said railroading is a "great way to meet nice people and a great hobby to rise kids around. It's just such a positive experience." After all, every time he goes into his train room he steps back into his boyhood.

## Passion for trains began around Christmas tree

Steve Johnson, vice president of Southern Division of National Toy Train Collectors Association, grew up collecting toy trains - his father and grandfather were collectors.

Johnson used the money from his paper route to buy model trains. He explained that his adult interest "started with a train around the Christmas tree - you just have to have a train around the tree - and then it just grew and grew."

After moving to Jacksonville 16 years ago he realized that the biggest problem in Florida for train collectors is that there aren't any basements. He is currently in the process of reconstructing his layout of post-war Lionel O gauge trains in an 800-square-foot train room that has been designed as part of a new house. Johnson said there are a lot of collectors out there but most are older. "Kids



are more into digital age stuff. Some drawbacks to collecting are lack of space and it can be expensive," he said.

The Beauclerc resident advises folks to get involved with a group. "There are lots of guys and a few women,

with lots of experience and resources. There is great camaraderie in sharing and going to meets and auctions," Johnson noted. "Being detail oriented is important and being a person who likes to have fun."

Johnson and his wife enjoy going antiquing and scouting for old model trains. What to get the man who has everything? Johnson's wife got him a turn of the century railroad crossing sign for his birthday. Naturally, he was thrilled. Johnson's collection includes a Z gauge train that will fit into a brief case. The tiny cars are no bigger than a lump of sugar with an engine about a quarter-inch wide. This fun loving CPA says that his collections don't just occupy space on shelves. "What's the point of having this unless you play with it?" he concluded.

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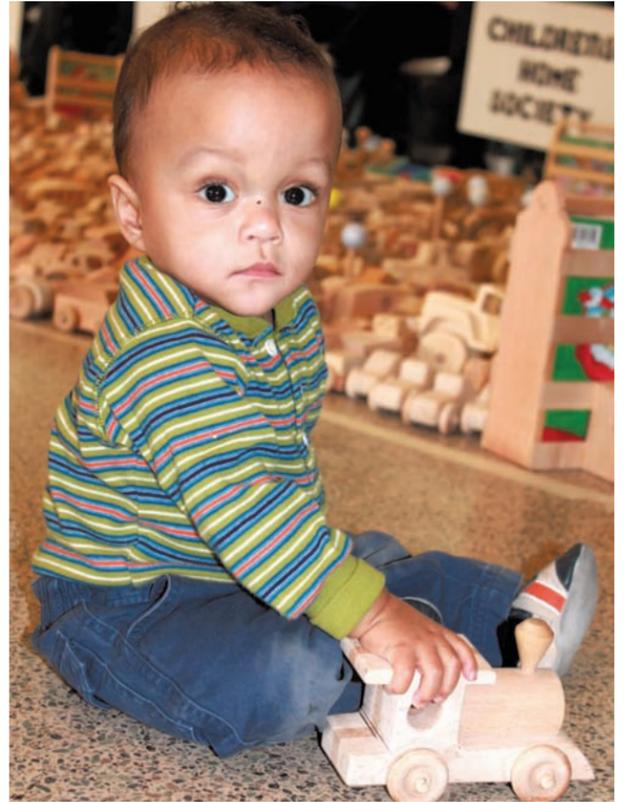
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Margaret Miller, president of the local club, kicked off the 26th annual Toy Giveaway at St. Catherine's Episcopal Church, 4758 Shelby Ave. The chairman of the event, Chet Davis, was especially happy that they exceeded last year's count by 600. He's very particular about the quality of the toys, even rejecting some that aren't sanded to his standards. "The toys are immaculate this year," he said. "The quality is much better."

Samuel Stephens IV tests a toy wooden train at the Jax Woodworkers Club annual toy giveaway. He was there with his mother, Christine, who accepted the toys on behalf of Children's Home Society.



Steve Grant, with the Church of Argyl, admires one of several dinosaurs, new this year, made for nonprofits and ministry groups to distribute to needy children.




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Nicolas and Benjamin Prescott box up the wood toys for Wolfson Children's Hospital. The boys' father, Chuck Prescott, works for Rulon, a wood ceiling and acoustical wood wall manufacturer that donates a significant amount of wood to Jax Woodworkers Club.



Twenty groups, including Children's Home Society, Wolfson Children's Hospital, Community Hospice PedsCare, Sulzbacher Center for the Homeless, Shriner's Hospital, among others, were the recipients of over 5,000 wood toys at the 26th annual Toy Giveaway.



The fellowship hall at St. Catherine's Episcopal Church was filled with wood toys, made by local woodworkers.



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# Giving back when others often just give up

By Kate A. Hallock  
Resident Community News

Traditionally viewed as that time of life when the rocking chair was pretty much all that a retiree looked forward to, now – thanks to better health and greater opportunities – more and more seniors are out the door and on the go.

When they are “seniors on a mission” it’s even better – for them and for the community.

Four local women, age 69 to 80, shared why they look forward to getting together at least once a month for fellowship and to do some “grunt work” for the good of the community.

Jill Sprunt, a member of Ortega United Methodist Church, takes local mission trips with Seniors on a Mission (SOAM). The nonprofit offers services to more than 50 other community nonprofit organizations to help them keep costs down by stuffing race day bags, assembling mailings, and working at Teacher Supply Depot sorting, counting and repackaging donated school supplies.

Last year 325 men and women took 102 mission trips totaling 10,394 hours’ worth more than \$230,000 in hourly labor. Although it’s light manual labor, the

work helps seniors stay active and involved.

“We supply a lot of the time that it would take a paid worker to do and we have such fellowship and fun,” said Sprunt. “It keeps us busy. We love being together each time we meet.”

Christine Teyssier, who has been part of SOAM for four years through the Ortega UMC group, said that while it’s tiring it’s also rewarding.

“It’s just a great thing to get out and do something instead of just sitting in the house,” Teyssier said. “It’s a lot of work but we do it with joy and I feel great about doing this. If someone’s missing, you know it.”

Another member of the Ortega contingent, Gail Atchley has been going on the trips for nearly five years. “It’s a worthwhile cause,” she said. “It gets seniors out and involved, doing something for the community.” In addition to work at Teacher Supply Depot, Atchley also mends clothing for the Clothing Warehouse and helps stuff race day bags.

The mission trips are also an opportunity for someone new to the area to develop friendships. Pat Warner moved into the Florida Christian Apartments two years ago and noticed



Gail Atchley, Christine Teyssier, Jill Sprunt

the 36-passenger bus picking people up at the Murray Hill complex. Curious, she thought she would see what it was all about.

“I enjoy pretty much all of the trips, but one day I had to cut plastic bags and ended up with blisters...not my favorite,” Warner shared. Blisters aside, “It makes me feel like I’m doing something worthwhile,” she said. “It gives me a

feeling that I’m doing something to help people.”

Warner noted that while she doesn’t know very many people in her apartment building, Seniors on a Mission has given her the opportunity to make new friends and do something worthwhile.

“I’m trying to give back at a time when other people just give up,” concluded Warner.

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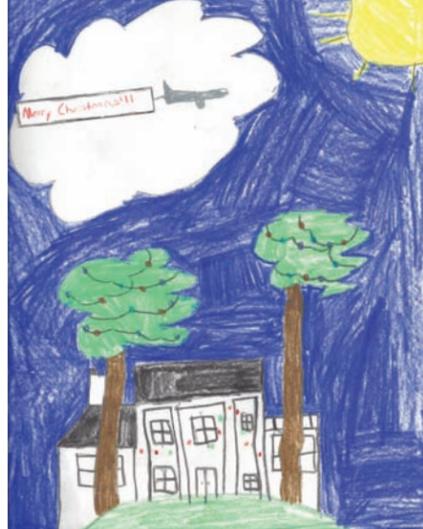
Will Walton, Ortega, 6th grade



Colin Sirbaugh, Ortega, 8th grade



Ben Magevney, Ortega, 7th grade



Ford Gleason, Ortega, 7th grade



Ruth Conner, San Marco, 7th grade

*Many thanks to Episcopal School visual arts teacher Michelle Krueger, Avondale resident, who rallied her class to provide this holiday artwork.*



Lauryn Barkas, Ortega, 7th grade



Cooper Lindsey, San Marco, 6th grade

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# Luminaria traditions in the neighborhoods

## Lighting up 30 years

By Kate A. Hallock  
Resident Community News



Volunteers came out on a sunny Saturday, the first of three work weekends, to bag sand for the luminaria kits.

It's the 30th anniversary of Riverside Avondale Preservation Luminaria this year and members of RAP are hoping to sell the thousands of kits that were put together over three weekends last month.

Luminaria was started by the late Jerry Spinks three decades ago as a fundraiser for RAP and it grew from a few blocks to the whole neighborhood participating through events at local churches, to house parties, street parties, bike rides, etc. "My favorite thing is always the parks," said Carmen Godwin, executive director. "They look so beautiful all lit up at night."

Spinks, a native Texan, came to Jacksonville in 1972 to begin a 35-year career with the IRS. A bachelor, he was active with the Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd, the Riverside Fine Arts Association, and West Jacksonville Rotary, among several other groups, but his

passion was for preservation. In addition to saving over a dozen buildings from demolition, one of his most significant accomplishments was to secure the Buckland House for RAP's headquarters.

Committee Chair Malcolm Jones said that the 12 tons of sand delivered to the Buckland House in early November should result in four to five thousand kits of six candles.

The kits are being sold at the Buckland House at 2623 Herschel St. You can purchase the luminaria kits (six bags, candles and sand) for \$6 beginning Dec. 6; Saturdays 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Sundays 1-4 p.m.

RAP is also running a Facebook contest again this year. If you purchase your kits directly from RAP, take a photo with your luminary bags, and send it to Heather Bailey (info@riversideavondale.org) to post on the Facebook page. Whoever gets the most Likes wins a gift card to a local merchant.

# Holiday tradition benefits disabled adults

It's become a holiday tradition for more than just the residents of San Marco. Luminaria night in San Marco, to be held on Sun., Dec. 14, is actually the culmination of another tradition in its own right.

Pine Castle began creating luminaria kits in 1998 for neighborhood associations, churches and other civic groups, and has produced those candle kits for the San Marco Preservation Society for the past five years.

The luminary production line is

in full swing from early November through mid-December. "This work is only typically done during the fall leading up to the holiday season, but special orders at other times of the year are not out of the question," said DuVal Malone, Pine Castle's director of community relations.

Various workshop areas around campus complete different tasks according to participants' degree of difficulty, allowing many people within a broad range of ability levels the chance to join in the work.



Matthew Nelson, a Pine Castle participant, and supervisor Mark Barno, with some of the completed luminaria kits

For instance, the sand will be packaged in the warehouse (or just outside) by people who are able to lift scoops-full into Ziploc bags and seal them, while the much lighter-weight white paper bags for each kit will be counted and rubber-banded by another shop nearby. Yet another shop will assemble the kits with all of the aforementioned components and label them for sale, noted Malone.

According to shop supervisor Mark

Barno, the Pine Castle participants complete about 1500 kits of 12 candles per kit. The San Marco Preservation Society order is about 300 kits.

The luminary program is managed by Business Development Director Ok Sun Burks, who also manages all other operations of several businesses on campus, which provide employment opportunities for about 150 people (all adults, 18 years of age to seniors) with intellectual disabilities each week.

"About a third of them are long-term residents of our five group homes, while others live with their families, are residents of other agency group homes, or live on their own with help from a living

coach and/or personal care provider/homemaker," Malone said. The proceeds from luminary sales support Pine Castle's overall mission, which is to enrich the lives of individuals with intellectual/developmental and acquired disabilities by providing opportunities to learn, work and lead healthy, meaningful lives in the community.

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# Happy Hour Guide

## Historic Districts North

### AL'S PIZZA

1620 Margaret Street  
Monday-Thursday all day drink specials on draft beer and house wine; Thursday special on Yuengling.



### ALE PIE HOUSE

3951 St. Johns Avenue  
Happy Hour 2-7 p.m. daily: \$1.50 Yuengling and Bud Light; \$3.50 other brews.



### BISCOTTI'S

1534 St. Johns Avenue  
Saturday and Sunday Brunch 8 a.m. - 3 p.m. New: Sweet Potato Pancakes with Crème Fraiche, new holiday desserts, Red Velvet Cake is back.



### BLACK SHEEP RESTAURANT

1534 Oak Street  
Happy Hour 3-6 p.m. daily, on Sunday 3 p.m. until close; special price on four specialty cocktails, all drafts and eight wine choices.



### BLUE FISH OYSTER BAR and RESTAURANT

3551 St. Johns Avenue  
Happy Hour 3-7 p.m. daily, Tapas style menu: \$6 dozen raw oysters, \$6 mussels, \$2 and \$3 beers, \$3 wells, \$4 wine and \$5 Mojito Margaritas, Manhattans and martinis.



### CARMINE'S PIE HOUSE

2677 Forbes Street  
Happy Hour Monday-Friday 2-6 p.m., \$1.50 pie slices, half-price Bold City, Intuition Ale Works, domestic drafts and house wine.



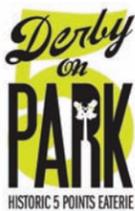
### CASBAH

3628 St. Johns Avenue  
Happy Hour 3-7 p.m. daily, Monday all day, includes half-price Hookahs, discounted draft and bottle beer plus house wines.



### DERBY ON PARK

1068 Park Street  
Happy Hour Monday-Friday 3-7 p.m., \$3 domestic drafts, \$4 craft beers, \$4 house wine, \$3 well cocktails and Pinnacle Flavors. Tuesday Burger and Bar Special \$10.99. Wednesday all day half off glasses and bottles.



### EUROPEAN STREET CAFE

2753 Park Street  
Happy Hour daily 2-7 p.m., two-for-one drafts, \$1 off wine, \$1.50 off bottle beers. Monday night kids eat free.



### FANCY SUSHI

4530-9 St. Johns Avenue  
Daily lunch specials Monday-Thursday. Beer, wine and sake buy one get one free daily.



### HARPOON LOUIE'S

4070 Herschel Street  
Happy Hour 4-7 p.m., \$4 domestic drafts and house wines, \$2.50 domestic bottles, \$3 premium wines, import drafts, \$3.50 premium drafts.



### HAWKERS ASIAN STREET FARE

1001 Park Street  
Happy Hour 3-6 p.m., Intuition Beers \$3, and Small Plate choices.



### HOVAN

2005-1 Park Street  
Domestic and Import beers \$3 all day, \$4 house wine daily.



### KICKBACKS GASTROPUB

910 King Street  
Happy Hour 2-7 p.m. \$1 off all beer, \$5 pitchers domestic beer.



### LOLA'S BURRITO JOINT

1522 King Street  
Happy Hour 2-7 p.m. Monday-Friday, half off local and domestic beers, \$2 wine, \$2.50 wells, half off chips and salsa, Loaded margarita with 8 oz. Corona for \$2 extra.



### MELLOW MUSHROOM

3611 St. Johns Avenue  
Happy Hour Monday-Friday 3-6 p.m., \$1 off wine, draft beers and craft cocktails. Late Night Happy Hour Monday-Thursday 10:30 p.m. to close, \$2 house wine, \$3 olive drinks, \$2.50 wells.



### MOJO No. 4 URBAN BBQ WHISKEY BAR

3572 St. Johns Avenue  
Happy Hour daily 3-7 p.m., \$6 cocktails, \$5 house wine, \$4 selected liquor, \$3 beer.



### MOON RIVER PIZZA

1176 Edgewood Avenue South  
Mon., 1-topping large pizza & a pitcher of beer for \$20. Tues. \$10 Pitchers, \$1 can beers. Weds. 4-10 p.m., half off beer & wine.



### MOSSFIRE GRILL

1537 Margaret Street  
Happy Hour 3-7 p.m. daily and all day Sunday. Specials include \$3.50 House Margaritas, \$4 House Wine (glass), discounted draft beers and well liquor drinks plus changing nightly specials.



### O'BROTHERS IRISH PUB

1521 Margaret Street  
Happy Hour Monday-Friday 3-7 p.m., \$2.75 domestic drafts, \$3.75 microbrews and imports, \$3 well drinks, \$6.50 Jaeger Bombs, house margaritas \$5 and Irish Car Bombs \$5.



### ORSAY

3630 Park Street  
Reduced price wine and draft beers, \$7 signature cocktails, half price oysters and large appetizer selection.



### PELE'S WOOD FIRE

2665 Park Street  
Happy Hour 3-7 p.m. daily. Domestic bottle beer \$2, house wine half price, specialty cocktails half price.



### PRIMI PIATTI

2722 Park Street  
Signature dishes including authentic homemade pasta, She-Crab soup and Lobster Bisque. Weekends feature fresh seafood, rack of lamb and lamb chops. Homemade desserts.

### SAKE HOUSE

824 Lomax Street  
Lunch specials from 11 a.m.-3 p.m. Monday-Saturday.



### SUSHIKO

3620 St. Johns Avenue  
Lunch specials daily except Sunday and daily dinner Sushi specials.



### TAPA THAT

820 Lomax Street  
Happy Hour daily 5-7 p.m., \$1 off all wine and draft beers, daily lunch specials and Wine Down Wednesdays, all wines 2-for-1 all day.



### THE BRICK RESTAURANT

3585 St. Johns Avenue  
Happy Hour 4-6 p.m. weekdays. Ladies Night Wednesdays, \$4 house wine, \$4 beer and other drinks. Friday, Saturday and Sunday Weekend food specials.



## Historic Districts South

### bb's RESTAURANT

1019 Hendricks Avenue  
Happy Hour Monday-Thursday 4-7 p.m., house-infused cocktails and half-price specialty martinis every Wednesday 5 p.m. until close. Prix Fixe Menu Monday-Thursday after 5 p.m. and Saturday Brunch 11 a.m.-2 p.m.



### BISTRO AIX

1440 San Marco Blvd.  
Happy Hour Monday-Friday 3:30-6:30 p.m., daily specials.



### CRUISERS GRILL

5613 San Jose Blvd.  
Happy Hour 4-7 p.m. daily, \$2 sangria and draft beers. Tuesday Trivia Night 4 p.m.-close. Burger of the Month, \$8.99.



### GENE'S SEAFOOD

1571 University Blvd. West  
Happy Hour all day every day, daily drink specials. Band Night Fridays 8 p.m.



### GROTTO WINE and TAPAS BAR

2012 San Marco Blvd.  
Daily featured red or white wine, Thursdays 6-8 p.m. weekly wine tasting and Sunday Wine Classes offered, call for schedule.



### LITTLE TOSCANA

4440 Hendricks Avenue  
Happy Hour daily 4-7 p.m., half price house wine, \$1 domestic draft beer and monthly food specials.



### MATTHEW'S RESTAURANT

2107 Hendricks Avenue  
Happy Hour daily 5-7 p.m. and Thursday 5 p.m. to close in the lounge area, \$3 beer, \$4 mixer cocktails, \$5 house wine, \$6 house martinis. Mondays half price wine bottles all night, no limit. Chef's six-course tasting menu with or without wine pairings, choices change daily.



### PIZZA PALACE

1959 San Marco Blvd.  
Lunch Specials Monday-Friday 11 a.m. -4 p.m., \$7.50-\$8. Tuesday and Friday Pasta Specials, Sunday 5 p.m. to close 12-inch one topping pizza and two side salads for \$15. Monday Family Night, large one topping pizza with chicken wings, 5 p.m.-close, \$20.



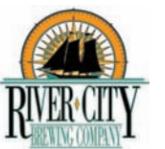
### PLAYERS GRILLE

4456 Hendricks Avenue  
Happy Hour Monday-Friday 2-7 p.m., \$2 domestic 20 oz., drafts, \$1 domestic 10 oz. drafts, \$2.75 all wells. Daily food specials, Mondays 69¢ wings, Tuesday half price kids' meals, Wednesday Kibbe Night (Middle Eastern dish), Thursday Pork Sandwich special, Friday Fish Sub Sandwich special.



### RIVER CITY BREWING COMPANY

835 Museum Circle  
Happy Hours Monday-Friday, 4-7 p.m., well liquors, house wine, house-brewed draft beer for \$3.50. Accepting holiday group reservations plus a special offer for groups of 20+.



### TAVERNA

1986 San Marco Blvd.  
Happy Hour Monday-Friday 4-7 p.m. on the patio or bar seating only, well drinks, local draft beer and wine glass, \$5, craft cocktails, \$8.



### THE WINE CELLAR

1314 Prudential Drive  
Happy Hour Monday-Friday 4:30-6:30 p.m., half price house wines by the glass and well brands with light fare appetizers. Check website for online specials. Holiday gift cards on sale until December 12 include 20% bonus card in all denominations.



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