

Happy St. Patrick's Day!

Let it go!
10 Ideas to free yourself from guilt, clutter, stress & body hang ups.



Resident

COMMUNITY NEWS

Riverside · Ortega · Avondale · Murray Hill

Fiercely Local News

Vol. 9 · Issue 3

Fiercely Loyal Readers

Volunteers Brave Cold to Support Park First Time a Charm for Cleanup Effort



By Kate A. Hallock
Resident Community News

Despite starting temperatures in the 30s, over 60 volunteers turned out to give Boone Park South (the portion between Herschel Street and St. John's Avenue) its first good cleaning and clearing in many years on Love Boone Park Day, Feb. 14.

"We really had a successful day," said organizer Pamela Telis. "The volunteers were incredibly hard working and many said they walk the park often and were so happy to see the park get some much needed attention. It was almost unanimous that we need to do it regularly several times a year."

"It was a wonderful day; the weather went from cold to perfect, the families enjoyed taking care of 'their' park and the park received some much needed TLC," said Anna Dooley, Greenscape executive director. "I commend the neighborhood activists for their work in organizing and hope Greenscape can return to be involved in this wonderful community."

For more photos, turn to page 13

Anna Dooley, Margaret Tocknell, Roger Morton, Kelly Morton, Brian Murray, Pamela Telis

Roast on the River

Fellowship, libations and 'good eats' were all enjoyed on a crisp evening along the banks of the Ortega River on the first day of January. The group meets once a month to discuss business, civic and current events affecting their interests. The members gather every year

for an Oyster Roast at Driftwood Alley in the Ortega Farms neighborhood, where the gentlemen took time to raise a toast to another year in business and share stories while building camaraderie within the membership.

For more, see page 47



Members Robert Pavelka, Jack Eller, Brian Edenfield, Jim Griffin, John Weyer and David Ashley gather on the docks of Driftwood Alley

Fishweir Friends Commit to Cause

Avondale residents Cate Goodwyne and her best friend, Grace Vosmik, made their New Year's resolution one that would help animals in need in Jacksonville. They saved their allowances to purchase pet food and linens and donated them to First Coast No More Homeless Pets. Goodwyne's mother Leah matched them dollar-for-dollar and the girls spent the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday running errands to purchase the items and dropped them off in person. Goodwyne and Vosmik, who attend fourth grade at Fishweir Elementary School, got a behind-the-scenes tour of the FCNMHP facility and decided they both wanted to volunteer there.



Expanded Technologies Sign of New Bank



An installer from Florida Certified Sign Erectors cleans the new sign on the site of Florida Bank, which is anticipated to begin operating as IBERIABANK on March 16. The parent companies of Florida Bank and IBERIABANK entered into a definitive agreement in October 2014 to merge Florida Bank with and into IBERIABANK. Shareholders approved the transaction on Jan. 13, which is subject to final regulatory approvals. According to Susan Martinez, President and CEO, Florida Bank Group, Inc., in a letter to business clients, expanded technologies will include ATM Check Image Deposits and Mobile Deposit Capture.

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You Asked For It!

Riverside Avondale boundaries

A reader recently wrote in to make clear the line of demarcation in the historic districts, following a reference to a business opening on King Street. The Resident made mention that it was located in the historic district, which it is not. In order to clarify, we turned to local historian Dr. Wayne Wood and long-time resident Jeanmarie Grimsley to shed light upon the dividing line between Riverside and Avondale.

Instead of leaning on ZIP Code assignments, which puts King Street as the line of demarcation between 32204 and 32205, we learned that Seminole Road is the correct boundary for Avondale. "The original Avondale subdivision went from Seminole to just beyond Talbot, and from the river to what is now Roosevelt Boulevard," said Dr. Wood. "It was long and narrow."

According to Grimsley, who checked with the National Register of Historic Places, the Riverside Historic District is "roughly bounded by the Seaboard Coastline Railroad, Riverside and Memorial parks, the St. John's River and Seminole Road."

She also noted that what is currently deemed to be Avondale, is a conglomeration of plats and subdivisions, among them Edgewood, Elizabeth Place, Windsor Place, Ingleside Heights, St. Johns Heights, Shadowlawn and Arden. "All of which still



show up on various maps, but all of those have been subsumed into what we today consider Avondale," said Grimsley.

"Interestingly, the shops of Avondale, which for many of us form the epicenter of Avondale, are actually located in West Avondale," she noted. "The original Avondale subdivision prohibited any kind of commercial construction, so a canny developer bought up the land immediately to the west of the subdivision, and built the shops in the late 1920s."

Spring cleaning? Consider Sulzbacher Center

The Sulzbacher Center, 611 E. Adams St., issued a plea last month for home furnishings. Many of the Center's families and residents are moving into permanent housing and the Center assists by providing the basics. Due to a large number who are moving out, the Center's supply of donated items has been depleted.

While spring cleaning and de-cluttering

your home, why not ear-mark some of those unused items for the Center?

Sulzbacher Center is looking for beds, mattresses, couches, linens and towels, shower curtains, tables and chairs, pots, pans and dishes.

"The Sulzbacher Center is very proud of our residents and families who have worked so hard to get back on their feet," said

Linda Hemphill. "We know their futures are bright and with your help, they will create comfortable homes for themselves and their families."

If you can donate anything to help these residents in transition, contact Linda Hemphill at (904) 394-8051 or LindaHemphill@tscjax.org.



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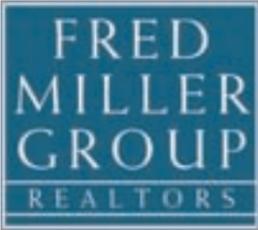
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EDITOR: Kate A. Hallock
NEWS EDITOR: Greg Walsh
editor@residentnews.net

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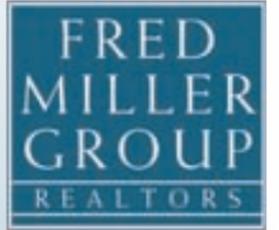
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2854 IONIC AVE - \$435,000
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REDUCED

4700 IROQUOIS AVE - \$429,500
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RIVERFRONT

5015 ORTEGA FARMS BV - \$885,000
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4401 COUNTRY CLUB RD - \$299,000
Charming 3/3, corner lot in Ortega



Alise Ferranti
904.434.0767



RIVER VIEWS

1927 WOODMERE DR - \$649,000
Fairfax Manor 4/3.5, 4000sf + gar apt



JUST LISTED

4417 SAN JUAN AVE - \$174,900
Adorable 3/1 bungalow, freshly painted



FOR RENT

5151 ACRE ESTATES DR - \$1,150/MO
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Mayoral candidates share thoughts on critical issues

A voter well educated on current political and economic issues as well as on the views of each candidate for mayor is a voter that has in mind the best interests of our consolidated City-County government. *The Resident* reached out to each of the four mayoral candidates for their responses to a short list of questions.

Next month we want to share your thoughts; send your one-line opinion of the most pressing issue that you think should be addressed by the new mayor and City Council representatives. Email to editor@residentnews.net by March 15.



Name: Eldre Omega Allen, 60
Education: MBA, Jacksonville
University; Doctoral Candidate in Public Administration, Northcentral University
Occupation: Certificate General Contractor

we (taxpayers) are going to have to pick up the tab regardless to the method by which the administration decides to address the debt initially.

3. What impact can the Mayor have on making neighborhoods safer?

The Mayor can influence neighborhood safety through open involvement with neighborhood youths and groups that foster higher self-esteem and respect for authoritative figures. *How would you work with the new Sheriff to implement any programs you may have?* I will use the power of the office to influence law enforcement policy that fosters mutual respect between citizens and officers. Trust is born out of respect and trust is the missing element in our community as a whole.

4. Locally owned businesses are important to sustaining positive growth and job creation in Jacksonville. How will your administration encourage and support investment in the small business sector for entrepreneurs and existing businesses?

I agree! As a Jacksonville native, I long to see the return of economic strength in our neighborhoods when entrepreneurs were able to sustain their households through honest business activities. One of the first orders of business for my administration will be to heighten business community awareness of the programs that already exist to assist with growth and development i.e. Northwest Jacksonville Trust Fund Advisory Committee. I will require City Trust Fund liaisons to track and recover funds from previous program participants to increase the amount of available funds. Thereafter, we will continually seek means by which to make assistance available (including but not limited to administrative assistance).

5. How can Jacksonville protect the fabric of historic neighborhoods while also encouraging new business development?

Sometimes we place an extraordinary amount of focus on preservation of historical landmarks that it only serves as a deterrent to economic development. While I believe in historic preservation, we must be more proactive and loosen the restrictions on physical redevelopment. I think we can preserve the historical integrity of a structure without imposing undue cost on the developer to used materials that make the project cost prohibitive.

6. What is your number one priority if you were to be elected?

There are many issues that are all equally important and urgent to Jacksonville's future. *Advocating for Downtown development?* Absolutely! The heart of every City is its Downtown. Our Downtown is in "Cardiac Arrest," however, it can be resuscitated with an infusion of mixed-use facilities that bring retail, residential, and entertainment to the Downtown area. The first step in revitalizing Downtown is to properly care for our homeless population. This will alleviate the concern that business owners have regarding the safety of their customers and employees, thereby removing the obstacle to progress. *Focusing on increasing tourism?* I believe Jacksonville has the potential to become a serious competitor for Florida's tourist trade. A Convention Center that can accommodate the many organizations that desire to bring their functions here can be a catalyst to increase for tourism, hospitality, and many other aspects of our business community. *Balancing the budget?* Re-budgeting, the act of re-visiting the budget

mid-year to evaluate allocations and actual spending vs. budgeted is the key to identifying areas of waste, over allocation, or under allocation and revising the budget accordingly. While this is not customary for COJ, it should be. It's good fiscal management and control. *What is Goal #1?* In view of where we are as a community, there is a need to implement several goals simultaneously, i.e. Project Home for the Homeless, Retail Therapy, etc.

7. Where does public education rank among your list of priorities?

As a former Educator and an Academic, I am a product of Jacksonville's public school system. I have high regards and concern for our public educational system. I long to see it restored to a system that has no failing schools because we have created a system of students with high self-esteem who are inspired, encouraged, and expected to excel. *Do you feel that our current state of affairs is improving?* Not really. *Do you support alternative measures and the continued pursuit of charter schools for increasing school choice for parents?* While I am not opposed to charter schools, they do not meet the needs of the masses. I am a proponent of system transformation that makes Duval County a haven for the BEST Educators in the country and produces highly competitive graduates.

8. What is your favorite aspect of the City of Jacksonville?

My favorite aspect of Jacksonville is its excellent geographic location. We are a hub for commerce by land, sea, and air. We are positioned for GREATNESS. *What do you enjoy most about our city?* Our beaches.

1. What is your position on the dredging of the St. Johns River?

I am in favor of responsible dredging. *Can decision makers strike a balance between environmental concerns and job creation?* I think collaboration between the Army Corps of Engineers and the Environmental Organizations is imperative to reaching a workable solution to be submitted to the decision makers for approval. It is always vital to have the appropriate stakeholders at the table when balance is the desired outcome.

2. How would you approach the unfunded liability in regard to the taxpayer funded police/fire pension as it stands today?

I would initiate a new negotiation with a different set of participants. Firefighters, Police Officers and Taxpayers should be the participating stakeholders. After all, they are the ones who will be most affected by the outcome. *Furthermore, do you believe in closed door negotiations or open meetings for transparency?* No, I believe in honesty, accountability, and transparency. The taxpayers desire and deserve to know the truth about this debacle...how it came to be. Ultimately,

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Name: William (Bill) H. Bishop, III, 58
Education: Bachelor of Architecture from Lawrence Technological University
Master of Architecture and Master of Business Administration from University of Detroit Mercy
Occupation: Architect; current City Council Member, District 2

and fire fighters. We must have an economically sustainable and market competitive plan for the long term viability of the city. If they are unwilling to negotiate by relying on the so-called 30-year agreement, then I will use the impasse options available under Florida law and vigorously defend the city in any lawsuit that may be filed as has been threatened many times by John Keane. Considering that much of the unfunded liability will have to be paid by the city, I support the sales tax option as the best way to provide a broad based revenue source with the least impact per individual. It is important that both the revenue side and the expense (benefits) sides be addressed together for a comprehensive solution.

1. What is your position on the dredging of the St. Johns River?

Considering the tremendous local financial investment needed, dredging to deepen the St. Johns channel to 47 feet should only be done if the economic case can accurately be made and if it can be done without significant harm to the river ecology. *Can decision makers strike a balance between environmental concerns and job creation?* I believe the jobs/environmental balance can be struck but it will take involvement of those in Putnam County that have an economic stake in the Rodman reservoir.

2. How would you approach the unfunded liability in regard to the taxpayer funded police/fire pension as it stands today? Furthermore, do you believe in closed door negotiations or open meetings for transparency?

All negotiations regarding pensions must be done in open meetings in full compliance with Florida sunshine laws. My approach to the police/fire pension fund unfunded liability would be to request negotiations with the appropriate union representatives as required by Florida law. If they are willing, aggressively negotiate appropriate revisions to the plan that will be economically sustainable for both the taxpayers and the police

3. What impact can the Mayor have on making neighborhoods safer? How would you work with the new Sheriff to implement any programs you may have?

As Mayor, I can and will reinvigorate the City's departments tasked with working with neighborhoods to provide assistance and training on how to establish and grow neighborhood associations. Strong neighborhood associations are one of the best tools for neighborhood vitality and safety. Neighborhoods that look out for themselves tend to have the lowest crime rates.

Keeping open lines of communications between city departments, neighborhood associations and JSO are critical in efforts to improve neighborhood safety. During my eight years on City Council and during the current campaign, I have had the opportunity to work with and visit numerous neighborhood association meetings where crime and safety issues are discussed. JSO does a very good job of working with neighborhoods to identify problems and develop strategies with neighborhoods for addressing them.

4. Locally owned businesses are important to sustaining positive growth and job creation in Jacksonville. How will your administration encourage and support investment in the small business sector for entrepreneurs and existing businesses?

First, my administration will be a partner with business rather than an impediment. The processes city departments use when interacting with business will be restructured to provide proactive support for people trying to start or expand a business to quicken the start-up time. City departments involved with the development process can provide active assistance to people inexperienced with the city's rules and regulations. These efforts will make business start-up and expansion less time consuming in a world where time is money.

5. How can Jacksonville protect the fabric of historic neighborhoods while also encouraging new business development?

Protecting the fabric of historic neighborhoods and new business development are not mutually exclusive. There are many businesses that are very compatible with historic neighborhoods. Public education about the value of historic neighborhoods can help expand understanding of their value to the community. Consistent, fair implementation of the historic area development rules are also critical tools. Every business is not necessarily compatible with historic neighborhoods. When such a conflict occurs, the City's economic development arm can work with such businesses to find suitable alternative locations.

6. What is your number one priority if you were to be elected? Advocating for Downtown development? Focusing on increasing tourism? Balancing the budget? What is Goal #1?

Goal number one is getting our fiscal house in order. Until that is done, resources for any other meaningful effort do not exist. Reaching a permanent solution to our pension problems is the most important part of that effort and I will immediately address that right after taking office. Downtown redevelopment and active promotion of our city for business expansion and job growth are also right up at the top. These are vital in our efforts to generate the resources necessary to build a great city.

7. Where does public education rank among your list of priorities?

The state of our public education system is a very high priority of mine and within the limits of the Mayor's authority, I will do everything I can to help improve our school system. Jacksonville is a tale of two systems. We have three of the best high schools in the entire country in our Duval County Public Schools – Stanton, Paxon, and Douglas Anderson – and the elementary and middle school feeder system. We have many high quality neighborhood schools throughout the city. On the other hand we have some of the worst performing schools in the state in northwest Jacksonville. I, as Mayor, will use the power of the bully pulpit of the office to champion and promote what we do well and work closely with the school board to improve areas where we don't. *Do you feel that our current state of affairs is improving?* In some areas we are improving and some not so much. *Do you support alternative measures and the continued pursuit of charter schools for increasing school choice for parents?* I do support the continued use of charter schools and school choice as alternatives for parents whose children would end up attending the worst performing schools.

8. What is your favorite aspect of the City of Jacksonville?

Jacksonville is a collection of distinct neighborhoods that can afford one any conceivable lifestyle choice from 100 acres in the woods and small-town feel to a high-rise downtown and everything in between within the envelope of a growing major metropolitan city. All this is within 30 minutes' drive time from all parts of our city. *What do you enjoy most about our city?* What I enjoy most is the ability to enjoy both the wondrous natural beauty of our St. Johns River and Atlantic Ocean as well as enjoy the cultural vitality of our urban neighborhoods without leaving home.

see Candidates page 6

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Name: Alvin Brown, 52
Education: Jacksonville University, MBA and Bachelor of Science
Occupation; Mayor of the City of Jacksonville

three of Jacksonville's business leaders — Matt Carlucci, Charlie Appleby, and Bill Scheu — have proposed a funding solution to the issue at hand. JEA recently voted to approve this plan, which stipulates that both the city and JEA would contribute \$120 million, along with \$61 million from the Police and Fire Pension Fund's reserve accounts to pay down the unfunded liability up front instead of over ten years. This agreement and funding plan will result in savings of well over one billion dollars over the next 30 years and will not require higher taxes or utility rates.

1. What is your position on the dredging of the St. Johns River? Can decision makers strike a balance between environmental concerns and job creation?

Our Administration led the way on the Jacksonville Harbor Deepening Project, which began its first phase in June 2014. Though some people thought we couldn't get congressional authorization for the deepening, we worked together with city, state, and federal leaders to win approval. The project will deepen the St. Johns from Dames Point to the river entrance, allowing larger, modern cargo ships to access our port. Our team has worked with JAXPORT, the St. Johns Riverkeeper, the Jax Chamber, and others on the Rodman Dam plan to mitigate the potential environmental impact of deepening the river. We are focused on securing state action to authorize and fund the breaching of the Rodman Dam. I will continue to build off that momentum to bring this important infrastructure project across the finish line.

2. How would you approach the unfunded liability in regard to the taxpayer funded police/fire pension as it stands today? Furthermore, do you believe in closed door negotiations or open meetings for transparency?

Our Administration has led in a bipartisan manner on pension reform. The pension agreement is a compromise that involves shared sacrifice by current and future city employees. Now,

3. What impact can the Mayor have on making neighborhoods safer?

Our Administration has worked tirelessly to make Jacksonville neighborhoods safer for kids and families. We have backed numerous programs to support increasing police presence, cleaning up our streets and unsafe areas, keeping kids safe and productive after school and during summers, and have focused on felon re-entry. *How would you work with the new Sheriff to implement any programs you may have?* Our Administration has already introduced and supported programs like "Operation Ceasefire," Rec N' Roll JAX, "Weekend of Hope," Mayor's Mentors, a youth sports initiative, faith community mentoring, community empowerment days, the summer jobs initiative, teen court, and neighborhood accountability boards. Additionally, year after year, I have increased the proposed budget for the sheriff's office. I plan to continue these programs and this funding once re-elected.

4. Locally owned businesses are important to sustaining positive growth and job creation in Jacksonville. How will your administration encourage and support investment in the small business sector for entrepreneurs and existing businesses?

My Administration's top priority has always been creating more jobs here in Jacksonville. That means attracting new businesses and making Jacksonville a more business friendly city. Today, I'm incredibly proud we've added

36,000 new jobs in Jacksonville and our city has been named the number one city to start a new business. We know that shopping locally has a ripple effect throughout the whole city and that every dollar invested in small businesses pays dividends throughout the entire community. That's why the success of our local economy depends on the success of our small businesses. Over the last four years I've cut red tape, eliminated waste, and invested in our workforce, infrastructure, and education system, while increasing access to capital to help small businesses thrive and provide incentives for them to hire. I've also launched several initiatives to support Jacksonville's small businesses including, Operation HOPE, Business Builder, Renew Jax, and more. Thanks to these efforts and our small business community, our hard work is paying off. We need to keep Jacksonville number one and that's exactly what my Administration will do over the next four years.

5. How can Jacksonville protect the fabric of historic neighborhoods while also encouraging new business development?

Renew Arlington is a model for encouraging new business and expanding economic opportunity, while preserving Jacksonville's historic neighborhoods. My Administration will work closely with community partners to ensure that development is responsible and innovative. Through public-private partnerships, we will create new business and job opportunities, while building safer, more vibrant communities. New business development improves access, mobility, and economic growth for these communities.

6. What is your number one priority if you were to be elected? Advocating for Downtown development? Focusing on increasing tourism? Balancing the budget? What is Goal #1?

My number one priority will continue to be creating jobs and expanding economic opportunity in Jacksonville. Since I became mayor, our city has created 36,000 new jobs, the unemployment

rate has dropped from over 11% to 5.2%, and Jacksonville was recently named the number one city in America to start a new business. My Administration has worked with Republicans, Democrats, and Independents to invest in Downtown revitalization and infrastructure — investments that have created jobs and improved the quality of life in our city. I will continue to spread the message nationally and internationally that Jacksonville is open for business.

7. Where does public education rank among your list of priorities? Do you feel that our current state of affairs is improving? Do you support alternative measures and the continued pursuit of charter schools for increasing school choice for parents?

Public education is one of my top priorities. I made this clear by naming the first Education Commissioner ever for the City of Jacksonville. As the first in my family to go to college, I sought to provide real opportunity for all kids in Jacksonville to pursue a higher education and employment by launching the Learn2Earn Initiative and the Mayor's Mentors program. As our schools continue to improve, it is critical to engage every part of the community in building a stronger education system and supporting our students.

8. What is your favorite aspect of the City of Jacksonville? What do you enjoy most about our city?

Jacksonville is a city that proves that anything is possible when people work together. I said I would bring Jacksonville together to create good jobs, and I did. Our Administration has put our city first by working with Democrats, Republicans, and Independents to move Jacksonville forward. Over the next four years, I will continue to bring people together to build on all the success we've had over the last four years. We can to make our city a world-class city, where people want to live, work, and play.

see Candidates page 8

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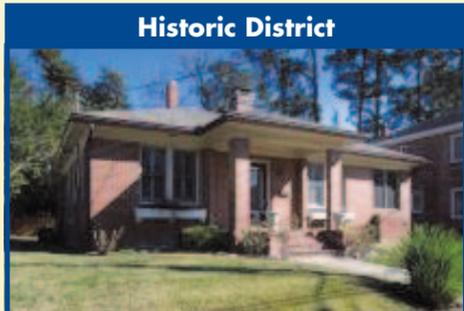
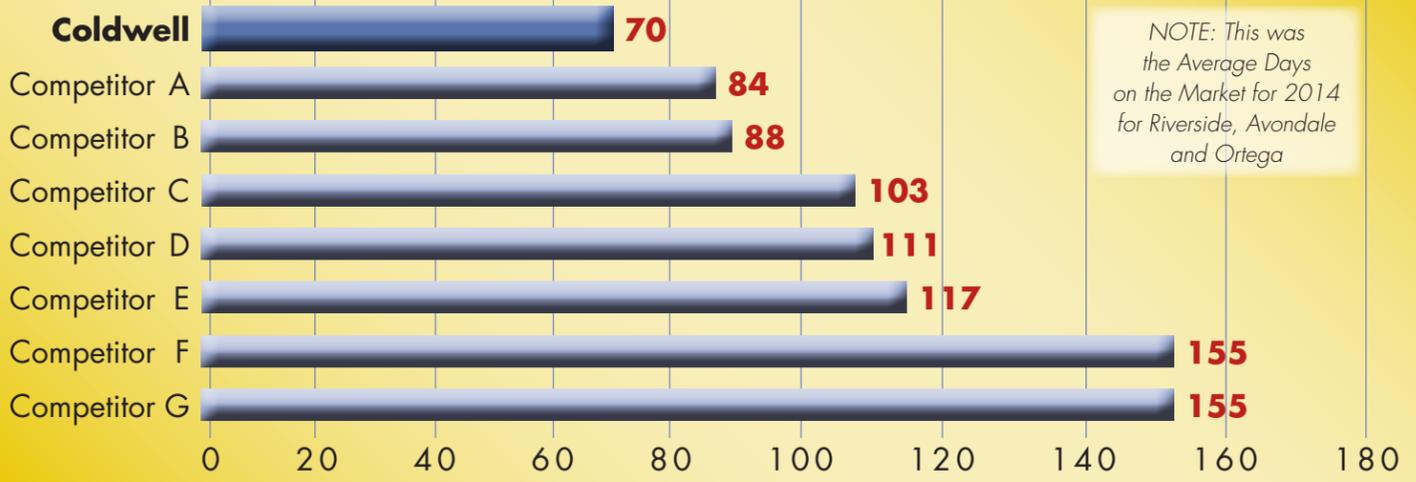


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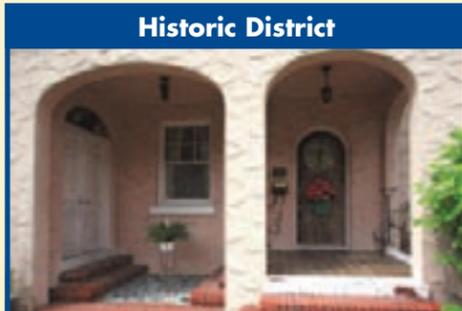
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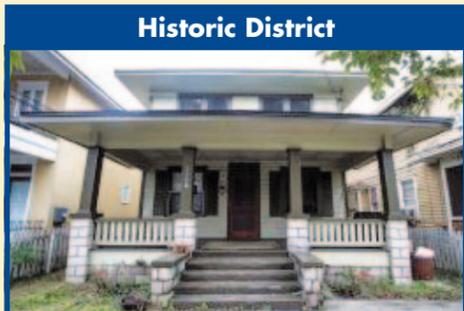
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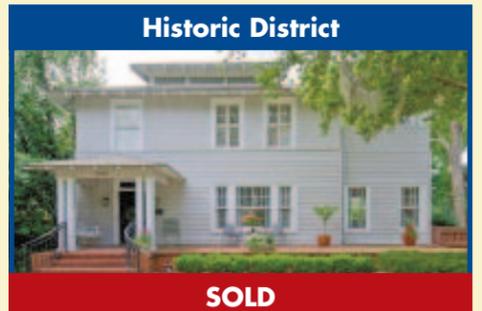
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Joyce Buchanan, 904-923-1877
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Seth Kimball, 904-270-0210
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Name: Lenny Curry, 44
Education: Bachelor of Science degree in Accounting from the University of Florida, additional professional training in accountancy and financial management
Occupation: CEO of ICX Group, accountant and business management consultant

1. What is your position on the dredging of the St. Johns River? Can decision makers strike a balance between environmental concerns and job creation?

The St. John's River is a great natural asset for our community, and we must strike a balance to protect this treasure while also making our port world-class. This balance can be struck with leadership. I will utilize relationships with our Governor, our State and Federal representatives, and the community as whole to get state and federal money to fund the dredging and to ensure our River is protected.

2. How would you approach the unfunded liability in regard to the taxpayer funded police/fire pension as

it stands today? Furthermore, do you believe in closed door negotiations or open meetings for transparency?

First, I absolutely believe that the people should be front and center anytime their tax dollars are being spent. So, I will demand open meetings and processes while we work to find a REAL solution to the pension challenge. The proposed solution from Alvin Brown requires hundreds of millions of dollars in new debt and takes money that is already committed elsewhere. It's not the best deal for taxpayers, it's the best deal for an election year gimmick. I will start on Day 1 going back to a plan that came from former Mayor Peyton. It could have saved us millions of dollars over the last three years, years when Alvin Brown did nothing on this vital issue.

3. What impact can the Mayor have on making neighborhoods safer?

My first priority as Mayor is to restore the 147 police officers taken off the streets under Alvin Brown's budget. By making safe streets the first priority we can have the right number of police and programs that give communities hope and opportunity like the Jacksonville Journey. **How would you work with the new Sheriff to implement any programs you may have?** I will work side-by-side by the new Sheriff to develop community policing strategies at the neighborhood level. As your next mayor I can and will make us safe again.

4. Locally owned businesses are important to sustaining positive growth and job creation in Jacksonville. How will your administration encourage and support investment in the small business sector for entrepreneurs and existing businesses?

One of the best ways to fight crime and improve neighborhoods is by helping people find good jobs. Small businesses hire locally and are the lifeblood of a city. Every day I meet local business owners who tell me the city government makes it harder for them to start and grow their businesses. I will streamline the process and get government bureaucrats out of the way of progress and job creation. I also believe recent spikes in crime prevent some from investing in our city, so increased public safety will help fuel investment from the private sector.

5. How can Jacksonville protect the fabric of historic neighborhoods while also encouraging new business development?

One of Jacksonville's greatest assets is that we have diverse neighborhoods with individual flair and flavor. If we link them to a vibrant and growing downtown, we can create growing pockets of business development in every corner of the city. I will return the Mayor's Budget Review Committee to an open, public meeting so the public knows what is going on before the budget is presented to the Council. I will have open dialogue with neighborhood organizations, CPACS, community groups and churches to ensure the voices of all of our distinct neighborhoods are heard.

6. What is your number one priority if you were to be elected? Advocating for Downtown development? Focusing on increasing tourism? Balancing the budget? What is Goal #1?

Elected officials have no greater responsibility than to ensure that we live in a safe city. My first priority will always be to have police and fire rescue operations that ensure our community is a safe one. Unfortunately, Alvin

Brown has cut police budgets, taken 147 police officers off our streets and now we see homicide and other violent crime on the rise. We also need to back programs that bring hope and opportunity to young people so that they can recognize their value in our city.

7. Where does public education rank among your list of priorities? Do you feel that our current state of affairs is improving? Do you support alternative measures and the continued pursuit of charter schools for increasing school choice for parents?

My wife Molly and I are raising our three kids in this great city. Our son and daughters attend our local public school. So I recognize that their future and the future for all of Jacksonville's families is linked to a world-class education. That starts with our kids being safe getting to school. Once they're there, they must feel that they can be successful and be encouraged to do so. I will work with parents, teachers, and the school board to make this happen. We need to respect that each family knows what is best for their kids. I support continued expansion of STEM programs, and alignment of our school districts programs with our economic development initiatives so that our children can find great jobs here at home when they graduate.

8. What is your favorite aspect of the City of Jacksonville? What do you enjoy most about our city?

The people and the diversity of our neighborhoods. This campaign has reignited my passion for the people of this city. Our people are our greatest asset and the key to regaining our greatness. Their passion for where they live helps create a distinct charm and flair. Jacksonville is ready to explode with new, great ideas, but we need the support of a mayor who is more willing to get behind a shovel, than in front of a camera. I will make certain this city's people have a leader they can count on.

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Khan's Shipyards plan draws local praise

By Greg Walsh
Resident Community News

Urging city leaders to bring economic vitality into the city, Jaguars owner Shad Khan is proposing an expansive commercial and residential development of the Shipyards that would connect the Downtown area to EverBank Field.

Representatives of Iguana Investments, a development entity created by the Jacksonville Jaguars owner just for the Shipyards project, made a formal presentation to the Downtown Investment Authority about the plan that initially has no price tag or timeline.

However, there is a concept, presented in colorful architectural drawings, depicting a marina, hotels and restaurants, expanded river walk from Downtown to the stadium including a suspension bridge, park space and a permanent museum for the USS Charles F. Adams.

In his annual State of the Jaguars comments, the billionaire businessman stressed the importance of such a development on the 48-acre Shipyards, which also would include a team practice facility.

"The Shipyards would give downtown Jacksonville the kind of iconic identity that many downtown districts in the United States enjoy and we currently lack," Khan said. "But it doesn't work or make sense if it doesn't provide jobs, boost our economy and self-confidence, stabilize the future of the Jaguars franchise and improve our overall quality of life. Our proposal to partner with the City of Jacksonville on this project will achieve this and more."

If there's skepticism about whether the plan will ever become reality, it's based on the Shipyards' history of failed deals that's left the site essentially vacant since the 1990s. The most recent ended in 2009 when LandMar's plan for condos, a river walk and retail and commercial buildings died when its parent company filed for bankruptcy.

Describing his proposal as modern and urban, Khan said it would also be a walkable destination "that connects the Sports Complex with downtown Jacksonville, activates Bay Street, engages with Hogan's Creek Greenway and hosts activities throughout the year."

Khan said he is hopeful the project will move forward once it is presented to the DIA, saying "it is critical to the future of Jacksonville and the Jaguars. It is our hope the DIA shares our sense of urgency and resolve. The opportunity to change Jacksonville is here."

Reaction was generally positive from businesspeople and local elected officials.

Anita Vining, president of the San



Architectural images show what Jaguars' owner Shad Khan's ideas are for the Shipyards property. (Photo credit: Populous)

Marco Merchants Association, described herself as "overly excited about the Shipyards Development. Jacksonville is very lucky to have a person like Shad Khan who has great vision and obviously an extraordinary business man.

"That area is one of the premier spots in the city and offers amazing potential. The plan I saw unveiled by Khan appears to offer something for everyone and including drawing visitors who will eventually want to live here. Our city is beautiful and currently is screaming for venues on the St Johns River.

"His plan will take Jacksonville forward and could highlight Jacksonville as a top tier city. My hope is for our current city leaders and Economic Development Council to support his plan and help to push to the top of their agenda and work with him not against him."

District 14 Councilman Jim Love called Khan's plan "very unique, very visionary."

"What I really like about it is it has a lot of docking and uses the river more than other plans before," said Love, who is chairman of the City Council's Waterways Commission.

While stressing the plans are only conceptual, Love acknowledges that Khan could be the person to finally make a developed Shipyards a reality.

"I believe in dreaming big and obviously Shad Khan has done that."

Including the USS Adams in the proposal is also a great idea, Love said. "You have an extremely valuable piece of land. It just makes sense. It's a wedding made in heaven...and with developers Peter Rummell and Mike Balanky's 'Healthy Town' across the river and going up simultaneously, now you have synergy. I am really excited about the next four years. I think Jacksonville is a good city and we're on verge of being a great city."

Dave Auchter, executive vice president of NAI Hallmark Partners, which is building 220 Riverside and Unity Plaza

in Brooklyn, said "Shad Khan seems to start with a goal in mind and then sets his course. Most credible football pundits respect what he is doing to build a sustainable, winning NFL franchise. I expect he will take the same approach to the Shipyards. And the goal is extraordinary. While the course ahead is certainly complex, I can't see why anyone would doubt Shad's success."

District 5 Council Member Lori Boyer said she's excited to see someone taking an interest in the Shipyards property.

"I am certainly interested in hearing about their concept and also hearing about the expected participation of the city," Boyer said.

From what she's hearing, Boyer said she's got "a little concern" about a proposed amphitheater because of past noise complaints from residents on the other side of the St. Johns River. Also, she wondered whether the Jaguars' practice

fields would be open to the public for other events.

But overall, Khan's proposal could benefit Downtown, she said. "We keep hearing Downtown is just on the brink of coming back. Clearly Brooklyn has happened, that is real, and the continued impetus is for Downtown to happen.

"If it does happen that would be a game-changer, no question about it."

Mayor Alvin Brown said, "I think it's going to be successful for a number of reasons. One, you have a great visionary leader in Shad Khan. As a mayor, it's my top priority. I believe in Downtown, and there's a drive to make sure we have the best Downtown. I think that's what's going to happen."

The mayor also has noted that the city will conduct a process following the law, which requires the city to advertise for other proposals for at least 30 days if the City moves forward.



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Edgewood Bakery narrowly avoids closing

Trial over ownership tentatively set for March 23

By Greg Walsh
Resident Community News

Insolvent and barely limping along on its daily receipts, the Edgewood Bakery narrowly avoided being closed in February over unpaid insurance premiums until a last-minute solution was found.

But Tom and Carol Rykalsky, who bought the bakery in June 2014, say they will continue to fight for the 47-year-old Murray Hill institution they bought less than a year ago with the help of Jacksonville Jaguars owner Shad Khan's Stache Investments, even though they are hundreds of thousands of dollars in debt.

"We feel that Stache is completely willing to shut the doors of Edgewood Bakery unless we turn over control," Carol Rykalsky said. "We are not willing to see this long standing, well-loved establishment close like this."

And close it nearly did. What began Feb. 20 as a progress hearing before Judge James Daniel turned into a

potentially door-closing situation when it was learned the bakery had only days to pay a \$12,000 liability and casualty insurance premium or the policy would be cancelled. The judge was told that without insurance the business should not stay open.

The closure was avoided only after Tom Rykalsky talked with the insurance carrier and convinced them to cut the payment in half.

During a day that saw two hearings before Judge Daniel, the bakery's appointed receiver, accountant James L. Meeks Jr., testified the Rykalskys had only about \$9,000 available after meeting payroll and couldn't pay the premium. Meeks testified it would take weeks, if not months, to find a new insurance provider if the current policy was allowed to lapse.

Although closing the bakery was an option, Daniel said he was reluctant to take that action unless absolutely necessary because it would mean lost jobs and a longtime business

shuttered. The judge urged both sides to meet after the morning hearing and discuss options, including drawing up a list of bakery assets that could be sold to raise the additional \$3,000 to meet the premium.

However, when the two sides returned in the afternoon, attorney Lanny Russell, representing Meeks, announced the insurance carrier had agreed to drop the immediate bill to about \$6,000, keeping the policies in effect until April 2.

"It appears we have dodged an initial bullet," Daniel said.

The April date is significant because Judge Daniel tentatively set March 23 as the date for a trial being sought by the Rykalskys.

"We have a business that's been open for more than 40 years," Daniel said. "I would like to keep this afloat long enough so I can have a trial, and I can fast track this trial. It's a very narrow issue... It's simply who owns this, who has 50 percent plus one."

It was clear from the hearings that Stache Investments is done giving the Rykalskys money. When pressed by the judge on whether Stache Investments would be willing to pay the insurance premium, attorney Williams Adams said Stache had already given the couple \$2.4 million to buy the bakery, pay off previous debt and operate the bakery until Stache suspended its financial support in November.

"What we're talking about here is paying \$12,000 in order to preserve more than \$12,000," Daniel said.

Adams responded that Stache feels "the hole that's been dug here is too deep to crawl out of."

The Rykalskys attorney, Jack Webb, introduced financial records showing Stache Investments had paid the liability insurance through November as well as other operating costs.

"Obviously if you cut off a source of funds it creates cash flow issues," Webb said. "That is what we're dealing with here today. We would

ask that Stache be required to pay the \$12,000 for insurance as prior practice would show was the case and to comply with spirit of the receivership to supply working capital in the short-term to get us through this situation."

Adams responded the prior insurance premiums were paid from an account for U.S. Culinary & Beverage Co., not Stache.

"Stache certainly doesn't like being in this untenable situation but this is where we are," said Adams, who later noted the Rykalskys "assumed a company that was - give or take six or eight months - cash flow positive to the tune of \$100,000 and in a year or so finds itself in an insolvent situation."

Stache Investments loaned the Rykalskys \$800,000 in June 2014 to buy the bakery and pay off lingering costs related to their company, U.S. Culinary & Beverage. In October, Stache notified the Rykalskys they had violated the terms of the purchase agreement and issued termination notices to them and all employees.

The Rykalskys ignored the notice, prompting Stache to file suit in December. Stache Investments urged the court to immediately appoint a receiver while the ownership issue was resolved; the Rykalskys and their partner, Mike Zimmerman, countersued, saying they never agreed to give Stache Investments majority ownership.

Bills will continue to mount for the bakery and U.S. Culinary & Beverage. Meeks testified the bakery is insolvent, with a negative working capital of \$150,000, trade debt of at least \$200,000 and unpaid bills for \$4,000 (utilities), \$5,000 (sales tax) and \$36,000 (payroll taxes).

Meeks testified he would need at least \$30,000 to keep the bakery open through March 31, and he warned that more creditors, including the Internal Revenue Service, could descend on the bakery in coming weeks as more bills come due.

City seeks input about new website

The City of Jacksonville wants your comments about its new website design and the site's overall functionality.

Launched in late February, www.beta.coj.net has a fresh design, streamlined navigation and a variety of new features that make it more user friendly for computers, tablets and mobile devices.

The current city site, www.coj.net, remains in operation while the beta site undergoes testing and public review. Visitors to beta.coj.net can use the pages as they normally would on the current site to help test the new site's functionality.

Comments about the new test site should be emailed to betafeedback@coj.net. As a test site, some information on beta.coj.net may have inaccuracies or errors. Users seeking the most up-to-date content are encouraged to

refer to the existing city website, www.coj.net.

The homepage includes primary search categories of government, living, business, visitors, online services and transparency, which is designed to give visitors more access to government events and meetings.

"We created the transparency page to deliver public records and open government information," said David DeCamp, Brown's director of communications.

In November, the Center for Digital Government ranked Jacksonville first in Florida and third nationally on its "Digital Cities" list for the effective use of technology to enhance city operations. In March 2014, the First Amendment Foundation rated it as the most transparent city website for public records in Florida.



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Rummell speaks on concept, model for future

By Greg Walsh
Resident Community News

Developers Peter Rummell and Michael Balanky are continuing their promotional efforts for “Healthy Town,” the planned residential and retail development they want to bring to the Southbank.

Speaking at the Meninak Club in February, Rummell made it clear what the \$400 million project of residential living and retail space on the former JEA Southside Generating Plant is – and isn’t.

“I don’t want it to become senior living,” Rummell said during a 20-minute speech and video presentation. “I want it to be a place where I could be comfortable living but also a place where my children could be comfortable living.”

It’s also clear the developers want to address concerns Healthy Town won’t have a “strange vibe that where you all are going to think if you don’t eat granola at 7 in the morning and do yoga at 7:30 that you don’t fit in.

“It’s going to be a place that is normal and lets you live a life better than you do now,” Rummell said.

JEA board members voted in January to finalize the contract with Rummell and Balanky’s company, Elements Development of Jacksonville. The contract gives them one year to get city approval for their plans for the 28-acre site. Since then, Rummell has spoken to several groups about the project.

During his speech to Meninak members, Rummell spent as much time talking about what the project won’t be. For example he assured the audience of more than 50 businessmen, attorneys and other professionals that Healthy Town is only a “descriptor.”

Elements is working with a local marketing company to create a contest



where the public can suggest names for the development.

Specifics about the project are limited, Rummell said, because work on the site’s master plan is still being finalized. However, he did give a few hints about what Elements has in mind, explaining “the thing that is going to make a difference is the software.”

“All will have access to the software and they can customize their life in the way they want to,” he said.

Again using the “is-isn’t” analogy, Rummell said Healthy Town won’t simply have “wider jogging trails or cleaner air.” And it won’t be a typical large housing development with a golf course that loses money. “If you want one of them there are hundreds across the country that are half full,” he said. “Nobody is building them anymore ... That’s not the future.”

A short video was shown before Rummell, a former Disney Imagineering and St. Joe Co. CEO, spoke. The video

described the development as having many opportunities for “unintentional exercise” and that “stairs will be everywhere.”

When completed, Healthy Town will have about 1,000 housing units and nearly 200,000 square feet of commercial space, including a large park and a marina with restaurants, but no large department stores, he said.

With experience developing real estate projects around the world, Rummell makes it clear Healthy Town is going to blaze a new trail.

“This is a big idea. If, after it opens, you get there and say ‘Gee, I have been to this before’ then we have failed. This is something new and different.”

The project, he said, is an outgrowth of his work as worldwide chairman of the Urban Land Institute, a large real estate organization that adopted Rummell’s proposal to encourage building healthy places as part of its two-year theme.

As a result, Healthy Town is getting worldwide interest. “This is not a little idea; this is not a Jacksonville idea. There are ideas coming in from all around the world...”

With an estimated three-quarters of the world’s population living in cities within 25 years, developers are facing a new challenge, he said.

“All you have to do is create an environment that is fun to live and easy to do that. I am convinced that Jacksonville is ready for that and that we can start that idea here. We are excited about it. We think we have a good idea, we have a magnificent site and we are now ready to go.”

He also encouraged the audience to think of ways Jacksonville can tap into a lucrative unused resource – successful seniors who snowbird to Ponte Vedra Beach and Amelia Island. Finding a way to do that could give Jacksonville the best of Naples’ senior living and the youthful feel of an Austin, Texas, he said.

“Think about the wisdom and Rolodexes and money that comes to Ponte Vedra and Amelia on a part time basis. It is a resource that is available for the tapping; it is as valuable as any other energy source we could find,” he said.

The 69-year-old Rummell, a co-creator of OneSpark, wasn’t shy about challenging audience members to think big as well. While OneSpark may target young entrepreneurs, there needs to be ways to link them with “65-year-olds with experience, contacts and cash.”

“How do you combine the two? That is something we are going to try and adapt to Healthy Town.”

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Entrepreneur taking ideas for 5 Points Five & Dime

By Greg Walsh
Resident Community News

If you've been contemplating a business in bustling 5 Points but haven't found the right venue, the former Fuel Coffeehouse building has a new owner looking for fresh ideas.

Steve Williams, CEO at family-owned Harbinger Sign, last month finalized the purchase of the former Fuel Coffeehouse at 1037 Park St. If all goes according to plan, a two-story building that's passed all recent city inspections and is capable of having a rooftop bar will be offering lease opportunities to aspiring businesses.

Williams' friend and Harbinger chief strategist Jon Bosworth said Williams wants interested businesses – or anyone with fresh ideas – to contact him.

"He wants to hear from people about what they think would work there," Bosworth said. "You never know what ideas are looking out there that haven't been flushed out... He wants to find out what cool ideas locals have (for the building)."

Built in 1938 as a Woolworth & Co. store, the structure later became Peterson's Five & Dime before it closed in the 1990s. Fuel operated in the building until closing in 2010 and leaving it vacant.

Issues with asbestos have been resolved and the building is good to go, Bosworth said.

"Steve never lacks for ideas," Bosworth said, "but he wants to make sure he has vetted ideas that people have for the building. He is looking



Design by Harbinger Innovation Group

for partners with skill sets that would complement his skills."

Generally, Williams sees the first floor being "mixed use" that could involve a restaurant, Bosworth said. Williams has spoken to restaurateurs from Atlanta and Charleston, S.C., as well as St. Augustine and Jacksonville, some of whom have already made formal business proposals.

During a recent trip to Atlanta, Williams toured several restaurants operations he felt might be a good fit for the building.

"We wanted to find inspiration," said Bosworth, who also went along on the trip that was officially for an art show. "We wanted to talk to those people and get a cool concept to expand into Jacksonville."

At least one 5 Points business owner says she's excited about Williams

purchasing the building and can't wait to see what he has planned.

"I think it's fantastic," said Gunnell Humphreys, owner of Edge City and a fixture in the Riverside business community for nearly 40 years. "Steve Williams is one of these wonderfully creative people. He has solid business experience behind him...I can't think of a better situation."

She called Williams' plans "fitting for Riverside" and recalled that he once owned an art gallery in Park Street. "If you look at what he's posting on Facebook it's very interesting," she said.

Matthew Clark of Prime Realty who was involved in the property transaction says the former owner, Patricia Branch of Richmond, Va., feels the building is in good hands.

"The current owner is glad to

see it change hands and believes in his vision," Clark said. "It's going to be something special in the neighborhood."

Williams isn't new to Riverside, having operated Pedestrian Art Gallery on Park Street until about 10 years ago. Bosworth believes that connection will give him a special perspective on what business will best enhance 5 Points.

"He wants to make it something special," Bosworth said of Williams, who also owns the Florida Mining Gallery. "He's learning as much as he can about business proposals and financing packages so he can assess what he can do to contribute to the neighborhood."

Williams has no opening date in mind. For those wanting more information or to monitor the projects progress, visit www.petersons5-10.com.



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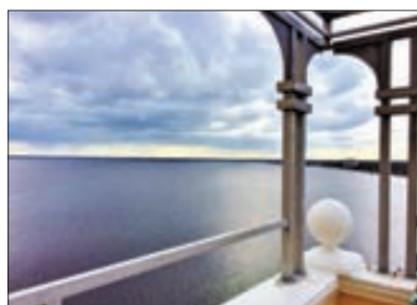
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Community comes out for first Boone Park cleanup



Dina and Elena Ferri

Neighbors of all ages turned out to spruce up Boone Park South, with support from Greenscape of Jacksonville Inc., the JEA, Riverside Avondale Preservation, the City of Jacksonville, the University of Florida IFAS, and the Florida Forest Service. Volunteers picked up branches, cleared weeds, trimmed shrubs and planted 51 trees and bushes of varying types and sizes on 10 acres of canopied park between Herschel Street and St. John's Avenue.

Cindy Guy trims back shrubs and bushes on Boone Park South Cleanup Day.



Peggy Bryan wields clippers in an attack on overgrown shrubs.



Sue Sofia puts "oomph" into hole digging for a new tree in Boone Park.



Jim Love plants a small tree in Boone Park.



Forester Larry Figart, Duval County Extension Office, and Mary Coleman get ready to put a new tree in the ground.



Bernie Contreras battles overgrowth.



Doug Guy and John Moscarillo dig a hole for a new tree in Boone Park.



Kim Clontz, Zoey Clontz, Nancy Chabot, Jacob Hane, Katy Hatfield, Eileen Huckabay



Carmen Godwin with Jetti and River



Lynn Richards and Carmen Godwin deliver hot coffee to the volunteers cleaning Boone Park.

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Pros and cons for annual Luminaria Night

In response to a recent letter about one resident's unhappy experience with Luminaria Night, other readers shared their thoughts, pro and con, along with some thoughtful suggestions for future events in Avondale. Since space does not permit us to print every letter in its entirety, we have provided excerpts from each letter submitted.

Those of us that enjoy these activities do understand that there are some things that need to be addressed. Perhaps we set some ground rules. Throwing hard candy, for example, is just anomalous to me and should be stopped. Throwing marshmallows is harmless and the kids love it. However, maybe standards of only throwing "Florida snowballs" at other trailers, or only at other "armed" people.

Donovan Keith Crichton

Why don't we stand up to the few and stop the nonsense? Here's an idea, how about the police actually policing right from wrong and issuing tickets or arresting people for any device that has projectile capabilities that can cause damage to persons or properties.

However, I think the event when performed properly is an amazing event that is fun and enjoyable for all and is one of the last things I've seen where people walk and ride by and speak and say hello and wish you a Merry Christmas. Wow, is that awesome or what! It's getting to the point where no one even wants to acknowledge the true meaning of Christmas.

Let's not quit, let's get together and find a way to police and get rid of the bad elements and keep a wonderful event alive.

Terry Kelly

I have lived in Avondale since 1984 and had enjoyed Luminaria for many years. About 5 years ago I barely missed being hit by an empty beer bottle that was

thrown from one of those wagons that come to our neighborhood.

I live on St. Johns Ave. which, as you know, is one of the main streets driven by all these out-of-our-neighborhood folks. I would love for them all to come back the next morning and see what a mess they have left behind. It is a total shame that something so beautiful has been ruined mainly by people who do not live in our area. I would love for people to come to our neighborhood and just play their Christmas music and quietly enjoy this occasion. This is not Mardi Gras, for goodness sakes.

I agree with Mr. Ingle that it is time for RAP to find another worthwhile fundraiser. Luminaria is no longer welcome in this neighborhood.

Pat Teems

This was similar to my experience from Dec. 2013. My wife, my granddaughter and I were riding down St. Johns Ave. and approached the St. Johns Ave. shopping center and experienced a massive number of shots from marshmallow guns from both sides of the street as we drove toward the shopping center. It also appeared as though some of the large trucks carrying young people had these PVC guns and were firing at the cars that they came across during the evening. I stated to my wife and granddaughter that we would no longer attempt to participate in the "Luminaria evening" as it was becoming unmanageable and detracting from the enjoyment of the seasonable occasion. This year we enjoyed

our local street Avondale luminaria occasion but it seems as a few are spoiling the occasion for the community.

Ed Fleming

I must say I was shocked when we turned off Greenwood Ave. and onto St Johns Ave. Not only was it gridlock (which I completely understand), but the things being thrown at our Tahoe...and SHOT at us was too much! When I first saw a couple young men lean out their windows and take aim, I was grabbing my weapon too. However, I don't carry a "toy." It was only because of some excellent training that I didn't wind up shooting them both. We had to have the thing detailed inside and out. I had stuff in my hair. The interior was a mess. I believe the law states "projectiles" being thrown, or shot...is illegal. What worries me is when someone unfamiliar with this type of "celebrating" comes for a visit...and they haven't been afforded any training. Add a couple cocktails to the mix and we have a dead kid. We can and must do better.

Hans E. Huntsinger

Decades ago, before the explosion of attendees, luminary was a quiet, beautiful, and almost a reverent event. After the crowd (which was tiny compared to today) died down, Andy and I would go back out about 8:00-8:30 and drive in quiet as we looked in awe at the thousands of lights on the deserted streets.

Today, armed with marshmallow guns and bags of marshmallows, we now stand on the sidelines and join in the celebration!

Is it the same event 5, 10, 15 years ago? No! But, things change! Enjoy the "Mardi Gras" atmosphere! RAP or some other group should organize a "real parade", charge money (fundraiser?) then give out awards to the best floats! Maybe do that Saturday night and luminary on Sunday!

So, grab a marshmallow gun (I bought mine at Dillard's) and have fun!

Susan Baker

It is time to retire Luminaria and find another RAP fundraiser. What used to be an elegant and beautiful showcase of our historic district in celebration of the holiday season has deteriorated into yet another party op.

Not only could you not see the luminaries, disembarking folks were actively tripping over the lit bags and their children were kicking and stomping on them "for fun." I watched in horror as flaming bags rolled off the curbs and beside and underneath the parked cars.

It's a miracle no car caught on fire. (Local residents deliberately move their cars off the street in support of the event.)

So next year our house will follow the suit of others on our block and "go dark." For us, Luminaria is dead. Let it rest in peace.

Sue Kenaston

Over the years, the magic of luminaria has seen its highs and lows while the true symbolism of Luminaria has dimmed. Luminaries, in ancient times, were meant to light the way for the Christ Child. Littering in any sense desecrates this beautiful night. Leaving cars on the street is both ugly and distracting. We do not need to hand out light sticks or drive around. We do not need to throw candy. We do not need outsiders being disrespectful of this beautiful tradition. No one in this part of town...Avondale...has room for a flatbed trailer. They are coming from outside our neighborhood.

There is nothing wrong with Luminaria; it simply needs to be tweaked. I feel that this event should be a non-vehicular one. St. John's Avenue should be barricaded for foot or horse drawn traffic only.

The Christmas in Avondale celebration operates very well with barricades. Let's take back the beauty of Luminaria by persuading the outsiders to enjoy the event with us and walk.

Jo Miller

Several years ago, I too wrote an editorial to the Florida Times-Union describing my sadness and regret that such a once beautiful and elegant event had become an out of hand and dangerous travesty. I noted the enormous quantity of candy, wrappers, and paper lying along the roads and embedded in the bordering lawns and I personally witnessed birds with deadly wrappers in their beaks. I implored the public to assume personal responsibility and RAP to make efforts to curtail an activity that was trashing the very same historic areas of town that they had a mission to protect.

However, year after year, Luminaria continues to be ruined: a yearly garbage fest and a danger to pedestrians that infects neighborhoods and puts a blight on the holidays. As for me, I started boycotting Luminaria after writing my editorial years ago and have done so ever since. Even though my home is on the historic path, there is a dark space, instead of Luminaria bags, along my property line.

Julie Banks



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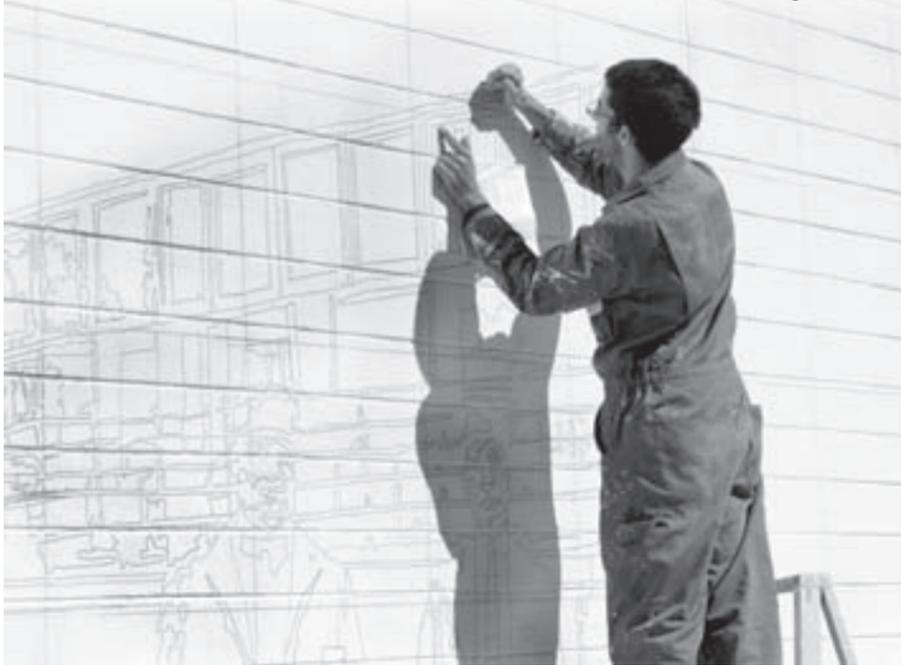
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Streetscape infused by local artist in Brooklyn



A Bishop Kenny High School graduate now has his biggest work of art on display for thousands of motorists passing daily on Riverside Avenue.

David Nackashi, a 2005 BK graduate who later attended the University of North Florida, was selected by Regency Centers to paint the side of the Corner Bakery building in the Brooklyn Station shopping center. The painting depicts an “old photo” of a Riverside trolley as

it would have appeared around 1915.

“I gave a low rate because I wanted the job so much,” said Nackashi, 28. “I was born in Jacksonville and love it here.”

Nackashi said he was recommended for the job by well-known Florida artist Jim Draper, who was one of Nackashi’s UNF art instructors.

“He put me in for it,” Nackashi said. “I really appreciate it. It’s going to be great.”

Water taxi service is continuing – for now

By Greg Walsh
Resident Community News

The Lakeshore-based operator of the city’s Downtown water taxi is committed to continuing the service but believes changes need to be made to increase daily ridership and make it financially sustainable.

“I don’t think a gap in service would be good for anyone,” said Heather Surface, a partner in Lakeshore Marine, the company that operates the water taxi. “That’s one of the things that hurt the water taxi in the past...the break in service.”

The company signed a six-month agreement in August to operate the 98- and 50-passenger boats, with the hope that a long-term agreement could be reached. The short-term agreement ended in mid-February with no resolution but the city extended the agreement with Lakeshore Marine temporarily as the two sides continue to meet.

Ridership during big events such as Jaguars football games is good, Surface said. However, it falls off to only a handful of riders during week days. Since 2012, ridership has fallen by 40 percent, she said.

“If there’s no demand we’re trying to determine the cause,” she said. “I believe it’s a combination of things.”

City officials are still determining where the water taxi will pick up on the Southbank. Currently passengers, who pay \$7 roundtrip or \$4 one-way, are picked up at Friendship Fountain and taken to the Jacksonville Landing.

On one particular day there had only been five riders by 1:30 p.m., Surface said. However, under its contract with the city Lakeshore Marine must pay two crew members to be on duty 11 hours a day, seven days a week. Surface noted the previous operators were paid an annual fee in addition to receiving a portion of

the rider fees.

When taking into consideration that Lakeshore Marine pays all operating costs as well as providing liability insurance, the current agreement is unsustainable, she said.

“People don’t realize this is not funded by taxpayers, it’s funded by the private operator and we pay a portion of the (rider) fees to the city,” she said.

Finding new ways to draw riders is the focus of ongoing discussions with the city, Surface said. Among those uses could be promoting ecotourism excursions and providing longer trips to destinations such as the Jacksonville Zoo.

There also needs to be discussions about the types of watercraft being used, including whether higher capacity boats with bigger motors might be more useful, she said. The city is currently leasing the two boats from Jacksonville businessman Harry Frisch, who bought them after the former water taxi operator suspended its service and removed its boats.

In an effort to find new ideas, the Jacksonville Transportation Authority is joining the brainstorming to provide technical expertise with ridership issues, said Pam Roman, spokesperson for the city’s Parks & Recreation Department.

“We’re excited to work with JTA and other groups to improve this service so residents and visitors alike can experience Downtown from the St. John’s River,” Roman said.

With more than three decades of operation in Jacksonville, Lakeshore Marine wants the city to have a water taxi, Surface said.

“I think the taxi is important. It’s important to tourism and to the personality of the city, and people say they enjoy the taxi,” she said. “If it’s important, then they need to support it, and if not then they need to let us know how we can encourage them to ride it.”

Blood drive to make dreams come true

Donating one pint of blood during March has a double impact. Each donation at The Blood Alliance Bloodmobile helps save up to three lives and gives the gift of a dream to two children.

The Blood Alliance will donate \$1 to Dreams Come True to help Katie Steffens, 15, experience Disney World and its theme parks and to take 12-year-old Jaquan Gray on a Disney Cruise. Steffens was diagnosed with a brain tumor and is blind; Gray battles

osteosarcoma, cancer of the bone.

This promotion only involves blood drives and does not include donor centers. TBA is additionally donating \$5 for every 50 HERO Rewards Points donated back by donors through its Hero Rewards Store (at www.igiveblood.com) during March. To make an appointment to donate visit: www.igiveblood.com/PINT, use TBA’s free Apple and Android app at: “iDon8” or call The Blood Alliance at: 888-99-TBA-HERO (888.998.2243).

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Former library charging toward June grand opening

Staff of Jessie Ball duPont Center may move in next month

By Greg Walsh
Resident Community News

There's an excitement in Mary Kress Littlepage's voice as she talks about renovations that will turn the iconic Haydon Burns Library into a philanthropic and nonprofit collective named the Jessie Ball duPont Center.

"It's going to be great," said Littlepage, spokesperson for the Jessie Ball duPont Fund. "We remain on schedule."

As those who follow nonprofit activities in Jacksonville know, the Fund purchased the 50-year-old library building in 2013 for \$3 million and began a \$20 million renovation project a year later.

A grand opening of the 80,000-square-foot building, which has been vacant since 2005, is tentatively scheduled for June.

Littlepage said in mid-February the renovations should be done in April – the same month the Fund staff plans to move in – assuming final city inspections find no issues and occupancy permits are issued.

Designed by famed architect Taylor Hardwick, the building remains in good shape overall, she said. "Of course we had to replace the wiring and plumbing but you would expect that of a building this age," she said.

"You expect a lot of surprises when you start a project like this but we only found one major problem and it's been dealt with," Littlepage said. "We're really past that stage now."

Many have commented on the building's unique "fins" that extrude outward but those structures actually contribute to its overall stability and provide sun and wind protection. "If there is a Cat 5 [hurricane] you want to be in the Haydon Burns Library," Littlepage said. "It is built like a tank!"

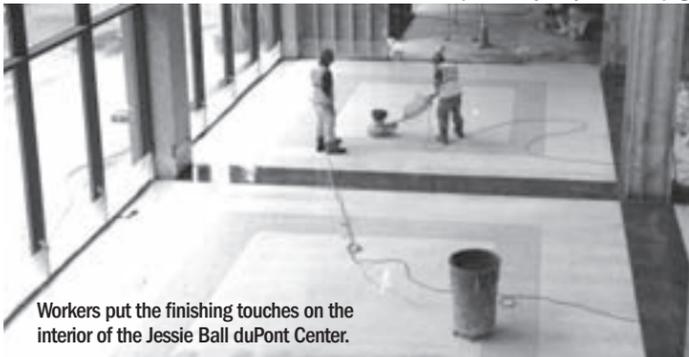
One of the most time-consuming parts of the renovation project was installing unique communications capabilities, which Littlepage describes as Internet access that is "extremely fast, reliable and redundant."

"This will be the most technologically advanced building in downtown



A groundbreaking ceremony in January 2014 featured from left: City Council President Bill Gulliford; owner's representative Jack Burnell; former Jessie Ball duPont Fund trustee Audrey Moran; Jessie Ball duPont Fund President Sherry Magill; and Will Morris, architect, KBJ

Photos provided by Mary Kress Littlepage



Workers put the finishing touches on the interior of the Jessie Ball duPont Center.

Jacksonville," Littlepage said. "We are working with some remarkable partners to make that happen."

Without providing specifics of specialized software being installed, Littlepage said the challenge was being able to provide computer security and maintain "high privacy thresholds." She noted each nonprofit must protect its sensitive donor information, while at the same time be able to use computers in shared spaces, such as conference or board rooms.

She noted the building's conference center will be available for the public to rent but located in a building full of privacy-sensitive nonprofits.

"We wanted to build a space where people could live in the community but keep their

own identity," she said. "The challenge was providing common space while providing connection to private intranet."

Capable of holding up to 20 nonprofits, the building's second floor is fully leased and one tenant is already signed for downstairs, she said. About six nonprofits will begin moving into the building in June, with about six more following over the next several months as leases on their current locations expire.

Nonprofits sharing space is not new in the United States; all of them are looking for opportunities to collaborate and share costs so they can put more money into their programs, she said. More than 250 people will work in the building when it's fully occupied.

The Nonprofit Center of Northeast Florida's CEO Rena Coughlin is one of those very excited about moving downtown. In comments to those attending her organization's annual awards banquet at Friday Musicale, Coughlin announced next year's annual awards would be held at the Jessie Ball duPont Center.

Calling the center's opening a "new opportunity," Coughlin said the opening is "on the country's radar and a huge symbol of success."

"It isn't just about the tenants. The Jessie Ball duPont Center is offering a place for nonprofits to thrive and collaborate," she said.

Nonprofit Center lauds five programs

Five nonprofits making substantial contributions to Jacksonville's quality of life in key areas are the recipients of the Nonprofit Center of Northeast Florida's 2015 Local Focus Lasting Impact Awards.

The name of the award is followed by the recipient's name:

Change Agent: Women's Center of Jacksonville – For working to find funding and other collaborative partners in order to maintain the Sexual Assault Forensic Exam project, which services adult victims in three counties.

Collective Power: Operation New Hope – For creating a program to reduce generational recidivism rates in children of incarcerated and ex-offender parents.

Cross Sector Collaboration: I.M. Sulzbacher Center – For its Chronically Homeless Offender Project to address ways to stop repeated arrests of chronically homeless persons.

Grassroots: Learn to Read – For its continuing efforts to remain open after losing its key funding sources and rebounding to the point where it has served more than 400 adults with learning to read in 2013.

Innovative Thinking: Jacksonville Humane Society – For its No Kill Duval Partnership, which Animal Care & Protective Services and First Coast No More Homeless Pets to find homes for 90 percent of shelter animals.

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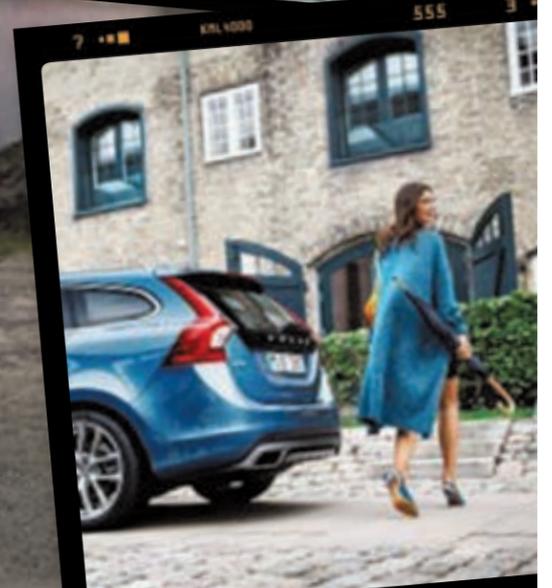
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Food trucks: Some moving to permanent spots, others enjoy the mobility

By Greg Walsh
Resident Community News

To Anthony Hashem it's a natural progression – start out with a food truck, build the brand for his tasty edible offerings by driving to wherever he can find hungry diners and then transition to a brick and mortar location where his now loyal customers can come any day of the week.

For the Bishop Kenny High School graduate who grew up working in his family's small restaurant on Beach Boulevard, the food truck gave him a chance to gradually develop his idea of "gourmet grilled cheese."

The move to a permanent spot happened much quicker.

"It was dictated by the (success of the) business," Hashem said while sitting near his colorfully decorated truck. "I had a five-year plan to get a restaurant but ended up signing a lease just a year and a half in. It was just out of necessity."

Now that his food truck, Happy Grilled Cheese, is doing well he's moving into 5 Points with hopes the demand for grilled cheese only increases. Others who began with a food truck and made the same transition, such as Corner Taco owner Christopher Dickerson, say Hashem is making the right choice and will benefit. But some food truck operators say moving each day is part of the allure and they don't plan to leave their kitchens on wheels to stay in one place.

It's an interesting dilemma that's just playing out for Jacksonville restaurateurs who began on four wheels.

A restaurant background

Hashem knows quite a bit about working in a traditional restaurant. His father, uncle and grandmother operated Desert Sands sandwich shop in St. Nicholas for 35 years.

Serving traditional Lebanese American style food including tabouleh and pita sandwiches for breakfast and lunch, the business gave Hashem a chance to see how running a restaurant becomes a way of life.



Anthony Hashem, owner of Happy Grilled Cheese

"I would get dropped off here after school instead of home. I did all my homework on the cutting board in the backroom next to the slicer," said Hashem, whose grandmother always seemed to pick him for chores. "I never realized she was trying to teach me, I guess, about the business."

But there was another influence, though, having just as much impact on how he thought about food preparation. During summer trips to Austin, Texas with family Hashem often stopped at that city's many food trucks.

"I grew up every summer eating at food trucks in Austin but knowing they were illegal in Jacksonville," he said.

Officially, they weren't illegal here, just forbidden from operating within one mile of an established restaurant. However, since the city dropped that restriction to 300 feet about three years ago (and to 50 feet in 2014), there's been a proliferation of food trucks.

Currently there are more than 70 food trucks operating locally.

"I was ready, and as soon as they legalized food trucks I had three business plans waiting. The grilled cheese concept was the first of the three," he said. "I walked out of a corporate job with a cellphone carrier and was ready to go."

In late February, Hashem was putting the finishing touches on renovations to Happy Grilled Cheese at 1029 Park St. The 2,300-square-foot restaurant will have outdoor dining areas in front and back and serve beer and wine.

As for the food truck, it will keep rolling even after the restaurant opens.

"I am excited to keep the food truck going. One of the good things about the restaurant is the kind of product we can put in the food truck, specials we can put on, the type of ingredients we can use.

"It is a 24-foot rolling billboard is the way I look at it. I am definitely going to keep it on the street."

Corner Taco transition

Corner Taco is about one year ahead of Happy Grilled Cheese in its move to opening a storefront in Riverside. In Dickerson's case, he started out with a small stand in a Neptune Beach bar before moving to a food truck in 2012.

The truck was a way to "get in front of people who are more ingredient conscious," he said.

These days, there's no negative stigma connected to a food truck, unlike in years past where they may have been seen as having poor quality or less-than-perfect sanitary conditions.

"Food trucks are much more high class now. There are some cooks who have worked in some very nice places now doing food trucks. They want to have fun cooking and the trucks give them the opportunity to do that," Dickerson said.

The food truck operators also are passionate about their product, said Dickerson, a Riverside resident. "It's a good way to test your label in different markets and find out how it does. 5 Points is different than Riverside and Riverside is different from Downtown. Then you can pick which (location) is best for you."

Dickerson credits the local craft beer operations Intuition Ale Works, Bold City and others for launching the food truck explosion here. "I really believe the food movement is following the local beer crafters. They got things going here in Jacksonville and the food movement is following."

As for how to pick a permanent spot, Dickerson has some advice: Always keep your eyes open for potential sites.

"You're never going to find the perfect spot," he said. "Find one that fits that your needs in an area that's just starting to grow and go for it. If

you wait until you find the perfect neighborhood it will be too expensive to move in there."

In Corner Taco's case, the 1965 Airstream trailer that served the hand-made tortillas and all natural ingredients for more than two years is used mainly for special events, such as The Players Championship, or catering events.

"We don't do the truck as much as we once did. It's a lot of work to get both it and the restaurant prepared," he said.

Sticking with food truck

If there's one thing Jennifer Kline knows it's that her food truck, Up in Smoke BBQ, will keep rolling every day.

"We're going to stick with the food truck," Kline said when asked if she and partner Tom Wilbers will open a restaurant. "I love that we can move every day; I love the diversity of a food truck."

Wilbers operated two brick and mortar restaurants in Georgia several years ago and has no interest in going back. Now he's so convinced that food trucks are the hot trend he plans to build and sell them to food entrepreneurs.

"We will have the first 'green' food truck in Jacksonville next month – no generator," Kline said.

Up in Smoke BBQ is one of the oldest trucks operating in the city and stays busy doing special events, going to the Riverside Arts Market and seeking out parking spots to connect with new customers.

"It's like a puzzle every day, a challenge," she said. "We love the food truck scene. Every truck has its own niche."

Grilled cheese in Riverside

Hashem sees it differently. In his mind, right now there's no better place to open a restaurant than Riverside right near his good friend Chris Dickerson at Corner Taco.

"I'm glad to be in the 5 Points neighborhood. It's always been a cool neighborhood, it's been so many things but it's always been unique. Whether it was kind of cool, whether it was the grunge, hard rock kind of feel, the punk rock '80s, to now it is doggie boutiques and gourmet grilled cheese. It's crazy, but it's always been a hotbed for something fresh."

And if the Happy Grill Cheese food truck ever does get parked, something else will replace it.

"There will be more and more food trucks. The competition is going to get better and better. There's going to be a lot of trucks fighting for the (parking) spots," Hashem said. "Growth is good but it's up to us to keep it going forward and keep it fresh."



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Downtown becoming hub for nonprofits

Cathedral Arts Project makes the move

By Kate A. Hallock
Resident Community News

While many area nonprofit organizations are eagerly anticipating a late spring/early summer move into the newly renovated Jessie Ball duPont Center in downtown Jacksonville, one nonprofit is already luxuriating in its new digs on Laura Street.

The Cathedral Arts Project, which formerly had office space off Salisbury Road, made a move to the Elks Building, 207 N. Laura St., in mid-January, and is the only nonprofit in residence there. Although CAP did consider the duPont Center, the Elks Building tugged at the heart.

“When this opportunity came along for us, we just couldn’t pass it up. As soon as we toured the space in the Elks Building, with its views of Laura Street from the gorgeous balcony and its proximity to Hemming Park, I knew we had found our permanent home,” said the Rev. Kimberly

Hyatt, CAP president and CEO. “This move puts us right in the heart of the city’s cultural center, which will allow us to facilitate the meetings and serendipitous encounters that can move us all closer to our shared vision for every child in our community to have access to an arts-rich education.”

Hyatt noted that the square footage of the new office space – approximately 7,800 sq. ft. – is more than double the size of the Cathedral Arts Project’s previous office, with space for administrative offices, faculty meeting space, a large conference room and two galleries.

“One gallery will feature student artwork, and one will display artwork from Jacksonville-based artists on a rotating basis,” said Hyatt. “Our new office space will lend itself beautifully to community



events. We anticipate that our gallery spaces will become a venue for events such as the monthly Downtown Jacksonville Art Walk, and the balcony will be a perfect backdrop for performances.”

By showcasing art in all its forms, both from its students as well as the arts community, Hyatt hopes their offices will become an extension of Downtown’s existing network of cultural venues.

Wolfson ICU on wheels gets major upgrades



Michael Gayle, Wolfson chief of pediatric critical care, Grace Sarber, Women’s Board president, hospital President Michael Aubin, Herbert Sellers, Century Ambulance president, John Glover, Century Ambulance CEO, Sharon Eddins, Wolfson senior chaplain

A Century Ambulance Service unit that racked up more than 450,000 miles transporting critically ill children for over 10 years is back on duty after a major technological makeover.

At a dedication service in February, Wolfson Children’s Hospital officials and Century representatives dedicated Kids Kare Mobile ICU 2 while at the same time noting the important role such rolling intensive care units play.

“It’s the next level from a reliability standpoint,” said Century CEO John Glover, who noted the ambulance’s medical equipment could function even if the unit’s engine stopped working.

The \$250,000 needed for the refitting was provided by The Women’s Board of Wolfson Children’s Hospital. “Mobile ICU units are tremendously important to bring children from as far away as Tallahassee and Savannah and Daytona and beyond,” said Grace Sarber, president of The Women’s Board. “That is what Wolfson is doing. We are reaching the children in this huge geographical area. It makes the Kids Kare ambulances all the more important and all the more special.”

The two Kids Kare Units, known for their kid-friendly aquatic blue exterior appearance, contain advanced monitoring equipment, a defibrillator, IV pump, neonatal/pediatric ventilators, infant isolettes with warmers and medications. In 2014, the Kids Kare team transported 1,330 critically ill newborns and children up to 18 years old to Wolfson.

Begun 43 years ago to care for one ill child, the 400-member Women’s Board has now donated more than \$25 million to Wolfson. However, Sarber noted “the real heroes here are the Kids Kare team and Century Ambulance.”

The Janie Boyd Real Estate Team



Front row: Charlie Boyd, Cheryl Laucks, Janie Boyd, Jamie Spicer, Trey Martin. Back row: Tinnon Froehlich, Judy Jones Davis, Linda Strickland, Betty Thomas, Moody Baker, Carolyn Tatum.

Congratulations to Linda Strickland, Salesperson of the Month of February!

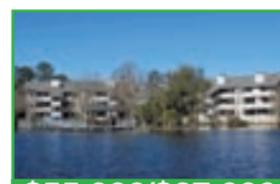


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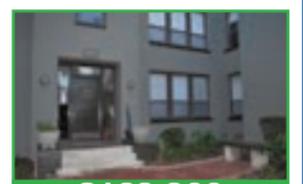
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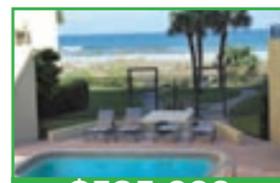
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Year of the River draw arts and cultural community together

March is River Celebration and Cleanup Month



Mayor Brown and City Councilman Jim Love join Cultural Fusion members and supporters as 2015 is proclaimed Year of the River (Photo Credit: Tonya Austin)

By Kate A. Hallock
Resident Community News

It's fitting on the 15th anniversary of the St. Johns Riverkeeper to have the St. Johns River celebrated in 2015 during the Cultural Fusion's Year of the River.

Last month Mayor Alvin Brown made the official proclamation at a press conference at The Cummer Museum

of Art & Gardens, and this month will mark the 20th annual River Celebration and Cleanup, held at dozens of sites throughout the area.

The Year of the River is an initiative that brings together more than 50 art and cultural organizations to raise awareness of the St. Johns River as the "cultural current" of the city.

"We're thrilled to be part of the Year

of the River, having this celebration, bringing together artists," said Riverkeeper Lisa Rinaman. "The river has inspired artists for centuries, and this celebration is, in a way, almost giving back and thanking the St. Johns for how it's shaped us as a community."

While the Riverkeeper's River Patrol is actively monitoring the health of the river, it is organizations such as The

Rising Tides and other community groups and individuals who help make a difference on Saturday, Mar. 21.

Cleanup supplies will be provided at each of the nearly 50 sites, and times vary, 8-11 a.m. or 9-12 p.m. Contact Shannon Blankenship, outreach director, at (904) 256-7613 or Shannon@Stjohnsriverkeeper.org, with questions.

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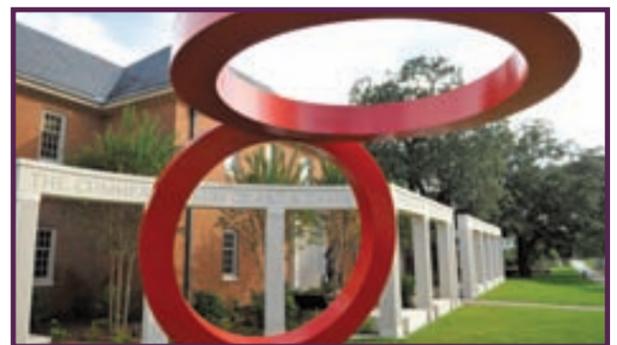
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Trauma patient honored at annual Night for Heroes

It was a starry, starry night at the annual signature event for UF Health Jacksonville, which honored trauma victim Tim Callahan, one of many saved by TraumaOne heroes last year. Held Feb. 7 at Sawgrass Marriott Golf Resort and Spa, the black tie evening was a celebration of victories, one life at a time, thanks to the UF physicians, nurses, TraumaOne flight crew and support staff. Honorary Chair Irene Lazzara also hosted a series of Coffee Klatches prior to the event to build momentum for the big gala debut.



Jean and Dr. Joe Tepas



Bobbie Gittings and Randle Marchman



Russ Armistead, CEO UF Health Jacksonville and wife Susan with Sandra and Daniel Wilson, M.D., Ph.D. and Vice President at UF Health and Dean, College of Medicine-Jacksonville

A magical evening for St. Vincent's HealthCare

The Jacksonville Marriott—Southpoint played host to "Do You Believe in Magic" for the 34th annual Red Rose Ball. Patrons paid tribute to Dave and Mary Pat Kulik, Honorary Chairs, and thanked the many patrons and sponsors that help guide the mission of the St. Vincent's Healthcare Foundation. It was a night of dinner, dancing, live and silent auctions, as well as an amazing sleight of hand performance by internationally acclaimed magician John Railing. The Feb. 13 event took place on a chilly night just before Valentine's Day.



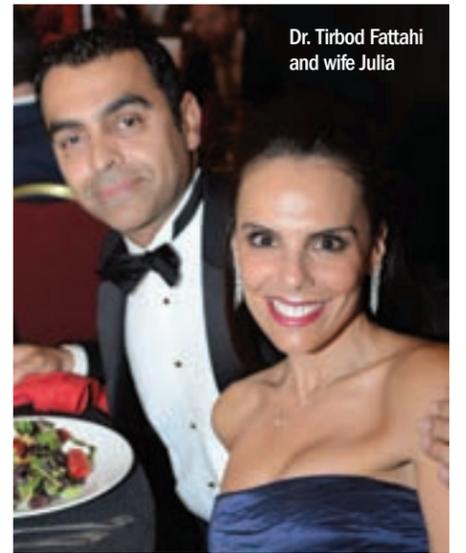
Kim Hodgkinson, CFO St. Vincent's Hospital and HealthCare System with Tom Branch



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It was all thumbs up at Annie R. Morgan Elementary School this month when Steve Pajcic paid a visit to his old stomping grounds.

Steve and his brother Gary were always huge

supporters of their school having donated \$1 million dollars to go towards supplements to bring in top teachers. Annie R. Morgan eventually rose up the ranks to become an "A" school. But the school has again fallen on tough times. Steve donated \$10,000 on his recent visit and promised to



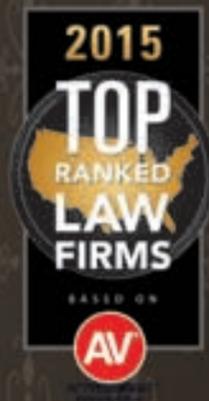
continue Pajcic support for his old school in the future. The money will go towards programs to boost parent involvement, encourage student achievement and promote teacher morale.

Principal Lashawn Streater has detailed plans to energize the Westside elementary school.

Steve enjoyed chatting with a few students in different grades. They all made a promise to work their hardest in school in hopes of reaching their goals and dreams.

As part of their pledge towards education, The Pajcics also donated \$2 million to Edward Waters College last year.

Pajcic & Pajcic has nine AV rated "preeminent" attorneys and is one of the few firms on Martindale-Hubbell's list of Top Ranked Law Firms in the Southeastern United States to receive the perfect 5.0 rating in client satisfaction.



MOVERS & SHAKERS

New director for Health Planning Council

The Health Planning Council announced that Emily Suter has joined the organization as the new Health Planning Director. Suter is recognized as one of the leading experts on Health Impact Assessments (HIA) and was on the team that developed the Florida Method for HIAs, which was presented at the inaugural National HIA Conference in Washington, DC. Further, Suter was the lead researcher for the Kings Ridge Apartment Complex rapid HIA project and consulted on the Brentwood HIA, both conducted in Jacksonville.

In her new role as the Health Planning Director, Suter will foster and lead initiatives to assess population health and to develop programs that address area health needs. Her responsibilities will include developing and implementing community health assessment and planning cycles. She will identify, develop, and execute health planning, research, and the evaluation of projects in the seven-county service area comprised of Baker, Clay, Duval, Flagler, Nassau, St. Johns and Volusia counties.

Moving to Jacksonville, Suter has initially been drawn to homes in Riverside, Avondale and Murray Hill and hopes to settle in soon.



Local law firm named to Gator100 list



Charles Jimerson, managing partner and founder of Jimerson & Cobb, accepted the award on behalf of the firm from Dr. Michael Morris, the Academic Director of the entrepreneurship program at UF.

Jimerson & Cobb, a Riverside law firm, was named to the University of Florida's inaugural 2015 Gator100 list at an awards luncheon Feb. 6 at the J. Wayne Reitz Union Grand Ballroom in Gainesville.

Sponsored by UF, the Warrington College of Business Administration and the Center for Entrepreneurship & Innovation (CEI), the Gator100 recognizes the 100 fastest-growing businesses owned or led by UF alumni. Ernst & Young calculated each company's

compounded annual growth rate (CAGR) over the past three years to generate the ranking.

Jimerson & Cobb was ranked No. 62, with a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 38.54 percent. Managing partner Charles Jimerson, graduate of the UF Levin College of Law and founder of Jimerson & Cobb, accepted the award on behalf of the firm. Other J&C Gator alums include partner James O. "Joby" Birr, partner Brent Zimmerman, associate Hans Wahl and associate Brandon Meadows.

Young adults hope to change voter apathy among cohorts



Joe Sampson, Christian Harden, Jimmy Midyette, Meredith O'Malley Johnson, Kemal Gasper, Karina Del Cid, Joey Marchy, Jack Twachtman, Donteacia Seymore, Jesse Wilson, Sara Dougherty, Keith Walters, Joanna Kurycki, Karen Kurycki, Jeff Smith

The Jax Young Voters Coalition, a nonpartisan group of young professionals, hopes to decrease voter apathy among 18- to 40-year-old residents by increasing voter turnout by at least five percent in the elections this month.

"I feel like we're at a turning point for our city and we have to get the right leadership in place that's willing to invest in our city and make it everything it can be," said coalition founder Meredith O'Malley Johnson. "We don't think city elections should be partisan, so we are focusing on City Council."

The nonprofit, all-volunteer group will host collaborative events, and create engaging and informative marketing and social media

campaigns to excite young voters.

"It's about [the candidates] wanting to invest in the city and the vision we have; making those quality of life investments we so badly need," Johnson said. "[We're looking for] more of a balanced approach for funding between homegrown small businesses and the big businesses, issues important for our generation."

The Jax Young Voters Coalition 22-member board of directors includes Riverside residents Meredith O'Malley Johnson, Karina Del Cid, Joanna Kurycki and Jesse Wilson; Avondale residents Mike Field and Emily Simpson, and Murray Hill residents Sean Collins and Sara Dougherty.

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MOVERS & SHAKERS

Baptist Health adds germ-zapping robots



A Xenex robot puts out a pulse of ultraviolet light during a demonstration at Baptist Health Jacksonville.



Michael Mayo discusses the Xenex robot.

Baptist Health recently introduced R2D2-like robots to its overall health care. The seven Xenex Disinfection Services germ-zapping robots are being used by the hospital to kill harmful bacteria that pose a danger to hospital patients, particularly those with compromised immune systems due to illness.

The robots, which are 20 times more effective than manual cleaning with chemicals, use full-spectrum UV light which destroys the organism's DNA so it can't reproduce. Specially trained technicians move the \$80,000 robot into a room that must be empty because the UV light might irritate eyes and skin. Once activated, the robot extends

upward to just over five feet tall and emits light pulses during the five- to 10-minute process.

Now used in about 250 hospitals nationwide, Baptist began using Xenex robots about four months ago in its operating rooms and just recently began going into in-patient rooms. Hospital President Michael Mayo said the Xenex robots provide "an extra layer of protection" and it "gives patients an extra sense they are being well cared for."

The hospital will do monthly patient safety results to monitor how the robots' effectiveness, said Kristin Vondrak, Baptist Health vice president and chief quality officer.

Stork makes a stop in Riverside



Proud parents Patrick and Reet Bilanchone welcomed baby Avery to their family Dec. 29, 2014. She was born at Baptist Medical Center Downtown. "We are both so happy that Avery could be a part of this world with us," wrote the parents, in a written statement to *The Resident*.

Robinson, Collins tie knot

The knot was tied between Kristopher Darwin Robinson and F. Susannah Collins on December 27, 2014, at the St. Mark's Chapel in Ortega. The nuptials were followed by lunch at the Timuquana Country Club and a river cruise through Downtown. The couple currently resides in the Ortega Forest neighborhood. (Photo by John Fountain Photography)



CenterBeam Construction awarded Best Of Houzz

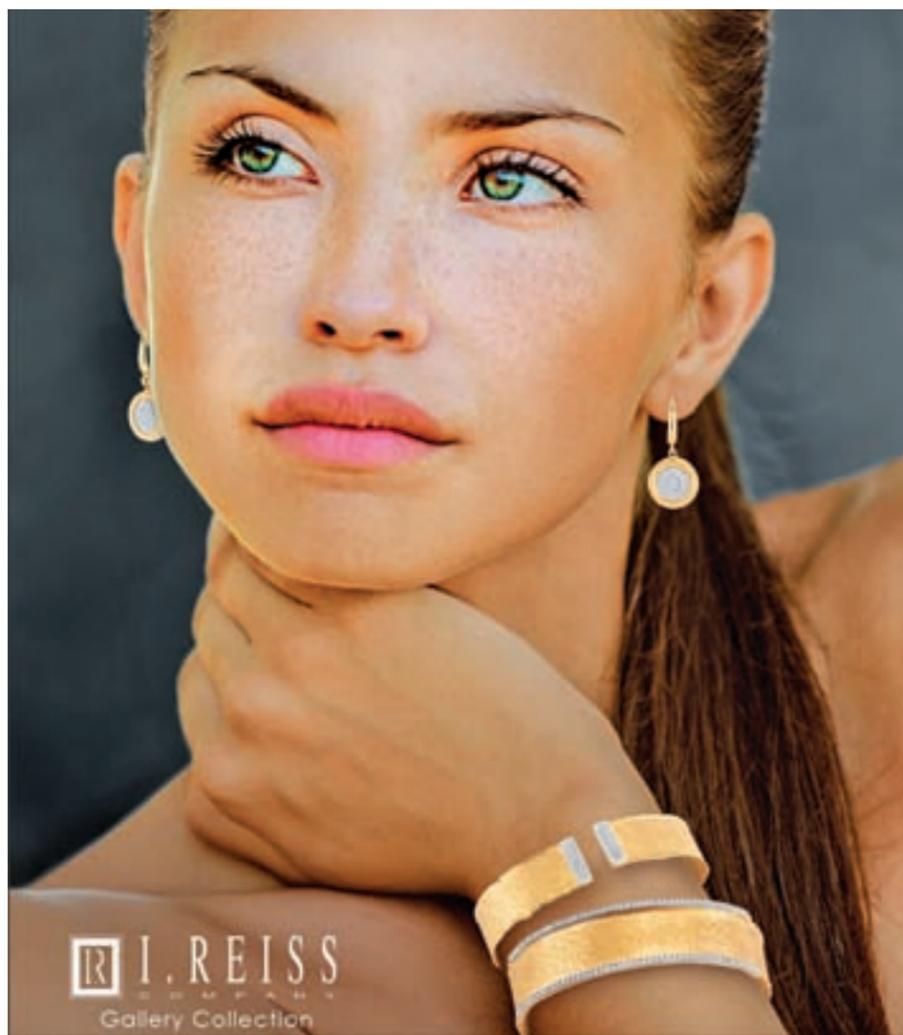
CenterBeam Construction, a historic homes remodeler, has been awarded "Best Of Houzz" for Customer Satisfaction by Houzz, the leading online platform for home remodeling and design. The Riverside company was chosen by the more than 25 million monthly unique users that comprise the Houzz community from among more than 500,000 active home building, remodeling and design industry professionals.

Customer Satisfaction honors are determined by a variety of factors, including the number and quality of client reviews a professional received in 2014. Christina Starmer, founder of CenterBeam, said "We are thrilled to be selected for this award especially since it is based on our customers' satisfaction. We do not advertise our services much and have relied on customer referrals to help us grow. Being chosen by the Houzz users is a real honor."

The company will have two houses on the 2015 RAP Tour of Homes in April.



Christina Starmer, Jeff Starmer (rear), Rober Baker



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Dandelion Boutique sprouts good clothing deals

It wasn't much of a leap physically for Sue Carstetter to take over the Dandelion Boutique and Consignment Shop. After all, her clothing alterations shop is literally attached as part of a small block of businesses on Herschel Street.

Women looking for new or previously owned clothing in excellent condition will find a variety of blouses, pants, dresses, coats and sweaters for sale. "We have high quality clothes at a very reasonable price," said Carstetter, who also runs Five Sisters Alterations. "We have a very good clientele who come in every month."

The shop, which offers 50 percent off sales each month on selected items, also has jewelry and fine handbags.

Located at 4308 Herschel, the shop is open p.m. 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Friday and 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday. Search for Dandelion Boutique and Consignment on Facebook or call (904) 527-3306.



Riverside resident, teacher participates in Apple program

Harrison Sepulveda, St. Johns Country Day School teacher of English, Foreign Language, and Latin Honors, is participating in technology training in Apple's elite Teacher Vanguard Program along with other members of the teaching faculty.

"I am thrilled at the prospects for this program at St. Johns and for the opportunities it offers, both teachers and students alike. Technology has, in a very brief span of time, come to influence almost every aspect of our lives, most visibly in the education of our children. This worldwide shift can be frightening especially when technology can at once be revered for its utility and dismissed as a distraction," said Sepulveda, a Riverside resident.

St. Johns is one of only 180 institutions in the world that are approved to offer Apple Vanguard Certification to their teachers. The school's administration has developed a training schedule to certify the entire faculty in the Apple Vanguard Program within the next two years.

"This program not only helps our teachers to walk the line between these two extremes, but also will ultimately instill in our graduates a sense of how to use technology in a responsible and critical way that will make them more competitive, empathetic, and innovative global citizens," continued Sepulveda. "To resist technology is to resist the progress of humanity itself, and we here at St. Johns want our students to be ready and willing to meet the challenges of an already eventful 21st century."



Avondale woman writes of experience with child's illness

Theresa Larsen, Avondale resident, teacher and author, has published "Cutting the Soul," a personal story about her experiences as a mother of a son with mental illness. The first-person account of a look at the emotional and financial aspects of mental illness is a helpful guide worth reading for any parent struggling with a child's mental health. The book is available on Amazon.com or visit Larsen's website at www.theresalarsen.com.

Chappell Schools named to Top 50 child care organizations

Chappell Child Care Centers was named to the Child Care Exchange "Top 50 For-Profit Child Care Organizations" in North America.

With eight centers in Duval County, Chappell has been providing high-quality preschool education to Jacksonville's youngsters for more than 55 years, and is a strategic partner with many major Jacksonville corporations and colleges.

CEO Nancy Dreicer stated that the newest Chappell center, a Head Start center founded in partnership with Lutheran Services Florida (LSF), is part of an expansion plan. "We hope to open one new center every year in Northeast Florida. Our expansion includes a plan to increase our quality and add the latest technology to our curriculum. Chappell makes learning fun for our children," she said.



TCF grant to help veterans with mental health issues

Veterans residing at the Five STAR Veterans Center will have access to mental health counseling thanks to a \$352,000 grant issued from the Delores Barr Weaver Fund at The Community Foundation of Northeast Florida. The grant was awarded to the Veterans Counseling Initiative, a collaboration with the NBCC Foundation (National Board for Certified Counselors), the Five STAR Veterans Center and the University of North Florida's Clinical Mental

Health Counseling program. NBCC was a sponsor of the recent Community Mental Health Study undertaken by the Jacksonville Community Council, Inc. According to Sherry Allen, executive director of the NBCC Foundation, "This initiative represents the mission of the NBCC Foundation as we strive to provide resources and collaborations that will bridge the gap in counseling services for those in the greatest need."

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MOVERS & SHAKERS

Be The Light dance lessons done in family friendly atmosphere

Nesia Campbell believes divine intervention was involved in her becoming the owner of an Avondale dance studio.

Now located on Herschel Street, the Be The Light Music & Dance Company was originally on Timuquana Road. It was called Jean's Dance Academy and was the one Campbell herself had "grown up in."

"I had stopped dancing in 2006 to raise my son," Campbell said. "I...secretly always wanted to return and someday own a studio that could be a ministry to young girls. I honestly thought my dance days were over. God had a different plan."

She describes the 1,800-square-foot upstairs studio that she bought in 2012 as family friendly and a place where students can learn dancing fundamentals in ballet, tap and jazz/hip hop as well as be exposed to Scripture and positive music. There are also weekend dance fitness events, birthday parties, rehearsal dinners and receptions held there.

Be The Light Music & Dance Co. is at 4724 Herschel St., Suite 200. For information, search Facebook under the studio name or call (904) 307-5689.



Nesia Campbell stands in her studio at 4724 Herschel St.

Fine jewelry, denim part of Dietrich boutique

The historic Riverside district is on the rise for both young, urban residents and businesses, and Tenley Dietrich couldn't be happier to be part of it.

Dietrich's new boutique offering fine jewelry, candles, premium denim and greeting cards opened in February at 2251 Oak St. Located in a beautiful historic building, Dietrich says one look was all it took to convince her the location was right.

"The first time I saw it I loved it," she says of the 95-year-old structure that also includes a dry cleaners, doctor's office and engagement ring consultant. "This is just a perfect spot for a boutique...I just wanted to be in the company of these young entrepreneurs doing so well in Riverside."

Prices range from \$2 for hair ties to more expensive gold and diamond jewelry, with an array of items appealing to moms on the go as well as husbands looking for birthday or holiday gifts.

Boutique hours are 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Friday and noon to 5 p.m. Saturday. Call (904) 570-9101 for details.



Tenley Dietrich inside her Oak Street boutique.

Antique store perfect match for Park St.



Carrie McCloskey is co-owner of The Looking Glass.

Carrie McCloskey had known for a long time she wanted to open her own antique store along Park Street in Avondale - an area she believes is ideal as an antique destination.

After months of looking she and her business partner Rosa Arjon found the spot they thought was ideal at 2748 Park St. And if the daily customer count is any indication, they were right.

"I quit corporate America two years ago," said McCloskey, who was renting space at the Treasure House. "I thought, 'I better get to it!'"

The store, previously called The Carriage House, is now filled with hundreds of knickknacks, paintings, furniture, jewelry, clothing and turn-of-the-century kitchen utensils. About 20 vendors also rent space in the store to display their antique wares for sale.

Store hours are 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Tuesday through Friday and 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Saturday. The store is closed Sunday and Monday. Visit Facebook or Instagram and search for "Looking Glass Jax" or call (904) 250-5425 for details.

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Edgewood Event Room can host your meeting, reception

Looking to have a wedding reception, baby shower, memorial service or community dance and need a place to hold it in Murray Hill?

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"We charge \$100 an hour and that includes tables and chairs. You can't beat that price," Hill said. "There's really no other place in Murray Hill or even Riverside for hosting indoor events."

Demand for rentable indoor space has grown since the Edgewood Bakery in Murray Hill converted its community room to a production facility, said Hill, who also operates Park Street Antiques. "We've actually hosted several events for (Edgewood Bakery)," she said.

Visit Facebook and search for Edgewood Event Room or call Hill at (904) 629-3103 for details.



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M Shack fits right into its Riverside location

M Shack owner Matthew Medure stands near the entrance to the new Riverside restaurant.

M Shack owner Matthew Medure believes fitting into the neighborhood is a critical part of each restaurant being successful.

So it's no surprise the Riverside M Shack, which opened in early February at 1012 Margaret St., has a "fresh casual concept" that Medure describes as "industrial, urban and edgy."

Menu items ranging from \$4 to \$18 are similar to those served at the M Shacks in San Marco, St. Johns Town Center and Atlantic Beach. "Eighty percent of what we do is handcrafted burgers, fries and shakes," Medure said. "But we do a lot of other things, too; we want to stand out from a typical

burger restaurant."

Those other things include processing its own ground beef from 95 percent grass-fed Black Angus cattle. And at the bar, in addition to craft beers, all cocktails are "handcrafted, no jiggers" with only freshly squeezed ingredients used.

The 3,900-square-foot restaurant with large canopy-covered entrance can hold up to 150 people and has a staff of more than 50. It is open seven days a week, serving lunch and dinner until 11 p.m. Thursday through Saturday and 10 p.m. the remaining days.

Visit www.mshackburgers.com for more information.

LunchBOX removes hair in a chic, customer-friendly setting

LunchBOX (A Waxing Salon) is open in Riverside and its skilled waxologists are ready to meet customers' grooming needs in a relaxed, professional setting.

The business touts itself as a full-service waxing salon that can provide all its services in under one hour, including those wanting to visit during their lunchtime. LunchBOX say it picks progressive communities for its salons that serve both men and women.

"Riverside is just perfect for us," said local franchise owner Lubo Jenkins, president of Florida-Puerto Rico Lbox Development. "I know the area very well. It's fun, beautiful and it's full of people who want to keep themselves looking and feeling great."

Located at 1661 Riverside Ave., the salon with three full-time employees offers services ranging from \$12 for a 15-minute chin or ear wax to \$75 for a 45-minute "manzilian."

Jacksonville is the eighth franchise to open for the Idaho-based company, which began in 2010 when founder Debi Lane opened her salon to emphasize waxing treatment that she felt was often an afterthought at many spas.

Visit www.lunchboxwax.com or call (904) 312-9867 for information.



Brittany Snell joins Jimerson & Cobb business litigation firm

Jimerson & Cobb announced the addition of three associate attorneys to its team, among them Avondale resident Brittany M. Snell, Esq., who joined the condominium law practice group. Snell is a graduate of Florida Coastal School of Law, graduating in the top 15 percent of her class and served as a member of its nationally ranked Florida Coastal Moot Court team. She earned an undergraduate degree in political science from The Ohio State University.

The other new members on the team are Austin B. Calhoun, Esq., in the construction and bankruptcy law practice groups, and Brandon C. Meadows, Esq., in the business litigation practice group.

"Our new attorneys bring with them a wealth of background expertise and experience that adds a new layer to the support we can offer our clients," said Charles Jimerson, managing partner of Jimerson & Cobb. "We look forward to the future of our firm with these superb attorneys on board."



New symphony group appealing to young adults

UpTempo, a new initiative for young professionals, launched last month with nearly 80 people in attendance, including Jacksonville Music Director Courtney Lewis and symphony musicians.

UpTempo represents the cultural class of the next generation, offering symphonic experiences to fit the lifestyle of adults in their 20s and 30s. An affordable membership includes five concert experiences, members-only get-togethers, and specially-priced tickets for friends. For information, log on to JaxSymphony.org, like them at [Facebook.com/JaxSymphony](https://www.facebook.com/JaxSymphony), follow them on Twitter @JaxSymphony or call (904) 354-5547.



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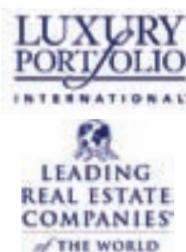
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Final Forum Speakers Share Thoughts on National Security

Guests attending the final installment of the Florida Forum 2014-2015 season, produced by The Women's Board of Wolfson Children's Hospital and presented by Landstar, were treated to an 'inside the beltway' talk from experts on hot topics of national and cybersecurity. Former USCYBERCOM Commander and NSA Director Gen. Keith B. Alexander and former FBI Director Robert S. Mueller, III shared their perspectives from their tenures, including Alexander's swearing-in just one week prior to the end of his time as lead security officer during the Snowden incident. The final event of the series took place Feb. 10, the reception was held at the Omni Hotel Downtown.



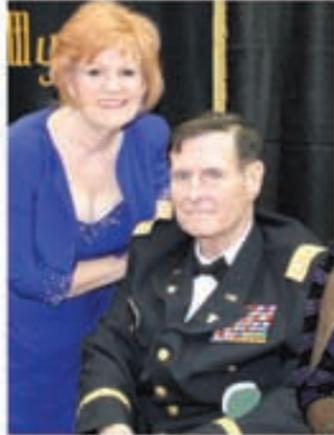
Gen. Keith B. Alexander and John Glover with Robert S. Mueller, III and Will Newton

Ye Mystic Revellers

The 89th Annual Pageant & Ball of Ye Mystic Revellers sported a military theme and offered skits, live band, open bar and dancing until the wee hours of the morning. North Florida's oldest Mardi Gras organization, established in 1923, keeps alive the tradition of celebrating Fat Tuesday typically on the Friday prior to Ash Wednesday. The event this year was held on Feb. 6 at the Jacksonville Fairgrounds, where Ron Davis and Mary Dudley Lee were crowned King and Queen and more than 600 Revellers danced to The Rivertown Band.



Ye 89th Court of Ye Mystic Revellers - Front: Scepter Bearer Ethan and Crown Bearer Carson Brockman, King Ron Davis, Queen Mary Dudley Lee, Crown Bearer Riley Muldoon, Flower Girls Sallye and Lila Todd; back: Karen Thompson, Vice Captain Stockton Eller, Maid Catherine Lee (Photo by Becky Hudmon)



Sarah and Dr. Bob Van Cleave (Photo by Becky Hudmon)



Karen and LTC David Thompson (Photo by Becky Hudmon)



Dr. George and Ann Trotter, Peggy Harrell Jennings, Jonathan Jennings



Past Captain Thompy Taylor with Christy and Trey Martin, wife Kendall Taylor and Cheri Holesko (Photo by Becky Hudmon)



John and Chris Trotter



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Social REGISTER



Chris Atkins, Niki Garner, Dennis Neely and Angel Gomez

JEWISH CENTER HOSTS 'SCOTCH & SPORTS' EVENING

The Jewish Family and Community Center hosted its fourth annual Men's Event in February. Called "Scotch & Sports," the event at Deerwood Country Club featured participants enjoying high-end scotch and hand-rolled cigars before hearing a presentation by guest speaker Mark Frisch of the Jacksonville Armada FC.



Jacksonville Armada owner Mark Frisch, left, and Cole Pepper, Armada game announcer and local TV personality



Marco Monteiro and his father-in-law Tom Harris

Lincoln Day Dinner Rallies the Party Faithful

Republicans of all stripes came out to raise funds for the GOP in Duval County. Texas Republican U.S. Senator Ted Cruz headlined the evening's festivities. Rallying the party base, Cruz outlined the strengths of the party and quoted Ronald Reagan, pointing to the infamous phrase of "bold colors, not soft pastels" - then summoning the crowd to change the course for the country. As leadership of the Republican Party of Duval County urged the importance of support for the Mayoral, Sheriff and Council races, the message was clear - participation and traditional GOP values of the party will ultimately trump partisan politics. The event took place Feb. 10 at the Hyatt Regency Riverfront Hotel.



John Falconetti and Shannon Miller, Mac McGeehee, Event Chair Nancy McGowan and Marty Fiorentino



Sheri Treadwell, Chris and Rebekah Hagan, Leeann and Hanz Krieg



U.S. Rep. Ron DeSantis and wife Casey Black DeSantis, Patricia and Fitzhugh Powell Jr. and Mike Hightower

Sharon Light, President of Republican Women's Club of Duval Federated with Bill Blackard



Silver Gala Marks 25 Years for Communities in Schools



Victoria and Joe Carlucci, and Matt and Laurie Carlucci



Bobby Martin, CIS Board member, and Athena Mann, CIS Board Chair

Communities in Schools, which began in 1989 serving 50 students at one school and is now in 39 schools serving 7,000 students, recently marked its 25th year.

The program provides case management, literacy, after-school and mentoring services to Duval County students. The largest Communities in School program in Florida, the Jacksonville affiliate is also the fourth largest in the United States. Visit www.cisjax.org for more information.



Victoria Carlucci, CIS member program coordinator, and Aly Urey, CIS resource development specialist



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Local teens take on super hero roles

Learning, sharing lessons on greater good

By Kate A. Hallock
Resident Community News

Contrary to popular belief that a teenager's attention span is only as long as it takes to send a text, a group of 10 young men and women hung together over a six-month period to beat the cliché and produce a 16-1/2 minute action film.

The Pride, filmed in several locations locally, percolated for some time with D-Life, a youth group at St. John's Presbyterian Church.

"Our former youth pastor had the idea two or three years ago of a super hero movie and we've finally realized that vision...to take the strengths of the youth group with individual super hero strengths and work together for a common goal," said Colin Montgomery, a member of the cast.

"The theme is about people teaming up to achieve a greater good, more than what one person can do on their own," echoed actor Pete Russell.

Ashley Smith, producer/director, wrote the script for *The Pride* and, wanting to provide the most realistic experience he could for the teens, went to Miami to observe a film on set.

"Ashley wrote this amazing script and it captures our personalities as if we were super heroes," said Patricia Montgomery. "It was easy to play our roles because it's kind of like we're already in it."

The first day of shooting began on the river in April. "The opening scene is on the river with a damsel in distress," said Karsten Hunger, another cast member. "The boat scene was very stressful. I was out there on a Sunday from eight in the morning until 4:30, in the sun."

There was a lag in production, then came fight choreography rehearsals in June and July, with more shooting in August, and again in September and November.

"We learned that it's much better to do it over a three-day weekend than one day this month and one day the next month," said Smith.



Tye McGee, Karsten Hunger, Sarah Duggan, Patricia Montgomery, Andrew Russell, Lane Montgomery, Jada McGee, Sierra Stone, Colin Montgomery, Pete Russell

"You have to have consistency in a movie, so we always made sure that the person was always wearing exactly what they were wearing in the scene before," added Hunger. "We put everything in a bag, made sure it was together for the next shooting. Minor details really matter in a film."

Breaking logs, not legs

The acting wasn't always a piece of cake for the teens. Sometimes a scene required a distinct move outside of familiar emotional or physical territory.

According to Patricia Montgomery, it was the fight scenes that took her out of her comfort zone. "We had to learn the combat choreography. It was interesting to learn how to make it look like you were punching someone but to not do it. I had not done that stuff before, so learning combat...I feel better now knowing that I can do it. Master Bill [Chiodo] taught everyone individual styles of combat and how to perfect it."

Sierra Stone, a senior at Lee High School, noted "I had to break a log on someone's back. I didn't want to hurt him. It wasn't a hard log,

it was dead, but it was hard learning the right moves, how to position it, not to hurt me or the person I was attacking."

As with professional productions, each scene required many takes – another lesson learned in the art of filmmaking.

"I was shocked at how long it takes to film just one scene," commented Sarah Duggan. "I really appreciate more how much effort it takes."

Andrew Russell, the youngest cast member, noted that their own reactions sometimes took the production off schedule. "It took quite a few takes to look menacing in one scene after we chased the terrorists because I was laughing for about 20 of those takes," he said.

With (more than) a little help

In addition to the 10 young adults, there were nine others in the cast, mostly parents who took on the roles of the villains, plus a crew of 27 to ensure that the film was done as professionally as possible.

Jamie Russell and Wendi Hunger, parents of cast members, were also part of the crew. Russell was in charge of Craft Services

(catering) and marketing, while Hunger served as assistant director.

Hunger noted that there were rewards for both cast and crew, youth and adults. "The project promoted relationships between the youth and the adults on a peer level," she said. "The goal is to create another program that other churches can use to bridge the gap between high school youth, college-age adults and parents."

There were also local professionals involved in the production and post-production of *The Pride*, including Jeff Green, Director of Photography, from Jeff Green Films; Bill Chiodo, Stunt/Fight Coordinator, from Julington Academy of Martial Arts; John Harret, Sound / Grip, from Prodigal 15 Productions; Eric Peck, Editor; Kevin Crainshaw, Music / Score, Associate for Worship and the Arts, St. John's Presbyterian Church; and Rick White, Photography, from Oelridge Video & Photography.

"We hope this will be an outreach to teens in the community," concluded Russell.

The Pride

Premiering April 11 at 7 p.m.,
Murray Hill Theatre

The *Pride* is a short film about a group of normal teenage students – with superpowers. Already carrying the typical teen pressures, *The Pride* must now take on another struggle. When danger threatens their town, they must band together to save the day. They are the last hope for a town – and one of their own – in the grips of evil, as they learn to trust one another and protect each other against a diabolical enemy.

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Bolles student earns Honorable Mention in competition



Tony Dai, Kayla Fender, Katie Scott, Frances Rice, Devon Haskell, Ivy Lou, Chloe Zhang

Frances Rice, a senior at The Bolles School, was one of several students honored in the Northeast Florida Art Association's Scholastic Art Awards competition. The Ortega resident received an honorable mention for her work "Breakfast" in the competition juried by teams of highly qualified art professionals, college professors and executive art directors. More than 1,700 quality works were entered and less than 400 pieces were selected for awards.

Eleven Bolles students achieved two gold awards, four silver awards and seven honorable mention awards. The competition's Award Assembly was held at LaVilla School of the Arts on Jan. 13. An exhibit of Gold Key student work was displayed at the Main Street Library Gallery and the Cathedral Arts Project Gallery.

Bolles students nominated to test for Joe Berg Society

Ortega residents John Norcross and Pete Woodall are among seven Bolles sophomores nominated to test for the Joe Berg Seminars of Jacksonville series. The Joe Berg Seminars of Jacksonville, a two-year academic experience, offers 12 seminars annually between September and May in each of the humanities and sciences.

Joe Berg scholars receive no credit for participation in the seminar program, but gain stimulation and knowledge beyond the scope of a high school's curriculum. Local experts from a variety of fields, which can range from space exploration to medical research, deliver presentations to participating scholars.

If selected, these students will have the opportunity to participate in 27 to 36 hours of college level lecture and discussion. About 50 students from approximately 15 public and private Jacksonville high schools are admitted into the program each year. The Joe Berg graduation ceremony is held in the middle of the students' senior year.



Pete Woodall



John Norcross



Teaching children good dental habits early

Dr. Jila Mahajan and Mojo the Monkey take questions from kindergarten students at Venetia Elementary School during a presentation on good dental hygiene. Dr. Mahajan, owner of Kids First Dentistry, toured many schools during National Children's Dental Health Month in February.



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Grades K-12

Fishweir students enjoy special book reading

Two classrooms at Fishweir Elementary School were spellbound when a special visitor spent time answering questions and reading a book. First Lady Ann Scott made a brief stop in Jacksonville on Jan. 30 as part of her campaign to promote literacy and in recognition of Celebrate Literacy Week.

Principal Kimberly Dennis said that the school has been trying for two years to get Mrs. Scott to come to Fishweir. The First Lady visited the second grade classroom of Meredith Arnold and the third grade classroom of Cindy Evans, who was also named a finalist for the 2015 Florida Blue Duval County Teacher of the Year.



Meredith Arnold, 2nd grade teacher, and Florida Governor's First Lady Ann Scott; front: Sophie Wiranata, Hazel Wickham, Logan Teklak, Laya Croft and Patrick Stone



Florida First Lady Ann Scott and Cindy Evans, 3rd grade teacher; front: Arabella DeGuzman, Austin Shepard, Alicia Royce and Sawyer Myers

Avondale resident takes first place in science and humanities symposium



Carly Crump, a senior at The Episcopal School of Jacksonville, was the first place winner at the 52nd Annual Junior Science and Humanities Symposium (JSHS) at the University of Florida, Jan. 25-27. During the speaker competition, Crump presented her experimental work on the transmission of the dengue virus to a panel of 20 judges and an audience of her peers.

As the first place finisher, the Avondale resident received a \$2,000 scholarship and an all-expense paid trip to the National Junior Science and Humanities Symposium in May, where she will present her work again and compete for additional scholarship money. The symposium is sponsored by the research offices of the U.S. Army, Navy and Air Force to encourage the future generations of scientists and engineers, and to celebrate student achievement in the sciences.

As a student in the Honors Science Seminar, Crump completed her research at the University of Florida and Johns Hopkins Medical School during the school year and over the summer.

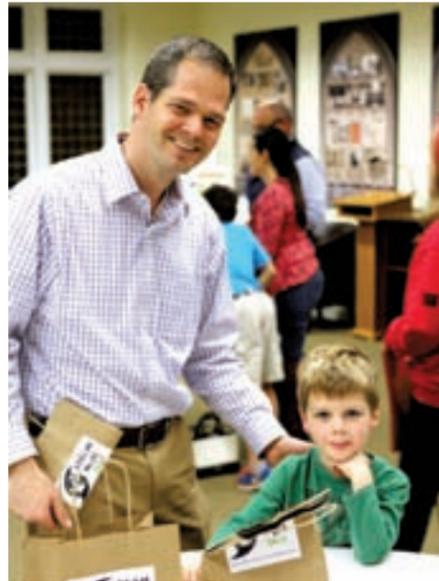
Homes withstand severe weather tests



Bree, Collins, Jeffrey Moses

At its first STEAM Night (science, technology, engineering, art and math), Riverside Presbyterian Day School parents and students were tasked with creating a structure that could withstand severe Florida weather. Families worked together using only a limited amount of provided supplies to build a house that could survive a big, bad hurricane. Each house was put through several severe weather tests using hairdryers, leaf blowers, fans and watering cans. Out of the 56 RPDS families who participated, 48 houses survived the Category 5 Hurricane final round.

Kurt and Everett Thoresen



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Jr. Residents

Budding photographers at Upson Elementary



Front: Ellen Spence, Thomas Holt; back: Ahmina Johnson, Jamoni Oakes

Students at Ruth N. Upson Elementary recently completed their "texture" photography project and some of their photos are hanging in the main hallway of the school. "I'm very impressed with the quality of work being produced this year," said art teacher Jacqueline Bauer. The photos by fifth grade students were taken on campus and edited by using GIMP (GNU Image Manipulation Program) after being downloaded on flash drives.

New Year's resolution for the dogs

Avondale residents Cate Goodwyne and her best friend, Grace Vosmik, made their New Year's resolution one that would help animals in need in Jacksonville. They saved their allowances to purchase pet food and linens and donated them to First Coast No More Homeless Pets. Goodwyne's mother Leah matched them dollar-for-dollar and the girls spent the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday running errands to purchase the items and dropped them off in person. Goodwyne and Vosmik, who attend fourth grade at Fishweir Elementary School, got a behind-the-scenes tour of the FCNMHP facility and decided they both wanted to volunteer there.



Sweethearts at any age



The four-year-old classes at St. John's Presbyterian Kindergarten & Preschool visited the Senior Ladies Bible study last month to sing a Valentine's song and deliver handmade valentine cards. The women were very entertained and enjoyed hearing "Let Me Call You Sweetheart."

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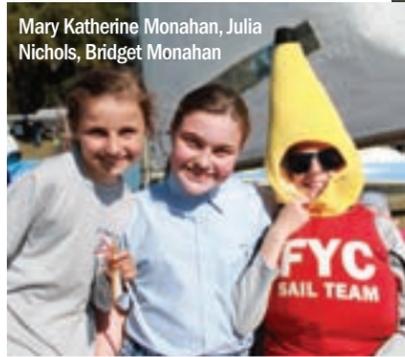
Health Fair helps chase winters blues away

There's nothing like a sunny day in the middle of winter to lift the spirits and give children a healthy glow. Assumption Catholic School's annual Health Fair offered opportunities to swing a hula hoop, pet a burro, a piglet or a chicken, taste locally produced honey, sample exotic fruits and vegetables, examine a miniature gator head, and experience – on dry land – the muscles needed to heel a sailboat. Vendors included San Marco Bookstore, The St. Johns Riverkeeper, Florida Yacht Club, and more.

Gunnar Davidson, Dominic and Jonathan Rogero



Mary Katherine Monahan, Julia Nichols, Bridget Monahan



Anna Townsend

Paxon students head to Seattle competition

Five students from the Paxon School for Advanced Studies are winners of the 2015 Florida LifeSmarts Competition held last month at the Florida State Fair in Tampa. The Paxon team beat six other teams who had qualified to participate in the game-show style challenge open to students, grades 9 through 12.



LifeSmarts was established by the National Consumer League, America's oldest consumer organization, to develop and educate teens on consumer and marketplace issues. As the winner of the Florida LifeSmarts competition, the Paxon SAS students will go on to compete in the National LifeSmarts Competition, held in April in Seattle, Wash.

St. Mark's Robotics Team Advances to State Championship



Placing 2nd in "Core Values" the Lego Lions are one of only two elementary schools to advance past the regional competition.

The top 24 teams in Northeast Florida competed in the Florida First Lego League Regional Competition at the University of North Florida on Feb. 1.

The St. Mark's Lego Lions, comprised of 4th to 6th graders, faced off against several middle-school teams. Their second

place ranking in the Core Values portion of the competition boosted them into the top eight teams to advance to the State Championship to be held on Sun., Mar. 8, in Orlando.

"This group is amazing," said St. Mark's Head of School, Kevin Conklin. "Their teamwork is incredible, and the process of competing at this level has been a wonderful journey for them to experience."

St. Paul's sends student to county spelling bee

St. Paul's Catholic School held its annual school Spelling Bee earlier this year sponsored by Scripps National Spelling Bee. Winner Chris Harris, 7th grade, successfully competed at both the classroom and school level, and went on to compete and represent his school at the Duval County level in late January.



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Stress is not something to be taken lightly. That's why *The Resident* is encouraging readers to relax and unwind and shrug off the little things.

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From the heart of Riverside, a water spirit emerges



Sarah Crooks Flaire tries on a papier mâché mask of an avian estuary resident.

By Katie Smith
Resident Community News

For more than two decades, artist and Florida Master Naturalist Sarah Crooks Flaire’s work has orbited the themes of the natural world. Exploring themes of the river, its surrounding ecology, and our interactions with nature, Crooks Flaire’s current project strives to draw the viewer in to become part of the creative process, introducing people to the river environment and its ecology along the way.

In the Mouth, the Oyster and I is interactive both in creation and performance. Supported in part by a Florida Blue-funded Spark Grant from the Cultural Council of Jacksonville, the yearlong project kicked off with a series of public workshops in downtown’s Spark District to piece together various components of a “playful celebration of estuary life” on the St. Johns River.

Crooks Flaire crowdsources recycled materials and enlists children and their families to contribute their time and hands-on creativity to transforming discarded items into everything from plastic recreations of microscopic plankton

and crab larvae to upcycled-fiber oyster beds.

The piece de résistance, a snakelike “water spirit” 30 feet long and counting, is comprised almost entirely of plastic drink bottles woven with the Japanese kumihimo method, traditionally used for samurai armor and jewelry-making.

At a recent Downtown Art Walk, her latest workshop, “How to Build a Waterspirit,” taught participants Crooks Flaire’s method of weaving collected plastic bottles into a Chinese dragon-inspired parade puppet. Rather than overwhelming youngsters with an overload of information about pollution, imperiled waterways, and the long-term effects of dredging and other manmade influences on the river, these workshops introduce children to the inhabitants of the river and its tributaries, while teaching small steps they can take to preserve clean water and wild spaces, starting with the simple concepts of recycling and reducing reliance on disposable containers.

Children ages 6-15 are invited to enter an estuary-themed haiku contest. Details and worksheets are available at www.crooksflaire.com



Volunteer Michelle Deluca paints bottles with leftover purple house paint.

under the Downloads tab. The deadline is April 1, and entries may be delivered to the children’s or teen’s departments at the Jacksonville Main Library, or mailed to Everess Art Studio at 2701 Rosselle Street, Jacksonville, FL 32205.

Join the next fun community activity on Culture Day, Sat., May 2 in Hemming Park. The Water Spirit will make its public debut, emerging for an interactive parade accompanied by music and celebration. The project culminates at Community First Saturday on June 6 on the Northbank Riverwalk with a celebration of life in the estuary, with appearances by the Water Spirit and youth-created characters based on inhabitants of the river.



Sarah Crooks Flaire checks her progress on the weaving loom she uses to construct the body of the Water Spirit from recycled bottles.

Crooks Flaire’s workspace, Everess Studio, has served as home base for the past 18 years as the CoRK Arts District grew up around it. She often hosts open studio days. Get more information by visiting her website, www.crooksflaire.com or by finding her on Facebook. For more photos about this story, visit residentnews.net.



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5/3-2,478 sqft. This beautiful home located just off of Bettes Circle has a big pool and great deck for entertaining. Hardwood floors throughout the home and the living room has a fireplace. The eat in kitchen opens to family room with a vaulted ceiling.



2358 RIVERSIDE AVE 1203 - \$1.595MM
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NEW PRICE

3855 MC GIRTS BLVD - \$1.195MM
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4450 YACHT CLUB RD - \$215,000
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2917 GRAND AVE - \$1.350MM
4/4/1-5,208 sqft. Meticulously renovated architectural gem on Grand Avenue! The owners, along with a team of local area experts, have rendered a masterpiece blending the graciousness of days gone by with all the modern conveniences of today.



3255 OAK ST - \$795,000
4/3/2-5,107 sqft. Wow! Built in 1924, this gorgeous Mediterranean welcomes you home from the minute you step through the front door into the grand entry. Beautifully renovated, this home offers everything! Gorgeous kitchen and fabulous family room with soaring ceilings.



NEW PRICE

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Annual preservation awards recognize local councilman, among others



Outstanding Business Renovation
2357 Riverside After



Outstanding Home Renovation
1873 Powell After



2357 Riverside Before



1873 Powell Before



Robin Lumb

Something old, something new. An apropos saying for Riverside Avondale Preservation as the organization hosted its annual preservation awards presentation on Feb. 24.

Something old is, of course, the Outstanding Home Renovation at 1873 Powell Street, by Jeff Schaefer of Jeffrey E. Schaefer Master Builder, Inc., and Melody Bishop, Akel Logan Schaefer Architects and Planners. It is also the Outstanding Business Renovation on 2357 Riverside Ave. by and for Troy Spurlin Interiors.

Something new is a returning category – Outstanding Neighborhood Architect – for Milan Malinovic, Design Cooperative, who contributed to the award-winning Mellow Mushroom, for which owner John Valentino accepted the award for Outstanding Historically Compatible New Construction.

Also receiving awards were Nick Wagner, Black Hive Tattoo, and David Joudi, Riverside Liquors, for Neighborhood Friendly/Contributing Businesses. “Wagner was a driving force getting other businesses on board for the Dog Days of Summer fundraising event for the John Gorrie Dog Park,” said RAP board member Tempest Arant. Joudi won the award for continuing to sponsor the annual Riverside Wine Fest that benefits RAP.

Outstanding Neighborhood Advocate was given to Robin Lumb and it’s no surprise, given Councilman Lumb’s successful efforts to effect changes to the proposed I-10/I-95 Interchange project. Lumb led a successful “campaign” to get the Florida Department of Transportation to reconsider some of its original plans, including the additional of a multi-use path across the Fuller Warren Bridge. According to Carmen Godwin,

executive director, Lumb “contributed greatly in getting the JEA to the table to save the tree canopy.”

Joy Walker, who chaired the 2014 Riverside Avondale Preservation Home Tour, was named Outstanding RAP Board Member. “We had our most successful year yet and we can attribute that her!” said Arant. “She was overwhelmingly voted by her fellow board members.”

Four residents were recognized as Outstanding Volunteers: Bob Pendell, Larry Mendlow, Peggy Richardson, and Cathy Heffernan, who were described as “volunteer superstars” by RAP Volunteer Coordinator Torrie Parette. “All of them have volunteered in one capacity or another for all of our different events and office needs,” she said. “They are always available to give some time and often volunteer for multiple duties/shifts.”



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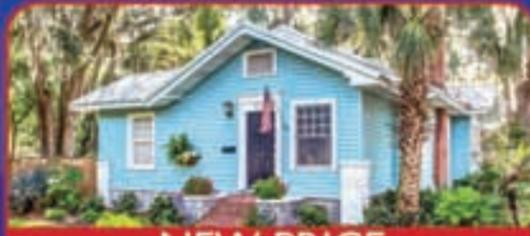


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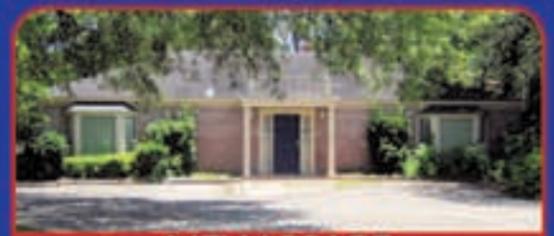
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Meninaks feel surge in community involvement

Guest speakers involved in critical local issues

By Greg Walsh
Resident Community News

Jacksonville has many active civic organizations with thousands of members doing good deeds that go unsung.

One such group is The Meninak Club, which is just four years shy of its 100th birthday but is probably not as well-known as some of its civic brethren. It meets nearly every Monday of the year and is composed of about 180 Jacksonville businessmen and women.

“Bringing Help Where None is Available” is the motto of this longtime Jacksonville group, said Larry Cobb, immediate past president.

“The people that really founded our club felt like a single club was the way the community needed to sort of be taken care of. Having separate clubs, rivalries, really wasn’t the best way.

“To this day we are solely focused on the Jacksonville area,” he said.

Once a member, most are hooked, said Cobb, noting the average length of membership is more than 20 years. New club members must be recommended by a current member, said Cobb, whose father and grandfather were members as well. Typical occupations for members include architects, lawyers, bankers and retired and active members of the military.

“Everybody has high character, intrinsic integrity, they are involved in the community outside of Meninak,” he said. “We are looking for people who care about the community, who care about children and they demonstrate that and they are looking for involvement.”

Riverside resident Hickory Fant, a member since 1964 who served as president in 1980, says the group is proud of its heritage of helping others.

“Years of technology-driven changes in the way we communicate...combined with the recent Great Recession, have been challenging to the memberships of civic and business clubs,” Fant said. “Yet we at Meninak feel a resurgence of spirit, camaraderie and enthusiasm buoyed by our growing number of younger members that bodes well as we approach our 100th anniversary in 2019.”

Ortega Forest resident Harrison Conyers, who joined in 1993 and served as president in 2008, is committed to building the community. “Through Meninak we are able to combine the leadership,

John Frederick Coots, who is best known for writing the melody to “Santa Claus is Coming to Town,” composed the Meninak song after being cared for by a doctor who was a Meninak Club member. Here are the words:

*Tramp, tramp, tramp, go the marching feet
Tramp, tramp, tramp,
up and down the street.
Is it the Army?
Is it the Navy?
It’s the people who care who belong
to Meninak!
So here’s to the best in Meninak,
Shoulder to shoulder, marching along together.
Cheers for the goals of Meninak,
We’re ready to fight with all our might
for everything that’s right!
Bringing help when none is available,
Never retreating from any attack!
So, use your head and your heart and
start to be a part,
Of the number one,
The best it’s Meninak!*

talents and resources of hundreds of community trustees to meet the needs of area youth through an annual capital project and college scholarships to select graduates of Youth Leadership Jacksonville,” Conyers said.

Club began in 1929

Officially, the club’s name is the combination of Greek words for “action” and “honesty,” although informally the name was considered shorthand for “men in action.” The club opened membership to women in the 1990s.

When the club was initially formed in 1929 a key goal was to foster unity between Jacksonville neighborhoods growing on the Northbank and Southbank of the St. John’s River. “In the early days of the club, gentleman got together to try to sort

of foster a real high-level integrity- and community-focused group that was made up of different professions across Jacksonville,” Cobb said.

The club attempted to expand in those early years as well to other regional cities, and even had a club in Havana, Cuba. But it ultimately found those satellite clubs didn’t have the same energy as the Jacksonville members, Cobb said.

That restored focus led to local partnerships with organizations such as the American Red Cross. The club will hold its 82nd Meninak Lifeguard Ocean Marathon Swim in Jacksonville Beach this year.

Many longtime residents will remember the club’s annual charity football game that was held until the 1980s.

“We have tried to do our community project and tried to sponsor community organizations that help youth,” Cobb said. “Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Boys and Girls Club, YMCA, YWCA...”

It also partners with Take Stock in Children and Junior Achievement to help identify five Jacksonville high school seniors to receive college scholarships. “We have a foundation that we are able to fund those scholarships with. It’s really an unbelievable synergy and energy that we have got going,” Cobb said.

The club has generated more news recently by hosting several very topical discussions during its weekly luncheon meetings at the Wyndham Jacksonville Riverwalk, including a forum of key figures in the police and fire pension fund issue. Other recent speakers have included University of North Florida President John Delaney and “Healthy Town” developer Peter Rummell.

A new initiative of the club is mentoring students about the importance of integrity and character. Working with students is “very rewarding and humbling” because it reminds members how difficult being a student can be, Cobb said.

But then reaching out to anyone in need is what the Meninak Club is all about.

“We would say that we provide help where none else is available. We don’t need the glory as long as we know that what we’re doing is having an impact in the community for our community.

“I don’t know if that makes us a little unusual, but at the end of the day we all can feel pretty good about it,” Cobb concluded.

For information about the club visit www.meninak.org.



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Local residents part of live TV proposals



Ellie Bishop and John Hamilton appeared on ABC's "Good Morning America."



Two Jacksonville natives appeared on ABC's "Good Morning America" on Feb. 14 for a special occasion.

John Hamilton, who grew up in Avondale, won a GMA contest for the opportunity to propose to his girlfriend, St. Nicholas native Ellie Bishop, on live TV. She accepted, to the cheers of onlookers, including Hamilton's mother Cindy and Bishop's mother Judie Bishop-Scardasis and her aunt Connie Wagster, who surprised them by coming to see the proposal in person.

"It turned out awesome," said Hamilton, who proposed at New York City's Bryant Park on the ice skating rink.

Hamilton responded to an online contest entry that gave him 200 words to explain why he wanted to be part of GMA's "Proposal Palooza." In all, 25 couples were flown to New York City.

"I thought we were just going for a

Valentine's Day getaway," Bishop said.

"All us girls thought we were getting an up-close private concert by (singer) Christina Perri, and in the middle of the song she stopped acting like the sound was off and all the guys dropped to one knee and proposed," Bishop said. "There was a lot of excitement on the rink even in minus 1 degree weather!"

Hamilton and Bishop went to middle school and high school together at Hendricks Methodist Day School and Bishop Kenny High School, then went their separate ways to attend different colleges. They reconnected after college and began dating about four years ago. They are planning a spring 2016 wedding.

It will be tough to top the proposal, though.

"After it was over people started calling us from Jacksonville and it blew up on Facebook," Hamilton said.

RAM regular is Chamber Small Business Award winner

By Greg Walsh
Resident Community News

If you have visited the Riverside Arts Market (RAM) in the past few years there's no doubt you saw Shai Tzabari making a pitch for his business Olive My Pickle.

Meeting and greeting people at the food stand is critical to Tzabari, who was recently named the Jax Chamber of Commerce Small Business Leader of the Year.

"Riverside is where we made our main focus because it is the downtown, the center of Jacksonville," the Israel-born Tzabari said. "Riverside Arts Market is one of most important markets. We have much more exposure there... and we have a chance to test market and get feedback."

Olive My Pickle's operation is on St. Augustine Road near University Boulevard. "Jacksonville is a great city. It's all about what you give to the city because you will never receive if you don't give back. That's a key principle," he said.

Jax Chamber President Daniel Davis said Tzabari is a prime example of how important small business is to the city. "Small business is the life blood of commerce in our community," Davis said.

Cynthia Farmer, immediate past president of the Chamber's Downtown Council, said fellow chamber



The business owners nominated by the Jax Chamber of Commerce as finalists for Small Business Leader of the Year award: Andy Bailes, Rebecca Walden, Denise Wallace, Marie Hope, Julie Dion, Shai Tzabari, Nico Hogeveen, Jeane Sumner, Joe Joseph, Dan Miller, Dallas Hempstead.

members saw Tzabari's enthusiasm starting with his first visit. "Shai, his wife Charlotte, and Olive My Pickle reflect incredible values that are a model for any business and the Downtown Council is especially proud of his accomplishments."

Nico Hogeveen, owner of GolfTEC on the Southside, was also a finalist for the Chamber award. Hogeveen said the application process was rigorous but very informative. "In terms of benefits, some of this has already started with

exposure throughout the JAX Chamber community and some will be leveraged throughout 2015," Hogeveen said.

Finalists for the Small Business Leader award must be a chamber member, must own at least 25 percent of the business, be active in daily operations, have been in business for at least three years, demonstrate business acumen and leadership and have gross revenues of less than \$5 million for the previous three years.

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Men's Garden Club

Mon., Mar. 2, 7 p.m., Garden Club of Jacksonville, 1005 Riverside Ave.

Carré Saunders, University of Florida on "Men's Garden Club of Jacksonville 4-H Endowment" and Andy Toelle, Duval County 4-H agent on "How the 4-H uses funding by the Men's Garden Club." Open to the public. Contact Donn Elliott, sweetwoodfarm@hotmail.com for details.

Book Sale and Family Fun Days

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5th Annual Northeast Florida Veg Fest

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Live music, speakers, cooking demonstrations, beer garden, kids' zone, pie-

eating contest, raffles, scavenger hunt and more. Organized by The Girls Gone Green.

Riverside Arts Market Opening Day

Sat., Mar. 7, 10 a.m., 715 Riverside Ave., under the Fuller Warren Bridge

Opening day presented by VyStar Credit Union kicks off with a parade; food, arts and crafts vendors, music and more.

Daylight Saving Time Begins - Sunday, Mar. 8

Remember to turn clocks forward one hour!

Dance Fest

Sun., Mar. 8, 5-6 p.m., Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd, 1100 Stock Street

Free dance festival featuring Florida Ballet, Fuego Flamenco and Unforced Rhythm Dance Company

St. John's River Dredging Town Hall Meeting

Mon., Mar. 9, 6-9 p.m., Adam W. Herbert University Center, Bldg. 43, Room 1058, UNF

Forum on the proposal to dredge/deepen the St. John's River, moderated by Dr. Georgette Dumont. Participants can comment/ask questions about the proposal. Free event; contact Catiin Dennis, (904) 620-2850 for more information.

Natural Life Music Festival

Sun., Mar. 15, 11 a.m. - 6 p.m., Metropolitan Park, 1410 Gator Bowl Blvd.

Free annual music festival benefits Children's Home Society of Florida; includes Crafternoon, Artisan Market, Food Village. For details, visit www.communityfirstnaturalifemusicfestival.com.

Duval Audubon Society

Mon., Mar. 16, 7:30 p.m., Swaim Memorial United Methodist Church, 1620 Naldo Ave.

Speaker Dave Korlacki, The Plant Man, on "If You Plant It, Birds Will Come." For more information, contact Carolyn Antman at (904) 737-1019.

29th Annual Celebrity Chefs Tasting Luncheon & Silent Auction

Thurs., Mar. 19, 10:30 a.m. - 1 p.m., The Prime Osborn Convention Center, 1000 Water St.

Presented by The Salvation Army Women's Auxiliary. Tickets \$30; call (904) 301-4841 or visit www.salvationarmynefl.org



Lobster Bake for Memorial Park

Sat., Mar. 21, 6:30 p.m., Cool Moose Café, 2708 Park St.

Seating is limited; cocktails and dinner to benefit Memorial Park restoration. Tickets at www.eventbrite.com

Willie's Spring Fashion Show

Sun., Mar. 22, 2 p.m., Willie's, The Shoppes of Avondale

All boys and girls, infants through age six are welcome to model Willie's spring fashions. Register at Willie's by Mar. 19.

A Movement of Movement: The Essence of Pilates

Sun., Mar. 22, 4 p.m., Sun-Ray Cinema, 1028 Park St.

Hosted by Tehila's Pilates, the documentary film is about the philosophy, lifestyle, movement, and world of Pilates. Told through the eyes of elders, world-renowned Pilates instructors, and everyday people who have been transformed by the Movement.

Arts in Avondale Free Concert

Fri., Mar. 27, 7 p.m., Avondale United Methodist Church, 1651 Talbot Ave.

Ted Munn in Concert: "A Little Help from My Friends" - for information, 904.389.1175 or www.aumcjax.org

Color Me Fed 5K Walk/Run

Sat., Mar. 28, 9 a.m., YMCA, 221 Riverside Ave.

Lunch provided by Tijuana Flat. 100 percent of proceeds stay local to help feed the homeless. Register at hungerfight.org

32nd Annual BBQ & Western

Sat., Mar. 28, 5 p.m., 17255 Normandy Blvd.

Presented by Miller Electric and WW Gay Mechanical Contractors, the event benefits Vision is Priceless. Homecooked BBQ, silent and live auctions, live entertainment. Tickets \$35. Call (904) 308-2020 or visit www.visionispriceless.org/western.



Under the Big Top

Sat., Mar. 28, 6 p.m., Buck Student Center, 4455 Atlantic Blvd.

A semi-formal evening gala featuring live and silent auctions for The Episcopal School of Jacksonville. Funds raised will be used to support all areas of the school. Tickets, which are limited, can be purchased at esj.ejoinme.org

Sheriff's Round-Up Benefit

Sat., Mar. 28, 6:30 p.m., Deerwood Country Club, 10239 Golf Club Drive

A night of boots and bling honoring Sheriff John Rutherford; a benefit for

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New American Songbook Concert Sunday, March 29

Community Easter Egg Hunt

Sat., Apr. 4, 10 a.m. to Noon, Boone Park South (Van Wert St.)

Sponsored by Avondale United Methodist Church; for information, 904.389.1175 www.aumcjax.org

Arts in Avondale Free Concert

Fri., Apr. 10, 7 p.m., Avondale United Methodist Church, 1651 Talbot Ave.

Praise Team Concert: Redemption: The Power of the Cross. For information, call 904.389.1175 or visit www.aumcjax.org

Duval Audubon Society

Mon., Apr. 20, 7:30 p.m., Swaim Memorial United Methodist Church, 1620 Naldo Ave.

Speaker Michael Brothers, Marine Science Center, on "Pelagic Birds of Florida's Northeast Coast." For more information, contact Carolyn Antman at (904) 737-1019.

50th Anniversary of Robert E. Lee High School Class of 1965

Sat., Apr. 25, 6:30-11:30 p.m., Deerwood Country Club, 10239 Golf Club Drive

The largest graduating class in the history of R. E. Lee High School will get together to celebrate its 50th anniversary. Members from the Classes of 1963 to 1967 are also invited. Limited seating. For information and to register, go to www.powderblue2015.com

PAL (Police Athletic League). For tickets, information or sponsorship opportunities, contact Renee Naughton, (904) 503-9460 or email events@jaxpal.com

3rd Annual Mt. Acosta Classic Endurance Race

Sun., Mar. 29, 3 p.m., Haskell, 111 Riverside

Run or bike as many loops of the Acosta Bridge as possible to raise funds for the Jaren Bynum Scholarship Fund for students in the mentoring program at Julia Landon College Preparatory. Family street fair at start and finish of race. Register at www.1stplacesports.com/mtacosta.html

Passion Play

Fri., Apr. 3, 7 p.m.; Sat., Apr. 4, 2 p.m., Sun., Apr. 5, 6 p.m., First Baptist Church Jacksonville

Celebrate Easter at the Jacksonville Passion Play, featuring Dove Award-winning artist Sandi Patty; 400+ musicians and actors; live animals; free parking and admission. For details, visit fbcjax.com/passionplay

Pedal 4 Paws

Sat., Apr. 4, 7:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., Unity Plaza, 220 Riverside Ave.

Bicycle ride through city's historic districts, arts festival and Easter Egg Hunt to benefit First Coast No More Homeless Pets. Register at www.fcnmhp.org

Helen Brittain and Grace Williamson The Women's Auxiliary of the Salvation Army got together for a luncheon at the Ferguson home in Riverside Feb. 23. The group, led by first vice president Linda White and current president Debbie Veale, went over the upcoming menu for the 29th Annual Celebrity Chefs Tasting Luncheon and Silent Auction menu and held their monthly planning meeting. The event will feature a keynote speech by best-selling author, Fmr. Captain Luis Carlos Mantalvn, who wrote about his companion and service dog "Tuesday". For more information about the event visit salvationarmyfla.org or call 301-4841.



Don't miss the Willie's Spring Fashion Show, Sunday March 22 at 2:00 p.m.



Upcoming Events section listing various performances like Jane Lynch, Great Guitar Gathering, Three Dog Night, Elvis Costello, etc.

COLOR ME FED 5K WALK/RUN advertisement for Saturday March 28th, 9:00am-12:00pm.

NATURAL LIFE MUSIC FESTIVAL advertisement for Sunday, March 15, 2015, featuring bands like Judah & the Lion, Horse Feathers, etc.

32ND ANNUAL THE KEELER PROPERTY advertisement for BBQ & Western on March 28, 2015.

You Gotta Have Heart

Mel and Debbie Gottlieb honored at Tuxedos and Tennis Shoes Heart Ball

By Peggy Harrell Jennings
Resident Community News

The old song “Ya’ Gotta Have Heart – Miles and Miles and Miles of Heart” sums up the personality, mission and personal journey of Jacksonville’s Martin “Mel” Gottlieb.

Gottlieb has heart in abundance. So much that he and his wife of 45 years, Debbie, are being honored by the American Heart Association at the Tuxedos and Tennis Shoes Ball for their dedication to bringing awareness and establishing programs to promote good heart health in the Jacksonville Community.

Kathryn Pitocchelli of St. Vincent’s HeartSmart said, “After Mr. Gottlieb’s second cardiovascular event he did a lifestyle overhaul. When he saw the transformation in his life and heart (literally), he started working to establish a program based on the Dean Ornish approach to heart health.”

Working with St. Vincent’s President and CEO Moody Chisholm, dieticians, nutritionists, and other health care professionals, Gottlieb helped create HeartSmart which was launched in November of 2014. He has seen every presentation, tasted every recipe, and even piloted the program at his business. “The cartoon on the back of the brochure says, ‘What fits your busy schedule better, exercising one hour a day or being dead 24 hours a day?’” said Pitocchelli. “This sums up Mel’s approach to good health and his wry sense of humor.”

The wake-up call

The son of a butcher, Gottlieb was “the steak expert. I had a barbeque sandwich every day for lunch.” In 2004 he was awakened in the middle of the night with chest and jaw pain. His wife Debbie, a nurse, realized that he was having a heart attack. After surgery and four bypasses he recovered but says he didn’t change

his lifestyle much. In 2009 the chest pains were back. His doctor recommended Dr. Dean Ornish’s book Reversing Heart Disease saying, “It works but nobody ever does it.”

For a Type A, goal-oriented personality like Gottlieb, becoming healthy became his passion and focus. “I can understand how folks find it difficult to change but I stopped eating meat right then. We bought two copies of Ornish’s book on the way home. Every time I’d want something I asked myself how could I explain to anyone I love and who loves me that eating something unhealthy is more important to me than they are? Debbie didn’t want me to die! So, we went to Dr. Ornish’s WellSpring Immersion program and spent seven days learning how to shop, cook, eat, exercise and control stress. Debbie said even if you’ve just improved a little bit at your next checkup – you are staying on this!” Gottlieb’s one year checkup showed a marked improvement.

A healthy workplace

Motivated by this turn around, he began implementing his lifestyle changes to inspire others. Beside the St. Vincent’s HeartSmart program, he changed the snack machines at his medical billing business to heart-healthy choices, paid for gym memberships for his employees, built an on-site gym (which has a trainer come in daily), offers yoga, a life coach, smoking cessation and other classes for his employees. He mentions that when business associates ask him what the return on his investment is, he answers: “How do you measure? We have folks who have lost weight – I’ve lost 30 pounds – who go exercise when they didn’t before. We’ve started a running club; we have built camaraderie. We hope it’s changing someone’s life.”

The smiles and friendly greetings from every one of his employees, the cartoons on



the board room table, the calm, and casual yet totally professional demeanor speak volumes about employee satisfaction and productivity. Gottlieb said, “The people here are like family. We have provided a good place to work – that matters to me. We take pride in taking the pain out of billing for patients. When I started in 1978 in the medical billing business we had three employees – no salesmen and no marketing people – we grew to 700 employees and then expanded to around 1,000. I retired in 1995 but took over again in 2004.”

When asked what motivated him to go into medical billing as a career he said with a totally straight face, “Since I was a little boy I wanted to go into the medical billing business.” Then laughs at this obvious “gotcha!”

A legacy of love

An hour with Gottlieb would do wonders for anyone’s blood pressure. His kindness and shows through in all he does. He spoke about how Debbie inspires and supports his life changes; she has been a vegetarian for 11 years, as are their son and daughter. When asked if their lifestyle inspired their children, Debbie remarked laughingly that it was probably the other way around.

Gottlieb radiates good humor, has a welcoming and unhurried manner and comments, “I’m so fortunate.” His Memories of Love Foundation is a “legacy of love” to his

son Marty who passed away in 2004.

Helen Werkin, executive director of Memories of Love Foundation, explained that proceeds from the biathlon provide families in which a parent is struggling with a life threatening illness an opportunity to travel to Disney World as a get away from the stresses of illness and build happy memories. The organization sends around 15 to 20 families each month.

Gottlieb, trim and fit at age 68, has embraced a vegetarian lifestyle, bicycles a heart pumping 40 miles, sometimes as much as four or five times a week. Debbie said “That is not my thing but I walk five miles a day and play tennis.”

The Heart Association asks, “What is your WHY?” The Gottliebs’ “why” is their health and their children, five grandchildren and one on the way. Mild mannered Gottlieb stated, “I get really frustrated and angry that coronary artery disease kills the most people in this country and is totally preventable and reversible.”

Ashley Plotts of the American Heart Association said, “The Gottliebs are an inspiration. They have had a huge impact on the Jacksonville community as a whole.”

Is it any wonder that the American Heart Association will honor Debbie and Mel at the Tuxedos and Tennis Shoes Ball? Gottlieb said, “I can bring attention to heart disease and help people that’s important.” Debbie joined in, “We are very honored to be honored!”

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What is Crime Stoppers?
Crime Stoppers is a partnership between the Community, The Media, and Law Enforcement, whose mandate is to “Work Together to Solve and Prevent Crime.”

The program is a community based, non-profit corporation, managed by a civilian volunteer board of directors. It is a crime information collection operation, which enables anyone with information about a crime, and who wishes to remain anonymous, to pass that information on to law enforcement through a neutral organization.

Paid for by the Florida Attorney General's Office Crime Stoppers Trust Fund

Businessmen gather for Oyster Roast



Casey Bulgin, Tracy Martin and John Barley



Roy Schnauss with Madison Shelley and David Parsons

The Professional and Businessmen's Association of Jacksonville, founded in 1976 by a group of like-minded business leaders, invites guest speakers to its monthly meeting to provide business knowledge to the club. The association, referred to as the PBA, also enjoys events such as the annual Oyster Roast, shown here, a Christmas party and an annual golf tournament, scheduled for this month at the Timuquana Country Club.

The 2015 Board of Directors includes Rich Exline, president; Jim Turnage, vice president; David Ashley, treasurer; Stanton Hudmon, secretary; Cole Pepper, historian and Sid Jones, past president. To learn more, visit www.pbajax.org.

Well-known author speaks at annual luncheon



The 30th annual Women for Christ Luncheon was held at the Prime Osborn Convention Center last month, featuring well-known Christian author Liz Curtis Higgs as the guest speaker. The organization's sole purpose is to provide women in the Jacksonville community with the opportunity to hear outstanding Christian speakers. Higgs is the author of the best-selling Bad Girls of the Bible series and many other books.

Past and present committee members pose with the guest speaker: Anis Daly, Anne Tyre, Patty Donahoo, Liz Curtis Higgs, Katherine Nott, Pat Setzer, Peggy Allcorn.

Seniors recognized for community volunteer hours

Pat Warner, Ann Stephens, Jolan Bateman, Ursula Phillips (front), and Mary Irvin, Mary Thompson and Richard Carr are seven of the nearly 100 seniors who were feted at a special event last month in recognition of the hours donated to community services. As volunteers with Seniors on a Mission, the Murray Hill team enjoyed a concert, Pops in Love, at the Times-Union Center for Performing Arts, after a short recognition ceremony. Teams from Baymeadows, the Beaches, Fruit Cove, Lakewood, Murray Hill, Orange Park, Ortega and Regency received gift baskets courtesy of Peterbrooke Chocolates.





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In Memoriam

Mary Gaile Edwards Wingard

Friends describe Wingard as caring mother, tireless volunteer

By Greg Walsh
Resident Community News

Friends and family of Gaile Wingard are remembering a vibrant, active mother and wife who spent many hours volunteering at her children's school and for other important community causes in Jacksonville.

Mrs. Wingard, who passed away on Jan. 27, was also a wonderful volunteer, said her longtime friend Nancy Burrows.

"She was thoughtful and creative, and she was probably the best friend anyone could have," Burrows said. "I miss her every day."

The two became friends after their families moved to the Ortega area in the early 1970s and their children began attending St. Mark's Episcopal Day School. Burrows said she and her husband didn't know anyone in Jacksonville and neither did Mrs. Wingard and her husband, Dr. Joseph Theodore "Ted" Wingard Jr.

There are many good memories, Burrows said, of working with Mrs. Wingard on fun projects at the school. "I can remember one time she and I had to go to McDonald's to pick up the orange drink for the kids' lunch. Another time we delivered poinsettias from the back of a truck to raise money for the school," Burrows said.

Early on Mrs. Wingard was a school



teacher when she was first married but she later became a stay-at-home mom. But that didn't curtail her creativity, said Burrows, noting that her friend did the interior designing and furnished the family's beach homes near Charleston, S.C.

A Greenville, S.C., native, Mrs. Wingard was a mom first and foremost, Burrows said, and they loved their longtime home on Yacht Club Road in Ortega Forest.

"She always put her family first and she allowed us to be a part of that family," she said. "She was more like a sister to me."

Among her community involvement was volunteering at the Cummer Museum of Art and Gardens, Jacksonville Zoo

and Gardens, Hubbard House, and was also a trustee at the Episcopal School of Jacksonville and St. Mark's Episcopal Day School.

Dave Wingard said his mother "encouraged all of her children in their lives and careers and loved spending time with her grandchildren. She loved hosting the whole family during the holidays at her home in Ortega.

"She also opened up her home and hosted many fundraising events for the organizations she supported. She meant a great deal to many people in this community and she will be missed."

Mary Gaile Edwards Wingard, 69, is survived by her husband; her children, Joseph Theodore Wingard III and his wife Pam, Jonathan David Wingard and his wife Heather, and Katherine Wingard Sherman and her husband Nate; her grandsons, Matthew Alexander Wingard, Jonathan Michael Wingard, Jonathan Ramsay Wingard, Joseph Theodore Wingard, Nathaniel Alden Sherman Jr., and an unborn granddaughter to be named Beatrice Gaile Sherman; her sister Jeanne Edwards Yarborough; and six nieces.

A memorial service to honor her was held Jan. 30 at St. Mark's Episcopal Church. The family asks that donations may be made in her memory to St. Mark's Episcopal Day School.

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For over 20 years the Silver Fox Squares Dance Club has raised \$52,000 for Dreams Come True helping to fulfill the dreams of more than 20 local children and their families. Bob Starling, Paulette Kilts, Ron Allen and Dan Kilts are four of the nearly 50 skilled square dancers who filled Trinity Lutheran Church, 1415 McDuff Ave., for a Jan. 23rd evening complete with money raffle, silent auction, and endless square dancing with some of the finest callers and cuers in Northeast Florida.

"It is always an honor for the Silver Fox Squares to present our annual Circus Dance in support of Dreams Come True and the children they serve," stated Dan Kilts, president of the group. The event raised \$3,060 for Dreams Come True and a check will be presented on Mar. 6 at the church.



Community Nutcracker presents \$45,000 to seven local charities

Terry Eason, Community PedsCare; Sheri Criswell, Dreams Come True; Steve Burnett, Community Health Outreach; Bruce Ganger, Feeding Northeast Florida; Kathy Harris, We Care Jacksonville; Gary Walo, Community Nutcracker; Michael Howland, Jacksonville Speech and Hearing Center



The Community Nutcracker, Inc. presented \$45,000 in donations to seven local charities from proceeds raised through its 23rd annual production of The Community Nutcracker Ballet in December 2014. Donations were made to Dreams Come True of Jacksonville; Community PedsCare; We Care Jacksonville; Sanctuary on 8th Street; Feeding Northeast Florida; Jacksonville Speech and Hearing Center; and Community Health Outreach.

Ravishing in red for Heart Health Month



The GFWC Lakeshore Woman's Club donned red dresses, blouses, sweaters and jackets in a vivid show of support for Heart Health Month at the February meeting. "All our members were stunning when they wore red in support of making women aware of heart disease," said club president Nancy Ware. "The local American Heart Association provided us with handouts and red dress pins." First Vice President Terry Laws spoke on how to stop smoking, manage blood pressure, change eating habits, physical activities and manage a healthy weight because heart disease is the No. 1 killer of women.

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In Memoriam

Anne Wright Fortson Freeman – Dec. 30, 1919, to Jan. 26, 2015

By Kate A. Hallock
Resident Community News

The most common compliment paid from family and friends alike of Anne Wright Fortson Freeman was her “wonderful unique ability to work with other people in organizing projects.”

“I have known Anne Wright for 75 years. She grew up on the Point in Ortega where I lived in the growing up years,” said David “Dink” Foerster. “She was a very gracious person. She was delightful to work with. I have the fondest memories because she was so easy to get along with; she got along with other people so well.”

That easy-going attribute served Freeman well as she was involved in many civic organizations and projects from the time she was an adult in Jacksonville.

Freeman was a past president of the Junior League of Jacksonville, and of the former Jacksonville Children’s Museum (presently known as the Museum of Science and History), where daughter Leslie Freeman recalls attending birthday parties and taking art classes.

Freeman’s primary interest was the preservation and restoration of historic properties, and during the early 1970s through her membership in the National Society of the Colonial Dames in the State of Florida she started an extensive research and archaeological program for the 1798 Ximenez-Fatio



Sisters Bolling, Anne and Nellie with brothers Malcolm and Thomas Fortson, 1928

House in St. Augustine and promoted the use of exceptional consultants to properly restore the House.

Locally, and perhaps most significantly, Freeman’s preservation efforts were focused on Memorial Park.

A driving force behind the organization of the Memorial Park Association, Freeman, 95, had lived across the street from the park at

one point in her life. “She was such a great resource with an encyclopedic knowledge of both the park and the Olmsted Brothers’ works,” said Jake Ingram, past MPA president. “With her went a treasure trove of knowledge.”

“When she organized MPA in 1987, that played a significant part in preserving the park and the memorial to World War I veterans,” said Foerster, also a past MPA president. “Had it not been for Anne, I don’t think the park would be as beautiful today as it is. So many have followed in her steps in

preserving the park.”

Ingram also noted that “she did not take lightly the task of founding and operating the MPA and it was her abiding intent that any and all improvements to the park be based soundly in its well documented history. Those documents reside today with the Jacksonville Historic Society archives and we have her to thank for them.”

Freeman, described by friend and MPA executive vice president Bobby Arnold, was “old Jacksonville. She was from an old family that believed in maintaining the lovely things that were here when we were all children. Anne has always been a very positive person and knew exactly how the park should look and be cared for. She wanted it just so. I believe that she was pleased with what we were doing.”

Anne Wright Freeman is survived by a daughter, Leslie Anne Freeman of Riverside; a son Judson Freeman Jr. (Tovia), of Ortega; two granddaughters, Cara Freeman Bowyer (Jason), San Jose, and Crista Freeman, Brooklyn, N.Y.; a great-grandson, James Wright Bowyer; a brother Robert Malcolm Fortson Jr. (Kathryn), Ortega; sisters, Mrs. E. W. S. Hull (Nellie), Chestertown, Md., Mrs. Allan Douglas (Bolling), Clayton, Ga., Mrs. Frank Walthall (Janet), Macon, Ga.; sister-in-law Mrs. Thomas Edward Fortson (Pat), Fleming Island; and many nieces, nephews and cousins.



Join us every Thursday in March, 4:30-6:30 p.m.

- 1st week: Virtual Dementia Tour
- 2nd week: Alzheimer’s Support Group
- 3rd week: Wine & Design Creative Event
- 4th week: Housewarming Party for New Families

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The Way we Were

Dr. Linda Fisher

By Julie Kerns Garmendia
Resident Community News

Teaching is in her blood.

Dr. Linda McLucas Fisher, now 72, was the only child of teachers Leonard and Margaret Cox McLucas. The family celebrated her first birthday in their new Murray Hill home on Attleboro Street after moving from Sanford, FL with Fisher's maternal grandmother Maud Medill Miller. Her father was a new coach and teacher at Robert E. Lee High School before serving as Duval County Supervisor of Health & Physical Education. Her mother taught American History at Lee for 30 years. Murray Hill was a snapshot of small town America and Robert E. Lee High School was the place to be in Jacksonville.

"I got to attend wonderful public schools: Ruth N. Upson Elementary, John Gorrie Middle School and I was a 1960 Lee High graduate," said Fisher. "Murray Hill felt like the heart of things happening in Jacksonville, plus close to everything in Riverside or Downtown. I studied ballet with Thelma Baggs, had piano and elocution lessons. I grew up singing in the church choir at Riverside Presbyterian. We all loved to eat at Whiteway, or go to Dreamette for ice cream and Pop Barrier's for malted frosties and delicious barbecue."

After graduation from Lee, Fisher left Jacksonville for Wheaton College in Norton, MA where she earned her degree in English and Literature. She then completed her Master's degree at Boston

University and returned to Jacksonville. Fisher taught briefly at Andrew Jackson High School before the "new" Florida Community College (now Florida State College) Kent Campus recruited her in 1969. Around that time she attended a concert at the Cummer Museum of Art & Gardens with her mother.

"Little did I know that would be the day I first saw my future husband, Michael Fisher of Avondale. I thought he was so handsome, but I was much too shy to introduce myself. Later I saw him again when he was on a date with a friend of mine at a Jacksonville Symphony concert and she introduced us. After that we began dating and married in 1970," Fisher said.

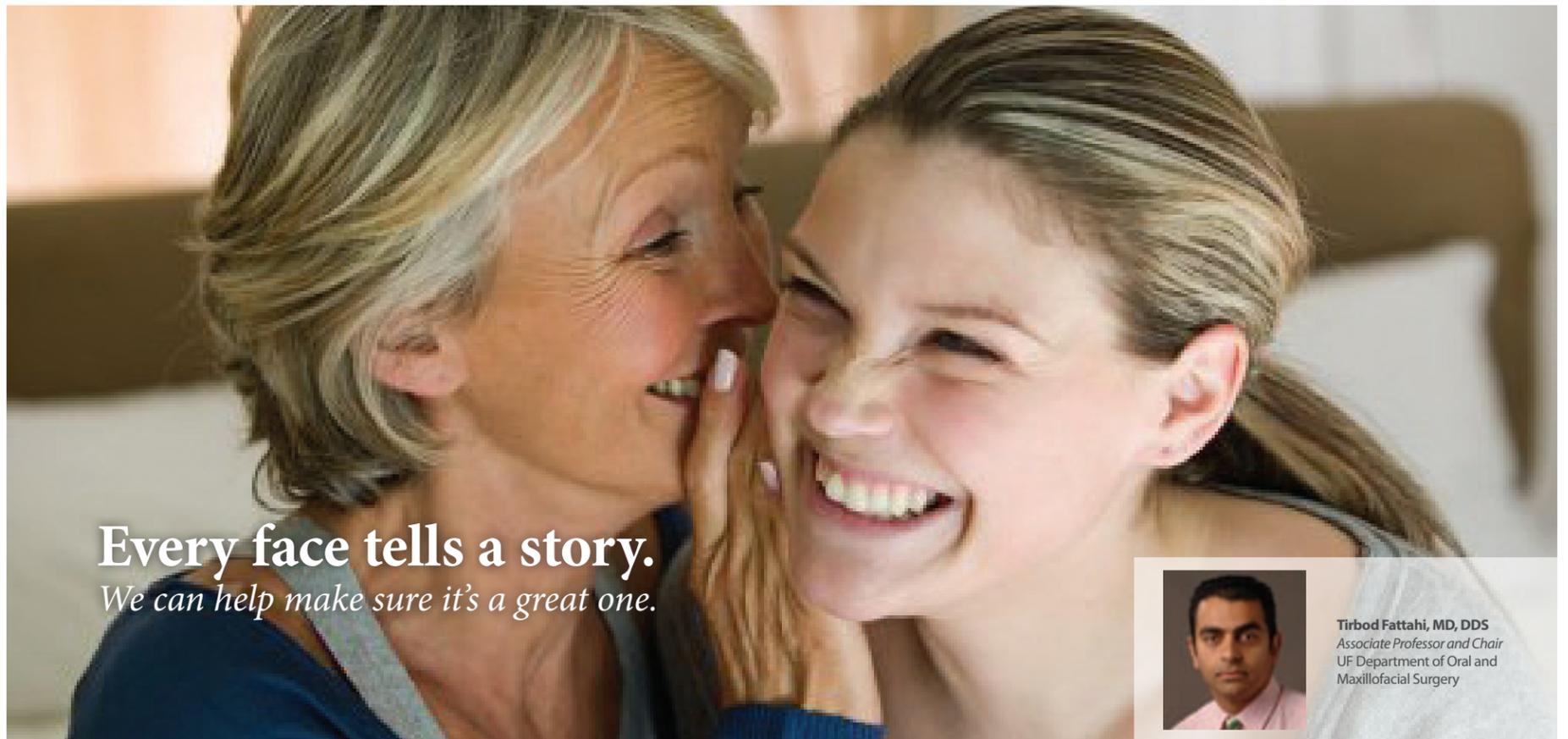
After their marriage the Fishers moved to their first Avondale home on Pine Street near Talbot to be near Michael's family and Linda's work. After their son Michael was born they moved to their Hedrick Avenue home where they've lived for 40 years and Linda's mother moved into the Pine Street house.

Fisher completed her doctorate at Florida Atlantic University Boca Raton with her mother's help caring for her children. Her passion for public school education earned her a reputation among students, colleagues and community as "one of Jacksonville's most beloved educators." The hallmark of her career was her expansion of traditional college

continued on page 53



Linda McLucas, age 6, Easter Sunday at Riverside Presbyterian Church



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Tirbod Fattahi, MD, DDS
Associate Professor and Chair
UF Department of Oral and
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Diane Bunker, Muffet Corse, Helen Lane, Betsy Lovett, Linda Fisher

instruction with her own creativity and enthusiasm. It was a fact that Dr. Fisher's classes filled quickly.

When asked to teach Humanities courses, Fisher invited guest speakers with expertise in each region of World Literature or History she taught: Greek, Arabic or Italian literature, Art History, World Philosophies, Religions or Music Appreciation among others. She was interested in more than mastery of course content; she sought life knowledge, enrichment and arts exposure through first-hand experiences for students. Fisher offered extra credit for optional field trips to free or low cost (she's a keen negotiator, too) cultural events, art exhibitions, musical concerts and museums. Her own home and collections from world travel became an exciting extension of her classroom.

"I invited students to luncheons at my home where we sampled food from cultures being studied. I showed them art or objects from each country or historical period, using our personal collections. Sharing with students was a delight for us," she said.

Linda retired from FSCJ in 2010 after nearly 40 years. She celebrates her 45th wedding anniversary with her husband, local attorney Michael W. Fisher, in September 2015. Michael grew up just a couple of miles away from Linda, on Richmond Street where he lived with his parents Prim (short for Primrose) and Dorothy Fisher. Michael's sisters

both live in Avondale, Kate Fisher Levitz works at FSCJ and Liz Fisher Harris is a retired teacher. Michael attended Bolles, graduated from the University of Pennsylvania and Stetson University College of Law. His law practice is with Fisher, Tousey, Leas & Ball, P.A.

The Fishers have two children and two grandchildren. Their son, Michael Medill Fisher works in the financial industry and lives behind Fishweir Elementary with their granddaughter Charity Lee Fisher. Charity, 11, is a drama student at LaVilla School of the Arts. The Fishers' daughter, Laura Lee is married to Leon Corbett. They live in Tallahassee with the Fishers' grandson, Arran, 6.

Linda is a 40-year member and past president of Friday Musicale, and the couple have long supported multiple community and arts organizations. Michael studied with violinist Aaron Krosnick of Jacksonville University and Jacksonville Symphony. They've traveled the world, enjoy sailing, the beach and walking their neighborhood. Michael collects rare maps and documents and often is asked to guest lecture on those topics.

Michael's main charity is FONKOSE (Haitian Creole for Shoulder to Shoulder), Haiti's largest microfinance institution, providing rural Haitian women with financial (loaned seed money) support including health education and literacy training.

The Windsor honors Watkins on his 100th birthday



Bob Watkins, a resident at The Windsor, is honored by his friends and family at his 100th birthday party.

Bob Watkins spent a good part of his adult life serving as a Navy pilot in military conflicts around the world.

But on Feb. 6 it was time for The Windsor resident to sit back and enjoy a serving of appreciation and affection from friends and family marking his 100th birthday. Watkins, who has difficulty speaking due to a recent stroke, was clearly moved by the songs, gifts and congratulatory comments from friends like Dr. David Anderdewski.

"For those who have never met Bob they missed a real treat," said Anderdewski, who was a frequent golf partner. "He is a good fisherman and a good golfer."

Watkins was drafted into the Navy in 1937 and became one of only 20 enlisted men selected out of more than 3,000 applicants to become pilots. On Dec. 7, 1941, Watkins was piloting one of the planes escorting ships taking supplies to Great Britain; within a month he was reassigned to the Pacific theater where he saw action in many of the major naval battles, Anderdewski said.

Watkins logged more than 11,000 hours in military aircraft while serving in World War II, the Korean War and Vietnam War before retiring as a Navy commander in 1969.

He and his wife, Hazel, have been married 76 years and are both residents of The Windsor.



Bob Watkins' 100th birthday cake included a photo of him as a Navy pilot.

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BIZ PICKS

JAXBIZ, a nonprofit, nonpartisan political committee affiliated with the JAX Chamber, works to identify candidates committed to economic growth and promoting policies to make Jacksonville a business-friendly community.

The committee spent days interviewing candidates and looking through their records and platforms.

Neighborhoods in Riverside, Avondale, Murray Hill and Ortega are now represented by either Councilman Jim Love or Councilman Warren Jones. Love is seeking reelection and endorsed by JAXBIZ. Jones is term-limited and JAXBIZ has endorsed Garrett Dennis to replace him.

The entire city votes for Mayor, Sheriff and the At-Large councilmembers.

JAXBIZ has made the following endorsements in the Jacksonville Mayor, Sheriff and City Council 2015 spring elections.

MAYOR		DISTRICT 10	
■ Lenny Curry	REP	■ Reggie Brown	DEM
SHERIFF		DISTRICT 11	
■ Mike Williams	REP	■ Danny Becton*	REP
DISTRICT 2		DISTRICT 12	
■ Lisa King	DEM	■ Doyle Carter	REP
DISTRICT 3		DISTRICT 13	
■ Aaron Bowman	REP	■ Bill Gulliford*	REP
DISTRICT 4		DISTRICT 14	
■ Scott Wilson	REP	■ Jim Love	REP
DISTRICT 5		AT-LARGE GROUP 1	
■ Lori Boyer*	REP	■ Anna Brosche	REP
DISTRICT 6		AT-LARGE GROUP 2	
■ Matt Schellenberg	REP	■ David Barron	REP
DISTRICT 7		AT-LARGE GROUP 3	
■ Reggie Gaffney	DEM	■ Tommy Hazouri	DEM
DISTRICT 8		AT-LARGE GROUP 4	
■ Pat Lockett-Felder	DEM	■ Greg Anderson	REP
DISTRICT 9		AT-LARGE GROUP 5	
■ Garrett Dennis	DEM	■ Michelle Tappouni	REP

* Not on ballot. Endorsed by JAXBIZ but elected without opposition.

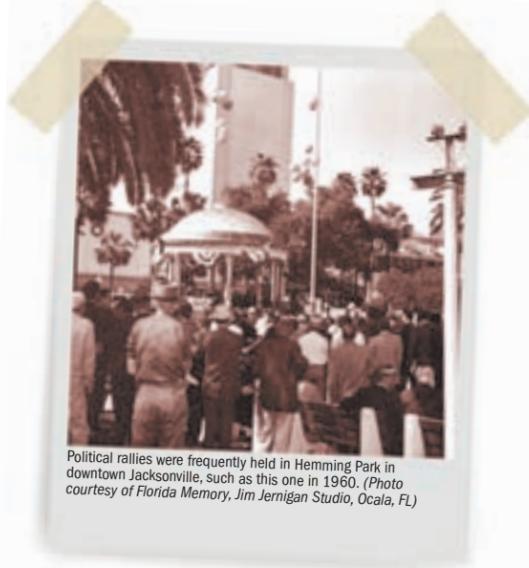
* FLASHBACKS *

Flashback to another era in elections

By Robin Robinson
Resident Community News



In 1960, prior to the use of computers, voter registration cards were filled out manually and hard copies were filed in huge rotating files in the Office of Elections. (Photo courtesy of Jacksonville Historical Society)



Political rallies were frequently held in Hemming Park in downtown Jacksonville, such as this one in 1960. (Photo courtesy of Florida Memory, Jim Jernigan Studio, Ocala, FL)



In 1960 the levered voting machine shown here was utilized in most precincts. Voters were instructed to walk into the booth, pull the handle to close the curtains and then vote by pressing the levers. Once voting was completed the voter would pull the handle to register their vote and open the curtains. It was bulky, but efficiently recorded the vote. (Photo courtesy of Florida Memory, Jim Jernigan Studio, Ocala, FL)



Mayor Hayden Burns in 1960 with fellow Democratic politicians campaigning in downtown Jacksonville along with a live donkey symbolizing their party. Mayor Burns was first elected in 1949 and re-elected to the office four times, serving the longest stint of any mayor in Jacksonville. (Photo courtesy of Florida Memory, Jim Jernigan Studio, Ocala, FL)

Casting one's vote an important privilege

Early voting begins March 9

By Katie Schoettler
Resident Community News

Only an estimated 30 percent of Duval County's registered voters will hit the polls for the March 24 election that includes the races for mayor, sheriff and numerous City Council seats.

Why the low turnout projection? It could be because many voters don't realize how important the March election is and how a number of races may be decided this month without moving to the General Election in May.

Many Jacksonville voters may be unaware the March election is unlike a traditional primary election where they can only cast votes for candidates in their party. In Jacksonville's unitary election, all candidates running for office appear on the same ballot. So, even if you are registered as a Democrat, you can vote for a Republican candidate and vice versa; independent voters can also cast ballots for any party's candidate in the unitary election.

In the event no candidate receives more than 50 percent of the vote, the top two vote-getting candidates, regardless of party affiliation will face off in the General Election on May 19.

As of Feb. 19, there were 548,733 registered voters in Duval County, with Democrats totaling 227,695, Republicans 201,110 and no party affiliated (NPA) voters at 119,928.

Increasing voter turnout

A low voter turnout is detrimental in a unitary election. According to Robert Phillips, Chief Election Officer with the Duval County Supervisor of Elections, an election costs about \$1.5 million. The higher the turnout in the unitary election, the higher the opportunity for one candidate to earn the majority of the vote and thus avoid the expense of a run-off. A higher voter turnout can also decrease the probability of a recount, which can cost the taxpayers thousands of dollars.

There are many organizations in Jacksonville with the sole mission of increasing voter turnout, including the newly formed Jax Young Voters Coalition, a non-partisan group with a goal to increase turnout of voters between ages 18 to 40.

Voters deserve to know the issues that will impact the future of Jacksonville and the solutions and ideas each candidate has to address those issues. It is never too late to become familiar with the issues and candidates.

Education is key when deciding which candidates to vote for, and research all of the races candidates and key issues is important. One way to avoid this problem is to look at the sample ballot from the Supervisor of Elections Office to become familiar with the races and the candidates up for election working to earn your vote.

Campaigns thrive with the help of volunteers. If a specific candidate or issue sparks your interest, do not hesitate to contact the campaign team to see what you can do to help. Most importantly, always remember to get out and vote. Every vote really does count and the outcome of each race will affect the future of the city.

Contact the Duval County Supervisor of Elections or visit www.duval elections.com for more information.

Local elections this month remind us of a time when rallies brought out voters and the voting process was manual from start to finish.



In Florida in 1950 George Smathers won a contentious race against Claude Pepper for a seat in the U. S. Senate. Smathers is shown here at his campaign headquarters where returns were tallied on a chalkboard by his campaign workers. Returns indicated that he was the winner as he celebrated with his wife. (Photo courtesy of Jacksonville Historical Society)

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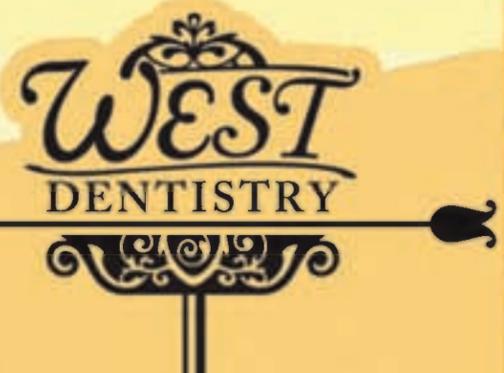
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