

Riverside – Avondale – Ortega – Murray Hill

Community News

Resident



AVONDALE NEIGHBORS HOST JUNIOR OLYMPICS

READ MORE, PAGE 44

Front: Amelia Fuller, Emma Ruth Ferguson, Conrad Roessler, Nick Narducci, Jr., Adelina Narducci; second row: Lizzie Nowicki, Emma Nussbaum, Lulu Nowicki, Katie Nussbaum, Ella Nussbaum, Jack Pruden; third row: Iris Slopsama, Max Slopsama, Ainsley Pruden, Cece Nowicki, Sam Nunes, Alex Slopsama



A NIGHT FOR NEMOURS

Local patrons, Priyanka and Ragu Murthy, joined other like-minded donors to lift the lifesaving efforts of physicians and staff at the Nemours Children's Specialty Care. The largest single fundraising effort for the clinic, An Evening of Promise continues to fund education outreach, advocacy, patient care, research and other outstanding services provided to the children and adolescents under their care. Read more, page 26

WHAT'S INSIDE

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- Avondale residents, merchants grapple with parking problem **PAGE 8 >>>**
- Multiple projects in planning for Historic District **PAGE 10 >>>**
- New YMCA opens to cheers and applause **PAGE 11 >>>**

PROPOSED RESTAURANT IN AVONDALE RECEIVES GREEN LIGHT

By Kate A. Hallock
Resident Community News

Against the recommendation of the City of Jacksonville Planning and Development Department and despite passionate pleas from Avondale residents, businesses, and property owners, the Planning Commission voted 5-3 to approve a request for a 120-seat restaurant to move into the Shoppes of Avondale without having to provide any off-street parking.

The applicant, property owner Thomas R. Lee, had requested an administrative deviation to reduce the number of required parking spaces from 10 to zero on behalf of his tenant, BMR Dining Group, registered

in Ponte Vedra Beach, but with roots in New York. Lee had also applied for an exception for full service of all alcoholic beverages and outdoor sales and service. The eight-member Planning Commission approved the exception 7-1 during its Aug. 18 meeting following a public hearing.

At the forefront of the issue for residents and other business owners was the fear that permitting 120-seats to utilize more than 5,000 square feet of space was an invitation to put in banquet rooms or a large bar area, neither of which count as seats toward the parking requirement.

Continued on page 40



3563 St. Johns Avenue will soon be the site of another restaurant option in the Shoppes of Avondale

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ORTEGA CHURCH CONTINUES SUPPORT FOR CUBAN CHURCH

For 28 years St. Mark's Episcopal Church in Ortega has cherished a sister parish relationship with La Iglesia Santa Maria Virgen (St. Mary's) in Itabo, Cuba. Each year, members of St. Mark's travel, via Havana to St. Mary's with medicines and gifts for the people of St. Mary's, as well as financial resources, which have provided critical renovations and additions to the church.

In July a mission team traveled to Cuba to provide Vacation Bible School for the children and youth of St. Mary's as well as Bible studies for the adults. Rev. Deacon Sandra Kidd led Sunday worship; and the Jacksonville contingent transported various materials difficult to obtain in Cuba, according to Bob Kidd. Team members included Laura and Xander Magevney, Bob and Sandra Kidd, Jerry Potts, Dennis Kelly, Dr. Mercedes McGowan and Lizzie Grich.

Mission trip members enjoy a Sunday afternoon ride in a horse-drawn carriage in Itabo, Cuba. Left, front to back: Rev. Deacon Sandra Kidd, Laura Magevney, Jerry Potts and Joly, a member of St. Mary's. Right, behind the driver, front to back: Dr. Mercedes McGowan (translator), Lizzie Grich, and Dennis Kelly.

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Q I just got the appraisal on a house I'm buying and the house measures over 300 square feet LESS than I thought. Even with the missing square footage, the house still appraised at the price I agreed to pay. My realtor said there's nothing I can do because the contract says square footage has to be verified during the inspection period. It seems so hard to believe I don't have any recourse!

A Most realtors pull the square footage from the tax records which can be inaccurate. If your appraisal had come in at a value less than contract price, you could've challenged this and hopefully gotten a price reduction. But, since it appraised, your options are limited. You could prevail on the goodwill of the seller and hope they will make an adjustment. In the future, you can write in the right to cancel if the appraisal shows less square footage than was represented.

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Third time may be the charm for Commander/St. Johns Village

By Kate A. Hallock
Resident Community News

Calling it “Commander 3.0,” Jeff Graf said he had “lived through” two previous versions and hoped this would be the last of what could happen to the property on St. Johns Avenue known as St. Johns Village and Commander Tower Apartments.

In a community meeting Aug. 29 at the Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd, Graf referred to prior Planned Unit Developments (PUD) in 2006 and 2014, which proved to be unfruitful attempts to update the 55-year-old property. He and other Arden neighborhood residents, as well as property owners in the Fairfax neighborhood across Fishweir Creek, and residents of the Fishweir neighborhood on the other side of St. Johns Avenue, battled the previous developments as having too much density and intensity.

The earlier proposals called for third-party development on property which would remain in the hands of the same family who had owned it since 1960. This time, however, Chance Partners are both owner and developer, having bought the property for \$5.8 million in March 2016. “Having the owner as the zoning applicant is something unique and different from the prior versions of what you’ve been through with this property,” said T.R. Hainline Jr., of Rogers Towers, P.A., the attorney for developers Judd Bobilin and Jeff Rosen.

After the property is developed, Chance Partners will turn over management of the rentals to Pegasus Residential, an Atlanta-based company that currently manages several properties in Jacksonville.

The \$41 million project includes renovation of the 16-story Commander Apartments, construction of two four-story apartment



Two four-story apartment buildings front Fishweir Creek in a proposed redevelopment of St. Johns Village. (By Davis Architects)

buildings, two two-story carriage buildings with two units each, and two townhomes with two units each. Chance Partners has included a cap on 228 units in its request to change the future land use designation from Community/General Commercial (CGC) to High Density Residential (HDR).

The townhomes were recently added to the plan to address the streetscape issue; the plan originally proposed a two-level parking garage up against St. Johns Avenue. Now the townhomes will front the property with the garage behind them at a lower elevation, and the garage will not be easily seen from the street.

While there are no plans to add water features to the property, such as docks, or to dredge Fishweir Creek, the applicants have asked for a conservation designation for a linear portion of the property along the creek, which would prevent future development at water’s edge.

There are still concerns about traffic in and out of the property, which allows for 320 parking spaces. Residents in the Arden neighborhood to the north of the development said they have trouble getting on to St. Johns Avenue currently. The proposed

plan will potentially triple the 100 parking spaces currently at the Commander.

District 14 Councilman Jim Love said he would take those concerns to Nelson Caparas, the city’s traffic engineer, to evaluate what might be done with traffic along that portion of St. Johns Avenue, a state road.

“RAP appreciates that Chance has been responsive to our concerns/previous discussions particularly around the site design,” said Nancy Powell, Riverside Avondale Preservation Zoning Committee chair. “We are supportive of the new site design that brings the townhomes along St. Johns to shield the garage structure, and the carriage houses that also front St. Johns. The current design is more street-friendly and a hallmark of historic neighborhoods, and complies with the Overlay.”

Powell said there are a few outstanding issues not yet resolved, including traffic flow and pedestrian safety, underground utilities, privacy screening between parking for the Commander Tower and the residents on DuPont Circle, and public space standards. “We are hopeful many/most will be resolved prior to the hearings,” she said.

The PUD 2016-561, filed July 13, 2016, is currently planned for hearings as follows:

- Planning Commission, Thursday, Sept. 22, 1 p.m.
- City Council, Tuesday, Sept. 27, 5 p.m.
- Land Use and Zoning, Tuesday, Oct. 4, 5 p.m.
- If there are no deferments, City Council will vote on the bills Tuesday, Oct. 11, 5 p.m.

For more information on the project, visit commander-rezoning.com.

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Amendments to Riverside Avondale Zoning Overlay underway

For some, it may be too little, too late

By Kate A. Hallock
Resident Community News

While some residents of Riverside and Avondale wait for legislation to help curtail retail and commercial development in the historic district, attorneys for restaurateurs are busy filing applications, administrative deviations and waivers, which will “grandfather” their projects against any new regulations.

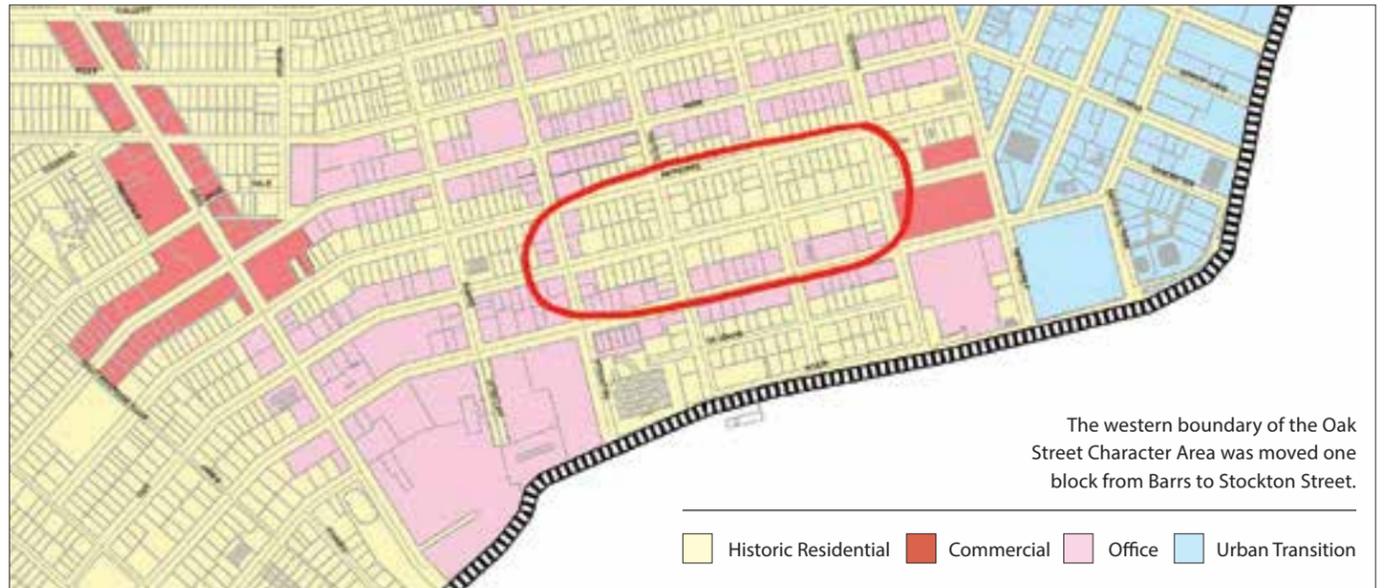
For almost three months, District 14 Councilman Jim Love’s bill to amend the Riverside Avondale Overlay has been undergoing dissection and re-assembly by the City of Jacksonville’s Planning and Development Department, the Office of the General Counsel, and Councilman Love.

Love initially introduced Bill 2016-366 to the City Council May 24 with the intent to amend the Overlay to prevent negative consequences from development or re-development within Historic Residential Character Areas (HRCA), defined as areas that are not contained within the commercial, office, urban transition or industrial character areas. In short, neighborhoods such as the one along the Oak Street corridor south of 5 Points.

After 12 weeks of slicing and dicing, Bill 2016-580 was introduced Aug. 23 to City Council. “It was recommended by the Office of General Counsel that it would be cleaner to introduce a new bill,” said Love in an email.

Essentially, what was removed from Love’s new bill is the requirement for Planned Unit Developments to be constructed on at least two acres of land and to contain a residential component. The PUD proposed for The Roost restaurant on Oak Street, which in part drove this measure to amend the Overlay, does not contain a residential portion and the size of the property is 0.75 acres. Instead, the bill will not permit rezoning for a property if its intended use will create intensity – traffic, noise, lights, etc. – around surrounding properties.

Determining intensification, however, will not be an easy task. Applicants with new developments, such as the proposal to raze St. Johns Village for new apartments, would most likely include traffic studies and



usage projections in their applications, leaving the final decision about intensification squarely in the laps of those on the three quasi-judicial entities: the Planning Commission, the Land Use and Zoning Committee, and the City Council.

This bill will also require the Council to evaluate specific criteria before approving a land use or zoning application in the Riverside/Avondale Overlay, as well as limiting deviations and waivers, providing parking requirements, and providing standards for restaurants in the HRCA.

One section in the bill addresses identification of Character Areas, adding Five Points Village as a predominantly commercial area, and changing the boundary of the Oak Street Character Area, which is predominantly zoned for office, from Barrs to Stockton Street. The block south of Stockton to Barrs Street is mostly commercial between Herschel Street and Riverside Avenue, supporting businesses in food, healthcare and general services.

Preserving quality of life

Of note, in the bill are three items which address recurring issues in the historic districts, particularly due to restaurant growth in Riverside and Avondale over the past four years.

The first would limit deviations and waivers applied for on behalf of commercial or retail development within the HRCA. The proposed

bill states, “In no instance shall deviations or waivers be granted in an amount in excess of 20 percent as required by the Zoning Code for parking, signage, seating, and hours of operations.”

Sondra Fetner, Office of General Counsel, confirmed the verbiage applies as much to “more” as it does to “less.” For example, a restaurant applying for the 60-seat maximum may request a deviation to put in 72 seats – 20 percent more than the stated maximum; conversely, if 20 parking spaces are required, the restaurant may get a waiver to supply 16, or 20 percent less than needed.

The second item, which provides for parking design standards and requirements within the HRCA, addresses the Overlay’s current allowance for zero parking when new structures are built to the same or less square footage of a non-conforming structure being replaced. The bill will remove that allowance and, further, would require on-site parking.

That portion of the bill includes other parking standards, stating no shared parking agreements will be considered for determining compliance with the parking requirements; all on-site parking for all uses shall be stabilized and of a pervious nature, except for the driveway and required ADA accessible spaces; conversions of contributing structures from non-residential to residential use may provide 50 percent of the required number of parking spaces, while conversions from residential to non-residential shall provide

100 percent; and parking in front yards or between the street edge and sidewalk/property line is prohibited.

Finally, in order to protect residents’ quality of life, the bill would provide standards for restaurants in the HRCA, essentially limiting hours of operation, seating capacity, and outdoor activity.

The bill, as introduced, states that while not permitted in any residential zoning districts, restaurants in other zoning districts are subject to restrictions. Only existing structures with a non-residential original use shall be permitted to operate as a restaurant, open to the public from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., with overall operating hours of 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. All parking shall be provided for on-site, and the restaurant shall control the effects of lights from automobiles or other sources. Seating shall not exceed a capacity of 60; service is on premises only; drive-thru restaurants are prohibited; there shall be no amplified live music, and no entertainment, waiting areas or service of food or alcohol outside the restaurant.

While Bill 2016-366 was under the knife, several restaurant applications have been filed for Riverside/Avondale. However, any applications for restaurants – such as the one proposed for the space formerly occupied by Cowford Traders in the Shoppes of Avondale – introduced prior to the effective date of this bill would not fall under the restrictions of Bill 2016-580.

Listing, Selling & Loving Every Minute

It’s been a fast paced real estate market for the traditional ‘slower in summer’ Avondale selling season. We are listing, making offers, getting multiple offers and closing loans rapidly despite the TRID regulatory slowdowns. Ortega is crazy hot right now along with Riverside, Avondale and Murray Hill all selling quickly for fair market prices. I’m barely hanging on to all my files as I fly through the office towards the scanner.

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Museum director resigns, reflects on career path

By *Kate A. Hallock*
Resident Community News

Hope McMath, the Cummer Museum of Art and Gardens' self-described "reluctant" director is stepping down. She served in that position for seven years, and was a member of the museum's staff for 22 years.

Holly Keris, also a Riverside resident, and the museum's Chief Curator, will take on the additional role of Chief Operating Officer during the search for McMath's replacement. Keris is a 13-year veteran of the museum.

"It is very true that I was, and have probably remained, a reluctant director. I loved my job as Director of Education at the Cummer Museum," said McMath. "I love the daily discoveries when sharing art making and art history with people of all ages, abilities, races, and backgrounds. It was challenging, meaningful, and a ton of fun."

The Riverside resident admitted as she moved into larger administrative positions, which were incredible opportunities, it always caused her to pause, especially her move to director.

"I was always concerned about my passion dimming if I became the leader of an organization that required a lot of time on fundraising, staff management, Trustee engagement, facility upkeep, budgeting, and the other responsibilities of such a position," she said.

Stepping into the shoes of former director Maarten van de Guchte in 2009 came at a challenging time for the museum and for the country.

"Who would want to take on such a job only a few years after the stock market had crashed, funding for the arts was under extreme threat, the museum had just experienced layoffs, we were part way through a reaccreditation process, and needed to create a new strategic plan?" McMath asked. "I have to say it was my love for the people I worked with and for that motivated me to take the leap. What I found is that my passion for community, my vision for how the arts and the beauty of the natural world, and my strong business skills could live in harmony and do something that would build upon the legacy of the Cummer family while moving the museum forward."

Although McMath, 45, has served seven years as the museum's director, she said she's spent almost half her life there.

"I started working at the Cummer Museum as a part-time educator under the brilliant Jean Hall Dodd, right as I was starting my Master's program at Jacksonville University," said McMath. "Prior to that I worked as a graphic designer and was active as an artist."

McMath said she realized although she wanted to work in the arts she needed to connect more deeply to people, so she

pursued a degree that balanced studio art, education, and art history. "It was perfect, as was my ability to land the educator position at the museum," she said.

The Jacksonville native and graduate of Terry Parker High School said she can never recall a time in which art wasn't part of her life.

"Even as a very young child I loved making art at home and at school," said McMath. "My passion for art history and museums was lit in two stages. First were visits as a child to the museums here in Jacksonville, including the Cummer Museum, and summer visits to the Toledo Museum of Art with my grandparents, who lived in Ohio."

The other stage in the development of McMath's passion was her undergraduate experience at JU.

"Debra Murphy, now at UNE, was my Art History professor, and I just couldn't get enough!" said McMath, noting it was a trip to Greece in her freshman year that was transformational. "This lower-middle-class girl who grew up in Arlington had only traveled to Ohio to visit family," she said. "Thanks to a scholarship I was provided by JU President Fran Kinne, I was able to travel to Greece and Turkey with Dr. Murphy."

Under McMath's leadership, the Riverside-based museum saw an increase in attendance and the development of many programs, including the Very Special Arts Festival, now in its 21st year. During her tenure, the museum's capital projects included renovation of Art Connections, restoration of the Olmstead garden, the street-side sculpture garden on Riverside Avenue and a showpiece of a parking lot across the street. McMath was instrumental in bringing to the Cummer over 100 exhibitions, and more public programs than she could name.

When asked to name her favorite accomplishment, McMath is hard pressed to admit to one.

"This is an impossible question for me to answer...really," she said. "It was a thrill to make some big, sexy things happen, like the restoration of the Olmsted Garden, the renovation to Art Connections over a dozen years ago, the transformation of the campus along Riverside Avenue, and the creation of several endowments to support programs and exhibitions. There has also been a string of not-so-sexy, but very important, projects like replacing every window, repointing every brick, renovating galleries, repairing every roof, and fighting termites."

She said she was also very moved by the current LIFT exhibition and glad to leave on a very high note, despite some of the negativity that has been publicly expressed by visitors to the museum.



Hope McMath

"This small part of what we have done at the Cummer has hopefully moved the needle on issues of race, equity, social justice, and deep community engagement," said McMath. "I do happen to believe, and I see it playing out every day, that art can communicate hard truths, inspire us to seek solutions, connect people, and create change. Although not unique to the Cummer, and not universally loved, this work and the people I have met through it are what I am most humbled and changed by."

The "reluctant" director of art and arts education is taking time to explore how and where she might next take her skills for engaging and inspiring others through art. In the meantime, McMath may get back to printmaking, a shared passion with her husband, Barry Wilson.

"Our shared love of printmaking, arts education, and travel sit at the center of our relationship and how we experience the world together," she said.

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Tails will be wagging at new park opening

A ribbon-cutting ceremony for the new John Gorrie Dog Park at Riverside Park is planned for Saturday, Sept. 17 at 10 a.m. Dignitaries will include Delores Barr Weaver, local philanthropist; District 14 Councilman Jim Love; Adrienne Burke, Riverside Avondale Preservation executive director, and Trey Csar, chair of the John Gorrie Dog Park Committee, among others.

Dog owners are encouraged to attend with their dogs to help officially open the new specialty park and enjoy the celebration until noon.

Daily's honors First Responders

Acknowledging the 15th anniversary of the tragic events of 9-11, and in gratitude for the men and women who serve the community and put their lives on the line every day, on Sunday Sept. 11 and Monday, Sept. 12 Daily's will offer a free Daily's Dash sandwich to any First Responder – police, firefighter or military – in uniform. On either day, men and women in uniform can stop into any of the 14 Jacksonville Daily's Dash locations for a free sandwich of their choice. No additional purchase necessary.

Starting on Sept. 11 and running through the remainder of 2016, First Responders in uniform will receive discounts on popular items from the Daily's Dash menu. For breakfast, the Piled High – egg, cheese, all natural bacon or all natural pork sausage, on a Southern-style biscuit – will be only \$1.50 (regular price of \$1.99). The savings continue during lunch when men and women in uniform will receive any regularly-priced lunch sandwich for only \$3 (regular price \$4.99-\$6.99).

New liquor store to open near Naval Air Station Jacksonville



ABC Fine Wine & Spirits is planning to open a new two-story store later this year at 6313 Roosevelt Blvd., in the Target Plaza next to Naval Air Station Jacksonville. It will replace the current building a mile north in the Venetia Village retail center. More than 8,000 square feet of retail space is under construction.

The two-story model is not the standard for all new ABC stores, according to a press release. Only a few have been built, and this will be the first in Jacksonville. The two-story model maximizes floor space by putting storage on the second floor, allowing customers to enjoy more ample retail space downstairs.

The new ABC Fine Wine & Spirits will feature 5,000 wines, a 16-door beer cooler stocked with more than 500 different types of beer, 2,000 rare and popular spirits, hundreds of craft beers, 300 premium cigar selections, gourmet food, custom gift baskets, glassware and other related items. Local Florida craft beers also will be available for purchase at the store.

"We're excited to open the doors to our new Jacksonville store and look forward to helping everyone in the neighborhood make all of life's celebrations special," said CEO Charles Bailes, III. "We are eager to share our modern and sophisticated shopping



The new ABC Fine Wine & Spirits store will include a Brew Stop growler filling station.

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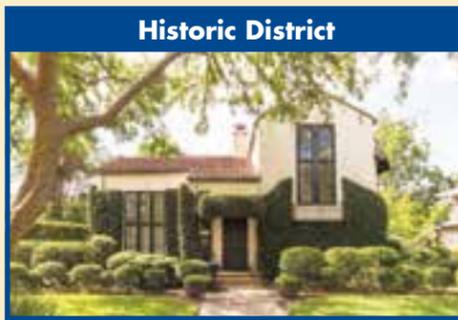
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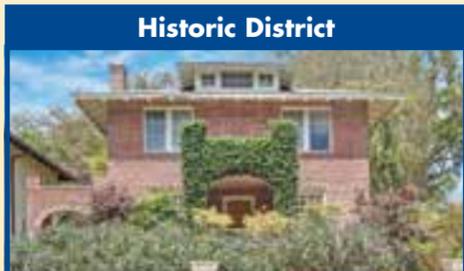
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Avondale parking a never-ending problem with difficult solutions

By Kate A. Hallock
Resident Community News

Economic success, at least in Avondale, has come at the price of parking – or the lack of it.

In the three years following the success of Mellow Mushroom’s foray into the neighborhood, the commercial mix in a three-block portion of St. Johns Avenue known as the Shoppes of Avondale has begun to change in favor of dining over shopping – and that shift has implications for the entire neighborhood.

Four decades ago, and up until the past few years, the blocks around the Shoppes constituted a safe, walkable neighborhood where residents left their cars at home and strolled up to St. Johns Avenue to shop at La Tierra Clothier or Gladys Thompson Dress Shop, visit a barber shop or Joseph and Charles Hair Salon, take their children to the bookstore or get an ice cream soda at the Avondale Pharmacy, where you could also mail letters or have a watch repaired.

“There were things that were only available here in Avondale, so you had to come here to get it,” said long-time businessman Hooshang Harvesf, Ph.D., owner of Hooshang’s Oriental Rugs. “It was destination shopping.”

Avondale, like the Park and King retail corridor, has changed over the years and is now a popular dining destination. Where once there were a handful of restaurants, the Fox Diner among them, now there are more than a dozen places to eat and drink within a two-block stretch of St. Johns Avenue, between Dancy Street and Talbot Avenue.

“The balance is lost,” said Harvesf. “The neighborhood is turning from retail to entertainment.”



At 11 a.m. on a weekday, parking has started to fill up on the street in the Shoppes of Avondale. An hour later, customers will find it difficult to find space along St. Johns Avenue, instead circling the blocks for parking one and two streets over.

The tipping point in the balance may have been the ordinance passed in 2012 which does not require restaurants with 100 seats or less to contribute to parking, and the J-Bill, also known as Florida House Bill 655, which provides exceptions for space and seating requirements for liquor licenses for those same small restaurants. As shops and boutiques, such as the former Cowford Traders, are vacated, hungry restaurateurs are seizing the opportunity to put in small, intimate restaurants without adding off-street parking spaces.

But lack of parking has become so acute, District 14 Councilman Jim Love, who spearheaded Ordinance 2012-339, which gives restaurants with 100 seats or less a buy when it comes to providing parking, seems to be having second thoughts.

“Maybe it needs to be toned down one more time,” said Love, referring to Ordinance 2012-339. “And if we do, that means if someone wants to go into a building that was formerly an office or a home, they would not be able to put in a restaurant unless they put in additional parking.”

According to Love, the idea of removing the requirement for parking in the historic districts was to encourage businesses in those areas. “Guess what? It worked,” he said. “Maybe we’re at the point of requiring parking for all restaurants in order to put a cap on the number of restaurants.”

Frank Gallo, owner of the property and parking lot used by Blue Fish Restaurant and Oyster Bar, said the legislation should be stronger. “He should introduce a bill

immediately to limit more restaurants,” said Gallo, referring to Councilman Love. “Without this legislation, restaurants may survive but the smaller shops won’t. If you think people will drive around to find parking to buy a frozen custard or a cookie, you’re out of your mind.”

No optimal solution

Most of the solutions proposed for parking don’t address where to find it or create it. Rather, many ideas offered alternatives to parking, such as walking, bicycling, using public transportation or Uber/Lyft. Other suggestions deal with enforcement, such as installing limited-time parking signs, instituting resident tags, and requiring businesses’ employees to park several blocks away.

Love would like to try limited-time parking, but only if a majority of the merchants agree. “The city would need to pass a resolution

Continued on page 9



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for three-hour parking,” he said. “One concern is enforcement. Some of that has to come from shop owners, who would have to call the city to ticket the car.”

But gaining a police presence for something as benign as parking enforcement is “not likely,” according to City Council President Lori Boyer. At a July 14 meeting on parking issues in San Marco Square in anticipation of a new restaurant, Boyer said the budget controls the number of officers and crime controls where they are placed. “It is unrealistic to expect we are going to get more police cover or more parking enforcement just because you have more businesses opening,” she said.

Dianne Garcia, president of the Shoppes of Avondale Merchants Association, said she has a few ideas on how to add parking, but added that there is not a lot of acceptance for them and no one is willing to make the investment.

“There are fears more parking will bring in more restaurants,” said Garcia.

One idea both Garcia and Gallo mentioned was converting the landscaped median on Ingleside Avenue between Riverside Avenue and Herschel Street to angle parking, similar to the parking median in Murray Hill on Edgewood Avenue, but the idea isn’t supported by many, said Garcia.

This isn’t the first time Ingleside Avenue has been targeted for parking. When a parking study was undertaken in 2013, survey responses from residents indicated opposition to removing the medians on Ingleside, as they were deemed to be part of the neighborhood’s historic character.

Garcia also suggested expanding parking at Boone Park by moving the playground away from the corner to accommodate employee parking, or converting the vacant lot on St. Johns Avenue between Van Wert Avenue and Dancy Street to a surface lot,

“Without this legislation, restaurants may survive but the smaller shops won’t. If you think people will drive around to find parking to buy a frozen custard or a cookie, you’re out of your mind.”

— Frank Gallo, Avondale Property Owner

which could be used for employee or customer valet parking.

“Not next door to me”

The fact is, there’s not a lot of space – or desire – for a small parking garage or even a surface lot in Avondale. Most homeowners don’t want a lot or a garage right next door or even a block away, and they are expensive to build and to maintain.

Parking garages are risky multi-million dollar investments if people are not used to or willing to pay for parking, according to Jack Shad, former City of Jacksonville officer of public parking.

“Parking garages are hellaciously expensive, costing between \$15,000 and \$25,000 per space to construct,” said Shad, who owns Windmill Consulting, an urban planning, historic preservation and real estate brokerage. “The smaller the garage, the higher the cost per space.”

Throw in insurance, staff, cleaning and maintenance, the cost to service the debt on long-term financing would require each space to earn \$1,700 per year, he said, noting the City spends \$400 per space per year in maintenance for downtown public parking garages.

“Parking lots are cheaper but RAP (Riverside Avondale Preservation) is not

always amenable unless it blends in, like the 5 Points Publix,” said Love.

In fact, the Riverside Avondale Zoning Overlay notes that off-street parking lots for premises requiring off-street parking are permissible “when meeting the performance standards and development criteria set forth in Part 4” of the Zoning Code (Chapter 656 of the Jacksonville Municipal Code), which in turn refers to Part 12 “Landscape and Tree Protection Regulations.” Additionally, the Zoning Code notes parking lots must be within 400 feet of the premises requiring off-street parking, severely restricting such possibilities for the Shoppes of Avondale.

Should property be available and compliant with the noted restrictions, even surface lots cost approximately \$2,500 per space to construct and maintain, said Shad, who indicated it would be difficult to get the merchants and/or their landlords to contribute to the cost of a parking lot. “It’s a typical collective action problem,” he said. “Why should a business contribute if it might not be in that space long-term?”

Shared parking is another alternative, said Shad, but there is a cost to letting customers from other businesses use your space at night, including insurance, maintenance and cleanup.



Merchants in Avondale are fearful they will lose the “shop” in their slogan “Shop, dine, and enjoy!” if the parking situation is not addressed.

“There’s real role for someone – like the City, RAP or the merchants association – to be an honest broker and find a way to provide insurance and a clean-up crew, and to collect from the merchants,” he said. “It’s not profitable for smaller surface lots to pay someone to collect parking fees unless multiple lots can be serviced by one person. That can be done with payment apps.”

Whether it’s a dearth of parking or a surfeit of restaurants – or a combination – the issue has not been laid to rest. Perhaps Love said it best in December 2013 when the Parking Study Steering Committee presented a number of solutions aimed at managing the existing parking supply, increasing that supply and managing behavior.

“We’re going to be working on this forever,” he said.

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Many development projects proposed for Historic District

By Kate A. Hallock
Resident Community News

Plans are in the works for a vacant lot at the corner of Stockton and College Streets to be developed into two multi-story live/work units.

At its Aug. 18 meeting, the Planning Commission approved two applications submitted by Hunter Hayden, of Hayden Hawk Investment Group, who wants to subdivide a 72x117-foot lot into two 36x117-foot lots. This bifurcation of the property results in less than minimum property setbacks and required a variance to reduce the minimum lot width by four feet.

The property sits across the street from the John Gorrie Condominium Homes, and diagonally across the intersection from a retail block which contains restaurants and other retail businesses.

The application for a zoning exception sought integration of retail sales and service or professional office space with a multi-family structure. Hayden also requested a reduction in the minimum required off-street parking from four spaces to zero, providing a site plan that indicated two parking spaces in the front of each building.

The Planning and Development Department recommended approval of the application with the condition that Hayden provide a minimum of four onsite parking spaces for the professional offices, accessible from the alley, and that the project meet the minimum setbacks required in the Riverside Avondale Overlay.

Riverside Avondale Preservation supported the project with parking in the rear and the condition that all setbacks be met.

The Planning Commission, however, approved the project with reduced setbacks, but added the following conditions:



Property on the corner of Stockton and College Streets may soon be developed for live-work units.

1. The commercial use shall be limited to professional office or art, music, or photographic studio space.
2. Each structure shall be allowed to convert back to 100 percent single-family residential use.
3. The commercial use portion shall not exceed 25 percent of the gross floor area of the live/work unit.

The live/work project will revitalize an underused site within the Historic District. As such, the project will be reviewed by the Jacksonville Historic Preservation Commission for final design, including vertical construction to ensure protection of the character of the neighborhood.

More movement, change

Adrienne Burke, Riverside Avondale Preservation executive director, Nancy Powell, chair of RAP's zoning committee and Board Chair Keith Holt are also in talks with developers for several other projects in the Historic District.

According to Burke, Atlanta-based TriBridg Residential has submitted a proposal for the property between Bishop Gate Lane and Lomax Street along the St. Johns River.

Formerly under NAI Hallmark Partners, this property was planned for 55 luxury condominiums in a 16-story building. Called the Beacon Riverside, sales efforts were suspended in November 2015 while Hallmark sought financing.

TriBridg is planning a multi-family apartment building with 144 units and internal garage. Burke said the developer was interested in providing public, pedestrian-friendly access to the river.

Another Riverside property under scrutiny by RAP is two lots on the corner of Oak and Stockton Streets. The lots, which include office buildings built 60 to 70 years ago, were sold 10 years ago to Riverside Square LLC, one of many companies owned by Mark Rubin, president of AccuBuild Companies.

According to RAP, Rubin is seeking to redevelop the two existing commercial buildings at 2502 and 2510 Oak Street into

use as a restaurant. Applications for a PUD, a zoning exception and an administrative deviation are in progress. The property is zoned commercial, so the exception would be sought for other reasons, such as a restaurant drive-thru, or outside service and sales.

In 5 Points, two businesses have indicated plans to demolish and rebuild. A planned unit development (PUD) application is being created for redevelopment of the Shell station at Margaret and Post Streets.

The property owner, First Coast Energy, wishes to demolish and rebuild the gas station/convenience store. Early discussions are in process, according to Burke. Daily's indicated this project is not in the queue until 2017.

At the 5 Points intersection, Wendy's Restaurant is planning to demolish its existing restaurant and rebuild a new Wendy's on the site. Early discussions are in process, according to Burke.

RAP is also monitoring a proposal to rezone a residential property on St. Johns Avenue to Commercial Office (CO) or Commercial, Residential, Office (CRO). A contract has been submitted by a local financial firm for 2982 St. Johns Ave., a 9,000-square-foot home built in 1916.

RAP met with the owner and his agent, and expressed its strong opposition to any change to the zoning in this location, which is currently within the residential land use category, low density residential zoning (RLD-60) designation and residential character area of the Riverside Avondale Overlay.

"That home and the lot next to it are the only two lots left on St. Johns Avenue that go from the street to the river," said Burke. "Historically, most of the lots were like that and at some point in time, they started subdividing the lots and building houses in front. So this is very significant."

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New YMCA opens in Brooklyn to serve diverse community

By Kate A. Hallock
Resident Community News

The Winston Family YMCA opened its doors with a ribbon-cutting ceremony Aug. 26 to much applause from nearly 500 well-wishers, supporters and members, many of whom sported “I survived Yates” T-shirts, poking fun at maintenance issues at the aging Yates Family YMCA.

The new \$21 million flagship branch replaces the Yates Y, which served the community for almost seven decades.

“We would not be standing here without the generous contributions from each and every one of our donors who pledged to help us build a stronger and healthier First Coast,” said Eric Mann, YMCA of Florida’s First Coast president and CEO.

During his remarks, Mann revealed the names of two previously anonymous Visionary donors – Gilchrist Berg and John D. Baker II – who had contributed with the stipulation the center be named after civic leader and philanthropist James H. Winston, also a YMCA trustee and member for 50 years.

Winston, 82, recalled when the Y was primarily “a gym and a swim.” He was presented with a framed watercolor of the building which bears his name.

Additional Visionary donors – those who contributed \$1 million or more – include Florida Blue, Luther and Blanche Coggin, Mr. and Mrs. Russell Newton Jr., Mr. and Mrs. Russell Newton III, and J. Wayne and Delores Barr Weaver, who also funded the new state-of-the-art women’s locker room, complete with sauna and steam rooms, and a riverfront park. The Norcross Foundation Men’s Locker Room is also equipped with a sauna and steam room.

Mayor Lenny Curry, a YMCA member for many years, proclaimed Aug. 26, 2016 as Winston Family YMCA Day in Jacksonville.

The new Brooklyn-based branch will serve as a hub for the Y’s community-focused efforts to reduce chronic illnesses such as cancer, stroke, heart disease and diabetes. Through partnerships with Baptist Health, Brooks Rehabilitation and Florida Blue, the Luther and Blanche Coggin Family Healthy Living Center offers a comprehensive range of programs to address health concerns of youth and adults.

The Winston Family YMCA is located on the same property as the existing Yates Family YMCA, but is closer to the river. The Yates Y, built in 1947, is now officially closed. The property is up for sale, but in the interim the building will be demolished and replaced with a parking lot for Winston Family YMCA members and visitors.



Baptist Health’s Julie Schafer, manager of Healthy Living Centers, with Cortney Surrency, Wellness Coach



Brooks Rehabilitation’s center manager Tava Buck



Florida Blue’s Nick Tant, senior director of retail centers, Toni Woods, senior media relations consultant, Matt Davidson, operations lead



Cutting the ribbon at the new Winston Family YMCA Aug. 26 were Luther Coggin, Pat Geraghty, Mayor Lenny Curry, Rev. Dr. Stephen Goyer, Delores Barr Weaver, James Winston, Russell Newton, Eric Mann, John Anderson, and John Baker.



Fitness trainers at the new Winston Family YMCA receive instructions on new fitness equipment prior to the center’s opening Aug. 26.

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JSO approves new neighborhood watch group

By Kate A. Hallock
Resident Community News

The Memorial Park Neighborhood Watch area has been approved by the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office, and will include the area between Goodwin Street and Lomax Street, between Riverside Avenue and the St. Johns River, plus the San Juline, Napier, and 1661 Riverside condominiums and Bell Riverside apartments, according to Tim Burleigh, a member of the Memorial Park Association Board of Directors.

Together with Mary Jarrett, who lives at the San Juline, Burleigh has worked to get a petition to submit to the JSO. At least 40 percent of the residents in the subject area were required to sign the petition.

"We want to establish the Neighborhood Watch to promote the safety of those who live around the park and enjoy it almost daily, as well as visitors, and to keep a watch out to deter and report vandalism, both in the park and in its immediate neighborhood," stated a flyer circulated with the petition. "We hope our Block Watchers can be eyes and ears for the park and its neighbors over and above what the JSO can reasonably be expected to offer."

The watch group's block captains include Ginny Greenland, Broadview Terrace; Patti Langenbach, Park Lane; Mary Jarrett, San Juline; Mike Williams, 1661 Riverside; Chad Bearden, The Napier; Tim Burleigh, Park Plaza; Joyce Devillez and Barbara Drake, Broadview Towers; Anna Quintana, Bell Riverside, and Susan Ober, who represents individual residences on Lancaster Street and Lancaster Terrace.

Burleigh is coordinating a meeting with a representative of the JSO, who will discuss with potential Block Watchers how the program works, what they should look for, and what they should do when they see inappropriate activities. The JSO will also distribute crime prevention materials.

The Watch Group meeting with the JSO will be held Wednesday, Sept. 21, 7 p.m. in the Park Plaza condo common room, 514 Lomax St.

New city bike/ped coordinator to give voice to cyclists, walkers

By Marcia Hodgson
Resident Community News

Amy Ingles, Jacksonville's new Bicycle/Pedestrian Coordinator, knows of what she speaks and practices what she preaches.

A native of Royal Palm Beach, Florida, the Riverside resident has "lived quite happily without owning a car for nearly four years" and is an avid bicycle commuter, riding nearly nine miles from her office downtown to attend a bike-ped public meeting in San Jose.

Ingles even has a WALK tattoo inked on her upper arm as a "way to get people talking," she said.

"People often ask me why I did not get a bike tattoo. I know everyone is not going to get on a bike. However everyone is a pedestrian at some point, and pedestrians of every kind represent the most vulnerable user in the transportation system. It is our most important responsibility to protect them. Walking is the most basic form of transportation available to humans. It takes no training or special equipment. Therefore, it should be safe, comfortable, and convenient for all people, regardless of age, socioeconomic status or physical ability," she said.

Ingles is a Georgia Tech alumna who received a Bachelor's degree in civil engineering and a Master's degree in both civil engineering and city planning in 2014. Most recently, she sharpened her skills for three years in Boston, Massachusetts, where she conducted innovative research at the John A. Volpe National Transportation Systems Center, sat on the board of a fast-growing bicycle co-op called CommonWheels, and did a brief stint as a bicycle courier with Metro Pedal Power.

In taking over the position vacated by Denise Chaplick earlier this year, Ingles has her work cut out for her. According to the Alliance for Biking and Walking 2016 Benchmarking Report, Jacksonville has the highest rate of pedestrian and bicyclist fatalities of the 50 most popular cities in the U.S. Ingles said one of her main goals, along

with reducing fatalities, is to "amplify and diversify the bicycling and walking voice."

"I'm thrilled to be working in a position that focuses on an issue so close to my heart: making biking and walking safer, easier and more enjoyable for people of all ages and abilities. I am especially excited to be in a position where I can make very real and impactful change," she said.

"The bicycling and walking community is as diverse as the Jacksonville community as a whole, and the needs we aim to satisfy should reflect that," she continued. "However, it is often the case the most vulnerable users in the community – children, elderly and low-income workers who cannot afford a personal vehicle – are not the ones with the strongest voice. I believe our infrastructure reflects this. I hope to use my advocacy and community-building background to reach out to groups who, for many reasons, have been more difficult to reach. I think this will help the city to build a bicycle and pedestrian network that feels safe and convenient for people of all ages and abilities."

Since she moved to Riverside three months ago, Ingles said she has participated in a few "social" rides including the monthly S-Line Ride with Groundworks Jacksonville, the RAM Ride that starts from Riverside Arts Market each Saturday and a no-drop fitness ride that begins at Open Road Bike Shop in Avondale every Tuesday evening.

The best thing about riding in Jacksonville's historic districts is "no hills," Ingles said. "In the urban core there is a nice grid network



Amy Ingles

that interconnects the various neighborhoods with relatively low-speed roads, providing easy bicycle access to the small commercial districts sprinkled throughout. This makes living without a car quite easy on the day-to-day. The Riverwalk on both banks is an incredible asset and a beautiful way to spend an evening ride and commute to work. Jacksonville is a beautiful city, and I'm enjoying it by bike!" she said.

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Consultants update community on city bike-ped master study

By Marcia Hodgson
Resident Community News

Halfway during its 18-month Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan Study, consultants hired by the City of Jacksonville were still seeking community input in order to find ways to transform Jacksonville into one of the best cities for walking and biking in the Southeast.

In the first of two public meetings held Aug. 23 and Aug. 25, more than 30 residents, pedestrian advocates and bike aficionados gathered at the Jewish Community Alliance to hear Andrew Clarke, director of strategy for Toole Design Group and the former president of the League of American Bicyclists, give an update on the study. A second similar meeting was held on the Westside at St. Andrews Presbyterian Church at 6317 103rd Street.

On hand at the meeting were Amy Ingles, the city's new bicycle/pedestrian coordinator, Stephanie Zarkis, city planner, Heather Deutsch of Toole Design Group, Victoria Pennington of MVP Marketing and Public Affairs, Cantrece Jones of Acuity Design Group, and Chris Burns of San Marco, who serves as head of the city's Bike-Pedestrian Committee and is on the master plan study steering committee.

Although she could not attend the meeting, Clarke said Jacksonville City Council President Lori Boyer is "very committed" to the study, and, like many of the residents she represents, wants to make sure "something actually happens from this exercise" and that it "does not just turn into a round of discussions."

Recognizing most of the American cities which are thriving and successful economically have made a special effort to make roads more bike-able and enhance their



Jacksonville City Planner Stephanie Zarkis and City Bicycle-Pedestrian Coordinator Amy Ingles, both of Riverside, spoke at two meetings about the Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan Study late in August.

walkability, the City of Jacksonville commissioned the study to provide a framework – a strategic plan – to set up a priority list of short- and long-term projects to improve Jacksonville's infrastructure and recommend a connective network of roads on which to make improvements.

In order to get the "lay of the land," the consultants have been studying several "existing conditions," including the number and location of motor vehicle, bicycle and pedestrian crashes, usage of the roads, infrastructure, culture, as well as previous studies from other agencies and the desires of stakeholders within the Jacksonville walking and biking communities, Clarke said.

The study includes only Mobility Zones 7, 8, 9, and 10, which encompasses the urban core and many neighborhoods within the I-295 beltway. San Marco, St. Nicholas, San Jose as well as Riverside, Avondale, Ortega and Murray Hill are included in the study.

"The not so surprising conclusion we've come to is that this is a big city – the largest in the 48 states – covering a big area and

just in the core we are facing big challenges," Clarke said, noting Jacksonville benefits from being flat and has an active population that is out biking and walking at all hours of the day and night.

Although crash maps show an exorbitant number of pedestrian and bicycle crashes in Jacksonville each year, motor vehicle crash maps are equally alarming, he said. "The whole city is one giant blob," he said, noting in one year there were between 15,000 and 18,000 motor vehicle crashes with injuries. "The problems we have with bicycling and walking safety are not unique to bicycling and walking safety," he said. "It's more about our driving habits than just our walking and biking habits."

Walking and bike strategies

In considering the problems facing Jacksonville's pedestrians, Clarke said the consultants had categorized the city's roadways into five types of streets, but highlighted two kinds, downtown streets and residential streets. Downtown streets are good for pedestrians because they include sidewalks on both sides of the roads, traffic signals and crosswalks. Residential streets usually are without sidewalks or crosswalks and do not meet Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards.

The study looked to identify five to 15 streets based on crash locations and research where different pedestrian facilities such as ADA-compliant sidewalks, high visibility crosswalks and curb ramps, raised crosswalks, median islands, curb extensions, rectangular rapid flashing beacons, raised intersections and automatic pedestrian signals might make a difference.

One way to solve the problems connected with pedestrian mobility might be to "prioritize neighborhoods like they do in storm water maintenance, where they do everything in one go and fix all the problems and do routine maintenance in a small area at one time," Clarke said. "This helps stuff stay together and not collapse in five years." This would involve getting the community to help identify missing sidewalks and crosswalks, broken signals and striping that needs to be replaced, particularly at transit stops.

In considering a strategy to make the city more bike-able, the city looked at the existing conditions on a 250-mile network of popular bike routes on state and local roads narrowing it down to 150 miles to do a "bicycle level of service assessment." There they studied the characteristics, level of volume, speed, lane widths and number of lanes to determine what level of comfort those streets currently offer cyclists with the idea of improving the comfort level for riders of all ages and abilities.

Looking for community input

"We are at a critical point where your input is vital to the project and in the next month we are going to make key decisions based on your input and the other work we are doing on what we will submit to the city," said Clarke. He asked community members to list which factors, such as stakeholder input, constraints, opportunities, safety, existing conditions, connectivity, equity and compliance, are most important

to them as pedestrians and bicyclists. Having community members give weight to certain factors will help the consulting group identify projects that will have priority over the next three to five years, he said.

"We want a road map so we can get them in the pipeline and the most critical projects can get built," he said.

Safety and connectivity were the top factors suggested by the JCA crowd. Other suggestions included making roadways easier for commuting by bike, working on several smaller, less expensive projects where you get "more bang for your buck," educating the public in safety practices both for motor vehicles, bicycles and pedestrians and enforcement when laws that promote safety are disregarded.

In considering pedestrians, one person noted not only is the availability of sidewalks a concern but also the condition of the sidewalks already in place. "Sometimes it is safer to walk in the street than on the sidewalk, especially if it is a person with a cane or a walker," she said.

The Fuller Warren Bridge multi-use path project and construction of The District – Life Well Lived on the Southbank are examples of "catalytic components" which can work to transform the city by providing an opportunity to tie smaller projects to big-ticket enterprises, Clarke said. "When a project like this lands we want to make sure the city is ready with the small on-street stuff to connect into it," he said, noting it is important to be "opportunistic and to follow the money" and not to be "hung up on one particular project" being first. "Big projects drive the choices and small projects feed into them," he said, noting changes to infrastructure, such as road striping, can be done cheaply when roads are repaved during routine maintenance.

His co-worker, Heather Deutsch, agreed. "Things are built on a 30- to 50-year time frame," she said. "Any time we don't take advantage and put in a sidewalk (when a development is built) we probably won't have the opportunity again for 30 years," she said.

Clarke said within the next 30 days his group would take the information gained from the public meetings and come up with a priority list of projects and a network plan using location suggestions, which community members marked on a large map at the meeting.

Three months from now the consultants expect to complete a detailed study of where to put pedestrian enhancements, such as rapid flashing beacons. By the end of the year a final draft of the plan should be complete so city planners can move forward, he said.

"Thanks to City Councilwoman Lori Boyer and others, there is money in the pipeline to do some of this stuff," said Clarke. "Perhaps not the big signature items that might catch everyone's eye, but there is enough money to make an appreciable difference over the next few years. This plan will help us to figure out what to do and couple with some of the big projects in the city."

To view maps of the Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan Study, visit residentnews.net and type Pedestrian Bicycle in the Search field.

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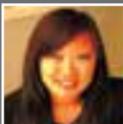
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Affordable prices, new businesses spur Murray Hill revitalization

By Kate A. Hallock
Resident Community News

Residents and business owners in Murray Hill have more than a centennial to celebrate this month.

While recognizing the 100th anniversary of incorporation in 1916 as a good reason to throw a party, the real news is what could be Murray Hill's comeback.

First platted in 1906, Murray Hill's residential growth was steady for four decades, with a post-World War II growth spurt before tapering down in the 1980s when suburban developments rose in number and popularity.

Now the area, bordered by Interstate 10, Park Street and U.S. 17/Roosevelt Boulevard, has seen positive commercial and residential growth within the past four years, but it's not clear which is driving the other.

Sacha Higham, a REALTOR® at Traditions Realty in Riverside, attributes a lot of the residential growth to the surge in commercial investments, especially along Edgewood Avenue. From Plymouth Street to College Street, a variety of restaurants, shops and boutiques have opened doors, with promises of more to come.

While fans of the iconic Edgewood Bakery mourned the closing of its doors in 2015 after 60 years, the location will be home to the second French Pantry in Jacksonville in the next one to two years.

In the meantime, Maple Street Biscuit Company, Vagabond Coffee, Community Loaves and the newly-opened Magnolia's have added to the dining options on the south end of Edgewood Avenue, while the north end, closer to College Street, will see

"In the last couple of years people are buying to live in Murray Hill, not just to invest."

— Sacha Higham,
REALTOR® at Traditions Realty

La Cena, an upscale Italian restaurant, opening in the very near future.

There's also plans for a new comedy club on Edgewood Avenue, according to Regina Heffington, owner of the Silver Cow on King Street in Riverside.

Heffington and her partners, Matt and Becky Martz, hope to have Jeux De Jax open by the end of the year next door to their new location of The Annex, which formerly operated next door to the Silver Cow.

Home values increasing

Higham, who moved to Murray Hill in 2003 to invest in rehabbing houses, has the long view on the resurgence. He bought his first home in 2004, and a second one in 2006 when "Riverside/Avondale was so 'hot' then you couldn't afford it," Higham said.

There were two real estate upswings in the past 10 years, according to Higham, and statistics support his statement.

The first influx to Murray Hill was 2004 to 2007, when many people bought 'high,' said Higham, but a lot of those investors went belly-up after 2007.

From 2005 to 2007, the average sale price of a home in Murray Hill was between

\$115,000 and nearly \$134,000, according to data supplied by the Northeast Florida Association of Realtors (NEFAR).

After 2007, others came in to buy properties at distressed rates, then put in a minimum of renovations and turned them into rentals, according to Higham. NEFAR data indicates that for six years average sale prices ranged from just over \$53,000 to about \$77,000. But as of August 18, 2016, the year-to-date average sale price of a home was \$107,000, according to NEFAR statistics, signaling a return to those pre-recession values.

"In the last couple of years people are buying to live in Murray Hill, not just to invest," said Higham.

"If you shop carefully, and get reliable information about the particular area of Murray Hill you are looking at, Murray Hill is still, in my opinion, one of the best deals if you want the perks of older homes at a price that is doable for many," said Toy Scott, a REALTOR® with Norville Realty in Lakeshore.

Pre-recession, the last year when more than 200 homes sold in Murray Hill was 2006. The numbers stayed well below that figure until 2014, when 211 homes were bought; last year 233 homes were sold in Murray Hill, according to NEFAR.

A great alternative

"Long-term owners stuck it [the recession] out, but many of the newer owners got out then," said Higham. "Now a lot of people are coming back, a lot of young families coming in."

Higham calls this latest wave the second gentrification of Murray Hill. "Before, it was infill," he said. "Now it's new growth.

Families are moving into homes that have higher-end renovations; you can't tell the difference in a re-done home in Avondale versus Murray Hill."

Sherry English has lived in Murray Hill since 2002, having purchased a 1926 bungalow at the beginning of the first upswing in real estate prices. She also noted a wave of younger families coming in around her.

"They are buying homes on my street that had been occupied for five and six decades by the same family," said English, who has recently completed some high-end renovations of her own. Now those homes are coming on the market at a time when young buyers can't quite afford to buy in Riverside or Avondale, she said.

"Indeed, for young people it's been a great alternative for those looking for the older homes, hardwood floors, higher ceilings, which are way too expensive in Avondale, Riverside," said Scott. "Interest rates are still at an all-time low and there are many financing options available."

"There's definitely an energy," said Higham. "Murray Hill is the next logical step [in home buying] to Riverside and Avondale."

Centennial presentation

In celebration of Murray Hill's centennial, the Friends of Murray Hill Library are sponsoring a presentation on "Murray Hill: Past, Present, and Future," by Ennis Davis, urban planner and author. The free event will be held Tuesday, Sept. 13 at 7 p.m. at the library, 918 Edgewood Ave. South.



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Murray Hill, the 'found' community

By Marcia Hodgson,
Resident Community News

Following a residential growth spurt in the 1940s and a similar growth for business in the 1950s, Murray Hill stagnated until the late 1990s and early 2000s when revitalization began.

In recognition of the resurgence in this historic neighborhood, *The Resident* asked: What do you like about living in Murray Hill? Do you think the public art projects are indicative of a positive change going on in the area? Do you think the area is making a comeback?



Courtney McClanahan

Murray Hill is great. I've lived here four months. It's centrally located to the urban core, and it's still quiet. It's really cool to be part of one of the fastest growing communities. I really like living here. Everyone seems to know each other. The public art does show a positive change, especially with incoming shops. There's been an influx of young families here, and it's made an impact on the atmosphere.



Thomas Thurston

I've lived in Murray Hill nine months. The whole neighborhood feels like family. It's like a true neighborhood. I chose to live here. I work here and I have a lot of friends who have migrated to this area. I used to live in Mandarin, but Murray Hill just feels like home. The artwork is a positive change. It's inspiring and it's cleaner. It inspires change in everybody. It's like just one person is making a difference



Robert Storm

My wife and I have lived here for almost four years with our Lab. We bought a 100-year-old house. We looked for a place that was kind of eclectic. We like the energy and diversity of the neighborhood. It's a lot different now (than when we moved in). There is more business and it is adding to the interest of the neighborhood. I've seen a comeback. People used to not know where Murray Hill was. Now it's become found. There are natural resources here, like parks, where we can walk our dogs. It's pedestrian friendly.



Tom and Kendall Wilson

We've lived here six months. We like the affordability compared to the surrounding communities. We like being within walking distance to the surrounding shops and restaurants while living close to downtown. We think there is a resurgence in Murray Hill with the Murray Hill Preservation Association and with the murals and the traffic slowdown scheme for Edgewood Avenue, which is helping to increase foot traffic to the shops and restaurants. We bought a house here for only \$150,000 that was fully renovated. The house in San Marco was \$220,000, and it was not nearly as good. Here we got a house that was affordable with a lot of character. If you don't put an offer on a house on the first day, you won't get it. Also, there is a lot of parking here, compared to other communities. This is becoming the neighborhood for people who can't afford Riverside or Avondale.



Robynn Sorenson

I've worked in Murray Hill two years, but I don't live in Murray Hill. At this point, Murray Hill is not a very friendly place for single people who live on their own. I can afford an apartment in Riverside where I've lived for four years, but I can't afford to rent a house in Murray Hill. Eventually I would like to move over here. It has more of a neighborhood feel than Riverside. It's more up-and-coming.

Cummer begins careful demolition of Woman's Club building

A worker from Childers Roofing and Sheetmetal painstakingly removes each of thousands of Italian clay tiles one by one from the roof of the Woman's Club building on the grounds of the Cummer Museum of Art and Gardens. The removal project began in mid-August and was expected to take about three weeks to complete, then a crew will begin removing the bricks. The tiles and the bricks will be salvaged for use in construction of a new greenhouse and learning center facility to be built on the north end of the property. Demolition of the nearly 90-year-old building will occur after it has been fumigated for Formosan termites and other pests.



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Nonprofit celebrates fifth year helping women

Thanks to the Delores Barr Weaver Foundation, the Leadership Jacksonville Class of 2016, Johnstone Supply, J & W Heating and Air, Grau Mechanical Enterprise, and many individual donors, Rethreaded was able to celebrate its fifth birthday and serve its customers in comfort. Through donations of money and in-kind services, the nonprofit was able to install air-conditioning at its office and renovate its warehouse in time for its Aug. 6 party, having raised \$18,832 against the Weaver matching grant of \$12,500.

Rethreaded provides job training for women in Jacksonville who are coming out of lives of addiction, violence, human trafficking, and prostitution, by helping them earn a living wage making products out of upcycled T-shirts, or pursuing other career paths within the company including marketing, administration, finance, inventory and sales.

Since 2012 Rethreaded has directly helped 24 women locally though providing jobs in the area. Last year, Rethreaded provided 10,000 hours of work; one year later that total has jumped to 19,000 hours. “We’ve had some amazing growth over the past year, and we’re expecting to provide two more jobs by the end of the year,” said



Rethreaded Founder and President Kristen Keen with Leadership Jacksonville 2016 classmate Vickie Robinson

Kristin Keen, founder and president. Rethreaded has also positively impacted the lives of over 2,000 women globally through its import company.

“Most everyone knows how hard it is to start a business and create something from nothing,” said guest speaker Daniel Davis, whose first day as Jacksonville Chamber president in 2013 included a visit to Rethreaded. “We’re so proud of you. Thank you for everything you are doing for our community, for creating jobs.”



Daniel Davis, president of the Jacksonville Chamber of Commerce, speaks at Rethreaded’s 5th Birthday party Aug. 6.



Jenn Martin, operations associate at Rethreaded



Ariel Taylor, Carmen Kasper, board member, Nikki Foiles, Rethreaded controller, Jamie Rosseland, marketing assistant

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St. Vincent's bolsters presence in Clay County, dedicates pavilion

Generosity of local patrons runs deep

By Seth Williams
Resident Community News

The ribbon has been cut on a state-of-the-art birthing center and three-story patient tower, thanks to generous support, hard work and community engagement. It is just one of latest in a series of growth points St. Vincent's HealthCare and Ascension Health have experienced as they meet the demand for services at the growing Clay County campus.

With the opening of the J. Wayne and Delores Barr Weaver Women and Infants Pavilion, Aug. 11, the hospital system took another leap forward. "We're here celebrating our growth once again, growing now to serve women and infants in this wonderful Clay County community, in this beautiful facility, in alignment in faithfulness to our mission and values," said Tom VanOsdol, chief operating officer, Jacksonville Ministry Market. "I want to assure you that what you see here this evening has only been accomplished by truly extraordinary people."

With more than 749 births estimated in the first 10 months of opening the pavilion, the expansion is a welcome sign for a growing community during a special time for St. Vincent's HealthCare's mission. "It's particularly special that we celebrate this evening, in the midst of the year in which we're celebrating our centennial anniversary as a health ministry," said VanOsdol.

The opening of the pavilion revealed a more comprehensive maternity and birthing center to include suites for families celebrating

one of their biggest moments in life. For the families of Middleburg and the surrounding areas, it reveals a concerted effort to increase the care for women and infants.

The move is the latest phase in the doubling of St. Vincent's Clay County through the new three-story patient tower. Back in 2013, a 106-bed hospital opened its doors to the community. Shortly thereafter, an immediate plan was put in place to expand and double the campus in size in 2015. Due to the demand and the urgent needs of the residents of Clay County, construction quickly got underway to increase the size of the hospital and completed this latest phase ahead of schedule.

"What you see here...has only been accomplished by truly extraordinary people."

— Tom VanOsdol, chief operating officer, Jacksonville Ministry Market

"There aren't many hospitals that are built these days anyway, there's even fewer that receive so much community support and have so much success so early in their development, but that's been our experience early on," said James Machado, president of St. Vincent's Clay County.

Closing out the dedication, philanthropist Delores Barr Weaver thanked and acknowledged everyone who answered the call to be a part of the hospital and pavilion.

"Everybody can give what they can give and every dollar is important," she said. "I've always found that it doesn't matter what the gift is, people take ownership when they feel they are a part of it."



The Most Reverend Felipe J. Estevez, S.T.D., Bishop of the Diocese of St. Augustine blesses the facilities and prays over guests, hospital administration and donors during closing remarks at the dedication. Seated, Wayne and Delores Barr Weaver; The Most Reverend Felipe J. Estevez, S.T.D., Bishop of the Diocese of St. Augustine; James Machado, president of St. Vincent's Clay County; Sidney S. Simmons, II, chairman of the board, St. Vincent's HealthCare; David S. Hyler, II, MD, Chief Women and Infants Health Department of Maternal Child Medicine, St. Vincent's Clay County; and Father Leonard Chuwa, System Director of Formation & Ethics, St. Vincent's HealthCare.



Dr. Oman Dajani, Honorary Board Member Robert T. "Bob" Shircliff and David Meyer, vice president of Strategic Planning



Amy Farley, RN, with Delores Barr Weaver and J. Wayne Weaver, Olga Miller, technologist. Farley and Miller took the Weaver's on the grand tour at the opening of the new facilities.



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Trisha Meili

Policy Center supporter joins Leadership Council

Trisha Meili has joined the Justice for Girls Duval County Initiative: Leadership Council, which serves as an advisory council to the Delores Barr Weaver Policy Center. Members of the council gain an understanding of how girls enter the juvenile justice system, make recommendations to create long-term systemic change for justice-involved girls and their families, and raise awareness in the community that inspires meaningful action.

"Trisha has been a supporter and advocate of the Policy Center since its inception. Her experience, strength and hope will be a welcomed addition to the Leadership Council as we work together to advance the rights of girls," said Dr. Lawanda Ravoira, president and CEO of the Policy Center.

Meili, of Riverside, graduated with a Bachelor's degree in economics from Wellesley College and earned Master's degrees in business administration and international relations from Yale University before joining the highly competitive world of investment banking at Salomon Brothers in 1986. Her life dramatically changed when on the evening of April 19, 1989, during a run in Central Park, she was viciously beaten, raped and left for dead.

Today, Meili speaks to groups about her journey of recovery and healing, encouraging people world-wide to overcome life's obstacles and get back on the road of life. Meili is the author of the best-selling memoir, "I Am the Central Park Jogger: A Story of Hope and Possibility."

"The Policy Center sees the possibility in each girl, and I'm overjoyed to be part of that process," said Meili about why she accepted the invitation to join the Leadership Council.

MOVERS & SHAKERS

St. Vincent's HealthCare offers fully dissolving stent

By Kate A. Hallock
Resident Community News

For people concerned about procedures which involve medically inserting foreign objects in the body, such as metal heart stents, there's good news in local healthcare.

St. Vincent's HealthCare is the first health system in Northeast Florida and second in the state to offer patients with coronary artery disease a new treatment option – the world's first FDA-approved dissolving heart stent.

Similar to dissolving – or absorbable – sutures, which have been used since the 1930s, the Absorb stent is made of naturally dissolving material that gradually disappears over approximately three years, after it has kept the clogged artery open and promoted healing of the treated artery segment.

The Absorb stent works just like the traditional metal stent, necessary during the first three months after a blocked artery has been opened. After that, the artery typically remains open on its own as new tissue grows



Dr. Samer Garas

over the old tissue, and the stent is no longer needed. Dissolving stents are a natural next step in stent innovation.

"When you break a bone and get a cast, the cast comes off once the bone has healed,

providing you a full range of motion. This is what we can now offer many patients through the Absorb stent," said Dr. Samer Garas, interventional cardiologist at St. Vincent's Cardiology and the first in the region to use the dissolvable stent.

"With Absorb, there is nothing left behind to restrict the artery from its natural motion once it has healed," said Garas. "This also leaves a patient's options open should they need future intervention and allows us to more effectively treat patients who may not be ideal for a metallic stent."

Dissolvable stents are not always an option as they are only available in a relatively limited number of sizes when compared to metallic stents, and there are certain places within the heart in which metallic stents might be preferred.

Heart disease is the leading cause of death for men and women around the world and coronary artery disease is the most common type of heart disease.

Legacy of well-known wine connoisseur lives on through philanthropy



Kelly Pickard with Merendino Foundation trustee George Ellis, Jr.



Patrick Wells receives scholarship from Gee Alexander, trustee for Merendino Foundation

Known for his passion for fine wine and craft alcohol, the late Robert Merendino's legacy lives on through the distribution of scholarships to two local business persons.

Kelly Pickard, co-owner of Alewife Craft Beer Bottle Shop in 5 Points, received a \$3,500 scholarship to fund her certification as a cicerone, craft beer's equivalent to a sommelier. Currently, only four people on the First Coast have earned this designation.

"This presents an opportunity I wouldn't have at this time as a new small business owner," said Pickard. "It's awesome to be able to go out and do something I otherwise wouldn't, not only for my own benefit but to also benefit the customer experience."

Pickard's shop is the former location of Riverside Liquors, which Merendino owned for more than 30 years. Merendino had chosen Pickard as the first recipient of a grant from the Merendino Foundation, which he had established before his death, according to George J. Ellis Jr., administrator of the Foundation.

Patrick Wells, of Riverside, received the Robert D. Merendino Living Trust's inaugural Fine Wine Scholarship of \$2,500, which will enable him to achieve sommelier status.

"It means a lot because I won't have to take out a loan or alter my financial situation in order to progress in the industry," said Wells, a server and shift manager at Restaurant Orsay.

Merendino's career went beyond buying and selling fine wine. He also wrote a wine column for the Florida Times-Union in the 1970s, and hosted a call-in radio show on fine wine in the 1980s. The scholarship grant program was created as a bequest by Merendino, who passed away October 2015, to those who share in his lifelong passion.

"It was Bob's wish to support local wine professionals who want to become educated, certified or otherwise experienced in their field," said Ellis. "This is Bob's way of ensuring expertise and appreciation of craft spirits, particularly of fine wine, continues to flourish in this market."

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Realtors set new record in annual backpack challenge

Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Network Realty collected a record 1,011 backpacks filled with school supplies for Northeast Florida children during its 17th Annual Backpack Challenge. The total exceeded the 2016 record of 733 backpacks by 38 percent.

The backpacks and school supplies, such as pens, pencils, paper and notebooks, were donated to students in kindergarten through grade 12 throughout Northeast Florida via a variety of community and social services groups in Duval and St. Johns counties.

“We are filled with gratitude to all of our Realtors, employees and clients for ensuring that so many local children have the supplies they need for educational success,” said Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Network Realty Founder, President and CEO Linda Sherrer. “The Backpack Challenge is an event our team looks forward to participating in every year and we are very proud of their efforts.”



Barbara Jenkins, with a Community Connections representative, Cathy Bade and Myrna Brannon



Front: The Zona family representing Dreams Come True; siblings Rocco Zona, Arianna Zona, Chad Skinner, and Dreamer Devon Zona. Back: Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Network Realty's Chantha Bisher, Beckie Pasko, Haylie Snipes, Margaret Ceaser, Manya Goldstein, Linda Sherrer and Christy Budnick

New agents join local realty firm

Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Network Realty (BHHSFNR) added three new realtors to its roster at its Avondale office.

Daniil Kushnir, Southside resident, is originally from Estonia. Fluent in Russian and Ukrainian, Kushnir is also working toward a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration.

Chai Janvier, from Massachusetts, moved to Jacksonville 17 years ago and has experience in retail management, event planning and visual merchandising.

For Philips Dickerson, working as a Realtor in the Avondale office is known turf. He grew up in Avondale, attended The Episcopal School of Jacksonville, and then went to college at Washington and Lee University. Dickerson worked for a defense contractor in Atlanta, Georgia, then entered the field of education, before returning to Avondale and a new career in real estate.



Chai Janvier



Daniil Kushnir



Philips Dickerson

Friends of Hemming Park announces new leadership



Bill Prescott



Wayne Wood



Michelle Barth



Suzanne Jenkins

Bill Prescott, principal with Heritage Capital Group and former Jacksonville Jaguars CFO, has taken over management of Friends of Hemming Park (FOHP) on a voluntary basis as the interim director of the nonprofit organization. Board Chairman Wayne Wood will also serve as Programming Coordinator.

Other volunteer additions include Michelle Barth (former Chief Strategy & Development

Officer at Feeding Northeast Florida and Deputy Chief of Staff for the Office of the Mayor), who will serve as advisor for fundraising and development, and Suzanne Jenkins, City Council woman for District 4 from 1999 to 2007, who will take over the role of Director of Strategic Planning. Both Barth and Jenkins are serving on a volunteer basis.

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Roosevelt Watson
(Photo by Bob Self)



Kathy Stark



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Sara Pedigo



Yvette Hyater-Adams



Adrian Pickett
(Photo by Ingrid Damiani)



Drew Brown
(Photo by Andy Welch)



Dustin Harewood

Eight artists receive Community Foundation grants

Arts Ventures grants from The Community Foundation for Northeast Florida will help eight artists advance their artistic work.

Dustin Harewood and Roosevelt Watson, III, will receive grants to fund mural projects. Harewood, a professor of art at Florida State College Jacksonville, will continue his street art series with two murals slated for downtown Jacksonville and Springfield. Watson plans three large-scale paintings to be exhibited at locations in Murray Hill and at FSCJ. Both men have work displayed in the Cummer Museum's "Lift" exhibit.

Landscape watercolor artist Kathy Stark is a third-time recipient of an Art Ventures

grant, which have funded several phases of her project, "The Wilderness of North Florida's Parks." This grant will cover the community engagement phase, which includes printing of indoor and outdoor exhibition pieces.

Portrait artist Adrian Pickett, Jr., plans to use the grant to purchase equipment and supplies to further enhance his process for creating Fine Art charcoal renderings. Four of the award-winning artist's original paintings hang in the Dr. Carter G. Woodson Museum in St. Petersburg, Florida.

Playwright and filmmaker Drew L. Brown plans to use his grant to complete a script for a semi-autobiographical play, "Monarch," based

on the life of his mother, who was sentenced to prison for six years for a crime she claimed she did not commit. Brown was the recipient of a 2014 Student Academy Award from the Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences.

Yvette Hyater-Adams, a writer from Atlantic Beach, is working on a book of essays and her grant will cover expenses for a writing residency and fees for a professional editor.

Jacksonville actor and former Douglas Anderson School of the Arts student Tarra Conner Jones (the "J" is intentional) will use her grant to produce her first one-woman cabaret-style show, "Here!" for local stages.

Sara Pedigo, an artist from St. Johns County and associate professor of painting at Flagler College, plans to use a portion of her grant for equipment and supplies, which will improve her ability to represent the quality of her paintings in digital media.

Since 1990, more than \$1 million has been granted through the Art Ventures initiative, which is funded through the Art Ventures Endowment, the J. Shepard, Jr. & Mary Ann Bryan Arts Endowment, the Anne and Sallyn Pajcic Art Ventures Endowment, the Independent Life Minority Arts Fund, and the Alynne Sharp Art Fund.

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Vørb Jax celebrates one year in 5 Points



Owner Ferdinand Mendiola, Lou Anthony Garcia, Anthony Holsey, Owner Toni Mendiola, Aurea Navarro, Patra Letbetter, and Bryndon Murphy; not pictured, Chandi Ontiveros

One year after opening Vørb Jax, a luxury fitness center in 5 Points, Toni and Ferdinand Mendiola are still putting quality before quantity, catering to their clientele in more ways than one.

They have tweaked their hours, brought in new equipment – some by special request – and added new classes and amenities.

“We have added a small private personal training studio, a Boxing Fitness class, and a full-time massage therapist,” said Toni Mendiola. “We became the only official Spinning facility in Riverside.”

Mendiola said while the customer base seemed a little apprehensive about them in the beginning, membership has been steady and consistent. “Our name had no familiarity, and no known reputation and yes, we do charge more than the cost of a pizza for membership,” said Mendiola. “However, you get what you pay for. You get an environment that you want to be in, with staff that caters to you and management that will actually listen.”

Florida Ballet hires new principal teacher



Chris Alloways-Ramsey

Georgia native and 5 Points resident Chris Alloways-Ramsey has joined the Florida Ballet as its new principal teacher.

Alloways-Ramsey was a professional dancer for 15 years before a traumatic car accident in 1999 left him with several injuries. After two-and-a-half years of therapy and retraining, Alloways-Ramsey returned to dance while pursuing a degree in liberal arts from Harvard University.

An American Ballet Theatre certified trainer, Alloways-Ramsey will be responsible for instructing students in the intermediate to pre-professional levels, focusing on ballet technique, pointe work, Florida Ballet performances, such as the Nutcracker, and expanding the male dance program.

Alloways-Ramsey was most recently head of classical ballet at Cape Academy of Performing Arts in Cape Town, South Africa, and prior to that position, was ballet master for Boston Arts Academy.

Jenks on track to be first female Rotary Club president

The Rotary Club of Jacksonville has elected Traci Jenks, of Ortega, its first president-elect designee. Jenks, a six-year member of the Rotary, will serve as president in 2018-2019. She is senior director of office leasing with Cushman & Wakefield, and has worked in the real estate industry since 1992.

The Rotary Club of Jacksonville is Florida's first club, chartered in 1912. Jenks will be the third woman to serve as president in the club's 104-year history. Many clubs are moving to designate a president-elect to allow time for acclimation and leadership training prior to taking the helm.

Jenks, however, is no stranger to leading, having worked in economic development from 2000 to 2003 at what is now JaxUSA Partnership, which convinced Fidelity National Financial to move its headquarters to Jacksonville in 2003.

“I'm passionate about Jacksonville and its people, and I look forward to serving them and honoring the great traditions of Rotary,” said Jenks, whose primary goal is to increase club membership, particularly among younger professionals.



Traci Jenks

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Riverside firm named a "Best Company to Work For"

For the second year in a row, Jimerson & Cobb, P.A., has been named one of Florida's "Best Companies to Work For" by Florida Trend magazine.

Companies that chose to participate underwent an evaluation of their workplace policies, practices, philosophy, systems and demographics, as well as an employee satisfaction survey.

"It is deeply gratifying to have our firm recognized not only for our dedication to our clients, but also to our employees," said Managing Partner Charles Jimerson. "It is only through the enthusiasm, hard work and dedication of our staff that we have continued to grow and develop so rapidly as a firm."

Jimerson said the firm places a high priority on maintaining a positive and encouraging work environment, and regularly hosts employee team-building activities to foster camaraderie and collaboration. Recently, for example, the firm held a painting contest in which participants imitated the style of Bob Ross.

"It is deeply gratifying to have our firm recognized not only for our dedication to our clients, but also to our employees."

— Charles Jimerson, Managing Partner, Jimerson & Cobb, P.A.

Panhellenic Association names officers

The Jacksonville Alumnae Panhellenic Association recently installed new officers for the 2016-17 year.

Serving as president will be Mary Freeman of Alpha Delta Pi. Vice president is Lauren O'Connell of Delta Gamma; Treasurer is Alex Landers of Chi Omega; Recording Secretary is Lindsay Jones of Alpha Xi Delta and Corresponding Secretary is Brandy Hibbard of Gamma Phi Beta.

Regular meetings of the group are held the second Tuesday of each month, September through May at the Haskell Building from 7-9 p.m. They include a scheduled speaker, social period, and brief business meeting. For more information, visit www.jacksonvillepanhellenic.org.

Cummer Museum gets award for VSA Festival

Coming on the heels of the Cummer Museum of Art & Gardens' 21st Very Special Arts (VSA) Festival in May, the museum received a 2016 John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts Leadership Exchange in Arts and Disability (LEAD®) Community Asset Award.

VSA is an international organization, a sister organization to the Special Olympics, founded 41 years ago by U.S. Ambassador Jean Kennedy Smith. The local affiliate is housed at the Cummer, which began small in 1995 with a two-hour festival, serving a couple hundred children with 50 volunteers. The Cummer is the only museum in the country that conducts the Very Special Arts festival within its walls.

Cummer Museum Lead Accessibility Educator Matthew Patterson accepted the award at the LEAD® Awards Night on Aug. 5 at the Pittsburgh Children's Museum in Pennsylvania.

"The Community Asset Award presented by the Kennedy Center is a tremendous validation of the many years of work the Museum has done in the realm of accessibility. Every year we serve thousands of individuals with disabilities through our events, our programs, and our exhibitions," said Patterson. "None of



Matthew Patterson

that would be possible without the dedication of the hundreds of people across our institution and within our community who have given their time, their attention, their energy, and their passion to ensuring the Cummer is a

better and more inclusive place for everyone and that no one feels isolated from beauty."

This award marks the Cummer Museum as one of the premier providers of accessibility programming in the country.

Local lawyers recognized as best

Seven local lawyers who practice with the firm Rogers Towers, P.A., have been recognized by their peers in two publications.

Named to The Best Lawyers in America® 2017 were Graham Allen – Commercial Litigation, and Mass Tort Litigation/Class Action – Defendants; William D. Brinton – Commercial Litigation; Wyman R. Duggan – Litigation – Land Use and Zoning; Theodore

R. Hainline, Jr. – Land Use and Zoning Law, and Real Estate Law; Edward McCarthy, III – Commercial Litigation, and William E. Scheu – Real Estate Law.

In addition, Allen and David H. Peek were named to Florida Trend's annual Legal Elite list. Allen, who was inducted into the 2015 Hall of Fame, was recognized in the area of Commercial Litigation, and Peek in the area of Tax.



David Peek



Graham Allen



William Brinton



Wyman Duggan



T.R. Hainline, Jr.



Edward McCarthy, III



William Scheu

Local lawyer named to Best Lawyers list



Sean Cronin

Attorney Sean B. Cronin, a partner at Cronin & Maxwell, PL was named to the 2017 edition of *The Best Lawyers in America*. He was selected in the practice area of Medical Malpractice Law – Plaintiffs. This is the sixth year he has been listed in the book.

Before practicing law, Cronin was a pilot in the U.S. Navy, serving as a P-3 (C) Mission Commander, Patrol Plane Commander and Naval Aviation Safety Officer. He is an FAA-certified commercial pilot with multiple and single engine instrument ratings. He represents victims of medical malpractice – including navy and military malpractice, aviation accidents and defective products.

Cronin, whose office is located in Lakeside, is a graduate of Jacksonville University and Florida State University College of Law.

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Nemours delivers for children, funds for care

The Cummer Museum of Art and Gardens set a beautiful backdrop for this year's annual fundraiser, *An Evening of Promise*, on behalf of Nemours Children's Specialty Care. The summer evening soiree brought like-minded sponsors and patrons to raise much-needed funding for patient care, research, outreach and education for the specialty hospital for children, based in Jacksonville.

The Honorable Mayor and Mrs. Lenny Curry were on hand to thank donors and mingle with other special guests. Thanks to the generous donations of local corporations, small businesses and donors, children will have a better chance to beat life-threatening challenges they face. The event is the single largest fundraiser for the nonprofit all year and it proved to be another elegant evening under the stars in the Cummer Gardens. The event took place Aug. 27 along the banks of the St. Johns River in Riverside.



Shelley and Julie Klempf with Connor Jarchow and Alexandria Klempf



Hal and Heather Houston, Jill Wu, Randi and Kevin Guthard



Robert Richendollar with Nemours' special guest, Riley Ruppert-Richendollar, and Donna Warmack



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Virginia Hall with Russell Armistead



Rachel Hill, Carol Catlett, Nick To



Community Connections Board Presi- dent Jerry Mallot with Mark Bennett



Chris Skinner with Stacy and

Community Connections hono

Achieving goals and bettering lives for Jacksonville's most vulnerable is best accomplished by the business community. With its organic growth over the years and the leaders who act as change agents in our city, much more can be accomplished for those underserved in the community. Those were a few of the talking points as speakers honored Rick Catlett, president and CEO of the Jacksonville Sports Council at this year's Community Connections celebration titled *One Life at a Time*.

Under Catlett's leadership, the growth of the Gator Bowl (now the TaxSlayer Bowl), celebrates 72 years and rests on a solid foundation, thanks to his guidance. The organization has broadened its reach to



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Ed Perez



Brian Crooke, Brandon Downie and Nick Venovski

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include neutral site college football games, several ACC Football Championship games, and as of two years ago, developed the Jacksonville Sports Council to oversee and facilitate the recruitment of all major sporting events to Jacksonville.

Catlett was awarded the Florence N. Davis award for his dedication, strength, and vision, just as Florence "Flo" Davis exhibited in her role as a volunteer, civic leader and philanthropist in Jacksonville.

To learn more about Community Connections and the work being done to help women and families fight poverty, visit www.communityconnectionsjax.org.



Ted Linhof, Steve Suhrer and Tim Cannon

Finger lickin' good time at the Florida Theatre

Between brisket, beans, wings and other sticky things, the music of Mamma Blue, Smokestack and an appearance by many micro brews, the Florida Theatre was brimming with activity Aug. 25. As supporters made their way through the corridors of the high-style movie palace, a casual evening with great food, libations and tunes ensued. The gathering served as a fundraising opportunity for patrons and donors as well as frequent concert-goers to the nonprofit theatre.

Participating merchants who came out in support of this year's event were Bono's Pit BBQ, MOJO No. 4, Butt Hutt Smokehouse, River City Brewing Company, Veterans United Craft Brewery, BOW LEG'Z BBQ, The Bearded Pig-Southern BBQ & Beer Garden, Bold City Brewery and Seven Bridges.



Lorraine Rodriguez, Florida Theatre President Numa Saiselin, Peggy Holt, Kyle Etkorn and Rick Beaver



Anne Scheufler, Peggy Barker, John Hay and Wes Scheufler



Kathi Grenville, Cheryl Canaday, April Bradley, Denise Bowenschulte, Jeannie Middlebrooks, Jill Chappano and Debbie Cook



Florida Theatre Development Officer Suzanne Hudson-Smith with Lorin Thies, director of memberships for the Florida Theatre.

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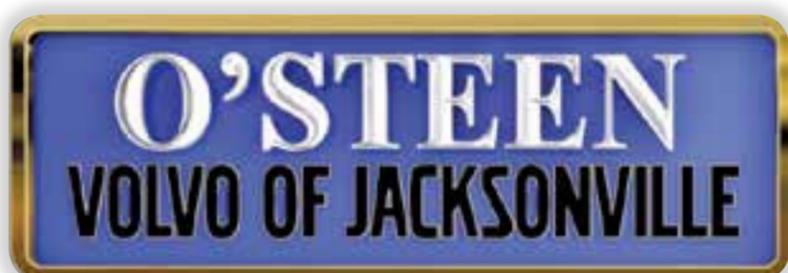
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Angelwood's kids star in nonprofit's fashion show

This year the "kids" were the stars with members of the Angelwood community, walking the runway during the nonprofit's annual fashion show and fundraiser at the Sawgrass Marriott Hotel Aug. 12.

"Usually we have top models but this year we wanted to tell the community what Angelwood is all about," said Nadine Gramling, Angelwood board member emeritus. "This is the first time the show has been dedicated to the participants of Angelwood."

Supporting the event were former Jaguar defensive lineman Jeff Lageman and NASCAR driver Kyle Weatherman of North Carolina, who drives in the ARCA series with the Roush Fenway Racing Team. Lageman recently became engaged to Angelwood Development Director Tera Williams.

Serving as mistress of ceremonies at the event were Rear Admiral Marsha "Marty"



Rear Admiral Marty Evans, mistress of ceremonies, who opened the Angelwood Fashion Show on August 12

Evans and The Honorable Angela M. Cox, Fourth Judicial Circuit Court judge, who introduced the models during the event. Robin Wahby of Wahby Financial Group served as chairman of the Angelwood Fashion Show committee.



Angelwood Development Director Tera Williams with her fiancé former Jaguar Jeff Lageman and her daughter Taylor Barszcz



Miss Florida Teen Gracie Smith strolled down the runway with Patrick of Angelwood during the Angelwood Fashion Show at the Marriott Hotel at Sawgrass Aug. 12.



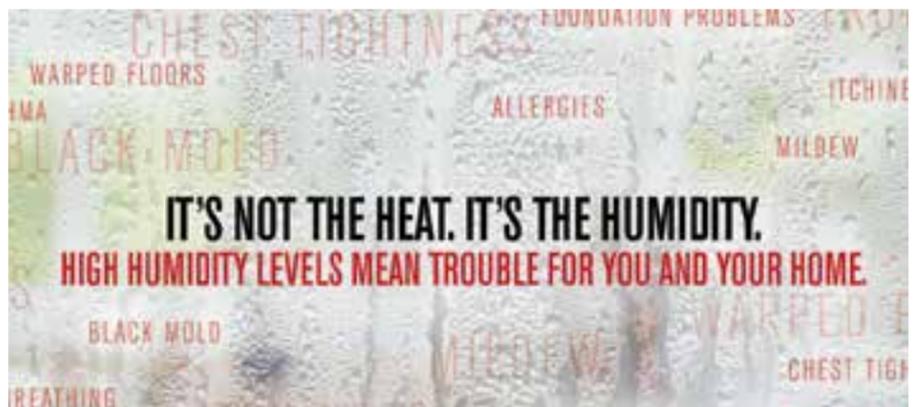
Angelwood's Sara Rieger and Cat Craven



Judy and George Gabel



Angelwood Board members Sharon Dowe and Stephen Ramsey



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Avondale family takes toys to Dominican Republic preschool



Sebastian Raker, far left, and his sister, Olivia, and mother, Zuleika (far right) with preschool children in the Dominican Republic

Zuleika and Mark Raker went to great lengths this summer – 1,027 miles to be exact – to teach their children the value of caring and sharing with others. In July the Avondale family traveled to Zuleika’s hometown of Moca, Dominican Republic. “As my home country, my husband Mark and I feel that it is essential for our children to build an emotional and social connection with its people and its culture,” said Zuleika Raker. “To this end, I asked my children, Olivia and Sebastian, to gather up all of the plush toys that they have outgrown to take with us as donations to those less privileged in Moca.”

Raker coordinated a visit to La Estancia Infantil, a preschool where they spent time with about 25 boys and girls ages two to four years old. “Olivia and Sebastian handed out the toys to the happy little faces while my husband, Mark, amused them with High Fives and a few basic English words,” Zuleika said. “The amount of joy and enthusiasm that we shared with the children of La Estancia Infantil was amazing and it will definitely remain in our hearts and our minds forever.”



Ducks Unlimited gains support from Jacksonville, Fernandina clubs

It was an evening to celebrate fellowship among duck hunters and clay target sportsmen at the most recent gathering of Northeast Florida’s Ducks Unlimited (DU) clubs. The passionate group of waterfowlers gathered Aug. 25 at Clay Target Sports off New Berlin Road on Jacksonville’s Northside to shoot clays, fire up steaks and rally for habitat restoration.

wetlands and associated habitats for North America’s waterfowl, other wildlife, and people is furthered by sponsorships and fundraising events.

The meet and greet helped lend support to the mission to grow awareness and raise funds for *Ducks Unlimited*. Their purpose to conserve, restore, and manage

The theme of the event, Ducks and Trucks, brought local DU chapters from both Fernandina and Jacksonville together to celebrate a year of successful fundraising and banquet turnouts. One of the marquis sponsors of the evening, Jacksonville’s Duval Ford, delivered big-wheeled trucks to the event, showcasing the offerings to sportsmen in the pickup truck line.

Support the Jaguars, raise money for favorite charity

Jacksonville Jaguars’ fans can support their favorite charity this year while cheering on the home team. Partnering with the Nonprofit Center of Northeast Florida, the Jaguars’ Give and Go 100 program lets fans get the best deal on individual game tickets and raise funds for the cause nearest and dearest to their hearts.

more than 25 tickets through the Give and Go 100 website will earn a dollar-for-dollar match for their WeGive.org® project. Each ticket sale over 25 donates \$20 to the nonprofit, and once the 100-ticket threshold is met, the match becomes three to one, earning an organization up to \$30 per ticket purchased.

For every pre-season and regular-season home games ticket purchased through the secure Give and Go 100 order site an automatic \$10 donation is made to the charity selected. Participating organizations may be found at NonprofitCtr.org.

In 2015 the program raised \$350,000 for local organizations. The Jaguars Give and Go 100 Program is a partnership of the Nonprofit Center of Northeast Florida, Jaguars, LLC, the Jaguars Foundation, the DuBow Family Foundation, and WeGive.org®.

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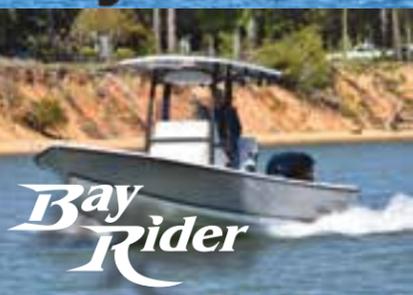



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Rain doesn't dampen spirits at River Ruckus

Despite off-and-on showers most of the day at Riverside Arts Market Aug. 27, the 4th Annual River Ruckus offered education and entertainment to raise awareness about the St. Johns River and the environmental issues it faces.

St. Johns Riverkeeper staff and a crew of volunteers shared information through games and literature, while river-related exhibitors, such as All Wet Sports, Blackcreek Outfitters, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, Freedom Boat Club, Jacksonville University Marine Science Research Institute, and sponsor Sadler Point Marina offered a variety of activities from standup paddleboard and casting lessons to kids crafts and free boat trips.



Fishweir Elementary School student Kaley Allen, 8, bravely lets Kayko, a 34-year-old macaw, perch on her arm at Riverside Arts Market.



David Raymer, Durell Myers, Brooks and Jenny Busey at the Sadler Point Marina booth during River Ruckus, Aug. 27 at Riverside Arts Market.



Genora Crain-Orth, Eli Orth, and Jimmy Orth, St. Johns Riverkeeper's executive director, with Gayle Rice, Deutsche Bank employee and volunteer at Riverside Arts Market.



St. Johns Riverkeeper's Justina Dacey with volunteers Tammie Gates, holding Amelia Taylor, and Jacquelyn Gates, at the Riverkeeper's booth at River Ruckus.

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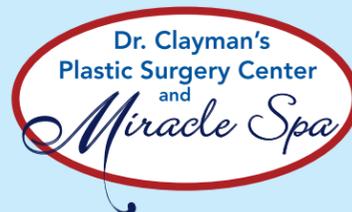
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Two more murals near completion in Murray Hill

Just in time for centennial celebration

By Kate A. Hallock
Resident Community News

The second and third of four murals planned for Murray Hill will be finished in time for the community's 100th anniversary celebration this month, according to Jason Tetlak, project director and secretary for Murray Hill Preservation Association.

A community block party is planned for the 900 block of Edgewood Avenue, with live music, food trucks and more, beginning at 5 p.m., Saturday, Sept. 17.

The mural project began earlier this year with a call to artists. The first mural, designed by New York artist Jon Burgerman, was painted by Lee High School art teacher Anne Jacques and former art students on the side of the Murray Hill Theatre building, next to the Esquire Barber Shop; it was completed in late July.

The second mural, in progress on the side of the Grater Goods Cheese and Charcuterie store at 1080 Edgewood Avenue, was designed by Britt Spencer, a newcomer to Jacksonville, coming from Savannah by way of his recent marriage to Shannon Snow, a graphic designer and illustrator for Natural Life magazine.

An illustrator and a professor at the Savannah College of Art and Design (SCAD), Spencer hopes to find a home in Riverside. In the meantime, he'll spend weekends in Murray Hill on his mural project.

Spencer is using acrylic house paint to apply his mural with brushes and rollers.



Shannon and Britt Spencer work on 1,800 square feet of mural on the south end of Murray Hill Plaza.

His 15-foot high by 120-foot wide mural depicts a marching band and will be seen on the side of Grater Goods.

"I want to be involved in the art community here," said Spencer, "so I put myself out there for this mural project."

Murray Hill's third mural was designed by two Riverside artists, Kate Willink and Brenna Martin. It is in progress at the corner of Edgewood Avenue and Post Street on the side of Tradewinds. The 52x16-foot mural uses eight distinct colors to combine an abstract of native Florida foliage with the word "GROW" in large, uppercase letters.

"We find nature worthy of inspiring our great community to reach out full potential here in Murray Hill," said Willink and Martin in their proposal to the Murray Hill Preservation Association.

Both artists attended Flagler College and hold a Bachelor of Arts degree in graphic design; Willink also has a Bachelor's of Fine Arts from the same college, and Martin minored in Fine Arts. They work together at First in Print and both love living in Riverside.



Brenna Martin paints from scaffolding while Kate Willink tackles the mural at ground level.



Shannon Spencer gives her husband, Britt, a hand filling in the outlines of his mural.



Britt Spencer works on the outline portion of his musical mural.



Willink and Martin's mural at Edgewood Avenue and Post Street



Mural artists Kate Rose Willink, Brenna Noel Martin

"It feels like one of the major art centers of northeast Florida," said Willink, who prefers to support local businesses. "You really don't have to leave Riverside."

"It has an up and coming vibe, open to creativity," agreed Martin. "I also like the contrast between history and growth."

The call for an artist to design the fourth mural has not yet been extended, according to Tetlak, but he indicated two businesses have expressed interested in hosting it.

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Love Feast attendees stand with Orlando

It was an evening to celebrate togetherness and tolerance, as VICARIOUS Events teamed up with SKYY Vodka to rally for lives lost in Orlando at the Pulse nightclub shooting.

The Aug. 11 event not only raised awareness, but proceeds collected by attendees will go toward the Better Together Fund to help victims.

The shooting took the lives of 49 people and injured 53 others on that fateful night in Orlando, June 12, 2016, a day that will go down as one of the worst domestic terror attacks in U.S. history.

Following the events that unfolded in Orlando, the outpouring of support has been overwhelming across the county. In another show of empathy and understanding, the Orlando Health and Florida Hospital systems have dropped all related fees and hospital bills for victims of the horrific tragedy.

At this special local event, a lighthearted gathering of culinary treats, cocktails and a photo exhibition brought guests to The Bridge at Sadler Point Marina for an evening of camaraderie, dancing and entertainment. For more information about the impact of the funds, visit cfound.org/give/about_better_together.



Laney Smith with Natalie Invelicato, Grace Driscoll and Durell Myers



Ari Gaskin, Mark Megerhoff of SKYY Vodka and VICARIOUS founder and creator Cari Sanchez-Potter



Sarah Hande, Andrews Fallon, Jensen Hande and Rob Middleton



Bruce Musser with Jennifer Ancelin, Laura Evans and Darren Ronan



Kara Scremin and Jodie Bielman with Racquel and Daniel Court

Aloe vera project gets new home in zoo

For the third time in as many years, aloe vera plants being raised by the Men's Garden Club of Jacksonville have been moved to a new location at the Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens.

The club raises the plants to donate to cancer patients undergoing radiation therapy. Aloe vera reportedly can ease the pain and dryness associated with radiation burns.

The aloe garden was first located in an area near bees, but they started flying into the greenhouse-like structure erected over the plants, according to Donn Elliott, program chairman. The next location was behind the picnic area near the parking lot, however, zoo officials anticipate a record crowd at its annual Halloween Spooktacular event and needed that area for parking.

The third and newest location for the succulents is behind the tiger cages, said Elliott, away from the public.

It took about three-and-a-half hours for six men to move 1,400 plants, "give or take," said Elliott, to the new location on Aug. 23, returning the following weekend to dismantle



Men's Garden Club member Jim MacLean moves pots of aloe vera from one location at the Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens to another.



Men's Garden Club members Jim MacLean, Marty Gottlieb, Donn Elliott and Scott Trenor take a break after moving 1,400 aloe plants to a new location.



Jim MacLean and Men's Garden Club president, Walter Bryant, finish the move of the club's aloe vera garden to a new location at the Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens.

the greenhouse. The club has 10 distribution points in Duval County and also provide plants in Nassau and Baker counties.

Gardeners serve up cold ice cream on hot summer afternoon

Tim Bush, member of Riverside Park United Methodist Church, is served ice cream by Men's Garden Club member Jeffrey Wardlow at an ice cream social held Aug. 21 in Riverside Park. The club hosts an annual plant sale each November, which helps fund the Jim Watson Scholarship Fund at the University of Florida, the Junior Master Gardeners Program and the 4H, among others. This year's plant sale runs Nov. 2-13 at the Greater Jacksonville Agricultural Fair.



Tim Bush and Jeffrey Wardlow



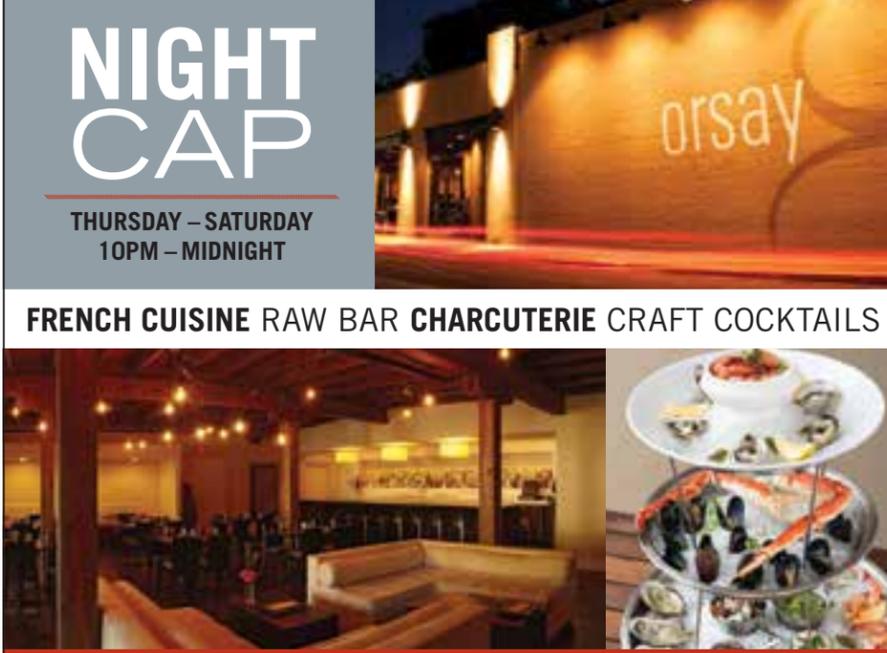
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Going pink for breast cancer at Arbor Terrace

Kicking off its upcoming 6th Annual Remission Rocks celebration Friday, Sept. 16 at the River City Brewing Company, Bosom Buddies hosted a pink party at Arbor Terrace in Ortega Aug. 25. Catered by Arbor Terrace Director of Dining Services Sandra Bernard, pink finger foods and cupcakes made by the residents carried out the theme.

Staff from event sponsor Life Care Centers of America sold tickets to the September

fundraiser for Bosom Buddies, and hot pink or gray Remission Rocks T-shirts.

The upcoming charity event celebrates Bosom Buddies' 28th anniversary. The organization seeks to raise awareness about breast cancer and provides women in the greater Jacksonville area with hope, support and education through direct services, free of charge, that address their breast health and educational needs.



Arbor Terrace Ortega Maintenance Director Ronald Jean, Rachel Pellum, Bob Barnhard, Senior Care Counselor Tracy Underwood, Director of Dining Services Sandra Bernard, and Crystal Roughton and Brian Phillips, engagement coordinators



Life Care Centers staff Kerry Fouraker, Tennille Batten, Charlene Ennis, and Margery Flannagan (back), with Lisa Wright, Bosom Buddies Coordinator



Jill Hecker, Benton House community relations director; Pam Kearney, Haven Hospice professional liaison, and Raymond Morris, Jr., Atkinson's Pharmacy, director of pharmacy services



Mary Pinelli, resident care director, and Tracy Bass, engagement director at Arbor Terrace

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New executive director opens 'Next Chapter' at Women's Center

Dubbed "The Next Chapter," the Women's Center of Jacksonville held its 21st Annual Celebration of Women at Deerwood Country Club, Aug. 19. The yearly event also recognized the 96th anniversary of the passage of the 19th Amendment, giving women the right to vote on Aug. 26, 1920.

The gala host committee was a Who's Who in local philanthropy and advocacy for improving the lives of women in Jacksonville: Dale Clifford, Lisé Everly, Linda Foley, Pat Hogan, Monica Jacoby, Helen Lane, Lynda Lewis, Trisha Meili and Jim Schwarz, Joan Newton, Anne and Steve Pajcic, and Joan and Jim Van Vleck.

Caroline, a young woman who had received help, hope and kindness at the Women's Center, performed the song "Warrior" by

Demi Lovato. "The individuals that attended were amazingly supportive and you could have heard a pin drop during Caroline's performance," said Teresa Miles, executive director. "I could truly feel the kindness and compassion in the room."

Sheriff Mike Williams served as auctioneer for the live auction and for Gifts of Love, the opportunity to bid on items that will make a difference in the lives of those served by the Women's Center.

"We are so grateful for the sponsors of the evening, not to mention the commitments from individuals, businesses and the City of Jacksonville," said Miles. "Sheriff Williams and his staff are wonderful partners in our efforts to ensure safety and healing for victims."



Cheryl Anthony, Women's Center founders Shirley Webb and Bobbi de Cordova-Hanks



Jim Schwarz, Trisha Meili, Beth Clark, board member



Board member Marsha Base, Cheryl Hemmerle



Sharon Simmons, Gillian Ticehurst



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Residents dive in overseas to learn 'le français'

By Christina Swanson
Resident Community News

Imagine sightseeing onboard a three-story high mechanical elephant, as it lumbers along, trumpeting loudly and spewing water from its flailing trunk at passersby,

Residents from Jacksonville experienced the heartbeat of French lifestyle in just such a Jules Verne-type of fanciful way, thanks to an opportunity to attend a language immersion program developed with Jacksonville's sister city, Nantes, France.

Nantes (pronounced "Nawnt"), a French city nestled in the Loire Valley 20 miles from the Atlantic coast, is rated one of France's best places to live, and that meant there was lots to see and do. Twinning with Jacksonville in 1984, Nantes has developed from a provincial town to a buzzing city



The Great Elephant was a highlight for many of the language immersion program participants.



Kayaunna Dean and her grandmother Marsha Phelts

with many similarities to Jacksonville's river-based activities, such as the Landing and Metro Park.

From taking French language classes at the University of Nantes, to visiting Nantes landmarks and enjoying the regional cuisine while completely absorbed in the cultural experience by staying with host families, this was no ordinary group trip to France for the 31 program participants during the first week of July.

Nantes is known for creating and exhibiting fantastic mechanical animals, the Machines of the Isle of Nantes, including the current one, the Great Elephant, which provides a most interesting way to take in the views of Nantes.

It certainly was one of the trip highlights for Marsha Phelts and her granddaughter, Kayaunna Dean, who were continually in

awe of the machine as it walked past restaurants, galleries and historic sites.

"It was quite a unique one-hour tour aboard the elephant and no matter what people were doing, everyone stopped to

notice him, or ran away to avoid getting sprayed," said Phelts, of Fernandina Beach.

Phelts and Dean were also especially fond of the riverboat cruises along the Erdre River, where they were awed by the massiveness of the mansions, castles and exquisite gardens along the waterway. Like all the participants, Phelts was impressed by the people's kindness and the incredible local cuisine – usually seafood – presented to them in such huge portions and variety, "as if we were royalty," said Phelts.

Richard Shieldhouse, Jacksonville Sister Cities Association vice president, echoed Phelts' foodie comments, pointing to the incredible three-foot round paellas filled with sausage, rice and shrimp during the special U.S. Independence Day party at the Château



Three-foot round paellas were served at the U.S. Independence Day party.

Continued on page 37



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des ducs de Bretagne given for the program's participants and their host families.

"I'm not usually sentimental, but I was moved after consecutively singing the *Star-Spangled Banner* and *La Marseillaise*, along with the rest of a large room full of Americans and French people," said Shieldhouse, of Avondale.

The language immersion program started with the desire to foster a stronger friendship between the two sister cities of Nantes and Jacksonville, planning was coordinated by the Alliance Française de Jacksonville (AFJax) and the Jacksonville Sister Cities Association, Inc. (JSCA), and sponsored by Jacksonville's France sister city, La Maison des États-Unis.

The trip was open to members of both nonprofits and attracted a diverse group of people from age 10 to 78, with a wide range of backgrounds.

"One of the wonderful things about this, was it gave people who wouldn't otherwise gone on such a trip, the opportunity to travel abroad," said Shieldhouse.

An architect, Jennifer Suharmadji was especially mindful of the ease of accessibility throughout Nantes by using the TAN, their tramway and bus service. "Their tracks and



Linda Sacco, Christine Renard of Nantes, Jen Suharmadji and Richard Shieldhouse at a special U.S. Independence Day party July 5 at the Château des ducs de Bretagne.

many tram cars are barrier-free, which made this medieval city very accessible and modern – a big plus being a visitor," said Suharmadji.

Nantes' "twin" city chairperson Mariette Cassouret (for La Maison des États-Unis) saw the idea as a wonderful opportunity to build a stronger relationship with Jacksonville.

Ultimately, it was the people who made the trip and immersion program so meaningful.

Episcopal High School student Mariama Pouye, whose family lives in Riverside, said when her host family took her to their family reunion, she made a meaningful friend with the host family's young cousin and plans on having her visit Jacksonville next spring. "Because we were truly relying on speaking French in daily situations, rather than just practicing out of a textbook like we do here, my communication levels have soared," said Pouye.

Suharmadji said her most valuable experience from the trip was living with her French host family and observing their relaxed and balanced way-of-life.

Just as the JSCA's theme is "peace through people," the trip to Jacksonville's sister city Nantes was another opportunity to foster goodwill.



Mariama Pouye, left, and a new friend in France (name not known)

Want to know more?

Jacksonville Sister Cities

Jacksonville Sister Cities Association, Inc. (JSCA) is the local chapter of Sister Cities International, based in Washington, D.C., and an active sister city program since 1967.

Jacksonville Sister Cities is currently twinned with eight Sister Cities throughout the world including Bahia Blanca, Argentina; Curitiba, Brazil; Changwon City, South Korea; Murmansk, Russia; Nantes, France; San Juan, Puerto Rico; Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality, South Africa and Yingkou, China; and three Friendship Cities in China: Ningbo, Shaoxing and Suzhou.

Sister Cities International's mission is to "promote peace through mutual respect, understanding, and cooperation – one individual, one community at a time."

JSCA holds meetings the fourth Wednesday of every month on the third floor of City Hall downtown. Committees may also meet in other locations as they work on planned projects and fund-raising events. Visit www.jsca.org for details.

Alliance Française

Alliance Française de Jacksonville (AFJax) is the local nonprofit of the American Alliances Françaises, located in Washington, D.C., and has been in Jacksonville since 1962. Its mission is to encourage and develop knowledge of the French language and French and Francophone cultures, and to foster cultural, intellectual and artistic exchanges between the United States and France and French-speaking countries.

AFJax's regular group meetings take place on the third Wednesday of each month at 1628 San Marco Blvd., Suite 9, with many

other activities planned each month. Its 150 members enjoy sharing their love of French culture and language with dinners at French restaurants, movie nights, artist and chef presentations, and more, in order to expand their knowledge and interest in everything French. The San Marco office includes a gallery space with monthly revolving exhibitions of local artists who have a link to France. For more information, visit www.afjacksonville.org.

AFJax Open House

Sheila Kloc, AFJax president for the past three years, welcomes the public to the open house for membership and class registration on Saturday, Sept. 10, from 9 a.m. until noon, to learn all about the organization and what it offers. There will be refreshments, (French pastries of course) and all ages are welcome! The public may ask questions about AFJax via email to ASJAX@aol.com or call the AFJax office at (904) 469-4964.

Peace Concert

The community is invited to attend this year's annual Peace Concert at 4 p.m. on Sunday, Sept. 11 at St. John's Cathedral, 256 East Church St., where the JSCA and OneJax will join other worldwide activities commemorating the events of 9/11. The free musical event will feature ensembles from St. John's Cathedral, the University of North Florida Chamber Singers, DASOTA Chorale and the Jacksonville Children's Chorus, followed by a reception hosted by JSCA.

Because seating is limited, advance reservations are recommended. To register online for tickets, go to https://webapps.unf.edu/eticket/peace_concert. JSCA membership information will also be available at the concert.

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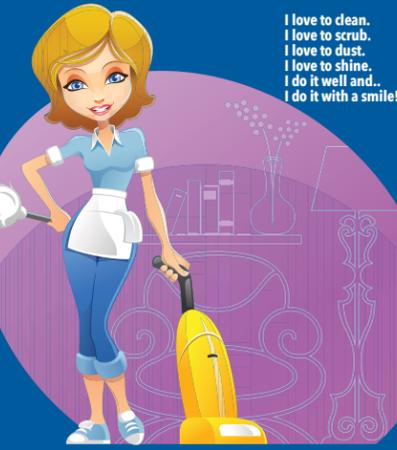
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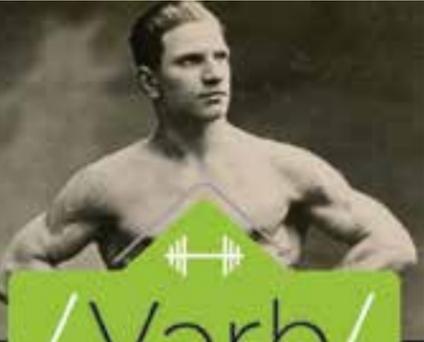


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Avondale woman goes to the dogs

By Peggy Harrell Jennings
Resident Community News

Soft-hearted doesn't begin to describe Avondale resident Rebekah Harp. A Special Education teacher at W.E. Cherry Elementary in Clay County, Harp has an affinity for special-needs dogs and kids.

Harp did not go out of her way to get these dogs. Someone would tell her about an abused or abandoned dog and she would spring into action. Once Harp brings them into her family, she names them after literary characters.

Aunt Pittypat, at age 15, has no eyes. "She was attacked by a hawk when she was a puppy, right in my backyard," said Harp. "It was the most horrible day of my life. I called Daddy (Jim Harp) and he came over and held her all the way to the vet and talked to her in his sweet Southern voice."

Pittypat rules the roost and is the bravest little dog. Now she is deaf, but she goes out into the backyard and finds herself a patch of sunshine to sit in, said Harp.



Rebekah Harp with three of her rescued pooches, one-eyed Captain Rhett Butler, Emma and Capt. Jack Sparrow.

teenagers tying her to a tree. They said their mother was going to 'take the shovel to her' like she had done to others. They sped off before I could get their tag number. Now Francesca does dog agility demonstrations at my school."

Harp's rescues are lucky she is a "fool who rushes in where angels fear to tread."

While some might think having eight special-needs dogs is excessive, Harp laughingly responds, "Pound for pound, I don't have a lot of dogs. That's how I justify it."

Educated at Wesleyan College and the University of Georgia, Harp holds degrees in special education and psychology, and her job as a special education teacher in a self-contained classroom has given her plenty of opportunities to enhance the lives of her students and dogs.

"When I take them to school it's like the Beatles just arrived. I'm so lucky that my principal allows me to do what I do," said Harp. "We have seen so many of the intellectually-disadvantaged students develop empathy and understanding because of interaction with the dogs. It empowers them as well."

At a recent event the students ran Francesca through her paces on an agility course for the entire school.

"My students got to answer questions and do the demonstrations; they were the leaders," she said "There have been miracles associated with these kids, whose mental handicaps do not allow for academic success. They could work at Publix or other jobs if they learn social skills. A smile on your face and a pleasant demeanor can do wonders."

Some of the programs which earned Harp four Teacher of the Year awards include the Heart Boot Camp, where students learn

manners; a Humane Society Club, Polite Pug Patrol, Fitness and Book Clubs, and Mimi's Character Counts.

"Pooches Emma and Pittypat teach kids about tolerance for those who are different, and to have compassion," said Harp.

Harp has always been for the underdog. Whether helping children or dogs, her heart is dedicated to serving. "We are supposed to help others. I was raised to do good things," said Harp. "Somebody has to step up and take action."

Harp's father, Jim, who substitutes in the classroom sometimes, remarked, "Some of the changes in the students because of the dogs is remarkable. One of her students painted a picture of my little dog who died. Rebekah is so proud of her students and their gifts. I don't know where all this came from. We love animals and had pets but we weren't a rescue family."

In addition to teaching, training her dogs (two are now certified therapy dogs and Mr. Darcy is in training), Harp gives presentations, makes jewelry for her business, Mutt Works, which donates 20 percent of sales to dog rescue, makes dog clothes, volunteers at church and of course, has to find some time for her three cats - Jane Goodall, Sydney Lanier and Little Edie Beale.

She also organizes numerous fundraisers for animal rescue, with hilarious names like the Spay Café - where they serve SPAY-ghetti, and at Avondale United Methodist Church "Where Jesus takes Care FUR You."

"The long and short of it is, I adopted a dog therapy team," laughed Harp. Her dedication to the disadvantaged - whether animals or people - demonstrates her ability to find that little niche where they can succeed - and exploit it.



Mr. Darcy cuddles with Wesley, a student in Rebekah Harp's class



Aunt Pittypat with Wesley, a student in Rebekah Harp's class

Captain Jack Sparrow was being kept in a taped cardboard box without food or water. Now he runs hurdles and plays a dog game called Fly Ball.

Her Chihuahua, Fiona McGillicutty, was found starving and chained to a garbage can with her face in the dirt. Fiona's extreme rescue involved some wire cutters and a fence.

Mimi La Rue was thrown out of a moving car. One-eyed Capt. Rhett Butler had the other eye removed at the Humane Society, for reasons not known, and he was fostered by several families before Harp was asked to take him.

Little Emma, who has degenerative myelopathy, was adopted from an owner who couldn't care for her. Thanks to Harp's fundraising efforts, Emma now walks with the aid of \$600 special wheels.

Mr. Darcy was simply lonely after his young master left for college and his parents didn't have time for him.

"Francesca is my miracle puppy," Harp said. "On an Easter Sunday I saw some

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Join Angel Corrales of American Window Preservation for “Restoring Windows, Restoring Hope” workshop. Learn how to glaze your own wood and steel historic windows. Explore the various types of glazing compounds and learn which one is right for your window and usage conditions. Plus, learn about glazing tools and secret techniques to get glass and glazing looking sharp and clean.

Historic Preservation Process Overview

Thursday, October 13, 6-7:30 p.m.
 Riverside Avondale Preservation Office,
 2623 Herschel Street
 Free to all, but space is limited; sign up
 early at Eventbrite, search for Historic
 Properties.

Whether you are new to the neighborhood or have been here for a while, you may have questions about the City’s process for historic preservation and how it applies to your home or business. The City Historic Preservation Planning staff will provide an overview of the process and how to apply to the Jacksonville Historic Preservation Commission for Certificates of Appropriateness for your project.

Bold Bean shuts Knead Bakeshop Café

Plans soon finalized to move roastery and bakery operations to Southside

By Marcia Hodgson
 Resident Community News

To make way for the demands of coffee shop locations in Riverside, Jacksonville Beach and soon-to-be San Marco, Bold Bean’s popular Knead Bakeshop Café in Murray Hill permanently shut its doors at the end of July.

Known for its signature tomato pies, classic pastries, craft sandwiches and Southern-inspired specialties, the Edgewood Avenue café, which opened its doors in 2014, was closed as a result of the coffee company’s need to focus on new products, menu development, catering and planned online sales under the Knead Kitchen label, said Bold Bean founder Jay Burnett.

At present, the roastery and production facility in Murray Hill as well as the kitchen and bakery, which produces baked goods for Bold Bean’s cafes and wholesale accounts, remains open seven days a week. However, plans are in the works to move the Murray Hill operation from Edgewood Avenue to a much larger and more centrally-located facility in Southside, Burnett said. “Plans are being finalized now,” he said.

“The closing of Bold Bean’s Knead Bakeshop Café was the result of a need for Bold Bean



The Bold Bean production facility on Edgewood Avenue in Murray Hill will be moving to the Southside.

to expand its capacity for pastry production and menu offerings to meet demand at the three coffee shop locations, which would be difficult to do while continuing to operate and staff a separate, stand-alone café serving breakfast and lunch,” Burnett said. “With the opening of new Bold Bean Coffee locations, closing Knead’s stand-alone café will allow us to increase our overall production and expand our food offerings at all our Bold Bean Coffee locations.”

In October, the popular coffee café plans to open its third store in San Marco at 1903 Hendricks Avenue. It will share space in the iconic Turner Plumbing building with the

offices of the Turner Plumbing Company, which has owned and occupied the building since it was built in 1952.

“Coming to San Marco has been on our radar as a neighborhood we’ve wanted to be part of even before opening our first shop in Riverside in 2011 and the opening of our Jacksonville Beach location two years ago,” Burnett said. “What’s taken us so long to open in San Marco has simply been a matter of waiting for just the right opportunity and ideal location, which we’ve found within the Turner Plumbing Company’s building on Hendricks Avenue.”

Avondale resident’s dream closer to reality

By Kate A. Hallock
 Resident Community News

“Coming soon!” announces a banner affixed to the fence at Boone Park along St. Johns Avenue. The park will be the site of a new Kompan playground, which has been in the works for over a year, thanks to Avondale resident Kim Clontz.

Through the efforts of Clontz and the Friends of Jacksonville Parks, \$100,000 was raised through private and public donations, and \$165,000 came from the city, through District 14 and the Parks, Recreation and Community Services Department.

Beginning Aug. 18, workers started removing playground equipment which had enthralled neighborhood children for 20 years. Clontz said a survey indicated many people were nostalgic about the “big metal slide,” so it and the old climbing dome will be moved to the other half of Boone Park between Herschel and Park Streets, near the tennis courts.

In place of the dome, swings, slides and forts, Precision Playgrounds will install new state-of-the-art interactive playground equipment.

“An Explorer Dome will definitely be the centerpiece and drawing card for kids because there are no prescribed climbing routes on it,” said Clontz, project organizer. “It’s kind of an imagination stretcher for them to figure out where and how to get from one part of the structure to another.”

Although the playground will be open for play and exercise later this month, an



Old climbing globe sits in front of new Kompan playground equipment for Boone Park.

official grand opening will be held Saturday, Oct. 15 at 10 a.m.

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Restaurant receives green light FROM PAGE 1

The Planning Department had recommended approval of the exception with two conditions; one would limit the size of the restaurant to 2,500 square feet, thus prohibiting banquet space, and the other would ensure outside seating would meet all requirements for ADA accessibility and would not obstruct pedestrian traffic.

The administrative deviation to reduce parking requirements to zero, however, was not approved by Planning Department staff. "Because the applicant is proposing a 5,000-square-foot restaurant, they are creating a condition where the reduction is necessary. As noted in Condition 2 in the companion Zoning Exception, if the restaurant size and seating capacity were reduced, limiting the use to 2,500 square feet, the need for the parking reduction would be eliminated. The hardship is self-imposed," the report noted.

At its Aug. 4 meeting, the Planning Commission had voted 3-3 on the application, thereby forcing the matter to be addressed again two weeks later. Following the 3-3 vote, the applicant's attorney, Steve Diebenow of Driver, McAfee, Peek and Hawthorne, stated if the application was not approved his client would return to the commission with applications for two 100-seat restaurants.

"Some people interpreted that as a threat, but that couldn't be further from the truth," said Diebenow. "It's an economic reality. If something happens here that permits the use or something happens here that encourages a different use, then we will act accordingly."

Diebenow re-iterated at the Aug. 18 meeting that the laws support parking waivers and

service of all alcoholic beverages for restaurants of 100 seats or less. "The liquor use is permitted by the state," he said, referring to House Bill 655, which established special zones in Jacksonville, including the Shoppes of Avondale, to allow small restaurants to be competitive by serving liquor, not just beer and wine.

The attorney also argued the request for a parking waiver for 120 seats was not a self-imposed hardship because two 100-seat restaurants in that space would require no parking, according to Ordinance 2012-339 which waives the requirement to provide 50 percent of the parking provision for restaurants with 100 seats or less. "This is not a situation created by the applicant or the tenant. There is no place to physically park a car on this site," said Diebenow. "When the building was built, the parking requirements did not exist."

Merchants speak out

Among those who spoke against the applications were Richard May, who owns property immediately adjacent to the location at 3563 St. Johns Ave., the former site of Cowford Traders in the Shoppes of Avondale. He noted within 100 feet of that site were five restaurants, with a total of 650 seats, in front of which are 36 parking spaces.

May was followed by John Winkler, a local attorney and owner of a property on Riverside Avenue behind the shop, Avondale merchants Dianne Garcia, Karin Tucker and Amy Hyde, Avondale property owner Frank Gallo, residents Alicia Grant and Dylan Phillips, and Adrienne Burke, executive director, Riverside Avondale Preservation.



The alley behind the former Cowford Traders is not a thru-street. A private parking lot is on the other side of the fence. Delivery trucks will be forced to back up the length of the alley to exit onto Ingleside Avenue.

In addition, 16 merchants submitted a letter to the Planning Commission, stating "the impact to smaller boutique shops would be detrimental to the survival of our businesses."

The letter further stated "Our guests are frustrated by the lack of parking which prohibits them from accessing our stores. Our Avondale community needs a variety of shops to allow for varied parking demand."

Commissioner Dawn Motes, one of three who voted against the administrative deviation, said the issue was not about upholding zoning codes, but about the reality of not enough parking in Avondale. "We have got to bring a solution to the table about parking and accommodating the traffic," she said. Ben Davis also voted against the administrative deviation.

Jerry Friley, the commissioner who voted against both the administrative deviation and the exception, said by agreeing with the Planning Department staff's recommendation to deny the parking waiver they were adhering to the laws on the books.

Most of the commissioners, while sympathetic to the arguments that parking is saturated and therefore creates hardships for the Avondale businesses and nearby residents, overall expressed the sentiment

that a compromise had been presented by the applicant.

Parking in Avondale is frustrating, said Abel Harding, but it's not this commission's responsibility or authority to address. "It seems a compromise has been presented and that would hopefully lessen the burden of parking," he said.

"The parking issue is a responsibility that falls on the city," said Nicole Sanzosti Padgett, who voted to approve the administrative deviation.

"I agree parking is a concern there," said Daniel Blanchard. "Perhaps there are more restaurants there than there need to be, I don't know, but we don't get to vote on that." Blanchard said what the commission would be voting on is whether it makes sense to combine two potential 100-seat restaurants into one that seats 120.

In the end, five commissioners determined that one 120-seat restaurant in 5,400 square feet of space was better than dividing the space in half for two 100-seat restaurants, which would have no parking requirements.

"I think 120 seats is a better solution for parking," said Padgett. Blanchard supported her comment, noting, "He's doing something right to reduce the seating."

"Our guests are frustrated by the lack of parking which prohibits them from accessing our stores. Our Avondale community needs a variety of shops to allow for varied parking demand."

— Merchants of the Shoppes of Avondale

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Local student gathers friends, shoes for impoverished



Christian Glover

With a heart for those in need, high school student Christian Glover is not only running hard for the Bolles Cross Country team, but running his own campaign to shoe the shoeless.

Glover, a senior at The Bolles School, wanted to help raise awareness and deliver on a higher purpose outside of the typical preseason party for teammates. His leadership on the track has spilled over into the conscience of fellow runners, teammates and friends as the concept of selflessness was exhibited at a recent rally, Aug. 20.

In order to assist those in need, Glover contacted Soles4Souls, a nonprofit global social enterprise committed to fighting poverty through the collection and distribution of shoes and clothing. A donation drive was then initiated with the help of his parents, friends and fellow teammates. Glover will continue to reach out to others at the school and deliver lightly used running shoes to a collection and distribution center in Jacksonville throughout the school year. The shoes will then be delivered to those in poverty around the globe through distribution channels worldwide.

Instead of deciding to simply host a party for his pals, Glover chose to deliver on his promise and purpose, receiving dozens of shoes to kick off his campaign. While making a short welcome speech to rally his peers and parents in attendance, Glover said, "You're all in for a treat this year...we're going to have a really strong team."

Praising the hard work of teammates, Glover also reminded them to appreciate their parents. He echoed the sentiments from a basketball coach and mentor who taught him a great lesson at a summer camp. "You need to thank your parents, they will always be there for you 100 percent," he said.

Bolles kicked off its 2016 cross country program on Aug. 19 as it faced off for a meet on its home turf at the San Jose campus.

Jr. Residents

Riverside dancer's tenacity pays off in a big way

By Peggy Harrell Jennings
Resident Community News

At 18, Pamela Litz has a world of opportunities before her, but the journey has not always been easy for the young dancer and scholar.

While a student at LaVilla, her parents divorced when she was 14. Litz' normally cheerful demeanor changed and her academic studies suffered. The one constant in her life was her passion for dance, and it helped her get through that tough time.

"Dance helped me with everything," said Litz, of Riverside. "It has been a constant in my life. When I come to the studio I can escape. When performing, there are so many different roles to play that it takes your mind off everything else in your life."

Tip-toeing in her mother Wanda Litz's pointe-shoe-clad footsteps, Litz toddled into Baggs Studio of Ballet at age two and grew into an accomplished dancer who recently graduated from Douglas Anderson School of the Arts.

Litz' high school schedule was an exhausting around-the-clock commitment to studying, dance classes at school, technique and pas de deux classes in the evening at Baggs Studio of Ballet. Add to that routine performances and rehearsals with DA and the Jacksonville Concert Ballet Company (JCBC) under direction of Debra Peters Rankin, as well as auditions and performances in the Jacksonville Community Nutcracker every year since she was nine years old.

Her vigorous training regime helped improve her level of commitment to academic excellence, and it paid off in a big way. Litz



Pamela Litz as a young dancer



Ida Uffleman, Morgan Murwain, Mssr. Soloman Srulovich formerly of the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo, Pam Litz and Melissa Cooper performing at St. Catherine Labouré Manor

graduated from DA with all As and one B her senior year, had the highest GPA in Advanced Placement U.S. Government, and was named most improved dancer two years in a row, as well as Model Dance Student.

Litz received a \$1,000 scholarship from Community Nutcracker Ballet and a \$100,000 scholarship to continue her academic and dance studies at Jacksonville University this fall.

Auditioning for JU was a challenge. Litz missed her first audition due to a broken foot. She was given another opportunity three weeks later, but dancing in pointe shoes with a broken foot still hindered her performance and she didn't make the cut.

Letters of support from her dance instructors and a review of her accomplishments finally won Litz a place in the esteemed JU dance program. Litz's parents have always been supportive of her dance, driving her to class and rehearsals, and are excited about the scholarship.

Litz has danced lead roles in numerous ballets with the Jacksonville Concert Ballet Company, playing everything from a femme fatale to Peter Pan. A favorite was partnering with Dr. George Trotter in the Red Riding Hood and Wolf pas de deux from The Sleeping Beauty ballet, which had also been performed by her mother in previous years.

Rising in the ranks of Community Nutcracker Ballet, Litz has performed as a mouse, bon bon, sprite, party girl, Spanish, snow, Mirliton and Chinese. "Spanish is my

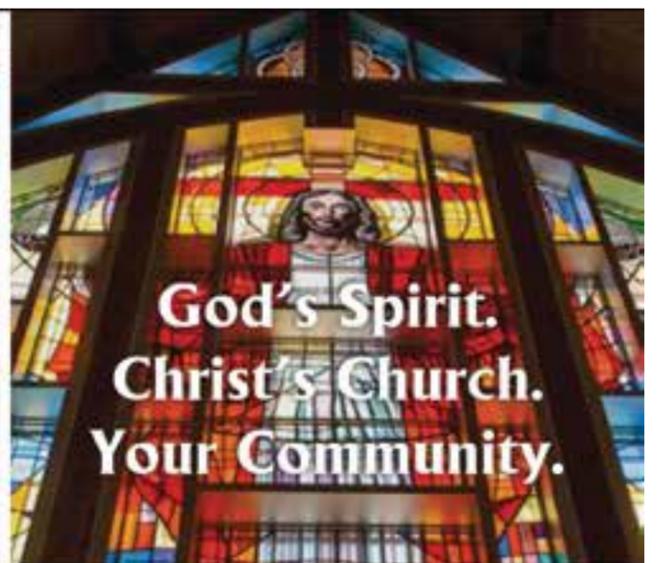


Pam Litz as Peter Pan to Dr. George Trotter's Captain Hook

favorite (role). You get to be so sassy!" said Litz. "You can never dance too big. It is powerful, and I love the costumes."

While at JCBC, Litz had the opportunity to perform at various retirement homes, such as St. Catherine Labouré Manor in Riverside. "When I was younger I didn't understand, but now I see that we may be the brightest part of someone's day. It was fun to have a former professional like Mssr. Soloman Srulovich in the audience at St. Vincent's."

After graduation from JU Litz said she hopes to find some way to make her living from dance. "It would be fun to be a professional, and I want to dance as long as I can, but I'm more interested in teaching and choreographing. I choreographed my own solo at DA last year, and I was really proud of it. My favorites are ballet and contemporary, anything with pointe shoes."



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RAM hosts annual Back to School Bash



Dr. Jila Mahajan and Danielle Guillory, of Kids First Dentistry, offered to get children off to a good start at school with dental hygiene and a raffle drawing.

The last gasp of summer was hot and humid on the Saturday before Duval County Public School students headed back to school Aug. 15. A Back-to-School Bash was held under the Fuller-Warren Bridge at Riverside Arts Market Aug. 13, drawing families from all over the First Coast.



Kelly Wolfe, Jessica Saracino and Karleigh Kirilloff, costumed as popular Disney princesses, thrilled little girls at Riverside Arts Market.

Elementary school kicks off centennial with public art

At the end of school last year, Jen Hawkins offered to make a yarn bomb to celebrate the upcoming 100th birthday of Fishweir Elementary School.

Little did the staff know it wasn't just one yarn bomb. Hawkins crocheted all summer, making nearly 50 musical notes, flowers, a paintbrush and a large commemorative "sign" to decorate the school's front fence along Herschel Street.

"I've been working on them since early June, around 50-plus total hours to crochet the pieces and two hours to install them, with help from the PTA ladies and their kids," said Hawkins, parent of fifth grade student Kyra Volz. Hawkins said the sign took the longest time, about five hours and seven skeins of off-white yarn.

"I'm not sure how many total skeins I used, as many of them were scraps, hence



Mia Marin, Lily Hardaker, Kyra Volz and Daisy Hardaker

the multi-colored items," said Hawkins. "All of the yarn was from our Yarn Bomb Jax yarn stash that has been donated to us over the past few years, with the exception of one black skein from my personal stash."

A few parents and students helped her install the yarn project the Wednesday evening before school started, and just in time for orientation on Friday, Aug. 12.

"The installation perfectly reflects Fishweir's arts magnet program, as well as provides unexpected art along Herschel Street," said Tanya Hardaker, one the PTA "ladies" who helped with the installation.

Hawkins said the yarn art should hold up anywhere from three to six months, but doesn't anticipate it lasting the entire school year. She used acrylic yarn, which holds up fairly well to weather and fading from the sun.

"As I walk by it five to 10 times a week, I plan to reinforce or reattach any pieces that may need it over time," Hawkins said. "I'm more worried about someone snagging the pieces than the elements, honestly."

Bigger than ever, backpack give-a-way draws 500

The 7th Annual Rockin' Back to School community event, sponsored by Riverside Park United Methodist Church, reached 20 percent more children this year as 500 boys and girls were given backpacks filled with grade-appropriate school supplies. The Aug. 6 event, held at Riverside Park, included bounce houses, free school physical exams by St. Vincent's Mobile Medical unit and, new this year, free haircuts.

"I think it's wonderful. This is exactly the kind of thing the church should be doing, being present in the community, opening our doors and stepping out," said Rev. Emily Knight, the new pastor at Riverside Park UMC.



William, Jasmine, Thomas, Jessi and Christi Moore, students at Ruth N. Upson Elementary School



Front, Raistlin Wascom and Judy Marks; back: April, Sharon and Jeff Joos, members of Riverside Park United Methodist Church



Sandra Zhou and Shelly Kui, students at St. Paul's Catholic School



FALL 2016 OPEN HOUSE DATES

Lower School (PK-5) Open House for Parents
Whitehurst Campus | November 9, 2016 9 a.m.

Lower School (PK-5) Open House for Parents
Ponte Vedra Beach Campus | October 5, 2016 9 a.m.

Middle School (6-8) Open House for Parents
Bartram Campus | November 8, 2016 9 a.m.
Bartram Campus | November 10, 2016 6 p.m.

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San Jose Campus | October 7, 2016 at 8:30 a.m.

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Back to the books, students arrive at local schools



Fishweir Elementary School students raise the flag on the first day of school. School secretary Nicki McCarthy lends a hand as Arabelle Deguzman and Burlin Frohock hold the flag securely above the ground.



The Felix family arrives at Fishweir as Naikiya and Carmelo take Nailayah and Carmelo Jr. to class.



After a bike ride, a mother and son make their way to Fishweir Elementary School on the first day of classes.



Church members with The Point at St. Johns Park provided coffee as part of their community outreach. Elizabeth Fenyoady (seated), Kaylee Hoover, Tanner Hoover and Andy Hoover (seated), served Chaslynn Wright her morning cup of coffee as students made their way through to the first day at Fishweir Elementary School.



The first day of school brought the England family to John N.C. Stockton Elementary School in Ortega Forest. It was the first day of kindergarten for Addy, who made her debut as the eldest child, with brothers Graham and Carson in tow. Proud parents Emily and Matt led the children to their first outing to elementary school, starting a long line of firsts for the growing family.



Melissa Kephart with her daughters Molly, kindergarten, and Emma, fourth grade at Fishweir Elementary.

Students come back to new teachers, equipment



Father Jose Kulathinal greets students (front) Zoie Wright, Madisyn Welch, Wyatt Welch, Mia Prince, Lily Prince, Aaryn Ray, Anthony Ray as their parents (back) Angie Welch, Amanda Prince, May Goodman and Anthony Ray drop them off for the first day of school, Aug. 10.

St. Matthew's Catholic School had a busy summer preparing the campus and classrooms for the students' return Aug. 10. A new Pre-kindergarten playground was installed and new playground pieces were added for the intermediate grades. Renovations to the gym, including a new roof and remodeled restrooms, have also begun. Four new teachers joined the faculty: Amanda Jayne Allen (art), Meagan Dubberly (grade 4), Erin McGuan (science grades 5-8), and Beth Mosley (an additional PreK class). The 2016-2017 parent-teacher organization will be headed up by co-chairs Corrine Grant and Meg Henning.

Murray Hill school kicks off 100th anniversary year



Ruth N. Upson Elementary School in Murray Hill kicked off its Centennial school year in grand fashion last month. Adopting a nautical theme and the slogan "Celebrating our past, charting our future," new Principal Yvonne Spinner and Assistant Principal Jeffrey Royal welcomed students, faculty and parents to the neighborhood school with a commitment to making the school's 100th year the best ever. There were some first-day surprises, including an inflatable battleship slide, and new T-shirts. The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission presented a program on whales to emphasize the school's seafaring theme.



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Resident receives distinguished Stars & Stripes award



Lily Larson

Lily Dale Larson, 17, has earned the highest recognition the American Heritage Girls offers, the Stars and Stripes Award. Recipients complete six requirements, including the planning, development and leadership for a 100-hour-plus service project.

Larson created a waiting area and butterfly garden for Hope Therapy in Middleburg for her service project. Hope Therapy provides occupational therapy services to children and adults with special health care needs using horses.

A member of the Lake Shore United Methodist Church Troop FL 1412, Larson is the 252nd girl nationally, and the 11th girl in Florida to earn the prestigious Stars and Stripes Award.

Larson was recognized in a Court of Honor Ceremony on Aug. 12 at Lake Shore UMC.

Larson is a member of Oak Leaf Christian Fellowship. Homeschooled, the recent high school graduate has a passion for photography and is working on building her own photography business.

Local Olympic Games enthrall neighborhood kids

For Olympic competitors and their fans, there's probably nothing more thrilling than hearing the iconic words "Let the games begin!" For nearly two dozen Avondale children, those same words – and the lighting of the Challen Avenue Olympic torch – kicked off an evening of fun Aug. 14.

The brainchild of Judge Emmet Ferguson, the neighborhood Olympics drew in children from the age of two to 11 to participate in five events: basketball, shot put (using water balloons), hurdles, archery and gymnastics (balance beam).

"I think the kids liked archery the most, but it was probably the most difficult," said Ferguson's wife, Julie. The couple hosted the event with neighbors Roelf and Stella Slopsama.



Accepting their medals are Emma Ruth Ferguson, Alex Slopsama and Amelia Fuller.

Judges included Dr. Ken Tannenbaum, John Sapora and his son, Riley, and Teddy Powell. After each event, a gold, silver and bronze medal winner was announced and the National Anthem was played.



Ainsley Pruden takes to the hurdles.



Proud mother, Kathryn Pruden, cheering for Jack and Ainsley.



Amelia Fuller draws the bow during the archery event.



Roelf Slopsama and his daughter, Iris, light the Challen Avenue Olympic torch.



Cece Nowicki displays a medal.

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Young golfer sweeps summer tournaments



Chloe Schiavone

Chloe Schiavone, 14 years and four months old, doesn't have much time left to make the history books if she wants to beat Lydia Ko's record as the youngest-ever winner of an LPGA Tour event. Ko was 15 years and four months old when she grabbed the title in 2012.

"It would be a long shot, but it could be fun," said Schiavone about the possibility of winning that title next year.

Schiavone had a good start this summer. The Ortega resident and freshman at The Bolles School won the 93rd West Virginia Women's Amateur Golf Championship and set a women's course record at the Bridgeport Country Club, right after winning the US Kids Teen World Championship and the Van Horn Cup Matches for Team USA, both held in Pinehurst, North Carolina earlier the same week.

"I was an unknown in the big tournaments," said Schiavone. "I knew I could compete, but I needed to become more accurate with my putts. To win two big tournaments in a row, it doesn't get any better than that."

Locally, Schiavone won four competitions in the past year in the girls age 13-18 category, playing at Hyde Park Golf Club, Jacksonville Golf & Country Club, Amelia River Golf Club and Timuquana Country Club. She placed second in the Titleist Invitational in April at the St. Johns Golf Club.

Schiavone was just three years old when she picked up a club taller than she was. She began to compete at age 11, and plays on Bolles' varsity girls' golf team, holding the same No. 1 spot for the Bulldogs as a freshman that she held in seventh and eighth grades.

Schiavone said she plays about two-and-a-half hours a day and was just accepted into the Tom Burnett Golf Academy, where she will continue that rigorous schedule.

Her favorite course is Mirabel in Scottsdale, Arizona. "I love how far the ball runs out on that course," said Schiavone, who also plays at Timuquana Country Club, TPC Sawgrass and St. Johns Golf and Country Club.

New ICE-stream enhances curriculum at St. Paul's Catholic

Students at St. Paul's Catholic School have a new elective opportunity this year, allowing boys and girls from Pre-Kindergarten through eighth grade to explore interests and nurture passions in a wide variety of subjects.

ICE (Individually Chosen Exploration) takes place each Wednesday in a wide range of subjects from cooking, sewing and gardening to robotics, engineering, coding



Second grade student William Longo concentrates on MineCraft during an ICE session at St. Paul's Catholic School.

and Minecraft to art, drama, dance and yoga. In all, nearly 20 electives will be offered for an hour each week. Students select their top three choices of explorations each marking period with every effort made to place students in their first choice.

"We are very excited to launch this elective opportunity for our children this year," said Kim Repper, principal.



Kindergartner Anthony Robinson assembles a LEGO project during his ICE session.



Ethan Johnson and Evan Piecklo, both in second grade, tackle a LEGO project together.

Kids enjoy art and app during Pokémon event

Nearly 2,000 people attended a Pokémon GO event at the Cummer Museum of Art and Gardens Aug. 6. The event featured Pokémon lures, attracting boys and girls armed with smartphones to seven Pokéstops on the Museum campus.

Smartphones in hand, Wright Bowyer, Alex Sesnick, Sarah LaPorta, and Roy Hamilton are engrossed in Pokémon GO at a special event held at The Cummer Museum Aug. 6.



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Revolutionary War coin found in Old Ortega yard

By Peggy Harrell Jennings
Resident Community News

Chip Kirkpatrick is still digging up history in Old Ortega.

His latest find includes a gold-plated, silver-colored Victorian-era coin purse, or flapper's purse, popular from the late 1800s to the 1920s.

Using his metal detecting skills, a curiosity for finding lost objects and a passion for uncovering the past, Kirkpatrick unearthed the purse from four inches of dirt at a property on the point in Old Ortega, after about two hours of detecting.



Chip Kirkpatrick digs around in an Old Ortega yard.

"At first I thought it was a wad of screening but my wife cleaned it up and we learned that the mesh was used to hold rose petals or perfumed cloth," said Kirkpatrick, a former AT&T employee from Avondale. "There would have been a thin chain so it could be worn around the neck."

A fanciful person might imagine a young lady tucking a perfumed hankie into the purse on her way to a dance at the Florida Yacht Club at the turn of the century.

Kirkpatrick's most interesting Ortega find, a Georgivs Triumpho or Tory's Penny, is a possible link to Ortega resident Daniel McGirtt, the notorious Revolutionary War Tory and bandit.

After being ousted from South Carolina for his misdeeds in 1779, McGirtt then continued his pillaging and punishing of Patriots throughout Georgia only to be banned from there in 1782.

Revolutionary War Col. Elias Ball had been farming and cutting lumber at what is now Sadler's Point in Ortega but eventually returned to England. This was a convenient spot for McGirtts or McGirth as he was later known, to continue his shenanigans throughout East Florida, Georgia and South Carolina, so he established a farm there around 1782.

The copper coin found by Kirkpatrick on land once inhabited by McGirtt was minted in 1783, the year which ended the Revolutionary War.

"It was the first true American coin and was intended to honor George Washington



Example of a Revolutionary War era coin similar to one found in Old Ortega

but it was minted in England," remarked Kirkpatrick. "They used a bust of King George III – the loser – on the front since they had no idea what General Washington looked like. There is controversy among scholars whether that was intended as a joke."

Romantic notions of McGirtt's buried treasure have been handed down through generations of Ortegans but Kirkpatrick says the coin is a truly rare find.

"The last reported coin like this was found in South Carolina in 2005," said Kirkpatrick, noting although these items do not have much monetary value they may be his best finds ever. "Generally, I dig up pop tops, nails, cans – things like that. That's why it's called hunting – not finding!"



Flapper's purse, about four-and-a-half inches in length

Local Republican women honor federation's oldest member

By Kate A. Hallock
Resident Community News

Arlington resident Dr. Marian Hall, 103, was doubly honored by a Who's Who list of local Republican leaders who gathered at the Lexington Hotel Aug. 11 to wish her a happy birthday and to acknowledge her as the oldest living member of the National Republican Women's Federation.

Hall received a certificate from the National Federation of Republican Women, which was established in 1938 and has over 2,000 chapters in the United States and Puerto Rico. The Republican Women's Club of Duval Federated, which was founded in 1944, and is the third largest club in the Florida Federation, also recognized Hall as did Mayor Lenny Curry with a proclamation designating August 22 as Dr. Marion Hall Day.

Hall joined the Republican Women's Club of Duval Federated two years ago and said she was voting for Donald Trump "because he claims to be a Republican."

The daughter of a judge and granddaughter of a Civil War veteran, Hall was born in Riverside, California. She raised six children, has 12 grandchildren, as well as great-great-great-grandchildren. Hall came to Jacksonville in 1993 with her oldest daughter, Judith Jewell, and her son-in-law, Rev. Harold Jewell, associate pastor at Highland Freedom Baptist Church.



Dr. Marian Hall

Frail, Hall relies on a cane and the arm of close friends, like Georgianne Pionessa and former Councilman Don Redman. She remains sharp, however, and still plays the piano at her church, Coral Ridge Baptist.

She has authored two children's books and a book of poetry. She also enjoys painting. "I always wanted to be an artist," said Hall, who holds an honorary doctorate of divinity.



Rachel Cook, Barbara Clingenpeel, Dr. Pat Holliday, Don Light

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THE WAY WE WERE: DOROTHY SURRENCY ROSENBLIOM

By Julie Kerns Garmendia
Resident Community News

If you were limited to choosing just one word to describe Dorothy Ann "Dot" Surrency Rosenbloom, chances are "longevity" would be the word.

Dot Rosenbloom's long life has been full of long-lived relationships, beginning with her grade school friendship with the boy who would become her husband of 67 years.

The 88-year-old Ortega resident was born at her maternal grandparents' farm in Houston, Florida, but spent most of her early years in Murray Hill. Back in the 1930s and 1940s almost anything needed could be bought at the shops on Edgewood without leaving the neighborhood, she recalled.



1955 Family portrait: Steven, 4, in Percy's lap; Beverly, 3, in Dorothy's lap, Percy III, 5, standing

The Daylight Grocery on the corner of Edgewood and Mayflower and the A&P grocery across the street were convenient to the Surrency home on Mayflower Street. Dot said she liked the bakery that was next door to the Daylight. Woods Pharmacy was the local drug store, and everyone went to Dreamette for ice cream. Where the former

Edgewood Bakery was located was a restaurant that served delicious fried chicken. For many years the entire extended Rosenbloom family ate there frequently, hosted by Percy's parents.

Dot's parents, Clifton and Leona Surrency were good friends with Percy, Sr. and Ethel Rosenbloom, but their children first got to know each other as students at Ruth N. Upson Elementary. Two of Dot's best friends at school were her next-door neighbor, Betty Jones, and Nancy Henderson. Albert Grant, now of Avondale, was another good friend who lived across the street.

Percy played on the Murray Hill School championship softball team in 1941-1942. They attended John Gorrie Junior High, and were 1946 Lee High School graduates. After their graduation, Dot went to Wesleyan College while Percy attended Jacksonville Junior College.

Upon her return from college, Dot said some of Murray Hill's longtime businesses had changed. The bakery and A&P had closed, and the Daylight had become the



Wedding Day, Sept. 4, 1948



On the "Blue Train" from Johannesburg to Capetown, South Africa

Thomas & Padgett Grocery and Meats, but the Dreamette was still serving cones.

At age 20, the longtime friends and high school sweethearts finally tied the knot.

"One evening in January 1948, Percy and I went to St. Augustine with our friends Bill and Lindy O'Brien," said Dot. "While we were in the restaurant, Percy suggested we go out and take a walk on the beach. He didn't get down on one knee, but I was very surprised and happy when he pulled out a beautiful ring for me," she said.

The couple was married on September 4, 1948 by Pastor James Stewart at Riverside Baptist Church. Dot's white satin dress came from Riverside Gown Shop, which served most of the local brides of that era.

Percy's best man was his Murray Hill neighbor, friend, and later business partner, John Lane Dyal. Percy's groomsmen were

Bill O'Brien and Richard Williamson, both of Murray Hill.

"It was a beautiful wedding. Our reception was held at my home on Mayflower Street," Dot said. "We took a week-long honeymoon car trip to visit friends in Alabama and Georgia."

They bought their first home at 834 James Street in Riverside for \$3,500 in 1948 and lived there until 1958. With the addition of three young children, Percy III, Steven and Beverly, the Rosenblooms needed a larger home and found it in Venetia.

"We moved to 4334 Forest Park Road near Verona Avenue and had great neighbors," she said. "Some of our closest friends were Sperry and Pat Lee, George and Georgia Herbertson and George and Pat Sanow," said

Continued on page 49

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Dot. "Our children played with Bill and Sister Avent's four sons: Billy, Kenny, Champ and Sandy of Ortega. Twin boys Sandy and Danny McArthur were also friends."

In the late 1950s the couple joined nine other couples to found Morningside Interdenominational Church. The group bought a house across from Bourbon Alley on St. John's Avenue. Worship services and Sunday school were held for four or five years until Morningside Church closed in Avondale and moved to Orange Park.

Later, the Rosenblooms moved to another home on Forest Park Road, where they lived until 1995 when they downsized to a Lakeside condominium.

"We often got together with four other couples for cookouts and to play badminton in the side yard at Margaret Ann and Bob Bazemore's," Dot said. "The group included George and Eleanor Carswell, Nadine and Bob Knight, Charlene and Bob Phillips."

Percy grew up working in the downtown Bay Street office of his father's business, Florida Window Cleaning Company, established in 1914. In 1948 Percy and his friend John Dyal opened Royal Services Janitorial Contractors. Royal was a combination of their last names: Ro (for Rosenbloom) and yal (for Dyal). Dot worked as bookkeeper for Royal for the first 25 years.

In 1950 Percy merged Florida Window Cleaning Company into Royal Services, Inc., creating what soon became one of the largest and most successful commercial janitorial contracting firms in Florida, with offices in Miami, Orlando and Tampa. As the firm branched out into multi-state satellite services and related businesses, Royal Services moved from Bay Street to Laura Street. It remained on Laura Street until 1967, when they moved into their new office on Park Street on Dot's 39th birthday, on August 25.

With military contracts throughout the U.S., extensive travel was required. Percy and his friend, Hal Lynch, Jr. (owner of North Florida Lincoln Mercury dealerships), bought a Cessna 182 and later, a Cessna 210.

"We learned to fly at Craig Field, got our licenses on October 13, 1968 and everyone flew during the 10 years we owned a plane," Dot said. "To me it was just like driving a car and saved so much time. I still have dinner on Friday nights with Hal, his wife Frances, and other friends at Timuquana."

In 1962 Dot learned to play golf at Hyde Park Golf Club and has been a member of the Jacksonville Women's Golf Association ever since.

"We joined Timuquana Golf & Country Club and met 11 or 12 couples we played with who became close friends," she said. "Our group golfed together for 35 years... once a week at different courses from September to May. Every year we took a one-weekend golfing trip to St. Augustine, Stuart, Savannah or Howey-in-the-Hills,



Murray Hill Elementary School 1940; Dot Surrency, front row, third from right; Percy Rosenbloom, back row, second from right in sixth grade

Murray Hill Softball champions 1941-42; Percy Rosenbloom back row, second from right in seventh grade



Florida. My claim to fame was in 1968 when I won the Deerwood Golf Club Championship – wish I had a picture of that!"

The Rosenblooms fished together before and throughout their long marriage, fishing with their children for bream and bass and always cooking their catch. The family cast their rods close to home during weekends and late afternoons, and often trailered their johnboat to creeks outside of Palatka or to Swimming Pen Creek at Doctors Lake.

Percy learned to play the harmonica in elementary school and enjoyed playing his harmonica by ear. He coached softball at Riverside Baptist Church and the couple sponsored high school youth groups for many years. They were active with their sons and daughter in the Scouts. Dot was Girl Scout Leader for Beverly's troop, which met at St. Mark's Episcopal Church in the early 1960s. Percy became an Eagle Scout in 1942; his grandson Carter Rosenbloom is also an Eagle Scout.

Family vacations were car trips exploring out West or in the North Carolina mountains. More recently they went on a Disney cruise out of Cape Canaveral with their sons, daughters-in-law, six grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren.

Percy and Dot loved to travel and enjoyed cruises and trips abroad, especially train trips. They toured Africa on a wildlife-viewing safari and took the famous Blue Train trip from Johannesburg to Cape Town. They rode bullet trains in Japan, crisscrossed the U.S. on trains, and rode the Rocky Mountain Express from Vancouver across the Rockies.

At age 88, Dot stays mentally and physically active and is following in her mother's footsteps (97 at her death) to live a healthy, long life. She believes staying active in every way possible is key to maintaining a great quality of life for seniors.

Dot keeps a full weekly schedule. Her phone rings constantly with calls from family

and friends. She is involved at her church, Riverside Presbyterian. She has lunch on Mondays with family and bridge most days with her friend Sally Simpson and other bridge buddies. She loves flowers and was a member and flower show judge for the Garden Club of Jacksonville for many years.

A supporter of her alma mater, Wesleyan College, and St. Vincent's Medical Center, Dot was also a 10-year volunteer at the

Downtown Ecumenical Services when her friend Mary Spuhler was the director.

The Rosenbloom family has long supported many charities, especially the American Cancer Society and the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society. Cancer caused the death of their daughter Beverly Lynn (Rosenbloom) Thompson at age 29, and Percy died from leukemia at age 87. One Rosenbloom daughter-in-law is a leukemia survivor.



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If these Walls Could Talk

Four sisters re-live childhood, youth in Avondale home



Mona Bloenk, Betty Crosby, Falli Shah, Patty Foulk, Janet Ward

By Peggy Harrell Jennings
Resident Community News

If the 80-year-old Ward family home at 4236 St. Johns Avenue could talk, it might have a lot to say about the six sisters who grew up within its walls.

Built in 1937 for William “Buck” Ward and Ruth Burt Ward – classmates at Robert E. Lee High School, the two-story brick house was home to six girls with a 23-year gap between the oldest, Patty, and the youngest, Janet. The four surviving siblings – Patty Foulk, Mona Bloenk, Betty Crosby and Janet Ward – recently shared some of the secrets the walls have kept for the past eight decades.

Some of those secrets aren’t so secret – they were written on the walls for all to see. “Phones in those days were attached to the wall; ours had a long cord,” Bloenk explained. “We dragged it down the hall or onto the stairs to the ‘dormitory’ so we could talk. While we talked, we wrote on the wall.”

The sisters attended St. Paul’s or St. Matthew’s Catholic schools, the Bagaley Juvenile Theatre for tap and ballet, and either Lee High School or Bishop Kenny. The sisters eventually married and moved away; sisters Frances and Cathy have passed away.

The walls in the old home tell of beaux calling for prom dates, of elegant cocktail parties and weddings, of things shared and things coveted.

“We shared everything – even pantyhose,” said Foulk, born in 1937. “Three of us wore the same wedding dress – Sissy (Frances), Betty and me. It came from Purcell’s. Mona was married in front of the fireplace, the rest of us at St. Matthew’s.”

Ward, the baby of the family, had a crush on oldest sister Mona’s boyfriend. “I loved him – he should have been mine,” Ward said jokingly. Five decades later, the wall still says, “I love Ron!”

Imagine six girls, one small bathroom, a tiny closet, an attic full of things to explore and a grate by the stairs, which made for good eavesdropping on what was going on in the living room. The Ward sisters’ parents’ upstairs bedroom and bathroom were off limits which, of course, added to the mystery.

Even with the gap within their ages, a little bit of sibling rivalry went on.

Foulk remembered when she had a date and Bloenk, then three years old, lifted up Foulk’s skirt to show the date her panties. All agreed Bloenk, born in 1949, was “just too bratty,” although she did serve as Foulk’s flower girl when she married.

“Jan [Ward] was bratty,” said Crosby, born in 1944. “She was six years younger. I would give her 25 cents to go next door to Griffin’s Pharmacy and get candy so she wouldn’t tell mother and Dad that I spanked her.”

“I was definitely an ‘oops’ but babysitting me should have been a privilege,” joked Ward.

The sisters kept up a continual line of teasing and joking. Ward said she never married because she meant to at age 50, but then she turned 60 and realized that 50 had slipped past.

The women laughed even more as they reminisced. “Our dad always introduced mother as ‘The Ever Pregnant Mrs. Ward,’” said Crosby. “Mother said, ‘We will fill this house until the yard is full or until we get you a boy!’ I don’t know what we would have done with a brother!”

When she was getting married, Foulk said her mother came to her to tell her that she was sorry but she was pregnant [with Jan] and didn’t want Foulk to be shocked or embarrassed at her wedding. “Better you than me, Mother!” remarked Foulk.

“Dad was always teasing,” said Ward. He had nicknames for the girls: Patty was First Born, Betty, Daddy’s Queen, Jan was Sixth Born and Mona, The Sheriff, because of a favorite hat and, according to her siblings, because she was so bossy.

In later years, when the girls and their husbands retired and they came home to Jacksonville, the sisters took turns going by to check on their aging father.

“I was the first one to help him get a shower,” said Crosby. “After he died I’d go to the shower and say, ‘Hi, Dad!’”

“Dad sold juke boxes, pool tables – so he traveled a lot and mother worked at Rosenblum’s at Roosevelt Mall for 20 years,” said Ward.

“He worked for Wolf Distributing on Riverside Avenue,” Foulk, the oldest, reminded Ward.

“Remember when he rolled a juke box into the house and rolled up the rugs for a party?” asked Crosby.

“Oh, the best was Betty’s 65th surprise birthday party!” chimed in Bloenk and Ward. “It was magnificent! The house wasn’t rented at the time so we rented it for the night. We cleaned and cleaned, and cried and cried.”

“Every time we would bring something in from our houses that had been in here – like the clock – we would just cry and laugh,” said Foulk.

One of the most interesting architectural features is the Heart of the Cypress wood paneling in several of the rooms and the intricate wood design in the living room ceiling.

“Our father was so proud of the wood in this house,” they said. “He would sit on the porch and talk to everybody – even Pat Boone [whose grandparents lived around the corner] – and invite them in for a tour. He lived here from the time it was built until he died at age 91.”

For a few years the house was rental property, then a dog-grooming establishment. Now it is a day spa.

When Falli Shah, owner of Seventh Wonder Holistic Spa, and two of her four sisters walked in the door in 2014 she said she fell in love with the house.

“I immediately felt such good energy – feminine energy – especially in the back room,” said Shah, noting she felt the beauty and peace of the house and wanted it for her business.

Although the house needed some renovations, Shah kept many of its tangible memories intact and allowed the sisters to salvage some of the discarded wood. They made crosses for their own homes and smaller cross necklaces for their daughters and nieces.

The Ward sisters feel great appreciation for the preservation of their memories and regard Shah as another sister. “It’s unbelievable that she kept almost everything,” they said.



1959: Betty, Frances with daughter Christine, Mona, Ruth with Janet, Patty with daughter Karen, Cathy



1981: Ward sisters Betty, Patty, Jan, Mona and Cathy with parents Ruth and William



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The lawyers and staff at the Pajcic Firm are grateful for our hard working law clerks and intern. They assist with research and preparation of the cases. They also shadow our attorneys, attend depositions, mediations, hearings and trials. We know their exposure to many aspects of the firm will be a great benefit to them in their future legal careers.



The Pajcic Firm is proud to sponsor an important event in our community. Hope For A Better Life is holding its annual benefit at the Comedy Zone



at the end of September. This year all proceeds go to support Rethreaded, which works to break the cycle of human trafficking in our area.



The kids are back in school and again this year the Pajcic Firm assisted with a back pack giveaway. More than 400 students in our area received a back pack and much more. Good luck to all the students and study hard for a successful year!



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