

San Jose – San Marco – St. Nicholas

# Resident

Community News



## Development review board grants The District design authority

By Marcia Hodgson  
*Resident Community News*

The Downtown Development Review Board (DDRB) broke new ground Aug. 25 when it unanimously granted conceptual approval – with one abstention – for The District – Life Well Lived during a meeting at City Hall. Board member Bill Schilling abstained due to a conflict of interest.

In what may be an example of unprecedented faith in Elements Development LLC, a company owned by San Marco developers Peter Rummell and Michael Munz, the DDRB agreed to relinquish its

authority in approving site plans and the architecture of each individual structure to be built on the 33-acre site, which is adjacent to the Duval County Public School administration building.

Downtown Investment Authority Development Coordinator Jim Klement recommended the board grant the developers this kind of flexibility saying the plan is a “single-phase massive development project,” and the “intent is to be able to get specific measurable regulatory guidelines that don’t require an individual building to come back each time unless they step outside those measurable guidelines.”

In short, it was his recommendation Rummell and Munz would thereby not be required to bring specific designs back to the board for approval after DDRB signs off on the final guidelines. “We may never see them again,” Klement said.

Elements Development LLC has a contract to buy the former Jacksonville Energy Authority Southside Generating Station site for more than \$17 million, and expects to close by the end of December, said JEA spokesperson Gerri Boyce. JEA has extended the due diligence period to Nov. 30, 2016, Boyce said.

*Continued page 6*

*Continued page 6*



Christian Glover

## Local student gathers friends, shoes for impoverished

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,



## Catlett recognized for nonprofit support, leadership

Rachel Hill, Carol Catlett, Nick Tolbert, former Mayor Jake Godbold, Martha Barrett and Honoree Rick Catlett were among many guests at Community Connections’ annual celebration. Business leaders, volunteers and philanthropists alike have enabled the organization to reach thousands of mothers and children seeking relief from poverty, homelessness and job insecurity. The jobs program, when finished and executed by the charity’s guidelines, has a success rate of 94 percent for enrolled participants. Read more, page 22

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## Women’s Center holds 21st annual celebration



Billy and Laura Atkins, Women’s Center of Jacksonville board member, joined other guests for “The Next Chapter” in the nonprofit’s history of making a difference in women’s lives. Read more, page 19

## Utility work coming to Hendricks San Jose Boulevard corridor



By Marcia Hodgson  
*Resident Community News*

Environmental and Geotechnical Specialists check soil conditions every 300 to 400 feet for suitability for JEA water main and sewer pipes.

San Marco area drivers prepare yourselves. Coming this winter, the Jacksonville Energy Authority is planning to do routine maintenance work on the sewer lines and water mains along Hendricks Avenue and San Jose Boulevard. The work will be completed prior to the start of Florida Department of Transportation’s resurfacing project.

According to JEA spokesperson Gerri Boyce, the water main project will be done in two segments. The first segment will be the replacement of approximately 5,000 feet of the existing cast iron water main from London Drive to Grosvenor Square Drive. The second segment will involve approximately 2,500 feet between Dunsford Road and Northwood Road.

The sewer main project will involve the replacement of approximately 1,000 feet of existing sanitary sewer force main from Arcadia Drive to Cornell Road, she said.

JEA will start the project in late fall 2016 and complete it by fall 2017.

Roadway construction on FDOT’s resurfacing project will come on the heels of the utility’s maintenance work. FDOT expects to open bids for the repaving project in June 2017 and will start construction in the fall of that year, said FDOT’s Craig Teal, project manager for the Hendricks Avenue undertaking.

In another bit of news, which should make the bike community happy, FDOT also plans widen the road underneath the Overland Bridge in order to construct a sidewalk and five-foot dedicated bike lanes on Atlantic Boulevard under the highway. The bike lanes will go up to Old Hickory Road, he said. “They will stop at Old Hickory and (at this point) can’t go up to Bishop Kenny,” he said, adding if a decision is ever made to restripe the busy Atlantic Boulevard corridor heading to St. Nicholas, the infrastructure under the bridge will be ready.

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# St. Nicholas: 'There's nothing cookie cutter about this community'

*Residents discuss what makes this 'suburb within downtown' a great place to live*

By Marcia Hodgson  
Resident Community News

With the transformational developments of East San Marco and The District - Life Well Lived headed for its neighboring communities, *The Resident* asked St. Nicholas residents whether they've seen positive changes in their neighborhood and what's the best thing about living in St. Nicholas.

### Sharon Johnson



I've seen a very slow progression of change. When the Overland Bridge project is finished we will see a real difference. It will flow from San Marco east.

They are starting to address the St. Nicholas proper where Mudville Grille is. When we start getting some things done there, it will start popping. Sadly, that area still looks unloved. When we start getting shops and restaurants like the Hendricks Avenue area, it will be better. The location on the creek with its proximity to downtown, San Marco and its straight shot to The Beaches and the Town Center, as well as the people, is the best thing about living in St. Nicholas. There is a warm, friendly group here, a great mix of long-time residents and their families and new families with children.

### Gary Hall



We're coming up in the world. You can see it in the energy we are feeling and the excitement from the residents. I used to run the Toyota facility across the river and living in St. Nicholas

was so convenient to my work. There are a great group of old, established neighbors here, the longtime residents of Jacksonville. I like the people.

### David Trotti



I've had my office here for 17 years. St. Nicholas is cleaner now with more businesses opening up and more places to eat. We need more restaurants, though. The friendliness here

is the best thing. You never meet a stranger once you start talking, and they all seem concerned about the area. They all want to beautify St. Nicholas.

### Dr. Richard Sollee



I definitely think there has been positive change. I've been in my building since the early '70s, for 45 years. With the history that has occurred here and the long-

time residents, it's been fun being part of the growth, history and change. Some of the changes are the widening of the streets and better walkability, biking and eateries and general shopping.

### Derik Flint



We've seen change coming up in the last 20 years. The first push was when the Jaguars came. Real estate on the water had a finite quality and people wanted to be close

to what was going on. We have also been brought up with what's been going on in San Marco. As one of many arteries going downtown and our ability to get to the Beach within 30 minutes, we've been coming along. Acorns don't fall far from the tree. Everyone who grew up here eventually returns to live here because it's a great community. The schools are good and everyone knows each other.

### Jim Williams



Yes, there has been positive change, especially with the area around Hendricks coming up. We have more young families coming in. A lot of people are tired of the

hour-long commute. We have a lot of wonderful neighbors, and last Saturday we had a wine walk through St. Nicholas. It is a wonderful place to live.

### Teresa Rose



I haven't seen any real change yet, but I know it will improve. I like the new Daily's. It's much more convenient, although a lot of people complain about it bringing in more traffic. When

the bridge is done the traffic will increase, but I see that as a positive. I want more restaurants and shops. More options. I love living here because it's convenient to everything. We're close to the beach and to downtown and close to the highway. We looked all over Jacksonville before coming here. We wanted to be close to downtown. We're city people, originally from New York and love that St. Nicholas is a suburb in the downtown area. It's a great mix of neighborhood and city.

### Louis Joseph



I think there is a little bit more change with the development going in at the end of Palmer Terrace and Millers Creek and with E-Med. But we need to get traffic under control. There's

more excitement here. The best thing is the great people and the great neighbors. There is nothing cookie cutter about this community.

## What to do in your neighborhood and beyond

Looking for something to do? Do you have a neighborhood event you would like to promote? *The Resident's* online community calendar is easy to view, easy to use.

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To add your event, go to [residentnews.net/submit-breaking-news/](http://residentnews.net/submit-breaking-news/) and complete the online form. Although it will not be published instantly, most events are reviewed and published within a business day.

If you have questions, contact us at [editor@residentnews.net](mailto:editor@residentnews.net).

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# Assumption to build new chapel

*Parishioners celebrate three building projects on campus*

By Marcia Hodgson  
Resident Community News

Never underestimate the power of prayer, said Father Frederick Parke of Assumption Church in St. Nicholas.

In the past 12 to 13 years since the church opened its Adoration Chapel, a 24-hour-a-day place of prayer, blessings have been heaped upon the St. Nicholas congregation, said Parke, a senior priest who has served Assumption for 15 years.

“As the Bishop said, it must have a blessing. Once the Blessed Sacrament was exposed in the chapel enabling people to come at all times day and night to pray, all kinds of blessings started happening,” Parke said. “The school began to grow, the parish began to grow, and our income began to grow. Maybe it’s a sign from the Lord, a way for the parish to thank Him for these blessings and enable them to continue.”

Tangible evidence parishioners’ prayers are bearing fruit has come in the form of three hefty donations from single donors, Parke said. One sizeable gift enabled Assumption

School to build a new 24,000-square-foot academic building to house middle school classrooms, laboratories and its pre-kindergarten program.

The new building, which is the biggest on campus, includes 23 classrooms and was finished this summer. It was blessed by the Most Reverend Felipe J. Estevez, Bishop of St. Augustine, Aug. 14 after noon Mass, just in time for school this fall.

Another generous gift from a single donor enabled the church to remodel the convent where the Servant Sisters of the Home of the Mother reside. Prior to the renovation, the nuns lived on the second floor of the convent, above Assumption’s preschool. With the advent of the new academic building, the preschool will move into new rooms on the ground floor enabling the female religious community to spread out and use the entire nunnery for its home. Included in the renovation will be the restoration of the convent’s original chapel, which was built in the 1950s but later was used as a classroom, Parke said.

In addition to the convent chapel, Assumption plans to build a new free-standing Adoration Chapel. The new religious building is another blessing, which came by way of a \$400,000 anonymous donation, Parke said. The new chapel will be nestled between the Main Church and its rectory adjacent to the parking lot, said Parke.



Rendering of the new Adoration Chapel, slated to be built on the Assumption Church campus in St. Nicholas.



Most Reverend Felipe J. Estevez, Bishop of St. Augustine, blesses the site where a new Adoration Chapel is slated to be built adjacent to Assumption Catholic Church in St. Nicholas and Assumption’s rectory. From left, Deacon Scott Conway, superintendent of Catholic schools of the Diocese of St. Augustine; Most Reverend Felipe J. Estevez, Bishop of St. Augustine; Reverend Frederick R. Parke, pastor of Assumption Catholic Church; Seminarian John Sollee, and Deacon Corky Hecht of Assumption Catholic Church.

A groundbreaking ceremony was held Aug. 14, immediately after a Dedication Mass for the Early Childhood Learning Center of Assumption Parish and ribbon-cutting ceremony for the new academic building. In addition to Parke, attending both ceremonies were Bishop Estevez; Reverend Monsignor Eugene C. Kohls, Assumption pastor emeritus; Reverend Jose Panthaplamthottiyil, C.M.I, parochial vicar; Reverend Donald Lum and Reverend Martin Raj, both of Assumption; Deacons Dale Tatum, Corky Hecht of Assumption and Deacon Scott Conway, superintendent of schools for the Diocese of St. Augustine.

Construction on the Adoration Chapel is slated to begin this fall. The new facility will replace a tiny Adoration Chapel, which is located off a hallway near the main

sanctuary at the foot of Assumption’s bell tower. The current chapel – a place where the Blessed Sacrament, the consecrated Eucharistic host, is on display in a monstrance 24 hours a day – has only 25 seats and, due to its proximity to the hallway, can be a noisy place to pray, Parke said, adding Assumption parishioners can gain access to the chapel by utilizing a security code.

In contrast, the new chapel will seat 60 and be much quieter, Parke said. It will be large enough to also hold daily Mass and will save the parish the high cost of air conditioning the larger church sanctuary during its weekday services when a smaller congregation attends, he said.

“The power of prayer is coming to fruition,” Parke said. “We are very blessed.”

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# Lakewood resident has close call crossing road

By Kate A. Hallock  
Resident Community News

Bernard Mazie was still very emotional days after a close encounter of a very frightening kind.

“I was almost killed attempting to cross University Boulevard at Stetson Road Aug. 11, at approximately 11 a.m.,” said Mazie, 73. “Traffic was almost clear, with one vehicle in the far distance. A gold pickup truck advanced in the outer westbound lane at an accelerated speed. Terrified, I attempted to walk faster to get out of the way, but I walk slowly with a cane. The vehicle barely missed me but was close enough to strike the end of my cane, which was pointed behind me.”

According to the Lakewood resident, this is a frequent scenario on University Boulevard, where a crosswalk is needed. There is not a signalized crosswalk at the University Boulevard-Stetson Road intersection, Mazie said.

More than two years ago, District 5



University Boulevard in the Lakewood area

Councilwoman and City Council President Lori Boyer met with representatives of the Florida Department of Transportation to see if FDOT would consider a pedestrian-activated signal at Auburn and Stetson Roads. According to Mazie, FDOT determined there

was not enough foot traffic to warrant a signal. “Even to save one person’s life is worth the cost,” he said.

The lack of a pedestrian crossing, coupled with the 2014 Jacksonville Transportation Authority’s route changes, make University

Boulevard a death trap, said Mazie.

A volunteer at City Hall, Mazie used to catch the B7 and U2 buses on his side of University Boulevard before Route Optimization went into effect Dec. 1, 2014.

Assisted by a cane, Mazie now walks two blocks from his home on Stetson Road to cross University Boulevard, then walks another two blocks west to catch Bus 25 at the corner of Auburn Road and University Boulevards. He was on his way to City Hall on Aug. 11 when he was nearly hit by a vehicle.

“JTA’s route changes force pedestrians to cross at dangerous locations which previously were not necessary,” said Mazie. “Bus route 25 forces frequent dangerous crossings. Former bus routes B7 and U2 were safer.”

Ironically, Mazie is a member of the city’s Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan steering committee, which will help develop recommendations for citywide policies, standards, and programs that affect walking and bicycling.

# Prep work begins on Broadstone River House property

On July 14, Alliance Residential Company, a development firm based in Phoenix, Arizona, began a \$1.2 million soil remediation project on its three-acre Southbank property

adjacent to the Duval County School Board building.

Alliance Residential plans to build Broadstone River House, a six-story, 263-

unit apartment complex on the site of a former shipyard.

The company has been removing contaminated soil and other unsuitable materials such as debris left over from the property’s days as a shipyard, said Tim Graff, vice president of development for Alliance Residential. The brownfield project was

expected to take a month after which the company plans to replace the bulkhead and do underground work at the site, he said.

The foundational work is expected to be finished in late October when work on the parking deck will begin, Graff said. The entire project, which will cost \$26.6 million, is slated to be finished in July 2018.



The Alliance Residential Company began soil work in July. The Arizona-based company plans to build an apartment building on its riverfront property adjacent to the Duval County School Board Building.



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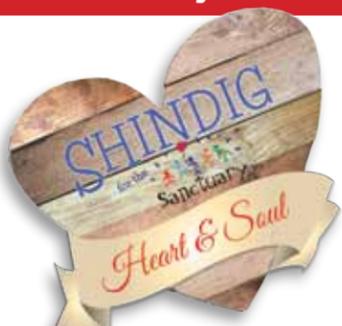



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## Local Student

*continued from page 1*

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.

## The District

*continued from page 1*

### A catalyst site

The District master plan calls for approximately 1,100 residential units, retail establishments that wrap around the ground floor of most structures, and parking garages incorporated within the lower and mid-levels of most buildings. Also included in the project are a hotel, a marina, and 45 to 65 two-story townhouses, each with its own garage.

"We view this an opportunity to build a catalyst site, a catalyst project," said Munz, adding his development group listened and took to heart the comments and feedback of the board and its staff during a workshop last spring and have incorporated much of their recommendations into its master plan.

"Having that workshop for a project of this magnitude was a very healthy thing to go through," he said, noting "view corridors," more attention to the riverfront and both sides of the property and the fact the project no longer has a "back section," came directly from feedback gleaned from the workshop.

Other goals for the project are to reinforce Jacksonville's Downtown, increase rental and owner-occupied housing, simplify the approval process, improve walkability and bike-ability, provide connectivity from The District to the "existing context" of the Southbank and the city, to establish a waterfront framework and to promote a design for overall healthy living, said Kent Knight, Elements project planner and architect.

"We are encouraging a variety of architectural styles," he said. "We don't see The District as one homogeneous



This design sample of the waterfront park at The District - Life Well Lived shows how the urban design block pattern and open spaces might be organized to maximize views of the river. This drawing is not a rendering and was submitted to the Downtown Development Review Board to show what might be developed as part of the project's design guidelines.

architectural style, but we want to invite and encourage variety."

The developers plan to ensure their project has "strong pedestrian streets," river views from the interior of the site through four "dedicated view corridors," buildings that step up in height as they go away from the river, and park space in the foreground that will allow both active and passive recreational uses, Knight said.

Their concept is to "create a skyline through various heights and tower massings," he said, noting a variety of roof-scape designs made of different materials as well as rooftop landscaping and outdoor amenities on the residential buildings would assist in making the skyline more attractive.

The project intends to encourage diversity and provide various types of housing in order to attract residents of different generations, Knight said.

Board member Joseph Loretta requested the board take a longer period of time than usual to evaluate the final guidelines. He also expressed a need to have more explanation and detail, particularly in the parking standards, before the board grants final approval. "When it comes to the final, we will not be able to evaluate it in one fell swoop," he said, noting parking standards and materials need to be very specific because The District's streets will be public.

"Conceptually this is just magnificent, and we're all very excited about this project," said Board member Carol Worsham. "It's one of the greatest things to happen in downtown

Jacksonville in years so we're all very supportive. I commend, of course, the design, and the architecture is fabulous. My question is more regulatory. When we get to the final, are you developing design guidelines for your developers and your folks that are going to be building your project? Is that what we are going to be approving when you come back to the final?" she asked, adding perhaps the board should review again the specifics dealing with the riverfront restaurants, marina and other amenities that are public and close to the Riverwalk.

Munz, however, ultimately convinced the board not to differentiate that area from the rest of the project. He promised to quickly return before the board with a solid regulating plan that will include more specificity.

"It is our intent in today's presentation to show you what our guidelines are going to be. So it is our intent at final to have you sign off on those guidelines. We heard some good feedback today. With this project we need you to keep in mind that when we're talking to a hotel developer or office developer or apartment (developer) the flexibility you are providing us and that we are going to provide them is critical," said Munz.

"So at the final there will be directions like we are giving you today and we can drill down and give you a few more types of treatments and various things," he continued. "But I want to make sure we're all in agreement today and we can continue to keep in mind the flexibility that we need to be able to take this to market."



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# District developer sees future blending of Southbank and San Marco

By Marcia Hodgson  
Resident Community News

Rapid change is a-coming and in five years it is entirely possible people will stop differentiating the “Southbank” from San Marco and will consider the entire area from the Strand to San Marco Square to be one community – San Marco, said Michael Munz, president of public relations at Jacksonville’s Dalton Agency.

Munz, who has lived in the San Marco area since he was six years old, joins with San Marco resident Peter Rummell in developing The District – Life Well Lived, a future Southbank community slated to be built at the edge of the St. Johns River, on 30 acres of JEA property adjacent to the Duval County Public School administration building.

“In five years I see us meeting at The District for a drink. There will be restaurants and infill along Kings Avenue, Hendricks Avenue and San Marco Boulevard that will connect San Marco Square with the river. (Baptist) MD Anderson (Cancer Center) will be in full swing and the whole San Marco District will be one of the most desirable parts of Jacksonville to live in,” Munz said, adding the development will “bleed over” into St. Nicholas, Miramar and South Shores. “All these areas will be very desirable,” he said.

The District is currently going through the regulatory process and received conceptual approval for its plans from the Downtown Development Review Board Aug. 25. If things go as swimmingly as Munz expects, the developers should break ground early next year with 12 to 14 months spent preparing “horizontal” parts of the project – the foundation and below-ground infrastructure, including an extension to the Southbank Riverwalk so construction on the “vertical” parts of the community can begin by spring 2018.

Although Rummell and former partner Michael Balanky amiably parted ways in May, with Rummell purchasing Balanky’s interest in Elements Development of Jacksonville LLC, nothing significant about the project will be different, Munz said. Rummell’s vision to create a “cutting-edge living environment with all the elements, facilities, amenities and resources to promote the optimal health of the people who live and visit there,” has not changed, he said.

Partnerships with several health and wellness organizations to support this vision will be announced in October and November 2016, he said.

Also in the works are “conversations” with Duval County Public School Superintendent Nikolai Vitti to acquire the DCPS administration building, which lies adjacent to The District property on the Southbank riverfront.

Munz said he and Rummell are aware of the DCPS Board’s desire to remain centrally located within the urban core, and they have been considering locations that would be easily accessible from all corners of the city. Talks on the subject will “heat back up” after the August 30 election, he said, noting it is important to have the new school board members involved in the discussion. “The board needs to support whatever change takes place,” Munz said.

“I remain open-minded about the opportunity to make an official recommendation to the school board to move off the river to another central location,” said Dr. Vitti in an email. “At this point, I have not been presented with a concrete and financially-advantageous opportunity to an alternative site but remain optimistic that one will surface.”

Acquiring the school board property, or not, really makes no difference to the success or final outcome of The District, Munz said. From the get-go, the developers had two master plans drawn up – one incorporating the school board land and one without – so the project will work either way, Munz said. “We would prefer to incorporate the land within The District, but if it doesn’t happen it will not negatively impact on the project,” he said.

Finding a long-term solution for parking in San Marco is essential to the area’s growth, Munz said. “You almost need a parking czar for San Marco,” he said. “It is something we as a neighborhood need to be dealing with,” he said. Land under the Overland Bridge may be available for surface parking and perhaps a parking garage might be built by assembling land in and around the railroad tracks near Atlantic Boulevard, he said.

Of course, The District will have its own parking solution built into the plan, he said, adding that metered street parking and garage parking for a fee will be available to visitors from the public who choose to



patronize the retail shops and restaurants.

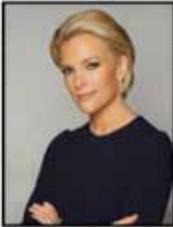
Mayor John Peyton should get credit for initiating the first step to build connectivity between San Marco and the Southbank riverfront by insisting the above-ground power lines be buried under the streets many years ago, Munz said, also recalling San Marco looked very different when he moved to the neighborhood at age six.

“There was a Gulf gas station in the middle of the Square,” he said, adding that over the past 30 years many changes, such as the construction of rotaries, Balis Park and communal landscaping throughout the neighborhood, have transformed San Marco into a very “vibrant and beautiful place.”

“The next five years should just be part of the continuum,” he said, noting all improvements in San Marco should come as a partnership between the public and private sectors, he said. “You have an active group of people in San Marco on the private side to spark these improvements and what John Peyton did in his term had a huge impact on San Marco.”

Once The District begins construction, commercial infill, which has already begun to spread down Hendricks and Kings Avenues, will only add to San Marco’s “walkability.” When that happens “I think people will stop saying it’s the Southbank and it will become San Marco all the way to the river,” he 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."



Map showing the downtown portion of the network of roads included in the city's bike-pedestrian master plan study.

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 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.

*continued on page 9 >>>*

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Andrew Clarke, director of strategy for the Toole Design Group speaks to the crowd during a city Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan Study.



Jacksonville City Planner Stephanie Zarkis and City Bicycle-Pedestrian Coordinator Amy Ingles attended a Pedestrian/Bicycle Master Plan Study Aug. 23 at the Jewish Community Alliance.

“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.

“The city of Jacksonville is fortunate to have over the next several years a budget for bike and pedestrian stuff,” said Clarke. “Thanks to City Councilwoman Lori Boyer and others, there is money in the pipeline to do some of this stuff. 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.”

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# Resident forms committee to bring benches to Duck Pond

By Marcia Hodgson  
Resident Community News

It may take a while, but if neighborhood organizer Suzanne Honeycutt has her way, duck pond benches may eventually come to San Marco's popular Duck Pond.

Honeycutt, who has a better than bird's eye view of Colonial Manor Lake Park from her porch, has assembled a committee of friends and neighbors to raise money and oversee the design of unique benches to replace the wooden seating adjacent to the water's edge along Old San Jose Boulevard.

Joining Honeycutt on the committee are San Marco residents Susan Pratts, Troy Winn, Valerie Feinberg, Cathe Gray, Cathye Onur and Emily Wiegner.

Although nothing is yet set in stone, Honeycutt said she has approached Kate and Kenny Rouh, mosaic artists who have constructed other tile-based projects in Jacksonville, to possibly create some artistic benches to coordinate with the duck-based theme.

In an email to Honeycutt Aug.1, the Rouhs forwarded a preliminary sketch of bench in a "recognizable duck shape that would optimize seating" while being an "impressive and inspiring sculpture for the park." The proposed benches might be comprised of three connected parts: a duck-shaped center body, two wings as seating and a "mosaic surface treatment" designed by Kate Rouh. The benches would sit on a "pond-shaped foundation slab."

Craig Pedroni of Pedroni's Cast Stone, and the City of Jacksonville Engineering would also need to be involved with the project, the Rouhs said in their email. "The scope of work and cost for preparation by COJ must be determined and accounted for in your fundraising," they advised.

Tia Ford, a spokesperson for the City of Jacksonville, said in an email that Daryl Joseph, Director of Parks, Recreation and Community Services, is aware of the project "as it was shared in a public meeting" but has not seen any sketches at this point. "Parks has not been engaged in any formal meetings specifically related to this effort to date and no meetings are currently scheduled," she said.

Honeycutt's idea is to bring some "nostalgic" art to the park that might provide yet another "focal point" for San Marco.

"It's so sweet. I constantly see a stream



Area at Colonial Manor Lake Park where Suzanne Honeycutt proposes to build artistic duck pond benches.

of families taking Christmas and Easter photos as well as brides and grooms who get their pictures taken there," she said of the pond. "If the benches get made, it will be even more of a focal point."

Honeycutt said she hopes to raise money from folks in the neighborhood or others in the city who have fond memories of feeding the ducks in the park and might want to put their names on a "lasting legacy" for the neighborhood. "My theory is to contact people who might want to leave a happy or lasting legacy on the city for decades to come," Honeycutt said, adding she could see the benches becoming a landmark like Gaudi's Parc Guell in Barcelona, Spain, which includes a long bench, inlaid with broken pottery, in the shape of a sea serpent, the curves of which form a number of enclaves creating a more social atmosphere.

In Colonial Manor Lake Park, Honeycutt said she envisions perhaps "five or six benches in the same configuration as" the benches are laid out now or "just one big one in the middle."

Honeycutt estimated the cost for the benches might be as high as \$60,000.

"This is the starting point," she said, "and by no means the finished product."



Rendering of a potential bench that might be built for the duck pond at Colonial Manor Lake Park in San Marco.

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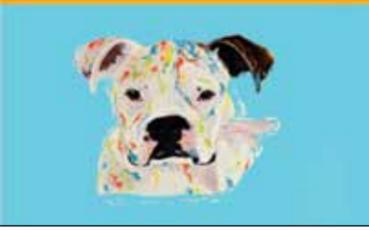
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# Willing volunteers make creek clean-up big success

By Marcia Hodgson  
Resident Community News

Nearly half the people who worked shoulder to shoulder with St. Nicholas residents to clean up Millers Creek Aug. 13 hailed from other neighborhoods in Jacksonville, said Millers Creek Special Tax District Secretary Sharon Johnson. Thanks to everyone's efforts, the event was a big success, she said.

Meeting on land owned by E-Med proprietors Rene and Danny Pulido, which is located adjacent to the creek on Atlantic Boulevard, the group worked diligently to collect trash from the creek's surrounding shores and water. Within three hours the group filled an extra-large dumpster with bottles, cans, plastic objects, mattresses, truck tires, broken bicycles, heavy-duty wire cutters and even a gigantic bin that had once found a home at the post office.

Joining in the fun were several members from the Jacksonville Environmental Quality Division including Water Branch Manager John Flowe, EQD Chief Melissa Long and Environmental Scientist Betsy Deureling, who supplied grabbers, gloves, trash bags and other miscellaneous items.

In addition to offering the clean-up workers with a place to meet, the Pulidos, who were unable to attend the event, supplied tents, chairs, ice-cold water, soft drinks, snacks and music to the volunteers. Several E-Med employees helped out, including Johnny Lopez and Fabian Overto, who loaded heavy bags of garbage from the creek and roadsides



Representing the Jacksonville Environmental Quality Department at the Millers Creek Cleanup August 13 were Melissa Long, John Flowe, Betsy Deureling, who were joined by Johnny Lopez of E-Med.



Helping to clean up Millers Creek were David Trotti, Dominic Trotti, Pam Cloys and Logan Kincade.

into a large trailer and transported it back to dumpsters rented by the Pulidos especially for the event.

"Many thanks to all who came out to make our Millers Creek/St. Nicholas Clean Up a big success," said Johnson. "Special thanks go to David Trotti, who brought his group of volunteers to help out even though no one lives directly in our community."



Getting down in the thick of it were Richard Sollee, Leo Davis (in boat) Kathy Davis, Arthur Sollee and Barbara Singleton (front).



Teresa and Christopher Rose helped out with the clean-up effort at Millers Creek August 13.



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# New city bike/ped coordinator seeks 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



Amy Ingles

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 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.

# New lighting to come to Davin Park

By Marcia Hodgson  
Resident Community News

Thanks to several generous donations to the San Marco Preservation Society, Lillian S. Davin Park in San Marco is going to have new landscape lights.

New uplighting will soon replace the string lights threaded through the branches of the stately oak trees in the 500 by 50-foot median on River Road, said San Marco Preservation Society President LeAnna Cumber. The Preservation Society project, which has the blessing of the Jacksonville Parks and Recreation Department, will cost \$15,000, Cumber said, noting the new lighting is

scheduled to be installed within the next two to three weeks.

For nearly 10 years, string lights have transformed Davin Park into a fairyland after the sun goes down. However, as the trees have grown over the past decade, the black plastic ties that attached the lights to the branches have snapped off, causing many of the strings to dangle aimlessly from the tree branches.

"About a third of the lights are not working and most are falling off the trees," said Cumber. "They were very pretty when they were first put up, but with the trees growing it is not a workable way to do lights in the trees," she said.

NiteLites of Jacksonville, which is owned

by Trevor Rosendahl, will remove the old lights and install new energy-efficient, soft uplighting at the base of the trees, said Cumber. In the meantime, the city has already cut off the electricity and capped the old outlets, she said.

"He (Trevor) is donating labor," she said. "He's knows we are a nonprofit and he has been very helpful in making sure what we get will work for us. He's been excellent in working with us."

The project has been made possible by several large donations to the Preservation Society, Cumber said, noting the Preservation Society is still accepting donations to help cover the full cost of the lighting.



String lights on the trees at Davin Park will soon be replaced with uplighting.



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**6159 FORDHAM CIR EAST**  
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# MOVERS & SHAKERS

## Local lawyer gets specialty certification



Gabriel Crafton

San Marco resident Gabriel Crafton, an attorney with Rogers Towers P.A., has achieved Board Certification in Construction Law from The Florida Bar, joining about 4,800 other Florida lawyers who are board certified in 26 specialty areas.

Crafton's practice in the construction industry focuses on representing developers, contractors, subcontractors, design professionals, government entities, homeowners and condominium associations in a variety of construction-related matters, including lien disputes, construction defects, delay and disruption claims.

Crafton is also a member of Rogers Towers' Bank Litigation Department, and works in the area of complex commercial banking and creditors' rights litigation, including loan enforcement, asset recovery and other banking litigation. He received his Juris Doctor degree from Florida State University.



Ginger Brelsford



Kevin Carlton



Julie Gaines

## San Marco bank brings on three new vice presidents

FirstAtlantic Bank has three new vice presidents, who will work out of the San Marco location.

Kevin Carlton, formerly with TD Bank, joins the financial institution as a commercial banker, responsible for developing new customer relationships with businesses and professionals. A board member of the Rotary Club of Mandarin and Athletes to Champions, Carlton is also a mentor for the Financial Matter\$ Mentoring Program through the Jacksonville Chamber's Women's Business Center.

Ginger Brelsford will serve as retail regional manager, overseeing the growth and retention of consumer and business customer banking relationships. Formerly with CertusBank, Brelsford is a member of the Jacksonville Rotary Club, a board member and treasurer for the Easy Peasy Kids Fitness Foundation.

Julie Gaines, senior commercial relationship manager, brings 25 years of financial services experience to the position. She will be responsible for developing new customer relationships with businesses and professionals.

## Delegal tops on Best Lawyers list



Tad Delegal III

Veteran attorney Thomas A. (Tad) Delegal III, has been recognized by his peers as the top lawyer in his field of individual employment law in Northeast Florida, according to 'The Best Lawyers of America.' The Best Lawyers' methodology is annual, national/regional and practice area based.

In 2017, Delegal will serve as president of the Jacksonville Bar Association.

Delegal is the only attorney in Florida who has received certification in two specialties: labor and employment law, and state and federal administrative practice. He has been a lawyer for 25 years and his firm, Delegal Law Offices, P.A., has served the Jacksonville community since 1996.

"As much as the legal community represents a diversity of clients and positions, it is an honor to be selected and recognized," he said.

## 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](http://www.jacksonvillepanhellenic.org).

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## Local attorney joins Rogers Towers



Joseph Kincart

Joseph Kincart, founder of Ideation Law, PLLC, and the Independent Patent Advancement Company (iPAC), has joined the law firm of Rogers Towers, P.A. The St. Nicholas resident specializes in intellectual property law and has worked as an in-house lawyer for the Clifford Chance Global Intellectual Property Group and for Johnson & Johnson. Kincart majored in information systems and holds a juris doctorate from Pace University School of Law.

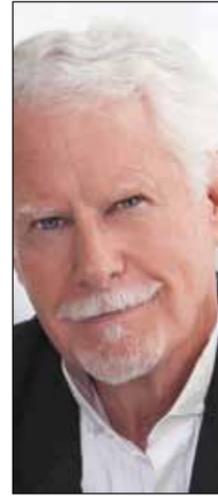
## Friends of Hemming Park announces new leadership

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 Councilwoman for District 4 from 1999 to 2007, who will take over the role of Director of Strategic Planning.



Bill Prescott



Wayne Wood



Michelle Barth



Suzanne Jenkins

## 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.”



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



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



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The Cultural Council regrets that in connection with its 2016 40th Annual Arts Awards celebration the Cultural Council inadvertently included and altered a photograph of Al Letson taken by Agnes Lopez without securing requisite permission from Ms. Lopez nor crediting her appropriately. The Cultural Council respects the rights of artists and photographers and apologizes to Ms. Lopez in connection with such use.



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## Local lawyers named to Best Lawyers list

Seven local lawyers who practice with the firm Rogers Towers, P.A., have been recognized by their peers in a 34-year-old industry publication.

Named to The Best Lawyers in America® 2017 were J. Kirby Chritton – Banking and Finance Law, and Mergers and Acquisitions Law; Christopher C. Hazelip – Commercial

Litigation; Vicki L. Meadors – Litigation and controversy – Tax, and Tax Law; H. Joseph O'Shields – Real Estate Law; Cristine M. Russell – Appellate Practice, and Commercial Litigation; Irvin M. Weinstein – Municipal Law, and Donald C. Wright – Trusts and Estates.

## Aloe vera project gets new home in zoo



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.



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.

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

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## Eight artists receive Community Foundation grants



Drew Brown (Photo by Andy Welch)



Adrian Pickett (Photo by Dwight Smalls Photography)



Roosevelt Watson (Photo by Bob Self)



Dustin Harewood



Kathy Stark



Yvette Hyater-Adams



Tarra Conner Jones



Sara Pedigo

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 Sallynn Pajcic Art Ventures Endowment, the Independent Life Minority Arts Fund, and the Alynne Sharp Art Fund.

## Parishioner to head Assumption Early Learning Center

Christina Petre, a woman with long ties to the Catholic community in the San Marco area, has been named Director of Assumption Schools new Early Childhood Learning Center.



Christina Petre

Petre, a resident of Beauclerc, attended Christ the King elementary in Arlington, San Jose Catholic School and is a 1995 graduate of Bishop Kenny High School. She attended college at Middle Tennessee State University in Murfreesboro, Tenn., earning a Bachelor's degree in business administration and marketing in 1999.

Petre is the mother of three children - Will, 13, Grace, 11 and Cate, 8 - all of which attend Assumption School. The Petre family is a member of the Assumption Parish.

Assumption's new pre-school director became interested in teaching small children after serving as a classroom volunteer and as Home and School Association president while her children were previously enrolled at San Jose Catholic School. After becoming a substitute teacher, Petre headed back to Florida State College to take continuing education and early childhood classes, subsequently earning her certification to teach preschool students. For the past three years she has worked for Lakewood Presbyterian Preschool, where she was first an assistant and then spent two years as lead teacher for the two-year-old class, known as Christina's Caterpillars.

At Assumption School, Petre will direct the Pre-Kindergarten program, which is licensed by the Florida Department of Children and Families and accredited by the Florida Catholic Conference. The new program is open to the public and includes children from infancy to four years old. It moved from the first floor of the convent building into new classroom space on the first floor of the St. Nicholas Catholic School's new school addition in late August.

"I always wanted to teach where my kids went to school," said Petre. "My grandfather was an alter server at the church 100 years ago and had a lot to do with moving the school to this location. My brother, who was at seminary, helped serve Mass during the church's 100-year celebration. This church has a lot of history with my family. I'm so excited to be a part of the Early Childhood Learning Center."

Petre is the granddaughter of Arthur N. Sollee, a Jacksonville city engineer who played an important role in designing many of Jacksonville's bridges and has the Butler Boulevard Bridge over the Intracoastal Waterway named for him. He was also instrumental in helping to move the Assumption Church campus from Gary Street to its present location on Beach Boulevard.

Her father is Richard P. Sollee, a St. Nicholas dentist.

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# San Marco to welcome coffee café



Bold Bean will be neighbors with Turner Plumbing by leasing two-thirds of Turner's iconic building on Hendricks Avenue in San Marco.

By Marcia Hodgson  
Resident Community News

Java lovers rejoice! Bold Bean Coffee Café is setting up shop in San Marco.

Bold Bean Coffee Roasters is leasing 2,088 square feet of space in the Turner Plumbing Building at 1903 Hendricks Avenue and will move into the neighborhood in October, said Bold Bean founder Jay Burnett.

“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,” said Bold Bean Owner Jay Burnett. “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,” he said.

The Turner Plumbing Company, which has owned and occupied the building since it was built in 1952, will retain a third of the space for its offices. Bold Bean will take over the remaining space, vacated when Hollingsworth Showroom, specializing in decorative tile and plumbing, moved to the former Peterbrooke building on San Marco Boulevard earlier this year.

As the Burnett family looks to opening its coveted San Marco café, it shuttered its popular Knead Bakeshop café in Murray Hill at the end of July in preparation for moving its roastery and production facility on Edgewood Avenue to a much larger and more centrally-located facility in Southside.



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



Jodi and Sheriff Mike Williams

# 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.”

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# 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.

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

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.

# 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](http://cfound.org/give/about_better_together).



A artistic photo installation illustrated togetherness and support for victims.



Laney Smith with Natalie Invelicato, Grace Driscoll and Durrell Myers



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



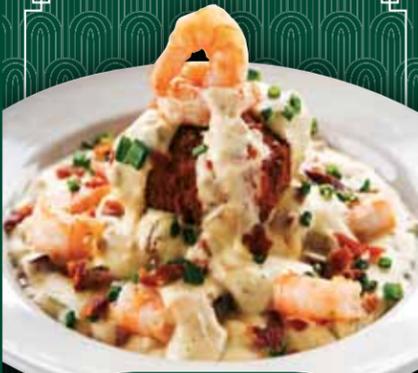
Bruce Musser with Jennifer Ancelin, Laura Evans and Darren Ronan



Sarah Hande, Andrews Fallon, Jensen Hande and Rob Middleton



Eric Haulotte and Sierra Doran help to adhere the visual art photos, reflecting togetherness, as a show of support and solidarity among event attendees.



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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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**Community Connections honors Rick Catlett, business leaders**

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 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](http://www.communityconnectionsjax.org).



Ina Gerville and Dawn Cuellar



Chris Skinner with Stacy and Ed Perez



Community Connections Board President Jerry Mallot with Mark Bennett



Virginia Hall with Russell Armistead

**SOCIAL R**



Mishayla and Michael Schmidt of The Bearded Pig



Lorraine Rodriguez, Florida Theatre, Peggy Holt, Kyle Etzkorn



Mike Miller, David Josserand and Michael Korn



Fitz Powell with Mark

**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. Participating merchants at this year's event were Bono's Hutt Smokehouse, River City United Craft Brewery, BOW Pig-Southern BBQ & Beer Garden and Seven Bridges.

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Krysta Johnston, Bob Grandstaff and Rick Haase with River City Brewing Company



David Haney and Lisa Coleman



Shelley and Julie Klempf with Connor Jarchow and Alexandria Klempf



Jerry Funk and Lynn Sussman



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



Ward Lariscy, First Lady Molly Curry, Jennifer and Paul Henrichson, Betsy Lovett and Mayor Lenny Curry

## 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.



Ariann Langsam and Steve Magiera

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Jim,  
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"I am not sure how I would have recovered without AgeWell," says Jim, who is now volunteering at a local nonprofit, going for walks and spending time with friends.

To find out if Baptist AgeWell Center is right for you or a loved one you care for, call us at **904.202.4AGE (4243)**.



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## Gardeners serve cold ice cream on hot summer afternoon



Men's Garden Club member Robert Roman serves ice cream to Club President Walter Bryant at an ice cream social held Aug. 21 in the Camellia Garden at Riverside Park. The club created the garden in 1967 and annually plants new camellia bushes in memory of former members.

## Boys will be boys



After letting off steam on the lawn, the Schwank brothers of San Marco (top, Bentley and Audie; bottom, Caleb and Steven) and Davin Baumann (right) of Springfield paused for a quick photo op before the Cummer Museum of Art and Gardens opened for August's Weaver First Saturday Free for All.

## 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.

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.

Supporters can help their favorite cause double the impact. Organizations that sell

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.

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®.

Contact the Nonprofit Center of Northeast Florida at (904) 425-1182 for more information.

## Challenge grant kicks off 50-day campaign

In response to an anonymous \$50,000 gift, Volunteers in Medicine seized the opportunity to launch a challenge campaign, "50 Days to \$50K," on Aug. 30.

An internal "soft" launch on Aug. 10 raised more than \$5,000 in two weeks from board members, volunteers and even some patients. The nonprofit provides health care to low-income and/or uninsured working men and women, and the campaign will give 1,000 such patients comprehensive wellness exams, as well as annual required screenings and tests.

Together with the original anonymous donation, the clinic could raise \$100,000 when the campaign ends Oct. 18.

To contribute to "50 Days to \$50K," visit [www.vim-jax.org](http://www.vim-jax.org).

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# Angelwood's kids star in nonprofit's fashion show



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

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" 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.



NASCAR driver Kyle Weatherman



Robin Wahby, Angelwood fashion show chairman, accompanies Jonathan down the runway during the Angelwood fundraising event at the Marriott Hotel in Sawgrass August 12.



Rebecca Mackenzie, Julie Martin and Chassidy Wendell



Stephanie Foster and Jan Kirby



Miss Florida Teen Gracie Smith walked Angelwood's runway with Patrick during the charity's fashion show at the Marriott Hotel at Sawgrass Aug. 12.

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# Greek Orthodox Church to celebrate 100 years in Jacksonville

*Looking toward next century, church plans move to Beach Boulevard*

By Marcia Hodgson  
Resident Community News

As the Reverend Dr. Nicholas Louh contemplates the upcoming 100th anniversary of St. John the Divine Greek Orthodox Church, two words come to mind: legacy and honor.

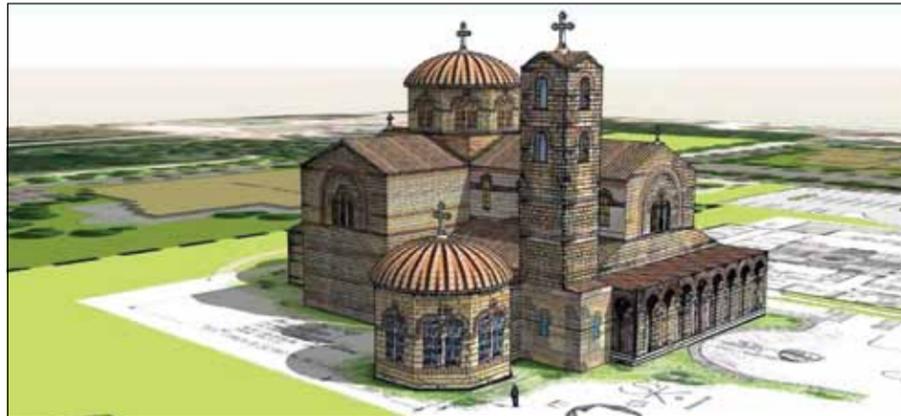
“We are honoring our past, the way God worked and Christ worked in our church over the last 100 years through the hands and feet of countless priests and family members,” said the senior pastor of St. John the Divine. “We honor them and our past by living a legacy in the present.”

St. John the Divine on Atlantic Boulevard in St. Nicholas is the only Greek Orthodox church in Jacksonville and the third oldest of its denomination in Florida. It will hold its centennial celebration Saturday through Monday, September 24-26.

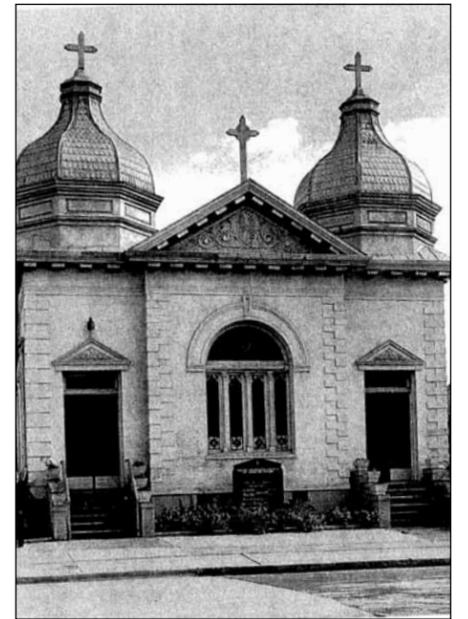
The festivities will begin at 10 a.m. Saturday with a memorial service to honor parish ancestors at Evergreen Cemetery on Main Street in Jacksonville. Soon after, at 11:30 a.m., a groundbreaking ceremony will be held at 12890 Beach Boulevard, where the parish plans to build a new larger church edifice on 20 acres of land it purchased in 2000. Capping Saturday’s events will be a grand banquet beginning at 5 p.m. at the Prime Osborn



The present location of St. John the Divine Greek Orthodox Church on Atlantic Boulevard in St. Nicholas.



A rendering of the future edifice of St. John the Divine Greek Orthodox Church, which is slated to be built on Beach Boulevard this fall.



The former St. John the Divine Greek Orthodox Church was located at Laura and Union Streets in downtown Jacksonville.

Center. The keynote speaker at the banquet will be 2016 Miss America Betty Cantrell, a member of the Greek Orthodox faith.

The balance of the festivities are primarily

religious. On Sunday an Orthros Morning Service will be held at 9 a.m. followed by a 10 a.m. Hierarchical Divine Liturgy and church-sponsored luncheon. At 6 p.m. a Hierarchical Great Vespers Service will be held, followed by a reception. The final act of the celebration will take place Monday at 9 a.m. with a Hierarchical Liturgy for the Feast Day of St. John the Divine.

In addition to Louh, who is senior pastor, several other religious figures will take part in the centennial festivities including His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios, Geron of America, His Eminence Metropolitan Alexios of Atlanta, Georgia, as well as the Reverend Dr. Milton Magos, co-pastor of the Jacksonville parish.

Jacksonville Mayor Lenny Curry, the Most Reverend Felipe J. Estevez, Catholic Bishop of St. Augustine, and several other local political figures are also expected to join the celebration, said Louh.

“It’s all coming beautifully together. How many churches in the city of Jacksonville are 100 years old? Since its birth in 1916, this church has been making a difference

in Jacksonville from feeding the hungry in the Great Depression to providing funds for Greek relief during the Greek struggles in World War II. Now 10 percent of our budget goes to outreach,” he said adding that money raised by the church’s annual Greek festivals has provided for a pediatric incubator at Wolfson Children’s Hospital as well as a room for the homeless at the City Rescue Mission.

## Greek Plymouth Rock

Greek settlers first came to Northeast Florida in the 1700s and their “Plymouth Rock” is the St. Photios Shrine in St. Augustine, said Louh. Just steps from St. Augustine’s historic city gates on St. George Street, the shrine is an institution of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America and is dedicated to the first colony of Greek people who came to America in 1768.

According to St. John the Divine Historian Mary Roman of St. Nicholas, the forefathers of St. John the Divine parish settled in the Jacksonville area around 1905. In the written church history, the first mention of a church service and priest is in 1907 when Father Arsenios was said to officiate a service to young immigrant arrivals.

“A church is not just a building, it’s a way to live,” Roman said, noting many of the Greeks who first came to Jacksonville left to escape persecution by Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, the founder of Turkey, and

*continued on page 29 >>>*

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Reverend Dr. Nicholas Louh of St. John the Divine Greek Orthodox Church



Altar at St. John the Divine Greek Orthodox Church on Atlantic Boulevard

believed they would eventually return. “When they came here, they had no language, they had no friends. They had no money. They had nothing but the belief that God was with them. This was their religion and whatever they did, they did to honor whoever they were because they thought they were going to have to go back to Greece and meet their families,” she said.

Louh agreed. “In the early 1900s there was an influx of Greeks that settled in Jacksonville and for them the church and their faith were significant. One way to hold onto their culture was through their faith,” he said.

Before the parish acquired its own church, intermittent services were conducted by traveling priests in the chapel of St. John Episcopal Cathedral downtown. As the congregation grew, it sought to purchase a building, establish a proper parish and perform regular Sunday services. The Oriental Greek Orthodox Church – The Revelation of St. John Theologos was chartered under the laws of the State of Florida on Nov. 2, 1916, and a two-story house was acquired at 1623 Boulevard Street in 1917 to provide a place to hold services. The charter was later amended to read “Greek Community of Jacksonville” and later the name was changed to “St. John the Divine Greek Orthodox Church.”

Two years after moving into the Boulevard Street house, the parish bought an architecturally significant building at 723 Laura Street for \$20,000 from the First Church of Christ, Scientist. In 1918, prior to the purchase, the 1902 building had been renovated by renowned Jacksonville Architect Henry John Klutho, according to a 1980 article in the Florida Times-Union. It was the first house of worship to be rebuilt after the Great Fire of 1901.

The Laura Street building first served as a synagogue for the Society Ahavath Chesed, the oldest Jewish congregation in Jacksonville. Ahavath Chesed’s original synagogue was built on the site in 1882 and destroyed by fire in 1901. The Jewish congregation rebuilt their synagogue and sold it to the Christian Scientists in 1908, according to the *Florida Times-Union*.

After holding services on Laura Street for more than 50 years, St. John the Divine Parish outgrew the its sanctuary. It built a new church, designed by Architect Ted Pappas of Avondale, at 3850 Atlantic Boulevard in St. Nicholas, and moved to the new location 1968. The Greek Orthodox Church continued to retain ownership of the Laura Street

church property for many years eventually selling its historic building to its next door neighbor, First Baptist Church, which had it demolished for parking in 1980, according to the Florida Times-Union article.

Over the past 48 years the church in St. Nicholas has been the place of innumerable weddings, baptisms, funerals and the center of liturgical life for Greek Orthodox faithful in greater Jacksonville.

During its 100 years, the Greek Orthodox parish has grown to accommodate more than 350 families and seeks to reach newcomers through social media, said Louh. The Jacksonville church also helped establish parishes in St. Augustine, Tallahassee, Daytona, Gainesville and Savannah, Georgia, and has assisted in planting the area’s Antiochian and Russian Orthodox churches. “Our community is made up of many different cultures. Our church is open to all people. We embrace all with open hearts and open doors. It’s not just a Greek thing to be Orthodox,” Louh said.

**New building for new century**

In April 2000, the parish purchased approximately 20 acres on Beach Boulevard between Kernan and Hodges Boulevards to build a new Byzantine Crucifix-form church, which will include a large sanctuary, a Family Life Center, administrative space, a kitchen, classrooms, a museum, and social area for luncheons and banquets. Also included in

plans for the property are areas for athletic fields, accommodations for the Easter picnic and Greek Festival as well as long-range plans for senior housing and a gymnasium.

“The new church home will continue to build upon the firm foundations previously built and will allow the church to create new ministries, new programs, and new opportunities that aim to bring people closer to Christ and to each other,” said Nicholas Furriss, chairman of the Building Committee and Athena Mann, co-chairman of the Capital Campaign Committee in a letter,

included in the written church history.

Louh said construction on the new facility will begin in 2017. No decision has yet been made as to whether the parish will keep or sell the Atlantic Boulevard property, he said.

“We love St. Nicholas,” said Louh, noting, in the past, church members have sponsored a “get-to-know your neighbor program” and have “adopted” the two-mile stretch of Atlantic Boulevard in front of the church, picking up litter three or four times a year. “Having the church here has been really beneficial to our impact on the city,” he said.

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# Methodist women bring hope to Guatemalan villagers

*HAE third graders help bring clean water to Mayan people*

By Marcia Hodgson  
Resident Community News

For the eighth year in a row, a team of 22 women from Southside United Methodist Church traveled to the Chisec, Guatemala, to bring hope to the Mayan people.

Led by Dr. Lourdes Pittochi, the team of Melissa Frankie, Angie Cospes, Kendall Cospes, Gwen Gallagher-Howard, Kailyn Moore, Sarah Wheeler and Ruthann Wheeler gave medical assistance to more than 100 babies in the health center in Chisec.

The church group also provided funds for the construction of a two-room classroom building in the Guatemalan village of Sepoc2, where they had donated two classrooms last year.

During the Guatemalan visit, the Methodist women brought a program of Bible-based lessons, crafts, activities and spiritual sharing led by Julie Barnard, Debbie Dawson, Kylie Dearing, Erin Elkins, Meloni Elkins, Amy Franks, Hannah Jackson, Karen Moore, Tiffany Musato, and Sandy Shallow. Hailey Ibach was the worship leader and Kit Rossi brought "Dance for Joy," a San Marco Dance Studio to the village.

In a special presentation July 20 at the school in Sepoc2, 16-year-old Logan Franks of San Marco presented a water filter from Ecofiltro, a Guatemalan company, to every household in the village. The gift was the culmination of a year-long fundraising effort on the part of Franks and students in several Jacksonville schools.

"Logan stood surrounded by the entire village and boldly spoke of the Living Water that Jesus offers freely by His grace," recalled Amy Franks, Logan's mother. "Every family walked away with an education on clean water and beamed with excitement to be gifted such a lavish gift."

One of the most generous contributors to Frank's water-filter project was the third grade at Hendricks Avenue



The team from Southside United Methodist Church poses with local children in front of the classroom they help build during a summer mission trip.



Logan Franks, 16, donates water filters to the Village of Sepoc2 in Guatemala during a mission trip with members of Southside United Methodist Church.

Elementary. Each year the third grade holds a "lemonade war," a friendly fundraising competition between classes, after reading "The Lemonade War," a book by Jacqueline Davies. At the end of

the competition, the classes voted as to where to donate the funds they raised, choosing this year to assist in bringing clean water to the Village of Sepoc2.

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# HAB art exhibit to feature San Marco painter

By Marcia Hodgson  
Resident Community News

As far as Ginny Stine is concerned, there is no better or more appropriate place than Hendricks Avenue Baptist Church for her to debut her painting expertise.

The San Marco interior designer and resident, who paints as a hobby, will hold her first formal art show, "Animated by Detail: Oil Paintings of Ginny Stine," in the Transitional Gallery of the sanctuary narthex at the church at 4001 Hendricks Ave. An opening day reception will be held Wednesday, Sept. 21 from 5-7 p.m., and the exhibit will continue until November.

The gallery is open each Sunday from 8:30 a.m. to noon or may be accessed through the church office Monday through Friday during business hours.

Although she no longer attends the Baptist church on Hendricks Avenue, the long-time San Marco resident said her grandparents, Edward and Mildred Knopf, were founding members and she grew up in the church and was "in the cradle roll."

"My grandfather was a deacon. He was there when it started," she said. "It was a wonderful experience growing up in that church."

With no specific training in oil painting or art prior to college, Stine graduated with high honors from the University of Florida with a Bachelor of Design degree from its College of Architecture. She has worked as an interior designer, specializing in residential and commercial design, for 49 years and founded her interior design studio on San Marco Boulevard in 1979.

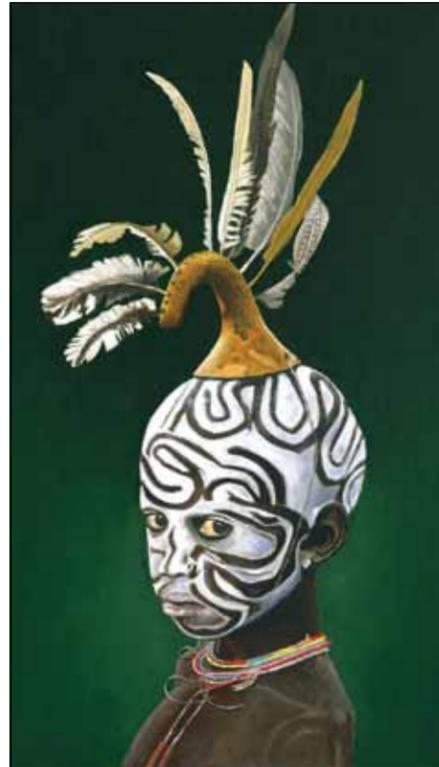
An award winner who has been recognized by the Jacksonville Chamber of Commerce, San Marco Preservation Society, the American Society of Interior Designers, and Designer magazine, Stine was also employed for 20 years as an instructor of interior design at Jacksonville University through the Dawn Program. For many years, she has designed textiles and wallcoverings for fabric companies, and continues to create fine jewelry.

Self-described as one of the "last of the photo realists," Stine said it takes between 50 to 150 hours for her to finish an oil painting, and she sells only signed limited-edition giclée prints of her work, which are priced by the square inch. "My painting is a hobby that I am happy to share, but not the originals," she said, noting after spending so much of her life on each piece, she refuses to part with them.

In the past, Stine has displayed one or two



Ginny Stine in her San Marco studio



Feathered Scamp, by Ginny Stine



Girl with the Wooden Earring, by Ginny Stine



Smoked Fish, by Ginny Stine

of her works at Reddi-Arts, a San Marco art supply store, where she often paints with her friend, Allison Watson, but has never been featured in a major show like the one at HAB, where she will be the sole artist with approximately 50 paintings on display.

Many of her paintings are still-life renderings of objects she has found near her cabin in Cashiers, North Carolina, where she does most of her work. Others depict birds or Ethiopian tribespeople in primitive headdresses.

"I paint them for the joy of painting them. When I choose a subject I've got to love it because I'm going to spend a lot of time with that subject," she said, noting she loves fruits and vegetables and has many "collections" of them. She is fascinated by the natives of the Omo Valley in Ethiopia and has painted a series of tribal portraits.

"They are nomadic. When they get up in the morning they are going to either eat or be eaten," she said, noting the natives have no way to view their reflections. "They have no clear water so they don't know what they look like. They get up in the morning and they decorate their bodies. They have to paint each other because they don't know what they look like and they can't see [themselves]. The most important thing to them is decorating their bodies with flowers and twigs," she continued, adding they use three stratas of clay to

make pigments of white, gold or rust. "The thought that design could absolutely drive your existence was familiar to me," she said.

As a child, Stine taught herself to draw with crayons and pencils and learned embroidery at age five, but it wasn't until she saw the movie, "Auntie Mame," at the Atlantic Drive-in when she was 12 that she knew she wanted to be an interior designer. "She (Auntie Mame) redecorated

her apartment five times, and that was the first time I knew that was a career option for somebody to do that, and I said 'I'm going to do that.' So these other things (painting, textiles and jewelry) are the icing on the cake along with my true design. I'm a designer first and foremost, but I enjoy painting," she said. "Beauty and aesthetics are always in my line of sight and they can take many forms," she said.

# Cemetery blog provides rich resource on St. Nicholas history

By Marcia Hodgson  
Resident Community News

Although she has no familial connections to anyone buried in the Historic St. Nicholas Cemetery on Olive Street, Kay Ellen Gilmour probably knows more about the people buried beneath its ground than anyone alive. Through her blog, Historic St. Nicholas Cemetery, which she developed a few months ago, Gilmour shares for free what she knows about the old-time burial ground and its history with anyone who is interested.

Gilmour, a retired cardiologist, is the author of *A Genealogical History of Florida Revealed in the Historical St. Nicholas Cemetery*, which provides a study of the genealogy of the cemetery's inhabitants, who she calls "Cemeterians," and their place in the history St. Nicholas, Northern Florida and the United States.

Taking up just under an acre of land, the small graveyard, which is nestled in residential St. Nicholas, was originally part of the Francis Bagley Spanish Land Grant and owned by the Holmes family. The Holmes donated the land to the non-denominational Union Church, which burned some years later and was not rebuilt, Gilmour said. The burial ground originally served pioneer families and later welcomed long-time friends. Ironically, the last person to be interred, William Darius Ferris IV in 2007, was the great-grandson of William Darius Ferris, Sr., the first person who was buried within its walls in 1849.

As a St. Nicholas resident who has lived near the abandoned cemetery since 1971,



Kay Ellen Gilmour stands by the grave of Mary Fox Markillie in the Historic St. Nicholas Cemetery on Olive Street.

Gilmour has joined her neighbors over the years in maintaining its grounds. Considering herself the landmark's "historian," Gilmour said she wrote her book with the purpose of using all the proceeds from its sale to financially support the burial site.

Gilmour said she became interested in genealogy after her mother's death in 1999. While cleaning out her mother's belongings, she discovered a huge chest filed with thousands of family documents and photos dating back to 1819 as well as family letters written during the Civil War and World War I. Included were photos taken by her grandmother, a historical photographer who documented the life and times of the people in her New York community in the early 20th century.

"I'm an only child and I have no children.



Author Kay Ellen Gilmour, MD, in the Historic St. Nicholas Cemetery. Gilmour has written a book and produces a blog charting the genealogical history of St. Nicholas residents buried in the small graveyard on Olive Street.

research the ancestors of those folks."

Gilmour said her first book attempt was "skinny." Even after two more fleshed-out editions, she still considers her book more "informational" than a "work of art."

"This book has so much information and is written so differently. I don't know of any other genealogical history of Florida that's out there," she said. Organized like a "three-act" play, Gilmour's book includes sections entitled Intermission, Curtain Call and After Party. Each act covers a different period in St. Nicholas history beginning in 1565 and ending with the Great Fire of 1901.

Also included are essays on pertinent topics such as diseases suffered by the Cemeterians (Gilmour considers herself more doctor than author), their occupations, the naming of Jacksonville, and slavery. Through her research, Gilmour discovered the unusual fact that an African American Civil War veteran lies alongside two white soldiers of the Confederacy.

Three months ago, Gilmour decided to place information from her book on the internet through her blog, hoping to provide an additional resource for people researching family history. So far, in addition to Jacksonville followers, she has gotten many hits from throughout North America, as well as Germany and Russia.

"The blog consists of information from the book as individual posts," Gilmour explained. "What I am doing is cutting and pasting this book onto the internet to share with people who may have an interest in it for free."

After researching her family history, Gilmour has also written three historical novels about the Palatines, a group of German immigrants who settled in central New York. She is currently working on a fourth book in the Palatine series.

An avid traveler who has spent time in 134 countries, Gilmour also manages two travel websites – [womentravelsafetutorial.com](http://womentravelsafetutorial.com) and [womentravelsafeblog.com](http://womentravelsafeblog.com) and is working to share online the travel journals of her housemate, Lois Olive Gray.

I asked myself, 'what do I do with these treasures?'" Gilmour said.

Gilmour set to work scanning the documents and identifying the people in the photographs, a task that took her two years. "At the time I was a busy 24-hour-a-day doctor," she said.

She also signed up for [ancestry.com](http://ancestry.com), a genealogical website, even though she had no clue how to use it to do family research. Not wanting to yet tackle her own family history, Gilmour decided to "experiment" by researching some of the names found on headstones in the historic St. Nicholas cemetery.

"The more I got into it, the more interesting it became," she said. "The people in the cemetery are the history of our country. They are not just St. Nicholas but Florida and the United States," she said. "The lives of our Cemeterians reach out to tell their stories to all who will take the time to listen. They tell us how they lived and died to make our place in the world. They ask nothing more of us than our support in maintaining the dignity of their final resting place," she wrote in the book's introduction. "I started out to report on the lives of those persons actually buried in our neighborhood cemetery. However, my curiosity got the better of me and I began to

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# 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.

Frail, Hall relies on a cane and the arm of close friends, like Georgianne Pionessa



Dr. Marian Hall

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.



Bosom Buddies Founder Bobbi de Cordova-Hanks with Sara Dewitt and Barbara Hoffmeyer, who organized the event



Arbor Terrace San Jose staff members Donna Crivaro, Nicole Jones, Terri Siess, Corrine Eubanks, and Veda Harless



Ron and Diane Cohen

## Ladies in pink party at Arbor Terrace

As a prelude to the upcoming 6th Annual Remission Rocks celebration Friday, Sept. 16 at the River City Brewing Company, the ladies in pink from Bosom Buddies hosted a party at Arbor Terrace in San Jose Aug. 25.

Selling tickets to the September fundraiser for Bosom Buddies, as well as hot pink Remission Rocks T-shirts, were Bosom Buddies founder Bobbi de Cordova-Hanks of San Marco and Sara Dewitt, who organized the event.

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.



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# The Way We Were Helen Peltz Diamond

By Marcia Hodgson  
Resident Community News

A “firecracker baby” who was born on the Fourth of July more than 100 years ago, Helen Peltz Diamond has seen more Independence Day celebrations than she may care to mention. This year, however, may have been a celebration for the ages.

Knowing Diamond had surpassed her centennial year, more than 100 of her neighbors and friends stopped at the end of her driveway to sing a rousing rendition of “Happy Birthday,” before they finished their march down Waterman Road during the Colonial Manor neighborhood annual Fourth of July parade.

It was the second year Diamond, who had turned 102, was serenaded by her San Marco neighbors, and it was a fitting commemoration to the woman who is the oldest member of the Jacksonville Jewish Center and Colonial Manor resident with the longest tenure – 64 years – living on her street.

Diamond claims her “longevity gene” was received from her mother’s side of the family. Her mom, Fannie Schemer Peltz, lived to be 84 and had two sisters who lived to their early 90s in a time when most women died by age 57 and a man’s average life span was 52.

Meanwhile, Diamond’s younger sister, Sylvia “Tootsie” Peltz Hecht, died at age 98; her older brother, Mitchell Peltz, lived to be 92.

Taking this into consideration, Diamond attributes her longevity to her “history.”

“She never did anything to override her good genes,” said Diamond’s daughter Rita Stearman. “She never drank. She was never a smoker or sat out in the sun. She never let her weight get out of control.”

It is hard for Diamond to select one time in her life as the good old days. “I never experienced hardship at any time,” she said, noting her parents owned a house, car and grocery store, which was a big deal. “When I was growing up I didn’t feel deprived of anything,” she said.

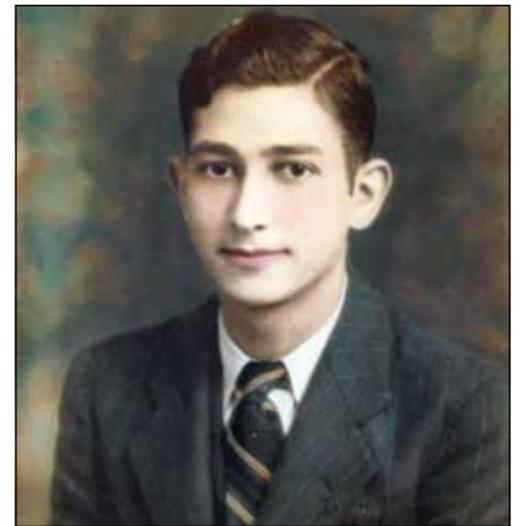
Diamond’s immediate family came to America when her mother immigrated at age 12, arriving in Baltimore, Maryland, from Lithuania to escape the pogroms in Eastern Europe. An uncle had forwarded money for her ticket so she traveled alone, and upon arrival at his home, she immediately went to work in a pajama factory, because at that time there were no child labor laws. Speaking only Yiddish, she worked to pay her uncle back and send money so her brother could make the trip from Europe the next year. Eventually the entire family came over, traveling one at a time, said Stearman.



Wedding, August 19, 1934, Jacksonville, Florida. Portraits of Helen’s parents hang on the back wall of her Springfield home.



Engagement photo, 1934



Frank Diamond, 1933

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“It was like ‘Fiddler on the Roof,’” explained Stearman, noting many Jewish parents would cut off their young sons’ trigger fingers to avoid having them conscripted into the Russian Army.

“My grandmother knew little or no future in Lithuania. She came over here by herself at age 12, but this was not unusual. Grandpa said if you were a Jew in America you were descended from people who had nothing, because the ones that had nothing came and the ones that had something stayed. The German Jews, they all stayed and they were all killed in the Holocaust,” said Stearman.

“My mother said they came (to America) to get a better life for their children,” said Diamond.

Eventually, Schemer met her husband, Harry Peltz, in Baltimore. Baby Helen was born on July 4, 1914. When she was six weeks

*continued on page 35 >>>*

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Helen Diamond with her daughter Rita Stearman and son-in-law Mandell Stearman in July 2016.



On her 102nd birthday, Helen Diamond watched the annual neighborhood Fourth of July parade with Robyn Fischer and Fischer's grandson, Weston Wright.

old, her family moved to Jacksonville to live near their relatives and to escape the cold weather, Stearman said.

The Peltz family made its home at 805 West Duval Street in LaVilla, just down the street from the synagogue when it was on Duval Street. During those days LaVilla was the heart of the Jewish community, Diamond said.

Her father owned Star Grocery at the corner of North Davis and West Duval Streets and sold food and produce in the days before such things were prepackaged, she said. Flour was stuffed into burlap sacks and weighed by the grocer, Diamond recalled, noting her father, who was not overly religious, did not operate a kosher market. Later, her father moved his store to 3rd and Walnut Street, and it was there he sold meat, she said. "There was only one establishment that sold kosher things and there wasn't a wide variety," Diamond said.

Eventually her folks moved to 334 East 4th Street, where she lived when she was married, said Diamond whose sharp memory allows her to easily reel off her old addresses.

Growing up she attended LaVilla Elementary and Kirby-Smith Junior High before graduating in 1932 from Andrew Jackson High School, one of three all-white high schools in the city. It was during her high school days she met her future husband, Frank Diamond, whose father, Joe, had a pawn shop and manufactured Diamond's

Rheumatism Powder in the days before the Food and Drug Administration.

Frank and Helen were married August 19, 1934, in the synagogue at 3rd and Silver Streets, when she was 20 and he was 22.

"I met him at the YMHA," she said explaining "things were segregated back then," and Jews used the Young Man's Hebrew Association, not the YMCA, which was the Young Men's Christian Association.

She and her friend, Rosslyn Magezis, were dropped off at the YMHA by her parents and were to call for a ride home when they were ready to leave, Diamond recalled. During the game Magezis met a boy who offered her a ride home. "She told him, 'I can't go. I came with my friend Helen.' He said he came with his friend (Frank), and was sure his friend would be glad to take her home, too," Diamond said.

After the wedding, the couple moved around the corner from Helen's parents to the Juliana Apartments on 3rd Street. Frank got a job at Cohen Brothers Department Store, where he was paid \$22.50 a week, said Diamond.

Realizing his job had no room for advancement, Frank decided to move to Atlanta and enroll in Georgia Tech, where he could work during the day and go to school at night. There he sold his father's rheumatism powder and later took a more lucrative job selling "debit" insurance door to door. When the school upped tuition by \$50, Frank dropped out of college to sell insurance full

time, Stearman said.

Diamond's first child, Ivan, was born in 1940, and her daughter, Rita, came along three years later. A few years later, when World War II was in full swing, Frank was finally drafted into the army. Helen headed back to Jacksonville to live with her parents and be near her husband who was stationed at Naval Air Station Jacksonville. Frank, who worked in the office on base, saw many of his shipmates shipped to the Pacific in the middle of the night. "My father was saved when Harry Truman decided to drop the bomb," said Stearman. "Dad never made it out of the continental United States and then the Japanese surrendered," she said.

Once out of the military, the Diamonds stayed in Jacksonville and Frank settled into a very successful 41-year career selling Gulf Life Insurance.

The Diamonds were conscious they were the only Jewish family in the neighborhood when they spent between \$3,500 and \$4,500 to buy their home at 5505 Liberty Street, just down from North Shore Elementary. "I think Ivan and Rita were the only Jewish children in the whole school," said Diamond.

In 1952 when the couple desired a larger house in a nicer neighborhood, they spent \$4,000 on a lot in a brand-new San Marco subdivision on Waterman Road and built the house where Diamond still lives. "There were empty lots all around. I think we were the ninth house built on Waterman Road," said Stearman, who was nine years old at the time.

"This area was lovely. It was considered an exclusive neighborhood," Diamond said, adding most residents owned cars and "the hired help" who worked in the neighborhood used the 31 Colonial Manor bus. "Most everyone had someone who worked either all day or half a day," Diamond said.

At that time, Waterman Road had a dozen or more Jewish families, including Diamond's sister Tootsie, who lived directly across the street, said Stearman. "My non-Jewish friends told me they used to call it Little Jerusalem. The talk among non-Jews was that this was predominantly a Jewish neighborhood. But one day, being Jews because Jews like to know this kind of thing, we went and counted and there were still more non-Jews than Jews living here," she said.

After World War II many Jewish families migrated from Springfield to South Jacksonville even though the conservative synagogue was still located on 3rd and Silver Street. As more Jewish families moved down the "San Jose Boulevard corridor" to points south, the synagogue, known today as the Jacksonville Jewish Center, moved to Crown Point Road in Beauclerc in 1976, said Stearman.

Frank Diamond was a founding member of Beauclerc Country Club, where the Jewish Community Alliance is now located. The club was established because San Jose Country Club would not admit Jews into its membership, Stearman said. "This was the height of discrimination. I tell all my friends that the Christian community discovered Jews had green money and that they could pay dues," Stearman said. "Every community who gave Jews a chance has been enriched by their intellect and their generosity and their philanthropy," she said, adding it was the Wolfson family who gave money for Wolfson Children's Hospital and the land for Wolfson High School.

Although Diamond said she never felt any discrimination living in Jacksonville as a Jew, her daughter explained that during much of her mother's early life, the Jewish Community, which is only one percent of the population, kept to itself.

"She would not go out with someone who was not Jewish, and non-Jews didn't date Jews," said Stearman. "The most important thing in the Jewish community was the synagogue. If they got there and there wasn't a synagogue they built one in the midst of where they lived."

Although she doesn't often go to synagogue now, running a traditional Jewish household with its many holidays was the center of her married life, said Diamond, who grew up in a kosher home. "I used to keep kosher, but I don't anymore," she said.

"Mom and her sister would cook and bake together for the holidays. We used to have big family dinners with 25 or more," recalled Stearman. "Traditions are not passed down, they are taken up. They would make all the traditional food, then when she couldn't do it anymore, I took it up and now do it at my home," she said.





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# Jr. Residents

## Local churches provide spiritual boost before classes begin

By Marcia Hodgson  
Resident Community News

On the Sunday before children headed back to their classrooms, several San Marco area public schools received spiritual uplift from various local churches, when church members spent time Aug. 14 praying on their campuses.

The day was targeted as “Pray for the Schools of Northeast Florida Day” by Transform Jacksonville and Northeast Florida, an interdenominational organization with the purpose of transforming Duval County through “neighborhood prayer evangelism.”

The school initiative, which began in 2009, selects a day where Christian believers go to neighborhood educational institutions and say prayers over their campuses. Prayers for elementary schools took place at 2 p.m. followed by prayers at middle schools at 3 p.m., high schools at 4 p.m., and colleges at 5 p.m.

Members of Southside Baptist Church in San Marco spent time at Julia Landon College Preparatory School, Douglas Anderson School for the Arts and Englewood High School.

Disregarding Transform Jacksonville’s schedule, more than 25 Southside Baptist members visited Landon immediately after church, walking the halls of the historic institution individually while utilizing a school prayer guide provided by their church.

Southside Baptist takes a special interest in these three schools, particularly Landon, because it is a designated faith-based partner with them, said the Rev. Dr. Gary Webber, Southside Baptist’s senior pastor.



Southside Baptist Church member Cheryl Barker takes a moment to pray in the corridor of Julia Landon College Preparatory School during Transform Jacksonville and Northeast Florida’s Pray-for-the-Schools event Aug. 14.



Tina Joel of SUMC, Catholic Deacon Michael Federico, Betty Taylor and Julie Howard of SUMC with Catholic Deacon Ed Prisby join forces to envelop Hendricks Avenue Elementary School in prayer.

“We were praying to know that Christ is in all the students and whatever Christians are among the students will connect with other non-Christian students in a godly manner,” said Bryan Cunningham, a Southside Baptist member.

Members of two different denominations took a spiritual interest in Hendricks Avenue Elementary.

Deacons Mike Federico of Prince of Peace Catholic Church and Ed Prisby of St. Paul’s Catholic Church in Jacksonville Beach blessed the school and sprinkled

holy water over its classrooms and corridors. Federico, who was recently ordained a Catholic deacon, is also a second-grade teacher at HAE. Prisby, who was also ordained recently, is the husband of HAE music teacher Caron Prisby.

Joining Federico and Prisby on the HAE grounds Sunday were more than 20 members of Southside United Methodist Church, a faith-based partner with Hendricks Avenue Elementary.

The SUMC churchgoers individually walked the halls and campus, stopping at individual classrooms and the cafeteria, to say special prayers. Included among the worshippers were SUMC Director of Student Ministries Steve Dickson, Amy Franks, SUMC Director of Women’s Outreach, and Rev. Juana Jordan, SUMC’s new Pastor-in-Residence, who plans to plant a new United Methodist Church in Jacksonville’s urban core in early 2017.



Southside United Methodist Church’s new pastor, Rev. Juana Jordan, prays over a classroom at Hendricks Avenue Elementary School Aug. 14.

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# New musical theatre teacher hired at DA

Douglas Anderson School of the Arts has hired David T. Loudermilk as a new musical theatre teacher and Theatre Department co-chairman. Loudermilk will share his department co-chair duties with Michael Higgins, a 26-year veteran of the school.

A successful performer, director, choreographer and producer, Loudermilk comes to Jacksonville from North Carolina where he served for the past two years as the artistic director of the Thalian Association Community Theatre in Wilmington, which is known as the "official community theatre of North Carolina."

In the past he has served as drama director at Cape Fear Academy, a college preparatory school in Wilmington and has been a producer/investor for "Tuck Everlasting" and "Doctor Zhivago" on Broadway and "Memphis" in West End.

In 2005, Loudermilk received his Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in directing with a minor in dance from Catawba College in Salisbury, North Carolina. Following graduation, he has worked as an artist, performer and choreographer at various theatres, theme parks and cruise lines until 2012. His awards include several Star News Media Theater Awards for Best Children's Theater Production and Best Choreography



David T. Loudermilk

as well as the 2013 North Carolina Theatre Conference Regional Award as Best Director.

"I am thrilled to be in Jacksonville at one of the premier high schools in the country," said Loudermilk. "I look forward to collaborating with the exceptional faculty at Douglas Anderson and providing our students with opportunities to hone their skills in the classroom and out in the community."

Loudermilk will debut his directing chops at Douglas Anderson by shepherding the musical production "Parade" in November. The performance will be held Thursday-Sunday, Nov. 3-6 at the DuBow Theatre.

The Douglas Anderson Theatre Department will also perform several other productions during this school year including "A Christmas Carol" on Thursday-Sunday, December 15-18; "The Ladies Man," directed by Higgins, on Thursday-Saturday, March 2-4; "The Dining Room" on Tuesday-Saturday, April 4-8. All productions are held at the DuBow Theatre except for "The Dining Room," which will be held at the school's Black Box Theatre.

For more information on the Douglas Anderson Theatre season visit [www.datheatreboosters.org](http://www.datheatreboosters.org) or call the box office at (904) 346-5620.

# Children help fill UCOM's shelves during Vacation Bible School



The Rev. Dr. Bruce Hedgepeth joins children in a devotional skit during Vacation Bible School at South Jacksonville Presbyterian Church the first week of August.



Solomon DeClue holds up a sign signaling an important lesson he learned in Vacation Bible School at South Jacksonville Presbyterian Church.

# Friends of Hendricks delivers Bloqx playground



Children at Hendricks Avenue Elementary School enjoy the new Bloqx playground equipment purchased for the school by The Friends of Hendricks.

Thanks to The Friends of Hendricks, a nonprofit organization with the mission to support Hendricks Avenue Elementary School, HAE students have new Bloqx climbing equipment from Kompan, Inc. to enjoy during recess.

The Friends of Hendricks purchased Bloqx with some of the \$60,005 raised by the student body during the Walkathon it sponsored last February.

Each year, The Friends of Hendricks, a 501(c)(3) that raises funds to bridge gaps in the elementary school budget, makes a "big ticket item" purchase for the school. The Bloqx equipment fit nicely with Principal Lacy Healy's goal to update Hendricks' aging playgrounds.

"Climbing is something children naturally enjoy. It also builds physical strength, hand-eye coordination, problem-solving skills, confidence, focus and concentration," said Healy.

"Hendricks is the first North Florida public school in recent history to invest in Kompan's approach to designing for play," said Kompan representative Stacy Moseley of San Marco, adding HAE has the first Bloqx structures in North Florida.

"Hendricks students have welcomed the equipment on campus," said Cindy Pearson, president of The Friends of Hendricks. "With the benefits that climbing offers, even recess can be a learning experience."

"Barnyard Roundup, Jesus Gathers Us Together" was the theme of Vacation Bible School at South Jacksonville Presbyterian Church August 1-5.

During the week, more than 100 children, who ranged in age from three to 12 years old, enjoyed games, music time, scriptural readings and other spiritual learning activities. They also collected enough school supplies to fill a large SUV and donated the learning supplies to United Community Outreach Ministry (UCOM). In a separate canned goods collection, which pitted the girls against the boys, the boys won, helping to fill the shelves at UCOM's food pantry.

On the last day of the week-long Bible school, the children had the opportunity to meet many barnyard animals in a petting zoo that was set up in the South Jacksonville Presbyterian parking lot.

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# PTA hosts 'bittersweet' breakfast for kindergarten parents on school's first day

It's a "bittersweet" experience, said Nancy Chrisman, who joined other kindergarten parents in the cafeteria after dropping off her five-year-old daughter, Kira, at Hendricks Avenue Elementary for her first day of school.

Not knowing whether she would cry or cheer, Chrisman was glad to have the opportunity to share the moment with other parents in a similar situation at the school's Annual Boo Hoo-Yahoo Breakfast Aug. 15. Sponsored by the PTA, kindergarten parents enjoyed coffee, orange juice and doughnuts while mingling with their peers and school officials.

"I think I'll just go home and call my mom," Chrisman said.

Anna Valent of San Marco, who saw her daughter, Sawyer, off to school while still caring for her

other daughter, 10-month-old Mary Parker, at home, said she would probably do a little boo-hooing as well as yahooing when she left the school.

This year, on the first day of school, there were 110 kindergarteners enrolled at HAE, said Principal Lacy Healy. While introducing herself to the parents, Healy said the school was going to continue to emphasize seven habits of good leadership, particularly during the time the children spend in the cafeteria. "It's a way to recognize the students positively," she said.

It was the 16th year that the HAE Parent-Teacher Association has sponsored the breakfast. This year the event was organized by Allison Taylor, Leighton Davis and Kasey Ritter.



Socializing at the PTA's Annual Boo Hoo-Yahoo Breakfast at Hendricks Avenue Elementary School were kindergarten parents Melodie Lockamy, Leah Kennelly and Emily Dostie with two-year-old Fitz.

## Boys of summer win national tourney

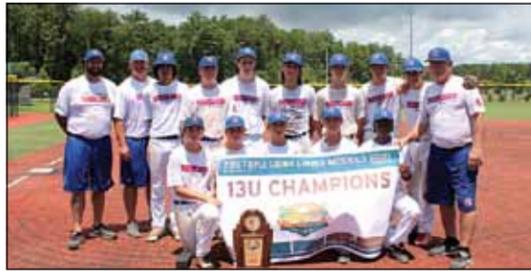
The North Florida Hurricanes Elite 13U team took home the National Championship at the Triple Crown Summer Nationals 13U tournament in Myrtle Beach July 17. The team was undefeated with a 7-0 record for the tournament.

Coached by Mark Campbell of North Florida Baseball Academy located on St Augustine Road, the team has several San Marco boys, including Davis Ellis, John Costa and Charlie Pellicer. The Hurricanes traveled the state for tournaments throughout the year and ended in Myrtle Beach for the national tournament.

"Our team came together as a unit and peaked at just the right time," said Ellis. "All my teammates contributed at the plate and in the field. It was an amazing feeling I will never forget - to go completely undefeated and walk away with the final championship win!"

As the last fly ball was landing in the glove of John Costa at first base all the boys, including the younger brothers aka water and bat boys, started running from their positions to the pitcher and they piled on in excitement, said Ellis' mother, Pam.

"It was so fun watching them celebrate, getting up from the pile with hugs, fist pumps and high fives," she said. "They were extremely proud of such an amazing week...they only gave up 15 runs the entire tournament, not more than three in any



Kneeling: Charlie Pellicer, Carson Bayne, Trey Burd, John Costa, Stefan White; standing: Assistant Coach Jason Clark, Assistant Coach Mike Pellicer, Alex Ortiz, Carson Hurst, Christopher Standley, Noah Bellinger, Max Hefner, Seth Bennet, Davis Ellis, Coach Mark Campbell



The Hurricanes pile up on the team's pitcher after winning the National Championship.

game and scored 71 runs over seven games."

In addition to winning the tournament, the boys also won the skills competition, taking first place in bat speed, bunting accuracy, pitching speed and base running.



School officials and kindergarten parents mingled during Hendricks Avenue Elementary's Annual Boo Hoo-Yahoo Breakfast in the school cafeteria. From left, Jennifer Porter with Ivan, four weeks, HAE Principal Lacy Healy, Nancy Chrisman and Mandi York, HAE Instructional Coach.



Dressed like twins for the first day of school at Hendricks Avenue Elementary were Cate and Caroline Taylor. Cate, a second grader, joined her sister, an incoming kindergartener, and mother, Allison, in setting up HAE's annual Boo Hoo-Yahoo Breakfast, of which Allison was an organizer.

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JACKSONVILLE  
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# Preschool freshens up with \$25,000 renovation

By Marcia Hodgson  
Resident Community News

After 64 years things are changing at South Jacksonville Presbyterian Preschool in San Marco.

Thanks to the generosity of the church and several parents, the preschool enjoyed a \$25,000 renovation to its facility this summer. All classrooms were repainted, and 5,000 square feet of new luxury vinyl-tile flooring was installed just in time for classes to begin, said Preschool Director Karen Saltmarsh.

For the first time in its history, the school opened before Labor Day and saw its hours extend to a full day, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Regular preschool is held from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., however, to help accommodate working parents the school now offers after-school activities, including Soccer Shots in the church gymnasium, Studio K ballet lessons and the installation of a butterfly and vegetable garden on church property.

Also new to the school is an updated “ages and stages” curriculum, Handwriting Without Tears, monthly Singapore Math concepts, Spanish, music, chapel, physical education, science and multicultural studies, as well as weekly trips to the church’s third-floor library, which has been expanded to include a large children’s section. During the library trips, children will study the works of certain authors every month, said Saltmarsh.

“This preschool in past years has been



Emily and Eloise Sands, Tabitha Galbreath with William, Beth and Ellie Martin, Karen Saltmarsh, Luke Eliopulos and Jan Waggoner enjoy a game in one of South Jacksonville Presbyterian Preschools newly renovated classrooms in August.



Three-year-old Eloise Sands and her mother, Emily, work out a puzzle at South Jacksonville Presbyterian Preschool.



Preschool Director Karen Saltmarsh joins Luke Eliopulos and Jan Waggoner



Enjoying the new children’s section in the library at South Jacksonville Presbyterian Church are Ellie Martin, Luke Eliopulos and William Martin.

very relevant to the community, and we are continuing to improve it,” said Saltmarsh, noting that enrollment has increased by 20 more students since last year with 56 students already signed up.

“We want to improve our standards so we will continue to attract families. We are changing to accommodate the changing needs of the San Marco community. When East San Marco is

built there will be 420 new residents, and we want to be ready to accommodate all the new families that will be moving into San Marco,” she continued. “It was time for the place to have a fresh new look.”

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Bartram Campus | November 8, 2016 9 a.m.  
Bartram Campus | November 10, 2016 6 p.m.

Upper School (9-12) Open House for Parents  
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# Neighbors gather to toast college-bound entrepreneurs

*Two from neighborhood to take over leash*

By Marcia Hodgson  
Resident Community News

There were mimosas, and champagne, breakfast casseroles and, of course, cookies shaped like dog bones as the San Marco's Colonial Manor neighborhood held a Saturday good-bye brunch for their favorite dog walkers before they headed off to college.

Hosted by Suzanne and Joe Honeycutt, nearly 50 friends and neighbors stopped by their Duck Pond home to bid adieu to high school entrepreneurs Jesse Evans and Chris Prattos, owners of the Happy Hounds Dog Walking and Pet Sitting Service, and to greet Austin Franks and Quinn Conrad, two neighborhood boys who plan to take over the business while Evans and Prattos are in college.

"The party was awesome. It was so much more than our expectations," said Evans. "We certainly will miss everyone."

Prattos agreed. "It was a very humbling experience to see everyone show up at the party. It really made me feel that the work Jesse and I have done these past couple of years has been worthwhile and meaningful both to us and the people we have helped," he said.

During the festivities, the dog-walking businessmen proved they also know their way around the kitchen as well as the neighborhood. The cookies, shaped like dog paws and bones, were made by hand for the party, Evans said.

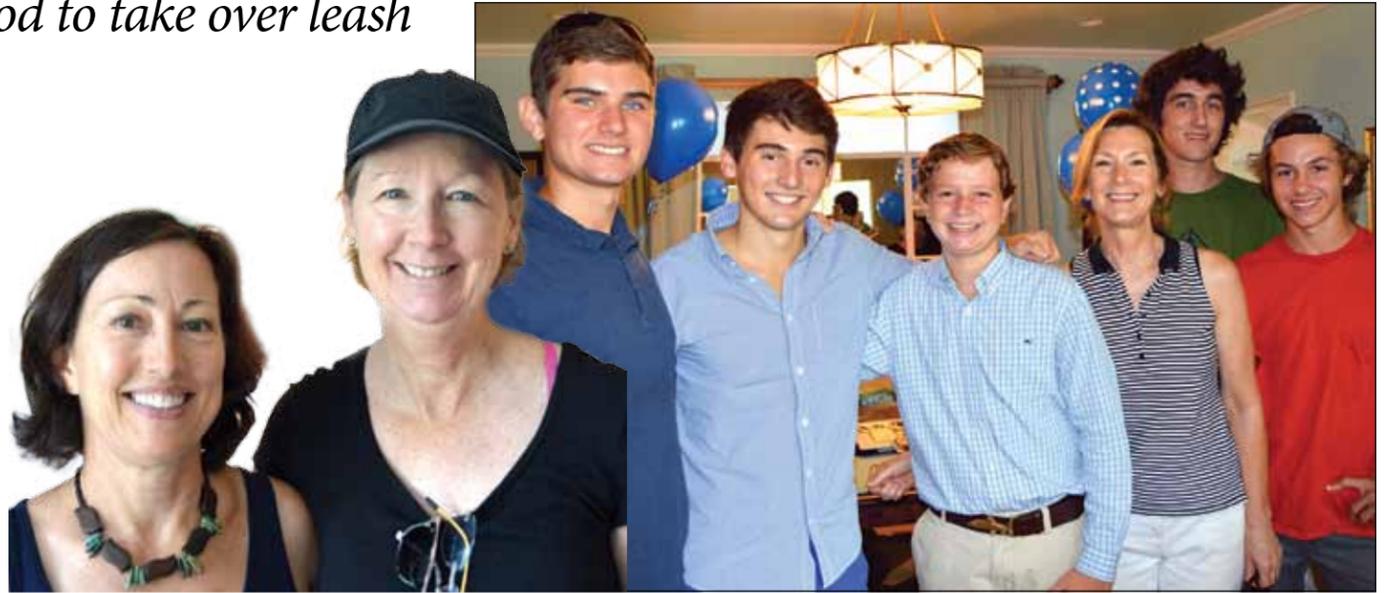
"They are splendid boys and we love them and treasure them," said Julie Mason of Prattos and Evans. "They have been a service to us with their pet sitting, and we all feel honored to have been part of their lives."

## Under new management

Although Conrad and Franks have agreed to step into the void created by the Evans and Prattos' departure, Evans said he and his partner intend to keep their hand in the management of the lucrative business albeit from afar for the next year or two.

"I feel confident handing the torch to Austin and Quinn," Prattos said.

"Chris and I feel secure in our decision to allow them to take it over," said Evans. "Chris and I still will provide some



Susan Prattos and Paige Moore

Jesse Evans, Chris Prattos, Austin Franks, Linda Kulka with Micah and Quinn Conrad



Robert Moore, Chris Prattos, Bill and Julie Mason with Troy Winn



Austin Franks and Quinn Conrad have agreed to take over the Happy Hounds Dog Walking and Pet Sitting Service after its founders, Jesse Evans and Chris Prattos, head off to college.

management, however they will have a lot of autonomy and can expand the business now that we will be gone."

Evans said he and Prattos selected the pair because they are very responsible, interact well socially with their clients, and are both young, enabling them to stay with the business for a few years.

Both Conrad and Franks have worked as employees of Happy Hounds. Franks is an eighth grader at Julia Landon College Preparatory School while Conrad is a sophomore at Stanton College Preparatory School. Conrad is the brother of Flagler College freshman Micah Conrad, who has also worked for the pet-sitting service over the years.

"I'm very excited to finally have a job for once and to work for myself," said Franks. I saw them walking my dogs and know how much money they were making off of it, and I thought, 'if they can do it, why can't I?'"

Quinn Conrad also said he was thrilled with the opportunity. "I'm just looking to keep the business going and then expand it," he said.

"I believe they will be able to expand the business while maintaining top-notch customer service," said Prattos. "So far they are off to a fantastic start, and I am thrilled to pass on the business to these young men with such drive and passion."



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# Crated ducks, geese find new home in Duck Pond

By Marcia Hodgson  
Resident Community News

A new flock of waterfowl inhabit the Colonial Manor's Duck Pond, thanks to the benevolence of Robin Ashourian of Waterman Road and her son, Justin.

While shopping at the Beaver Street Farmer's Market, the Ashourians, both avowed animal lovers, spotted six white ducks and two geese crammed into tiny crates baking in the hot sun. The crates were so small the ducks and geese could not move. "I couldn't stand it. I was speechless. It almost made me cry. They looked like they were really suffering. They were huffing and puffing, and there was no water or food around," said Ashourian.

At Justin's suggestion, the life-saving duo paid nearly \$200 for the birds, piling the crates into the backseat and open trunk of a brand-new BMW belonging to Justin's wife, and made a beeline to the Duck Pond.

"It was the best money I ever spent. I didn't get the peaches or watermelon that I wanted but we did something good and liberated them," Ashourian said. "They are so happy at the duck pond and I'm thrilled."

After learning about the new flock, Ashourian's neighbor, Suzanne Honeycutt, put out an email to the Colonial Manor neighborhood suggesting folks might want to stop by, greet the newcomers and feed them lettuce and good bread. Since her notification, a steady stream of well-wishers have flocked to the waterside bearing gifts.

"The ducks haven't learned how to hop out



Robin Ashourian feeds ducks at the Colonial Manor Duck Pond

*"They are so happy at the duck pond and I'm thrilled."*  
— Robin Ashourian

of the water yet, which is probably a good thing, said Honeycutt, adding that they spend most of their time on a slightly submerged island in the center of the pond. "It keeps them safe, and they won't get hit trying to cross the road. There is constantly somebody out there, and from what I can see, they are hand-fed all day long."

## TheCity.church changes location

TheCity.church, a millennial-oriented congregation led by 28-year-old Pastor Blake Bennett, is changing its location.

As of Sunday, Sept. 18, the church, which currently holds services at the Knights of Columbus Social Club on Hendricks Avenue, is moving its weekly "Worship Experiences" to Julia Landon College Preparatory School. Services are held Sunday mornings at 10:30 a.m.

To celebrate the first Sunday in its new home at 1819 Thacker Avenue,

the congregation will launch a six-week teaching series entitled "How to Neighbor," and hold a neighborhood block party full of fun, food, trucks and new friends.

TheCity.church aims to be "a new, life-giving community" where church-goers "can expect a friendly, inspirational message and energetic music," said Bennett.

More information on the move can be found at [www.TheCity.church/OwnIt](http://www.TheCity.church/OwnIt).

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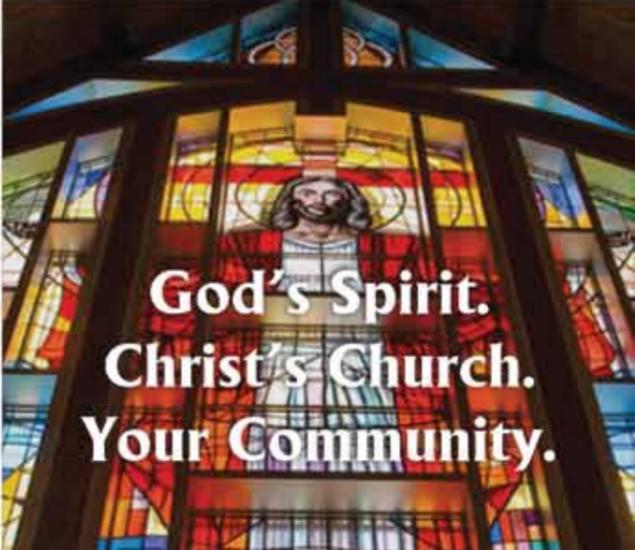


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# Museum director reflects on career path

By Kate A. Hallock, Resident Community News

*“I loved my job as Director of Education at the Cummer Museum.” — Hope McMath*



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 UNF, 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.

“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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