

# Resident

Community News

San José – San Marco – St. Nicholas



## Bigger than ever Gingerbread House Extravaganza



San Jose Episcopal Day School students Roman and River Penland, sons of Brooke and Aaron Penland, with a prize-winning gingerbread house, "A Snow White Christmas." Third grade classmates helped with the trees in the display. The Jacksonville Historical Society's Gingerbread House Extravaganza runs through Dec. 23 at Old St. Andrews, 317 A. Philip Randolph Blvd.

## Wreaths, lights and ornaments make Balis Park sparkle



Shelly Boynton and Paula Joyner put lights on the Christmas tree in the gazebo at Balis Park in San Marco.

Christmas arrived early at Balis Park this year. The San Marco Garden Circle was out in force Nov. 16 decorating the park with wreaths, lights and a beautiful Christmas tree in the center of the gazebo in San Marco Square.

For more than 20 years the Circle has decorated the tree and did its part to usher in the holidays by making San Marco Square festive. "This is our gift to the entire San Marco community and the Jacksonville residents that pass through the Square," said Garden Circle member Cathy Watkiss of San Marco.

Helping with the decorating this year were

several members of the Jacksonville Fire and Rescue Squad including Ben Stein, Allen Hawk, Pete Bilodeau, Sean Vernon and Lonnie Mincey, who helped anchor the tree in the center of the gazebo. The firemen also affixed several ornaments on the highest branches as well as the star at the top of the tree.

Joining Garden Circle Co-Presidents Lindsey Riggs and Shari Thanner with the decorating were Cynthia Murray, Suzanne Perritt, Jan Bebeau, Terry Boulos, Nancy Maguire, Lynda Erwin, Mary Toomey, Paula Joyner, Cathy Watkiss, Shelly Boynton, Lynne Murphy and Karen Hirschberg.

## Celebrating a milestone in medicine for Baptist MD Anderson Cancer Center



Celebrating the big day with leaders of the Baptist MD Anderson Cancer Center were First Lady Molly Curry, Mayor Lenny Curry, Hugh Greene, president and chief executive officer of Baptist Health, Tabitha and PGA Tour Professional Jim Furyk of the Jim and Tabitha Furyk Foundation.

A major announcement was made last year in Jacksonville when the leadership of two major health systems teamed up to deliver world-class cancer care to our region. As MD Anderson, based in Texas, signed on with Baptist Health, the duo created a powerhouse for fighting cancer, making cancer history.

While celebrating the relationship and a one-year anniversary Nov. 29 during an Evening of Celebration in the US Assure Club at EverBank Field, leaders spoke of the journey to today, the building of the new

nine-story center along San Marco Boulevard and the future of the partnership.

"This is the inaugural fundraiser for our new cancer center and cancer program. Defeating cancer is a huge undertaking and we are poised to take on that challenge," said Hugh Greene, president and CEO of Baptist Health. "There are only three other similar partners in the country, which highlights the faith and commitment MD Anderson has in our health system."

## Flying Iguana is a no-go in San Marco Square

By Marcia Hodgson  
Resident Community News

It looks like the Flying Iguana is not coming to San Marco Square after all.

Unable to work out a financially feasible parking solution to accommodate the 150-seat restaurant he planned to install in the Stellers Gallery building adjacent to the fire station, restaurateur Al Mansur decided to pull out of a deal where he would purchase the building at 1407 Atlantic Blvd.

Instead, the building will soon pass into the hands of another owner. Zambetti Properties, which has owned the building since 1995, has accepted another contract on the property, said Vincent Zambetti. Zambetti refused to give out any details other than to indicate it probably will not become a restaurant.

"It's under contract and they have asked me to not say anything," said Zambetti. "It will be sold in two to three months, or it might be in January," he said, adding that he was "very disappointed" that the Flying Iguana was not going to make its home there.

See more on page 14

## See Who's Who at Red, White & Blues



Michelle and Alan Isolda

The North Florida School of Special Education welcomed guests and sponsors to the 7th Annual Red, White and Blues fundraising event Nov. 18 at the riverfront estate of Gary McCalla.

See more on page 27

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*'Tis the Season*

## **12 Days of Holiday Cash** **December 12 - 23**

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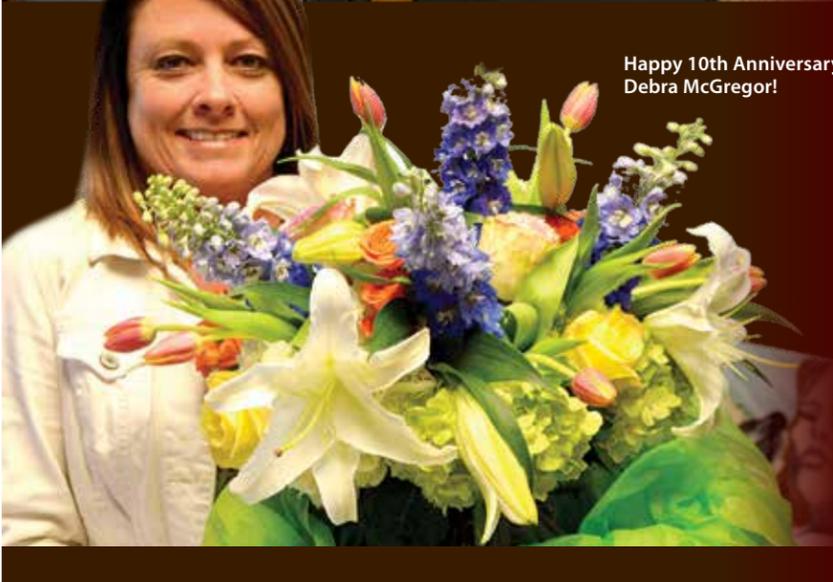


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# Publishers' Note



Seth Williams and Tarryn Bradford with Circles Volume 2 at the National Philanthropy Day Awards Luncheon



Happy 10th Anniversary, Debra McGregor!

Having just celebrated Thanksgiving, we're still in a very thankful frame of mind going into the final month of our 10th year in publication.

We count our blessings every month when we put out *The Resident*, thankful for our loyal readers and advertisers. Spoiler alert: You'll see some of their smiling faces and kind words next month in our January 2017 10th Anniversary issue.

We're also grateful for our hardworking staff, who together make this a quality publication in every way. One of those is Debra McGregor, our director of sales, who celebrated her 10th anniversary with *The Resident* in November. Debra has been with the company since our first issue was published in January 2007 and since then has built strong relationships with many local businesses, small and large, on both sides of the river.

Last month we also published Volume 2 of *Circles - Social Datebook & Charity Register*, with stories about the individuals, businesses and nonprofits who do so much to make our community stronger, an extensive list of charitable organizations and foundations, and a calendar of the events that fund those causes and the good works they do.

As we close out 2016, we hope you will have a very peaceful and joyous holiday. We also look forward to the start of our next decade, so we can continue sharing stories about the neighborhoods, people, places and businesses that reflect our uniqueness.

*Happy Holidays*  
— Seth and Pamela Williams



**Resident**  
Community News

*Happy Anniversary to Us!*

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In celebration of *The Resident's* 10th anniversary, we're giving away two six-month individual memberships to VERB JAX, a full-service, upscale fitness facility in 5 Points. Each prize is worth over \$400.

All you need to do is tell us why you love *The Resident* newspaper in 50 words or less.

A selfie with the paper is a bonus, but not necessary. Send to editor@residentnews.net, with "I love *The Resident*" in the subject line, no later than Tuesday, December 20, 2016.

**Christmas at All Saints**  
*Christmas Eve* – Sat. December 24  
 5 pm – Holy Eucharist with Children's Christmas Pageant  
 10 pm – Solemn Choral Eucharist with Parish and Handbell Choirs  
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**HAPPY HOLIDAYS!**



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# Boyer seeks coordination in city waterways projects

By Marcia Hodgson  
Resident Community News

Perhaps it could be considered a call to action. Although finding better ways to coordinate a citywide effort to enhance Jacksonville's waterways in an inexpensive way was "not on her radar six months ago," City Council President Lori Boyer is now rallying the troops to make it a priority.

Realizing "our natural assets are our greatest assets," Boyer convened a meeting of St. Johns River stakeholders, city officials past and present, members of the Jacksonville Chamber and other river, ocean, and parks enthusiasts to find ways to better utilize the St. Johns River and Jacksonville's other waterways without a duplication of effort. The meeting took place Nov. 3 at City Hall.

After describing the economic importance of the St. Johns River, the beach, the ocean, and the many river tributaries and their wilderness preserves to the Jacksonville community, Boyer said it is important the city "celebrate, market, and make more readily accessible to its residents and visitors," the waterways that make Jacksonville so unique. "For too long we have failed to shape what waterways can do for our community," she said.

Since she took over the job as Council President, Boyer said she has become aware of a need for a more "unified vision" in the city's approach to its waterways projects so a better effort can be made to make the water accessible to all its citizens and tourists, not just those who own boats or waterfront property.

"This initiative was not on my radar six months ago, and it's not my project, it's yours. It's something you've all been bringing to me in bits and pieces and all of a sudden I started to see a bigger picture," she said, adding that studies already done by the city, nonprofits and other organizations suggest "remarkable consistency" and often "recommend the same thing over and over."

Surrounding the perimeter of the Lynwood Roberts Room in City Hall during the meeting were easels holding maps and charts of the many waterway projects Boyer had become aware of during her tenure as City Council president. During the meeting, she said she hoped to learn of more.

"I've seen bursts of enthusiasm, very significant but disconnected wins, and no lack of opinions and studies," she said. "We are making isolated decisions or no decisions at all. We have failed to bring our community and those who visit closer to the water," she said noting that recreation, exercise, and enjoyment as it pertains to Jacksonville's public waterways need to be looked at in a more thoughtful and visionary way.

"We can set the stage for how our unique waterways can help us build a stronger national identity centered on our national resources and all they offer. We can affect policy about how development happens on our waterways," she said. "While an obvious focal point will be on our downtown waterfront, our vision and action must be county-wide. We must be intentional about our waterways and involving them in our daily lives."

In comparing the many plans, Boyer said she noticed four things missing. The first was the importance of "coordination and the opportunity to be more than the sum of individual parts," she said. "Many of our efforts are not necessarily connected in time or geography," she said.

Secondly, she suggested her audience consider the quality of the experience. "The Northbank and Southbank Riverwalk are true assets as are parks and boat ramps, but they don't provide the qualities in their current form to attract tourists or allow all our residents to walk those Riverwalks downtown," she said. "We have an opportunity here to change from having a facility to having an experience."

Thirdly, Boyer suggested her audience consider accessibility for all residents and visitors when taking on a waterways project. How do we make the views, trails, and concessions that rent kayaks and canoes available to everyone? she asked.

Lastly, she suggested the consideration of marketing and awareness. "The fact is we have not done a good job of telling the story of what we already have and what potential we have. There is a real mission here to communicate, not only to our citizens but also to those outside of our city of the fabulous opportunities there are in Jacksonville."

Boyer said what she is suggesting is not expensive and requires no additional funding. "There are dedicated resources that help us achieve many of these small ones,"

*continued on page 5*

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she said. "There are opportunities to connect things we are already doing that don't require an enormous financial commitment."

Also speaking at the meeting were Margo Moehring of Northeast Florida Regional Council, Aundra Wallace of the Downtown Investment Authority, Mark Middlebrook, executive director of the Timucuan Parks Foundation, George Forbes, city manager of Jacksonville Beach and District 3 Councilman Aaron Bowman who discussed the specifics of a few ongoing projects throughout the county.

"Today we begin the process of positioning, coordinating and building," Boyer said. "It will require patience, discipline, collaboration, creativity and your expertise. I would like each of you to commit your time, talent and to make a commitment on behalf of the city," she said encouraging those in attendance and in the community to sign up for a host of river-related groups and subcommittees.

Some of the topics covered by the groups are identification and prioritization of public parks, docks, and boat ramps, including private facilities; signage, dredging, strategic land acquisition, identification of private opportunities for business investment, activation through clubs and park programs, zoning maps for the waterways, beautification, funding, coordination and continuity, advocacy.

Topics that are not part of her waterways initiative include entertainment programming such as weekend festivals, event coordination, large-scale private developments, and water quality except as a secondary impact, she said.

To sign up for a group, contact Carolyn Clark, senior director, Urban Land Institute of North Florida at [Carolyn.clark@uli.org](mailto:Carolyn.clark@uli.org).

# What is your favorite go-to Holiday STRESS RELIEVER?



**Leo Davis**

I watch the political debates and I'm glad it's not me or my relatives.



**James Davis**

Ballroom dancing at the Monarch Ballroom.



**Maddie Windsor**

Taking my dog Cody on walks in San Marco. He's old and sweet and he loves to walk with me.



**Joanne Davis**

I work with children and by making a contribution like that I find it alleviates stress.



**Alicia and David Strayer**

Eating and working out, also working in my metal shop



**Zachary Walker**

Walking around Riverside and playing Pokemon Go and looking at all the sights.



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# JTA board to hear Skyway recommendations

By Lilla Ross  
Resident Community News

Expanding the Skyway to San Marco and Riverside could be among the recommendations submitted to the Jacksonville Transportation at its Dec. 8 board meeting.

For the past year, a subcommittee has been studying how to modernize the 27-year-old people mover system.

Public sentiment is strong for extending the system to Jacksonville's sports complexes, San Marco and Riverside, but there are many variables to consider: should the new cars be elevated or street level, manned or driverless, third rail or battery powered.

Already the driverless cars are sporting a new look – an exterior “wrap” with a blue arrow and the JTA logo – but the technology that was state-of-the-art when the system came on line in the 1990s is now obsolete.

The existing Skyway could last another 50 years with proper maintenance, but parts are no longer available for the 10 driverless trains, said Brad Thoburn, vice president of long-range planning and system development at JTA.

So the JTA subcommittee has been looking at other options including upgrading to modern people mover vehicles, a rapid transit system, smaller cars that could operate on the street or on rail, and the option of a street-level driverless system.

The board also will be looking at expanding routes to Riverside to include Brooklyn Station, 5 Points and Riverside Arts Market; San Marco to include Baptist Medical Center, RiverPlace, Kings Street and The District, when it is built on the Southbank; the stadium complex, and UF Health by way of Main Street.

JTA has been seeking public input through forums, like one Nov. 15 at the downtown library, and an online survey.

However, there's no secret about what the public would like to see happen, Thoburn said. About 83 percent want the Skyway to



go to the stadium complex, 79 percent to Brooklyn and 66 percent to San Marco.

“The next thing people want to know is how are we going to pay for it,” Thoburn said. “We are not there yet. There are a lot of possibilities, including public/private partnerships and grants.”

The original system cost \$182 million and a future system would likely far exceed that.

The toughest challenge facing JTA is trying to see into the future, anticipating technological developments and population growth.

“Technology is rapidly changing, especially the autonomous [driverless] vehicles,” Thoburn said. It's the “vehicle of the future,” with so many unknowns.

Population trends are another unknown. The subcommittee has projected that by 2040 Downtown, Brooklyn and the Southbank could be high-density residential areas with an estimated 50 people per acre.

“We need a broader reach,” Thoburn said.

“The new development [Brooklyn Station] is just beyond our reach.”

The current system provides 1.2 million rides a year, running a 25-mile circuit of Downtown and San Marco on weekdays and on weekends for special events.

Tom and Maureen Hermann, who live in Riverside, ride the Skyway occasionally, mostly to entertain their grandkids.

“I'd like to use it more but I don't know how to access it,” Tom Hermann said. “It's really not on my radar.”

The Hermanns attended a public forum on the Skyway last month to see what was being considered.

If it was easier to access, the Hermanns said they would use it to go to the symphony, Hemming Park, MOCA and, if it were extended, the Baseball Grounds.

Wende Wilson, who lives in 5 Points, said she rarely uses the Skyway, “but I would if it went somewhere I want to go. I would love to sell my car.”

## Free Wi-Fi available on buses

Riding the bus now comes with a perk — free Wi-Fi.

The Jacksonville Transportation Authority is expanding the hotspots to all its fixed-route buses.

To log on, simply select JTA's Wi-Fi network, JTAconnect, and follow the directions. No password is necessary for the public network.

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Wi-Fi was already available on the First Coast Flyer “Green Line” and JTA vehicles, excluding Connexion and the Skyway.

“Wi-Fi allows our customers to manage their cellular phone plans while on board and turn their commute into productive time,” said JTA Chief Executive Officer Nathaniel P. Ford Sr. “We are pleased to offer this enhanced amenity.”

JTA also offers real-time passenger information with NextBus, which gives customers the estimated arrival time of the bus at their stop.

With the app, customers can find out arrival times by calling (904) 242-6490, texting JTAFLA space followed by the bus stop number to 41411, visiting [www.nextbus.com](http://www.nextbus.com) or downloading the NextBus application from the Google Play or Apple App Store.

JTA customers can buy single-ride tickets, one-day or three-day passes with a mobile device using the MyJTA app, available on Google Play or the Apple App Store.

Customers can also purchase fares for the St. Johns River Ferry and Gameday Xpress passes. Visit [www.myjta.com](http://www.myjta.com) for more information.

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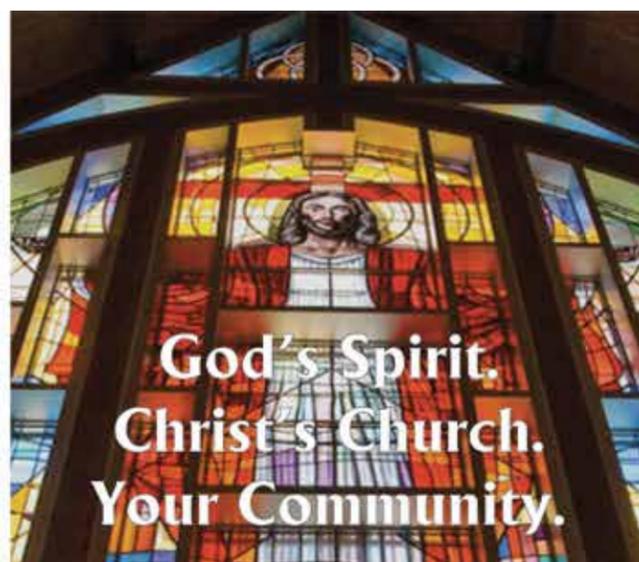
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# Daily's opens second station in San Marco area

Jacksonville Mayor Lenny Curry, City Council President Lori Boyer and several Jacksonville Jaguars football players were on hand as First Coast Energy President and Chief Executive Officer Aubrey Edge celebrated the opening of a second Daily's Dash location in the San Marco area in less than a year.

The official ribbon-cutting ceremony took place at the new location in Miramar Nov. 29 and marked the 16th Daily's Dash location and 29th Daily's convenience store in North Florida.

"I am thrilled to help open the doors and cut the ribbon for a new Daily's location in our city," said Mayor Curry. "Especially for a company that is headquartered locally with more than 1,000 employees in Northeast Florida. Since day one, my team and I have been working hard with our great partners at the State and JAX Chamber to deliver a clear message – Jacksonville is open for business."

As part of the grand-opening festivities, Daily's presented a \$2,500 check to



Cutting the ribbon at the new Daily's Dash location on Hendricks Avenue in Miramar were Daniel Davis, president and CEO of the Jacksonville Chamber of Commerce, Aubrey Edge, president and CEO of First Coast Energy, Lori Boyer, president of the Jacksonville City Council, Jacksonville Mayor Lenny Curry, Brooke Curry, and Jacksonville Jaguar Paul Posluszny.

The Friends of Hendricks, a nonprofit organization comprised of Hendricks Avenue Elementary parents, alumni, and friends, with the intention it would benefit the elementary school as part of the company's ongoing community partnerships with neighborhood schools

and organizations.

"At Daily's, we are committed to giving back to the communities and neighborhoods in which we work and live and are pleased to monetarily contribute to the important efforts of the Friends of Hendricks organization that directly benefits Hendricks Avenue Elementary School," said Edge. "We are proud to be a new member of the Lakewood/San Marco community and are excited to provide our new neighbors with the nicer amenities that all Daily's customers expect and appreciate."

Also, as part of the grand-opening festivities, Jaguars' middle linebacker Paul Posluszny and linebacker Telvin Smith autographed free footballs, which were given to the first 200

children that passed through the doors of the new 5,000 square-foot convenience store. All in attendance had the opportunity to enter contests to win free Daily's coffee and f'real milkshakes for a year as well as a free Daily's Dash lunch for a month.

Last January, First Coast Energy opened its first San Marco location on Atlantic Boulevard. A month earlier, it had acquired the property at 3973-3975 Hendricks Avenue between Dunkin' Donuts and Hendricks Avenue Baptist Church, and began construction soon after.

The new station consists of a traditional Daily's service station with eight fuel pumps and a convenience store with a Dash fast-casual food concession. No car wash is on the site.



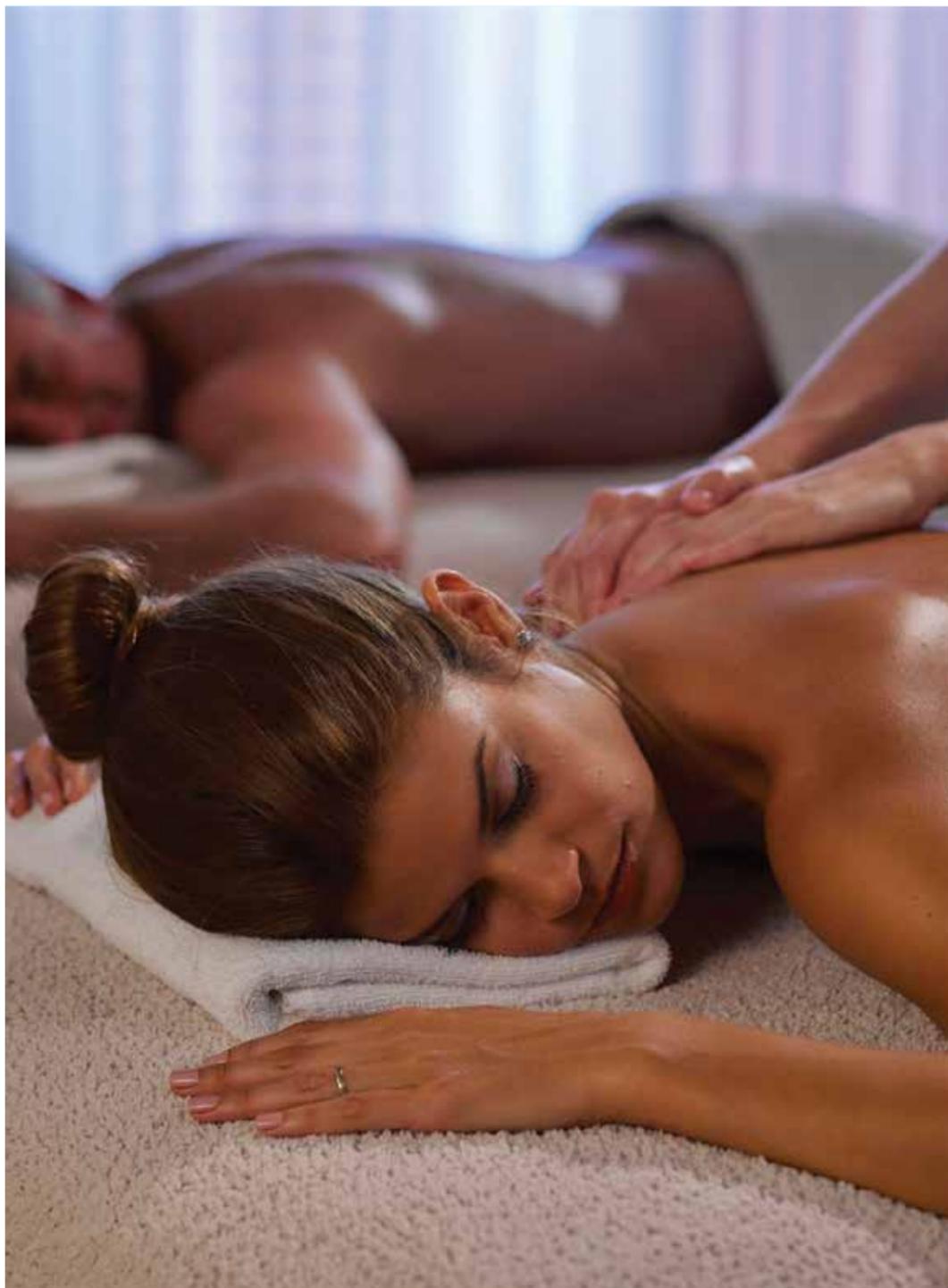
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Katie Lestan, divisional vice president for Walgreen's Health Systems, shakes hands with Baptist Health President and Chief Executive Officer Hugh Greene during a press conference announcing the partnership between the two entities Nov. 16.

## Baptist Health to partner with Walgreens

By Marcia Hodgson  
Resident Community News

Baptist Health made another contribution to its "mission to change healthcare for good" for the residents in the northeast Florida region when it announced a new special partnership with pharmaceutical giant Walgreens during a press conference at its hospital on the Southbank Nov. 16.

As part of the agreement, Baptist's retail pharmacy operations will open under Walgreen's ownership at Baptist Medical Center Jacksonville in January 2017, while pharmacies at the health system's six other locations are planned to close. Continuity will be provided through access to any of the 55 Walgreen's locations in the greater Jacksonville area.

However, Baptist Health's inpatient pharmacies and infusion therapy pharmacy will remain owned and operated by Baptist.

"This is a strategic relationship between the most comprehensive health care system in the region and a long-standing, trusted provider of pharmacy services throughout the community," said Baptist Health President and Chief Executive Officer Hugh Greene. "Together with Walgreens, we are eager to provide value while improving the overall health of the communities in northeast Florida."

In addition to the retail pharmacy component, the partnership with Walgreens also spans four other areas – retail health clinics, care coordination, digital apps and social responsibility, Greene said during the press conference.

Baptist Health will take over and own the clinical practice and operations management of retail health clinics within three Walgreens stores in Jacksonville and northeast Florida. The locations will be in Ponte Vedra, Mandarin and Fleming Island and the transition from Walgreens to Baptist Health is expected to begin in May

2017. Once the transfer is made, the clinics will operate under the name Baptist Health Clinic at Walgreens and will be considered an extension of Baptist Health.

The retail clinics will complement Baptist's extensive primary care network and urgent care partnership with CareSpot, and give consumers improved access to compassionate, affordable, high-quality care due to extended walk-in hours, convenient online scheduling and the option to access a variety of health care services without and appointment.

Baptist Health also plans to take advantage of Walgreen's highly successful digital tools and incentives to help people manage their health. The Walgreen's mobile app is one of the most downloaded retail apps in the country, said Greene, and offers a variety of tools and programs including Balance Rewards, a customer loyalty program that allows consumers to earn points for health-related activities such as walking and running, logging weight, checking blood pressure and receiving vaccinations.

"We believe at Baptist we are going to learn from Walgreens in terms of being more consumer responsive in an era of which that's increasingly important, but also it allows us to do some unique things in interfacing with their tools in the local community," Greene said.

In addition, the two organizations are planning several future community initiatives, he said.

"This is a very good cultural fit," said Greene. "I've been very impressed with the spirit of collaboration that exists from Walgreens' leadership whether it's in Chicago or locally. A true collaborative requires a relationship characterized by commitment, trust and communication. We believe that exists in our relationship with Walgreens and that Walgreens will be an ideal partner to embark on a strategic relationship for the future."

## Lions get dressed for Christmas

Thanks to the efforts of San Marco's Karen McCombs and Benita Boyd, the lions in San Marco Square are all ready for Christmas.

The women, who have taken it upon themselves to adorn the lions with festive garb for the past several years, dressed the trio with collars made of flaming red tulle and tail-lets of red jingle bells on Nov. 19.

Helping with the decorating was Brian Ware of San Marco, who was enlisted by McCombs that morning as he left Starbucks. Thanks to Ware's agility, the collars were properly fitted, and a red jingle bell necklace was also placed around the neck of the statue of a small boy, which rests on the side of San Marco Boulevard near the Beach Diner. Years ago, the statue was donated by Boyd and her brother, Jimmy, as was one of the three lions.



Brian Ware, Benita Boyd and Karen McCombs take a rest after dressing up the Lions in San Marco Square Nov. 19.

*"At Christmas, all roads lead home..."*  
Marjorie Holmes

*Wishing you the happiest of holidays and a bright New Year!*  
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**1117 RIVIERA ST - \$333,000**

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**4385 WORTH DR EAST - \$369,975**

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**1342 JEAN CT - \$320,000**

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# Art in the heart of giving

*Nonprofit ballet donates over half a million dollars to other charities in 25 years*

*By Peggy Harrell Jennings  
Resident Community News*

When Community Nutcracker, Inc. presents its 25th annual “The Nutcracker Ballet” performances this month, the nonprofit can look forward to taking another bow on a different sort of stage.

Each year since its premiere in 1992, Community Nutcracker has donated the proceeds from the production of the beloved Christmas ballet to a variety of local charities – showing a broader audience the power of art in the heart of giving.

By bringing community hearts together to enjoy the combined art of ballet and benevolence, the philanthropic foundation of Community Nutcracker has spread the warmth of Christmas to more than 200,000 ticket holders over the past 25 years, but also holds a free Community Service Night performance for almost 2,000 members of various Jacksonville agencies, organizations, nonprofits and nursing homes.

“Not only do we produce the wonderful ‘Nutcracker Ballet,’ sharing the talents of our artistic directors and dancers to enhance the arts community, we spread our success further by supporting a varied group of locally-based nonprofit organizations through direct donations,” said Helen Albee, president of



Community Nutcracker, Inc., during the March 2016 presentation of checks to nine local charities. “We are honored to be able to continue both of these traditions as we enter our 25th year.”

The \$500 investment made by five talented, determined choreographers – Dulce Anaya and Beth Marks, both of St. Nicholas, Debbie Peters of Murray Hill, Bambi Philips, formerly of Ortega,

and Mark Spivak of Mandarin – has grown a thousand fold in donations to other local nonprofits.

Community Nutcracker takes it second bow each year at its annual check presentations at Dreams Come True of Jacksonville, which has partnered with the ballet company for more than 10 years to bring joy and comfort to children battling life-threatening illnesses.

## SUMC sponsors Angel Tree Program

Once again the folks at Southside United Methodist Church are planning to play Santa to several local families with children at Hendricks Avenue Elementary School.

In conjunction with its Hendricks Avenue Partnership Initiative (HAPI), church members are kicking off its Christmas Angel Tree project again this year. The school provides anonymous profiles of families in need with clothing sizes, gender and gift suggestion for each child so that church members and other families in the community can provide them with presents for their children.

From monetary donations, church members also provide a luscious Christmas dinner with all the trimmings to each family. Each child on the list receives a new outfit, special gift and shoes, according to Amy Franks, director of women’s outreach.

“On the Sunday before Christmas our Sanctuary is awash with beautifully wrapped gifts which are prayed over and delivered, with the meal, on Christmas Eve to the families,” said Jeanette Yates, communications director.

Anyone interested in sponsoring a family or helping to deliver meals and gifts should contact the church at (904) 396-2676.



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# 36th Annual Red Rose Ball chairs announced



Betsy and Steven Siegel, M.D., Nanette and David McInnes, M.D., Paula and Michael Phelan, M.D.

Save the date for Friday, Feb. 3, 2017. St. Vincent's HealthCare's 36th Annual Red Rose Ball will be in good hands under the chairmanship of Betsy and Steven Siegel, M.D., Nanette and David McInnes, M.D., and Paula and Michael Phelan, M.D.

Dr. Siegel has been a practicing hematologist and oncologist with Cancer Specialists of North Florida for 28 years. Betsy has served on St. Vincent's Foundation special event committees for 16 years.

Dr. McInnes has held the role of Medical Director of St. Vincent's Family Medicine Center since 2002, and is Program Director of the Family Medicine Residency Program. Nanette is an accomplished interior designer and a passionate horsewoman, winning the World Championship in her category at the 2016 Tennessee Walking Horse National Celebration.

Dr. Phelan served as chair of the Physicians Giving Society's Physician's Cup Golf Classic in 2006 and 2016. He has practiced at St. Vincent's for 38 years in obstetrics and gynecology, while Paula has worked there for 32 years as a certified nurse midwife. The Phelans served as Red Rose Ball chairs in 2003.



Jacob Lopez, PGA Tour Golfer Jim Furyk, Raia Adams and Furyk's wife, Tabitha. Furyk and his wife were on hand to present a \$2 million check to Baptist Health and Wolfson Children's Hospital on behalf of The Player's Championship to benefit child health, wellness and injury prevention programming at The Player's Center for Child Health at Wolfson Children's Hospital.

# The Players Championship Center at Wolfson receives \$2 million for endowment

By Marcia Hodgson  
Resident Community News

PGA Tour Golfer Jim Furyk and his wife, Tabitha, who are building a home in San Marco, were on hand Nov. 21 along with The Players Championship Executive Director Matt Rapp and the Red Coats, to present a \$2 million check to Wolfson Children's Hospital to help further endow child health, wellness and injury prevention programming at The Players Center for Child Health within the children's facility.

The presentation took place in The Players Championship Playroom at Wolfson Children's Hospital where Furyk presented the check to Baptist Health President and Chief Executive Officer Hugh Greene and Wolfson Children's Hospital President Michael Aubin.

The gift will be matched at 150 percent through \$3 million in funds supplied by Baptist Health bringing the actual value of the contribution to \$5 million, said Aubin.

"Funding is one of the things we always worry about because funding is always variable," Aubin said after the presentation, adding he was relieved by the gift because it means that the Center and its child health, wellness and injury prevention programs will be able to remain in perpetuity. "This gift will provide the core funding to keep it alive and well forever," he said. "When we started it, the goal was to get the program going and

to get it endowed so it would be able to keep going. We hope others will step forward. Any contribution to the fund in the next year and a half will be matched at 150 percent"

The gift is the second sizeable donation The Players Championship has made toward the Center that bears its name. Its original gift of \$1 million was made in 2011 and helped establish the Center.

In addition to Aubin and the Furyks, also at the presentation were Megan Denk, director of The Players Championship Center, several Center staff members and two children who have benefited under the Center's programs, Raia Adams, who suffers from asthma and Jacob Lopez, who incurred a traumatic brain injury and is now a champion for child passenger seat safety.

"The goal of The Players Center for Child Health is to keep kids out of the hospital. We do it through prevention, advocacy and access to care," said Denk. "This gift to our endowment will allow us to improve the health, wellness of families in the community in perpetuity."

In the past five years that The Players Center has been in existence, it has impacted the lives of more than 100,000 children and families through community and parent education, childhood injury prevention, wellness and an assess-to-care program. The new gift will enable The Players Center for Child Health to sustain current programs and expand them to more kids in the region.

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# HAE crossing guard learns what she means to community

By Marcia Hodgson  
Resident Community News

Over the years, Hendricks Avenue Elementary Crossing Guard Maxine Brown has lived through a lot of trials and tribulations – cancer being one – but it wasn't until she encountered a brain tumor in October that she fully realized how precious she is to the San Marco families she serves each day.

After receiving her diagnosis earlier this fall, Brown let a few parents know her cerebral surgery would take place Oct. 24 and that October 20 would be the last day she would help guide the kids across Old San Jose Boulevard in the early morning and after school.

"She let us know a couple of weeks before," said Kit Rossi of San Marco. "A bunch of us neighborhood moms wanted to do something for her to help her out."

At first the HAE parents discussed setting up a meal train and giving her gift cards, but then realized a more meaningful gift would be to aid her financially, so they set up a Go Fund Me account to help with her medical expenses.

"We will be setting up some meals for her, and I know she will love cards and treats from the kids as well. But I really think she will benefit most from financial help with medical bills. This will be such a tangible outpouring of love from her community that will speak volumes to her heart," Rossi wrote on the Go Fund Me account.

The account was established Oct. 16 with a goal to raise \$5,000. In less than a week, the goal was met, and after a month, 102 neighborhood donors have pledged to help, surpassing the goal with a total of \$5,698.

"It was just amazing. The money came from Hendricks Avenue Elementary families and so many others that just know her from driving by," Rossi said. "Even if you don't have a child at school, everybody knows and loves Mrs. Brown."

Assisting Rossi with the fundraising plans were Leighton Davis, Amy Franks, Sarah Troup and Emily Dostie. HAE Coach Shannon McGlynn also helped by spreading the word among the faculty and staff at school, Rossi said.

"I've been through so much – back surgery, breast surgery, and I lost my only daughter (and only child) when she was 25. She had a 19-month old baby and I raised her," Brown recalled in a telephone interview from her St. Nicholas home Nov. 17. The surgery was successful and the tumor benign, she said, adding it is her hope to recover quickly



Henry Cosper, Grant Tedder, Max Berzenyi, Parker Roberson, Meredith Berzenyi, Peyton Franks, Colin Shea and Leighton Dostie join Maxine Brown curbside behind Hendricks Avenue Elementary School.

*"Maxine has been there seven years. We're so blessed to have her because she knows every kid, and if someone doesn't show up she calls to inquire if they are okay. She makes every mom feel like there is another parent there parenting their kid." — Amy Franks*

enough to be back at her post before Christmas break.

"I'm just so blessed. God has truly blessed me. This just took me unawares," she said about the monetary gift. "I never expected it. Who would think this would happen when I just stand up and wave at somebody and smile? It never dawned on me that something like this would happen to me of all people. People are so good. I've had so many bad things happen to me, I never thought anything good like this would happen. I didn't realize the kids love me like they do, and then the parents do, too," she said.

"One of a kind" is how Amy Franks, an HAE parent who lives across Old San Jose Boulevard from the school, describes Brown. "Maxine has been there seven years. We're so blessed to have her because she knows every kid, and if someone doesn't show up she calls to inquire if they are okay. She makes every mom feel like there is another parent there

parenting their kid," Franks said. "She remembers the kids' birthdays, and gives them balloons and treats on holidays, and we know it is tough because surely she is on a limited income. She loves the kids, and she loves to see them light up, and we love to see her devotion there," Franks continued. "She does her job because she loves it. She does it for the children."

The fact that Brown was a very special patient was immediately apparent to Baptist Hospital Jacksonville President Michael Mayo, who was notified by one of his neighbors that Brown would be admitted to Baptist for her surgery.

"Almost every day on my way to work I go by the school and usually it is early, before the kids and their parents begin to arrive, and she's out there with the friendliness she always exhibits," said Mayo. "She waves and I wave, so I kind of knew her, not by name but by presence. When Suzanne Honeycutt called Jennifer, my wife, to alert me of her situation, I went by to check on her. I visited her post operatively after her procedure. I was really amazed at her remarkable recovery," he said, adding that he prayed with her and gave her his business card with cell phone number in case any issues arose.

"When you see someone every day, you don't always pay that close attention, but now when I go by and she is not there, I think about her. She's a real fixture in the community, and, apparently, she's very good with the children and is especially kind and sensitive," he said. "When I see her again, I may roll down my window, or better yet, just stop and reintroduce myself."

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# Flying Iguana

*continued from page 1*

“Potential buyers would like to put a restaurant in that space, but there is too much opposition,” he said.

Owner of the popular Al's Pizza chain, which has locations throughout Jacksonville, Mansur's plan to install a Flying Iguana Taqueria and Tequila bar, similar to the one he owns in the Beaches Town Center, was marked with controversy from the start.

Mansur had applied to the city's Planning Commission for a liquor license and a waiver to reduce the required distance

from a church from 500 feet to 111. Through his lawyer, Paul Harden, he had been working to acquire enough parking to make his application palatable to the city, while requesting a deviation to reduce the minimum number of required off-street parking spaces from 43 to eight. Zoning regulations required that he provide at least 43 spaces for his customers to use.

In a town meeting sponsored by the San Marco Preservation Society July 14, local residents, business owners and representatives from neighboring Southside Baptist Church debated the parking issues a restaurant in that location would create. During the meeting, Harden had said he was negotiating with two off-site parking lots in the San Marco area so Mansur could provide a valet service for the restaurant. At that time, Harden declined to specify which parking lots were being considered, and without more specificity, the Preservation Society had requested another town meeting be held so Harden could return to explain the details of Mansur's plan to the community once they had become clear.

“I decided to pass on this site because of the parking issue. It became too costly to rent parking lots and use a valet service. It just didn't make financial sense. I am still interested in San Marco, but the Square is just complicated with the new parking ordinance,” Mansur said in an email. “I love the San Marco neighborhood and still want to be there in the future, and I'm looking to work with the new development that's coming. It was a lot of hurdles to do a location in the Square, and if there is no new business coming there, it's just not going to grow. I think some of the residents just wanted it that way, and there is nothing wrong with that. I

hope to be there soon in a different location,” he said.

LeAnna Cumber, president of the San Marco Preservation Society, said her board never knew enough about Mansur's parking plans to offer a solution or take a stand on the issue. “We were in fact-finding mode, and we never got to the point where we were prepared to come out for or against the development,” she said. “Our board was split. As an organization, we are always ready to discuss potential development. Our goal is to work to help find a solution everyone can work with.”

Meanwhile, many members of the San Marco Merchants Association were very supportive of having the Flying Iguana come into the Square and sorry when they heard Mansur decided not to go through with his plans.

“The news that Flying Iguana elected not to come to San Marco was very disappointing,” said SMMA President Anita Vining. “The San Marco Merchants Association represents merchants and totally supports new business. The parking situation for some was a dilemma, but parking is plentiful in San Marco. There are only certain times of the day that one may park further away from their destination than they would at other times.” The merchants were in hopes that a shared valet for the entire Square would help to resolve Flying Iguana parking concerns and that is a project the SMMA continues to explore, she said.

One group that was not sorry to see Mansur withdraw his application were the folks at Southside Baptist Church, who opposed the idea of having a large eatery at that location from its inception. As the restaurant was to be in the shadow of the church, Southside Baptist intended to fight its request for a liquor license. The church was so concerned Flying

Iguana customers would fill up its San Marco Place parking lot on Sundays, Wednesday evenings and when it had special events, such as weddings and funerals, it had considered charging a fee for parking and hiring a parking management company to oversee the lot. Now that Mansur has nixed the idea of moving to the Square, the church no longer plans to change its parking lot arrangement with the community, said Southside Senior Pastor Rev. Dr. Gary Webber.

“We support business, but not that business,” he said, noting the church recently arranged to allow the new Bold Bean Coffee House to use the lot behind its edifice adjacent to Hendricks Avenue during the times church was not in session or having a special event.

“Southside Baptist is honored to be a part of this community, and we are always seeking ways to make San Marco a better place for the people who live, work, or visit here,” said Webber in an email. “Sharing our parking with local businesses is just one way we hope to serve people in San Marco. Until the recent controversy concerning the proposal of a tequila bar, whose parking lot usage would have gone outside the scope of our PUD (Planned Unit Development), I have not been aware of any problems with our policy of shared parking. We appreciate the way local residents and merchants have supported our desire to protect our ability to use our parking lot for church events and believe their support is evidence of the good will that exists among the merchants, residents and patrons of the square. The recent addition of Bold Bean Coffee is just the latest of many examples of our openness and commitment to partner with local businesses for the good of our community.”

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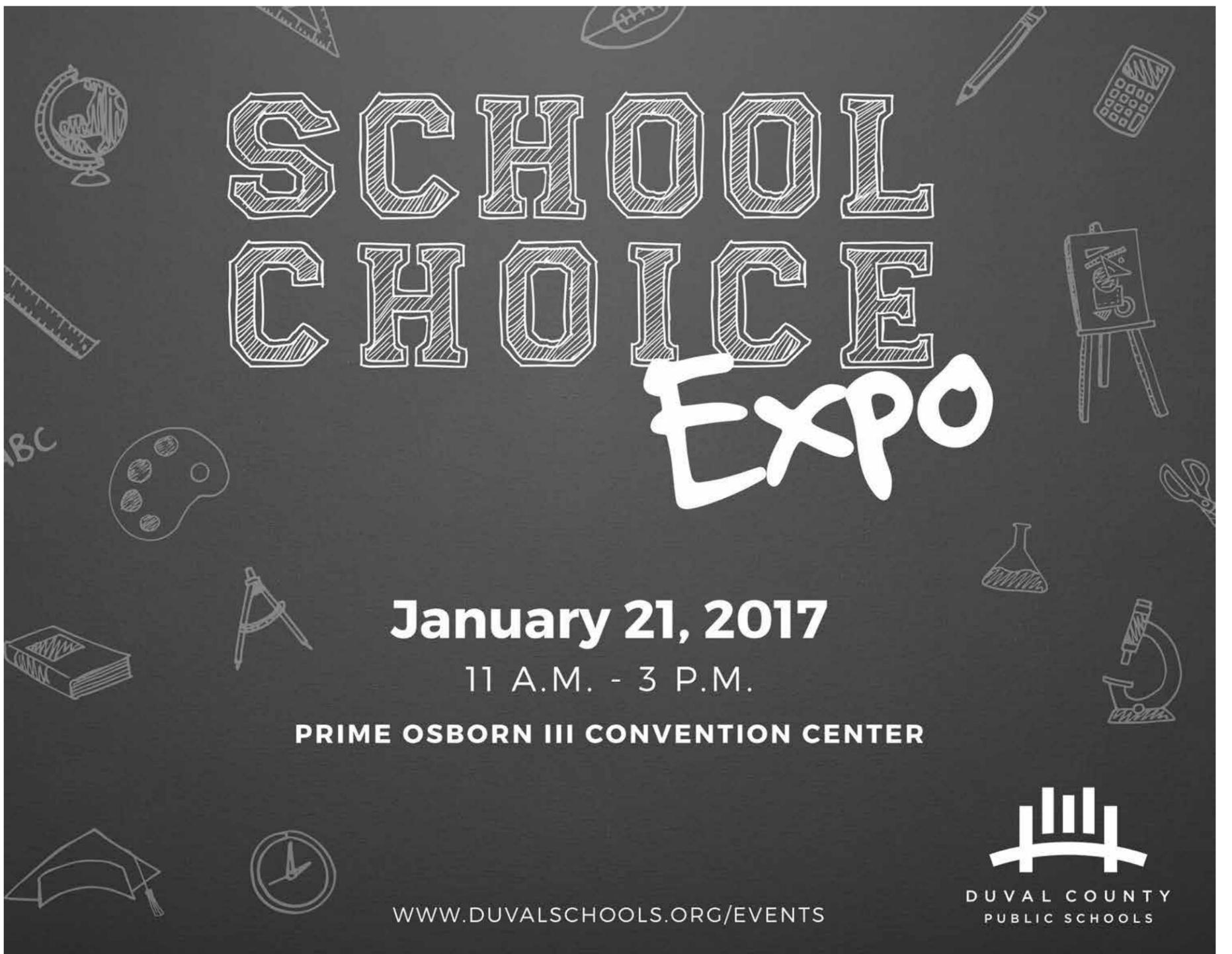
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# MOVERS & SHAKERS



Rula Carr with gallery manager Katrina Bryant

## Boutique owner opens new art gallery

Rula Carr, owner of The Snob in San Marco, has opened The Vault@1930, an art gallery located at 1930 San Marco Blvd. The gallery will make its home in the original site of her clothing boutique, which moved a few doors down to 1990 San Marco Blvd. after a lightning strike nearly 20 years ago. The new gallery, managed by Katrina Bryant, will feature mostly local artists as well as unique furniture art.

## Arts advocate honored with painting for new children's behavioral center



Susan Greene and CAP President and CEO Rev. Kimberly Hyatt

At the Oct. 27 grand opening of the Baptist Behavioral Children's Center at Wolfson Children's Hospital, San Jose resident Susan Greene was honored with an original painting to be displayed at the new center. Greene has served on the Cathedral Arts Project board of directors for 10 years and is a vocal advocate for the benefits of arts education.

The painting was created by a young

man in CAP's program in the Juvenile Justice System. Local artist Tony Rodrigues leads the class at the John E. Goode Pre-Trial Detention Facility, challenging the students to express their thoughts and feelings through the language of paint and color.

The new center specializes in the unique needs of children and adolescents with behavioral health issues.

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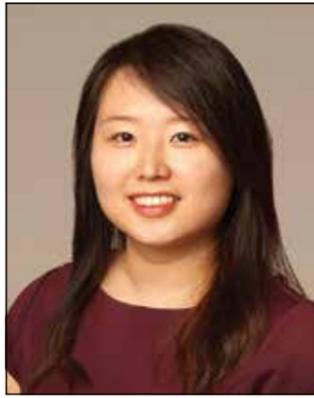
## Local groomer ranked in top eight percent

Morgan Murphy of Groomingdales Dog Salon, 4424 Hendricks Ave., was ranked in the top 16 out of 205 grooming shops in Northeast Florida by expertise.com. Five criteria were used for the rankings: reputation, credibility, experience, availability and professionalism. Murphy opened her salon in October 2014.

# Jax Children's Chorus adds to staff



Marshaun Hymon



Chohee Kim



Millicent "Penny" Sylvester



Keturah Robison



Katy Polk



Melissa Barnes



Kim Clayton



Marissa Dickerson

As the Jacksonville Children's Chorus tunes up for its 2016-2017 season of inspiring excellence in young singers, Darren Dailey and Carolyn Bell Audije announced new staff and/or assignments. Of the eight, Ortega newcomer Marissa Dickerson was hired as assistant conductor for the lyric and training choirs. Chohee Kim, of San Marco, is accompanist for both the Chorus and Florida State College Jacksonville. She holds the position of

organist at Southside United Methodist Church as well.

The other six include Marshaun Hymon, interim assistant conductor for the Young Men's Chorus; Millicent "Penny" Sylvester, Lyric Choir conductor; Keturah Robison, assistant choreographer; Katy Polk, program coordinator and voice instructor; Melissa Barnes, assistant conductor for concert and touring choirs, and Kim Clayton, new to staff as accompanist.



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## New signage for MOSH, just in time for 75th Anniversary



The Harbinger Sign Company's staff of installers worked hard to complete the new signage on the front façade of the Museum of Science and History (MOSH). Just prior to the museum's anniversary party, the finishing touches were put on the new, redesigned exterior signage.

The installation was completed just in time for the MOSH BASH, the 75th Anniversary party for patrons and proud supporters. Celebrating years of

education, exploration and discovery for area youth and visitors from around the globe, the anniversary party delivered a good time for families, young professionals and board members.

The big bash took place Nov. 19 and included fire dancers, Mario Kart in the Planetarium, Sweet Pete's Science of Candy, and much more. A late-evening rooftop after-party played out under the stars until midnight.



Bert Brown, Delores Barr Weaver, Ben and Sarah Brown

## Weaver supports North Florida School of Special Education with gift

Delores Barr Weaver, of Riverside, was honored at the North Florida School of Special Education as its "Angel of the Woods" for kicking off the school's capital campaign with a million-dollar gift from the Delores Barr Weaver Foundation.

Weaver and other generous donors have already helped the campaign reach one-third of its \$6 million goal to extend the campus, which will include a new equestrian center named the Delores Barr Weaver Therapeutic Equestrian Center.

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## Women's Giving Alliance introduces Class of 2017

Eighteen young professional women were named to the 2017 Class of the Delores Barr Weaver Fellows program at the Women's Giving Alliance. The program offers young women from Northeast Florida the opportunity to become full members through a shared financial arrangement for four years, made possible by funding from the Delores Barr Weaver Fund.

The Class of 2017 includes Allishia Bauman, Molly Davidson, Poppy Decunto, Stephanie Doran, Aidee Chavez Frescas, Jennifer Earnest, Moné Holder, Imani D. Hope, Laura Lothman Lambert, Marina Martin, Joni A. Poitier, Lauren Purdy, Amy Rice, Jamie Rich, Jacqueline Rudloff, TriciaRae Stancato, Annie Tutt and Mollie Williams.

## Grants awarded to nonprofits working with mental health issues

The Women's Giving Alliance announced the six recipients of its 2016 grants, which total \$432,000. Each nonprofit provides mental health services to women and girls in Northeast Florida, and are the final recipients of a five-year research-based focus in which nearly \$2 million has been given to 17 agencies.

The 2016 grantees include the Betty Griffin Center (\$100,000) for the Hope in Recovery program; the Delores Barr Weaver Policy Center (\$100,000) to create a model that reduces the use of

the juvenile justice system as a mental health provider for girls; Hubbard House (\$100,000) for the RISE! program; Jewish Family & Community Services (\$100,000) for sliding fee scale mental health counseling; Volunteers in Medicine (\$22,000) for the Healing the Mind, Body, Heart and Soul program; and the Nonprofit Center of Northeast Florida (\$10,000) to deliver an impact evaluation report for grantees working in the mental health field. Baptist Health will match the report funding.



Barbara Harrell



Richard Sisisky

## The Community Foundation names two new trustees

Barbara Harrell, of Granada, and Richard Sisisky, of Epping Forest, will join The Community Foundation for Northeast Florida as members of its board of trustees. They replace Bill Brinton and Chuck Hyman, who have served three three-year terms.

Harrell, a founding member and past president of The Women's Giving Alliance, is a longtime community activist and volunteer. Named a 2011 honoree of the Mayor's Commission on the Status of Women, Harrell served as chair of the Mayor's Education Council and was campaign chair for the 1987 community effort to pass a \$199 million referendum to build and renovate public schools. She was a trustee of The Cummer Museum of Art and Gardens and also served on the boards of the Jacksonville Housing

and Community Development Commission, the Daniel Foundation and JCCI.

Sisisky, president and owner of The Shircliff & Sisisky Company, has also served in numerous community leadership positions for three decades. He is founding chair of the Jacksonville Children's Commission and the Public Policy Institute of Jacksonville University. Sisisky received the 1999 Humanitarian Award of the National Council for Community and Justice, and was the 2015 Florida Hospital Association Trustee of the Year. He has served on a variety of boards, including Baptist Health Systems, The Bolles School, United Way of Northeast Florida, the Jewish Federation of Jacksonville and the Jewish Foundation of Jacksonville.

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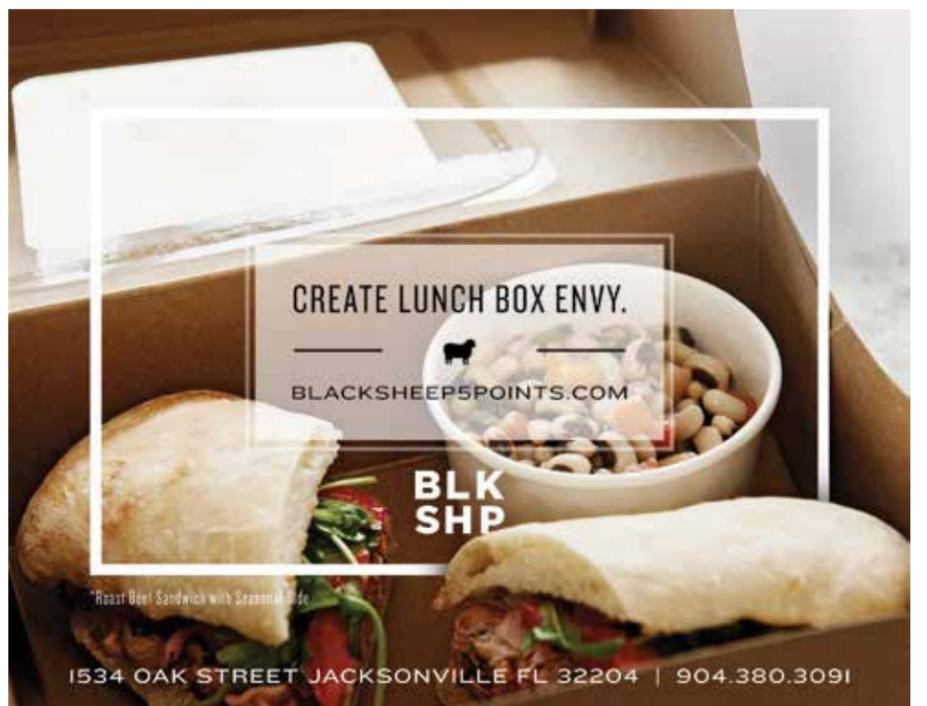
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# Fertility doctors to open antique store on Hendricks Avenue

## Medical museum may find home in San Marco

By Marcia Hodgson  
Resident Community News

What was once a hobby is now turning into a business for two fertility doctors, an OB-GYN specialist and their friends.

Longtime San Marco residents, Dr. Michael Fox and his wife, Dr. Felicia Fox, an OB-GYN at Baptist Hospital, are joining with Fox's fertility clinic partner, Dr. Chris Lipari and his wife, Grace, of Avondale, to start a new antiques business on Hendricks Avenue.

Also partnering in the project are their Avondale friends, Andy Baker and his wife, Susan, who works as a fertility nurse with Fox and Lipari at their clinic in Baymeadows. "We're all kind of a big family," Fox said.

In early January, the group plans to open The Antique Fox with Southern Grace in a building currently under renovation at 3216 Hendricks Avenue across Inwood Terrace from the Metro Diner.

More than just a typical antiques market, the new store will sell period pieces acquired from auctions and estate sales over the years by Dr. Fox and his wife, as well be a place for vendors and others from the community to sell their wares on consignment. Baker, an Avondale antiques dealer, who is a "walking encyclopedia" of information on period furniture and other collectables, will manage the business and be available to do evaluations and offer advice on selling goods over eBay, said Fox. "He will be the backbone of the site," he said.

The group chose the location due to the building's exposure on Hendricks Avenue, Fox said. "About a third of the people going to work in downtown Jacksonville go right by there in the morning," he said. "We're hoping to capitalize on that."

Grace Lipari, who has sold refurbished



Andy Baker, Dr. Michael Fox, Dr. Felicia Fox, Caden Lipari, Grace Lipari, Dr. Chris Lipari and Sophia Lipari

furniture in a booth at Southern Crossing Antique Mall in Riverside, will now sell her wares in the new shop. "I want to keep it in the family," she said. "I like to take older pieces that may be broken or have no purpose anymore and revamp them into something else."

In addition to offering classes in collecting and selling antiques, Fox said he hopes the shop will develop a relationship with interior designers in the area. "We're going to try to change up the whole business format and not just be another antique mall," Fox said.

The rectangular storefront was formerly home to a travel agency, but has lain vacant for several years, said Fox, who along with the Liparis, purchased the space from Lupo Properties in April 2015 for \$100,000, according to Jacksonville Property Appraiser's records.

Although the partners may eventually apply to have the building's zoning designation changed, it is currently zoned CRO (commercial, residential and office), allowing for only 50 percent of its space to be used for retail, he said. In the approximately 4,000 square-foot building, a third of the space will be used for storage and approximately 20 percent may be used

as a medical museum, he said.

Because Jacksonville is becoming a medical destination in the Southeast and there is no museum that accommodates medical antiquities, Fox said his new store may become a place where patrons can view antique medical items such as instruments, devices, cabinets and exam tables.

"We'd like to have a place to showcase these things because there is such an interest in medicine in Jacksonville," he said. "I have many pieces now, and the idea is for any retiring physicians who might want to donate things, or possibly the hospitals if they are getting rid of equipment, we will be able to provide an outlet for that," Fox said.

Included in the store will be a "triplets corner" where the Fox's "spontaneous" triad – 10-year old Maddox, Millicent and Magnolia – will join the Lipari children, 12-year-old Sophia and 10-year-old Caden, in selling things they have made. Sophia Lipari is already an entrepreneur having started a beaded jewelry business, The Palm and Pine, on Etsy.com with her North Carolina friend, Caida Stanelle, who formerly lived in Riverside.

The upcoming opening of The Antique Fox is the realization of a dream, Fox said. "I've always wanted to be in the antiques business," he said, adding his mother and grandmother instilled in him a love for heirloom furniture at an early age. In his childhood home, "every piece of furniture was an antique," he said.

"My mother taught me about wood and how to refinish it. She often reupholstered pieces," he recalled, adding as a small child he was initiated into the art of negotiating for antiques by his maternal grandmother.

"She would take me to the beauty parlor and afterward we would visit the antique store where she would fall in love with a piece and put a ridiculously low offer on it. We go back every week and see the piece and eventually they would cave in and let her have it," he recalled.

Fox said having the store will provide him the space to keep collecting antiques. "At home we were running out of space for everything. Now if we go somewhere we can buy more things," he said. "My wife and I have talked about it for years, and now we are finally doing something."

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# Decades of donations raise millions for children's hospital



Women's Board Founder Ellen Cavert with Michael Aubin, president of Wolfson Children's Hospital

The Women's Board of Wolfson Children's Hospital held its annual fall gathering at the Ortega home of philanthropist Betsy Lovett. Many of the nearly 400 members enjoyed the riverfront ambience Nov. 3 as they celebrated two significant milestones in raising funds and awareness for the hospital:

the 40th anniversary of the Arts & Antiques Show, Dec. 2-4, and the 25th anniversary of the Florida Forum. Hospital president Michael Aubin thanked the women for the tremendous support and millions of dollars they have given Wolfson Children's Hospital for the past 43 years.



Cathy Watkiss, Paula Margiotta, Linda Street



Susie Miller, Karen Franklin, Ellen Jensen



Janet Reagor, Sally Parsons





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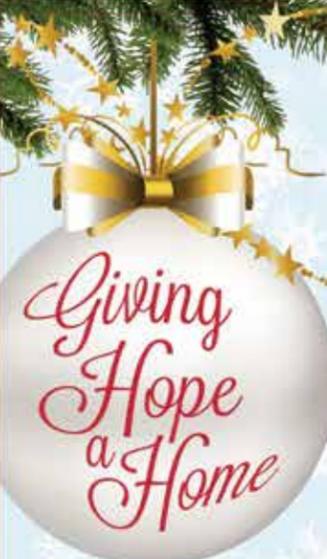
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Josh and Melissa Scobee



Karen Tutwiler and Mike Hartley

## Matthew delays Taste of Golf 'friend-raiser'

Although Hurricane Matthew caused The First Tee of North Florida to postpone its 11th annual Taste of Golf fundraiser, the delay was no problem for 600 donors and supporters.

Held Nov. 3 at TPC Sawgrass Clubhouse, the 'friend-raiser' included live music from the Charlie Walker Band, a silent auction with a variety of golf packages, and great food in an elegant setting, served by chefs from TPC Sawgrass, San Jose Country Club, the Ponte Vedra Inn & Club, Hidden

Hills Country Club, Deerwood Country Club, Sawgrass Country Club, The River Club, The Lodge & Club, Jacksonville Golf & Country Club, Epping Forest Yacht and Country Club, and Hammock Beach Golf & Spa Resort.

The annual benefit helps The First Tee impact the lives of young people through educational programs that build character, instill life-enhancing values and promote healthy choices through the game of golf.



Mark Austin and Robert Minton



Kerry Murphy with Wendy and Scott Hamilton

## Churches band together to do community service

More than 60 members of six area churches fanned out across Jacksonville Nov. 19 to do good works for the community as part of Go Jax, a one-day opportunity to serve together in the name of Jesus.

Church-goers from South Jacksonville Presbyterian Church, Southside Baptist Church, TheCity Church in San Marco, Southside Assembly of God, Fort Caroline Baptist Church and the Closer to Love Ministry enjoyed a kick-off celebration at South Jacksonville Presbyterian Nov. 18, where each

worker was assigned a project at one of five locations.

Early Nov. 19, Go Jax workers assisted the community by doing several projects throughout the community including landscaping projects at the Florida Baptist Children's Home; cleaning and shoring up a retention wall at The Pulse Ministries on Spring Park Road; giving out bottles of water and granola bars to the homeless in Hemming Park; and painting, carpentry and organization at Kim's Open Door Ministry in Spring Park.



Rev. Dr. Bruce Hedgepeth of South Jacksonville Presbyterian Church joins Pastor Ed Wolanski of The Pulse Ministries and Ron Gilliard of Southside Baptist Church in fixing a retaining wall near the ministries headquarters on Spring Park Road as part of the Go Jax event Nov. 19.



Go Jax workers Abby Webber and Perrin Lasonde of Southside Baptist Church sort toys at Kim's Open Door Ministry in Spring Park Nov. 19.



Elizabeth Hill of San Marco painted some rooms at Kim's Open Door Ministry in Spring Park Nov. 19.

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# Volunteers in Medicine honors community leaders



Six of the 2017 Women with Heart Honorees Tracy Williams, Helen Morse, Paula Liang, The Very Reverend Kate Moorehead, Nicole Thomas, and Lisa Weatherby. Not pictured: Aimee Boggs, Dr. Annie Egan, Representative Mia Jones, Kathryn Pearson Peyton, and Susan Towler.

Eleven “women with heart” have been chosen to share a diamond heart-shaped pendant, designed by Beard’s Jewelry, to wear as a conversation starter about the importance of Volunteers in Medicine.

Lisa Weatherby, The Very Reverend Kate Moorehead, Aimee Boggs, Paula Liang, Helen Morse, Susan Towler, Nicole Thomas, Tracy Williams, Representative Mia Jones, Dr. Annie Egan and Kathryn Pearson Peyton will take turns wearing the 14-karat white gold pendant necklace containing 20 diamonds with a total weight of two carats. Each “Woman With Heart”

honoree will wear the necklace for a month at special philanthropic events they personally design.

The women will use the pendant to share the story of Volunteers in Medicine, its unique volunteer service model, and the often overlooked vulnerable, working and uninsured individuals and families that are served at the free downtown clinic.

“Volunteers in Medicine’s downtown clinic and its impressive cadre of medical and non-clinical volunteers provide an invaluable service to our community,” said John Lupo, owner of Beard’s Jewelry.



Robin Robinson of the Jacksonville Historical Society addresses the crowd Nov. 16 at Preservation Hall during a talk on San Marco history, sponsored by the San Marco Preservation Society.

# Historian discusses San Marco History at wine and cheese event

Historian Robin Robinson of the Jacksonville Historical Society allowed listeners to step back into the history of South Jacksonville during a wine and cheese “Happy Hour” event sponsored by the San Marco Preservation Society at Preservation Hall Nov. 16.

During her talk, which was part of SMPS’s new speaker series, Robinson discussed the impact the St. Johns River and specifically the former St. Johns River Bridge (now the Acosta Bridge) had on the development of South Jacksonville.

“The bridge brought a lot of changes because it gave people the opportunity to bring cars further south,” she said, in a telephone interview, adding that in the late 1800s Jacksonville was the biggest winter resort in the United States until the St. Johns

River Bridge and Henry Flagler’s railroad bridge were built. Soon after, tourists chose to go further south for their winter retreats. “It was Duval County’s gift to the State of Florida,” she said, noting it helped feed the Florida land boom at that time.

Robinson also discussed the importance of San Marco and San Jose in Jacksonville’s history and shared a slide show which included past, present and future photos of the East San Marco property at the corner of Atlantic Boulevard and Hendricks Avenue. In the past, the property was home to the American National Bank, she said. Presently it is a vacant lot, but a future rendering promises it to become a multi-use residential and commercial center, slated to be built in the coming months.

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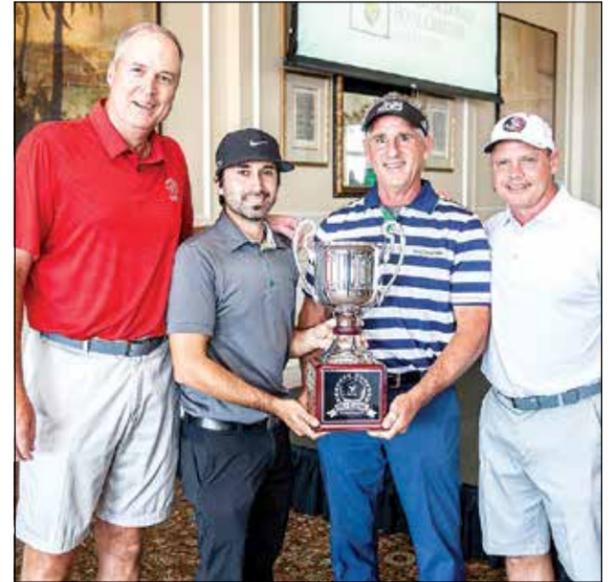
# 'Home away from home' gains \$140,000 in support



Tim Connolly (Golf Committee member), Keifer O'Connor (Golf Committee member and Red Shoe Crew Chair), Brent Martineau, Joe Ferrara



Garry Redig (Fields Auto Group), Diane Boyle, Peter Kuchar (board member and Golf Committee Chair), Blair Sharpe (Fields Auto Group)



Sven Kessler (PGA Tour), Pat Velasquez (PGA Tour), Chris Quinn (Skechers), David Desmond (PGA Tour)

## Lexus dealers unite to fight breast cancer



Dan Glenn, John Sniffen, Jack Griego, Darryl Wilder, B.J. Morris

The 15th annual Lexus Champions for Charity Golf Tournament produced another large donation to help promote breast health and battle breast cancer in Northeast Florida.

Sponsored by Lexus of Jacksonville and Lexus of Orange Park, the tournament was held Oct. 24 at the San Jose Country Club with all of the proceeds benefiting the UF Health Breast Center – Jacksonville. Organizers estimate that approximately

\$100,000 was raised this year to help the program. Proceeds from previous tournaments have supported the purchase of lifesaving equipment at UF Health Jacksonville to help diagnose and fight breast cancer.

The tournament, created by the RITA (Research Is The Answer) Foundation, is the annual fundraiser for the UF Health Breast Center– Jacksonville and prior to this year's event raised more than \$1.5 million.

Ronald McDonald House Charities® (RMHC) of Jacksonville recently hosted its third annual Golf Classic at Timuquana Country Club, raising \$140,000 to support RMHC of Jacksonville, an organization that serves as a "home away from home" for families that travel to Jacksonville for their child's medical care.

"We appreciate the wonderful support we received for our third annual Golf Classic, and we thank everyone who generously donated, sponsored, volunteered and participated in this event," said RMHC of Jacksonville

Executive Director Diane Boyle. "Peter Kuchar and his golf committee have done a fantastic job growing the event. The funds raised from the Golf Classic are essential in ensuring we offer the best accommodations, services and programming we can to families of children that call RMHC of Jacksonville home each year."

Presented by Fields Auto Group, major sponsors included Conser Group Moving Solutions, Florida Blue and the Jacksonville Jaguars, among others.

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# Italian feast marks San Marco's 90th birthday

By Marcia Hodgson  
Resident Community News

Balis Park in San Marco Square was transformed into a Venetian festival Nov. 6 as nearly 150 diners sat beneath lavish tents and twinkling lights to celebrate the Feast of Carnevale, San Marco's 90th birthday party.

A short rain shower did not dampen the spirits of partygoers as they enjoyed a six-course Italian banquet prepared by five of San Marco's finest chefs – Chris Cohen of Bistro Aix, Tom Gray of Town Hall and Moxie Kitchen + Cocktails, Sam Efron of Taverna, Wes Nogueira of bb's Restaurant and Matthew Medure of M Hospitality.

The event was a fundraiser for the San Marco Merchants Association, which plans to use the proceeds to further beautify the park in the center of the Square as well as promote San Marco as a destination within



Alan Howard, Gwen Gallagher-Howard, Dee Burke with Steve Morrill

known as South Jacksonville. Developer Telfair Stockton imagined the area as a fashionable, upscale development comprised of 250 lots and a centralized commercial district. Construction of the first buildings, designed in Italian Renaissance Revival style, began in 1926. San Marco Square, named after the Piazza San Marco in Venice, Italy, showcases several Mediterranean-style buildings and a central fountain, guarded by the three regal lions, a symbol of St. Mark.

San Marco's local history will be captured in a commemorative book, which will be given to all who attended the event and later sold in the San Marco Bookstore, said Morrill.



Tyrie and Lori Boyer with Rob Smith

Jacksonville's urban core.

During her remarks before the feast, SMMA President Anita Vining expressed special thanks to San Marco's Anita Morrill, a professional party planner, who organized the event. Jacksonville City Council President Lori Boyer, who represents District 5, also addressed the crowd. She said she has lived in San Marco for 30 years and was very happy to be able to take part in the celebration. "It's a celebration of all the people who have made San Marco what it is all these 90 years," she said. "It's so fabulous to see the merchants

so engaged in this celebration."

Boyer also said the occasion coincided with her 19th wedding anniversary to Judge Tyrie Boyer, who grew up in San Marco.

The Sessions, a brass band, serenaded the partygoers, and models, dressed in Italian Renaissance garb, silently struck poses on the lip of Balis Park's fountain and near the San Marco Lions, which were also dressed for the occasion.

Over 90 years ago San Marco was constructed on 80-plus acres of the former Villa Alexandria Estate, which was then



Dr. Lakshmi Gopal and her husband, Dr. Ned Clark



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**Oysters by the dozen,  
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The St. Johns Riverkeeper's annual Oyster Roast is famous for being one of the best parties of the year. The single largest fundraising event for the organization helps to deliver critical support to effective advocacy, outreach, and education programs.

Each year, the party plays out at the Garden Club of Jacksonville in Riverside, and if you're looking to put your money where your mouth is, the delicious oysters and seafood from Fisherman's Dock help patrons do just that. Accompanying the shellfish were tasty treats from Biscottis, live music from Cloud 9, and a wide array of items in the silent auction. This year's party was a big hit, as patrons flocked to the banks of the St. Johns River to support their favorite environmental advocacy group, the St. Johns Riverkeeper.



Cam Betz with Genora Crain-Orth



Leanna Cumber with Jessica Baker and Carolyn Hawthorne



Chris and Meghan Weaver with Sam and Erich Geisler

**SOCIAL R**



River Garden Foundation President, Jeanine Rogozinski, with Kellie Ann Kelleher and Jason Smith



Corey Sander and Chaz Martin



Melanie Lawson M



Janne Brandenburg with "Sweet Pete" Behringer and Phyllis Geiger



Board Chair Sid Ansbacher and Gary Herzfeld, Clara White Mission, Ju'Coby Pittman, Bracy Taylor, Michelle Paul and

**An evening of Pure Imagination at River Garden Gala**

If Willy Wonka walked into the room at the 24th Annual River Garden Gala, he would have felt right at home. From the Oompa Loompas to the land of the lollipops, the décor made for an entertaining evening for gala patrons Nov. 12 at the Sawgrass Marriott.

In addition to the candy-covered backdrops, the black-tie evening

featured luscious cocktails, an outstanding silent auction, elegant dining and dancing to the music of Anita and the Party Life Band. The gala was presented by Sun Trust Bank and was chaired by Jackie and Stephen Goldman. Proceeds raised will benefit the River Garden Hebrew Home and Wolfson Health and Aging Center.

**A glamorous gala for Clara White**

It's a celebration of the mission, as well as 12 years of the Pearls & Cufflinks, a masquerade gala on behalf of The Clara White Mission. The Citi Card headquarters played host and doubled up as one of the lead sponsors for this year's star-studded fundraiser.

Jacksonville's finest supporters of the Clara White Mission came out to give thanks, including WJXT's Melanie

Lawson, the Mission's Executive Director, alongside her daughter, Clara White Minor. Clara White Mission's Ashley Street, delicious treats, Shaken, Not Stirred. The entertainment event by Ernie and Ronald Baker was a highlight of the event.



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Chris Hazelip and David Lane



Barron Romans and Linda Thomas with Mark and Debbie Johnson

## Rollin' on the river at Red, White and Blues

The North Florida School of Special Education welcomed guests and sponsors to the 7th annual Red, White and Blues fundraising event Nov. 18 at the riverfront estate of Gary McCalla. McCalla has hosted the annual food and wine event at his property on the river for the past several years and exhibits exemplary dedication to the school's mission.

With support from several dozen vendors, the premier wine, food and spirits event was assisted in its mission to deliver great eats, unique craft cocktails and fine wines. With live music, student artwork and food stations throughout the elegant property on the St. Johns River, it's always a 'must attend' event. To learn more about the North Florida School of Special Education visit, [www.northfloridaschool.org](http://www.northfloridaschool.org).



Kevin Copeland, Jessica and Luke Morris, Gary McCalla, Melanie Jensen, Steve Strum and Mark Fallon

### Our Mission

Mistress of Ceremonies, husband, WJXT's Tarik White's catering division, delivered as Anthony Davis of Stirred created cocktails. ment was brought to the Lombardi & Friends as snapped photos during

### Gala delivers support for outreach in Clay County

The St. Vincent's HealthCare Foundation continues to grow its annual Corks & Forks Gala in support of critical outreach missions. The Riverside-based health care system added the gala to its seasonal fundraising events last year and has continued to make good on its promise to raise funds in support of the people of Clay County.

This year's masquerade ball, titled Evening of Elegance, was a premier food and wine event that gained tremendous support from Southern

Glazers Wine and Spirits alongside the following restaurants: 29 South, bb's, Biscottis, The Club Continental, South Kitchen & Spirits, Mezza restaurant & bar, HOBNOB, Havana Jax and 4 Rivers Smokehouse. The Art League of Orange Park also donated dozens of masquerade masks artfully decorated for auction. The event took place at the Club Continental Nov. 11; the Chairs were Tina and Greg Clary and Teresa and Randy Scott, D.O.





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The Pajcic Firm loves to spread a little Thanksgiving cheer every year. Our own LaNell & Hona handed out Publix gift certificates to those in need. The hugs and thank you's received were priceless!



The Pajcic Firm was honored to sponsor the 4th annual Right Path Behavioral Health Thanksgiving feast. The event was held at The Five Star Veterans Center in Jacksonville.



About 35 veterans who suffer from PTSD, Traumatic Brain Injuries and other service related health issues were treated to a Thanksgiving dinner and a magic show. Right Path's Don Jackson, who orchestrated the festivities, said it is all about fellowship and giving back to our veterans who have given up so much for us.



Happy Holidays from  
The Law Firm of Pajcic & Pajcic



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# Courthouse transformed into Oz at Guardian ad Litem fundraiser



Guardian Ad Litem Foundation President Marietta Sampson with Foundation Board Member Kellie Prusiecki



Rick Morales, Beville and City Councilman Greg Anderson, Gary Flower and Husein Cumber



Ali Korman Shelton with Husein and LeAnna Cumber



Barbara and Bud Maurer with Steve and Carol Smith

The Duval County Courthouse was transformed into the Emerald City as it opened its doors after hours for the first time to become the venue of the Guardian ad Litem Foundation's inaugural fundraiser, There's No Place Like Home.

Gross proceeds for the event topped \$120,000, and the net proceeds will go toward volunteer recruitment and training for the Fourth Circuit program, serving Clay, Nassau and Duval Counties.

Nancy Mahon of San Jose served as honorary chair of the sparkling benefit which sought to raise community awareness and funding for the more than 1,000 abused and neglected children who, through no fault of their own, have landed in the dependency court system.

Mahon's son, Chief Judge Mark Mahon, was on hand to give personal tours of the courthouse, which covers three city blocks and includes 51 courtrooms and 47 hearing rooms. Built in 2012, the building is state-of-the-art in design, security, and technological support with advanced audio visual capabilities, courtroom evidence presentation and assistive listening devices.

During the fundraiser, guests were "whisked away" by a "tornado" on the second floor to advance to the third where the Emerald City festivities were held. Included in the evening's events were an introduction to Guardian ad Litem by Melinda Oberle Brown, circuit director of the Fourth Judicial Circuit, a video presentation, a live and silent auction, champagne drawing, and hot hors d'oeuvres. The Chris Thomas Band provided a musical backdrop and there was a surprise performance by the Jacksonville's Children's Chorus.

"We're so excited to do our inaugural event to support our volunteer advocates here in the courthouse. They serve as a voice for our foster-care children," said Foundation President Marietta Sampson. "The community support has been tremendous, so much more than we expected."

# Under the tents at Treaty Oak Park for Festival D'Vine

Treaty Oak Park was the site once again for the annual Festival D'Vine benefit held Nov. 18 for Catholic Charities. More than 100 wines were sampled, along with craft beer and food from more than 20 local restaurants as the crowd mingled under white tents and danced to music by the Chris Thomas Band. FIS was the "vintner" sponsor, and others included Black Knight Financial Services, Fidelity National Financial, St. Vincent's HealthCare, the Diocese of St. Augustine and Wire Mesh Corporation, to name a few.



Ruby Peters, Catholic Charities Executive Director Lauren Weedon Hopkins, James Hopkins, Anna Valent



Bill Hart and his daughter, Rachel, Linda Cunningham, Denise and Rafi Wartin, Liz and Paul Iglesias

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# Helping the hungry in greater Jacksonville

Approximately 50 teams from all over Jacksonville converged in the Prime Osborn Convention Center Nov. 5 to pack nutritious meals to give to families deemed “food insecure” and hungry within the greater Jacksonville area.

Within four hours, hundreds of boxes were filled with more than 600,000 meals. In the boxes were bags comprised with the raw materials to make six meals such as beans and rice or cheesy macaroni, said Dean Porter of San Marco, who with his wife, Sherri, founded the organization.

Packing the meals provides teams representing local businesses with an “amazing team building experience,” he said. All the ingredients are supplied by Hunger Fight, however the business partners are able to determine where the food will be distributed, such as local food banks, pantries, or churches so that it will have the impact they see fit. The cost of each meal is 25 cents per serving.



Packing meals with Team O'Steen Volvo were Mark and Lisa O'Steen. The Hunger Fight event took place Nov. 5 at the Prime Osborn Convention Center.



Hunger Fight founders Dean and Sherri Porter of San Marco



Lubna Lorrea, Jacqueline Small, Aryana Correa and Dayalis Guerra of Team Advantage Dermatology in San Marco put together meals during the Hunger Fight packing event at the Prime Osborn Convention Center Nov. 5.



Peter and Laura Bailet



John and Susan Zona

# Caring souls raise funds to heal little hearts

The Heart & Soul – the 2016 Artscapade – wrapped together art, music and fun Nov. 4 at Taliaferro Hall in St. John's Cathedral to benefit Patrons of the HeARTS, which serves children with congenital heart disease.

Founded in 2005 by Dr. Jose and Hilda Etedgui, Patrons of the HeARTS is a partnership with Wolfson Children's Hospital and the University of Florida Pediatric Cardiovascular Center at Jacksonville. Funds raised each year help to provide life-saving surgery for children with congenital heart defects from around the world. In addition, the nonprofit has a \$2 million goal for an endowment fund, which will provide high quality pediatric cardiac care in perpetuity.

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# Friends gather for Dinner with Bill at The Arc Jacksonville Village

The 23rd annual Dinner with Bill and Friends was held Nov. 4 at The Arc Jacksonville Village, beginning with home tours and cocktails and followed by dinner and entertainment. Chair for the fundraising event was Audrey Moran, Baptist Health Senior Vice President, Social Responsibility & Community Advocacy.

The celebration is named in memory of Bill Sackter, an early ambassador for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Sackter spent the better part of his life in an institution and, when eventually released into the community, he spoke often of the need all people have for “a good friend, a good job and a good home.”

Dinner with Bill and Friends applauds the achievements of people with disabilities and helps sustain the programs that support them. Donations and sponsorships ensure that The Arc Jacksonville continues to elevate and empower individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities to achieve the “Good Life” everyone desires – a good home, a good job and good friends.



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Sara McMillan, Linda and David Stein

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# Holidays a challenge for young, expectant mothers

The holidays are a time of celebration for many, with one family gathering after another. But for some women in our city, during this time there are challenges that make life seem like an uphill battle. For young mothers-to-be with unplanned and unexpected pregnancies, there is anxiety and a difficult road ahead.

Thankfully, there are resources available and a caring local nonprofit to turn to for guidance when it comes to these challenges. Despite its longevity, the organization needs material goods and donor assistance to continue serving this growing need.

For more than 40 years Emergency Pregnancy Services has assisted women – many of whom are teenagers or young adults – with the transition into motherhood, or in some cases, guiding them through the option of placing their child up for adoption.

EPS was founded as a hotline in 1974 and was the first crisis pregnancy center in Duval County. Today, there are three locations: Riverside, Arlington and Orange Park.

The agency offers services such as pregnancy testing and life-affirming ultrasounds, options counseling, material support and education to help women make informed choices about their pregnancy. All services are free and completely confidential.

“Florida is one of the highest states with unplanned pregnancies, and Duval County is also well above the average,” said Sandra Duggan, EPS executive director of development.

EPS is a ministry of St. Vincent’s HealthCare and its mission is to empower women with fact-based information about their pregnancy – without judgment or pressure – and to save lives. The agency serves more than 3,000 women per year.

By helping clients feel safe, trained



Emergency Pregnancy Services office at 1637 King Street

counselors focus on where the client is coming from, mentally and physically – not where they think they should be in regards to their pregnancy, socio-economic status, or lifestyle.

“I think one of the things that makes us stand out as an agency is that we are so non-judgmental,” Duggan explained.

### Programs

Emergency Pregnancy Services and Growing Parenting Skills are programs of Growing Parenting Choices.

The EPS program focuses on health services such as free, laboratory-quality pregnancy testing as well as options counseling,

pregnancy and abstinence education, and a list of community resources. A non-diagnostic ultrasound may be performed following a positive in-office pregnancy test after meeting the requirements set by the sonographer and the medical director.

The second program, Growing Parenting Skills, focuses on counseling and mentoring. Prenatal care, nutrition, breastfeeding and delivery education as well as parenting classes and life skills guidance with a focus on continuing education, money management and budgeting, job interview skills and vocational training are all facets of the GPS program.

Together, these programs mobilize mothers-to-be on a path of enlightenment and empowerment, preparing them to be both sound parents and contributing members of the community.

EPS, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit agency, relies on community donations and support to continue serving clients in the community. Community support may include financial donations or volunteer-driven fundraisers such as baby showers or diaper drive events. The donated supplies are used to help stock the agency’s material stock room.

Diapers, baby wipes, bottles, formula, and baby clothing – typically up to a size two – are all stored at the ready for in-need mothers. Larger items such as cribs, highchairs, strollers, or car seats may be available as well. Items are available in a limited supply.

Mothers-to-be can “shop” in a walk-in closet full of donated maternity clothing. In turn, when expectant mothers are finished with the clothing, they can return it to the agency for other clients to use.

### Locations

The main office is centrally located in the heart of Riverside. The office is located just two blocks from St. Vincent’s Medical Center Riverside at 1637 King St. (on the corner of King and Oak streets).

The Arlington office is located at 6903 Merrill Road in Jacksonville and the Orange Park office is located at 2300 Park Ave.

All offices are open Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. The Riverside office is also open on Saturday from 9 a.m. to noon.

Appointments are not necessary, walk-ins are welcome and all clients are asked to bring a photo ID.

For more information, call (904) 308-7510 or visit [www.growingparentingchoices.org](http://www.growingparentingchoices.org).



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# Spiritual leaders share inspirational messages

Take time in the busyness of the season to reflect on the great qualities of the neighborhood, including the many houses of worship that contribute to the fabric of the community. Take a moment, too, to read these seasonal messages of hope, joy and peace from some of the local clergy.



### Pastor Juana Jordan, Pastor-in-Residence, Southside United Methodist Church

Last year I had the privilege of spending the holidays with one of my best girlfriends of 24 years and her family. It was there I was reminded of the John 19:26-27 passage where Jesus, hanging on the cross, gives his mother to his beloved friend John. He gives the gift of family, sending the message that bloodlines don't necessarily bind us, but it's the love lines we have with each other that matter. In one selfless action, he silences both their fears and concerns of loneliness and aloneness. It was a point he made to the disciples: "And they will know that you belong to me by your love for each other." In other words, it is our act of love and acceptance and embracing of each other that speaks the language of family. It speaks the language of belonging.

This year I am living in the city of my birth for the first time in 27 years. I am with my family I grew up with and also with a new family: Southside UMC. Yes, I am blessed. My family keeps growing. My prayer and challenge however, is that this holiday season we all will love and embrace others beyond our traditions and societal and familial boundaries. It is what Jesus would do and has already done. May we be Jesus with skin on!



### Mother Teresa Seagle, Chaplain, The Episcopal School of Jacksonville

The most cherished Christmas memories are those that reflect the love that entered the world on that first Christmas when baby Jesus was born. The joyous laughter and excitement of family and friends together; watching the tiny angels and shepherds seeking Mary, Joseph and the baby Jesus at the annual pageant; receiving that popsicle-stick picture frame that needs to be glued back together. These are precious moments that no amount of planning and preparing, that no amount of money, could make any more meaningful. These are precious moments that could not be any more filled with love. This season of Christmas, may your hearts be overflowing with the love of God, as you create lasting and cherished memories.



### Ian Stake, Director of Evangelism, Worship Leader, Southside United Methodist Church

We celebrate the season of Advent in our home, and this year I'm especially looking forward to it. Advent is a time in the Christian faith set aside to prepare for Christmas. It started on the fourth Sunday before Christmas, November 27.

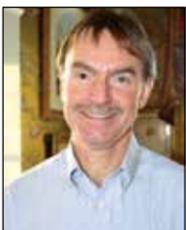
During this time, we reflect on what it means that God has come into this world to pursue us. The reason I'm looking forward to this season is that I feel I've been so busy I'm might be missing what's most important. And that is, Christmas is the celebration that God came into this world to seek out those who were lost, tired, broken and to offer us life. I know as I simply take time to be quiet and to be with God in prayer - to have honest conversation with Him and enjoy His presence - the true meaning of Immanuel, God with us, begins to have meaning.

As we get inundated with how many shopping days until Christmas, remember the real story is about how God comes to us, right where we are, and offers us the most amazing gift, a love-rich relationship with Him.



### Rabbi Rick Shapiro, Interim Senior Rabbi, Congregation Ahavath Chesed

All of us at Congregation Ahavath Chesed send blessings to our brothers and sisters of all faiths and traditions at this time of year. May lights of Hanukkah shine brightly among us, dispelling the darkness of hatred and bigotry that is engulfing our nation, bringing the light of justice and equality, respect and compassion, kindness, blessing and peace to us all. May these lights remain with us through the dark days ahead, dwelling within our hearts, and igniting the spirit of the Holy One of Blessing contained within each and every one of us. May we ever recall the words of the prophet Zechariah: "Not by might, and not by power, but by My spirit," says the Eternal God."



### Rev. Dr. Bruce Hedgepeth, South Jacksonville Presbyterian Church

A familiar part of Luke's telling of the Christmas story is when a very pregnant Mary and Joseph arrive in Bethlehem and there is no room for them in the inn. Reading between the lines of Luke's narrative, the innkeeper extended hospitality to the couple by allowing them to stay in the stable, where baby Jesus was born. Since this is my first Christmas season in Jacksonville, I've been reflecting on the warm welcome my wife, Cindy, and I have received since we moved to San Marco in February. We've been welcomed not only by our church family at South Jacksonville Presbyterian Church, but by so many others in the community. We are so grateful for the hospitality we've received and our hope and prayer is that San Marco will continue to be a place of welcome. May God bless you in this holiday season.



### Rev. Dr. Gary Lee Webber, Southside Baptist Church

Every four years we go through the pains of a presidential election. I use the word "pains," not to suggest that it isn't worth it, but because, like childbirth, the process required to deliver a democratically-elected president is usually preceded by a long and difficult labor.

Following the clamor and noise of the presidential election, much of the country begins to turn its attention to another birth. This one is not figurative, but was quite literal. The birth of this child took place, not in the power center of the world, but in a stable in a small town occupied by a hostile foreign army.

Jesus was born into the hostility and political upheaval of a world in a perpetual and relentless search for peace. Every four years we go to the polls hoping to elect a person who might bring us peace. And four years later, we try again. What if this Christmas we finally recognize that peace will not be elected in a ballot box, but was, in fact, delivered to us in a manger?

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. - Isaiah 9:6



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# Nativity scene collection reflects allness of God's creation

By Marcia Hodgson  
Resident Community News

While some people might collect baseball cards, stamps, coins, dolls or even elephant figurines, Cindy Graves' passion has a religious bent. The former long-time San Marco resident and daughter of a Baptist preacher, Graves has a passion for collecting nativity scenes, and owns more than 100.

"Actually, I've lost exact track," said Graves, who recently moved to Mandarin and is administrative assistant to Southside Baptist Senior Pastor Rev. Dr. Gary Webber. "I have over 100 nativity scenes. Long ago I ran out of room to display all of them in my home or office so I rotate them. The church generously allows me to store them in a closet-storage room upstairs. I often kid the pastor that I need to keep working here because he gives me storage for my nativity scenes."

Graves' fascination with nativity scenes began when she was a little girl.

"My family had one of those little dime store nativities with the cardboard crèche and the little plaster of Paris figures, and I set that out every year. Dad would rig up a night light in it. I loved getting that nativity out on Christmas Eve. Father read the Christmas story out of Luke and as he read it I would move the little figures around to act out the story," Graves recalled, adding that one year there was a crisis because Baby Jesus was missing. "It turned out my brother's G.I. Joe had kidnapped the Baby Jesus and had hidden it in the toe of my Christmas stocking. We had to rescue Baby Jesus that year before we could continue the tradition," she said.

Although the childhood nativity scene eventually was given to her brother, Graves started collecting nativities after she moved out on her own. "The first gift my mother gave me was a porcelain nativity set of my own, which I still have. It is special because it was the first one, but all of them are precious to me."

Graves became interested in collecting the nativity sets after receiving a Christmas card of the Angel Tree at the Metropolitan Museum



Cindy Graves holds Baby Jesus and Mary, carved pieces from a nativity scene made in Kenya



A nativity scene made from discarded soda cans by a South African craftsman.

of art. Under the tree was a set made in the "Italian tradition" with not only the Baby Jesus, Mary, Joseph and the three Wise Men, but also hundreds of figures representing the villagers. Seeing the card enlarged Graves' perception for the first time of the Blessed event. "It made me think there are other townspeople in Bethlehem who would have found out about the baby. That's when I started looking around at the amazing interpretations of nativity sets, especially around the world," she said.

"People tend to picture the Christmas story with characters that look like them," she continued. "That's why I have so many sets that come from different countries." Graves said when she travels abroad she tries to take home a nativity set as a souvenir. She has Asian sets with "almond-eyed" characters, African sets where the figures are black and an Irish set where each figurine looks like a Celtic statue. "The different variety of them reminds me that Christ came for the entire world, that Jesus came for everybody and not just for Americans and Christians," she said.

Graves' collection also includes figures made of different kinds of materials. "In poor countries, they use whatever is available," she

explained. One set from South Africa has figures made of discarded soda cans. Another from Mexico is made of recycled auto parts with a spark plug representing Baby Jesus. Church members Pat Jones of San Marco and her daughter Amy Jones Saladino of Mandarin made a set for her out of wine corks.

She even has nativities made of nails, recycled glass and plastic snack bags. "Those remind me that this was trash that was taken and turned into what I consider a treasure," Graves said. "In the same way God can take the junk, the trash of our lives, and make it into something beautiful. There are human beings in this world that we consider throw-away human beings, worthless, but God does not consider them worthless, and he can make something beautiful out of every life."

For many years during the Christmas season, Graves has displayed her collection in various storefronts on the Square and at Southside Baptist Church. She is not displaying the collection this year due to personal time constraints and the fact there is not a suitable venue on San Marco Square. She said she hopes to display them next year, even if it is just in the church.

One year San Marco artisan Brooks Gordon visited the display and asked if he could show a nativity scene he had carved by hand the next year. "When I saw it I immediately fell in love with it," Graves said. "It was folk art primitive, and eventually I bought it from him. Then I realized I had a fantastic resource, a real artisan who could do custom work for me."

Over the next several years Graves commissioned Gordon to carve a very personal nativity set, one made up of her friends and family bringing their gifts to the Baby Jesus. The set, which sits on a bookshelf in her office, includes among the many figures former Southside Baptist Pastor, Mark Wilbanks; her nieces, Christina and Lydia; her parents, Dorothy and Ray Graves; her godchildren, Julia and Jeffrey Ferrell of St. Nicholas; former Southside Baptist food service director Linda Nesmith; Bagheera, a black cat she dearly loved, Florida State coach Bobby Bowden to represent her favorite football team; and even Gordon, the master woodcarver, himself.

"If I had to choose one as my absolute favorite it would have to be this one because no one in the world has it," she said.



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# No chance Santa will miss this house

## San Marco family continues longtime decorating tradition

By Marcia Hodgson  
Resident Community News

When it comes to Christmas spirit, perhaps no home in San Marco can rival the Pennsylvania Avenue home of Karen Moore and her husband, Lee McCook.

From just before Thanksgiving to just after New Year's, Moore and McCook's yard is a twinkling wonderland of Christmas lights, candy cane ornaments and no less than 25 inflatable holiday decorations, which jostle for space on the front lawn. Within the collection are numerous Santas, including Fishing Santa, Military Santa, and Jet Pack Santa, who is 10 to 12 feet tall. There is also Frosty the Snowman, polar bears, and grandma run over by a reindeer. Snoopy and the Peanuts gang are heavily represented as is Elf on the Shelf, the Incredible Hulk, Minions, Mickey and Minnie Mouse, and Olaf from the Frozen movie.

Decorating the house became the family's passion many years before McCook came on the scene, he said. "It originally started years ago as just a gingerbread house. Karen and her



With 80 percent of his decorations up, Lee McCook's home is already looking festive.



Trevor Moore and Lee McCook with an inflatable Christmas decoration at their home in Colonial Manor.

children, Trevor and Kailyn Moore, would light up the house so that it would look like a life-size gingerbread house and over time it spread to the yard and the trees. I'm just helping them continue the tradition."

The tradition got its start when Moore's 18-year-old Trevor was a little boy. "He liked to sing the song, 'This little light of mine, I'm going to let it shine,' and they began to light up the house because it was Jesus's birthday. There were a lot of oak trees in the yard and because of the canopy, Trevor would say to his mom, 'How is Santa going to see us with all of the oak trees?'"

McCook explained. "You could see the decorations from the street, but he worried about how Santa would see it from up there in the clouds. Soon they began decorating the trees and putting up blow-ups all over the place. It's just grown from there."

It takes no less than four days to fully decorate the house and yard, McCook said. "The kids test the blow-ups and position them. I get to pay the bill, which JEA seems to find hilarious. They have already sent me three thank-you cards and two turkeys," he joked, adding that all the lights add about \$50 to \$60 to his monthly electric bill.

For many in San Marco, driving by the

Moore/McCook house is a Christmas tradition. "People come from all over to look at it," he said. "We call it the 'Age of Innocence.' It allows people to get away from their daily stresses and relive their youth."

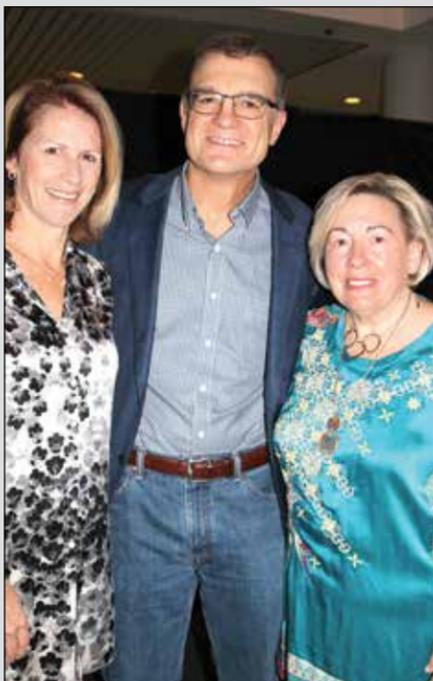
Many grateful admirers have left thank-you cards, letters from their children, scented candles and the occasional gift of an inflatable, McCook said. "We've actually received two blow-ups with an anonymous note on them asking if we could find a place for them in our yard. One was the Fishing Santa and the other was a Mickey and Minnie Mouse Hot Cocoa Stand," he said, noting the Fishing Santa is a family favorite.

## Catfish and rice mix well to raise funds for DESC

For more than 10 years before the economic recession shrunk the pond, the "Catch Bubba" catfish tournament was the DESC (Downtown Ecumenical Services Center) annual fundraiser. Bubba the Catfish is back and has been scavenging for goods all over town this fall to help DESC stock its shelves for those in need.

The wily fish concluded his adventure Nov. 18 at The Haskell Building where about 200 DESC donors and supporters enjoyed an evening of dinner, dancing and virtual fishing. The event raised nearly \$95,000 to provide groceries, clothing and financial assistance for the homeless in Jacksonville.

Presenting sponsor for the "Where's Bubba?" evening was the Meyer family of Congaree and Penn Farm and Mills, which donates 300 pounds of freshly milled rice to DESC every week.



Rosemary and Dr. Dan Robie with Sherrie Webb



Allan Clark, Allison Turknnett, Betsy Clark, Fran Moulder

## It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas



A 40-year St. Nicholas tradition, the holiday window display at Kuhn Flowers brings residents and out-of-town visitors to gaze at Santa and Mrs. Claus, along with his crew of elves and reindeer, as well as toy soldiers and other delightful decorations. Bring the family for a special, magical experience, then stop next door at the new Christmas store at 3802 Beach Blvd.

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Dec. 7

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Dec. 14

### What about me? Caring for the caregiver

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Dec. 21

### Breaking bad: Habits that is!

We all have habits. Some are good, while others can be annoying or even harmful. We can create habits by repeating behaviors until they become automatic. With a new year just ahead, what better time to learn how creating just ONE good habit can make a difference in 2017!

Dec. 28

### Mindfulness: "Being" not "doing"

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# Friends of Landon plan media center makeover

By Marcia Hodgson  
Resident Community News

The Media Center at Julia Landon College Preparatory School in San Marco is in dire need of a makeover, and to raise money to buy new books and furniture, a group of parents from the middle school has established a new 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, The Friends of Landon (FOL).

FOL is a similar organization to Friends of Hendricks, a non-profit organization started by Matt Carlucci of San Marco years ago to raise money to build a track at the Hendricks Avenue Elementary School. The Landon parents seek to provide additional funding to fill in gaps in the school's budget to ensure it has the resources to equip its students "for a lifetime of academic and leadership success," said Emily Gideon, FOL vice president.

"Landon has a history of raising up leaders. Friends of Landon wants to continue the legacy of leadership," she said.

The initial goal of the Friends' group is to ultimately raise \$90,000 in three phases so the middle school's antiquated library can be converted into a modern "Learning Commons," said Cindy Pearson, FOL fundraising chairman.

The group's first fundraiser, Landon Relays, will be an event similar to the Walkathon held by Hendricks Avenue Elementary each year. The relay event will be held Saturday, March 4 from noon to 6 p.m. on Landon's track. The goal of the relays is to raise \$15,000.

"FOL also plans to hold at least one "Spirit Night" at a local restaurant to raise money for new books," said Pearson, noting the event would be held in January or February.

"The Friends of Landon was formed to address the needs the school has, and the first project is the media center," said Pearson. "We anticipate we will continue (with other projects) after the media center is completed."

During the past year, a subcommittee of the Landon School Advisory Council assessed the needs of the school's media center and decided it needed a "change in culture," Gideon said. "The committee's goal is to change the culture of the Media Center from the outdated space where students merely checked out books to a space where they can research and collaboratively learn," she said, noting that Landon's Media Center has been "dormant for years" and no new books have been purchased for the library in more than a decade.

"What we want is a 21st century learning model that has been used across the country and is certainly being used on college campuses," Gideon said. "Since Landon is a college



Members of Board of Directors of the Friends of Julia Landon College Preparatory School include: President Fay Patsourakis, General Counsel Bryan Gowdy, Fundraising Chairman Cindy Pearson and Vice President Emily Gideon.

preparatory middle school, we want to prepare our students for that aspect of learning."

This year's goal is to raise \$30,000 purchase new furniture, tables and books as part of a first phase to create a "collaborative learning environment" at the school, said Gideon. "If additional funds are available after the completion of the first phase, then we will fund individual grant requests by the teachers," she said.

Included in the first phase is the removal of outdated and under-grade-level books from the shelves of the Landon library. The purchase of new counter-height tables that seat six with a large flat screen monitor at the end so students can connect with their devices will enhance the space. Trading soft chairs in the place of the hard ones, which are there now, will expand the seating options by allowing the new chairs to be moved around to create "collaborative spaces" for learning, she said. FOL would also like to replace the center's desktop computers with a cart of laptops that can be used in small-group collaborations. To pay for the counter-height tables, chairs and monitor at least \$10,000 must be raised, she said.

The second and third phases, at \$30,000 per phase, will address technology concerns and upgrades within the Learning Commons by adding a laptop cart, iPads, and a Nureva interactive wall.

Already FOL has submitted a grant re-

questing \$5,000 to purchase two chairs with tablet arms and two armless lounge chairs as well as 71 new fiction books, graphic novels and biographies, Gideon said. A team of FOL parents has spent more than 128 hours to remove the outdated and lower grade level books from the shelves, she said.

Principal Tim Feagins is committed to the success of the project and has a plan in place to allocate times during the day

students can check out books, she said.

"The goal of the Library Commons is to engage students in a collaborative, innovative environment serving as an extension of the classroom to inspire creativity, curiosity, critical thinking and lifelong learning," Gideon said. "Similar to dressing for success, by changing the aesthetics of the space, we hope to change its function to engage students for advanced learning in a multisensory environment."

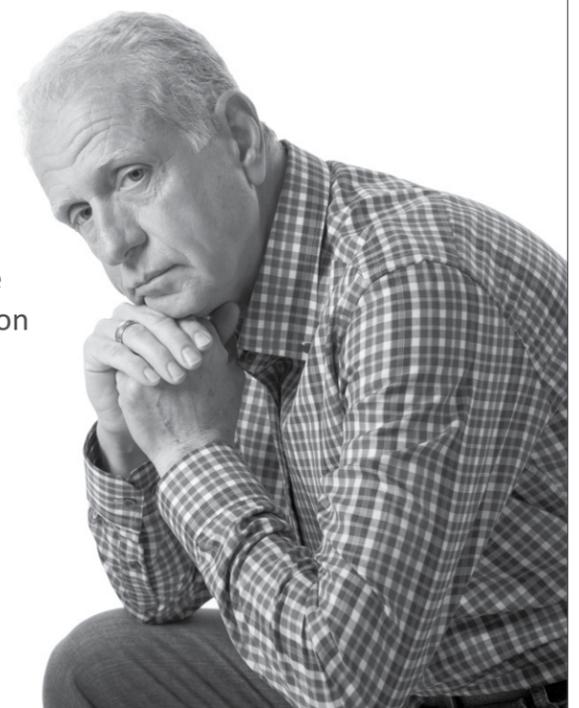
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# The Way We Were

## Mary Georgia Roman

By Julie Kerns Garmendia  
Resident Community News

Mary Georgia Roman, 90, delights in describing her life in St. Nicholas, growing up as a first-generation American child born to Greek immigrants who proudly became U.S. citizens. Her joyful recall of her South Shores neighborhood, events within the Greek families and their close ties to St. John The Divine Greek Orthodox Church is astonishing. She reminisces with a sense of purpose and of urgency.

"I never thought I would live to see everything that has happened," Roman said in reference to the third and newest St. John The Divine Church to be constructed on Beach Boulevard in 2017. She was thrilled to be able to celebrate the church's centennial anniversary in September 2016.

Roman moves and walks with difficulty and the aid of a cane, but that doesn't stop the church historian from frequently double-checking facts in her monumental work: a four-inch-thick book that meticulously details the history of the Greek Americans and her church at 3850 Atlantic Blvd.

A church committee was formed in 1948 to gather the church's history but it was not pursued in earnest until 2012 in preparation for the Centennial. Roman gratefully credits notes and research from two others: the late Judge John Marees and Dr. Theodore Panos. When Dr. Panos died, his wife, Mary, kindly gave his notes to Roman.

The book documents the arrival of the first Greeks here in 1905 and the first church service and priest visit in 1907. It includes copied photographs with captions and pages listing family and church records, dates, events and positions from 1905 to the present. Roman's dearest wish is to see it published and that new historians will continue her work.

Her parents, Constantine "Gus" (1895-1970) and Soutlana (Valsamindes) Roman, (1900-1980), were both born in the Greek Islands, then met, married and immigrated to New York. They moved to Brevard, North Carolina, had two daughters, Mary and Ethel, and operated three restaurants. In 1929, when banks closed at the start of the Great Depression, they relocated to Jacksonville.

The Romans settled on Eighth Street in



Constantine "Gus" and Soutlana Valsamindes Roman

Springfield to live near downtown and St. John The Divine Greek Orthodox Church, then located at Laura and Union Streets. Gus Roman served as president of the Parish Council in 1935 and as cantor for the next 35 years.

The Roman sisters walked to school at Jacksonville Elementary at Ninth and Perry Streets and home afterwards. They ate snacks of bread, butter and sugar sandwiches while they walked to Greek school at St. John The Divine Church every day immediately after "American school."

"For about ten years we studied at Greek school from 4 to 7 p.m. We learned Greek, history, spelling, religion, recitation and reading, with all ages and grades in one room," Roman said.

Their father went to work as a restaurant employee in Jacksonville, until he was able to open his own Cozy Restaurant in 1935. It was located near the Beaver Street Farmers Market and was a successful family business for 20 years. The building is still standing.

In the early 1940s the Romans bought their brick home on Old Hickory Road in St. Nicholas. In 1968, when the church

relocated to Atlantic Boulevard, it became their neighbor and an anchor of the St. Nicholas community.

"There was a naval shipyard on the river at the end of our street, and it was constantly lit up like a Christmas tree," Roman said. "We knew they were watching for enemy submarines."

Roman describes a smaller, more rural St. Nicholas in the 1940s and 1950s, with only half the homes and families which live there now. Her family had established routines. On Saturdays they cleaned house together and on Sundays they attended church. The neighbors knew each other by name, helped each other and gathered for births, birthdays, illness, accidents or funerals. The children had their favorite routines too.

"We loved to walk down to the dead end of the street and fish together. As we walked down with our fishing poles more and more children would join us. It was so much fun. We didn't care if we caught anything, and I don't think we ever did. I still have my fishing pole somewhere. There were thick woods and huge pine trees that always got struck by lightning," she said.

The Roman family often drove out San Jose Boulevard to the duPont family home, which is now the Epping Forest Yacht and Country Club.

"The duPonts would open their grounds every spring to let the public see the azaleas in bloom, and it was the most beautiful sight. We went every year," she said.

Roman said music and art are her first loves. Her mother saved 25 cents each week from the family's grocery money to buy an upright Wurlitzer piano. Roman received weekly lessons from Jenny Castrounis, choir director at St. John The Divine. Castrounis taught Roman American piano standards and Greek songs. Roman also studied classical piano and organ music with Mrs. Milton Bacon of San Marco. A piano lesson cost one dollar, Roman recalled. She went on to lead the choir for 25 years and started the junior choir at St. John The Divine.

The Roman sisters graduated from Andrew Jackson High School, and Mary attended Jacksonville University. She planned to become a nurse so that she could care for their parents. Greek families often live together and care for elderly



Mary, mother Soutlana, father Gus, sister Ethel



Ethel, 2, and Mary Roman, 3

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relatives at home. However, Roman's math and accounting abilities led to a 36-year career with the IRS. She retired in 1991.

Roman never married, but her sister, Ethel, married Dino Mastrogianakis and they have two children. Roman dotes on her niece, Deanna Mastrogianakis, and nephew, Dr. Lazarus "Larry" Mastrogianakis, a pediatrician in private practice and a Memorial Hospital Emergency Room physician.

During the ensuing years Roman has watched neighborhood children grow up and have their own families. Some of the homes have passed from generation to generation in the same family, as the Romans' home has done. Roman kept the family home and intends to live on her street as long as she possibly can, with the help of her sister and brother-in-law who live in Arlington.



High school graduation



Mary and sister Ethel



Mary Roman

Roman says she has been blessed to live her life freely as an American and Greek Orthodox Christian. She recalls the words of her late mother, upon seeing Lady Liberty and Ellis Island for the first time. Her mother told her they were finally safe and free in America. Roman said her family was given the freedom and privilege to become citizens and achieve whatever they wished through hard work and determination. She is profoundly moved whenever she speaks of America and overcome with gratitude.

She has tried throughout her life to do one good thing each day and firmly believes that angels watch protectively over all. She credits her faith in God for bringing her family through hardships and life challenges. Quotes from Mother Teresa and the Bible can be found throughout her home and in her history of the local Greek Orthodox church. She is a devoted member of Philoptochos (friend of the poor), the women's philanthropic organization of the Greek Orthodox Church. She has been

a supporter of the Cummer Museum and through Philoptochos has supported many charities including City Rescue Mission and Wolfson Children's Hospital.

Roman's greatest wish for the future is that she will be able to attend the dedication and first service in the new church on Beach Boulevard when it is completed. Although she does not say it, she will certainly record that momentous event in words and photos in her book, preserved forever for future generations.



*Lost Memory #2154: "St. John's River, Summer 1968"*

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# Historic biplane gives seniors flight of lifetime



Mada Allen with Michael Kaminski, Arbor Terrace San Jose engagement director, at Herlong Airport



Bill Smith at Herlong Airport waiting for his Dream Flight.

By Kate A. Hallock  
Resident Community News

Thanks to the Ageless Aviation Dream Foundation, two residents of Arbor Terrace San Jose senior living communities enjoyed a once-in-a-lifetime chance to take to the skies in a very special aircraft on Nov. 8 at Herlong Recreational Airport.

Ageless Aviation Dream Foundation, a nonprofit dedicated to honoring seniors and United States military veterans, provided the “Dream Flights” in a Boeing Stearman biplane, the same aircraft used to train many military aviators in the 1940s.

Mada Allen, 103, wanted to fly in memory of her late husband, Navy veteran A.W. Brann, and in honor of her son, Bob Brann, who served in the Army. Although she was able to get into the airplane they did not go into the air, instead taxiing down the runway for a few minutes.

Allen worked for Florida Power and Light

as a traveling saleswoman displaying home electrical appliances, however, she considers her 20-year career as a Hendricks Avenue Elementary School teacher as her true calling.

A veteran of the Air Force, Bill Smith, 76, began his career in his profession at a young age when he started working in his father’s drugstore. He was a pioneer in medical device sales, being one of the first to supply X-ray films and equipment to hospitals in North Florida. Smith claims his proudest accomplishment is the family he built with his wife, Iva.

Following the flights, the Arbor Company presented a donation of \$2,200 to the Foundation.

“In the past year, Ageless Aviation has enabled 130 residents in 22 of our Arbor communities to realize their dreams of flight,” said Laura Ellen, Vice President of Engagement for the Arbor Company. “The \$2,200 expresses our appreciation with a donation of \$100 for each community they have flown for us this year.”

# First football team enjoys Homecoming at Bishop Kenny

Bishop Kenny High School welcomed members of its inaugural 1952 Crusader football team to the field during the school’s Nov. 4 Homecoming game against Ridgeview High.

The alumni were introduced to the crowd at the 50-yard line of the field at William Johnston Stadium.

Prior to the game, the alumni enjoyed a picnic with dinner and dessert provided by 4Rivers Smokehouse and Bruster’s Ice Cream.

The event capped a week-long homecoming celebration at the school and marked its 65th anniversary of operation. Several hundred alumni attended the event.



Members of the 1952 Bishop Kenny football team were recognized during the Crusader’s Homecoming game Nov. 4. The team was the first to play for the St. Nicholas-based Catholic high school.

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# Alumni flock to Landon for Homecoming football

By Marcia Hodgson  
Resident Community News

Although things are decidedly different now that Julia Landon College Preparatory School is a magnet middle school, many alumni who attended Homecoming at the historic brick edifice in San Marco couldn't help but remark that, although many things have changed, some things remain the same.

"The building is like a fortress," said Rev. Dr. Milton Magos, Class of 1961, who is now an associate pastor at St. John the Divine Greek Orthodox Church in St. Nicholas. "We climbed up the same steps that we climbed up 50 years ago and there is no sagging. These are the same walls, there is the same stage in the auditorium," he said. "But there are different seats there," his friend Skip Lee, Class of 1963, interjected. "The seats have cushions now. They were wooden before."

Magos and Lee are two of nearly 20 Landon alumni who made their way back to their alma mater for a special Homecoming reception and football game Nov. 1. Prior to the game, the reception took place in the school's inner courtyard, which hadn't changed much, said Lee. Student ambassadors were on hand to give tours, and old yearbooks were on display while refreshments were served. At the football game, the names of the alumni were to be announced over the loud speaker, said Lori Lunitz, a Landon parent and PTSA member. The Landon band also played the school's anthem for the first time at a football game, she said.

With the motto "Once a Lion, Always a



A small gathering of former Landon students attended an alumni reception in the school's courtyard during Homecoming Nov. 1. Included at the festivities were John Rose '65, Bobby Libby '64, Susan Winch Pajcic '64, Susie Dixon Grice '61, William Harrell '61, Blanche Richard Koegler '64, Stacy Grice '61, Landon Lion, Frank Dixon '63, Skip Lee '63, Jessica Chambless Martinez '98, Bill Lyle '57 and Rev. Dr. Milton Magos '61.

Lion," which was plastered on orange T-shirts for sale at the event, the Landon PTSA has been working hard to reach out to its alumni in an effort to drum up school spirit and local support for the school, said Kelly Nowak, PTSA president.

Many Landon High School alumni meet for breakfast at 8 a.m. the second Wednesday of every month at Cracker Barrel at 46 Lenoir Blvd. and keep in close touch through a monthly newsletter sent out by the Landon High School Alumni Association, said Reed Tillis '53, a board member of the Landon High School Alumni Association.

The Alumni Association, which has been in existence for nearly 20 years, is also hosting a Christmas party Saturday, Dec. 10, at the San Jose Country Club, where 80 to 100 former Landon students are expected to show

up. Any alumni interested in attending the Christmas party should contact Tillis at (904) 704-2252 or Carolyn Knopf Graham '44 at (904) 724-2951.

Landon alumni also have a Landon memorabilia room located at 9951 Atlantic Blvd., where they have housed precious school items for the past 19 years, said Tillis.

Both Lee and Magos said they are impressed with the improvements to the school facility and its curriculum. "It's wonderful. These kids are very bright, and they are getting a wonderful education here," said Lee. "I enjoyed talking with the kids who were putting together robotics," said Magos. "I asked them if they knew what an abacus is. They didn't and I don't think they knew what a slide rule was either, but they know more than we know."

When they were in school, Lee and Magos



Blanche Richard Koegler and Susan Winch Pajcic, both of the Class of '64, look over an assortment of Landon High School yearbooks during an alumni homecoming gathering at the school Nov. 1.

recalled Landon did not play its football games on the school grounds. "We used to play in the Gator Bowl (which is now Ever-Bank Field), and in the Orange Bowl in Miami when we played against Miami schools," Magos said. "The field here was a practice field and a track," he said, remembering when he practiced running it was along the nearby railroad tracks, something he does not recommend to today's students. Meanwhile, many football practices were held in San Marco's Alexandria Oaks Park in the spring, Lee said.

Landon won the Nov. 1 game with a 28-12 victory over Kernan Middle School. It was first homecoming game to be played at Landon in five years and the first time the Landon Band had played at a football game, said Principal Tim Feagins.



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## Tailoring teaching to child's curiosity guarantees learning successes

Skateboarding 101 is not what you might think at San Jose Episcopal Day School. Instead of learning the latest techniques to pull off kickflips or ollies, students are just as mesmerized by studying the physics behind these aerial-defying feats as well as the architecture required to construct the actual boards and ramps used in the sport.

"Learning the concepts of math and science in the classroom is one thing," said Jenny Clarke, Director of Development and Marketing for San Jose Episcopal Day School. "But what we've found is that students are better able to grasp these concepts by applying them to the world around them in a very hands-on way."

It's this guiding philosophy that provides the backbone for many of the educational initiatives at this private elementary school in the San Jose area of Jacksonville.

Every child is gifted in his or her own way, and it's just a matter of tapping into the natural curiosity and personal interests of each student that makes a difference in instilling the kind of lifelong learning that San Jose Episcopal Day School is trying to spark, according to Caitlin O'Keefe, Director of Education and Curriculum.

"You really have to look at every student individually," said O'Keefe. "It's about tailoring learning to each child as needed."

Whereas the term "differentiated instruction" has become a kind of buzz word in the educational arena, San Jose Episcopal Day School has become a leader in this area and truly embraces the approach, which begins with the professional development of faculty.

Over the last several years, teachers have received training in differentiation, meeting with experts in the field, reviewing case studies and sharing best practices. Some have taken their training a step further, by completing coursework to earn their gifted endorsement. This training enables faculty to be aware of students who exhibit signs of exceptional talent in various areas, according to Clarke. "Our teachers have the autonomy to tailor their curriculum and instruction for each child."

What they've learned, said Clarke, has only reinforced some of the existing programs San Jose Episcopal Day School already has in place, such as Think Tank, now in its second year.

The school-wide enrichment program, provided to every student—not just those identified as gifted—allows kids to choose from a menu of potential areas of interest—many suggested by students themselves—at Think Tank expos offered in both the fall and spring semesters.

"They're then grouped into pods and meet regularly for six weeks," said O'Keefe. "The program is designed to be student-centered, starting from the topic they're going to explore, to how they're going to explore it. We think that's what makes students so engaged. These are topics of interest to them that they want to learn more about."

Recent pod topics range from 3D printing to geocaching, mathematical art to rock music.

"We've seen students really blossom in these breakout sessions," said Clarke. "We've heard from parents that in some cases it's led to whole families wanting to go out and explore geocaching together."

In other cases, according to O'Keefe, Think Tank pods can be seen as a glimpse into areas of interest for potential career paths—perhaps ones that parents, or students themselves, might never have been exposed to without these exploratory sessions.

Think Tank dovetails with the larger mission of San Jose Episcopal, which is to inspire a passion for learning by uncovering the unique inner gifts of each student, and to maximize those talents to their utmost potential.

San Jose Episcopal Day School is located at 7423 San Jose Blvd. Call Teresa Hall, Director of Admissions, at (904) 733-0352 to schedule a personal tour. Now accepting applications for the 2017-18 school year.



Guest speaker Mike Peterson, owner of The Block Skate Supply, helps students make adjustments to their skateboards while talking to them about his professional skateboarding career.



History of Rock: Patrick Pajic participates in a jam session



Sightseeing in 3D: Students study landmarks and recreate them in 3D, as shown by Anna Turner

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# Jr. Residents

## San Marco siblings run New York race



Lanie and Benjamin Pochurek

Two Riverside Presbyterian Day School students and San Marco residents, Lanie Pochurek (3rd Grade) and Benjamin Pochurek (5th Grade), competed in the Abbott Dash to the Finish Line 5K in New York City.

Over 10,000 runners participated in the 5K dash held Nov. 5, the day before the TCS New York City Marathon. The course followed the exact path of the last 3.1 miles of the marathon and finished in Central Park. The Pochurek siblings ran together, finishing with a time of 37:14.

## Students present redevelopment vision in urban planning competition



Students from San Marco, San Jose and St. Nicholas who participated in the Urban Planning contest at the Episcopal School of Jacksonville Nov. 10 included Alex Dent, Cristina Acevedo, Jenna LaBorde, Austin Sams and Jacob Miller.

As the culmination of a 15-hour urban planning course, 45 Episcopal High School students in teams of five presented their redevelopment vision to a fictitious city council made up of Urban Land Institute volunteers Nov. 10.

Two teams won the competition: Bold City Enterprises, comprised of Chase Scovill of Avondale and Jack Baker of Ortega, Jacob Miller of San Marco, Donnovan LaFavor and Phoebe Anton; and Duval Developers, comprised of Wade Hampton, Chase Tennant, Henry Zimmer, and Margaret Commander, all of Ortega, Olivia Hampton and Adam Boselli.

The students worked in development teams to analyze and respond to a hypothetical Request for Proposal for the redevelopment of a certain area. Through the program, the students explored how forces of the market economy work with and against non-market forces in a democracy to create the environment in which they live. They considered the economic, social, cultural and political goals of the fictional city and its residents. They also took into consideration

zoning and design regulations, market demand for different types of land uses and real estate products, traffic patterns, quality of life and the needs of investors and lenders providing the capital for the project.

Several prominent members of the community volunteered to serve as City Council members in the fictitious city created by the urban planning program. Included on the judging team were Jess Simmons of Avondale, senior associate of CBRE; Trip Stanly of Avondale, managing member of Blackwater Capital, LLC; Allison Ford of San Marco, director of real estate accounting for Regency Centers; Tarik Bateh, vice president of capital markets, real estate investment banking, JLL-Capital Markets; Michael Gruber, director of business development for Ellis & Associates; Holly Grimes, associate and senior project manager for Wakefield Beasley & Associates; Fountaine LeMaistre IV, vice president of EverBank; Russell Yaffee, vice president, Peters and Yaffee; David F. Parker, president, Parker Associates; and Dan Jackson, vice president-commercial lending, CenterState Bank.



Nancy Hudson, Angels for Allison Halos committee chair; Reef Winchester, grand prize winner; Judy Bryan, SJEDS art teacher; Ryan Servis, contest winner; Ben Monger, contest winner and Sally Bardin, Angels for Allison Halos committee member.

## San Jose student wins art contest

Three San Jose Episcopal Day School students were winners in the Angels for Allison annual art contest.

Taking home prizes were Reef Winchester, Ryan Servis and Ben Monger, all of San Jose, with Winchester winning the contest's grand prize.

The boys were selected from hundreds of city-wide submissions to have their artwork featured on the nonprofit's set of 16 notecards, which are sold to benefit families who are suffering with the loss of a child.

The boys are students of Judy Bryan of San Jose, an art teacher at the school.

## Students enjoy food, farming and fun at Assumption festival

There was something for everyone at the Assumption Catholic School's Food and Farm Festival Nov. 16.

Baltimore Oriole left fielder Nolan Reimold and his wife, Jenny, who are also Assumption parents, were on hand to discuss baseball, while Coach Jodi Weinbecker of the Florida Yacht Club Youth Sailing and Water Sports program talked sailing.

Black Hog Farm introduced the students to produce, eggs, a petting zoo, and a cooking demonstration by Chef Mary K. Rivers. Also on hand were Dave the Plant Man and the Bluebird Growers. Kali Spurgin and Hanna Garland of the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission educated the students on the destructive predator, the lionfish.

Several local organizations gave demonstrations or sponsored booths during the afterschool festival including: the Jacksonville Armada Soccer Team, the Bishop Kenny Cross Country team, Jacksonville University Cesery Riverbank Rowing Club, Cable Junction Ziplines, Congaree & Penn Rice Farm & The Brick Kale Salad, Jacksonville Bees, Sweet Grass Dairy, Flying Dragon Citrus, Set Performance Training, The First Tee Golf, Living a Balanced Life, Hula Hooping, I Love Kickboxing & Watson Martial Arts, Wolfson Children's Hospital EMT Team and JOI, Servant Sisters of the Home of the Mother, 1st Place Sports, San Marco Bookstore, Shrek Smoothies & Hyppo Pops.



Ria Saldeno and Megan Cunningham practice kickboxing at the Food and Farm Festival at Assumption Catholic School Nov. 16.

# Honors convocation format changed at Bolles



Christina Lopez, Dr. Juan Luis-Jorge

## Granada resident wins first place for Hispanic Heritage essay

Christina Lopez, a junior at Douglas Anderson School of The Arts was the first-place winner in the high school category of the Hispanic Heritage Month Essay Contest, sponsored by the City of Jacksonville. Lopez' essay was on her role model, Dr. Juan Luis-Jorge.

Lopez, of Granada, and two other Duval County Public School students were recognized Oct. 28 by Dr. Charles Moreland, Mayor Lenny Curry's Representative for Community Affairs. Cullen Brandenburg of Kirby Smith won the middle school category with his essay about his pediatrician, Dr. Olga Prat. An Honorable Mention was received by Breeanna DeGrove of First Coast High School, who wrote about her Spanish teacher, Genoveva Gonzalez- Jaquez.



Class of 2017's Annie Pentelari, John Norcross and Graham Ungrady



President's List winners Bear Schickel, Jack Swinson, Journey Wise with President and Head of School Dave Farace; not pictured: Grace Igel

The Bolles School recently changed the format for its quarterly honors convocations so students will receive commendations for academic achievements and President's List honors at the same event. Meanwhile, athletic awards and updates will be reserved for quarterly pep rallies, allowing the student body to focus more on school and community service honors during each assembly.

The switch means that students will now play a greater role in the presentation, introducing the award winners and inviting school leaders to the podium for remarks.

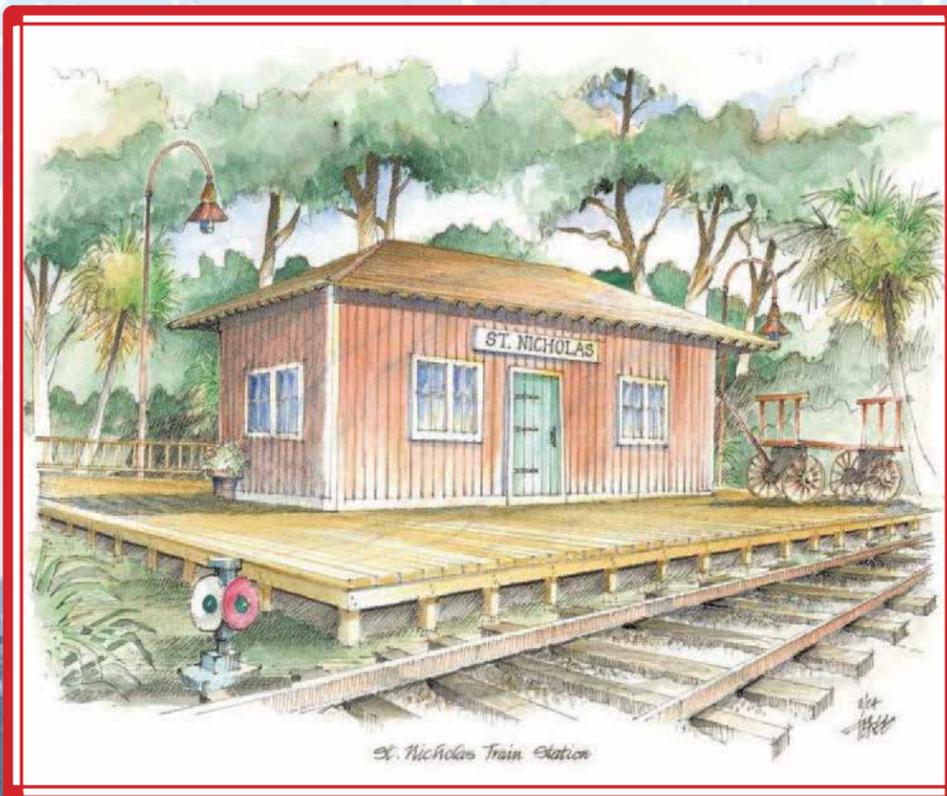
"We are also going to approach this convocation a little differently with myself, Annie Pentelari and Graham Upgrady leading it to represent the growing role of the students in our school and our ability to impact not only Bolles but also the larger community as well," said Bolles Student Council President John Norcross of Ortega, who is a senior. Pentelari, of Ortega, is president of the Bolles Chapter of the National Honor Society. Upgrady is president of the Bolles Upper School Honor Council.

Included among the President's List recipients this year was Jack Swinson of San Marco and Grace Igel who helped plan and direct orientation day, Journey Wise who has been an exemplary volunteer at North Florida School of Special Education for four years and Bear Schickel, who made a difference teaching chess in an outreach program at the Mandarin Library one Saturday a month.

To be named to the President's List, students must demonstrate servant leadership "above and beyond" the ordinary, have passing grades and exemplify the Bolles Values Statement, and have made a "significant contribution beyond the level of performance expected of the Bolles student to create a positive impact in the area of service to the school or in the community."

# Jolly Christmas at St. Nick's

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# Manatees, dolphins and birds, oh my!

*St. Johns Riverkeeper partners with DCPS to give students hands-on experience in environmental science*

By Marcia Hodgson  
Resident Community News

Brodie Hartman, a fifth grader at Brookview Elementary, couldn't think of a better birthday present than to finally take a boat ride on the St. Johns River.

"I've never been on a boat or plane, ever," he said. "I expect it will be both fun and nerve-racking at the same time. It is fun to do something new, but scary because I've never done it before."

Hartman was one of 5,900 students from 72 Title 1 public schools in Duval County to participate in a special field trip over several days to provide on-the-water learning experiences through the STEAM Cultural Passport Program during the 2016-2017 school year.

Sponsored by the St. Johns Riverkeeper and Duval County Public Schools, with additional funding from CSX and the Edna Sproull Williams Foundation, the program allows students from low-income families to learn about the river by taking a water taxi from the Friendship Fountain Park, while making several stops along the river over approximately two hours. While on board, the students rotate through a series of educational activities that correlate with state standards and focus on river science.

"Our goal is to get every student out on the river," said Jeffrey Smith, director of arts for Duval County Public Schools.

The STEAM Cultural Passport is a DCPS program that provides Title 1 elementary school students with three to four educational field trips per year. Each trip is connected to programs in Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts and Mathematics. Organizations are selected through an application process. The program is currently funded through federal dollars.

Hartman's school took advantage of the program Nov. 1, which was, coincidentally, his birthday. It is the second year DCPS has partnered with the Riverkeeper to give children who might not otherwise have an opportunity to get a view of manatees, dolphins, and river birds up close. The students used water-quality monitoring equipment, gathered and interpreted water-quality data, recorded observational



Looking over the rail of the river taxi are fifth graders Brodie Hartman, Jalia Santiago and Gaby Persaud of Brookview Elementary School.



Fifth graders from Brookview Elementary line the seats of a water taxi on the Southbank Riverwalk

data on manatees and dolphins, examined river plants and animals for adaptations that enable them to thrive in the river ecosystem and used their water quality data to make predictions about the future of the St. Johns River.

Hartman said he was happy to go on the field trip because learning about the river is important. "When you don't take care of the environment you can endanger animals and other species, and that can endanger you because we rely on them," he said. His classmate, Jalia Santiago, agreed. "It is important to protect the river because its

animals are a big part of the environment and some of them benefit humans," she said.

"The kids see downtown Jacksonville, JaxPort and Exchange Island," said Emily Floore, an education director for the Riverkeeper. "So many of these kids have never had the opportunity to experience the St. Johns from the water," she said. "They especially loved seeing the stadium from the river. It's the most recognizable thing on the river for these students. I love working with the students, getting them outside on the river and allowing them to experience science hands-on."

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## South Jax Presbyterian fills shoeboxes for Christmas



Working at the Operation Christmas Child event at South Jacksonville Presbyterian Church Nov. 9 were (back row): Scotty Montgomery, Carleigh Bartlett, Casey King, Kate Montgomery, Laurie Tillbrook, Jason Meeks, Cathy McClure, Ellen Leigh, Wyatt Eady, Wendi Orr. Middle Row: Melissa Montgomery, Elizabeth McClure, Matthew McClure, Isaac Hamilton, Macon Norris and Finn Farrow. Seated: Jenny Snoddy, Eleanor King, Viki Wood, Leone Faust and Abby Weiss.

Operation Christmas Child was in full force Nov. 9 when members of South Jacksonville Presbyterian Church gathered to stuff shoeboxes full of toys, hygiene products, candy, and school supplies to send to children in need around the world.

The shoebox effort is an initiative of Samaritan's Purse, a nondenominational evangelical Christian organization providing spiritual and physical aid to hurting people around the world.

Having filled 88 boxes last year, Wendi Orr, head of South Jacksonville Presbyterian's children's ministry, said the goal was to fill 100 this year. In October, the congregation was asked to supply toys, small items of clothing, hard candy, school supplies and non-liquid hygienic items. It was also asked to provide \$700 in cash through donations to cover the \$7 cost to send each box.

As she watched her group fill the boxes, Orr said they had not yet received enough money to cover the shipping cost. "Every year it happens," she said, indicating she is not worried. "It's one of those miracles that happens at the finish line."

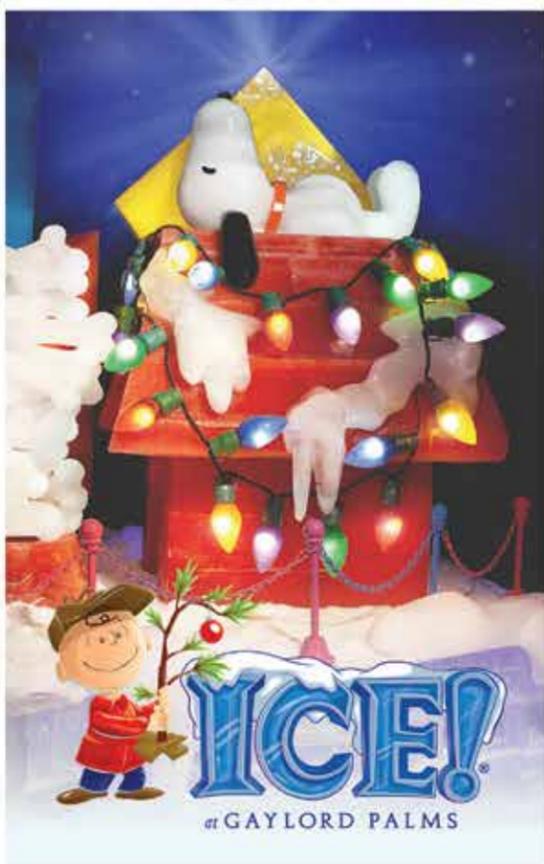
## San Marco school active in community



Members of the Hendricks Avenue Elementary Student Council hold bags filled with donated items to show the culmination of the school's annual food drive in partnership with Southside United Methodist Church. Through HAPI (Hendricks Avenue Partnership Initiative), church members assisted the students in preparing 48 bags of food for needy families from the school during the holiday season.



San Marco resident Ian Stake of Southside United Methodist Church joins Hendricks Avenue Elementary students during the evening of the church's HAPI (Hendricks Avenue Partnership Initiative) Fall Showcase Nov. 16. The students are part of HAPI's Digital Music Extended Day Program, which it sponsors along with two other such programs, Dance for Joy and K-Club, at HAE. This past semester 50 students participated in the programs, and the Showcase allows the students to show their parents and families what they have been learning.



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KISSIMMEE, FL



# Hendricks Avenue PTA announces top fundraisers

Eliza Shea and Miller Pickett raised the most money in the Hendricks Avenue Elementary PTA fall fundraiser, which ended Oct. 14.

The fundraiser earned more than \$20,000 for the Hendricks Avenue PTA, which will support all PTA programs at the school.

Shea sold 71 items to win the grand prize, a large red, one-eyed stuffed animal named Chompers. Pickett placed second by selling 58 items. Both students earned a special MVP lunch with Assistant Principal Tiffanie McClain. In addition, they participated in a Silly String party and a black light party where they were awarded a light-up jump rope and shoe lights.

Chairing the fundraising committee for the PTA was Carissa Hammel of San Marco.



Hendricks Avenue Elementary Principal Lacy Healy announces the top fundraising award winners Miller Pickett and Eliza Shea.



Athletes visited the stadium at The Episcopal School of Jacksonville one last time before ground was broken Nov. 14 to build a new 1,000-seat stadium at the same location.

# Episcopal breaks ground to build new stadium

The Episcopal School of Jacksonville broke ground on a new 1,000-seat stadium Nov. 14 after its existing stadium was demolished earlier in the month. The building project is part of the school's "Lead The Way" capital campaign, which has a goal of building new, cutting-edge athletic facilities on its Atlantic Boulevard campus.

The new 8,000-square-foot stadium is the centerpiece of Episcopal's McCormick Sports Complex, which includes Langford Track, Pajcic-Hunt Field and the Semmes Aquatic Center.

"Episcopal athletes are excited for this new, beautiful space, which will be reflective of the great student-athlete experience at Episcopal," said Athletic Director Andy Kidd. "The strength of our programs and growth of the number of students participating in athletics will be reflected

in the new design and facilities."

The new stadium will include offices, a concession stand and small store that sells Episcopal memorabilia, meeting spaces, a new press box and a new weight room.

In addition, the current swim facilities will be demolished. Offices for the swim coaching faculty will move to the second floor of the stadium, which will also feature boys' and girls' locker rooms and restrooms. A second-story, covered observation deck is also included in the plans to provide spectators a comfortable bird's-eye vantage point to view swim meets at the Semmes Aquatic Center.

The new facility will be utilized by the 66 sports teams, which Episcopal fields each year as well as the school's summer camps and Amberjax swimming program.



## WINTER 2017 OPEN HOUSE DATES

Lower School (PreK-5) Open House for Parents  
Whitehurst Campus | January 10, 2017 9 a.m.

Lower School (PreK-5) Open House for Parents  
Ponte Vedra Beach Campus | January 13, 2017 9 a.m.

Upper School (9-12) Open House for Parents  
San Jose Campus | January 6, 2017 at 8:30 a.m.

**For more information and to reserve your space at one of our many Open Houses, visit [www.Bolles.org](http://www.Bolles.org) or call (904) 256-5030.**

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# December Happenings

## 14th Annual Gingerbread House Extravaganza



Through Dec. 23, weekdays 11 a.m. – 5 p.m.,  
Saturdays 10 a.m. – 5 p.m.  
Old St. Andrews (Jacksonville Historical Society),  
317 A. Philip Randolph Blvd.

The Gingerbread House Extravaganza showcases some of the most creative gingerbread and confection creations from traditional houses to animals and fairy tale themes.

## Gingerbread Workshop

Saturday, Dec. 3, 9:30-11:30 a.m.  
Lakewood Presbyterian Church,  
2001 University Blvd. West

The workshop is open to all ages, however, children under the age of 12 must be accompanied by an adult. \$7.00 donation for each house and a bag of candy to share for decorating purposes. Sign up by calling (904) 733-8055; space is limited to 25.

## 40th Anniversary Art & Antiques Show

Friday-Sunday, Dec. 2-4, opens at 10 a.m.  
Prime Osborn II Convention Center,  
1000 Water Street

An annual show and sale featuring lectures, celebrities, designers, a fashion show and renowned antique dealers from around the U.S. and Europe. The Women's Board event raises funds for Wolfson Children's Hospital. Visit [womensboardwch.com](http://womensboardwch.com) for more information.

## Jolly Christmas Party

Thursday, Dec. 8, 5:30-7:30 p.m.  
St. Nicholas Train Station Park

Meet Santa Claus and enjoy hot beverages and other refreshments. Children receive a toy from St. Nick.

## 30th Historic Springfield Holiday Home Tour

Friday-Saturday, Dec. 9-10 Saturday,  
Dec. 10, 5-9 p.m.  
Springfield Improvement Association  
& Archives, 210 W. 7th Street

Experience holiday cheer with wassail and cookies at the SIAA building. Interpreters provided by UNF. For more information or to buy tickets online, visit [SpringfieldTour.org](http://SpringfieldTour.org); \$12 prior to Dec. 9, \$15 on event days.

## Community Nutcracker



Friday, Dec. 9, 8 p.m., Saturday, Dec. 10,  
1 p.m. & 7:30 p.m.  
Florida Theatre, 128 E. Forsyth Street

The annual Community Nutcracker celebrates 25 years enchanting audiences of all ages. Patron Party and 25th Anniversary Gala, Dec. 10, 9:30 p.m. at Jessie Ball duPont Center. Visit [jaxnutcracker.org](http://jaxnutcracker.org) for tickets and more information.

## Festival of Lights 5K & Family Fun Run

Saturday, Dec. 10, 5:30-9:30 p.m.  
San Marco Square, 1999 San Marco Blvd.

Luminaries light the way for runners and walkers in the holiday fundraiser for Children's Miracle Network. Horse-drawn sleigh rides, petting zoo, bounce houses and a visit from Santa. Register at [1stplacesports.com](http://1stplacesports.com)

## Luminaria Kit Sales

Sunday, Dec. 11, Saturday, Dec. 17,  
9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

M Shack parking lot, between San Marco  
Boulevard and Hendricks Avenue

Help San Marco get in the Christmas spirit by purchasing a luminaria kit. Sales support San Marco Preservation Society.

## Cultural Snapshots Winter Concert



Sunday, Dec. 11, 5 p.m.  
Jacksonville Jewish Center,  
3662 Crown Point Road

The Civic Orchestra of Jacksonville will perform a free concert with music from Fiddler on the Roof, Nutcracker, Sibelius' Karelia Suite, Chabrier's España and Walton's Crown Imperial. Meet and mingle with the musicians at a post-concert reception.

## Songs of the Season Holiday Concert

Sunday, Dec. 11, 6 p.m.  
All Saints Episcopal Church,  
4171 Hendricks Avenue

A free Jacksonville holiday favorite featuring the choirs of Jacksonville University choirs with vocal soloists and instrumentalists performing music and carols of the Christmas season.



## Toys for Tots

Through Dec. 15 at a variety of drop-off locations, including:

- Edward Jones Investments, 4466 Hendricks Ave.
- Hardage-Giddens Oaklawn Cemetery and Funeral Home, 4801 San Jose Blvd.
- Sherwood's, 1105 San Marco Blvd.
- Thigpen Heating & Cooling, 2801 Dawn Rd.
- Smiles on Beach Boulevard, 13794 Beach Blvd.

Join the U.S. Marine Corps in the annual Toys for Tots drive to collect new, unwrapped toys for needy children. Last year toys were given to more than 15,000 Jacksonville-area children. Visit [jacksonville-fl.toysfortots.org](http://jacksonville-fl.toysfortots.org) for more information or additional drop-off locations.

## A Christmas Carol

Thursday-Saturday, Dec. 15-17, 7:30 p.m., Sunday, Dec. 18, 2 p.m.

DuBow Theatre, Douglas Anderson School of the Arts, 2445 San Diego Road

Enjoy a heartwarming adaptation of the classic Charles Dickens story about Ebenezer Scrooge's transformation. Purchase tickets at [datheatreboosters.org](http://datheatreboosters.org).

## Holiday Helpers Toy Drive

Through Dec. 16 at Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Network Realty offices in Avondale (3627 St. Johns Ave.) and San Marco (1983 San Marco Blvd.)

Make the holidays brighter for more than 300 children in Northeast Florida affected by HIV/AIDs. Join BHHS for its 5th annual Holiday Helpers toy drive and drop off new, unwrapped toys, bicycles and clothing.

## Live Nativity

Saturday, Dec. 17, 5:30-8:30 p.m., 1090 Arbor Lane

Annual neighborhood living nativity, complete with live animals has been a tradition for nearly 30 years.

## Ameris Bank Jacksonville Marathon

Sunday, Dec. 18, 7 a.m.

The Bolles School, 7400 San Jose Blvd.

The 34th Ameris Bank Jacksonville Marathon course is USA Track and Field certified and is a Boston Marathon Qualifier. More information and registration can be found at [amerisbank.com/jacksonville-marathon/](http://amerisbank.com/jacksonville-marathon/).

## Hubbard House Children's Store

Through Dec. 20 at Hubbard House  
Outreach Center, 6629 Beach Blvd.

Donate new, unwrapped toys and gifts for the Children's Store, where mothers can pick out toys and presents for their children, and children can select special items for their mothers. Donations of wrapping paper, bows and tape are appreciated, too. Call (904) 354-0076 or email [development@hubbardhouse.org](mailto:development@hubbardhouse.org) for toy and gift suggestions.



## 32nd Annual Light Boat Parade

Friday, Dec. 30, 7 p.m.

Northbank and Southbank Riverwalks

Sponsored by Community First, the Jacksonville Light Boat Parade and fireworks show is a longstanding tradition, which began as a celebration of the Gator Bowl. This year the event kicks off the 72nd annual Taxslayer Gator Bowl, which will be held Saturday, Dec. 31 at EverBank Field. Boaters may register for free by Dec. 16 at [lightboatparade.com](http://lightboatparade.com).

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