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Resident

COMMUNITY NEWS

Riverside - Avondale - Ortega - Murray Hill



CHEERS! BEER FEST DRAWS CROWD FOR CHARITY BENEFIT

Rick Rosenbaum, Darren Ronan, Joe Buck, Brian Wargo and Billy Morse were some of the more than 2,000 beer aficionados who came out for the 4th Annual Riverside Craft Beer Fest. [READ MORE, PAGE 31](#)



GET ACTIVE ON THE WATER

Our boating and river-related topics will have you swimming with ideas for a good time.

[READ MORE, PAGE 32](#)



TEBOW CLOSSES OUT SILVER ANNIVERSARY AT FLORIDA FORUM

Fans of all stripes, including those of Wolfson Children's Hospital, were on hand to listen to Florida sports idol, Tim Tebow. Speaking to his hometown crowd, Tebow, a Heisman Trophy winner, two-time National Champion University of Florida standout quarterback and a first round NFL draft pick, delivered an uplifting and faith-inspired message.

The Women's Board of Wolfson Children's Hospital closed out another top-notch season of programming, as Tebow followed world-renowned neurosurgeon Ben Carson, and most recently, television personality and journalist, Megyn Kelly.

[READ MORE, PAGE 27](#)



Joey and Christy Allen with Pam and Bob Tebow, Grace Sarber



ANNUAL ORCHID SHOW GETS BOOST AT RAM

Jacksonville Orchid Society Secretary Tammy Stomfay-Stitz and her husband, Robert, set up a booth at Riverside Arts Market March 18 to advertise the Jacksonville Orchid Society Annual Show and Sale occurring simultaneously one block south at the Garden Club of Jacksonville.

Tammy, who started growing orchids five years ago, has 10 varieties at their Avondale home, but her personal favorite is the Phalaenopsis. The 73-year-old society meets the second Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m. at the Garden Club, 1005 Riverside Ave.

JEA UPGRADES FOR ORTEGA RESIDENTS

Residents on Hiawatha Street in Ortega will be subject to occasional water outages for the next three months as Jacksonville Energy Authority crews install a new water main.

The project began in March and is estimated to be completed by the end of June, barring any unforeseen circumstances or heavy storms. JEA will be replacing and upgrading the existing water main on Hiawatha Street from McGirts Boulevard to Iroquois Avenue.

This work will also include the installation of new individual water services to property lines and one new fire hydrant. When completed, this project will increase water pressure and provide better system reliability for customers in the area.

JEA will notify customers 48 hours prior to any planned interruptions to water service. Residents may also experience a brief outage of 10 to 15 minutes while crews transfer customers from the old water service to the new water service.

Once the water lines are installed and have been tested and cleared for use, restoration of the project area will begin. Any existing pavement, grass, driveways or sidewalks affected during construction will be returned to its pre-construction condition.

If you have any questions about the Hiawatha Street Water Main Improvement Project, contact JEA Project Outreach at (904) 665-7500 or projectoutreach@jea.com

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Bald eagle fledglings take flight in Ortega



An adult bald eagle rests on a pine tree branch in Yerkes Park.



A young bald eagle does not yet have its white head feathers.

By *Peggy Harrell Jennings*
Resident Community News

Ortega residents have been on high alert, waiting for two new bald eagles to develop wings large enough to venture from their Yerkes Park nest.

For the past couple of weeks, neighbors have been observed sitting in the park or standing in their yards or in the middle of

McGirts Boulevard keeping their eyes on the nest of fledglings.

Those who kept their eyes to the skies were not disappointed when the young eagles started flapping their wings and hopping from tree to tree on March 12.

Claire and Rob Charnley and Chris and Ana Johnson and their children live next to the park and have been keeping a close watch on the activities. The parents agreed

that it's been a good way to keep the children occupied with something real and not just television or computer games.

The Johnson and Charnley children have named the eagles. Daddy Eagle is Eddie, his wife is Elle and the babies are Eggbert and Eggbeth. Eddie, Elle and one of the eaglets were spotted in a yard on Hiawatha Street later when the protective parents took one of their brood for a test flight.



Letters to the Editor

Thank you so much for putting Brian and me into *The Resident*. Your article helped make 2017 our best year in 15 years. We collected 1,230 pairs of shoes and 65 garbage bags of T-shirts. These shoes and T-shirts will make the day a little brighter for a lot of our homeless neighbors.

I really appreciate all the hard work you do to make our neighborhood the best in Jacksonville, and you help make Jacksonville a great place to live.

All the best,
Cary W. Hepler, Riverside

Editor's Note: Cary Hepler and his brother, Brian, were featured in the "Do Something" column by Marian Johns in the March issue. The Hepler brothers collect shoes and T-shirts each year at the Gate River Run and donate them to organizations such as Downtown Ecumenical Services Council, Rethreaded and St. Francis Soup Kitchen.

I see the city is installing flashing signals at crosswalks at several intersections, including three in Avondale. I wish to bring to your attention another crossing that needs such attention: At the intersection of Fair Street and San Juan Avenue. The [Number] 16 bus stops here, and it is the stop for the shopping center on Roosevelt. I use the 16 to go to these shops. There is not even a crossing painted on the street, and San Juan is four lanes at this point. I have often found it difficult to cross here safely. This is definitely a place that needs attention for safety.

Thank you for your attention,
Lawrence P. Brennan

Editor's Note: After the March story on new crosswalks in the Shoppes of Avondale, reader Ed Walker asked the Florida Department of Transportation to expedite installation of signage that states "State Law - Stop for Pedestrians in Crosswalks." On March 10, FDOT Traffic Operations Engineer Jerry Ausher responded to Walker, stating "We will be issuing the work order to the maintenance office on Monday to install the signs. It normally takes a few weeks from them to procure and install them."

Congratulations Riverside-Avondale Preservation for another successful Home Tour 2017!

Sorry we have to miss it this year but will be with you in spirit!

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4646 LANCELOT LN - \$450,000
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4333 VENETIA BLVD - \$1,195,000
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Annual Home Tour to feature 14 venues

The 43rd Annual Tour of Homes will feature 11 residences, including a “before” house, as well as a school, a church, and a private club. The self-guided tours will be held Sat., Apr. 29, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sun., Apr. 30, noon to 5 p.m.

Spread throughout Riverside and Avondale, the venues include a new home in the Arden section of Avondale, built in 2016 by architect Bill Leuthold, who won the 2017 Riverside Avondale Preservation award for outstanding new residential construction for 3900 Richmond Street. Leuthold’s other project on the tour, a renovated historic home at 3110 St. Johns Ave., also garnered him the 2017 award for outstanding architect.

The 2017 Home Tour Design House is a 1922 Mediterranean Revival located at

1850 Powell Place, featuring wrought-iron balconies, arched French doors, a spiral staircase and coffered ceilings. The Craftsman House will be the Garden Club of Jacksonville, 1005 Riverside Ave., and the Art House, a 1923 Prairie-style home originally built as apartments at 2773 Oak St., will feature works by the members of the Jacksonville Artists Guild.

Fishweir Elementary School, which celebrates its centennial this year, will be open for the tour, as will The Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd, built in 1929.

The Ixia Chapter will give tours of Native Park, 3312 Park St., 12-3 p.m. both days of the Tour of Homes and will hold a plant sale on Sat., Apr. 29, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

A three-hour narrated bike tour will depart City Cycle, 2740 Park St. at 10 a.m. on Sat., Apr. 29, led by local historian Jeanmarie Grimsley. If you plan to visit the residences on the tour you will need to purchase ticket, but the bike tour is free.

For more information about the annual event or to purchase tickets for the tour and the Designer Preview VIP Party, go to www.riversideavondale.org. Tickets can also be purchased at the Riverside Avondale Preservation office, 2623 Herschel St.

This Cotswold Cottage-style home on Osceola Street is one of 11 residences on the annual Riverside Avondale Tour of Homes. (Photo by Mike Hall, Residential Photography Solutions)



JCCI evolves as leader of new PACT

By Kate A. Hallock
Resident Community News

An organization with beginnings that date back more than 125 years has rebranded itself in order to survive. The Jacksonville Community Council Inc. (JCCI) announced in February the evolution of its organization from a stand-alone entity leading the civic engagement process to a civic pact called the Citizen Engagement PACT.

This announcement comes nearly a year after JCCI Board Chair Kevin Hyde first issued an emergency call for funds to keep the doors open for at least six more months. Citing cash flow issues due to a lack of contract projects, Hyde said in April 2016

the nonprofit would implement a long-term plan for sustainability.

The plan resulted in the Citizen Engagement PACT, which will ensure continuity of JCCI’s values to foster a culture of civic engagement to improve the quality of life for all citizens.

JCCI’s roots go back to 1883 when Colonel James Jaquelin Daniel formed a citizen’s committee to combat a smallpox epidemic in Jacksonville. Daniel formed a second citizen’s committee in 1888 to fight a yellow fever epidemic, which caused his death.

Through the decades, a variety of community groups were formed, disbanded, reformed and re-chartered, until 1975 when JCCI was created and chaired by J.J. Daniel, grandson

of Colonel Daniel, in whose memory Daniel Memorial Association was founded.

For the next 40 years, JCCI was instrumental in launching projects which focused on quality of life issues for the community, producing 80 studies and reports which are used worldwide. The most recent major project, JAX2025, began in 2013 with a vision plan for what the city could become in 12 years. The goals included enhancing the arts and entertainment scene, preserving natural assets, promoting diversity, and enhancing neighborhoods and the urban core.

“For more than 40 years, JCCI has served as a neutral and non-partisan forum for citizen dialogue and participation, and has been an integral part of the community with significant and positive impact now fully engrained in the DNA of the Jacksonville community,” said J.F. Bryan IV, JCCI member and former Board Chair.

After assessing the community’s needs around civic engagement and the continued meaning and relevancy of JCCI, the study revealed those needs could be met if the JCCI mission was served through multiple organizations working together to continue a culture of inquiry, convening and implementation.

“This is a natural next step for JCCI to move towards a working collaborative of

community stakeholders with the shared values of fostering a continued culture of civic engagement...thus carrying on the spirit and legacy of JCCI” said Hyde, who is working to gather PACT members, an evolving process that involves many community organizations, business, and community leaders.

The PACT comprises a varied group of organizations from the nonprofit, government and business sectors that traditionally have played an integral role in either the work of JCCI or that serve as a diverse constituency to represent community needs and interests going forward.

Stakeholders will initiate the civic engagement process to make positive changes for the community, serving as a portal for citizens to engage on key community issues and offering an opportunity for continued dialogue and updates on quality of life indicators.

JCCI recently released its 31st edition of the Quality of Life Progress Report, which provides a comprehensive look at the quality of life in Jacksonville in areas such as youth in poverty, graduation rate, crime rate, fuel and water consumption.

All JCCI’s reports and studies, including the Quality of Life Progress Report, can be found at www.jaxpact.org.

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Plucky giant chicken finds new roost in Riverside

By Kate A. Hallock
Resident Community News

Snacker has a new home, her fourth in the past seven years, but this one is her forever home.

The giant orange chicken recently flew the coop from Hemming Park, where she has been on display since April 2016, staring at park visitors and passers-by from between her scrawny chicken legs when she wasn't gawking at the white cone she laid.

After a three-year gestation, Snacker, the creation of Riverside sculpture artist Lana Shuttleworth, was born in Los Angeles in 2010, and first delighted crowds at the Armory Center for the Arts in North Pasadena, California, then spent four years perched along the Santa Monica Freeway in Los Angeles before traveling across the country to go on display at OneSpark 2016.

Having overstayed her intended display in Hemming Park by six months, Snacker needed to find her final nesting place before the beginning of April. On March 9, City of Jacksonville Public Works and Hemming Park employees carefully hoisted the 600-pound, 8-foot-tall bird out of a fountain and onto a flatbed trailer.

A last-minute discovery that the trailer was not wide enough to keep Snacker upright for the trip to her new roost in Riverside required the hefty hen to indignantly make the three-mile journey on her back. After some overdue repairwork, Snacker will reside in the front yard of Wayne Wood's 1914 Prairie-style home, where she is sure



Hemming Park lost its most recent quirky work of art when Snacker, a giant orange chicken, found a new home.

to draw the attention of residents and visitors on Riverside Avenue. It's not every day one sees a giant chicken made of recycled orange traffic safety cones in the neighborhood.

Since Wood's home sits right in the heart of historic Riverside, he applied for a Certificate of Appropriateness from the Jacksonville Historic Preservation Commission, which granted it Jan. 25.

"The Giant Chicken is the only piece of yard art that I am aware of that has been given a COA in the Riverside Avondale Historic District," said Wood, whose yard was once graced by a 17-foot-tall tipi (teepee) made 16 years ago by Wood's brother, Darry Wood, a widely recognized builder of quality tipis. "The tipi received a COA under the provision for temporary structures, not as yard art. Temporary structures may be erected for no more than 30 days per year, not more than 10 days consecutively, and must meet certain size and setback requirements," said Wood.

The Hemming Park fountain where Snacker was most recently on display has also been the site for Sergeant Quackers, a giant yellow rubber duck for OneSpark 2013; Colonel Crackers, an oversized replica of a Goldfish cracker for OneSpark2014, and the Shark in the Park, an open-jawed shark for OneSpark 2015. All three sculptures were created by students of Dr. Jenny Hager, associate professor of sculpture at the University of North Florida, and commissioned by Wood.

"We are looking forward to having new sculptures in the park in months to come," said Wood, founder and board president of Friends of Hemming Park.

When asked what might be in store next for the fountain, the City's Chief of Recreation and Community Programming, Keith Meyerl, said with a laugh, "I'd like to see a jumbo shrimp in there."



Snacker takes flight from Hemming Park to transportation to her new home in Riverside.

Working group established to evaluate 2030 Mobility Plan's first five years

By Kate A. Hallock
Resident Community News

T.R. Hainline, Ortega Forest resident and attorney and shareholder at Rogers Towers, has been named as chair of the Mobility Plan Working Group, a joint appointment by the Office of the Mayor and the City Council President.

The group was formed to evaluate the 2030 Mobility Plan, established in 2010, and Chapter 655 of the Ordinance Code with respect to implementation of the 2030 Mobility Plan.

The 2030 Mobility Plan describes a mobility fee system, outlining land use and transportation strategies to support and fund mobility within Jacksonville, according to a presentation developed in April 2010 by the Planning and Development Department.

The presentation noted plan objectives would include supporting a variety of transportation modes, reducing vehicle miles traveled, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, promoting a compact and interconnected land development form, and improving the health and quality of life for Jacksonville residents.

The plan assesses mobility fees on new developments and provides fee reductions to developers based on a variety of actions, among them bicycle and sidewalk

network completion. The 2030 Mobility Plan also has a strategy for urban design, incorporating safe and attractive pedestrian-oriented infrastructure, transit-oriented design features, consideration of the interface between street design and building frontages, and context-sensitive parking facilities.

An ordinance passed in 2011 provides for an evaluation every five years by the Planning and Development Department, which may recommend appropriate amendments to the Mobility Plan and to Chapter 655.

The working group is tasked with providing the Mayor and the Council with recommendations for action by the legislative and executive branches within 90 days of receiving the report. The Transportation Planning Division expects to commence group meetings this spring, according to Tia Ford, public information officer for the City of Jacksonville.

Joining Hainline in the group are Robert Rhodes of Avondale, Rick Morales of Ortega, Andrew Dickson of San Marco, as well as Staci Rewis, a resident in the Baymeadows area, and Rajesh Chindalur, a Deerwood resident.

Council President Lori Boyer, of San Marco, will serve as the Council Member Representative in the group.

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5 Points Wendy's signage almost 'cut down to size'

Rezoning to PUD approved

By Kate A. Hallock
Resident Community News

Although the fast-food restaurant may be a 5 Points institution, due to the fact it has been in the neighborhood for 43 years, residents, city organizations, and members of Riverside Avondale Preservation are less than thrilled about the effect its new design will have on the neighborhood's historic ambiance.

"The proposed signage for the Wendy's in Historic 5 Points is just too big," read a statement from City Beautiful Jax, a non-profit established in 1989 to advocate vigorous enforcement of ordinances pertaining to signage, landscaping and other visual enhancements.

The current Wendy's drive-thru restaurant, erected in 1974 at 2006 Park St., will be razed and the new structure will conform to the current footprint, which also includes a drive-thru.

While embracing the renovation of the decades-old burger joint, RAP and nearby property owner Jay Gladding weren't thrilled with Wendy's new look, rolled out in 2012 in an attempt to move the brand from the image of a hamburger stand to a fast-casual restaurant.

At issue is the overall design, including signage and lighting, which had RAP and the Riverside Avondale Zoning Overlay at odds with the corporate fast-food giant.

Since July 2016, RAP has worked with Steve Diebenow, the local attorney representing property owners Frederick and Daniel Bowen and franchisee Meritage Hospitality Group, to move the design away from its modern visual to one more appropriate to a historic neighborhood.

On March 6, the day before the Land Use and Zoning Committee meeting, District 14 Councilman Jim Love met with Diebenow, RAP's Nancy Powell, Gladding, and representatives from Wendy's, to work out the resolution, which LUZ approved as an amendment to the Planned Unit Development (PUD) description.

One of the sticking points, and ultimately one of few concessions by Wendy's, was to change the 43-foot-tall red "blade" – a vertical panel on which the name and logo is placed – to a 24-foot-tall wood-tone blade, although still six feet taller than zoning requirements.

Because the property owners filed for a PUD, they were able to avoid applying for administrative deviations for the blade.

Additionally, the externally lighted monument sign originally designed to be 10 feet in height will still be almost one-and-a-half



The monument sign at the corner was approved for a 7-foot height, including the brick base. The height of the sign depicted above is 10 feet.

"Adherence to the standards set forth in the Overlay is really important because projects like this are an opportunity to affect change in the district."

— Tracey Arpen, attorney, City Beautiful Jax

times the 5-foot height requirement. The 4-foot-high by 8-foot-wide sign will rest on top of a 3-foot-high brick wall at the corner of Park and Margaret Streets.

Both the Planning Department and the Planning Commission had recommended limiting the size of the monument sign to the required 5-foot height. The Planning Commission however, did not agree with the Planning Department's condition prohibiting internal illumination of the signs.

The Zoning Code calls for exterior illumination only, and with the final compromise, the current signs are all specified to be internally illuminated, including the drive-thru signs. It was an agreement RAP was not entirely pleased with.

"The compromise reached on the signage is not something we took lightly," said Nancy Powell, RAP Zoning Committee chair. "We feel that the trade-offs result in a better possible outcome."

During the March 7 LUZ hearing, Attorney Tracey Arpen commented on behalf of City Beautiful Jax that while it was pleased a resolution had been worked out, its board of directors had unanimously passed a resolution opposing any version of the ordinance that did not include a reduction of the height of the signs and on the issue of internal illumination.

"It's important that the performance standards in zoning overlays be met. The Overlay itself says that requirements for parking, landscape and other performance standards shall be strictly enforced," said Arpen. "This is a perfect example of the appropriate time to require specific enforcement when you have complete demolition and reconstruction of the site."

Matt Schellenberg, District 8 Councilman, asked Arpen if City Beautiful Jax was more accepting of the project with the compromises as noted.

"We certainly would not stand in the way of the compromise that has been worked out," said Arpen. "I just wanted to raise the point that when you have an Overlay, adherence to the standards set forth in the Overlay is really important because projects like this are an opportunity to affect change in the district."

City Council rubber-stamped the amended bill, 2016-674, on March 14, voting 19-0 in favor.

"We welcome the redevelopment of the Wendy's. It's in a critical location at 5 Points corner," said Powell. "We appreciate that Wendy's took the time to hear us, to work to improve the original plan with a more compatible building, the addition of the brick knee wall, and an improved site plan with space for better landscaping."

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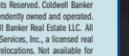
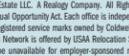
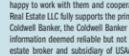


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Another step completed for removal of derelict boat

By Kate A. Hallock
Resident Community News

City Council has approved three grant agreements to appropriate nearly \$53,000 to remove three derelict vessels, including one in the Ortega River, from Jacksonville waterways.

Ordinance 2017-99 authorizes the Small-Scale Derelict Vessel Removal Project Agreement between the City of Jacksonville and the Florida Inland Navigation District

(FIND) for \$30,000; a grant of \$11,275 from the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) Florida Boating Improvement Program, and an FWC Derelict Vessel Removal grant of \$8,625.

This last grant will help fund the removal of *Class Action* from the Ortega River; the City is required to match 25 percent or \$2,875 to cover the \$11,500 cost of removal.

Class Action sank in the Ortega River nearly a year ago after taking on water. The owner, who was purportedly on his way

to a boatyard for maintenance, was unable to bail the water and raise the 51-foot motor vessel.

The other two derelict vessels are abandoned shrimp boats at the mouth of the Trout River east of U.S. 17/Main Street and south of the Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens.

The grants require the City to complete the removal projects before receiving reimbursement from FIND and the FWC. The projects are being managed by Robert Skalitzy, chief of the Natural and Marine

Resources Division of the Parks, Recreation and Community Services Department.

The next step is procurement of bids, and the chosen contractors (one for the Trout River vessels and one for the Ortega River) will be responsible for removal, salvage of parts, and destruction of the remains, which will be taken to a landfill, according to Jim Suber, Waterways Coordinator for the City of Jacksonville. With nearly 35 vessel removals under his belt, Suber will coordinate the removal activities.

Lecture planned on zoning pitfalls

The unintended pitfalls of the Riverside Avondale Zoning Overlay will be the topic of a lecture on urban core development sponsored by the First Coast Chapter of the American Planning Association.

The lecture will highlight the use of Planned Unit Development (PUD) rezoning in the Riverside Avondale Overlay as an unintended complication with the implementation of the overlay district. It will take place at The Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd, 1100 Stockton St., Friday, April 7, 8:30 to 11 a.m.

Riverside Avondale Preservation Executive Director Adrienne Burke will speak on the economic value of historic preservation.

Although the audience is primarily planners, it is open to the public at a cost of \$10 per person. Tickets may be purchased at www.eventbrite.com.

Vitti seeks school superintendent job in Detroit

Dr. Nikolai Vitti, Duval County Superintendent of Schools and a former San Marco resident, has informed the school board that he has been named a finalist to become superintendent of the Detroit Public School system.

“On behalf of the Duval County School Board and as chair, we respect his interest for the position, the potential opportunities that await him, and his desire to return home,” said Duval County School Board Chairman Paula D. Wright in an email statement.

“Dr. Vitti has family ties in the area, and while there has been no final decision, I am confident he will remain committed to our students through this process regardless of the outcome. We appreciate Dr. Vitti’s dedication to our school system. I assure you, all members of the Duval County School Board and district faculty will remain focused on the work of providing educational excellence every day,” Wright said.

Trey Csar, president of the Jacksonville Public Education Fund, expressed sorrow at the thought Vitti might leave Jacksonville.

“I will never forget the first time I met Nikolai Vitti and learned, first hand, of his tremendous passion and motivation to make sure that every child, no matter who they are or where they live, has the opportunity to, as he likes to say, live up to their God-given potential,” said Csar, a Riverside resident.

“Under Dr. Vitti and the school board’s leadership, our district graduation rate is at an all-time high and no longer the lowest of Florida’s urban districts. On a personal level, I am happy for Dr. Vitti to potentially bring that commitment and expertise to his hometown. On a professional level, I know, should he be offered and accept this position, I would join city leaders, parents, and public education advocates in being terribly sad to see him leave,” Csar said.



Dr. Nikolai Vitti

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The former Edgewood Bakery will be the site for a new 191-seat French Pantry restaurant in Murray Hill.

French Pantry developer takes first step toward new Murray Hill business

By *Kate A. Hallock*
Resident Community News

John Valentino, IV, owner of Pie High Real Estate Holdings, LLC – which includes Mellow Mushroom, Burrito Gallery and French Pantry restaurants across Jacksonville – received the green light with no conditions from the Planning Commission March 23 to put a new French Pantry in Murray Hill.

Valentino had purchased the property and building of the former Edgewood Bakery, a 69-year-old Murray Hill icon, in February 2016 for \$700,000, with the intention of putting in his second French Pantry restaurant. He went before the Planning Commission to get approval for three applications: a zoning exception, an administrative deviation, and a waiver.

The zoning exception sought outside sales and service/retail as well as service of alcoholic beverages at the proposed 191-seat restaurant, including open-air garden seating in the corner courtyard at Post Street and Edgewood Avenue.

The administrative deviation sought a reduction in parking spaces from 54 to 40 on site, a reduction in minimum landscape requirements from 2,915 to 2,474 square feet, and a reduction in backyard buffer from 15 to 3 feet. The requested deviation for parking includes three spaces for motorcycles as well as space for bicycles. There are also nine

parking spaces directly in front of the building along Edgewood Avenue.

The landscape deviation of nearly 500 square feet is required to allow for some of the off-street parking. The reduction in yard setback from 15 to 3 feet will be ameliorated by the use of a 6-foot fence or 5-foot ever-green hedge to be erected between the onsite parking and the adjacent property on the southwest edge of the former bakery site.

The third application was a waiver of minimum distance requirements for a liquor license, from 500 to 225 feet. The proposed restaurant, at 1012 Edgewood Ave. South, is within 500 feet of two churches and two worship centers, none of which were present to oppose the application.

The Murray Hill Preservation Association did not oppose the applications, stating it was pleased to see additional business on Edgewood Avenue.

Since Valentino is not seeking a change in zoning, the project does not need to go before either Land Use and Zoning Committee or the City Council. With the Planning Commission's approval, Pie High Real Estate Holdings can take the next step – renovating the property – toward opening French Pantry number two.

“We are clear to proceed,” said Valentino. “We will be remodeling the current space and will not likely start any construction until late this year with a proposed opening sometime in 2018.”

First Watch planned for Brooklyn/Riverside

By *Marcia Hodgson*
Resident Community News

First Watch, the “daytime” café, which has three locations already in Jacksonville, is coming to Brooklyn Station.

The breakfast-brunch-and-lunch restaurant will take over the more than 4,000-square-foot free-standing building that formerly housed the Corner Bakery Café at 192 Riverside Ave., said Eric Davidson, a spokesman for Regency Centers, which owns the shopping center.

First Watch has signed a 10-year lease deal, and will begin construction on the restaurant location this summer. In addition to the Brooklyn restaurant, the restaurateur is also currently building outposts on Southside Boulevard and in the Shoppes at Bartram Park.

“Jacksonville is a strategic part of our continued growth in Florida, and we are excited to continue our expansion with these high-profile locations,” said Matthew Livingston, southeast director of real estate for First Watch.

Presently the chain, which is based in Bradenton, Florida, has three other locations in the Jacksonville area – Mandarin, Southside, and in Jacksonville Beach.

The Corner Bakery Café at Brooklyn Station was one of two such restaurants in Jacksonville that closed suddenly without notice in early December 2016. The other location was on Bonnevall Road off Butler Boulevard. Both locations had opened in 2014. The two Corner Bakery restaurants were owned by Lee Wesley Group LLC, which is headquartered in Orlando with offices in Jacksonville.

“Economic conditions and other factors often force a restaurant to close, and these

are circumstances that are difficult to control,” said Breana Whalen of Fishman Public Relations in Illinois in a prepared statement on behalf of The Corner Bakery. “Restaurant sites that might have seemed ideal when first opened can become less desirable locations, due to changes in traffic flow, nearby construction or even a shift in the primary commercial area.”

“We think First Watch will be an excellent addition to the retail mix in Brooklyn Station as well as for Riverside,” said Carrie Smith, a Riverside resident and managing director for Franklin Street, a commercial real estate company.

Brooklyn Station and 220 Riverside have become a destination for both residents and daily commuters who work in the area, and First Watch’s “daytime café” concept is a good fit for this location, she said.

“There was a lot of competition with other restaurants and retailers for this space, which tells us the former tenant’s experience may be specific to only them. We have done a tremendous amount of research and market analysis related to this location before making the commitment,” Smith continued.

“First Watch is confident in the location and so am I. The center fills an interesting gap nestled between downtown and Riverside and is easy to reach for business people and residents. First Watch’s concept is a little different than the previous restaurant – First Watch has full service as opposed to counter service, focuses on breakfast, brunch, or lunch anytime during its opening hours and the concept touts its healthy and nutritious cooked-to-order offerings. While not based here, the concept has become a go-to ‘neighborhood’ spot in its other locations across the city,” she said.

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Riverkeeper serious about fighting dredging project

By Marcia Hodgson
Resident Community News

After five years of negotiations with the Jacksonville Port Authority and the Army Corps of Engineers, the St. Johns Riverkeeper is ready to take off the gloves and file a lawsuit within 30 days regarding the proposed St. Johns River dredging project, said Riverkeeper Lisa Rinaman.

Rinaman discussed the dredging issue and two other legislative issues, which will seriously impact the health of Jacksonville's main waterway, during a talk sponsored by the San Marco Preservation Society March 14 at Preservation Hall.

In April 2014, the Corps issued its final environmental impact statement for the Jacksonville Port Authority's (JAXPORT) proposal to dredge 13 miles of the St. Johns River from Mayport to the Dames Point Bridge. The plan is to widen and deepen the waterway from 40 feet to 47 feet so that the larger cargo ships transiting the Suez Canal and the expanded Panama Canal can deliver shipments to JAXPORT terminals. In its statement, the Corps found the plan, which would enable Jacksonville to be the first U.S. East Coast port of call for the vessels, "economically justified" and environmentally acceptable," according to Dredging Today.Com.

However, in her talk in San Marco, Rinaman said a recent new study by a retired CSX professional "peeled back the onion," calling into question the Corps' findings and suggesting the benefits of the dredging may be "over-exaggerated."

"The Army Corps only looked at the redemption costs to shippers. That is the only

economic measure they looked at. They haven't studied the regional impact and only looked at the job projections with JAXPORT. The new study found JAXPORT's numbers don't add up," she said. "Before we do a billion-dollar project with public money that will damage our river, let's have some public conversation about it."

"The wetlands are the kidneys of our river," Rinaman continued, noting that widening and deepening the river will allow salt water to intrude further inland, burning submerged grasses and trees, and harming fish and wildlife. "If we allow this we will lose the bio filters of the river and its tributaries. It hurts the river from a recreational and commercial point of view," she said.

Rinaman also said that early in the dredging negotiations, the Corps had offered an \$80 million mitigation package. "One of the most controversial and exciting things in it was the restoration of the Ocklawaha River," she said, referring to the largest tributary of the St. Johns, which was dammed in 1968. Bowing to political pressure, the Corps later reduced its mitigation offer to less than \$3 million, adding that it would also buy conservation land, she said.

"Conservation land in itself does not offset damage to the river. It does not provide resources – biofilter or capacity or habitat. It protects the status quo," she said, noting the Corps indicated it would "buy" Pelotes Island as part of the mitigation agreement. "The island is already in conservation and was part of the mitigation agreement with JEA when it built its [coal-fired] power plants [in the 1980s], she said. "It is of no benefit to the St. Johns River."

"One of the biggest issues in Central Florida is that they are running out of drinking water. Instead of focusing on sustainable water conservation, they want to pump more than 160 million gallons of water from the St. Johns River every day."

— Lisa Rinaman, Riverkeeper

Also of concern to The Riverkeeper is a proposed amendment to Senate Bill 10. Submitted by State Senator Rob Bradley (Rep.) of Fleming Island and the Appropriations Subcommittee on Environment and Natural Resources, the bill shifts funds from the state's Land and Acquisition Trust Fund, meant for buying conservation land, to acquiring land for water supply development, she said. The amended bill would encourage surface and groundwater withdrawal projects and unsustainable growth, particularly in Central Florida, while not encouraging water conservation, she said.

"One of the biggest issues in Central Florida is that they are running out of drinking water. Instead of focusing on sustainable water conservation, they want to pump more than 160 million gallons of water from the St. Johns River every day," Rinaman said, noting Jacksonville Mayor Lenny Curry also opposes this plan. Pumping water from the river and springs at such a high rate will allow further salt water intrusion in Jacksonville, with damage to grasses and trees already visible on the Ortega River, Goodby's Creek, and Christopher Creek, to name a few, she said.

Of course, the Riverkeeper's purpose is to fight the water pollution caused by fertilizers and leaky septic tanks, she said. One

silver lining to the recent disastrous algae bloom on the Indian River, which one scientist termed was "as toxic as snake venom," is that it forced government officials in Tallahassee to recognize its economic ramifications, she said.

Also of concern is House Bill 17, which changes the Florida Constitution's Home Rule amendment, she said. It aims to strip away the rights of local citizens and municipalities to govern themselves by shifting power to the state government. Rinaman said her organization is waiting to see how this would affect local fertilizer ordinances and other protections for the St. Johns, which are currently in effect.

With the federal government's recent plans to eviscerate the Environmental Protection Agency and other state-wide environmental reversals that have taken place in the last five years, Rinaman said it often seems the Riverkeeper is fighting a losing battle, but she said her organization and its volunteers intend to "celebrate every positive step going forward."

"If we work together, we can give the St Johns River a voice, give the Ortega River a voice, give Goodby's Creek a voice, and all these other tributaries a voice," she said. "If we stay connected and we collaborate, we can make a difference."



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Riverside Ophthalmologist, Dr. Charles Adams, welcomes new partner to serve patients

Warm and welcoming is the feeling you'll get when visiting Dr. Charles P. Adams, Jr., a longtime Riverside ophthalmologist. It begins with the ambience at his Riverside Avenue office, a beautifully restored historic home originally built in 1927. The office feels more like a cozy residential home than a doctor's office, with unique decorating touches in each exam room, and relaxing living room-type waiting rooms.

"We really want people to feel comfortable here and know that they're going to be well taken care of," Dr. Adams said of the Riverside practice.

To ensure that patients will continue to be well taken care of long into the future, Dr. Adams has recently taken on a partner in the practice, Dr. Brittany Ransom Agee. A graduate of LSU School of Medicine in New Orleans and UTSW Ophthalmology residency in Dallas, Dr. Ransom Agee joined the practice in February. She has been in private practice since 2015 and provides comprehensive ophthalmology services including cataract surgery, glaucoma and other eye disease management, diabetic eye exams, and dry eye treatment.

"What I noticed the first time I walked

in was the unique setting and historic charm of the office," she said. "Also, the staff are so warm and friendly which greatly enhances the patient's experience."

Dr. Ransom Agee said she has enjoyed meeting Dr. Adams' returning patients for the first time as well as getting to know new patients visiting the office. "I just love coming to work every day here and I am looking forward to forming lasting relationships with my patients," said Dr. Ransom Agee, whose husband, Shawn, is also an ophthalmologist in the community.

Dr. Adams received his medical degree from Emory University School of Medicine, then completed his ophthalmology residency at Georgetown and finally a corneal fellowship at Wills Eye Hospital in Philadelphia. He established his first practice in Jacksonville in 1984 and was one of only two corneal transplant specialists in the area.

"I'm from Atlanta originally, but my wife is from here. So the decision to settle in Jacksonville was an easy choice for the two of us," he said.

With a busy ophthalmology practice at the Riverside location, and a branch office in Fernandina Beach, Dr. Adams felt the time was right to bring in Dr. Ransom Agee. "It's wonderful to partner with somebody that has your same values and work ethic."

Both ophthalmologists noted it's

“We really want people to feel comfortable here and know that they’re going to be well taken care of.”

Dr. Charles P. Adams, Jr.

also beneficial to lean on one another's expertise to provide the highest level of eye care. "We have the ability to put our minds together to deliver the best treatment for our patients" said Dr. Ransom Agee. "We are proud to offer exceptional service and the latest technology to our patients."

"We both love what we do as ophthalmologists. We are privileged to help our patients achieve their best possible vision. There are few things as life-changing as the gift of sight – a sentiment that our patients often express to us. That is very rewarding and drives us every day to be better clinicians and surgeons," Dr. Adams said. "To be able to do what you love, in a place that you love, it's a wonderful combination. And together we are looking forward to serving the residents of this great community."

Visit Dr. Adams or Dr. Ransom Agee at 1034 Riverside Ave. or call (904) 354-2114 for an appointment. You can also check out the practice online at www.adamseyes.net.



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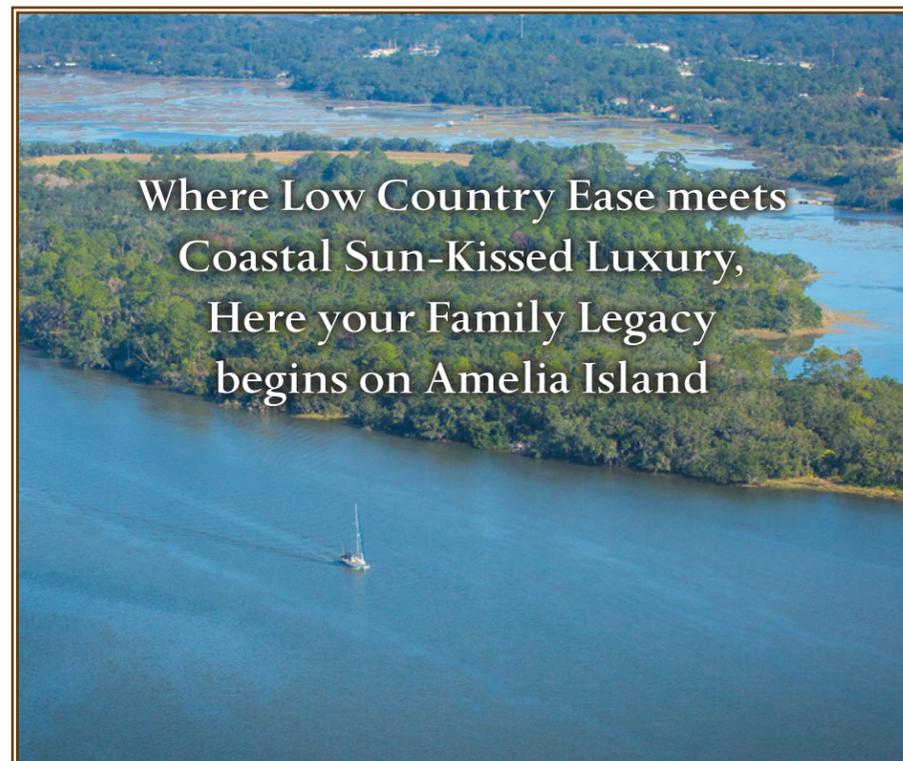
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2525 COLLEGE ST 1215

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3/2-2,054 sqft. SOLD by Leslie Fraleigh and Jane Slater! This home is on a great street in Ortega Forest. It has refinished hardwood floors, large bedrooms, plenty of storage and a spacious backyard. It has an eat-in kitchen and and large family room.



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1157 LAMBOLL AVE

3/2-1,438 sqft. SOLD by Natalie Reese! Have the best of both worlds with a new construction home in Murray Hill! The open concept, attached garage and modern finishes will draw you in while the warm and friendly neighborhood will keep you loving where you live.



4263 GARIBALDI AVE - \$330,000

5/2/1-2,429 sqft. PRICED TO SELL!! This beautiful two-story home is move-in ready. Traditional floor plan includes separate living room, dining room and den. Custom Wainscoting in living room and dining room with beautiful built in china cases.



4637 ORTEGA FOREST DR - \$485,000

3/3/1-3,082 sqft. Amazing Gourmet Kitchen! This wonderful Ortega Forest home has been completely renovated with new Pella windows, electrical, plumbing and roof-all within the past 5 years. The traditional home features formal living and dining rooms.



SOLD

1057 FAIRWOOD LN SOUTH

5/2-1,161 sqft. SOLD by Lisa Nguyen! New Construction just completed in September! A rare find in the up and coming Murray Hill neighborhood! It is located on a nice corner lot in Murray Hill close to the shops and restaurants.



SOLD

3009 OAK ST

2/2-2,148 sqft. SOLD by Allison Steilberg! Masterful renovation by a world class craftsman! Totally rebuilt from the inside out! Incredibly charming from the street and even more so inside, this home has the most gorgeous kitchen you've ever seen.



2970 ST JOHNS AVE 4E - \$475,000

3/2-1,822 sqft. Rarely Available! Spacious fully renovated move-in condition unit at Beau Rivage. Beautiful tree top and St Johns River views from almost every room as well as the balcony. Gleaming hardwood floors through out all areas except the baths.



2930 ST JOHNS AVE - \$659,000

3/2/1-2,823 sqft. Rare AVONDALE find! This beautiful 1927 brick home has been recently renovated & restored by the present owners PLUS includes a two story brick DUPLEX(1/1, living area, full kitchen in both upstairs & downstairs units, & separately metered).



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1524 DONALD ST

5/3-2,642 sqft. SOLD by Linda Maxwell and Sarah Leuthold! Great price for this much square footage in Avondale! Some updating needed - Ask about renovation financing. Walking/biking distance to shops of Avondale. A rare find offering 5 bedrooms and 3 bathrooms with 2 bedrooms and 2 bathrooms downstairs!



SOLD

4703 ASTRAL ST

3/1/1-1,727 sqft. SOLD by Natalie Reese! What a great find! All the charm and space you need! No detail has been spared - renovated kitchen, granite, gas appliances, professional Wolf range, indoor laundry, subway tile, marble vanity, original hardwoods and more.



SOLD

1233 EDGEWOOD AVE S

2/1-1,106 sqft. SOLD by Dylan Rigdon! This charming 1925 Avondale bungalow has gone through a careful, loving and meticulous whole-home renovation. No expense was spared on renovations which include a stunning gourmet kitchen.



1444 AVONDALE AVE - \$465,000

4/2/1-1,980 sqft. This historic home is a one of a kind. Situated on a corner lot on one of the most desirable streets in Avondale! Completely remodeled kitchen and bathrooms. Beautiful windows throughout make this home bright and cheerful.



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Master plan aims for zero bike/pedestrian deaths

By Marcia Hodgson
Resident Community News

When it comes to walking and bicycling, Jacksonville – which notches nearly 40 bicycle and pedestrian fatalities each year – has a reputation of being one of the most dangerous cities in the nation.

To transform the city into the kind of walkable, street-friendly place where future businesses may settle and millennials might want to live, Toole Design Group rolled out the final draft of its bicycle and pedestrian master plan in front of the city's Bike/Pedestrian Steering Committee March 27 downtown in the Ed Ball Building.

Addressing city government department heads and representatives from other interested agencies, Andy Clarke, director of strategy for the Toole Design Group, said the bottom line to making the 119-page master plan work was to adopt a bold "Vision Zero Policy" to help change the city's culture when it comes to bicycling and walking.

"A Vision Zero Policy says no loss of life is acceptable on Jacksonville streets and the responsibility for changing that dynamic is not just to exhort people into wearing brighter clothing or to pay more attention to when they cross the street," Clarke said. "That simply isn't enough. As long as we continue to excuse or explain away the terrible crash history we have here, it becomes really difficult to take a plan and implement it. A Vision Zero Policy takes it out of the realm of being a pedestrian/bicycle master plan – a special interest document – and puts it into the realm of a public safety, public health plan."

"Humans make mistakes, and we need to create a safe system so when mistakes are made, they are not fatal."

— Andy Clarke, Toole Design Group
director of strategy

First developed in Sweden, Vision Zero Policy is an international approach to addressing traffic safety in a different way, Clarke said, adding it prioritizes roadway engineering and the physical environment as ways to make sure people use the transportation system safely.

"Humans make mistakes, and we need to create a safe system so when mistakes are made, they are not fatal," he said, noting New York City implemented the approach in 2014 and has seen its number of crashes drop to the lowest on record in each of the past three years.

Fundamental to a successful Vision Zero Policy is building or retrofitting roads and sidewalks with various facilities such as barriers, dedicated bike lanes, crosswalks, lane reductions, medians, or rectangular rapid flash beacons (RRFBs) to diminish the chance of accidents between pedestrians, cyclists, and motor vehicles. Where this is not possible, speed must be reduced to ensure pedestrians and cyclists survive accidents when they happen.

"We need to make sure there is no opportunity for motorists to hit them at a speed where we know people will die," Clarke said, adding that only one out of 10 pedestrians/bicyclists will survive a crash at 45 mph, while nine out of 10 do survive at 20 mph. "You can't have people barreling down the street at 45 and 55 mph. If you aren't prepared to slow traffic down, you need to instead create a safe system for pedestrians and bicyclists," he said.

In implementing the master plan, the Toole Design group recommends the city begins with four projects: 1) a Soutel Drive road diet; 2) installing pedestrian and bicycle enhancements in the Phoenix neighborhood; 3) accelerating the installation of RRFBs citywide; and 4) making roads in Riverside and San Marco, which will hook up with the new multi-use path across the Fuller Warren Bridge, ready to ensure connectivity between both sides of the St. Johns River.

"To see this rolled out in the foreseeable future would send a strong signal to those neighborhoods where these changes are appropriate," Clarke said.

It's important to immediately follow through on fixing pedestrian/bike infrastructure so residents in the crash-heavy Soutel and Phoenix neighborhoods know the city is serious about their welfare, he said. The Toole Group also identified more than 80 locations for RRFBs and knows the city has funding for 30, which it recommends it installs in a timely manner. Preparing roads for the new I-95 dedicated multi-use bridge will be a "real catalyst of the city's commitment" to the master plan and the bike/pedestrian "trail," which is planned to

loop through north San Marco and the Southbank, he said.

The Toole Group made seven key recommendations to help create an institutional framework essential to bringing the master plan to life: 1) Create a baseline of data through bike counts, and bike parking downtown when new development and redevelopment occurs; 2) Implementing projects quickly; 3) Adopt new consistent, coordinated, and current road standards, and making sure all transportation agencies citywide use them as well as train consultants and developers in the standards; 4) High-level coordination among the multi-transportation agencies twice a year to make sure all projects and schedules are on the same page; 5) Make a funding commitment of a recommended \$10 million to independent projects and coordinated incidentals from a wide variety of city, state and federal funding sources; 6) Implementation oversight to make sure metrics are gathered, measured and met to document more people are walking/bike riding, fatal crashes are diminishing, and the master plan is moving ahead; 7) Adopt a Vision Zero Policy to change the culture of the city.

"Vision Zero Policy helps you ask the right questions, collect the right data, and develop the right approach in eliminating fatalities," Clarke said. "Unless you do that, the quality-of-life benefits we want to see in walkability and bicycling over the next decade will not materialize. If Jacksonville is going to compete in economic opportunities, offer great quality of life, and attract the millennials that are driving the bus these days, this is what it has to do."

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Miramar Animal Hospital has been a staple in the San Marco community for over 30 years, originally opened by Dr. Dawne Lazar in 1986. After being an integral part of the practice for 3 years, Dr. Greg Stacey and his wife, Dr. Jennifer Ferrin, purchased the animal hospital in March 2016. This past year has been filled with such great response from the community, and we would like to show appreciation to everyone in the San Marco area. Please join us for an afternoon filled with food, drink, and door prizes. Come meet our staff and check out the changes we have made to better serve you.

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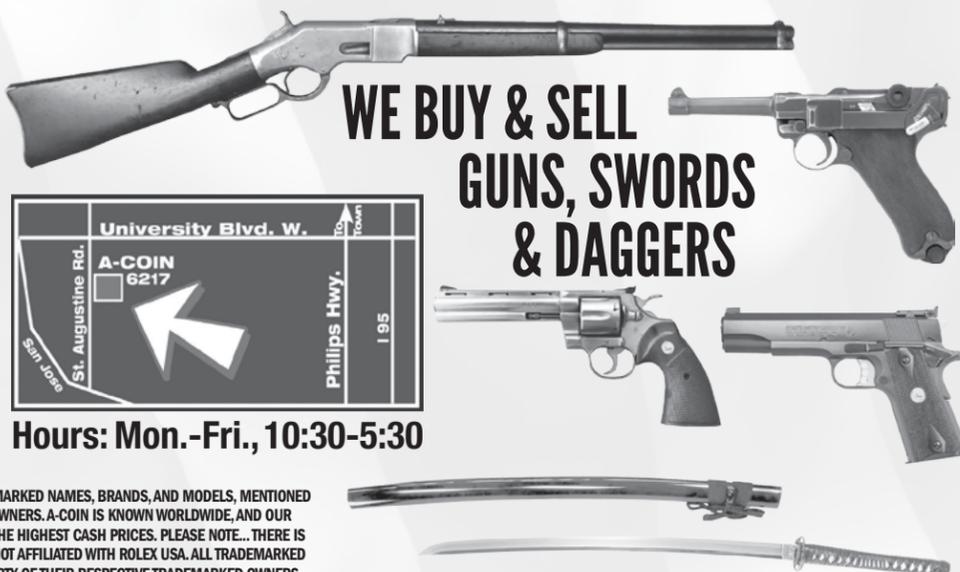
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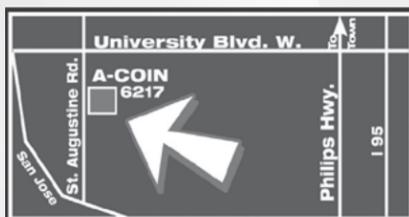
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Westside treasure trove yields name brands at unbelievable prices

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All over Jacksonville, real estate agents, landlords, production companies, newly established businesses, parents of college-bound children and others are finding there's one destination that's sure to have top brands at steep discounts – Viktor's Payless and Grocery at 6612 San Juan Avenue.

Entrepreneur Viktor Gjergji, the man behind the name, is a savvy buyer and dealer-maker who has harnessed the power of social media to get the goods out the door at unheard of prices.

Gjergji's selling power comes from his connections with government auctions and seizures, unclaimed freight, and overstocks from other retailers. Buying new, unused goods through these outlets, Viktor's Payless can provide endless deals on fine furniture, outdoor furniture, and high-end mattresses and box springs, as well as myriad grocery, personal and sportswear items.

"Drexel, Barclay Butera, Pulasky, Collezione-Europa – any high-end brand that exists, we have," said Gjergji, who enjoys passing those steep discounts on to nonprofits, churches, and even college students.

"Not everyone can afford to buy fine furniture, but they can here," he said. "We do a lot for college kids and homeless shelters, Lutheran Social Services, and churches."

Gjergji's honesty and friendly, helpful service extends to customers from all walks

of life, and reflects his love for both country and community. "You can work anywhere in the world...but it doesn't pay off like it does here," said Gjergji, who immigrated to the United States in 1991, started as one of the staff and then worked his way into the business. "I'm living the American dream."

Filling big ticket orders with high-end furniture is part of that dream, yet nothing new to Gjergji, whose clients include the previous State Attorney's office, which he furnished with seven truckloads of desks, chairs, sofas and tables. "We sell to judges, lawyers – anyone born and raised in Jacksonville will know this hiding spot."

Viktor's not only furnishes steep discounts for the legal set and real estate staging services, but for anyone who wants half off or more on fabulous, exclusive furniture brands.

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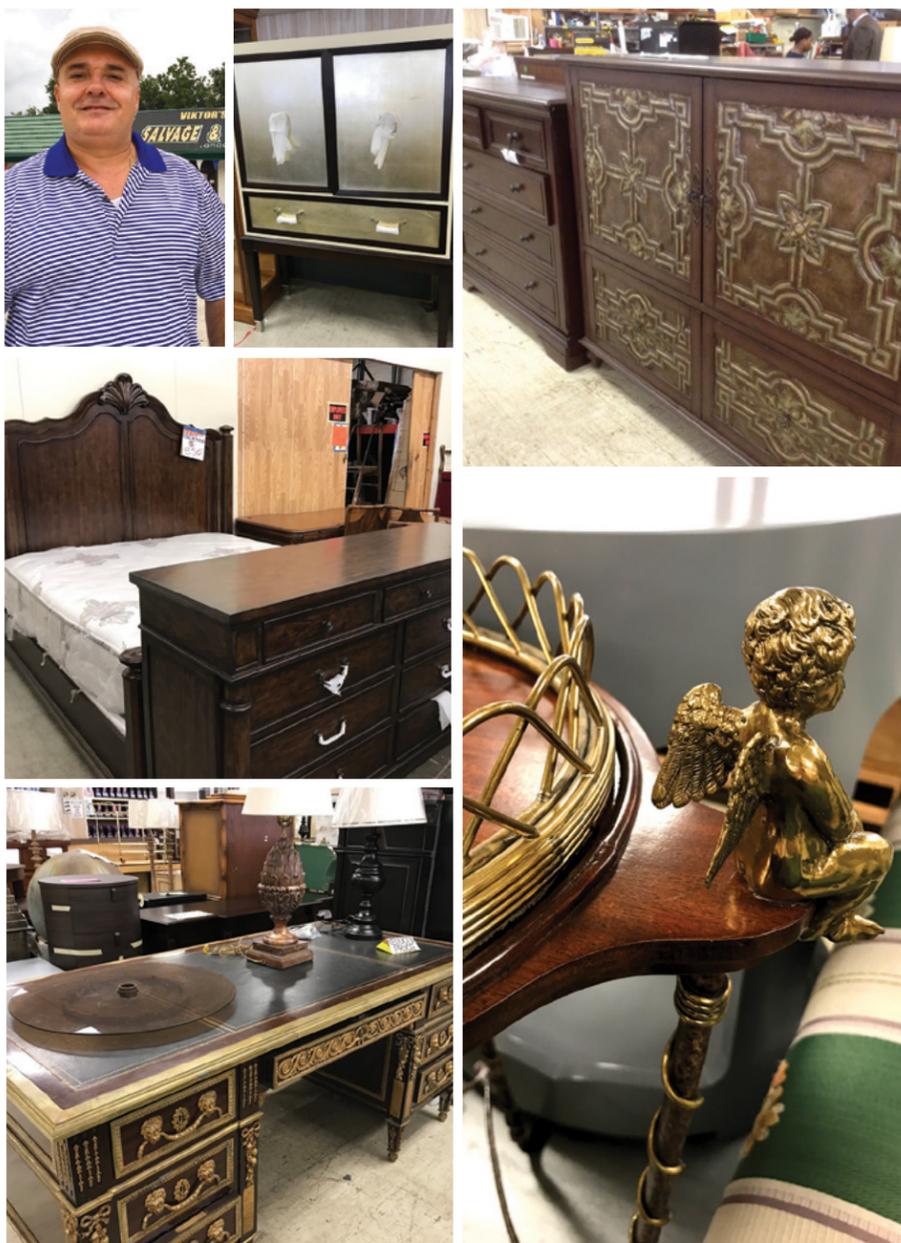
Need a new Lilly Pulitzer bed set for your master bedroom, or a classy, Michael Amini credenza for the dining room of your vacation home? Viktor's has what you want.

Is your deck devoid of a rotisserie grill and comfy outdoor furniture? Viktor's has you covered with deep discounts on the best.

Gjergji's clientele all know one thing – no day is the same at Viktor's Payless. Shipments of goods arrive daily, and every trip to the store can yield a delightful surprise or two to be found among the newly-stocked items.

Viktor's Payless and Grocery has everything you need for every aspect of your life, indoors and out – all at steep discounts, of course.

Viktor's Payless & Groceries, 6612 San Juan Ave., (904) 786-5424, Tuesday-Saturday 9:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.





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Morning Star High School seeking new friends



JC Demetree Jr., Robert T. Shircliff, Louis V. Walsh

Recognizing a need to provide a secondary education for children of the Catholic faith who have learning disabilities, in its sixth decade Morning Star School started a high school program this past school year. Believing in the future, school leaders commenced construction without having the \$1.5 million needed by using savings and a loan from the Diocese of St. Augustine.

To benefit the "Building a Brighter Future" campaign, and help pay off the loan for the special education high school, Morning Star School has launched an initiative and is planning a gala. Although the school is part of the Catholic diocese, 50 percent of the students are not Catholic, according to Maria Johnson, development director.

"We have students from five counties at the school; we are not a neighborhood school and 80 percent of the kids are on a scholarship program," Johnson said. "The kids we serve do not fit into the regular school system because they learn differently and need more attention and special learning tools. Most schools cannot accommodate that. Our 12:1 teacher ratio is an important part of why we succeed."

Circle of Friends, the initiative chaired by well-known philanthropists Robert T. Shircliff, JC Demetree Jr., and Louis V. Walsh, founder of Guardian School, will help support and promote Morning Star High School. A cocktail party was held March 30 at Epping Forest Yacht and Country Club to toast the school, add charter members to the circle of supporters and begin the awareness campaign.

The gala, A Night on the St. Johns River, will be held April 8, at The Haskell Building, beginning at 6 p.m. and will include an auction.

MOVERS & SHAKERS

Rogers ends football career as winningest Florida coach

Legendary high school football coach Charles "Corky" Rogers of The Bolles School officially ended his coaching career with more wins, state titles, championship game appearances, Hall of Fame inductions and collegiate players than any coach in Florida.

Rogers, 73, who has led the football program at Bolles since 1989, announced his retirement due to medical reasons March 7 during a press conference in Bolles' McGehee Auditorium.

"I'm sitting in a chair. I'm not coaching. I'm not teaching. This isn't fair to the kids," he said. "I don't want to short them in any way. They need somebody who is active and able to do things."

Finishing his career with a 466-84-1 record, Rogers is the fifth winningest coach nationally. In 2011, he was the eighth coach in the history of high school football to reach 400 victories. During his 45-year career, he also holds the Florida state record for most state titles won among coaches with 10 and has racked up 83 playoff victories – 78 at Bolles alone, which is more than any coach in state history. In 2016, he led Bolles to its 17th appearance in the state championship, a state record.

A graduate of Robert E. Lee High School in Riverside, Rogers played football at Georgia Tech and attended National Football League training camps with the Baltimore Colts and Washington Redskins as a tight-end receiver. His first coaching job was at Ribault Junior High, where he served as



Corky Roger's family was on hand during a March 7 press conference at Bolles, where he announced his retirement. From left, Clint Drawdy, wife Linda Rogers, Corky Rogers, daughter Tracy Rogers Yost and grandson Mason Yost.

offensive coordinator before being appointed Head Coach at Lee High School in 1972. During his 17 years at Lee, he accumulated 10 consecutive district titles, a state record then, and a winning record of 141-39-1.

An impressive number of Rogers-coached athletes have gone on to play football at the collegiate level, including 156 at Bolles. He has also had 11 former players compete in the NFL.

Rogers is a member of the National High School Hall of Fame (2015), the Florida Sports Hall of Fame (2013), Robert E. Lee High School Alumni Hall of Fame (2013),

Gator Bowl Hall of Fame (2012), Florida High School Athletic Hall of Fame (2005), and the Florida Athletic Coaches Association Hall of Fame (2002). He has also earned numerous Coach-of-the-Year honors at the state level and was named National High School Football Coach of the Year for 2004-05 by the National High School Coaches Association.

"I am most proud of being a head coach for more than 44 years, and I never had a losing season," Rogers said. "If you have a good, solid program, you are going to have a successful team."

Nine Jacksonville Symphony musicians announce retirement

Nine Jacksonville Symphony musicians who have a total of 356 years of performing with the orchestra have announced their retirement at the end of the 2016-2017 season.

Of those retirees, five are from local neighborhoods. Lois Elnfenbein Gosa (violin) and Merryn Ledbetter Corsat (principal viola) are San Jose area residents. Claudia Minch (oboe and English horn) is an Avondale resident, Philip Pan (concertmaster) lives in Murray Hill, and Jeanne Majors (violin) is from Ortega.

Each of the musicians is looking forward to new challenges and experiences in retirement. For Gosa, it will be spending more time with her husband, mother, children and grandchildren.

Corsat enjoys walking, jogging and cycling along the Baldwin Trail, so retirement means more trips out west and more nature hikes.

Minch, who has 38 years with the Symphony, has traveling to see family, spending more time with her 90-year-old parents, and continuing her hobby of restoring antique dolls on her list.

Pan's list of activities is long and includes running, hiking, cooking, skiing, fencing, tinkering with cars, studying philosophy, and all things mechanical.

Majors, who has spent 50 years with the Jacksonville Symphony, plans to remain active in Prelude Chamber Music Camp and Festival, an organization she co-founded in 2002 to teach children and adults the joy of chamber music.

The other retirees include Deborah Heller (flute and piccolo), Lela LaBarbera (violin), Glynda Newton (violin), and Peter Wright (principal clarinet).



Front: Lela LaBarbera, Lois Gosa; middle: Philip Pan, Merryn Corsat, Claudia Minch, Glynda Newton; back: Deborah Heller, Jeanne Majors, Peter Wright

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Duval Ford opens ultra-modern facility

Nearly two years after its July 8, 2015 groundbreaking, Duval Ford held a “soft opening” March 22 for its brand-new multi-million-dollar facility at 1616 Cassat Ave. The grand reopening will be held in July as the 100-year-old dealership celebrates its state-of-the-art upgrades.

At the soft opening, guest speaker Councilman Tommy Hazouri highlighted the positive economic impacts of the company’s investment and presented a Mayoral Proclamation, designating March 22, 2017 as Duval Motor Company Day. Richard Tackett, Duval Ford general manager, spoke about the enhanced customer experience delivered by the dealership’s staff.

“This building is exactly what our customers deserve,” he said. “You have to come by and experience it.”



Hampton Graham accepts a Mayoral Proclamation from Councilman Tommy Hazouri on March 22. In the lineup are William Law, Mike Murdock, Richard Tackett, Hampton Graham, Tommy Hazouri, Ryan Bass, Bruce Armes

Duval Ford was officially appointed as a dealer by the Ford Motor Company on August 7, 1916. Hampton Graham, CEO and Chairman, and Alex Graham, Vice Chairman, are the fourth generation of the Scott-McRae Automotive Group, a family-owned company which also includes Duval Honda, Duval Acura, and Subaru of Gainesville.



Episcopal’s Trustee Emeritus John Donahoo Jr.

Baseball facility named for Ortega resident

A surprise dedication of the Episcopal School of Jacksonville’s new baseball training facility was held in honor of John Donahoo Jr. March 7.

Donahoo, an Ortega resident, arrived at the facility with his son, John Donahoo III, as varsity baseball players stood at either side of the entrance to Ray Downing Knight Field and greeted him as he saw his name on the new facility for the first time.

Director of Athletics Andy Kidd welcomed guests to the ceremony and shared that Donahoo had taught him many things about the history of the Episcopal athletic program.

“We often say here at Episcopal that we stand on the shoulders of the giants who built this place. Mr. Donahoo is one of those giants,” Kidd said.

After the dedication, Donahoo threw out the first pitch of the varsity game against Atlantic Coast High School.

Cummer Museum of Art & Gardens hires new program manager

The Cummer Museum of Art & Gardens has hired Tonya McCain as its new Program Manager. McCain earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Painting and Sculpture from Middle Tennessee State University. She worked for the Frist Center for the Visual Arts in Nashville, Tennessee, planning and executing museum programming, and managed the summer camp program for children.

McCain left the Frist Center to pursue a master’s degree in art education from Ohio State University, where her studies focused on applying principles of art education, narrative inquiry, and criticism in a museum setting

McCain believes that the arts hold a unique power to evoke growth, and hopes that her time spent with the Cummer Museum will promote that growth by supporting and contextualizing the world-class art that the Museum proudly presents to the Jacksonville community.



Tonya McCain

Two inducted into Sewanee’s Order of Gownsmen

James Knox Kerr IV, son of Madeline and James K. Kerr III of Avondale and Emily Linen Sirbaugh, daughter of Leslie and Steve Sirbaugh of Ortega, were inducted into the Order of Gownsmen at the University of the South in Sewanee, Tennessee during the Opening Convocation Jan. 20.

The Order of Gownsmen is an academic honor society and a unique student government body among U.S. colleges and universities. Since 1875, the Order of Gownsmen has remained the body responsible for maintaining the spirit, traditions, and ideals of the University of the South. The wearing of the gown is both a sign of academic achievement and a promise to continue the ideals and traditions of the University.

Arbor Company recognized as leader in dementia care

The Arbor Company, with two locations in Jacksonville and one in St. Johns County – has been recognized as a Dementia Capable Society Leader by Dementia Care Specialists (DCS), a Milwaukee-based firm that assists long-term care providers in developing best-practice memory care.

The recognition highlights organizations and individuals committed to principles of person-centered care for people with dementia and those who care for them. Dementia Capable Society Leaders come from all areas of long-term care, from architecture and design firms to therapy agencies and home health care organizations.

In selecting The Arbor Company, DCS leaders cited the company’s dedication to ongoing staff training, including those at its Ortega, San Jose and Ponte Vedra locations.

The Arbor Company expanded its caregiver training program to include webinars and classroom training in topics that address specific challenges identified by the company’s caregiving teams.

Arbor’s in-depth training of its caregiving staff is just one component of the company’s comprehensive approach to memory care. Staff in Arbor’s memory care communities develop an individual plan of care for each resident.

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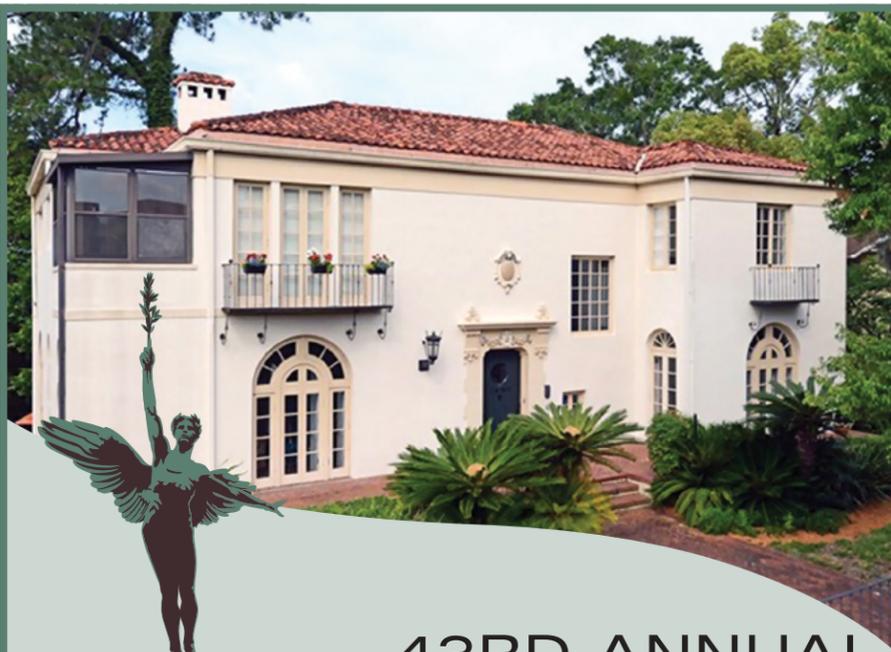
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Front: Toy Scott, Cathleen Lee, Winfield Duss, Lee Davis and Linda Shepherd; back: Bart Colbert, John Barry, Lee Norville and David Taylor

Norville Realty looks to future with location change

Norville Realty, established 31 years ago on Hamilton Street on the Westside, has moved to a new office at 5335 Ortega Blvd. “This move is a wonderful change for us and an exciting opportunity to continue our tradition of serving Northeast Florida with the utmost in integrity, professionalism and personal service,” said Lee Norville, founder.

“Our new location was also selected to give us the opportunity to recruit a few more great agents, and to give us better visibility and access to the communities in which we serve.

“We are also pleased to have our longtime friend and associate, John Barry, a semi-retired attorney, making the move with us,” he said.



Greene installed as Episcopal Head of School

The Rt. Rev. Samuel Johnson Howard, Episcopal Bishop of the Diocese of Florida with The Rev. Adam Green, head of school at Episcopal School of Jacksonville

Although he has been working as Head of School since the beginning of the school year, The Rev. Adam Greene of Ortega was officially installed as Head of the Episcopal School of Jacksonville during Episcopal’s annual Founder’s Day Chapel Service March 14.

The Rt. Rev. Samuel Johnson Howard, Bishop of the Diocese of Florida, presided over the installation. Greene is the third

Episcopal priest in the school’s history to be named Head of School.

Episcopal dioceses conduct installations when an ordained Episcopal priest assumes a leadership role in a parish or other church-affiliated institution.

Other priests who have served as Episcopal’s Head of School are The Rev. E. John Dyer, from 1981 to 1983, and The Rev. C. Robert Neilson, who served as interim head from 1989 to 1991.

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The Design Preview VIP Party is extra special this year and includes not one, but two, incredible locations. Start off the night at the Design House and end with dessert at an amazing historic riverfront home that has recently been fully restored. Tickets to the Preview Party include a Home Tour ticket. Get a sneak peek at these two homes, along with food, drinks, music and more!
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SATURDAY, APRIL 29TH AT 10:00 AM IN FRONT OF CITY CYCLE AT 2740 PARK STREET

The best way to really experience the beauty of our neighborhood is by foot or by bike. The ride will stop at many of the Home Tour’s featured residences and highlight historically important landmarks along the way. There is no charge to participate, but a Home Tour ticket is needed to enter the residences. The bike tour takes approximately three hours to visit all of the homes.

RAFFLE

THIS YEAR HOME TOUR RAFFLE PRIZES INCLUDE: A Local Sports Package, Amelia Island Get-away, Riverside Arts Market Basket, Salon Services at Redfields Salon, Two (Separate Winners) Honeywell Lyric Round Wi-Fi Thermostats & Professional Installation by Emergency Heat and Air (Valued At \$325 Each) & a Couch from Generation Us (Value \$895).

BE SURE TO PICK UP A RAFFLE TICKET TO WIN! Tickets are 1 for \$5, 3 for \$10, 6 for \$20 and can be purchased the weekend of Home Tour at ticketed tour stops and the RAP HQ at 2623 Herschel Street. Raffle tickets can also be purchased online as an add on to your Home Tour ticket.

WE LOVE OUR VOLUNTEERS!

Volunteers help make the Home Tour a success! Throughout the weeks leading up and the weekend of the event, volunteers help sell tickets, market the event, serve as House Captains and greet people in the homes. This year as a thank you for volunteering, you’ll be invited to a special volunteer party after the tour and entered to win a very special prize!
 FOR MORE INFORMATION, EMAIL INFO@RIVERSIDEAVONDALE.ORG OR CALL 904.389.2449.

DON'T DELAY IN PURCHASING TICKETS

Early bird prices are good through April 8, or sign up as a RAP member and you’ll keep the discount, as well as receive discounts on future events. Membership is a great way to get involved and help us continue our work on behalf of the neighborhood.

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Local Pen Women host UNF panel discussion

In honor of Women's History Month, members of the Jacksonville Branch of the National League of American Pen Women (NLAPW) took part in a panel discussion at the University of North Florida's Thomas G. Carpenter Library March 10. Several of the women on the panel are residents of Jacksonville's historic districts.

Introducing the speakers was Dr. Elizabeth Curry of Lakewood, dean of the Thomas Carpenter Library. Speaking on the panel were Jacksonville Pen Woman President Duncan Sawyer of Ortega, Pat Setser of Empire Point, Fletcher Shipp of Springfield, and Jan Atchley Bevan of Murray Hill. The program was moderated by Ted Centerwall of St. Nicholas, who serves as library services specialist at the UNF facility.

Setser, Florida's Pen Woman of the Year in 2011 and a past president of the group, outlined a short history of the National League, which is celebrating its 120th year.

Sawyer, a member of the first graduating class at the University of North Florida and a retired medical photographer at St. Vincent's Medical Center, Riverside, spoke about the importance carrying on the heritage of the Pen Women to "perpetuate its history for future generations."



Members of the Jacksonville Branch of the National League of American Pen Women who supported a panel discussion by the group Women's History Month March 10 at the Thomas G. Carpenter Library at the University of North Florida. Front: Dean Elizabeth Curry, Lisandra R. Carmichael, Francesca Tabor-Miolla, Siggie Buckley, Duncan Sawyer, Maria Atilano, Alla Centerwall. Back: Diane Rabideau-Wise, Jen Jones Murray, Jan Atchley Bevan, Susan D. Brandenburg, Fletcher Shipp, Mimi Pearce and Pat Setser.

Shipp, newsletter editor for the award-winning Jacksonville Revue, reprised her role as Eliza Wilbur Souvielle, a founding member of the Jacksonville Branch of NLAPW, and discussed the history of local chapter, which recently celebrated its 90th anniversary.

Bevan, branch vice president and an accomplished poet, pianist, and musical composer, rounded out the panel by telling her personal history of overcoming adversity, especially the challenge of being visually impaired since birth.



Lorna Bridgers, West Marine store manager

Local West Marine named Store of Year

While not the largest in square footage nor the highest in sales volume, the West Marine store located in the Roosevelt Square Mall is, however, simply the best.

Thanks to a high customer satisfaction rating for outstanding service as well as a variety of other performance metrics, the small but locally popular marine supply store was named West Marine's 2016 Best Store Overall out of more than 250 locations in the United States. Operating out of just 8,000 square feet, the store even bested West Marine's superstore in Ft. Lauderdale, which claims to be the yachting capital of the world.

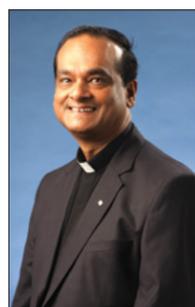
Local boaters, and transients who spend time at nearby marinas, enjoy the friendly nature of the store's employees, many of whom are boaters also. Store Manager Lorna Bridgers has run the Roosevelt Mall store for 16 of her 22 years with the California-based company, which will celebrate its 50th anniversary in 2018.

"She's the 'real deal,'" said Peter Roach, a sail boater who docks at The Marina at Ortega Landing.

Bridgers said her team and the support of their customers made the award possible, but it's not the first they've received. The store was also named Best in District in 2004, 2012 and 2015. The employees who helped the store achieve its honor include Bill Thompson, David Freeman, Frank Houghton, Terrie Beeson, Karen Jensen, Judy Cunningham, Owen Maszy, Jimmy Fewell, Will Montgomery, Gerry Sanchez, Mattie Thornton, Jerry Kautzman, Lee Bowman, Nikki Bowman, Ann Marie Misora and Dennis Pilla.

St. Paul's Catholic installs new pastor

Rev. George Vaniyapurackal was installed as the new pastor of St. Paul's Catholic Church, 2609 Park St., on February 26, following an interim period after the parish's former pastor, Father Silverio "Sal" Di Fazio, retired in mid-2016. The interim was served by Father Arulanantham Yagappan. Rev. Vaniyapurackal, who comes from Peruvanthanam, Kerala, India, is the ninth priest to serve St. Paul's since it was established in 1923.



Rev. George Vaniyapurackal

Immediately prior to this appointment, Rev. Vaniyapurackal served six months as parish administrator at St. Paul's after having worked as chaplain at St. Vincent's Medical Center in Riverside since February 2012. He also received certification as a chaplain in October 2015 by the National Association of Catholic Chaplains.

Herrick shares 'unstoppable' experience

Janet Herrick of Avondale, CEO and President of Onsite Environmental Consulting LLC, was a key speaker at the Women Business Owners 2017 signature event, UNSTOPPABLE, on March 16 at the University Center at the University of North Florida.



Janet Herrick

In her presentation, which she performed in the PechaKucha style, Herrick shared her personal experience of how her business survived the recession to an audience of more than 100 business owners. Her firm, which is located on Riverside Avenue, is a leading environmental company specializing in wetlands, gopher tortoises, Phase 1 ESAs and dune restoration.

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Riverside Arts Market celebrates 9th birthday

A community parade led by students from Ronan's School of Music kicked off the 9th birthday celebration of the Riverside Arts Market, located under the Fuller Warren Bridge at 715 Riverside Ave.

Opening ceremonies March 4 included brief remarks by Adrienne Burke, Riverside Avondale Preservation executive director; Wayne Wood, founder of RAM; District 14 Councilman Jim Love; Keith Holt, RAP board president; John Silveira, RAM senior market manager, and Kevin Miller, Bold City Brewery customer relations.

Traditionally, the first Saturday in March was known as "Opening Day" after two months of the smaller "Winter RAM."

Under new management as of May 2016, changes to the popular Saturday arts, crafts and produce market include a 50-week schedule, closed only the last two weeks in December; shorter hours, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.; First Saturday Brews, sponsored by Bold City Brewery, and yoga on the river stage at 9 a.m. every Saturday prior to the market opening.



Kevin Miller, Cindy Guy, Keith Holt, Liz Grebe, John Silveira, Adrienne Burke, Pamela Telis, Wayne Wood, District 14 Councilman Jim Love

Entrepreneurs open cell phone repair shop, invite families

A new cell phone repair shop has arrived in north Riverside to help users conquer their challenges on their mobile devices. The shop, an official METRO PCS and Boost Mobile vendor, is located in the plaza on the corner of McDuff and Post at 929 McDuff Avenue South, Suite 104.

Re-Konekt business partners, Sineth Chet and Chris Cantillo, have been re-designing the space, filling it with music and artistic graffiti-style art throughout the walled interiors. The two owners are hoping to provide an outlet for local kids to hang out and play arcade games.



Sineth Chet and Chris Cantillo

"Riverside is based on families...and we want to help them get their phones fixed and provide a hangout for kids in a safe place, without any problems," shared Cantillo.

The cell phone repair shop opened in late February and occupies space in the plaza that is anchored by a Dollar General store, Subway, and a laundry facility.

Overton named YMCA Volunteer of the Year

Former District 14 Councilman Jim Overton was named the YMCA of Florida's First Coast Volunteer of the Year at the 7th Annual Y-Bash Feb. 28.

Overton served nine years on the YMCA Metropolitan Board of Directors, including five years as the chairman. He also sat on the board of the Yates Family YMCA, now known as the Winston Family YMCA, from 1999 to 2006.

Overton has been an ardent supporter of quality of life issues in Jacksonville. Throughout his career with the City of Jacksonville, Overton has made major improvements to city parks and dedicated his service to downtown redevelopment and revitalization. Following three terms



Jim Overton

as councilman, Overton was elected Duval County Property Appraiser.

At this year's event, the Y announced its funding priorities for the following year and its goal to raise \$1.55 million. This year's four funding priorities include Creating Healthy Families and Communities; Making Kids of All Ages Safe in the Water; Academic and Life Achievement for Our Youth, and Helping Teens Become Leaders.

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Historic District residents' books on exhibit at Jax Book Fest

Three Riverside/Avondale residents, one Ortega and one former Ortega Forest resident were just some of the 150 authors who exhibited their books at the inaugural Jax Book Fest on March 25 at the Main Library downtown.

Exhibiting in the Nonfiction-Florida category was Timothy Gilmore, professor of literature and writing at Florida State College Jacksonville, creator of the website Jax Psycho Geo, and author of 13 books, including the recently published "The Devil in the Baptist Church," an expose of child abuse committed by the late Rev. Robert Gray, former pastor of Trinity Baptist Church.

Kathy Stark exhibited in the Nonfiction-Florida category her new book, "The Wilderness of North Florida's Parks," an illustrated exploration of the natural parks system in North Florida, which serves as a guide – and a tribute – to the expansive, unspoiled stretches of wilderness in Florida.

In the Fiction-Mystery category, author Jordan Logue shared the adventures of Lambert Van Poole, a fictional Jacksonville detective in the early 1900s. When he isn't writing, Logue is a civilian bailiff at the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office.

By day, Sara Hurd, writing as Elizabeth Raven and exhibiting in the Fiction-Romance category, is hospital manager for San Juan Animal Hospital. She is the author of Matanzas Moon, a paranormal romance series set in St. Augustine.

Nancy Blanton, formerly of Ortega Forest, is the author of two award-winning historical novels *Sharavogue*, and *The Prince of Glencurragh*, plus a non-fiction guide for



Nancy Blanton



Timothy Gilmore



Kathy Stark



Jordan Logue



Sara Hurd

personal branding. Since its July 2016 publication, *The Prince of Glencurragh* has won three state and national awards, and was a finalist in Amelia Island's 2017 Book Island Book Awards.

In addition to providing direct access to the large variety of authors, Jax Book Fest included presentations by authors of children's, teen and adult-level books; book sales and signings; workshops for aspiring authors, vendor fair, kids' activities and food trucks.

Woodlief attends art education conference in the Big Apple

Central Riverside Elementary School Visual Arts Teacher Terry Woodlief was among 7,000 educators, including 10 from Duval County, who attended the National Art Education Association's 70th anniversary conference in New York City, March 1-4, where she took a variety of workshops on the integration of the arts into core subjects.

"Hot topics were STEAM and Arts integration, advocacy and curriculum design," said Woodlief, of Avondale. "Professional development/conference costs are not typically funded by the district but I won a \$500 scholarship to cover conference expenses from our local professional organization, NeFAEA (North Florida Art Education Association), a nonprofit



Terry Woodlief

supporting arts education in northeast Florida. NeFAEA also provides scholarships to our students for art museum camps."

Natural health care studio open in Riverside

Body & Soul, a natural health care and healing boutique, is open for business in the Park and King retail corridor. Owner Vanessa Alvarado, of Riverside, ran the business out of her home before leasing space at 2726 College Street.

Alvarado bulk-buys herbs and healing natural body care goods such as bath bombs, salves, soaps, lotions, lip balms, aromatherapy, essential oils, tinctures, pain care, pet care, baby care, and much more. All products are made in the studio by certified clinical herbalists. Alvarado



Vanessa Alvarado

also hosts classes on natural health care and healing with creativity.

The shop is open every day except Sundays, 1 p.m. to 7 p.m. Call (904) 660-8328 for more information.

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1422 Windsor Place

Avondale brick home with two studio apartments. Featuring 4BR/2.5BA in Main House. Spacious living room with fireplace, Florida room, dining room, and beautiful new kitchen. 3,128 sq. ft. \$529,000



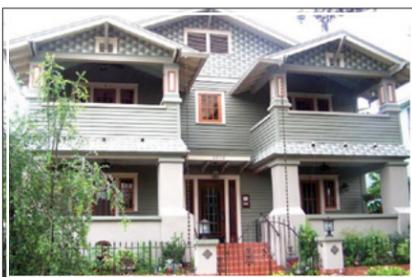
2821 Downing Street

3BR/2BA bungalow with private, fenced back yard with a deck, paver fire pit, and a large storage shed. The master bathroom features a double vanity and claw foot tub. 1,366 sq. ft. \$269,000



1709 Edgewood Avenue, South

3BR/2.5BA freshly painted inside and out, complete chef's kitchen & laundry remodel with ultra top of the line appliances, custom cabinetry, stainless steel and concrete countertops. Beautiful outdoor garden area with fireplace. 2,534 sq. ft. \$575,000



2030 Herschel Street, #1

2BR/2BA first floor unit formerly on RAP Tour of Homes. Leaded glass colonnaded bookcases divide LR from DR with gas fireplace and built-in hutch. Kitchen with all stainless steel, high-end appliances. 1,186 sq. ft. \$330,000



4612 Royal Avenue

Charming 2BR/1BA bungalow in Murray Hill. Great front porch and tons of character. Hardwood floors, deck, fenced yard and storage room 1940 sq. ft. \$137,000



3119 Herschel Street

Charming 1926 Avondale cedar shake 2-story home with classic 1920's architecture. This home features 5BR/3BA, newer kitchen, and hardwood floors throughout. 2,276 sq. ft. \$399,000



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Project SOS Gala Chairman Kim Deas with Florida State Senator Aaron Bean and Project CEO and Founder Pam Mullarkey Robbins

Glitzy gala raises \$45,000 for Assumption School

A maze of glittering art work and fabulous Oriental rugs provided a rich and sumptuous backdrop for the first-ever annual Assumption Gala Feb. 25 at Mussallem Galleries.

With the theme, Boots and Bling, attendees donned sparkling dresses, jewelry, hats and other accessories, while some men and women choose to wear cowboy boots, hats and Western wear.

The fundraiser was a "huge success," said Assumption School Principal Maryann Jimenez after the event. The gala, which included dinner, dancing, a silent and live auction, was presided over by Auctioneer Jon Singleton of San

Marco and raised \$45,000 to renovate student bathrooms in one of the school's oldest buildings as well as to replace flooring in the same building and add two new water fountains, the type which provides filtered water into water bottles, she said. The amount raised was \$5,000 more than the goal of \$40,000, targeted by the event planning committee.

Heading up the event were co-chairs Christi Toney of San Marco and Michelle Bedoya of St. Nicholas. Also in attendance was Father Fred Parke of Assumption Catholic Church and United States Congressman John Rutherford.

No need for an SOS on this Hawaiian cruise

All that was missing was Gilligan and the Skipper as guests gathered at the Marriott Sawgrass in Ponte Vedra for a Hawaiian cruise-themed gala to benefit Project SOS, a nonprofit that assists teens in making healthy life choices and in giving youth critical life skills.

Master of Ceremonies State Senator Aaron Bean enjoyed auctioning off several spectacular gifts, including an adorable Shih Tzu puppy named Jack, and a Heisman Trophy football signed by 20 Heisman Trophy winners, which was donated by Project SOS Board Chairman Ben Wuerffel, brother of Heisman winner Danny Wuerffel.



Pet World Owners Michael Kassnoff and Sharon Welsh with Jack, a Shih Tzu puppy they donated to the live auction

Guests also enjoyed entertainment by Comedian John Crist, as well as a wine drawing, and a video courtesy of major sponsor LandSouth Construction, entitled "An opportunity to invest in our youth."

Kim Deas was the gala chairman, and Project CEO and Founder Pam Mullarkey Robbins was on hand to greet everyone.



Kristi and James Mussallem



Daisy Davidson, Emily White and Grace Lipari



Ed and Karen Rogan with Rep. John Rutherford



Marie Mussallem with Father Frederick Parke of Assumption Church

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Wheelchair art teaches lessons, provides insight

The 3rd Annual Abilities in Art was held March 18 at Riverside Arts Market, with hopes of beating last year's amount of more than \$5,000 raised from the canvases painted during the event.

Visitors to the Arts Market had the opportunity to create art using wheelchairs instead of brushes. "It gives people the chance to experience what those who need a wheelchair for movement do every day while helping to benefit all those with a disability," said Tyler Morris, Independent Living Resource Center executive director.

The art created will be available for purchase at the ILRC's annual Mystery Trip Suitcase Party, to be held Saturday, April 29 at Malone Air Charter. Funds help the ILRC of Northeast Florida implement its programs which empower those with disabilities to reach their goals in education, employment, and independent living.



Tyler Morris, ILRC executive director, with Dana Bray



ILRC volunteer Samantha Leis helps St. Mark's Episcopal Day School student Grace Lilley put paint on a canvas with a wheelchair.



Sophia Ramos and Samantha Leis, ILRC volunteers, help Susan Yeoman and her granddaughter Teagan create wheelchair art.

Episcopal raises \$50,000 at boathouse barbecue

The setting sun on the river was the perfect backdrop as Episcopal parents, alumni and supporters met at the Walton Boathouse for the school's BBQ Bash fundraiser Feb. 25.

As partygoers sipped on libations and noshed on delectables provided by Bearded Pig, more than \$50,000 was raised from the "All Things Episcopal" auction, which included online and mobile bidding during the event.

"The money will be used where the school needs it most during this fiscal year ending June 30," said Meg Sacks, a spokesperson for the school.



Melissa Coll with Arnie and Danielle Tritt



Michael Magevney with Elizabeth and John Sawyer



Matt Flakus with Molly Johnson and Martha Greene



Carson and Scott Hobby with Len and Dana Allen



Christie Freel with Karen Curran



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This time we will have two 9-hole courses. Every golfer has the opportunity to win \$6,000 if they can ace the 6th hole. We will have local celebrities including Jaguar players and former NBA great Artis Gilmore who will attempt a hole-in-one to



benefit their own charities as well as Legal Aid. The Pajcic Firm matches all donations from the event for JALA.

Don't miss out! Please join us on Saturday May 20th. Go to www.jaxlegalaid.org/pajcicyardgolf for more information and to register please.

Last year Thomas Lloyd got a hole-in-one. The Pajcics gave Lloyd \$6,000 and another \$6,000 for JALA.



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Kelly Winer with Judi Zitiello, Pat and Michelle McManamon



Chris and Wendi Sutton



Shannon and Jeff Kinney



Denisha Merriweather with JaxPAL Development Director Ashley Scott and Lt. Lakesha Burton, PAL executive director



Dan and Rosemary Jackson



Debbie and Pete Gunnlaugsson with Karen and Dan Curran



Jodi and Jacksonville Sheriff Mike Williams with Gala Master of Ceremonies Richard Nunn and his wife, Cyndi



Randy Royall with Tina and Charles Holt and Larry Southworth

Stroking checks to help leave strokes behind

A "Florida Affair: Citrus Groves and Salt Water Coves," was the theme for the 2017 Heart & Stroke Ball, held March 4 at the Sawgrass Marriott. The 59th annual ball brings together two organizations – the American Heart Association and the American Stroke Association – which will benefit from the support given by guests, sponsors and donors.

Chair for the event was Gary Norcross, president and CEO of the event's legacy sponsor, FIS, headquartered in Riverside. Norcross is also a board member for the YMCA of Florida's First Coast and the KIPP (Knowledge is Power Program) Impact School.

Honorary chairs were Florida Blue's Pat Geraghty and his wife, Inger, who will serve as chairs for the 2018 ball.

The event, which included a silent auction, as well as a live auction conducted by Senator Aaron Bean, raised over \$650,000 toward the prevention of heart disease and stroke.



Kat and John Pitocchelli

Annual Sheriff's Roundup lassoed funds

All that was missing was the O.K. Corral when supporters of Jacksonville Sheriff Mike Williams came together at the Fourth Annual Sheriff's Roundup to honor Williams and his commitment to the Jacksonville Police Athletic League (JaxPAL) March 25 at the Hyatt Regency Hotel.

Guests at the western-themed event enjoyed live music, dancing, delicious grub, a silent auction, casino games and interactive experiences as they sought to raise money to assist children who live in Jacksonville's toughest neighborhoods. JaxPAL's goal is to provide a

safe and structured environment, positive adult role models, friendship with local police officers as well as academic support during after school hours for many of the City's at-risk children.

Victor Cora served as Gala Chair. Assisting in planning the event were JaxPAL Development Director Ashley Scott and Lt. Lakesha Burton, JaxPAL executive director.

Richard Nunn of San Jose served as the Roundup's Master of Ceremonies and of course, Sheriff Mike Williams was on hand to make sure all the cowboys and girls minded their P's and Q's.



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Bright Lights, Big City at JCA Gala

Partygoers wore their best "urban chic" to Bright Lights, Big City, the Jewish Community Alliance's annual fundraiser Feb. 25 at the JCA.

After sweeping through an entrance draped with flowing white curtains, reminiscent of Miami Beach's Delano Hotel, guests congregated in JCA's courtyard, adorned with twinkling lights, as well as in several other similarly festive rooms within the facility. The atmosphere was a mixture of uptown sophistication combined with a hip downtown vibe.

Proceeds from the fundraiser benefit many JCA programs including senior activities, preschool, after-school care, and camp tuitions for families in need. Last year, the JCA awarded more than \$330,000 in scholarships for children, families, and senior adults, said Lior Spring, a spokesperson for JCA.

This year the Block family served as honorary chairpersons of the event. Included among the chairs were Beverly Block and her sons, Jeff and Andy.



Sharon Walker with Amy Bright, Kaley Smith and Jayne McLeod



Erin Wolfson with Darnell Smith and Karen Wolfson



Anne Arden Pomar with Elli Zimmerman and Jane Pomar



Mary Love McArthur with Raya McArthur, Berrylin Houston and Mary Love Strum



Maggie Hightower with Trish Bautista

Tebow takes stage for Florida Forum season's final event

Jacksonville residents love their Florida Gator quarterback, two-time national champion and Heisman Trophy winner, Tim Tebow. This was never more evident than on March 13 when Tebow was the final speaker of the Women's Board 25th Annual Silver Anniversary Florida Forum Speaker Series. Tebow, who now plays for the New York Mets organization in their baseball training ranks, came in swinging for the fences with a message of love, nurturing others and uplifting the city of Jacksonville.

Following a line of fans who waited for hours to get a glimpse or snap a shot of the Jacksonville native, Tebow waited out a lengthy round of applause onstage before speaking to a packed auditorium at the Times-Union Center.

Tebow's message of bringing faith, hope and love to those in need is borne out by his own foundation, which has seven distinct service branches, including Night to Shine, a prom night event for those with special needs.

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Southern tradition showcased at annual ball

Five Southern Belles made a grand entrance under raised swords at the 48th Annual Confederate Ball, held March 4 at the Florida Yacht Club in Ortega.

This year's Belles include Elizabeth Grich, whose Confederate ancestor is William Derr, a 2nd Lieutenant in the Virginia Cavalry; Hannah Arnold, whose ancestor is Stephen Roberson of the Georgia Cavalry; Hannah Harper, whose ancestor, Sanders Watson was a member of the Georgia Infantry; Hailey Jenkins, whose ancestor is Reason Swilley, of the Florida Infantry, and Riley Smith, whose ancestor, Thomas Richardson, served in an Infantry Battalion in South Carolina.

Over 300 belles have promenaded in hooped skirts since 1971; belles were not presented at the first ball in 1970.

Sponsored by the Sons of the Confederacy, Captain J.J. Dickison Chapter of the Military Order of the Stars and Bars, the annual event benefits the G. Howard Bryan Museum of Southern History, located at 4304 Herschel St.



Southern Belles and the Court: front, Olivia White, Addisen White, Abigail Naugle, Jordyn Jenkins; middle: Riley Smith, Hannah Harper, Hailey Jenkins, Hannah Arnold, Elizabeth Grich; back: Xander Magevney, Mac Lyerly and Davis Shelly



Robert Derr, Carol Hutton, Susan and Tom Grich



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Davis Shelly, Xander Magevney, Mac Lyerly



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Damp, dirt crawlspaces compromise indoor air quality

Turners Underseal has the solution

If you're troubled by breathing problems or your house has a dank smell, Chris Turner, owner of Turners Underseal, thinks he knows why — a damp, dirt crawlspace.

Florida's humid climate means exposed wood in houses is always damp, even when it looks dry. A damp crawlspace is a breeding ground for mold, mildew and other microbes that can cause health problems.

The dirt in an enclosed crawlspace can cause real issues, Turner said.

"The quality of air in the house is all about the dirt in the crawlspace," said Turner. "If you go outside and sniff the ground, it doesn't smell, but it does in a crawlspace. Especially in an older home, that dirt hasn't been exposed to sun or fresh air in years and mold, mildew and bacteria can thrive.

"A lot of people know it's a problem, but they ignore it. Or they may be having health problems and not realize the problem is in the crawlspace," Turner said. "A healthy, dry crawlspace means clean air inside the house."

Air mover machines are not the solution because contaminated air gets sucked

into the house and circulated throughout the entire building.

Insulation in floors can make problems even worse because it traps moisture and mold, Turner said. The moisture also can cause drywall to crack, wood floors to cup and cause unpleasant smells, as well as respiratory problems.

With more than three decades in the business of indoor air quality, Turner has a solution. His company uses a product called Turners Underseal, a professional-grade polymeric water-proofing sealer for all kinds of wood. The sealant contains EPA-registered preservatives that are water resistant, environmentally friendly and provide long-term protection.

During a free inspection, Turner uses a moisture meter to test the wood. In some cases, the moisture is so bad that the area must be dehumidified first before it can be treated, Turner said.

When Turner's team treats a home, the first thing they do is remove any fiberglass insulation. Then the wood is sprayed with a peroxide solution that sanitizes any debris and contaminants. "You can actually see it

bubbling when you spray it on," he said.

Once it is cleaned, the wood is sprayed with Turners Underseal, which is absorbed by the fibers in the wood.

"It has a really strong capillary action," said Turner. "I've never seen anything that works as good." The product has been used throughout much of the Southeast for over 15 years. Turners Underseal, which was developed by a Georgia chemist and trademarked for Jacksonville, comes with a 25-year guarantee.

After Turner's Underseal is applied, a nondegradable permanent vapor liner is installed in the crawlspace, fitted around piers and pipes, to control ground evaporation and contaminants.

To further improve air quality, a commercial-grade dehumidifier or a Hydroxyl generator to circulate the air can be installed to keep humidity to a minimum. The equipment is low-maintenance and safe to operate in either crawlspaces or inside buildings.

Ron Langley, who lives in Empire Point, hired Turner to fix his crawlspace after flooding from Hurricane Matthew. "Liv-

ing on the river has its own special challenges, especially when a hurricane comes along," he said.

The work crew had to remove wet insulation from a tiny crawlspace, but "I heard no complaints," Langley said. "They did an outstanding job."

After the job was completed, Langley crawled into the space to inspect the work. "What a difference — clean wood and easy crawling on the new liner," he said. "It looks and smells great."

Liz lives in a house in Avondale that was built in 1936. "It definitely had odors," she said. "My house smells so much better since the crawlspace wood treatment. I am breathing so much better."

Turners Underseal also can be applied to new construction, making a new home resistant to moisture for 25 years, said Turner.

"This is Florida," he said. "You need to protect your crawlspace. It's just common sense."

For your home air quality inspection and remediation, contact Chris Turner at (904) 903-9569, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.



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Event Co-chair Matt McLaughlin, Riverside Rotary President Dale Orr, Event Co-chair Chris Croft, Rotary District Governor Marshall Butler

Rotarians tap kegs for a cause

The Riverside Rotary Club hosted the 4th annual Riverside Craft Beer Festival under the Fuller Warren Bridge Feb. 25, tapping more than 150 beers for over 2,000 participants at the sampling event, which benefited Community PedsCare for the second year in a row.

The nonprofit, which provides comfort, care and support for children with life-threatening conditions, received \$75,000 from last year's beer fest. The Rotarians hoped they could do the same or better this year, and they succeeded in topping the previous donation by \$25,000. After presenting a check for \$100,000 to Community PedsCare March 28, the club also plans to donate a portion to Riverside Arts Market and to other charitable causes supported by the Riverside Rotary Foundation.

"The breweries and distributors say it's one of their favorite events of the year and think it has potential to become a premiere beer festival in Florida," said Event Chair Matt McLaughlin. "But I'm not looking to be big, I'm looking to raise money for PedsCare. If it becomes a destination event for people who like beer, that's one thing. We have an opportunity to make it the best and get it to a place where it maxes



RAM Senior Manager John Silveira, Riverside Rotary President Dale Orr and Councilman John Crescimbeni

out the space and attendance and it's still a really nice event."

McLaughlin will chair the 2018 Craft Beer Fest, his third, but hopes to recruit young professionals to the Rotary Club, and to turn over the reins. "Having other people involved will make it a better event. It's a lot of fun to do it," he said. "I haven't heard anyone say they've had a bad time. Everyone I've talked to said they had a blast."

In addition to samples from local, regional and national breweries, guests enjoyed live music by Grandpa's Cough Medicine for the fourth year in a row, and cuisine from a variety of food trucks.



Steven Hiney of Kentucky Ales with Nick Olson of Artisanal Imports



Justin and Allie Chila, April and Justin Vecoli

Cool Moose owners host lobster bake benefit

The 3rd Annual Claws for a Cause Lobster Bake to benefit Memorial Park Association was held March 4 at the Cool Moose Café on Park Street. Sixty guests attended the popular event, raising almost \$2,400 for MPA through ticket sales and a silent auction, more than doubling the amount raised in 2016.

"Tony and Laurie Jarvis know how to support a cause as tastefully as anyone could possibly do it - with a genuine Down East lobster bake!" said Percy Rosenbloom, MPA president. "This has to be one of the top feasts in Jacksonville. Deliciously prepared Maine lobster, outstanding clam chowder, tasty steamed mussels and clams, and all the fixings to go with it."

The annual event helps raise awareness of MPA's mission to enhance, promote and preserve Memorial Park as a premier historic park in the City of Jacksonville.

"Memorial Park is really lucky to have fans like Tony and Laurie. They put a lot



MPA President Percy Rosenbloom with Cool Moose Co-owner Laurie Jarvis

of effort into this event for us to raise funds and more importantly to raise awareness about the treasure we have in Memorial Park," Rosenbloom said. "We could not be more grateful for them and their staff."



Matt Cochran, MPA treasurer, Lori-ann Cochran with Robin and Jim Love



Lynn Gresham and George Gresham

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As cooler weather passes and things start to warm up, there's no better way to beat the heat than to join family, friends and fellow boaters – who always wave in passing – on the river.

The Resident is doing its part by highlighting topics of interest that encourage a better understanding of what our legislators, our local nonprofits, and our citizens are doing to improve all our water assets. Our Bold City is working toward a better experience on the waterways so we can take advantage of our greatest asset, the St. Johns River.

Our goal is to provide information on the waterways and knowledge of the current water accesses available in our area. In this issue, you'll find a variety of water-related stories, from river cleanup efforts to fishing tournament winners, a feature about local women who have taken to the water, and a guide

to water access, among others. In addition, the boat show and seasonal sales efforts are underway locally, so you can get introduced to the buying experience from small craft to larger vessels. Call on one of our local advertisers who can help you find the boat that fits your lifestyle, all while helping you maintain it as well.

We also encourage you to share your stories and favorite day trips so we can print them in the May issue. Next month, we'll continue to deliver outstanding content – via your stories, concerns, comments and thoughts on local river and ocean-related activities and issues.

Email editor@residentnews.net and send some of your best water-activity photos, or send photos of a spot that could use more help to deliver access to our river. We appreciate it, and so do your neighbors and leaders in the city's quest to better our use of the mighty St. Johns River.

New kayak launch sites to improve access, maybe perceptions

By Lilla Ross
Resident Community News

Paddle sport enthusiast Keith Keller is hoping the Jacksonville City Council's decision last month to spend almost \$3 million to create public access points on the river will help launch not only more kayakers but a change in public perception about using personal watercraft downtown.

Keller, who grew up in San Marco, has spent his life playing and working on the river. He is harbormaster at Epping Forest Yacht and Country Club, and a kayak and paddleboard instructor.

For the last six years, he's been campaigning for the city to provide better river access, especially downtown. He is delighted with Council's decision to build a kayak launch on North Pearl Street and to design a Southbank Riverwalk launch on school board property.

The council also approved a new fishing pier and kayak launch at Charles Reese Memorial Park, and a new ramp and the improvements at Half Moon Island, both on the Northside, and for

picnic pavilions on Exchange Club Island under the Mathews Bridge.

The projects will be paid for with \$1.2 million from a Florida Inland Navigation District (FIND) grant and \$1.5 million from the city.

"A lot of other cities utilize their waterfronts by allowing access to people who don't own sail or motorboats," Keller said. "I think [Mayor] Lenny Curry and [Council President] Lori Boyer see the real impact dollar wise. This will bring more people to the city and allow residents more access to the river, which is one of our greatest assets."

More improvements are on the horizon. The Jacksonville Waterways Commission is expected to release its recommendations for "activating" the river at its April 12 meeting. And the city is finishing a draft of its Maritime Management Plan, which will be a citywide strategy to protect and utilize the rivers and wetlands.

Helping tourists and residents enjoy the river is one of the priorities, including more boat ramps, extending the Riverwalk, boat tours and river-centric events. Some of the money could come from FIND, which pays for water access projects with a tax levied

on residents in 12 coastal counties, including Duval. In the last two decades, Duval has received \$18 million from the fund.

Keller said that under Mayor Alvin Brown 25 small launch sites were created but progress has been slow because of public perception and ignorance about paddle sports.

He said he often hears people say that it's not safe to paddle downtown because of the strong current.

"People at the beach are in way more dangerous conditions," he said. "When you're a paddler you manage the tides, you don't fight them. If it's done correctly and you have the right outfitter, it's safe to do."

Right now, the only access to the river downtown is the ramp at St. Johns Marina on the Southbank, Keller said. And trying to launch a kayak or canoe from the ramp can be dicey if people are trying to launch or remove a powerboat.

Other cities like Charleston, San Diego, Louisville, Kentucky, Portland, Oregon, and New York have good public access to their rivers, Keller said.

"You can go on tours by water. I know some people who paddle to work," Keller said. "Why can't we do that here? With all that development they're talking about doing downtown there is such great potential for people to run kayak tours from downtown to Brooklyn and RAM."

John Ruskuski, commodore of the Seminole Canoe and Kayak Club in Ortega, said he has gone paddling in downtown Oklahoma City.

"I didn't even know they had a river," he said. Ruskuski said he and club members welcome news of new launch sites.

"We are always looking for access. After all we are the River City," Ruskuski said. "We do a lot of paddling but very little on the St. Johns River. We might go down to the Shands Bridge in St. Johns County."

Ruskuski said when they do paddle on the St. Johns in Jacksonville they usually put in at Mandarin Park or paddle from the clubhouse on the Ortega River to downtown.

But he doesn't know if downtown would ever become a popular paddle area.

"From the Times-Union down to Metro Park, that stretch has a lot of boat traffic and strong currents," Ruskuski said. "It takes a brave soul to do that stretch."

Ruskuski and Keller agree that more launch sites in the area are needed.

"We'd like to link a bunch of these launch sites so you can go on distance paddles, say start in Mandarin and paddle to the Southbank and to Exchange Club Island and to Goat Island and beyond," Keller said.

"It would add opportunities for revenue for small business and enhance what the city is all about — the river," he said.

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Have boat, will launch

Summer will soon rear its hot, humid head, putting thoughts of boating, swimming, fishing and other water-related activities into the minds of many residents. The St. Johns River and its tributaries afford opportunities to do more than test the waters.

If you're fortunate to have access to watercraft, there are a dozen points within or near the Historic Districts where you can launch a kayak, canoe, or motorized boat to enjoy a pleasant day on the water. For more details or a complete list of Jacksonville's 54 water access sites visit

www.coj.net/departments/parks-and-recreation/park-search.aspx

Public Docks and River Access

- Bee Street Park, Bee Street and Utah Avenue
Launch (Non-motorized Watercraft)
- Curtis Lee Johnson Marina Park, 5434 San Juan Avenue
Dockage, Launch (Motorized and Non-motorized Watercraft)
- Goodby's Lake Boat Ramp, 9021 San Jose Blvd.
Dockage, Launch (Motorized Watercraft)
- Metro Park Marina, 4110 Gator Bowl Drive
Dockage, Launch (Non-Motorized Watercraft)
- Nathan Krestul Park, 2001 LaVaca Road
Launch (Non-motorized Watercraft)
- Ringhaver Park, 5198 118th Street
Launch (Non-motorized Watercraft)
- River Oaks Park, 1201 Brookwood Road
Launch (Non-Motorized Watercraft)
- Southbank Riverwalk, water taxi dock next to Chart House
Launch (Non-motorized Watercraft)
- Seminole Park, 4170 McGirts Blvd.
Canoe/Kayak Launch (Non-motorized Watercraft)
- Stinson Park, 4050 San Juan Avenue
Launch (Non-motorized Watercraft), Pedestrian Docks
- St. Johns Marina, 901 Museum Circle
Dockage, Launch (Motorized and Non-motorized Watercraft), Fishing
- Wayne B. Stevens Boat Ramp, 4555 Ortega Farms Blvd.
Dockage, Launch (Motorized and Non-motorized Watercraft), Fishing

Semi-Public River Access

- Jacksonville Zoo, 370 Zoo Parkway
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- Jacksonville Landing, 2 West Independent Drive
Visit jacksonvillelanding.com for additional information.
- Riverside Arts Market, Under Fuller Warren Bridge
Visit riversideartsmarket.com or email info@riversideartsmarket.com for additional information.
- River City Brewing Company Marina, Southbank Riverwalk
Visit www.rivercitybrew.com/marina for additional information.

An additional website with helpful information for boaters is www.floridabywater.com/north-east-florida/jacksonville



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Ellen Sulzbacher holds a bag open for Don Hall to deposit trash pulled from Azalea Creek.

Azalea Creek cleanup precursor for annual event

By Kate A. Hallock
Resident Community News

One Avondale family can take credit for some of the first steps taken locally in a water cleanup event.

According to Margaret Johnston, her neighborhood cleanup effort began in 1994 on Azalea Creek, around the time she enlisted the help of Jim Overton, District 14 Councilman at that time, to put a ban on advertising leaflets from being tossed



Azalea Creek Cleanup Crew: Don Hall, Margaret Johnston, William Hall, Ellen Sulzbacher

on lawns. Those flyers became a soggy mess in the creek, she said. “The next year St. Johns River Water Management held their first state-wide river cleanup effort,” said Johnston.

Johnston’s crew weighs the trash pulled out of the creek and river. “In the first 10 years, one ton of trash was removed each year from Azalea Creek,” Johnston noted. “The more volunteers we have the more trash we remove.”

Azalea Creek flows from an area on the north side of US-17, meanders under the railroad tracks and the highway, and resurfaces behind the FSCJ campus to run through the neighborhood before reaching the Little Fishweir Creek, then the Big Fishweir, which flows into the St. Johns River.

Johnston said for several years a Boy Scout troop and members of the Rotary Club were faithful helpers. “Last year, only [Councilman] Jim Love showed up,” she said.

This year, four people showed up on March 25 to help Johnston, her husband Don Hall and son William Hall, rid the neighborhood creek of 300 pounds of accumulated trash.

22nd Annual River Cleanup and Celebration

Iris Eisenberg rakes dead brush and litter from the flower beds in Yacht Basin Park during the 22nd annual River Cleanup March 25. Fallen leaves, lawn clippings and dead shrubs are best bagged and collected or used for compost as they cause unwanted and uncontrolled growth of algae and aquatic weeds in the waterways



Austin O'Brien displays a pair of blue jeans, with earbuds found in a pocket, he pulled from Willowbranch Creek during the 22nd annual River Cleanup March 25.



Hayden Keeney and his mother, Caroline, remove dead brush and litter from the flower beds in Yacht Basin Park during the 22nd annual River Cleanup March 25. Hayden participated to accumulate community service hours.



Ortega residents Peyton Poitevint and Austin O'Brien, seventh grade students at St. Matthew's Catholic School, help clean up Willowbranch Creek to rack up community service hours during the 22nd annual River Cleanup March 25.

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Team Rain/Jaramillo take home another Ranger boat, title

For the second year in a row, anglers Jesse Rain, of Ortega, and Luis Jaramillo have taken home the top prize in the Inshore Fishing Association (IFA) Redfish Tour stop for the Florida East Division.

The team's aggregate 13.71 pounds of two redfish was enough to win them a fully

equipped brand-new Ranger RP190 aluminum saltwater center console fishing boat, worth \$27,550.

The annual tournament was held March 18 at Sisters Creek where 87 teams fished at the highest level of redfish competition in Jacksonville.

Jesse Rain and Luis Jaramillo with their winning pair of Redfish



Riverkeeper celebrates birthday with a get-to-know the St. Johns campaign

By Marcia Hodgson
Resident Community News

The St. Johns Riverkeeper, a privately funded organization with the mission to protect and give a voice to the St. Johns River, just celebrated its 17th birthday.

In an hour-long wine and cheese gathering at Preservation Hall courtesy of the San Marco Preservation Society March 14, St. Johns Riverkeeper Lisa Rinaman extolled her organization's mission while discussing the joys and challenges of being an advocate for the St. Johns River.

To help Jacksonville residents understand its work and "get to know the river better," the Riverkeeper recently launched "Save the St. Johns - Activate the River," a campaign offering local inhabitants the opportunity to explore the St. Johns River and its tributaries throughout some of the river's 8,800 miles of watershed, she said.

"The rewards of being Riverkeeper are that I work with great people and get to do great stuff," she said, noting her team of six and their volunteers do wonderful, necessary work investigating, fundraising, and celebrating good works on the river's behalf. "Every day I get to work with folks who are passionate about what we can do to protect our waterways."

Rinaman, who has served as the river's mouthpiece for the past five years, said the Save the St. Johns - Activate the River program



St. Johns Riverkeeper Lisa Rinaman

coincides with the city's desire to re-energize its riverfront and is necessary to the work of defending the river. "You can't do it unless you know the river," she said.

From its kick-off event - a Goodby's Creek Paddle and Cleanup March 18 - to its final event - a Timucuan Preserve Estuary Paddle on April 2 - the Riverkeeper offered 21 intimate tours of the river and its tributaries in Duval, Seminole, Volusia, Clay, St. Johns, Indian River, and Putnam counties over 16 days.

More than 100 springs make up the St. Johns River, which flows north from the

mountains of Central Florida west of Vero Beach to the Atlantic Ocean at Mayport, she said. During the Save the St. Johns campaign, Rinaman traveled over 310 miles on the river in a 13-day period, meeting with people in bars, restaurants, fish camps and on kayaks while working "to celebrate and build collaboration throughout the watershed."

"It takes an army of advocates to do this work," she said.

Rinaman said she is also interested in educating children early about the importance of caring for the river. In a partnership with Duval County Public Schools, the Riverkeeper has taken more than 11,000 fifth graders on an educational boat trip on the St. Johns during the past few years. "We want to get kids excited about the river early, and some children have never been on a boat before. It is really something to watch them see dolphins for the first time," she said.

Other ways the Riverkeeper seeks to reach out to the community is through river clean-ups, and community education demonstration tools such the bioswale in front of the San Marco Public Library.

The Riverkeeper's community activation coordinator trains volunteers to take algae samples and watch for outbreaks of green toxic slime invading the waterway as well as encourages residents to watch over the river and report fertilizer violations or septic problems to the group so it can take action.

"We train folks so we can document what's happening so we can make sure we're advocating good policies in Tallahassee," Rinaman said, noting the documentation helps to get fertilizer ordinances in place locally as well as other protections for the river and its wildlife.

"We work with the City of Jacksonville, which has two inspectors to inspect issues throughout the entire county. We train volunteers to help the city make sure things are right and have the volunteers available to help watch so we can catch things before they become issues," she said.

The St. Johns Riverkeeper also sponsors Rising Tides, a young professionals group mainly consisting of adults ages 24-40, who have adopted McCoy's Creek. The group conducts monthly clean-ups of the creek, writes letters to city and other elected officials advocating for the river, and often talks about environmental issues over a beer at a nearby brewery. "It's a social group that is actually getting its hands dirty. They get their feet wet and invest in what they are passionate about," Rinaman continued.

"We need to make sure the river is okay so we can get out and boat, swim, and fish, not only to enjoy now but also for future generations. We need to invest in the long-term. If we are making good decisions today, we will have better outcomes in the future," she said. "We don't want to pass the buck to future generations."



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WOMEN OF THE WATER



Playing or working, these gals can't get enough of our local waterways

By Krysten L. Bennett, Resident Community News

You could say it's water that runs through the veins of the women featured in this story. To a woman, they have a love affair with water, from dipping in an oar to powering ahead full throttle in a traditionally male-dominated industry.

I've been sailing since 1968. I joined a sailing club, then crewed on larger boats and finally bought my own. I sailed to Jacksonville from New York in 1989 and live in an apartment on the water and spend as much time on the water as I can. I have the greatest respect for women like [Lisa Rinaman] the Riverkeeper, and Jodi [Weinbecker], who works with kids. It's important that we get the younger generation on the water.

Jacquie Welti, longtime sailor, multiple grand champion of the Light Boat Parade



A lot of times people view boaters as being in opposition to conservationists, or to the marine mammals I work with, but it's actually the opposite. It's those who love the water and are out in it who act as our eyes and ears. They're the ones who call us about a manatee that may be injured or sick. It's the people who consider the river their backyard that are most connected to it and will fight the hardest to conserve it.

Allison Perna, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission marine mammal biologist



Nadia and Peggy Sue Williams

I grew up on a creek. It was my backyard, and I was in it at a very young age. For me, the water is about freedom and adventure. When I was growing up in the '60s and '70s, we'd see sewage flush out into the river. We've come a long way since then. It's great to be older now and see the positive changes, and to see more people have an appreciation for the water.

Peggy Sue Williams, Lambs Yacht Center owner/operator

Growing up around the river, we'd go for bike rides and then leave our bikes in the driveway and run down to the end of the dock to jump in the river. I learned how to drive a boat at a very young age, and I'd just put the dogs on board and cruise around. It's peaceful for the mind.

Nadia Williams, Lambs Yacht Center owner/operator



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I've been on the water all of my life. My grandfather was in this business, my father was in this business. He was an excellent craftsman and told me that if I could swim across the St. Johns River he would build me a boat, so I swam (at age 10, from Holly Point to Mandarin) across the river and he built me a boat! The St. Johns River is a great asset. It's swimmable, it's playable, we just need more people in it.

Cindy Purcell, Huckins Yachts owner/operator and former barefoot water skier



I've always been a boater, and have always loved the water and the wind. As a woman, I enjoy bringing artistic, visual and domestic components into a profession that's male-dominated. I'm so proud of all of the women buyers I work with who are getting onto the water for themselves.

Barbara Burke, yacht broker

My family has worked on the water in Jacksonville for nearly four decades. It's our waterways that define our city. The beaches, the St. Johns River and all of the small creeks and tributaries offer something for both residents and visitors. It's been an honor to work with so many outstanding partners to promote river activation and to help educate people about the diversity of our waterways.

Heather Surface, St. Johns River Taxi owner/operator



Rowing is technically demanding exercise, and you have to be able to work as a group, but it's not just the function and the activity of rowing, it's partially the social aspect of connecting with my fellow rowers that I'm drawn to. I row because of the Zen nature of connecting to the wildlife and to the water.

Susan Fraser, Longtime sculler, member of the Jacksonville Rowing Club



We are so fortunate to have a river in Jacksonville that can be enjoyed year-round. Since I was 10 years old, most of my leisure time has been spent on the water: sailing, water skiing, kayaking, taking photos at regattas or being in the yard enjoying the view. There are so many opportunities to expose children to boating: The Rudder Club and the Florida Yacht Club have fabulous sailing programs and safe boating courses. Working with Heather [Surface] on the River Taxi allows me to share the joys of being on the river with hundreds of new people every week, including Duval County 5th graders, tourists, residents that don't have access to private boats, corporate groups, concert goers and football fans.

Deb Fewell, St. Johns River Taxi director of operations



I grew up water skiing, fishing, swimming and sailing, and just love being on the water, always have. My husband was in the Coast Guard and is a naval architect. We're both water people. My kids have been on a sailboat since they were two weeks old. It's what my family does. We have this beautiful river here, and we need more people on it. The more people we get on the water the more passionate they're going to be about wanting to keep the river healthy and clean.

Jodi Weinbecker, Florida Yacht Club Waterfront Director and Head Sailing Coach

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If These Walls Could Talk

A Very, Very, Very Fine House

By Peggy Harrell Jennings
Resident Community News

If the walls in newlyweds Dr. Katie Stender and Taylor Neilly's 1913 Aladdin Kit house in Historic Ortega could sing perhaps they would choose the lyrics to "Our House" by Crosby, Stills and Nash. "Our house is a very, very, very fine house, with two cats in the yard (in this case, make that four cats and a dog) ...now everything is easy 'cause of you."

Stender and Neilly met seven years ago and "have never been apart since," they said. Originally from South Florida, Stender finished her Doctorate in Veterinary Medicine at the University of Florida, worked for Lap of Love Veterinary Hospice and Palliative Care, and was doing a lot of driving from Gainesville, to Tampa and to Jacksonville.

Neilly, a Gainesville native, finished his degree at UF in 2015. They took a leap of faith and moved to Jacksonville where Stender continues her work with Lap of Love and Neilly is a first year 10th Grade Language Arts and Creative Writing teacher at Robert E. Lee High School.

"We moved to Jacksonville on a whim," explained Stender.

After renting an old house in Riverside, Dr. Katie, as she is known, said, "That's it for me! I'll never live in an old house again!



Taylor Neilly, Katie Stender and Lady on the front steps of their 1913 kit house

We loved Riverside, but we would ride our bicycles through old Ortega and dream of living among the trees, but thought we'd never be able to afford a house there."

But from the moment they saw it, Stender's stipulation of "No old house!" went right out the paired casement windows of the two-story historic bungalow on Hiawatha Street. The couple walked through the whole house, sat out in the backyard and made an offer within an hour. "We just loved it as soon as we walked in the door," Neilly said.

"I did not want an old house," laughed Stender. "Now we have the oldest house around here!"

"We fell in love with everything; it's so unique. I love the windows, the old pine floors, the dual fireplaces, the exposed bricks in the kitchen. It was in perfect shape - move-in ready," she continued. "We moved in on Sept. 1, 2016, and then a month later

Hurricane Matthew came through," said Stender. "That was scary."

Neilly said he loves the country-like atmosphere of Old Ortega. "There is so much history in the house and in the neighborhood. I love the oak trees, and there are bald eagles around here, and owls," he said.

A peach of a house

As a kit, the house was shipped from Bay City, Michigan to Jacksonville as a giant, three-dimensional puzzle of pre-cut lumber. Each piece was numbered and labeled, while plaster, shingles, paint and explicit instructions were included - everything needed for construction, except the hammer. Average finishing time? Less than two weeks.

Historical information is incomplete on its arrival into what was then just oak trees and farm land. Perhaps the parts were carried over a bridge constructed in 1908,

which connected Ortega with Jacksonville, and down the dirt road which curved around McGirt's Creek to what would become Hiawatha Street.

Founded by Otto and William Sovereign, Aladdin Kit Homes remained a family business for 76 years before closing in 1982. The Sovereign brothers got the idea of creating and selling prefabricated homes, also known as "Knock-downs" and "Readi-cuts," from the common practice of ship builders who constructed ships to be transported to other areas for reconstruction. Aladdin's competitors were Sears Roebuck and Montgomery Ward, but the Sovereign brothers held their own, selling over 50,000 homes all over the country and the world.

Purchasing a new Aladdin home was as simple as perusing the catalog, picking out the style, placing the order, and waiting for shipment. The Hiawatha Street house owned by Stender and Neilly is called The Georgia and listed for \$897.75 in the Aladdin Kit catalog in 1913.

Appropriately named, it is a peach of a house. Carefully and lovingly tended over the years, the interior has been renovated - central heat and air, updated bathrooms and kitchen and expanded master bedroom - but it is basically true to the original floor plan and its outward appearance could be an ad for the company in present times.

Many families have inhabited the bungalow over the years. Just since 1988, the 104-year-old house on Hiawatha Street was home to at least eight families, whose laughter and footsteps have echoed up and down the stairs.

Stender's and Neilly's four cats join the generations of cats which have lounged on the front steps. Now the couple are the next generation of caring homeowners to contribute to what Neilly calls the house's "good juju!"

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Good Friday:
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Easter Sunday:
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– In Memoriam –

Bette Jewell Davis Wadkins Mackoul

December 30, 1932 – March 5, 2017

By *Kate A. Hallock*
Resident Community News

Longtime Avondale resident and business owner Bette W. Mackoul, 84, passed away March 5, 2017. Although best known locally for the Avondale Gift Boutique, which she and her husband, Edward, established in the early 1980s, Mackoul was also active in a variety of associations and causes, including Riverside Avondale Preservation, the Woman's Club of Jacksonville, St. Luke's Auxiliary, the Avondale Merchants Association, and The Tournament Players Club.

Her obituary states she was born in Graham, Georgia in 1932, but daughter Samantha Wyatt said the family isn't totally sure of the date.

"We think she lied to get her driver's license a year early," said Wyatt. "The courthouse with the records burned down, so her [grave] marker will include both 1931 and 1932."

Wyatt recalls moving to Jacksonville from South Florida in 1973 when she was a child



Bette Mackoul

so that Mackoul, then Bette Wadkins, could help care for her father-in-law. Less than a year later Mackoul was widowed and, when her father-in-law died, she inherited a Riverside apartment building.

"She became a landlord," said Wyatt. "She did all the repairs herself, including wall-papering, fixing toilets, and climbing out on to the roof to check the oil level in the fuel heaters." When her second husband, Edward Mackoul, had a stroke in the late 1990s, Mackoul would juggle running the boutique, caring for her husband, and managing the apartment building.

"I'm in awe of her perseverance and business acumen," said Wyatt. "She gave me and my sister Cindy such a strong work ethic. She was involved, visible in the community, determined but caring. She taught me everything I know. She was a good role model for women in business. She just did what needed to be done to pay the bills and stay open."

Wyatt's sister, Cindy Manouilidis, agreed. "There was nothing too big that she couldn't tackle," she said. "She was just a positive force in my life, a strength, she was inspiring, and she's the kind of women that never gave up."

The sisters said for all her strength, Mackoul was also a kind and compassionate woman.

"She was so giving of her time and loaned money to people in need," said Wyatt. "She never backed away from helping anyone."

"She was super-outgoing, friendly and congenial," added Manouilidis. "She was very involved in the community, in the people. She loved Avondale, Jacksonville, everyone she knew."

One of Mackoul's oldest friends, Hooshang Harvesf, owner of Hooshang Oriental Rugs, said she was a very special and close, personal friend, and her personality was what made the boutique such a popular destination.

"Bette made the difference, her personality made the shop," said Harvesf. "Customers came to see Bette, not just to purchase. She had a lot of positive energy, and you always felt good when you saw her."

In addition to her daughters, Mackoul is survived by two stepdaughters, two stepsons, two brothers, 13 grandchildren, four great-grandchildren and nephews, nieces and cousins.

– In Memoriam –

Taylor Lawton Graves

December 30, 1925 – February 11, 2017

By *Peggy Harrell Jennings*
Resident Community News

Taylor Lawton Graves of Ortega was the "ultimate Southern hostess," recalled her good friend Elizabeth Howard.

"She loved people from all walks of life and welcomed everyone in old Southern tradition," said Howard, who is a cousin of Graves' husband, Ed. "She had friends who were wealthy, and friends who didn't have two cents to rub together."

Graves was a woman who was "totally unique and had a world of friends," said her friend Caroline Burroughs.

At her memorial service on Feb. 16 at St. John's Episcopal Cathedral, Graves was remembered for her readiness to jump into anything and her involvement with everything.

"She was a great person. She never questioned what I was doing or what I wanted to do," said Ed, her husband of 65 years. "When I bought a sail boat she went right along even though she got seasick. We went



Taylor Lawton Graves

to the Keys, Dry Tortugas, Abaco, we went up to Chesapeake."

Proud of her family's ancestry, Graves was active in the National Society of Colonial

Dames, where she was a caretaker and tour guide at the Ximenez-Fatio House in St. Augustine. She was also a founder of the Watsonia Garden Circle, where she provided interesting and creative programs for members. Since childhood, she had been active at St. John's Cathedral and took her duties on the altar guild reverently and seriously, said Ed.

"Taylor was very outspoken, but she would never say anything behind your back that she wouldn't say to your face," he said. "She was very funny – as you are when you tell the truth. She had lots of friends, and she got involved in everything."

Graves was adept in craft work, particularly needlework and smocking. She also refinished furniture and helped Ed refurbish their 1915 house, which had belonged to his parents. She bought 10 old chairs at a junk sale and caned each of those chairs herself, said Ed.

"She was pretty smart. She probably just looked at a book and learned how to do it. She could knit, quilt, and was a pretty good

cook, too," he said. "She was so active in church and Junior League and Colonial Dames, everyone said 'Taylor, you're going to burn yourself out.'"

Howard agreed. "She was a worker bee. As a teen, we all hated it," she said. "Taylor would not tolerate idle time. She was always doing something."

Although described as "very penny-conscious and all about saving for a rainy day," Graves was very generous, treating Howard to a trip to New York as part of her wedding trousseau. "Taylor was like my second mother," said Howard. "She was there for me when my mother was ill."

Always active, the last months of her life Graves was either bedridden or wheelchair-bound, but her husband moved her downstairs into a room with a picture window where she could look out at her garden, and watch birds and the antics of the squirrels.

She is survived by her husband, three sons – Holt, Bryan and Corbin, as well as three grandchildren, six great-grandchildren, and her sister.

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April 9 - Palm Sunday

7:30, 9:00, 11:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.

Palm Procession and Communion

April 13 - Maundy Thursday

6:00 p.m. Dinner w/RSVP and 7:00 p.m. Service

April 14 - Good Friday

Noon Good Friday Service

Good Friday Stations of the Cross

8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Self-guided

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April 16 - Easter Sunday

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Watercrest, which opened last fall on San Jose Boulevard, offers 66 studio and one-bedroom apartments with assisted living services and a separate memory care wing with 24 rooms, said Executive Director Cindy Gordie. A nurse is on site 24 hours a day.

The community was designed by StudioSix5 in Texas, which specializes in creating senior living communities that encourage residents to stay engaged. Common areas and club rooms are located throughout the facility, each with a big-screen television and Wi-Fi.

While flooring and bathrooms are designed with wheelchairs and walkers in mind, the overall ambience of Watercrest is that of a luxury hotel, complete with a concierge, a spa featuring a full-service salon and massage room, as well as housekeeping and laundry service. Physical therapy, occupational therapy and speech therapy are available at the wellness center.

After entering the lobby from a porte cochère and visiting at the front desk, a short walk through the high-ceilinged lobby takes you into the Bistro, one of two restaurants.

The Bistro offers all-day casual, quick meals prepared by the chef from a menu of light hors d'oeuvres. Sit at the bar, by the fireplace or choose a table looking out on a garden.

Watercrest's full-service restaurant, the W, offers three meals a day prepared to order. There's also a private dining room for large events. Watercrest, which has a wine and beer license, has its own label of merlot and chardonnay – always popular at wine tastings and the weekly TGIF party.

The one-bedroom apartments have a kitchen with a full-size refrigerator, microwave oven, and a large pantry. The bedrooms have two closets, including a spacious walk-in. The bathrooms are equipped with grab bars and wheelchair-accessible showers.

Residents, who range in age from 45 to 98, are encouraged to stay active. The assisted living and memory care units each has its own program director, who stays busy providing exercises classes, games and other activities. Shuttle service is provided for shopping and entertainment.



The property backs up to Goodbys Lake and features a dock with a gazebo – a popular place to fish.

Memory care offers a secure, supportive environment with studio apartments for people with all types of dementias. Activities are tailored to each resident's needs with the goal of giving them as much independence as possible for as long as possible, Gordie said. They have their own dining room, salon and a secure garden.

"We promote aging in place and that includes hospice care," Gordie said. End-of-life care is provided onsite through an arrangement with one of the local hospice providers.

"We believe our residents deserve the same elegance and luxury they enjoyed living independently," Gordie said. "We serve our residents with a genuine sense of pleasure while their loved ones take comfort in knowing they are receiving the highest quality of care."

Watercrest Senior Living is located at 9075 San Jose Blvd. Call Cindy Gordie today at (904) 510-5482 for a tour or visit online at www.watercrestseniorliving.com/san-jose

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The Way We Were – Hayes and Norma Basford

By Peggy Harrell Jennings
Resident Community News

On a Sunday afternoon in the early 1940s, Hayes Basford, Jr., his father and maybe a couple of friends would saddle up their horses at the Basford home on five acres between Prunty Avenue and Tunis Street in Murray Hill for a 10- or 15-mile jaunt.

“We would cut through the woods, cross Cassat and go down San Juan to Hyde Park Stables,” Hayes, an Ortega resident, recalled. “We would ride for miles, from the bridge to Hyde Park was a dirt road and the stables were just past the duck pond on San Juan. There was a pasture and commercial dairy on the corner of San Juan and Jammes, and a goat farm on Lenox, where we’d stop and drink a Co-Cola,” he said. “The horses drank Co-Cola too!”

Hayes’ grandmother lived two miles from his family in Murray Hill but when Hayes’ father bought the 1930s house on Prunty Avenue, he recalls she said, “Y’all are moving too far out in the country.”

Although the countryside is now gone, the Murray Hill Theater, Florida Christian Home and the Dreamette still reflect those

bygone days when Edgewood Avenue in the late 1940s and 1950s had a big post office where the Edgewood Bakery was located. The Amber House, a restaurant known for its hamburgers, was on the corner of Post and Edgewood. Tarantus Five and Dime, Nell Wage’s Dress Shop, a hardware store, Wood’s Pharmacy, and Thomas and Padgett Grocery Store contributed to a vital community, Hayes recalled.

As an only child, Hayes had the run of Murray Hill and Avondale, whether on his horse or on his bike. His father owned Hayes Lounge on St. Johns Avenue (where the Mellow Mushroom is now). It was the stopping point for Avondale and Ortega residents to gather in the comfy chairs on their way home from work, he said. Hayes Sr. also built the building across the street on the corner of St. Johns and Dancy, which he later sold. The name was changed to Monte’s West Inn and is now Shores Liquors and Bar, Hayes said.

The Basford family had 100 chickens, 10 pigs, five horses and a huge vegetable garden. A young entrepreneur, Hayes would spend afternoons when he wasn’t operating his egg and vegetable selling routes visiting the



Hayes and Norma, sons Matt, Scott and Brett

grocery store, antique shops, bowling alley, hardware store and bakery in Avondale Shopping Center. “I rode my bicycle everywhere and knew everybody. Sometimes I’d go to Easterling Drugstore in Lakeshore,” said Hayes.

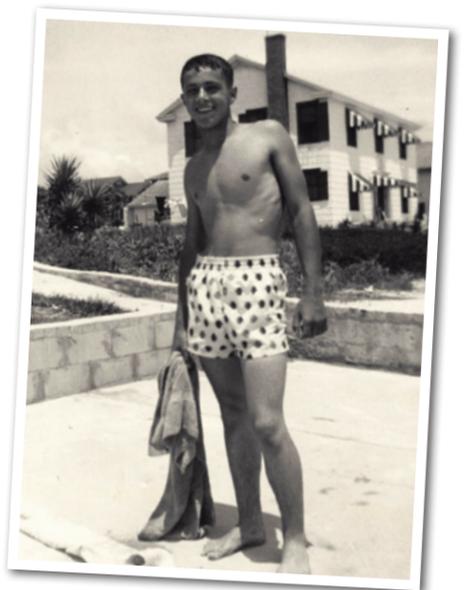
“We might have crossed paths there,” said Hayes’ wife, Norma Jean nee Sherouse. “My sister, Marguerite Motes, is 14 years older than I am. She was married and lived near there and when I was about 12, I’d come visit her and her husband, and go to the drugstore. Who knows? I might have seen Hayes there,” she said.

Norma grew up in the small town of Micanopy, Florida. Her parents had a Standard Oil Station where their reputation for friendliness brought Miami-bound vacationing families back time after time.

“Until 8th grade I attended a school where we had two classes in one room. My graduating class had seven people,” said Norma. “But then we were bused to P.K. Yonge – a private high school in Gainesville.”

While Norma was miles away in her little corner of Florida, Hayes was in Jacksonville at Murray Hill School – now Ruth N. Upson Elementary, then Lakeshore Middle School, and then The Bolles School, where he graduated in 1954.

Everything changed for the couple when they met their junior year at Emory University in Atlanta. Hayes declared it was love at first sight. “Well for him, maybe,” said Norma. “I was dating someone else, but I knew Hayes. Five minutes after we broke up, there was Hayes asking me out. We’d go to places like Manuel’s Tavern, The Varsity, fraternity parties – nothing exotic – just where people gathered. When we first dated, he had a beard because Kappa Alpha, his fraternity, and Kappa Delta, my sorority, were celebrating Old South. I was afraid I wouldn’t like him when he shaved it off. But I might have noticed him, he was pretty cute back then,” she recalled.



Hayes, 15, in swim trunks

“And I had a car – a 1957 gold Plymouth!” Hayes quipped.

He claims he was once caught in the headlights of his parent’s car kissing his girlfriend while on horseback in his yard when he was in the fourth grade, and said he was voted Most Bashful in the 9th grade at Lakeshore. “People will hoot when they read that!” said Norma.

After graduation from Emory, Norma, with degrees in English literature and sociology and Hayes, with a degree in economics, came back to Jacksonville and were married by Rev. Dr. Douglas Leatherbury at St. Mark’s Episcopal Church on December 5, 1959.

In addition to 200 guests, Norma’s students at John Stockton Elementary School attended the wedding and put on a Womanless Wedding skit. Their reception at The Woman’s Club was catered by Mrs. Goode of Goode’s Bakery, and Hayes’ father made sure they had a champagne fountain, which did not please Norma’s parents at all, she said.

Times were challenging for the newlyweds when Hayes went into active duty in the Army Reserves, making about \$100 per month, and Norma’s teaching job paid a whopping \$3,500 a year. But the man who had an egg route and sold mistletoe for 15 cents a bunch as a child put his “go git ‘em” spirit to work and landed a job as a



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Continued on page 43



Norma modeling at a city-wide tennis tournament

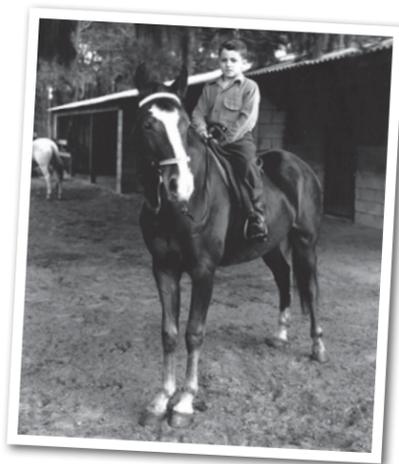
two-bath brick house with those ugly old jalousie windows all across the back. You couldn't even see the river!"

After adding on a bit at a time and removing the old windows, the home now has fabulous views of the river.

In 1969 their third son, Matt, came along. "I loved being a mother and it was important to be home when the boys got home from school," said Norma. "We had cute birthday parties; I made Halloween costumes and baked a zillion cookies." The Basfords now have four grandchildren although three of them live in Texas.

During this time of raising a family no moss grew under their feet. Called to leadership, Hayes was named president of the Rotary Club of Riverside. Meanwhile, Norma was president of the Junior Woman's Club, taught a young woman's Bible group at St. Mark's Episcopal Church, and established the Redeemed Caregivers group, which she conducted for over 10 years.

The couple started the Greater Jacksonville Families in Action in the late 1980s as part of the Say No to Drugs campaign. "I didn't even know what marijuana was!" said Norma.



Hayes Basford, age 10, on horseback

stockbroker in 1960 with Pierce, Harrison and Wulbern.

In 1973 Hayes transitioned to an Atlanta firm which, he explained, had many buy-outs over the years, but he maintained his career there for 50 years before retiring in 2010. "I gutted out the tough times," he said. Norma agreed. "He stuck it out when others gave up!" she said.

Hayes and Norma had been living in the Wedgewood Apartments on Roosevelt but later bought a little house in Westfield for \$10,000. By 1964 they had sons Brett and Scott, and managed to upgrade to a \$20,000 house on the corner of Yacht Club and Roosevelt in Ortega. Then the "deal of a century came along and we bought the house on McGirts Boulevard for \$40,000," Hayes said. "It was a stretch for us. My dad said, 'You are paying too much for it.' It was just a three-bedroom,



Norma

When the local schools were no longer accredited in the 1970s they worked with a group of about 20 families to start St. Mark's Episcopal Day School. "We all pitched in - hired teachers and a headmaster, begged and borrowed books for a library," Norma said. "I knew nothing about library science so we finally hired a retired librarian to set it up in a more professional way. We had about 100 kids - one class of each grade, and it is so exciting to see how far it's come."

They also became interested in mental health issues and were instrumental in reorganizing Jacksonville NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness). Hayes served as president from 2011 to 2015 and continues to raise funds to support the organization. Since 2011, Norma, as director of education, has helped the group establish four support groups for families, several for those with mental disorders, a Helpline, Family to Family classes, a Board of Directors, educational meetings, taught classes, and opportunities throughout the year and has taught classes and served in innumerable capacities. And yes, she is still organizing Hayes' notes.

In 2015 Hayes and Norma accepted Mental Health America's Agency of the Year Award for Jacksonville NAMI, and Norma has twice been a finalist for the Eve Award for her contributions to mental health awareness and advocacy.

In his spare moments, Hayes can be found playing pickle ball (which he was instrumental in establishing at the Ortega United Methodist Life Center), fishing, walking his 10,000-plus steps a day or picking up granddaughter Mason from St. Mark's School, attending her recitals and school events - all while looking for ways to be a benefit to his church and his community.

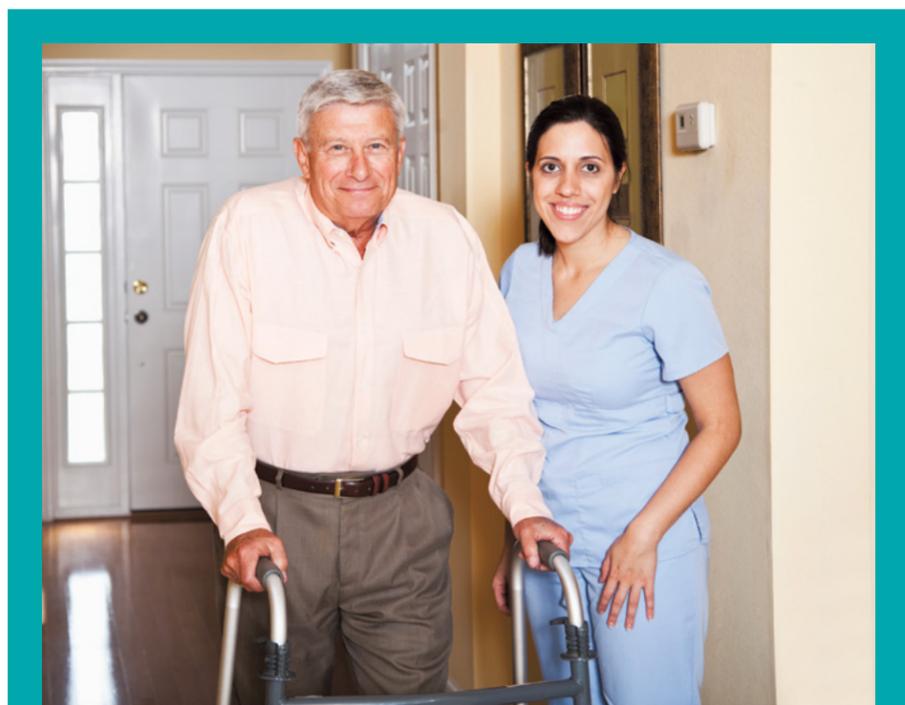
Norma enjoys reading and plays pickle ball occasionally. Both agree that faith is a large part of their lives. "It hasn't been a bed of roses - but prayer has gotten us through so many challenges," said Norma.



Hayes and Norma Basford

Your Story in Print

The Resident is seeking willing participants for its monthly column, The Way We Were. If you are interested in sharing your recollections of bygone times and places, or if you know someone who has a story to tell, contact editor@residentnews.net or call (904) 388-8839, ext. 103.



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Friends of Stockton seeking funds for new laptops

From the inception of the Florida A-F school grading system in 1999, John N.C. Stockton Elementary School has maintained an "A" rating among Florida public elementary schools.

For the math, science and technology magnet school to continue to thrive, Stockton needs additional computers for the students it serves, said Stephanie Freeman, a member of the Friends of Stockton.

The school is raising funds for 25 new laptops, and a wireless laptop cart to be used by all K-5 classes. The total cost of the cart containing the Lenovo Yoga 11e laptops is estimated at \$22,500.

The school reaches students beyond those in the local neighborhood, serving as the "gifted" hub for public school gifted elementary students in Ortega/Avondale/Riverside who visit the school weekly.

Friends of Stockton, the school's nonprofit, is launching a capital campaign, "Become a Friend of Stockton," in April, and is seeking business and community partners, as well as support from local residents of the Ortega Forest neighborhood and parents. If you are interested in making a donation or becoming a partner, contact friendsofstockton@gmail.com.

Jr. Residents

Opening Day never gets old

Little pitchers, catchers and fielders were suited up and ready for baseball season to begin March 11 at Opening Day for the Murray Hill Athletic Association.

Drawing from nearby Ruth N. Upson Elementary School, students and staff participated in the festivities, which included a parade of teams, a flag-raising by Upson students Camron Hartley and Timothy Tubbs, bounce houses, games, booths and a dunking tank, where Upson Assistant Principal Jeffrey Royal provided a target.

The MHAA, located at 4208 Kingsbury St., has been in existence since 1975, celebrating more than 40 Opening Days and providing a fun, healthy environment for local baseball fans and fanatics to enjoy. The nonprofit is a Babe Ruth League affiliate, offering youth baseball, softball and T-ball for children age 4 to 17.



Opening ceremonies included a parade of all the MHAA teams. (Photo by Mike Bonts)



Jacksonville Jumbo Shrimp Mascot Southpaw made an appearance at Opening Day for the Murray Hill Athletic Association. (Photo by Mike Bonts)



There were games, booths and fun highlighted by Ruth N. Upson Elementary Assistant Principal Jeffrey Royal volunteering for the dunk booth. (Photo by Mike Bonts)

Ortega boy earns merit scholarship

Jack McNulty, Ortega resident and sixth-grade student at St. Johns Country Day School, was one of three students to receive the St. Johns Merit Scholarship for the 2017-2018 school year. McNulty joins high-achievers Brooks Burson, also in Grade 6, and Alex Dimmick, Grade 8, in earning the scholarships based on Independent School Entrance Exam scores, grade point average, and the desire to make a significant contribution to the school.



St. Johns Country Day School Head of Middle School Bill Rothe, Jack McNulty and Headmaster Todd A. Zehner

Youth plan service auction to raise funds for mission trip

St Mark's Episcopal Church youth group is presenting a service auction to raise money for its 2017 Youth Mission Trips. Some of the services offered include yardwork, babysitting, a day with a St. Mark's priest, and a free week of Vacation Bible School.

The event, which includes a spaghetti dinner, will be Sunday, April 23, 5-6:30 p.m. in St Mark's Leatherbury Hall. Tickets are \$5 per person, \$20 per family, and they will be sold online and at the church.

The Senior High Mission Trip is June 3-11 to Costa Rica and the Junior High Mission trip is June 17-24, serving in Atlanta and Chattanooga. Currently, 34 youth have signed up to participate in the two trips, according to Ayana Grady, Director of Youth Ministries, St Mark's Episcopal Church.

Love is...sharing art with others



Matt Potter and Merritt Young display their gifts of love.

Lessons in art, penmanship and letter writing came together at St. Mark's Episcopal Day School to create a service project for the third-grade class, which is focused on sharing the gift of love with residents of Cathedral Care, a gerontology convalescent center in downtown Jacksonville.

In art class, students created beautiful "Love" plaques that will be hung on display in every room of the center. Bible verses on the back speak of God's love. While creating the plaques, students learned about the work the center does to care for its residents. The students also practiced their letter-writing skills by writing letters to the residents.

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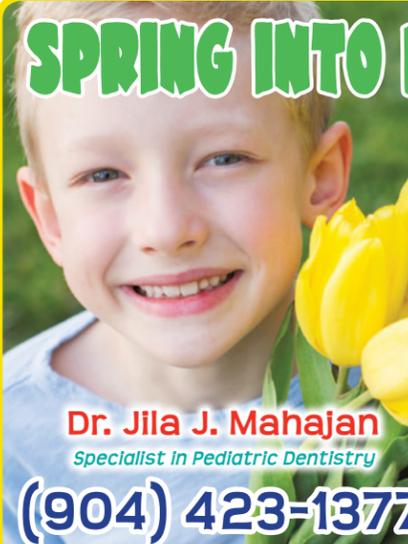
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Elite runners visit Sanctuary on 8th, thrill students and teachers

By Robert DeAngelo
Resident Community News

Some of the top-ranked runners in the world visited children in the afterschool program at Sanctuary on 8th Street on March 10 to share stories about their love of running and to participate with the kids in a fun-filled relay race.

As has become a tradition over the past eight years, Richard Clark Fannin, coordinator for the Gate River Run elite runners, brought the athletes to Sanctuary a day before the race. This year, more than 40 runners – including six Olympians – took part.

The event began with Lee Troop, a three-time Olympic marathon runner, getting the kids fired up with his infectious enthusiasm and thick Australian accent.

“I’ve been doing this program for about three or four years and it only happened by accident,” said Troop, who coaches the Boulder (Colorado) Track Club. “One year we came out here and Richard had lost his voice and asked me to come out to Sanctuary and do it.

“I think this is one of the greatest joys that any elite athlete can have – to give back to every community. We know that there are some people that aren’t as privileged as others, so to be able to come and spend some time speaking to the kids is rewarding.”

After Troop helped build excitement, the runners formed a circle around the youngsters and one by one introduced themselves, noting their city and country of origin as well as why they love the sport. Included in the group were six 2016 United States Olympians: Emily Infeld (women’s 10,000 meters); Hillary Bor (men’s 3,000-meter steeplechase); Paul Chelimo (men’s 5,000



Lisa Davis, 6, races U.S. Olympic silver medalist Paul Chelimo as some of the country’s top runners paid a visit to children in the Sanctuary on 8th Street afterschool program March 10.

meters); Kim Conley (women’s 5,000 meters) along with Leonard Korir and Shadrack Kipchirchir (men’s 10,000 meters).

But it was Chelimo who garnered the most attention, particularly after donning the silver medal he won at last summer’s Rio Olympics.

“The silver medal was big, it was shiny and it was heavy,” said 10-year-old Kendyl Johnson. “It was heavier than the medals we always get when we win something. And I know that was a big reward for him for his success and never giving up.”

“Hopefully it motivates and inspires them and also helps the kids realize that things aren’t untouchable,” added Troop. “That they can actually see it, feel it, touch it and then who knows what can happen in the future.”

Chelimo said he relishes the opportunity to talk to children and enjoys the questions he gets – for the most part. “Today, I was asked why I didn’t win the gold medal,” the 26-year-old Kenyan-born American track star laughed. “It’s a good question and hopefully I can come back here one day and show them that gold.”

Sanctuary on 8th Street executive director and teacher Rick Carlidge said he sees both the kids and athletes getting something positive out of the visits.

“I think it’s a great program,” he said. “The runners come here every year and are able to gain a relationship with the kids and there’s a tradition in place. It’s been a lot of fun over the last seven or eight years now and I think everyone involved enjoys it.”

St. Paul’s Catholic student takes first in competition

St. Paul Catholic School eighth-grade student Eve Holzbaur placed first in the Bishop Kenny Grade School Art Exhibition and Contest held February 10. The third annual event featured artwork from seventh- and eighth-grade students from the “feeder schools” in the Diocese of St. Augustine. In addition to her ribbon, Eve also received a gift certificate to Barnes and Noble.

In other news, St. Paul’s students “Danced Their Teal Off” March 6 to raise money and awareness of ovarian cancer. The event, which began in 2011 to support the school secretary Phyllis Graham, who passed in 2013, is still danced on Graham’s behalf. Students raised over \$900, which will be donated to the American Cancer Society.



Eve Holzbaur

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Young Riverside artist on display at Carnegie Hall



Emma Flaire

The apple didn't fall far from the tree at all in the Flaire family.

Douglas Anderson School of the Arts freshman Emma Flaire, of Riverside, was awarded a Gold Key award from the National Scholastic Art and Writing competition. Her work, a wire bird sculpture, will be on display in Carnegie Hall this summer.

"I am super proud," said Flaire's mother, Sarah Crooks Flaire, well-known commissioned environmental artist. "Yep, I'm bragging."

There were 330,000 submissions from students nationwide. Earlier this year, Flaire was one of 66 at DA to win a medal on the regional level, progressing to national adjudication.

Flaire took home two Gold Key awards in the Northeast Florida Scholastic Art Awards, one in sculpture and one in painting. Both pieces of artwork were created when Flaire was an eighth grader at LaVilla School for the Arts last year.

Avondale boy performs with musician Michael Franti

While playing his violin in 5 Points outside Hoptinger Bier Garden & Sausage House, Avondale resident and LaVilla School of the Arts student Jimmy Moseley received the surprise of his life.

Multi-platinum musician and humanitarian Michael Franti, who spotted Moseley during the 12-year-old's impromptu jam session, invited the young musician to join him for a song to a surprised crowd at the grand opening of Hoptinger.

Franti was in 5 Points for a fundraiser for his nonprofit, Do It For The Love Foundation, hosted by local businesses JAX Refrigeration's charitable foundation; JAX Cares and Hoptinger.

Do It For The Love is a wish-granting nonprofit organization that brings people living with life-threatening illness, children with severe challenges and wounded veterans to live concerts of their dreams.



Kirsten Moseley, Jimmy Moseley, Michael Franti, local musician Charlie Walker

Later while attending Franti's concert at Mavericks at The Landing that same night, the musician invited Moseley to join the band on stage and show off his talents to the cheering audience.

"I couldn't hear anything I was playing. I had to keep putting my ear on my violin

just to make sure I was playing it right," said Moseley. "He kept looking over to make sure I was okay, and then he started to lay down on the stage and motioned me to do the same thing. That was so cool."

Moseley and his family have been long-time fans of Michael Franti and Spearhead. Moseley's mother, Kristen, a Jacksonville schoolteacher and bluegrass mandolin player, said she's used Franti's lyrics in her English class to teach students how to creatively communicate social commentary.

Moseley, who has been playing the violin since he was 6 years old, often performs with his mother and grandfather. He has also occasionally been invited to take the stage at local music festivals.

The Do It For the Love fundraiser collected more than \$6,000 dollars for dreams that evening.

St. Matthew's hosts annual Modern Woodmen speech contest

St. Matthew's Catholic School hosted one of the five local Level II Modern Woodmen of America speech contests on March 16 in its campus Media/Spirituality Center. The Modern Woodmen speech contest is a national contest that has been sponsored by the organization for more than 60 years in which many schools participate.

Each participating school sends their top two winners to the Level II contest; the top two winners from each Level II contest go on to compete against each other at Level III before moving to the national level.

The winners from St. Matthew's competition were Tony Valentino and Frankie Alvarez, both from Holy Family Catholic School in the Baymeadows area. All the contestants, however, did a wonderful job as their hard work and practice was evident.



Emma Fraidenburg, St. Joseph's Catholic School; Kinsey Gabree, St. Matthew's Catholic School; Keneth Santonil, Sacred Heart Catholic School; Tony Valentino and Frankie Alvarez, Holy Family Catholic School; Austin O'Brien, St. Matthew's Catholic School

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Producers, crafters bring farm to Bolles campuses

The 10th Annual Farmers' Market for The Bolles School provided three splendid days of shopping and relaxation at the Ponte Vedra, Bartram and San Jose campuses the first week in March.

Students visited a wide variety of vendors exhibiting unique wares and offering fabulous fare. Potted herbs, succulents, flower bouquets, and aquaponic micro-greens were a few of the flora offered for sale. Handmade jewelry, lotions, soaps, and candles were a sampling of the interesting craft options. Wildflower honey, baked goods, French crepes, ice pops, frozen acai fruit bowls, and organic pressed juices satisfied taste buds.

Colorful T-shirts, bracelets, and cups were available to purchase, with proceeds to benefit Angels for Allison and the McKenzie Noelle Wilson Foundation. The petting zoo was aflutter with activity as attendees bonded with baby goats, bunnies, ducklings, pigs, and sheep.



Executive Council Farmers' Market Chair Tina Toomey, Executive Vice Chair Sara Brackin and Executive Chair Trish Haskell



Alexa Geist and Marlo Morales make friends with a small pig.

Drawing like a master

Art students at Central Riverside Elementary School experienced drawing on their backs, just like Michelangelo did when he worked on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel, and found out just how difficult it is to keep their arms raised for the time it took to finish the assignment.



Students at Central Riverside Elementary School found out it wasn't easy to paint lying down.

Storytime at the community garden

Adeline Reilly and Finn Little listen to District 14 Councilman Jim Love read "Up, Down, and Around," a story about gardening, at the Riverside Avondale Community Garden. The Willowbranch Library Storytime was attended by 13 toddlers and 10 adults, who walked over from the library Feb. 24 to enjoy time in the sun.



Students lay wreath for unknown soldiers

Four Riverside Presbyterian Day School students were selected from their sixth-grade class to place a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Washington, D.C. Feb. 26 as part of the five-day field trip, a 30-year tradition for the sixth-grade students. This is the third year the class has taken part in the wreath laying ceremony, which is becoming a traditional part of the trip.



Naomi Cochrane, of Avondale, and Cross Thomas, of Ortega, present the wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier while RPDS classmates Ellie Spickelmier and Alex McLaurine look on.

Cookie dough mix raises a lot of 'dough' for relief

The Girls Breakfast Club, a St. Mark's Episcopal Church Sunday school class for girls in grades four to six, raised \$1,300 for Episcopal Relief & Development, a worldwide agency of the Episcopal Church. The relief organization provides money and resources in times of emergency or disaster. The girls made cookie mix and sold it at the Advent and Alternative Giving Fair and in the St. Mark's Bookstore.



Front, Emily Dearing, Sarah Frances Magevney; back: Lexie Smith, Abbey Magevney, Ann Lowrey Eyrick, Catherine Nichols, Hannah Miller

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Local students win awards in PTA Reflections contest

Two Stanton College Preparatory High School students from the local area received awards in the Duval County Council of PTA's 2016-17 Reflections Arts contest.

Alexandru Bordanca of Ortega and Katie Bartkowiak of Avondale were among the Reflections winners at Stanton. Bordanca received an Award of Merit in literature. Bartkowiak placed fourth in photography in the school competition.

A nationwide arts appreciation and recognition program for students from pre-kindergarten to 12th grade, this year's Reflections contest allowed budding artists to express themselves based on a common theme, "What Is Your Story?"

Entries in six categories – visual arts, photography, film production, music composition, literature, and dance choreography – were judged on interpretation of theme, artistic merit, creativity and mastery of medium.

Each school's top six winners in each category advanced to the county level, where 199 entries from 19 high schools were scrutinized by a different panel of judges. At the county level, only three Awards of Excellence were given out in each category, and those winners advanced to the state competition. At state, only one winner will be named in each category to represent Florida in the national competition.

A celebration ceremony will be held for all Duval County Award of Excellence and Award of Merit winners on Tuesday, May 16 at Atlantic Coast High School.

First-grade students collect shoes for global relief

For the past five years, first grade students at St. Mark's Episcopal Day School have held a shoe collection for Soles4Souls, which creates sustainable jobs and provides relief through the distribution of shoes and clothing around the world.

Again this year, the students solicited donations from their peers and during the school's annual Ortega River Run event Feb. 25. Students created posters and gave presentations during chapel services to encourage participation.

Math skills are used during this service project as the students collect, sort, bundle and package the shoes for delivery to Soles4Souls. Previously 800 to 1,000 pairs were collected by the students. Halfway through this year's collection period, the first-grade class had already collected 480 pairs of shoes.



First grader Anna Hammond holds a pair of high-heeled shoes donated to the collection.

Bolles, Episcopal adopt more flexible class schedules

The leaders of Episcopal School of Jacksonville and The Bolles School have announced the adoption of new schedules that focus on their students' well-being for the start of the 2017-2018 school year.

According to the Episcopal School website, both schools have been working independently for more than a year in this endeavor, and their paths recently merged in sharing the news of this change with the community. The academic change is a national trend that has already been adopted by many of the country's independent schools.

"Bolles joined Episcopal in making the announcement because it found out that Episcopal was going through the same thing at the same time," said Jan Olsen, senior

director of communications and marketing at The Bolles School. "We share a lot of the same families and have a good working relationship," she said.

The new schedules will bring student and mission-centered changes to the schools' daily schedules to allow for more balanced learning and teaching time for both students and faculty. Included in the benefits gained by the adoption of the new schedules is access to students' best learning times through rotation; more time for learner-centered instruction with deeper investigation, exploration, and reflection on content; support for balanced lives of students and teachers; longer class periods and fewer classes in a school day to provide balance

to nightly homework; classes that meet five out of every seven days, and increased teacher access.

"With these priorities in mind, The Bolles School and Episcopal School of Jacksonville are moving toward a more flexible school day that maintains the high expectations and outcomes associated with independent schools," according to the Episcopal School website.

"Bolles has always had a culture of innovation, and this is manifested each and every day in our commitment to the pursuit of excellence. These schedule changes better prepare our students for college and life and, at the same time, allow more family connection and time for personal reflection and rest," said Bolles Associate Head of School Tyler Hodges.

"We have several priorities to ensure the most balanced teaching and learning experience possible: a more balanced day to facilitate deeper learning, creative independent thinking, and a variety of types of assessment; increased opportunities for faculty collaboration and co-teaching; interdisciplinary work by students and faculty; opportunities for small group advisory discussions and clubs; the ability to access student and teacher best learning and teaching times throughout the day; and opportunities for personalized learning, experiential learning and innovative application of knowledge and skills. With these priorities in mind, we are moving toward a more flexible school day that maintains the high expectations and outcomes associated with Bolles since its founding," Hodges said.

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As a kickoff to the annual Book Fair at CDO Avondale (Child's Day Out), on March 8 students dressed up as characters from their favorite storybooks and paraded around Avondale United Methodist Church, to clapping and snapping of cameras by proud parents. Child's Day Out is an outreach ministry through the church to provide a loving, caring, and Christian environment for children ages 1 to 4 to learn, grow, and explore in a safe and social environment.

DA students perform piano recital at Main Library

William Watson of Ortega and Hannah Scales of Avondale were among 14 piano students from Douglas Anderson School of the Arts to perform at a Spring Piano Recital at the Jacksonville Main Library March 12.

Watson partnered with Shoshana Howard to play Mozart's Symphony No. 2, K. 17 *Allegro molto*, and Scales performed Beethoven's Sonata in F Major, Op. 10, No. 2, *Allegro*.

Douglas Anderson School of the Arts Piano students: Nathan Villacampa, Anne McMullen, Neo Camanga, Cristian Dirkhising, Gabriel Ellis, Hannah Scales, Kenny Foreacre, Kara Straight, Alyssa Flakowicz, Shoshana Howard, Mason Hunn, Brennan Villacampa and William Watson.



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DO SOMETHING

Want to get involved in the community? Sometimes it just takes a little push to do something, from the smallest gesture to the grand donation. Get ready to get nudged.

BY MARIAN JOHNS, RESIDENT COMMUNITY NEWS

There's no better time than the budding days of spring to start a lifetime passion for volunteering, help with a one-time project or event or provide ongoing financial support to a worthwhile organization such as the Healing Every Autistic Life (HEAL) Foundation.

Autism affects a growing number of families, not just on the First Coast, but all across the country, and HEAL supports the organizations which provide assistance to those facing Autism Spectrum Disorders. HEAL's grants help finance programs such as summer camp for students at the North Florida School of Special Education or Catholic Charities' Camp I Am Special, as well as sports and service dogs for the autism community. Through those grants, HEAL also provides educational programs for parents, teachers and therapists regarding autism.

Read on to find out how HEAL can use your help during National Autism Awareness Month and beyond to bring awareness and assist those with autism.

Participate: HEAL offers three fundraising opportunities each year. Lace up your walking shoes and join in the HEAL Walk for Autism at the Jacksonville Zoo on Sunday, April 30. Hit the water at HEAL's popular Great Ponte Vedra Paddle held each September at Micklers Landing. Swing a club next February, when HEAL holds a golf tournament, or attend the gala the evening before. For more details on HEAL's fundraisers, visit healautismnow.org

Donate: Through grants, the HEAL Foundation is able to support local organizations and schools in Northeast Florida serving those living with Autism Spectrum Disorders. To help support these grants, visit healautismnow.org to donate or send contributions to HEAL at P.O. Box 140, Ponte Vedra, FL 32004.



Students at W. E. Cherry Elementary, Orange Park, receive an iPad from the HEAL Foundation for their Exceptional Student Education (ESE) classroom.

Beville Anderson Did Something

Supporting the HEAL Foundation has a ripple effect on so many local charities. Just one of the many non-profits whose work is made possible through HEAL grants, is North Florida School of Special Education.



Beville Anderson

Ortega resident Beville Anderson, the Assistant Head of School at St. Mark's Episcopal, is passionate about working to make a difference. Thankfully, it is a conviction which she has been able to successfully pass on to her students.

For the past six years, Anderson has led her school's partnership with the North Florida School of Special Education (NFSSE), where St. Mark's sixth graders work with NFSSE students. Together, the students perform team building exercises, science lab experiments, art and musical projects as well as participate in physical fitness programs.

"I have seen many lives changed as our sixth graders have built relationships with the students at NFSSE," Anderson said. "These relationships are cultivated over a year-long partnership, which provides the opportunity for students at both schools to look beyond perceptions and invest time in getting to know others when it is uncomfortable.

"The result has been greater acceptance, empathy and understanding for others," said Anderson. "Our graduates have gone on to their middle and high schools continuing to serve alongside students at NFSSE with respect and joy."

"We believe the hearts of the students at both schools are transformed through getting to know each other as people and investing time in one another," she said.

"I have seen many lives changed as our sixth graders have built relationships with the students at NFSSE."

— Beville Anderson, Assistant Head of School at St. Mark's Episcopal



Students from North Florida School of Special Education and St. Mark's Episcopal Day School worked together to create an artwork project.

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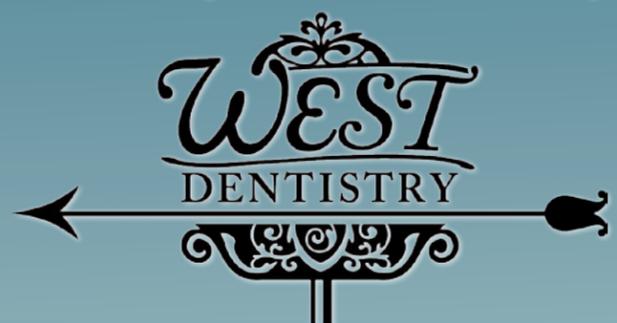
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