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Resident COMMUNITY NEWS San Jose - San Marco - St. Nicholas



LAKWOOD RESIDENT WINS TWO AFRICAN VIOLET AWARDS

Sharon Gartner of Lakewood holds her prize-winning Best Chimera, Ma's Blue Spinner, one of 178 entries in the Heart of Jacksonville African Violet Society's 24th annual show and sale at San Jose Church of Christ March 25. Gartner also won the First Award AVSA Collection for three African Violets.



TEBOW CLOSES OUT FLORIDA FORUM SILVER ANNIVERSARY

Pretty in purple, Christy Allen and Grace Sarber lend elegance to the final Florida Forum event, an evening with Tim Tebow, sponsored by the Women's Board of Wolfson Children's Hospital.

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LITTLE LADIES RALLY, RAISE FUNDS FOR LOCAL LIBRARY

Thanks to eight civic-minded fifth-grade girls from Hendricks Avenue Elementary School, residents in the Colonial Manor neighborhood can enjoy a relaxing read at the Duck Pond, courtesy of a new Little Free Library. The girls sold \$500 in baked goods to purchase the library and fill it with books. In April, they plan to hold another bake sale to raise money for the Jacksonville Humane Society.

At the bake sale were Katherine Cheshire, Delaney Hayman, Betty Leuthold, Autumn Rose, Ryn Rossi, Garland Glasheen and Leila Jane Davis. Not pictured: Esher Yu.

NO GO FOR EAST SAN MARCO

ArchCo Residential steps away from deal at closing

By Marcia Hodgson Resident Community News

East San Marco, the long-awaited multi-use development on the corner of Hendricks Avenue and Atlantic Boulevard, is not coming to San Marco anytime soon.

According to Jacksonville Council President Lori Boyer, who represents District 5, ArchCo Residential of Atlanta, primary developer of the project, "declined to move forward with the purchase," during its closing March 13.

"This is not to say they will not go ahead and revive the deal," said

Boyer, "But at this point it is not as if it has been delayed a day. I guess they are still trying to work it out."

Construction on the project had been expected to start April 1, with "expected delivery on residential units" slated for early 2019, according to Eric Davidson, a spokesperson for Regency Centers, which currently owns the 4.33-acre parcel, and a partner in the project.

ArchCo and Blue Rock Residential Growth REIT, Inc. had intended to purchase the land from Regency Centers, then sell back the retail space to Regency once the project is complete, Davidson said.

In a phone interview March 20, Davidson said he had not heard that ArchCo had permanently backed out of the deal, and after



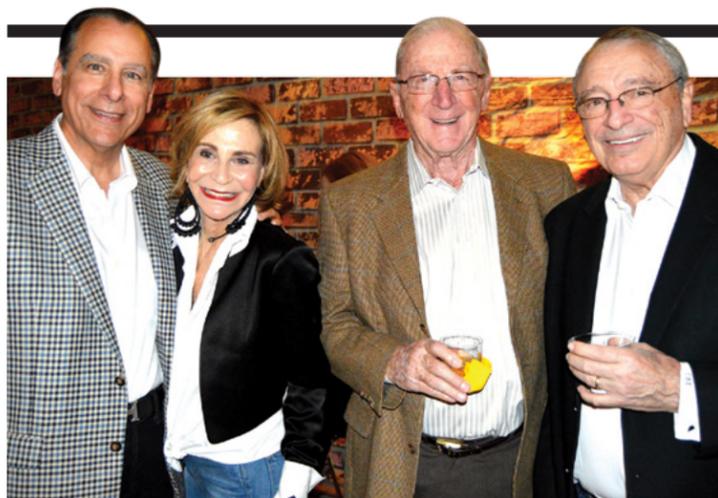
The 4.33-acre parcel at the corner of Atlantic and Hendricks may remain vacant for the undetermined future.

checking on the matter with Jim Thompson, executive vice president of operations for Regency Centers, said it was his understanding the closing had been delayed.

ArchCo was also co-developing the project with G. John Carey of Whitehall Realty Partners of San Marco, who was to be the boots-on-the-ground partner overseeing the construction. The Resident reached out to Carey, who was not available for comment.

ArchCo Residential was granted \$48 million in building permits for the development in late December 2016.

The project, which has had several false starts over the past decade, was to comprise 239 residential units, 46,000 square feet of retail space, including a 33,000-square-foot Publix, and a six-story parking garage.



GUESTS ENJOY SOPHISTICATED URBAN ATMOSPHERE AT JCA FUNDRAISER

Guests at the Jewish Community Alliance's annual fundraiser Feb. 25 enjoyed an "urban chic" affair in JCA's courtyard and other rooms at the community center, gathering to support many JCA programs including senior activities, preschool, after-school care, and camp tuitions for families in need.

READ MORE, PAGE 25

Richard Sisisky with Elli Zimmerman, David Stein and Charles Zimmerman

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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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# 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."

## Mandarin to host Trader Joe's

Trader Joe's is coming to Mandarin. The popular California-based specialty-foods grocery store will be setting up shop in a 13,700-square-foot location at 11112 San Jose Blvd. inside the Claire Lane Shopping Center, just a half a mile off Route 295.

The store is slated to open in the later part of this year.

The Mandarin location will be the second Trader Joe's to be built in Jacksonville and the 15th store in Florida. The first Jacksonville-based store was established in Jacksonville Beach in a shopping center on A1A just off Butler Boulevard.

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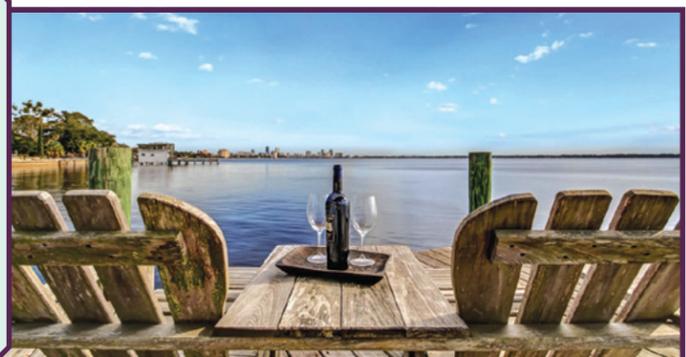
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# San Marco hotel purchased by Virginia based firm

By Marcia Hodgson  
Resident Community News

A familiar Southbank landlord is the new owner of the Hilton Garden Inn and Homewood Suites at 1201 Kings Ave. in San Marco.

In early March, Lingerfelt Commonwealth Partners LLC, a commercial real estate investment firm based in Richmond, Virginia, purchased the 221-room, eight-story hotel for \$24.7 million from San Marco Hotel Partners LLC, according to a press release from Berkadia Real Estate Advisors LLC, which represented the seller.

Lingerfelt Commonwealth Partners, through LCP Riverplace LLC and LCP 1200 Riverplace LLC, also owns Riverplace Tower and the Stein Mart Building, both on the Southbank.

“After a thorough and highly competitive process, our team was pleased to lead a complicated transaction to a highly successful closing for our client and the buyer,” said Dave Weymer, a managing director at Berkadia. “The institutional nature of these assets drove tremendous interest in the process and allowed the Berkadia Hotels & Hospitality team to maximize value for the owners.”

As of press time, according to the Jacksonville property appraiser, the 1201 Kings Avenue property is still owned by the Jacksonville Transportation Authority and San Marco Hotel Partners LLC in the care of David Wolfe, an attorney with Alex Brown Realty Inc. of Baltimore, Maryland, and its taxable value is \$18.2 million. Alex Brown Realty is a privately-owned real estate investment

manager, which was organized in 1972, according to its website. It has a “national footprint” and co-invests with clients and joint venture partners in properties located throughout the United States.

The dual-branded hotel, which offers select service and extended stays, was constructed in 2009 and is comprised of a 123-guestroom Hilton Garden Inn and a 98-suite Homewood Suites. Both facets of the hotel share an outdoor pool and fitness center. The Homewood Suites offers its visitors a boardroom, business center and a lodge on the building’s main floor. Visitors of the Hilton Garden Inn are able to enjoy two meeting rooms as well as an onsite restaurant and lounge.

Commonwealth Lodging Management, the company’s hotel management affiliate, will operate the hotel, according to a press release from Lingerfelt Commonwealth Partners.

Although Lingerfelt owns the hotel, it does not own the land the hotel sits on. Due to a Public/Private Partnership between JTA and Chase Properties, a development firm owned by San Marco resident Michael Balanky, the property belongs to JTA and has been leased until 2046 by Kings Avenue Redevelopment LLC, which is also led by Balanky.

The complicated arrangement allows that the hotel owner is actually a tenant of Kings Avenue Redevelopment because the hotel was Phase I of the larger Kings Station Development, a master-planned project which got its start in 2005, according to chaseproperties.com. Phase I of the development included the dual-branded hotel, while Phase II, which has yet to be built, was to include apartments and retail, all within



the close proximity of the adjacent Kings Avenue Garage and the nearby Skyway station.

Lingerfelt Commonwealth Partners is a vertically integrated, full-service real estate investment management firm with 60 years of experience, according to its website. In addition to its home base in Richmond, it has additional offices in Jacksonville, Nashville, Tenn., Tampa, Greensboro, N. Carolina, and Hampton Roads, Virginia.

Together with its predecessors in the private sector and public REIT sector, Lingerfelt’s partners have built, acquired, and managed nearly 20 million square feet of commercial real estate valued at approximately \$2 billion across the Mid-Atlantic and Southeast, according to its website.

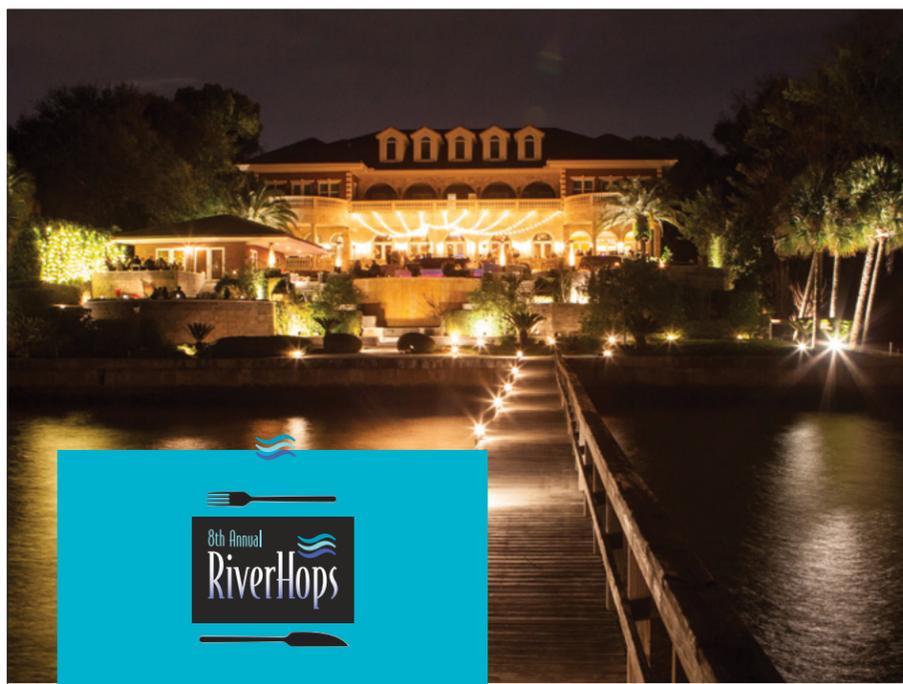
In addition to the two buildings on the Southbank, Lingerfelt’s property holdings include medical and professional offices, industrial, data and call centers, emergency care centers, elderly housing and nursing homes, and hospitality ventures located in Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Maryland, Illinois, Tennessee, and Florida.

The Lingerfelt Commonwealth Partners

website describes its firm this way: “With over half a century of deep institutional knowledge in all aspects of commercial real estate, Lingerfelt Commonwealth Partners combines its expertise with the energy of an entrepreneur. Building on the successes of the past, while adapting to changing markets, has allowed us to be selective in the opportunities we undertake, choosing only those that offer the greatest potential for our stakeholders.

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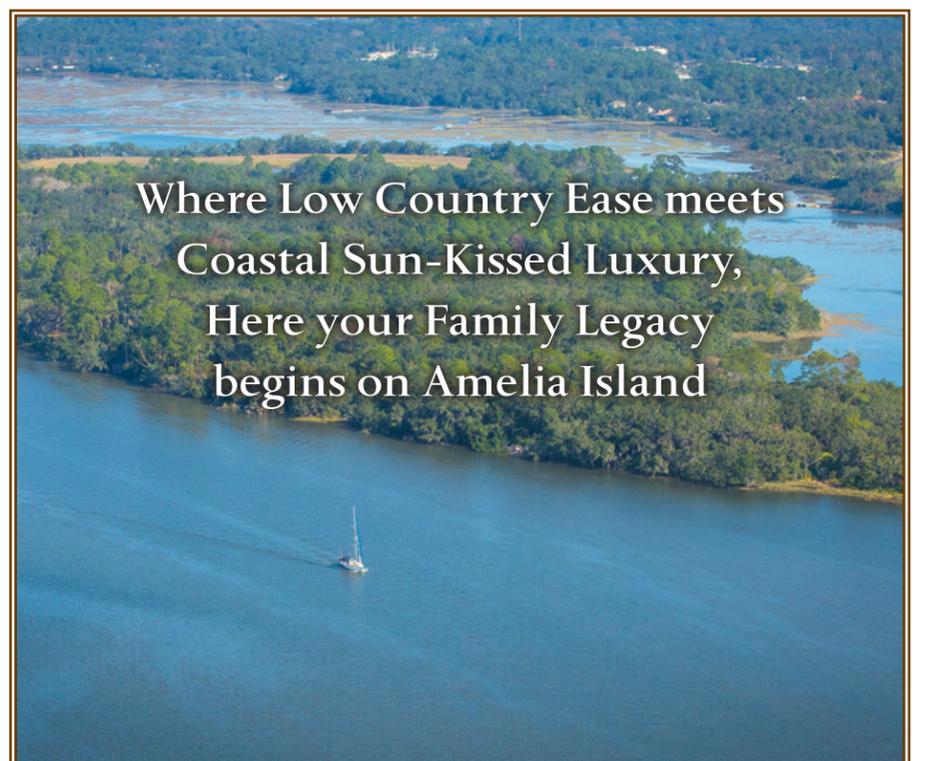
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# Riverkeeper serious about fighting dredging project

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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# Baptist MD Anderson Cancer Center construction on schedule

By Robert DeAngelo  
Resident Community News

Steel fabrication continues on a new addition to the Baptist MD Anderson Cancer, with the frame of the nine-story structure expected to be finished within the next three to four months.

When the addition is completed, projected for spring 2018, the new 330,000-square-foot facility will be connected via a skybridge to the current Baptist MD Anderson Cancer Center at 1235 San Marco Blvd., which opened in October 2015.

The new building's steel frame is expected to be completed this summer, according to Darin Roark, vice president of Oncology Services for Baptist Health.

"There is quite a bit more steel to go, with several phases ahead of us," Roark said. "We are hoping to be able to top off the building with the last piece of steel by June or July of this year."

Once the steel skeleton is finished, the next phase of construction will consist of an exterior frame for the building, including wall structures and glass, Roark noted.

The new facility's main entrance will face Palm Avenue and construction includes a four-story parking deck with space for about 600 vehicles. Other aspects of the plan include a bicycle and pedestrian path from Palm Avenue to the railroad tracks on Nira Street as well as wide sidewalks along San Marco Blvd.

Despite a temporary interruption by Hurricane Matthew when land preparation had just begun last October, this season's mild winter has allowed the \$150 million project to continue unabated.

"We are on schedule for completion of construction in the spring of 2018 with grand opening plans to follow in early summer," said Roark, who is a registered nurse and holds an MBA. "We are grateful to our neighbors for their patience as we continue to build a very complex structure."



The nine-story Baptist MD Anderson Cancer Center addition in framing phase.



Welders working atop the ninth floor of the new Baptist MD Anderson Cancer Center addition position a steel plate on March 6.



Nine stories high, construction workers appear to dance across the steel framework of the Baptist MD Anderson Cancer Center addition.

## Millers Creek Board approves 2017-18 budget

By Marcia Hodgson  
Resident Community News

The Millers Creek Special Tax District Board came three steps closer to seeing its dredging project become a reality during its meeting March 21 at Havana Jax Café in St. Nicholas.

During the meeting, the board approved its budget for the 2017-18 fiscal year, just in time for the City of Jacksonville's April 1 deadline.

The Board also granted its approval to purchase liability insurance from agent Robert Roldan, and finalized and approved the details of its Request for Qualifications

(RFQ) so that it can obtain bids for professional engineering work on its dredging project.

After tweaking a few items on a budget submitted by Board Member Jonathan Wright, who was unable to attend the meeting, the Board approved the \$81,792 budget for the following year. Including \$44,168, which was carried over from the previous fiscal year, the board projected it would have \$126,160 in revenue, eventually upping its reserves next year to \$44,368.

Some of the larger ticket line items included in the budget were \$50,000 in engineering and consultant fees, \$6,000 in legal fees, \$4,000 in accounting and auditing fees, \$3,500 for liability insurance, \$3,000 in promotional and legal advertising, and \$12,650 in reimbursement to Millers Creek homeowners for forwarding money to cover the board's first-year expenses.

During its February meeting, the Board had decided to have Chairman Dr. Rene Pulido send a letter requesting that residents

who had advanced money to the board last year wait to be reimbursed until February 2018 because it feared its budget might be in jeopardy. During the meeting, Board Treasurer Christopher Rose said only eight residents had responded, so far, to the request with all agreeing to be reimbursed at the later date.

To protect each board member's individual liability, the Board also approved payment of \$2,437 to Roldan for insurance coverage during the next year.

With the board's approval, Secretary Sharon Johnson said she planned to advertise the RFQ in the Financial News and Daily Record on March 24, setting a deadline for engineering vendors to submit their qualifications to do the Millers Creek dredging project by Friday, April 21. The Board plans to rank the different firms individually and make its selection during its next meeting, Monday, May 15.



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# St. Nicholas residents differ about LED streetlight installation

By Marcia Hodgson  
Resident Community News

New LED street lights have been coming to St. Nicholas, and not all residents are happy about it.

In early 2016, the City of Jacksonville and the Jacksonville Electric Authority launched a multi-year effort to upgrade all existing high pressure sodium (HPS) street lights with new LED lights, said Gerri Boyce, media relations coordinator for JEA.

“The material, along with the installation, for the LED conversion project is being supplied by JEA,” Boyce said. “When a street light is converted, it is moved into a new LED rate code. The rate for the LED cobra-head fixtures installed is currently less than the HPS/MH versions.”

There are many reasons having LED street lights installed is an advantage to the city, Boyce said.

The LED replacement project will cost approximately \$30 million – \$5 million per year over the next six years, but because the improved bulbs use about 40 to 60 percent less electricity, the eventual annual savings to the city may tally as much as \$1 million after they all are installed, said Boyce.

In addition to being more energy efficient, LED street lights are brighter with a higher lumens per watt rating than the older version. They boast longer light expectancy, and are expected to last up to 20 years, more than three times longer than the HPS/MH lamps, which usually last only three to five years, she said, noting LED lights also provide a more accurate color rendering, depicting the true color of objects. The intensity of the light is more consistent throughout



This new street light on Nicholson Road in St. Nicholas is an example of JEA's LED conversion project.

the LED lamp's life span and there is “less wasted light,” Boyce said.

“LED fixtures are constructed in a way that directs the light in a specific direction, reducing light pollution,” she said.

However, not all St. Nicholas residents may agree with that statement.

In the Facebook group St. Nicholas Neighbors, Christopher Lahey created a thread asking the question, “Ok neighbors, how do we feel about these new LED street lights?” Noting that it feels “a bit like an interrogation room,” he also weighed in saying “Personally, the light intensity and color is incredibly shocking and not how I want to feel in our quaint pocket neighborhood. It's already bad enough that we get blasted from the lights on the scoreboards. Now this...hrumph!” he said, referring to glare from the stadiums and scoreboards across the river.

A Holmesdale resident agreed, piping up that the atmosphere was “very Twilight Zone,” and although new lights were needed on the street, these are “super white bright. They light up the inside of the house, too.”

Meanwhile, Jennifer O'Neal Walworth didn't mince words. “I hate them. Feels

sterile. I woke up at 1 a.m. thinking it was morning,” she wrote and referred to a posting on CNN.com (www.cnn.com/2016.06/21/health/led-streetlights-ama/) from June 2016 where doctors issued a warning about LED streetlights. “The American Medical Association (AMA) has just adopted an official policy statement about street lighting: cool it and dim it,” she said.

However, Stacey Steiner posted she regrets not yet having the brighter lights on her street. “No new lights by me. Wish it was brighter over here. Happy to trade!”

Desiree Deakle Hauber also wrote she is happy about the change. “I like the extra light. It is brighter, but not too bright. I think my street is still pretty darn quaint.”

And Joyce Doty approved of the new streetlights. “I love the new lights. I feel safer at night when I'm outside. I close my blinds at night, so it isn't an issue for the inside of my house.”

One resident said she hopes the new lights will “keep the riff raff” at the park on Palmer Terrace out at night, and Michael Bayne concurred. “The park needs more lights down there,” he said.

“Crime rate is lowest in neighborhoods with blue-light streetlights. Our new LED full-spectrum lamps are the next best thing,” wrote another resident. “The blue light emitting diode in these LED bulbs is a fairly recent development, which won the Nobel Prize in physics. It was the shortest time ever between the research report and award of the prize in physics,” she said.

“Young children should sleep in rooms with fairly heavy window coverings. There is a modest correlation between early onset diabetes and exposure to streetlights, which can make a bedroom much brighter than

an ordinary nightlight for children. This discovery pre-dates LED streetlights,” she continued, adding, “the blue light phenomenon was reported before the scientific study is completed.”

The resident also referred to Snopes, which addressed the rumored correlation between the installation of blue streetlights in Japan and Scotland causing a reduction in crime and suicide rates. Last updated in May 2015, Snopes (www.snopes.com/politics/crime/bluelight.asp) catalogued the claim as “unproven,” citing that no specific scientific research existed while referring to several references within the media that had charted anecdotal evidence from police supporting the assertion.

Lahey also posted a link from Astronomy.com relating to the light and crime. Quoting from an article entitled “Humans cling to their primal fear of the dark” (http://cs.astronomy.com/.../humans-cling-to-their-primal) he wrote “Secondly, the researchers looked at lighting's effect on crime trends. In regions of reduced lighting, they found, there was no increase in burglary, auto theft, robbery, violence or sexual assault.”

The effects of light pollution is also covered in an article printed by the International Dark-Sky Association (http://darksky.org/light-pollution/wildlife) which is known to negatively affect wildlife, plants, and animals. “Plants and animals depend on Earth's daily cycle of light and dark rhythm to govern life-sustaining behaviors such as reproduction, nourishment, sleep and protection from predators,” according to the article.

No matter, one resident appreciates what the city and JEA are trying to do. “I like the energy savings with the LED, and they last about 10 years longer,” said Kelly Felkey Tomson.

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# Southbank apartment complex construction right on track



Southeast view of the future Broadstone River House parking garage which is being constructed on the Southbank next to the Duval County Public Schools building.

By Marcia Hodgson  
Resident Community News

Except for a “couple of weeks” delay due to Hurricane Matthew, construction on Alliance Residential’s Broadstone River House \$26.6 million Southbank housing complex has been progressing pretty much according to plan.

“Things have been going along smoothly,” said Tim Graff, vice president of development for Alliance Residential.

Planned for the site, which is adjacent to the Duval County Public Schools Building, is a six-story, 263-unit apartment complex offering one-, two- and three-bedroom units. The complex will consist of two residential buildings, one fronting the St. Johns River and another fronting Prudential Drive. Community amenities include a pool, courtyard, fire pit, game areas, a social clubroom, billiards lounge, and a health club that will feature yoga and spin studios as well as top-grade fitness equipment.

Completed so far on the 3.8-acre property is the \$1.2 million environmental remediation to the soil, underground infrastructure, a new \$620,000 bulkhead, and two public-access bridges that will attach the property to the Southbank Riverwalk, said Graff. The cost of the bridges is approximately \$88,000.

Currently under construction is a 463-space parking garage. When it is finished, part of the parking garage will be visible from the Duval County Public Schools building, however, residential units will wrap around the parking structure and the garage will not be visible from Prudential Drive, he said.

Building 1000, which directly fronts the river and will house most of the amenities, will be completed first, said Graff, adding

that he anticipates the first units in that building opening in the early first quarter of 2018. “We will be delivering them by floor,” he said.

Meanwhile, Building 2000, which fronts Prudential Drive and includes the parking garage, will see all the exterior work completed leaving only interior construction left when tenants begin to move into Building 1000. “Our intent is that the exterior skin will be complete when people first move in, leaving only the interior work to finish,” Graff said.

*“Things have been going along smoothly.”*

— Tim Graff, vice president of development, Alliance Residential

The entire project is expected to be complete by August 2018, he said, noting Alliance Residential will begin leasing the units three months before Broadstone River House first opens its doors.

Also, included in the project will be a new \$100,000 public plaza, which will be built along the Southbank Riverwalk on the west end of the property. Included in that 7,000-square-foot space will be benches, tables, and landscaping. The plaza will be connected to Prudential Drive by a wide public walkway, which will be constructed of pavers so that “everything blends into the Riverwalk,” Graff said. Wayfinding signage is also included, so the public will easily be able to spot the plaza and find its way to the Riverwalk.



Broadstone River House parking garage as seen from Prudential Drive

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# 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.

# 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

*"This is a natural next step for JCCI to move towards a working collaborative of community stakeholders."*

— Kevin Hyde, JCCI Board Chair

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



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# Oaklawn Cemetery expands with new facilities

*Property purchase to add space for new amenities, parking*

By Marcia Hodgson  
Resident Community News

Hardage-Giddens Oaklawn Chapel and Cemetery plans to expand its facility located on San Jose Boulevard to include a new chapel, Life Well Celebrated Center, a spacious funeral reception area, and expanded parking facilities for funerals and memorial services.

The planned expansion will take place on six acres formerly owned by the Shad family, which has owned the property adjacent to the existing cemetery for many generations.

“We are excited about our expansion plans, which will allow us to better serve families in the Jacksonville area,” said Jody Brandenburg, president of Hardage-Giddens Funeral Homes, Cemeteries and Cremations. “The six-acre addition from the Shad Family Plantation will allow us to add options like family estates and private family mausoleums to the property. We take great pride in maintaining our beautiful, park-like grounds, and these enhancements will only add to the beauty, function, and convenience of our location.”

Opened in 1927, Oaklawn Cemetery has been a fixture in the San Marco area for 90 years. Tommy C. Shad, owner and caretaker of the Shad family property adjacent to the



Rendering of the new Life Well Celebrated Center

cemetery, said timing and determining what was in the best interest for his family influenced his decision to sell. He said the property had been in his family for many generations and that he wanted sell to someone who would respect the property.

“We wanted a buyer that would honor and preserve the property,” said Shad. “We wanted one that would take an active role in maintaining the integrity of its unique beauty. Oaklawn is the best fit, and we are confident in its reputation and heritage.”

The new chapel and Life Well Celebrated Center will be located on the north side of Oaklawn Cemetery on Inman Place just off San Jose Boulevard. “It will have the same décor and the same feel as our present facility,” said Brandenburg, noting the expansion will allow Hardage-Giddens to host larger events and services, as well as provide additional parking for funerals, memorial services and visitations.

“This really comes in response to the community’s request for individualized and customized Life Well Celebrated services,” he said.



Workers with Southeastern Roofing, Inc. replace the cedar shake roof on Preservation Hall in San Marco’s Fletcher Park March 21.

## New roof for Preservation Hall

Preservation Hall, the quaint historic church building in San Marco’s Fletcher Park, is getting a makeover.

A new roof was put on the 129-year-old structure March 20, with paint and other cosmetic maintenance upgrades to follow, said Barbara Hall of San Marco, chairman of the San Marco Preservation Society’s committee which oversees the structure. The new roof consists of cedar shake shingles, the same material used on the original historic edifice, said Hall. The cost of the new roof was \$30,000, she said.

“The building was built in 1888. It’s always needing something,” said Hall. “It has withstood all its years really well.”

The chapel, which is managed by the San Marco Preservation Society (SMPS),

is often used for public meetings. Popular with couples, it is also frequently rented as a wedding site. Last year, nearly 50 nuptials were held in Preservation Hall, said Hall.

Preservation Hall is an example of Carpenter Gothic architecture and was built as St. Paul’s Episcopal Church by lay carpenters, said Hall. Its original location was on the Southbank, near where the Museum of Science and History now stands. In 1994, it was renovated and moved to Fletcher Park by the city, the San Marco Preservation Society, and the San Marco Garden Circle, which helped landscape the area in the park around the building.

## 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.

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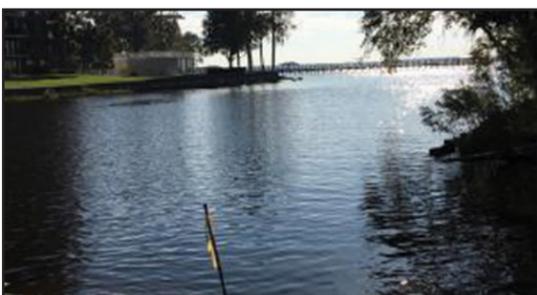
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# Buried in books

*Who's your neighbor? Meet Ashley Halil, a San Marco mother with a passion for the written word.*

*By Marcia Hodgson  
Resident Community News*

Ashley Halil's day job as media specialist for two elementary schools keeps her immersed in the stacks, where she oversees the use and care of 35,000 books by the 1,000 students at Hendricks Avenue Elementary and R.L. Brown Elementary Schools.

Halil is also an author, having written "Comin' Across Grace," a quirky, Southern adult novel, which won a Breakout Author Award from Amazon, and two children's books, "The Sleepless Knight," and "The King's Daze," which are both stories about a father's relationship with his children.

Halil grew up in Mandarin and attended duPont Middle School and Wolfson High School, graduating in 1990. She spent one year at the University of Florida before transferring to the University of North Florida, where she graduated in 1995 with a degree in communications and a minor in English.

A San Marco resident, Halil is married to Don, and has four children, Savannah, 19, a freshman at the University of Florida; identical twins, Trip and Cole, 17, both seniors at Paxon School of Advanced Studies; and Piper, 9, a third grader at HAE.

**What do you like best about living in San Marco?**

I live on Whatley Park. My kids were always out there playing football and they learned to play soccer in the park. My son and I walked through the park this morning. It's great to be able to step out your front door and have that. I also love that Starbucks and the movie theater are so close that the kids can walk, and I don't have to worry about them driving far away. They can enjoy friends there or go on a date. Our kids went to Hendricks and to Landon, so I love that our schools are within walking distance.



***"I have quite a few students who want to be writers and want to start an afterschool writing club. It's really cool to have sparked that interest in some of them."***

— Ashley Halil

**What inspired you to write a book?**

I've always written. I took creative writing and fiction classes in high school and college but didn't actually publish my first book until 2013. Then I got sidetracked into children's books, which are stories I took from my own children, watching them interact with my husband.

**Where do you do most of your writing? Are you currently working on a book?**

My computer's in my kitchen in the middle of everything, and that's where I usually do my writing. But I love going to the beach and that's my favorite place to write. I don't take my computer with me there, but I will set out with a notebook. When I'm at the beach, I write in longhand. When I'm at home I type, but there is something about being at the beach and letting your mind wander. I'm not writing a book right now, but will start to work on one again this summer.

**Are your books on the shelves of R.L. Brown and HAE?**

Yes. The kids asked me to bring my books in. They love to check them out, which is really cool. My first day of school, I introduced myself and told them about the writing process. I told them that my book, "The Sleepless Knight," was based on a story that happened to my boys, and I showed them a PowerPoint of my kids and how the idea hit me for the book. Because of that, I have quite a few students who want to be writers and want to start an afterschool writing club. It's really cool to have sparked that interest in some of them.

**What is your favorite thing about HAE?**

Hendricks parents are a very generous, kind-hearted group of people. When I started at R.L. Brown, it had been without a librarian for several years. The library was a storage room for supplies and textbooks. I was totally overwhelmed. The kids who live in that area, most of them don't have books at home. If they can't check out library books at school, they go without reading at home. My goal was to get that library into shape, but I knew it would take me, alone, until the end of the year to do it. I mentioned my issue to a HAE parent, and before I knew it I had 15 parents from Hendricks go over to R.L. Brown and work all day with me wiping two inches of dust off the shelves and helping me rearrange the books. We got the library turned around that day, and the kids checked out books the next time they came in. Hendricks parents have also come over to help me with the R.L. Brown book fair. You don't find people like that in too many places.



Tucked under majestic oaks along the banks of the river is the ideal place for your family. Sunday brunches in the historic Mansion. A splash in the new family pool or sets on the tennis courts. A morning workout and a spectacular sunset at the Marina Deck Bar. Dinner for just the two of you while the kids enjoy movies in the Cub's Den. It's all here, just waiting for you.

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COMMUNITY CALENDAR – APRIL 2017

1

**Cemetery Clean-up**

Saturday, April 1, 8 a.m.  
Historic St. Nicholas Cemetery,  
Olive Street and Linden Avenue

**Granada Fest**

Saturday, April 1, 3 - 7 p.m.  
Granada park, 3960 Alcazar Ave.  
*Sponsored by the Granada Neighborhood Association.*

8

**GoJax Event**

Saturday, April 8, 8 a.m.,  
Southside Baptist Church, 1435 Atlantic Blvd.  
*Participants in the multi-church community initiative meet at 8 a.m. for Huddle Time to learn where they will work on community projects, followed by breakfast at 10 a.m.*

**Daily's Fit4Life Kids Duathlon**

Saturday, April 8, 8 a.m. – Noon  
Riverside Presbyterian Day School, 830 Oak St.  
*One-day community event features a run, bike, run for children ages 5-15. Race concludes with family-friendly festival. To register, visit [www.rpds.com/duathlon](http://www.rpds.com/duathlon) or call (904) 353-5511, ext. 186.*

13

**Prayer Labyrinth**

Thursday, April 13 at 9 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.,  
Friday, April 14 at 9 a.m. to 6:30 p.m., or  
Saturday, April 15 at 9 a.m. to noon  
South Jacksonville Presbyterian Church,  
2137 Hendricks Ave.  
*Labyrinths have been used to facilitate prayer, meditation, spiritual transformation and global unity in a variety of cultures for at least 3,500 years.*

**Preschool Easter Parade**

Thursday, April 13, 9:15 a.m.  
South Jacksonville Presbyterian,  
2137 Hendricks Ave.  
*Egg hunt to follow parade.*

**Christ in the Passover Seder**

Thursday, April 13, 6 p.m.  
Southside United Methodist Church,  
3120 Hendricks Ave.  
*Jews for Jesus present "Christ in the Passover," a model Seder, in the Family Life Center.*

9

**Easter Egg Hunt**

Sunday, April 9, Noon  
Whatley Park, Hendricks Avenue and  
Alexandria Place  
*Pack a picnic and chairs or a blanket and stay for lunch. Sponsored by South Jacksonville Presbyterian.*

**Easter Egg Hunt**

Sunday, April 9, 4 p.m.,  
Southside United Methodist Church,  
3120 Hendricks Ave.  
*Egg hunt on the lawn, picnic to follow.*



16

**Son Rise Service**

Sunday, April 16, 6:45 a.m.,  
Balis Park, 1999 San Marco Blvd.  
*Sponsored by Southside Baptist Church, Southside Karen Baptist, South Jacksonville Presbyterian, Hendricks Avenue Baptist, and Southside Assembly of God.*

19

**Pixilated Poetry**

Wednesday, April 19, 3-4 p.m.  
San Marco Library, 1513 Lasalle St.  
*A mash-up of Tetris and poetry where players attempt to fit together puzzle blocks and words to make new and innovative designs.*

11



**Poetry Open Mic Night**

Tuesday, April 11, 6:30-8:30 p.m.  
San Marco Library, 1513 Lasalle St.  
*In celebration of National Poetry Month, bring an original poem, song or even an old favorite to the library, then step up to the mic and be ready to read. Poetry must be appropriate in language and content and less than three minutes in length. Ages 12 and up will be able to participate.*

27

**Wolfson High School Tours**

Thursday, April 27, 6 p.m.  
Samuel W. Wolfson High School,  
7000 Powers Ave.  
*Come and learn about Wolfson's new magnet International Baccalaureate and Advanced Placement programs.*

**Open House, April 22 - 12-3 p.m.**



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# No job too big, nor too small for Ground Control

## Lawn and landscape firm earns their business

For most homeowners, trying to hire someone to take care of the lawn and gardens is tough. Knowing how hard they will work, how much time they will put into your landscaping and property management, and just how meticulous their finished product will be is rarely a sure thing. If you're looking for a guarantee, look no further than Ground Control's Josh Willett.

In the industry, Josh stands out head-and-shoulders above the rest, with partner Nicole Anderson, who works side-by-side with him, providing design assistance in the field. The finished look of landscapes and final products, from installations to maintenance and upkeep, never disappoint their clients.

"Each and every time he's been to our home, he's meticulous and there's not a stone unturned," said Jane Evans of Hidden Hills in Arlington. "Josh and Nicole are perfectionists and it shows in the upkeep of multiple properties we own."

Whether it's standard landscaping, from the grass to the hedges and trimming the yard to seasonal flower and plant installations, you can't help but notice the care and planning that goes into his work. Your yard and gardens will always look good if Ground Control is in charge of your outdoor spaces, and it's worth comparing their prices against any competitor.

Josh prices the job so you enjoy your space, not worry about how much you're going to spend on it. His quotes can't be beat when it comes to installations and plant selections, not just because he can

save you money, but because he knows where to plant, what to plant and how to nurture everything to health once installed. The difference is simple – care and concern, not churn and burn, and plants that are healthy and blooming, not dry and dying.

### Valuable Lessons Learned from the Best

Josh is meticulous and caring; it shows in his work from the very slightest detail. From a young age, he had a great teacher and mentor in his father, who showed him the ropes for many years. From the age of 12, Josh spent his formative years beside his father, a landscape professional in charge of gardens and museums throughout Macon, Georgia. Many of the historic sites and gardens were impeccably designed and maintained by his father, including the gardens dedicated as a memorial to the Allman Brothers band.

Josh credits his father for giving him a solid work ethic and strong knowledge base. From understanding the requirements of varying species of plants and flowers, to managing seasonal changes through routines of trimming and implementing fertilizers and understanding growth expectations, years of learning were passed from one man to another.

### Spring Installation and Advice

It's spring and Josh believes in picking the right plant for the right place – for the right price. He believes that producing the best results comes from research, from the sun to the right amount of natural rainfall, and how this all affects your choice in landscaping. He has a respect for your bottom line and won't waste your time and energy installing landscapes that won't work or bear fruit in your surroundings.



If there is too much sun, or not enough water to foster growth, he'll know. Josh is comfortable recommending alternatives and work to ensure they live strong, live long and provide a lasting presence in your landscapes. Taking several trips to the job site to learn the daylight tendencies and the fall of shadows under trees, to include the strength of full sun on your property is something he absolutely believes in. Before one plant goes in the ground, he understands more than most will ever know.

### Hiring a Professional

From clipping shrubs and maintaining creeping fig with the utmost of care, the

process is not speed and completion, but that of precision and perfection. Someone who cares for your property and wants to make plants live happily in their best possible natural environment is what Josh has in mind. Setting goals to make that happen is his specialty.

If you're seeking a true perfectionist to produce wonders for your landscapes, from shady areas that never produce blooms to full sun that burns everything you've installed, look to Ground Control for all your needs, from the mowing and blowing to the maintenance of your most prized landscapes.

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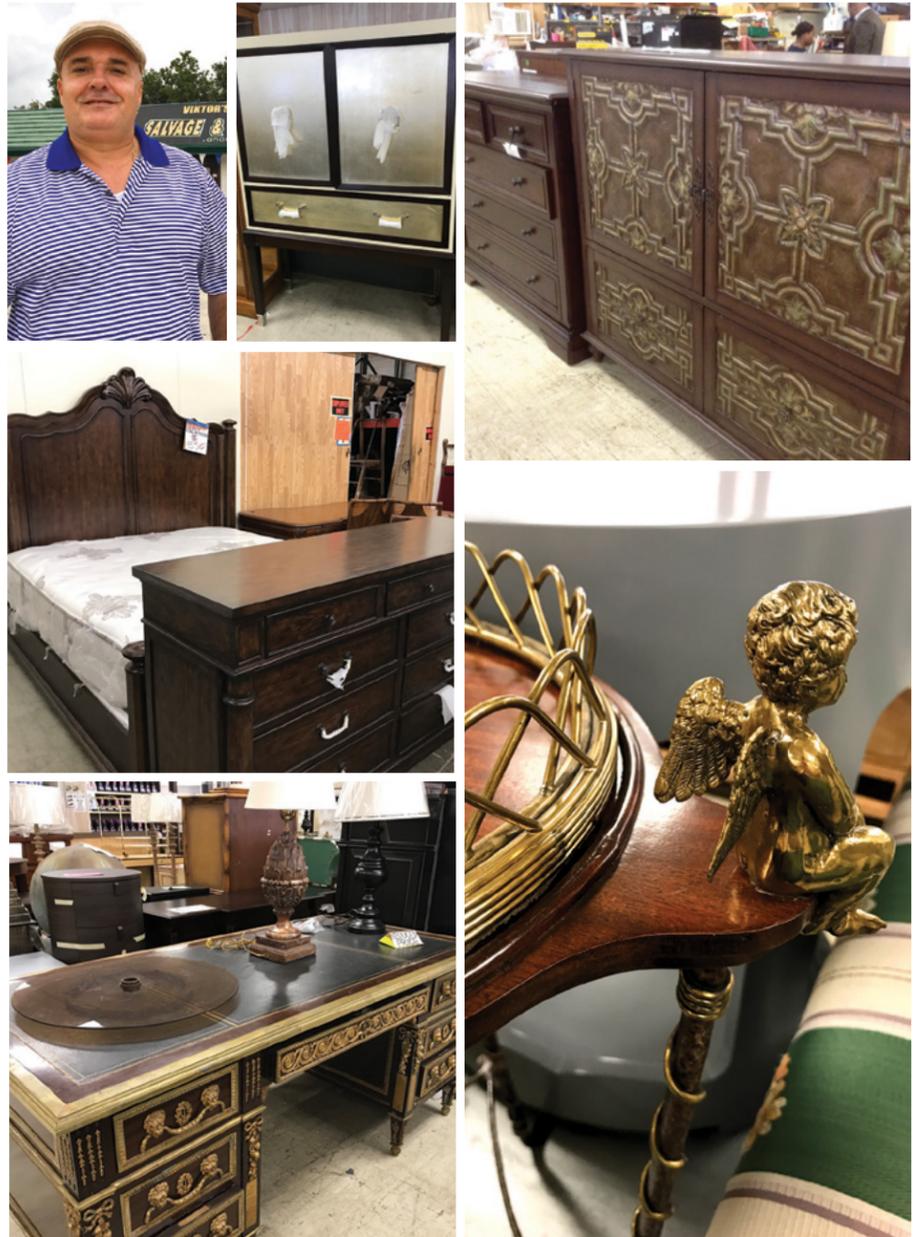
Need a new Lilly Pulitzer bed set for your master bedroom, or a classy, Michael Amini credenza for the dining room of your vacation home? Viktor's has what you want.

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.



## The 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Jacksonville Jewish Food Festival



Sunday, May 7 11:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m.  
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We will have fun, kid-friendly activities so come hungry and bring your family.

### Ticket Information

\$25 General Admission

\$75 Families (includes 2 adults & 2 children under 16) | Children 3 & under, Free

Wine Wall \$18 each or \$30 for 2

50/50 Raffle 1 for \$5 and 5 for \$20

Bake-Off \$10 per Entry (Unlimited entries per person)



## Dance Trance

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# Experience high quality eye care in a unique, historic location

*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](http://www.adamseyes.net).



Dr. Charles P. Adams, Jr. and new partner, Dr. Brittany Ransom Agee

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**APR 15** Gardening to Attract Birds  
with Robert Sanford, FNGLA Northeast Chapter

**APR 22** Pet Safe Landscaping  
with Jessie Miller, EPIC Animals Outreach

**APR 29** Palms and Nutrition  
with Larry Figart, Urban Forester Duval County Extension



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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 offensive coordinator before being appointed Head Coach at Lee High School in 1972.



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.

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."

## Local coach judges cheerleading championship Worlds qualifier

San Jose resident Brian Payne served as head tumbling judge for the Kick's Cheerleading Championships held March 25-26 in Montreal, Quebec, Canada. As part of an international judges' panel, he assessed scores for over 150 competitive scholastic and all-star cheerleading squads, composed of more than 3,000 athletes, in their quest for a bid to Cheerleading Worlds in Orlando April 29-May 1 at Disney's Wide World of Sports.

Payne is head diving coach at Duncan Fletcher High School as well as trampoline and power tumbling coach at Infinity All Stars Gym. His wife, Layne Thompson-Payne, is the new executive director for Riverside Fine Arts Association. She previously served the nonprofit as the Project Listen Outreach coordinator 2006-2008.



Brian Payne and Layne Thompson-Payne

## Blakely new assistant principal at Landon

Julia Landon College Preparatory School has a new assistant principal.

Katrina Blakely, formerly assistant principal of Terry Parker High School, took over the position vacated by former Landon Assistant Principal Carolyn Aponte just before Christmas break, said Landon Principal Timothy Feagins.

Blakely, a 2000 graduate of Terry Parker High School, has 13 years of educational experience, most at her alumna mater. The Arlington resident earned her bachelor's degree at the University of Florida, where she majored in telecom productions and minored in education. She began teaching at Terry Parker in 2004, and has also served that school as a teacher, graduation coach, and assistant principal.

"I love being at Landon," said Blakely. "It is my first experience at a magnet school. We have kids from all over the city, yet there is a real community spirit and phenomenal parental support here."



Katrina Blakely

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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 of carrying on the heritage of the Pen Women to "perpetuate its history for future generations."

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



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.

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.

# 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 Elfenbein 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



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

co-founded in 2002 to teach children and adults the joy of chamber music.

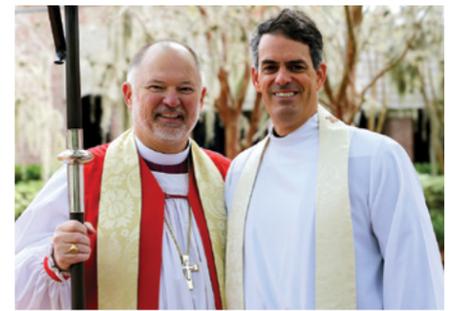
The other retirees include Deborah Heller (flute and piccolo), Lela LaBarbera (violin), Glynda Newton (violin), and Peter Wright (principal clarinet).

## Greene installed as Episcopal Head of School

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.



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

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.

## 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.

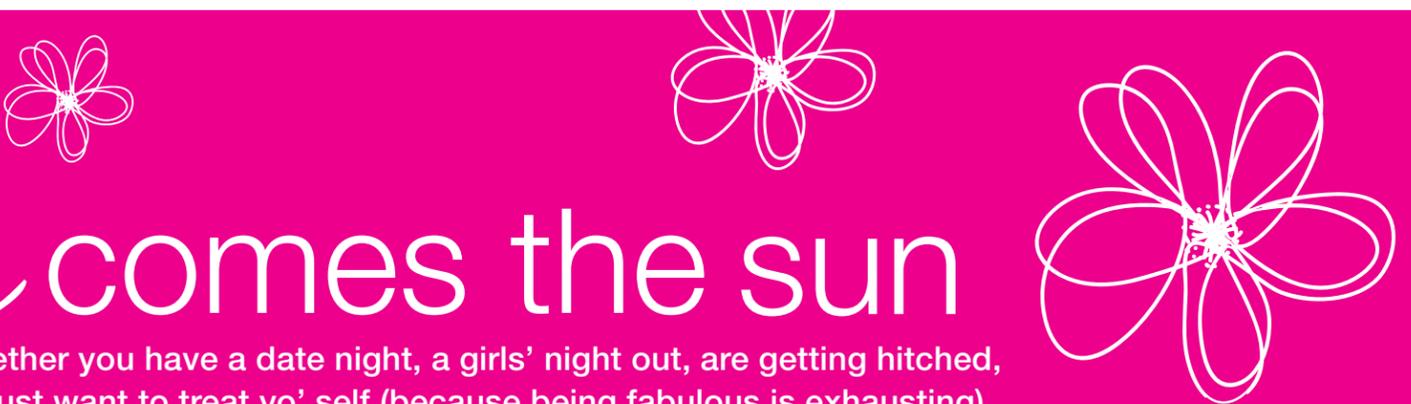
The recognition highlights organizations and individuals committed to principles of person-centered care for people with dementia and those who care for them. Dementia Capable Society Leaders come from all areas of long-term care, from architecture and design firms

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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## Historic District residents' books on exhibit at Jax Book Fest



Dorothy K. Fletcher



Judith Erwin



Jolene Cazzola



Jody Giles

Four San Marco/San Jose area residents 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.

A former English teacher in Duval County Public Schools, Dorothy K. Fletcher is a prolific author, with poetry, essays, articles and six books under her belt. Exhibiting in the Nonfiction-Florida category, Fletcher's latest book is "Historic Jacksonville Theatre Palaces, Drive-ins and Theatre Houses." She won first place in the 2006 Robert Frost Poetry Contest in Key West, Florida.

A passion for numbers led new author Jody Giles into financial planning, where she discovered the importance of creating a "Missing Pieces Plan," also the title of her Self-Help book on legacy planning. She exhibited in the Nonfiction-Self-Help category at the book fest.

Jolene Cazzola is a new author in the Fiction-Romance category, with "Love's Illusions," the first in a series. Cazzola also holds a Master of Fine Arts and a Master of Business Administration, and has worked in social service. She is currently writing book two of the series.

Also writing in Fiction-Romance is Judith Erwin, a retired attorney turned author, exhibiting her latest of three books, "Shadows from the Past." She has also written for local, regional, and national publications, primarily in the area of the performing arts.

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.

## Real estate agency welcomes new San Marco agent

San Marco resident Terri LeSuer has joined Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Network Realty as a Realtor in the San Marco office.

LeSuer was born at Naval Air Station Jacksonville, and her family was stationed in Texas and California before eventually returning to Jacksonville, at Cecil Field NAS.

"My father was a fighter pilot, and I have the utmost pride and respect for our military community and I'm proud to have been raised in that environment," said LeSuer. "The annual air show is my favorite event of all time; I was raised with the Blue Angels."

LeSuer also comes from a family of real estate investors and landowners, and said she always planned on ending up in the industry.



Terri LeSuer

## Falero joins BHHS San Marco office

Danny Falero has joined the San Marco office of Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Network Realty.

Born in Puerto Rico, Falero is bilingual – speaking, writing, and reading Spanish. He has a background in sales, marketing, and public relations working with major brands such as the PGA Tour and MasterCard.

"We are pleased that Danny has joined our San Marco Office family. His background in marketing and sales is sure to give him an advantage, and ensure that his client's real estate experience will be stress-free from beginning to end," said Sheron Willson, Broker/Manager of the Metropolitan office of Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Network Realty.



Danny Falero

## FirstAtlantic Bank brings on new vice president

Damir Delic has joined the San Marco team at FirstAtlantic Bank as vice president, commercial banker. Delic's 17 years of financial services experience includes a previous position with First Citizens Bank. He is a member of the Small Business Resource Network and the Small Business Development Center at the Small Business Administration department located at the University of North Florida. Delic will develop new client relationships within the business and professional markets for the bank's eight financial centers in Northeast Florida.



Damir Delic

## New ophthalmologist joins established practice

Dr. Brittany Ransom Agee, a Southbank resident, has joined the ophthalmology practice of Dr. Charles Adams Jr., long-time local ophthalmologist with offices in Riverside and Fernandina Beach.

Formerly in practice at Bowden Eye & Associates in Jacksonville, Dr. Ransom Agee is a graduate of the Louisiana State University School of Medicine in New Orleans. She completed her internship in Internal Medicine at Tulane Medical Center in New Orleans and her residency in Ophthalmology at the University of Texas Southwestern in Dallas.

Dr. Ransom Agee's husband, Dr. Shawn Agee, is an ophthalmology specialist with Southeastern Retina Specialists.

"We love living on the Southbank for so many reasons! We love the proximity to a variety of local restaurants and shops. We love participating in the frequent social, charity, and networking events that take place nearby. We also love being so close to the hub of Jacksonville's fine arts scene and sporting events," said Dr. Ransom Agee. "This area is so unique in that you can easily take advantage of all the benefits of living in a large city, but still have a sense of community and small neighborhood feel. When you add in the beautiful river views, what's not to love?"



Dr. Brittany Agee

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## Geiger named keynote speaker of Female Founders Forum

Phyllis Lockwood Geiger of San Jose, founder of the Peterbrooke Chocolatier Company, was the keynote speaker at the 2nd Annual PS27 Female Founders Forum, March 8 at the University Center at the University of North Florida.

The Female Founders Forum is an exclusive annual event organized by PS27 Ventures to motivate and improve the skills of the female founders of small businesses. The purpose of the forum is to attract and inspire more women to become entrepreneurs and to help them learn how to build sustainable businesses that create jobs within their communities as well as create returns for their shareholders and personal wealth for themselves.

The forum's keynote speaker is usually an acclaimed business leader and Geiger fit the bill. In addition to founding Peterbrooke Chocolatier in 1983, a company



Peterbrooke Chocolatier founder Phyllis Lockwood Geiger with her daughter, Brooke Joyner, owner of the Peterbrooke Chocolate franchise in Atlantic Beach and founder of a new venture, Brookie's Cookies.

that grew from eight stores to 30, which she has since sold, Geiger was named the 2006 Pioneer by the Women Business Owners of North Florida, and the Small

Business Administration's 2006 Family-Owned Business of the Year for the North Florida District.

"We're here celebrating Women's International Business Day. I'm really honored to be here," said Geiger, noting that she is proud that her appearance comes on the heels of last year's speaker, Delores Pass Kessler, founder of the recruiting company Associated Temporary Staffing, which eventually became AccuStaff and then MPS Group, Inc. and is now part of Adecco Group.

Geiger attended the event with her daughter, Brooke Joyner, the "Brooke" in Peterbrooke Chocolatier, which was also named for her son, Peter Behringer, owner of Sweet Pete's, a candy store in downtown Jacksonville. Joyner owns a Peterbrooke franchise in Atlantic Beach and is following in her mother's footsteps with a new venture, Brookie's Cookies.

## DeVooght takes top Christian writers awards



Leslie DeVooght, center, with Florida Christian Writers Conference hosts Mark Hancock and Eva Marie Everson

San Marco resident Leslie DeVooght took home top awards at the Florida Christian Writers Conference in Lake Yale (Leesburg, Florida) Feb. 25. DeVooght won first place for overall fiction and first place in the romance category for her novel submission, "Island Love is Elementary." With the overall fiction award, Elk Lake Publishing guarantees a full read of DeVooght's manuscript and possible publication.

Lauren Crews, DeVooght's conference roommate and Fleming Island resident, won first place for overall non-fiction and first place for Bible study.

This is the 30th year of the conference where Christian writers from around the state and the country meet with industry professionals to hone their craft and take steps toward publication.

## Lawrence DuBow named 2017 Baker Award winner

Junior Achievement honored Epping Forest resident Lawrence J. "Laurie" DuBow, who received the Annual Thomas S. Baker "Solid as a Rock" award during its annual Hall of Fame luncheon at the University of North Florida's Adam W. Herbert University Center March 13.

Also inducted into Junior Achievement's Hall of Fame was Bill Koch, managing partner of Northwestern Mutual, and Wells Fargo Bank.

The awards are given to longtime supporters of education, either financially or through volunteerism, within the community, said Koch, who has been on the Junior Achievement Board for 18 years.

As the 2017 winner, DuBow was the 19th recipient of Junior Achievement's Baker award.

"Laurie is a primary example of someone who has given. He exemplifies the good that can be accomplished when well-earned success is wisely shared," said Junior Achievement President Steve St. Amand of Mandarin.

DuBow said receiving the award was a "great honor," and that he is happy to support Junior Achievement's efforts in the Jacksonville. "It's an outstanding group. I'm very impressed. They are giving help and encouragement to children who are starting out in life," he said, noting his foundation supports children, education



Bill and Denette Koch with Lawrence "Laurie" DuBow

and health within the community. "We are happy to give that money away, because when I die it isn't going with me. I know some may think a golden armored truck will be following me at my funeral, but that isn't going to be the case," he laughed.

## Local art students shine at annual show

Local watercolor artist Jennie Szaltis held her 27th annual art show March 11 at Trends Home Décor, 3919 Hendricks Ave. The show featured works by Szaltis and her students. Elizabeth Shieffer was the first-place winner in the juried show for her watercolor, "Autumn."

Szaltis, who has taught painting to local students for over 30 years, is a past president of the Jacksonville Watercolor Society.



Elizabeth Shieffer and Jennie Szaltis



Jennie Szaltis and son JP



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## Belger named head football coach at Bolles



Wayne Belger

After coaching at the side of legendary high school coach Corky Rogers for more than 28 years, Wayne Belger, the Bulldogs offensive coordinator, has moved up to take the place of his mentor as head coach of The Bolles School's football program.

Rogers announced his retirement March 7 as Bolles' head coach due to medical reasons. He worked until March 17, when Belger officially took over as head coach, just in time for spring practice to begin in April.

Belger grew up in Lackawanna and played quarterback on the first football squad Rogers coached at Robert E. Lee High School. Later he returned to coach with Rogers at Lee after graduating from Garner-Webb College in North Carolina. When Rogers took the top job at Bolles in 1989, Belger moved with him.

"I am excited and looking forward to it. I know we can keep the program Corky started going strong," said Belger. "We are going to keep everything the same as we can, keep up the hard work and see the pay-off on the field."

Rogers often said "continuity of staff is a major reason for my success," and had recommended Belger has his replacement. "One of the things I told them was not only was he deserving of the job, but I knew the other coaches wanted to work for Wayne," he said. "He is the best way to keep the program intact. Bolles is a special place, and he knows Bolles and its athletes and will do a wonderful job."

## Carlucci family welcomes third generation

In about 20 years, there may be a third generation of Carluccis going into the family insurance business in San Marco.

At 8:18 p.m. Feb. 23, 2017, a healthy 7-pound, 12-ounce boy was born to Victoria Joy Carlucci and her husband, Joseph Anthony Carlucci II, of St. Nicholas, at the UF Health North Birth Center.

The child, Joseph Anthony Carlucci III, is a namesake for both his father and great-grandfather, Joe Carlucci, who founded a State Farm Insurance Agency in San Marco more than 40 years ago, and died in 1986. His agency is currently owned and operated

by the baby's grandfather, Matthew Carlucci, Sr. Joe Carlucci jointly owns the Brightway Insurance Agency in San Marco with his brother, Matthew Carlucci, Jr.

The baby's paternal grandparents are Matthew Carlucci, Sr. and his wife, Karen, of San Marco. The maternal grandparents are David and Joan Elian of Jacksonville.

Referred to affectionately as JC3, the baby is the second namesake baby in the Carlucci family. His uncle, Matt Carlucci, Jr., has a three-year-old son, Matthew Carlucci III, affectionately called MC3 by his new cousin's father, Joe Carlucci.



New parents Victoria and Joseph Carlucci II of St. Nicholas with Joseph Anthony Carlucci III

## New principal at Wolfson High

Although it is only mid-year, a new principal is at the helm of Samuel W. Wolfson High School for International Baccalaureate and Advanced Placement Studies.

Christopher Begley, formerly principal of Lake Shore Middle School, has been named the Wolfpack's new principal. He takes over the job from Terrence Connor, who left mid-year to work as an administrator in the Clay County School system.

Begley, who has worked in education for 32 years and served as a Duval County principal for 19, received his undergraduate degree in English Education from Oral Roberts University, and a Master's in Curriculum from Union College in Barbourville, Kentucky. He later earned an Educational Leadership Specialist degree from Nova Southeastern University in Fort Lauderdale.

Begley was one of three educators who helped establish

Providence School of Jacksonville for the New Life Christian Fellowship in 1997, and served as principal of Providence High School for 10 years. Later, when his children were young, he moved back into the Duval Public School System serving as principal for Loretto Elementary and Lake Shore Middle School. "I feel like I've come back whole circle," he said, noting although it is a private school, the curriculum at Providence, with its advanced placement and honors classes, is similar to what Wolfson, a dedicated magnet school, now offers.

"Wolfson is supposed to be in lockstep with Paxon (School for Advanced Studies) and Stanton (College Preparatory School). We have the same program, a mirror to the ones at those two schools, however, this location better serves San Marco, San Jose, St. Nicholas, and Mandarin. This is exactly what I did at Providence for 10 years," he said. "This has been my dream, to get back to what I used to do at Providence. I am now back at a high school, which I love."

## Fourth Judicial Circuit Adult Drug Court receives national recognition

The Fourth Judicial Circuit Adult Drug Court, overseen by Chief Judge Mark Mahon of San Jose, has been named one of only nine mentor drug courts in the United States by the National Association of Drug Court Professionals (NADCP) and the U.S. Department of Justice. The Jacksonville program received the distinction during a ceremony March 8 at the Duval County Courthouse.

"It's an incredible honor to be recognized at a national level for all the great work being done in our problem-solving courts," said Mahon.

As a national Mentor Court, the Fourth Judicial Circuit Adult Drug Court helps develop, identify, and test national best practices and provide technical assistance to jurisdictions interested in implementing a drug court, including hosting visitors from around the country. The program will serve as a national Mentor Court for a period of three years.

"The Fourth Judicial Circuit Adult Drug Court is a shining example of how a combination of accountability and compassion can save lives, reunite families, and make the community safer," said Carolyn Hardin, NADCP chief of training and research.

There are currently more than 3,000 drug courts nationwide. The Fourth Judicial Circuit Adult Drug Court provides interagency, collaborative, non-adversarial treatment strategy for defendants in the criminal justice system. Since 1994, nearly 2,000 participants have successfully gone through its program, which addresses substance abuse addiction by assisting those in need in overcoming their addictions and restoring their lives by being supervised by a judge and a professional treatment team. The result has saved lives, families, and hundreds of millions of dollars in tax-payer funding.

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**735 ALHAMBRA DR S - \$1.350MM**  
4/4/1-5, 1,99 sqft. NEWER In 2016. NEWLY updated and TOTALLY RENOVATED. Step inside this tasteful and beautiful home. The Fabulous Gourmet Kitchen boasts large prep island, NEW stainless steel appliances including Wolfe Gas Range/oven.



SOLD

**8973 YARMOUTH RD**  
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**4248 GREAT OAKS LN - \$385,000**  
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**1157 NORWICH RD - \$1.2MM**  
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**3215 FRONT RD - \$1.695MM**  
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**7000 SAN FERNANDO PL - \$1,799,999**  
4/4-4, 770 sqft. Private and Peaceful all brick charm on 248 feet of river frontage. Private road and protected park across the street. Pristine & move in ready. Step inside and enjoy river views from almost every room.



**948 OLD GROVE MANOR - \$490,000**  
4/4-3, 722 sqft. Walk inside this Perfect Family Home and make it your own. Spacious Foyer opens to formal living room. Family room features brick fireplace, wet bar, and sliding glass doors to beautiful patio and lushly landscaped backyard.



**3540 BEAUCLERC CIR N - \$560,000**  
4/3/1-4, 149 sqft. Situated under a canopy of majestic Southern oaks on half-acre lot in desirable Beauclerc. Spacious living areas ideal for large/growing family include family room w/wood beams, wet bar & gas fireplace, great for easy entertaining.



**4342 LAKE WOODBOURNE DR SOUTH**  
2/2-1, 267 sqft. SOLD by Julio Mendez! Great home in a very comfortable community called "Lake Woodbourne". IT FEATURES NEW CARPET, FRESH INTERIOR PAINT, living/dining combo, spacious eat in kitchen with stainless steel appliances.



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Natalie Reese  
REALTOR®  
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**4385 WORTH DR EAST**  
3/2-2, 080 sqft. SOLD by Kristin Nimnicht! This lovely brick traditional home is located in one of the most desirable neighborhoods in Jacksonville down the street from the St. Johns river. It is situated on a very large lot.



**4158 ALHAMBRA DR WEST - \$1.8MM**  
3/3/1-4, 115 sqft. Riverfront on sprawling cul-de-sac & high bluff lot. Original family home has been well maintained and lovingly cared for. Open floor plan has been beautifully updated & renovated inside and out.



**3134 WELLESLEY SQUARE - \$844,000**  
4/4/1-5, 963 sqft. Architectural Masterpiece! Exceptional and Incredible details throughout including a glass and steel roof in entrance. Walk inside to Grand 2-Story Atrium Foyer & presentation Staircase. Formal Living & Dining Rooms are grand.



SOLD

**1704 PEACHTREE CIR SOUTH**  
3/1-1, 267 sqft. SOLD by Anita Vining! Absolutely charming and adorable Brick home in great location of Miramar! Original and beautiful hardwood floors flow throughout entire home. Living room features Brick Fireplace.



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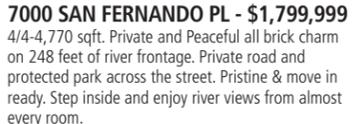
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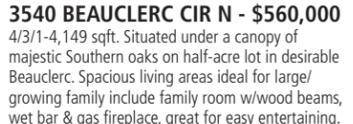
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Debbie and John Ferelisi



Sunny and Stephen Berg with Dana and Justin Kane



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



Kent Matthews and Malkah Hochman with Vicki and John Higbee

**Annual Sheriff's Roundup seeks to lasso funds for at-risk children**

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.

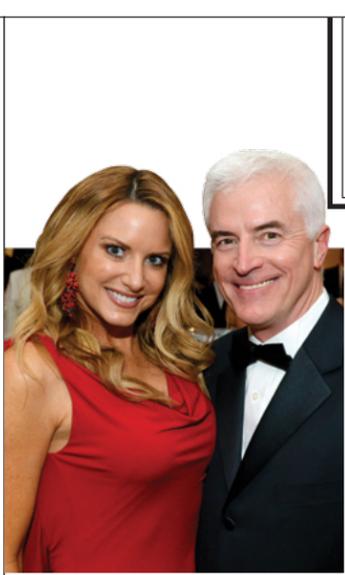
Guests at the western-themed event enjoyed live music, dancing, delicious grub, a silent auction, casino games and interactive experiences as they sought to raise money to assist children who live in Jacksonville's toughest neighborhoods. JaxPAL's goal is to provide a safe and structured environment,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



Shannon and Jeff Kinney



Angelia Savage and Larry Patterson



Dan and Rosemary Jackson with Gil and Jane Pomar



Kelly Winer with Judi Zitiello, Pat and Michelle McManamon



Lindsey and Fontaine Lemaistre with Donna and Charlie Kauffman

**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.



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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



Christy Allen and Pam Tebow with Vice President and Development Foundation at Baptist Health, Pierre Allaire PhD, Bob Tebow and Kent Stermon

## 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.



Calvin Orth with Chelsey Lossin



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# 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 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



Allison and Dustin Fries, Daniel and Megan Moffatt



Dave Adams, Brad and Michelle Skinner, Amy Adams

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.

# No need for an SOS on this Hawaiian cruise

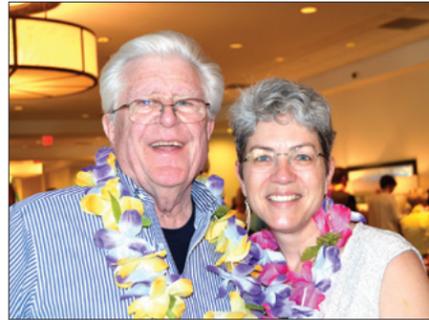
All that was missing was Gilligan and the Skipper as guests gathered at the Marriott Sawgrass in Ponte Vedra for a Hawaiian cruise-themed gala to benefit Project SOS, a nonprofit that assists teens in making healthy life choices and in giving youth critical life skills.

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.

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.



Bryan and Joanne Hickox



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



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

# JCDS faculty repairs hurricane-damaged home

Director of Education at Jacksonville Country Day School Tonya Elstein of San Marco and a team of school faculty and staff dedicated a sunny Saturday in early March to painting a fence and the porch decking of a St. Augustine home that had been damaged in Hurricane Matthew in October 2016.

The service project, which was coordinated through the St. Johns Housing Partnership, helped restore a historic house built in 1904 by a Minorcan family. There was also an educational component to the project because the property previously housed a small Montessori school from 1966 to 2006.

"I'm ecstatic! It's marvelous. It is emotionally uplifting," said homeowner Judy Sharp after the work was finished. Sharp is one of 5,000 St. Augustine victims who had

their homes damaged in the hurricane. A retiree, she had several feet of water in her home, and discovered her insurance did not cover the full cost of repairing the damage.

The St. Johns Housing Partnership "promotes safe, decent, and affordable housing" in north Florida, by creating links between the public and private sectors on projects that create low and moderate income housing by rebuilding neglected homes and neighborhoods, according to its website. The purpose is to benefit disadvantaged areas and enhance community economic and social development.

"Our school community wanted to come together and aid someone who was in need of our assistance," said JCDS Physical Education Specialist Doug Postell, who helped coordinate the effort.



The team from Jacksonville Country Day included (front) Darron Blanchard and Doug Postell; row two, Kathryn Chess, Karen Connelly, Ian Nyquist, Alli Flores and Sarah Holland; row three, Tejal McLeod, Sarah Brinson and Jennifer Highsmith; back, Ashley Turner, Missy Melba, Pat Walker, Patrick Grant, Ruthanne Stabler and Tonya Elstein.



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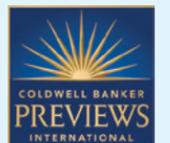


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## GET WET ON OUR WATERWAYS

Whether it's dipping your toes at the edge or taking a plunge into the river, just do it! Perhaps you experience the river by way of your favorite paddleboard, kayak, or your boat; regardless of your method or means, it's time to get out and get soaking wet this summer.

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](mailto: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 kayaks 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](http://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  
For additional information call (904) 757-4463.
- Jacksonville Landing, 2 West Independent Drive  
Visit [jacksonvillelanding.com](http://jacksonvillelanding.com) for additional information.
- Riverside Arts Market, Under Fuller Warren Bridge  
Visit [riversideartsmarket.com](http://riversideartsmarket.com) or email [info@riversideartsmarket.com](mailto:info@riversideartsmarket.com) for additional information.
- River City Brewing Company Marina, Southbank Riverwalk  
Visit [www.rivercitybrew.com/marina](http://www.rivercitybrew.com/marina) for additional information.

An additional website with helpful information for boaters is [www.floridabywater.com/north-east-florida/jacksonville](http://www.floridabywater.com/north-east-florida/jacksonville)

# Miramar couple offers free lessons to budding swimmers

*Marcia Hodgson  
Resident Community News*

For Chris Oliver and Nancy Hennessey, swimming is life.

The couple, who have spent nearly all their adult lives coaching at some of the finest swim clubs in the country, now want to give back to children from Jacksonville's urban core, many who have never splashed in a pool or had the opportunity to learn to swim.

As the owners of Splash Jax Swim School, a for-profit business, Oliver and Hennessey make some money teaching swimming lessons using the four-lane, 25-meter pool on Davidson Street in San Marco, which they purchased from longtime Coach John Carroway in 2011. However, over the past three years, they have also given away more than \$20,000 in swimming lessons to less fortunate beginners as part of the Swim Jax: We Swim for Others Foundation.

The couple, who have lived in Miramar since 1998, decided to start the foundation after spending part of the summer of 2013 teaching swimming to more than 100 children from Jacksonville's urban core in the pool at the Episcopal School at the behest of the Boselli Foundation.

"We've been teaching swimming for a long time and that passion was always in the depths of our hearts," said Hennessey. "But when we worked with the Boselli Foundation and saw the transformation that occurs, it really touched us in ways we had not known, and we realized we need to do this for more people. That's when the shift came, and we decided to set up the foundation. We want to pass our love for swimming along with high quality instruction, teaching kids not just to swim, but to swim efficiently and safely," she said.

Oliver agreed. "Working with the Boselli Foundation, and by giving out lessons on our own, has been extremely rewarding," he said, noting they have taught Boselli swimmers for the past four years. "The Boselli Foundation is a different dynamic. There we work with true inner city kids, instead of [less fortunate] children from Hendricks Avenue Elementary or Assumption School where our daughter attends. With the Boselli kids, we have a little swim meet for them at the end of the session. To watch a kid compete for the first time, and see someone who had never been in a pool before or ducked his face in the water swim 25 meters freestyle – it's incredibly fun. Their smiles are so wide."

Hennessey said both she and her husband were pool rats as children and have spent



Chris Oliver and his wife, Nancy Hennessey, at the Splash Jax pool on Davidson Street in San Marco

nearly all their adult lives teaching and coaching age-group swimmers in three of the best swim programs in the country.

As parents of three children – 8-year-old Lucy and 14-year-old twins, Ty and Cameron, who have special needs – the couple decided to open their Splash Jax Swim School so they could also offer lessons to children with similar disabilities. "Swimming is good for kids with autism and ADHD," said Hennessey. "It's a peaceful place for them to be. Because they have many sensory issues, the water kind of holds them."

The year-round Swim Jax swim team dues, which are set based on the swimmer's ability to pay, help fund their foundation. Through their nonprofit, they also plan to reach out to children who qualify for the free lunch program at public school by offering free swim lessons, through Peachjar, a service that provides parents with digital flyers about after school activities.

"We know people have a lot of pride – they don't want the world to know they are in need – and we respect that," Hennessey said. "We are excited to have further outreach with these families, and want them to come to us and let us know that they need our help," she continued, noting one family reciprocated by painting a sign for the swim school, and many parents often help by cleaning up after lessons.

"My greatest joy is watching these kids grow up. The swimming is awesome, but building that relationship with kids and watching them grow is pretty magical," said Hennessey. "Accolades and medals are great, but its helping kids believe in themselves and become the best people they can be, that's where the magic happens."

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# Dedicated and passionate group cleans up St. Johns River

By Marcia Hodgson  
Resident Community News

Although turnout was less than expected, a lot of work was done by the few volunteers who came to help clean up Balis Park, Craig Creek, Goodby's Creek and the South Shores kayak launch area at Bee Street and Utah Avenue as part of the St. Johns River Celebration Cleanup March 25.

Balis Park Organizer Mimi Pearce, who saw only two volunteers show up, attributed the lack of enthusiasm to spring break and the University of Florida-Wisconsin March Madness Basketball game, which was shown late on TV the night before. "A lot of work was done by very few," she said.

Meanwhile, at Goodby's Creek three homeless men were the only volunteers who turned up to assist clean-up

organizers Dick Cardell of Lakewood and Grace Torsanko.

Attendance was even more sparse in South Shores where John Nooney was the only one who made an effort to clean up the area near the kayak launch. However, at least 16 San Marco area residents, including several members of the Bolles Environmental Club, made an effort at Craig Creek.

"We had less than in years past, but I couldn't be happier with the result, which is that the creek got cleaned up," said Craig Creek Organizer Bryan Mickler of San Marco. "We had a few young families who were teaching their kids how to be responsible, as well as the kids from the Bolles Environmental Club. I promise San Marcovillians that our next event will be hugely, bigly better," he said in his best President Trump imitation.



The whole Barnett family helped clean the river bank at Craig Creek March 25: Richard and Michelle Barnett with Jacqueline, Madeline, and Rawls.



Mimi Pearce manned the table in San Marco Square.



Dick Cardell and Grace Torsanko worked to clean up Goodby's Creek March 25.



John Nooney found a volleyball, basketball, a funnel, and hardhat as he worked to clean up the South Shores kayak landing at Bee Street and Utah Avenue.



Bolles Environmental Club members Emmett and Wyatt Kogan join Grace Igel on the banks of Craig Creek.



Bryan Mickler assists Kristin Nimnicht in retrieving a hard-to-reach piece of trash in Craig Creek 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.



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



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



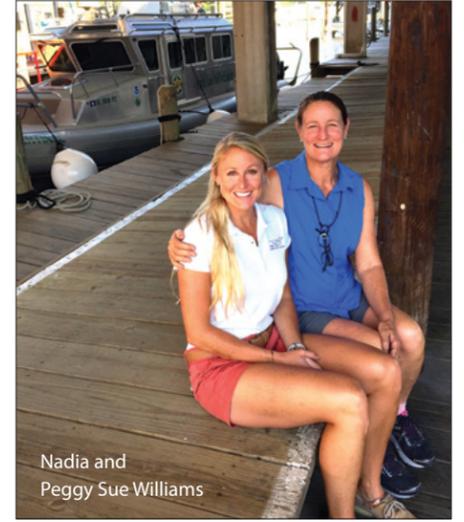
We are so fortunate to have a river in Jacksonville that can be enjoyed year-round. Since I was 10 years old, most of my leisure time has been spent on the water: sailing, water skiing, kayaking, taking photos at regattas or being in the yard enjoying the view. There are so many opportunities to expose 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



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



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



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

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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**

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**



I hear so many people say that Jacksonville is boring or that it's not very pretty, and they've obviously not been on the water. The St. Johns River is one of the most beautiful aspects of Jacksonville. It's where the city shines. I hope to see better access to the river created and amenities developed along it so that more people can enjoy how life slows down when you're on the water.

**Hillary Almond, Epping Forest Yacht and Country Club Vice Commodore**

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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 house-keeping 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.

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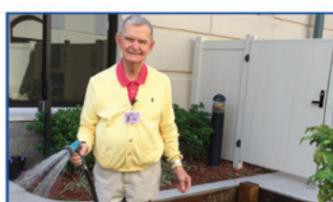
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# THE WAY WE WERE – CORKY AND KIT THOMAS

By Peggy Harrell Jennings  
Resident Community News

It's amazing Kit and Corky Thomas of San Marco didn't meet a whole lot earlier than 1982 when the couple – both single parents of daughters – went on their first date to a Florida-Georgia football game.

Kit, whose maiden name was Bunch, grew up in San Marco, while Corky lived his childhood years across the river in Murray Hill. Both, unknowingly, shared long-time acquaintances, and both, unknowingly, had shared experiences by being in the same place at the same time.

On their first date, Corky showed up with a large pompom corsage sporting a little plastic football. "I thought 'Oh, my gosh, way over the top,'" said Kit. But, because both were longtime Georgia Bulldog fans, the two couldn't have come up with a better first date. "Georgia won!" Corky said, and so did he when they married July 23, 1983, with their young daughters, Jennifer, Katie, and Betsy serving as bridesmaids.



Corky and Kit Thomas

The couple's gridiron connection, one of many, goes back to high school when one of the biggest school rivalries in Jacksonville in the 1970s was Lee-Wolfson. While Corky, Class of 1967, was marching in the Lee High School band as drum major his senior year, Kit, Class of 1968, attended football games and cheered for her alma mater, Wolfson High.

Kit attended Mercer University in Macon, Georgia, where she earned degrees in elementary education and sociology with a concentration in criminology. Meanwhile, Corky studied a few miles away at Emory University in Atlanta, receiving his Doctor of Dental Science in 1975. Because both schools did not have football teams, they each cheered for the University of Georgia Bulldogs, and today continue to do so together.

The San Marco couple didn't meet, however, until mutual friends at Southside Methodist Church encouraged the single parents to get know each other better 35 years ago.

"My girls and his daughter sang together in the choir. All the kids loved him," said Kit. "We hung around with the same group of church friends. Our faith was an important part of the attraction, and we were always together anyway."

A year after their wedding, daughter Maggie turned the family into "yours, mine and ours," but the couple just refers to all their daughters as "ours."

Reminiscing about some of their teachers, and the strict rules high school students had to follow in the late '60s, Kit recalled, "Mrs. Wilson at Wolfson made girls kneel down to see if their skirts were long enough to touch the floor. And you couldn't wear pants, only dresses or skirts."



Corky and Kit Thomas with daughters Betsy Zahn, Katie Zahn, Maggie Thomas, Jennifer Thomas Medure with baby Charlie

"What about those gym outfits the girls wore?" Corky interjected. "Oh, my goodness, those white things with your name embroidered on it, and your shoes had to have your name across the front in marker – Bunch, K.," laughed Kit.

Corky recalled Virgie Cone at Lee enforced the same short-skirt rule and mentioned seeing boys come back from the dean's office red in the face from getting swats with a paddle for misbehavior. Kit said the paddle at Wolfson had holes in it.

Corky's favorite teacher at Lee High School was Myra Schwerdt, who happened to be best friends with Kit's favorite teacher at Wolfson, Charlotte Ray, although

neither were aware of it when they were in high school.

Growing up in Murray Hill, Corky attended Ruth N. Upson Elementary, then went to middle school at John Gorrie. As a teenager, he rocked out with his band, The Coronados, at Southside Woman's Club, The Beach Pavilion, Woodstock, Cedar Hills and other teen clubs all over Jacksonville. Meanwhile, Kit would sometimes go to the teen clubs, but more often just hung out in the parking lots. "My parents didn't want me going to dances," she joked. "But there was a great teen club in San Marco – near where the

*Continued on page 37*

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library is on Hendricks. There used to be a community swimming pool there, but they filled it in.”

While at Wolfson, Kit ventured across the river to the Dreamette in Murray Hill and to Pop Berrier’s for malts on Cassatt Avenue, a favorite hangout for Lee students.

Both took dance classes; Corky took class at Buddy Campbell’s Dance School, which was across from the Dreamette on Post Street, and Kit took class with Earl Bagaley of Bagaley Juvenile Theatre on Stockton Street in Riverside. Kit attended Cotillion, and they laughed when Corky recalled going to the Patrol Boy dance in 6th grade wearing a red jacket and black bow tie with a girl about a foot and half taller than he was. “Our daughters and Kit had a lot of fun with that picture!” he laughed.

After graduating from Mercer, Kit taught Special Education at Wesconnett Elementary for one year from 1973-1974, then worked as a Probation and After Care Counselor with the Juvenile Justice from 1974-1976.



Kit Thomas still has the teddy bear she loved as a toddler

Ironically, the judge she most often had to deal with was Judge Marion Gooding, who just happened to be Corky’s uncle.

Kit returned to her teaching career at Fort Caroline Elementary, where she found the principal was the same woman who had been principal at Hendricks Avenue Elementary when Kit attended as a child. Since those teaching days, Kit has been director of Southside United Methodist Preschool, executive director of Girls, Inc. Jacksonville, and vice president of major gifts for United Way of Northeast Florida, from which she retired in 2013. But her best job ever? Stay-at-Home mom from 1979-1996.

Besides cooking with daughters Jennifer Thomas Medure, Katie Zahn, Betsy Zahn and their families (daughter Maggie lives in California), socializing and traveling with their 12 or 15 friends of 30-plus years – the Thomases have been to Alaska, Spain and are soon off to Italy. Kit and her group of girlfriends, called The Dreamers, have gone off together every Martin Luther King, Jr. weekend for 25 years. “We lounge around, eat, play games, talk and laugh,” said Kit.

Kit and Corky have hosted a Christmas Eve party for family and friends every year since they married. “Once you are invited

you are always invited,” said Corky. One year they were sick and didn’t have the party, but their pastor and his wife didn’t get the message and showed up anyway.

Music has always been an important part of their lives. They are active in Southside United Methodist Church, singing in the choir; Corky leads a small group and was youth choir director for 15 years, while Kit co-directs the children’s choir. They also sing in One Accord, a community choir. “Our kids grew up around the piano,” said Kit.

The list of boards and community involvements they have served would fill a page or two. Presently Kit serves on the board of Theatre Jacksonville, Arc Jacksonville, Kairos Outside Council – a prison ministry for women with incarcerated loved ones, and is the Continuing Ministry Chair at Southside Methodist.

Kit is also presently capital campaign manager for the North Florida School of

Special Education, which she said is “a little piece of heaven,” while Corky maintains his dental practice on Hendricks Avenue. “It has been very rewarding to see families come through. I’ve treated three and sometimes four generations in the same family as well as many of my former teachers from Lee High School and Kit’s former teachers from Wolfson,” he said.

Having a child with learning disabilities inspired the Thomases to help in the vision for the Arc Village, where one of their daughters now lives. “Parents of adult children would ask, ‘What’s going to happen to our kids when we are gone?’” said Kit. “United Way opened doors for me – I met community leaders and philanthropists and used those relationships to connect folks to their passion.”

Community involvement is simply a reflection of living their faith, said the couple. “We like to have fun – include anyone and everyone, and serve others,” they said. “We have been through a lot together, but when you have a God-centered marriage and hard times come in life you can pull out of it,” added Kit.

“People don’t care how much you know until they know how much you care,” quoted Corky. “That’s my favorite quote!” Kit exclaimed.



Corky Thomas, sixth-grade patrol at Ruth N. Upson



Corky and Kit Thomas, Wedding Day, 1983

### 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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## Lakewood senior enjoys Gate River Run event

Patricia Jennings Hart, 98-1/2, of Lakewood, participated in the Brooks Rehabilitation Challenge Mile portion of the Gate River Run March 11 representing Brooks Rehabilitation Bartram Crossing. Hart's sons Jon and Tom Jennings, and grandson Donavin Jennings pushed her wheelchair. When they teased her, asking if she was going to run, Hart said, "No, I think I'll just roll." The one-mile event along Duval Street enabled and empowered individuals living with disabilities to participate in the annual Gate River Run event.



Patricia Jennings Hart, Jon Jennings, Donavin Jennings, Tom Jennings

— In Memoriam —

## Linda Katherine Anderson Foley

June 3, 1941 – January 30, 2017



Linda Foley

By Marcia Hodgson  
Resident Community News

She was a "woman for all seasons" – a tenured psychology professor, a crime novelist, a forensic scientist, a gourmet cook, ceramic potter, a prolific volunteer with at least 10 nonprofit and civic groups, as well as a wife and mother.

Dr. Linda Foley of San Marco died of ovarian cancer in Community Hospice on Jan. 30, leaving a gaping hole in the hearts of her husband Roger Sharp, her son Tim, daughter Reen, their spouses, and her grandchildren, Timothy and Cassandra Foley.

"She was very knowledgeable on a lot of subjects," recalled close friend Laura Crooks of Riverside. "She taught at the university when it first opened. She could make people laugh. She reached out to everyone. She was such an inclusive and wonderful person."

Foley, a native of Stamford, Conn., graduated from Western Connecticut State College and went on to earn a doctorate in social psychology from the University of Florida. A University of North Florida Professor of Psychology for 34 years, Foley served as president of the UNF Faculty

Association, Psychology Department chair, and Associate Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. During her tenure, colleagues awarded her the Outstanding Teaching Award, Distinguished Professor Award, and the title of Professor Emeritus after her retirement in 2008. She was especially proud of her research on race relations, which was cited in a decision by the United States Supreme Court.

Once she retired, Foley was not one to sit still. She served as a volunteer and financially supported many local civic and nonprofit organizations – particularly those that serve women – including the Jacksonville Community Council, Leadership Jacksonville, Women's Center of Jacksonville, Women's Giving Alliance, Jacksonville Women's Network, and Uptown Civitan.

She also was active in organizations that supported the wide variety of her other interests, including the Jacksonville Garden Club, the Jacksonville branch of the National League of American Pen Women, where she served recently as president, Wow Book Club, Sisters in Crime, a gourmet cooking group, and Vina Schemer's Pottery Group in Mandarin.

"She cared a lot about the Jacksonville community, and was always trying to make it better," said Crooks. "She gave generously of her time and her money."

The author of one psychology textbook and more than 40 articles in scholarly journals, Foley was a sought-after speaker in her field and it was her work in social psychology which led her into the emerging fields of psychology and law and forensic science. The research for her doctoral thesis at the Florida State Prison at Raiford inspired her to write three "Cozy Mysteries," non-violent crime novels focused on solving murders.

"Linda loved crime stories on TV, especially British ones," recalled Sharp, her

companion for 30 years. "She loved to read crime novels and eventually decided to try her hand at writing one."

Her first novel, "A Taste of Vengeance," was a thriller about a forensic psychologist who helps investigate the murder of a University of Florida professor. She later went on to write two more novels, "Road Rage" and "Vigilante Justice," and was working on a fourth at the time of her death.

Foley met Sharp in mid-life, during a college graduation party for her good friend, Nancy Chamblin of San Marco. "She and my husband both taught in the Department of Psychology," recalled Chamblin. "I have always known her to be smart, wise, strong, brave and loyal to her friends. She loved her family most of all."

"Linda was a really warm person," remembered Duncan Sawyer of Ortega. Sawyer took over as president of the Jacksonville Pen Women after cancer forced Foley to resign the position. "You got a feeling about her. She had a spark, a special way about her."

In addition to her "company, especially around the house," Sharp said what he misses most is Foley's "sage" advice. "She encouraged everyone to do what they found most interesting," he said.

Crooks, who often traveled overseas with Foley and Sharp as part of a "Cruisers" group, recalled Foley would make "whimsical things" out of clay and once created a beautiful totem pole for her garden. "She was always encouraging her fellow potters," she said.

"When politics would get you down, she would always find a way to make you laugh. We especially feel the loss because she was the 'suggester,'" Crooks continued. "She would plan the trips, and we all fell into line. She was a thoughtful, caring, giving, loving person, and our little Cruisers group will miss her terribly."

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# Cuban charm resonates during Old Havana Gala

There was no need to take a jet to Cuba. Guests at San Jose Episcopal Day School got close to the real thing when they enjoyed the school's annual gala – A Night in Old Havana – March 4.

Organized by Chairman Erin Cumiskey and Co-chairs Jenny Clarke and Sara Mitchell, antique cars lined the entrance and Spanish dancers performed at the sidelines as participants enjoyed drinks and hors d'oeuvres while perusing more than 200 items in the silent and live auction, which was later overseen by auctioneer Steve Walt. Rich Thompson of San Jose served as Master of Ceremonies for the event, which featured music by JP Latin All Stars and a presentation by ballroom dancers from Kaluby's Dance Club.

Nearly \$78,000 was raised for the school by the event, said Clarke, noting it is San Jose Episcopal Day School's only major fundraiser of the year.

Seen enjoying the fun was Father Steph Britt, rector of San Jose Episcopal Church, Father Donovan Cain, rector of All Saints Episcopal Church, Head of School Lori Menger, as well as Laurie Reese of San Jose and Sue Fazio of San Marco, both members of the school's Board of Trustees. Also on hand to help with the event were E.J. Porter, Clemente Inclan, both of Bolles, and Nick Hall, of Christ Church Academy, who are all alumni members of San Jose Episcopal Day School's Class of 2011.



Dana Baldwin, Megan Edwards with Brooke Penland



Caitlin O'Keefe, Teresa Hall, Amy Blumstein, Lori Menger, and Sue Fazio



EJ Porter, Clemente Inclan, Nick Hall with Father Steph Britt, Rector of San Jose Episcopal Church



Lee and Becky Nimnicht with Brian and Sara Mitchell

## 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.



Brian and Charlotte Logullo, Graham and Whitney Riley, Kim and Steve Watkins with Bill and Lisa Gielinski



Stephanie and Cary Helton, Jonathan Wright, Renee Cheanvechai with Kim Sievert

## 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.



Kristi and James Mussallem

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.



Ed and Karen Rogan with Rep. John Rutherford



Assumption Gala Co-Chairs Christi Toney and Michelle Bedoya



Marie Mussallem with Father Frederick Parke of Assumption Church



Daisy Davidson and Martha Barrett



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## HAE math student wins district math championship

Graham Glasheen of San Marco, a third grader at Hendricks Avenue Elementary, was named the Overall Third Grade Winner the Duval County District 1 Math Championship.

To win, Glasheen bettered 97 other third graders from 97 elementary schools within Duval County.

With the victory, Glasheen advanced to the regional math finals in May.

When he was in first grade, Glasheen represented HAE in Duval County's Sunshine Math competition and was named the county's overall award winner in problem solving. He is also a member of the school's chess club.



Graham Glasheen with his teacher, Katie McMahon

# Jr. Residents

## Last minute donation allows HAE to reach Walkathon goal

It was a delightful last-minute "game changer" that Hendricks Avenue Elementary Principal Lacy Healy was not expecting.

Individual winners of the school's 5th Annual Friends of Hendricks Walkathon Fundraiser had already been announced with the students collectively walking 752 miles, two miles more than their goal. Healy had already squared off against Jacksonville Jumbo Shrimp Mascot Southpaw on an obstacle course as promised, even though her students had raised more than \$50,000 but failed to meet the established goal of \$55,555.55, when word came in that a last-minute donation of \$3,165 had been made by an anonymous parent to help the students reach their collective goal. The money has been earmarked by the Friends of Hendricks, a nonprofit organization that supports HAE, to purchase laptops and tablets for the school.

"I'm thrilled," said Friends of Hendricks President Morgaen Brandler after the event. "I love making our goal, and you could see from my face as I stood there out on the field that I was as surprised as everyone else."

Hendrick Avenue's three top walkers were Niek Razaei, Brooke Curry and Ella Hodgett, who averaged among themselves 11.5 miles apiece and collectively walked 34.7 miles.

The top fundraiser in the school was Edward "Val" Kolar, who was absent from the school celebration. In second place was Isabella Kennedy, followed by John "Jeb" Naugle and Katherine Cheshire, who tied for third.



Stephanie Hale's second grade was the top fundraising class overall during the 5th Annual Walkathon celebration at Hendricks Avenue Elementary School March 10.

Leading their grades in miles walked during the event were Matthew Repper, kindergarten; Aerabella Good, first grade; John "Jeb" Naugle, second grade; Burke Scharer and Graham Glasheen (tie) third grade; Brooke Curry, fourth grade; Niek Rezaei, fifth grade.

Winning a popsicle party as the winning classes for their grade level were Allison Wise's and Caroline Spottswood's kindergarten classes; Sharrell Thomas's first grade; Stephanie Hale's second grade; Virginia Smith's third grade; Terrye Kibler's fourth grade; and Nicole Groetke's and Christina MacDowell's fifth grade classes.

Winning a popsicle party for being the class in each grade level that logged the most miles were Nicol Mickler's kindergarten; Gretchen Frazier's first grade; Ashley Adkins' second grade; Virginia Smith's third grade; Terrye Kibler's fourth grade; and Craig Beyer's fifth grade.

Bingo Card winner of a drawing during the Walkathon was Emiliano Makros, a fifth grader, who received four tickets to a Jacksonville Jumbo Shrimp baseball game. Gregory Hunter, a second grader, was the winner of the drawing to receive a Jacksonville Jaguars helmet signed by Quarterback Blake Bortles.

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## SJEDS teachers donate hair to fight breast cancer



Peggy Rush holds up a swath of her son's hair during a special assembly held at San Jose Episcopal Day School in late February.

To help with the fight against breast cancer, two San Jose Episcopal Day School teachers are now sporting much shorter hair styles.

During a special assembly at the school in late February, physical education teacher Taylor Rush and Senora Marina Gallo, the school's Spanish teacher, had their hair clipped and donated to Pantene Beautiful Lengths, an organization which uses the donated hair to make real-hair wigs for women with cancer.

Rush said he had grown his hair out for two years so that he could cut eight inches off and donate it in honor of his mother, Peggy, a breast cancer survivor.

The entire student body was on hand during the event, and the sixth graders danced to a song from the musical "Hairspray."

James Reeser of Anthony's Et Al salon donated his time and talent to ensure Rush and Gallo left the assembly with a decent haircut.

For more information about hair donation see <http://pantene.com/en-us/experience-main-section2/beautiful-lengths>



San Jose Episcopal Coach Taylor Rush and Senora Marina Gallo display their shorn locks during a special assembly held at the school.



San Jose Episcopal sixth graders dance to tunes from the musical "Hairspray" during a special assembly held at the school.



Ryan and Gigi Giles of San Marco with their perfect rescue dog, Sugar.

## San Marco sisters publish book on adopting the perfect dog

The six-year-old daughters of San Marco author Jody Giles are following in their mother's footsteps.

Born in Los Angeles, Gigi and Ryan Giles made a deal with their parents – that they could get a dog if they agreed to move across the country to Jacksonville. The result, after months and months of searching, was finding Sugar, the "just right" rescue dog.

The girls have documented their experience in a children's book titled "Too Licky." The story features illustrations by Cynthia Inks, a Florida native, as well as forwards by well-known bully breed advocates and celebrity dog trainers. It also features tips for families interested in adopting an appropriate rescue dog from the pound.

To secure funding for the completion and distribution of "Too Licky," the girls will launch a Kickstarter campaign in April. Once the book is available for sale on Amazon, they plan to donate half the proceeds to rescue and bully breed advocacy organizations.

For more information on "Too Licky," visit [www.toolicky.com](http://www.toolicky.com).

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## 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.

## Local students win awards in PTA Reflections contest

Several San Marco area elementary, middle, and high school students received awards in the Duval County Council of PTA's 2016-17 Reflections Arts contest.

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?" Brianna Eisman of San Jose holds bragging rights for submitting the theme, which as selected to be used nationally in the contest by the PTA.

Entries were received in six categories – visual arts, photography, film production, music composition, literature, and dance choreography – and judged on interpretation of theme, artistic merit, creativity and mastery of medium. Each entry was accompanied by an artist statement to describe the student's interpretation on the theme.

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. Meanwhile, at the county level, up to five Awards of Merit winners were recognized. Merit winners do not advance to the state competition. At state, only one winner will be named in each category to represent Florida in the national competition.

### Douglas Anderson School of the Arts

Twenty-one students from Douglas Anderson received awards including Kendall Cosper of San Marco, Sydney VillacortaBuer of Miramar, and Brianna Eisman in visual arts.

Cosper and Eisman each received an Award of Excellence for their entries in the visual arts category. VillacortaBuer received an Award of Excellence in the film production category.

Also, receiving Awards of Excellence from DA were Madison Minkley, Amanda Trujillo and Christiana Sanacore in dance choreography; Ashley Kramer in film production; Hannah Overfield, Haley Pafford in literature; Cristion Dirkhising and Elijah Johnson in music composition; Ane Yates-Campbell and Roudy Leonard in photography; Corey Keisel in visual arts.

Recognized with Awards of Merit from DA were Malachi Woods and Haley Pafford, dance choreography; Oona Roberts, literature; Savannah Rahn and Kaylin Hillman, photography; Darvin Nelson and LaJoyce McGrew, visual arts.

### Hendricks Avenue Elementary

Six from Hendricks Avenue Elementary were recognized at the county level.

Emma Lee in literature and Kelsie Kiernan in visual arts received Awards of Excellence in their categories.

Receiving Awards of Merit were Piper Halil, photography; James Brandler, Katherine Cheshire and Betty Leuthold, all visual arts.

### Julia Landon College Preparatory School

Seven from Landon Middle School, four with Awards of Excellence, were recognized.

Madison Mina and Beatrice Climaco received Excellence awards in the photography category. Caroline Robbins and Shariah Brown were similarly recognized in the visual arts category.

Three took home Awards of Merit. Meg Ritter was recognized in dance choreography. Charlotte Rogers in literature and Samira Isack in visual arts.

In the school competition, the visual arts winners were first, Samira Isack; second, Caroline Robbins; third, Shariah Brown; fourth, Peyton Franks.

In the school competition in literature the winners were first, Bonny Bruzos; second, Charlotte Rogers; third, Ainsley Robbins; fourth, Savannah Friday.

### Stanton College Preparatory School

Alexandru Bordanca of Ortega, Katie Bartkowiak of Avondale and Andrew Lopez of San Marco were among the Reflections winners at Stanton College Preparatory School. Bordanca received an Award of Merit in literature. Lopez received an Award of Merit in photography.

Also, recognized at the county level were Ellery Susa, Award of Excellence in photography. Ysabella Rodriguez, Award of Merit in film production; Shruti Murali, Award of Merit in Literature; Ga-Haj Hung, Award of Merit in Literature.

Bartkowiak placed fourth in photography in the school 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.

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## duPont students explore non-athletic careers in sports

Students at Alfred I. duPont Middle School discovered there are lots of ways to have a career in sports without actually playing the game, when they attended a sports career fair sponsored by JAXSPORTS at the school March 7.

JAXSPORTS Charities has adopted duPont's 25 students enrolled in the 5000 Role Models of Excellence Project, which is a citywide effort to provide positive mentorship to Jacksonville at-risk kids.

At the fair, those in the 5000 Role Models program, as well as duPont's eighth-grade class, had the opportunity to engage with area sports professionals who work in non-athletic careers in sports. Included among the participants were Harold Crow, general manager, Jacksonville Jumbo Shrimp; Val Glanton, event manager and W. Zane Collins, assistant general manager for SMG; Andy Williams, director of community relations, Jacksonville Jumbo Shrimp; Chris Porter, sports director, First Coast News; Blythe Brumleve, co-host, Helmets & Heel radio show; Dr. Irvin Cohen, vice president of social responsibility, YMCA; Keith Meyerl, chief of recreation, City of Jacksonville; Abs Grand, premium member specialist and Kathleen Dwulet, corporate sponsorships, Jacksonville Jaguars; Taylor Baldasso, athletic trainer, Preferred Physical Therapy; Raymond Miller, system director, Rehab Services, St. Vincent's Healthcare; Ervin Lewis, senior associate athletic director of Facilities and Operations at the University of North Florida; Steve Kemper, business development coordinator, SMT; Mike Webb, director of IT, Jacksonville Jaguars, and Shannon Gray, database and applications development manager, Jacksonville Jaguars.



Shannon Gray of the Jacksonville Jaguars discusses with duPont Middle School eighth graders Jacobi Myers and Alvin Walker how the Jaguars use the field of information technology during a career fair sponsored by JAXSPORTS at the school March 7.

"The students get to go around and talk to them about what classes were impactful to them, their volunteerism and what really got them to their career," said Katie Cox, vice president of marketing for JAXSPORTS Council. "It's all focused on education and how long term they will need to stay in school and volunteer, and be community stewards to ultimately have a career in sports."

Students in duPont's 5000 Role Models for Excellence will also go to JAXSPORTS



Jasean Armstrong, Timothy Levert, duPont students and members of the 5000 Role Models of Excellence Project, discussed their future with Katie Cox, vice president of Marketing for the Jacksonville Sports Council, during a career fair at the school March 7.



Charity Morejon, Abs Grant of the Jaguars and Jirelizmas Ramos met at the career fair sponsored by JAXSPORTS at duPont Middle School March 7.

events and make site visits to the University of Florida and the University of North Florida as part of the program, Cox said. "We've adopted them for the long term," she said. "We want them to interact with adults and professionals. We will allow them to take campus site visits to get the feel of a college campus and work to help them tie their daily curriculum into getting into sports as a career."

## Riggs offers College Prep 101

To help parents and students plan successful college tours, Ryan Riggs, a San Marco resident, dean of students and director of college counseling at Episcopal School of Jacksonville, gave a presentation entitled "College Visits: What to Know Before You Go" at the Munnerlyn Center March 8.

In addition to Riggs, participants heard from Episcopal students and parents the best ways to plan college visits and why it is important to do research.

Also a teacher in Episcopal's History Department, Riggs received his undergraduate degree from the University of Virginia, a master's degree from the University of Richmond and an MBA from the University of Florida. He is a member of National Association for College Admission Counseling, NACAC, SACAC, a counseling organization, and the University of Georgia Advisory Board.



Episcopal Dean of Students Ryan Riggs

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# Pi Day takes on new meaning at Landon Middle School

## Top fundraisers give duct-taped principal a pie in the eye

By Marcia Hodgson  
Resident Community News

It is not in Timothy Feagins' job description to be duct-taped high up on the wall of the cafeteria and pelted with whipped cream pies, but as principal of Julia Landon College Preparatory School, Feagins didn't seem to mind.

"Anything for the kids," he said. Throwing pies in Feagins' face during lunch in the school cafeteria March 14 – on Pi Day, no less – was the reward for the top six student fundraisers in the Friends of Landon's first-ever fund drive. The Friends of Landon is a new 501(c)(3) organization that seeks to increase available funding to provide Landon faculty and staff with additional resources to support its academic program.

In total, Landon students and their families raised \$14,828, surpassing their initial goal of \$12,000. The money will begin a renovation project to convert the school's media center into a 21st century learning commons.

To help accomplish its goal, the students in each of Landon's three grade levels were challenged to raise \$4,000. The eighth grade was the top fundraiser, earning \$5,690.68 and was awarded a movie party during the fourth quarter of the school year. The sixth grade also met its goal, raising \$4,690.47. All members of the class were allowed to eat lunch outside as a reward on March 16.

Ever the good sport, Feagins agreed to spend all three lunch periods duct-taped to the wall of the school cafeteria if the student body reached the Friends of Landon's goal of raising \$12,000. While hanging several feet off the ground, Feagins was the target of the pie toss on Pi Day, named for the mathematical symbol Pi, which equals 3.14.

As the top individual fundraisers, Grant Tucker, Juliana Thint and Nico Summa of Avondale were the pie-throwers in the sixth-grade class. Mia Summa of Avondale, Fabrizio Gowdy of Riverside, and Nathan Lubow of San Marco threw pies on behalf of the eighth-graders. Although no one threw a pie during the seventh-grade lunch period, as a consolation prize, students lined up to ask the captive Principal Feagins any question they wanted.

Most of the money was raised by the nonprofit through cash and checks received from parents brought to the school by the students. Parents were also invited to make donations online.

Landon students were also invited to participate in a "Clash of Coins" competition by dropping spare change and money into jars set up in the school cafeteria. The seventh grade won that competition, putting a total of \$365.95 toward the final amount raised of \$797.10.

Bradley Grant, a student from San Marco, dropped his entire savings, \$16.69, in the seventh-grade jar during lunch March 3. "I've been saving the money for a long time to get something I want, but I haven't seen anything that I want, so I figured I would give it to my school," he said. "I did it because I want to help my school out."



As one of the top fundraisers in the Friends of Landon first annual fundraiser, sixth-grader Grant Tucker tosses a pie in Landon Principal Timothy Feagins' face during lunch March 14.



Bradley Grant deposits \$16.69 into the coin jar set up in the Julia Landon College Preparatory School Cafeteria March 3. Friends of Landon President Cindy Pearson holds up the sign in the background.



Friends of Landon Board Members Cindy Pearson and Bryan Gowdy watch over the coin jars during the Clash of the Coins competition at Julia Landon College Preparatory School March 3.

Howard Coker, an Empire Point resident and alumnus of Landon High, "matched" the students' Clash of Coins total with a donation of \$1,000. An anonymous donor also agreed to contribute \$2,000 if the school could raise at least \$10,000, in order to have the school meet its goal.

Proceeds from the fundraiser will purchase two work tables, 12 counter-height chairs,

two flat-screen monitors, and four lounge chairs with tablet arms for the media center, all which will be in place before school closes for summer, said Feagins.

Interested parents, alumni and former students are invited to continue to make online donations at [www.friendsoflandon.org](http://www.friendsoflandon.org) throughout the year, said Friends of Landon President Cindy Pearson of San Marco.

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# Landon girls win City Soccer Championship

When it comes to girls' soccer, the Lady Lions are no longer a bridesmaid.

After four consecutive years coming in second, Julia Landon College Preparatory School finally captured the City Championship trophy with a 2-1 victory over Fletcher Middle School March 15 at Stanton College Preparatory School. It was Landon's first time ever to win the City crown.

Landon made it to the City final with a 3-0 victory over James Weldon Johnson, the defending City Champion, in the semi-finals March 13 at Landon. For the past three years, James Weldon Johnson had defeated Landon in the final game to take home the City title.

This season marked a banner year for Landon, which finished the regular season at 12-0-2, outscoring its opponents 61-3. San Marco's Elizabeth Nowak, Landon's top scorer and one of four captains of her team, was named Most Valuable Player in the tournament.

"The girls worked through four different game formations, and adapted without hesitation. Our ability to attack and counterattack relentlessly contributed to the frustrations of the better teams in our side of our conference. These girls would not



Landon Soccer MVP Liz Nowak with the City Championship trophy

quit. Ever. And that was a pleasure to watch," said Landon Coach Chris Brunner.

Also playing on the championship team this year were Emma Robbins, Olivia Savelson, Grace Watkins, Hailee Papa, Lauren Ferranti, Kelsey Kettel, Ellie Simmons, Rae Livingston, Tauryn VillacoteBuer, Hannah Farah, Emma Elrod, Cecilia Bailey, McKenna Geoghagan, Rynna Burgbacher, Laura Livingston, Ainsley Robbins, Muna Aboushaar, Bonny Burzons, Kirsten Dearing, Sophie Echer, Erica Plauche, Hannah Furry, and Mia Daniel.



## Signs of Spring

Landon eighth grader Reagan Burleson poses with students in the Dance for Joy Class sponsored by Southside United Methodist's Hendricks Avenue Elementary Partnership Initiative (HAPI). The children performed in HAPI's Spring Showcase recital March 15. Each of initiative's extended day programs – Dance for Joy, K Club and Digital Music Academy – participated in the springtime event.

## Underwater theme creates magic at JCDS book fair

With jellyfish suspended from the ceiling, fish on the floor, undersea murals, and a "shark jaws" exhibit, the Fine Arts Center at Jacksonville Country Day School was transformed into an underwater literary adventure during the school's annual book fair in February.

"The kids loved selecting the books and really appreciated this magical event," said JCDS Director of Education Ruthanne Stabler.

Heading up the Book Fair Committee was Barbara Groves, who served with Heather Douglas and Holly Kobrin of San Marco. "It was a pleasure to work with such an amazing committee," said Groves. "Their enthusiasm and energy were electric. My decorations team of Jon Kaplan, Deborah James, and Beth Roberts, were always available and ready



Two Jacksonville Country Day students check out some of the inventory during the school's bookfair.

to tackle any project request. The creativity and synergy of this team was the essence of success in decorating the JCDS book fair."

## 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.

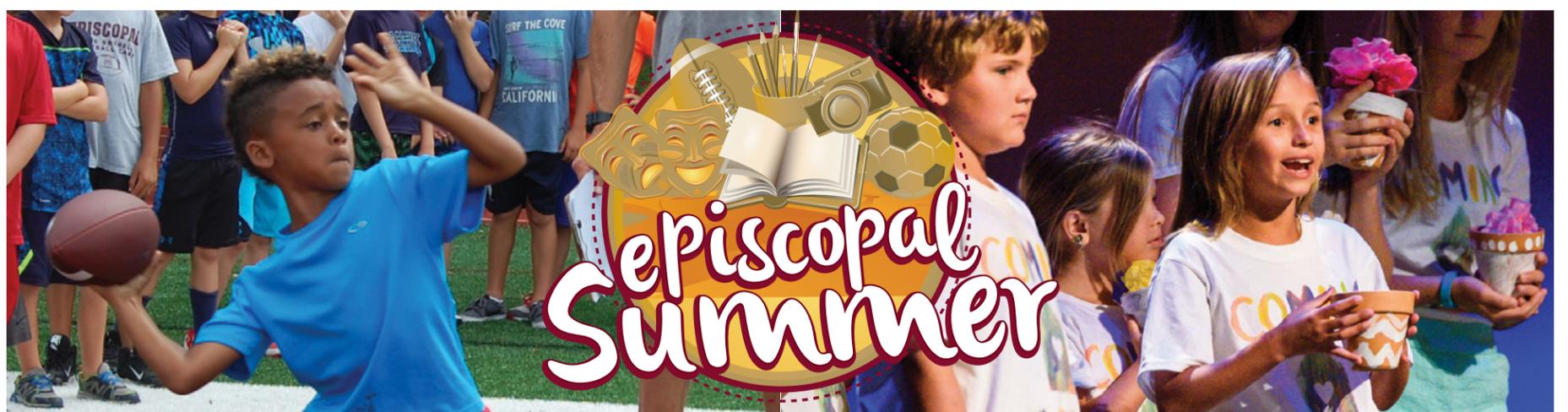
## duPont boys win City Soccer Championship

The Alfred I. duPont Middle School boys' soccer team took home the City Middle School Soccer title with a 3-0 victory over Eastern Division Champion James Weldon Johnson College Preparatory School in the championship game played at Fletcher High School March 9.

duPont defeated Fletcher Middle School in the semi-final game earlier in the week. James Weldon Johnson had defeated Highlands Middle School in its semi-final game.

duPont finished the season at 12-1-1. Playing on the championship team for duPont were Ning Ming, Maw Hu, Aarom Chum, Hiram Baguer, Viktor Simic, Parker Hall, Dal Khai, Thla Sang, Eh Lue Taw, Chan Hrin, Thong Nguyen, Peng Tim Hmung, Fabian Quintana, Dillon Noyer, Matthew Alexander, Jeffrey Augustin, Henry Cordova, Lung Tangbau, Armarta Gibbs, Jonah Fornari, Samuel Lian, Rashawn Spears (manager), David Simic (manager). duPont's coaches are Rachel Duff and James Castagna.

Alfred I. duPont Middle School boys' soccer team



See [www.esj.org/summer](http://www.esj.org/summer) to sign up for camps.

Programs run May 26 - August 3 • Grades K-12

# 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](http://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](http://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.

Dawson Wakefield gets a hug from Caleb Prewitt



## Dawson Wakefield Did Something

Supporting the HEAL Foundation has a ripple effect on so many local charities. Just one of the many nonprofits whose work is made possible through HEAL grants, is Catholic Charities' Camp I Am Special.

Anyone would be lucky to have a "buddy" like San Marco resident Dawson Wakefield. For those who attend Catholic Charities' Camp I Am Special each year where Wakefield volunteers as a buddy, his friendship and 24/7 willingness to serve all week is a key ingredient to a camper who would never otherwise be able to enjoy a camp experience due to his/her disability.

"At the beginning of camp, you get paired with a person who has a certain disability and over the week, you create an unbreakable bond with your camper,"

said Wakefield. "Just the feeling you get seeing that amazing smile on their face can easily be compared to heaven."

"Buddies like Dawson are selfless, dedicated, compassionate, energetic and of course, fun," said Rebecca Aleman, Catholic Charities Camp I Am Special and Ministry for Persons with Disabilities Director.

Aleman said thanks to HEAL funding, much needed equipment such as a specialized side-by-side trike for campers, would not be possible.

"The HEAL Foundation provides items we need through a generous grant. We buy the adaptive equipment we need to customize our program to fit those we serve," said Aleman.

"I think the biggest reason I do Camp I Am Special is the sort of simplicity," Wakefield said. "The campers don't worry about drama or who did this or that. They focus on the here and now. Making that bond and just having a good time with them, cannot be beaten."

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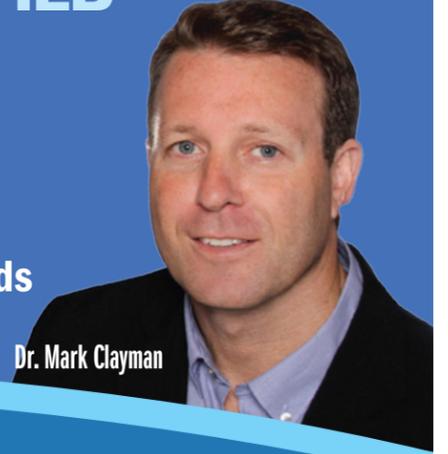
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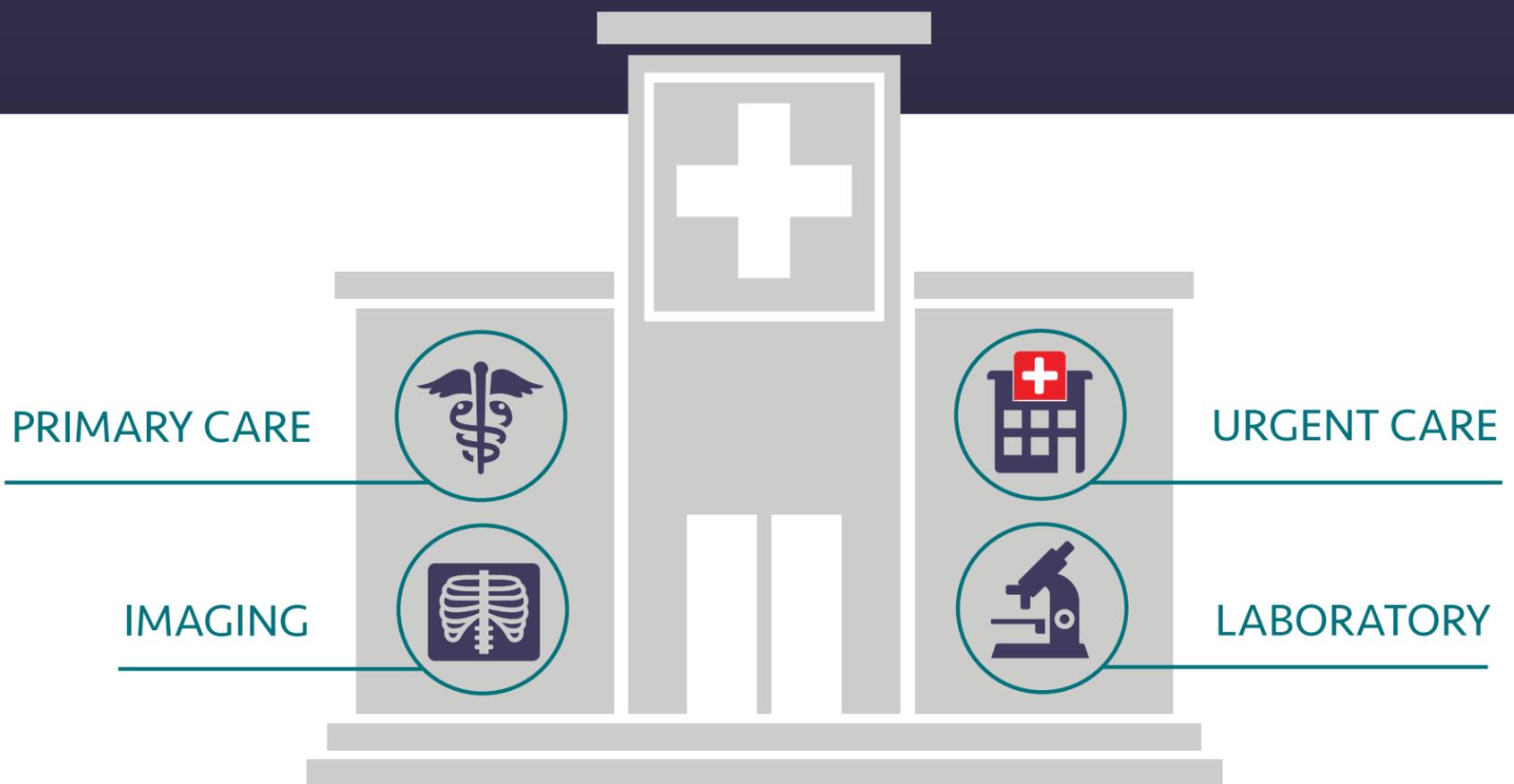
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