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Resident

COMMUNITY NEWS

Bring on the bulldozers, Publix is coming



By Marcia Hodgson
Resident Community News

Anticipation pervaded the room as more than 200 San Marco residents crowded into the fellowship hall at Southside Baptist Church to view renderings and learn the details about Regency Center's plans to build a new Publix on its East San Marco property at the corner of Hendricks Avenue and Atlantic Boulevard.

The project, which is vastly different than plans the company unveiled in 2017, was welcomed by an audience that mainly wondered when construction would begin. "I think it's great.

I'm happy a grocery store – any grocery store – is coming. We are so overdue," said Sandy Myers of San Marco. "Until I see a bulldozer, I won't believe it. I've been waiting 25 or 30 years for this Publix that they've talked about on and off. I just love the idea of being able to walk to a grocery store."

And Regency's plans for their new shopping center did not disappoint.

The commercial development company plans to expedite construction as soon as possible. It submitted plans for a PUD zoning modification in late September and will go through permitting soon after it receives zoning approval. If all goes according

to plan, Regency intends to send in the bulldozers in Spring 2020, said Patrick McKinley, vice president and market officer for Regency Centers. "Once we start the development, it will be on a 16-month schedule. We hope the first restaurants and retailers will be open in the fourth quarter of 2021," he said, noting Regency has not yet signed any tenants.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4



Havana on the St. Johns

Authentic cigars, mojitos, and a spectacular river view greeted Shannon and Mike Garfield, Michael and Jennifer Lehman, Rick and Traci Walker during Havana Nights, Morning Star School's 8th annual gala in the Haskell Building. [READ MORE, PAGE 28](#)



Royal Occasion

Bianti Danaj and Carly Schwab, both boarding students at the Bolles School, were crowned Homecoming King and Queen after being elected by their peers based on their leadership and service to the school. [READ MORE, PAGE 45](#)



Giving season in full swing

Pam Tebow and the Rev. Silas Mmworia celebrated DLC Nurse & Learn's 30th Anniversary of Hope and Miracles where Tebow was the keynote speaker. [READ MORE PAGE 27](#)

As the holidays near, 'tis the gala season, and folks are generously emptying their pockets to help others. Whether its Daniel's 135th anniversary, or a welcome-back luncheon for an old friend, residents of Jacksonville's historic communities are donning their party clothes for a good cause.

- A. Jackie Cornelius, hostess Janne Brandenburg and Richard Warholic enjoyed a welcome-back luncheon at Epping Forest. [READ MORE, PAGE 20](#)
- B. Laurie Plotz, Kathy Nichols and Carol Wall sampled wine and gourmet food from around the world during Catholic Charities Festival d'Vine. [READ MORE, PAGE 25](#)
- C. Dan and Rosemary Jackson with Zoie Morales, Betsy Cox and Michael Morales celebrated Daniel's 135th anniversary at Haskell Company headquarters in Riverside. [READ MORE, PAGE 25](#)
- D. Sally Parsons, her daughter Sara and her mother Sissy Barker enjoyed the Florida Forum speaker series' first installment of the 2019-20 season. The lineup kicked off with Nikki Haley, former Governor of South Carolina and former United States ambassador to the United Nations. [READ MORE, PAGE 28](#)
- E. Ponce de Leon Society members Juliana Catlin, Joan Altes and Laura Langton listened to Cummer Chief Curator Holly Keris's vision for the Louis Comfort Tiffany: Treasures from the Driehaus Collection. [READ MORE, PAGE 31](#)
- F. Civic Orchestra raises funds, celebrates donors Dr. Mitchell Terk and his wife Nadine, Civic Orchestra of Jacksonville President, enjoyed an evening with friends, fellow musicians and their best and brightest supporters. The Civic Orchestra of Jacksonville hosted their gala at the Garden Club of Jacksonville in Riverside, Oct. 17. [READ MORE, PAGE 33](#)

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Ventures apartment building close to construction

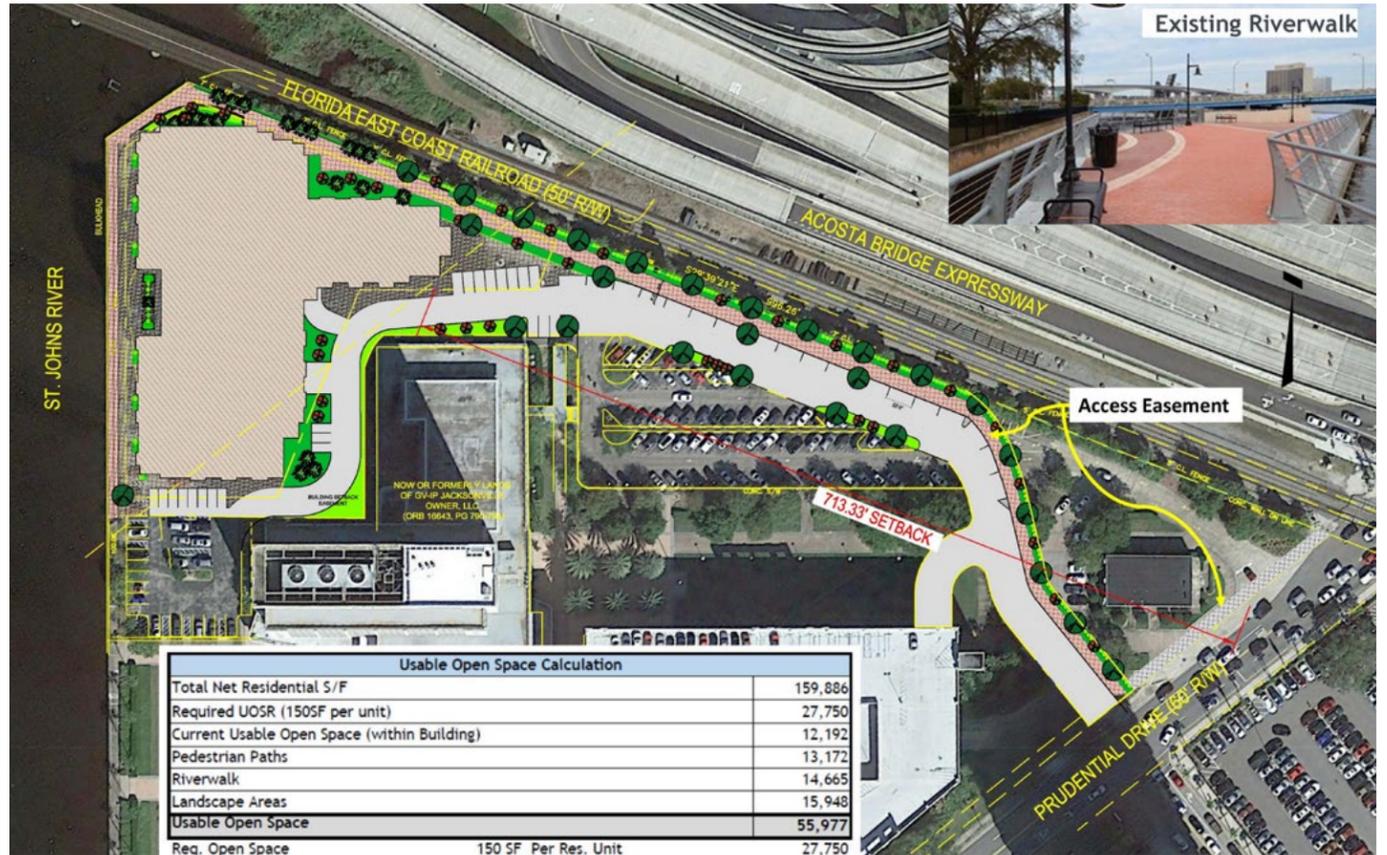
By Jennifer Edwards
Resident Community News

Developers of a new apartment building on the Southbank are much closer to breaking ground on a project that was once controversial but now has the go-ahead from the City.

Ventures Development Group had originally proposed constructing an apartment tower of up to 300 units on nearly three acres, near Baptist Health and Wolfson Children's Hospital, *the Resident* reported back in 2018. That brought concerns about increased traffic flow in an already-busy area from neighbors GV-IP Jacksonville Owner LLC, which owns the former Aetna Building property, renamed Eight Forty One, on Prudential Drive.

There was a lawsuit, now settled, and the project has been scaled back to 185 units and is within a couple of steps to construction. While occupation of the building will doubtless increase traffic flow, it will also attract more residents downtown, which has been a focal point for the city's Downtown Investment Authority (DIA).

When Guy Parola, DIA's Operations Manager, was asked what the project would add downtown, he said "More residents moving us closer to the 10,000 mark, as



This site plan was approved in 2018 but was later slightly modified to reflect a small revision to the building placement, a City spokesman said.

well as increased accessibility for the general public to our Riverwalk."

Calls for comment to the developer were not returned, but Parola confirmed in October that the project is very close to the permitting phase preceding construction commencement.

"Their next step is to submit revised engineering plans, which when approved, gets them to permitting," Parola said. "They are responsible for the design and construction of the mixed-use path and expanded Riverwalk and are responsible for conveying the easement area to the City."

He said the developers have agreed to provide easement and improve the public space, specifically the multi-use path from Prudential Drive to the Riverwalk. No date has been set for groundbreaking.

Parola said the project received city incentives via a recaptured enhanced value grant. Those kinds of grants mean projects get a partial reprieve from taxes on the increased value of the property, DIA Executive Director Lori Boyer said.

Leadership at the Downtown Investment Authority is hoping to bring more residential units to the downtown area in order to

revitalize it and attract a younger workforce. To that end, the DIA has been streamlining the process for future development and offering incentives.

"It is a \$7.8M recaptured enhanced value grant," she explained about the Ventures incentive. "If the development didn't happen at all, your taxes would be X. That's your base year. If your taxes go to Y, the increment is the enhanced value and the 75 percent is the recaptured enhanced value." That means the city gets 25 percent of the increased taxes for 20 years, rather than 100 percent.



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Rendering of the new East San Marco development at the corner of Hendricks and Atlantic Boulevard



Rendering of Publix from the corner of Mango Place and Atlantic Boulevard

Publix FROM PAGE 1

Gone is the old idea to build 245 residential units over retail, including a “resort-sized” Publix, in what would have been a towering 77-foot “big box” building with an enclosed parking garage. Instead, the new plan offers a much larger more traditionally sized second-story Publix in a building 50 feet in height with a parking garage underneath on the corner of Mango Place and Atlantic Boulevard.

“Before, we were zoned for 57,000 square feet of retail. Today, we are asking for 62,000 square feet of retail. We got rid of 245 apartments and increased our retail by 5,000 square feet,” said Hugh Mathews, CEO and president of England, Thims, and Miller, Inc., who is assisting with the project. “Previously we were going to put in a 28,000-square-foot Publix, a very small Publix, but now with the increased square footage, Publix will go to 40,000 square feet, like the typical Publix we see in the region.”

The Publix will include large second-story windows, which is unusual in most grocery stores, to allow in natural light. Dining will be permitted inside and outside on a second-floor balcony. A staircase and four elevators, large enough to carry three or four grocery carts and shopper will lead from the parking garage to the store, said Mathews, noting pedestrians and bicyclists will be able to access the building on all four sides, while vehicles can access the surface lot and parking garage from Mango Place and Alford Place. “The garage parking will be buffered, but along Atlantic it will look like a two-story building with parking behind the wall,” he said. “There will be parking at almost 360 degrees around where the entrance to Publix is.”

The shopping center will boast a courtyard design with retail outlets, including two restaurants, bordering Atlantic Boulevard and Hendricks Avenue in buildings no higher than 36 feet. Parking will be in the center, which will be tastefully screened from the street by landscaping and attractive walls. As with the previous



Birds' eye view of the proposed East San Marco Shopping Center Regency plans to build at the corner of Hendricks Avenue and Atlantic Boulevard.

plan, 3.75 parking spaces will be allowed per 1,000 square feet of retail space, Mathews said. “Although we think we may be able to achieve a little better parking ratio than that.”

On the corner of Hendricks and Atlantic will be a 4,000-square-foot restaurant with a 2,400-square-foot rooftop patio for outside dining. Another first-floor restaurant space will join other retailers along Atlantic where a much wider 20-foot sidewalk space will accommodate outside dining and a pedestrian arcade. “We wanted to create a pedestrian arcade along Atlantic because we wanted to activate the retail along Atlantic and Hendricks,” McKinley said. “We did not want retailers to offer their front doors from the parking lot. We didn’t want dead streets. We knew we had to create more access, so it is easier for customers to get to the front of the stores. We don’t want it to feel dangerous, so we made it wider. We think it is a really nice amenity for the project.”

The shopping center will be designed in Spanish Mediterranean Mission-Style architecture, said McKinley, noting the design was inspired by the Highland Park Shopping Center in Dallas, Texas, which was built in the 1930s.

“Highland Park looks as good today as it did then and is one of the most highly sought-after shopping centers in the United States,” he said. Included in the design will be windows with shutters, inset doors with columns, grand arches, covered walkways, wood-trim ceilings, colorful tiles, stone, stucco, and inset lions to coordinate with the lion statues in San Marco Square. “We really feel the lighting ties the project together, so we have been very focused on the lighting fixtures for both up-lighting and downlighting, he said. “We want to create a unique, timeless, classic rich look.”

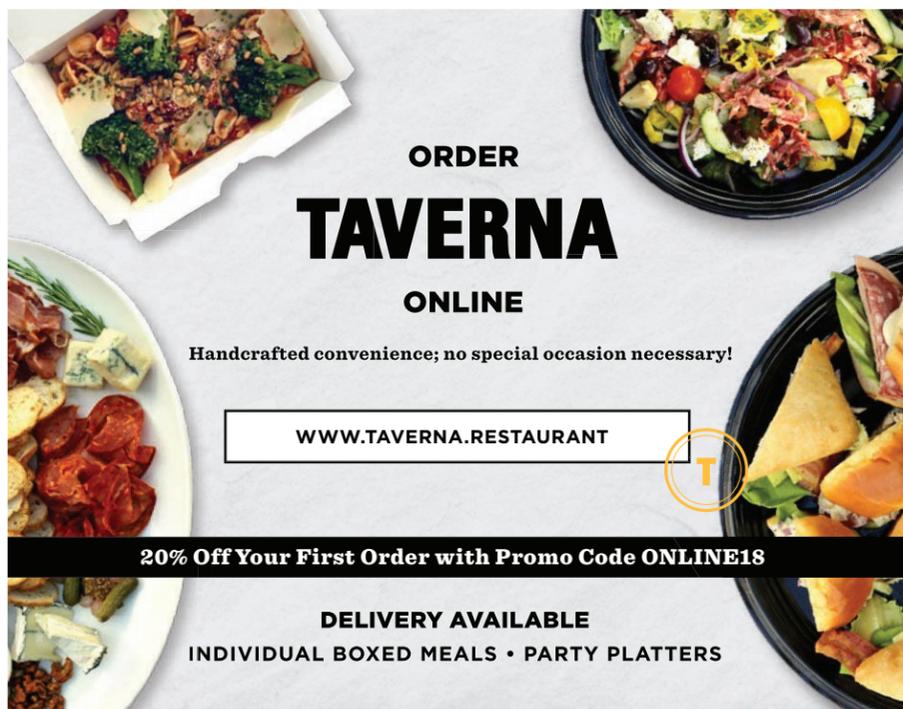
McKinley also said the orientation of the Publix store has been dictated by the truck

CONTINUED ON PAGE 5

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— Patrick McKinley, vice president and market officer for Regency Centers





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route that will use Hendricks Avenue to Alford Street to Mango Place, then out Mango. "In these tight urban sites, that's really the only way we can get the product in and make it work," he said. "They will need to use elevators to bring the product upstairs."

Meanwhile, plans for Parcel "E" which is across Mango Place near Fletcher Park will remain the same with 35 residential multi-family townhouses to be built on the site.

Most opinions seemed favorable as residents milled around the room looking at the renderings before Regency's presentation began. Linzee Ott, president of the San Marco Preservation Society, which hosted the meeting, said she was excited to hear what the public's feedback would be.

"San Marco is going to look different in the next three years," she said. "We've been really appreciative of Regency's mindfulness and thoughtfulness on this project. Its attention to detail has been really astounding for any development. Period. And we are appreciative for how much they have worked with our Councilwoman, with the San Marco Preservation Society, and with the San Marco Merchants Association. Tonight, they honestly and earnestly want public feedback. I'm really excited. I think people, in general, are hesitant when it comes to change, but I think in the end, this will be a very good thing. Honestly, right now, we are vying with Riverside to be the most walkable neighborhood in Jacksonville. Right now, we are kind of a food desert, but if we get this grocery store, that will fill a void, and San Marco will be

the most walkable neighborhood in Jacksonville. That's why people move here."

Also, a member of the San Marco Preservation Society, Gordon Mott was more guarded with his opinion. "There are a lot of positive aspects to having the additional retail, but Publix is going to impact the area with additional traffic," he said. "It all has to be balanced. The additional retail will bring people to San Marco. That's both good and bad. In the area east and south of Hendricks and Atlantic, the street network was not intended for a commercial area. The streets are residential streets. We'll just have to wait and see. There are a lot of positive elements to it, but the downside is the impact on traffic."

However, Martha Paulk of San Marco and Myers did not share Mott's concerns. "I think it's fabulous. I'm so excited," said Paulk, while Myers gushed, "I'm so glad they aren't doing all the apartments that they initially had signed on to do. I think there are too many apartments coming as it is. I love the design, and I'm glad there is not a ton of retail, because we have to support the retail that we already have in San Marco Square. Some people have commented that it looks like there are too many parking spaces, but San Marco needs parking, so I think it's wonderful that they do have that amount. I've attempted to go to the Riverside Publix and it's a nightmare to go into that parking lot," Myers said. "I think it will be a wonderful asset to the neighborhood. I hope I see a bulldozer soon."



Save the View

By Marcia Hodgson
Resident Community News

Pat Andrews, a River Road resident who snapped this photo of sunset in the park many longtime residents refer to as "San Marco Beach," was one of nearly 100 residents who packed Preservation Hall Oct. 16 to listen to Daryl Joseph, director of the city's Parks, Recreation and Community Service Department and District 5 Councilwoman LeAnna Cumber City discuss installing a fishing platform, a new public boat dock, and a water taxi station in Riverfront Park. During the occasionally contentious town hall meeting, most residents rejected the idea of placing any dockage within the park. Andrews was so against the idea of installing a water taxi stand, which would rest in a residential area, that she has been circulating a petition against the proposal.

Noting that the fishing pier has already secured funding from a Florida Inland

Navigation District (FIND) grant, Joseph explained that the two concrete water platforms are separate projects. He said the fishing platform will hold 10 to 12 fishermen, limiting the number of people fishing in the park, since fishing would be prohibited everywhere else - thereby protecting the new \$2 million bulkhead from damage. The concrete floating dock would provide a temporary anchorage for up to five 30-foot boats and a water taxi, he said, adding that the design was funded by a FIND grant, but presently it is more of a "concept," to provide San Marco residents with better access to the St. Johns River.

Against both proposals, Anita Morrill, who lives adjacent to the park, voiced an opinion that was shared by many residents in the meeting. "The park is very active in a good way," said Morrill. "I say leave it as it is."

Stay tuned. *The Resident* will run more detailed stories on the Riverfront Park and LeAnna Cumber Town Halls in its December issue.

SMPS Town Hall Nov. 19

Residents interested in learning more about the residential development, Park Place at San Marco, which is slated to be built on land previously owned by South Jacksonville Presbyterian Church will want to attend a special Town Hall hosted by the San Marco Preservation Society Tuesday, Nov. 19 at 6 p.m. at Harvin Hall Fellowship Center in South Jacksonville Presbyterian Church.

Bill Ware, vice president of development of Harbert Realty Services of Birmingham, Ala., will join District 5 Councilwoman LeAnna Cumber in discussing the project., which will consist of a four-story residential complex consisting of 143 apartments and an adjacent parking garage.

Raising funds on the rooftop, Cowford Chophouse style

As part of the run-up to the 2019 Art & Antiques show, held Dec. 6-8, The Women's Board of Wolfson Children's Hospital invites up-and-coming young professionals to engage in a rooftop soiree. The Young Collectors Party will be held downtown at the Cowford Chophouse Nov. 5 from 5:30-8:30 pm. The party offers a unique networking opportunity for those looking to get involved and provides reduced price point options for show tickets.

Great views, cool weather, libations and lite bites at one of Jacksonville's most exquisite dining spaces will only enhance the

experience for those in attendance. The ticketed event offers young professionals, ages 25-40, an opportunity to learn more about the campaign to continue fundraising for the build-out of Wolfson Children's Hospital's NICU or Neonatal Intensive Care Unit tower.

The gathering also offers guests complimentary drinks, hors d'oeuvres, and a silent auction loaded with great gifts and takeaways to the top bidders. The Young Collectors Party is sponsored by Betsy Lovett and Beard's Jewelry.



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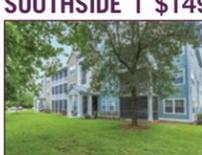
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Letter TO THE Editor

Dear Editor:

I enjoyed the article Marcia Hodgson wrote on the trees in San Marco. The single most reason why I chose to live in San Marco was the fact there were established trees in the neighborhood. It is important to my vision of community to be surrounded by trees having places of natural beauty that create a sense of inspiration and respite – a place where I want to live. When JTB was being expanded (in the 1990's), I read an article about the fact that 30% of the natural canopy was being replaced by concrete highways and the increase in population would inevitably sustain pollution that could not be stalled. What could we say about the 30% now?

All you've written should be a primary consideration of the NE Florida Builders Association(s) as well as the architects who are coming to San Marco to make landscaping designs on our community.

Nature is an eco-system. It has been designed by time and survives without man. Living creatures find homes in these ecosystems, and it perpetuates life, which is not the same as planting trees to replace ecosystems that are replenished by man. Planting trees offers solutions but, do not sustain natural ecosystems. You mention risk. Consider Frank Lloyd Wright who incorporates the natural landscape into his designs, which are now highly prized and sought after. There are ways to co-exist with trees.

Though we still live in an industrial, consumer-driven, mechanistic time we should all stop to consider and preserve our natural heritage. Is it any wonder there has been such a drastic decline in birds? The destruction of trees is a detriment to our planet. As you point out, trees are a natural canopy, provide gas exchange, and protect us from the sun. What is destroyed can never be replaced. A tree such as the 'Angel Oak', revered for its ancestral heritage may one day be the only tree our grandchildren will ever get to see (if it survives) and then, maybe in photos.

Thinking about the 7,000+ proposed high rises, and new construction in our community in the near future we're looking forward to concrete, traffic, a population glut and increased personal stress. What will be on the next River Keepers agenda? Do we wait and see?

I can only root (no pun intended) and support your views. Your article was informative and poignant. Seeing the industrial, consumer-istic 'progress' throughout Jacksonville as well as in San Marco, has inspired the strangulation and extinction of natural ecosystem(s) and wildlife habitat. Hearing the necessity to protect our natural heritage has fallen on ignorance. How can this trajectory change?

Dana Kontras
San Marco resident

Dredging is in process on Millers Creek



DredgIt began mobilizing its equipment on property owned by Korean First Baptist Church at the corner of Gay Avenue and Atlantic Boulevard.

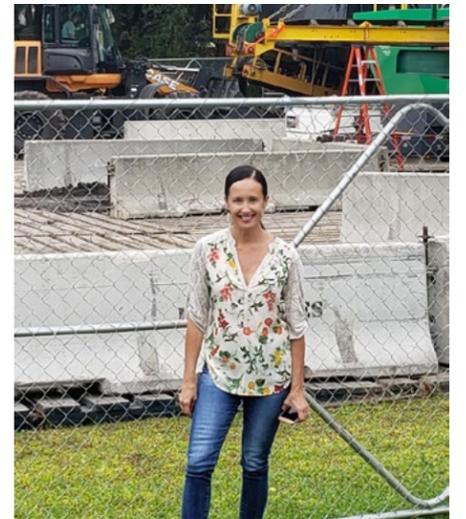
By Marcia Hodgson
Resident Community News

The long-discussed Millers Creek dredging project became a reality in early October, when DredgIt, a fully integrated sediment management company from Houston, Texas, set up shop on land owned by Korean First Baptist Church adjacent to the creek.

DredgIt started mobilizing its equipment on Sept. 30, a task that took two weeks, said Michelle Wright, president of the Millers Creek Special Tax District. After mobilization, the actual dredging of the creek began two weeks ago, she said, noting that the contractor sends her daily updates about the project including how many truckloads of soil has been removed. "Everything has been moving along very smoothly so far," she said.

Most of DredgIt's equipment remains safe behind temporary fencing, however one of the company's trailers, which was parked outside of the fence, was stolen, she said. "It was kind of like someone breaking into your car. No major equipment was stolen," she said, noting the company filed a police report with the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office. "It hasn't set back the project at all," she said.

The Millers Creek board is still working with District 5 Councilwoman LeAnna Cumber to receive the full \$275,000 set aside by the Jacksonville City Council to assist in paying for the dredging project. A mix-up occurred when the paperwork went through the General Counsel's office, stating that the board would only have 12.5% of its expenses reimbursed up to \$275,000. In order not to delay the project, the board kept its financial expectations lower, and is currently submitting invoices to the city to cover its engineering fees, attorney fees, the cost of an audit, and any fees from contractors to be reimbursed up to \$12.5%, until it works out the arrangement with City Council to get the full amount as was originally discussed by District 5 former Councilwoman Lori Boyer.



Michelle Wright, president of the Millers Creek Special Tax District, stands in front of the de-watering equipment used by DredgIt, the contractor Millers Creek residents have hired to dredge the creek.

The board expects to receive a \$50,000 grant in December, which was promised by the Jacksonville Environmental Protection Board to help cover the removal of benzo (a) pyrene from a small section of the creek. The board had expected to only remove 2,000 cubic yards of contaminated soil from the creek, but will be able to double the amount of soil with benzo (a) pyrene to 4,000 cubic yards, thanks to the additional grant money, Wright said.

"I don't want us to think that we are done once the dredge is finished," she said. "Moving forward we are kind of brainstorming to see what can be done to protect our investment. We want to work on ways we can slow down the silting back into the creek. Whether it is working with the city to have the storm drains cleaned more frequently or other things to prevent the creek from getting filled up again, we have to protect our investment. Thankfully, we are at the point now that we have been working hard for three years to get to."



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6740 EPPING FOREST WAY N #102
2/2-1,724 sqft.

SOLD by Anita Vining, Josh Nugent, and Dee Burnett! Looking for carefree lifestyle? Ground-floor unit offers easy access without having to get into an elevator. Wake up and have morning coffee on your balcony while enjoying St Johns River views. Open and Split bedroom plan + office. Beautifully designed shelving & desk space makes for great home office offering tranquil views and bright natural light.



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3837 LA VISTA CIR - \$250,000
3/2/1-1,824 sqft.

Securely live in this fabulous community. 24 hour controlled gate. Walk your pet or yourself around a 1 mile perimeter following the neighborhood sidewalk around a large lake. Stop and meditate as you sit on one of the quaint benches along the way. You will love meeting the friendly people as you stroll.



4233 POINT LA VISTA RD S - \$425,000
4/3-2,375 sqft.

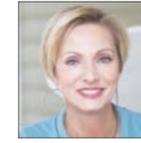
Amazing location in Point La Vista in San Marco. This L-shaped, split plan home is ready for your creative renovation. So much potential! Kitchen, dining, master bedroom have awesome view of big backyard and a future island oasis/pool, play space, and dog haven. Renovation loan will have you living in your dream home in no time!



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3540 SUNNYSIDE DR
3/2/1-2,835 sqft.

SOLD by Anita Vining! Close in Riverfront with skyline views 140 FF, 1.13 Acres beautifully treed, full bulkhead, dock and boat house with hoist. Elegant approach to tastefully updated home. 3BR/2 full and 2 half baths. Bright island kitchen with 2 walk-in pantries. Large atrium glass doors take advantage of the views from LR, DR and Family.



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SOLD
1526 PALM AVE #1526
1/2-906 sqft.

SOLD by Anita Vining! RIVERFRONT is your dream but not in your budget? Looking for 2nd home? Look no more because here it is in San Marco. Immaculately & beautifully renovated 2-story Condo in the heart of sensational San Marco. Incredible views of the St Johns River, Pool & Courtyard. A true showplace and ready for immediate occupancy. Hardwood floors throughout.



1820 CHRISTOPHER POINT RD S - \$1.5MM
6/7/1-5,300 sqft.

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1946 RIVER RD - \$2.4MM
5/4/1-5,081 sqft.

An Architectural Masterpiece situated on the St Johns River in the heart of highly desirable San Marco. An elegant and inviting Riverfront home built in 1928 and featured in Jacksonville's Architectural Heritage. Landmarks for the Future. Restored in 2008 with major upgrades over the last 3 years, the custom home exudes beauty with exquisite architectural detail.



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3463 SUNNYSIDE DR
3/2-1,839 sqft.

SOLD by Sarah Leuthold and Linda Maxwell! A Must See - a fabulous home in a fabulous San Marco location! This 3-bedroom, 2-bathroom, well-maintained, all brick home is situated on a large corner lot across from riverfront estates and nestled among beautiful mature oak trees. Welcome your family and friends into the large living room which leads into the open kitchen, dining and family areas - plenty of room for entertaining and family life.



831 LASALLE ST # 831 - \$193,000
2/2-856 sqft.

AFFORDABLE San Marco condo w/ courtyard to river views awaits new owner. Freshly painted two story condo lives larger than square footage shows. Beautiful hardwood floors & beamed ceiling in living area & new neutral carpet in bedrooms. Door from living room leads to spacious balcony perfect for morning coffee or enjoying evening sunsets.



2805 BEAUCLERC RD - \$1.3MM
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SOLD
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SOLD by Billie Bernhardt! Looking for a newer, perfect, pool home, centrally located, close to shopping, in one of the most attractive and convenient areas of Jacksonville? This Westover Estates executive neighborhood in the prestigious Beauclerc area, two homes from the river, has it all!



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12038 RISING OAKS DR E - \$386,000
4/2-2,346 sqft.

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SOLD
4582 CORRIENTES CIR S
2/2-1,567 sqft.

SOLD by Anita Vining! Move in ready and A D O R A B L E! Updated and refreshed, the kitchen designed for cooking and entertaining. NEW master bath created to keep you organized with stylish finishes. Open floor plan with high ceiling in living area where you will cozy up to fireplace or saunter to sunroom.



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New owner rebrands Metro Square as San Marco East Plaza

By Marcia Hodgson
Resident Community News

Metro Square Office Park now has a new identity.

On Oct 3, Prescott Group, new owner of the 38-acre property that boasts 470,000 square feet of office and retail space, announced it will rebrand the historic shopping center along Philips Highway as San Marco East Plaza.

The process to rename the property and rebrand the campus began earlier this year when Prescott Group, which is headquartered in Dallas, Texas, purchased the loan and through a foreclosure process gained fee simple title in March. Since then, Prescott Groups' CEO and Founder Jud Pankey and Vice President of Asset Management Frank Cofer have been in Jacksonville working with local partners, such as Meek Development Group, a Jacksonville property management firm, and other vendors to implement a new campus vision.

"Prescott Group worked on underwriting Jacksonville and the Metro Square opportunity for two years. The resurgence of Jacksonville's infill urban areas highlights our opportunity along with the continued desire to create unique workspace for tenants throughout Jacksonville and beyond," said Pankey. "The location of San Marco East Plaza and its current configuration will allow Prescott to stay focused on the redevelopment and renovation for years to come."

Part of the vision includes several capital improvements to the massive mall, such as replacing the roofs on all eight buildings,

retrofitting LED lighting, refreshing landscaping and upgrading its security systems. The initial capital investment will total \$10 million, according to a Prescott Group representative. Additional capital investments for the property are being planned, including outdoor common areas, increased green space, and new on-campus programming such as a farmer's market and food truck meetups.

"The campus developments underway at San Marco East Plaza will complement our continuous efforts toward a rewarding workplace culture," said Michael Morales, CEO of RF-SMART, a global software company that expects to move to the plaza in January 2020. "As plans developed, Prescott tapped into our Jacksonville-based team members to gain their feedback on the amenities and environment that they are looking to create. We are very pleased with our decision to relocate our headquarters here and look forward to making the space our own."

Approximately 1,800 tenant employees mingled with the owners at the celebratory event Oct. 3. Pankey said the name San Marco East Plaza is not a coincidence. As the newest member of the San Marco East Business Association, Prescott Group is committed to helping facilitate the revitalization of the Philips Highway corridor, which was formerly known decades ago as the "Miracle Mile." Through the rebranding of the area as San Marco East, businesses such as Holmes Custom, Meek Development Group, Hugo's Interiors, Chance Partners, and a dozen other



Prescott Group's Frank Cofer and Jud Pankey celebrated the renaming of Metro Square to San Marco East Plaza Oct. 3.



Metro Square has been rebranded as San Marco East Plaza.

enterprises along Philips Highway that comprise the San Marco East Business Association expect to get a boost in their goal of improving the neighborhood for families, businesses and the community.

Already a tenant in the former Metro Square Office Park, Baptist Health is pleased with the changes, said Keith Tickell, senior vice president of strategic assets/real estate. "We're looking forward to collaborating with the Prescott Group as the new owner of San Marco East Plaza," he said. "The creative and comprehensive changes that are both in progress and planned for the future are certain to have a positive impact on the property."

Cofer said his company is committed to enhancing the property into a "dynamic work environment" by installing increased green spaces, community areas and new activities – all provided in a safe environment.

"We are excited to do our part to support the transformation of the neighborhood, and we look forward to reviewing additional acquisition opportunities in Jacksonville's urban infill neighborhoods," he said.

"By renaming the commercial anchor of the southern-most point of San Marco East, we are putting a stake in the ground," said Pankey. "We join Chance Partners, whose San Marco Crossing and San Marco Promenade residential developments will define the northern-most point of San Marco East, in seeking to catalyze significant change for this area of Jacksonville."

San Marco East Plaza already boasts 86% occupancy with long-term tenants including Baptist Health, Wells Fargo, The Edge Rock Gym, Jacksonville Ice & Sportsplex, First American Title, and Excel Church. With the addition of RF-SMART occupancy will reach 94%, said Pankey.

Treasured community artwork to hang in San Marco Theatre

By Marcia Hodgson
Resident Community News

Atlanta artist Dennis Campay, a Miramar resident, unveiled his painting, "The Land We Stand On," in a special gathering in the parlor at Grape and Grain Oct. 16.

The painting, which prominently features the iconic San Marco Movie Theatre, was a gift from the artist to the San Marco Preservation Society. It will hang on permanent loan in the lobby of the historic theatre.



Linezee Ott, president of the San Marco Preservation Society with Andrew Oetjen, Ryan Davis, Artist Dennis Campay, Frank Sanchez and Jonathan Davis

"When Frank (Sanchez) first told us that Dennis had offered to do a piece featuring the San Marco Theatre, we were thrilled," said Ryan Davis, who co-owns the theater with Sanchez, his brother, Jonathan Davis, and Andrew Oetjen. "We are honored that he would choose the theatre to display what will become a lasting part of the history of San Marco. It's really a very generous gift from Dennis to our entire community."

"The painting invites the viewer to seek out familiar landmarks and beloved details in every inch," said Linzee Ott, president of the San Marco Preservation Society. "It is rich with San Marco imagery, including the old clock, Lions' Fountain, art deco architecture, as well as the new abstract Remi Rough mural and the Main Street Bridge in the background. It's a love note to the San Marco community," she said, noting Campay wanted the painting to be enjoyed by all its residents and visitors for generations to come.



"The Land We Stand On," by Dennis Campay

At Campay's request, prints of the painting are being sold by Stellers Gallery, and all proceeds from the print sales will be donated to the Preservation Society for specific use in its arts programming in San Marco, she said.

"The San Marco Preservation Society treasures this beautiful painting and is thrilled it is being so proudly displayed for the neighborhood to enjoy," said Ott.

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Art to provide ‘positive distraction’ in new hospice center at Baptist

By Marcia Hodgson
Resident Community News

With a new hospice center being built at Baptist Medical Center Jacksonville, the Southbank hospital can now be regarded as the place for patients to go in dealing with life’s beginnings, endings and every medical need in between.

The new Alice and T. O’Neal Douglas Center for Caring, part of Community Hospice & Palliative Care, will open at Baptist Medical Center Jacksonville in December to serve patients with advanced illnesses such as cancer, congestive heart failure, COPD, or Alzheimer’s/Dementia, who are in need of end-of-life care.

The new hospice center will be located on the fifth floor of the main building on Baptist’s downtown campus. The 7,500 square-foot, 10-bed area will include private rooms with baths, comfortable spacious gathering areas, family laundry and kitchenette areas, and a quiet place with a view of the St. Johns River for when patients or family members simply need a break.

In addition to comprehensive inpatient hospice care, the Douglas Center for Caring will provide bereavement care and grief services, offering comfort to families and loved ones. Just like all of Community Hospice’s centers for caring, family and friends are welcome to visit at any time. Overnight stays and visits from family pets are also welcome.

On board with the idea that art can bring healing, serenity and calm to those suffering from severe illness or difficult situations, the Douglas Center for Caring will include creative works by 20 North Florida artists in its public spaces as a permanent, curated collection, similar to what was done in Baptist MD Anderson Medical Center.



Artist John Bunker with Julie Mason and Amy Davis



Julie and Bill Mason stand in front of their San Marco home with paintings by Maribel Angel, Erin Gregory and Alma Ramirez, that will hang in the Douglas Center.

Under the leadership of San Marco’s Julie Mason, a former Community Hospice Board Chair, a “call to artists,” was issued in May to help decorate the new center. From 800 submissions, the Art Selection Committee chose 20 works for the public spaces. “While it was very difficult work, often tedious at times, and always a struggle to be sure the criteria were met, the committee members were so in tune with the mission and with each other that the final selections were, remarkably, unanimous choices,” said Mason. “The atmosphere in the room when the selection work concluded was palpable with emotion and a great sensation of an arduous goal well achieved. Art for art’s sake was not what we were searching for. We wanted art for good mental health’s sake, and we are confident we found it.”

Working with Mason on the project were Nancy Felton, Susan Gallo, Susan Greene, Joan Haskell, Melanie Husk, Holly Kerris, Suzanne Taylor, and Carole Varney, together with Amy Davis, vice president of Community Hospice Foundation and Leigh Fogle, principal of Fogle Fine Art, who served as a consultant on the project.

“The criteria for this particular endeavor was specific in that we searched for paintings or sculptures or mosaics that reflect what we think of as ‘positive distraction,’ works that could be contemplated over and over, works that did not evoke beginnings or endings, works that did not suggest any idea of what could be false hope, yet works that were beautiful, unbiased in their appearance, colors and expression,” said Mason. “We know the hospice experience is unlike most hospital

experiences in that the hospice patient is not going to get well and go home, whereas most hospital patients do go home. These pieces represent ethnic, racial, gender, and cultural diversity. The marvelous thing about this collection is that these pieces emerged solely because they met the criteria.”

The Douglas Center will be the ninth Community Hospice Inpatient facility in the area.

“This is a wonderful collaboration benefiting the entire community,” said Michael Mayo, president of Baptist Medical Center Jacksonville. “With the ability to transition a patient from inpatient care to hospice care without leaving our campus, we will be able to provide those patients who are in need of hospice care a more comfortable transition and provide their families with peace of mind.”



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14 JACKSONVILLE AREA LOCATIONS - NOCATEE COMING SOON!

Community teams up to build \$535K home to sell for Boys & Girls Club

By Jennifer Edwards
Resident Community News

An historic Avondale neighborhood got a double novelty in early October: A brand-new, half-a-million-dollar home in an area populated by old historic houses, built solely to raise money for philanthropy.

When the 2,400-square-foot home at 3881 Jean Street, completed in late October, is sold, all the profits will go to the Baxter E. Luther Boys & Girls Club, formerly the Woodland Acres Boys & Girls Club, on Pecan Street. Private backers Phyllis Arnold – whose father the club was renamed to honor— Gary Moreau and Paul and Caren Felker organized and underwrote the project while Bucky and Meg Davis, the owners of Springfield builders, oversaw the building of the home for free.

As construction progressed, the collaboration grew to include as many as 80 to 100 other community members who contributed time and materials at reduced cost or for free. And, many of them grew up going to Boys & Girls clubs, Bucky Davis said.

“This was a wonderful effort,” Davis said. “They had all of the ingredients except for someone to build the house. They wanted to know how much it would cost to get us to build a house and we said we would be willing to do it for nothing. And, we have had 100% participation of the subcontractors and suppliers as far as reducing their costs so that the contribution to the Boys & Girls club is maximized.”

The Davises used their license and paid for the permitting while the private backers paid for labor, materials, the lot and other expenses. When the house is sold, the net

profit will go to the club, which Arnold says performs a crucial role in the community.

“The kids come there after school, they get homework assistance,” Arnold said. “They participate in all kinds of programs. They do robotics, dance, all kinds of programs they can participate in. And, they get a hot meal. For most of those kids, they get that before they go home. Going home, there may or may not be food there or not much anyway.”

Arnold said her father, who helped found the club with the Optimists and Arlington Rotary clubs, came up with the idea of selling a home as a fundraiser during a time when golf tournaments were the norm and the economy was hitting a downturn. Meanwhile, the clubs built and continued to expand the Boys & Girls club.

“My Dad used to say this: ‘All (the kids) really need is just a little encouragement and just a helping hand,’” she said. “Not all kids are fortunate.”

Brian Gabree, Broker Associate with eXp Realty, is paying to market the home and will sell it commission-free. He describes it as “a modern interpretation of an American Craftsman-style home,” but its singularity doesn’t end there.

“They are building a new home in the historic district. That in itself is a unique commodity,” Gabree said, noting that any new construction or renovation must be approved by the City Historic Preservation Commission. He said the home is close to Boone Park, the Florida State College at Jacksonville’s Kent Campus and is within walking distance of the Shoppes of Avondale.

“Everybody wants to be in the historic district and the reason is its walkability,” Gabree said. “Everybody wants to be there



The home at 3881 Jean Street is brand-new construction built to look as historic as its neighborhood.

“The kids come there after school, they get homework assistance. They do robotics, dance, all kinds of programs they can participate in. And, they get a hot meal. For most of those kids, they get that before they go home. Going home, there may or may not be food there or not much anyway.”

— Phyllis Arnold

but there are only so many homes and there are even fewer new construction (homes). With a new home, you have the luxury of living within the historic district without the maintenance chore that never ends.”

Now, the completed home is waiting for a buyer or family who would like to enjoy top-of-the-line, brand-new interiors and gas appliances even while the home itself appears to have been on the 50-foot-by-100-foot lot for a century.

The two-story, four-bedroom-three-bath home features 10-foot ceilings on the ground floor and 9-foot ceilings on the top floor, hardwood flooring and an open floor plan. And, because the water lines on the street were at or over capacity, the home comes with a well and a water softener and reverse osmosis systems donated by Kinetico CGC Water Treatment, Davis said. The asking price is around \$535,000.

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\$539,900 - 4401 PHILLIPS PL
4 BR | 4 BA | 1 HBA | 3,489 sqft.

Located on a large lot with in-ground pool. 2 Master suites, office area, large living and dining area, fireplace, bar area, eat-in kitchen, lots of storage! No water or sewer bill. Property has 2 septic tanks; 2 wells, 2 water heaters, (gas and electric) 2 HVAC systems. Roof only several years old. Sauna located in first level master bath never hooked up for use.

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Residents explore the bounds of gratitude over the past year

Q. Who is the most consistently grateful person you know? What's the one experience for which you are most thankful this year?

By Marcia Hodgson, Resident Community News



I am the most grateful person I know. I've been very lucky and very blessed. I'm retired and I moved to San Marco and I am very happy here. I'm most grateful to be able to look after my two grandchildren, Caroline and Katie Coates, and being able to watch them grow.

— **Bob Egan**, San Marco



My husband, Dean. He's very optimistic and very positive about everything, especially everything going on in our neighborhood and stuff. I am so grateful that the Publix is coming because we've been waiting for it for so long. It's a food desert here, and that's part of our thing, feeding people in a food desert.

— **Sherri Porter**, San Marco



My wife, JoAnne. She's just thankful for everything she's got and helps me to put things in perspective. I am most grateful to have gone to Jazz Fest New Orleans. I'm from Louisiana originally so it was a great chance to go back and visit family, and it's a great event.

— **Rich Bouchereau**, San Marco



My husband, Michael Epstein, because he married me. He's always looking on the bright side of things and always looking for things to be thankful and happy about and telling me to be more positive. He's a joy to live with. I'm most grateful for selling our house and being able to move into St. Nicholas, and being able to have a house in a great neighborhood that we're excited to live in. We think our neighbors are great. We like how close to the river and to town we are, and that we are able to walk to San Marco and be in an active part of the area while still having a small neighborhood feel.

— **Julia Epstein**, St. Nicholas



My wife. I'm fortunate to work with her everyday on our nonprofit, Hunger Fight, and she's always on the go and never complains – she's hardworking and just always dreaming for the next optimistic thing to happen. I'm most grateful to the Jim Moran Foundation and the multi-year grant they just gave Hunger Fight. It will really make the difference in the Ribault and Raines area. They gave us \$120,000 each year for the next two years with an additional caveat of \$60,000 if we also raise \$60,000. It's a little over \$374,000 with the two caveats we have.

— **Dean Porter**, San Marco



Two people, my grandchildren, Garland and Graham. They are grateful for everything I do, and I don't mean gifts either. They are thankful to be with me, to eat with me, to go on walks. They are such a joy, and they are thankful for spending time with me, and that's just the greatest thing that there is on earth. They are ages 14 and 12. I am so grateful for family and friends. It's so nice all the time to know what wonderful family I have and what fantastic friends I have. I have such a terrific support system all the time and not just to play with. In good times and bad, I always have great family and friends.

— **Missie Sarra LePrell**, San Marco



Probably my daughter, Reagan Dobbins. She's a very grateful kid. She's just turned 6-and-a-half, and everything is very exciting and pleasing to her. I'm most grateful for my family – my husband, Bryan, and our daughter, Reagan and dog, Gibbs. It's been a big year. We moved into San Marco and bought a house and Reagan started first grade. It's just been a good year for us.

— **Kristen Cotney**, San Marco



Councilwoman LeAnna Cumber is the most grateful person I know, and I'm grateful she hired me. What I'm really thankful for is being able to come out of retirement to work with one of my closest friends. Everyday I have to opportunity to work to solve district issues to help make our community a better place to live.

— **Debra Rubin-Pataky**, San Marco



My friend Sherri Stratton, who is constantly doing things for other people and her friends. Even though she has health issues, she's always pushing herself as far as she can. I so admire her. She lives in the Lakewood area. I am also grateful I am able to walk. I had a hip replacement a couple of years ago, and I got to the place where I couldn't walk, but I'm doing much better, and I'm walking now.

— **Sandy Myers**, San Marco



My daughter, Liz Reilly. She always sees the good in everything and she tends – oh gee, I'm tearing up – she just tends to go to that place of being thankful for the good instead of dwelling on the negative. I'm most grateful for the birth of her third child – we weren't certain there would be a third child. He is my sixth grandchild, and we weren't certain there would be a third and he came along and is such a blessing.

— **Martha Paulk**, San Marco

ASK THE EXPERT

DRUG PRICE MERRY-GO-ROUND

After finishing sea duty, my wife and I found ourselves enlightened outside the Uffizi Gallery in Florence. Our engrained naval officer training compelled us to pre purchase tickets to avoid the line. Sticking to our structured schedule we dutifully arrived 15 minutes early only to find you had to buy tickets to stand in line to buy the tickets to get in the gallery line. Conflicting, confusing, and complicated are how I would describe this merry-go-round puzzle which parallels the ecosystem of my main topic: Drug prices.

With the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services projecting nearly 20% of GDP being spent on health care per year coupled with health care costs rising more than 5% per year (more than double inflation), it is understandable that drug prices are a tempting topic in the political world. The main question becomes: Where is the fix? The Tufts Center for the Study of Drug Development estimates it costs \$2.7 billion to bring a drug to market. Strict approval standards, long testing cycles, and low success rates all contribute to a drug's lofty cost. To reduce these costs, pharmaceutical companies offer rebates. Originally, these rebates went back to the negotiating insurance companies who used the rebates to pay the negotiators and keep overall insurance premiums down. Rebates could go to consumers but then insurance premiums would go higher. Many foreign governments handle this on a national level by negotiating drug prices which create lower prices on an approved number of drugs. Lower prices but on fewer, older drugs. So, where to start? The approval process, drug companies, insurance companies, nationally reduce access to cutting edge products for lower costs?

Medicare for all, imported drug prices, and drug arbitration are just some of the drastic proposals coming from every corner of Capitol Hill. With the healthcare sector underperforming the market this year, the opaque outlook has obviously caused investors to wait and see. However, if you are waiting to see the healthcare show finale, you might want to get in line to buy tickets to get in line.

Caleb Cronin is a financial advisor with Raymond James & Associates, Inc. Opinions expressed in the attached article are those of the author and are not necessarily those of Raymond James.

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Wolfson pet therapy program to celebrate 25th anniversary in 2020

By Jennifer Edwards
Resident Community News

At Wolfson Children's Hospital, with its bright colors, comforting staff and intensive focus on helping children get better, it's a rare occasion that patients and their treatment are not the center of attention. But from time to time, some very quiet, four-legged volunteers sneak in and steal the show. And, that's exactly the point.

Early 2020 will mark the 25th anniversary of the Wolfson Children's Hospital Auxiliary Pet Therapy program, and this year's team is a well-trained but motley crew, ranging from a 6-pound Yorkshire terrier to a 100-pound black Russian terrier and every size and color in between, including an Australian shepherd mix, golden retriever and German shepherd. And then there are the dogs with the most entertaining breed names to say: a cockapoo, a labradoodle and a schnoodle – that is, a schnauzer and poodle mix.

"You would be hard pressed to find anyone there who doesn't like the dogs," said Jeanne Shoher, program chair. "They come in and the nurses go ooohhh!"

Thirteen specially trained dog-owner teams comprise the program, and each year they pad into the hospital for almost 290 visits a year, hoping to bring kids and their families a pleasant distraction, feeling of connection and the impetus to heal. Their visits are something that both patients and staff look forward to.

Some of the pups are small enough to snuggle on the bed with a young patient, while others are too large to even roll over in the hospital room. One pup is a highly trained trick master, while another is so patient, he calms everyone around him just by being present.

All of them help patients in ways both minor and major. According to the Mayo Clinic, animal-assisted therapy can significantly reduce pain, anxiety, depression and fatigue in people with a range of health problems, as well as the families who love them. In some cases, families can get a few minutes of happiness and distraction from anxious or distressing thoughts. In others, a visit from a furry friend can be a nudge to healing that might not otherwise come.

"After the visit, you realize you're smiling," an article on the Mayo Clinic site explains. "And you feel a little less tired and a bit more optimistic. You can't wait to tell your family



Yorkshire Terrier Libby visits Wolfson to help children recover.



Yorkshire Terrier Libby visits Wolfson to help children recover.



Goldendoodle Elvis at Wolfson. A goldendoodle is a golden retriever/poodle mix.



Scout, the golden retriever, visits patients at Wolfson.

all about that charming canine. In fact, you're already looking forward to the dog's next visit."

Researchers at UCLA found that just the act of petting a dog caused lowered anxiety in patients and released hormones that play a part in elevating mood. The American Heart Association also released a study showing that just 12 minutes with a dog decreased anxiety and helped heart and lung function in heart failure patients. That translates well to some of the work done at Wolfson. Therapy dogs there see heart patients as well as patients ages two and up on a variety of floors, including children in surgical units.

"It's such a gift for all these teams to go in and be with these precious children and their families," Shoher said. "It's a really wonderful thing." The program is looking for volunteers, she added.

WeCareJax welcomes new executive director



Angela Strain, GPC

With more than twenty years of experience in nonprofit leadership and fund development, Angela Strain, GPC, will take on the role of Executive Director of WeCare Jacksonville effective Nov. 1.

Before moving to Jacksonville in 2012, Strain was the Organizational Advancement Director for The Center for the Advancement of Health IT, where she coordinated and delivered health education, organized quality improvement initiatives, and led the outreach and meaningful use education strategy for 41 predominantly rural Florida counties. She also provided proposal development and reporting support for federal grants for community health care members.

In Jacksonville, she served as the inaugural director of development for JASMYN, Inc., developing its first strategic three-year fund development plan that served as a foundation to grow the organization's reach and assets, including its clinic and the donation and renovation of property that will soon open as the first resource center for youth experiencing homelessness in the city. Most recently, she supported the Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA Jacksonville), a direct support organization of the University of North Florida.

Strain earned her Bachelor of Arts degree in public administration with a minor in English from the University of Memphis and was a long-time consultant for the Alliance for Nonprofit Excellence based there. She is a graduate of the 2018 class of Leadership Jacksonville and maintains certification through the Grant Professionals Credentialing Institute (GPC). She served as president of North Florida Grant Professionals, a chapter of the national Grant Professionals Association and is a volunteer community coach with the Nonprofit Center of Jacksonville.

"I'm thrilled to be moving to WeCare and working with such an amazing group of volunteer physicians and community health organizations serving our northeast Florida community," said Strain.



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Jacksonville Area Legal Aid CEO and President Jim Kowalski with San Marco attorneys James Poindexter and Tad Delegal and JALA Pro Bono Director Missy Davenport at the premiere of "Twelve Angry Men" at Theatre Jacksonville Sept. 12.

Local attorneys honored by JALA

James Poindexter of San Marco and Tad Delegal of San Jose were two of 11 attorneys recognized for their pro bono service during Jacksonville Area Legal Aid's annual Robert J. Beckham Equal Justice Awards Sept. 18.

Poindexter and Delegal, partners in the Delegal & Poindexter law firm, both received the Kathy Para Outstanding Pro Bono Service award for their volunteer work with JALA. Both men often provide pro bono help to employees facing discrimination, inequity, and oppression in the northeast Florida workplace, working to ensure their clients have a fair chance to

preserve employment income and the stability of their families.

The Delegal & Poindexter law firm also sponsored Theatre Jacksonville's production of "Twelve Angry Men," which was shown in the San Marco playhouse in September. The firm donated the box office receipts from the opening night performance to JALA. "As part of our sponsorship, we were given an exclusive first performance of the show on September 12," said Poindexter. "We opened the show to the legal community to raise funds for Jacksonville Area Legal Aid. We raised over \$2,000 for legal aid that evening."

Staying true to Rosie for 20 years

It's been 20 years since Angie Sparks first opened the doors of Rosie True in San Marco Square.

In 1999, the hip clothing boutique was a shoe store and resided across the square in the space now occupied by Stubbees honey shop. "At the time, San Marco was the only place I wanted to be in Jacksonville," said Sparks. "It has such a wonderful neighborhood feeling, and I wanted to be a part of that. We were coming from Seattle, Wash., and it has a distinctive feel with all of its little neighborhoods. San Marco reminded me the most of Seattle. Also, my mom lived in San Marco."

Soon, Sparks' shoe store began adding t-shirts and accessories, and before long it was a "one-stop lifestyle" store where shoppers could come and get dressed from head to toe. "We have clothing, jewelry, and giftables," she said.

The store - Rosie True - was named for Spark's great grandmother, Rosie. "I wanted to be true to her, true to me, and true to everybody in between," Sparks explained, adding she opened a second Rosie True boutique in Jacksonville Beach 17 years ago. Sparks also said she is especially grateful for her "true" longtime employees - Crystal Shackelford, who has managed both stores for 17 years; Tess Manley, a faithful employee at the



Angie Sparks

Beach for 16 years, and Sarah Baker, a 15-year fixture at the San Marco store.

"I'd love to spend another 20 years in San Marco Square," Sparks said. "I feel like our business is as strong as ever. We're still seeing growth, and we still are catering to the customers we've had for 20 years. We have no intention of going anywhere."

Family Promise of Jacksonville accomplishes amazing feat

Organization gives away 5,000 pairs of Bombas socks

Thanks to Family Promise of Jacksonville and Bombas Socks, thousands in the community will have warm feet and toasty toes. At their Oct. 5 sock giveaway, Family Promise gave away 5,000 pairs of socks, valued at \$60,000. Bombas Socks donated 75,000 pairs of socks to 25 Family Promise affiliates across the nation. For every sock purchased, Bombas Socks donates a pair.

Family Promise shared 4,000 pairs of socks with 10 partner agencies, including Catholic Charities Workforce Development, Changing Homelessness, Empowerment Resources, The Giving Closet Project, Her Song, The Magnolia Project, New Town, See the Girl, Squat for Change and UCom Jacksonville.

At the giveaway, the agencies shared their plans for the socks. They serve a cross section of the community such as the homeless, victims of sexual trafficking, the elderly, new parents and families.



Jennifer Smith from The Giving Closet Project is ready to give their socks away.

"We want the socks to be out in the community, on people's feet and not sitting in a storeroom," said Beth Mixson, development director for Family Promise of Jacksonville, "When your feet are warm and dry, you feel better."

Family Promise of Jacksonville is a nonprofit organization with the goal of helping homeless families return to stability. It collaborates with 18 local congregations, multiple social service organizations and 800 volunteers.



Representatives for ten agencies were excited about receiving Bombas Socks for their programs.

Baptist Medical Center Jacksonville gets new board member

Baptist Medical Center Jacksonville has added a new board member, former Aetna executive Mark R. LaBorde.

LaBorde, Aetna former senior vice president and head of enterprise sales, product and marketing at Aetna Inc., retired from Aetna in May 2017, and brings more than 30 years of health care management experience to Baptist.

Prior to serving as senior vice president, LaBorde was the president of the Southeast Region, which included Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia and Washington, D.C.

Michael A. Mayo, Baptist Jacksonville president, had this to say: "Mark's depth of experience in the health care industry,



Mark R. LaBorde, former Aetna exec, has joined the Baptist Medical Center Board of Directors

combined with his lifelong dedication to the Jacksonville community, will be an excellent contribution to the Baptist Jacksonville Board of Directors."

LaBorde is a Jacksonville native and serves on the board of directors for the Cathedral Arts Project and the board of trustees for The Episcopal School of Jacksonville. He is a former member of The Brooks College of Health Dean's Council at the University of North Florida and the Florida Health

Insurance Advisory Board and is also the past president of the board of directors for the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation of North Florida.

"We are fortunate to have his insight in serving the health care needs of our community," Mayo said.



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Howl-O-Ween event celebrates anniversaries, fall

Groomingdales celebrated its fifth anniversary and Dogtopia celebrated its first at the end of October with a free community Halloween event for pets and their owners. The Howl-o-Ween Block Party was hosted Oct. 26 at Dogtopia, 1075 Hendricks Avenue. Activities included a pup costume contest, “puppacinos,” fall-themed festivities, raffles, community vendors, free food and free pup daycare.

Groomingdales is in the Miramar Center on Hendricks Avenue and serves up to 22 pooches a day in the Miramar, Lakewood and San Marco areas as well as Ponte Vedra, Palm Coast, Pensacola, and South Georgia, said owner and dog stylist Morgan Murphy. The business is a true family affair, with Murphy running the business and her little brother Matthew assisting.

“I believe we have been so successful because we provide quality and knowledgeable breed grooming using top-of-the-line products and procedures,” she said. “We have grown by being loyal and building client relations, outstanding grooming services, educating clients on the specific needs for their unique pet, and happy clients referring their friends and neighbors,” Murphy said.

Dogtopia, meanwhile, is a “high-end beautiful doggie daycare,” said Addie Kasraeian, who owns the business with husband Ali, a urologic surgeon. She said



Nick the Yorkie

about 45 to 50 dogs come there each weekday to play and socialize. The couple opened the franchise not too long after their son Alik, now 21 months, was born. They decided to host a block party to celebrate Dogtopia’s anniversary because they wanted to include their neighbors, and neighboring businesses.

“We are all entrepreneurs and we are all in it together, so it is a nice community that we have,” she said.

“We knew the neighborhood, it’s our neighborhood,” Ali added. “I think that has allowed us some successes we may not have enjoyed if we chose to do this somewhere else.”

And, Addie said, “We can see Dogtopia from our window.”

Schmidt joins JCDS board

Jacksonville Country Day School has welcomed San Marco resident and business owner Michael Schmidt to its board of trustees.

Schmidt, a JCDS alum, is the co-owner of The Bearded Pig restaurant in San Marco and also Tomo Development, a company that is involved with real estate development.

He will serve on the buildings and grounds committee for the private school, which is located on the Southside.



Michael Schmidt

Real Men Wear Pink Raises \$13,000 at First Charity Golf Tournament

The first golf tournament staged by the local Real Men Wear Pink (RMWP) fundraising campaign for breast cancer brought home more than \$13,000 on Oct. 7, when 21 foursomes played the 18-hole course at Blue Sky Golf Club. Each foursome competed to see who could take first prize on the Arnold Palmer Signature Designed course after trick golf pro Rocky “Rockstar” Shipes kicked off the tournament.

The foursomes included company teams from the Jacksonville Icemen, North Florida Medical Center, Suddath, Jacksonville Transportation Authority, Sleiman Enterprises and Rainbow Shades, among others.

Shipes opened play with a trick shot par 4 hole-in-one challenge.

Tournament winners were: First: RMWP participant Todd Frankman, Joe Harvey, Chris Seely, and Rob Bydlick. Second: Former Jacksonville Jaguars players and RMWP alumni David Garrard and Adam Podlesh, Chandler Coto, and Zach Tucker. Third: Executive Director of Community Development for the American Cancer Society Mel Toran, former Jacksonville



Winning foursome, from left: Chris Seely, Joe Harvey, Todd Frankman, Rob Bydlick.

Jaguars player Drayton Florence, Ramone George and Montrel Wells.

Andre Green was closest to the pin; Adam Podlesh got longest carry and Drayton Florence achieved the longest drive.

“A huge thanks needs to go out to all our sponsors and all those who participated in the tournament,” said 2019 RMWP Co-Chair Victor Patel. “Without their support, we wouldn’t be able to continue doing such amazing things like this event. This was our inaugural tournament and I am so proud of the work our entire team put in to make it such a success.”

New insurance agency opens in Riverside

David Hodges, Jr. of San Jose, an entrepreneur known for his work at Hodges Motor Company, is partnering with Blake Rhodes, a local independent insurance agency owner, to launch a new insurance agency, 925 Partners Insurance in Riverside. The new agency offers personal and commercial insurance, including employee benefits, to serve the growing industries and families of Jacksonville.

The company name originates from the biblical verse, Luke 9:25, “For what is a man profited if he gain the whole world and lose himself?”

“We saw a need in Jacksonville for an insurance agency that focuses on small to mid-size businesses,” said Hodges. “Most



David Hodges, Jr. and Blake Rhodes

commercially focused agencies pour all their resources into big business accounts, and many personal-line driven agencies are not equipped to fully meet the needs of mid-size companies. That leaves a significant segment of the middle market underserved for their risk management needs,” Rhode added.

The new insurance agency plans to contribute financially to the Jacksonville community that fostered the partners’ success. The men also plan to make donations to nonprofits, ministries and local sponsorships during the 2020 fiscal year.

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Luke is so proud to be a big brother.

Birth Announcement

Lily Irene Garmendia and Haydon Williams, Jr. of Jacksonville, FL announce the birth of their son, Haydon Williams, III., who was born on August 15, 2019 at 3:31 a.m. Haydon was delivered at St. Vincent's Medical Center Southside, where he weighed 6 pounds, 13 ounces at birth and was 19 inches long. Haydon was welcomed home by his big brother, Luke Alexander Garmendia, 3 1/2. The proud grandparents are paternal grandmother Sharon Smith and maternal grandparents are Jose' M. Garmendia, M.D. and Julie Kerns Garmendia of Jacksonville, FL.

Magazine names Aubin influential executive in Florida

Michael D. Aubin, FACHE, president of Wolfson Children's Hospital and a San Marco resident, has been listed to the Florida 500, a listing of the state's most influential executives in different economic sectors by *Florida Trend* magazine. The selection of the Florida 500 is a result of a year-long research initiative by the editors of the Florida business publication.

"Michael Aubin is a visionary healthcare leader who is known statewide and nationally for his steadfast devotion to children," said Brett McClung, FACHE, president and CEO of Baptist Health. "Being named to the Florida 500 is a fitting tribute to Michael for his continuing and positive impact on the lives of families in our region."

Selections for the Florida 500 are organized according to categories used by the Bureau of Economic Analysis of the U.S. Department of Commerce, and include: agriculture, arts & entertainment, education, energy, finance and insurance, hospitality and tourism, information/tech/media, law, life sciences, manufacturing, philanthropy/nonprofits, professional services, real estate, retail/wholesale, and transportation.

Aubin has served as hospital president of Wolfson Children's Hospital and senior vice president of Baptist Health since 2011. Prior



Michael D. Aubin

New York City and various roles with Milwaukee Children's Hospital in Wisconsin.

Aubin is a Fellow in the American College of Healthcare Executives. A longtime child advocate, he has served as board president for the Florida Association of Children's Hospitals (FACH) and is a member of its board of directors. He currently serves on the national Children's Hospital Association's (CHA) board of trustees and is co-chair of CHA's Public Policy Committee.

Aubin also is a JAX USA Partnership Trustee and serves on the board of directors of Sulzbacher Center in Jacksonville. He is on the board of Northeast Florida Regional STEM2 Hub, and the Board of Directors for the Jacksonville Sports Medicine Program (JSMP), where he served as a past chair. In addition, he currently serves on the Operational Efficiency and Integration Committee of Florida Healthy Kids Corporation.

Aubin holds a master's degree in Business-Health Services Administration from the University of Wisconsin - Madison. He is also graduated magna cum laude from Providence College in Providence, R.I., where he received his Bachelor of Science degree in Health Sciences Administration. He and his wife, Hillary, have four children and two grandchildren.

to his current position, he served as the founding administrator and CEO of St. Joseph's Children's Hospital in Tampa. Aubin helped to re-establish St. Joseph's Children's Hospital in 1990 after a 23-year hiatus.

Prior to his role at St. Joseph's/BayCare, Aubin served as founding associate administrator of the new H. Lee Moffitt Cancer Center and Research Institute in Tampa. Aubin's early career included serving as a consultant with M. Bostin Associations in

Taverna celebrates its 10th anniversary

Taverna celebrated its 10-year anniversary Oct. 1. The Italian restaurant, which is in the historic San Marco neighborhood, offers catering and a private dining room in addition to its brunch, lunch and dinner service. Owners Sam Efron, who is also the executive chef, and Kiley Wynn Efron, wine director, established Taverna in a space previously occupied by Café Carmon. Four years later, they expanded it into a neighboring space once occupied by MiMi's, and by 2019 the owners reported that they had doubled the number of people they served on an average day.

"We are so thankful to our amazing San Marco and Jacksonville community for supporting our Taverna family for a decade," Kiley said. "Sam and I are proud of what

we've built here at Taverna and are excited to celebrate our 10-year anniversary." For his part, Sam said he was excited and looking forward to another decade.

"It has always been a dream of mine to own and operate my own restaurant," he said. "Since the moment we opened our doors in 2009, Kiley and I have been overwhelmed with the support from this community. We are excited to see what the next 10 years has in store for us!"

Some of what the future holds is already clear. The duo is finalizing architectural plans to expand yet again, into the space that once held Pure Barre, and will transform it into a Japanese version of Taverna called Izakaya, the Japanese word for tavern. They expect the eatery to be open in the spring.



The staff at Taverna celebrated the restaurant's 10th anniversary Oct. 1.

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Generous grant to Hunger Fight to help feed thousands of at-risk children



Dean and Sherri Porter

Hunger Fight, Inc., a nonprofit organization with the mission to end hunger and illiteracy through providing nutritious meals and books to children, seniors and families, has announced a two-year partnership with The Jim Moran Foundation so that it can feed hungry children during the weekend.

Hunger Fight's Feed the Backpack program provides a four-serving meal pack each week for children who receive free meals during school but may face an entire weekend with little food. Thanks to The Jim Moran Foundation, Hunger Fight, a first-time grant recipient, received a two-year grant totaling \$244,816 to provide three four-serving meal packs – breakfast, lunch and dinner – to 1,177 at-risk hungry children every weekend. The Foundation also awarded Hunger Fight with two matching challenge grants that will match every dollar raised up to \$60,000, to feed an additional 561 children. The initial \$30,000 challenge grant was raised by Aug. 31, 2019. Funds raised for the second challenge grant are due by June 1, 2020.

"We are very grateful and humbled by the recognition and support we received from The Jim Moran Foundation with these grants," said Sherri Porter, founder and executive director of Hunger Fight. "To be recognized and supported for the work we do addressing the issues of hunger in our community inspires us to continue making a difference in the lives of the children we serve."

The potential impact of these grants and the food they provide is significant, Porter said. Studies show that children who do not get enough food to eat are sick more often and cannot concentrate or focus in school. They also have more behavioral, emotional, and academic problems, she said.

"Through our partnership with Hunger Fight, we are making sure that children and their families have wholesome, nutritious food options over the weekend to lead happier, healthier lives," said Jan Moran, chairman and president of The Jim Moran Foundation.

Haskell Company helps beautify school



More than 150 volunteers turned out for the Green Apple Day of Service at LaVilla School of the Arts.

In keeping with Haskell Company's core value of service, Haskell team members partnered on Sept. 7 with LaVilla School of the Arts for the Green Apple Day of Service, an international movement for schools to set aside a day for environmentally sustainable education and projects.

Haskell team members worked alongside LaVilla parents, students and faculty to green up the school's front yard, using native plants to create a sightly and sustainable entrance to the school. More than 150 volunteers turned out for the project.

"Here at Haskell, we have a sustainability council and that council is charged to try to keep sustainability on the front of everybody's mind – it's an important part of how we do business," said Jacob Thurlow, director of project development at Haskell. "When this opportunity first came up, we thought this was a great fit for what we

do because we design and build schools from time to time, and here was our chance to go to an existing school and provide some improvements."

Along with sprucing up the grounds, Haskell team members installed signs that explained the importance of native plants and installed seating areas and interactive art made of reclaimed wood donated by Eco Relics. Additionally, Earth Works donated several plants and discounted other items, Tremron donated pavers, and Sunbelt Rentals provided wheelbarrows for the day.

Haskell has been participating in the annual Green Apple Day of Service at various schools since 2013, according to Thurlow. "It's always a lot of work, but it's always a lot of fun to see everybody from the community come out and work hard and then to see the results from all the hard work," he said.

Local educator gives talk on Epping Forest history

Lori Menger, head of school at San Jose Episcopal Day School and local amateur historian, presented "Epping Forest, Then and Now" at the club Oct. 3.

Menger's talk also included information on the Mediterranean revival in the San Jose area. Menger has been a member of San Jose Episcopal Church for almost 30 years and has worked at the parish school for 18 years, most recently as Head of School since 2009. Her interest in local history was sparked by her connection to San Jose Episcopal Church and Day School.

"While researching the history of the church and day school, I realized how rich the story of our community is,"

said Menger. "I enjoyed delving into the history of Jacksonville in general and the San Jose area specifically. As an educator, I love sharing this knowledge with our community! In fact, one of my favorite things is joining our third graders on their annual field trip: I get to be their tour guide on a bus tour of the history of Jacksonville!"

Originally from Birmingham, Ala., Menger has lived in Jacksonville for nearly 35 years. A graduate of Auburn University, she also holds a master's degree in education from the University of North Florida. In addition to her career at San Jose Episcopal Day School, Menger is a member of the Jacksonville Historical Society.



(left to right) Sarah Stanley, Scott Stanley, Jan Horenstein, Tammy Imrie, Lori Menger, Robert Menger

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Thomas to chair First Go Red for Women Campaign

Nicole B. Thomas, president of Baptist Medical Center South, will serve as chair of the 2020 Go Red for Women initiative for the American Heart Association.

"I am honored to chair the 2020 Go Red for Women movement here in Jacksonville," said Thomas. "I know we can make a difference in women's health by engaging the business community and leaders in this important cause. The Go Red for Women movement has made tremendous strides in the fight against heart disease and stroke in women. However, we still have a long way to go when it comes to awareness and research for women's heart health."

Thomas is the first woman to be named a hospital president in Baptist Health's 64-year history. She is responsible for the operational and strategic direction of the second largest hospital in the health system. She has a long history of community involvement and is passionate about the mission of the American Heart Association.

In her role as chair, Thomas will work diligently with community members and executive leaders to support the First Coast Go Red for Woman movement. The 2020 Go Red for Women luncheon is scheduled for Fri., May 15, and expects to welcome a crowd of 400 local business, healthcare, civic, and philanthropic leaders to raise funds for continued research, education and outreach.



Nicole B. Thomas

"I am excited to join the effort not only to ensure women are aware of the deadly impact of heart disease and stroke, but also that we can do something about it," said Thomas. "I believe research and science can change, improve, and lengthen lives. My grandmother is a stroke survivor and lives with heart disease. My mother lives with heart disease. Based on my risk factors, I have to take charge of my health so we can all grow old together."

Go Red for Women is a year-round movement focused on awareness, prevention education, risk factor reduction, healthy behavioral changes and women's health research. This year's Go Red community initiatives will be celebrated at the 2020 First Coast Go Red for Women luncheon, sponsored by Baptist Health. To sponsor Go Red on the First Coast or to get involved with this year's leadership team contact Allison Gubitza at 904-903-5217 or email Allison.gubitza@heart.org.

Women's Board of Wolfson Children's Hospital announces Florida Forum series chairs

The Women's Board of Wolfson Children's Hospital proudly announced Heather Moseley, Anna Neal and Dearing Thoburn as the chairs for the 2019-2020 Florida Forum Speaker Series.

Speakers include former United Nations Ambassador Nikki Haley, Presidential Historian and Pulitzer Prize-winning Author Jon Meacham, and Hall of Fame wide receiver and three-time Super Bowl champion Jerry Rice. Haley spoke Oct. 28, Meacham on Wednesday, Jan. 22 and Rice on Tuesday, Feb. 25. The programs begin at 7 p.m. at the Times-Union Center for the Performing Arts.

The Florida Forum Speaker Series, presented by The Women's Board of Wolfson Children's Hospital and sponsored by Wells Fargo, Florida Blue and Landstar, raises awareness and funds for the hospital, supporting its mission to provide the



Dearing Thoburn, Heather Moseley and Anna Neal (Photo courtesy of Captured Photography)

highest quality of advanced pediatric healthcare regardless of ability to pay.

Since 1973, The Women's Board has raised more than \$32 million in support of Wolfson Children's Hospital.

Diamonds Direct holds multi-faceted grand reopening



Diamonds Direct General Manager Kelly Flahardy and Senior Vice President Dovy Klarberg alongside their team cutting the ribbon.

When Diamonds Direct held their grand reopening celebration Oct. 17-19, not only did they celebrate their new store at 4840 Town Center Parkway by flying in world-renowned jewelry designer Tacori for a 3-day trunk show, they also gave back to the community by donating a percentage of sales from the event to the Tom Coughlin Jay Fund, to benefit local families tackling childhood cancer.

While checking out the new store and the latest jewelry trends, customers sipped champagne, enjoyed sweet treats and had the satisfaction of knowing that part of every dollar they spent was donated to a worthy cause.

"We are so grateful that our unique direct-to-the-consumer concept has been so well received in Jacksonville. In the last few



Lisa Bub, Kasey Bub, Diamonds Direct marketing & merchandising manager, and Keli Coughlin Joyce, executive director Jay Fund.

years, we outgrew our retail space and simply needed to upgrade," said Kelly Flahardy, general manager of Diamonds Direct. "What better way to celebrate this exciting new chapter than by donating a portion of our success to a cause near to our hearts."

Founder of women-centric human rights group at meet and greet Downtown



Sarah Symons

Sarah Symons, founder of Her Future Coalition (HFC) will be at a meet and greet during Christmas in the Cathedral District, an ecumenical event in the Cathedral district Downtown from 5:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. on Dec. 4. Symons and her husband, John Berger, founded HFC in 2005. Symons will be in the St. John's Cathedral bookstore at 221 E Church Street.

HFC provides shelter, education and employment for survivors of gender violence, and fights against human trafficking. HFC trains survivors in goldsmithing and jewelry design and employs women in three locations in India, according to a news release. HFC also has a training center in Thailand run by the women themselves. There will also be a jewelry sale showcasing the jewelry the women created, with proceeds to benefit the women creating the jewelry.

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Political cartoonist shares work at exhibit

Internationally known political cartoonist Ed Hall had a great turnout for his solo exhibition, "To the Point" at The Vault in San Marco with over 150 original editorial cartoons.

The illustrations, with biting satire and knee-slapping humor, were an unexpected exhibit for a fine art gallery and promoted thought provoking dialogue among the art enthusiasts as they moved from piece to piece. Included in the exhibit is Hall's new work as well as some of his archival cartoons.

Hall, a San Marco resident, did political cartoons and illustrations for the school newspaper while a student at University of Florida and has worked for several weekly publications in and around



The Vault Gallery Director Rula Carr with artist Ed Hall

Jacksonville. His work has appeared in numerous publications in the United States as well as internationally.

The exhibit is on display at The Vault, 1930 San Marco Blvd., through Friday, Nov. 8.



Murray Hill residents Cookie Davis and Susan Cochrane

Officer Youngblood retires

A familiar man in blue will no longer be walking the streets of San Marco.

Officer Glenn Youngblood, San Marco's go-to member of the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office is retiring as of Friday, Nov. 8. Youngblood, who has walked the beat in San Marco for more than 10 of his 25 years with JSO, has assisted merchants and residents with many concerns and has been a staple at San Marco Merchants Association meetings where he often give updates about crime and safety issues within the community.

Youngblood attended the San Marco Merchants' Association Meeting Oct. 23, with his partner, Officer Michelle Davis, and supervisor, Lt. David Valentine. He was given a special plaque of appreciation by SMMA President Joe Carlucci. After the presentation, Youngblood received a standing ovation from the merchants.

Youngblood's partner Davis, will continue on the beat and will most likely be joined by Officer Jonathan Tyrrell, who has volunteered for the position. Officers Kevin Golino and Golan Grinberg, will continue to serve San Marco on the weekends.

"It's funny how you usually don't have a personal relationship with one officer for such a long period of time, but that is not the case with Officer Youngblood, he's completely dedicated to the community," said Carlucci. "He will respond to personal calls and text messages. He's so attentive to everything in San Marco, which is why he was such a pillar in the community. Everyone knows Officer Glenn. He has helped us with all our events, answered all



San Marco Merchants Association President Joe Carlucci presents Officer Glenn Youngblood with a plaque of appreciation on the occasion of his retirement.

our questions, and gives us good updates on crime and how to prepare for things that we don't know about. He's the guy that you want in San Marco, a happy guy who cares about his job and the safety of others."

Youngblood said what he will miss most about the job is the people of San Marco. "My wife, Tammy, and I adopted San Marco years ago," said Youngblood, who formerly lived in Miramar and was a member of Southside Baptist Church for 13 years. "When I was assigned here, it was like working where you live. It's home. We've gone to so many funerals and weddings over the years, because we were adopted by San Marco. Sometimes that means people have a complaint, or sometimes it means they have food," he joked. "I'm leaving the job, but I'm not leaving my people. I may not be in a blue suit, but this is not going to be the last they see of me. San Marco is the Mayberry – the town square – of Jacksonville. It's where your neighbors are."

Local organization helps teens in foster care celebrate birthdays

Jewish Family & Community Services has launched a new program with opportunities for volunteers to help teens in foster care celebrate their birthdays. JFCS matches each foster child with a volunteer. The volunteer provides lunch, a gift and a birthday cake at a restaurant.

"We shared the initiative on our Facebook page and within minutes had more than 500 volunteers offering to donate their time and money to celebrate a foster teen's birthday," Colleen Rodriguez, CEO for JFCS, said. The program was launched on Sept. 25 at Outback Steakhouse in Mandarin, and JFCS had already had four teens who celebrated their special days.

"I have never had a celebration of my birthday quite like this one," said Ali, a 17-year old foster child living in a group home. "The lunch was amazing. I got to have a steak, and my volunteer sponsor gave me the best birthday



Foster teen birthday volunteer Sheri Weiss celebrates JaQuan's birthday.

cake – chocolate and had my name on it. And then she quietly sang 'Happy Birthday' to me and let me blow out 17 candles. It felt good to feel special for a change."

"The restaurant went above and beyond," Rodriguez said. "Without being asked, Outback Steakhouse employees contributed out of their own pockets to provide birthday gifts to our foster teens. Their staff went out of their way to make our teens feel special and appreciated, decorating the birthday area and providing extra-special service."

For more detailed information on how to help foster teens like Ali, contact Donna O'Steen at info@jfcsjax.org.

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Martha Frye Baker

Baker to head Community Foundation trustees

The Board of Trustees of The Community Foundation for Northeast Florida has selected Trustee Martha Frye Baker of Ponte Vedra Beach to serve as its chair beginning in January 2020.

Baker joined the Board of Trustees in January 2011. During her time on the board, she has served on the Program and Initiatives Committee continuously since 2014 and was chair of that committee in 2017 and 2018. She has also served on the Board's Governance Committee, the Strategic Planning Task Force, and the Strategic Planning Exploration Committee.

Baker is also an inaugural founding member of the Women's Giving Alliance, which is an initiative of The Community Foundation and was co-founded by her late mother-in-law, Ann McDonald Baker. She has continued to be active in WGA since joining in 2002 and has served in a number of WGA leadership positions, including first vice president in 2015.

In 2013, she spearheaded The Community Foundation's Beaches Advisory Council, which eventually became the Beaches Community Fund. In 2015, she teamed up with Tracey Westbrook to lead the Beaches Community Fund, a collective giving group, in distributing nearly \$1 million in grants in just its first four years.

Riverside Rotary gifts 600 students with colorful dictionaries

Rotary Club of Riverside made about 600 students' lives a little more colorful this fall when they visited eight area elementary schools to deliver dictionaries to third-grade classes. The dictionaries are more than just a listing of words and definitions, however; they include 50 pages of animal facts, 20 pages of global facts, lots of illustrations and the sign language alphabet.

On Oct. 4, peaceful and bright John Stockton Elementary in Ortega Forest was the club's the last stop. There, Rotarians unloaded 87 tomes still fragrant with fresh ink and crackling with new binding from cardboard boxes, then distributed them to the classrooms of Leah McCorvey, Ashlyn Cogswell, Jennifer Watkins, Deb Robson and Donnette Williams.

Students' faces lit up as they each received their own fresh copy. They flipped the crisp leaves and took in the longest word in the English language – an unpronounceable protein that took up the entire page.

But the best part? They got to put their name in it and take it home.

The students get "very excited" about that, said Stockton Principal Stephanie Brannan. "The fact that it is their own personal dictionary, they can write their name in it, it gives them



From left: Dale Orr of Ortega Forest; Casey Bulgin of Avondale, Tom White of Avondale, Chris Edison of Ortega, David Martin of Ortega.



From left to right, back: Jakhorri O'Neal, Bo Wedekind, Brendan Bellamy, Alton Baldwin, Henry Deering, William Kerns, Cooper Bagley, Mason Sexton, Aiden Johnson-Hardison, Clayton Kuder, Aubrey Snoap. Left to right, front: Marilyn Bravo, Isaiah Collins, Kellan Burge, Ava Pham, Brooklyn Butler, Lilyonna Clark, Pepper Lochrie, Luke Rattigan.

a sense of pride," she said, noting many of the students have older siblings who received a dictionary when they were in third grade. Now, it's a little brother or little sister's turn.

The dictionaries help kids get "a passion for particular subjects," she said. "It really helps in writing, which we start in third grade, and in science."

The club has been doing the dictionary drop-offs for a decade or more to about seven schools, but this year added an additional school, Bayview Elementary School on Lake Shore Boulevard, said Club President Casey Bulgin, of Avondale.

Five Rotarians distributed the book at Stockton: Bulgin, Dale Orr of Ortega Forest, Tom White of Avondale, Chris Edison of Ortega and David Martin of Ortega. One of them, Orr, is an alumna of the school.

"So much of learning is done on the computer nowadays that is amazes us how these kids continually love to get these hard copy dictionaries," Bulgin said. "Many of

them had older siblings that have received these in the past and they look forward to getting their own when they reach the third grade. It is such a rewarding experience."

The other schools Rotarians from the club visited were Ruth N. Upson Elementary on Dancy Street; West Riverside Elementary on Herschel Street; Fishweir Elementary on Herschel Street; Central Riverside Elementary on Gilmore Street; Venetia Elementary on Timuquana Road; Ortega Elementary on Baltic Street and Stockton.

The club continues to make the donations because "Youth literacy is a big hot button for our Rotary," Bulgin said.

The cost for the dictionaries was around \$1,800 and the funds came from the club's main fundraiser, the annual Riverside Craft Beer Festival. Next year's festival, which also raises funds for other area causes and non-profits, will be Feb. 22 at the Riverside Arts Market. The plan is to use some of the funds to buy more dictionaries next year.



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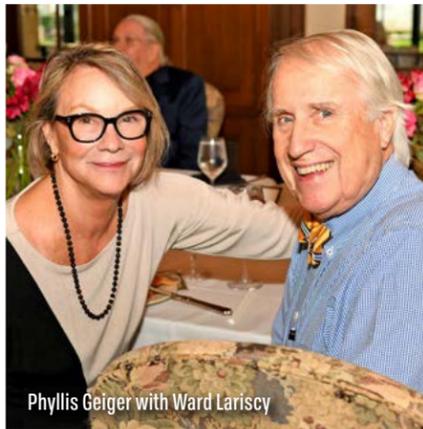
Welcome back luncheon celebrated in style at Epping Forest

Friends and associates gathered for a welcome back party for Margaret 'Mag' Black-Scott, as a homecoming upon her recent return to North Florida. Black has spent many years in Jacksonville during her career yet returned to California for many of her working years as the founder and CEO of Beverly Hills Wealth Management.

Janne Brandenburg played hostess, as the luncheon at Epping Forest Yacht and Country Club delivered the perfect backdrop for the afternoon gathering. Black-Scott was thankful for the opportunity to connect with friends and new acquaintances. "There's no such thing as an old friend, we're just friends of longstanding ... and new friends of longstanding," said Black-Scott, as she embraced guests Oct. 10.



Hostess Janne Brandenburg with special guest, Margaret 'Mag' Black-Scott



Phyllis Geiger with Ward Lariscy



Bonnie Sleiman with Wendy Grimm



Mara Contrare with Janne Brandenburg and Richard Warholic

Families visit 'Disney in Jacksonville' at Halloween Doors and More



Toy Story characters Duke Caboom, played by John Mann, and Buzz Lightyear, played by Javier Neret, pose with Lucky and Ashley Butler and their children, Winifred, 4, and Charley, 3.

Families from Jacksonville and beyond showed up in full force – and in full costume – for Community PedsCare's signature fundraiser, Halloween Doors and More on, Oct. 19. PedsCare is Community Hospice & Palliative Care's pediatric program and the event is a huge source of the program's funding. About 1,600 families came to the event, held at the Jacksonville Fairgrounds Exhibition Hall, said Amy Davis, Community's vice president of philanthropy.

Davis refers to the event as "Disney in Jacksonville," and with its multiple 10-foot-by-14-foot doors, which serve as bright backdrops, it is easy to see why. "One's a pumpkin, one's a firehouse, minion town, under the sea adventure," she explained. "They go to those doors, they go trick or treating, there are interactive areas, and they have Jedi Academy that they walk into."

There's even a salon where they get their hair done and their face painted. Danielle Eaves, Community Peds Care Child Life Specialist, took a moment to get gussied there, too.

"It's amazing to see how much fun our kids have. Here, people don't stare, and they get to see other families they know," she said.

Peds patient Mikayla Linear, of the northside was there, getting her face painted with her grandmother, Doris Lloyd.

"I love it," Lloyd said. "She comes every year, but this is my first time. She loves it." Ashley Jimerson of San Marco was also there with her children, Ford, 7, and Lila, 9. So was John Mann of San Marco, who was dressed to impress.

"I'm Duke Caboom from the new Toy Story," he explained with a smile half-hidden behind a fake handlebar moustache, in between taking photos with kids.

Along with live-action characters and entertainment from Orlando, Susan DuBow, event founder, said the event still featured the bright, festive candy machines she



Ashley Jimerson with her children, Ford, 7, and Lila, 9



Kendell Jones, 3, poses with Disney princesses at Halloween Doors and More, an event to benefit Community PedsCare.

bought on eBay 16 years ago. The year of its inception, it became the largest first-year fundraiser ever, she said, and took 18 months to plan. Since its inception, it has raised more than \$4.4 million, not including this year's event, according to community hospice.

"I feel like so many times, parents or grandparents get a babysitter and go to a charity event and their children don't know what they are doing," she said.

She wanted this event to be different and geared toward peds patients. "I was very specific," she said. "There are no special lines, no wheelchair lines. Everybody's together."

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Annual Artscapade helps pediatric heart patients

The Glass Factory on Myrtle Ave. pulsated with life the evening of Oct. 25, as supporters gathered for Patrons of the Hearts' 15 annual Artscapade, an event to help raise money for pediatric heart patients.

Splashes of colorful art throughout the venue engaged the eyes of the attendees, while they listened to live music, shared conversations with friends old and new, and sated their palates with food and cocktails. The evening was a celebration of the new lives of the children Patrons of

the Heart has served and the donors that make it possible.

The non-profit helps children around the world with congenital heart defects to be evaluated, treated and receive life-saving surgery at Wolfson Children's Hospital.

Patrons of the Hearts is a partnership between the University of Florida Pediatric Cardiovascular Center, Wolfson Children's Hospital and the Jacksonville community.

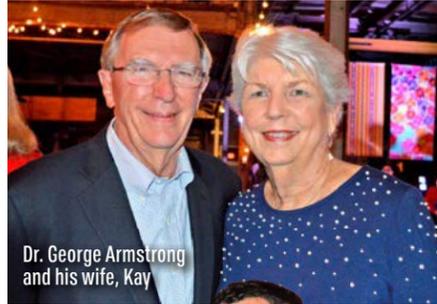
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Megan Terry, Laura Collins, and Don and Karen Wolfson



Melanie Hunt, Bailey Fouche and Sarah Owens



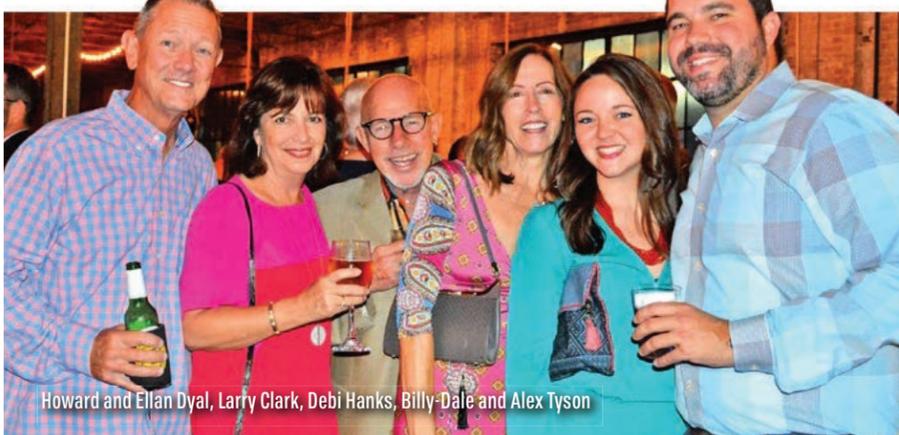
Dr. George Armstrong and his wife, Kay



Agan and Una Prameshuber



Dale and Jim Gray with Hilda Etedgui (middle)



Howard and Ellan Dyal, Larry Clark, Debi Hanks, Billy-Dale and Alex Tyson



Helena Riedeberg and Declan O'Neal



Giselle Edwards and daughter Kryztina, with Jessica Harvey and Brian Frampton

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MaliVai Washington Youth Foundation Executive Director Terri Florio with Donovan Darius, MaliVai Washington, Pat and Inger Geraghty

MaliVai Washington Foundation celebrates

Supporters of the MaliVai Washington Youth Foundation celebrated the construction of the nonprofit's new Teen Center—Club 904 and the more than 1,400 students served by its programs when they gathered at the Florida Blue Conference Center Oct. 17.

Curtis Dvorak and Sportscaster Dan Hicken welcomed the guests to the event, which included recognition of the foundation's scholarship recipients. During the past year, the foundation has served 205 students in its Tennis-n-Tutoring program, 196 at Camp Dynamite, and more than 1,000 in its community outreach endeavors. "We are proud to have had three students achieve a 4.0 GPA, maintained our 100% on-time graduation rate and for the first time in program history, a 100% promotion rate," said MaliVai Washington, founder of the foundation.

"Our goal tonight is to raise between \$250,000 and \$300,000. That will support the programs of the foundation that we already have running as well as our teen capital campaign," said MaliVai Washington Youth Foundation Executive Director Terri Florio. "We're building a teen center right next to our current youth center, which will be opening next summer."



Prudence Baldwin with Dan Hicken



Darnell Smith, Kristi Aiello, Chantel Clark, Joy Stanton with Soo and James Gilvarry



Kim and Tim Conner with Daniel Alter



Kathy and Jim Joyce with Amy and Mike Lynch

'Fun fundraiser' supports children with Muscular Dystrophy

MDA Toast of Life Co-Chair Elaine Ashourian said her goal was to have a "fun fundraiser," so people would return to support children with Muscular Dystrophy. Judging by the joy her guests expressed, she accomplished her mission. Nearly 450 turned out to raise money to send children afflicted with the disease to summer camp and to support research into finding a cure. During the event, Reginald Thompson, owner of Le Macaron™ in Avondale, was recognized with the Champion of Hope award for his long years of service to MDA. Ashourian and her co-chair, Kenneth McElfresh, also received recognition for their selfless support as chairs of the event over the past four years.



Sara and Brett McKee

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Mike and Elaine Ashourian with Kenneth McElfresh



Stephanie Ebers and Reginald Thompson with Jason Alpert, master of ceremonies



Seth and Teri Bearden with Laurel and Caleb Dunlap

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Lauren Scheible with Fr. Nicholas Louh, Peggy and Steve Bacalis, Laurie and Greg Bacalis



Marilyn Carpenter

Susie O'Quinn with Lori Boyer, Christy Smith and Tyrie Boyer

Salvation Army Celebrates its namesake, the Red Shield

The Adam W. Herbert University Center on the University of North Florida's campus hosted the Salvation Army's Sixth Annual Red Shield Ball Oct. 19. The Red Shield Ball was launched in 2014 in order to raise funds specifically for the organization's homeless shelter, located at 900 West Adams Street in Downtown Jacksonville and the services provided. It has been a success since the boost in program funding began.

While at the shelter, families receive intensive case management services including crisis intervention and counseling, as well as training in personal finance, parenting skills, child development, stress management, and health and wellness advice. All the giving efforts boost the odds of success clients have impacted 7,818 individuals and families upon leaving the shelter.



Mike and Heidi Buresh



Gala Chair Melody Van-Zant with Brooks Biagini, JDRF executive director, Alexandra Iannone, JDRF development manager, and Becky Gray, JDRF board member



Brandy and Chris Hughes with Lindsay Smith and Drew Gardner



The JDRF Board of Directors with honoree Steven Halverson and his wife, Diane



JDRF Honoree Steven Halverson and his wife, Diane, with David and Beth Stubbs



Marty Janowiecki with Leigh Rollins and David and Melissa Boor

Royal affair raises \$583,000 for JDRF

In an affair fit for royalty, guests donned attire fit for a king and queen to toast Honoree Steve Halverson of San Marco during the 19th Annual Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation Miracles Gala at the Sawgrass Marriott Oct. 19. The evening, which included cocktails, dinner, dancing, card games and a silent and live auction, raised \$583,000, said JDRF Executive Director Brooks Biagini, who estimated the final total would rise to \$600,000 in the coming weeks. Melody Van-Zant served as Gala Chair. Cynthia Gonzalez was Gala Auction Chair and Leahan Mayer served as Gala Administrator.



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Lisa Weatherby with Jimmy Kelly and Lynn Shad



Jan Bebeau with Nicola Barnack, Catholic Charities director of development



Ashley Tunac, Ian Hollingsworth with Lisa and Steve Armbrust and Heidi and Tom Anderson



Bill Gibbs, Madison Shelly and Anne Gibbs



Lewis Hunter with Jimmy and Cindy Kelly

Daniel celebrates 135 years of service to youth

Daniel, founded in 1884, is the state's oldest child-serving agency. The nonprofit recently hosted its 135th anniversary celebration on Oct. 17 at the Haskell Company headquarters on the banks of the St. Johns River. With more than 100 Daniel supporters and philanthropic community members gathering to celebrate the importance of their role in Northeast Florida, the evening was a smash for their fundraising initiatives.

Since its humble beginnings, Daniel has expanded to offer a diverse range of programs that serve approximately 3,500 children and families each day. The organization offers abused and emotionally troubled children refuge and counseling, connects kids with foster and adoptive homes, helps homeless teenagers find housing and jobs, and strengthens families. Learn more at danielkids.org.

Record crowd attends Festival d'Vine

A record crowd of more than 860 guests showed up, raising \$100,000 for Catholic Charities as they enjoyed fine libations and tasty food during the 16th Annual Festival d'Vine Oct. 25 at Treaty Oak Park on the Southbank. This year's event featured more than 100 varieties of wine from around the world courtesy of Republic National Distributing Company, while cuisine was presented by 24 popular local restaurants, including bb's, Bistro Aix, Town Hall, Moxie, Indochine, Bono's BBQ, Matthew's, The Bearded Pig, Havana Jax & Cuba Libre Bar, Southern Grounds and more. Regional Director for Catholic Charities Jacksonville Lauren Weedon Hopkins said the event has raised more than \$1.1 million for the agency over the past 16 years.



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DLC Nurse & Learn celebrates three decades of caring for children

DLC Nurse & Learn celebrated its 30th Anniversary of Hope and Miracles at the RiverFront Cafe Sept. 12. Local author and advocate Pam Tebow, mother of football player Tim Tebow, winner of the Heisman Trophy, was the keynote speaker at the event, which included dinner and a reflection of 30 years of miracles with the kids and families who have been served at DLC over the years.

DLC Nurse & Learn is an inclusion childcare center for children of all abilities, including those with cerebral palsy, Down syndrome, spina bifida, microcephaly, seizure disorders, g-tubes, apnea monitors and other special needs. Classrooms are available for infants to 5-year-olds, including voluntary prekindergarten for 4-year-olds. Additionally, after-school programs for children up to 22 years of age are offered. The organization is funded through a variety of community partners.



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Amy Buggle, Nancy Jantz, Ansley Ward, Marc Pyatt



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Sister Rea Wurmnest with Father James Bodie, Jr., Deacon Scott Conway and Kristen Conway, Joann and Roy Leskanic

Guests rock to Caribbean tunes during Morning Star's Havana Nights

Ricky Ricardo would have been right at home during Havana Nights, Morning Star School's 8th Annual Gala and Auction Sept. 28 at the Haskell Building in Riverside.

The event, which boasted Cuban-inspired cuisine, mojitos, open bar, casino games, a cigar lounge, and dancing to Caribbean tunes, helped to raise money for the school that services children with learning differences and intellectual disabilities.

Casino Tropical, which was sponsored by Jenny and Mike Lehman, featured craps and blackjack tables, while Julio "JC" Cordero, a master Cuban cigar roller, manned the cigar lounge, which was sponsored by Swisher International. Cordero worked in the family tobacco harvesting business in Cuba and learned the art of cigar rolling, which guests found fascinating and fun to watch. His tobacco leaves were grown in Ecuador, Honduras, and the Dominican Republic from Cuban seeds.



Barbara Wood with Lori Pyle and Deborah Landon

Ambassador, former governor speaks during Florida Forum

Former U.N. Ambassador Nikki Haley spoke Oct. 28 during the Women's Board of Wolfson Children's Hospital Florida Forum series, discussing such topics as her time working with Pres. Donald Trump, her new advocacy group for policy initiatives and a new book, "With All Due Respect: Defending America with Grit and Grace."

Haley was elected in 2010 as the first female and first minority Governor of South Carolina. Haley, born in Bamberg, South Carolina as the daughter of Indian immigrants, was re-elected in 2014 and served as governor until 2017, when Congress confirmed her appointment as United States Permanent Representative to the U.N. She resigned her post last year, telling Columbia, S.C. newspaper the State "It's been eight years of intense time, and I'm a believer in term limits," meaning six years as governor and nearly two as ambassador. "You have to be selfless enough to know when to step aside and let someone else do their job."

During the event, Haley spoke about taking a break from politics to spend time with her children and formulate a fresh



Dr. Gary Josephson and Patricia Josephson with Dr. Scott Silvers and Avery Silvers

approach to her new role in helping future generations disseminate facts from fiction in politics. She believes in the future of media, the stories being told and the myths about American policy and world leadership must be told in order to debunk the corruption in social, news and othe media that threatens democracy.

The Women's Board of Wolfson Children's Hospital's Florida Forum speaker series raises funds as part of the commitment to raise \$4 million over five years to contribute to the state-of-the-art Neonatal Intensive Care Unit.



Lathun and Debbie Brigman with Lynda and Richard Masuli



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Downtown Dwellers host first fundraiser on Riverwalk

Nearly 100 residents of Downtown Jacksonville gathered on the Southbank Riverwalk to celebrate a series of “firsts” during the Downtown Dwellers’ “River Celebration,” its first official fundraiser Oct. 11.

After working with the Jacksonville Parks Department for three years, not only was it the first time the Dwellers had hosted a social fundraiser, but it was also the first time the City had permitted any kind of a party where alcoholic beverages were served to be held on the Riverwalk, which is considered to be a public park. The party was held near the Lone Sailor fountain, which lies in the shadow of The Strand on the Southbank.

“We’d come to celebrate the restoration by the city of the Lone Sailor Fountain and the mural we had paid to have painted on the public restroom across the way,” said Dwellers President Sandra Fradd, noting that the Dwellers initiative to beautify the restroom with a colorful mural by David Naskashi had sparked a desire for the City to refurbish the rest room, relandscape the surrounding area and dress the building up with a new roof.

“The City has done a great deal to enhance our areas, like installing No Fishing signs in strategic places along the Riverwalk and reconstructed walkway-walls by the Main Street Bridge. With the collaboration of First Coast Security and Downtown Vision, the Riverwalks, north and south, have been cleared of the homeless who shout, sleep and panhandle,” she said.

The party was made possible due to a \$2,000 grant by Ameris Bank’s Southbank location, and food supplied by Village Bread Café in the Riverplace Tower Building. Daryl Joseph, director of the Jacksonville Parks, Recreation and Community Services Department was in attendance and spoke at the event.



Bob and Elizabeth Mossbrooks



Susan and Mike Oehler with Sonia and Gianni Vivian



Jerome Hudson and Hank Werner

“Participants at the party, who were mostly members of the Downtown Dwellers Association, should know their membership dues and donations have enabled us to collaborate with the Parks Department in making changes,” Fradd said. “In effect it’s all of us working together to make our area a great place to live. In the coming year, we look forward to creating art and celebrating on the North Bank. More than anything, we gather by the river because we love it, and we enjoy being with old friends and making new ones as people have across time.”



Howard Taylor, Gayle Balanky with Dwellers President Sandra Fradd and Mike Balanky



Standing: Susan Powell, Drew Haramis, Lee Haramis, Ginny Walkhour, Sandi White and Ann Stewart Hemphill
Kneeling: Liz Nottingham, Nancy Bennett and Barbara Irving

Attendance soared at Festival of Flight

Support was strong at the ninth annual Festival of Flight fundraiser for Angels for Allison, an organization that helps cover funeral costs and provides ongoing support for families that have lost a child. The family-friendly event, held Oct. 12 at Intuition Ale Works and Manifest Distilling, included food, games, bouncy houses, a raffle, entertainment and more.

Several dance and music studios performed inside and outside the venue – the theme was celebrating life. “We are fostering the next generation of philanthropy, giving teenagers and youth the opportunity to give back to their community,” said Liz

Nottingham, executive director of Angels for Allison.

The day began with a remembrance of the children whose families Angels for Allison had helped. “My favorite part of the day is when we start our morning with a memorial service for the families we serve. I do not want these children to be forgotten,” said Drew Haramis, founder of the organization, which was named for her daughter, Allison, who died in a car accident at the age of 15.

The organization has helped over 400 families over the past nine years, and they have helped 72 families so far this year.



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School celebrates expansion, honors donors

Tasty tidbits and specialty drinks accented a night of celebration for The North Florida School of Special Education (NFSSE), which honored its donors at their Farm to Cocktail event with delectable fare prepared by the Berry Good Farms a NFSSE culinary team. Attendees also got a sneak peek at their new Christy and Lee Smith Lower School Campus at the Oct. 10 gathering.

More than \$6 million was raised to help NFSSE achieve its dream of expanding its campus to enroll additional students and to serve the community through equine therapy and other programs. The construction is scheduled to be completed in January of next year.

John Baker, a lifelong Jacksonville resident who learned about NFSSE just two years ago, has become one of its biggest supporters. "It didn't take me long to learn that the school was unique, offering state-of-the-art educational and therapeutic programs for children with intellectual differences and helping their families. It was also obvious that the dream of expansion was substantiated by the fact that



Ed White, owner of Auld and White Constructors shows his wife Marlene the plans that his company have been executing for the build-out of the North Florida School of Special Education. The school project holds a special place in their hearts, as they have a personal connection to the mission through their granddaughter, Abigail Jones.



Debbie Buckland with Elaine and Mike Ashourian

the existing building was and still is bulging at the seams, and there is a wait list at every academic level," he said.

Of the new building, he said, "It is not only an amazing building, but every detail is so well thought out and beautifully executed that it just gives me goosebumps." According to Bert Brown, vice president of board of directors for NFSSE, there were over 1,000 donors this academic year, and 8,000 volunteer hours offered by individuals, groups, companies and students, and over \$700,000 was raised this past year. "It means so much when people give – monetarily or of their time – and we are so appreciative," said Brown.

NFSSE, established in 1992, seeks to improve the lives of students with mild to moderate intellectual disabilities through the achievement of academic, vocational, and social skills.



Lane Nelson of J.E. Abercrombie with board member Bert Brown, Frank Ringhofer of P.Q.H. Group Design and Ed White of Auld & White Constructors



Maggie, Parker and Gracie Hightower with Betsy Lovett, Sue and Mike Hightower

Friends, family celebrate Mike Hightower in style

First the Jacksonville City Council celebrated Mike Hightower's second retirement from public service with a proclamation, then friends, family, and members of JAX Chamber's Hightower Emerging Leaders Program, his namesake, honored him at a special afterparty at the Ortega home of Betsy Lovett Oct. 8.

Hightower received the proclamation as a result of resolution 2019-480, "Honoring & Commending the Life and Many Accomplishments of Mike Hightower Upon the Occasion of His Latest Retirement," which was introduced by former District 6 City Councilman Matt Schellenberg in June and co-sponsored by At-Large Group 5 Councilman Samuel Newby. City Council passed the resolution in July but held off in presenting it to Hightower until its Oct. 8 meeting.

Hightower, 74, has officially retired twice in his long career – first in 2014 after 30 years at Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida, where he served as director and later as vice president of Governmental and Legislative Relations. His second retirement was from



Mike Hightower with Betsy Lovett

JEA's Senior Leadership Team, which he joined in 2015, after being appointed Chief Public and Stakeholder Affairs Officer.

At the party, Hightower was joined by his wife, Sue, and his son, Parker, and daughter-in-law, Maggie. Also attending the party were officials from the 5 Star Veterans Center, a nonprofit of which he holds dear.



Martha Barrett with The Honorable Gary Flower



Colonel Len Loving with Gracie Simendinger, Mike Hightower and Suzie Loving



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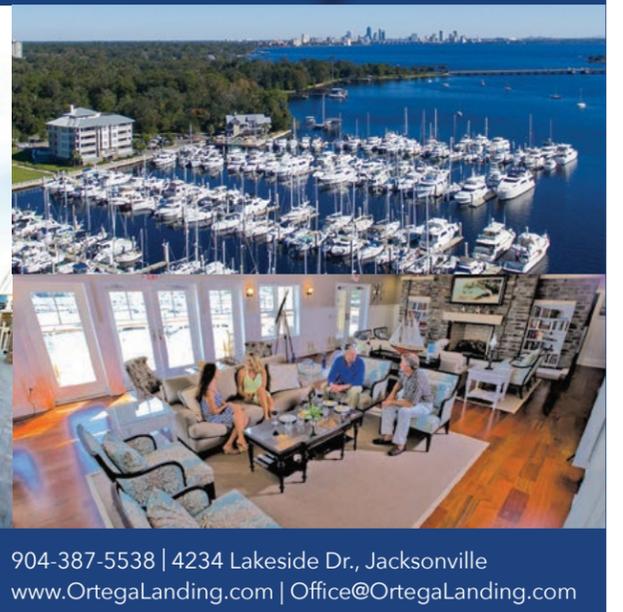
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Cummer debuts Louis Comfort Tiffany collection, celebrates donors



Supporters Bruce Dempsey, Juan Carlos and Lorelei Figueroa, Janne and Jody Brandenburg, Gabrielle Dempsey, Walter Thompson, Jackie Cornelius, Susan Slagle, Phyllis and H.L. Geiger enjoyed the opening amongst friends.

The newest exhibition at the Cummer opened to one of the most highly attended Ponce de Leon Society openings in years. With approximately 150 members of the highest order in the room, Dr. Adam Levine, the Museum's George W. and Kathleen I. Gibbs Director and CEO showered praise on his Chief Curator, Holly Keris, as guests anxiously awaited their opportunity to learn more.

"I'm going to let the star shine, the one who put this together," said Levine, as he introduced Keris to the gathering of patrons. He also thanked donors for enabling everyone in the community the ability to cherish this "gem of a museum" because of their generosity. "It is a civic resource for all of Jacksonville," he shared.

Keris shared her vision for showcasing the hard work that permeated the comprehensive and varying works of Louis Comfort Tiffany. She talked about the elaborate works in nearly all the media available to artists and designers in the late 19th and early 20th centuries and how the collection includes pieces in glass, ceramic, metalwork,



Hank Holbrook with Pam Paul, current chair of the Ponce de Leon Society

jewelry and painting. The exhibit features more than 60 objects, spanning over 30 years of Tiffany's prolific career.

The newest exhibition at the Cummer Museum of Art & Gardens, titled *Louis Comfort Tiffany: Treasures from the Driehaus Collection*, opened to the donors Oct. 16 and to the greater public on Oct. 18. It will be on display through Jan. 5, 2020. Philanthropic support from the community is critical for the Museum to serve as a vibrant civic resource. Many of the top supporters were present for the opening donor appreciation evening.



Wes Bowling and Katie Black with Jennifer and Lance Windley



Katherine and Dink Forrester



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Patty Houlihan with Warner Webb, Janice Buck, Mattox Hair and Sherrie Webb



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Neighborhood institution delivers world class opening of 130th season

It was an evening to remember as history was made when the oldest musical institution in the State of Florida, Friday Musicale, opened its doors for the 130th season Sept 20. The organization, known for its rich tradition of free music for all attendees, continues to raise the bar as talent from around the globe makes its season rich with musical performers from near and far.

“It’s a wonderful tradition, once again, too few know about it,” said Linda Fisher, a past president and longtime supporter of the organization, who attended with her husband and a few friends. “We’ve always heard about the Friday Musicale, but never came,” shared Cathy and David Keener of Arlington, who enjoy all styles

of music. “David has played the trombone for many years, he’s proud to say that he still has his Olds at home,” said Cathy. The couple was thrilled to be able to attend and learn more about the offerings inside the grand old hall, complete with massive white pillars that front Oak Street.

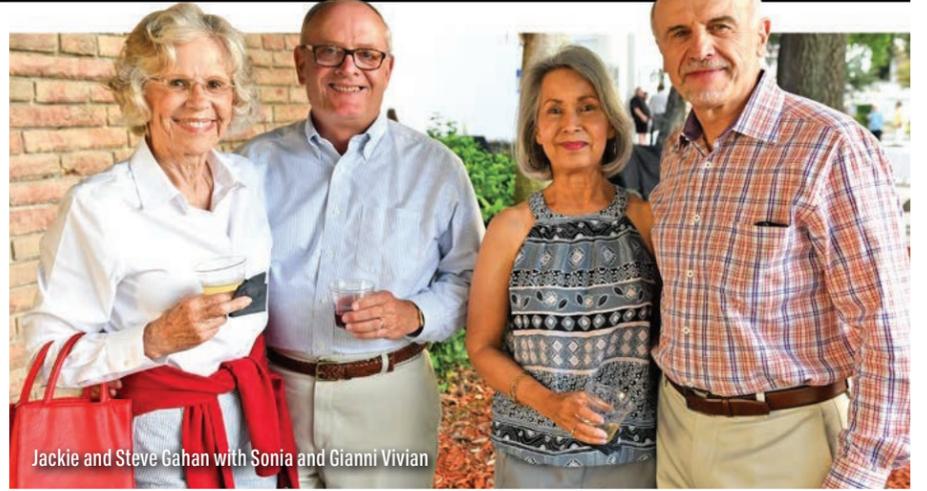
Opening night featured solo acoustic classical guitarist and internationally known performer Ana Vidovic, a world-renowned artist known for her beautiful tone, precise technique, well-defined phrasing and thoughtful artistry. She traverses the globe and frequently performs recitals, concerto engagements and festival performances, travelling to Europe’s cultural destinations including Amsterdam, Brussels, Budapest, Copenhagen, London, Oslo, Paris and the list goes on. Friday Musicale was fortunate to have welcomed her to the stage and continues to up the ante on their schedule for the 130th season.

Friday Musicale also continues to offer scholarships for aspiring musicians, educational outreach opportunities to local students, and lends its support to the next generation of musicians and music educators through college scholarship awards. The neighborhood icon, located at 645 Oak Street, also offers venue space for local recitals and special events, not to mention, performances rich with exceptional talent and charisma.

To learn more about upcoming programs and concerts at Friday Musicale, or to dig further into the history of the organization, which went by the name Women’s Friday Musicale in the early 1900’s, visit www.fridaymusicale.com.



Lines formed outside of the 130th Season and Opening Night of Friday Musicale



Jackie and Steve Gahan with Sonia and Gianni Vivian



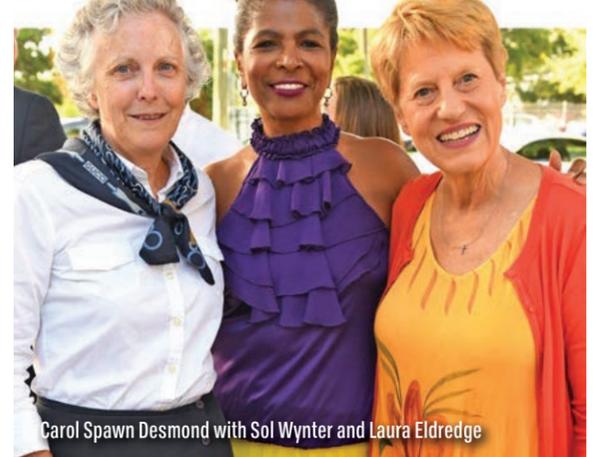
Michael Fisher with Clyde Crimmel, Henry Rogers and Linda Fisher



Friday Musicale staffers Jeff Tawney and Emily Rivera



Mag and Robin Moore



Carol Spawn Desmond with Sol Wynter and Laura Eldredge

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Civic orchestra performs at garden club, cathedral

By **Peggy Harrell Jennings**
The Resident Community News

The Civic Orchestra of Jacksonville's "Orchestration of Food, Wine and Music" at the Garden Club in Riverside was an exciting and fun affair. Guests were greeted with champagne and a violin duet. The orchestra, which is supported by volunteer musicians and donations from the community, celebrated its third fundraiser with performances by the Woodwind Ensemble, French Horn Quartet, Violin Duets, including Concert Master Edward Latimer, a String Quartet and a Contemporary Ensemble as guests enjoyed a silent auction, door prizes, good food, wine and fellowship. Serving as Master of Ceremonies was Board Member Kent Justice, who kept the evening moving while joking that his energetic auctioneering skills might lead to a new profession.

Artist-in-Residence Kelly Young displayed her vibrant work, which is unique in



Concert Master Edward Latimer with Dr. Marguerite Richardson, conductor

concept. Using music as inspiration for her 10-year-old autistic child to create paintings or drawings, Young then transfers and embellishes her creations onto canvases. She expressed her joy at being able to work with her daughter and said, "I'm not happy unless I'm doing art. It is something that we can share."

Civic Orchestra President Nadine Terk and Conductor Dr. Marguerite Richardson expressed gratitude for the turn out, and for the strong, vibrant community, which loves music. Of course, there was appreciation for the musicians who enjoy bringing free concerts to Jacksonville and Northeast Florida.

The orchestra opened its fourth season at St. John's Cathedral Oct. 6 and recently had a concert at St. Anastasia in St. Augustine. Its next concert will be held Friday, Dec. 8 at the Terry Theatre at Jacksonville University with selections from the Nutcracker Ballet and the Skater's Waltz among others. Check out the orchestra's spring season at civicorchestrajax.org.



Kelly Young



The Civic Orchestra led by Dr. Marguerite Richardson, conductor



Dr. Mitchell Terk and his wife, Nadine Terk, president, Civic Orchestra of Jacksonville



Sabrina Arceneaux with Jennifer Barrett and Angie Bussone



Carol Meyer, Peggy Holt and Bobi McGinnis

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THE WAY WE WERE: HENRY DARWIN ROGERS

BY PEGGY HARRELL JENNINGS
RESIDENT COMMUNITY NEWS

Dashing. Daring. Dapper and Debonair. Ian Fleming of James Bond fame would have found new inspiration for novels based on the incredible adventures of Henry Rogers, a man who has tangoed, samba-ed and passo doled his way around the world as easily as he has navigated the stage of First Coast Nutcracker for 41 years.

Pick a country from A to Z and Rogers has probably had some wild adventure there. And that was his goal. From the Andes, Argentina, Bogota, Ecuador, Peru to Japan, Uruguay and all points in between, Rogers has narrowly escaped mishaps with armed rebels, suspicious armed guards, risked his life exploring the heights and depths of mountains, gorges, canyons and winding roads with drops in elevation of thousands of feet, all the while finding fabulous dining experiences, meeting beautiful women and living to tell the tale.

Born at Riverside Hospital, Rogers grew up at 2950 St. John's Avenue in the beautiful house that was the original Florida Yacht Club and like many historic homes in Riverside torn down in 1966. He grew up with his brother Walter, now 98, whose survival of five major battles in World

War II is reflective of the danger and daring of the brothers, as well as his twin siblings, the late Minerva Mason and John, who is also deceased.

In the summer the Rogers children spent time in Murfreesboro, Tenn., on their maternal grandparent's farm where Rogers said they "did what you do when you're 7, 8, 9 or 10 - chop cotton, pitch hay, and milk cows."

He attended West Riverside Elementary, John Gorrie Junior High and Robert E. Lee High School then graduated with an AB in Physics from Harvard in 1954. He'd wanted to go to Duke or Georgia Tech to become a civil engineer, but his father, a Harvard graduate, wanted him to go to his alma mater. "I hope you enjoy working," is what his father told him, if he chose to attend another school.

After graduation from Harvard, Rogers desired to travel and to attend graduate school in Singapore, but riots were going on there and his mother "had a hissy fit." During his time at college he was in naval ROTC and served during the summers in the Merchant Marines. He related that one of the most terrifying moments of his life was in 1951 when he was on battle watch going through the Florida Straits between Florida and Cuba. "Stalin said if the US didn't pull back, they would retaliate. I saw a glow about 50 - 100 yards away in the water and I thought it was a Russian torpedo. I dropped behind the bow thinking I would die any second," he laughed. "It was a dolphin leaping and playing about and the glow was the phosphorescence in the water."

His later adventures while in the Navy on the USS Wiltsie destroyer make the playful dolphin episode comical by degree and pale in his recount of a journey as a top- secret



Henry Darwin Rogers in 1954

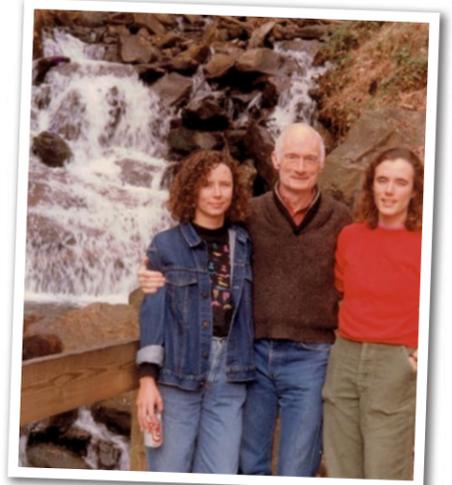


The Rogers' home

military courier in 1954. "Two armed marines escorted me to an airplane to go to Sasebo, Japan. About 10 or 15 minutes out of Tokyo we experienced engine failure and glided down into a dry rice patty. The U.S. was no longer occupying Japan, but it was illegal for anyone to have a handgun. I had a 45 automatic with shells in the chamber, and documents more valuable than my life. I was afraid someone would take me down. After 16 hours of trying to get to Sasebo by walking, various trains and avoiding policemen, I finally arrived. But the guards would not let me in with the gun and I wasn't going to let go of it or the papers until someone came and signed for it. Finally, around midnight a high-ranking officer came to take over and relieve me," he said.

In 1959 Rogers married Beverly Baggs at the Church of the Good Shepherd on Stockton Street. Beverly was the daughter of Thelma Johnston Baggs of Baggs Studio of Ballet fame. The dance studio has been an institution in Jacksonville for over 60 years. Rogers explained that when his mother-in-law died in 1977, his daughter, Katherine, then 16 years old, and Debra Rankin (then Peters), a student of Thelma Baggs, ran the studio until Rankin purchased it in 1978. Thelma Baggs presented the first full length Nutcracker with the Jacksonville Symphony in 1972 at the Civic Auditorium, now the Times Union Center for Performing Arts. Henry Rogers and Debra Rankin performed in those productions until Rankin, with Dulce Anaya and Mark Spivak formed the Community Nutcracker Ballet 28 years ago. Rogers continues to dance in what is now the First Coast Nutcracker. Thelma Baggs' dance legacy lives on in both productions through her son-in-law and her former student.

Beverly and Henry divorced after 21 years of marriage, and Beverly passed on five years ago. Rogers said this was one of the most significant relationships of his life because of his children - Katherine, who lives in Jacksonville, and Amelia Rogers who lives in Atlanta with her husband Douglas Green and son Elia. Rogers recently



Henry Darwin Rogers and his daughters, Amelia and Katherine

lost his beloved sister, Minerva. "It was my good fortune to be the little brother of Minerva Mason. Because of her, I got invited to great parties with senators and ambassadors. She was seven years older than I am and protected me from my brother John when we were kids. It is a great sadness to lose her," he said.

For a gentleman who celebrated his 87th birthday on Oct. 5, Rogers is in no hurry to slow down. He walks a mile and a half every day - many of those up and down stairs - and continues his work as a Broker Associate at First Coast Sotheby's International Realty, where he wears a three-piece suit every day except Sunday. He also goes to social dances every Friday evening, hosts dinner parties several times a year, and enjoys cooking, noting that he specializes in several dishes where he is "famous for including rum cake." He can also be seen leaping about entertaining the crowd as The Jester at the annual ball given by Ye Mystic Revellers.

Rogers is active in the Unitarian Universalist Church, the Friars' Club, the Sheriff's Advisory Council, the Word Affairs Club, the "Billy Boys," a group founded by William Ketchem consisting of old pals from Lee High School who meet once a month, as

CONTINUED ON PAGE 35

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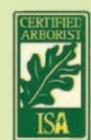
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Henry Dawson Rogers dressed as the Jester at 2017 Reveller's Ball

well as the Harvard Business Club and other organizations too numerous to mention.

His past accomplishments are many and varied. He was elected to two terms on the Jacksonville Civil Service Board serving with former Mayor Hans Tanzler and worked to unify Jacksonville with consolidation. Toss in the fact that he works with the Jacksonville Historical Society, Jacksonville Mental Health, Southeast Community Planning Advisory Council, is a founding member of the Jacksonville Ski Club, Past President of Jax Board of Realtors, where he was awarded Florida Land Realtor of the year in 2014, and one gets a picture of the indefatigable Rogers.

Although a less energetic person would be exhausted and ready for retirement, Rogers is still globe-trotting. One of the most fun trips he has made was with his daughter, Katherine, hiking in Turkey, he said. When asked which was his favorite trip he said, "It depends on which side of the bed I got out on. I love the Far East. I really enjoyed Toyoko. Last year, I went to Morocco."

He recalled of chatting with his friend, Dale Orr Taylor, after church. As former captains in Revellers, Taylor's dad, husband and son were associates of Rogers. The conversation turned to traveling, and they decided to go to Katmandu, but only if they would get there by crossing the Atlantic, since Rogers had already crossed the Pacific.

In earlier travels, Rogers carried a .38 special in Columbia and wielded a bolo knife to chop two canine teeth from a dead mountain cat presented for sale by an Indian carrying a muzzle-loading gun. The teeth, which were to be made into earrings, were later presented to a young lady he'd met at the airport, who accompanied him to the bull fights and danced the paso bobble, an energetic dance where the gentleman mimics the matador and the lady, the bull, into the wee hours.

His recent trips have been tame compared to the time a machine gun was pointed at his stomach or when he rode a mule along a perilously steep mountain path. However, these exciting adventures almost did not come to fruition.

Not everything has been rosy for the self-proclaimed "Wild Man," who with his closest friend and college roommate, Peter van Thiel, had decided to live life to the edge. Unfortunately, in 1957, Rogers landed

in St. Vincent's Hospital where he was diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes three weeks before he was scheduled to fly to Baghdad to begin a job with an engineering company near the Iraq border. He said he felt his life of adventure was doomed to failure. How to travel and make sure he had insulin in the wilds of the world was mind boggling, and he felt defeated in his dreams of the adventurous life, which he and Peter had vowed to embrace.

Although Rogers life has been filled with joyful exuberance and fascinating travels, his dear friend Peter, who was with the CIA, did not live to keep that promise or enjoy the wild adventures they had pledged to pursue. He was killed on a mission in 1965.

The combination of struggling to control his diabetes, the loss of his dream job, and Peter's death, pushed Rogers into a deep depression. Not caring if he lived or died, he embarked on a journey which tested his survival skills to the max before he experienced a turning point.

Having separated himself from the travel guide at Machu Picchu so he could explore on his own, he found himself looking down a 2,000-foot drop as clouds darkened the sky. Unable to find the return path with, ironically, only half a pack of Lifesaver candies to sustain his blood-sugar level, he proceeded down a steep, narrow pathway, most of which had been washed away by a landslide. He then maneuvered a terrifying balancing act, worthy of the famous trapeze artist, Karl Wallenda, crossing over a 300-foot deep gorge on an unsteady, decaying log to survive and make it back to the lodge.

The near brush with death was a pivotal moment in his thinking, he said. Surviving this ordeal inspired him to live and to continue his quest for life and for other dangerous adventures.

Edgar Allan Poe's poem, "El Dorado," where the knight's search for the city of gold is illusive, has always inspired him, he said. The last stanza reads: "Over the mountains of the Moon, Down the valley of the shadow/ Ride boldly ride, if you seek Eldorado."

Rogers has certainly ridden, hiked, climbed, and danced in over 40 countries, not including exploits in his own. His travels have been both exhilarating and frequently fraught with danger. His pledge in college with his old pal to seek adventure has been fulfilled. He has been in the valley, yet survived, and continues to seek the next thrill "over the mountains of the moon" as he tangos, rumbas and rides boldly through life. And he loves to tell the tales.



Henry Dawson Rogers



Henry with his siblings, Walter, Minerva and her twin, John, around 1933

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 Christmas Cantata: "Sing with the Angels"

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 Family Christmas Eve Service with Live Nativity

December 24th-Christmas at 11:00 p.m.
 Christmas Eve Candlelight Service with Communion



Photo by Will Dickie

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PD. ADV.

Release of butterflies soothes loss of little loved ones



Families released butterflies in honor of their loved ones at Baptist Medical Center Oct. 20.

More than 300 family members released colorful butterflies in honor of lost infants during the 29th Annual Pregnancy and Perinatal Loss Remembrance Day, Oct. 20 at Baptist Medical Center.

The event, which was open to any family that has lost a baby, was sponsored jointly by Baptist Health and Ascension St. Vincent's HealthCare. During Remembrance Day, grieving families also had an opportunity to create individual keepsakes to honor their loved ones.

"This event reminds families who have gone through this tremendous loss that they are not alone," said Linda Rosengren, chaplain and bereavement services coordinator for Baptist Medical Center Jacksonville and Wolfson Children's Hospital. "Around 300 people attend Remembrance Day every year, and when each family hears their baby's name read aloud, it's proof that their baby is not forgotten."



Rear Admiral Christopher Asselta shakes hands with John Thomas (Jack) Coyle of Lakewood during a special gala in Washington D.C. Oct. 19.

WW II Seabee honored in Washington

John Thomas (Jack) Coyle, a Lakewood resident and veteran who served with the Seabees during World War II, was honored during a special gala at the Ritz Carlton in Washington D.C. Oct. 19.

Coyle, a 1944 graduate of the Bolles School, entered the Seabees in November 1944 and served for two years in the South Pacific. He was honored as the only World War II veteran during the gala and was seated with Rear Admiral Christopher Asselta and his wife.

“It really was beyond wonderful. My husband received great honor and appreciation,” said Coyle’s wife, Anne, after the event.

In Memoriam Bishop John J. Snyder

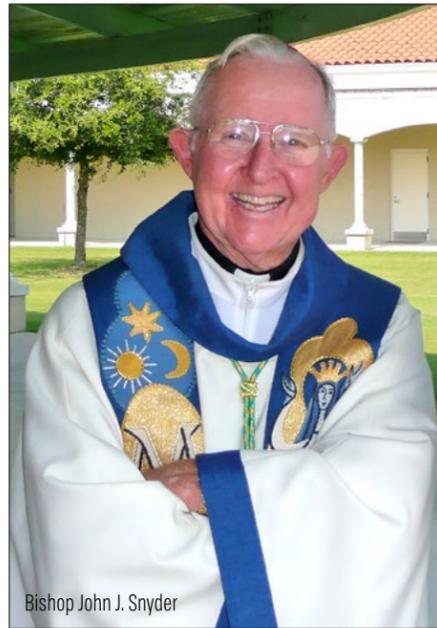
October 25, 1925 - September 27, 2019

Bishop John J. Snyder, affectionately known as the people’s bishop, passed away Sept. 27 at the age of 93. Hundreds of people whose lives he had touched crowded The Basilica Cathedral for his Oct. 2 funeral mass, testament to a remarkable man who not only loved the Lord with all his heart, but also loved people – all people – unconditionally.

Bishop Snyder led the 17-county Diocese of St. Augustine for more than 20 years, during a period of tremendous growth, when the number of Catholics more than doubled – requiring the addition of eight new parishes, seven elementary schools, and two high schools, St. Francis Catholic Academy in Gainesville and the school on the Westside that bears his name.

He built the Catholic Center, the diocesan offices in Mandarin; renovated and expanded a riverfront estate into the Marywood Retreat and Spirituality Center and converted the old Immaculate Conception school downtown into the Providence Center that provided offices for social service agencies.

Although he produced much fruit by his faith and was prolific in good works for the church, his love and works extended far beyond the church. Bishop Snyder reached out to groups that did not feel welcomed in the church – the divorced, the disabled, gays and lesbians, inmates, farmworkers, refugees, and immigrants. He made everyone feel loved and noticed.



Bishop John J. Snyder

David Seamans, posted on the Bishop’s online tribute wall a special moment shared between them. After a confirmation service at Christ the King Catholic Church, Seamans had the opportunity to speak privately with the Bishop about his son, Tim, who was killed in action. “Within two weeks later, I received not only a beautiful, but emotional letter from His Grace; he shared with me his family’s story of coming to America and how his brother was killed in WWII. This brought tears to my eyes - now the Bishop that my family loved and adored was a Gold

Star sibling. May God bless you and keep you, may He shine His everlasting light upon you always; in Jesus Name we pray,” Seamans wrote.

Bishop Snyder backed his love and faith with action – he built five retirement homes for low-income elderly, a nursing home and a retirement home for priests, where he spent his last years. Additionally, he established ministries for farmworkers, refugees, and immigrants, offering medical services and legal assistance as well as pastoral support.

He had a special affinity for the disabled, resulting in him establishing the Ministry for Persons with Disabilities that runs summer camps for disabled children and adults from all over the county. On the state level, he advocated for prison reform and spoke out against the death penalty. He was active in prison ministry and after his retirement in 2000 ministered to inmates on Death Row.

He was one of the founders of the Interfaith Council in Jacksonville and in 1991, he became co-chairman of the Anglican-Roman Catholic Dialogue, a role in which he traveled with Catholic and Episcopal bishops, first to England to meet the Archbishop of Canterbury and then to Rome to meet Pope John Paul II.

Well known and loved within and without the church, Bishop Snyder will be remembered for his faith, his good works, and his love for God and people.

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Birthday bash unites college friends, raises money for Wolfson

By Marcia Hodgson
Resident Community News

Rather than lamenting about being “over the hill,” when he turned 50 in August, Auburn McClure turned his milestone celebration into a chance to give back to his community.

At first McClure and his wife, Cathy, planned to mark the occasion in his San Jose backyard, with cake, ice cream, a single guitar player, and a small gathering of friends. However, a chance meeting in Costco with his University of Florida fraternity brother, Chris Bolton, changed his plans. Next thing he knew, Bolton’s band, the legendary Pinocchio Knows, was reuniting to play at Jack Rabbits in honor of McClure’s big day and to raise funds for Wolfson Children’s Hospital.

Popular with the Gainesville crowd during the 1980s and early ‘90s, Pinocchio Knows cut more than one album back in the day, including its popular “Roll Down” record, said McClure.

“I ran into Chris Bolton and told him about my 50th birthday party and one thing led to another, and we got the whole band back together,” he said, noting the musicians were also members of his fraternity, SAE.



Cathy and Auburn McClure

“I was a big fan back in college. The band hadn’t played together in eight years. When they agreed to get together and play for my party, I knew from our peer group back then there would be a lot of people wanting to attend, so we needed to do more than just a party – we needed to raise some funds for a great cause.”

The party ended up being more like a college reunion than a birthday party, said McClure. Approximately 250 friends, fraternity brothers and classmates heard about the celebration by word of mouth and joined in the fun at Jack Rabbits Aug. 10, with several traveling from Kentucky, Charleston, S.C., Pensacola, and Atlanta. Although four out of five of the band members – Bolton, Cameron Washburn, Bill Queen, and John Josey – are natives of Jacksonville and attended either The Bolles School or Episcopal High School, today they are scattered throughout the country. To play at the party, Washburn came down from Atlanta, Queen flew in from San Francisco, Josey made his way south from Boston, Edwards drove up from Tampa, and Bolton made his way from St. Augustine.

Boasting eight gold sponsors, each of whom donated \$1,000 apiece, the party raised nearly \$10,000 for Wolfson, a cause that is close to McClure’s heart.

In 2007, when he was 3 years old, McClure’s son, Matthew, was diagnosed with acute lymphocytic leukemia (ALL) and was treated at Wolfson Children’s Hospital. “When he was going through his treatment for ALL for three years, we just felt the people at Wolfson Children’s Hospital treated us like we were the only patients they ever had,” said McClure. “It was just remarkable personal and professional care. So, when



Auburn and Cathy McClure with Madison Harris, associate director of Development, Wolfson Children’s Hospital and Debbie Ferguson, director of Annual Giving at Baptist Health

the opportunity came for a fundraiser, there was no question where we would direct the funds. Matt is a happy, healthy, sometimes ornery teenager,” he said, noting Matthew, now 16, is a sophomore at Bolles, and still has annual ALL checkups at Wolfson.

Madison Harris, association director of Development at Wolfson said the hospital was surprised and pleased with the impromptu donation. “This is really special. We have a huge giving circle program at Wolfson, but it’s not every day that you get a \$9,000-plus gift from a family that had a birthday party in honor of their son that was a Wolfson patient in the past. This is a really special gift. We’re excited that we were able to honor their family and their friends.”

Debbie Ferguson, director of Annual Giving at Baptist Health, joined Harris in receiving the check from the McClures. “We really appreciate their generosity and loyalty to be part of the Wolfson family,” she said.



The Pinocchio Knows band on stage at Jack Rabbits during Auburn McClure’s birthday party. Dr. Chas Edwards, Chris Bolton, John Josey (drums), Cameron Washburn and Bill Queen

“It was just a reminder how blessed we are,” said Cathy McClure. “Not only were we blessed with Wolfson’s outstanding service, but also to be blessed today with so many friends came all this way to celebrate a friend’s birthday and contribute financially to a great cause.”

McClure agreed. “It was wonderful to have so many friends here having a good time for a good cause.”

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Bringing history to light

North Light Studio owner cataloging decades of city's past

By Jennifer Edwards

Resident Community News Group

Curt Coenen has been a well-known San Marco photographer for more than 40 years, working out of his familiar North Light Studio for many of them. While he's since closed the studio, he still has thousands upon thousands of negatives he carefully maintains.

The thing is – they're not even his.

Instead, they are the work of other photographers taken more than a half century ago during a period of intense growth for Jacksonville, the 1940s through the early 1970s. They show everything from such iconic city buildings as the Prudential Building, Gator Bowl and Colosseum to San Marco landmarks like the Little Theatre.

There are even photos of family weddings of important political figures such as past Jacksonville mayor and Florida governor William Haydon Burns.

"We have weekly progression pictures of how the Prudential building was being built, how the Colosseum was being built, a lot of other locations around the time that preserved what it was really like," Coenen said, while thumbing through just a fraction of the negatives.

They are the work of Marsh-Kornegay Inc. photographers, a studio that closed its doors in 1976 or 1977 after performing decades of official documentation for the city and its builders. Steve Barber, another San Marco photographer, took them on for their historical value, but many others from the firm were lost to time.

Coenen said he claimed the negatives when Barber decided to move to a new studio in Mandarin but didn't want to haul 100-plus boxes of old negatives to his new location. He said he immediately saw the value in them.

"I grew in North (New) Jersey, looking at pictures such as these, landmarks in New York City" in newspapers like the *New York Post*, he said. "That's why I felt it would be worthwhile to preserve these and hopefully do something of a similar nature."

Mitch Hemann, head archivist for the Jacksonville Historical Society, said the period the photos were taken was a pivotal time for Jacksonville.

"Post- World War II would be a time of immense work and progress," Hemann said. "From a research standpoint, anybody who would be interested in accessing those photographs would be seeing some pretty immense changes at that time."



Curt Coenen, a longtime San Marco photographer, talks about the photographers who did work for the city and its contractors from the 1940s through 1970s

Some of the buildings may no longer be around, Hemann added, so pictures such as Coenen's could provide a rare snapshot into a time long gone. "Jacksonville probably looks a lot different now than it did then," he said.

Coenen said he also took the negatives in case others came looking for them. "I think I got one, two calls maybe in the 40 years I was in business up there," he said.

So, he sat down and began the arduous process of cataloguing them into a spreadsheet – work he has still not finished at over 3,000 negatives logged and counting.

The photos cover hundreds of sites, from what is now San Jose Boulevard and Loretto Road in Mandarin to the shipyards downtown. That's not including the anonymous family photos Coenen has culled, although he did keep a few important ones.

One set includes a wedding in the family of William Haydon Burns, a mayor of Jacksonville who went on to become Florida governor from 1965 to 1967, according to the Florida Department of State.

"I have the file of his daughter's wedding and some of his gubernatorial campaigns as well as some locations," Coenen said. Those include the museum dedicated to him.

The oldest images Coenen has catalogued so far are from 1946, he said. The photos from that year include Massey Motors on State Street, an old car dealership downtown. He has the Little Theatre, still operating today in San Marco, which Hemann said was an important neighborhood site.

"Images of that would be pretty important to see," he said. "That is definitely a city



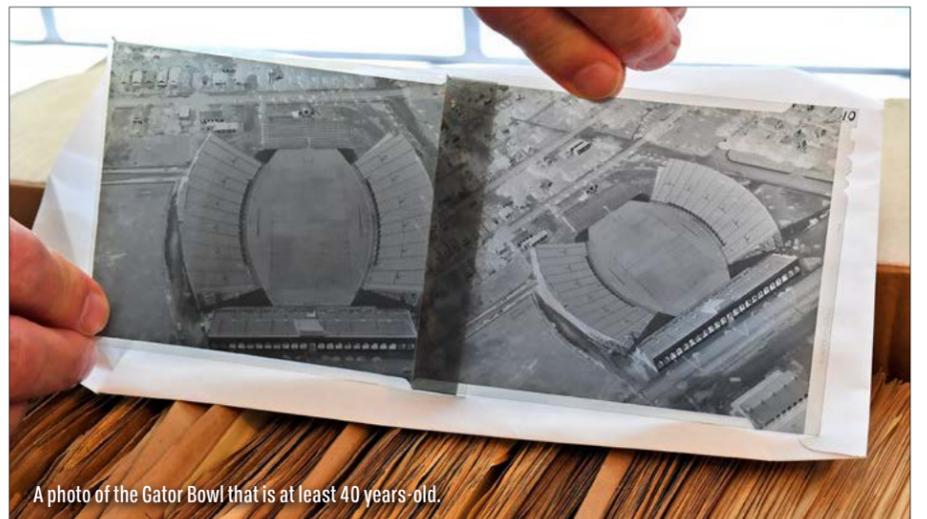
A negative from a time when the city and its downtown were developing



Curt Coenen thumbs through files in a box that show a fraction of the files he has archived in the hopes that they would come back in the public eye



Curt Coenen holds up a negative from his collection



A photo of the Gator Bowl that is at least 40 years old.

landmark that is well known. Carl Swisher of the cigar makers was one of the major funders for that theater, and that would be earlier than the 40s."

Coenen also has exteriors of buildings on Hendricks Avenue, aerials of Jacksonville Beach, the shipyards downtown, Hendricks Avenue Baptist Church and the old Tilman Laundry at 312 Park Street. "There was a lot of construction photography," Coenen said. "Back then, they were building the original Prudential building, the original Colosseum before the arena. The builder was required to send weekly construction pictures."

If history repeats itself, the photographs may remain an important clue to the multiple pasts of a city that keeps being reborn. "Jacksonville rebuilds itself over and over again," Hemann said. "It has a legacy for that. Whether it burns down in a fire, we are always rebuilding."

Publishers note: Do you have an interest in these or other old photographs or have your own stories and photos to share? Reach out to us at editor@residentnews.net

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Pink Out volleyball tradition continues for Bishop Kenny, Bolles

The 12-year Bishop Kenny-Bolles tradition to raise awareness for the fight against breast cancer continued as volleyball teams from both schools squared off Oct. 8 to provide support for the Donna Foundation.

Donna Deegan, a Bishop Kenny graduate, delivered an inspiring speech to a packed

gymnasium during half-time of the Pink Out event. Over \$5,000 raised from pre-event t-shirt sales, a bake sale, and funds from the game's admission were donated to benefit the Donna Foundation.

According to Bishop Kenny Head Coach Suzanne Winkler, Pink Out is one of the best nights of the year for her players and fans. "I hope it never dies down, our kids were great, tonight was great, I love to see all the pink, and having Donna Deegan come back to Bishop Kenny to help us celebrate makes it even more special," she said.

The genesis of the annual Pink Out game started in 2008 at the suggestion of Elise Bush, head volleyball coach at The Bolles School. "Elise asked whether or not, in light of the heightened consciousness about breast cancer, we could dedicate one of our games in support of breast cancer awareness. I thought it was



The Bishop Kenny volleyball squad led by Head Coach Suzanne Winkler greet Bishop Kenny Alum Donna Deegan during the school's traditional Pink Out game against Bolles Oct. 6. The game is held to raise funds for the Donna Foundation.



Fans and players alike wore pink during the 12th Annual Bishop Kenny Pink Out game against Bolles Oct. 8.

a great idea, and an even better idea to put our rivalry with Bolles to work for a good cause," said Winkler.

Bush passed away in February 2018 and was recently inducted into the Florida High School Athletic Association Hall of Fame. The annual event sparked numerous other volleyball programs across the First Coast

to hold similar "Dig Pink" or "Pink Out" matches. "She was an unbelievable mentor and every time we do this, I think about her, Winkler said, referring to Bush. "She was just always doing it for the right reason. She motivated so many people and touched so many lives. She was definitely missed by us all tonight."

Undefeated Wolfpack swimmers place second in Gateway championships

The Samuel W. Wolfson School for Advanced Studies girls' swim team finished its regular season undefeated with wins over Paxon, Englewood, Atlantic Coast, Stanton, Mandarin and Terry Parker High Schools.

The Wolfpack women took that momentum into the Gateway Conference Championships placing second behind a strong Fletcher High School team. Contributing to the team's success were

divers Kaylee Carolan, who placed 3rd, and Imani Franklin, who finished 10th.

Led by Augustina Cole, a junior, the Wolfpack are a young team of mostly freshmen and sophomores. The Pack boasts seven swimmers from San Marco and Miramar, including sophomores Leah Troup and Mayson Wilkins and freshmen Charlotte Caccam, Emma Domingo, Paige Pearson and Campbell Scharer.



Wolfson High School swimmers placed second at Gateway Conference Championships



Chloe Weldon, Bridget Coscia, Kyle Hopkins, Klare Bryan, Antonio Hicks, Braden Witkovich, Charles Medure and Anna Mayo

JAX Sings selects eight from Episcopal

Eight Episcopal High School students, including three students from Jacksonville's historic neighborhoods, were selected to participate in JAX Sings, a high school honor choir invitational hosted by the University of North Florida.

Singing in the group were Anna Mayo of San Marco and Klare Bryan and Chloe Weldon of Ortega. Rounding out the Episcopal participants were Bridget Coscia,

Charles Medure, Kyle Hopkins, Antonio Hicks and Braden Witkovich.

Mayo, a senior, won the Soprano 2 MVP award, while Coscia, also a senior, won the Alto 2 MVP award.

The three-day event took place on Sept. 26 and ended with a Saturday evening concert in Lazarra Hall on the UNF campus. During the event, students learned six pieces with guest clinician and Grammy Award winner Dr. Jeffrey Redding.

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Author warns Bishop Kenny students about dangers of vaping

Robb Holladay, a nationally acclaimed author and speaker, addressed the student body of Bishop Kenny High School on the topic of vaping during a special assembly Oct. 3.

The presentation was part of a yearlong Bishop Kenny campaign emphasizing faith, focus and health. "Vaping has become an epidemic throughout the country, and Bishop Kenny needs to be proactive in educating our students and parents about the dangers associated with this addictive habit," said Principal Todd Orlando.

Holladay's presentation was offered to students in two sessions during the school day and to parents in an evening program. The content of his talk was set up to inform, educate, and encourage students to think about the addictive nature of vaping. The evening session for parents focused on



Nationally acclaimed author and speaker address students at Bishop Kenny about the dangers of vaping.

why vaping has become such an epidemic, its harmful effects, and how to discuss vaping with kids.

The program was well received and opened channels of discussion for those in attendance. Holladay was dynamic in drawing attention to the serious damage that vaping can do to the body and mind, most especially in young people.

Landon families feed the hungry



Catherine Cooke, Callie Joyner, Anna Nelson, Brooke Curry and Charlotte Ritter

Julia Landon College Preparatory School families know how to respond to a call to action! In September, the Duval County Council PTA announced a food drive to benefit Feeding Northeast Florida, and the PTA at Landon Middle School responded in force. In total, the majority of the student body collected 505 non-perishable items.

"At our September Board meeting, we all agreed it would be an easy, inexpensive thing for individual Landon families to support, while the collective results would be large," said Landon PTSA President Terri Nelson. "We decided a one-week blitz would rally the troops to act quickly, and it sure did! Each day it was so rewarding to see the food in the collection boxes grow exponentially."

To add a little incentive, Landon Principal Katrina Blakely announced a contest for the students. Whichever grade level brought in the most items

would earn a week of free seating in the school cafeteria. "Getting to choose where to sit and with which friends, versus assigned seating by class, is something most students look forward to, so that potential prize certainly helped our collection efforts," added Nelson.

The drive kicked off Sept. 16 and ended on Sept. 23. Students from each grade level gathered to count their total items and sort by canned and boxed goods. The next day, all items barely fit into the back of a van driven by Doreen Abbott, a Landon PTSA board member. Abbott delivered the goods to Feeding Northeast Florida.

Blakely announced the winning 6th graders had a total of 267 food items!

Due to the overwhelming support of Landon families, the PTSA executive board is planning to announce another community service drive soon, and Nelson is confident that Landon students will rise to the occasion once again.



Bolles students help out at the City Rescue Mission

Bolles Make a Difference Day a Meaningful Community Experience

The Bolles Class of 2023 experienced firsthand the hard work and satisfaction of servant leadership during Bolles' annual Make a Difference Day on Oct. 16. In addition to working with more than a dozen local nonprofit agencies off-campus, students completed additional activities on-campus that solidified the day's experience.

The day helped familiarize students with the many opportunities for volunteerism in Northeast Florida and gave them new perspective on community need. Students traveled to the following nonprofit organizations and centers including Angels for Allison, Angelwood, City Rescue Mission, Hope Haven, Lutheran Social Services, Mandarin Museum, MARC, North Florida School for Special Education, Pine Castle, Ronald McDonald House, Sanctuary on 8th Street and the St. Johns Riverkeeper.



Bolles students assist in the gardens at North Florida School for Special Education

Following lunch and regrouping in Davis Gym, freshman students made posters and partook in a t-shirt design competition. They gathered in small groups to participate in the exercise of group collaboration, design and idea promotion – all key elements to successful servant leadership. The winning design will be used on t-shirts for the Class of 2024's Make a Difference Day. Freshman students also wrote letters to themselves projecting how they hope to make community service a priority. They will open the letters at the Senior Breakfast in the fall of 2022.



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Art educators convene in Jacksonville for conference

Creative educators from around the country came to the River City for the 2019 Arts Schools Network Annual Conference Oct. 22-25, where they spent several days experiencing the artistic treasures Jacksonville has to offer.

Jackie Cornelius, executive director of the Douglas Anderson School of the Arts Foundation, hosted this year's event and was the mastermind behind the jam-packed schedule that catered to the theme, Creative Arts Collaboration.

Activities included a cocktail reception and dinner, a series of breakout sessions and workshops, tours of Jacksonville University, Douglas Anderson School of the Arts,

Museum of Science and History, Mayo Clinic, LaVilla School of the Arts, Fishweir Elementary, CORK, Haskell, Space 42, Yellow House and more.

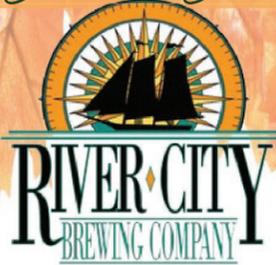
Each year, the conference travels to a new location to offer timely and fresh perspectives on the challenges faced by art educators, offering them the opportunity to grow, explore, and foster new networks of support and make new friends. For 30 years the Arts Schools Network has been bringing together networks of art leaders.

Major event partners included Gary McCalla, Jacksonville University Mayo Clinic, Florida Blue and Smith Gambrell & Russell LLC.



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Cold Station
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Wolfson JROTC Raiders win three events in regional competition

The Wolfson High School Army Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps (JROTC) came home with a big "W" when it competed in the Regional Rangers Competition on Sept 22.

Wolfson's soldiers-in-training placed first in three of the major events, the rope bridge, the tire flip and the cross-country rescue. "The mixed team brought home the first-place trophy, thus putting the Wolfpack Battalion in a great position to possibly win the upcoming state competition," said Wolfson Principal Christopher Begley.

The Army JROTC Raider team consists of a group of high school students who compete in physical events outside of the



The Wolfson JROTC brought home the winning hardware during a regional competition Sept. 22.

classroom. The Wolfpack Raiders team is the most strenuous and most physical team in the JROTC program, said Begley, noting many cadets use the conditioning and training to prepare themselves for other school sports held throughout the year. The Raiders regional competition included events such as constructing a rope bridge, a cross-country rescue, a 5K team run, the tire flip and the ammo-can relay.

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FSPA recognizes Bishop Kenny teacher

Bishop Kenny Multi Media Design II students were excited to see their teacher, Dawn Huskey be presented with the “Teacher of the Year” award for during the Florida Scholastic Press Association (FSPA) District 2 Workshop at the University of North Florida Oct. 4. More than 100 students attended the workshop that was open to all Northeast Florida District members.

At the Catholic high school, Huskey works with students taking Multi Media II, year-book, creative photography, and CruscaderVision, which is a student-run broadcast production team. “Mrs. Huskey is very determined to help her students reach their full potential. She is a master at helping us take our projects to the next

level,” said Will Joyce, a senior. His classmate, Natalia Vinas, agreed. “Taking a student’s vision for a project and turning it into reality is Mrs. Huskey’s special gift,” she said.

Huskey will compete against the other six FSPA district nominees during the State FSPA convention in Orlando, April 23-25, 2020.

The Bishop Kenny students attended a variety of sessions including videography, storytelling, and caption writing. The sessions were led by many industry professionals with a highlight being able to see Brent Martineau of ESPN. Jack Trent, a Bishop Kenny senior, was asked to give a presentation on Advanced Digital Storytelling that focused on cinematography and reporting techniques.



Bishop Kenny students taking part in the Florida Scholastic Press Association District 2 Workshop were: Back, Andrew Helow, Will Joyce, Savannah Mullins, Sephora Affa, Valentina Mosqueda, Natalia Vinas, Emily Voykovic and Katie Richmond. Front: Tucker Ranney, Bryce Hinschberger and Jack Trent

Assumption Catholic School students enjoy creative projects

Students at Assumption Catholic School enjoyed a busy September, enjoying hands-on science experiments, social studies exploration and accolades for their work and sports plays.

The eighth graders experimented with an egg-drop engineering project, the second year the students tried their hand at protecting each fragile ovum with just a few materials. Their tools: masking tape, straws and computer paper. Meanwhile, the third graders learned the tools of the science trade. They learned that scientists use tools to help them observe, describe, compare, measure and communicate and recently took to the lab to practice what they learned. They worked on measuring length, mass, time, volume and temperature and practiced magnification.

In fifth grade, students were hard at work on two projects in social studies: their state poster project and a cartographer’s challenge map project. For their posters, students were tasked to create an eye-catching, creative poster on any state they chose, while working to memorize the 50 states and capitals. For the cartographer challenge, they chose a theme for their map and used them for physical features and other items.

While students were making their beautiful creations inside, the school got a gift that will help make the outside even more inviting to certain creatures. A flat of milkweed plants will now be placed in the school’s Monarch/pollinator gardens. The campus is a certified Monarch butterfly waystation, which means it’s a place that provides resources necessary for Monarchs to survive, thrive and reproduce. Without the milkweed,



Addison Criscitiello, Emily DiPerna and Olivia Raker



Mikhail Kozev and Christopher Mullalem

the butterflies wouldn’t be able to migrate and produce new generations. According to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Monarch may be in peril and is currently under consideration to be included as an endangered species.

On Sept. 25, students also came out in pajamas to support their school basketball teams. The junior varsity boys, varsity girls and varsity boys played San Juan Del Rio and won all three games.

Episcopal choral group heads to Disney



The Episcopal School of Jacksonville’s choral program was recently selected to perform at this year’s Disney Candlelight Processional in December. Twenty-six high school students will perform at EPCOT on Tuesday, Dec. 10 for the 6:45 p.m. and 8:15 p.m. The students were selected from more than 350 school submissions. The Episcopal students will be accompanied by celebrity narrator Isabella Rossallini.

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Bolles Mock Trial Team Scores Third at FSU



The Bolles Mock Trial Team

The Bolles Mock Trial Team competed in the Florida State University mock trial tournament Oct. 12 in Tallahassee, placing third out of 12 schools and 15 teams from across Florida and South Georgia. Mock Trial Team Sponsor Andrew Dickson of San Marco said the Bolles team outranked many teams that consistently place at the state finals every year, including Lincoln, Chiles and American Heritage.

Jessica Zeng was recognized for her outstanding work, receiving the title of top lawyer in the tournament. This is the second year Zeng has achieved this designation. As a reward for this accolade, FSU officials granted her automatic admission to the renowned FSU Mock Trial Team if she chooses to attend Florida State University.

Also, for the second consecutive year, Telvia Perez brought home an outstanding witness award.

The team's success was a group effort. Advisor Kim Dividu and lawyer-coach and Bolles dad Jamie Holland prepped the winning squad prior to the competition. Team moms, Kim Anderson and Karen Morris, made sure the team was well fed and supported.

Joining Zeng and Perez on the Bolles Mock Trial Team were: Ashmitha Arun, Catherine Holland, Ryan Anderson, Jena Leighton, Amaya Bunch, Isabelle Gurlter, Lara Morello, Ellie Anderson, Colin Duhnoski, Logan Smith, Jade Hollander, Edward Sun, Sage Kaye, Sophie Rose Shwartzman, Joey Morris, and Jacob Schrieber



Members of Wolfson's Class of 1967 try to find themselves in the freshman class' decorations.



Homecoming was a big deal at Wolfson High School Oct. 26.



Members of the Class of 1999 with their mascot, a wolf.

Victory marks Wolfson's homecoming

Samuel Wolfson School for Advanced Studies celebrate is Homecoming Weekend with a 22-0 victory over Pine Ridge High School.

It is the first winning season for the 7-2 Wolfpack's football team since 2004.

Before the game, the Wolfpack welcomed alumni with campus tours. At halftime, Dimas Bustamante and Aniyah Telfair were crowned Homecoming King and Queen.

San Marco chessmen finish strong in MOSH tourney

The chess squads from Hendricks Avenue Elementary and Julia Landon College Preparatory School both had strong showings in the Annual National Chess Day Tournament, which was held at the Museum of Science and History Oct. 12.

Seventy-five students in grades Kindergarten to 12 participated in the event, which was sponsored by the Jimenez Law Firm of San Marco.

The chessmen from Landon placed second in the middle school division, while the student from Hendricks Avenue Elementary took third place in the K-5 division.

Special activities included at the tournament were playing on a giant chess set, displays of collectible chess sets, building your own chess set, a coloring contest, game analysis by Professor Chess.



Lux Wichterman, Liam Drake, Hannah Oberdorfer and Griffin Mickey, who placed third.



Elijah Noel (orange) and Bobby Robar (blue). The Hendricks K-2 team placed fourth.

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San Jose Catholic Head Coach Rashard Rock inspires his team after a four-month deployment in the Middle East.

San Jose Catholic Coach's return sparks win

Although the San Jose Catholic boys' JV basketball team was in the midst of a winning season as it headed into its match Oct. 12 against Christ the King, something was missing. It was Head Coach Rashard Rock. Rock, a staff sergeant in the Air Force National Guard recently returned to Jacksonville after a four-month deployment to the United Arab Emirates, surprising his basketball team.

"I am blessed to be part of a great community here at San Jose," said Rock, a 2009 graduate of Mandarin High School. "It is great to be a part of something that is bigger than me."

With Rock to guide them, the Trojans went on to defeat Christ the King, 37-11, and improve their season to 7-2.

During Rock's deployment, the JV squad was coached by his father, Alphonso Rock. The older Rock has coached the varsity girls' program at San Jose Catholic for the past six seasons. Rashard has been the JV coach for the past three seasons.

"We are blessed to have Rashard and Alphonso in our basketball program," said San Jose Catholic Athletic Director Dennis Bergin. "They give of their time to help make our players better at basketball, but more importantly they give our student athletes life skills."

Wolfson students serve as ambassadors on Capital Hill

Young men from Samuel Wolfson School for Advanced Studies traveled to Washington D.C. in September to serve as official ambassadors for the 2019 Congressional Black Caucus Legislative Conference. The students were part of the 5,000 Role Models of Excellence, a leadership and mentoring group founded in 1993 by Congresswoman Frederica Wilson.



A band of Wolfson students are part of the school's 5,000 Role Models of Excellence program where they toured Washington D.C. this September.

In addition to meeting with CBC members, the students toured Washington D.C. landmarks, where they discussed the contributions and perspectives of African Americans. Some of the highlights included the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial and the National Museum of African American History and Culture.

Locally, 5,000 Role Models for Excellence students participate in various cultural and educational experiences such as visits to college campuses, etiquette workshops, and job and career building trainings.

The 5,000 Role Models of Excellence Project aims to intervene in the lives of minority male youth to provide them with positive role models and experiences that will empower them to make good choices and encourage healthy living, responsibility, respect, and achievement. Currently, Duval County has 16 sites hosting 5,000 Role Model for Excellence programs in its elementary schools, middle schools and high schools.



Wolfson High School students traveled to Washington D.C. to serve as ambassadors for the 2019 Congressional Black Caucus Legislative Conference in September.

San Jose residents named Bolles Homecoming King and Queen

Seniors, Bianti Danaj and Carly Schwab of San Jose were named 2019 Bolles Homecoming King and Queen during halftime of the Bolles vs. Clay High School Homecoming football game Oct. 18.

Several weeks prior to the homecoming festivities, students nominated 10 girls and 10 boys as "Homecoming Sweethearts" based on their leadership and service to the Bolles community. Danaj and Schwab were selected from that group which included: Brielle Bouchard, Jack Clark, Olivia Candelino, Amelia Emas, Conor Fites, Sam Josephson, Yash Gulani, Christina Klassen, Mitchell Henshaw, Julie Mas, Rishi Misra, Avery

Patterson, Justin O'Leary, Aubrey Ramey, JP Schellenberg, Fatima Samb, Kenny Sogbesan and Taiwo Sogbesan. Candelino and Emas hail from San Jose. Mas, O'Leary and Ramey are San Marco residents.

This is the first time in recent Bolles history an international boarding student has won the title. Danaj, who is from Albania and lives in the Bolles Hall dorm in San Jose, is a Bolles swimmer who also has been active in Bolles dance. Schwab is on the Bolles swim team as well and was one of five Bolles students to have recently been named to the USA Swimming's Scholastic All American Team.

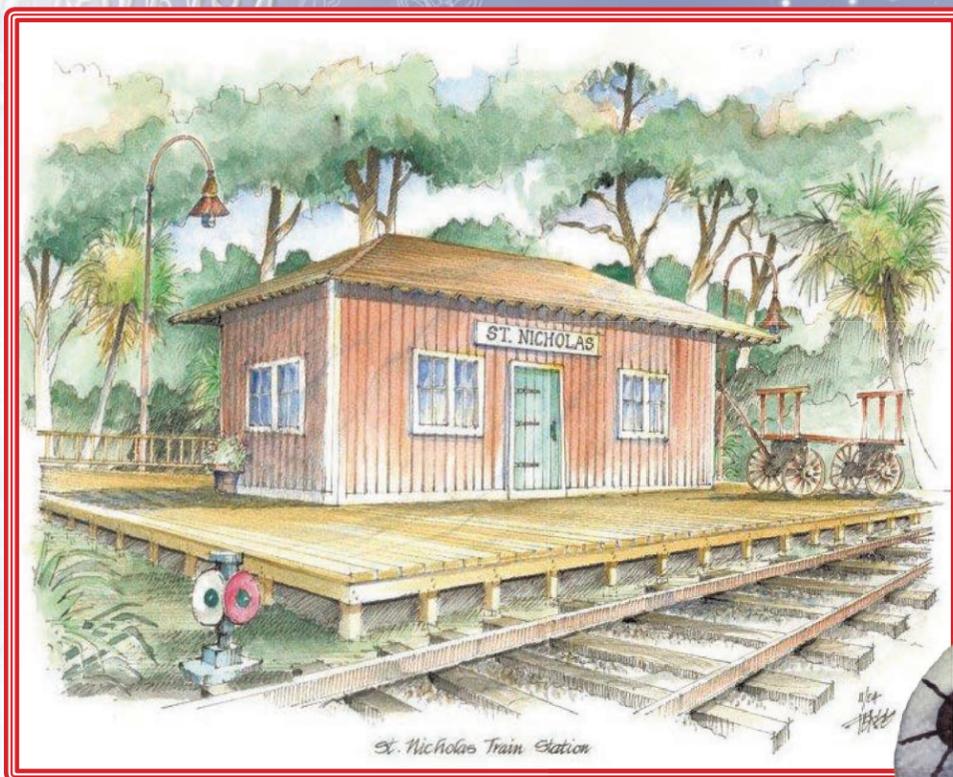


Bolles Homecoming Sweethearts, Carly Schwab and Bianti Danaj

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St. Nicholas resident views life from different perspective

Blindness no obstacle for local university professor

By Karen Rieley
Resident Community News

Because she can't see, Emily Michael has a different view of life growing up in St. Nicholas, where she lives and went to high school. She views the world from the perspective of someone who is considered "different," a label that she said doesn't define her, but instead, allows her to embrace opportunities as a way to broaden others' perspectives.

Born legally blind as the result of leber congenital amaurosis, a condition similar to RP. She currently lives with her parents in their "starter home," which is how her mother describes the 1940s house in St. Nicholas she and her husband bought with the help of their parents when they married.

Michael has good memories about growing up in St. Nicholas with her three siblings, Marie, the oldest, a pharmacist at Wolfson Children's Hospital, Angela a nurse, also at Wolfson, and Simon a teacher.

Although six years separate Michael from her sister, Marie, Michael said she has the most in common with her. "We both love learning and reading," she said, adding that she can read large print or braille and often listens to audio versions of books. While her other siblings were busy playing, Emily and Marie often had to be ordered to stop studying by their mother.

Being blind didn't grant Michael any special privileges with her siblings, or her mother for that matter, Emily recalled. "When we were little, my brother and sisters told me that Emily was spelled P-E-S-T," she laughed.

"Often people with normal vision can't imagine a world where a blind person isn't constantly obsessed with her own blindness. We live in a world where 'sighted' is the standard, the norm, and it's implied that blind people have a lot of compensating to do so that we can get as close to that norm as possible. But you can't overcome blindness. It's part of who you are, just like being a woman. I had to learn to manage within a primarily visual system but living with a disability is not extraordinary or exceptional. It doesn't make me an inspiration or a superhero. My family and friends were even less obsessed with my blindness than I was," she explained.

"Life was simple then. We had lots of good times playing in our postage stamp-sized backyard on the swings, in the kiddie pool and in the playhouse with 3-D flowers that my dad built, while my mom hung clothes on the line. We had picnics in the yard, and we always had friends over to play with us," Michael said.

"My mom liked to have us in the kitchen. You could graduate from grating cheese to peeling carrots," she said. "My dad liked to cook, too, and would ask me to help him season things. 'What does it need?' he'd ask me. Everyone assumed I had a heightened sense of smell because I couldn't see, not necessarily a good thing when they wanted me to tell them if food had spoiled."

Michael's mom encouraged her to figure things out for herself and not allow her blindness to be a handicap. "I remember her teaching me how to vacuum and scrub the toilet. I told her that I hated vacuuming because I couldn't see the floor. She said she'd put baby powder all over the floor, and then I could see it. My sarcastic reply was, 'Thanks, Mom!' she laughed.

Elementary school presented few problems for Michael. She attended San Jose Catholic School through middle school, where her siblings and neighborhood friends also went. "I grew up with those kids," she said. "They were used to me, plus, I didn't use a cane then. I was a little nerd who loved reading," she said.

Michael sang in the chorus, was in the school plays and took music lessons starting at 3 years old. By fourth grade she knew she wanted to be a writer. "I was always writing stories, even when I was supposed to be listening to my teacher in class."

In middle school, she watched her teachers teach and critiqued them. "The teacher in me was brewing even then," she said.

When she moved on to Bishop Kenny High School, she was the only kid with a white cane. "Kids would say that I didn't look blind and didn't really need the cane, so I must have it so that I could trip people," she said.

Her therapist had recommended that Emily use a cane to help her safely navigate a bigger, unfamiliar environment. "My mom told me later that it was hard for her to see me having to use a cane because suddenly it made me more public as a blind person," she said. "She had her cry in private because she realized that was her problem, not my problem."

Michael remembered hearing a lot of whispering and giggling when she went by students. "But I had a tight group of friends, all of us nerds and 'misfits,' who stuck by me. My chorus teacher was tiny and could be tough, but one day when I came to chorus upset because of what some student had said to me, she told me that people like that don't define who I am; I define who I am. That made a big impression on me."

Following in her siblings' footsteps, Emily attended the University of North Florida. She earned an English degree and was so happy with the experience, especially the English Department faculty, that she stayed to get her master's in English.



Emily Michael and her guide dog, York

College was not without its challenges, however. "Accommodations at UNF were some-times difficult," she said. "I would often show up to take an exam and find that the professor didn't have an enlarged version of the text that I had requested ahead of time."

As she became more comfortable advocating for herself, things improved. In graduate school, many of the professors had taught her in undergraduate classes and knew what accommodations she needed.

"I understand that for most people a disability is not the norm and that it will take them awhile to adjust," Michael said.

Michael has been teaching since the fall of 2012. She has talked with students and other professors about how to teach students who do not naturally excel in writing and reading classes. "When I first started teaching, I couldn't imagine why every student didn't just love being in class, because I always did. One of my students told me that when you're a C student you're nervous to come to class because you are anxious that you're not good enough or that you might fail," she said. "I learned it is my job to make everyone feel confident, to help them feel it is not scary to approach subjects they don't feel competent about handling."

Michael has developed a good system in terms of reading. "I listen to an audio version and annotate on paper at the same time." Her students print their work in 18-point type. Bright light is a problem for her, so she needs classrooms with variable lighting and wears dark glasses when she is outside.

UNF's THRIVE staff often place students in her class because they know she is comfortable working with them. THRIVE provides supplemental resources for degree-seeking students with autism spectrum disorders. She has also had a couple of blind students, too. "That was cool because they had never seen a blind professor, and I hadn't either," she said.

"I want to publish a full-length collection of essays and one of poetry," she said. "I'd

eventually like to deliver community workshops in which people could get help with their writing and work on their projects with others. I love teaching beginning, reluctant writers, but I think there is a real need for people in the community, who are not in college, to engage in writing classes, like older people or people who work full-time."



Emily Michael and her fiancé Joel Williams

Michael is a published author. Her book, *Neoteny: Poems*, is available from Finishing Line Press, finishinglinepress.com.

Michael said she is looking forward to the next stage in her life. When she was in graduate school in 2010, she emailed her classmates asking if anyone would like to walk with her to class, because the UNF campus had many unpredictable obstacles - geese, golf carts, etc. Joel Williams, a Jacksonville native, answered her email, and they became good friends. They began dating in 2016 and are now engaged. "We love cooking together, going to the symphony and the Cummer museum, and sharing educational research," she said, adding that Williams is a high school English teacher.

In the end, Michael's real difference may be her ability to view life from many perspectives, thanks to parents, teachers and friends who encouraged and supported her efforts. She, in turn, works to do the same for students today.

To read more about Michael and her writing go on the web to emilykmichael.com.

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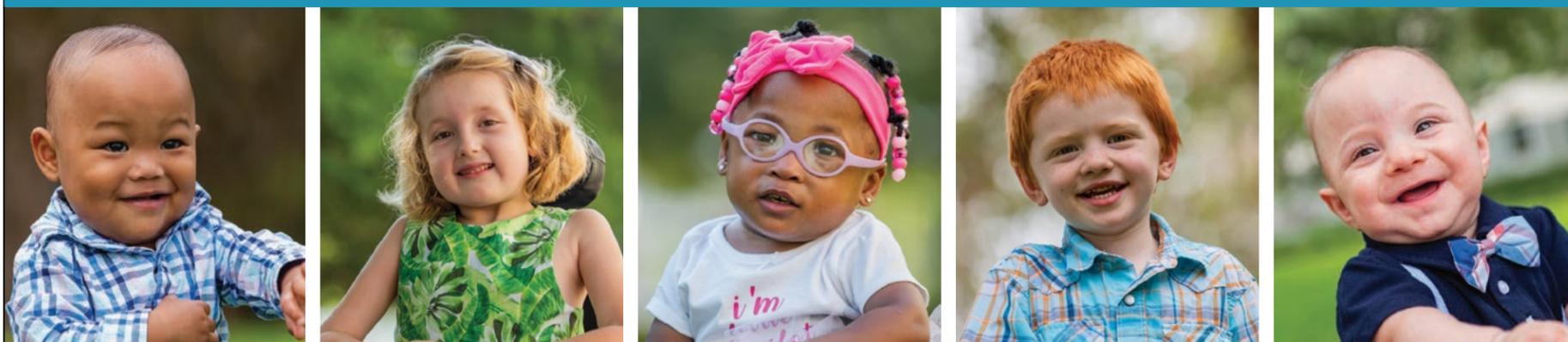


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Junior Achievement of North Florida climbed in national ranks

Recently released national statistics from Junior Achievement USA show that Junior Achievement (JA) of North Florida is excelling at its goals. The nonprofit organization was ranked 21st out of 108 organizations in student reach for the 2018-2019 school year – up two spaces from the previous year – and 16th for market share nationally – up three spaces from the last school year.

“We hit many milestones this past school year, which was the most productive in our 57-year history,” said Steve St. Amand, president of JA of North Florida. “We reached 62,355 students last school year, up 2,916 from the previous year, and the most we have ever reached in a single year. Also, up from previous years was the number of New Town Financial Literacy Center students

reached, the number of classes taught, the number of volunteers who helped us achieve this goal and the donors who helped make it possible. We appreciate all who helped and hope to reach more milestones this school year.”

JA of North Florida ranks 16th nationally in market share and first for all of Florida, with 17.2 percent of the local market, meaning the organization successfully reached the largest number of students among all potential students. Additionally, the JA Financial Literacy Center in New Town also achieved record highs with 6,125 students reached in a single year. The JA Financial Literacy Center is where third-grade students from throughout Duval county participate in the JA's Our Community

program and the JA Eating Healthy on a Budget program, which includes a shopping trip to the Jacksonville Farmer's Market.

“This was the first year our staff was responsible for all of the logistical aspects of the programs at the Financial Literacy Center including the scheduling of teachers, students and buses,” said Teresa Smith, vice president of programs for JA of North Florida. “We previously had an arrangement with Duval County Public Schools to help schedule the programs for students. I am proud of the hard work of our staff who are directly responsible for this milestone.”

JA is the world's largest organization dedicated to educating students about workforce readiness, entrepreneurship and financial literacy through experiential,

hands-on programs. JA of North Florida has been operating in Jacksonville since 1963 and includes a satellite office in Tallahassee. In partnership with the business community, educators and volunteers, JA of North Florida helps young people connect with relevant learning and the importance of staying in school.

JA of North Florida needs volunteers to help achieve its goals for the 2019-2020 school year. Opportunities include assisting in teaching financial literacy, entrepreneurship and workplace readiness to students, grades K through 12. Those interested in volunteering can sign up at janfl.org or call (904) 398-9944. To learn more about Junior Achievement of North Florida, visit www.janfl.org.

More than artistic expression, ballet also offers gentler workouts

Avondale resident Richard Shieldhouse, 66, is a former swimmer and runner who had to forego those strenuous activities due to damage to his feet and rotator cuffs. Seeking an activity that would be kinder and gentler on his body, he decided to check out ballet.

“Numerous academic studies reveal dancing to have superior cognitive, cardiovascular and psychological benefits to other forms of cardiovascular activity – particularly for older people,” he said, citing a 2018 study by six German researchers who found significant improvement in brain function for elderly dancers versus a control group performing “conventional” fitness activities.

Other academic studies have identified improved cognitive function and reduced depression for Alzheimer's and Parkinson's patients. Such benefits supplement other, more obvious, benefits of dance, such as improved flexibility, weight loss, coordination, balance, muscle tone and posture.

Shieldhouse began taking ballet at Saltmarsh Dance of Jacksonville and said he likes the effect dance has had on his life. “I'm in better shape than I've been in decades. Plus, ballet is altogether more fun and mentally more challenging than endlessly swimming or running in a straight line,” he said.

Stephanie Motley, 37, is a former dancer, nurse and mother of three. She has worked as a registered nurse in critical care, caring for patients and their families with major organ failure.

Motley, another Saltmarsh student, also attests to mental as well as physical benefits of dance. “Ballet brings so much peace to a hectic week. When I'm at the barre, I forget about deadlines and chores,” said Motley, a Southbank resident. “Dancing is unique in that you have to use both sides of the brain. Ballet keeps my mind sharp,



Ballet instructor Suzanne Saltmarsh helps Stephanie Motley with her form in a pose as Richard Shieldhouse waits his turn. (Photo by Natassja Ebert)

body flexible and most importantly my heart healthy and happy.”

Recognizing such benefits, choreographer, teacher and dancer Suzanne Saltmarsh is introducing a new program of adult ballet classes at her San Marco studio.

While any adult is welcome to attend the classes, Saltmarsh is especially interested in exposing older people to dance, which fortifies all parts of the body and, as studies demonstrate, provides numerous health benefits that are unavailable with other forms of exercise.

“The well-known benefits of dance from opening up the mind, body and spirit are tremendous, but now there is substantial documented evidence of its medical benefits,” said Saltmarsh.

During her three decades of teaching, Saltmarsh has worked extensively with

students of all ages and abilities. She is as proud of her work with Alzheimer's patients as she is of her work developing more than 100 young students who went on to perform at leading dance companies in North America and around the world.

“I've been privileged to work with elderly people who have clearly demonstrated the benefits of dance in all kinds of ways. It's a beautiful thing to witness how dance transforms the body.”

Adult ballet sessions begin Tuesday, Sept. 10, meeting every Tuesday and Friday morning as well as Wednesday evening through early December. Students have the option of attending one or both classes each week. Classes are open to all levels of ability and experience. More information on the program is available saltmarshdanceofjacksonville.com.

Jacksonville Aviation Authority board members announced

Gov. Ron DeSantis has appointed Michelle Bedoya Barnett to a vacancy on the Jacksonville Aviation Authority (JAA) board of directors, and Mayor Lenny Curry also reappointed Jay Demetree, who most recently served as board chairman, for a second four-year term on the JAA board.

Barnett is replacing Teresa Davlantes, whose second term on the board expired last month. Barnett is an attorney and a founding shareholder with Alexander, DeGance, Barnett, P.A. and was previously with the law firm of Holland & Knight. Since 2014 she has served on the Jacksonville Bar Association's Board of Governors, and she is currently serving as president-elect of the Jacksonville Bar Association.

She graduated from University of Florida with a bachelor's degree in finance and earned her juris doctorate from Vanderbilt Law School. Barnett is appointed to a four-year term. Her appointment is subject to confirmation by the Florida Senate.

Demetree is president and CEO of Demetree Brothers, Inc., a leading full-service real estate developer and property manager based in Jacksonville. He is a graduate of Georgia Tech with a bachelor's degree in industrial management. His appointment is subject to confirmation by City Council.

JAA's Board of Directors is comprised of seven members. Three members are appointed by Jacksonville's mayor; the other four are appointed by the governor. Board members may serve a maximum of two consecutive four-year terms. Along with Teresa Davlantes, another member, Frank Mackesy, has concluded his second full term on the board and will continue to serve until Gov. DeSantis appoints his replacement.

NOF founder named to Most Influential Filipina Women list

Carmina Aldana, founder and vice-president, the Neurosurgery Outreach Foundation (NOF), a Jacksonville-based non-profit, received the prestigious 100 Most Influential Filipina Woman in the World Award from the Filipina Women's Network.



Carmina Aldana

The Global FWN100™ Award™ is a working recognition award with a meaningful purpose: *A Filipina woman leader in every sector of the global economy.* The Filipina Women's Network recognizes women of Philippine ancestry who are changing the face of leadership in the global workplace, having reached status for outstanding work in their respective fields and are recognized for their contributions to society, female mentorship and legacy.

“This award is a validation of my body of work with NOF. I'm humbled and honored to be recognized among a group of high-caliber women from around the globe. I'm excited

about what the future holds, and about the partnerships and collaborations we can create for the betterment of our communities, for the advocacy of our causes, and for the advancement of women,” said Aldana.

She was honored with the Founder & Pioneer award, which honors Filipina women in their capacities as the chief executive, president, executive director or founder of a company, community organization, non-profit, or business venture that they helped start, build or significantly grow.

NOF has several programs that advance neurosurgical care in underserved communities through service, education, and support. With Jacksonville's support and Aldana's hard work, NOF has given monetary and in-kind surgical gifts valued at over \$460,000 which includes \$31,000 of educational awards to 44 neurosurgical residents in eight countries.