

Resident

COMMUNITY NEWS

Stimulus bills offer monetary relief to struggling businesses, nonprofits

By Jennifer Edwards
Resident Community News

Sensitive to the plight of small businesses, many of which have struggled to survive since the Coronavirus pandemic descended in March, Jacksonville City Council members voted unanimously May 26 to offer a financial lifeline to help kickstart their endeavors to reopen.

The bill, which was introduced by District 5 Councilwoman LeAnna Cumber of San Marco and co-sponsored by 10 council members, sets aside \$9 million to create the city's Small Business Relief Grant Program, a plan that will distribute payments of up to \$2,000 to Duval County businesses that can show they have lost at least 25% of their revenue due to COVID-19. The intent of the bill is to assist qualifying businesses in paying rent, mortgages, or other fixed expenses.

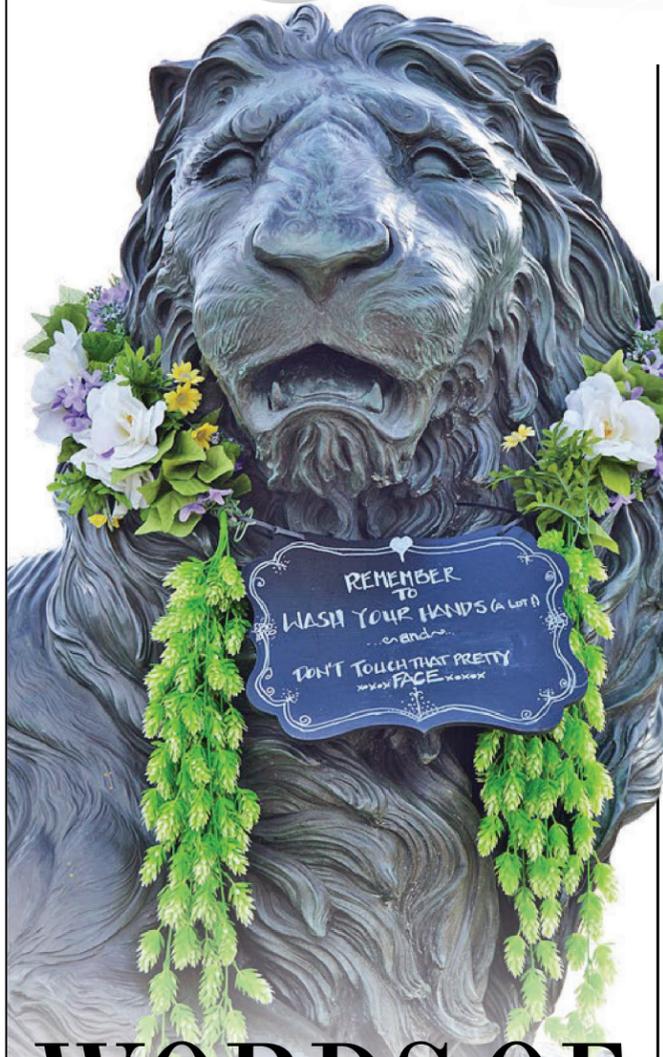
The grant program mirrors another city stimulus program that has so far provided \$1,000 in assistance directly to 40,000 Jacksonville residents who most need it. The plan has been so successful, Council members also voted May 26 to add \$5 million to expand it. That plan granted debit cards to Duval County residents who earn less than \$75,000 a year, have lost at least 25% of their income due to the pandemic, and need help with mortgage, rent and utility payments.

The city's nonprofit community was also not left out of the Council's largesse May 26. The Council appropriated \$1 million toward the First Coast Relief Fund, which is administered by the United Way of Northeast Florida, to help nonprofit organizations serve individuals and families in need during a community crisis.

"We now have a safety net under almost every segment of our population," said Group 4 At Large City Council Member Matt Carlucci after the meeting.

The Small Business Relief Grant program is not to be confused with the loan program offered by VyStar in partnership with the City of

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WORDS OF WISDOM

Depending on the time of year, the San Marco Lions in Balis Park are always in a festive mood, but during the Coronavirus pandemic, they each had some words of wisdom to share with the community. A sign under one gave residents the reminder "Show your love by social distancing," while the second expressed the importance of having a grateful heart: "Be grateful to all the people who are keeping us going. Thank you!" But was the third lion who showed its love for the neighborhood by sharing practical advice to keep everyone safe: "Remember to wash your hands (a lot!) and Don't touch that pretty face."



SHOWING THE LOVE

Dearing Setzer and Joe Kemper joined other faculty members in cheering on graduates from Douglas Anderson School of the Arts during a car parade on the school campus May 20. **READ MORE PAGE 38**



AL FRESCO DINING IN THE SQUARE

San Marco Square came to life during the weekend of May 15-16 when the San Marco Merchants Association (SMMA) partnered with the San Marco Preservation Society and Southside Baptist Church in hosting its inaugural Open Air in the Square, the first event to be held in Balis Park since the advent of COVID-19. The Wohler's family - Kyleigh, Katherine, Scott and Charlie - joined SMMA President Joe Carlucci and his wife, Victoria, and sons, Jackson and Joe III for an impromptu take-out dinner May 16, in what is sure to become a regular weekend occurrence until the pandemic is over.

READ MORE PAGE 23

Nonprofits face uncertain future due to COVID-19

By Marcia Hodgson
Resident Community News

A "Wild West" kind of climate has affected many businesses since the Coronavirus descended in March, but perhaps no other group has been as heavily impacted as Jacksonville's nonprofit sector.

Many of Jacksonville's charitable organizations were holding their own until COVID-19 hit, leaving the Nonprofit Center of Northeast Florida, Jacksonville's vital support system for the region's not-for-profit entities, scrambling to figure out what is needed to assist its clientele as it works to safely re-open and re-enter the economy.

In a State of the Sector talk given on the Zoom video conference platform May 14, Rena Coughlin, CEO of the Nonprofit Center, discussed the state of the nonprofit sector

pre- and post-virus with members of the Planned Giving Council of Northeast Florida.

"We need to understand what indicators we should be measuring to determine how well a nonprofit will emerge from this recessionary economy," said Coughlin, noting the Nonprofit Center has been hosting weekly COVID-19 resource calls, flash polls, and has set up four subcommittees to create and collect resources for the sector. It also has been asking nonprofits to fill out a "changes in the sector" survey so it can "better get a handle on everything as we move into a summer with lots of unknowns."

"It's important to take the survey because it's important that we benchmark what the sector is doing. I've been approached by funders and by those in local government who have been basically accusing the sector of not taking advantage of the relief that has been offered," she said.

Pre-COVID State of the Sector

Coughlin began her talk by giving analysis and an overview of the nonprofit sector in Northeast Florida, which has been done in partnership with research funding from the Jessie Ball duPont Fund. Using information gathered from 990 and 990EZ forms from the Internal Revenue Service, Coughlin said there are 8,027 nonprofit organizations on the First Coast, but that 6,336 do not file a 990 form, so their data has not been used in the analysis. Instead data is derived from the 1,320 organizations that filed in 2016.

There has been substantial growth in the 18-year span from 1998 until 2016, when the sector grew from 427 organizations to 1,320. She attributed the growth to better IRS enforcement,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 30

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IN HOMES BY JUNE 7TH, 2020

Letter TO THE Editor

Dear Sir or Madame:

Your wonderful newspaper is the best thing to happen to Southsiders in many moons! We can count on up-to-date, accurate news about our area, about what's a'building and where, our neighbors' accomplishments, who's graduating, who's moved in (and sometimes who's moved out), and great historical coverage stories about the folks who've been around for a long time. You have lots of wonderful pictures, and a great balance of informational material. In short, you give us a good picture of ourselves as we go about our daily lives.

In particular, I want to add that I, as chairperson of the Little Friends Preschool at HAB on Hendricks Avenue, have chosen to advertise in the San Marco edition of *The Resident* because your readers are the very people who need the services provided by Little Friends – assorted daycare hours AND one of the finest VPK programs to be found in the city, with a 94% readiness-for-kindergarten score at last testing. Interested folks may look at our website, littlefriendsathab.com, for tuition rates and hours of operation.

Keep up the great work, Marcia, Seth, Debra, Pamela, and all the people who make this newspaper so excellent.

Allons, enfants!

Appreciatively,
Juliette Mason
San Marco Resident

Publishers' Note

A different kind of Memorial Day is behind us – one filled with the need to wear masks, have stay-at-home barbeques, and the need to socially distance from neighbors. The one thing that never changed was the recognition of our fallen. We are thankful for the sacrifice they have made while serving our great nation, may those that paid the ultimate price rest in peace.

And as we head into Summer, we want to illustrate our immense gratitude to all the people that make publishing a newspaper in Jacksonville's historic neighborhoods so enjoyable and remarkable, from advertisers to readers alike.

In this edition of *The Resident Community News* we celebrate the graduates from the class of 2020 on pages 33-38, the furry creatures that keep us company as we work and play at home on page 23, and, just in time for Father's Day, a story on page 18 by Jennifer Edwards that celebrates the countless deserving dads that live in our historic neighborhoods.

We have also included Nonprofit Center CEO Rena Coughlin's assessment of the State of the Nonprofit Sector, a talk given to the Planned Giving Council of Northeast Florida that our Managing Editor, Marcia Hodgson, was fortunate enough to hear. Please read her story that starts on the cover of this edition.

In being mindful of the uncertain future faced by many not-for-profit institutions in Northeast Florida, we want to remind you that tangible support for those organizations can be given through *The Resident's Connecting-by-Caring Campaign*.

The campaign, which is a new take on the pay-it-forward principle, allows you to provide a win-win opportunity by both assisting your favorite charity or small business while also supporting *The Resident Community News*, a fiercely local news source that covers the nonprofit sector better than any other media outlet in Jacksonville. With a direct-mailed circulation of 30,000 households on both sides of the St. Johns River, advertising in *The Resident* allows you to apply the "multiplier" effect to your gift to the organization.

For more information on how you can make a difference, please call Debra McGregor at 904-885-6031 or Seth Williams at 904-885-6849.

Pamela and Seth Williams



Photo courtesy of Headshots Studio

We dedicate this issue of *The Resident* to a wonderful family man, pharmacist, entrepreneur, small business owner and friend to so many. Gary Roberts will be missed by everyone he came in contact with, may God rest his soul.



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Business Grants FROM PAGE 1

Jacksonville to assist in keeping businesses afloat. There the city's contribution to the Small Business Lending Program was between \$20 and \$30 million, and was to be used to provide a combination of grants, interest payments, and potential aid toward the principal of loans to small business owners, with some elements tied to employee retention, according to VyStar's website.

In contrast, Cumber's small business bill, officially called Ordinance 2020-0247, provides grants to business owners and is meant to assist Duval County companies that have been operating at least a year and employed less than 100 employees as of Feb. 29, 2020. District 14 City Councilwoman Randy DeFoor also filed an amendment, which passed, allowing self-employed, sole proprietors, and those working from home, to also qualify.

"I'm very excited that we could get together as a council and help," Cumber said. "I think this is a boost for those small businesses who need it. I'm happy I could sponsor some legislation and happy that my colleagues are all supportive, and we came out with a great bill."

Carlucci said that an application portal could be online as soon as Wednesday, June 3.

Before the vote, Cumber said City administrators were prepared to get the program online quickly.

"I think addressing fixed costs like rent and mortgage is one way the City can help," Cumber said. "They are hard to negotiate, you have to pay them in the end, everything else can pretty much fluctuate. I thought it would be a good idea to help them with their rent and mortgage. Council has done the same thing for individuals. We want to keep people in their homes, we want to keep people in their businesses."

Cumber said the money funding the program would come from \$9 million already appropriated by the city for Coronavirus relief. Originally, that city funding was going towards the VyStar loan program and would pay the interest on emergency small business loans. It was part of a \$26 million City package that over six years would pay for 10% of the principal on the loans if businesses retained their employees. However, when the City was able to get \$159 million in federal relief, it was able to use federal funds instead of City funds, she said.

"I wanted to take that \$9 million and put it back into small business relief," Cumber explained. "I really hope that it can give folks a shot in the arm and a little relief as they are really starting and trying to come back. We can't solve all of the issues, nor is that the role of government in my mind. But I think we are in extraordinary times. I think helping with those hard, fixed costs to get people over the hump is really important and a really good use of taxpayer funds."

Cumber also said residents could do their part by patronizing local businesses to "get those businesses back up and running."

DeFoor said her amendment to the bill was to address business owners who have fallen through the cracks for all other types of aid, both federal and city.

"What I've heard loud and clear from constituents is that 1099s have been left out, not just of the previous VyStar relief act but also the CARES act. Both required brick and mortar as well as employees," she explained. "For VyStar, you had to have two or more employees. I wanted to make sure that those (self-employed) individuals and sole proprietors who did not have employees and/or work at home can also get relief. I think it obviously will provide relief to small businesses such as restaurants and service industries. It's going to be very helpful, and

we want that, we want to help as many people as possible."

Carlucci also supported the bill.

"Even though it's coming out of our operating reserves, I think we can afford that to happen during this emergency, and I think Councilwoman Cumber is putting a safety net underneath some people who for some reason or other didn't qualify for some of the other relief bills," he said. "I think she is capturing a lot of people who fell through the hole and is providing safety nets (through the bill)."

The other relief bill that passed unanimously was Ordinance 2020-243, sponsored by District 9 City Councilman Garrett Dennis, that added \$5 million to a City program that gave \$1,000 to individuals through pre-paid debit cards that the City was still distributing in May. Carlucci said the money would come from an "overaccumulation" of money for permits and fees. "We might be charging too much for those," he said, noting the fees were for different aspects of the building process and are in excess of what the City Building Department needs to support itself.

Meanwhile, Ordinance 2020-0248, which will assist nonprofits, was sponsored by District 6 City Councilman Michael Boylan. It will help nonprofits that directly serve clients in need of such things as food, housing, medical care, and other necessities.

"It helps the programs of the nonprofits, not the nonprofits themselves. You can make an application directly to the nonprofit," he said.

"I'm very supportive and pleased with the support my colleagues have given me and given this bill," Boylan said. "And I certainly support Councilwoman Cumber's bill. The small businesses have fallen through the cracks in this process. They can't get unemployment money from the state, and although they get individual relief, that's not helping their business any."

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Brooklyn area booms with residential, retail growth

By Jennifer Edwards
Resident Community News

Scott Riley fondly remembers his time living in the Brooklyn area, located between Five Points to its south and LaVilla and Downtown to the neighborhood's northeast. About four years ago, he lived in a tiny 600-foot studio apartment in the multi-family complex called 200 Riverside, next to Unity Plaza. It was a place with amazing fourth-story views of Downtown. He could walk down from his apartment to restaurants in the complex and take daily strolls over the Main Street and Fuller Warren bridges safely.

Riley, now a San Marco resident, recently reopened his longtime business, Stellers Gallery, in its former home: San Marco Square. But he said he loved living in Brooklyn and would still be if he was single – even though he hardly recognizes the area.

"It's exploded since I left," he said. "I don't get over there much anymore, but when I do go over there it's amazing, the restaurants and the shops. And, I loved walking Downtown. I walked every day from my apartment, every day straight to town. Those were some fun times for me."

If Riley and other visitors think Brooklyn is packed now, they should wait another year and gauge again.

While the area already has a retail center, Brooklyn Station, with a Fresh Market grocery store and various other services, retailers and places to eat, it's poised for tremendous growth in the retail, employment and residential sectors in the next year or two. This year alone, there are at least half

a dozen major projects either starting, in the process of completion, or nearly complete. They are all acting synergistically to accomplish some major City goals: a diverse residential population; more jobs; more employers; more retailers; and more parking.

Each goal builds on the others, said the City's Downtown Investment Authority (DIA) CEO Lori Boyer, who is helping shepherd and, with DIA, to incentivize projects for the area.

"To me, Brooklyn is a great success story, and it's what we want to see in the other districts downtown," Boyer said. "Brooklyn has really taken off, and I have to give kudos to W. Alex Coley with Hallmark and 220 Riverside, and the initial shopping center (Brooklyn Station) because both those were the pioneer projects and a lot of everything else came behind it. You always have to have those pioneer projects first. Obviously, the commercial office growth was strong before that and has been forever. But those were the first that took us in the neighborhood and the community, residential and community."

Here's a look at what's coming to the area, including expanded parking, a hotel, several new employers and two new multi-family residential complexes that will target different demographics.

Multifamily residential

Boyer said the City's goal for Brooklyn is to offer a mix of housing that will serve multiple types of workers and residents.



Vista Brooklyn, 200 Riverside Avenue, is shown in mid-May.

"What you're seeing here are everything from luxury apartments to workforce housing to lower income housing," Boyer said. "The idea with all of those is that you can support the entire demographic span of the community. You might have individuals who are working in some of those office buildings at an executive level who are looking to downsize and who want to live close to work and a walkable community. You might have young millennials who want to live close to work, or you may have service staff that support all these areas, whether they work in restaurants or service. Our goal downtown is to make sure we serve all those demographics in proximity to where they work and shop."

Vista Brooklyn

Bristol Hallmark Holdings LLC is developing a 10-story, 308-residential unit at 200 Riverside Avenue, according to City documents. When it's complete, the building will

include a rooftop pool and deck, a fitness center and 14,000 square feet of retail space that could attract retail tenants who could then potentially employ Brooklyn residents. The project likely won't be complete this year; the website says spring 2021, although Vista Brooklyn is currently pre-leasing. Boyer says developers are branding the units as luxury and marketing to higher-end occupants. They will command rent of \$2.15 to \$2.20 a square foot, in excess of some other area residential projects.

The Lofts at Brooklyn

Vestcor's Lofts at Brooklyn Ltd. is developing a 136-unit, five-story structure at the corner of Chelsea and Jackson streets. While Vestcor has not returned requests for comment about the project, its website states that the building should be complete and open in early 2021 and will offer studio, one-, two- and three-bedroom apartments. It is also slated to have a fitness center, lounge, and picturesque views. Boyer said that the slab was poured in mid-May and workers were proceeding on the framing at that time. She also said that the units would be workforce housing, and developers would be taking advantage of some credits for low-income renters.



Renderings of the Lofts at Brooklyn, 190 Chelsea St.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 5

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Rendering of a new dialysis center rising at Roselle and Park streets.

The Dialysis Center

In May, work was nearing completion on The Dialysis Center, a 12,000-square-foot facility situated on .77 acres at Roselle and Park streets, according to City documents. Based in Nashville, Tenn., the developer is Dialysis Clinic Inc. (DCi), a nonprofit that treats people with end-stage renal disease, according to its corporate site. DCi also has a Jacksonville presence, with a center on Union Street.

DCi did not immediately return request for comment at press time, so there was not an indication yet of how many the clinic would employ.

“I think this is an additional piece of the puzzle,” Boyer said. “Ultimately, we would like to see a centralized medical innovation campus somewhere Downtown. If that were to happen, all of these ancillary facilities play a role in that. Those are one of our target industries, the medical technology and medical support.”

FIS New World Headquarters and Florida Blue

Executives had hoped to break ground in May on the new FIS headquarters, which in February was expected to bring up to 1,800 employees to the Brooklyn area by 2029, a little more than 12,000 of whom

were current Jacksonville FIS employees with an average salary of \$85,000. Now, crews building the 12-story, 350,000-square-foot office are more likely to see a groundbreaking in June, Boyer said. When the headquarters is done, it will supply 1,380 additional parking spaces for its employees and allow the use of at least 130 for the public after work hours and on weekends and holidays.

Meanwhile, the nearby Florida Blue parking garage at the corner of Park and Forest streets had a completion date of March 2021 but may be completed sooner, Boyer said. It will supply a minimum of 750 spaces for night and weekend parking. Parking is essential to develop retail and employment in the area, she said.



The Florida Blue parking garage at Park and Forest streets may be done this year.

Brooklyn Place

Southeast Investment Inc. is constructing a retail strip called Brooklyn Place. It will be located next to the retail center Brooklyn station and span 11,708 square feet while accommodating five retail tenants in four retail bays, according to renderings submitted to the City and other City documents. Like the existing retail already there, it will front Riverside Avenue. Construction is fully under way, and Boyer said she expects the strip may be done completely by the end of this year.



Residence Inn by Marriott, 357 Oak St.

Residence Inn by Marriott

The 135-room hotel at 357 Oak Street is also rising quickly. Boyer said it's needed for travelers doing business in Jacksonville's corporate offices and for family members of new residents. Hospitality projects being built now have an advantage, because they were financed before the COVID closures and will likely open after a COVID vaccine is found – and before new hotel projects can get financing, she said.

Overall, Boyer counts all the new projects as a win for the Brooklyn area and a possible model for other areas Downtown. Riley, the former 200 Riverside resident, also thinks it's a positive for his old neighborhood.

“I think the growth is probably very, very fun, and every time I go there it's packed,” he said.



Brooklyn Place, a retail strip, fronts Riverside Avenue.

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Earth begins to move on East San Marco site

By Marcia Hodgson
Resident Community News

With so much at a standstill due to the COVID-19 pandemic, San Marco residents were delighted spot earth-moving equipment and see construction work beginning on Regency Centers East San Marco site.

On May 15, Regency Centers filed civil engineering plans prepared by England, Thims & Miller Inc., for an environmental resource permit with the City and the St. Johns River Water Management District for its 3.25-acre site that will include a 39,200 square-foot Publix, and other retail establishments and restaurants. The project is located at the corner of Atlantic Boulevard and Hendrix Avenue.

One lane of traffic had been blocked as workmen from Miranda Contracting dug up the roadway to install a storm drain. “We’re doing some necessary stormwater work for the site as we make our preparations,” said Regency Center’s Spokesman Eric Davidson, noting the drainage project is all that is happening for the moment.

“We are still at the planning stage,” Davidson said, noting the project has been slightly delayed due to the Coronavirus pandemic. “We are looking to file permits later in the year. There has been a little bit of a slowdown because of the impacts of COVID-19, but we’re still going forward,” he said. “We are still fully committed, and Publix is with us. Everything is still moving forward.”



Stormwater drainage is being installed under Atlantic Boulevard and Thacker Avenue on the East San Marco site.

During a town hall meeting at Southside Baptist Church in October 2019, Patrick McKinley, vice president and market officer for Regency Centers said he expected bulldozers to begin construction in Spring 2020, and work to continue according to a 16-month plan so that the restaurants and retailers would be open in the fourth quarter of 2021.

The plan is to build a full-size Publix supermarket on the second floor of the 62,000 square-foot retail area with parking underneath. The shopping center will include a courtyard design with retail outlets including two restaurants bordering Atlantic Boulevard and Hendricks Avenue, with parking in the center. Meanwhile, plans for Parcel “E”, which is across from Mango Place near Fletcher Park will continue to include 35 residential multi-family townhouses.

Opinions differ on COVID insurance claims for small businesses

By Jennifer Edwards
Resident Community News

Small business owners across the country who have been devastated by loss of revenue and/or employee work productivity due to COVID-19 are now left wondering whether their insurance policy covers their losses. Locally, some in the insurance business say no, while other attorneys say, “definitely maybe.”

At-Large Group 4 City Councilmember Matt Carlucci, a State Farm insurance agent, says it is highly unlikely virus losses would be covered, although it would be nice if they were.

“Loss of income would never apply to a Coronavirus pandemic or anything that has to do with health, not that I’ve experienced in my 42 years in the property and casualty insurance business,” he said. “It would be much more fun to say that it is covered, but it’s not, which is sometimes why people buy disability insurance, Aflac (supplemental insurance), and in the awful event of a life event, they might buy business life insurance. In the event of COVID interrupting a business, and businesses suffering a loss of income because of the Coronavirus, I don’t know of any property and casualty policy covering it.” Carlucci said, adding in his experience, policies pay loss of income for physical loss, such as if the business burned down or was damaged by a tornado or by some other means.

But Bradley Bodiford disagrees. An attorney with the Jacksonville firm Terrell Hogan, Bodiford and other local attorneys dispute Carlucci’s view, and Bodiford said that unless a business policy has a virus

exclusion – which the insurance companies started putting in policies after several pandemics in the last century – there was room to potentially be reimbursed. He said that he and other local attorneys have been reviewing policies and about a third of the policies they reviewed did not have an exclusion. The collective number they reviewed by the last week of May was about 20.

“Even if there isn’t a virus exclusion, it doesn’t mean there’s a slam dunk, but we think potentially there is a path forward for you, and potentially a large amount of money, and the sustainability of your business,” he said. The effect of the virus can be likened to other cases that the courts have ruled on, case law that sets a precedent – and could be designated as a physical loss, depending on how local, appellate, and possibly the Florida Supreme Court see it, he explained. In his view, the virus makes physical businesses uninhabitable, leading to a physical loss, and in Washington State and across the country, several businesses have filed lawsuits on the same premise.

“But it’s up to the judges to make this jump,” Bodiford said. “We will probably start seeing opinions across the country in three to six months. I imagine one judge will see it one way, and one will see it the other way. If all the mid-level appellate (appeals) courts agree, it wouldn’t go up to the State Supreme Court. There are a lot of ifs,” he said.

In the meantime, there is one concrete step business owners can take if they’re seeking reimbursement, he said: Have an attorney review the policy.



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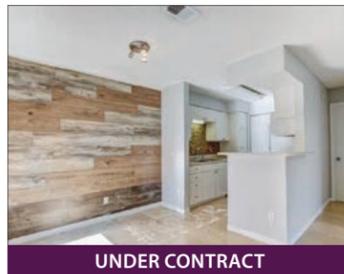


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The Salvation Army forced to close Child Development Center

Effective May 4, The Salvation Army of Northeast Florida has made the difficult decision to cease the operations of its child development center. The child development center had been in operation for 21 years, but in the height of COVID-19, The Army was forced to reassess the viability of the programs and decided to close it down permanently.

It had been The Salvation Army's goal to help children reach their full potential. The nonprofit intends to do whatever it can to assist the employees affected by this decision and will help families, who had children enrolled, to find alternative programs. The Army will continue

to offer scholarships to families of the Towers Center of Hope and other families in need that wish to put their children in accredited learning centers, said Antoinette Vitale, a spokesperson for The Salvation Army.

All other Salvation Army of Northeast Florida programs will operate as usual and continue to meet the daily needs of the most vulnerable populations.

"After much deliberation, thoughts, and prayers, we decided to close the Child Development Center. Since 1891, The Salvation Army has provided numerous services to meet the needs of men, women and children in

Jacksonville and surrounding communities. We will continue providing housing to the homeless, food for the hungry, emergency assistance for those in crisis, character building programs for the youth, and a myriad of other services in our communities. We are only able to do the most good, to the most people, in the most need, because of the generous support and resources from our donors, partners and friends. We are so grateful to all who enable us to serve the 'whosoever daily,'" said Major Keath Biggers, administrator for The Salvation Army serving Northeast Florida.

Lexington Hotel joins Marriott brand

The Lexington Hotel & Conference Center – Jacksonville Riverwalk will join the Marriott brand this month and has a new name: The Southbank Hotel at Jacksonville Riverwalk.

The hotel complex is located near San Marco and Riverside and features a pool, courtyard and 40,000 square feet of event space as well as a 10,000-square-foot ballroom and tiered amphitheater. After the transition, it will be Downtown's only Marriott that's part of its loyalty reward program.

"We're ready to embark on a new journey with Marriott while celebrating an immersive look at Jacksonville's past - all inspired by the shipyards situated on our property decades ago," hotel staff posted on Facebook in May. The hotel is to feature "a modern industrial aesthetic inspired by the ports and shipyards once situated at the property," according to the site. The hotel will continue to take reservations through the change, which includes some updating. The hotel has more than 300 rooms.

116-year-old Doro Building to be demolished

The Jacksonville Historical Society (JHS) in May released its list of the most endangered historical buildings in Jacksonville, and atop it is the George Doro Fixture Co. building at 102 A Phillip Randolph Blvd., currently set for demolition. It's located near TIAA Bank Field.

In March, the Downtown Development Review Board approved Rise Properties LLC's conceptual designs for an eight-story, mixed retail and residential use complex, to be located on the current Doro site. The new project would also be called the Doro but would not incorporate any element of the original structure, which is not protected because it is not part of the Downtown Historic Register District and is not a locally designated landmark, according to JHS. The JHS office is a couple of blocks away from the building.

"Historic sites and properties matter to Jacksonville's people," said JHS CEO Alan Bliss. "When historic buildings – such as Fire Station No. 5 and soon the George Doro Fixture Company building – are demolished, we erase another part of the culture, history, and life stories that form our Jacksonville." For the full list of endangered buildings, which includes the old Ford Motor Company assembly plant on Wambolt Street, Snyder Memorial Methodist Episcopal Church on Laura Street and the Old Eagle Laundry Building (known most recently as Kartouche, a nightclub that has since closed) on West Forsyth Street, among many, go to www.jaxhistory.org.



Photo from the Wayne W. Wood Collection



The 116-year-old George Doro Fixture Co. Building. Courtesy of Mark Krancer, Kram Kran Photo, for the Jacksonville Historical Society

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Jeepers! Jeep parade cheers on front-line medical staff

By Jennifer Edwards
Resident Community News

What started out as a fun idea to get Jeep enthusiasts together and celebrate health care workers turned into a 94-vehicle procession of Jeeps and Harleys May 2, as Jeep groups from all over Jacksonville joined more than a dozen hog riders in a trek to Ascension St. Vincent's Riverside and several other area hospitals.

John Coffey, Ascension safety officer at Ascension St. Vincent's Riverside, loves to ride with his wife in Jeep meetups, and



Amy McCall Switzer and Keoni Switzer, two participants in the parade, have several friends who are nurses or otherwise on the front lines in the fight against Coronavirus

helped create the parade after he saw a video of a similar procession in Orange Park. What began with a few Facebook posts ended up with drivers from multiple groups, including Jacksonville Jeep Meet, North Florida Jeep Meet, No Boundaries Jeep Crew Unleashed and others gathering forces and then driving for six hours along a route that began at St. Vincent's Riverside and wended to Baptist Medical Center Jacksonville before moving on to Ascension St. Vincent's Southside and Baptist Medical Center Beaches before finishing up at Baptist Medical Center South.

The idea was to show appreciation for, and solidarity among, all health care workers on the front lines against COVID-19.

"I had no idea how many were going to show up; it could have been five people," said Coffey, who rode in the front with his wife, Cindy, in their 2007 Jeep Wrangler JKU, followed by 78 other Jeeps and 15 motorcycles. "I said y'all (Harley riders) can bring the noise at the end, and they were very happy about that. It was very emotional. Everyone felt really good about doing it. That was the driving factor behind it."



A procession of Jeeps and motorcyclists made an appearance at Ascension St. Vincent's Riverside to thank medical staff fighting against COVID-19.

Amy McCall Switzer, another participant with Jeep club No Boundaries Southeast, said she and her husband, Keoni, went the extra mile to make sure their audience felt appreciated. Her husband is Hawaiian, so they dressed up their 2012 Jeep Rubicon with flowers and a sign that said "Mahalo," which means thank you, and she wore pineapple sunglasses.

"It was amazing," she said. "It is a big deal to us to be able to do that and show our appreciation for what they're doing."

In fact, participants enjoyed the ride and the reactions – from cheers to tears – so much they plan to do another parade to other area hospitals including UF Health Jacksonville, UF Health North and the Mayo Clinic.

"I got a specific story from Baptist that a lot of their staff was lining the windows because they couldn't come outside," Coffey said. "I heard from one side people felt really good. From the other side, there were a lot of tears, happy to be recognized and appreciated."

Ascension St. Vincent's Riverside officials appreciated the Jeep groups' efforts.

"We are blessed to have people like John as part of our health ministry and the broader community," said Tom VanOsdol, president and CEO of Ascension Florida and Gulf Coast. "I know those who were able to see our neighbors come together in this fun and unique way were deeply moved. This trying time is made easier for all of us through acts of kindness like this one."

Right Size San Marco challenges zoning change in court

By Marcia Hodgson
Resident Community News

Right Size San Marco is finally getting its day in court.

Having filed two appeals against the City of Jacksonville concerning its approval to rezone land owned by South Jacksonville Presbyterian Church, Right Size San Marco, a grassroots neighborhood group supported by more than 800 San Marco residents, had its first dates in court with the State of Florida Division of Administrative Hearings (DOAH) on May 28 and 29.

At issue is whether the Jacksonville City Council acted appropriately when it approved zoning changes to a 2.87-acre parcel that would allow a four-story, 133-unit apartment complex measuring 49.5 feet in height, and 26-foot, two-story parking garage to be built within the San Marco Overlay, a zoning ordinance that mandates buildings shall not exceed 35 feet within its boundaries. Harbert Realty Services LLC, of Birmingham, Ala., is joining San Marco-based Corner Lot Development Group, led by Andy Allen, as the developers of the project.

Specifically, Right Size San Marco is challenging whether a Small Scale Future

Land Use Map Amendment to the City of Jacksonville 2030 Comprehensive Plan adopted by Ordinance No. 2019-750-E is in compliance with the requirements of Chapter 163 of the Florida Statutes. Speaking for the not-for-profit group in the appeal are Jonathan Livingston and Lakshmi Gopal, two neighbors who live in homes adjacent to the church and the proposed residential development.

Represented by Sidney F. Ansbacher and Frank D. Upchurch III of Upchurch, Bailey and Upchurch PA in St. Augustine, Right Size San Marco claims the "amendment is not consistent with the local, regional, and state comprehensive plans and was not adopted in compliance with all applicable state and local statutes, rules, regulations, ordinances, and common law. The amendment is in conflict with the Comprehensive Plan and was not supported by relevant and appropriate surveys, studies, data, and analysis and the City did not respond to the data and analysis appropriately," according to court documents.

The City is represented by Attorneys Jason R. Teal, Craig D. Feiser, and Trisha D. Bowles, all members of its Office of General Counsel. Also assisting in its case are Attorney Paul Harden of The Law Firm of Paul M. Harden

Esq., Attorney Gary K. Hunter and Attorney Mohammad O. Jazil of the law firm Hopping, Green & Sams, P.A. in Tallahassee, and Attorneys T.R. Hainline, Emily G. Pierce, and Courtney P. Gaver of Rogers Towers Attorneys at Law, who represent the intervenors – South Jacksonville Presbyterian Church, Inc., and Harbert Realty Services LLC.

According to court documents, the City's position is that the amendment is in compliance with requirements stated in Chapter 163, Part II, Florida Statutes, and it disputes Right Size San Marco's claims. Instead it contends that the amendment was validly adopted and noticed.

The case will be heard by Florida Administrative Law Judge Francine M. Ffolkes in Tallahassee via the Zoom video-conference platform.

Right Size San Marco also filed a petition or writ of certiorari with the Fourth Judicial Circuit in Duval County. If the neighborhood group wins the DOAH appeal, it will trump the Certiorari, which is on hold until a DOAH ruling is made, according to the Right Size San Marco website. A writ of certiorari is an order a higher court issues to review the decision and proceedings in a lower court and determine whether

there were any irregularities, according to USLegal.com.

"Winning the appeal will protect the San Marco Overlay by making the developers follow the 35-foot standard set by the overlay," said Livingston, noting the group is still raising money to support its legal effort.

Right Size San Marco objected to the City's approval to rezone the property to a Planned Unit Development with the more intense land-use designation of Urban Priority (CGC-1), which allows the higher density of 60 units per acre and the use of a calculated weight average height as a way to have the project conform to the San Marco Overlay.

During its February 25 meeting, the City Council voted 17-1 to approve an amendment to the 2030 Comprehensive Plan, which overshadows the San Marco Overlay and the City Zoning Code, enabling developers to use a calculated weighted average height, which has never before been used in Jacksonville, instead of the strict height measurement of 35 feet. The calculation averaged the 49.5-foot height of the residential building with the 26-foot, two-story parking garage that will also be built on the property so that the combined heights would not exceed 35 feet.

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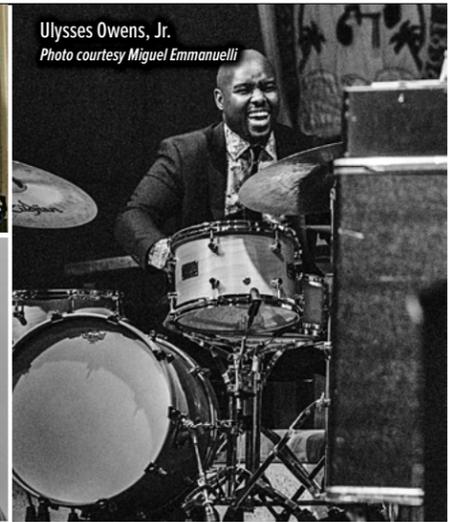
Rebecca Levy
Photo courtesy of Shana Skelton



Richard Colado
Photo courtesy of Andrew Carroll



Bob Moore



Ulysses Owens, Jr.
Photo courtesy Miguel Emmanuelli

Art Ventures bestows 18 grants to celebrate 30th anniversary

Eighteen Northeast Florida artists, including five from Jacksonville's historic districts, were recognized with Art Ventures grants of \$3,500 each as The Community Foundation for Northeast Florida celebrates three decades of investing in our local cultural community. The individuals selected for the 2020 awards include visual artists, writers, composers, choreographers, musicians, and photographers chosen for their demonstrated talent as well as their aspirations to refine an aspect of their craft.

This year's 18 grants represent the largest number bestowed on individual artists ever made in one year, and in conjunction with 12 awards being made to small arts organizations, fulfill the Foundation's pledge to honor Art Ventures' 30th anniversary with a record 30 grants.

"Months ago, when deciding to mark the historic Art Ventures milestone 30th anniversary by greatly increasing the number of grants made in 2020, our goal was to highlight the importance of investing in the

local arts community," noted Nina Waters, president of The Community Foundation. "Little did we know when we made these plans that the COVID-19 pandemic would exact such a toll on local artists, and we are delighted we can help support this vital part of our cultural community. Their rich contributions to Northeast Florida are an important reason we love living here."

The 18 individual artists represent the largest multi-disciplinary pool of grantees in the initiative's history, a testimony to the depth of artistic talent in Northeast Florida. They include: Barbara Colaciello, Richard Colado, Laura Colomb, Nancy Hamlin-Vogler, James Joshua Hansbrough, Rebecca R. Levy, Alisha Lewis, Roxanna Lewis, JoAnne Maffia, Christina Mastrangelo, Franklin Matthews, Aisling Millar McDonald, Bob Moore, Ulysses Owens Jr., Ebony Payne-English, Theresa Segal, Marisella Veiga, and Hurley Winkler.

Colaciello, Colado, Levy, Moore and Owens have ties to Jacksonville's historic neighborhoods.

Colaciello is a well-known writer and performer in Northeast Florida, and artistic director of BABS' LAB, a performance and training center in the CoRK Arts District. The grant will allow her to fund a new work examining caregiving, women's heart health, and the healing power of the arts.

Colado, an Avondale-based song writer and musician, has toured throughout the U.S. and Europe and recorded with a variety of musical ensembles. The grant will help him complete a recording of *Bones*, Colado's original music with Northeast Florida themes.

Levy, of Avondale, is co-founder and artistic director for Jacksonville Dance Theatre, the contemporary modern dance company. She also serves as the Director of Dance at FSCJ. The grant will support her in choreographing an original piece called *Disorder*, an evocative work about mental illness.

Moore, of San Marco, is a composer of sacred music who has published more than 300 choral and instrumental works which are performed across the country. The

grant will support his presentation of a concert of original work to be recorded for production.

Owens, of Avondale, is a graduate of Douglas Anderson School of the Arts and an international Grammy Award-winning jazz musician and educator. He is also the founder of the nonprofit, Don't Miss a Beat, a Jacksonville arts after-school program empowering 'At-Hope' children. The grant will allow him to fund production costs for a live recording of the musician's ensemble, *The Ulysses Owens Jr. Big Band*.

In addition to the individual artist grants, the Art Ventures initiative also supports small arts organizations. To date, nine art organizations have received 2020 Art Ventures grants, including: 5 and Dime Theatre, Clamour Theatre, tag! Children's Museum, Limelight Theatre, Florida Chamber Music Project, Amelia Island Chamber Music Festival, Jacksonville Dance Theatre, Hope at Hand, and Don't Miss a Beat. Three additional grants will be made in the fall.

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Patricia S. Otterson

Patricia S. Otterson, CIMA® senior vice president, Investments, of Otterson-Allison Wealth Management Group of Raymond James, was among the Raymond James-affiliated advisors named to the *Forbes* list of America's Top Women Advisors. The list, which recognizes advisors from national, regional and independent firms, was released near the end of April.

To be considered for the *Forbes* list, advisors were required to have a minimum of seven years' experience and were chosen based on several factors including revenue trends, assets under management, compliance records, and industry experience. They were also favored because they encompass best practices in their work and in their approach with clients. Out of approximately 32,000 nominations, only 1,000 advisors, or 3 to 4 %, received the award.

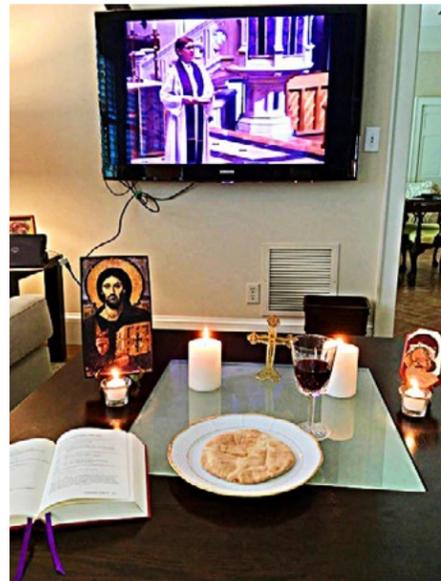
Otterson, who joined Raymond James in 2009, has more than 38 years of experience in the financial services industry. The services she provides include individual portfolio management, wealth accumulation strategies, and retirement planning.

Filling the pews in the time of Coronavirus

Although parishioners have not been allowed to worship together in person at St. John's Cathedral since the advent of COVID-19, church members surprised their clergy by pasting their photos in the pews to give a boost to their priests as they livestreamed the services online May 3.

Figuring out how to worship with your community of faith when you can't come to church is something church leadership at St. John's has had to figure out rapidly with the onset of the pandemic, said The Very Rev. Kate Moorehead, dean of the cathedral. The following are some things she said she has learned so far:

1. Worship can happen virtually, but we must be very careful to sing, sit, stand, and respond in prayer so it does not become entertainment. You can either watch worship or you can participate in it. We ask our viewers to light a candle, to set up a home altar by their computer, to pray aloud the responses and to eat bread with us. In this way, we hope that



Members at St. John's Cathedral are encouraged to take an active part of the service at home.



The Very Rev. Kate Moorehead, dean of St. John's Cathedral, poses in the interior of St. John's Cathedral, where photos of church members are now taped to the pews. During this time of COVID-19, church members have spent their Sundays watching services online, but on May 3, they decided to take an extra step and not only join in the service in spirit but to also fill the pews with their photos as a surprise for the clergy. "The sight of the photos made me cry," said The Very Rev. Kate Moorehead. "We are all there together, just in a different way."

2. Worship online has to be briefer and more intimate. The long ancient liturgies that have been beautifully executed for centuries don't come across well virtually. So, we must be ancient and beautiful but also concise and vibrant.
 3. Love does transfer online. This last week, some of our faithful put pictures of our people up taped to the pews. In a few weeks, we will add photos of our loved ones who have died and who also are still with us. As one person said, "The cloud of witnesses is now in the cloud."
 4. People are engaged and active. They are bringing food in for the hungry, they are giving, they are praying and contacting one another. The church is very much alive, even without our building. On our altar every Sunday, we now place flowers from someone's garden.
- "The church is alive. It is vibrant and holy and growing and changing. The early Christians worshipped in each other's homes. And here we are, returning to our roots, at home with one another and with God," Moorehead said.

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Patients' spouses honor hospice nurses



Chad Thrift, RN, and Paulene Showalter



Nancy Wansor, RN, and Vic Halbach.

Community Hospice & Palliative Care officials and staff honored nurses during the agency's Nurses' Week the first week of May, and they weren't the only ones. On May 8, two family members who lost their spouses surprised the two nurses who made the losses easier to manage while providing a high level of care. Vic Halbach Jr. and Paulene Showalter wanted to show their recognition in person, with Halbach celebrating Nancy Wansor, RN, who stayed with his beloved wife the entire time she was dying, and Paulene Showalter expressing her gratitude to Chad Thrift, RN for his compassion.

"Words can't describe the remarkable care my husband received from Chad," Showalter said. "He is more than a nurse, he's an angel. Honestly, I believe all nurses are angels."

Rice promoted as Baptist Chief Medical Officer

David Rice, MD, has been selected to serve as senior vice president, chief medical officer and chief quality officer of Baptist Health. In his new position, Rice will be responsible for oversight of clinical quality, patient safety, and performance improvement, across a network of more than 200 points of care. He has served as Baptist Health's chief quality officer since 2015 and will continue in this role, in addition to serving as chief medical officer.

Rice officially assumed the new role following the May 4 retirement of Keith Stein, MD, FCCM, FCCP, who has served as chief medical officer since 1999.

"David's ability to bring interdisciplinary teams together to elevate clinical care makes him an outstanding selection for Baptist Health's chief medical officer and chief quality officer," said Elizabeth Ransom, MD, FACS, executive vice president and chief physician executive at Baptist Health. "In this role, he will continue to advance the quality and safety achievements of the organization, streamline physician infrastructure and oversee performance improvement across the system."

Rice has seen tremendous success as a leader in providing strategic direction to advance quality and safety initiatives across inpatient and outpatient settings. Under his leadership, all adult hospitals in the Baptist system attained Leapfrog Hospital Safety



David Rice, MD

"A" grades and Wolfson Children's Hospital was named as one of 10 Top Children's Hospitals in the nation. The efforts he championed also increased Hospital Compare star ratings to "4 star" and "5 star" hospitals. Other notable health system recognitions under his tutelage include the "2017 100 Top Hospitals" and "2017 Everest Award" by Truven Health Analytics, "2017 Patient Safety Excellence Award" by Healthgrades and "Magnet Designation for Excellence in Patient Care."

Recently, Rice led the implementation of Enhanced Recovery After Surgery (ERAS)

pathways at Baptist Health. ERAS is an innovative, evidence-based approach to surgery that changes the long-established routines before, during and after surgery to help people recover faster and decrease their time in the hospital following surgery.

Rice joined Baptist Health in 2001 as a hospitalist for Baptist Primary Care, and has served in successive leadership roles including medical director of utilization management and as the founding chief medical officer of Baptist Physician Partners (BPP), a clinically integrated network of more than 900 local providers.

Rice earned his Doctor of Medicine from the University of Florida and his Bachelor of Science from Florida State University. He completed his residency at Orlando Regional Medical Center, where he served as chief resident of Internal Medicine. Currently, he is pursuing an Executive Master in Healthcare Leadership degree from Brown University.

Involved in the community, Dr. Rice currently serves on the Florida State University College of Medicine Alumni Board and has previously served as president of the Board of Directors of We Care Jacksonville and board member of Quality & Patient Safety Committee for the Florida Hospital Association, Environmental Protection Board and Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation (JDRF).

Three from Berkshire Hathaway San Marco honored as top producers

Lynne Ferguson, Brittany McGuire, and Anita Vining of the San Marco office were honored by their peers when Berkshire Hathaway Home Services Florida Network Realty announced its top producing agents for April 2020.

Ferguson received recognition as the top listings, sales, and transactions producer while McGuire received top sales honors and Vining was named first in transactions and production.

"Congratulations to our top producers, each of you have risen to the top of your profession," said Christy Budnick, Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices president and CEO.



Lynne Ferguson



Brittany McGuire



Anita Vining

Meanwhile, the company's founder and chairman, Linda Sherrer, added, "You have consistently set a high standard in both professionalism and within the industry with performance and knowledge. Congratulations to our April top producing agents!"

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Dwellers help hungry residents downtown



While demonstrating proper social distancing and responsibility, Downtown Dwellers Ambassador Howard Taylor looks on as Eric Miller, president of the group, gives Gwendolyn Owens, a board member of Don't Miss A Beat, a check to help feed hungry Downtown families. The presentation took place in the lobby of The Peninsula on the Southbank.

The Downtown Dwellers, a group of residents living in housing along the north and south banks of the St. Johns River, are concerned about the well-being of people in Downtown, especially families with children whose breadwinners have lost their jobs due to the Coronavirus pandemic. To ensure children are fed during the difficult days of the quarantine, the Dwellers contributed \$1,500 to families associated with Don't Miss a Beat, a Brooklyn-based nonprofit that in normal times provides after school and summer activities for elementary and high school children with interests in the arts—music, dance, drawing and painting, and theater.

Baptist receives 'A' rating in patient safety

All four Baptist Health adult hospitals – Baptist Jacksonville, Baptist South, Baptist Nassau and Baptist Beaches – have received 'A' ratings in the spring 2020 Leapfrog Hospital Safety Grade, a national distinction recognizing achievements in providing the safest health care for patients.

Baptist was one of only 867 hospitals in the United States to receive the highest grade.

"Our 'A' ratings show that we are committed to providing safe, high-quality patient care in all situations," said David Rice, MD, senior vice president and chief quality officer for Baptist Health. "Our health care teams are dedicated to collaboration and open communication – two keys to success in achieving the highest quality standards in our hospitals."

Baptist Health's safety and quality protocols have been further enhanced during the COVID-19 crisis through many additional measures. Separate respiratory care units for COVID-19 patients, designated staff and equipment for COVID-19 rooms, and the use of advanced UV technology for decontamination are among the many safety reinforcements the health system has implemented.

"Patients can have peace of mind that their safety always comes first, especially as we move toward resuming all of our regular medical services," said Rice.

The Leapfrog Group is an independent national watchdog organization committed to health care quality and safety. The Leapfrog Hospital Safety Grade assigns an A, B, C,

Straight A's for Baptist Health!

All four Baptist Health adult hospitals received 'A' patient safety ratings from The Leapfrog Group, an independent national organization committed to health care quality and safety.

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D or F grade to hospitals across the country based on their performance in preventing medical errors, infections and other harms among patients in their care. Developed under the guidance of a national expert panel, the Leapfrog Hospital Safety Grade uses 28 measures of publicly available hospital safety data to assign grades to more than 2,600 U.S. acute-care hospitals twice per year. The Hospital Safety Grade's methodology is peer-reviewed and fully transparent, and the results are free to the public.

"As the nation copes with a challenging pandemic, our gratitude extends to hospital leadership and health care workers everywhere for their tremendous dedication," said Leah Binder, president and CEO of The Leapfrog Group. "We hope this 'A' helps to thank the people who work and volunteer for Baptist Health. They are role models in putting patients first, and their service has been extraordinary in our country's time of need."

Assumption clergy receive love through parishioners' parade

The community of Assumption Catholic Church showed its love of church when it gathered together with decorated vehicles and grateful hearts to do a surprise-drive-by-parade for its priests and servant sisters of the convent, Home of the Mother, which is located next to Assumption Catholic School.

Church Pastor, Fr. Jason Trull, his associate, Fr. Eric Steltzer, and the convent's many servant sisters have worked tirelessly to adapt their ways to serve the community during the COVID-19 pandemic. They collectively have learned new ways to offer services virtually, they have reached out to parishioners via phone and email.

They also have been praying nonstop for all those in the community who are sick, suffering, or by necessity are physically separated from their church community.

The parade was the parishioners' way of showing gratitude. Services for Assumption Catholic Church have been live-streamed via the parish YouTube channel and will continue on line in the coming weeks to be enjoyed by all those choosing to stay home.

Assumption parishioners held signs out as they stayed safe during the COVID-19 pandemic while still showing love to their church May 3.



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Nemours names Enterprise Chief Development Officer

James "Jim" Digan will begin his new role as Enterprise Chief Development Officer for Nemours Children's Health System in July. He will be responsible for strategic leadership and guidance for the health system's fundraising across its five-state footprint, including portfolio development, staff management and leadership engagement for all of Nemours' philanthropic pursuits. Digan will be based at Nemours' headquarters in Jacksonville.

"Jim is one of the most accomplished and respected development professionals in the country," said Dr. R. Lawrence Moss, chief executive officer and president of Nemours Children's Health System. "Over a distinguished 25-year career in academic health systems, Jim has consistently exceeded expectations and set a standard of excellence for himself and his teams. He will be a tremendous asset to Nemours in achieving our goal of transforming children's healthcare to deliver the healthiest generation of America's children."

Digan joins Nemours from Baylor College of Medicine, where he currently serves as the president of Baylor Medical Foundation and senior vice president of Institutional Advancement at Baylor College of Medicine in Houston. Prior



James "Jim" Digan

to his current positions, Digan held major leadership positions in development at Nationwide Children's Hospital, Rochester General Health System and Children's Hospital of Philadelphia.

He has made numerous national contributions to his field through the Association for Healthcare Philanthropy, the Woodmark Group, the Juvenile Diabetes Foundation and others.

Digan is a graduate of Colgate University and has continually contributed his talents to furthering that institution for decades. His career accomplishments also include other academic and development positions, including director for the Zweig Foundation, a private family foundation established to improve society by supporting the environment, education, and healthcare.

Ascension St. Vincent's Riverside has a new president

Jon D. Cooper was selected in May to helm Ascension St. Vincent's Riverside beginning June 15, after nearly 20 years of experience leading hospital operations and directing operations at skilled nursing facilities, rehabilitation hospitals, urgent care centers and outpatient rehabilitation facilities. Earlier in his career, he worked in Jacksonville's Brooks Rehabilitation. Cooper received his bachelor's degree in marketing from Indiana University and his MBA from the University of Toledo in Ohio. In 2020, he was honored with the Healthcare Hero Award (leader category) from Louisville (Ky.) Business First. He is a longtime volunteer with Habitat for Humanity.

For the past seven years, Cooper has been president and chief administrative officer at Norton Audubon Hospital in Louisville. Prior to that, he served in other leadership roles at Norton Healthcare, including vice president of operations at Norton Women's and Children's Hospital, system vice president over surgical, orthopedic and spine services, and vice president of operations at Norton Audubon Hospital and Norton Suburban Hospital.



Jon D. Cooper

Women's Food Alliance honors Emily Slatsky with Blossom Award

The Women's Food Alliance (WFA) bestowed its 'Blossom Award' honorarium to Emily Slatsky, a young deserving hospitality professional, in April. The Blossom Award recognizes new members who represent the best of what hospitality can be. Slatsky fit the bill for her perseverance and passion for each job she has tackled in the past five years, said Leigh Cort, WFA president.

'Blossom Award' winners are granted Honorary Membership in the Women's Food Alliance when they possess the following hospitality criteria such as: have a positive attitude, exude a warm welcome, display a professional style in their chosen career, offer gracious service, possess proficient communication skills, represent a well-groomed woman.

By the time Slatsky was 18, she began her journey into the hospitality industry in Jacksonville Beach and Ponte Vedra



Emily Slatsky

Beach. Her five-year path gave her a broad education including organic cafes, farmers markets, restaurants, and culinary schools.

Emily works for Sprouts Farmers Market. Prior to her current position, she spent two years at Earth Fare, where she worked in the produce department, specialty foods and then on to food and wine. Slatsky had the perfect personality to also do demos each weekend, giving her the opportunity to sample new and unique products. This included wellness items, too, while she educated their customers with information that she gathered for herself. As she starts a new chapter in hospitality, she has developed a very passionate interest in nutrition and using food as medicine.

"The Women's Food Alliance is an incredible way to connect with and be inspired by women who love the same things as me! I am so excited to be a part of it" said Slatsky.



The Women's Food Alliance Advisory Council consists of Sandi Galloway, owner Sandy Calloway & Associates; Rebecca Reed, executive pastry chef, Black Sheep Restaurant Group; Nancy Slatsky, chef, manager, JAX Cooking Studio; Leigh Cort, president Women's Food Alliance; Cindy Stavely, executive director, St. Augustine Pirate/Treasure Museum; Kelly Mabry, owner Tropical Smoothie; Amy Morales, creator, Sweets for the Soul; and Carol Maurer, sales manager, Hilton Garden Inn Ponte Vedra Beach.

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Community Foundation receives gift to support First Coast Relief fund

The Community Foundation for Northeast Florida received a \$500,000 gift from The Humana Foundation that will be directed to Florida's First Coast Relief Fund to aid pandemic response in the community. With the funds from The Humana Foundation, Northeast Florida will be better positioned to respond to those who need assistance to recover and rebuild from this crisis.

The Humana Foundation's \$500,000 gift is in addition to a \$100,000 contribution from Humana to United Way of Northeast Florida for Florida's First Coast Relief Fund in the earliest days of the pandemic as part of its Bold Goal partnership with the Jacksonville market.

"The impact of a grant of this size cannot be underestimated," said Nina Waters, president of The Community Foundation for Northeast Florida. "Every week, we and our partners in Florida's First Coast Relief Fund struggle with the extraordinary needs presented by our nonprofit community as they try to respond to their clients who are hurting. The Humana Foundation's generosity will help alleviate the strain on our neighbors and fellow citizens."

Since mid-March, Florida's First Coast Relief Fund has granted more than \$2.4 million to 75 local nonprofits in the six-county area. Applications continue to come in, and new grants are awarded weekly.

The Humana Foundation's gift to The Community Foundation for Northeast Florida is part of The Humana Foundation's historic April 30 announcement to commit \$50 million to coronavirus relief and recovery efforts to a select group of organizations supporting essential workers, food security, behavioral health and local communities.

Balis Park seating available for weekend take-out diners

By Marcia Hodgson
Resident Community News

Keeping social distancing in mind, San Marco area residents and their friends now have an opportunity to visit with one another – albeit distantly – over a meal in Balis Park.

In the first official in-person social event since the COVID-19 pandemic began in mid-March, the San Marco Merchants Association (SMMA) and the San Marco Preservation Society (SMPS) began jointly sponsoring weekly weekend gatherings entitled "Open Air in the Square" from 5:30 to 9 p.m. Friday and Saturday nights in Balis Park so that neighbors can enjoy take-out food from local San Marco restaurants in San Marco Square. The first take-out event was May 15. Assisting the two organizations is Southside Baptist Church, which donated tables and chairs, spaced several feet apart, so that people can comfortably sit and eat. Soft music is also piped into the to the Square, to bring a relaxing ambience while diners are eating.

"We just started planning this the Wednesday (May 13) before," said SMMA President Joe



Rachel Licea, Nick Edwards, Tony Edwards and Steve and Anita Morrill with Cooper

Carlucci. He said the event came in response to requests from local restauranteurs who noticed a precipitous drop in their business after Florida Governor Ron DeSantis opened the community up to allowing restaurants to serve 25% of their clientele indoors as well as seat people outside. On May 18, restaurant guidelines changed to allow inside seating for 50% of the venue. "There was no sense of urgency now and their take-out business went way down," said Carlucci. "The restauranteurs are very happy with this."

Thanks to Southside Baptist, 10 tables with five chairs spaced evenly around each table were scattered near the gazebo in the square allowing patrons to enjoy take-out dinners from restaurants nearby. Carlucci said more than 100 people took part in the event May 15 with even more coming out May 16. The tables will be available every Friday and Saturday night from 5:30 to 9 p.m., as long as is required during the pandemic, he said.



Megan McKenzie and Garrett Boyd



Ryan and Melissa Derr



Diane and Tim Martin with Cooper

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Freedom Boat club gets new top staffers

Freedom Boat Club of Jacksonville and St. Augustine has a new manager at the helm and a new director of administration and member service.

Mark Vickers has been promoted from membership executive to a new leadership post as general manager for the organization's three local clubs in Jacksonville Beach, Julington Creek and St. Augustine, and the Canada native plans to ensure that members get the most from their membership. The club offers boating experiences that don't require owning a boat.

Meanwhile, Lindsay Sheffield was the client and community relations director before recently being appointed to a newly formed position. She is now the director of administration and member service and is responsible for managing social media and member and partner communications. With this promotion,



Lindsay Sheffield

Mark Vickers

Sheffield will also be managing the accounting and marketing departments of the club.

The promotions are part of a management restructure that Freedom Boat Club officials are implementing as they continue growing their organization and all three club locations. The club offers an alternative to boat ownership. More details can be found at www.freedomboatclub.com.

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Pulling off the perfect wedding in the time of COVID-19

By Marcia Hodgson
Resident Community News

Before she was wed, Lauren Taylor Anderson used to joke that she “could get married in a parking lot and it would still be a fun time.” Little did she realize her words might soon be tested.

Lauren, and her husband, Wesley Anderson, had plans in place for a big wedding April 25 at Jacksonville’s Main Library downtown. Invited to the ceremony were 220 guests. Then Coronavirus hit.

“It happened so fast. Six weeks before the wedding, the mayor shut everything down, and that included the library and the parks,” Lauren said. Learning the bad news, believe it or not, on Friday the 13th of March, Lauren and her fiancé wondered what possible venue could be secured that would accommodate all their guests on short notice.

“We were thinking, what other venue can we do? By Monday, we realized it was not going to happen. So, we went to the courthouse and got our marriage license because we didn’t know how long the courthouse would be open,” Lauren said. “At that point people were calling us, cancelling, because they didn’t want to expose themselves to anything. So, we knew we were going to have to come up with something different. We prayed about it, and we talked about it, and we realized we had the marriage license now. We could get married at any time. We didn’t have to wait until April 25.”

Although they had planned to have a fairly large wedding, after much discussion, the couple realized it was really a small, intimate affair they longed for.

“The one thing I really wanted was for my grandparents to be there,” said Lauren, who has three living grandparents, Nancy

Richardson of the Westside and Lois and Tommy Taylor of Mandarin. Unfortunately, Wesley’s grandmother, Hilda Cowser of East Arlington, would be unable to make it, as her assisted-living residence was already under lockdown.

It was Wesley who decided March 28 was a good day to get married, Lauren said. “He came up with the date because he was off from work that day,” she said. “It was a Saturday. We checked the weather, and it was supposed to be nice,” Wesley explained. “We knew we had to keep it to as few people as possible,” Lauren said.

Both Lauren and Wesley work for Baptist Health and live in San Marco. Lauren, who grew up in Southpoint, serves as a digital content strategist and copywriter, while Wesley, a Holiday Hill native, works for Baptist Behavioral Health. Lauren enjoys running and would often pass Preservation Hall, which is close to their home, as she dashed through the streets of San Marco.

“Originally, I had my heart set on Preservation Hall and Fletcher Park because it was on my route. When I got engaged, I would run past the little chapel and dream about my wedding, then I would run by Fifi’s on Hendricks Avenue and see the wedding dresses. It was perfect that I ended up getting my wedding dress at Fifi’s and that we got married in that park,” she said.

Unable to use Preservation Hall due to the COVID-19 shutdown, Lauren was at least interested in getting married on the steps. She was told by San Marco Preservation Society officials that anything outside of the building was considered Fletcher Park and was governed by the City Parks Department. “The City Parks Department said they weren’t giving out permits, but gave me the ‘wink, wink’ if it wasn’t too many people. I told them it would be quick with no rented equipment so we wouldn’t get in trouble.”

Lauren and Wesley were married at 9 a.m. on the steps of Preservation Hall. Fifteen immediate family members, including Lauren’s three grandparents, were in attendance. Lauren’s father, Brian Taylor, walked her down the path leading to the chapel steps as wedding music played on a small portable speaker. Meanwhile, the guests safely social distanced away from each other and the couple. Rev. Craig Brown LMHC, LMFT, an Anglican Deacon at Church of the Redeemer and a co-worker of Wesley’s at Baptist Behavioral Health officiated the nuptials. The entire event took less than an hour.

A fire engine with siren blaring roared down Atlantic Avenue during the ceremony, but instead of bothering the couple it was welcomed, Lauren said. “My granddaddy,



At the Fletcher Park March 28 wedding of Wesley Anderson and Lauren Taylor, the bride, groom, and their immediate family practiced social distancing. Photo courtesy of Andy Varnes.

Doug Richardson, passed away in 2013. He had been a Jacksonville firefighter for more than 25 years. I felt like he was sharing his congratulations,” she said.

Also, in attendance was Lauren’s mother, Vickie Taylor, and Wesley’s parents, Roy and Norma Anderson. Lauren’s cousin, Andy Varnes, took photographs, and her cousin Jennifer Phelan and Phelan’s 18-year-old daughter, Isabella, did Lauren’s hair and make-up. Deb Livingston, best friend of Lauren’s mother, created a special bouquet of paper flowers made by Lauren.

“It was truly a family affair,” she said.

The reception was held in the couple’s San Marco back yard a few blocks away. Vickie Taylor and Norma Anderson brought food, and the couple and their guests enjoyed chocolate wedding cake from Publix and Krispy Kreme doughnuts courtesy of Amanda, fiancée of Lauren’s brother, Michael. The couple’s first dance took place on their driveway and was accompanied by music played from a small speaker.

Both the wedding and parts of the reception were posted virtually on Facebook Live so that all the other wedding guests that were unable to come could be part of the day.

Prior to the ceremony, the couple created a special Facebook page just for their wedding so everyone could post photos and share in the fun.

Although Coronavirus forced the cancellation of their honeymoon in Ireland, the couple enjoyed several days in a cabin in North Carolina instead. They plan to travel to Ireland once the pandemic is over.

“It was perfect for us because we had everyone there that we wanted to be there virtually, but we also had a small intimate ceremony and reception in our back yard,” Lauren said.

Wesley agreed. “We’re so happy with how it turned out,” he said, noting he and his wife have no plans to hold another wedding or large reception after the Coronavirus crisis is over. “What we want to do in time is have a bunch of ‘mini receptions,’ with people that maybe would have been at the wedding. We just want to have them over for dinner and give them all our attention rather than five minutes at the wedding that we won’t remember. I’m kind of excited about the mentality going forward. We can celebrate with those people then because we like being hospitable anyway.”



Patricia Leigh Locklear and her daughters dressed for the occasion as they watched the wedding of Lauren Taylor and Wesley Anderson on Facebook Live.



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Deserving Dads

By Jennifer Edwards, Resident Community News

There are countless numbers of dedicated fathers in Jacksonville's historic districts, and, unfortunately, *The Resident* can only recognize a handful. They are from different walks of life and parenting stages, but every Dad said there is no joy greater than their children. Happy Father's Day to them and to all you Dads reading.



Dr. Richard Mullens, Tucker, Sherrill Mullens and Jordan.

Dr. Richard Mullens DDS

San Marco dentist Dr. Richard Mullens and his wife, Sherrill, waited a little longer than some parents to have children. Twenty-seven years ago, the couple enjoyed a DINK – Double Income No Kids – lifestyle for eight years, before they had their first child. Mullens was starting his dentistry practice from scratch and building it into what is now Mullens & Nguyen Distinctive Dentistry of Jacksonville, a Hendricks Avenue practice he now co-owns with Dr. James Nguyen. Meanwhile, Sherrill works with Channel 4 as an account executive. Mullens was 34 and his wife, 32, when they became parents, and while they weren't aged by any means, their daughter's birth brought a huge realization.

"Why were we waiting so long to have children?" Mullens recalls thinking. "There is no greater blessing in our lives than having children. There really isn't any greater joy."

Now, their daughter, Jordan, is 22, a graduate of Wake Forest University and holds her perfect post-graduate job, working for The United Way of Northeast Florida. Their son, Tucker, is 21 and has been doing distance learning at Wake Forest since the Coronavirus closures. His most recent semester ended in early May. Mullens is enormously proud of what his children have accomplished and encourages them in their schooling and career pursuits. But, the Dad in him is a little grateful that Coronavirus closures have everyone at home.

"I think it's a hidden blessing as a family," he said. "Tucker left last July for a semester abroad in Australia and even though we saw him in early October, he was gone from mid-July to Dec. 3. He was home for Christmas and then went right back to school. The fact that both have been sequestered at home – he had to come home immediately after spring break – that's pretty rare. Once kids graduate from college, they fly the nest next and they're gone."

Mullens said that it helps that he has been able to be home a lot as well. He has been extremely careful when he treats patients at his practice and had mostly been coming in just for emergencies.

"For the past six weeks, we have been able to be home a lot," he said. "It's been a great thing for us. We've had a lot more times to play games together, we've done a lot of takeout, a lot of meals together that everyone has participated in, a pretty regular mealtime, it's brought a lot of structure back to our life. It's not been all bad. We've all managed to stay very healthy, we've all managed to do our jobs, and we've all managed to be together this whole time."

Joseph Carlucci II

Joseph "Joe" Carlucci II often jokes that people think he has an "arranged" marriage, because he married Victoria, a woman he's known nearly his whole life and who happens to be the daughter of his father's lifelong best friend. With a wife he adores, his son Joseph III, and his work as president of the San Marco Merchants Association and co-owner of Brightway Insurance in San Marco, Carlucci relished his full life. But on Jan. 23, his life got even richer due to the birth of his son, Jackson, who was given the middle name Kekoa to honor Victoria's Hawaiian heritage.

"The second one has been easier than the first one. I don't know if that is because less stuff bothers us and maybe it's a combination of both," Carlucci pondered. "It definitely makes the plate fuller. We were kind of ready for it. I am lucky to have a wife that stays at home."

Because his children are so young, Coronavirus closures haven't ruffled the young family that much, he said, although does admit having a new baby in the house has brought trials and tribulations as well as great rewards.

"My morning routine has definitely changed," he said. "I don't get to wake up and have my coffee and have my peace and quiet any more. I wake up when I am woken up. I go into the office and that's where I can read and have my cup of coffee. I've shifted my routine. I get summoned home with crying babies and things like that. Or, I come home at a normal time at 5:30 p.m. or so and it's 'Hold this baby while you also get to play with Joseph.'"



Joseph Carlucci II and Victoria Carlucci with Joseph III and Jackson.

Little Joseph is the one feeling the quarantine the most. At age 3, he knows exactly what quarantine means.

"We told him the beach was open for a little bit of time," Carlucci explained. "And he asked, 'Then is the toy store open?' I am very thankful that I didn't have to do any of the online school."

For now, Carlucci is appreciating what he considers the choicest experiences of being a Dad – and they are different depending on the ages of his children.

"The best part is when they are a newborn and they smile at you, you feel this overwhelming love for this new baby, holding their squishy body," he said. "My three-year-old, the best part is having the interaction and getting to be a kid again, with his Hot Wheels cars and his racetrack and him wanting to play baseball. The things my Dad saw with me, I get to see with him, and it comes full circle. Showing him how to fix things: That's one of my and Joseph's things we do, that's cool."

Seth Pajcic



Seth Pajcic with Maggie and Patrick.

Family and success are two pronounced threads running through the tapestry of Seth Pajcic's life. For starters, he is part of the well-known Pajcic and Pajcic law firm, which was started by his own father, Gary Pajcic, and uncle, Steve Pajcic, in 1974. Every day, he works with his Uncle Steve, who still oversees the day-to-day operations, as well as his brothers Curt and Curry and his cousin Michael. Although there are also six other attorneys, the family element is undeniable.

Pajcic and wife, Kathleen, have two children: Patrick, 14, an eighth grader at The Episcopal School of Jacksonville, and Maggie, 12, a sixth grader at San Jose Episcopal Day School. Family is a central value, and while he said the kids are pretty self-sufficient when it comes to working on their schoolwork, his biggest challenge as a Dad is "picking them back up and giving them the confidence to go back out and try again."

"When they get disappointed in themselves, I try to tell them that's part of life, you don't always succeed, sometimes you do fail but you have to pick yourself back up again," he continued. "If you don't, you are not going to succeed or

fail, you will have a boring life. You will ultimately be successful, you know you are going to fail, but you pick yourself back up."

However, he said the flip side of that challenge is also his greatest satisfaction as a father.

"My greatest joy is seeing my kids succeed and do things and excel and be proud of themselves for doing something good," Pajcic said. "For example, my daughter is a really hard worker, and she gets all A-pluses, and she is really proud of herself. That makes me happy, to see her be proud of herself. The same thing with my son, to see him be proud of himself makes me happy, seeing them succeed and do great things."

He said his children are adjusting pretty well to the current closures and online schoolwork, and it's quiet at home. He works from his home office two to three days a week and the main office the other days.

"It hasn't been that much of a change," he said. "The biggest issue is, they miss being with their friends, and trying to explain to them why they can't see their friends is the most difficult."

Dr. Scott Scharer

Dr. Scott Scharer said his greatest joy is watching the personalities, interests and talents of his children evolve as they grow up. He lives in San Marco with his wife, Erin, and three children: sons Grant, 14, and Burke, 12, and 15-year-old daughter, Campbell. Campbell is at Samuel W. Wolfson High School, where Grant is headed next year. Meanwhile Burke will attend Julia Landon College Preparatory and Leadership Development School.

Unfortunately, Scharer, a Baptist Health ear-nose-throat physician and surgeon, has barely been able to see his children over the past several weeks. Because he works at Baptist among diagnosed and undiagnosed COVID-19 patients, he has been living separately in quarantine above the family's garage in a sort of in-law suite with its own fridge and microwave.

"I haven't even really seen my family in two months," he said. "Since this pandemic started, we decided it was safest if I kept coming into my office in the hospital five days a week and stayed above the garage. We try to get together on our front lawn or front porch several times a week, take bike rides, things like that." That has him missing out on family life even though he feels fortunate to have a job in a very difficult economy. For now, his wife will bring him meals on the front porch or meet him by the fence



Dr. Scott Scharer and wife, Erin, with Burke, Campbell and Grant.

that separates the house from the garage and the family tries to gather in other cautious ways.

"We do activities you think would be safe, that let us keep social distancing," he said. "We will sit on a couch outside and watch a show on the TV." Of his children, he says: "It's amazing that these three people came from the same two parents but are so different in some ways and similar in some. Being a surgeon, a physician, I don't know if I've been able to spend as much time as I'd like to, watching them grow up, although I try to be there as much as I can. It is fun watching them get to ages I clearly remember. It doesn't seem so long ago."

Continued on page 20

The Basilica of Immaculate Conception
www.icjax.org

Peace doesn't just happen, it's made!

"But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without a trace of partiality or hypocrisy. And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace for[a] those who make peace." James 3:17-18

Bishop Felipe Estevez invited Fr. Blair Gaynes to become the shepherd of the Basilica of the Immaculate Conception Parish in early 2017. He had previously been the pastoral associate at Resurrection and Blessed Trinity Catholic Church and at that time, he relinquished his duties with the diocesan Vocation Office. In July 2017, he assumed the role of Pastor while also using his more than 30 years of experience in Youth & Young Adult ministry, education and social services to continue his ministerial and administrative leadership of Campus Ministry. Fr. Blair, prior to being ordained in 2012, had worked in the Diocese for several years during which he was able to use his gifts as an instructor for teachers and parish catechists religious certification, lead spiritual and formation retreats, as well as being a Spiritual Director.

For Fr. Blair, this scripture passage has been a guiding light since the early years of his conversion. His deeply personal encounters with the Living God became the foundation for unshakeable faith that has been guided by Scripture and aided through the teachings and the living tradition of the Church. He believes that disciples of Christ must be faithful to the essential teachings of the Church, understood and enlivened, through genuine encounters with Christ. That the individual Christian and the Church together must also read the signs of the times and appropriately adapt the message of the Gospel to enable others to encounter Christ, to embrace the 'Universal Call To Holiness'. He believes a parish community must grow in desire and ability to consistently and authentically LIVE the FAITH, LOVE as CHRIST, LEARN the FAITH, and LEAD as CHRIST. That we should be unimpeded in making Christ present through evangelizing actions that are rooted Love of God and inspired by Love of neighbor.



Father
Blair Gaynes



First United Methodist Church
www.firstumcjax.org

Grace in Uncertain Times

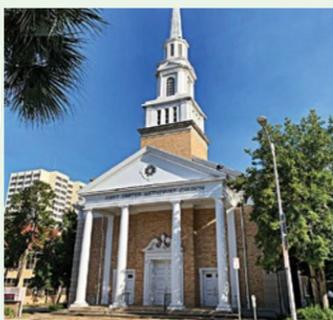
We all love a sense of order and predictability and its comfort, however, crises, chaos, and, yes, just life itself can bring about the most unpredictable circumstances. Circumstances that disrupt our sense of order and control. This can be frightening and disheartening yet, as believers, we are called to live faithfully in such uncertainty.

I am reminded of a moment in early Christian history when things radically changed for all who followed Jesus. This was certainly a time of distress and challenge, to say the least: Jesus had been crucified, buried, and now his body was missing. Life was hard for the disciples struck with grief and uncertainty. According to Luke 24: 13-35, two of them traveled to Emmaus. As they traveled and shared words of grief with one another Jesus joined their journey walking with them. He asked them questions that directed them to spiritual practices that came to shape the lives of all believers. He challenged his disciples to focus on the truth in Scripture rather than circumstances.

Scripture is a reminder of who we are and who our God and Father is. Studying Scripture daily is a comfort in times of uncertainty. When you are confronted with the chaos of life and pandemics in particular and overwhelmed by feelings of grief, loneliness, and pain, you need to remember that Scripture remains the foundation of our hope and our healing. So as you all continue your journey in this unsettling season, remember and seek out the Word of our Lord. Draw near in sacred spaces and prayer, open your eyes, and see the grace of God all around us, for He is with us.



Rev. Tiffany
McCall



www.cathedraldistrict-jax.org

The Pride of Cathedral District Jacksonville.

The Cathedral District Churches are the Spiritual and Historical Foundation for the City of Jacksonville. The community that we are all so fond of living in comes to us from the courage and the faith of the churches that established our community almost 200 years ago.

After the Great Fire of 1901, all five of these churches immediately began to rebuild. Their congregations and spiritual leaders rolled up their sleeves and used gifts of strength and ingenuity, and the power of the Holy Spirit, to begin again. Each of these five churches in the heart of Downtown Jacksonville have planted close to 100 mission churches and charitable organizations throughout Duval County. This gracious and kind "City of Jacksonville" would not exist without the commitment of our CDJ Churches.

In addition to the ecumenical and charitable services they provide to our city, they give us a heritage to be proud of, a story of perseverance and love. Now they also offer us these magnificent historical architectural structures that represent the foundation in the heart of Downtown Jacksonville. The excellent educational programs for all ages have not ceased, nor have the different choral and instrumental programs offered. We invite you to attend and experience these churches for yourself.

Right now they need your help and support! Please consider donating to one of our CDJ churches, by going to their websites to help sustain the spiritual and historical foundation of our city.

Once again as a community, we face great challenges: the loss of life sustaining jobs; the loss of loved ones; feelings of isolation; fear of the unknown; and the daunting task of change. Let the rebirth commence! Consider now, as we are all doing, how to steward and prioritize your gifts. Please give of your time, talents and money where you are called.

— Linda Crofton, Community Development

St. John's Episcopal Cathedral
www.jaxcathedral.org

Hope

Our lives have been turned upside down in just a few months. We are facing the greatest epidemic of our lifetimes. What will the future hold? Now is a time for hope.

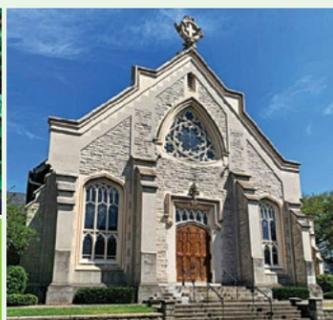
Here in the Cathedral District, we were so excited to welcome over one thousand people to our Christmas in the Cathedral District event. People who had never been inside our historic churches walked in and stood in awe in the face of their beauty.

When the virus hit, we didn't stop. While everyone was locked in their homes, we planted 60 trees. It was a visible sign of the hope that we have in Jesus.

Hope is not something determined by external circumstances. Hope comes from God alone and we will have hope as long as we have life. We hope that we will be able to welcome you again soon to our beautiful historic district and to the churches who worship there.



The Very Rev.
Kate Moorehead



Historic Mt. Zion AME Church
www.hmzjax.org

"...By Our Love."

"A new commandment I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you also must love one another. 35 By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you love one another." John 14:34-35 NIV

We are Historic Mt. Zion African Methodist Episcopal Church. Moved by God to love humankind as family. This narrative serves as a link to our past, and a bridge to our future for we are bond by Christ Spirit to Love our neighbor as Christ loves.

As an African born in America during the inception of the Civil Rights Movement, my parents raised my four siblings and me on the principle that God is Love. It is God's love that drives my pastoral and community ministry.

As I witness the resurgence of hate crimes and the divisiveness within our nation, fueled by fear and ignorance especially during the pandemic (Covid-19) health crisis, I often wonder, where is the Love?

In Dr. Martin Luther King's book Strength to Love, "It's difficult for most not to become cynical, vindictive and to retaliate. It's human nature. But, that does not give humankind a License to disrespect, disregard, demoralize the disenfranchised. "Returning hate for hate multiplies hate, adding deeper darkness to a night already devoid of stars. Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate, only love can do that."

As I reflect on a recent morning walk with my wife, she reminded me of a timeless hymn "We Are One in the Spirit." A Christian hymn written in the 1960s by then-Catholic priest, the late Fr. Peter Scholtes. It is inspired by John 13:35. The title of the hymn They'll Know We Are Christians By Our Love originates in a phrase that non-believers used to describe Christian believers of the early Church: "Behold, how they love one another."

We are Historic Mt. Zion African Methodist Episcopal Church. We are in community with the Cathedral District and thus we are Stronger Together.



Rev. Victor
D. Cole, M. Div.



First Presbyterian Church
www.fpcjax.org

Peace

There is a famous painting of a stormy sea, dark clouds, large waves and fierce lightning. In the middle of the scene is a large rock with waves crashing against it, and in the middle of the rock is a small cleft. A closer look inside the cleft reveals a grassy patch surrounded by beautiful flowers. And there in the middle of the flowers, amid the violent storm, is a dove sitting calmly on her nest!

Most people long for the peace represented by that dove. But peace seems elusive in a world that is anything but serene, especially in this Covid-19 season.

Jesus once said to His disciples: "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid" (John 14:27).

Let us learn from the dove in the painting, sitting calmly on her nest as the storm raged. Better yet, let us learn from Jesus and receive His peace. Because of His atoning death on the cross for sinners, we can experience peace with God through faith in Jesus Christ (Romans 5:1). We can also experience abiding peace in an unsettled world as we keep our minds fixed on the Lord (Isaiah 26:3).

Amid the storms of life, may His peace be yours.
Shalom!



Rev. Dr. Michael
"Scott" Luckey



Dr. Gustavo Jurado

A few months ago, Dr. Gustavo Jurado, a hospitalist who specializes in internal medicine at Ascension St. Vincent's Riverside, could not have foreseen how handy his daylight basement would come in.

He and his wife Julie, and children Emma, 6, Evelyn, 3, and Jacob, 10 months, live on a sloped lot in San Marco that allowed for the basement, a rarity in an area with such a high water table, to be underground in the front but have a separate door to the home in the back. Inside, there is a laundry room and a shower, which have been crucial in the days of Coronavirus, as he is coming home from work.

"The first thing I do is walk around the house, come through the back of the house and clean, get rid of the hospital clothes, put them in the washer in the basement," he explained. "I clean myself and by the time I come to the main room, I'm already purified from the hospital germs. Then, I go to the



Dr. Jurado holds baby Jacob the day he came home, flanked by Emma and Evelyn.

main room and the kids are there and we interact, we go for bike rides, we walk around. We live right next to a natural park, and the neighbors have put on the trees and the branches, swings and the kids love it. We go there quite a bit just to play on the swings and then just to walk around and hang out."

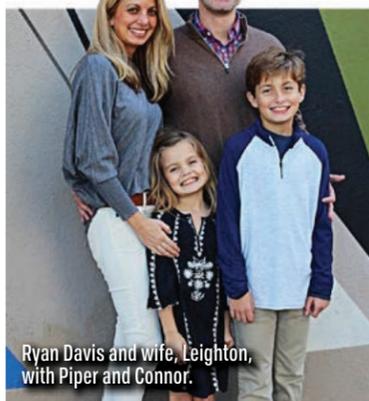
Jurado said his wife stays at home and helps Emma, who goes to Assumption Catholic School, with her virtual schoolwork, so there hasn't been much change in routine at home. But at work, he has gone from working about 21 days a month to 14 because fewer doctors have been needed there since government mandates stopped elective procedures and the numbers of COVID-19 patients actually treated has been far lower than feared.

"In a way it is a good experience, because you spend more time (at home)," he mused. "But on the other hand, you don't have a lot to do, so you find new and different things to do. Emma, somehow, she talked me into building an American Girl house, a LEGO thing full of little pieces. It was time consuming; it was a nice thing to do and spend time with them. At this age, it doesn't matter what you do, it's just spending time with them.

"The biggest joy of being a Father is definitely just hanging out with the kids," he added. "Interacting with them is a reward."

Ryan Davis

San Marco residents Ryan and Leighton Davis and their son Connor, 11, and daughter Piper, 8, students at Hendricks Avenue Elementary School, are no strangers to screens. After all, Davis co-owns the historic San Marco Theatre with his brother, Jonathan, and partners, Andrew Oetjen and Frank Sanchez. It was the very first movie theater Leighton ever went to, and, years later, the couple would go there often when they were dating. Now, seeing and presenting movies in the 82-year-old theater is part of the fabric of the family. The Davis children act as candy testers, and Leighton is a big part of the creative force behind the theater and also serves as occasional ticket taker.



Ryan Davis and wife, Leighton, with Piper and Connor.

It's not the big screen that's the challenge for Ryan Davis; it's the small screens – multiple small screens. The Coronavirus closures have meant he worked at his dining table for several weeks running his construction company, Piper Homes, which is named for his daughter,

while his children did virtual school. He said he's worried about the role the internet and social media will play in his children's lives, and the online school format has been trying.

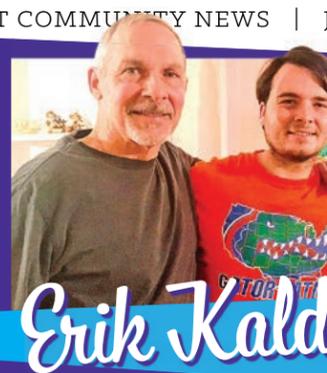
"It's been interesting for us," he said. "Our son is kind of generally the stronger student, he is a rule follower, he's kind of on autopilot, he communicates with his teachers. Our daughter needs a little more attention, she talks a lot in class, she needs some focus. But it's been totally the opposite since home school started. My wife has to sit with her a lot, or I do. But we talk about how this is a once in a lifetime event, we will talk about it in 30 years, and say 'Remember the Coronavirus?'"

For now, the family's normal weekly traditions have been put on hold – eating lunch at Taverna on

Saturday or Sunday and going to the movies. But Ryan finds other rewarding ways to connect with Connor and Piper. He said spending time with his kids by doing something they are both interested in is one of his chief joys in fatherhood, whether that's fishing with his son or working in the garden with his daughter.

"They always make me proud, but when we connect over a mutual interest it's special," he said. And as the days go by, Ryan holds fast to one of the best pieces of advice, given by an older friend.

"He told me when we started having kids, it gets better every day," he recalled. "The older they get, the better it gets, the more fulfilling it gets. It was such good advice, and it's proven to be true."



Erik Kaldor

It's been a long time since Erik spent time with both of his children on a holiday break, and he's taking time

Erik and his wife, Dell, have two boys in May – Jimmy, 22, from the University of Florida, and Jacob, 18, from Bishop Kenny. While neither experienced normal graduation, the pandemic also meant precious family time. "Lately we have been bike riding in San Marco, about 15 miles a night," he said. Watson Realty Corp on San Jose Avenue is home for the first time in four years. "It's nice. As a family we like to go to the beach. Staying there, it's relaxing."

Although the family no longer travels, related distance learning, the downtime of visiting Jekyll Island, and the singular mission of visiting evergreen trees back of a U.S. quarter. That was the U.S. Mint. So far, the Kaldors and his wife went to the Everglades, the Sumter, and others. His son is a hobbyist who has grown into a major hobby, traveling more than 50,000 miles in 25 states to visit hundreds of Civil War battle sites.

The good news is that some of the family's time over Mother's Day weekend and Father's Day. The best news is that whether they are in just San Marco, Kaldor is already home.

"I wouldn't change being a Dad. It's an important role a man fulfills despite the challenges. We are husbands, we're friends, and we're fathers. But I think being a parent is the most important role."



During this time of uncertainty, it's crucial to remember that, while following the CDC's recommended safety steps, there are many ways we can support those in our communities most impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Sotheby's International Realty agents are proudly invested in their local communities and, together, we wanted to share this resource for those able to make a positive impact during this trying time. For the complete descriptions and further details, check out the Extraordinary Living blog at www.sothebysrealty.com/extraordinary-living-blog

5 Ways You Can Have a Positive Impact on Your Community in a Trying Time

- Support Small Businesses
- Give Blood
- Check in on Friends, Neighbors, and Family
- Donate to a Food Bank
- Feeling Lost? Help the CDP (Center for Disaster Philanthropy)

Most importantly, continue to practice safe social distancing. We are all in this together, from our individual communities to the larger global society, and we hope you stay healthy and safe during this trying time.

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Erik and Dell Kaldor with Jimmy and Lauren.

Kaldor has delighted in family time once for longer than a school year. The time to enjoy it.

Two children, and both graduated from the University of Florida, and Lauren, the Coronavirus closures meant a quiet fanfare, their graduations were.

During every night through San Francisco," said Kaldor, a Realtor® with Coldwell Banker. "Having them both here, other than vacations, was a trip to Jekyll Island, biking there,

has to contend with Coronavirus. The upside is that for now, the family is on hold, as is the Kaldor's family National Park featured on the island be 56 total, according to the state are 16 down, 40 to go. Last year the Dry Tortugas, Yosemite, Fort Bragg history major, and visiting parks with the family driving more to visit them as well as the country's parks.

National parks began reopening. Others were set to open in phases. The family explores the parks or by doing the work he loves best. "For the world, it is the most important thing," he said. "We're bosses, we're employees. The most important one."

Robert Harris

When it comes to fatherhood, you could say Attorney Robert Harris of Harris Guidi Rosner P.A. has perspective.

Harris, 68, and his wife, Paola Parra-Harris, an attorney with Parra Harris Law, have two sons, Lucas, 14, Marcus, 11, a dog named Marley, and a cat named Dorie that they rescued after she was badly hurt in Hurricane Dorian. Harris also has three older children: Vanessa, 37, of Kansas City; Blake, 35, of Denver, and Chase, 30, whom Harris is thrilled to say now works with him at his law firm. All of Harris's older children followed in their father's footsteps and became lawyers. They all married spouses who were lawyers, have given Harris six grandchildren.

Being the patriarch of such a large brood has brought multiple shades of meaning and joy, as well as brought different challenges at different ages. Yet, Harris said he has approached all of his



Robert Harris and Paola Parra-Harris with Lucas, Marcus.

children with his own wisdom, with which he knows others will disagree.

"I've sort of looked at being a Dad, as being their friend more than their Dad. I think that has allowed for a lot of fun. All three of my older children call me by my first name, Robert this, Robert that, and tease me about it. They call me Dad, too."

But he does see a difference in the generations. "I don't remember quite as much of the challenge with the older ones as the little ones," he recalled. "Electronics have become a major, major part of the difficulty with being a father. My little ones

at The Bolles School are frighteningly bright and good athletes, but I can't keep them off the electronics. The older ones, I think we ended up with quality, good times by doing a lot of traveling. We ate dinner together every night, but I think our binding thing was breakfasts."

Harris said he has tried to carry on that tradition with his sixth- and eighth graders.

"Now, with the younger ones, we sit down to a big breakfast in the morning. It's only 15 minutes but everybody's in a good mood, and it sends them off well."

He said his wife is involved with multiple community groups such as Catholic Charities and the Catholic and Hispanic communities, which sets a great example but takes time away, as do the kids' sports and friends. But right now, Coronavirus closures require the entire family to do their work and schoolwork from home, allowing everybody to be together at once.

"I'm frankly enjoying it," he said.

Dr. Edmund Clark

Dr. Edmund Clark lived a colorful life before becoming a father and has experienced some terrifying events in foreign lands – but he will tell you nothing can compare with the joy, the love, and the love-based fear of being a parent.

Clark is currently a psychiatrist working for the Veterans Health Administration (VA) and is married to Dr. Lakshmi Gopal, a gastroenterologist also assigned to a local VA clinic. The couple has two children: Leela, 7, a second grader, and Krishna, 6, a kindergartener. But years before he had a family, between 1997 and 1999, he was a secondary school teacher serving with the Peace Corps in Kenya during what turned out to



Drs. Lakshmi Gopal and Edmund Clark with Leela and Krishna.

be the height of HIV crisis there. The epidemic was so severe that instead of teaching, he became a community outreach coordinator, because so many of his students had lost parents or were HIV positive themselves.

After coming home, he joined the Navy and later became a Navy psychiatrist deployed to Iraq in 2008,

when he was involved in a rocket attack. As difficult as those times were, he'll tell you nothing can compare with the awesome responsibility of fatherhood.

"I find myself more emotional working with my kids than those life stressors," he said. "I remember when my daughter had an allergy to eggs, I was in tears, desperate, and thinking, should I get her to a hospital? That fear of loving your child so much is scarier than dealing with rockets."

These days, he and his wife are helping their kids learn online during the pandemic closures. The VA offered him a telehealth psychiatry position in March, around the same time the schools were closing, and being able to work from home helps. His wife is home more often, too, because elective procedures are on hold.

"For the first few weeks, we especially were struggling with all the assignments and navigating what's online," he recounted. "It's been very challenging because there are so many different things you have to look at. It's not just the regular class work but also the gifted class assignments and the resource assignments. I was having to look at 18 different places on the school district's online teaching platform. But now the kids are in a good routine."

Overall, he's learned that parents probably shouldn't worry so much.

"The kids are more resilient than the parents, I think they have taken on all of this better than we have," he said. "The way to be a great parent is to start with the basic of loving your child. At the end of the day if we love our kids and are dedicated to them, the kids are going to be OK."



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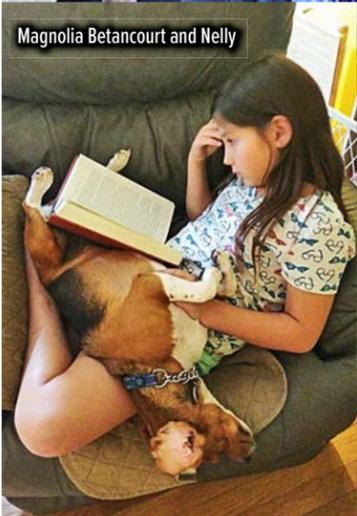
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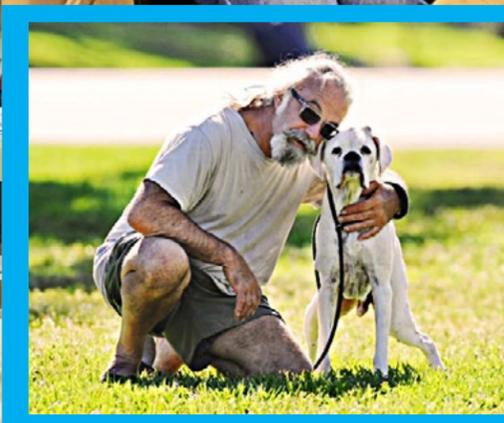
Anita Morrill and Cooper



Carsten Bahr with tadpoles, Shredder and Ripper

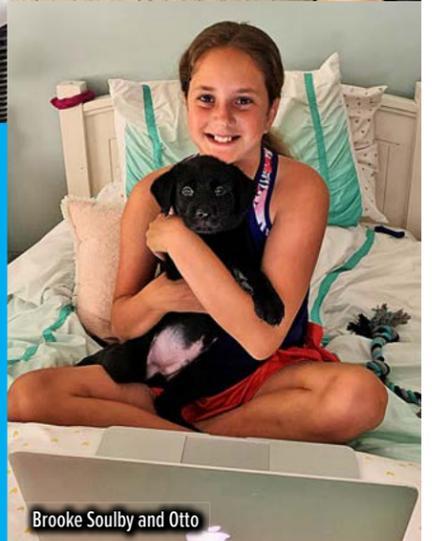


Bill Mason with Blue



Gone but not forgotten

Titus, a 12 1/2 year old white boxer owned by Didier Busnot, passed away peacefully at home May 11. He was a fixture in the Colonial Manor neighborhood and was known for a tender disposition filled with playfulness, curiosity, and love. "Like me, Titus may have looked rough on the outside, but he loved hard and was a loyal companion. He was always right by my side as we walked in the neighborhood each morning. When I walked, I whistle old favorite songs, and he would often howl alongside me," Busnot said. "He will remain in my heart for the rest of my life."



Brooke Soulbey and Otto

Animal House

By Julie Kerns Garmendia Resident Community News

Celebrating bees & beekeepers in June

June is the time to celebrate everything to do with bees, specifically June 22-28, the week designated to celebrate the nectar-seeking wonders, promote beekeeping and publicize the critical food-chain importance of fragile pollinators: birds, hummingbirds, butterflies, moths, bats, beetles and small animals.

Apiologists – honeybee experts – want to inform the public about threats to pollinators and protective actions to save them. Super-pollinators, like honeybees cultivated by backyard beekeepers, are environmental workhorses that pollinate flowering plants, trees, fruits, vegetables, and nuts and seeds essential for feeding people and wildlife. One honeybee can pollinate thousands of flowers per day.

The wild and managed honeybee role in the food chain is undisputed, yet the population is decreasing, according to scientific studies. Experts blame pesticide use, pests, diseases, and stress caused by shrinking sources of their only foods: pollen and nectar from flowers. Those hazards are compounded by the bulldozing of wild lands for development, destroying critical habitat. Altogether, these factors may have already set into motion a catastrophic future scenario for pollinators, unless there is change.

One cause for hope is the increasing popularity and regulatory and community acceptance of urban beekeeping. Urban beekeepers manage backyard beehives and nurture pollinators in compliance with state and local guidelines. Even a few colonies help maintain the genetic diversity of healthy bee populations, according to Brent Weisman of the Florida Master Beekeeper Program and the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services.

Two of approximately 200 local beekeepers are Marilyn Young, whose bees reside in St. Nicholas and Glen St. Mary, and Suzy Faggard, Ortega beekeeper. Young and Faggard became beekeepers through their love for gardening and nature. Both care about environmental issues and support conservation in their own backyards.

Young recently described how the sight and sounds of her honeybees as they contentedly hum around their backyard hives, add endless enjoyment, relaxation, and fulfillment to her daily life. An event held at the Jacksonville Arboretum in 2008 first alerted her to the plight of pollinators.

“That program was so eye-opening it was a turning point in my life. I wanted to get

back outdoors every day and enjoy nature again like when I was a child growing up,” she said. “I wanted to plant, garden, learn about agriculture and pollinators. As an adult, with increased responsibilities over time, I felt so far removed from nature. Beekeeping changed that.”

Excited about a hobby that combined conservation with gardening, Young researched the tiny, flying insect-animals with velvety colorful bodies. Of approximately 20,000 bee species, honeybees were first brought to America and managed by European settlers. They measure 15 millimeters long and fly at approximately 15 mph. They perform a “waggle” dance for other bees, that communicates GPS directions to nectar sources up to 3.5 miles from the hive. Honeybees live up to five months, have a heightened sense of smell and dislike loud noise, or glaring lights. Highly sensitive, they display distinctive moods.

Young completed the University of Florida, weekend “Bee College” held at Marineland, (now online). She joined the Jacksonville Beekeepers Association monthly meetings and educational programs at the McDuff Avenue Duval County Extension office. There she met local beekeepers, made friends, and compared notes before the purchase of her first hives and bees.

Both Young and Faggard said anyone with a little free time and enough space can keep bees. One hive is permitted on smaller than a one-quarter acre lot, or up to three hives on a quarter-acre in Florida. They stress the necessity to first review Florida Department of Agriculture regulations, HOA rules or local restrictions regarding beekeeping. Faggard cautioned that beehives should sit far from property boundaries, safely separated from neighbors, children, pets, or farm animals.



Suzy Faggard

Florida Department of Agriculture registration, certification and inspection are required. Costs for two hives average \$500-\$600, with \$10 registration fee. Expenses can be recouped by private sale of nutritional honey or homemade beeswax products, (Florida Cottage Food Law).

Young said she was amazed when her small colony yielded 100 pounds of honey. She said a common misconception is that honeybees require specific flowers, plants or trees. Bees are expert foragers who find what they need wherever available. They feed on flower pollen and nectar as they collect both, for transport back to the hive, where it is used for food, beeswax and honey production. During their travels bees continuously fertilize thousands of plants with pollen caught on their bodies.

Beekeeping also provides mental health benefits recognized by beekeepers and valued by therapists. Whether it is the common challenges of life experienced by everyone, or more serious, unexpected trauma, there is relief, release and a peaceful escape in time spent with bees.

The concentration and focus required to manage beehives, harvest honey or process beeswax showed therapeutic benefits for military veterans with PTSD, Traumatic Brain Injury or mental health conditions, according to the Bees4Vets program. Bees4Vets teaches beekeeping to reduce stress, anxiety, and depression among participants. Beekeeping increases relaxation, imparts a sense of accomplishment, and provides an independent business opportunity. A formal study of the program's therapeutic benefits is underway.

“When I walk out to check on my bees it becomes an instant unplugged moment. No cell phone, no technology. A complete change of pace that's so relaxing. I slow down. I check on one hive at a time to see how everything is progressing,” Young said. “I go straight into ‘bee world’ where I forget stress. It's not like work at all and brings so much enjoyment. I went from not knowing how to grow anything, to a productive garden as soon as I cultivated honeybees and attracted native bees.”

Young said that beekeeping is an inclusive hobby rewarding for persons of all ages. Beekeeping is also manageable for disabled and blind beekeepers. There is some heavy lifting; assistance may be needed for movement of wooden box hives and honey.

Suzy Faggard, a retired cytotechnologist (examines cells for cancer), is an Ortega



Marilyn Young

Master Gardener whose tropical jungle backyard is a pollinator paradise and her personal oasis. An adventurous world traveler, she's now pleased to be known as the lady to contact, who will gladly drive any distance to carefully relocate unwanted butterfly caterpillars for homeowners.

In 2010 on her daily walk, Faggard's curiosity was sparked by a beehive on a church property. That sighting led to a hobby more fascinating than anything she imagined for her retirement.

“That hive belonged to Marlin Creiter, 94, a local beekeeper, who agreed to locate one of his hives outside of my bedroom window. I spent hours watching those bees. The next year I bought my own two hives. It's a learning process like anything else. Bees are intelligent, complex, and fascinating,” Faggard said. “I'm a different kind of beekeeper because I'm happy with just one hive. I love to check on them up to five times a day, and I like to give all my honey away.”

Despite her skirmishes with pests like hive beetles, wax moths, and mites, Faggard said the rewards of beekeeping are worth the challenges. Last year was the best, most productive year she and her bees have ever had. She said her current residents are gentle and calm, unlike her first two hives, which she described as angry all the time. Faggard and Young both said their bees do not recognize or respond to them like pets, but probably know their scent, which calms them. Bees typically only sting if threatened or to protect their hives.

Both ladies recommend the beginner beekeeping classes and educational programs offered by Jacksonville Beekeepers Association or Clay County Beekeepers Association. The University of Florida offers beekeeping classes and a Master Beekeeper Program.

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Building with integrity

Wolfson pet therapy program celebrates 25 years

When experienced pet handler Linda Dunn moved to Jacksonville, she approached numerous hospitals about starting a pet therapy program. When she shared this vision with Wolfson Children's Hospital leaders, they saw it as an innovative way to improve patients' experiences. Dunn promptly joined the Wolfson Children's Auxiliary, established the program, and made the hospital's first pet therapy visit in May 1995 with her Labrador retriever, Jenni.



Wolfson Children's Hospital's original therapy dog, Jenni, owned by Linda Dunn

In May 2020, the Wolfson Children's Hospital Pet Therapy Program celebrated its 25th anniversary. In that time, pet therapy dogs and handlers have visited thousands of patients and families to provide emotional support during their hospitalization. To commemorate Pet Therapy's contribution to Jacksonville's children and families, Mayor Lenny Curry proclaimed May 15, 2020, to be Wolfson Children's Hospital Pet Therapy Day.

Today, the auxiliary has a roster of 13 certified pet therapy teams, each made up of one handler and one dog, with one more duo in training.

"Our Pet Therapy Program is a unique and important part of how we care for our patients," said Michael D. Aubin, FACHE, president of Wolfson Children's Hospital. "These remarkable dogs and owners reduce anxiety for and bring comfort to our patients, their families and our team members the moment they walk in the door. The bonds our patients and therapy pets form are evidence of how important the program becomes to them during their stay."

Pet therapy is an evidence-based way to support children's healing, no matter the

reason the children are in the hospital. Studies show that spending time with a certified therapy dog triggers the release of endorphins, which eases pain and discomfort, lowers blood pressure, and reduces levels of the stress hormone, cortisol. When patients need to practice their motor skills or learn to walk again, providers can call on therapy dogs to motivate them to practice walking, petting, and reaching to tug or toss toys. Wolfson's pet therapy teams not only visit patients, but also provide support to nurses, physicians, and other providers during special events, like Nurses Week. Baptist Health also offers pet therapy visits at two of its locations thanks to 15 handler and dog volunteer pairs.

Pet Therapy Chair and volunteer handler Jeanne Shober said she and her dog Bear have seen the benefits of pet therapy firsthand.

"Nearly every child we visit has a beloved pet at home that they miss terribly," Shober said. "Sharing our dogs with the children, their parents and the staff helps to bring smiles and a touch of happiness to their day. Sharing our pets is also rewarding to the handlers and their dogs. It's such a privilege for us to be a part of this wonderful hospital."



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THE WAY WE WERE: DR. WILLIAM CORDELL MASON III

BY MARCIA HODGSON
RESIDENT COMMUNITY NEWS

REFLECTING ON A 50-YEAR CAREER FILLED WITH MEDICINE AND MINISTRY

Reflecting on his 50 years as a hospital administrator for Baptist hospitals worldwide, Bill Mason realized his career was the perfect mix of medicine and ministry. The San Marco resident has held leadership positions at Baptist Health in Jacksonville for 40+ years, from 1978 until October 2020. During that time, he kickstarted and oversaw the growth of Baptist Medical Center – Jacksonville from a small city hospital into a much larger regional health system in Northeast Florida.

Mason credits his highly successful career to the influence of his two grandfathers who lived in Fairhope, Alabama, where he grew up – Dr. William C. Mason, a dentist and a pharmacist who served as temporary town doctor when the only physician was called away during World War II, and Rev. Dr. William H. Evans, former pastor of First Baptist Church.

“When I went away to college at the University of Louisiana in Lafayette, my two grandfathers sat me down because I couldn’t decide what I was going to be,” Mason recalled. “They said, if you don’t know if you want to go into medicine or

ministry, study pharmacy and that will buy you four years until you decide what you want to do.”

Knowing there was not a “snowballs chance” that he would enjoy a pharmacy career “typing labels for little bottles,” Mason received an epiphany after hearing a lecture by Raymond C. Baumhart, SJ, president of Loyola University in Chicago.

“He said the word administration derives from two Latin words Ad and Ministrare, which means to serve and to minister, as in hospital administration, which I had never considered before. He said in the Catholic Church the Pope’s role is to serve the servants who are the nuns and priests who are then serving Christ’s children, and it goes back to the Bible where Jesus said ‘he who would be chief among you must first be your servant.’ He said, the same is true in hospitals. The CEO is the servant of the servants of the hospital – doctors and nurses, technicians, pharmacists, lab workers, housekeepers, and dietary workers. The hospital administrator as the chief executive really means you are the chief servant of the servants, if you do it right,” he said. “I looked at it that way, and that was the cornerstone of my whole career.”

Married to his first wife, Mona, and with two babies to provide for after his college graduation, Mason was trying to figure out how he could afford to get a master’s degree



Rev. Dr. William H. Evans and his wife, Laeuna, Evans was pastor of Alabama’s Fairhope Baptist Church where Mason’s parents were married in 1935 and where Evans baptized Mason in 1946.



Dr. William C. Mason and his wife, Annie. Dr. Mason was a dentist and town pharmacist.



Bill Mason, his infant daughter, Holly, and his son, Steve, and wife, Mona, ride an elephant through the jungle in Bangalore, India in 1977.

in hospital administration, when, thanks to the recommendation of Baumhart, he was offered the opportunity to join the State Department’s U.S. Agency for International Development as a foreign service officer in Manila, Philippines. His assignment was to assist in rebuilding the country’s hospitals and medical schools. During 1966-1969, as part of the Southeast Asia desk, Mason was also sent to South Viet Nam as a civilian advisor.

As an aide-de-camp to Ambassador Sterling J. Cottrell, he ferried important dignitaries such as Sen. Ted Kennedy to view refugee camps, a role which was often fraught with danger. “I never went out in the boonies or even shaved in the morning without my .45,” he said, noting the Viet Cong tunneled under the barracks and were on the verge of sneaking in to cut the Americans’ throats when the tunnel was inadvertently discovered by the Marines.

But it was during the Tet Offensive, when Mason’s village was mortared that he had his second “life-changing” experience.

Before his eyes, small children were brutally injured, and Mason’s role was to serve at Can Tho Hospital as the triage officer deciding who would receive treatment and who would be left to die. “One little fellow lost his leg. Another was blinded and lost his arm, and there was this little girl, Troung Minh, whose left arm was so badly mangled the only way to save it was to take skin from her abdomen and graft it onto her arm,” he recalled, adding that the brilliant Army surgeon who saved the little girl’s life was Dr. Herschel Douglas, a man who much later became chief surgeon at Jacksonville’s University Hospital. “When Dr. Douglas died, his wife asked me to do the eulogy,” Mason said.

“There were 197 casualties. People were bringing handcarts full of bodies with people dead and alive and just dumping them in front of the hospital and then running back to get more. One young woman was pregnant. Her leg was missing, and she was bleeding to death but in labor and I had to decide which pile to put her on. We took her into the hospital to have her baby. The baby lived, but unfortunately, the mother died,” he said.



The Mason family arrive in Kenya so that Bill can attend Swahili language school in 1972: Mike, Mona, Steve, Becky, and Bill

The traumatic experience earned Mason the Meritorious Service Medal and led Mason to decide it was time to pursue his masters in hospital administration. Through his military connections, Mason was able to receive a scholarship to Trinity University Hospital in San Antonio, Texas, where he received his degree and did a residency at Baptist Hospital in Beaumont, Texas. Beaumont is where he learned of opportunities in hospital administration in Baptist Mission Hospitals around the world. “This is where my 50 years started, right there,” he said.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 27



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Although he was invited to remain on the staff in Beaumont, Mason decided to become chief executive officer of a Baptist hospital in Africa. “Seeing those kids injured in Can Tho during the war really shook me to the core, and I thought, I’ve been through all this with people killing each other, I think I need to go spend my life helping poor people and the children in those countries,” he explained.

To get initiated into Baptist hospital mission work, Mason first attended Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, where he took courses in Christian ethics and Biblical archeology. He also received cultural and language training at the Baptist Mission retreat at Calloway Gardens in Georgia, and at Brackenhurst Conference Center, an old British Hotel in Nairobi, Kenya, where he spent eight months learning Swahili.

In his four years heading Baptist Hospital in Tanzania, Mason was responsible for the care of 380 patients. Food was often scarce, requiring him and a crew to head out in two Land Rovers onto the plains of Serengeti, where he would shoot six to eight animals, such as impala, to feed his family and patients. “It wasn’t really hunting because the animals were just everywhere,” he said.



A government game warden asked Mason to shoot an old rogue hippo in Lake Rukwa. The old hippo with an abscessed tooth was killing villagers. “We put him out of his misery,” he said.

Wanting to provide a turkey dinner for his family during their first African Thanksgiving, Mason recalled heading out in search of the iconic bird. When he realized there are no turkeys on the Serengeti, he shot an ostrich instead. “I had no idea how big they were,” he explained. “We spent half a day field dressing it, and it took four of us to pick the carcass up and put it on the Land Rover. It weighed 300 pounds.” Because of the bird’s size, his wife was unable to cook it in the house, so he steamed it in the hospital’s autoclave sterilizing unit and carved off the meat. “We doctored it up, but it was not edible. The patients wouldn’t eat it, and the German Shepherds we had to guard the hospital wouldn’t eat it, so we ended up just burying it,” he remembered.

After four years in Africa, Mason was called to Bangalore, India in April 1974, where he oversaw the construction of a new Baptist hospital. The President of India was present at the hospital’s dedication, and Mason’s youngest daughter, Holly, was the first American child born within the medical facility.

During this time, Mason was also called to serve as a regional consultant for Baptist hospitals in Yemen and Rhodesia, two locations where he was called to fill in as CEO after hospital administrators were murdered by terrorists as they performed their work.

Mason later returned to the United States and was working at a hospital in Alabama, when his aunt, Lois Smith, an active member of Hendricks Avenue Baptist Church, asked him to speak to her congregation about his hospital work. During that visit, on December 2, 1977, his third life-changing experience occurred because Dick Malone, the new CEO of Baptist Medical Center Jacksonville just happened to join the church that Sunday.

“He had been here a few weeks and had already decided he was going to clean house and build his own team,” Mason said. “After church that day, Dick invited me to come down to the hospital and have lunch with him, and the rest is history.”

As chief operating officer, Mason ran Baptist Medical Center while Malone served as CEO and chairman of the board, working closely with the Southern Baptist Convention, which owned the facility. Later Baptist legally separated from the Convention. After two or three years, Mason officially became CEO when Malone died of leukemia in the early 1980s.

Since then, Mason has shepherded Baptist and its extensive building programs. It was his vision to bring the first Life Flight Program to Jacksonville. “That came out of my experience in Viet Nam,” he said, noting the air ambulance had ferried 22,000 patients over 37 years without an accident. During his tenure he built the Pavillion, an obstetrical hospital in 1985, the Baptist Cancer Center and Eye Institute in 1986 (which is now the Hill Breast Center), the Jacksonville Orthopedic Institute which housed 32 surgeons in 1987, Baptist Hospital at the Jacksonville Beaches in 1988, Baptist Hospital in Nassau County in 1989, Wolfson Children’s Hospital in 1993, a 225-bed Heart Hospital in 2001, and the Baptist South Hospital in 2003. “I built just about one a year,” he said.

Mason also set up the Baptist Foundation in 1985 and its \$23 million Campaign for Construction to build Wolfson and considers the children’s hospital’s ribbon-cutting one of his finest hours. He is proud First Lady Barbara Bush was able to attend the Oct. 23, 1993 ceremony, joining his mother, Sybil Evans Mason, and his second wife, Juliette, then head of the Baptist Foundation, who he married in April 1993. The children’s hospital, which is adjacent to Baptist Medical Center, represents a Children’s Health Consortium between Baptist, Nemours Children’s Specialty Care, and University of Florida Medical School Jacksonville.

From its inception in 1985 to 2018, the Foundation has built an endowment of more than \$100 million, he said proudly. Baptist Health also donated the first radio-equipped ambulance in Paraguay to the Baptist hospital there.

Also, during his tenure, he bought four city blocks of San Marco homes so that Nemours and Ronald McDonald House could be built in close proximity to Wolfson. And Mason joined Jeff Wadsworth of Nemours in placing the golden spike on the glass skybridge that connects the children’s hospital with Nemours across I-95.

Mason took the lead during Baptist’s 1995 merger with St. Vincent’s Hospital, where he served as President and CEO of the Baptist/St. Vincent’s Health System, which grew to 1380 beds, 12,000 employees and eight hospitals, the biggest health system in the Southeastern region. The merger lasted until 2002 when the Daughters of Charity sold St. Vincent’s to Ascension Health.



William and Juliette Mason on their wedding day in April 1993

Also inspired by his two “doctor” grandfathers, Mason had on his bucket list to earn a doctorate of his own. He entered a doctoral program at the University of North Florida in 1997 earning a degree in Health and Education Leadership in 2002, and taught hospital administration in UNF’s graduate school for several years receiving the College of Education and Human Services “Alumnus of the Year” award in 2005.

Officially retiring from all Baptist boards and committees in October 2020, until that

time, Mason continues to serve on four different Baptist Health boards of directors – the Foundation Board, as chair of the Baptist AgeWell Institute, and on the boards of Social Responsibility and Community Health. “Right now, I’m still working at Baptist. I’m there every week,” he said.

Mason said he often thinks of Winston Churchill’s words when he reflects back on his career: “To each in their lifetime comes a special moment when they are tapped on the shoulder and offered a chance to do a very special thing, unique to them and fitted to their talents. What a tragedy if that moment finds them unprepared for that which could have been their finest hour.”

“With the support, encouragement, and love of my family, I was prepared when that special moment came in my life. I am humbly grateful,” he said.



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Mourning a loved one during the Coronavirus pandemic

By Marcia Hodgson
Resident Community News

When it comes to mourning the death of a loved one, “there is no textbook way to grieve,” said Jody Brandenburg, president of Hardage Giddens Funeral Homes and Cemeteries, which owns 10 funeral facilities including Hardage-Giddens Riverside Memorial Park & Funeral Home and Hardage-Giddens Oaklawn Chapel & Cemetery in San Marco. His words perfectly describe what funeral directors in Jacksonville’s historic neighborhoods have encountered during the recent Coronavirus pandemic.

During a time when residents are advised to wear masks, use hand sanitizer, and remain six feet away from each other, when death comes, surviving families have discovered the art of mourning has greatly changed as well.

Many families have opted to hold graveside committal services, which have been limited to only 10 mourners, while postponing memorial and celebration of life services until the stay-at-home orders and restrictions on group gatherings are lifted, according to Brandenburg and two other funeral directors in Jacksonville’s historic neighborhoods – Cameron Naugle, owner of Naugle Funeral Homes & Cremation Services in San Marco and Riverside, and Greg Williams of Integrity Funeral Homes and Cremation Services in Riverside and Fernandina Beach.

Funeral homes also have adopted Zoom, social media, and other on-line technologies to conduct funerals, share messages of condolence, and store historical information into perpetuity.

During the Coronavirus crisis, funeral services are considered essential businesses by state officials. When state and city leaders at first issued stay-at-home orders, funerals and committal services at cemeteries were limited to only 10 mourners. With the issuance of phase 1 by governmental officials in May,

as a way to normalize business on the First Coast, funeral guidelines are “unlimited” as long as they adhere to social distancing measures are maintained, said Brandenburg.

Prior to the change that occurred in mid May, Naugle said he measured the seating of his chapel and determined he could seat two mourners on either end of the front row, one in the middle of the second row, two in the third row, one in the fourth, and so forth in order to keep everyone six feet apart. “That way we can seat 32 people in our chapel safely. I figure that is a good compromise,” he said.

Meanwhile, Hardage-Giddens tried to keep its numbers at graveside committal services low, while stressing social distancing, Brandenburg said. “If there are more that want to come, they can drive by in their cars and roll their windows down so they can feel apart of it,” he said.

As of this writing, Naugle said most cemeteries continued to limit graveside mourners to 10, and Jacksonville’s National Cemetery had stopped all services completely. “The casket can go to the National Cemetery, but it’s only drop-offs, no families are allowed, and no honors are rendered,” he said. “It’s kind of disappointing, but that’s what they’ve decided to do. They are promising to do make-up services at later dates.”

The restriction to only 10 graveside mourners caused some families to become more creative. “I did a service at Jacksonville Memory Gardens and one sister showed up with her 10 people and she did a service, and after she left, her sister came with her preacher and her 10 people and did a service at the graveside for 10 minutes. Then a third sister came, and she did a service at the graveside for 20 minutes with her people. Something like this was never a thing before,” Naugle said. “We try to find something that works for the family as well as the cemetery.”



Mourners practice social distancing during a funeral service in the Naugle Schnauss Funeral Home’s Riverside chapel.



Greg Williams of Integrity Funeral Home & Cremations adjusts a camera to use during a Zoom funeral.

The use of Zoom, an online meeting platform, has allowed more family members to participate in the ceremony while at home, said Naugle, who recalled such a graveside service at Evergreen Cemetery. “I brought my cell phone and tripod, and we set it up off to the side. We had 15 additional family members join 10 minutes before the service,” he said, noting a family member also recorded it. “After the service, we uploaded the recording to our website so those who couldn’t make the Zoom meeting or were in a different time zone could watch it.”

Families are satisfied with Zoom because communication goes two ways, he said. “Some family members wanted to talk. I know it was strange that the cell phone was talking, but they got to talk, and that was important,” Naugle said, noting it is a way for family members to give testimonials.

As of this writing, Integrity Funeral Homes had not yet conducted a Zoom funeral but has the capacity to do so, Williams said, adding that before the pandemic he had livestreamed services overseas so family members could experience celebrations in real time.

Hardage-Giddens also livestreams services to worldwide locations and provides copies of the service afterward. “It is almost like an online guest book,” said Brandenburg, whose company also uses Making Everlasting Memories (MEM.com), an online memorial website, where obituaries, stories, and information can be placed in perpetuity.

Brandenburg, Naugle and Williams said the pandemic has not caused their companies to change the way they prepare bodies. All staff wear PPEs (personal protection equipment—gowns, masks, face shields and gloves) during preparation. “Since the HIV crisis years ago, everybody has changed their procedures,” Brandenburg said. “We have universal precautions in place. This is nothing new for us because we’ve been up to speed,” he said, noting Hardage-Giddens also has an additional set of universal precautions it abides by.

Families with loved ones who die of COVID-19 often opt for cremation or direct

burial, Naugle said. “We had one COVID case that was a direct burial. We took the body, which comes in two very thick pouches (body bags) from the hospital, and we transferred it directly to a casket and buried it,” he said. “That’s probably the safer way to handle it if the family chooses burial. I haven’t seen anything that says you can’t embalm it, or that after it’s been embalmed that you can’t let people view it, but for safety’s sake and erring on the side of things we don’t know, we’ve been recommending direct burial.” As of this writing, his funeral home had only handled six COVID cases, he said.

Although his funeral home had not yet served any COVID cases, his team is prepared to when and if the time comes, Williams said. “We know exactly what to do to squash the virus.”

All three men mentioned social distancing has been rough on client families during the pandemic.

“I’m a Southern Baptist. We hug, we shake hands, and we hug again,” said Williams. “It’s devastating, especially for families who want a hug and can’t get it.”

Naugle agreed. “We are a touchy, feely industry, and sometimes you want to give people hugs because you feel bad for them. The way it is today, you are not able to,” he said. “It has been tough. I had a family member who looked like she was going to cry. I asked her, ‘what’s wrong?’ and she said she just wanted to hug her brother but realized she shouldn’t at this time. It’s just a sign of the times.”

“Many people will be planning life-story celebrations after this is over so they can have the strength of having people around them,” said Brandenburg, noting each Hardage-Giddens location has a special calendar reserved to schedule future memorial services. “Even with the delay, celebrations are important. Although this is unprecedented, I think people need the recognition and celebration of a life well lived. It is important to recognize the person who has passed away, and it doesn’t just have to be the most prominent person in Jacksonville. Everybody is comforted by being surrounded by friends. There is no time limit on it.”



Chairs are set up for social distancing at Legacy Lodge, a gathering place on Hardage-Giddens Oak Lawn property where the facility that normally might house 160 is restricted to 40 during the time of COVID-19.

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In Memoriam

Frances Bartlett Kinne

May 23, 1917 to May 10, 2020

A trailblazer in education, both in Jacksonville and throughout the world, Dr. Frances Bartlett Kinne, matriarch of Jacksonville University, passed away May 10 at the age of 102. She was only two weeks shy of her 103rd birthday.

A small-town Iowa girl, who had a love for music and literature, Kinne rose to

become the first woman to receive a doctorate from the University of Frankfurt in Germany, and later became the first female dean of a fine arts college in the United States and the first woman to serve as president of a Florida university – Jacksonville University – as well as the first chancellor of JU.

In Jacksonville, she was also the first female member of the Downtown Rotary Club and of the River Club and was the inaugural winner of the EVE Award. In 1973 she received the first Florida Governor's Award for the arts. She is also a Florida Women's Hall of Fame inductee and is listed on 24 different Who's Who lists, including Who's Who in the World.

In 2000, her autobiography, *Iowa Girl: The President Wears a Skirt*, was published, which included forewords by Bob Hope, Charlton Heston and Winston Churchill, grandson of Britain's former prime minister.

"Dr. Frances Bartlett Kinne leaves behind an incredible legacy," said Jacksonville Mayor Lenny Curry. "She was an inspiration for women across the globe. Not only was Dr. Kinne and incredible educator, administrator, accomplished musician, and author, she was the first female university president in the State of Florida, and the second in the United States. She paved an important path for women everywhere, and she will be greatly missed."

Born in Story City, Iowa, to Bertha Olson Bartlett, who ran the town library and Charles M. Bartlett, who published her hometown newspaper, Kinne graduated from high school in 1934 and attended Iowa State Teachers College in Cedar Falls, which is now known as the University of Northern Iowa. She took piano lessons at Iowa State University in the summers, and later received her Bachelor of Music Education degree from Drake University. After graduation, she worked as a public-school music teacher and as a choral and instrumental conductor for several central Iowa schools.

In World War II, she became a U.S. Army entertainer and served as a United States Army Hostess at Camp Crowder in Missouri, eventually becoming the head hostess in a program that served 70,000 servicemen.

Once the war was over, Kinne served as recreational director at a V.A. hospital in Kansas, which was where she met her first husband, Lt. Colonel Harry Kinne. The couple lived in China in 1948 and were forced to be evacuated to the country's interior during the communist revolution. Later, during the Korean War, her husband was posted to General MacArthur's staff, and she served as director of music and assistant entertainment director for the Far East Command for the U.S. Army's Special Services.

In 1955, her husband was posted in Germany, and Kinne completed her Ph.D. at the University of Frankfurt. In 1958 the couple moved to Florida, where her husband accepted a position in the Florida National Guard and Kinne became involved with Jacksonville University.

She initially joined the riverfront college as a humanities professor, a position she only expected to hold for a short time.



However, her tenure ended up spanning 62 years.

In 1960 she founded JU's College of Fine Arts, and nine years later she rose to become dean of the program, before taking over as president of the university in 1979, a position she held for a decade. During her tenure as president she established the Davis College of Business, the Keigwin School

of Nursing, and eliminated the university's debt within 18 months of her appointment. In 1983, she launched the university's 50-year Golden Anniversary Campaign and raised \$16 million for the school.

"Fran was absolutely a once-in-a-lifetime mentor. What's remarkable about her is that she represented that role to literally hundreds and hundreds of people," said JU President Tim Cost, who added she was famously known on campus as "capturing the lady in red."

"She had rare and special gifts that she was able to share. Her combination of enthusiasm, optimism, and pragmatism was unrivaled in any leader I've had the pleasure of working with in my 40 years since graduating from college."

Kinne raised the national profile of JU by inviting world-famous celebrities to visit the school, including President Gerald Ford, Bob Hope, Jack Benny, Charlton Heston, Duke Ellington, Linus Pauling, Margaret Mead, Ross Perot, and Arthur Fiedler, conductor of the Boston Pops. She also convinced George Steinbrenner, owner of the New York Yankees, to have his baseball team play an exhibition game against JU's collegiate team as a fundraiser for the school.



Dr. Frances Bartlett Kinne with Hollywood superstars Jack Benny (left) and Bob Hope (right)

Upon her retirement as JU president, she was immediately elected as first chancellor of JU by its board of trustees.

JU named her Professor of the Year in both 1961 and 1962, and Business and Professional Women's Clubs of Greater Jacksonville granted her the Distinguished Achievement Award. She was also named by President Ronald Reagan to chair the President's Council of Independent Colleges and Universities of Florida. On Nov. 1, 2012, the City of Jacksonville proclaimed Dr. Frances Bartlett Kinne Day.

"Dr. Kinne was an excellent connector, mentor and role model for JU students through their undergraduate years and beyond," said Nina Waters, president of The Community Foundation of Northeast Florida and an alumna of JU.

Cost agreed. He said every holiday season, when he would visit with Kinne at her home, he usually found her to be in the middle of corresponding with more than 2,000 JU alumni that stayed in regular touch with her. "To see the joy and gratitude in her interactions with our graduates was unforgettable," he said.

Kinne was preceded in death by Col. Harry L. Kinne, her first husband who died in 1981, and Col. M. Worthington Bordley Jr., her second husband who died in 1996.

ASK THE EXPERT



Celebrating your passions

Matt Tucci

Jacksonville Market Director,
Hardage-Giddens Funeral Homes
and Cemeteries

Q: I'm a United States Veteran. What kinds of memorial benefits are available to me and my family?

A: First of all, thank you for your courageous, selfless service to our country. As a veteran, you may qualify for burial benefits through the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), and it's essential to find a funeral or cemetery provider that understands these benefits and can help you design a memorial that not only reflects your personality and passions, but also honors your legacy of service and commitment. The following benefits may be made available to veterans and their survivors, as supplied by the VA:

- Burial and plot interment allowances
- Headstones and markers
- Military honors
- Burial flags
- Presidential Memorial Certificate (PMC)

Q: How do I file for Veterans memorial benefits?

A: Ensuring that all available Veterans benefits are received is very important. Keep in mind that, like Social Security benefits, Veterans benefits are not paid automatically; you must apply for them. Here's what you will need when filing for Veterans benefits:

- Death certificate
- Discharge papers (DD-214)
- Marriage certificate
- Birth certificate(s) for Veteran's minor child(ren)
- Receipt of itemized funeral bill

A knowledgeable provider can walk you through this process and help you coordinate every detail of a final tribute that truly celebrates the life it represents.

Design a memorial that not only reflects your personality and passions, but also honors your legacy of service and commitment.

Q: What else does your funeral home do to honor Veterans?

A: We're proud to be part of a nationwide network that serves more Veterans than any other funeral service provider. We work year-round to help Veterans and their loved ones understand and obtain memorial benefits at informational seminars, and we are proud to partner with community programs like the We Honor Veterans Program and the Homeless Veterans Burial Program. We also host and participate in annual Memorial Day and Veterans Day celebrations. And, to help you plan, our funeral home offers a Veterans Planning Guide filled with useful information about the benefits available to you and how to apply for them, as well as a place where you can organize and record your final wishes. You can contact us to receive your complimentary planning guide today.

If you have more questions, visit your local funeral provider. They are a good source of information for funeral, cremation and cemetery options.

Matt Tucci is the Jacksonville Market Director with Hardage-Giddens Funeral Homes and Cemeteries, which serves the greater Jacksonville area. For more information, Matt can be reached at 954-821-7103 or visit him at the Hardage-Giddens Funeral home in Mandarin, 11801 San Jose Blvd, Jacksonville, FL 32223 San Jose Blvd. or email matthew.tucci@dignitymemorial.com

Nonprofits uncertain future FROM PAGE 1

and noted Duval County is the “900-pound gorilla” with 902 nonprofits, including several that serve multiple counties. Nassau County has 68, Baker County, 11, Clay County, 102 and St. Johns County, 237, signifying it is a particularly high growth area with many new sports and recreation organizations.

One project the Nonprofit Center is working on is assisting the U.S. Census in numbering hard-to-count populations, she said. “Having a vital nonprofit community in these counties makes our ability to reach out to hard-to-count populations much easier. I think that is another way to think about the impact of the nonprofits. We know we are the most trusted to work in a community, so when it comes to a project like completing the census, having a strong nonprofit community is truly helpful,” she said.

Since 2012, the First Coast has added 51 education nonprofits serving clients from birth to grade 12. Second was religious organizations with 44, followed by human services general with 38, general health with 33, sports & recreation with 30, and arts and culture with 28. Currently, the First Coast has 3.99 nonprofits per 1,000 people, she said, noting that the average in the United States is 3.98. “The numbers may sound large. What I hear from my peers is ‘Wow, there are so many nonprofits, how are we all going to survive?’ But when you look at the number per capita compared to other states and the U.S., we aren’t any different, so it seems to be consistent,” she said.

Nearly 50% of the nonprofits in Northeast Florida fall within five groups by mission: Religion, 9.8%, health general 9.7%, human services general 9.4% and arts and culture 8.9%. One of the smaller groups is international with 5.6%, which Coughlin said she expects to shrink down even further in the future due

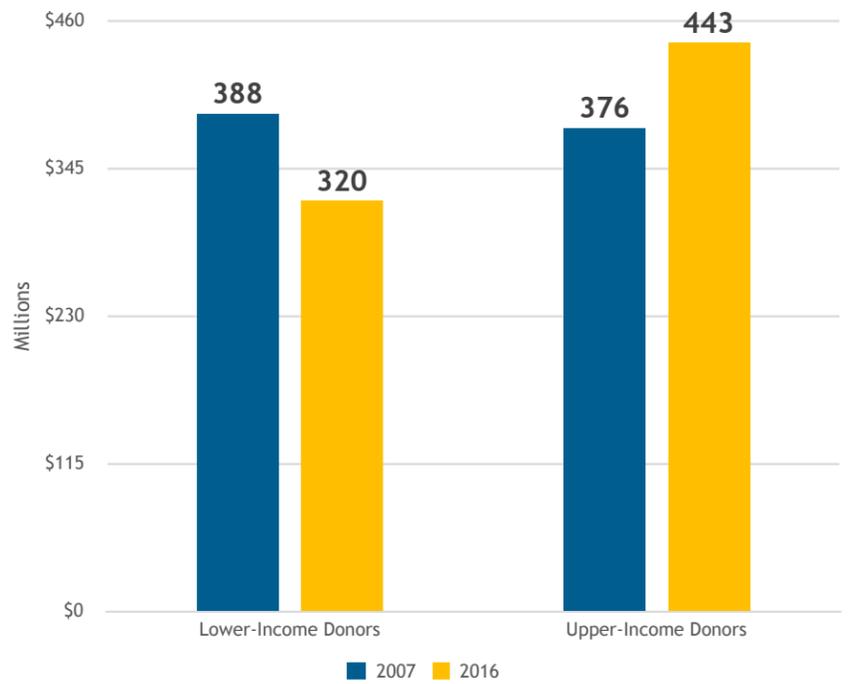
to the federal government’s recent crackdown on immigration. “We lost two affiliates that did refugee resettlement in our community, and I don’t think that will be easier in the future with the Coronavirus. That will be a number we want to watch,” she said.

Viewing aggregate revenue and aggregate assets among the 501 (c) 3s there seems like a strong balance sheet, she said, especially if you look at employment. Altogether the nonprofit sector boasts \$8.56 billion in revenue, \$7.33 billion in assets, and 72,188 nonprofit employees, making the sector the third largest civilian employer in Northeast Florida. However, most organizations are small, with 72% pulling in less than \$500,000 in revenue. Only 5.2% have more than \$10 million in revenue, followed by 14.7% with revenue between \$1 million and \$10 million, and 8.1% with revenue between \$500,000 and \$1 million.

“When we take out nonprofit health institutions from the statistics, we see a huge drop in all of those numbers – 72,188 employees goes to 28,483, while the \$8.56 billion in revenue goes to \$2.72 billion, she said, adding that of the 15 largest First Coast nonprofits, only three – Step Up for Students, Wounded Warrior Project, and Jacksonville University – are not health related. “There’s the sector, and there’s the sector with health institutions,” she said.

Of the three ways nonprofits are funded – earned income, government funds and contributions – locally 69% of all funding for First Coast nonprofits comes from earned income with 5% from government funds and 22% from contributions. Meanwhile, if one excludes the health nonprofits from the equation, the picture changes dramatically. Only 27% of those nonprofits survive on earned income, while government funds make up 14% and contributions play a much

Aggregate Giving Adjusted for Inflation



bigger role of 55%. “This is important to think about as you assess the long-term impact of the Coronavirus pandemic on nonprofits,” she said.

In 1998, approximately 31% of all nonprofits operated in the red, and the number in 2017 – pre-COVID -- is slightly higher – 35%. In the recession of 2002, the number soared to 42% only to be outdone by the Great Recession of 2008 when the number rose to 44%. Since its height in 2009, the numbers have fluctuated slightly downward hovering around 37% and 38% most years, until its lowest in a decade came to 34% in 2016, with 2017, ticking slightly upward before COVID-19 hit. “What this doesn’t tell you is that although they closed the year in the red, it could be by \$3.58, \$3 million or \$580,000. We have no idea. However, this is an important trend line for us because you can see it follows almost exactly the economic trend line. In 2001, after 9/11, we had a recession, and the number spiked to nearly 42% of organizations closing the year in the red. We’ve had a gradual trend line down to 33% just in time for the Great Recession, when we had a peak of nearly 45% of nonprofits in the red. We also saw a steep decline in their asset base, which means they were digging into their assets to survive the recession. I believe this has left them weaker as they enter this next difficult period. This trend line has never come back to pre-recession levels, which is worrisome, Coughlin said.

Contributions paint a similar picture, indicating that individual wealth has not fully recovered from the Great Recession. Considering data based on polling IRS forms of individuals with itemized deductions, contributions were just under \$1 billion in the pre-recession year of 2007, and by 2016, they are at \$1,014,379, just slightly above the 2007 level. What’s really concerning is that when viewing the average gross income of those donors, its slightly down when you consider all donors but is considerably less for upper income donors, dropping from an average of \$679,067 in 2007 to \$493,838 in 2016, she said. “There’s a 30,000 drop in the number of persons who itemized on their tax form as donors from 2007 to 2016,” she said. “That’s a tremendous decrease. What we don’t know is if those donors are contributing in some other way or have established a donor advised fund, or are giving online and not recording it, but I think to some extent it is a true decrease.”

It is also important to note that the bulk of giving to nonprofits has shifted dramatically to upper-income donors in the decade from 2007 to 2016. With the numbers adjusted for inflation, in 2007, lower-income donors gave approximately \$388 million, which was just slightly above gifts from upper-income donors of \$376 million. This

changes dramatically in 2016, with lower-income donors falling to \$320 million, while upper-income donors climbed to \$443 million. “Upper-income donors, even though their average gross income has not rebounded, are making up the difference,” she said, noting lower-income donors have an adjusted gross income (AGI) of less than \$100,000, while upper income donors have an AGI of more than \$200,000.

COVID-19 impact

Although it may seem like nonprofits may be in for a bloodbath as the COVID-19 economy marches on, it may not all be bad news, Coughlin said.

In recent polling done by the Nonprofit Center, 74% of the nonprofits said donors had reached out to check on them, while 20% were providing advocacy for the sector and 30% offered to provide nonfinancial support, and 23% said they had received some kind of help or assistance from their donor partners. Of note is that 39% of donors have offered to convert program funding to operations funding. “I think this is a critical and bold move for many funders,” Coughlin said.

Much of this has to do with “trust philanthropy,” a new concept which promotes a higher level of trust between nonprofits and donors, especially when it comes to trusting the organizations they have invested in will make the right decision when using their funds during extraordinary circumstances in a different way than specified. Trust philanthropy is currently being pushed by the Council on Foundations, which is offering a pledge to be signed by both donors and organizations, said Coughlin, adding the Community Foundation of Northeast Florida has signed the pledge.

This is important considering the dramatic changes many nonprofits have been forced to make due to COVID-19. In a recent survey, 34% of nonprofits said they have converted to all virtual operations, while 28% have formed a hybrid way of operating by using both in-person and virtual methods. Meanwhile, 14% of the nonprofits have closed operations except for essential services, and 14% have stayed fully in-person operationally by occupying their physical office space. Only 4% reported that they have entirely ceased operating.

COVID-19 has also taken a toll on staffing. Nearly 30% of the nonprofits polled said they have laid off or cut staff, which is an increase from the Nonprofit Center’s first flash poll done just after the crisis started when that number was below 15%. “We are seeing this number inch up every time we ask,” said Coughlin.

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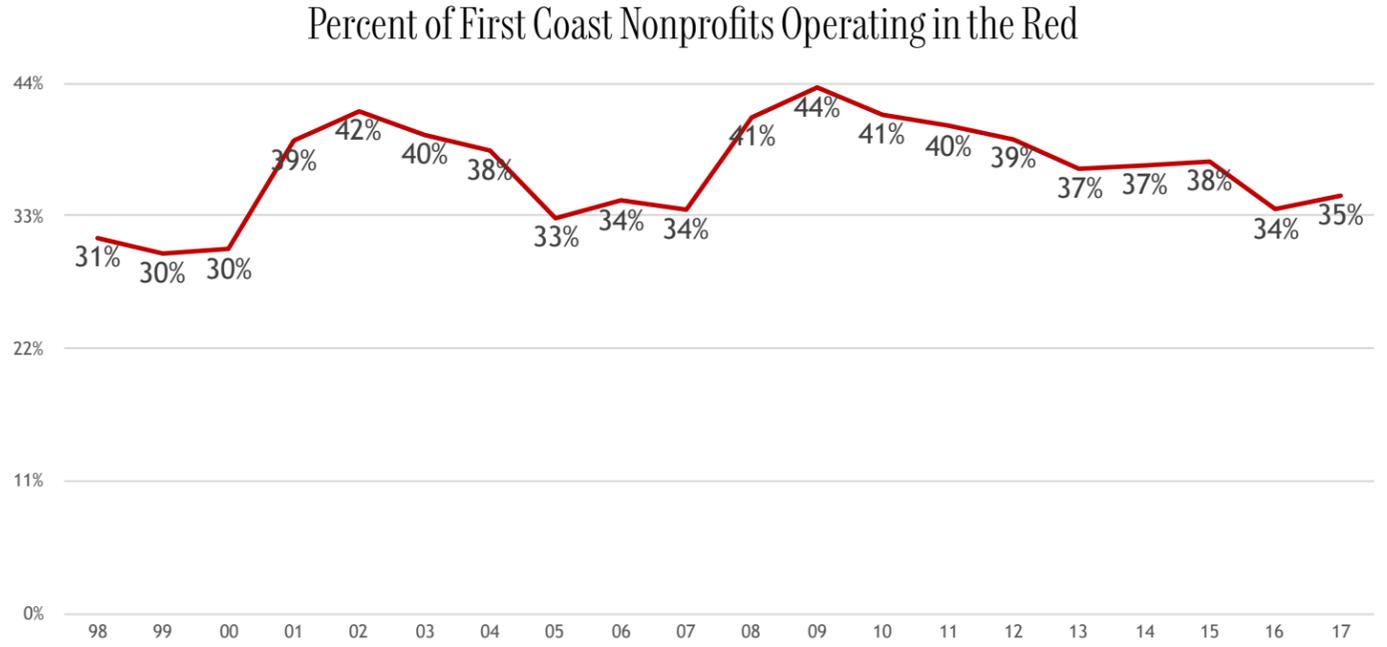
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And 50% of the nonprofits said revenue has been lost during the pandemic due to the forced cancellation of fundraising events, while 30% said they had lost revenue due to their inability to deliver services.

But most impactful is the loss of volunteers, many of whom were fulfilling staffing rolls. Nearly 40% of the nonprofits are suffering due to a loss of volunteers, while 28% said there has been an increased demand for their services, and 33% said converting to a virtual world has been significantly difficult.

Contrary to what many funders and governmental officials believe, First Coast nonprofits – the majority of which earn \$500,000 or less – have been applying for the lifelines that have been offered by the local and federal government. Of the nonprofits recently polled by the center, 67% have applied for the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) while 3% were planning to apply. Of the organizations that applied, 91% were successful in getting a grant, while 9% were still waiting to hear. “I had to say I’m blown away by this statistic,” Coughlin said. “The absolute angst and terror we were all confronted with to meet the PPP deadline, and it seems now there was a significant amount of success in the sector,” she said, also noting that 33% also applied for help from the City’s VyStar small business loans, the First Coast Relief Fund, or Eidl (Economic Injury Disaster Loan).

Also, of interest will be how stimulus checks from the federal government will impact the nonprofit sector. “It’s almost as if we have a micro laboratory to see how universal basic income could influence the demand for services,” Coughlin said. “I know the First Coast Relief Fund had a significant drop in their requests for assistance immediately after stimulus checks went out. Perhaps there is a way for us to think about the future with direct service, direct income support that allows



the nonprofit sector to respond to the community need.”

Coughlin also said that Mari Kuraishi, president of the Jessie Ball duPont Fund, reported during a recent webinar that many nonprofits have assumed donations would decrease during the pandemic, but a poll indicates most donors have no intention of decreasing their giving. “Where the truth lies, we will have to stay tuned to find out,” she said.

“Depending on your revenue streams, ability to work remotely, the services you provided, and whether you were forcibly able to connect with the community or not – all of that has made a huge difference and has pointed out how complicated the nonprofit sector is,” said Coughlin. “It’s clear to me that it has taken longer for us to come back from the 2008 recession, so what will happen and how long will it take to come back from the Coronavirus recession? No one knows.”

Connecting-by-Caring is how you can help

COVID-19 has forced many nonprofits to dramatically change the way they do business, with many converting from in-person organizations with many volunteers to virtual operations. Although it is too early to determine what long-term affect the pandemic’s seismic change will have on the health of the nonprofit sector, it is obvious that nonprofits need extra support as they navigate through unsettled economic waters. And there is a way you can help. By supporting *The Resident’s* Connecting-by-Caring Campaign, it is possible to support nonprofits that care for the most vulnerable in our community while also supporting the community newspapers that cover the sector closely and provide the best that fiercely local journalism has to offer. A creative look at the paying-it-forward principle, the Connecting-by-Caring Campaign allows you to both assist your favorite charitable organization while also supporting the neighborhood newspaper you love. Instead of simply giving a monetary donation directly to a nonprofit, we ask that you entrust that money to our publication so we can design, write, edit, and complete a marketing campaign of your choosing. This kicks into action the “multiplier” effect by doubling or tripling your impact as your message is delivered directly into 30,000 households in Jacksonville’s historic neighborhoods. For more information about the campaign and your role in it, please contact Debra McGregor at 904-885-6031 or Seth Williams at 904-885-6849.

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Fourteen members of the Class of 2020 will be playing a sport at college next year.

BASEBALL

Matt Komaroski – Pacific University
Carson Hurst – West Liberty University

SWIMMING

Jace Crawford – University of Florida
Kate Wilkerson – Wagner College

VOLLEYBALL

Olivia Leinenweber – Babson College
Hannah McCarthy – Franklin and Marshall College
Viki Wood – Queens University of Charlotte
Emily Mayher – Loyola College of New Orleans

SAILING

Chris McCollum – Jacksonville University

GOLF

Tommy Bishop – Hampden-Sydney College

SOCCER

Mason Doherty – Sewanee: The University of the South
Paddy Prendergast – Piedmont College

WEIGHT LIFTING

Max Evanson – Northern Michigan University

WRESTLING

Reid Hampton – Virginia Military Institute

Victoria Acevedo
Emily Allemand
Emery Allen
Anders Amlie
Amelia Anderson
Alden Andrews
Lucca Antonio-Jose
Katherine Barringer
Brooke Begley
Elizabeth Bell
Tommy Bishop
Ashton Body
Max Borghese
Thomas Brumback
Luke Brunell
Sarah Bryan
Jackson Chappell
Naiya Cheanvechai
Madison Clark
Lizzie Conklin
Lauren Connors

William Cook
Jace Crawford
Olivia Daniel
Brooklyn Davis
Mason Doherty
Ben Easton
Max Evanson
Rad Fant
Emilie Fazio
Chandler Fields
Christopher Gardner
Ford Gleaton
Lilly Gleaton
Mara Goldwasser
Will Goodman
Reid Hampton
Jewel Hardwick
Lily Hauser
Alex Hays
Will Hays
Cooper Helton

Sekai Hicks
Jonah Hodo
Spencer Huie
Leticia Huntley
Carson Hurst
Carrisa Iszard
Robert Jackson
Jackson Jones
Parker Kelly
Josh Kewere
Matt Komaroski
Olivia Leinenweber
Sam Logullo
Vason Lyerly
Ben Magevney
Evan Mansur
Emily Mayher
Maya McCall
Hannah McCarthy
Chris McCollum
Matthew McCoy

Max McQuiddy
Andrew Moseley
Kolby Mullaney
Nolan Nicholson
Max O'Brien
Olivia Orr
Trenton Orr
Mark Parent
Sophie Perrella
Kevin Pina
Will Pittman
Paddy Prendergast
Ally Raudenbush
Ellie Riggs
Charlotte Rosenberg
Timmy Rudolph
Johnny Rukab
Adam Sayar
Logan Sims
Caroline Smith
Mabel Smith

Caden Staggard
Nick Strada
Haley Strenta
May May Swett
Kristin Taylor
Caroline Terre
Cassidy Terre
Lucas Thompson
Tanner Thompson
Kate Wilkerson
Niya Williams
Viki Wood
Tori Zlatanoff



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Jr. Residents 33

Sievert named as Presidential Scholar in the Arts

Mallorie Sievert, a senior at Douglas Anderson School of the Arts was named one of six from Florida to be part of the 56th class of U.S. Presidential Scholars and the only scholar from Jacksonville.



Mallorie Sievert

The May 21 announcement was made by U.S. Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos. She recognized 161 high school seniors for their accomplishments in academics, the arts, and career and technical fields. Sievert was named as one of only 20 Presidential Scholars in the Arts and the only one in theatre.

"It is my privilege to congratulate the Presidential Scholars Class of 2020 on their outstanding academic achievement, community service, and leadership," said DeVos. "These exemplary young people have excelled inside the classroom and out. And, while they are facing unprecedented challenges as they graduate from high school into a world that looks much different than it did just a few months ago, their determination, resilience, and commitment to excellence will serve them well as they pursue their next steps."

The White House Commission on Presidential Scholars selects students based on their academic success, artistic and technical excellence, essays, school evaluations, and transcripts as well as evidence of community service, leadership, and demonstrated commitment to high ideals. As directed by Presidential Executive Order, the 2020 U.S. Presidential Scholars are comprised of one boy and one girl from each state, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico, and U.S. families living abroad, as well as 15 chosen at-large, 20 scholars in the arts and 20 scholars in career and technical education.

Donations overflow from Episcopal's remote Celebrating Service Day

A global pandemic did not stop folks from the Episcopal School of Jacksonville from giving to the less fortunate. The school's first remote Celebrating Service Day April 21 resulted in such an avalanche of donated goods that Episcopal was able to help two food pantries instead of just one. Benefitting from the largesse were St. Mary's Episcopal Church food bank and Mandarin Food Bank.

"The pandemic has made our need to help others in our community even more critical. Food pantries are serving more individuals and families than ever before," said The Rev. Teresa Seagle, school chaplain.

Episcopal's buses were parked at the St. Mark's, Beaches, and Munnerlyn campuses from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. April 21 for donations. Donors brought goods – like non-perishable foods and hygiene products – and were able to do so without coming into contact with anyone or touching any surfaces.

Episcopal annually holds Celebrating Service Day, and all students, faculty, and staff contribute thousands of hours of community service at organizations around Jacksonville. This year, because of the pandemic, the event was held remotely.



Andy Kidd, Episcopal athletic director, with his daughters Emily and Maggie, who both attend St. Mark's Episcopal Day School

Creating a time capsule to remember COVID-19

To make sure, 25 years in the future, that Riverside Presbyterian Day School students will be able to understand what the Coronavirus pandemic was like, first and second grade students at the school decided to create, Front Porch Stories: A Time Capsule from 2020.

"I wondered, what if we made something to help RPDS remember the significance of this time? A gift... to the future first and second grade classes of 2045... a gift that won't be opened for 25 years," said Samantha Stokes, a lower school science teacher at RPDS.

"The pandemic of 2020 will stay marked in our memories for the rest of our lives," Stokes said. "It affected almost every part of our daily lives. Someday, though, this will all be a memory – something that happened in the past that we all got through, together. This terrible time will end, and we will emerge into the world to resume our lives."

In forming the time capsule, RPDS's first- and second-grade students included



Jenny Brumback and her girls



The Arrowsmith family

future letters to themselves, interviews, reflections on the passing of time, and items they believed would tell the story of this unprecedented time, such as toilet paper and masks. Stokes also ventured out to each

student's home for a front porch distance picture to capture the essence of this time period. Students in the year 2045 will be asked to open the time capsule that will be buried on the RPDS campus.

GRIT CAMP

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CAMP SCHEDULE

- From 9am to 2pm each day
- Week 1 - June 1-5
- Week 2 - June 8-12
- Week 3 - June 15-19
- Week 4 - June 22-26
- Week 5 - July 6-10
- Week 6 - July 13-17
- Week 7 - July 20-24
- Week 8 - July 27-31

Multi-child and multi-week discounts available. Lunch can be provided for extra fee. T-shirts and swag available for extra fee.

Registration is now open!

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THE BOLLES SCHOOL



Anne Ruperto – Co-Valedictorian

Ruperto intends to take a gap year to explore internship and research opportunities before attending Harvard University. She has a long list of academic honors – too many to mention here – but a few include National Merit Scholar, National AP Scholar, and the U.S. Presidential Scholarship, the Carter Stubbs Drake Goad Award by earning five or more gold medals on the National Latin Exam, and eight first places at the Florida Junior Classical League Regional Latin Forum. For community service, Ruperto logged more than 100 hours volunteering at the Museum of Science and History. She also served MaliVai Washington Youth Foundation and the Greek Orthodox Youth Association. The only girl on her all-boys travel ice hockey team, she was captain when it placed third in the state championship. A two-time team qualifier for the USA Hockey Girls Nationals, she received Most Improved Player and Hardest Working Player laurels at ProAmbitions Hockey Camp at Boston University.



Rishi Misra – Co-Valedictorian

Misra was accepted to Princeton, Yale, University of Chicago, The Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania, and Duke, but finally settled on Yale, where he will pursue his interest in the life sciences, business, philosophy, and ethics. At Bolles, he was president of the National Honor Society, president of the Bolles Environmental Club, a pancreatic cancer researcher at the Mayo Clinic's Cell Adhesion and Metastasis Laboratory for two years, regional vice president of the Florida Junior Classical League, played soccer for both Bolles and the Jacksonville Armada. He placed first in the undergraduate research competition at ASCB| EMBO, world's largest cell-biology conference, where he was the only high school student among college undergraduates and medical students. A National Merit Scholarship recipient, he received five gold medals or perfect scores on the National Latin Exam. A finalist at the 2020 Regeneron International Science & Engineering Fair, he and has published cancer research in MCoC, an international cell-biology journal.



Yash Gulani – Salutatorian

Accepted at Brown University, Gulani plans on studying public health and economics on a pre-med track. At Bolles, he served as president of his class all four years. He was also president of the Latin Club and Latin Honors Society. Apart from school, he was heavily involved in his local Indian community's youth committee. "Since the sixth grade up until now, I have met so many teachers and fellow students who have impacted my life in so many ways. In response to the Coronavirus, it has been difficult being unable to live out what was supposed to be the best days of our high school careers. Missing events such as sporting events, prom, and honor society inductions have put a damper on the year for sure, but above all the health of myself and my fellow peers comes first. I know we will get through this even stronger and find a way to celebrate our achievements."

BISHOP JOHN J. SNYDER HIGH SCHOOL



Abigail Wilson – Valedictorian

First in her class, Wilson is graduating with a 4.429 GPA and will attend the University of Florida next fall, where she will study biology and health sciences. In high school, she has served as president of the National Honor Society and was also a member of the English National Honor Society, Mu Alpha Theta National Math Honor Society, Rho Kappa National History Honor Society, the Science National Honor Society and the Spanish National Honor Society. "While the end of this year has certainly not been 'normal,' with us missing out on prom and grad bash, I still am thankful that we have the opportunity to graduate in person and see our friends one last time. In a way, I've actually enjoyed this time, because I feel online schooling better prepares me for the college-setting, and it makes being able to graduate with my friends all the more special."



Michael Baugh – Co-Salutatorian

Boasting a 4.411 GPA, Baugh will be on his way to the University of Florida next fall and is planning to major in chemical engineering. At Bishop Snyder, he was a member of the National Honor Society, Mu Alpha Theta National Math Honor Society, Rho Kappa National History Honor Society, the Science National Honor Society, and the Spanish National Honor Society. "The last quarter of senior year, the material felt faster paced yet less significant," he said. "I guess it did not seem as important with other worries in minds and finals out of the question."



Sarah Kersten – Co-Salutatorian

Committed to St. Mary's College in Notre Dame, Indiana, next fall where she will study nursing, Kersten shares Salutatorian honors with a 4.411 grade point average. In addition to memberships in the National Honor Society, English Honor Society, Mu Alpha Theta National Math Honor Society, Rho Kappa National History Honor Society and the Spanish National Honor Society, Kersten was secretary for the school's Student Government Association. She was also the 2020 recipient of the Cardinal Club Student Athlete Award and was on Snyder's volleyball and soccer teams. "Having the final months of my senior year with my classmates stripped away was unanticipated and difficult to grapple with. As graduation approached, I realized the Class of 2020 has accomplished so much. It now comes down to taking this experience with us as we move forward, learning from it, and striving to accomplish even more in the future."

CONTINUED ON PAGE 35

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BISHOP KENNY HIGH SCHOOL



Kathleen Yarborough – Valedictorian

Headed to University of Florida next fall where she will major in public relations with an eye toward law school, Yarborough graduated with a 4.55 GPA and earned memberships into the National Honor Society, as well as the Latin Rho Kappa, and Science Honor Societies. She participated in Anchor Club, Catholic Athletes for Christ, and Latin Club. Yarborough achieved honor roll every quarter of her high school career and had straight A's in 11 advanced placement courses and was named AP Scholar with Distinction in 2019 based on her AP exams. She logged more than 200 hours of community service in four years and is involved in her parish church. A gymnast for North Florida Gymnastics, where she is team captain, Yarborough achieved level 10 in the sport and has qualified for state and regional gymnastics competitions. As a member of her school's swimming and diving team, she placed 13th in the state diving competition.



Gabriella Hitti – Salutatorian

Hitti ended the year with a 4.53 GPA and had high honors for all four years at Bishop Kenny. She is a Joe Berg graduate, a National Merit Commended Scholar, a National Hispanic Scholar, member of the National Honor Society, National Latin Honor Society, and earned the AP Scholar Award, the Wofford Scholar Award, and the UNF Diamond Scholarship. She participated in Medical Club, Spanish Club, Science Club, and The Society of St. Vincent de Paul. She will attend the Hicks Honors Program at the University of North Florida as a pre-med chemistry major. "To me, graduating high school is simultaneously nerve-racking and exciting. Sure, we will get to move on we our lives to learn about the actual world, but I will miss all the memories of high school: the excellent teachers, the diverse student body, and the familiarity of the school itself. Many of my favorite memories were made during these four years," she said.

SAMUEL WOLFSON SCHOOL FOR ADVANCED STUDIES



Sherry Gill – Valedictorian

Graduating with a weighted GPA of 4.7424 and a cumulative GPA of 3.8485, Gill is debating on whether to attend the University of North Florida or the University of Texas – Dallas, where she hopes to become a nurse. In high school, she logged more than 150 hours of community service through the National Honor Society, Trunk or Treat, and other International Baccalaureate activities. She was also the winner of the school's end-of-the-year English and Art awards. "The Coronavirus has definitely brought abrupt change to my school life," she said. "Being a senior, many activities were cancelled, which was devastating. However, as heartbreaking as it was to miss these events – prom, grad bash, etc. – the important thing was to remain safe in times like these. With this being said, it motivated me to finish strong and remain on task to complete my senior year."



Kevin Torres – Salutatorian

Committed to attend the University of North Florida, Gonzales-Torres has the goal of becoming a real estate agent and an entrepreneur. Graduating with a weighted GPA of 4.6406 and a cumulative GPA of 3.7813, Torres was in the National Honor Society. He logged more than 150 community service hours through the Society, cleaning for a company, and participating in International Baccalaureate events. He was winner of Wolfson's end-of-the-year Foreign Language Award and the Class of 1989 Alumni Award. A Wolfpack soccer player for three years, he was on a Florida Elite Soccer Academy team throughout all four years of high school. "No matter what background you come from, nobody can say life is without troubles. All that matters is how you deal with it," said Gonzales-Torres. "My school is not a huge or wealthy school. However, we push through and find success. My school has students with multiple different backgrounds and personalities, which makes it unique."

DOUGLAS ANDERSON SCHOOL OF THE ARTS



An Tran – Valedictorian

A visual-arts major, Tran will head to the University of Florida to study architecture next fall. At DA, Tran received the following laurels: National Gold Scholastic Art and Writing Award, Scholastics American Visions Nominee, and Arts for Life, MVP Science and Top 10 awards. She accrued 275 hours of community service, and was a member of the National Honor Society, National Arts Honor Society, Robotics Club, Mu Alpha Theta National Math Honor Society, and Marathon High, a running club that prepares members to run a 13.1 half-marathon. "Graduating from DA is rewarding knowing all the effort I put into balancing arts and academics have finally come to fruition. We will not be known as the unlucky class that experienced a pandemic, but the class that stayed resilient, connected, and creative despite the odds. We are the class that overcame a pandemic on our way to academic success."



Samuel Pabon – Salutatorian

As a future University of Central Florida student who plans to major in mechanical engineering, Pabon majored in visual arts at DA and took home several end-of-the-year awards: All-Star Senior, National Merit Finalist, National Merit University of Central Florida Scholarship, AP Chemistry award, Seal of Biliteracy, and Top 10 award. Pabon tallied 300 hours of community service and was a member of the National Honor Society, the National Art Honor Society, Mu Alpha Theta National Math Honor Society, Rho Kappa National History Honor Society, the National Spanish Honor Society, the National Science Honor Society, Robotics Club, Yearbook Club and Marathon High. "Four years of work has prepared me to make my own masterpieces. Besides determination, passion, and proficiency, DA has granted me individuality," he said. "Graduating means there is no mold for my future. I will keep my head up; life is not meant to be a masterpiece, it's a work in progress."

THE EPISCOPAL SCHOOL OF JACKSONVILLE



Ashton Body – Valedictorian

Graduating with a 4.93 GPA, Body plans to attend Harvard next fall with her eye to eventually going to medical school and becoming a surgeon. For the past two years, she has conducted research at the Mayo Clinic through the SPARK program, which is how she completed most of her community service hours. As a freshman and sophomore, she played volleyball for the Eagles, and just took up lacrosse her senior year. "Graduating from Episcopal means a lot to me as it has become such a tight-knit community," she said. "It is such an amazing place where I have been lucky enough to compete in science fairs and learn so much from such a caring and passionate faculty, but also where I could impulsively play lacrosse with my friends for the first time this year. Overall, I am extremely grateful for my time at Episcopal, and I can't wait to see what the future holds!"



Sarah Madison Clark – Salutatorian

Earning a 4.9 GPA, Clark will attend Vanderbilt University where she plans to major in pre-med molecular biology. A member of the Cum Laude Society, National Honor Society, National Chinese Honor Society, National Art Honor Society, Clark received several NEFAA Scholastic Art and Writing Awards. As a freshman she played volleyball, receiving the Coach's Award. As an upperclassman, she was a JV and Varsity cheerleader, and the recipient of the JV Lisa Lampe Rogers Excellence in Cheer Award. For four years, Clark served as an Eagle Ambassador, serving the admission department as tour guide. In the Angels for Allison Club, she was on the Student Leadership Council and co-president as a senior. Clark was Dynasty Club president, and active in community service. Working for the Jacksonville Humane Society, Clark fostered three litters of kittens. She played with children at Nemours Children's Specialty Care and served as a counselor for Beaches Episcopal School summer camp.

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CONGRATULATIONS CLASS of 2020

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EPISCOPAL CONGRATULATES

Members of the Class of 2020 were accepted into the following colleges and universities:

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 Arizona State University
 University of Arizona
 Auburn University
 Ave Maria University
 Babson College
 Bard College
 Barry University
 Baylor University
 Belmont University
 Berry College
 Birmingham Southern College
 Bishop's University
 Boston College
 Boston University
 Brown University
 Butler University
 Cal Poly San Luis Obispo
 Cal State San Marcos
 University of California, Davis
 University of California, Irvine
 University of California, San Diego
 University of California, Santa Barbara
 Carroll University
 University of Central Florida
 College of Charleston
 Clark University
 Clemson University

Colby College
 Colorado College
 University of Colorado, Boulder
 University of Colorado, Colorado Springs
 Colorado State University
 Columbia College, Chicago
 Columbia University
 Creighton University
 Dartmouth College
 Davidson College
 Denison University
 University of Denver
 DePaul University
 DePauw University
 Earlham College
 Eckerd College
 Edward Waters College
 Elon University
 Embry Riddle Aeronautical University
 Emory University
 Flagler College
 Florida Atlantic College
 Florida Gulf Coast University
 Florida Institute of Technology
 Florida International University
 Florida Southern College
 Florida State College of Jacksonville
 Florida State University
 University of Florida
 Fordham University
 Franklin and Marshall College
 Furman University

George Mason University
 George Washington University
 University of Georgia
 Georgia Southern University
 Guilford College
 Hampden Sydney College
 Harvard College
 Hawaii Pacific University
 High Point University
 Hobart and William Smith Colleges
 Howard University
 University of Illinois,
 Urbana-Champaign
 Indiana University, Bloomington
 University of Iowa
 Ithaca College
 Jacksonville University
 James Madison University
 Kennesaw State University
 University of Kentucky
 Lafayette College
 Lake Forest College
 Liberty University
 Louisiana State University
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 Loyola University, New Orleans
 Lynn University
 Macalester College
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THE CLASS OF 2020!

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 University of Mississippi
 Montana State University
 University of Montana
 Morehouse University
 Mount Allison University
 Muhlenberg College
 North Carolina A&T State University
 University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill
 North Carolina State University
 Northwestern
 University of North Florida
 Northeastern University
 Northern Michigan University
 Nova Southeastern University
 Oglethorpe University
 Oklahoma State University
 University of Oklahoma
 Old Dominion University
 Olivet Nazarene University
 Oregon State University
 Oxford College of Emory University
 Pacific University
 Palm Beach Atlantic University
 University of Pennsylvania
 Penn State University
 Piedmont College
 Presbyterian College
 Purdue University
 Queens University of Charlotte
 University of Rhode Island

Rhodes College
 University of Richmond
 Ringling College of Art & Design
 Roanoke College
 Rollins College
 Roosevelt University
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 Santa Clara University
 Sante Fe College
 Savannah College of Art & Design
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 Skidmore College
 University of South Carolina
 University of South Florida
 University of Southern California
 Southern Methodist University
 St. Thomas University
 Stetson University
 Tallahassee Community College
 University of Tampa
 Temple University
 University of Tennessee, Knoxville
 Texas A&M University
 Texas Christian University
 Texas Wesleyan University
 United State Military Academy,
 West Point
 University of Oregon
 Vanderbilt University
 Virginia Commonwealth University
 Virginia Military Institute

Virginia Tech
 University of Virginia
 Voorhees College
 Wagner College
 Wake Forest University
 Washington & Lee University
 Washington College
 University of West Florida
 West Liberty University
 Western Michigan University
 College of William and Mary
 Williams College
 Wingate University
 Winthrop University
 Wofford College
 University of Wyoming
 Yale College



Letter TO THE Editor

Student shares appreciation for remote teaching

Dear Resident Editor,

I want to share my experience with distance learning during the Covid-19 crisis. My name is William Wright, and I just finished 8th grade at Episcopal School of Jacksonville. During my spring break, the school announced that we would not be coming back to campus but instead do remote learning. At first, I was excited about not going to school, but after a few weeks I realized that I would rather go back to school to see all my friends and teachers. We did remote learning through Zoom and Google Meets and met everyday from 8:05 am – 3:25 pm. I thought my school did a great job trying to make it feel like we were actually at school. We rotated through our normal school schedule and met with all our teachers and classmates everyday. The hardest part of remote learning was looking at a computer all day and focusing on the teacher through a screen. However, it was the best that we could do during this crisis, and I appreciate all the hard work and planning my school did during this time.

Sincerely,
 William Wright
 St. Nicholas

Keeping with tradition at Douglas Anderson

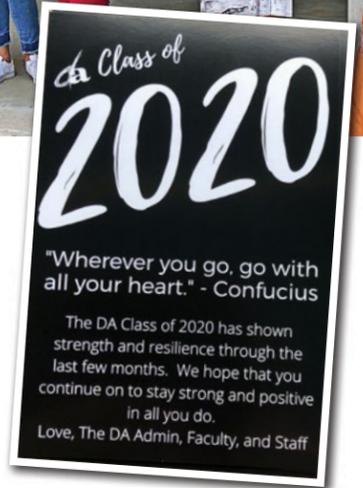
Due to COVID-19, the long-standing tradition of having the senior class parade out of school on its last day, was not possible so the faculty modified the ritual to fit the times. DA hosted a car parade for its seniors, who decorated their cars and turned into the bus loop to start the parade. Each member of the Class of 2020 got a special gift from the school's administration, faculty, and staff before driving through the bus loop with their teachers cheering them on. The parade was live streamed on Facebook so families could watch. Of the 296 students graduating from Jacksonville's arts magnet this year, 250 participated in the parade, said DA Principal Melanie Hammer.



Jennifer Turbyfill, chair DA Dance Department; Rhonda Stampalia, Christa Sylla and Kathy Keel



DA Principal Melanie Hammer hands a gift to Abby Webber, a member of the senior class



Sign congratulating the senior class at Douglas Anderson School of the Arts



Senior gifts from the DA administration, faculty and staff

CONGRATULATIONS

CLASS OF 2020




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