

Alumni fights school renaming



Robert E. Lee alumni have formed a political committee to fight the Duval County School board as it aims to rename their alma mater. Forming the committee are Norman Abraham '59, Melanie Amos Love '79, Robert Lawrence '80, Patti Fraser Price '80, Joey Stevens '84 and William "Pat" Geer '67 (not pictured).

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Park Place developer wins first round in legal battle

The grassroots neighborhood group Right Size San Marco received disappointing news when a Tallahassee judge ruled in favor of the City of Jacksonville and South Jacksonville Presbyterian Church in a preliminary legal decision that may allow an Alabama developer to build a four-story apartment complex on land near San Marco Square.

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COMMUNITY NEWS



CHILDREN MASK UP AS THEY HEAD BACK TO SCHOOL

Thanks to the Coronavirus pandemic, masks were the new uniform when children at all grade levels in Jacksonville's historic districts headed back to school in August. While a fair number of parents opted to keep their children home and do their schoolwork remotely, the majority of students headed back to the classroom, cautiously, to learn in-person with their peers. It was a new normal at every school, public and private, due to the strict new rules of social distancing and adherence to CDC guidelines put in place to keep their students safe.

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Monty Trammell

Welcome new neighbors

One care package at a time

Hospitality reigns in Lakewood thanks to Monty Trammell. As president of the Lakewood Community Association, Trammell has been making it her business to welcome newcomers to the neighborhood by filling up special baskets full of useful neighborhood information, copies of *The Resident Community News*, fun goodies, coupons, and gift certificates from local stores. She then hands off the baskets to other "street" volunteers, who assist by making the deliveries.

The area Trammell serves comprises approximately 350 homes over nine streets, and she identifies newcomers to her neighborhood by keeping an eye on "For Sale" and "For Rent" signs posted on front lawns.

A retired educator who taught at San Jose Elementary and Beauclerc Elementary, Trammell eventually became a principal serving San Pablo Elementary for 10 years and then back to Beauclerc for 14 years before retiring in 2003.



PASTRY CHEF WINS SWEET PRIZE

Foodies throughout Jacksonville's historic neighborhoods were able to cheer one of their own when a pastry chef from a Riverside restaurant group took home top honors and a \$10,000 prize on the Food Channel's prestigious show, "Chopped: Sweets."

Rebecca Reed, a pastry chef for the Black Sheep Restaurant Group, which encompasses Restaurant Orsay in Avondale, Black Sheep in 5 Points, and Bellwether restaurant downtown, flew to New York to compete against three other contestants on the show March 4, just days before the city

was shut down for COVID-19. The program aired locally Aug. 25.

Going head-to-head against her competition, Reed was asked to whip up delicious tropical-themed desserts within 30 to 45 minutes from a basket with four mystery ingredients.

Reed holds a Master of Pastry Arts degree with honors from New York City's French Culinary Institute and has called Jacksonville home for the past eight years. Prior to working with the Black Sheep Restaurant Group, she was a pastry chef at Matthew's Restaurant and Rue Saint Marc in San Marco.



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Letters TO THE Editor

The Resident, a focus of good news in the community

Three years ago, when I joined St. John's Cathedral as director of marketing and communications, I contacted *The Resident Community News* about taking out a monthly advertisement. The Cathedral is downtown, outside of the delivery area of the newspapers, but many of our parishioners live in these areas. Advertising in the paper has been a great fit for us. The paper not only features news about our community, but it's also the one paper that people tell me they read from cover to cover each month.

On the editorial side, the reporters at *The Resident Community News* have done a fabulous job featuring news from the Cathedral about people and businesses in the communities that surround downtown Jacksonville. When we hosted a luncheon to celebrate the lifelong friendship of three Cathedral members who have shaped our community, Seth Williams and Marcia Hodgson came to cover the event. Marcia wrote a standout piece, "Celebrating Sisterhood through Philanthropy and Community Leadership" (Jan. 2020). She also has covered events at the Cathedral Bookstore featuring partnerships with Jacksonville nonprofits including Rethreaded, Angels for Allison, City Rescue Mission and the North Florida School for Special Education.

In addition, as a Riverside resident, I thank you for your excellent work and your continued commitment to focusing on the good news in our community!

Nancy Purcell
Riverside

Reader congratulates *The Resident* on 13 successful years

Congratulations to *The Resident Community News* on 13 years of existence! Your monthly newspaper is the third and most successful journalistic publication of historic Jacksonville. During the 70s, we had *The West Side Story*, and around the 80s and 90s, there was *The Express*.

In January 2007, *The Resident* published its inaugural edition, which covered news in the Westside historic neighborhoods of Riverside, Avondale, Ortega, and Murray Hill. The following year, the paper began publishing an additional Southside edition, concentrating on San Marco, San José, and St. Nicholas. This two-edition reach presently covers the central Jacksonville neighborhoods south of Downtown near the St. John's River.

In a time when daily newspapers are losing money to the Internet, *The Resident* is bucking the trend by specializing in historic neighborhood news, sponsored by a healthy amount of school, business, charity, and real estate advertising. The story themes are impressively wide in scope. They include art, health, music, business, politics, religion, education, city projects, local history, resident opinions, civic organizations, and architectural preservation.

The slogan of *The Resident* reflects its key to success: "Fiercely local news...fiercely loyal readers." Rather than resurrecting the general, county-wide coverage of the disappearing daily, *The Resident* concentrates on the historic neighborhoods of the city's center. Such hyper-local news on a monthly basis allows for more in-depth and informative reporting of local issues. This specialization is part of a growing trend towards niche journalism.

So, I propose a toast to the continued success of *The Resident*. Our neighborhoods have dreamed of having a viable, local publication since the Disco Age. Now, with *The Resident*, it looks like the third time's the charm.

All the best!
Marcos Protheroe
Avondale

Resident disputes need for mandated vaccinations

In response to the letter in the current issue of the San Marco *Resident* titled "Children need wellness appointments, vaccinations," I wonder if the good doctors are aware of the unexpected benefits of the drop in these visits and the accompanying vaccinations. It seems that, according to CDC statistics listed in "Lessons from the Lockdown: Why are so many fewer children dying? A White Paper from Health Choice by Amy Becker and Mark Blaxill (June 18, 2020)," "amid near universal lockdowns, roughly 30% fewer children died. ... Virtually the entire change came from infants. Somehow, the changing pattern of American life during the lockdowns has been saving the lives of hundreds of infants, over 200 per week." And later in the paper, the

"Amid near universal lockdowns, roughly 30% fewer children died. ... Virtually the entire change came from infants. Somehow, the changing pattern of American life during the lockdowns has been saving the lives of hundreds of infants, over 200 per week."

authors reach the following conclusion: "What no one would have predicted in advance of Covid19 is that the extreme lockdown response has produced a natural experiment that actually calls into question the very actions—widespread, mandated vaccines for all—that the infectious disease and public health community have been pushing for years."

Thanks!
Diane Royal
St. Nicholas

Masks are required in all Duval County Public Schools

I just wanted to alert you of a correction that should be made to the article "Uncertainty Haunts Educators," that appeared in both the Riverside and San Marco *Resident Community News*. In this article, it is mentioned that DCPS (Duval County Public Schools) is not requiring masks, but only encouraging them. As a high school teacher, it terrifies me to think that parents and students would be under the impression that masks are not mandatory in an enclosed classroom with 30 other people. If you have a way to make corrections, please update this part of the article.

Thank you,
Jessica Blair

Editor's Note: At the time our reporter, Lilla Ross, contacted DCPS she was referred to the county's reopening plan, which was in the process of being approved by the Duval County School Board and the Department of Education. The plan did not specify that masks would be required, only that they would be provided. The latest policy now specifies that face coverings are required on the school buses and in school. The best way to slow the transmission of COVID-19 in a school setting is to require all staff and students to wear face coverings throughout the day. Kindergarten through second grade students will be issued a clear plastic face shield, which may be used in addition to or instead of a cloth face covering. Students with disabilities or medical conditions that prevent a face covering may also use a clear plastic shield or another reasonable accommodation. Face coverings will not be required in P.E., recess, band, music, and other classes in which the facial covering is an obvious impediment to learning activities.

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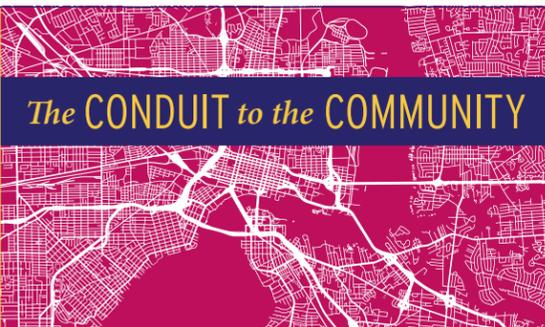
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What can 3D mammograms do for your peace of mind?

New breast imaging technique makes breast cancer easier to see and reduces false-positives.



3D mammography (digital breast tomosynthesis) is approved by the FDA and is quickly becoming the standard of care for breast cancer screening. Because it's a newer technology, 3D screening mammography is not available at all screening facilities – but it's **now available at all Baptist Health screening locations.**

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San Marco Crossing to sport two new identities

By Marcia Hodgson
Resident Community News

San Marco Crossing, the large housing development near the intersection of Kings Avenue and Route 1, has been divided into two separate communities each with a new name and identity.

Renamed The Exchange and Barlow, the multi-family apartment complexes will offer luxury apartments in close proximity to San Marco Square but each with its own unique identity and vibe.

“We thought it was really important not to have two-and-a-half blocks with just one project. It’s better if it’s multiple projects with different target identities,” said Jeff Rosen, principal with Chance Partners, developer of the project.

The communities will be similar in that both will be four-story complexes with ground-floor units, modern amenities, keyless entry, WiFi thermostats, high-speed internet, garage space for all homes and a pool. The new names of both developments were inspired by the railway nearby, Rosen said, noting a small park and dog run will be built across from the two new multi-family communities on Perry Place.

However, the Barlow, the larger of the two developments which lies between Olevia Street and Bertha Street near the Daily’s gas station, will have a more “formal and iconic” atmosphere to attract empty nesters and perhaps an older clientele, similar to the demographic of Riverview, Chance Partner’s development in Avondale. It will open in the summer of 2021 and include 290 units – with 25 on the ground-floor – of 1-, 2-, and 3-bedroom apartments ranging in size from 632 square feet to 1,522 square feet. The Barlow’s design is meant to be “historic urban” coupled with a resort atmosphere.

Meanwhile, The Exchange will include a “more colorful” atmosphere with the idea of attracting a younger set of urban professionals. It is slated to open earlier, in Spring 2021, and will include 196 1-, 2- and

3-bedroom units ranging in size from 632 square feet to 1,450 square feet. Unique corner units will offer floor-to-ceiling glass and views of the surrounding area.

“The Barlow, which is the larger of the two and closer to Atlantic is meant to be a timeless and sophisticated, upscale product,” said Rosen. “The Exchange, which will be one block south, will have a hip, boutique feel. It has a pop of color and is more vibrant and will have more energy in its design with a larger pool and balconies overlooking the pool. It is geared to a younger clientele.

“We view having two projects each with its own identity to a different target audience will help to activate the whole neighborhood because that is what we like so much about San Marco, it is not really any one demographic. It really can run a wide range of people that are interested in the neighborhood,” Rosen said. “We think neighborhoods work best when you have a mix of demographics and can appeal to different people. Everyone has their own taste in cars and clothes, so we think they will play off each other as individual identities, but still in the context of the neighborhood.”

The two projects are the second and third residential developments by Chance Partners that leverage the federal Opportunity Zone tax benefits and are located within the transitional census tract near Philips Highway.

Dynamik Design Partners of Atlanta served as the architect for both multifamily projects, and Kimley-Horn provided civil engineering services. Live Oak Contracting, based in Jacksonville, is the general contractor for both communities.

Chance Partner’s first San Marco development, San Marco Promenade, a 284-unit residential complex located along Philips Highway and Mitchell Place is open with approximately 50 residents who call it home, Rosen said, noting that because the Promenade development opened during COVID-19, it is hard to tell if the pandemic had an impact on the ability to rent the development. San Marco Promenade



Rendering of the pool at The Exchange apartment complex



Rendering of the pool at Barlow, a new apartment complex on the edge of San Marco

is a gated community, and its rents will be slightly less expensive than The Exchange or Barlow, he said.

“We’re extremely happy with the initial response from the community and the overall prospects. People are living there, and it’s been an overall positive experience. We’ve been able to pull residents that are looking, and not just in San Marco but also at the Town Center and Riverside. They are deciding that San Marco Promenade is where they want to live.”

Rosen said the second phase of San Marco Promenade is currently in design. Like its first phase, it will also be a gated community

that fronts Philips Highway. It will include 226 units, and construction will begin in the summer of 2021. At this point, Chance Partners has not considered changing the name of San Marco Promenade’s second phase or to give it a different identity.

“We are still in the design phase and working through whether it will be consistent or kind of a standalone project,” said Rosen.

“We’re very excited for The Exchange and Barlow projects and to see them delivered next year. We want to get more people living within walking distance of San Marco Square,” he said.



The four-story Barlow complex as seen from Bertha Street in San Marco



San Marco Promenade is now open and home to at least 50 new residents



The four-story Barlow complex as it stretches along Olevia Street in San Marco

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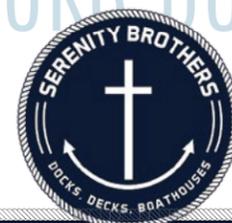
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Pearson wins school board seat by overwhelming margin

A familiar volunteer who has worked tirelessly for San Marco's public schools bested three educators to win Duval County's District 3 School Board seat Aug. 18.

Cindy Howell Pearson of San Marco collected 10,933 of the 19,588 votes cast in the primary contest to win the seat outright with 55.56% of the vote. She will replace Ashley Smith-Juarez, who was unable to run again due to term limits.

"I am humbled and thankful to have garnered the support of such a broad, diverse coalition of people and organizations that care passionately about the future of education in Duval County," said Pearson after her victory. "Running in a field of four uniquely qualified candidates made for a tough race. I am thrilled to have won and look forward to getting to work for the Duval County students, families and staff."

The four-man race for District 3's seat included Christopher P. Guerrieri, who finished at 15.64% with 3,148 votes, James C. Jacobs, who finished at 18.49% with 3,721 votes, and Robert "Bob" Abene, who earned 10.31% or 2,075 votes.

Pearson will begin her four-year term in November 2020. She will represent San Marco, St. Nicholas, San Jose, and portions of Southside.

Throughout the years Pearson has been active as a volunteer parent and fundraiser in San Marco's public schools, having worked hard as a member of the Friends of Hendricks Avenue Elementary and its PTA, as well as being a founding member of both the Friends of Landon and the Friends of Wolfson, a fundraising-volunteer group to support Julia Landon College Preparatory School and Samuel W. Wolfson High School for Advanced Studies and Leadership.

A native of Duval County, Pearson graduated from Samuel Wolfson High School in 1988. She holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from Florida State University in English and a Master of Science degree in Recreational Studies from the University of Florida.

In April, Pearson was named Duval County Volunteer of the Year by the Florida Department of Education. A mother of three, she has averaged more than 15 hours per week volunteering at Wolfson High School, helping to make its transition from a C- rated neighborhood school to an A-rated dedicated magnet school that only offers IB, AP and honors courses. Over the years she has focused her volunteer efforts into fundraising, campus improvement, community outreach, and student leadership development. She also has helped raise \$16,000 for Wolfson by organizing academic fundraisers for the Friends of Wolfson.



Karenia Parliament with District 3 School Board Member-elect Cindy Howell Pearson

City extends South Shore buyout program to restore wetlands

By Lilla Ross, Resident Community News

An additional 22 houses in South Shores are eligible for a city buyout program that will allow the city to demolish the properties and restore wetlands.

That is in addition to 17 houses that were initially approved for a buyout in 2017 under a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) program after Hurricane Irma. So, a total of 39 of the 73 properties identified in 2017 have applied for the buyouts.

South Shores, known officially as Reed's Subdivision, is a low-lying neighborhood east of San Marco and west of St. Nicholas. Many of the houses were built in the 1930s and over time have become increasingly prone to flooding from storms and high tides.

The new buyouts are covered under a Hazard Mitigation Grant Program. The Mayor's Budget Review Committee has approved \$5.45 million for the project. That is in addition to \$4.6 million set aside by the city in 2019 for the first 17 houses.

FEMA has allocated approximately \$7.4 million between the two projects, \$3.4 million for the first group of properties and \$4 million for the second group.

Although the application period for these buyout programs has passed, City Spokeswoman Marjorie Dennis said money may be available through other programs for homeowners who want a buyout.

Demolition for the first group of properties is expected to begin next summer. The demolition and wetland restoration will be done by contractors under the guidance of the city.

Bond sale raises \$245 million for capital improvements

The City of Jacksonville recently sold \$245 million worth of municipal bonds at an average interest rate of 2.22%, a new record for the City, Mayor Lenny Curry's office announced Aug. 21. Within this bond issue, the City was also able to save taxpayers more than \$25 million by refinancing higher rate bonds at substantially lower rates.

These actions allow the City to keep costs low, increasing money available for critical priorities, including public safety, infrastructure, libraries, parks and more.

"I am thrilled that citizens are reaping the benefits of having a fiscally-responsible government and encouraged to continue working toward further improving

Jacksonville's financial health," said Curry. "The low rates will help us conserve our resources to address needs across the city."

Interim City Council President, Sam Newby agreed. "It is a great day for the city of Jacksonville. Not only have we saved the taxpayer over \$25 million, we are generating funds to improve our citizens' overall way of life," Newby said. "I am eager to see these dollars spent to improve public safety, infrastructure, libraries, parks, etc., in our most underserved communities."

Bonds are used to assist with funding capital development projects in neighborhoods around the city.

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ORTEGA WATERFRONT

4 Bedrooms, 4 Baths, 2 Half Baths | 5,830 sq ft | \$1,475,000
Panoramic views of Pirates Cove | 1-story ranch style home | Sunshine filled rooms and breathtaking water views | Open Floor Plan | Cozy family room features brick woodburning fireplace | NEW Hardwood Floors | Spacious Kitchen with abundance of counterspace, cabinets and storage | MLS#993056

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Developer, city win first round in San Marco lawsuit

By Marcia Hodgson
Resident Community News

Although it may not be over yet, the folks at South Jacksonville Presbyterian Church have received good news from a Florida administrative law judge in Tallahassee and are one step closer to being able to sell nearly three acres of their San Marco Square campus to an Alabama developer so that an apartment complex and parking garage can be built on the site.

On Aug. 10, Florida Administrative Judge Francine Ffolkes recommended in favor of the City of Jacksonville and its decision to approve the church's amended application to rezone its property. The new zoning legislation, which was approved by the Jacksonville City Council, 17-1, on Feb. 25, allows for Park Place of San Marco, a 133-unit, four-story, 49.5-foot tall residential complex, to be built within the San Marco Overlay, a zoning ordinance that mandates buildings shall not exceed 35 feet within its boundaries.

Right Size San Marco, Inc., a grass-roots neighborhood group comprised of more than 800 members, had filed an appeal against the city with the State of Florida Division of Administrative Hearings (DOAH) questioning whether the City Council's vote to approve a small scale development amendment to the 2030 Comprehensive Plan, is in compliance with state law. The 2030 Comprehensive Plan overshadows the San Marco Overlay and the City Zoning Code.

The site-specific amendment, which was added to the City's future land-use map

of the city's 2030 Comprehensive Plan adopted by Ordinance 2019-750-E, enabled developer Harbert Realty Services of Birmingham, Ala., represented by Bill Ware of San Marco, and Corner Lot Development Group led by Andy Allen of San Marco, to use a calculated weighted-average height, which has never before been used in Jacksonville, instead of the strict height measurement of 35 feet mandated in the San Marco Overlay. The calculation averaged the 49.5-foot height of the residential building with the 26-foot height of the two-story parking garage that will also be built on the site so that the combined heights will not exceed 35 feet.

Although Judge Ffolkes sent out a recommendation consistent with the City's argument, Right Size San Marco's appeal is not over yet, said Paul Harden, an attorney working on the City's case. "It needs to be reviewed by the Department of Economic Opportunity for a final ruling, but we anticipate a good result there. In the interim we will wait, but hopefully now we can start working together with the community and get a result everybody can be happy with. I know there is going to be some disappointment, but that's part of the process. We're going to be neighbors for the next hundred years so I'm hoping everybody will be at peace."

Right Size San Marco filed several exceptions to the proposed order, which were due by Aug. 25, said Jon Livingston, a petitioner in the case before the DOAH court. Harden and the stable of attorneys representing the City, church, and the developers had 10 days



Updated rendering of Park Place San Marco that soon will be submitted to the city by Harbert Realty Services

to respond to the exceptions before the case is reviewed by the Department of Economic Opportunity for a final order.

Right Size San Marco has also filed a second appeal, a writ of certiorari, with the United States Court of Appeals to further review the case. A final-final appeal of the Department of Economic Opportunity's final rule can be made to the Florida Cabinet, which is comprised of independently elected state officials including the attorney general, the commissioner of agriculture and the chief financial officer, but bringing something to the Florida Cabinet is very rarely done, said Harden. He added that he would be "shocked" if the Department of Economic Opportunity reversed Judge Ffolkes ruling. Harden also said he is not concerned about the writ of certiorari.

"They have filed a writ of certiorari but the rulings by the DOAH judge or the administrator of law judge are relatively final as to the writ issues as well," he said. "We'll see how they proceed. If they have good lawyers, they will recognize what I recognize, and that is it's dispositive of the issues of a writ proceeding."

Harden also said it is not his preference to waste a lot of time tied up in lawsuits with any development he represents, but that the time to go to court was inserted into the Park Place of San Marco developers' time line so any holdup is not a big concern. "We had that in the timeline, and we anticipate moving forward with the project," he said.

Livingston, a founder of Right Size San Marco along with Lakshmi Gopal, who is also a petitioner in the case, said he was disappointed with the judge's order but is not willing to give up. He also reiterated that Right Size San Marco is not against a residential

complex and parking garage being built on the site. The group's opposition stems only from the height and density of the project and whether the San Marco Overlay was unlawfully set aside by the City to allow developers to push through the project. He said if the developer were willing to reduce the height of the apartment building to three stories, which would also reduce the number of apartments by 34 units, the neighborhood advocacy group would happily be in favor of the development.

"From the very beginning, Right Size San Marco's goal was to maintain the character of this community," said Livingston. "While we await the final order, we are currently discussing ramifications. In the end, the final ruling could not only affect San Marco's historical character but all overlays throughout the city. Developers are drooling at the opportunity to use a weighted-average height to bypass set height restrictions and site-specific zoning to get around the standards currently in place. The impact would be significant, and neighborhoods throughout Jacksonville could unfortunately suffer."

"Was the judge's ruling a disappointment? Yes definitely, but we knew this was not the end, and we are going to continue to fight for the right thing," he continued. "It's kind of a sad state for the way things are operating right now. The developer is dictating everything, and the City Council is going along with whatever they say because they want development. There has to be a stand taken on the code that is being put into the laws, and if you can't go off that, what are we going to have in the future? We are going

CONTINUED ON PAGE 7

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to have a mismatch of so many pieces of development around the city. I don't think people are going to be pleased with Jacksonville in 15 or 20 years."

In the meantime, Ware said the developers are going forward as planned and have submitted civil engineering plans to the city. Harbert has also received final architectural design plans, but has not yet submitted those yet, he said, adding that he expects to begin breaking ground in January.

"We are happy to have that ruling behind us, and we have a high level of confidence in our position going forward," said Ware. "We don't hold any ill feelings and hope they won't either when it is all said and done. We think this project is a real benefit to San Marco and the community at large."

Allen, who is Ware's partner in the project, agreed. "We are excited to be one step closer to groundbreaking on this much needed project in San Marco," he said. "We thank the community for its overwhelming support – minus a couple of signs – towards Park Place, and we look forward to help bringing the much-needed energy and patrons to our small businesses and restaurants in San Marco. San Marco is a wonderful place to call home," said Allen.

Church officials said they are also pleased with the legal outcome so far. "We are encouraged by the judge's decision to uphold the ordinance," said Mark Middlebrook, an elder of South Jacksonville Presbyterian Church. "We are not in a position to predict whether Right Size San Marco will appeal the ruling or pursue an alternative remedy. We are continuing each and every day to work with our buyer toward closing the sale and to get Park Place built," he said.

Deadline nears for future of The District

By Lilla Ross
Resident Community News

Peter Rummell and Michael Munz, partners in the Elements Development of Jacksonville LLC, have until Sept. 30 to make a decision about the future of their 30-acre Southbank project, The District.

First unveiled in 2014, The District is an ambitious proposal to transform the riverfront land formerly occupied by JEA's Southside Generating Station into a multi-use development of residential, retail, office, and hotel space, enhanced by a marina and waterfront park.

In 2018, the City Council approved a redevelopment agreement that would give Elements \$56 million in property tax rebates. The rebates, called Recaptured Enhanced Value or REV grants, are 75% of the property taxes and are dependent on how much of The District is built and added to the tax rolls.

The city committed to paying \$26.5 million to construct 3.5 acres of park space, a 1,900-foot Riverwalk extension with bulkhead, a boardwalk trail, 100 parking spaces and three road extensions.

In 2018, The projected completion date was the end of 2022.

More than once, Munz said that groundbreaking was only a few months away. But so far, not a shovel of dirt has been turned.

"To say this has been a complicated, expensive, and time-consuming process would be an understatement," Munz said. "We have spent more than any other private sector developer in terms of the planning stages to move this 30-acres forward as a mixed-use master planned project in downtown."

Munz said that so far, Elements has spent \$9 million on the project to build a

multi-use development that would include 950 residences, 147 hotel rooms 134,000 square feet of retail, 200,000 square feet of office space and a 125-slip marina.

The much-anticipated project has been mired in delays and obstacles.

Development rights were entwined with the Northbank and had to be untangled. The state had to sign off on JEA's \$20 million environmental cleanup of the former Southside Generating Station. An unconventional financing scheme that generated controversy was withdrawn and a more conventional one proposed.

"We have spent more than any other private sector developer in terms of the planning stages to move this 30-acres forward as a mixed-use master planned project in downtown."

— Michael Munz, Elements Development

The latest delays occurred this year. January 13 was the deadline for the company to issue bonds to finance the infrastructure, transfer property to the city, and submit the permits for the horizontal construction.

But on Jan. 9, Rummell sent the Downtown Investment Authority a letter saying that "due to the drawn-out marketing process and the fact that this is a complicated mixed-use urban project, we find ourselves in a position of not being able to meet the upcoming deadline."

DIA CEO Lori Boyer granted them an extension until April 13, denying the developers the six they had requested.

But in March, the Coronavirus pandemic hit, bringing the city and the economy to a standstill. Elements requested a suspension of performance deadlines, citing a "force majeure" provision.

Boyer started the clock again Sept. 1, citing the resumption of business activity. She has the authority to grant Elements another 90-day extension if they can show they are making progress. They have until Sept. 30 to do it.

If they can't make the case, the redevelopment incentives approved by the city in 2018 will expire. Since Elements owns the property, it could seek another redevelopment agreement with the city or do something else entirely, Boyer said.

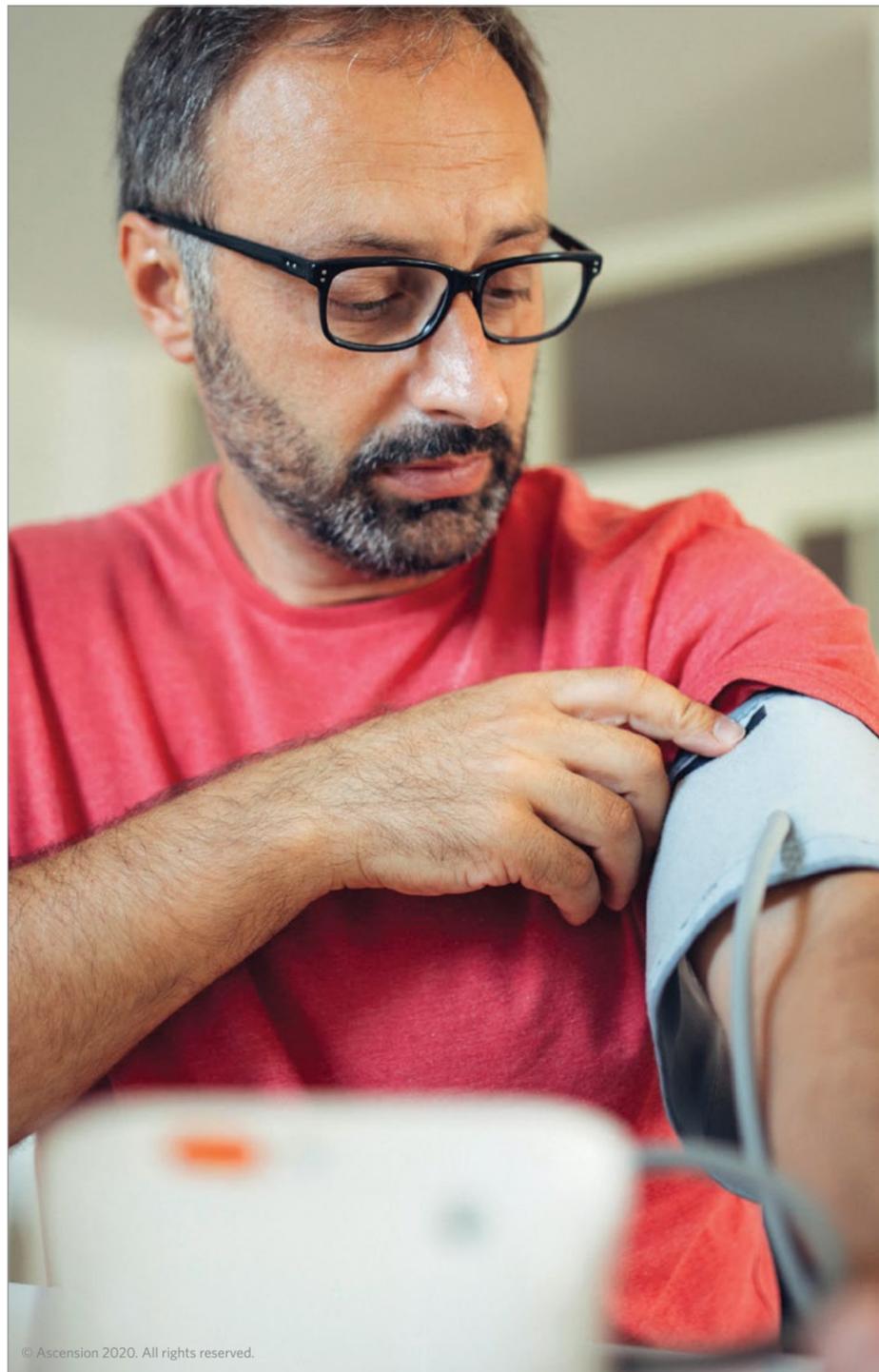
Boyer said she hopes Elements can demonstrate that it is making progress because the city stands to get four acres of riverfront property for the Riverwalk extension and park.

"There's a real public interest to getting that property," she said. "There is a value to keeping it alive. I'm not sure there's a lot to be gained by a termination."

Munz said they have every intention of continuing the project and that much has been accomplished.

Engineering design has been completed for the horizontal infrastructure that includes the bulkhead, parks, roads, parking and landscaping. Permitting is currently in progress.

"We're working diligently to determine the proper next step. COVID-19 is presenting a lot of problem on a lot of levels. We're carefully analyzing where we are and where we need to be," Munz said. "No one is more motivated than us to move forward in some form and fashion for all the time and money spent."



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The Jacksonville Historical Society is inviting the public to participate in naming and branding a proposed music history museum and performance venue. Photo courtesy of the Jacksonville Historical Society

Name that tune: Public invited to name music museum

The Jacksonville Historical Society and a task force dedicated to building a music history museum that will firmly set Jacksonville as the birthplace of many genres of music, including Southern Rock, invite the public to participate in a contest to name the venue.

One part museum, one part intimate performance venue, the unnamed venture will leverage the memories and memorabilia of people who lived through the birth of Southern rock and roll, as well as pay homage to the giants in the blues and jazz genres in Jacksonville's African American community.

"Jacksonville was a pioneer in blues, jazz, rockabilly, and was the birthplace and launchpad for Southern Rock," said Dennis Whittle, JHS board member. "By looking back, we provide a foundation to invent the future. In addition to looking backwards, the museum is intended to be a launching pad: What music genres will Jacksonville pioneer next?"

The museum will provide an opportunity for visitors to travel through the history

of blues, jazz, Country and Rockabilly to Southern Rock that originated in Jacksonville.

The public is invited to participate in establishing a name for the music history museum and performance venue, as well as by donating artifacts from music performers who came from Jacksonville or paused here for a time and who subsequently contributed to the rich history of American music that has its roots established in Jacksonville.

Ideas for the name of the museum may be submitted to the Jacksonville Historical Society no later than Sept. 30, 2020. Visit jaxhistory.org for link to survey. The Jacksonville Historical Society and task force will make the final decision but will acknowledge the person(s) whose idea ultimately leads to establishing the venue's name, brand, and identity.

To contribute items to the museum, contact the Jacksonville Historical Society at (904) 665-0064 or email archives@jaxhistory.org. To donate online, visit jaxhistory.org/donate-now/

Lakewood store to close as Stein Mart files for bankruptcy



The Stein Mart store in Lakewood

By Marcia Hodgson
Resident Community News

After several years of struggling to find its financial footing, Stein Mart, a discount department store whose headquarters is a fixture on Jacksonville's South Bank, fell victim to the COVID-19, as the pandemic caused it to file for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection Aug. 12.

Included in the bold move is the company's plan to permanently close nearly all of its 281 brick and mortar stores within 30 states in the United States. Included among the closures will be the recently renovated emporium within the Roosevelt Square shopping mall in Ortega. The Roosevelt Mall is currently under construction and in the process of being rebranded as Ortega Park. Located at 4399 Roosevelt Blvd., the store in Ortega is one of five Stein Mart stores in Jacksonville.

The Ortega store, which has been a longtime anchor within the Roosevelt Square Mall, is in the process of closing, according to a sales associate. Everything in the store is 10% off except for fragrances and fine jewelry with some items in the men's department lowered to 30% off, she said, noting the store was completely renovated last year. The store is just beginning to liquidate its merchandise and no date has been set to when it will finally close its doors, she said.

The company filed voluntary petitions for relief under Chapter 11 of the Bankruptcy Code in the United States Bankruptcy Court for the Middle District of Florida – Jacksonville Division.

In July 2019, the company received a delisting notice from the Nasdaq Stock Exchange and was given six months to regain compliance. Handicapped with a highly leveraged balance sheet and interest burden stemming from a special dividend issued in its first fiscal quarter of 2015, the company barely turned a profit the next year and operated at a loss in 2017 and 2018 partly due to its inability to attract national brands, manage inventory and keep prices competitive, according to Businesswire.

Stein Mart is also evaluating strategic alternatives including the potential sales of its eCommerce business and related intellectual property, according to a press release.

"The combined effects of a challenging retail environment coupled with the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic have caused significant financial distress on our business," said Hunt Hawkins, chief executive officer of Stein Mart, Inc. "The company has determined that the best strategy to maximize value will be a liquidation of its assets pursuant to an organized going-out-of-business sale. The company lacks sufficient liquidity to continue operating in the ordinary course of business. I would like to thank all of our employees for their dedication and support."

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JTC Running donates \$50,000 toward Emerald Trail design



Before and after photos of the Emerald Trail's S-Line Connector and its improvement to the community.

Groundwork Jacksonville announced on Aug. 6 that it had received a \$50,000 donation from JTC Running, a Northeast Florida promoter of healthy lifestyles through running, fitness, and fellowship. The donation will help to fund the design of the Emerald Trail S-Line Connector which completes an unfinished 1.3-mile section of the existing S-Line Rail Link from 12th St. and Boulevard near Andrew Robinson Elementary School, to E. 21st St. The total design cost, to be shared equally by Groundwork and the City of Jacksonville, is estimated to be \$860,000.

In June, Groundwork unveiled the design of the Emerald Trail LaVilla Link connecting Brooklyn to LaVilla and the S-Line. Construction of the LaVilla Link will begin later this year with an expected opening of fall 2021. Together, the S-Line Connector and LaVilla Link will form a six-mile contiguous trail enabling runners, walkers, and cyclists to travel from Brooklyn to Norwood Plaza, near Gateway Mall.

One of the points of interest along the S-Line connector is the Phoenix Arts District, a 100,000-square-foot

warehouse space spanning across a 4.5-acre campus space that will be converted into workshops, studios, apartments, event space, galleries, restaurants and more.

"JTC Running has been a tremendous ongoing supporter of the Emerald Trail," said Kay Ehas, CEO of Groundwork Jacksonville. "We are exceedingly grateful for JTC's generous monetary contributions as well as the group's advocacy for safe urban spaces to run, walk, and cycle. Their support is truly helping make this endeavor possible," she added.

The S-Line is a 4.8-mile rails-to-trails multiuse path that runs from Myrtle Avenue just north of Beaver Street to 44th Street. The S-line was an abandoned length of CSX railroad Right-of-Way — appropriately in the shape of an "S" — that was acquired by the City to create an urban greenway. It is now part of the planned 30-mile Emerald Trail.

JTC Running played a key role in launching the Emerald Trail project in 2018 by helping to underwrite the Emerald Trail Master Plan with a \$50,000 donation. "The Emerald

Trail personifies our mission of bringing people together through running and recreation and does so in a way that beautifies our city through greenscapes and creating a safe place for people and nature to co-exist," said Larry Roberts, president of JTC Running. "We are proud to partner with Groundwork Jacksonville and support this project, which greatly enhances our city overall."

The Emerald Trail is a public-private partnership between the City of Jacksonville and Groundwork that will connect 14 of our city's historic urban neighborhoods to downtown, the St. Johns River, McCoys Creek, and Hogans Creek. When completed by 2029, the trail will link 16 schools, two colleges, and 21 parks among other destinations like restaurants, retail and businesses, with an additional 13 schools and 17 parks located within three blocks of the trail. A catalyst for neighborhood revitalization, economic development, recreation, tourism, mobility, and improved community health, it is hoped that the Emerald Trail will transform Jacksonville's urban core.

Wolfson volunteers distribute backpacks at Ribault High

Aubrey Miller, Teri Oldfield, Sherri Vroom, Megan Denk, Tamela Smith-Swanson and Jade Swanson, who are a mix of volunteers from the community and Wolfson Children's Hospital, joined together to assist with Wolfson's first Drive-Thru Back-to-School Bash at the Wolfson Children's Health Center at Ribault High School Aug. 1. During the event, families had the opportunity to learn about health resources available through Wolfson Children's Health Center at Ribault, which was created by the hospital to give students in the underserved community access to health care. The students and their parents or legal guardians received a free backpack, school supplies, a face mask as well as a hot dog, chips, and drink through the drive-thru



line. They also received educational resources to take control of their health, including information on enrolling children in health insurance and asthma education. The center is supported by Duval County Public Schools, the Duval County Department of Health, Sulzbacher Center and Full Service Schools of Jacksonville. The Back-to-School Bash was sponsored by Wolfson Children's Health Center and the Jean Ribault High School Class of 1985.

Republican women celebrate 19th amendment



Back row: Troy Winn, Hilary Knapper, Carol Tegho, Kim Black, Jalene Holden, Karen Olen, Brenda Edwards, Cindy Collins, Crystal Draper, Helen Giallombardo, Antoinette Jones. Front row: Lisa Glennon, Ann Teague, Karen Bridgham, Stephanie Boyette, Katherine Crow-Nichols, Jenell Flynn, Norma Vargas, Billie Husk, Lori Henderson, Betty Bentley, Patti O'Neal, "Susan B. Anthony" Wanda Bosworth.

Susan B. Anthony was the special guest during the Republican Women's Club of Duval Federated luncheon Aug. 13 at the Southbank Hotel, which was formerly the Lexington Hotel.

The luncheon celebrated the 100th anniversary of the 19th amendment and women's right to vote. Rick Mullaney, founding

director of the Public Policy Institute of Jacksonville University was the featured speaker. Wanda Bosworth, past president of the Republican Women's Club of Duval Federated, dressed as suffragette Susan B. Anthony and made a presentation about suffragette Susan B. Anthony.



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Cultural Council announces art awards nominees



Geexella



Laurie Hoppock



Marie Hane



Mark Krancer



Rebecca Levy



Ulysses Owens



William McMahon

Nominees for the Cultural Council of Greater Jacksonville's 44th Annual Arts awards have been selected and several of the artists are familiar faces in the city's historic neighborhoods.

In all, 28 artists have been nominated including William McMahon, Maria Hane, Geexella, Rebecca Levy, Ulysses Owens, Laurie Hoppock, and Mark Krancer.

The theme of this year's awards ceremony is Bridges: Connecting Arts, Business, and Community. The virtual event will be live-streamed Wednesday, Sept. 2, on the Cultural

Council's Facebook page and website as well as on WJCT's Facebook page and website from the Jesse Ball DuPont Center and hosted by Tenikka Hughes, anchor of Action News Jax. Al Emerick, founder of ValueMapping, will serve as co-host.

This year's evening has added a People's Choice Award, which will be chosen via online voting throughout the event with the winner announced at the conclusion of the program. Candidates for the people's choice honor include Nikesha Williams, Word Revolt, Eleana Ohlander and William McMahon.

The following are nominees for the eight other awards:

Helen Lane Founders Award: Maria Hane, Jenny Hager and Shawana Brooks and Roosevelt Watson III.

Robert Arleight White Award for Advocacy: Geexella, Toni Smailagic and Ulysses Owens.

Art Educator Award: Amandy Holloway, Laurie Hoppock and Rebecca Levy.

Business Award: Jacksonville Aviation Authority (JAA), Jacksonville Transportation Authority (JTA), VyStar Credit Union.

Small Business Award: PETRA, VOID Magazine, and EU Jacksonville.

Art of Giving Award: Tomas Vercher, Ted and Alexandra Stein, and Mark Krancer

Art Innovator Award: Mr. Al Pete, Paul Bourcier and Nicole Radiez

Community Impact Award: Nicole Holderbaum, Marguerite Richardson and Basma Alawee



Diane Dodds

New director to head Assumption Early Childhood Learning Center

A new face will greet the students at the Early Childhood Learning Center at Assumption Church this fall. Diane Dodds has taken over the position of director, which was previously held by Kristen Spears. Spears decided to transition back to the classroom and will be teaching in Assumption School this fall.

Dodds moved to Florida from New Jersey in 2017. With more than 20 years of experience in education, she has previously taught 3-6-year old students, mentored new teachers, worked as a consultant to private schools and has been the head of school at two Montessori schools. She has also taught CCD and vacation Bible School in her parish in New Jersey.

Dodds earned a bachelor's degree in economics from Brown University and a master's degree in education from St. Catherine University.

She is an avid reader, swimmer, and enjoys knitting. She and her husband, Terry, have been happily married since 1988 and enjoy spending time with their two adult children, David and Adam.

"Diane comes to us with a wealth of experience, and as I sensed when I interviewed her, a great joy and love for the faith," said Fr. Jason Trull of Assumption Catholic Church.

New pastor takes over at HAB

The congregation of Hendricks Avenue Baptist Church has hired Dr. William J. "B. J." Hutto to be its new senior pastor. Hutto succeeds Dr. Kyle Reese, who served HAB with distinction for 14 years.

Hutto holds a doctorate from Kings College, the University of Aberdeen in Scotland, where he studied theological ethics. He also holds dual master's degrees from Duke University Divinity School, one in theology, the other in divinity, with the second *magna cum laude*. His undergraduate degree was a Bachelor of Arts in religion and English literature from Wofford College in Spartanburg, S.C., from which he graduated *summa cum laude* and Phi Beta Kappa.

Hutto spent five years at New York's Madison Avenue Baptist Church in Manhattan as an associate pastor. He has also served as senior pastor at Crabtree Valley Baptist Church in Raleigh, N.C., and as associate pastor at the First Baptist Church of Henderson, N.C. Most recently, he was the theologian-in-residence at the Myers Park Baptist Church in Charlotte, N.C.

Widely involved in civic and church-related organizations in his former positions, Hutto founded The Faith to Freedom Project, Inc. in Henderson, N.C., an area non-profit dedicated



Rev. Rebekah Hutto and Dr. William J. "B.J." Hutto with their children Hannah Ruth and Elijah

to community redevelopment and served on the advisory board of the Northern Outreach Clinic of N.C.'s Ryan White HIV/AIDS Clinic. He also helped to establish the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of North Carolina's Task Force on Wealth and Poverty and has served as member of the Alumni Regional Board of Duke University Divinity School.

Joining Hutto at HAB is his wife and ministerial partner, the Rev. Rebekah McLeod Hutto, and their two children, Hannah Ruth, 10, and Elijah, 5.

Natives of South Carolina, the Huttos met at Wofford College, where they both heard the call to ministry. Following graduation, both went to Duke Divinity School.

After Duke, they remained in the Raleigh-Durham area serving several churches,

Hutto at First Baptist Church of Henderson and Crabtree Valley Baptist Church, Rebekah at Mt. Bethel Presbyterian in Durham. An ordained Presbyterian minister in her own right with the Presbyterian Church USA, Rebekah has also served Brick Presbyterian Church on the Upper East Side of Manhattan and Trinity Presbyterian Church in Charlotte, N.C. She is the author of several children's books and hopes to write more.

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Santa appears virtually at Wolfson Christmas fundraiser

Santa may have stayed in the North Pole this year, but that did not stop generous donors from making Wolfson Children's Hospital's 9th annual Christmas in July fundraiser a success. During the virtual toy drive, which ended July 31, 2,820 new toys for patients were donated at an estimated value of \$25,660, and the hospital received \$10,975 in monetary donations that will allow Child Life specialists to purchase developmentally appropriate toys for children throughout the year.

Santa Claus and his elves usually deliver toys to Wolfson Children's patients in person the morning of July 25, but amid COVID-19 precautions this year, Santa made a special Christmas Eve Facebook Live appearance instead. He called for toys to be donated via the Christmas in July Amazon registry and financial donations on ChristmasJuly.com.

Christmas in July began as a way to restock the hospital's toy closets in the summer, when they typically run low. Toys are vital to children's development and their ability to cope while in the hospital. For Child Life specialists, who work directly with young patients to offer comfort, distraction, and age-appropriate education about their procedures, toys are their most important tools.

"Even in the midst of a pandemic, when we are all experiencing different levels of uncertainty, our community still showed up for its children," said Michael D. Aubin, FACHE, president of Wolfson



Although he stayed in the North Pole, Santa made an appearance during the Christmas in July fundraiser at Wolfson Children's Hospital July 25.

Children's Hospital. "To our patients, these toys are much more than just Legos and craft sets. Our Child Life specialists use toys to help these children feel normal and develop on track while they're in our care. We deeply appreciate everyone who donated."

Those who wish to donate toys year-round can do so by visiting the Wolfson Children's Hospital Amazon registry. To make a contribution to Wolfson Children's Hospital throughout the year, please visit wolfsonchildrens.org/ways-to-give.

Clay Eye expands to Middleburg

Clay Eye Physicians and Surgeons recently expanded its services to Middleburg, making this its fifth location and third in Clay County. This new office is located on the St. Vincent's Medical Center-Clay Campus, and its address is 1658 St. Vincent's Way, Middleburg, FL 32068. The new office will provide patients with five comprehensive exam rooms, and it anticipates seeing new patients in early September 2020.

"With growth comes expansion," said Eric King, practice administrator with Clay Eye. "We are very intentional when positioning ourselves within a new demographical area. Our objective is to serve the medical needs of Middleburg and surrounding areas by extending our comprehensive eye care services to areas that need additional ophthalmology support. Our services range from routine eye exams to surgical services. We have sub-specialists in the areas of cornea, retina, glaucoma, oculoplastics and pediatrics, which makes it possible for patients to remain within our practice rather than have to seek a specialist elsewhere," King said.

Clay Eye Physicians and Surgeons offers comprehensive eye care in the following specialties: Glaucoma Surgery, Diabetic Eye Disease and Macular Degeneration, Laser Cataract Surgery, Laser floater lysis, Cornea Surgery, Medical Retina, Retinal Surgery, LASIK Surgery, Cosmetic Eye Procedures, Pediatric Ophthalmology, and Pediatric Eye Exams. In addition, they offer Routine Eye Exams, Contact Lenses, and Boutique Eyewear for the entire family.

Clay Eye Physicians & Surgeons was established in 1977 and is now a 13-physician group. They currently have offices in Orange Park, Fleming Island, Mandarin, Riverside and Middleburg. If you would like more information about Clay Eye, please contact (904) 272-2020, or visit their website at www.clayeye.com.

San Jose Episcopal Church welcomes new assisting priest during difficult times

On June 15, San Jose Episcopal Church welcomed the Rev. Joseph "Gray" Hodsdon as its new curate. Hodsdon joins the Rev. Steph Britt, as the church's clergy. He will be an active leader and learner in many areas of parish life, including preaching, teaching, pastoral care, the day school, and other responsibilities. He is joined by his wife, Catie, who will complete Physician Assistant School at Emory University in Atlanta at the end of this year.

Hodsdon was born and raised in Sanford, N.C. until his family moved to Jacksonville in 2007, where he attended the Episcopal School of Jacksonville. He received his Bachelor of Arts in Religion and Sacred Music at Florida State University, where he also discerned a call to ordained ministry. After interning for a year with the Episcopal Diocese of Florida, Hodsdon attended seminary at the School of Theology at Sewanee: The University of the South, where he served as student body president in 2019.

Hodsdon joins San Jose Episcopal church in an unusual time. Like so many



The Rev. Gray Hodsdon

people and organizations, the church faces new challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, it has swiftly adapted services and other offerings to safely address these challenges. From March through May, the church moved

all services online, livestreaming its services via YouTube. However, San Jose remained steadfast in its commitment to give communion to parishioners, offering drive-through communion for several hours following the Sunday service.

San Jose Episcopal restarted in-person worship on May 31 with two options, 8 and 9:30 a.m., both at limited capacity. Masks are required for all who attend. The church has also instituted physically distanced seating and contactless entry and exit into the building. Hand sanitizer is available at the back of the church. Communion is brought by the clergy, who don masks and clean hands, to each person at their seat. These measures were all made to ensure that people intent on returning to in-person services can do so as safely as possible. Others choosing to participate remotely can still livestream the 9:30 a.m. service or watch the service later on the church's YouTube channel. For more information, visit sanosepiscopal.com or the church's YouTube channel, "San Jose Episcopal Church."

WJCT News 89.9



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Former councilman joins Historical Society board

At its July Board of Directors meeting, the Jacksonville Historical Society (JHS) welcomed William H. Bishop as a new member of its Board of Directors.

“The history of a community serves as its collective memory,” said Bishop when asked why he was interested in serving on the JHS board. “It reminds us of who we are, where we’ve been, and can help guide us to where we’re going. A community’s architecture is the physical manifestation of that history and its condition expresses how we feel about it. The Jacksonville Historical Society’s tireless work to preserve and promote our history and all of its manifestations is vital to telling our story and instilling pride in our community.”

Bishop, a practicing architect since 1983, has served as vice president and chief operating officer for Akel Logan Shafer, PA for the past 28 years. His professional accomplishments include the rehabilitation of the historic Main Post Office building in downtown Fernandina, rehabilitation of historic post office buildings in several other cities in Florida and Georgia, the design of Pope Vocational High School and the Kirk Memorial Auditorium renovation at the Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind, as well as Duval County Florida Highway Patrol District Headquarters, and renovation of the FSCJ Downtown Campus Main Street Building.

A strong believer in public service, Bishop served on the Jacksonville City Council from 2007 to 2015 and was actively involved in the effort to bring the USS Charles Adams to Jacksonville as a naval ship museum. He is also a past board member of the Riverside Avondale Preservation, the Meninak Club, and the



William H. Bishop

Jacksonville Community Council Inc. (JCCI), where he chaired a study committee on affordable housing in Jacksonville. He is currently chair of the Southside Businessmen’s Club and serves on the board of directors of Scenic Jacksonville.

Professionally, Bishop is a member of the American Institute of Architects, a past president of AIA Florida, a past board member and corporate secretary of the Mellon C. Greeley, AIA Foundation, Inc., a charitable foundation of AIA Jacksonville. He is the recipient of the 2013 AIA Florida Hilliard T. Smith Silver Metal and AIA Jacksonville’s 1997 John W. Dyal Memorial Award for Community Service.

Bishop holds a Master of Architecture and a Master of Business Administration from the University of Detroit Mercy, and earned his Bachelor of Science in Architecture from Lawrence Technological University in Southfield, Mich.

Grit University internship is lucrative for two college students

Two local college students received a deep dive into the world of business by running their own show as the directors of Grit Camp, a summer sports camp located at Riverside Presbyterian Day School. Designed to teach mental, physical, and emotional resilience to young people, the camp was the inaugural venture of Grit University, a summer internship program designed to help college-age students start and run their own business while learning and implementing time-tested life and success principles.

Colby Harris of Fernandina and Dylan Tedder of San Marco spent the summer at Grit University headquarters in San Marco. Their daily schedule included waking up at 5:40 a.m., taking a cold shower, working out from 6 a.m. to 7 a.m., meditating, enjoying breakfast at a local restaurant, setting up running camp from 8 a.m. to 3



Brian Corbin, Dylan Tedder and Colby Harris on the last day of Grit Camp.

p.m. each day, marketing and promoting Grit Camp, selling corporate sponsorships for the camp, doing outbound sales for an online company, Towerclimber.com, reading five motivational/self-help books, and journaling. Each intern received a salary of \$250 per week for 10 weeks to oversee eight weeks of camp, one week of training and one week of paid vacation. They also each received an additional profit-sharing check of \$3,500, bringing their summer earnings to \$6,000.

In all, 207 campers enjoyed the experience, and for an additional charge provided more than \$10,000 to the local economy by eating lunch in the 5 Points area. Meanwhile 15 high school students volunteered as counselors, earning 250 services hours and over \$5,000 in profit. In all, the camp generated over \$35,000 in revenue from the campers.



Brian Harbin and Colby Harris celebrate Harris’s summer earnings check

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New principal to head Morning Star School

A familiar face is taking the helm of Morning Star School, a Catholic school that serves students with learning and intellectual challenges.

Elaine Shott, a Lakeshore resident who has worked at the school for more than two decades, is taking over for longtime principal Jean Barnes. Barnes served at Morning Star School for 30 years and plans to remain involved as a board member.

Shott has worked at Morning Star School for 23 years, 10 as a junior high teacher and 13 as assistant principal.

She has a Bachelor of Arts in Business Administration from Flagler College, a master's degree in educational leadership from Walden University in Minneapolis, Minn., and a certification to teach special education from the University of North Florida.

"I am thrilled to lead our Morning Star community into a new school year," said Schott. "The current situation has placed many additional health protocols and safety measurers for our staff and students, but we are committed to keeping everyone safe, healthy, and focused. About one third of our students have elected to learn from home. To help our students and prepare for e-learning needs throughout the year,



Elaine Shott

we have developed a unique learning platform making the virtual classroom an easy transition for all students, and providing a more inclusive environment for our distance-learning students."

Shott said she is ready to take on the challenges that lay ahead. Trained to work with children who have learning and intellectual differences, she and her staff intend to work with each child to help them through this difficult time caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. "As a non-profit Catholic school, I am hopeful for the continued community support that the school receives every year to fund the many needs and growth of our special education school," she said, noting everyone at Morning Star is excited about the new outdoor fitness center that is to be completed this fall.

Bolles alum returns as campus nurse

During this unprecedented pandemic school year, Kerry Phillips, a 2005 graduate of The Bolles School, has returned to her alma mater as the school's Whitehurst campus nurse.

"I am so excited to be back on campus helping out our little people," said Phillips, a Bolles "lifer," who lives in San Jose. Phillips is a pediatric registered nurse hired to assist with the on-campus health and safety of lower school students.

Phillips received a bachelor's degree in biology from Washington & Lee University, and her nursing degree is from the University of Florida. Her area of specialty has been in pediatrics and lactation counseling.



Kerry Phillips

She and her husband, John Phillips, who is also a 2005 graduate of Bolles and was her high school sweetheart, have four children – Carson, 8, Everett, 5, Laine, 3, and Hope, 1.

Steve St. Amand to retire from Junior Achievement

Junior Achievement of North Florida President and CEO Steve St. Amand is retiring after 20 years of service.

St. Amand plans to step down from the position on Dec. 31, 2020, after nearly 20 years to the day that he joined the organization. St. Amand will be honored for his service with an induction into the Junior Achievement of North Florida Hall of Fame.

St. Amand has been overseeing Junior Achievement's (JA) programs throughout 26 counties in Florida since Jan. 1, 2001. During his tenure, he has grown JA of North Florida's program reach from 6,841 students in 2001 to 62,355 students in the 2018-2019 school year and 48,100 students in the most recent school year where in-class education was cut short by the pandemic. Over St. Amand's 20 years of service, 601,193 young people from kindergarten to 12th grade in North Florida received Junior Achievement financial literacy, workforce readiness and entrepreneurship programs.

"Twenty years ago, I learned that Junior Achievement was about children, education, and free enterprise. It hooked me then and has sustained me for two decades," said St. Amand. "The staff who have worked at Junior Achievement of North Florida, the 300 businesspeople who over the years have served on the board of directors, and the companies, foundations and individuals who have supported JA were really the ones who made this a successful organization."

St. Amand said that he took the Junior Achievement position because he was "looking to do something worthwhile." He was recognized in his first year with Junior Achievement when he was named by JA USA as a finalist for the prestigious Karl Flemke Award.

JA of North Florida has won many awards over the years, but St. Amand is proudest of the local initiatives he created that used JA programs to meet community needs. JA Girl\$ was created 12 years ago to bring tailored JA programs to girls and young



Steve St. Amand

women especially in areas where women were the only caretaker in the family. JA Boy\$, its partner program, was created a few years later. JA Girl\$ has been replicated throughout the country and in four foreign countries. It also won the Met Life Foundation for Entrepreneurial Excellence.

JA Work\$ is another initiative created by St. Amand and his

staff to provide hundreds of high school seniors the wide range of Junior Achievement workforce readiness programs and activities. Selected students are given real-life work experience and are paid a stipend for successful completion. The JA Financial Literacy Center created in 2015 houses The Economics of Healthy Eating, a program developed by Junior Achievement of North Florida in conjunction with the University of North Florida's Brooks College of Health.

This year, JA of North Florida will continue the commitment made 18 years ago to providing JA programs where they are most needed. They will develop and introduce a Black & Minority Initiative that will specifically meet the needs of black and minority students by providing access to financial resources, exposure to minority-owned businesses and mentors, and financial literacy education to ensure they have the tools to own their economic success.

Before joining JA, St. Amand worked for two Florida Governors and a United States Senator in Washington, D.C. St. Amand was also the Director of Governmental Affairs for the Jacksonville Chamber of Commerce, managed 28 political campaigns and was a registered lobbyist in Florida for 12 years.

"I got my first 10-hour a day job during the summer when I turned 14 and I worked throughout high school and paid for my college education," recalled St. Amand. "I now have three grandchildren who are probably as happy as I am that I am retiring. I have a new generation to which I can introduce fly fishing and a wife of 43 years with whom to enjoy retirement."



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Baptist hospitals rank high in state and national spectrum

U.S. News & World Report ranked Baptist Medical Center Jacksonville and Baptist Medical Center South 11th in Florida, which is in the top 5% of all hospitals in the state.

The two Baptist Health hospitals also ranked 50th nationally for gynecology services, and were “high performing” in geriatrics, neurology, and neurosurgery.

In addition, Baptist Jacksonville and Baptist South were ranked as high performing in heart failure, hip and knee replacement and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). Baptist Medical Center Beaches also received high marks in the heart failure designation.

For the 2020-21 rankings and ratings, U.S. News evaluated more than 4,500 medical centers nationwide in 16 specialties, 10 procedures and conditions.

“To be recognized among nearly 5,000 medical centers throughout Florida and the U.S. is an accomplishment we owe to our expert physicians, nurses, and team members,” said Michael A. Mayo, FACHE, hospital president of Baptist Jacksonville.

Baptist South President Nicole Thomas, FACHE, a San Marco area resident agreed. “Our goal is to provide our patients with innovative, high-quality, compassionate care every day,” said Thomas. “This objective ranking shows that we are delivering the type of care our patients require and expect.”

In addition, Wolfson Children’s Hospital was ranked among the 50 Best Children’s Hospitals for diabetes & endocrinology, orthopedics and urology in June.

The U.S. News Best Hospitals methodologies in most areas of care are based largely on objective measures such as risk-adjusted survival and discharge-to-home rates, volume, and quality of nursing, among other care-related indicators.

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Chelsea Harris



Lindsay Tygart

Fourteen attorneys from Coker Law have been included in the 2021 listing of *The Best Lawyers in America’s* 27th edition. Included within the listings are attorneys Howard Coker, Dan Iracki, Matthew Posgay, Jake Schickel, Charles Sorenson, Steve Watrel, Rufus Pennington III, Fraz Ahmed, Chelsea Harris, Janeen Kirch, Chase Sorenson, Aaron Sprague, David Thompson, and Lindsay Tygart.

The Best Lawyers in America is one of the oldest, most well-respected attorney-ranking services in the United States, and to be included in the publication is a great reflection of the dedication these 14 legal professionals have to practicing law.

This marks the 21st year for Coker, founding shareholder and president of Coker Law to be recognized in *The Best Lawyers in America* for his work in the category of Personal Injury Litigation. He is board certified by The Florida Bar in Civil Trial Law and has demonstrated tireless service and consistent commitment to both professional and community organizations.

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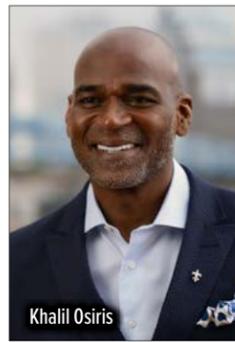
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Cathedral hosts talks on racism, healing

On consecutive Wednesdays throughout July and August, Khalil Osiris, founder of the Reflecting Freedom Network, sponsored a program of discussions entitled “Truth & Reconciliation Conversations” at St. Johns Cathedral.

During the conversations, Osiris said it was his goal to invite members of the Cathedral to share their thoughts and feelings about racism and to discuss what they could do to address it in the church.

“This summer, the overlapping crises of COVID-19 and civil unrest have focused new attention on the systemic impact of racism. For many people of color, George Floyd’s murder by police officers is a poignant reminder of the intersection between racism and injustice. It’s a topic that evokes anger, fear, guilt, as well as hope for healing and reconciliation,” said Osiris, who then quoted



Khalil Osiris



Khalil Osiris, founder of the Reflecting Freedom Network discusses racism and with Megan Cochran, District 14 City Councilwoman Randy DeFoor, and District 10 City Councilwoman Brenda Priestly Jackson.

Nelson Mandela: “In the end, reconciliation is a spiritual process, which requires more than just a legal framework. It has to happen in the hearts and minds of people.”

“The Truth & Reconciliation Conversations initiative is based on the belief that forgiveness takes one person, reconciliation two,” Osiris continued. “The conversations we had at the Cathedral highlighted the importance of listening to others, especially people who don’t share our views or experiences. By listening, we learned things about others that reminded us of our shared humanity.

By sharing our stories, we deepened our relationships with each other.

We started an important conversation. I hope it inspires others to join the work of facing racism and healing together.”

The conversations are available as a playlist on St. John’s Cathedral’s YouTube Channel. St. John’s Cathedral will continue the conversations on Wednesday nights in the fall with a film and discussion program called Sacred Ground.

For more information call St. John’s Cathedral at (904) 356-5507 or visit jaxcathedral.org.

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Ron Whittington, president of the Jacksonville Arboretum & Botanical Gardens (JAG) and long-time volunteer and lead donor Marcia Mederos cut a ceremonial blue ribbon to 'officially' open the South Loop Ravine Overlook, an ADA-accessible paved path, while JAG Executive Director Dana Doody looks on.

Jacksonville Arboretum celebrates ADA-accessible South Loop Ravine Overlook

Jacksonville Arboretum & Botanical Gardens (JAG) staff, board members and volunteers, along with Jacksonville City Councilman Al Ferraro and key donors, took part in a ribbon-cutting ceremony in June to thank funders of the new ADA-accessible path along the south loop of the arboretum's lake and to announce the path's official name: The South Loop Ravine Overlook.

"The board especially thanks long-time volunteer and supporter Marcia Mederos and her family for providing the lead gift, all the individuals who donated during our 2018 annual holiday appeal and the Delores Barr Weaver Legacy Fund at the Community Foundation of Northeast Florida, which provided a \$9,000 match," said JAG Board Chairman Ron Whittington.

Whittington was joined by Mederos in cutting a ceremonial blue ribbon to 'officially' open the path as the sign for the new path was unveiled.

The project, which cost more than \$50,000 to complete, involved major grading along the path to ensure people using wheelchairs or other visitors with mobility impairments can navigate down to the pavilion area more easily and safely. A1 Coastal Paving completed the paving project, representing the first major capital investments at the arboretum since it opened to the public in 2008.

The asphalt path is just over 1,000 feet long and is an average of 10 feet wide. As part of the project, JAG extended its reclaimed-water irrigation system underneath paved area so it can be accessed later as new gardens are established.

"All these donations to our capital campaign made this path a reality, and we hope this will be the first of many projects coming up to provide more garden spots and amenities for our visitors to enjoy," said JAG Executive Director Dana Doody.

Barber arrives in Miramar, offers locals new grooming options

A new barber shop has arrived in the Miramar Plaza to compliment the business landscape in the local area off San Jose Boulevard. According to the owner, Jimmy Koklarinis or "Jimmy the Greek", the traditional barber shop experience will be a trip down memory lane for many, as he is bringing back the straight razor and a top-notch attention to detail to the profession.

With his barber pole displayed out front, Jimmy wants locals to know he has a special lineup of services in store, one that includes an aromatherapy straight razor steam shave and salon techniques that reflect today's grooming trends. He also discounts services for seniors, military veterans, and active duty personnel as well. Jimmy the Greek Barber Shop is open for 7-days-a-week availability, and even offers a complimentary beer while you wait for your services.

Poised to serve locals in his new space at 4436 Hendricks Avenue, he is happy to neighbor with longtime businesses Toscana Little Italy, The PLAYERS Grille, Open Road Bicycles and Groomingdale's, to name a few. The nature of the community surrounding the shop has made an early impression on Koklarinis.



"I'm glad to have found this area of Jacksonville, you just get a sense that the locals support businesses, and support one another, it's tight knit," he observed. "I look forward to making a bold impression on the neighbors," he said.

New to the area, but not to the profession, Koklarinis has owned 10 previous barber shop locations over the last 16 years in Jacksonville. At one point, Koklarinis had his own branded barber school titled JRK's Studio 1 Academy on Bowden Road, where his experience has spawned hundreds of barbers in pursuit of their own businesses. Jimmy encourages drop-ins, or you can call ahead to set an appointment by dialing 904-475-2487. Mention 'The Resident' and receive \$5 off any service during the month of September.

Cathedral creates "Pony Express" fundraiser



Harriett Meyer, the Very Rev. Kate Moorehead, dean of St. John's Cathedral and Laura Eldredge stand on the sidewalk near the "satchel" pick up station.

Thanks to COVID-19, the Stewardship & Development Council at St. John's Cathedral knew it was facing a strange pledge season. Desiring to create a fundraising campaign that would build community, meet the church's financial needs, and bring everyone together, it discovered the answer in a good, old-fashioned Pony Express-style campaign and called it "Count on Me."

Just as the Pony Express helped spread important news to bind the nation during the Civil War, the Count-on-Me Pony Express campaign helped members of the Cathedral join together in this time of pandemic.

Approximately 50 team leaders – the Pony Express riders – were sent out with

satchels from the Cathedral to all corners of the Jacksonville metro area on Aug. 9. Each team leader had a delivery list of 8-10 households along with pledge cards and information. The leader brought the satchel to the first home on the list. After the recipient filled out the pledge card, sealed it, and placed it back in the satchel, he or she passed the satchel on to the next person. To add a little fun, participants were encouraged to snap a selfie and tag it with #SJCCountonMe.

All satchels were returned to the Cathedral by Aug. 30 for a special Ingathering Sunday. With only three weeks on the road, this was the fastest and most unique pledge drive ever.

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PNC Bank Commits \$500,000 to MOSH 2.0

PNC Bank has committed \$500,000 to the Museum of Science and History's MOSH 2.0 capital campaign. The museum announced the launch of its MOSH 2.0 campaign in March 2019 with the goal of raising \$20 million in community support from individuals, businesses and corporations, foundations, and other community stakeholders.

PNC will be recognized as the title sponsor of all early learning initiatives at MOSH, presenting sponsor of the new Preschool Days Program, and will be the naming rights sponsor of the MOSH Research Vessel/Maker Space, which will be featured in MOSH 2.0 plans.

"Ninety percent of a child's brain develops by age five, which is why PNC believes it's critical to invest early in a child's future," said Brian Bucher, PNC regional president for the southeast Port Cities. "At MOSH 2.0, the early learning center will be a stimulating, interactive and fun exhibit, perfect for little ones to flourish. We're thankful for MOSH's innovative and inclusive thinking about pre-k education, because when children are given the tools to thrive, their future becomes even brighter."

Additionally, PNC has pledged to invest in educational resources for First Coast families through an agreement with WJCT Public Media. Together, they will develop a series of videos showcasing MOSH and PNC early learning activities that will introduce science concepts for children ages birth to 5. Videos will air on WJCT and be housed on WJCT & MOSH websites and social media.

San Marco Rotarians welcome back Spring Park teachers

San Marco Rotarians welcomed back teachers at Spring Park Elementary with specially boxed lunches Aug. 17.

Annually, the Rotarians sponsor a back-to-school breakfast that they share with the teachers while discussing the upcoming school year. With social distancing in place this year, it was decided to make a change of plans and provide boxed lunches and drinks. San Marco Rotary President Pete Helow and President-elect Logan McEwen presented the lunches on behalf of the club and thanked the teachers for their service to the community.

The Rotary Club of San Marco was chartered in 2008. It continues to meet virtually at this time, and all are welcome to join the meetings as guests. Meetings are held the second and fourth Tuesday of the month at 8 a.m., with a virtual Happy Hour held the third Tuesday of the month at 5 p.m. For information on how to connect, email Pete Helow at pete@helow1.com.



Logan McEwen, president-elect, San Marco Rotary Club with Davina Parker, principal, Spring Park Elementary, Toby Brandon, vice principal Spring Park Elementary, and Pete Helow, president, San Marco Rotary Club.

Global entrepreneur joins historical society board

At its June meeting, the Jacksonville Historical Society welcomed Dennis B. Whittle as a new member of its board of directors.

A newcomer to Jacksonville, Whittle relocated from Washington, D.C. in 2018 when his wife, Mari Kuraishi, accepted a position as the new president of the Jessie Ball duPont Foundation. A Riverside resident, Whittle became interested in the Jacksonville Historical Society through another board member, the Rev. Canon Dr. Allison DeFoor. Whittle is also a member of the Society's music history museum task force.

Whittle recently co-founded Normal>Next, a network of C-level executives, entrepreneurs and technologists committed to helping the world adapt, change, and thrive through economic and social turbulence. He also recently co-founded The Future Proof Institute, which helps nonprofits, cities, universities, and other public organizations re-imagine their future.

"I was drawn to the Historical Society because I believe it has the potential to help Jacksonville build on its incredible past to become one of the country's leading cities in the years ahead," Whittle said. "The Society is in a unique position to help the city celebrate its



Dennis B. Whittle

amazing economic and cultural accomplishments while also facing head-on the racial and other social injustices that we must overcome to be a thriving city."

Whittle was CEO and co-founder – along with Kuraishi – of GlobalGiving, the world's first online crowdfunding marketplace. GlobalGiving has raised a half billion dollars in funding for thousands of community projects in 170 countries from a million donors and 300 companies. More recently, he was co-founder and CEO of Feedback Labs, a network of 600 public and private organizations seeking to find out what regular people

need to make their lives better. Earlier, Whittle spent 14 years working in Indonesia and Russia with The World Bank, most recently as senior partner of the Bank's innovation and strategy groups. He has also spent time in Manila, Philippines, with USAID and Asian Development Bank. Over the past decade, he has taught at Princeton and University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill.

Whittle holds a master's degree in public affairs from Princeton and a Bachelor of Arts from UNC, where he was a Morehead Scholar. He has also completed Harvard Business School's Executive Development Program.

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Catholic Charities distributes emergency assistance during COVID-19 crisis

Catholic Charities agencies distributed nearly \$400 million in emergency COVID-19 assistance to people across the United States and the U.S. territories during the past four months. Emergency help consists primarily of food, rental assistance, personal protective equipment, baby supplies and emergency quarantine housing. “The generosity of corporate donors, foundations, and individuals has been overwhelming,” said Sister Donna Markham, president & CEO of Catholic Charities USA.

From April through June, the Catholic Charities Bureau for the Diocese of St. Augustine gave out more than \$762,000 in emergency assistance to 1,930 individuals affected by the coronavirus pandemic. The agency also gave out

387,563 pounds of food to food pantries and outreach in the community and another 1,243,054 pounds of food through their food banks. These figures represent emergency assistance provided by the four regional offices of Catholic Charities for the diocese.

Additionally, the \$100-\$200 million in Payroll Protection Program loans has enabled Catholic Charities throughout the country to retain employees to provide urgent help during the pandemic. “I remain edified by so many Catholic Charities staff and volunteers who work tirelessly on the front lines – often at great personal risk – to maintain the distribution of critical supplies,” said Sister Donna. “They are truly the embodiment of the Good Samaritan.”

Theatre Jacksonville to offer fall educational programs

Registration is now open for Theatre Jacksonville’s fall educational programs for adults and children in both individual and group virtual options.

For adults, the theatre is partnering with two NYC-based acting and voice coaches – Dorothy Bishop and Jean Tait – to offer one-on-one virtual sessions, all from the comfort of your own home. Bishop is experienced in audition prep, comedy, and interpretation of songs, with a specialization in music theater and pop voices. Tait specializes in audition prep and will be working with students to find new depth in monologues, while strengthening acting technique.

For children ages 7-16, Theatre Jacksonville is offering online Creative Connectivity for Kids classes. Each 10-week class costs \$250 and begins the week of Sept. 14. One-on-one virtual coaching for children and teens is available in vocal/musical theatre and acting/monologue, with instruction provided by Theatre Jacksonville experts. For more information or to register for adult one-on-one coaching sessions, virtual coaching for children or Creative Connectivity classes, visit www.theatrejax.com or call (904) 396-4425.

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Life Flight celebrates the big 4-0



The Life Flight helicopter sits on its pad at Baptist Medical Center Jacksonville

Life Flight, Baptist Medical Center’s air ambulance, celebrated 40 years of continuous service on Aug. 3.

The helicopter service, which takes off from a landing pad atop Baptist Medical Center Jacksonville, had an auspicious debut. Four minutes after it officially went into service in 1980, the French-built, single engine helicopter was called to airlift a Fernandina Beach man who had fallen into a vat of corrosive liquid. Later that same day, during the official dedication ceremony for the five-passenger helicopter, Life Flight was dispatched to its second mission – transporting a sailor based at Mayport Naval Station, who had been severely injured in a diving accident.

During its first year of operation, Life Flight flew 641 medical missions, with more than half of its patients being flown directly to area emergency centers. Over the past 40 years, Life Flight has safely transported more than 25,000 adult and pediatric patients in Northeast Florida and Southeast Georgia, serving all five Baptist Health hospitals and three of its four Baptist/Wolfson Children’s Hospital satellite emergency rooms.

When it debuted in 1980, Life Flight was the second air ambulance in the state and one of only 40 in the nation. Richard Malone, Baptist Medical Center’s executive director at the time, was instrumental in getting Jacksonville’s inaugural air ambulance service off the ground. Before coming to Baptist in 1977, Malone was involved in a trail-blazing hospital-based helicopter project sponsored by the U.S. Department of Transportation.

Life Flight was the first rotor-wing air ambulance in the state accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Medical Transport Systems (CAMTS) and the first in Jacksonville to carry blood products.

“CAMTS accreditation is highly regarded in the air medical industry and represents the hard work of the entire Life Flight staff, crew members, pilots, mechanics, leadership and medical directors,” said Brad Elias, MD, Life Flight’s current medical director and an emergency medicine physician at Baptist Jacksonville.

“When Life Flight first started at Baptist Medical Center it was cutting edge,” recalled Richard Stromberg, MD, an emergency medicine specialist at Wolfson Children’s Hospital and Life Flight’s third medical director. “Life Flight’s establishment marked an enormous change in how certain kinds of emergencies were handled because we suddenly had very rapid transport.”

Baptist Health currently contracts its emergency air medical transport services through Air Methods Corp., the largest provider of air medical transport services in the United States. Life Flight 1, the latest in a long line of medical helicopters that have called Baptist Health home, has been

stationed at Baptist Medical Center South since 2017.

The helicopter service employs four Life Flight pilots, eight flight nurses and paramedics, a mechanic, and a medical director.

“We fly trauma and medical patients from the scene to the hospital, or hospital to hospital transfers,” said Dane Taylor, FP-C, senior clinical base supervisor for Air Methods Jacksonville and a senior flight paramedic for Life Flight since 2007. “Medical calls range from heart attacks and strokes to high-risk pregnancy complications. We never know what the day will bring and nothing we do is routine.”



A BO-105 Eurocopter flies over Jacksonville in 1995

Life Flight 1, a Bell 407GX, flies within a 150 nautical-mile radius of Jacksonville and carries one patient. The standard crew configuration is one pilot, one flight nurse, and one flight paramedic. The aircraft is outfitted as a self-contained critical care unit and contains a hook-up to an incubator for transporting newborns and sick babies with Kids Kare’s Neonatal and Pediatric Transport Teams, a service of Wolfson Children’s Hospital.

Other life-saving equipment on board include defibrillation and pacing capabilities to treat life-threatening cardiac episodes; multiple dual-chamber infusion pumps to deliver fluids; video laryngoscope for airway management; blood products; and LUCAS chest compression system.

Sam Young, PMD, manager of EMS Support and System Emergency Preparedness for Baptist Health and a former paramedic, flew on several different Life Flight helicopters over the years. “The original Life Flight was a single-engine helicopter. Then we transitioned to a series of twin-engine models,” said Young, who flew on and off from 1985 to 2001. “It was an honor to serve aboard Life Flight and a very rewarding experience.”

“The medical care rendered by the Life Flight crew is comparable to that of any Intensive Care Unit,” added Dr. Elias, who has served as Life Flight’s medical director for more than a dozen years. “Whether it’s a complex medical patient or a severely injured trauma patient, Life Flight nurses and paramedics rise to the challenge.”



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Social distancing Season Calendar of Events

Daily feeding at the Clara White Mission

When: Any Monday in September
8:30 AM to 10 AM

Where: Clara White Mission,
613 West Ashley Street,
Jacksonville, 32202

The Clara White Mission is a 116-year institution in the Jacksonville community. Known for feeding the homeless and veterans and with your continued help, it will continue to do that. Thank you for your time and caring hearts. Questions or comments about volunteering at this particular event, email Merle Wright at volunteering@clarawhitemission.org or call at 904-354-4162 ext.1100.

Down on the Farm with Clara White Mission

When: Any Thursday or Friday in September
10 AM to 1 PM

Where: 4850 Moncrief Road

Volunteers are needed to harvest, plant, and clean vegetables for the Clara White Mission, a 116-year institution that feeds homeless and veterans in Jacksonville. Any questions and comments contact Merle Wright at volunteering@clarawhitemission.org or call 904-354-4162 ext. 1100



Delicious Destinations "Dine In Edition"

Ascension St. Vincent's Community Outreach

When: September 12 | 6 PM

Where: Virtual and free to the public: visit www.givestvincents.org/deliciousdestinations

Presented by Miller Electric, the signature event will be held virtually and free to the public. Chef Hermann Muller of the Ponte Vedra Inn & Club and Chef Darek Stennes of The River Club will provide step-by-step instructions for attendees to cook an elegant, three-course meal from the comfort of their own homes. Registered participants receive an ingredients list ahead of the event.

44th Annual Arts Awards

Cultural Council of Greater Jacksonville

When: September 2, 2020 | 7 PM

Where: This free live-streamed, virtual event can be seen on the websites and Facebook pages of The Cultural Council, WJCT and Downtown Vision's September virtual Art Walk.

Hosted by Tenikka Hughes and Al Emerick, this event will combine award presentations, appearances from distinguished members of the community, moving and impactful performances, and more including an online auction, pre-awards cocktail party and virtual Zoom party. For event information go to www.culturalcouncil.org/44th-annual-arts-awards.html

The Swingin Shindig

Sanctuary on 8th Street

When: September 17, 2020 | 6-8 PM

Where: Virtual Event, visit sanctuaryon8th.org

Join in online to hear great music, participate in an online raffle and consider making a donation which will benefit the Sanctuary on 8th Street, a place of hope for the children of Springfield since 1992. Get into the theme with delicious New Orleans dinner recipes you can make at home. Visit our website at sanctuaryon8th.org

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14th Annual Inshore Slam Fishing Tournament

Anglers for a Cure, Inc.

When: September 25, 2020 | before 6 pm
September 26, 2020 | 4 pm
Rain date: Sept. 27, 2020

Where: Vilano Beach Boat Ramp



This fishing tournament is in loving memory of Doug Carroll. In a continued effort to right colorectal cancer, proceeds will benefit the Borland-Groover Clinic Foundation for research and education. Mandatory Captains meeting followed by a cookout will be held at The Bait Shack, 101 Vilano Causeway in St. Augustine. Live music, a prize drawing, breakfast and lunch included for tournament participants.

Transformations 2020 – Covid Edition

When: September 30, 2020 | 12pm

Where: Virtual event, visit SulzbacherJax.org

What started as a humble shelter that served meals has grown into an organization that has helped literally thousands of homeless get their lives back on track. This free virtual event celebrates 25 years of housing, healthcare & hope. Featured will be musical performances by the Jacksonville Symphony Orchestra & others!

For more information visit SulzbacherJax.org or call (904) 568-8351



18th Annual Buddy Walk

Down Syndrome Association of Jacksonville

When: October 17, 2020

Where: Northeast Florida and Southeast Georgia

Instead of a large-scale gathering, the nonprofit is supporting Buddy Walk teams as they host personalized celebrations. Participants are encouraged to walk one mile on the day of the event to raise funds to support those with Down syndrome. Team captains will host personal, socially distanced events for their teams that follow state and CDC guidelines. To register contact DSAJ.org.

The Home That Daniel Built: An Evening Under the Pavilion

When: October 3, 2020 | 6pm

Where: Daniel Residential Campus, 3725 Belfort Rd, Jacksonville, 32216

A fun-filled evening benefiting the Glyn S. Cook Memorial Scholarship Fund and campus cottage renovations to raise funds to give youth in crisis the tools they need to heal and become productive members of our community. Proceeds will support educational scholarships for formerly homeless teens and pay for essential renovations to the children's cottages.

The 11th Annual Dine with the Swine

CJ Acres Animal Rescue Farm

When: October 3, 2020 | 6-8 PM

Where: 5728 Jones Creek Road, Keystone Heights, FL 32656

An all-inclusive, catered five-course vegan meal with wine pairings for ages 21 and older is by advance ticket purchase only. Tickets at \$43.75 per adult are available on the website: www.cjacres.org. Current social distance recommendations and all safety precautions will be followed. Each guest will receive an etched wine glass as a thank-you gift.

Margarita J'Ville

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Northeast Florida

When: November 6, 2020 | 7pm - 10pm

Where: Mavi Waterfront Bar & Grill, Jacksonville Beach

Key West will come to Jacksonville when Big Brothers Big Sisters of Northeast Florida hosts its Margarita J'Ville fundraiser. Live music, delicious island-inspired cuisine, and sip-free flowing margaritas will be offered while enjoying picturesque views and Jimmy Buffet vibes. Proceeds support Big Brothers Big Sisters' work in assisting youth in realizing their potential through the power of mentorship.



2020 Festival of Flight

The Allison Brundick Haramis Foundation (Angels for Allison)

When: October 18, 2020

Where: Stockton Park

Join a memorial service remembering Angel Children, to be followed by a Festival that is family friendly and free to attend. The nonprofit is returning to where the first Festival of Flight was held at Stockton Park. The event will include games, crafts, music, food, and dancing. There will also be a raffle.

2020 National Philanthropy Day

AFP First Coast

When: November 19, 2020 | 11:30 am

Where: Virtual Event, visit community.afpnet.org/afpfirstcoastchapter/npd48/content168

AFP First Coast's 2020 National Philanthropy Day celebration will go on. The virtual event will honor donors, volunteers and professionals in the nonprofit, civic and service sectors whose gifts of time, expertise, and resources contribute to the quality of life in our communities. The event is a fundraiser for the First Coast Chapter of the AFP to provide scholarships to further individual members' professional development.



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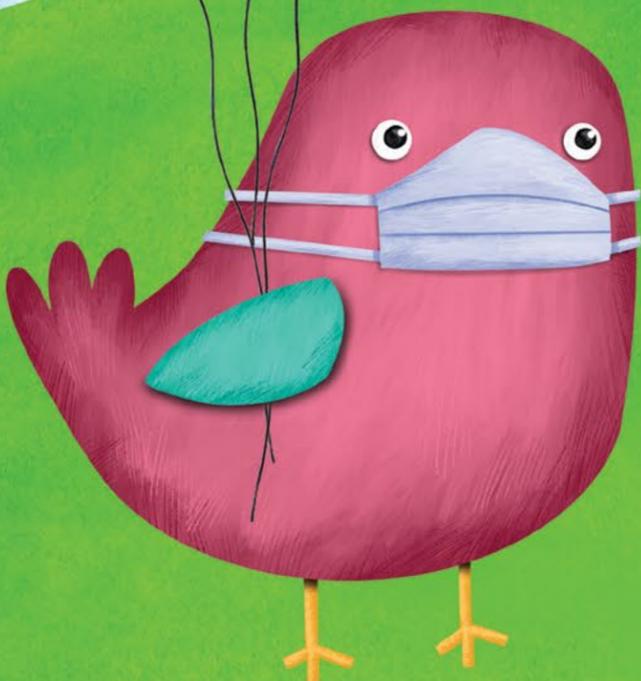
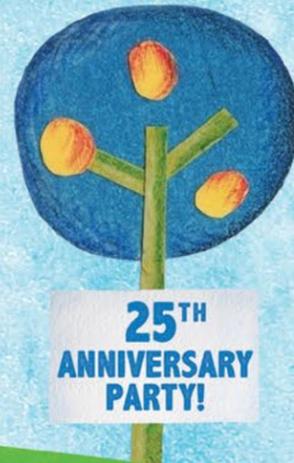
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2020 COVID EDITION

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Alumni forms committee to save name of Robert E. Lee High

VIEW LETTERS TO THE EDITOR FROM LEE ALUMNI AT RESIDENTNEWS.NET

By Marcia Hodgson
Resident Community News

What's in a name? Quite a bit. Just ask the alumni of Robert E. Lee High School.

Dedicated to the Confederate general on January 19, 1928, Lee's birthday, the school has a proud tradition of academic and athletic excellence, particularly in football. As a historic school still operating at its original location, Lee has graduated 92 senior classes and at least 35,000 students from its hallowed halls on McDuff Avenue.

Lee's alumni, many of which are celebrated athletes, politicians, and musicians, show love for their alma mater, both in spirit and financially. Not only are class reunions well attended, alumni annually donate the interest from a special fund established to help the school after a fire ravaged its facility in 1988.

So, it comes as no surprise many of Lee's alumni were outraged when the Duval County Public School Board voted to rename the school, along with five others named for Confederate soldiers June 16.

Hearing hue and cry from many classmates, six Lee alumni -- Norman Abraham '56, Melanie Amos Love '79, Robert Lawrence '80, Joe Stevens '84, Patti Fraser Price '80 and William "Pat" Geer '67 -- decided to do something. The group formed a political committee and website, SavetheSchoolNames.org, to fight the school board's initiative. They are raising tax deductible contributions to hire legal counsel to observe the process and file a lawsuit if necessary, said Lawrence.

"Our fight is not against the history," said Love. "It doesn't have anything to do with it. It's to maintain our identity as alumni of Lee High School."

On June 16, Duval County School Board Chairman Warren Jones called for six schools

– Robert E. Lee High, Joseph Finegan Elementary, Stonewall Jackson Elementary, Jefferson Davis Middle, Kirby-Smith Middle, and J.E.B. Stuart Middle – to be renamed, and the school board voted unanimously to begin the process.

"We have come to a place and time in the history of our city that we must begin the process of renaming all the schools named for a confederate soldier. This effort can help to heal a city that is fractured. In following the lead of our mayor, who is boldly removing all confederate monuments, it is high time that we do the same," he wrote.

On July 7, District 3 School Board Member Ashley Smith Juarez went further, requesting the board consider adding three more schools to its renaming list – Andrew Jackson High, Jean Ribault High, and Jean Ribault Middle. At its Aug. 4 meeting, the school board voted, 6-1, in favor of her proposal.

"We should continue with schools that are named for people responsible for systematically marginalizing and killing indigenous people," Smith Juarez said.

Darryl Willie, representative of School District 4, voted against the plan. Renaming the additional schools might "dilute" the focus on racial justice. "I have not heard the need is dire to change these names," he said, adding it is "not the right time."

Cost is another reason not to rename the schools, said the alumni. It costs at least \$2 million to change names on nine schools, they said, although the school board estimated the cost at less than \$1 million. "It cost \$350,000 to change to name of Nathan Bedford Forrest High School and that was six years ago," said Price, noting the Forrest High Alumni Association faded away after the school was renamed.

"Warren Jones said, 'Now is the time.' Well, our theme is 'now is NOT the time,'" said Stevens. And thousands of Lee alumni agree with him. More than 2,000 alumni have contacted the committee, and 1,309 members have joined the Save the School Names Facebook group.

Jones' proposal is based on the current political climate, and propelled by social activism, said Love. "We are strongly opposed to the name change but not for any social justice or political reason," she said. "We feel the heritage and culture of the alumni of Lee High School is at risk of being invalidated and erased. This is distressing to people who have graduated because we will essentially have an alma mater that no longer exists. This is not about the man the school was named after. It's about the alumni," she said.

Lee High's student body is mainly African American. The group does not believe those students consider the name a problem, as evidenced in \$13 million in academic scholarships they earned this year. "They have Lee pride," said Stevens. "In 10 years, I've never heard of any graduate say they thought of the school in a negative way. People who keep raising the issue never attended the school."

To defray taxpayers' cost, the Jacksonville Public Education Fund (JPEF) has created a special fund to allow community members to support the renaming effort through tax-deductible donations. "Research shows students are better able to learn when they feel welcome and represented at school," said JPEF President Rachael Tutwiler Fortune.

Lee's alumni dispute Fortune's claim. "We ask them to give us some proof that changing the names will influence those positive academic outcomes," said Price. "They have yet to convince us that kids are not doing

well in the classroom because of the name on the sign out front."

Westside High was a C school before it was renamed and is still a C school now, said Love. "There are 23 schools in Duval County that are D or F schools. Of those schools 15 are not named after any person, six are named after African Americans, and two are named after Confederates. We feel the school board's motivations are groundless," she said, noting Lee is a B school.

The alumni feel the school board's move is an "opportunistic grab." There are much greater needs and priorities the board should focus on such as readying schools for COVID-19, improving curriculum, funding teacher's supplies and higher pay, and infrastructure repairs as many schools are "crumbling," she said.

With a current enrollment of 1,800 students, Lee High sports a truancy rate of 33% or 600 students, said Price. "Any money being raised (by JPEF) would be much better spent on a truancy officer to get them back in school. That's what is going to improve student success."

At a minimum Duval County Public Schools Superintendent Dr. Diana Greene should hold community town hall meetings and allow the public to have a say, said the group. Meanwhile, Lee alumni have flooded the school board with nearly 200 letters denouncing renaming.

"We want Warren Jones to host a public forum and be willing to field questions regardless of how uncomfortable they are," said Price. Lawrence added, "And we don't want him to have it at 10 a.m. Tuesday morning. We want it to be held at a time when people can attend." Stevens concurred. "I'd like to see it on a city-wide ballot. It would never pass," he said.

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As head of CastleWise, Tom York has an economics degree from the University of Florida and has held senior-level positions in finance and insurance throughout his career. He most recently served as the president of Clear Payment Solutions before branching off to start up CastleWise Realty & Insurance, and he holds the Chartered Property and Casualty Underwriter (CPCU) designation, which is one of the most highly regarded certifications in the insurance industry. He also has a wealth of experience in real estate and insurance having previously worked on the carrier side with Tower Hill Insurance Group of Gainesville and Citizens Property Insurance in Jacksonville. He is extremely familiar with Jacksonville's historic communities, having lived in Riverside for the past 10 years with his wife, Andria and two daughters, Meara, 5, and Tessa, 10 months.

How to find your castle and protect your kingdom

CastleWise Realty & Insurance President Tom York has a motto: "To find your castle and protect your kingdom."

As the principal of Jacksonville's newest realty that offers a one-stop experience allowing clients to buy or sell a home while taking care of all insurance needs under one roof, he offers this advice: "Consolidating your contact points for everything related to your largest investment only makes sense. I started CastleWise because I felt that the service and attention to detail in both the insurance and real estate industries was lacking and I wanted to fix that. Over time, I've seen both industries fall prey to acquisition and franchise, and a lot of the personal experience you would expect has all but disappeared," he said.

In both real estate and insurance, it is important that technology make things easy for the customer, he said. "Our firm offers an option for a fully touchless and electronic experience. Because it is important to have easy access to information on both your

"I started CastleWise because I felt that the service and attention to detail in both the insurance and real estate industries was lacking and I wanted to fix that."

— Tom York, CastleWise

home purchase or insurance renewal, the fact that documents from both agencies can be bundled together on an app like the one CastleWise provides for both iOS and Android users, helps to simplify matters and make things easy for the customer," he said.

"Technology should be used as a supplement to enhance a customer's experience instead of replacing the critical human-to-human interaction so vital when buying a home or deciding on necessary insurance. People should have their semiannual risk

reviewed with their insurance agent more than once a year, in person, on Zoom, or over the phone, to ensure that their personal risk management program is structured effectively," he said, noting all that comes standard to CastleWise customers. "Life changes a lot throughout the year, and we want to make sure that we stay in lock step with our customers."

In order to find the right product at the right price to meet a client's individual need, it is important to have the right insurance agent, one that is able to check the offerings presented by as many different insurance carriers as possible, he said, noting his firm has access to more than 20, and that number is growing every month. Unparalleled market access is key, he said.

And because each individual client is different, the kind of coverage and amount of insurance will vary from each person, so it is important to work with an agency

CONTINUED ON PAGE 25

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“The key is working with a group that takes a consultative approach to your needs. If you haven’t talked to your insurance agent in the past year and don’t know their name, that’s a sign it may be time to make a change.”

— Tom York, CastleWise



The York Family

like CastleWise, which offers a wide variety of coverage including personal auto and homeowners to commercial liability and even kidnap and ransom insurance. “It all boils down to the agent experience,” he said. “The key is working with a group that takes a consultative approach to your needs. If you haven’t talked to your insurance agent in the past year and don’t know their name, that’s a sign it may be time to make a change.”

Understanding that many first-time home buyers may not know where to start, York recommends selecting an agent that can offer personalized customer service and is committed to getting the best deal for the client. What they should look for is an

agency like CastleWise, that has a stable of friendly, talented, and experienced agents who are able to draw on an intimate knowledge of North Florida’s neighborhoods and can offer exceptional guidance during every step of the homebuying process. “It is important not only to have a professional assist in the search for the right property, the agent should remain at the client’s side during home tours, negotiations, and the closing, to ensure the entire journey is hassle-free and enjoyable,” he said.

In selling a home, it is important that the agent do a complete market analysis of the neighborhood to determine the ideal selling price. Clients should also expect agents to assist them in professionally staging their

home, he said. And once a buyer and seller come to a decision, it is important that a managing broker and full-time deal coordinator be on-site to assist so that scheduling, contracts, and closings come together seamlessly, he added.

Selecting the right agent, is perhaps the most important aspect in buying or selling a home. It is important to make sure they have familiarity with the neighborhood as well as the education, qualifications, and experience to serve you well, he said.

A firm should have expertise in all areas of the region in which it serves, so that its knowledge-base covers a wide variety of neighborhoods and price-points, he said. CastleWise’s current offices are based in

Southside at 7220 Financial Way, Suite 300, just off J. Turner Butler Boulevard, with expansion plans for offices in Avondale and Atlantic Beach.

“As with any business, success depends on the quality of the agents and employees, and the quality of those who serve the company often depends on the compensation they receive,” he said. “You get what you pay for,” he said. “From the very beginning, at CastleWise it is our intention to always pay our agents and employees better than the rest of the market,” he said. “It’s important that both consumers and agents see the same benefits in doing a transaction – value, access to technology, and top-tiered support, which is what you get at CastleWise.”

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Tom York, CPCU | President

Thanks to Boy Scout training, college student saves teen from drowning

By Marcia Hodgson
Resident Community News

Lifesaving skills learned as a 13-year-old Eagle Scout made the difference when San Marco resident Ross Johnson was called to save a young teen from drowning in Neptune Beach ocean waters May 17. In recognition of his heroic save, Johnson was awarded the prestigious Lifesaving Award by the Neptune Beach Police Department during the Neptune Beach City Council meeting Aug. 3.

Johnson, a 20-year-old student at Jacksonville University, had arrived an hour early with his friends and family for a dinner reservation at the Neptune Beach Town Center when the group decided to take a short walk on the beach. Little did Johnson know he would be soon called upon to save a life.



Ross Johnson

"We'd arrived a bit early, so we went down to the beach to take a walk. As we neared the ocean, we saw a woman running out of the water calling desperately for help. She was screaming repeatedly that her nephew was drowning. At first, we thought she was just kidding because the ocean seemed far too rough for anybody to be actually swimming in it. Tropical Storm Arthur was right off the coast causing huge, mushy surf," Johnson recalled.

Scanning the waves, Johnson and his party did not immediately see a struggling swimmer, but after searching a few moments, his father, Bob, spotted something in the water far beyond the breaking waves. "We saw a dark head bouncing around, about 150 yards out," said Bob Johnson, noting it was the woman's nephew, who had probably gotten dragged out into the ocean by a rip current. "The lifeguards were no longer on duty and there were no surfboards or other flotation devices in the area, so I knew I had to do something right away," said Johnson.

Seeing no sign of an obvious runout, both Johnson and his father urgently yanked

off their shirts and shoes, emptied their pockets and ran into the water. However, Bob Johnson quickly discovered he was no match for the rough sea and turned back quickly allowing his son to push on alone once he reached the breakers. "By the time I got to the breakers, my heart rate was so high, I couldn't go any further," Bob said. "Ross is younger and more fit. I knew if I kept going, my son would have to decide whether to rescue the kid or me. I had to make a choice." Yelling for his son to continue, he turned back to call 9-1-1.

Meanwhile, Johnson dove through the breakers and was swimming as hard as he could. "It was a challenge to get through the rough water, and it sapped a lot of my energy, but eventually I started nearing the figure and realized it was a young teenage boy. His head kept going under the waves, so I knew I had to get to him fast," Ross said. "I finally reached him and as I held him up to keep his head above water, he told me he didn't know how to swim and that he couldn't feel his legs. I didn't know how long he had been out there, but I suspected he had been pulled out by a rip current and was physically exhausted from treading water for so long. I began gradually leading him toward shore, but he kept slipping under water and grabbing me around my shoulders and neck to pull himself up, causing me to then go under and choke on saltwater."

It was then the life-saving skills Johnson learned so many years before in Boy Scout Troop 136, which meets at All Saint's Episcopal Church, came into play. "I adjusted how I was holding him so that he was on his back with one of my arms around his chest so I was able to swim while keeping his head above water without him pulling me under," Johnson said. "This allowed me to work back toward shore and eventually to the first breakers where my father and another volunteer were able to take him from me just as I was at my limit from exhaustion." The Neptune Beach Fire and Rescue squad took over once the victim was brought into the beach, he said.

In addition to receiving the Lifesaving Award from the City of Neptune Beach, Johnson has also been nominated for the prestigious Boy Scout Lifesaving Award. "It means a great deal to me to receive this lifesaving award from the Neptune Beach Police Department, an organization for which I have great respect and admiration as their officers put their lives on the line each and every day to protect their community," Johnson said. "It shows how much the city of Neptune Beach cares about its citizens and visitors and appreciates those who get the opportunity to assist them."

A dean's list student who is entering his sophomore year at Jacksonville University



Certificate given to Ross Johnson by the Neptune Beach Police recognizing his dramatic rescue.

"The lifeguards were no longer on duty and there were no surfboards or other flotation devices in the area, so I knew I had to do something right away."

— Ross Johnson

on a president's scholarship, Johnson said he didn't think twice about whether or not to try to save the 13-year-old boy. "It just seemed that I had to or else a person was going to die. I wasn't thinking too much about making it back or not but more about keeping the boy's head above water. As he was pushing me under and I kept choking on saltwater, it did occur to me that if I didn't change techniques it was quite possible I would drown myself. Thankfully, that didn't happen. I kept going simply because I knew he would not make it back alive if I didn't," Johnson said, adding that he can't imagine seeing someone in distress and not trying to help. "I am relieved that I was in the right place at the right time to be able to help out, and I'm extremely appreciative to scouting for giving me the training and confidence to be able to make the rescue. On the path to Eagle Scout, I was required to earn the Lifesaving merit badge where I learned the skills that I drew upon for this rescue. Without the scouting experience, there's no telling how differently and tragically this situation would have turned out," Johnson continued.

"I was not worried about not remembering the skills I had learned because in Scouts many of the drills we did intentionally

involved not always having time to think too much and building the skills into your natural reactions. So, a lot of it came naturally after practicing so much in Scouts."

Bob agreed that the training his son learned in Boy Scouts made a difference. "If he hadn't been an Eagle Scout, he probably wouldn't have known how to handle it," he said.

Johnson said he is grateful to his parents for teaching him how to swim when he was a baby and giving him opportunities to be comfortable in all kinds of water.

"I definitely recommend that everyone in our area learn basic swimming techniques because we have water all around us and this experience is a reminder that you just never know when you may be suddenly called on to use that swimming ability to assist somebody. If you are going to swim in the ocean, I would definitely recommend learning about rip currents and practicing navigating in strong surf. Knowing the basics of how to pull someone out of the water as well as keeping physically fit are invaluable. Those are some of the skills and ideals central to scouting. I would highly recommend that young people consider getting involved in an organization like scouting where they can learn lifesaving and many other skills while having a great time."

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Question: If a vaccine was developed tomorrow, would you take it? Or would you wait to see the results of the initial tests and trials? Or would you not take it at all?

By Marcia Hodgson, Resident Community News



I don't know. I don't know how to answer that. I would call my mother and ask her what I should do. That's exactly what I would do.

— ASHLEY OLIVER



I would not take it at all. I'm just not big into vaccines. I think they have run this one through so fast, too, that I don't have a whole lot of confidence in it.

— BOBBY BACK



I'd wait to see the effects. What if you grew a tail or something? I'd want to wait and see what happened. If other people want to take it, they are voluntarily taking it if they want to. I will let the other people who want to take it and think that's a good decision, they can take it and we can all see if it affected them or not.

— ALEX MEYER



I would definitely wait and probably still be hesitant. I think because it hasn't been out long enough, I don't want to be a guinea pig. It's like our grandkids are in Texas, and I'm still unsure if we should go see them. My thought is, they've been quarantined, and we've been quarantined, and at my age, if I get it and die with it, I've seen my grandkids. I guess I'm very hesitant. I'm just not real big on putting things into my body. I try to stay very healthy. I don't want to be a guinea pig, and I don't know what it is. But I do know there are other people out there who will do it. So, I will wait, and I probably still wouldn't do it.

— PAM BACK



I would wait to see the results. I think in developing a vaccine you need to see what the long-term effects are and the negative effects of the vaccine. If everything is fine, I would absolutely take it.

— ZACH IACOPUCCI



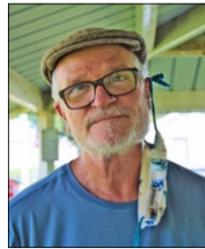
Yes, I'd take it, but I'd give it a month to see the result. It sounds smart to see how other people react before I would take a vaccine. I'm for taking it, but I'm for somebody else walking through that gate before me.

— ROB FEAGIN



I would wait to see the results of the tests. I can't trust it right now because it's so new. I would definitely wait until there is probably at least a year to see how it panned out. We just don't know if there are going to be any negative effects of getting that vaccine. I just wouldn't want to expose myself to something that we just don't have enough research on.

— MINDI MEYER AND COOPER



I would definitely take it right away. It can't hurt, and I think it would speed along the process of learning something about it faster for the sake of everyone. I think we will all suffer some from it, but I think beginning to take it is the smart thing to do. Everybody takes the same risk at the same time, which is sort of altruistic.

— SCOTT DORMAN

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Animal House

By Julie Kerns Garmendia Resident Community News

CARING FOR RESCUE ANIMALS PROVIDES REJUVENATION FOR BUSY VOLUNTEERS

Their large dark eyes question as they push soft muzzles over the worn wooden fence, blow hot breath onto outstretched hands, and deeply inhale the scent of strangers. The horses, Amanda and George, who is named for the character in the children's book, Curious George, are the official welcoming committee for CJ Acres Animal Rescue Farm, which is named after CJ, a beloved dog. Like every animal at the farm, endangered or harmed by humans, these trauma survivors remain friendly and interested in people. Volunteers from both historic districts, who serve at CJ Acres, have found not only a way to help animals and promote animal welfare, but also a rejuvenating escape into rural Northeast Florida.

Kim Lamb of Fairfax Manor, who has volunteered at CJ Acres for 10 years, found the non-profit, all-volunteer organization through Volunteer Match. She said that its time and schedule flexibility made it possible for her to escape to the country and help care for the animals. Like many who visit the farm, she unexpectedly also found a best friend.

"My heart melts the moment I see adorable Opie, who is the sweetest, gentlest donkey. But it's not just Opie. All the goats, pigs,

horses, cows, sheep, chickens, ducks, and turkeys want our attention and love. They enjoy belly rubs, have friends and relationships among themselves and with us, and like to be talked to," Lamb said. "Turkey was the last meat I had not given up, but after I met Tom Turkey out at the farm, with his funny personality that can't be ignored, that was it. It was easy to stop eating turkey after I got to know Tom."

Lamb's personal herd includes her German shepherd named Bunny and her rescue cat, Edward. She is a RailPros project manager.

Andrea Johnson learned about CJ Acres at the Jax Veg Festival and despite her busy career as an accounting internal auditor for a Riverside firm, she has made time to volunteer. The little girl who dreamed of becoming a veterinarian, now wishes she could pull on her dirty farm boots more often.

"I love driving to the farm... leaving the hectic pace of daily life and work behind to slow down. It's incredibly beautiful out there any time of year, with floating butterflies and birds singing, crickets chirping, buzzing insects, and frogs croaking. We can see stunning sunsets, wide clear night skies and endless stars. Time flies when I'm working with the animals. I always have a feeling of gratitude that I can help in a variety of ways, from feeding or cleaning stalls to public events, doing whatever is needed along with other volunteers of all ages and backgrounds," Johnson said.

Lee Sackett, founder of CJ Acres and animal rescuer for 30 years, relocated his farm animal rescue from North Carolina



Andrea Johnson with the horses Amanda and George

to rural Clay County in 2003 for better weather. This former advertising executive operates the closest farm animal rescue to Jacksonville and responds to emergencies throughout the Eastern U.S. and nationwide. He is FEMA-certified for disaster rescue and has coordinated with PETA.

Sackett has instant recall of rescue situations and details about each animal – all named – who reside on the farm. Thanksgiving turkey refugees are obvious; other stories are painful to hear. Animals come from law enforcement confiscations, cockfighting rings, hoarding, abandonment, abuse or neglect, removal ordered by an HOA, landlords, and community or zoning restriction violation authorities.

Owners lose their land, become ill or die, and families may not want any animals left behind. Individual rescuers or organizations close or reach capacity. COVID-19 has increased calls for help from owners who unexpectedly lost income and can no longer afford to keep their animals, Sackett said.

As a child, Sackett was never permitted to have a pet. He was told that when he became an adult, he could have as many animals as he desired. At the first opportunity, he literally "bought the farm" and began to fulfill his personal mission to help animals. The result is a modern-day Dr. Doolittle – a laid-back comedian whose funny jokes and positivity lighten the difficult topics of abuse, abandonment, cost of care and placement for large animals with potentially longer life spans.

"The number of animals in need of rescue, ongoing care and rehabilitation for potential adoption, grows every year. Medical care and food are most costly. Regardless of national crises that cut donations or cancel fundraisers, the monthly bill for 10,000 pounds of grain and produce to feed the 125 residents of the farm must be paid. Bread, canned food, and treats cost extra," Sackett said.

The CJ Acres team is committed to promote responsible animal stewardship, compassionate consumption and to share information about vegetarian and vegan diets. They work to bring people and animals together, to interact and communicate through pre-scheduled, socially distanced farm tours, family friendly activities, events, or a variety of volunteer opportunities for big-hearted people ages 18 and older.

Interaction and communication with farm animals can surprise some people. They learn that every animal has an individual personality and traits just like any beloved domestic pet dog or cat, said Lamb and Johnson. Getting face-to-face with a friendly farm animal can influence attitudes toward meat consumption and the treatment of food animals, in a respectful, informative way.

Sackett has only one rule for new residents – to play nice. Wide open spaces, plentiful food, consistent training, verbal guidance, re-direction, and the occasional squirt from a water bottle result in feral cats, chickens, and former cockfighting roosters living

peacefully together. Words for desired behaviors such as "stall," are taught to simplify work for volunteers, and each species has its own set of verbal commands to avoid command chaos.

For any animal to make it to safety at CJ Acres, Sackett said the stars must align and they basically hit the lottery, because most are destined to be consumed for food or to become a product ingredient in North America or elsewhere in the world. Even unwanted horses, or excess wild mustangs rounded up from Western states for auction, may be bought for a few dollars per pound by "kill buyers," and transported out of the U.S. to Canada for slaughter under the most inhumane conditions imaginable.

Moodini, the 1,500-pound Brahma steer who thinks he is one of the resident mustangs, escaped being "processed" at an Oviedo slaughterhouse by smashing a gate and hiding in a neighborhood backyard. Because he had no ear tag, chip, or brand he was able to be legally claimed by rescuers.

Sackett said that residents "get healthy, then educated" at the farm with some clearly set on higher education. George, the horse who is on the logo, is the longest resident. He takes delight in opening doors by crunching the doorknob. He is especially pleased if he can lock volunteers in or out. George can also turn the water and lights on and off. Opie the donkey is currently focused on how to use keys left in doors.

CJ Acres relies on community support from mailed checks or online donations through its website. It welcomes volunteers, as well as individual or corporate sponsors. Any assistance is greatly needed and appreciated and there are free or low-cost ways to support their mission, the farm and animals, Sackett said.

The 11th Annual Dine with the Swine fundraising event will be held at the farm on Saturday, Oct. 3, from 6 – 8 p.m. The all-inclusive, catered five-course vegan meal with wine pairings for ages 21 and older is by advance ticket purchase only. Tickets at \$43.75 per adult are available on the website. Current social distance recommendations and all safety precautions will be followed. Each guest will receive an etched wine glass as a thank-you gift.

CJ Acres is grateful for its support partners: Publix, which has donated leftover produce for more than a decade; Disney, Southwest Airlines, Whole Foods, Starbucks, Ethos Vegan Kitchen, Kirschner's Korner, Unicorn Web Development, Carpe DM, and the Clay County Fair.

Contact CJ Acres by email at info@cjacres.org, its website at www.cjacres.org or www.facebook.com/cjacresanimalrescuefarm. The website provides ways to donate, support, attend volunteer training, schedule a free guided tour, or view its wish list. All donations are tax deductible. Checks may be mailed to CJ Acres Animal Rescue Farm, 5728 Jones Creek Road, Keystone Heights, FL 32656.



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San Jose Car Show's record turnout generates \$10,000



This eye-catching 1966 Volkswagen Type-1 Beetle, owned by Dennis DuBois, took first place in the Best European – Pre-1970 class.



Ross Bremer's 1958 Cadillac Eldorado Brougham took home the Best of Show award, sponsored by A-Coin & Stamp Gallery.

Submitted by **Joe DeSalvo**

Despite a blazing summer sun and an ongoing pandemic, car enthusiasts were ready to show off their shiny customs and classics in record fashion at the San Jose Car & Truck Show at Dupont Station Shopping Center Aug. 15.

The fifth annual event, originally scheduled for April 4, had 93 registered vehicles and raised \$10,000 for the Bishop John J. Snyder Community Center at nearby San Jose Apartments for seniors off St. Augustine Road. The previous highs were 42 cars (2017) and \$4,180 (2018).

In addition to having Key Buick GMC Hyundai Genesis and North Florida Lincoln returning as presenting sponsors, the San Jose Apartments board of directors and staff also secured support from additional sponsors in an effort to reach their goal of \$20,000 in total funding raised from the five shows during its 20th anniversary in 2020. Their hard work paid off as they have now surpassed the \$23,000 mark.

The community center, located between HUD-assisted San Jose Apartments I and II on Galicia Road, was named in honor of Bishop Snyder, who served the Diocese of St. Augustine from 1979 to 2000; he died last September at age 93.

Many of the activities and services for the senior residents are held at the center. The complex is managed by Family Housing Management Company for the Diocese of St. Augustine.

"Words cannot express the excitement and gratitude for the community's support," said Alma Ballard, executive director/management agent of Family Housing Management Company. "The funds raised will help support the operations of the Snyder Community Center and provide wellness and nourishment for the most



Eric Thompson, a sales manager with Key Buick GMC Hyundai Genesis, gets together with Alma Ballard, executive director/management agent of Family Housing Management Company for a photo in front of the show's sponsor banner.

vulnerable — our seniors. The residents of San Jose Apartments are blessed by the support given this important fundraiser."

The board and staff made sure the show followed CDC social-distancing guidelines for outdoor events, placing signage, encouraging the use of face masks, and making hand sanitizers available to car owners and guests.

Eric Thompson, a sales manager with the Key group, once again coordinated an onsite collection of new models for folks to check out at the show. It's something he looks forward to doing each year.

"It's been great; we've had a great time," Thompson said. "It's really nice to know that we're doing something really good for San Jose Apartments, the Bishop Snyder Community Center and our community. And doing something that everyone loves and that's showing off good-looking cars and looking at all these customs and collectibles — just getting everybody together and having a lot of fun. Car people are always nice to talk to. They are always very warm and engaging."

Dennis DuBois, owner of pristine 1966 Bahama Blue Volkswagen Type-1 Beetle coupe, is one such driver who enjoys this event.

"I love it," DuBois said, wearing a face mask. "I wouldn't miss this show. It's for a good cause. This may be the only show I do all year."

Why this show?

"It (his car) was getting tired sitting in the garage," DuBois said. "Buggy wanted some fresh air."

DuBois and "Buggy" made it four awards in four years as they took first place for Best European (pre-1970).

The Best of Show award, sponsored by A-Coin & Stamp Gallery, was won by Ross Bremer's 1958 Eldorado Brougham. Steve Edenfield's 1948 Chevrolet truck was the top vote-getter in the People's Choice balloting, sponsored by Krispy Kreme in Mandarin.

The 2021 show will return to a spring date, which has not yet been determined.

2020 San Jose Car & Truck Show Award Winners

BEST CLASSIC AMERICAN – PRE-1970

Sponsor: Trad's Pest Control
First Place: Ross Bremer's 1958 Cadillac Eldorado Brougham

BEST CLASSIC FOREIGN – PRE-1970

Sponsor: Jim and Joyce Dolan
First Place: Tommy Entenza's 1954 Swallow Doretti

BEST MUSTANG

Sponsor: Kathy Scott State Farm Insurance
First Place: Bill McDermott's 1972 Ford Mustang Mach 1

BEST MODERN ERA CAR

Sponsor: IMC Telecommunication
First Place: Paul Nesbitt's 2008 Ford Mustang Shelby GT

BEST CORVETTE

Sponsor: San Jose Apartments Board of Directors
First Place: Ronnie Edge's 1963 Split-Window Coupe

BEST TRUCK

Sponsor: Jason Miller, Morgan & Morgan
First Place: Chris Railing's 1948 Willys pickup

BEST EUROPEAN

First Place: Tren and Donna Brownley's 1974 Triumph TR6

BEST EUROPEAN – PRE-1970

Sponsor: Walsh Investment Consulting
First Place: Dennis DuBois' 1966 VW Type 1-Bug

BEST TRUCK – PRE-1970

Sponsor: Walsh Investment Consulting Group
First Place: Mike Farhat's 1959 Chevrolet Apache 3200

PEOPLE'S CHOICE AWARD

Sponsor: Krispy Kreme in Mandarin
First Place: Steve Edenfield's 1948 Chevrolet truck

BEST OF SHOW

Sponsor: A-Coin & Stamp Gallery
First Place: Ross Bremer's 1958 Eldorado Brougham

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THE WAY WE WERE: CAROL COCHRAN TODD

BY MARY WANSEN
RESIDENT COMMUNITY NEWS

Carol Cochran Todd has seen over seven decades of change across Jacksonville. But there's been at least one constant thread woven into the fabric of her life here, and that is respect—the respect she witnessed as a little girl, the respect she was taught in school, the respect she holds today for all people.



Carol Cochran Todd with her mother Elizabeth Clark Cochran and baby brother Charles Clark Cochran

Originally from Chicago, it was her dad's job with Armour and Company that brought the Cochran family to Jacksonville to work in the regional office. It was the spring of 1944, and Todd was not quite four years old. For her mom, the move was a difficult one, as she initially missed the advantages of a large city—the cultural opportunities and urban education. To complicate matters, the travel back and forth to visit family was cumbersome, a car ride over two days or an overnight train trip.

Todd remembers vividly one of those train rides back and forth to Chicago with her mother. It was the spring of 1945, and their travel time was interrupted by President Franklin D. Roosevelt's funeral train heading from Warm Springs, Ga., to Washington D.C. Female passengers wept. Males held their hats to their hearts. Such a display of respect for the deceased was not an unusual occurrence in those days, and Todd recalled how years later she would often witness funeral processions from local churches to Oaklawn Cemetery on San Jose Boulevard. It was commonplace for cars to stop, men to exit their vehicles, and hold their hats to their hearts while standing on the passenger's side as the procession passed.

Todd's family missed Chicago, and an opportunity arose for them to return to Illinois with an advancement potential for her dad's career. But by then, they had grown to love Jacksonville—its people and its way of life. "We have Florida sand in our shoes now," her mom had said. And so, they chose to stay in their Jacksonville home on Riverside Avenue across from Memorial Park for a bit longer.

Todd attended West Riverside Elementary School where weekly assemblies were held

in the auditorium. They began with a salute to the American flag followed by the recitation of The Lord's Prayer. A chosen student would then read an excerpt from scripture prior to the principal, Mrs. Hughes, delivering a talk on an aspect of character development. Occasionally, as a special treat, a movie would follow. Todd still sees in her mind's eye a scene from "The Little Match Girl" based on a story by Hans Christian Andersen, that of a young girl standing in the snow while gazing into a warm, lighted building.

As the school's principal, Mrs. Hughes occupied a position of great respect, and her goal of instilling in her students a concern for other people was taken very seriously. So, when she had admonished the student body during a weekly assembly to "never put anything over the Bible," Todd, ever questing to do what was right, rushed home to remove from the bookshelf her family's copy that had been flanked by other texts.

By January 1950, the Cochran family had moved from Riverside to Miramar, settling on Jean Court. It was the last street to have mail delivery at that time. One of the most exciting events to take place there, a most fantastic story to recount for old friends back in Illinois, is that a bear had been seen running through the back yard, initially brought attention to by a neighborhood dog barking at bushes.



Students at a duPont High School gym dance – 1957-58

Upon her family's move, Todd began attending Alfred I. duPont Elementary School, which eventually became the middle and high school she graduated from. When Todd first enrolled, duPont was a first-through-sixth-grade school built on land donated by Alfred I. and Jesse Ball duPont who lived in a large home on the river. It was built to accommodate Southside's growing population. Until then, youngsters went to either Southside Grammar School or Hendricks Avenue Elementary. Later, San Jose Elementary would be built, and duPont's student body would gradually transition, every year removing the lowest grade and adding a grade at the highest level until eventually it became a high school. So, there were some students who attended duPont from first grade through to high school graduation. It wasn't until after



1958 duPont High School Homecoming Court during Carol Todd's senior year; from left Jane Ross, Patsy Scanland, MaryJo Pabst, Jane Diaz, and Carol Cochran Todd

Wolfson High School was built that duPont became a junior high school.

Every winter, Mrs. duPont and her female assistant would come to have lunch with the students in the duPont cafeteria. On that very special day, the school's PA system, normally used only for announcements, would play classical music. The ladies would arrive elegantly dressed in wool suits with matching hats. Around their shoulders hung furs, each with the furry animal's head and feet still attached, Todd recalled with a giggle. She and her classmates found the guests fascinating, and it was instinctively understood that they were to be on their best behavior, to show respect for their school's namesake.

In the early 1950s, Southside was small-town living. Almost everybody knew each other or knew of each other through church, Sunday school, or scouts. This was a time when San Jose Boulevard from Oaklawn Cemetery past University Boulevard was a canopy road made of oak trees. Beneath the tall oaks, on either side of the road, was a row of redbud trees that, when in bloom, created traffic jams as drivers exited their cars to take pictures of nature's breathtaking beauty. It was a time when Oriental Gardens Road, not far out of San Marco, was not yet a residential area but a popular tourist attraction known for its floral gardens, particularly its banks of azaleas. Foot walks were a Jacksonville attraction. It was a time when San Marco was more like the business section of a small town, complete with a grocery store, a drug store, a dime store, a gift-and-toy store, a dry cleaner, and a dress shop. The Towne Pump bar and liquor store was there, too, next to Mim's Bakery across from the current Lions Fountain, which had been the spot of the original, compass-themed fountain whose wrought iron top now stands on a pedestal in the Square.



Carol Cochran Todd – Sweet 16 - 1956

These were the days when moms would form a carpool line on Saturday morning outside the San Marco Theatre, hand their children nine cents for admission, and pick them up again afterwards. Todd recalled the uproar when admission soared to 15 cents! Prior to the feature film, a black-and-white news reel and then an animated cartoon would be shown. Not too many children paid attention to those though, as more important were trips up and down the aisles to see who was there and with whom and to visit the concession stand for Junior Mints and Jujubes.

As Todd and her friends grew and gained a bit more independence, moms would drive them not to the theatre's entrance but to the bus stop. They'd travel downtown by bus in groups of five or six, dressed in their finest clothing, including gloves, and eat lunch at the counter in the newest downtown spot, The Krystal. Afterward, they'd take in a movie at the Florida Theatre. Sometimes, they would opt instead to admire merchandise at the two departments stores, Furchgott's and May-Cohens, which stood on the current site of City Hall.

At Furchgott's, Mrs. Amelia Deavy, who happened to be a friend of Todd's mother,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 31

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reigned over the cosmetics department. She taught the girls how to wear makeup and was generous with Elizabeth Arden samples. Christmas cards were exchanged for decades until she died in 2013 at the age of 100. Todd said she still remembers Mrs. Deavy as being glamorous – looking so pretty, always smelling good, and wearing nail polish.

Another downtown Jacksonville lady who played a role in Todd's life growing up was Mrs. Underwood from the china and crystal department on the second floor of Underwood Jewelers at the corner of Hemming Park. Every year, Mrs. Underwood would host a table setting contest that the Home Economics departments of every school would encourage students to enter. And as Todd remembers it, every high school graduate was gifted a silver teaspoon from Mrs. Underwood in the pattern of her choice.

Being mobile in those days meant that you could drive the family car. It was unusual for a young person to have his or her own vehicle, and the norm was for a family to have only one car for the entire household. Driving meant dates to football games or to one of three drive-in theaters: Texas Drive-In on San Marco Boulevard, Crystal Drive-In on Atlantic Boulevard across from Assumption Church in St. Nicholas, or the Smoke House on San Jose Boulevard just before Lakewood. Just as years earlier they had walked up and down the aisles of the San Marco Theatre on Saturday mornings, Todd and her friends would circle around the lot to see who was attending the drive-in that night and, of course, park next to the most popular boys. Afterwards, a slumber party in shorty pajamas at a girlfriend's home was a favorite phenomenon all the way through high school. Of course, if the boys visited, they'd have to leave by the girls' curfew time.

Prudential Insurance had moved its headquarters from New Jersey to Jacksonville in the 1950s and had built a beautiful building on the river, which became the site of a lot of community activities. The owners were very generous with the use of their indoor auditorium, where Todd's senior class play was performed in 1958. There was an outdoor patio, too, that was open for families to stroll on Sunday afternoons and couples to meander hand-in-hand in the evening. Each summer, when the class of third year midshipmen from the U.S. Naval Academy came to Naval Air Station Jacksonville for training, they would be entertained at a dance there. They'd wear their dress whites, and young women of comparable age were invited, dressed in summer formals. Many marriages came of the festivities. "It seemed quite glamorous," Todd said, "a place worthy of a movie setting!"

Todd went on to graduate from Queens College in Charlotte, N.C. and attend a year of graduate school in Atlanta. Then, she returned to Jacksonville. On Thanksgiving weekend in 1964 at Riverside Presbyterian Church, she married Ethan Ogilvie Todd, Jr.,

an orthopedic surgeon from Greenville, S.C. She had met him in the hospital room of her dear friend and next door neighbor, Helen Mickler, who was in traction for several months as the result of an auto accident.

The Todds settled in a home on Arbor Lane, not too far away from her family home on Jean Court. The neighborhood had begun to change by then. It had been built shortly after the Acosta Bridge, known as the Old Bridge, was built, making the Southside accessible for residential development. Many of their new neighbors were the original builders, the parents of Todd's friends whom she had met in Sunday School and Girl Scouts years before, and they were aging. They were either dying or downsizing to smaller homes, and the houses were being sold to young families.

Todd described the house they bought as "a wonderful house very carefully and thoughtfully built in 1924 by a doctor from South Dakota. It was his dream house," she said, and it had been adorned with select chandeliers and tapestries from Europe. Todd continues to reside there and is amazed that the original white oak floors remain in beautiful condition despite years of children skating circles on them from the hall through the dining room into the kitchen and back to the hall again.

Todd's three sons, who had come along in the mid-60s, were among the first children to live on Arbor Lane in quite a long time. Within a few years, the streets and yards were coming back to life again with bicycles and baseballs. It was a time when parents looked out windows to watch after each other's children. "That's something that's a big change," Todd said. "You look out the window now and hardly ever see a child except getting out of a car and going into a house. Children don't play outside anymore," she said with a wistfulness in her tone.

When her youngest son was in the third grade, Todd drove to Gainesville daily to attend law school at the University of Florida. After being a child welfare volunteer, she became a lawyer practicing in that field, first in the State Attorney's office and then in private practice.

Todd retired from law 15 years ago to serve as part-time nanny when her first granddaughter was born. Two more followed, and "a grandson completed the group four years later," she said. "Their growing up and the restrictions imposed by our current health crisis has made my home quiet once again. I am reading those books that I have been saving to reread, painting, and again working in my yard, a hobby that I began years ago when my children were young and we were all out in the yard together!"

In the 70-plus years that Todd has lived in Jacksonville, the number of buildings that have been torn down, especially those to make way for new condominiums and apartments by the river, is too numerous to mention. Changes in street names, too,

have been prolific. For example, Atlantic and Beach Boulevards used to be called Old Beach and New Beach Roads. The Main Street Bridge was called the New Bridge. University Boulevard was known by various names, as it began at the river and ended way out at Fort Caroline in Arlington, spanning three sections, she recalled, noting the first part of the road was called Longwood, which ran from the river to just past Philips Highway. It then turned into Love Grove. Then, when the road reached Arlington Expressway, it became University Boulevard due to its proximity to Jacksonville University.

Todd pointed out that San Marco today is still very attractive and quite charming, but that a car is required to go anywhere. "We can't buy scotch tape, or milk, or a loaf of bread to make school lunches anymore without driving somewhere," she said. "No longer are there the same local conveniences,



Carol Cochran Todd with granddaughters Salley Todd, Lila Todd, and Hattie Todd

and it's no longer as safe to send your child on a bike to run an errand like that. No longer does everybody know everybody."

But whether she knows them or not, Carol Cochran Todd honors others with an abiding sense of respect. The credo she holds herself to is "Be open. See the world through other persons' eyes—through writers and artists and musicians and the person sitting in the room with you," she said.



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Safely tucked away on 40 acres in Mandarin is a special place that many people call home, including Betty & Ernest Barnes. The couple have not been apart since their first grade class nearly 82 years ago. The latest chapter in their life story is set at The Coves on River Garden's highly-rated campus. Here, they can access a continuum of care befitting their lifetime of love.



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In Memoriam

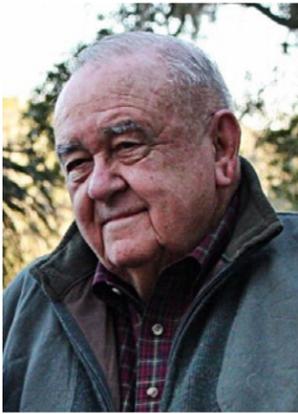
Arthur Chester Skinner, Jr.

February 20, 1922 to August 7, 2020

Philanthropist Arthur Chester Skinner, Jr., who played a major role in the development of Jacksonville's southside, passed away peacefully in his sleep of natural causes Aug. 7.

Referring often to himself as a simple "country farmer," the always humble Skinner was so much more than that. Throughout his 98 years, he was first a family man who relished raising his children and giving back to his community. During his life he worked as an engineer, operated a successful dairy business, served on multiple community boards, gave abundantly to his alma mater, The Bolles School, and generously contributed to the growth and expansion of his hometown, Jacksonville, which he dearly loved.

Born on February 20, 1922, Skinner grew up in South Jacksonville at a time when the



lands to the south and east of the St. Johns River were mostly woods, marsh, or sand dunes.

Skinner's family had ties to Northeast Florida for more than a century. His father, Arthur Chester Skinner, Sr., built the first house on Old Kings Road South, when Old St. Augustine Road was still made of brick and University and San Jose Boulevards were dirt roads.

In 1926, when Skinner was 4 years old, his parents attended the grand opening of the San Jose Hotel, which is now the main building on Bolles' San Jose campus, said John Trainer, Skinner's longtime friend. Skinner often shared with Trainer his vivid memory of the evening. "It was a major opening, black tie, on New Year's Eve. Mr. Skinner remembered that his parents were getting dressed up to go, and his father



A. Chester Skinner, Jr. and his children: back row: Rusty Newton, Kathy Newton, Chip Skinner, Jenifer Skinner, David Skinner. Front row: Erin Skinner, Chris Skinner, A. Chester Skinner, and Kim Skinner.

complained to his mother that he really didn't want to put on a tuxedo," Trainer said.

It was just a few years later after the elegant San Jose Hotel went bust that the building was transformed into the headquarters of Bolles, a military school. Skinner's father, who ran a dairy, signed his son up and paid for his tuition by supplying the school with milk, said Trainer. At Bolles, Skinner excelled in both athletics and academics, graduating in 1940 as class valedictorian, class president, battalion commander, and honor cadet, all achievements he rarely, if ever, mentioned to his family. "We didn't even know he was valedictorian until we walked into Bolles Hall and saw his picture hanging on the wall," said his daughter, Kathy Skinner Newton. "He never told us. We had no idea at all. He was very humble."

Upon graduating from Bolles, Skinner continued his education at Georgia Institute of Technology, where he competed in basketball, baseball, track, wrestling, and football, playing as a lineman for the Yellow Jackets in the 1943 Cotton Bowl against Texas. Earning a Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering in three years, he was again named valedictorian of his class. Years later, in 1999, Georgia Tech inducted him into its Engineering Hall of Fame.

Throughout his life, Skinner credited his education at Bolles and Georgia Tech with opening his eyes to a whole new world for which he was very grateful. "Bolles did a lot for me with a prodigious education, introducing me to the military and great athletics," Skinner told *The Resident* in April 2020. "It truly was the beginning of my awareness of the world and all its opportunities."

A member of Georgia Tech's ROTC program while in college, Skinner joined the U.S. Army immediately after graduation and was sent to Fort Monroe to serve in a coastal artillery unit where he was trained in the new field of radar technology. There he led the charge of making design modifications, testing, and assembling super-secret radar units,

as well as training personnel. After six years of Army service, he was discharged at the rank of second lieutenant.

Upon returning to Jacksonville, Skinner took a job with Reynolds, Smith and Hills, a local engineering and architectural firm before joining his brother, Charles Brightman Skinner, in forming Meadowbrook Farms, a wholesale and retail dairy company. After selling the business in 1985, Skinner successfully committed his time to several family-owned enterprises – farming and cattle, timber operations, real estate, and investments. At that time, he was instrumental in the planning and donation of family lands for the University of North Florida campus, J. Turner Butler Boulevard, Interstate 295, St. Luke's Hospital, and the A.C. Skinner Memorial Youth Baseball Complex, which was named in honor of his late father.

Skinner also served the Jacksonville community as a director of American National Bank and a founding director of Memorial Hospital. But perhaps closest to his heart was The Bolles School, which he supported generously both as a trustee and ardent champion of its athletic programs.

"No single individual has done more for the Bolles community throughout its history than A. Chester Skinner Jr.," said Bolles President and Head of School Tyler Hodges. "His commitment to the school began during Bolles' earliest years when he led his peers as class president and valedictorian and continued unwaveringly through the decades through innumerable volunteer positions, campus projects and work in all areas of school life. Mr. Skinner tackled projects with the goal of strengthening and improving our programs and kept a keen eye on the campus needs until his passing at age 98. He has enriched our school in many ways, and always did so with determination, commitment, and humility. Our community has lost a great man, alumnus and friend."

CONTINUED ON PAGE 33

DUE TO COVID-19 AGING TRUE NOW OFFERS VIRTUAL MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING



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Skinner was a life-long member of Riverside Park United Methodist Church, which was where he met his wife of 45 years, Katherine Godfrey, who died in 1996. The couple had four children. He later married Constance Stone, who was also a member of Riverside Park UMC. His four children, Arthur Chester “Chip” Skinner III, Katherine Skinner Newton, David Godfrey Skinner, and Christopher Forrest Skinner as well as his 15 grandchildren and 27 great grandchildren all attended Bolles.

And while he was a frequent spectator at Bolles plays, recitals, and sporting events, he was a football fan first, and a close friend of Coach Corky Rogers, said Trainer, former Bolles head of school. “My wife, Alice, and I would sit with him at football games. Most of the time our team would be pretty far ahead, and I would say, ‘Mr. Skinner, are we feeling sorry for the other team yet?’ He

would say, ‘no, not yet.’ Often, we would get accused of running up the score, which Corky opposed. Corky would put in his second string, then third string, and on occasion we would still be running up the score and I would ask, ‘Mr. Skinner, are we feeling sorry for the other team yet?’ He would say, ‘no, not yet, but we’re getting close,’” Trainer recalled.

“He was one of the most enjoyable people I’ve ever had the privilege of working with. He was amazing, optimistic, and always supported and encouraged others. He was a great patriot and loved our country,” Trainer continued, adding that Skinner was responsible for installing flagpoles in the front and rear of Bolles Hall as well as ensuring that the school’s Skinner-Barco football stadium was built to his specifications.

A man who enjoyed working with his hands, Skinner very talented in carpentry,



Members of the Skinner family wear tee shirts denoting “Papa ... The Man ... The Myth ... The Legacy,” as they gather with their family patriarch, A. Chester Skinner, during the Christmas holidays.



One of five unique playhouses A. Chester Skinner built for his grandchildren.

constructing benches and other additions to the Bolles’ stadium in his backyard workshop. He also crafted five children’s playhouses, all in different architectural styles, for the families each of his children and a niece, where he personally designed and drew the plans, said his daughter, Kathy, noting her Victorian playhouse came complete with a fireplace, a mantle, a ceiling fan, and two working bay windows. “They were beautiful works of art,” she said.

But most important, Skinner was a man filled with humility, the kind of person whose spirit endeared him to everyone he met. “I’d take him to the Mayo Clinic, and he would know the guy who pushed his wheelchair – where his child went to school and who his wife was. He’d know the same of the woman who drew his blood and of the doctor he went to see,” Kathy said, adding he mowed grass and often picked up trash on the Bolles campus. “Somebody once told me when they were Bolles they

saw my father was on a stepladder changing a lightbulb and thought he was the custodian,” she said.

“He was very interested in other people. He gave 110% to everything he put his mind to. He always had time for you and made you feel special. He never missed an opportunity to tell you how proud he was of you. I think he had an impact on a lot more people than we realize. Several people have told me that he was like a second father to them,” she continued.

Since her father’s death, Kathy said many people have reached out to her family to share how her father inspired them. “One person shared this: ‘Your dad never told, he showed and calmly expected us to watch, learn, and follow suit. He taught me that no matter your background, no matter your status, set a goal, and work hard. If you are willing to do this, you will earn the respect of those around you.’ I thought that summed up very well who he was,” she said.

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In Memoriam

James Frank Surface, Jr.

March 15, 1938 to July 17, 2020

James Frank Surface, Jr., a “rainmaker” in every sense of the word both professionally and personally, passed away suddenly of a heart attack July 17. He was 82.

Known as “Big Frank” to his family and friends, Surface was a larger-than-life kind of guy who worked as a successful corporate lawyer and entrepreneur, founding several lucrative businesses including the former Stand N Snack franchises, Lakeshore Dry Storage Marina, Costa Verde Plaza and Vista de Mar, the first condominiums in Jacksonville Beach, and Vesta Property Services, which is headquartered in Riverside. Most of all, Surface was a man of integrity and the kind of family man who adored his wife and three sons, Frank III, David, and John, their wives, and made it a point to nurture a special relationship with each of his eight grandchildren.

“He built a life that was as big as his imagination and did things a lot of people only sit and think about,” said his long-time business partner Bryan Simpson of Ortega. “Things happened with him. He was a doer in business and in his private life. He saw opportunities when others saw trouble or confusion. He was a pretty remarkable man.”

His daughter-in-law, Heather Surface, agreed. “He went from being Superman to just gone,” she said, noting he worked hard up until the last and his death came as a surprise to many. “He was strong, honorable and kind, just the best person I’ve ever known. He was very positive and very supportive. He was Mr. Everything, and then he was gone.”

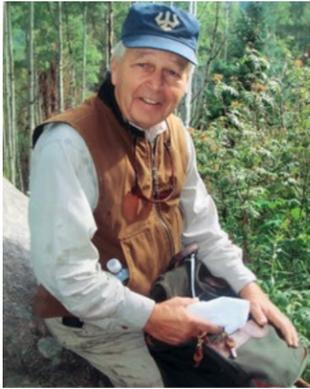
A native of Salem, Virginia, and the youngest child of John Frank Surface, Sr. and his wife, Myrtle, Surface made his way to Jacksonville at an early age after his father was appointed area sales manager for the Jergens Soap Company.

A life-long Christian who was raised by a “tough-as-nails” mother, Surface had two older sisters, Bobbi and Jackie. After his father died when he was 21, his mother remarried Admiral Herman S. Duckworth, a man Surface adored.

As a child, he attended West Riverside Elementary, John Gorrie Junior High, and Robert E. Lee High School, and it was there he began life-long friendships with Bob Feagin, Tom and John Donahoo, Kirby and Tommy Alexander, Kim Weller, and Charlie Commander among others. Feagin’s father, Robert, former president of Florida Publishing Company and founder of The Players Championship, was his mentor.

Surface’s first job at a young age was as a pin setter in a bowling alley where the current Shoppes of Avondale are located, said his son, David Surface. “He would sit above the pin area and then drop new ones by hand into a cradle which was then lowered to the floor,” he said. “Before school he also had two paper routes having earned enough money to buy a Vespa and thus improving his efficiency. When he was older, he worked summers as an electrician’s mate at the old Jacksonville Shipyards, downtown.”

A 1956 graduate of Robert E. Lee High School, Surface excelled at academics, athletics, especially football, and served as captain of the basketball team. He often told of playing football for Lee and catching a pass “backwards” for a touchdown against Andrew Jackson High School during the annual Thanksgiving



James Frank Surface, Jr.

matchup in the Gator Bowl, recalled Frank Surface III, his son.

Surface graduated from Washington and Lee University in Lexington, Virginia, in 1960 with a Bachelor of Science degree in business management. In college, he was president of the student body, dorm counselor, a member of Omicron Delta Kappa fraternity, and captain of the basketball team, where

he proved himself to be a determined defender against future National Basketball Association greats such as Hot Rod Hundley, Hal Greer, and Jerry West, who he proudly held to a career-low point total while wearing worn-out Converse shoes that exposed his feet, said Frank III. “Frank also guarded Hal Greer from Marshall College who went to the NBA and was a big-time star for Philadelphia,” said Simpson. “Frank said, ‘I knew I was between him and the basket, but he jumped right over me, over my head.’ But Frank stood steadfast and ready to block him.”

Washington and Lee University was always close to his heart. Following in his footsteps, all three of his sons attended the prestigious school. Later he served on the school’s board of trustees for nearly a decade and was sworn in as rector in 1997, serving in that position for six years. As an alumnus, he was also a founding member of the school’s Institute of Honor, which was established in 2000, and chaired his 50th reunion, which endowed the Class of 1960 Professorship in Ethics. He was committed to supporting his alma mater’s student-run honor system, which provides an all-encompassing system of trust on campus.

While attending Washington and Lee, Surface met the love of his life, Sally Holcomb, a student at nearby Hollins University, and they married in 1961. Later Sally worked as a librarian at the University of Florida, while he attended law school at UF, eventually graduating with honors. During this time, Surface also served in the ROTC/Army Reserve in the Judge Advocate General’s Corps at Camp Blanding. “One story he told was of leading his Army convoy on an unauthorized drill onto the beach in South Ponte Vedra and then north past the Ponte Vedra Inn and Spa,” remembered David. “It was during the Cuban Missile Crisis, the scene created quite a panic, yet he somehow was able to avoid getting disciplined by his superiors.”

Following law school, Surface began his career as a practicing attorney at Mahoney, Hadlow, Chambers and Adams, where he eventually became managing partner of the firm. It was there he met Simpson in March 1968, who had been assigned to work with him. “It was a great gift to me, that assignment,” said Simpson. “He was blowing and going. He and some of his friends acquired three sandwich shops and in another four or five months they had taken those sandwich shops public. They paid \$600,000 for the sandwich shops and had taken the idea and franchised it nationwide raising \$10 million. Then five months later, that same \$600,000 purchase was valued at \$55 million.”

The sandwich shops became the Stand N Snack restaurant chain – home of the Big Frank hot dog – and that was just the first of many successful business ventures he implemented during his life including Adcom Metals and Lakeshore Dry Storage



James Frank Surface, Jr. and his family in Africa in 2018

Marina. He also pioneered the construction of several condominium buildings – Vista del Mar and Seascape – in Jacksonville Beach with partners Charlie Commander, George Dickerson, Joe Hixon, and Simpson. “When we went to the lenders some didn’t even know what a condominium was when we started,” said Simpson.

“He was a magician with spread sheets. He would take up an idea, make some assumptions and the next thing you knew he had a great looking pro forma and the energy to push it through. He was busy, energetic, and swinging for the fences hitting a lot of good balls,” said Simpson, who worked with him on the condominium projects. “He was a doer and he stayed a doer his whole life. He was a rare combination of intellect, energy, persuasiveness, determination, and imagination. He was the most fun partner you could have been associated with, and we were business partners for 50 years.”

In the 1970s, Surface and his partners also formed the Bold City Travelers, which chartered jets to transport hundreds of skiers each year to most of the western resorts, a business that continued for 15 to 20 years, said Archie Jenkins of San Jose, his close friend from college. Surface first met Jenkins, who graduated from Landon High, briefly in 1953 when they played basketball against each other in high school, but the two became fast friends at Washington and Lee when they pledged the same fraternity. “Frank and I would often race head to head down the long slopes until one day we were forced to stop by our wives who, for fear of injuries, threatened to leave us,” Jenkins said.

When his sons, Frank and David, played football at Washington and Lee, Surface took time off from his law practice to go to Lexington and teach at the school’s law school as an adjunct professor just so he could watch the games and practices. “He taught a law seminar that he devised on law and entrepreneurship, and it was perfect for him,” said Simpson. Surface also served on the Institute for Honor Council, which promotes the school’s honor code and student self-governance, which he firmly believed helped to develop character and honor in young men and women.

Surface finished his law career Of Counsel with LeBoeuf, Lamb, Green and MacRae. Later he decided he wanted to embark on something new so he co-founded Vesta Property Services, where he served as chairman and chief executive officer for the past 25 years. Under his leadership, Vesta grew into one of the largest property management companies in Florida, providing community and amenity management, financing, and ancillary services to master-planned residential communities.

Always a champion for Downtown Jacksonville, Surface was involved in many civic initiatives. “He gave himself credit

– unconfirmed – for suggesting the name of the old Jacksonville Landing,” said David.

Active in the community, Surface served as a founding member of St. Mark’s Episcopal Day School, the Jacksonville Zoological Society, Enterprise Florida and Central Jacksonville, Inc. He was also chairman of several local boards including Leadership Jacksonville, the March of Dimes Campaign, and the Jacksonville Charter Revision Commission, as well as serving on the board of The Bolles School, St. Mark’s Episcopal Church Foundation and the Jacksonville Chamber of Commerce.

A man who liked to keep his good friends close, Surface was a member of two local monthly lunch groups, the No Purpose Lunch Group (NPLG) and the Good Guys Club, which he enjoyed for more than 30 years.

He enjoyed hunting ducks at Maryfield Plantation, his property in southeast Georgia. And he and his wife loved to travel and generally took a big trip once a year visiting Asia and Europe. In 2018, the Surfaces treated their large extended family to a trip to Africa for three weeks.

As a man who loved to fish and dive, Surface began taking his family boating in the Bahamas in the early 1970s, first to Walker’s Cay and Bimini in his boat, Sundancer, and later to Elbow Cay on the Sunbird,” David remembered. Over the decades, the excursions turned into guy trips, with many of his friends, such as Jenkins and Royce Hough. “The adventures in the Bahamas were legend,” said Jenkins. “We would have the families with us in the early years, but when we then became more adventure-some we wanted to go into the far reaches where fishing and diving was better and less crowded. There was a paucity of infrastructure where we cruised, so the families stayed behind, and our cruises became guy trips, and we experienced a more modern Robinson Crusoe lifestyle living off sea creatures and speared lobster, fish of all varieties, land crabs, which we’d procure, clean, cook and eat within one to two hours. It was fresh seafood for sure. Frank did all the heavy lifting in all phases, except for cleaning up!” he said, noting on one trip they spotted a white lobster while diving and decided to found the White Lobster Society, a Bahamian enthusiast group, which became a cult of sorts with initiation, bylaws, and traditions. He also helped form Hopetown Rising, a non-profit organization that provides hurricane relief funds to the Abaco Islands.

Surface also loved cooking and was famous for his key lime pie. Simpson recalled a time in the islands when he was making a pie and discovered there were no ingredients for the crust. “We had no graham crackers or anything else, so he made a crust out of crushed up M&Ms. It was delicious,” Simpson recalled. “He never let little hurdles slow him down.”

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Jr. Residents 35



Hart and Houston Abney

RPDS welcomes back students

At least 400 students were enrolled when Riverside Presbyterian Day Preschool opened its doors Aug. 11 to begin its school year. With COVID precautions in place, the majority of parents chose the brick-and-mortar option for their children with only 10% selecting RPDS's "Riverside Remote" distance learning option.

Landon's drive-thru PTSA membership booth



Members of the Julia Landon College Preparatory School Parent Teacher Student Association worked the membership booth during Landon's drive-thru orientation Aug. 10. From left: Shanteyl and Kierra Green, Wren Tiedeberg, Campbell Shell, and Allison, Avery, and Camden Bear.

First school day goes off without a hitch at Bolles

The first day of school on all four campuses and in home-based classrooms around the world went off without a hitch – successfully launching the historic 2020-21 school year at The Bolles School.

The Bolles Lower School Whitehurst and Ponte Vedra Beach Campuses, as well as the Bolles Middle School Bartram Campus, opened the year in a "Operating Scenario 2," with classes held on campus with synchronous online instruction available for students wishing to take classes from a distance. The Bolles Upper School San Jose Campus is in "Operating Scenario 3," meaning half the student body is on campus each day while the other half participates in at-home learning. Facilities and classrooms on all four campuses have been redesigned for appropriate physical distancing, including the addition of partitions and relocation of some classrooms to larger spaces.

"Thanks to the hard work and diligence of our faculty and staff this summer, we are well prepared for a safe and healthy return to campus," said Bolles President and Head of School Tyler Hodges. "I am grateful for the opportunity to learn together during this unusual season – we are ready for a safe and productive school year."

The focus on health and safety is paying off. The Bolles School has a higher enrollment number this year than last year, with numbers expected to grow as prospective student paperwork is processed in the weeks ahead.



Trinya, a third grader on the Bolles Whitehurst campus, begins classwork at her newly partitioned desk on the first day of school Aug. 13.



Ellie, a junior, and Bobby, a senior, head to class on the first day of school at Bolles Aug. 13.

On the first day of school, students practiced new arrival protocols on each campus, including arrival health screenings. Prior to campus entry, all students must have their temperature taken from their vehicle. They also must answer a standard set of questions regarding their physical condition, symptoms, and any known exposure to COVID-19. All faculty and staff also must answer the same questions and log their temperature before beginning each workday.

Masks are mandatory on all Bolles campuses this year. Students also are getting used to new classroom seating charts,

physical distancing standards and new class dismissal and arrival bells that allow for adequate spacing between classes. Many classes enjoyed connecting with classmates learning from home via large screens and video technology.

Half of the Class of 2021 enjoyed the Senior Breakfast, an annual tradition hosted by the Bolles Parent Association. Clad in black dresses and shirts, tiaras and sunglasses, students convened at a distance on the Bolles River Campus for grab-and-go breakfast snacks and camaraderie. The second half of the Class of 2021 enjoyed the festivities Aug. 14.

Lucy Page honored with Rotary's "Service Above Self" award

Rotary Club of San Marco President Pete Helow presented the "Service Above Self" award to 10-year-old Lucy Page, daughter of Rotarian Tim Page for demonstrating exemplary humanitarian service, with an emphasis on personal volunteer efforts and active involvement in helping others in our community.

In May as COVID had fully set in, Lucy was unhappy to realize there were hungry people in our city. With encouragement from her father, she arranged a food drive in her Miramar neighborhood and collected nearly 100 pounds of food for the United Community Outreach Ministry (UCOM) – Lakewood United Methodist's food bank. She did this on her own from idea inception to finish.

In August, the Lakewood United Methodist Church charged their members to help others and involve their neighbors. Lucy's neighbors attend the church and knew Lucy had helped with a food drive before, so they asked for



San Marco Rotary Club President Pete Helow with Lucy Page and her father, Tim

her help. Lucy and her neighbor setup a lemonade stand and food drop-off. Lucy made signs and placed them around the neighborhood. The money earned from lemonade sales – almost \$400 – was used to purchase groceries. Between food donations and lemonade proceeds, Lucy and her neighbor contributed over 900 pounds of food to UCOM.

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Student ambassadors welcome new Episcopal students

The Episcopal School of Jacksonville welcomed new students to its Munnerlyn Campus Aug. 12 with Eagle Ambassadors assisting students as they toured around campus, found their lockers, set up their technology, and met their advisors.

During the new student orientation, the campus chaplain blessed all parts of the campus with holy water, including the inside and outside spaces. "We will be praying for all that will happen in these spaces and for our faculty, staff, and students who will inhabit them," said The Rev. Teresa Seagle, school chaplain. The blessing event follows a St. Mark's campus tradition, and the Munnerlyn and Beaches campuses joined in the tradition this year as all three campuses are now one school.

The faculty and staff at Episcopal's St. Mark's campus welcomed students back to school during the week of Aug. 10 for a Meet-the-Teacher event and for the first day of school for the Early Learning program



Lauren Stroud, a student at St. Mark's Episcopal School

and Pre-K classes. During Meet-the-Teacher, students learned new routines for the school year. Air hugs, socially distanced desks in classrooms, new hand-washing routines when entering and leaving classrooms, temperature checks, facial-covering rules, and, of course, many, many smiles were apparent during the event.



An Eagle Ambassador leads a group of new students around the Munnerlyn campus Aug. 12.



Caroline Giddens

Caroline Giddens honored with Mary Award

Caroline Giddens, a 2020 graduate of Bishop Kenny High School, was a recipient of the Ascension St. Vincent's Foundation's 2020 Mary Award in the philanthropy/volunteerism category.

Given to high school seniors, the Mary Awards honors exceptional young women in the Jacksonville community. Giddens logged more than 450 community service hours volunteering with Camp I Am Special. She received \$1,000 as a cash award and will be invited to the 2021 Mary Awards event.

"After my first day with my camper at Catholic Charities Camp I Am Special, I realized that camp was going to be my second home," Giddens said. "At camp, I find that I experience a happiness unlike anything I have ever experience before, which is the overwhelming feeling that comes from doing what God created me to do."

During her tenure at Bishop Kenny, Giddens was involved in the schools Anchor and Interact Clubs. She also focused her attention on community events such as dance marathon, Rise Against Hunger, and the Donna Marathon. She is currently attending Florida State University.

The Mary Awards seek to empower young women while supporting Ascension St. Vincent's Foundation in its core values of service to the poor, reverence, integrity, wisdom, creativity, and dedication. The prestigious award is meant to recognize young women who serve as positive role models for young people. By demonstrating positive values, lifestyle, and leadership the Mary Awards seeks to shine light on these young women as they lift society up. The Ascension St. Vincent's Foundation has long been an advocate for women of all ages, and their important role in the fabric of society as civic, volunteer, and business leaders.

TURNERS UNDERSEAL

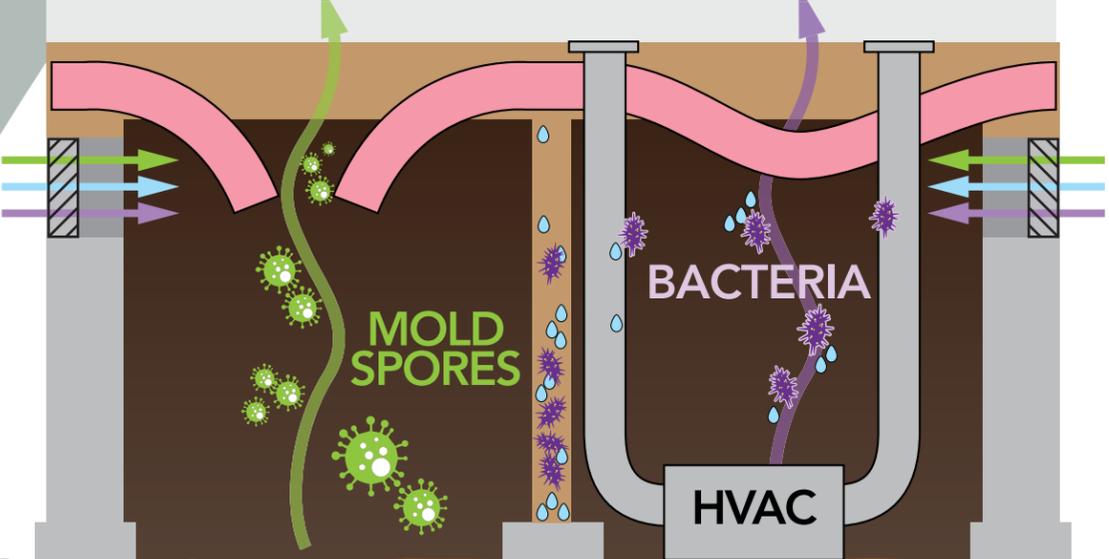
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Bolles senior presents research at health conference

Bolles senior Abigail Lynch, a San Marco resident, presented research at the prestigious Global Health Leaders Conference, held virtually at Johns Hopkins University. She was one of the only students from Florida admitted into the selective conference program, according to organizers.



Abigail Lynch

“Abby wonderfully represented The Bolles School and Florida – we were honored to have her as part of our conference program this year,” said Siam Rezwan, chair of the Global Health Leaders Conference at Johns Hopkins University in a letter to the school. “Our conference board members, in addition to the students in our program, were deeply inspired by her character, knowledge and passion.”

Lynch’s presentation was titled, “Abigail Lynch Presents on the Youth Pregnancy Crisis in Guatemala.” A participant in the 2019 Bolles service trip to Guatemala, she garnered firsthand perspective of the crisis through group visits to Guatemalan homes and schools.

The annual Johns Hopkins University student- and faculty-led conference featured some of the world’s leading researchers, physicians, policy developers, and professors – even a Nobel Laureate. The conference also featured exceptional students from across the United States and Canada who are “budding leaders in the fields of global health, public health and medicine.”

South Shores resident makes bracelets to cheer Wolfson patients



Mackenzie Meyer with her walking buddies, Bobby and Pam Back



Mackenzie Meyer assists helpers during a bracelet-making event Aug. 8 at Marjehoff Park. From left Mackenzie Meyer, Paula Thyfault with Sadie, Brooke and Felix Simonpau.

By Marcia Hodgson
Resident Community News

What started as a cure for boredom during Jacksonville’s stay-at-home order has turned into a gift to the young patients at Wolfson Children’s Hospital.

After learning the skill of making bracelets from a friend at school, 10-year-old Mackenzie Meyer of South Shores decided to teach others how to make the handmade treasures during a special event held at Majenhoff Park Aug. 8.

“I started at school because my friend did it and she taught (sic) me how to do it, and I thought that it would be cool to keep on doing it,” Mackenzie said. “I hope to donate enough to give one to every patient and all the nurses at Wolfson Children’s Hospital. I will need to make a couple hundred because there are a lot of kids there, which is really sad.”

After learning at school, Mackenzie perfected her skill during quarantine when her parents bought the supplies to help her keep busy. Later she learned to make rope bracelets and negotiated with her mother, who was eight-months pregnant, on how to best share them with others in her neighborhood. She made up little bags with a bracelet in each and included a special “happy” message, and went out on her bike, accompanied by her neighbors, Pam and Bobby Back, to sell them door to door for a \$1. “They were bags with happy thoughts. She was just spreading a little joy in the neighborhood,” said her grandmother, Beth Meyer. Mackenzie continued to spread the love later by writing each customer an individual thank-you note and delivering it, her grandmother said.

“The Backs walked with me on my bike,” Mackenzie said. “I was too young to sell them online, so my mom and me negotiated

that I could sell them in the neighborhood. We walked around and I got to meet a lot of neighbors. I saw that I was making people happy so I negotiated with my mom to see if we could do an event for Wolfson Children’s Hospital, and we ended up here,” she said.

Conscious of the care that needs to be taken during the COVID-19 pandemic, the bracelets will be sterilized twice by the hospital and put into quarantine for 14 days after being donated, said Beth Meyer.

“I think it’s absolutely wonderful,” said Mackenzie’s mother, Mindi Meyer, who attended the bracelet-making event with her month-old son, Cooper. “Mackenzie has reshifted her focus on selling the bracelets. She saw how happy it made people so she thought she should teach people how to make these bracelets and get some help so we can donate them to the children at Wolfson Children’s Hospital.”

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Assumption welcomes back students

The Coronavirus pandemic caused Assumption Catholic School to change its tradition of having parents accompany their children onto campus the first day. This year, to make things special and welcoming, school officials hosted a car line welcome. Nuns from the Servant Sisters of the Home of the Mother convent joined priests from Assumption Catholic Church and school faculty members and students along the line of cars entering the campus to welcome the students back.

This year Assumption has 500 students enrolled with 60 participating in its distance learning program. Also

new to the school is Diane Dodds, who has taken on the role of director for Assumptions Early Childhood Learning Center, which is also on campus.

“We had eighth-grade ambassadors who attended our kindergarten orientation and then were here the first few days to help walk in their new friends. Made it easier for parents to drop them off. No parents are allowed on campus right now to help with contact tracing for COVID,” said Jennifer Soulbly, who works at the school.



A welcome sign greets students as they return to Assumption Catholic School.



Fr. Eric Stelzer of Assumption Catholic Church blesses a classroom



Fr. Jason Trull of Assumption Catholic Church blesses a classroom



Nuns from the Servant Sisters from the Home of the Mother convent welcome Assumption's distance-learning students

SUMC partners with UCOM to give away free food

Southside United Methodist Church (SUMC) and the United Community Outreach Ministry (UCOM) held a free food drive-thru Aug. 18 in conjunction with Hendrick's Avenue Elementary School's drive-thru open house. Church members of all ages served in the church parking lot giving away food and donated school supplies. Feeding Northeast Florida supplied 12 pallets of fresh food for the giveaway.

For over seven years Southside UMC has supported Hendrick's Avenue Elementary through a faith-based partnership, the Hendrick's Avenue Partnership Initiative, better known as HAPI. Every year the church holds a school supply and backpack drive to help students at HAE. Over 50 students are helped every year. This year, students were also given a pair of shoes.

Southside UMC works throughout the year to support the teachers, students, and parents of Hendrick's Avenue Elementary through various programs and volunteer opportunities. For more information or to donate to HAPI, contact Angie Cosper, children's director at SUMC.

Since 1978, UCOM has been working to end hunger in Jacksonville. The organization works with the community to serve its people. SUMC and UCOM have a long history of partnership. To learn more about UCOM, visit their website at ucomjax.org.



Libby DeVoght



Brooke Curry, Catherine Cook, Layla Brown, Will Kirk, Connor Posgay, Henry Cosper, Emory Dilts and Aaron Woods

Camp Sunshine shines blessing on Angels for Allison



Camp Sunshine counselors and campers from the first week of camp including Allison Brundick Haramis' cousins, Elizabeth Moore and Danielle Groff.

As with many nonprofits, COVID-19 has not been kind to Angels for Allison, requiring the Jacksonville-based charity call a pause to all its fundraising efforts for several months. However, one ray of light has been Camp Sunshine, a day camp led by high school students across Jacksonville, which for the past seven years has supported the nonprofit that is dedicated to assisting with funeral expenses and other costs associated with the loss of a child.

This year, Camp Sunshine donated \$10,945 to Angels for Allison, proceeds derived from the day camp that was held at Ortega home of the Rachels' family for three hours each day over two weeks in June and July. This year, 31 girls ranging in age from 5 to 10 enjoyed arts and crafts, baking, daily dance parties and painting Angels for Allison's signature metal angels. The week finished up with a swim party. As an

opportunity for young women to lead, the camp celebrated Allison's spirit and the secondary mission of The Allison Brundick Haramis Foundation – to create a welcoming and inspiring environment for service to others and to cultivate the future of philanthropy through focused programs for youth participation and leadership.

Sadly, since January, the nonprofit has been called on for support by over 70 local families who have experienced the loss of a child. Camp Sunshine, which is led by teen volunteers was a blessing and helped keep the nonprofit operational over the summer. Founded in 2010 in memory of Allison Brundick Haramis, who tragically died in a car accident at the age of 15, the organization has provided financial assistance to more than 550 Northeast Florida families who have lost a child. To learn more about Angels for Allison, visit www.angelsforallison.org.

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