

# Resident

COMMUNITY NEWS

## Happy Holidays



Ju' Coby Pittman speaks to media about the gift of \$100,000 dollars given to the Clara White Mission on Nov. 16. Clara White board chair Michelle Paul, veteran client Russell Graney, Seth Pajcic of Pajcic and Pajcic, veteran client Wayne Stephens and Clara White president and CEO Ju' Coby Pittman gathered to announce the gift during the check presentation.

### Pajcic and Pajcic continues tradition of giving back

When Seth Pajcic of The Law Firm of Pajcic and Pajcic handed Ju' Coby Pittman, CEO and president of Clara White Mission, a check for \$100,000 Nov. 16, it was to continue the Pajcic tradition of giving back to the community.

"Ever since my dad and uncle started the firm, they thought about how they could give back to the community. With this check we are trying to continue a tradition of giving back, especially to important charities like Clara White and what they do, feeding people, providing housing (for veterans), and job training," said Seth Pajcic. "People that can, this is our time to step up and do a little extra and that's what we're doing. We are fortunate to have the

means to donate and give to a mission like Clara White and make our community a better place."

Pittman said the donation would be a game-changer for her nonprofit. Due to the Coronavirus pandemic, Clara White has been struggling as many charitable organizations have been, lacking volunteers and resources to feed hundreds of individuals and families every day. The money will help the mission stay open and continue to feed people and provide packaged goods to families who have come to depend on it, she said. "We are a safety net. We've been around 117 years," she said. "Today I didn't expect this check, but I can tell you we need it more now than ever," she said.

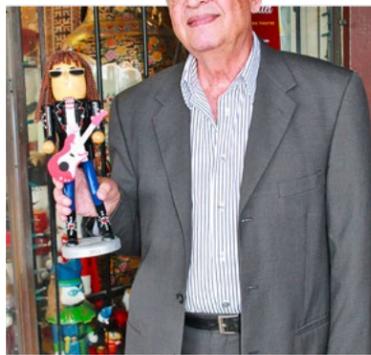
### The 'Smell' continues to linger in Murray Hill

During a Murray Hill Preservation Association meeting, residents learned the investigation into the mysterious odor wafting through their neighborhood has ramped up and may be tied to a local fragrance company.

READE MORE, PAGE 16

### Avondale's most special tradition

It would not be Christmas without a visit to the festive nutcracker collection on display at Hooshang's Oriental Rugs and Gallery. Each year store owner Hooshang Harvesf, Ph.D. and Designer Carolyn Patterson of Avondale, present a most special arrangement of more than 300 nutcrackers from Harvesf's extensive collection of approximately 1,000. "My challenge is to add to the display without taking any out because each one has their own follower who visits every year just to see their favorite," he said, adding that new generations of viewers stop



by each December to see the display. "A lady once came in with her daughter and she said, 'I want to thank you.' I said, 'I appreciate that, but can I ask why?' 'My mother brought me to your window when I was a little girl and now, I am bringing my daughter to see it,' she said," he recalled.



### Have mask will read

Caped literary crusaders Kathleen McAllister, Kristen Johnson and Michelle Tibbets don their hero duds to encourage students at Ortega Elementary to become "super readers" during a drive-through book event at the school in November.

READE MORE, PAGE 48



### Lake Howard no more

After years of persistence, an Ortega resident finally convinces the city to fix the street that has been flooding her driveway.

READE MORE, PAGE 6



### Fun with gingerbread

Team Cody comprised of Bowen and Louie Body and Anna and Maria Conners creates a Christmas-themed display to compete in the Jacksonville Historical Society's 18th Annual Gingerbread Extravaganza at Old St. Andrews Church in December.

READE MORE, PAGE 50



Blaire Massey

### RPDS students help feed the hungry

The Riverside Presbyterian Day School sixth-grade project LEADS program is underway! The school's sixth-grade classes have been collecting items for Downtown Ecumenical Services Council (DESC) as they serve the needs of the hungry in Jacksonville. On Nov. 17, the RPDS Sixth Grade Leadership Council loaded up another donation delivery for the nonprofit. The school is grateful that its students care for and give back to their community!

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# LETTERS to the EDITOR

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*Letters to the Editor are submitted as OPINION. The Resident Community News does not stand behind these statements as accurate or factual.*

## Reader concerned off-road biking will damage beloved park

I write to express my concern and opposition to the off-road bicycling competition held within Willowbranch Park every Thursday during the month of October. This event that happens each fall creates scars across the landscape that may take years to recover.

As an off-road cyclist and a Riverside resident, I, too, understand the particular enjoyment of this sport in the right environment. But Willowbranch Park is not the right environment. This small, fragile neighborhood park, an island of green within an urban neighborhood, cannot accommodate this kind of intense usage in addition to the usual wear and tear it is regularly subjected to on a weekly basis.

These events should be held in a location with an existing off-road bicycling trail, as can be found at the Tilly Fowler Park.

Furthermore, during these events many vehicles are also brought into Willowbranch Park, including trucks, SUV's, and supporting/transport vehicles. By riding on the temporarily defined trails, the 35-50

participants target wetlands and boggy areas, which soon enough have been turned into a series of unsightly mud wallows, connected by trenches carved into the ground due to hundreds of bicycle tires covering the same path. Last year's event so damaged the park, that two groups, Plant Parenthood and the AIDS Memorial Project of NE Florida, designed and installed a garden to help repair those scars so that the topography of the park would not be permanently changed. This bicycling event is clearly too intense for this well-loved neighborhood park. I join many concerned neighbors and community groups who are adamantly opposed to this kind of activity being held at this location. It must be discontinued before Willowbranch Park is permanently disfigured and its wooded and pastoral beauty is lost forever.

**Richard A. Ceriello**  
President of the Board of Directors  
AIDS Memorial Project of NE Florida.

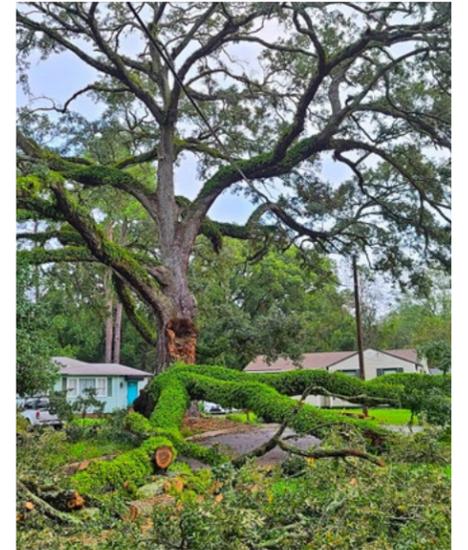


Off-road bikes cut deep grooves into the turf at Willowbranch Park



Trails are defined by blue tape when the off-road bicyclists use Willowbranch Park in October.

## Goodbye, Old Friend



A massive oak tree was removed from its longtime rooted location Nov. 11, days after a towering three armed limb fell, presenting safety issues too great to leave the remaining structure in the area.

The tree that once stood proudly and prominently as the centerpiece of a quaint neighborhood cul-de-sac on Azalea Drive in the Avondale neighborhood, where it stood prominently for over 300 years, had to come down, according to Richard Leon, Urban Forestry Manager for the City of Jacksonville.

The decision was made to remove the entire tree, after the large limb finally failed, separated by rot from the main trunk of the behemoth oak.

## Kudos for Way We Were

I want to thank Mary Wanser so much for her wonderful way of putting my mom, Hazel Montgomery, at ease while conducting the interview for the Way We Were article. I think my mom was a little nervous, but Mary had a wonderful way of putting her at ease, praising and encouraging her. I thank *the Resident* for doing this for my mom and our family.

**Marianne Hofheimer**  
Ortega

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1650-302 Margaret St. #310, Jacksonville, FL 32204

<b>PUBLISHERS</b>	<b>SALES</b>
Seth Williams seth@residentnews.net	Debra McGregor Director of Sales debra@residentnews.net
Pamela B. Williams pamela@residentnews.net	<b>EDITORIAL</b>
<b>DESIGN</b>	Marcia Hodgson Managing Editor marcia@residentnews.net
Joshua Garrett Art Director josh@residentnews.net	<b>Contributing Writers</b> Julie Kerns Garmendia Lilla Ross, Mary Wanser Peggy Harrell Jennings

**GOT NEWS? EMAIL US AT**  
[editor@residentnews.net](mailto:editor@residentnews.net)

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# Watch this space – exciting changes coming in 2021!



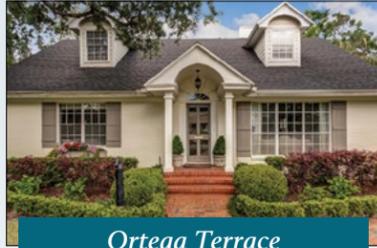
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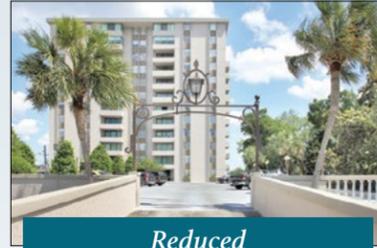
Newly renovated ranch on a great street! Incredible family room & master suite.



**Ortega Terrace**

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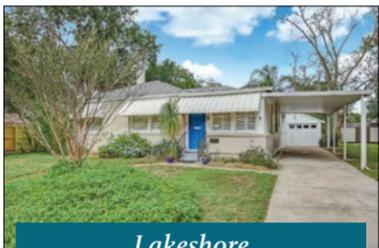
**Riverfront Lot**

2849 Grande Oaks Way - \$525,000  
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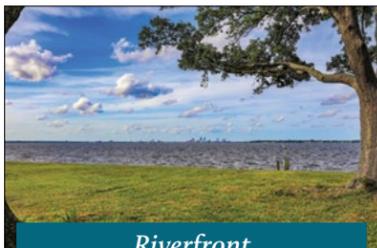
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## City hears residents' concerns, agrees to widen Willow Branch Creek

By Lilla Ross  
Resident Community News

In response to concerns from Riverside Avondale Preservation, the city will widen the channel of Willow Branch Creek, which is currently under construction as part of a restoration project.

Nearby residents and RAP were alarmed when they learned that the contractor was narrowing the creek from 17 feet to 12 feet near its mouth, which is near St. Johns Avenue and Yacht Club Basin in Riverside. The city said narrowing the creek would not reduce its capacity, but nearby residents, who have experienced repeated flooding, challenged that assumption.

City Council Member Randy DeFoor convened a meeting in November with RAP Executive Director Warren Jones, RAP Chair Brooks Andrews, Public Works Director John Pappas, City Engineer Robin Smith and Jimmy Orth, executive director of the St. Johns Riverkeeper.

"We had a really good discussion," Jones said. "I think many of the residents' questions were answered so they understood better what was happening."

In response to the meeting, the Public Works Department addressed some of their concerns.

The channel will be widened to 18 feet by "turning the wall at an angle until the width of 18-feet is reached, and then angle back to a 12-foot wide channel at St. Johns Avenue to match the existing box culvert," Pappas said.

RAP and the Riverkeeper also objected to the use of precast concrete that is nonporous.



Contractors were hard at work in early November fixing the bulkhead that lines Willow Branch Creek

They asked for a living shoreline that would be more resilient.

Pappas said the east side of the channel will remain at its current location to protect nearby buildings. The west side "will have rubble rip-rap placed at the toe of the wall to make the canal more resilient and aid with creating habitat for plants and small fish."

Nine trees will have to be removed on the west side. The city has now asked the Parks Department to be involved in the choice of trees to replace them.

"We're very pleased that they've recognized that the section along the creek is part of the Parks Department, and they're now involved," Jones said.

Concerns about silting from the project that is affecting the yacht basin will have to wait until the project is completed because it involves the Army Corps of Engineers.

"Pappas was very good at explaining what they were doing and why. We're hopeful that going forward, in the next phases, we'll be able to work together on a plan that meets some of the resiliency concerns we have," Jones said.

## Sixth downtown sculpture is installed on Laura Street

The sixth and final sculptural masterpiece within the City of Jacksonville's Downtown Sculpture Initiative was installed on Laura Street Oct. 31.

The Cultural Council of Greater Jacksonville in collaboration with Farah & Farah, a personal injury law firm, revealed a 20-foot-tall sculpture called "Laura's Flower" positioned just outside of one of Farah & Farah's offices located at 100 North Laura Street (at the Northwest corner of Forsyth Street). The Downtown Sculpture Initiative, which partners with private companies to enhance Downtown, has brought more than \$400,000 worth of public art to Jacksonville's Urban Core.

The Laura's Flower sculpture is named after the daughter of Jacksonville founder Isaiah D. Hart, for whom Laura Street was also named. Farah & Farah and the Cultural Council funded the design and construction of the artwork. Farah & Farah owns and will maintain the sculpture.

The sculpture was created by Gus and Lina Ocamposilva, a husband-and-wife team from Clearwater, Florida, who were the visionaries behind the project. Their work includes table-top size pieces - made of clay, cast stone, resin, and steel - and more than 60 public large-scale art sculptures in cities, such as Chicago, New York, Atlanta, Miami, and Las Vegas. In 2013, the City of New York invited them to exhibit three 13-foot-tall sculptures designed for the East River Park Promenade in Manhattan.

"Investing in Jacksonville is one of Farah & Farah's core pillars and greatest honors," said Eddie Farah, founder and managing partner at Farah & Farah. "Laura's Flower" is the second sculpture that our firm has backed in the last five years to support the beautification and development of downtown Jacksonville. We're proud to be a part of



Laura's Flower was installed Downtown on Laura Street as part of Jacksonville's Downtown Sculpture Initiative

this project and look forward to the enhancement it will bring to the downtown scenery!"

As a sculpture, Laura's Flower combines elements of abstract and figurative, classic and contemporary forms. The hand-textured aluminum material is configured to appear soft and fluid. The curved forms incorporate tubes, exposed bolts, and applied color, meant to enliven the sculpture and surrounding area.

David Engdahl, a sculptor from San Marco, has facilitated, coordinated, and managed the four of the six sculpture projects in the Cultural Council's Downtown Sculpture Initiative as a volunteer. Originally, the initiative planned to install 10 works of art throughout Jacksonville's urban core but at this time has no more projects in the pipeline, he said.

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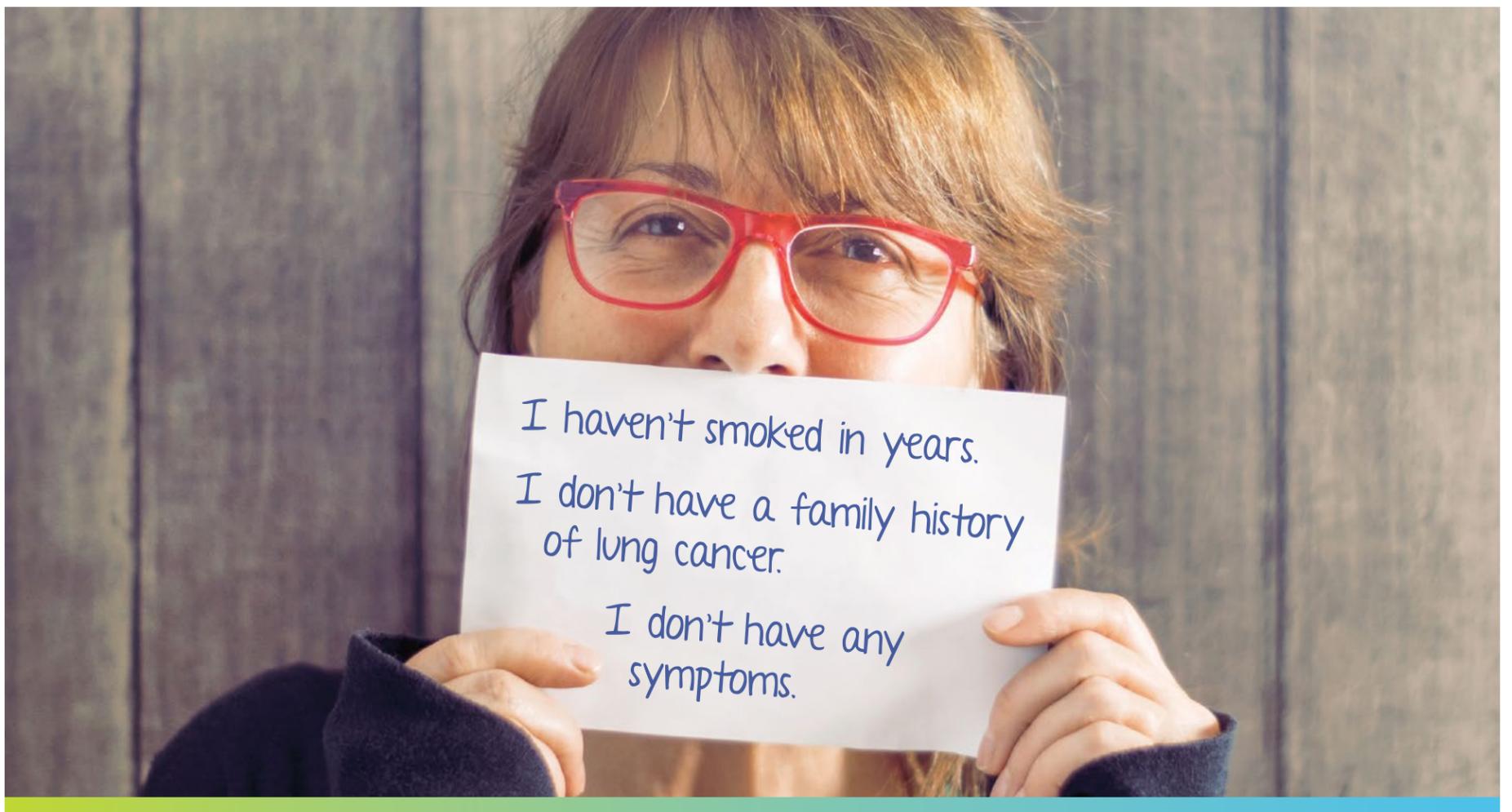
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# Resident's persistence leads to Ortega drainage resolution

By Marcia Hodgson  
Resident Community News

Although there is no official waterway near her Ortega home, Elizabeth Howard has often felt she had lake-front property. Referring to the deep puddle that routinely gathered at the foot of her driveway after it rained as "Lake Howard," Howard is grateful the city has finally agreed to fix it right, after more than seven years of complaints.

"It has been flooding for years," said Howard, of the land that has been eroding underneath her driveway at the corner of Ortega Boulevard and Yacht Club Road. And her driveway was not the only one affected. The driveways of at least four or five of her neighbors were also slowly sinking.

"I'm 5-feet tall and for me to take the garbage out to the street after it rained it

would come up to my midcalf. I'd call up and complain, but nobody was really listening. "Of course, people (from the city) would come out and look at it, and it would be a sunny and beautiful day and they would think, 'she's crazy.' But I would keep calling. We have children in the neighborhood who like to collect tadpoles in it when it rains because it doesn't drain. After the rain stops, it would take three days to drain and four days to totally dry up, but it never really dries up," she said.

One day earlier this fall, Howard, who has lived in her home for 34 years, got lucky. After contacting District 14 Councilwoman Randy DeFoor and calling the city for the umpteenth time, a workman came out to inspect it after it had just rained.

"I told him I was going to take my garbage out and he could see how deep it was. It



City crews are finally fixing water issues causing the driveways to sink on Ortega Boulevard



Elizabeth Howard has called the puddles at the end of her driveway "Lake Howard."

was midcalf on me, and I told him I was going to splurge and buy waders just to bring my garbage out. He walked down the street and looked at all the other driveways and said it was out of his department. He called another guy and the next thing I knew, there was an engineer out here and he said, 'this is pretty bad.' They started to work on it in October. They even commented that the water was worse than they thought because it took them so long to pump out the water just so they could do the work," she recalled.

"It had been building up over many years. A previous owner of a neighbor's house years and years ago had replaced their driveway and it created not all of the problem, but it didn't help it," she said. "It made it worse for certain driveways because it held water and interrupted the flow. And then their driveway was sinking, too."

Also, exacerbating the problem was the repaving Ortega Boulevard. The problem

became worse because the road was then higher than the driveway allowing runoff from the road to flow into it. "If I were driving a sedan or a station wagon, the undercarriage would hit the street as I turned into my driveway," she said. "If I wanted to get out of my driveway, I would have to stop at the sidewalk and, along with checking for pedestrians, I would have to carefully check for traffic because I needed to build momentum just to get up on the road," she said.

Howard said she is grateful the road work will be finally done by the end of the November. She also said she has been impressed with the City's road crew working on the project and noted that they have been very polite, considerate, and easy to work with.

"I'm glad it's finally being resolved and that the construction will be finished and everyone can drive down Ortega Boulevard without worrying about it," she said.

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Listed By Robert VanCleve



4520 MUNDY DR - \$1,325,000  
568 x 100 Feet | 1.35 Acres  
Listed By Wade Griffin



3032 SAINT JOHNS AVE - \$1,245,000  
3 BR | 2 BA | 1 HBA | 4,034 SQFT.  
Listed By Wade Griffin



1560 LANCASTER TER 1104 - \$875,000  
3 BR | 4 BA | 3,317 SQFT.  
Listed By Nancy Cusimano



2815 CORINTHIAN AVE - \$519,000  
4 BR | 2 BA | 1 HBA | 2,838 SQFT.  
Listed By Wade Griffin



4530 IROQUOIS AVE - \$395,000  
4 BR | 2 BA | 1,785 SQFT.  
Listed By Nancy Cusimano



1061 CHATFORD RD - \$365,000  
3 BR | 2 BA | 1,611 SQFT.  
Listed By Leslie Rios Wilkins



12530 TROPIC DR E - \$362,000  
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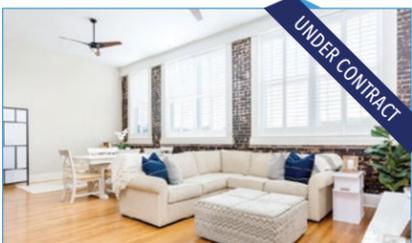
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# Questions arise on sustainability, financial feasibility of Lot J project

By Lilla Ross  
Resident Community News

Mayor Lenny Curry's generous incentives for Shad Khan's \$450 million multi-use development of Lot J has stirred up city residents like nothing else since the controversy over the sale of JEA.

The legislation has had a bumpy ride in the City Council, where it is being challenged and at least two amendments are in the offing. But even as the bill is being revised, a decision of whether to give the project the go-ahead could be decided as early as Dec. 8.

Curry is proposing to give Khan's Gecko Investments and the Cordish Companies of Baltimore \$233 million in tax dollars for the development that would be one of the largest in the city's history. Among the details:

- Live! District would have 75,000 square feet of restaurant and retail space, 40,000 square feet of Class A office space, a 150- to 250-room hotel and two mid-rise apartments buildings with 400 units. The city would own Live! District and lease it to the Jaguars for 35 years with four 10-year extensions, and therefore, the property would not generate tax revenue.
- The city would build parking garages with 700 spaces and pay for infrastructure improvements that would include a 700-space surface parking lot built over an existing stormwater retention pond to the west of Lot J. The infrastructure improvements are estimated at \$77.4 million.



A rendering of the Live! District and other buildings planned for Lot J

- The city would be responsible for up to \$15.1 million in cost overruns for the publicly owned portions of the Lot J project and the developer would cover other project cost overruns.

In addition, the developer would receive incentives: a 75% Recapture Enhanced Value Grant for 20 years capped at \$12.5 million for the apartments, which has already been approved by DIA and a \$12.5 million grant upon completion of the hotel.

A financial analysis done for the Jaguars by Chicago-based C.H. Johnson Consulting Inc., estimates the Live! District would create 1,070 full-time equivalent jobs and create a \$456.6 million economic impact over 30 years beginning in 2022.

City Council Auditor Kim Taylor said the deal would only generate 44 cents in revenue for each \$1 spent by the city, although

*“Sweetheart deals are great, but we want a married deal, and the only way this project makes any sense at all is if the Jaguars stadium lease is extended for at least 25 years and they commit to a certain number of home games.”*

— Randy DeFoor, District 14 City Council member

the City's Office of Economic Development put the figure at \$1.69.

No independent market analysis of the development has been done to determine if it is economically viable and sustainable.

Lamping has said if the City Council approves the legislation, construction could begin in the first half of 2021 and take three years to complete.

But Lot J, a former industrial site, is environmentally contaminated that would

have to be cleaned up in accordance with federal environmental regulations before any construction could begin. The city, which would pay for the cleanup, estimates it would cost \$77 million.

Correspondence between the Mayor's Office and the City Auditor's Office indicates the cleanup could take three years. And the auditor notes that the deal would give the developer seven years to get Live! District completed and up to 12 years to finish the hotel.

Khan, who donated \$150,000 to the mayor's re-election campaign, and Cordish have been negotiating the Lot J deal with Chief Administrative Office Brian Hughes in the Mayor's Office for more than two years, said Jaguars President Mark Lamping.

The deal, however, only became public Oct. 5 at a news conference held by Curry and Khan. Curry said he was sending the legislation to the City Council. It was the expectation that it would be approved before the end of the year. Meanwhile, six weeks later, Lamping unveiled yet another Khan development for Metropolitan Park and the Shipyards that would include a Four Seasons Hotel, a medical complex and residential.

The push back on Lot J was immediate. Why was the city giving so many incentives to a billionaire, while the city was covering half the cost of the project without getting incentives from Khan?

In particular, residents want some assurance that the team will stay in Jacksonville after its lease with the city expires in 10 years. Speculation is rampant that Khan could move the team to London, where he has already moved two home games.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 9

## Carlucci pushes to put Lot J negotiations in hands of DIA

At-Large City Council member Matt Carlucci thinks the Lot J deal has been negotiated backwards, and he's hoping to get it turned around.

“The mayor negotiated this deal with the Jaguars and Cordish. It's very lopsided. They've thrown it over to the City Council for us to review and pass,” Carlucci said. “That's not how it works. “The Downtown Investment Authority negotiates these contracts. They review the viability and sustainability and put together how project should be designed and what will work. They negotiate a lot of the incentives.”

City Administrative Officer Brian Hughes said the city negotiated with Jaguars owner Shad Khan, his company Gecko Investments, and the Cordish Companies of Baltimore because the city has a long-term contract with Khan and owns the property.

But Carlucci said the DIA negotiated the development agreement for the District on the Southbank, which is to be built on land formerly owned by JEA, and it is currently

negotiating a development agreement for the River City Brewing Company, which also is leased by the restaurant from the city.

Carlucci said the last time the city handled the negotiations was for Daily's Place, an amphitheater built by Khan.

“DIA wasn't involved. They had beautiful renderings of the building but when it was built, it was nothing like the renderings,” Carlucci said. “DIA would have made sure about the architecture.”

Carlucci said the mayor has put the City Council in the position of doing the work of the DIA.

“The mayor's bill is full of waivers keeping DIA out of the project,” Carlucci said. “We find ourselves as a council doing the work of DIA. That's why it's not working well. We're not subject-matter experts.”

Carlucci has a substitute bill that would amend the Lot J legislation to remove the waivers that bypass DIA and require that the deal be negotiated by DIA.

District 5 City Councilwoman LeAnna Cumber, who is the council's DIA liaison,

has a similar amendment that would send the legislation as it exists to DIA for review.

Cumber introduced her bill at the Nov. 19 Committee of the Whole meeting but it was deferred because there wasn't a quorum. Cumber didn't respond to a request for comment.

Carlucci said he has reached out to Cumber and hopes they can come up with a consensus bill after the Thanksgiving holidays.

“I haven't read her bill, and she hasn't read mine, but I think we're headed in the same direction. At the end of the day, DIA by code is to manage and have oversight of any of the contracts associated with Downtown development projects. The mayor wants the oversight. That's outside the purview of the city code.

“It's not a slight to the mayor. It doesn't mean we're against Lot J. I've voted for every Jaguars' bill going back to the beginning,” Carlucci said. “Call me crazy. I'm just trying to follow the law.”

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District 14 City Council member Randy DeFoor, who represents Riverside, called it “a fat deal.”

“Sweetheart deals are great, but we want a married deal, and the only way this project makes any sense at all is if the Jaguars stadium lease is extended for at least 25 years and they commit to a certain number of home games,” DeFoor said.

At-large City Council member Matt Carlucci, a San Marco resident, said Khan was getting special treatment. He questioned why the deal was negotiated by the Mayor’s Office and not the Downtown Design Review Board and the Downtown Investment Authority, as required by city code.

Three civic groups also weighed in:

- The Urban Land Institute North Florida offered its expertise to analyze the deal, saying “any project of such magnitude – financially, catalytically, and optically – deserves sufficient time and transparency.”
- OurJax, a citizens watchdog formed after the JEA scandal, asked the City Council “to slow down the unnecessarily rushed and non-transparent process. ... It is not good enough for the mayor and the City Council to say, ‘trust us.’”
- The Jacksonville Civic Council, in a letter co-signed by former Mayor John Delaney, also called for transparency, urging the release of all documents and calculations related to the project.

According to a survey by Barcelo & Company, 70% of the residents polled oppose the proposed deal, with 25% strongly opposing it. Only 17% favored the deal and only 6% strongly favor it.

Carlucci introduced a bill to hire a firm to take an independent look at the deal and another bill that would send the deal to DIA to be negotiated.

District 5 City Council member LeAnna Cumber, who represents San Marco, introduced a bill that would send the existing deal to DIA to be reviewed.

Carlucci and Cumber each convened Town Halls for the public to weigh in.

City Council President Tommy Hazouri took the unusual step of suspending the legislation’s usual review by council committees and instead convened a Committee of the Whole, so the entire council could review the legislation.

The second meeting of the Committee of the Whole on Nov. 19 revealed the true extent of the tensions generated by the Lot J deal, with sharp words exchanged among the City Council members, as well as between Hazouri, Lamping and Hughes.

Asked why the deal has numerous waivers that excluded DIA, Hughes said the city owns Lot J and already has a lease with the Jaguars and didn’t think it was necessary to go through the DIA.

But Hazouri said the Mayor’s Office “violated the spirit of what the DIA is supposed to be doing.”

Attorney Paul Harden, who is working on the Lot J deal, said they are making concessions to the city that will be reflected in the revised bill. These include giving the city 50% of the net revenue from the Live! District during the Florida/Georgia game. They also pledge not to sell Live! District until five years after its completion.

But the consensus of the City Council members was that there were too many questions yet and they need to see a final bill.

Hazouri has scheduled another meeting of the Committee of the Whole at 10 a.m. Thursday, Dec. 3. If the committee is satisfied, it could vote and send its recommendations to the City Council, which could vote on the project as early as Tuesday, Dec. 8.

# Fundraising campaign to make magic for Theatre Jacksonville

As 2020 draws to a close, Theatre Jacksonville is ready to make some magic happen! With the help of a matching grant initiative through the Jessie Ball duPont Fund, donations from Dec. 1 - 31 will do just that. Any gift of up to \$500 given to Theatre Jacksonville’s Make Magic in 2020 campaign by December 31 will “magically” double – and 10% of the gift amount will also be donated to one of three local charities if the giver specifies as such.

“We have been able to keep operations going this year, during exceptionally difficult times, in part due to the generosity of our donors. Our Make Magic in 2020 program is a fantastic way for operating funds to get a much-needed boost during these final months and for your donations to pack an extra punch,” said Theatre Jacksonville Executive Director Sarah Boone. “In turn, we are also aware that difficult times continue, not just for the theater industry, but also for many others. We are committed to doing our part for our larger community by sharing 10% of the money raised, if specified by each giver, with local organizations that do a tremendous amount of good helping those in need.”

The three charities Theatre Jacksonville has selected to assist are Clara White Mission, JASMYN, and Mental Health America of Northeast Florida. Clara White Mission offers a variety of programs to chronically homeless and low-income clients, particularly veterans. JASMYN supports and empowers LGBTQ young people through health and wholeness services and youth development opportunities. Mental Health America raises awareness of mental health and wellness, provides training, and works to impact policy and legislation. Each giver may designate and name one if

*“We are committed to doing our part for our larger community by sharing 10% of the money raised, if specified by each giver, with local organizations that do a tremendous amount of good helping those in need.”*

— Sarah Boone,  
executive director, Theatre Jacksonville

they wish to help a charity in addition to Theatre Jacksonville.

“We are thrilled about the opportunity to double any funds that we receive, while at the same time helping the larger community. This allows donations to be especially effective,” said Boone. “Also, as an incentive for givers who are feeling extra generous and who make two or more \$500 donations, a playhouse chair will be named in their honor.”

Donations to the Make Magic in 2020 campaign can be made by visiting [www.theatrejax.com](http://www.theatrejax.com).

On the performance front, Theatre Jacksonville continues its online show offerings in February, when audiences will be treated to a local virtual production of “Thurgood,” written by George Stevens, Jr. “Thurgood” is a powerful play about the life of Thurgood Marshall, the first Black associate justice of the Supreme Court. The showing of “Thurgood” during Black History Month in February is timely, particularly as the country continues to grapple with the issues of racial injustice, inclusion, and equality. Virtual performances will begin on Thursday, Feb. 18.

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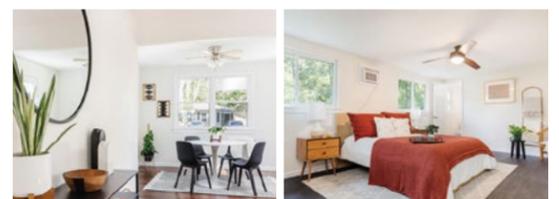
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# Jaguars float possibility of building hotel on Metropolitan Park land

By Lilla Ross  
Resident Community News

While the City Council is still debating Jaguars owner Shad Khan's proposed Lot J development deal, Jaguars team President Mark Lamping unveiled a development plan for the downtown riverfront, which would feature a Four Seasons hotel.

Lamping made the presentation at Nov. 12 at the Downtown Investment Authority's Strategic Implementation Committee, which was considering incentives for the proposed Lot J project.

The new project would be developed on Metropolitan Park and the Shipyards and in addition to the hotel would have a medical complex, office space, 400 apartment units, parking garages, a marina and a Riverwalk extension.

Lamping said the project would be done at the same time as Lot J, which will require the city borrowing \$200 million.

"The public involvement in that will be significantly less both from a dollar standpoint and from a percentage of project standpoint - because of Lot J," Lamping said.

The Four Seasons, which Khan would own, would have a 10,000-square-foot spa and 11,000 square feet of food and beverage concessions. Khan already owns a Four Seasons hotel in Toronto. The nearest Four Seasons is in Orlando where rooms cost \$600 a night.

Lamping said the project could begin within six months of reaching an agreement with the city.

But before any construction can begin, two hurdles must be cleared:

The first, the Shipyards is a brownfield site, and Lamping said his team is waiting on an environmental status report from the state.

The second, Metropolitan Park cannot be developed until another site for a public park is found and approved by the National Park Service due to a clause in federal funding contract used to build the park in the 1980s.

The city has asked the federal agency whether it can swap Metropolitan Park for the Shipyards. Lamping said a portion of the Shipyards property could be set aside for the park.

The Museum of Science and History (MOSH) has also announced plans to relocate its museum facility onto property on the Shipyards site.



Renderings of a new Four Seasons Hotel Jaguars owner Shad Khan would like to build in land now part of Metropolitan Park and the Shipyards

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Rendering of a \$50 million multi-use project Jacksonville Riverfront Revitalization LLC hopes to build at 500 East Bay St.

## Developer questions city's speedy push to demolish Berkman II

By Lilla Ross  
Resident Community News

The cavernous hulk of the abandoned Berkman II project on the Northbank could be imploded soon, but it's not clear if it will be done by the city or the development company that wants to build a multi-use project on the site.

Jacksonville Riverfront Revitalization LLC is in the final stages of purchasing the site at 500 East Bay St., which has been vacant for 13 years. A construction worker was killed, and 21 others were injured when the parking garage collapsed during construction on Dec. 6, 2007.

Choate Construction, the general contractor, received a lien on the property and a \$10.2 million judgment to settle a lawsuit over the accident. It later bought the property in a foreclosure sale.

In 2019, 500 E. Bay LLC, bought the property with plans to complete the construction with a 340-room hotel and family entertainment center and water park. The company was a partnership between Ohde Construction of Wisconsin and Barrington Development of Mississippi.

But a few months later, the company withdrew those plans. The company cited concerns about contamination at the adjacent Shipyards and the Navy's decision not to give the USS Adams to the Jacksonville Historic Naval Ship Association, which wants to create a floating naval museum. The nonprofit has since procured the USS Orleck and is moving ahead with its plans for the attraction.

The city condemned the building in January 2020 and again in August 2020,

sending notice a second time to the 500 East Bay LLC's new address, giving it 30 days to correct problems that include trash, graffiti, safety issues and incomplete construction.

Wanting to control the implosion, Jacksonville Riverfront Revitalization LLC has challenged the demolition order in court.

Park Beeler of Jacksonville Riverfront Revitalization (JRR) said he is puzzled by the city's push to demolish the building when it knows that JRR is in the process of buying the property and plans to demolish it at its own expense, which he estimates at \$1 million.

"Why should the city spend money to demolish it? They'll put a lien on the building, which would be more than it would cost us to demolish it," he said.

The city says it is pursuing due process on the demolition but will not demolish the property provided the property owner continues to take steps toward demolition on their own.

Beeler is no stranger to imploding buildings. In 1978, he was involved in the demolition of the old Mayflower Hotel, which was the first building in Jacksonville to be imploded. "It came down very nicely," Beeler said. "But Berkman will be easier because it's just concrete and steel."

Beeler said the implosion can be engineered so that it falls away from the adjacent Berkman I and Bay Street.

Beeler said JRR is in the due diligence phase of the sale and hopes to close on the property before the end of the year. The company has already applied for a demolition permit.

Berkman II is adjacent to Berkman Plaza, a 22-story condominium with 15 riverfront townhomes. Berkman Plaza, which opened in 2003, is undergoing a facelift to repair its stucco façade. The project is expected to take about a year.

JRR hopes to start construction on its \$50 million multi-use project, designed by KBJ Architects, next year.

The first phase of the project would be a low-rise building with retail and commercial space on the first floor with luxury townhomes with private garages on the second floor. Condos or apartments could be built above the townhomes. The pool and other amenities would be on the roof.

The second phase would be a high-rise hotel or apartments or combination.

Beeler said an important piece of the project is the public space along the river that includes the Northbank Riverwalk and an expansion of the Berkman Plaza Marina.

The green space would be adjacent to the Shipyards property and could form a natural link along the river all the way to Metropolitan Park.

Beeler said he and his partners expressed interest in buying the heavily contaminated Shipyards in 2004, cleaning it up and redeveloping it. But the city gave the project to LandMar Group. However, its parent company filed for bankruptcy.

More recently Jaguars owner Shad Khan's company Iguana Investments planned to build a convention center and a hotel on the site, which is adjacent to Lot J, where Khan plans a multi-use development.

But the development agreement with the city has expired, though Khan says he's still interested in developing the Shipyards.

# City's first Eco-Counter dedicated on Northbank Riverwalk

More than 30 guests gathered at Corkscrew Park on the Northbank Nov. 17, to dedicate Jacksonville's first Eco-Counter, a permanent bicycle and pedestrian tracker. Included among the crowd were representatives from Downtown Vision, the City of Jacksonville (COJ) Parks Recreation and Community Services, Downtown Investment Authority (DIA), JTC Running, Black Girls Do Bike, Major Taylor Cycling Club, and the North Florida Bicycle Club.

Located along the Northbank Riverwalk under the Acosta Bridge, the sleek 7.5-foot Eco-Counter kiosk displays daily and year-to-date pedestrian, runner, and bicycle use. Additional trackers are planned for the urban core and information collected will help the City and its partners in future recreational and transit planning. Having reliable data showing foot traffic is also valuable as the City and its partners seek outside grants to improve bike/ped infrastructure.

The Eco-Counter was made possible by a \$31,550 donation from JTC Running, the nonprofit organization that founded and hosts the annual Gate River Run,

among other initiatives. "JTC's mission is to support health, outdoor recreation and running in Northeast Florida," said JTC Board President Larry Roberts. "All proceeds from the Gate River Run stay local to support high school track, JTC-sponsored races and training classes, and major initiatives like the Eco-counter and the planned 30-mile Emerald Trail."

Also speaking at the event were San Marco's Lori Boyer, CEO of the DIA; Daryl Joseph, Jacksonville director of Parks, Recreation, and Community Services; Eric Miller, vice president of District Services for Downtown Vision and president of the Downtown Dwellers; and Karissa Moffett, Jacksonville Bicycle and Pedestrian coordinator.

"The Eco-Counter is a great tool for collecting valuable data that can help guide active infrastructure investments Downtown while also promoting and inspiring the community to take advantage of our 2.8 miles of Riverwalk promenade," said Boyer. "The St. Johns River is at the heart of Downtown's infrastructure, and we're grateful for JTC's generous donation that will



DIA CEO Lori Boyer speaks at the dedication of the Eco-Counter in Corkscrew Park Nov. 17.



A cyclist breezes past the new Eco-Counter in Corkscrew Park.

encourage access to the river for locals and visitors alike as they walk, jog, bike, or simply stroll along the Riverwalk and take in the scenic views."

As of the event day, nearly 14,000 pedestrians and runners, and 2,500 cyclists have traversed through Corkscrew Park on their journey along the Northbank Riverwalk to and from Riverside since the Eco-counter was installed in late October.

Moffett said the Eco-Counter will help create a ridership baseline that can be used to assess future years, and ensure investments are moving the City toward its goal of increasing walking and bicycling trips by 10% by 2030. "Thank you to JTC for spearheading the first permanent counter in Jacksonville—this is the first of many to help us reach our goal of becoming a bicycle and pedestrian friendly community," said Moffett.



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# Historic incentives breath life into urban development

By Lilla Ross, Resident Community News

Preserving historic buildings is a key element to the redevelopment of downtown and now there's a new tool available in the form of city incentives that will help cover some of the extra expenses that come with refurbishing an old building.

The incentives were approved by the City Council in October, and Lori Boyer, CEO of the Downtown Investment Authority, said she expects to see a number of development applications come in in the next few months.

"It will be transformative to old building stock. I think we're going to see a lot of them get off the ground," Boyer said. "By incentivizing, you can make something happen that is transformative or changes the value of downtown and the neighboring properties."

"It becomes a policy decision about how much you value historic building stock and the importance of that to the culture and identity of downtown. It creates an ambience," she said.

DIA already gives incentives to downtown developments both old and new, such as Recapture Enhanced Value (REV) Grants, which give developers a tax rebate on the value of the enhanced property for a set number of years.

"It allows a developer to ask for an amount that is necessary to bridge the financial gap when they are trying to restore a building, the difference between construction costs versus what they get in rents," Boyer said.

The Laura Street Trio for instance will only have 24 to 50 residential units. "That doesn't yield a lot of rent, or pay off a big loan, but it will make all the difference in downtown," Boyer said.

A company that brings jobs to the area can be eligible for other incentives.

In the last decade, DIA has given 16 downtown development projects various incentives. Here are some better known examples. The complete list accompanies this story.

- The District on the Southbank received a REV grant of 75% for 20 years, not to exceed \$56 million.
- The Cowford Chophouse received a \$500,000 Historic Preservation and Revitalization Trust Fund Grant
- 220 Riverside received a REV grant of 75% for 20 years not to exceed \$4.9 million with a \$30 million minimum capital investment requirement.

To qualify for the new historic incentives, buildings must be at least 50 years old and designated historic by the City Council and contribute to the Downtown Jacksonville Historic District.

The new incentives would include funding to offset the costs of upgrading fire and other systems required to meet building codes. The city also would cover some of the costs of exterior and interior renovations such as flooring and elevators.



Sweet Pete's sweet shop with its close proximity to City Hall, brings a historic ambience to James Weldon Johnson Park.

Smaller projects could be eligible for grants capped at 40% of the total cost of the project.

The DIA also could give forgivable loans of up to \$100,000 from the Downtown Historic Preservation and Revitalization Trust Fund without approval from the City Council. But there is currently no money in the fund.

Loans of more than \$100,000 would be available through the Downtown Preservation and Restoration Program that would require City Council approval.

The legislation also removes the \$1 million cap on historic incentives.

Jacques Klempf, who renovated the old Bostwick Building at 101 E. Bay St., into the Cowford Chophouse, said renovating an old building comes with special challenges.

The Bostwick building was in such poor condition, it was dismantled brick by brick and rebuilt.

"Nothing had been done to it for 80 years," Klempf said. "I would have been better off mowing it down and starting from scratch. But that building is the entrance to downtown, that was my main reason for purchasing it."

And it also yielded a cache of historic records and artifacts from its two vaults that contained 200 lock boxes that hadn't been opened since the bank closed in 1926.

"We were very fortunate. DIA was willing to help developers to keep the fabric of historic downtown," Klempf said. "We worked with the mayor and council. We shared with them our vision. Once we completed the project, they came through with incentives. It was a nice bonus."

Robert Pavelka didn't get incentives for his 2007 renovation of the Churchwell Lofts on Bay Street, but the project is a study in the complexity of renovating a historic building.

The building was constructed as a brick warehouse in 1904 and Pavelka's grandfather and great uncle bought it in 1922.

"It was beautifully built. It's a substantial building," he said.

The walls on the lower floors are 24 inches thick and the building has over 100 windows.

In renovating the building into luxury condos, Pavelka said they left much of the original building intact. Many of the windows are the originals with wavy glass, and the walls are exposed brick.

"All the columns were heart pine. We just refinished everything, left it natural. We sanded and polyurethaned the floors. We didn't stain them. I wanted it to be upscale, urban chic."

Pavelka, an Ortega resident, said he applied for incentives under the Peyton administration but didn't get them.

"A lot of it depends on who is running the city and how badly they want to work with you," he said. "It's great to have an incentive, but it doesn't make it profitable. You have to have the right market. It has to make economic sense. Incentives didn't work for us but hopefully it will work for other people."

For Alex Sifakis, president of JWB Real Estate Capital, incentives are critical and essential piece of historic preservation.

"You need incentives because the rent is not enough to make money off development. In other downtowns, the rents are high enough, you don't need incentives. If you incentivize development, eventually you will get enough residents and amenities that will make it more desirable and raise the rents."

"That new program is pretty great as far as enabling developers to save historic buildings," Sifakis said. "We think it's a great move and will make great impact on revitalization."

JWB recently bought two historic buildings: Federal Reserve Bank at 424 N. Hogan St., and the adjacent Baptist Convention building at 218 W. Church St.

The bank was designed by Henrietta Dozier, the first woman architect in Jacksonville; the Baptist building by famed architect Henry Klutho, who helped rebuild the city after the 1901 fire.

Sifakis said the buildings will be redeveloped as one project with the parking lot to be converted into an outdoor courtyard with seating for two to three restaurants. In addition, the Baptist building will have 24 residential units and the Federal Reserve will have event space on the upper floors.

JWB is in talks with DIA about incentives and plans to begin work by the middle of next year. Sifakis said they also will be pursuing a federal historic tax credit.

Sifakis said JWB did not get incentives for the shipping container apartments on Ashley Street, but in retrospect, wish they had because the project was more expensive than they had anticipated.

JWB also has acquired the Porter House mansion, 510 Julia St., another Klutho building catty corner to Federal Reserve and Baptist building that will be turned into office space and retail/restaurant.

It also owns Klutho's Seminole building, 400 N. Hogan St., which is anchored by Sweet Pete's and has a vacant restaurant space.

The buildings are in close proximity to City Hall and James Weldon Johnson Park. In a few years, the Emerald Trail will run down Hogan Street from Springfield to the river.

"The Emerald Trail is a great amenity," Sifakis said. "Urban trails have proven to be a great catalyst for revitalization."

Boyer said she hopes the incentives will help boost the residential population downtown and the number of restaurants and retail shops to sustain them.

"We have a great quality of life for the beach lifestyle and the suburban lifestyle, but we're not as competitive with the urban lifestyle," she said. "By creating an urban lifestyle, we'll be catering to what millennials are looking for. It helps us compete for jobs and business recruiting."



JWB's plan for the Federal Reserve Building on North Hogan Street is to have event space on its upper floors.

## Downtown Historic development projects

List of open projects approved in the last 10 years that are currently administered by the Downtown Investment Authority:

### RIVERSIDE/BROOKLYN

**220 Riverside**  
Minimum Capital Investment Requirement: \$30,000,000  
REV Grant: 75%/20 years, not to exceed \$4,905,980  
Loan: None

**200 Riverside (a/k/a Vista Brooklyn)**  
Minimum Capital Investment Requirement: \$50,000,000  
REV Grant: 62.5%/20 years, not to exceed \$9,000,000  
Loan: None

**Riverside Lodging (a/k/a Residence Inn)**  
Minimum Capital Investment Requirement: \$17,500,000  
REV Grant: 75%/20 years, not to exceed \$3,700,000  
Loan: None

**Lofts at Brooklyn**  
Minimum Capital Investment Requirement: \$28,000,000  
REV Grant: 75%/the earlier of 15 years or 2037, not to exceed \$3,380,000  
Loan: \$625,750, 20 years at 0% interest

**Brooklyn Riverside (BR Riverside, DST)**  
Minimum Capital Investment Requirement: \$35,500,000  
REV Grant: 75%/20 years, not to exceed \$5,154,000  
Loan: None

**Fidelity Information Services (d/b/a FIS)**  
Minimum Capital Investment: \$145,000,000  
REV Grant: 75%/20 years, not to exceed \$23,400,000  
Loan: None  
Other: City QTI contribution of up to \$600,000 for 500 new jobs over ten (10) year period

### LaVILLA

**Lofts at LaVilla 2 (a/k/a Jefferson Station)**  
Minimum Capital Investment Requirement: \$26,000,000  
REV Grant: 75%/15 years, not to exceed \$2,980,000  
Loan: \$400,000, 20 years at 0% interest

**Lofts at LaVilla on Monroe**  
Minimum Capital Investment Requirement: None  
REV Grant: None  
Loan: \$303,750, 20 years at 0% interest

### DOWNTOWN

**ACE Jax, LLC (Jones Brothers)**  
Minimum Capital Investment Requirement: None  
REV Grant: None  
Loan: None  
Other: \$1,500,000 Historic Preservation and Revitalization Trust Fund Grant

**AXIS Hotels, LC (Ambassador Hotel)**  
Minimum Capital Investment Requirement: None  
REV Grant: None  
Loan: None  
Other: \$1,500,000 Historic Preservation and Revitalization Trust Fund Grant

**FOODONICS EQUITIES, LLC (Cowford Chophouse)**  
Minimum Capital Investment Requirement: None  
REV Grant: None  
Loan: None  
Other: \$500,000 Historic Preservation and Revitalization Trust Fund Grant

### SOUTHBANK

**Southbank Apartment Ventures**  
Minimum Capital Investment Requirement: \$37,000,000  
REV Grant: 75%/15 years, not to exceed \$7,810,000  
Loan: None

**CDP Home Street (SoBA)**  
Minimum Capital Investment Requirement: \$21,000,000  
REV Grant: 75%/15 years, not to exceed \$2,530,000  
Loan: None

**The District**  
Estimated Capital Investment: \$280,000,000  
REV Grant: 75%/20 years, not to exceed \$56,025,000  
Loan: None

**GV-IP Jacksonville Owner, LLC (One Call)**  
Minimum Capital Investment Requirement: None  
REV Grant: None  
Loan: None  
Other: \$100,000 annual Commercial Revitalization Grant for creating/maintaining 900-1,175 jobs

**SunGard Data Systems, Inc.**  
Minimum Capital Investment Requirement: \$1,235,000  
REV Grant: 50%/10 years, not to exceed \$80,000  
Loan: None  
Other: Create/maintain 120-250 jobs

# Has there been a silver lining for you, your family, or business during the Coronavirus pandemic?

By Marcia Hodgson, Resident Community News



Yes, I think our silver lining has been to slow down and really appreciate the small things in life. So meeting neighbors, taking walks, being outside more, enjoying nature more, and its also offered us the opportunity to be more introspective – to spend more time reading and writing, and it has given us a chance to spend more time together doing puzzles and games as a family. I think a big part, too, is really reprioritizing our spending dollars so that we don't do retail therapy anymore. The money that was being spent frivolously, the real juxtaposition – look how much more money we have because we are not going to Target on a weekly basis and just spending it on oh...a new sweater. The checks and balances of our spending, even our restaurant spending.

— MARCI MAY, RIVERSIDE



Yes, because I've gotten to be closer with the family because I don't go out too much. Also, my daughter has made sure that I've been a good foster for cats to keep me less lonely, so I've increased my flock. We found four in Riverside Park in a carrier at the beginning of the pandemic. It sounds worse than it is. Actually, it's been great, and it's nice to get with my daughter and to help out at the park.

— LESLIE DAWSON, MURRAY HILL



Yes, being creative and coming up with solutions to adapt to the changing environment, such as for Halloween, we created a chute so we could pass candy out while social distancing. We had fun decorating that. We had the idea, and then some of our neighbors did as well, and so it became interesting to see who had the best, the most creative. We decided that we are going to make it an annual thing to find creative ways to pass out candy without having such close contact. Now it will be a neighborhood gathering of neighbors to see who can be the most creative. So, it has been fun to see who can come up with creative solutions, especially with two kids. We've also been decorating face masks so we can personalize them. It's been having to think outside of the box to make life as normal as possible.

— MELANIE DOBBINS, AVONDALE



There has been a silver lining, even though I actually did lose my job in the pandemic, but that's given me a lot more free time for family, volunteer work, and I'm very lucky it has not impacted things too, too much financially. It's given me the opportunity to think about the possibility of a new career and to do a lot of the volunteer things I've been wanting to do but had not had the time to do.

— KATIE DAWSON, RIVERSIDE



Yes. To take a pause. To smell the roses more. To enjoy and slow down, and, definitely, to have more quality time with my wife and son, which has been a highlight.

— BEN FRICK, RIVERSIDE



I let my hair go gray and it looks better. Everyone tells me now that my hair looks fabulous.

— AMY QUINCY, RIVERSIDE



No, not really. The whole thing has been terrible. At school, there are a lot of problems with people trying to talk when their mask is on. I'm looking forward to a maskless 2021 because people yell at you when your mask is down. During the time change, everyone at my school was groggy because it's hard to wake up in the morning and go to school and be happy about it. You walk into school and you have to pull up your hair for a temperature check. It's a long day just trying to do stuff. It's hard to have friends and talk to them because at lunch time we used to sit next to each other, and now my friends have to sit far away from each other. It's hard to talk to them.

— WILLIAM DOBBINS, AVONDALE



My wife sings, and we were out five nights a week, but because the singing has stopped due to COVID, we've been home a lot, which is nice. I'm my wife's driver. She sings with a fellow out of Palm Coast who used to be a member of Blood Sweat and Tears. They've been singing together for 15 years. So, the silver lining is being able to see her and not to have to drive five nights a week.

— BILL JONES, AVONDALE



That's a great question. We have two children in college, and they were both home after spring break for the rest of the semester. They weren't happy being home, but we loved having them home after being empty nesters. The silver lining is that people are getting out more in the community and spending more time in parks doing things around their homes that maybe they didn't have time to do before. I founded the Friends of Riverside Park. I spend as much time here as I can encouraging other people to keep our parks clean, green, and litter free. I think people are looking for more opportunities in what they do that are closer to home. People are looking for ways to volunteer, to get out in the community and enjoy public spaces.

— CATHLEEN MURPHY, RIVERSIDE



Quite frankly, we haven't seen much of an effect because I own a medical supply company, so we are essential, and nothing has changed business-wise. But, I think people are more aware of contagious conditions or diseases, so I think everyone is becoming more aware of that and wearing more masks.

— PATTI LANGENBACH, RIVERSIDE

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# Khan's donation to aid museum move to Northbank

By Lilla Ross  
Resident Community News

With a little help from a \$5 million donation courtesy of Jaguars owner Shad Khan and his family, the Museum of Science and History has launched its new fundraising campaign to assist in funding the museum's move to the Northbank.

MOSH Genesis is the new name for the \$20 million capital campaign launched last year as MOSH 2.0.

In October, MOSH announced plans to build a new museum on the Shipyards property, where Khan is proposing to build a multi-use development.

Khan described MOSH's plans as "a spectacular addition to downtown Jacksonville."

"The best downtown districts in the United States include urban parkland and cultural destinations, and we can have that here in Jacksonville with the Museum of Science and History anchoring a new riverfront park," Khan said.

"I'm hoping my contribution to the capital campaign will spark additional commitment from throughout the region so we can get started on a new downtown.

I am confident it will, because I know I'm not the only person in Jax who believes it's time to finally meet and even exceed our potential."

Earlier this year, MOSH received an undisclosed gift from the C. Herman and Mary Virginia Terry Foundation, a \$2.5 million pledge from VyStar Credit Union, and \$500,000 from PNC Bank.

MOSH CEO Bruce Fafard said the board of trustees had originally planned to renovate and expand the existing museum on the Southbank.

"But there were a lot of things we wouldn't be able to do, and the donors were lukewarm to renovating here," Fafard said.

The board had a committee look at the options, including a marketing study.

"It became obvious that the Northbank, especially the Shipyards, was a very viable solution and the board voted to move in that direction," he said.

Fafard said the board likes the Shipyards because it is close to the city's Sports and Entertainment District.

"I can see visitors coming for several hours, having lunch on the lawn and going to see a baseball game," he said.



A rendering of what the new Museum of Science and History might look like if it were built on the Shipyards property.

Fafard said he hopes to have chosen an architect by next summer so that the project can enter the design phase.

But the exact location of the museum remains uncertain.

The Shipyards, a 45-acre site between Metropolitan Park and Berkman II, is owned by the city.

The Downtown Investment Authority has asked the National Park Service if the Shipyards property can be swapped as public park space for Metropolitan Park. The city is prohibited from selling the 24-acre Metropolitan Park property as part of a 1981 federal grant. If the Park Service agrees to the swap, part of the Shipyards could be developed by Khan or another developer.

Another complication is that because the Shipyards was formerly an industrial site it is a brownfield, environmentally contaminated, and would have to be cleaned up under state and federal guidelines.

"We are working closely with DIA. The exact location won't be determined until we get a response back from the National

Park Service," Fafard said. "Regardless of the decision, there will be a location and space at the Shipyards for us."

Fafard said the new Northbank location will allow the museum to pursue a "bolder vision."

"We're going to be 80 next year. If you look at our history, we've always been able to make bold moves."

The museum was founded in 1941 as the Jacksonville Children's Museum in Riverside. It moved to the Southbank in 1969 and changed its name to the Museum of Arts and Sciences in 1977.

In 1988, it changed its name to the Museum of Science and History as part of an expansion that included the Alexander Brest Planetarium. It was renovated and expanded again in 1994.

"This is another bold move. We will stay true to our mission to inspire the joy of lifelong learning by bringing to life the sciences and regional history. This will allow us to start with a clean palette. We can design the museum to be more adaptable and create interactive and experiential exhibits," he said.

*"I'm hoping my contribution to the capital campaign will spark additional commitment from throughout the region so we can get started on a new downtown."*

— Shad Khan, owner of the Jacksonville Jaguars



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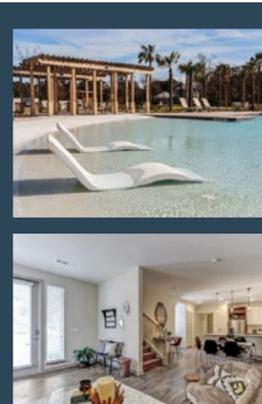
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# DeFoor to call in EPA as Murray Hill smell continues

By Marcia Hodgson  
Resident Community News

As Murray Hill residents continue to smell a toxic odor that wafts through their neighborhood at night and in the early mornings, the City of Jacksonville Environmental Quality Division has managed to put together an “enforcement package,” against a local company that may be the culprit causing the offensive smell. However, unsure whether the City’s enforcement division will be able to rectify the situation, District 14 City Councilwoman Randy DeFoor has also called for a meeting with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

In a virtual meeting held Nov. 2 by the Murray Hill Preservation Association, Melissa Long, chief of the City’s Environmental Quality Division, said her division has been in communication with IFF – International Flavors & Fragrances, Inc., which is located at 2051 North Lane Avenue – about the foul smell.

“They don’t believe they have any leaks in their product line,” said Long, referring to IFF. “They said if anything, it might be from their wastewater system that is open to the atmosphere. They are taking a look at that right now.”

Long said even though her division had finally accrued enough verified reports from separate households within a 90-day window to be able to send a “packet” along to the City’s enforcement division, she still encouraged residents to continue to notify the city when they smell the odor. To register a complaint, residents need to

either call 630-CITY or get into the MyJax system by emailing their concerns to myjaxcusthelp.com. All complaints should include the resident’s name and contact information so the City can contact them and verify the smell, she said, noting that additional verified complaints can be added to the enforcement package.

“It’s taken a little while to get the enforcement package together and submitted, but last week they are taking a look at it and asking a lot of questions,” Long said. “I don’t know if the whole package will stay together or not. I want everyone to know if you do continue to experience odors, we want you to call in. We got several last night. I hate that we couldn’t get anyone out there to find out what the smell was last night,” she said, noting that 30 complaints were called into the City on Sunday, Nov. 1, a time when no one was on duty to verify the smell.

Shane Brisentine, a Murray Hill resident, said he filed one of the complaints Nov. 1, after he noticed it while returning to his neighborhood from a visit to St. Augustine.

“Last night was horrible. I took video. The sky was clear, but as soon as I got off the ramp from Route 10 to Route 17, I started smelling it. Then as soon as I peeled off of 17 to turn onto Edgewood Avenue there was a fog over our neighborhood. It was so strong I was wheezing when I got home. This company knows that nothing can be done if it is happening at night. It’s like a big ‘FU’ to the city and the neighborhood,” Brisentine said. “It was not a wastewater smell, it was chemical. It was the same stuff I smell most of the time. I cannot stress enough that the city needs to take it seriously.

*“We need to isolate exactly what area in this facility the odors are coming from and figure out a remedy and a reasonable schedule for them to implement whatever the remedy is.”*

— Melissa Long, chief of the City’s Environmental Quality Division

My doctor thinks that my recent reboot of my asthma issues is related to this.”

In responding to Brisentine, Long said the smell was “wastewater” but not a wastewater smell that might emanate from a treatment plant run by the Jacksonville Electric Authority (JEA). “It’s their wastewater, and it does have a chemical smell,” she said, referring to IFF. She also said the City is trying to work with IFF, but that the company was denying the smell.

“It’s hard to find out what is causing the odor and what remedies there are,” she said. “That’s the next step. We need to isolate exactly what area in this facility the odors are coming from and figure out a remedy and a reasonable schedule for them to implement whatever the remedy is. We do not have a remedy. It has to come from experts that are in that type of field. It’s a little bit of a slow process. I wish I could say it will happen tomorrow, but it will take a little bit of time,” she said, noting the enforcement division currently has attorneys scrutinizing the verified complaints so if the City needs to go to court, its case will stand up.

District 14 City Councilwoman Randy DeFoor wasn’t happy with Long’s answer. “I think this company is gaming the system,”

she said, adding that the smell is not new and that folks working in City Hall have told her it has been occurring off and on for many years. “They do it early in the morning and late at night knowing you guys aren’t available to respond within four hours. When you get there, it’s all gone, and they know it. I know there is a criminal component. When I worked in the state attorney’s office years ago, we actually prosecuted companies for this very thing. You should explain that to them.”

In response, Long said her division is administrative and does not handle criminal investigations. If there is reason to believe there is criminal activity, the City would probably need to hand over the packet to investigators from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), which holds IFF’s permit. “DEP says there is nothing wrong. There is nothing to cause the odor (at IFF), she said.

But DeFoor was still not satisfied. She insisted her assistant, Brooks Dame, contact EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) for a meeting to discuss the problem. “There is something going on. That’s gaslighting. I’ve had constituents call me from Talbot saying their face is burning,” she said. “We will bring EPA in.”

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# Wolfson Children's Hospital's 'bridge of hope' to the future

By Marcia Hodgson  
Resident Community News

Wolfson Children's Hospital President Michael Aubin called it a "big deal" when medical center employees made their inaugural trek through the new skybridge over Palm Avenue Oct. 30. The glassed-in pedestrian walkway connects the P2 Parking garage with what will soon be the new Wolfson Children's Hospital entrance and critical care tower. Although the new critical care tower and entrance to the medical center's Southbank campus are currently under construction, employees enjoyed a safe jaunt over the bridge, two stories above the street.

"In a project like this, there are certain times when you say this is a major deal," Aubin said. "The ground-breaking was a major deal. Putting this bridge in place was a major deal, and getting it open so our team can come over and our patients can use it is a major deal. Then, 13 months from now, when we actually get to enter the new building, that will be a major deal," he said,



Wolfson Children's Hospital President Michael Aubin with Baptist Medical Center Jacksonville President Michael Mayo

estimating the new entrance and building will be complete in February 2022.

To celebrate the new edition to the campus Oct. 30, employees were greeted by team members dressed in Halloween costumes, who passed out candy and other goodies as they made their way to work. Heading the welcome effort were Aubin and Baptist Medical Center Jacksonville President Michael Mayo, both of whom were on hand at 7 a.m. to greet employees as they came and went across the bridge during the early morning hours.

"This is an opportunity for us to meet and greet our team members and encourage them to use the new skybridge," said Mayo. "I look for every opportunity I can to interact with our team members. I am glad we can now provide them with a very safe way to cross Palm Avenue. I am very excited about this being open," he said, noting that when the building is finished it will lead to the second floor of a two-story welcome area that will serve not only as the main entrance to Wolfson Children's Hospital but also as the main starting point for all patients and visitors to enter the medical center's Jacksonville campus.

"The first floor will be the new entry level and the second floor will be the connector that will take you to any part of the campus," he said, adding that the third through ninth floors will be dedicated to Wolfson's new neo-natal intensive care and pediatric intensive care units. "We're expanding our bed capacity from 52 to 75 beds, a 25% increase. Everything will be state of the art. This will be a one-of-a-kind intensive care unit," Mayo explained.

The new skybridge allows Baptist Health to reimagine the entry point of its main



The new skybridge across Palm Avenue that connects the P2 garage with the new entrance to Wolfson Children's Hospital and Baptist Medical Center Jacksonville

Jacksonville campus, a feature that is currently buried on Prudential Drive. "Once it is finished, our new entry point will be visible off of Palm Avenue and the Interstate," he said. "The entrance will have four large lanes, valet parking, and easy directions into the P2 garage so people won't be confused when they come onto the campus for the first time."

In the new plan, the old rotunda entrance will be used primarily for adult patients who are discharged from Baptist's adult tower. Children and parents will be discharged from the front of the Wolfson building, while the ramp and circular entrance to the Heart Hospital on Prudential Drive will remain for patients using that facility.

In the front of the new entrance will be green space and a new piece of sculpture, similar to what sits in front of Baptist MD Anderson Cancer Center, said Mayo. "We took a lot of our inspiration and direction

from the Baptist MD Anderson building," he said. "When you come down the Interstate you will see this mirroring of two beautiful healthcare buildings – the new critical care tower and Baptist MD Anderson on the other side. It will make for a nice campus.

"This has been a part of a 10-year plan of development we've done by doing different enhancements throughout the campus. It's kind of a capstone project," he continued.

For Aubin, the skybridge signifies more than a safe way to enter the campus. "The exciting thing about this bridge – I say it's a 'bridge of hope' – is that when the kids and their parents come over the skybridge and they have neo-natal babies in the hospital, for us it's that they have hope that this center will make them better. That is really what this is all about. The bridge is great, and it keeps people off the street, but what counts is where it is leading to. That's what makes the big difference."

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## New animal hospital opens in Avondale

Thirty dogs and one cat joined more than 150 guests as Avondale Animal Hospital, a new veterinary practice, celebrated its grand opening on Oct. 31.

Located at 1502 Dancy Street the new veterinary facility is housed in the historic, craftsman-style building that once housed Tania's Hair Salon. The new business represents a partnership of three Jacksonville veterinarians who desire to bring high-quality medical services to animals and their families in the Riverside, Avondale, Ortega and Murray Hill communities. Although the grand-opening and ribbon-cutting event were held on Halloween, due to construction setbacks, the animal hospital officially opened its doors Nov. 23.

Owned by Dr. Matthew Wilson and his partners, Drs. Steven and Jordan November, who are Riverside residents, the state-of-the-art hospital consists of four exam rooms, a surgery suite, an intensive care ward and cutting-edge diagnostic laboratory equipment and modalities.

Dr. Steven November will be the primary practicing veterinarian with Dr. Matthew Wilson and Dr. Jordan November upholding business management roles.

Dr. Steven November is a Stanton College Preparatory School graduate who attended the University of Florida on a Bright Futures scholarship and graduated with honors from the UF College of



Co-owner Dr. Matthew Wilson with his partners Co-owners Drs. Steven and Jordan November, and staff members Amanda Amaru, Kristen Daughtry, Amanda Passeri, Hillary Vessels and Jamie Dye.

Agricultural and Life Sciences. He worked as a surgical technician at Affiliated Veterinary Specialists for a year before entering the University of Florida College of Veterinary Medicine where he graduated with a doctorate in Veterinary Medicine and a certificate in Veterinary Business Management. After vet school, November worked for five years at Animal Care of Ponte Vedra before opening the new animal hospital in Avondale.

Wilson is also owner of Monument Road Animal Hospital in Jacksonville.

Grand-opening festivities were held outside the new facility and followed COVID-19 safety guidelines. During the event, most of the visiting animals arrived in costume. Guests enjoyed live music and food supplied by Aardwolf and Chancho King. "We loved getting to meet and converse with so many of our neighbors and future clients," said Dr. Jordan November.

## Realtors named as October top producers for Berkshire Hathaway



Beverley Brooke

Marilyn Gilman

Beverley Brooke and Marilyn Gilman were among the top producing agents named by Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Network Realty in October.

Working from Berkshire Hathaway's San Marco office, Brooke received recognition as the top listings, sales, and transactions agent. Gilman was the agent recognized for top production.

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

Company Founder and Chairman Linda Sherrer also praised her top agents. "You have consistently set a high standard in both professionalism and within the industry with performance and knowledge," she said.

## Cultural Council and PNC Foundation team up to support new Jax Arts Project

Cultural Council of Greater Jacksonville and the PNC Foundation have joined forces to support the JAX Arts Project, a new program for individual artists living in Northeast Florida working on community-based projects resulting in pieces of art that reflect the unprecedented current social environment.

"The JAX Arts Project will take into account the challenges of creating and presenting art works in the time of

COVID-19," said Jannet Walker-Ford, chair of the Cultural Council's board of directors. "The Cultural Council is thrilled to work with PNC on this new grant-making program for our local artists."

Grant submissions must take place in Greater Jacksonville between Dec. 15, 2020, and June 30, 2021, and must incorporate social-distancing measures to view or experience the artwork due to COVID-19.

"By funding quality arts programming, we help to showcase the artistic talent and creativity of the next generation, while contributing to the \$4 billion arts and culture industry in Florida," said Brian Bucher, PNC regional president for Port Cities. "We also know how critical economic support is to local artists during these exceptional times."

For more information, including detailed grant guidelines, visit the Cultural Council of Greater Jacksonville website.

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## Donors furnish Clara White rec room for homeless vets

Homeless Veterans in reemployment programs at the Jacksonville Clara White Mission were honored with the first recreation room at the facility. Donors rallied from the three surrounding counties to furnish the room with a foosball table, indoor basketball, magnetic dart board, board games, masks, furniture, military service wall hangings, supplies, and the services of a professional painter.

The Clara White Mission was designated by the We Can Be Heroes Foundation for delivery of food and goods. The male Veterans Dormitory and the female Veterans Boulevard House at the mission provide a



The new Clara White Mission Rec Room

welcoming place for veterans in need of a place to live while they work toward independent living.

Donors from Clay, Duval and St. Johns Counties included Community Presbyterian Church in Atlantic Beach, the American Legion Auxiliary 233 of Ponte Vedra, the Women's Tuesday Mah Jongg Group of Fleming Island, and anonymous veterans and volunteers with We Can Be Heroes.

## Stellers Gallery opens second location in Avondale

Stellers Gallery, a long-time purveyor of fine art in San Marco Square, has opened a second location in the Shoppes of Avondale.

The new 700-square-foot gallery opened in the new Southern Grounds & Co., an 8,000-square-foot, state-of-the-art and largest independent coffee house in Florida. The gallery will offer contemporary works of art as well as home accessories and gifts.

Owned by Stellers Gallery Founder Scott Riley and his wife, Missy, the new location will be a full-service fine arts gallery that offers complimentary consultation, delivery, and installation. The new location will be a "go-to" art resource for area residents, interior designers, and corporate clients," said Missy Riley.

One of the longest operating, privately owned galleries in Northeast Florida, Stellers Gallery first opened in 1985, when Scott Riley began to exclusively represent his brother, C. Ford Riley, a nationally acclaimed artist. The gallery now represents more than 50 artists, and Riley has



contributed to numerous charities and fundraisers by donating hundreds of pieces of art for various causes throughout Jacksonville over 35 years.

"We are beyond excited about this new location," said Missy Riley, gallery director. "I grew up in Avondale, and I'm so excited to expand the gallery to the Shoppes of Avondale where I spent so much time as a young girl. Stellers is a community gallery. I can't think of a better neighborhood and community as Riverside/Avondale."

## Jaguars donate \$58,000 to local nonprofits serving military and veterans



Jaguars President Mark Lamping gives a fist bump to a grant recipient during a press conference at City Hall Oct. 28.



Jaguars President Mark Lamping addresses the crowd during press conference where his team bestowed \$58,000 in grants to local nonprofits that provide services to the military and veterans

Jaguars President Mark Lamping joined Jacksonville Mayor Lenny Curry at a press conference inside City Hall Oct. 28 to announce the 2020 recipients of the Jacksonville Resource and Reintegration Center community grants. The Jaguars Foundation and the City of Jacksonville's Military Affairs and Veterans Department awarded \$57,500 to military and veteran-serving organizations throughout the community.

"Today's grant recipients play a key role in keeping our nation strong by caring for its greatest defenders," said Jaguars President Mark Lamping. "The Jaguars are honored to support these organizations and their programming, be it residential services, financial assistance, mental health, and even canine outreach. Their hard work is key to caring for our military, veterans, and their families across the First Coast."

Grants were provided to nine organizations: Five Star Veterans Center, that provides residential services for veterans; Florida National Guard Foundation that offers financial assistance for Guard members and their families; K9s for Warriors that supports the expansion of a warrior and service dog training program; Northeast Florida Women Veterans that provides emergency services to women veterans; Operation New Uniform that provides

training for transitioning veterans; Operation Barnabas that offers hardship fund support for veterans; Veterans Council of St. Johns County that provides emergency assistance to veterans; United Way that supports operating expenses for the Mission United Launch; and Yoga 4 Change that provides trauma-informed yoga for veterans.

"The Jacksonville Jaguars have been amazing partners in our efforts to support military service members and veterans in our city," said Curry. "I am grateful to the team for their continued contributions to our community. These grants to veteran-serving organizations further enhance Jacksonville's well-earned reputation as the most military- and veteran-friendly city in the nation."

Since 2013, the Jaguars have provided over \$1.5 million to help fund the Veterans Resource and Reintegration Center at City Hall. Including today's announcement, the team has also given nearly \$360,000 in grants to nonprofit organizations during that same time.

The Jaguars held their annual Salute to Service game Nov. 8 at TIAA Bank Field. CSX served as presenting sponsor for the Salute to Service activities, which included events and programming for military members, spouses, and families on local bases and at TIAA Bank Field throughout November.

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*Janie Boyd*

## Team from Berkshire Hathaway helps make dreams come true

Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Network Realty enjoys supporting Dreams Come True of Jacksonville, an organization that helps brighten the lives of children who are battling life-threatening illnesses. Team members from the Northeast Florida real estate firm recently participated in the charity's Trunk or Treat event and Virtual 5K race, where team members raised \$4,370 for the nonprofit. Members from three of the realty's branch offices also collected donations for Dreams Come True during its community shredding events.

Berkshire Hathaway team members love a costume party, and for Trunk or Treat, team members dressed up and stylishly decorated seven vehicles, filling the trunks with candy, treats and trinkets. They passed out candy and goodies to hundreds of Dreamers and their families who enjoyed a special Halloween drive-thru, trick-or-treat experience.

Team members from the realty also participated in the Dreams Come True



Berkshire Hathaway Creative Services Marketing Director Marisa Barbieri and Malia

Virtual 5K by raising money and actively participating as runners and walkers.

Meanwhile, company branch offices in Atlantic Beach, Fleming Island and Mandarin hosted successful community shredding events, collecting donations for Dreams Come True while offering the opportunity to shred confidential documents safely and securely.

For the past seven years, Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Network Realty has donated more than \$281,000 to Dreams Come True by contributing a portion of proceeds from every completed home sale. The company and its associates support the organization by volunteering, fundraising, and participating in events.

"Dreams Come True has been and continues to be very close to our hearts, and we are deeply committed to supporting this wonderful organization," said Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Network Realty President and CEO Christy Budnick, who is also a member of the Dreams Come True Board of Directors. "Our company believes in creating a positive impact in others' lives, and we truly appreciate the support of our passionate team to help make dreams come true for many deserving local children."



Realtor Shonda Campanaro, Realtor Sarah Rothstein, Mark Campanaro and Aaron Campanaro

## Historian at-large launches new book

Jacksonville Historical Society announces publication of *LIFE: The Untold Story of Charles Adrian Pillars* by Wayne W. Wood

The 2020 holiday season's best gift will be the latest engaging masterpiece by Riverside resident Wayne W. Wood, the Jacksonville Historical Society's Historian At-Large and former longtime board member.

"*LIFE: The Untold Story of Charles Adrian Pillars*," is the culmination of 10 years of visioning, research, and wordsmithing about the sculptor behind Jacksonville's most iconic piece of art, prominently placed in Memorial Park since 1924.

Wood skillfully combines his passion for history, his love of art and architecture, and his knowledge of Jacksonville to dig deep into the life of a somewhat obscure artist whose only goal was to be known as Florida's most famous sculptor. With more than 200 photos of historic people, places and events, "*LIFE*" provides the backstory behind Memorial Park's sculpture, "*Life*," in riveting detail.

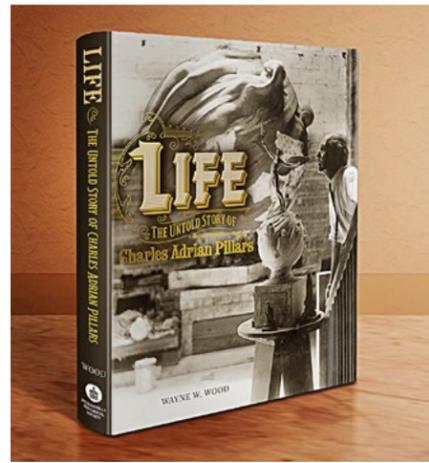


Right, Wayne W. Wood, author of "*LIFE: The Untold Story of Charles Adrian Pillars*," presents a copy of the book to Michael Pajcic, representing The Law Firm of Pajcic & Pajcic and the Pajcic family, whose grants helped underwrite publication, in Memorial Park in front of the namesake sculpture, "*Life*."

Published by the Jacksonville Historical Society through grants from Steve and Anne Pajcic and the Law Firm of Pajcic & Pajcic, the hardcover book retails at \$49.95.

To purchase this exquisite 400-page volume, which weaves art, architecture, and significant historical events around one man, visit [jaxhistory.org](http://jaxhistory.org) and click on "Shop."

Just in time for the holidays, the book is also available at San Marco Books and More, Chamblin's Uptown, Chamblin's Bookmine, and at the 18th Annual Gingerbread Extravaganza at Old St. Andrews Church (book signing Saturday Dec. 5, 12:30 – 1:30 p.m. and Saturday Dec. 12, 11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.). The book will also be on sale at a special book signing in Memorial Park on Saturday, Dec. 5, 10:30 a.m. – noon, to benefit Memorial Park Association.



"*LIFE: The Untold Story of Charles Adrian Pillars*" by Wayne W. Wood



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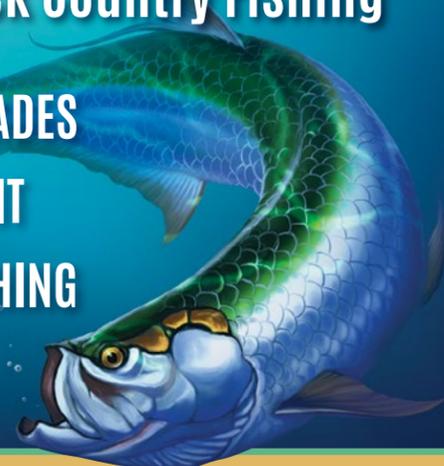
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# Subaru shares the love with \$115,500 donation to Wolfson Children's

To kick off the 13th-annual Share the Love campaign and celebrate the success of last year's philanthropic drive, Subaru of Jacksonville presented a check for \$115,500 to Wolfson Children's Hospital. The donation, which is the result of the 12th annual Share the Love campaign, is the largest to-date from the local dealership since pledging a five-year commitment to Wolfson Children's in 2016.

The gift will help fund care and advanced technology to treat critically ill and injured children at Wolfson Children's Hospital, along with child passenger safety education through THE PLAYERS Center for Child Health at Wolfson Children's. While the donation is usually announced and presented to Wolfson Children's Hospital in the spring, it was delayed so that it could coincide with the beginning of this year's campaign due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

For this year's Share the Love campaign, Subaru will donate \$250 for every new vehicle purchased or leased from Subaru of Jacksonville between November 19, 2020,

and January 4, 2021. Customers may choose between four national charities for the \$250 donation – including ASPCA, Make a Wish Foundation, Meals on Wheels, and the National Park Foundation – or Subaru of Jacksonville's hometown charity, Wolfson Children's Hospital. Subaru of Jacksonville matches every \$250 donation, regardless of the charity chosen by the customer, with all matching funds benefitting Wolfson Children's Hospital. Additionally, Subaru of America and Subaru of Jacksonville donate \$2 and \$3, respectively, to Wolfson Children's for every Subaru oil change at the dealership.

Subaru of Jacksonville has donated \$476,448 to Wolfson Children's Hospital since the partnership began in 2016. This year's event is the final of a five-year pledge to support Wolfson Children's.

The Jacksonville dealership was the first corporate partner to support trauma services at Wolfson Children's and established the "Subaru of Jacksonville Porter Family Trauma Services Endowment," creating a legacy of support for generations to come.



Wolfson Children's Hospital President Michael Aubin, Jessica Winberry of THE PLAYERS Center for Child Health at Wolfson, with Roxanne Porter and Phil Porter, owners of Subaru of Jacksonville

"We are proud of the results and partnership with Wolfson Children's Hospital. Everyone in our community has known someone or has personally benefited from the amazing care at Wolfson Children's Hospital.

Jacksonville is so fortunate to have such outstanding care available for our children, and we consider it an honor to support the hospital and its remarkable staff," said Phil Porter, owner of the dealership.



Ortega author Peggy Harrell Jennings

## Children's book character explores Jacksonville's historic districts

Ortega's Peggy Harrell Jennings, a contributing writer with the *Resident Community News*, has written another book, "Ginny's Journey," and in it Harrell's favorite character, Ginny, world's largest guinea pig, explores some of the historic districts of Jacksonville.

In the book, the second of the Ginny series, the intrepid guinea pig wanders through Ortega, Avondale, Riverside, and San Marco as she visits Stockton Park, Willowbranch Park, The Cummer Museum of Art and Gardens, the Museum of Science and History (MOSH) and many other locations.

A former visual art and language arts teacher, Harrell Jennings has provided many learning opportunities in the book's "Did You Know?" sections as well as an interactive map for families to follow Ginny as she journeys around town. Fans can also check out Ginny on YouTube at Miss Peggy's Playhouse-Ginny.

"Ginny has many more adventures to go, after all she didn't yet make it to Murray Hill or Springfield. Then there are dance classes, art museums, the space station – all things to teach and inspire children and adults as well. There's lots of information in each book, and they are pretty funny, too," said Harrell Jennings.

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## City celebrates Murray Hill library

The City of Jacksonville celebrated “Friends of the Library Week” in September.

Friends of the Bill Brinton Murray Hill Library received a Proclamation from Mayor Lenny Curry honoring the important work Friends groups do to support public libraries throughout the city. The goal of the Friends of the Bill Brinton Murray Hill Library is to promote and strengthen the neighborhood’s library. The group also seeks to promote education and a higher quality of life through a strong library system and to strengthen support of the Murray Hill branch.

Mia Brack, acting manager of the Bill Brinton Murray Hill Library with Nancy Beecher, Marjorie Marvin, and Judy Klein of the Friends of the Bill Brinton Murray Hill Library group.



Tyler J. Hodges

## Bolles president elected to FCIS Board

The Florida Council of Independent Schools has elected Bolles President and Head of School Tyler J. Hodges of San Jose to its board of directors.

Hodges joins a board of five officers and 12 directors who are elected by their peers. FCIS membership includes 145 schools serving more than 72,000 students around Florida – from Pensacola to Key Largo. The board elected Hodges to the group during the organization’s virtual annual meeting on Nov. 5.

“We are fortunate to have Tyler Hodges as a member of our board,” said FCIS Executive Director Barbara H. Hodges Ed.D. “This confirms his standing as a valued member of the Florida family of independent school leaders, and we look forward to working with him.”

Hodges’ first official FCIS board meeting will be Sept. 23-24, 2021 in Tampa. As part of his new leadership responsibilities, Hodges will serve on accreditation visitation teams during the school year and participate on board committees.

## MASH house wins Spooky-in-the-Hill decorating contest



M.A.S.H. unit at 4823 Royal Ave.

A rendition of a skeletal M.A.S.H unit in Korea was the winner of Murray Hill’s inaugural yard Spooky-in-the-Hill decorating contest Oct. 24-31.

Forty homeowners participated in the contest, which took the place of the neighborhood’s annual Hill-O-Ween festivities that were cancelled this year

due to COVID-19. The yard contest was a big success with thousands viewing the decorations and 700 people from throughout the city voting on their favorites, said Murray Hill Preservation Association President Meghan Kopitke.

Winning “Best Overall” and “Scariest” was the M.A.S.H. unit display located at

the home of Donald Griffin at 4823 Royal Ave. Also recognized with an award for “Funniest” was Holly and Benjamin Baumgartner’s display at 4603 Attleboro Ave. Ernesto Casas’s display at 1165 Owen Ave. was deemed the “Most Creative” by voters.

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# Dennis named Duval County Elementary School Principal of the Year

Kimberly Dennis of Fishweir Elementary School in Avondale has been named Duval County's Elementary School Principal of the Year and was a finalist to receive the honor of being Duval County Public School's 2020-2021 Principal of the Year.

Dennis joined Marilyn Barnwell of Alfred I. duPont Middle School in San Jose, who was named the county's Middle School Principal of the Year, and two other principals as finalists for the county's Principal-of-the-Year laurels. Barnwell was later named as the county's Principal of the Year.

Also, named as finalists were James Ledford, principal of Duncan U. Fletcher Middle School in Neptune Beach, who was named

the county's High School Principal of the Year, and Shirley Winfrey, principal of Hyde Park Elementary, who was named the County's Principal of the Year for its Innovation and School Improvement Region.

A native of Jacksonville, Dennis is a 1989 graduate of Jean Ribault High School. She graduated from Edward Waters College in 1995, where she received a Bachelor of Science degree in elementary education. Dennis also holds a Master of Education degree in educational leadership from the University of North Florida, which she received in 2002.

Dennis began her teaching career in August of 1995 at John Love Elementary. In

2003, she was assigned to San Mateo Elementary as a Teacher in Instructional Support (TIS). A year later she became vice principal at Susie E. Tolbert Elementary before a two-year stint as vice principal of R.V. Daniels Elementary. She was appointed principal of R.V. Daniels in 2007 where she remained until 2010. From there, she was assigned to Sadie T. Tillis Elementary until 2013. She is currently the principal of Fishweir Elementary.

Dennis and her husband, Lawrence, are the parents of a son, Mylz. She is an active member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated. She and her husband are active members of The Bethel Church in Springfield.



Kimberly Dennis

## Home Tweet Home

Bluebirds may soon be singing in Boone Park South.

In June 2020, the Friends of Boone Park installed a Bluebird nesting box in the park, and Jessie Wainwright has volunteered to monitor it during nesting season, which runs between March and August each year. She will report activity in the box weekly.

The box was donated by Jax Federal Credit Union. The Florida Bluebird Society will direct the Friends of Boone Park South in the care and monitoring of the nesting site. A sign near the box tells the story of bluebirds.

Eastern Bluebirds compete for habitat with non-native House Sparrows and Eastern Starlings. Nesting boxes have contributed to the conservation of the species.

"We didn't have any birds take up residence in the 2020 season, however we are hopeful



for 2021," said Pamela Telis, president of the Friends of Boone Park. "It will be exciting to see how long it takes the bluebirds to find it and start a family. Remember to stay a distance from the box when you visit."

## State Farm agent earns prestigious designation

Edie Williams, a State Farm agent in Riverside, has earned the Chartered Financial Consultant® (ChFC®) professional designation from The American College of Financial Services.

Candidates for the ChFC® designation must complete a minimum of eight college-level courses and 18 hours of supervised examinations. They must also fulfill stringent experience and ethics requirements and participate in continuing education to maintain professional recertification. Since its inception in 1982, the credential has been widely regarded as a premier standard of knowledge and trust for financial planning professionals.

The ChFC® program prepares professionals to address the financial planning



Edie Williams, Photo courtesy of Laura Evans

needs of individuals, families, and small-business owners in a diverse environment. Those who earn a ChFC® can provide knowledgeable advice on a broad range of financial topics including financial planning, wealth accumulation, and estate planning, income taxation, life and health insurance, business taxation and planning, investments, and retirement planning with a focus on the practical application of concepts learned.

Williams has owned her State Farm agency in Riverside for 16 years. She is an active member of the community including Riverside Avondale Preservation and is a supporter of the Riverside Arts Market, Memorial Park Foundation, and the John Gorrie Dog Park.

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Florida Secretary of Education Richard Corcoran, Ambassador John Rood, Governor Ron DeSantis, Kiersten Chism, sixth-grade scholar of the month, Head of School Dr. David Withum, and Kelly Chufo, Jacksonville Classical Academy operations manager

## Florida governor visits Jacksonville Classical Academy

Governor Ron DeSantis toured Jacksonville Classical Academy Oct. 20, to observe classes and to discuss transitioning students from distance learning back to in-person instruction. The governor was joined by Richard Corcoran, Florida Secretary of Education; Ambassador John Rood, Jacksonville Classical Academy school board chair; and Dr. David Withum, Jacksonville Classical Academy head of school.

DeSantis visited classrooms and observed JXC's American classical education that emphasizes human virtue, moral character, and responsible citizenship through content-rich curriculum and teacher-led classrooms. During his visit, DeSantis observed classical education in a Latin lesson in a sixth-grade classroom and in a phonics lesson in a first-grade classroom. He also visited with students during their lunch periods.

After the tour, several teachers joined the governor and the tour group for a press briefing. Hattie Anthony, a kindergarten teacher, and Nick Barker, a fifth-grade teacher, joined the governor and shared their observations on American classical education and its impact in their classrooms.

"The most important thing that's happening in this building is happening in the classrooms," said Withum during the briefing. "It's important that they have the opportunity to teach students in the least restrictive environment possible, and to teach them in person. There's nothing that can replicate the relationship between students and teachers in a classroom. We are doing it in a way that is both reasonable and safe and meets the needs of all of our students."

# Community Foundation adds two to board of trustees

The Community Foundation for Northeast Florida elected Carol J. Alexander and Velma Monteiro-Tribble to its Board of Trustees for three-year terms, starting in January 2021. Also, in January, current trustee and U.S. District Court Judge Brian J. Davis will become chairman-elect of the Board, in anticipation of his becoming chairman in January 2022.

"We are delighted to welcome Carol and Velma to the Board of Trustees—they each have extensive experience in the corporate, philanthropic, and nonprofit arenas and will bring new perspectives to our governing body," said Martha Frye Baker, the current chair of The Community Foundation's Board of Trustees. "And we are particularly gratified that Judge Davis has agreed to lead the Board starting in 2022."

Carol J. Alexander is president and chief creative officer of MaBu: A Cultural Resource. An arts management executive, producer, storyteller, and educator, her work has taken her around the world including her oversight of the reopening of the National Museum of Liberia in 2017, following a 14-year civil war there. She has been the driving force behind two local museums. She serves as the Founding Executive Director of Jacksonville's prestigious Ritz Theatre and LaVilla Museum, and she founded and has directed the artistic and educational operations at the American Beach Museum on Amelia Island since it opened in 2014.

Velma Monteiro-Tribble is director, Grants and Programs for the Florida Blue



Carol J. Alexander



Velma Monteiro-Tribble

Foundation. Prior to joining the Florida Blue Foundation, she served as executive officer and assistant treasurer of the Alcoa Foundation, a worldwide \$500 million foundation based in Pittsburgh and New York City. She also spent five years at the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. She has served in executive roles at the National Association for Community Leadership and at American College Testing (ACT). Monteiro-Tribble has served on the Program and Initiatives Committee at The Community Foundation since 2018.

Current members of The Community Foundation's Board of Trustees include Chair Martha Baker, Dr. Sol Brotman, The Honorable Brian J. Davis, Michael DuBow, Deborah Pass Durham, George M. Egan, Barbara Harrell, Robert E. Hill, Jr., Michael Meyers, Buddy Schulz, Ryan A. Schwartz, Richard L. Sisisky, Julia Taylor, and Dori Walton. Deborah Pass Durham, who has been a trustee since 2008, will be rotating off the Board at the end of 2020.



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Devin Dawson with Leah Sykes, Ben and Rachel Sykes, Quinn Rozycki, Samson, Isaac (with Dad), Levi, Silas, Vicki and Brad Sykes, Jacob Sykes and Meredith Edwards



Nick and Angela Chandler with Jaclyn holding Andy Corr, Candy Corr, Chris and Thomas Corr



Susan Gonino with LeAnne Crabtree, Kallen Stifura and Emily Magevney

**Kickin' it at Keeler with the Will King Foundation**

It was an afternoon full of fun and fundraising as children's activities and live musical performances, tasty eats from Mayday Ice Cream, food trucks and bar-b-que were served at Gather + Give on behalf of the Will King Foundation. Passionate supporters of the foundation also enjoyed live music by Nashville performing artists Devin Dawson and Jacksonville native, Leah Sykes. The event took place Nov. 7 at the Keeler Property on the Westside.

The foundation was established to honor the memory of Will King Hughes, a twin born to Courtney and Taylor Hughes, who went to be with his Lord and Savior after a long and harrowing battle with

complications and infections following an early-term birth, complicated by a series of seizures and kidney failure, among other fatal difficulties.

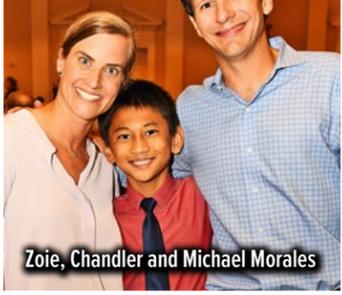
The foundation's primary mission is to raise funds to help support lifesaving heart treatment and surgical care for children visiting internationally to receive treatment in Jacksonville hospital systems. The foundation is now a partner with Patrons of the Heart, the organization founded to help make medical care available to children throughout the world who would otherwise go without. To learn more about how you can show your support, visit [www.willkingfoundation.com](http://www.willkingfoundation.com).

**20th annual golf tournament on par, raised funds for Daniel**

The 20th annual Hank Haynes golf tournament was a socially distant hit for Daniel, one of the area's longest functioning nonprofits that fights for children. The goal of the organization is to raise funds for vulnerable children and families in need of financial aid and resources to better their circumstances.

On Dec. 9, the Timuquana Country Club played host for the socially distant outing, as guests mingled and enjoyed the banquet, complete with a silent auction, live auction and a speech by former Daniel kid, Aramis Johnson, who is now a preacher raising up other children and families after overcoming great odds stacked against him.

Presenting sponsor Enterprise Integration, along with countless supporters from Weather Engineers, GHG Insurance, Miller Electric, Duval Motor Company, Brumos Collection, Swisher International and many more joined the ranks to support the organization that helps to "improve the odds for kids since 1884". For more about Daniel, visit [danielkids.org](http://danielkids.org).



Zoie, Chandler and Michael Morales



Low net winners, representing the Haskell Golf Club: Allan Iosue, Alan Verlander, David Auchter and...



Brandon Brooks with Lori Finn, Renata Bryan, Dana Brooks, Jimmy Fasig and Carrie Roane



Janel Pesha with Jessica Donnelly



Adecco's Susan Schemanski, Nicole Lupo and Teresa Gunter



Cami Lesade with Michaela Fogg

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Christine Sweet with Emily Pepper, Vaughan Lee Griffin, Jackie Cook, Jeanine Fickling and Jim Griffin



James Griffin III with Dan Griffin and Chad Yeager



Company were and Matt Roberts.

**Seeing girls for who they are and who they might become**

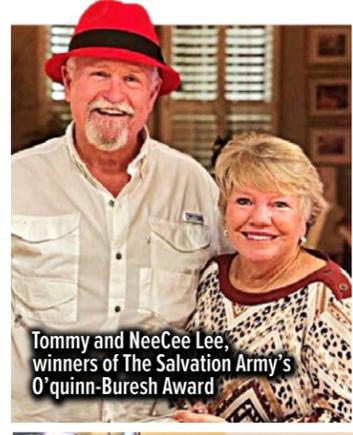
The Delores Barr Weaver Policy Center hosted Manifest Change & See the Girl, its first open-invite virtual fundraising event Nov. 18. Many supporters of the policy center affectionately referred to it as “see the girl,” which is the tagline manifested from a girl asking adults to “See me for who I am, not for who you think I am. See me for who I am and who I can become.” During the event, the policy center partnered with Manifest Distilling to offer guests the option to purchase a signature event glass and cocktail kit. At least 140 guests from across the United States tuned in to learn more about the agency’s mission to lead policy and practice reform for girls in the juvenile justice system. To view the event on YouTube tune into: <https://youtu.be/mJtIXuuBk>.



See the Girl participants Photo courtesy of Andrea Bottin



See the Girl glass that was purchased by guests tuning into the Manifest Change & See the Girl” virtual event Nov. 18.



Tommy and NeeCee Lee, winners of The Salvation Army’s O’Quinn-Buresh Award



Guests of The Salvation Army’s Red Shield Ball snacked on cheese and charcuterie during the virtual event.



Majors Keath and Candice Biggers speak during The Salvation Army’s virtual Red Shield Ball Nov. 21.

**Good works get noticed for Rethreaded, benefit survivors**

Rethreaded is a local organization changing the lives of women who were abused, trafficked, and downtrodden by providing a new lease on life through the empowerment of other women. Through the creation of garments and socially conscious gifts, the company offers employment programs and counseling to help better lives and better our world. During a recent fundraiser titled Gather + Give on Nov. 18, the PLAYERS and the philanthropic arm of past chairmen, the “Red Coats,” gifted the mission a \$10,000 surprise donation that will be matched, yet fulfilled the goal of the nonprofit’s holiday events in a moment. The gift will forever be etched in the minds of the leadership of Rethreaded and its support system of faithful givers. Patrons and supporters were on hand to shop and celebrate the momentous occasion, all while helping to elevate the conversation for the latest program titled – Shop with a Purpose. For more about Rethreaded and the mission to renew hope, reignite dreams and release potential, visit [www.rethreaded.com](http://www.rethreaded.com).

**Tommy and NeeCee Lee honored at virtual Red Shield Ball**

Tommy and NeeCee Lee were the 2020 recipients of the O’Quinn-Buresh Award, which was bestowed on the couple, who have served the Army’s Advisory Board and Women’s Auxiliary for 18 years, during a virtual rendition of The Salvation Army’s Red Shield Ball Nov. 21. Chaired by Lauren Scheible, Courtney Taylor, and Christine Carter, the virtual ball featured a curated cheese tasting for two or more with thoughtful charcuterie and libation pairings catered by Biscottis, which were delivered to guests’ doors, as well as entertainment and a live auction. All funds support the Army’s Red Shield Lodge and Carpenter Family Marketplace, a client-choice pantry that gives clients the opportunity to select foods that are best for their household in an environment that preserves dignity. The marketplace was created from funds raised by the friends of Pete and Marilyn Carpenter and 2019 Red Shield Ball Fund-a-Need donations.

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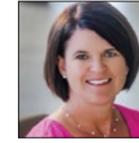
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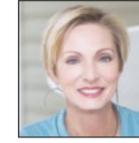
2064 Herschel St. #303  
\$310,000  
2 BD / 2 BA / 1,202 SF



1715 Challen Ave.  
\$650,000  
3 BD / 2 BA / 1 HBA / 2,617 SF



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## 'Food for their bellies, books for their brains'

Hunger Fight celebrated its eighth anniversary, Nov. 8, doing what it does best – packing nutritious meals for hungry children and families in Northeast Florida.

"We started fundraising Nov. 8, 2012 and began packing meals in June 2013 and this Sunday we will surpass 10 million meals," said Dean Porter who serves the nonprofit alongside his wife, Sherri, Hunger Fight's founder.

Hunger Fight held its 7th Thanksgiving Community Outreach event Nov. 1-8 at its San Marco warehouse. Normally a two-day event, the Porters decided to stretch the packing activity over seven days to accommodate COVID-19 guidelines. "We stretched it out so we could have smaller groups and do social distancing," Dean Porter said. "We wanted to make everybody feel more comfortable and still be able to make our goal of packing 400,000 to 500,000 meals to distribute to the children and families we service on a regular basis."

During the week-long event, more than 600 volunteers participated in the packing activity.

Along with packing meals, the nonprofit also started its "Feed the Need to Read"



Hunger Fight Founders Dean and Sherri Porter

program more than a year ago. "We started collaborating with the Dolly Parton Imagination Library and have since started our own homegrown program, where we can be more targeted to the children we are trying to reach and work directly with daycare centers to get books in their hands so we can get the children better prepared for school before they go to kindergarten," said Porter, adding that 46% of children in Northeast Florida are not reading on grade level. "We don't want to change just the child's life, we want to change the family unit, so that we can really make a difference in those communities that have a high drop-out rate."

Since the program started, Hunger Fight has passed out 88,000 books and serves 2,800 preschoolers with reading material each month throughout the First Coast.



Bonnie Smith of Hunger Fight stands with books from Hunger Fight's Feed the Need to Read program.



Emily Dearing, Josh Slocum, Bella Willard, McKenzie Parish and Abigail Harrison of Holiday Hill Baptist Church pack meals on Nov. 7.

## Friday Musicale seeks new supporters with Harvest Festival



The Ancient City Brass Band performs at Friday Musicale's Harvest Festival Nov. 15.

It wasn't so much about raising money as making new friends when Friday Musicale held its annual Harvest Festival in Riverside Nov. 15.

With the goal to bring awareness to the musical nonprofit and its programs, the "friendraiser" event partnered with Feeding Northeast Florida, Mars Hill Church in Riverside, Central Riverside Elementary, Ancient City Brass Band, River City Rhythm Kings, and Oceanway School of Dance, successfully drawing many of their supporters to the festival for the first time.

With entertainment from the Ancient City Brass Band, the River City Rhythm Kings, and dance performances from the Oceanway School of Dance, the festival offered food, games, and 16 vendors selling arts and crafts and other items. Food donations were collected for Feeding Northeast Florida.

"Our barometer for success is to cultivate new audiences and to partner for community outreach," said Janet Withers, stewardship coordinator for Friday Musicale.



Debbie Cain, Phyllis Cain, Joann Kuhns and Rick Dorn enjoy the music at Friday Musicale's Harvest Festival Nov. 15.



Maia Arnold, Willow Gann and Lindsey Nichole Smith have fun at Friday Musicale's Harvest Festival Nov. 15.

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# Animal House

By Julie Kerns Garmendia Resident Community News

## Giving the 'purr-fect' present

### GIFTING A PET DURING THE HOLIDAY SEASON REQUIRES CAREFUL CONSIDERATION AND PRE-PLANNING

Few sights evoke heart-warming holiday sentiments as perfectly as images of a puppy, kitten, dog, or cat with a festive bow. Perhaps the furry creature is being hugged by a delighted child under a Christmas tree, or peeking out from inside of a beautifully wrapped gift box. The question of whether to give a live animal as a gift is not easily answered. It is a decision that requires careful consideration and pre-planning, according to recognized animal welfare professionals and experienced veterinarians.

Many animal shelters have traditionally discouraged the idea of giving a live pet for any occasion because in many cases, gifted pets are returned or surrendered to shelters and do not remain in the home of the recipient. At shelters, January intake numbers are often the highest of the year, and gifted pets, often take the blame.

Although there continue to be different viewpoints, new research has shown that with advance planning, a gifted pet can thrive and may even be more cherished because it was given by a close friend or loved one. More in-depth analysis of January intake numbers at animal shelters, found that gifted animals were not the predominant cause.

The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) has changed its position regarding gift pets based upon their own research. They support a gift pet if specific criteria are met by the potential owner such as the recipient has expressed a sustained desire to own a pet; has adequate space, time and income to own and properly care for a pet; the pet is legal at the location where it will reside; and the parents have been consulted if the recipient is a minor.

Before selecting any animal to give as a gift, it is important to verify and understand restrictions of the return policy if there is an unexpected problem, such as recipient allergies, pet illness, or conflict with other pets. Finally, only obtain a gift pet from reputable animal shelters, rescue organizations, or licensed, ethical breeders.

Other animal welfare organizations state that it is always best to know the potential recipient's specific pet preferences, such as

type of pet, age, size or weight, hair length, mixed breed, mixed breed that resembles a purebred type or a purebred animal. Some communities, rental apartments and homes enforce ironclad pet type restrictions, including breed, size, and weight limits. Many also charge additional pet fees or penalties.

Pet temperament and energy level must also be considered. Grandmother might do much better with a small lap dog or cat, rather than a large dog that could be too much for her to handle and requires extensive daily outdoor exercise. Animal shelter professionals interviewed for this article consistently stress that the daily exercise and space requirements of any pet are critically important to the success of the gift pet in its new home.

"In most cases we support the giving of pets as gifts provided the intended recipient has expressed interest in acquiring a pet and has the ability to provide responsible care. If the recipient is a child, we strongly encourage a parent or guardian to be involved in the decision," said Jennifer Walter, shelter manager at Jacksonville's Animal Care & Protective Services on Forest Street. "Several studies have been conducted on this topic and have found that pets received as a gift are less likely to be relinquished or returned than pets acquired by the owner. We offer and encourage 'sponsored adoptions,' which provide a coupon for a free adoption that can be given as a gift."

Some of her happiest childhood memories are of pets received as holiday gifts, said Denise Deisler, president and CEO of the Jacksonville Humane Society (JHS). Last Christmas, the only thing she and her five-year-old granddaughter wanted to find on Christmas morning was a kitten under their tree.

"We got our kitten, and it has been wonderful," she said. "JHS will help people choose a pet. If it is to be a gift, that must be a careful decision and the giver must know the recipient and situation very well. Specific circumstances do matter. While it might be a good idea for grandparents to have a dog to walk for exercise, for companionship or protection, it may not be a great idea to choose that pet without talking to them. Sometimes the joy and experience of selecting a pet together with loved ones is very special. JHS offers a Pet Gift Certificate. That certificate allows the recipient to take their time and visit the shelter as often as they wish until they find the perfect pet. Also, the return of an



Praline is filled with Christmas spirit

animal does not mean it was a bad gift, but that it might not have been the right fit for that recipient."

Other important reasons to thoroughly discuss a pet gift with the recipient beforehand, are possible circumstances of which the giver is unaware. The recipient may have an upcoming job change, pending move, or new pet restrictions where they currently reside. There may be financial pressures that would affect the addition of a pet to the family.

Dr. Howard Acree, DVM of Cedar Hills Animal Hospital said that, in his opinion, it is a wonderful idea to give a pet as a gift. "Just be sure that you do your homework beforehand and know for certain that the individual is going to be happy with a pet. If you have any reservations at all then a gift pet is not a good idea," he said.

When asked about gift ideas for pets this holiday season, Acree said it's usually best to stick to new dishes, beds, collars, harnesses, leashes, clothing, bandanas, sweaters or toys instead of food or treat items. For instance, it is important to purchase the best quality pet accessories your budget will allow to avoid accidents or breakage.

"It is also best to stick to the pet's regular diet during holidays because new foods can cause stomach issues or illness. Some food and dessert ingredients are toxic to dogs or cats. If treats are purchased, read labels carefully, purchase 'Made in America' items and absolutely avoid any product manufactured in China. They have no quality controls and are known to use questionable or potentially toxic ingredients. Many pets have become extremely ill or worse from the consumption of treats made in China," he said.

Acree also warned of the dangers of pets eating or chewing on holiday plants or floral bouquets, ornaments, and decorations. These items, even if not toxic, are irritants that can cause gastrointestinal upset,

pancreatitis, vomiting, diarrhea, or obstruction that requires surgery. Cats and dogs will eat tinsel, ornaments, ornament hooks, rubber bands, plastic ties, and pieces of live or artificial Christmas trees with disastrous results. He suggests pet-proofing the house, just as parents will child-proof a home, to avoid pet emergencies or accidents. Acree has been in veterinary practice for 32 years at Cedar Hills Animal Hospital.

Jacksonville Humane Society and the city's Animal Care & Protective Services shelter both welcome holiday gifts for their animals awaiting adoption. JHS has a wish list on its website and needs dry cat and dog food, especially with the COVID pandemic increasing demand for their food bank. Their lobby gift shop offers wonderful gifts for pet-lovers and pets alike and is open during regular shelter hours with proceeds going to benefit the animals.

ACPS shelter dogs love to receive gifts of Pup-Peroni®, bully sticks, Nylabones, Kongs, Kraft Velveeta® cheese, and easy-walk harnesses. Their cats would be thrilled with cat treats, cardboard scratch posts, cave/enclosed cat beds, Kitten Milk Replacer (KMR®) and Miracle Nipples. Donations of dog and cat food are always needed, and they also maintain a wish list on their website.

National Mixed Breed Dog Day, aka National Mutt Day, is Dec. 2, 2020. It is a time when the public is encouraged to consider the adoption of a mixed breed dog or cat, which fill overcrowded shelters and rescues. Reasons to adopt a mixed breed animal, which are often rescues, include that the animals are generally hardy with fewer health issues due to genetic mixing and have lower veterinarian costs over their lifetime as a result. They also tend to have more moderate temperaments, and, according to owners, they exhibit extreme loyalty and lifelong appreciation once adopted into a forever home.

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# How to Succeed at Small Business Finances and Investing

By Peter E. Bower  
President, CEO and founder  
Riverplace Capital Management

Small businesses continue to be the engine that fuels the American economy. Succeeding in small business is undoubtedly one of the most challenging and gratifying experiences that a person can have. What are the key ingredients to success? How can you navigate the financial challenges that you face? My team and I have worked with small business owners and businesses for more than 40 years, and there are some key financial strategies that you want to consider for your small business to succeed.

Let us be clear, the number one financial concern for small businesspeople is generating **positive cash flow**. If expenses are not met with enough income to pay them, then not much else matters. Any business that endures for any length of time has managed this.

Next in importance is to try to develop **stable revenues** the owner can count on month in and month out. The nature of the business determines how easily this can be achieved, but it is always a consideration and a goal. One way to accomplish this is through diverse income sources. Relying too much on one or just a few sources is always uncomfortable and risky. When it

comes to valuing a business, those with the most stable revenues are always worth more than ones that do not have this.

The most important investment that a small business can make is back into the firm. Growing can take money. **Providing a cushion** for the surprise events and the inevitable needs that crop up is a priority too. Any responsible businessperson knows there are good years and bad ones. Not spending up to the limit during the good years allows the establishment of reserves to make it through the not so good ones.

Many business owners love the challenge, sense of independence, and opportunity involved in managing an enterprise. However, providing for ones' family is not to be ignored. This may be in fact, the most important reason for working. A good life, a better life, and a safe and **financially secure** one are what so many of us want for our loved ones. Success provides for all these and other aspirations.

**Succession or cashing out** becomes a very important consideration at some point. Planning for either of these must take place along the way. How will the business proceed if you are no longer there? Or, how will you create the greatest value and price for when you might want to sell it? There are many things that can be done for either possibility — knowing what to do and how to do it are important.



Some businesses may or may not provide much value when sold. Like everyone else, every business person needs to think about **providing for retirement**. This may seem like a luxury at times, but just remember how quickly events can change everything. For those who are able, making retirement investments separate from the business, may make all the difference in your financial security. There are many tax-efficient ways to do this. What's right depends on you.

Making investments separate from your business can provide invaluable security during challenging times. This may not be your highest priority when starting out, but will soon become one as success grows. If the worst happens and the business gets in trouble, having other **wealth** can be critical to you and your family's future. Just think

of the value of many hospitality and leisure businesses today compared to a year ago.

Working with a financial advisor like **Riverplace Capital** can help you better navigate the challenges involved with building, running, and perhaps selling a business. Doing this in a financially efficient and successful manner is the goal. Knowing what to do to sustain the business and create the most value is how we help you. If you would like to discuss your business plan, ideas or challenges, call us. We have helped many business owners secure their **financial independence** and create wealth for themselves and their families. We publish a weekly update on financial topics entitled, "Lonely Bull Blog". If you would like to receive this, please sign up contact us via email at [info@riverplacecapital.com](mailto:info@riverplacecapital.com) or via text (904) 614-8000.

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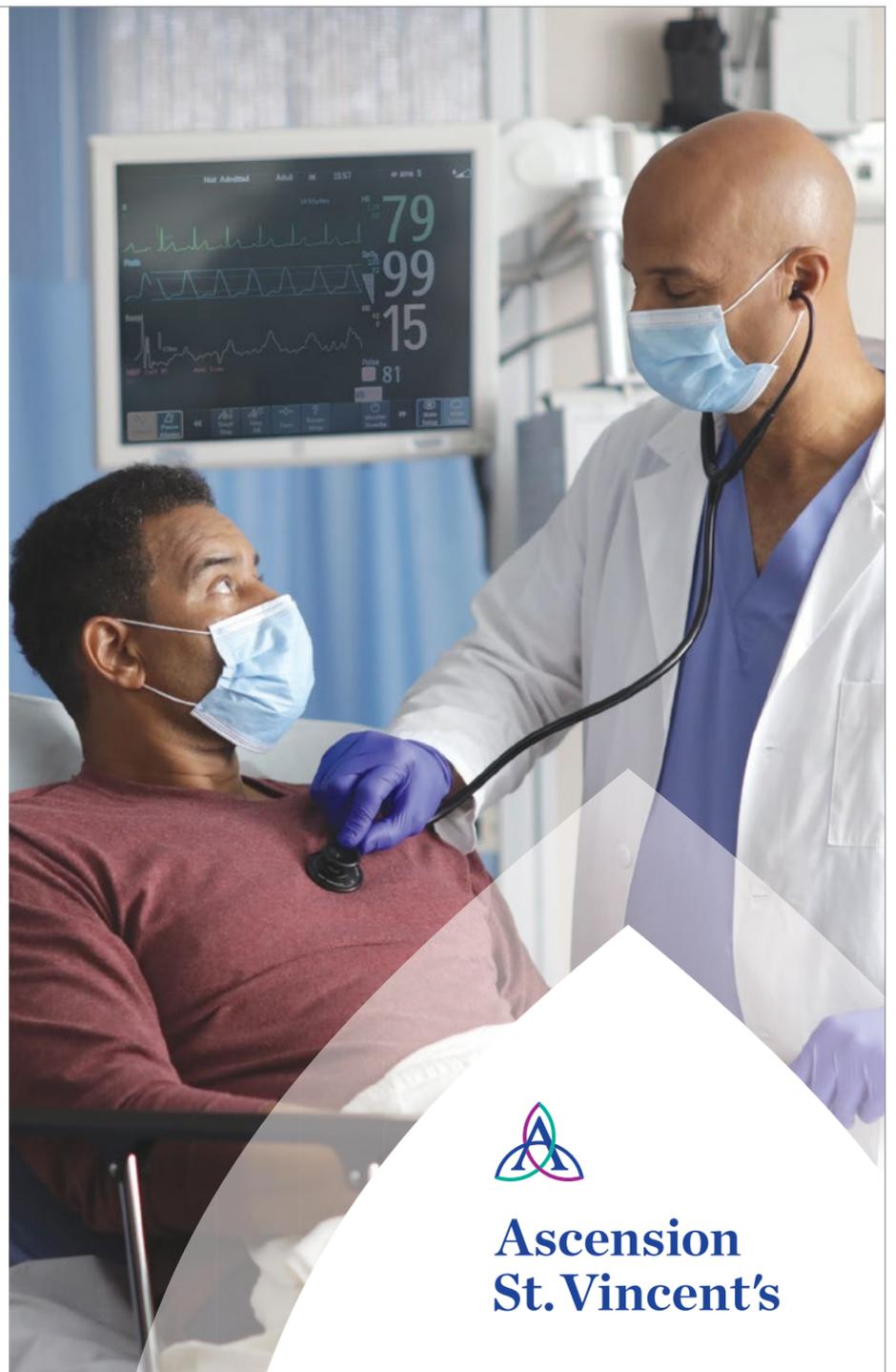
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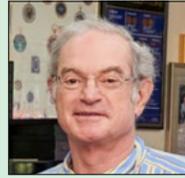


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## Equal Justice for All Legal Expense Insurance Corporation provides affordable legal services to North Florida residents



Equal Justice's attorneys are available to handle many legal matters for their clients for one low monthly fee.

Every citizen should have access to the legal system, and a person's ability to have access is greatly enhanced with the assistance of a licensed attorney. The concept of affordable legal representation might seem out of reach to many. However, local attorney Fred C. Isaac, founder of Equal Justice For All Legal Expense Insurance Corporation, has made this concept his mission - successfully providing affordable legal services in Jacksonville for the over 30 years.

"The concept is simple – Equal Justice provides an insurance policy for legal matters," said Isaac, who started Equal Justice with David R. Lewis and Herman S. Paul in 1989 to provide access to legal representation at a fair price.

Equal Justice's attorneys are available to handle many legal matters for their clients. For a monthly fee, a variety of legal issues

can be taken care of by the plan's attorneys, who have expertise in family law issues, misdemeanor criminal violations, real estate transactions, and personal injury matters. The plan provides members the power to manage their legal matters simply and effectively. A group policy through Equal Justice is available to all employees of a participating company. Employees typically pay through monthly payroll deductions or bank draft programs. For \$20 a month, members and their families are entitled to a variety of legal services.

Rebecca Schriver, chief financial officer of Equal Justice, often hears clients say that the access to the legal services has been immeasurable. "Employers like the fact that their employees no longer have to worry

CONTINUED ON PAGE 33

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**“The goal of our company has been to find an expeditious way for an individual to have the advantages of ongoing legal representation just like large corporations have.”**

— Rebecca Schriver  
chief financial officer of Equal Justice



about their legal issues because they have an attorney representing them,” Schriver said. “Statistics indicate that seven out of 10 people experience some type of legal issue in any 12-month period, and most of them do not hire an attorney because they cannot afford to do so. Approximately 30% of employees miss work due to a legal issue. The employees save precious hours at work and have peace of mind because they have a lawyer who is able to handle issues that they would have had to take time off from work to deal with themselves - such as traffic violations or family law matters.” Employers are able to provide a fringe benefit to their employees at no cost to them. The employees basically have an attorney on retainer.

“They know exactly with whom they’ll be dealing when they pick up the phone and call us,” Schriver said. Not to mention, employers and employees don’t have to

mind the clock when they are dealing with their attorney. The monthly fee ensures relief from expensive, hourly rates.

Don’t work for a company? Or maybe you’re an individual who wants the peace of mind that a lawyer is available anytime you need one. Equal Justice also features opportunities for individual policies at the cost of \$25 per month. The plan offers unlimited phone and office consultations, contract review and preparation, and many other services. The pressure of having to monitor the hours spent talking to your attorney is removed and there are no exorbitant legal bills to pay. Schriver boils the opportunity down to numbers and cost savings. A simple will, living will and power of attorney for a husband and wife, for example, typically costs between \$1,500 and \$2,500, which are covered under the plan.

“The annual fee of \$240 a year to participate in Equal Justice seems almost too good to be true,” Schriver said. “The goal of our company has been to find an expeditious way for an individual to have the advantages of ongoing legal representation just like large corporations have.” Equal Justice, based in Jacksonville, employs attorneys throughout North Florida. The Florida Bar supports the concept of legal service plans as a means of increasing a citizen’s ability to obtain legal services at an affordable cost. Equal Justice For All Legal Expense Insurance Corporation provides insured clients with access to the legal system as well as access to preventative legal services so they can find resolution early on the “small” issues before they become “major” legal problems. Fred Isaac has been practicing law in Jacksonville since 1969. For more information, call (904) 399-3313 or visit our website at [www.equal-justiceforall.com](http://www.equal-justiceforall.com).

**Fred C. Issac**



As managing partner of the law firm of Foerster, Isaac and Yerkes, P.A., Fred C. Isaac holds an AV rating by the Martindale-Hubbell Law Directory, the

highest rating that can be determined by his peers. He is a graduate of Jacksonville University with a Bachelor of Arts degree in psychology and holds a Juris Doctorate from Walter F. George School of Law at Mercer University. Isaac is licensed with the Supreme Court of both the State of Florida and the United States of America as well as the United States Middle District of the State of Florida and all appellate courts in Florida.

**Rebecca Schriver**



Rebecca Schriver has long tenure with Foerster, Isaac & Yerkes, P.A. having worked for the firm 34 years. She holds a Bachelor of Science degree in

Business Administration from the University of Alabama and is a graduate of the American Institute for Paralegal Studies. Schriver is a Florida Registered Paralegal and is a member of The Florida Bar’s Florida Registered Paralegal Enrichment Committee.

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# 5 IMPORTANT REASONS TO Support Local Businesses

- 1 Farm-to-table foods help improve health**  
Buying foods grown locally allows access to fruits and vegetables that are chemical free such as grass-fed meats, fresh eggs, and dairy from cows cared for locally. Local farmers are more likely to utilize sustainable practices and not "factory farming practices," which line the pockets of faceless corporations.
- 2 Small businesses elevate the local economy**  
A 2003 study done by the Institute for Local Self-Reliance illustrated the local multiplier effect supporting small businesses can have in the community. It showed that a portion of each dollar spent at local independent stores is re-circulated in the community as payroll, goods/services purchased from local businesses, profits spent locally by owners, and charitable donations. According to the study, for each \$100 spent locally, \$45 went to secondary local spending as opposed to only \$14 which might be spent locally by a large chain store.
- 3 Shopping locally builds personal connections**  
Small business owners often know customers by name and offer a personal friendly connection to the customers they serve. Customers celebrate when their favorite local businesses succeed or mourn when they are forced to shut their doors. Local entrepreneurs have an investment in their enterprises and are often happier and have a sincere attitude toward clients.
- 4 Quality customer service**  
Personalized customer service from local establishments is preferable to the service received from large chain stores that view clients as nameless customers with bank accounts. Directly connected to every employee in their store, local business owners offer personalized service by taking customers' suggestions or issues more seriously. Local shopkeepers understand customer preferences. They tailor their services to individual needs and offer professional advice to make the shopping experience better.
- 5 Small businesses are unique and add character to the neighborhood**  
One-of-a-kind boutiques and restaurants offer the community a unique flavor and play a big role in the neighborhood identity. The attention to detail their enterprises provide as well as the unique architecture of their shops' facades can be a selling point and provide a quaint and appealing visual appearance to the community.



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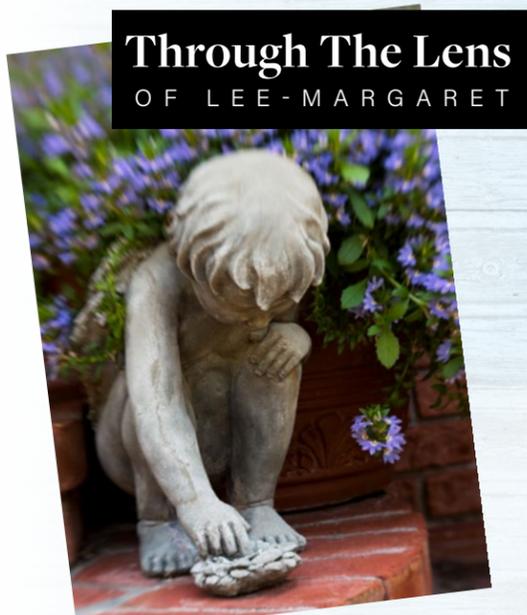
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# THE WAY WE WERE: JIMMY KELLY

BY MARY WANSER  
RESIDENT COMMUNITY NEWS

We reap what we sow, the saying goes. There's a Jacksonville man who's living proof. Jimmy Kelly, a native Floridian raised in Ortega, is a civic-minded man. He has helped hundreds of kids in our community, and animals, too. The joy he gives always comes back.

Kelly was born in late November of 1951 at St. Vincent's Hospital, the same hospital where subsequently his brother Mike, sister Jan, and daughter Laura were born. He attended Ruth N. Upson Elementary, a neighborhood school in Murray Hill, the single-story dark red brick building that then served kindergarteners through sixth graders. There's a park across the street from Upson, one that Kelly today notices needs attention. He hopes to gather his class of 1963 to commit to annual donations to upkeep the park's landscape. It's a dream Kelly plans to pursue, and he is confident that his class can do it.

Back in the sixth grade, one lesson was to study Florida. He and his classmates, along with help from their fathers, built on the school's property a 5-foot high, 40-by-70-foot replica of the state made with dirt and rocks, including all the rivers. The class was featured on the local news for having done such an extraordinary job. "It was a pretty cool project," Kelly said.

After graduating from Upson, Kelly completed seventh through ninth grades at John Gorrie Junior High School, his dad Mikey Kelly's alma mater, which was named for Gorrie, who invented the ice-making machine and is considered the father of air conditioning and refrigeration. Years later, that building at the corner of College and Stockton Streets in Riverside was turned into a schoolbook depository for a time before becoming vacant. Delores Barr Weaver and her daughter, Leigh, bought the building and turned it into condominiums. "I wish I'd have bought one of those condos," Kelly said. "I could have lived in what was Miss Helen Jackson's seventh-grade English classroom," he reminisced.



Jimmy Kelly's maternal grandfather (J. D. Beard) and daughter (Laura Kelly)

A graduate of Robert E. Lee High School, Kelly's class of 1969 had 700 students. "That was always sort of a dream. If your dad went to Lee or your mother went to Lee, or both of them, that's where you wanted to go if you lived on this side of town," Kelly said. His father graduated from Lee in 1949. He was a big, strong guy who went on to be the first athletic director of Lake Forest Junior-Senior High School when it opened in September 1957. That was before the name was officially changed to Ribault Senior High School in November of the same year. He was there until 1966 when he transferred jobs to Lee as vice principal and dean of men, just in time for his son to begin school there. "For my three years at Lee, my dad was my dean of men," Kelly reported.

The worst disciplinary problem Kelly recalled from high school, and it wasn't him, is the day a guy rode a motorcycle through the halls on the first floor. That was unusual and extreme though. "Back in those days, if you screwed up, like if you were talking in the auditorium or in class for example, and you were sent down to my dad, he might pop you with that paddle three times and send you back to class," Kelly remembered. "He was well thought of though. That was just part of the deal back then," Kelly said.

Kelly was of very small stature, at first, but grew to be nearly as big as his dad. He played basketball at Lee, a little baseball, but mainly golf. "I got the golf bug when I was about 12 years old, and I kept it from that point forward," Kelly said. In fact, he used to play with Mark McCumber, a Lee classmate and friend who went on to play professionally on the PGA and Champions Tours. "He was one of the biggest things to ever come out of Lee High School. He's always been one of my heroes," Kelly said.

Kelly's mom, Janice Beard, graduated with the class of 1950 from Andrew Jackson High School. Hence, it became an annual tradition for his family to attend the Thanksgiving Day football game when Lee played against Jackson, and they were never late for the 2 p.m. kickoff. Kelly recalled the game was a more formal occasion with gentlemen spectators wearing suits and ties, and women donning beautiful dresses. Regarding today's controversy over the school board's desire to change the name of both schools, Kelly said, "To change the name of either school would be a sin."

After high school, in 1970 while Kelly was attending the University of Florida, his parents moved to Ocala, where his father had taken a position as principal of the new Forest High School. "He was a jock who went to administration," Kelly said of his dad. His father had played football through



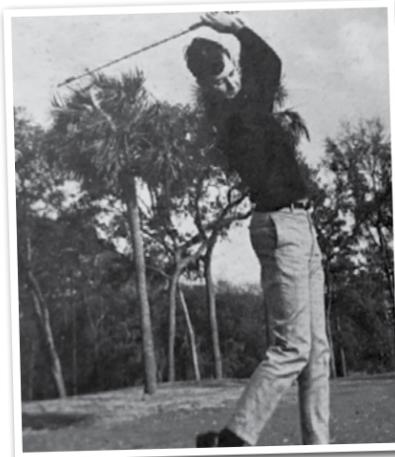
Jimmy Kelly with Governor DeSantis



Jimmy Kelly with Senator Marco Rubio

Lee High School and in college at Florida. He also had an offer to play professionally with the New York Giants, which he turned down so he could teach and coach at Jackson High School for the same pay, \$5,000 per year. Why? The latter career offered health insurance benefits. It also provided the opportunity to help kids.

Kelly was a history major. His plan was to teach for a few years, save some money, and then go to law school. But fate had a different plan.



Jimmy Kelly 11th grade member of the Lee golf team

When Kelly rang in the new year in 1973 with Cindy Robinson at the home of a mutual friend, Jim Mayes, his life then took a different path. New Year's Eve was the couple's first date. Within months, on October 20, they wed. They had met the year after Robinson graduated from Nathan B. Forrest High School, which is today known as Westside High School, and Kelly had just graduated the year before from UF. They both worked at Ivey's Department Store, the precursor to Dillard's, he as an assistant manager, and she in ladies' sportswear.

Forty-one years ago, when Cindy became pregnant with their only child, Laura, who is still a Jacksonville resident, Kelly quit

smoking. He went to a class hosted by the Seventh Day Adventists called the Five-Day Plan to Stop Smoking. "I choose not to smoke. It's my decision," was his mantra, and it remains so.

Although he is retired now, Kelly's employment history is colorful. For over a decade, he had worked in sales for Blue Cross Blue Shield, a company his grandmother also had worked for years earlier and Cindy, too, for a time after high school. He moved on to selling business furniture at Perdue Office Interiors, also in Jacksonville. Plans of buying out the company didn't turn out after several years, and an entrepreneurial spirit was prompting Kelly, so he became a stockbroker. In 1987, self-taught, he passed the Series 7 exam on a Saturday just before the market crashed on Monday. "It was a hard way to earn a living," Kelly admitted. On to a decade of lawn service and his own company, KellyGreen, with 75 customers. Kelly got into the business after neighbors who admired his lawn convinced him it was a good idea. "Alright, I think I will," he said. And he soon went out and bought a \$400 Oldsmobile station wagon, threw a few lawn tools in the back, and off he went. Also, for a time, Kelly held the title of National Sales Director of Sabertooth golf products.

Kelly then took his sales and marketing experience and applied it to fundraising for nonprofit organizations. That's when he really found his niche. And more than that, he seems to have found his calling to be an advocate for children, an endeavor that has brought mutual satisfaction.

For six years, from 2005-2010, Kelly worked for Daniel Kids, a 135-year-old children's service agency. On the third day of his employment there, enough time to witness the atrocities that many children live through, Kelly called his mother to tell her, "I just want to thank you and my dad

CONTINUED ON PAGE 37

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for doing such a good job raising me because I'm seeing things now that I didn't believe happened." He was seeing children who were in severe physical, emotional, and mental distress, those with no safety net at home, some and with no home at all.

As Executive Director of Daniel Kids foundation, he brought the organization from \$800,000 per year to over a million, despite the 2008-2009 economic recession. But Kelly wasn't only employed by Daniel; he also served as a volunteer mentor, working directly with abused, abandoned, neglected, and foster teens, developing close emotional bonds with them. He'd take them on trips to the zoo, ballgames, and to Dick's Sporting Goods, sometimes just talking with them, letting them know that someone cared.

The first mentee Kelly was assigned to was Robert, a boy whose foster mother chose to adopt him. On the day the arrangement was to become legal in Judge David Gooding's court, the young man turned to Kelly and requested, "Mr. Jimmy, I want you up here with me." The judge's mother had been very good friends with Kelly's grandmother, so the two men knew each other from a very young age. The judge was astounded at the bond Kelly had been able to forge with Robert. That year, Kelly took the teen shopping for a new skateboard and related equipment, "It was one of the greatest Christmases I ever had," Kelly shared. The two kept in touch for many years afterwards. Kelly said of Daniel, "Of all the jobs I've had in my life, that was the best one."

After Daniel, for three years in 2010-2013, Kelly was employed as Chief Development Officer of Dreams Come True, a local organization that does for kids being treated at Wolfson Children's Hospital what Make-a-Wish does for children nationally, fulfilling the dreams of those battling life-threatening illnesses. Again, Kelly had combined his



Laura, Jimmy, and Cindy Kelly at Presidents Night

compassion with his salesmanship and dedicated himself to another endeavor where the rewards were reciprocal.

Kelly said that many opportunities came to him through his love for the game of golf. Some were of a monetary nature, but not all. Some were referrals and introductions. "I would tell any kid right now, learn how to play golf because, in my opinion, it can do more for any young person willing to climb the business ladder than any other sport I know." Kelly spoke of playing with "really nice people on beautiful courses. It's a good, clean, gentlemen's game," he said.

Though retired now, Kelly remains an active Rotarian, 25 years and counting. He plans events, like his 50th high school reunion, for example. At his church, Ortega United Methodist, Kelly has served on several committees; his wife taught Sunday school classes there for several years when their daughter was young.

It's not only people Kelly helps; he rescues dogs as well. "They need homes, too," Kelly said. Sam is his second. They've been together

since May 2017, four months after his first, Lucy, passed away. Kelly spoke of the joy and comfort brought to him by these pets.

Kelly attributes his altruism to his dad, who for many years had been president of the Ocala Civitan Club and member of Eustis Elks Lodge as well as Jacksonville Kiwanis Club.

Kelly also credits two particular mentors he had as an adult, Bob Shircliff and William W. Gay, both of whom were pillars of the community. "They never said 'no.' They were both always doing something for others," Kelly said.

Shircliff, owner of the Pepsi-Cola bottling plant in Jacksonville for many years was known for the bowties he wore. A portion of Barrs Street in Riverside near Ascension St. Vincent's Medical Center is named in his honor.

Gay who started up Jacksonville's W.W. Gay Mechanical Contractor, Inc. Both men were quiet contributors to several local

charitable organizations, Kelly reported, and he turned to them for advice on many fronts. "I feel very fortunate that I was able to call them my friends and my mentors," Kelly said.

For the past 35 years, Kelly and his wife have lived in the same house in Ortega. He said he feels fortunate that one of his neighbors, four doors down on the left, is a Lee schoolmate. Another former schoolmate lives two houses away in the opposite direction. "We have lunch on a regular basis. We talk all the time. We've stayed in touch since high school," Kelly said.

He loves having friends close by, but still, Kelly wants to sell his house because recent orthopedic surgeries, one hand and two knees, demand a ranch-style home. His injuries have kept Kelly off the golf course for the past eight years. It had been his habit to be swinging a club several times per week and to be playing in tournaments regularly. "My goal now is to be able to play a round of golf, at any level, just play a round of golf. I never lost my passion for it," Kelly said. He still keeps up with the sport on TV and through reading golf magazines.

Kelly also keeps active by helping children. He's a volunteer tutor, and he has been helping to raise 7-year-old Jenna, the daughter of Laura's best friend, since the day she was born. Kelly said he considers the girl his own grandchild, and she calls Kelly and his wife Papa and Nanny. "It's very nice. She's a sweetheart. I love her dearly. I'm glad she's in my life," Kelly said. His biological twin granddaughters, Britton and Rylan, are no longer living.

"Kids are fun! Once they get up to a certain age, particularly their smart-ass years where they know more than you do and they'll tell you all about it, that's when they get sassy. Then, they're even more fun, I think!" Kelly said.



Jimmy Kelly and Jenna

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## In Memoriam

## Mary Olive Jordan Fleming Mahoney

September 29, 1926 – August 23, 2020

## She never met a stranger...

By Paul Bessent Mahoney

Mary Olive (Olive) Jordan Fleming Mahoney (September 29, 1926 – August 23, 2020) crossed over the river to rest under the shade trees with her Lord and Savior Jesus Christ peacefully at the St. Vincent's Hospice unit Sunday the 23rd at (John) 3:16 in the afternoon, just shy of her 94th birthday. Heavens gates opened up and God and the love of her life, Billy, greeted her with a hearty welcome, "Hey Little Darlin' – welcome Home".



Olive tested positive for COVID on July 3rd, fought the hard fight, testing negative and finally coming home to 4132 Robin Hood Rd. on August 14th. It seemed she had beaten COVID and was resting and recovering. Unfortunately underlying systemic infections and the impact of COVID were too much, and she left us for 4132 Heaven Rd. on the 23rd. Suffering back to back strokes in early 2018, she and God had many conversations over the last 2 and ½ years before they finally agreed it was time for Olive to go to her eternal home.

Olive was born the youngest of four, in the Fleming family home at 1102 Acosta St. in Jacksonville, in the fall of 1926. The family attended Riverside Baptist Church, which could be seen from the front porch, where she was baptismally dunked as is the custom. Her father John David, from whom she inherited her beautiful blue eyes, went to heaven at 1102 when she was just four years old. Olive most likely witnessed his tragic death, at his (debated) young age of 41; she would have been at home while her siblings were in school. She was to be married at 1102, 30 years later in 1956, to the love of her life Billy Mahoney. Her mother Ruth (Bama), the oldest of eight children, raised the family on a song and a prayer. Olive was called by the sobriquet of "Little Olive" as a youngster by her large family, as she was named after her Aunt Olive, Bama's little sister. 1102 was home to many boarders over the years, including Bama's siblings and their spouses. Jacksonville was the official home to the large Adams clan who were spread out across the country.

Olive attended West Riverside Elementary, John Gorrie Junior High and graduated from Robert E. Lee High School in 1944. Olive went through the Jacksonville school system with many life time buddies, including Minerva Mason, nee Rogers, and Jean "Pokey" Lyerly, nee Towers and Bartley. As one of the "Greatest Generation", she then attended The Florida State College for Women (FSCW), now The Florida State University (FSU); arriving in Tallahassee at the age of 17, while the country was at war. From her student records found after 64 years, many enlightening details about Olive's early life can be shared. As to her

Home Conditions, it was stated – "Very attached to family. Worried about sister whose husband was just killed, and brother in France. Very fond of her Mother. From a Counselor's report it was stated – "Olive is deeply religious, regular in her church attendance, and has high ideals of morality. In another report it was noted – "She seems to make friends easily. She has a delightful sense of humor, and carries on a conversation with directness and ease. She is very well poised. Indeed Olive never met a stranger. She was very active at FSCW including joining the Pi Beta Phi sorority, where her future Sister-in-Law, Eleanor Elder Mahoney was already a senior sorority sister of the wine and silver blue. Olive was chosen Miss Pi Beta Phi of 1945, and often reflected upon the moment when she was initiated to the beautiful melody of Claude Debussy's "Clair de Lune".

During the interim years before marrying Olive was busy with family. She travelled with her mother via train to California to visit her sister Ruthie-Bell, staying at the Palmer House in Chicago along the way, ultimately attending the Rose Bowl. She spent many years visiting her namesake Aunt Olive and Uncle Jack Jordan in New Orleans. She worked for the Army Corp of Engineers, often having coffee at the Green Derby on Riverside Ave. She proudly often stated that she never smoked a cigarette, but she sure did love her wine. These were memories that became stories to her children in her later years.

Her mother's people were from rural Alabama and her daddy's were from rural Georgia. Olive had a way with words, understandably picked up from being from a large southern family. Phrases like "that was a big rascal", "I need to see a Man about a Dog", "Bread and Butter – come to Supper" – spoken to someone when you walked on either side of an object; and "Sit down and count to ten", when you left the house and had to return for something forgotten.

She married Bill Mahoney on June 2, 1956, and their love story lasted for 49 years. They bought a "spec" house in Ortega Forest that was built by her brother Buck. They engaged wonderful Fannie Wolfolk Pandley to help them raise their boys. A young 18 year old Fannie had assisted Bama at the Fleming household when Olive was just four years old, essentially helping to raise two generations of Mahoney's. Olive embraced the longtime Mahoney Presbyterian faith and raised her children at the Riverside Presbyterian Church. She had a strong Faith in God and lived her Faith through her family and friends. She was honored by RPC back in 2015 with a 50+ Years Membership Certificate.

Both born and raised in Jacksonville, Bill and Olive had many friends and were engaged in many activities. They belonged to a Dinner Group made up of many couples for years. Tennis at the Florida Yacht Club (FYC) was a big part of their social life, harkening back to their courtship days when they played at Boone Park. They travelled the country and world, often with great friends Dr. David and Jeanne Moomaw. They lived their lives seeking knowledge and adventure. Olive was active over these years, volunteering at the voting booths at Ortega United Methodist Church, with her Book Club – the "Ladies Literary Society", the "Brown Baggers" and "Lunch Bunch" – school gal pals, and "Prophets Profits" – an investment group. She was also an active



David, Bill, Mary "Olive", Paul, and Hardee Mahoney – 1985

member of the Watsonia Garden Circle for many years, being "Golden Gardner". She worked many years at Lords Gift Shop in Avondale, along with her buddy Dinkie Roseborough, the perfect job to allow her social butterfly skills to flourish.

Unfortunately they were in a terrible accident back in '04 which took Bill's life in March of '05. Olive persevered, continuing in many of these activities. She was active in the "Tea-Girls" gatherings usually on Monday's where the ladies gathered to ruminate and discuss the day's issues (not exactly drinking tea). She continued her bridge games at the Timuquana or Florida Yacht Clubs, often every Wednesday night with the FYC bridge gang.

Olive loved sports, crowds and people watching. She always cheered on her FSU Seminoles – including her hilarious version of the Tomahawk Chop; enjoying many football tailgates and games in Tallahassee, once famously slugging a shot of bourbon from a bottle being passed around. Olive's constant companion through these later years was her kitty – Aunt Val – so appropriately named because she actually had an Aunt Valentine, the first female executive with Pan Am Airlines out of Houston.

Olive's sister-in-law, Eleanor, was a very active member of The National Society of the Colonial Dames of America (NSCDA), and it was a dream that she would become a member. This membership was in the works when COVID hit back in March and suspended everything. The genealogical documentation was completed that was to be submitted to the Society, validating her lineage back to Captain Thomas Jefferson II, born 1677, grandfather to the president Thomas Jefferson. His daughter Judith was the ancestor that led from the Jefferson's, to the Farrar's to the Flemings. Her Great Great Grandfather, Robert Alexander Fleming, was a co-founder of the Lincolnton, GA Presbyterian Church, founded in 1823 – a beautiful one-room church house still standing today.

In her later years Olive initiated several rituals which her children and care givers embraced. She would say "Lord be With You", which was to be answered with "And also with you". She also would give the thumbs up sign, to let you know that all was well; we were blessed with that final thumbs up on August 16th at 4132 Robin Hood Rd. Her final words were, "let's have some wine".

She was predeceased by her parents, John David and Ruth Thornton Adams Fleming, her beloved husband of 49 years William (Billy) Hardee Mahoney Sr., her brother Paul (Buck) Guilford Fleming (and Nell McNeil Fleming who passed away just a few days before Olive), and sisters Virginia (Dit) Ellen Prather (Walter), and Ruth Thornton Ryker Hancock (Frank and Floyd).

She is survived by her sons William Hardee Mahoney, Jr. (Juan), David Fleming Mahoney,

and Paul Bessent Mahoney; grandchildren Katie Doyle Mahoney Bridge (Eric), Caleb David Mahoney (Jennie), and Kylie Adams Mahoney Turner (Bradley), and great grandchildren Hudson Turner, Wyatt Bridge, and Oliver Mahoney.

The Mahoney's would like to thank many people for their gracious and warm loving help over the last several years of Olive's life. Especially the many compassionate colleagues from J-Mac Enterprises, including Johnnie (sadly recently going to his eternal home) and Geneva McClain, their daughter Johnnetta McClain, Annie Snead (our sweet Miss Annie), Wanda Jackson, Stephanie DuPont, Sheila McClain, Shann'toria Smith, Tammala Miller, and others, whose devotion and care enabled Olive to have the quality of life these past few years that she would not have had otherwise.

The family invites all, given these pandemic days, to a safe and socially distancing graveside interment at the Evergreen Memorial Cemetery, 4535 N. Main St., Jacksonville, FL 32206, at 10am, Tuesday September 29th, , Olive's 94th birthday. A Memorial Service at the Riverside Presbyterian Church Sanctuary will be held when possible.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Riverside Presbyterian Church Meals on Wheels program, the National Society of the Colonial Dames of America, 2715 Q St. NW, Washington, DC 20007, or the Sulzbacher Center for the Homeless, 611 E. Adams St., Jacksonville, FL 32202.

**Hebrews 11:1-3:** "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things unseen. With it the elders received divine approval. Through Faith we know that all the world was created by the word of God, so that all that can be seen is made up of that which does not appear"; **2 Corinthians 4-6:** "For it is the God who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ"; **Isaiah 41-31:** "but they who wait on the Lord shall have their strength renewed, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint; **Philippians 4:4-7:** "Rejoice in the Lord always, again I say rejoice in the Lord. Let all me know your forbearance, the Lord is at hand. Have anxiety about nothing, but in everything with prayer, supplication and with thanksgiving make your requests be known to God. The Peace of the Lord shall pass all understanding, and shall keep our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus forever".

"We will be Together –  
Always in All Ways –  
for Eternity; Bye for now  
– Lord be with You Mama"

– Selah

## Baptist Health to partner with BAYADA

Baptist Health, the largest health care provider in greater Jacksonville, has announced a joint venture with BAYADA Home Health Care to expand upon the services provided to the community by Baptist Home Health Care for more than 25 years. The combined organization, Baptist Home Health Care by BAYADA, will have the capabilities to serve more patients at home, where they can recover and thrive best.

"This partnership enables Baptist Health to provide a wider array of in-home services to help people with multiple chronic conditions as well as patients recovering from an illness, injury, or recent hospitalization," said Joe Mitrick, FACHE, president of Transitional Care for Baptist Health and hospital president of Baptist Beaches. "The demand for high-quality home health care services is rising, and there has never been a better time to build on our legacy of care for the community."

Baptist Home Health Care by BAYADA will begin operations in early 2021, pending licensing and regulatory approvals.

In joining with BAYADA Home Health Care, the newly formed Baptist Home Health Care by BAYADA entity will continue to serve the in-home care needs of Northeast Florida residents with an extensive team of skilled professionals trained to the highest standards.

BAYADA Home Health Care is a leading national nonprofit provider of in-home care and post-acute care services headquartered in Moorestown, N.J. It is the largest nonprofit home health care company in the United States. BAYADA offers a broad line of home health care services including non-skilled home care, private duty nursing for high-tech pediatric clients, and physician house calls, which will position the new entity for future growth.

"Health systems and hospitals have a vested interest in the success of their patients after they are discharged," said David Baiada, CEO of BAYADA Home Health Care. "With 45 years of home health care expertise grounded in our values of compassion, excellence, and reliability, we are recognized as a valuable resource to help keep patients safe at home and out of the hospital. We are committed to partnering with organizations like Baptist Health to meet the post-acute care needs of patients and other community residents, advancing BAYADA's mission to help millions of people experience a better quality of life in their own homes."

## Founding partner of JOI, Jaguars team physician to retire

R. Stephen Lucie, M.D., a founding partner of the Jacksonville Orthopaedic Institute (JOI) and the inaugural team physician for the Jacksonville Jaguars, is retiring after 40 years of practice in sports medicine and orthopedic surgery.



R. Stephen Lucie, M.D.

Lucie moved to Jacksonville in 1981, and jumped right into the sports medicine scene, becoming the team physician for the Jacksonville Bulls, Jacksonville Tea Men, the University of North Florida, Jacksonville University, The Bolles School and several local high schools.

"It has been a wonderful career and extremely gratifying," Lucie said. "Returning all of the injured athletes back to their various sports could not be more fun. However, getting my weekend warriors and other hurt patients, both young and old, back to their level of

function and mobility, is one of the most rewarding things I have ever done."

In 1994, Lucie, along with four other orthopedic surgeons, founded Jacksonville Orthopaedic Institute, affiliated with Baptist Health. The practice now includes 34 physicians and 12 rehabilitation centers and employs over 400 people.

When the NFL expanded new franchises in 1995, the Jacksonville Jaguars selected Dr. Lucie as their first team physician. His leadership was instrumental in developing the sports medicine program, building top-tier staff, and beginning an enduring legacy for JOI, which has, for over 25 years, provided team physicians for the Jaguars.

Lucie's leading role in creating innovative surgical procedures at JOI led to the institute pioneering a minimally invasive technique for partial knee resurfacing, called MAKOplasty. JOI surgeons have performed more of these surgical procedures than any other provider

in the region, and Lucie performed nearly one-fifth of JOI's 966 MAKO procedures.

Lucie also helped found the Jacksonville Sport Medicine program, a nationally renowned high school athletics program, which has since become a model for the rest of the country. He has served in many leadership positions in organized medicine including as president of the Duval County Medical Society, president of the Florida Alliance of Sports Medicine Physicians, and president of the Jacksonville Sports Medicine Program. He has served as both chairman and vice-chairman of the Jacksonville Orthopaedic Institute.

Lucie will continue to maintain leadership positions both nationally and statewide in orthopedics and is the current president of the Florida Orthopaedic Society. He also serves on the Board of Counselors for the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons and the Board of Delegates for the American Orthopaedic Society for Sports Medicine.

## Mitch Hunt named vice chair of local Alzheimer's Association board

The Central and North Florida Chapter of the Alzheimer's Association named Mitch Hunt, Jacksonville community president of CenterState Bank, to serve as the vice chair of its board of directors.



Mitch Hunt

Hunt, a resident of Atlantic Beach, has been volunteering with the Alzheimer's Association since 2014. He started volunteering after becoming a secondary care provider for his mother when her Alzheimer's began limiting her ability to live a normal life. Hunt's father was her primary caregiver.

His father's dementia manifested a couple of years after his mother died. Since his father died in 2019, Hunt has served on the board of directors, made personal financial contributions, and raised funds as a team member at CenterState Bank.

"My first-hand experience, as well as my observations of other families who are dealing with the impacts of Alzheimer's disease, compels me to do whatever I can to spare future generations of the physical, emotional, and financial tolls that this disease inflicts," Hunt said.

On Hunt's selection, Alzheimer's Association Central and North Florida Chapter Board Chair Steve Waterhouse said, "I am honored to have Mitch as our vice chair. His board and business experience combined with his

passion for eliminating Alzheimer's will be valuable as we move forward with our important role in realizing a world without Alzheimer's and all other dementias."

## River Garden Foundation chief development officer to retire

Kathy Osterer, a 22-year veteran of River Garden, has announced her plans to retire at the end of 2020, after a rewarding and fulfilling career.



Kathy Osterer

"River Garden will always be so important to me, and I am very proud of all that we have accomplished together. I could not have asked for finer people to have worked with," Osterer said in a letter to past Gala Chairs. "This will give me the opportunity to work on my mental health, improve on my physical health, and to take time to count the many blessings that I have in my life."

Osterer has been involved with the River Garden Foundation since 1993, when she joined the first Gala committee. In 1995, Osterer chaired the Foundation Gala that brought the late comedian Alan King to town. In 1998, she formally accepted the position as foundation

director, and later advanced to chief development officer. Due to her leadership, the impact of the foundation has grown significantly over the years. Notwithstanding a monumental capital campaign in 2010, golf tournaments and galas, the foundation has raised millions of dollars and made thousands of friends in support of River Garden and its mission to the community during Osterer's tenure.

"It has been a privilege working with Kathy over these last 22 years," said River Garden CEO Martin Goetz. "Kathy is a passionate advocate for River Garden's mission, vision and values, and we are now a better and more financially secure care community because of her."

Foundation Board Chairman Jeanine Rogozinski also praised Osterer. "In 2007, Kathy called me to chair the annual Foundation Gala. I had only been a member of the committee a short time, but she had faith and confidence in my abilities. That was the beginning of our beautiful friendship. Kathy

is a tremendous and dynamic leader, one who never meets a stranger and always finds a way to make River Garden important to everyone. My working with Kathy and the leadership at River Garden developed into a passion and a necessary purpose in my life that I didn't even know existed. It has been an honor and a privilege to work with Kathy and her legacy and presence will have a lasting impact upon the organization."

Foundation Board President Sandy Zimmerman added, "I have worked closely with Kathy over the past 22 years, first as a donor, then as co-chair of the capital campaign in 2010, and now as President of the River Garden Foundation board. There is no person more dedicated and capable as Kathy. It has been my pleasure to work with her, and I am excited for Kathy to move into the next phase of life, enjoying more time relaxing with her family and friends."

River Garden has begun a search for Osterer's successor.

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## PTA, students aid in campus clean-up at Ortega Elementary



Thanks to the Parent-Teacher-Association at Ortega Elementary, children at the school now have a spiffy clean area to enjoy outdoor learning and lunch. On Nov. 14, PTA members did a campus cleanup, emphasizing the outdoor area outside the school's lunchroom. Several volunteers helped out with the project including PTA President George Nelson, Audrey Hernandez, PTA fundraising chair, and her daughter, Katie, PTA Treasurer Scott Hernandez, Sadie Hernandez, Noelle Payne, Graham Payne, and Max Payne, all students at the school, and Steve Hernandez, a proud grandparent of an Ortega Elementary student.

The PTA hopes that more Ortega neighbors will consider joining with PTA efforts to help out the school, which received has received an A rating.

# Gardeners, pollinators, and Boone Park South

Neighborhood parks are home to many species of local wildlife, including squirrels, bats, river otters, and birds and insects. In 2020, neighborhood parks saw an influx of another species, "people," as residents on lockdown utilized long walks and bike rides for exercise and fresh air.

Pamela Telis, founder of the Friends of Boone Park South, has long had a vision for how volunteers can work with the city to ensure parks are the neighborhoods' social and recreational focal points. She recently headed a task force that delivered a report to the RAP Board, with a key recommendation to re-establish a Friends of the Park program for all neighborhood and pocket parks in Riverside and Avondale. Since 2013, Boone Park South has benefited from an active Friends of the Park group under Telis's leadership.

This year, the Friends of Boone Park South (BPS) worked with the Florida Bluebird Society and Jax Federal Credit Union to install a bluebird house. But like most homeowners, Telis has a long wish list for BPS. For many years, she has envisioned adding a flower garden to the prominent park corner at St. John's Avenue and Van Wert.

"It is a step-by-step process," said Telis.

Last year, the Friends of BPS were able to fund the purchase of new azalea bushes. This year, they found volunteers to install a pollinator flower garden in front of the azaleas to create a nice layering effect. "Having volunteers that are able and willing to take a project from conception to completion is critical," Telis said.

For this most recent endeavor, Telis relied on three Avondale residents, Sue Sofia, Mary Svoboda, and Ann Carey Holt, to bring the vision to life. The team selected a group of plants that would attract pollinators, such



Ann Carey Holt, Sue Sofia and Mary Svoboda

as bees, butterflies, and hummingbirds. Then, they drew up a garden design and sourced the plants. But preparing the site one weekend and planting the next required more hands, so seven additional volunteers joined the effort.

Pollinators are critical to our ecosystem, so the intent was to make something that was beautiful and useful. A pollinator moves pollen assisting in the fertilization process. Pollinators include insects such as bees, butterflies, and moths, as well as flower beetles. But other vertebrates get in on the action: bats, birds, and even lizards are also considered pollinators.

Flowers selected for the Boone Park South pollinator garden included: Horsemint (*Monarda Punctata*), Blanket Flower (*Gaillardia pulchella*), Coreopsis (*Coreopsis Lanceolata*), Scarlett Sage (*Salvia Coccinea*), Pennyroyal (*Piloblephis Rigida*) and Black Eye Susan (*Rudbeckia hirta*).

Horsemint, also known as beebalm, is a late summer bloomer that attracts pollinators by the dozens. Blanket Flower is the state

flower of Oklahoma, which is native to North America except for the northwest U.S. and western Canada. Coreopsis is also known as tickseed and the orange blossom variety was named the state wildflower of Florida in 1991. Scarlett Sage is native to the Southeast and known as salvia, blood sage, and Texas sage. Flowering in spring through the first frost, it is a favorite of butterflies and hummingbirds. Pennyroyal is endemic to Florida. A mint family member, it is a low growing semi-woody shrub with lavender flowers seen in late winter through spring. Meanwhile, Black Eye Susan is native to Florida and easy to grow.

For an instant pop of color, the gardeners included non-native Pentas, which show exceptional tolerance for Florida's hot and humid Summers, along with Ocean Blue Salvia.

Volunteers Sofia, Svoboda and Holt also set up a rotating schedule to weed and maintain the garden. Anyone interested in setting up a Friends program for a neighborhood park, contact Kim Clontz, RAP Parks Committee, info@riversideavondale.org.

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# In Memoriam

# John Reilly Schultz

September 30, 1963 – November 5, 2020

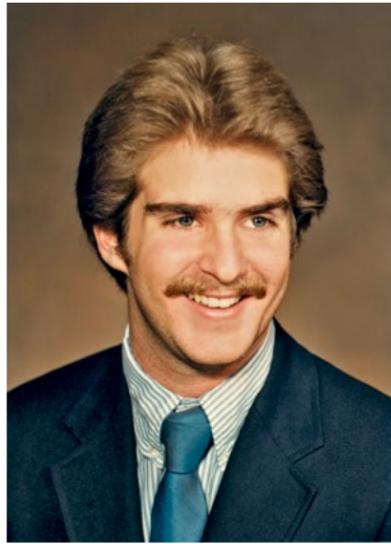
By Frederick Schultz Jr.

On November 5 John Schultz died of heart failure at his home in Ortega Forest. In addition to his twin children, Rick and Reilly, John leaves behind his mother, Nancy, sister, Catherine, and brothers Frederick and Clifford. His father, Governor Frederick H. Schultz, predeceased him.

For 35 years John worked in real estate development, management, construction, and brokerage, both commercial and residential. Together with many partners, he built numerous shopping centers and some six hundred houses. He also managed the extended family's investments.

John attended The Bolles School and the University of Florida. He served as a director of Jacksonville Bancorp, Metro YMCA, the Daniel Companies, the Museum of Science and History, St. Vincent's Foundation, Junior Achievement of Jacksonville, Jacksonville Museum of Modern Art, Intrepid Capital Corp., Bolles School Alumni Board, and Southeast Atlantic Corp. He was a board member of our local NAACP chapter, the Trust for Public Land, the National Association of the Remodeling Industry, and was a founding member of the Ribault Group. He was voted one of 20 outstanding young men in Jacksonville.

Unusual for a real estate developer, for decades he was active in conservation. In particular, he championed St. Johns Riverkeeper, the Nature Conservancy, and Jacksonville University Marine Science Research Institute.



*“John knew every street and block in Jacksonville and seemed to be on a first-name basis with a thousand friends and colleagues. He sincerely loved the people of Jacksonville and took every opportunity to expand his circle of friends.”*

John knew every street and block in Jacksonville and seemed to be on a first-name basis with a thousand friends and colleagues. He sincerely loved the people of Jacksonville and took every opportunity to expand his circle of friends. Those who enjoyed his friendship knew that if they needed help, they could call John night or day.

His devotion was legendary. When Stella Lodesky, the family babysitter, fell victim to dementia, John visited her bedside every day for years. With his Uncle Jack who was mentally handicapped, he arranged "vacations" — trips taken together to Disney World, Las Vegas, sea cruises, and other colorful destinations.

He adored his twins and rarely missed their performances or games. Nearly every day he stopped by to see his mother. He helped to raise five step-children.

From kindergarten friends to fraternity brothers (SAE) to fellow Rotarians, once he made connections he held onto them. A friend wrote to us this week saying "John had the biggest heart of anyone I ever knew." To that must be added his keen wit, rousing sense of fun, and a remarkable memory for personal details. He leaves behind dozens who counted him as their best friend in the world.

In lieu of flowers, his family asks that donations be sent to Riverside Presbyterian Day School, 830 Oak St., Jacksonville, FL 32204.

A memorial service will be scheduled post-pandemic.



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Resident Community News Publisher Seth Williams with JSO Assistant Chief Jimmy Judge and his wife, Shannon

H O M E T O W N H E R O E S

## The Resident congratulates heroes the entire community is proud of

Resident Community News Publisher Seth Williams personally congratulated Jacksonville Sheriff's Office Assistant Chief Jimmy Judge, the winner of his newspaper's Hometown Hero contest, and his wife, Shannon, during a special presentation at The Peninsula on the Southbank Nov. 16. Judge, who is assistant chief of JSO's Zone One, was nominated for the contest by the Downtown Dwellers, a community organization whose members live in Jacksonville's urban core on both sides of the river. He was presented with a framed copy of the article, which ran in the November edition of *The Resident*, and gift certificates for dinner for two at Bellwether Restaurant. *The Resident* also congratulates Light it Forward award winner Nancy Chamblin for her invaluable work with the Downtown Ecumenical Services Council, Carolyn Baggett for the lung screening program she developed at Baptist MD Anderson, and Kristen Zumwalt, for her brave generosity in donating a kidney to her father, a U.S. Marine Corps veteran. Periodically throughout the next year *The Resident* will be featuring stories on hometown heroes who are making a difference in Jacksonville's historic neighborhoods. If you would like to suggest a neighborhood hero to be featured in the newspaper, please contact Marcia Hodgson at [marcia@residentnews.net](mailto:marcia@residentnews.net).

H O M E T O W N H E R O

## Nancy Chamblin

To low-income people in need in Jacksonville's urban core, Nancy Chamblin is the kind of hero that lights up a room.

A San Marco resident, Chamblin, who serves as a financial assistance program coordinator for the Downtown Ecumenical Services Council (DESC), was one of three human-services advocates honored by the Jacksonville Electric Authority (JEA) with the utility's fourth annual Light it Forward Awards Oct. 23. The awards are presented to representatives known for their dedication and commitment to serving Jacksonville residents in need.

Each year, nonprofits such as DESC provide millions of dollars in utility bill assistance to JEA customers in need. JEA created the awards to recognize some of the people behind the scenes who go above and beyond to help low-income customers in the community who are seeking utility bill assistance.

"You represent the best there is in servant leadership. Your work in helping those most in need is truly the work of angels," said JEA Interim CEO and Managing Director Paul McElroy during the virtual event.

Sheila Pressley, director of JEA Customer Revenue Services and Elizabeth Paulson, manager of JEA Customer Assistance Programs went a step further in a letter to Chamblin.

"When the community had a need over the past year, you did more than just see the need — you met it. Thank you for assisting JEA limited-income customers and answering their call for help," wrote Pressley and Paulson. "You are part of the greater good and a shining example of what care-in-action looks like."



Nancy Chamblin

In a phone interview, Chamblin said the award was unexpected and she was honored to receive it. "It was just delightful that JEA recognized me for this award," said Chamblin. "I feel really like its an award for DESC. I got it because I've just been there the longest. I did not expect it at all because at DESC we all just share our work and our joys and our struggles. The thanks we get goes to everyone. I feel it is the team that earned this honor. It really was wonderful that out of all the agencies and the people in Jacksonville, who are helpers, that DESC would be singled out this way to receive this honor," she said.

"The thing I've found that is so good is that all the agencies are cooperating and helping each other take care of people who are common to all of our agencies. We coordinate with JEA and different landlords and apartment complexes. Often when landlords learn that we are going to help, they stop the eviction or drop the late fees. Everybody just seems to be pulling together so nicely to help people in need right now."

CONTINUED ON PAGE 43

\*Limited Time Offer. Community Fee and one month rent required prior to move-in.

H O M E T O W N H E R O

### Kristen Zumwalt

Usually daughters are the ones to idolize their dads, but in the case of Kristen Zumwalt, it was she who became her father's hero.

On Oct. 15, Zumwalt, an English teacher at Bishop Kenny High School, donated a kidney to her father, AJ Taylor, a United States Marine Corps veteran. He had been on an organ donation waiting list since spring of 2020. In July, Taylor became sick with peritonitis, an infection contracted during the peritoneal dialysis he was receiving at home. His need for a kidney transplant became more urgent by the day.

A Bishop Kenny faculty member for five years, Zumwalt was teaching summer school when her father became sick. Upon hearing the news, she immediately contacted the



Kristen Zumwalt

kidney center in Millington, Tenn., the town in which her father lives. After receiving permission from her father to pursue the donation process, Zumwalt began testing and interviewing to find out if she were a match. Several weeks later, she was informed

that not only was she a match but also that her kidneys were in tip-top shape.

"I'm happy that I am able to help my dad and help his condition of living," Zumwalt said.

Although things were looking very promising, Zumwalt's journey as an organ donor would not go unchallenged. After saying goodbye to her husband, her two children, and her students in Jacksonville, she arrived in Millington a week before the scheduled transplant.

"It's scary because I had never had a major surgery before," Zumwalt said to a reporter in Tennessee, who interviewed her post-surgery.

With just three days to surgery, Zumwalt suffered a gallbladder attack, and the transplant was delayed. Heavy restrictions on travel and hospital visitations did not allow for her husband to be with her for

the rescheduled donation date. Despite the obstacles, the surgery was successful, and Zumwalt's mother was able to care for both patients during their recovery phase. By the grace of God, the donated kidney began working immediately for Taylor, whereas many others who receive a kidney transplant must undergo further rounds of dialysis before the donated organ begins to function.

Currently, Taylor is recovering comfortably with increased energy and the ability to do daily tasks he was not able to do prior to the transplant. Zumwalt has also recovered nicely and has since returned to Jacksonville to her family and students.

"Being a live donor was nice because I was able to choose who received my organ," Zumwalt said. "To make it even better, I got to help my dad!"

H O M E T O W N H E R O

### Carolyn Baggett RN

Lung cancer at any stage is a scary prospect for most, but thanks to Carolyn Baggett, a nurse at Baptist MD Anderson Cancer Center, the diagnosis no longer has to be so fearsome.

Baggett has developed a lung cancer screening program that can detect the disease in its earliest stages. In recognition of her contribution to cancer research, Baggett was one of four winners recognized at the inaugural 2020 Lung Cancer Heroes™ virtual awards Oct. 15 by CURE Media Group. CURE Media is an industry-leading multimedia platform devoted to cancer updates and research that reaches more than 1 million patients. The awards event recognized heroes who have gone above and beyond in making a difference in the lives of those affected by lung cancer.



Carolyn Baggett, RN

Baggett began working at Baptist Medical Center in 2014 as an oncology nurse navigator caring for stage 4 lung cancer patients and assisting their families. When lung cancer screening was recommended by the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force, Baggett

was very motivated to develop a program to help detect lung cancer when it is in its early stages. In December 2015, her program launched and has grown substantially, so that by July 2020, Baptist MD Anderson Cancer Center had completed nearly 10,000 screenings at 10 locations and found 129 lung cancers, of which almost 70% were in the early stages.

"Carolyn Baggett has fundamentally changed the way we diagnose lung cancer in this community," said Bill Putnam, MD, FACS, a thoracic surgeon and medical director of Baptist MD Anderson. "Her passion for lung cancer screening has helped patients diagnose an unsuspected lung cancer at the earliest stage, saving lives. In addition, the lung cancer screening program includes smoking cessation counseling, which has improved the general health of our patients."

Since 2018, Baggett has been an American Lung Association cabinet member, which has helped her expand this work. Ever humble, Baggett said she was thrilled to receive the award. Recognizing the role her patients and other staff members have contributed to her work, she was quick to dedicate the award to them.

"When I was a lung cancer nurse navigator, most of my patients were stage 4 and terminal. In 2015, I was thrilled to develop the lung cancer screening program because it finds lung cancer early – before symptoms. Now, most of my patients are stage 1 or 2 and curable," she said. "This award is for all of my wonderful patients who are/have been challenged with lung cancer! Also, I want to thank all of my Baptist team members who assist with the success of the lung cancer screening effort. I cannot do it without them!"

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## Volunteers scrub parks in RAP clean-up effort

Dozens of volunteers flooded to public parks in Riverside and Avondale to trim brush and pick up litter during a massive clean-up effort sponsored by Riverside Avondale Preservation Nov. 7.

During the morning, volunteers fanned out to spruce up 23 of the 26 parks in the Riverside-Avondale area. The only park areas not addressed were Riverside Arts Market, the pool at Robert E. Lee High School, and John Murray Forbes Park near Ascension St. Vincent's Medical Center, which is still under construction, said Pamela Telis, president of Friends of Boone Park South.

"The City doesn't have the staff, resources and local funding to do the kind of things we are able to do," Telis said. "Residents need to get involved with local parks to make them really good."

Kim Clontz, chairman of the RAP Parks Committee rotated between the various public green areas to ensure everything was running smoothly. "My role was to float," she said, noting she spent time handing out



Katie Dawson and her mother, Leslie Dawson

donuts to the volunteers and making sure they had everything they needed.

Clontz also made short videos memorializing comments from volunteers saying why they love their parks and were volunteering that day. "It was so inspirational," she said. "People were saying, 'this is my only greenspace.' Many don't like to work in their own yards and prefer to help out in the parks," she said. "At Willowbranch Park, they were saying that the park is such beautiful greenspace they just want to preserve it. They said to see trash in it was like seeing trash in their own yards. They wanted to come out, clean up, and to be a good neighbor."



Friends of Riverside Park President Cathleen Murphy



Laird, Pamela Telis, president of Friends of Boone Park South, with Bill Jones in Boone Park South



Working to keep Murray Hill Playground clean and tidy Nov. 15 were Nathaniel Eller, Shayla Carrigg and Levi Eller, with Jose Lazcanop, Murray Hill Athletic Association President Joey Umstead, Catalina Love, Terrance Murphy, Shagaria Murphy, Blue Buting, Jr., Blue Buting, Sr. and Duffy Buting

## Murray Hill volunteers put sparkle in park

If the play area and ballfields at Murray Hill Playground shine a little more brightly, it is thanks to a cadre of masked volunteers that turned out Nov. 15 to hold neighborhood cleanup sponsored by the Murray Hill Athletic Association.

Led by Joey Umstead, president of MHAA, and Jose Lazcano, who is actively involved with both MHAA and the Murray Hill Preservation Association (MHPA), the volunteers picked up litter from the popular park across from Ruth Upson Elementary. In addition, a small group of gardeners led by Alicia Smith, head of MHPA's Beautification Committee, worked to weed the medians and plant drought-resistant foliage in the center of Edgewood Avenue South. The beautification group aims to maintain the space at least once a month, while the MHAA sponsors a cleanup of the park at least once a month, Lazcano said.

To reward the group of enthusiastic volunteers, Moon River Pizza offered free pie slices and Fishweir Brewing Company donated a free drink to all participants.



Phoebe Kopitke, Meghan and Jacin Kopitke with Apple Kopitke and Les and Jimmy Coggin helped with the clean up effort at Murray Hill Playground Nov. 15.

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## SJCDS wins District Boys' Cross-Country Championship

Matthew Stratton, a junior at St. Johns Country Day, took home the individual title to lead his team to victory in the boys' cross-country team Class 1A District Championship Oct. 29.

The victory ended a 16-year drought for the Spartan boys, who last won the championship in 2004. Stratton's win in the districts was the second time ever that a St. Johns harrier took home individual championship laurels.

Meanwhile, the St. Johns girls' team exceeded expectations and finished second.

Both teams advanced to the regional championship, which was held at Cecil Field Nov. 6. At the regional, the boys' varsity will attempt to qualify to run in the state championship for the fifth consecutive year, while the girls' varsity aimed for a 15th consecutive state championship appearance. The state championship was held in Tallahassee.

The weather was perfect – pleasant and breezy – for the race at the New World golf complex at Cecil Field. All five Spartans finished among the top 20. At the start, Stratton pulled away early and was never threatened. He cruised home in 17:27 to become the individual champ. In third place was Nichols, a freshman, who came back from an injury to shave 34 seconds off his time and log his all-time personal best of 17:58, breaking the 18-minute barrier for the first time. He was followed by his teammates Jake Kailes at 18:18 for fourth place, Walker Cowherd placed sixth in 18:53, 19 seconds better than his previous personal



Back row: Richard Wilson, Head Coach Greg Stratton, James Wilson, Jacob Holyer, Timmy Jackson, Teague Dunagan, Walker Cowherd, Cade Zehner (holding trophy), Adan Herrera, Matthew Stratton, Richard Nichols, Jake Kailes, Michael Robinson, Assistant Coach Jordan Noble. Front row: Ayla Frisbee, Rebecca Stratton, Kaitlyn Phillips, Sofia Conde, Evelyn Hanson, Sarah Robinson, Sarah Mejias.

best. Cade Zehner at 20:44 for 18th place, which was his best individual race of the season.

Stratton, Nichols, Kailes, and Cowherd were named to the All District team.

In the girls' race, St. Johns finished second as a team behind Providence but ahead of Bishop Snyder. The Spartans first three runners posted their personal bests. Seventh grader Rebecca Stratton led her team with a sixth-place finish of 22:16, her personal

best by 11 seconds. She was followed by her teammate Evelyn Hanson in seventh place who logged her personal best time of 22:35 for her best race of the season. Rounding out the team was Sarah Robinson in 11th place at 23:29, a personal best and her best run of the year, Sofia Conde in 13th place at 23:38 and Sarah Mejias at 18th place with 25:29.

Rebecca Stratton, Hanson, Robinson and Conde were named to the All District team.

## Central Riverside students collect food for needy families



Aiyana Forrest, Alayssia Gibson, Tatiyana Kluger, Sydelle Webb and Henry Foiles (front) helped work on a school-wide food drive at Central Riverside Elementary

The National Junior Beta Club and the Student Council at Central Riverside Elementary School jointly sponsored a school-wide food drive resulting in the donation of over 400 food items ranging from canned vegetables and soups to stuffing mixes and rice. The students sorted and arranged the food into Thanksgiving baskets that will be donated to needy families at the school and in the community.

The National Junior Beta Club is in its fourth year at Central Riverside and is the only elementary school chapter in the district. Currently there are 22 members. Over the years, both organizations have compiled baskets benefiting the Ronald McDonald House, raised over \$2,000 for Pennies for Patients, and held a Valentine cozy sock drive for local nursing homes.

## Smith wins state title, Kelly sets school record in FHSAA championship



Mary Kate Kelly of Episcopal (middle) places third in the 100 butterfly in the FHSAA championship meet.



Julian Smith of Episcopal (middle) wins the state title in the 50 freestyle at the FHSAA state championship

Episcopal's girls' and boys' swim teams participated in the Florida High School Athletic Association (FHSAA) state championship held in Stuart Nov. 15. Senior Mary Kate Kelly of Avondale took third in the 100 butterfly posting a time of 54.92. Her time set a new school record previously held by Olympian Nancy Hogshead, who graduated from Episcopal in 1980. Kelly has committed to swim at the University of Florida next year.

Meanwhile, senior Julian Smith claimed a state championship in the 50 freestyle with a time of 20.56.

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Marco Chua



Jaxson Smith



Mia Sandhu

## St. Paul's Catholic announces science fair winners

Marco Chua, Jaxson Smith, and Mia Sandhu were the winners of the annual science fair at St. Paul's Catholic School in early November. The students spent two months working on their projects.

Competing against his sixth-grade classmates, Chua placed first with a project: "Stop Cross-Contact: How Proper Washing of Utensils Can Keep People with Food Allergies Safe." Placing second in the sixth-grade competition was William Peterson with his project, "Will a Nichrom Wire or a Bamboo Skewer Make the Most Noticeable Color in a Flame?" Placing third was Evan Pieklo with his project, "Corked vs. Uncorked Baseball Bats."

Smith led the seventh-grade competition with his first-place project "Perfect Plant

pH." Placing second was Nyankir Deng with a project entitled, "Which Brand of Gum Products Produces the Biggest Bubble." In third place was Gabby Rogers with "Miracle Masks" Are the Safe?" Receiving Honorable Mention in the seventh-grade competition was Jack Shanks with a project entitled, "Which Brand of Pizza is the Greasiest."

Sandhu led the eighth graders with a project, "Which Reaction Will Blow the Cap Off the Highest?" Runner-up in the eighth-grade division was Kirby Alexander with a project entitled, "How Does Fertilizer Help in Plant Growth?" Wesley Revenaugh placed third with a project, "Coffee Grows." Jayden Register's project, "Grime and Growth with Algae," received Honorable Mention in the eighth-grade competition.



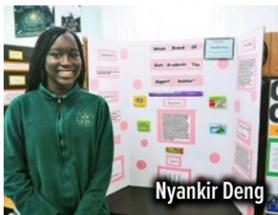
Kirby Alexander



Gabby Rogers



Jack Shanks



Nyankir Deng



Wesley Revenaugh



Jayden Register

## Beach volleyball comes to Episcopal



Episcopal Head of School Rev. Adam Greene with Stephanie Chesser, Caelan Chesser, Adam Kidd and Mark Chesser with the school volleyball team

Beach volleyball has come to Episcopal School of Jacksonville.

Episcopal celebrated the groundbreaking of its new six-court beach volleyball complex Nov. 3 at the Knight Sports Campus. Shovels were put in the ground and The Rev. Adam Greene, head of school, and Andy Kidd, director of athletics, thanked donors Stephanie and Mark Chesser and Matt and Shannon Connell of Conser Moving and Storage for providing the lead gift for the project. The facility will be named Conser Beach Volleyball Center.

"We feel very blessed to be able to do this," said Mark Chesser. "All of us are blessed to have the opportunity to be at Episcopal, and we are grateful to the administration for supporting beach volleyball."

Kidd praised the committee which formed over the summer with the vision for beach volleyball. "In a time of unprecedented challenges brought by the pandemic, it's an amazing feat that a conversation we started in the summer has resulted in adding a new sport and this new facility in time to open for play in January. It would not be possible

without the work of the committee and the support of all of the donors.

"Beach Volleyball is one of the fastest growing sports in the country," Kidd continued. "Our new facility will allow our volleyball players the opportunity to train and compete at one of the finest facilities in Northeast Florida."

Mark and Tyra Tutor named one of the six courts in honor of their daughters, Thea, who graduated from Episcopal in 2018, and Zoe, a junior who will graduate in 2022. Parents Dwight and Christine Cooper asked their daughter, Jordan, an Episcopal senior, to identify two Episcopal employees to recognize who have made a positive impact on the school community. Tonya Carter, Episcopal's school nurse, and Deborah Harvey, Episcopal's security guard, were both present as Greene announced the courts that were named for them.

The site for Conser Beach Volleyball Center is opposite the Knight Field House. The courts will be open for the spring season and the team will have its first contest on Feb. 22.

We wish you all a healthy and happy season!

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Connor Walker, J.C. Walker, Coby Confiado, Zach Zastrow, AJ Johnson, Noah Confiado, Phi Huang and Alex Looney brought *The Resident* on their Boy Scout trip down the Suwannee River.

## Huckleberry Finn redux

Getting close and personal with nature is a requirement for the young men in St. Matthew's Boy Scout Troop 252. In November, the scouts, who had recently earned their canoeing and kayaking merit badges, enjoyed a fall weekend canoeing the Suwannee River. Just like Mark Twain's indelible characters, and under the watchful eye of Scoutmaster Bill Baker, the troop set no agenda except to soak in the delights of canoeing, fishing, swimming, and primitive camping along the banks of one of the state's most scenic waterways. And *The Resident* went along for the ride.

## Costumed students celebrate DA's Spirit Week

COVID has not stopped some of the traditions at Douglas Anderson School of the Arts. During Spirit week, a DA tradition held during the last week of October, students and faculty go all out by wearing costumes. Not only do the students on campus dress up, but students who are learning virtually also participated in the fun.

Also, in November, in-person performances started up at DA with the Winter Jazz Band Concert on Nov. 17. Capacity was limited to 100 people in the DuBow Theatre to ensure social distancing, and masks were worn at all times. Visit the school's website [www.da-arts.org](http://www.da-arts.org) for the complete performance calendar.



Rori Links, an 11th grade cinema arts student, dressed as Dali's Lobster phone



Erin Flowe, a junior vocal student came to school as Flo from Progressive Insurance



Aiden Coats, a sophomore theatre student showed off his dragon costume

# State titles roll on for Bolles swimming, diving

The Bolles boys' and girls' swimming and diving teams continued their state title streaks, winning team titles at the 2020 Class 1A meet in Stuart on Nov. 15. The boys won the program's 33rd consecutive state title, extending the national record for straight titles, and 42nd overall. The girls won the program's 30th consecutive state title and 34th overall.

Along with a state title in girls' cross country on the same day, the Bolles athletic program has now won 144 state titles. The Bulldogs won eight events and recorded numerous automatic and provisional All-American times.

The boys' 200 medley relay that included David Walton of San Jose, William Heck of Avondale, Martin Espenberger of San Jose, and Ansen Meyer of San Jose won in an All-American time of 1:30.72.

Andres Dupont Cabrera of San Jose won the 200 free and 100 free, both in All-American times of 1:35.60/44.09. He also broke the school record in the 200 free.

The girls' 200 free relay comprised of Fresh Sathianchokwisan of San Jose, Emily MacDonald of San Jose, Katherine Meyers-Labenz, Sasha Ramey of San Marco won in an All-American time of 1:33.01.

The boys' 200 free relay comprised of Dupont Cabrera, Meyer, Heck, Adnan Atwan of San Jose won in an All-American time of 1:21.96. Heck won the boys' 100 breast, breaking the state record in an All-American time of 53.73 in the prelims.

The girls' 400 free relay (MacDonald, Ramey, Megan McGrath, and Sathianchokwisan) won in an All-American



William Heck of Bolles won the boy's 100 breaststroke and set a new the state record of 53.73 in the prelims, which was also an All American time.

time of 3:23.19, while the boys' 400 free relay – Dupont Cabrera, Seth Tolentino, Atwan, and Tomohiro Nozaki of San Jose – won in an All-American time of 3:02.73.

In addition to the swimmers, Bolles had two divers contribute to the girls' team score.

Additional automatic All-American times included: Sathianchokwisan, girls' 50 free second place, 22.85; Espenberger, boys' 100 fly second place, 47.82; Meyer, boys' 100 breast, second place, 55.39; Harry Herrera of San Jose, boys' 100 breast, third place, 55.79.

Additional All-American consideration times included: Girls' 200 Medley Relay (Meyers-Labenz, Jessica Strong of San Jose, MacDonald, Julia Murphy); McGrath, girls' 200 free, third place, 1:49.31 and girls' 100 fly, fifth place, 55.06; Ramey, girls' 200 IM, second place, 2:02.90; Nozaki, boys' 200 IM, third place, 1:51.47 and boys' 100 breast, sixth place, 56.36; Meyer, boys' 50 free, prelims, 20.92; Kaan Orhan of San Jose, boys' 100 fly, sixth place, 49.70; Sathianchokwisan, girls' 100 free; second place, 50.21.98; and Strong, girls' 100 breast, third place, 1:03.11.

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# Bishop Kenny NJROTC wins Cairo triathlon challenge and drone competition

The Bishop Kenny Navy Junior ROTC team took home much of the hardware when it defeated teams from nine high schools in the 7th Annual Cairo Triathlon Challenge and Drone Competition Oct. 24 in Cairo, Georgia. The competition was an Area 12 NJROTC event.

The Crusaders triathlon team consisting of Sarah Roberts, Tony Castelo-Galliano, Katherine Capra, Luke Gould, Maya Balolong and Isaac Salcedo-Sotelo won the overall championship placing first in the Brain Brawl and Athletics and seventh place in the Air Rifle competition.

“The Triathlon Challenge is a competition format that combines Air Rifle, Brain Brawl,

and Athletics into a challenging test of physical fitness, academics, and rifle skill in one competitive meet,” said Master Chief Kevin Harris, USN (Ret.)

In the drone competition, which consisted of four events – Obstacle Course, Naval Flight Officer (NFO) challenge, Flight Deck Landing Challenge and Rotor Head Challenge – Bishop Kenny was declared the overall champ by winning the Obstacle Course and Rotor Head Race and placing second in NFO and the Flight Deck Landing challenge.

Competing for the Crusaders in the drone competition were Matthew Slade, Sean Limbaga, Ryan Soroka, and David Portbury.



Ryan Soroka, Luke Gould, Maya Balolong, Matthew Slade, David Portbury, Katherine Capra, Sarah Roberts, Tony Castelo-Galliano, Sean Limbaga and Isaac Salcedo-Sotelo

## Book program turns Ortega students into super readers

Ortega Elementary students are donning superhero masks and reading books thanks to a new program called “1 School 1 Book,” sponsored by the school.

On Literacy Night in early November, the Ortega Elementary Parents-Teachers Association sponsored a drive-through literacy night for all families to come by the school and receive a copy of the book “Almost Super,” by Marion Jensen. Each child also received a “care” package that included super hero masks, popcorn and stickers as well as a schedule of which days the students would read the book with their families so that all the students would be reading the book at the same time.

Students are to have completed the book before the holidays. After each reading session, the students were to be prepared to answer a trivia question provided by the school. The



Ortega Elementary student Rainna Smith holds up the book, “Almost Super,” by Marion Jensen

students were to write down their answers and put them in a pot to win a prize.

“My daughter who is in second grade has been so excited about reading the chapters each night and has been talking with her friends about the book and the trivia questions at school,” said Audrey Hernandez. “It’s such a wonderful program to unite our school community and to get the students excited about reading.”

## Bolles athletes sign to play in college

Sasha Ramey of San Marco and Ansen Meyer of San Jose were among eight Bolles student-athletes honored on Nov. 11 for committing to a particular college or university to continue their athletic and academic careers.

Family, friends, classmates, coaches, and faculty gathered in Davis Gymnasium on the Bolles San Jose Campus to celebrate the students’ achievements. Athletic Director Matt Morris welcomed everyone, and several coaches introduced their respective athletes. It was the first of three college commitment ceremonies planned at Bolles this school year to recognize student-athletes when they commit to colleges.

As swimmers, Ramey signed on to compete next year at Louisiana State University, while Meyer will swim for Georgetown University.

Also honored at the ceremony were athletes from Bolles’ baseball, cross country



Eight athletes from The Bolles School signed to compete in their respective sports at various colleges next year

and track, and swim teams. Among the baseball players who signed were Matthew Anderson (University of Richmond), Jackson Baumeister (Florida State University), Gunner Boree (Brown University) and Jackson Mayo (University of South Florida). Maxine Montoya agreed to run for Brown University and Emily MacDonald agreed to swim at Columbia University.



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# Longtime kindergarten teachers make learning fun

Kathy Stokowski, Janice Davis, Barbara Leshner, and Rayya Ossi have been educators for 73 years collectively and 64 of those years have been at Assumption Catholic School.

Stokowski has been teaching at Assumption for 30 years. She has taught both preschool and kindergarten. Stokowski said she loves the family atmosphere that surrounds her at Assumption. She is now teaching children whose parents she once taught. "I love kindergarten because the students are so excited to come in and learn. We have a lot of fun incorporating music and movement into our learning activities!"

Davis has been teaching at Assumption for 13 years. Her experience also includes teaching the first- and third-grade levels. She said she loves teaching at Assumption because it gives her a sense of being at home. She said she enjoys working with children and seeing the excitement on their faces as they learn new things. "I love to create a loving, caring environment in my classroom where every child can become what God has planned for them and prepare them for the world that we live in."

Leshner has been an educator for 21 years and has been teaching at Assumption for 12 years. She has taught Pre-K, first, second and third grade. Leshner said she is inspired by the faith-based approach that is instilled at the school. "Teaching at Assumption Catholic School provides me with the opportunity to serve God by helping and



Barbara Leshner and her kindergarten class at Assumption Catholic School



Jennifer Soulbey, Barbara Leshner, Janice Davis, Rayya Ossi and Kathy Stokowski of Assumption Catholic School

encouraging young children to build a close relationship with Jesus and know that they are truly loved."

Meanwhile, Ossi assists the kindergarten teachers. She has worked as a teaching assistant for nine years at Assumption in Pre-K2 through PK4 grade levels. "I love teaching at Assumption because it gives me the joy of watching the kids grow in faith and I love working with younger children."

With these four women on the staff, kindergarten is a happy place full of learning, faith, and fun. Eddie Greaves, Dover Caro, Julia Foster, and Olivia Baker from Leshner's class enjoyed painting pumpkins as part of their fall lesson.

# Upson families enjoy drive-through reading night

It was an opportunity to enjoy a literary event as a family and never get out of the car. More than 100 families took part in Ruth Upson Elementary Schools Drive-through Reading Night Oct. 29.

Upson students and their families lined up to go through the school's drop-off lane to retrieve a bag of books, Harry Potter glasses, popcorn, juice, and a reading comprehension activity to complete as a family. The families also viewed the school's Literacy Pumpkin Patch.



Families line up for Drive-Through Reading Night at Ruth Upson Elementary



Adorned in her Harry Potter glasses and munching on popcorn, an Upson student reads a new book she received during Drive-Through Reading Night at Ruth Upson Elementary Oct. 29.

Each family was asked to upload pictures and videos to their teacher TEAMS page. The students were also able to hear some of their favorite teachers read-aloud stories aloud over the school's YouTube subscriber account.

"The kids and I loved it. We watched the video prior to attending the drive-through. After we left the drive-through my son read two of his books on the way home and was very excited about it. I hope you all do it again. The glasses were also a big hit for my kiddos," said one happy parent.

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# New and repeat builders create clever gingerbread displays

Despite concerns about the pandemic, the 18th Annual Gingerbread Extravaganza will be every bit as magical as in prior years. More than two-thirds of the gingerbread builders this year are new to the show and every display will be brand-new.

Gingerbread Extravaganza takes place Dec. 1-27 (closed Mondays) at Old St. Andrew's Church, 317 A. Philip Randolph Blvd. Each year several families from the historic neighborhoods participate in the event with a gingerbread creation and this year is no different.

In Ortega, Team Cody, which includes members of the Body and Connors families are participating for the fourth straight year. High school juniors Louie Body and Maria Connors, freshman Anna Connors, and seventh-grader Bowen Body spent over 100 hours planning, baking, constructing, engineering, and designing their Christmas-themed creation.

Meanwhile, new Ortega homeowner Kelly Brenner turned a tradition of visiting gingerbread displays with her three-year-old niece into participating as a builder this year for the first time. She chose a local

landmark from her hometown of Safety Harbor, Florida, where two artists have transformed their property for the last 30 years into Whimzeyland. Although Brenner was sole creator of her display, she said friends and family helped gather supplies and, of course, provided a lot of input.

Years of attending the annual Gingerbread Extravaganza finally motivated the Cashore family of Murray Hill family to give it a try.

With sixth-grade daughters Imogen and Isabel Flowers, Catherine Cashore created a take on Greek and Roman mythology. "We thought it would be fun to display the Greek gods and goddesses in gingerbread form, using candies that represent their major features – warheads for Ares, Swedish Fish for Poseidon, etc. Trial, error, and several mishaps occurred in creating the display. "Mount Olympus collapsed, the dog ran off with the fondant, our first gods and goddesses weren't sturdy enough and crumbled. We're still not 100% confident in the sturdiness of our display," she said. "Assuming the whole thing doesn't collapse, we're pretty happy with how we've done things."



Kelly Brenner started a tradition with her 3-year-old-niece



Imogen and Isabel Flowers and Catherine Cashore's Cyclops from their display "Do You See One Eye See?"



Gods and Goddesses by Imogen and Isabel Flowers and Catherine Cashore



Bowen Body, Maria Connors, Anna Connors, Louie Body



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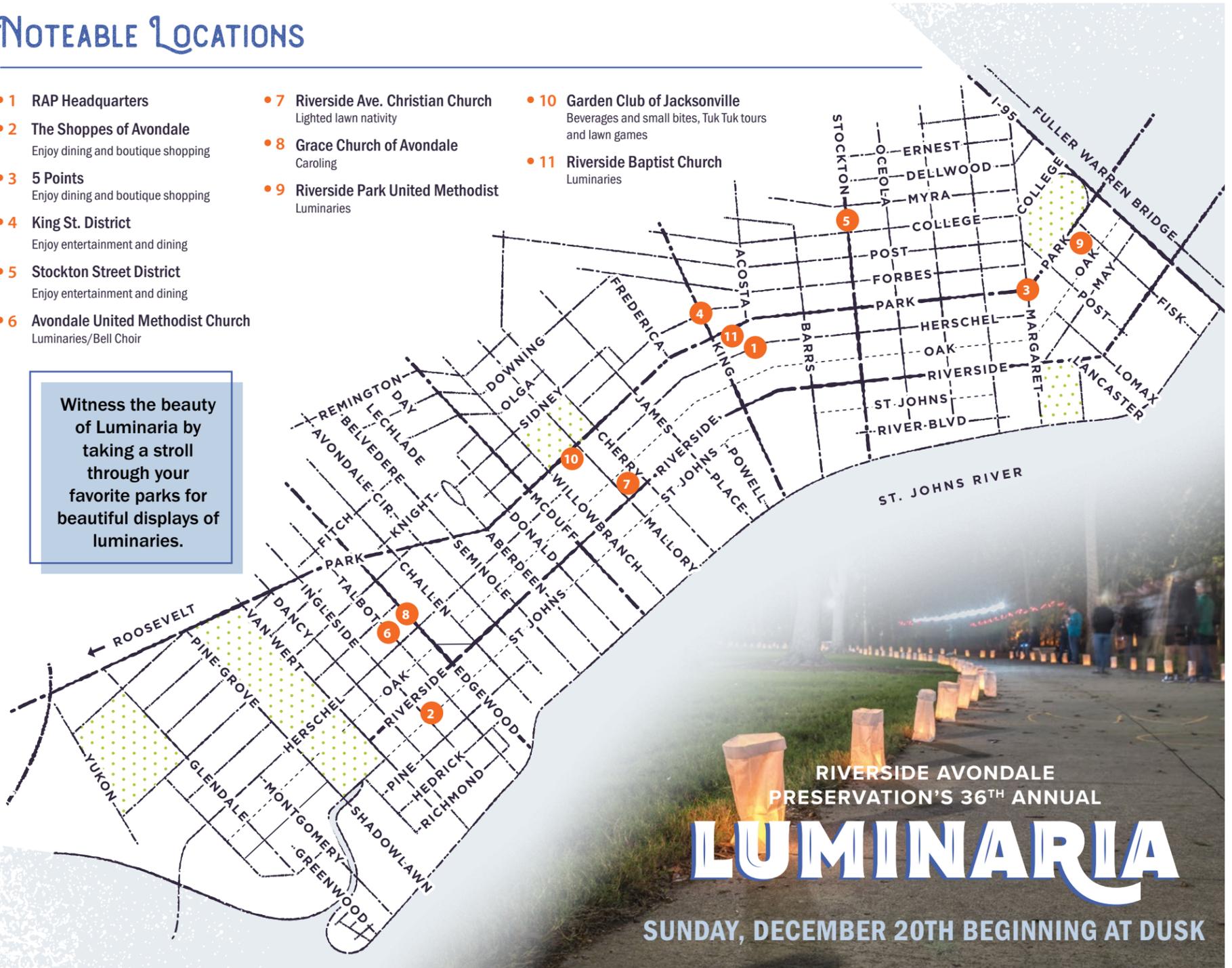
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