



Purrrfect therapy

Lorri Reynolds and her rescue cat, Sooshi, have the perfect cure for what ails a child in one of Jacksonville's hospitals. [READ MORE, PAGE 22](#)

Construction on Southbank Riverfront

From the east end near the Fuller Warren Bridge to the west boundary near Reed Subdivision and South Shores, a variety of construction projects may begin this year that will change the face of the Southbank forever. [READ MORE, PAGE 6](#)



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"Fish," by Stephanie Keith of Orange Park

ART CAN SAVE LIVES

The *Resident* extends a big thank you to everyone who participated in its Masks for Aid contest this year. The results were amazing and are featured in the latest issue of *Circles - Social Datebook & Charity Register*, which is available on newsstands. "Fish," by Stephanie Keith of Orange Park Art Classes took home the top prize. [READ MORE, PAGE 34](#)

5G poles crop up in Riverside

By Marcia Hodgson
Resident Community News

Tall, black, monolithic poles are starting to crop up in Riverside, and members of Riverside Avondale Preservation (RAP) are not happy about it.

In January, residents driving along Riverside Avenue at Copeland Street noticed a new black utility tower with a large box attached a third of the way up from the ground. Soon many of these towers, which bring 5G capabilities to the neighborhood, will be proliferating on city-owned easements throughout Duval County.

To work effectively, the towers must be spaced close to each other, approximately 200 feet apart, said District 14 City Councilwoman Randy DeFoor. DeFoor had been alerted about the black utility tower on Riverside Avenue by RAP. A few days before the tower appeared, RAP Executive Director Warren Jones had attended

a City of Jacksonville Historic Preservation Commission meeting to speak about another 5G tower proposed by Verizon to be located at 1113 Margaret Street in 5 Points. The proposed location is directly across from Forbes Street and in front of the entrance of an office building.

"There was a notification that a tower was going to go in on Margaret Street. It was not going to go in front of a historic building, but it was going to go in front of an office building with some very unique architecture," he said. "The plan is for the very tall, black pole to be placed right in front of the front door, and if you drive down Forbes Street toward Margaret Street that pole is what you would see. It will block the view of the building."

RAP, Scenic Jacksonville, the owner of the building, and a nearby resident have requested that the placement of the tower in front of the building be moved to another location. After the public hearing, Commissioners debated what legal authority they had to make

any changes regarding the placement of the tower and decided to defer a decision to allow a permit until they receive word about the legality of their authority by Jacksonville's Office of the General Counsel.

RAP is concerned that the appearance of towers in front of historic homes and businesses in its historic district will drive down property values and increase blight, said Jones, who suggests residents and business owners pay attention to blue signs posted at the locations where the poles are to go in. The signs are meant to inform the community that a permit application is being heard by the Historic Preservation Commission. A few other towers have been approved for locations near the Fuller Warren Bridge, Jones said. The city has also permitted two other towers, one slated for the city easement at 721 Post Street and one at 809 College Street, said Marjorie Dennis, a city spokesman.

STORY CONTINUED ON **PAGE 7**

ICONIC BALLPARK CELEBRATES

Hendricks Avenue Baseball League commemorates its 75th year as a center for youth sports.

PAGE 28

NATION CHEERS HIGH SCHOOL POET

Hallie Knight of Bishop Kenny High School receives national acclaim as the winner of a prestigious poetry contest.

PAGE 31

HOMETOWN HERO

Ellen Sullivan heads back to school so she can serve her community through nursing.

PAGE 21



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What's Love Got To Do With It?

IN THE SEPTEMBER 2019 ISSUE of the *Canadian Family Physician* journal, one of the three things a doctor prescribed for happiness was to surround yourself with supportive people – in other words, to foster a sense of community, which is defined by a feeling that members matter to one another. During this trying time, living through a pandemic, this has never been truer.

Turning the clock to 2021, we at the *Resident* have served as conduits for the community for 14 years, channeling quality press to Jacksonville's historic neighborhoods on both sides of the river. Our goal from the beginning has been to support every resident, from all walks of life – including our youth and our elders – by being your cover-to-cover, good-news source. Each month, we deliver the facts that affect our market, powered by advertising. We've defined our papers by delivering fiercely local news that cheers, inspires, and engages.

Though our first focus is on sharing uplifting stories as they unfold in our community, we are also committed to bringing attention to local matters of healthy debate. While mainstream media often fans the flames of divisiveness, the *Resident* aims to shed light on all sides of an issue. We believe that a variety of viewpoints lends to Jacksonville's unique color. So, we make room for the voices of those who want to rename schools, and those who want to preserve history; those who believe in wearing masks of protection, and those whose believe in herd immunity; those who push to develop our land, and those who push to protect it.

Although, we, as a staff, hold diverse opinions, just as the public does, we endeavor not to carry our personal views into our newspapers. We're proud circulate community journalism based on facts. You can be assured that we will continue bringing balanced reports of what is happening in our region as we intentionally attempt to leave bias behind.

And we strive to do a little more. We keep our fingers on the pulse of how folks are supporting their neighbors in the most tangible of ways— by giving of their time, talent, treasure, and ties. We also bear witness to and then share

with you the ability of our community to come together and help organizations develop sustainable behavior changes that lead to improved mental health and positivity. And we are sure to share and curate stories of elders that have helped to shape our community. History is always a part of our papers – from homes and buildings – to our local faces and unique places.

As the doctor said, maintaining a sense of community is key to experiencing a greater level of happiness, and so is maintaining a positive mindset. In turn, feeling happier leads to people becoming more positive. It's a cycle. We at the *Resident* are honored to be a trusted part of that cycle with you. None of it would be possible without the support of advertisers, those that help to deliver your paper also play a vital role.

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We couldn't do our part, dear reader, if we didn't have you. We are so grateful for how supportive you have been of our efforts. Rely on us to continue encouraging yours. Share with us your organization's news, upcoming events, press releases, and public announcements. Send a letter to the editor, whether expressing a concern, airing a grievance, applauding an accomplishment, or simply to share much you enjoy the paper and its content.

As readers, please become a mainstay in patronizing the local businesses that appear on our pages, which range from education to exercise, health to recreation and from investment to worship, to include a spectrum of sectors in between—the *Resident* displays it all and then some!

Part of keeping a community close is reminding members that they matter. So, for this, our February issue, in traditional Valentine's Day tradition, we would like to say WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR YOU, our reader, our neighbor, our advertisers. You are at the heart of this publication.

With sincere gratitude for your loyalty,

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- ✓ You are a current smoker or have quit within the last 15 years.



Hold hands you love-birds



Jack and Anne Coyle on their wedding Day, Feb. 3, 1951



Jack and Anne Coyle, January 2021

For 70 years Anne and Jack Coyle of San Marco have enjoyed the bonds of matrimony. The couple were married on Feb. 3, 1951 at St. Martin's Catholic Church on North Capitol Street in Washington D.C. on a day that was so cold the floral bouquets froze. The ceremony was attended by Monsignor Maurice Sheehy, a decorated Navy admiral.

"It has been good. We have nine children, 15 grandchildren, and nine great-grandchildren," recalled Anne Coyle, noting that her cup has run over with blessings throughout the years. "I'm in a flood zone!" she exclaimed.

Carlucci casts hat into 2023 Mayor's race

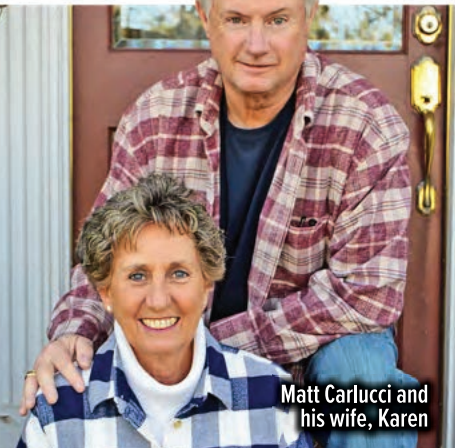
By Marcia Hodgson
Resident Community News

Although the next Mayor's race is two years away, Matt Carlucci has already cast his hat into the ring. The Group 4 At-Large Councilman, who has lived in San Marco all his life, announced his bid to replace term-limited Mayor Lenny Curry Jan. 14. He is the first candidate to declare his intention to go after the top spot in the 2023 race.

Carlucci, a Republican, said he believes he can lead Jacksonville in a nonpartisan way. In 2019, he won his At-Large seat with 72% of the vote, and his past experience shows he is no stranger to Jacksonville politics. He has held a seat on the Jacksonville Council four terms and 16 years – once as District 5 Councilman and three terms – 12 years – in At-Large positions. He has also run for mayor once before, in 2003, when he finished third against Mayor John Peyton and Nat Glover.

In a way, running for office is a Carlucci family tradition. His late father, Joseph Carlucci, Sr., was elected to the first consolidated Jacksonville City Council and eventually the Florida Senate. Carlucci, like his father before him, owns a State Farm Insurance Agency in San Marco.

"I think the City of Jacksonville is looking for a change in its city leadership," Carlucci said. "I think our government needs a new direction, and I feel that for the people I talk to because they no longer trust our leaders to make decisions in their interest. Part of the reason for that is they have seen big issues where the policies and procedures have been ignored or circumvented and so much goes on behind closed doors. It seems like the city has gone from ditch to ditch, drama to drama,



Matt Carlucci and his wife, Karen

with the people always being left out of the equation. I just think it is time to get out of the ditch, to get the drama out, and put the people in."

If he wins, Carlucci said his administration would be a "bottom-up" style government as opposed to a top-down form of command. "We will have a big emphasis on what the people want and what they think," he said.

Organized community conversation is important to Carlucci. He has been the Jacksonville City Council Finance Chairman four times. His community approach was reflected in the way he set up the city's new Resiliency Committee, allowing for residents who were interested to volunteer and take part on various subcommittees.

"No voice will be silenced," he said, adding that his leadership will stand on four pillars – integrity, transparency, public involvement, and action. "By action I mean that I am going to surround myself with some really smart people, and it will be a diverse group of people so that it looks like Jacksonville," he said.

"We're going to start building this city up. And when you use that approach, it dovetails into the overall theme of my campaign, 'Jacksonville is better when we move together.' I want to move us into the future by being guided by those principles."

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Community Foundation fund helps compensate nonprofits for COVID-19 costs

Thanks to The Community Foundation of Northeast Florida’s Respond/Adapt/Recover Fund, 117 local nonprofit organizations received a total of nearly \$1.2 million to help offset the costs they incurred trying to re-open and continue serving clients during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The grants, which ranged from \$500 to \$50,000, helped cover agencies’ purchases of personal protective equipment, Plexiglas and similar materials, COVID-19 training, and health testing of staff, and necessary items for social distancing and sanitation. Program transition support costs—such as those necessary to deliver services online—were also eligible for reimbursement.

The Respond/Adapt/Recover Fund, which was established at The Community Foundation this fall, was made possible with a significant gift from the Lucy Gooding Charitable Foundation Trust, as well as additional gifts from individual donors and The Community Foundation’s discretionary funds.

“These nonprofit organizations, many with limited budgets before the pandemic, suddenly were faced with overwhelming, unplanned costs that were essential to continuing to serve their clients,” said Kathleen Shaw, vice president of programs at The Community Foundation for Northeast Florida, who led the vetting of nearly 150 applications. “We saw them make the anguishing decisions to ensure a safe environment for staff and clients, and we know these grants will help ease some of the financial burden that the pandemic created.”

The 117 agencies who received the grants operate across a wide spectrum of focus areas, and throughout The Community Foundation’s six county (Baker, Clay, Duval, Nassau, Putnam, and St. Johns) service area. Nearly a third of the recipient agencies have annual budgets of less than \$200,000.

Agencies providing mental health services, which became even more crucial to the community during the pandemic, received grants to reimburse them for costs associated with making in person mental health services possible (Plexiglas, HEPA air filtration, deep cleaning) as well as other costs incurred to deliver some services virtually. Clay Behavioral Health, Epic Community Services, Gateway Community Services, and Stronger than Stigma are just a few of the mental health agency recipients.

“As an essential behavioral healthcare provider, it was critical that we continue to offer our counseling and treatment services to our clients with substance use and mental health disorders,” according to a spokesperson from Epic Community Services in St. Augustine. “Yet we also had to consider the safety of everyone and mitigate the potential spread of the virus.”

Safety net agencies like Barnabas in Nassau County were on the front lines for so many residents whose jobs vanished during the pandemic. Barnabas received a grant to help with the cost to transition to a cloud-based IT system, the purchase of critical PPE supplies, and the purchase of air sanitizing systems.

“When the pandemic began, we pledged to help as many people for as long as we could,” said Barnabas President and CEO Wanda Lanier. “Infrastructure support of our organization with this unique and critical funding is making that happen.”

Agencies such as The Arc, Pine Castle, Hope Haven, Downs Syndrome Association, BASCA, and others, often have clients with compromised health issues that need increased safety precautions. Individual contact is also extremely important to many of their clients. More than \$110,000 was made available from the fund to help these organizations recover some of those critical expenditures.

“The safety and well-being of our program participants and members of our staff drives every decision we make,” said Jim Whittaker, president and CEO of The Arc Jacksonville. “Because of this generous support of our work, we are in a position to continue our services safely for individuals with intellectual and developmental differences and maintain our staff.”

“The safety and well-being of our program participants and members of our staff drives every decision we make.”

— Jim Whittaker, president and CEO of The Arc Jacksonville

Another part of the nonprofit sector devastated by the pandemic were arts and cultural nonprofits, whose live performances and in person events were halted and their traditional business models were undermined. The Respond/Adapt/Recover Fund made grants to 19 arts organizations in our area, for a total of more than \$225,000.

The Cummer Museum of Art & Gardens was one of those arts organizations that received a Respond/Adapt/Recover grant to help broaden accessibility during the pandemic. “Access to the arts has the power to provide people with positive and restorative ways to express themselves through conversation, creativity and collaboration,” said Kerrie Slattery, chief advancement officer. “Through our work, we will continue to serve as a safe place that promotes our community’s health, happiness and well-being.

Unofficial groundbreaking takes place on East San Marco site



Top: Signs heralding the new East San Marco shopping center have cropped up on the corner of Atlantic Boulevard and Hendricks Avenue in San Marco; Bottom Left: Trees behind a building at the corner of Alford Place and Mango Place were cleared by Big Ben’s Tree Service in January; Bottom Right: Large piles of dirt and earth-moving equipment on the East San Marco Shopping Center site show signs of progress that long-awaited Publix is coming

A collective sign of relief went through the San Marco community in January when a sign was posted on the corner of Atlantic Boulevard and Hendricks Avenue that read: Coming soon, PUBLIX.

While Eric Davidson, a spokesman for developer Regency Centers claims an official groundbreaking ceremony may be coming soon, residents found it encouraging to see heavy earthmoving equipment digging trenches on the site as workmen from Miranda Contracting readied the ground for sewer and infrastructure to be installed.

To have a grocery store so near to San Marco Square has been long desired by residents and a long time in coming. So far four separate permits for site-clearing, sewer, and driveway installation were issued in December and January. Permits for the shopping center that will include restaurants, boutiques and the long-awaited Publix have not been issued yet.. However, it is comforting the see Regency’s “Now Leasing” sign with two guaranteed tenants – Publix and Orangetheory Fitness.

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Southbank to bloom with construction projects

By Lilla Ross

Resident Community News

From the east end of the Southbank to the Fuller Warren Bridge, 2021 will be a year of change.

Construction on the long-awaited District development will get underway. Plans for new apartments on the site of River City Brewing are being finalized, as new apartments emerge west of the Acosta Bridge take shape. Friendship Fountain and the Riverwalk will be expanded.

The District

Preston Hollow Capital LLC of Dallas took over The District – Life Well Lived development in October from the original developers Peter Rummell and Michael Munz.

The Texas-based company closed on \$35.56 million in bonds in December that will pay for the infrastructure. It also transferred four acres of land to the city for riverfront parks and a Riverwalk extension.

Lori Boyer, CEO of the Downtown Investment Authority, said Preston Hollow has hired a French artist to design a sculptural node on the theme of health and wellness that will identify the development.

She also has been meeting with the company to discuss matters such as JEA easements and submerged land issues for the marina.

Boyer said she expects groundbreaking during the first quarter of the year. “They’re moving quickly,” she said. “They’ve got the money, and it’s waiting to be spent.”

The District is located on 32 acres of what was formerly the JEA Southside generating station. Plans are for Preston Hollow to build a multiuse development with residential, hotel, office space, retail, a marina, and park space.

School Board

Next door, the Duval County School Board is exploring the sale of its riverfront property.

The School Board owns the property at 1701 Prudential Drive and is considering consolidating its offices at another location.

Boyer said there are parties interested in the property, which has the potential for adaptive reuse.

She said the School Board would benefit from a third-party developer, who could provide a new location for the offices and take over the riverfront Prudential Drive site in exchange.

The board approved a resolution in December to consolidate its offices but has not put the property on the market yet.

Friendship Fountain and MOSH

Farther down the Southbank, work on Friendship Fountain could begin this spring. The City has set aside \$1 million to renovate the fountain, which is in poor repair, and add technology to give it a multimedia function.

District 5 Councilwoman LeAnna Cumber said the walls of the fountain will be lowered so that people will have better access to the water.

“It will be illuminated and much more inviting,” Cumber said. “People will be able to sit and have their lunch.”



This rendering of a proposed new eight-story apartment complex, planned for where River City Brewing is located, was rejected by the Downtown Development Board as a design that does not fit in well with Jacksonville’s downtown riverfront.

A playground will be added that will feature a ship modeled on the Peter Pan ship at Kensington Palace. Cumber said the city has hired the same company to build a ship based on French explorer Jean Ribault’s ship. The theme of the park will be exploring the St. Johns River.

“Everything is going to tie into the city’s history. It will give families a great place to be,” Cumber said.

The park originally was to tie into the adjacent Museum of Science and History that was planning an expansion. But late last year, the museum’s board announced it was planning to build a new museum at the Shipyards on the Northbank.

The board renamed its capital campaign MOSH Genesis with plans to build an \$80 million to \$90 million museum on four acres at the Shipyards to open by the end of 2024.

CEO Bruce Fafard said the museum still plans to make the move even though the National Park Service rejected the city’s request to swap the Shipyards for Metropolitan Park.

The city used federal money to build the Metropolitan Park in the 1980s, which required that the land be used as a park in perpetuity. The city had sought the swap to allow Jaguars owner Shad Khan to build a Four Seasons hotel, residences and a medical complex at Metropolitan Park and turn the Shipyards property into a park.

River City Brewing

Next to MOSH, a proposed redevelopment of River City Brewing is moving forward. The land is owned by the city and leased to Maritime Concepts, owner of the restaurant.

Related Group of Miami plans to buy out the lease, which expires in 2027 and build a 335-unit apartment building with a restaurant and parking garage.

The company submitted conceptual plans for the \$92 million project to the

Downtown Development Review Board, but the board rejected the plan for the eight-story building, saying it didn’t contextually fit Jacksonville’s riverfront.

While the company revises the design, the DIA approved an additional \$500,000 grant to help offset the costs of stabilizing the subsurface soil. Soil borings found 15 to 30 feet of fill that will require remediation before the foundation can be laid.

Related Group will now receive \$15.94 million in incentives for the project, which is expected to be complete by 2025. The incentives include an \$11.9 million Recapture Enhanced Value Grant; \$3 million for upgrades to the Riverwalk, boat ramp parking and marina, and a \$500,000 grant upon completion of the restaurant.

The DIA has sent the new term sheet and details of the disposition of the property to the City Council for approval. Boyer said DIA is now drafting a redevelopment agreement that will be sent to the mayor’s budget review committee. Once it is approved, legislation will be filed on the project. DDRB needs to sign off on the new conceptual design and give the project its final approval.

Cumber said she likes the overall concept of the project. “It’s a great use of that land. We need more people living down there, and there’s a restaurant component to it,” Cumber said. “I think it’s going to be great.”

Meanwhile, on the other side of the Acosta Bridge near Baptist Medical Center Jacksonville, construction is under way on the Southbank Urban Residences. The eight-story, 185-unit building, a project of Ventures Development, is expected to be open by 2022.

The Southbank Riverwalk will be extended from Friendship Fountain to the Fuller Warren Bridge. Boyer said it is in the design process and will link up with the multi-use path currently under construction on the Fuller Warren Bridge that is expected to be completed by the end of the year.

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Placement of 5G poles in historic district

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

State mandate

A few years ago, the Federal Communications Commission approved 5G and left it to the states to regulate it through legislation, said DeFoor. In 2017, after dismissing the idea that 5G can adversely affect health, the Florida Legislature passed a law prohibiting local governments from banning or unreasonably restricting the ability of telecommunications companies to install transmission facilities and infrastructure. However, they allowed local governments the ability to require permits for use on public rights-of-way and to regulate “objective design standards, such as size, configuration, color, and shielding of equipment” in ways that still permitted the 5G service to be provided.

Local governments were tasked with granting permits to install the equipment on poles during a specific time period, said State Representative Wyman Duggan, who represents Riverside. “The local government is free to deny the permit application, but then it would go through a permit appeal process,” he said, referring to the Tower Review Committee, and not an appropriate committee of the City Council.

From April to September of 2018, the City Council’s Land Use and Zoning Committee and Transportation, Energy and Utilities Committee held a series of eight joint meetings leading to the passage of Ordinance 2019-770 that regulated the specifics about the placement, location, and design of 5G infrastructure and apparatus. DeFoor had been part of the discussion, which was led by District 11 Councilman Danny Becton.

However, under a mandate from the state, a new Part 4 to Chapter 711 or the Ordinance Code to implement the permitting and objective design standards was adopted via Ordinance 2018-463-E. According to the bill summary, the amended ordinance was drafted by attorneys for Verizon Communications to change numerous provisions of the current code that were problematic for their technology model, which differs from one provider to another based on the manufacturer of their equipment.

According to the bill summary, the amended bill removed language spelling out the city’s right “to minimize the negative aesthetic impact and potential conflicts with other mobility and utility uses caused by a proliferation of new poles and to maximize location context, color, stealth, and concealment requirements in the placement of a Small Wireless Facility within the City’s Rights-of-Way by first requiring co-location on existing structures unless it can be proved to the Director’s satisfaction that co-location is not feasible.”

The original bill was also amended to remove the city’s ability to deny a permit because “a proposed installation fails to comply with ‘applicable objective design standards,’ or

because the installation is not proposed to be co-located on an existing structure when the applicant has not demonstrated that such a structure is not available or is insufficient for the placement of the proposed installation.”

In addition, the amended bill deleted several objective design standards, increased the volume of equipment that may be pole mounted from 10 to 28 cubic feet, and deleted the requirement that applications for new poles must be reviewed for the potential to co-locate equipment on existing city, JEA, or privately owned poles or structures. It also removed the requirement that “permits for new poles can only be granted when the Director determines that no existing utility pole is reasonably feasible to collocate the small wireless facilities.”

“I worked hard with Danny Becton and Michael Boylan on the code to try to put as many restrictions as we possibly could into the 5G legislation and the location of their poles. Unfortunately, the state usurped the local control and agreed that 5G could be placed anywhere within the right-of-way easements,” DeFoor said. “Think about that. That means you could have a pole right in front of your house because we all have easements. It’s awful. It’s absolutely awful,” she said.

“I’m of the belief that we really need to go back to the state and tell them this can impact people’s property values, and that it impacts our tax base,” said DeFoor, noting she had been told that JEA was requiring “too much,” for Verizon to rent space on its poles. “If all these poles go up, I would not be at all surprised if a lawsuit was filed by residents because it impacts their property values.”

In fact, a lawsuit was filed with a California appeals court. The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit largely dismissed a challenge from dozens of state and local governments who tried to push back against the FCC and its orders to restrict their ability to regulate technology for 5G infrastructure. The decision was rendered in August 2020 and may be a precedent that pretty much prevents the City of Jacksonville from being able to enforce any regulations, said DeFoor.

JEA has a Master Wireless Agreement with Verizon, as with all the wireless carriers, allowing collocations on JEA communication towers, high voltage electric transmission structures, and JEA electric distribution poles and standalone streetlight poles. A rental does apply allowing JEA and the community an appropriate return on investment for the assets utilized,” said Simone Garvey-Ewan, media relations coordinator for JEA.

“JEA has been approached by Verizon for collocations on JEA electric distribution poles and standalone streetlight poles for small cell collocation. JEA and Verizon have only looked at 12 sites downtown. Rent for a small cell on an electric distribution pole or standalone streetlight pole is presently \$1,432 per year, which is consistent with market analysis of



The 5G pole is within the line of sight of Tanner Crews’ condo in the Cathedral District

similar utilities and cities. The small cell rent was set per an agreed to contract amendment in 2015 between JEA and Verizon,” she said..

In the Historic Commission meeting, Jones said Verizon’s representative told the group the company had not reached an agreement with JEA to share the utility poles, therefore Verizon must use its own towers. Cellular companies are also not required to share towers with each other, further increasing the number of possible towers in our community.

“We know these towers do not necessarily have to be placed on Verizon’s dedicated poles. They can be placed on existing poles owned by JEA,” Jones said, adding that during the meeting the representative from Verizon said there is a provision in state law that if JEA charges something other than a normal fee the phone company can use its own tower.

Residents in the Riverside Avondale historic district may be among the first to raise an aesthetics alarm on 5G poles, but they are not the only ones. At Large Group 4 Councilman Matt Carlucci said he received a call from Tanner Crews, a resident in Jacksonville’s Cathedral District, who in early December came home from work to discover a towering black pole blocking the line of sight from his window. Carlucci said he is trying to work with the city and Verizon to have the pole removed and placed in a more desirable location. “They aren’t supposed to go in front of windows,” Carlucci said. “I am sending another follow-up to what I sent in December to ask them to take out that pole and place it legally.”

Carlucci’s assistant, Alyson Lee, said she contacted Chief Ellyn Cavin about the pole in the Cathedral District. “Ellyn called me back and said the city had contracted with Verizon to install the poles. She said she did not think Verizon violated the letter of its contract but that she did think the company violated the spirit of the contract. She said she would contact Verizon and see what could be done,” Lee said.

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Northbank construction projects in flux

SHAD KHAN AND HIS DEVELOPMENT TEAM HEAD BACK TO THE DRAWING BOARD

By Lilla Ross
Resident Community News

Recent turn of events has put more than one Northbank construction project in flux. A no vote on Lot J by the Jacksonville City Council sent Jaguars owner Shad Khan and his development team back to the drawing board. Khan and the city also received bad news when the National Park Service rejected the city’s request to swap land within Metropolitan Park with acreage in the Shipyards to allow Khan’s group to build a new hotel on park land.

Concerning other projects pending on the north side of the St. Johns River, the city is actively seeking designs for a park at the former site of the Jacksonville Landing, and the demolition of Berkman II is awaiting a greenlight from the city.

To the surprise of many, the City Council failed to find enough votes on Jan. 12 to approve Khan’s plan to redevelop the Lot J parking lot at TIAA Bank Field. The deal failed by one vote. Those who voted against it, who are now known as the Lot J Seven, included District 14 City Councilwoman Randy DeFoor and At Large, Group 4 City Councilman Matt Carlucci.

District 5 City Councilwoman LeAnna Cumber, who supported the deal, said she was surprised when the vote fell short.

“I think there were people who had talked about how they were going to vote, but you never know when it comes to the final vote how it goes,” Cumber said.

The legislation was amended several times and debated during numerous public hearings. Prior to the final vote, Cumber introduced an amendment to send the legislation to the Downtown Investment Authority for review.

The \$450 million deal, which was negotiated by Mayor Lenny Curry’s office, included a Live! entertainment district, office space, residential and retail. The project was a partnership between Khan’s Gecko Investments, the Cordish Company of Baltimore, Md., and the city.

The city was expected to invest more than \$200 million in the deal, which would have required a bond issue that ultimately would have cost taxpayers almost \$400 million. The city also would have retained ownership of the property, keeping it off the tax rolls.

The developer also would have gotten a 50-year, interest-free “breadbox loan” worth \$65 million.

The city auditor estimated that the city’s return on investment would have been 44 cents on the dollar. But the deal did not include any assurance that the NFL team would remain in Jacksonville when its stadium lease expires in 2030.

The public’s reaction was swift and negative. A University of North Florida poll found more than half the respondents opposed it.

In addition, the accountability group OurJax and the NAACP spoke out against it, calling it a bad deal for the city. “We’re not afraid to dream big as long as we dream smart,” said Audrey Moran, a director of OurJax.

“There was a lot of pressure on council to pass the deal. The Lot J Seven who stood up for taxpayers should be commended. It took a lot of courage. They stood their



Grass and trees now cover the site where The Landing once stood

ground. It was a victory for the people,” Moran said.

The deal had been negotiated by the mayor’s office, circumventing the Downtown Investment Authority, which by city code is required to negotiate all downtown development deals.

Michael Ward, president of OurJax, said a lack of transparency was one of things that killed the deal.

“We’re hoping that lessons will be learned and that next time things will go through the normal process. DIA knows how to negotiate those deals,” Ward said.

After the vote, Jaguars President Mark Lamping said the Lot J deal is dead and that the focus was shifting to the development of Metropolitan Park.

Metro Park and the Shipyards

Khan, through his company Iguana Investments, wants to build a Four Seasons hotel and apartments, a medical complex and parking garage at Metropolitan Park, which is south of Lot J. The \$535 million project would also include \$151.2 million in incentives from the city.

But Metropolitan Park was built in the 1980s with a federal grant that requires the land to be used as a park in perpetuity. The city asked the National Park Service for permission to swap the Metropolitan Park with the Shipyards. But the federal agency notified the city in December that it would not approve the swap.

Khan has not announced how that will change his plans, but Boyer said she is in conversation with Khan about the project.

“I want to see how flexible they are about location,” Boyer said. “There needs to be a decision made about Metro Park. Do we leave Metro Park alone and move the development closer to downtown? Maybe you put another park closer to Hogan’s Creek or Berkman.”

Metro Park is designed to be a festival lawn and was a popular venue until its stage was damaged and torn down. Boyer said downtown needs a festival lawn and

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the Metro Park site is well suited because of its proximity to the parking at the stadium.

The Peyton administration had a plan to revamp the park, but then the Great Recession of 2008 hit, scuttling the plans.

The city owns the Shipyards, which is a former industrial site that would need environmental remediation before it could be developed.

The Museum of Science and History announced plans in November to relocate from its Southbank location, which it has occupied since 1967, to the Shipyards. Khan welcomed the move and pledged \$5 million to the museum’s \$20 million capital campaign.

Since the Park Service’s decision became public, MOSH CEO Bruce Fafard said the museum’s goal of moving into a new \$80 million museum at the Shipyards site by 2024 had not changed.

Berkman II

The unfinished Berkman Plaza II, adjacent to the Shipyards, is getting closer to disappearing from the riverfront.

Developer Jacksonville Riverfront Revitalization LLC has applied for a demolition permit to tear down the building at 500 E. Bay St., which has been vacant for 13 years. A construction worker was killed and several others were injured when the parking garage collapsed during construction.

An initial application for a permit to demolish the building by implosion was rejected by the city over concerns that debris could damage the adjacent Berkman Plaza I. Park Beeler, a principal of JRR, said JRR has now contracted with Pece of Mind Environmental Inc. of Orlando to demolish the building from the top down, a process that could take about six months at an estimated cost of about \$1 million.



Due to a decision by the National Park Service, the Four Seasons hotel proposed to be built on Metro Park land may have to be built elsewhere.

JRR is in the process of purchasing the property from 500 E. Bay LLC so that it can begin construction on a \$50 million multi-use project, designed by KBJ. 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.

The Landing

The DIA is seeking proposals from three firms for the design of a public park at the site of the former Jacksonville Landing that is described as a “vibrant and iconic public space on the premier waterfront site in Downtown Jacksonville.”

Since the old riverfront mall was demolished last year, the six acres have been covered in grass and trees.

About 4.5 acres are designated for park space while the rest near Water Street and Independent Drive could be redeveloped. The city also plans to demolish the on-ramp to the Main Street Bridge, which will add another 1.6 acres to the site.

The city has not set a budget for the project, but expects to award a contract by September.

The floating docks at the Landing and Friendship Park, which were damaged by Hurricane Irma in 2017, have now been replaced.



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Bruce Fafard

MOSH names Fafard as CEO

The Museum of Science & History (MOSH) has appointed Bruce Fafard as CEO.

Fafard joined MOSH as chief operating officer in May 2020 and was appointed as interim CEO in August 2020. The Board of Trustees Executive Committee confirmed his appointment as permanent CEO on October 15, 2020, after observing the immediate and positive impacts of his leadership on the museum's operations.

Fafard brings more than 30 years of executive leadership experience from numerous industries to the role, including the aerospace, insurance, manufacturing, and retail industry. Prior to joining MOSH, Fafard served as president and CEO of 121 Financial Credit Union, CEO of Scient Federal Credit Union and held a variety of positions at Connex Credit Union. He earned his Master of Business Administration from the University of New Haven and his Bachelor of Science in economics from Southern Connecticut State University. He also earned the Certified Innovation Executive designation from the Credit Union Executive Society.

In addition to his position at MOSH, Fafard currently serves on several boards and committees including Leadership Jacksonville, Northeast Area Health Education Centers (AHEC), and the JAX Chamber.

Stasi takes helm as City Rescue Mission celebrates 75 years

The City Rescue Mission (CRM) began the New Year by celebrating 75 years with a new executive director.

Paul Stasi, a long-time employee of the mission, was named executive director Jan. 1. He takes over the position from Penny Kievet, who retired Dec. 31, 2020.

Stasi has been with CRM for six years and previously served as director of Resource Development as well as the director of Social Enterprise. Prior to his time at the mission, Stasi served as the director of Social Services for the Northeast Florida Area Command with The Salvation Army.

"I am honored and energized by the opportunity to assume leadership of this great organization that plays such a vital role in our community by helping people in desperate situations go through a life transformation," said Stasi. "City Rescue Mission has a robust future continuing to reach out to some of Jacksonville's most needy citizens, and I am excited to see how God will work through us."



Paul Stasi



The new year marks a significant milestone for CRM. Started by a small group of Christian businessmen with its original mission of "soup, soap, and salvation," City Rescue Mission has expanded its services to maximize its benefit to those experiencing homelessness, hardships, and addiction in Jacksonville. Today CRM offers a number of services to fulfill basic needs such as daily meals,

overnight shelter, laundry services, hygienic facilities, and a clothes closet as well as LifeBuilders, a long-term residential addiction recovery program that includes workforce development, and transitional sober living housing. All of CRM's programs and services are provided at no cost to the recipient, giving them the opportunity to focus solely on transforming their life.



Debra

Filling empty bowls virtually

Although Feeding Northeast Florida was forced to hold Empty Bowls, its signature fundraiser, virtually due to COVID-19, the annual event was a huge success. A total of \$14,167 was raised with \$4,925 coming through Facebook, \$8,068 coming through the Network for Good website, and \$1,174 being raised through the silent auction.

This year, the annual luncheon, which is aimed at increasing awareness of food insecurity on the First Coast and beyond, was reformatted

as a digital fundraising campaign which began on Nov. 16 and ended on Giving Tuesday, Dec. 1. Feeding Northeast Florida has provided 28 million meals to families living in eight counties through the end of 2020, which is a 90% increase over its work in 2019.

"I'm very thankful they're doing this. It's a blessing for them to do it and it's a blessing for me to receive it."

— Debra, Feeding Northeast Florida Client

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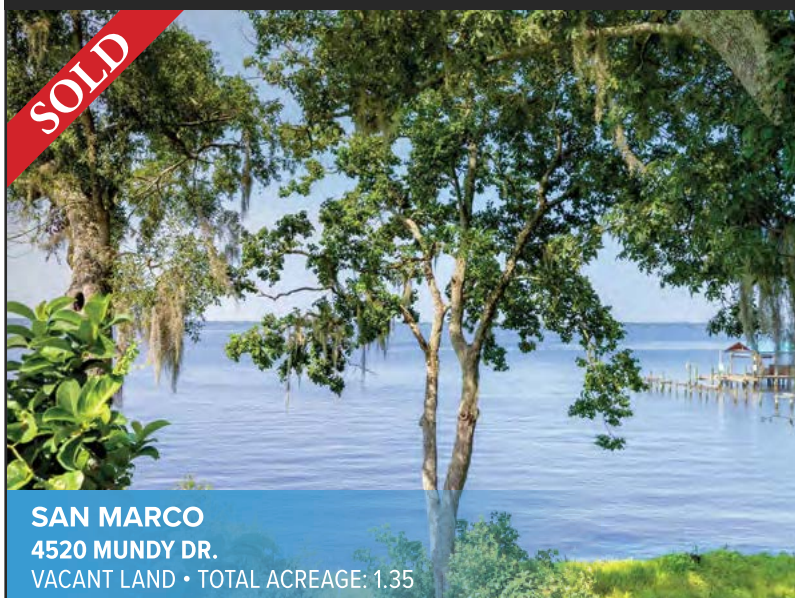


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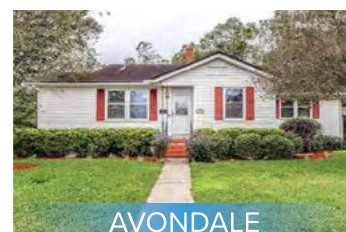


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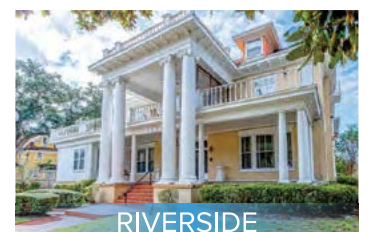
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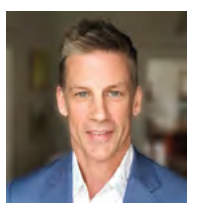
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JAGA President Jeff Adams with Billy Walker, John Tancredi, Cary Helton and Larry Stark

Helton to continue on JAGA board

Cary Helton, Jacksonville Area Golf Association (JAGA) director of San Jose Country Club, was named vice president/tournaments to JAGA when the organization elected its 2021 officers at its final director's meeting of the year at Marsh Landing Country Club Dec. 15. Helton, who is a retired CSX executive, joins JAGA President Jeff Adams, John Tancredi, vice president/administration, Larry Stark, secretary, and Billy Walker, treasurer, on the board. Adams of TPC Sawgrass, was elected president after serving the past two years as

vice president/administration. He succeeds Randy Nadar of Sawgrass Country Club, who served during the past two years. Helton, Stark, and Walker were reelected to their posts, with Stark serving as secretary for a third year and Helton and Walker returning for a second year in their positions. Stark is a member of Jax Beach Golf Club, while Walker belongs to Cimarrone Country Club. Tancredi, a member of Marsh Landing Country Club, joined the JAGA board for the first time.

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Peña honored with 2021 Ann McDonald Baker Art Ventures Award

Jorge Peña, veteran member of the Jacksonville Symphony Orchestra and artistic director and co-founder of the St. Augustine Music Festival, was presented with the Ann McDonald Baker Art Ventures Award in early January. The presentation was made in front of his colleagues in the Jacoby Symphony Hall as they prepared for the Florida Blue Masterworks Series performance. Peña has performed with the Symphony for 23 seasons.

“Jorge’s mastery of the viola and contributions to the Jacksonville Symphony Orchestra are notable in themselves, but he has gone on to share his passion for classical music well beyond traditional audiences,” noted Martha Frye Baker, Ann McDonald Baker’s daughter-in-law and chair of the board of trustees of The Community Foundation for Northeast Florida. “His generosity of spirit is exactly what we had in mind five years ago when we established this award to honor Ann’s devotion to making our community a better place through the arts, and Jorge is a significant contributor to that model.”

Peña also serves as conductor and music director of the Golden Isles Youth Orchestra,

and General Manager of the Coastal Symphony of Georgia in Brunswick. He has conducted master classes and coached at LaVilla School of the Arts, Douglas Anderson School of the Arts, and the University of North Florida. He is an instructor for the Jacksonville Symphony Youth Orchestra and was on the faculty of Prelude Chamber Music Camp.

The Ann McDonald Baker Art Ventures Award recognizes an artist whose work brings distinction to Northeast Florida, and is named for the late Ann McDonald Baker, whose leadership helped create and nurture such vital cultural gems as The Community Foundation’s Art Ventures Fund, the Arts Assembly (now the Cultural Council), Douglas Anderson School of the Arts, and Greenscape, among others. As this year’s Ann McDonald Baker Art Ventures award recipient, Peña received a \$15,000 unrestricted grant.

The selection process for the Ann McDonald Baker Art Ventures Award includes a knowledgeable, anonymous panel of advisors who put forward a short list of finalists after considering a wide range of deserving artists in all disciplines throughout the year. A selection committee, which includes



Tom Baker, advisor to the Baker Family Advised Fund; Martha Frye Baker, chair of the Board of Trustees for The Community Foundation for Northeast Florida with Jorge Peña and Nina Waters, president of The Community Foundation for Northeast Florida.

a member of the Baker family, a trustee of The Community Foundation for Northeast Florida, a representative from the advisory panel and The Community Foundation

president, reviews the finalists and names the winner. Past recipients include Terrance Patterson, David Engdahl, Jim Draper, Louise Freshman Brown, and John Bunker.

Baptist Health launches campaign to meet challenge grant from The Jim Moran Foundation

The Baptist Health Foundation has begun a fundraising campaign for a challenge grant award by the Jim Moran Foundation to launch and sustain a care coordinator to serve young adults with mental illness and their families as they transition from childhood to adulthood. To commemorate its 20th anniversary, The Jim Moran Foundation offered to match, dollar for dollar, all gifts made towards the Alex’s Dragonfly Endowment for Young

Adult Behavioral Health, up to \$750,000, as part of more than \$10 million in special grants that reach beyond its traditional funding priorities to support nonprofit partners in Broward, Duval, and Palm Beach counties. In 2019, Sheryl and Todd Johnson established the behavioral health endowment in memory of their son, Alex. The Johnsons wanted to ensure that other young adults with mental illness and their families had a resource

at Baptist Health to guide their transition from pediatrics to adulthood. The potential impact of the grant is significant. Baptist Behavioral Health projects that the care coordinator position will develop and implement plans that will integrate physical and mental health for 225 young adults in 2021, and at least 300 young people per year after it is fully funded in 2022.



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As the New Year begins, Coker Law continues to be recognized as one of the top law firms in Jacksonville. Not only did the firm make the 2020 list of “Best Law Firms” selected by U.S. News and Best Lawyers, but also Coker Law attorneys were selected to join prestigious law societies or boards.

On the 2020 “Best Law Firms” list, Coker Law is regionally ranked tier one in two practice areas, medical malpractice law and personal injury litigation. This designation is based on a rigorous evaluation process that includes evaluations and reviews from leading attorneys in the field. At least 22,000 firms were evaluated this past year, the highest on record.

Coker Law shareholder Fraz Ahmed and trial attorney and personal injury litigation authority Chelsea Harris were selected for membership to the International Society of Barristers (ISOB). ISOB supports the retention of trial by jury, provides training in advocacy, encourages civility, and supports and improves the justice system. As membership comes by invitation only, it is a

prestigious honor to be included, as members undergo a rigorous screening process that considers the lawyer’s ability, experience, accomplishments, and ethical standards.

Other Coker Law attorneys that have been recognized in the community are David Thompson, Janeen Kirch, and Stefano Portigliatti. Thompson, a trial attorney, has been accepted into the American Board of Trial Advocates (ABOTA), a national association of experienced trial lawyers and judges where members are selected by their peers. Kirch, an experienced personal injury trial attorney, has been elected to serve on the board of the Jacksonville Justice Association (JJA). Portigliatti, a lawyer who is considered a trucking crash expert, was the winner of the Michael Bailey Trial Lawyers Email List Award. He was selected for his outstanding contributions to all of the lawyers on the email list throughout the state of Florida, and the list’s membership is currently in the thousands.

Coker Law also generously contributed to The Salvation Army of Northeast Florida’s Angel Tree Program this year.



Cohen named LISC executive director

The Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) has named long-time community leader Dr. Irvin “PeDro” Cohen as executive director of LISC Jacksonville, the local arm of the nation’s largest community development organization.

Cohen succeeds longtime Executive Director Janet Owens, who passed away earlier this year.

As executive director, Cohen will lead LISC’s local staff and programs, which focus on catalyzing economic opportunities for Jacksonville residents. He most recently served as vice president of operations for YMCA of Florida First Coast, with 19 facilities in and around the city. Previously, he worked as executive director of New Town Success Zone, a community-based organization providing a diverse range of services focused on raising up children and families.

Cohen earned his bachelor’s degree from the University of North Florida (UNF), an MBA in marketing from Pfeiffer University in Charlotte, N.C., and a doctorate in organizational leadership and nonprofit management from Nova Southeastern University in Fort Lauderdale. He currently serves on the advisory boards of UNF’s College of Education, the University of Florida’s Clinical Translation Science Institute, Vanderbilt University’s Recruitment Innovation Center, and JASMYN, Inc.

As executive director, Cohen will be involved with key national LISC initiatives such as Project-10X, a \$1 billion plan to close racial health, wealth, and opportunity gaps. He will also head locally designed efforts to address racial injustice, invest in resilient communities, and fuel inclusive economic growth.

IBERIABANK-First Horizon appoints Lanahan as regional president

First Horizon Bank and IBERIABANK announced Jan. 11 that San Marco resident Marty Lanahan has been appointed as the new regional president for North, Central and Southwest Florida regions. In her new role for the merged company, she will lead a team of banking professionals and oversee business development across several of Florida’s largest markets, including Jacksonville, Orlando, Tampa, Fort Myers, and Naples. She will also leverage IBERIABANK and First Horizon’s resources to lead the bank’s growth strategy of building strong community teams within each of the market areas.

“Marty has been a tremendous contributor to the success of IBERIABANK since she joined us in 2019,” said Michael Brown, president, Regional Banking for First Horizon. “Marty has a proven track record in Florida as a business and community steward. Throughout her banking career, she has built diverse teams and driven business

results. In her new role, she brings momentum and expertise to guide our banking division to its next successful chapter.”

Lanahan has achieved significant professional recognition in her 30 years of experience as a prominent banking leader. Most recently, she served as the executive vice president and Tampa Bay market president of IBERIABANK, having joined the company after 18 years of service at Regions Bank.

Throughout her career, Lanahan has received several awards and accolades for her business acumen, including being inducted into the First Coast Business Hall of Fame and being named Jacksonville Business Journal’s Woman of Influence, as well as Girls Incorporated’s Woman of Vision and the Women Business Owners’ Corporate Leader of the Year. Statewide, she has served as chair of the Florida Transportation Commission. She is currently a board member of JEA, one of the nation’s largest municipally owned electrical and water/



Marty Lanahan

sewer authorities, where she has also served as chair during a previous appointment.

A firm believer in community service, Lanahan holds leadership positions on several boards to advance health care initiatives, develop programs for underserved populations and expand significant work for cultural arts organizations. She currently serves as board chair of the Jessie Ball duPont Fund; board member of the Tampa Museum of Art; and board member of Moffitt Medical Group.

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Bernadette Tasher, San Marco Chamber Music Society board member; Eric and Ellen Olsen, founding members of the San Marco Chamber Music Society; Leslie Burkhalter, JDRF board member; and Brooks Biagini, market director for JDRF.

San Marco Chamber Music Society raises \$3,461 for JDRF

Members of the San Marco Chamber Music Society raised \$3,461 for the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation (JDRF) during their annual virtual benefit concert Oct. 18. For more than 10 years, San Marco Chamber Music Society musicians have performed in a special benefit concert to raise money for JDRF in honor of the daughter of Society Founders Ellen and Eric Olson, who lives with type 1 diabetes.

Playing in the benefit concert were Les Roettges, flute; Scott Watkins, harpsichord and piano; Eric Olson, oboe; DJ Cheek, viola; and Ellen Olson, viola. They performed music by Johann Janitsch, Howard Hanson, Paul Coletti, and Alyssa Morris.

Over 14 years, the San Marco Chamber Music Society has raised well over \$25,000 in support of diabetes research in search of better treatments and a cure for type 1 diabetes.

Hopkins joins Episcopal Children’s Services

Lauren Weedon Hopkins signed on as the new chief development officer for Episcopal Children’s Services in late November.

Hopkins brings a wealth of knowledge to the nonprofit. Most recently, she served as Regional Director for Catholic Charities Jacksonville Regional Office, raising more than \$1 million for a Catholic Charities capital initiative in just one year.

“We are delighted to welcome Lauren to the ECS team,” said Episcopal Children’s Services CEO Connie Stophel. “Her experience in the nonprofit industry and commitment to improving the lives of North Florida children will be an asset to our mission.”

As Chief Development Officer for ECS, Hopkins will provide leadership and support to development, grants, community outreach and volunteer efforts, as well as oversee the non-federal match requirements for the agency. Hopkins will also lead the agency’s



Lauren Weedon Hopkins

fundraising efforts as ECS prepares to launch a new, innovative, virtual event in the Jacksonville community, Wine Women & Shoes, in May of 2021.

“It is so important for children to build a solid educational foundation early in their lives,” said Hopkins. “I am honored to join the ECS team, which provides quality early learning opportunities for children and their

families. I am excited to grow community support for these vital programs.”

With more than 14 years of nonprofit experience in development, Hopkins is a member of the Association of Fundraising Professionals (AFP) and is a Certified Fund-Raising Executive (CFRE). She is a graduate of Washington and Lee University in Lexington, Virginia, where she earned a Bachelor of Arts degree with honors in English and print journalism. Hopkins is a Jacksonville native and a San Marco resident.

San Marco resident named to Teddy Roosevelt Board



Rod Sullivan



Rod Sullivan of San Marco has recently been appointed to the Board of Trustees of the Theodore Roosevelt Association of Oyster Bay, New York. Created by an Act of Congress in 1920, the organization perpetuates the legacy of President Theodore Roosevelt.

“The persons serving on the board are scholars, naval officers, and descendants of Roosevelt who come together to

preserve his memory,” said Sullivan, a local maritime attorney. “As a descendant of Theodore Roosevelt’s plumber, I feel a bit out of place, but I also feel honored to have been selected to serve among such a distinguished group.”

In the mid-1880s, Sullivan’s great-grandfather, Lawrence T. Mulhearn, a journeyman plumber, worked to install the plumbing in Roosevelt’s hillside home in Oyster Bay, then known as Leeholm. In the 1960s his grandmother, Zita Mulhearn Adamson, a New York school-teacher, encouraged him to inspect and admire the plumbing when they visited the home now known as Sagamore Hill. Since that time Sullivan has been fascinated by Roosevelt.

In the years that followed, Sullivan has re-traced Roosevelt’s footsteps throughout the world, including visiting the Elkhorn Ranch in North Dakota with some of Roosevelt’s descendants and dipping his toes in the Little Missouri River. He charged up San Juan Hill with the Tampa Rough Riders for the 120th Anniversary of the battle that made Roosevelt famous. He has even retraced the former president’s 1909 safari in Kenya. Sullivan also blogs occasionally for the Theodore Roosevelt Center at Dickinson University in North Dakota.

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Goetz to retire after 43 years at River Garden



Martin A. Goetz, chief executive officer at River Garden Senior Services, will step down from his position in March 2021 after 43 years with the company.

The announcement of Goetz’s retirement was made by Gloria Einstein, president of River Garden Senior Services, on Jan. 5. Mauri Mizrahi has been tapped to succeed Goetz as River Garden’s CEO in late March 2021. Mizrahi has served as association administrator at River Garden since 2017.

Goetz joined River Garden as an associate administrator in 1978 and assumed the role of CEO in 2004. During his tenure, River Garden has grown to include a 180-bed skilled nursing and rehabilitation facility as well as The Coves, an 80-unit independent living community, a Medicare-certified home health agency, adult day care, and a foundation.

Goetz has received many honors over the years including the “Young Executive of the Year” award in 1994 and “The Dr. Herbert Shore Award of Honor” award in 2016 from the Association of Jewish Aging Services. Leading/Age Florida also awarded him its “Distinguished Service Award” in 2003 and the “Chairman’s Award” in 2007.

He served as board chair of the Association of Jewish Aging Services from 2011-2013 and has also been a board member of OneJax. In the spring of 2021, he will be honored with the OneJax Humanitarian Award.

Goetz holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from Kent State University in Ohio, a Master of Science in Health Services Administration from SUNY at Stony Brook, and a Master of Public Administration from the University of North Florida.

Goetz and his wife, Susan, have two adult children.



Simms elected president of Sanctuary on 8th board

Dr. Catherine Baker Simms has been elected to serve as the president of the Sanctuary on 8th Board of Directors for 2021. Sims founded the Florida Children’s Institute in 2014 to make a difference for children and families coping with a wide range of behavior issues and learning disabilities.

Other newly appointed board members include Bernard Augustine, Christina Padilla, and Nathan Renstrom. Retiring from the board are Robert George and Laura Renstrom.

Community support helps city retain no-kill animal shelter status during pandemic

Thanks to the unwavering support of the local community, the City of Jacksonville has again earned the no-kill designation for the year 2020, in spite of the Coronavirus pandemic.

“A no-kill community is a city or town in which every brick-and-mortar shelter serving and/or located within that community has reached a 90% save rate or higher and adheres to the no-kill philosophy, saving every animal who can be saved,” according to Best Friends Animal Society.

In 2020, the save rate for Animal Care and Protective Services (APCS) was 91%

and 94% for the Jacksonville Humane Society (JHS), for a citywide save rate of 93%.

In total, 13,217 animals entered Jacksonville shelters in 2020. This was a decrease of 3,677 animals compared to 2019, which was likely a result of Animal Care and Protective Services being closed due to a viral outbreak among their canine population in February of 2020, and then closing for general intake in March through May of 2020 due to COVID-19. During that time, JHS remained open. Community members and local veterinary offices helped shoulder the burden to alleviate pressure on JHS, particularly with kittens.

Denise Deisler, CEO of Jacksonville Humane Society, credits the historic year of lifesaving to the community’s continued support of new initiatives and answering the call.

“Jacksonville is, without a doubt, one of the country’s most compassionate cities for pets and the people who love them,” said Deisler. “Whether we needed support for our Kitten Krusader program that keeps baby kitties out of the shelter, temporary foster homes to help us empty the kennels, or donations to help bridge the gap when our major fundraisers were cancelled – the people of this city came through in a major way.”



Community help saved animal lives during the pandemic

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Pearce takes first place in JCVA Art Show



Far Left: "Alexandria Oaks," an oil on arches paper painted by Mimi Pearce that placed first in the Jacksonville Coalition of Visual Artist's Show at the Jewish Community Alliance in January; Left: Mimi Pearce with her blue ribbon; Mimi and Jim Pearce Above: "Winterwood," a watercolor painted by Jim Pearce that was on display at the Jewish Community Alliance in January.

Alexandria Oaks, an oil on arches paper, painted by Mimi Pearce of San Marco, took home the blue ribbon at Jacksonville Coalition of Visual Artist's juried show at the Jewish Community Alliance in January.

Pearce's painting is displayed in the JCA's Vandroff Gallery. Also, on display is "Winterwood," a watercolor done by Pearce's husband, Jim.

The couple paint out of their studio, Yellow Pants, which is located at 1225 Hendricks Ave.



Last year 8,000 people attended the Jacksonville RV MegaShow

RV MegaShow takes COVID precautions

The 2021 Jacksonville RV MegaShow, hosted by Florida RV Trade Association (FRVTA) members in Northeast Florida, is scheduled to take place from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 11 through Sunday, Feb. 14 at the Jacksonville Equestrian Center – located at 13611 Normandy Blvd.

Regular admission is \$8 for adults and children 12 years or younger are admitted free. All active and retired military and first responders who attend will receive half-off the regular admission price throughout the show. On Thursday, Feb. 11, the opening

day of the show, all seniors will receive half-price admission.

To help prevent the spread of COVID-19, temperature checks will be taken as people enter the venue. Anyone with a temperature over 100.4 degrees will not be admitted. Face coverings will be required in all buildings and inside RVs when social distancing is not possible. Hand sanitizer stations will be provided throughout the facility.

More than 300 new recreational vehicles of all types, including motor homes, travel trailers, fifth wheels and tent campers, will

be on display. The show offers fun, family-friendly atmosphere with music, concessions, and giveaways. Pet owners can bring their dogs if they are on a leash. A \$250 gift card will be awarded as a door prize for a lucky guest each day of the event.

The February event marks the 12th consecutive year the show has been held at the Jacksonville Equestrian Center. Last year, about 8,000 people attended the show.

For more information, contact the Florida RV Trade Association at 813-741-0488 or visit the association's website at www.frvta.org.

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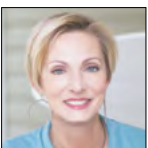
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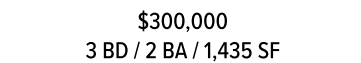
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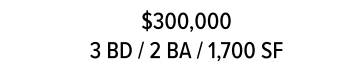
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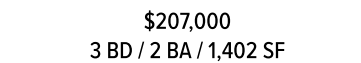
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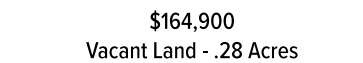
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Forecast murky for nonprofit sector in unsettled times

PADEMIC FORCES ‘HYPER-CHANGE’ IN THE WAY NOT-FOR-PROFITS CONDUCT BUSINESS

By Marcia Hodgson
Resident Community News

Northeast Florida’s nonprofit organizations have found it hard to regain their footing from nearly a year filled with major disruptions caused by COVID-19. The continuing slow roll-out of Coronavirus vaccines, rocky economy, and transfer to a new regime in Washington, have made it difficult for organizations within the sector to “catch their breath” as they endeavor to adapt to “hyper-change,” while serving the community during such unforeseen circumstances.

In a Jan. 14 update of the State of the Sector talk she gave before the Planned Giving Council of Northeast Florida in May, Rena Coughlin, CEO of the Nonprofit Center, discussed the hardships and necessary adaptations nonprofits have faced during the pandemic. She also suggested several ways the sector can reposition itself for strength as it attempts to settle into a new normal.

“We are talking about major disruption and hyper-change, the speed and the pace of which is only equaled to the length and duration of this disruption,” said Coughlin. “When we talked in May, there was still this sense that ‘Wow, we are just catching our breath.’ Organizations report all the time that just when things are settling there is another surge,

or regulations change, or the economic outlook changes. There never seems to be any settling for most organizations that gives them time to regroup,” she said.

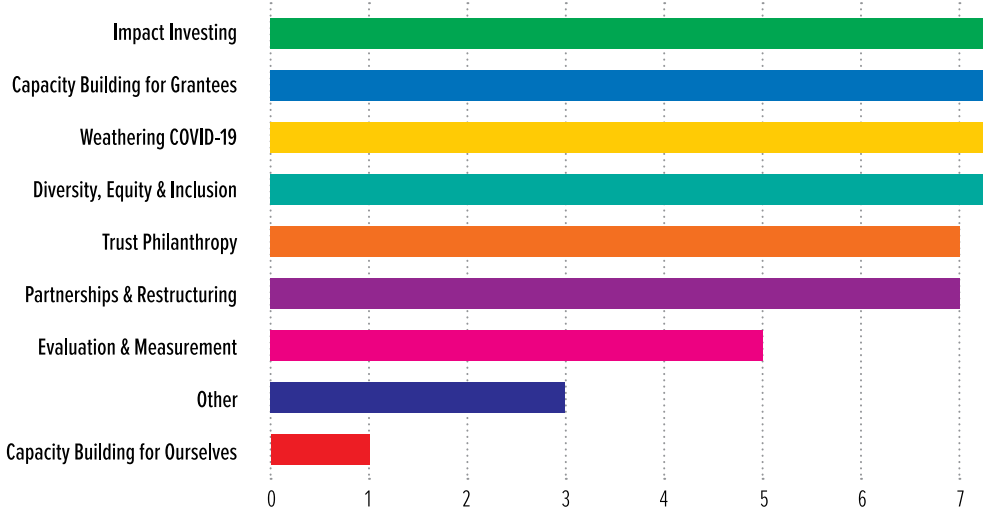
According to surveys done by the Nonprofit Center of Northeast Florida, the pandemic has forced 28% of local nonprofits to cut their worker’s hours or lay off staff. Yet 31% have experienced an increased demand for services while more than half have lost revenue due to cancelled fundraisers, and 28% have lost revenue due to a reduced demand for services. Eight in 10 nonprofits have found it necessary to apply for PPP grants/loans or some other COVID-19 relief funding. And one third reported difficulty operating in a virtual environment.

What the Nonprofit Center is seeing is a “trifurcation” in the sector, said Coughlin. “One group has had a huge increase on their demand for services with a lack of resources to deliver. Then some organizations have a huge demand for services and have been able to marshal the resources so they can meet capacity. Then there is a third group of organizations that are still struggling to reenter the community and workforce at the level that they had been,” she said referring to civic and cultural organizations that need to convene big groups of people to get their work done. For those organizations, the pandemic has severely impacted earned income and how they deliver on their contracts because it affects the way they are reimbursed or earn revenue.

Many organizations report they are struggling with the conversion to either hybrid or virtual ways of doing business. “It is not just the

IMPORTANT ISSUES FOR LOCAL GRANTMAKERS

What are the most important issues when it comes to your organization’s grantmaking in the coming year?



cancelling of fundraisers that is really hurting organizations, it’s access to unrestricted dollars,” Coughlin said. Many nonprofits were successful in obtaining PPP during the first round, and at least 60% have said they will be applying for PPP grants/loans in the second, even though there will be slightly different requirements. “There is a significant need to shore up the bottom line for nonprofits when it comes to paying for what is usually the most expensive line item in the budget – people, human capital,” she said, adding that those applying for the second round of PPP need to prove they have a 25% reduction in revenue in comparable quarters.

When the Nonprofit Center sent out a recent survey asking how organizations thought they would “come out of 2021,” the response was largely positive. At least 20% were confident they would be fine, while 65% checked the box as “cautiously optimistic.” Only 12% were “uncertain – too many unknowns,” and 3% were “very concerned – unsure if we will be open.” Yet, none checked the box saying they were “gloomy.”

However, in speaking with nonprofit leaders one-on-one, most indicated they are “very exhausted,” said Coughlin. “The words I kept hearing were ‘saturation level.’ They are so worried about their teams, and they are pessimistic about so many things – whether they will raise enough money, whether they will hold their programming – yet when you ask them how they will be at the end of 2021, they will say, ‘We’re going to be all right.’ I don’t know whether it comes with the territory of the nonprofit sector, but I believe there is an optimism bias.”

Repositioning the Sector

Several lessons have been learned as the nonprofit sector struggles to survive the pandemic, the first being that many nonprofits have not closed revealing to the community just how essential they are, she said. A big part of this lesson is a thorough consideration of who, exactly, is an essential worker. Going forward it will be important, perhaps, to redefine




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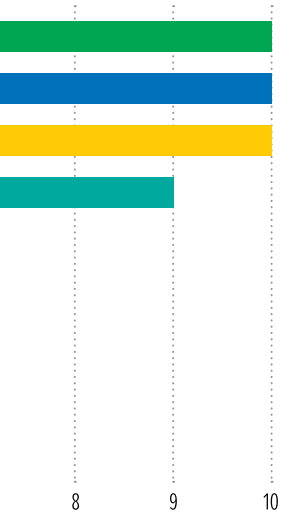
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Local Nonprofits After COVID-19

8 in 10

Have applied for the PPP or some other COVID-19 relief funding

31%

experienced increased demand for services

1/3

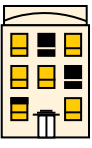
reported difficulty operating in a virtual environment

28%

lost revenue due to reduced demand for services

1/2

lost revenue due to canceled fundraisers



28%

had to cut hours or lay off staff

just who is essential, and this may differ from the workers who keep the community afloat during a hurricane and those who help distribute food, clean hospitals and buildings, and provide transportation during a pandemic.

The current “dreadful” economy with 10 million unemployed, shows the value of the nonprofit sector as it fills community needs for childcare, healthcare, elder care, and disabled care, she said, adding that nonprofit organizations that supply essential services are necessary in making an economic renaissance possible.

“Think about how dependent we are on our institutions of faith, of art and culture, of dance, and theater. These things we have gone without for a very long time. I don’t think that we will feel like we are back to normal until these things are functioning,” she said.

Big reveals

The pandemic has disclosed several inequities – specifically who has access to healthcare, childcare, technology, and the internet

– embedded in our economy and institutions, Coughlin said. These inequities were compounded when the social justice movement exploded in the summer of 2020. “So many leaders in the nonprofit community have said to us that this is a top priority,” she said. “One of the few bright spots in this pandemic is this that this disruption exploded a lot of business and cultural norms that had kept organizations from being flexible, creative, and innovative in how we work, how we serve, and how we live.”

Also revealed were gaps in technology, logistics, partnerships, protocols, funding mechanisms, and leadership. “I think what everyone keeps saying is, ‘Let’s not forget this.’ We shouldn’t go back to thinking we fixed it when we haven’t,” she added.

Positives revealed by the pandemic include discovering that virtual work can be effective. Using new technology to break down barriers in service delivery is possible. “We’ve seen huge, positive increases in how organizations deliver, particularly in healthcare, telemedicine,

telehealth, and counseling. Even an organization like The Literary Alliance has changed how they work and who they work with. Play therapy for young kids obviously does not translate well on Zoom, but there are other ways we can start thinking of to address things,” she said.

Also, important is to focus on team well-being and fair compensation as well as trust philanthropy, where donors feel comfortable in allowing the nonprofit unrestricted management of their gifts.

Throughout the pandemic it has been apparent the boards of many organizations do not fully understand their organization’s business model, or their role in assisting the executive director when making critical decisions, Coughlin said. “Getting a PPP loan is a perfect example. The boards of some organizations said that they could not apply for loans because they were a nonprofit. They had so little understanding of the essential meaning of a nonprofit. They thought it was illegal for them to have a loan,” she said.

COVID-19 has also showed that operating reserves are critical to the an organization’s survival. “We are hoping that we can, with non-pejorative language, help organizations think about new business models and partnerships on a spectrum from cooperative partnerships to mergers,” she said.

Important issues for local grantmakers

Coughlin said she was recently in a meeting where she had an “out of body” experience. “I was the only nonprofit representative on the call and there were a lot of people with a lot of wealth talking about how great a year it was,” she remembered. “How do you reconcile what truly was for so many investors a very good year with the reality of the situation for the majority of the rest of the universe?”

Local philanthropists have continued to make major contributions during the pandemic,

but at some point, they will be stretched thin, she said. Meanwhile, a fair portion of everyday donors has diminished. “We lost some 30,000 people who contributed small, itemized deductions to the recession. It is a big question as to what the impact will be after this pandemic is over.”

In a recent Nonprofit Center survey, philanthropists noted the top issues they consider when giving. At the top of the list were impact investing, capacity building for grantees, and weathering COVID-19. Slightly below was bringing diversity, equity, and inclusion to the organization. Trust philanthropy, and partnerships and restructuring also got high marks.

As the pandemic drags on in 2021, Coughlin had three points of advice to share with nonprofit leadership: 1) Stay hyper-relevant; 2) Be willing to develop and pivot operations; 3) Capitalize on new initiatives and partnerships.

“Stay hyper-relevant. You have to communicate and advocate and make sure people know you are still here, and you are still working – that you are still delivering on your mission,” she said, adding it is important organizations expand hybrid, synchronous service, learning, to examine infrastructure needs and to prep for the future minimum wage when it goes to \$15 an hour.

Capitalizing on new initiatives and partnerships is also imperative. “Are there opportunities to right-size your organization? Are there merger opportunities for you as a strong organization to initiate or is there a need for you to think about being absorbed into another organization?” she asked.

Investing in diversity, equity, and inclusion to enhance competitiveness in the marketplace is also important, which dovetails with prioritizing staff care and staff development. In a 2019 survey, the Nonprofit Center asked whether organizations were supporting their executives with at-home technology or internet access. None were. “That has to change,” she said.

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HOMETOWN HEROES: ELLEN SULLIVAN

BY MARCIA HODGSON
RESIDENT COMMUNITY NEWS

RETURNING TO NURSING
TO ANSWER THE CALL

Although her current day job as business manager of The BairFind Foundation has nothing to do with nursing, Ellen Sullivan of San Marco has always kept her hand in by keeping her RN (Registered Nurse) license active. Desiring to answer a call to former nurses to assist with COVID-19 testing, she became a hometown hero of sorts by finishing up a three-month, 176-hour clinical refresher course in December. The course was offered by Florida State College Jacksonville, the official provider for the Board of Nursing.

“There was a call for former nurses with the sheer volume of testing for COVID-19,” she said. “I’ve always maintained an active RN license, however, it was a long time since I’ve provided direct patient care,” said Sullivan, noting the course through FSCJ Workforce

Planning was comprehensive and thorough. To complete the refresher course Sullivan was required to devour 1,000 pages of text, answer 4,050 questions, take part in 25 clinical simulations and labs, successfully pass five timed-comprehensive exams, and study pharmacology. “I loved it. I highly recommend it,” she said. “Now, I am prepared to help in my community should the need arise.”

Before she began her work with The BairFind Foundation, a nonprofit that helps search for missing children, Sullivan was an entrepreneur, who had crossed over the sectors of nursing, healthcare, and nonprofits.

As an RN, she began her career as a critical care nurse. She then gained broad corporate experience in healthcare quality and compliance by working over 20 years at Florida Blue. Eventually, Ellen left her executive role to invest in the first Doctors Express Urgent Care clinic in Florida. Later, after she successfully sold her business, she became CEO of BairFind in its national expansion as an official charity partner of Minor League Baseball. Although she stepped back as BairFind’s CEO when she took on a role to help Jacksonville Women’s Business Center as its former director, she continues to serve as BairFind’s business manager. She also currently serves as a consultant on innovation projects.

Sullivan has served on many boards of directors, including ATHENA International, JAX Chamber Board of Directors and Board of Governors, the Chamber Health Council, the Jacksonville Women’s Business Center, Women Business Owners of North Florida, and Theatre Jacksonville.

Her passion is the health and wellbeing of children and teens, and she is a longtime



“Now I am prepared to help
in my community
should the need arise.”

— Ellen Sullivan RN



Ellen Sullivan works on the Shadow Health Digital Clinical Experience program

supporter of Safe Harbor Boys Home. A member of Leadership Jacksonville, she volunteers for its youth program.

Sullivan has received numerous awards and recognition including Family Foundations “Asset Award for Wise Money Week” and the Small Business Leader of the Year from the Chamber’s Health Council. She was named one of Advantage Magazine’s “Top 50 Business Influencers” and “Up and Coming Entrepreneur” Finalist at the Women in Business Awards. Also, she has been featured in Entrepreneur Magazine and on CNBC. Ellen earned a Bachelor of Science degree in nursing from the University of Iowa and a Master of Science degree in administration from Central Michigan University.

She is married to maritime attorney Rod Sullivan and has two children, Brendan, a category buyer for Southeastern Grocers, and Jacqueline, a professional performing artist.

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Animal House

By Julie Kerns Garmendia Resident Community News

Pet therapy teams provide comfort

VISITING WITH THERAPY ANIMALS LIFTS SPIRITS, BOOSTS MORALE AND RELIEVES STRESS

Children with prosthetic limbs, in wheelchairs or wearing baseball caps at Nemours, smile and laugh as they hug, pet, and talk to the dark bay American miniature horse with the seafoam-green orthotic leg device. Seven-year-old Buc stands calmly between Chris and Dale Dunn, surprisingly relaxed as the center of joyful, noisy attention. When the 36-inch horse looks these children in the eyes, hospital walls and medical scrubs fade away.

Buc almost did not survive to fulfill his unique destiny with Pet Partners of North Florida (PPNF), as part of the Dunn's pet therapy team that visits Nemours, Riverside senior centers, fire stations, schools and events. An accidental rope entanglement severely damaged the miniature horse's back leg and disconnected his hoof, and his owners could not afford vet bills. The Dunns adopted Buc, then learned that the lost hoof compounded by a 10% chance of survival, indicated euthanasia.



Chris and Dale Dunn with Buc and Buddie

“Dr. Herb Loeman at Atlantic Veterinary Hospital thought differently. He agreed to try to help Buc and with 24-hour care by our friend, equestrian Claire Piatt, they saved Buc's life. His foot healed, although it's misshapen. Sam Marvin, certified veterinarian prosthetist-orthotist in Bushnell, Florida, created a custom orthotic leg support, and Buc wears protective boots. Walking is a challenge, but he's a living miracle,” Dunn said. “His disability helps hospitalized kids, who each have their own challenges or who may also look or move differently. Buc loves them. He senses who needs him most and puts his head against that child's chest.”

The other four-legged member of the Dunn's animal-assisted therapy team is

Buddie, an 11-year-old miniature Doberman pinscher. Buddie was adopted from St. Johns County Animal Control.

“When I put Buddie's vest on he knows it's time to go to work. If I place him carefully in the lap of a child in a wheelchair, he instantly knows to cuddle as gently as possible. If a child sits beside him, he crawls right into the child's lap. Everyone notices his soft coat, just perfect for tiny hands,” Chris Dunn said. “With seniors, he understands their frailty and instinctively knows what to do to make them happy.” Chris and Dale Dunn own Ravenwood Farm Foundation, a dog and horse rescue. They volunteer as PPNF-registered pet therapy team and participate in hurricane/all-disaster emergency preparedness and large animal rescue/recovery for Florida and Louisiana. They are PetSmart Emergency Response Team volunteers.

Cindy Ballantyne and her rescue rabbit, Gimli, were the first registered rabbit pet therapy team in North Florida. When they visit mental or behavioral health support groups, everyone asks why Gimli has only three legs. Ballantyne is a military veteran who has struggled with PTSD, depression, and has worked with domestic abuse victims. She knows how to immediately connect with her listeners, whatever their situations or personal challenges.

“I broke Gimli's leg,” she tells them. “It's all my fault.”

Uncomfortable silence and questioning stares normally follow as Ballantyne allows that statement to sink in. Then she explains that Gimli was relaxed on her lap when he



Cindy Ballantyne and her therapy rabbit Gimli visit with a senior

suddenly became startled, and she could not react quickly enough to restrain him before he leapt to the ground. His severely broken leg could not be saved.

“What you say aloud to others or say to yourself inside your thoughts and how you say those words, really matters. Word choice and tone of voice can communicate entirely different meanings and emotions,” Ballantyne said. “What happened to Gimli was an awful accident. However, I could torture myself with blame and guilt regarding my actions or inability to act quickly enough. Unfortunately, that is what people dealing with life adversities, behavioral or mental health issues, often do to themselves. We want to show that simple changes are possible, can be learned and can help.”

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Sooshi just wants to be admired and petted

Ballantyne said that her visits to share Gimli with first-grade children diagnosed with attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) or various learning differences, are eye-opening.

“Rabbits are prey animals and startle easily. To approach or pet Gimli, you must be calm and gentle. These children, who struggle to be calm or quiet, discover that it is possible, because they want so badly to interact with Gimli,” she said. “They learn to practice being able to quiet themselves or sit still. Still, slow, and quiet are skills quickly learned when petting Gimli is the reward. Every small success builds their self-esteem.”

Ballantyne and Gimli visited a local hospital burn unit where a young patient wore a partial face covering and gloves. A visiting child entered with her family, saw the injured patient, and loudly remarked, “Ooooh, gross!” Ballantyne recalled what a hurtful moment that was for the burn patient and her parents.

“I showed the visitor child that Gimli only has three legs. He looks very different from other rabbits, but that’s okay,” she said. “Working as a team with these special animals gives us many small teaching moments.” Ballantyne and Gimli visit Riverside/Avondale

schools, nursing homes, hospitals, and patients at Brooks Rehabilitation.

PPNF’s board chairman, certified instructor, and registered handler, is Lorri Reynolds. Reynolds and her rescue cat, Sooshi, were the first locally registered feline pet therapy team. They visit Community Hospice & Palliative Care and PedsCare patients, Brookdale Avondale, St. Catherine Laboure and Taylor Manor senior living facilities. Reynolds said that COVID restrictions forced pet therapy teams to find new venues when hospitals and nursing homes locked down. An unexpected result has been more access to many new venues and greatly expanded services.

Pet therapy teams visited Jacksonville’s Amazon facilities after the 2020 shooting incidents to comfort workers traumatized by the violence, and nervous about their safety. They have visited the FBI, real estate and title companies, and other businesses to help share positive animal interaction, lift spirits, boost morale, and relieve stress, Reynolds said.

“People are surprised to see Sooshi walk in wearing her harness and leash, with her beautiful green eyes and diva air. She is totally relaxed and laid-back. Sooshi just



Buddie visits with a friend



Cindy Ballantyne with her rabbit, Gimli

wants to be admired and petted. That makes for the perfect, soothing visit, especially for hospice patients or seniors,” said Reynolds, vice president/managing broker of Watson Realty’s Avondale/Ortega office.

Each human handler said that most people need and want to feel connected to others during stressful times or situations, whatever their circumstances. To pet or hold an affectionate animal, could be the best part of the day. During animal-assisted therapy, the focus is on positive fun, relaxation, and enjoyment, to help better handle challenges that an individual or group might face.

PPNF is part of an all-volunteer, nonprofit national organization that promotes animal-assisted therapy through expert evaluation, training, testing, and registration of pet therapy team human handlers and their animal partners. Screening, adherence to the highest quality, research-based training, and continuing education ensure safe, effective visits.

The organization supports scientific research that documents the benefits of animal-assisted therapy and the human-animal bond: affection,

acceptance, comfort during crisis, relief of anxiety and stress, feelings of normalcy, and home-like experiences.

PPNF’s local chapter has volunteer men, women, and youth pet therapy team handlers from the age of 16 to 78 and approximately 100 teams. Volunteers may register from the age of 10, although they must be accompanied on visits by an adult until age 18. If interested in this rewarding volunteer opportunity to show compassion, help others, make a difference in lives and enjoy a rewarding activity while sharing your pet, contact PPNF.

All PPNF visits and services are completely free of charge. PPNF registers nine animal species: cats, dogs, birds, rabbits, guinea pigs, rats, pigs, miniature and full-size horses, donkeys, llamas, and alpacas.

To learn if a pet is suited for therapy work, take the online quiz at petpartners.org/quiz, or contact: Pet Partners of North Florida, P.O. Box 1485, Ponte Vedra Beach, FL 32004 or call 904/612-8952. For more information, their email is EachDayIsHis@gmail.com or visit their website, www.petpartnersnf.org.



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THE WAY WE WERE: BILL AND MARY DUDLEY SCHMIDT

BY MARY WANSEN
RESIDENT COMMUNITY NEWS

It doesn't happen often. But sometimes, Cupid's arrow pierces the same heart twice. Such was the fate of Bill Schmidt.

He was only 15 years old when he met his first love, his first wife, the mother of his two children. But cancer came. On the day he turned 48, the widower's heart beat with love again when he met the lady who would become his second wife. Their nearly three-decade relationship is proof that true love can happen twice in a single lifetime.

Schmidt is a fourth generation Floridian. His maternal great-great-grandfather, William B. Henderson, born in Georgia, is considered one of the founders of Tampa and the namesake of Henderson Boulevard, Henderson Avenue, and W. B. Henderson Elementary School there. His mother, Christine Henderson, was one of five girls, all third generation Floridians.



Christine and Gert Schmidt

Schmidt's father, Gert, was a German immigrant who grew up in Vermont, went to Cornell University in New York to learn the hospitality industry, and was hired by George Mason to manage his Tampa Terrace Hotel. Schmidt's parents met at that hotel while his dad was working, and his mom was there decorating a room for her Plant High School prom. Schmidt's dad, as hotel manager, had told his secretary that he was so taken by the high school senior, "Someday, I'm gonna marry that girl." A few years later, he did, before joining the Army Air Corps as a flight instructor. The couple moved to Ocala, where Bill Schmidt was born in 1944.

After the war, in 1946, the family moved to Jacksonville when Schmidt was 2 years old. His father had been hired by Robert Kloepfel to manage the Hotel George Washington downtown. Schmidt recalls living in a penthouse there and his swing set being perched atop the hotel roof. The bellman often took Schmidt for walks around

the city for exercise. By the age of 5, after a brief move to Fairfax Manor in the Avondale area, the family settled in the neighborhood of Venetia near Ortega where Schmidt grew up as big brother to Kent, Jack, and Bobby.

Venetia was built according to the developer's dream—for it to be like Venice, Italy, with every other street to be little canals. But then the Great Depression came, and building stopped. So, when the family moved to the area, it was rather primitive and very woody. Schmidt's dad volunteered with the Wesconnett Fire Department. There was no garbage pick-up service and only two or three homes on each block. Theirs was at the corner of Roma Boulevard and Genoa Avenue.

Next door to their home was an empty lot where Schmidt and his brothers enjoyed playing kick the can, baseball, and other sports. Living close to the St. Johns River, the four often fished and water skied.

Schmidt attended Venetia Elementary School, Lakeshore Junior High, and Robert E. Lee High School where he was a member of the football team. He keeps up with many of his childhood friends all these decades later.

In January of his high school senior year, 1962, Schmidt's family moved to Florence Drive in Ortega, just prior to his graduating and leaving home for the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill to study business administration. During his senior year of college, he was president of his fraternity, Delta Kappa Epsilon, to which he had pledged along with two buddies from Lee: Hap Stewart and Mike Hoyt, who was Schmidt's freshman roommate. Schmidt had three more friends from Lee at UNC—Graham Allen, Bobby Martin, and Ray Rodgers—but they had pledged to a different fraternity. Upon returning home to Jacksonville after college graduation in 1966, Schmidt began working in the family business, Florida Tractor Corporation, a wholesale distribution company.

"I'd always loved advertising and public relations," Schmidt said. So, in 1982, he



Mary Dudley Childress and Bill Schmidt on their blind date on March 2, 1992



Schmidt Family at John and Kathryn Schmidt's farm in The Plains, Virginia on Thanksgiving 2018. Back Row: John, Turner, Ragnar, Hildur, Mattie, Mary Dudley, Bill, Bill Jr., Grayson, and Kathryn. Front Row: Magnus, Coal the golden retriever, and Thor.

partnered with three friends—Fred Miller, Bill Robinson, and Larry Nussmeyer—to form Miller/Robinson/ Nussmeyer/Schmidt, an advertising and public relations company. Once that company broke up, Schmidt went on to form William G. Schmidt Advertising and Public Relations, Inc.

During his senior year of college, Schmidt married his high school sweetheart, Sandra Johnston. They'd been dating since they turned 15 but were apart for a time while he was at UNC and she at USC. They raised two boys on Algonquin Avenue in Ortega, Bill Junior and John, who were born 13 months apart. The boys attended St. Mark's Episcopal Day School, where their dad taught confirmation classes, and then Bolles starting in seventh grade. Growing up, when they weren't playing sports, they loved duck hunting and dove hunting with their dad. In 1991, Bill Junior was in North Carolina at Wake Forest School of Medicine. John had just graduated from UNC, his father's alma mater, and was working for the Republican National Committee in Washington. It was on October 13 of that year, after 27 years of marriage, that cancer took Sandra's life. It took Bill's heart with it. Or so he thought.

On March 2, 1992, his 48th birthday, Schmidt met Mary Dudley Childress on a blind date at a Mardi Gras celebration in Mobile, Alabama. He had been invited there by his friends, Geoff and Nancy (nee McLean) Parker. Schmidt and Parker had met during their freshman year at UNC when they were both members of the German Club. Childress had been invited to the annual event, which extends the debutante season for exclusive social circles, as godmother to one of the debutantes. When Schmidt and Childress met, "I was no spring chicken. I was 49," Mary Dudley admitted. "I fell for her the moment I saw her. It was love at first sight," Bill said.



Schmidt Wedding - Chapel of St. Mark's Episcopal Church - February 24, 1995

They wed on February 24, 1995. "I was terrified, so it took him three years to convince me to get married," Mary Dudley said. She was a Mississippi gal, an only child whose parents died young. She felt, and still does, so fortunate because Gert and Christine, Bill's parents, welcomed her readily into their family. "Bill and Sandra raised two fine young men, and now there are six grandchildren," Mary Dudley pointed out. She relished having an instant family. "I married Bill because he's a good husband, a good father, and a good Christian," she said.

Mary Dudley comes from a tiny town, a farming community in Mississippi with a population of 735 people. She did live for a brief time in Alabama. And although she has seen the world as a 56-year, recently retired Delta airline flight attendant,

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Mary Dudley Schmidt and her horse, Sam Brown

“Jacksonville’s the biggest place I’ve ever lived,” she said. She relocated here after the wedding. “I moved into Bill’s house and made it my own. People have been lovely to me, and I’m so appreciative,” she said.

Because of her airline career, the couple has been able to travel together extensively. “Mary Dudley has opened my horizons worldwide,” Bill said. “I really wanted to share my career with him. I wanted to share the bounty,” she said in reply. They have been to 16 countries on a regular basis. They were working trips for her while in the air, but they did get to tour together once they landed. One of numerous highlights was Bill having the opportunity to attend a Rotary Club meeting in Hamburg, Germany, on a layover where he met three men who seemed to know more about Florida than he did. Another was the uniqueness of eating delicious sushi from a convenience store in Narita, Japan. “My life hasn’t been glamorous, but it’s been filled with a lot of adventure,” Mary Dudley said.

Mary Dudley does not miss flying for work. She’s learning to navigate a whole new world being full-time on the ground. “I’m learning to cook a little bit,” she said but admitted that Bill still prepares most of their meals. “I’m just beginning to have local adventures,” she said, and notes she is happy about meeting new people in the area around their home.

While she was still employed by Delta, Mary Dudley started an additional part-time job at Underwood Jewelers in Avondale



Mary Dudley Schmidt at the Trevi Fountain in Rome
“Toss a coin and you’ll return.”

where she still works today, for over two decades now. “I’ve met so many wonderful people there from all walks of life. That was my introduction to Jacksonville. And I felt good about it,” she said. She also commented about the numerous ZIP Codes she has learned since moving here.

Between them, the couple has had eight dogs since they’ve been together. Bill refers to the two of them as “animal persons.” As a child, Mary Dudley enjoyed riding horses. Her dad was a horseman on their family’s farm in Mississippi. At 72, when Bill bought her a horse for Christmas, she started taking lessons again at Geddaway Farm, which is owned by Sherri Geddes who lives in Ortega. Now 77, Mary Dudley recently began adult ballet classes at Baggs Studio on Plymouth Street.

“She’s a young 77. She looks 55. When I first saw Mary Dudley, my heart went to 12 on the flutter meter, and it hasn’t stopped

since then,” Bill said of his wife, and he mentioned a song entitled “Tell Your Heart to Beat Again,” a single recorded in 2016 by Danny Gokey. The lyrics tell Bill’s story best, his story of love and loss and love again: “Tell your heart to beat again. Close your eyes and breathe it in. Let the shadows fall away. Step into the light of grace.”

Bill is retired from business now and has also stepped down from his volunteer work with the Episcopal Diocese of Florida. He’s very proud to have been awarded the Bishop’s Cross Award for his prior service by Bishop Samuel Johnson Howard in 2012.

Bill spends as much time as he can in the art studio he built in his home. His canvases reflect an Impressionist approach and style. He is an honorary board member of the Jacksonville Artists Guild (JAG), the organi-



Mary Dudley and Bill Schmidt at Victoria Falls, South Africa

zation he formed in 2009 in memory of his mother who was an accomplished and prolific artist, a painter of acrylics and oils. The Guild’s co-founder is watercolorist Carole King Mehrtens, another Jacksonville resident, who was a dear friend, fellow painter, and traveling companion of Bill’s mom. The organization today has over 140 members. JAG hosts a variety of events, exhibitions, and programs that benefit the public.

Bill suffers from spinal stenosis, and his doctor tells him, “Motion is lotion,” so he tries to stay as active as possible. He chairs reunions for his alma mater, UNC. He has chaired many of his Lee High School reunions over the past five decades and remains friends with his female co-chairs, many of whom are members of the Lee Lunch Bunch Girls Club and have dubbed Schmidt their honorary mascot, still calling him by his childhood nickname, Billy. He threw himself a 75th birthday luncheon a couple of years ago and invited some of the ladies—Joanne Griffin-Caraway (former Miss Lee High), Catherine Sears-Sexton, and Margaret DeHoff-Stanly, to name a few.

Bill and Mary Dudley are still living in the Algonquin Avenue house in Ortega where he raised his boys. He’s lived there for nearly 50 years. The couple has also acquired a condo on Jacksonville Beach where they enjoy watching the waves of the Atlantic Ocean.

Together for nearly 29 years, February 24 will mark their 26th wedding anniversary. For some, love like that doesn’t even come once in a lifetime. For Bill Schmidt, it’s come twice.



Mary Dudley and Bill Schmidt



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Bolles receives historic gift, begins residence hall project

A historic gift from American businessman, philanthropist and professional sports owner Gordon Gund is fueling transformative changes for Bolles Hall and the Bolles Residential Life program in Jacksonville. While the amount is undisclosed, it marks the largest single donor gift in the School’s 88-year history, according to Bolles Chief Advancement Officer Carol Nimitz.

“This gift fulfills our community’s longtime vision of locating our Girls’ Residential Life program on the Bolles Upper School San Jose Campus and allows the program to grow and expand in its experience,” Nimitz said. Female boarders at Bolles have been living in a residence hall on the Bolles Middle School Bartram Campus while their male peers call the third floor of Bolles Hall home. “Girls will soon be able to live on the campus where they learn and – along with boy-boarder and day-student peers – flourish in an environmentally friendly facility.”

Called the Llura “Lulie” Liggett Gund ’58 Bartram Residence Hall for Girls, the project encompasses the entire second floor of Bolles Hall and will double Bolles’ female boarding capacity from 30 to 60 students – positioning the program to meet increasing admission demand. The work includes notable environmental enhancements to the entire building, originally developed in the mid-1920s as a posh hotel before its founding as a school in 1933. Bolles Hall will be 100% solar energy dependent once the new residence hall opens in July 2021.

Local architecture firm Luke Architecture P.A. has designed plans for the new spaces and Bent Construction is contractor for the six-month project. The full scope of work



Lulie Liggett Gund and her 1958 Bartram classmates. Gund is in the back row, far left.



Zachary Gund, Lulie Liggett Gund with Gordon Gund and Grant Gund



Thanks to a generous gift from the Gund family, renovations are being made to transform the second floor of Bolles Hall into a girls’ dormitory



Floor plan of the rooms comprising the new girls’ dormitory in Bolles Hall

hinges on future completion of a STEM building planned for the Upper School San Jose Campus bluff. This building, expected to house the school’s science, math, and technology offerings, adds classroom space displaced by the residence hall expansion.

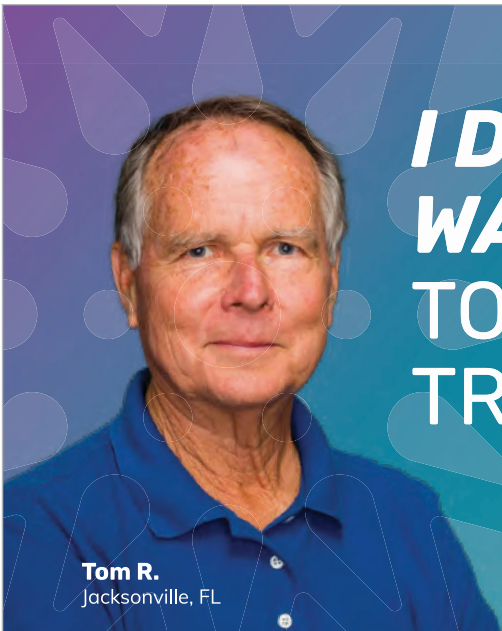
The new female residence hall project will also provide new learning spaces for students on the Bolles Middle School Bartram Campus. Former girls’ dorm rooms on this campus

will be converted into new classrooms and areas for collaboration.

Lulie Gund attended Bartram School for girls in the 1950s before it merged with The Bolles School in 1991. An avid supporter of both schools and a philanthropist who made tangible changes in the realms of blinding retinal diseases, conservation, and renewable energy, Gund passed away in 2020. Her husband, Gordon Gund, and their sons,

Grant and Zack, made the gift in her honor and their generosity is unmatched.

“The indelible impact Lulie made on the world through her philanthropic endeavors is tangible and forever changes the future for Bolles,” Nimitz said. “We are incredibly grateful to the Gund family for making this gift, it truly refines and advances the educational experiences of our children now and in the future.”



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San Marco Eagle Scout awarded Boys Scouts’ highest honor

By Marcia Hodgson
Resident Community News



North Florida Boy Scout Executive and CEO Jack Sears with High Honor of the Crossed Palms recipient Ross Johnson

A Jacksonville University sophomore and Eagle Scout received national acclaim when he was awarded the Boy Scouts of America’s highest honor Jan. 12.

Ross C. Johnson, 20, of San Marco, was awarded the Boy Scout’s High Honor Medal of Crossed Palms during a BSA National Court of Honor held at All Saints Episcopal Church. Presenting the award was North Florida Scout Executive and CEO Jack Sears. The High Honor Medal of Crossed Palms is awarded to Boy Scout youth members or adult leaders who have demonstrated unusual heroism and extraordinary skill or resourcefulness in saving or attempting to save a life at extreme risk to themselves. The medal has been awarded fewer than 300 times since its inception in 1924, according to the Boy Scouts’ website.

Johnson was recognized with the prestigious medal for his bravery when he saved a young teenage stranger from drowning at Neptune Beach on May 17, 2020. For his bravery, Johnson was presented with the prestigious Lifesaving Award by the Neptune Beach City Council, during a meeting Aug. 3, 2020.

During the National Court of Honor in January, Sears also read a proclamation of congratulations from Florida Senator Marco Rubio.

Johnson was planning to have dinner with his family and some friends in Neptune Beach when the group decided to take a short walk on the beach. He quickly responded when a screaming woman came running out of the water calling desperately for help because her 13-year-old nephew, who did not know how to swim, had been swept at least 150 yards offshore in a rip current.

Seeing no lifeguards on duty or floatation devices available nearby, Johnson urgently yanked off his shirt and shoes and emptied his pockets before running into the water. The sea was rough because Tropical Storm Arthur was raging some distance off the coast, making the long, arduous swim and rescue of the victim more difficult. After it was over, Neptune Beach paramedics ambulated the young teen to a nearby hospital, and Johnson credited skills he had learned in Boy Scout Troop 136 with his ability save the boys’ life.

Johnson began his scouting career as a Tiger Cub in Pack 35 when he was 7 years old. At age 11, he crossed over to Boy Scout Troop 136 in San Marco. He obtained the rank of Eagle Scout when he was 13 after leading his fellow scouts in an Eagle Project that landscaped and created a new drainage

system at Jacksonville University. The project caught the eye of Jacksonville University President Tim Cost, who offered Johnson a full-tuition President’s scholarship.

“Isn’t it a bright spot that scouting played such a role in someone else’s life?” said Sears, noting the contribution Johnson’s scout training had in saving the life of a teenage stranger. “Every person in this room can celebrate and feel good about what you are doing for your families and other families to help perpetuate life-saving skills that truly make a difference.” Sears also added that in his 35-year tenure of working professionally for the Boy Scouts of America, Johnson’s award was only the second High Honor of Crossed Palms Medal he had the privilege to present.

During the ceremony, Johnson thanked all his scoutmasters over the years. “If it was not for the skills that I learned in Troop 136, I would not have been able to help that young man,” he said, addressing the scouts in the audience. “I encourage you to have fun as you work hard. Pay close attention and learn all you can. The skills you learn on your journey throughout scouts will greatly help you in life. Thank you and be prepared.”

Feeding Northeast Florida receives \$100,000 grant on Giving Tuesday

Feeding Northeast Florida received a \$100,000 donation from The Delta Dental Community Care Foundation on Giving Tuesday, Dec. 1. The donation was part of a larger initiative for the company as \$325,000 was donated by the foundation to food banks across Florida through this grant.

“We are grateful for the generosity of Delta Dental for their support of Feeding Northeast Florida,” said Feeding Northeast Florida Development Director Sarah Dobson. “In 2020, the need for food assistance has doubled, making this donation even more important. The Delta Dental Community Care Foundation’s commitment to give back is admirable, and their partnership is critical in our fight against hunger.”

Delta Dental will donate \$2.5 million in funding to food banks across 15 states and Washington, D.C., in addition to the \$11

million in previously awarded grants in response to COVID-19, said Kenzie Ferguson, vice president of Delta Dental.

“As a result of the pandemic, food insecurity rates and reliance on food banks are skyrocketing like never before,” said Ferguson. “Fighting food insecurity is not only the right thing to do for our communities during these trying times, but it also aligns with our mission to promote oral health.”

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Hendricks Avenue Baseball League Celebrates 75 Years



Luke Eliopulos and Will Mitchell

By Marcia Hodgson
Resident Community News

One of Jacksonville’s most iconic neighborhood baseball leagues will celebrate its 75th anniversary when opening season begins Saturday, Feb. 27.

Hendricks Avenue Baseball League was founded by Hendricks Avenue Baptist Church – which is also celebrating its 75th anniversary this year – when it built the athletic fields next to its church in 1946. For generations, children from San Marco and adjacent neighborhoods have grown up playing together at the athletic complex which is located at 4001 Hendricks Avenue. The place is special because it allows the children and youth of the San Marco

community to “play baseball in an atmosphere that is encouraging and supportive of all players and where the highest ideals of sportsmanship are fostered and upheld,” said Jon Yost, commissioner of baseball for Hendricks Avenue Baseball. “That vision is just as true today as when the baseball grounds were first opened. Now, in our 75th year, it is not uncommon for a parent or even a grandparent who grew up playing ball at Hendricks Avenue to be seen at the fields coaching his own son or daughter or cheering on a grandchild’s team.”

Such is the case of At-large City Councilman Matt Carlucci, a San Marco resident who grew up playing Pop Warner football on the fields as a child in the 1960s and watched his sons also play on the fields.

“What is wonderful about HAB is the diversity of HAB,” said Carlucci. “It’s the diversity of the children playing baseball amongst the parents and amongst the coaches. It’s a melting pot of a demographic of Jacksonville that gathers over at HAB. I think what it means to the community and the signal that it sends out is that there are places you can go and compete that are cutthroat, but this place provides a genuine sense of community, and it is beloved by so many, including me.”

Part of the diversity comes in the feeling of gender equality that has been fostered at the ballfields for 60 years. When Karen Buskirk signed up to play at HAB in 1960, she became the first girl to ever play Little League in Jacksonville.

“There was no softball at the time. I was probably 11 or 12,” she recalled. I was the only girl in Duval County to play. The leagues were only boys. I had my hair cut short, and I wore a hat so they really didn’t know I was a girl. I

played right field, and I was just as mean as the boys, so they kept me on the team because I was a good player. I grew up on Peachtree Circle North, not very far from there and the church had a great youth program. They had a gym and Mickey King was the athletic director that stood out when I went up there. I played everything. I would go there when I got out of elementary school. We would race up there and the kids would come from the neighborhood and we would play basketball – all kind of sports. They had a trampoline, and baseball, all kind of different activities. HAB has been in the community as a plus for many, many years,” she said.

Over the years, young athletes have used the complex to play football, basketball, and baseball. The baseball fields were rebuilt in 2000, when a third field was added, said Yost. The HAB logo was redesigned in 2015 as a five-sided crest to pay homage to Jacksonville’s rich military history, with each side representing a neighborhood serviced by the park – the Southbank, St. Nicholas, San Marco, Lakewood, and San Jose, according to the league’s website. “We also wanted to tie together our nearly 70-year history with our future. Our crest harkens back to an era when we started, but our lettering has a modern and sleek look. Finally, the seven pillars symbolize two ideas: Jacksonville’s seven major bridges bringing together our community, and each pillar supports a core trait that guides our league – trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, teamwork, and healthy competition,” according to the website.

The year 2015 also marked the return of the original league colors of green and yellow, which were used from 1947 to 2013, after

which for two years, orange and blue became the standard colors of the park. In 2016, a new team nickname and logo was introduced – the Hendricks Avenue Angels, which represent the park’s program through its advanced baseball and all-star teams. “The logo stems from the ideas laid out in the park philosophy,” according to the website. “The font was narrowed and shaped to impress a forward and modern baseball theory that applies to how we play.”

Registration for the 2021 spring season is currently open. Players are divided into five divisions by age; T-Ball for 4-to-6 year olds; Instructional (pitching machine) for 7-and-8 year olds; Minors (kid pitch) for 9-and-10 year olds; Majors for 11-and-12 year olds; and Juniors for 13-to-15 year olds. Two seasons are played every year, one in the spring and one in the fall. All players, regardless of experience or ability, are welcome to play, and advanced programs are available for players interested in higher levels of play and participating in baseball tournaments. No family is ever be turned away due to inability to pay the registration fee.

For many years, the league typically has 300 players signed up from all over the city, said Yost, noting that HAB baseball is woven into the fabric of San Marco. “We do play the way baseball should be played, but there is nothing really nostalgic about it. We play competitive baseball and compete against teams around the city. Keeping up with the times is an important part of what we do.”

For more information, to volunteer, or to contribute financially or in other ways, please check the website (hendricksbaseball.org), or reach out via email: hendricksavebaseball@gmail.com.

Bolles journalists receive top FSPA honors



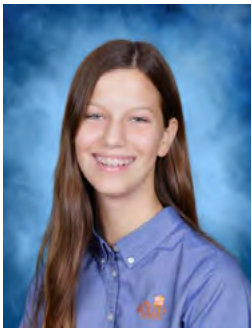
Cameron Gratz



Ella Schellenberg



Grace Albaugh



Isabel Bassin



Gabriel Coleman

The Florida Scholastic Press Association named five Bolles journalism students as All-Florida winners in its Fall 2020 Digital Contest.

Freshman Isabel Bassin of San Jose, Sophomore Grace Albaugh of San Marco and Sophomore Cameron Gratz received contest honors in the commentary categories. Freshman Gabriel Coleman and Senior Ella Schellenberg received All-Florida designations in the deadline prose category.

The Bolles students, most of whom are staffers on *The Bolles Bugle*, were among 100 winners from across the state named in the annual contest. They were the only students from Jacksonville to be designated All-Florida award-winners.

Digital Contests allow Florida student journalists to showcase their work in a variety of categories such as writing, design, photography, art, broadcast, and multimedia journalism. Students receive prompts and have between 24 to 72 hours to craft stories

and layouts in response. Professional journalists and photographers, many of whom are certified journalism teachers, judge their work by assigning a numeric score to each and providing written feedback. FSPA recognizes All-Florida winners online and names a Best of the Best at convention for each category.

The All-Florida winners will be evaluated, and one piece will receive the ranking Best of the Best so all of the Bolles students’ pieces are eligible to compete in that contest.

Fourth graders construct Black History Month quilt



Brody F., Olivia H., Bella A. and Trinity G. stand next to the Black History Month quilt made by fourth graders at San Jose Episcopal Day School.

In honor of Black History Month, fourth graders at San Jose Episcopal Day School each selected an influential African American to research. Included among the notables were artists, journalists, scientists, musicians, and athletes. The students discovered their major contributions to the world and other interesting facts, and each made a research “square” that was then put together to make one amazing quilt.



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Episcopal art students take home scholastic art awards



Audrey Gunnlaugsson, Chloe Simpson, Ellie Reed and Chester Holland

Fine Art students from the Episcopal School of Jacksonville earned more than 75 awards including 17 gold keys during the 2021 Northeast Florida Scholastic Art Awards Jan. 9. During the adjudication, judges from around Northeast Florida reviewed more than 2,900 entries ranging from 16 visual art categories. Included among the honors awarded to Episcopal students were 17 Gold Keys, 20 Silver Keys, and 39 Honor recognitions.

“These awards are a remarkable achievement for our Episcopal artists. They have been recognized as most outstanding regionally,” said Becca Hoadley, an art instructor at the school. “Gold Level student art will be on display in the Jacksonville Main Library and moving on digitally to a national level jurisdiction in New York. National winners will be announced March 17.”

The regional Gold Key artwork will be on display at the Jacksonville Main Library Saturday, Feb. 13 through Saturday, March 13. The library is open from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Gold Key Winners

Alaina Case – Photography; William Chase – Photography; Miranda Doro – Painting; Emily Drake – Oil Pastel; Chloe Simpson – Graphite Drawing; Kaitlyn Sweder (2) – Ink and Graphite; Lucy Williams – Charcoal; Alston Rachels – Oil Painting; Ellie Reed – Charcoal; Audrey Gunnlaugsson – Charcoal; Chester Holland – Block Printing; Katherine Kavanaugh (4) Oil Painting; Madison Linn (4) – Acrylic Painting; Julia D’Arienzo – Photography; Paul Lampley-Sims – Photography; Isabella Romanello – Photography; Elizabeth Roy – Ceramics and Glass.

Silver Key Winners

William Chase – Photography; Sophia Chokshi – Photography; Joseph Cuchiara – Graphite; Elizabeth Curran – Photography; Cecilia Fannin – Charcoal; Mackenzie Flakus – Ceramics; Declan Hammerling

– Graphite; Izzy Joy – Photography; Kate Kavanaugh – Charcoal; Mimmi Kurlas – Ceramics; Emily Leeper – Oil Pastel; Annie Miller – Photography; Jake Murphy – Ceramics; Tommaso Pozzoni – Acrylic Painting; Alston Rachels – Acrylic Painting; Ellie Reed – Charcoal; Kaitlyn Sweder – Drawing; Mary Woodward – Oil Pastel; Lyla Wright -Graphite; Emily Ziomek – Photography.

Honorable Mention

Kate Adams – Drawing; Annie Afflic – Photography; Lauren Avery – Photography; Jace Bankston – Drawing; Sally Barksdale (2) Drawing; Abby Beaver (2) Photography; Audrey Franken – Printmaking; William Chase (2) – Photography; Gabriela Diaz-Vendrell – Ceramics; Miranda Doro (2) – Oil Painting; Julia Fannin – Charcoal; Makenzie Flakus (2) Ceramics; Sydney Freed – Photography; Parklyn Gardner – Photography; Declan Hammerling (2) Graphite; Nadya Hicks – Oil Pastel; Abi House – Graphite; Harrison Hutto (3) Ceramics; Mimi Kurlas – Ceramics; Madison Linn – Acrylic and Colored Pencil; Myles Long – Ceramics; Jon Maggiore – Graphite; Alston Rachels – Acrylic Painting; Lucy Rachels – Acrylic Painting; Harper Mcevoy – Photography; James Mickler – Block Print; Maddie Morris – Photography; Annie Miller – Photography; Jake Murphy (7) Ceramics; Ellie Reed – Charcoal; Kate Reinhardt – Photography; Elizabeth Roy – Ceramics and Glass; Emily Spinning – Photography; Daniela Suarez – Ceramics; Paul Vitulli – Ceramics; Joelle Wadei – Acrylic Painting; Kathy Waryold (2) Photography; Taylor Wells – Ceramics; Emily Ziomek (2) Photography.

Joy cometh to Episcopal School



Students spell out “joy” on the sidewalk.

The concept of joy was the focus of a campus-wide Health, Safety, and Well-Being (HSW) event at the Episcopal School of Jacksonville during the second week of January. The HSW theme for the year is: *Respect the Dignity of Every Human Being*. The first event, which was held in the fall, focused on gratitude. For the theme of joy, a campus-wide question and answer competition was held as well as an advisory discussion, and students viewed some created short films that explored how members of the advisory seek and find joy. A “Bag of Joy,” filled with joke cards, sidewalk chalk, bubbles, and other treats, was given to each advisory for students to enjoy.

“Joy was an important theme for our event, especially since our last event focused on gratitude. Students explored what brings them joy, how they can cultivate joy for themselves, and how to share it with others,” said Amy Burrows Perkins, director of Student Services. “At a time when so much feels out of control, it is important for us to pause and recognize the opportunity we have to impact how we feel. Welcoming joy felt celebratory, and we have pictures, videos, sidewalk chalk messages and bubbles all over campus as evidence of all the joy expressed today.”

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Wolfson students to hold Dance Marathon fundraiser



Samuel Wolfson High School student Abby Germaine and the Wolf solicit donations for Dance Marathon

Students at Samuel Wolfson School for Advanced Studies will put on their dancing shoes as they join thousands of others nationwide by hosting a virtual Dance Marathon on Saturday, March 27. The marathon is a national fundraising event for Children’s Miracle Network. Funds raised locally will benefit Wolfson Children’s Hospital and UF Health.

Dance Marathon has been a fixture on college campuses for nearly three decades. Samuel Wolfson SAS will be the first public high school in Duval County to host an event, joining The Bolles School, Episcopal School of Jacksonville and Bishop Kenny High School.

Leading up to Dance Marathon, students have been busy recruiting teams and raising funds toward their goal of \$3,000.

They have held fundraisers where students pay to play a song over the school announcements, having the Wolf, the school’s mascot, ask parents for donations in the car line and a trivia night.

“We are so excited to be hosting Dance Marathon at Wolfson! This is an amazing opportunity to come together as a school and give back to the community. It’s such a special thing to go along beside big colleges and help children and families that are going through things I can’t even imagine,” said Student Government Vice President Leah Troup.

Community members are welcome to contribute to local children’s hospitals through Wolfson Dance Marathon at <https://events.dancemarathon.com/event/WHSDM>

DA graduate featured in 2020 College Board art exhibit

Larry Fullwood, Jr., a 2020 graduate of Douglas Anderson School of the Arts (DA), was one of 51 students selected to have artwork featured in the 2020 College Board AP Art and Design Digital Exhibit, which can be viewed online. It is the first time a student or graduate from Douglas Anderson has been included in the exhibit, said DA Principal Melanie Hammer.

Fullwood was a visual arts major at DA with an emphasis in drawing/painting and photography. He earned a full-ride scholarship to Temple University in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, where he is majoring in painting and drawing with a minor in entrepreneurial studies.



Larry Fullwood, Jr.

“DA pushed me to take my art to the next level, lighting a fire under me to continue on that path into college,” Fullwood said.

The College Board exhibit features 51 international high school artists who submitted their artwork to the 2020 AP Art and Design exam. During the AP Art and Design Exam adjudication, over 400 readers graded student portfolios submitted for review in 3-D design, 2-D design, and drawing. Pulling from the top scores, the 51 students selected for the AP Art and Design Digital Exhibit represent high-quality examples of the Sustained Investigation and Selected Works sections of the portfolio. The digital exhibit is designed not only to showcase the rigor and excellence of the AP Art and Design portfolio but also as an exemplary teaching tool shared with AP Art and Design students around the world. In this capacity, high-achieving students’ artwork and statements and their teacher

statements help teach best practices in visual art production.

“Larry was a good student,” recalled Hillary Hogue, his drawing/painting teacher at DA. “What really sets him apart is his dedication to his practice as an artist. H knows that having talent is only part of his success. Working hard and investigating his ideas is how he creates a new level of mastery.”

Hammer agreed. “Larry is a dedicated artist and student. He puts forth tremendous effort and time into his work. He is truly deserving of this honor, and we are all very proud of him.”

The AP Art and Design program was founded in 1972, and as of 1978, 4,500 students had completed portfolios for submission to the program. Today, over 60,000 students participate annually. Students that receive a score of three or higher (on a scale of one to five) are eligible to receive college credit.

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Bishop Kenny senior wins national inaugural poetry contest

By Marcia Hodgson
Resident Community News

Twenty-two-year-old Amanda Gorman, the first person to be named National Youth Poet Laureate, may have wowed the crowd with the poem she recited during the Inauguration for Joe Biden Jan. 20, but she is not the only young poet to receive national acclamation. Bishop Kenny Senior Hallie Knight, 17, of San Marco also received national recognition when she won a contest organized by the Academy of American Poets for an inauguration poem that she wrote for a class at Bishop Kenny High School.

Knight's poem, "To Rebuild," included some well-formed ideas about the present state of the country and what she would like to see changed. As the winner, she received a \$1,000 cash prize and a chance to have her poem featured on Poets.org and in American Poets Magazine.

Knight said she was inspired by W.H. Auden's poem, "As I Walked Out One Evening," and Adrienne Rich's literary work, "Storm Warnings." In crafting her award-winning piece, she likened the United States to a house that has been severely but not hopelessly damaged.

"I wanted to acknowledge the greatness of the potential for our country at this present moment, and the opportunity we have as citizens to choose what it becomes out of all this chaos," she said.

Guidelines for the contest required that the student be under age 17 and submit work that reflects "on the country's challenges, strengths, and hope for its future." A former inaugural poet, Richard Blanco, who read a poem at the 2013 inauguration of President Barak Obama, served as the judge of the contest. In an article written



by the Associated Press, Blanco said Knight's imagery impressed him, and he likened it to Abraham Lincoln's famous warning that a "house divided against itself cannot stand."

Knight was one of three poets recognized in the contest. Runner up was 17-year-old Mina King of Shreveport, Louisiana, for her poem, "In Pursuit of Dawn." Third place went to Gabrielle Marshall of Richmond, Virginia for her poem, "The Power of Hope."

A superior student, Knight was also recognized as the Bishop Kenny High School Student of the Month for January. She was selected for academics highlighting initiative and commitment. She has a rigorous schedule with six AP-level classes and is involved in several extra-curricular activities as well as Campus Ministry. She is a board member for the Interact Club, and a member of the History Club at school. She is also an Extraordinary Minister of the Holy Eucharist and a member

To Rebuild

The house was built,
Brick by brick, pane by pane,
Initially withstanding winds,
The force of a hurricane.

But over time, the faults are found
As storm after storm
Assails, the craftsmanship outdated,
In need of reform.

The windows break, one by one,
Under the weight of wrongs, the structure strains,
Until one day fire catches,
And only the foundation of good intentions remains.

While easiest would be to walk,
To abandon, moving on to rebuild,
The value is seen by those who have called it
Home, desires to be fulfilled.

Remembering the mistakes,
Maintaining the hope of freedom,
Hand in hand, we work,
Entering a new season.

The work is not complete until
The walls protect all who live there,
No exceptions. Abandonment of all
Unnecessary despair.

A job led by all, not by one,
We work long days turn long nights.
The creation of our hands
Proving more than surface level acknowledgment of rights.

The past is not buried
But underlies
What we have transformed
Before our eyes.

"I wanted to acknowledge the greatness of the potential for our country at this present moment, and the opportunity we have as citizens to choose what it becomes out of all this chaos."

— Hallie Knight

of the National Honor Society, the Science Honor Society, and the Math Honor Society. Last fall, she was named a National Merit Semifinalist having scored in the top 1% in the country on the PSAT. Of the 70,000 high school juniors who took the test from throughout the state of Florida, only 879 in the state were designated as semifinalists due to their high score on the test. The finalists will be confirmed in February 2021.

She has also been a part of Bishop Kenny's cross-country team since her freshman year.

Although she has not settled on what college she will attend next year, Knight hopes to major in chemical engineering and has expressed an interest in attending Georgia Tech.

"Bishop Kenny is a place where I have made friends that will last a lifetime," Knight said. "It allowed me to combine academic courses and AP art along with encouraging my love for community outreach. They all bring me a sense of joy that I want to continue with throughout my life."



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Episcopal science projects continue despite COVID-19

Students working on research projects in the Episcopal Honors Science Seminar are continuing their work on research projects this semester, despite the COVID pandemic that is causing complications with university research opportunities.

“Students in Honors Science Seminar have embraced many interesting, complex, and timely projects this year,” said Marion Zeiner, director of Scientific Research. “Most students are conducting their investigations at home, in the field and at Episcopal School of Jacksonville.”

The Coronavirus did not stop some Episcopal students from working in and with laboratories, including the University of North Florida Physics Department, the University of North Florida Chemistry Department, Central Michigan University, and Seal Shield in Orlando.

This year the honor science students’ project topics were very diverse. They



Episcopal sophomore Tom Commander works with Jordan Harrow, a senior

included studying melanoma treatments, UV radiation on eye development, nanoparticle treatment on cell stem growth, robotic manipulation of objects, engineering neuromuscular electrical stimulation, pesticide resistance, a novel approach to water analysis, links between online learning and student progress combinatorial effects of lead nitrate and dibutyl phthalate, concrete for colonization of Mars, the eradication of mites on beehives, and ElectroClave UV-C disinfection.

Senator Bean brings a touch of Tallahassee to SJEDS

Florida Senator Aaron Bean brought a little bit of the state capitol to San Jose Episcopal Day School when he visited Megan Trumpler’s fourth grade class in January.

SJEDS fourth graders typically venture to Tallahassee in the spring for an all-day field trip that enables them to visit the Florida Capitol building and learn about government. Due to COVID-19, the fourth-grade teachers decided to bring Tallahassee to their classrooms. Bean visited with the classes and ran through a mock-session to help the students understand how laws are made.



Florida Senator Aaron Bean schools fourth graders in Megan Trumpler’s class about government

DA alumni mentor students in new college and career class

COVID-19 has brought about many challenges in education, and as many students plan to opt for virtual learning this year, Douglas Anderson School of the Arts is offering a new course for Duval Homeroom students.

The course, College and Career, is designed to help students explore and plan for post-secondary educational career opportunities by assisting them in creating a personal portfolio.

To assist with the new initiative, DA has partnered with Alumni for Leadership and Mentoring, Inc. (PALM). Working with PALM, Douglas Anderson has been able to connect the school’s alumni with current DA students in a mentoring partnership in the arts. Several of the alumni who have participated in the course’s Career Talk Guest series are working artists across the country.

“I love that we are able to use a class to precisely focus on what we would want to pursue when leaving senior year,” said Nedra-Ann Murray, a junior. “I call this class, ‘The game-plan class.’”

Included among the alumni panelists are Nick Sacks and Alexis Atwill.



Nick Sacks performs on Broadway in Dear Evan Hanson


A 2007 graduate of DA, Sacks earned a BFA in music theater/acting from Carnegie Mellon. He has had several roles in film/television and theater, most recently on Broadway as Connor/Jansen in Dear Evan Hanson.

Atwill, a 2001 DA performance theater graduate, works as a puppeteer for Manual Cinema and as a sales and communication associate for a local business in Chicago. She has worked on multiple projects with Manual Cinema, but most often travels with Ada/Ava and Hansel & Gretel.

“I learned that opportunities are endless, and they can often come right at your feet,” said Lio Vinson, a sophomore. “Something as simple as seeing your friend do a puppet show can influence your career and allow you to follow a dream of something you never expected. There are many ways to go about life and careers but being open to your opportunities allows you to discover more than you originally imagined.”



Alexis Atwill in DA’s new virtual College and Career class







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Assumption cross country teams sweep diocese championship

The Assumption cross country teams whizzed past 14 competing schools to win the Diocese of St. Augustine Cross Country Championship held at Bishop Kenny High School on Nov. 14.

The girls' varsity led throughout to win the 3K-team competition. Lucrezia Gowdy finished first individually, while Stephanie Grden, Quinn Camerlengo, Jillian Jakab, Alexandra Lumpkin and Olivia Lumpkin all finished among the top 10.

The boys' varsity team also placed first in its 3K team competition. Patton Avera, Joe Joseph, Lucas Andrade, and Gabriel Andrade all finished among the top 10 finishes individually.

Graziana Gowdy finished first among junior varsity girls as Assumption won in the girls' junior varsity 2K team competition. Gigi Werstine, Katelyn King, Taylor Lawhon, and Sarah Ruen powered Assumption

by finishing among the top 10. Meanwhile, the boys' junior varsity team polished off the winning streak by placing first in its 2K team competition. Johnny Patelli, Seth Paulus, Henry Morreale, and Shane Taylor all finished in the top 10 individually.

The challenges faced due to the COVID-19 pandemic delayed the practice start date until early November and reduced the number of meets from five to three. The meets took place at Bishop Snyder, the St. John's Fair Grounds, and Bishop Kenny.

Cross-country is the single largest sports program within the Diocese of St. Augustine. Catholic schools from Duval, St. Johns, Clay County, and Flagler counties participated. In addition to the varsity and junior varsity teams, Assumption offers the sport to students in grade levels K-4 who wish to learn proper running form and strength training while having fun.



The Assumption Cross Country team



Lucrezia Gowdy



Graziana Gowdy with Eloise Libra and Evelyn Slattery



Wolfson National Honor Society members collected books and games for needy families in December. Included in the collection drive were Augustina Cole, Priscilla Osburn, Jaden Jenkins, Jefferson Li, Austin Franks, Will Davis, Rynna Burgbacher, Joey Perry, Kelsey Kettel, Sam Davis, Naya Hudson, Kayla Lyn, and Carrie Compton

Wolfson honor society members assist those in need

The Samuel Wolfson School for Advanced Studies chapter of the National Honor Society (NHS) has been very active in the Jacksonville community. In December, NHS partnered with Wolfson's Senior Network and JROTC to organize a week-long collection drive for canned and nonperishable food items, toys and games, baby needs, winter clothing for all ages, household necessities, and holiday gifting.

On Dec. 12, NHS donated the collected items to the community outreach event, Humble Harvest. In addition, NHS sent 13 student volunteers to Humble Harvest to distribute items to those in need.

"Everyone at Wolfson is super involved in the community, but NHS is just a different level. It's been so amazing to be a part of a club in which everyone has a genuine passion for helping others and making a

difference in the community," said NHS President Ashley Shakib. "I've had so many amazing experiences volunteering that have changed the way I look at life, and it's all been very rewarding."

NHS also supported the Salvation Army Dec. 19 when students rang the bell for six hours from at the Winn Dixie on University Boulevard and San Jose Boulevard. NHS had more than 30 volunteers working different shifts.



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College Prep,
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Art can save us

By Marcia Hodgson
Resident Community News

Fashionistas often draw inspiration from world events, and this year has been no different. With the onset of the Coronavirus pandemic, 2020’s newest fashion statement, the face mask, was born.

As COVID-19 spread across the nation, medical experts strongly espoused the wearing of facial coverings as the best way to protect oneself against infection while limiting the transmission of the virus within the community. A perfect union of function and fashion, donning a face mask is now as much a part of daily life as wearing a coat or sporting a pair of sunglasses. And although utilitarian KN-95 and blue paper surgical masks may dominate many faces within Jacksonville’s historic neighborhoods, there is nothing that says masks need to be boring. Masks can be artistic statements. In fact, faces swathed in colorful, unique materials can showcase identity.

To celebrate the “new normal” fashion accessory, the *Resident Community News* held a “Masks for Aid” contest at the end of last year. Contest winners’ work is

showcased in the sixth annual edition of *Circles, a Social Datebook & Charity Register* now available on newsstands. Readers from the community had been requested to create their own artistic facial coverings, and the response was overwhelming. Several intriguing face wrappings were made by the students of art instructor Jessica Grotberg of Orange Park, including “Fish” by winner Stephanie Keith, and “Raven” by runner-up Riley Cox. Receiving third place was a handsomely hand-embroidered mask by Kelly Sullivan, a student of Patricia Beach, an art teacher at Samuel Wolfson School for Advanced Studies. The contest offered cash prizes to the top three winners.

“My inspiration to do this project was my love for fish and all the colors of their scales,” said Keith, 18. “I always try to challenge myself in each piece I do. I appreciate the help and support of my art teacher, Ms. Jessica, and my mom,” she said.

Cox also found inspiration from her mother as she worked to bring “Raven” to fruition. “What inspired me to do this mask is my mom as well as my friends at the art studio,” she said. “As far as I know, black birds mean a new beginning and so the mask represents a new beginning for everyone.”

Meanwhile, Sullivan’s great grandmother was her muse. “Growing up, I have always



Riley Cox, Jessica Grotberg, and Stephanie Keith



“Fish” by winner Stephanie Keith of Orange Park Art Classes



“Raven” by runner-up Riley Cox of Orange Park Art Classes



Third-place finisher Kelly Sullivan of Samuel Wolfson School for Advanced Studies submitted an embroidered creation inspired by her great grandmother

seen my great grandmother’s embroidered pieces around her house,” she said. “She always made the most beautiful designs, and I decided that I wanted to try embroidery for myself. In the last few years, she has not been able to embroider so I wanted to honor her passion for the art. I decided to embroider flowers on the mask because I wanted to create an elegant design that could be functional for someone to wear in the future.”

Other Wolfson High School students that sent in hand-created masks were Morgan Renfro, Megan Woolbright, Robert Grant, and Chelsea Dejesus.

Also competing in the contest were Tyler Brown of Orange Park High School, Olivia Raker of Assumption Catholic School, Livia

Pinto of West Riverside Elementary School, Sophia Williams of Ortega, Tiana Fordham of Orange Park Art Classes, Sara Smith of Fleming Island High School, and Ronald Episcopal of Riverside.

One prediction is that artistic masks will be more sought after in the community as residents continue to adapt to the new reality. Already many fashion designers are transforming leftover fabric into face coverings that coordinate with apparel. Designers such as Louis Vuitton, Burberry, Fendi, and Gucci have taken to decorating face masks with their logos or designing them to go with their runway ensembles.

One thing is for certain, masks save lives and will be around for a while. We might as well have a little fun as we wear them.



Megan Woolbright, Robert Grant, Morgan Renfro and Chelsea Dejesus



Kelly Sullivan



Olivia Raker



Livia Pinto

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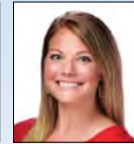
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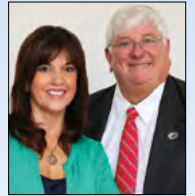


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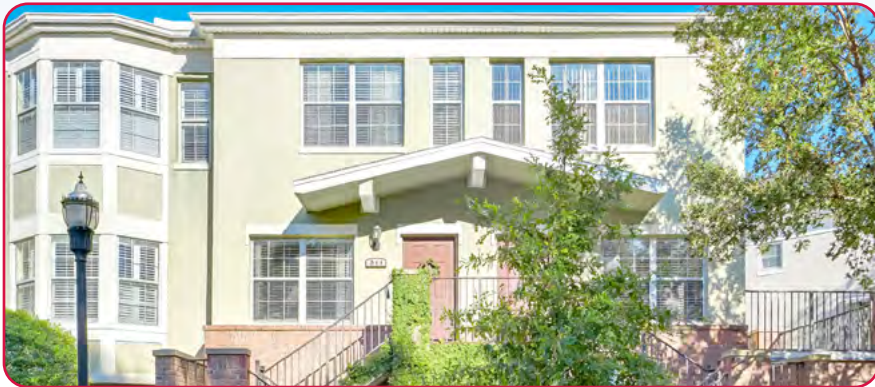


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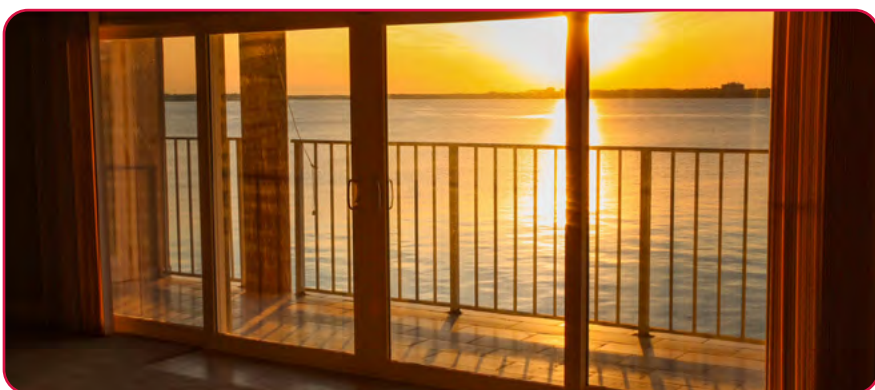
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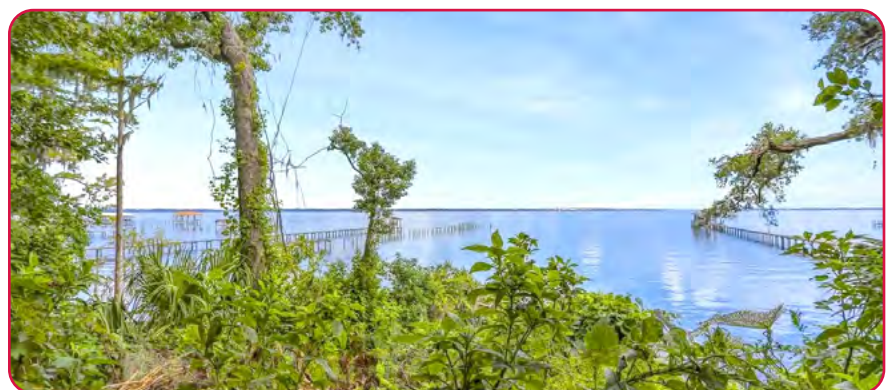
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Nothing is more important than your heart.

That's why Baptist Health created an unmatched cardiac care program with the only dedicated heart hospital in our region.

We have board-certified cardiologists and cardiovascular surgeons armed with the most advanced technologies and the latest research. And a full spectrum of specialized care from top-rated doctors.

In addition to providing cardiac consultations and pre-operative clearance, our physicians diagnose, treat and manage:

- Blood pressure and cholesterol
- Heart issues related to sleep disorders
- Congestive heart failure
- Heart rhythm disorders such as AFib
- Coumadin/blood thinners
- Peripheral artery disease
- Heart valve problems
- Adult congenital heart defects
- Heart attack and stroke risk
- Sports and heart health
- Electrophysiology
- Cardiac testing

**Thank you for entrusting us
with your heart care.**

 **904.720.0799**
 **baptistheartspecialists.com**

