



TEACHING TOLERANCE

Fifth grade students at St. Paul's Riverside prepare for their presentation on Prophetic Witnesses Against Racism as part of their classroom guidance lesson.



CYCLING SAFELY

4th and 5th grade students spent time learning about bicycle safety, the basic parts of a bicycle, as well as the ABC quick spin check. They also had the opportunity to ride their bicycles during PE where they focused on riding skills, safety, and etiquette.



ROOTING FOR THE RIVER RUN

Tim Bush, Margaret Day Julien and Barbara Barsh cheered on participants as they jogged, walked and pushed strollers down McGirts Boulevard during the home stretch of the 43rd Annual Ascension St. Vincent's Ortega River Run.

SEE PAGE 33

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INSPIRED BY A ZEST FOR LIFE

Heartspace Art founders Ian and Danielle Cleary have painted a new mural, a mural with a message.

Their latest work of inspiring art can be found on a wooden slat fence in Murray Hill. The scene is of three sunflowers popping out of clouds, reaching for the sky. Danielle likens it to a metaphor for life, offering encouragement and a message of confidence. "Reach high. It's closer than you think," she said.

Underneath the sunflower mural, the couple painted the words "Love Life" so that there's intention behind it. "We wanted that energy to vibrate out of that painting," Danielle said.

The fence is located on the side of the Murray Hillbilly Restaurant. It was erected to make a private, outdoor eating area for patrons and to partition space for sound healing gatherings.

Heartspace Art partners with people who host community events. They're currently working with Riverside Arts Market (RAM), and Riverside Avondale Preservation (RAP) is also involved. On February 6th at RAM,

folks had the opportunity to be part of a collaborative mural, a project funded by the Cultural Council of Greater Jacksonville. Danielle and Ian had mapped out huge coloring pages on two wooden panels that community members could paint on. One is the image of the sun shining on the downtown skyline. Bold lettering spells out, "Shine love on Jacksonville." The other depicts a young woman running from 2020 into 2021, declaring, "Curiosity is an act of courage." The completed pieces are displayed every Saturday at RAM.

The Clearys have been traveling and creating art together for five years. Recently, they decided to re-brand and home in on a niche, focusing exclusively on local large-scale temporary and permanent murals using paint, chalk, and other mediums. Danielle dreams of working with schools.

She wishes for all members of the community to be like the sunflowers on that fence, "to be seen as the beautiful people we are. Shine your light bright. Reach for the sky," Danielle said.



DUVAL COUNTY SCHOOL RENAMING SAGA CONTINUES

The heated debate continues over school names in Duval County, as the latest disagreement rages on about an answer to the burning question – will schools retain their names – or go the way of history. Perhaps there will be a change, a christening of a new school name, the outcome has yet to be determined.

Currently, Robert E. Lee High School is at the forefront of the battle for the renaming issue in Duval County, the high school serves the community where thousands of readers of Resident News call home. The tense meetings were originally intended to create conversation, share historical facts, and gain understanding, but with individuals receiving only a minute and a half of time, brevity has

SEE PAGE 2



MEMBERS OF THE SCHOOL SAC COMMITTEE LISTEN TO THE OPEN COMMENT SESSION DURING THE MARCH 15 MEETING.

BALUSTRADES ARE BACK,
MEMORIAL PARK TRIUMPHS
OVER TRAGEDY

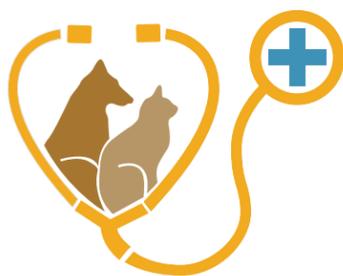
PAGE 10

APRIL IS NATIONAL POETRY MONTH,
GET INSPIRED WITH POEMS
FROM YOUR NEIGHBORS

PAGE 34

SPARTAN GIRLS FROM ST. JOHN'S
COUNTRY DAY SCHOOL WIN 10TH
CONSECUTIVE STATE SOCCER CHAMPIONSHIP

PAGE 41



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PUBLISHERS' NOTE

A season of change is upon us. Spring is here and COVID's major impact seem to be falling like the leaves before the renewal of blossoms and buds, which is a welcome sight all over our wonderful neighborhoods.

With this Spring renewal comes a symbolic shift in priorities due to our experiences over the last year. In March, we looked back on the anniversary of the nationwide shutdown, one that changed routines forever for some, temporarily for others, but certainly left no one unscathed in some fashion.

It has been refreshing to tell the stories of people aiding one another, whether it is lending a hand by feeding others, providing housing, donating toiletries, or clothing and raising funds. We are fortunate that The Resident News gives us the ability to give in a way that can multiply its effects by our direct mail distribution of almost 30,000 residents every month. Especially when our readership is generous, considers others, and takes great pride in sharing the burden, neighbor helping neighbor. It is gratifying to make such a positive impact and we feel fortunate to be the conduit to this amazing community we all call home.

Spring is a welcome seasonal change and we are happy to welcome our newest addition to The Resident News, Carolyn Snowden. Creative, local talent is found by way of the works of Carolyn this month for National Poetry Month. We received several submissions that appear in the pages of this issue. We hope you enjoy the value in these simple, yet well composed literary works. We welcome Carolyn to our staff and we are excited to add her poetry to the pages of your community newspaper every month.

In closing, we hope you have found the silver lining over the course of the last year, when all of us had to realize what is important, what is worth fretting over, and how we are going to work towards building a better tomorrow as we move through this season of change together.

It's great to be smiling at one another in passing. It's time to get back to a better, more prosperous economy while also remembering the importance of what we've learned through the pandemic. Be caring, be careful and be kind.

Pamela and Geth Williams

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1...

Name Change

brought tense, often combative podium speeches and disruptive comments from audience members, on both sides.

Those in favor of keeping the name Robert E. Lee High School have squared off with some Lee High School students, activist groups - from 'Take em' Down Jax and the Northside Coalition, as well as fans of Black Lives Matter - to name a few. Passions have been running high as generations of Lee grads have been sounding off about their agreements or disagreements with the issue, voices from both sides have shared their support of, and removal of, the school's name.

Resident News had reported back in February, the debates were to continue until a final tally of votes determines a resolution to the issues at hand, following April vote tallies. Since that time, The School Advisory Council of Robert E. Lee High School (SAC) has held all five community meetings on the issue, the first was Feb. 24 at the school. Four subsequent meetings were Thursday, March 4; Monday, March 15; Tuesday, March 23; and Thursday, March 25. All meetings were held at 6 p.m. in the school auditorium located at 1200 McDuff Avenue South to standing room only crowds, due to limits placed on social distancing and proximity. COVID precautions forced some to be turned away at the door, for those willing to wait, it meant one exiting member entered as another parted the school.

The renaming comment periods have brought division in the auditorium each night, with passions running high, live stream videos of some at the podium and contentious moments complete with vulgarities. The contentious vote will ultimately determine whether history, memories of alumni, and a school name that has remained the same for almost 100 years will continue, or the school's name will change; sweeping changes from logos on uniforms, gym floors and signage, to new diplomas and stationery will all be part of the process and the costs associated have concerned many who have spoken.

Tracy Pierce, spokesman for the Duval County School Board and Chief of Marketing and Public Relations representative, maintained the Board's position. "We made it crystal clear that no sales tax funding will be used to pay these cost - a point we have reiterated from the outset," he wrote via email.

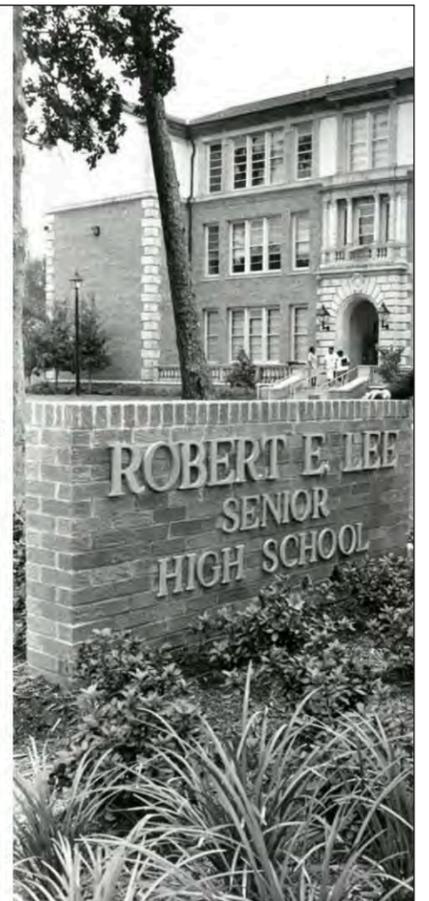
Local supporters and alumni groups, including representatives of SavetheSchoolNames.org have argued since the beginning that the process is unfair to alumni for many reasons; some for sheer distance from Lee to cast a vote in person, and for others, the hoops to jump through including an in-hand diploma are more cumbersome than voting in local and federal elections.

Arguments were also made the promise of private funds name changes promised for Nathan Bedford Forrest, now Westside High School were anemic, as of this writing, one of the biggest

Dissappearing Act

Their lives are now over
But a presence still near,
With school names and statues
Where legacies appear.
Historical figures
Documented in books,
Disappearing from these places
Because of how it now looks.
Though lessons are learned
And opinions evolve,
Some still feel the need
To completely dissolve,
Each likeness represented
If too painful the past,
While others accept
A reminder that lasts.

C.C. Snowden



proponents of the idea of cost coverage by donations was the Jacksonville Public Education Fund, or JPEF. To date, the funds recorded total \$11,243.85 of its \$200,000 goal.

As The Resident reported back in April, Norman Abraham, head of the grassroots alumni group called SavetheSchoolNames.org, only people who will be allowed to vote are dues paying PTSA members, current Lee High School students, residents who live in the school district covered by Lee High School, and alumni. Alumni will need to provide proof of graduation be it a diploma or, perhaps a photo in the school yearbook, he said.

Those who wish to vote on the matter must physically cast a ballot at Robert E. Lee High School and ballots will be placed in a box in the school's office for 10 days, from Tuesday, April 20, to Friday, April 30. The voting will be overseen by Robert E. Lee Principal Timothy Feagins and SAC. The Resident will follow the story and report on the results of the vote.



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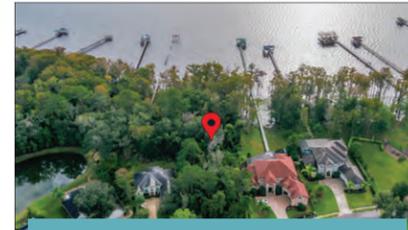
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New tree canopy coming to Riverside and Avondale



“The new plantings will have a variety of different species including three Chinese fringetrees, six dahoon hollies, eight crape myrtles, eight saucer magnolias, eight olive trees, seven live oaks and three chastetrees.”

- Florida Department of Transportation

Forty-three new trees will soon grace Riverside and St. Johns avenues (State Road 211). The FDOT is currently preparing the roadway for the addition of new trees and the removal of some Pindo Palms that are either aged out, rotting or diseased, according to FDOT.

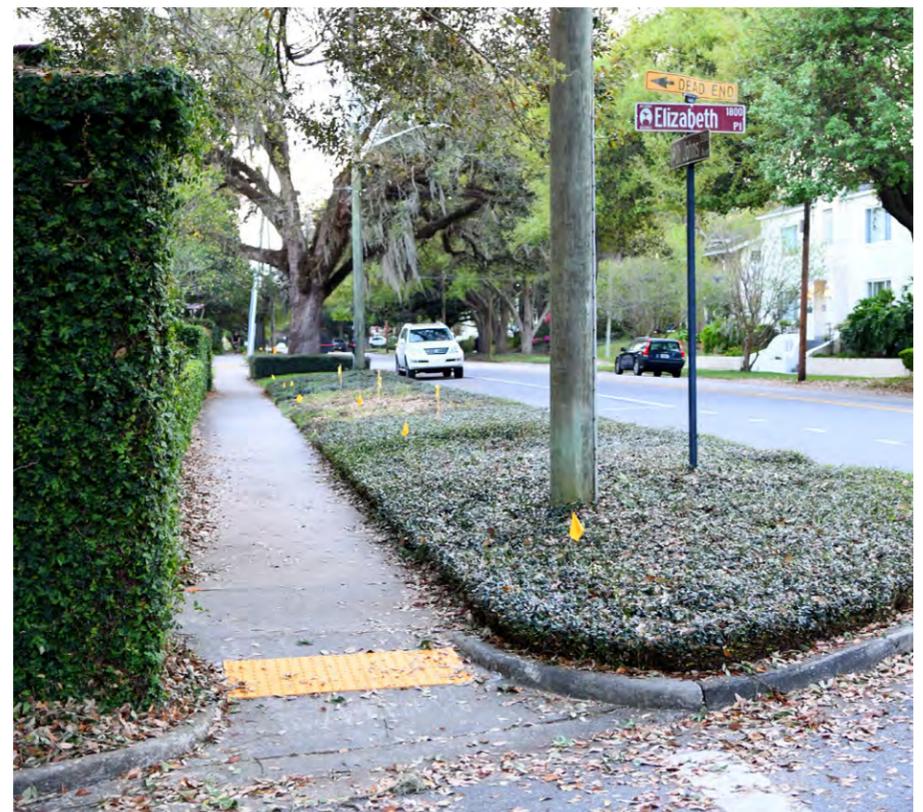
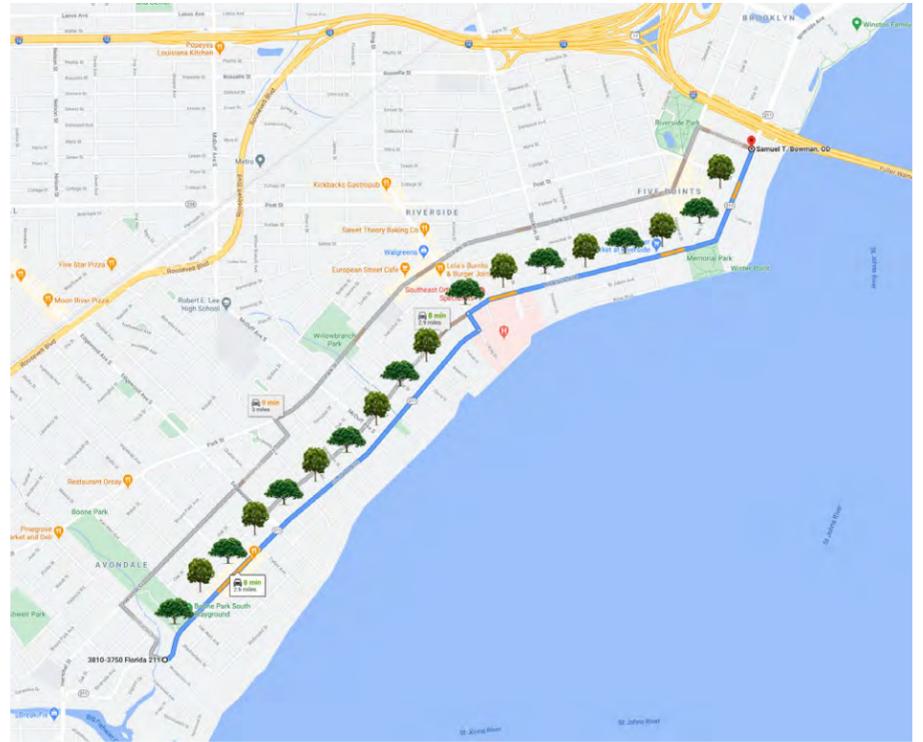
“Recent collaboration between the FDOT, JEA, Council member Randy DeFoor, Pamela Telis [Boone Park South], Scenic Jacksonville, the Duval County urban forester and Riverside Avondale Preservation [RAP], has resulted in a plan to remove/replace aged-out trees and infill where trees have already been lost,” said Brooks Andrews, chair of RAP’s Board of Directors.

The original plan called for the planting of mostly crape myrtles. RAP and the arborists requested a more diverse set of trees along the roadway, and FDOT revised its plan to increase the types of trees planted.

The new plantings will have a variety of different species including three Chinese fringetrees, six dahoon hollies, eight crape myrtles, eight saucer magnolias, eight olive trees, seven live oaks and three chastetrees.

“Council member DeFoor was very helpful in getting FDOT, the COJ arborists and RAP together to talk through how we could have a more diverse set of trees instead of just a row of Crape Myrtles,” said Warren Jones, RAP executive director. “St. Johns and Riverside avenues are beautiful roads due to the tree canopy and the incredible historic architecture on most of the road.”

According to Brooks, the project should move quickly, but there will be some disruption to traffic and parking for a couple of weeks.



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Mayor and local leaders focus on revitalizing downtown and urban core

BY KAREN J. RIELEY
Resident Community News

“

“We now have a focused effort on what needs to be done relative to downtown, although I do not think we have landed on what will represent progress outside of restoring historic buildings, which isn’t a bad thing.”

**- Dr. Irvin PeDro Cohen,
executive director of
LISC Jacksonville**

Talks about Downtown Jacksonville revitalization may seem like a case of déjà vu, but community and business leaders are tackling the issue with energy and vision.

Mayor Lenny Curry and six Jacksonville business owners and local leaders held meetings in February and March to discuss ways to improve the urban core. The working group is led by John Rood, founder and chairman of The Vestcor Companies that redeveloped The Carling and 11 East Forsyth into apartment buildings and has recently completed four new projects Downtown.

“After a 2018 Chamber of Commerce trip to Denver, I came back really excited about revitalizing empty buildings in Jacksonville the way that Denver had successfully done,” Rood said. Talks with the Mayor at the end of 2020 resulted in a working group that is soliciting public input on how to make

downtown more livable and workable in the next two years.

Beautification, maintenance of public owned property, lighting, riverfront parks, regularly scheduled activities, resolving the homeless issue, transportation, and bike/street safety have been discussed. Activities suggested included festive events such as laser and fireworks shows; food trucks; a permanent, large farmer’s market; and regular outdoor concerts.

Working group members, in addition to Rood and Mayor Curry, include Gary Norcross, FIS corporate chief of staff; Nat Ford, JTA CEO; Aundra Wallace, president of JAXUSA Partnership; Jack Hanania, Hanania Automotive Group founder & CEO; and Ed Burr, founder & CEO of GreenPoint Holdings LLC.

Their input, as well as recommendations from other Downtown stakeholders and from surveys conducted by employers with downtown employees, such as FIS, Vystar and Vestcor, will be compiled into a prioritized list of actionable items that can be accomplished in two years.

Developer Alex Sifakis, president, JWB Real Estate Capital, owns Sweet Pete’s, the two buildings just north of it and the Porter House Mansion. JWB also built 18 apartments made from shipping containers in the Cathedral District.

“Young people want to live in an urban, walkable environment so having a vibrant downtown is critical to the future success of business,” Sifakis said.

Lori Boyer, CEO of the City’s Downtown Investment Authority, is staff person to the working group. The DIA is in the midst of the five-year update of the Business Investment Strategy and Community Redevelopment Area Plans for the Northbank and Southbank.

“The DIA plans focus on the vision for Downtown and larger strategies and incentives, as opposed to the types of issues being considered by the working group,” said Jordan Elsbury. “For example, homelessness must be addressed from a City-wide rather than just a Downtown perspective, because our goal is not simply to move people from one neighborhood to another, but to provide more lasting and meaningful solutions.”

“DIA’s focus on achieving a critical mass of residents is so important, because that mass helps support retail and makes the Downtown market self-sustaining,” Elsbury said. “Public parks, trails and civic attractions along with retail create energy and vitality.”

“There are about 5,000 apartments in Downtown Jacksonville currently. The goal is to get the number to 10,000 for enough base for restaurants, grocery stores and other services that people need to live downtown,” Rood said.

Downtown revitalization is a challenge for Jacksonville, according to Rood, because of several factors, including that it is a consolidated city with large undeveloped parcels of land that are less expensive to develop, rental rates for offices and apartments are lower than most other cities, and construction costs are rising.

Boyer lists 10 formal revitalization plans that have been developed since the early 90s, beginning with former mayor Ed Austin’s River City Renaissance program in 1993. Austin’s plan is often referred to as the first large-scale effort to revitalize Downtown.

Former mayor John Delaney’s Growth Management Task Force Recommendations plan in 1997 was followed by John Peyton’s Brooklyn Neighborhood Strategy Plan 2004; River Dance: Putting the River in River City, a 2005 study by now-defunct Jacksonville Community Council Inc.; the 2007 Downtown Action Plan; and Celebrating the River: A Plan for Downtown Jacksonville issued in 2009.

Alvin Brown, during his tenure as mayor, produced the Downtown Business and Investment Plan that incorporated Northbank and Southbank community redevelopment plans and a business investment strategy adopted by City Council in 2015.

The plan that evolves from the current working group will be the fourth one under Mayor Lenny Curry’s leadership.

“The McCoys Creek project, The Emerald Train, extensions of the Riverwalk, addition of boat docks and marinas, enhancement of riverfront parks and public spaces, restoration of two-way streets, and redevelopment of the SS Generating Station Site and, likely, the Shipyards as examples of progress that has been built upon prior plans and recommendations,” said Boyer.

“My first conversations about downtown started in the seventies with Mayor Hans Tanzler,” said Mike Tolbert, corporate and political consultant, who managed re-election campaigns for Tanzler and former mayor Jake Godbold and was a member of both former mayors’ staffs. “Tanzler shut off 77 outfalls that carried millions of gallons of raw sewage straight into the St. Johns River in Downtown.”

“One of the biggest barriers to downtown progress is the absence of a shared and continuous vision, in large part because we change mayors every four or eight years,” he said.

“Scenic Jacksonville is conducting a brief survey of our supporters to get their ideas, which we will submit to the Task Force,” Nancy Powell, the nonprofit’s executive director, said. “Our preliminary ideas center around providing activities that utilize our great waterfront and basic amenities to attract people downtown and making our streets friendly and well-maintained.”

Powell and her husband have lived in Avondale since 1990 and raised their three children there. “We love the historic homes, parks, trees and walkability. And we’re close to downtown so it’s easy to get to the symphony, The Florida Theatre, or the Jaguars games.”

“Having lived at the Berkman Plaza and worked in Downtown Jacksonville for more than a decade, I am happy to see a group talk about projects that may have an immediate impact,” said Michelle Barth, advancement and external affairs associate director for the Jacksonville Symphony. “The faith community, sporting and special events, and very significantly, the arts, have long brought hundreds of thousands of visitors to downtown each year. All of these things help to bring together our community.”

Kelly Rich, executive director of the Springfield Preservation and Revitalization Council, said, “Springfield’s success is Downtown’s success [and vice versa]. I would love for these discussions to include surrounding neighborhood leaders for brainstorming partnerships.”

“As the president of the duPont Fund and a relatively new Jacksonville resident, I think potential quick wins are walkability, bike and scooter friendliness, and deregulation of public spaces like sidewalks and Riverwalk extensions to encourage and support creative public uses and activation,” said Mari Kuraishi. She said she lives in Avondale because she loves the architecture, its commitment to preserving the history of the community and “its kissing canopies of street trees.”

The public is invited to offer suggestions and comments by emailing palmerk@coj.net. Updates are available at www.downtownjax.com or by directly contacting Cantrece Jones (cjones@adgmark.com), president of Acuity Design Group who is leading the public outreach efforts.



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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

DEAR EDITOR,

The Duval County School Board has proposed 9 school names to consider changing. Robert E. Lee High School is one of them.

Why change the name?

Robert E. Lee was a general in the Confederate Army. The Civil War was fought by the South to defend the institution of slavery. Enslaving human beings is an abhorrent concept that can only be defended by those who believe that white people are superior to other racial groups. This is called white supremacy. The dictionary defines white supremacy as "the belief that white people constitute a superior race and should therefore dominate society, typically to the exclusion or detriment of other racial and ethnic groups, in particular Black and Jewish people."

The effects of white supremacy remain deeply embedded in the fabric of our daily lives to this day.

This is not a noble history or a time to be proud of and yet it is our history.

Robert E. Lee High School, when named, was an all white school. Desegregation in Jacksonville didn't occur until 1970, despite the 1954 Supreme Court ruling that schools should be desegregated because separate schools were not equal. Much later, many of our schools were named after Confederate leaders by the school board which included members of the United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC). They were responsible for naming Nathan Bedford Forrest High School, for example, who was the first Grand Wizard of the Ku Klux Klan.

Why should Black students go to a school who honors the enslavement of their ancestors? How does this support the students? Why should the community support an enslaver? How is it different from a school named Adolph Hitler High attended by Jewish students?

To the alumni of Robert E. Lee, why would you remove support to the school if the name is changed? Memories and experiences will always be treasured but those are not related to the name.

It is important for Jacksonville to acknowledge the truth, honoring enslavers and continued racism is nothing to be proud of and is hurtful to many citizens of this community. It's time for Jacksonville to proudly honor all of its citizens--to begin to free ourselves from the bonds of prejudice and intolerance.

Etta Ettliger / Facebook: @Take Em Down Jax

DEAR EDITOR,

General Robert E. Lee was the commander of the Confederate army during the United States only civil war. He was a slave driver and a murderer. Thankfully, he was also a loser, and slavery was abolished. Regrettably, he managed to get his name on our local highschool.

At its founding in 1928, Robert E. Lee high was an all white school. After Brown v. The board of Education, it took 15 more years to desegregate. This change was dramatic and totalizing, and just. Though the appearance of the school changed after the incorporation of black students in 1970, it remained an institution of learning. The changing of the school's name is a symbolic echo of the school's reintegration 50 years ago.

There have been disputes against this name change on account of it's alleged costs, mostly allocated to cosmetic alterations. But it should be kept in mind that this money is not just buying us new signs and stationary, nor is it wiping away the legacy of the schools athletes, teachers, and alumni; this money is paying for a renewal. Those alumni who love the school for the knowledge and experiences they gained there will not feel a blow, but a weight off. Now that the institution they love so much is no longer marred

by doubts about the character of its namesake, they can support their alma mater with the clearest conscience, no longer having to worry about justifications, arguments and excuses, or historical debates.

It isn't just the alumni whose consciences are at risk. There is a dark irony in a student honoring, with their own academic and athletic achievement, the man who lent his name to their school, while at the same time learning in their classes how much worse the world might have been for them if that man had accomplished what he set out to achieve.[It's vital that students grapple with the mental tension of this dichotomy, it matures them, it gives their thought independence. But we don't need to age our students too quickly.]Pragmatically, this mental energy can be better spent, and if this simple change eases the mind of each young person by just so much, this relief sums to a great weight dropped from the shoulders of the student body. It would be free to look higher, roam wider, and continue to construct a better world. You can't even imagine a better world when your imagination is still in chains.

Remy Van Nostrand / Riverside/Avondale

HELP OUR HEROES GET THE TRAINING THEY NEED

Cardiac arrest is a leading cause of death, with more than 350,000 out-of-hospital cardiac arrests occurring each year in the United States.

The American Heart Association annually trains over 22 million people how to properly perform CPR. We do this because we know that bystander CPR is often the difference between life and death for someone who suffers sudden cardiac arrest. Moreover, it is critical that the bystander perform CPR as quickly as possible. For every minute without CPR, survival from a witnessed cardiac arrest decreases 7-10 percent. By the time the paramedics arrive, it is often too late.

In my position, I am fortunate to hear remarkable stories of individuals who have survived cardiac arrest. In many instances, the reason they are alive to share their story is not because someone nearby knew CPR. Rather, someone nearby dialed 9-1-1 and was walked through how to perform CPR.

Unfortunately, those who call 9-1-1 in Florida may be speaking to a dispatcher who does not know what is called TeleCPR – CPR over the telephone. HB 397 and SB766 will ensure all dispatchers are trained and able to coach bystanders to perform CPR, and we ask you to please support this legislation.

We have a saying at the American Heart Association: "Heroes aren't born, they are trained."

Let's make sure our emergency dispatchers are trained to be heroes.

Amber Wilson / Executive Director, First Coast American Heart Association

DEAR EDITOR,

The DCSB's effort to change the name of Robert E. Lee High School is both wasteful and unjustifiable: an exorbitant (yet predictably futile) effort to appease a block of citizens who claim that the renaming (translation: erasure) will enable students to learn better, and in the process will "correct" history.

"Correct" history how, exactly? Cancel-culture movements like this "correct" nothing; they just force actual history "out of sight, out of mind".

Those enslaved in the 1800's will in no way benefit from changing the names of the targeted schools, nor will their history be made more meaningful. They are no longer

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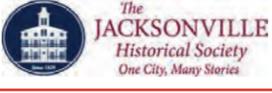



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living, nor are the perpetrators of the evil deeds of slavery. How will a statue's empty spot, or a school's new, generic name, improve any living person in meaningful ways?

While there is more to be done to accomplish racial equity, endeavors like this are purely symbolic and will do nothing to make anyone's life "better". Efforts like this one are hollow attempts to rewrite history in a less-offensive tone.

During my years at Robert E. Lee High School, there were no bands of students walking through the halls, demanding that the school's name be changed. Robert E. Lee was the name of our school, not a toxic scarlet letter of shame and disgrace. All the students had school pride. The school's name is inextricably woven into the fabric of our high school years because we learned and formed friendships and became more "ourselves" under that blue and gray banner.

Our yearbooks contain no endorsements of the antebellum south. They commemorate our becoming part of something bigger than ourselves, the place where our minds were challenged and sharpened, friendships were born, opportunities were revealed, and possibilities took root.

All references to Robert E. Lee High School in alumni's possession – diplomas, awards, memorabilia, chorus and band programs, NHS certificates, class rings, student government gavels, athletic stats, team championships, scholarship award letters – all will forever carry the invisible (yet ugly) blemish of political correctness, should this name change effort succeed.

The rants and chants of camera-chasing activist groups seek to agitate and intimidate. Too often, confrontations and vandalism ensue. And still, history remains history. Some part of it will offend every person on the planet. And taking offense is a choice.

The renaming of Forrest High School in 2014 left the school with a generic name, a few hundred thousand dollars of taxpayer dollars spent, and only the ghost of an alma mater. Alumni support evaporated. Are academic outcomes better? No. Is the community better in measurable ways? If yes, how? Can we have some testimonials, please (other than "liking it better" or "feeling validated")?

ALL students from EVERY demographic have obstacles to overcome. Dislikes to live with, at school and at home. Yet the opportunities for success within our high schools are available to all who reach for them. If students' eyes are where they ought to be (which is "on the prize"), then the brick signage and bronze statues are just markers of a season of life in the passage from youth to adulthood. Not microaggressions against anyone; not shrines to an oppressive culture as the "name-changers" have judged them to be.

LEAVE our school's name alone.

Melanie Amos Love / Class of 1979

ROBERT E. LEE HIGH SCHOOL: CHANGE THE NAME, REALLY?

Every one of us went to a High School that contributed to our formation. Certain teachers stood out. They encouraged us to grow, to count and to matter for our future more mature rolls in life. Formative years were also transformative. Our parents worked hand in hand with the leadership at our schools. They concentrated on the future, while we as young students saw narrowly, often only as far as the cute student at the desk behind us.

In those days, no one really cared deeply about a school's name. Like today, kids simply wanted to be with friends and learn from creative talented teachers. As we aged and matured, those formative years became treasured memories. That fond memory decidedly includes the name of our school.

We spoke to our children about the pride in going to Lee. We hoped they would have the same treasured experiences to pass on.

Today, nationwide, insistent narrow minded individuals want to change history, mores, and even memories for their own petty agendas. Certain individuals beyond our Jacksonville Westside neighborhood and even our city want to strip and dictate a name change of our school, Robert E. Lee, which graduated 93 classes or 93 years of learned and talented individuals who now count in Jacksonville and beyond.

They have no right because we have had ENOUGH of this ridiculous and unlearned "cancel culture". They have no right to delete our high school days, to cancel our own history or to pour water on our yearbooks and letter sweaters. They have no right to rob our memories of our parents and their involvement in our treasured education at Lee.

It is time for people to say NO. The school board must say No. The neighborhood must say No, and the entire geographic area must say No. We went to Lee, the school we were pointed to. Some graduated and went to colleges, some worked diligently in trades. But we counted, and we still do count because we were educated with an eye on our futures, and the futures of those who would need us.

We respected our teachers and we enjoyed our friends. We competed on the field and in debates. And now years after high school we still reflect on the educational memories that molded us into the professions and families we chose because we were pointed toward a vision, a goal that could indeed count for America.

However all across the treasured country of America weak people are allowing the loud but baseless staccato voices of cancel culture to rob and to delete what we hold dear: to steal our mores, our education, our memories and our foundations for no reasonable motive whatsoever. Their real motive? Cancel history, diluting the foundations which made us the greatest country in the world.

To this we say NO. It is our school with 93 graduating classes who have counted because of the foundation for which our parents and teachers worked.

Change the name of Lee? Absolutely not.

Patti Price / Daughter of Bodie Catlin, Class of 1966

RESIDENT WRITER APPRECIATED

I want to let you know my son found a copy of the March 4, 2021 Resident article you wrote, and we now have the online version to read. Betty and I read it this morning. You listened to our stories and produced a remarkable article about our lives and family. You were able to put so much emotion into your words making it a wonderful story of our lives. The both of us appreciate so much your writing, it brings a tear so our eyes just reading it. We have heard from so many who have read the story already.

Thank you Resident News and Mary Wanser for all the work you put into the story!

Pat and Betty Geer



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Heather Buckman

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David Paulk

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2561 Rosselle St - \$430,000
6 BR / 5 BA / 2,753 SQFT.



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Listed by
Heather Buckman

Three years after Hurricane Irma, progress made in Memorial Park



TOP: Replacement of 440 balusters along the seawall in Memorial Park began on the east end of the park in early March. BOTTOM: Fallen Soldiers: Balusters from the Memorial Park seawall balustrade built in 1924 were toppled by Hurricane Irma Sept. 11, 2017. (Photo by Mark Krancer, Kram Kran Photo, for Memorial Park Association)



Memorial Park Association’s Board of Directors was thrilled to see progress in March on the replacement of the nearly 100-year-old balustrade that formerly lined the seawall before Hurricane Irma destroyed it in September 2017. Board members aren’t the only ones happy to see the project underway. “Looking forward to it being restored to its former glory,” posted Sarah Kurtz on the MPA Facebook page. “Such great news!” exclaimed Terry Woodlief on the post.

Southside-based Intron Technologies was selected by the City of Jacksonville in June 2020 to replace the 560-foot-long stretch of concrete balustrade and begin making the new balusters earlier this year. In early March 2021, workers from the company started the process of affixing the 90-lb. 36-inch-high concrete balusters to the seawall. The \$405,000 project is expected to be complete by summer, according to a spokesperson from the City of Jacksonville’s Parks Department.

Septic tank funding to better health of residents, St. Johns River

BY JENNIFER EDWARDS
Resident Community News



The City and JEA are teaming up this year to make good on a promise to protect the beauty and health of the St. Johns River, which defines and molds the historic neighborhoods. Contaminants in the river have long been a concern, especially for residents who boat on it, bike and walk to it, or pay a bit of an upcharge to dine in restaurants where they can view it. But for years, outdated septic tanks throughout Jacksonville have been leeching contaminants that can cause sickness.

In 2016, the City began a program to take out the tanks but ran out of funding. This February, thanks to new funding from both the City and JEA, many septic tanks that have been leaching fecal coliform bacteria into the water table are being removed. The bacteria have been making its way into the river’s silvery waves for years, and in 2016, the City approved a project to provide infrastructure to connect those with septic tanks to City-provided water and sewer. The program will take a while, but to restart it the City of Jacksonville leaders earlier this year announced they were putting aside \$14.3 million and JEA was adding another \$12.5 million to ameliorate the problem.

Fecal coliform bacteria are microorganisms associated with the intestinal track of warm-blooded animals and that can contaminate waterways and drinking water, according to the St. Johns County RIVERKEEPER. Tributaries of the St. Johns River often contain dangerous levels of these bacteria due to the failing tanks as well as poorly treated wastewater, broken sewer lines and animal waste. In the Lower Basin of the river, which extends from Welaka to Jacksonville, most of the 75 streams listed as impaired due to elevated levels of the bacteria are in Jacksonville.

There is not enough funding yet to remove all of the failing septic tanks in the area and provide hook ups. The City/JEA project is currently targeting neighborhoods in the City’s Northwest. But some on the City Council hope to extend the program sometime soon into the historic neighborhoods.

“We have 5,000 septic tanks in our district, and the area I am most concerned about is the Lakeshore area,” District 14 City Councilwoman Randy DeFoor said. “I am hopeful that can be addressed sooner versus later. That would have to happen after the other three neighborhoods.”

At the moment, the three neighborhoods prioritized for the septic tank phase-out include the Biltmore neighborhood, where more than \$17 million was already used to complete the project, the Beverly Hills neighborhood, where \$38 million is allocated and is currently underway, and, now that additional funding has been secured, the project could expand to the Christobel community, according to a City news release.

District 8 City Councilwoman Ju’Coby Pittman said in a news release that the project has been in the making 50 years.

“As the Councilwoman of District 8, the City needs to make good on the 50-year commitment via consolidation and resolve the broken promises to the residents. They have waited long enough for this project to be completed and come to fruition.”



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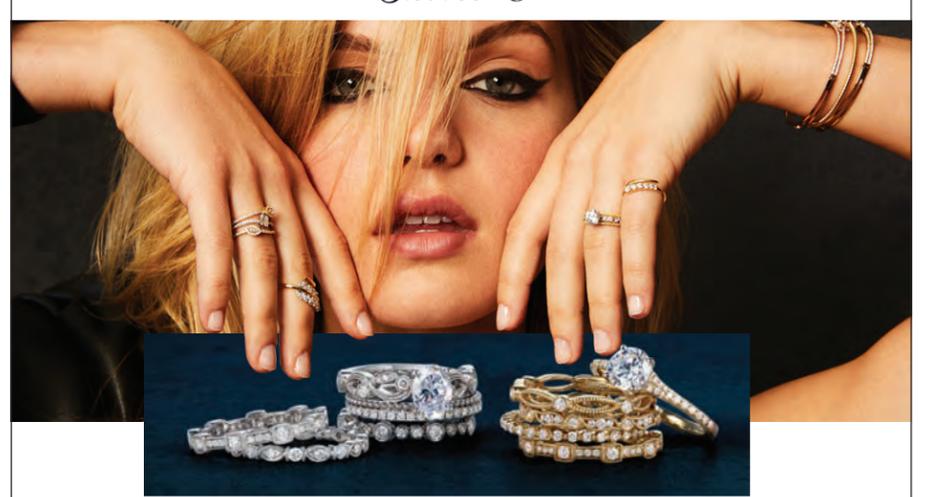
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NAI Hallmark Represents Landlord in Lease of 4,200 SF at Riverside Village



NAI Hallmark, a leading commercial real estate brokerage and property management firm in Jacksonville, announced it negotiated a 10-year lease at 1551 Riverside Avenue, Jacksonville, FL 32204 (the “Property”) on behalf of the landlord, Dr Frank Schiavone of Schiavone Enterprises. NAI Hallmark Vice President Austin Kay and Senior Associate Eric Yi represented the landlord. The tenant is Blue Orchid Thai Cuisine.

“This was a deal that required a tremendous amount of patience from all parties involved as we dealt with the uncertainty caused by the Covid-19 pandemic,” said Senior Associate Eric Yi. “Dr. Schiavone was committed from day 1 to secure a thriving restaurant concept as part of his overall redevelopment plans, and Blue Orchid matched our enthusiasm for this site to serve as their flagship location. It is always a pleasure working with Lara Bahri

from CBRE and this was the ultimate team effort to cross the finish line. Very excited to see this project come to fruition!”

“I am pleased that after much consideration, Riverside Village will be a great balance of an outstanding restaurant and modern apartments in historic buildings,” said Dr. Schiavone, property owner and landlord.

The Property consists of four medical and office buildings situated on 1.3 acres at the intersection of Riverside Avenue and Memorial Park Drive with views of Memorial Park. One medical building is being converted into the restaurant and the remaining three are being converted to multifamily. The Property has excellent visibility for retail, is highly walkable and offers impressive riverfront views.

Ascension St. Vincent’s to offer new clinical trial for COPD patients

Ascension St. Vincent’s is the first health system in Florida to participate in a clinical trial for an investigational treatment option for patients who have frequent Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) exacerbations, also known as lung attacks.

The AIRFLOW-3 Clinical Trial is evaluating the safety and effectiveness of targeted lung denervation (TLD), a bronchoscopic intervention designed to disrupt pulmonary nerve reflexes, which may reduce COPD lung attacks. Ascension St. Vincent’s began enrolling patients in the trial in February.

Pulmonologist Dr. Jose Soto-Soto and team recently successfully treated a COPD patient with TLD therapy in an hour-long outpatient procedure at Ascension St. Vincent’s Riverside.

COPD is a group of diseases like emphysema and chronic bronchitis that can cause breathing-related problems and block airflow. Symptoms include frequent coughing or wheezing, shortness of breath, trouble taking a deep breath, and producing excess phlegm, mucus, or sputum. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, millions of Americans have been diagnosed with COPD and more than 50 percent

of adults with low lung function didn’t realize that they had COPD, so the actual number could be even higher.

“We always want to keep advancing the level of high-quality, personalized, and compassionate care that we provide,” said Ascension Florida and Gulf Coast Chief Clinical Officer Dr. Estrellita Redmon. “When any of us have a healthcare need, we want to have options for treatment, so we’re grateful for the opportunity to offer this exciting new option to qualifying patients. Individuals who participate in this clinical trial are potentially helping improve COPD care for patients everywhere.”

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Keep Jacksonville Beautiful thanks St. Johns River Celebration Cleanup Site Captains for their dedication and hard work at the 26th annual St. Johns River Celebration cleanup held at 44 locations with 400 volunteers around Duval County on March 20th!

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Keep Jacksonville Beautiful
Commission 2021 Calendar
of Annual Projects & Events

Keep Jacksonville Beautiful
38th Anniversary Event and
KJB Awards Ceremony
TBD

St. Johns River
Celebration Cleanup
March 20, 2021
8 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
Various sites around Duval County

July 5th Beaches Cleanup
7 a.m. - 9 a.m.
Atlantic Beach at the ocean
Beach Boulevard at the ocean
Seagate Avenue at the ocean

International Coastal Cleanup
September 18, 2021
9 a.m. – 11 a.m.
Various sites around Duval County

Right Whale Litter Cleanup
Nov. 6, 2021
8 a.m. – 10 a.m.
Seawalk Pavilion
1st St. North
Jacksonville Beach, FL 32250

America Recycles Day
November 11, 2021
9 a.m. – 1 p.m.
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*** Dates and location of events are subject to change.

Feeding Northeast Florida Hosts Vice President Kamala Harris for Roundtable Discussion on Food Insecurity

CONVERSATION HIGHLIGHTED HOW THE AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN (ARP) IS HELPING TO PUT FOOD ON THE TABLE FOR LOCAL FAMILIES

Feeding Northeast Florida (FNEFL) hosted United States Vice President Kamala Harris at its headquarters for a roundtable discussion about food security, March 22.

The discussion was held during Harris's visit to Jacksonville as part of the Help is Here tour, and focused on the theme of helping to put food on the table. Participants included Susan King, President and CEO of Feeding Northeast Florida; U.S. Representative Al Lawson (FL-05); Florida Commissioner of Agriculture Nikki Fried; Jacksonville City Councilwoman Joyce Morgan; Duval County Superintendent of Schools Dr. Diana L. Greene; and Jacksonville City Councilman Garrett Dennis.

The group talked about how food insecurity has impacted Northeast Florida during the pandemic, ways that the American Rescue Plan (ARP) is helping to address the hunger crisis and strategies to ensure everyone can access fresh, healthy food.

"FNEFL is thankful for the support and leadership of President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris to ensure the American Rescue Plan of 2021 included critical nutrition investments to help people facing hunger," said King. "Our food bank has seen a 129% increase in people needing emergency food assistance since the start of

the pandemic, and our struggle is reflected in every food bank nationwide. Nationally, the Feeding America network reports a 55% average increase in the need for emergency food assistance. We are honored to be given the opportunity to discuss food insecurity and the impact of COVID-19 on our community with Vice President Harris."

FNEFL estimates that 326,000 individuals experience food insecurity on some level every day across its service area. In 2020, the food bank served 2.8 million people and distributed 30.8 million pounds of food — an 82% increase since 2019, equaling 84,500 meals per day. The organization expanded its operating partner agency network from 200 to 300, and increased its logistical capabilities to manage the volume.

"The Feeding Florida food bank network is at the forefront of innovative distribution methods created in response to COVID-19. We appreciated the opportunity to share this work with the Vice President during her visit, and discuss how we've been able to provide consistent and reliable food support every day," said Robin Safley, Feeding Florida Executive Director. "Our food banks will need the continued support from the administration to meet this increased demand."



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Riverfront development gains conceptual approval from DDRB



PROJECT EARNS HIGH MARKS FOR FORMER SITE OF RIVER CITY BREWING

Over the past two months, the highly anticipated project set to replace River City Brewing Company on the Southbank had gone back to the drawing board. After some tough scrutiny over the project's highest and best use, as well as its size and scope, developers illustrated a willingness to get creative and come to the table for compromise.

The constructive critiques and clarifications from DDRB [Downtown Development Review Board] board members had caused the development team to go back to the drawing board and bring forth changes that would eventually please those critical of the initial concept, gaining a sweeping 7-0 vote in favor of the plans, March 23.

The latest changes that were rolled out included reimagined spaces, both in terms of the floor layouts, unit counts and floorplans, as well as courtyards and building amenities for residents. Cindy Trimmer, a partner with Driver, McAfee, Hawthorne & Diebenow, PLLC., the firm representing the interests of Related Group, made mention of the fact that the building has been 'completely redone' to accomplish the mutual goal of moving ahead with the riverfront parcel's progression.

According to DIA [Downtown Investment Authority] Executive Director and former Councilperson for District 5, Lori Boyer, things have been moving in the right direction for the project.

"DDRB appreciated the modifications for the enhanced corridor to the river, it was more compatible with the site," she shared. It eliminated the 'closed in' effect that can occur when developing parcels along an area that offers views to a river, or other valued assets for the public. Along with the corridor widening, the site is smaller, taller, and narrower on this next phase, which Boyer applauded as well.

Other key points that pleased the DDRB and DIA officials was River City's proposal to run a 'Ship's Store' adjacent to the existing boat ramp, as well as giving up a portion of park space that will increase the size of St. Johns River Park, often referred to as Friendship Fountain Park. An agreement between the City and the lease holder to reconstruct docks and maintain the fuel dock, as one of the only fuel providers along the St. Johns River downtown, was an important amenity to maintain. According to Boyer, it has become an essential element of the site, along with a portion of public dockage and transient slips.

Boyer also emphasized the importance of Related Group's willingness to accommodate those who were constructively critical of the initial plans, citing the "high quality, respectful developer" that she believes will be a true asset moving forward, in light of a growing riverfront skyline, which has been a priority for city leaders.

IN REVIEW, THE FINER POINTS

Plans call for an 8-story building with 325-residential units, an adjoining 8-story garage with 535 parking spaces, and a restaurant concept (yet to be conceptualized and submitted for review) on the ground floor, which is said to offer seating outdoors, increasing the ability to enjoy dining and entertainment offerings.

The new lease holder, RD River City Brewery LLC, had entered into a contract back in 2020 to assume the remaining 77-years on a ground lease of 99-years from Maritime LLC. The latter lease agreement was established back in 1998, after it was inked with the City of Jacksonville.

According to its website, Related Group is a real estate development group that has enhanced skylines with real estate development characterized by innovative design, enduring quality, and inclusive living. The firm is based out of Miami, FL, but has offices in Orlando, Tampa, Atlanta, Texas, Arizona, Las Vegas, Mexico, Argentina, Brazil, and Panama.

Updated renderings of the East facing façade, the direction facing St. Johns River Park and the Friendship Fountain was a large question mark for DDRB board members. Related Group team members went back to the drawing board and provided relief [for façade projections, versus flat fronted] along this portion of the development along with other measures - to the pleasure of the voting board - and subsequent approval.

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Riverside, 5Points advocates look forward to dockage, water access

BY JENNIFER EDWARDS
Resident Community News

“We are very, very excited about it. I think this, along with the bike path being built this summer from San Marco over to Riverside and the Riverside Arts Market, I think they are two things that are going to open Riverside up to more of the broader community in Jacksonville.”

- Brooks Andrews, Riverside Avondale Preservation (RAP) Board Chair

Plans for a new floating dock at the end of Post Street are getting closer to fruition, to the anticipation of area residents, homeowners and business owners hoping for a new place to dock their boat for a bit or hop a ride or cruise on the water taxi connecting the North and South banks.

The dock is set to be constructed between the Cummer Museum of Art and Gardens and the Garden Club of Jacksonville, in close proximity to River & Post, with its rooftop views, and an easy stroll to Riverside and Memorial parks.

“We are very, very excited about it. I think this, along with the bike path being built this summer from San Marco over to Riverside and the Riverside Arts Market, I think they are two things that are going to open Riverside up to more of the broader community in Jacksonville,” said Riverside Avondale Preservation (RAP) Board Chair Brooks Andrews. “I think it will make a big difference not only to our community but also to the accessibility to the broader Jacksonville area.” The bike-pedestrian lane on the Fuller Warren is set to be finished this summer.

District 14 Councilwoman Randy DeFoor said in late March that construction on the dock could begin as early as a couple of months from now. The City is working with the State to get a submerged land lease by

summer so construction can begin. DeFoor and the City Council set aside about \$400,000 for the project, which will feature four boat slips and will lead to parking just off the dock. The City selected local contractor Hal Jones during the bidding, a division of Vecillio & Grogan Inc., which has done work for the City, the Jacksonville Port Authority, Florida Department of Transportation and other public and private developers.

Many in Five Points, Riverside and beyond also hope to add to the dock’s increased public access by beautifying the area leading up to it. Right now, the land access is a public parking lot populated by diagonal parking spaces.

Local business owners and others in a group called the Five Points Collaborative set a goal two years ago to beautify the coming dock, transforming it into a welcoming place for visitors new to the area looking to get around to all of the restaurants, shopping and entertainment options available once they step off the dock. Organizers of the Riverside Arts Market (RAM), RAP members and others involved in the collaborative are also urging the use of uniform signage to help visitors get around.

“If you look at the area, when you get off the water taxi and walk into the area between the Garden Club and the Cummer, there is just a parking lot, there is no wayfinding

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Diagonal parking as it exists now and extends down toward the river.



Five Points Collaborative vision for a small park near the dock, with bike racks and a tree canopy leading out.

“(The dock) is a perfect entry way into that location. Our hopes are that some funding is going to be able to be available at some point in time, where something like this can be added at the right time.”

- RAP Board Chair, Brooks Andrews

Points was. Some of the sidewalks are in disrepair; they’re narrow as they were built many years ago. Some of the overhead lighting is inadequate, the treescape looks tired and needs to be replaced,” RAP Executive Director Warren Jones said.

Currently, there are 55 diagonal parking spaces at the head of the dock site, with little ornamentation. RAP proposed plans to members of the City’s Parks, Recreation and Community Services Department in July of last year that include placing wayfinding signage there as well as streetlights and extended sidewalks, and reducing the parking spaces to 46 in order to make space for the improvements. Those prospective plans also call for the sidewalks to be extended and a new canopy of trees planted in order to shield cars and pedestrians from the sun. Those same plans also suggest a 50-foot-by-80-foot

park between the parking area and the dock, with bike racks and twin live oak shade trees.

As of late March, the landscaping and park project had not yet been budgeted or funded although the collaborative is moving toward that and hopes remain high for a better welcome for visitors.

“(The dock) is a perfect entry way into that location. Our hopes are that some funding is going to be able to be available at some point in time, where something like this can be added at the right time,” RAP Board Chair Brooks Andrews said, referencing “the need for directional wayfinding and to do it in an artful way that fits into the Riverside neighborhood. The wayfinding would include RAM, how one finds their way to Riverside Park, to Memorial Park, to the Five Points Merchants and shopping area. As we have these wonderful amenities added such as

the dock, people need to know how we get from there to here.”

Regardless of whether the parking lot project is funded, the new dock will also be part of a larger effort to connect more of Riverside and Five Points with City and community efforts to create a more walkable, bikeable community. The St. Johns River Taxi currently connects the North and South banks via the St. Johns River and makes its rounds to several landmark locations including RAM, The Hyatt Regency Jacksonville Riverfront, Veterans Memorial Arena and the Baseball Grounds, DoubleTree by Jacksonville Hilton, Friendship Fountain and Metropolitan Park. It also operates cruises along the river. Bike and pedestrian paths provide access nearby, and efforts are underway to create more trails that lace the communities’ best venues together.



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IKEA Donates Teddy Bears and VR Glasses to Children at Ronald McDonald House Charities

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- Andrea Dombrowski, IKEA Loyalty Manager



IKEA Jacksonville donated 500 plush teddy bears as part of IKEA’s nationwide “Let’s Play” Campaign which gives customers the opportunity to purchase new soft toys and donate them to a local organization. The “Let’s Play” campaign is an 8-week campaign that ran November 1 – December 24, 2020 that generated support from hundreds of local IKEA supporters and employees. IKEA Loyalty Manager, Andrea Dombrowski, was excited to personally deliver the variety of plush bears with other IKEA employees saying, “We believe kids are the most important people in the world, and IKEA is excited to be part of their development through play and imagination as the building blocks for their future. When we looked at organizations that we felt would experience the greatest impact from this donation, it was an easy choice to choose Ronald McDonald House of Jacksonville.”

Ronald McDonald House Charities of Jacksonville, Executive Director Diane Boyle expressed her appreciation, saying, “The employees and customers of IKEA have done an exceptional job collecting these adorable teddy bears and amazing virtual reality glasses for children staying at our House. To receive this thoughtful donation after a busy holiday season really reminds us that the Jacksonville community is committed to our seeing our children weather their medical diagnosis with a smile. These bears will certainly bring comfort not only to children who are physically staying with us, but also to children who are still receiving inpatient care at local hospitals.”

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Wolfson Children's Hospital photo earns spot in national exhibit

THE CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION GALLERY SHOWS THE STRENGTH AND UNITY OF CHILDREN'S HOSPITALS DURING THE PANDEMIC

A photograph that tugged at the heartstrings of people throughout the Jacksonville area is now part of a national photo series highlighting the resilience of children's hospitals and patients during the COVID-19 pandemic. This year's Children's Hospital Association (CHA) photo exhibit, entitled "Stronger Together: Children's Hospitals During COVID-19," showcases how children's hospitals adapted during the pandemic, while still delivering the highest quality of care.

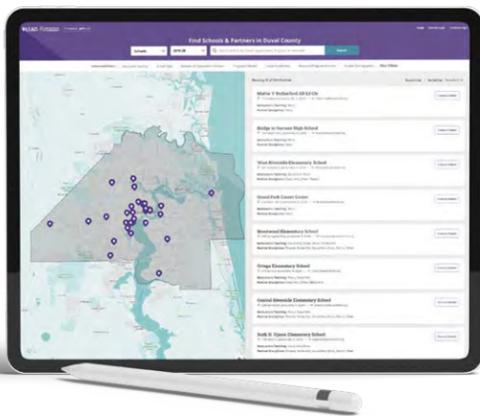
While the annual CHA photo series is typically a competition judged by experts in the field of photography, this year's gallery features at least one

image from every submitting hospital as a show of solidarity. The photo from Wolfson Children's Hospital is one of nearly 400 submitted from 51 children's hospitals across the country.

"Even in the face of a pandemic, our patients and families found ways to show immense strength," said Michael D. Aubin, FACHE, president of Wolfson Children's Hospital. "Though it seems like the world stopped, children still fight health battles every day and need the expert care only children's hospitals can provide. We are honored to have this photo displayed alongside images from across the country, as we really are all in this together."



Cathedral Arts Project launches artlook® map



VIEW THE LEAD ARTLOOK® MAP AT JACKSONVILLE.ARTLOOKMAP.COM

The Cathedral Arts Project (CAP), as part of the Any Given Child Jacksonville program (AGC Jacksonville), recently announced the launch of the Landscape of Education in the Arts in Duval (LEAD) artlook® map. The platform was created by the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts and Ingenuity, which is an arts advocacy organization based in Chicago.

The interactive tool was launched as part of a collective national effort toward systemic change for arts education. It provides a real-time snapshot of arts resources and services throughout Duval County on a school-by-school basis.

LEAD began in 2019 taking surveys and collecting information about the arts programs and resources available in the county's public school system

and the arts education offerings of local culture organizations. Data from the 2020-2021 school year will be active on the map by fall 2021 and updated annually thereafter.

The data allows community stakeholders to identify funding and partnership opportunities for arts education throughout the local public education system and will lead to more equitable access to the arts in Jacksonville, the only city in Florida to participate in the artlook® Project.

With funds from the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), the U.S. Department of Education, and the PNC Foundation, AGC Jacksonville is assessing the state of the arts throughout the Duval County public school system and advocating for its 130,000+ students

to have equitable access to quality arts education, especially during the current coronavirus crisis.

"Arts education plays a critical role in the development of children, and we are fortunate that multiple community partners have come together to provide this new resource," said Dr. Diana Greene, Superintendent of Duval County Public Schools.

"For nearly three decades, CAP has worked to make sure every child has access to an arts-rich education with tremendous progress. Now, with the launch of the LEAD artlook® map, it will be easier than ever for our community — rich in quality arts learning resources — to come together on behalf of our children," said The Rev. Kimberly L. Hyatt, CAP President and CEO.



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Jewish Federation & Foundation announces \$50 million endowment and planned giving campaign

Jewish Federation & Foundation of Northeast Florida has launched an endowment and planned giving campaign to ensure the future of Jewish life in the region and beyond.

Foundation Director Kellie Ann Kelleher-Smith is leading a community-wide project to encourage a legacy of giving, endeavoring to raise \$50 million by 2025. Assisting with the campaign will be advisory board members Chair Stephen Silverman, Dr. Scot Ackerman, Michael DuBow, Jeff Edwards, Mel Gottlieb, Mark Green, and Brent Trager.

“Organizations that have developed endowments and cash reserves, those with visionary boards and professional expertise, will keep themselves afloat and continue to provide vital services to the Jewish community, now and in the future,” said Kelleher-Smith, considering the current COVID crisis.

A February 18 virtual event celebrated the establishment of multiple permanent endowed funds that will support the work of all Jewish nonprofits in Northeast Florida, helping to sustain their missions. In addition, a \$500,000 fund has been established to provide a 1:1 challenge, doubling the impact of any gift made to the Federation Endowment Fund.

Iris Kraemer, President of the organization, urged event attendees to create a family legacy, a partnership that will help ensure permanent financial stability for the community.

“We are proud supporters of the Jewish Federation & Foundation because we believe that all Jews are responsible for one another. We can help perpetuate the living legacies that have been left to us from Morton Hirschberg and all those who inspired him,” Kraemer said.

The Setzer family has endowed funds to the Jewish community as has the Morton R. Hirschberg Trust.

Hirschberg was one of Jacksonville’s Jewish community philanthropists who died in 1978 with no living heirs. The organization became one of the beneficiaries of his Trust, which provided millions of dollars to local nonprofits in 2019.

The Jewish Federation & Foundation of Northeast Florida is a mission-driven nonprofit dedicated to building a vibrant, inclusive community and sustaining Jewish life in Northeast Florida, Israel, and the world. Since the Jewish Federation’s 2018 merger with the Jewish Foundation, the organization has grown to over \$34 million in assets under management and has disbursed over \$4.3 million through family legacy funds, donor advised funds, B’nai Tzedek or next generation programming, and Jewish grants. In 2020, \$1.5 million in grants were distributed.

To learn more about the organization’s campaign, contact Kellie Ann Kelleher-Smith, Director at (904) 512-3796 or KellieK@JewishJacksonville.org.

BHHS welcomes Lisa Zielinski

Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Network Realty is pleased to welcome Lisa Zielinski to the Metropolitan office with locations in Avondale and San Marco.

Lisa joins Florida Network Realty as a newly licensed Realtor but has a strong background of working with timeshares and property management. In addition to this, Lisa has been the owner of her own company for over twenty-five years, has experience working as an Executive Assistant. When asked why she joined Florida Network Realty, Lisa states, “When I was looking for a Brokerage, a great friend of mine works for BHHS Florida Network Realty, and has said amazing things about working with this company. I feel at home here, and I’m excited to help my clients find their dream home with the support of this team.”

“I’m excited to welcome Lisa to the Avondale office! I have great expectations for Lisa, and I am excited to welcome her to our team. She has a plan and a ‘can-do’ attitude. Lisa’s drive and commitment to excellence are right in line with the service we provide our clients at Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Network Realty,” shares Josh Cohen, Broker/Manager of the Metropolitan office of Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Network Realty with locations in Avondale and San Marco.



LISA ZIELINSKI

SJCDS Announces New Enrollment Lead

St. Johns is pleased to welcome Kelly Risdon, of Ortega, as Director of Enrollment

Management. Reporting to Head of School Valorie Baker, Mrs. Risdon will be responsible for managing the School’s overall enrollment, introducing new families to St. Johns, and managing the Office of Admissions. “We are so pleased to have Kelly join our St. Johns team,” said Baker. “She brings a wealth of knowledge and experience, not just of independent schools, but also of the Jacksonville community, and we’re thrilled to have her as part of the St. Johns family.”

Mrs. Risdon comes to St. Johns after 25 years at St. Mark’s Episcopal Day School, where she served as Director of Admission and Enrollment and, before that, as faculty. “I’m excited to begin my new adventure at St. Johns and look forward to sharing with the greater Jacksonville community what an amazing school it is,” said Risdon.

Mrs. Risdon received her bachelor’s degree in elementary education from DeLand’s Stetson University and her master’s degree in reading education from Jacksonville University.



KELLY RISDON

Photo credit: John Cabrera '22

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Terry's cooking, so you don't have to



Terry's Kitchen celebrated a 20th anniversary!

It was March 1, 2001 when Terry Roberts opened her doors on the west side of Jacksonville. "I appreciate all the wonderful people that have come to my store and how many wonderful friendships I have been so blessed to make over these 20 years," she said.

At Terry's Kitchen, breakfast casseroles, dinner entrees, and desserts are freshly prepared and then frozen. The meals are meant to go from freezer to oven to table. "So, you can have a homecooked meal without spending all your time in the kitchen," Roberts said.

In addition to offering fresh frozen meals for pickup, Terry's Kitchen caters food and will deliver large orders for local events. "Everything travels beautifully," Roberts said. She's heard that her meals have traveled as far as New York, Washington, and even the Bahamas.

"I've always enjoyed cooking," Roberts said, especially for friends and family. She began her business by making chicken pot pies at home, and it grew from there. She said of her late husband, "He helped me fulfill my dream." Gary Roberts, a pharmacist, was a native of Jacksonville who passed away in May of last year.

Their teenage son, Clay, had passed away in 2007. The family maintains a memorial scholarship in his name at Bishop Kenny High School. Their daughter, Casey, now helps her mom at the store.

In earlier days, Roberts had been a dental assistant. But she wanted work that would allow her time to be with her children, to accompany them on field trips. As they grew and needed her less, she thought to herself, "Well, I can't clean house all day," so, she turned her passion into her business.

Jacksonville Historical Society welcomes Paul Bourcier as Music History Coordinator

The Jacksonville Historical Society recently hired Paul Bourcier to serve as the nonprofit's new Music History Coordinator.

Alan J. Bliss, Ph.D., and chief executive officer for the JHS, stated he and the Board of Directors welcome Bourcier's expertise in helping to implement the music history museum project, which was announced to the public in June 2020.

"One of the primary duties of this new position is to refine a mission and vision for the music history museum, including a well-articulated collections development plan and a set of goals for exhibits and programming," said Bliss. "By engaging Paul in this role, the Jacksonville Historical Society is well positioned to execute its intent to bring a first-class music museum to our city, where the roots of many musical genres are found."



PAUL BOURCIER

The museum will leverage the memories and memorabilia of people who lived through the birth of Southern rock and roll in the late 1960s, according to Bliss. "But there is a lot more to Jacksonville's music history," he added. "The music of Lynyrd Skynyrd and the Allman Brothers Band stands on the shoulders of giants in the blues and jazz genres in Jacksonville's African American community."

Bourcier spent four years as Curator at Jacksonville's Museum of Science & History, bringing to life exhibits such as "Neighborhoods," "Mission: Jax Genius," and "The Legacy of Lynching: Confronting Racial Terror in America."

"I admire the work of the Jacksonville Historical Society in preserving the history of a multifaceted city," said Bourcier when asked why he was interested in joining the JHS. "Music history has fascinated me since I was a teenager. I relish the opportunity to explore this topic in a regional context and help JHS share stories that inform and inspire."

Prior to moving to Jacksonville in 2016 and joining MOSH, Bourcier served as Chief Curator for the Wisconsin Historical Society for 26 years. He began his career in curatorial positions at New York's Adirondack Museum and the Rhode Island Historical Society. Bourcier's resumé includes more than 100 exhibits and many collections management projects. He also edited two editions of Nomenclature, a professional cataloging standard recognized throughout North America.

Bourcier holds a Bachelor of Arts in geography from Clark University and a Master of Arts in American history and certification in museum studies from the University of Delaware.

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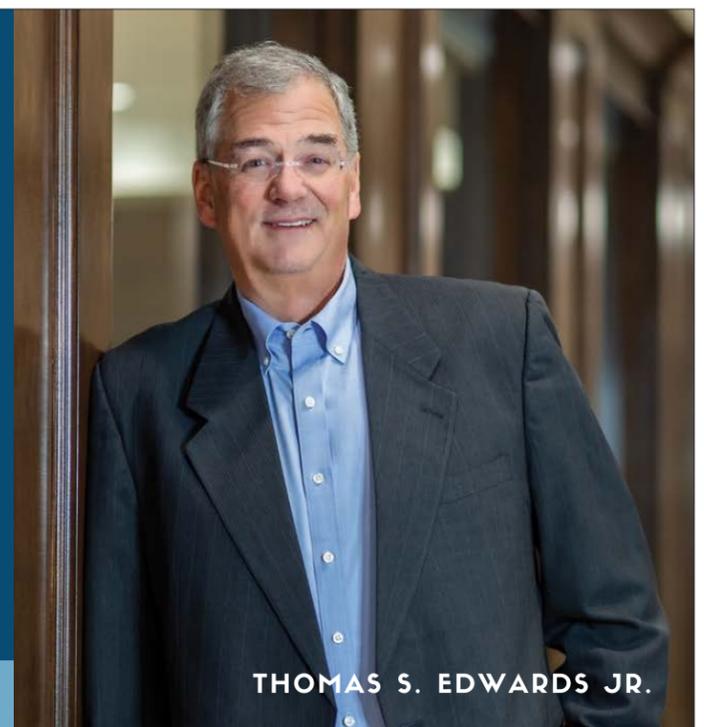
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Managing Broker of the Year



Lorri M. Reynolds, vice president and managing broker of the Watson Realty Corp. Avondale/Ortega office, was named Managing Broker of the Year last month at the company's virtual president's meeting on Feb 11, 2021. Watson Realty Corp. has more than 50 offices in Northeast Florida, Central Florida, and Southeast Georgia.

The Broker of the Year award is in recognition of her tremendous leadership, support, and contribution to the success of Watson Realty Corp. Ms. Reynolds is responsible for oversight, staff and sales operations for more than 25 full-time real estate associates, with a 2020 closed sales volume in excess of \$85 million.

Reynolds joined Watson Realty Corp. in September 2012 and has been a licensed real estate broker since 2000 and a licensed Florida Realtors® Instructor since 2014. In 2019, Reynolds was named NEFAR's Humanitarian of the Year and in 2018, was named NEFAR's Educator of the Year.

"Real estate is not just a job, it's my passion. I am humbled and honored to work with the best brokerage ever based on the integrity of the corporate leadership and our company's endless commitment to customer service."



Daniel's *Furnish Their Future* Campaign Is in Full Swing to Help Local Kids in Crisis



Rendering of the dining area in Daniel's soon-to-be renovated cottage

Some would say 13-year-old Carson* had the odds stacked against him. He experienced trauma at a young age. He was diagnosed with conduct disorder, which made him defiant and destructive. He also happened to be on the autism spectrum. As a result of his trauma, he not only had trouble relating to his peers, but also acted out with property destruction. And, if it weren't for Daniel, Carson wouldn't have had a facility within 100 miles of his home to receive the acute care he needed. Fortunately, Daniel did not focus on his odds, but on the opportunities for helping him heal. Daniel is the only local resource in Northeast Florida where kids with mental health issues that coexist with intellectual differences can receive therapeutic care in a residential environment.

Carson came to Daniel in June 2019 and began behavioral therapy that helped him express his feelings in an acceptable manner as well as learn enduring coping skills. He maintained his academics through the Duval County Hospital Homebound Program. He and his parents also worked together in family counseling to ease his transition back home. Carson returned to his very grateful family in October 2019. He began earning A's and B's in his honors classes and became the first freshman swimmer to go to regionals in his high school's history.

"Daniel has been serving kids with serious emotional and behavioral issues on our campus since the early 1970s. Often, we are families' last stop on a very bumpy road toward wellness," said Lesley Wells, CEO of Daniel. "Youth who have developmental differences and mental health issues have an even harder time finding a place to heal. Fortunately, our agency has the expertise to help them – we just need a dedicated space to do so effectively."

That's where Daniel's loyal donors...and the general public comes in.

"Thanks to generous donors, we're in the home stretch of raising the funds we need to renovate our Cedarwood/Creekside cottage to help more kids like Carson," said Wells. "However, before we break ground, we must raise \$150,000 for furnishings and equipment."

The non-profit agency launched the *Furnish Their Future* Campaign in mid-February, which is focused on getting public support to raise that \$150,000 within 150 days. Whether donors can afford to give \$25, \$50 or \$500, every donation to this cause will go toward buying the beds, tables and chairs needed to create a warm, welcoming environment where kids in crisis can heal.

To take part, visit danielkids.org/future or contact Madison Shelly at 904.296.1055, Ext. 1031.

(*name changed for privacy)

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New downtown chapel marries everyone, welcomes anyone



SELECIA YOUNG-JONES

of life through her doors inside Maddy D's at 440 West Adams Street, directly across from the Duval County Courthouse.

When the Duval County Clerk of the Courts office refused to marry anyone if they were going to have to officiate same-sex marriages back in January of 2015, the policy was to cancel courthouse wedding ceremonies for all. Following the passage of same-sex marriage in Florida, citizens lost the ability to marry in a quick, efficient, and official ceremony downtown at or near the Courthouse. It became obvious to Selecia that she wanted to help people get married and proudly declare - 'Until death do us part' - while officiating special moments in the lives of those served.

Since those rulings' years ago, COVID-19 has now entered the picture, making it even more difficult to register your marriage license. Due to backlogs and virtual court proceedings, the barriers to nuptials seemed to be growing, or at least being made more difficult. Selecia saw a chance to offer a solution.

Due to the increase in red tape and difficulty, she decided to open her own wedding chapel nearby the Federal Courthouse and Rainbow Wedding Chapel, as part of the Rainbow Mobile Notary and Nuptials Wedding Officiants Network, is now up and operating. Visit the Facebook page at [Rainbownotaryandnuptials](#) for more information or visit [rainbowweddingchapel.com](#), or by calling 904-Rainbow.

St. Nicholas resident Selecia Young-Jones is an open-minded woman, she is also motivated to offer an equal opportunity for couples that wish to marry. Whether you are gay, straight, or otherwise, the door to your wedding ceremony is now open in Downtown Jacksonville.

Having recently opened her business April 1, she's now operating the Rainbow Wedding Chapel and welcomes all walks

Ackerman Cancer Foundation Receives Breast Cancer Grant



The Ackerman Cancer Foundation, found in 1997 by Medical Director, Dwr. Scot Ackerman, is now the proud recipient of a grant that will help thousands of patients with basic needs when faced with a cancer diagnosis. The new funds were awarded by the Florida Breast Cancer Foundation (FBCF), a group that will help cover bills and expenses for 50 breast cancer patients during the fight ahead.

In a typical calendar year, the Ackerman Cancer Foundation will cover thousands of dollars in transportation and housing assistance, meals and groceries, support and educational programs, and necessary basic

needs which break down common barriers patient face when battling cancer.

"Patients shouldn't have to choose if they should put food on the table for their family or getting treated, and often times patients are put in very tough spots," said Dr. Ackerman. "Often, I see patients putting the needs of their family first and delaying their treatment, Ackerman Cancer Foundation supports patients in need and helps eliminate barriers to care."

Ackerman Cancer Foundation patients are faced with financial burdens and the Foundation helps to identify and relieve the patient's stressors. The recent grant award will afford the Foundation the ability to deliver 100% of the proceeds to patients, where the funds are needed most for struggling families.

"Treatment can keep patients out of work, add unexpected expenses, and ultimately cause financial burden that can delay further treatment," says Ackerman. "Ackerman Cancer Foundation has always been dedicated to helping our patients navigate these challenging barriers, and we are excited to be working with the FBCF to provide even more assistance to our community."

For more information about how you can help support the FBCF, visit [www.floridabreastcancer.org](#) and to learn how you can help patients via the Ackerman Cancer Foundation visit [www.ackermancancerfoundation.org](#), or call Ryan Ali, Foundation Director, at (904) 880-5522.

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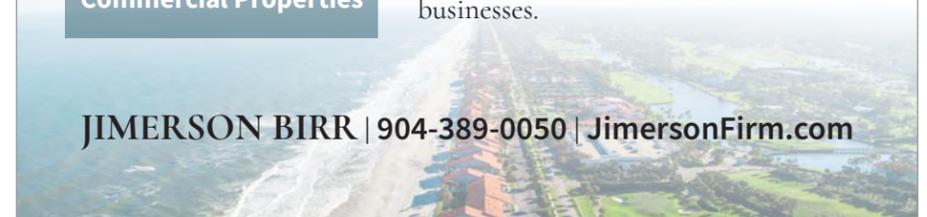
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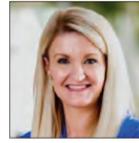
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4258 ORTEGA FOREST DR.
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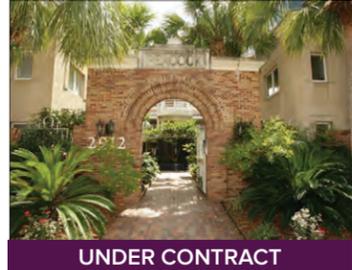
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WE CAN BE HEROES

Foundation brunch a huge success



LEFT: Ryman Shoaf, Cliff Leonard, Beth Heath; RIGHT: Atlantic Coast Young Marines Color Guard

The We Can Be Heroes Foundation hosted its spring Tribute to Our Heroes Brunch at the Salem Centre Auditorium in late March with the room filled to capacity (given the current COVID restrictions). Unsung heroes from around the country were recognized for their sacrifices for the good of their neighbors, their country and its future. The event featured a catered brunch followed by young Marines from the Atlantic Coast Young Marines formally presenting the Colors. Many tables were labelled with the names of a Veteran or community hero, donated by their loved ones to honor them. Two special heroes in attendance were Jacksonville World War II Veterans Frank Pupura and John Connelly. In addition to being recognized at the brunch, each unsung hero is delivered the Foundation's Unsung Hero Lives Here yard sign. The event concluded with presentations from Hillsdale College Professor Dr. Adam Carrington on America's freedom and Concerned Veterans for America Coalition Director Jimmie Smith on endless wars. Sponsors of the event included Americans for Prosperity, Concerned Veterans for America, and K9S for Warriors.

Rethreaded exceeds fundraising record goal during virtual Mukti Gala

February 27, 2021, was a night to remember for the organization, Rethreaded. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the company made the decision to host their annual Mukti Gala virtually. With the hard work of the Rethreaded team, with the support of Sight and Sound Productions and Emcee Geoff Cowan, Rethreaded was able to beat their fundraising goal of 265,000.

The organization surpassed its fundraising goal and raised \$323,000 by the end of the evening. Everyone who virtually attended the gala was able to participate in the silent auction the week leading up to the event. During the event, a thrilling live auction took place with incredible prizes like a private plane ride to Savannah and a getaway to Blue Ridge, Georgia, to a couple lucky winners. Guests had a blast texting in their photos to appear in the virtual program presentation. This new feature allowed everyone to feel like they were enjoying the event together, even while they were apart.

During the event, the auctioneer and Emcee Geoff Cowan stated that he "has never seen generosity like this" in his many years of emceeing events. Founder and CEO of Rethreaded, Kristin Keen, could hardly contain her excitement as donations continued to roll in throughout the evening. The entire Rethreaded team was blown away by Todd Taylor, Co-founder, and Chief Executive Officer T2 Advertising Inc, who generously gave over \$70,000 to the organization.

Rethreaded is grateful to everyone who watched the gala from home, participated in the silent and live auction, and donated. Due to Mukti's success, the organization will now be able to hire more survivor employees in 2021.



Veronica Barnes 881.4083	Mary Blajian 742.7067	Flo Bliss 463.1692	Felicia Bowen 673.9857	Greg Bowen 673.2929	Neil Bridgers 580.2289	Nick Clauser 502.457.4268	Terri Cornell 613.6162	Belinda Felscher 699.9299	Reggie Fountain 635.3347	Candice Gann 502.7054	Corinne Grant 334.8135	Russell Grooms 631.3411	Michelle Gully 742.5159	Christy Hilpert 252.9615	Jesika Johnson 891.2703	Maxine Kelley 923.3136	K... 598...
 955 Albert St. \$900,000	 4810 Arapahoe Ave. \$832,000	 738 Lafayette St. \$700,000	 1648 Woodmere Dr. \$675,000	 1506 Glendale St. \$399,000	 10310 Hamlet Glen Dr. \$396,000	 1327 N. Kyle Way \$359,999	 1545 Parrish Pl. \$295,000	 6139 Briarforest Rd. N. \$255,000	 1686 Geraldine Dr. \$249,900	 2994 Remington St. \$249,900	 8124 Niska Trail \$245,000	 10528 Abilene Rd. \$199,900	 9471 Baymeadows #403 \$187,900	 328 Edson Dr. \$169,900	 11636 Charlie Rd. \$161,500		

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River City Dancing With The Stars

The Jacksonville Children's Chorus hosted River City Dancing With The Stars. The event was hosted both in-person and live streamed for virtual audiences.

River City DWTS featured local stars partnered with professional ballroom dancers as they competed to be River City's favorite dancer while also raising money for the JCC. All the dances kept the audience dancing in their seats while also impressing the star panel of judges.

After a night full of dancing and singing showcases, the winners were finally determined. Third place was awarded to John Thompson, Financial Advisor at Wells Fargo, for his fun swing dance. Second place was awarded to Susana Cruz, Broker, AON, for her upbeat salsa dance. The overall winner of River City DWTS was awarded to Allison "AllieMcDeal" Hollander, bestbet Poker Show Host, for her dramatic Tango.

At the end of the night, all the contestants collectively raised a total of \$95,813.71. All proceeds from River City Dancing with The Stars will benefit The Jacksonville Children's Chorus' ongoing programming and scholarship funds.

Lutheran Social Services hosts first Saturday food giveaway



Lutheran Social Services (LSS), in partnership with Helping Florida and Clear Health Alliance, hosted a Saturday mobile food pantry on March 20. The food pantry was open to anyone in need and included 1,600 pre-packaged food boxes to be distributed on a first-come, first-served basis. The event took place at LSS headquarters, located at 4615 Philips Hwy in Jacksonville.

"Our pantry serves more than 2,000 households every month, but we know there are families missing out on much-needed food assistance because they work during the week," said Bill Brim, LSS Executive Director. "Thanks to our partnership with Helping Florida and Clear Health Alliance, we are able to offer this special Saturday food giveaway. We are committed to distributing as much nourishment as possible to our neighbors in need, and we hope food-insecure families will hear about this event through local media outlets and join us."

LSS feeds hundreds of local families every week through its regular pantry, which is open five days a week, Monday through Friday.

"Our pantry serves more than 2,000 households every month, but we know there are families missing out on much-needed food assistance because they work during the week"

- Bill Brim, LSS Executive Director



Michael 4365	Laine MacWilliam 654.6830	Hugh Mattox 535.7941	Tammy McKinley 421.3577	Allison Mead 530.355.3966	Dillon Mills 864.8139	Rosemary Murphy 612.7760	Bahman Nakhai 463.6600	Christina Sapp 536.1359	Debbie Sapp 662.9030	Margie Scarborough 910.1624	Dave Shortz 219.7495	Victoria St. Clair 894.9600	Tony Tindol 303.8564	Keith Waldrip 434.7117	Daina Watts 210.5326	Kyle Williams 304.9499	Lorri Reynolds Broker
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Hurricane season is approaching. Secure the proper insurance now.

As hurricane season approaches, it's imperative that homeowners and renters secure the proper insurance coverage ahead of time, amending base policies with specific endorsements where necessary.

"Insurance carriers will restrict binding or adding new coverage once a hurricane is within a certain geographic distance of the state. So, it's best to review your policy while there is no hurricane approaching. That time is now," said Tom York, President of CastleWise Insurance Group in Southside.

"A lot of people don't have any idea what their policy covers and what it doesn't," said York. It is best to work with a trusted professional to evaluate your homeowners insurance policy, but should you decide to do it on your own, here's what to look for:

- **Carrier stability** – Recently, a host of Florida insurance carriers received downgrades in ratings. If the insurance carrier of your homeowners policy is downgraded below the minimum threshold set forth by your mortgage company, you may be out of compliance.
- **Ordinance or Law Coverage** – Most standard homeowners policies provide limited protection should a structure, particularly an older one, require major repair or demolition and reconstruction with upgrades to comply with building ordinances and city codes in the event of damage. "This coverage is shown as a percentage. It can be as low as 10% of the dwelling coverage, but it is usually 25%. In older homes, like those found in Ortega, Riverside, Avondale, and San Marco, I recommend it be increased to 50% by endorsement," York said.
- **Water Damage Coverage** – Many carriers are lowering or removing this coverage to protect themselves due to the frequency of these claims, which include burst pipes and leaking roofs and air conditioners. Houses built more than 40 years ago are especially affected by these coverage changes.

- **Guaranteed Replacement Cost Coverage on Dwelling** – In the event of a total loss, this coverage could avoid your being underinsured, as it guarantees that the policy will pay for the full cost of replacing the home, even if that amount exceeds the policy limits. It's important to note that not every state or every insurer has this provision available.
- **Appropriate Dwelling Coverage** – It's not only your house itself that needs to be insured but also any attached structures, like a garage, as well as built-in appliances, like a water heater. It is particularly important for condominium owners to be aware of this coverage, as the walls may or may not be covered by your master policy.
- **Personal Property Replacement Cost** – There are two types of personal property coverage, and the difference involves depreciation of items.

- **Actual Cash Value Coverage** – This is not the amount you paid for an item or the cost to replace that item in the event of loss. This is the amount the item is worth today, which is equivalent to its cost new minus its depreciation.

- **Replacement Cost on Contents Coverage** - It covers the cost to fully replace your personal possessions that are damaged or destroyed by a covered loss. It covers items like televisions and furniture, regardless of when you purchased them, regardless of their depreciation.

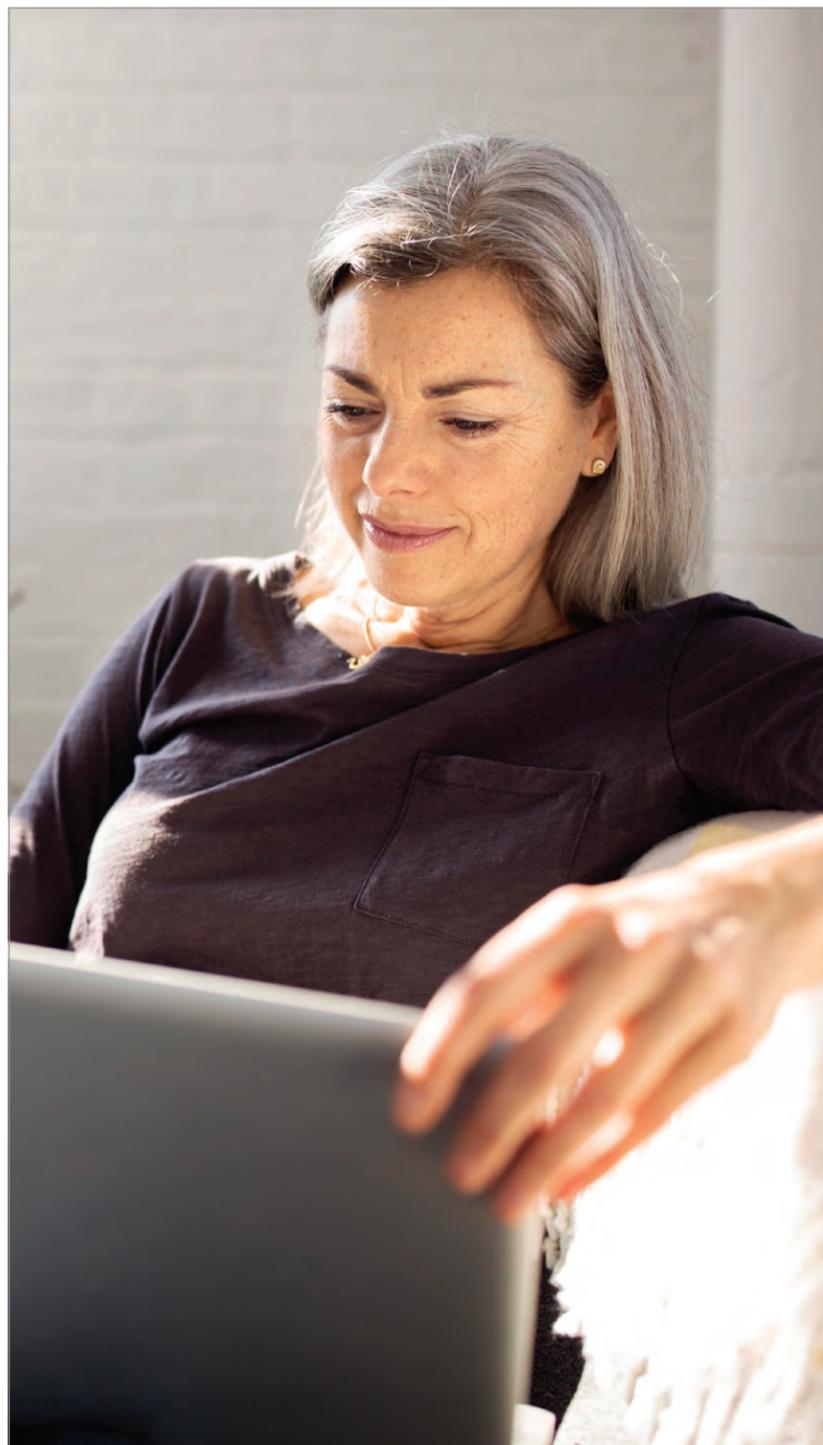
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A glimpse into the Eucharistic Procession at Assumption Catholic School



Sisters: (front left) Sr. Karen, Sr. Marina, Sr. Grace (front center) Sr. Kelly (behind from left) Sr. Sasha, Sr. Megan, Sr. Paulette and Sr. Kira

“A what?” one might ask.

“Anyone who had truly fallen in love can understand why Catholics believe that Jesus is truly present in the Eucharist,” one of the religious sisters at Assumption ardently explained. “His love is infinite and love does crazy things; since He is God, His love goes beyond our human reasoning and He chose to transform bread into Himself so that He could be with us until the end of time.”

The Eucharistic Procession is kicked off during the first school day of Catholic Schools Week. The Servant Sisters of the Home of the Mother collaborate with the Assumption Catholic Church and the school to organize this truly amazing event at the school. Covid Restrictions turned out to be a blessing in disguise as it gave us the opportunity to change things up a bit for this year’s procession. Whereas in past years Jesus only processed amongst the students in the gym, this year the students were stationed at 4 different locations throughout campus.

Father Jason Trull, pastor of Assumption Catholic Church, processed with the Eucharist throughout the school campus so

that the students could adore Him, love Him, and enjoy the true peace that only comes from being in His Presence. This is the 4th year that a Eucharistic Procession has taken place on campus; “It’s becoming a tradition,” confided one of the teachers smiling, “and the students look forward to it every year; They say, ‘When are we going to do the adoration walk?’”

Jesus began His procession route at 9:30am in the Church where the Kindergarten, 1st, and 2nd grade students were gathered to adore Our Lord. He then processed to the cafeteria, where the 5th and 6th grade students were gathered. “It was exciting to know that Jesus was coming, when you heard the bells ringing, you knew that Jesus was near!” At each altar vocal prayers were said, a Gospel reading was read, petitions were read by students and teachers. The week before students made pennant banners and wrote the intentions they carried in their hearts to be presented before the Lord. As Jesus passed by, the students’ colorful pennant banners joyfully swayed in the cold wind; it seemed as though Our Lord reiterated His words in the Gospel, “...great is your faith! Let it be done as you wish” (Mt. 15: 28).

Our Eucharistic Lord proceeded to the school courtyard where the 3rd and 4th graders were eager to see Jesus. “It was cold outside, but it didn’t matter because we were with Jesus,” one of the 3rd graders shared after the procession.

Exclamations of love and thanksgiving like, “I love you, Jesus,” and “Thank you, Jesus,” were heard from the Pre-K students stationed outside the Early Childhood Learning Center as they waved handkerchiefs with joy as Jesus passed by their classrooms.

The final altar station was the gym where the 7th and 8th graders were already prayerfully preparing their hearts for Jesus’ coming, as the 8th grade choir led them in song.

“When Jesus came there was so much peace,” one of the 8th graders shared bubbling over with joy, “It was different from going to the Church for Adoration because today Jesus came to us and was walking on our campus - and that was really special.” We give thank to the Lord for pouring out so many graces in the hearts of these students and that these graces may extend to their families as well!

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There are so many ways you can help your local community. Each month, The Resident will feature a local nonprofit that needs the community's help.

Display your Pet's Portrait in the Jacksonville Humane Society Joy Gallery!

This year Julie Garmendia, our Animal House columnist and 14 year freelance journalist with The Resident, inspired us to sponsor a Kennel at JHS. Kennel sponsorships are a meaningful way to honor a beloved human or pet and show your support for pets in need. Your gift will provide compassionate care including things like veterinary treatment, food, a warm bed and TLC to each pet who lives in the kennel before they go to a loving home. Annual sponsorship, based on a calendar year, includes a plaque with your name that will be displayed on a designated kennel.



The Joy Gallery offers the opportunity to visually emphasize the human and pet connection throughout the shelter with a photo gallery dedicated to your pets.

Display your love for your pet and the joy they bring to your life with a personalized pet portrait displayed throughout the Jacksonville Humane Society Adoption, Education and Pet Help Center!

Your donation will provide compassionate care and comfort to the many homeless pets here at JHS. Your donation of \$2,500 will help 25 dogs and cats get the lifesaving medical care they need to go into their new homes. Donate \$5,000 and double your lifesaving, providing 50 dogs and cats medical care and comfort while at the shelter.

*Note: The gallery placement is not permanent and can be renewed after January 1, 2024. Should you not renew, you may keep the photo.

For further assistance or questions, please call Theresa Scordo at 904-493-4606 or email TScordo@jaxhumane.org.

Photography details:

- Photo placement is for an estimated three year period.*
- Local photographers, Amy Olivieri, Craig O'Neal, and Wayne Lasch, have donated their time and talent for each photography session.
- Photography sessions will take place at JHS, or in home, depending on preference and location during the months of April and June.
- Photographs will be in black and white and can include both pets and humans.
- Lobby Gallery donation is \$5,000.
- Dog and Cat Area Gallery donation is \$2,500.
- Your photo will be printed with your pet & family name.
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Planned gifts sustain future ministry



“The biggest challenge we face in getting planned gifts for our organizations is that nonprofits by necessity focus on their need for annual gifts throughout the year.”

**- Kellie Ann Kelleher-Smith
Director of the Jewish Federation & Foundation of Northeast Florida**

BY KAREN RIELEY
Resident Community News

Lent, which began on Feb. 17, 2021 and continues until Saturday, April 3, is a season of reflection and preparation before the celebrations of Easter. It reminds Christians that Christ allowed himself to suffer the weight



of the cross and death out of compassion for others, a powerful example of caring and compassion for all of us, Christian or otherwise.

The Planned Giving Council of Northeast Florida's March meeting shared ideas and examples with its members of how planned gifts can impact faith-based nonprofits, their donors and those they serve. Tania Yount, chief development officer for Barnabas Center in Fernandina Beach, moderated remarks by Celeste Hart, associate planned giving director, Florida Divisional Headquarters, Salvation Army; Kellie Ann Kelleher-Smith, director of the Jewish Federation & Foundation of Northeast Florida; and Cliff Evans, planned giving officer of the Diocese of St. Augustine's Catholic Foundation.

“The biggest challenge we face in getting planned gifts for our organizations is that

nonprofits by necessity focus on their need for annual gifts throughout the year,” Kelleher-Smith said. “We work to educate donors on the difference between annual gifts and planned gifts and why a faith ministry needs both types of gifts.”

An annual gift is a contribution made to a nonprofit organization or higher education institution, provided on any given annual basis. It funds the nonprofit's regular and ongoing expenses.

A planned gift is any major gift, made during lifetime or at death as part of a donor's overall financial and/or estate planning. Some planned gifts provide lifelong income to the donor. Other gift plans use estate and tax planning to provide for charity and heirs in ways that maximize the gift and/or minimize its impact on the donor's estate. These include gifts of equity, life insurance, real estate, personal property, or cash.

One of the major benefits of planned gifts is that they provide a promise of future funding for an organization. They allow a nonprofit to plan ahead and budget for the future, including for economic crises. For example, “Coping with COVID-19: Insights from Church Leaders” by Ministry Brands about the pandemic's impact on church giving reports that, overall, almost 60 percent of respondents indicated that a reduction in giving income

is one of the top challenges facing their church. Planned gifts can buffer the negative effects of unexpected crises.

“The Jewish Federation & Foundation's goal is to work cooperatively with all Jewish institutions in the area in a communal approach,” said Kelleher-Smith. “We recognize that a donor may have been supporting a number of nonprofits annually but want to focus planned gifts to benefit one organization specifically.”

Some nonprofit professionals worry that planned gifts will cannibalize annual giving to their organizations. However, planned giving has actually been found to trigger a 75% increase in annual gifts, according to FreeWill estate planners.

“I try to show what the impact of planned gifts can be and that the foundation is here to support our organizations, not take money away from them,” Evans said.

Planned gifts officers love stories about donors who appear to be of modest means and who make no or small annual gifts but then leave large planned gifts in their will. Kelleher-Smith recalled the story of a donor who made small gifts and then nine years later made a \$10 million planned gift to the hospital where she was working.

“There's a perception that you have to be a millionaire to make a planned gift, but that's not true,” Hart said. She shared a story about “Gail,” who said she didn't have anything to give and owned nothing of value but her house worth \$70,000.

“I asked her to think about what a \$70,000 might mean to an individual and told her that would make an equally significant difference to the Salvation Army.”

“Planned gifts come in all sizes,” Kelleher-Smith said. “I talk about our shared faith tradition and remind donors of the story of the widow's mite in the bible. She gave everything she could.”

Panel members noted that planned gifts actually seem to be on the increase during COVID-19.

“I worked with a 60-year-old who wanted to create a memorial legacy fund for his parents because he was afraid he might die from COVID,” Kelleher-Smith said.

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JSA offers hope and inspiration to parents of children with autism



April is World Autism Month with Autism Awareness Day designated as April 2. For the Jacksonville School for Autism (JSA), however, April 2 is one of many days in its ongoing mission to put “Autism in Action” each day. For the past 16 years, the school has served students with autism spectrum disorders (ASD) ranging in age from three through 25 years old.

“JSA focuses on acceptance, not just awareness,” said Michelle Dunham, the school’s executive director. “We see every student beyond an autism diagnosis and assume their intelligence to uncover their individual and unique abilities.”

JSA reports that one in 50 children have autism; one in 140 cannot speak. Boys are nearly five times more likely than girls to

have autism. Autism is on the rise and is now the fastest-growing developmental disorder in the United States.

For Dunham, autism is a deeply personal story of raising a child with this diagnosis. In 2000, her husband, Mark, and she learned that their son, Nick, had autism.

“The child we knew was gone in an instant, and so were our dreams for his future,” Dunham said. The Dunhams decided to go from “impact to inspiration,” and founded JSA.

Since then, JSA has grown from a grass-roots school of two students and one teacher to now supporting 60 students from six counties and more than 50 teachers and therapists.

“We have some families who have moved across the country to receive the lifechanging services for their children,” Dunham said.

According to JSA, by 2030 it is projected that one in two boys will be diagnosed with autism. There is no medical detection or cure for autism and it can cost a family \$60,000 a year, on average, in managing it. JSA works with families to create a lifechanging environment for students to believe in themselves and achieve their best.

JSA provides program in early childhood development, academic/behavioral classroom models, clinical therapy, enrichment classes and a vocational Supportive Transition & Employment Placement (STEP) program designed to give young adults the skills necessary to be successful and productive members.

“One of our most critical needs is to have space for all the on-campus vocational training and enterprises for our rapidly

expanding STEP program,” said Dunham. “Life span services are critical to support our aging population of young adults to ensure a future full of hope and independence.”

The school’s five-year plan has been to find a permanent school home. It purchased a building in February 2020 only three weeks before the school had to shut down due to COVID-19.

“We faced the serious threat of laying off our staff and potentially losing our new school campus,” Dunham said. She credits the generosity of grantors, individual donors and loyal supporters for raising nearly \$700,000 to keep the school going and growing. The school opened back up for school in August 2020 in its new school building.

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A Biblical Garden Grows in Jacksonville



Dr. Larry Kantor, Goldie Lansky and Reverend Dr. Bez in front of the Date Palm planted in honor of Goldie's many years of service to Congregation Ahavath Chesed. Lansky is holding a gold-painted shovel that Dr. Bez made especially for her.

"We are pleased for the opportunity to share The Temple's meaningful garden with our neighbors and other houses of worship. We hope it will offer visitors a sense of true Biblical history as we bring a little bit of the past alive."

**- Gene Meyers
Executive Director**

Congregation Ahavath Chesed announced the construction of a Biblical Garden in front of its sanctuary. Funding for the project is provided by the Dr. Larry & Kathy Kanter Jewish Preservation Fund and Temple Congregants. Reverend Dr. Ed Bez, of the Biblical Gardens Society – USA, is furnishing design and construction supervision.

On Wednesday, March 17 at 12:00 noon, the garden's centerpiece Date Palm was planted to honor Goldie Lansky, for her 12 years of dedicated service as Executive Director, prior to her recent retirement. Kantor Carrie Barry will lead a dedication ceremony at the garden on Saturday, March 20 at 6:30 PM, prior to the Havdalah Service.

As sponsor of the project Dr. Larry Kanter commented: "The biblical garden is a joint effort between church and synagogue. It will add an educational and spiritual experience to the Jacksonville community." Regarding the garden's design, Dr. Bez commented: "Fostering

a feeling of connection with both the natural and biblical worlds is one of my primary goals in the development phase of The Temple's Bible garden project."

David Kaufman, President of the Board of Trustees stated: "It's a privilege for our congregation to be the setting for this special garden. Ours and one being constructed at nearby Christ the Messiah Church, are the only Biblical Gardens on the First Coast." The gardens, designed to complement each other, will stand as commitments to interfaith cooperation and understanding.

Gene Meyers, Executive Director of The Temple said, "we are pleased for the opportunity to share The Temple's meaningful garden with our neighbors and other houses of worship. We hope it will offer visitors a sense of true Biblical history as we bring a little bit of the past alive."

Chartered in 1882, Congregation Ahavath Chesed is one of the oldest reform synagogues in the USA. It is firmly rooted in tradition yet focuses clearly on the present and future of Judaism.

1200+ participants came out for the 43rd Annual Ortega River Run

“I’ve run this race more than any other race I’ve run in Jacksonville. The route from St. Mark’s across the little Ortega Bridge, down Woodmere, Herschel, over the Roosevelt Bridge and down McGirt is fun. The azaleas are always blooming.”

- Bernie Powers



LEFT: Episcopal’s Eagle mascot, Talon, poses with this year’s run committee: Chair Jessica Ryals, Co-Chair Amanda Trimble, Kelli Chunn, Rebekah Hagan, Susan Kwartler, Lacey Mauritz, and Melissa Vogt; MIDDLE: Audrey Brice, Kate Brice and Stella Krueger finished in the top three in their age groups; RIGHT: Maggie Wilson and Emma Newton; BOTTOM: Tim Bush of Ortega Forrest with his daughter Rachel Bush a runner



The 43rd Annual Ascension St. Vincent’s Ortega River Run, a GrandPrix sanctioned race hosted by 1st Place Sports, got off to a great start with 1,283 participants of all ages walking, pushing babies in strollers, jogging or running over the bridges and throughout the course in historic Ortega.

The event to benefit St. Mark’s Episcopal School financial aid and scholarship programs kicked off with a spaghetti dinner on Friday night with 200 hundred meals sold and began Saturday morning at 7:30 am with a 1 mile Fun Run culminating in the 5 mile run beginning at 8 am. Participants came from all over town and beyond with Jake Wightman from England taking first place for men in the 5 mile challenge with Sem Sultanov and Christopher McGaffrey of Jacksonville bringing up 2nd and 3rd. Morgan Hull, Kelsey Beckman and Lucrezia Gowdy of Jacksonville took the top 3 spots in women’s. Although there were other winners in the many age categories represented. Runners were required to adhere to Social distance requirements during registration and wear masks when not running.

Talon (the Episcopal Eagles mascot), Episcopal band and cheerleaders, community athletic teams and student volunteers got the runners off to an energetic start while neighbors, family members and

residents lined the streets clapping and yelling, offering encouragement, bottled water and popsicles as the participants passed by.

The Historic Ortega River Run is the 4th oldest race in Jacksonville and certainly one of the most anticipated. According to Bernie Powers of Ortega who has run the race since 2000, “I’ve run this race more than any other race I’ve run in Jacksonville. The route from St. Mark’s across the little Ortega Bridge, down Woodmere, Herschel, over the Roosevelt Bridge and down McGirt is fun. The azaleas are always blooming.” Powers trained alone by running three miles around the neighborhood every day for the past year and enjoyed seeing many other runners and walkers doing the same. Ortega River Run was the last race he ran in 2020 (due to covid) and the first race he has run in 2021. Now that serious training has begun again runners will be gearing up for Saturday February 26 for Ortega River Run 2022.



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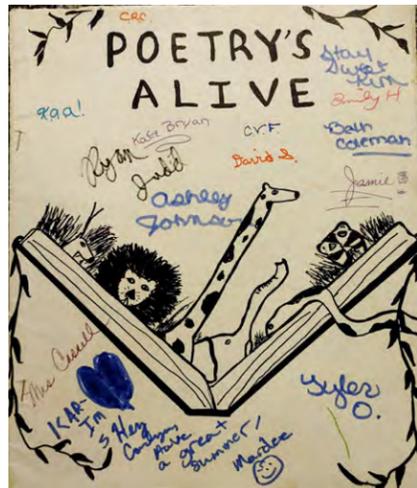
Roses are red, Always be grateful, National Poetry month happens in April

BY CAROLYN CANTRELL SNOWDEN
Resident Community News

When I think about big moments in my life, there are of course the predictable ones: graduations, my wedding day and the births of our two daughters. But, one of the biggest moments actually occurred in the Spring of 1987. I was just a typical 11-year-old in Martha Milton's fifth grade classroom at Riverside Presbyterian Day School. A poetry unit was introduced to us that would set a course for my life that I could never have imagined. Not only were we challenged to pick out and memorize a poem individually to present to the class, but both the fifth and sixth grades combined created original works to be published together as a keepsake. A flame was ignited inside me and I have written poetry ever since. I now have a personal poetry collection that spans my days growing up here in Jacksonville to my college days at the University of Alabama and all the way to the present, my mid-forties.

Below are several Poems submitted by local readers in our neighborhoods in celebration of National Poetry Month, I hope you enjoy them as much as I did.

I could not be more excited to now have the opportunity to work with The Resident, engage with other local poets and share a few poems to celebrate April's National Poetry Month! If you are a local poet who has interest in submitting your poetry, you can do so by sending an email to my attention at editor@residentnews.net



Forever and Ever, Amen

*"I remember my mother's prayers,
and they have always followed me.
They have clung to me all my life."
- Abraham Lincoln*

My Dearest Son, As with Abraham of old,
when mother's prayers he did behold,
Could it be, with every breath
her prayers did guide him so that death,
when it did sting,
was left behind, a mortal thing?
As Abe did with his life, should we
let God our guide and comfort be?
Else all is naught...
and life is fraught
with insufficient answers.

For God, who made us each His child,
loves us with depth and height so wild
and joyful, too; and yet He gives a choice...
it's yours... so take it, LIVE!
my son, in grace and love
and peace that comes as gentle dove,
to save and heal and hold and wrap
His arms around you... as in my lap
you, as a babe, did I.

My prayers for you will never die, my dearest,
for you see that I can say you are a Godly man,
as only God and Mother can (with certainty!)
and if, per chance, it's help we need,
then let us see it as a seed
of hope and glory, sown in grace
till dark glass yields us face to face...
As I, then still, pray for you.

By: Cathleen Lee

dawn

Morning is dawning
Wind stirring in my garden
Birds singing loudly
-
Rain
-
Soft rain, now welcome
Dry earth drinks it thirstily
Hope for growth at last

By: Linda Ross

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Wondering

On this quiet night,
I look at my bare feet stretched
out in front of me in the grass,
and I wonder beyond myself.

-

Through an opening in my mind,
I see past my yard
and my neighbor's house.
I see across my town, until,
slipping silently beyond my country,
I cross the ocean that divides.

-

I come to a place where there is
a woman in a hut in Uganda.
She is looking at her bare feet stretched
out in front of her on her sleeping mat,
and she is wondering beyond herself.

-

Through an opening in her mind,
she sees outside her hut,
and past her neighbor's hut.
She sees past the animals
fenced in for the night,
she sees across the desert,
beyond the land she knows,
until she crosses the world.

-

And she is imagining
that I might be here,
wondering about life,
like she is.

-

"Hello, there," we say,
"How wonderful to meet you."

By: Janis Kinley

Untitled

This heart is burning,
Hottest red and sunray orange.
The heat of memory, long forgotten dreams.
I thought they were ashes, but silly me.

I'm so worthy, yeah.
So deserving of this inferno.
Passion licks my skin, burning hot tendrils dancing.
You're the center of this blaze.
Destroyer of walls built to withstand.
They crumble at your feet, tiny pebbles mean nothing.

With you here it's brand new days.
Cradle this ember, this heart of mine.
Breathe life, stoke this fire.
Let this love rival the sun.

By: Keiralynn Packard

Mowing the Lawn in Jacksonville, Florida

In the shower, flecks of grass stick,
reluctantly wash down your body
into the drain they will later clog.
Day made blessed by two showers
because you mowed the lawn, weeded,
smelled dirt, near-copper scent of red bricks.
Whispers of gray roots you pulled from
the black sand of dirt. Two or three tugs
awakened the lawnmower to churn St. Augustine grass.
Two or three tugs with bent knees, weeks spent
handling tree arms in miniscule. These root systems,
small and dusty and gray are precious
even as they rise from earth,
drawn between your fingers.

By: Olson

Hanging On

Political chess games,
A national divide.
Plummeting deeper in debt,
While our borders are tried.
Frustrated parents,
Our children, behind.
Depression cases still climbing
With pandemic combined.

How do we stay optimistic,
That these nightmares are gone
One day as we struggle,
To keep hanging on?

By: c.c. Snowden

begin here

Little children know
animals know
sick people know
handicapped people know
poor people know
suffering people know

if you're fake or not.

If you want to learn
who you are,
look deeply
into the mirror
of their eyes
and see.

You'll know.

By: Janis Kinley

In the National Library in Cairo

a fifteenth-century folio, ink
and color on paper—mint green, sandy
red, sky blue. The Seduction of Yusuf.
He arrives at her door, she leads him in.
Pulls him through seven more, locking each
behind. There seems no release. She looks him
in the eyes, tar pools lit by fire. Slides
the gown down her arms. Her skin promises
radical relief. A rushing sound—wind
stirs the desert—and he turns. He flees, and
every bolted door springs free.
We lean in, to see the lines more clearly.
There's no sound, but the echo of our checking.
The dunes reach long into the night.

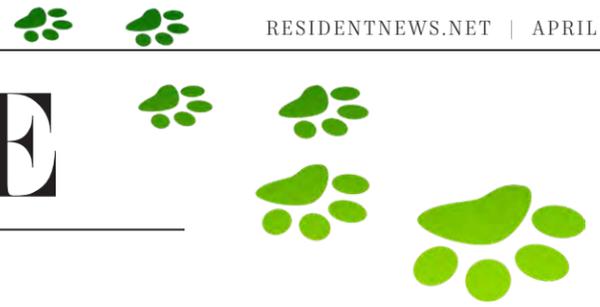
By: Liz Robbins

The Last Poem

The final pairs of animals herded up the plank as the rain begins: there is no need for repetition. Only the sound of water filling the Earth, the animals quieted for a time by silence and gentle rocking. When I was young, I had no voice, I filled my mouth with the sounds of others. When I aged, I spoke, I had to, I couldn't stop, I couldn't know I existed unless others listened. Now I am old, and what I hear grows dimmer in the early sun, and I quiet my thoughts for the treble of the mourning dove. This is the last poem, written from her faraway call. Now the pairs raise their voices and I celebrate them, my body already transforming into water and earth. The most beautiful notes of all! Water and earth.

By: Liz Robbins

ANIMAL HOUSE



Pet reptiles & amphibians Instant Wow factor

BY JULIE KERNS GARMENDIA
Resident Community News

They may not be furry or cuddly, but legal pet herptiles (reptiles and amphibians), are fascinating pets. They have unique skin, scales or shells, odd physical features, unexpected colors and mesmerizing behavior. Their striking appearance or almost-alien, “wow factor”, immediately attracts attention. They include common pet reptiles like lizards, snakes, turtles or tortoises, and amphibian frogs, toads, newts and salamanders, among many others. Reptiles are cold-blooded, air-breathing vertebrates (possess a backbone), that move

on their bellies or small, short legs and are usually covered with scales or bony plates. These egg-layers are classified as part of the dinosaur family and include some of the most ancient animal species alive on Earth.

Amphibians are also cold-blooded vertebrate animals, but most have moist, smooth skin. They are distinguished by an aquatic, gill-breathing, larval stage, followed by a lung-breathing stage on land. They lay shell-less eggs in water or wet areas, and resemble an animal somewhere between fish and reptiles.

Despite the description of a “reptilian brain”, limited to a primitive drive that controls bodily functions, continuing research shows that some herptiles can learn, be trained and adapt to environments. They dwell on dry land, in water or both. Depending upon age and species, they are carnivores, herbivores, insectivores or some combination during their lifetimes.

Shane Smith works fulltime in a Jacksonville pet shop and specializes in herps. His childhood hobby catching frogs and toads led to his first pet snake at age ten. Formerly active-duty coast guard, now a reservist, Smith will soon complete an environmental sciences degree, intent on a wildlife biology career. A former member of the Milwaukee Area Herpetological Society, among the largest in the U.S., Smith raised funds for herp conservation, rescue and educational outreach.

At the pet shop, Smith loves talking to children and answering questions about herps and the environment. Smith said it is

crucial to educate children about animals, wildlife and the environment, so they will become knowledgeable adults, who understand and care about conservation and the need to protect all species and habitat.

Smith’s unusually-broad perspective on herptiles is not only as a longtime herp owner, and pet shop staff, but also as a former employee of a major venom collection lab. Only a few labs worldwide extract poisonous venom from the venom glands of snakes for use in scientific, medical and antivenom research, and for manufacture of medications and antivenom.

“All snakes, captive-bred legal pets or native wild snakes, especially venomous snakes, suffer the consequences of widespread myths and misconceptions. They are too often labeled as bad animals that should be killed. Most people don’t know that snake venom is used for research by toxicologists and pharmaceutical companies to create life-saving medications, including antivenom for snake bites in humans or animals. Venom components are used in medications for treatment of strokes, heart conditions, brain injury, hypertension, blood disorders, Alzheimer’s disease and other ailments,” he said.

Chuck Smith, president of the Jacksonville Herpetological Society, moved to Florida forty-five years ago specifically because of his serious pet herptile hobby. He said that Northeast Florida has the ideal climate for keeping pet turtles, frogs, snakes and lizards indoors, seasonally outdoors or in outdoor climate-controlled enclosures.



Shane Smith with his pet Rhino Iguana, Phillip.

“Herptile pets require time, a lot of care and education about various species. I’ve been a herp owner and active herpetological society member for decades. The strongest message I have is to discourage people from taking reptiles and amphibians out of the wild, even species that are legal to possess in Florida,” he said. “Learn as much as possible about any reptile or amphibian before you purchase that animal and only purchase or adopt from a reputable, licensed pet store, breeder or rescue organization. Ask questions. Verify that the herptile is legally bred and born in captivity and not removed from the wild,

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birds, bats, snakes, all provide pest, insect and rodent control. Beneficial resident snakes, like black racers, king and rat snakes routinely prey upon or prevent venomous snakes from moving in.”

Pearson said most people falsely believe that common Florida animals like snakes and alligators are prone to bite or attack by nature. In most interactions, however, unless cornered or threatened, they usually flee or freeze, and desperately try to completely avoid humans. Alligators that have been fed, however, lose their fear of humans and behave aggressively in constant search of more food. In all cases, widely avoid, never approach and keep children and pets safely away from snakes or alligators.

Herptile experts note it is imperative to learn as much as possible about any herptile pet before purchase, especially the expected adult size, age expectancy (varies greatly, but can range from 3 – 50+ years), lifetime housing and dietary requirements. Young, small herptiles may rapidly outgrow typical pet store tanks. Cold-blooded herptiles require strictly controlled environmental conditions to maintain body temperature through external sources. Unable to pant, shiver or sweat to increase or reduce body temperature, herptiles must move to find their optimal temperature. Learn before purchase, which herptiles are best for a first-time owner.

Besides constant temperature control, herptiles need special lighting, humidity, misting, water, hiding and basking spots. Their diets are diverse and species-specific. Habitat requirements differ; some prefer flat spaces with hiding places, while others climb horizontally. Secure, escape-proof housing is essential, as is protection from other pets, children or predators if housed outdoors.

Although herptiles may not require the same daily care or exercise of other pets, they cannot survive neglect. It is also important

including eggs.” When Smith isn’t tending to his extensive herp family, he is an indoor tropical plant expert who works for a local plant nursery. President of the Jacksonville Herpetological Society, he presents educational programs to community groups and homeowner associations.

Cayle Pearson, Jacksonville Zoo Assistant Curator of Herps, Birds & Others, planned to attend veterinary school until he went to work in a pet shop, where he immediately “was hooked” on the reptiles. He said that when handling herptiles, strict cleanliness, sanitization and hand-washing are necessary to avoid any possibility of bacterial infection or diseases that can be transmitted to humans. Anyone with an open wound should never handle herptiles; never eat or drink around them.

Pearson cares for the zoo’s herptiles and birds, and is part of multiple conservation projects to save endangered herps and the habitats they require to survive. Pearson noted persistent public misunderstanding about the value of all herp species.

“Every animal plays a vital role in the ecosystem. If we lose even one, their predators are affected and that ripples down, adversely impacting the food chain,” he said. “Herptiles,



SCUTES Turtle Rescue founder Danielle D'Amato and her husband Pete Bis hold two common pet reptiles: on left/Pete - Red-Footed Tortoise, on right/Danielle - Sulcata Tortoise.

Release of exotics or nonnative animals is illegal and unethical.

National Gopher Tortoise Day, April 10, 2021, promotes awareness and protection of a reptile keystone species, the gopher tortoise - federally protected under the Endangered Species Act. A keystone species is a critically important wild animal that other species depend upon for survival. Their elimination would drastically and negatively impact the ecosystem. Gopher tortoise burrows are twenty-five feet deep and provide shelter to approximately 350 other species.

Fortunately, Danielle D'Amato, local founder of SCUTES (Sustainable Care & Urgent Treatment for Every Shell), is an FWC licensed wildlife rehabilitator who can legally rehabilitate injured or ill turtles. She has created a Go Fund Me site to purchase acreage for a gopher tortoise refuge in Northeast Florida. D'Amato is a herpetologist, marine and wildlife biologist, who works for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. She and her husband and co-wildlife-rescuer, Pete Bis, are US Navy veterans. She presents educational programs to the community regarding gopher tortoises, diverse wildlife and conservation issues.

to understand that herptiles may prefer never to be handled, might routinely hide or become stressed with human contact, including normal household noise and activity.

If a herptile or other nonnative pet owner can no longer care for or no longer wants their exotic pet, or if they possess an illegal exotic, nonnative or wildlife animal, the Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC), holds periodic Exotic Pet Amnesty Day events throughout Florida. Individuals can surrender exotic or illegal animals free of charge, with no penalties or prosecution, to authorities.

The goal of these amnesty events is to prevent release of exotics, invasive (nonnative) or illegally-held animals into the wild. Most exotics, and any animal housed and fed as a pet, usually cannot survive in the wild. If they do survive and breed, or prey on native animals and birds, they threaten survival of those native animals, the stability of the ecosystem and may pose risks to humans.



Calla Titterington, 7, with Phoebe, her super-friendly Bearded Dragon.

“Let my teaching fall like rain and my words descend like dew, like showers on new grass, like abundant rain on tender plants.”
~Deuteronomy 32:2

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LOCAL FOLKS

Avondale

Leigh Murphy

BY PEGGY HARRELL JENNINGS
Resident Community News

Artist. Gardener. Philosopher. These three words barely describe Avondale resident Leigh Murphy. Anyone familiar with the award winning artist's exquisitely detailed watercolors – stunningly rendered seashells, glittering reflections in a collection of silver spoons, driftwood with light rippling on water or colorful images of cars and depictions of motorcycles- might think any garden Murphy planted would be a showcase of carefully and artfully arranged plants and posies. But her award- winning garden has an international flavor. There are around sixty varieties of edible and useful plants, many which have been grown from seeds and cross bred by Murphy which intermingle with blooming plants as a feast for the eyes as well as the table. Although she loves to read about Giverny and how artist Claude Monet worked so hard to keep everything in his famous garden organized. Murphy said, "I just shove stuff anywhere and everywhere it will fit. Art is the only thing I'm meticulous about."

Murphy bought her HUD repro house on Belvedere behind the Avondale shopping center in 1997. She remarked, "It had been a rental and eight of the windows were knocked out; there were no light plates, there were holes in the wall. It was horrible. It probably would have been torn down if it hadn't been in the historic district. I didn't know anything about gardening when I moved in and there wasn't one blade of grass – just weeds – and only one tree." Her years of hard work have paid off with a bounty of blooms and food for the table as well as for thought. For someone who didn't know anything about gardening, Murphy is a walking encyclopedia of information. Mention a plant in her yard and be prepared to hear a litany of tongue twisters- sansaviera, thunbergia, leonotis, jaboticaba are a few, then an exhaustive list of years of learning with a roll call of the varieties, places of origin, heritage, medicinal uses, planting and growing advice. Generous with her wisdom she shares her incredible storehouse of knowledge and variety of plants freely. She advises gardeners to do as she has done for the past twenty three years: learn from other gardeners, don't be afraid to do a little "zone pushing" by establishing "micro climates" in your yard, and experiment by trial and error. Of

course, Google it. Like Murphy you may become a "victim of your own success" with amaryllis, orchids, persimmons, aloes, onions, dill, Mayan spinach, Yuzu lemons, asparagus, plantains, pineapples, beans and squash, comfrey plants and flowers everywhere.

During this time of Covid quarantine, the incredibly generous Murphy established "Free Plant Friday" which she advertised on



LEIGH MURPHY



"I can teach people to be gardeners, and from them, once they know to garden, you'll get a philosopher."

- Bill Mollison
of Global Gardener

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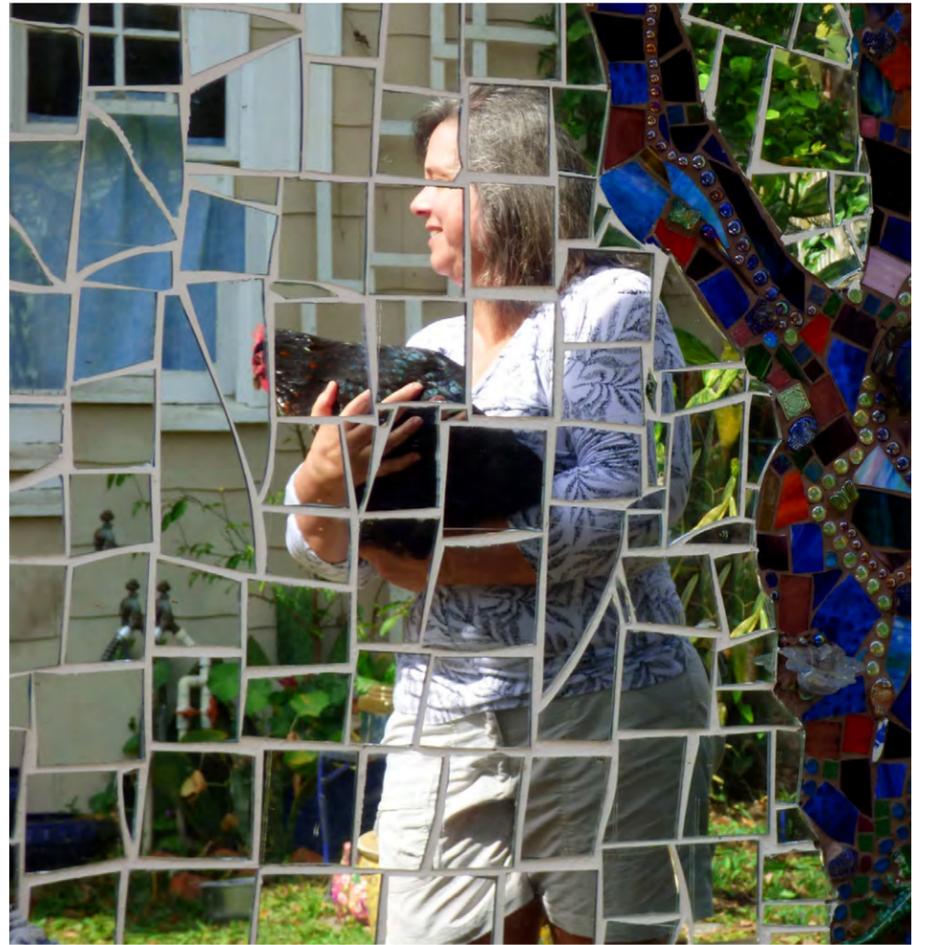
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social media so people could come by and pick up potted plants and cuttings at the curb to take home to their own gardens. A little nourishment for the soul and the body. Her small yard is a testimony that “You can do a lot with a little.” Keeping her company during her gardening activities and philosophical musings are Ruby Toot Squeak and Eunice Underfoot, her chickens, who reside in the Chalet de Poulet beside her small Japanese Tea Hut where she sits with her coffee and watches and listens to the rain during those rare moments when she isn’t creating art, reconstructing some antique machine, writing a novel, posting on her Youtube Channel, or contemplating the universe. Her “off the shelf life” is a model of creativity and generosity. She exhibits at The Englishman Gallery in Naples, Florida and recently demonstrated her “slick, chrome, mechanical” painting techniques at the “Cars on 5th” - an event sponsored by the Naples Ferrari Club.

Murphy does some heavy mental and physical lifting. She is a dedicated and highly accomplished weight- lifter whose dead lift record is an amazing 245 pounds! Murphy said she has spent the past months “catching up on my bucket list” which includes kayaking on Rainbow River and Crystal River where a baby manatee was pushed her boat while huge manatees swam by underneath. She’s crossed the Okefenokee, hiked Ravine Gardens and biked the Baldwin Trail enough times to reach her 100 mile challenge. She paddled the Ichetucknee River alone and remarked, “That was a dream come true. I had the entire river all to myself.”

Murphy’s philosophy runs the gamut from serious contemplation (“Most people never bother to figure out what they understand to be good or evil and let others make that decision for them.”) to lighthearted Comedy for Nerd posts on social media of Socrates vs. Nietzsche.

One of her favorite quotes from Bill Mollison of Global Gardener is: “I can teach people to be gardeners, and from them, once they know to garden, you’ll get a philosopher.” Leigh Murphy can teach you to garden, share her plants, teach you art on her website Art by Leigh Murphy or you can join the 900 plus people who enjoy her posts of paddling around in her kayak on adventures. In striving to be more goal oriented she fills each day of her life journey with interesting endeavors, shares her thoughts, promotes life lessons and offers inspiration along the way.




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St. Paul's-Riverside students win awards at regional science fair

MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENT ADVANCES TO STATE SCIENCE FAIR, BROADCOM MASTERS



MARCO A. CHUA & JULIA-ELIZABETH MARQUEZ

Two middle school students from St. Paul's Catholic School-Riverside bagged first and third-place awards in two categories at the Northeast Florida Regional Science and Engineering Fair (NEFRSEF) during virtual awards on Feb. 23.

Sixth-grader Marco A. Chua won first place in Medicine and Health with his project titled, "Stop Cross-Contact: How Proper Washing of Shared Utensils Can Keep People with Food Allergies Safe." Meanwhile, seventh-grader Julia-Elizabeth Marquez placed third in Computer Science with her project titled, "The Speed of the Internet."

Chua advances to the State Science and Engineering Fair (SEEF) of Florida STEM Competition, which will be held on March 30-April 2. He has also earned an invitation to participate in Broadcom MASTERS, a premier national middle school STEM competition slated for fall.

Kelsey Theodore, St. Paul's middle school science teacher and coordinator for NEFRSEF, said the annual fair provides a healthy level of rigor that has challenged her students to grow as scientists and foster their own scientific inquiry. "Participating in NEFRSEF is an incredible opportunity for students with a passion for science to pursue scientific endeavors with the guidance of a skilled team of scientists every step of the way," she added.



Episcopal Science Fair Winners Miranda Dora, Daniel Delong and Sally Barksdale

Barksdale, Delong and Dora win Episcopal Science Fair

Sally Barksdale, Daniel Delong and Miranda Dora were the winners of the Science Fair held at Episcopal School of Jacksonville in late January.

Barksdale took home top honors in the senior biological category with a project titled, "Machine learning to predict cancer treatments with genetic biomarkers. Delong and Dora both took top honors in the senior physical category. Delong's project was titled: "A robotic arm with computer vision to manipulate objects." Dora's project was titled, "Lead removal with silver nanoparticles."

The projects were displayed on the Kirwan Flag Plaza on the Munneryn Campus after school, where the judges interviewed the students. The judges – Tess Peterson, Peter Blumeyer, Jason Marks, and Isaiah Nields – are all graduates of Episcopal. They said they were impressed with the students' creativity, presentation skills, and scientific reasoning.

First, second and third place winners as well as those receiving honorable mention presented their projects at the Regional Science Fair, a four-day, hybrid event, Feb. 20-23.

Other place winners are as follows: Senior Biological: Second place, Tom Commander – Nanoparticle-based hypothermia; Second place, Jordan Harrow – Environmental buffers in freshwater; Third place, Matthew Schinsing – Mite eradication on bees; Honorable mention, Natalie Rabil – Lead nitrate toxicity to amphipods; Honorable mention, Isabella Buschini – UV light on chicken embryos; Honorable mention, Ariel Largen – Comparison of online learning vs. in-person learning.

Senior Physical: Second place, Julia Kagiliery – Novel method of water analysis; Third place, Jace Bankston – Shark skin denticles on rockets; Third place, Sean Ramsey – Martian construction materials; Honorable mention, Chris-John Griffith – Electrical stimulation of earthworms; Honorable mention, Cole Nigro – Zinc analysis in lettuce; Honorable mention, Jackson Whitchurch – Measuring UV-C for disinfection.

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Bolles students super soaked over history lesson



As part of their study of famous Black Americans, first grade students learned about the man who invented one of their favorite pool and summer fun resources – the Super Soaker.

Lonnie Johnson, an aerospace engineer and entrepreneur whose life work included a 12-year stint at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory, invented the popular children's water gun toy in 1990 and later became president of Johnson Research and Development Co., Inc. Johnson also invented the popular Nerf Gun.

Students enjoyed celebrating Johnson's life works with a Super Soaker water gun adventure on the playground, of course! Students in both Karen Stephens' and Jill Bobbitt's classrooms took part in the lesson separately.



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Spartan girls win 10th consecutive state soccer championship trophy



PHOTO CREDIT: JOHN CABRERA

On Wednesday, March 3, the girls' varsity soccer team of St. Johns Country Day School won their 10th consecutive state championship trophy.

The Spartans 6-0 defeat of Ft. Myers' Canterbury School began when St. Johns scored two goals in the first two minutes of the game. By the half, Mia Sadler '21 had scored twice and Paige Crews '21 once, leaving the Spartans with a 3-0 lead. Goals by Bella Pontieri '22, Julia Boaventura '22, and Maddie Moody '21 after the half marked the shutout victory. "I am so proud of this team and everything we've accomplished. We truly are a family," said Crews.

The team officially has cemented their #DecadeOfExcellence and set a new state record for number of consecutive titles. The team now holds 13 total state championship titles, gaining ground on Thomas Aquinas that holds 15. "We're closing in on them!" said Regan Minners, Director of Communications at St. Johns.

"I'm numb. These girls really delivered," said Coach Mike Pickett.

Hands Campaign Successful Despite Pandemic



The Friends of Stockton 2021 High Five campaign raises money for John Stockton Elementary. This year's campaign was the most successful, raising \$22,860 during the two-week period in which it took place. For the past five years, this campaign has been kid focused and the students have been creative in their ability to sell \$5 paper hands. Embracing their entrepreneurial skills, they sold hands by writing online

books, crafting bracelets and baskets, and held virtual "hand" stands to sell hands. Our top winner was Betty Hogan who sold 330 hands and the runner up was Reginald Northcide who sold 267 hands. As a reward, Betty will be Principal for a day and Reginald will be Assistant Principal for the day. John Stockton will be receiving 100% of the proceeds. The funds will be used to purchase new audio visual equipment, fund resource programs for the arts, music and physical education, support the school's robotics team and enhance the school campus. Friends of Stockton (FOS) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, led by Stockton parents, grandparents, alumni and friends, whose mission is to increase available funding to ensure that the legacy of excellence stands and continues for years to come at Stockton Elementary.

Seven Bishop Kenny students achieve Eagle Scout rank



FRONT ROW LEFT TO RIGHT: Sean Meisler, Matthew Bailey, and Andrew Russell
BACK ROW LEFT TO RIGHT: Aden Dreher, Joey Eichler, Ryan Spinelli, and Adam Shalley

Seven Bishop Kenny High School students who represent six scout troops throughout Jacksonville have achieved Eagle Scout rank, the highest honor awarded to any scout. The 2020-2021 recipients are Sean Meisler '21, Matthew Bailey '21, Andrew Russell '21, Aden Dreher '22, Joey Eichler '21, Ryan Spinelli '23, and Adam Shalley '23.

This distinguished rank, established in 1912, takes years to achieve. One of many requirements is the planning, development, and completion of a significant service project, which must include the leading of volunteers to help execute it successfully.

These young men instituted a variety of projects that address needs within the community. All are funded by the boys' donated labor at no cost to the public.

Meisler designed and built an information board with wildlife and park activities for First Christian Church of the Beaches.

Bailey built an agility course for the dogs at K9 Services German Shepherd Rescue in Green Cove Springs.

Russel built and installed a shooting bench for the Atlantic Beach Police Station.

Dreher designed and installed a military memorial path outside San Juan del Rio Catholic School.

Eichler designed, built, and installed ten bird feeders and five bird houses for Westminster Woods Retirement Center.

Spinelli designed and built a fire pit and four benches for North Florida School of Special Education.

Shalley remodeled an art room for Geneva Presbyterian Church and converted it into a new religion space for the church community to use.

Bishop Kenny congratulates all!



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Inaugural diversity celebration week a success



Olivia Farah, Teressa Elhaji, Skylar Fick, Winston Peele, Arisa Nakamichi and Frankie Alvarez

Bishop Kenny High School observed its first Diversity Celebration Week in its 69-year history February 22-26. Organized by the Diversity Student Union, the week included a variety of daily activities, beginning each morning with student-produced announcements featuring the designated culture of the day.

Winston Peele '22, founder and president of the Diversity Student Union and Student Government vice president, spearheaded the celebration week in collaboration with the other DSU officers: vice president Jasmyne Roberts '21, executive assistant Arisa Nkamichi, historian Jamia Nesmith '21, historian Shadia Nouredin '21, and public relations coordinator Olivia Farah '21.

"Diversity week was a great opportunity for the students to see the amazing impact people from different backgrounds contributed to the world," said Teresa Elhaji '21, Middle Eastern and Arabic community co-chair. The club officers are already talking about next year's event and how they will utilize the feedback from a survey administered the week after DCW concluded.

"We hope to expand upon the celebration next year to bring more diverse activities such as dancing, and games to bring more fun and joy to the week," said Arisa Nakamichi '22, Asian and Island Pacific community chair. As listed on the school's website, the Diversity Student Union's mission is to promote and increase awareness and appreciation for all racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds on campus and in the community. DSU members seek to build relationships with their peers by breaking down barriers which lead to prejudice and encouraging unity which leads to acceptance.

Peele said, "The number one idea would be to connect with the Clara White Mission to work specifically with the growing homeless community in the downtown area." Principal Todd Orlando said he was impressed by the dedication and work of the DSU. He is honored to work with these students as they critically and thoughtfully address the issues of diversity and racial inclusivity at Bishop Kenny. "I am proud of our students on the DSU who have worked very hard to raise awareness about cultural diversity, and I am looking forward to the continued progress we are making as a community."

'Nanny's Nation' Club Raises Funds for ALS



Jessie Pearson was inspired by the charitable work her Maryland-based camp friend Sophie Rubin accomplished in honor of her grandmother, "Nanny," who passed away after a battle with Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, or ALS. Rubin began a group called "Nanny's Nation" that successfully raised money and awareness for the disease through walks organized by the ALS Association. Pearson thought the service effort would be well received by the Bolles community and endeavored to bring "Nanny's Nation" to Jacksonville this school year.

"I decided to bring Nanny's Nation to Florida to continue to support people that suffered like [Sophie's] grandmother," Pearson said. "I am thankful for the people who have joined my club and are ready to help make a difference."

Pearson said the mission of the Bolles club is to provide knowledge and educate others about the horrors of ALS and to fundraise and support families who suffer from the disease. Pearson is the president of the club, and its officers are: Georgia Avert, vice president; Sophia Stromberg, secretary; Jackson Brill, treasurer; and Anna Turner, technology officer.

The club's inaugural Nanny's Nation Walk for a Cure was held January 17 at Bolles. Participants were led on a campus walk with music and celebrated at the finish with snacks and drinks. Students donated \$20 to the organization to be part of the walk and received a Nanny's Nation t-shirt and face mask. The club raised more than \$500 for ALS.

Pearson said she has a few ideas for club fundraising this spring. She also is encouraging club members to attend the National ALS walk in Jacksonville this April.

Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) is a progressive, fatal neuromuscular disease that slowly robs the body of its ability to walk, speak, swallow and breathe. The life expectancy of a person with ALS averages two to five years from the time of diagnosis.

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Jasmyne Roberts Named Florida Dairy Farmers Class 4A Girls Player of the Year



Her goal is to major in communications and become a network sports broadcaster following a successful basketball career.

The Crusader basketball team is led by Coach Charlse Clark and she truly leads by example and takes her “We over Me” philosophy into every aspect of the game with her players. The Crusaders have been very successful with Roberts leading the team and accumulated three district titles, three regional titles, three final four titles, and two state runner-up finishes. Clark has been head coach at BK for six years with a 112-61 overall record and finished second in voting for Class 4A Coach of the Year. She values her players as individuals, but mandates that they always play as a team and work for the greater good of the program. She stated, “We had one of the toughest schedules in the state for a reason of wanting to prepare for this moment. So, I’m able to see past the state loss and be so proud for our school and our program.”



“I love playing guard because I can shoot or make a move and attack the basket to score.”

- Jasmyne Roberts

Jasmyne Roberts, BK Class of ’21 received a new title on Tuesday, March 16, Florida’s Best in Class 4A girls’ basketball. Roberts is committed to play basketball for the University of Miami in the Fall. Roberts transferred to BK as a sophomore and has been the starting guard since 10th grade. Roberts stated, “I love playing guard because I can shoot or make a move and attack the basket to score.” Roberts, who is the team captain, finished the year with 2,224 career points and 1,005 rebounds. She has a full life outside of basketball and is very involved in Crusader activities. She is a Kairos leader, a member of the Diversity Task Force, and co-founder of the Student Diversity Union. “I love playing basketball at BK and it has given me the opportunity to grow as a person, and even more importantly, to play for an amazing coach. Coach Clark pushes me every single day to perform at the highest level and to become a stronger leader.” said Roberts.

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THE WAY WE WERE: HAZEL MONTGOMERY

BY MARY WANSER
RESIDENT COMMUNITY NEWS

Hazel Montgomery has been a permanent Jacksonville resident for nearly eight decades. She was married for 62 years to an Ortega native. “She is sharp, proud of her Ortega heritage, a delightful storyteller, and an all-around fabulous person,” said Marianne Hofheimer, one of her five children. Hazel Jackson Montgomery was born in Albany, Georgia at a hospital nearly 30 miles from her family’s home in Camilla, Georgia. She was the daughter of a road builder who was general manager for a company with its home office in Jacksonville, Florida. Her family lived here for a few months at a time in 1936 and in 1941.

When that company went from building highways and small bridges to building airfields, including the one at the beach and the one in Ortega that back then was referred to as Mainside Naval Base, the Jacksons settled in Jacksonville permanently. This was the first place Montgomery had ever lived for over a year. They started out on Geraldine Drive in the Riverside/Avondale area near Fishweir Creek. It was 1943, Montgomery

was 7 years old, and she attended Fishweir Elementary.

On Saturdays, after having saved her money throughout the week, the big deal was to walk over the Fishweir Creek Bridge and pay nine cents to enter the Fairfax Theatre and watch the matinee, which was often a cowboy picture and always a serial. Montgomery remembers one in particular: The Green Hornet with its theme song “Flight of the Bumble Bee.” “This was in the days before television, so that was a big deal,” Montgomery said. On the walk home, there was Mundy’s Drug Store where a two-dip ice cream cost only five cents. The store is no longer there, but the building still stands.

“It was a wonderful, wonderful time to grow up in this area. We thought nothing of walking up to Avondale and Boone Park, which is still there,” Montgomery said. When she grew old enough to ride her bicycle to farther locales, Montgomery enjoyed the Willowbranch Library on Park Street near Herschel. By the time Montgomery had gotten to the sixth grade, the economy had improved, and she would get a dollar per week allowance for doing chores at home,



FRONT ROW: (left to right) Jackson Bartz (great-grandson), Cynthia Bartz (granddaughter-in-law), Alison H. Sausaman (granddaughter), Hazel Sausaman (great-granddaughter), Hazel Montgomery, Millie Hofheimer (great-granddaughter), Kirsten Hofheimer (granddaughter-in-law), James Hofheimer (great-grandson)
BACK ROW: (left to right) John Bartz (grandson), Kent Sausaman (grandson-in-law), Andrew Hofheimer (grandson)

tasks like making her bed and drying the dishes. “And for a dollar, you got a lot!” Montgomery said. Now at 10 or 11 years old, she’d be permitted to take the five-cent bus ride downtown with her friends to enjoy lunch at Woolworth’s counter. “A hot dog with all the trimmings cost 10 cents,” Montgomery recalled. It was another 10 cents to see a movie downtown at the Florida Theatre, which is still there. That was a bigger deal than the St. Johns Theatre, as Montgomery remembers it. Another nickel, and she’d be on the bus ride back home.

It was always with friends in groups of two or three that she traveled. One of them was Dorothy (Dotty) Laurmer Risley, now the wife of Steve Risley who opened Sunrise



Hazel Jackson age 2, 1938

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March 2, 1957

seen since her days at Lee. They became college roommates for two years.

In June 1956, Montgomery's Pi Beta Phi sorority sister, Mary Stewart Bolton married Charlie Perry. In attendance at the celebration was a friend of the bride's family, William Thomas Shircliff Montgomery, Jr., commonly known as Bill, who was a Bolles boy. The wedding reception was held at the San Jose Country Club. It was there that Hazel Jackson met Bill Montgomery. Three months later, they engaged. And on March 2, 1957, with the bride wearing a gown made by her mother, they married at St. John's Episcopal Cathedral in downtown Jacksonville.

The Montgomerys' first home together was on Verona Avenue in Ortega. In the six years they lived there, they had five children. Their first two girls, Ginny and Patten, were born 14 months apart. A year-and-a-half later, they had twin girls, Marianne and Alison. Two years afterward, in December 1962, came their youngest, a boy named Cliff. "Then I quit having children," Montgomery said. All five were baptized at St. Mark's Episcopal Church where Montgomery remained an active parishioner for many years.

To support their large family, her husband worked in the air conveyance business with his father, WTS Montgomery, Sr., at a company he had founded in 1925. It was originally called Jacksonville Blow Pipe Company and later became Montgomery Industries International. They designed and manufactured large industrial machinery that they sold all over the world. Hazel Montgomery was a stay-at-home mom who, of course, drove a station wagon. It was a blue Chevrolet.

Having outgrown three bedrooms, the Montgomerys bought the house at 1830

Shadowlawn Street off of St. Johns Avenue in Avondale. "One of the most interesting things is that my two older girls got to go to Fishweir School for two years, which was where I had gone to school. And my favorite teacher as a student at Fishweir was then my girls' principal, and she remembered me!" Montgomery said. Her name was Mrs. Lucille Ross, and she used to teach fourth grade.

In 1966, after nearly five years on Shadowlawn, the family built a house on McGirts Boulevard along the Ortega River, down the street from Ortega Elementary School, next door to where Bill Montgomery's parents had built their family home when he was 3 years old. Back then, the senior Montgomery had purchased two lots on the river but built on only one of them. The empty lot was later gifted to Bill Montgomery by his father as an anniversary present so that he and his wife, Hazel, could build their own family home there. In fact, the Montgomery family is now into its sixth generation in Ortega.

"I always loved to sew, and I made almost all of my children's clothing. I made so many

things by hand. I made my four daughters' debutante dresses that they wore at their formal presentations," Montgomery said. She spoke of a time when heirloom sewing had made a comeback in the South and about how many heirloom stores had opened.

After her own children were grown and married, Montgomery's passion became her career. It was at a sorority reunion that a sorority sister, Barbara Jones of Winter Park, convinced Montgomery to do as she had—start a local hand-sewing and smocking business. She did. It was a small store, and she taught hand-sewing classes there. To remain sustainable, in 1990, Montgomery purchased Hobbie Horse, a children's boutique clothing store in Avondale, selling upscale lines. She held that business for 15 years and sold it in 2005 when she turned 70.

Today, Montgomery still lives in Ortega, now in a small condo community. She remains in touch with many dear friends whom she has known for decades. Diane Schwable and Carol Fewell are two. "Unfortunately, I've lost a lot of friends in the past couple of years," Montgomery said. In November 2019, Kay Atkins passed away, and the following month, Anis Daley. These losses came on the heels of the death of Montgomery's husband of 62 years who died in June 2019.

Montgomery is grandmother to 11. "My prayer had always been that I would be on earth long enough to see at least one great-grandchild, and I am expecting my sixth one in April," she said. Many have worn the family baptismal gown that Montgomery remade using scraps of lace trim from those debutante gowns she had made for her four daughters many years earlier. "I have had a blessed life," she said.



Hazel with her 5 children, 1963 (FRONT ROW) (left to right) Patten M. Moore, WTS Montgomery III (Cliff), Hazel Montgomery, Ginny M. Vorsanger

Nissan of Orange Park. In fact, the two continue to talk daily. Another was Anis Ira Daley from Challen Avenue whose father was a Jacksonville physician and whose mother was the Sunday school teacher at Riverside Park Methodist Church where the three girls originally met.

After Fishweir, Montgomery spent seventh, eighth, and ninth grades at Lake Shore Junior High. She'd ride the city bus for another nickel to get there. She spent only one year at Lee High School before attending three years of boarding school at Ashley Hall in Charleston, South Carolina, her mother's home town. While away at boarding school, Montgomery's only sibling, a brother 10 years her junior, was entering the first grade. "We were in two different worlds. We had lived in the same house, but he was so much younger than I," she said.

As a freshman at Florida State University in 1954, Montgomery met up again with Diane Steagall Schwalbe whom she hadn't



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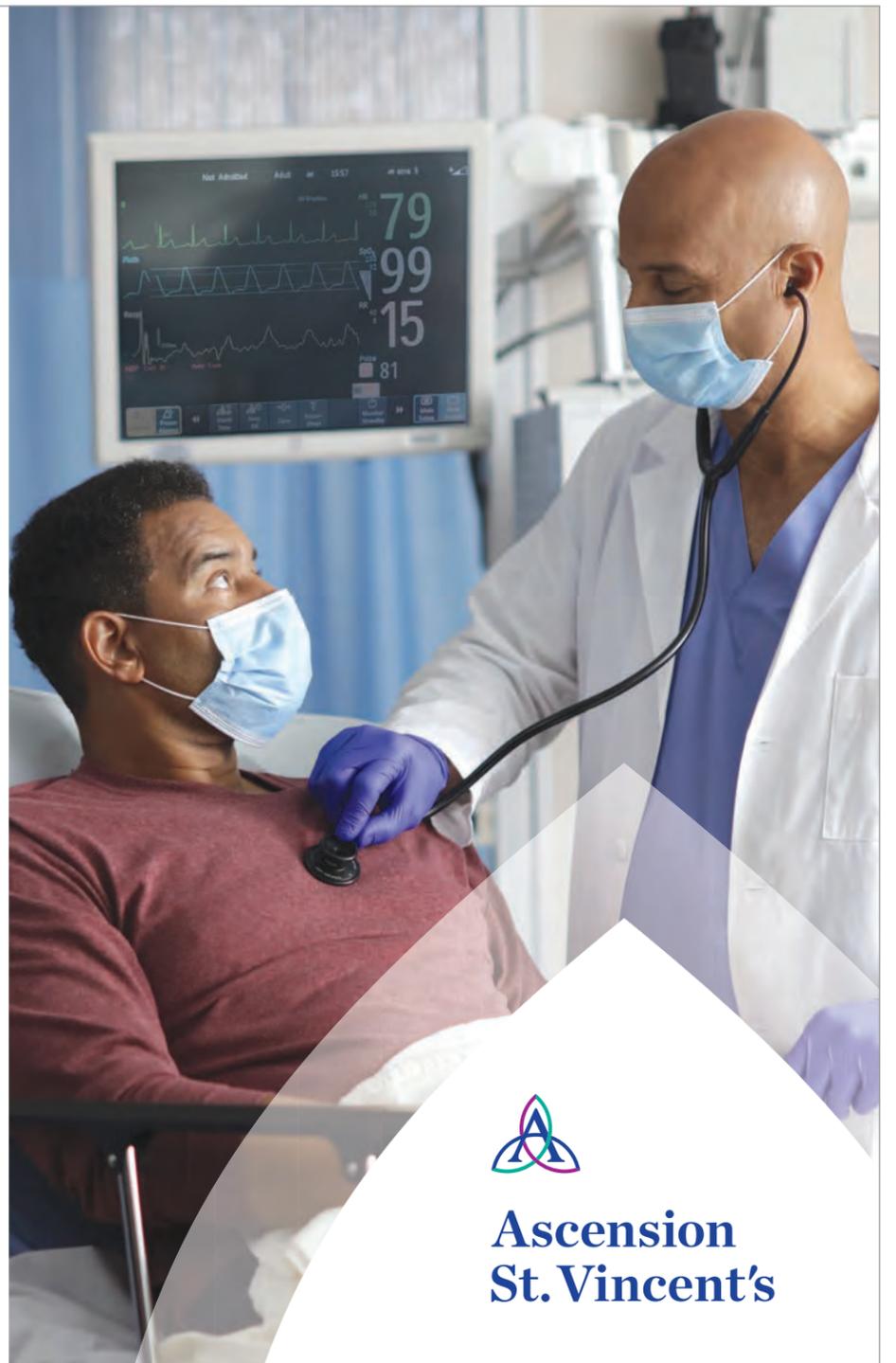
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2251 POST ST - \$1,450 (Residential)
2 BR / 1 BA / 1 HB / 1,180 sqft. / \$1,450 security deposit

RIVERSIDE 1ST FLOOR APARTMENT FOR RENT. From 5 Points, Park St west, north on Copeland, left on Post to sign at brick duplex. , LR, DR, kitchen (R/R/DW), CHA (upgraded electric, plumbing, appliances, granite counter tops, Washer/Dryer, approx 1180 sf, screened porch and beautifully refinished hardwood floors, covered off-street parking, non smoking only. Water and sewer included. May consider small pet w/NRPF, \$1450 sec year lease (AVK S&F)



2671 POST ST - \$1,375 (Residential)
2 BR / 1 BA / 1,100 sqft. / \$1,375 security deposit

RIVERSIDE DUPLEX APARTMENT FOR RENT. 2nd FLOOR UNIT: Park Street to north on King, right on Post to sign on left- 2 Bedrooms, 1 Bath, Living Room, Dining Room, Kitchen (R/R/DW), CHA, Hardwood Floors, Large Front Porch, Washer/Dryer, Offstreet Parking, \$1375 Security Deposit, 1 Year Lease, Owner May Consider Small Pet w/nonref Fee, Non Smoking Only, (AKV fs) Available Now