



Michael and Morgan Roberts with Michael and Michaela Schmidt

ROOT BALL RETURNS FOR DERBY DAY

Frosty mint juleps flavored Greenscape of Jacksonville's 16th annual Root Ball fundraiser on May 6, aptly named "Ante Up for Derby Day" for its Kentucky Derby-themed watch party, complete with casino games, hat and bowtie contests and silent auction. Funds raised will assist in providing education, advocacy and tree-planting here in the River City.

"We had record attendance this year and it was such a fun crowd," said Lisa Grubba, Greenscape's executive director. "We're so grateful to our supporters, many of whom have been with us since our founding in 1975."

The event was co-hosted by Late Bloomers Garden Club. Club members Debbie Early and Sally Ragsdale, along with Greenscape board member Tiffany Davis co-chaired while Ann Hicks served as Honorary Chair.

Greenscape of Jacksonville is one of the nation's longest-running tree groups, serving Jacksonville for 48 years.



Tiffany Davis and Cathie Robinson



Mike Munsch and Rebecca Black



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16 YEAR ANNIVERSARY COMMUNITY NEWS

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RESIDENT NEWS

JUNE 2023. VOL. 16, ISSUE 06



BUILDING COMMUNITY ONE PLOT AT A TIME

Riverside and Avondale neighbors' dirt, foliage and blooms were on full display during Riverside Avondale Preservation's third annual Garden Tour on May 13. Sue, Ellen and Tom Holbert made it a family event as they biked between stops on the self-guided tour.

READ MORE ON PAGE 15

AFTER HOURS ACTIVITY AN ISSUE IN 5 POINTS

BY MICHELE LEIVAS
RESIDENT COMMUNITY NEWS

The 5 Points district in Riverside saw a considerable police presence in the late hours on Saturday, May 13.

Local news outlet Action News Jax reported on a chaotic scene on 5 Points' Park Street, where officers, including bike and horse patrol units, responded to several calls for service that evening.

The Resident reached out to JSO to inquire about the recurring issues in the 5 Points area related to safety and security. JSO's Public Information Office provided the following statement:

"I can confirm that on the weekend of May 13th and 14th, the Sheriff's Office took a proactive approach by having additional officers, to include mounted officers and bike units, in the 5 points area in anticipation of large crowds gathering after the closing of local businesses. Going forward, we will continue to monitor calls for service and any other concerns brought to our attention by members of the community and business owners. Based on that information, decisions will be made on how to best address the activity; however, I would not be able to discuss plans for the future."

The Resident will continue reporting on this issue in the coming month. Readers interested in sharing comments are invited to submit them to editor@residentnews.net.



Barry Kirkland, Charles Samford, John Depietro, Robin Szabo and John Lemen

50 YEARS FOR '73 GRADS

BY PEGGY HARRELL JENNINGS
RESIDENT COMMUNITY NEWS

Over 175 classmates of the Robert E. Lee High School, now Riverside High School, class of 1973 recently celebrated their 50th high school reunion. Attendees came from nine different states, including senior class president, Chase Morgan, who traveled all the way from Washington.

Guests included former Lee High coaches Leon Barrett, Ed Johnson and Skip Cross, as well as Linda Rogers, representing her late husband, Coach Corky Rogers.

"I enjoyed seeing the coaches and players from the first few years Corky and I were at Lee. Great memories," said Rogers.

Ortega resident Becky Rood and her committee organized the fun-filled evening at the Ortega River Club, which included 27 members of the senior girls' Powder Puff Football team, four varsity football players who were their coaches, and the "Yellers," who performed as the Powder Puff team's cheerleaders.

Debbie Washington Rankin said, "It was great to visit with classmates and reminisce about our youth, but better yet to see the 'aged to perfection' we have become. It was a blast! Looking forward to the next reunion in 2028."



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letters TO THE EDITOR

Florida-Friendly Lawns vs. Homeowners Associations

(Not the “Rumble in the Jungle” some think)

Last year, our next-door neighbor, a former board chair of the Riverside Avondale Preservation Society told us, upon seeing us transform our sod and shrubby property to an all-native plant landscape, “You’re going to be in the Garden Tour next year,” we did exactly that. Truth be told, there were other reasons to be in the show other than the invitation. Our home was the “Conservation Home” on Pine Street in Avondale right behind the Casbah.

After returning to Jacksonville from a 15-year odyssey that led us through Arkansas, Illinois, and finally Massachusetts, one goal was to reduce our carbon footprint. We installed solar panels, retractable clothes lines, and changed over the electric stove to gas, which reduced our electric bill by more than 40%. The sod lawn was using thousands of gallons of water every month. When we first lit in June 2018 monthly consumption was north of 15,000 gallons. Further tweaking reduced it to a little over 9,000 gallons. After jumping off the “sod” cliff, less than 2,000 gallons.

The tour was a great success. Between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., north of 400 people toured the property. Steely Dan was playing in the back yard (...on hidden speakers). People loved the Florida-friendly front and side yard, and the backyard as well with its outdoor “living area,” that was bracketed by herb and vegetable gardens.

People were inspired by what they saw. However, more than a few were circumspect. These individuals most often felt totally or partially hampered by the fact that they lived in subdivisions that had Homeowners Associations and indicated that native planting was “totally forbidden.”

At the time, I commiserated with these poor souls. I have lived in HOA communities across the country. In Illinois, it was a 36-house neighborhood, nine of which housed attorneys, of which four were litigators, and the paperwork certainly flowed until they discovered



the transfer of oversight from the developer to the neighborhood was not handled properly. Suddenly, there was no HOA and the litigators found themselves all dressed up with nowhere to go. A sublime outcome if ever I have seen one. Ironically, in Massachusetts, the so-called Nanny state, the HOA simply charged an annual fee that was used to maintain common areas. Beyond that, nothing else was a problem. In Arkansas, HOAs were unheard of. If you asked, I wouldn’t be at all surprised if the response was something like, “I do believe they have a booth right next to the 4-H stall at the county fair in the fall.”

My point is there are HOAs, and then there are HOAs, and I didn’t realize this until everyone had left. The fact is, in Florida, there is an actual law against forbidding native plants in your yard. This doesn’t mean you can show Suzanne, your HOA chair, a finger near your thumb the next time she sees you planting drift roses in the front yard. That’s no way to perpetuate any kind of warm and fuzzy feelings in any event. I looked on the internet, and, as we all know, everything is there, and I found out about the Florida law and much more. By searching for “Florida friendly lawns hoo” you will find everything you need to know about the...wait for it... process you should follow to get your plans approved. You will find that most HOAs and frankly, and surprisingly, the State of Florida are as concerned about conserving water as you are.

One of the main goals of any HOA is to preserve the community’s value. Chief among the ways to maintain value is with curb appeal. The best way to successfully achieve your goal of changing your sod yard into a Florida friendly property is to include the HOA in the process from the very beginning, explain what your goals are, show them your plans (produced by professionals), and be prepared to negotiate. As you search through the cavernous areas of the net you will see many examples of native lawns that would absolutely fit in even the most exclusive communities in Jacksonville, all surely governed by Homeowner Associations. Remember, little patience goes a long way.

So, get busy. The clock is ticking. People are moving in. We don’t have an infinite supply of fresh water. The more of us that change over, the more water can be used to fill the increasing need from the influx of new Floridians. And, if you’re in the Riverside Avondale area near the Casbah, or even next door to us, hurry up, so you can put your property on the tour next year. We’re exhausted.

- CHRIS HILDRETH

FLORIDA GEORGIA

rivalry game to stay
in Jacksonville



The Florida Gators and Georgia Bulldogs announced that the schools have exercised the option to play their annual rivalry game in Jacksonville during the 2024 and 2025 seasons.

The most recent game agreement, which secured the matchup in Jacksonville through the 2023 season, outlined an option to extend the rivalry game in the neutral site the following two seasons as long as the two schools notified the City of Jacksonville prior to June 30, 2023.

“The City of Jacksonville has been an historic host for one of the greatest rivalry games in all of college football,” Florida Athletics Director Scott Stricklin said. “We are excited to have the game in Jacksonville for another two seasons.”

“We are pleased with the decision to exercise the option that will keep the game in Jacksonville for 2024 and 2025,” said UGA J. Reid Parker Director of Athletics Josh Brooks. “We look forward to discussions that I’m sure will continue over the next couple years exploring all the options for 2026 and beyond. We continue to be appreciative of the working relationship we have with the University of Florida and the City of Jacksonville.”

“Jacksonville has been the proud home of the Georgia-Florida game since 1933,” Jacksonville Mayor Lenny Curry said. “We are excited to welcome back the thousands of Dawgs and Gators to Jacksonville in 2024 and 2025. I want to thank the University of Georgia and University of Florida for their continued faith and investment in our city.”

A staple October tradition, the Florida-Georgia game has been played in Jacksonville since 1933 except for the 1994 and 1995 seasons during the construction of TIAA Bank Field. The Gators and the Bulldogs are currently slated to meet on Oct. 28 for this year’s matchup.

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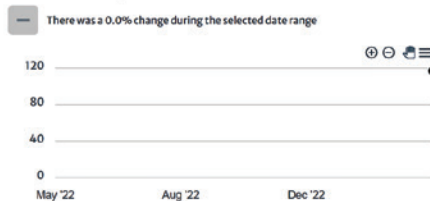
Market News

The Riverside-Avondale-Ortega-Murray Hill housing market is humming along. Days on market has increased, but is still historically very low. The monthly average number of active listings is unchanged over last year, resulting in a blank graph line, and our average sale price remains well above the average for Jacksonville.

117

Average calculated by selected date range

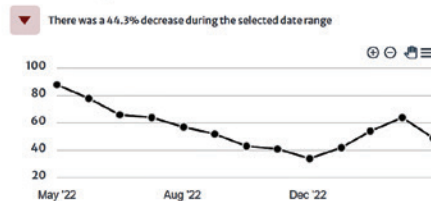
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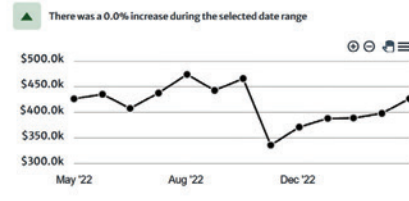
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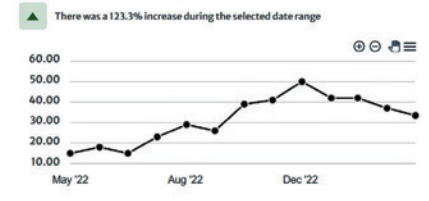
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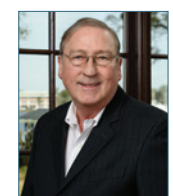
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Donna Deegan elected next mayor of Jacksonville, announces transition team co-chairs

BY MICHELE LEIVAS
RESIDENT COMMUNITY NEWS



Mayor-elect Donna Deegan with the Co-Chairs of her Transition Leadership Team. Left to right: Kevin Gay, Nat Glover, David Miller, Donna Deegan, Lakesha Burton, Darnell Smith. Photo courtesy of Mayor-elect Deegan team.

Democrat Donna Deegan has been elected the next mayor of Jacksonville and the first woman to hold the title in city history.

Deegan emerged the victor in a runoff election against Republican Daniel Davis on May 16 with 52.08% of the 217,392 votes cast.

Deegan took to Twitter the evening of the election to celebrate her victory stating, “Love won tonight, and we made history. We have a new day in Jacksonville because people chose unity over division—creating a broad coalition of people across the political spectrum that want a unified city.”

She continued: “Together, we will bring change for good to Jacksonville by making good on the decades-long broken promises on infrastructure, building an economy that works for everyone and improving access to healthcare. We will break down the wall between City Hall and bring all the people in to create a city that works for everyone.”

In his concession speech, Davis expressed his support of the mayor elect and his continued support for the City of Jacksonville.

“I just want to let you know I’m going to do everything I can to make sure Mayor Elect Deegan’ is successful in making Jacksonville the best Jacksonville it can be,” he said. “I love my city. I will never stop loving my city.”

On Thursday, May 25, Deegan held her first news conference at City Hall, announcing the co-chairs of her Transition Leadership Team.

“Today, I am excited to announce our Transition Team Co-Chairs. They are a brilliant group of leaders who collectively embody our guiding values, the culture we strive to create,” she said. “They come from across the political spectrum and all work with relentless optimism to lift our city, to bring this beautiful mosaic we call Jacksonville together for its greatest good. I couldn’t be more grateful to have them by my side as we prepare our administration. They have and will continue to serve as wise counsel for me.”

The co-chairs of the transition team, a representation of “Jacksonville’s political diversity,” include former candidate for Jacksonville sheriff and retired Jacksonville Sheriff’s Office Assistant Chief Lakesha Burton, former Jacksonville Mayor John Delaney, Operation New Hope Founder Kevin Gay, former Jacksonville Sheriff Nat Glover, Brightway Insurance Co-Founder and Executive Chairman David Miller and Florida Blue North Florida Market President Darnell Smith.

“Our administration will be guided by the principle that every person should have a voice in City Hall and a seat at the table,” Deegan continued. “Transparency, accountability and innovation will be at the center of all of our decisions as we build a bridge to the next generation and industries of the future.”

Rumored restaurant for Lomax Street?

A new restaurant may be coming to the Five Points neighborhood.

According to city records, there are active permits for site clearing and demolition work at the former Five Points Wells Fargo branch at 803 Lomax Street.

This site is where Roost Restaurants LLC, the same company that brought The Local to Miramar and Neptune Beach, hopes to build what is currently being called the “Lomax Street Restaurant.”


In March, a permit was filed for site clearing of the 0.59-acre lot. Toney Construction Co. was listed as the general contractor with a cost of \$10,000 listed for the site clearing.

City records list a companion building permit to this March one for the “addition to existing building/restaurant remodel.” This permit, currently listed as “return for corrections,” reflects a \$600,000 remodel covering 5,855 square feet.

On May 9, another permit was filed for the “demolition of the drive-thru teller structure.”

County records reflect City Limits LLC purchased the property, along with two other parcels, for \$1.25 million in October 2020. Language in the deed prohibits all entities but Wells Fargo to use the property for any sort of financial services business. Also according to county records, the building was built in 1956.


City Limits is the third entity to own the property.



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Defunct Five Points Merchants Association rekindled with fresh eyes

BY MICHELE LEIVAS
RESIDENT COMMUNITY NEWS

Jacksonville’s Five Points District resides within the historic Riverside neighborhood and is known for its eclectic collection of restaurants, bars and boutiques and its unique, bohemian vibe.

Many small business owners call it home. Some have called it home for several decades; others are new to the neighborhood. Regardless of how long their business has been open, however, they all share a desire to see Five Points and its businesses thrive and prosper.

To that end, Matthew Clark, senior vice president at Colliers International Jacksonville, is spearheading an effort to revive the currently-defunct Five Points Merchants Association, in collaboration with Riverside Avondale Preservation (RAP). Clark is a nearby resident and real estate professional with extensive experience in the Five Points area.

Past iterations of the merchants association date back several decades. While the nearby communities of San Marco and Avondale have thriving merchants associations, Five Points struggled to get its merchants association off the ground with consistent merchant participation. When Clark realized the association was, at this point, virtually non-existent, he decided to integrate both the district’s business owners and property owners, who have, to this point, been uninvolved with prior iterations of the merchants associations.

“One of the things that we feel is important is that the merchants are able to be merchants and run the merchants association [in a way] that helps bring business back into Five Points, drive business into Five Points,” he said. “So, what we’ve established is we feel like there are three pillars that should be the responsibility of the property owners: trash and general street upkeep, security, landscaping.”

Clark and his team developed a budget for these three factors, which, he said, when spread out across the 17 property owners on Park and Lomax streets, “ends up being actually really affordable.”

Trash and clean-up are regular issues at Five Points. Over at Edge City, Gunnel Humphreys routinely takes the time to pick up any trash in front of her store in the morning before she opens for business.

“I always make sure my store is spotless, absolutely spotless,” she said. “No cigarette butts, nothing like that. I would like to see that every merchant would take care of their front and the neighbors on both sides.”

Clark is working to schedule a meeting with the Five Points property owners to discuss what he feels their responsibilities are to the area. The meeting will include representatives from RAP, the City of Jacksonville and, possibly, a liaison from the Jacksonville Sheriff’s Office to discuss safety and security issues. The property owners he’s contacted thus far have “all been on-board.”

“I think that the merchants need to feel like they’re not in it alone and that it’s the merchants and property owners working together,” he said. “I think that is what we were missing, and really, we’re in it together. I think when you look at San Marco and you look at Avondale, those streets look drastically different, and it’s because the property owners and the merchants association both have really good relationships.”

Clark added that his team has been working closely with RAP Executive Director Shannon Blankinship to help create this baseline foundation for the Five Points Merchants Association.

“RAP supports the 5 Points area through bi-annual cleanups and can do the work to see installation of new bike racks, trash cans, benches, or whatever is needed to support the merchants and property owners,” Blankinship wrote in an e-mail. “New businesses in the area are sparking new interest in bringing the merchants together again for communal upkeep, safety and landscaping. I hope to see more soon.”

A successful merchants association, Clark said, would provide “a level of consistency, so when you’re going into these areas, you can have a consistent experience, you can have a family-friendly experience, and at night, you can have a fun experience for everybody.”

DIA approves amendments to RiversEdge redevelopment agreement

BY MICHELE LEIVAS
RESIDENT COMMUNITY NEWS

Jacksonville’s Downtown Investment Authority (DIA) recently approved a second amendment to its redevelopment agreement with Dallas-based developer Preston Hollow Community Capital, LLC regarding the Southbank’s RiversEdge: Life on the St. Johns project.

At a May 17 meeting, DIA CEO Lori Boyer discussed the proposed amended redevelopment agreement, which detailed several modifications, including, among others, adding more land parcels to the project, an increased grant amount and extending completion deadlines.

in this case the percentage remains exactly the same in the amendment as it was five years ago — 75%.”

“In addition, the Recaptured Enhanced Value grant expiration date is consistent with the updated Downtown redevelopment plan adopted by City Council in 2022. The completion dates for the parks and road are extended by several months, but all parks, the Riverwalk, boardwalk and amenities as well as access roads for those public spaces, will be completed by the end of 2024. Vertical construction on private development is expected to get underway this year. We are excited to see this long-awaited development moving forward and shifting from work on underground infrastructure to truly visible improvements.”

“As everyone knows, rents and construction costs have increased sharply in recent years, which means the projected tax revenue that RiversEdge will generate for the City of Jacksonville is substantially higher today than it was in 2018 when the original agreement was finalized.”

- Lori Boyer, DIA CEO

The completion date for Community Redevelopment Area (CRA) infrastructure improvements has been extended from June 14, 2024 to Dec. 31, 2024. The April 5, 2025 deadline for Community Development District (CDD) infrastructure improvements has been extended to Dec. 31, 2025.

In an e-mailed statement provided to The Resident, Boyer explained the modifications in greater detail:

“As everyone knows, rents and construction costs have increased sharply in recent years, which means the projected tax revenue that RiversEdge will generate for the City of Jacksonville is substantially higher today than it was in 2018 when the original agreement was finalized,” she wrote. “The increased grant amount is based on a percentage of the property’s tax value, and

Ground broke on the Southbank mixed-use development in May 2021. The highly-anticipated, 32-acre project will feature 134,000 square feet of retail space, 200,000 square feet of office space, 147 hotel rooms, 950 residential units and a 125-slip marina along with four public parks.

In a February article, Preston Hollow Community Capital Managing Director Ramiro Albarran told The Resident the project was, at the time, “about halfway through the infrastructure development cycle.”

Vertical construction will commence once all infrastructural work is completed.

Preston Hollow Community Capital declined to comment on the amended redevelopment agreement, which will now go before the city council for approval.

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Historical society shares annual Endangered Properties list

BY MICHELE LEIVAS
RESIDENT COMMUNITY NEWS

The Jacksonville Historical Society (JHS) has released its annual list of endangered buildings.

The list, “Jacksonville’s Endangered Historic Properties 2023,” is an annual compilation of historic sites and properties currently facing the threat of demolition. This year’s list features more than 20 properties, including religious structures, dwellings, public buildings, businesses and schools, as well as a special category of historic and architecturally significant Duval County Public School buildings currently slated for demolition.

“Historic sites and properties matter to Jacksonville’s people,” said JHS CEO Dr. Alan Bliss. “When historic buildings, such as the 99-year-old Ford Motor Assembly Plant building, are demolished, we erase another part of the culture, history and life stories that form our Jacksonville. Historic places lend authenticity to their surroundings, making us all more invested as citizens. In addition, data proves that historic preservation adds value by strengthening economic development. Recognizing this, the Jacksonville Historical Society advocates for preservation through its annual Endangered Historic Properties list.”

Featured on the list are many familiar historical buildings in Jacksonville’s urban core, including the Laura Street Trio at the corner of Laura and Forsyth streets. These



Mount Olive A.M.E. Church in 1973, from the Collections at the Jacksonville Historical Society.

three buildings — the Florida Life Building, the Bisbee Building and the Old Florida National Bank (also known as the Marble Bank) — date back to the early 1900s in the first years following the Great Fire of 1901.

“As a city, we cannot let these buildings remain the way they are because they’re vacant and certainly a detriment to trying to achieve downtown redevelopment, and yet, they’re too historically and architecturally significant to tear them down,” said Jacksonville historian Dr. Wayne Wood.

While there is currently a developer interested in restoring and reviving these historic buildings, Wood added the trio will remain on the endangered buildings list until construction work actually begins.

“The fact is that the economy and [cost of] construction has risen so great that there’s still not a certainty that these buildings will be saved,” he said.

Mount Olive A.M.E. Church on Franklin Street was built in 1922 and was designed by Jacksonville’s first Black architect, Richard L. Brown, after A.L. Lewis, the church’s building committee chairman, selected his plans for a new building to replace the congregation’s original one, which dated back to 1887. JHS noted in the list that “a declining congregation, infrastructure issues and developer encroachment are threats to the future viability of this historic old church.”

Additional religious buildings on the list include Laura Street’s Snyder Memorial Methodist Church, built in 1902-03, and Mount Cavalry Baptist Church on Spruce Street, built in 1949.

Not all historic buildings are in danger of demolition, though, as adaptive reuse and renovations are underway for several historic and architecturally significant buildings throughout the city.

In April, The Resident reported on plans to convert the historic Independent Life Building, built in 1955, into a mixed-use development featuring commercial tenants, residential units, dining options and a grocery store. Work on the building continues. Since then, several permits have been filed with the city for plumbing work on several of the building’s higher floors.

The article reported that the developer on this project is Augustine Development Group; the contractor on this project is DFI General Contractors LLC. Its total cost is estimated at \$23.3 million.

Wood also cited the transformation of the former Florida Baptist Convention

Building. Designed by famed architect Henry J. Klutho and constructed in 1924, the building “was in deplorable shape and was in danger of almost collapsing,” he said. The building, according to the Downtown Jacksonville website, was abandoned for more than 40 years and is now transformed into a mixed-use facility comprised of two future mercantile suites, future restaurant spaces, and 24 studio and 1-bedroom apartments

“Every old building should not be saved just because it’s old, but those buildings that are of architectural and historic significance deserve to be part of our city’s effort to preserve our heritage,” Wood said.



A 1927 photo of the Laura Street Trio, from the Collections at the Jacksonville Historical Society.



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Residential real estate update

Historic districts remain insular despite market shifts, uptick in rates

BY **MARY WANSER**
RESIDENT COMMUNITY NEWS

In this Part 1 of a 3-part real estate series, we look at residential sales throughout the historic districts of Jacksonville as seen through the eyes of local real estate professionals. A panel of six experts weighed in.

PANEL EXPERTS



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Managing Broker/
Coach, Berkshire
Hathaway
HomeServices
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Erin King
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Nick Salter
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Anita Vining
REALTOR®,
Berkshire Hathaway
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LOCAL MARKET

Q: Is the current real estate market in the historic districts of Jacksonville a favorable one?

VINING AND COHEN: Absolutely favorable. The median sales price has been creeping up over the last few months since inventory of homes for sale has been decreasing. It's still a strong sellers' market. Buyers can still find the perfect home; they just need to move fast and rely on their REALTOR® to guide them carefully. In some cases, they need to make a very strong offer. We are seeing great numbers at open houses and multiple offers on properties.

SALTER: The real estate market for historic homes in Jacksonville remains dynamic, with a limited supply and a steady stream of buyers eager to invest in the timeless allure of the city's architectural treasures.

KING: Overall, Jacksonville is slated to outperform most other metro areas of Florida for the foreseeable future. Jacksonville is positioned well for massive growth (+20%).

SINGLETON: The current real estate market is fantastic in the historic area. We have really strong demand that seems to be driven by the addition of well-paying positions in the Jacksonville job market.

SIMONETTA: Historic districts are often highly sought-after areas for buyers due to their unique charm, character and sense of history. Historic districts typically have a well-established sense of community with amenities such as local shops, restaurants and parks.

While there may be fluctuations in the real estate market in any area, historic districts often tend to hold their value well over time and can even appreciate more quickly than other areas. In part, this is because there are typically strict guidelines in place to ensure that historic properties are preserved, which can help maintain the area's overall character and desirability.

INTEREST RATES

Q: Are current interest rates affecting the real estate market here?

SALTER: While interest rates may have a number of buyers waiting on the sidelines, I'd say the historic market has recently seen a surge of growing interest.

KING: Yes, interest rates are a big worry for buyers, especially those who have become accustomed to below-market-value interest rates of the pandemic. The reality is that the 40-year average for mortgage rates is 7.71%. Even as I write this, rates hover at or below 7%. Buyers can sigh relief as we expect interest rates to begin declining in the coming months. Down payment programs, like Hometown Heroes and others, are making getting into a home much easier. How much depends on the overall economy, but we are confident that we have seen the ceiling and can look forward to lower rates as time progresses.

SIMONETTA: Yes, current interest rates can have a significant impact on the real estate market. When interest rates are low, it can make borrowing money to purchase a property more affordable for potential homebuyers, which can increase demand and lead to higher prices. Conversely, when interest rates are high, borrowing money to purchase a property becomes more expensive, which can decrease demand and lead to lower prices.

Low interest rates can also lead to an increase in refinancing activity, as homeowners may look to take advantage of lower rates to lower their monthly mortgage payments or shorten the term of their loan. This can also lead to an

increase in demand for housing, as homeowners who refinance may use their savings to invest in additional properties or upgrade to a larger or more expensive home.

Overall, interest rates are just one factor that can influence the real estate market, but they can play a significant role in shaping supply and demand dynamics and, ultimately, affect property prices.

VINING: To some degree, yes. Some borrowers are in a vulnerable position, and when rates change, their debt-to-income ratios change. This can impact the borrower's affordability and the type of home for which they qualify.

IN COMPARISON

Q: How are sales here in the historic districts as compared to those throughout the rest of Jacksonville?

KING: Sales in our area are a bit slower this year than in the last several years, but stable. Homes are selling, we just do not have enough inventory to meet demand. This can be attributed to overall market conditions and sellers' unwillingness to put their homes on the market for various reasons. We can look forward to the market loosening up a bit as we progress through the fall of '23. Homes are still selling faster than they did pre-pandemic, especially homes that have been well-kept and updated. The sellers having the most issues are overpriced and/or need to make repairs to justify their lofty prices.

SINGLETON: While some other areas seem to slow down, we are continuing to see multiple offers and homes selling above asking price.

SIMONETTA: Like any real estate market, the market in Jacksonville's historic districts can be affected by a variety of factors, such as the overall state of the economy, changes in zoning laws or building codes, and fluctuations in supply and demand. It's also worth noting that property values can vary greatly depending on the specific neighborhood and type of property you're considering. In my opinion, the historical districts tend to be the last impacted in a declining market due to the public's demand to invest their cash in a recessionary market.

VINING: The historic homes are not as plentiful as homes that are newer construction or in other neighborhoods. With limited inventory, demand continues to be high.

Real estate is local. While other markets may be seeing a slowdown, Jacksonville has been seeing a tremendous influx since Covid. With the wonderful quality of life we offer, what's not to love? By comparison to other cities in Florida, Jacksonville's price points remain a bargain.

SALTER: Jacksonville boasts a rich history and a diverse array of well-preserved historic properties, attracting both local residents and out-of-state buyers. These homes, often characterized by unique architectural styles and captivating stories, hold immense appeal for those seeking a blend of charm, character and timeless beauty.

As the market continues to experience demand due to a major lack in inventory, prices for homes in Riverside and Avondale, specifically, have steadily increased, reflecting their desirability and scarcity. Buyers are drawn to the distinctive features such as original hardwood floors, intricate moldings and ornate façades, which contribute to the allure of owning a piece of our city's past but are also shopping for homes that are more "move-in ready"

and well-maintained versus ones that may be more of a project.

Additionally, the city's ongoing efforts to preserve its historical heritage and revitalize historic districts have further fueled the interest. The real estate market for historic homes in Jacksonville remains dynamic, with a limited supply and a steady stream of buyers eager to invest in the timeless allure of the city's architectural treasures.

SCHOOL TREND

Q: With the school term coming to a close, are you seeing/expecting more movement in local real estate, as is the usual trend?

SIMONETTA: Historically, the end of a school term can be a time of increased real estate activity, particularly for families with school-aged children who may be looking to move before the start of the next school year. This can create a surge in demand for homes in certain areas, which may lead to increased buying and selling activity.

However, it's important to note that real estate activity can be influenced by a wide range of factors, including economic conditions, interest rates, housing inventory and local market dynamics, among others. Therefore, the level of real estate activity at the end of the school term may vary depending on these and other factors.

This year, due to the higher interest rates and home prices, which have not adjusted as fast, I expect to see a slower pace than the usual trend. You also must remember that many homeowners have current mortgages on their existing homes under 3%. It would take something special for them to sell and purchase a property at a rate easily doubling their current mortgage.

VINING: It's always busy. Northeast Florida is in a major growth mode, and we continue to attract businesses and great jobs. There are always a few extra moves when kids are out of school. Competition rises slightly, but it's already a competitive market. We just keep moving forward, creating the best experience for clients.

KING: We are currently in the middle of our hot spring market. Before the middle of June, we see sellers earn the best returns of the calendar year, and this year is no exception, especially while demand and supply are offset in sellers' favor.

THE FUTURE

Q: What is your best guess as to what we can expect in the near future? Distant future?

KING: We can expect to see interest rates stabilize and begin declining very soon and throughout the remainder of the year. In the near term, we expect to see interest rates come down while prices stabilize and probably inch back up. Today, we are still at half or less of the number of homes available for sale in Northeast Florida compared to before the pandemic. In the future, Jacksonville is positioned to become the power player it has always strived to be.

Jacksonville is the largest land mass city in the U.S. We have excellent rail and road transportation systems, we have a top-five freshwater port, and an international airport. We have multiple military installations, not including the Coast Guard, and let's toss in a roughly 30-minute or less drive to the beaches. We have all the pieces, and now, all of those pieces appear to be falling into place.

VINING: As long as people continue to relocate to our area, demand will be high. Currently, many in the local market would like to move, but with rising prices and outside demand, it is hard for locals, as there aren't as many choices or opportunities to move up or down in their communities.

SIMONETTA: The bottom line is: We are in unprecedented times. Throughout history, one thing is for sure. No matter what the rates or prices were, deals have always been done. The key is to produce a fair deal for all parties no matter what the circumstances are.

IMPENDING SLOWDOWN?

Q: Do you see a slowdown coming?

COHEN: I believe Northeast Florida really has that special sauce. We have the largest urban park system in the country, beautiful beaches, a high quality of life with excellent healthcare facilities, schools and a low cost of living. All that, combined with our diverse economy, makes Jacksonville an attractive place for business and job opportunities. Markets have ups and downs; the best REALTORS® and brokers thrive in any market condition.

VINING: The first quarter [of] 2023 has been very strong in Jacksonville. As more locals find desirable places to move within the city, and their homes sell, our market will keep moving upward.

SALTER: I do not foresee a downturn in the market. I think Florida as a whole is still very hot. And Jacksonville remains affordable as compared to other major cities in our state, so we are seeing people flock from more expensive and populated markets within Florida and make the move as well as transplants from across the country. I've heard so often that our historic neighborhoods remind northerners of where they live, and I think finding that relatability has made our area so appealing to people shopping for a place to move here.

KING: I do not see much of a real estate slowdown from here. I see sales numbers stabilizing and reminiscing of 2018-2019 regarding volume, with our current prices sticking and even slight increases in pricing as interest rate pressures decline.

AVAILABLE INVENTORY

Q: What type of inventory and in what quantity is available in the historic districts now?

VINING: In Avondale and Riverside, there are currently 84 single-family homes for sale. Of the 84 for sale, 53 are currently under contract. There are 31 active listings, ranging in price from \$159,900 to \$2.9 million.

KING: Our current inventory levels are still well below where they were pre-pandemic, while buyer demand is much higher. Average days on the market pre-pandemic were over 100 days, and today they're around 47. So, the limited numbers of homes on the market are moving quite well. Again, buyers are forced to be a bit more conservative in their home choices.

COHEN: The latest NEFAR market statistics show 2.6 months of supply. That's low and evidence of a super sellers' market. The median sales price is up 13% month over month. Year-over-year stats shows prices are down; low supply is driving prices back up. Transactional dynamics

have moderated, and sellers are more likely to negotiate and make repairs. With such low supply, sellers considering putting their homes on the market should act fast. Competition gets thicker in the summer months.

CHOOSING AN AGENT

Q: Our readers expressed that they have chosen or will choose agents they see advertised in "The Resident." What other criteria should people look for in an agent?

VINING: An experienced REALTOR® who has knowledge of the market in which the buyer is seeking a home. Also, an established real estate company offering up-to-date technology. With our current fast-paced market, an experienced REALTOR® should be able to provide creative suggestions for making an offer.

For someone selling a home, an experienced and successful REALTOR® who knows how to market and price a property and has the ability to spend marketing dollars to reach the seller's true target market.

COHEN: Trust, integrity, longevity and respect. Your REALTOR® should be knowledgeable and dynamic in their marketing efforts. Does the REALTOR® apply social media, video, print marketing and continuous networking with other agents and brokers? Make sure your REALTOR® has support and is involved in the business culture. The collective group they are part of is important.

KING: Picking your agent, above all else, should not be out of nepotism. Interview an agent just like you would any potential new hire. Yes, it is important to have a good relationship with your agent. Still, at the end of the day, our job is to market your home aggressively, provide the customer/client with excellent advice (even if they do not want to hear it), and to be a consummate professional. Your agent should have a good track record of closings and be very well-versed in selling historic properties. 100-year-old homes are a very different world than newer homes.

SIMONETTA: In addition to experience and knowledge of the local market, there are several other criteria to consider when choosing a real estate agent.

Communication skills: An excellent real estate agent should have good communication skills, which include listening actively, being responsive and explaining things clearly.

Professionalism: It's important to work with an agent who is professional, courteous and respectful. A professional agent should always keep their promises, meet deadlines and keep their clients informed throughout the buying or selling process.

Trustworthiness: Look for an agent who is honest and transparent with you. You want to work with someone who has your best interests in mind and is committed to helping you achieve your goals.

Marketing strategies: An effective agent should have a strong marketing strategy to help you sell your home quickly and at the best possible price. Ask the agent about their marketing plan, including their online presence, advertising and open house events.

Negotiation skills: A skilled agent should be able to negotiate on your behalf to get you the best possible deal. Look for an agent who has experience negotiating with other agents, buyers and sellers.

Availability: You want an agent who is available when you need them, whether it's during the day, evening or on weekends. Make sure the agent you choose is willing

to work around your schedule and is responsive to your needs.

Network: A good agent should have a strong network of industry professionals, including lenders, home inspectors and contractors. This can help make the buying or selling process smoother and more efficient.

By considering these factors when choosing a real estate agent, you can ensure that you find someone who is knowledgeable, professional and committed to helping you achieve your real estate goals.

LISTING ADVICE

Q: What are your top tips for listing a home?

SINGLETON: The most important advice for sellers is using professional marketing and pricing the home accurately. We continue to see some listings languish because they're simply not presented in the best manner.

SALTER: When listing a home in today's market, you must understand the current buyer's mindset. People are definitely more hesitant because of the financial markets, and buyers now want to feel like the home they buy is worth the money they are spending because home prices accelerated

so quickly over the last few years. We aren't just making offers on anything anymore. A listing needs to have a strong pricing strategy combined with professional marketing. If you feel like your home needs some touchups before going on the market, it likely does. Don't wait until the buyer does an inspection to figure it out. Be proactive.

VINING: Decluttering is at the top of the list. Less is best. Depersonalizing the home so buyers can visualize themselves in the property versus seeing family photos, trophies, degrees and/or personal items.

COHEN: Curb appeal is critical: laying fresh mulch, landscaping, pressure washing hardscapes. Sprucing up the landscaping and outside improves curb appeal and the potential buyer's first impression. Also important are decluttering and depersonalizing the home so buyers can visualize themselves in the property and take emotional possession of the space.

KING: Work closely with your agent and try hard not to pre-decide what your home is worth before consulting your licensed and experienced REALTOR®. Consider performing a pre-market home inspection and address needed repairs before you list.

COMING SOON

Stay tuned for the July issue of "The Resident," where we'll report on the current state of the local commercial and residential rental market in Part 2 of a 3-part real estate series.

Have something to contribute? Contact Pamela at Editor@residentnews.net

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Financial literacy now required for high schoolers

FLDOE is finalizing standards and curriculum for a new financial literacy class

BY JENNIFER JENSEN
RESIDENT COMMUNITY NEWS

In March 2022, Gov. Ron DeSantis signed a bill to require high school students to take a financial literacy class prior to graduation. Thanks to Senate Bill 1054, titled the Dorothy L. Hukill Financial Literacy Act, students will learn how to make smart decisions with their money prior to taking the giant leap into adulthood. This new requirement applies to students entering high school in the 2023-2024 school year.

“The Dorothy L. Hukill Financial Literacy Act will help prepare students for the future by providing them with the knowledge to achieve financial stability and independence,” Florida Department of Education (FLDOE) Press Secretary Cassandra Palelis said. “In addition, the standards will ensure students have the tools to make educated financial decisions and empower them to thrive in our economy, no matter what path they choose after high school.”

Sen. Dorothy Hukill, who died in 2018, and for whom the legislation is named, had a career-long dedication to expanding opportunities for students to learn about financial literacy in high school. She was a former classroom teacher and understood firsthand just how important these skills are to successful employment and economic independence in adulthood.

In 2019, DeSantis signed legislation that required schools to offer the course as an elective, but many in the community continued to push for a more aggressive approach. The Rotary Club of Jacksonville was one such group. They pushed for legislation to be written to require the financial literacy course to graduate, rather than having it be just an elective students could choose or not.

“When they turn 18 and are legally adults, they’re empowered to sign legal contracts — student loans, credit

card agreements — and that affects their financial wellbeing for forever,” The Rotary Club of Jacksonville President Jim Agee said. “It’ll give them some tools. If the parents get involved, it might teach the parents something too, but it requires a big investment by the parents to teach their kids financial responsibility, cash flow and building net worth.”

Agee said it goes beyond just one semester of learning about financial responsibility. It is about building intergenerational wealth. “How are you going to break this cycle of poverty and underdevelopment, both in education and social skills? You’re not going to break that cycle until you can get a generation educated on this,” Agee added.

And today, living in such a digital age with everything at one’s fingertips, it can be easy to make quick decisions that might not be the best financial one. Don’t want to drive to the gas station for a soda? Just order one through one of the many food delivery services — for a significant upcharge. Scroll through TikTok and there’s an ad to buy something instantly. There is such an ease in getting something nowadays without truly knowing how much it should cost.

Erin Conklin, Duval County Public Schools (DCPS) Director of K-12 Social Studies, said these types of things will be incorporated into the curriculum. “Teachers will have resources that teach students about digital spending and other digital components,” she said.

The course curriculum must touch on several other aspects as well, including:

- Types of bank accounts;
- Opening and managing a bank account;
- Assessing the quality of a depository institution’s services;
- Balancing a checkbook;
- Basic principles of money management;



Two students review lessons from Junior Achievement’s in-school literacy programs.

- Loan applications;
- Receiving an inheritance;
- Basic principles of personal insurance policies;
- Federal income taxes and local tax assessments;
- Interest rates;
- Contracts;
- Billing statements;
- Savings and investments; and
- Laws concerning finance.

The FLDOE released proposed standards for the course on April 6 for public review. FLDOE convened a workgroup to review the previous financial literacy courses, as well as propose new financial literacy standards and courses that align with the financial principles defined in SB 1054. The State Board of Education (SBOE) was anticipated to take action on these standards at their meeting on May 24.

Financial literacy courses aligned with the new standards are currently in development and are expected to go before the SBOE in July. Once SBOE gives its approval, the courses will be available for the beginning of the 2023-2024 school year. Workgroups will develop resources for financial literacy immediately following the adoption of the new courses, according to Palelis.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 13



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Substantial price improvement on this gorgeous lakefront pool estate, nestled in the heart of Mandarin! The first floor offers plenty of room to gather large families, with an open floor plan and tons of light everywhere. The chef’s kitchen has beautiful white cabinetry, granite countertops and a breakfast bar that welcomes you to sit. Dinner parties are flawless now with room for your guests to gather while you lovingly finish the meal. The piece de resistance of the lower floor is the light-drenched sunroom that overlooks the pool area. Kids can gather to play a board game, or you can prop your feet up and finish reading that delicious book. On the right side of the house, you’ll find an office, pool bath and the generous owner’s suite. Much More!!



Listing Agent
Heather Buckman



1526 COPELAND ST - \$1,195,000
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Sitting high on a corner lot in PRIME Riverside, this STUNNING three-story historic CRO building is 4 blocks from St Johns River, can be: commercial, single family residence, ofc, or work-live combo. Every square inch of this sprawling *showstopping* structure has been meticulously renovated with a designers’ eye. Roof 3 yrs new, HVAC 4 yrs, Water heater 2 yrs! Classical light bright ornate elements meet simplistic modern details, color palettes w/ an open pass-through floorplan downstairs, winding staircase leading upstairs to private rooms, then a fully open floor plan on the 3rd floor. Beautiful hardwood floors throughout, 4 fireplaces, updated kitchen, multiple bathrooms on each floor, bonus rooms, storage areas galore. Outdoor spaces leave many options for entertaining. LOTS OF EXTRAS!



Listing Agent
Alyssa Key

MEET THE AGENT



RACHAEL GREENE

Licensed Realtor®

904.303.1556

rachael@cowfordrealty.com

 [r.greenehomes](https://www.instagram.com/r.greenehomes)

Rachael is the proud owner of a 1930’s brick bungalow in Murray Hill that needed a good dose of love to make it a home! She lives there with her family, including her fuzzy German Shepherd puppy and black cat!

Attending her first real estate seminar at 16 years old, Rachael has always had a passion for real estate. She started her real estate career working with investors and renovations, and most recently spent time working in land development projects. She is very excited to connect with buyers and sellers in the greater Jacksonville area and looks forward to helping them get everything they are dreaming of.

Real Estate Super Power: My genuine commitment to doing whatever it takes to get my customers what they want! When I’m not working: You can find me outside soaking up some sunshine with a good book. The beach, the park or even my own backyard!

Favorite Jax Spot: Anywhere in Murray Hill! Community Loaves is incredible, and we love El Jefe any night of the week!

Conklin has been working with those at the FLDOE to be ready for implementation in the upcoming school year. Once it is approved by SBOE and DCPS has a course code from FLDOE, it will be added to the pupil progression plan and the Duval County School Board agenda. The board will then have to approve the course and standards prior to its implementation, which, she indicated, could be as late as August or September.

The new course will also require professional development for teachers. The school district will need to adopt materials and textbooks, and plans to include parents in this process.

Conklin said the district has many community partners that work with them to provide resources and support for teachers and students. And some offer support and programs specifically targeted to financial literacy. One of these such groups is Junior Achievement of North Florida (JA), which employs a pathways approach to teaching financial literacy to young people.

Shannon Italia, president of leadership for JA, said this bill “elevates the priority and provides a framework to ensure that all young people in Florida will be exposed to this critical information. Even if people have limited means, a better understanding of how money works and how one can use budgeting, cost management and credit as a tool can help lead to better financial outcomes, which can contribute to a greater quality of life and financial wellness.”

Another partner in the community is VyStar Credit Union, which started the VyStar Academy of Business High School Branch Program about 15 years ago. High school students receive real, hands-on experience by operating a fully functional VyStar branch in the school, which is open to students and faculty only.

“Instead of doing a classroom presentation or offering job shadowing, which are still very beneficial, we decided to build a fully functional VyStar credit union on campus that was exclusively operated by the students as part of their business program,” VyStar Vice President of School Programs Michael Rathjen said.

Vystar just opened its 18th high school branch and now operates in eight school districts. In Duval County, there are branches at Samuel Wolfson, Ribault, First Coast, Mandarin and Fletcher high schools. Vystar offers 12 yearlong paid internships to students at each branch.

“As we’ve been able to partner with schools over the years, we realized how valuable this opportunity is to students, regardless of their career aspirations,” Rathjen said. “They learn how to work with two key elements. They learn how to work with money, and they learn all types of financial literacy concepts, and they learn how to work with people.”

“When it comes to learning how to handle money, it’s not a matter of if we need to learn those skills, is just a matter of when,” Rathjen said. “So, we can do one of two things. We can either take the time to prepare for our future or we will take the time to repair from our past.”

Bye, bye Black Sheep

BY MICHELE LEIVAS
RESIDENT COMMUNITY NEWS

Last month, Five Points bade farewell to the Black Sheep Restaurant, one of its neighborhood staples.

In a social media post shared in late April, Black Sheep announced the decision to permanently close its doors at the end of May.

“With heavy hearts, we are announcing our closing at the end of May,” the post read. “Saturday, May 27 will be our last shift. We want to express our gratitude to all our Black Sheep employees, both current and alumni. We’d also want to thank all of our patrons from over the years, it has been our pleasure to serve you!”

The post went on to invite all to come join the restaurant in its final four weeks to “say goodbye to our 5 Points and Riverside friends, family, and supporters. It’s been an awesome 13 years serving our community.”

The post quickly garnered hundreds of likes and many comments from patrons expressing their support of the restaurant and their dismay over its closing, with

many of them sharing memories they’ve made there over the years.

Black Sheep resided in the now-familiar triangular building at 1534 Oak Street at the corner of Margaret and Oak streets in the Five Points district and opened late 2012. In an August 2012 article, The Resident reported that Black Sheep was the first named tenant in the new building and would be its primary tenant as well.

In a text message, former Black Sheep managing partner Allan DeVault remarked on “how said it is to lose such a great restaurant. It was on the forefront of rooftops in Jacksonville and was followed by many others.”

Small business owner Gunnel Humphreys, who has owned her Five Points boutique, Edge City, for more than 40 years, said she doesn’t expect the restaurant to stand empty for long.

“I’m sure that some restaurant from Dallas, Chicago, New York or Denver will just descend upon this beautiful space and do something,” she said. “That is not, really almost no concern. That goes without saying with the rooftop and then the nice dining downstairs. It’s one of the most beautiful contemporary buildings that I’ve seen. It’s just gorgeous in its design.”

“We’d also want to thank all of our patrons from over the years, it has been our pleasure to serve you!”

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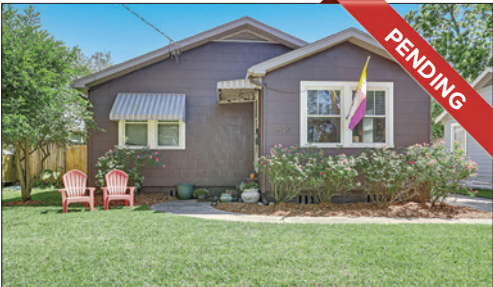
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City Council approves settlement agreement in redistricting lawsuit

BY MICHELE LEIVAS
RESIDENT COMMUNITY NEWS

At a May 9 meeting, the Jacksonville City Council voted 15-to-3 to approve a settlement to end the ongoing litigation regarding the redistricting of the city council and school board district map.

The three dissenting votes were from Council Members LeAnna Cumber, Brenda Priestly Jackson and Reggie Gaffney, Jr.

In May 2022, the Jacksonville branch of the NAACP, Northside Coalition of Jacksonville, Inc., Florida Rising Together, Inc. and the ACLU of Florida Northeast Chapter — along with 10 citizens — filed a lawsuit against the City of Jacksonville claiming the district map in use at the time was unconstitutional.

In a February article, The Resident reported on the remedial map to be implemented for the recent city council elections as well as the 2024 school board

elections until, according to a December court order, “entry of a final judgement in this case.” This map — the P3 map — was one of three submitted by the plaintiffs.

With the approval of 2023-0281 at the May 9 meeting, the entry of a final judgement may be drawing nearer, though City of Jacksonville General Counsel Jason Teal explained to council members that the settlement agreement will still need to go before the judge for evaluation before a final judgement is issued.

At a Rules Committee meeting the week prior, Teal explained in greater detail what the settlement agreement includes, which, he said, was the adoption of the plaintiff’s P3 map until the next redistricting takes places following the 2030 census and an award of \$100,000 to the plaintiffs for attorneys’ fees.

Council Member Nick Howland was among the council members expressing reluctant support for the settlement agreement at the Rules Committee meeting.

“I’m grudgingly going to support this settlement agreement,” he said. “I begrudgingly do it because...I support it because of the unforeseen cost that we’ll incur if we continue moving forward and because we’re about to elect a whole new city council with these maps.”

Before voting on the proposed settlement agreement at the May 9 city council meeting, Council Member Brenda Priestly Jackson also expressed her reluctant support.

“This is an agreement I will live with but I am not comfortable living with,” she said.

Priestly Jackson argued not only does new map fail to “address the issues alleged by the plaintiffs,” but it also pitted four sitting women council members against one another in the spring elections by drawing them into two districts.

“Further, the same new redistricting maps didn’t draw any male council members into the same council districts, thereby further marginalizing and othering the ladies on the city council and potentially significantly diminishing the female representation on the city council,” she said.

Northside Coalition of Jacksonville President Ben Frazier stated the settlement agreement was “a step in the right direction.”

“I think it was unfortunate that the city decided to cost taxpayers all of this money to fight the inevitable,” he said. “They in fact were hard-nosed, hard-boiled and hard-headed, and it ended up costing the taxpayers a lot of money. So now, it is time to move forward in what I refer to as the sunlight of a brand-new day. Let’s work closer together. That is what this is about. This is about collaboration between all the parties involved: the private sector, the public sector, the community. We simply have got to learn how to work better together. We must all learn how to collaborate. Why? Because none of us is as smart as all of us.”

Frazier said this provides Black voters the opportunity to “elect a preferred candidate of choice in District 7” in the May election. In District 7, he added, “if the candidate who is selected...will operate with the best of interest, cares and concerns of all the voters, then that will be just fine.”

“What we want there to be is fair representation so that our cares and interests — meaning the cares and interests of the underserved community, meaning District 7 — will in fact be addressed,” he said. “We want our best interests to be addressed, and quite frankly speaking, I don’t care who’s addressing it, whether they’re black or white.”

There is currently no set date for when the court will render a final judgement in the case.

Communities in bloom for third annual Garden Tour

Guests walked, biked and drove throughout the Riverside and Avondale communities to explore the gardens participating in the third annual Garden Tour on Saturday, May 13.

The event, hosted by Riverside Avondale Preservation (RAP), celebrated homeowners’ green thumbs and landscaping designs rather than the homes’ interiors and histories that were the focal point of RAP’s Home Tour in April.

Originally created as an alternate to the Home Tour during the pandemic, the Garden Tour has since evolved into an event in its own right. This year, RAP Executive Director Shannon Blankinship said more than 500 people participated in this self-guided tour.

“What always surprises me about the Garden Tour is that each person has a different favorite property from the next,” she wrote in an e-mail following the event. “Deciding what will be ‘inspiring’ is hard to determine, but the positive feedback from gardeners and neighbors from the 2023 Garden Tour is good news for a greener, healthier Riverside Avondale. The scavenger hunt was a fun way to encourage folks to seek out unique garden items and was a fun add-on to the event.”

The Garden Tour was, for many, a perfect Mother’s Day gift. Donna Behrman drove up from Tallahassee to join her daughter, Madi Gardner, on the Garden Tour for the first time.

“It’s been really fun,” Behrman said.



Madi Gardner celebrated Mother's Day a day early by taking her mother and "master gardener" Donna Behrman, on the RAP Garden Tour.



Homeowners Amanda Pinero-Trombly and husband Donald Trombly and pup Tonka participated in the Garden Tour for the first time this year.



Tiffany Bess from Apple Rabbit Compost helps Samuel and his brother Andy get their hands dirty for the Garden Tour scavenger hunt.

“Mom is a master gardener and I just strive to follow in her footsteps,” Gardner said. “I’m a baby gardener.”

The tour featured 11 different stops at various gardens, most at private residences but some at businesses or public spaces, including the Riverside Avondale Community Garden on Azalea Terrace. There, Tiffany

Bess, founder of Apple Rabbit Compost, educated visitors about the importance and benefits of composting. Bess explained that Apple Rabbit Compost already maintains a “pretty close connection” with RAP through the Riverside Arts Market, but this is the first year it has participated with the Garden Tour.

“Getting to actually get involved with the garden, where the food grows, and getting to educate people who are looking to do the ‘rot’ thing, that’s been really rewarding to me,” she said.

Bess shared information about her own plot she rents at the garden, which grows a variety of herbs and vegetables, and discussed the importance of community gardens.

“I really think community gardens in all forms are important because you’re coming together and you’re revitalizing community outreach,” she said. “You’re getting involved with your neighbors. You’re talking to Kyle who owns that plot over there and Debbie who came and picked some green beans earlier today. You’re kind of getting that community feel that I think, in our current society, could be lacking sometimes; there’s a disconnect. Being able to bond over soil and veggies is a very natural thing to do.”

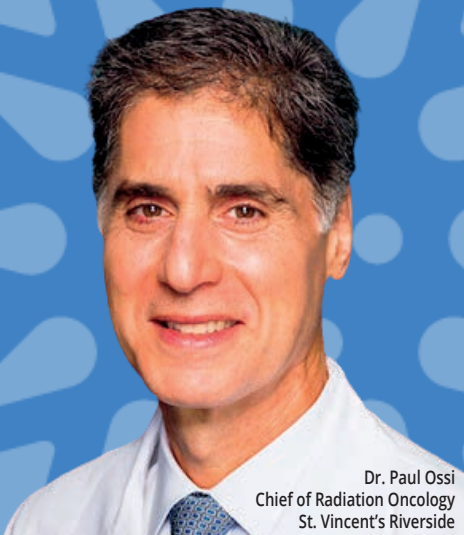
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MOVERS & SHAKERS

Goodman joins Baptist Health in new role



Jeremy Goodman

Jeremy Goodman, MD, MBA, FACHE, CPE, FACS, joined Baptist Health in the newly created role of vice president and system quality officer on May 15, 2023. The role is responsible for the effectiveness of clinical management, patient safety and performance improvement, as well as facilitating collaboration and integration across the brand's entire system. Goodman comes to Baptist Health after six years as chief medical officer at Banner-University Medical Center Phoenix, Arizona's largest hospital.

"[Goodman] is a highly accomplished physician executive with a significant background in process improvement and clinical care design. He has successfully worked with physicians, nurses and administration across disciplines to drive clinical excellence and improve outcomes," said Timothy Groover, MD, MBA, CPE, FACHE, senior vice president and system chief medical officer of Baptist Health.

Jacksonville viewers give \$130,000 for children's treatments



Michael Erhard

Nemours Children's Health raised more than \$130,000 during its fifth annual Day of Giving, in partnership with WJXT Channel 4. All funds raised will go toward the Compassionate Care Fund, which provides for children who may not have the resources for treatment. Viewers called in donations in the telethon-style fundraiser, and donations were matched by the 2023 sponsors: VyStar Credit Union, the Jacksonville Jaguars Foundation and Ruckus.

"Our commitment is to do good and lead by example, and there is no better way to do that than work with Nemours Children's and partner with the Compassionate Care Fund to help the children in greater Jacksonville get the support they need," said Chad Meadows, executive vice president and COO of VyStar Credit Union.

Thurson shines as a guiding light

Noreen Thurson has been honored as the recipient of the Sr. Marie Celinie Joubert Award for Excellence in Forming the Faithful. The award was started in 2015 to recognize those who excel in their catechetical roles in schools and parishes in the Diocese of St. Augustine.

Thurson began her career in ministry as the Director of Religious Education at Resurrection Catholic Church, teaching first grade before moving on to teach Religion I to freshmen at Bishop Kenny 18 years ago. She is also the sponsor for the Society of St. Vincent de Paul.

"As a Catholic school teacher, I can say, 'I touch eternity. I teach in a Catholic School,'" said Thurson, who also recalled how the move from public school to private, Catholic school brought her to tears when she was again allowed to reference God and Jesus in the classroom.

Thurson considers her teaching a vocational calling, drawing on the spirit of the children she teaches.

"They inspire me to serve," she said.



Noreen Thurson with Deacon Bob DeLuca

Hammond to head HCA Florida Memorial Hospital

Reed Hammond has been named the next CEO for HCA Florida Memorial Hospital, taking the reins from Bradley Talbert June 1.

"I am excited to join a team that is known for delivering high quality care," said Hammond. "That is a tribute to the medical staff and HCA Healthcare colleagues that raise the bar when it comes to caring for their community."

"Reed is a compassionate leader that has a track record of success," said Hugh C. Tappan, president of HCA Healthcare's South Atlantic Division. "He will always put his team members and patients first."



Reed Hammond

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Cummer Museum awarded \$650,000 grant



Dr. Johnnetta Betsch Cole
[BOSTON PHOTOGRAPHY, AMELIA ISLAND, FLORIDA]

The Cummer Museum of Art & Gardens overlooks 2.5 acres of historic gardens situated on the St. Johns River in Jacksonville, Florida. [PHOTO CREDIT: RYAN KETTERMAN]

The Cummer Museum of Art & Gardens was awarded a \$650,000 grant from the Leadership in Art Museums (LAM) initiative, a partnership between the Ford Foundation, Mellon Foundation, Pilot House Philanthropy and Alice L. Walton Foundation. The funding provided by LAM enables the Cummer Museum to establish the Dr. Johnnetta Betsch Cole Curator position, a new post named in honor of the Jacksonville native. The new curator will work collaboratively with museum leadership and colleagues on the development of exhibitions, educational initiatives, public programming and acquisitions. The funding will also support the Cummer’s and LAM’s shared goals of advancing professional development in the museum field.

“Dr. Johnnetta Betsch Cole has always considered the Cummer Museum her hometown museum. The curatorship named in her honor will help us advance Ninah Cummer’s vision of being a ‘center of beauty and culture for all,’” said Andrea Barnwell Brownlee, Ph.D., George W. and Kathleen I. Gibbs Director and CEO.

The Cummer is one of only 19 museums across the country selected to receive a LAM grant, which are designated for creating and sustaining new leadership positions that are inclusive of communities of color.

“It is an extraordinary honor and a joy to have my name associated with this new curatorial position at the Cummer Museum. I am witnessing this institution emerge into a beacon where the stories of all of the world’s people are told,” said Dr. Johnnetta Betsch Cole. “Imagine how much further we will go as this curator builds upon the Museum’s momentum, values its legacy and facilitates opportunities to expand the vast stories that art tells.”

The pie lady of Five Points



Nataasha Burton

When Nataasha Burton went sightseeing with her aunt in Jacksonville, she never imagined one of the stops would be home to her next business venture. A stop at Park Street, however, prompted her to snap a photo to text to her husband, along with a message that one day, their family would move to Jacksonville and she would open a business on that street.

“By that June, by that Father’s Day, I had him here in Jacksonville and he fell in love with it, too, and by August we were in a U-Haul and moving our family to Jacksonville,” she said.

Initially, Mixed Fillings accepted only pre-orders, which Burton baked and delivered as a one-woman show. When word got out that there was a new “pie lady” in town, however, the demand got so great that she called in reinforcements by way of her husband, who quit his job to work alongside her and their new team.

On April 28, Burton officially opened her new brick-and-mortar shop on the very street that first captured her heart. Mixed Fillings Pie Shop has a fixed menu of approximately eight recipes baked fresh daily and are available year-round, with seasonal offerings rotated in.

“This is the stuff, honestly, that dreams are made of,” she said. “When the inspector told us that we had passed our food inspection, and we knew we were able to open, I literally just fell apart and started crying. Because it was like everything that we had been going through — all the teamwork, all the sacrifice, all the 13- and 16-hour days and sleeping at the shop — it was all worth it.”

Mixed Fillings Pie Shop is located at 1049 Park Street and is open Tuesday-Saturday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. (or until sold out).



Nina Waters



Isaiah M. Oliver

Waters to retire, Oliver succeed as president of The Community Foundation

Following a nationwide search, The Community Foundation for Northeast Florida (TCF) unanimously selected Isaiah M. Oliver to succeed Nina Waters as TCF’s new president, effective July 31, 2023.

“I am incredibly grateful to our staff, trustees and partners who have been essential to our success over the last 22 years,” Waters, who will officially retire September 1, said. “We are starting our next chapter in a position of great strength, and I have no doubt Isaiah is the right leader for us at this time.”

Oliver is the third president of the organization, stepping into TCF’s engaged network of more than 660 fundholders and donors, \$57.7 million in grants distributed in 2022, a 25-person staff, and more than \$1 billion in total lifetime gifts.

“The Community Foundation for Northeast Florida has an outstanding reputation locally and nationally for donor service and strategic community philanthropy,” Oliver said. “I’m looking forward to building relationships with donors, grantees and the community, to better understand how I can build on the strength of the Foundation in our next chapter.”



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Rutherford Tops at NAI



John Rutherford

John Rutherford, Senior Vice President of Multifamily Investment Sales at NAI Hallmark, was recognized by NAI Global as a global top 10 producer for the commercial real estate brokerage firm. The award honors individuals who are handling the highest volume

of business within NAI. The award was presented at the NAI Global Convention in February in Las Vegas.

“John’s success over the past few years, particularly in 2022, comes as no surprise to his colleagues at NAI Hallmark and his clients around the world. John’s preternatural understanding of the multi-family industry and thoughtful approach creates exceptional value, leading to a long list of repeat clients. John success is also a tribute to the strong team he has developed at NAI Hallmark. We are very proud of his accomplishments and excited to see his career continue to flourish,” said Christian Harden, managing partner at NAI Hallmark.

“This award represents outstanding performance within the organization,” said Jay Olshonsky, President and CEO, NAI Global. “We are proud of John Rutherford’s success, and the dedication and commitment to service excellence he has shown.”

Stophel Retires from Episcopal Children’s Services

CEO Connie Stophel announced her upcoming retirement from Episcopal Children’s Services (ECS), the second-largest nonprofit in Northeast Florida. The announcement was made to ECS’s board of trustees, and will go into effect at the end of 2023.

“I am grateful to have served the Northeast and Central Florida community for more than 30 years, and I am excited about the future of Episcopal Children’s Services. I am still, and will always be, invested in the mission and will work to ensure that all children reach their fullest potential,” said Stophel.

Stophel has been in the CEO position at ECS since 2003, and with the agency for more than 30 years total. Throughout her career, she has helped expand ECS’s revenue from \$13 million to \$98 million and extended the service area to encompass 14 counties. She was honored as one of the Jacksonville Business Journal’s Ultimate CEOs in 2017.

ECS has begun the search process for Stophel’s replacement with the goal of having a new CEO in place no later than January 2024.



Connie Stophel

OCEANA Raw Bar and Seafood opens

From the team who brought you Taverna



Sam Efron and Kiley Wynne Efron, owners of Taverna Oceana. (PHOTO CREDIT: Jensen Hande)

Taverna Oceana, in San Marco Square, opened its doors to the public on Tuesday, May 2, 2023. The raw bar and seafood-focused concept is the brainchild of owners Sam and Kiley Wynne Efron, the husband-and-wife team behind Taverna.

The two restaurants are connected via an open passageway, while Taverna Oceana offers a slightly more intimate experience than Taverna and includes an exposed oyster-and-champagne bar, visible shucking station and a private dining space.

Taverna Oceana’s coastal-inspired décor, designed by Jacksonville-based Design Cooperative, echoes Executive Chef Sam Efron’s coastal-caught offerings like the Lobster Thermidor, Miso-glazed Chilean Sea Bass or Ceviche Tostada. A full bar complements the dinner menu with its expansive collection of terroir-driven wines.

“At Taverna Oceana you can expect the same consistency and quality that you have come to know and love with Taverna. The menu will be rooted in the classics but will have modern touches that keeps everyone excited, also allowing our team to play with global flavors, like Asian- and Latin-inspired dishes,” said Sam Efron.

Taverna Oceana currently offers dinner Tuesday-Thursday from 5-9 p.m., Friday-Saturday from 5-10 p.m., and Sunday from 5-9 p.m., with plans to open for lunch, brunch and private events in the coming months.

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The Village gifts \$3M to Wolfson Children’s

Donation will go toward new inpatient behavioral health unit

THE PLAYERS Championship Village, Inc. (The Village) announced May 3 a \$3 million gift toward a new inpatient behavioral health unit at Wolfson Children’s Hospital.

Expected to open in spring 2024, the new 20-bed Behavioral Health and Wellness Unit will be on the third floor of Wolfson Children’s in space previously occupied by the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit, which relocated to the Borowy Family Children’s Critical Care Tower in 2022.

Michael De La Hunt, MD, medical director, Pediatric Inpatient Behavioral Health Services at Wolfson Children’s, said they have seen an “explosion” in the demand for crisis mental health services that exceeds inpatient bed capacity.

“Compared to the 1% population growth over the next five years, pediatric ER visits related to mental health are expected to grow by 9% across the country and inpatient stays are expected to increase by 11%. Like communities across the nation, Northeast Florida has been challenged to match limited mental health resources for children and adolescents with the overwhelming demand for this specialized type of care,” said Allegra C. Jaros, president of Wolfson Children’s.

This \$3 million gift to Wolfson Children’s is the first from The Village, but the third from THE PLAYERS Championship, which provided a \$1 million gift in 2011 and a \$2 million gift in 2016 to benefit child health, wellness and injury prevention programming at THE PLAYERS Center for Child Health at Wolfson Children’s.

In addition to inpatient and partial hospitalization behavioral health services, Wolfson Children’s provides outpatient consultation, evaluation and treatment for children and adolescents. It currently has the 14-bed Larry J. Freeman Behavioral Health Unit in the J. Wayne and Delores Barr Weaver Tower and the eight-bed behavioral health pod located in the main hospital.

Andre Ayoub appointed Jacksonville Emergency Preparedness Chief



Andre Ayoub

Mayor Lenny Curry has appointed Andre Ayoub as the City of Jacksonville’s new emergency preparedness chief. The appointment was announced on Friday, May 5.

Ayoub’s past experience includes nearly three decades as a former police chief as well as the chief of Special Events Division, where he served as the Jacksonville Sheriff’s Office’s primary emergency preparedness point of contact.

In this new role, Ayoub will oversee “the preparation, prevention, response, recovery and mitigation in an all-hazards environment.” The Emergency Preparedness Division is responsible for responding to various emergency and disaster situations, “including, but not limited to: apartment fires, hurricanes, tornadoes, gas leaks, hazardous material spills, building collapses and flooding.”

Ayoub’s duties also include overseeing downtown Jacksonville’s Emergency Operations Center, which is the “central location for disaster and emergency information and the central voice of government as it relates to protective actions for the public and any actions being taken to protect life, property, and to mitigate damage.”

“Public safety is a top priority and being prepared for an emergency plays a big part in keeping our city safe,” said Mayor Curry in a press release. “Andre is an excellent leader and tireless public servant. I have complete confidence in his management and expertise during an emergency and am looking forward to working together to keep Jacksonville Jax Ready.”



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Beer Bucks

The Riverside Craft Beer Festival raises big bucks for children



Jonathan Cagan, Nidhi Every, Patrice Austin, Pamela Bourne and Tim Gaskin

The Rotary Club of Riverside Jacksonville presented the Community Hospice & Palliative Care Foundation with a \$60,000 donation on April 26 at the Florida Yacht Club. The money was raised at the Rotary's ninth annual Riverside Craft Beer Festival, which was held in February.

"This donation will make a significant impact on our organization as we continue to provide critical pediatric services and programs to our community," said Nidhi Every, Senior Development Officer, Community Hospice & Palliative Care Foundation. "We greatly appreciate the Rotary Club of Riverside Jacksonville's dedication to making a difference in the lives of children and appreciate their partnership and support."

The two organizations have partnered since 2016, throughout which the foundation has received close to \$600,000 in contributions from the Riverside Craft Beer Festival toward its Community PedsCare® program to provide support for children with life-threatening conditions.

Hightower Fellowship class announced

The Hightower Emerging Leaders Fellowship selected 17 young professionals from a variety of different industries to participate in its 7th annual class. The fellowship introduces the group of ascending leaders to prominent and influential Jacksonville leaders, allowing participants to build relationships and learn through round-table discussions. The fellowship is named for Mike Hightower, former JAX Chamber chair, who helped launch NextUp JAX (previously ImpactJAX), the Chamber's young professional mentoring and networking program.

In addition, Lauren Braddock was named 2023 board chair of the Fellowship, with Belkis Plata announced as chair-elect. Additions to the 2023 Hightower Fellowship board are: Kemal Gasper, Brandon Cornellier and Tee Ambrose.

The 2023 Hightower Fellowship class is: Betsy Dobbins, Executive Director, Center for Children's Rights; Dr. Audrieanna Burgin, Director of Diversity in Business, University of North Florida; Yanira Cardona, Owner, Yaya Productions; Megan Bush Del Pizzo, Vice President, Tom Bush Family of Dealerships; Darrin Eakins, CEO, Golden Age Innovations; Olivia Frick, Business Development, LSP3 Associates; Ashantae Green, Owner, Green Legacy Farm; Megan Hayward, Founder and CEO, Temporary Assistance Guru; Matthew Medley, Operations Administrator, Mayo Clinic; William Moorer, Assistant General Counsel, Miller Electric Company; Tyler Morris, Executive Director, Center for Independent Living Jacksonville; Bryan Murphy, Vice President of Hospital Operations, Brooks Rehabilitation; Niko Negron, Vice President of Business Strategy and Logistics, PRI Productions; Shannon Schott, Partner, Plata Schott Attorneys and Counselors Law; Ryan Smith, Chief Growth Officer, JAX Executive Jet Center; Andrea Williams, Senior Corporate Social Responsibility Integrator, Florida Blue; Erin Wolfson, Assistant State Attorney, Fourth Judicial Circuit of Florida.



United Way's Stein Fellowship returns, opens application period

The application period for United Way of Northeast Florida's Stein Fellowship Class of 2024 is now open. The fellowship is returning after its hiatus because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The fellowship is open to all young professionals between the ages of 21 and 40 years old. The application window will remain open until midnight, Friday June 9.

According to a United Way of Northeast Florida press release, the fellowship program was founded in 2007 by David and Linda Stein in 2007. It is a "year-long immersive leadership and mentorship experiences" that "develops high-performing leaders who show a commitment to philanthropy, improving our community and growing professionally through mentorship."

A United Way Tocqueville Society mentor will work with each participant. The Tocqueville Society is comprised of top region philanthropists who contribute more than \$10,000 annually to United Way.

According to the press release, a dozen Tocqueville Society mentors have already committed to this year's fellowship program, including:

Robin Abbott, CFO, United Way of Northeast Florida; Carl Bailey, community volunteer; Henry Brown, CEO, Miller Electric; Nathaniel Ford, CEO, Jacksonville Transportation Authority; Pat Geraghty, President and CEO, Florida Blue; Chris Hazelip, Attorney, Rogers Towers, PA; Mike Herman, SVP and General Counsel, Regency Centers; Connie Hodges, Retired, United Way of Northeast Florida; Patty Keenan, Chief Talent Officer, Miller Electric; Dr. Michael Mayo, President and CEO, Baptist Health; Richard Sisisky, President, The Shircliff & Sisisky Co.; Diana Sorfleet, EVP and Chief Administrative Officer, CSX.

"United Way believes community-centric leadership development is a critical strategy for the long-term stability and continued success of Northeast Florida and the communities within," said United Way of Northeast Florida President and CEO Melanie Patz in the press release. "We are thrilled to bring back this wonderful experience for young professionals this year and continue to carry on Linda and David's legacy of leadership for future generations."

Rodriguez celebrates 25 years with LJD Jewish Family & Community Services



Colleen Rodriguez

Colleen Rodriguez, CEO of LJD Jewish Family & Community Services (JFCS) was recently honored for her 25 years with JFCS during the nonprofit's 2023 Annual Event in March. Under her leadership, JFCS has grown from 80 employees and a budget of \$5.6 million in 2011 to 200 employees and a \$17 million budget this year.

Rodriguez grew with the agency as well. After working in a variety of departments, she became the agency's first chief programs officer. For the past 12 years, she has served as CEO.

She is a licensed clinical social worker who started her career at Stilwell Middle School where she focused on juvenile delinquents.

When asked to name her greatest accomplishments, Rodriguez said, "Participating in the designing and implementation of the privatization of the child welfare system in northeast

Florida, and the successful completion of the JFCS Capital Campaign." That campaign raised more than \$6 million, resulting in a new headquarters for the agency and a remodeling of its food pantry and prevention office.

"I had the benefit of having the most amazing mentor, Hal Resnick," she said. Resnick was a leadership expert who trained Fortune 500 leaders.

"I wasn't convinced I wanted to be, or even should be, a CEO, and he saw things differently. He provided invaluable advice and coaching to me and my team," said Rodriguez.

Another role model was Rodriguez's father, Bob Lloyd, who was an executive with Florida Power and Light.

"I watched how he interacted with his employees," Rodriguez said. "We would spend a lot of time discussing how you can be supportive while still holding people accountable."

She is married to Eddie Rodriguez, who is with the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office. They have two sons, Jake, who is a Marine, and Nathan, who is in sixth grade, and a German shepherd named Roxy.

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PLENTIFUL POKE AT PLENTI



Jonathan Cagan, Nidhi Every, Patrice Austin, Pamela Bourne and Tim Gaskin

There’s plenty to choose from at Plenti, a new poke restaurant that opened at the end of March in the Brooklyn neighborhood.

Before transitioning into the role of Jacksonville restaurateur, owner Dean Nixon worked long office hours in Washington, D.C. that resulted in him eating out for nearly every meal. When he returned to Jacksonville with the idea of opening his own business, he knew he wanted to promote healthy meal options that he would have wanted for himself.

“I thought, ‘You know, what is something that I myself would eat every single day, would go back several days a week for, would kind of help me foster a lifestyle where I could continue working a lot of hours and still feel good about my meal choices, about my health,’” he said.

Nixon worked with a team of professional chefs to ensure Plenti not only offered a healthy, enticing menu but also provided choices beyond what one would typically expect from poke restaurants.

“I also wanted to do some cooked seafood since we were already bringing in seafood for poke and kind of complement that with chicken and shrimp, some things that are — a lot of people are hesitant about raw seafood and seafood in general so I wanted to make sure there was something for everyone there,” he explained.

Additionally, Plenti offers salads, toasts, acai bowls and smoothies.

Plenti is located at 200 Riverside Avenue, Suite #1. It is open Sunday thru Saturday, 9 a.m. to 8 p.m.

From diamonds to (cookie) dough

Something sweet this way has come to the Lakeshore neighborhood: First Coast Cookies and Boba.

With a permanent menu of nine different cookie flavors and rotating seasonal options on their way, First Coast Cookies offers cookies “like grandma used to make” at its new location on San Juan Avenue, which opened this past Valentine’s Day.

This is the second location for the cookie shop. Its first location, at Regency Mall, remains open as well. Owner Michelle Rhoades said she decided to move to the Westside after hearing many of her customers traveled from there to the mall to purchase a batch of her cookies.

“It’s been wonderful,” she said. “Everybody’s been so welcoming and they share with me that they needed something like this on this side of town. I just see the growth here and it’s so exciting. I’m so glad I caught it when I did because I think there’s just so much possibility and things coming up in this area, so I’m really excited to grow with the Westside.”

Rhoades’ journey to her desert shop began at The Landing, where her family operated a jewelry store alongside fellow tenant Coastal Cookies. When The Landing permanently closed, Rhoades explained she bought some of Coastal Cookies’ equipment and six months later, she opened First Coast Cookies.

“I went from gems and diamonds to sugar and flour,” she said. “I like my natural resources, I guess.”

First Coast Cookies and Boba is located at 4610 San Juan Avenue.



Michelle Rhoades



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When the time comes to remodel or restore your home – whether it’s a bathroom, kitchen or an addition – there are many boxes to check and plans to make before you commit to a contractor. The most important part of the process is hiring the right party that has safety in mind, innovative design and quality craftsmanship come with a top notch firm. Finding someone that can help you navigate the process in the most flawless of ways is difficult, but there is an industry professional that’s ready to serve.

For certified general contractor Mark Herron, a 30-year veteran of the commercial building industry, his goal is to use the experience, knowledge and expertise to deliver results that far outpace the competition. Mark’s company, The Herron Group, has completed over 800-million-dollars in projects successfully throughout Northeast Florida and the greater Southeast, which makes him a savvy contractor that has a track record of delivering an outstanding product for his customers.

From historic homes that require special attention and historical knowledge, to remodeling a more recently built home; there are advantages to using an experienced contractor that can lead you down the right path. Mark is confident in his ability to navigate the recent supply chain issues that plague jobs, pull permits in a timely fashion; all while knowing how to match stucco, brick, mortar and other dynamic elements like accommodating the movement of load bearing walls in historic structures.

*A good contractor will always give you an estimate in writing.
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Experience is paramount and can’t be compromised in a valuable home. Being a reliable and trustworthy partner to the homeowner requires the right skills and depends upon good communication, on-time work, and budgets being met.



Mark Herron of American Home – Remodel & Restorations

a Certified General Contractor,” shared Herron. “There’s a big difference between someone that’s qualified to do work on your home, but do they have the proper licensure, insurance and bonds that can pay for mistakes and issues – when, and if, they arise?” said Herron, while making an

Choosing experience, trusting the process
In today’s construction climate, there are thousands of contractors, but being one of the best requires focus, clarity and excellent communication skills. Herron’s foray into home remodels has been extremely successful and he is looking forward to becoming a household name by way of his residential construction company – American Home Remodel & Restorations. For those who love their location, but want to upgrade to fit their lifestyle, the value of new spaces can be game changing, bringing value to your home and providing satisfaction for years to come.

By taking experiences learned from the commercial building industry and moving laterally to helping homeowners achieve their dreams, Mark is poised to help people looking for a great listener who is budget conscious and stands by his work.

“I know that the quality of our work, the timely nature of our deadlines and the communication it requires will be refreshing to those that haven’t had that prior,” he shared. “I know how to navigate supply chain issues and avoid delays due to my industry knowledge,” said Herron, “I’m prepared to handle the job and limit setbacks due to my advanced preparations, contacts and sheer number of years that I’ve been handling difficult circumstances.”

Mark is a proud Jacksonville native who grew up in the South Jacksonville area and has built businesses, raised a family, all while regularly spending time with his 91-year-old mother. With his roots planted firmly in town, he is looking forward to building even more relationships. He wants to help homeowners in Jacksonville feel confident in their decision to work with a trusted, local company.

From Commercial to Residential

Moving from the commercial industry into the home remodel and construction business, Mark feels that he has a distinct advantage over his peers as he leads his residential construction company.

“A lot of people don’t know that becoming a contractor with a General Contractors license is good...but it’s not quite the same as qualifying as

interesting point about doing things right the first time.

Having accountability leads to comfort for the homeowner, especially when there are so many contractors that take shortcuts to achieve results. Many can be catastrophic if they don’t know what they’re doing, costing homeowners thousands in unexpected fixes, fines and delays.

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A SUCCESSFUL DAWN FOR DERBY & DIAMONDS

The Developmental Learning Center (DLC) hosted Derby & Diamonds, it's first-ever Kentucky Derby watch party fundraiser, on May 6 at San Jose Country Club with live bluegrass music, hat and bowtie contests and Derby-inspired bites. Guests and sponsors helped raise more than \$30,000 for DLC through sponsorships, a silent auction, a raffle-style drawing for jewelry from Miriam's Jewelry and a Bourbon Pull.

The event was co-chaired by Ashlea Joplin, Liz Page, Allison Sample and Regina Sooe. Action News JAX chief meteorologist Mike Buresh emceed the evening.

DLC is a faith-based nonprofit providing on-site nursing, education and therapy for medically complex and significantly impaired children since 1989.



Ashlea Joplin, Mike Buresh, Chrissy Wallis, Henry and Andrea Read



Leslie and Jacob Gorman



Susanna Barton with Carlos Sanchez, Suzanne Honeycutt and Katie Towers

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Joe and Melissa Baker



Bill and Sarah Ware



Shirin Brenick, Jesse Lewis Jr., Henry Hill, Karen Hike, Scott Romero and Debra Hill



Hannah Shite, Susan Bateh, Suzanne Horne and Ari Jolly

The Jacksonville Speech and Hearing Center (JSHC) hosted its annual FinFest fundraiser on Saturday, May 13 at Timuquana Country Club. Darnell and Celestine Smith served as event Chairs along with Honorary Chairs Katie Jeffries and Chris James, Dr. Christine Sapienza and Jasmine Bragg, Ashley Smith Juarez and Alex Juarez, Al Emerick and Ashely Carroll and Clara Mangin.

The island-themed celebration was hosted by First Coast News Anchor Katie Jeffries, who was honored and recognized for her work as emcee for the tenth consecutive year.

"FinFest is a festive party for a great cause," shared CEO Michael Howland. "All proceeds raised from FinFest directly support the speech and hearing needs of our community, ensuring that all children can experience the gift of communication."

On the brink of its 75th anniversary, the Jacksonville Speech & Hearing Center provides professional and compassionate audiology and speech/language services to thousands of Northeast Florida residents regardless of their ability to pay. For more information about Jacksonville Speech and Hearing, visit shcjax.org

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Niki Dawson and Paris Winningham

CSI GIVES BACK IMPROVES EDUCATION, COMMUNITY

CSI Gives Back hosted its 4th annual gala, titled “A Night Under the Stars Masquerade Ball,” at the University of North Florida arena on April 29, 2023. Guests enjoyed food from Biscotti’s, dancing and a silent auction. Proceeds from the event went to support children and families in the First Coast community, and this year’s program highlighted the 2022 event’s impact on Duval County Public Schools (DCPS), their students’ educations, health and self-esteem.

“We are humbled by the support and dedication throughout Jacksonville and look forward to continuing to propel our mission throughout the community, break down barriers and build morale where darkness is lingering,” said Becky Lowry, CSI Gives Back director.

In addition to DCPS, other 2022 beneficiaries of the CSI Companies’ charitable arm included: Charger Academy, Dreams Come True, Hunger Fight, Jacksonville Humane Society, Grit Camp and Sadie T. Tillis Elementary.



Sarah Brock and Carson Smith



Ashton Fields, Addi Wetjen and Anna-Caroline Bridgeman



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Laura Phillips Edgecombe
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Lorraine Rodriguez with Irene Lazzara, Don Cameron, Kyle Etkorn and Holly Cameron

The historic Florida Theatre held its annual fundraiser, The Florida Ball: Big Easy Style, presented by Dex Imaging, on Saturday, May 20, 2023. The signature fundraiser raised \$200,000 in support of the arts and culture in downtown Jacksonville.

Since its creation, the event has raised \$1,684,000 since 2013 for the almost 100-year-old Florida Theatre venue.

“Running and booking a historic theatre like the Florida Theatre is, in part, a labor of love by the whole community, and we appreciate the community showing up in record numbers and showing their support for the nonprofit Florida Theatre,” said Numa Saisselin, president of the Florida Theatre.

“I have been given so many opportunities in my life that have revolved around performing arts and I am truly grateful for every opportunity,” said Dex Imaging’s Angela Ward Merritt. “Many often forget that our historic Florida Theatre is a nonprofit organization. Venues like the Florida Theatre are an important part of having a healthy community. Art is good for mental health and is a universal form of communication. It helps to create a shared community.”

In addition to Dex Imaging, top sponsors for the event included Auld & White Constructors, Eisman & Russo Consulting Engineers, VyStar Credit Union and Dr. Gasper and Irene Lazzara.

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FIESTA FOR GOOD

Sulzbacher and more than 250 supporters fiesta-ed for good Tuesday, May 2, at the organization's annual Fiesta on the Beach event at the Casa Marina Hotel in Jacksonville Beach. Over \$55,000 was raised to support the Sulzbacher Beaches Health Center, a clinic that serves as a healthcare safety net for people in need in the beaches community.

Christ Church Episcopal was also honored with the night's Healthy Hero Award for its 15-year support of the Sulzbacher Beaches Health Center. Sulzbacher provides more than 7,000 people with high-quality healthcare each year.



Hope Starts Here 5k participants celebrating post-race at Strings Sports Brewery.

A RACE FOR A BETTER FUTURE

The 2nd Annual Hope Starts Here 5K and One-mile Fun Run hit the pavement on Saturday, May 20. Presented by Florida Capital Bank (FLCBank), the race benefitted Operation New Hope and its mission to build safer communities, stronger economies, and more stable families through programs such as workforce training, mental health services and job placement for people affected by the criminal justice system. In the past 24 years, the organization has supported more than 10,000 people.

"Whenever someone crosses a finish line in their life — whether it's a personal goal, a professional accomplishment, or a 5K with friends and family — it has the power to inspire hope in someone else," said Reggie Fullwood, president and CEO of Operation New Hope.

The race began and ended at Operation New Hope's offices in Springfield and incorporated sections of Jacksonville's Emerald Trail. Post-race, Strings Sports Brewery hosted the Hope Starts Here 5K Breakfast and Brews.

"This event represents a step forward in making Jacksonville's economy one where second chances are celebrated every day," said Mark Johnson, president and CEO of FLCBank.



Hope Starts Here 5k participants crossing the finish line.



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Courtney Hughes with Lori Cochran, Jenny Terrnoz and Melanie Trautman

LOCAL FAMILY AND FRIENDS HONORS LEGACY OF WILL KING HUGHES



Courtney and Will Hughes, founders of the Will King Foundation



Matt Cochran with Tyler Terronez



LeAnn Crabtree with Melissa Gerard, Lucy Bravo and Lauren Hagan

The Will King Foundation recently celebrated its Legacy Night on Thursday, April 27, at TAE on Talbot in Avondale. The nonprofit celebrated 5 years of commitment to children and families receiving funding and support for heart surgeries and lifesaving treatment in Jacksonville. The foundation believes in a world where every child has access to heart care that could save his or her life.

The foundation shared its local mission and global vision for the future with guests at TAE on Talbot, Thursday April 27th. Friends, family, development professionals and the Hughes Family had a chance to speak about the mission, dedicated in the honor of the passing of their son, Will King Hughes, who's spirit lives on and inspired the family to provide support children from developing countries receiving heart treatment in Jacksonville, FL.

Through grace, love of God, and honoring Will through its faithful mission, the family is providing health care and pediatric support to those that don't have the good fortune of top notch medical care where they live in the world.



Six local teams competed in the third annual Steals and Slides: Kicking Out Homelessness kickball tournament, held April 29 to benefit the Clara White Mission. The tournament raised \$2,500 to feed the homeless and educate people about food scarcity issues in Jacksonville. The funds equate to roughly 800 meals the Clara White Mission can feed people living on the streets.

Sports club team Jax Fray won the tournament in a 9-0 win over team Smokin' Aces. The tournament-style, single-elimination games were hosted by the Horne Foundation and started at 8:30 am at Ray Greene Park.

Joketra Horne Hall started the Horne Foundation two years ago in honor of her father. In 2021, she launched the Steals and Slides kickball tournament in three cities: Jacksonville, Tallahassee and Pensacola. Each year, she has partnered with the Clara White Mission in Jacksonville.



Jonathan Odom from the winning team, Jax Fray, with Joketra Horne Hall. >



Team Mean Green brought together Warriors and Whiskey representatives and veterans with staff from the Clara White Mission.



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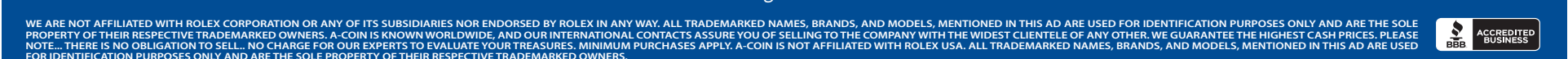
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ANIMAL HOUSE

Kittens, Kitnapping & Krusaders

A case study in properly handling feral cats and kittens

BY **JULIE KERNS GARMENDIA**
RESIDENT COMMUNITY NEWS

When a gorgeous, but gaunt, tabby cat with swirly fur appeared at Connie Williams’s home begging for food, Williams rushed to feed her distressed visitor. While the cat would approach and meow for food, it would run if Williams attempted to pet her. Thus began a daily routine between the nervous cat and the retired Southwest Airlines supervisor — one that would end happily for all involved.

THE ARRIVAL

“Her body was thin, with rough fur. She had been on her own for a while,” Williams said. “One day, we noticed that she seemed frantic and unusually hungry, almost like the first day she appeared. My daughter, Katie, and I wondered if she was pregnant, but we couldn’t tell.”

Soon after, on a stormy day, Williams looked outside to see how bad the rain was coming down. As she opened the patio door, a tiny kitten hopped down from under

Katie’s car in the driveway. Then, one at a time, three more kittens followed.

Katie, who works for the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, had rescued and fostered cats and kittens during college. Katie credits the Jacksonville Humane Society’s (JHS) “Don’t Kitnap” campaign with teaching her the importance of not immediately scooping up those kittens. She knew that the mother cat was probably nearby.

To keep the babies with their mother, but knowing that Kitten Socialization 101 needed to begin immediately, Williams and Katie hatched a plan. Despite their tiny size and being no more than a few weeks old, the kittens were already ferocious, little blue-eyed, spitter-hissers. However, they responded to the calming consistency of gentle voices and handling — the first steps of successful socialization and taming.

The goal was to enclose them on the back patio for safety and access. However,



Vicki Cross, ACPS 15-Year Kitten Army Volunteer



Connie with kittens at the vet

the mother cat rejected their plan and kept relocating her kittens. Sometimes, the women quickly found the family’s new location. Other times, they had to manually pull kittens from under the car or out of the engine to cuddle them. Gradually, the mother cat showed cautious trust in the Williamses.

When the kittens were old enough to be zipped into a soft enclosure, they were placed inside the screened patio with the screen door propped open, in an attempt to lure mom inside. The women watched, ready to attempt the safe capture of the mother cat inside the patio.

“It took forever before she even approached, let alone walked into the patio, but she finally did. It was wonderful when we were finally able to shut her inside and know that they were all safe,” Katie said.

UNDERSTANDING FERAL CATS

The mother cat’s curious-yet-fearful, conflicted behavior characterizes homeless animals that were formerly family pets. They behave like a domestic pet that understands everyday life with a caring family — purring or rubbing against a leg

CONTINUED ON PAGE 27

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Katie with Cayenne petting Bonsai

—but the homelessness gradually increases anxiety and fear, sometimes triggering panic and retreat. Even the tamest pet cat can become partially or entirely feral without positive intervention.

A homeless cat must elude or fight off predators, unleashed dogs and other cats. Hunting for food and water are daily needs that, combined with constant fear and danger, negatively affect temperament and personality. Traumatic interactions with humans who mistreat homeless cats are even more psychologically damaging. Besides psychological and emotional damage, homeless pets suffer physical deterioration and exposure to diseases and parasites.

HOW TO HANDLE FOUND KITTENS

Anyone who finds kittens alone outside should wait and watch until their mother returns, usually within a few hours. Rescuers say the kittens’ best chance to thrive is to stay with their mom, nursing. JHS, Jacksonville’s Animal Care & Protective Services (ACPS), and No More Homeless Pets all offer free advice to assist anyone

who finds orphaned kittens alone outdoors, or a homeless mother cat with kittens.

Relocating the family, enclosing them or safely trapping everyone for removal allows the kittens’ normal development, veterinarian care, vaccinations, spaying, neutering and adoption. There are local, free services available to help find veterinarian care and foster homes.

The Williams family successfully saved the mother cat and all the kittens, even a wild-child fifth kitten who miraculously survived alone until the next day when he arrived, yowling outside for help. They enrolled all five tabby kittens in the JHS’s Kitten Crusader program.

The Kitten Crusader program is a partnership between JHS and private veterinarian clinics. They support citizens who find kittens, helping keep these fragile babies out of shelters and in new homes. In overcrowded shelters, the kittens’ immature, weak immune systems expose them to potentially life-threatening illnesses.

ACPS also has dedicated kitten volunteers, the Kitten Army, who care for orphaned kittens until they are healthy and ready for sterilization and adoption. There are many adoptable cats of all ages and personalities available at both JHS and ACPS during adoption hours.

Vicki Cross is one of the longest-serving, if not the most experienced, ACPS kitten volunteer. She has spent fifteen years successfully raising more than 1,100 orphaned kittens. Cross specializes in caring for kittens with ringworms, something many volunteers avoid. Her supportive husband, George, provides socialization.

“No one wants ringworm babies because it’s contagious to humans, dogs, and cats,” Cross said. “But I’m immune to ringworm. I’m also a cat adoption counselor at the



Tame, beautiful Millie

shelter. My friend, Becky Hamilton, volunteered at the shelter and said how much they needed help, so I took the class on fostering.”

The Crosses volunteer together as a hobby and encourage volunteering at the shelter, fostering and adopting. They advise cat and kitten fosters or adopters to have scratching posts available and to acclimate cats to nail clipping since declawing can cause negative medical and behavioral problems.

CONQUERING KITTEN MOUNTAIN

In most parts of the country, kitten season begins in spring when warm weather triggers unfixed cats to mate and give birth to kittens, according to Best Friends Animal Society. The season typically ends with cold temperatures, except in the South, where year-round moderate weather results in continuous litters of homeless kittens with high survival rates. In 2022, JHS and ACPS accepted 5,352 kittens under five months old.

Anyone feeding unfixed outdoor cats contributes to the kitten crisis by nutritionally

boosting mother cats to birth even more surviving offspring, and enabling male cats to father more litters. The only solution is to trap, neuter and release (TNR) outdoor cats. Safe traps are sold at hardware, feed supply or thrift stores. Rescue organizations can provide information about TNR volunteers who can be contacted.

A Tail With a Happy Ending

The Williams’ foster kittens, three males named Bonsai, Cayenne and Nova, and two girls, Chico and Cosmo, and mother Millie all received medical care from participating veterinarians at Durbin Creek Animal Hospital. Millie is now tame, loves petting, and uses her litter box perfectly...after they added a little potting soil. A friend adopted Cosmo. The Williamses fell in love with the rest of their swirly tabby fosters and adopted them all.

Anyone interested in helping kittens should visit jaxhumane.org/foster, or send a gift to kittens through jaxhumane.org/donate. To foster, adopt, volunteer or donate to kittens and cats at ACPS, visit coj.net/departments/neighborhoods/animal-care-protective-services.

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LOCAL FOLKS



The Saisselins: Numa and Laurie



Numa and Laurie Saisselin

BY MARY WANSE
RESIDENT COMMUNITY NEWS

Since 2012, Mr. Numa Saisselin has been president of downtown’s historic Florida Theatre, a non-profit organization and one of the most attended theatres in the world. “Our business is better than it’s ever been,” he said.

Numa and his wife, Laurie, moved from New Jersey to Avondale 10 years ago specifically for his position at the theatre. The board of directors had connected the Saisselins to a realtor, Carol Powell at Berkshire Hathaway. She and Allison Steilberg found the Saisselins a rental house on Pine Street. The neighborhood delivered everything Numa and Laurie had been looking for: a non-gated community, an old house rather than new, a park nearby, walkability to dinner and coffee, and the theatre close enough so that Numa could work odd hours.

“They parked us in Avondale. We were lucky enough to find a house three blocks away on Oak Street a year later,” Numa said. That’s where they’ve been since. “We love living in Avondale. We have absolutely everything we asked for.” That includes

Numa Saisselin

several super friendly neighbors whom they see every day. “Avondale’s just a great place to live,” he said.

Once upon a time, Numa was a French horn player. He did earn a bachelor’s degree in the instrument, but somewhere halfway through his schooling, Numa realized that he wasn’t quite good enough at it to ever be able to earn a living. Shortly afterwards, he discovered arts administration. “I feel very lucky that I figured out a career that was going to be good for me,” he said.

Numa and Laurie have been together for 21 years, married for 11. Numa tried to talk Laurie out of taking on his last name because, he said, “That’s a bear of a last name to go through life with. But she felt like it was important, so she took my name. She now admits that I was right,” Numa said.

Completing the Saisselin family are a 2-year-old Great Dane named Cooper and a 4-year-old pit bull named Ruth. “The dogs are our children. They get along great,” Numa said. He is the designated dog walker and usually does so in shorts and a ripped T-shirt, not nearly as nice as he dresses for work. But sometimes, people still recognize him. The three can be found in Boone Park most every day. A couple times per week, they load in the car and head to Riverside’s John Gorrie Dog Park or to Kanine Social. “I walk a giant dog. It’s amazing how many people you meet when you’re walking a Great Dane,” Numa said.

As representative of the theatre to the community, a lot of Numa’s social activities are related to his work. But when he and Laurie socialize as a couple, at one of the restaurants in The Shoppes is where they might be found. They’ve been regulars at Biscottis for a long time. They enjoy The Fox. And their new favorite is Josephine. They feel fortunate to have so many choices within minutes of their house. “The pandemic changed our behavior a little bit,” Numa said. Since then, they don’t go out nearly as much as they used to and, instead, eat at home more often than before.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 33



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CONTINUED ON PAGE 35

Aside from dogs and dining, Numa doesn't have many pastimes. "I'm not retiring anytime soon, but if I eventually do retire, I am going to be terrible at it because I really have no hobbies," he admitted.

What Numa loves though, apparently, is Jacksonville. And it's not only the Avondale area that he's passionate about but also the heart of the city. He has been a board member of Downtown Vision for eight years and currently sits in the president's seat. He finds it gratifying to be able to point out things that weren't here when he first arrived—things like Brooklyn. That entire neighborhood between Water and Forest Streets did not exist back then. "It's been super exciting to see downtown as well as the neighborhoods surrounding the urban core developing over the last 10 years. Anywhere you look, you can find an example of something new," he said.

Supporting arts and entertainment throughout Jacksonville is something that Numa encourages all residents to do—going

“ I feel very lucky that I figured out a career that was going to be good for me. ”

— NUMA SAISSSELIN

into the neighborhoods like San Marco, Riverside, and Avondale for a meal and a drink or going downtown to see a show. "Go to something you've never been to before. Try it out. See if you like it. It adds a little something to your life," he said.

Numa mentioned the national ranking of VyStar Veterans Memorial Arena and the capital improvement plan going on at Florida Theatre. Though the theatre will be closed from July to October for major renovations, Numa and the staff will be busy booking fall shows during that time and selling seats. He said that guests can expect it to look like a brand new building when it reopens.

From Numa's view, "If you're not exploring a little bit, you're really missing out on something."



Colleen Rodriguez, Nancy Lantinberg and Fran Selevan with Rebekah Selevan.



JFCS CELEBRATED EFFORTS TO IMPROVE LIVES

More than 400 friends and community partners came together to participate in The LJD Jewish Family & Community Services' (JFCS) annual event, "Wrapping Ourselves Around the Community" on March 30. The event celebrated JFCS' work in the community.

Guests listened to poignant and powerful stories of how the nonprofit's services have had a positive impact on the people JFCS has helped. Darnell Smith, Florida Blue's North Florida region market president, also made a surprise announcement that the insurance company committed \$25,000 as a match grant to benefit JFCS's CEO Impact Fund.

The fund honors CEO Colleen Rodriguez's 25 years working for the agency, and is in memory of Rodriguez's father, Bob Lloyd. It will enable JFCS to assist its own staff members when they are faced with the unexpected.



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Douglas Anderson Graduates Accepted At The Colleges & Universities Listed Below:

American University
Alabama State University
Anderson University
Appalachian State
Auburn University
Arizona State University
Aveda Institute
Baldwin Wallace University
Belhaven University
Belmont University
Brenau University 2
Berklee College of Music
California Institute of the Arts
Carnegie Mellon University 2
Case Western Reserve University

100%
Of Enrolled Seniors
Receiving
High School
Diplomas

Clark Atlanta University 3
Cleveland Institute of Art
Clemson University
Coastal Carolina University 2
College of Charleston
Colorado State University
College of William & Mary
Columbia University
Columbia College /Chicago
Cooper Union
Cornell
Converse College
Daytona State College
DePaul University
Dillard University
Duke University 2
Eastern Kentucky University
Eckerd College
Edward Waters College
Emory University 3
Embry Riddle Aeronautical University
Elon University
Emerson College
Flagler College 2
Florida A&M University 3
Florida Atlantic University 2
Florida Institute of Technology
Florida Gulf Coast University
Florida International University 2
Florida Southern College

Florida State College of Jacksonville 12
Florida State University 15
Fordham University
Fort Hayes State University
Furman University
George Mason University 2
Georgia State University
Georgia Institute of Technology
Howard University
Hampshire College
Hofstra University
Ithaca College
Jacksonville University 10
Johnson & Wales University
Jones Technical Institute 2
Juilliard School 2
Kennesaw State University
Long Island University
Louisiana State University
Loyola University
Lynn University
Manhattan School of Music 2
Maryland Institute College of Art 2
Marymount Manhattan College
Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts
Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Miami University
Mercer University
Montclair State University
Morehouse College
New England Conservatory of Music
New College of Florida 2
New Hampshire Institute of Art
New York University 2
North Carolina State University
Northeastern University
Nova Southern University
Oberlin College
Oglethorpe University
Otis College Of Art and Design
Otterbein University
Pace University
Parsons School of Design

Peabody Conservatory
Pennsylvania State University
Piedmont College
Portland State University
Point Park University
Pratt Institute
Purchase College
Purdue University
Randolph College
Ringling College of Art and Design 2
Roanoke College
Rollins College
Royal College of Music, London, England 2
Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama,
Wales
Salem College
Samford University
Santa Fe College 2
San Francisco Conservatory of Music
Sarah Lawrence College
Savannah College of Art and Design 3
School of the Art Institute of Chicago
Seton Hall University
Sewanee University
Shenandoah University 2
Southern New Hampshire
Southern Union Community College
St. Johns River State College
Stetson University 6
Tallahassee Community College
Temple University 2
Texas A&M
Texas State University
The Art Institute of New Hampshire
The University of the Arts
The University of Alabama
The School of Art Institute of Chicago
Tulsa Welding School of Jacksonville
United States Air Force
University of Advancing Technology
University of Alabama
University of California, Los Angeles
University of Central Florida 10
University of Cincinnati

University of Denver
University of Florida 18 (one is going to
UF and Joffrey Ballet School)
University of Georgia
University of Illinois
University of Kansas
University of Kentucky
University of Massachusetts
University of Miami
University of Mississippi
University of New Haven
University of New Mexico
University of North Carolina

96%
Of The 229 Graduates
Will Attend Colleges,
Universities, And
Conservatories

University of North Florida 28
University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown
University of South Carolina
University of South Florida 9
University of Southern California
University of the Arts
University of Tampa
University of Vermont
University of Virginia
University of West Florida
Valencia College 3
Valdosta State University
Wake Forest University
Warner Pacific College
Webster Conservatory

2 GRADUATES
National Merit Finalists

8 GRADUATES
Presidential Arts Merit
Finalists

2 GRADUATES
National Reflections
Winners

7 GRADUATES
National Scholastic Arts &
Writing Award Winners
In Visual Arts, Creative
Writing & Cinematic Arts

2 GRADUATES
Florida Arts For Life
Winners

18 National Theatre
Applause Awards

Douglas Anderson 2023 Graduates

\$21
Million
Total Scholarships
Offered Graduates

Alexander Eugene Agaliotis
Christopher James Agaliotis
Tywan Jaleel Takey Allen
Helena Naomi Mishima Almeida
Portia Fern Apostol
Azyria Monet Artis
Valeria Marie Aviles
Lucija Ryan Antonia Bacon
Mason Douglas Balcarek
Jessica Shay Barone HHB
Samantha Kathleen Beane
Zoe Dee Beard
Lachey Ann Marie Benson
Naomi Dayne Bierowski
Lillian Jewel Blanco
Lilliana Mary Bella Braddock
Jordan Marie Bradford
Benjamin Daniel Bravo
Graham O'Neil Briggs
Ella Grace Brisson
Lydia Frances Bautista Broward
Emerson Hill Brown
Chloe Krishna Browne
Kennedi Amara Brush
Jayci Evelyn Bryant
Janai Trinity Burton
Erinne Adrianna Butler
Aiden Alexander Camp
Rosalea Lyndale Carr
Bailey Anna Carson
Claudia Gwyneth Cassaro
Maurice Chakour
Alisa Gwendolyn Chamberlain
Nevaeh Ceri Chamberlin

Te'Avion Nicole Champion
Caiden Madison Church
Hazelanne Doreen Claudio
Emily Nicole Collins
Melody Claire Combs
Aiden Jason Coots
Liliana Copeland
Shaira Jada Corbitt
Maeve Edna Coughlin
Jill Meredith Crews
Aidan Robert Curran
Ariyana Zana'e Davis
Brian Jordan Davis III
Sarah Riley Dickey
Nicolas Jacob Dobleo
Jessie-Ellen Doherty
Abigail Anne Douglas
Insselena Lunise Dufrene
Samia Nelda Dumesle
Dakota Jeanette DuPree
Christina James Dyches
Taylor Strever Ekern
Amelia Claire Elder
Lauren Alexandria Emerson
Bethany Grace Farris
Davin Giann Fasci
Babafemi Oluwasubomi Fatoki
Camille Jordan Faustino
Jace Patrick Felix
Ka'Layla Unique Fells
Katrina Dahl Fluker
Emily Mae Folsom
Brenna Danae Fox
Jahquez Wesley Fudge
Anissa Dahlia Galagarza
Jacquelyn Garcia
Lauren Elizabeth Bato Garcia
Juliana Kaleigh Gates
Grant Jonathon Gatto
Leeyah Dior Genaovargas
Emily Grace Giacchetto
Amaya Dava Gray
Carter Jacob Gray
Elias Mahan Greene
Taylor Marie Griffith

Jadalyn Darlene Gubat
Lily Anna Guerrant
Meghan Brooke Haile
Bryce Alexander Hamilton
Tatyana Katherine Hardnett
Audrey Brooke Harrell
Michaya Annice Harrell Henry
Thalia Ilyana Hart
Julie Ann Hathaway
Sophia Alannah Henry
Padm'e Amidala Henshaw
John Richard Hermann
Lanina Faith Herndon
Natalie Elise Holden

59%
Of Seniors
Offered
Academic & Arts
Scholarships

Rodney Eugene Holmes Jr.
Reagan Maree Hoogesteger
Mallory Elizabeth Howard
Sarah Jade Hunn
Denver Dawn Hunt
Kaley Adelaide Hylton
Eric Lawrence Impey
Giovani Jacques
Ryan Michael James
Ella Tova Todd Jenkins
Gabriella Maria-Rosa Johnson
Gracie Jayne Johnson
Kaelyn Tiara Johnson
Hayden Reese Johnston
Zachary Holden Kaiser
Aniyah Denae' Umi Kargbo

Ta'Nivea Syaughn Kinchen
Ethan Jeremy King
Aria Simone Kirkpatrick
Bethany Ann Klimchak
Eileen Sarah Kohner
Alexandria Joy Leilani Kollmann
Kayla Marie Lapaugh
Charlee Stafford Lawrence
Allison Harper Lee
Erica Gabrielle Lehosky
William John Letscher
Alexander Stephen Leuschen
Samuel Wayne Lewis
Brooke Eileen Little
Mattelyn Elizabeth Locklear
Lucas Michael Lowery
Savanna Nicole Lyles
Isabel Ramos Magpusao
Alexandra Nicole Manaos
Jack Simon Martin
Giovanni Jacob Martinez
Isabela Sofia Martinez-Rivera
Samira Hope Mashburn
Ciara Marie McCarthy
Bria Hailey McClary
Aurielle Paris McCoy
Nicholas Adam McDonald
Kyro Brianna McMahon
Jaslyn Marie Medina
Rae Allison Merrifield
Kiana Nadayla Michel
Anthony John Mikus Jr.
Beckett Peter Miles
Jesse Nabil Mitchell
Mackenzie Elizabeth Moore
Paris Anisa-Brantley Morrison
James Stewart Moseley II
Jackson Patrick Moser
Diana Rose Murrey-Settle
Ian Anthony Naville
Charlie Dean Nelson
Kaitlyn Renee Nelson
Samantha Allison Nelson
Brendan Joseph Nurczyk
Jackson Guy Owen

Alana Sue-Ann Pablo
Katherine Monica Page
Lorelee Camile Patterson
Shimla Dakota Perez Briones
Michelle Drew Phillips
Cyana Rose Phipps
Alyssa Monique Pilgrim
Emily Anne Poe
Francis James Polly IV
Ahvane Sharai Porter-Cook
Eurayah Lyvette Postell
Nora Paige Preza
Trinity Faith Pama Quinto
Tristan Gabriel Ratchev
Lavari-Ay Gabriel Ray
Eden Paige Rewa
Sachiko Rivamonte

47%
Of Graduates
Will Pursue College
Degrees In
The Arts

Daija Cy'rai Roberts
Jaiden Christian Robinson
Lily Becker Robison
Sofia Madison Rodriguez
Cassidy Alexis Rose
Finley Rion Rosenbaum
Matthew Ezekiel Royal
William Aidan Salter
Ciara Lauryn Sanders
Kaya Nicole Elizabeth Sanders-Jones
Anna Belle Schell
John Irving Elias Scott IV
Madeline Katrina Scotti

Haylie Bryanne Self
Rylan Leslie Serrano HHB
Bianca Alegria Shaffer
Colin Duval Shelby
Chesley Jude River Simmons
Phillip Nazir-Jhahid Simmons Jr.
Jacob Patrick Skidmore
Kaleb Elijah Smith
Matthew Nicholas Snead
Annelise Jean Spottswood
Julian Malcom St. John
Annalisa Guo Hua Strub
Noah Daniel Suarez
Jhalena Sian Sulcer
Anasley Elizabeth Taylor
Brayden Cortland Tebbe
Emma Jean Terrill
Aidan Henry Carswell Thomas
Zayne Xavier Thomie
Aniya Nicole Thompson
Mikayla Murphy Titus
Tru Elise Kiryn Truelove
Lan Ngoc Turner
Terri Anne Umberger
Kathryn Lane Underwood
Rhiannon Arianna Valdez
Maya Maittee Vazquez
Elahee Kristen Gacula Viray
Brynn Ashlee Von Seggern
Taylor Jenette Wade
Emma Grace Waidner
Kylea Danielle Watson
Benjamin Robert Wells
Luke Vincent Whipple
Jah'mia Annette Lashaye Williams
Rhea Sarah Williams
Alexandra Grace Willis
Iputu Andrew Wiranata
Trinity Elizabeth Wirth
Ivy Marie Woodman
Leilani Patrice Wright
Gianna Maria T'ra Yaccino
Shamar Josiah Zimmerman
Catherine Emily Zurcher
Jacob Benjamin Zussy

JUNIOR RESIDENTS

18 win scholarships from Jacksonville Area Golf Association



2023 JAGA scholarship recipients

The Jacksonville Area Golf Association (JAGA) announced its 18 Scholarship Trust recipients for 2023 at a May 16 banquet at Deerwood Country Club. Each recipient will be awarded a \$1,000 scholarship per semester for the upcoming school year.

Scholarships are renewable each semester, based on scholars meeting certain criteria, including a minimum grade-point average, for up to eight semesters. Applicants for scholarships must be sons, daughters or grandchildren of a member of a JAGA member club or an employee of a member club who resides in JAGA's Northeast Florida region.

"The JAGA scholarship program continues to get stronger every year and branch out in new ways," said Scholarship Trust chairman Wayne St. Clair. "In recent years, this stability has allowed us to expand the number of college-bound students we are able to support, which is very gratifying. Currently, JAGA is providing grants to 46 who we are confident will become key contributors to the Jacksonville area community or wherever else they may wind up."

The 2023 JAGA Scholarship Trust recipients and their respective high schools are: Tom Anderson Ponte Vedra; Will Anderson, Ponte Vedra; Shanya Arasu, Nease; Chase Carroll, Middleburg; Jacob Davis, Home school; Olivia Drake, West Nassau; Matthew French, Bishop Snyder; Casey Jones, Providence; Juel Kimball, Bishop Kenny; Samantha Kroog, Ponte Vedra; Andrew Morgan, Bolles; Amelia Peters, Bishop Kenny; Kira Powell, Brookville; Adrianna Selles, Frank W. Cox; Cody Tucker, Bishop Kenny; Maya Walker, Fleming Island; Michael Wenk, Ponte Vedra; Graham Worley, Bolles.

Since its inception in 1974, JAGA has awarded approximately \$2 million to approximately 400 deserving young students.



Assumption shines at track championships

The girls' track and field team from Assumption Catholic placed fourth overall at the Florida Youth Running Association's Middle School State Track and Field Championship, held May 12-13. More than 1,500 athletes from 69 teams across Florida descended on IMG Stadium in Bradenton, Florida to compete.

On the track, Assumption's Maria Patelli took eighth place in the 100-meter hurdles. The 4x800 team, comprised of Ashten Wolff, Makenzie Wolff, Graziana Gowdy and Alexandra Lumpkin, placed seventh. On the field, Sarah Ruen won sixth place in the pole vault. Makala Desjarlais took third in discus and second in javelin.

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Ramblers repeat championships



From left, back row: Coach Tim Revenaugh, Brandon Parliment, William Petersen, Ngong Beit, Jack Muisenga, Ethan Johnson, Evan Pieklo, Cooper Revenaugh, Brady Johnson and Coach David Ricke; front row: Christian Salem, Colin Maynard, Owen Taylor, Joey Turner, Reece Lorentson and Timothy Parliment

The St. Paul's Catholic School-Riverside Ramblers were crowned division champions in boys' softball after defeating the Holy Spirit Catholic School Hurricanes on May 8. The championship game, with a final score of 18-3, was held at Christ the King Catholic School. The Ramblers finished the season strong, remaining undefeated at 7-0, and bringing home the championship trophy for the second year in a row.

St. Paul's principal, Kim Repper, attributed the team's "dominant" performance to the leadership of eighth graders, but added, "It was a true team effort from beginning to end."



A champions' concert

The Douglas Anderson School of the Arts Jazz Combo performed a free concert Thursday, May 4, in the Recital Hall on the Douglas Anderson campus. The concert featured jazz standards along with student compositions, and lasted a little over an hour. Recently, these honored students were named the small group winner of the National Jazz Festival for the second year in a row.

AN EYE FOR ART



Bolles seniors Ashvatha Arun and Lars Jendruschewitz took home first and second place, respectively, in the 5th Congressional District Art Competition, a juried exhibition organized by the Office of U.S. Representative John Rutherford. Winners were recognized at a reception and awards ceremony on May 2 at the Florida State College of Jacksonville Deerwood Campus.

Arun's first-place acrylic painting "Eye of an Era" earned her an expense-paid trip to Washington D.C., a tour of the Capitol and an opportunity to attend the national reception for the Congressional Art Competition. Her artwork will also be on display in the National Congressional Art Show in the Capitol for a year beginning this June.

Jendruschewitz won a monetary prize for his second-place photograph "Spring Sunrise."

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Six Bolles students presented at the Global Entrepreneurship Challenge in New York City.

Bolles students address global homelessness

Six students from Bolles’ Student Global Connections Committee were chosen to participate in the 2022-23 Global Entrepreneurship Challenge, an initiative that invites students from select international schools to solve the world’s largest problems. Hosted in New York City, the challenge asked students to solve real-world problems based on the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

Bolles students Abby Bradley, Ava Cheng, Esha Kasavaraju, Anaiya Nahar, Sarah Park and Jaden Taher presented their project, “Heartbeat in a Box,” a sustainable and accessible kit for the homeless population.

“I think we started off the project without fully knowing what we were getting into, but over the course of around the six months we spent working on it, we learned how to collaborate as a team to create something we were all very passionate about,” said Cheng. “We were able to look at some issues that mattered to us and create something new to help.”

Bisher named National Merit Scholar



Episcopal School of Jacksonville senior Ella Bisher has been honored as a National Merit Scholarship recipient. The \$2,500 scholarship is issued by The National Merit Scholarship program, an academic competition for recognition and scholarships that began in 1955. Approximately 1.5 million high school students enter the program each year through their PSAT scores, typically taken during their junior year. Bisher is one of the approximately 7,250 finalists nationwide to receive the scholarship. She will be attending the University of Florida.

Honoring Hispanic Heritage

West Riverside Elementary hosts its annual Family Fiesta



West Riverside families enjoying the event.

Third grade students Genesis Grijota, Arabella Waszak and Ava Bullard enjoy a La Bodega Original dinner.

Mexico en la Piel group before their final performance, La Danza.

More than 200 gathered on April 21 for West Riverside Elementary’s PTA-sponsored Family Fiesta, where families dined al fresco under patio lights as the basketball court transformed into a stage flourishing with performances from cultural groups Peru Dance, Viva Panama and Mexico el la Piel, which capped the night with the showmanship of La Danza, an Aztec dance performed in traditional feather headdresses.

The event’s traditional meal of roasted pork, stewed chicken, rice, black beans, plantains and empanadas of was catered by La Bodega Original. The fiesta has become a cherished annual event of the dual-language magnet program, honoring the ceremonial preservation of historical cultures.



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904.246.2466

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4114 OXFORD AVE., JACKSONVILLE, FL 32210
904.388.2632



EPISCOPAL
SCHOOL of JACKSONVILLE

Students named national music ambassadors



A record number of seven Douglas Anderson School of the Arts band students, received national recognition with the National Youth Ensembles, which is organized through Carnegie Hall. The highly competitive ensembles are comprised of the best young instrumentalists in the country.

Maurice Chakour, jazz guitar; Nelson Keakopa, trumpet; Luke Malobay, percussion; Beckett Miles, percussion; Sophia Para, flute; TJ Shistle, trombone; and Dru Verge, saxophone, were selected from a pool of thousands.

Miles was named as one of the two drummers to the National Youth Orchestra Jazz Ensemble, and will be touring a variety of Europe’s top summer jazz festivals with the ensemble. Malobay, Keakopa and Shistle were chosen to play select ensemble shows, including one at Carnegie Hall. Para, Verge and Chakour received recognition as alternates.

15 rounds of Applause for Douglas Anderson’s “Chicago”



A performance by the cast of Douglas Anderson’s “Chicago.”

Douglas Anderson School of the Art’s (DA) recent production of the musical “Chicago” took home 15 of its 21 regional Applause Award nominations for the 2022-2023 school year, including Best Musical. The students will perform a selection from the show at the awards ceremony on June 3 at the Dr. Phillips Center in Orlando for a chance to advance to the National High School Musical Theatre Awards®, known as The Jimmy Awards®, and compete among the next generation of Broadway stars in New York City. A panel of 12 statewide casting agents have selected nearly 300 students from 33 high schools and seven counties to vie for the honor.

DA’s Applause Awards wins for “Chicago” include: Outstanding Musical, Outstanding Ensemble, Outstanding Orchestra - Directed by Don Zentz, Outstanding Director - Bradley Akers, Outstanding Choreographer - Ellie Potts Barrett, Outstanding Lead Performer - DJ DeJesus as Billy Flynn, Outstanding Lead Performer - Christina Dyches as Velma Kelly, Outstanding Lead Performer - Brennan Mitchell as Amos Hart, Outstanding Lead Performer - Samantha Nelson as Velma Kelly, Honorable Mention for Outstanding Lead Performer - Samia Dumesle as Matron “Mama” Morton, Outstanding Supporting Performer - Jace Felix as Emcee, Outstanding Sound Design - Rick Painter and Alanna Cooper, Outstanding Dancer - Alex Agaliotis, Outstanding Dancer - Chris Agaliotis, Outstanding Stage Manager - Charlee Lawrence.





RIVERSIDE

Presbyterian Day School

Congratulations, Class of 2023!

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EPISCOPAL CONGRATULATES THE CLASS OF 2023!

Members of Episcopal School of Jacksonville's Class of 2023 were admitted into the following colleges and universities:

American University	Drexel University	Northeastern University	The University of West Florida	University of Oregon
Appalachian State University	Eckerd College	Northwestern University	Tri-County Technical College	University of Pennsylvania
Arizona State University (Main Campus)	Elon University	Oglethorpe University	Trinity University	University of Pittsburgh (Pittsburgh)
Auburn University	Emory University	Penn State University (University Park)	Union College	University of Rhode Island
Ball State University	Fairfield University	Penn State University (World Campus)	United States Naval Academy	University of Richmond
Barry University	Flagler College	Providence College	University of Alabama at Birmingham	University of Rochester
Baylor University	Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University	Purdue University (Main Campus)	University of California (Berkeley)	University of South Carolina
Belmont University	Florida Atlantic University	Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute	University of California (Los Angeles)	University of South Florida (Main Campus)
Berry College	Florida Gulf Coast University	Rice University	University of California (San Diego)	University of Southern California
Birmingham-Southern College	Florida Southern College	Rochester Institute of Technology	University of Central Florida	The University of Tennessee (Knoxville)
Boston College	Florida State College at Jacksonville	Rollins College	University of Colorado Boulder	University of Utah
Boston University	Florida State University	Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College	University of Delaware	University of Virginia (Main Campus)
Butler University	Fordham University	Samford University	University of Denver	University of Washington (Seattle Campus)
Case Western Reserve University	Full Sail University	Santa Fe College	University of Florida	Utah State University
Catholic University of America	Furman University	Savannah College of Art and Design	University of Georgia	Valdosta State University
Citadel Military College of South Carolina	Garrett College	Sewanee: The University of the South	University of Kentucky	Vanderbilt University
Clark University	George Mason University	Southern Methodist University	University of Louisville	Villanova University
Clarkson University	Georgetown University	Stetson University	University of Maine	Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University
Clemson University	Georgia Institute of Technology	Syracuse University	University of Maryland (College Park)	Wake Forest University
Coastal Carolina University	Georgia Southern University	Tallahassee Community College	University of Massachusetts (Amherst)	Washington and Lee University
College of Charleston	Guilford College	Texas A&M University	University of Miami	Washington University in St. Louis
Colorado Mesa University	Hampden-Sydney College	Texas Christian University	University of Michigan	Wingate University
Colorado State University (Fort Collins)	Harding University	Texas State University	University of Mississippi	Yale University
Colorado State University (Pueblo)	Haverford College	The College of William and Mary	University of Missouri (Columbia)	
Cornell University	Indiana University (Bloomington)	The Ohio State University	University of New Hampshire (Main Campus)	
Culinary Institute of America	Jacksonville University	The University of Alabama	University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill	
Dartmouth College	Liberty University	The University of Tampa	University of North Carolina Wilmington	
Davidson College	Louisiana State University	The University of Tennessee (Knoxville)	University of North Florida	
Denison University	Lynn University			
DePauw University	Mercer University			
DigiPen Institute of Technology	Miami University (Oxford)			
	Michigan State University			
	New York University			
	North Carolina State University			



Jacksonville Debutante Coterie To Be Presented

The Jacksonville Debutante Coterie has been announced for 2023. The debutantes will be presented June 9 during the Magnolia Ball at Timuquana Country Club. The Coterie will make its final, formal bow on December 28 during the Christmas Ball at Timuquana Country Club.



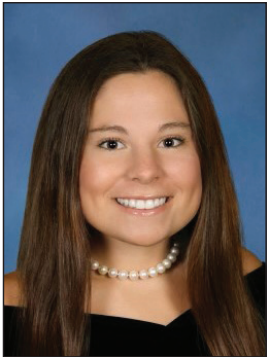
Eleanor Somerset Acosta-Rua
Daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Fernando Javier Acosta-Rua
Somerset is a student at the University of Alabama



Sarah Alice Craddock
Daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Gregory John Craddock
Sadie is a student at Florida State University



Meagan Dianne Donovan
Daughter of Mrs. Celeste Rice Green and the late CDR John Matthew Donovan
Meagan is a student at Washington & Lee University



Hannah Pendleton Goldfield
Daughter of Mr. and Mrs. David Max Goldfield
Hannah is a student at the University of Richmond



Barley Jemison Hilpert
Daughter of Ms. Elizabeth Christian Hilpert and Mr. Paul Martin Hilpert
Barley is a student at Florida State University



Catherine Kelly Kunz
Daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Stephen James Kunz
Catherine is a student at Clemson University



Mimi Page Kurlas
Daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Anthony Scott Kurlas
Mimi is a student at Florida State University



Ann Genevra Miller
Daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Nathan Earl Miller
Annie is a student at John Cabot University



Evelyn Elizabeth Miller
Daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Alfred Miller IV
Evelyn is a student at Florida State University



Catharine Tucker Ogletree
Daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Todd Ogletree
Katie is a student at the University of Mississippi



Wentworth Grace Pajcic
Daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Curry Gary Pajcic
Winnie is a student at the University of the South



Elizabeth Alston Rachels
Daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Philip Sanford Rachels
Alston is a student at the University of Virginia

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Summer entertainment for kids

and summer sanity for parents

As the school year draws to a close, many parents are likely wondering how to keep the kids entertained and off their devices during summer break. The Resident has compiled a small list of summer camps and activities we thought sounded fun:

SCHOOLS

Assumption Catholic School

Coach Polster’s summer camps run throughout the summer, both for sports and enrichment camps. These week-long sessions span the entire summer break and are hosted at Assumption Catholic School. Sessions are available for grades K through 8th with the option of half-day or full-day registration. Prices range from \$95 to \$150. www.coachpolsterscamps.com

Bolles

Read through the Bolles Summer Program catalogue to review all the available options for summer campers across the different school campuses throughout the summer. www.bolles.org under “About” (Auxiliary Programs)

Bishop Kenny High School

Student athletes can participate in one of eight athletic summer camps at Bishop Kenny in a variety of sports, from basketball, baseball, track and field, soccer, volleyball and football in 17 different sessions. BK-registered students also have the option of registering for a summer workout schedule. Registration ranges from \$120 to \$150. Age and grade ranges vary in each sport. www.bishopkenny.org/summer/camps2023

Episcopal School of Jacksonville

ESJ is offering a full roster of summer programs for rising kindergartners through 12th graders along with summer shuttle options from Beaches and St. Mark’s campuses. <https://esj.org/summer/>

San Jose Episcopal Day School

SJEDS summer camps are available in an array of activities, from art and STEAM to sports and dance and everything in between. <https://sjeds.org/programs/summer-camp/>

St. Johns Country Day School

St. Johns Country Day School is entering its 33rd Summer of Fun with a full catalogue of summer camp options covering arts and crafts, swimming, air conditioned gym games, computer games and more at its Orange Park campus. <https://www.sjcds.net/our-community/summer>

AROUND TOWN

Broadway in Jacksonville

Presented by FSCJ Artist Series, Next Stop Broadway offers a week-long musical theatre for children ages 10 to 17 (nine-year-olds turning 10 in June are eligible to join as well). This immersive week offers workshops, classes and rehearsals “that focuses on being in the ensemble of a classic Broadway show.” www.fscjartistseries.org/education/next-stop-broadway

Friday Musicale

The historic Friday Musicale is partnering with Grammy Award-winning drummer and educator Ulysses Owens Jr. to host a daily (9 a.m. to 4 p.m.) summer jazz camp for grades 5 thru 12 on July 31 to Aug. 4. Tuition is \$250 and includes family membership to Friday Musicale. www.fridaymusicale.com under “Upcoming Events.”

Gyminators Gymnastics

Gyminators is offering 10 one-week sessions throughout the summer, each with a different themes and with varying options (three-hour, six-hour, nine-hour, full-day and morning care). Prices range from \$30 to \$250. www.gyminators.com under “Camp Events”

Jacksonville Speech & Hearing Center

Jacksonville Speech & Hearing Center is hosting Camp Chatter 2023, its first summer program for children ages three to 10 “focused on enhancing speech and language skills.” This is a 10-week program at \$135/week. www.shcjax.org/camp-chatter

Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens

Let your camper spend the day at the Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens in one of the several themed summer camps. Kindergartners through eighth graders can participate in full-day weekly sessions while younger campers can join in on the VPK half-day camps. www.jacksonvillezoo.org/summer-zoo-camp

The Performers Academy

Let your budding thespians get their drama on at one of The Performers Academy’s two-week Summer Acting Boot Camps (or both!). Session A runs June 5 to 16; Session B, June 19 to 30. Camp is \$250 per week per camper with sibling discounts available. www.jaxtpa.org under “What We Do”

The Florida Yacht Club

The Florida Yacht Club is offering its Waterfront Programs this summer in weekly sessions for FYC members and sponsored guests. Options are available for ages five thru 16 in half- and full-day camps. www.thefloridayachtclub.org under “Amenities” and “Fleet and Sailing”

Members of country clubs (including Timuquana Country Club, Epping Forest Yacht & Country Club and San Jose Country Club) should check with their youth programs for available summer options.



Steve Grundy and Adam Umberger, Tim Tickle (General manager) and Rodwell Munoz from Presenting Sponsor WW Gay Fire & Integrated Systems, a division of Sciens Building Solutions team.



First-place winners: Rick Howard, from Air to Air — the event’s Dinner Sponsor. From left to right: Kenny Crews, Eddie Diggs, Mitch Timberlake, and Rick Howard.



Theresa Varnes, Abbey Bickhart, Maria Johnson, Janae Almaraz, Briana Costa, Holly Petricelly, and Taylor Johnson. Photos courtesy of The Covenant School of Jacksonville.

TEED UP FOR FUNDRAISING

The 13th annual Covenant Golf Classic

The Covenant School of Jacksonville held its 13th annual Covenant Golf Classic at Deerwood Country Club on Monday, April 24.

More than 100 golfers participated in this fundraising day of “taking a swing for education,” according to a Facebook post on The Covenant School’s Facebook page, which included lunch and, later, a dinner featuring an awards ceremony, raffle opportunities, games and prizes.

“It was a great tournament with a huge turnout,” said Tim Tickle, general manager of WW Gay Fire & Integrated Systems, a division of Sciens Building Solutions team — the golf classic’s presenting sponsor. “We are proud to have sponsored the event for Covenant.”

Prizes were given for first place gross as well as first, second and third place net. Additional prize categories included Hole in One, Closest to Pin, Men’s Longest Drive, Women’s Longest Drive and Putting Contest.

The day’s proceeds went to Covenant’s “Bridge the Gap” Fund, which this school year had set a goal of raising \$315,000 “to help offset need-based scholarships and on-going operational needs such as student transportation, athletic programs, technology, campus security and extra-curricular activities.”



Duke Butler, Josiah Foster (student), Duke Butler IV, and Rufus Dowell



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Taylor Horne, Caitie Morgan, Meredith Jetton, Joy McDonald, Caroline Skinner and Simmons Skinner

The legacy of angels

The Allison Brundick Haramis Foundation, known as Angels for Allison, hosted its fifth annual benefit breakfast on Tuesday, May 2.

Approximately 200 guests gathered at the Timuquana Country Club to enjoy a meal together and listen to the even't guest speaker Anne Neilson, author, artist and Jacksonville native. Neilson shared life moments from her newly released memoir, "The Brushstrokes of Life: Discovering How God Brings Beauty and Purpose to Your Story." Following the event, guests were able to purchase signed copies of the book to take home, along with other merchandise from the Avondale Gift Boutique pop-up.

Board President, and Allison's mother, Drew Haramis welcomed and thanked everyone for attending the breakfast. Because of the community's continued support, Haramis said, Angels for Allison has served more then 875 children and their families since it was first formed 13 years ago.

"Though we didn't know it at the time, this was Allison's purpose," she added. "This was why she was put on the Earth and this was all part of God's plan...This is Allison's legacy."

Angels for Allison was launched in 2010 in memory of Allison Haramis with a mission of "aiding with the financial needs of families suffering the loss of a child."



Michele Small, Lisa Parker, Anita Moynihan and Tricia Novak at the fifth annual Angels for Allison Benefit Breakfast at the Timuquana Country Club on Tuesday, May 2.



RJ Debee, Shannon Darling with Michael Darling



Nacho Average Fundraiser

Assumption Catholic School raised over \$110,000 for a new playground at its annual fundraiser, Nacho Average Knight Out, on May 5, setting a new fundraising record for the event. The festive event, held at San Jose Country Club, featured a mariachi band, silent and live auctions, dinner and dancing.

The money raised at the event, coupled with funds raised at the school's annual Jogathon last October, will allow construction of the playground to begin shortly after the end of this 2022-2023 school year.

San Marco resident Ambur Finley chaired the Knight Out committee.



Mary Foster, Maryann Jimenez, Alessandro Jimenez, Chris Waterman, Kelli Waterman and Megan Stephens



Tina Amico, Alicia Alligood, Meghan Rajta, Susanna Elliott and Shelby Kelly

NOTHING SOUR AT THE LEMON BALL



Attendees gathered for the check presentation at the May 2 Lemon Ball.

Northwestern Mutual — Jacksonville showed its supportive spirit in shades of yellow at its annual Lemon Ball event, held May 2. The event raised a total of \$175,128 for Alex's Lemonade Stand Foundation (ALSF) in support of key areas such as early career research, research accelerators and quality of life and care. ALSF is named after Alex Scott, who passed away at the

age of eight from childhood cancer, after spending four years of her life setting up lemonade stands and inspiring people to help find a cure for the disease that took her life. Liz Scott, mother of Alex, and Co-Executive Director of ALSF, was present for the event, and spoke to attendees.

The team at Northwestern Mutual Attendees gathered for the check presentation

at the May 2 Lemon Ball. Jacksonville, however, had even more good news to unveil at the event. In addition to raising money for ALSF, the Jacksonville-based office surprised the Kate Amato Foundation with a \$25,000 grant to support the organization's mission to finding safer, smarter and more effective treatments for children with cancer.



Liz Scott, mother of Alex of Alex's Lemonade Stand, speaks to attendees at Northwestern Mutual's Lemon Ball.

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Eric and Pamela Fenton with their daughters, Coraline and Natalie



Dr. Bruce Mattern with Melanie Jensen, Barbara Mattern, Alisa Demico, Rachelle Ferrelli and Brett Trevett



Gloria and John Murray



Edisa, Maira, Anna and Remza Harambasic were on hand to enjoy the festivities.

RUNWAY SHOW SHINES LIGHT ON CRITICAL MISSION

For children who are hard of hearing or deaf, there's never a day that doesn't provide some form of challenge. Despite the difficult days, a very special day for students was made possible during a recent fashion show at the St. Johns Town Center Dillard's department store, May 6. Proud parents, teachers and alumnus of the Clarke School helped cheer on models, leaving the stigmas of hearing loss and impairment behind, as they strutted their stuff in the Spring and Summer lineup provided by the upscale retailer.

Thanks to the professionals at Dillard's and the emcee, Jana Angel, co-host of River City Live on NEWS4JAX, the crowd lit up and cheered on the models, many of whom walked with their parents at their side during the showcase. Whether it was the matching of cochlear implants (specialty implanted hearing devices) to purses and lipstick, or the dancing and posing of the most animated stage performers; the fashionable day was full of exuberance, exhilaration and good times for all in attendance.

The Clarke School in Jacksonville is part of a network of unique campuses that offer the resources and expertise of the largest Listening and Spoken Language (LSL) organization in the nation, Jacksonville is the only location that serves the Southeast portion of the United States. The goal via the Clarke network is for hard of hearing and deaf students is to thrive in mainstream schools, the local community and the wider world.

Visit clarkeschools.org to learn more about the offerings and how you can help contribute to the mission.



Rachel Major, assistant store manager with Melanie Jensen, development and communications manager for Clarke Florida and Rodger Woika, store manager.



Clarke School alum Pierce Montero with his father Dan.



Liz Morgan, Lauren Carlucci and Anna Kramarich



Amanda Kellum, Tabitha Ford and Jenifer Southall

WHERE FASHION MEETS COMPASSION

Episcopal Children's Services (ECS) hosted its 3rd annual Wine Women & Shoes fundraising event at Timuquana Country Club on Thursday, May 18. The fashion-forward event had attendees dressed to impress while they sipped varietals from Justin wines, and shopped a multi-designer marketplace with local and national clothing brands, shoes and accessories. The event also featured silent and live auctions, a raffle and a fashion show.

All proceeds benefited ECS and its mission is to create opportunity so that the more than 27,000 children it serves can achieve their full potential.

"The 3rd Annual Wine Women & Shoes Jax event allows us to share our agency impact in the community and engage with supporters, as well as those who are learning about our wonderful organization," said ECS CEO Connie Stophel. "Episcopal Children's Services is pleased to produce this event to raise money for our youngest citizens in North and Central Florida, and help the children and families we serve build a strong foundation for life."



Aletoria White and Cantrece Jones



Adrien Malek-Lassiter with Justin and Connie Stophel



Rachel Klinger, Brooke Weedon, Tabitha Wilkey, Kristy Schmieder and Elena Singletary

Thank You!

We raised over **\$50,000** through your generous donations and support!

Our event chairs were key to the success of this inaugural event, special thanks go out to: **Ashlea Joplin, Liz Page, Regina Sooeey and Allison Sample**

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5 Points Icon to Retire

Edge City’s next chapter yet to be written

BY MICHELE LEIVAS
RESIDENT COMMUNITY NEWS



Gunnel Humphreys

Edge City on Park Street has been a Five Points staple for more than half a century.

It first opened its doors in 1968 and offered black lights, rolling papers and other paraphernalia with a “vibe of that era,” recalled Gunnel Humphreys, who purchased the store with her late partner, Tom McCleery, in 1976 and transformed it into the eclectic clothing and accessories boutique it is today.

Now, after 47 years, Swedish-born Humphreys is retiring and readying the shop for its next chapter under new ownership.

“It’s about time,” she said. “My friend, Vince, says that you should stop while you still can walk out instead of being carried out.”

Humphreys will be at Edge City for the remainder of the year and said there are several parties interested in purchasing the boutique, though she has yet to make a final decision.

“I really want it to be a really good fit, and whoever we decide on, whoever it becomes, I would do anything to make it successful,” she said. “I feel like I want a younger person in there. I want another person’s point of view. I’m very Euro-centric, and I’m very European fashion-oriented...There’s so many young people on the street and I think it’s time for a somebody young to be in there.”

Throughout the years, Humphreys has worked hard to curate a one-of-a-kind inventory at Edge City and offer her clients items they can’t find anywhere else. When asked what she will miss most about her shop, Humphreys said, without hesitation, “Oh my God, the customers, absolutely.”

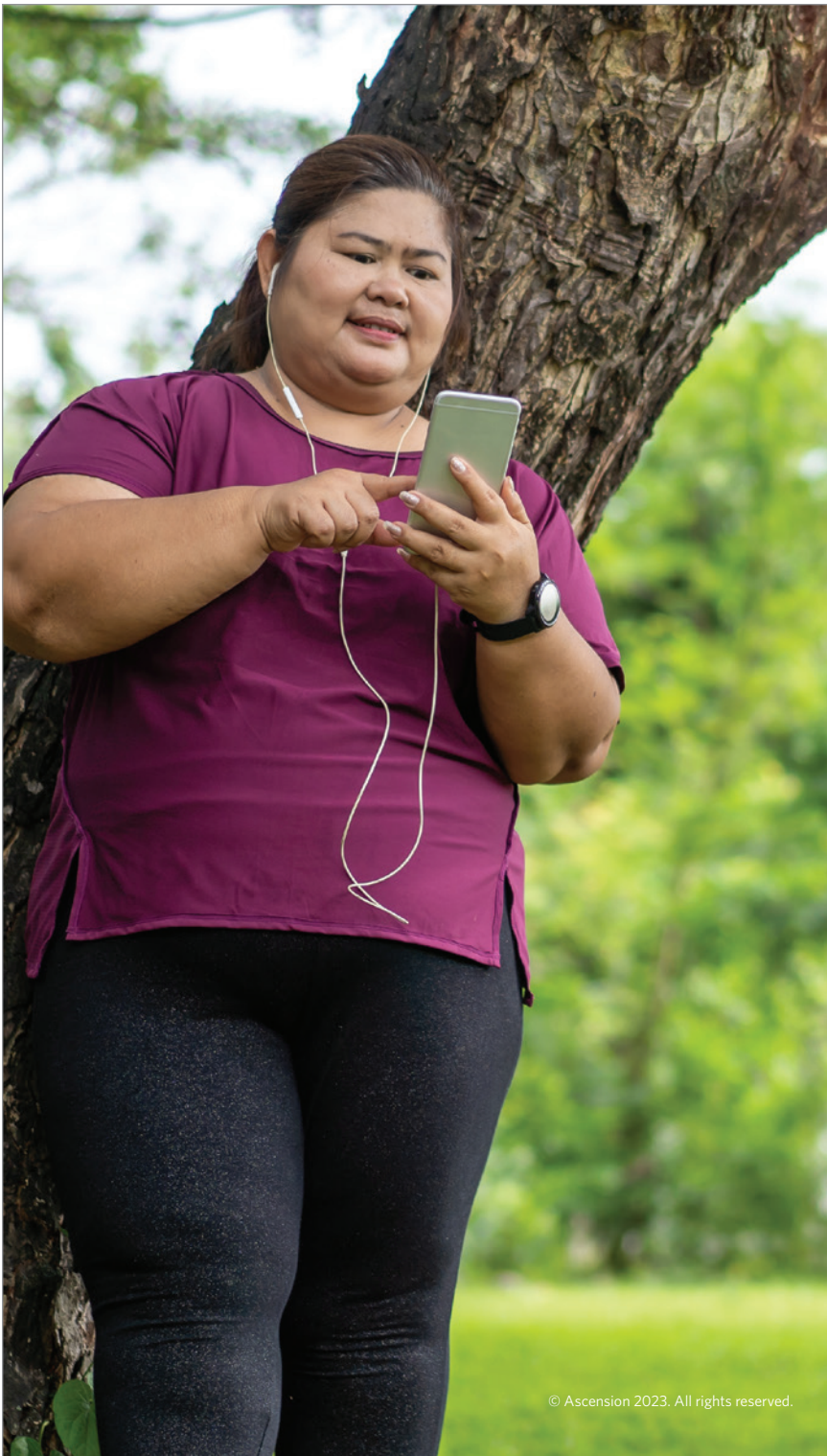
“I enjoy the diversity of my clientele, because it’s a very diverse clientele. I think, in Five Points, you find it maybe more so than in San Marco and Avondale, I really do,” she said.

Though she will no longer be a part of Edge City, Humphreys said she plans to remain in Five Points, where she lives and maintains an extremely active lifestyle that includes bicycling 20 miles every morning before walking to the boutique. In the 40-plus years behind the counter at Edge City, Humphreys has borne witness to the changes of the Five Points neighborhood.

“Five Points is always going to be there,” she said. “It’s had its ups and downs over the years, obviously. It was very conservative when Tom and I moved there. They never thought we were going to last. We were like the renegades.”

While she has no plans to travel extensively in retirement, Humphreys is looking forward to returning to Sweden, visiting other parts of Europe and going to Paris to “buy something extravagant, just because I can.”

Edge City is located at 1017 Park Street and is open Monday-Saturday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.



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Thank You Notes

FROM MY EMPTY NEST PERCH

BY **SUSANNA BARTON**
RESIDENT COMMUNITY NEWS

I am grateful our Resident community offers so many delicious dining options. In this month's column, I would like to offer a short blessing for all the local menu items that enhance my diet and expand my pallet (and menopausal waistline) week after week.

Dear God, most merciful Connoisseur of All Things Epicurean and Divine, Tantalizer of All Taste Buds, Friend of all Who Feast, thank you for these fantastical culinary destinations in San Jose and San Marco, and the people who make such heavenly goodness:

Thank you for the hands that prepare the Elena Ruth sandwich and the delicious ham and chicken croquettas with that holy green sauce — plus the chicken a la plancha and the gordita — at 1828 Cuban Bistro on Baymeadows Road and Roosevelt Boulevard. My son, Ben, and I — and, if we elect to invite him, my husband David — have made a weekly habit of lunching at this heavenly place, where the bottled Cokes and Matervera soda cans are always cold, and the homemade Cuban desserts alluring. We are grateful for the food coma this outing puts us in every Monday.

Thank you for Casa Bonita Mexican Bar & Grill on University Boulevard behind the Publix. Thank you for the skilled cocinero who prepares the most perfect Sopos plate of thick, fried masa with chicken and refried beans, white cheese, fresh avocado and pico de gallo — hold the lettuce. This trio has my heart, though I can only ever eat two. Thank you for the satisfying blessing of the white cheese dip appetizer, chips and salsa and regular Coke pairings.

Thank you for Noura Café in Lakewood. If you know, you know. It is

good every time. Plus, you see pretty much everyone you know there. And if someone in your world is sick or not feeling their best, Noura's chicken soup is a miracle-worker. And is there ever NOT a time to rip into some fresh pita bread? Nope.

Thank you for the Brussels sprouts appetizer and fun, happy hour scene at Toscana Little Italy in the Miramar Shopping Center. This place is heaven-sent — a true answer to prayer — no advance OpenTable or Resy reservations are needed. All you require of me is an empty tummy, the ability to swing their front door open with low-sugar abandon and a polite voice to request a booth — just like the good ole days. Thank you for this local dining establishment.

My breadbasket puffs outward with gratitude for Cultural Kitchen & Catering in that quiet little shopping center at St. Augustine Road and Philips Highway. Their Puerto Rican and German-inspired yumminess — especially the chicken rice bowls, spaetzle and the fried green plantain topped with rotisserie chicken, slow roasted skirt steak and sofrito roasted pork served with sweet guava and spicy, boom-boom sauce — inspires me to glorify your name over, and over, and over again, and later, to nap.

Thank you for Taverna in San Marco Square — where literally everything is delicious, always. Thank you for the person who prepares the parmesan truffle fries, the fungi pizza and the

steak frites, and for putting hearty Italian white wines on the menu that taste like the good California chardonnays I love. One prayer request, if I may: please, Lord, nudge these talented pastry chefs to bring back the budino pudding dessert — for my budino-loving son, of course. OK, a second request: that my shellfish and fish allergy miraculously disappears so I can enjoy the new Oceana restaurant next door.

Thank you for the Florida Juice and Bowl on San Marco Boulevard. It is always a blessing to besmear my face with the always-satisfying peanut butter, honey, cinnamon and banana toast sweet toast, hold the strawberries. And when my taste buds scream for the savory and protein-rich, I am grateful to have the Egg and Avocado option on the menu, sans hot sauce, of course.

Dear God, most glorious Glutton of Goodness, Loving Gourmand of Diets Bright and Beautiful, Chef of all Chefs, Bon Vivant of Bougie Delights, thank you for the restaurants and cooks that rustle up such ambrosial wonders in Riverside, Avondale and Ortega:

Thank you for Homespun Kitchen on Oak Street near Riverside Presbyterian Day School, and the fresh, homemade delicacies they brew up day after day. I offer particular thanks for the Chunky Monkey smoothie with whey protein, the Harvest Bowl (add rubbed grilled chicken thighs) or the Lily avocado toast, with or without hard boiled eggs and uncured turkey bacon. I just got real hungry writing that, oh dear.

Thank you for Arepa Please on Riverside Avenue...because, yes, please! Every day, please! My tummy tingles for their hearty little corn cakes, filled to the brim with beans and meat and avocados and other yummy deliciousness. Forgive me for eating so much every time I go, but it's just all so irresistible, and beautiful, and perfect. Thank you for showing me how scrumptious Venezuelan food can be, and thank you for locating it far enough away from my

house that I won't gorge there on the daily.

Thank you for all the restaurants with a rooftop view — River & Post and Hoptinger Bier Garden and Sausage House. I did, of course, have Black Sheep on that list, but God, please rest its soul. And if you're so inclined, please inspire another restaurateur to step in and make magical morsels there one day soon. It's always a delightful experience to look out over our beautiful city!

Thank you for the fancy places like Restaurant Orsay and Josephine, where I can get my bon apetit on and see Westsider friends I haven't seen in a while. Thank you for giving Jacksonville a restaurant that really feels like a big city epicurean adventure, complete with nice stemware and cool waitstaff.

A big, big thank you for Terry's Kitchen. I am so grateful Terry's is still spreading chicken tetrazzini love after all these years! And thank you for Terry's crack dip and all the other delectable casseroles that are available for us all to swing in, buy, and serve up or deliver to our families and friends.

Thank you for any opportunity to be invited to the Florida Yacht Club for dinner, on occasion, because everything there is good and the pours are hearty, praise Jesus! My prayer request is that David and I will be invited soon by his card-carrying member brother and sister-in-law, Ellis and Stacey. Thank you, Lord for reminding them — and any friends or family needing to use up their minimums — of our availability in this regard.

So now I am STARVING and must wrap things up ,so I can bust a move on some lunch. This has been a tasty and titillating exercise in gratitude IMHO. We are way fortunate to live near such heaven-sent nourishment. Most people must get in a car and drive long distances — or into the bowels of traffic trauma hell, like the Town Center — to get a memorable meal. This is not our refreshment-reality. We can all raise a glass — and a heaping platter of something noted above — to that!

Susanna Barton is a sucker for local restaurants but secretly laments the void of good drive-thru Mexican food options (read, Taco Cabana) in town. She has lived in a house on Granada Park with her husband David, their children, Ben and Marley, and geri-dog, Dot, for 25-plus years. She has written for The Jacksonville Business Journal, The Resident, Jacksonville University and The Bolles School during her professional life in Jacksonville, and is now ruminating on geri-scaries and all things elderly through Grand Plans, an online brand community at www.mygrandplans she founded in late 2022. She really enjoys embarrassing-mom-walk exercising later in the morning, napping, reading and catching some rays. Each month, she will share reflections on neighborhood qualities for which she is grateful.



THE WAY WE WERE

Diane and Bill McFadden

BY MARY WANSE
RESIDENT COMMUNITY NEWS

Diane and Bill McFadden married 66 years ago on a late December day in Illinois while they were college students. The theme of their life has been the joy of being able to travel to many different places and to learn from the people there.

Since they married, Bill and Diane have moved 20 times. “We moved to areas that were fascinating. We’ve met many people, and we have grown from knowing them,” Diane said. Their neighbors have been of a variety of races, creeds and colors. “I learned to understand them and be a part of their lives.”

Though not local natives, Diane and Bill have lived here for several decades. They were both born in a small town, Herrin, in southern Illinois, 85 and 88 years ago, respectively. They both graduated from Southern Illinois University. Bill was drafted soon after into the United States Navy. They were sent to Newport, Rhode Island, before being transferred to Jacksonville, Florida, for navigation training in 1959. They lived on Post Street off Edgewood Avenue, at the start.

The first McFadden child, Michael, was born in July of that year at NAS Jax in a Quonset hut without air conditioning, one that had been left over from WWII.

“It was the most exciting birth I’ve ever had,” Diane said. Almost immediately, they were sent to Hawaii, where they spent 3 ½ years. While there, their second child, Marla, was born in Oahu. “I wanted to name her Lili’uokalani after the queen of Hawaii,” Diane said. But she was told that would not be a good thing to do, so she chose a different Hawaiian name.

Bill was restationed to Jacksonville in 1962, during the Cuban Missile Crisis. Because NAS Jax was on alert, Diane could not give birth to their third, Amy, at the hospital there. Instead, she was assigned to St. Vincent’s in Riverside. Diane drove herself there in her Volkswagen Beetle while her mother stayed with Michael and Marla. Bill had already been deployed to Spain by then.

While Bill was away, six weeks after Amy was born, Diane boarded the train called City of Miami that used to begin in Miami, travel through Jacksonville, and end in Chicago. With three little children in tow, Diane was heading back toward her hometown to be with her Illinois family of origin. It wasn’t until late December 1963 that the McFaddens reunited at NAS Jax. That was the first time Bill had met his second daughter, who was six months old by then.

“When he left, I was nine months pregnant and had dark brown hair. When he came home, I had lost a considerable amount of weight and had bleached my hair. He practically walked right by me,” Diane said.

Bill retired from active military duty in 1965 to join the Navy Reserve. For 13 more years, he still had to report to NAS Jax regularly, so he and Diane bought a two-story house nearby. Bill landed a position at Peninsular Life Insurance Company. Diane was a stay-at-home mom who occasionally substitute taught, as she had done nearly every day when they lived in Rhode Island.



Diane and Bill McFadden, December 29, 1956



Diane and Bill McFadden, June 2018

a part-time assistant librarian within the Raleigh system.

“It was great fun. I enjoyed it because I got to read all the books I wanted to, which I love to do. Reading is my favorite sport,” she said.

After seven years, Bill and Diane returned once more to Jacksonville, bought a house in

In the mid ’70s, Bill accepted a transfer to London, England. The children were 11, 13, and 15. They learned to survive in an enormous city with a totally different structure than they were used to.

“They had the joy of being at school in London, but they went to school most of their lives in Jacksonville,” Diane said. Their list of local schools is long: Venetia Elementary, Lake Shore Middle, Lee High (now Riverside), Riverside Christian (during the bussing crisis) and St. Johns Country Day.

For the nearly two years that the McFaddens lived in London, they rented out their Jacksonville home so they would have something to come back to. When they did, Diane, in her 40s, began a new adventure. She partnered with a friend and went into the dry-cleaning business.

“I knew nothing on earth about it,” she said, but there was her last name out front, McFadden’s Dry Cleaners, in the Venetia Shopping Center beside the old Pizza Hut.

A decade more had passed before Occidental Life took over Peninsular and transferred Bill to Raleigh, North Carolina. By that time, the McFadden children were grown and off on their own, so it was only Bill and Diane who made that move. Before they left, Diane sold her business.

While Bill worked at the new insurance office, Diane took a job as



McFadden Family, Ortega Forest, November 1997

Ortega, and have lived there on Pirates Cove Road ever since. Both have been active in the community in a variety of pursuits.

Bill used to be an active sportsman. “When you’re in your 80s, there are always parts that aren’t working quite properly anymore,” Diane said.

For Bill, it’s his back and his knees. So, he has taken to building model airplanes and ships in the evenings. But team tennis at the Florida Yacht Club was a pastime for him and Diane up until a few years ago.

“And we were boating people,” Diane said. For a long time, they had at least one or two different kinds of vessels docked at the Club.

For years, Diane and Bill have been heavily involved at St. Johns Presbyterian Church. Both are ordained elders. She is a Stephen Minister, ordained to help those in crisis. He is a trustee. Diane had been a Sunday school teacher there for a long time. These days, she leads a women’s bible study group twice per month. Both of the McFaddens’ daughters live in Jacksonville, their son in Dallas. They have seven grandchildren, “Five of whom are married, so that doubles my grandchildren,” Diane said. And they have nine greats.

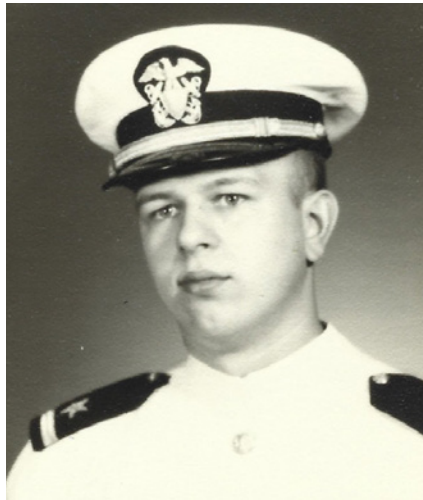
“It’s been a wonderful life, and it still is!” she confirmed.



The McFadden Family, December 1967



Bill McFadden, Florida Yacht Club, April 1985



Bill McFadden, 1950s

Bill’s officer status at the insurance company included recruiting salesmen for overseas offices, so the McFaddens continued to travel a lot, often attending insurance conventions and serving as the host committee. They’ve been to Scotland and the Panama Canal. They have ridden the Rhine River through Switzerland, and have visited Amsterdam. Domestic trips were included as well, like Washington, D.C. and the Grand Ole Opry in Nashville, Tennessee.

“We have enjoyed being able to see this magnificent world that we live in,” Diane said.



Diane McFadden at McFadden’s Dry Cleaners, 1980

Kay Biddy Watson

JANUARY 31, 1934 – MAY 16, 2023



Kay, devoted wife, mother, grandmother and friend to all who were blessed to know her, was born and raised in Jacksonville, Florida. She attended Landon high school where she was a Lionette and a member of the class of 1951. Her professional career included working for Florida title company and Florida national bank prior to living her true passion: wife and mother. Along with the passion she had for her family, Kay enjoyed

her tennis. A member of both Florida Yacht Club and later San Jose Country Club for many years, she played competitive tennis with her club teammates and life long friends. Kay's family has been members of south Jacksonville Presbyterian for decades.

Kay was the daughter of Thomas and Ruth biddy. She was predeceased by her sisters Joyce Kesler Glenn and Janet Holloway. She

is survived by her loving husband of 60 years Gary Edgar Watson and their children Andrew Watson, Mindy Gullede (Mike), and grandson Michael (mick) Gullede, Jr. She is also survived by stepson William Gary Watson (Susie) and children William Watson Jr. and Savannah Watson. Lastly, Kay was cared for in her home by the devoted caregivers from Concierge Care and Community Hospice.

William Franklin Johnson Jr.

FEBRUARY 28, 1944 – MAY 5, 2023



In life, Bill was a husband, a father, a grandfather and a great-grandfather. He was a friend to many and served the Lord faithfully.

Bill was born in Witchita Falls, TX on February 28th, 1944 to William Franklin Johnson Sr. and Francis Hollingsworth Johnson.

He attended Bolles High School and was an all-state athlete in baseball, basketball, and football.

Bill attended the United States Naval Academy from 1962-1966 where he played both baseball and football for the Academy.

He served as a Supply Officer in the U.S. Navy on the U.S.S. Franklin D. Roosevelt.

Bill married his beautiful bride, Mary Tullis, on June 11th, 1966 in Jacksonville, FL.

Bill was a loving and devoted father to Lisa Dullum (Mark), Jennifer Howard (David), and Billy Johnson (Cari).

He cherished the friendships he made at Florida Furniture Industries for over 30 years as well as being a realtor in the Jacksonville area.

He had an uncanny ability to reach people in a deep and positive way and couldn't go

anywhere without making friends with a stranger.

Bill meant so much to his family and leaves behind a legacy that lives on forever through his grandchildren - Lauren (Alex), David (Chrissy), Ashley (Austin), Billy, Allison, Zach, Colton, Lea - and his great-grandson Deacon.

He will be deeply missed by his family, friends, and all who knew him.

The family would like to thank Dr. Muhammad (Hassan) Imam, Sarah Souverain, NP, Florida Cancer Specialist, and Advent Health Hospice.

Bruce & Johnnie Hatcher

MAY 10, 1935 – APRIL 21, 2023

SEPTEMBER 29, 1935 – MARCH 31, 2023



Bruce Edwin Hatcher was born on May 10, 1935 in Albany, Georgia, and he passed away on April 21, 2023. He was the first of two sons born to Charles Marvin Hatcher and Naomi Joyce Gwines Hatcher. The family relocated to Southwest Georgia, where he met the love of his life, Johnnie Maddox.

Johnnie Myrle Maddox was born on September 29, 1935 in Opp, Alabama, and she passed away on March 31, 2023 (three weeks to the day before Bruce). She was the middle of three children born to John Henry Maddox and Myrtle Stanley Maddox. Johnnie's family also relocated to Southwest Georgia, where she met the love of her life, Bruce Hatcher.

Bruce and Johnnie attended school together in Sylvester, Georgia. At age 14, Bruce and Johnnie had their first "date" when his parents took them to the traveling ice show. After graduating from Sylvester High School in June

of 1953, Bruce and Johnnie both entered Georgia Southwestern College in Americus, Georgia, and both graduated with an Associate Degree in 1955.

On November 11, 1954, at the young age of 19, they married each other in Americus, Georgia, and began a long and happy life together as husband and wife. That loving union was blessed with one child, Bruce Doyle Hatcher.

For most of his professional life, Bruce worked in the insurance industry while Johnnie made a loving home for the family. In 1962 they moved to the house in the Lakewood neighborhood of Jacksonville where many friends and family visited and made happy memories with them. However, the most important thing in their life has been their service to their heavenly Father, Jehovah God. Bruce and Johnnie dedicated their lives to Jehovah on August 26, 1961, and both Bruce and Johnnie were baptized at a Circuit

Assembly of Jehovah's Witnesses in Fernandina Beach, Florida. Bruce and Johnnie actively served in the San Jose Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses for many decades and will be dearly missed. They were wonderful examples of loyalty, faith, and endurance along with genuine compassion and kindness to others.

Bruce and Johnnie's individual dedications guided the decisions they made throughout the remainder of their lives, including how they raised their son. It brought them immeasurable happiness and joy to see their son serving Jehovah with them, and then raising his own family in the same faith.

Bruce and Johnnie were both known for their kindnesses and a sense of humor that brought smiles to so many faces. They both passed away at home attended by family and confident in their future hope of a resurrection to a restored paradise here on earth.

While they are resting in their heavenly Father's loving memory, family and friends alike look forward to seeing both of them again according to God's promise.

In addition to many friends and spiritual brothers and sisters, Bruce and Johnnie leave behind their son Doyle and his wife Lisa, their grandson Alan and his wife Kelsea, and their granddaughter Mallory. Bruce is survived by his brother Keith (Diane), niece Melodi and nephew Cameron. Johnnie is survived by her brother John, niece Kim and nephew John III.

Let us help you celebrate your way, we can show you how today!

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~ Jody Brandenburg, President
~ Matt Tucci, Director of Operations

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