

Resident

17 YEARS COMMUNITY NEWS

RIVERSIDE | AVONDALE | ORTEGA | MURRAY HILL

FIERCELY LOCAL NEWS ... FIERCELY LOYAL READERS | RESIDENTNEWS.NET | JANUARY 2024 | VOL. 17, ISSUE 1

2024

A Look BACK... A Look AHEAD

SEE PAGE 12

SEE PAGE 14

For 17 years, *The Resident News* has served as an archive of our lives. From progress to preservation, through tragedies and triumphs, our local team has chronicled the moments that define our collective journey. As we look back, we take pause to remember the humble victories and poignant lessons. Looking ahead, the only certainty we have for 2024 is that things will change. Except us. *The Resident News* will still be here to keep you informed, keep you entertained and keep you connected to the community and people you love. Of all the stories we've written, our favorite is yours. Happy New Year to our fiercely local, fiercely loyal readers!

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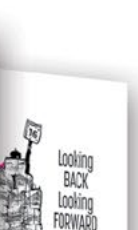
Looking BACK Looking FORWARD



for third year



VERPOWERS GN TO FIGHT PERTY



Looking BACK Looking FORWARD



for third year



VERPOWERS GN TO FIGHT PERTY



Jolly



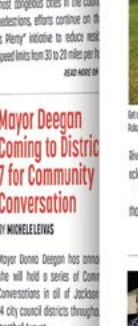
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Area leaders help



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Celebrating the Thril



Voter Information for Upcoming Runoff Elections



Property Appraiser: Joann Fischer (REP)



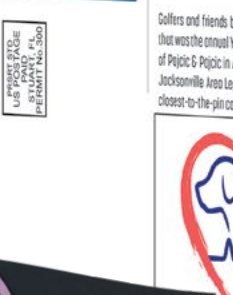
City Council At-Large Group 8: Charles Garrison (REP)



Voter Information for Upcoming Runoff Elections

Property Appraiser: Joann Fischer (REP)

City Council At-Large Group 8: Charles Garrison (REP)



City Council District 7: Joseph Hagan (REP)

City Council District 9: Mike Muldoon (REP)

Runoff elections will also be held for city council seats in districts 2, 8, 10 and 14.

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Word on the Street

If you knew you couldn't fail, what thing or activity would you do?



"I would rescue animals. I would purchase a large piece of property and create a rescue for animals. I would like to save those dogs. We always wish we could take in all the strays."

– Donna Doyle



"I think to be a great mom throughout the year and that my kids will grow up saying they had a good mom."

– Karina Gonzalez



"I would go to Korea and attend the Kukkiwon. I used to take Tae Kwan Do. I got my black belt and then life started. I've always wanted to go to the World Federation School in Korea to practice there. They are way over-the-top great. If I couldn't fail, I would go there."

– Susan Hayward



"I would try to do stand-up comedy. I'm into watching it. And from watching it, it looks like it would be fun. I'd like to move into the entertainment industry. You always wonder, could I do that?"

– Melissa McReady



"I'd probably go for banking, to be a banker. I'm interested in finances and helping new businesses get started. But business was something I felt was out of my reach."

– Sean Roberts



"I don't believe in failure. Failure is not a word in my vocabulary. I'm doing it right now. Start your own business."

– Mike Sealio and Danielle Illich



"I would save the oceans. Because the oceans are a critical part of the future of humanity. If we can save the oceans, we can set up a better world for the next generation."

– Daniel Stark



"I would do a sport, play football. Defense, linebacker. First for Georgia, then the 49ers. I played here in Jacksonville in high school, and I messed up my knee and had to stop playing."

– Lawrence Wilson

New Grants Available for Nonprofits

The Community Foundation for Northeast Florida, the largest funder of nonprofits in the region, has grant opportunities for nonprofits open now.

Small Organization Grants

Available for small organizations with budgets of \$150,000 or less, The Community Foundation offers grant funding for strengthening the organization and program development, as well as 1:1 appointments with

grantmaking staff to help those who need assistance. Grants are available up to \$2,500, and the deadline to apply is Jan. 25. Learn more at www.jaxcf.org/grants/small-organization-grants.

Women's Giving Alliance

Women's Giving Alliance is offering one-time grants of up to \$50,000 to eligible nonprofits to provide funding focused on client basic needs support. To apply, nonprofits

must have current 501(c)(3) status and programs that exclusively serve women and/or girls. Deadline to apply is Jan. 15. Learn more at wganeft.org.

Beaches Community Fund

Grant opportunities are now available for nonprofit organizations serving residents from Mayport to Guana. Priority will be given to grantees offering support for K-12 students, early learning opportunities for low-income students and support for the basic needs of Beaches residents. Deadline to apply is Jan. 12. Learn more at www.jaxcf.org/grants/beaches-community-fund.

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Ortega Forest



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listed for \$750,000

Ortega Point



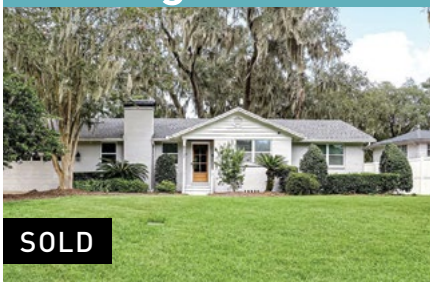
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Westfield



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Ortega Forest



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Ortega Terrace



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Jacksonville University College of Law will move into the building at 121 W. Forsyth St. in summer 2024.

A rendering of the ground-floor entry for the new location of the Jacksonville University College of Law.

New Historic Campus for Jacksonville University College of Law

Jacksonville University College of Law announced its plans to move into a new permanent space in the heart of Downtown Jacksonville at 121 W. Forsyth St., the historic former Atlantic Bank Building, in summer 2024.

“We’re proud and energized to be able to move into this new space, even closer to the federal and county courthouses and City Hall.”

– Nick Allard
Randall C. Berg, Jr. Founding Dean
of Jacksonville University College of Law

The College of Law formally signed a long-term lease of more than 50,000 square feet on four contiguous floors of the building. The space will accommodate the growth of the law school and provide the opportunity to expand. It will be completely renovated to include flexible, state-of-the-art classrooms, study and common areas, meeting spaces, faculty

and staff offices, and library spaces. The college will continue to hold classes in its current campus in the VyStar Tower until the new space is completed.

“We’re proud and energized to be able to move into this new space, even closer to the federal and county courthouses and City Hall,” said Randall C. Berg, Jr. Founding Dean Nick Allard. “It is a priority for us to maintain a presence and contribute to the city’s vibrant, growing urban core, and we look forward to being part of the rapid development of Downtown Jacksonville. Our location is ideal, especially for our students, who regularly make good use of the libraries and observe law in action in the county and federal courthouses. This keeps them embedded in the legal epicenter of the region with unparalleled access to these invaluable resources for learning.”

The City is also planning an investment of \$6.5 million in 2024 for the \$12.5 million project, subject to approval by City Council.

“This is exactly the type of transformational project that Jacksonville needs in its Downtown revitalization goals – the economic vitality of hundreds of college students living and learning in the downtown core and the preservation of one of Jacksonville’s iconic historic buildings,” said Karen Bowling, Chief Administrative Officer for the City of Jacksonville.

The 10-story building was the tallest in Florida at the time it completed construction in 1909.

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Meet the Team

The team at *The Resident Community News* works hard all year to bring you the news, events and people that make an impact in your neighborhoods. In this new year, we thought we'd share a little bit about the people behind the pages.



Susanna Barton
Favorite Jacksonville Spot: Lunch at Homespun Kitchen, La Petit Paris or 1928 Cuban Bistro with my son, Ben.
Secret Fact: I appeared in the centerfold of a 1975 issue of National Geographic, which featured a story on San Antonio, Texas, my hometown.



Susan D. Brandenburg
Favorite Jacksonville Spot: 6000 on the River, in my apartment on the eighth floor. It is where I love to entertain and where my writing muse lives.
Secret Fact: I was once marooned on Wake Island in the South Pacific for 12 hours when a typhoon forced our plane to land.



Lorrie DeFrank
Favorite Jacksonville Spot: I'll go with the iconic gem, Florida Theatre. Its recent renovation is spectacular.
Secret Fact: As a teen, I worked one summer as a live-in housekeeper at the rectory of my grandmother's church in South Philadelphia.



Julie Garmendia
Favorite Jacksonville Spot: Disappearing into any of the biggest parks!
Secret Fact: I'm somewhat obsessed with mountains, especially the world's highest peaks and of course, Mt. Everest. I've read every book and watched every movie about it repeatedly and really want to see it. Not climb it. Just see it from the last village on the way up to base camp.



Chris Gildersleeve
Favorite Jacksonville Spot: Chamblin Bookmine
Secret Fact: I read 78 books in 2023.



Dan Harris
Favorite Jacksonville Spot: Big Talbot Island Beach
Secret Fact: As a track runner in high school, one month after my 17th birthday, I set the school record for the 1-mile run: 4 minutes 41 seconds (It has all been downhill since then!)



Peggy Harrell Jennings
Favorite Jacksonville Spot: Memorial Park. Had two different fellows propose marriage to me there. The other is my front porch.
Secret Fact: One of my favorite performances was as a tap-dancing cow...as in the nursery rhyme "The Cow Jumped over the Moon." I was in my 50's. Fortunately, I was the front end. My friend Edith Pilsbury got to be the rear.



Jennifer Jensen
Favorite Jacksonville Spot: I love hiking the trails in Tillie K. Fowler Park and climbing the tower overlooking the water. It's very peaceful there.
Secret Fact: I have been skydiving three times and can't wait to go again. I also did meet and interview Erin Brokovich. She was in Tennessee after the TVA ash spill.



Michele Leivas
Favorite Jacksonville Spot: Any one of our amazing indie bookstores
Secret Fact: Fluent in "Friends" quotes and conversational-ish (although probably not grammatically correct anymore) in French and Italian.



Jason Lindstrum
Favorite Jacksonville Spot: Although I've never visited Jacksonville, I'm eagerly looking forward to making it a regular destination on my yearly travels.
Secret Fact: I still tie my shoes like a little kid, struggling to hold two bows together while attempting a granny knot.



Debra McGregor
Favorite Jacksonville Spot: My back patio with my computer and a glass of wine
Secret Fact: I have met Eddie Murphy, John Travolta, Rob Schneider, wrestlers Dusty Rhodes, Arn Anderson & Lex Luger, Funny Car driver Ron Capp, Michael Jordan, Jacksonville Bulls Quarterback Buck Belue and sat behind Eric Clapton on a flight.



Lindsey Gast-Pessia
Favorite Jacksonville Spot: The drive-on beach at Huguenot Memorial Park
Secret Fact: I share an award with John F. Kennedy, Elvis Presley and Howard Hughes. We all received the Jaycees' Ten Outstanding Young Americans.



Laura Phelps
Favorite Jacksonville Spot: Social Grounds Coffee Roasters on Main Street in Springfield. Absolutely the best coffee in town and their mission is to employ and support veterans.
Secret Fact: I write music. I'm part of a songwriting collective with some friends around the U.S. and we try to get together every year or two and record original music together.



Sandy Rea
Favorite Jacksonville Spot: I love to go out to eat and drink, so one of my favorite spots is Julington Creek Fish Camp.
Secret Fact: I have six grandchildren all ages 6 and under, with the last additions being twin girls born last July to my twin son.



Karen J. Rieley
Favorite Jacksonville Spot: I love viewing the St. Johns River, most especially from the Cummer museum's gardens. Such a tranquil, "old Florida" look with its majestic tree and lush foliage and a perfect setting for events.
Secret Fact: My first newspaper job was in 1976-77 when I moonlighted for the daily paper in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. I worked the night shift typing up obits and auction sales after my full-time job in communications for Armstrong Cork Company.



Tricia Steele
Favorite Jacksonville Spot: Jacksonville beaches
Secret Fact: If I could, I would have a facility for stray animals and take in as many as possible.



Windy Taylor
Favorite Jacksonville Spot: Chamblin Bookmine
Secret Fact: The Great Fire of 1901 started at my great-great-grandfather's fiber company.



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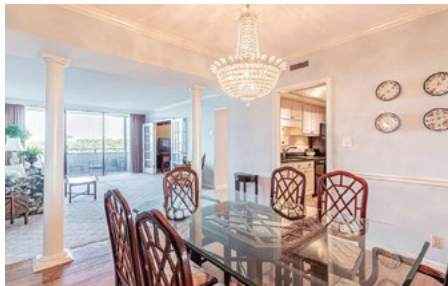
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\$940,000
3626 PINE ST
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Listed By Alan Aptheker
904-982-3950



\$485,000
3949 ARBOR LAKE DR W
3 BR | 3 FULL BA | 1 HB | 2,372 SQFT
Listed By Robert B Van Cleve
904-535-4420



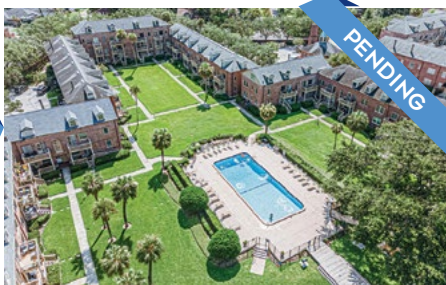
\$459,000
2970 ST JOHNS AVE 7D
3 BR | 2 BA | 1,696 SQFT
Listed By Robert B Van Cleve
904-535-4420



\$390,000
1127 BLUE SKY WAY
3 BR | 2 BA | 1,546 SQFT
Listed By Edmund Akers
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\$300,000
10222 OLD KINGS RD
3 BR | 2 BA | 1,740 SQFT
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A Park RAP-up

The Avondale Preservation Parks Committee reflects on 2023, charts the course for 2024

BY KIM CLONTZ

As 2023 drew to a close, the Riverside Avondale Preservation (RAP) Parks Committee took stock of several accomplishments in preserving and enhancing the natural beauty of our historic parks. We are also looking forward to ambitious goals for 2024.



2023 Achievements:

- With the help of more than 250 volunteers, the committee successfully organized two park and merchant area cleanup events, tallying 200 bags of trash and 85 trees planted.
- Beyond litter control, many park stewards look for ways to enhance neighborhood green spaces. To support this effort, the RAP Parks Committee created a “How To” guide, focusing on creating native plant gardens and beautifying the landscape around park signage. This effort received an extra boost with a \$400 grant from Rose Circle Garden Club to pay for flowers and materials.
- At John Gorrie Dog Park, several pieces of new agility equipment were added for both large and small dogs.
- At Boone Park North, volunteers initiated a work order for all picnic tables, benches, trash receptacles, shelters and gazebos to receive a high-pressure cleaning and fresh coat of paint.
- At Willowbranch Park, members of the Parks Committee are working with park users and stakeholders to improve the distressed park entrance on Sydney Street, sketching preliminary designs and working with the City of Jacksonville to add this effort to the budget.
- Park stewards, recruited by the Parks Committee, gathered for a several informational meetings and social events on ways to improve the smaller pocket parks.
- At RAP’s 3rd annual Garden Tour, the Park Committee members provided volunteers and expertise on creating and maintaining residential yards and gardens.
- At the RAP House, the team collected and digitally captured historic park archives and stories for each park. Additionally, they focused on providing regular content to RAP’s social media feed to communicate the importance of historic parks to multiple generations.



2024 Goals:

- At John Murray Forbes Park, we are working to draw attention to the incredible St. Johns River and promenade, including signage that will commemorate the Boston investor who platted the Riverside neighborhood in 1869.
- At Peace Memorial Rose Garden Park, the “Friends of the Labyrinth” will complete its fundraising goal of raising \$220,000 to build and install a world-class 40-foot stone labyrinth.
- Identify stewards for greenspaces that are not designated parks by the City of Jacksonville. This will ensure medians and other city right of ways do not become neglected, overgrown or unofficial parking areas.
- Create a “hidden gems” park brochure for new residents.
- Grow the Park Steward program with additional volunteers and engagement.
- Develop landscape plans in partnership with landscape designers and master gardeners.
- Build a “Teen Leader” program to foster youth engagement within the historic parks.
- We will remain active and engaged with the ongoing renovations and plans for improvements to Willow Branch Creek drainage, Riverside Park duck pond renovation, and the new construction of Artist Walk and skate park underneath the Fuller Warren Bridge, led by JaxParks.

“This committee has been instrumental in ensuring that we are actively engaged in promoting positive improvements at all of our historic parks,” said Shannon Blankinship, executive director of Riverside Avondale Preservation. “Thank you to the leaders on this committee: Pamela Telis, Alexandra Rudnik, Abby Ravichandran, Kim Clontz, Reed Hawkins, Chloe Kuhn and Nancy Powell. We are passionate about making our historic parks in Riverside Avondale even better!”

2023 Saw Good Growth for Retail, Residential

BY MICHELE LEIVAS

Our Resident communities saw a lot of new faces last year, be they new neighbors or new businesses. In addition to bringing you the latest city and community news, *The Resident News* also takes great pleasure in reporting on and celebrating some of the new businesses and residential complexes that have joined their respective communities.

Last year, *The Resident News* reported on the opening of 29 new businesses, relocations or ownership changes within its coverage areas.

For the San Marco area, that included: Bar Molino, Crumbl Cookies, St. Johns Eye Associates, Foxtail Coffee Co., One Bridal (relocation), Taverna Oceana, Chasing Paper, City Grille, Good Dough (new ownership), Milkster Nitrogen Creamery and Vevetas Tapas.

New businesses to the Riverside, Ortega, Avondale and Murray Hill area included Josephine, The Greenhouse Bar, Southern Steer Butcher, Cyclebar, Plush N’ Prana, The Florida Real Estate School by Pier 21 Realty LLC, Jay’s Spaw Grooming, Plenti, First Coast Cookies and Boba, Malachi’s Ice Cream Bar, Happy Medium Books Café, Waffle Cone, Flip Flop Shops Jacksonville and BOTE Jacksonville.

Mixed Fillings Pie Shop opened its new brick-and-mortar storefront in Five Points. Popular neighborhood eateries Mossfire Grill, Terry’s Kitchen and Bagel Love all came under new ownership.

San Marco continued to see exponential residential growth and development with the launch of several new residential complexes, including The Barlow, The Exchange, Eastborough San Marco, The Lofts San Marco, The Lofts at San Marco East, The Hendricks and the Terraces at San Marco, with The Station at San Marco near completion as well.

Riverside-area residents will see more residential units come online as developments currently under construction move toward completion. The completion of Phase 1 of construction for One Riverside, reported by media outlets to be the end of this year, will bring 270 residential units online at the former site of the Florida Times-Union headquarters. According to Downtown Vision, Inc.’s 2023 State of Downtown Report, several other developments with residential components are currently in review for the Brooklyn area, including Block Nine, Lennox on Park and McCoy’s Landing, which would bring a total of 910 new residential units to the area.

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(VERDICT, 8/5/2022)

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Becoming a Better Bold City

City leaders weigh in on the 2023 State of Downtown Report

BY MICHELE LEIVAS

Downtown Vision, Inc. (DVI) released its 2023 State of Downtown Report in October. This annual report encompasses an 18-month timeframe from January 2022 to June 30, 2023, and analyzes Downtown Jacksonville’s “performance in key indicators of urban revitalization, such as development and investment, residential demand, office market and employment base, transportation enhancement and tourism health” to track its growth.

Additionally, it breaks down development incentive programs created by the Downtown Investment Authority (DIA), tracks various trends across different categories – from downtown visits (both from tourism and Jacksonville residents coming into downtown) to office occupancy – and details development highlights.

“I think the big takeaway, honestly, is exponential growth,” said DVI CEO Jake Gordon.

According to the report, which Gordon explained is an “agnostic” reflection of the numbers and projects that are in the pipeline and moving through various stages of the approval or construction processes, there is \$8 billion “in the project pipeline” for developments across different categories (mixed use, residential, office, retail, etc.) throughout downtown. Compare that to the \$5 billion from last year’s report.

“That’s a huge increase compared to what’s actually been invested in

downtown over the last two decades or so,” he said. “We really think there’s a lot of progress thanks to the last mayor, now being continued by this mayor. Between 2000 and 2020, there was about \$3 billion in projects. So, if we’re at \$8 billion in progress right now, that is just kind of – via the numbers – kind of showing that we’re in for a huge change in downtown as all these projects get finalized.”



Michael Balanky

The Resident News reached out to the following experts for their thoughts on the data presented in the 2023 State of Downtown report and what it means for the future of Downtown Jacksonville: Michael Balanky, Chase Properties founder, president and CEO; Matt Marshall, Senior Vice President of Development at RISE: A Real Estate Co.; Stephen Crosby, DVI board member and

former CEO for InvestJax; and Oliver Barakat, DIA founding member and inaugural chairman and current DVI board member.

Creating Synergy and Overcoming Challenges

After reviewing the report, Balanky said, “It’s hard not to get excited about the opportunities in downtown Jacksonville.



Matt Marshall

DIA, DVI and Build Up Downtown (BUD) have done an incredible job to bring us where we are today.”

Marshall said creating synergy is a necessary component of revitalizing the downtown area. Finding the areas lacking activation and filling them in to create a seamless, walkable downtown is essential to creating that synergy. The challenge for Downtown Jacksonville,

he said, is it’s a large swath of land. Filling those gaps will take time, but there is a focus and determination to see it done.

“Now people can walk through the downtown area, then you have these dry zones where it seems like not a lot is happening,” he said. “But that’s because all of this just recently started within the last, say, 12 years, 15 years. Before that they didn’t have a focus of downtown development. So, that will all improve.”

Crosby said downtown’s size, geographically, is one of its biggest challenges and therefore “creating density and centralized activity” for the area is a challenge in itself. Even the riverfront presents its own set of



Stephen Crosby

challenges, despite also being a major asset to downtown.

“Perhaps the two most successful riverfront stretches to date, Brooklyn and the Southbank, between Friendship Fountain and the School Board building, have taken years for the market to infill,” he said. “Despite significant public and private sector investment and massive construction



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FAREWELL, 2023

The champagne has been popped and the confetti has fallen to ring in 2024. However, the celebration isn't only for the new year to come, but also for the year now behind us. Our Resident community and Jacksonville as a whole have seen so much growth and change these last 12 months and we at *The Resident News* wanted to take a moment to acknowledge some of the highlights and achievements from 2023 before we close that chapter and move into the next.

BY MICHELE LEIVAS

BY MICHELE LEIVAS

What happened in ...

JANUARY



Bryan Tucker, vice president corporate communications for CSX, addresses the crowd at a Jan. 19 press conference as council members Randy DeFoor, LeAnna Cumber, Matt Carlucci, Michael Boylan and Jewish Community Alliance CEO Adam Chaskin look on.

The Jacksonville City Council passed an emergency bill prohibiting messages from being projected onto a building without owner approval or consent following the appearance of a cross and swastika projected across the CSX building on Jan. 14. Perpetrators projecting any message, regardless of its content, onto a building without owner consent or approval could be charged with a second-degree misdemeanor, punishable by a \$2,000 fine and up to 60 days of jail time.

FEBRUARY

A map detailing the anticipated parks along Jacksonville's riverfront and their various stages of progress.

Riverfront 2025: A Look Ahead shared plans for several parks near or along the riverfront, including Artist Walk, Music Heritage Garden, Riverfront Plaza, St. Johns River Park/Friendship Fountain, Northwest Park and RiversEdge Parks. According to the Riverfront 2025 presentation, plans were still needed for Metropolitan Park, Shipyards West Park, the Ford on Bay public space, the Old City Hall Annex and McCoys Creek Park.

APRIL



Trevato Group's Block Nine mixed-use development will be bordered by Jackson, Stonewall, Park and Chelsea streets.

Jacksonville's Downtown Development Review Board granted unanimous conceptual approval of Block Nine, a mixed-use development intended for the Brooklyn community. This development by the Trevato Development Group will fill the entire block bordered by Jackson, Stonewall, Park and Chelsea streets and feature 293 multi-family units and 7,000 square feet of ground floor retail space with an additional 5,000 square feet of "co-working space." Construction is anticipated to begin in 2025 at a cost in "the \$100 million range."



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MAY



Ron Salem with Rod Myrick, Bryan Bedell, Terrance Freeman, Dr. Charles Moreland, Will Williams and Steve Long at the May groundbreaking ceremony for the Lasalle Street pump station.

Groundbreaking on San Marco's long-awaited Lasalle Street pump station took place on May 17 with city officials and representatives from Haskell and A&E Engineering; construction timeline is anticipated to be 18 months. (Later, in September, *The Resident News* reported that Phase 1 of construction is expected to wrap at the end of 2024; Phase 2 was, at the time, under design with an anticipated end date of spring 2026).

JUNE



Construction, as of June 2023, on the 25,000-square-foot medical office building for women's health on King Street.

Riverside saw construction underway for a new medical office building at 1232 King St. for incoming Women's Care Florida in the former SouthState Bank branch located on the site. A smaller SouthState branch has been constructed and completed on the corner lot at 1210 King Street. A King Street [Medical Office Building] Neighbor Meeting agenda placed the estimated completion date for this project in December 2023.

JULY



The Swinerie and Bar Molino co-owner Kurt Rogers, right, with co-owner Alfred Young, coined the #HendricksCorridor on social media, launching the movement to raise visibility for the small businesses and restaurants along the avenue.

Restauranteurs and business owners along Hendricks Avenue in San Marco used social media to launch and promote what has become known as the Hendricks Avenue Corridor to raise visibility for the shops, boutiques and restaurants located along the street. With a combination of new ventures and seasoned storefronts, Hendricks Avenue is becoming another popular area of the San Marco community where guests and residents can dine, shop and live.

AUGUST



Restaurateur Al Mansur and artist and small business owner Missy Riley announced plans to renovate the former San Marco Theatre into a restaurant and art gallery.

New tenants for the shuttered San Marco Theatre shared plans to convert the interior space into a restaurant and home décor store. Restaurateur Al Mansur will be converting the bulk of the theater space in the Flying Iguana Taqueria and Tequila Bar while the remaining space will become a new location for Missy Riley Arts & Pieces, which is currently located just a few doors down on San Marco Boulevard. The new Flying Iguana restaurant is expected to open the first quarter of 2024 while Missy Riley plans to move into her new storefront as soon as the buildout is complete.

SEPTEMBER



The Local plans to join the Riverside Avondale community with its third location on Oak Street.

On Sept. 19, the Land, Use and Zoning (LUZ) Committee approved the amended Planned Unit Development (PUD) rezoning request for The Local's proposed third location on Oak Street. Discussions and plans for a new restaurant at this location – the now-condemned site of the Deluxe Laundry and Dry Cleaners and Deluxe Launderette – date back to 2016 when the original PUD was first approved, originally for The Roost restaurant concept. The amended PUD was later approved by the city council at its Nov. 14 meeting.

OCTOBER



The Jacksonville Armada Football Club shared renderings of its new soccer stadium on social media in November.

After years of planning, the Jacksonville Historical Society (JHS) broke ground on Phase 1 of the new Jacksonville History Center, which will be housed, fittingly, in a historic building. The 103-year-old Florida Casket Company building is located next door to the JHS headquarters and will undergo extensive renovations to prepare for the three-story center, consisting of a ground-floor museum space, a second-floor special events area and a third-story archives and research space. Phase 1 is expected to be complete this spring.

NOVEMBER



Construction on Jacksonville's new soccer stadium - and home to the Jacksonville Armada Football Club - is expected to break ground this year.

The Jacksonville Armada Football Club shared renderings of the new soccer stadium coming to Jacksonville's Eastside. The new stadium will be a mixed-use development, featuring 25,000 square feet of "coworking space." Jacksonville Armada Football Club Owner Robert Palmer said this will help address the challenges a soccer stadium faces regarding the days and nights it goes unused. In a November announcement of the new stadium, Palmer stated construction is expected to break ground this month.

DECEMBER



Underwood Jewelers celebrated the annual tradition of raising funds for Pink Ribbon Jax, a holiday shopping soiree accompanies a check presentation.

Jacksonville closed out the year with a series of charity events, galas and fundraisers, supporting several causes near and dear to its residents and communities. These events included Hope for the Holidays (Jim and Tabitha Furyk Foundation), the 10th annual Heroes Gala (Operation New Uniform), Steven Cade's Giving Guitar Tour stop at the City Rescue Mission, Gala Night "Under the Stars" (First United Methodist Church Jacksonville with Pillars Plus Foundation), and more.

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Riverside Avondale Preservation's Home Tour turns 50 this year.



Riverside's Memorial Park turns 100 in 2024.

Progress Report Ahead of 2024

Resident readers gain insight for best laid plans in the New Year

BY MICHELE LEIVAS

The new year offers a fresh start for people to recenter, reassess and regroup for the coming 12 months. Some prepare with resolutions; others use vision boards. Others still like to select a word that will embody the attitude and outlook with which they will step into the new year.

The word we at *The Resident News* have selected for our Resident communities for 2024 is: Growth.

Development and change is all around us, either in planning and design stages or already underway. While we watch these highly anticipated projects reach construction benchmarks, there are also momentous community celebrations we can celebrate to appreciate both how far our city has come and the limitless potential of Jacksonville's future.

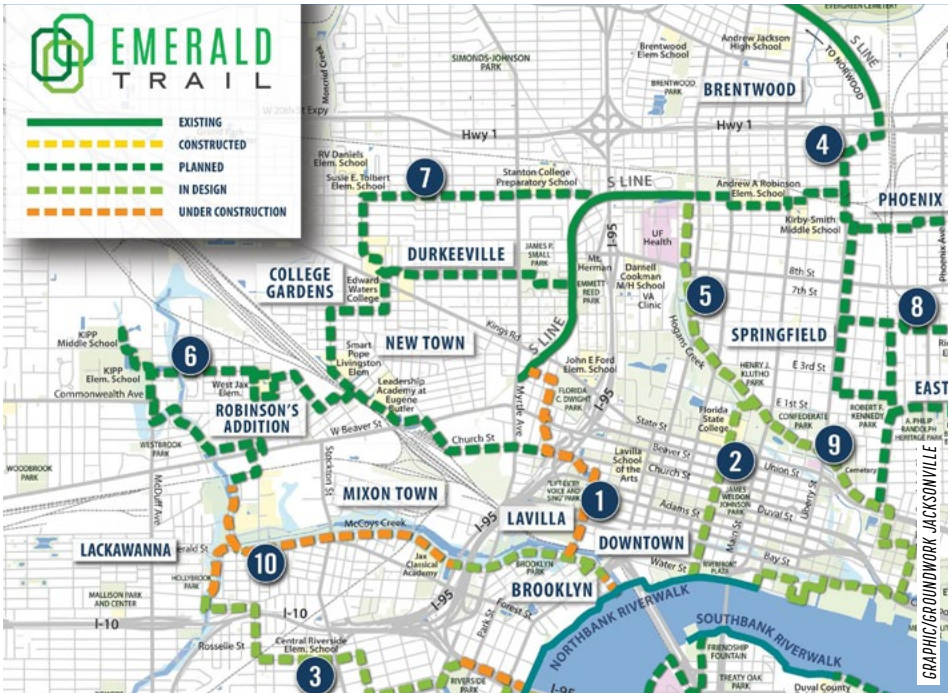
These are just some of what we have to look forward to in our Resident communities in 2024:

San Marco/Southbank:

- San Marco Refresh 2.0: The improvements to San Marco Square will continue in the new year in this collaborative initiative by the City of Jacksonville, San Marco Merchants Association and the San Marco Preservation Society.
- Phase 1 Completion of the Lasalle Street Pump Station: As previously reported by *The Resident News*, phase 1 of construction is expected to wrap by the end of 2024.
- Friendship Fountain: The ongoing, and extensive, renovations to Friendship Fountain are expected to be complete by the end of the first quarter of 2024.
- RiversEdge Trail and Park System: RiversEdge developer Preston Hollow Community Capital stated at an unveiling event in November that the four interconnected public parks and their trail are expected to come online by the end of the year.

Riverside and Avondale/Northbank:

- Riverside Avondale Preservation's Home Tour turns 50: The neighborhood association celebrates half a century of this time-honored event.
- Memorial Park Centennial Anniversary: Jacksonville's iconic Memorial Park will celebrate its 100th anniversary in style this year.
- The Emerald Trail: The first segment of the Emerald Trail – the LaVilla Link, connecting Brooklyn to LaVilla and the S-Line Rail Link – is expected to open in January.
- One Riverside: Construction continues on this highly anticipated mixed-use development, with media outlets reporting the first phase of construction should wrap by the end of 2024.



The first segment of the Emerald Trail is expected to come online this month.



Construction continues at One Riverside.



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Mayor’s Task Force Funding Approved

BY MICHELE LEIVAS

Mayor Donna Deegan held a signing ceremony at City Hall on Wednesday, Dec. 13 to enact the near \$26 million legislation package for the Mayor’s Task Force.

The evening before, at its regularly scheduled meeting, the Jacksonville City Council passed the funding through a series of votes.

“This is a transformational moment for Jacksonville. In June, during the transition, I launched seven task force committees and asked them to make concrete policy recommendations for the betterment of our city,” said Deegan. “This legislation is a direct result of that work. I’m grateful for the nearly 1,000 citizens who participated in the committees. I also want to thank Council President Salem, Vice President White, and the entire Council for working collaboratively with us every step of the way. It shows what is possible when we unite around our shared values, listen to our neighbors, and work together to move our city forward. I’m excited to sign this historic and one-of-a-kind legislation that will positively impact all our lives.”

The newly approved funding will support various programs and initiatives addressing a wide range of issue impacting the City of Jacksonville and its citizens, including literacy, housing, homelessness, health, small business, art and veteran programs.



Three of the five blocks in Gateway Jax’s proposed Pearl Street District mixed-use project received DDRB’s final approval last month.



Board Clears Pearl Street District Final Design

BY MICHELE LEIVAS

Pearl Street District, the mixed-use development proposed by Gateway Jax, received final approval from the Downtown Development Review Board (DDRB) last month for three of the five blocks included in its overall project.

DDRB granted final approval of the project as a whole in October.

With this phase of city review now completed, the project will go before the city council for approval of its incentives package, as recommended by the Downtown Investment Authority (DIA) before beginning the permitting process.

Pearl Street District is phase one of the anticipated mega-development proposed by Gateway Jax, a JWB Real Estate Capital- and DLP Capital-sponsored real estate development firm, covering more than 20 blocks in Downtown Jacksonville’s North Core district. Included in designs for Pearl Street District are more than 1,000 multifamily residential units, 100,000 square feet of retail space and outdoor spaces to be enjoyed by the community at large.

This announcement of final design approval was shared in a December press release from Gateway Jax, which included statistics from a KB Advisory Group analysis report stating that the overall Gateway Jax project “is anticipated to directly create approximately 2,700 permanent jobs and spur over \$750 million in annual economic impact.”

“When factoring in the follow-on demand induced by the catalytic nature of development at this scale, the Gateway Jax development pipeline is expected to generate over \$475 million in annual tax revenues to the City of Jacksonville upon full completion,” it continued.

“It is an exciting time for Downtown Jacksonville and Gateway Jax’s first phase of development along Pearl Street as we achieve this milestone in the development process,” said Gateway Jax CEO Bryan Moll. “We appreciate the DDRB and DIA’s enthusiasm for our team’s vision and their commitment to seeing Downtown Jacksonville reach its full potential. We know developments of this scale can be transformational for a city, based on our experience in other markets, and we look forward to the next steps as this initiative progresses.”

Construction on the Pearl Street District project is anticipated to break ground mid-2024.



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Matt Hartley

MaShonna Hughes

Hartley, Hughes Join OneJax

In spite of several changes at OneJax in recent months, the agency added two new staff members: Matt Hartley as the Director of Interfaith Programs and MaShonna Hughes as the new Social Media Specialist, a part-time position.

As of July 1, 2023, OneJax and the University of North Florida (UNF) terminated its Memo of Understanding that affiliated OneJax with the university 11 years ago. Then, in October, Kyle Reese ended his tenure as OneJax CEO. Board member and president of the VyStar Credit Union Foundation, Patricia McElroy, is serving as Interim CEO during the organization’s national search for a new full-time CEO.

Hartley comes to OneJax from UNF, where he served for five years as Director of the UNF Interfaith Center. He also spent 11 years in professional youth, college and young adult ministry in the Presbyterian and Episcopal churches. He is a past board chair of the Interfaith Center of Northeast Florida and sits on Interfaith America's Higher Education Council. As part of his new role, Hartley will launch a new collegiate initiative, Interfaith Campus Connect.

MaShonna Hughes has experience in business and operations across the public, nonprofit and philanthropic sectors. Grounded in working with data and key metrics, Hughes is a passionate advocate for our communities. She is a North Carolina native and a recent first-time published author.

“We’re delighted to have these two accomplished professionals join the OneJax team,” said McElroy. “The work our organization is doing has never been more important. There is much to be done as we attempt to bring the people of our community closer together.”

Wolfson Children’s Named Top Hospital

The Leapfrog Group announced on Dec. 5 that Wolfson Children’s Hospital has been named one of only eight Top Children’s Hospitals in the country and one of only three in the State of Florida. The Leapfrog Top Hospital award highlights patient safety and quality achievements and is widely acknowledged as one of the most competitive awards American hospitals can receive. Qualifications for the award encompass the quality of patient care and hospital performance, including infection rates, practices for safer surgery and the hospital’s capacity to prevent medication errors.

“We are honored to receive this distinction and to be recognized as one of only eight Top Children’s Hospitals in the country by The Leapfrog Group that recognizes our focus on patient safety and quality,” said Wolfson Children’s Hospital President Allegra C. Jaros. “This designation is a testament to the dedication and collaboration of our team members and providers at Wolfson Children’s, Nemours Children’s Health, Jacksonville, the University of Florida College of Medicine – Jacksonville, and Emergency Resources Group.”

This follows last month’s announcement that Baptist Medical Center Jacksonville, Baptist Medical Center South, Baptist Medical Center Beaches and Baptist Medical Center Nassau all received an “A” Leapfrog Hospital Safety Grade for providing the highest level of safety in patient care.

“Protecting patients from preventable harm is the cornerstone of The Leapfrog Group’s mission,” said Leah Binder, president and CEO of The Leapfrog Group. “Wolfson Children’s has demonstrated that patient safety is their top priority, and we’re truly pleased to recognize them as a Top Hospital this year.”



Susanna Barton shelves her book on the Local Authors shelf at the Literary Lounge in Murray Hill.

Book Launch a Grand Affair

Local writer and *The Resident News* columnist Susanna Barton launched her newly released book, “Grand Plans: How to Mitigate Geri-Drama in 20 Easy Steps” and the accompanying “Grand Planner,” in early December at the Literary Lounge in Murray Hill and San Marco Bookstore in San Marco Square.

“There was a tremendous turnout for both events, it was really fun to see everyone and feel the neighborhood love,” Barton said. “I am grateful to everyone who came out to support these grand planning adventures and helped normalize conversations about aging in the process.”

Barton published “Grand Plans” this year, following a challenging caregiving experience and her father’s passing. Both experiences revealed the depth of planning all adults should be taking now to improve outcomes during their second half of life. Her list of 20 mitigating steps includes everything from ensuring all affairs – legal, financial and medical documents – are in place to minimizing your stuff and self, and playing the “what-if” game “like your life depends on it.”

“The more planning, and expecting, and talking we can do with our family and friends now, the better and less stressful our senior strolls will be – both for us, and our one-day caregivers,” Barton said.


The book and Grand Planner workbook are available on Amazon and locally at the Literary Lounge, San Marco Bookstore and CX904 in downtown Jacksonville. Visit www.mygrandplans.com for more information on the Grand Plans biweekly newsletter, podcast and blog.



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Representatives from Auld & White Constructors presented their Project of the Year Award to the firefighters of Fire Station 10, the building for which the award was won.

Auld & White Shares Honor with Firefighters

Auld & White Constructors (AWC) formally presented its Project of the Year award, bestowed by the Associated Builders and Contractors (ABC) Florida First Coast Chapter, to the City of Jacksonville and the dedicated firefighters of Jacksonville Fire and Rescue Department's (JFRD) Fire Station 10 on Dec. 1. The award was given to AWC in honor of the work it did during the renovation and expansion of the historic McDuff Avenue fire station to preserve the station's authentic aesthetic and overcome construction challenges.

"The updates truly make Station 10 like home," said JFRD Fire Chief Keith Powers, who once called Station 10 home. "Our guys work 24-on-48-off, so they live in these stations for a 24-hour period. They not only come to work, they also eat and sleep here – it's just like a regular house on the inside – then they respond to runs and 911 calls as they come in."

Established in 1927, Fire Station 10, affectionately known as "The Penitentiary," has evolved into one of JFRD's largest and most important stations. AWC not only helped acquire adjacent properties to facilitate the expansion, but also managed the project in a way that preserved the station's historical significance and minimized disruption to daily operations for the firefighters.



Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Network Realty provides holiday gifts to Family Support Services' Be an Angel holiday initiative. Front row: Leigh Ann Luttrell and Kayla Garza; Back row: Kathy Suber, Nathan Gray, Kimberly Waterhouse, Rochelle Lockett and Josh Cohen.

Angels Unite for Foster Children

Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Network Realty showed its support for Family Support Services of Duval and Nassau Counties' (FSS) annual Be an Angel holiday drive for First Coast children in foster care. Angels buy gifts from a child's wish list or make a monetary donation so that the children receive Christmas presents they would not otherwise be able to enjoy. The realty office, which is among the top donors to the campaign, supported Christmas wishes for 50 children in foster care and secured a generous \$20,400 donation from the Gray Family Foundation to help additional children served by FSS.

"We are grateful for the ongoing support of Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Network Realty and the Gray Family Foundation for Be an Angel and our community's children in foster care," said Leigh Ann Luttrell, Community Engagement Manager for FSS. "Through their generosity, we can support happier holidays for children who might not otherwise receive gifts this time of year. Be an Angel and other FSS programs just aren't possible without committed partners like them."



Outgoing board chair Numa Saisselin with incoming chair Paul Davison.

Davison Chairs Downtown Vision Board

Paul Davison, BDO USA, P.C. Jacksonville Assurance Market Leader, has been appointed the incoming board chair for Downtown Vision (DVI). Davison succeeds Numa Saisselin, president of the Florida Theatre, who served as chair for more than four years.

"We are honored to have the leadership of Paul Davison as the incoming Downtown Vision board chair as we continue our mission to help Downtown Jacksonville grow and thrive," said Jake Gordon, CEO of Downtown Vision. "I want to express my deepest gratitude to Numa Saisselin for his exceptional leadership and invaluable contributions to DVI and Downtown Jacksonville as our outgoing board chair."

Davison has over 35 years of experience in the public and private sectors complex accounting matters, including business mergers, leasing, restructuring, complex stock-based compensation matters and derivatives. Davison has been a member of the 30-person board for five years and has served as treasurer for the last two.

"Downtown Jacksonville is on a sustained trajectory of growth and opportunities," said Davison.



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Dawn Lockhart

Lockhart New CEO for Nonprofit Center

After a national search, Jacksonville’s own Dawn Lockhart officially took the helm as CEO for the Nonprofit Center of Northeast Florida on Jan. 2, following a two-week transition period.

“We chose our new CEO for the Nonprofit Center of Northeast Florida because of her vision to inspire positive change,” Board Chair Lisa V. Johnson said. “Dawn’s proven commitment, strategic mindset, passion for our mission, and extensive reach into the local nonprofit sector convinced us that she is the catalyst needed to lead our organization toward greater impact and success.”

Lockhart has worked in the nonprofit sector since 1984 and is the former Director of Strategic Partnerships for the City of Jacksonville, for which she was selected as a 2023 Council on Foundations-HUD Secretary’s Awardee for Public-Philanthropic Partnerships. She is also a former CEO of the nonprofit Family Foundations of Jacksonville and led the inaugural Mayor’s Downtown Homeless Taskforce and the 2019 and 2022 Jacksonville Housing Strategy Summits.

“Continuing to champion and advance the high performance of the nonprofit sector – through advocacy, innovation, strategic partnerships and results – is the most important work ahead to ensure all communities, neighborhoods, families and individuals can thrive, and I can’t wait to get started,” said Lockhart.

MacQueen Joins Berkshire Hathaway

Marsha MacQueen joined the Avondale office of Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Network Realty as a real estate agent. Fluent in Spanish and English, MacQueen has a 25-year career spanning administration, sales, marketing and legal services that she brings to her new role. She also enjoys community service and volunteering.

“We are delighted to welcome Marsha to our team,” said Josh Cohen, Broker/Manager at Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Network Realty. “Marsha’s unique background and enthusiasm for helping people find their homes matches with our commitment to delivering exceptional service.”



Marsha MacQueen



Martha Frye Baker



Jeffrey Edwards



Rhianna Scyster



William “Bill” Bond



Brian Wolfburg

OneJax Announces 2024 Humanitarian Award Nominees

OneJax, Inc. announced the recipients of its 2024 Humanitarian Awards. The awards honor those who have demonstrated the personal and professional integrity, have given generously and extensively to the community and have been dedicated to the improvement of human relations among diverse groups in the community.

The 2024 Silver Medallion humanitarians are: Martha Frye Baker, William B. “Bill” Bond, Jeffrey R. Edwards and Brian Wolfburg. Rhianna Scyster received the Acosta Rua Young Professional Medallion.

“Our 2024 honorees are a group of deserving people who have made a significant impact on our community and are passionate about making the Jacksonville community the best it can possibly be,” said Patricia McElroy, OneJax Interim CEO. “These honorees represent a growing list of people laying the foundation to help take Northeast Florida into the future. Their impact is immeasurable.”

The honorees will be recognized at the Humanitarian Awards Event on Thursday, May 9, 2024, at the Jacksonville Center for the Performing Arts.

Double Recognitions for Timucuan Parks Foundation

Timucuan Parks Foundation (TPF) is the recent recipient of two awards from the Florida Planning and Zoning Association’s (FPZA) First Coast Chapter and the City of Jacksonville’s Keep Jacksonville Beautiful.

City and TPF representatives accepted the FPZA Award at the First Coast Chapter’s Annual Banquet in recognition of the 7 Creeks partnership – whose partners include TPF, Florida State Parks, National Park Service, North Florida Land Trust, Visit Jacksonville and the City of Jacksonville. Established in 2020, the partnership created the 7 Creeks Recreation Area “to highlight and promote the 6,600 acres of preserved public lands that are home to seven connected wilderness parks and preserves surrounded by seven creeks.”

The 2023 Keep Jacksonville Beautiful organization award was presented to TPF’s Trail Team, which coordinated more than 700 volunteers – contributing more than 2,000 hours – on “maintenance and cleanup projects at Jacksonville’s national, state, and city preservation parks” last year. The Trail Team’s estimated 25 volunteers “travel all over the country and work nearly every week on litter removal, trail maintenance, invasive plant removals, planting native plants and trees, and creating living shorelines that help stabilize coastal areas and protect important cultural resources.”



Gina Fish, Cory Carter and Ron Fish with the 2023 Keep Jacksonville Beautiful Organization Award.

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Wealth Management Firm Continues to Build Global Expertise that Benefits Clients

In August 2022, the Wall Street Journal ran an expert opinion column with the headline “RIP Big Bull Market (1982-2022).”

The Journal’s article was a “rear-view-mirror” confirmation of what Capital Dimensions Wealth Management founder and CEO Steve Hyers’ numbers told him was coming – and one he’d already shared with his clients. Nine months earlier, he had predicted the end of the bull market to his clients in an end-of-year Christmas card message.

“The average person on the street is so busy with their day-to-day activities, they’re not paying attention to it,” Hyers said. “If we don’t reinvest in our defense industries and our corporations – in the things that have made the U.S. the top economy and military in the world, particularly since World War II – we’re going to deteriorate quickly.”

At \$34 trillion, the current national debt in the U.S. is the highest since World War II. In the first nine months of 2023, the U.S. paid \$800 billion in interest on its debt. For the markets, this often means increased market volatility and interest rates and reduced foreign investment in U.S. treasuries. Add to that a 2024 presidential election, and conditions are ripe for elevated uncertainty in the short-term – an atmosphere that makes investing quite challenging.

“If we continue with these existing debt levels, were going to have a significant slowdown in the rate of reinvestment in these great companies that we own.” Hyers predicts. “In the short-term, you can address some of that by looking for alternative investment opportunities in countries, industries and companies with lower debt and risk.”

Hyers doesn’t try to spin this into a positive tale for Capital Dimensions clients. From his San Marco office, he offers honest assessments backed with data, experience and extensive research. Results are never guaranteed, and Hyers emphasizes the ever-present risk involved in investing. The candid willingness to explain both the risks and potential rewards has allowed Capital Dimensions to have a high retention rate with its clients and help clients feel more comfortable planning as a team.

EVOLVING TOWARD A GLOBAL STRATEGY

Hyers founded Capital Dimensions in 2005 to offer a local, independent financial services firm with credentialed financial advisors. The firm is serviced by United Planners Financial Services, a national wealth management firm where Hyers is also a Limited Partner. United Planners provides financial planning, investment management and insurance services. When Hyers started the company, markets were still riding the wave of the “Reagan Revolution,” which produced low interest rates, sustained market investment and 40 years of prosperity.

In 2015, Hyers began advising clients that U.S. market growth may slow without significant policy changes at the federal level of government. At about the same time, discussions of the United Kingdom’s possible separation from the European Union (BREXIT) began ramping up, and Hyers saw an opportunity to possibly better protect client assets through high-performing international holdings diversification.

Hyers began visiting international companies in 2015 in order to better assess them as potential investments for his clients. By the end of 2023, he had visited every major economy worldwide. The new strategy generated greater stability in returns of Capital Dimensions clients when comparing many large domestic indices. Generally speaking, it matched up-ticks and produced better results during down markets.

Hyers now travels several times a year and has visited some of the largest companies in the world, including BHP, SONY and Diageo, along with at least a dozen international banks.

“We have interviewed companies that we – along with Moody’s, Fitch and Standard & Poor’s – regard as among the most profitable and well-run companies in every major economy in the world over the last few years” Hyers said. “When you’re able to sit down with companies and talk to them face-to-face, you develop a relationship with them. You can pick up the phone and call them anytime, which we do. We run financial ratios and formulas that tell us if industries and companies are overvalued, undervalued or reasonably priced. If the overall results are good, we buy.”

Before Hyers invests for his clients, he often first invests his own funds, demonstrating his confidence in the assets he recommends.

“My money usually goes in before anybody else’s. That’s significant. We put our money where our mouth is, and our clients know this,” he said.



CREATING A FAMILY LEGACY

While Capital Dimensions helps clients generate and manage wealth to endure through generations, Hyers is also creating his own legacy at the firm by welcoming daughter Kaleigh to the team in 2024. An alum of Episcopal School of Jacksonville and a graduate of the University of Tennessee at Knoxville, Kaleigh decided to leave a corporate position at one of the top financial technology companies in America to learn, help build and someday run her father’s company.

Kaleigh is working toward earning her licenses and credentials to become a CFP and/or ChFC. She has significant experience in corporate operations, communications, marketing, and modern technology and automation that should improve Capital Dimensions’ efficiency and productivity in the long run, according to Hyers.

Looking ahead to the new year, Hyers advises individual investors not to expect significant interest rate cuts from the Fed in the short term. He believes companies will continue their conservative approach to internal investment, as borrowing at higher rates has been challenging, particularly for small businesses. He also predicts that commercial real estate may have a challenging year.

It’s not just a cliché to Hyers when recommending clients take a long-term approach to investing. He said strategies and processes take more than a year or two – usually a minimum of one market up cycle and one down cycle – to show progress. Capital Dimensions investment process is a marathon, not a sprint.



Hyers in Australia, 2023



Hyers in Australia, 2023



Hyers in Mumbai, 2020



This 1928 Tudor-Revival style mansion sold for \$7.8 million. The property closed on Dec. 21.

Dream Finders Homes CEO Finds Dream Home in Avondale

BY MICHELE LEIVAS

After going up for auction last October, the historic Tudor-Revival mansion at 3730 Richmond St. is now under new ownership.

Dream Finders Homes, Inc. Founder, President and CEO Patrick Zalupski found the dream home for his family in the sprawling Avondale estate.

The 18,100-square-foot mansion is on the U.S. National Register of Historic Places. It boasts 10 bedrooms and 12.5 bathrooms. The property sits on 2.2 acres and enjoys 220 waterfront feet along the St. Johns River.

In October, The Resident News reported on the auction, which initially opened with an asking price of \$25 million with starting bids between \$2 million and \$7 million. The asking price was then readjusted to \$4.5 million.

Ultimately, the home sold for nearly \$7.8 million. According to the listing, the furnishings were included in the sale.

The property was co-listed by Sperry Lee, Jr. of RE/MAX Specialist PV [Ponte Vedra] and Julie Little Brewer, in cooperation with Concierge Auctions. “It’s certainly one of the most iconic houses in Jacksonville, so I’m sure [the Zalupskis] will be great stewards of it,” said Lee.

John Hove purchased the Lane-Towers House in 2012 for \$2.6 million and spent years renovating and reviving the sprawling mansion and its property. He and his late wife, Yvonne, were only the fourth owners of the historic property. Past owners included the Lane family, the Towers family and Raymond Mason, Jr.

About the estate’s renovations, Lee recalled his favorite quote by Hove, “‘It’s a brand-new house in an old suit,’ which is exactly what it is. It’s a new house, it just has an old cover.”

Built in 1928 and initially renovated in 1930, the home was meticulously restored to its historic grandeur

and renovated with comforts for a modern-day owner. A 2015 article by The Resident News detailing the renovations Hove had planned for the property discussed the type of attention he was paying to ensure the estate was given its due, from the six-color blend created for the repairs to the property’s 1,200-foot brick-and-wrought-iron wall to ensure the closest possible match to the original brick colors and the 32 eleven-foot wrought iron sections “Hove personally cut down, sandblasted, galvanized, polished and painted with primer and top coating.”

Moving on to the next chapter of his life, Hove has remarried and relocated to South Carolina and is looking forward to closing on a new home that doesn’t require any renovations.

“I’m leaving my renovating days behind me,” he said. “The house we’re going to buy is not in need of any renovations. We can just move in.”

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The 2023 Champions for Child Safety Pro Am Golf Tournament raised \$457,000 to support Monique Burr Foundation Prevention Education Programs.

Pro Am Raises \$457,000 for Child Safety

The Monique Burr Foundation for Children’s (MBF) 2023 Dream Finders Homes Champions for Child Safety Pro Am Golf Tournament, presented by AT&T, Impact Landscaping and Irrigation, and MJC Land Development, raised \$457,000 to support MBF Prevention Education Programs to protect children from bullying, cyberbullying and abuse.

“Another successful and memorable event that will enable us to fuel our life-saving work,” said Tanya Ramos-Puig, MBF CEO. “We are incredibly grateful to our countless golfers, sponsors, donors and volunteers, many of whom have been supporting us year after year. They made the golf tournament a tremendous success and helped MBF raise much-needed funds to support our efforts to protect children and remove obstacles to accessing prevention education – both locally and globally.”



Ed Burr with Lynn Layton and MG Orender



Tanya Ramos-Puig with Goya Foods’ Rafael Toro and Ed Burr

Co-chaired by Jim Furyk and Mark McCumber, and hosted by MG Orender, the annual tournament paired amateur and professional golfers at The Palencia Club in St. Augustine. Since the tournament began, it has raised more than \$5 million for MBF.

During the 2023 Pro-Am Pairings Party, presented by Lennar Homes, Lynn Layton was honored with the Champion for Child Safety Award from MBF in recognition of her work and dedication to child advocacy and community outreach while at the helm of MBF from 2008-2022. Goya Cares was also recognized with a Champion for Child Safety Award for helping serve over 30,000 students in New York, New Jersey and Illinois with child safety curriculum to prevent child abuse, bullying, trafficking and digital dangers that can lead to other forms of child victimization.



Rethreaded staff showed their holiday spirit during Springfield Saturday.

Randi Beesing and Mama Blue with Lloyd Beesing

Rethreaded Celebrates Springfield Community

Rethreaded, a Jacksonville-founded nonprofit, celebrated its Springfield neighborhood on Dec. 2, with a “Springfield Saturday” party and 2-hour concert featuring local performer Mama Blue, a Jacksonville native and supporter of Rethreaded’s work to restore choice and opportunity to the survivors of human trafficking. The event welcomed 100 attendees, who also shopped Rethreaded’s line of unique, survivor-crafted goods and enjoyed local food and beverage vendors like Soulful Spirits and Windy City Eats.

“We love our home in Springfield, and we couldn’t be more grateful to our neighbors for their love and support,” said Kristin Keen, founder and CEO of Rethreaded, which has employed 89 survivors locally.

An Oyster-Swilling Good Time



St. Johns RIVERKEEPER held its annual Oyster Roast at the Garden Club of Jacksonville Nov. 17 with more than 1,700 pounds of oysters, a silent auction and raffle, games and live music.

“We hear folks often refer to the Oyster Roast as the ‘best party of the year,’ but it’s so much more than that,” said Meredith Jespersen, Development Director for St. Johns Riverkeeper.

Now in its 22nd year, the roast is the organization’s most critical fundraising event, raising more than \$210,000 for advocacy, education and outreach programs in support of the St. Johns River. The thousands of oyster shells were saved and recycled for the Guana Tolomato Matanzas National Estuarine Research Reserve Reef Restoration Project, and the event diverted 262 pounds of recycling and 317 pounds of compostable material from the landfill through the use of Apple Rabbit Compost stations.



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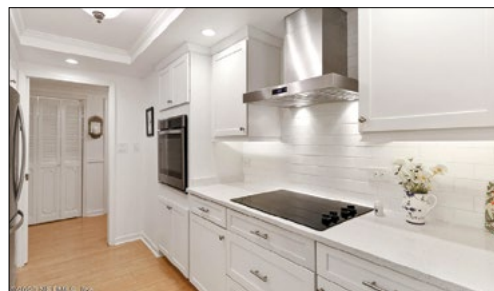
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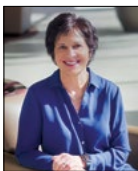


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Exchange Club of Jacksonville Celebrates 100 Years of Service

The Exchange Club of Jacksonville celebrated 100 years of service to the Jacksonville community with a Gatsby-inspired gala that harkened back to the times of its founding in 1923. The event was held at the San Jose Country Club on Tuesday, Dec. 12 with national Exchange Club representatives, as well as current and past local members in attendance.

U.S. Representative John Rutherford taped a personal video message for the event, and U.S. Representative Aaron Bean, longtime supporter of the club, sent one as well, in which he spoke a brief history and congratulations of the club to the record from the floor of the House.

The Exchange Club is rooted in service, with a focus on Americanism, child abuse prevention and youth programs. They maintain Exchange Club Island, located under the Mathews Bridge, and support the Exchange Club Family Center.

Women's Board the Art of C



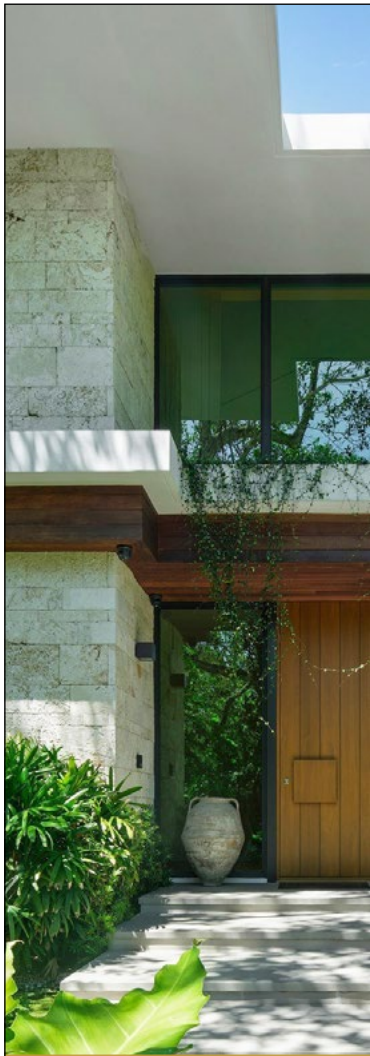
Paige and Paul Borah with Sabrie and Mark Edmonston, Alison and Kent Sausaman

Don W



Christian and Stephanie Harden with Emily and William Magevney

The Women's Board of Wolfson Children's Hospital hosted its First Coast Design Show: 'The Art of C' on a weekend of December at the Wolfson Children's Hospital Center. Vendor booths, demonstrations anchored the opening night kick-off gala on Dec. 3 which featured a show on Dec. 3 which featured Wolfson Children's Hospital antiques and garden show benefiting Wolfson Children's Hospital. Emily Magevney and Grace Zimmerman were honorary co-chairs, while Sharon Zimmerman were honorary co-chairs. The 2023 First Coast Design Show is slated for Dec. 6-8, 2023.



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d Exemplifies Gathering



Wolfson with Mark Green and Bruce Smathers

Wolfson Children's Hospital held The Art of Gathering the first Prime Osborn Convention design lectures and special weekend, which included an art auction on Dec. 1 and children's fashion show. All proceeds from the art, fashion show and silent auction benefited Wolfson Children's. The Jacksonville Register served as the 2023 auctioneer, with Lucie, Paula Skitsko and Elli Skitsko as chairs. More than 140 people attended the event. The 2024 event is set for Dec. 1 and 2.



Alan and Erin Harris with Jennifer and Chriss Grippa

Steve Williams with Fitz Pullins



Grier and Julie Wells with Beverly and Tim Sleeth



Durwood Foshee with Tiffany McCall and Thomas Gauthier

Michele Williams with Fanny Jackson

Fundraiser Supports Building Pillars of the Community

Pillars Plus Foundation hosted "Under the Stars," its gala fundraiser, on Dec. 9. The event included live music and a silent auction. Proceeds went to support Mother's House, a 12,000-square-foot transitional housing, education and healthcare program that helps young adults who have aged out of the foster care system or are homeless become sustainably independent within two years.

Tiffany McCall, who had a vision to help children when she was younger, founded the Pillars Plus Foundation, now with a goal of raising \$3 million in support of Mother's House.

"Data from the Annie Casey Foundation show that 37% of people who age out of the foster care system, within three years, will end up behind bars, and 50% will become homeless at some point," said McCall.

The organizations name stems from the acronym for People Investing in the Live and Legacy of Adult youth Reaching for Success, and the plus refers to its local partners such as Sulzbacher, Florida State College at Jacksonville, Daniel House and JASMYN.



Janet Withers with Maxie Coleman



Katrina Johnson with Theresa Tippins



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Adding Value for Clients Makes NAI Hallmark a Trusted Partner

Keith Goldfaden and Christian Harden, SIOR, spent 7 years cultivating a strong book of business for NAI Hallmark when they decided to buy the company in 2016. Building on the company's 23 years of success and its well-established reputation for excellence and expertise in commercial real estate and development, Harden and Goldfaden had a clear vision for the future.

"Keith and I had a keen eye to evolve and grow the business. It was very apparent to us that Jacksonville's commercial real estate market was moving toward specialization, in terms of how brokers focused on specific asset classes," said Harden, who now serves as Co-owner and Managing Partner, along with Goldfaden.

"I think most people only knew NAI Hallmark for development, and we were really eager to build the third-party services side – the brokerage, sales and leasing, and property management," Harden said.

The two partners invested in the expansion of NAI Hallmark's property and facilities management services. Today, their team of 12 building engineers and technicians offers "first responder" service for urgent needs that arise on properties.

"They are really the core component of our business, because they're the first impression with clients," Harden said. "They triage problems and really save people from having to call vendors unnecessarily, which is important to owners."

On-site management services add value for clients and position NAI Hallmark to serve as a trusted strategic partner. They work closely with clients to align their strategic business, financial and operational objectives with their real estate needs through acquisition, renewal, relocation, expansion or consolidation services.

NAI Hallmark also offers unmatched experience, integrity and knowledge. Harden's Society of Industrial and Office Realtors (SIOR) credential recognizes the highest level of standards in the real estate industry, while Goldfaden has successfully closed over \$2 billion worth of office, industrial, retail and multi-family capital markets transactions in his 20 years in the industry.

NAI Hallmark treats every client like a "top 5 client" and prioritizes listening to their needs to build a foundation of trust.

"We want to create 20-year relationships with our clients," Harden said. "Sometimes that means giving clients honest professional guidance, even if we don't earn a fee, because it's the right thing to do. We work hard to create value for their real estate needs as if they were our own."

Harden attributes the company's continued success to a strong culture that embraces five core values: relationship-focused, integrity, passionate, team-oriented



Harden and Goldfaden

and constant improvement. This value-based culture not only makes NAI Hallmark a great CRE partner; it makes the company a great place to work. In the past seven years, NAI Hallmark's team of experts grew from a dozen employees to now more than 60.

In 2021, NAI Hallmark moved its headquarters from the Southpoint area to a more visible location in the Vista Brooklyn building located within the growing Brooklyn neighborhood. They opted for a smaller footprint to accommodate their hybrid workforce, and Harden says it turned out to be a great decision for their employees.

"Our employees love it downtown," Harden said. "Being in a retail space in a thriving neighborhood means we're not only more visible in the community, but we're offering our employees a desirable place to work when they come to the office, even if it's for two or three days a week."

Harden believes exceptional customer service is inextricably linked to satisfied employees who love what they do and are proud of their work. The company even created a program for employees to recognize one another when they exhibit the five core values, and they regularly participate in community-service projects focused on three main areas: environmental stewardship, education and cultural enrichment.

"The City of Jacksonville is really important to us. It's not just the place we work; we care about the people," Harden said. "Doing our part to make the community a better place will create more value for our clients and for real estate nationally."



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FIBROID MYTHS & FACTS

Myth: Surgical removal of fibroids, like hysterectomy, is the only effective cure for fibroids.

Fact: A hysterectomy forecloses pregnancy, and in 60% of cases, the fibroid returns. But, surgery is NOT the only option. An effective, non-surgical option is uterine fibroid embolization (UFEs), which is 90% effective in healing fibroids for good.

A Better Way to Care for Fibroids

- Heavy menstrual bleeding, pelvic pain, or changes in bowel habits are common yet overlooked fibroid symptoms, often misdiagnosed as endometriosis.
- Fibroids can cause difficulty conceiving, miscarriage risk, or delivery complications. Ask your OBGYN or reproductive specialist to refer you to a fibroid specialist.
- UFEs effectively treat fibroids and preserve the uterus. Dr. Parikh performs UFEs through a small access point in the groin avoiding a major surgery.
- Discharged the same day, UFE patients return to normal life in a week, unlike with surgery.

VEIN MYTHS & FACTS

Myth: Slow-healing wounds are a result of aging.

Fact: 90% of leg wounds are due to undiagnosed vein disease but treatment of veins can heal the wound.

Myth: Varicose veins are purely a cosmetic concern, never a major health issue.

Fact: While visible varicose veins cause cosmetic concern, they also cause symptoms such as pain, swelling, and immobility. Not all vein issues are visible. Chronic venous insufficiency, for example, may cause symptoms like leg swelling and discomfort without signs on the skin's surface. An ultrasound is needed to diagnose.

A Better Way to Care for Veins

- Early intervention can heal vein disease before it leads to serious blood clots and venous ulcers.
- Dr. Murthy performs ablations, a non-surgical procedure that delivers radiofrequency energy to collapse the problematic veins and reduce symptoms and the disease.
- Sclerotherapy is another effective, minimally invasive treatment where Dr. Murthy injects a solution into the veins to close them off, so they heal. The veins fade and skin looks better.



Josh GELLERS

BY JENNIFER JENSEN

While Josh Gellers might claim his move to Jacksonville was just luck and timing, it took two years of applying to more than 78 jobs to finally beat out nearly 150 applicants for a job as an assistant professor in the political science department at the University of North Florida (UNF). “I’m very grateful, Gellers said. Gellers grew up in Plantation in South Florida and graduated from the University of Florida; he thinks these ties gave him a leg up from the competition. “I don’t want to say I wasn’t a good candidate, but that definitely played a bigger role,” Gellers said. “I was very excited to go there because it was a place I’d heard of, in a city that I had also heard of. Which is not always the case if you’re an academic.” He described the job as a perfect match. “I never saw myself moving back to Florida,” he said. “But everything kind of worked out. I’ve established my career, a reputation and my extended family is here.” A few years after taking the job at UNF, he worked his way up to associate professor and is now a full professor. He specializes in environmental law and politics. While his focus in college wasn’t on environmental relations, he took a class in geography on El Nino and environmental issues and ended up doing research with the professor and fell in love with it. “I just thought, how else can I analyze what’s going except to take what I’m learning in my macroeconomics

LOCAL FOLKS

class and use it to understand what’s driving the environmental consequences,” he said. Gellers also has a master’s degree from Columbia University and a doctorate in political science from the University of California, Irvine. He focused his dissertation on environmental rights and did field work in Nepal and Sri Lanka. He flirted with law school, but ultimately took a different path. “I’m still very much engaged with environmental law, but analyzing it as a social scientist; and that has kind of become my calling card, a political scientist who studies environmental law policy,” he said. When he moved to Jacksonville, he lived in the intracoastal area before moving to Riverside because it reminded him of the walkability of Long Beach, California. “I wanted to replicate that here,” he said. After marrying Allie Armstrong, the couple moved to Murray Hill and had a daughter, Lillie Faye Gellers. “We opted for Murray Hill, and we’ve been here ever since,” he said. “We love it, and we have friends who live on our street and on our side of the neighborhood and they have kids. So, we have playdates and all that kind of stuff.” Gellers met Armstrong at Douglas Anderson High School during a monthly visit on behalf of the World Affairs Council of Jacksonville’s Great Decisions program. His partner at Douglas Anderson ended up playing matchmaker and introduced him to Armstrong, a counselor at the high school. “We agreed to do a sort of quasi-chaperoned blind date,” Gellers said. “We met at now-defunct Black Sheep.” His friend left shortly thereafter for the Gellers and Armstrong to have an actual date. “I think it was like a five-hour date,” he said. And the rest is history. After moving to Murray Hill in 2019, Gellers decided to get a even more involved in the community. He became a member of the Murray Hill Preservation Association and was charged with handling the community’s response to the Murray Hill chemical smell. He met with local, state and federal environmental officials, and even earned an environmental education and advocacy award from the Jacksonville Environmental Protected Board for his work. Gellers served on the City of Jacksonville’s Special Committee on Resiliency and Mayor Donna Deegan’s Transition Team on the Infrastructure Committee’s Subcommittee on Resiliency. He is also the newest member of the Jacksonville Environmental Protection Board. “It was really a confluence of activities that I had been involved with in the city, as well as at UNF that exposed me to the Environmental Protection Board’s work,”



Josh Gellers, his wife Allie Armstrong and daughter Lillie Faye Gellers attend Porchfest in Springfield.

Gellers said. “And then there was this opportunity where there was now going to be a position for what they call a discreet citizen.” The timing was right, and the board needed to fill the vacancy quickly. He will serve in the role for five years. He likes the Environmental Protection Board because it’s “boots on the ground.” “We’re fighting this company and we’re holding the party responsible, and we get to vote on it,” he said. In his career, he has also been fortunate to be able to travel. He’s been invited to speak in Australia and Germany. In addition to performing research in Sri Lanka and Nepal, he’s also done field research in China and Japan. Whenever he travels, he likes to take photos of his adventures. A photo he took while on a research trip in Sri Lanka was a finalist for a World Bank photography competition. Outside of work and community involvement, Gellers enjoys going to concerts, playing fantasy football, running and photography. He learned to play the drums in middle school band and was in a punk rock group in high school. When he was leaving for college, he realized he couldn’t take a drum set with him. “I was like, I’m just going to have to learn something more portable,” Gellers said. “And so that’s when I sort of picked up the guitar.” Gellers believes no one can be a master of everything, but one can specialize in their own niche. “I think being an expert in a very narrow area has made me very humble to accept that I don’t know a lot about other things,” he said. “I can just focus on my lane and develop my very limited expertise in that manner.”



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BY PEGGY HARRELL JENNINGS

It's 2024! Out with the old, in with the new. Perhaps it's not an abrupt ending or a startling beginning but a chance to ring in the new year with a melding of the past with new opportunities.

People have been making New Year's resolutions since the Babylonians over 4,000 years ago. In Julius Caesar's time the calendar was changed to celebrate the god Janus – he of the two faces – one looking backward and one looking to the future. For the new year, reflect on what is behind, yet challenge yourself to find new creative outlets. Find inspiration. Be an inspiration.

Looking back ten years ago, photographer Mark Krancer could only dream of exhibiting in a gallery. Now, this month and through February, his dream is a reality. Check out this award-winning featured artist at the Southlight Gallery in the Wells Fargo building downtown.

In 1971 architect David Engdahl attended a sculpture exhibit and reflected, "I think I'd like to try doing that." In those 50 plus years of "trying" Engdahl, now a highly respected and award-winning sculptor, has created over 600 exquisite pieces, 65 of which he displayed at his recent Open Studio Event.

Michaelangelo said the task of a sculptor is to discover what is inside each block of stone and free it.

In Engdahl's hands, wood is formed into graceful objects of beauty which transcend their humble beginnings. His art is inspired by natural forms which he interprets in his sculptures. He embraces the organic feel and natural flow of the imperfections of nature and his contemporary laminated wood pieces interpret that natural element in startlingly beautiful forms.

"I'm always sketching. I always have lots of ideas rolling around. After all, architecture – buildings – are just three-dimensional sculptures," he said.

Learn more about Engdahl's process at DavidEngdahl.com and meet one of his greatest influences, his mother, artist Nathalie Roth Engdahl.

Open Studios at CoRK Arts District

Hundreds of visitors flooded to CoRK when 60 artists opened their studios to the public at its annual Open Studios, held the weekend before Thanksgiving. Watching Larry Wilson attack a canvas with his hands covered in paint and a jubilant expression



David Engdahl in his workshop.

on his face was worth beating your way through the crowd.

Artist Allison Watson has been drawing since she was around three years old, and her glorious paintings of nature – which she calls her refuge and spirituality – reflect a harmony with the natural world.

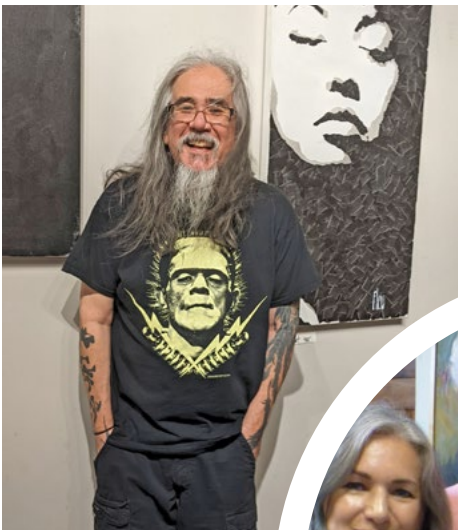
Marsha Hatcher created an amazing series of work based on her concept of visualizing faces and figures in the bark and branches of trees.

Lauren Peckham and Frank "Flew" Lewis find inspiration through music.

"Sometimes music, or just being around other creatives, will give me the itch to create. Going to art shows makes me want to go home and work," said Lewis.

Another inspiration for Lewis's dramatic black and white ink portraits?

"I've always been better at rendering people, and what's a prettier subject than a woman?" he said.



Frank "Flew" Lewis



Mark Krancer



Anna Miller with Paul Lodner and Kelli Suzanne

Glenn Ivie

Eddy Hatcher with Marsha Hatcher and Allison Watson

The Beat Goes On:

It's a new year, a fresh canvas, a world of imagination without limits!

Jan. 27 – Ortega Camellia Festival – 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Ortega Church Fellowship Hall and Courtyard with art, vendors, food, kids' activities and gardens tour. Free and open to the public.

January – Jewish Community Alliance's Vandroff Gallery – Featured artist Glenn Ivie's landscape and nature painting exhibit "Evolving Works" demands us to "look, listen, receive and get ourselves out of the way of the experience."

Through February – "Colors of the Wild" Jacksonville ZooLights Lantern Experience, jacksonvillezoo.org

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BY MICHELE LEIVAS



Jason Hatley with Caryn Carreiro



Libby Boomer and Kristen Brodosi



Heather Schatz and Lauren Collie with Lyndsay Rossmen and Jim Webb



Alton Knox with Denise Johnson Daniels



Kerri Stewart with Downtowner of the Year Kay Ehas and Jake Gordon



Tyler Osborne, founder of Setlan Coffee, winner of Retail Project of the Year.



Emily Moody, co-owner of the night's Small Business of the Year, Wolf & Cub.



Downtown Ambassador of the Year Potrina Jones

Downtown Vision Inc. celebrated its ninth annual DT#Jax Awards on Thursday, Nov. 30, honoring and celebrating projects, companies and individuals that have served and enhanced Downtown Jacksonville.

The event was held at The Lark for the third year.

The evening's emcee was News4Jax news anchor and investigative journalist Vic Micolucci. The evening also offered drinks and appetizers for guests to enjoy. In his opening remarks, Downtown Vision Inc. (DVI) CEO Jake Gordon explained the funds from the event go "directly to [DVI's] placemaking efforts for downtown."

"We came up with these awards to honor those who work hard in downtown every day," said Gordon. "It's a little bit thankless sometimes and I think we really want to make sure that people who work hard and do great things in Downtown Jacksonville get honored for that."

In total, six awards were given. The categories and honorees are as follows:

- Ambassador of the Year – Potrina Jones - Awarded to honor a Downtown Ambassador who continually goes above and beyond in their service of Downtown's stakeholders, residents, employees and visitors.
- Downtowner of the Year – Kay Ehas, CEO of Groundwork Jacksonville – Awarded to an individual who in 2023 has demonstrated inspirational leadership and made strides to create and support a vibrant Downtown.
- Small Business of the Year – Wolf & Cub – Awarded to a street-level retailer who has enhanced the Downtown experience for everyone living, working and visiting Downtown Jacksonville.
- Retail Project of the Year – Setlan Coffee Co. – Awarded to a new retail project that has created an amenity for Downtown residents, employees and visitors through remarkable design and unique offerings.
- Downtown Project of the Year – The Fuller Warren Bridge Shared Use Path (SUP) – Awarded to a project that has

significantly enhanced the economic revitalization of Downtown through the activation of underutilized buildings, job creation or leading design practices.

- Downtown Achievement Award – Alex Sifakis, president and founder of JWB Real Estate – Awarded to an individual or organization for a significant body of work that reinforces Downtown as the premier center for arts, dining, retail, entertainment, business and urban living in Northeast Florida.



William and Alyson Stokes with Billy Cerveney and Drew Haramis.

Art, Angels Support Families in Need

The Allison Brundick Haramis Foundation and Miller & Company Real Estate held their Annual Holiday Open House on Tuesday, Nov. 28, hosting more than 100 guests in Ortega Village. Cheerleaders from Episcopal School of Jacksonville - St. Mark's campus kicked off the event, which included vendors, hot cocoa, and entertainment from The Ronan School of Music. Angels for Allison also honored this year's 16 Angel Art Contest winners. Selected from more than 200 contest submissions, the winners will be featured on the Foundation's limited-edition stationery sold throughout the year. A portion of the event's proceeds were donated to the Allison Brundick Haramis Foundation, which assists with funeral costs for families who have lost a child.

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ANIMAL HOUSE

Have Pets,
Will Travel



BY JULIE GARMENDIA

If the family's recent travels with a pet included unexpected difficulties, planning – plus travel-friendly pet gear – can make future trips more carefree. Planning is essential to streamline public transportation or lodging for pets.

Packing functional gear specifically designed for pets, including smooth-rolling carriers, lightweight backpacks or collapsible strollers, can make activities easier and safer. Especially for kittens, puppies, seniors, disabled or exotic animals, these ever-improving products can make it possible for pets to accompany the family almost anywhere.

When planning, secure pet-friendly lodging reservations early. Confirm the types of pets, breeds, sizes and weights allowed, as well as any additional requirements or fees. When leaving the room, confine the pet in its carrier and place the Do Not Disturb sign on the door. Turn on a quiet television or radio talk show to comfort your pet and mute outside noises until your return.

Some pet owners choose the familiarity and comfort of their own car or motor home and avoid regulations required by public transportation. But, because the family vehicle is not always possible, the International Pet & Animal Transportation Association reports that four million pets and other live animals annually travel on public transportation: two million of those within the U.S.

Know Your Regulations

Owners must make their pet's and their own airline and other transport reservations simultaneously. Carriers limit the number and type of pets permitted on each trip. It is a good practice to book non-stop flights of the shortest duration and reconfirm reservations before flights.

All public transit carriers also enforce restrictions regarding pet types, breeds, sizes and weights for in-cabin, on-board or cargo. Pet travel containers must be large enough for the animal to stand in, sit and turn around. Read the fine print and only purchase a pet travel carrier (in cabin) or crate (as cargo) approved by your transportation carrier. Pet regulations and container specifications are regularly updated on carrier websites. If a pet carrier is not compliant, denial to board is a last-minute travel nightmare that cannot be quickly solved. This problem usually results in a missed departure that may be non-refundable. Despite

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some manufacturers’ advertisements, airlines do not approve, endorse or certify specific pet products for flight.

Consult online site maps of the transportation provider’s facility to locate pet relief areas. Take the pet to the relief area just before entering security screening. Most pet relief areas are outside security clearance and require pet owners to exit and repeat the screening process.

Owners must always maintain control of their pets, keeping them contained or leashed. Upon arrival at a security checkpoint, remove the pet from the carrier. Place the empty carrier through the X-ray machine. Remove the pet’s leash and collar with metal or tags. Place everything into a bin and onto the X-ray machine’s conveyor belt. Pets should never remain in carriers entering X-ray machines. Follow officers’ instructions before walking through the metal detector with a pet. Pets and pet carriers may be subject to a visual or physical inspection. TSA personnel may swab the pet owner’s hands for traces of explosive residue. After screening, the pet should be re-collared and returned to the travel carrier.

For travel outside of the U.S., pet owners must also follow U.S. regulations for re-entry. Research websites or contact each country’s entry authorities, consulate or embassy regarding the necessary pet documents, vaccinations and quarantine rules.

Visit Your Veterinarian

While federal, state and individual airline pet travel regulations can change, all pets, generally, should be healthy and vaccinated. Puppies and kittens must be eight weeks old and weaned five days before any flight; be sure to carry valid veterinarian records and documents. Before purchasing any pet travel, review pet regulations on carrier websites early enough to schedule required veterinarian exams and vaccinations and be aware of any separate fees charged for pet transport.

Some carriers and hotels also request a health certificate provided by veterinarians. Required veterinarian documents may include annual exams, vaccinations and a Veterinary Inspection or Acclimation Certificate (for cargo transport). The Veterinary Inspection confirms the pet is healthy for travel, shows no sign of disease and is vaccinated. The Acclimation Certificate for cargo pet travel waives the low-temperature federal regulation for animals traveling in a cargo hold. It indicates the owner’s understanding that airlines cannot guarantee the temperature of the cargo area or holding facility, including transit temperatures between the terminal and carrier.

Pets traveling as cargo may experience fluctuating temperatures that could drop below 45 degrees Fahrenheit or lower for more than 45 minutes between the terminal and plane, or for longer than four hours in a holding facility. Airlines cannot ship animals if they will experience temperatures higher than 85 degrees Fahrenheit.

Pets lost during travel are among the most heartbreaking incidents that can occur. Check with your vet to ensure identification tags and microchips are updated. These



precautions are the only hope of reunion with a lost pet in case of disaster. Veterinarians recommend that pets eat a regular meal the night before travel and have minimal food and water on travel days. Secure a puppy pad with shipping tape inside the pet carrier. Pack extra pads in case of accidents or if the pet relief area is too distant. A small, soft infant blanket or towel is the perfect size to place on the pad and can be discarded if necessary. Carry veterinarian and vaccination records, a leash, harness, disinfectant wipes, disposable litter box, cat litter, doggy bags for clean-ups or trash, a collapsible water bowl and any pet medications with you during travel.

Assess Your Pet

Consider the pet’s temperament, health and ability to travel on public transport. Can the pet quietly and calmly handle crowds and noisy locations where it will see, smell and hear other traveling pets? Can it tolerate confinement for unpredictable periods?

If the pet has never traveled or only for short car rides, try a longer-distance trip, overnight or weekend getaway. A more extended trip will determine the pet’s tolerance for travel. Before departure, allow the pet free access to travel gear, with a favorite blanket or toy inside.

Young, senior, disabled pets or those with chronic conditions may be unable to tolerate long-distance travel, connecting flights or delays common on public transport. Instead, seek your family vet, kennel, pet sitter, friends or family to board these pets.

While exploring, all pets may need a break from crowds of tourists, traffic noises or marathon sightseeing. Even fit, active pets can tire during challenging hikes. They also might need paw protection from hot pavement, sharp rocks or rough terrain. Whether moving through busy terminals, city streets, paved walking paths or wilderness trails, a safely secured pet reassures everyone.

RESOURCES

- Pet-friendly U.S. Hotels: <https://www.petswelcome.com/pet-friendly-hotel> | <https://www.pet-friendly-hotels.net>.
- Transportation Security Administration (TSA): (866) 289-9673 | TSAContactCenter@tsa.dhs.gov. <https://www.tsa.gov/travel/security-screening/what-can-i-bring/items/small-pets>
- U.S. Department of Agriculture, Animal, Plant & Health Inspection Service (USDA/APHIS): <https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/pet-travel> | (800) 545-8732, press #2 for State Regulations.
- International Air Transportation Association (IATA): <https://www.iata.org/en/programs/cargo/live-animals/pets>
- International Pet & Animal Transportation Association (IPATA): <https://www.ipata.org>



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THE WAY WE WERE

Margaret Day Julian & Hazel HarbyDonahoo

BY PEGGY HARRELL JENNINGS

Margaret Day Julian has pleasant memories of running down McGirts Boulevard to play with her cousins - eleven of them living on the same block! She and her brothers, along with cousin Hazel Harby Donahoo and her siblings, were fortunate to have 21 first cousins and 55 relatives within a five-mile radius in old Ortega. The memories of Julian and Donahoo aren't just personal accounts of growing up on the river crabbing, bicycling and water skiing but are an integral part of Jacksonville history.



Margaret Day Julian and her brothers

Arthur Benjamin and Hazel Brown Chitty married in 1913 and built the prairie-style house at 2953 Riverside Ave. in 1918 and had two sons and four

daughters. The Chittys were founding members of Riverside Baptist Church, where all the girls were married, and Arthur Chitty was the founder of Chitty and Company on Dennis Street, the first wholesale grocer in Florida. After Arthur Chitty sold his business in the 1960s, he and family member Nathan Brown migrated to McGirts Boulevard to be near the rest of the family, where they lived in what old Ortegas know as The Barker's Dock House. The family has had six addresses on McGirts Boulevard and three generations living in some of the same houses.

The oldest of the 21 cousins, Donahoo was often called upon to babysit the younger cousins for 25 cents an hour and she pointed out "that wasn't per child!"

"It was the cocktail era," Julian said about the entertaining during post-war times. "Everyone was very sociable and involved in the community. My father, Dr. Sam Day and our uncle, Dr. Jack Terry, went into practice together. They were general surgeons, and their offices were in the

Medical Arts Building in 5 Points where the SunRay Theater is now."

Donahoo and Julian both attended Ortega Elementary School and Lakeshore and Donahoo was everything one could be at Robert E. Lee High School.

"It was ridiculous! I was president of or volunteered for everything!" she said.

Donahoo was president of Little Women, in Y-Teens, mascot of Hi-Y, and dated (later married) the captain of the football team, Tom Donahoo. She said it's in her DNA to excel and work. She taught school and was "tied to the Cummer" after being inspired to create Cummer by Candlelight upon seeing Franz Hal's painting in Amsterdam when touring Europe with her mother.



The Chitty sisters: Gertrude, Dolly, Betty and Mary Ann



18-month-old Margaret Day feeding a squirrel on the porch of her McGirts Boulevard home.

"Mother and I were close friends. We served as docents at the Cummer for 18 years. It was fabulous training. I felt like I got a PhD in art," she said. Later, she worked at The Added Touch and Mrs. Howard Interior Design as a decorator. She is in the Junior League, has been a devoted member of St. Mark's Episcopal Church for 70 years and uses her knowledge to "encompass her love of community."

Julian, after attending Ortega Elementary, Lakeshore and Bartram, where her interests were music and drama, attended Stephens College to major in piano before graduating from University of Tennessee (UT) with a degree in speech pathology. Unlike her other cousins who stayed close to home, this free spirit hitchhiked to San Francisco for the Summer of Love. When she married, Julian didn't tell her parents until later. She lived in Montana

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Tom and Hazel Donahoo



Gertrude Terry with Dolly Day and Betty Harby Stark



Margaret Day Julian and Hazel Harby Donahoo

and was introduced to different thoughts and philosophies out west which have carried over into her present life. She refers to herself as “a flower child turned career woman.”

Julian returned to Jacksonville with her son, Edward Indigo Julian, and worked for thirty years in Duval and Nassau County schools as an itinerant speech pathologist. As a plant enthusiast – thanks to an inspiring botany course at UT – Julian is organizing the First Annual Ortega Camellia Festival, set for Jan. 27 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Ortega Church Fellowship Hall,

“We might have inherited a little Bohemian streak from Grandmother Hazel Chitty.”



Hazel Donahoo on her wedding day.

which will include garden tours, artists on site, a bloom exhibit and art exhibit.

“So many of the young people who buy old Ortega homes don’t know or understand the legacy plants in their yards and tear them out. The festival will be a chance to educate the public and help preserve the historic plants,” she said.

Julian, whose favorite quotes include “Bloom where you are planted” and “Live simply so that you may simply live,” worked with the flower arranging committee at Riverside Presbyterian Church and is a lifelong member of the Sierra Club, Audubon Society and Delta Kappa Gamma. She loves music, particularly The Rolling Stones, The Beatles and Bob Dylan. Although opera is her least favorite, she has great admiration for Rene Fleming and supports the Friday Musicales and Prelude Music.

The cousins, who live within two blocks of each other with relatives scattered all over Ortega, became best friends when their mothers died in 2010. As alike as they are different, the two share cherished affection for those who came before them, a zealous dedication to the betterment of their community and a keen sense of humor.

According to them both, “We might have inherited a little Bohemian streak from Grandmother Hazel Chitty.”

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NEFAR President Diana Galavis, left front, joins other NEFAR members in packing meals during the NEFAR/Hunger Fight Pack-a-Thon Dec. 7.

Realtors Show Generosity Through Donations, Time

More than 200 Realtors converged at the Ramallah American Club with the goal of packing 75,000 meals for disadvantaged children during the Northeast Florida Association of REALTORS® annual Hunger Fight Pack-a-Thon Dec. 7. Within three hours, the Realtors prepared 76,126 meals, surpassing their goal.

The event was sponsored by the NEFAR Charitable Foundation, which donated \$33,000 to cover the cost of the food supplies as well as 2,640 books for underserved preschoolers in the region. The food and book combination supported Hunger Fights’ “Food for their bellies, books for their brains” program. Also, to aid in Hunger Fight’s distribution of food throughout the region, NEFAR donated two box trucks worth more than \$100,000 to the nonprofit in 2022.

“Hunger Fight is an amazing organization, and NEFAR is proud to partner with them again to provide children and families access to food to end hunger and provide those in need with tools for success,” said 2023 NEFAR President Diana Galavis.

In 2023, NEFAR’s Charitable Foundation, which is funded by gifts from the 12,000 members, has donated \$370,568 to nonprofits and charitable projects on the First Coast.

“Realtors have the reputation of being very generous with their time, talent, and treasure when it comes to the Northeast Florida community,” said Galavis. “Nearly every member of NEFAR supports one of the various nonprofits within our region. These donations are an expression of appreciation from our association to the community that we love.”

Gathering Love, Giving Support

BY MICHELE LEIVAS

The Will King Foundation celebrated its fifth annual Gather + Give fundraising event at The Keeler Property on Saturday, Nov. 4.

This day of family-friendly fun offered food truck bites, live music and activities for children, all to raise funds to “support children from developing countries who are receiving life-saving heart treatment at Wolfson Children’s Hospital,” explained Founder Courtney Hughes.

This year’s event raised \$73,000.

The Will King Foundation partners with Patrons of the Heart, providing sponsorships to cover costs relating to travel, lodging, logistical planning and medications for the child, while also providing support for their families while they are in Jacksonville.

According to a social media post about the Gather + Give event, the foundation is anticipating the arrival of its 11th child in Jacksonville for surgery.





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K9 Cairo, whose handler is Columbia County Sheriff's Office's Matt Waddington, was the competition's obstacle course winner.



Jacksonville Sheriff's Office's Scott Stevenson, along with K9 Tyr, was crowned Top Dog at K9s United's Law Enforcement K9 Competition Nov. 18.



JSO K9 Crowned Top Dog

Hundreds of fans converged on Bishop Kenny High School on Nov. 18 to watch canine crimefighters from around the state compete in a variety of obstacles to see if they had what it takes to be K9s United's Top Dog. The annual Law Enforcement K9 Competition event, now in its second year in the area, brought 15 handlers from law enforcement teams across Florida to the First Coast in support of K9 United's mission to advocate and support K9 law enforcement by providing funding for equipment, trainings and services.

The dog-and-handler teams competed in a timed obstacle course to showcase their impressive speed, strength and skills through various exercises including, wall jumps, tunnel crawls, bailouts, apprehension, and more.

Overall Top Dog was awarded to Officer Scott Stevenson and K9 Tyr from the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office (JSO). Columbia County Sheriff's Office's Deputy Matt Waddington and K9 Cairo were the obstacle course winners while fastest winner went to Corporal Casey Walsh – the competition's first female competitor – and K9 Stern from Gainesville Police Department. “Hardest Hitting” went to Deputy Logan Schrock and K9 Junior from St. Johns County Sheriff's Office.

According to competition winner Stevenson, who has been with the JSO K9 Unit for 17 years, competitions like these give the community an opportunity to better connect with the working dogs.

“There’s this perception that these dogs are terrifying and they’re just chain saws on a leash, and that’s not the case. With these competitions you can show that not only are these dogs not super aggressive, but it also shows that you can have a lot of verbal control over the dog as far as getting them to do certain tasks,” he said.

Each dog completes a minimum of 480 training hours for patrol skills, 400 hours for explosive detection, and 240 hours for narcotics detection, though Stevenson said JSO exceeds all those numbers. Each dog also receives a minimum of 16 hours of maintenance training per month and is certified annually through the Florida Department of Law Enforcement and the National Police Canine Association.

“They’re not robots. You can’t just program them, or set a code, and the dog does it for the remainder of his life. You constantly have to work on specific skills and try to improve them,” he said.

Stevenson said K9 officers often get questions about what happens to the dogs when they aren’t working. Typically, the dogs live with their handlers. Considered far more than just “a tool,” they often become a part of the family. But the biggest question he gets while out in the community is why K9 officers always leave their trucks running.

“[It’s] because of the air conditioning. Dogs are real sensitive to heat, and especially being down here in Florida, we have to have that air conditioner running at all times,” he said.

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Children Blessed (and Bless) through Shopping Spree

Sanctuary on 8th Street treated over 50 kids to its Annual Holiday Shopping Experience at Target on Dec. 13. Each child was given a budget of \$100 and a chaperone to guide them through the store. Beyond the excitement of choosing gifts, the experience served as a valuable opportunity for the youth to work on math and decision-making skills. Some of the children truly embraced the spirit of the season, exhibiting selflessness through their choice to buy more gifts for others than for themselves.



Lucas Soulby with Shelly and Sheldon

Boy Scout Troop 2 member Lucas Soulby recently completed his Eagle Scout project to the benefit of his alma mater, Assumption Catholic School. The school has two tortoises, Shelly and Sheldon, who reside in its garden and were in need of a permanent shelter. Soulby met with science teacher Bill Hawthorn to design a plan that would meet the needs of the campus tortoises. He then designed, fundraised and constructed the shelter on campus, giving the tortoises a new home and a place for the students to interact with them.

Bolles Science Expo Showcases Student Innovation

More than 100 middle and upper school student researchers shared their projects at the annual Bolles Science Expo Dec. 7 in Cain Gym on the Bolles Upper School San Jose Campus. A more comprehensive approach to an annual science fair, the event included displays of research projects and demonstrations from students in science and technology classes, as well as clubs like the middle school's Biomimicry Club.

2023 SPARK Scholars Christina Dovellos, Madeline Kaiser, Annika Mirjankar, Simran Naval, Krish Patel and Amanda Tun also had projects in the Expo. SPARK, which stands for Science Program for the Advancement of Research Knowledge, started at Mayo Clinic in summer 2017 for students from Duval and St. Johns counties. The SPARK Research Mentorship Program provides high school students with mentored research experience in world-class laboratories at Mayo Clinic.



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The Knight's Ensemble choir with director Andrea Ford.

Choir, Spelling Bee Wins for Assumption Students

Assumption Catholic School students brought home several awards in November. Dozens of students vied for top spot at the annual Spelling Bee, with seventh grader Evelyn winning the competition. She will progress to the Duval County semi-finals on Feb. 13 with the top 25 moving on to the finals on Feb. 27. Seventh grader Wyatt placed second and sixth grader Lucas placed third. English/Language Arts teacher Erin Mah led the Spelling Bee, in which Georgia Ruen served as moderator while Vicki Yazdiya, Lydia Stanley and Vickie Charboneau sat as judges.

The Assumption Catholic School choir also saw honors of its own when the Knight's Ensemble brought home the Golden Mickey trophy from its competition at Disney Springs on Nov. 10. The choir practices and performs under the direction of teacher Andrea Ford.



Assumption Catholic School Annual Spelling Bee winners Lucas, third place; Wyatt, second place; and Evelyn, first place.



Mike Lowery autographed copies of his books for students during a Dec. visit to Riverside Presbyterian Day School.

Riverside Presbyterian Day School Hosts Bestselling Author

Riverside Presbyterian Day School (RPDS) hosted its annual Author-In-Residence program on Dec. 5, welcoming *New York Times* bestselling author Mike Lowery. Lowery is an author and illustrator of dozens of books, both fiction and nonfiction, for children and adults. Lowery visited with kindergarten through sixth grade students, reading some of his work to classes, leading the students through creative exercises, and signing books. The Author-In-Residence program at RPDS helps promote literature and creative thinking.

Now STREAMing: Family Fun

Assumption Catholic School celebrated its own version of STEAM curriculum with a family-fun night of STREAM – Science, Technology, Religion, Engineering, Arts and Math – activities for its students and their families. STREAM teachers Tina Amico and Pete Zahner set up different stations across campus, and the evening concluded with dinner from Triple D Dogs, which is owned by alumni Colin Bailey.



Daniel Celebrates 140 Years Helping the Community

With the start of 2024, Florida's oldest child-service agency marks an important milestone – 140 years of serving local children and families. Daniel was established in 1884 as a nonprofit assisting orphaned children after yellow fever ravished Jacksonville. The agency now serves some 5,000 kids and high-risk families each day with a wide range of services that still include adoption.

In late 2023, Daniel's Family Service Counselor Mazie Hopkins proudly stood beside Misty Powless as she adopted her son Jamison. Powless is the child's biological great aunt who eagerly stepped up to care for him after his biological mother, who struggled with substance use disorder, relinquished her parental rights. Hopkins was Jamison's advocate and helped Powless navigate the process.

Daniel also connects children with caring foster families, strengthens at-risk families, provides residential treatment to kids struggling with emotional/behavioral issues, and operates a nationally recognized independent living program designed to prevent homelessness among youth and to help them become productive members of our community.

Many success stories have emerged from this program, but Victoria* serves as a powerful example. When her mother's relationship with her stepdad ended, teenaged Victoria and her siblings ended up couch surfing at friends' houses. With that instability and her grades slipping, Victoria needed a better path forward. She found it at Daniel.

With Daniel's help, Victoria moved into their Independent Living Village, refocused on school, and learned enduring life skills. Today, she's a wife, mom to three boys and a licensed REALTOR®, crediting Daniel with instilling qualities she still utilizes.

Daniel CEO Lesley Wells says even as Daniel has evolved to meet the community's changing needs over the past 140 years, their commitment to children has remained constant.

"When it comes to local children in crisis on any level, Daniel has always been there," Wells said. "And the community has always supported us with gifts from independent donors, corporate sponsorships, and outstanding board support. It's why we've endured and how we'll be able to continue this vital support well into the future."

*First name only used for privacy

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Congressman John Rutherford with Sarah Park and Tyler Hodges

Park Wins Congressional App Challenge

U.S. Congressman John Rutherford visited the Bolles Upper School San Jose Campus Dec. 8 to surprise junior Sarah Park and recognize her as the first-place winner of the Congressional App Challenge for District 5. The Congressional App Challenge is a nationwide computer science and coding competition in which participants create an application or “app” for mobile, tablet or computer devices. Park’s soon-to-be-published app, Spark Care+, is a music therapy app that provides mental wellness services to users by allowing them to select a personalized music piece based on their activity.

“[The app] takes into account your activity that you’ve been doing, your current mood and so much more to present you some music that may help you with relaxation, concentration, meditation and more,” she said.

As a challenge winner, Park is invited to Capitol Hill in the spring for #HouseOfCode, a celebration where winners from around the country will demo their apps to their Representatives. Winning apps may be put on display in the U.S. Capitol building for one year.

Students Board the Jukebox Time Machine

Riverside Presbyterian Day School’s fifth and sixth grade students traveled through time in celebration of the school’s 75th anniversary. In this year’s annual fall play, a musical titled “Jukebox Time Machine,” the students emulated the pop culture from different decades, showcasing the fashion statements and signature songs from the 1940s to today – songs from bands like Abba, The Beatles, and even Los Del Rio’s popular “Macarena.” The performers staged two shows: one for the student body and a second for parents and guests.



Students channeled the flapper era during Riverside Presbyterian Day School’s 75th anniversary musical.



PHOTOGRAPH BY WES LESTER

CAP students performed at the James Weldon Johnson Park Tree Lighting Ceremony on Dec. 6.

Thirty and Thriving

Performances by the Cathedral Arts Project (CAP), Brookview Elementary School Chorus and the Springfield Middle School Majorettes closed out the yearlong celebration for CAP’s 30th anniversary at the Tree Lighting Ceremony at James Weldon Johnson Park.

CAP’s 30th year celebrated the milestone acquisition of Connecting Thru Music (CTM), a music therapy nonprofit, this past September. According to a CAP press release, this acquisition “represents a strategic expansion of CAP’s services to address unmet community needs for children and young adults living with disabilities through music therapy.”

The year was also an “exceptional year for fundraising” for the nonprofit: Spring for the Arts, its signature fundraiser event, raised more than \$800,000 in support of arts education for children and youth in Northeast Florida.

“This year marks a significant chapter in CAP’s story, one characterized by remarkable growth and collaboration, thanks to the dedication of our team and the generous spirit of our community,” said CAP President & CEO Rev. Kimberly L. Hyatt. “Now more than ever, children and young people need access to quality arts education and therapeutic services. The milestones we’ve achieved together in our 30th year will set the foundation for future generations to experience the transformative power of arts education.”



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Bishop Kenny's Isabel Alejandro-Blanco and Kaley Mahoney

Episcopal School of Jacksonville's Ford Rachels and Josh Jenkins

Inaugural Soccer Media Day

JAXUSL hosted its inaugural High School Soccer Media Day on Nov. 2, featuring prominent student-athletes and coaches from 44 local soccer teams from Northeast Florida high schools. The event, presented by Island Wing Company, showcased local soccer talent and invited players for media interviews to share their passion for the sport and expectations for the upcoming season.

The event, held at the Winston Family YMCA in Riverside, was created to help nurture Northeast Florida athletes and create opportunities for players of all ages to follow their passion for the game. More broadly, JAXUSL formed with a goal to bring men's and women's professional soccer franchises to the area by 2026, and to develop host stadium and training facilities.



Episcopal School of Jacksonville's Skylar Dancel and Charlotte Seay

The Bolles School's Ashton Ashchi, Will Morales and Ayden Ashchi

The Bolles School's Milan Thomas and Hallie Nelson



Coch Mike Curran with Olivia Lumpkin, Taylor Lawhon, Isabella Hutchins, Emily Wheldon, Davis Johnson, Alexis Holmes, Stephanie Grden, Tessa Massa, Alexis Wilson, Jillie Jakab, Head Coach Jackie Hardin and Coach Becca Kerr.

Bishop Kenny Girls Win Cross-Country Title

The Bishop Kenny Crusaders girls cross-country team secured the FHSAA Class 2A State Championship Title on Nov. 17 with 69 points, their first win since 2009. This marked the ninth team state title in the program's history. Tessa Massa, Emily Wheldon and Alexis Wilson individually placed inside the Top 16.

The title-winning team time of 19:04 follows the ladies' first place triumph in their district, with a team time of 19:27, and the region, with a team time of 19:10.

Head Coach Jackie Hardin acknowledged that this victory was years in the making and gave special recognition to the four seniors who played a pivotal role in mentoring their younger counterparts and fostering a sense of unity, a commitment to excellence and teamwork.

Their male counterparts, Bishop Kenny Crusader boys cross-country team, also delivered a stellar performance, securing second place in the state. The hometown rivalry with the Bolles Bulldogs added an extra layer of excitement to the competition, as both schools secured the top two positions in both the girls and boys categories, with Bolles taking first place for the boys and second for the girls.



The final beam is installed on Episcopal's new Haskell Center for Science and Student Life.

Topping Out Ceremony Held at Episcopal

Construction crews installed the final support beam on the new Haskell Center for Science and Student Life at Episcopal School of Jacksonville (ESJ) Dec. 8.

Prior to the installation, Haskell employees, ESJ representatives and architect and design team members signed the beam during the Topping Out Ceremony, which included lunch, before the beam was lifted into place at the top of the new building. Located at ESJ's Munnerlyn Campus for grades six through 12, the new building is on track to open for the 2024-25 school year. It will house new science laboratories, a dining hall, student gathering areas and new outdoor spaces.

Funding for the building is provided by the "Boldly ESJ" campaign, for which ESJ has raised \$19.6 million of the campaign's \$26 million goal.

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NJHS students with Administrator Kelli Waterman at the Thanksgiving food drive.

Assumption Students Show Gratitude

Assumption Catholic School students demonstrated acts of gratitude in November as they honored veterans and helped give back to their community.

The National Junior Honor Society hosted a Thanksgiving food drive, successfully collecting 50 bags of goods for those in need. The bags were decorated by Assumption students to help spread extra cheer for the holiday.

The school also held its annual Veterans Day flag ceremony to honor those who have served this country. The student body and staff wore red, white and blue in celebration, and all congregated in the courtyard alongside the school's Cub and Boy Scouts, the Knights of Columbus and the Bishop Kenny High School NJROTC, as the old flag was retired and a new one was raised. The seventh-grade students sang the preamble to the U.S. Constitution during the festivities.



The Bolles JV boys basketball team, including Landon Wagoner, Aiden Henderson, Caleb Davis, Jack Pearson, Dylan Nelson, Jai Patel and Samuel Ellis, was the top fundraiser for the 35th Anniversary Block Party and Light Up the House 5K.

\$100K Raised for Ronald McDonald House

The Ronald McDonald House Charities of Jacksonville (RMHC) held its 35th Anniversary Block Party and Light Up the House 5K on Dec. 1, raising over \$100,000 to help keep families close to the hospitals where their children are receiving medical treatment.

The Bolles JV boys basketball team was the top fundraising team for the event, netting over \$7,000 for RMHC. Jack Pearson, who serves on the RMHC Teen Board, rallied his teammates and others around the cause. Pearson raised \$1,575 and teammate Jai Patel topped the team with a fundraising total of \$2,175.

Brody Olson was the top finisher of the 5K at 18:01, Ethan Reid placed second at 19:03 and Eliot Niece finished third with 20:48.

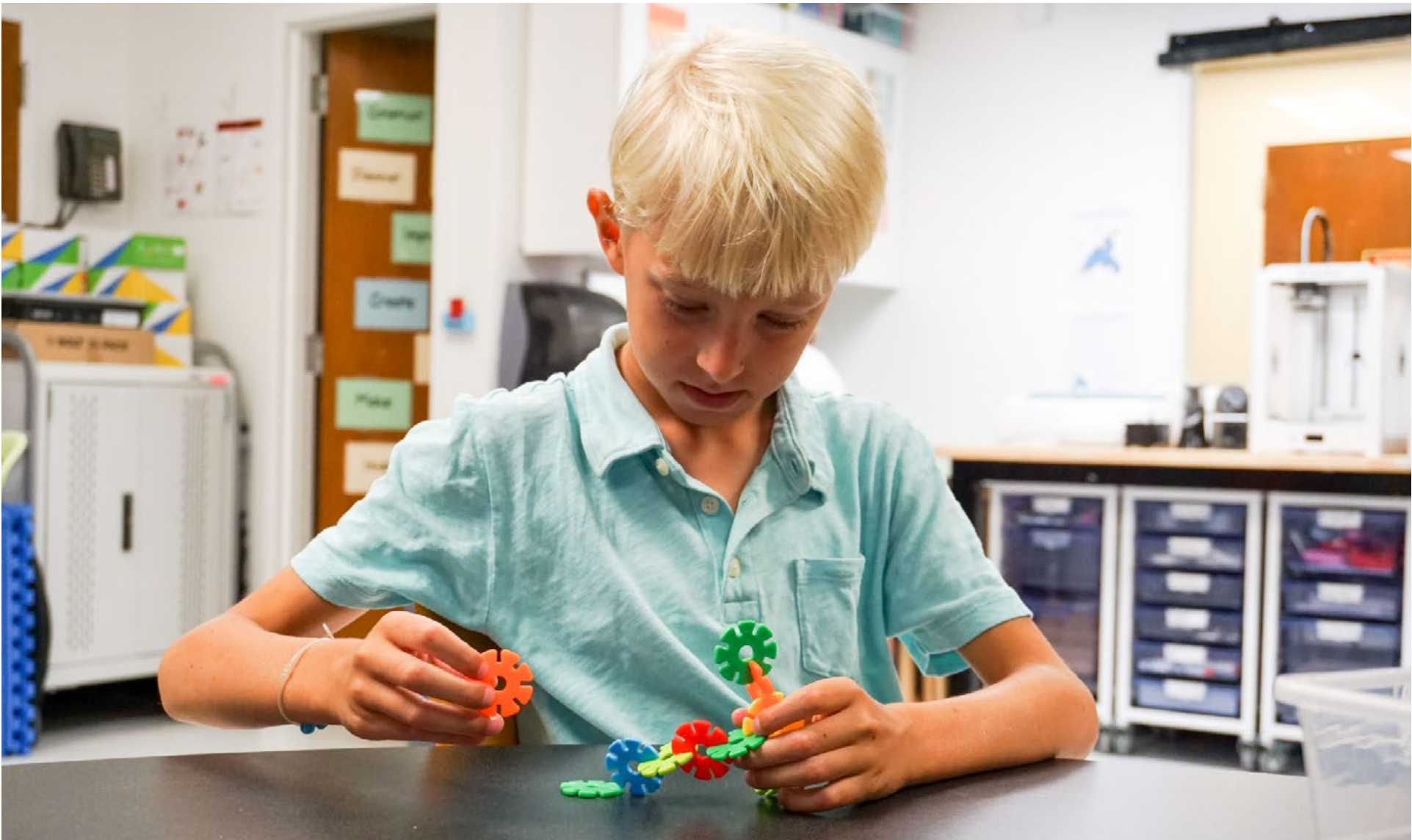


Outdoor Learning Lab Opens at Bolles

Bolles' Middle School Bartram Campus welcomed the new Parrish Family Outdoor Learning Lab with a ribbon-cutting ceremony on Dec. 4. The lab is situated along Pottsborg Creek next to the Pratt Library.

In addition to Jay and Julie Parrish, who had previously opened another outdoor learning center on Bolles' Lower School Ponte Vedra Beach Campus, construction of the new outdoor lab was supported by Sallie Ball, Bess and Tyler Goff, Justin Hart and Liza and Blake Griffis.

"The Parrish Family Outdoor Learning Lab will be an engaging space to conduct experiential lessons in nature and facilitate multidisciplinary education, with a focus on student research, conservation and sustainability," said Bolles President and Head of School Tyler Hodges. "Our science programs have long inspired students on their journeys to become scientists, engineers, doctors and accomplished professionals in their respective fields, and this new facility will only bring about further inspiration."



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Happy New Year, Resident Community! Pass the lucky lunch, uncork the bubbly and sit a minute as we overserve ourselves heaping portions of reflection, gratitude and New Year's resolution.

I bet after a few hefty pours of champagne, we would decide very quickly – and unanimously – that our top-ranked object of neighborhood gratitude is, hands-down, the people who live here. The folks down the street, around the corner and up the way give our community the character and flavor for which it has long been known. The historic homes around here are stunning, and the retail is healthy, but without the people, our neighborhood would have Mad Max Beyond Thunderdome vibes, or worse. Our people are our everything! And therein lies our 2024 New Year's Resolution: to protect this most precious neighborhood resource by getting to know people better, listening more intently and finding the story in every person we meet.

I have been a story collector for most of my adult life, professionally and personally. Through my work as a business news reporter, neighborhood news editor and independent school communicator, I was forever searching for “the story.” And when it started taking shape, I dug a little deeper for the nugget – the lede, the takeaway that might be the highlight of some reader's cocktail party conversation later that evening. I learned everyone has a beautiful story just waiting to be excavated, polished up and shared with others. No two are the same. And all are quickly revealed when we get out of our dome a minute and make an effort to ask. Here are a few memorable finds:

- Longtime San Marco resident Jimmy Pittman, who passed away in 2019, was a key guitar player and songwriter on famed 70s band Strawberry Alarm Clock's fourth album, “Good Morning Starshine.” He also was part of the local band, the Nightcrawlers, known for its song, “My Little Black Egg.” You wouldn't have known this about him just sitting behind him in church. You might have had to ask.
- The countless stories of residents whose personal loss and tragedy inspired the formation of nonprofit organizations that continue to be a healing resource for others. People like Drew Haramis and the Angels for Allison, The Allison Brundick Haramis Foundation; or members of the Rice family who, after facing a cancer diagnosis and being unable to find support for their children in North Florida, founded the Kids Together Against Cancer organization with Ascension St. Vincent's; or how the late Ellen Cavert created the Women's Board of Wolfson Children's Hospital after the death of her infant daughter. There are so many beautiful stories of people in our neighborhood who transformed pain into an opportunity to serve others. These are the saddest but most inspiring stories to discover.
- Meanwhile, some residents like Cathleen Murphy quietly advocate for a cleaner neighborhood by taking and posting photos of collected trash to her Instagram account, LitterFree. It's pretty motivating. Plus, she's very witty, is into horses and always has funny stories to share.
- I know I've mentioned this tale before. Still, I would not have known the “happy walking man” Lee Turner was

an acclaimed pianist and musician if I hadn't asked him during one of the debutante presentations he performed at several years ago. He and his wife, Dianne, have been lifelong pianists in Jacksonville. According to his website, “While at the University of Florida, Lee was the pianist for The Dream Weavers, who had a popular twice-weekly radio show and performed at personal appearances. In 1955, the group recorded ‘It's Almost Tomorrow’, written by members Gene Adkinson and Wade Buff. On January 1, 1956, The Dream Weavers performed the song on the Ed Sullivan Show in New York City, and the song spent 22 weeks on the charts, where it made the top 10. Another song, ‘Into the Night’ (music by Lee, words by Wade Buff), was recorded by the group that year and reached number 82 on the charts.” (!!!) Sometimes, just asking puts a little song in your heart – and the ask-ee's!

- One of my favorite stories is that of longtime Resident photographer Mark Krancer – whose stormy hurricane day photo of Memorial Park's “Life” winged sculpture garnered him numerous accolades and professional prestige. His story is one of faith, redemption and healing and it inspires me every time I think about it.
- I recently took a load of castoffs to the Goodwill donation center in Miramar. There, I was received by the kindest, spirited, most dapper gentleman – he was wearing a stylish hat and black-rimmed glasses, squared on one side, circular on the other. I had to know his name; all I can tell is now I want to know more of Gaylord's story. Hopefully, that will happen on the next big purge outing.

Getting the story always begins with a question – and ends with a relationship. Our community is all about this and why our neighbors are so important. This is why getting out of our heads and into someone else's is the New Year's resolution we all need now. Life-changing connections are at stake! So, where do you start? Let's go to the expert for this. If you haven't read David Brooks' newly released book, “How to Know a Person: The Art of Seeing Others Deeply and Being Deeply Seen” you must go to your local bookstore and get it now. Brooks is a longtime *New York Times* columnist and reporter; he knows his stuff when it comes to asking good questions. And in this book, he explains the urgency and importance of understanding people. In his October 19, 2023, *New York Times* opinion piece, “The Essential Skills for Being Human,” Brooks gets to this nitty-gritty: “I have learned something profound along the way. Being openhearted is a prerequisite for being a full, kind and

wise human being. But it is not enough. People need social skills. The real process of, say, building a friendship or creating a community involves performing a series of small, concrete actions well: being curious about other people; disagreeing without poisoning relationships; revealing vulnerability at an appropriate pace; being a good listener; knowing how to ask for and offer forgiveness; knowing how to host a gathering where everyone feels embraced; knowing how to see things from another's point of view.”

He continues. “People want to connect. Above almost any other need, human beings long to have another person look into their faces with love and acceptance. The issue is that we lack practical knowledge about how to give one another the attention we crave. Some days it seems like we have intentionally built a society that gives people little guidance on how to perform the most important activities of life.”


But how, you ask? He drills down to some very helpful points in his book, but here are the bare bones of his connection performance tips in his, and some of my, words:

- Give people you talk to the gift of your total attention.
- Accompany someone when they are talking to you, don't lead or manage the conversation.
- Be a loud listener.
- Storify whenever possible.
- Do the looping, especially with adolescents.
- Turn your partner into a narrator.
- Don't be a topper. (This is my absolute favorite. Toppers bug me so bad.)
- Ask big questions.
- Stand in their standpoint.

There is so much insight in Brooks' books. I also highly suggest “The Second Mountain: A Quest for a Moral Life.” The bottom line is this: connections and communication are the path to healing and joy. We do not find this when we're living me-centered lives or putting ourselves in the middle of our everything. We cannot hear it when we're blabbering on about how interesting and amazing we are or what wonderful, one-upping things we did today. We find it through connection with others. And that always begins with a question.

Happy New Year!

Susanna Barton is taking on this New Year's resolution through a new self-published Lenten series book called “Rolling My I-s: A Lenten Challenge to Give Up Me, Myself and I-Talk.” Join her for a book launch from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. on January 25 at the St. John's Cathedral Bookstore and Gift Shop in downtown Jacksonville. She raised her family in Granada and has written professionally for The Jacksonville Business Journal, The Resident, Jacksonville University and The Bolles School. She currently manages an online community called Grand Plans, which addresses geridrama and all things elderly on www.mygrandplans.com. Each month, she will share reflections on neighborhood qualities for which she is grateful.



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In Loving Memory

MARY APPLETON JAYCOX

Oct. 23, 1964 – Dec. 14, 2023



On Dec. 14, 2023, the Jaycox family and our community lost a cherished soul when Mary Louise Appleton Jaycox passed away at the age of 59. She was a bright light in the lives of so many and a pillar of strength as she fought a courageous battle against pancreatic cancer.

Mary was born in Toronto, Ontario, Canada on Oct. 23, 1964. She grew up in the capital city of Ottawa and later returned to Toronto to earn her bachelor's degree in radio and television arts at Ryerson University. In 1987, she married the love of her life, William Russell Jaycox, and moved to Jacksonville, Florida.

Mary loved traveling the world and exploring new places. Her favorites included her time spent in India vaccinating children against polio, in Africa white water rafting down the Zambezi River, and drinking and eating her way through Italy and France. Always having been a creative person, these travels fueled her other great passion, interior design. She carefully curated many homes for her family and others, taking great pride and joy in the beauty she created around her.

Mary was kind, compassionate and always put others before herself. She was the most dedicated

mother, wife and friend, spending much of her energy on raising her three children and ushering them into adulthood. She was always there for her family, no



matter what, sacrificing every weekend to attend soccer tournaments, encouraging her children to move across the world for a year-long exchange program, and always supporting their wildest dreams. She instilled in them a sense of determination and encouraged them to embrace their gifts. She led by example as a loving, humble, passionate, perseverant and patient person.

Mary was a tenacious researcher to ensure her family's health and well-being, always won in trivia

and was a brilliant day trader in the stock market. She enjoyed playing tennis, walking her dogs, Moose and Jasper, a good Cabernet and quality time with her friends and family. Mary loved San Marco, of which she was a resident for 39 years, and was involved in the community, including reestablishing Granada Fest in the early 90s.

When Mary contracted Lyme Disease from a tick in Africa, she became a board member of the Florida Lyme Disease Association and dedicated herself to supporting others who were suffering from Lyme in the hope that her experience would help others avoid the struggles and challenges she encountered.

She is survived by her adoring husband, her children, Noelle Jaycox Acosta (Alexei), Shannon Jaycox, and William "Randy" Jaycox; her grandchild, Avery Acosta, and soon-to-be-born second grandson, all of Jacksonville, Florida. She is also survived by her mother, Edith Kathleen Appleton. She was preceded in death by her father, Jack Wayne Appleton (2020), and sister, Corinne Elizabeth Appleton (2011).

She was laid to rest at Hardage-Giddens Oaklawn Cemetery on Wednesday, Dec. 20 in Jacksonville, Florida.

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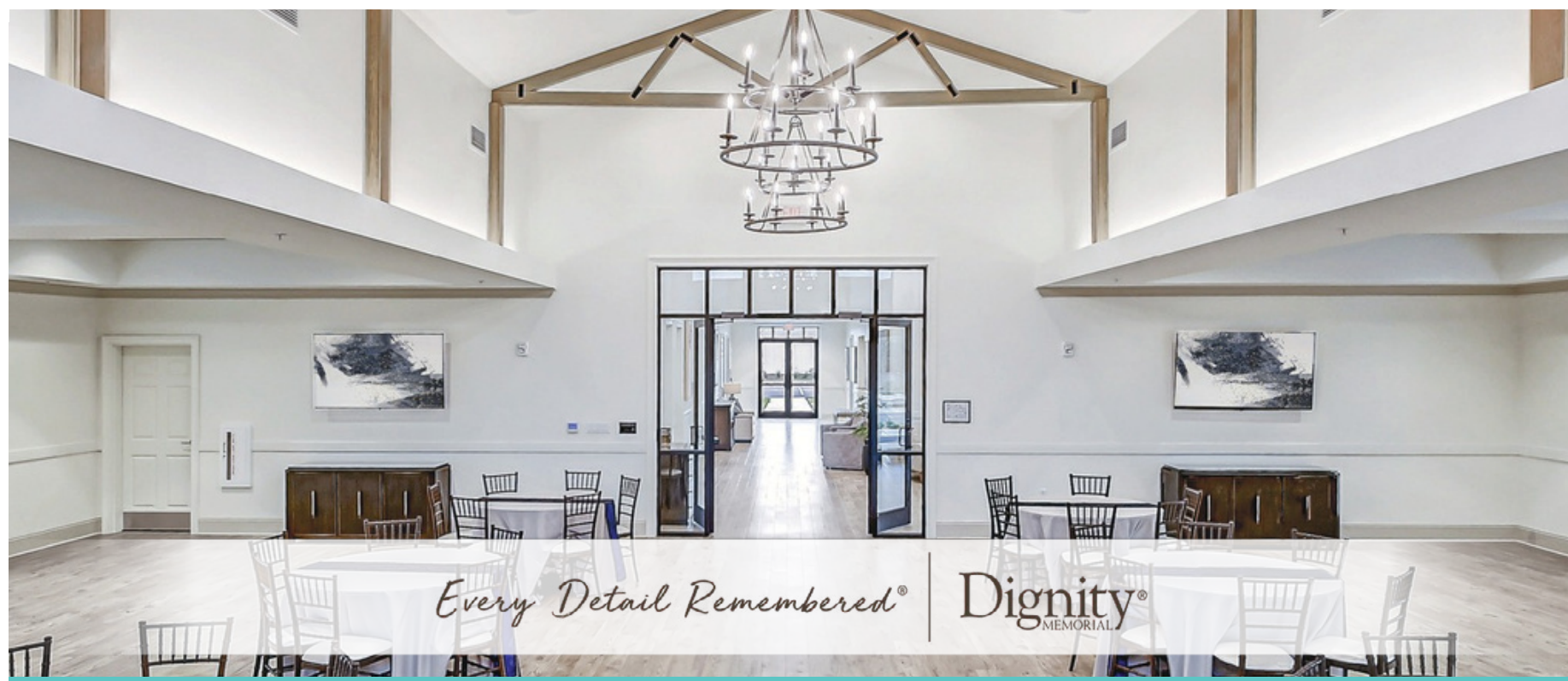


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