

# San Marco Times



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## Southside Tennis Park Project is All Aces

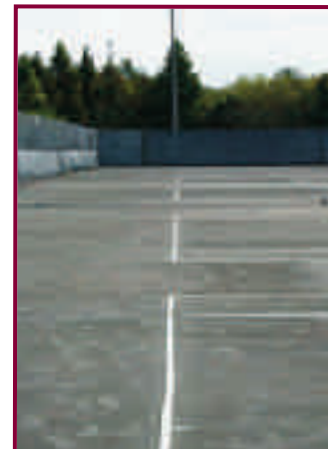
By Alison Abernathy

You’ll forgive the folks who play tennis on the clay courts at the City’s Southside Tennis Complex in San Marco if they’re grinning from ear to ear these days, but they’re beaming with pride in their newly resurfaced courts.

And they’ve got lots of people to thank for this gift that was delivered just before the holidays.

“First, players and friends of Southside raised \$10,000 to pay for the critical materials required for the project – clay, lines, nails, nets, cranks, and paint,” explained Alison Abernathy, Southside tennis player.

“But we couldn’t have added upgrades to the project – new benches and scoreboards for each court – without a generous incentive gift from San Marco Preservation Society (SMPS),” she said. At the start of the fundraising effort in the fall, SMPS offered to add \$3,000 to the total if the Southside players group met their \$10,000 goal, which they did in early December.



*Before*



*After*

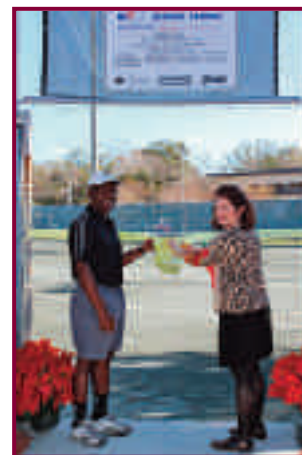
“The project also wouldn’t have happened without the leadership of Councilwoman Lori Boyer, who, along with SMPS, has been a long-time supporter of the Southside Tennis complex,” added BJ Laster, Southside tennis player. She explained that Boyer was instrumental in getting the City’s Public Works and Parks departments involved in this public-private partnership.

While the players and SMPS provided the materials, the City supplied the labor resources for the project, which began in late November and was completed within four weeks. Crews from Public Works began the project by scraping off the old clay, and then

they laid tons of new clay, carefully placed the new lines and hammered in 12,000 nails by hand to secure the lines. They also painted net posts, installed new nets, cranks and wastebaskets and laid new mulch throughout the complex.

Abernathy noted that San Marco businesses, including Matt Carlucci of State Farm and the San Marco Sherwin Williams store, also contributed to the successful effort.

The newly resurfaced courts were dedicated and re-opened at a ceremony on December 22. Along with Councilwoman Boyer, Doug Skiles, SMPS President and Mary Toomey, SMPS Treasurer, were on hand for the ribbon-cutting ceremony.



## San Marco Preservation Society is now online!

For news and information happening in your neighborhood, please find us online at [www.smpsjax.com](http://www.smpsjax.com) and on Facebook!

San Marco Times is the news and information publication of San Marco Preservation Society.

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## Letter from the President



Two years ago at about this time, Jon Singleton (then president-elect) asked me to step into more of a leadership role in SMPS. I slowly warmed to the idea and agreed to start with secretary. Now my term as president is a few months from complete and I look back – with gratitude for the opportunity and excitement for our next president, Diane Martin.

Our board of directors has been a great support for me as well as an inspiration through their endless dedication to our neighborhood. I have also been incredibly blessed to work with our new District Councilwoman, Lori Boyer.

The spring always brings a renewed enthusiasm for us, and I hope that you will join in our fun. We kick off May with the always popular Concert-in-the-Park. Later in the month, we will hold our Annual General Membership meeting which will give us a chance to look back at the year, recognize members of the community for their achievement and share plans for the excitement ahead.

I thank all of you for your generous support of our organization, and in particular for supporting me this past year in the role of president.

Cheers!

Doug Skiles  
President

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## San Marco Blvd-January 2012 update

By Lori Boyer

Construction has begun on Phase 6 of the project from Riviera to Landon. The phase is expected to take 8 to 10 weeks to complete so we can expect completion of this section by mid-March. The contractor and City are in ongoing discussions about possible changes in the phasing schedule in order to facilitate completion on time and to accommodate the desire to limit work in the Square to the summer months. I am advised by Public Works that as of today, we are on schedule for completion in October 2012.

Our efforts to save some additional existing oak trees may be too costly in terms of both dollars and time. The contractor proposed a 25 day extension and substantial cost associated with the effort. I cannot in good conscience support any change that could delay the project that much and potentially impact the holiday season next year. However, the Mayor's office has requested that the City's project manager and the City's Arborist meet this week with the contractor to see if perhaps additional elements of the enhanced tree protection plan can be incorporated without the significant time delay. In any case, we will be relocating the cathedral oak planted on Landon Avenue several years ago in mitigation for the old oak taken down in Landon Park. It will be moved into the park between the playground and San Marco Boulevard.

One very good piece of news is that the actual price of the project is substantially below the \$12 million that was authorized and budgeted. Absent major change orders and unforeseen circumstances, I anticipate that the actual project cost will be closer to \$7 million. I have obtained detailed information from the City Council Auditor on the various contracts and amounts paid out to date, and will be following the process closely. That \$5 million dollar savings certainly comes at the right time for our City.

By the way, for those who are concerned about the raised manholes in the section from Gary to Riviera, another paving layer will be applied in the future. There has been some discussion about the pros and cons of applying the final layer on that section now or upon completion of the project in order to have a uniform color final coat for the entire project. No final decision has been reached.

## *“Pop-up” Neighborhood Block Party*

By: Diane Martin

The San Marco Preservation Society sponsored the first ever “Pop-up” Neighborhood Block Party in beautiful Brown Whatley Park on Hendricks Avenue, and had a great turn-out! It was held on March 10, from noon until 2:00 pm, after the Gate River Run. The sun came out and turned the weather from cool to very pleasant! A huge grill was on hand for grilling hot dogs and hamburgers, and all the fixin’s. Live music by the Band 3 provided a great atmosphere, and the kids had a ball in the Bounce House. If that wasn’t enough to keep the kids occupied, many played corn hole and football! New and old neighbors met and mingled, and caught up on the latest news.



Although membership was not required, it’s always encouraged, and the Preservation Society picked up four new memberships! The event was definitely a success, so look for another “Pop-up” Party in the near future!

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## *Joseph W. Davin Instrumental in the Early Development of San Marco*

By Mimi Pearce



Joseph Davin was instrumental in the development of San Marco in the 1930’s and 40’s. He played a key role in the creation of the San Marco Better Homes Company First Addition to San Marco (on the lands where Villa Alexandria once stood), the San Marco Place Subdivision, River Oaks Subdivision, Alexandria Place Subdivision, Brookwood Terrace Subdivision and Colonial Manor Subdivision. He saw to it that parks and green spaces were an important part of the neighborhood.

He worked closely with Telfair and James Stockton as well as Brown Whatley. In 1929 he joined Telfair Stockton & Co. In 1937 Davin and Whatley organized Whatley, Davin & Co. -- a general real estate, insurance, and mortgage business. One of their accomplishments was building the “Little Theater” in San Marco Square. In 1946 Whatley, Davin & Co. merged with Telfair, Stockton, & Co to form Stockton, Whatley, Davin & Co.

The eldest of five children, Joseph W. Davin was born in Hoboken, N.J. in 1902. His father Denis was an Irish immigrant who was an architect; his mother M. Julia Gallagher was a milliner. Davin attended public schools in Brooklyn, NY and graduated from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute with a Civil Engineering degree in 1923. In 1924 he moved to Jacksonville and was associated with Robert M. Angas, Civil Engineer.

Joe Davin was a prominent civic leader. He was involved with many local and national organizations including: Board of Trustees and Secretary of Jacksonville University; Director of the American National Bank; Children’s Home Society board member; President of the Home Builders Association; President of Jacksonville Board of Realtors; National Board of Realtors; President Jacksonville Chamber of Commerce; President Meninak Club; American Institute of Appraisers; the American Red Cross; and Community Chest.

In 1940 he ended his bachelor days at the age of 38, marrying Lillian Shinholser Jones, and built their home at 903 River Oaks Road where he lived until he died in 1987. Davin Park on River Road is named after his wife, Lillian. The Davin’s had no children and doted on their nieces and nephews. I am one of those nieces and I have many fond memories of Uncle Joe. I remember that he loved music; he played by ear on his Steinway “baby grand” and loved to sing as well. When Haydon Burns was President of the Jacksonville Male Chorus, Uncle Joe was a member of the chorus and sang baritone. He and his wife, Lillian, never missed a symphony performance when they were in town. They loved to dance under the stars on the patio of The Ponte Vedra Inn and Club, which he also helped to build.

His boundless energy and enthusiasm for living life to the fullest included many sports: playing golf wherever he went; riding horseback in “the wilds” of Mandarin; body surfing in the waves at Ponte Vedra; fishing for tarpon at the Jetties; hiking the North Carolina mountains; and traveling worldwide. Uncle Joe possessed a keen sense of humor and a warm, welcoming personality. Always willing to share his knowledge and experience, he mentored many people inside the company and throughout the community. San Marco became the place it is today due to the vision of the Stockton’s, Brown Whatley and Joe Davin.

## Upcoming Events in San Marco

### Concert in the Park - May 4<sup>th</sup>

The Lucas Cates Band, all the way from Madison, WI is coming to play for us, so wear your dancing shoes! The next Concert in the Park will be held on Friday, May 4th, from 6:00 - 9:00 PM in Fletcher Park, 1652 Atlantic Blvd. Taverna will be providing delicious dinner items for purchase, and Marble Slab Ice Cream will have dessert, if they don't run out! You'll be able to purchase Bold City Beer as well as red and white wines. During the band's break, Dance Trance Kids, Watson Martial Arts, and a young singer named Michaela Rowe will each provide a special performance you won't want to miss!

Pre-reserved tables are available for a donation to the San Marco Preservation Society—a table for 8 is \$80 and a table for 6 is \$60. Go to [www.SMPSJax.com](http://www.SMPSJax.com) to reserve your table by May 1, or call 904-614-7814. Or bring a blanket and chairs and your own picnic. Leashed dogs are welcome. Membership table will be on site to collect membership dues.



### Farmers Market of San Marco

Farmers Market of San Marco is open every Saturday from 8:30 am - 2:30 pm. The market has fresh and affordable Florida and regional produce, honey, local San Marco eggs, hot boiled peanuts and baked goods. The San Marco Farmer's Market also has organic produce when available from local organic farms. Please come out and support your local farmers market and the San Marco community.



The market is a collaboration of Farmers Market of San Marco and the historic Swaim Memorial United Methodist Church working together to bring community outreach and fresh affordable produce to San Marco. Find the Farmers Market of San Marco and San Marco Preservation Society on Facebook.

**Location:**

1620 Naldo Ave, Corner of Lasalle and Hendricks behind Regions Bank

**Date and Time:**

Every Saturday, 8:30 am - 2:30 pm

### Preservation Hall Spring Clean Up

Saturday, April 21, 2012, 8:30a – 1p

Please join us in sprucing up our very popular Preservation Hall & Cottage.

We will be wiping down the interior walls with Old English (bring your rubber gloves), vacuuming the chair cushions (bring small vacuum cleaners) and trimming the adjacent shrubbery (bring hand clippers and rakes).

### General Membership Meeting

May 21, 2012, 7:00 PM, at Preservation Hall, 1652 Atlantic Blvd. Beautification Awards. Everyone is welcome to come.

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## River Oaks Road Speed Tables and FEC Agreement

By Lori Boyer

In April 2010, a Stipulation Agreement was entered into by the City, FEC railroad, neighbors, the developer of Jackson Square, and the Florida Department of Transportation that allowed the River Oaks crossing of the railroad to remain open provided certain conditions were satisfied. One of the conditions in the agreement was the execution of a maintenance agreement for the grade crossing between the City and FEC. That maintenance agreement was negotiated by the prior administration, and legislation to authorize execution of the agreement was introduced in December (2011-767). The new administration had some concerns regarding the extent of the financial obligation to the City and asked for a two week deferral to verify the cost to the City. I anticipate that the bill will be heard in February as scheduled. Upon passage of the bill and execution of that agreement, the Jackson Square developer will have 30 days to commence construction of the traffic calming devices on River Oaks Road.

## ***Sidewalk Café bill passes Council***

By Lori Boyer

I am happy to report that 2011-727, the Sidewalk Café Ordinance that I sponsored, has been adopted by Council and signed into law. The impetus for the bill was to allow sidewalk café use along the newly reconstructed San Marco Boulevard. Sidewalk cafes on public sidewalks are only allowed in designated areas downtown, in Riverside/Avondale and in San Marco. The previous San Marco zone was limited to the Square, so an amendment was necessary to include the commercial sections of San Marco Boulevard north to Nira St. Of equal importance is a change regarding the location of tables within the sidewalk area. It is of paramount importance to retain an ADA acceptable and pedestrian friendly passageway along the sidewalk. To that end, it often makes more sense to locate tables among the tree wells and light poles rather than adjacent to the building. This leaves an unobstructed walk space for pedestrians and still accommodates outdoor seating. Previous code language could be read to require the walk space adjacent to or measured from the curb. 2011-727 will clear up any potential confusion and conflicts between prior language and actual use as well as be consistent with the intended design of the new streetscape area.



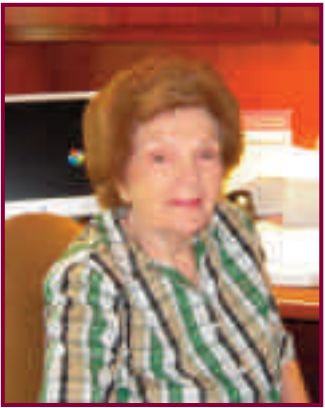
In committee, we clarified that the *zoning code* provisions addressing sidewalk cafés, such as required exceptions and enclosure requirements, only apply on private property and do not apply to public sidewalks. Further, I amended the bill to provide that oversight and administration responsibilities would be handled in the Planning and Development Department. The Chief of Building Inspection within that Department currently has responsibility for review of permit applications and issuance of permits. But, the prior code gave oversight to the Housing and Neighborhoods Department. In the interest of streamlining and eliminating confusion, we combined responsibility in one Department.

Operators of cafés within the designated zones of Downtown, San Marco, and Riverside/Avondale who wish to offer service on the public sidewalk, still must obtain a permit under Chapter 250 of the Ordinance Code. The revisions simply make it possible for them to do so when the previous language often made it impossible to comply. This permit will also allow the Planning and Development Department to issue the zoning letter required by the state if the operator wishes to include the public sidewalk in their sketch for their liquor license.

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## ***Meet Gertrude Greene, San Marco Preservation Hall's Rental Consultant***

By Gertrude Greene



After 23 years as Administrative Assistant and Secretary in a hospital, and 5 years working in a family pharmacy, I thought when I moved to Jacksonville I would probably not work anymore. Not! About two years after moving here several people kept calling for my granddaughter to babysit, but she had left for college. I have always liked people, children and babies, so I thought, “Why don’t I babysit sometime?” That led me to the first family with two little boys. The rest is history - that family introduced me to a wonderful family with 3 children and we soon learned there would be 4. This wonderful mommy was the coordinator at the Preservation Hall. Several years after I started helping her, she returned to school and on the days she had conflicts, I would fill in for her at Preservation Hall. When she graduated with her pharmacy degree, I was fortunate to be able to continue as the Preservation Hall Coordinator. I still help her with the children when she needs me. Through her I met several other wonderful families and I think of them all as part of my large extended family, while babysitting for my special little ones.

It is so nice to be a part of the San Marco Preservation Society as Coordinator of the Preservation Hall. I enjoy seeing the faces of people when they first enter the Hall. The beautiful old yellow pine wood and the arch and height of the ceiling were certainly the work of a master carpenter in 1888. People often knock on the door and ask to look inside. I love to tell them how in 1994 the church was moved by barge to Fletcher Park in San Marco, and in early 1995 the San Marco Preservation Society began repairing, repainting and landscaping, with help from the San Marco Garden Circle.

It is so fulfilling to help people plan for one of the biggest events in their life - their wedding. I tell them about vendors that have been used in the past and help them any way I can. It is so nice when you hear “thank you for all your help” – and I do get invited to a lot of weddings.

## *What's in Your Backyard?*

Our beautiful San Marco neighborhood has so much to see! These recent photos of some amazing bald eagles were taken by one of our neighbors. Have you seen any of nature's visitors? New blooms? Unique sunsets? If so, please post your best San Marco photos to our Facebook page. You can find us at Facebook at "San Marco Preservation Society."



## *Southbank Sojourn*



## *San Marco Preservation Hall*

San Marco Preservation Hall, a Jacksonville historic landmark, was built in 1888 as St. Paul's Episcopal Church. The Hall was moved to Fletcher Park on Atlantic Blvd. and renovated in 1994. The Hall is operated by the San Marco Preservation Society, comfortably seats 80 and is available for rental. The interior of the building is warm and intimate, finished in dark pine beaded board and pine flooring.



San Marco's lovely Carpenter Gothic-style hall located at 1652 Atlantic Blvd. is now available for rental for your next meeting, party or wedding.

For more information on renting San Marco Preservation Hall, please call 904-396-4734.

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## *Happenings in the Square*

By: Desiree Bailey  
San Marco Bookstore  
Past President, SMMA



As I sat listening to the music in Balis Park (I have time to do that now that I am no longer the president of the San Marco Merchants Association), I realized how much things were changing in San Marco. Here's a list of what I saw as I gazed around our Square. The lamppost banners were changed to the spring banners with red flowers, courtesy of the SMMA. The planters were being re-planted at the San Marco Theater. I noticed the shop windows have changed at the boutiques, like Therapie and Leila's, to show all the new spring fashions. At Peterbrooke and the

San Marco Bookstore, we've changed holidays to get ready for Easter and Passover (I stocked the greeting cards at the bookstore!) Continuing to look at the shops and restaurants, I realized that when I talked to Sam Efron, chef at Taverna, just the other day, he mentioned that they are changing their menu! Oh, it makes me hungry just thinking about it! Oh, and I can't forget this one! This one should get your attention: I've also heard rumors of changing tenants! Yes, I think we'll have some new merchants joining us in the months to come! All this from a quick glance around our busy Square. As I look at the full parking spots, I am inclined to think that we're doing pretty well and know it's because of people like you that value and appreciate what the small businesses in San Marco have to offer! So here's my last notation, as you shed your winter coat and get back outside, spend your time in San Marco! Invite friends and family to meet you and make a difference at the independent San Marco businesses that you know and love! See you soon!

## *San Marco Preservation Society Tour of Homes 2011*

By: LeAnna Cumber

What a wonderful holiday season it was! San Marco homes were beautifully decorated for the holidays, and the San Marco Preservation Society held its 21st Holiday Tour of Homes. The tour was a smashing success. Five families and one Pastor generously opened their doors to share their homes with the neighborhood. Over 400 neighbors and visitors from all over Jacksonville accepted this invitation.

Featured were six beautifully decorated and remodeled, or in one case newly built, homes that had their own style and charm. There was a charming home that featured a cozy attic getaway and an intimate backyard that serves as an oasis from the hustle and bustle of the city. Then there was a newly built Spanish style home. This home is unique in many ways including that much of the material used in the construction was repurposed, including the Golden Pine that was used as flooring throughout the home. The next home featured an interior that was immaculately designed to demonstrate the owners' love of art and style. The backyard features a gorgeous pool and patio to relax in while watching the sunset on the St. John's River. Next was a stately Mediterranean style home overlooking the St. John's River. This home boasts many unique features including a bomb shelter under the home built in the mid-20th Century. Next was a fully remodeled home that is stately yet welcoming. Beautifully done in calming blues and neutrals the home has a soothing quality. Among its outstanding features is a masterfully designed kitchen that has all a cook could want to whip up anything from a Friday night pizza to a seven-course meal. Finally, the last home was not a home at all but a church, The Swaim Memorial United Methodist Church, celebrating its 125<sup>th</sup> year! The church building was designed in 1924 by Jacksonville architect Mellen Greeley, and is designed in a Spanish style with beautiful arches and stained glass throughout.

We thank all participants and volunteers for making the tour a success and look forward to the next tour!

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### *Welcome New Board Members!*

Terry and Lauri Smith are the newest Parks co-chairs. Terry has a background in civil engineering and site design. Lauri has been a commercial real estate broker and property manager for the past twenty eight years. The Smiths and their "kids" - three Jack Russell Terriers, moved into the neighborhood in 2006. They love living in the area and are excited to help the SMPS in taking care of our beautiful parks.





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## *Membership*

We would like to thank the following organizations for supporting SMPS at the Business Membership level.  
We greatly appreciate your support!

The Accubuild Companies- Mark Rubin

ARDUS design group, Inc.- Raymond Scott

Awards Unlimited

The Brumos Companies- Nancy Toman

Brunet- Garcia Advertising & PR

Club Jacksonville

Cunningham Collection- Linda Cunningham

Creative Printing Place, Inc.

Dance Trance- Beth Handline

David & Associates- Dr. Joel David

Dr. Norman Sharp, DDS

Harris, Guidi, Rosner, Dunlap, Rudolph, P.A .

Jacksonville Orthopaedic Institute

James F. Tullis & Associates

Jaycox Reinel Architects

Lucas, Herndon, Hyers, Pennywitt, CPA's

Matt Carlucci Insurance - Matt Carlucci

Manormor Sotheby's Realty- Jeff Chefan

Metro Diner

Murphy & Anderson, PA- Niels Murphy, Geddes Anderson

Office Environments and Services

Pizza Palace

Prudential Realty- Anita Vining

R.L.A. Inc.- David & Janet Whitmill

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Roberts South Bank Pharmacy, Inc. - Gary Roberts

Ruckus Advertising & Public Relations- Susan M. Masucci

San Marco Bookstore

San Marco Theatre- David Blue

The Tile Market of San Marco- Bill & Sheila Page

Theatre Jacksonville, Inc.

Thomas A. Ranney Interiors, LLC - Tom Ranney