

San Marco Times



The Official Newsletter of the San Marco Preservation Society • www.smpsjax.com • "Find us on Facebook"

'Tis The Season for Holiday Happenings!

Happy Holidays! This is one of the best times of the year to enjoy the community spirit of our San Marco neighborhood.

In addition to the many holiday events below, it is important to remember how essential our local shops, restaurants and businesses are to the neighborhood charm we all enjoy. If you have holiday shopping to do, patronize local shops and vendors! Ready to gather friends and family over a delicious meal out? Make your reservation at one of our wonderful neighborhood restaurants or watering holes. Looking for some easy holiday exercise to make room for upcoming feasts? Put on your kicks and stroll, run or walk through our picturesque neighborhoods. San Marco has long been one of the best places to live in Jacksonville. Keep it that way by being an active member of the community. Shop local. Eat Local. Live local. And, of course, join the San Marco Preservation Society! Membership information is on the back of this newsletter. In the meantime, we hope to see you at one or all of these upcoming holiday events:

- Tree Lighting Ceremony in Balis Park
Friday, December 4
6 p.m.
- Twinkle Lights, Merry & Bright
Holiday Cocktail Reception and
One Night Only Art Sale,
Stellars Gallery
Friday, December 4
6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.
- Holiday Magic in the Square
Saturday, December 5
5 p.m. to 9 p.m.
- Nativities from Around the World
Southside Baptist Church
December 5-31
- Festival of Lights Run
Saturday, December 5
5:30 p.m., 1-Mile Fun run
6 p.m., 5K Race
San Marco Square
- Storytime in Balis Park, How the
Grinch Stole Christmas!
Saturday, December 12
10 a.m.
- Take Pictures with Santa and Mrs. Claus in
Balis Park
Saturday, December 12
11 a.m. to 2 p.m.
- San Marco Luminaria and the Live Nativity
Sunday, December 13
- "Christmas from Southside" Fun for the
Whole Family
Wednesday, December 16
5:30 p.m.
Southside Baptist Church

The Lowdown on Luminaria

What, where...and when? Help! The San Marco Preservation Society will be selling Luminaria kits in the Bank of America parking lot in San Marco Square from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturday, December 12, and from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Sunday, December 13. Kits are \$10 each and include: 12 bags, 12 candles and a bag of sand.

Now what? Light your Luminaria candles at dusk on Sunday, December 13. All homes in San Marco should have Luminarias on the curb in front of each house! And if you live near a park, please volunteer to set up and light the Luminarias around that park. Contact Rosemary Robie at (904) 583-7595 if you'd like to volunteer.

Oh, and don't forget...In addition, on Sunday evening, December 13, the Live Nativity on the corner of Arbor Lane and Laurel Road will take place. Many friends and neighbors play a part in this experience, and there are even live animals!



Leave the (electric candle) Lights On!

As Holiday and Luminaria times approach, we would like to tell new San Marco neighbors of the beautiful custom of putting single candles (electric, of course) in your windows. When the houses are candle-lighted in the evening, our neighborhood is like a fairyland. And on the nights when the warm glow of the Luminaria and holiday decorations are added, you will know another reason we all love this special area so much.

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

South Jax City Hall 396-0081
Leigh Melvin, Coordinator
1468 Hendricks Avenue
Office Hours: Mon, Wed, & Fri, 9:00 – 12:00
info@smpsjax.com

Shelley Cain, Bookkeeper
Office Hours: Tues., 9:00-12:00

Preservation Hall 396-4734
Gertrude Greene, Coordinator
1652 Atlantic Boulevard
Office Hours: Tues & Thurs, 10:00-2:00

SMPS Officers:

President:
Andrew Dickson

President-Elect:
LeAnna Cumber

Immediate Past President:
Mary Toomey

Secretary:
LeAnna Cumber

Treasurer:
Jim Stevens

Beautification:
Rob Smith

Events Chair:
Alex Varkonda

Membership:
Diane Martin

Membership Co-chair:

Business Membership:
Zendra Spikes

Merchant Liaison:
Desiree Bailey

Electronic Media:
Liz Foraker-Klein

Traffic / Safety / Nuisance:
Gordon Mott
Neil Chandler
Rick Kohn

Parks:
Bryan J. Mickler

Preservation Hall:
Barbara Hall

Water and Drainage:
Glen Wieger

Newsletter:
Susanna Barton

Directors Emeritus
Zim Boulos
Lori Boyer
Barbara Hall
Suzanne Perritt
Rob Smith

From the San Marco Preservation Society President Andrew Dickson



Photo by Heather Stine

Happy Holidays!

As a former Yankee, I confess I love the sweater weather we have this time of year. It gets me in the mood for the holidays, which our neighborhood celebrates with style. So pull out your sweaters and take a stroll!

You'll enjoy terrific bird-watching if you hike along the creeks in River Oaks or Greenwood Parks, and you'll see some true fall color in Alexandria Oaks Park as those new Red Maples turn. Take a turn through Whatley Park, which should be completed by Christmas, and enjoy the serenity of Davin Park under the twinkle lights.

Flock to San Marco Square for holiday events! Sashay to the Tree Lighting and San Marco's Twinkle Lights Cocktail Reception on December 4. Jog to the square for Holiday Magic and the Festival of Lights Run on December 5. Tow your wagon to the Bank of America lot to pick up your Luminaria Kits on December 12 & 13.

Promenade around the Laurel and River Road neighborhood for Luminaria and the Live Nativity the night of December 13.

And above all, hoof it to our shops, restaurants, and bars for holiday purchases, dining, and revels! We are among the most walkable neighborhoods in town, and fortunately for us, we have some great watering holes within staggering distance of our doorsteps. Cheers!

The SMPS Board wishes you a happy, safe, and blessed holiday season!

Andrew Dickson

Headline: Etch Your Name Into San Marco History: Bricks for Sale

The area around the San Marco Square Lion Fountain in the center of Balis Park has plenty of room for more engraved bricks. And what would make a better Holiday gift or Wedding present? For a \$100 donation, you can purchase a brick engraved with your name, your pet's name, or



the name of a living or deceased loved one. The bricks will be added to the existing bricks laid around the fountain. This is your opportunity to be a part of a meaningful piece of public art for all generations. Go to www.SMPSJax.com to order your brick, or call Leigh at 904.396.0081.

All donations are tax-deductible through the San Marco Preservation Society as provided by law. What a great gift to give those you love this holiday season! There's no other gift like it!



From District 5 City Council Representative Lori Boyer

The holiday season is upon us and it is a great time to live in San Marco! We have so many wonderful opportunities to reconnect with friends and neighbors, and the sense of community that builds is part of what makes San Marco so special.

As your Council member, my time has been divided between work on a number of significant Citywide projects and the many local drainage, park, and roadway issues in the District. For several months, I have served on a Council committee that has been renegotiating the JEA contribution to the City (in lieu of property taxes and as a return on the City's ownership of the utility). The JEA agreement will also address efforts to further reduce pollution of the river, and to extend sewer lines into areas currently served by septic tanks. In addition, I have been working with JTA on a number of issues, such as short term parking availability on the Southbank, and completion of the Better Jacksonville road projects.

Closer to home, we have recently seen greater enforcement of the reduced speed limits west of San Marco Boulevard, and have a few other ideas to further reduce cut through traffic. Construction projects like the Overland Bridge and the drainage improvements on Pennsylvania Avenue are progressing on schedule, but the disruption is inconvenient, and I ask you to be patient. The extraordinary high tides we have experienced in the last few months have tested the limits of our existing pump stations, and many area streets have flooded repeatedly. I will push for funding of the LaSalle Street pump station as soon as possible, and I am working with the Mayor's office and Public Works to implement temporary solutions. And the fishing at Riverfront Park is out of control. I know that the specific issue that impacts you personally can cause your life to be disrupted and your property damaged- and we are working on all of them.

But this month, let us remember our many blessings, too. As events worldwide point out the dangers we face, let us be grateful for those who protect us here and abroad. Let us share the love and joy of the season with family and friends - and with those who need our help.

Lori Boyer

Balis Park Gets New Look

Balis Park received an update this fall with a redesign of the landscaping.

The improvements to Balis Park were completed in late September. Planning for the improvements began back in early summer with a meeting and tour of the park with Jamie Ross from Jamie Ross Garden and Landscape Design. Mrs. Ross consulted with San Marco Preservation Society on ways to improve the landscape to achieve the goal of bringing a cleaner, more uniform look to the park along with adding some color to the area. All of her services were donated.

San Marco Preservation Society contracted with Brian Box of Horizon Landscaping for the

clean-up, removal and relocation of plants and the installation of over 700 new plants. Jasmine plants were added to the eastern end of the park as a ground cover. Agapanthus were added to the southern part of the park and Anne Marie Lantana was added for color. African Irises were relocated to other areas and Pine straw was used to mulch the beds and around the trees.

Approximately \$4,000 was spent on the Balis Park Project.

Green ReLeaf Rejuvenates Alexandria Park

Park renewal was in the San Marco neighborhood air this fall with several cleanup projects, including The Green ReLeaf event at Alexandria Park. Brian Mickler said the event attracted a great turnout of neighbors and volunteers and all enjoyed being outside on a beautiful day.

Groups in attendance included representatives from San Marco Preservation Society, Greenscape, the City of Jacksonville, JEA and the Bolles Environmental Club. Preservation Society notables included Andrew Dickson, Mary Toomey and Susan Caven.

Arborists in the midst helped more than 40 people, many neighbors with dogs and children in tow, plant about 30 trees in the neighborhood.

Mickler said there are more planting events in the works for the park. Another planting is expected when the long leaf pine trees come in.



Welcome to the Neighborhood: The Thompson Family

By Anita Vining

The San Marco neighborhood is thrilled to welcome The Thompson Family to our beautiful community! Please meet Tracy, Jane, Trae, Tori, Tatum, Tanner and Tucker, some of our neighborhood's newest residents.

The Thompsons recently moved to San Marco from Ponte Vedra Beach, where the family lived since 2004. Prior to that, the Thompsons lived in many cities around the country including Lexington, Kentucky, Atlanta, Kansas City, Charlotte and Indianapolis.

Tracy and Jane honed in on the San Marco area several years ago while on a search for the perfect family home. After hearing quiet whispers of a beautiful home for sale in the neighborhood, the Thompsons purchased a beautiful lakefront home on Lake Marco in the heart of San Marco. The home had been loved by the Rothstein family for many years and now is the center of family life for the Thompsons. They say they have especially enjoyed being closer to their children's schools and walking to the shops and restaurants in San Marco. They have enjoyed meeting many nice neighbors who have stopped by their home to welcome them to the neighborhood.



The Thompson Family

The Thompsons know what it means to make a house a home. Tracy is a Realtor with Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Network Realty in the San Marco office. Jane works as Vice President Market Access for Teva Pharmaceuticals.

Their children are receiving educations throughout Jacksonville and Central Florida. Trae is a senior at the University of North Florida, Tori is a sophomore at Rollins College, Tatum is a senior at Episcopal School of Jacksonville, Tanner is in the eighth grade at Episcopal School of Jacksonville and Tucker is a second grader at Jacksonville Country Day School. Be on the lookout for this beautiful family and give them a big San Marco welcome.

Are You a 50+ Year Resident?

The 50-Year Residence Award will be given at the May 2016 General Membership meeting to honor families who have resided in the same house for 50 years or more.

This award is extended to original residents as well as children and grandchildren who subsequently reside in the home.

This kind of stability and commitment to our neighborhood has been a major factor in keeping San Marco such a desirable home for all generations. If you know of anyone in San Marco who would qualify for this, please contact Leigh at (904) 396-0081 or email leigh@smpsjax.com.

Buy a Bench for Whatley Park!

A donation of \$2100 will purchase a 6-foot cast iron and tropical hardwood bench.

Each bench will include a center armrest, and a customized commemorative bronze plaque.

All of the donation goes to cover costs and installation.

There are 6 benches planned for 3 new seating areas in the park.



Be a part of our park's history, and memorialize your loved ones for decades to come!

Contact Leigh Melvin at SMPS on Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings, 8am-12pm, or email

leigh@smpsjax.com.

SMPS Membership: It's Time to Renew for 2016

Soon you will receive a letter asking you to renew your membership for January thru December 2016, or to join if you are not currently a member. When you open the envelope, think about the value the Preservation Society brings to this part of Jacksonville, and also to you, as a resident or a business owner.

Over the past 40 years, the San Marco Preservation Society has represented San Marco interests on zoning and governmental issues, as well as restoration of the Square, buildings, and parks.

The Preservation Society is responsible for many things you may take for granted, for instance:

- Developing Balis Park, with its gazebo and fountain, on what was once a dirt lot
- Designing and building the magnificent San Marco Lion Fountain with its commemorative bricks and Campanile tower
- Installing a beautiful vintage clock in the Square in front of the San Marco Theater
- Developing and overseeing construction of the Balis Community Center, as well as the expansion and renovation of the San Marco Branch Library
- Overseeing construction of the Southside Tennis facilities and playground as well as landscaping the grounds
- Landscaping and planting trees in the Square
- Designing a plan for the Square to include medians, a traffic flow plan, brick sidewalks and pedestrian crosswalks
- Moving an historic church building to its current location in Fletcher Park to serve as Preservation Hall
- Installing vintage street lights in the Square
- Renovating South Jacksonville City Hall at 1468 Hendricks Avenue
- Planting trees and developing the foot path in Alexandria Oaks Park (FEC Park)
- and the list goes on...

San Marco Preservation Society and its members have been involved every step of the way, and has succeeded in keeping the old world charm and character of San Marco intact. SMPS relies on each and every one of you to join the Preservation Society and to renew your membership each year.

Please take the time to consider what SMPS has done for our neighborhood and renew your membership promptly. If you have not joined, please join today, and be a part of your neighborhood's future.

Go to www.SMPSjax.com to join and see the list of San Marco Merchants offering discounts with the SMPS membership card. Or simply mail the Membership application with your check to SMPS, 1468 Hendricks Avenue, Jacksonville, FL 32207.

We thank you for your support. Please see the back page of this newsletter for a membership form!





1468 Hendricks Avenue
Jacksonville, FL 32207-8623

NON-PROFIT
ORGANIZATION
US POSTAGE PAID
JACKSONVILLE, FL
PERMIT NO. 1669

SMPS Membership Application
2016 Dues

___ Individual	\$40.00
___ Family	\$50.00
___ Preservation Partner	\$100.00
___ Small Business	\$100.00
___ Corporate Business	\$200.00



Name (Print) _____
 Address _____
 City, State, Zip _____
 Email Address _____
 Phone _____

Mail Application to: San Marco Preservation Society
1468 Hendricks Avenue
Jacksonville, FL 32207

San Marco Preservation Society is a 501(c)(3) non-profit. Your contribution is tax deductible.