

JaxParks Now



A quarterly newsletter connecting people to JaxParks

jaxparks.com

Fall 2011

Bethesda Partnership Offers Unique Program for Service Dogs

JaxParks Kids Ask the Mayor - page 3

Mayor Brown's education message isn't just resonating with parents; it's also being heard loud and clear by children. Several JaxParks afterschool participants are excited about the mayor and wanted to learn more about him. They asked ... he answered.

JaxParks says "Swim, Bike, Run!" - page 7

JaxParks and Episcopal Amberjax are partnering to host JaxParks first-ever triathlon. Activities are open for youth and adults.

Huguenot Park Sets New Record - page 8

22,000 was a record-setting number for Huguenot Park this year, but it's not in what you may think. Read more.

Sport Tournament Impact Economy - page 12

When one sports tournament returned to Jacksonville after a long absence, it left a major impact on our city. Learn more.

Cork Munson and Bruiser epitomize the concept that dog is man's best friend. Shortly after adopting Bruiser from a rescue group, Munson realized that the boxer could tell when Munson was about to have a seizure. Now, the two regularly work as a team with Florida Service Dogs, Inc., and Bruiser is able to let Munson know if his blood sugar is low as well as help with some household chores like opening doors and picking up objects.

Carol Christopherson, who runs Florida Service Dogs (FSD), moved the program to Bethesda Community Center earlier this year. Approximately 30 pairs of dogs and owners participate in the training. Christopherson credits the success to the program's unique approach to dog selection and her approach.

"We train the owner and the dog together. It creates the best bond," Christopherson said.

Many service animal agencies use a puppy raiser program in which handlers raise and train the service dogs before matching them with a client. FSD works through a foster training program. The dog is immediately placed with the owner who learns to train and work with his or her own animal."



Photograph by Brittany Bandi

Cork Munson and his boxer Bruiser take a break during a training class at Bethesda Center.

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Afterschoolers Grow Veggies and Fun

Gardens are sprouting up everywhere at JaxParks centers as part of the M3Zone afterschool program. Youth participants planted 12 gardens this fall and are growing vegetables like lettuce, cabbage and collards. The gardens are part of M3Zone's focus on health and wellness. Through the program, youth participate in a variety of fitness and nutrition activities. The goal is for at least 80 percent of the kids to improve their fitness levels by 10 percent.



Photograph by Wes Lester

Junior gardeners at H.T. Jones begin preparing the bed for planting their winter crop.



Photograph by Wes Lester

UNF nursing students help H.T. Jones afterschoolers plant their center garden.

In September, 15 JaxParks youth participating in the Davis Performing Arts Program, an M3Zone programming partnership led by Mary Davis Johnson, put on those famous yellow t-shirts and waved at the audience from the Jacksonville Jaguars Honor Rows during the Tennessee Titans game. The youth received the honor for their success in achieving goals in nutrition, fitness, reading and community service.



Photograph by Pam Roman

Mary Davis Johnson (center, rear), students and volunteers gather around the famous Jaguar statue at EverBank Stadium.

In November, 22 youngsters in the performing arts program experienced the magic of the stage production of "Beauty and the Beast" at the Times Union Center for the Performing Arts, thanks to a number of generous donors.

Fifteen M3Zone youth attended the Lights On Afterschool Celebration at Friendship Fountain in October. The program, hosted by the Jacksonville Children's Commission, celebrated the role of afterschool programming in the lives of many youth.

M3Zone currently has 514 enrollees. Check out JaxParks website feature, M3Zone Resources, for monthly health and wellness resource materials.

A special thank you to the Duval County Extension Office for training JaxParks M3Zone staff in gardening

JaxParks Kids Ask Mayor Brown ...

Since Mayor Alvin Brown took office in July, a lot of young people have heard his messages about the importance of education and staying in school. His own story of being raised by his mother and grandmother who taught him the importance of reading and an education, has also inspired a number of the children participating in JaxParks programs. After meeting the mayor this summer, the kids wanted to know more about him so we gave them the opportunity to ask Mayor Brown any question they wanted. Here's what they asked... and how he answered.



Photograph by Wes Lester

Mayor Brown with JaxParks programming participants earlier this year.



Zaria Reese - Age 9
C.T. Brown Center

Q: How can the mayor help low income families?
A: One of my biggest responsibilities is to make good relationships with business people so that they can grow their companies in Jacksonville. I also work hard every day to make sure people can get all the education they need to find a good job.



Daryl Houston - Age 9
McGirts Center

Q: Where and how did you meet your wife?
A: My wife and I met at a conference years ago. She is my best friend. We are the proud parents of two boys.



Kevin Watson - Age 10
Dinsmore Center

Q: What kind of books does the mayor read for entertainment and why?
A: My favorite book is the Bible. When I was a kid, my grandmother used it to teach me how to read. I will never forget how hard she worked to be sure that I had every opportunity to learn and to succeed.



Henry Adkins - Age 8
Carvill Center

Q: How does a person become mayor?
A: To be mayor, you have to run for election. It's sort of like a job interview, but it's a job interview where the whole city decides whether you get the job. Mayors in Jacksonville serve four-year terms before they have to be elected again. You are allowed to serve two terms (a total of eight years) before you have to step aside to let someone else be mayor. One of the best parts of our democracy is that we always value the opinions and abilities of other people.



Kentrez Peterson - Age 8
Julian Barrs Center

Q: What are your job duties?
A: As mayor, I run the city's government. My signature is what turns City Council bills into the laws and policies that shape our community. I also work hard to recruit businesses and promote our city. To be Jacksonville's mayor, you need to be excited about Jacksonville all the time. That means getting out to meet people and talking about all the great things we have here, like the St. Johns River and the Jaguars.

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Programming

Legends Center Highlights

The Legends Center in Northwest Jacksonville is adding to its growing list of programs this fall with new adult computer, dance and tae kwon do classes.

The center recently was the site for the 2011 Feeding the Dream kick-off breakfast hosted by General Mills. The company also partnered with JaxParks to offer community education sessions led by local health and education professionals that focused on African-American mothers.

About 300 kids and adults attended the Jacksonville Giants' Fall Festival at Legends Center on Halloween. The free event hosted by the basketball organization was the place to be for games, costumes and a lot of treats.

More additions to look for this winter: Legends gym is the newest location for JaxParks' youth basketball league, and the fitness center is eagerly awaiting the arrival of new fitness equipment. The equipment is expected to be installed by the first of the year.

Since opening in May, Legends Center has sold 252 annual memberships. The facility is located at 5130 Soutel Drive. For more information, visit jaxparks.com.



Trick-or-treaters at the Jacksonville Giants Fall Festival show off their costumes.

Photograph by Brittany Bandi

Center Updates

If you haven't visited Henry T. Jones Center lately, stop by and check out the recent renovations. The center has a fresh, new look, new kitchen and patio and an improved weight room.

Renovation to the Mary Lena Gibbs Center on Wilson Boulevard are expected to be complete by spring 2012.

JaxParks introduced a new community program to its lineup this fall. Line dance classes are now available at Clanzel T. Brown Center on Monday and Friday evenings. Visit jaxparks.com for a complete schedule of all JaxParks community programs.

This December, JaxParks will host its traditional Holiday Blast Camp at 12 locations, plus a basketball camp at one facility. Holiday Blast Camp is free for ages 6 - 12 and runs Dec. 19 through 22. Registration is now open. The list of locations is available at www.jaxparks.com.

JaxParks Homeschool Recreation session 2 begins Jan. 9 and is offered at Blue Cypress and Cecil centers.

Programming

Cont. from page 3 - JaxParks Kids Ask Mayor Brown



Q: What inspired you to become mayor?

A: I had a vision to make Jacksonville a better place by growing jobs and helping our schools. As you go through life, you have to know your purpose. Then, you have to use your passion and you will find your true power.

Shaquirah Bass - Age 10
Henry T. Jones Center



Q: What do you like most about being mayor?

A: I like to help people. I like the responsibility. I like being able to put my ideas to good use. When you're mayor you have the whole city in your hands. It is a lot of work but it's rewarding.

Brianna Hagans - Age 8
Legends Center



Q: How would you address racism in the City of Jacksonville?

A: I have been out talking to church leaders so that we can all be together to address problems like racism, crime and poverty. Ending racism starts with each and every one of us doing the right thing.

Glovanny Beauge - Age 11
Oceanway Center



Q: Do you have kids and would they like to become mayor?

A: I have two sons and I want them to do whatever makes them happy. Having kids helps shape me as a decision-maker because I understand what all parents in Jacksonville are going through. I want the best for all of Jacksonville's youths.

Keandie Bailey - Age 10
Windy Hill Center



Q: How can you help school students obtain a bus pass to allow them to attend after-school programs and libraries?

A: I want to be sure all of our students have a safe way to get around our city. I would encourage you to ask your parents to help you get a bus pass through the Jacksonville Transportation Authority. There is a website you can visit, www.jtafla.com. Or, you can call 630-3100.

Brandon Tulla - Age 10
Blue Cypress Center



Q: What are some ways that the mayor can help children with math, reading and science?

A: As mayor, I care deeply about education. I understand how important it is for young people to study hard so they can get good jobs. That's why I'm creating a mentorship program. We will have retired school teachers and other highly qualified people working with students. Math, reading and science are important subjects. I want to be sure everyone has the opportunity to learn.

Dante Gonzalez - Age 7
Balis Center

“Select” Swimmers Benefit from Partner’s Generosity

Episcopal High School Amberjax swim team has partnered with JaxParks for a second year to sponsor JaxParks’ swim participants in the annual JaxParks Swim Classic Jan. 14 and 15. This year, 79 youth from various JaxParks swim teams were chosen for the JaxParks Select swim team.

Amberjax swim coaches sponsored the team to compete in the event. The sponsorship gives the swimmers 22 training sessions with a certified United States swim coach, a team suit and cap and a USA Swimming registration. It also enables the team to participate in a sanctioned swim meet. The swimmers, who range in age from 8 to 17, practice at Episcopal High School on Fridays and Saturdays.

JaxParks Lifeguards Featured in Local Media

High praise for two JaxParks lifeguards featured in an article published in The Florida Times-Union this fall. The paper described Evan DeGidio and Hannah Schaefer as talented and upcoming seniors who are expected to make an impact in the swimming world. DeGidio, a student at Episcopal High School, is noted for his talent in the 50 and 100 freestyle. Schaefer, an Atlantic Coast High School student, is noted for the 200 individual medley, 200 freestyle and 100 butterfly.

DeGidio has worked as a JaxParks lifeguard for the past two years at the Hanna Park Water Park. Schaefer worked as a guard last year at Sandlewood High School Pool.

Fall Highlights ...

The Cecil Aquatics Center hosted its first high school regional diving and swim meet this fall. The Class 2-A Regional Swimming and Diving Championships brought 625 competitors from 35 high schools from Northeast Florida and the Panhandle. Winners advanced to the Florida High School Activities Association State Swimming and Diving Finals in Orlando.

The aquatic center also hosted thousands of swimmers participating in high school conference and district swim meets this fall. The competitions were:

St. Johns River Athletic Conference featured 10 divers, 328 swimmers and 900 coaches, officials and spectators for a total event attendance of 1,238.

Gateway Conference Swim Meet included 515 swimmers, 1,342 coaches, officials and spectators for a total event attendance of 1,857.

Catholic Classic Swim Meet hosted one diver, 85 swimmers and 139 coaches, officials and spectators for a total event attendance of 225.

Class 2A, District 3 Swimming & Diving hosted 16 divers, 494 swimmers, and 1,317 coaches, officials and spectators for a total event attendance of 1,827.

Class 3A District 1 Swimming and Diving featured 574 athletes and 1,476 spectators for a total event attendance of 2,050.

Class 2A Regional Swimming and Diving included 625 athletes and 1,662 spectators for a total event attendance of 2,287.

Coming this Winter ...

Aqua Aerobics for Adults (offered year-round)
Cecil Aquatic Center, 13611 Normandy Blvd.
9-9:45 a.m. and/or 6:45- 7:30 p.m.
Tuesday and Thursday

Swim Meets (Cecil Aquatic Center)
JaxParks Swim Classic: Jan. 13-15
Bolles TYR Invitational: Feb. 10-12
Bolles School Sharks: Feb. 25-26
Tri-Jax Challenge: March 3-4
Area 1 and 4 Championships: March 16-18

Cecil Aquatic Center holiday closures:
New Year’s Day: Sunday, Jan. 1
New Year’s Day Observed: Monday, Jan. 2
Martin Luther King Day: Monday, Jan. 16
President’s Day: Monday, Feb. 20

JaxParks Invites You to Swim, Bike, Run

The success of the Episcopal Amberjax-JaxParks partnership is extending its reach in 2012 with the addition of a new triathlon event - the inaugural Tri-Jax Challenge. The competition, hosted at the Cecil Recreation Complex, includes both a youth and adult component. Online registration is open now at www.trijaxchallenge.com.

As part of this competition, Amberjax will sponsor several teens in JaxParks’ Teen Warehouse program to compete. Bicycles were provided for the teens through the Jacksonville Sheriff’s Office. JaxParks and Amberjax are providing training and Amberjax is covering the registration costs for the teens.

Visit Jacksonville is also assisting with the event. The youth competitions are scheduled for Saturday, March 3; adult competitions including relays are Sunday, March 4. Information is available online at www.trijaxchallenge.com or by phone at (904) 573-3157.



A reminder that the JaxParks Swim Classic makes its splash at the Cecil Aquatic Center for its fourth year this Jan. 14 and 15. JaxParks and Episcopal Amberjax partner each year to host this sanctioned swim meet. Call (904) 573-3157 for details.

New Partners; Continued Success

Residents of the Beachwood community will soon have a newly renovated center and variety of programs to enjoy, thanks to a recently formed partnership with JaxParks and River Regions. The agency will manage the Beachwood center at 11758 Marina Drive. Construction is underway and is expected to be completed early next year.

JaxParks also welcomes United Christian Fellowship Ministry to its family of managing partners. The agency will manage the Westbrook Center at 904 Westbrook Road. Construction is expected to begin early 2012.

JaxParks also continued successful partnerships this fall with existing managing partners.

Fifty youngsters in the Community Connections’ afterschool program at Normandy Center were treated to a visit to the Hendricks Avenue Pumpkin Patch in October. The kids also enjoyed story telling, a scavenger hunt and journal writings.

Youth in Don’t Miss a Beat’s afterschool program at J.S. Johnson Center are finalizing preparations for their Holiday Showcase Musical and Toy Drive scheduled for Dec. 9 at the Friday Musical Theater. The kids have adopted 16 neighborhood families for the toy drive.

In October, 15 people attended Don’t Miss a Beat’s adult computer class at the center where they learned about basic computer skills.

The Boselli Foundation, JaxParks managing partner at Simonds-Johnson and Russell Bill Cook centers, hosted its inaugural Mud Fest at the Jacksonville Equestrian Center in October. More than 900 people participated, including 40 Boselli Foundation afterschool youth who competed in the one-mile kids’ race. Proceeds from the mud run went to support the foundation’s work with youth in the community.

For a complete list of JaxParks partners, visit online at www.jaxparks.com.

Huguenot Park Hits Record Numbers

This year, Huguenot Park recorded record-breaking numbers; not for park attendance or camping, but for its wildlife. When it comes to experiencing the miracles of nature, Huguenot Memorial Park was the place to be this fall, in part because of continued attention to resource protection. Park staff saw record numbers of both birds and sea turtles.

Throughout the year, Park Naturalist Shelly Beville worked with 34 volunteers to identify a record 22,000 birds nesting, migrating or calling Huguenot Park home. Thanks to efforts of park staff, the Florida Wildlife Commission and volunteers to remove non-native vegetation from the dunes throughout nesting season (May through September), along with temporary closures of shoreline areas to vehicles, the park created better nesting opportunities for the Royal Tern, one of the park's more popular birds. As a result, the number of nesting Royal Terns doubled from last year, making it the largest colony of Royal Terns on the Eastern Seaboard.

The park also recorded a record number of 19 Loggerhead Sea Turtle nests this year; five more than any other year. More than 1,400 of the hatchlings made it to the Atlantic Ocean.



Baby Loggerhead Sea Turtle on the beach at Huguenot Park

Photograph submitted by Huguenot Park staff



Royal Terns (adults and chicks) at Huguenot Park

Photograph submitted by Huguenot Park staff

The naturalists also introduced several new and fun education programs such as "Frogs and Toads," "Fish & Sharks of Huguenot Memorial Park," "Tree Cookies" and "Let's Talk Turkey." A complete list of current programs is available in NatureScope, our online environmental education newsletter. You can find it at jaxparks.com

Fall Highlights

Environmental Education

Interest in learning more about our natural environment continued to be popular this fall. JaxParks Park Naturalists Jean Schubert and Shelley Beville presented 153 workshops to nearly 1,200 people.

Volunteer Activities

It's amazing what you can find if you just look. This fall, more than 17,000 people collected about eight tons of litter during the 2011 International Coastal Cleanup at 15 JaxParks facilities and other sites throughout the day.

Thirty-two members of the Northeast Florida Geocachers Association participated in "Cache In Trash Out" at Ringhaver Park, where they removed 30 bags of trash, one truck door and several tires.

Twenty-one volunteers collected 35 bags of trash and recyclables in addition to a tire and washing machine parts at Exchange Club Island. First Coast Outfitters led the island cleanup under the Matthews Bridge.



Northeast Florida Geocachers Association volunteers show off their "find" at Ringhaver Park.

Photograph submitted by NE FL Geocachers Assoc.

Huguenot Memorial Park

In addition to record breaking numbers of birds and sea turtles, Huguenot Memorial Park also celebrated the addition of a new off-beach parking lot this fall. The lot, which opened Labor Day weekend, provides 172 parking spots, with oversized vehicle and jet ski parking, six ADA parking spots and two walkovers that lead to Family Beach. Before opening the new lot, staff had to close the park several times each year because the park reached capacity. Since the lot opened, the park has only closed one day due to capacity.

A new educational kiosk also opened at the park this fall, providing visitors with information about wildlife, safety, park rules and maps.



Volunteers collect trash and other debris at Exchange Club Island

Photograph submitted by First Coast Outfitters

Kathryn Abbey Hanna Park

This fall, 41,342 people visited Hanna Park September and October. Hanna Park Campground sold out its sites for Labor Day weekend.

More than 700 Loggerhead Sea Turtle hatchlings survived their trek across Hanna Park Beach to reach the Atlantic Ocean. The hatchlings came from 10 protected nest at the park.

Completed improvements to the beach access boardwalk at parking lot #1 include a wheelchair access ramp and new shower areas.

The Southeast Off Road Biking Association (SORBA) hosted two events at Hanna Park this fall; Take a Kid Mountain Biking and Trail Maintenance Education Day. The group also led a park clean-up and installed a new bike trail bridge on the park's "Z" trail.

Hanna Park earned "Best Park," "Best Camping," and "Best Place to Bike" in the 2011 Folio Weekly readers' poll.

Hanna Park volunteer host campers provided 1,080 hours of service to operate and maintain the park's 293-site campground and three public bath buildings.

Blue Cross-Blue Shield of Florida, HandsOn Jacksonville and J.P. Morgan Chase partnered with Keep Jacksonville Beautiful to host three cleanups at Hanna Park this fall, collecting more than 200 bags of trash.

Waterways

Metropolitan Park Marina was a busy place for boaters this fall. Most of the dock space sold out for the Jaguars games for the season. The Florida-Georgia game brought 150 boats to the Metropolitan Park marina area and another 80 to the Landing docks.

Thanks to a partnership between local business owners, boat owners and clubs, the annual Light Jacksonville Parade celebrated its 27th year. More than 200,000 spectators attended this year's event, with 51 boats participating.

Several hundred boats gathered in the St. Johns River off Naval Air Station Jacksonville to watch the Blue Angels celebrate their 100-year anniversary Nov. 4 through 6. The St. Johns River is one of the best places to watch the show.

This fall, the United States Environmental Protection Agency brought its research vessel "Bold" to the Northbank Riverwalk. The agency hosted several school groups and an open house for the public. This vessel travels all around the United States performing water quality research.

Coming this Winter ...

More than 100 environmental education programs are scheduled for the winter months.

In December, NatureScope programs will include "New Neighbors" about introduced species as well as programs on raptors, sharks, beetles and reptiles, in addition to our trail walks and wildflower searches.

In January, NatureScope programs will include "Marine Mammals and More" and "Waterway Wildlife" in honor of the Right Whales coming into the area to give birth. Other programs will include beach walks and bike hikes.

In February, NatureScope programs will include "If Trees Could Talk" and "Civil War Changes" at Camp Milton Historic Preserve. Other programs include "Shorebird Basice," "Artful Science" and "Natives and Invasives" in honor of invasive plants awareness week.

Under Construction

Barco Field (CD 10)

This project includes the addition of shade structures in the bleacher area at the football field to protect viewers from the direct impact of the sun. Completion is expected spring 2012.

Emmett Reed Park (CD 8)

Renovations include the addition of two basketball courts. Expected completion is winter 2012.

Mary Lena Gibbs Community Center (CD 10)

Renovations to the facility include painting, new flooring and bleachers. Expected completion is summer 2012.

Springfield Disc Golf Course (CD 7)

Development of a new 18-hole disc golf course is underway within the Springfield park system. Project completion expected by end of year.

Completed Projects

Brackridge Park (CD 4)

Park improvements include a new concession stand/restroom with pavilions and playground.

Cuba Hunter Park (CD 4)

Skate park renovations include repairs and repainting of the existing skate ramps. A new concrete skate component was also added.

Flossie Brunson Eastside Park (CD 7)

Completed renovations include the addition of a new football field, bleachers and basketball courts. The park is now open to the public.

Jim King Park and Boat Ramp at Sisters Creek (CD 11)

Completed additions include a 400-foot floating dock and pump out station.

Joe Carlucci Boat Ramp (CD 11)

Completed project includes shoreline stabilization and additional parking.

Maxville Senior Center (CD 12)

Completed additions to the center include new benches and a flagpole. Repairs were also made to

Cont. from page 1

"The client actually has the ability to bond and get along with their animal long before the end result. They bond over time and learn each others nuances," Christopherson said.

Tywanda McGee and her dog Chili joined FSD because it places more emphasis on the animals than other programs. They regularly attend the program two days a week.

"We do outings, and it's just so beneficial to get the dogs engaged in so many activities out in the public and experience new things," McGhee said. "

Another element that makes FSD different is that it works with pound and rescue dogs instead of with a breeder. It also allows clients to bring in their own dogs for training if they prefer. Finally, the program is free. No one is rejected because they can't afford the service.

Munson and Bruiser plan to continue with the program for at least another year. Munson says its a bonding experience for him and his dog and also a social time. He and Bruiser can work with and help other dog and owner pairs while continuing their training.

Munson describes the program as a life saver.

"For people, it's a godsend. There's no other way you could ever get a service dog at a price you could afford. This way your investment is your sweat equity," Munson said. "As far as the dogs are concerned, it gives them a new life, and it also shows people that you don't have to have a thoroughbred dog to be able to do all the things that a service dog can and should do."

Florida Service Dogs is one of several programs offered at Bethesda Center that focus on engaging the disabled community. Other activities include a monthly dance for adults with disabilities; Life Skills Training, a program that emphasizes cooking; an Alzheimer's support group; Active Thursdays, a program engaging participants in various indoor and outdoor physical activities; and Open Mic Night, a monthly event that encourages creativity, fellowship and fun.

More information is available online at jaxparks.com or by calling (904) 764-5531.



Photograph by Brittany Bandi

Tywanda McGee gives Chili a treat for a job well done.



Photograph by Brittany Bandi

Bethesda Manager Gaile Lanier takes a moment to relax with one of the four-legged participants during an FSD training.



Photograph by Brittany Bandi

FSD owner Carol Christopherson performs an assessment on one of the program's newer dogs.

Youth Tennis Serves Successful Second Season

This fall, 89 kids ages 6 to 10 were served, rallied and got excited about the game of tennis, thanks to a unique program that returned to JaxParks for a second season. Four parks facilities - Boone Tennis Center, Southside Tennis Center, John Stockton Elementary Park and Burnett Park - offered 10 and Under Tennis this fall.

JaxParks first introduced 10 and Under Tennis last spring. The program features the USTA Quickstart format designed to engage younger players at a faster pace. It uses special equipment, shorter court dimensions and altered scoring.

The second season of 10 and Under Tennis ended with a celebration at Boone Park Tennis Center for participants and their families. The program will return to JaxParks spring 2012.



Players and coaches take a break during 10 and Under play day at Boone Park Tennis Center.

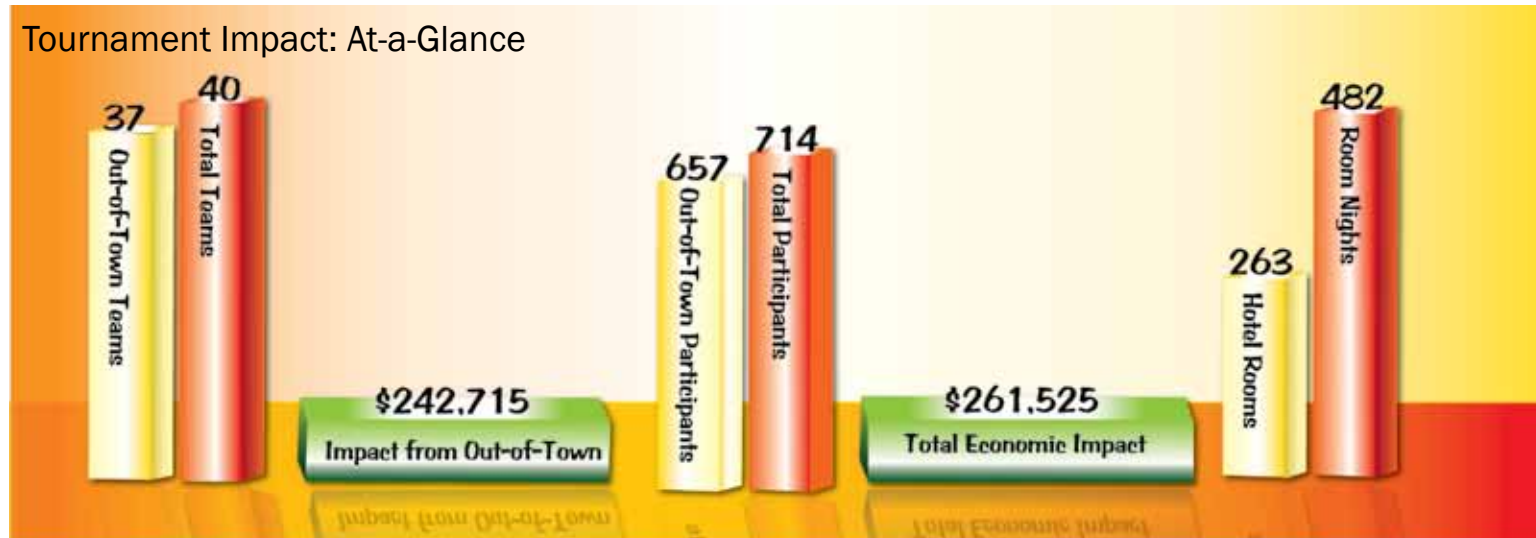
Photograph courtesy Jacksonville Youth Tennis Association

than 700 players and spectators visited Jacksonville for the tournament, staying in local hotels and eating at local restaurants. A JaxParks study estimated the tournament had a \$261,525 economic impact on the city.

FHC and Hollis Appraisal Softball sponsored the tournament and JaxParks and Florida First Coast Softball, Inc. co-hosted the September event. FHC Association Secretary Duane Jones said that FHC was extremely pleased with the tournament and glad it had returned to Jacksonville. Jones said he looks forward to the tournament returning again to Jacksonville in 2012.

Tournament Returns to Jacksonville, Leaves Impact on Economy

For the first time in more than a decade, the Florida Half Century (FHC) Softball Association returned to Jacksonville this fall for its annual tournament. Forty teams representing 26 cities throughout Florida competed in games at Ringhaver and Drew parks. More



5,000 Youth Complete Pop Warner Season

Greater Jacksonville Pop Warner Football and Cheer Program opened early September with 4,830 players and 1,350 cheer squad members throughout Jacksonville. Twenty-eight teams competed in the October playoff games at Wurn Park and First Coast High School with 16 teams advancing to the divisional championships at First Coast High School and EverBank Field.

The Greater Jacksonville Pop Warner Conference and JaxParks also partnered in October to host the annual Cheer & Dance Competition at the Veteran's Memorial Arena. There were 63 cheer and dance squads, 75 volunteers and 2,600 spectators on hand. Sixteen squads advanced to a regional competition in Kissimmee.

Fifteen football teams and 52 cheer squads enjoyed food and games at the 16th Annual Junior Jaguar Bowl at EverBank Field in November.

Fall Highlights

Softball was alive and well at JaxParks this fall. JaxParks adult softball league registered 147 mens and coed teams for regular season play. Teams played weekdays and Sundays through early November at Drew and Ringhaver parks.

JaxParks also hosted two popular tournaments this fall, JaxParks Halloween Bash Adult Softball Tournament and the Fall Shootout Adult Softball Tournament, both at Ringhaver Park. Each tournament registered 90 teams. About 350 spectators also attended each event.

Fast pitch softball also had a hit with participation numbers totaling more than 500 for two tournaments.

The River City Fast Pitch USSSA Tournament hosted 255 players and 1,126 spectators for a total event attendance of 1,351. North Florida USSSA Invitational Softball Tournament hosted 340 players, along with 1,360 spectators for a total event attendance of 1,700.

Thirteen teams participated in a 3 on 3 Shoot Tournament at the Cecil Gym and Fitness Center. Sam's Wholesale Club sponsored the event.

JaxParks hosted the 2011 United States Tennis Association (USTA) Tournament Directors Workshop at Southside Tennis Complex and Balis Community Center this fall. More than 30 Northeast Florida tennis professionals attended the mandatory workshop. Ann Brown, USTA Competitive Education Coordinator, conducted the activities. JaxParks tennis pros Harrell Thomas and James Catenis attended.

Coming this Winter ...

JaxParks Basketball League
2012 Season: January-March
League play is 6:30, 7:30 and 8:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday and 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday.
Gym locations: Cuba Hunter, Emmett Reed, R.F. Kennedy and Legends
Registration dates: Dec. 14 - 22 and 28 - 30
Fee: \$75 per team (7-15 players)

Youth basketball divisions:

Boys	Girls
Biddy Ball 5-7	Juniors 12-14
Tadpoles 8-10	Seniors 15-18 (in school)
Midgets 11-12	
Juniors 13-14	
Seniors 15-18 (in school)	

Flag Football Registration
2012 Season March - May
Team (7-10 players) Registration Fee: \$75.00
Age divisions: 5-7, 8-11, 12-14 and 15-18

Youth Baseball and Softball
Ages 5 to 18
For registration information, call
(904) 255-7927 or (904) 255-7925

Four-week rowing program
This new program is free for gym members and \$2 per class for non-members. Participants must be 18 or older. Registration begins in January. The program runs 11 a.m. - noon Mondays and Wednesdays in February at the Cecil Gym and Fitness Center, 13531 Lake Newman St.

Meet JaxParks Newest Tennis Pro ...

JaxParks is excited to introduce one of our newest team members, James Catenis. When Catenis accepted the role as lead tennis pro at Boone Park Tennis Center earlier this year, he brought a wealth of experience to the courts.

Catenis began his tennis career as captain of the North Carolina State University tennis team. After graduation, he joined the Jockey Club of Miami as its director of junior development. He later became the director of tennis at Woodlake Swim and Racquet Club in Richmond, Virginia, and general manager of the Raleigh Racquet Club in Raleigh, North Carolina, before relocating to Jacksonville as director of tennis at Eagle Harbor.

Catenis and his wife Crissy have two children; Ben, age 9, and Vivian, age 4.

JaxParks on the Tube ... Check out some of recent JaxParks videos.



Connecting with JaxParks is Easy!



Alvin Brown, Mayor City of Jacksonville

Kelley Boree, Acting Director of Recreation and Community Services

For newsletter information, contact Pam Roman
at 255-7902 or pwilson@coj.net.



www.jaxparks.com

www.coj.net (904) 630-CITY (2487)

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