



REAL SCOOP



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



John Keane, President

The top 2024 legislative priority of the Retired Employees Association is the enactment of an Ordinance providing a “one time supplement” for retirees and beneficiaries of City of Jacksonville Pension Funds. City retirees did not participate in the Social Security System during their career, due to City policy are falling further behind in their standard of living due to many issues, among these are: significant increases in food costs; rising health insurance copayments; higher home and

automobile insurance premiums; change in home value assessments resulting in high property taxes along with recent record high inflation. Your REA leadership team has held meetings and discussions with top staff of Mayor Donna Deegan, seeking to identify a source of funding. We are continuing to seek additional support among Council Members, prior to the introduction of the bill.



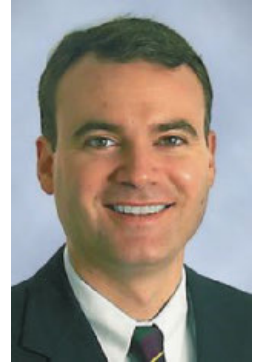
On Sunday May 12th, remember your Mother --- it's Mother's Day. Mother's Day, a holiday to honor our mothers is celebrated in many countries around the world. In its modern form the holiday originated in the United States, where it is observed on the second Sunday in May. Anna Jarvis, whose mother had organized women's groups to promote friendship and health originated Mother's Day on May 12, 1907, when she held a memorial service at her late mother's church in Grafton, West Virginia. The following year, **on May 10**, a Mother's Day service was held at that same church to acknowledge all mothers.

Anna's efforts came to the attention of the mayor of Philadelphia, who proclaimed a local Mother's Day. Thus, was born the idea that the second Sunday in May, be set aside to honor every mother, whether living or deceased. We also honor the way mothers have raised and nurtured their children with love and courage. From the local level, she went on to Washington, D.C. The politicians there knew a good thing when they saw it and were quick to lend verbal support. Within five years virtually every state was observing the day, and in 1914, President Woodrow Wilson made it a national holiday.

Continued on Page 2

Many other countries also celebrate the holiday on this date, while some mark the observance at other times of the year.

A “tip” of the cap to State Representative Wyman Duggan for his efforts to quickly alert City Officials and other stakeholders to a potential serious “unintended effect” on Jacksonville finances with language in a bill that would require a voter referendum to continue voter approved local sales tax beyond 10 years. Careful reading of proposed legislation prevents “a good bill from having bad consequences.” The potentially troublesome language was deleted in the Florida Senate. All is well, thanks to the attention to the details in the bill by Representative Duggan.



Terry Wood, 1st Vice President

Beware These Infamous Social Security Scams

Social Security fraud is rampant -- and increasing. The Federal Bureau of Investigation reports that scammers took about \$3 billion from Social Security beneficiaries in 2022. That was a staggering 84 percent higher than the previous year.

Here are some of the most notorious scams. If anyone contacts you in person, by mail, or electronically with messages that follow any of these themes, call the Social Security Administration's fraud prevention and reporting hotline at 800-269-0271.





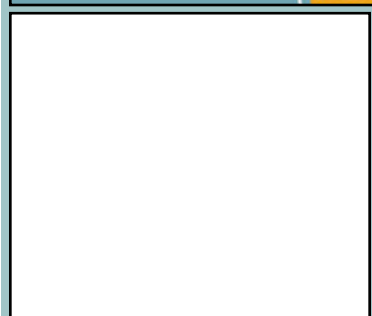


- 1.** A phone call message from someone who claims to be an SSA employee. Do not respond -- call the fraud hotline.
- 2.** An unexpected demand for money. The scammer says you owe some money as a penalty or due to overpayment of benefits. They may threaten you, but again, do not respond. Call the fraud hotline at 800-269-0271.
- 3.** Someone contacts you to say that your Social Security number has been suspended and you must provide personal information to "reactivate" your number. The SSA never suspends Social Security numbers. Never give your information out to anyone.



Darryl Patterson, 2nd Vice President

When you're trying to sell a house, looks matter almost as much as a competitive price. But you don't necessarily have to spend big to give your interior a pre-sale face lift — try these wallet-friendly options instead.

- ◆ Tile paint can spruce up sad kitchen tile in a hurry. Choose a high-quality product and apply carefully to give things a fresh new look for prospective buyers.
- ◆ Don't replace your dated laminate countertops -- refinish or recover them. You can use specialty paints, peel-and-stick coverings, or new laminate sheets.
- ◆ Beat-up carpets and linoleum look terrible, and if they can't be salvaged with cleaning or repair, luxury vinyl flooring is a cost-effective replacement option that can give your home a well-maintained appearance.
- ◆ Consider new faucets and cabinet hardware to give an updated look with manageable costs.
- ◆ Put a fresh coat of paint on all the walls. Choose a light and airy neutral, like cream, beige, or pale gray, and avoid bold statement colors and accent walls.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
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From the Secretary's desk....

Thanks to all of you who wrote your council members calling on them to support a one-time pension supplement for all retirees. There is movement on this subject and expressing your interest will help build momentum. As you have read in the newspaper and heard on TV, the Jaguars Organization and the City Administration are thinking about asking the GEPP, COPP, and PFPF trustees to lend money to upgrade Everbank Stadium. REA hasn't been asked to support this investment. Neither the City nor the Jaguars have made a presentation to the Board, so we don't know much more about the deal than you do. At the appropriate time, we will take a position.

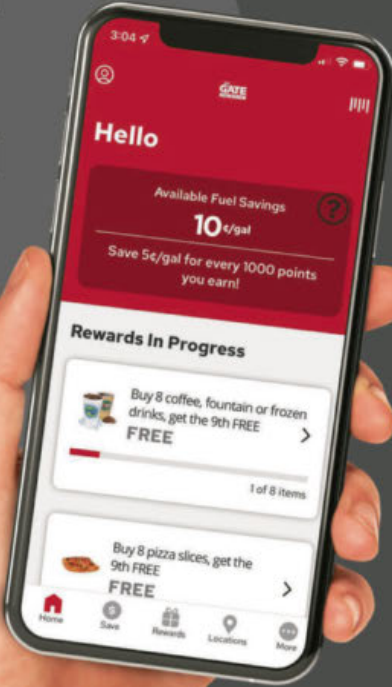
Meanwhile, you are encouraged to think this through on your own. When you decide whether tapping pension funds to renovate Everbank Stadium is good or bad, share your opinion with your pension's trustees, your council member, the mayor and the REA Board. Pension experts, including accountants, investment advisors and lawyers will weigh in on the economics involved, whether investing pension funds in this project is in keeping with the trustees' fiduciary duty, and the risks involved. In the end, its your pension at stake. Speak up.

Greg Radlinski, Secretary

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Save On Gas.

Are You A Caregiver?

Psalm 103:13-1

Since we now live longer, many of us are caring for sick and aging family members, but who 's caring for the caregivers? Who's meeting their needs? If you are one, here are a few things you must learn to do for yourself:

1. **Ask for help.** John Donne wrote "No man is an island." Reaching for help may feel awkward at first but keep doing it and you'll develop a comfort level. Start by listing all the areas in which your loved needs help. Be specific: Household chores, transportation, personal finances bathing and dressing, etc. When you get a "no" don't take it personally, just look elsewhere. There are people who find joy and fulfillment in serving
2. **Get connected.** Don't try to reinvent the wheel. Take advantage of the resources in your church, community programs, support groups senior centers and the internet. Involve your family, as well as your friends and neighbors. The Bible says, "A person standing alone can be ...defeated, but two can stand back to back and conquer. Three are even better" (Ecc.4:12 NLT).
3. **Remember that you're human; God does!** Don't feel bad about feeling bad. God is tender and compassionate... For He knows how weak we are. Focusing on someone else's needs to the exclusion of your own seems noble, but it also sets you up for guilt, anger depression and burnout. Your emotions influence your physical health, so giving yourself permission to "feel your feelings" not only enables you to stay healthy, it ensures you'll stay around to be a compassionate and able caregiver.

Leona Spann

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The Traditional Way: Call or go online to book an appointment. 904-381-6511 or duvalford.com

Mobile Service: If your vehicle needs service, you'll find the team at Duval Ford ready to help. The best part? We're willing to bring that help right to you. Our team offers a special mobile service option that removes the need for you to visit our dealership with your personal or business vehicle. When you schedule mobile service, our dealership will send a technician to come and handle your maintenance remotely at your home or workplace. Through this method, we can handle a number of essential services. These run the gamut from oil changes to tire rotations and more. Our technicians work directly with the team at the dealership, so we're able to handle warranty work and even some recall jobs. We have three mobile service vans able to serve you!

Pick up and Delivery: if your vehicle needs service that can't be handled by our mobile technicians? We'll pick up your car and bring to our service center. Once we finish with your service work, we'll bring your newly repaired and cleaned vehicle back home to you.



**25 mile radius for mobile and pick up/delivery*

**Call for additional details
904-381-6511**

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Departure: Jacksonville, FL @ 8 am

Day 1: Depart your group's location in a spacious, video and restroom equipped Motorcoach for the exciting Mississippi Gulf Coast! Once there you'll check into a beautiful Casino Hotel where you'll stay for four nights. Tonight, enjoy a relaxing Dinner.

Day 2: Enjoy a Deluxe Continental Breakfast before spending some free time exploring the Resort and do a little gaming if you wish. Then you will depart for a visit to a GULF COAST CASINO in Biloxi. This evening, you will enjoy Dinner and more gaming!

Day 3: Enjoy a Deluxe Continental Breakfast before departing for a GUIDED TOUR OF BAY ST. LOUIS, home to numerous landmarks on the National Register of Historic Places. See the historic Bay St. Louis Depot and St. Rose De Lima Church. Spend some time shopping in the historic Old Town Main Street, where you will find everything from local art, antiques, and exquisite jewelry. Discover a hidden treasure on the Mississippi Gulf Coast in this quaint historic town. Then, you will enjoy Dinner at a Second GULF COAST CASINO, along with more gaming if you choose.

Day 4: Enjoy a Deluxe Continental Breakfast, then depart for a GUIDED TOUR OF NEW ORLEANS and learn about the past and present of what makes this unique city a treasure. Next, you will head to Riverwalk, which features over 75 retailers and restaurants on the majestic Mississippi River. Later, you will go on a relaxing RIVERBOAT CRUISE on the Mississippi River. Wind down as you set sail and explore the Mississippi River. This evening, you will enjoy Dinner at a local restaurant and some free time in the French Quarter of New Orleans before returning to your casino hotel.

Day 5: Today after enjoying a Deluxe Continental Breakfast, you depart for home... a perfect time to chat with your friends about all the fun you had and where your next group trip will take you!

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Amount Enclosed: _____

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Guest Name: _____

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Email: _____

Please return this form with check made payable to:

Retired Employees Association

Mail to: 4830 Waller Street, Jacksonville, FL 32254

Please state in memo: Biloxi 2024 Trip





WELCOME! Paul Daragjati- *General Counsel*

Paul Daragjati graduated from the University of North Florida in 1993 and entered service with the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office, where he worked as a police officer for seven years. Paul then attended Florida State University School of Law, and thereafter served with the Office of the State Attorney for the Fourth Judicial Circuit, where he prosecuted both felonies and misdemeanors. In 2007, Paul became in-house counsel to the Jacksonville Fraternal Order of Police, where he represented police and correctional officers in labor, employment, criminal and administrative matters, as well as in civil and appellate litigation in state and federal courts. Between 2013 and 2018, Paul worked with a Fort Lauderdale-based firm specializing in the representation of public employee pension funds, where he assisted public retirement systems in their daily operations and in resolving complex legal issues.

Since 2018, Paul has been the principal at Daragjati Law, where he represents public employees and labor unions throughout the state and serves as statewide counsel to the Florida State Lodge Fraternal Order of Police. Paul is admitted to practice before the state courts of Florida and Georgia, and the United States Courts for the Middle and Southern Districts of Florida, the Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals, and the United States Supreme Court. Paul has represented clients in front of state and federal trial and appellate courts and has prosecuted dozens of administrative actions in arbitration, civil service forums, career service forums, and in front of administrative agencies. Paul has also represented over 150 officers in deadly force encounters and has defended as many law enforcement officers sued in their personal capacities in federal civil rights cases.

Paul's professional memberships have included the Florida Bar's Fourth Circuit Grievance Committee, where he served as chairman, and the Labor & Employment and Administrative Law Sections of the Florida Bar. In addition to his professional memberships, Paul has served as a board member for the Jacksonville Youth Sanctuary, a non-profit organization providing housing for young people involved in the child welfare system, has been a member of the Knights of Columbus and is a lifetime member of the National Rifle Association. Paul has been married to his wife Sonila for 29 years and together they are the parents of two beautiful daughters, one of whom currently serves as a prosecutor with the Miami-Dade State Attorney's Office.

Paul Daragjati can be contacted by reaching out to the office at (904) 353-2400.

Remembering Senator Betty Holzendorf

Betty Holzendorf, a dedicated public official and tower of political power for 50 years passed on February 29th, after a long career of serving the citizens of Jacksonville and Northeast Florida. REA President John Keane led a delegation of REA Members at the Funeral service on March 11th.



In the political arena, Betty Holzendorf was known for achieving her goals in often very controversial issues by willingness to listen to “the other side”; seeking to compromise, when compromise was the best route; standing tough when “tough” was her only option, but disagree with opponents without being disagreeable or disrespectful. From the beginning, winning was her goal ... on each and every issue. Once quoted as saying “I have been able to, in my public career, cross the lines to work with the business community and the neighborhoods and the educational community.”

Appointed as the Affirmative Action Officer by the late Mayor Jake Godbold, she served in several capacities in the Godbold administration, during the late 1970’s and 1980’s. Elected to the Florida House of Representatives, she served from 1988 – 1992. Elected to the Florida Senate in 1992, serving parts of Alachua, Clay, Duval, Putnam and St. John’s Counties until term limited. Betty was a candidate for Mayor in 2003.

After many political battles in City Hall, the Florida House and Senate, now is the time for Senator Betty to rest in Peace.

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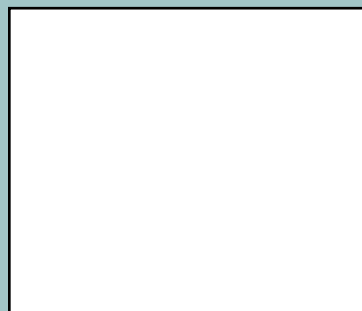
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RETIRED EMPLOYEES OF THE CONSOLIDATED CITY OF JACKSONVILLE

MAY - JUNE 2024

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS MARCH - APRIL 2024

| | |
|------------------------|-------------------|
| Belcher Jr, Kenneth E. | Pugh, Nicole |
| Bell, Patricia A. | West, Deborah |
| Carridine, Winfred L. | Woods, Jeffery L. |
| Carridine, Nikishia | Young, Maria |
| Hayes, Chuck | |
| Jensen, Ryan | |
| Johnson, Donna M. | |
| Jolly, Reginald D. | |
| Lively, Cathryn | |
| Mann, Vivian Y. | |
| Piccione, Maria | |

WE REMEMBER IN SORROW MEMBERS WHO HAVE PASSED AWAY MARCH - APRIL 2024

| | |
|----------------------|----------------------------|
| Blair, William N. | Norman, Janetta G. |
| Broward, John E. | Schroeder Jr, Frederick W. |
| Burns Sr., Robert E. | Shields, Wonnie D. |
| Coram, Rick M. | Sirmons, Donnie |
| Duane III, John C. | Taylor, Norman E. |
| Hendrix, Margaret | Thompson, Brenda R. |
| Horne, Sr., Roy R. | |
| Hudson, Mary S. | |
| Jordan, Vera B. | |
| Keane, Lynda P. | |
| Looney, Jeanette | |

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June 14, 2024



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IMPORTANT!

Check the REA website often for up to date news about our next meeting, when it will take place and where it will be. Also, call the office for information at 904-353-2400. 9:00 am-2:00pm Tuesday-Thursday.

REA Real Scoop Staff

Managing Editor: Lynette Clinch & Alyson Hayes

Executive Editor: John Keane

Reporting Contributors: John Keane, Terry Wood, Darryl Patterson, Greg Radlinski, Leona Spann, Alyson Hayes