

REAL SCOOP



President's Message:

Greetings to all REA members, family and friends. I hope this Newsletter finds everyone in good health and enjoying their days of retirement as we approach warmer weather and a beautiful summer. We are praying for no storms and damages during our upcoming hurricane season.

The REA had a great annual Spring BBQ on Sunday, April 14th at Fireman's Hall located at 618 Stockton Street. This year it was catered by the owner of Woody's BBQ in Green Cove Springs. All of the food was awesome, and everyone was pleased with this event.

Our next Quarterly meeting will be on June 20th at 10:00 a.m. at the Mary Singleton Center located at 150 E. 1st Street. There are always cash door prizes that you do not want to miss. We will also have a speaker for this meeting. It will be our new Pension Administrator, Thomas Stadelmaier. He has agreed to come as our speaker, and we are looking forward to the upcoming information that he will be sharing with us.

Our Board of Directors meets monthly at the City and Police Credit Union located at 4830 Waller Street. The meeting is always the 3rd Thursday of each month at 10:00 a.m. We have a small office on Waller Street, but if you have something to share with Board you can call us at (904-353-2400). We will allow for you to speak to the board members, or we will share your concerns with the board members for you.

Also, if anyone would like to serve on the board, we would encourage you to advise us of your interest. We are continually looking for Board Members to contribute to the Real Scoop.

Our next social event to look forward to is the Annual Fish Fry that will be held in October at the Firefighter's Hall located at 618 Stockton Street. Details including the date, time and caterer will be shared as soon as we have them.

Also, if anyone would like to contribute to the newsletter with a story, history of the department that you worked in, a family story, or anything interesting where you have traveled, please send them to the REA office at klooney@reajax.com or jking@reajax.com.

Recruiting continues to be very important for the association. If you know of anyone that is not a member, please recruit them to become a member. Also, if you know of someone that is not receiving the REAL SCOOP, have them call the REA office to make sure their information is correct.

As a reminder to all the REA members, our staff and Board are here to help with your City of Jacksonville retirement questions. Feel free to contact any Board member or the REA office. However, if you have any questions regarding the Jax Pension Portal you will need to contact the Pension Office, at 904-255-7288.

*God Bless you all,
Pete Ison*

Jacksonville's old City Hall Annex brought down with a bang

For a few moments Sunday morning, downtown Jacksonville was eerily quiet.

But that calm — just after 8 a.m. — came to an abrupt end with the blare of a warning horn and the sharp crack of the explosion that would reduce Jacksonville's old City Hall Annex to a pile of rubble.

Having watched from nearby parking garages, apartments and offices, spectators whooped and cheered as the dust cloud enveloped where the building had stood not even 20 seconds earlier.

The 15-story, mid-century modern building at 220 E. Bay Street opened in 1960, a time when it was the fifth-tallest building in Jacksonville. It was City Hall until 1997, until the reopening of the St. James Building that is still home to City Council and the Mayor's Office today. It was where the vote on the city's consolidation took place, and the one where the deal to bring the Jaguars to Jacksonville was approved.

There was no designated public viewing area, but that didn't stop the party for Justin Hearon and his friends. Hearon, who lives in Jacksonville Beach, scouted the downtown area for a good viewing spot on Friday, and even tried with no luck to get a room at the Hyatt right next to the implosion site.

After settling on a parking garage at the corner of Bay and Main Streets, Hearon and his three friends arrived at 6:45 a.m. for their morning tailgate, complete with camp chairs, beer and music turned up.

Hearon said it's not the kind of sight a person gets to see often, and "I thought it'd be cool."

Jordan Pence, who watched from the same garage as Hearon, said he remembers when his dad took him to see a building implode roughly 20 years ago.

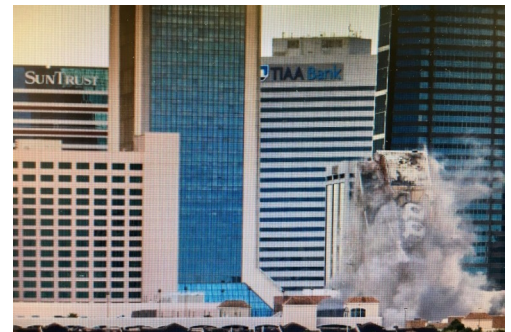
"I was a little kid, and I thought it was the coolest thing I'd ever seen," Pence said of the experience.

He came equipped with a tripod and his nice camera to capture the action. As the dust cloud began to drift away and the outline of the Berkman came back into view, Pence watched the video he'd just captured.

"It's crazy how two minutes ago there was a building there," Pence said.

Tessa Duvall: (904) 359-4697

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Comments from some folks who worked there!

Mayor John Delaney:

"When I was interviewed before the implosion, I said "good riddance." The St. James Building was such a spectacular building to replace the old one—it looks and feels like a City Hall. I was just in it today, and the St James Building has not shown any sign of age—it is a classic that will last forever.

The "Old City Hall" was poorly designed, had small floor plates, poor circulation, asbestos, leaked, and was simply ugly both inside and out.

Public office buildings should not be on the waterfront, though the placement of the Jail, Courthouse, and City Hall was considered progress at the time since that portion of the waterfront was decaying piers—it was modernization for that era.

In saying all of that, I have driven by the past few weeks and have a sense of sadness. I spent 10 years in the "Old Courthouse" and about 8 in the "Old City Hall." Lots of history occurred there. I had a sense of loss that I did not have earlier—I think it was the visual of the piles of bricks and the empty airspace.

The Old Courthouse had more charm inside and a weightier feel. But both buildings had long outlived usefulness, were in the wrong location. While Mayor, I had determined that neither Building could be renovated into a higher or better use."

Mayor Jake Godbold:

"I spent 20 and a half years in the old City Hall and loved it! I was a City Councilman for 12 years and Mayor for 8 and a half years.

Many important and crucial decisions regarding this City were made in those years.

I do miss the building and will always have fond memories regarding the City Hall on Bay Street!!"

Martha Barrett (Mayor's Aide):

"I was so excited to work in the Mayor's office from January 1979 to July 1987!

I had the most wonderful times in that building and the Mayor's office was always busy and fun!

We had all kinds of people and visitors from all over the world on the 14th floor.

I miss that building and I will always be grateful for the honor and privilege to work for former Mayor Jake Godbold!"

Mayor Tommy Hazouri:

"During my four years as Mayor, there was much to accomplish, and we did. But it was not without its levity, and its many memories at City Hall. We had many visitors, from national politicians like former Vice President, Walter Mondale, and Senator, Al Gore Sr, (the veep's father), to the CEO of Coors Beer, Adolph Coors.

The funniest, however, were visiting Penguins from Disneyworld, who performed tricks on the large conference table in the Mayors conference room; and the droppings they left behind 🐾

A real surprise one day, was the pop in visit of Henry (the Fonz) Winkler! He was seen earlier that day by shoppers at the Beach Blvd K-Mart, but apparently wanted to visit the Mayor in my office. The next thing I knew, he literally entered my office in his trademark character with one of his popular Catchphrases, "Heyee," Unexpected, he was in full character with his Bronx or Brooklyn accent, as seemingly the whole 14th floor we're enjoying a take from the then decade long hit show, "Happy Days" as they stood at my door crying in laughter."

Bob Johnson (City Council Auditor):

"I went to work with the City on July 1, 1968 which was 3 months before the official start of the Consolidated City.

The Mayor and City Council were already in place. We were in the process of preparing the first City budget, and the Finance Committee meetings were interminable long, often lasting well past midnight. I.M. Sulzbacker, the Chairman was very deliberate as was the Committee.

Meetings were held at least six days a week. It was a learning experience for Council members as well as staff."

Councilman Matt Carlucci:

"When I was a young man about 16 years old my father was at a Council meeting and I got a call at home from a man who said he was heading over to City Hall to shoot my father. I immediately hopped into my 1966 Mercury Comet and sped over to City Hall pulled up in the middle of the parking garage. When I arrived the Council meeting had just gotten over and my father was talking with other councilmembers and I told my dad what happened and that somebody was coming over to shoot him. Dad just looked at me and said "son, we get those kinds of calls all the time don't you worry about it". That's when I First opened my eyes about how crazy some people can get.

The other things I reminisce about are the Council members I served with on the council and made some substantial changes in our local government with their help.

How you were one of the finest councilmembers if not the finest councilmember I ever worked with for good government. I also remember working to make sure Warren Jones was elected Council President. Warren was the first black councilmember to serve a full term as President and then he round up serving a second term.

And of course, the last thing I can remember is we were in that City Hall at a time when my two sons were born! I remember taking them up to the 10th floor and letting them run loose while I try to get some work done, just as my dad did with me when he served, and I was a young boy.

"I remember so many other wonderful city employees we worked with there.

I believe to this day that the set up on the 15th floor for the Council members and our meetings was far superior than the one at the "new" City Hall."

Councilman Jim Overton:

"A couple of things... The view from the balcony on the 15th floor was uplifting (just outside the Council Chamber). It was open air and the Hyatt Hotel wasn't built yet so there was a spectacular view of the riverfront. The Council President's office was on the northeast corner on the 10th floor and it had a great view as well . I was the last Council President in that office. We moved to St James in January halfway through my year with a lot of hoopla.

Jim Overton (Continued):

The Mayor's Office was one floor down from the Council Chamber, so the Mayor's staff would swoop up the fire stairwell to suddenly appear when one of their bills was in trouble.

At the new City Hall the competition was fierce for office selections, which as the presiding officer I got to make. Just to throw a little doubt around I left a couple of different fake office assignments on the copy machines. I was mad at Mike Hogan for something, I don't remember what, and put him in the last office in the back of the building. He didn't mind, since it overlooked the original First Baptist Church building, which he much admired.

Lloyd Brown (Jacksonville Journal):

"Beginning with Consolidation, I spent many hours in the old City Hall covering local government with the Jacksonville Journal Governmental Affairs Staff.

The Mayor and new City Council took the recent government-in-the-sunshine laws very seriously and we had unprecedented access to meetings and records.

I could freely drop into any office, from the lowest ranking clerk to the Mayor's office without appointment. There were unwritten rules. If I sat down in a meeting and the conversation stopped, I would just get up and leave – knowing I could call any of the participants later and find out what the discussion had been about.

The openness no longer exists, and I don't understand why the local media allows that situation to continue without protest."

James Crooks (Author/Historian):

"In 1987 following Tommy Hazouri's election I applied to be Historian-in-Residence. Arthur Schlesinger had done it for JFK and wrote a book. I thought if Tommy had 8 great years, it too might be worth a book helping to put Jacksonville on the map. However, Schlesinger had a paid full-time job serving JFK and collecting data. Basically, was an observer at meetings and events. For example, I attended every Monday staff meeting to learn what was going on. Got to know Mitch Atalla, who I respected, and Ann Shorstein who I found very bright and acerbic. Tommy not so much. He of course did not get re-elected, so I turned to looking at the experience of consolidation, which turned out to be a much richer topic than Tommy.

I got a sabbatical from UNF for a semester, went down to City Hall, met with the Public Information people, specifically Ivan Clare. (I also got to meet Dick Martin who still at that time was working for the City.) Ivan took me to Lex Hester who approved of my messing around with the documents. Duane Atkinson introduced me to some 44 file cabinets of records stored in the Mezzanine of the City Hall garage with letters, reports and memoranda dating from the Haydon Burns years thru Lew Ritter, Tanzler, Godbold and Hazouri. It was an extraordinary trove, also filthy dirty. I would haul a basketful of documents up to the 5th floor and begin reading. They also let me xerox copies for documents to take home for referencing in my writing. I spent a year immersed in that research using the Public Information office as my base. Not very exciting, but the results turned out to be a pretty good book on Consolidation."

Richard Bowers (Mayor's Aide/HUD Director)

"I always enjoyed the view from the 15th floor balcony before they build the hotel. But my earliest memory was going to meet with Mayor Tanzler after I had been hired as Director of the Community Relations Commission in 1971. His office was decorated with the stuffed heads of his hunting trophies, very intimidating, and I sat next to a trash can that had been made out of an elephants foot. I was so intimidated and hardly remember what we discussed. I spent most of my time on 15 at Council meetings, 14 in the Mayor's Office and 10 in the Council offices.

My office was on the 3rd floor of the Courthouse, School Board was on the 4th floor and the Sheriff's office on the 5th floor. I was surprised by the fact that each floor had two sets of men's and women's restrooms, the vestiges of segregation reminded me that when the City Hall was built, the city was still segregated.

As early at 1971, Lex Hester was already discussing building a City Hall that encompassed all the city departments, though as we all know, this was never done. I also remember the ease of parking at the old City Hall, that was lost in the new one.

It is important not to forget the condition of Bay Street when the City Hall and Courthouse were built and that this was a major effort to clean up that area, which on the weekend was an area that most people, other than sailors and the shore patrol stayed away from, thus making it safer and more comfortable.

I liked the building, liked its exterior looks, was frankly sad that it was demolished. But as it was location on some of the most taxable land in the city, it was probably a good idea. In all the years, I was in and out of there and worked on the 14th floor, I always felt that its presence represented that we were striving to do our best for the citizens of the City."

If you have a story about the old City Hall, email it to Real Scoop Editor, Harry Reagan - harry.reagan@comcast.net.



LAW TALK by Eric Smith, General Counsel and Past President

As I write this column, we celebrate Cinco De Mayo (and Mother's Day). If not both, I hope you enjoyed at least one of these holidays.

I get a number of pleasant surprises about readership of LAWTALK. Just last week I ran into my old friend, the Honorable Gayward Hendry, Clay County Commissioner and retired JSO Officer. We go so far back that when I was an Assistant State Attorney and Police Legal advisor for Sheriff Dale Carson, Detective Hendry was in my Police Academy class.

The Commissioner, who is a REA member, mentioned he reads the Real Scoop and this column. Why is this of interest to you? If you have a question or problem in Clay County, I have a hunch that our member, Gayward Hendry (also my wife's cousin!) would be able to give us some advice.

The Senior Citizen Predator Department:

It is unbelievable (but believe it) How many con-artists, thieves, scamsters, assorted criminals, telephone con-men (and women) and nice-sounding fraudsters there are seeking you out day in and day out. For a short and very educational article about the tactics used by these Predators who seek to trick you out of your hard-earned money and if possible, completely wipe you out of everything you own, read again.

Your First Vice-President, Greg Radlinski's excellent words on Fraud Prevention from our last Real Scoop. It was so important that it was printed twice.

Would you believe that as I sat in the REA office composing these words, evidence of predators came rolling in to prove the case. The Office phone rang, and I answered. A lovely recorded voice identifying itself as Tina, notifying whomever of a problem with our PCI compliance and suggesting it was "imperative you call this 800 number". I hung up on lying Tina. You should too.

(By the way folks, an entity purporting to be Microsoft makes threatening scam calls to my house multiple times a day, even after being blocked by us. We hang-up on the lying Microsoft rep. You should too.)

Not 5 minutes after lying Tina, the telephone rang again with great news. (I can't make all this stuff up!) "You have in the past applied for a pay day loan. Now you're pre-approved for a loan of \$1,000.00." Tomorrow I'm going to ask Kathy and Jackie in the REA office if they applied. I'll bet my house that they didn't!

The caller then says to seek out GOPAYUSA.COM and use promo code 7117 and gives me "congratulation's" from GOPAYUSA! "Hang up on these thieves! I did. You should too.

How pitiful it is for the millions who lose money this way. Next time we focus on Nursing Home abuse and there's plenty to talk about. I've been involved with one with a Jacksonville home being complicit with a dear, very lucid, lady almost 95 years of age being denied her freedom of movement, access to friends and even something so simple as eyeglasses. It makes my blood boil. If you have a loved one or friend in a nursing home, assume nothing. There are remedies.

In conclusion, cut this paragraph out—slip it in your billfold, wallet, purse or type it in you telephone contacts. For help with legal questions or problems be sure to call your attorney or do not hesitate to call me 24/7, or email: eric@govin.net. Law office 904-596-5707; cell 904-635-2973. Remember, the REA is always here to help. If your problem is important to you, it's important to us.

Or, ask me at our Quarterly meeting at the Mary Singleton Senior Center. In the meantime, take a baby step to make the world a little better place... Do something nice for someone quite unexpectedly. The great Bishop, Desmond Tutu, said it best and most poetically: "Do your little bit of good where you are; it's those little bits of good put together that overwhelm the world."

God Bless, Eric

2019 REA BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Left to right, Pete Ison, President, Harry Reagan, Historian, Greg Radlinski, 1st Vice President, Sheila Sharp Caulkins, GEPF Adv Comm, Richard Wallace, Past President, Gary Looney, Treasurer, Tom Lumpkin, P&F Adv Comm., Eric Smith, 2nd Vice President/Gen Counsel, Larry Johnson, Member-at-Large, Wade Haynes, Ombudsman, Leona Spann, Chaplain, Flo (Emily) Clark, Adv Panel, Debbie Brooker, Member-at-Large, and Cindy Gardner, Secretary **Absent:** Henry Cook, Advisory Panel, Terry Woods, GEPF Trustee, Darryl Patterson, Sergeant-at-Arms, and Randy Scott, Member-at-Large.

Thank God for our Mothers

By Julia Hunt

If life were without water, where would we be?
 If life were without mothers,
 There would be no you or me. We all need to take hold, of how precious life really is,
 and not take for granted the gift of love and the ability to give.
 Thank you to God for creating us all
 For giving us our Mothers
 So we can stand proud and tall.
 Humans are no accident, no mistake or error
 We sometimes live our lives in fear of this,
 Even to the point of terror.
 But when the truth is told, and recognized by all,
 God does not create rubbish. He knew what he was doing when he created
 me and you, but the best gift of all, is giving us loving, caring
 Mothers who love us unconditionally through and through.
 None of us are perfect, that includes ourselves and family.
 Hold onto how precious we are and thank God for our Mothers.
 Amen

Leona J. Spann, Chaplain

HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY



RETIRED EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP MEETING

10AM - THURSDAY, JUNE 20, 2019

MARY SINGLETON SENIOR CENTER AUDITORIUM

150 E. FIRST STREET, NEAR DOWNTOWN

OUR GUEST SPEAKER WILL BE MR THOMAS STADELMAIER, PENSION ADMINISTRATOR WITH THE
GENERAL EMPLOYEES PENSION FUNDS, WITH QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

ALSO, COMMITTEE REPORTS FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS.

AT THE CLOSE OF THE MEETING, DRAWINGS FOR CASH PRIZES.

HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE!!

If you missed our Annual BBQ we had on Sunday, April 14th at the Fire Fighter's Hall you definitely missed a real surprised. Our very own talented Board member, Mr. Henry Cook surprised two of our long standing Board members, Sheila Sharp Caulkins and MaryAnne Anders with a portrait of themselves. Good job Henry!!



Retired Employees of the Consolidated City of Jacksonville

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E-mail: jking@reajax.com

Website: www.reajax.com

Bring in a new member and help us reinforce our efforts to take care of our retirees.
Update your E-mail address and contact info. Send it to jking@reajax.com.

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