



# REAL SCOOP



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



*John Keane, President*

### *An Open Letter to Michael A. Mayo, DHA, President and Chief Administrative Officer*

Good morning.

I write to you today as President of the Retired Employees Association of Jacksonville, to express my great concern on behalf of our thousands of members and their families of the status of negotiations for renewal of health care services between Baptist Health System and Florida Blue.

Much like Baptist Health and Florida Blue, organizations dedicated to the health and wellness of our citizens, as a career public employee, I spent 54 years serving the citizens of Jacksonville, first as a Deputy Sheriff, then as a member of Jacksonville Fire-Rescue, completing my career as Administrator of the Police and Fire Pension Fund. I understand budgets and governmental finance, the value of long-range planning and the need for the ability to make changes when changes are required in operational policies and procedures.

Public reports reveal the extensive and costly challenges facing both Baptist Health and Florida Blue in reaching a successful outcome of the current negotiations. Failure is not an option for the future health care of our members and families. The thought of our members not having full access to the extensive network of hospitals, clinics, physicians and services offered our members by the Baptist Health System is very concerning to our members. In addition to the retirees, thousands of current City of Jacksonville employees obtain their health care from the Baptist Health System under policies administered by Florida Blue. Exiting Baptist Health System will impose significant additional health care cost on our members in co-payments and higher out of pocket expenses and increase employer cost.

On behalf of our members and the active City of Jacksonville employees I respectfully urge an immediate return to the negotiating table with the goal of reaching in good faith a fair resolution of the pending fiscal issues that will ensure our members continue to have access to the quality, affordable health care provided by the Baptist Health System.

Now is the time, this is the place - - - for renewing good faith conversation and joint cooperation in seeking a fair resolution to pending issues and moving forward together – Baptist Health System and Florida Blue - to continue offering top tier, top quality health care options for our members.

Please let me know if I can provide any help in this matter. Thank you for your consideration.

*John Keane, President*

**You're urged to Call Baptist Health at 904-202-3247 to fix this issue!**



## **Terry Wood, 1st Vice President**

### **Legislative update – Working to Repeal WEP and GPO. Senate 597, HR 82**

**By John Keane REA President and Terry Wood, REA 1st Vice President**

When most City of Jacksonville employees work a second job, they are often unaware of the Social Security penalty awaiting them in retirement. City retirees who paid into Social Security before joining the City workforce or through a second job expect to receive Social Security benefits they paid for when they retire. Unfortunately, if these retirees didn't also pay into Social Security through their entire working career, their benefits will be dramatically reduced. The Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and Government Pension Offset (GPO) are two provisions that allow the federal government to reduce many public employees Social Security benefits even though they paid the required Social Security taxes through a second job. The Retired Employees Association opposes this unfair penalty on many retired City employees and strongly supports legislation to repeal the WEP and GPO.

On August 7th, U.S. Senators Sherrod Brown (D-OH) and Susan Collins (R-ME) called on Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY) and Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) to immediately put Brown and Collins' bipartisan Social Security Fairness Act on the Senate Floor for a vote. The legislation would restore full Social Security benefits for many City retirees by repealing two provisions of current law – the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and the Government Pension Offset (GPO) – that unfairly reduce the Social Security benefits that public employees.

In addition to Brown and Collins, the legislation has 62 Senators as bipartisan cosponsors. With 62 out of 100 Senators, 46 Democrats, 13 Republican, including Senator Rick Scott and 3 Independents supporting this important bill now is the time for the Senate to act. The Retired Employees Association joins our Public Employee allies in Washington in sending our message to the Senate leadership: take up and pass S. 597 to restore the full Social Security benefits our public sector workers have earned, and immediately and send the legislation over to the House of Representatives, where HR 82, the House version of the bill has 324 cosponsors — 210 Democrats, 114 Republicans, including Representative John Rutherford. We will continue to closely monitor this Legislation, and renew our efforts to obtain the support of Senator Rubio and other Florida Representatives.



## Darryl Patterson, 2nd Vice President

### TRAVEL TIPS

Proving your identity is part of traveling, whether you're checking in at a hotel or navigation through airport security. Thankfully, you can take steps beforehand to help mitigate that potential stress. Here are seven common travel documents you should make virtual copies of before your next trip.

**Passports-** Passports are the most essential document when it comes to international travel- if you lose yours, you'll likely end up stranded in a foreign country until you can procure a replacement. Keep an image stored on your phone, in the cloud, or even on a spare USB drive. If you lose your passport, bring that copy to the consulate (along with any other identification) to help expedite the replacement process.

**Driver's License-** Much like a passport, driver's licenses can be essential for proving your identity on the road- for example, if you're checking into a domestic hotel, picking up train or bus tickets, or, most importantly, renting a car.

**Travel Visa-** Tourist Visas are a necessity for gaining access into certain countries. Fortunately, many nations have switched to electronic visas, but it's worth printing out multiple copies and storing them in various locations such as your wallet, backpack, and suitcase - just in case. If you're dealing with a physical visa, be sure to scan the document and save it to your phone or the cloud so you can still gain access to your destination should you lose the actual physical visa.

**Credit Cards-** No traveler likes to imagine the scenario of being stranded abroad without having a means of paying for anything. Add it before your trip to a digital payment service such as Apple Wallet or Google Pay.

**Medical Prescriptions-** When traveling, losing critical medical information could lead to major health complications. It's important to bring virtual copies of any necessary medical prescriptions with you. You can show the copies of your prescription to a local doctor. And they should be able to help you replace your meds more easily.

**Proof of Insurance-** Unexpected complications can arise at the most inopportune times on vacation. Keep a copy of the document on the

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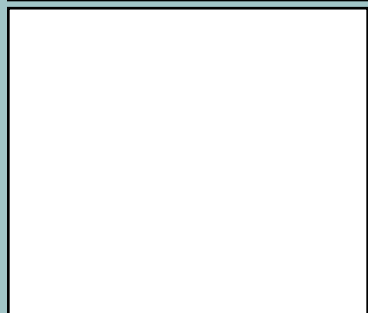
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### From the Secretary's desk....



This year we celebrate the 50th anniversary of the founding of The Retired Employees of the Consolidated City of Jacksonville, Inc.--our REA—on August 13, 1974. The first directors were J.D. Peacock, J.M. Saunders, Winson Anthony, Louise B. Dorsey, Iris Parker, C.L. Millis and J. N. Bowen. At their direction, the purpose of the association was declared, in part, "...to provide an association for persons who receive a check from retirement from the Consolidated City of Jacksonville; to promote the economic and social interest of the members; to promote, protect and enforce the rights of its members as retired persons receiving a retirement check from the Consolidate City of Jacksonville; to promote social activities for the advancement and interest of the members and to foster, develop and promote social intercourse and fraternity among its members...."

An early member, Marvin Booz, was one of the greatest supporters of the Association. In his name and memory, the Board of Directors annually recognizes the significant contributions of contemporary members who advanced the REA's purposes. On this, the 50th anniversary of our association, we acknowledge the foresight and fraternal accomplishments of the founders, the Booz Award honorees, and the many retirees who have joined the association for their benefit and the benefit of all City retirees. Mayor Deegan has submitted her proposed budget for fiscal year 2024 – 2025. It is being reviewed by the City Council. As you may recall, before the last Mayoral and Council election, REA asked the candidates to declare whether they support the Association's request that each retiree receive a one time pension supplement of \$1,250 from as then unencumbered Federal funds granted under the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021. The Mayor and almost all the Council Members replied that they supported our proposal. However, they didn't appropriate funds for this purpose before all the ARPA funds were spent. Moreover, the Mayor's proposed budget does not include a line item for the one-time supplement.

Now is the time to write and/or e-mail your District Council Member and the At-large Members reminding them of the commitment they made to earn your vote. Act now!

*Grea Radlinski, Secretary*

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Icons: coffee cup, pizza slice, gas pump



Trust God-He Knows What He's Doing REA  
 Psalm 46:10  
 "Be still and know that I am God"

Let's take a look at the Scripture:

(1) "Be still". Activity born out of anxiety actually prevents God from showing Himself strong on your behalf. That doesn't mean you can be passive or lazy, it means doing what God leads you to do without running ahead of Him. It means submitting to Him by slowing down and waiting. Why? To make sure you have a sense of peace to go along with the ideas you believe He's giving you. (See Col.3:15). Ask Him to reveal His will, then "be still". Acknowledge that He's in charge and He knows What He's doing.

(2) "Know that I am God". This means acknowledging that you are not God. When you don't obey God, consult Him, or recognize His timing, you remove Him from the throne of your life and end up trying to take His place. And you know how well that works. We hear a lot about goal setting and vision. And it's a scriptural principle for "where there is no vision, the people perish" (Pr. 29:18). But the bible also says, "The vision is...for an appointed time. Though it tarries, wait for it" (Hab. 2:-3 NKJV). You'll never fulfill your vision without the help of the One who gave it to you. Nineteenth century American clergyman Henry Ward Beecher said, "The strength of a man consists in finding out the way God is going, and going that way." Remember, there's no time lost in waiting, if you're waiting on the Lord. So don't let a "how to" seminar or a "type A personality" stampede you into getting ahead of God or attempting to forge ahead under your own steam.

God Bless and keep you,

**Leona J. Spann**

## Did you know there is more than 1 way to get your vehicle serviced at Duval Ford?

**The Traditional Way:** Call or go online to book an appointment. 904-381-6511 or [duvalford.com](http://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**

**WELCOME NEW MEMBERS  
JULY—AUGUST 2024**

Belcher, Daniel H	Lundy, Richard D.	Salter, Junell
Bradford, Carl M.	Lundy, Terri J.	Sastre, Judith
Brennan, Paul	Mays, William L.	Smith, George H.
Butler, Gerald D.	McNeil, Julie	Strickland, Rachel C.
Campbell, Lisa L.	Napoli, Randall	Terry, Robert L.
Cunningham, Barry	Powell, Raiford J.	Tison, Thomas N.
Fulford, Randall B.	Rahm, Scott C.	VanAsten, Anna Marie
Ginther, Paul	Reyes, Joseph	White, Dorothy
Howard, Evans	Reyes, Tammi L.	Williams III, George A.
Jarrett, John E.	Richardson , Owen A.	Young, George F.
Jole, Gary	Sands, Gary	
Kaplan, John	Sims, Grady V.	
Leggett, Steve L.	Salette, William F.	

**WE REMEMBER IN SORROW MEMBERS WHO HAVE PASSED AWAY  
JULY—AUGUST 2024**

Cherry, James T.	Lyle, Arthur H.
Dugan, Joseph R.	Patin, Lynne M.
Emanuel Sr., Larry E.	Rodeheaver, Robert P.
Fullwood, David	Ross, Diane
Gandy, Margie P.	Schnabel, Carolyn D.
Griffin, Douglas E.	Smith Sr., Roger
James, Muriel J.	Ursry, Thomas R.
Johnson, Joseph L.	
Jordan, Cedric A.	
Kinard, Mary G.	
Knight, William J.	
Lawson, Robert J.	

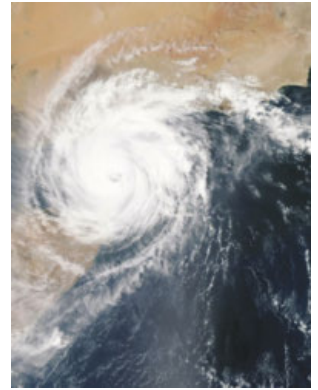


## September is National Preparedness Month

WASHINGTON -- September marks National Preparedness Month, the annual recognition to remind everyone in America how important it is for individuals, families and communities to prepare for disasters and emergencies that can happen at any time.

President Joseph R. Biden, Jr. issued a [National Preparedness Month proclamation](#), acknowledging the importance of building a nation more prepared and resilient in the face of more frequent and severe disasters the country has endured in the last few years.

Earlier this year, FEMA Administrator Deanne Criswell [announced this year's theme](#) would focus on preparing older adults and their caregivers ahead of disasters.



"September is National Preparedness Month, and during our month-long campaign to emphasize the importance of being ready when disaster strikes, FEMA is focused this year on providing information and resources to empower older adults as they make their own preparations," said Administrator Criswell. "We are also underscoring the importance of involving caregivers in these conversations, as they are instrumental in our efforts to help this vital community before, during and after disasters."

This year's theme, "Take Control in 1, 2, 3," encourages everyone, especially older adults, to become more prepared in three simple steps:

- **Assess your needs.** Everyone has unique needs. There are several factors that can affect the steps you need to take to prepare yourself and those you care for. Whether you care for pets, have children, have a medical condition or a disability, it is important to know what your family will need to stay safe.
- **Make a plan.** Once you've assessed your needs, you can plan for what you'd do, where you'd go and what to bring if a disaster strikes. Your emergency supply kit should include items that [meet your individual needs](#).
- **Engage your support network.** Get to know your neighbors because they, along with your family and friends, can be a support network before, during and after a disaster by providing emotional and practical support.

In recognition of this year's special focus on older adults, Administrator Criswell signed an agreement today that formalizes the partnership between FEMA and the [Rosalynn Carter Institute for Caregivers](#).

"Emergency preparedness is part of the Carter family legacy, with President Jimmy Carter creating FEMA by executive order in 1979. With today's signing, we honor that legacy by strengthening our partnership with the Rosalynn Carter Institute for Caregivers," said Criswell. "This agreement will enable us to leverage each other's vast support networks to further support older adults when preparing for disasters and point caregivers to essential resources as well."

"Bringing caregivers into the conversation about emergency preparedness is the goal of this new partnership," said Dr. Jennifer Olsen, Chief Executive Officer for the Rosalynn Carter Institute. "We want older adults and their caregivers to know they are not alone before, during, or after a disaster, and for caregivers to be seen and supported critical partners in emergency preparedness. When caregivers and older adults are empowered to work together to prepare for disasters, they are better able to overcome challenges and manage stress."

Criswell urged FEMA's partners, emergency managers and all those who work with and support older adult communities to access the new webpage available in English and Spanish languages at [Ready.gov/older-adults](#) and [Ready.gov/es/adultos-mayores](#) for preparedness messaging, graphics and resources. FEMA created a [toolkit](#) with key messaging, graphics and talking points to help our partners uplift and amplify this year's National Preparedness Month theme.

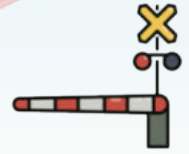
Last year, as part of FEMA's ongoing approach to advance accessibility and cultural competency in boosting the nation's preparedness, FEMA's Ready Campaign and the Ad Council created [PSAs](#) developed specifically to reach [Black and African American communities](#). The year prior to that, the theme was "[Prepare to Protect](#)" and was designed to resonate with [Latino communities](#).

For more information on how to prepare yourself, your loved ones and your community, visit [Ready.gov](#).





# All Aboard the Train to Winter Park, Florida!



Enjoy the shops, restaurants, and parks within walking distance of the train station in beautiful Winter Park!

To make reservations call 1-800-USA-RAIL or go online to [Amtrak.com](http://Amtrak.com) we will be on train #91 South and Train #98 North.

The train will depart at about 7:30AM on October 2nd and return at approximately 5:30PM the same day



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**Across**

- 1. Letter before zee
- 4. Maxim
- 9. Mr. Potato Head piece
- 10. Pertaining to birds
- 11. Islamic sect
- 13. Nose out
- 14. Monk's haircut
- 16. Therefore
- 17. School org.
- 18. Element #2's symbol
- 20. Handler
- 22. Maple genus
- 24. Prefix with type
- 25. Sink feature
- 27. Terminate
- 28. "Beats me!"
- 29. Freelancer's enc.

**Down**

- 1. Adam and Mae
- 2. AOL competitor
- 3. The Emerald Isle
- 4. Cellist Yo-Yo --
- 5. Blanket
- 6. It ebbs and flows
- 7. Playground game
- 8. Undivided
- 12. Headache helper
- 15. Western tribe
- 18. Reddish brown
- 19. Eat away at
- 20. Withdraw gradually
- 21. Runs out of steam
- 22. Sum (up)
- 23. French vineyard
- 26. Thumbs-down

Do you have documents that you need notarized? As a member of the Retired Employees Association, you have the added benefit of free notary service! Come visit us at 4830 Waller St. Jacksonville, FL 32254 and enjoy the convenience of quick and easy notary services right in our office.

Answer key on page 9



# REA Events Coming Soon!

## Winter Park Train Trip

Enjoy the shops, restaurants, and parks within walking distance of the train station in beautiful Winter Park! The train departs at approximately 7:30AM and returns at 5:00PM the same day. See next Real Scoop for full details!

## Biloxi Bus Trip

The rescheduling of the Biloxi Bus trip is on the horizon! The trip will include a 5 day 4 night vacation to Biloxi and New Orleans. It features guided tours, casinos, and more! Be on the lookout for more information soon!

## Alhambra Dinner

A selection of exciting shows paired with a wonderful dinner makes this REA excursion one that you do not want to miss. Be on the lookout for more information in the next Real Scoop.

## Annual Christmas Party

It's almost time for our Annual Christmas Party! Please join us on December 8th, 2024 at 1:00PM for fellowship and fun! We look forward to seeing you there. **See page 11 for more details.**

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			W	I	E	L	D	E	R
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D	R	A	I	N		E	N	D	
D	U	N	N	O		S	A	E	

Answer key to Crossword puzzle on page 8



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<b>Blanding</b> 6841 Blanding Blvd.	<b>Cedar Hills</b> 3614 Blanding Blvd.

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# RETIRED EMPLOYEES OF THE CONSOLIDATED CITY OF JACKSONVILLE

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Email: [LClinch@REAJAX.com](mailto:LClinch@REAJAX.com)

Website: [www.reajax.com](http://www.reajax.com)

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City & Police Federal Credit Union  
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To learn more, visit us at [CityFCU.com](http://CityFCU.com).

904.353.2240 [CityFCU.com](http://CityFCU.com)



## 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, Greg Radlinski, Leona Spann, Alyson Hayes

### Article Page 7:

"FEMA, Ready Campaign Launch National Preparedness Month." *FEMA.Gov*, 1 Sept. 2023, [www.fema.gov/press-release/20230901/fema-ready-campaign-launch-national-preparedness-month](http://www.fema.gov/press-release/20230901/fema-ready-campaign-launch-national-preparedness-month).