

Spring Newsletter 2023

# Junior Service League of St. Augustine



Photo by Shannon Fitzpatrick | Instagram @prettyoldcity

**\$82,556**  
2022 Annual Giving

All American Air Charitable Foundation  
Childrens Home Society  
EPIC Cure  
First Responders Project  
Home Again St. Johns  
Horse Play  
Kids Bridge  
Kids Bridge Playground  
Lighthouse  
Lighthouse Camps  
Montessori School  
Port in the Storm  
Rebloom Center  
SAYS  
Single Vision  
The Planting Fund  
Wildflower Healthcare

## *Parliamentarian's Note*

Thank you to each and everyone of you who took the time to reach out and checked in on myself and my family. The support of our community kept our family going in the most difficult year of our lives. I am blessed and grateful to be a part of such a legacy as the Junior Service League.

With love and admiration, I wish the best for our league for many years to come.

*Gini Golano*





*Carice Schuster*

## *President's Note*

We started off 2023 ringing in the New Year together at Gala, and what a year it has already been! In January we welcomed 18 new Provisionals. February brought our Lighthouse 5K and the start of Spring into Service. March & April we were busy stuffing Easter Eggs. Currently we are Gala presenting and Feel the Wheels prepping! I am so grateful for each member and active sustainer that has supported the success of our League. It is an honor to serve in this position and I am excited about all the things still to come!

## *Board Retreat*

Our 2023 board met in December to review the year and set goals. Thank you to Lynn Straughan at Kids Bridge for being the most gracious host and allowing us to take over the Kids Bridge meeting space for an afternoon!



## *Board Members*

- Parliamentarian | Gini Solano
- President-Elect | Brittany Brooks
- Vice President | Sarah Duffy Smith
- Recording Secretary | Jennifer Taliaferro
- Corresponding Secretary | Monica Miles
- Treasurer | Heather Draper
- Membership | Andrea Lyles
- Membership | Dorothy Rowland
- Communication | Megan Miller
- Ways and Means | Nikki Pontello
- Social | Hillary Lipps
- Service | Cara Seifart
- Active Sustainer | Ashley Pieratt
- Historian | Nicole Walters
- Lighthouse Liaison | Madison Onderdonk
- Kids Bridge Liaison | Sarah Duffy Smith
- Webster Liaison | Jennia Sarnowski

## *General Members*

- Elizabeth Balog
- Genny Johns
- Alyssa Benincosa
- Nicole Crepes
- Louanne Lewis
- Alexis McDaniel
- Sharon Mitchell
- Morgan O'Leary
- Laurin Thomas
- Erin Winters
- Sammy Washburn
- Emily Masson

## *Provisionals*

- Maria DiMare
- Hannah Gassman
- Yvonne Glines
- Kirsten Halbach
- Kristin Haluch
- Svetlana Karnauch
- Anissa Konieczny
- Sarah Marston
- Kaysie Nicklo
- Jami Odom
- Leslie Osmond
- Kayla Polk
- Hannah Rullo
- Kim Sakraska
- Emma Simmons
- Kellie Steele
- Lindsey Taylor
- Brynn Mary Whetzel

# Odd Bird's of a Feather

December Dinner Meeting at Odd Birds was one for the books! Gini Solano hosted the evening and created a beautiful event for us all to gather and celebrate our successes of 2022.

## Thank You

for your years of service to the League.



Dr. Diana Cline, Dr. Teri DeLuca, Tristan Alfant, Nichole Novonty, Katie Larsson, Julie Kay, Michelle Altmann, Gini Solano

"Thank you to everyone for being open and up for a new location and space. Odd Birds is such a vibe in and of itself and we hope you enjoyed the food, beverages and socialization. December Dinner Meeting is such a wonderful time for Active Sustainers, Honorary Members and our Active Members to celebrate all of the hard work we have completed over the year. A time of celebration for the previous year and a way to get us ready for the next year."

- Gini Solano



# New Years Eve Gala

"What a way to end our New Years Eve Gala theme.

The night was magical! Literally.. we had a magician.

The food, the music, the lights, every detail made our last NYE Gala a night to remember. Thank you so

much to the Gala Board for the constant planning to ensure the night was a hit!

And, to our Active Sustainers who sponsored the Fireworks display, you helped us end the night with a bang, and what a show it was!" - Gini Solano



This evening of fun featured delicious hors d'oeuvres, a carving station by World Plate Caterer, decadent desserts, an open bar and a champagne toast at midnight. Dancing and live music was played by Chillula as well as a photo booth, charitable gambling, and an amazing silent auction! This was all made possible by:

**Silent Auction:** Sarah Duffy Smith, Jennifer Talifero, and Morgan O'Leary

**Decor:** Emily Masson, Andrea Lyles and Alexis McDaniel

**Food/Beverage:** Hillary Lipps, Laurin Thomas, Alyssa Benincosa

**Sponsorship:** Ashley Pieratt, Nikki Pontello, Dorothy Rowland

**Logistics:** Brittany Brooks, Cara Seifart

**Entertainment:** Nicole Novotny, Madison Onderdonk

**Communication:** Sammy Washburn, Megan Miller

*Party with a Purpose*

**95**

Silent Auction Items

**300**

Guests

**52,793.80**

Dollars Raised



# Winter Events

## PARADE

"The best way to spread Christmas cheer is singing loud for all to hear."  
– Buddy the Elf.

The "J S Elves" participated in the 2022 St. Augustine Christmas Parade! From building the float, to passing out candy canes, we had so much fun working on this project together. Thank you to Parker Farms for giving us an official workshop! AND, thank you to Sarah Duffy Smith for driving our float on parade day! Note for next year: ... DO NOT walk behind the pirates!

## PROVISIONAL WINE & CHEESE

Thank you to Meridith Strout for providing the most beautiful backdrop for our Provisional Wine and Cheese! On January 19th, we welcomed our 2023 class with drinks and great food from By Design Catering. It was a lovely evening getting to know our new members! Thank you to our Member Chairs, Andrea Lyles and Dorothy Rowland.

## BUNCO

Our Annual Provisional Pal event was held at the Heritage Landing Club House on February 3rd! Thank you to Sara & Jeffrey Parker for sponsoring our event. With potluck food and a few prizes, we learned how to play the game of Bunco. Thank you, again, to Andrea and Dorothy for planning our evening of fun and games!



# 39th Annual Lighthouse 5K & Fun Run

**15**

JSL Members ran in the 5K

**482**

Crossed the Finish Line

**628**

Total number of Registrants

*Thank you!*

**Event Chairs**

Brittany Brooks & Hillary Lipps

**Event Co-Chairs**

Monica Miles & Erin Winters



On February 18th, in brightly colored shirts, our JSL members gathered to execute our first event of the year, The Lighthouse 5K & Fun Run! The race chairs left no detail untouched during this year's planning process. We saw an increase in sponsorship revenue, our highest number of race registrants, and an approximate increase of 16% in total revenue. Against the inflation odds, we are delighted to announce that the 5K & Fun Run profited **\$17,849!** Aside from the race itself, members worked to stuff 500 race bags at Ansbacher Law, organized a Friday packet pick up at The Village Garden Food Truck Park, and executed a fun filled Night Fest that included princesses, face painting, and live music! A huge shout out to our wonderful race chairs: Brittany and Hillary. Thank you for everything!!

## *2023 Sponsors*

FPL, Burkhardt, Radiology Associates, STARS Rehab, Ring Power, Conser Moving and Storage, Matt & Naomi Wilkinson Realtors, Don's Friends, Palencia Pet Clinic, The Local Motel Inn, Anastasia Fitness, Anastasia Miniature Golf, Mellow Mushroom, Rebound Rehabilitation, PT Solutions, and National Anthem Singer: Nichole

## *In Kind*

The Village Garden Food Truck Park, Wildflower Healthcare, Shiloh Pelchat, FairyTale Headquarters, Costumes with a Cause, Kevin Quinn, Chez Entertainment, Five Star Pizza, Judy Albright, Parties n' Motion, Costco, Publix, Winn-Dixie, South State Bank, Dental Specialist of North Florida, St. Augustine Alligator Farm, and Ancient City

# Egg Your Yard



We hopped our way through the 3rd annual Egg Your Yard! In our own version of March Madness ... we spent the month stuffing thousands of eggs to deliver on Easter Eve!

New to 2023 was our Secret Bunny Package. This opportunity was created to allow members of the community to gift an Egg Your Yard experience. We worked with various organizations to gift the eggs on behalf of our donors.

As a result, 1,600 eggs were divided and delivered to SAYS, Betty Griffon, Council on Aging, and Lilac at Bayview.

As little ones opened eggs filled with treats and toys, they also found a dollar coin and a special Whetstone Chocolate!

And, what Easter Egg Hunt is complete without a punny note from the Easter Bunny himself?!

We were very egg-cited to make this past Easter morning a little more magical for families in St. Johns County.

This year's event raised **\$6,772.30!**

Thank you to Whetstone Chocolates for their continued sponsorship and support! Thank you to our wonderful event chairs, Cara and Madison!



*Thank you!*

**Event Chairs**  
Cara Seifart &  
Madison Onderdonk

**Logistics**  
Brittany Brooks

**25**  
Early Drop Offs

**77**  
Houses Egged

**8,500**  
Eggs Stuffed





# Spring into Service

Spring into Service is a project that quickly became a favorite of the League. Each Spring our Service Chair sets out to coordinate volunteer opportunities around St. Johns County. It is a wonderful way to do hands-on work in our community, and an added bonus that all we get to serve together. A HUGE thank you to our Service Chair, Cara Seifart, who has gone above and beyond to plan and organize this year's project list!

## MARCH PROJECTS

- Galentines for the Betty Griffin Center
- 904 Race Volunteering
- Kids Bridge Clean Up
- Port in the Storm Golf Tournament
- Dessert and Board Games with the SAYS Boys
- 18th Annual Kids Bridge Tournament
- County Road Provisionals Chopping (2)
- Lions Spring Seafood Festival
- Horse Play
- SAYS Clothes Organization

## APRIL PROJECTS

- Thank you notes to our Officers in Blue
- Organizing at Epicure
- Port in the Storm Lunches
- Webster Clothing Closet Organization (2)
- JSL Storage Unit Organization
- Brewers Fest Volunteers



# Provisional Project

Port in the Storm is a “port in the storm of life” for youth who have fallen through the cracks.

This is a safe place off the streets for homeless/unaccompanied youth in crisis. Caring adults provide stability, hope and a path to successful futures through Positive Youth Development programming.

Located at 1375 Arapaho Avenue, drop-in services are provided from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. daily that include life skills, basic needs, job skills, housing assistance and more. Port in the Storm now provides 16 beds for youth needing a place to stay.

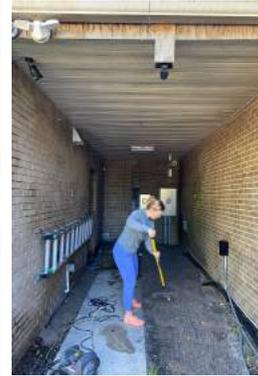
The facility has an outdoor space that was a Zen Garden area. This space was flooded by a recent storm, and became unusable.

Junior Service League of St. Augustine 2023 Provisional Class partnered with Port in the Storm to rebuild this space and give the youth a place to relax and connect.

The project: Design the space, clean and power wash the area, collect and purchase items, set up the new space, deliver lunch and gift baskets.

"This project was passionately chosen to support the kids in the community and to allow them to express themselves and empower themselves in a calm and peaceful environment. These kids will be able to have conversations with their mentors and hangout with their fellow peers. The kids were so very happy to be able to receive a yummy meal provided by our provisional class; as well as personal care items in addition to the Zen Garden."

-Kaysie Nicklo



# All things Active Sustainer

We have had a very \* active\* Spring! Thank you to all that gathered to stuff eggs in support of our Egg Your Yard event. From December Dinner Meeting to Wine Night, we appreciate your support!

Each month this past Spring we have hosted a guest speaker at the beginning of our meetings. In April, past JSL president Susan Ponder-Stansel, President & Chief Executive Officer Alivia Care, Inc., came to speak about her work in the hospice world. It was a wonderful way to connect with Susan while learning about her impact and learning more about the Chapman Center, where our monthly meetings are held. Thank you Susan for taking the time to speak with our members, we greatly appreciate you!

Looking to update your email, address, or phone number in our records?! Please email Ashley Pieratt at [ashley@paradiseweddingsandtravel.com](mailto:ashley@paradiseweddingsandtravel.com)



## Wine Night

Thank you to Greg Siewiorek, husband of Holly Sheets, for hosting a lovely evening of wine tasting and pairings. Greg was generous enough to host this event in his beautiful home. It was the perfect way to kick off our first active sustainer social of the year!

## General Meeting

Welcome back to general meeting! This year we thought it would be fun to invite Active Sustainers to join us during our May 9th general meeting! With the Provisional Project and Gala details being presented, we are excited to share this time with you. a few sustainers.

## Spring Social

Our Annual Spring Social will be held on the afternoon of May 20th from 4:30 -6:30 PM. We are excited to spend time together enjoying the waterfront view and flipping through old scrapbooks. Please RSVP to Hillary Lipps at [hillarylipps1@gmail.com](mailto:hillarylipps1@gmail.com)

## MEET AND GREET

### *Ways and Means and More*

In her second year of the League, Nikki Pontello is serving as our 2023 Ways and Means Chair and as a member on our Gala Board! Nikki is from Darien, Georgia and currently works as the Chief Administrative Officer at St. Johns County Property Appraiser's Office.

"My favorite thing about the League is the friendship & fellowship we share as we work to continue improving our community. I enjoy working to educate people about JSL, our Legacy Projects, and the additional non-profits we support. I love sharing this passion with others in a way that encourages them to also contribute to these causes!"



# Looking Ahead

*Save the Date*



## SPRING SOCIAL

Thank you so much to Jeani Taliaferro, Jennifer Taliaferro's Mother-in-Law, for opening up her beautiful home for our Spring Social! We are so excited to gather on May 20th and spend the afternoon on the water reminiscing through old JSL scrapbooks. See you there!



## JUNIOR SERVICE LEAGUE ANNUAL GALA

The planning process has officially begun, mark your calendars for September 23rd! Our Gala Board, Alyssa Benincosa, Nikki Pontello, Alexis McDaniel, and Sarah Duffy Smith, is busy working to create a magical night at the Casa Monica for all guests.



## FEEL THE WHEELS

An interactive event for the whole family! It is a day created to soak up that fall sunshine and let the little ones loose to explore and climb. Our Feel the Wheels Chairs, Sammy Washburn and Heather Draper, are bringing this event back to life after a four year hiatus!

