

Dear Ones,

After cancelling last year, it was a joy to have Jesse's covid style camp during Spring Break Week. This year has been devastating for so many. We keep all who have been impacted in our hearts with hopes and prayers for much better days to come.

HUGE thank you and shout out to the incredible Tallahassee Parks, Recreation, and Neighborhood Affairs (TPRNA) staff in all FIVE locations for all they did to create a wonderful week for our youngsters in spite of covid restrictions. Thank you, TPRNA Superintendent Bobby Sparks, for coordinating Jesse's camps at all of our locations! TPRNA executive director Ashley Edwards told me how proud she is of all staff for their creativity and imagination in programming our activities. She was delighted to see our campers flying kites one day. "When was the last time you saw kids flying kites?!" she asked and we both talked about what a great opportunity it was for them to get to do that. TPRNA has amazing and dedicated staff. Jesse's camps would not exist without them. Thank you all for what you do all year long.

Heartfelt thanks to Donna Dillon for her fund raising so we could have organic fruits, veggies, and snacks for our campers. What a treat!!! Thank you to my sweet husband, Greg Youchock, for helping organize all of Donna's food for easy delivery and to dear friend Kat Figley for helping with delivery. What a team!

Now to the fun things our campers did! Covid distanced activities included tennis, kickball, kite flying, garden crafts, drumming circles, tie dying t-shirts, sidewalk chalk art, morning stretching classes, "wheels day" where they were invited to bring scooters or skates (skates were provided for anyone who didn't have them), and more. Some photos are attached, and more photos will be on our website shortly. Please visit so you can see it all! Our link is <https://www.talgov.com/parks/JesseCorreiaMemorialScholarship.aspx>

The one activity I was allowed to participate in was a talent show via zoom at Walker Ford. We have some mighty talented youngsters, and I am proud of each of them! Personal thanks to Aeshah McQueen, their director, for giving this a go.

Special thanks to Chiedza Ponder of Walker Ford. Attached is an MP3 file of the world's most wonderful song written by Mr. Ponder and performed by some of the Walker Ford youngsters. You can tell they rehearsed and sang it with a lot of love. As you listen to this, please say your name out loud after they sing "Thank you" because each of you has contributed so much to make this program a huge success. Thank you Mr. Ponder for this incredible gift. I am touched and ever so grateful.

Special recognition goes to Mary Allgire who has been so generous with her time. In previous years, Mary taught staff and campers old time dances, and she recruited the Long Forgotten String Band to play for our dances. In anticipation of this year's program, Mary wrote a grant to pay our local artists to perform for our campers. Her grant was approved but because of covid restrictions, it couldn't happen. We are so grateful to you, Mary, for all you do to teach and support Old Time Dance. Thank you so very much.

This year marks ten years since Jesse's fund began. Over all these years, we continue to add locations and programs. These camps are possible because of your love and support. I cannot thank you enough for all you have done to help us grow. I am so grateful to each of you for allowing me to honor my beloved son's memory in such a meaningful way. Here's to many more years to come. Tax deductible donations are always welcome. Write your check to Friends of Our Parks/Jesse's camps and mail it to: Friends of Our Parks Foundation, 1201 Myers Park Drive, Tallahassee, FL 32301. 100% of your donation goes directly to Jesse's camps.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge that the community centers hosting Jesse's camps are named for several African American Tallahassee residents. Here's a snapshot of these extraordinary men and woman:

**The Walker-Ford Community Center** opened on June 13, 1976 in the Bond community. It is named for Dr. Courtney Emory Walker and James R. Ford. Dr. Walker, known as "C.E.", was FAMU's Dean of Agricultural and Home Economics. Before retiring, he became Director of Research Development and Grants. James R. Ford was born in Tallahassee. He served in the Navy in WWII, was the assistant principal at Leon High School, and was a city commissioner. He became Tallahassee's and the United States' first African American mayor of a capital city.

**The LeVerne Payne Community Center** is located in the Frenchtown neighborhood of Goodbread Hills. Originally the Naval Reserve Building, it was acquired by the City in 1972, creating the Fourth Avenue Community Center. It was rededicated in February 2007 to honor longtime Director, LeVerne F. Payne, a Tallahassee native and FAMU graduate who began his career with TPRNA in 1961. In 1975, he was named Supervisor of the Fourth Avenue Community Center, a position he held until he retired in 2005. Mr. Payne established many programs benefitting the neighborhood including tutoring, clothing give-a-ways, food drives and health fairs. His Soul Santa program provides an opportunity for hundreds of community children to experience holiday fun. Mr. Payne served on the Planning Committee for the National Recreation and Parks Association for 18 years and was a member of the Florida Recreation and Parks Association, the 21st Century Council and the Tallahassee Urban League.

Opening in 1959, **the Lawrence-Gregory Community Center** is one of the oldest community centers in the TPRNA system. The Dade Street Community Center was renamed in 2002 in honor of Mr. James Lawrence and Ms. Beulah Gregory. James Lawrence worked for TPRNA from 1955-1984 serving in many capacities including Recreation Supervisor, Golf Course Manager, and Recreation Superintendent. Since his retirement he continues to be active in many civic groups and boards including the Advisory Board for TPRNA.

Beulah Gregory served as the first Director of both the Dade Street and the Walker Ford Community Centers. During her thirty-year career with the City, in addition to her work with TPRNA, she worked in the employee relations department. Since her retirement in 1989, she has been working as the Coordinator of Student Services at the FAMU Developmental Research School.

**The Jack McLean Community Center** was dedicated in November 2004. It is the first full project completed with the City's 10 percent share of revenue generated by the Blueprint 2000 sales tax extension fund. It is named for former City Commissioner Jack L. McLean, Jr. who was the driving force behind the acquisition and development of the former Southside Park. Mr. McLean served as the second African American mayor of Tallahassee. Mclean graduated with a B.A. in African Studies from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and received a J.D. from Florida State University. He served as the chairman of Florida Public Employees Relations Commission, was on the Florida Human Relations Commission, and was executive director of Legal Aid of North Florida.

**The Jake Gaither Community Center** is named for Alonzo S. "Jake" Gaither who was a FAMU assistant professor of education and assistant football coach. He was named head coach in 1945. In 1975, Mr. Gaither was elected to the College Football Hall of fame by the National Football foundation. He received the Amos Alonzo Stagg Award and the Walter Camp Award and became the only football coach to receive those awards in the same year. He was chosen as "Coach of the Year" by the Associated Press in 1961, the American Football Coaches Association in 1962 and the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics in 1969. His record, 203 wins, 36 losses and 4 ties during his 25 years as head coach at FAMU gave him one of the highest winning percentages in college football. In addition to the community center, the City of Tallahassee has named Gaither Drive and the Jake Gaither Golf Course in his honor.

As always, if you wish to make a tax-deductible donation, your check should be made to FOOP/Jesse's camps. Mail it to: FOOP, c/o PRNA, 1201 Myers Park Drive, Tallahassee, FL 32301. Your dollars remain right here in our community and they go entirely into this project.

With deep love and gratitude,

Martha Weinstein  
Jesse's mom

PICTURES OF ACTIVITIES ARE BELOW











