



Learn how Former City Councilman
and Current Duval County
School Board Member
**The Honorable
Warren Anthony Jones**
fought to have his voice heard and
now champions all Jacksonville children.

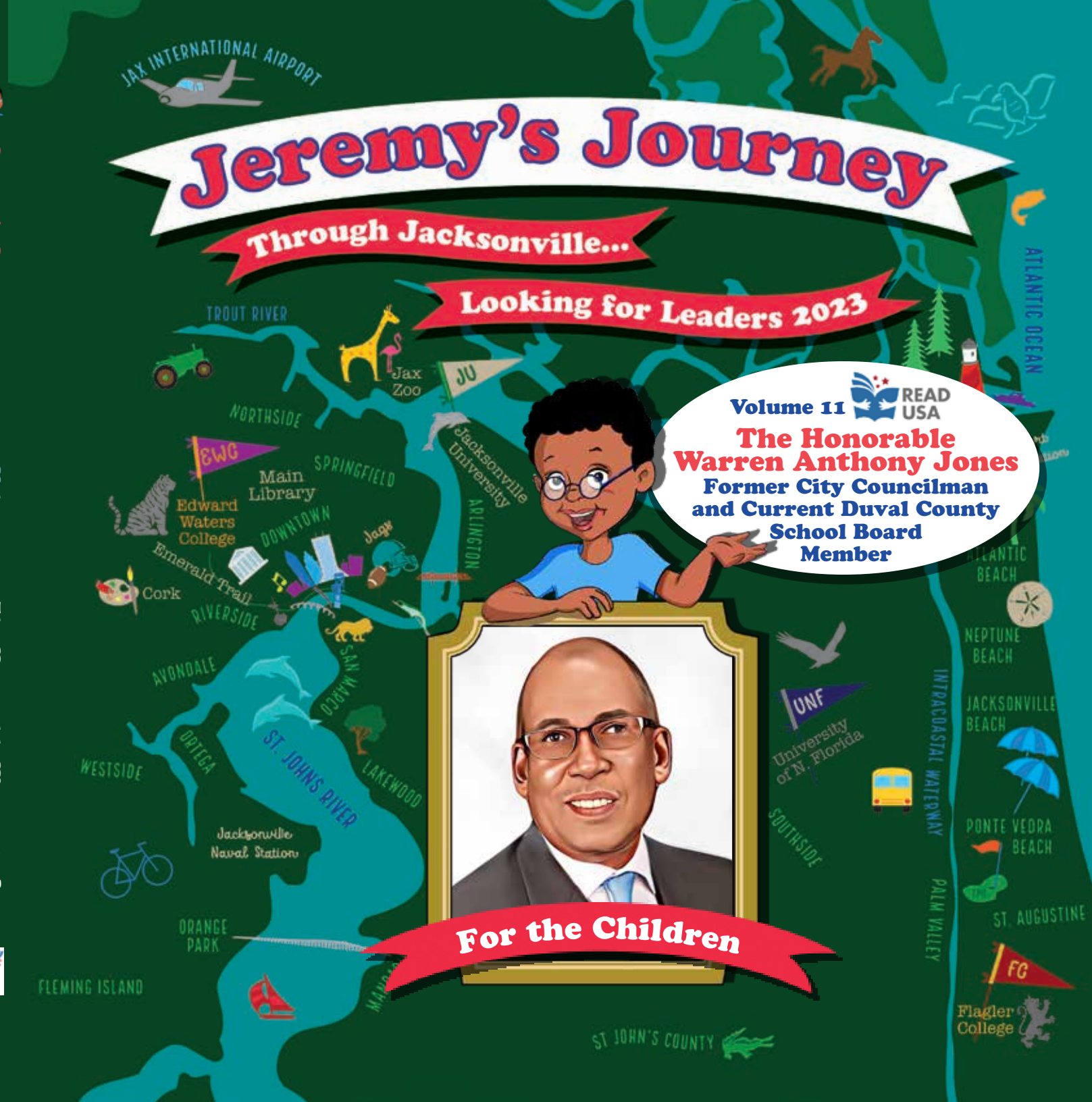


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Jeremy's Journey 2023
Volume 11 The Honorable Warren A. Jones



Jeremy's Journey

Through Jacksonville...

Looking for Leaders 2023



Volume 11

**The Honorable
Warren Anthony Jones**

**Former City Councilman and Current
Duval County School Board Member**

For the Children



Book of the Month

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by

READ USA

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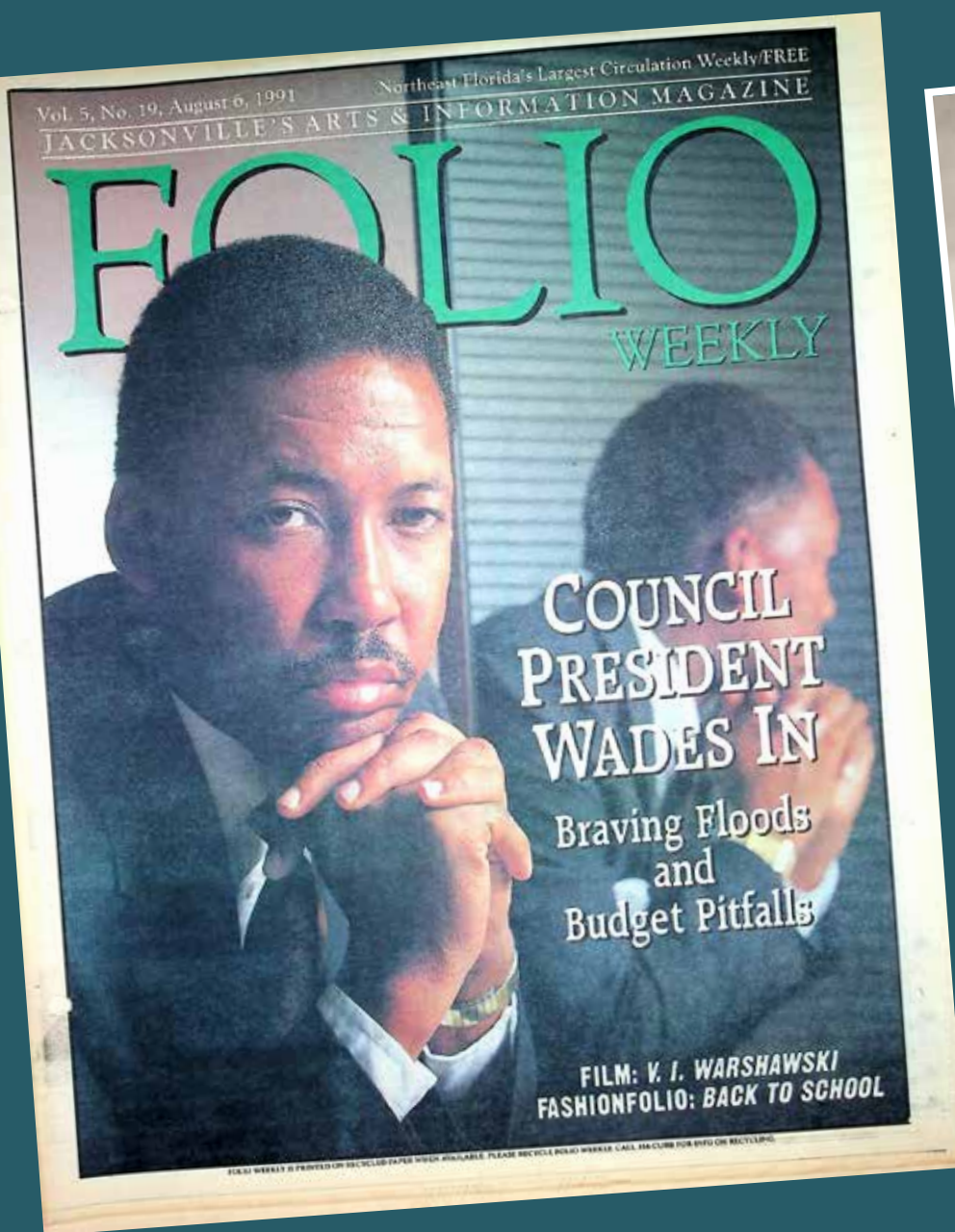
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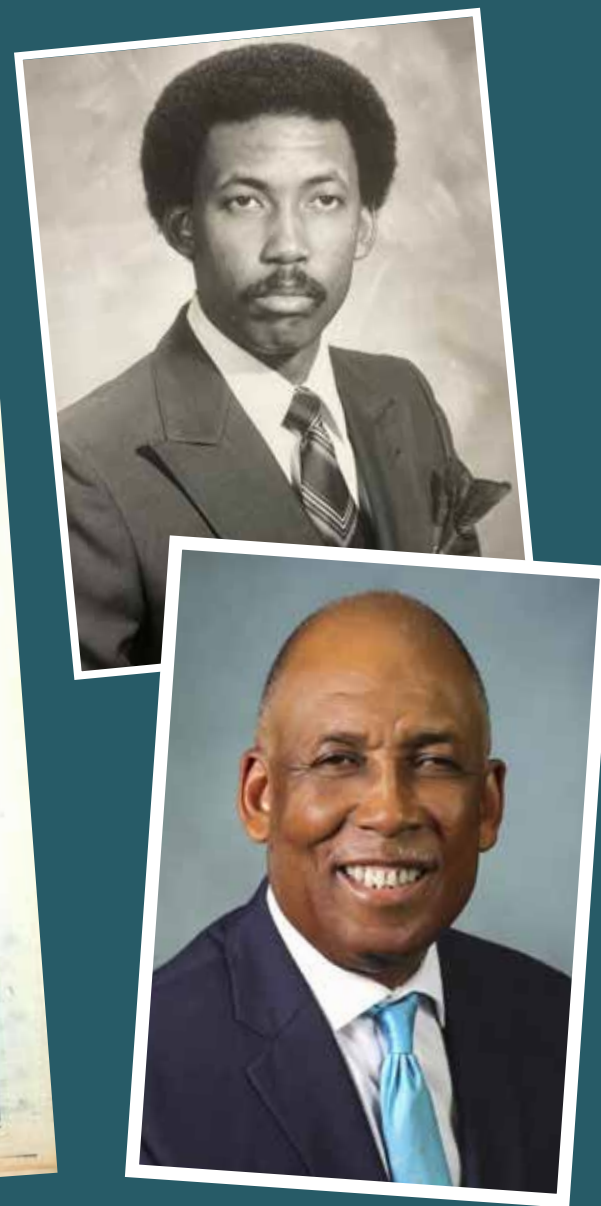
Happy Thanksgiving

It's Jeremy again!

*This is the month of Thanksgiving ... and I'm so thankful to
Be taking this journey through Jacksonville with you!
READ USA has launched me on this wonderful quest,
To search for our leaders, the best of the best!*



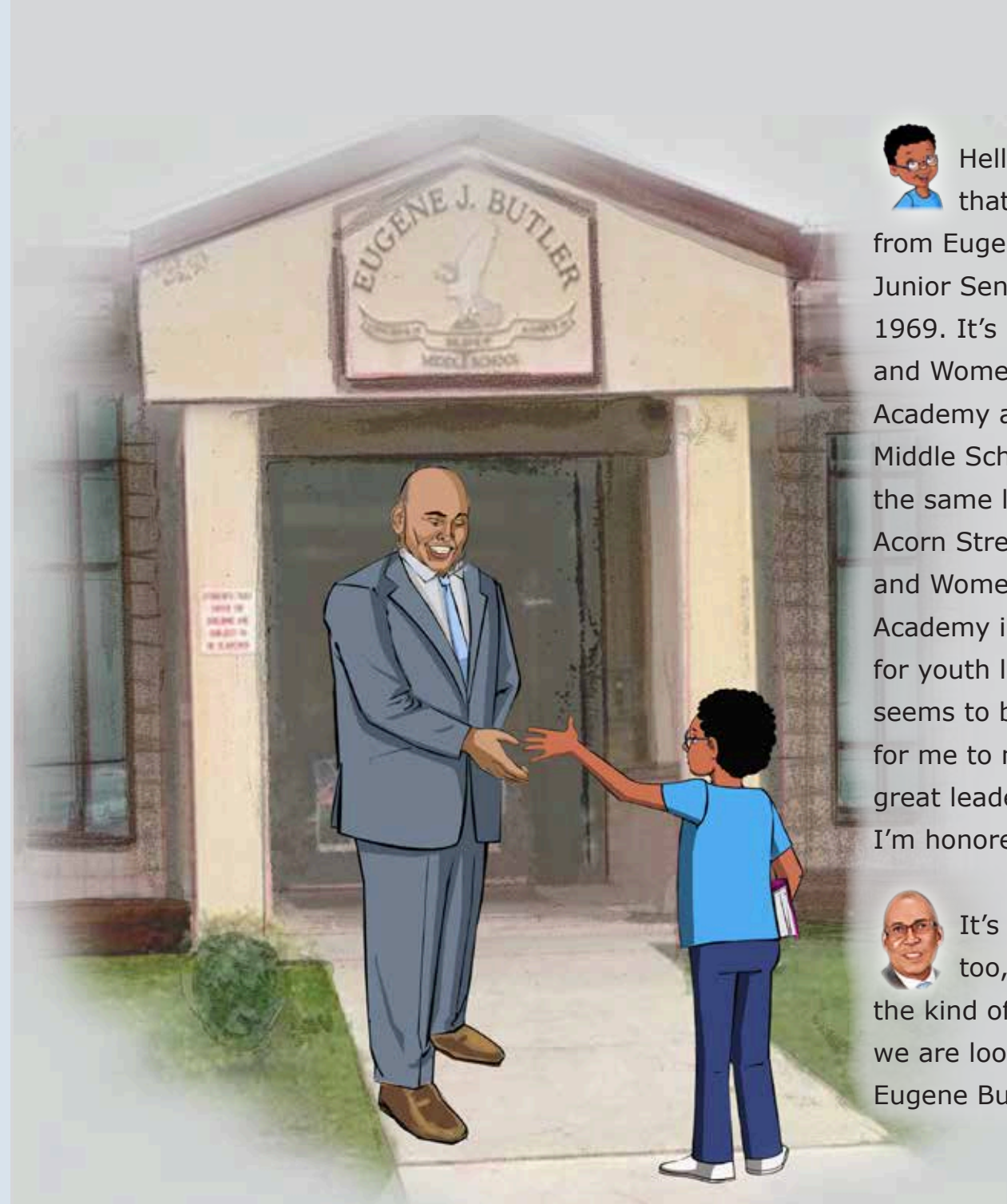
*I am meeting The Honorable Warren A. Jones today,
He's a man who works tirelessly leading the way.
A Jacksonville native who loves where we live,
Mr. Jones grew up yearning to serve and to give.*





*A City Councilman for 28 years, he made changes, big and small,
With new sidewalks, pools, parks and events, life improved for all.
An Icon for education, he's made literacy a main goal,
He's a dedicated school board member, serving body and soul.*




At READ USA Book Fairs, he encourages students to choose, Helping them find the perfect book to take home and peruse. Wearing his READ USA Apron and his constant encouraging smile, The Honorable Warren A. Jones always goes the extra mile.




 Hello Mr. Jones. I read that you graduated from Eugene J. Butler Junior Senior High School in 1969. It's now Young Men's and Women's Leadership Academy at Eugene J. Butler Middle School, but it's in the same location at 900 Acorn Street. Young Men's and Women's Leadership Academy is a magnet school for youth leadership, so it seems to be the perfect place for me to meet you – our great leader of the month! I'm honored to meet you!

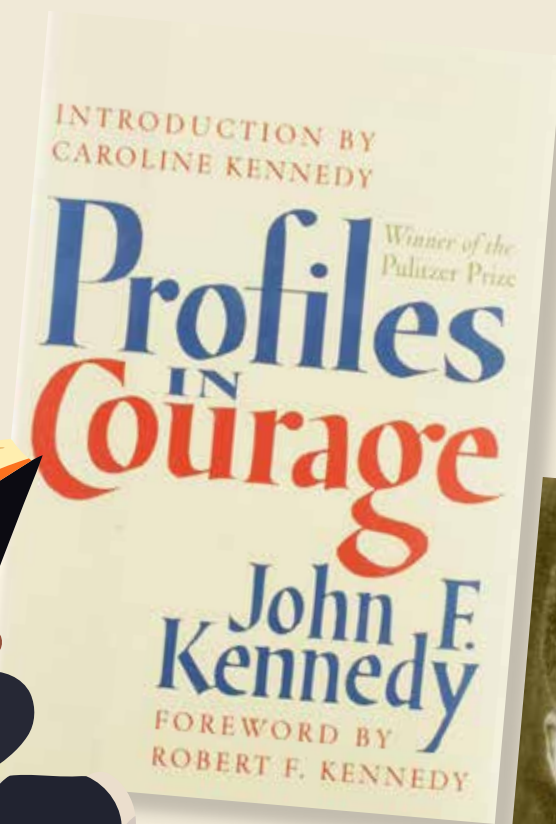
 It's good to meet you too, Jeremy. You are the kind of youth leader we are looking for here at Eugene Butler Middle School.




 Thank you, Mr. Jones! READ USA inspired me to be a leader when I started getting free books in Pre-K, discovered I love to read, and learned the READ USA motto: Readers are Leaders! How did you get inspired to be a leader, Mr. Jones?




 My love of reading actually started with comic books when I was around 6 years old. I still have my collection of comic books from the late 1950s, and they are now quite valuable. And, Jeremy, I was not much older than you when I read President John F. Kennedy's book, *Profiles in Courage*, and was immediately motivated to start making a difference in this world.



 Wow, Mr. Jones! A book changed your life! I'm so proud I'm a part of the READ USA team! We do everything we can every day to encourage students to read books, and you are a great example of how reading a book can put you on the path to leadership!




 That's one of the reasons I'm so enthused about READ USA, and why I put on that red apron and go to READ USA Book Fairs as often as I can. It is my hope that by being there, I can motivate students to want to read. After all, reading is fundamental.




My mom



Me at eight months old

 My mother always read books to me, so I wanted to read. Please tell me about your family, Mr. Jones.

 Well, Jeremy, I was the only surviving child in what should have been a family of four children. My mother had twin girls who died at birth in 1948. I was born in 1950, and my baby brother was born in 1952 and died of lead poisoning when he was a toddler. Back in those days, there was a lack of access to healthcare in the Black community, and I can't help but think that may have been part of the reason I became an only child.



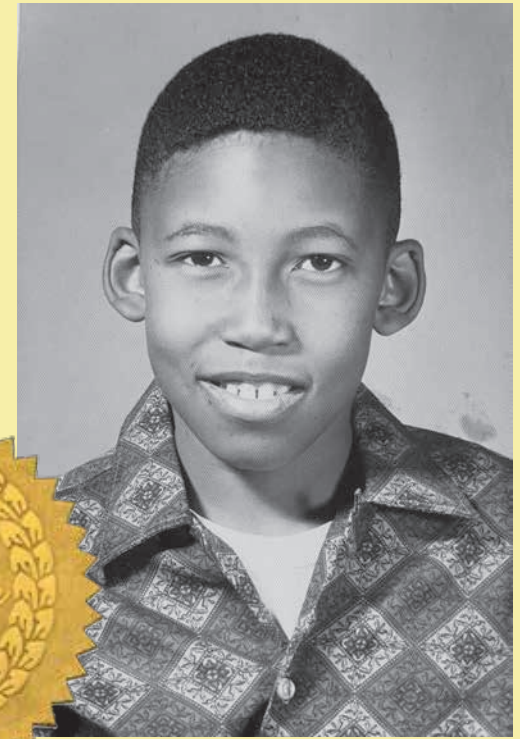
That's so sad, Mr. Jones.



Yes, it is, but because there were no other children in my house, I was always looking for friends and I found them at school and church. I was so eager to be with other children that I had perfect attendance in school, except for 7th grade when I missed 7 days.



What happened?



Me in sixth grade, 1966



I got measles and was out for four days and then later that same 7th grade year, I missed three days because I fractured my wrist performing the high jump on the track team.





My parents, Essie Mae and Henry Jones



Your parents must have been proud of your perfect attendance record.



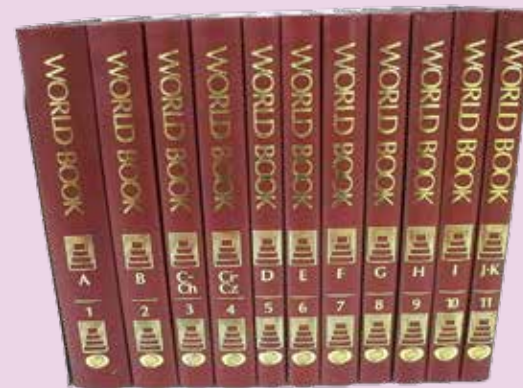
Yes, they were. My parents, Henry and Essie Mae Jones, bought me a set of encyclopedias and encouraged me to excel in school, which I did.



What did your parents do for a living?



My father worked at the Naval Air Station in the cafeteria and my mother worked in the cafeteria for the Duval County School Board. My parents worked hard and did what was right. I had a good childhood.



Where did you live when you were a boy?



First, we lived in LaVilla in a densely populated neighborhood of two-story houses. When I was 6, 7 and 8 years old I went to A. L. Lewis Elementary School. On Saturday mornings at 10 a.m., a bunch of us kids would go to the Roosevelt Theatre on Ashley Street. All we needed for admission to the matinee was 6 pennies and 6 RC Cola bottle caps! We loved seeing movies like Muscle Beach Party with Annette Funicello, featuring Little Stevie Wonder!



That sounds like fun! Movies cost a lot more now.



Yes, they do, Jeremy, and that theatre is no longer there. Things change.



We bought our first home at 286 Stockton Street in 1959. I enrolled in Forest Park Elementary School in 3rd grade. Since I moved, there were fewer opportunities to go to the movie theatre. I spent a lot of time with my friends at school and at Emanuel Missionary Baptist Church. My 4th grade teacher,



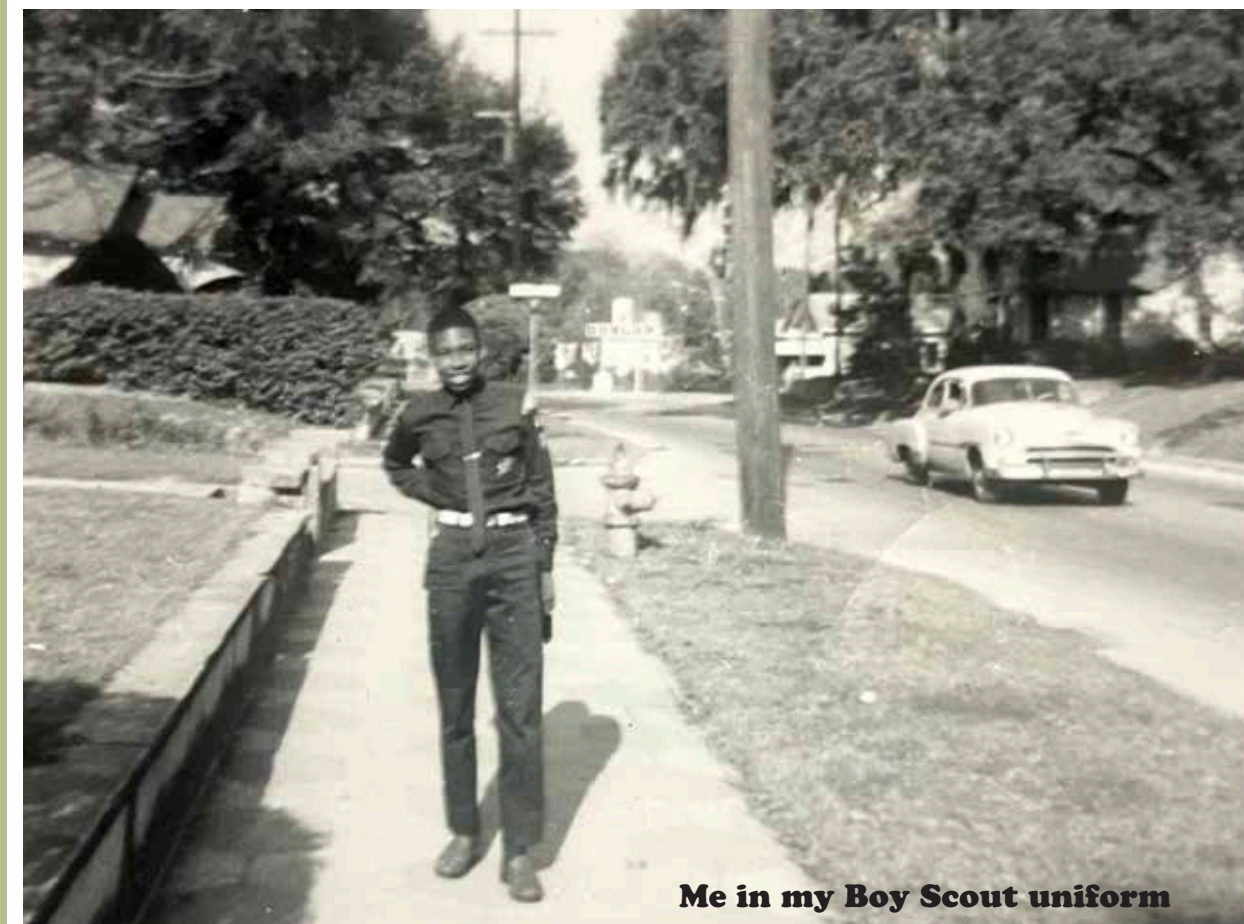
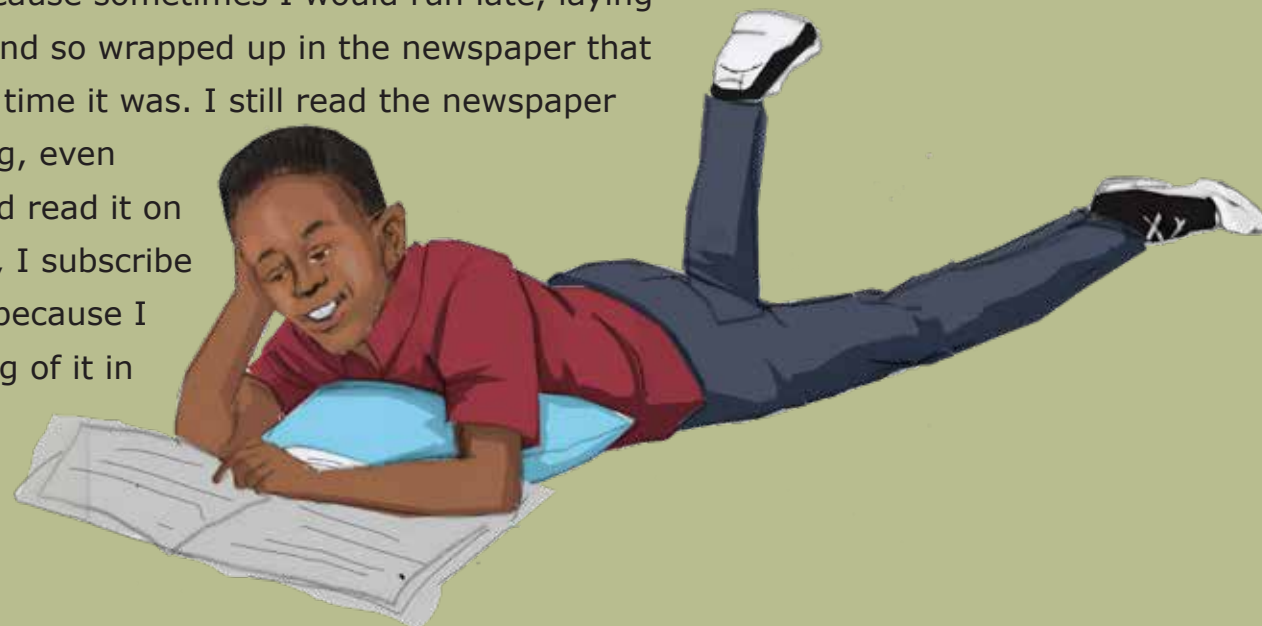
Vivian Holmes, gave me a dictionary as a reward for perfect attendance. I spent a lot of time looking up words and kept that dictionary until it fell apart.



Did you do a lot of reading when you were in 4th grade?



The first thing I did every morning was read the newspaper. My friends teased me because sometimes I would run late, laying on the floor and so wrapped up in the newspaper that I forgot what time it was. I still read the newspaper every morning, even though I could read it on the computer, I subscribe to the paper because I like the feeling of it in my hands.



Me in my Boy Scout uniform



So, you went to school and church, and you were already preparing to be a leader by keeping up with all the latest news! What were your other interests as a boy?



I was very active in the Boy Scouts, Scout Troop 58, at Emanuel Missionary Baptist Church. One of my scoutmasters was Mr. Maxie Coleman, whose son, Greg, was the first black punter in the NFL.



I read that you were one of four boys chosen to go to Boys State. What is that?



Boys State is sponsored by American Legion Posts throughout the nation for students to spend a week in the State Capitol and learn about the legislative process. I was chosen by Post 197 to attend Boys State in the summer of 1968 when I was in 11th grade at Eugene J. Butler Junior Senior High School. It was the

first opportunity I had to engage in an integrated environment with White students. The other three boys, Jimell Erwin, Lamar Winegeart and Rob Rivers, went to Robert E. Lee High School (now Riverside High School), which was all White at the time. We became friends that week and stayed in touch.



Did you learn a lot about how government works?



Yes. I had to go back to the American Legion Post and report on Boys State and that year, I also became a page for the Jacksonville City Council. I got to know people on the City Council like Sallye B. Mathis and John Lanahan. It was inspiring to see how things worked in my own city.



So, you were already with the City Council as a page before you graduated from high school. Did you have any idea you'd someday be a member of the City Council?



Senior students in the Social Studies Seminar class listen attentively and question councilwoman Sallye Mathis on one of her frequent visits to our school.

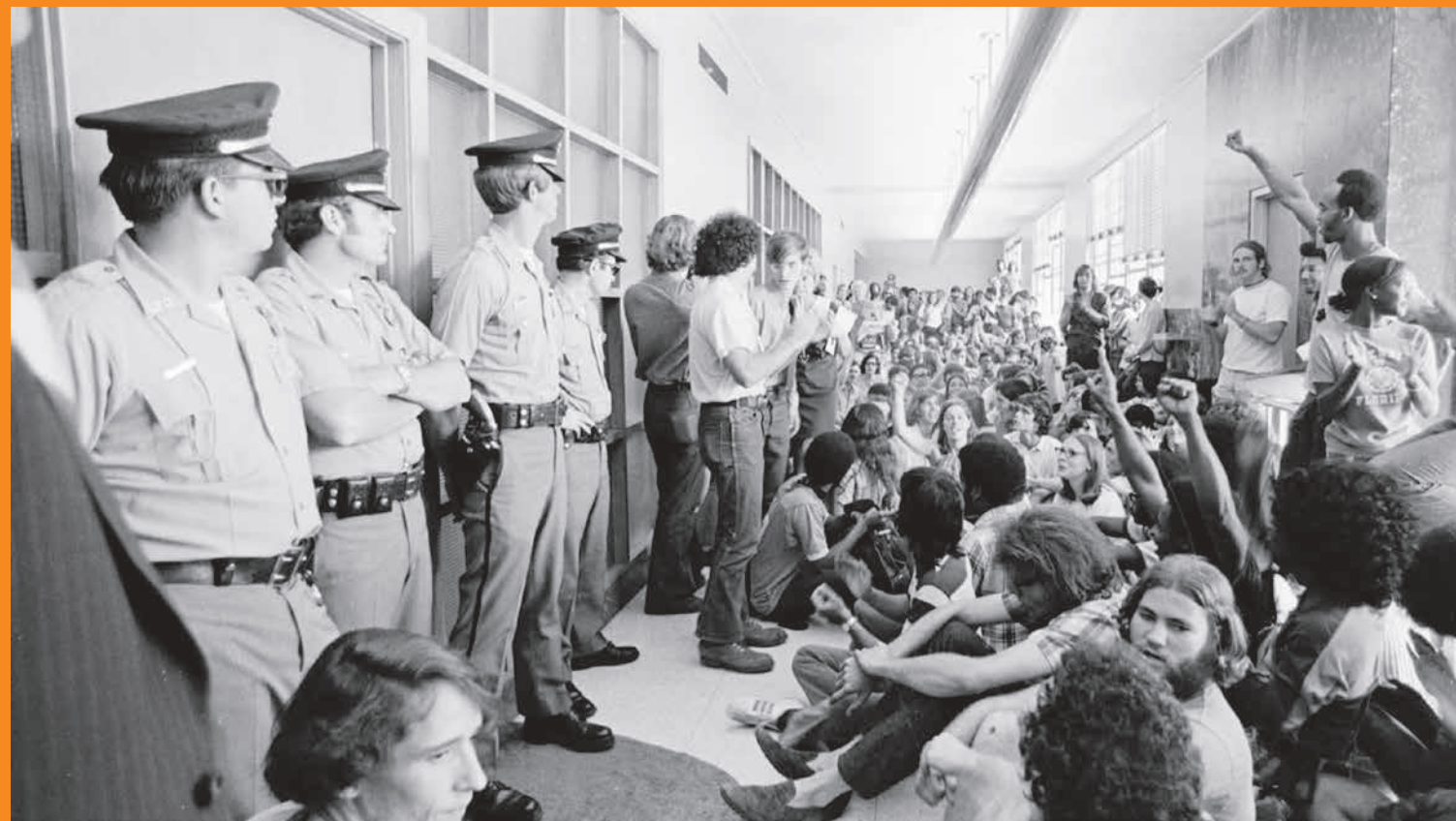


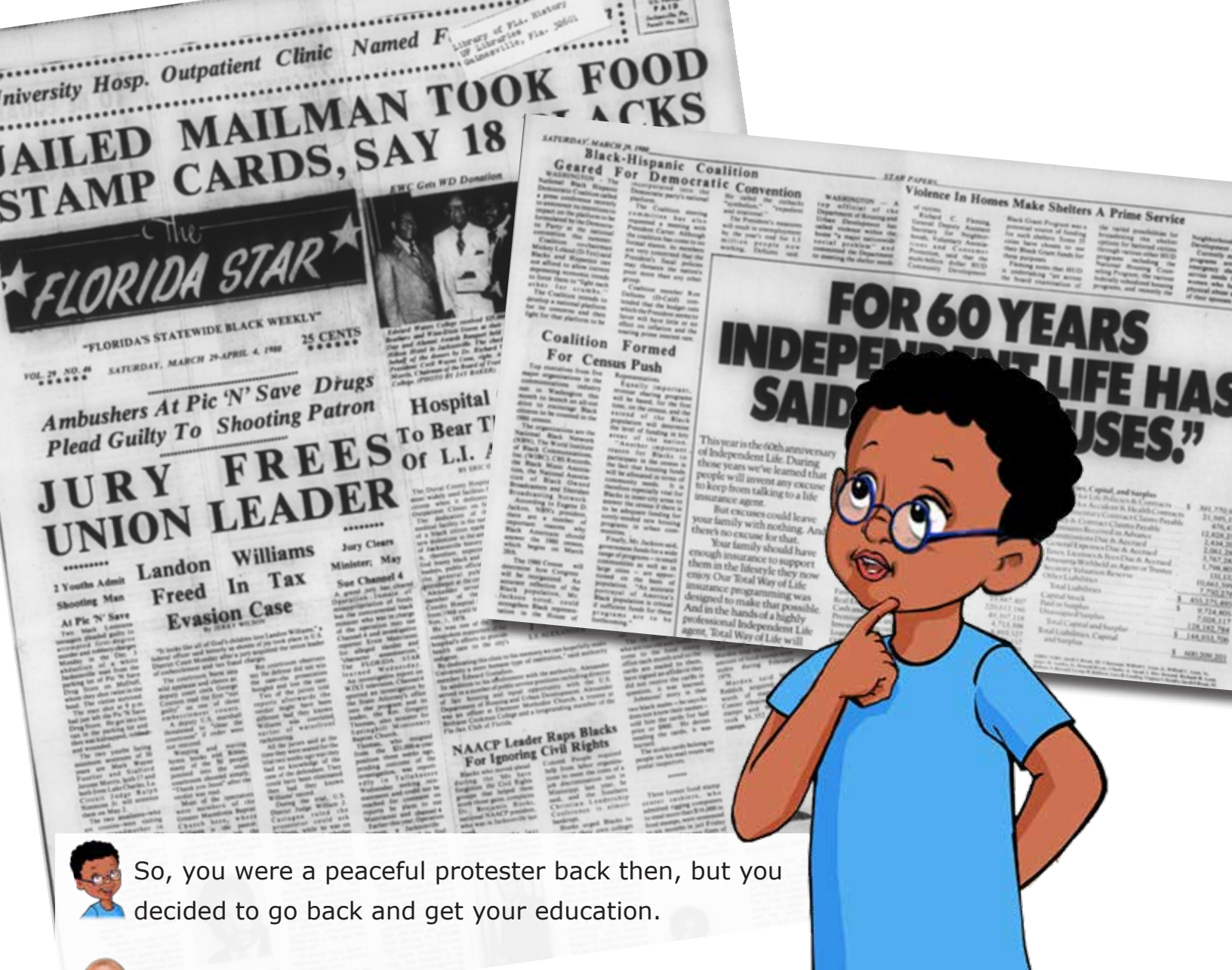
Jacksonville's old City Hall





Not really, Jeremy, but I knew that I wanted to be a leader in our city and make positive changes. First, though, I had to get a college education. I went to the University of Florida in 1969 and that was a hard transition, going to a predominantly White School. I got to know a lot of wonderful people there, including Willie Jackson, Sr. and Leonard George, the first Black UF Football players. I hung out with the athletes. We played ball together and cards at night when we weren't studying. There were no Black fraternities back then, but we sort of had our own friendship fraternity. It seemed like there were challenges every spring. In 1970, the campus was shut down because of students protesting Vietnam War, and in 1971, Black students protested because there were no Black professors. I was one of those protesters. We walked out (which is called a peaceful protest). My math teacher, Janet Johnson, was Civil Rights Attorney Earl Johnson's wife. She told me to go back and get my degree, which I did, in 1974. I graduated with a degree in Political Science.





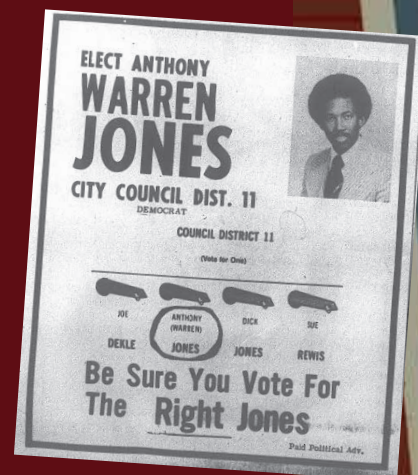
So, you were a peaceful protester back then, but you decided to go back and get your education.



I knew I needed it if I was ever going to create real change in what I saw was wrong. At the time I graduated, a group of Black leaders including Arnette Girardeau, Wendell Holmes, Sallye B. Mathis, Clanzel Brown and others, began recruiting a member of the Black community to run for City Council for District 11.



They asked Reverend S. L. Badger, a highly respected citizen, to run, but he had no interest in politics. Rev. Badger's son, Dr. Solomon "Chuck" Badger, III, had been my history teacher in high school and heard I had just graduated and was working at Sears downtown part-time. Chuck Badger knocked on my door in January of 1975 and asked me to run for City Council. I was just six months out of college, but I ran, finishing third in a five-person race for City Council.



What happened then?



Chuck and I met with Randy Amos, who finished second in that race, and Randy went on to win the run-off. He encouraged me to run again for City Council in 1979 and, again, Chuck Badger was my campaign manager. It was a grass-roots low-budget campaign. I qualified by petition and we hand-made our yard signs and laid



them out on the grass to dry. We used my parents' garage as our headquarters. I knocked on every door and wore out two pairs of shoes. We had two endorsements: The Florida Star Newspaper and outgoing City Councilman Randy Amos. There were no major endorsements, and we only raised about \$1,800 dollars. We had been told we couldn't win unless we raised at least \$30,000 dollars.



But you did win, didn't you Mr. Jones?



Yes, Jeremy. I won. It was reported by the Florida Star

that I was the first candidate in the state to qualify by petition and actually win an election. Chuck Badger was a great campaign manager. Chuck informed me that, because another man named Jones was also running, I needed to use my middle name, Anthony, so I would be the first Jones on the ballot. That was smart. People saw my name first and I'm sure it got me a few votes.



After winning, you stayed on the City Council for 28 years! I know you made some great accomplishments for the City of Jacksonville over those years.

Me after becoming President of the Jacksonville City Council, the second Black man, after Earl M. Johnson, to serve in this role.



© David Williams



As council president, I presented awards to Councilmembers Terry R. Wood and E. Denise Lee.



Yes, during those years I was chairman of several committees and City Council President in 1991 and 1992. I think that growing up in Mixon Town (LaVilla) on the Westside, led me to see the great needs that existed in those neighborhoods. That was what I did, and I saw the needs and sought solutions. I focused on simple things like putting a sidewalk down in the Forest Park Elementary School neighborhood and bigger things like heading up a major drainage project in Grand Park that took us ten years and cost \$36 million dollars. I helped bring swimming pools to the Grand Park and Eugene Butler neighborhoods and laid the groundwork to alleviate the flooding at McCoy's Creek, something that is still underway today.





It seems that some things take a long time, Mr. Jones, but you've proven your love for the City of Jacksonville over the years. You are a man who does what is morally right, a man of honor and courage, and that is why you were given READ USA's READ TO BE FREE Award in 2022. I know you've earned many other recognitions over the years, too.



I must admit, Jeremy, that I'm filled with gratitude over the things I've been able to accomplish over the years. Being in the civic arena is a great way to bring about positive change.



What was your proudest accomplishment while on City Council?



My wife, Vanessa, always reminds me of my part in creating the World of Nations in 1992.

Sonny Mares, President of the Jacksonville Visitors Bureau (now Visit Jacksonville), and I flew to Milwaukee, Wisconsin to visit their Summerfest, which was a coming together of all ethnic groups. We thought it would be a great way to showcase the diversity of our community. It became a great two-day event that still happens annually and now, with the racially motivated incidents that have happened recently, it is more important than ever to celebrate diversity and learn from each other.

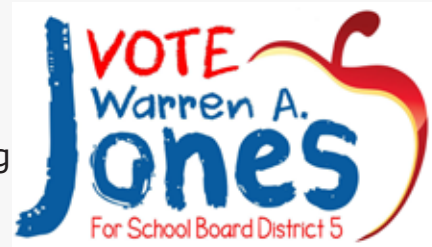




It sounds like you started an important local tradition, Mr. Jones. And now, you're on the Duval County School Board and still working for positive change in our community.



Yes, Jeremy. We must support reading for all our students and that is one thing that READ USA is doing to help us. I love being visible at the READ USA Book Fairs and encouraging students to read more. And I consider the READ USA teen tutors a godsend. They are doing something that is making a difference in their lives and the lives of the students they tutor. They are improving their own academic and future goals while helping younger students learn to read. What they are doing will benefit this community for decades to come and provide a great path forward for our children.



My wife Vanessa



My son Mycal and his family when I was sworn in as School Board Chairman.



Carlos



Our granddaughters



Speaking of children, do you and your wife, Vanessa, have children?



Yes, we do. We have two grown sons, Mycal and Carlos, both coaches. Mycal coaches with the Philadelphia Phillies organization and Carlos is a high school football coach in Charlotte, North Carolina.



Mycal



Carlos coaching football

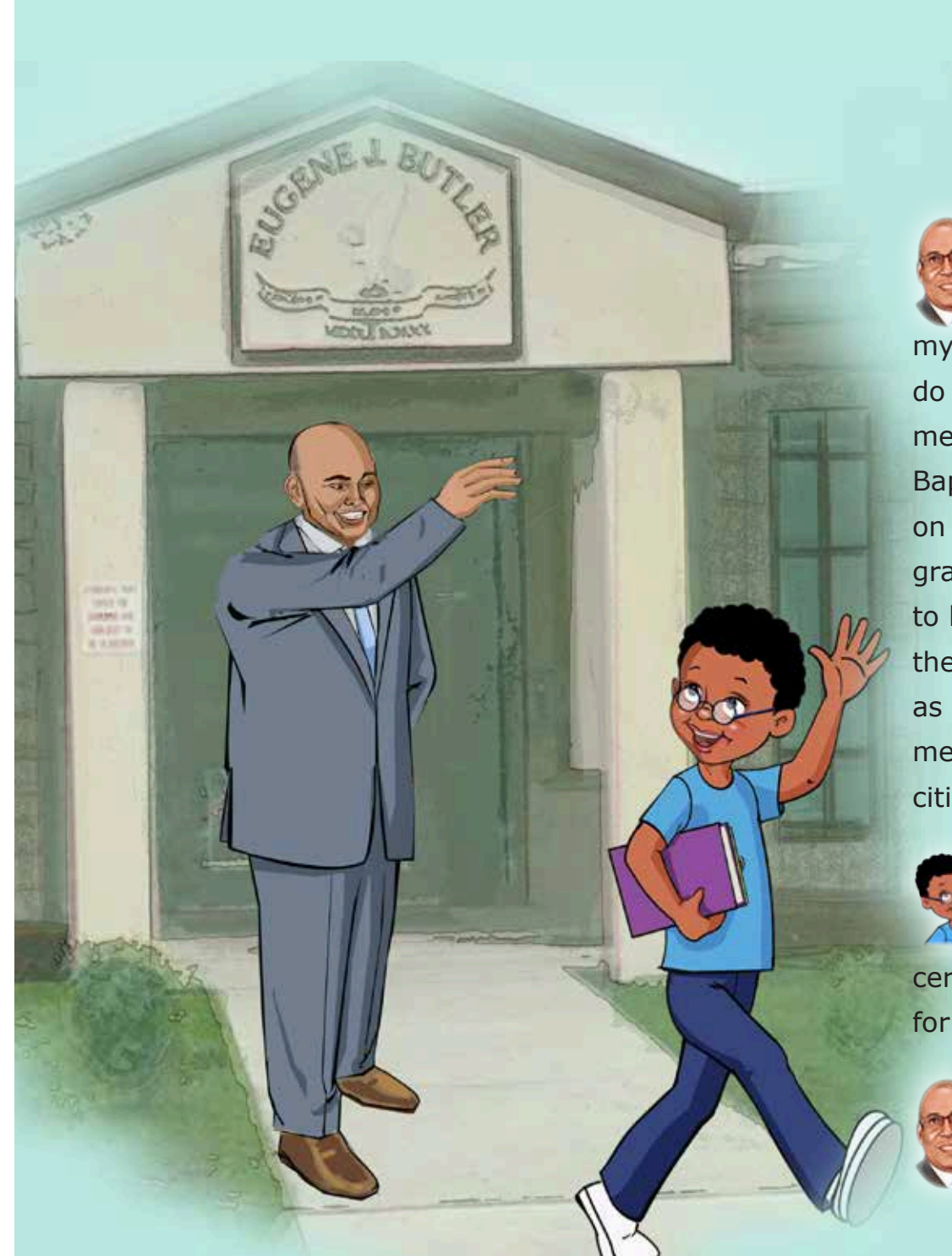


Mycal coaching baseball

Me coaching my junior baseball team in 2000. I'm on the far right.



Coaches are leaders, Mr. Jones. I read that you were once a baseball coach for the Paxton Improvement Association. So, it turns out that both of your sons are leaders, too! You have been a great role model for so many.



Thank you, Jeremy. I've tried to be like my parents, work hard and do what is right. I'm also a member of Emanuel Missionary Baptist Church, where I serve on the Board of Trustees. I'm gratified that I've been able to help make things better for the people of our great city, as a councilman, school board member and active, caring citizen.



Mr. Jones, you are a true leader. Here is a certificate from READ USA for you.



Thank you, Jeremy. Keep up the good work!

You are an inspiring leader, Mr. Jones.

And here's a special certificate from READ USA just for you!



**Watch for READ USA's
Book of the Month
for Decemeber 2023**

Volume 12

**when Jeremy's Journey
through Jacksonville**

will take him

to meet our next leader,

TIM COST,

President of

Jacksonville University

**The Honorable Warren A. Jones’
Leadership Tips**

- ✓ Always be honest.
- ✓ Be patient and listen to people you don’t agree with.
- ✓ Find your passion and follow it.

Vocabulary

Subscribe - arrange to receive something regularly, typically a publication, by paying in advance. The root word of subscribe is scribe with a Latin origin meaning scribble, or script.

Equity – the quality of being fair or impartial. The prefix of equity is equi, meaning equal.

Diversity - the condition of having or being composed of differing elements; variety. The inclusion of people of different cultures, groups, identities, or organizations.

Perseverance - continued effort to do or achieve something despite difficulties, failure, or opposition.

References for Research

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University of Florida
Willie Jackson
Leonard George
Civil Rights Attorney Earl Johnson
Arnette Girardeau
Wendell Holmes
Sallye B. Mathis
Clanzel Brown
Rev. S. L. Badger
Chuck Badger
McCoy’s Creek
Sonny Mares
World of Nations

ABOUT READ USA

READ USA began as a voluntary project created by Ellen Wiss and teacher Vanessa Tussey at George Washington Carver Elementary School in Duval County, Florida. While tutoring in Vanessa's classroom, Ellen witnessed the gains from some of the most struggling students. She became hopeful and passionate about expanding the impact for transformational change in one severely impoverished neighborhood and asked Vanessa what was needed most. Vanessa's response: "Books of interest to my students that inspire them to read, books they can choose and own. **Reading is key to all learning.**" They raised funds to hold a free, colorful book fair with thousands of new, popular and culturally sensitive titles that all students could choose from to build their home libraries. As demand and support grew, annual READ USA book fairs expanded to every public elementary school in Duval County as well as for younger children at other sites. READ USA is poised to serve throughout Florida and beyond.

In 2019, a grant from Jacksonville's Kids Hope Alliance enabled READ USA to pilot an intensive research-based Peer to Peer reading

tutoring intervention that provided jobs to teens with training, supervision and professional workforce development skills. One on one tutoring resulted in significant reading gains by both the teen tutors and the students they taught. Jacksonville University, University of North Florida, and Ohio State University have been evaluation partners to verify, document and assist with expansion of the program's evidence-based positive outcomes. READ USA has expanded this program year after year, now providing Teen Tutoring year-round.

READ USA — *laser focused on closing the reading gap* — opens pathways for children with book choice and ownership, peer to peer reading tutoring intervention, multi-cultural literacy programming, and professional literacy instruction development for educators. READ USA has evolved into a powerful force for positive change, impacting grade level reading proficiency, workforce development and building a diverse teacher pipeline, all with the goal of establishing an equitable and permanent culture of literacy for lifelong learning, social justice, freedom and prosperity.