

money

CUSTOMERS RETURN TO TARGET

Turnaround efforts are working, retail giant says

Story, D-2

 Stein Mart 1.25 +.04/+3.3%	 Home Depot 152.25 +2.08/+1.4%	 Lowes Cos 75.35 +1.05/+1.4%	LOCAL MOVERS	 FRP Holdings 43.25 -.85/-1.9%	 CSX Corp 50.38 -.75/-1.5%	 BankAmerica Corp 24.19 -.28/-1.1%
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Amazon's Pecan Park facility to open Sept. 1

No exact date given for opening of second facility

By Roger Bull
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Amazon's new fulfillment center in North Jacksonville will open in two weeks and its other one on the Westside will follow soon after.

Employees will start working at the facility on Pecan Park Road before the end of the month and will start processing or-

INSIDE

President speaks out: Trump renews attacks on online giant Amazon. **D-2**

ders there Sept. 1, a spokeswoman said Wednesday.

She said she couldn't say exactly how many people have been hired, only that the company is still expecting about 1,500 to work there when it opens. The other facility on 103rd

Street in Cecil Commerce Center is expected to have about 1,000 working there when it opens in late September.

No exact date has been given for that.

The online retail giant had planned two weeks of job fairs last month to fill those positions, but cancelled the second week after turnout had been so high during the first week.

Hundreds of people lined up early and waited for hours for a shot to apply.

Those job fairs had originally been planned for just the North Jacksonville center, but Amazon was able to fill most of the Westside jobs as well, the spokeswoman said.

Applications are still being taken online at amazon.com/jobs.

Jacksonville Transportation Authority has added a shuttle bus that will go between its park-and-ride fa-

cility on Armsdale Road to the Pecan Park Road center during shift changes.

The Pecan Park Road facility will handle smaller items, typically no bigger than a microwave oven. The one on 103rd Street will handle larger items, including kayaks and riding lawn mowers.

Between the two of them, several hundred thousands shipments will go out each day, officials have said.

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24 area companies named to Inc. 5000

Local businesses among country's fastest-growing

By Roger Bull
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Twenty-four Jacksonville area companies have made the Inc. 5000 list for 2017 as the fastest-growing companies in the country.

At the top of the local list is E-file.com, an online vehicle for preparing and filing federal income taxes. The two-person company based in Ponte Vedra Beach has grown by more than 4,000 percent in the past three years and is now grossing \$5.1 million a year.

Aaron Rosenthal said he and Robert Reynard formed the company in 2013 using software from Drake Software.

"It's normally for CPAs," he said, "so we're able to tap into a very large organization."

Close to 400,000 returns were filed with E-file this year, he said. Many are free, he said, but enough users pay so that the company topped \$5 million last year. And he said there's still room for growth.

"All we do is individual tax filing," Rosenthal said. "So there's some opportunity to move into business tax filing. And all we do is 1040s and tax extensions, so there's other areas we could move into there, too."

Here's the list of the 24 area companies that Inc. put on its list of the 5,000 fastest-growing companies, with the growth rate over the past three years and its 2016 revenue.

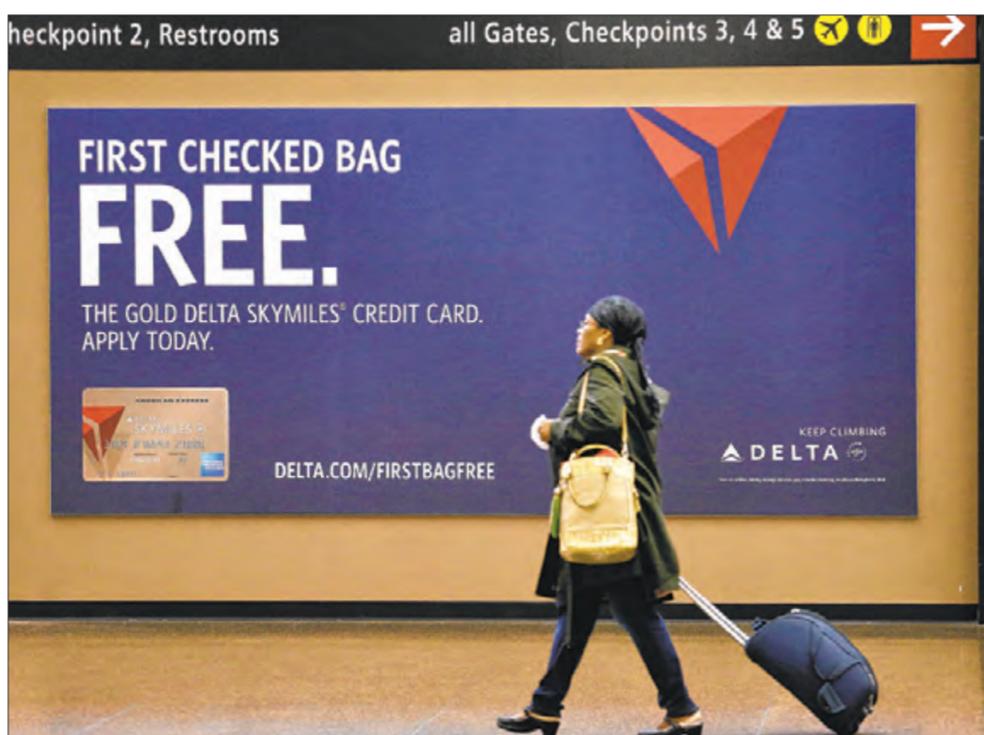
79. E-file.com, 4,642 percent, \$5.1 million.

479. The White Magnolia Bridal Collection, 931 percent, \$3.1 million

574. Forcura, 790 percent, \$2.2 million.

683. Willie Jewell's Old School Bar-B-Q, 660 per-

5000 continues on D-2



Airline loyalty programs are losing much of their allure, and the rules for navigating the system have changed. The biggest bang for your buck comes from signing up for the right credit card. Even if you make purchases with another card, consider getting the card of the airline you usually fly to enjoy benefits such as priority boarding and free bag-checking. (AP Photo/Elaine Thompson, File)

Airlines making it harder to earn free loyalty flights

Credit cards, not flying, are best ways to claim credits

By David Koenig
Associated Press

DALLAS | Airline loyalty programs are losing much of their allure even for frequent flyers and the rules for navigating the system have changed.

Flying is no longer the best way to earn miles or points. The biggest bang for your buck comes from signing up for the right credit card.

And those come-ons from the airline to sell you miles? Ignore them unless you are very close to a qualifying for a big trip.

Frequent-flyer programs get relatively little attention from Wall Street and their financial importance to the airlines is not widely understood by travelers, who just hope to earn a free flight now and then.

Airline profits are subject to vagaries like the price of fuel, the actions of competitors on key routes, even the weather. Amid all that uncertainty, airlines have found a reliable source of revenue in selling miles to banks, which then use the miles to persuade consumers to sign up for the cards and use them as much as possible.

"The bottom line is that the business of selling miles is a very profitable one and has proven historically to be far less cyclical than the core airline," Joseph DeNardi, a Stifel analyst who tracks airlines, said this month in a note to clients.

The downside for airline customers is that the world is awash in frequent-flyer miles and the airlines are constantly making each mile, or point, less valuable. Many trips don't earn as many

miles or points as they once did and the price for claiming a reward flight keeps going up. In many cases, availability of reward seats on flights has gotten worse.

"It is harder to use miles at the price that people are expecting to pay," says Gary Leff, who writes the View from the Wing travel blog.

Even for frequent flyers like Leff, a once-cherished benefit of the miles — using them to upgrade to first class — has been diminished because airlines sell more of those upgrades for cash.

That doesn't mean travelers shouldn't sign up for the airline programs. After all, there is no charge for joining.

It does require rethinking how to earn, keep and redeem

AIRLINES continues on D-2

A.M. Briefing

JU program cited as tops in business

The Jacksonville University Davis College of Business' part-time FLEX Master of Business Administration program for the first time has been named a best business graduate school by U.S. News and World Report. Rankings are based on three main criteria, including quality assessment, placement success and student selectivity.

The JU school debuted at 204 out of 1,000 part-time MBA programs. In addition, the Coggin College of Business at the University of North Florida was ranked at No. 215.

To be eligible for the part-time ranking, a program needs to be accredited by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business International and have at least 20 students enrolled part-time in fall 2016 based on data reported to U.S. News in fall 2016 and early 2017.

The part-time JU Davis FLEX MBA allows professionals to complete their MBAs through evening and weekend classes once per week while continuing to work full-time. Typically, candidates complete the program in two years.

Times-Union

Union Pacific to lay off 500 managers

OMAHA, NEB. | Union Pacific is laying off 500 managers and 250 other workers to reduce costs and eliminate about 8 percent of the railroad's managers.

The railroad told the affected workers Wednesday that their jobs will be eliminated by mid-September.

Most of Union Pacific's layoffs will be at the railroad's headquarters in Omaha, Neb., but they will affect Union Pacific's 23-state network. In the second quarter, Union Pacific had about 42,000 employees.

Company that makes Dickies to be sold

FORT WORTH, TEXAS | Williamson-Dickie, the family-owned work wear company founded in Fort Worth nearly 100 years ago, is being sold to VF Corporation, an apparel manufacturer based in Greensboro, N.C., for \$820 million.

VF, which owns top brands including Vans, North Face, Timberland and Wrangler, will pay Williamson shareholders cash for the company, which produces the Dickies, Walls and Kodiak brands.

The companies expect the merger to be completed in the fourth quarter. Philip Williamson, the company's chairman and CEO, will stay on to lead the company in Fort Worth.

Automakers, Intel to make self-driving car

DETROIT | Fiat Chrysler is teaming up with BMW and Intel to develop an autonomous-driving system.

The companies say the system will be used by automakers worldwide to run self-driving vehicles. It will be flexible so automakers can keep their unique brand identities.

Also ...

A Delaware bankruptcy judge on Wednesday ordered a 90-day stay over the prosecution of lawsuits filed by Hawaii, New Mexico and the U.S. Virgin Islands against Japanese auto parts supplier Takata over its lethally defective air bag inflators. ... UnitedHealth Group has picked company President David Wichmann to replace CEO Stephen Hemsley in a long-planned transition that Wall Street greeted with polite applause. The nation's largest health insurer says Wichmann, 54, will take over Sept. 1, and Hemsley will become executive chairman of the company's board.

From news services

Downtown speakeasy-style bar Volstead to remain open

Atlantic Beach couple who frequented popular spot now own establishment

By Ann Friedman
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Five days before Volstead, a downtown speakeasy-style bar, was set to close, the owners announced it will remain open under new ownership.

Co-owner Alexa DiMaio posted on Volstead's Facebook page, "The Volstead story lives on ... Jacksonville, your public outcries of disappoint-

ment, positive social media attention and genuine disbelief toward our closing announcement helped us achieve something we didn't even think was possible. My husband Sam Linn and I, have poured everything we have into the Volstead for the last 3.5 years, but Sam had some serious health issues pop up recently. We could no longer devote time and energy into The Volstead and undergo treatment at the same time. ...



Co-founder Matt Williams will stay on board to help new owners Dana Chen and George Cunningham stay true to Volstead's style. (Bruce Lipsky/Florida Times-Union)

"But don't despair! After the closing announcement, numerous people approached us about pur-

chasing the business. Most of these people did not share the same vision as us, but one couple stood

out. Since then, we have all been working together diligently behind the scenes to transition everything over but had to wait until everything was settled before we could make the announcement. ... Co-founder Matt Williams will also be staying on to uphold the unique style, speakeasy vibe and delicious cocktails that have become synonymous with the Volstead brand."

Dana Chen and her husband, George Cunningham, owners of the Atlantic Beach-based real estate company, Cheningham

VOLSTEAD continues on D-2