

money

Coach Inc
39.42 +.55/+1.4%

Northrop Grumman
298.68 +3.49/+1.2%

FedEx Corp
225.06 +2.39/+1.1%

LOCAL MOVERS

AT&T
35.86 -2.33/-6.1%

Stein Mart
1.23 -.05/-3.9%

Citigroup
72.37 -2.57/-3.4%

New Ikea store scheduled to open Nov. 8

290,000-square-foot-store 5th in Florida, 46th in U.S.

By Gary T. Mills

Ever since Ikea first announced in October 2015 its plans to open a store in Jacksonville, shoppers have wanted to know one thing: When will it open?

On Thursday, the mega-popular home furnishings store announced its store will open at 9 a.m. Nov. 8. Customers can begin lining up at the store as early as Nov. 6.

The 290,000-square-foot-store store — at the northwest corner of Gate

Parkway and Interstate 295 — will be the fifth Ikea to open in Florida and the 46th in the U.S. Worldwide, Ikea has more than 400 stores in 49 countries.

The grand opening will include several days of “activities, giveaways and amazing deals,” according to the company’s website.

Ikea’s Jacksonville store will feature nearly 10,000 items, most of which will be showcased in 50 room-settings and three model-home interiors, according to a company news release.

The company has hired about 260 permanent employees, a spokesman said Thursday. About 50 part-time and seasonal positions are still open.

The store also features a 275-seat restaurant and a supervised children’s play area. The store’s regular hours will be 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. daily.

Ikea first announced it would open the Jacksonville store in October 2015. It broke ground last November.

The store is about aver-



Steve Therrien of Taylor Sign & Design helps install the 10-foot-tall letters on the new Ikea Home Furnishings store Aug. 18 at Gate Parkway in Jacksonville. (Will Dickey/Florida Times-Union)

age size for Ikea, which has some U.S. stores as big as 400,000 square feet. If

you walk the designated path through the store, it’s about two-thirds of a mile.

Hearing lets CSX chief, critics have their say

STB says comments part of public record

From the Times-Union

CSX CEO and President Hunter Harrison apologized to customers who came to a “public listening session” by the Surface Transportation Board on Wednesday in Washington to complain in person about poor delivery, inefficient routings and service disruptions.

Since he took over in March, Harrison has advocated what he calls “precision railroading.” To that end, he has closed CSX rail yards, removed nearly 900 locomotives and 60,000 freight cars from service, and laid off 2,300 people this year.

He told the board and his critics — including representatives from steel-producing and automobile companies, chemical and agricultural firms — that he blamed various issues for the problems, including internal errors, derailments and shutting down too many railyards. Harrison told the STB his strategy needs “fine-tuning,” and could include more layoffs and other yard changes.

Harrison said his strategy was crucial to his previous turnarounds of Canadian Pacific Railway Ltd. and Canadian National Railway Co., and added the “best is right around the corner.”

“We’ve made some mistakes. This is not a failure of precision scheduled railroading,” he said.

He promised over and over to improve service.

The Surface Transportation Board has been reviewing the railroad’s performance every week, and has been an intermediary between CSX and unhappy customers. On Wednesday, it held what it called a public listening session to air the complaints and hear the railroad’s response.

After Harrison finished, the vice president of Cargill, Inc., a global company that deals in agricultural commodities, came to the podium. Brad Hildebrand urged the STB to ensure CSX returns resources to its network.

“In a nutshell, (precision scheduled railroading) means having to do with less,” he told the board.

William Scott, vice president of Collum’s Lumber Products LLC, spoke of changes to his delivery schedules to which he was not informed. He said CSX has a “total disregard for customer service,” that oftentimes phone calls are not answered and are not returned.

A representative of Che-

CSX continues on C-2

TEXAS-SIZED PIT STOP



A Buc-ee’s mega-convenience store like this one in Terrell, Texas, is coming to St. Johns County. It’s only the second one not in Texas. Two others are being built in Florida. (Wikipedia)

Buc-ee’s to open huge convenience store with 120 gas pumps

By Roger Bull
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If convenience store competition in Northeast Florida were a poker game, the stakes are about to get raised. A big Texan is sitting down at the table.

Buc-ee’s, a Texas chain that is just expanding into Florida, plans a store and gas station on Interstate 95 near World Golf Village in St. Johns County. And the numbers are huge: A 52,600-square-foot store with 120 gas pumps.

You read that right: At 52,600 square feet, that’s a little bigger than a typical Publix or Winn-Dixie and eight or nine times the size of what Gate, Daily’s or Race Trac has been opening lately. The 120 gas pumps are about 100 more than most new stations.

“That’s enormous for a convenience store,” said Jeff Lenard, spokesman for the National Association of Convenience Stores, “but it’s not all that big when you look at Buc-ee’s. Some have gone as big as 70,000 square feet.”

The preapplication filed with St. Johns County places the store on 13.71 vacant acres at the southwest quadrant of the International Golf Parkway and I-95, about 15 miles south of I-295. A county spokeswoman said that Buc-ee’s



The sausage and jerky counter at Buc-ee’s offers a big selection. (Courtesy of Buc-ee’s)

will need to file construction plans and have those approved before being issued a building permit.

Co-owner Arch “Beaver” Aplin said Thursday that he hopes to break ground during the first quarter of next year. Construction, he said, would take about a year. Last year, the chain announced that it was expanding outside of Texas for the first time, into Florida and Alabama. At the time, the first store in Florida was expected to be at I-95 and LPGA

Boulevard in Daytona Beach, followed by Fort Myers.

But Aplin said the St. Johns store should be first now because the other locations have to work through some environmental issues. It will be the 37th or 38th in the chain, he said.

Many of the chain’s stores are typical convenience store size. But it’s been increasingly moving to the mammoth ones on interstates, which it has insisted are

BUC-EE’S continues on C-2

Amazon to add 1,000 Jacksonville holiday jobs

By Drew Dixon
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Amazon is gearing up for the holiday season by hiring thousands of more workers nationwide, including a bump in laborers at its new Jacksonville facilities.

Across the country, Amazon will be hiring an

additional 120,000 workers for the holiday season, a company news release said Thursday. In the Jacksonville market, that means the online retail company will hire about 1,000 additional employees. In total there will be about 5,000 jobs added to Florida operations during the holidays that include

other markets such as Tampa and Orlando.

In Jacksonville, Amazon just opened operations at Bulls Bay Highway, 103rd Street and Pecan Park Road this year. Combined, those so-called fulfillment centers that handle, packing, deliveries and shipping have hired about 3,000 permanent workers.

Many of the holiday jobs will be full time during the season. But there are part-time jobs also available.

Those interested in applying for the positions that will help pick, pack and ship customer holiday orders can apply online at www.amazon.com/peak-jobs.

A.M. Briefing

Fixed mortgage rates go up to 3.91 percent

After a month of incremental increases, fixed mortgage rates took their biggest leap since this summer.

According to the latest data released Thursday by Freddie Mac, the 30-year fixed-rate average climbed to 3.91 percent with an average 0.5 point. (Points are fees paid to a lender equal to 1 percent of the loan amount.) It was 3.85 percent a week ago and 3.47 percent a year ago. The 30-year average, which hasn’t been this high since August, had its biggest one-week increase since July.

The 15-year fixed-rate average jumped to 3.21 percent with an average 0.5 point. It was 3.15 percent a week ago and 2.76 percent a year ago. The 15-year average hasn’t been this high since July.

The five-year adjustable rate average fell to 3.16 percent with an average 0.4 point. It was 3.18 percent a week ago and 2.82 percent a year ago.

Target adds Google’s voice-activated retail

NEW YORK | Target is jumping into voice-activated shopping as it deepens its relationship with Google, offering thousands of items found in the store except for perishables like fruit and milk.

The move is happening as Google says shopping will be available later this year through Google Assistant on iPhone and Android phones, joining its Google Home device and Android TV. So shoppers can shout out orders to their phone while they’re running around doing errands or just walking.

Maine blue mussel harvest declines

SCARBOROUGH, MAINE | The size of the annual harvest of Maine’s blue mussels has dipped in recent years.

Harvesters collected less than 1.8 million pounds of mussel meat in 2016. That’s the lowest since 1976, when the state’s harvesters topped a million pounds for the first time.

In the 1980s and 1990s, harvesters topped 6 million pounds three times. They have routinely topped 3 million pounds until 10 years ago.

More than 500,000 child car seats recalled

More than 500,000 child car seats made by a company called Diono are being recalled because they may not adequately protect children in a crash.

The recall covers the Radian R100, Radian R120, Radian RXT, Olympia, Pacifica and Rainier convertible and booster seats. They were made from as early as January of 2014 to September of this year by Diono, which used to be called Sunshine Kids Juvenile.

Documents posted Thursday by the U.S. National Highway Traffic Safety Administration say that when the seats are secured using a lap belt without the top tether, children over 65 pounds have an increased risk of chest injury in a crash.

The company will send owners a kit with an energy absorbing pad and a new chest clip at no cost. The recall is expected to start Nov. 22.

Customers with questions can call Diono at (855) 463-4666.

Domino’s Pizza beats Wall Street estimate

ANN ARBOR, MICH. | Domino’s Pizza Inc. on Thursday reported third-quarter earnings of \$56.4 million.

On a per-share basis, the Ann Arbor, Mich.-based company said it had profit of \$1.18. Earnings, adjusted for non-recurring costs, came to \$1.27 per share.

The results exceeded Wall Street expectations of \$1.22 per share.

From news services