

Georgia

Plant that turns tires into components opens in Nahunta

It's the first time the technology has been used in the U.S., official says

By Terry Dickson
terry.dickson@jacksonville.com

NAHUNTA, GA. | Although he was speaking in his native Italian to an American audience, one of inventor Domenico Tanfoglio's words needed no translation as he spoke Tuesday at the opening of a \$5 million plant in Nahunta.

The word "problema" was likely understood as the reason Cox Enterprises built the Golden Isles Conservation Center to use Tanfoglio's technology to reduce 80,000 tires a year into their original, marketable components.

"I wanted to find a way to turn wastes into a positive," according to his speech translated by an interpreter.

He said the Cox family is known for doing the right thing for the environment. "Today is a dream for me," he said.

The plant will process

the scraps of 480 tires per day, heating them to about 2,200 degrees Fahrenheit to break them down. Every 450 pounds of scraps will produce about 150 pounds of oil, 150 pounds of carbon black, 100 pounds of gas and 31 pounds of steel, officials said.

The plant will also burn some wood, but that is mostly to get the process started. Once gas begins cooking off, it will be used to fuel the furnaces that heat the tires in oxygen-free chambers so they don't ignite.

Cox Chief Operating Officer Alex Taylor said the company, which began as a newspaper company in 1898, is passionate about the environment. "We love trying new things and investing in the future," he said.

Taylor, who chairs the board of American Rivers, said he likes to be outdoors. "I come across tires all the

time, out in the rivers and out in the woods," he said.

Taylor said he understands why because there's not much people can do with old tires except pay someone to dispose of them.

"Let's hope this turns into something big and exciting," he said.

He noted earlier that Cox is still a media and telecommunications company but said it has branched out into other things.

Company spokeswoman Elizabeth Olmstead said the company, which has \$20 billion in revenue, has expanded into the auto industry with its ownership of Kelley Blue Book, Auto Trader and vehicle auctions around the world.

The Golden Isles Conservation Center is the result of the company's examination of the effect its businesses have on the environment, Olmstead said.

"We saw that tires have an impact globally," she said.

Through its auto businesses, Cox is responsible for about 80,000 tires a



Paul Yarbrough (right) leads a tour group through the Golden Isles Conservation Center where he and four others will operate the \$5 million plant that will break tires down into their original components for reuse rather than disposal. (Terry Dickson/Florida Times-Union)

year, and the Nahunta plant will turn that many into marketable products, officials said.

Steel is among the most recycled substances in the world, carbon black can be used in inks, plastics and possibly new tires and the oil can be used in automotive products, she said. The gas will be used to fuel the plant, all with no emissions, she said.

"We're looking at this as

a [research and development] center," Olmstead said. "We hope to look at other waste streams."

Joe Carr, a member of the Brantley County Development Authority, credits former Brantley County Commissioner Mike Edgy and County Manager Carl Rowland with working to keep Cox in Brantley County.

"This wouldn't be here without Mike Edgy and

Carl Rowland," he said. "[Edgy] fought hard for this."

Richard Thornton, executive director of the development authority, said that although five jobs aren't many, the county is grateful.

"We appreciate them when we get them," Thornton said, especially high-tech positions that pay well.

"This is the first time [the technology] has been used in the U.S., and Brantley County will be the first place," he said.

"We hope it's the initial step" and hope it attracts other investors to the county, Thornton said.

Edgy said he is hopeful a company that wants to build a waste-to-energy plant in the Waynesville area will be able to locate in Brantley County.

"We need to stop burying our trash," Edgy said.

Local residents can get their own look at the facility in April at an open house.

Terry Dickson: (912) 264-0405

Authorities release names of 5 who died in crash at Bunnell

The Times-Union

Authorities released the identities Tuesday of the five victims killed in a three-vehicle crash on U.S. 1 near Old Dixie Highway in Bunnell over the weekend.

Five South Florida residents were inside a Mazda Tribute that was westbound Sunday on Old Dixie Highway about 11:30 a.m. when it turned left to head south on U.S. 1 and crossed into the path of a northbound Ford pickup, according to the Florida Highway Patrol.

The pickup struck the driver's side of the Tribute and both vehicles collided with a southbound Toyota Camry, troopers said.

The Tribute's driver,

58-year-old Edwin Santana of Miramar, was killed. None of his passengers — Maria Rosario Cedeno, 74, of Miami; Olga Melania Nunez, 70, of Miramar; Gloria Santana, 53, and Sonia Elena Melendez, 64, both of Pembroke Pines — survived.

The Camry's driver, 72-year-old Louis Krombholz of Ormond Beach, and two passengers in the pickup, 22-year-old Jessica Walker and a 4-year-old girl, were treated for minor injuries, according to the Highway Patrol.

Troopers said Gloria Santana and Melendez were not wearing seat belts.

The crash, which shut down a stretch of U.S. 1 for four hours Sunday, remains under investiga-

tion.

Garrett Pelican

DUVAL Woman dies after arrest on drug charge

A 57-year-old woman arrested Monday on a drug-possession charge died Tuesday after being taken to a hospital feeling ill, according to the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office.

Verna Maria Nairn was booked into the jail about 3:50 p.m. Monday and then was transported about 7:30 a.m. the next day, the Sheriff's Office said. She died a short time later.

No foul play is suspected, but the death is being further investigated.

Scott Butler

JACKSONVILLE JOURNAL

The Times-Union

Man wins \$8 million with free lottery ticket

For the second time in Florida Lottery history a Lotto jackpot was won by a free ticket with Xtra, this time by a 66-year-old Jacksonville man, the Lottery announced Tuesday.

Muhamed Omeranovic claimed the \$12 million jackpot from the Dec. 21 drawing and chose to receive the one-time, lump-sum payment of \$8,035,884, according to the Lottery.

Players who match two winning numbers on a Florida Lotto with Xtra ticket win a free a Quick Pick ticket for the next available drawing. The winning numbers were 2-4-7-21-34-48 and the Xtra number was 5.

The free ticket came from Ruts BP at 6923 Atlantic Blvd., the Lottery said.

Author-singer to speak to Women for Christ

Kelly Minter, a popular conference speaker, author and recording artist, will speak at Women for Christ's 32nd annual luncheon at 11:30 a.m. Feb. 21 at the Prime Osborn Convention Center. She will talk on "No Other Gods: Confronting Our Modern Day Idols."

Women for Christ, which was founded in 1986 and has about 200

members, brings top speakers in the Christian field to Jacksonville and hundreds of women to hear them, said member Colleen White. Minter is the author of four books and four Bible study curriculums. Her most recent book, "Wherever the River Runs: How a Forgotten People Renewed My Hope in the Gospel," chronicles her many trips to Brazil with Justice and Mercy International, which serves the needy in the Amazon jungle. The Nashville, Tenn., resident has released several albums of original songs and favorite hymns.

Tickets are \$30. For information visit jaxwomenforchrist.org.

Undie Campaign at Dignity U Wear

Dignity U Wear, a Jacksonville-based clothing nonprofit, will launch its 11th annual Undie Campaign March 1.

Underwear and socks, particularly children's sizes, are the items most requested by the needy. Through April 29, faith and school groups, businesses and others in the Jacksonville community will have drives to collect those items.

Clothing and monetary donations also can be dropped off at Dignity U Wear at 136 N. Myrtle Ave. in Jacksonville 8:30 a.m. to

4:30 p.m. April 25-29.

To register a collection team to or get more information, contact Dignity U Wear at (904) 636-9455 or info@dignityuwear.org or go to dignityuwear.org.

DOT to preview I-95 work in Yulee

An open house to present information on the state's planned Diverging Diamond Interchange at Interstate 95 and Florida A1A will be 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. Feb. 23 at Florida State College Nassau at 76348 William Burgess Blvd. in Yulee.

The Florida Department of Transportation is building the area's first interchange of this design, and the meeting will present information on the planned \$40 million project as well as other projects along Florida A1A in Yulee.

Project staff will be on hand to answer questions and share details of the project.

LGBT ordinance clears another council committee

Measure would expand anti-discrimination law if City Council OKs it

By Christopher Hong
christopher.hong@jacksonville.com

A proposed anti-discrimination law for LGBT people cleared another crucial step Tuesday, bringing it closer to a final vote by the Jacksonville City Council.

The council Rules committee passed the bill in a 6-1 vote and made no significant changes to the legislation. Councilman Danny Becton, who strongly criticized the legislation during the meeting, cast the only no vote.

The legislation would expand the city's anti-discrimination law to protect LGBT people, with exemptions for religious organizations and small businesses.

Jacksonville remains one of the last major cities without those protections. This year marks the council's third attempt at enacting the protections since 2012.

The legislation is moving closer to a final vote. After passing through two committees this week, it will be ready for a final vote on Feb. 14 if it clears the council Finance committee on Wednesday.

"I have not met one person in the past year who can tell me how this ordinance could solve any problems about discrimination against the LGBT community," Becton said.

Becton emerged as a vocal opponent of the legislation during the meeting, proffering several hypothetical consequences that would hurt small businesses and LGBT workers.

Facing new penalties for discriminating against LGBT people, Becton predicted that businesses would avoid the issue altogether by "silently" refus-

ing to hire gay and transgender employees.

He also said he believes new companies would avoid moving to Jacksonville because of the expanded discrimination protections.

Councilman Jim Love said he's spoken to officials in other Florida cities with similar laws, including Tampa Mayor Bob Buckhorn, and asked if they've experienced any of the scenarios described by opponents of the legislation, like small businesses facing frivolous lawsuits and sexual assaults in women's restrooms by predators dressed in female attire.

"Absolutely not," Love said. "This bill is about freedom and justice, and as a retired Navy pilot, that was my job to fight for those rights. Not just for some people, but all people."

While the legislation appears on track to be decided next week, it remains unclear whether it has enough support to pass.

While seven council members have voted for the legislation in committee, their votes are not binding and don't necessarily predict whether they'd support the bill in a final vote.

Some of the yes votes haven't publicly explained their stance on the issue, and others have sent mixed signals through their comments during meetings.

Still, a few council members have said they'll likely support it, like Councilmen John Crescimbeni and Greg Anderson.

The bill's three sponsors, Councilmen Aaron Bowman, Tommy Hazouri and Love, have all voted yes in committee this week.

Other council members, like Becton, have staked their positions on the opposing side.

It also remains unclear which version of the legislation will be considered by the full council when it

comes for a final vote.

While the legislation was significantly changed on Monday to exempt more small businesses from the law's employment discrimination ban, the Rules committee on Tuesday didn't adopt that amendment.

That means the full council will decide whether to adopt the expanded small business exemptions — or any other proposed changes — before they make their final vote.

Another looming uncertainty is the possibility of a referendum.

Councilman Bill Gulliford, who opposes the legislation, said last week he would introduce an option to decide the issue through a special countywide election.

Gulliford hasn't put forward that option yet, although he could do so at Wednesday's committee meeting or when the bill goes for a final vote.

Gulliford introduced legislation to hold a referendum last year that competed against similar anti-discrimination legislation. Both bills were withdrawn before they could be voted on.

Supporters of the discrimination protections do not support a referendum, arguing that civil rights for minority groups shouldn't be decided by a popular vote. Opponents have insisted on letting voters decide the issue.

While many supporters of the discrimination protections have cautious optimism they will prevail, the option of giving voters the final say on the highly controversial issue could shake up the vote count.

Even Anderson, who voted for similar legislation in 2012 and anticipates supporting it next week, said he'd have to "seriously consider" a referendum if Gulliford proposes it.

Chris Hong: (904) 359-4272

AW As Low As **\$37**
JUNK REMOVAL ARWOOD WASTE
904-751-2177 a Pick Up
Arwood Waste now offers a full range of sizes and styles of dumpsters that can be used for any residential project, from light remodel to demolition work.
Junk Removal / Portable Toilets / Demolition / Recycling
www.ArwoodJunk.com

LET US SELL YOUR BOAT!
CONSIGNMENT BOAT SALES
www.jaxboating.com
Since 2001 – Phone: (904)249-6225

Macintosh Consulting Services Serving Jacksonville's Macintosh needs since 1998
• Problem Solving & Troubleshooting • Instruction & Training
• Internet Setup & Networking • Windows-to-Mac setup
• Installation & Upgrades
All work performed on-site in your home or office
Mike Rosenberg
904-642-6741 • www.maconconsult.com

Bogers Shoes is celebrating 60 years!
Boger's Shoes has been in the shoe business for 60 years, providing the largest inventory of orthopedic and comfort shoes in Northeast Florida. We specialize in extra-wide widths, and offer free evaluations and fittings by a board-certified pedorthist.
WE CARRY
BIRKENSTOCK dansko BROOKS
And many more brands.
Boger's FOOTWEAR SPECIALISTS EXTRA WIDE WIDTHS IN STOCK
1014 Park Street at 5 Points **356-0459**