

# current



## THE FIVE

Jeezy headlines Unity Fest 2016  
at Jacksonville Arena **Page 3**

### COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Times-Union

#### 'Stories on a Summer Afternoon'

Tale Tellers of St. Augustine present "Remembering: Stories on a Summer Afternoon" at 2 p.m. Saturday at the Anastasia Branch Library, 124 Sea Grove Main St. The program is recommended for listeners 12 years old and older. For more information, call (904) 471-0179 or (386) 446-4909.

#### Stetson's 'Woody Guthrie Showcase'

Acoustic singer-songwriters David Milam, Cindy Bear and Jeff Parker, from Jacksonville, will perform in the "Woody Guthrie Showcase" for Second Sunday at Stetson's from 2 to 4 p.m. Sunday at Beluthahatchee Park, 1523 State Road 13. All will be performing Woody Guthrie songs in the round. Space is limited and reservations are required. The park opens at 1 p.m. with tours of Stetson Kennedy's house and museum before and after the concert. To make a reservation, call (904) 206-8304.

#### Catholic Writers Guild monthly meeting

Aspiring writers, poets, composers and other writers are invited to the St. Johns Chapter of the Catholic Writers Guild meeting from 10 a.m. to noon Saturday at The Father Felix Varela Center, 5110 Lourcey Road. This month's meeting speaker will be Tony Kolenc on the legal issues in writing. Door prizes will be given out as well as refreshments during the meeting. For more information, go to dosafll.com.

#### Lightner Museum curator tours

The Lightner Museum, 75 King St., offers monthly curator tours to visitors to see how displays operate and were used in the 19th and early 20th century. The museum will hold its next tour at 10 a.m. Wednesday. July's theme is "Made for Children," and will show visitors what children played with during the turn of the century. The tour is included with admission, which is \$10 for adults, \$6 for active duty military, \$5 for college students and youth ages 12-18. Children 12 years old and under are free. For more information, call (904) 824-2874 or go to lightnermuseum.org.

#### Improvisation Workshop

Atlantic Beach Experimental Theatre hosts an improvisation workshop for teens and adults from 5 to 7 p.m. Sunday at the theatre, 716 Ocean Blvd. in Atlantic Beach. The workshop, led by Gary Baker, will teach how to effectively use improvisation on the stage and include techniques such as quick decision making, working as a team to reach one goal and expanding the actor's imagination on stage. The registration fee is \$50 per student.

#### The Power of Myth: 'Sacrifice and Bliss'

The Power of Myth workshop and video series continues with "Sacrifice and Bliss" at 6 p.m. Monday in the Friends of Hemming Park office inside the Jacksonville Main Public Library, 303 N. Laura St. Jungian psychoanalysts Gretchen Deter-Murray and Barbara Woods-Barnes will talk about the connection between sacrifice and bliss in mythological stories. To RSVP, email social@hemmingpark.org. For more information, go to hemmingpark.org.

Send news from Mandarin, St. Augustine and greater St. Johns County to [current@jacksonville.com](mailto:current@jacksonville.com).



Bruce.Lipsky@jacksonville.com

The World Golf Hall of Fame is one of the more popular tourism destinations in St. Johns County beyond St. Augustine's historic district.

# Tourism in St. Johns: More than just old city

## Visitors bureau also promoting ecotourism, cultural and culinary offerings

### First Coast News

Once something of a sleepy tourist destination — at least during off-peak times — St. Augustine and St. Johns County have been sufficiently discovered by visitors. The issue now is what to do with them all.

According to the county visitors and convention bureau, there were about a million more visitors (6.3 million) to St. Johns County in 2015 than 2014 with no signs of things slowing this year.

Much of the tourism activity is focused on the beaches and St. Augustine's historic district — for obvious reasons. And while marketing done by the visitors bureau still highlights the area's most iconic attractions, bureau President and CEO Richard Goldman said there is a new focus on highlighting other experiences.

Among these are ecotourism, arts and cultural offerings (including those of the St. August-

tine Amphitheatre and Ponte Vedra Concert Hall), amateur sports competition and golf, and culinary experiences.

"Culinary has been growing in importance," Goldman said. "It's a very big part of what we market. That cuts across the entire destination."

The last five or 10 years have seen a host of new restaurant openings around the county with expansion of popular regional chains like Salt Life Food Shack, M Shack, Hoptinger and Metro Diner. That has augmented the openings of many independent establishments.

There is also an effort to remind visitors of opportunities for recreation away from the traditional hot spots.

### WGV HALL OF FAME

One of the more popular attractions outside of the historic area is World Golf Village, which includes the World Golf Hall of Fame, an IMAX theater, restaurants and two golf

courses.

The Hall draws about 200,000 visitors per year, said Brittany Schnorr, manager of public relations and media relations at the venue.

Schnorr said the Hall is a nice change for tourists who might have had hassles dealing with parking downtown or around the beaches.

"Outside of major events, we are never short on parking," she said. "It's a stress-free, beautiful drive. It's really just a pleasant experience from the time you enter the property."

### AQUARIUM TO JOIN OUTLETS

Just one exit south of International Golf Parkway on Interstate 95 is the State Road 16 exit that could be a bigger destination for tourists in the coming years.

The area already has two outlet malls and several hotels just a few miles from downtown St. Augustine. One attraction that's coming there is the

St. Augustine Aquarium.

Aquarium co-owner Kathy Hiester said the first phase of the project is set to open at the end of the summer. She said her research showed that 1.5 million people visit the outlets. A lot of them are likely tourists who might be interested in the aquarium.

Like the World Golf Hall of Fame, Hiester said there are advantages to being located outside the crowded downtown, especially the availability of ample parking.

Goldman said it's important for the visitors bureau to let potential visitors know about other attractions and areas of the county, and it's about more than just easing congestion in popular areas.

"There is a great deal to do here," Goldman said. "It's one of great advantages over other destinations. The depth of experiences and spectrum of price ranges; that's been very helpful to us."

# Gate to develop huge St. Johns shopping center

Durbin Park would have double retail space of St. Johns Town Center

By Roger Bull  
[roger.bull@jacksonville.com](mailto:roger.bull@jacksonville.com)

Gate Petroleum plans a massive mixed-use development, including the largest shopping area in Northeast Florida, on property it owns in St. Johns County. Called Durbin Park, it will cover 1,600 acres south of Race Track Road, stretching east of Interstate 95 and west of the new Florida 9B.

Plans for the project, which Gate will develop along with partner Gatlin Development Co., call for 2.4 million square feet of retail, 2.8 million square feet of office space, 999 multifamily units and 350 hotel rooms.

To put that in perspective, St. Johns Town Center has 1.4 million square feet of retail space.

Ken Wilson, vice president of Gate, said those numbers have all been approved by St. Johns County, but they're all maximums without a guarantee they'll be built.

"But my best guess is that we'll accomplish it," he said. "There's such a serious lack of big-box retailers and services in the



Rendering provided by Gate Petroleum

northern half of St. Johns County."

The first phase, on an 80-acre parcel west of 9B/County Road 2209, will include approximately 700,000 square feet of retail anchored by three big-box retailers, Gate said. Construction is scheduled to start late this year with an opening in the second quarter of 2018.

The second phase, between I-95 and 9B, will

open 12-18 months later and include restaurants and retail. Bass Pro Shops, which first announced its plans to open here in 2012, will be part of that phase. The original announcement had the store opening in early 2014.

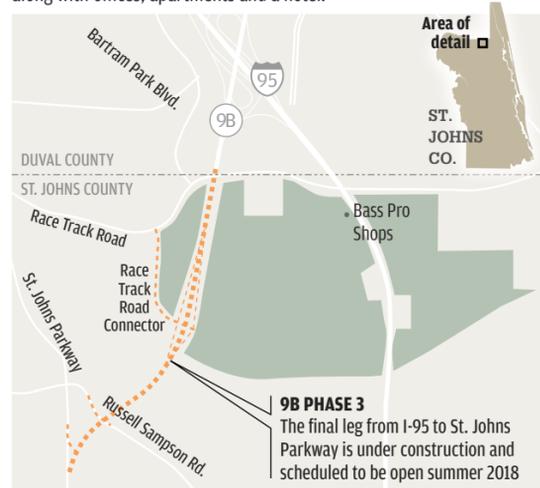
The final phase, east of I-95, will have the offices.

Other than Bass Pro Shops, no tenants for the project have been

**DURBIN** continues on Page 3

### Massive project for St. Johns

Durbin Park, being developed by Gate Petroleum and Gatlin Development Co., is projected to have 2.4 million square feet of retail space, along with offices, apartments and a hotel.



Source: Gate Petroleum

Steve.Nelson@jacksonville.com

JULY 6-12, 2016

# THE FIVE

things you need to know

The Times-Union



## Unity Fest 2016

Unity Fest 2016 will be held 8 p.m. Saturday at the Veterans Memorial Arena. Artists include Jeezy (pictured), Jacquees, Plies and more. Tickets start at \$25 and can be found at [ticketmaster.com](http://ticketmaster.com) or by phone at (800) 745-3000.



## 30th anniversary BFAST Triathlon

BFAST Triathlons holds its 30th anniversary competition Saturday at Mickler's Landing. BFAST includes one sprint distance and one Olympic distance triathlon. Registration can be found at [bfasracing.org](http://bfasracing.org).



## 'Three Blind Dates' at Limelight Theatre

Limelight Theatre, 11 Old Mission Ave., presents "Three Blind Dates," an award-winning, unscripted romantic comedy, at 6 p.m. Sunday. The show follows three single women through a round of speed dating, and the audience chooses which person each woman will go on a date with afterwards. Tickets are \$12 in advance and \$15 at the door. For more information, go to [3blinddateshow.com](http://3blinddateshow.com).



## MasterChef Junior open casting calls

Open casting calls for television show MasterChef Junior will be held Saturday at Omni Jacksonville Hotel, 245 Water St. Casting directors are looking for home cooks between the ages of 8 and 13. Those interested in auditioning need to register beforehand at [masterchefjuniorcasting.com](http://masterchefjuniorcasting.com).

## 15th annual Jacksonville Beach Summer Jazz Series

The second concert of the 15th annual Summer Jazz Series will be held from 5 to 9 p.m. Sunday at the Seawalk Pavilion in Jacksonville Beach. The concert features Four 80 East with special guest Art Sherrod Jr., Althea Rene and Jeanette Harris, and Isaac Byrd Jr.

## DURBIN

Continued from Page 1

announced. But Frank Gatlin of Gatlin Development, which will develop and co-own the retail space, said he expects to start releasing names in about 90 days. The Shopping Center Group will handle the leasing for the project.

Durbin Park, if fully built out, would add as many square feet of retail as St. Johns Town Center, Markets at Town Center and River City Marketplace combined. But Cliff Taylor, a retail special and senior vice president at real estate firm CBRE, said there's plenty of room for it.

"I think it's going to be wildly successful," Taylor said. "If you think about it, Jacksonville historically had three major retail nodes: Orange Park Mall, Regency Square and The Avenues. But as shopping morphed away from malls to the open-air lifestyle centers all over the country, we'll still have three nodes: The Town Center, River City Marketplace and Durbin Park, all along the I-95 corridor."

### '10 YEARS OF DISCUSSIONS'

Northern St. Johns County has been the fastest-growing area in Northeast Florida for several years, but retail has not kept up

with housing, he said. New communities are being announced regularly and the largest ones, Durbin Crossing and Nocatee, are not yet built out.

"If you drive that area," Taylor said, "it's primarily grocery stores, there's no soft goods. If I live in Durbin Creek, Nocatee, Julington Creek, I have to drive to Mandarin, The Avenues or the Beaches. But with Saturday morning traffic, those are all 20- to 25-minute drives.

"You've got the No. 1 school district in the state, they're putting up homes like you can't believe and they're all fleeing the neighborhood to shop."

New stores in Durbin Park would take their toll on other shopping areas, and Taylor said he thought The Avenues would be the most affected.

"Mandarin may feel a little pinch," he said. "But The Avenues could become no man's land. Other than Deercreek and Deerwood, there's no much residential around it. I imagine a significant portion of that shopper is coming out of northern St. Johns County."

Gate bought the property in 2004 and early plans were delayed by the recession.

"We've had more than 10 years of discussions," Wilson said, "and I tell you that interest from the major an-

chors has only increased."

### A TWO-STORE TOWN

Gatlin Development, which specializes in retail shopping centers, moved its headquarters from Fort Lauderdale to Riverplace Tower on Jacksonville's Southbank last year. But it has developments all over the country.

Frank Gatlin said he usually does projects in the 300,000- to 700,000-square-foot range, including the Wal-Mart Supercenter that opened in April on Collins Road. But the second phase of Durbin Park will be the largest retail project he's taken on.

"Jacksonville was always considered a one-store market," he said. "If you're talking about a store like Nordstrom, there's only going to be one.

"But in what's happened with the explosion of growth in St. Johns County," he said, "it's become a two-store market. There's room for St. Johns Town Center and the Durbin Park."

Florida 9B was recently completed to I-95 and work is underway for the final 2.3 miles that would take it to County Road 2209, also known as St. Johns Parkway. Without 9B, Wilson said, the project would have been much smaller.

Roger Bull: (904) 359-4296

## CURRENT WANTS TO HEAR ABOUT YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD

This is the place to tell us about your neighborhood.

Current is a weekly section serving three areas of the First Coast: Town (Avondale, Riverside, Springfield, Downtown and San Marco), Southside-Beaches, and Mandarin-St. Johns. Our aim is to "get local," to provide useful news to each of these zones, to tell stories about those who are doing meaningful work who might have been overlooked. We'll also try to call attention to events and places worth checking out in your area. But to deliver news that's truly meaningful, we need to hear from those who live in the areas we hope to serve. If you have some news to share, let us know. Want to try your hand at authoring a column? Write 400-600 words and send it in (no politics please; let's keep that for the op-ed page). Do you take great photographs? Send your pics and captions and we'll publish them (JPEG only, at least 300 DPI, please). Know of an overlooked park, restaurant or cool business? Show it some love in these pages.

Direct submissions to [current@jacksonville.com](mailto:current@jacksonville.com) or call (904) 359-4483. And please, let us know how we're doing.

## Make your summer great at Augustine Landing!



- Chef-prepared, nutritious meals
- Social & recreational activities
- Housekeeping services
- Private apartments
- And much more!

**Lock in your rate!\*** Lease by July 15.  
Call 904-263-4655 today to schedule a visit.

HOLIDAY  
RETIREMENT

**Augustine Landing**  
Independent Retirement Living  
10141 Old St. Augustine Road  
Jacksonville, FL 32257

904-263-4655 | [augustinelanding.com](http://augustinelanding.com)



\*TO BE ELIGIBLE YOU MUST (A) LEASE A UNIT AT A HOLIDAY COMMUNITY AND EXECUTE ALL RELEVANT DOCUMENTATION RELATED TO THE RATE LOCK, (B) PAY YOUR FIRST MONTH'S RENT, THE COMMUNITY INITIATION FEE AND RATE LOCK FEE; AND (C) MOVE INTO THE LEASED UNIT. SEE THE COMMUNITY MANAGEMENT TEAM FOR COMPLETE DETAILS. CANNOT BE COMBINED WITH OTHER OFFERS. ©2016 HARVEST MANAGEMENT SUB LLC, HOLIDAY AL MANAGEMENT SUB LLC, HOLIDAY AL NIC MANAGEMENT LLC.