Princess Place stable restoration nearly done

The restoration of the Princess Place livery stable is nearly complete. Exterior painting, the finishing touch, could be completed by Friday if dry weather prevails.

Flagler County contracted with DiMare Construction – a company that also does restoration at Flagler College – to complete the work, which included replacing the foundation, re-framing the front and back of the stable and adding interior supports, replacing termite-damaged siding and stalls, new windows, and a new roof. Ken Smith Architects, also specializing in historic restoration, provided the architectural services.

“We are really pushing to finish the work by Friday (July 31), but the rain may not allow it,” project manager Charlie Owen said. “You really can’t paint while it is raining.”

The total project budget is $440,000 and is currently $45,000 under budget.

“We probably won’t spend all of that,” said Heidi Petito, Flagler County General Services Director.

Funding for the project is coming from a Florida Bureau of Historic Preservation grant in the amount of $183,400; a $150,000 Tourist Development Council grant; and, from money raised for capital projects through the half-cent sales tax to cover the remaining $106,600.

“I am thrilled with the restoration of the Princess Place stable and bathhouse,” Commissioner George Hanns said. “The restoration has been needed for a long time.”

Cherokee Grove, locally known as Princess Place Preserve, was listed on the National Registry of Historic Places in 1997. The Flagler County Board of County Commissioners documented its vision of preservation of historical places by including it in the 2010-2015 Strategic Plan.

The lodge was built in 1888 and was restored by the county from 1997 to 1999 and remains much as it was in 1888. The Princess Place livery stable is located within the preserve and is included in the historic designation. It is the largest out-building in a complex of the oldest standing buildings in Flagler County.

“The stable will be restored to its original appearance,” Petito said. “We have recreated the north portion, using old photos, which had been removed prior to the county’s ownership. Additionally, it will be restored to its original color – light tan with white trim and dark green windows and doors.”

Environmentally, the property is the anchor for a coastal greenway system that runs some 30 miles along the Atlantic Coast and 7 miles west into the interior, and is within a designated National Estuarine Research Reserve and State Aquatic Preserve. The preserve plays an integral part in the Guana Tolomato Matanzas National Estuarine Research Reserve.
**Data Busters’ visit Flagler County Fire Rescue**

Local high school students participating in the Northeast Florida Community Action Agency’s “Data Busters” program visited Flagler County Fire Rescue to learn about the department, and to learn how to properly use a fire extinguisher.

“I’m going to show you how to use these fire extinguishers and while I wouldn’t discourage you from putting out a small fire, you should really call 9-1-1,” Fire Marshal Joe King said on Friday. “We’d rather show up and have the fire out, leaving us nothing to do, than to have you wait until the fire is out of control before you call us.”

Fifteen students listened carefully to his instructions before heading outside to put their classroom knowledge into action.

There are five steps (PPASS) to using a fire extinguisher: “pull” the ring or pin that prevents accidentally pulling the trigger; “purge,” or test the extinguisher before walking up to the fire; “aim” starting low at the bottom of the fire; “squeeze” the trigger; and “sweep” the nozzle back and forth.

“You want to be 6 to 8 feet away,” King said. “Don’t corner yourself and back away from the fire; never turn your back on it. If the smoke is making you cough, the fire is definitely too big to try to put out by yourself.”

Patricia Cain, a family service specialist, and Donna Schwarz, her assistant, said the Data Busters program is offered through Daytona State College. During the six-week program, students have classes on Monday and Wednesday to learn the Microsoft Suite programs, including Excel and PowerPoint. The students work on Tuesdays and Thursdays, with some having jobs at the Flagler County Public Schools, Flagler County Senior Services and Career Source among other locations.

“They really get some good skills in this program,” Schwarz said.

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**FireFlight assists search for teens**

Flagler County’s FireFlight helicopter assisted the U.S. Coast Guard in the search for two teen boaters who went missing six days ago.

Helicopter pilot Dana Morris and flight medic, George Tolbert, searched 150 miles of the ocean off the Flagler County coastline and as far out as five nautical miles Wednesday morning without success locating Perry Cohen and Austin Stephanos.

“We had good visibility, and were able to identify dolphin, sea turtles and birds, so we feel we covered the area very well,” Morris said. “We had the doors open and a life raft. We were ready to assist them if we found them.”

The Coast Guard often asks for help searching for boats in distress or missing people.

“Flagler County is in an area where the Coast Guard has minimal resources,” said Flagler County Fire Rescue Chief Don Petito. “The Coast Guard’s air assets are in Savannah (Georgia) and Miami. Their water assets are in Jacksonville and Ponce Inlet. We’re right here.”

Morris contacted the Coast Guard Wednesday morning to offer assistance.

“I spoke with Senior Chief (Petty Officer Luis) Negron and told him I was willing to help,” Morris said. “I told him I had a tracking program that would allow me to show him where we searched.”

Morris and Tolbert searched the area for an hour and a half.

“I’ve been watching the news coverage and wanted to do what I can to help,” Morris said.

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Picking palmetto berries on Flagler County land is forbidden by ordinance.

“While some private property owners allow the harvesting of the berries with permission, please be advised that picking palmetto berries is not allowed on Flagler County owned or managed preserves and parks,” said Flagler County Land Management Coordinator Mike Lagasse.

In the past, palmetto berry harvesting has been problematic at Mala Compra Park, River-to-Sea Preserve and Varn Park in the northeastern Flagler County. Other areas of concern include Haw Creek Preserve, Princess Place Preserve, Shell Bluff and Betty Steflik Preserve.

“Palmetto berry harvesting activities reduce the amount of food available for wildlife and can create unwanted trails and debris on our public lands,” County Administrator Craig Coffey said.

If you see someone you suspect of harvesting palmetto berries on county-owned property, please report it to Lagasse at 386-313-4064.
Please join us at 9 a.m. August 4, 2015 for the groundbreaking event marking the beginning of the Old Kings Road Extension project.

Matanzas Woods Parkway will not yet be re-opened to through traffic, so please take Forest Grove Drive to Old Kings Road past Matanzas High School. Turn left onto Matanzas Woods Parkway and park near the blockade. The groundbreaking ceremony will be held here.

Flagler County Fire Chief Don Petito recently took possession of this 2015 Pierce “Enforcer.”

“This engine will be added to our fleet of state-of-the-art engines. It will help protect the lives and property within Flagler County,” he said. Though the engine number is currently 16, that will likely change to 92 and be staged at Station 92, the busiest in the county.

Flagler County receives ‘Distinguished Budget Presentation Award’

Flagler County is being praised for the sixth consecutive year for its annual budget presentation by the Government Finance Officers Association.

Flagler County’s 2014-2015 fiscal year budget was rated in four categories: as a policy document, as a financial plan; as an operations guide; and, as a communications device.

Lorie Bailey-Brown, Financial Services Director, has worked on award-winning budgets for the county going back to the first budget that received the award – the 2009-2010 budget under Tom Klinker, the former director of the department.

She and her staff – Tammy Patten, budget manager, and Kelly Freshcorn and Lauren Shank, both budget analysts – are in the midst of pulling together the 2015-2016 budget.

“Staff is mindful of the Government Finance Officers Association standards as they prepare the budget,” County Administrator Craig Coffey said. “There is some very detailed information the GFOA asks for, and they are looking for a document that is outstanding.”

Register for 2015 Fall Citizens Academy

Flagler County is now accepting applications for the Fall 2015 Citizens Academy. Classes will be held on Thursday evenings from 5 to 8 p.m. beginning Sept. 10 for nine weeks, ending Nov. 5. The program is free to all Flagler County residents and space is limited, so all interested residents are encouraged to apply now.

The Flagler County Citizens Academy is held twice annually to introduce residents to the operations and services performed by Flagler County government. Each weekly session features a presentation by different departments or branches of the county government, including the Board of County Commissioners, constitutional officers, and administrative departments.

The class includes a highly engaging and educational mock county commission meeting with participants taking on the roles of Commissioners, County Administrator, and as concerned citizens.

For more information, go to flaglercounty.org/academy.

Get your heart pumping - Get Moving!

Staff & Families
Flagler County - Health Department – Free Clinic
Take a step to increase physical activity!

Join Us
5K Fun Run/Walk
When: September 26, 2015
Start Time: 8:00 a.m.
Where: Lehigh Trail
(Belle Terre, east side entrance)
Tammy Patten returned to work in Flagler County this April and couldn’t be happier.

“I worked here from 2005 to 2008, and then took a job in Volusia County at the Daytona International Airport,” Tammy said. “I’m so glad to be back. This is home. The people here feel like family.”

Tammy had been a budget analyst and returned as budget manager. She had been finance manager at the airport.

There is “a great sense of community” both within the walls of the Government Services Building and Flagler County.

“I moved to Palm Coast from Hollywood (Florida) ten years ago,” Tammy said. “I could go to the Publix right around the corner from my house and not see a single person I knew. It’s not like that here.”

Additionally, Tammy’s mom lives here in Flagler County.

“And I just knew it would be a better place to raise my children,” she said.

Tammy has two daughters: Amanda, 23, and Erica, 20. Amanda is a recent graduate of Flagler College with a degree in graphic design. She’s already landed a job working in her field right here in the community.

“Erica is also going to Flagler College,” Tammy said. “Same major. My girls have quite a talent.”

Tammy has been married for a year to Ken Patten.

“Life is good,” Tammy said. “There’s no place like home.”

Nominate a Veteran of the Year

All veterans deserve high praise, but Flagler County is looking for nominations for Veteran of the Year.

The award will be presented to a living Flagler County veteran who has not only served his or her country with honor, but has used the leadership skills and abilities learned in the military to improve the Flagler County community through selfless volunteer service.

“There are a number of veterans who continue to serve their fellow veterans and the community, said Sal Rutigliano, Flagler County Veterans Services Officer. “They deserve to be recognized.”

Nominations will be accepted from Aug. 1 through Sept. 30.

The nominee must: be resident of Flagler County; be a living veteran of one of the five Armed Forces of the United States, including Reserve or National Guard, or a United States Merchant Marine; have demonstrated outstanding patriotism, leadership, and service as a veteran and a volunteer in the community or civic service; and, be awarded for a single act or for continuous service. Previous recipients of the award will not be considered.

Nominations must be postmarked no later than Sept. 30, and may not exceed three typewritten pages.

The nomination must include a resume of no more than two pages with a minimum font size of 11 points that includes: periods of military service and branch of one of the five Armed Services or USMM; military awards and decoration; membership in nationally recognized veteran’s organizations; membership in community or civic organizations; community or civic organization awards or special recognition; and, the nominees address, telephone number and email if available.

A one-page typewritten nomination statement, maximum 250 words, that describes why the individual being nominated should be selected as the Flagler County Veteran of the Year should be provided along with the resume. Proof of military services is also required through either a DD214 or verification by a nationally recognized veteran’s organization.

Mail nominations to: Flagler County Veteran’s Service Office, Attn: Veteran of the Year, 1769 E. Moody Blvd. – Building 2, Bunnell, FL 32110.