

The Florida Times-Union

A B C D
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PEPSI 400

STEWART EARNs THIS ONE

He cruised last year, needs help this time



SPORTS • C-1

Inside Duval's hip-hop scene



LIFESTYLE • E-1

What it was really like inside Club Paris

LAURA CAPITANO, MARK WOODS • B-1

By JOE LIGHT
The Times-Union

PANAMA CITY BEACH — Lee Sullivan knows change is inevitable.

The mayor of Panama City Beach speaks in a low baritone, steeped in an accent from his native Montana. He wears worn boots and a cowboy hat to the office and reminisces about a time when he could ride horses on the beach and was threatened more by hogs getting into trash cans than by speeding tourists.

That Panama City Beach is dead and gone. In its place is a seemingly endless stretch of hulking condominium towers with tens of thousands of units, a strong retail corridor with big-box stores and a county population that has already grown nearly 10 percent in the past five years, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.

Although the company doesn't own much oceanfront property, many locals look to The St. Joe Co. as the growth's catalyst.

"Our visions fit together well, but it's not easy," Sullivan says. "It behooves government to be just as businesslike as they are. If you don't have that, you're going to get consumed by the movement that is Joe."

Jacksonville-based St. Joe doesn't just influence Northwest Florida. The company has practically owned it for more than 70 years. The company's founder bought the land — which now amounts to about 835,000 acres — in some cases for dollars on the acre, back when St. Joe was mainly a timber company. But now St. Joe is a massive developer, and the wealth and new opportunities the company is bringing to the Panhandle are bumping up against the region's traditional

ST. JOE continues on A-7



Above: Panama City Beach Mayor Lee Sullivan has witnessed the city's transformation over the years from a quiet coastal town into a growing tourist city.

Right: A seemingly endless stretch of high-rise condominiums lines the coastline of Panama City Beach.

Photos by BOB SELF/The Times-Union

FADING FRONTIER

Once known as "Redneck Riviera," the Panhandle is now booming with development. And while the firm owns very little coastal property, many look to Jacksonville's St. Joe Co. as the growth's catalyst.



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Lee Sullivan, mayor of Panama City Beach

School Board, chief creating office suite

The cost of renovations will be recouped as the administration building is sold, members say.

By RACHEL DAVIS
The Times-Union

The Duval County public schools administration building is getting a bit of a makeover this summer, despite the School Board's and the administration's interest in abandoning the riverfront building in several years.

Contractors are renovating the Prudential Drive building's sixth-floor administrative suite, which will include new offices for the seven board members, the superintendent and his chief of staff. The 3,750-square-foot expansion also includes a reception area and conference room.

The \$365,000 project was requested by Superintendent Joseph Wise, who wanted to "improve communications and maximize the agility, efficiency and effectiveness" between the School Board and members of the superintendent's cabinet, according to Wise's 100-day plan.

School Board members justify the renovation project by saying they will recoup the cost of the renovations — and more — once they sell the building.

Board member Tommy Hazouri said he wants to sell the riverfront building, for local tax purposes, but is

OFFICE continues on A-6

Stark choices for future as Mexico votes

A divided nation decides today which direction to take — continued free trade or a new focus on helping the poor.

By ALFREDO CORCHADO
The Dallas Morning News

MEXICO CITY — Mexicans vote for a new president today faced with a choice between a conservative who stresses continued free-trade policies and economic competitiveness, and a leftist who wants to focus on helping the nation's lower classes.

The debate is roiling a country that some say hasn't been this divided since the 1910 Mexican Revolution. The results could also profoundly affect relations with the U.S., which shares a 2,000-mile border with Mexico and is its biggest trading partner.

More than 40 million of the country's 71 million registered voters are expected to participate in what most see as a showdown between left-leaning Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador of the Party of the Democratic Revolution, or PRD, and Felipe

MEXICO continues on A-6

Today

Weather

High 90 Chance of rain 55%

Afternoon thunderstorm
5-DAY FORECAST • A-2



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Surviving blackness

Black men quietly combat the stereotypes about being dangerous and aggressive.

INSIGHT • F-1



U.S. strategy in Somalia backfires

By trying to prop up unpopular warlords, the United States succeeded only in boosting anti-Americanism and hurting the war on terror, analysts say. WORLD • A-19

24/7

Club Paris

@ Find out what Laura Capitano and Mark Woods think about Club Paris.
PLUS: Videos, photo galleries and more. Keyword: Paris

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Monday

Rallying around the racetrack

It's a different kind of racing for Florida, one that is more popular in Europe: rally racing, and it's being taught near Keystone Heights. MONDAY IN FIRST BUSINESS