



Economic Development

Quarterly

An official publication of the Volusia County Economic Development Division



I-95 Interchange aesthetics to project warmer welcome.



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Welcome to Economic Development Quarterly

Welcome to Economic Development Quarterly, a publication brought to you by the Volusia County Economic Development Division. This publication is being produced for people who have an interest in the area's business, economic development and real estate market.

Our goal is to use this publication as an economic development tool, to keep you informed and to provide information and statistics that have meaning to your business. This publication is owned by Volusia County Government and is produced and sold by the Volusia/Flagler Business Report through contract. Content is solely the responsibility of the Volusia County Economic Development Division.

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The Economic Development Quarterly is produced and mailed quarterly to a minimum of 10,000 area businesses by the Volusia County Economic Development Division. It is offered free to readers, including real estate professionals, leaders of business, industry, education, government and selected organizations. If you are interested in receiving this publication, please contact the Volusia/Flagler Business Report at 386-681-2457.

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JetBlue service on the horizon for Daytona Beach



JetBlue Airways coming to Daytona Beach with service to New York. Daily service on A-320s like this one scheduled to start early next year

After years of discussions, overwhelming support from the Volusia County business community, and efforts by the Volusia County Council, and Daytona Beach International Airport officials, JetBlue Airways has announced new daily air service between New York City's John F. Kennedy International Airport (JFK) and Daytona Beach International Airport (DAB) beginning next February.

JetBlue's new daily air service will become the airport's only nonstop option between Daytona Beach and New York City.

"This is great news for this community and our airport," said Jim Dinneen, Volusia County Manager. "This is the result of the community support the County Council received to recruit JetBlue as an important new business partner at Daytona Beach International Airport. The new service will complement existing service offered by Delta Air Lines and American Airlines, which offer nonstop service to Atlanta and Charlotte."

The JetBlue recruiting effort has been focused and sustained over several years. This campaign was underscored by unprecedented community support that included a variety of incentives. Among them are a marketing program funded by Volusia County Government, the Halifax Area Advertising Authority, the Southeast

ABOUT JETBLUE AIRWAYS

JetBlue Airways is known as New York's Hometown Airline and is a leading carrier in Boston, Ft. Lauderdale/Hollywood, Los Angeles (Long Beach), Orlando and San Juan. JetBlue carries more than 32 million customers a year now serving 87 destinations in the United States, the Caribbean, and Latin America with an average of 825 daily flights. For more information visit jetblue.com.

Volusia Advertising Authority, and the West Volusia Tourism Advertising Authority. Daytona Beach International Airport waived rent for the first year of service and offered free baggage handling and ramp handling operations for a year. The Daytona Regional Chamber organized a travel bank which includes \$250,000 in pre-paid ticket purchases by 31 area companies, demonstrating strong support of the business community. These and other incentives have a value of \$2.3 million and made a big impression on JetBlue.

"We couldn't be more excited to launch yet another route that shows our deep commitment to Central Florida," said Scott Laurence, JetBlue's senior vice president of

airline planning. "We also have a long standing relationship with Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University and are pleased to give the academic community there a new option for travel."

The new service to Daytona Beach will create a direct link between JetBlue's main base of operations at New York City's JFK International Airport and Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, the world's largest, fully-accredited university specializing in aviation and aerospace. In 2007, JetBlue partnered with Embry-Riddle to launch the University Gateway Program that creates a career path within the airline for aspiring aviators.

"The new nonstop route will provide much needed service for our growing community and it will strengthen an already great relationship between Embry-Riddle and JetBlue," said Dr. John P. Johnson, the university's president.

JetBlue's new Daytona Beach flights will be operated with the 150-seat Airbus A320 aircraft. JetBlue's service includes comfortable seating, unlimited brand-name snacks, more than 100 channels of free SIRIUSXM radio programming, and 36 channels of free, live DIRECTV programming on personal seatback televisions, and ample leg room in the coach section.



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Interchange improvements coming to local interstates; highway widening will make merges easier, safer.

COVER STORY

I-95/U.S. 92 interchange makeover in Volusia County among many Central Florida major road projects

Transportation continues to be a major driver of the Central Florida economy. And in Volusia County, projects of direct or indirect impact have a profound effect on quality of life, safety, convenience and economic development. As an example, the northern end of a major project that will widen part of Interstate 95 includes improvements to the I-95/U.S. 92 interchange that will greatly enhance this port of entry to east Volusia County. The interchange is the aesthetic component of the larger project.

This Florida Department of Transportation project involves widening I-95 from four to six lanes from north of S.R. 44 to north of U.S. 92 (International Speedway Boulevard). The southern limit of the \$205 million, 1,100-day project will tie into the ongoing I-95 widening project to the south from south of S.R. 406 to north of S.R. 44.

"The major aspect of the project is the reconstruction of the system's interchange with

I-4, I-95 and US 92," said Bradley Bauknecht, a project manager for FDOT. "The work also includes pavement widening and resurfacing, drainage systems improvements, bridge widening and replacement, and Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) modifications -- pretty much everything you can think of. We already have begun milling and resurfacing, along with temporary outside shoulder widening on the southern end of the project."

Beyond the engineering and logistics of the ambitious project, a great deal of attention is being paid to aesthetics. "As a first impression of east Volusia County for many, it is important the interchange project a positive sense of place," said Patricia Northey, project manager for Ghyabi & Associates, a planning and engineering firm that is involved in this project and others throughout Florida. "To optimize the aesthetics of the interchange and consider myriad beautification techniques, a committee

including elected officials and other key stakeholders has been meeting to consider all options. Many are surprised to learn of the treatments that can enhance greatly an interchange, transforming it from an off-ramp to a welcome mat."

Working with a \$2 million budget for aesthetics, the committee is considering factors that include color and design of retaining walls, lighting and more. Water features and landscaping will be included, but are not part of the aesthetics plan and will be covered by a separate contract after the larger project is complete.

The major project in Daytona Beach is among many major projects in the area. I-4 is being widened from four lanes to six lanes from S.R. 44 in DeLand to I-95 in Daytona Beach. There are other major projects in Orlando that will affect Volusia County residents' travel throughout Central Florida.

I-4 Ultimate is a critically important project for Central Florida. The 21-mile, \$2.3 billion makeover (from west of Kirkman Road in Orange County to east of S.R. 434 in Seminole County) will transform the region while connecting communities, improving the economy and enhancing livability.

"The I-4 Ultimate will provide critical infrastructure that will enable us to continue to expand our business development, cultivate growth, and create jobs," said Florida House of Representatives Speaker Steve Crisafulli. "This is a big step forward for Central Florida."

There also are plans to widen I-4 beyond those limits, including to S.R. 472 in Volusia County. In addition to a portion of Volusia County, this includes improvements planned for I-4 in Seminole, Orange and Osceola counties, and into Polk County. For more information go online to: i4express.com or CFLRoads.com.

Strong turnout at job fairs attests to growing local economy

State and federal government labor statistics track the ebb and flow of employment levels. But the overwhelming response to recent job fairs is a convincing barometer of a local economy that is gaining strength. Employers want to hire, and workers want to work, which adds up to the creation of jobs. The outcome of that equation is the very purpose of economic development.

Job fairs are more than a forum for matching employers with workers. They foreshadow the future of local businesses. Given the number of positions being offered at recent job fairs, our tide is rising, and this bodes well for what lies ahead. In addition to offering a glimpse at what appears to be a more robust economy, the results of recent job fairs add credence to a recent Manpower Employment Outlook Survey that ranked our region among the nation's



Rob Ehrhardt,
Director, Volusia
County Economic
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Division

Beach. Of course, many applicants were residents seeking employment. But there also were many currently-employed individuals seeking greater responsibility to advance from

top 10 in hiring by local employers.

CareerSource Flagler | Volusia, the local organization focused on providing recruitment services and training opportunities to businesses and job seekers, assisted two human resources firms that are hiring for hundreds of positions at the new distribution center in Daytona

“underemployment” (jobs with responsibilities below workers’ skill levels and capabilities). According to Dr. Sean Snaith, director of the University of Central Florida Institute of Economic Competitiveness and a nationally recognized economist, underemployment in the U.S. remains a serious problem. But when a currently-employed job seeker can obtain a higher position, it leaves his or her current position open, resulting in an opportunity for another worker. This happened at recent job fairs.

The Daytona Beach News-Journal recently hosted its Spring Mega Job Fair that featured a wide variety of local employers from across the county. Additionally, the VMA, our local manufacturing alliance, partnered with Daytona State College in sponsoring a job fair at the Advanced Technology College. Separately, the

VMA hosted another event at the CareerSource office in Orange City. CareerSource offers assistance in resume writing and interviewing skills for applicants who many not have landed a job. These job fairs, and the organizations presenting them, reflect solidly upon the confidence of local businesses seeking growth.

Our economic development eco-system is purposeful in its efforts to influence and support growth strategies and assist in the creation of new jobs. Ultimately, it is decision making in the private sector that generates new employment opportunities for Volusia County residents. This collaboration among local businesses and community partners is critical in helping firms tap into the local talent pool as applicants take advantage of the confidence in today’s economy that local businesses clearly are projecting.

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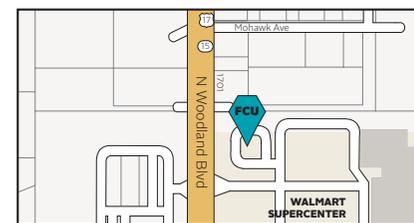
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Embry-Riddle, Daytona Beach Airport a great private/ public partnership

Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University (ERAU) and Daytona Beach International Airport (DBIA) share more than a common property boundary. On any given day, because of ERAU's flight programs, there are hundreds of flight activities going on at and around the airport making it one of the busiest air spaces in Florida. Embry-Riddle not only contributes to making DBIA one of the busiest airports in Florida, but also helps to make it one of the safest, given the fact that the university's safety record is better than 1/20th of the airline industry.

But, because DBIA and ERAU are collaborative partners, there is much more going on than just flight activity. Embry-Riddle is student-centric but also is heavily research-focused, and DBIA helps to support that mission by serving as a lens to focus part of this research. In a real sense, DBIA is a test bed for ERAU research as the airport and the university look for ways to meet many of the challenges facing aviation industries in our country.

For example, the FAA's Next Generation Air Transportation System initiative is tasked to allow more planes and passengers to operate safely and efficiently in the global air space by replacing the antiquated ground-based radar control with satellite-based GPS. This initiative depends to a great extent on the research being carried out at the Florida NextGen Test Bed at DBIA and operated by ERAU researchers.

Embry-Riddle is a leader in the development and application of autonomous and unmanned platforms for use in the air, on land and in the water. Since airport perimeter incursions are one of the highest security priorities in the U.S., it is not surprising that DBIA is serving as a test bed for an autonomous airport perimeter scanning vehicle developed by ERAU that is capable of detecting security breaches and the presence of foreign objects within the boundaries of the airport. This autonomous platform has been demonstrated to the



By Richard H. Heist, Ph.D.
Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost
Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University

Transportation Security Administration (TSA), and the plan is to test further at larger airports and, eventually, have this autonomous vehicle as part of an airport's security arsenal.

ERAU also is developing and testing an autonomous mower at DBIA that will allow unmanned mowing of airport grasses at night during reduced aircraft activity. Another significant advantage to using this platform is that fewer birds

are attracted to the mowing at night thus minimizing the hazards of bird strikes.

DBIA supports UAV research at the university by serving as the public entity for a certificate of authorization (CoA) that allows ERAU to fly unmanned and autonomous systems for university research safely and legally.

In addition to the educational, flight training and research collaborations between DBIA and ERAU, the airport is an opportunity for our student interns and as an employer for our graduates. All in all, the relation between DBIA and ERAU is a great example of a productive, collaborative public-private partnership serving the university, the airport, Volusia County, and Florida.

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Florida Health Care Plans has been recognized nationally among the nation's best Medicare Plans by *U.S. News & WORLD REPORT* (Source: *U.S. News & WORLD REPORT*, October 15, 2014). Locally, more than 55,000 Medicare, Commercial and Healthy Kids members trust their health to Florida Health Care Plans. Learn more by visiting FHCP.com or calling 1-855-Go2FHCP between 8:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m., seven days a week. Hearing impaired, call TRS Relay 711.



Florida Health Care Plans is an HMO plan with a Medicare Contract. Enrollment in Florida Health Care Plans depends on contract renewal. The benefit information provided is a brief summary, not a complete description of benefits. For more information contact the plan. Limitations, copayments, and work restrictions may apply. Benefits, formulary, pharmacy network, provider network, premium and/or co-payments/co-insurance may change on January 1 of each year. You must continue to pay your Medicare Part B premium.
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Regional aerospace alliance convenes in Daytona Beach as community's efforts intensify to cultivate high-tech jobs

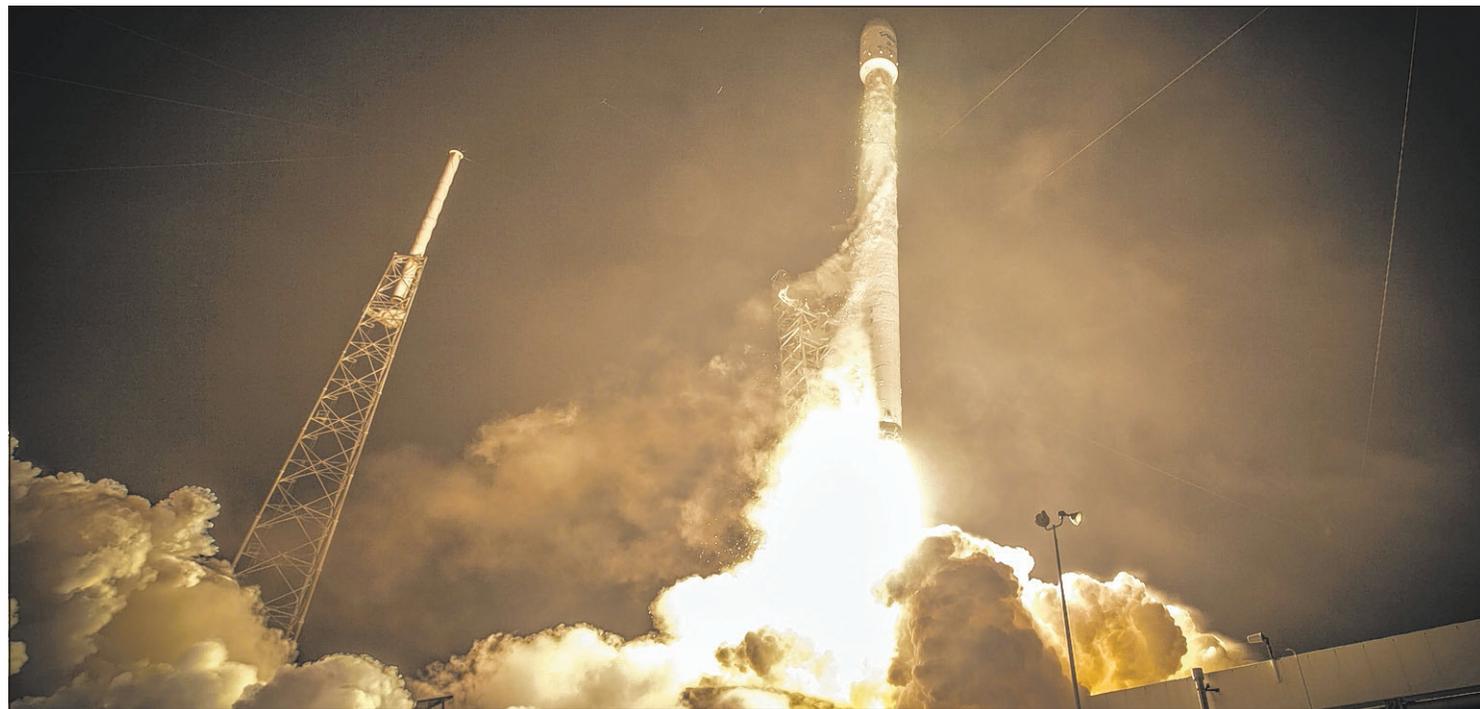


Photo: SPACEX

Embry-Riddle hosts Aerospace Alliance conference. Private ventures like the one pictured seen as huge area economic boon.

Many business and economic development leaders believe the greater Gulf Coast region of the United States has unlimited potential in the aerospace industry. Accordingly, the four-state Aerospace Alliance was formed to help the region achieve this potential. The organization's Spring Summit was held recently at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University in Daytona Beach. The summit attracted aerospace company officials and leaders in economic development.

"The Southeast is home to some of the world's most advanced manufacturing operations, aerospace installations, a number of key NASA facilities, and numerous military installations critical to the Department of Defense flight missions and training," said Melissa Medley, chief marketing officer and senior vice president of Enterprise Florida, the state's principal economic development organization. In addition, Florida, and the other three Alliance states, each have a significant presence of commercial aerospace companies and suppliers that include maintenance, repair and operations entities.

To capitalize on these unique abilities and assets, a group of business leaders, economic development professionals and government officials in the region came together six years ago to form the Aerospace Alliance, a private/public organization.

Members include Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana and Florida.

The Spring Summit at Embry-Riddle focused on preparing the workforce for the aerospace industry needs. Scott Thompson, PricewaterhouseCoopers Aerospace Division president, released the organization's updated state rankings for aerospace in his address to the group. Industry and aerospace company panels focused on workforce needs and impacts to the sector.

The featured keynote address was delivered by Jim Clifton, author of *The Coming Jobs*

War and president /CEO of Gallup Inc., a research-based global performance management company. Clifton said global competition for jobs is an undeniable fact that will affect all leadership decisions as countries compete to produce the best jobs.

"Leaders of countries and cities should focus on creating good jobs because as jobs go, so does the fate of nations," he said. "Jobs bring prosperity, peace, and human development; unemployment ruins lives, cities, and countries."

Clifton explained that creating good jobs is tough, and many leaders do many things wrong. For example, he said they undercut entrepreneurs instead of cultivating them; they run companies with depressed workforces; and they let the next generation of job creators rot in bad schools. He said with the coming of the global jobs war, there's no time to waste. Cities are crumbling for lack of good jobs. Nations are in revolt because their people can't get good jobs. The cities and countries that act first – that focus everything they have on creating good jobs – are the ones that will win.

Locally, efforts to elevate the workforce to meet the needs of tech-driven industries including aerospace have been on the upswing.

For example, area high schools have launched several embedded academies that focus on science, engineering, simulation and robotics, drafting and design, manufacturing technology and more.

VMA, Volusia County's 35-year-old manufacturing alliance, is attacking technical workforce issues on all fronts. "Our efforts are very intense when it comes to supporting science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) programs at our elementary, middle and high schools, Daytona State College (DSC) and Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University," said Jayne Fifer, VMA's president and CEO. "For example, we just bought a 3-D printer and scanner for the public school in Edgewater. We are helping to revitalize the manufacturing academy at Mainland High School. We make available speakers for our schools. We include students on our plant tours. We even offered a unique project for our students in cooperation with Teledyne Oil & Gas in which students participated in the project beside Teledyne personnel on a real-time basis. There really is no end to our support of developing our technology workforce."

Last year, the Daytona State College trustees

hosted a workforce summit attended by leaders representing a diverse array of area businesses. According to Dr. Mary Bruno, College of Workforce and Continuing Education associate vice president, the college is working in collaboration with Volusia and Flagler county schools and has identified career paths from high school to DSC that grant advanced credit for high school students. These paths include computer science and engineering. DSC also began a fast-track training program with a focus on advanced manufacturing. Additionally, DSC has established a Workforce Trends Advisory Board to help identify training program needs ahead of the curve, making the college more responsive to the market as advanced training needs become evident. DSC's Advanced Technology Center provides technological training that meets the current and future needs of area industries. The facility includes occupational classrooms and labs with state-of-the-art equipment and smart classrooms designed for each specific program.

Collectively, the community's commitment to advancing programs that support a technologically skilled workforce is constantly evolving with the goal to increase the presence of aerospace and related industries in the region.



Volusia Hispanic chamber part of trade mission to Peru

Volusia Hispanic Chamber makes inroads in Peru

The Volusia Hispanic Chamber of Commerce (VHCC) recently seized the opportunity to develop commercial relationships in Peru by participating in an export development trade mission organized by Enterprise Florida, the state's economic development organization.

Carlos Valderrama, the chamber's chairman, and Nestor Collado, the chamber's international affairs director, made the trip to Lima and were active participants among the delegation of approximately 90 Floridians.

"There was strong representation from South Florida, of course," said Valderrama. "But thanks to some key appointments, we were able to garner attention for Central Florida and initiate what we think will become some productive relationships."

The Florida Chamber of Commerce and the United States Department of Commerce were well represented and added to the impact of the delegation. Bill Johnson, Florida Secretary of Commerce and CEO of Enterprise Florida, led the Florida delegation, which included Richard Bitter, Florida Department of Transportation Assistant Secretary for Intermodal Systems Development. Lieutenant Governor Carlos Lopez-Cantera also participated and was instrumental in presenting in Spanish to attendees.

The United States ambassador to Peru hosted a reception at the embassy and the room was filled with people eager to export products to the United States. That opened the door to conversations about Americans who want to export goods and services to Peru.

One entity with particular interest in American services and systems is Universidad San Ignacio de Loyola. Other Peruvian entities demonstrated high levels of interest in American transportation infrastructure, mining equipment and more. This fueled dialogue among participants whose meetings were booked back-to-back-to-back during the intense three-day mission. Underscoring the potential for import/export

activity is the fact that LAN, the official airline of Peru, just announced direct, nonstop service between Orlando International Airport and Lima.

"This will support commercial activity and will have a positive effect on tourism, which is good for our chamber and other chambers and convention and visitors bureaus throughout Central Florida," Valderrama said. "This is very much in keeping with the mission of the Volusia Hispanic Chamber of Commerce."

The Volusia Hispanic Chamber of Commerce serves as a bridge between the Hispanic and non-Hispanic community by facilitating business, social, educational and governmental relationships. VHCC offers technical consulting, resources, networking and education programs designed to provide growth and opportunities to members while contributing to the economic vitality of Volusia County.

"If you look at the products that are in demand in Peru, they are all sectors in which Florida specializes," said Manny Mencia, Enterprise Florida's senior vice president of international trade and development. Peru is Florida's eighth largest trading partner with more than \$2.8 billion in Florida products exported to Peru last year. In 2013, Peru achieved its 15th consecutive year of economic growth at 5 percent and Peru continues to be one of the best performing economies in Latin America. Projections include a 5 percent growth rate in 2015.

Recognizing the vast potential to expand Florida trade within this market, Enterprise Florida led the export development mission to Peru as part of its strategy to market Florida exports in Latin America. This mission provides Florida companies with the opportunity to expand their business and build new relationships.

"New relationships are the cornerstone of potential commercial activity between Central Florida and Peru and this trade mission has cultivated many such relationships," said Valderrama.



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News and notes from recent editions of **On the Economic Scene**, the Monday morning newsletter of Volusia County Economic Development

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On the Economic Scene is Volusia County Economic Development's popular newsletter that is faxed every Monday and then posted on-line. The one-page communication features timely briefs on economic development-related subjects. The newsletter reaches more than 2,000 people every week. If you would like to receive it, contact Volusia County Economic Development at 386-248-8048. Here are a few briefs that appeared in recent editions. If you have news you would like to share, please send it to Dave Byron, Volusia County Community Services Department director, 123 W. Indiana Ave., DeLand, FL 32720-4612, or by e-mail at: dbyron@volusia.org.

ACADEMY FOCUS IS EARTH SCIENCES — The Horticultural, Environmental and Marine Science Academy offered by Volusia public schools is focused on Florida's environment and prepares students for careers in horticultural and environmental services. Students are involved in projects such as water quality testing, marine life sampling, wildlife gardening, invasive species eradication and mosquito control monitoring. For information email James Clements, academy director, at jrclemen@volusia.k12.fl.us.

NEW, IMPROVED INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY TOOL — A new and improved intellectual property tool developed by BusinessUSA, in cooperation with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, is an easy guide through the steps to protect an invention or intellectual property. Go to: business.usa.gov/patent-trademark-office.

DISCOVER GLOBAL MARKETS: THE AMERICAS — Discover Global Markets: The Americas is the premier international business conference that offers country-specific and industry-specific information/opportunities, scheduled meetings with representatives of 14 countries, keynote speakers, and networking. For information call Leigh Shapleigh at Volusia County Economic Development at 386-248-8048 or email Lshapleigh@volusia.org.

VOLUSIA SCHOOLS OFFER CAREER ACADEMIES — A career academy is a school within a school that offers programs focused on broad career themes. There are more than 30 career academies in Volusia County high schools. These academies integrate classroom instruction with work-based learning, field studies, job shadowing, and internships to equip students with the skills for work and secondary education. For information go to: career-connection.org.

GRANTS AVAILABLE FOR MEDICAL FAIR THAILAND — Medical Fair Thailand 2015 is an opportunity to showcase products, solutions and services for this region's flourishing medical and health care industry. The event is September 10 - 12 in Bangkok. Reimbursable grants are available from Enterprise Florida to Florida companies. For information email Leigh Shapleigh at Volusia County Economic Development at Lshapleigh@volusia.org or call 386-248-8048.

BOOMERS BECOMING ENCORE ENTREPRENEURS — Gallup reports that many Baby Boomers, people born from 1946-1964 in the U.S., are looking for what the Small Business Administration describes as an "encore" career. These Boomers are choosing to start a business because it allows them to be independent, pursue their interests, or increase their income. For information go to: tinyurl.com/ovy84f3.

U.S. COMMERCIAL SERVICE VIDEOS FOCUS ON AGRIBUSINESS EXPORTING — Six upcoming videos target U.S. companies in agribusiness. Topics include gathering international market intelligence; finding and managing international partners; export readiness; networking; exporting from rural areas, and managing the most of trade shows. For information go to: export.gov/industry/agribusiness/eg_main_076698.asp.

M3T TEAM READY TO PROVIDE EXPORT HELP — The U.S. Commercial Service's Machinery, Materials & Technology (M3T) Team is a service for U.S. manufacturers who want to export. The M3T Team's in-depth industry experts provide up-to-date export assistance and value-added services for the export of industrial machinery and materials in the chemicals, plastics, composites, paper/pulp, material handling, metal working and machine tools sectors. For information, call Leigh Shapleigh at Volusia County Economic Development at 386-248-8048 or email Lshapleigh@volusia.org.

TAXWATCH: FLORIDA ECONOMY TO OUTPACE NATION IN 2015 — Florida TaxWatch, the state's nonpartisan, nonprofit public policy research institute and government watchdog, expects another year of economic growth and recovery, according to the 2015 Economic Preview. The independent analysis reports that Florida's economy will grow faster than the nation and employment again is expected to outpace the nation. For information, go online to: floridataxwatch.org.

ENTERPRISE FLORIDA HIGHLIGHTS HIGH WAGE MANUFACTURING — EnterpriseFlorida.com has listed the average wage levels of Florida's top 20 manufacturing industry segments. Topping the list is the communications equipment segment with an average wage of \$92,067. For the list go to: enterpriseflorida.com/industries/manufacturing/.

THE INTERNET OF THINGS (IOT) — From smart phones to smart homes to smart industries, the global economy is responding to intense demands for people and things to be connected anytime, anywhere, with anything. Internet-enabled devices such as personal computers, cell phones and other smart devices no longer are counted in millions but in billions. Twenty-first century machine-to-machine communication is a growing reality in the world of commerce as machines not only do things but also perceive and respond. As computers connect to objects, international researchers continue to work on the Internet of Things (IoT) addressing hardware, software, sensor networks, protocols and languages. For a glimpse of the international activity on global standards go to: itu.int/en/ITU-T/gsi/iot/Pages/default.aspx.

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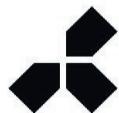


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Military veterans presence significant in Volusia County, throughout Florida



Gov. Rick Scott addresses deploying troops at Daytona Beach International Airport. Active, former military service members make huge local economic impact.

A recent event at Daytona Beach International Airport reminded the community of the many residents who have served in the U.S. armed forces. In March, a sendoff of 191 Florida National Guard troops was attended by more than 400 people including Governor Scott and other dignitaries, all of whom expressed their gratitude to the men and women being deployed and offered best wishes for a safe return.

Those being deployed are from battalions in Palatka, Flagler/Palm Coast and DeLand. They will be deployed to Afghanistan after training at Ft. Hood, Texas, and Ft. Sill, Oklahoma. Their work involves air defense support of Operation Freedom's Sentinel during their up to 12 months of deployment. The operation includes working with allies and partners on the Resolute Support mission and ongoing counterterrorism efforts. Resolute Support was launched this year to provide further training, advice and assistance for Afghan security forces and institutions.

Among those being deployed are five employees of Volusia County Government, including Army National Guard Specialist 4th Class Ashley Northway. "The county has been great," she said. "We got a nice sendoff with lots of laughs, a few tears, and plenty of requests for information on how to send us things during our deployment."

Northway and her fellow servicemen and

servicewomen join a formidable population of Volusia County residents who have served in the military. In fact, the population of veterans in Volusia County is estimated at more than 54,000, or 10 percent of the county's population.

"Veterans are an important segment of our population," said Volusia County Chair Jason Davis, a veteran of the United States Army. "We are honored to have so many who served our country living in Volusia County. And those who are part of our workforce or are engaged in community volunteer work bring critical skills to their tasks and strengthen our economy through their expertise."

The local veteran population is served by Volusia County's Veteran's Services Division. The division assists veterans and their dependents in preparing claims for compensation, hospitalization, vocational training and other benefits and privileges to which they are entitled. More than \$176 million is distributed to local veterans each year.

Volusia County veterans are among 1.5 million vets in Florida, which is the nation's most veteran-friendly state. In fact the Governor's Veterans Service Award has been established to honor Florida residents serving honorably as members of the U.S. Armed Forces, the U.S. Coast Guard, or the U.S. Reserve Forces or Florida residents who have been honorably discharged or who are retired from active duty.

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Left to right: Hollis Inglett, JR., Ryan Scott, Barbara Bohan, Richard Brown, Hollis Inglett, III

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News-Journal/**JIM TILLER**

Construction on the new Cheddar's Casual Cafe in the parking lot of Volusia Mall in Daytona Beach got started in the first quarter of this year. Daytona Beach issued a \$2 million permit for the restaurant.



News-Journal/**BOB KOSLOW**

Workers for DeLand-based Universal Construction of Florida pick out roof rafters for a new model home built by America's Dream Place in the Briargate section of the Hunter's Ridge in Ormond Beach.

Permit activity slips in the first quarter, but optimism not dimmed

While residential and commercial construction permit activity dipped in Volusia County in the first quarter of the year compared to the period in 2014, economic development officials remain optimistic about the overall improvement in area's construction activity over the past several years.

"If there is anything that generates optimism it's that activity breeds activity," said Rob Ehrhardt, Volusia County's economic development director. "We are three months closer to almost \$30 million in new permits for five or more announced commercial projects with estimated completion dates in 2015. In addition, as the Daytona Rising project drives toward the finish line, we are hopeful some of the larger announced commercial projects will begin the permitting process to create opportunities for construction workers to remain in our community."

RESIDENTIAL

Through the first three months of the year,

there were 265 residential permits issued across Volusia County, according to the data compiled by the county's Economic Development Division. That's down almost 24 percent from the 348 residential construction permits issued in the same period for 2014. But the number of residential permits during the first quarter is the second highest first quarter data in seven years and higher than the 259 permits issued in the fourth quarter of last year.

For four consecutive quarters now, the number of residential permits has fallen below 300, which was preceded by four quarters of permit levels above 300. Permits typically are two to three months behind the signing of sales contracts.

The total value of residential permits in the first quarter this year was \$81 million, down from \$107 million a year ago. The average permit value was \$305,660, down slightly from \$307,471.

Sandy Burke Bishop, executive director of the Volusia Building Industry Association, said demand for new homes remains strong, but the dip in the number of permits issued partially is

the result of a shortage of ready and buildable home lots.

"I have builders calling me weekly to see where there are ready lots," she said. "The smaller local builders are not in control of their own destiny because the bigger national companies bought up the older subdivisions and there aren't enough lots."

Jim Mather, vice president of Paytas Homes in Port Orange, agreed. He said a shortage of lots is the key holdup to higher residential permit numbers. He said his company is fortunate to have land ready to develop additional phases of existing subdivisions and also bought land it's developing in the Venetian Bay community in New Smyrna Beach.

"If a builder did not have land locked up a year ago, they could be struggling now," said Mather, who also serves this year as president of the builder's association. "There are projects to bring more lots on line, but those will take some time. The surplus of lots we had four or five years ago is pretty well chewed up."

There are new subdivision and community expansion projects ongoing in New Smyrna

Beach, Port Orange and DeLand, some of the areas with the highest permit numbers. The unincorporated area of Volusia County ranked first during the first quarter in the number of residential permits with 52 issued at a value of almost \$17 million. New Smyrna Beach was second with 53 permits valued at more than \$15.6 million, followed by DeLand with 47 permits valued at more than \$14.2 million.

Mather also said a continued shortage of qualified and experienced construction workers also is restricting some builders from doing more work if they had the lots.

Bishop also pointed out that many people who would like to build a home are having difficulty qualifying for a mortgage. As a result, many homes are being bought with cash, but cash purchases are difficult for first-time homebuyers who do not have sufficient savings required for a substantial down payment to help qualify for a loan.

"The real estate community is optimistic based, in part, on our strong value proposition for retiring baby boomers in northern climates who are tiring of prolonged winters and higher

costs of living," Ehrhardt said.

COMMERCIAL

There were 26 commercial construction permits issued in the first quarter across Volusia County with an estimated construction value of almost \$50 million. The number of issued permits is down from 34 issued in the same period last year that had a value of \$216 million. But this included a \$152 million permit for the \$400 million Daytona International Speedway's makeover project called Daytona Rising. This single permit skewed last year's

quarterly data. "It's difficult to find trends in commercial data that fluctuates more than residential numbers," Ehrhardt said.

Daytona Beach led all the cities with the issue of seven commercial construction permits with an estimated value of almost \$28.5 million. This included two permits for Bethune-Cookman University to build student housing along Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune Boulevard. Those permits were valued at \$11 million and \$9 million.

Other permits included almost \$5 million for Daytona Toyota to build a body shop/service center and used car showroom at W. International Speedway Boulevard and Nova

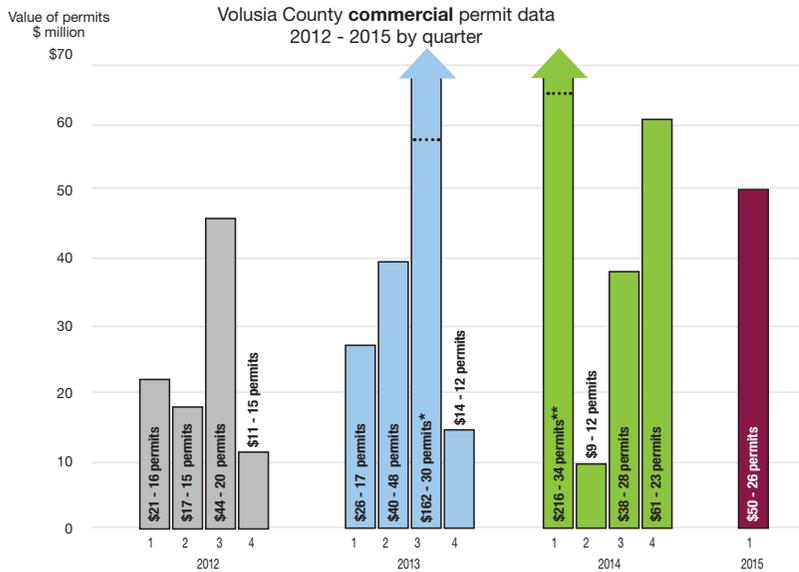
Road; \$2 million for a Cheddar's restaurant at the Volusia Mall, and \$1 million for a truck wash/maintenance facility at the distribution center being built for the Trader Joe's grocery chain at LPGA Boulevard and Interstate 95.

DeLand issued six commercial permits valued at \$8 million. Those included four permits valued at \$2 million for a 16-unit apartment complex and a \$3.3 million permit for a residence center at the Brookdale DeLand assisted living center.

Port Orange also issued six new commercial construction permits in the first quarter with an estimated value of \$5.6 million. The permits include one for nearly \$3 million for a Goodwill Industries retail store along Dunlawton Avenue

at Yorktowne Boulevard.

Among the projects Ehrhardt expects to see permitted this year include the Energizing Holding plan to expand its Playtex manufacturing plant in Ormond Beach that could add 21 jobs; Wal-Mart having Neighborhood Markets built in Deltona, DeBary, DeLand and Port Orange; Skyo Industries renovating the former StyleMark sunglass distribution facility at the Ormond Beach Airport Business Park; and Tailwinds Development continuing to build the Country Club Corners commercial center in DeLand at U.S. 17-92 and Orange Camp Road.

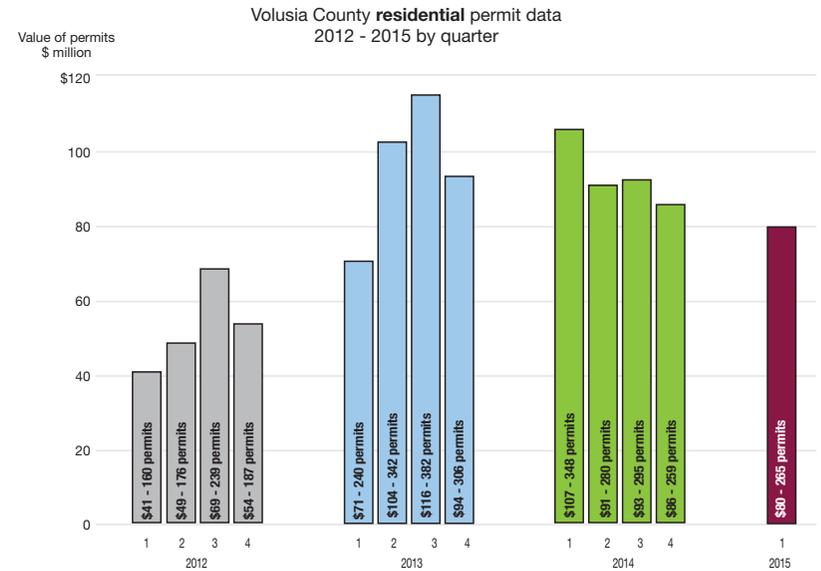


Source: Cities and county permit offices reporting new construction activity.

* Q3 2013 includes single \$105m permit for Daytona International Speedway.

** Q1 2014 includes single \$152m permit for Daytona International Speedway.

Note: Dotted lines represent permit total excluding single permit for Daytona International Speedway.



Source: Cities and county permit offices reporting new construction activity.

Commercial building permits issued in Volusia County first quarter 2015

Ranked by total value of projects

Area	January permits	February permits	March permits	Total # permits	Total Value
Daytona Beach	3	3	1	7	\$ 28,442,035
DeLand	1	4	1	6	\$ 8,029,249
Port Orange	2	3	1	6	\$ 5,619,647
New Smyrna Beach	2	0	0	2	\$ 4,650,000
DeBary	1	1	0	2	\$ 1,343,704
Orange City	0	1	0	1	\$ 912,433
Ormond Beach	1	0	1	2	\$ 758,695
Daytona Beach Shores	0	0	0	0	-
Deltona	0	0	0	0	-
Edgewater	0	0	0	0	-
Holly Hill	0	0	0	0	-
Lake Helen	0	0	0	0	-
Oak Hill	0	0	0	0	-
Pierson	0	0	0	0	-
Ponce Inlet	0	0	0	0	-
South Daytona	0	0	0	0	-
Unincorporated	0	0	0	0	-
Total	10	12	4	26	\$49,755,763

Source: Cities and county permit offices reporting new construction activity.

Residential building permits issued in Volusia County first quarter 2015

Ranked by total value of projects

Area	January permits	February permits	March permits	Total # permits	Total Value
Unincorporated	27	12	13	52	\$ 16,981,135
New Smyrna Beach	12	16	25	53	\$ 15,623,095
DeLand	22	13	12	47	\$ 14,273,745
Ormond Beach	7	12	9	28	\$ 8,902,536
Daytona Beach	4	3	22	29	\$ 6,673,746
Port Orange	7	3	10	20	\$ 6,516,639
DeBary	4	9	1	14	\$ 4,809,500
Ponce Inlet	1	0	3	4	\$ 3,017,371
Deltona	0	4	2	6	\$ 1,799,074
Edgewater	1	5	3	9	\$ 1,447,639
Oak Hill	0	0	3	3	\$ 415,630
Daytona Beach Shores	0	0	0	0	-
Holly Hill	0	0	0	0	-
Lake Helen	0	0	0	0	-
Orange City	0	0	0	0	-
Pierson	0	0	0	0	-
South Daytona	0	0	0	0	-
Total	85	77	103	265	\$ 80,460,110

Source: Cities and county permit offices reporting new construction activity.



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The Volusia County Economic Development Division is a free resource available to businesses in Volusia County needing assistance with business planning in the areas of:

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- financing/loan opportunities,
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- supply chain issues.

The division specializes in assisting manufacturing and knowledge-based companies with high growth potential

who require capital investment (i.e. corporate headquarters, research and development facilities, etc.) and are in targeted industries such as aviation and aerospace, clean tech, financial/professional services, homeland security/defense, infotech and life sciences.

The division is a partner with Volusia County's cities and chambers of commerce to promote the growth of new jobs in their communities.

Call our office or visit our web site at **floridabusiness.org** for detailed information about available services.



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Volusia County Division Economic Development Division, 700 Catalina Drive, Suite 200, Daytona Beach, FL 32114