



06/14/2006

Stories

Business

Articles
Leads/Notices
Classifieds

Legal

Legal Links
Legal Dictionary

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Online
Classified
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Products/Services

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Buy Directories
Corporate Kits
Article Reprints
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06/06/2006

City Notes



When attorney Hank Coxe is sworn in as the next Florida Bar Association president in about three weeks, he'll become the ninth Jacksonville-area attorney to hold the position. On a nationwide-scale, only one Jacksonville-area attorney has been president of the American Bar Association — Scott M. Loftin from 1934-35.

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Search To Date
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- The line-up for this year's Florida Forum speakers is set. Former Georgia Sen. and Gov. Zell Miller will be here Oct. 17. Washington Post assistant managing editor Bob Woodward (think Watergate) is here Nov. 16. On Jan. 16, "Meet The Press" host Tim Russert is in town and the forum will wrap up with long-time "Today" host Katie Couric on Feb. 17. By then, Couric will be the anchor and managing editor of "CBS Evening News." This is the 15th season of the forum and it's sponsored by the Women's Board of Wolfson Children's Hospital.
- The dog track's move Downtown hasn't been a pleasant one as a virus has hit some of the participating kennels. Two races were cancelled Monday night due to "scratches" — the term for a dog being withdrawn from the race — and it's possible that some programs this week will either be shortened or called off.
- The "Phantom of the Opera" is gone. Last show was Sunday and the production is on the way to St. Louis where it will open Wednesday.
- It won't come as a surprise to Downtown walkers that 1 in 5 drivers don't know that pedestrians are supposed to have the right of way in a crosswalk. That's one of the findings of a nationwide survey conducted by GMAC Insurance. The same survey reported that 1 in 3 drivers usually don't yield to pedestrians, even at a crosswalk or yellow light. One third of the drivers admitted that they speed up to make a yellow light even if pedestrians are in the crosswalk. Still, Florida pedestrians have it better than those in the Northeast. Florida drivers ranked as the 10th worst in the country, better than just about every state in New England.
- Council member Reggie Fullwood said in Monday's Finance Committee meeting that the mayor's office is looking to trim 300 positions from its payroll in preparation for another tough budget next year. Fullwood pointed out that the number doesn't necessarily mean layoffs, since a lot of those positions are likely vacant.
- Habitat for Humanity kicked off its biggest home-building campaign to date on Monday. The Home Builders Blitz 2006 aims to build 400 homes in 130 communities throughout the nation within one week. The homes are built with volunteer labor and donations, including the future homeowner's volunteer hours of "sweat equity." The houses are sold at no profit to low-income families and financed by loans.
- Nice little check. According to the latest Florida Trend, Fidelity National Financial Chief Financial Officer Alan Stinson recently exercised stock options to buy almost 200,000 shares of Fidelity stock. Stinson then sold them and pocketed more than \$5 million.
- Speaking of Florida Trend, this month's list is of the state's top 150 public companies. Tech Data Corp. in Clearwater tops the list with over \$20 billion in revenue last year. The top local company is Winn-Dixie, which ranks No. 7 (three spots below 2004) with reported revenue of almost \$10 billion. Also on the list in the top 25 locally are CSX Corp. (No. 10) and Landstar System Inc. (No. 23).
- The Sulzbacher Center needs your old running shoes and is pairing with 1st Place Sports in an effort to collect shoes for the Center's 300 guests that include men, women and children. Take your "slightly worn" shoes to any of the 1st Place Sports — Baymeadows Road in Jacksonville, Wells Road in Orange Park and Third Street in Jacksonville Beach.
- Four Duval County high schoolers recently graduated with 13 years of perfect attendance. Melissa Hewiett (Douglas Anderson School of the Arts), Tiffany Fason (Fletcher), Heather Dodds (Lee) and Jamal Smith (Paxon School for Advanced Studies) will all be recognized at tonight's Duval County School Board meeting.
- Couple of national awards for Digital Video Arts for work they did on a video tribute to the emergency team at Blue Cross Blue Shield. The company recently found out it's getting a Gold Videographer Award and an Award of Excellence from the Aster Awards.
- This Wednesday's Downtown Art Walk will have some Latin flavor. "Camina Del Arte! A Latin Celebration" will feature spoken word poets, a Flamenco guitarist, dance exhibitions, a short film called "Latino in the City" and, of course, Latin art. For more info, pick up a map around Downtown or visit www.downtownjacksonville.org.
- The best way to meet the CEO/president of a Florida bank is not in Florida but this year, it's in Colorado Springs, Colo. The Florida Bankers Association Convention is at The Broadmoor in Colorado Springs, a five-star hotel at the base of the mountains that includes a golf course and spa. The convention runs through Wednesday and is sponsored by 43 big name companies such as Compass Bank, Financial Insurance Brokers Inc. and Zurich North America, each with up to a \$4,999 donation or more. Last year, the convention was in Puerto Rico.

- Big retirement bash planned for BellSouth's Jim McCollum. It's next Wednesday at the Ch. 7 offices from 5:30-7 p.m.
- Our local Salvation Army is losing its leadership team. Majors James and Karol Seiler are being reassigned to Atlanta. There's a going away bash planned for June 21 at the Salvation Army Senior Center on East Church. No word on who will take over for the Seilers.
- Steve Nichols may have retired as the Dockmaster from the City of Jacksonville, but he's still involved with St. Johns River issues. City Council President Kevin Hyde is sponsoring a bill that would appoint Nichols to the Waterways Commission.
- The State Attorney's Office has established office hours at the beach. A branch is open every Wednesday from 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. inside City Hall in Jacksonville Beach.

[Back To Home Page](#)

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