



STATE | A3

### VIGIL HELD FOR BRIDGE COLLAPSE VICTIMS



SPORTS | B1

### FSU HOPES DEPTH CAN WEAR DOWN GONZAGA



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Thursday, March 22, 2018

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# Pot dispensaries ban proceeds

**Next step is Planning and Zoning Agency on April 5**

By Jake Martin  
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St. Johns County commissioners on Tuesday voted unanimously to move forward with a ban on medical

marijuana treatment center dispensing facilities in the unincorporated parts of the county.

The county's Planning and Zoning Agency will hear the ordinance to establish the ban at its April 5 meeting. There will be a second, final hearing before the commission on April 17.

Dispensaries are the retail component of the treatment centers, similar to pharmacies. The county is currently under a temporary moratorium on dispensaries, enacted in March 2017 and expiring at the end of the month.

The ban would prohibit dispensaries in all county zoning districts but would not

prohibit cultivation and processing facilities. It also does not prohibit at-home delivery by state-licensed treatment centers.

#### Lobbyist regulations

Commissioners also heard an overview of lobbying regulations from around the

state as well as some possible options for establishing a local lobbying ordinance.

State law provides for the registration of lobbyists who lobby the legislature, executive agencies, the Constitutional Revision Commission and water management districts.

See BAN, A4

# Building character



Boys from county elementary schools compete in a sack race during the St. Johns County School District's annual Character Cup, an Olympic-style competition held at St. Augustine High School on Thursday. [PETER WILLOTT/THE RECORD]

**The Players donates \$500,000 to St. Johns County Schools for Character Cup**

By Colleen Michele Jones  
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The Players Championship announced Wednesday the organization would commit \$500,000 over the next five

years to character development programs in the St. Johns County Schools District.

The news was delivered at the district's annual Character Cup, an Olympic-style competition that celebrates excellence in athletics in building positive qualities in students. Beginning next year, the

event will be called The Players Character Cup.

The Ponte Vedra Beach-based golf tournament organization will underwrite other costs associated with Character Counts. The district's four signature events programs cost the district a total of \$55,000 annually, some of which is offset by business sponsorships.

Jared Rice, executive director of The Players, said the goals of St. Johns County's character development program tied in with the brand of the golf tournament, including healthy living. Rice's children attend Ocean Palms Elementary School in St. Johns County.

See PLAYERS, A4

NATION | A8

### TRUMP-PUTIN CALL LEAK LEADS TO AN UPROAR

## Tourism numbers hit high in 2017

**An estimated 116.5 million visited state to set single-year record**

By Stuart Korfhage  
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Rising tourism numbers throughout the state provided a boost to St. Johns County last year despite the effects of a hurricane for the second straight year.

Hurricane Irma most likely kept Florida from reaching a goal of 120 million visitors last year, but it didn't stop the state from hitting a new single-year tourism high, according to numbers released Tuesday by Gov. Rick Scott.

Florida drew an estimated 116.5 million visitors in 2017, up 3.6 percent from the previous high of 112.4 million in 2016.

With St. Augustine, the beaches and Ponte Vedra Beach gaining in popularity, it could be assumed that this area will draw its share of tourists regardless of statewide trends.

But Richard Goldman, president and CEO of the county visitors and convention bureau, said that would be a mistake. He said St. Johns County draws lots of visitors who have other primary destinations.

In other words, crowds at Disney World, Universal

See TOURISM, A4

# Work begins for new county fire station

By Jared Keever  
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Crews have begun work on a U.S. 1 lot that will soon be the home of a new fire station for St. Johns County Fire Rescue.

Spokesman Capt. Jeremy Robshaw said the land clearing at 3370 U.S. 1 South began about three or four weeks ago. The project, which will also be home to a St. Johns County Sheriff's Office southern regional command center, is

expected to be complete in the spring of 2019.

"I think we are looking at approximately a year right now," Robshaw said Wednesday.

County commissioners voted unanimously in December to award a bid to DiMare Construction Company to build the 22,940-square-foot, four-bay station that will replace

See STATION, A4



Work continues on a parcel on land on U.S. 1, south of St. Augustine, that will be the site of a St. Johns County Fire Station and the St. Johns County Sheriff's Office South Regional Command Center on Wednesday. [PETER WILLOTT/THE RECORD]

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TODAY  
Sunny; cool  
64° / 43°

FRIDAY  
Partly sunny  
65° / 48°

SATURDAY  
Mostly sunny  
74° / 55°

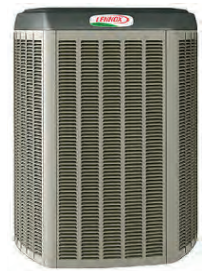


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