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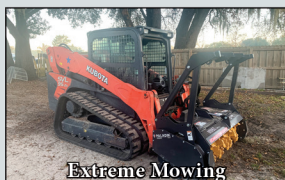
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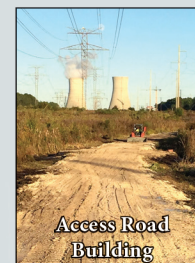
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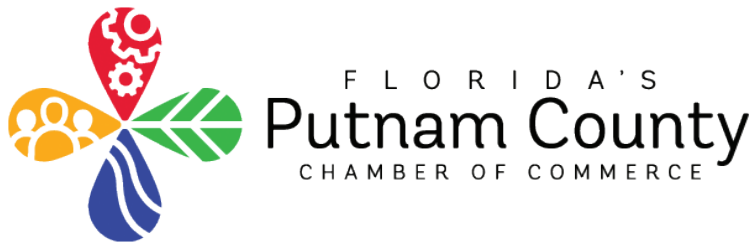
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Florida Landscape Doctor with Keith Valentine



Putnam County WELCOME

Chamber of Commerce President Laura Pavlus welcomes everyone to Putnam County!

Welcome to Putnam County, a hidden gem nestled in the heart of the Sunshine State. As the President of the Putnam County Chamber of Commerce, I am thrilled to share the unique blend of history, natural beauty and economic potential that makes our county a truly special place to live, work, and visit.

Putnam County proudly holds the title of the "Bass Capital of the World." Our pristine lakes and rivers provide some of the best bass fishing opportunities, attracting anglers from near and far. Whether you're a seasoned fisherman or a novice, the waters of Putnam County promise an unforgettable fishing experience. We're proud to be part of the Bassmaster Elite Series Feb. 20-23 in 2025.

With numerous lakes, rivers, and springs, Putnam County is a haven for water recreation and eco-tourism. Whether you enjoy boating, kayaking, or simply relaxing by the water, our county offers endless opportunities to soak up the sun and enjoy the great outdoors. Explore the lush landscapes, hike scenic trails, and discover the diverse wildlife that calls our county home. Ravine Gardens State Park boasts stunning gardens, winding trails, and breathtaking views, making it a must-visit destination for residents and visitors alike. The historic Bartram Trail, which traces the journeys of William Bartram, offers a



unique opportunity to follow in Bartram's footsteps and explore the natural beauty that inspired his writings.

Putnam County is home to the acclaimed Hog Waller, an 1,100-acre family-friendly off-road ATV and UTV adventure park and campground that draws enthusiasts nationwide. This local favorite offers a thrilling experience for those exploring the rugged terrain and enjoying the great outdoors. Skydive Palatka will happily throw you out of your comfort zone if you still need more thrills. Practice your aim at Palatka Shotgun Sports or play a round at the Palatka Golf Club, ranked in the top 100 courses for less than \$100 by Golf.com.

There are so many charming places to stay when you visit Putnam County. Enjoy one of several historic bed and breakfast inns, campgrounds and RV parks, hotels and cabins; many with river or lake views that will make it hard to leave.

Putnam County has charming small towns that exude an old Florida feel. Top-rated historic districts that offer a glimpse into Florida's rich past. Stroll through charming streets lined with well-preserved buildings and immerse yourself in the stories of yesteryear. These towns offer a warm and welcoming atmosphere, where neighbors know each other by name and community spirit thrives.

Our community is a haven for foodies, with diverse dining options catering to all tastes. From Angel's Diner, Florida's oldest diner in an original railcar, to Corky Bell's for memorable riverfront dining to Musselwhite's Seafood and Grill, Putnam is full of unique, locally owned and delightful restaurants. Papa Ray's BBQ, Niko's Pizza, Mariachiles Mexican Grill, Colee's, Blue Water Bay, Bradley's Steak and Seafood, C.P. Deli, Renegades



With numerous lakes, rivers, and springs, Putnam County is a haven for water recreation and eco-tourism. Whether you enjoy boating, kayaking, or simply relaxing by the water, our county offers endless opportunities to soak up the sun and enjoy the great outdoors. Explore the lush landscapes, hike scenic trails, and discover the diverse wildlife that calls our county home.

on the River, Rusty Ducks, Shrimp-R-U's, and Velchoff's Corner are local favorites. Comfortable pants are required for a stay in Putnam County.

Putnam County hosts various nationally known events and festivals yearly that celebrate our rich culture and community spirit. Start the year right in Downtown Palatka which hosts one of the best New Year's Celebrations in the Southeast. Bostwick Blueberry Festival, Palatka Porchfest, Christmas Historic Home Tour, Jingle Jam, Blue Crab Festival, Datil Pepper Festival, Azalea Festival, Blue Grass Festival, Bartram Frolic, Craft Beer Festival, and Catfish Festival draw visitors from across the country.

Agriculture is a cornerstone of our community, with multi-generational family farms dotting the landscape. These farms not only provide fresh, local produce but also preserve the agricultural heritage that has been passed down through generations.

Strategically located, Putnam County is within easy reach of major hubs, making it an

ideal place for businesses and residents alike. Our county offers a range of economic development opportunities, including a county-controlled business park and a barge port, which provide excellent infrastructure for growth and investment. Additionally, we are home to Seminole Electric, a key player in our local utility advantages, Palatka Municipal Airport, which boasts a 6,000-foot runway and St. Johns River State College.

Putnam County is where history, nature and community unite to create a vibrant and welcoming environment. Whether you're looking to explore our historic districts, enjoy outdoor adventures, or take advantage of economic opportunities, Putnam County has something for everyone. We invite you to discover the charm and potential of our county and become part of our thriving community. For more information, your Putnam County Chamber of Commerce team can be reached at (386) 328-1503 or at PutnamCountyChamber.com. See you soon!



Putnam County BUSINESS

Infrastructure work makes 'Wilderness Resort' in Putnam a likely reality

It's fair to be more than optimistic about a sprawling five-star resort that will likely take shape between Welaka and Samsula.

After all, why would Gov. Ron DeSantis agree to spend \$3.5 million to build a wastewater treatment plant and other infrastructure projects on 5,200 acres, including Turkey Island, consisting primarily of scrubland?

Bass Pro Shop, founder and owner Johnny Morris, bought the Lodge 2022 in Ridgedale, Missouri, in 1987, and he transformed the 4,600-acre track in the Ozarks to create a "fish camp" for his outfitters.

That camp soon became the "Wilderness Resort" Big Cedar Lodge, where "rustic luxury is tucked into the rugged landscape of the Missouri Ozark Mountains, overlooking sparkling Table Rock Lake."

Morris, a noted conservationist, "created Big Cedar Lodge as a destination for families and friends to connect in the great outdoors,

with inviting accommodations, spectacular restaurants, two full-service marinas, five golf courses, a 50,000-square-foot activity center, breathtaking spa, unparalleled fishing and countless outdoor adventures."

Morris has owned a fish camp – the 10-bedroom Floridian Sports Club Fish Camp on the shore of the St. Johns River near Welaka – for more than 40 years. The likely outdoors-themed resort will be built around it.

The Florida resort is more than 11½ times bigger than the Daytona International Speedway



property.

During the 2022 announcement, Morris didn't elaborate on the property's plan. But with the infrastructure work completed, things appear to be in motion toward making Putnam County a Gold Star destination.

"We don't have any real big particular plans,

but when we develop something or have a wish list, we'll be sure to work with everybody and be part of the community. And hopefully, whatever we end up with, if we do something, everybody would be proud of it," he said.

Like most, Putnam County Chamber of Commerce President Laura Pavlus is hopeful the news will come true.

"What pops up around it, all the nice restaurants and amenities and shopping, you can picture it," she said. "That will be transformative (at the county's south end). That's going to bring a lot of ecotourism here. You can already picture what it will mean to this county."

Optimistic and hopeful? Perhaps. Realistic? Absolutely.



\$75 Million

Happy growing pains

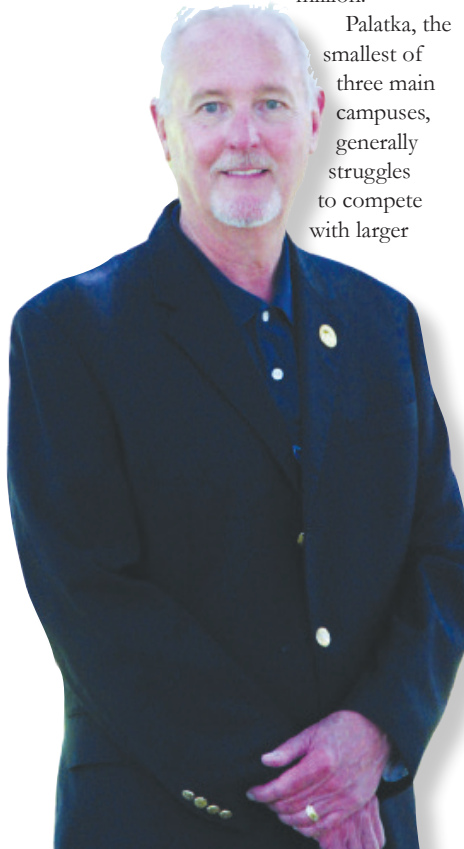
By Don Coble
don@claytodayonline.com

There is no sanctuary from the throaty sounds of black smoke belching, teeth-rattling work by the heavy equipment on the St. Johns River State College Campus, or the occasional ear-piercing shrieks of “beep, beep, beep” when a 30-ton bulldozer backs up to get a better angle to knock down another tree or clear another swath of scrubland.

It’s the sound of progress.

On one side of the campus, workers are working to complete an on-campus dormitory for athletes and students from the Florida School of the Arts for the 2025 fall semester. On another side of the campus, work is underway on rebuilding and remodeling the college’s library. Next is work on the School for the Arts and the STEM Building, a Workforce Training Center.

The total cost of the makeover is \$75 million.



Palatka, the smallest of three main campuses, generally struggles to compete with larger

“The library is being renovated on the interior to some degree, but especially the exterior. The exterior needed it both structurally and cosmetically. The library will have a completely new look and complement the new look of the student housing complex. That is about a \$1.5 million external renovation.”

– Joe Pickens

campuses in Orange Park and St. Augustine for state resources. Joe Pickens, the president of all three campuses at SJR State College, vowed since he took the helm in 2008, shortly after leaving the Florida House of Representatives.

“I’ve been pursuing student housing here since I became the president, which is 16 years,” Pickens said. “I’ve talked to many developers and could never find one that felt they could make it work on the scale that we wanted. They essentially wanted at least 300 beds, preferably 400, and we don’t have that great need.”

Developers also wanted to use the on-campus housing for non-students, which Pickens said was a deal-breaker. He continued to find a solution that would fit his needs.

A former student said he would create an independent association to build and operate the dorm since state laws forbid colleges from being in the apartment business. The new dormitory will have 128 rooms, 64 of which will be doubles and 64 singles, for a maximum occupancy of 192 people.

The library was in desperate need of updating.

“The library is being renovated on the interior to some degree, but especially the exterior,” Pickens said. “The exterior needed it both structurally and cosmetically. The library will have a completely new look and complement the new look of the student housing complex. That is about a \$1.5 million external renovation.”



The state promised to give SJR State College \$28 million to overhaul the T Building, the technology building.

Pickens said the college will add a STEM program, a Workforce Training Center Complex.

Another \$14.5 million will be used to renovate the Florida School of the Arts Complex. Pickens said all of that money came from local donations.

“That’s money that the college has gathered

together on our own,” he said. “That’s a pretty significant renovation.

“Altogether, with the water/sewer project and the infrastructure that will facilitate the construction of the student housing, is almost \$5 million in the types of things that you can’t see in infrastructure – construction of a new access road for the student housing, also to the baseball and softball fields. We’re going to redo some of the retention areas, landscaping, all of



those types of things. It was all prompted by the student housing project, but it's been needed for a while as part of a comprehensive infrastructure upgrade of this campus."

It's taken Pickens years to funnel so much attention to the Palatka campus, where the college's sports teams are based. They certainly did their part to turn the spotlight on the smallest campus when the women's softball team won the national championship last year, and the men's baseball team finished as the national runners-up the previous two years.

"You can add all those up total, it's going to be pretty close to \$75 million for infrastructure and renovations and new construction that we'll be doing just on this campus that be completed in June and will open in August," Pickens said. "The library project will be finished by the time we open for the fall of next year. The arts project is scheduled, but we haven't started yet. We have hired architects. We've been through that process. We've done the planning, design and engineering." It's moving quickly, and it's noisy. It's the sound of progress.

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by producing household products
that make everyday life a little easier.





A Pillar of Economic Growth in Palatka



Georgia-Pacific's mill in Palatka has been a cornerstone of the community for 78 years, employing more than 1,000 workers. "In bathrooms, kitchens and at backyard barbecues, you can find our household products helping to make everyday life a little easier," said Vin Webster, vice president of manufacturing at the Palatka facility.

The mill began operations on November 5, 1947, under the name Hudson Pulp and Paper Company. Initially, the Hudson mill had 279 employees but quickly became Florida's largest producer of facial and bathroom tissue. Over the years, it expanded its product offerings to include gummed paper tape and kraft paper for bags and sacks.

In its early days, the mill was a significant community in Putnam County, featuring its own power plant, fire department, police department, medical facilities, two cafeterias, and water supply. Today, it remains the largest private employer in the county, supporting more than 1,000 jobs directly and creating an additional 2,426 indirect jobs in the community. The mill produces well-known consumer brands such as Brawny®, Sparkle®, and Angel Soft®, as well as private-label paper towels and bath tissue. The mill also manufactures kraft paper used for recyclable mailers, grocery bags, butcher paper, and linerboard used in producing corrugated boxes. Since its inception, daily production has skyrocketed by 800%.

Georgia-Pacific acquired the mill in 1979 and has since modernized and expanded the facility, investing over \$1.2 billion since 2002. With an annual economic impact exceeding \$1 billion, the mill plays a crucial role in the growth of Palatka and the surrounding region.

Beyond its economic contributions, the Palatka mill has also received recognition from the Environmental Protection Agency for its efforts in reducing energy and water consumption. In 2018, it earned the ENERGY STAR Challenge Achiever for Industry by cutting energy use by over 10% in three years. Additionally, in 2020, the mill received the EPA's ENERGY STAR Top Project award for achieving a 40% reduction in water use within just 10 weeks, thanks to investments in upgraded

equipment and monitoring systems.

The Palatka facility manages 16 wooded plots for sustainable forestry practice. When one area is harvested, saplings are replanted, allowing the land to be reused. After 15 years, these saplings mature into full trees, ensuring a continuous supply of resources without the need to encroach on new forested areas.

Georgia-Pacific, headquartered in Atlanta, is one of the leading manufacturers and marketers of bath tissue, paper towels, napkins, tableware, paper-based packaging, cellulose, specialty fibers, and building products. The company operates over 150 facilities globally, directly employing around 30,000 people and creating more than 89,000 indirect jobs.



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Approximately 2 million people and businesses in 42 Florida counties rely on Seminole's Member cooperatives for electricity

Seminole Electric Cooperative (Seminole), headquartered in Tampa, is one of the largest generation and transmission cooperatives in the country. Approximately two million people and businesses in 42 Florida counties rely on Seminole's Member cooperatives for electricity.

Seminole's primary resources include the Seminole Generating Station (SGS), the Richard J. Midulla Generating Station (MGS), the Seminole Combined Cycle Facility (SCCF), and Seminole's first "Cooperative Solar" facility.

Consisting of one approximately 736-megawatt coal-fired generating unit, SGS is located in northeast Florida, just north of Palatka, and is equipped with more than \$530 million in environmental control upgrades.

The approximately 839-megawatt MGS facility is located in Hardee County and uses natural gas as its primary fuel. MGS is a 529-megawatt combined-cycle facility that consists of two natural gas-fired combustion turbines, two heat recovery steam generators, and one steam turbine. The facility later added 310 megawatts of power generation through five aeroderivative combustion turbine units. Cooperative Solar, adjacent to MGS, is a 2.2-megawatt solar array comprised of more than 8,000 solar photovoltaic (PV) panels.

In 2023 Seminole constructed a new natural gas facility, the Seminole Combined Cycle Facility

(SCCF). Located directly adjacent to the existing Seminole Generating Station site in Putnam County, Florida, SCCF has a generating capacity of approximately 1,100 megawatts.

Seminole also owns more than 330 miles of transmission line that connect its electric generating plants to Florida's transmission grid.

Seminole works to maintain a balanced and diversified generation portfolio that includes owned facilities, as well as capacity and energy provided through short-, medium-, and long-term purchased power agreements with other utilities, independent power producers, and government entities. In 2024 four Florida Renewable Partners (FRP) Solar sites came online and reached commercial operation. These FRP sites are under power purchase agreements (PPAs) that are now a part of Seminole's generation portfolio. These sites contribute about 298 megawatts (MWs) of solar capacity collectively.

Seminole's portfolio reflects a mix of technologies and fuel types, including renewable energy. Seminole may sell a portion of the renewable energy credits associated with its renewable generation to third parties. The third parties can use the credits to meet mandatory or voluntary renewable requirements. The diversity in Seminole's generation mix reduces exposure to changing market conditions, helping keep rates competitive.



Seminole Electric, CertainTeed create win-win collaboration for Putnam

Putnam County BUSINESS

Companies continue \$235 million project to turn coal ash into gypsum wallboard

Saint-Gobain North America's investment of \$235 million to expand its CertainTeed gypsum manufacturing facility in Palatka will not only create 100 new jobs in Putnam County. Still, it will also be a significant investment in the environmental future of Northeast Florida.

By recycling coal ash from Seminole Electric's power plant into drywall and sheetrock products, not only is the environment spared the possible effects of nose and throat irritation and shortness of breath with long-term exposure possibly causing kidney damage, cardiac arrhythmia and a variety of cancers by not being exposed to coal ash.

An additional bonus is creating building materials and adding jobs during a time of unparalleled growth.

"I am proud to be part of the effort to create and retain jobs here in Putnam County," said Mark Litten, Vice President of Economic Development at Putnam County Chamber of Commerce. "This project represents a significant investment in our community and is great news for local small businesses, both retail and services, supported by Saint-Gobain/CertainTeed's investment."

CertainTeed and Seminole Electric will operate north of Palatka. Together, they will

"I am proud to be part of the effort to create and retain jobs here in Putnam County."

— Mark Litten, Vice President of Economic Development at Putnam County Chamber of Commerce.

pipe flue gas ash since these reactive oxides are captured in large scrubber units made of calcium carbonate. This calcium is nearly identical to gypsum, making it a great material to replace freshly mined materials required for sheet rock production.

The wallboard traps the various hazardous materials contained in the used scrubber materials, binding them harmlessly where they can be helpful. Between the use of flue gas residues in drywall and fly ash in all sorts of cement-based products, most homes could contain some amount of coal ash to make productive use of it.

According to Saint-Gobain, the expansion of manufacturing and warehouse space in Palatka, strategically located near the Port of Jacksonville, comes as the company continues implementing its global Grow and Impact strate-



gy, which includes expanding its presence in key, fast-growing markets.

In line with Saint-Gobain's global pursuit of carbon neutrality by 2050, sustainability will be a key component of this expansion project by installing new, best-in-class energy-saving equipment and automation technology.

"We look forward to growing our already robust presence in Palatka and Putnam County and would like to thank the State of Florida and all of our partners for their support to make this expansion a reality," said Jay Bachmann, Vice President and General Manager of CertainTeed Interior Products Group.

Putnam County ELEVATE INITIATIVE



Chamber President Laura Palvus:

'Putnam County is on the cusp of a tremendous amount of growth'



When Putnam County Chamber of Commerce President Laura Pavlus has an idea, she only needs to step outside the front door of the organization's office on Reid Street and look to the right for sense of clarity.

Roughly 20 miles away is Clay County, and it serves as a perfect road map to Putnam's future.

As the former Vice President of Clay's Economic Development, Pavlus understands how to work ahead of growth.

The Elevate Putnam Initiative was created to map out a five-year strategic plan to propel the community toward unprecedented economic growth and revitalization. Campaign Co-Chairs Benjie Bates and Charlie Douglas and Campaign Cabinet members Karla Flagg, Jerry McClellan, Jini McCool Robbins, Joe Pickens, Vin Webster and Judson Sapp formed a blueprint that focused on three pillars: targeted economic growth, talent attraction and development and quality of place and brand identity. With \$100 billion in wealth management expected to migrate to the Southeast, Elevate Putnam Initiative will position Putnam in a favorable position to attract a slice of that business, equating to 750 jobs and \$500 million in new capital investment.

With a plan in place, Pavlus was hired as the Chamber President and Mark Linton was brought in as the Vice President of Economic Development to implement the Initiative.

"Putnam County is on the cusp of tremendous growth," Pavlus said. "They have all the components here for everything to hit special

space. Clay knew what was coming years ago, but you never know what you don't know. I think there's enough leadership here that understands the opportunity that's on their doorstep. It's a different opportunity, but they understand enough that they know the time is right. The opportunity was right for them to do something very aggressive."

The \$235 million expansion of CertainTeed's conversion of coal ash from Seminole Electric to gypsum wallboard, the likely 5,200-acre, five-star "Wilderness Resort" in southern Putnam County by Bass Pro Shop founder and owner Johnny Morris, the business and industrial opportunities at the Palatka Municipal Airport, the open spaces for development and the county's reputation as the "Bass Capital of the World" puts the county in the enviable position of going on offense to attract business.

"If you look at St Johns County, they're developed out, they're overpriced," Pavlus said. "They have great schools, but they're overpriced. They are now anti-development because they're basically saying, 'We have more than we can handle right now. Let us catch up.'"

Clay County's rapid growth has it playing a catch-up game with several infrastructure projects. The county council has put a moratorium on building permits in the Lake Asbury area for three years while water and roadway expansion projects have snarled traffic; the Green Cove Springs City Council was forced to raise its millage rate by 19.13% for 2025 to pay for infrastructure upgrades ahead of new development

after putting off those improvements for years.

Pavlus said Putnam is working ahead of those challenges by purchasing land, particularly near the airport, to use as leverage to pay for infrastructure enhancements.

"We want to get off the developers and make sure design standards in place, land is in place, fee structures are properly in place," she said. "When these developers do start buying land in Putnam County, everything is positioned to protect the integrity of the county to make sure they don't just come in, drop garbage and make a ton of money."

Pavlus knows growth is coming. She saw it in

Clay County years ago. It will hit without warning; if the community isn't prepared, it's too late to catch up. Putnam will be prepared, she said. And it will prosper. "I'm really focused on making sure that the community is foundationally strong to support the coming growth," she said. "Hey, you guys probably don't even realize the tsunami on the earth's curvature, and it's coming around, and we'll be ready. It's an exciting time to be in Putnam County."

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andersenslodge.com

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Thebluewaterbay.com

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Welaka
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welakalodge.com/boat-bar-grill

Bradley's Steaks & Seafood

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(386) 326-4334

Cheyenne Saloon

337 U.S. Highway 17, East Palatka
(386) 328-9216
cheyennesaloon.com

Corky Bell's at Gators Landing

185 U.S. Highway 17, East Palatka
(386) 329-9300
corkybellsseafood.com



Angel's Diner located at 209 Reid St. in Palatka

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(386) 603-5060

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Longhornsteakhouse.com

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melsriverpub.com

Mema's Family Restaurant

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(386) 649-4929

Musselwhite's Seafood & Grill

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(386) 326-9111

Nanna's Country Café

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Niko's Pizza

804 State Road 29, Palatka
(386) 328-8558

Palmeras Restaurant

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(386) 698-4672

Palatka Chinese Buffet/Leo's Fine Sushi

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Papa Ray's BBQ

816 St. Johns Ave., Palatka
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Parker House Lounge

143 North Summit Ave., Crescent City
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parkerouselounge.com

Peas & Carrots Catering

Crescent City
(386) 937-2051

Pomona Park Pizza & Subs

1762 U.S. Highway 17, Pomona Park
(386) 649-2333

Pop's Southern Buffet

909 State Road 19, Palatka
(386) 385-3773
popssouthernbuffet.com/

Renegades Restaurant and Tiki Bar

1171 State Road 309, Crescent City
(386) 524-4179
Renegadesontheriver.com

Rumors Flying

248 U.S. Highway 17, East Palatka
(386) 385-3409

Rusty Ducks

623 Laurel St., Palatka
(386) 386-3557

Shrimp R Us & More

765 3rd Ave., Welaka
(386) 467-7111

Sonny's Real Pit Bar-B-Q

425 State Road 19, Palatka
(386) 328-4655

Southern Wild Smokehouse

881 State Road 20, Interlachen
(850) 274-5697

Spank's Pizza & Famous Subs

923 North Summit, Crescent City
(386) 698-2315

Spankypizzasubs

Steamboat Willies Gastro Pub & Bar

309 St Johns Ave., Palatka
(386) 325-0419
steamboatwillies.com

Sunset Landing Restaurant

110 River Bend Road, Welaka
(386) 467-8430

The Crescent

1304 County Road 308, Crescent City
(386) 559-7578

The Magnolia

705 St Johns Ave., Palatka
(386) 530-2740
magnoliapalatka.com

The Oaks Golf Club Café

1264 County Road 309, Crescent City
(386) 467-2512
the-oaks-golf.com/restaurant

The Whistle Stop

1749 U.S. Highway 17, Pomona Park
(386) 244-8084
True Grits
1116 State Road 20, Interlachen
(386) 684-3772

Velchoff's Corner

105 N. Second St., Ste. D, Palatka
(386) 276-2282
facebook.com/velchoffscorner

Welaka Fish & Crab Co

676 Third Ave., Welaka
(386) 467-9776

Welaka Lodge & Resort

1001 Front St., Welaka
(386) 467-7171



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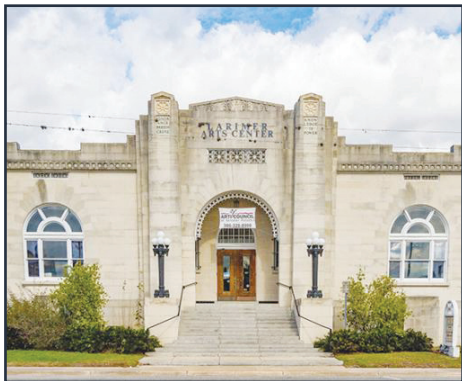
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Putnam County ARTS & Culture



• A City of Murals. Palatka has more than 30 murals painted on buildings, depicting historical, cultural and natural riches of Palatka and Putnam County. These larger-than-life pictorial renderings are mostly projects of the Conlee-Snyder Mural Committee. Mural prints, postcards and tour brochures are available at the Visitor Center at the Putnam County Chamber of Commerce, 1100 Reid St., Palatka.



Larimer Arts Center

• The Larimer Arts Center is home of the Arts Council of Greater Palatka and the Council's Monthly Gallery Exhibits. Located at 260 Reid St., the gallery is open from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturday and 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday through Thursday.

• The Florida School of the Arts Galleries is on the campus of St. Johns River State College, 5001 St. Johns Ave. in Palatka. The gallery is open from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through



The Bronson-Mulholland House

Friday, and features many of the state's premier students, artists and instructors. For more information, visit floarts.org or call (386) 312-4300.

• The Historic Tilghman House at 324 River St. in Palatka is open on Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and is home of the Palatka Art League, a nonprofit organization consisting of artists and crafters from the county and surrounding areas. For more information, visit palatkaartleague.com or call (386) 325-8750.

• The St. Johns River Center is open Tuesday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Sunday from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. at 102 North First St., showcases the unique and varied ecosystems of the St. Johns River as well as its unique history, culture and commerce. For more information, call (386) 326-2704.

• The Bronson-Mulholland House is open every Saturday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and the first Sunday of each month from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. at 100 Madison St. The house was built in 1854 and stands as a testament to the City's rich history. It is a stunningly furnished antebellum home sitting on two-plus acres of greenspace overhung with live oaks



Florida School of the Arts St. Johns River State College



City of Palatka has more than 30 murals painted on buildings.



David Browning Railroad Museum

and magnolias. It is available for free guided tours as well as a rental venue for weddings and other events.

• The Interlachen Museum is operated by the Interlachen Historic Society and is open on Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at 311 Atlantic Ave. Group tours are available by request. For more information or to reserve a tour, call (386) 684-0103.

• The Putnam Historic Museum at 100 Madison St. is open from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. on Tuesday, Thursday and Sunday. Putnam County has a rich and fascinating history. From the early days of riverboats and the rebirth of a city recovering from devastating effects of a massive fire in its downtown district in 1884, the museum houses the archives and memorabilia of Palatka and Putnam County. Explore the unique history, including the oldest surviving structure in the county, originally built in 1834 and served as the Officers' Quarters during The Seminole Indian War. For more information, call (386) 325-9825.

• The David Browning Railroad Museum

houses historic photos, documents, railroad memorabilia, maps, signs and an operating model train depicting Palatka and surrounding areas during the heyday of rail traffic at 11th and Reid streets. The museum is open from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. on the first Sunday and third Saturday each month. For information or to schedule a tour, call the Palatka Railroad Preservation Society at (386) 328-1539.

• Little Blue House Heritage Museum and Art Center at 602 N. Summit St. in Crescent City is open Tuesday through Saturday from 2:30 p.m. to 5 p.m. The home dates back to 1871, showcases the history and art of South Putnam County. For more information, call (386) 698-4711 or (386) 698-1911.

• The Mt. Royal Indian Temple Mound Archaeological Site includes a Native American burial mound, earthworks, village area and evidence of a British plantation, as well as the remains of a Spanish mission occupied by the Timucua Indians. Of those, only a one-acre area is preserved in a parcel owned and managed by the Florida Department of Historical Resources. The Timucuan Indian Temple is the largest sand mound in Florida. William Bartram was first to write about the mound and urged that it be preserved. It is located at 120 Indian Mound Dr. in Crescent City. There is no charge to visit. For more information, call (386) 467-2863.

• Fort Gates Ferry at 229 Fort Gates Ferry Road in Crescent City operates from 7 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. every day except Tuesday. The cost is \$9 a car. The ferry shuttles cars and passengers between Welaka and the Ocala National Forest across the St. Johns River. Downstream of Lake George and just upstream of Little Lake George. The oldest operating ferry in Florida, it acts as part of the Florida Black Bear Scenic Byway.

Putnam County

FUN FACTS

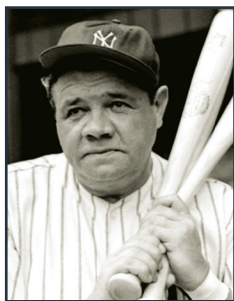
- The name Palatka is a contraction of a Native American word that means “cow crossing for “cow ford.” The U.S. Post Office changed the name to “Palatka” in 1875 after a 22-year debate.

- The county was named after Benjamin A. Putnam, an officer in the First Seminole War, a lawyer, Florida legislator and first president of the Florida Historical Society.

- The county has 827 square miles, and 105 of those are water.

- There are two cities, three towns, one census-designated place and 24 unincorporated communities in the county.

- Baseball legend Babe Ruth used to live at 422 River St. in Palatka and coached in a training league at the Azalea Bowl Baseball Park in the mid-1930s.



Babe Ruth

- Mary Nesbitt Wisham was one of the original 60 members of the All-American Girls Professional Baseball League that was portrayed in Penny Marshall’s movie “A League of Their Own.” Mary played four years for the Racine Belles and two for the Peoria Red Wings before quitting and moving to the unincorporated area of Hollister in Putnam County, where she lived 62 years before dying in 2013.

- Professional football players Clayton Beauford



Mary Nesbitt



John Williams

(Detroit, Cleveland), Kevis Coley (New York Giants, Jacksonville, Cincinnati, Houston), Willie Offord (Minnesota), Charles Sharon (Jacksonville), Jarvis Williams (Miami, New York Giants), Earl Leggett (Chicago, Los Angeles Rams) and John L. Williams (Seattle, Pittsburgh) were born in Palatka.

- Retired 2-time WWE championship wrestler Michelle McCool was born in Palatka, while Walter Curry (Baltimore, Jacksonville) was born in Crescent City

- Baseball Hall of Fame player John Henry Lloyd (Cuban X-Giants in 1906, Bacharach Giants) was born in Palatka

- South Carolina, Duke, Virginia Tech, Clemson and Shorter College basketball coach



Michelle McCool

Bill Foster grew up in Palatka

- Vietnam veteran Medal of Honor recipient Robert H. Jenkins was born in Interlachen.

- Asa Phillip Randolph was an American labor unionist, civil rights activist and socialist politician born in Crescent City.

- Angel’s Dining Car at 209 Reid St. in Palatka has been operating since 1932 and is recognized as the oldest diner in Florida.

- Putnam County has many sinkhole lakes, including Lake Suggs and Lake Barco, formed after surface deposits collapsed into the limestone of the Floridan aquifer.

- Nearly one-quarter – 24.2% – are 65 or older.



Robert H. Jenkins



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Palatka MURALS

Portraying colorful and historic roots

There's a reason why Palatka embraces its nickname as the City of Murals.

Buildings have been adorned with murals that tell colorful stories about the town, attracting visitors and adding a splash of beauty to the historic downtown area.

There are more than 30 cultural and historical murals around town, and that doesn't include a giant banner on the side of Wilkinson Automotive where each letter in the word PALATKA offers a scenic glimpse into the attractions that make up the town. The banner greets motorists as they drive north over the Memorial Bridge U.S. Highway bridge, and it sets the tone for a day of artistic discovery.

The project to add color and purpose to the downtown area is managed by the Conlee-Snyder Mural Committee. Prints of each mural are available at the Palatka Welcome Center at 900 St. Johns Ave. Proceeds from those sales finance the creation of new murals.

One of the newest murals is of The Putnam House, circa 1891, on Second Street and St. Johns Avenue. Artist Luke Taft, who lives in nearby Florahome, completed his biggest, and perhaps his best, mural in October and it is 20 feet by 40 feet. In all, Taft has created six of the city's murals. According to his website, he works

as a musician, artist and arts educator in Palatka, a small town nestled on the edge of cypress swamps on the St. Johns River. Palatka has a colorful downtown with a strong revitalization effort, historic buildings and architecture, and is developing a thriving arts community.

Taft is so committed to enhancing the Putnam County area, he opened The Art Hole, a nonprofit fine arts school for children.

"My work in teaching art is very important to me and I firmly believe that it strengthens the community when our youth have a creative outlet," he said. "We are all artists, as art is a merely unique expression. When provided the tools, we can speak this language more articulately and expand our ability to think and communicate."

Another artist is Nina Larkin Mateyunas. One of her works is "The Wild West Comes to Palatka," which features cowboys rassing with cows and the day in 1908 Annie Oakley brought her shooting exhibition to town.

Mateyunas, along with her husband Ed, also created "Harlem Nights in Palatka," which is on St. Johns Avenue and North Eighth Street.

Terry Smith's 13-foot by 56-foot painting of "The Georgia Southern and Florida Railroad" can be found on St. Johns Avenue and North Seventh Street, while his "Heartbeat of Palatka,



The Georgia Southern and Florida Railroad by Terry Smith



The Mug Race by Carolyn Stevens

Circa 1890-1909-1916,” is on display at 205 N. Second St. and his “To God Be the Glory,” which chronicles the first sermons by Rev. Billy Graham, is at South Fourth Street and St. Johns Avenue.

“My goal is to paint as much of ‘The Real Florida’ as I can,” Smith said. “Future generations need to see what has been and is being lost. There is a need to encourage others to speak

up to protect our most valuable treasure. Many things in life can be replaced or rebuilt, but not our greatest possession. It is my hope that by recording the natural Florida now, people will realize the importance of saving Florida’s natural resources, to avoid being left with just memories.”

Other mural artists include Carolyn Stevens, Dean Quigley, Monique Sinclair, Richard Currier,



William Bartram By Dean Quigley

Kitty Williams, Joe Puskas, Betty Sutliff, Julia McCoy and Sherrie Z. Lowe.

Visitors can get mural tour brochures at the Putnam County Visitors Center at the Putnam County Chamber of Commerce, 1100 Reid St., Palatka, Lady Bugs, 115 S. Second St., Lemon St. Market & Mercantile, 715 St. Johns Ave., Palatka, and Putnam Bicycles, 100 S. 9th St., Palatka.

On May 24, 1875, the post office changed the spelling of Pilatka to Palatka.

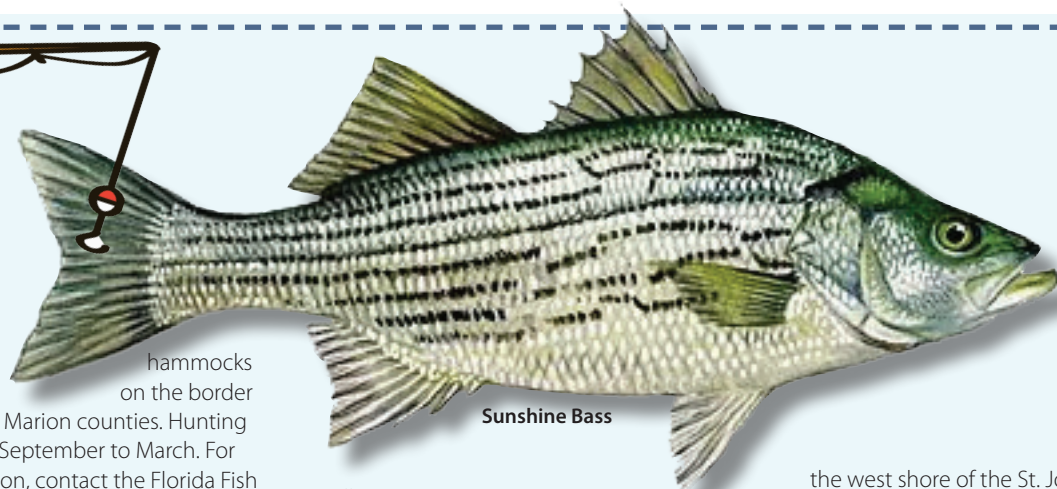


The Putnam House, Circa 1891 by Luke Taft



Senator B.C. Pearce Agricultural Mural by Richard Currier

Putnam County PARKS & Wildlife



Sunshine Bass

• St. Johns River and its Tributaries runs northward for nearly half the length of the state. William Bartram explored the state in 1773. However, the source of the river wasn't charted until 1882. Flowing northward, the St. Johns passes through nine lakes, eventually emptying into the Atlantic Ocean. Lake George is the second-largest lake in Florida and is a premier largemouth bass fishing lake. It's also perfect for crappies and blue gills.

For catfish, the St. Johns River and Dunns Creek are top spots for channel and white catfish. Big channel catfish have been reported in the upper and lower St. Johns River and Dunns Creek system from early May through June. Small catfish can be caught all year, but the best times are in the spring and fall.

Striped bass and sunshine bass in the eight-to-12-pound range are common in the fall and winter, especially around the Memorial Bridge in Palatka, jetties and bombing ranges in Lake George.

• The Welaka National Fish Hatchery and Aquarium and observation tower, with a three-quarter-mile trail, picnic area, wildlife viewing and eagle cams, is operated by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is open seven days a week from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. Complimentary guided tours are available. For more information, call (386) 467-2374.



• The Caravelle Ranch Conservation Area is 24869 acres of river bottom hardwoods, pasture and pine-palmetto flatwoods

with small intermingled hammocks on the border of Putnam and Marion counties. Hunting season is from September to March. For more information, contact the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation, Northeast Region Office, at (352) 732-1225.

• The Etoniah Creek State Forest at 390 Holloway Road in Florahome is 7,145 acres of pine palmetto flatwoods, sand hills, hardwood hammocks and creek bottoms. Deer, squirrel and turkey hunting are good, while wild hog, migratory bird and small game hunting is fair. No dogs or ATVs are permitted.

• The Georgia-Pacific Wildlife Management Area is 3,661 acres of creek bottom hardwoods and pine palmetto flatwoods west of Palatka on State Road 100. Small game and turkey hunting is good, while deer, wild hog and migratory bird hunting is fair. No dogs or ATVs are allowed. For more information, contact the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation, Northeast Region Office, at (352) 732-1225.

• The Ocala National Forest is in Putnam, Marion and Lake counties, and it is comprised of 382,408 acres from dense sand pine-scrub oak communities to wet and dry prairies to longleaf pine-palmetto flatwoods. Small game hunting is good, and deer and turkey hunting is fair to good. Hunters could encounter bears while hunting. Dogs and ATVs are allowed.

• Dunns Creek Conservation Area in south of Palatka on State Road 100. The swamp and upland communities support a variety of animals including numerous salamander species, toads, frogs, snakes, alligators, bobcats, raccoons, white-tailed deer and gray foxes.

• Skydive Palatka is at the Palatka Airport, Kay Larkin Field, 4015 Reid St. It operates on Fridays from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m., and Saturdays and Sundays from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. You can learn to skydive or join the skydiving family that caters to jumpers of all skills. For first-time jumpers, you can enjoy the experience of a freefall while being harnessed to a professional instructor. For more information,

call (386) 328-0606.

• The Ocala National Forest also has 1,100 acres set aside for outdoor fun for ATVs and UTVs. You can ride through the woods or brave huge mud pits with specialty-built trucks or cars. There are also nearly 200 miles of ATV/motorcycle trails.

• Putnam County is quickly becoming known as the "Trail Hub" of Northeast Florida. Palatka is the center point of the Lake Butler to St. Augustine Rails-to-Trails project which is nearly complete and serves as the backbone for an elaborate Trail System. The Palatka-to-St. Augustine State Trail currently runs through the communities of Armstrong, Elkton, and Vermont Heights in northeastern Florida. Much of the route follows State Route 207, hence its former name as the State Road 207 Rail-Trail. Views are a mix of woodlands and rural landscapes. Palatka-Lake Butler State Trail is situated in one of the most picturesque areas of the state and is warmly welcomed by this northeast Florida region for the enhanced quality of life and economic benefits it offers many small towns and communities. The trail corridor stretches nearly 47 miles from west of U.S. Highway 17 in Palatka to State Road 238 in Lake Butler, as it runs along the former Norfolk-Southern Railroad right-of-way through Putnam, Clay, Bradford and Union counties. Long-range plans include a connection to the Palatka to Lake Butler Trail, which has 31 interpretive kiosks tour and historical information sites, as part of a developing 260-mile, five-county regional network known as the St. Johns River-to-Sea Loop. The network is part of the East Coast Greenway.

• Ravine Gardens is a representation of the never-ending shaping that occurs by Florida's water flow. The steep ravine at 1600 Twigg St. was created by water flowing from beneath the sandy ridges that flank

the west shore of the St. Johns River. Ruby-throated hummingbirds feed in the gardens in spring/summer; Cedar Waxwings flock near the amphitheater in April. On occasion, the pond at the bottom of the ravine has ducks and wading birds; be on the lookout for Wilson's Snipe and American Woodcock as well. The park's checklist includes Eastern Screech-Owl, Wood Thrush, Blue Grosbeak, Baltimore Oriole and Whip-poor-will. This site gets busy from January to April, when visitors descend on the formal gardens to see the thousands of showy azaleas, Chickasaw plums, dogwoods and camellias in bloom. During these months, the best time to visit is early in the morning and during weekdays. Recreation facilities include picnic areas, ornamental gardens, numerous hiking trails and a 1.8-mile



Ravine Gardens

paved perimeter loop trail that traverses along the upper rim of this 80-acre ravine. Admission is \$4 for one person in a vehicle, \$5 for two-to-eight people in vehicle, \$2 for one person walking into the park and children younger than six are free. Hours are from 8 a.m. until sundown. For more information, call (386) 329-3721.

- Wetland Preserve is 3,725 acres on State Road 19 south of Palatka that is part of the American Tree Farm System and a Stewardship Forest under the Florida Forest Service that adhere to a management regimen which attaches value to not just the pine plantations which provide income but to the whole ecosystem is a hallmark of these programs. Their commitment to abide by Best Management Practices for the protection of water resources and to adhere also to Wildlife Best Management Practices are just the first steps we take in making sure the wood and fiber produced on our land are not the only benefits arising from it.

- Murphy Creek Conservation Area is predominantly hardwood swamps associated with Murphy Creek and the St. Johns River, with the limited uplands containing sandhill, flatwoods and hardwood hammock. The Murphy Creek and Murphy Island parcels that make up this conservation area protect the water resources of both the St. Johns River and Murphy Creek. The island portion contains one of the few upland areas along the St. Johns River, providing visitors an opportunity for a spectacular view of the river. One of the special highlights of the property off U.S. Highway 17, west on County Road 309B, is it divided by Murphy Creek. Visitors will need a boat to access the island trails, accessible from a dock along the St. Johns River. Recreational activities include hiking, bicycling, horseback riding, wildlife viewing and nature study.

- The Rice Creek Conservation Area covers approximately 70% of the property. Together with Palmetto Branch, Oldtown Branch and Hickory Branch, which are all just west of the conservation area on State Road 100, the swamp forms the headwaters of Rice Creek, a large tributary of the St. Johns River. The area was an indigo and rice plantation during the 18th century, and most of the uplands were managed as commercial pine plantations before it was folded into public ownership. The site protects a variety of natural communities, including floodplain swamps, flatwoods, dome swamps, floodplain forest and upland mixed forest.

One of the special highlights is an historic levee built for an 18th century rice plantation to see the seventh largest cypress tree in Florida and an 1,886-foot narrow boardwalk. Recreational activities include hiking, bicycling, horseback riding and primitive camping.



- The Palatka Golf Club at 1715 Moseley Ave. was designed by Donald Ross in 1925 and borders the beautiful Ravine State Gardens. It may be only 5,942 yards from the back tees, but don't let that fool you. The Ross "turtleback" greens and well-placed bunkers will test your game. With a newly installed retention pond, an aqua driving range and large clubhouse and snack bar



and lounge, the clubhouse is available for parties and other functions. For more

information or to make a tee time, call (386) 329-0141.

- The Oaks Golf Club at 1264 County Road 309 in Crescent City is an 18-hole, par-72 with wide fairways on the front nine, while the back side is a narrow tract. Although



there are no sand traps, the public course has plenty of ponds and water hazards. To make a tee time, call (386) 467-2512.

- Experience Real Florida Fishing in Putnam County. Known as the "Bass Capital of the World," Putnam is home to three of the "Top 10" bass fisheries in Florida – the St. Johns River, Crescent Lake and Rodman Reservoir. Rodman also made No. 14 of the Top 100 most productive bass fisheries in the nation by Bassmaster Magazine. The county

also offers a list of other freshwater and saltwater – or brackish – fishing. Freshwater species include largemouth bass black crappie (speckled perch), bluegill, shell cracker, warmouth and catfish. Saltwater species include redfish, flounder, seatrout and tarpon.

Shrimp migrate up the brackish water during the summer months and are easily caught off docks or by boat with cast nets. Striped bass can be caught mostly during the fall and winter months.

Putnam County EVENTS

Tourism plays a crucial role in the economic development of Putnam County by attracting visitors who spend money on accommodations, dining, entertainment and shopping. This influx of spending supports local businesses and creates jobs. The tourism industry provides employment opportunities in various sectors, including hospitality, retail and transportation, and it reduces unemployment and boosts the local economy.

Tourism in Putnam County has been increasing year over year. Bed tax collections increased by 27% during fiscal year 2023/24 compared to the last three years because of a commitment to host major events like the Bassmaster Elite Series and other large-scale events that contribute millions into the local coffers.

These highlight the importance of tourism in sustaining and growing the local economy in Putnam County. The ongoing promotion of the county as a family-friendly, outdoor and adventure destination continues to enhance its appeal to visitors.

Here are some of the things that make Putnam County a popular destination:

January

- Martin Luther King Jr. Festival will be on Jan. 20 downtown on St. Johns Avenue in Palatka. For more information, visit aacacputnam.org or call (386) 325-9901.



The Palatka Bluegrass Festival will be on Feb. at Rodeheaver Boys Ranch.

February

- The Capital City Bank Classic Baseball Tournament is scheduled for Feb. 6-9 at St. Johns River State College. For a schedule, visit sjrvikings.com/landing/index and click athletics.

- The Palatka Bluegrass Festival will be on Feb. at Rodeheaver Boys Ranch, 380 Boys Ranch Road, Palatka. For more information, visit rbr.org or call (386) 328-1281.

- The John Tindall Classic Baseball Tournament will be on Feb. 13-16 at St. Johns River State College. For a schedule, visit sjrvikings.com/landing/index and click athletics. At St. Johns River State College. For a schedule,

visit sjrvikings.com/landing/index and click athletics.

- The Bassmaster Elite at St. Johns River will be from Feb. 20-23, 2025, at the Palatka City Dock and Boat Ramp. Last year's tournament attracted 103 of Bassmaster's highest level of elite anglers to the St. Johns River and made an estimated \$2 million impact on Putnam County. Cory Johnston of Peterborough, Ontario Canada, easily won last year's tournament with a four-day aggregate catch of 93 pounds, 6 ounces to easily beat second place Brad Whatley's 72 pounds, 4 ounces. In fact, Johnston started Day 4 with enough – 73 pounds, 13 ounces – to take the day off and still collect the first-place check of \$101,000.

- The Azelea Expo will be on February 22-23 in downtown Palatka. Visit palatkaazaleafest.com for more information, or call (386) 328-7502.

- The Azelea Golf Tournaments will be on Feb. 28 to March 2 for Juniors; March 8 to March



Bostwick Blueberry Festival will be on April 26 at the Bostwick Community Center, 1252 Tillman St. in Palatka.



The Azelea Golf Tournaments will be on Feb. 28 to March 2 for Juniors; March 8 to March 11 for Seniors; and March 13-16 for Azeleas at the Palatka Golf Course.

11 for Seniors; and March 13-16 for Azeleas at the Palatka Golf Course. For more information, visit palatkagolfclub.com or call (386) 329-0141.

March

- The Azalea Pickleball Tournament will be at Palatka High on March 1-2. For more information, visit northfloridapickleball.com or call (386) 325-8816.

- The Dreams Come True Bass Tournament is scheduled for March 15 at the Palatka City Dock and Boat Ramp. For more information, visit dreamscometrue.org or call (904) 296-3030.

- The Azalea Open Skeet Shoot will be on March 15-16 at the Palatka Sheet Club, 301 Skeet Club Road in Palatka. For more information, visit palatkaskeet.org or call (386) 972-3860.

- The Putnam County Fair will run from March 21 to March 29 at the Putnam County Fairgrounds in East Palatka. For scheduling, visit putnamfairandexpo.com.

- The Rodeheaver Benefit Bass Tournament will be on March 29. Anglers will meet at the Palatka City Dock and Boat Ramp. For more information, visit rbr.org or call (386) 983-0658.

- The St. Johns River Catfish Festival will be at Eva Lyon Park in Crescent City on April 5. The event is sponsored by the Rotary Club of Crescent City. For more information, call (410) 459-4336.

April

- The St. Johns River Bartram Frolic that celebrates William Bartram's 1774 travels through Palatka will be along the riverfront in Palatka on April 11-13. Events include kayak tour, horse ride and campout at Dunns Creek State Park, tour of 10 educational stations by historians and availability of nature-based vendors, demonstrations and environmental

groups and food trucks.

- The Bostwick Blueberry Festival will be on April 26 at the Bostwick Community Center, 1252 Tillman St. in Palatka. In addition to buying or pre-picked or picking your own blueberries, guests can enjoy a blueberry pancake breakfast, blueberry ice cream, blueberry pies, free entertainment, vendors, Humane Society pet adoptions and used library book sales.

- Freedom Fest will be at the Putnam County Fairgrounds in East Palatka on April 26. Veterans can enjoy a free barbecue dinner and receive free information about opportunities for services and benefits. For a schedule, visit VetsFreedomFest.org or call (386) 546-9126.

May

- The Mug Race for sailboats with a maximum height of 44 feet will leave the City Dock and Boat Ramp on May 3 at 7:55 a.m. and end 38 miles later in Orange Park. To register, visit rudderclub.com or call (904) 264-4094.

- The Wolfson Children's Bass Tournament is scheduled for May 15-17, 2025. Anglers will leave the Palatka City Dock and Boat Ramp at 6 a.m. with hopes of catching the largest fish or the largest five-fish aggregate weight between two fishermen. Last year's winners were Parker Stalvey of Green Cove Springs and Syler Prince of Palatka. Together, they caught five fish weighing a total of 27.79 pounds on Saturday, May 18. Last year's event attracted more than 1,000 anglers and raised more than \$385,000 to support Wolfson's life-saving cardiology and heart surgery equipment and state-of-the-art technology.

- The Blue Crab Festival during Memorial Day weekend is one of the largest festivals in Northeast Florida. The celebration of its namesake river crustacean attracts 10s of thousands of people in downtown Palatka along the waterfront and throughout the city. This year's festival will be May 23-25 and will attract family-friendly national headlining entertainment, full-day concert lineups of regional musicians, dozens of vendors and food trucks, activities and entertainment.



The Blue Crab Festival during Memorial Day weekend is one of the largest festivals in Northeast Florida

June

- Red, White and Boom will be on June 28 near the Crescent City Dock. The event includes live entertainment, games, a foam party and fireworks.



The Palatka Fourth of July Fireworks Show will be on July 4 along the riverfront.

July

- The Interlachen Independence Day Celebration will be on July 4 throughout the downtown area. The event starts with a child's fishing tournament at 8 a.m. and concludes with a fireworks show at 9 p.m.
- The Palatka Fourth of July Fireworks Show will be on July 4 along the riverfront. The festivities will start at 4 p.m., wrapping up with a 9 p.m. fireworks show over the St. Johns River.

September

- The Occupation of Palatka 1864 will be staged from Sept. 26 to Sept. 28 at the Bronson Mulholland House, 100 Madison St. in Palatka. Step back in time when Union soldiers drilled in the yard during the Union Occupation of Palatka. The event presents a slice of daily life during the chaos of the Civil War.
- For more information, visit putnam-fl-historical-society.org.

October

- The Florahome Fall Festival will be on Oct. 18 at Palmetto Park. For more information, call (386) 659-2321.
- The Crescent City Fall Festival is scheduled for Oct. 25 along Central Avenue. Visit crescentcity-fl.com/visit for more information.
- The Halloween Spooktacular will be on Oct. 25 at Ravine Gardens State Park, 1600 Twigg St. in Palatka from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. The family-friendly event will be filled with Halloween excitement. Admission is \$5 a person. For more information, call (386) 329-3721.
- Boo on the Avenue will be on Oct. 31 in downtown Palatka along St. Johns Avenue. The

event is for children in sixth grade and younger.

- The Interlachen Fall Festival will be along the riverfront on Nov. 1. For more information, visit nffolk.com.

November

- The Putnam County Sheriff's Office PAL Boxing Tournament will be on Nov. 1 and 2 at the Fred P. Green Gymnasium. The event is part of the Florida PAL State Boxing Championships. For a complete schedule, visit putnamsheriff.com.

- The Day of the Dead Festival will be on Nov. 1 at Eva Lyons Park in Crescent City. For more information, visit crescentcity-fl.com.

- The Palatka Fall Bluegrass Festival will be at the Rodeheaver Boys Ranch, 380 Boys Ranch Road in Palatka, from Nov. 6 to Nov. 8. For a complete schedule, visit rbr.org.

- The Veteran's Day Parade will be on Nov. 11 along St. Johns Avenue in downtown Palatka at 10 a.m.

- Holiday House will be from Nov. 7 through Dec. 22 at the Tilghman House, Palatka Art League, 324 River St. Visit the Palatka Art League's house with seven rooms and two hallways decorated with hand-crafted items, jewelry, Christmas ornaments and gifts of all kinds. For hours, call (386) 325-8750.

- The Palatka Craft Beer Festival will lift a mug on Nov. 23 along the riverfront. For a complete schedule, visit palatkabeerfest.com.

- The Palatka Christmas Parade will be on Nov. 29 on St. Johns Avenue in downtown Palatka. The parade starts at 7 p.m. To register a float, call (386) 983-9847.

December

- The Toys Tour will be from Dec. 6 to Dec. 8 at Crystal Cove Marina. The toys drive helps



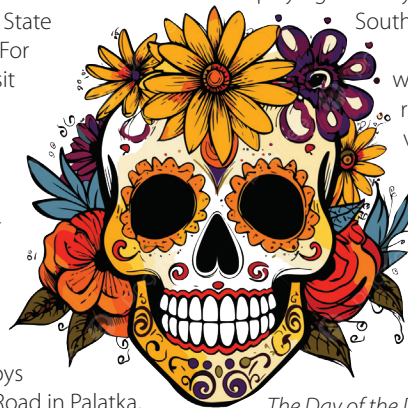
The Palatka Porchfest Music Fest is on Dec. 7. Sponsored by the South Historic Neighborhood of Palatka.

underprivileged victims of domestic violence during the holidays, so no child is without a gift. For more information, visit toystourflorida.com.

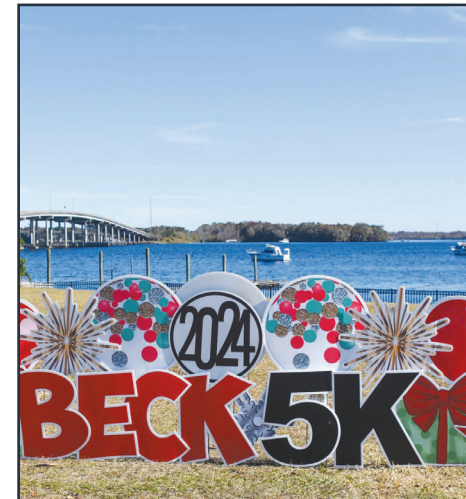
- The Palatka Porchfest Music Fest is on Dec. 7. Sponsored by the South Historic Neighborhood of Palatka is a family-friendly event that features more than a dozen bands playing a variety of music throughout the South Historic Neighborhood.

- The Beck 5K Rein-Beer Run will be on Dec. 7 along the riverfront in Palatka. To sign up, visit becksignup.com.

- The Jarvis Williams Holiday Basketball Tournament will be at Palatka High on Dec. 26 and 27. For a schedule, call (904) 540-5384.



The Day of the Dead Festival will be on Nov. 1 at Eva Lyons Park in Crescent City.



The Beck 5K Rein-Beer Run will be on Dec. 7 along the riverfront in Palatka.

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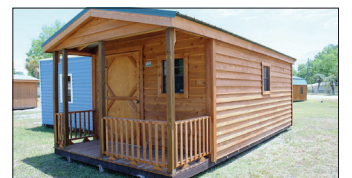
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