

# The Byway Buzz

July 2012 Vol: 2 Issue: 3

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## Message From Jeff Caster



Jeff Caster

As the status of the National Scenic Byways Program is still uncertain, please be confident the Florida Scenic Highways Program (FSHP)

community is as strong and as motivated as ever. Leadership at the Florida Department of Transportation has renewed interest and understanding of the economic value and potential of the FSHP. Byway groups throughout the state are gaining momentum and strength greater than ever before. The FSHP has a new sense of direction and is eager to make a difference, preserving and promoting our state's amazing resources, and by providing economic development and job creation. With the FSHP designation process reactivated as of June 1, 2012, a new and enthused State Scenic Highways Coordinator, and a new sense of commitment and enthusiasm from the FDOT, the FSHP will be a model grassroots program for many years to come.

Please feel free to reach out to me and my staff at any time. We are here to support you, and need to work as a team to develop and implement a new vision – a new direction – and a new FSHP. I look forward to the road ahead, and am confident of our success! Enjoy the trip – experience a Florida Scenic Highway.

Jeff Caster

**Golfing Under the Stars  
J.C. Penney Memorial Scenic Highway**  
*By Cathie Parrott*

On Friday May 11<sup>th</sup>, just shy of the full moon, the J.C. Penney Memorial Scenic Highway, C.M.E, CASH-16, sponsored a "glow-ball" golf tournament on the 9-hole course owned by Penney Retirement

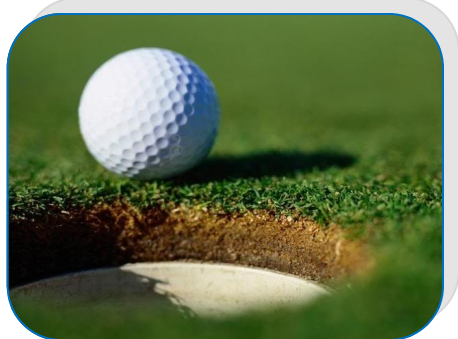


Retirement Community. Each player was allowed three clubs of their choice and a putter, in their bag. The registration of \$40 per person covered 2 rounds of play,

goodie bag, use of cart and dinner.

The first round, beginning at six was regular evening play with a shotgun start, followed by dinner. Before the moonlight round began the tee boxes, green flags and golf carts were equipped with glow sticks as were any hazards on the course. Armed with glow balls and Mulligan replacements the foursomes hit the links again!!

The second round took considerably longer but Penney Farms residents came out to encourage the "bobbing lights" and attached players, from surrounding sidewalks and benches!! There was much laughter and wise cracks floating in the night-time air as they made their way around the, now, much more challenging course. The evening ended with trophies and prizes being presented amid stories of escapades in the sand traps.



All nine holes were sponsored, U.S. Foods supplied the barbeque pork, rolls, beans, chips and dessert and Pepsi provided the drinks. This partnership event, which raised almost \$1,400 and introduced new friends to our scenic highway corridor, was both fun and very worthwhile. It is definitely something we will build on in the future.

## Old Chimney Park Receives Historical Registration

By Jean Wallace



Pensacola Scenic Bluffs received notification that the Hyer-Knowles Planing Mill Chimney was listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

The National Register of Historic Places is an official listing of sites and properties throughout the United States that reflect the historic occupation and historical development of our nation, states and local communities. It is maintained by the

Keeper of the National Register, National Park Services, U.S. Department of the Interior. To qualify for the national Register the applicant must first qualify in Florida as a Florida Heritage Landmark. This application was filed by Scenic Highway Foundation member and grant writer Mary Gutierrez on March 10, 2009. After approval as a Florida Heritage Landmark, the state recommended the application be sent to the National Register of Historic Places. Notification of the listing was sent to Scenic Highway Foundation May 24, 2012 .

The Old Chimney property is part of a land grant to Emanuel Bonifay in 1813. The chimney was built in the mid-1850's on land acquired by Henry Hyer in January of 1854. It was part of the steam power plant for the "Hyer-Knowles Planing Mill" which was in operation by 1857. The original bricks for the chimney were hand made by slaves in one the nearby brick factories that lined the west coast of Escambia Bay. In March 1862, General Braxton Bragg was evacuating the Confederate forces holding Pensacola when Confederate Secretary of War Judah P. Benjamin ordered the destruction of everything that could be of use to the advancing Union forces. His instructions were to "Destroy all machinery private and public which could be useful to the enemy; especially disable the sawmills in and around the Bay, and burn the lumber". He set March 10 as the deadline for the demolition. The Hyer-Knowles Mill (except for the brick chimney) was destroyed that night. Local legend has been that the Hyer-Knowles machinery was loaded onto barges in an



attempt to save as much as possible. Confederate memos say thunderstorms and large waves swept Escambia Bay that night of March 10, 1863. The Hyer-Knowles machinery on the barges sank to the bottom of the bay. Thus the chimney serves as a physical reminder of the internal struggles of our nation during the Civil War.

Today the property is configured as a "mini" or "ribbon" park functioning as a roadside rest area with parking spaces and brick walkways. It is located on a portion of Highway 90 that is Scenic Highway in Pensacola, Florida. The highway is the first Florida State "Scenic Highway" designated on April 13, 1998 as Pensacola Scenic Bluffs Highway.

A local volunteer group, the Scenic Highway Foundation was formed to manage the Highway. The Foundation is in the process of writing a grant for the restoration of the historic brick chimney in order to stabilize the structure and prevent further deterioration of this historic gem.

## Tallahassee to St. Marks Railroad Along the Woodville Highway



Let's take a step back in time, year 1837 Tallahassee along the Woodville Highway.

The Tallahassee to St. Marks Railroad was the first rail line established in Florida, starting operation in 1837. It was an im-

portant means of transportation during the Antebellum Period, taking cotton from the rich agricultural region around Tallahassee, as well as naval stores from this same region, to port for shipment abroad.

The railroad originally consisted of cars being pulled along wooden rails by mules. In the 1850s, the wood rails were replaced with iron, and a steam powered locomotive was added.

During the Civil War, the railroad was used to move Confederate troops between Tallahassee and several Confederate camps south of town, and to Confederate Fort Ward at St. Marks. When the U.S. landed troops at the St. Marks lighthouse in 1865, the railroad was used to transport troops, militia, and volunteers to the front, including to defend Natural Bridge on the St. Marks River and the bridge across the St. Marks at Newport.

The route is now the Tallahassee to St. Marks Historic Railroad State Trail and it is possible to follow it all the way between Tallahassee and St. Marks by foot, bicycle, or horse.

## The Byway Buzz Tidbits

- **Photo Contest**—Deadline July 5, 2012, Old Florida Heritage Highway. [More information](#). Hope to see the winning picture in next newsletter.
- **VISIT FLORIDA Supports A1A Byway Plans for Spoonbills and Sprockets and More** - Once again VISIT FLORIDA has awarded 3 new grants to A1A for marketing, image development and tourism education for FY 2012-2013. Themes will include art along the Byway, bike safety and hospitality training for partners. These regular culture, heritage and tourism grants allow for increased awareness for all.
- **On October 28<sup>th</sup> Friends of A1A will host a leisure bike tour** from Marineland to Gamble Rogers to St Augustine Beach at the Pier and back to Marineland for a joyous BBQ with music and merriment. The event is planned annually and expects well over 100 riders. Register at [www.scenica1a.org](http://www.scenica1a.org) and find details.
- **Sunset Celebration at Vilano Beach Pier** -A new Marina at Marineland was dedicated in August 2011 and a new public dock installed at Vilano Beach in 2012. Soon the blueways connections via water routes along the A1A Byway will be popular as in days of old when Spaniards, French and Englishmen navigated the waters. To enhance the visiting experience, Vilano Beach Main Street has begun regular first Saturday *Sunset Celebrations*. The event features artisans, musicians, crafts people and more drawing crowds to enjoy the setting sun from the Intracoastal side of the Vilano Beach peninsula. Seven new businesses have opened since January with more to follow in this small A1A community – a hidden gem along the byway and home to the International Skim Boarding competition in August.
- **Kids Care**—On May 4<sup>th</sup> 650 elementary students in St. Augustine gathered at Anastasia State Park to make a statement: *Kids Care*. The 4<sup>th</sup> annual Environmental Education Fair hosted by Friends of A1A fascinated all with 27 learning booths engaging three area schools. What a day ! It was highlighted with a walk to the beach for an aerial art mosaic in the sand – a sea manatee. Modeled after the California Kids Day, the A1A event increases environmental awareness at a young age.

## **Website Information**

**Tourism Website:** [floridascenichighways.com](http://floridascenichighways.com)

**Program Website:** [floridascenichighways.com/program](http://floridascenichighways.com/program)

**Follow us on Twitter:** @FLscenichighway

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/FloridaScenicHighwaysProgram](http://www.facebook.com/FloridaScenicHighwaysProgram)

**Email Address:** [FloridaScenicHighways@gmail.com](mailto:FloridaScenicHighways@gmail.com)

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