

LIBPA April 2004 Newsletter

Island Notes:

Under Construction: Lady's Island Commons, a nine-unit business complex adjacent to the Lady's Island Cinema. Each unit will be two stories designed for retail use on the ground floor and either residential or business offices on the second level. Palmetto Business Park, located across from Rue Dubois on Lady's Island Drive and next to Palmetto State Bank consists of thirteen commercial lots and a new BB&T Bank. Barbara Jean's Restaurant located adjacent to the Sea Island Presbyterian Church at the intersection of Lady's Island Drive and Ferry Road. The commercial buildings located at the front of the Celadon development on Sams Point Road.

In the planning stages are a wide variety of projects for the Village Center. The largest number of planned projects are buildings in the category of two story buildings with retail on the ground floor and either residential or office on the second floor. The new "face lift" for the Beaufort Plaza Annex, where Winn Dixie is located, is in the final stage of review. Some of our businesses in the Village Center are in the planning stages for construction of new facilities to either expand their present operation or construction of new facilities at a new location.

Recently approved is a one bay automated car wash adjacent to the Exxon Station/Convenience Store opposite the New Point community. LIBPA has expressed our concern that it was approved as a "special use" type of business without allowing for public comment or review by the Zoning Board of Appeals which is normally the case for similar type businesses. The Beaufort County Development Review Team recently reviewed plans for Garfield Park, which is a 38-lot development and is phase III of the Cat Island development.

In response to requests from our members as to where and to whom one can write to express their support for mail boxes continuing as part of the postal service provided on Lady's Island the following address is provided:

Mr. Lee Shelton
Acting Manager, Consumer Affairs
U. S. Postal Service
451 College Street
Macon, Georgia 31213-9631/ S

From The President:

While serving as the President of LIBPA I am constantly amazed and impressed at the wide variety of projects with which we are involved in our efforts to serve the Lady's Island community. Following is a brief status report of the current projects.

Establishment of a Redevelopment District around the Village Center. This project, which has been worked on for over two years by the Community Preservation Committee, was recently reviewed by the Beaufort County Planning Commission and forwarded to County Council recommending their approval. If County Council approves the establishment of a Redevelopment District the long term result should be an increase of available housing in the vicinity of the Village Center and the improvement of areas that have deteriorated over the years.

Establishing a program for the maintenance of the medians on Sams Point Road. Bob Stoothoff has taken the lead in this effort along with Bill Rice and Robert Deloach. Brad Hill, a landscape architect with the Beaufort Planning Group, has agreed to design the plantings, obtain the necessary permits and provide cost estimates. The committee will then approach the Lady's Island business community to obtain sponsorship funds for the plantings, installation and first year's maintenance. Two island businesses have already indicated their willingness to sponsor a median. If you are interested in sponsoring or cosponsoring with another business one of the remaining medians please contact Bob Stoothoff or Bill Rice for details regarding sponsorship.

Erection of a "Welcome to Lady's Island" sign on the Sea Island Parkway entrance to the Village Center. Pat Harvey Palmer is leading this effort. As an organization we can allocate \$2000 from our reserves for the sign. The recommended style of sign cost \$4000 and the members have contributed a portion of the remaining \$2000. Simply stated we will either raise the additional funds or buy a less expensive sign.

Keeping our members and the community informed. This is an area in which we, as an organization, can take great pride. In the last two years we have gone from a single sheet two page newsletter to an 8 page newsletter. We now can deliver our newsletters either by e-mail or regular mail. Thanks to the generosity of Steve Thompson of PC Web Services we have established and maintained a current

comprehensive informational web site about our island. This web site is provided and maintained as a community service by Steve and LIBPA. Thanks to Pat Harvey Palmer's efforts we have published a "Welcome to Lady's Island" business pamphlet which is available to our members and is distributed by the Chamber of Commerce.

Monitoring the current zoning regulations. The LIBPA Community Preservation Committee successfully sponsored numerous changes to our island's zoning in 2003 and is currently the driving factor in sponsoring the Redevelopment District. As a matter of general interest the Lady's Island Community Preservation Committee is the only active Community Preservation Committee in Beaufort County. Most similar committees disband after the initial zoning is approved. However, due to the intense pressure of growth on Lady's Island our committee has continued to effectively serve the community.

Membership. LIBPA has grown at a fantastic rate over the last two years. This growth is directly related to the support and promotion of our members. To date we have not conducted an expensive advertisement campaign nor have we done a mass mail solicitation for membership. Jane Hincer has graciously agreed to be the Chairman of our membership committee this year. If you have ideas on how we can do a better job of getting the word out to potential members in the community regarding LIBPA please pass them to Jane or any of us on the Board Directors.

Following are additional projects which the LIBPA Board of Directors have approved for our organization's active support,

- A park on Lady's Island.
- Development of the Crystal Lake area as a passive park.
- A consolidated storm water management system in the Village Center.
- A third elementary school before our present schools are totally overwhelmed by growth.
- Promotion of equal postal services for the Village Center to include mail boxes.

Have we, as an organization, taken on too much and possible spread ourselves too thin to be effective? I offer the answer to that question is directly dependent on the number of members willing to contribute of their time and talents in this regard. During my time as president I have not received a negative response from a single member who I have asked for help or assistance. With that type of attitude and support by our members we can continue to be both productive and effective in our efforts to support of the Lady's Island community



U.S. Group Nominated For Award:

The National Partnership for Highway Quality is an organization consisting of officials, contractors, engineers, community members and others who have embraced the idea that an emphasis on quality - from design, to construction, to delivery and performance - produces the best possible return on our nation's roadway investment. A "quality" project is defined as one which brings all stakeholders to the table - from roadway professionals to local citizens and businesses - to plan, coordinate, and carry out roadway construction so that it delivers the maximum return on the public's investment. This organization presents an annual "Making a Difference Award" which is designed to recognize projects and organizational teams that have contributed to "making a difference" in the quality of our Nation's highways.

U. S. Group and the Sams Point Road widening project have been selected by the South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) to be nominated for this award. The nomination highlights the exceptional team effort of SCDOT, the county, local utility companies, LIBPA, the community and especially the contractor, U. S. Group. U. S. Group was the 2003 recipient of the "Lady's Island Spirit Award", which is presented annually to a company or individual who makes a significant contribution to the community. In addition, LIBPA President Jan Malinowski sent a letter of appreciation to Mrs. Elizabeth Mabry, Executive Director of the South Carolina Department of Transportation for the superb manner in which the project was conducted.

It is nice to see companies that work with the community, do quality work, bring their projects in on time and within cost estimates receive recognition. Congratulations to both U. S. Group and Greg Cook, their regional manager. We wish them luck in the competition. The winners of the competition will be announced in June. Lady's Island was the real winner by having a well planned, supervised and executed construction project to widen Sams Point Road.

New Contract Postal Unit Coming Soon: By Donna L. Ricks, USPS Public Affairs & Communications, South Georgia District

A new Contract Postal Unit (CPU) will be opening soon to provide Lady's Island customers convenient access to postal services. The Paper Company, located at 10 Sam's Point Road on Lady's Island will provide all retail services with the exception of post office box rental, meter settings, and bulk mail acceptance. Hours of operation will be Monday through Saturday, 9:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. CPU's are retail outlets under contract to the Postal Service. They are found in a variety of locations, and most are operated in conjunction with another business. The majority of CPU's are established by the competitive bid process. Bids were solicited from retailers in the area and the successful bidder was chosen based on the ability to meet Postal Service and customer requirements. The Paper Company was the successful bidder and we are confident that they will represent the Postal Service and its products in a professional, business-like manner.

Contract postal services with the current contractor, Review Office Supplies, will terminate on or before May 6, 2004. The Paper Company, only ¼ mile from the current CPU, will provide all retail services with the exception of post office box service. A CPU will not provide post office box service since providing this service makes a commitment to the customer as to the availability of a delivery service. Post office box service may be obtained from the Beaufort Main Office or Burton Station, and/or St. Helena Island Post Office. Lady's Island customers who wish to receive mail at their residence should contact Dale Miller, Officer in Charge, Beaufort Post Office, at 843-525-9085 for proper placement of your mailbox.

Editors Note: A special thanks to Ms. Ricks' for her response to LIBPA's request for information regarding the removal of the mail boxes and the relocation of the postal unit on Lady's Island. A recent check with the Paper Company indicates they plan to be ready for business by April 1, 2004.

AFLAC Establishes District Headquarters On Lady's Island:

Mr. Randy Waters, recently assigned as the American Family Life Assurance Company (AFLAC) District Coordinator for the Beaufort and Jasper County area, has established an AFLAC district office in the Oakwood Plaza business office on Sams Point Road. A Fortune 200 Company, AFLAC is the leading provider of voluntary supplemental benefits marketed at the worksite in the United States. They offer policies to employees at more than 270,000 payroll accounts across the country. These programs can be provided for little to no cost by employers.

Prior to coming to Beaufort and Lady's Island Mr. Waters was the AFLAC South Carolina State Training Coordinator and located in Charleston. For additional information regarding AFLAC Randy invites you to call him at (843) 521-9440 or via e-mail at randell_waters@us.aflac.com.

Editors Note: LIBPA welcomes AFLAC and Mr. Waters to Lady's Island. A special thanks to Randy for taking the time to provide the information in this article.

Signs and Sams Point Road:

When the decision was made to zone the property along the newly widened portion of Sams Point Road as a modified form of commercial zoning called "Expanded Home Business" it was recognized that establishing appropriate sign regulations would be a challenge. To the owner of a commercial business a good sign is one that identifies the business and brings customers into his or her establishment. Which type of sign is attractive or ugly is often in the eye of the beholder.

Since most of the property in the Expanded Home Business District along Sams Point Road is residential, the first challenge in drafting the sign regulations was to keep the size of the sign appropriate to be in the yard next to a private home. Another factor was to provide the new business owner a reasonable choice of different styles of signs. It was not the intended to make Sam's Point Road have the "Hilton Head" look but rather to insure the signs could blend into the neighborhood.

With the popularity of the expanded home business concept where the older homes along Sams Point Road are being purchased, renovated and transformed from residential to business use, the present sign regulations for the area are being tested. Just as with any new regulations there is always room for different interpretations by different individuals. This has occurred with the different businesses involved in making and designing signs. LIBPA has requested LIBPA member Frank Bailey of Spectrum Graphics to work with the county representatives to insure those "gray or ambiguous" areas of our sign

regulations are clarified so that regardless of who asks for a sign permit they receive the same answer. We sincerely appreciate Frank's willingness to work on this problem.

Signs that existed prior to the new zoning are "grandfathered" in that they may continue to exist as they are until the time of change or replacement. When changed or replaced the new signs must meet the current regulations. Obviously, this evolution could take years but prevents added expense to the present business owners.

It is rapidly becoming apparent that the small signs stuck in the ground by two wires, which in the past were used primarily for political races, are gaining in popularity for business advertisement. Will the use of these types of signs reach the point of becoming an eyesore? The political signs had a very limited time they could be posted and were required to be removed after that date. The use of these signs for business advertisement is a new area and one that deserves attention.

Finally, there is no system that will prevent individuals or businesses from putting up signs without any approval or review. However, Beaufort County Codes Enforcement (470-2597) can be requested to check a specific sign to ensure that it has a permit and meets regulations. If the sign is found to be illegal they will require its removal. Lady's Island is a community in transition facing intense pressure from both residential and commercial growth. LIBPA will continue its efforts to ensure the sign guidelines accurately reflect the taste of the community.

A Bridge Solution?:

LIBPA President Jan Malinowski and Jim Hicks, who represents Lady's Island on the Planning Commission, recently appeared before the Beaufort County Capital Project Sales Tax Commission to plead the case for inclusion in the 1% Sales Tax Referendum of a project to relieve the present traffic over load on the bridges leading to Lady's Island. Specifically, the need for a project to increase the capacity of the McTeer Bridge was addressed. Both of the bridges have reached their maximum capacity for which they were designed. If LIBPA members or members of the community desire to address the Capital Projects Sales Tax Commission their next meeting is on April 14 at 6 P. M. in Darra Hall at Penn Center on St. Helena. Public comment is normally limited to 3 minutes.

A Tough Year For Business? At the end of each calendar year we provide our members a summary of the Beaufort County business licenses Issued on Lady's Island with a comparison to previous years. The results are not offered as scientific evidence but rather as a general guide as to how business is doing on the island. Having said that, the 2003 data would indicate that for the first time since Beaufort County began issuing business license in 1999 there was a decline (-28) in the total number of businesses on the island and a reduction of almost \$30 million in the amount of estimated gross revenue generated by the existing businesses. It should be noted that the gross revenue for a business is provided by the individual applicant and naturally could be underestimated. However, a \$30 million decline is difficult to explain by nothing more than under estimation of projected gross revenue. The key to the revenue reduction would appear to be in the housing construction industry. Although there was a minor increase (3) in the number of general contractors, a significant increase (+100) in the number of Lady's Island housing permits issued in 2003 and a 16% increase in the price of the average house sold on Lady's Island the estimated gross revenue for general contractors decreased by \$17 million, returning to the 2001 level. However, the possibility of a decline in the housing construction industry on Lady's Island is supported by a reduction of 13 special trade contractors in 2003, which resulted in \$2.7 million less revenue than the previous year. Also the reduction of 3-business license in the hardware and garden supplies area combined with a reduction of \$1 million in revenue adds additional support to concerns for a possible slowdown in housing construction in 2004. However, there is too much conflicting data to make any valid prediction.

The reduction in the number of real estate license combined with a reduction in the amount of gross revenue is difficult to explain. Across the board, last year was a good year for the real estate market both in volume and average price per house sold. Our members in the real estate business report 2003 as a good year. On Lady's Island in 2003 more houses were sold at the highest average price of any time in our history.

The areas that showed strength in both quantity and revenue were professional and business services, general retail and restaurants. Lawn Care Services was added as a new category this year and recorded 17 businesses with gross revenue of \$1.7 million. The revenue from businesses licenses paid

to Beaufort County by Lady's Island businesses was \$35,701. It should be noted that the data upon which this article is based does not include those businesses (Publix, Walgreen, the Marina, Ollie's, Upper Crust and Fuji) in the Village Center located on Beaufort City property. Following is the business license data for 2000 through 2003 for those areas, which LIBPA has watched over the last few years and provided for our member's review and evaluation.

BUSINESS TYPE	NUMBER BUSINESS LICENSE ISSUED				GROSS REVENUE (MILLION)			
	2000	2001	2002	2003	2000	2001	2002	2003
Professional Services (Note 1)	11	7	42	39	3.3	31.8	9.2	9.8
Business Services	13	21	19	16	0.9	3.5	1.3	2.9
General Contractor	31	48	57	43	6.9	8.3	7.0	4.3
Eating/Drinking Places	7	11	12	10	3.7	2.9	3.7	4.5
Hardware/Garden Supply	9	9	9	6	26.2	29.8	24.9	23.3
Food/Convenience Store	6	5	8	8	8.1	8.5	12.8	6.4
Health Services	11	15	16	16	3.3	3.9	4.3	4.0
Insurance	3	4	4	4	0.6	6.4	5.6	5.7
Miscellaneous Retail	10	15	12	19	4.3	4.5	4.3	6.1
Real Estate	23	22	24	17	27.1	3.6	4.0	3.1
All Others	79	113	112	106	51.7	32.0	17.0	21.9
Total	220	312	353	325	146.6	38.2	157.3	128.1

Note 1: The category of professional services, established in 2002, includes engineers, architects, accountants, lawyers and similar professional fields.

Editor's Note: The data for this article was obtained from the records of the Beaufort County Business License Department. A special thanks to Ms. Reba Hunt, Director of the Business License Department and Ms. Diane Butler, License Specialist for their gracious support and patience in the collection of data for this article.

Real Estate: by Jerry Marlow, Broker In Charge, Coldwell Bankers Keyserling Real Estate

The following information is designed to provide a statistical look at the real estate picture in the key areas of northern Beaufort County over the last 9 years (1995-2003). The first figure represents the 1995 data the second the 2003 data and the figure in parenthesis the percentage of change. For example Beaufort's volume was \$9 million in 1995 and \$19 million in 2003 for an increase of 109%, 75 units were sold in 1995 and only 54 in 2003 for a decrease of 28%, the average price of a house sold in Beaufort in 1995 was \$120,000 and \$351,000 in 2003 thus a increase of 191%.

Area	Volume	Total Units	Avg Price
Beaufort	9 - 19 (+109%)	75-54 (-28%)	120 - 351 (+191%)
Mossy Oaks	7 - 13 (+ 88%)	66-89 (+35%)	106 - 147 (+39%)
Port Royal	3 - 14 (+347%)	39-95 (+44%)	78 - 143 (+84%)
Burton	17 - 36 (+113%)	192-214 (+91%)	81 - 131 (+62%)
Lady's Island	19 - 63 (+225%)	163-286 (+76%)	119 - 219 (+84%)
Total Area	56 - 145 (+161%)	535-739 (+38%)	104 - 196 (+89%)

Burton and Lady's Island provided the majority of the volume to the real estate market. For example, those two areas provided 68% of all the houses sold in 2003. Lady's Island contributed 43% of the volume and 39% of the houses sold in 2003. The average selling price of a home sold on Lady's Island was higher than any of the other areas north of the Broad River except the City of Beaufort. In that same line a homeowner on Lady's Island has enjoyed a 16% annual increase in the resale value of their home.

Lady's Island Elementary School:

Mr. Terry Bennett, Principal of Lady's Island Elementary School and LIBPA member graciously includes LIBPA in his efforts to insure the parents of the students are well informed about the school. Following are some of the items, which he recently passed to the parents, and are offered to our members for general information.

At this point in the school year the Lady's Island Elementary School has seen a 10% growth in the number of students as compared to last year and a 100% growth since 1999. The present enrollment is 407 students consisting of 204 males and 203 females. With this enrollment and a capacity of 400 students the schools is slightly over capacity.

The school was recently selected by the South Carolina Psychological Association as a winner of the Psychologically Healthy Work Place Award in the small non-profit category. The selection was based on four criteria (employee involvement, family support, employee growth and development and health and safety). The award was made on a statewide basis and now will be submitted for national recognition.

Following are some of the results of a recent survey of parents of students attending the school.

- 97.3% said that the school keeps the parents informed about being a Title One School.
- 100% said the school informs the parents about the students' progress.
- Only one parent voted that their child was not safe at school.
- Less than 5% of the parents completing the survey said their children do not enjoy the Accelerated Reader program.
- 92% of the parents voted that their children have the opportunity to eat a nutritious breakfast and/or lunch.
- To the question: I feel my child is safe on the school bus, 4 parents voted No.

Mr. Bennett and his staff have worked hard to insure that Lady's Island Elementary School offers a top quality "art based" educational program, which attracts and retains students and keeps parents and the community informed. His effective use of e-mail reports to parents, a great web site combined with his use of the editorial page of the local newspaper and paid advertisements insure the Lady's Island Elementary School story is available to parents and the community.

Lady's Island is very fortunate to have the talented and dedicated teachers and administrators in our public and private schools on the island. LIBPA sincerely appreciates their dedication and hard work and pledges to support them in every way possible.

Membership

We are in the last phase of reminding our members about their annual dues. The vast majority of our members have paid their dues. If you are not sure as to whether you have paid your 2004 LIBPA membership dues please check the address label of this month's newsletter. If it has a red dot on it, our records indicate you have not paid. If you receive your newsletter by e-mail and desire confirmation as to your status please call our treasurer Stephanie Bost (521-5668).

Jane Hincer and Jim Hicks have volunteered to call those members who have not paid their dues to insure it is not simply an oversight.

Regretfully, on April 30, 2004 we must remove from our membership rolls those who have not paid their dues.

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Lady's Island, SC 29907

Our New Address: LIBPA
182-B Sea Island Pkwy
PMB 102
Lady's Island, S. C. 29907
