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STUDENTS RETURN



Members of the Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity give high-fives to students as they arrive for the first day of school at Margaret Willis Elementary School on Aug. 25. See more photos at fayobserver.com.

PHOTOS BY ANDREW CRAFT/THE FAYETTEVILLE OBSERVER



Superintendent Dr. Eric Bracy, Police Chief Roberto E. Bryan Jr., CCS mascot Cooper and members of the Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity give high-fives to students as they arrive for the first day of school at Margaret Willis Elementary School.



Myron B. Pitts
Opinion Editor
Fayetteville Observer
USA TODAY NETWORK

New plaza to complement Dirtbag Ales

I like a good small business story because it is usually a story of family and community, too. It's also like watching someone launch into the big waters on a smaller boat. You pull for them.

It's a story of people investing in a place, not just extracting money out of a place.

And when we have a story like the new Dirtbag Plaza, under construction on Corporation Drive just south of Hope Mills, we are talking many small business stories intersecting.

The plaza is adjacent to Dirtbag Ales Brewery & Taproom, a popular "third place" that combines family-centric experiences from a farmer's market to a playground to a dog park and a restaurant, Napkins. The plaza is meant to complement the brew pub and will be trying some new things in terms of food delivery.

Tenants that have signed on include Jersey Mike's, expected to open in September; Tropical Smoothie, which is under construction and is slated to open before Thanksgiving and perhaps as early as October; and The BBQ Lab, which currently operates a food truck up the hill at the brewery and is expected to open in the winter.

All this information is according to Jerry Hall, a co-owner of Dirtbag Ales, to whom I spoke on the afternoon of Aug. 22. Hall said about 4,800 square feet of space remains for lease. How many additional businesses that space translates to depends on the future tenants' space needs and floor layouts.

Wanted: A pizza place, and more. Vape shops need not apply.

Hall's team has a few types of places in mind when it comes to additional tenants.

"We are strongly looking for a New York-style pizza-by-the-slice vendor," he said. "Because our customers at Dirtbag Ales are asking for it."

Other retail offerings the Dirtbag Plaza would be very amenable to include a hair and nail salon and a work-out facility, Hall said.

The plaza team also has establishments they are not interested in.

See **PITTS**, Page 2A

Hurricane season in lull, expected to ramp up

John Bacon
USA TODAY

The quiet weather forecast across the Atlantic Basin for the next two weeks could test the adage of "calm before the storm," forecasters say.

Tropical Storm Fernand was headed into open waters of the central Atlantic, more than 600 miles east-northeast of Bermuda, the National Hurricane Center said Aug. 26. No storm watches or

warnings were in effect, and the center had little else to report from the Atlantic Basin, an area comprising the Caribbean Sea, the Gulf and parts of the Atlantic Ocean.

Still, Alex DaSilva, lead hurricane expert for AccuWeather, said the hurricane season that began June 1 and ends Nov. 30 could heat up soon.

"Sometimes you can get these lulls in the middle of the hurricane season, and it looks like we are going to be having

one, at least across the main (storm) development region," DaSilva said.

DaSilva said there would be a lot of "sinking air," which can tamp down storm development, through the full first week of September. But toward the second week "there's going to be a lot of vertical motion, I think. And so we are going to have to watch those tropical waves very carefully," he said, noting

See **HURRICANE**, Page 6A



Hurricane Erin caused high tides and coastal flooding on Dewey Beach in Delaware. The hurricane season may experience a lull for a couple of weeks before conditions become more favorable for hurricane development.

SHANNON MARVEL MCNAUGHT/WILMINGTON NEWS JOURNAL

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