



MEDIA RELEASE

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Ribault Club Revitalization Adds Revenue and Sophistication to Jacksonville Area

Jacksonville, FL – The Ribault Club at Fort George Island Cultural State Park, recently renovated through a partnership between city, state and federal governments, today announced economic impact results for Fiscal Year 2005. The Ribault Club is a Florida Park Service facility, with special events marketed and managed by Amelia Occasions Inc., Amelia Island’s premier event management firm.

The Ribault Club is a mixed space that offers a sophisticated and historic backdrop for weddings and corporate events. The facility provides visitors grand entryways, sweeping lawns and views, a spacious ballroom, intimate meeting rooms and multiple catering kitchens. The property hosts the Fort George Island Visitor Center, with interactive exhibits, jointly created and managed by the National Park Service and the Florida Park Service, that guides visitors through the cultural and natural history of Fort George Island over the past 6000 years.

“It was important to those of us in public service to maintain the historical integrity of the Club while expanding visitor opportunities, as well as the economic enhancement of the community,” commented Robert E. Joseph, Park Manager, Talbot Islands State Parks.

Promoting the natural history and beauty of the Park and the Club has been an important component in marketing the space for special events.

In its first year operated by Amelia Occasions, the Ribault Club reports the following statistics:

- 114 events were held in 2005
- 59% were weddings, followed by corporate & social events
- 13% were destination events, 87% were local events
- 12,770 guests attended events at the Club
- \$191,700 in income to the Club generated from these 51 events
- 400 inquiries received, 350 marketing packages sent out, 200 site visits scheduled, and over 65 events are booked for 2006 season

Economic Impact to Community (estimate):

- \$1.4MM in catering/floral
- \$ 200K in hotel stays
- \$ 100K in rental cars
- \$162K in other meals, golf, etc.
- **Totally over \$2MM in revenue to Greater Jacksonville**

“When I talk with corporate and private hosts, it’s easy to sell the benefits of the property – an unmatched outdoor setting, gracious interior amenities and a plethora of world-class service purveyors providers in greater Jacksonville,” said Leana Gallagher, President, Amelia Occasions. “It’s why we’ve been so successful,” Mrs. Gallagher noted.

“The renovation of the Ribault Club has strengthened Jacksonville’s national position as an elite destination and expanded the region’s small business economic driver,” said John Reyes, President of the Jacksonville & the Beaches Convention and Visitors Bureau.

The Ribault Club has contracted with over 50 providers of event services over the past 12 months.

“Because we can offer visitors, residents and employers an expanding economy along with our vibrant history and culture, Jacksonville has emerged as one of the nation’s premier places to live and work,” said Mayor John Peyton.

The Ribault Club also contributed to Jacksonville’s national rise that is associated with the honor of hosting last year’s Superbowl XXIX. The Ribault Club was tapped by the NFL Philadelphia Eagles owners who hosted a special event during last year’s Superbowl.

The Ribault Club was selected by this prestigious client, not only for its ambiance, but also because the property and the preferred providers it selects have earned a reputation for exceeding the expectations of clients in a very short time.

“Looking back over our first few years in this partnership, its remarkable what we’ve been able to contribute to the economy and the image of this great city,” Mrs. Gallagher concluded.

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