

Tampa Bay teams are preparing to play in the still of stadiums that have few or no spectators, with far-ranging effects for players and fans. **Sports, 1C**

Tampa Bay Times

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Fla. voters swinging away from president

A *Tampa Bay Times* analysis of statewide polls shows that Donald Trump trails Joe Biden.

BY STEVE CONTORNO AND LANGSTON TAYLOR
Times Staff Writers

President Donald Trump is losing his hold on important swing voters in Florida, imperiling his chance of another four years in office, according to recent polls.

The global health catastrophe, ensuing economic collapse and protests nationwide have tested Trump's leadership and left his popularity diminished, polls have found. The fallout has created an opening in the country's largest swing state for his Democratic rival, former Vice President Joe Biden.

Biden leads Trump in Florida by 5 percentage points, 47.4 percent to 42.5 percent according to a *Tampa Bay Times* analysis of statewide polling data.

The average isn't perfect, and neither is any poll. Each poll comes with a margin of error, **See POLL, 7A**



DIRK SHADD | Times

Lou Claudio, 67, stands in parking lot 1 at Tropicana Field, where he believes the Oaklawn Cemetery was once located.

Tropicana Field parking lots could be grave sites

Those buried in 3 cemeteries were to have been moved, but it's possible the job was not done.

BY PAUL GUZZO
Times Staff Writer

ST. PETERSBURG — Thirty years ago, residents stepped forward when the city prepared to pave parking lots 1 and 2 for Tropicana Field.

They thought caskets were under those 12 acres on the corner of 16th Street S, spreading from Third to Fifth avenues.

It was once the home to Oaklawn Cemetery, the city was told, and bodies were likely left behind when it was moved in the mid-20th century.

Oaklawn was adjacent to two other cemeteries. In 1976, human remains were unearthed from one of those properties during construction, years after the burial grounds were supposed to have been moved, bolstering the belief that bodies were also under the parking lot land.

But the land was paved without further investigation. **See GRAVES, 8A**



Spread across 26 acres of St. Petersburg's waterfront, the new Pier District opens to the public Monday.

ST. PETE PIER

A landmark to capture a city's art and soul



Photos by BOYZELL HOSEY | Times

The signature sculpture of the new St. Petersburg Pier District, *Bending Arc* by renowned artist Janet Echelman, glows Tuesday.

St. Petersburg's \$92 million Pier District makes its debut this week, with 26 acres stretching from the edge of downtown out into Tampa Bay. • The waterfront park features a tilted lawn that people can sit on and children can roll down. Panoramic views abound. Also on tap: a beach, a playground, restaurants, shops, a fishing deck and a center that teaches about the Tampa Bay ecosystem. • Natural shade is enhanced with broad umbrellas, solar panel roofs and three main structures, including one that rises five stories above the water at the Pier's end. Seating is plentiful, as are works of public art, including an aerial net sculpture by international artist Janet Echelman that steals the show above the family park. • At this, the latest iteration in more than a century of St. Petersburg piers, there's much to do and see and a chance to simply be. • For a closer look at the Pier and its surroundings, see **Floridian, 1E**.

ANOTHER RECORD FOR CORONAVIRUS CASES

Florida hit another single-day record for positive coronavirus tests Saturday, with 11,458 new cases. The state is closing in on 200,000 total infections and may surpass that this weekend if cases continue at the same rate as recent days. **1B**

LOCAL PROTESTS SURGE ON THE FOURTH OF JULY

Demonstrators on both sides of Tampa Bay seized the holiday to condemn racism and police brutality. One group shut down the Treasure Island Causeway. In Tampa, another group halted traffic on one of the city's busiest roadways. **1B**

CATCH UP ON NEWS: THE WEEK IN REVIEW

More than 18,000 Floridians who voted by mail in March's presidential primary did not have their votes counted, according to an analysis by elections experts and academics. **More headlines, 10B**

Note to readers

There is no *Parade* magazine in today's *Times*. It will be back next week.

Storms start early

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More, 8C

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ST. PETE PIER OPENING

Take in new artwork to add to your experience

BY MAGGIE DUFFY
Times Staff Writer

For all its natural beauty and million-dollar views, the new St. Pete Pier will have another aesthetic element in the form of public art.

After years of planning, committee meetings and controversy, four distinct pieces have been installed throughout the Pier.

The most high-profile piece is Janet Echelman's *Bending Arc*, an aerial net sculpture that is now suspended above a family park on the Pier's approach.

When the idea to commission the Boston-based, Tampa-born, world-renowned artist was proposed in 2017, many wondered why a local artist wasn't being considered. Laura Bryant, who was Pier public art committee chairwoman and suggested Echelman for the new Pier, posited that working with the artist whose sculptures are on display around the world would elevate the city's status.

Echelman integrates architecture, urban design and structural and aeronautical engineering into her work.

The committee paid \$75,000 to secure Echelman so she could conduct a feasibility study before constructing the piece, a decision that created debate among committee members.

Mayor Rick Kriseman made it a personal mission to bring the sculpture to the city. He raised \$1.25 million in private money to pay for the sculpture and another \$400,000 to help cover costs for the infrastructure, including the foundation, lighting and four pylons.

The city also allocated \$1.3 million in tax increment financing funds for the design and construction of the infrastructure. The Public Art Commission also committed \$250,000 to the project.

"The first time I saw her work she was receiving an award, and I thought, 'We have to get that in St. Pete,'" said Kriseman during a tour of the St. Pete Pier on June 25. "It would be perfect out at the Pier, because the way her designs are, they come alive with the



Xenobia Bailey's *Morning Stars* glass mosaic, peeking out on the path to and from the Pier head, will be a good selfie spot.



The sculpture *Olnetopia* by Belgian artist Nick Ervinck is situated at the Pier head.



Bending Arc, an aerial net sculpture by Boston-based, Tampa-born, world-renowned artist Janet Echelman, lights up the night sky at the St. Pete Pier's approach on Tuesday during a test run.



Nathan Mabry's *Myth*, a metal origami pelican sculpture, greets visitors near the St. Pete Pier's entrance.

blend with the sky, giving the effect of gazing at clouds. The grassy park filled with plants was built with just that in mind, with berms in the ground on which to lounge. At night, it's a whole different experience when LED colored lights in a palette of magentas and violets transform the sculpture's physical color.

It's attached to poles that resemble sail masts, done intentionally to blend in with the nearby marina. It can be seen from almost anywhere at the Pier. A nearby observation bridge provides a good platform to capture a photo of the sculpture.

In her artist's statement, Echelman says that the sculpture "embraces change." She says that

she was inspired by the site's "multi-layered cultural and natural history." For the design, she studied old postcards of the Pier and Spa Beach and created patterns inspired by beach umbrellas and barnacles.

She also researched the site's "social and political history with respect to both who was given and who was denied access to its natural beauty and recreational pleasures." The title is taken from a phrase by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.: "The arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice."

The other three pieces that were chosen by the Pier Public Art Selection Committee come with less scrutiny than *Bending Arc*. But some residents voiced disapproval that the artists who created them are also not local.

"We decided early on that while we were more than happy to consider and look at the work of local artists, many of whom are friends of all of us, many of whose work we admire, we were not going to give any preference to local artists," said Laura Bryant.

Bryant said that in the early stages, local names were brought up as potential artists for the project. But two architects on the committee pointed out, as did Bryant, that artists wouldn't apply for a project that stated up front that it would give preference to local artists. They felt that would inhibit the entries.

The committee hired Ann Wykell to put together a list of artists they would invite to submit works, and they also did an open call. They received 300 applications, which Wykell went through, researching each artist's past experience to ensure they were capable of completing the work.

Local artists did apply, and Bryant said that some of them got quite far in the jurying process.

But in the end, it came down to three: California-based Nathan Mabry, New York-based Xenobia Bailey and Nick Ervinck of Belgium, who shared \$488,000 in public art funds from the Public Art Commission.

See ART, 7E

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ST. PETE PIER OPENING



SCOTT KEELER | Times

Teak is the most upscale of the St. Pete Pier's dining concepts, and it sits at the very tip.

Here's the dish on what you'll be eating, drinking

BY HELEN FREUND
Times Food Critic

In addition to the sprawling 26 acres of parks, playgrounds and plazas, a collection of new restaurants appears poised to make the new St. Pete Pier not just a recreational hot spot but a Tampa Bay dining destination. From a Florida-themed good-times restaurant to grab-and-go cafes with picnic amenities and drinks to-go, a fine-dining anchor and a tiki-themed rooftop lounge, here's what to know about the Pier's new food and dining options.

Note: Restaurants in Florida are currently required to adhere to 50 percent capacity limits, and tables must be spaced at least 6 feet apart both indoors and outdoors. Specifically in Pinellas County, restaurant and bar staff must wear a face covering while on duty and while serving food or beverage, or having customer contact. Customers can remove their face coverings while dining or consuming a beverage when seated and social distancing.

Doc Ford's Rum Bar & Grille

What: A large, casual sports bar and restaurant from Florida author Randy Wayne White.

Where: The southern end of the Pier's overlook, directly on the seawall.

What to expect: The 10,000-square-foot indoor-outdoor space is named for the protagonist of White's crime series about a marine biologist living on Sanibel Island. With seating for about 350 people, it's the fourth location for the Florida-based chain, which also has locations in Captiva Island, Sanibel Island and Fort Myers Beach.

The restaurant's decor imbues a sports bar-meets-Florida fishing camp vibe, and the layout is similar to the Sanibel Island flagship, with a long wraparound covered patio and retractable garage doors that open up to the water. A lower outdoor patio with chairs and tables with umbrellas sits right on the seawall. Inside, the restaurant is anchored by two bars and outfitted with dark and light wood accents, fishing accoutrements and several large televisions.

On the menu: A seafood-heavy list of dishes inspired by Florida and the flavors of the Caribbean includes pan-fried crab cakes with jicama slaw and key lime butter sauce, and a snapper served in a banana leaf with chili puree and lime juice. Rum is the poison of choice here, and mojitos the main vehicle; the menu includes several takes on the drink with flavors ranging from pineapple to coconut, passion fruit to mango. Other rum-centric creations include the Doc's Cure, made with creme of coconut and black rum, pineapple, orange juice and nutmeg; and the Barbados Punch featuring Mount Gay rum, peach schnapps, pineapple juice and a floater of black rum topped with a cherry.

Hours: 11 a.m.-11 p.m. daily.

Teak

What: A fine-dining restaurant from the Birchwood proprietor Chuck Prather.

Where: At the end of the Pier, on the middle deck.

What to expect: The nautical-inspired restaurant sits at the very tip of the Pier and features breathtaking views of Tampa Bay. The location provided the inspiration for the restaurant's name, a nod to the water-resistant hardwood often used in the manufacturing of boats. It's impossible to miss the reference, from the lacquered lake boat hull that does double duty as a host stand to the boats hang-

ing from the ceiling throughout the main dining room, all replicas of vessels dating back to the 1940s. The main dining room is outfitted with plush dark teal armchairs and a driftwood centerpiece. The restaurant, which seats roughly 180 people, features a separate back bar overlooking the water, outside seating and a long communal dining table facing an open kitchen.

On the menu: Lee Aquino, the executive chef at the Birchwood's Birch & Vine, helms the kitchen at Teak as well as Prather's other two concepts at the Pier, Pier Teaki and Driftwood Cafe. Though Teak is arguably the most upscale of the Pier's dining concepts, the menu's pricing is varied, with several shared plates and entrees hovering around the \$20 mark.

"We wanted to make sure it was affordable," Prather said. He described the menu as heavily inspired by Florida and the Southeast.

Dishes include teak-spiced fish spread with plantain chips, citrus-tinged mahi tacos, a roasted Florida yard bird with jezebel sauce and a pan-roasted grouper with citrus herb risotto and a mandarin citrus sauce.

Hours: 11 a.m.-10 p.m. Sunday through Thursday, 11 a.m.-11 p.m. Friday and Saturday.

Pier Teaki

What: A Polynesian-inspired rooftop tiki bar and restaurant

Where: Above Teak, at the westernmost end of the Pier.

What to expect: Like Teak, the massive rooftop deck space overlooks Tampa Bay and features two bars — one facing Tampa and the other facing downtown St. Petersburg. At full capacity, the space can accommodate 400 people, though with the current social distancing guidelines that figure will be significantly smaller to start.

Pitched as a modern tiki bar, the deck space is outfitted with fire pits and tiki torches, several tiki huts and tiki-themed accoutrements ranging from a 15-foot tiki god to 20 tiki totems, all sourced from local design firm Creative Arts and the St. Petersburg-based Tiki-Mondo.

On the menu: A rum-focused cocktail selection features twists on tiki classics like mai tais, rum runners and zombies. A list of frozen libations includes boozy frozen lemonade, strawberry daiquiris and pina coladas.

A selection of beers and wines on tap are also served. Drink-friendly snacks include popcorn coconut shrimp, buffalo chicken wings, mahi ceviche with plantain chips and watermelon, and a barbecue chicken flatbread with chimichurri.

Hours: 10 a.m.-midnight Sunday to Thursday, 10 a.m.-2 a.m. Friday and Saturday.

Driftwood Cafe

What: A casual grab-and-go cafe concept from Chuck Prather.

Where: At the far end of the Pier, underneath Teak.

What to expect: The small grab-and-go coffee shop sits directly under Teak near the main fishing dock and features a selection of breakfast and lunch items available all day. Guests can either grab a seat at one of the tables outside the cafe or take their food and drinks to-go and spread out in one of the nearby grassy areas overlooking the bay.

On the menu: The menu here is focused on casual cafe fare and espresso drinks from Counter Culture Coffee, smoothies, ice cream, milkshakes and shaved ice. Croissant sandwiches, avocado toasts and pastries are served for breakfast. Lunch and all-day dishes include sandwiches, salads, pizzas and charcuterie picnic platters.

Hours: 7 a.m.-9 p.m. Sunday through Thursday, 7 a.m.-10 p.m. Friday and Saturday.

Spa Beach Bistro

What: A casual bar and cafe with a focus on lighter fare and pizza.

Where: Next to the splash pad and Spa Beach.

What to expect: The casual, grab-and-go outdoor cafe in Pier Plaza overlooks the splash pad and is steps away from the Pier's beach. The pavilion features shaded tables and chairs where guests can sit and eat while the kids play.

On the menu: The pizzas take a design-your-own assembly line format where guests can pick a number of toppings and sauces before the pies get tossed in the oven and cooked. The adjoining bar features wine and beer on tap and guests are welcome to take their drinks to-go.

Hours: 10 a.m.-9 p.m. Sunday through Thursday, 10 a.m.-11 p.m. Friday and Saturday.

Contact Helen Freund at hfreund@tampabay.com or (727) 893-8310. Follow @HelenFreund.

ART continued from 6E

"We really were judging on the work alone," Bryant said.

Myth, Mabry's monumental metal red origami pelican sculpture, greets visitors near the Pier's entrance. Two realistic, red statues of pelicans, which Mabry creates in a multistage process that begins with 3D scanning of taxidermy birds, are perched on top of the sculpture, and a few others sit several feet away. Mabry was trained in ceramics and explores the history of making objects while exploring new techniques.

"I've always been fascinated by anthropology and archaeology — ritualistic associations within objects both old and new — everything they represent about human culture and human endeavor, and how this affects past, present and future," he said. Mandalas swirl over a cheerful yellow background in Bailey's *Morning Stars* glass mosaic, affixed to a concrete structure.

The piece peeks out on the path to and from the Pier head and has all the makings of a selfie wall. Bailey is a crochet artist who became known for her African-inspired hats that were worn on *The Cosby Show*, in a Spike Lee movie and in United Colors of Benetton ads. For *Morning Stars*, she crocheted the mandalas, took photographs of them, pixelated the photos and worked with fabricators to have one of them rendered in glass tiles and assembled into a mosaic.

Bailey has committed her work to create an African American aesthetic and lifestyle she calls Funk.

Her artist's statement says that "she researches, honors and continues the history of African Americans using imagination to create something out of nothing to express identity and survive."

Ervinck's *Ometopia* sculpture at the Pier head looks like a big water droplet. Of the three artists, he was the only one who wasn't invited to apply; he sent in his work via the open call. He

has shown his sculptures, which play with negative space, around the world. They're usually rendered in bright yellow polycarbonate, but the committee knew that would create the need for constant upkeep. So instead, Ervinck created the sculpture in bronze with a patina that will deepen over time.

"The finding that a 'hole' in matter is such a young idea will probably haunt him for the rest of his life," his online bio states.

St. Petersburg artists do have some representation at the St. Pete Pier. Vendor stalls in the Marketplace area are adorned with details of murals from around the city that lists the artists' names and the location of the mural. Artists include the Vitale Bros., Palehorse, Jennifer Kosharek, Cecilia Lueza and Zulu Painter. Those will be updated with different murals as time goes on.

Contact Maggie Duffy at mduffy@tampabay.com or (727) 893-8572. Follow @maggiedalexis.

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