



GreenSteel Features

- > Steel framed
- > Metal and cement-board roof
- > Foam-cement insulation
- > Cement-board exterior walls
- > Fire, mold and mildew resistant
- > Can withstand 150-mph winds
- > Made from almost all recyclable material
- > Sells for about \$100 a square foot

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Hurricane-Proof — and Affordable

Tallahassee developer **Bud Chiles** and business partner **Tony Attala**, who owns a steel fabrication-frame manufacturing facility in New Hampshire, think they have a product to help solve Florida's affordable housing crisis: A proprietary steel-framed, factory-built home that is fire, mold and mildew resistant and is designed to withstand 150-mph winds.

The homes, dubbed **GreenSteel**, feature "Katrina cottage" floor plans and designs created by **Tolar Denmark Architects** of Ocean Springs, Miss.,

part of a post-Katrina architects' group organized to provide permanent housing for storm victims. Chiles and Attala are marketing the homes to municipalities and developers, who will assemble parcels, pour slabs and run utilities to the home sites. The homes will be constructed — including wiring and plumbing — at a new \$6-million manufacturing plant in Carrabelle, trucked to home sites in two pieces, assembled in about a day and "plugged in" to the water, sewer and electrical lines.

Chiles and Attala, doing business as **Hexaport Building Systems of Florida**, hope to produce 400 homes a year that should sell to buyers for about \$100 a square foot, they say. A 1,100-sq.-ft., three-bedroom model, together with site and foundation, could cost as little as \$125,000, Chiles says.

A similar site-built home would cost \$175 to \$200 a square foot, he estimates.

Carrabelle is investing nearly \$1.54 million in infrastructure and the factory and is also providing a 99-year lease on the 21-acre site for \$10 a year. The plant is expected to open in September, initially will employ 50 and at peak production could hire up to 350.



>> Gov. **Charlie Crist** has appointed Tallahassee lawyer **Daryl**

Parks to the board of trustees of Florida A&M University. A FAMU graduate, Parks is a partner in the Parks & Crump law firm.

>> **John Thiemann**, formerly a consultant at Starke, is the new city manager at Blountstown. >> **Ed Kilpatrick**, a Florida A&M graduate and former Jackson County School Board member, is now the city manager at Sneads. >> **Jeff Townsend** has been promoted to president of Innisfree Hotels' newly formed Innisfree Development in Gulf Breeze, currently designing and building 11 condominium or condo/hotel towers.

HOME PRICES Up and Down

Pricing trends are a mixed bag in major Panhandle markets.

Single-Family Homes

| County | March '07 Median Price | 12-Month Change |
|----------|------------------------|-----------------|
| Okaloosa | \$198,650 | -5.4% |
| Leon | \$190,450 | +6.4% |
| Bay | \$182,000 | +1.1% |
| Escambia | \$110,000 | -18.5% |

Source: Metro Market Trends

EDUCATION A Boost for Schools

Florida's Great Northwest gave regional school systems \$1 million in nine grants to create school career academies or accelerated math and science training at middle or high schools. Awards came from the federal Workforce Innovation in Regional Economic Development grant. Awards went to a Panama City academy; Port St. Joe and Marianna high schools; two academies in Tallahassee; Bay and Escambia County School systems; Jefferson County High School; and Franklin/Liberty County high schools.

DEVELOPMENT

Jubilee Under Way

Eagle Group of Atlanta has started infrastructure and golf course development on Jubilee, a 2,718-acre community in Santa Rosa County. The plan for 10,000 homes makes it the largest master-planned community in the Panhandle, according to the developer. Jubilee will be built in three phases over 10 years. Home prices for the first phase, beginning construction this year, are expected to range from \$212,000 to \$1 million. The town will include a pedestrian-style town center and a 1,620-acre preservation area.