

# **Building**<sup>TM</sup> **EDGE** MAGAZINE

*The Local Voice in Building*

William G. Pitts  
President/C.E.O.

# WG PITTS COMPANY

*'Upholding promises & exceeding expectations'*



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‘Upholding Promises & Exceeding Expectations’

by Ledyard Woods



above left: St. Johns Forest clubhouse interior in St. Johns County. ©Photo by Rob Harris.

above right: The Village Green at Palencia in St. Johns County. ©Photo by Palencia.



Some people are remarkable painters. Still others have the innate knack of turning a canvas into a magnificent piece of invaluable art. In barely more than a decade, the uniquely creative brushstroke of Will Pitts is already rather conspicuously impacting many picturesque areas of the Northeast Florida construction landscape.

For the highly focused Pitts, and a distinctly qualified team of carefully selected professionals, the rapid rise of WG Pitts Company of Jacksonville has been a matter of blending his clear-cut central vision with an unyielding commitment for making things happen.

In positioning himself to create and guide a business with the documented stature of WG Pitts Company, Will reflects back on his upbringing and an early recognition that “building things is something that I greatly love to do.”

Born at the former Orlando Naval Training Center hospital in mid-April of 1969, Will accompanied his parents, David and Carol Pitts, to Jacksonville and then on to Callahan after his father retired from the U.S. Navy as a Master Chief Petty Officer in 1971. After several years of owning and running a motel, restaurant, and bar business, the family moved back to Jacksonville, where Will began working

in the construction industry while still in high school.

Pitts holds a Bachelor’s Degree in Building Construction from the University of North Florida in Jacksonville, and points out that he has been involved in the building industry most of his life when not attending school.

“Most of what I did in the early years was work in the trades,” Pitts acknowledges. “These hands-on jobs included tile, stucco, concrete, drywall and metal stud work.

“Also, I am an avid reader and I would like to think that much of my education has come from being self-educated or just through hard knocks.”

While completing his college degree, Pitts worked for a company that was building components of recreation complexes and tennis facilities. He soon noticed that land developers and builders across the country were becoming willing to partner with a company capable of providing these recreational facilities and amenities, including components such as monument signs, entry features, and hardscape – all elements that help to create a community’s true identity and sense of arrival.

“We started this company really with the thought and the vision of providing and constructing recreation and amenity complexes,”

Pitts says. "It was at a time that amenity centers were really becoming a necessary component for modern master-planned communities. I saw it as an opportunity within the construction industry."

With that in mind, WG Pitts Company has been at the forefront in design and construction of amenity centers throughout Florida, partnering the company with many of the area's leading developers and builders.

The project list is quite extensive: Fleming Island Plantation in Orange Park, Margaret's Walk at Fleming Island, North Hampton and Oyster Bay Harbour at Fernandina Beach, Grand Haven Sales Center at Palm Coast, St. Johns Golf & Country Club and Walden Chase in Saint Augustine, Heritage Landing at World Golf Village, North Hampton in Yulee, and other Jacksonville endeavors that include Glen Kernan Golf & Country Club, Greenland Chase, Hampton Professional Park, Mira Vista at Harbortown, James Island, Julington Creek Plantation, Nature's Hideaway, the Taylor Woodrow community of St. Johns

Forest, Summerhaven, Waterford Estates, and Windsor Falls.

But that was only the beginning for Will Pitts in establishing his company in the marketplace. Today, the business still concentrates on recreational facilities and amenities at master-planned communities. The company has a success-proven record of accomplishment in constructing the most elaborate amenities, clubhouses and hardscape and entry features ever designed.

Will's vision as a general contractor has widened to include two other areas of construction that encompass the building of commercial, that includes medical and retail facilities, and residential, that includes estate homes and multi-family.

Prominent commercial projects include the corporate office for the City & Police Credit Union and the Hampton Professional Park in Jacksonville, and the retail center, The Shops at Johns Creek in St. Johns County. Construction of the Cobblestone Professional Park in Saint Augustine is scheduled for an early 2007 start. Other

facilities on the horizon include banks, industrial warehouses, medical, retail and tilt-up facilities.

In addition, WG Pitts Company, through its staff of 30 employees, offers general contracting, comprehensive pre-construction and construction management, and complete design-build services.

The residential division completed the beautiful multi-family condo project, Residences of World Golf Village, in St. Augustine, and even more recently WG Pitts Company is creating luxurious custom homes that showcase the superior craftsmanship, detail, and unsurpassed customer service that has resonated as the hallmark of the company since its inception.

"Beginning in 2006, the building of custom homes has been a new extension of what we're doing," Pitts says. "For example, we've got a \$1.5 million home we're constructing on the marsh in Oyster Bay Harbour. We are extremely proud of what we have accomplished with this beautiful home."

The 5,718-square-foot luxury creation represents the company's first inventory home in the Waterway Oaks neighborhood at Oyster Bay Harbour, a gated yacht club community in Fernandina Beach.

While estate and residential construction represents less than one third of the total projects, it is another area that lends itself naturally to the higher-end clubhouses constructed by WG Pitts Company.

"There is a lot of the same level of fit-and-finish that you find in a million-dollar-plus estate home as you find in a comparable priced clubhouse," Pitts notes.

The ascension of WG Pitts Company in the marketplace has been duly noted, with the business being ranked No. 1 in the *Jacksonville Business Journal's* 9<sup>th</sup> annual listing of the "Top 50 Fastest Growing Privately Held Companies in Jacksonville and Northeast Florida" that was issued at the start of the 21st Century. Also in 2000, WG Pitts Company was ranked by the University of Florida as "The No. 6 Company of the Florida 100."

"These are distinctions that we are very proud of," says Will Pitts.

The success of this ever-growing, multi-faceted building enterprise that Will and his wife, Susan Pitts, founded in 1996, is based on incorporating a unique set of

Hampton Professional Park, one of Jacksonville's finest class "A" office parks.  
©Photo by Judy Davis Photographer.



Shops at Johns Creek in St. Johns County.  
©Photo by Judy Davis Photographer.





essential core values based on a rather simple premise: Uphold a set of stated promises, and exceed clients' expectations while delivering quality projects on time and on budget.

In fact, the first letter of WG Pitts Company's list of eight core values spells out PROMISES<sup>SM</sup>:

- Professionalism and courtesy in all our actions
- Responsibility to the community, our clients and our company
- On time, on budget, sense of urgency and efficiency
- Motivation, determination and enthusiasm as our attitude
- Integrity, fairness and honesty in all of our dealings
- Service that is client-driven and solutions-oriented
- Excellence as the standard we evaluate our work
- Safety – no lost-time accidents on any of our projects

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"These are the guiding principles," Pitts stresses. "We will make decisions and act according to our 'PROMISES<sup>SM</sup>,' and no matter how tough the decision may be, we will not compromise."



above: St. Johns Golf & Country clubhouse exterior in St. Johns County.  
©Photo by Oscar Sosa Photographer.

below: WaterChase clubhouse interior in Tampa, Florida. ©Photo by Rob Harris.

According to Pitts, the biggest challenge since starting the company has been finding the people – those with the right character, competence, and commitment – who match the WG Pitts Company's type of environment and its unique production delivery system.

"We have one of the best teams right now that we've ever had," Pitts assesses. "Our people are really focused on our clients and on having successful experiences with our building projects."

Pitts points out that the total team performance is vital to each and every project.

"Every one of our projects is unique and every one includes custom components. We've got to use our overall expertise and skills on the front end to calculate exactly how much it's going to cost to build the project. And we have to determine exactly how long it is going to take to build it and to get all the components and pieces it takes to get that project successfully working within the developer's budget and guidelines. It takes focused and dedicated people to do this."

The youngest of a blended family of 12 children, Will serves as the company's president/CEO. His wife, Susan, is comptroller, overseeing areas of accounting and financing, in addition to human resources.

The WG Pitts Company over the years has been presented a number of prestigious honors – Aurora Awards by the Florida Homebuilders Association and The Best Project in the State by Associated General Contractors of Greater Florida.



Professionally, Will Pitts is vice president and serves on the board of Associated General Contractors, the state association for general contractors. Also, he has previously served as a Northeast Florida Builders Association board member and on the University of North Florida's Building Construction Management Industry advisory council.

Living up to one of WG Pitts' core values of responsibility to the community. In early 2005, WG Pitts Company joined with the Northeast Florida Division of D.R. Horton, America's largest homebuilder, to provide construction services for the William R. and Frances B. Barnett Children's Building at the I.M. Sulzbacher Center for the Homeless in Jacksonville.

In another community involvement, the company partners with the City Rescue Mission through that organization's Supper Club. Periodically, company employees select a menu, pay for the food items, and prepare and serve a meal to the mission's Life Builders students.

Susan Pitts is actively involved with activities of the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation.

In addition to continuing to direct the operations and growth of WG Pitts Company, Will someday hopes to become involved in a humanity effort that benefits at risk youth and teens.

For now, though, time away from business for him and wife, Susan, primarily involves the raising of four children – teenagers Jonathan and Samantha and youngsters Kristin and Griffin.

"We try to spend a good bit of time with the kids and be involved with their activities," Will says. "Susan and I enjoy working out. Once in a while, we all find time to pack up and get away on three- or four-day trips."

And then for Will and Susan, it is back to the successful business they co-founded – one that upholds promises and exceeds expectations.



*For more information on WG Pitts Company, visit its corporate website at [www.wgpitts.com](http://www.wgpitts.com), or telephone (904) 260-3499. The company is located at 7807 Baymeadows Road East, Suite 403, Jacksonville, FL 32256.*



Corporate office for the City and Police Credit Union in Jacksonville. ©Photo by Oscar Sosa Photographer.