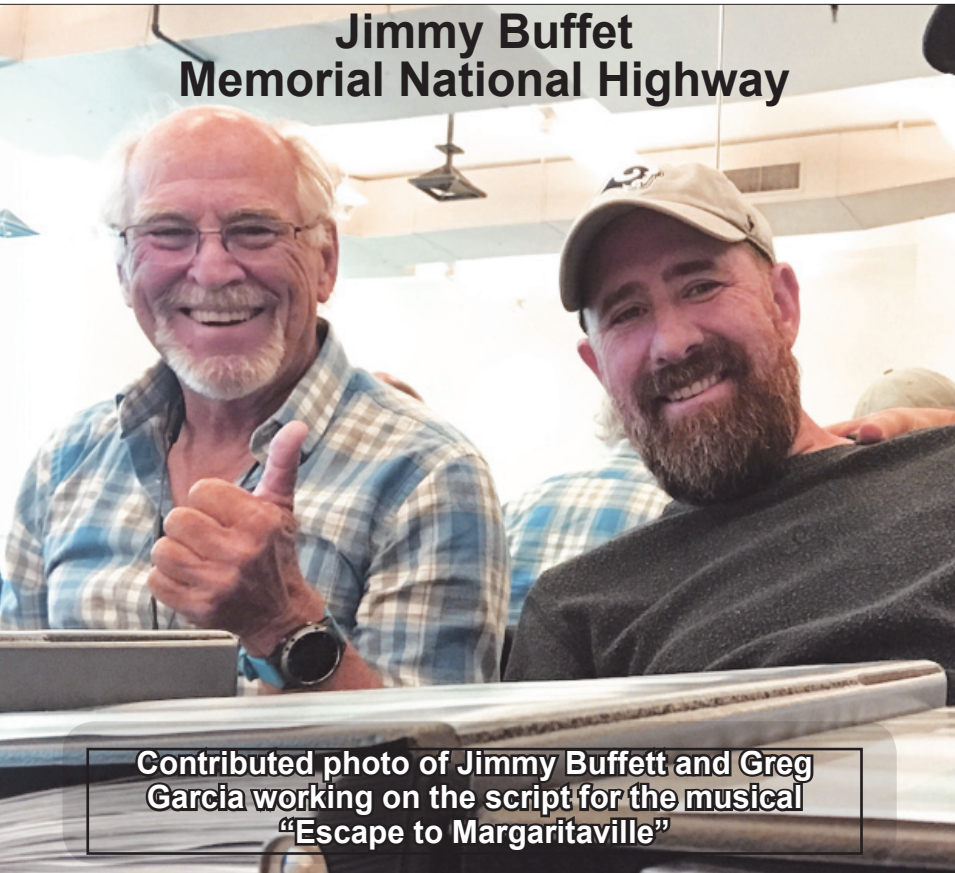


St. Augustine Beaches NEWS JOURNAL

NEWS INFORMATION FOR & ABOUT ST. AUGUSTINE BEACH & ANASTASIA ISLAND



**Jimmy Buffett
Memorial National Highway**

Contributed photo of Jimmy Buffett and Greg Garcia working on the script for the musical "Escape to Margaritaville"

Getting Personal--Living in Margaritaville

by Lorraine Thompson

Traveling from Anastasia Island on A1A, over the Bridge of Lions, through the fringes of downtown St. Augustine and onward over the Vilano Bridge where the route reattaches to the A1A route to Jacksonville, remains as one of the area's most relaxing and scenic drives. (Photo contributed)

It's even more relaxing now, knowing that the Florida A1A portions of the drive are officially part of the recently named Jimmy Buffett Memorial Highway which begins in Fernandina Beach near the Georgia border, continues through parts of Florida, including St. Johns County, and ends in Key West.

For locals and visitors, including those who don't need to rush somewhere on Interstate 95, the A1A route, now officially Jimmy Buffett Memorial Highway, offers incredible beach and ocean views. And if you can find—and play—an old CD with Buffett's music, it puts more joy into the drive.

Buffett, who passed away in September 2023, was known for his music and love for coastal living. He was also a singer-songwriter, author, businessman, and cultural icon, best known for his unique blend of country, rock, and Caribbean music that became the soundtrack for a laid-back, tropical lifestyle. Hits like "Margaritaville" and "Cheeseburger in Paradise" helped make him a favorite for those seeking a break from the daily grind. His music celebrated the beach, the ocean, and the carefree joys of life, earning him a devoted fanbase known as "Parrotheads."

Buffett's 1974 album "A1A" was inspired by this highway, warming the hearts of his fans and as part of his

"Scandious Women: Women Who Broke the Rules" March 21, 2026

Enjoy "Scandalous Women: Women Who Broke the Rules" a Tale Tellers of St. Augustine production on Saturday, March 21, 4:30 pm, at the Unitarian-Universal Fellowship, 2487 A1A S, St. Augustine. The featured performer will be musician, songwriter, and storyteller, Robin Mahonen. She will be joined by Chris Kastle and David Fussell. For further information call: 904-540-0402. Tickets available at the event or in advance at taletellers.org.

Born to be a traveling musician, Robin Mahonen is the daughter of Grammy Award winning jazz trombonist Jimmy Knepper and trumpet player Maxine (Fields) Knepper who was in the "Sweethearts of Rhythm." Robin toured across the country with her husband, "Uncle Eddie" Mahonen for almost 20 years and has, more recently, appeared as a solo performer. David Fussell is known for his personal and gathered stories of Florida old and new. Chris Kastle is an award winning poet, songwriter, and storyteller.

For over 33 years, Tale Tellers of St. Augustine continues to be a performing guild devoted to the advocacy of storytelling as an art form and entertainment medium. It is a Florida not-for-profit corporation with a 501(c)(3) designation. www.taletellers.org. Photos contributed by Kathy Kniery and Ted Miller



Chris Kastle



David Russell



Robin Mahonen

musical legacy. The album's original back cover featured a photograph of a section of A1A, and the road is mentioned in the song "Trying to Reason with Hurricane Season."

A few years after his death, the Florida highway that enhanced Jimmy Buffett's life, now bears his name. The proposal to rename A1A gained widespread support, with fans, local governments, and state officials rallying behind the idea. The Florida Legislature approved the motion, and in late 2023 Governor Ron DeSantis signed the bill into law opening the door for new housing and retail developments to grab on to the Margaritaville "label" throughout Florida.

The official highway renaming ceremony took place in Key West in June of 2024 drawing thousands of fans, as well as local and state officials. Performances of Buffett's songs, heartfelt speeches, and the unveiling of new highway signs marked the occasion. The atmosphere was both celebratory and nostalgic, with attendees sharing stories of how Buffett's music had touched their lives. The renaming was not only a way to honor Buffett's contributions but also to immortalize his connection to Florida's culture and landscape.

The Jimmy Buffett Memorial Highway, a new name for an old road, is a tribute to a lifestyle and a legacy that has brought happiness to millions. Driving along this route is a reminder of Buffett's message, "To embrace the simple joys of life, to seek adventure, and to appreciate the beauty of the world around you."

Whether you're playing Margaritaville music on the car stereo or simply soaking in the ocean views, the Jimmy Buffett Memorial Highway stands as a testament to the enduring power of music, storytelling, and the magic of coastal living.

So—why am I so intrigued with Buffett's story and accomplishments?

Decades ago while living in Arlington, Virginia with my husband and our four children, one of the school friends of our son Jimmy was Greg Garcia. Years later, the two continue to be friends with Jimmy living in Denver and Greg residing in Hollywood, California. Through those years, Garcia went on to become a television writer/producer as well as an author. He is the creator of the TV show "My Name is Earl" as well as several other television sitcoms. In addition, he had a close connection to Jimmy Buffet. I contacted him at his home in (continued on page 4)

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 City Manager Max Royle

www.staugbch.com
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**Print Distribution Locations for
 the Beaches News Journal**

- St. Augustine Beach City Hall
- Anastasia Library
- St. Johns County Pier Park
- YMCA
- Main Library
- Southeast Library

The purpose of the St. Augustine Beaches News Journal LLC is to serve neighborhoods of St. Augustine Beach and other communities on Anastasia Island.

First priority will be given to reporting news and activities of the residents of St. Augustine Beach local communities, and other news and events that directly affects the St. Augustine Beaches areas. Second priority will be given to articles of general interest as space permits.

Information and ads should be received by the 15th of the month in order to appear in the following month's issue. Articles or information may be sent to the Beaches News Journal, 2465 US1 South PMB #8, St. Augustine Florida 32086. Information may also be e-mailed to clifflogsdon@att.net or clogsdon1@yahoo.com.

All materials submitted to the Beaches News Journal is subject to editing. Publishing of submitted information is at the discretion of the publisher. Views and opinions expressed are those of the writer and do not express the viewpoint of the publisher or editorial staff of the Beaches News Journal.

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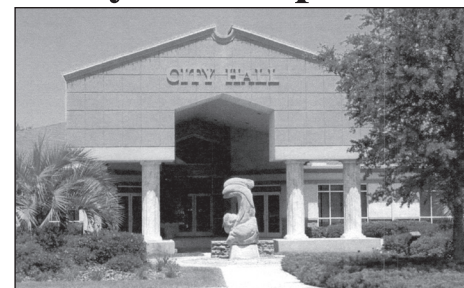
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The Beaches News Journal is published by an independent publisher and is not affiliated with any government or agency, community development, management company or Homeowners Associations.

St. Augustine Beach City Hall Update

The City Commission held its regular meeting on Monday, February 2, 2026, and did the following:

1. Approved a proclamation to declare February 2026 as Black History Month.
2. Approved on final reading an ordinance to amend the Land Development Regulations to allow flexible setbacks to save trees.
3. Passed on second reading an ordinance to change street side setbacks for ocean-front lots in the Atlantic Beach, Chautauqua Beach and Coquina Gables subdivisions. The ordinance will have a final reading at the Commission's March 2nd meeting.
4. Approved the award of the bid to TB Landmark Construction for Phase 1 of the Magnolia Dunes drainage project and approved a budget resolution to appropriate \$184,491 for the project.
5. Approved the re-appointment to a three-year term of the following Code Enforcement Board members: Mr. Kevin Sweeny and Ms. Bertha Odom.
6. Approved on first reading an ordinance to adopt minor changes to the City Charter.
7. Discussed other changes to the City Charter that must be presented to the



voters for approval, such as term limits for City Commissioners.

8. Discussed the search for a new City Manager and directed the City's current Manager to contact a volunteer group of managers, current and retired, affiliated with the Florida City/County Management Association. The Commission may schedule a workshop with the group to discuss such matters as the particular services the group will provide and the costs that the City will have to pay.

The City Commission will hold its next regular meeting on Monday, March 2, 2026, in the Commission meeting room at City Hall, 2200 A1A South, starting at 6 p.m. The public is invited to attend or may view it on YouTube on the City's website, staugbch.com.

**City of St. Augustine Beach
 February 2026 Commission Meeting Agenda**

The St. Augustine Beach City Commission will meet on Monday, March 2, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. in the Commission meeting room at City Hall, 2200 A1A South. Topics on the agenda may include:

1. Presentation by Mr. Chris Benjamin, Outreach Coordinator, of County's Program for disposal of used American flags.
2. Final reading of an ordinance to adopt minor changes to the City Charter.
3. Final reading of an ordinance to change street side setbacks for ocean-front lots.
4. Appeal of the Planning Board's decision to deny a variance to reduce the street side setback from 12 feet to nine feet for a new house on 9th Lane.
5. Budget resolutions to appropriate money for Building Department training, for the purchase of a drone for the Police Department and to transfer money from a state grant for the purchase of stormwater system operation and maintenance equipment.
6. Extension of City Manager's contract to December 31, 2026.
7. Discussion whether to rescind an agreement that protects from removal a tree at 106 7th Street so that the owner of the lot can build a house.
8. First reading of an ordinance to ask the voters at the 2026 primary or general election to include term limits for City Commissioners in the City Charter.
9. Review of a request by a 3rd Street homeowner that the City allow his fence to remain in a drainage easement.
10. Review of the request by the St. Johns Cultural Council for a three-year extension of the lease the Council has with the City to use its former city hall at the County's Pier Park.

The public is invited to attend the meeting, or to see it on YouTube at staugbch.com.



CAPTION: At their February 2nd meeting, the City Commission approved a proclamation declaring February as Black History Month. Shown left to right: Commissioner Don Samora, Commissioner Dylan Rumrell, members of the West Augustine Community Development Association with Robbie Nimmons holding the proclamation, Mayor Beth Sweeny, Commissioner Undine George and Vice Mayor Virginia Morgan. Photo by Max Royle

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St. Augustine Genealogical Society

The St Augustine Genealogical Society holds it's monthly meeting the 2nd Saturday of each month in the Southeast Branch of the St Johns County Library. The SE Library Branch is located at 6670 US Hwy 1 South. Check in for our meetings is 12:45 and meeting starts at 1:00 PM.

Our Genealogical Society is open to all. We encourage visitors, as well as current and former members to join us. Refreshments will be served, and feel free to bring your favorite. For information visit website StAugGenSoc.org.

“Margarettaville”

(continued from page 1)

California, asking for a comment about his Jimmy Buffett connection, and he responded:

“As a lifelong Jimmy Buffet fan, it was a dream come true when asked to write the book for the Broadway musical “Escape to Margaritaville”. What followed was five years of fun with one of my heroes. People say ‘never meet your heroes’ but if yours was Jimmy Buffett, you were safe doing so.

“Escape to Margaritaville” continues to be presented by performing arts groups throughout the country.

“Jimmy (Buffett) was exactly what I wanted him to be—generous, funny, friendly and the definition of chill—in other words, ‘Jimmy Buffett.’”

Garcia was delighted to know that Buffett’s name and memory are being kept alive in Florida.

“He deserves that Margaritaville tribute,” Garcia commented.

So, as you travel through any part of Florida’s A1A, now officially Jimmy Buffett Memorial Highway, enjoy the view, turn on the music or just sing (not too loud) as you travel through Margaritaville,

Interested in the Civil War?

(continued from page 1)

Please join our Civil War Discussion Group. Our next presentation will be TUESDAY, MARCH 17, 2026 at 1pm, at the Anastasia Branch library in Sea Grove.

The MARCH presentation will be with Len Whiteside, titled “Union Strategy of the Civil War”. We will examine the elements of continuity and change in Union strategy, from policy to operations and tactics. Previous presentations have taken a micro view of various Civil War events; this presentation is a macro view.

For questions or comments, please contact Len Whiteside at armyfam831@gmail.com

Floralines Guild of the Garden Club of St. Augustine

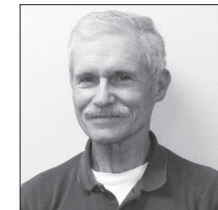
by Helen Boxer

MARCH 10th at 1pm—“FUN WITH FLOWERS”

Designer Renee Jamison of the Floralines Guild of the Garden Club of St. Augustine will lead each participant in creating a professional style floral arrangement. Open to the public at the clubhouse at 3440 Old Moultrie Rd. \$40 includes light refreshments and all materials (fresh flowers, greenery, container and oasis). Just bring your favorite scissors! Contact Trudi Edenfield at 904-495-3715 tripoliete@gmail.com Call early. Limited space.

What’s Happening

By Max Royle
St. Augustine Beach City Manager



Time to bring you up to speed about the development of private property in our fair City. Likely you have noticed land being cleared and/or buildings being constructed and perhaps you have wondered what is going on. I am humbly at your service to provide information that mayhap will satiate your wonder. Oh my, “mayhap” and “satiating”: I do so love those fancy words!

First, though, I must beg: Please don’t shoot the messenger. When I last wrote in this fine publication about development in our City, some of you strongly expressed your displeasure. Stop the construction! you told me emphatically. It causes more traffic, removes trees and ruins habitat for eagles and owls, foxes and raccoons. In response, I must point out that unless the City buys the property, it cannot stop the owner from developing it in accordance with the City’s Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Regulations. And you can be assured that Brian Law, the City’s Director of Building and Zoning, and his staff make certain the regulations are followed. The City has done its part to save land from development by purchasing the 14-acre Ocean Hammock Park between the Bermuda Run and Sea Colony subdivisions with state grants and City savings. Also, the City and the County together bought Hammock Dunes Park, the six-acre parcel north of the shopping center. The City’s cost was \$1,250,000, half the purchase price. In addition, private landowners have donated three lots along the north side of 2nd Street to a land trust to be left in their natural condition. Finally, before I yield the soapbox in this overly long paragraph, please consider this paradox: City uses taxpayer money to buy land; land then is off the tax rolls, thus reducing the amount of tax money the City collects to purchase more land. With these clarifications, here’s an update concerning current development in the City.


1. Between 4th and 5th Streets, west side of A1A Beach Boulevard, a 12,000 square foot, two-story building for law offices.
2. Corner of E Street, west side of the Boulevard. Already completed on three lots is a 12-room boutique hotel called the Sylvan.
3. Corner of F Street, west side of the Boulevard, a two-story, 2,500 square foot mixed-use residential and commercial building.
4. Adjacent to the beach east of Fiesta Falls Miniature Golf, a proposed eight-unit condominium. Construction has yet to begin.
5. Proposal to replace the Atlantic Beach and Tennis Club located north of Ocean Trace Road with 42 townhouses. Construction will start after the City approves a replat and building plans.
6. Renovation of the former Wendy’s restaurant on State Road A1A, south of Ameris Bank, for a Red Owl Cafe.
7. In the Anastasia Plaza, construction of the First Watch restaurant, a Mayday Ice Cream store and a high-end clothing boutique.

Also, each month the City experiences more new construction as single-family residences are built, either on vacant lots or to replace older houses that have been removed.

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St. Augustine Beach and Beyond...

by Lorraine Thompson
staugbeachwatch@aol.com

March 2026 Beach Information

Warmer weather attracts more people to our beaches and with that the need for more safety patrols and regulation enforcement increases.

Toll booths reopen on March 2nd for the 2026 beach season at all St. Johns County beach access entry ramps.

Motorized vehicles seeking beach access are required to either pay a daily admittance fee or display a seasonal pass during the hours of 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. through September 30.

County-managed beach gates close at 7:30 p.m. and reopen at 8 a.m. daily during sea turtle nesting season (May 1 – October 31) except for the A Street Ramp which is managed by the City of St. Augustine Beach. It closes at 5 p.m. year-round. From November 1 through April 30, county-managed gates remain open overnight, unless a weather event or emergency condition requires closure.

Beach season daily rates are \$10 for residents and non-residents and \$5 for handicap and active military. The annual/seasonal pass is \$50 for residents, \$100 for non-residents, and \$40 for handicap passes. Disabled veterans enter free with proper documentation.



To purchase 2026 passes, residents must present a valid I.D. with a St. Johns County address or present proof of property tax payments in St. Johns County. Passes may be purchased at the beach toll booths and at the Beach Pier Gift Shop throughout the season.

Vehicular access is dependent on beach conditions — weather, sand, or tides may cause ramps to temporarily close or limit access to only 4 wheel drive vehicles. Vehicle access locations include Vilano, Porpoise Point, A Street, Ocean Trace Road, Dondanville Road, Matanzas Avenue, Mary Street, Crescent Beach (Cubbedge Road), Fort Matanzas (exit only ramp).

County beachfront parks with off beach parking include Mickler's Landing Beachfront Park, Guana Tolomato, Matanzas National Estuarine Research Reserve, South Ponte Vedra Beach Recreational Area, Usina Beach, North Beach, Surfside, Vilano Beach, Anastasia State Park, St. Augustine Beach, Frank Butler County Park (east), Mickler Landing Beachfront Park, Guana Tolomato Matanzas National Reserve, Crescent Beach, Fort Matanzas National Monument Beach and River to Sea Preserve.

A reminder--At its December 2, 2025, regular meeting, the St. Johns County Board of County Commissioners voted unanimously to amend two existing County ordinances to prohibit smoking, vaping, and the littering of cigarette butts and vaping paraphernalia in County parks and on County-managed beaches. (continue on page 6)

The Friends of the Anastasia Island Branch Library March Activities

by Mollie Meikle

The Friends of the Anastasia Island Branch Library (FAIBL) has loved seeing our snowbird friends in the library! Our next board meeting will take place on Thursday, March 19th from 5 to 6pm in the Dr. Patricia Laurencelle Meeting Room at the Anastasia Island Branch Library. All are welcome!

Looking for something new to read? Need a cookbook refresh? Time to start thinking about your Spring garden? Find the right book(s) for you at our next book sale: Friday, March 6 and Saturday, March 7 at the Anastasia Island Branch, 124 Sea Grove Main St, St Augustine. Members shop early on March 6, from 9am to 10am, and the sale opens to all at 10am. Friday we close up at 5pm. March 7 the sale runs from 10am to 4:30pm.

While you're at the library in March, don't forget to check out our Spring Basket Silent Auction. Beautiful baskets donated by local businesses and community members are yours for the bidding from March 2 to March 20. What treasures will you find?

To sign up for our newsletter and email alerts, or to learn more about Friends of Anastasia Island Branch Library, please email us at anastasiainlandfaibl@gmail.com

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MORE INFO

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St. Augustine Travel Club

by Peter Dytrych

Our next gathering is Wednesday, March 11, 2026 at 3:00 pm at the Southeast Branch Public Library, and we will feature: ITALY PART 2: ROME AND NAPLES - Enjoy the feel of Rome, dubbed the Eternal City, navigate the tourist stops and take in the wild nightlife. Then visit Naples, bustling diverse city that combines both the historic and the modern.

The St. Augustine Travel Club is open to all residents and no registration is required. The program is formatted as arm-chair travel, meaning a brief lecture of the destination we cover, along with a video. We look forward to seeing our regulars and newcomers! Any questions, please call Peter at 904-797-3736.



St. Augustine Travel Club Cruise

The St. Augustine Travel Club will again be sailing the seas on Sunday, November 1 - 8, 2026 on the beautiful NORWEGIAN PRIMA ship out of Port Canaveral to the Caribbean and Bahamas, to the ports of Puerto Plata (Dominican Republic), St. Thomas (USVI), Tortola (BVI) and Great Stirrup Cay (Norwegian's private island in the Bahamas) for a 7-day cruise. Prices start from \$1203.45 per person, double occupancy, for inside cabin, inclusive of all port fees and taxes. Balconies, Oceanviews and Single Studios are also available at additional cost. Book now with a \$125 p.p. deposit and receive \$100 per stateroom On Board Credit, Free Beverage Package, Wi-Fi, Shore Excursions Credit and more. Call Peter, St. Augustine Travel Club at (904) 797-3736.

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Alzheimer's/Dementia Caregivers Support Group

Caring for a loved one with Alzheimer's or another form of dementia can be overwhelming, emotional, and isolating. That is why a local support group is inviting caregivers in our community to come together for encouragement, education, and connection. Come join us. You are not alone.

Alzheimer's/Dementia Caregiver Support Group meets the 2nd and 4th Thursday of each month, 10am at Homeport Christian Church, 5601 U.S. 1 South, St. Augustine, FL 32086. Call Nancy Wright 904-347-6299, BeBe Kelly 386-793-8414 or the Alzheimer's Association 800-272-3900 or go to alz.org/help-support/caregivers for more information.


St. Augustine Multiple Sclerosis Support Group

The National MS Society maintains a network of affiliated groups to provide opportunities for people living with MS to connect with others in their community. Every group is unique and welcoming — contact the group leader for more information. Join Us! We are recognized by the National MS Society and the Multiple Sclerosis Foundation.

We meet every 4th Tuesday at 1:00 pm at Anastasia Library, 124 Sea Grove Main Street, St. Augustine Beach, FL 32080. For information or to RSVP, contact: Anita Clark johnita0013@gmail.com 305- 898-1432.

Do You Have Community News to Share?

Do you have news, events or personal interest information that are relevant to our communities in and around St. Augustine Beach? Please forward them to the Editor for consideration for the monthly News Journal. Please contact Editor clifflogsdon@att.net or call 904-607-1410.



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St. Augustine Beach and Beyond...

by Lorraine Thompson, staugbeachwatch@aol.com
(continued from page 5)

Violations of the amended provisions are subject to enforcement under the County's existing public-conduct and littering regulations and include a fine of \$53.

For more beach information, visit <https://www.sjcfcl.us/beach-services/beach-access/>

St. Patrick's Parade and Celtic Festival

You don't have to be Irish to enjoy St. Augustine's St. Patrick's Parade which steps off from St. Augustine's Francis Field. at 10 a.m. on Saturday, March 14. The parade opens the Celtic Music and Cultural Heritage Festival. First held in St. Augustine 1601, the event is the world's first recorded St. Patrick's Day Parade.

This year's parade event will feature two special marching units: The New York City Fire Department Emerald Society Pipes and Drums and the Parkview Lassies from Springfield, Missouri. Members include active or retired firefighters. Their mission is to play at every funeral and memorial service for the first responders who lost their lives in the September 11th attacks on the World Trade Center, 25 years ago this year. The Parkview Lassies are from Springfield, Missouri.

Gordon J. Wilson will serve as this year's Parade Marshall. Wilson served in the U.S. Park Service for nearly 50 years. He recently retired as the Superintendent of the Castillo de San Marcos and Fort Matanzas National Monuments.

For more information including parking options, visit www.celticstaugustine.com/parade

According to Wikipedia, the first recorded St Patrick's Day celebration in America was in St. Augustine, Spanish Florida, in the year 1600 and the first St. Patrick Day Parade was also in St. Augustine in 1601.

Summer camps and activities

St. Johns County offers a variety of programs and activities for school age children during the summer months including a Summer Camp program, for county residents only, that emphasizes outdoor activities and is staffed by experienced, motivated leaders from within our community.

Campers participate in a variety of activities, including field trips, arts and crafts, and swimming. The Parks & Recreation Department Camps are for children ages five to twelve. (*only five-year-olds that have completed kindergarten by the start of camp are eligible) and are held at four locations in St. Johns County. Camps emphasize outdoor activities and are staffed by experienced, motivated leaders from within our community. For camp locations, dates and costs, visit www.scfl.us/Recreation/Youth/summer.aspx (continued on page 7)



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St. Augustine Beach and Beyond...

by Lorraine Thompson, staugbeachwatch@aol.com
(continued from page 6)

Junior Lifeguard program

Registration opens on March 29 for the St. Johns County Junior Lifeguard program for ages 9-16 years. The program is staffed by St. Johns County certified Open Water Lifeguards with the focus on providing water safety education in an environment that is fun while building teamwork, physical conditioning and respect for each other and the environment.

Participants are Issued an Official St. Johns County Junior Lifeguard Uniform and Junior Membership in the United States Lifesaving Association. Skills taught include First Aid Lessons and CPR Certification, Lifeguard Rescue Skills. Activities will include swimming, paddleboard and PWC, Surfing and Bodyboarding. There will also be lifeguard competitions, beach games, weekly cookouts and an awards celebration. In person Registration opens at 8 a.m. on March 29 at the Marine Rescue Headquarters, 366 A1A Beach Boulevard, St. Augustine Beach. The required registration form must be submitted in person at the registration on March 29. For additional information and the required form, visit sjcrlifeguard@sjcfl.us.

Civic Association offers free concerts and area discounts

It's less than two months until the 2026 Music by the Sea Concert Series, sponsored by the St. Augustine Beach Civic Association, begins at St. Augustine Beach's Pier Park. Although the performers have not been announced yet, the dates of the Wednesday night shows are set. A Special Pop Up Concert will open the series on April 1. Other concert dates are May 20, 28, June 3, 10, 17 and 24, August 19 and 26 and September 2, 9, 16, 23 and if necessary, a concert makeup date on September 30. Admission to the concerts which begin at 7 p.m. is free—but someone has to pay!

According to St. Augustine Beach Civic Association President Bill Jones, the budget for the concerts is covered for this season, thanks to local sponsors and Association memberships, but with increases in the costs of insurance, security and other financial requirements, looking ahead, there is a need for more concert sponsors plus memberships in the association.

Becoming a member of the Association is an inexpensive way for locals as well as visitors to receive discounts at area restaurants, boutiques, medical and health facilities, auto dealers. Realtors, and a variety of other businesses. Annual memberships are \$20 for individuals and \$30 for corporates or families. For online membership information and the application, visit <https://www.sabca.org/membership/join-us-now/>

You can also learn more about volunteering at the concerts and other St. Augustine Beach Civic Association events and/or becoming a business sponsor at 904-347-8007.



Please Join us for our March First Friday Art Opening, Friday, March 6th from 5pm to 8pm Featuring Artist of the Month, Kathy Harrod. Here's a little more about her in her own words: "I am lucky to have had parents and teachers at a young age who encouraged me to draw and paint. I have been painting and drawing pictures since grade school. I am self-taught and have talented mentors. The world holds so much beauty. I attempt to convey what moves me, gets me excited to make a painting. Subjects, scenes or objects that catch me by the light, the atmosphere, color or composition. A heap of pumpkins on an autumn day, the sunrise over a winter marsh, an egret trying to evade me.

Originally from Minnesota, I moved to Florida in 2016. I have worked in many mediums and have been exhibiting my work since 1989. The subjects I paint vary from illustration, portraits and landscapes. I have been in juried shows in Minnesota, nationally and now in Florida. Professionally, I worked primarily in pastels and in acrylics. White Oak Gallery in Minnesota promoted and sold my work from 1991 through 2002. I focused on landscape painting and am "naturalistic" in style.

I got my first set of oil paints in the 7th grade and now I have returned to them. I love their lushness and luminosity. Primarily as a landscape painter, I always wanted to paint flamingos. Now, what an opportunity! I built a new body of work while camping around the state and chasing birds on the beach. Working from reference photos and plein air, making color notes and starting a painting at the campsite. Paintings are completed in my studio in Ormond Beach. I work in series to fulfill my vision for that subject. Each painting is a new challenge and the more I paint, the more I learn.

I started to show and sell my work primarily through The Art Studio and The St. Augustine Art Association in 2021. I enjoy getting to know other artists and being part of a community".

The Art Studio is currently Celebrating 15 Years and we have special events planned all year long! Please keep up to date on all the upcoming special events by following us:

The Art Studio is located at 370 A1A Beach Blvd. in the St. John's County Pier Park and is open 7 days a week from 12pm to 5pm. We are a 501(c)(3) Non-Profit organization that brings Art and Culture to the community and offers classes, special events, exhibitions and rental space. For more information please visit www.beachartstudio.org, Facebook or call 904-295-4428.



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St. Johns Botanical Garden & Nature Preserve Spring Fling & Plant Sale

by Jane Villa-Lobos,

Come and enjoy a fun filled day at the St. Johns Botanical Garden & Nature Preserve at 8310 County Road 13 South in Hastings on Saturday March 21 from 10:30-4:30. The event is free with regular admission.

The Spring Fling and Plant Sale will have something for everyone to enjoy. In addition to the Garden's plant sale, Katie Tripp of Natural Beauty Native Florida Landscapes will present a talk on Butterfly Gardening and will be selling native plants. There will also be unique nature-related vendors, a delicious food truck and music by Sue Tice.

St. Johns Botanical Garden & Nature Preserve contains the largest collection of palm trees for North Florida. There will be a variety of palms for sale as well as succulents, perennials, bromeliads, and more.

For more information, visit the Garden's website: stjohnsbotanicalgarden.org, the Garden's Facebook page or call Kaitlyn Fair at 904-540-3294.

Families Anonymous Support Group

At your wits end? Tired of lies? Is someone you love destroying your family harmony? Families Anonymous is a free weekly meeting for mothers of addicted loved ones. We have walked your path and are here for you.

Thursdays 9-10 am, 2487 A1A S. Street, St. Augustine (Use red back door entrance) For more information to restore peace and harmony, contact 843-367-1475.

St. Augustine Film Society

by Kasey Valentine

"Delicatessen" (1991) - March 1st at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, 2487 A1A S, St. Augustine, FL 32080. Doors open at 3:30 p.m. The film begins at 4:00 p.m.

"Delicatessen" (1991), directed by Jean-Pierre Jeunet (same director as "Amelie") and Marc Caro, is a post-apocalyptic black comedy set almost entirely inside a crumbling apartment block whose cannibal butcher keeps the tenants fed by preparing a special delicacy. Against this grotesque routine, the arrival of ex-clown Louison and his romance with the butcher's daughter Julie turns the building into a battleground between habit, hunger, and the possibility of a different morality. The film's blend of slapstick, dystopia, and meticulous visual design has made it a modern cult classic. Not for the faint of heart.

"Maiden" - March 22nd PM Limelight Theater, 11 Old Mission Ave, St. Augustine, FL 32084. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. The film begins at 7:00 p.m.

"Maiden", In honor of Women's History Month, the St. Augustine Film Society is proud to present this film event sponsored by June and Howard Entman. This film tells the story of how Tracy Edwards, a 24-year-old cook on charter boats, became the skipper of the first ever all-female crew to enter the Whitbread Round the World in 1989. In 2014, Tracy Edwards learned that her boat, "Maiden," was rotting on the rocks in The Seychelles, a small group of islands in the Indian Ocean off East Africa, where it had been abandoned by its owner two years before. She crowdfunded the money to repurchase the wreck in 2016, and took another year to restore it at Southampton, where she and her crew had rebuilt it for the first time in 1989. As of 2019, it is on a three-year world tour to raise money and awareness for girls' access to education in poorer nations. Her project is called "The Maiden Factor."

"Harold and Maude" - March 26th Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, 2487 A1A S, St. Augustine, FL 32080. Doors open at 5:30 p.m. The film begins at 6:00 p.m.

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Financial Focus

Information Provided by

Edward Jones

Cory Caplinger, CFP

Your 401(k) is one of the most powerful tools for securing your financial future.

The question is: Are you using it to its full potential?

Here are some strategies to help you maximize its benefits:

- Earn your employer's match. It's a good idea to contribute as much as you can afford to your 401(k) plan. (In 2026, you can put in up to \$24,500, or \$32,500 if you're 50 or older. If your plan allows, there's also a "super catch-up" contribution of \$11,250 for people aged 60 to 63, for a total contribution limit of \$35,750). At least put in enough to earn a matching contribution if one is offered. Otherwise, you're shortchanging yourself. For example: Your employer matches 50% of your contribution up to \$5,000. If put in \$8,000, your employer's 50% match is \$4,000, and you're leaving \$1,000 "on the table."

- Give your plan a raise. When your income increases, consider increasing contributions to your 401(k). When you get a bonus or a tax refund, you could use some or all of that to boost your retirement savings.

- Evaluate the Roth option. When you invest in a traditional 401(k), you contribute pre-tax dollars, lowering your taxable income that year. Your earnings grow tax-deferred and are taxed when you withdraw. If your employer offers a Roth 401(k), you contribute after-tax dollars, so your taxable income doesn't drop that year. However, withdrawals in retirement, contributions and earnings alike, are generally tax-free. (Employer matching contributions and related earnings remain taxable.) If you expect a higher tax bracket in retirement or want to diversify tax treatment for flexibility in retirement, consider the Roth option. In 2026, the Roth option must be used for catch-up contributions if you earn more than \$150,000 and you are 50 or older. Consult your tax advisor before deciding.

- Build an appropriate investment mix. You may have multiple investment options in your 401(k). The driving principle early on is growth so your plan can fund a long retirement. But growth-oriented investments are naturally riskier than fixed-income vehicles. When starting your career, you may prefer a portfolio weighted toward aggressive growth, as you have years to recover from downturns. Nearing retirement, though, consider shifting to a more conservative mix. A financial advisor can help you choose an appropriate mix at different stages, based on your risk tolerance, time horizon and goals.

- Keep your plan intact. At times, you may feel a financial pinch that leads you to consider taking out loans or early withdrawals from your 401(k). However, this can cause you to incur taxes and penalties and will likely slow the growth needed to help reach your retirement savings goals. Taking steps to prepare for unexpected expenses, such as building an emergency fund containing three to six months' worth of living expenses, can help you avoid dipping into your 401(k). You may also be able to find other ways to access cash.

By following these steps, you can unlock the full potential of your 401(k) and position it as a cornerstone of your retirement income.

This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor. Edward Jones, Member SIPC

Edward Jones, its employees and financial advisors cannot provide tax or legal advice. You should consult your attorney or qualified tax advisor regarding your situation.

Clear Space, Calmer Mind: How Decluttering Supports Our Wellbeing

By Diane Thompson Cortese, Wellness Coach

The month of March in St. Augustine arrives with warm breezes, blooming color, and a natural sense of momentum. It's the ideal time to declutter – to clear the physical and emotional buildup of winter and create space for a lighter, more intentional season ahead.

Clutter isn't just a visual nuisance. Research confirms it has measurable effects on our brains, stress levels, and emotional health. From a neurological standpoint, clutter competes for our attention. When our environment is filled with excess items, the brain must constantly filter information, increasing cognitive load and mental fatigue. This ongoing overstimulation can make it harder to focus, regulate emotions, and feel calm- even when nothing else is "wrong."



There is also strong evidence linking clutter to stress physiology. Studies have found that people who perceive their homes as cluttered are more likely to experience elevated levels of cortisol, the body's primary stress hormone. Chronic cortisol elevation is associated with anxiety, sleep disruption, inflammation, and difficulty managing emotions.

Researchers at the University of Florida Center for OCD, Anxiety, and Related Disorders study the psychological and emotional impacts of difficulty discarding possessions. Their work highlights how cluttered environments and attachment to excess items are closely linked with anxiety, stress, and impaired daily functioning. While their research often focuses on clinical hoarding, it reinforces an important takeaway for all of us: our surroundings are not emotionally neutral. In other words, what we live among affects how we feel.

The benefits of decluttering are not about minimalism or perfection. They're about restoring agency. Completing small, tangible tasks – like clearing a drawer or a single surface – can increase dopamine, a neurotransmitter associated with motivation and reward. This is why even brief decluttering efforts often lead to improved mood, clarity, and energy.

Benefits of decluttering:

- Improves focus by reducing visual distractions.
- Lowers stress and supports nervous system regulation.
- Can improve sleep quality.
- Boosts mood and motivation through small task completion.
- Increases sense of control and clarity.
- Reduces feelings of overwhelm.
- Makes daily routines easier and more efficient.

Decluttering works best when it's approached gently. Research supports the effectiveness of small, achievable actions, not all-day cleanouts. Clearing one space at a time allows the nervous system to register success without overwhelm.

This spring, consider reframing decluttering as a wellness practice rather than a chore. Ask yourself:

- Does this item support the life I'm living now?
- Does my environment help my nervous system feel settled?
- What would make this space feel lighter?

And if you're ready to let items go, donating them can transform decluttering into an act of community service. In the St. Augustine area, gently used clothing and household items can be donated to local organization's thrift stores such as: Betty Griffin Center (supports survivors of domestic abuse), Alpha-Omega, St. Vincent de Paul, and Goodwill.

Clearing physical space often creates room for clearer thinking, better sleep, and more compassionate self-talk. Sometimes, improving our wellbeing doesn't involve adding something new – instead, consider letting something go.

(Information contained in this article is not intended as medical advice. Please check with your doctor before making health or wellness changes.)

Bio: Diane Thompson Cortese is a Mayo Clinic-trained Wellness Coach, NASM certified Personal Trainer, and CEO of Wildly Capable Wellness Coaching, helping women build confidence, strength, and sustainable healthy habits, one powerful step at a time. Contact: Website: www.wildlycapable.life Email: diane@wildlycapable.life



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5 Things Older Adults Should Know About the Recent Funding Package the House Passed

Carol Bogart, Palencia Resident
904-648-6488
Carol@AskCarolB.com

The House just passed a funding package that actually protects older Americans instead of leaving them to navigate yet another healthcare crisis. If you're on Medicare or about to turn 65, here's why you should care.

1. Your Doctor Won't Stop Taking Medicare Patients

Remember those scary headlines about physician payment cuts? They've been averted—at least for now. The package stops scheduled reductions that would've pushed even more doctors to stop accepting Medicare. It's not a permanent fix, but it buys us time and keeps your access to care intact.

2. That \$2,100 Drug Cost Cap? It's Staying

The much-needed prescription cost protections remain firmly in place. If you're spending a fortune on medications, that \$2,100 annual cap on out-of-pocket drug expenses continues into 2026.

3. Telehealth Isn't Going Anywhere

Those convenient virtual doctor visits you discovered during the pandemic? They're sticking around. For folks who can't easily get to appointments—whether you're in a rural area or simply don't drive anymore—this is genuinely life-changing healthcare access.

4. Medicare Advantage Gets More Scrutiny

Increased oversight of Medicare Advantage plans means stronger protections against coverage denials and quality issues. It's a step toward holding these plans accountable when they don't deliver what they promise.

5. Prevention Stays Free

Your annual wellness visits and health screenings remain covered at no cost. Early detection saves lives, and keeping these services accessible without copays is smart policy.

The takeaway? Your coverage remains stable, your costs stay predictable, and help is there when you need it. Still, review your plan each fall during Open Enrollment to make sure it fits your current needs.

Medicare

If you are turning 65 and want to understand Medicare as well as review available plans, appointments are free and there is no obligation to enroll.



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St. Augustine Beach Democratic Club

provided by Susan Horwitz

The St Augustine Beach Democratic Club's March 2026 meeting will be on Tuesday, March 10, 2026. We regularly meet on the first Tuesday of each month, but the Library is not available so for March 2026, the meeting will be on Tuesday March 10 instead of March 3. The meeting is at the Anastasia Island Branch Library, 124 Sea Grove Main Street, St Augustine Beach at 5:30 pm.

Our Speaker will be Eddie Creamer, St Johns County Property Appraiser. Property Appraiser Creamer has been our St Johns County Appraiser since 2017 and he regularly meets with community groups to share the most up to date news and information. He will be providing his insight about the proposals to change Florida property taxes.

The St Augustine Beach Democratic Club's focus is on issues affecting those living in the St Augustine Beach area. Our meetings provide an excellent opportunity to hear from a variety of speakers, get to know elected representatives, mingle with Democratic candidates and socialize with like minded neighbors. The Club's regular monthly meetings are held at the Anastasia Island Branch Library 124 Sea Grove Main Street at 5:30 on the first Tuesday of each month. There is plenty of parking. For additional information, please contact info@sabdem.org.

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Living with Cancer Support Group

The Living with Cancer support group has moved to Cancer Specialists of North Florida. 121 Whitehall Drive, St. Augustine 32086 on the third Wednesday of every month at 11:00 am. We still have the ability to ZOOM in if needed. This is an informal gathering for adults with any type of cancer and their caregivers.

It is open to all affected by cancer. This group will provide the opportunity to meet others in similar situations, share your stories, provide practical suggestions and offer support to each other. If you prefer to participate virtually via Zoom, please call 904-819-4793 for further instructions.

Do You Have Community News to Share?

Do you have news, events or personal interest information that are relevant to our communities in and around St. Augustine Beach? Please forward them to the Editor for consideration for the monthly News Journal. Please contact Editor clifflogsdon@att.net or call 904-607-1410.

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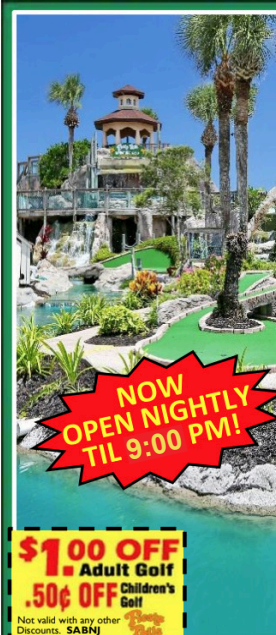
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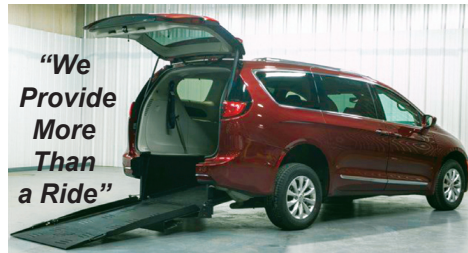
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