

St. Augustine Beaches NEWS JOURNAL



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



USCG Auxiliary holds Change of Watch

By Lorraine Thompson (staugbeachwatch@aol.com)

U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary, Flotilla 14-7, St. Augustine, held its annual Change of Watch event at the Guana Tolomato Matanzas National Estuarine Reserve Visitor Center in December.

Elected officers who were sworn in for 2026 include Dr. Louis Laguardia as Flotilla Commander and Alphonse Albano as Vice Flotilla Commander. Staff officers for 2026 include Joseph Martin, Robert Bond, Roxanne Anstett, Steven Bergmann, Neil Rattrie, Jon Cegielski, Robert Mattson, Delores Lexandra, Henry Seiden, Daniel Jacquish, Joseph Martin, Aaron Curlin and Herbert Peters. Other new or returning staff officers who were not present at the event will be sworn in at a future Flotilla meeting.

At the annual event Flotilla Commander Laguardia and Vice Commander Alphonse Albano reviewed recent flotilla achievements. "We celebrate and recognize the large increases both in areas of qualified program members, participation hours and number of boater interactions this year in our two main program areas of Vessel Safety Checks (VSC), as well as Program Visitors. Partner numbers increased over the year," said Vice Commander Albano. Dr. Laguardia continued, "Thirteen Certified Vessel Inspectors completed 247 mission hours and 470 vessel inspections. Ten Partner Visitation specialists likewise set records, completing 186 mission hours and 493 visits with our Partners to date. All this was supporting Boating Safety missions with the U.S. Coast Guard locally, including special events like Snapper Trapper, National Safe Boating Week and Operation Dry Water. The flotilla members were also recognized nationally with the Auxiliary Commandant's Meritorious Team Commendation Award. Of those, five were new members qualifying this year for their program positions."

Membership in the auxiliary does not require extensive knowledge of rules pertaining to boating nor does it require boat ownership. Education is provided to members. To learn more about membership in Flotilla 14-7, contact Steven Bergmann at srbergmann@verizon.net or visit <https://www.uscgaux.info/content.php?unit=070-14-07>

The Coast Guard Auxiliary is the uniformed volunteer component of the U.S. Coast Guard and supports the Coast Guard in nearly all its service missions. The Auxiliary was created by Congress in 1939. For more information, visit www.cgaux.org.

Contributed photo—members of St. Augustine USCG Auxiliary 14-7 Flotilla take the Oath of Office for 2026

St. Augustine Lions Seafood Festival!

Save the dates for March 21-22 at Francis Field!

The St. Augustine Lions Foundation and Lions Club will host the 43rd Annual St. Augustine Lions Seafood Festival — a family friendly event with something for all ages!

The beloved festival is the primary fundraising event for the St. Augustine Lions Foundation each year since 1981 — generating funds for charitable needs and services to the community, focusing on youth, the deaf and the blind, disaster relief and Veterans.

The festival is known for its abundance of great food, live music, and fun entertainment!

* Seafood is the main star, prepared in various ways, along with other cuisines such as BBQ, Asian, Greek, and fun carnival eats. (continued on page 6)



photo by JWilson Aerial Photography

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“News Source for the City of St. Augustine Beach”

City of St. Augustine Beach



Mayor Dylan Rumrell
 City Manager Max Royle

www.staugbch.com
sabadmin@cityofsab.org

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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St. Augustine Beach City Hall Update

The City Commission held its regular meeting on Monday, January 5, 2026, and did the following:

1. Witnessed the swearing in of Commissioner Beth Sweeny as Mayor and of Commissioner Virginia Morgan as Vice Mayor for 2026.
2. Approved a proclamation to declare January 2026 as Human Trafficking Awareness Month.
3. Passed on second reading an ordinance to amend the Land Development Regulations to provide flexible setbacks to save trees.
4. Reviewed changes to the City Charter and approved those that can be done by ordinance.
5. Discussed the employment contract with the City Manager, whether to approve the position of Assistant City



Manager and directed that information concerning the search for a new Manager be provided at the Commission's February 2nd meeting.

6. Decided not to accept an offer to purchase for \$400,000 a lot on the north side of 7th Street to preserve a large oak tree.
7. Accepted a proposal to change the street side setback for ocean-front lots in the Atlantic Beach, Chautauqua Beach and Coquina Gables subdivisions.
8. Decided it was too early for the City to adopt policies concerning proposed Florida constitutional amendments to reduce property taxes by referendum in 2026.

The City Commission will hold its next regular meeting on Monday, February 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.



The City Commission approved a proclamation to declare January 2026 as Human Trafficking Awareness Month. Shown left to right, Mayor Beth Sweeney, Catherine Altman of the American Association for University Women and Alison Hashaw with the Betty Griffin Center. (photo by May Royle)

PUBLIC NOTICE: Notice is hereby given that the undersigned, desires to engage in DBA business under the name of “Jellyfish Massage” and registered with the Florida Department of State, Tallahassee, FL. The party will commence practice in St. John's County, FL at 2807 Tenth Street North, Suite 11, St. Augustine, FL 32086. By: M. Danielle Welch, LMT,MA70133.

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City of St. Augustine Beach February 2026 Commission Meeting Agenda

The St. Augustine Beach City Commission will meet on Monday, February 2, 2026, at 6 p.m. at City Hall, 2200 A1A South. Topics on the agenda will include:

1. Final reading of an ordinance to update a section of the Land Development Regulations pertaining to flexible setbacks to save trees.
2. Second reading of an ordinance to amend the Land Development Regulations to change street side setbacks for ocean-front lots in the Atlantic Beach, Chautauqua Beach and Coquina Gables subdivisions.
3. Award of bid for to T B Landmark Construction for Phase 1 of the Magnolia Dunes subdivision drainage project and a budget resolution to appropriate \$184,491 for the project.
4. Review of an ordinance to adopt changes to the City Charter.
5. Discussion of options for the search for a new City Manager.

The public is invited to attend the meeting or view it on YouTube on the City's website at staugbch.com.

Notice from the City of St. Augustine Beach

By Max Royle, City Manager

Attention Owners of Property Bordering St. Augustine Beach. If you are thinking of a major remodeling of your property, changing its land use from residential to commercial or vice versa, or tearing down an existing building to construct a new one, the City of St. Augustine Beach can provide timely and efficient review and permitting services. The only condition is that the property will need to be annexed into the City. Persons with questions may direct them to Max Royle, City Manager, at mroyle@cityofsab.org, or telephone (904) 471-2122.

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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.



City of St. Augustine Beach

Installs 2026 Mayor and Vice Mayor



City Commissioner Beth Sweeny takes oath of office to be the City's Mayor for 2026. (photo by Max Royle)



Commissioner Virginia Morgan takes the oath to be St. Augustine Beach's Vice Mayor for 2026 from City Attorney John Steinmetz

Garden Club of St. Augustine

by Helen Boxer

FEB. 11, 2026 — Walter Bryant of the Florida Native Plant Society will be the featured speaker at the Garden Club of St. Augustine's general meeting, 3440 Old Moultrie Rd. The topic is "Camellias". Refreshments at 9:30am, presenter and business meeting at 10am. Open to the public. Carpooling encouraged. Welcoming new members! gardenclubofstaugustine.org

FEB. 26 2026 —Come and play! The Woodland Circle of the Garden Club of St. Augustine is sponsoring a CARD PARTY 12noon to 3pm at the clubhouse: 3440 Old Moultrie Rd. \$20 includes a buffet lunch with dessert beginning at 12. Door prizes, 50/50 raffle. Open to the public. To attend, text or call Pattie at 904-392-1963. Bring cards, and/or your favorite games aka Mah-jongg, Backgammon, Scrabble, Rummikub, etc. Come with buddies or solo for spontaneous pairing!

Done

By Max Royle
St. Augustine Beach City Manager



What's done? Is it the pot roast, Aunt Maybelle's cinnamon-flavored pork chops or her world-famous sauerkraut and Limburger cheese casserole? Well, it certainly isn't your City Manager who, according to well-founded rumor, is merely half-baked. Where am I going with this metaphor? I've no idea, so let's get to the "meat" of the matter. Another metaphor. Please excuse.

During 2025, you likely saw the City's Public Works employees in orange vests doing road, sidewalk and drainage repairs at various locations. For other projects, you saw other workers and often large vehicles, such as bulldozers, concrete trucks or asphalt spreaders, which are cost-ineffective for the City to own because of the limited number of large projects each year. The work done was a mosaic of large and small actions that each workday kept your City repaired, drained and maintained.

As 2025 is finished, some of you may want to know what those projects were. I have divided them into two categories: those that the City hired a contractor to do because their complexity required manpower and equipment the City didn't have, and those projects that were done by City employees with City equipment.

A. ROAD REPAVING: 11TH Street west of A1A Beach Boulevard (\$134,686), 10th Street east of the Boulevard (\$49,238), 12th Street east of the Boulevard (\$28,314), pavement rejuvenation for various streets to extend the life of the pavement (\$35,077).

B. SIDEWALKS. New sidewalk to connect the A Street and 2nd Avenue sidewalks (\$56,210), repair of sidewalks at various locations along Mickler Boulevard and 2nd Avenue (\$100,777).

C. DRAINAGE PROJECTS. Rehabilitation of the Sandpiper Village subdivision pump station (\$156,212), Ocean Pines Drive drainage pipe replacement in the Sea Oaks subdivision (\$42,777), new drainage pipes, pavement and curbing of Lakeshore Drive between 16th Street and Willow Drive (\$264,101).

D. SPECIAL PROJECTS. Repaving and striping of the 11TH Street public parking lot in front of Café 11 (\$34,644), remodeling and improvements to an auxiliary building at the City Hall complex to make it more suitable for City operations (\$53,900), planting 58,000 sea oats on the beach between 16th Street and south of A Street to help build protective dunes (\$95,154). The St. Augustine Port, Waterway and Beach Commission generously provided \$70,000 for this project.

Here are a few of the many projects done by Public Works employees. The costs aren't included because the employees were already on the City's payroll: Repair of the pier in Lakeside Park, removal of debris from the following: two City-owned drainage ponds in the Sea Oaks subdivision, 11th Street drainage ditch between Mickler Boulevard and the entrance to the Spanish Oaks subdivision, Mickler Boulevard ditch between A and 11th streets; grading and stabilization of the banks of the City's 15-acre Mizell Road retention pond, grading the swales on 2nd Avenue and 13th Street.

Thanks to Russell Adams, Public Works Director, for providing the above list of projects. He shows what a first-class staff does to help make a half-baked city manager done. Metaphorically speaking, of course.

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St. Augustine Travel Club

by Peter Dytrych

Our next gathering is Wednesday, February 11, 2026 at 3:00 pm at the Southeast Branch Public Library, 6670 US 1 South. We will feature ITALY - PART 1: Florence, covering all the must-see sights, shopping tips, and more in this splendid town. Exploring Amalfi Coast, its cities, little towns and villages along the soaring cliffs over the Mediterranean Sea.

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.



gg62176354 GoGraph.com

St. Johns Botanical Garden January Tours

by Jane Villa-Lobos

The St. Johns Botanical Garden & Nature Preserve is having two different tours on Saturday, January 10, 2026. The Nature Preserve Tour will be a walk through the nature preserve to learn about the importance of growing natives. The Bromeliad Tour will be a walk along Tropical Trail to learn about growing bromeliads in your landscape. Both tours will be from 10:30 am - 11:30 am and will be repeated from 1:30 pm - 2:30 pm. There will be a break, so plan on bringing lunch and picnic at the garden's picnic areas.

Tickets are \$10 for each tour plus garden admission. To pre-register, contact Kaitlyn Fair at (904) 540-3294 or email: info@stjohnsbotanicalgarden.org. The garden is located at 8310 County Rd. 13 South, Hastings, FL.

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.

Alzheimer's/Dementia Caregivers Support Group

Looking for encouragement and support taking care of your loved one with Alzheimer's or Dementia? We have a place for you to share your concerns and get resources to help with your journey.

The Caregivers Support Group meets the second and fourth Thursday of each month from 10:00 am - 11:00 am at Homeport Christian Church, 5605 US1South, St Augustine.

For information, call Nancy Wright 904-347-6299, Bebe Kelly 386-7793-8114 or the Alzheimer's Association 800-272-3900 or go to alz.org/help-support/caregivers

St. Augustine Beach and Beyond...

By Lorraine Thompson (staugbeachwatch@aol.com)

You gotta love February!

February, the shortest month of the year, is also the month of love!

Island residents and visitors are invited to start the month of February out "lovingly" at St. Augustine Beach's "For the Love of Art" festivities at Lakeside Park. The event, Sunday February 1st from 12 noon to 5 p.m., is described as a family-friendly afternoon dedicated to creativity, community and fun featuring local art displays, live music, food and hands-on activities for all ages. Visitors can also meet local art creators.

Lakeside Park is located at 2340 A1A S. Admission and parking are free at St. Augustine Beach City Hall.

SPRING BREAK CAREER CAMP

With spring break coming up for local students, St. Johns County Parks and Recreation will conduct two Sustainable Futures Career Camps aimed at introducing students to a variety of careers in the environmental field including wildlife conservation, environmental science, and sustainability. Camps are offered for home schoolers as well as high school students. Camp times and dates are: 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., March 2-6 for home school students, and 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. March 16-20 for high school students in grades 9 to 12. Both camps will be centered at San Sebastian River Park Educational Classroom, 320 State Road 312. The cost is \$200. Scholarships are available for students on free or reduced lunch programs. Students can earn at least ten service learning hours by participating in environmental projects that benefit the community. The camp not only helps students discover potential career interests but also provides them with practical experience and the chance to make positive impacts on the planet. Email kussia@sjcfl.us for registration and other information.

FREE INCOME TAX PREPARATION

United Way of St. Johns and Putnam Counties offer free income tax preparation services to eligible individuals and families in both counties through the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program. VITA Locations in St. Johns & Putnam Counties are at:

- St. Johns County Health and Human Services
- VyStar Credit Union – St. Augustine
- United Way of St. Johns and Putnam Counties
- St. Johns River State College – St. Augustine
- St. Johns River State College – Palatka
- Hawthorne Community Center
- Melrose Public Library
- Interlachen Public Library

This service is available by appointment only and can be scheduled online at unitedway-sjc.org/freetaxprep or by calling 904-222-6609. Appointments are available from February 2 through April 15, 2026.

VITA depends on the help of volunteers. If you're interested in becoming a greeter, tax preparer, or site coordinator, contact Patty Isola, Director of Community Impact, at freetaxprep@unitedway-sjc.org.

St. Augustine Beach Democratic Club

provided by Susan Horwitz

The St. Augustine Beach Democratic Club's February meeting will be on Tuesday, February 3, 2026. The meeting is at the Anastasia Island Branch Library, 124 Sea Grove Main Street, St. Augustine Beach at 5:30 pm. Our topic will be "Protesting; How to Stay Safe." From her experience in organizing protests and engaging in nonviolent civil disobedience, Activist Cara Vetsch will present useful guidance and skills on your rights while protesting and actions you can take to keep you and your community safe.

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@sabdems.org.

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March 21-22, 2026

St Augustine Lions Club.

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Whitney Turtle Lab

The University of Florida's Whitney Lab, located in the City of Marineland, is in the final stages of completing construction of a forty-one million dollar technologically advanced teaching, research and conservation facility that will include a new sea turtle research center and hospital.



Photo by John Jernigan: Cat Eastman holding a green feeder--"How we feed our patients their veggies", she explained.

Catherine Eastman couldn't be happier.

Eastman (known as "Cat" to her friends and colleagues) started working with sea turtles while she was studying at Florida Atlantic University in the late 1990s. In 2007 along with her husband Scott, she incorporated a non-profit conservation group that worked with seasonally migrating sea turtles along St Augustine beaches, focusing on the nesting ecology of the local juvenile loggerhead turtles.

With the help of a large volunteer network the focus shifted as they responded to stranded juvenile green sea turtles who were diagnosed with the fibropapillomatosis tumor disease that was more commonly found in tropical waters of south Florida and the Florida Keys.

Seeing the disease increase into more northern latitudes sparked a call to action by the group.

Fibropapillomatosis, commonly referred to as FP, is a tumor-causing disease that most commonly affects green turtles in some areas of the U.S., including locations in Florida, Hawaii, Texas, and Puerto Rico. It causes cauliflower-like tumors to form on the turtle's skin anywhere on the body, including the eyes and mouth. Tumors can also form on internal organs. Some sea turtles only have mild forms of the disease whereas others develop numerous or large tumors that result in debilitation and death. Only sea turtles (no humans) can become infected by the virus associated with this disease and only sea turtles develop this form of FP.

The current Sea Turtle Hospital at the University of Florida Whitney Laboratory opened on October 24, 2015. Its mission has remained the same since day one — to provide rehabilitation, education, and research that support sea turtle conservation in Northeast Florida.

"It's been more than just 10 years, 1,056 juvenile sea turtles and 2,523 hatchlings and washbacks," Eastman commented on her experiences. "It's also been countless hours of volunteer support and staff pulling 'all nighters' to care for patients after surgery. Over the past decade, the Sea Turtle Hospital has grown from a small rehabilitation effort into a program that reflects both the resilience of sea turtles and the dedication of the people who care for them. Each patient tells a story of the challenges facing our coastal ecosystems and of what's possible when science, compassion, and community come together." she reflected.

Eastman, who serves as program manager, credits the persistence and dedication of colleagues who have worked with her for the past decade—"the backbone of the hospital since the very beginning" including Veterinarian Dr. Brooke Burkhalter and Hospital Manager Devon Rollinson-Ramia and Animal Care Technicians Kaylee Hargis and Leah Adelman who have assisted for the past five years, and the contributions of the dozens of volunteers who have assisted at the lab and along the beaches.

And while Cat is busy dealing with the sea turtles, her husband Scott, has moved on and now serves as Regional Program Administrator for the Office of Resilience and Coastal Protection Florida Department of Environmental Protection.

For more information on the program including volunteer information contact (Eastman at <https://www.whitney.ufl.edu/>)

St. Augustine Lions Seafood Festival!

(continued from page 1)

- The live music on the main stage is a feature that gets better year-after-year. The Fun Zone offers excitement for all ages, with the Ninja Nation obstacle course, Axe Throwing for adults and youth, Bungee Jumping and bounce houses.
- The Arts & Crafts Village features local and regional artisans offering a wide variety of handcrafted items.
- Pirate Landing features performers such as magicians, pirates, mermaids, lions and Smokey Bear!
- HOURS
Saturday, March 21, 10 AM to 9 PM
Sunday, March 22, 11 AM to 6 PM



www.lionsfestival.com



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St. Augustine Orchid Society

by Janid Croft

February 3 - Tips and Tricks for Growing Orchids

Linda Stewart and Eric Milstrey, SAOS Board members, will be giving us some tips and tricks for growing orchids in St. Augustine. Linda will show how she customized a Wardian Case for her cool growing miniatures. Eric will focus on ways to grow your orchids using locally available materials (moss, fern and palm fiber). He'll also demonstrate how to make and use hand-made baskets, modify low cost plastic and clay pots and make fence cages for growing orchids.

Eric has a deep personal knowledge of orchids growing in their natural habitats from having lived for years in the Caribbean, Central and South America while serving in the Army. Linda has grown orchids for many years in a variety of environments, including an atrium, greenhouse, under eaves and a pergola and now in her home under lights. Bring your blooming orchids for the Show Table.

Plants will be available on the sales & raffle tables. The St. Augustine Orchid Society welcomes all to our monthly meetings. No charge.

<https://www.staugorchidsociety.org>

When: Feb.3, 6:30 to 9 pm

Where: Memorial Lutheran Church. Drive around to the back entrance

3375 US 1 South, St. Aug 32086



Eric Milstrey
Photo provided by Janis Croft



Please Join us for our February First Friday Art Opening, Friday, February 6th from 5pm to 8pm Featuring Artist of the Month, Carol Lye, here's a little more about her in her own words: "I am a local, self-taught artist, born in Auckland, New Zealand. After spending over 30 years on the Gold Coast of Australia, I moved to the United States in 2022. My American husband and I am now permanently settled in the beautiful city of St. Augustine. My love for art began in my early years in New Zealand, and while raising my family in Australia, I immersed myself in exploring a wide range of artistic mediums and styles.

Recently, I've been focusing on the vibrant and expressive possibilities of ink, creating colourful, cheerful, and uplifting works. Most of my works incorporate the New Zealand, traditional spiral Maori Koru which resembles new life, growth, strength, peace, harmony and the continuous cycle of life. I find that the natural beauty of Florida is a constant source of inspiration, which I channel into each of my newer creations.

I hope you enjoy my art as much as I have loved creating it for you. For updates, please follow me on Instagram @Lyeart1, or reach out at carollye16@gmail.com".



St. Augustine Film Society

by Kasey Valentine

February 4th - "The Grand Highway" - at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, 2487 A1A S, St. Augustine, FL 32080. Doors open at 3:30pm. Film begins at 4:00pm.

"The Grand Highway" (Le grand chemin, 1987), directed by Jean-Loup Hubert, is a gently unsentimental coming-of-age drama about a Parisian boy's formative summer in rural Brittany, where exposure to adult pain, sexuality, and death fractures his childhood innocence without quite extinguishing his capacity for wonder. Nominated for 6 Cesar Awards including Best Picture.

February 13th - Valentine's Day - at The Waterworks, 184 San Marco Ave, St. Augustine FL 32084. Doors open at 6:30pm. Film Begins at 7:00pm.

Annual Valentines Day Party! Join us for an evening of Film Shorts on the topic of "Love" from around the world plus many other surprises.

February 20th - "Wings of Desire" - at the Limelight Theater, 11 Old Mission Ave, St Augustine, FL 32084. Doors open at 6:30pm. Film begins at 7:00pm.

"Wings of Desire" ("Der Himmel über Berlin," 1987) is a meditative, poetic fable about angels in a divided Berlin, one of whom chooses to renounce eternity to experience the fragility and fullness of human life, especially love. It stands as one of Wim Wenders' defining works, merging philosophical reflection, political memory, and romantic longing into a singularly lyrical cinema experience. Inspiration for the film came from the poetry of Rainer Maria Rilke and the film is more poetry than cinema.

February 22nd - "Life, Above All" - at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, 2487 A1A S, St. Augustine, FL 32080. Doors open 5:30pm. Film begins at 6:00pm.

"Life, Above All" (2010), directed by Oliver Schmitz and adapted from Allan Stratton's novel "Chanda's Secrets," is an intimate, township-scale tragedy about a 12-year-old girl who refuses to let shame and superstition dictate the fate of her family in the shadow of HIV/AIDS in South Africa. It is both a social issue film and an in-depth character study.





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Meet Sigsbee L. Scruggs, ESQ “A Florida Legend”

On February 21, 2026 hear and “Meet Sigsbee L. Scruggs, Esq.: A Florida Legend” through the amazing oratory of David Fussell in his first-person interpretation of the man who was special counsel for Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings during her invasion of privacy trial.

A production of Tale Tellers of St. Augustine production on Saturday, February 21, 4:30 pm, at the Unitarian-Universal Fellowship, 2487 A!AS, St. Augustine.. For further information call: 904-540-0402. Tickets available at the event or in advance at taletellers.org.



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. Photo of Sigsbee Scruggs by Kathy Knieri



Interested in the Civil War?

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

The February presentation will be with Len Whiteside, titled “Union Conquest of the Mississippi”. It discusses how the North fought geographic and technological problems to gain control of the Mississippi River. The South fought to try to spread the Confederacy to the east and west of the river and was therefore critical for them as well.



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

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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Sheriff’s Update

By St. Johns County Sheriff Robert A. Hardwick



St. Johns County Fight Night February 26, 2026.

On Feb 26, 2026 St. Johns County Fight Night is coming to the St. Augustine Amphitheatre in support for boxers fighting for charity.

The charitable event include 13 adult bouts between St. Johns County Fire Fighters and St. Johns County Deputies. Also 3 Police Athletic League (PAL) boxing bouts. The event is sanctioned by Combat Sports Athletic Commission. Both male and female teams have been traing since October.

Fund raising will be in support of:

- DiamonD of Dreams: Playground and baseball field in south St. Augustine build project that is tiered to children with special needs. The facility will be handicapped accessible, even a slide with wheelchair capabilities for example.
- Special Olympics: Law Enforcement Torch Run supporting a great charity that helps our local youth participate in sports.

The event will have a DJ, Honor Guard presentation and special guest for the pledge and the best ring announcer in town - Sheriff Rob Hardwick. The doors will open at 6:00 pm and the Amphitheatre will sell food, drinks, and merchandise for those who attend.

Tickets range from \$10-\$35 and there’s a VIP option for \$150 to sit ringside! Please buy tickets from the Amp website so they aren’t resale prices. Sponsorship/ Advertisement opportunities may still be available for businesses. Contact kpadgett@sjsso.org for info. For ticks see: <https://www.theamp.com/events/detail/st-johns-county-fight-night-2026?>

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Music

The City of St. Augustine Beach will be hosting

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Art

How the Jeff Galloway Run-Walk-Run Method Makes Running Accessible for Every Body

By Diane Thompson Cortese, Wellness Coach

If you've ever thought, "I'm not a runner," you're not alone. Many people are drawn to running but feel held back by fear of injury, exhaustion, or the belief that they must run nonstop for their exercise to "count."

That's where the "Jeff Galloway Run-Walk-Run®" method comes in - a science-backed, confidence-building approach that makes running more sustainable, enjoyable, and realistic for real life.

Developed in the 1970s by Olympic runner and coach Jeff Galloway, the method alternates short running intervals with planned walking breaks. Instead of pushing through fatigue, runners manage effort intentionally, allowing the body to recover during the workout rather than after it.

The result? Less injury, more consistency, and greater enjoyment.

What Is the Run-Walk-Run Method?

The Run-Walk-Run method simply means inserting brief walk breaks into a run before you're exhausted. For example:

- Run 1 minute / Walk 1 minute
- Run 2 minutes / Walk 1 minute
- Run 4 minutes / Walk 1 minute

These ratios can be adjusted for beginners, experienced runners, or anyone returning after time off. Surprisingly, many runners discover they can go farther, and sometimes faster, using this approach because fatigue is managed rather than ignored.

Why It's Perfect for St. Augustine

St. Augustine's climate makes outdoor movement inviting nearly year-round. In February, average daytime temperatures hover around 68–70°F, with cooler mornings in the low-to-mid 50s, ideal conditions for run-walk training without extreme heat or cold.

Add ocean breezes and scenic views, and running here becomes less about suffering and more about rhythm, movement, and presence.

Best Local Places to Run & Walk

Anastasia State Park

Shaded trails winding through dunes and maritime forest offer a softer surface, perfect for walk breaks and joint-friendly running.

St. Augustine Beach

Flat, open shoreline stretches make it easy to time run-walk intervals using beach access points or lifeguard stands as markers.

Vilano Bridge

For runners craving variety, the Vilano Bridge offers rare local elevation and breathtaking views of the Intracoastal Waterway. It's ideal for building strength, practicing effort control, and adding gentle "hill work" into a routine.

Local Community: Ancient City Road Runners

Running doesn't have to be a solo pursuit. Ancient City Road Runners is a welcoming local running club open to walkers and runners of all paces and ages. Looking for a community to do group runs with, Anastasia Island resident, Sean Doyle and his son Kilian, who was 10 at the time, joined ACRR in 2020. "What I didn't expect to find was a fiercely dedicated group of runners who also acted like friends and family," said Doyle. "They welcomed us in and took Kilian under their wings."

The group offers:

- Weekly group runs
- Training support for local races
- Social connection and accountability
- A strong sense of community

They also host local events, including the annual Matanzas 5000, making them a great entry point for anyone curious about racing, especially first-timers.

Membership details and weekly run schedules are available on their website. <https://www.ancientcityroadrunners.org/>

Try This: A Simple Starter Workout

- Warm up: 5-minute walk
- Run 2 minutes / Walk 1 minute
- Repeat for 20–30 minutes
- Cool down with an easy walk and stretch

Early mornings or sunset runs work best, especially as temperatures warm in the upcoming months. Whether you're walking your first mile, returning after a break, or training for a local race, the Jeff Galloway Run-Walk-Run method meets you exactly where you are.

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



Financial Focus

Information Provided by

Edward Jones

Cory Caplinger CFP



New tax laws for 2026 that you should know

The new year brings more than resolutions and fresh starts; it also ushers in several tax changes that could affect your wallet. Whether you're saving for retirement, funding your child's education or supporting your favorite charity, here's are a few things you need to know about the tax landscape in 2026.

More room to save for retirement and healthcare. There's good news for savers: Contribution limits for retirement accounts are going up. If you're under 50, you can now contribute up to \$7,500 to an IRA, which is up from \$7,000 in 2025. Those 50 and older can contribute an additional \$1,100, for a total of \$8,600.

The limits for 401(k), 403(b) and governmental 457(b) plans are also increasing, with workers younger than 50 able to defer up to \$24,500. Visit IRS.gov and search "401k limit increases" for an article outlining the details.

Health savings account limits are rising too. In 2026, individual coverage increased to \$4,400 and family coverage to \$8,750. If you are age 55 or older and are not enrolled in Medicare, you can contribute an additional \$1,000 as a catch-up contribution.

The start of the year is an ideal time to review your contributions and consider increasing them, even by small amounts which can add up over time.

A catch-up rule for high earners. If you're 50 or older and earned more than \$150,000 last year, there's a new wrinkle in your retirement planning. You can still make catch-up contributions to your workplace retirement plan, but they must now be Roth contributions rather than traditional pre-tax contributions. This includes 401(k), 403(b) and 457(b) plans.

While you won't get an immediate tax break, Roth contributions offer tax-free income in retirement and can provide a tax-free legacy for your heirs.

Expanded benefits for 529 education plans. Families using 529 plans to cover K-12 expenses will see the annual federal distribution limit double from \$10,000 to \$20,000 per student. The definition of qualifying expenses has also expanded to include curriculum, books, certain tutoring expenses and testing fees.

This change provides more flexibility for families with overfunded plans and increases options for managing education costs across multiple children or beneficiaries.

New charitable giving provisions. The rules around charitable deductions are shifting in two directions. Taxpayers who take the standard deduction can now deduct up to \$1,000 in cash donations (\$2,000 for joint filers) to qualified organizations.

However, those who itemize deductions face a new threshold: only charitable contributions exceeding 0.5% of adjusted gross income are now deductible. Donors may want to consider bunching strategies or using donor-advised funds to maximize their tax benefits.

Getting help. Navigating these tax changes can be challenging, but you don't have to go it them alone. A qualified financial advisor and tax professional can help you understand how these and other changes affect your specific situation. Together, you can develop strategies to make the most of new opportunities while minimizing your tax burden.

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

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The Medicare Advantage Open Enrollment Period: Your Second Chance to Adjust Coverage

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

Enrolled in a Medicare Advantage plan that isn't quite working out? The Medicare Advantage Open Enrollment Period (MA OEP) gives you a valuable opportunity to make changes without waiting until fall.

What is the MA OEP?

The MA OEP runs from January 1 through March 31 every year. This three-month window allows current Medicare Advantage members to reassess their coverage after experiencing it firsthand and make adjustments if needed.

Who Can Use It?

You must already be enrolled in a Medicare Advantage plan as of January 1 to use this enrollment period. If you have Original Medicare, you cannot use the MA OEP to join a Medicare Advantage plan.

What Changes Can You Make?

During the MA OEP, you have two options:

Switch to a different Medicare Advantage plan if your current plan's network is too limited, costs are higher than expected, or you're unhappy with the coverage.

Drop your Medicare Advantage plan and return to Original Medicare, with the option to add a standalone Part D prescription drug plan for medication coverage.

Important limitation: You can only make one change during this period. Once you switch plans or drop coverage, you've used your opportunity for the year.

When Does New Coverage Begin?

Your new coverage starts on the first day of the month following the month the plan receives your enrollment. For example, enroll on February 15, and coverage begins March 1.

Common Reasons People Use the MA OEP

- Preferred doctors aren't in the network or not accepting new patients
- Prescription drug costs are higher than anticipated
- Out-of-pocket expenses exceed expectations
- Difficulty getting referrals or prior authorizations
- Changes in health status requiring different benefits
- Preference for Original Medicare's flexibility

How to Make Changes

To switch Medicare Advantage plans: Simply enroll in the new plan by

contacting them directly, working with a licensed agent, or using Medicare's online tool. You'll automatically be disenrolled from your old plan.

To return to Original Medicare: Contact your current plan to request disenrollment. Your Original Medicare coverage reinstates automatically. Separately enroll in a Part D plan if you want prescription drug coverage.

What If You Miss It?

If you don't act during the MA OEP, you'll typically wait until the Annual Enrollment Period (October 15 - December 7) to make changes, unless you qualify for a Special Enrollment Period due to specific life events.

Tips for Success

- Don't wait until the deadline—address coverage concerns early
- Document all enrollment requests with dates and confirmation numbers
- Contact Medicare (1-800-MEDICARE) or your State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) for free guidance
- Consider your healthcare needs for the entire year ahead, not just immediate concerns
- Read the Evidence of Coverage and Summary of Benefits for any new plan carefully

The Bottom Line

The MA OEP provides essential flexibility to correct coverage problems early in the year. If you're unhappy with your Medicare Advantage plan, use this three-month window to find a better fit. Acting during this period could significantly improve your healthcare experience and costs for the rest of the year.

Feel free to reach out to me if you have any questions or need help transitioning to a new plan.

Carol@AskCarolB.com Text: 714-930-7165 Direct: 904-648-6488 www.AskCarolB.com FL License #: W756153

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.

Sons and Daughters of Italy

"Music That Makes You Smile"

St. Augustine, will host "The Kings English" concert with "Music That Makes You Smile" at 3:30 p.m., Sunday, March 1 in Celebration Hall located at St. Anastasia Catholic Church, 5202 A1A on Anastasia Island. Performances will include hits from the Beatles, Motown and other favorites of the 1950's.

Proceeds will benefit the Sons and Daughters scholarship program which last year awarded three \$1,000 scholarships to local students. Concert tickets are \$25 per person. Parking is free. Light snacks will be provided and beverages will be available for purchase. Doors will open at 2:30 p.m. For tickets and other information call 904-377-7089.

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.

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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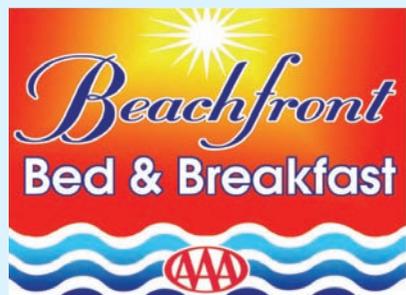
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