



St. Augustine Beaches NEWS JOURNAL

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



City of St. Augustine Beach Swears in 2024 Mayor and Vice Mayor



At the City Commission meeting on January 8th, the newly elected Mayor and Vice Mayor were officially sworn in for the next term by City Attorney Charlie Douglas.

Dylan Rumrell, who has served on the Commission since 2019 was sworn in as Mayor and Beth Sweeny as Vice Mayor.

At the meeting, Rumrell stated, "Thank you to all that came this evening. I want to give a special thank you to my family for allowing me to spend time away and give back to our great city." Rumrell continued "I also want to thank my fellow commissioners for giving me the gavel and opportunity to be Mayor. I will continue to

work hard for the city, and I will also work hard for the employees of our city. It is a true honor to be your Mayor."

Sweeny, who has served on the Commission since 2022 stated, "I am honored by the faith placed in me by my fellow commissioners, and the support of my family as I move into the role of Vice Mayor. I look forward to continuing to serve the residents of St. Augustine Beach as we work to preserve our slice of paradise."

The terms which began on January 1, 2024, will run for one year, and end on December 31, 2024. For more information, please visit www.staugbch.com, The City of St Augustine Beach Facebook and Instagram pages, and sign up for the monthly e-newsletter by texting CITYOFSAB to 22828.



St. Augustine Beach and Beyond...

By Lorraine Thompson (staugbeachwatch@aol.com)

Black History Month

As the nation commemorates Black History Month in February, events that took place in St. Johns County will be highlighted with the introduction of a new book, "The Courageous Women of Fort Mose—All for Freedom."

Written by Dorothy Headley (Deeh) Israel and Jane Mahoney, the eighty-eight page book relates the story of Black women and their contribution to the freedom of enslaved Africans.

Israel, who will turn 100 later this year, is one of a handful of Black people who resides in St. Augustine Beach. In January 2018 she was honored at the Lincolnville Museum and Cultural Center and named a "Living Legend," a person who has given of themselves for the St. John's County Community. She is the author of "From Harlem to the Sea--a Life Well Lived," which traces her life from New York during the days of the Harlem Renaissance to her retirement in St. Augustine Beach.

While many of the stories of Blacks in St. Augustine and St. Augustine Beach are widely etched in history by names like Dr. Martin Luther King, Dr. Robert B. Haling, Frank B. Butler and others, little has been published

(until now) about the bravery and the passage of Black women who escaped southern plantations almost three hundred years ago via an underground railroad, to get to St. Augustine and eventually gain their freedom.

The book is packed with meticulously researched history of the Black women's struggle for freedom by transcending colonial brutality, leveraging colonial rivalries and altering the colonial narrative. They are described in the book as "extraordinary women who overcame the unimaginable and achieved the impossible by escaping plantations, forging the



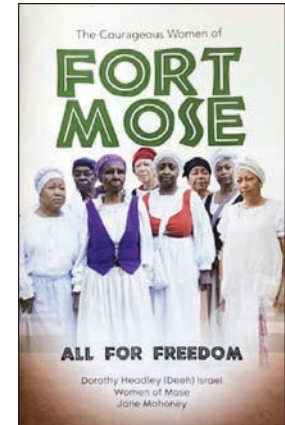
Underground Railroad, self-emancipated, secured their own freedom, earned foreign citizenship and co-founded and sustained Pueblo de Gracia Real de Santa Teresa de Mose, today known as Fort Mose. Inhabited by Black freedom fighters who had gained their freedom by escaping from the northern colonies to Spanish Florida, Fort Mose was the first free Black settlement to be legally sanctioned in what is now the United States.

Fort Mose Historic State Park is a 40-acre waterfront historic site located in St. Augustine at Fort Mose Trail off U.S. 1. It offers picnic areas, observation and birding boardwalk, kayak launch boardwalk, a visitor center and museum. It is open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., 365 days a year. Call 904-823-2232 for more information.

Fort Mose Black History Month "Flight to Freedom" tours will take place during the hours of 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. February 1 through February 3. Copies of "The Courageous Women of Fort Mose, All for Freedom," are available for purchase at Fort Mose for \$10 each.

Fort Mose Third Annual Jazz & Blues Series--February 8-17--will welcome renowned artists Common, Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra with Wynton Marsalis, Keb' Mo', and others.

The series celebrates the fusion of history, community, and music, honoring the historical significance of Fort Mose, the site of the first legally sanctioned free African settlement in the United States. Tickets are available at The St. Augustine Amphitheatre Box Office, online at Ticketmaster.com, and DiscoverFortMose.com. A portion of proceeds from a charity fee built into each ticket will support the Fort Mose Historical Society in their mission to promote and preserve the site's rich history. (continued on page 6)



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St. Augustine Beach"

City of St. Augustine Beach

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the Beaches News Journal

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- 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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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 St. Augustine Beach City Commission met on January 8, 2024. Here is a summary of the actions taken at the meeting:

1. Sworn in Commissioners Dylan Rumrell and Beth Sweeny as Mayor and Vice Mayor, respectively, for 2024.

2. Approved on final reading an ordinance to adopt the 2023 Florida Building Code.

3. For the construction of a paved parking lot on the west side of A1A Beach Boulevard between A and 1st Streets, rejected the bid from GRSC of Stuart, Florida, and approved the bid from G&H Underground Construction of St. Augustine. GRSC's bid of \$487,716 was rejected because it was well above the City's budget. G&H Underground's option of brick pavers with a concrete driveway will cost \$280,759.

4. Approved a budget resolution to appropriate \$94,000 for the project to pave the parking lot between A and 1st Streets.

5. Approved having the design and permitting phase done for drainage improvements for the Magnolia Dunes and Atlantic Oaks subdivisions. The phase will be done by a consultant, Jones Edmonds of Gainesville. The cost will be \$135,267.

6. Approved an increase of \$14,572 to the contract with a consultant, Jones Edmonds, to assist with the development of a stormwater utility fee and the notification of all property owners in the City of the proposed fee. Reducing expenditures in the budget will pay for the cost increase.

7. Reviewed with the Finance Director, Ms. Patty Douylliez, trends in the City's budget for the next fiscal year, FY 25. Individual Commissioners can provide requests to Ms. Douylliez for additional information, which will be discussed at a special meeting, most likely in April 2024.

8. Approved City staff negotiating with companies for contracts for the following specialties: general civil engineering, architectural, surveying, environmental and GIS services.

9. Discussed Commission assignments for 2024. They are: Mayor Rumrell, Tourist Development Council; Vice Mayor Sweeny, Economic Development Council and St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce; Commissioner Samora, Visitors and Convention Bureau; Commissioner George, Florida Shore and Beach Preservation Association; and Commissioner Morgan, Northeast Florida League of Cities.

10. Decided not to have a specific policy for supporting or opposing bills proposed by the 2024 Florida Legislature, but to continue to rely on the Florida League of Cities to decide which particular bills to support or oppose. The League, which is based in Tallahassee, keeps cities informed of proposed legislation that affects cities and lobbies the Legislature on cities' behalf.

The Commission's next meeting will be held on Monday, February 5, 2024, at 6 p.m. in City Hall, 2200 A1A South. The public is invited to attend or may view the meeting on YouTube at staugbch.com.



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St. Augustine Travel Club

The St. Augustine Travel Club will meet on Wednesday, February 7, and will present on AUSTRALIA ...Exploring the exciting cities of the Land Down Under as well as the rugged beauty of the ancient natural wonders such as Ayers Rock, Great Barrier Reef and much more.

For those of you who do not know about the club, it is formatted as an armchair travel presentation with a brief lecture and a video highlighting areas around the world, with focus mostly on Europe, but also other parts of the world.. Also, some of our participants have hosted a presentation of their own based on their travel experiences. If you are interested in doing a presentation about your unique travel experiences, please let us know. The Travel Club also organizes a cruise in the Caribbean region once a year, and is published in the St. Augustine Observer, the Palencia Press, and the Beaches papers. The Travel Club is free and no registration is necessary. If you require any further information, please call Peter Dytrych at (904) 797-3736.

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.



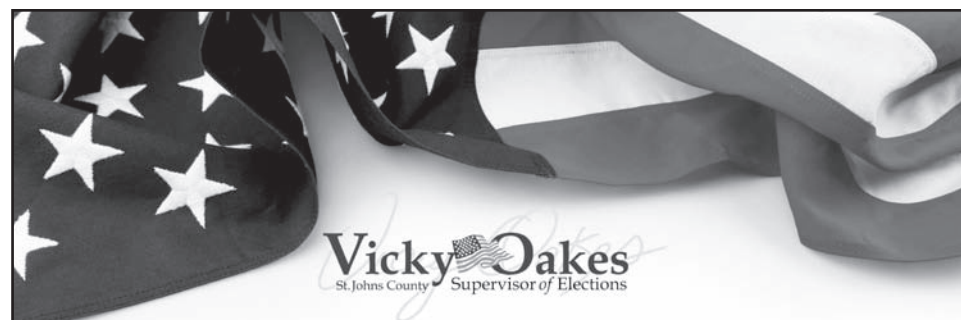
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The Beach

By Max Royle
St. Augustine Beach City Manager

Get ready, folks. There's a beach restoration project coming to our fair City. It is scheduled to begin in February 2024 and, barring delays, end in September 2024. From Anastasia State Park to A Street, 2.5 million cubic yards of sand will restore an eroded section of the beach for a cost of nearly \$34 million, which the federal government will pay. Bulldozers and other equipment will be on the beach and those of you who live near it will hear, even during the night, the beep-beep of backup alarms and noise from other equipment. It will be a 24/7 operation. And yes, next summer, any sea turtle nests in the construction area will be relocated.

I can hear the comments now: "What a waste! Putting sand on the beach is throwing money into the ocean. Mother Nature will have her way and the new sand will be swept away by the next storm."

Not exactly, and to understand why not exactly, let's review some history. From the 1940s to 2001 much of the beach from the State Park to the Sea Colony subdivision was gradually eroded. Studies have shown that the main cause was the construction of the St. Augustine Inlet jetties in 1940 when the Inlet was moved north from the middle of the State Park to its current location. The jetties helped to prevent sand from shoaling or blocking the new Inlet. An unintended consequence was that the jetties also blocked the southward migration of sand that for centuries had naturally replenished

the beach on Anastasia Island.

Fortunately, by 1994, visionary City, County and federal officials were working on a plan to replenish the eroded beach. This happened in 2001-02, when 3.7 million cubic yards of sand restored the beach from the State Park to the Sea Colony subdivision for a cost of \$15,800,000.

Since 2002, our fair City has been the beneficiary of periodic beach restoration projects, which definitely have helped stabilize the beach, provide sand for wind-formed dunes and offshore build up the seabed. This buildup causes waves to break farther from the beach, thus weakening their erosive effect. Proof of this can be seen by how, despite repeated storms, the beach and its dunes have protected upland homes and businesses from storm surge damage.

But, some residents may insist, look at how eroded the beach is under the pier and in front of the Embassy Suites hotel. This is proof that restoration is a waste. Again, not exactly. With every restoration project, extra sand is put there because that section of the beach erodes first. It curves outward to the northeast and thus is a target for the scouring waves of winter and summer storms. However, the extra sand isn't lost. Ocean currents carry much of it southwards to replenish the beach, just as nature had done for centuries before the jetties were built.

Information about the project will be available on the City's website, staughbch.com, and social media.

High Tea & Crafts at Shores United Methodist Church

Shores UMC will hold its popular, annual "High Tea & Crafts" on Saturday, February 17, 2024 from 10am to 2pm in its Christian Education Building. Women in the community are invited to stop by to enjoy tea with a cookie and a sandwich and to learn a new craft or two. Traditional tea sandwiches and cookies will be served. Ladies are welcome to wear their best "fancy hat!" Reservations are not required yet very appreciated. There is no charge for this fun event. Shores United Methodist Church is located at 724 Shores Blvd, between Hartley Elementary School and the Shores Golf Course Clubhouse. Rev. Carolyn Westlake is the pastor. Reservations can be made by calling 904.797.4416.

Interested in the Civil War?

If so, please join our Civil War Discussion Group. Our next presentation will be Tuesday, February 6, 2024 at 1pm, at the Anastasia Branch library in Sea Grove.

The February presentation will be with Donald Wiles on "S.S. Sultana: An American Tragedy". This is a memorable event near the end of the war that has been noted as the "worst maritime disaster in American history".

Hope you can join us. For questions or comments, please contact Len Whiteside at armyfam831@gmail.com

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Sheriff's Update

By St. Johns County Sheriff Robert A. Hardwick
Property Crimes Unit



The St. Johns County Sheriff's Office Property Crimes Unit are truly some of the unsung heroes of our organization. Currently, this unit is comprised of 10 detectives including one sergeant and two corporals. In the coming fiscal year, we are planning to add two additional detectives and one sergeant with the goal of making two full units who can service the north and south parts of the county respectively. Two of the detectives in this unit are subject matter experts in financial crimes.

Additionally, the unit works cases in the following areas: felony and misdemeanor theft, agriculture, arson, burglary (both residential and commercial), criminal mischief (vandalism), crimes against the elderly, counterfeiting, racketeering, credit card crimes, impersonation, vehicle theft, and especially right now, retail theft.

In St. Johns County, there's been a 70 percent increase in retail theft due to the increase in retail establishments across the county. In 2023 alone, there were over 3,200 property crimes reported with the top three areas being some type of theft, fraud, or burglary. Outside of working active cases, the detectives take on lots of proactive activities to include working on mail fraud, working with loss prevention specialists in specific retail stores, and following up with unlicensed contractors. Far too often, citizens fall victim to scams. Please always call the St. Johns County Sheriff's Office at 904-824-8304 and ask to speak with the Property Crimes Unit if you ever have a question or concern.

Meet Our Occupational Therapist

by Lindsey Hall

Linda Smiciklas is a Florida native who graduated from Florida International University in 1984 with a BS in Occupational Therapy. In 1991 she became a certified hand therapist and has spent most of her 39-year career in outpatient hand therapy clinics and orthopedic physician offices. Linda has been practicing and providing patient care in South Florida since 1984 and recently moved to St. Augustine and joined STARS rehab.

Having a love for learning, Linda has also obtained certifications in: Pilates, personal training, nutrition and recently became a certified Lymphedema Specialist. Her passion is using a holistic approach in helping patients to recover and return to

their activities of daily living.

For those of who are not familiar with Occupational Therapy, Certified Hand Specialist, and Certified Lymphedema Specialist, here is a quick breakdown.

Occupational Therapy/ Certified Hand Specialist: Any injury/ problem with the upper extremities that impacts your daily life.

Certified Lymphedema Specialist: Working with patients with dysfunctional lymphatic systems. (Linda has a special interest in patients with UE and breast cancer).

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This Month our New Opening Reception For First Friday ends up being on “Groundhog’s Day”, February 2nd. I couldn’t think of a better day to live over and over again. Nancy Grasso will be our Featured Artist. So please visit us at the Art Studio & Gallery in Augustine Beach for her Opening Reception Friday, February 2nd from 5:00pm-8:00pm. Please visit us to see, not only her show, but all the other Member’s beautiful new pieces. We have many new artists to come out and see. Here’s a little background on our Artist of the Month for February:

My humble beginnings go back to Hollis, NH when I spent time watching my Dad “create” photos in his dark room with special chemicals. I found that fascinating. He liked using me as a model and one day, while bored waiting for him to adjust the camera, I tilted my head sideways with my long flowing hair and he caught the shot. Well, that really impressed me and made me realize right then that a camera can be used very creatively. After that he taught me to “frame my photos” with a muted background and have an interesting image in the foreground, sometimes mimicking movement. He then equipped me with my first Brownie camera and I started my journey into photography. It was a rough road with my feeble camera, but I had lots of fun trying to create something worthy! I’ve been on that road ever since!

First Friday Opening
February Artist Of The Month
Nancy Grasso

February 2nd - 5pm to 8pm
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The Saint Augustine Beach Art Studio and Gallery
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 904-295-4428 www.beachartstudio.org

Well, I can't forget my mother, who delved into watercolors and illustrated and wrote a couple of children's books. She was very proud of her "rejection slips", but never stopped trying.

When in college, I minored in art and took quite a few fun classes and dabbled in different mediums. I also sold some of my creations at different local fairs at that time. I finally settled down to working with acrylics, which I really enjoy when I put my camera down.

Back to photography—I was a featured artist in a couple of stores at “Uptown Saturday Night Art Walk” and sold a few items there. Probably the best venue for selling art was when I was the only artist at Everything Bagel, where I really jump started my reputation and sold items to The Alligator Farm, Howard Johnson's Motel, and Limelight Theatre, where I still head up their paint crew.

I really enjoy displaying my works at the Beach Gallery by the pier, as it is a chance to meet many creative people.

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.

Black History Month

(continued from page 1)

For concert information, visit: <https://discoverfortmose.com/2023/11/the-fort-mose-jazz-blues-series-returns-in-february-2024/>



Fort Mose Jazz & Blues Series Concerts
 Schedule (doors open at 6 p.m., concerts begin at 7 p.m.):

February 8: Common – An illustrious rapper, actor, and writer, Common has won numerous accolades, including multiple Grammys, an Oscar, and an Emmy Award. Known for his poetic and thought-provoking music, he brings a unique fusion of hip-hop and jazz to the stage.

February 9: Preservation Hall Jazz Band – This New Orleans-based band embodies the spirit of traditional jazz. With a history dating back to the early 1960s, their performances are a journey through the heart and soul of New Orleans’ musical heritage.



February 10: Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra with Wynton Marsalis – Led by the legendary Wynton Marsalis, this orchestra is renowned for its commitment to jazz education and preservation. Marsalis, a trumpet virtuoso and a multiple Grammy

winner, ensures an unforgettable night of jazz excellence.

February 16: Christone “Kingfish” Ingram with special guest Taj Farrant – Hailed as the future of the blues, Ingram returns to Fort Mose for the 2024 series. Since bursting onto the scene in 2019, Ingram’s raw and expressive guitar work has not only earned him a Grammy but also 10 Blues Music Awards.

February 17: Keb’ Mo’ – A modern master of American roots music, Keb’ Mo’ music reflects a deep appreciation for his blues heritage. A multiple Grammy Award winner, his music is a testament to the enduring power of the blues.



We are excited to announce that Ancient City Accounting has won the Best Accounting Firm award for the 2023 Official Community's Choice Awards, Best of St. Augustine! Thank you to our clients and supporters for voting for us. We are celebrating THIRTEEN wonderful years of Ancient City Accounting, LLC!

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Fort Mose Unveils Historic Reconstruction Project in Landmark Groundbreaking Ceremony



Photo by Roz Zekavat

In a collaborative effort, the Fort Mose Historical Society and the Florida State Parks Foundation hosted an historic groundbreaking ceremony on Friday, Jan. 19, 2024.

Initially built almost four decades before the American colonies declared their independence, Fort Mose was the first legally sanctioned free Black community in the present-day United States. Now, efforts to begin reconstruction of the 1738 fort on the grounds of Fort Mose Historic State Park are set to begin and be completed by late 2024.

“As we break ground on the reconstruction of Fort Mose, we are not merely rebuilding walls — we’re creating a tribute to the resilient and determined freedom seekers who made the first free Black settlement a possibility,” said Charles Ellis, president of the Fort Mose Historical Society. “The Fort Mose Historical Society is honored to have played a pivotal role in launching this project, providing the public with an opportunity to consider the true value of freedom. With the community’s support, we embark on a journey to create a dynamic space where the echoes of the past will resonate in the hearts and minds of all who visit.”

“Today marks a historic moment in our journey to preserve and celebrate our state’s and our nation’s rich cultural heritage,” said Julia Gill Woodward, CEO of the Florida State Parks Foundation. “The Fort Mose groundbreaking ceremony signifies a commitment to fostering a deep connection between our past and present. This project is a tribute to the enduring spirit of community and the profound importance of preserving our shared history.”

The original Fort Mose was established in 1738, marking a new beginning for a wave of freedom seekers who first arrived in St. Augustine in 1687. That version of the fort met its end with the Battle of Bloody Mose in 1740.

The Fort Mose Historical Society launched the fort reconstruction project in 2012 and began fundraising efforts for the reconstruction. The Florida State Parks Foundation was awarded a \$933,000 grant through the Florida Department of State’s Florida African-American Cultural & Historical Grant Opportunity for fort reconstruction. This project transcends the simple reconstruction of a landmark; it will convey the vital history of Fort Mose to the world, a pivotal chapter of our nation’s narrative.

“We are excited to break ground at Fort Mose after so many years of hard work and dedication,” said Chuck Hatcher, director of the Florida Park Services. “The new fort reconstruction will provide a remarkable experience for visitors from around the world, and we are grateful for everyone who has helped bring this project to life.”

Fort Mose is the site of the first legally sanctioned free African settlement in what is now the United States. In 1738, an estimated 100 Africans made Fort Mose their home and sanctuary in seeking liberation from English enslavement amid a large-scale power struggle between European powers. In 1994, Fort Mose was designated as a Historic National Landmark.

The Florida State Parks Foundation is collaborating with the Fort Mose Historical Society and the Florida Park Service to reconstruct the 1738 fort on the grounds of Fort Mose Historic State Park, which is set to be completed by late 2024. In addition to the fort’s reconstruction, this project will outfit the fort with interpretative resources so park visitors may better understand the historical significance of Fort Mose.



St. Johns County Anastasia Library February Programs

Please check our on-line calendar at www.sjcpls.org for even more events at the Anastasia Island Branch Library, as well as the other branches in the library system.



MID-WEEK MEDITATION WITH NANCY: Every Wednesday @ 10:30 am - 11:30 am *2/7 may be held off-site

LITTLE ONES STORYTIME: (AGES 2-5) Every Friday @ 10:30 am. Join us for Little Ones Story Time! We’ll have stories, songs, and activities to help develop pre-literacy skills and spark your child’s love of reading.

LITTLE ONES CRAFT TIME: (AGES 2-5) Every Friday @ 11:00 am. Join us for a simple craft to encourage your little ones to practice fine motor skills and explore their creativity!

LOVING FEBRUARY CRAFT-ANASTASIA ISLAND CRAFTERS:

(February 1 @ 10:30 am-11:30 am) February is a month to take care of ourselves and Leslie has a special craft planned! Please RSVP at www.sjcpls.org. All supplies are provided by the Friends of the Anastasia Island Branch Library.

LINE DANCING LESSONS WITH THE ST. AUGUSTINE LINE DANCERS

(February 1 @ 6:30 pm-7:30 pm) Do you want to learn some line dances or get some exercise and make new friends? The St. Augustine Line Dancers are here to help! Learn some fancy footwork while getting a bit of exercise and making new friends. Please wear comfortable clothing and shoes. Please RSVP at www.sjcpls.org.

ANNE E. TAZEWEILL, AUTHOR OF A GOOD SPY LEAVES NO TRACE

(February 2 @ 1:00 pm-2:00 pm) Please join us for Author, Anne E. Tazewell, as she discusses writing her personal story in A Good Spy Leaves No Trace: Big Oil, CIA Secrets, and a Spy Daughter’s Reckoning. Book signing to follow the discussion.

VALENTINE’S DAY ART CARDS: (February 7 @ 3:30 pm-4:30 pm) Join us in the Anastasia events room as we explore positive and negative space to create simple and unique Valentine’s Day cards inspired by Japanese Notan designs. Geared toward elementary kids and their grown-ups, too! Sponsored by the Friends of the Anastasia Island Branch Library.

AI ADULT BOOK CLUB: (February 8 @ 10:30 am-11:30 am) This month we venture into the world of award-winning and best-selling author, Charles Martin with The Water Keeper. Available in multiple formats!

MID-DAY MOVIES: (February 8 @ 2:00 pm-4:00 pm) Tying into this month’s Adult Book Club author, Charles Martin, we will be showing The Mountain Between Us with Idris Elba and Kate Winslet.

DECLUTTERING AND ORGANIZING YOUR HOME WITH ANSLEY HUDSON: (February 10 @ 2:00 pm-3:00 pm) Ansley Hudson is passionate about organization and keeping things tidy. Ansley Hudson is a Certified KonMari Tidying Consultant® and owner of Simply Sage Tidying. Her goal is to help you grow your organizing skills, as well as your decision-making skills as you get your house and life in order to bring you peace and joy in the New Year. This is a multi-part series coming to you each month!

MYSTERY SCIENCE – “WHY ARE POLAR BEARS WHITE?” (February 14 @ 3:30 pm-4:30 pm) Join us in the Anastasia Island Library events room! We’ll be making observations to construct an explanation of why camouflage is helpful to animals. Best for Grades 1-4.

BABY PLAY DATE (AGES 0-1): (February 15 @ 10:00 am-11:30 am) We provide the space and some playthings. Babies (ages 0-1) and their grown-ups provide the fun! Snacks provided!

HEARTFULNESS MEDITATION: (February 17 @ 10:30 am - 12:30 pm) Abishek and Lakshmi will teach you the practice of meditation that can help reduce stress and negativity, while increasing patience and tolerance.

RAINDROP THERAPY: (February 17 @ 2:00 pm - 3:00 pm) Raindrop Therapy is back! Join us for some relaxation and health benefits of essential oils as Susan Stone leads us through their properties and uses. Please bring a small towel for your feet. Please RSVP at www.sjcpls.org

LEGO FOR KIDS: (February 21 @ 3:30 pm - 4:30 pm) Join us in the Events Room to make your own LEGO creations or take on a LEGO challenge!

I LOVE JULIA (CHILD): (February 22 @ 11:00 am – 12:30 pm) Find out what sweet stuff is cooking in the kitchen this month! Please RSVP at www.sjcpls.org.

FILM AND DISCUSSION SERIES WITH SEPAC: (February 22 @ 6:00pm – 7:30 pm) The Sustainability and Environmental Planning Advisory Committee (SEPAC) bring you another informative and enlightening Film and Discussion.

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Tickets & Info at:

www.DISCOVERFORTMOSE.com

It's all about tennis!

By Lorraine Thompson (staugbeachwatch@aol.com)

Four months after Atlantic Beach and Tennis Club was hit by lightning in the middle of the night, club owner Bill Brothers continues his efforts to restore the popular facility located on at 2 Ocean Trace Road on Anastasia Island. It once included ten outdoor Har-Tru tennis courts, an indoor reception area, two fitness centers, outdoor decks, outdoor pool and a heated indoor pool, a salon, two locker rooms, two saunas, two steam rooms, showers, a hot tub and a physical therapy room. Now all that's left are the ten Har-Tru tennis courts, the reception area, one fitness center and the salon.



Brothers, a former Californian, purchased the facility in 1991. After participating in the National Paddleball Tournament held on St. Augustine Beach, he said he was impressed with the location and the facility, then known as St. Augustine Beach and Tennis Club, which served as headquarters for the tournament. At the time there were four tennis courts and a small building on the east side of the property that served as an office.

Since then, he has added more tennis courts and indoor health facilities which attract three hundred members during the summer and more than four hundred members during the winter "snowbird migration" months. "I'm dealing with insurance, local, state and federal restrictions, requirements and laws before I can get started with rebuilding," he said last month as he was hosting the club's annual "Member of the Year" tournament and awards celebration. The courts were filled with players, an improvised "band" was playing, and food was being readied for the celebration.



This year's Member award was presented to Leonard Lukin. "I don't know how I would have managed without Leonard," Brothers said, explaining that while he has been putting in long days to keep the club going, "Leonard has been maintaining the tennis court player schedule updated, which I could not have managed with all the other work and details."

While there are no estimated dates to restore and to reopen the inside facility, Brothers continues to maintain and operate the tennis courts. "We'll just have to wait on the rest," he said, adding that, "For now, tennis is what it's all about."

A Classic Theatre Introduces New Show Time for Shirley Valentine

A Classic Theatre will present the sharply funny and moving production of Shirley Valentine, a lonely British housewife in search of her old self. The show opens March 1 and runs for 2 weekends finishing on March 10.

ACT is introducing a new feature for this show, a 4:00 pm "Twilight Matinee" on Saturday, March 2nd. This allows theatergoers the freedom to enjoy most of the day, see the show, and still be out in time for dinner and an evening out in St. Augustine. This showtime will be offered only on March 2nd. Showtime for the Sunday matinees remains 2:00 pm, and evening shows at 7:30 pm. For tickets and additional information go to www.aclassictheatre.org.



Francesca Bellavista is

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by Willy Russell
Directed by Cindy Alexander

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March 1-10, 2024
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Also *Wanda's Visit*
by Christopher Durang
Directed by Dawn Knipe

In this parody of The Glass Menagerie, a fading Southern belle, Amanda, tries to face everything with "charm and vivacity," but sometimes she just wants to hit somebody.

February 9, 2024 - 7:30pm
at The Center for Spiritual Living

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St. Johns County Board of Commissioners Adopts Updated Beach Code Ordinance

The St. Johns County Board of County Commissioners unanimously voted to adopt an updated beach code ordinance at its regular January 16 meeting. The updated beach code ordinance features amendments banning any “aircraft, seaplane, helicopter, glider, balloon, dirigible, parachute, drone or other aerial apparatus” taking off from or landing within park property or the beach; the careless operation of “any e-bike, e-scooter, or other electric motorized device” (including weaving through pedestrians, carrying too many [passengers, and speeding); and operating any motor vehicle “so as to intentionally cause sand to be thrown into the air or across any beach area.”

“Parks and Recreation and the Board of County Commissioners Office both received feedback from residents about issues pedestrians and beachgoers had been having with e-bikes,” Parks and Recreation Director Ryan Kane said. “These changes provide guidelines for proper use of e-bikes and other motor vehicles on our beaches, and they give the St. Johns County Sheriff’s Office and St. Augustine Beach Police Department the ability to address issues as they arise.”

Violation of any part of the ordinance comes with the risk of receiving a \$53 citation from law enforcement for Non-Criminal Violation.

The St. Johns County Parks and Recreation Department and Beach Services Department worked closely with the St. Johns County Sheriff’s Office and the St. Augustine Beach Police Department on the amendments to ensure they would provide better safety and health measures to the visitors of our County’s beaches. With over 74,000 beach driving passes sold in 2023 alone, proper regulation of vehicles on the beach is a major County priority.

Parks and Recreation explored the option of e-bike registration on County beaches, but staff determined that it would not be feasible, as e-bikes can utilize all 42 miles of St. Johns County beaches and there are hundreds of access points for vehicles to get on the beach. Identifying e-bikes versus traditional bicycles would also pose a challenge.

For more updates from St. Johns County Beach Services, visit the department’s pages on Facebook, Instagram, or X (formerly Twitter).

GriefShare

GriefShare, is a weekly seminar designed to help you rebuild your life after the loss of a loved one in a comfortable, casual environment

Starting February 7, 2024–May 1, 2024, Wednesday’s from 6pm-730pm
Crescent Beach Baptist Church, St. Augustine FL 32086

Contact Melanie, 904-759-1054 or email rscoggn@gmail.com or GriefShare.org under Find a Group to register. You are welcome to join at any point during the 13 weeks



Ability Housing Ground Breaking

On Wednesday, January 10, 2024 the nonprofit Ability Housing broke ground on a new 92-unit affordable housing complex in St. Johns County. The complex, The Villages of New Augustine, is scheduled to open in around 18 months.



Attainable Housing Coalition
OF THE ST. JOHNS COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

The Villages of New Augustine will offer reduced rents to residents earning up to 60% of the area's median income. Rental prices will vary based on household size, income, and apartment size, and will start at approximately \$547 minimum per month for one-bedroom units and \$759 minimum per month for three-bedroom units. Actual rent prices will be contingent on current Housing and Urban Development (HUD) data at the time of the apartment community’s completion.

The project will include four apartment buildings and a community center that will have a library, community event space, a computer lab and on-site leasing offices, plus a pavilion, playground and walking trail.

For more information on The Villages of New Augustine and Ability Housing please visit their website at <https://abilityhousing.org>

Living with Cancer Support Group

Our 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.

St. Augustine Beach Democratic Club

The SAB Democrats will have its next gathering on Tuesday, February 6, 2024, 5:30 pm at the Anastasia Island Branch Library. Our speaker for February 6 will be Professor Michael Binder, Director of the Public Opinion Research Lab (PORK) of the University of North Florida (UNF). PORK is a research facility which conducts public opinion polling including political polling. Professor Binder will discuss polling methodology and issues in the current climate. Please join us and bring your questions. The St Augustine Beach Democrat Club’s focus is on current local issues affecting those living in St Augustine Beach. These meetings provide an excellent opportunity to get to know the elected representatives, mingle with Democratic candidates and socialize with our Democratic neighbors. The SAB Dems Club meets on the first Tuesday of the month at Anastasia Island Branch Library, 124 Sea Grove Main Street, 5:30 pm, plenty of parking available. For additional information, please contact sab-dems@googlegroups.com.

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Free Seminar

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February 20th 1:30pm - 3:00pm
St. Johns County Main Library
1960 Ponce de Leon Blvd., St. Augustine FL 32084

The Truth About Independent Living Options

Learn the truth about the independent living options available in the area and the questions you should be asking when considering your options. This is the perfect place to educate yourself so that you can make the right decisions for you and your family.

February 22th 10:30 am - Noon
St. Augustine Garden Club
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Hosted By
Beth Hurewitz

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Council on Aging Celebrates 50th Anniversary of Service to Seniors and Caregivers

by Carolyn Karger (ckarger@coasjc.org)

This year, local nonprofit St. Johns County Council on Aging (COA) celebrates 50 years of service to older adults and caregivers in St. Johns County, Florida. The 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization was founded 50 years ago by local concerned citizens with a focus on providing essential nutrition, transportation, and independent living support services for our community's elders.

Since serving the first home-delivered and congregate meals to seniors in 1974, COA has been on a journey to empower our community's elders to live their best lives at every age. Now with six senior centers and lifelong learning centers, four memory care locations, and transportation to all 600 square miles of the county, COA is able to offer older residents a much wider array of life enhancing opportunities thanks to the continued support of the St. Johns County community.

"As we have throughout our history, we continue to pursue opportunities to provide greater dignity, independence, social inclusion, and well-being for those we serve," explained COA Executive Director, Becky Yanni. "Whether it is a meal prepared with love, a strong hand to help with tasks around the house, or an engaging program to stay active, healthy, and connected, we are dedicated to supporting quality of life and independence for local seniors."

While volunteers provided transportation for seniors in the early days, COA now offers door-to-door paratransit transportation services with a fleet of specialized vehicles. In 2000, COA also established the Sunshine Bus Company, providing the first public transportation services for the entire community as the St. Johns County Government contracted provider.

COA created their Prescription Assistance Program in 1999 to assist seniors in obtaining low or no-cost prescription medications through pharmaceutical company programs. The program has saved St. Johns County seniors over \$32 million since it began.

In 2003, COA created the Sunshine Center, licensed by AHCA #9081, a therapeutic adult day care facility in St. Augustine serving adults with special needs, such as Alzheimer's disease, dementia, and other disorders. The center also provides crucial respite time for caregivers.

With seed money from a legacy gift received from St. Augustine resident Mary Peck, COA constructed River House in 2010, a lifelong learning center set on the Matanzas River in downtown St. Augustine. On nights and weekends, the waterfront facility serves as a five-star wedding and events venue, proceeds of which will fund additional programs and services for seniors.

Also in 2010, COA created IMEP™, its groundbreaking Integrative Memory Enhancement Program. The popular classroom program is now offered at four locations throughout the county, including the Ponte Vedra Memory Care Center, which COA established in 2015. Outside agencies and facilities that serve seniors throughout Florida and the U.S. have also subscribed to the program since 2015, when IMEP™ was trademarked and copyrighted.

These are but a few highlights from a 50-year history dedicated to meeting the needs of St. Johns County seniors and caregivers. Over the course of this anniversary year, COA will continue to highlight the visionary individuals in our community who have made COA what it is today. To follow these inspiring stories, please visit www.coasjc.org/coa-50th-anniversary.

"We would not be where we are today without your support," Ms. Yanni shared. "Thank you to all of our champions – our donors, funders, volunteers, staff, and community partners – for supporting our important mission. Together, the future for seniors and caregivers – our future – will grow ever brighter into the next 50 years and beyond."

To learn more about COA's services and programs for older adults and caregivers, visit www.coasjc.org or call (904) 209-3700.



Financial Focus

Information Provided by

Edward Jones



Consider family meeting to discuss estate plans

At some point, you'll want to share your estate plans with your loved ones — and the first step in this process may be to hold a family meeting.

The best time to hold this meeting is when you're still in good mental and physical shape, and the enactment of your estate plans may well be years away. But what topics should you cover?

Consider these main areas:

- Your wishes — and those of your family. Use this meeting to introduce your estate plans and, in a basic sense, what you hope to accomplish with them — leave money to your family, support charitable groups and so on. You'll want to emphasize that you want to be equitable in what you leave behind, but there may be issues that affect this decision, such as disparities in income between grown children or an allowance for a special-needs child. But you'll also want to listen to what your family members want — and you might be surprised at what they tell you. Consider this: More than 80% of the millennial generation would rather know their parents are financially secure throughout their retirement, even if this means that their parents will pass on less money to them, according to an Edward Jones/Age Wave study.

- Estate planning documents – At the time of your family meeting, you may or may not have already created your estate planning documents, but in either case, this would be a good time to discuss them. These documents may include a will, a living trust, financial power of attorney, health care power of attorney and possibly other arrangements. At a minimum, you'd like to give a general overview of what these documents mean, but at an initial family meeting, you don't necessarily have to get too detailed. For example, you might not want to talk about specific inheritances. This is also an opportunity to inform your loved ones of the professionals involved in your estate plans, such as your attorney and your tax advisor.

- Roles of everyone involved – Not only does a comprehensive estate plan involve moving parts, such as the necessary documents, but it also includes actual human beings who may need to take on different roles. You will need an executor for your will and, if you have a living trust, you'll need a trustee. Even if you choose to serve as the initial trustee, you'll still need to identify one or more successor trustees to take your place if you become incapacitated, or upon your death. Plus, you'll need to name people to act as your power of attorney for health care and finances. Choosing the right people for these roles involves thought and sensitivity. Obviously, you want individuals who are competent and reliable, but you also need to be aware that some family members could feel slighted if others are assigned roles they feel they could do. By being aware of these possible conflicts, you can be better prepared to address them.

- Here's one more suggestion: Let your family know that this initial meeting doesn't mean the end of communications about your estate plans. Encourage your loved ones to contact you with questions whenever they want. You may need to hold additional family meetings in the future, but by laying the initial groundwork, you will have taken a big first step in establishing the legacy you'd like to leave.

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

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“Liar’s Contest” at The Waterworks February 18, 2024

by Chris Kastle, Treasurer, Tale Tellers of St. Augustine

You are invited to tell your most outrageous stories when Tale Tellers of St. Augustine holds a “Liar’s Contest” on Sunday, February 18, 2:00 pm at The Waterworks, 184 San Marco Ave., St. Augustine. The contest will be hosted by Pat Nease, a highly lauded liar. Sign up when you come—prizes will be awarded to the best liars. Enjoy an afternoon of fun and folly. For further information or reservations: 904-540-0402. Admission is \$10.00; advance tickets and sign up guidelines are available at www.taletellers.org.

Our host, Pat Nease, a national award-winning storyteller, is known for her high energy, quick wit and wry humor. With over twenty years of entertaining audiences, she has developed an impressive repertoire as a teller, an emcee, and a workshop leader.

The Tale Tellers of St. Augustine is a performing guild devoted to the advocacy of storytelling as an art form and entertainment medium. The organization just celebrated its 30th anniversary. It is a Florida not-for-profit corporation with a 501(c)(3) designation. www.taletellers.org.



St. Augustine Yacht Club Celebrates Its 150th Year Founding “Grand Masquerade Ball February 13th”

The SAYC continues celebrating its 150th anniversary. Founded in 1874 the membership now exceeds 250 individual members! A SAYC Sailing Center focusing on the youth in and around St. Augustine is currently under construction as the sailing program grows with leaps and bounds.

On February 13th a Grand Masquerade Ball mimicking those elegant affairs held back in the late 1800s is planned. A black tie and masked event such as this has not been seen in St. Augustine for some time now. Tickets are \$150 on <https://www.staugustineyachtclub.com/event/xkjUpSXibM> or contact Sayc15024@gmail.com.

Dinner will be catered by Purple Olive with Cocktail Hour entertainment by classical guitarist, Chuck Rogers and his wife Laura accompanying him on the flute. Later in the evening kick back and dance the night away to live band music by Contact Buzz.

During the late 1800s and early 1900s, the Club was referred to as the Winter Newport because so many prominent northern families came here for “the season,” January through May. The Club became renowned for its parties. The most famous was the “Grand Bal Masque,” held each February at a hotel and which “eclipsed anything of the season,” according to one scribe. Two hundred attendees, many of them masked, would dance to an orchestra until two in the morning.

The 1870s were exciting times in America. The Civil War was over and the economy was booming, leading to a prosperity that Mark Twain dubbed the Gilded Age. In 1873, a group of yachtsmen began planning a yacht club in St. Augustine, Fla. Fittingly, the oldest yacht club in Florida is in the oldest city in the United States. In the 1880s that city would become the winter resort of the Gilded Age’s rich and famous. And many had yachts.

By 1874, the St. Augustine Yacht Club was begun in earnest, with a Civil War hero as the first Commodore. Major General Gordon Granger is known for his part in the Battles of Chickamauga and Chattanooga. He is also the general who, on June 19, 1865, informed the residents of Galveston, Tex., that the Emancipation Proclamation had ended slavery. His announcement is now celebrated as a national holiday, Juneteenth.

During the late 1800s and early 1900s, the Club was referred to as the Winter Newport because so many prominent northern families came here for “the season,” January through May. The Club became renowned for its parties. The most famous was the “Grand Bal Masque,” held each February at a hotel and which “eclipsed anything of the season,” according to one scribe. Two hundred attendees, many of them masked, would dance to an orchestra until two in the morning.

Celebrating Past and Future. A Masquerade Ball is being held on Feb. 13, 2024. Other events include a sailing regatta, boat parade, boat scavenger hunt, Dragon Boat races, a trolley ride to places associated with the Club’s history, a plein air painting event with local artists, and the burial of a time capsule containing Club history. Contact manager@sayc.club for more information and tickets.

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Accumulating Dysfunction

By Rob Stanborough
PT, DPT, MHSc, MTC, CMTPT, FAAOMPT
First Coast Rehabilitation
(904) 829-3411

I wrote this column a few years ago but I find myself referring to it more and more when I teach. It was written following a conversation with an older friend of mine. I asked him how he was doing and he said, “well, but I’ve got the normal aches and pains that come with age.” I asked him, when was pain required with aging?

Each of us has experienced injury during our life time; some more significant than others. We typically brush ourselves off and press-on never thinking of the long-term consequences. We were young, healthy and motivated or we were busy and didn’t have time to get things checked out.

This works for a time but after a while we do what I call, accumulating dysfunction. If you think about it, how many times have you blamed an ache/pain or inability to do something on a previous injury? “My knee hurts because I have an old football injury.” “My body has not been the same since I gave birth to my kids”, “I was fine until that guy rear-ended me 4 years ago.” Perhaps there are legitimate, residual consequences from a previous injury and our function will never be the same, but usually what happens is we compensate over and over. A little weakness. A little shift in the way we move, an extra pillow, or something to help us get through.

The word function is a term resurfacing in healthcare. Perhaps the re-focus is due to our more active baby-boomers, or changes in healthcare and insurance policies. Regardless of the reason, it’s important because function requires movement and proper movement keeps us healthy. Our bodies consist of an osseus (bony) frame, controlled by a myofascial system, which receives its orders from the nervous system. Injury to any one of these systems will result in dysfunction (impaired or abnormal function) great or small. Fortunately, due to “self-preservation” our bodies compensate in varying degrees—resulting in imbalances.

To use the analogy of cars, you don’t lose the use of parking your car in your garage overnight. You accumulate “stuff” day after day, year after year and the next

thing you know there is no room for your car because you have slowly accumulated things that hinder its use. Further, most of us provide more regular maintenance to our cars by changing worn tires or other parts to keep them running than we do our own bodies. We don’t wait for the air conditioner to breakdown before scheduling service. We schedule regular annual service in an effort to keep it running without interruption. We even get vaccinations and medical check-ups annually for the purpose of prevention – to keep our organs healthy. Why not give your musculoskeletal system an annual check-up? What was your shoulder or hip range of motion last year? What was your strength? Have you lost some? What are your baseline measurements?

We’ve all heard the phrase, “prevention is the best medicine”. I prefer the phrase, “prevention is the best intervention”. Prevention can intervene (or get in between) you and dysfunction. Whatever movement you have today – don’t lose it. Maintain your strength, muscle length, joint motion and function with prevention. Get current baseline measurements and compare annually just like you would your weight, cholesterol, blood sugar or INR. When you schedule your annual medical exam, schedule an annual functional exam with your physical therapist. Keep moving. Minimize compensation. Stay healthy and be functional.

Rob Stanborough is a physical therapist serving St. Augustine for nearly 20 years and has presented both nationally and internationally. He was one of the first PT’s to be permitted to use DN in FL and doing so since 2017. He has trained others in DN since 2010 as a Senior Instructor for Myopain Seminars (www.myopainseminars.com). He is a co-owner of First Coast Rehabilitation (www.firstcoastrehab.com), and co-author of *Myofascial Manipulation: Theory & Application, 3rd ed* by Proed Inc. Read previous columns posted on www.firstcoastrehab.com.

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NAMI Family-to-Family is a free, 8-session education program for family, friends and significant others of adults with mental health conditions. NAMI Family-to-Family provides information about anxiety, depressive disorders, schizophrenia, bipolar disorder and other mental health conditions. Other topics covered include communication, problem solving, treatment and recovery.

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January 28- March 17, 2024, Sundays, 2:00-4:30 PM
Flagler Hospital, St. Augustine

To register, contact cabrabrj@att.net or 352-246-9519. The course is designed to increase understanding and advocacy skills while helping participants maintain their own well-being. The program is taught by trained family members who have a loved one with a mental health condition. NAMI Family-to-Family is an evidence-based program (EB). For information on the research base for the program, visit nami.org/research.

Who Are We?

By Lorraine Thompson (staugbeachwatch@aol.com)

If you are a longtime resident of St. Augustine Beach, as you drive down the main streets as well as the residential developments do you marvel at how our little island city is growing? According to www.biggestcities.com, recent statistics based on the latest 2022 data from the US census, the current population of St. Augustine Beach is 6,979 making it the 3,981st largest city in the US. 2024 www.biggestuscities.com,

St. Augustine Beach is located entirely in St Johns County.

St. Augustine Beach has an area of 2.1 square miles.

The current population of St. Augustine Beach (6,979) is its peak population.

St. Augustine Beach has grown 46.6% since two thousand. St. Augustine Beach, Florida is growing moderately quickly; it is growing faster than 85% of similarly sized cities since 2000.

St. Augustine Beach has a population density of 2,917.3 people per square mile.

The total voting age population of St. Augustine Beach, Florida, meaning US citizens 18 or older, is 5,413. The voting age population is 50.7% male and 49.3% female.

According to the latest census statistics, 24.5% of the residents of St. Augustine Beach are 65 or older.

In St. Augustine Beach, 9.5% of residents have an income below the poverty line, and the child poverty rate is 5.7%. On a per-household basis, 5.9% of families are below the poverty line in St. Augustine Beach.

Among those aged 16 and older, 56.1% of St. Augustine Beach residents are in the labor force.

Among the adult population 25 years old and over, 96.0% of St. Augustine Beach residents have at least a high school degree or equivalent, 52.8% have a bachelor's degree and 22.2% have a graduate or professional degree.

Among St. Augustine Beach residents aged 5 and older, 8.5% of them speak a non-English language at home. Broken down by language: 3.2% of residents speak Spanish at home, 3.6% speak an Indo-European language, and 0.0% speak an Asian language.

The unemployment rate in St. Augustine Beach is 5.9%, which is calculated among residents aged 16 or older who are in the labor force.

In St. Augustine Beach, 10.5% of the residents in the non-military labor force are employed by the local, state and federal government.

The median household income in St. Augustine Beach is \$86,056.

In St. Augustine Beach, 78.4% of housing units are occupied by their owners.

Renters occupy 21.6% of housing units in St. Augustine Beach.

In St. Augustine Beach, 28.8% of the total housing units were built after the year 2000, which is approximately 1,300 units.

The median gross monthly rent payment for renters in St. Augustine Beach is \$1,347.

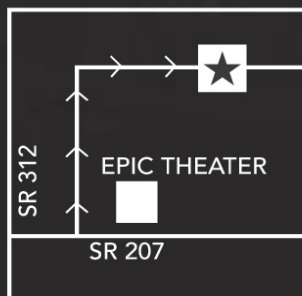
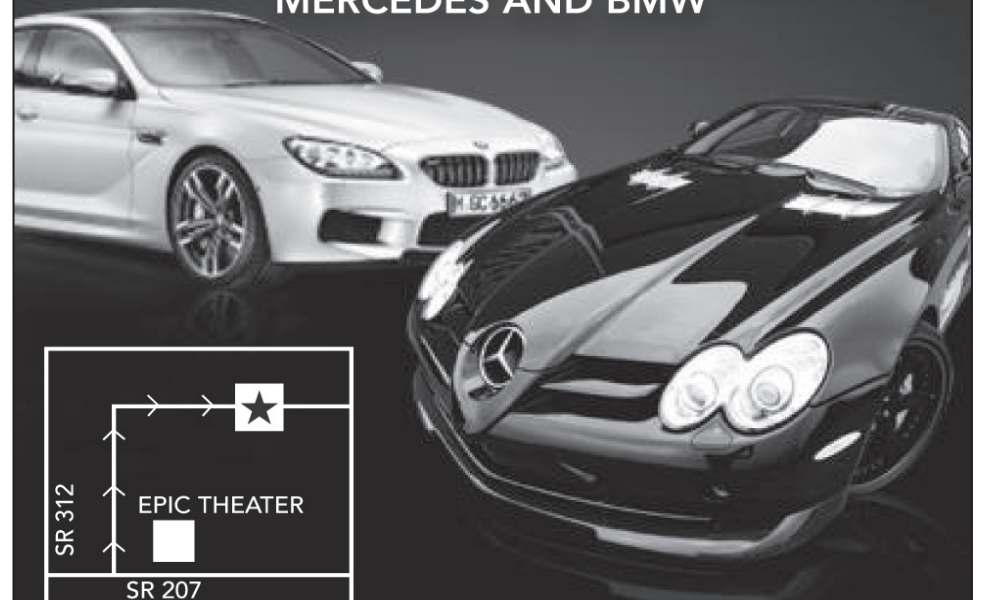
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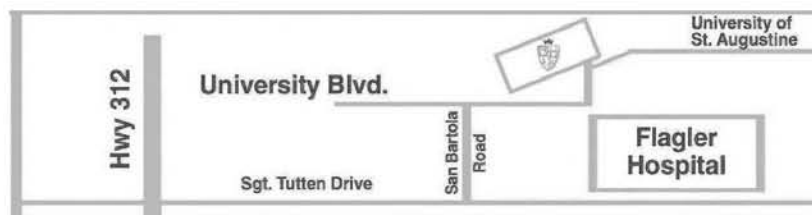
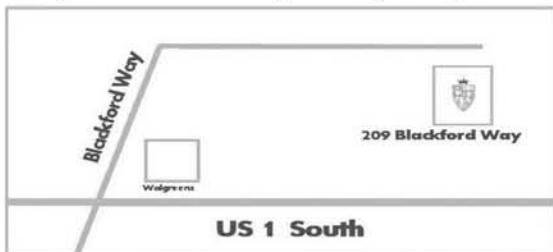
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St. Johns County Deputies Will Teach 200 Students in Eight Schools About the Dangers of Drugs and Violence

provided by Ariel Kaplan (ariel@zitopartners.com)

January 9th, 2024 47 deputies from St. John’s County Sheriff’s Office were trained by L.E.A.D. (Law Enforcement Against Drugs & Violence), a nationwide nonprofit that works with communities to help students understand the dangers of drugs and violence, to teach the program’s proven effective curriculum. Nine of those trained deputies will educate around 200 students in several grades at eight schools in St. John’s County on why steering clear of drugs and violence is critical as well as help them to build skills surrounding effective communication, conflict resolution and resiliency, for example, during the school day.

The schools in which the program will be taught teaching the curriculum are: Julington Creek Elementary, Hickory Creek Elementary, Durbin Creek Elementary, Liberty Pines Academy, Palm Valley Academy, Patriot Oaks Academy, Bartram Trail High, and Pedro Menendez High.

“We’re thrilled that our program is continuing to grow in Florida. It’s great that nine deputies from St. John’s County Sheriff’s Office will be teaching the evidence-based curriculum implemented by our organization as it will give them plenty of opportunity to strengthen the relationship that they have with their community,” said Nick DeMauro, CEO of L.E.A.D. “We look forward to seeing the positive changes that will result among the students in the area, given that L.E.A.D. not only teaches students how partaking in alcohol, drugs and violence can negatively impact their lives, but it teaches them how to set attainable goals, manage their emotions and make wise decisions as well.”

L.E.A.D. provides services “On The Street” and “In The Classroom” as it brings law enforcement and communities closer together. The “In The Classroom” program is taught by 4200 trained instructors in 44 states. L.E.A.D. has a proven effective, law enforcement-focused anti-drug, anti-violence curriculum for K-12 students in the U.S. The L.E.A.D. curriculum is taught over the course of a 10-week program to educate youth on how they can make smart decisions without the involvement of drugs or violence.

Captain at St. John’s County Sheriff’s Office, Peggy Tennyson, says that one of the aspects they’re most looking forward to regarding the kickoff of the L.E.A.D. program is the ability for the deputies to get to act as mentors to the students.

“Normally, we don’t get to interact with the kids in our community in such a close setting,” said Capt. Tennyson. “Therefore, we’re extremely grateful that L.E.A.D. has granted us the chance to do so as it’ll allow them to act as role models toward the students and let the students get to know our deputies on a more personal level.”

“Of course, we’re always looking out for the children’s safety,” she added. “However, the organization has given us an incredible opportunity to take the way that we look out for their well-being to the next level by getting to go into their classrooms and help them to understand how making just one bad decision with alcohol, drugs or violence could completely change the outcome of their lives.”

The biggest impact that the L.E.A.D. program will have on the kids, Capt. Tennyson says, is the education that they’ll receive on consequences for their actions.

“Many students don’t realize that the path for law enforcement is not one and the same as the path of the school district,” she said. There are consequences on both sides depending on the severity of the issue, and we work closely with the schools and parallel the disciplinary processes.”

“However, the law enforcement side is usually a big eye opener for kids and parents when an incident occurs,” added Capt. Tennyson. “L.E.A.D. affords us the opportunity to talk on some of these confusing topics.”

Capt. Tennyson says that the deputies who will be teaching the L.E.A.D. program look forward to participating in the games and skits that are incorporated into the curriculum to have fun with them while also instructing them on such a serious subject matter.

L.E.A.D. provides the leadership, resources and management to ensure law enforcement agencies have the means to partner with educators, community leaders, and families. L.E.A.D. succeeds by providing proven and effective programs to deter youth and adults from drug use, drug related crimes, bullying and violence. L.E.A.D. is committed to reinforcing the mutual respect, goodwill and relations between law enforcement and their communities. For more information, visit <https://www.leadrugs.org/>.

Friends of Anastasia Island Library 2024 Upcoming Events

by Diane Grundy, President

Spirit Nigt at Tijuana Flats

Spirit Night at Tijuana Flats on Monday, February 5, 2024 from 4:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at their 833 S. Ponce de Leon location. The restaurant donates 20% of our sales for that time period. You can pick up our fundraising flyer at the library.

Book Sale

Our amazing book sale will be Friday, March 1 from 10:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. and Saturday, March 2, 2024 from 10:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. As a special treat, we will hold a pre-sale for Friends members only from 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. on Friday, March 1.

Spring Basket Silent Auction

Our 9th annual Spring Basket Silent Auction will be held from Tuesday, March 5 through Friday, March 22, 2024 during normal library hours. In past auctions, we have had up to 30 various baskets for auction.



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Lyrics by Nathan Tysen
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