

# St. Augustine OBSERVER

NEWS INFORMATION FOR & ABOUT RESIDENTS OF SOUTHERN ST. JOHNS COUNTY FL

## Training for 2026 Summer Beach Lifeguards Underway



**Become a SJC Beach Lifeguard. Ocean lifeguards are needed for the 2026 beach season.**

St. Johns County Fire Rescue will hold annual tryouts for seasonal lifeguards for the 2026 beach season. Required training is provided during a paid Marine Rescue Academy. Starting pay for lifeguards is \$18.11 per hour with incentive pay for Florida certified EMT or Paramedics. Acceptance of online applications opened on January 1.

Candidates must be 18 years of age and be able to swim 500 meters in under ten minutes and complete a half-mile run in under 3 and a half minutes.

Tryouts for the 2026 summer season, continue at the Solomon Calhoun Pool, 1300 Duval Street in St. Augustine on January 3 and 25, February 7 and 26, March 7, and April 4. All tryouts begin at 9 a.m. Prior to any tryout, all candidates must first complete the Online Application as well as initial paperwork.

Potential new guards who pass the tryout and background check will be required to attend the Marine Rescue Academy in order to be eligible for hire with St. Johns County Marine Rescue. The Marine Rescue Academy consists of 40 hours of Emergency Medical Responder, 8 hours of CPR, and 40 hours of advanced USLA surf rescue training. Individuals who hold a Valid Florida EMT OR Paramedic license may be exempt from a portion of the academy class.

There will be 2 Academies to choose from: March 1 to 31 Tuesdays and Thursdays from 6 to 10 p.m. and Saturdays 9 to 5 p.m. or April 27 to May 22 Monday/Wednesday/Fridays from 6 to 10 p.m. and Saturdays 9 to 5 p.m.

For more information email [jearl@sjcfl.us](mailto:jearl@sjcfl.us), or visit online at <https://www.sjcfl.us/departments/marine-rescue/>

## St. Augustine South Reflections

by Ruth Hope

Santa doing his rounds in St Augustine South  
Happy New Year! May your 2026 be pleasant, healthy, and contented.

In St Augustine South, we have had several pleasurable events over the last month. SASIA hosted its annual Arts & Craft Fair at the clubhouse with vendors' booths set up around the grounds by the tot lot and picnic shelter. Many talented artists, some living in the neighborhood, offered their work at a perfect time for holiday gifts to wrap and put under folks' Christmas trees.

As always neighbors are doing us proud with holiday lights cheering up the long cold winter nights. I note that Alicante now has a rival for the street with most elaborate holiday lights! I have also noted several well decorated streets and homes when visiting The Shores!!

Interspersed with cold and occasionally wet days, we have had crisp weather, bright sun, blue skies and clear nights in the few weeks. We were fortunate in having a clear night sky on December 13, the peak for the Geminid meteor shower. It's one of the year's best shows, said to offer up to 120-150 meteors/hour in dark skies, as the moon didn't interfere until late. Well not so many meteors were visible in The South, where they were visible from 10pm to midnight. The sky then clouded over for the advertised "best viewed after midnight until pre-dawn with clear skies away from city lights". My husband and I sat on our front doorstep enjoying the show.

SASIA general meeting is on the 3rd Wednesday of the month at the Clubhouse. The December meeting followed the customary swearing in of the Board office bearers and other members for the forthcoming year, and the SASIA Holiday Party. The month of December this year, as always, has been a great time for living in The South and enjoying social activities with neighbors. I am grateful for our volunteer board and all they do to make our community a great place to live. I am also grateful for all the work that Verdego has done keeping our Waterfront park trim and tidy. The County Parks department recently undertook cutting back and clearing of the abundant growth along the intracoastal so that park users can still see the marsh and appreciate cooling breezes from over the water. There are again many non-native and invasive plants growing there. I hope those cutting and shredding the overgrowth noted and reported the invasives. It is more than five years since the County last took action to eliminate invasive plants along County waterways. I think, perhaps, it will be time to have another campaign to address this in the New Year.

## Did You Get Your Copy of the Observer?

The St. Augustine Observer community newspaper is delivered free by US Mail to the Shores & South Communities and other selected smaller neighborhoods in Southern St. Johns County 32086 residential areas. Currently 9,000 copies are mailed to selected carrier Routes. If you do not live in the current mailing areas, contact me at 904-607-1410 or [clifflogsdon@att.net](mailto:clifflogsdon@att.net) for an annual monthly subscription for \$12 to cover a portion of the postage.



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# St. Augustine Observer

Published monthly for residents and visitors of St. Augustine Florida area  
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**Cliff Logsdon**  
**Publisher/Editor**  
 (904) 607-1410  
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The purpose of the St. Augustine Observer is to serve residents of St. Augustine area Communities.

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

Information 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 St. Augustine Observer, 2465 US1 South PMB #8, St. Augustine Florida 32086. Information may also be e-mailed to clifflogsdon@att.net.

All materials submitted to the Observer is subject to editing. Publishing of submitted letters and 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 Observer.

Information, articles and other materials published are believed to be accurate at time of publishing. Acceptance of articles, advertising does not constitute an endorsement or approval of the contents, products or services by the Observer or its staff. It is agreed that the Observer and its staff will not be held liable for information provided herein by submitters/advertisers, including pictures, graphics, websites, dates, times and/or emails listed, that may have the potential to constitute fraud or other violation of law including copywriting infringements. The publisher reserves the right to refuse materials that does not meet the publication's standards.

## St. Augustine Shores Community

**The Shores Service Corporation  
 Shores Homeowners Association  
 (904) 794-2000**  
[www.staugshores.org](http://www.staugshores.org)

### Shores Monthly Meetings

• Shores Service Corporation's monthly meetings are held on the second Thursday of each month. Meetings are at 6 p.m. at the Riverview Club.

• **Conquistador Condominium** Board meetings are held on the fourth Monday of each month at 5 p.m. at the Riverview Club. Please call to confirm that the meeting will be held.

• **Fairview Condominium:** Board meetings are held on the second Tuesday of every other month at 4 p.m. at the Fairview Condo club house.

• **Greens Condominium:** Board meetings vary. Owners please contact Sovereign and Jacobs at 904-461-5556.

• **Casa Bella Condominium:** Board Meetings will be bi-monthly on the 3rd Monday of the month, still held at 6 P.M. Meeting location will still be posted on the bulletin board 48 hours prior to each meeting. Contact: Community Association Manager – Kandice Williams – 904-461-9708 Ext. 205 – [kwilliams@maymgt.com](mailto:kwilliams@maymgt.com) or Community Association Assistant – Vicki Collins – 904-461-9708 Ext. 231 – [vcollins@maymgt.com](mailto:vcollins@maymgt.com).

## St. Augustine South Community

**St. Augustine South Improvement Assoc.  
 709 Royal Rd. St Augustine, 32086  
 email: [info@staugsouth.com](mailto:info@staugsouth.com)  
[www.staugsouth.com](http://www.staugsouth.com)  
 (904) 615-6916**

### 2025 SASIA Board Members

President: Justin Miller  
 1st VP: David Rieger  
 Secretary: Pat Pleasant  
 Treasurer: Tony Dawson  
**Board:**  
 Vicki Cofone Patti Brown  
 Oonna Hueck Fran Lundberg

### January Community Meeting

Join us on Wednesday, January 21st for our community meeting. Victoria Weber-Cofone will be presenting "The History of the St Augustine South Improvement Association".

Community meetings are held the third Wednesday of each month at 7:00 pm at the SASIA clubhouse, except July and August.

### Classes at the Clubhouse

Weekly classes at the clubhouse are open to the public. You do not need to be a resident in St. Augustine South to participate.

**Square Dancing** – Mondays 7:00-9:00 p.m. Come and join the fun and dance with others. Contact caller,

Mike Akers, with any questions: [michael\\_akers@bellsouth.net](mailto:michael_akers@bellsouth.net) or (904) 466-8663.

**Movin' with Melinda** – Tuesdays and Thursdays 8:30-9:30 a.m. Move and groove in a low to medium impact exercise class with music from the past and present. A \$5.00 donation is requested. Contact Melinda at [slidermomma@yahoo.com](mailto:slidermomma@yahoo.com).

**REFIT and Rev+Flow with Onika** – Tuesdays and Thursdays 6:00-7:00p.m. REFIT combines powerful moves and music to create an exciting, fun workout for all ages. Rev+Flow is a one-of-a-kind workout that increases strength, builds muscle and increases mobility.

**Beginning Line Dancing** – Wednesdays 1:00-2:30 p.m. Have fun as you boot, scoot, and boogie while learning to dance. Join Dianne and Ingrid for a beginning level line dance class. A \$5.00 donation is requested.

**Intermediate/Advanced/Line Dancing** – Mondays 10:00-12:00pm and Wednesdays 3:00-5:00 p.m. Join Jinny for an intermediate/advanced level line dance class. A \$5.00 donation is requested.

Residents interested in becoming SASIA members may do so at [www.StAugSouth.com](http://www.StAugSouth.com)

## Community Classifieds

The Observer offers free community classified listings for USPS selected addresses in Southern St. Johns County and paid subscriptions. Classified ads will not be printed without a name, address and phone number included with the request. 5 items or less should be sent. Free ads are not for Business or Personal Service ads. Placement is not Guaranteed.

Business, Service, seeking work, etc. may be placed in the classified section: (1-4 lines) \$5, (5-9 lines) \$10, (10-14 lines) \$15, (15-19 lines) \$20. Ad \$10 for single line border. Ads should be paid in advance before placed. Send your listing and payment, if required, to Observer, 2465 US1 South PMB#8, St. Augustine, 32086 or email your ad to [clifflogsdon@att.net](mailto:clifflogsdon@att.net). Deadline is the 15th of every month for the next monthly issue.

**FOR SALE:** (1) 5 piece Broyhill living room - excellent condition \$400. (2) 12" thick queen size mattress, no stains or tears - excellent condition \$75. (3) large single door dog crates 36"x 23", used once, \$25 each call or text (904)-687-9149.

**FOR SALE:** (1) Long Haul Brand Cowboy Boots Size 10 Made USA Genuine Brown Leather List \$150. Excellent Condition \$20. (2) A/C Fan Motor 1/3 HP Part # FSE 1036 SV1 and Fan Capacitor 7.5 MFD 370 Volt. I Have Receipt \$187.84 Selling Both \$39.00. Call 904-472-4465 Lv Message or Text.

**FOR SALE:** (1) Mahagony color wood TV console. Like new.55"x20"x2'H. Shelves inside 2 glass doors in center. 2 doors either side for storage. Must sell. \$450. (2) Used Textbook notebook computer w/detachable keyboard. clean inside and out. Reset to factory settings

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## Shores Communications Corner

News & Information from the  
St. Augustine Shores Service Corp.

### President's Message,

I hope that everyone in St. Augustine Shores has had an enjoyable Holiday Season. I am looking forward to another good year for our Community in 2026.

Our HOA continues to have a good turnout at the monthly Board Meetings. At our last meeting of 2025, our Board approved Deborah Campbell as our new Board member. We welcome her and we look forward to welcoming new volunteers as we are nearing the May 2026 Annual Meetings. Our HOA will be looking for a few residents to consider serving our Community as Board Members and hopefully also as volunteers on our committees. The deadline to submit your applications for a Board of Directors position is February 16th, 2026. You can submit them any time prior.

I would like to thank KB Homes for completing not only the widening of Shores Boulevard and all of the infrastructure improvements that accompany the expansion of Unit 7 but also for resurfacing the existing Shores Blvd. along the same stretch, providing sidewalks where needed and, most important to many, the crosswalk between San Savino and Sabal Estates.

Finally, I would like to clarify to residents who wish to have our HOA Board get involved in St. John's County matters like the liquor Store variance, the Cell Tower application in Unit 7 and the Sevilla Drive Median Opening, to respect the fact that our HOA cannot take sides in these matters. We have to lobby as individual homeowners, attend the meetings and speak politely and professionally with forethought and purpose at the County about the issues that matter to us the most - It is the same expectation that our Board has when you attend our HOA Board Meetings.

Wishing everyone a Happy and Prosperous 2026.

Kathy Schroeder, President

## Shores Riverview Club Member Activities

January 2026						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 CLOSED	2 CLOSED	3
4	5 HAND & FOOT 12:00 PM SITTING ROOM ZUMBA 3:30 PM REFLECTIONS BALLROOM	6 CHAIR YOGA REFLECTIONS BALLROOM 10:30 AM MAHJONG 12:00 PM SITTING ROOM BARRE 5:30 REFLECTIONS	7	8 KICKBOXING 9:00 AM REFLECTIONS BALLROOM 10:30 AM CHAIR YOGA REFLECTIONS BALLROOM 10:30 AM REFLECTIONS	9 ZUMBA 10:00 AM REFLECTIONS BALLROOM	10
11	12 HAND & FOOT 12:00 PM SITTING ROOM ZUMBA 3:30 PM REFLECTIONS BALLROOM	13 CHAIR YOGA REFLECTIONS BALLROOM 10:30 AM MAHJONG 12:00 PM SITTING ROOM BARRE 5:30 REFLECTIONS	14	15 KICKBOXING 9:00 AM REFLECTIONS BALLROOM 10:30 AM CHAIR YOGA REFLECTIONS BALLROOM 10:30 AM REFLECTIONS	16 ZUMBA 10:00 AM REFLECTIONS BALLROOM	17
18	19 HAND & FOOT 12:00 PM SITTING ROOM ZUMBA 3:30 PM REFLECTIONS BALLROOM	20 CHAIR YOGA REFLECTIONS BALLROOM 10:30 AM MAHJONG 12:00 PM SITTING ROOM BARRE 5:30 REFLECTIONS	21	22 KICKBOXING 9:00 AM REFLECTIONS BALLROOM 10:30 AM CHAIR YOGA REFLECTIONS BALLROOM 10:30 AM REFLECTIONS	23 ZUMBA 10:00 AM REFLECTIONS BALLROOM	24
25	26 HAND & FOOT 12:00 PM SITTING ROOM ZUMBA 3:30 PM REFLECTIONS BALLROOM	27 CHAIR YOGA REFLECTIONS BALLROOM 10:30 AM MAHJONG 12:00 PM SITTING ROOM BARRE 5:30 REFLECTIONS	28	29 KICKBOXING 9:00 AM REFLECTIONS BALLROOM 10:30 AM CHAIR YOGA REFLECTIONS BALLROOM 10:30 AM REFLECTIONS	30 ZUMBA 10:00 AM REFLECTIONS BALLROOM	31

More Calendars from WinCalendar: [February](#), [March](#), [April](#)



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## SASIA News and Calendar of Events

### January 2026

All events are held in the SASIA Clubhouse at 709 Royal Road. If you wish to contact SASIA please email [info@staugsouth.com](mailto:info@staugsouth.com).

Check out SASIA's Facebook page [www.facebook.com/staugsouth](https://www.facebook.com/staugsouth), Nextdoor page (search for St. Augustine South Improvement Association), and Instagram page [www.instagram.com/saintaugsouth/](https://www.instagram.com/saintaugsouth/). Like and follow us so you can see what is happening at the SASIA clubhouse each week.

#### January Community Meeting

Join us on Wednesday, January 21st for our community meeting. Victoria Weber-Cofone will be presenting "The History of the St Augustine South Improvement Association".

Community meetings are held the third Wednesday of each month at 7:00 pm at the SASIA clubhouse, except July and August.

#### Neighborhood Strategic Plan Development Meeting

St. Augustine South residents are invited to participate in a crucial Neighborhood Strategic Plan Development Meeting to define the mission, vision, and priorities for St. Augustine South! Collaborate with SASIA and your neighbors to set goals and create implementation groups for a new 1-year and 5-year plan. Please attend one of the following identical sessions on Saturday, January 24, 2026, 1:00–3:00 pm or Friday, January 30, 2026, 6:30–8:30 pm.

#### Food Truck Nights

Food Truck Nights are the second Friday of each month from 5:00-7:00 p.m. at the Clubhouse, (709 Royal Road, 32086)

Friday, January 9th, 2026 Uptown Artisan Pizza

Friday, February 13th, 2026 Jersey Girl Grill

Friday, March 13th 2026 Salt Run Barbeque

Food Truck events are subject to change in the event of inclement weather. Check our social media for updates.

#### Upcoming 2026 Events

Saturday, Jan 24th, Neighborhood Strategic Plan Development Meeting, 1:00–3:00 pm

Friday, January 30th, Neighborhood Strategic Plan Development Meeting, 6:30–8:30 pm

Saturday, February 7th, Community Cleanup, 9:00 am –12:00 pm

Saturday, April 11th, Spring Festival

Saturday, November 7th, Fall Festival

Saturday, December 5th, Arts and Crafts Fair

Saturday, December 12th, Photos and Crafts with Santa

Dates are subject to change.

## The Wildflower Meadow Group

by Marlene Land

The Wildflower Meadow group meets the first Saturday of each month at about 8:30 a.m. by the Riverview Club House and we usually work for a couple of hours. Our goal is to preserve the wildflower meadow, learn about native plants that grow in this area, and enjoy the outside. We're an informal group without officers or dues and hope you will join us. We occasionally visit state and county parks and welcome newcomers.

Call Cindy at 904-797-3931 or Marlene at 305-968-0447 for more information. If we can't answer leave a message and we'll call you back. Call for more information about the meadow and our walks to state and county parks.



## 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](mailto:info@stjohnsbotanicalgarden.org). The garden is located at 8310 County Rd. 13 South, Hastings, FL.

## 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.

## Families Anonymous Support Group

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

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

## January St. Augustine Film Society

1. "The Crimson River" - Sunday January 4th at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, 2487 A1A S, St. Augustine, FL 32080. Doors open at 3:30 pm. The film begins at 4:00 pm. "The Crimson River" (Les Rivieres Poupres, 2000) - is a sleek, Wintry French police drama with a serial killer narrative wrapped in an art-film atmospheric, pitting two mismatched detectives against a conspiracy rooted in eugenics, academic elitism, and the policing of bloodlines. It earned 5 nominations at the 26th Cesar Awards including Best Cinematography for breathtaking views of the French Alps.

2. "Blancanieves" - Sunday January 25th at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, 2487 A1A S, St. Augustine, FL 32080. Doors open at 5:30 pm. The film begins at 6:00 pm. "Blancanieves" is a 2012 Spanish SILENT, black-and-white reimagining of Snow White, set in 1920s Andalusia and transposed into the world of bullfighting and flamenco where a woman is trying to make it in a man's world. It won ten Goya Awards, including Best Film and Best Actress for Maribel Verdú, and was Spain's official submission to the Academy Awards for Best Foreign Language Film.



# Riverview Club

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## News From St. Johns County

### Porpoise Point Vehicular Access Ramp Temporarily Closed for Improvements January 5, 2026

St. Johns County will temporarily close the Porpoise Point Vehicular Access Ramp beginning January 5, 2026 for improvements. The resiliency project will raise and harden the ramp to protect it from flooding during astronomical tides and tropical weather events. The ramp is expected to reopen to vehicles in May 2026.

The County will accommodate beach driving to the area during the project with an alternative access point, as conditions allow. During the closure, residents and visitors looking to access Porpoise Point may use the Vilano Beach Vehicular Access Ramp located at Vilano Beach Oceanfront Park, 2752 Anahma Drive, St. Augustine. Access will be dependent on the visibility of rocks along the Vilano Jetty. This area is closely monitored, and access may change periodically. Drivers and pedestrians are encouraged to follow posted signs and use caution in the area during construction. For the latest updates, follow SJC Beaches on Facebook.

"This resiliency project will provide much needed flood mitigation to the Porpoise Point community and also improve one of the busiest beach access ramps in the County," said Corryn George, Project Manager for St. Johns County Public Works Department. "We planned construction outside of sea turtle nesting season, which runs annually from May 1 to October 31, to ensure we are in compliance with our Habitat Conservation Plan."

The project advances the key priorities of Enhance Conservation, Community Well-Being, and Infrastructure in the St. Johns County Strategic Plan by strengthening coastal resiliency, improving community access to public recreation, and delivering responsible infrastructure improvements that protect both public assets and neighboring properties.

Visit the Featured Projects webpage for a full list of St. Johns County capital improvement projects, including detailed information on a project status, timelines, and funding.

### Smoking and Vaping Banned at Parks and Beaches Under Amended Ordinances

Littering of cigarette butts and vaping paraphernalia also prohibited

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

The action, titled "An Ordinance of St. Johns County, Florida, Amending the St. Johns County Park Ordinance 2005-114 and the St. Johns County Beach Code Ordinance 2007-19, as amended," (PDF) updates the County's park and beach regulations to restrict smoking and vaping on all County park property and within 600 feet of the Atlantic Ocean shoreline on County beaches.

The amendments also expand the definition of "litter" in both ordinances to include cigarette butts and vaping paraphernalia, making improper disposal of these items a violation under County code.

In accordance with state law, the amended ordinances do not prohibit cigars. Florida law restricts local governments from banning "unfiltered cigars," and the County's revisions explicitly reflect this limitation.

#### Summary of Key Provisions

Smoking and vaping prohibited on all St. Johns County park property and on County beaches within 600 feet of the shoreline.

Cigarette butts and vaping waste classified as litter, making improper disposal a violation of County code.

Cigar smoking permitted, consistent with State of Florida restrictions.

**Please support the local businesses in the Observer!**  
**They make this publication possible...**

**The Art Studio**  
of St. Augustine Beach, FL

Art Studio News by Paul Slava

Please Join us for our January First Friday Art Opening, Featuring Eva Askew-Houser and Stan Hill, Artists of the Month, where The Art Studio is pleased to present a special exhibit showcasing their work in partnership and co-sponsored by: St. Johns Regional Audubon Society. This collaborative exhibition celebrates the beauty and fragility of the natural world, with a particular focus on birds, wetlands, and coastal habitats.

Eva Askew-Houser's work explores the grace and character of regional bird species through expressive, detailed imagery that highlights both their individuality and the ecosystems they depend on. Her pieces invite viewers to slow down, observe closely, and consider the delicate balance of the natural environments around them.

Stan Hill contributes a complementary body of work inspired by local landscapes, marshes, and shorelines, capturing the subtle relationships between water, land, and sky. His paintings evoke a sense of place and underscore the importance of preserving these habitats for both wildlife and future generations.

This exhibition is cosponsored by St. Johns Regional Audubon, a local chapter dedicated to protecting birds and the places they need, today and tomorrow.

Through conservation projects, stewardship initiatives, community education, and science-based advocacy, St. Johns Regional Audubon and its members work to safeguard diminishing bird habitat in our region. For more information, please visit <https://stjohnsaudubon.com/>.

The public is invited to join the opening on Friday, January 2nd at 5pm to 8pm for an evening of art, conversation, and conservation.

Attendees will have the opportunity to meet the artists, connect with local Audubon members, and learn more about how to support bird-friendly initiatives in the community.

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.bechartstudio.org](http://bechartstudio.org), Facebook or call 904-295-4428.



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## 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 US1 South, 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](http://alz.org/help-support/caregivers)

## Interested in the Civil War?

Please join our Civil War Discussion Group. Our next presentation will be MONDAY, JANUARY 26, 2026 at 1pm, at the Anastasia Branch library in Sea Grove.

The JANUARY presentation will be with Len Whiteside, titled "Bombardment of Fort Sumter". We will examine the political setting in 1860, decision making under President's Buchanan, Lincoln, and Davis that led to the bombardment of Ft Sumter and then the aftermath.

For questions or comments, please contact Len Whiteside at [armyfam831@gmail.com](mailto:armyfam831@gmail.com)



**Rob Cook Attorney At Law P.A.**

Rob Cook, Esq.

**Auto Accident & Injury Law**

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## Diaries of a Shores Grand-Dad

by Dirk Schroeder

Every now and then you get an unexpected surprise. I have to share this one because it is an example of the shining light of humanity in what would be a relatively ordinary real estate event. Since I've been licensed as a real estate salesperson in 1984 (Broker since 1987), I have dealt with many good people yet, once in a while, you get some folks that are more than considerate - they're deliberately thoughtful and extraordinarily caring.

It's December 9th and it's a cool morning. I have a walk-through inspection at 5730 Datil Pepper Road. The sellers, Ron and Alisa, are already en route to their new home out of State. Alisa tells me that they left a few pieces items for the buyers; a local family of five. I knew that the home would be clean and presentable.

I arrived at the home and had just enough time to turn on a few lights when the buyers and their Realtor, Janice, arrived. The three youngsters poured out of the vehicle first and I told them that the owner had a treasure hunt waiting for them. All seven of us went in the front door and immediately the treasures were found. The recliner couch and table were obvious but on the kitchen counter were fresh cleaning supplies and some candy for the little ones. As we went into one of the spare bedrooms, a desk with paperwork about every aspect of the home, every improvement to the home was neatly organized and filled a file box. A beautiful wooden desk chair and an armoire with goodies for mom were discovered. In the other bedroom, a box with toys for the kids were cheerfully found by the little ones. The hunt was on - a new jacket for dad in the closet. Out to the porch, the owner left patio furniture and cool vintage signs for the family. On to the gazebo, a craft table and chairs for the kids and two new scooter toys were waiting for them. The sellers had even put three popsicles in the freezer for the kids. It was the most enjoyable and welcoming walk-through inspection ever! Even at closing, the mortgage broker, Allison Barlow, came in with a gift - a beautiful plant and a personal card for the new homeowners.

I had to share some of the photos with Ron and Alisa and I called them to let them know what a beautiful experience they had created for the new owners of their beautiful home.

When you need inspiration and faith in humanity, it's heartwarming experiences like this one that make all the darkness disappear. The smiles that morning were glowing. While writing this episode about a simple walk-through inspection, I was inspired to watch one of my favorite movie scenes: Monty Python's "Always Look on the Bright Side of Life". I saw it for the first time with my dad - we laughed so hard together. Hilarious magic moments! On that uplifting note, I wish everyone an incredible 2026 and, as always, a Sunshine State of Mind.

## ONLY YOU KNOW & I KNOW

### What is the Purpose of a Walk-Through Inspection?

On the day before (or the day of) Closing, the Buyer has the right to perform a "Walk-Through" Inspection to confirm that all Personal Property is still there, that the property has been maintained properly and that any repair work agreed to is completed. The Seller is responsible to provide Utility Service and Access.

In my "Diaries of a Shores Grand-Dad", you can read about how a Walk-Through experience can be a welcoming experience to the new occupants of the home that you're leaving behind.

We've also had complete opposite experiences as well, where stainless steel appliances were switched out

with white scratch 'n dent, curtains missing, mounds of garbage left behind both in the home and curbside, buyers refusing to close because of a few leaves in the garage, green pools and overgrown lawns - just to name a few.

**REMEMBER - IF YOU WANT THE BUYERS TO LOVE THE HOME ON THE WAY IN - LOVE IT ON THE WAY OUT!!**

God Bless You Ron & Alisa Jones for providing the Family (and both Realtors) with the most unforgettable Walk-Through ever. Love prevails once again!!

Want to be a part of a great Real Estate Experience? I welcome you to call me.



**Dirk Schroeder**

**Direct: 904-540-2360**  
**2820 US 1 S. St. Augustine FL 32086**



## What to expect after you enroll

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

Once you've enrolled, you are now a member / beneficiary of a carrier. You'll find support for what matters, big and small. You can easily manage and find answers about your plan on the carrier's app or your member site / portal. Some Medicare Advantage plans have an all-in-one card which makes it easier than ever to unlock more from your Medicare plan.

### Manage your plan online

If you haven't done so already, use your member ID number and email address (for most carriers) to create an account online. This is where you can:

- Find network providers and pharmacies and view plan documents, like your Drug List (Formulary).
- Complete your Health Assessment if you haven't already done so.
- Review your card balances if your plan has OTC or other type benefits.

### Once your coverage begins

- Schedule your annual physical and wellness visit.
- Schedule your yearly in-home preventive care visit if that is a need for you.
- Set-up your prescription home delivery if that is the method you prefer to receive your medications.

### Inform your agent

- If you move to a different zip code you will need to change either your Prescription Drug Plan or your Medicare Advantage Prescription Drug Plan (MAPD) as you may be out of your service area.
- If you change your primary doctor, your agent can help you or you can call the number on the back of your card to update your provider. This is for MA and MAPD plans.
- If your meds change significantly, you may want your agent to run a pricing of those meds.

Have a safe and Happy New 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

### 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.



Ask  
Carol B

### Health Insurance (Under 65)

If you are in need of health insurance, whether short-term or through the Marketplace, I am happy to help you find a plan that fits your needs.

**Carol Bogart**

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## Small Steps, Big Magic: Setting Micro-Goals for the New Year

By Diane Thompson Cortese

As the pier fireworks fizzle and the new year rolls in with sparkling possibility, many of us think big, creating lofty resolutions – work out at 5 a.m. daily, lose 20 pounds, earn a million dollars. But big goals tend to collapse like a sandcastle at high tide. When change feels too big, we freeze. Micro-goals offer a better path: small, doable actions that build confidence, momentum, and real transformation over time. Like walking the shoreline in St. Augustine Beach, one step at a time eventually takes you farther than you expect.

### Why Tiny Goals Matter

Micro-goals work because they're achievable. Small wins release dopamine, reinforcing progress and encouraging consistency. You don't need to overhaul your life, just make one tiny shift today, and another tomorrow. Celebrating these small wins matters because they prove to you that you can follow through, and that sense of success creates momentum.

### Examples of Breaking Big Goals into Micro-Goals

1. Big goal: Eat healthier.

Micro-goals:

- Check out the offerings of the local farmer's markets at The Amp or pier.
- Add one fruit or veggie to a meal each day.
- Swap one packaged snack per week for a whole-food option.

2. Big goal: Exercise daily.

Micro-goals:

- Walk the beach for five minutes.
- Do 10 squats while waiting for your coffee to brew.

3. Big goal: Be calmer.

Micro-goals:

- Take three deep breaths before picking up your phone in the morning.
- Step outside for two minutes of fresh air.

4. Big goal: Build deeper relationships.

Micro-goals:

- Send one thoughtful text a day.
- Plan one beach walk or coffee meet-up per month (Check out the Kookaburra, Zaba's, Starbuck's, or Une Autre.).

Visualize Yourself Succeeding and Celebrate When you Do

Imagine greeting the sunrise at the beach, not promising a 5-mile-run, just committing to walk for five minutes. Tomorrow you might go a few steps farther. A week later, farther still. Change doesn't require force or perfection, it requires consistency.

This year, shrink your goals. Make them so small you can't fail. Small steps lead to big, sustainable change, wave by wave, step by step.

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](http://www.wildlycapable.life). Email: [diane@wildlycapable.life](mailto:diane@wildlycapable.life).

*Note: This article is not medical advice. Please check with your doctor before making health or wellness changes.*

## St Augustine Genealogical Society

The St Augustine Genealogical Society holds its 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](http://StAugGenSoc.org).

## Epic-Cure Offers Food Resources to Public

by Eva R-Marienchild

Congrats are in order for Epic-Cure at One Orthopedic Plaza for their well-organized and popular weekly shopping distribution set-up. The site is always welcoming of neighbors who need healthy edibles that are sometimes locally grown.

Sunny Milford, the Executive Director, says that they strive to set up each Tuesday. "Unless there's a major storm, we are always on," says Milford. "Awaken City Church is our distribution partner for that location."

Epic-Cure is at One Orthopedic Place Tuesdays from 5:15 to whenever the food runs out. Accessibility ramps are conveniently provided.

According to Therese M., a Shores neighbor who has volunteered to pick up food for another neighbor a number of times, "You can go into the Flagler Hospital entrance, or 312, and then it's in between 312 and the ER. The food is still fresh and the people there are all nice". See link: <https://www.epic-cure.org/food-resources>

## 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](mailto:johnita0013@gmail.com) 305- 898-1432.

## St. Augustine Travel Club - Peter Dytrych

Our next gathering is Wednesday, January 14, 2026 at 3:00 pm at the Southeast Branch Public Library, 6670 US 1 South.

We will feature the AUSTRALIA OUTBACK - Australia's vast North West is as large as California yet with a population of only 40,000 people. It has some of the world's most ancient rock formations which predate life, the sea where enormous tides create the most biodiverse mudflats on the planet, and a variety of unique animals. 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.

## Non-Profit Helping Seniors With Ramps

By Eva R-Marienchild

These days with prices out-of-reach for most folks, spending money on items like food or even disability items, like ramps – necessary as they are – seems out-of-reach too. Fortunately, we have nonprofits galore here in St. Augustine which might be of help in this arena. The other day I was talking to Bill Lazar, director of St. Johns Housing Partnership, well-known for setting up safe housing at affordable price points. He confirmed that they're currently working on getting ramps for disabled residents.

Additional good news: they provide home repair services for our seniors and for the low-income. They do have a waiting list and they'll gladly refer you to other resources if they can't immediately help. Offices are at West King St (admin) and on Orange St. in St. John's County (rental properties). Call for info, or to donate! (904) 824-0902 or email at [info@sjhp.org](mailto:info@sjhp.org).



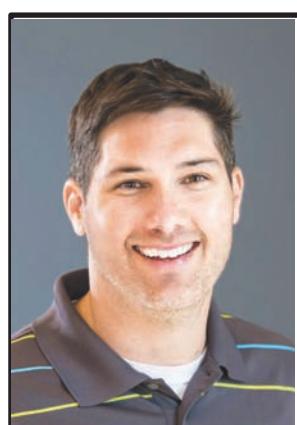
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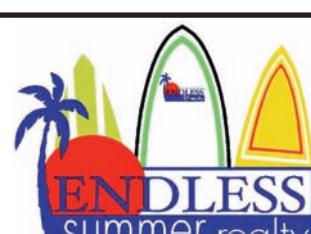
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## St. Augustine Orchid Society

Jan. 6 - Tiny Treasures, Big Blooms-Growing Miniature Orchids

by Janid Croft

Luis Manuel Ortiz Jordán will talk about how to grow the cooler growing miniature orchids indoors. Luis will present some of his techniques, tips, and tricks to help orchid growers cultivate highland climate orchids in their home. While his collection includes other larger growing genera, his greatest passion lies with cool-growing miniature orchids. Despite the challenges of cultivating them in hot, humid South Florida, Luis embraces the process and enjoys sharing his knowledge, teaching others how to help their own miniatures thrive. Luis is a research scientist at UF-Scripps Biomedical Research in Jupiter. In April 2021, he published a paper on *Eurystyles luisortizii*, a species he discovered in Puerto Rico. He also serves as a student judge for the American Orchid Society, a role that reflects just how deeply orchids define his world.

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: January 6, 6:30 to 9 pm

Where: Memorial Lutheran Church

Drive around to the back entrance, 3375 US 1 South, St. Aug 32086.



## St. Augustine Beach Democratic Club

The St Augustine Beach Democratic Club's January meeting will be on Tuesday, January 6, 2026. The meeting is at the Anastasia Island Branch Library, 124 Sea Grove Main Street St Augustine Beach at 5:30 pm. Our Speaker will be Gayle Phillips, the Executive Director of the Lincolnville Museum and Cultural Center in St Augustine. She will be presenting about African American history in St Augustine and the Civil Rights Movement. This is in honor of Martin Luther King whose birthday we will be celebrating on January 19. 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 our like minded neighbors. The Club's regular monthly meetings are at the Anastasia Island Branch Library, 124 Sea Grove Main Street at 5:30 pm on the first Tuesday of each month. There is plenty of parking available. For additional information, please contact [info@sabdems.org](mailto:info@sabdems.org).

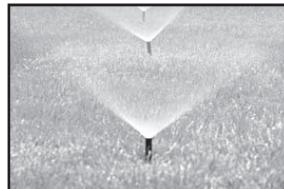


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## Early start for North Atlantic Right Whales

By Lorraine Thompson

North Atlantic right whale watching got off to an early start this season with the sighting of a mother whale and her new born calf. The mother, previously catalogued as female #3760 and named Callosity Back, was spotted heading north on December 19 in the waters off the Hammock Dunes condos by Barbara Kuhns and at Jungle Hut Road Judy Bowmann. The spotting was confirmed by photos from two drone operators.

Records show that the mother calf was catalogued with the name "Callosity Back" since she was the only known right whale with callosities on her back (see red circle on the photo). She was originally spotted and photographed as a calf in July 2007 off Jacksonville, Florida.

Once a thriving species, less than four hundred North Atlantic right whales are known to exist, making them the world's most endangered whales.

This is the time year when pregnant females migrate from the Bay of Fundy, Nova Scotia, and the Gulf of Maine to the coastal waters of the southeastern United States to give birth and nurse their young.

The Marineland Right Whale program is at the forefront of local whale watching. Volunteer right whale watchers including beach residents and frequent beach visitors are trained to spot and report sightings. Once identified by the watchers, that information is passed along to the network of watchers along our coast and reported to state and federal agencies. Numbers are assigned to the whales as they are located and their identifying markings are photographed, mainly from the air, and then they are catalogued.

In last year's season, twenty calves were born in the southeastern United States. Five of those twenty calves either died or are presumed to have died since their mothers were seen alone before the calves were old enough to survive on their own. One of the mothers also died. The main causes of death for North Atlantic right whales are vessel strikes and entanglement in fishing ropes and other gear.

The Marineland Right Whale Project expects approximately 150 volunteers to return for the 2026 season. Mobile survey teams watch from designated shoreside points for 10 weeks, January 4 through March 8.

There is also the need for "unofficial" whale watchers—beach goers or those who reside in oceanfront homes, particularly high rises including condominiums. Members of the public can help by reporting sightings of whales usually from December through March.

The Marineland Right Whale project kick-off meeting for the 2026 season is Monday, January 5 starting at 2:30 p.m. at the University of Florida's Whitney Laboratory, 9505 Oceanshore Blvd., Marineland. The program will include informal meet and greet in the atrium from 2 to 3 p.m., presentation in the auditorium from 3 to 4 p.m., and breakout sessions by sector from 4 to 5 p.m.

To learn more about the right whale and how to identify one, visit [www.neaq.org/.../identifying-right-whales](http://www.neaq.org/.../identifying-right-whales). If you think you have spotted a whale, you are asked to call the Right Whale Hotline: 1-888-97-WHALE (1-888-979-4253).

PHOTO by J. Greene (note the red circle which shows callosities on the back of the mother right whale #3760 named/catalogued Callosity Back)





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**9:00 - noon**

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## Direct Primary Care...What is it?

My name is Lina L Feaster MD and I am a Family Physician who has been practicing in St Augustine for the last 21 years. I am a solo physician who strongly believes in comprehensive medical care, treating patients as individuals, helping patients navigate the complicated healthcare system, and efficiently managing patients' medical needs. I have two dedicated employees, Becca and Jessie Gail, who work closely with me to help patients get the best possible medical experience.

Starting January 5, 2026 my solo medical practice will be changing from an insurance-based system to a direct primary care (DPC) office.

Questions and Answers about Direct Primary Care:

What is direct primary care?

It is healthcare going back to its roots in which the doctor patient relationship is the focus without a middleman (insurance).

How does direct primary care work?

DPC is a subscription-based service in which the patient pays a monthly fee and has much easier access to medical care. There are no copays or hidden fees. Patients will have direct communication with me for health questions and appointment follow ups, longer non rushed appointments, and same or next day appointments for urgent issues.

Can I still use my health insurance?

Your insurance will still be used for coverage of your lab and radiological bills and you will use your insurance with any specialists that you see. However, your insurance will not be used for my office visits.

Who is direct primary care for?

Direct primary care is for anyone who would like a more individualized approach to healthcare. DPC can be beneficial to everyone from a busy professional who wants to do a telehealth appointment instead of taking time off from work to a college student who may not have health insurance to a retired person who would like to have a doctor who has the time to spend explaining their medical care.

We welcome new patients to join our office and experience a fresh new type of healthcare where the patient doctor relationship is at the center and the constraints of insurance are no longer a problem.



## Revitalize Healthcare

is opening on January 5, 2026

Revitalize Healthcare is a Direct Primary Care (DPC) office. DPC is a new model of healthcare that focuses on the relationship between the patient and the physician without the burdens and restrictions of health insurance.

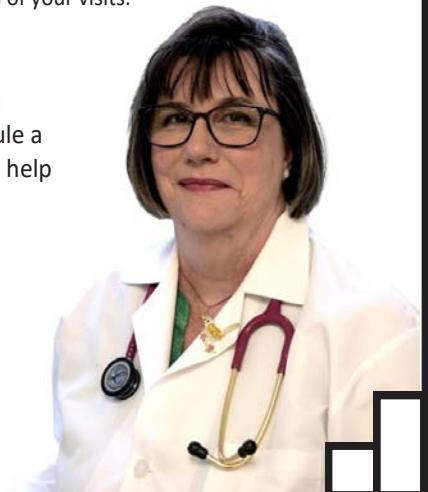
### What you can expect:

- Longer, more thorough appointments tailored to your individual healthcare needs and goals.
- Direct communication with Dr. Feaster, a Family Medicine physician who has been in solo practice in St. Augustine, her hometown, for over 20 years.
- Same day or next day scheduling for urgent issues.
- No copays or extra charges.
- You pay a predictable monthly fee that covers all of your visits.



Space is limited. For more information visit [revitalizehealthcare.org](http://revitalizehealthcare.org) and then call to schedule a virtual meet and greet with Dr. Feaster who will help determine if DPC is right for you.

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