

# St. Augustine Beaches NEWS JOURNAL

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




## St. Augustine Beach and Beyond . . .

By Lorraine Thompson ([staugbeachwatch@aol.com](mailto:staugbeachwatch@aol.com))

### 'Tis the season—

Living on an island during Christmas-New Years celebration times has its advantages. There are no bridges to cross, very few stop lights, plenty of holiday events and an abundance of visitors who come to enjoy the beaches and local oceanfront events. This holiday season events include:

**Wednesday, December 4, Luminary Night at St. Augustine Lighthouse and Maritime Museum**, from 6 to 8 p.m., offering early holiday fun for the family including a visit from Santa, refreshments, Christmas caroling, photo opportunities with Santa and the traditional and spectacular holiday decorations and lighting displays with more than two thousand luminaries blanketing the lighthouse grounds including the 1876 Keepers' House and other historic buildings on the property. Weather permitting, visitors who climb the lighthouse tower may be able to view the downtown St. Augustine Nights of Lights. Admission and parking are free for this event. Guests are asked to bring a non-perishable food item as a donation to a local charity.

There will be twenty-one different themed Christmas Trees on display through January 11. Also through January 11, special tours will be offered at 7, 7:30 and 8 p.m. Admission prices for these tours are \$24.95 for adults and \$22.95 for children 12 and under. The Lighthouse is located at 100 Red Cox Dr., St. Augustine. For information call 904-829-0745 or visit [www.staugustinelighthouse.org](http://www.staugustinelighthouse.org)

**Saturday, December 7--St. Augustine Beach's 24th Annual Surf Illumination** spectacular will take place starting at 4 p.m. at Pier Park, 350 A1A Beach Boulevard. The event will feature the annual Holiday Arts and Crafts Market and free children's activities including the opportunity for photos with Santa, pirates, face painting, glitter tattoos and balloon twisting. Holiday Music will be provided by DJ Danimal from VIP Entertainment. There will be a performance by the Gamble Rogers Middle School Choir at 4:45 p.m. The highlight of the event, the annual tree lighting, will take place at dusk, approximately 5:45 p.m. followed by a concert at the pavilion by the band Not Quite Dead. The concert is free and ends at 9 p.m.

**Saturday, December 7--Friends of the St. Augustine Amphitheatre** will host a holiday presentation of the movie "Home Alone". The free event will include a visit from Santa Claus, snow, face painting and fun activities. Gates open at 5:30 p.m. with the film beginning at 7 p.m. The Amphitheatre is located at 1340C A1A S.

**Wednesday, December 11--Christmas Cops and Claus--**The St. Augustine Beach Police Department will host children (with a parent or an adult) at a meet-and-greet Santa Claus festivity from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. The Christmas with Cops and Claus event is part of a national effort to foster police/community relationships, to present a positive image of the SABPD with local and visiting children as well as a welcome environment for families and children. Activities will include free photos with Santa, goodie bags for children along with seasonal music, arts and crafts, visits to fire trucks and police vehicles, a Christmas movie, popcorn, face painting and more. Children can bring their letters to Santa to deposit in a North Pole Christmas mailbox. The Police Department is located at 2300 A1A South. For information call 471-3600.

### Saturday, December 14, Annual Santa Suits on the Loose 5K run/jog/walk

Starting at 8 a.m., hundreds of runners of all ages, some dressed in colorful Santa suits and holiday garb, will dart through the streets of St. Augustine Beach. The run begins at the St. Johns County Beach Pier Park, follows a flat 3.1 mile area through St. Augustine Beach neighborhoods and finishes at Pier Park. Runners, walkers, and joggers are welcome to participate. The first one hundred to register will receive a Santa suit. After that, participants will receive a Santa-themed t-shirt. All finishers will receive medals. Registration fee is \$35. For registration and other information visit <https://runsignup.com/Race/FL/>

**Saturday, December 14--Holiday Market**, 3 to 7 p.m., St. Augustine Beach Pier Park, 350 A1A Beach Boulevard. Unique and locally created gift items, tasty foods all in a colorful holiday atmosphere. This event offers one-of-a-kind gifts, food, and a Grinch-themed photo booth. For information call 904-471-2122 X112

**Sunday, December 22, Santa Paws Dog Brunch.** People are not the only ones who will celebrate the Christmas holidays here on St. Augustine Beach. Guy Harvey Resort, 860 A1A Beach Boulevard, will host a competition from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. to select the best dressed Santa Dogs. Entry fee is \$10 per person (dogs are included in the fee). Events will include fun games and photos with Santa. All people who participate will receive one free cocktail and a Santa Swag for their four-legged friend. Prizes will also be awarded for the best-dressed dogs. The \$10 entry fee for Santa Paws (per person, dogs are included) will go to support Ayla's Acres No-Kill Animal Rescue. Donations of dog/cat food & treats are (continued on page 8)

## St. Augustine Youth Services Hosts 13th Annual Santa Suits on the Loose 5K to Benefit Youth Mental Health Programs

St. Augustine Youth Services (SAYS) is thrilled to announce the 13th Annual Santa Suits on the Loose 5K. This year's race will take place on Saturday, December 14, 2024, at 8 a.m. at St. Augustine Beach Pier Pavilion. All proceeds from this cherished event will directly benefit SAYS programs that serve local at-risk youth and support youth mental health and wellness.

The Santa Suits on the Loose 5K invites participants of all ages and fitness levels to dress in festive holiday and Santa attire, creating a joyful and memorable holiday spectacle. This unique race, combining holiday spirit with a community cause, features a flat course with route entertainment as participants travel through the neighborhoods of St. Augustine Beach. Walkers, runners, and joggers are welcome to join!

The Santa Suits on the Loose 5K has become a holiday tradition, providing an opportunity for the community to come together to raise awareness and funds for essential programs that SAYS offers, including residential therapeutic care and community-based services for youth facing challenges related (continued page 6)



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- Print Distribution Locations for the  
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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](mailto:clifflogsdon@att.net) or [clogsdon1@yahoo.com](mailto: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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## Sheriff's Update

By **St. Johns County Sheriff Robert A. Hardwick**

### 2nd Annual SJSHo-Ho-Ho Christmas Event



The St. Johns County Sheriff's Office is excited to be hosting the 2nd Annual SJSHo-Ho-Ho with Sheriff Hardwick at our main office located at 4015 Lewis Speedway St. Augustine, FL 32084.

The date of this year's SJSHo-Ho-Ho is December 14th from 5:00-9:00pm. This event will feature photos with Santa, Buddy the Elf, the Grinch, and more!

There will also be a Christmas movie playing, snow, facepainting, reindeer food, and more activities for all to enjoy! All purchases are tax-deductible.

Tickets are available on the St. Johns County Sheriff's Office Special Teams Eventbrite page.

I'd also like to take this moment on behalf of my wife Kendell and I and the over 1,000 members of the St. Johns County Sheriff's Office, to thank you all for another great year. Your continued support of our agency is truly humbling. It is an honor to serve St. Johns County which we believe is the best place to live, work, play, raise a family, and retire. We wish you all a wonderful holiday season with your family and friends.

### Temple Bet Yam's 22nd Annual Card Party January 15, 2025

Hammock Dunes Country Club, 30 Ave Royale, in Palm Coast will again host our annual Card Party on January 15, 2025. You can look forward to a continental breakfast at 10 and a buffet lunch with desserts at noon. Your choice of games include Mah Jongg, Mexican Train, Canasta, and Scrabble and more.

You might win a door prize or the 50/50 raffle. You may find a great item at the silent auction. Registration info coming soon so keep an eye out for more information. Contact Ellen Miller at [rehsm@yahoo.com](mailto:rehsm@yahoo.com) or (516) 234-0950.

### 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 Branch 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.

### 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.

We meet Thursdays from 9-10 a.m. at Unitarian-Universalist Fellowship, 2487 A1A S. Street, St. Augustine (Use red back door entrance). For more information to restore peace and harmony, contact 843-367-1475.

### Phone Calls from Santa

Phone Calls from Santa  
 December 10, 11, and 12 from 6 – 7:30 p.m.

Parents with children 8 years old and younger living in St. Johns County can sign up to receive a phone call from Santa Claus right from the North Pole this Christmas season. Contact the St. Johns County Recreation Department website.



### St. Augustine Beach Community Garden Spots Available

Would you like to save on your grocery bill, get some exercise, have fun and meet other gardeners?

The St. Augustine Beach Community Garden, located at Ron Parker Park (near dog park) has announced the availability of garden boxes for lease for the fall/winter gardening season.

With cooler temperatures and decreased pests, fall/winter is the best time to garden in Florida. When you lease a box, you will have available water, organic fertilizer and compost, tools and the camaraderie of fellow gardeners. You are welcome to grow vegetables, herbs and flowers organically.

Your cost is \$40 annually, with the expectation that you are an active gardener and promise to keep your box weed-free, with the stipulation you will work at least an hour a month helping with the communal beds and maintaining common areas.

Go to St. Augustine Beach Community Garden on Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/ronparkerpark>) and click on the Sign Up button near the top of the page. Our Membership Chair Marjorie will then contact you.

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## St. Augustine Beach City Hall Update

Because the Commission meeting room at City Hall was used for early voting and on November 5th for the recent election, the St. Augustine Beach City Commission met on Wednesday, November 6, 2024. Here is a summary of the decisions the Commission made at that meeting:



1. Approved two appointments: Mr. Todd Grant as a member of the Sustainability and Environmental Planning Advisory Committee, and Mr. Eric Kenney as the junior alternate on the Comprehensive Planning and Zoning Board.

2. Approved on final reading an ordinance to amend the Land Development Regulations to adopt provisions concerning the historic preservation of buildings.

3. Heard a presentation by Mr. Jason Harrah, Project Director for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, concerning the need to obtain easements from private property owners for future beach renourishment projects.

4. Approved the final development plan for an eight-unit condominium building to be constructed between Fiesta Falls Miniature Golf and the beach at 812 A1A Beach Boulevard.

5. Approved a resolution to authorize

two alternate members for the Sustainability and Environmental Protection Advisory Committee.

6. Approved three budget resolutions: a) to record lease obligations for new copier machines; b) to make adjustments to the Fiscal Year 2024 budget, which ended on September 30, 2024; and c) to recognize an increase in funding from tourist tax revenue for the City's New Year's Eve fireworks show.

7. Approved the Building Director, Mr. Brian Law, moving forward with a proposal to streamline regulations in the Land Development Code concerning review of major developments.

8. Heard a presentation by an 11th Street resident, Mr. Rick Mauldin, for a traffic calming device, such as a speed bump, on 11th Street west of Mickler Boulevard, to slow speeding drivers. City staff is to research types of speed bumps, their costs, and having the 11th Street residents share in paying the costs.

The City Commission's next regular meeting will be held on Monday, December 2, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. in the Commission meeting room at City Hall. The public is invited to attend or can view the meeting on YouTube at [staugbch.com](http://staugbch.com).

## Do You Have Community News to Share?

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

## Annexation II

By Max Royle  
St. Augustine Beach City Manager



In a recent article titled "Annexation," I provided a brief history of the City of St. Augustine Beach, a list of areas it has annexed, and the benefits to owners who annex their property into the City. Among those benefits are rapid law enforcement response, efficient removal of solid waste, and the opportunity for property owners to have a "voice" in how the City is governed and what land development regulations are adopted and applied. I also pointed out that to be annexed, properties must be located on the City's boundaries: Pope Road (north), State Road A1A (west) and the Sandpiper Village subdivision (south), which is south of the Oasis Restaurant.

Other advantages of a property being annexed into the City are these: Say the owner wants to change the land use from residential to commercial, or vice versa, or the owner wants to change the commercial use of it. Annexation into the City ensures that the property owner is quickly informed whether the change is allowed as well as information about other regulations concerning building setbacks, parking and signage, etc. Or say the owner wants to re-roof his or her building, install new windows, or build a swimming pool, etc.: City staff quickly processes the permit request. Because the City is small, it doesn't have the layers of regulations and bureaucracy that larger governments have. The City's well-trained planning staff works quickly because often for property owners time is money, especially during this period of high interest rates and construction costs.

Annexation provides other benefits: Property owners when they are in a group have a much louder voice in matters that concern improvements to their property and protecting its value. Thus, when owners annex their property into the City, their voice joins the voices of many other owners in the City, as well as those of their elected representatives, the Mayor and Commissioners. These voices when spoken in unison make it much more difficult for outside forces to ignore the clamor for or against certain proposals. And always there are outside forces, usually state authorities, with which cities must joust to protect the rights of their property owners.

Also, to be considered is the "personal touch." City government is the level of local government closest to property owners. Especially in a small city, it is easy for owners to know who their mayor, commissioners, police chief, building official, city planner, city manager are, easy to bring problems to the attention of these officials and require that they work with the property owners to solve problems. There's no waiting for emails to be answered or phone calls to be returned.

Annexation into the City can be summarized as efficiency: less red tape, less cumbersome regulations and fewer hoops for property owners to jump through to use their property and protect its value.

Property owners interested in discussing the possibilities of annexation are welcome to email me at [mroyle@cityofsab.org](mailto:mroyle@cityofsab.org) or call me at (904) 471-2122.

## St. Augustine Aquarium is Excited to Announce New Juvenile Cow Nose Ray

The St. Augustine Aquarium has recently introduced a new juvenile Cownose ray into the main habitat that houses many of their tropical fish. The aquarists and staff at the St. Augustine Aquarium have been tirelessly ensuring that the new ray, acclimated, thriving, and that he is target trained with food. With one of our main missions being education, this juvenile ray is the perfect opportunity to expand the aquarium and the public knowledge.

The Cownose ray recently dubbed "Sunny" has been introduced to the Florida Reef habitat here at the St. Augustine Aquarium. There are a multitude of ways that guests will be able to interact with Sunny such as tours that allow guests to view his habitat, snorkeling in his habitat, and even feeding him. These are enrichment interactions are not only for guests, but also for Sunny. Interaction has been a large part of helping Sunny to acclimate to his new habitat and he loves when snorkelers are near his target platform. Sunny also makes a great representative of species that are located on our coast in Florida, helping people to learn how to properly help conserve and see them thrive in their natural habitat. Our lead aquarist Sydney states, "Sunny joined us at the end of April, and went through health exams and training process before moving into our 80,000-gallon Florida Reef on July 4th. Measuring in at a whopping 15 inches in wingspan, what this little guy lacks in size he more than makes up for in personality. If you're in St. Augustine and looking for something to do, stop by and meet, feed, or snorkel with and all our other amazing fish!" We are so excited to welcome Sunny and all the education and joy he will bring to the aquarium.

St. Augustine Aquarium was opened in 2016 by husband and-wife Kathy and Shawn Hiester. After consulting with many aquariums across the country they created a unique aquarium centered around conservation through education. The aquarium utilizes guided tours by experts to help educate the public about marine life. The aquarium also offers one-of-a-kind experiences in St. Augustine with feed and touch experiences with sharks and snorkels in the Florida Reef habitat. All of this with the hope that guests will leave feeling like they can play a role in conservation in the future. For information email: [info@saaqium.com](mailto:info@saaqium.com) or call 904-428-9777.



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## St. Augustine Travel Club

by Peter Dytrych

### St. Augustine Travel Club Cruise

The St. Augustine Travel Club will again be sailing the seas on Saturday, April 5, 2025 on the beautiful CARNIVAL VISTA out of Port Canaveral to the Caribbean ports of Amber Cove (Dominican Republic), San Juan, St. Maarten and St. Thomas for a 8-day cruise. Prices start from \$894 per person, double occupancy, for inside cabin, inclusive of all port fees and taxes. Balconies and Oceanviews are also available at additional cost. Book now with a \$250 p.p. deposit and receive \$100 per stateroom On Board Credit. Call Peter, St. Augustine Travel Club at (904) 797-3736.



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## St. Augustine Beach Democratic Club

by Susan Horwitz

The SAB Democratic Club's December meeting is our Holiday Party on Tuesday December 10, 2024 from 5:30-7:30 at Cafe 11, 501 A1A Beach Blvd, St Augustine Beach. We are planning on having good cheer and musical entertainment. There will not be a meeting on December 3. We will be resuming our regular first Tuesday monthly schedule in the new year. The St Augustine Beach Democratic 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 Club meets at the Anastasia Island Branch Library, 124 Sea Grove Main Street, 5:30 pm, plenty of parking available. For additional information, please contact info@sabdems.org.

## 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.

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## Interested in the Civil War?

Please join our Civil War Discussion Group. Our next presentation will be Tuesday, December 3, 2024 at 1pm, at the Anastasia Branch library in Sea Grove.



The December presentation will be with Len Whiteside titled "Spies in Petticoats". He will discuss the lives and exploits of three female spies: 2 Confederate and 1 Union, and their impact on various Civil War battles. For questions or comments, please contact Len Whiteside at armyfam831@gmail.com

## Mah Jongg Tournament at Temple Bet Yam

Mah Jongg fans! Temple Bet Yam presents it's Mah Jongg Tournament on Thursday December 5th. Please enter by November 22nd if possible.

Register at 10:30 a.m. for the 11:00 a.m. start. Cash prizes, a 50/50 Raffle, morning pastries, coffee and a lunch consisting of buffet salads, noodle kugel, fruit salad, dessert and cold beverages are included in your \$36 donation.

The tournament will be held at Temple Bet Yam, 2055 Wildwood Drive (just off SR 207), St Augustine. A security guard is on site. Sorry, but there will be no walk-ins. Questions? Call Carol Levy (954)895-7332.

## St Augustine Genealogical Society

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

Our Genealogical Society is open to all. We encourage visitors, as well as current and former members to join us. Refreshments will be served, and feel free to bring your favorite. For information visit website stauggen.org or contact Georgia Horsey at 770-337-6137.

## St. Johns County Beach Services Celebrates 2024 Summer of Success

Joey Pellegrino, Public Affairs Specialist

In the wake of 2024's peak beach season, St. Johns County Beach Services is celebrating a summer of successfully serving our visitors and residents amid major storms and extensive renovations.

**Tolls:** During Summer 2024, Beach Services hired 41 new toll attendants, maintained a staff of 53 part-time employees, created new lead positions, and sold a total of approximately 78,000 beach passes.

**Trash:** Staff removed roughly 70 tons of trash from the beach, cleared six derelict boats, and removed washed-up items including a cargo ship fender, marine markers, buoys, and more.

### Special Events:

1. A total of 971 events were hosted along St. Johns County's 42 miles of beach, mostly surf camps and weddings. There were 12 surf contests and five major impact events (each including over 200 people).

2. St. Johns County hosted state and national elected officials for a community forum addressing stormwater flooding in the North Beach area

**Renovations:** In early July, St. Johns County completed the \$38.6 million Ponte Vedra Restoration Project two months ahead of schedule. Vilano Beach Oceanfront Park (2752 Anahma Drive, St. Augustine) reopened on July 17 after a \$1.8 million renovation.

**Sea Turtle Conservation:** Staff spent over 141 hours responding to 80 reports of stranded sea turtles, and nine part-time members of night staff raked approximately 145 sea turtle nests (raking each individual nest for 10 to 25 days), removing ruts adjacent to nests due to hatch.

### Other Highlights:

1. Beaches staff successfully broke down and reinstalled infrastructure before and after Hurricanes Helene and Milton brought impacts to Northeast Florida. Throughout the season, Beach Services continued maintaining the dunes critical to the beach ecosystem.

2. Fourteen beach walkovers were upgraded, and a new Mobi-mat was installed for greater accessibility at Vilano Beach. New positions were created for workers to operate the grader machine used for daily grading of beach access ramps. Vilano Beach vehicular access and South Ponte Vedra Beach 4x4-permitted driving access were both reopened.

3. Beach Services added the environmental technician position to assist and expand the Habitat Conservation team, crucial to such efforts as our work during the sea turtle nesting season. After last season's huge success, we anticipate promising numbers once St. Johns County's official data is calculated in early 2025.

4. The old Reach the Beach app is set to be retired on Dec. 2, with all beach info and updates now accessible via the SJC Connect app.

5. All the season's work was done in the wake of an updated beach ordinance being adopted by the St. Johns County Board of County Commissioners, designed to better protect beachgoers and ensure the community enjoys the full benefits of our gorgeous beaches.

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## Santa Suits on the Loose!

(continued from page 1)

to behavioral health, education, and family stability. By joining us in this fun, festive 5K, participants can make a meaningful difference in the lives of our youth.

**Race Details:**

When: Saturday, December 14, 2024, at 8:00 a.m.

Where: St. Augustine Beach Pier Pavilion, St. Augustine, FL

Registration: Sign up or learn more online at: <https://www.sayskids.org/events> or on race day beginning at 7:00 a.m.

All runners have the option to choose a Santa suit, or a holiday-inspired shirt and top finishers will receive awards. Participants are encouraged to register early to secure their suit/shirt and finisher medal, and to help us make this event a success for the youth who rely on SAYS services.

SAYS would like to thank Title Sponsor Bozard Ford, and all our supporting sponsors, volunteers, and the St. Augustine community. Together, we are making a difference in the lives of children and families in Northeast Florida.

For more information, to register, or to become a sponsor, please visit [www.sayskids.org](http://www.sayskids.org) or contact [lauren@sayskids.org](mailto:lauren@sayskids.org) or [timothyd@sayskids.org](mailto:timothyd@sayskids.org).



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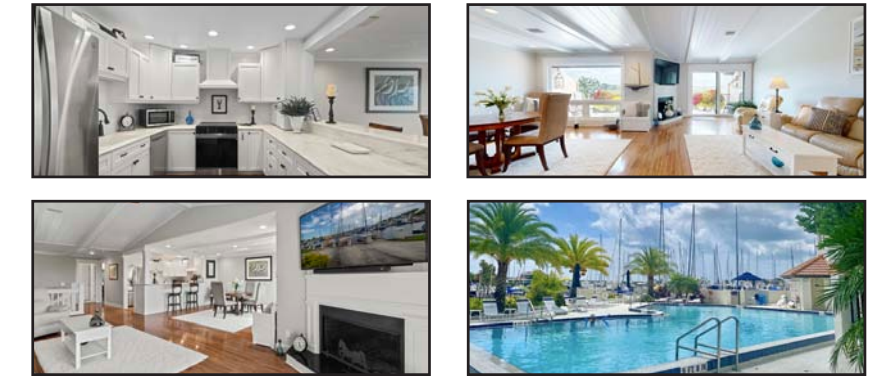
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The Art Studio is located at 370 A1A Beach Blvd. in the St. John's County Pier Park and is open 7 days a week from 12pm to 5pm. We are a 501(c)(3) Non-Profit organization that brings Art and Culture to the community

and offers classes, special events, exhibitions and rental space. For more information please visit [www.beachartstudio.org](http://www.beachartstudio.org), Facebook or call 904-295-4428.

## St. Augustine Beach and Beyond . . .

(continued from page 1)

welcomed. For entry and other information call 888-449-9293 or 855-509-9724.

Tuesday, December 31, **St. Augustine Beach's New Year's Eve Light Up the Night** fireworks show begins at 8:30 p.m. at the St. Johns County Ocean Pier. There will not be a pre-show festival this year. Fireworks viewing spots include three designated spots along A1A Beach Boulevard. A free shuttle service will operate from 5 to 10 p.m. from Anastasia Baptist Church to the three viewing locations on the beach. Park and walk locations include: YMCA, 500 Pope Road (after 1:00 p.m.); St. Augustine Beach Pier (limited parking); St. Augustine Beach City Hall; Ron Parker Park; Anastasia Square Lot, close to Pope Road. (Do not park in the area designated for Amici's Restaurant). Beach driving and parking will be allowed south of A Street.

## The Dance Company's St. Augustine Winter Spectacular



This family-friendly, entertaining holiday production follows a young girl's journey home for the holidays. Expect high-kick dancers, ballerinas, acrobats, actors, and more amidst dazzling costuming and props. Performances are on Saturday December 14 at 7 p.m. and Sunday December 15 at 2 p.m. 14 Granada St., St. Augustine.

"The St. Augustine Winter Spectacular is a holiday production that was created in 2013 by The Dance Company and continues to be a holiday favorite amidst the Nights of Lights at Lewis Auditorium at Flagler College in downtown St. Augustine.

Executive Artistic Director Stephanie Burkhardt Lahti, a former TDC dancer herself, created the show after a trip to New York City's Broadway district. Wanting to bring the big city caliber of entertainment back to her quaint hometown, she and the artistic staff wrote the holiday show and continue to rewrite and tweak the story each year, making it fresh and memorable for all ages in the community.

The St. Augustine Winter Spectacular captures the flavor of the iconic Radio City Rockettes mixed with familiar holiday music and characters amidst a stage artistry of ballet, tap, acrobatics, musical theater, kick lines, and more. We have seen audience members revel in laughter, tears, wonder, and awe as they come back year after year to soak in the best of the winter season during the St. Augustine Winter Spectacular."

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## Carpal Tunnel Syndrome

By Meg Robinson, OTR/L, CHT  
First Coast Rehabilitation  
904-829-3411

Just about everybody, either knows somebody who has carpal tunnel syndrome, thinks they have carpal tunnel syndrome, or has been diagnosed with carpal tunnel syndrome. I have noticed that quite a few of my patients have been confused as to what constitutes carpal tunnel syndrome. They mistakenly believe that any numbness, pain, or weakness in their hand means they have it. Although all of these can be associated with carpal tunnel syndrome, let's narrow it down.

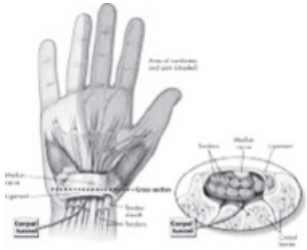


Image 1 by O-health

The carpal tunnel is about the size of a dime. It is a very small area for so many structures to pass. If that area is compromised, like when you bend your wrist, or if the tendons swell up, there will then be less room for the median nerve. When the nerve is compressed, you initially start to feel symptoms of numbness and tingling. The median nerve supplies sensation to the palmar side of the thumb, index, middle, and half of the ring fingers (see image 1).



If carpal tunnel syndrome is not addressed, it can result in muscle weakness and eventually atrophy (wasting of the muscle), which causes difficulty using your thumb. People often complain of dropping things, whether from lack of feeling or lack of thumb strength and coordination. Muscle atrophy may appear as an indent in the muscular area of the thumb. (see image 2). Ideally, it is better to address your

carpal tunnel syndrome before it causes muscle wasting.

Image 2 from Wikipedia

Carpal tunnel syndrome became more prevalent in the 1980's, which corresponds to typewriters and factory jobs becoming more automated and requiring less full body movements. Hands and wrists would hold prolonged positions and put more strain on the finger tendons, which compromised the median nerve within the carpal tunnel. If a person keeps his wrist bent down, then the carpal tunnel is smaller, and the nerve is pinched. If the finger tendons swell up, then there is less room for the median nerve in the tunnel. Old typewriters required a person to put the paper in the machine, hit the advance lever for each line, and then remove the paper. These motions provided an opportunity for the fingers and wrists to let the tendons glide through a full range of motion. With the invention of electric typewriters and then word processors, a person could stay in one position and type for hours, thus straining the finger tendons. If they were in a bad position for that time, it also pinched off the space for the nerve.

If you feel like you may have symptoms of carpal tunnel syndrome or have questions about numbness, pain, and/or weakness in your hands one of our occupational therapists, certified hand therapists at First Coast Rehabilitation would be happy to evaluate you and make some recommendations. The earlier your symptoms are addressed the better. The longer the nerve is compressed the more difficult it may be to reverse the symptoms.

We can help you discover what may be the cause and rule out any more serious problems. It could be a simple solution that a home exercise program or some education could fix. If we feel it may be more serious, we can suggest further options. If you are interested in pursuing an evaluation, you will need a referral from your primary care or other specialist. We would be happy to see you at your earliest convenience. Please contact us at 904-829-3411.

*Meg Robinson is an occupational therapist and certified hand therapist who has been working in hand therapy for over 38 years. She moved from Cincinnati, Oh to the St. Augustine area at the end of 2023 and joined First Coast Rehabilitation staff in early 2024. Before that she worked closely with hand orthopedic surgeons in Ohio and Northern Kentucky. She taught hand therapy and splinting for over 20 years at various universities in Cincinnati. She also received a US patent for a dynamic splint, which is currently manufactured by Alimed, Inc.*

## St. Augustine Beach and Beyond . . .

By Lorraine Thompson (staugbeachwatch@aol.com)

Anastasia Island gift giving that lasts a year

If you're looking for a gift that hits home, this time of the year is the best time to obtain memberships that will last for a year. You might also consider purchasing these memberships as "gifts" for yourself.

- If you're a frequent visitor to **Anastasia State Park**, consider joining the Friends of Anastasia State Park for \$25 per year. The memberships entitle you or the recipient to twelve park entrances throughout the year. Without the membership, admission fees are \$8 for vehicles with 2 to 8 people, \$4 for single occupant vehicles. For membership information go to "Become a member" at [www.friendsofanastasia.org](http://www.friendsofanastasia.org)

- For those who travel throughout the state, an annual membership is also available that covers entrance to most **Florida State Parks**. Individual passes start at \$60. Family passes begin at \$120. For details, visit <https://www.floridastateparks.org/learn/florida-state-parks-annual-pass>.

- **St. Augustine Lighthouse Museum** offers several annual membership levels starting at \$35 that also offer discounts on programs including summer camps as well as entrance to other Florida lighthouses. The Lighthouse is located at 81 Lighthouse Avenue on Anastasia Island. For information call 829-0745 or visit [www.staugustinelighthouse.org](http://www.staugustinelighthouse.org)

- **St. Augustine Beach Civic Association** not only entertains the public with free summer concerts and sponsors other beach events. It also offers annual memberships with the proceeds helping to defray the costs of its programs. Individual Memberships are \$20 per year and Corporate and Family Memberships are \$30 annually. Use the membership card year-round for ten to fifteen percent discounts at designated restaurants and for other products and services offered on the island as well as on the mainland. Memberships are not restricted to St. Augustine Beach residents. They can be purchased online at [www.sabca.org](http://www.sabca.org). They will also be available at the Surf Illumination event on December 3.

- **St. Augustine Alligator Farm Zoological Park**, located on the island at 999 Anastasia Boulevard, offers individual annual memberships at \$139.95. Family membership is \$169.95. A grandparent membership (for two adults and grandchildren 18 and younger is \$159.95 per year.) The memberships include unlimited admissions year-round, gift shop, birthday parties, zoo camps and other discounts. For membership details visit <http://www.alligatorfarm.com/zoo-membership/> or call 824-3337.

**Marineland Dolphin Adventure**, located at 9600 Oceanshore Boulevard, off A1A South, now offers annual passes. Prices start at: Individual Pass: \$65 (1 adult); \$45 (1 child). Annual passes may be purchased online at <https://marineland.net/annual-pass/> and at the Marineland ticketing office. Call 877-933-3402 for information.

## Cindy Walker Named Events Manager of River House Events & welcomes Janel Graham as Assistant Events Manager

by Carolyn Karger, Communications Coordinator - [ckarger@coasjc.org](mailto:ckarger@coasjc.org) (904) 209-3687

River House Events and Council on Aging proudly announce Cindy Walker has been named Events Manager for River House Events, joined by Janel Graham as Assistant Events Manager. Both professionals bring extensive experience and a shared dedication to enhancing the event experience at River House, COA's premier waterfront venue in St. Augustine, Florida, celebrated for its stunning views and community-focused mission.



River House Events, nestled along the Matanzas River in historic St. Augustine, offers an exquisite venue for weddings, corporate gatherings, and social events. Owned and operated by St. Johns County Council on Aging (COA), River House serves as both an event space and a community hub. Its elegant architecture, expansive riverfront patio, and breathtaking views of the St. Augustine Lighthouse make it a sought-after destination for memorable celebrations.

Cindy Walker has been involved with COA since 2017, serving in various roles including Development and Events Coordinator and Events Assistant. Now stepping into her new role as Events Manager, Cindy is thrilled to lead the team at River House, which she describes as "a place that feels like home."

"River House is not only an amazing events venue with breathtaking views, but it's also a place that supports older adults in our community," Walker explained. "I'm excited to enhance the guest experience with exceptional customer service and unforgettable events."

Janel Graham, who joined COA in 2022 as Development and Events Coordinator, also brings valuable experience in the wedding planning and hospitality industries. Her skills and dedication to creating unforgettable moments make her an excellent addition to the River House team.

"This venue is not just a beautiful location for events, but also a cornerstone of our senior programming," said Becky Yanni, COA Executive Director. "Cindy and Janel's efforts help ensure that River House continues to provide a welcoming space for events, while also offering a unique location to support senior programming and lifelong learning."

River House is located at 179 Marine Street in St. Augustine, and offers weddings, as well as corporate event hosting, military discounts, and short-term booking opportunities. For more information, visit [www.RiverHouseEvents.com](http://www.RiverHouseEvents.com) or follow @RiverHouseEvents on Facebook and Instagram.

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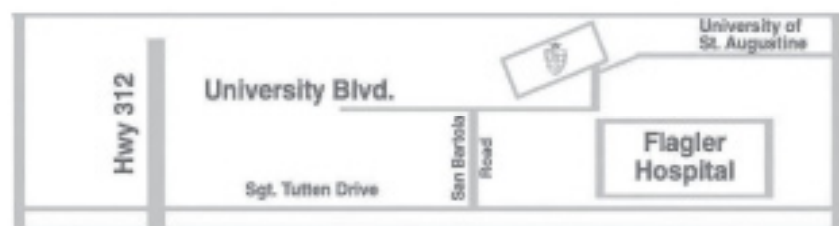
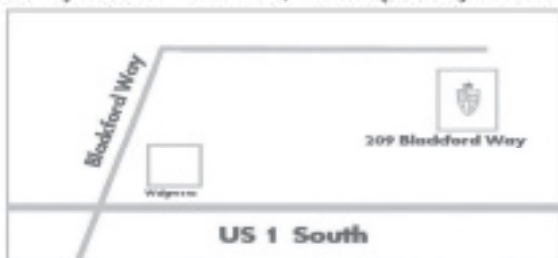


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## Financial Focus

Information Provided by

Edward Jones

Cory Caplinger AAMS

### Inflation-fighting strategies for retirees

At different times, inflation may be high or low, but, except in those rare periods of deflation, it's always with us. During your working years, when you may receive boosts in your salary, you at least have the potential to keep up with inflation — but what happens when you retire? As a retiree, what can you do to cope with the rising cost of living?

Here are a few suggestions:

Keep some growth potential in your investment portfolio. During your retirement years, you may want to move your portfolio toward a somewhat more conservative approach by owning investments that offer significant protection of principal. However, these same investments offer little in the way of growth, which means they are susceptible to inflation. Consequently, you'll also need to own a reasonable amount in growth-oriented investments, such as stocks and stock-based securities. Of course, these investments will fluctuate in value as the financial markets move up and down, but by owning some more conservative investments, you can reduce the overall impact of market volatility on your portfolio.

Consider inflation-adjusted bonds. You might want to consider Treasury Inflation-Protected Securities (TIPS), which are indexed to the Consumer Price Index, so the principal increases with inflation (and decreases with deflation). Another inflation-adjusted Treasury security is the I bond, which differs from TIPS in that the principal doesn't change but the interest rate does, every six months, based on a combination of a fixed interest rate and the inflation rate. Like all investments, though, TIPS and I bonds have various features and risks of which you should be aware before investing.

Delay taking Social Security. You can

start collecting Social Security benefits at 62, but your monthly checks will be much bigger if you wait until your full retirement age, likely between 66 and 67. You would receive the maximum amount if you waited until 70 before collecting. Of course, if you need the money to help support your retirement, you may not be able to afford to wait, but if you can, your bigger checks can be a big help against inflation.

Don't hold too much cash. During your working years, it's a good idea to have an emergency fund containing several months' worth of living expenses in liquid, low-risk accounts. And when you're retired, you might want to have up to year's worth of expenses in such a fund. But be careful about holding too much cash, as it will lose purchasing power each year due to inflation. Instead, when keeping cash, seek the "Goldilocks" solution — not too little, not too much, but just the right amount.

Think about extending your employment. If you like what you do, you might want to consider working a few years longer than you had originally intended. Not only will you be bringing in more income, but you could also continue to contribute to retirement accounts, including your IRA and 401(k). Even if you don't want to continue working full time, you could do some part-time work or consulting. Any earned income you bring in can help in your fight against inflation.

You can't control the cost of living, but by making some of the moves described above, you can help yourself mount a defense against the effects of inflation during your retirement years.

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

Edward Jones, Member SIPC.

## Computer Corner

by Steven Aldrich

### Printer Problems?



When encountering printing issues on both Macs and Windows computers, a highly effective troubleshooting step is to remove the printer from the system settings and then add it back again. This method can resolve various connectivity and configuration problems that may prevent successful printing.

Why Remove and Re-add the Printer? Removing and re-adding a printer essentially resets its connection to the computer. This process can clear out any corrupted settings or outdated drivers that may have accumulated over time. Printers often rely on specific drivers to communicate effectively with computers, and if these drivers become corrupted or incompatible due to updates, printing issues can arise. By starting fresh, you can ensure that the latest drivers are used and that any misconfigurations are corrected.

Steps for Mac Users

1. Open System Preferences: Click on the Apple logo in the upper-left corner of your screen and select "System Preferences."
2. Access Printers & Scanners: Click on "Printers & Scanners."
3. Remove the Printer: Select the printer you want to remove from the list and click the minus (-) button to delete it.
4. Add the Printer Again: Click the plus (+) button to add a new printer. Your computer will search for available printers on the network. Select your printer from the list and follow any prompts to complete the installation.

Steps for Windows Users

1. Open Settings: Click on the Start menu and select "Settings."
2. Go to Devices: Click on "Devices" and then select "Printers & scanners."

3. Remove the Printer: Find your printer in the list, click on it, and select "Remove device."

4. Add a New Printer: Click "Add a printer or scanner." Windows will search for available devices. Once your printer appears, select it and follow the prompts to reinstall it.

By removing and re-adding printers in Windows, users often find that issues related to driver conflicts or network connectivity are resolved.

Benefits of This Approach

Reset Configuration: This method resets any erroneous configurations that might have developed over time.

- Update Drivers Automatically: Both macOS and Windows can automatically download necessary drivers during reinstallation, ensuring compatibility with current software updates.

- Clear Print Queues: Removing a printer can also clear any stuck print jobs in its queue, which might be preventing new jobs from processing.

Conclusion - Whether using a Mac or a Windows PC, removing and re-adding your printer is a straightforward yet powerful troubleshooting step for resolving printing issues. This method addresses many underlying problems by refreshing connections, updating drivers, and clearing out potential conflicts, ultimately leading to a smoother printing experience. If problems persist after this process, additional steps such as checking network connections or updating software may be necessary.

Steven Aldrich is a technology advisor with decades of experience as an IT Director and is the owner of First Coast Computer Services. Contact Steven if you need a trusted advisor to come to your business or home and help with your technology. [Steve@fccspro.com](mailto:Steve@fccspro.com) or (904) 479-5661.



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