



# St. Augustine Beaches NEWS JOURNAL



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

## USCG Flotilla 14-7 Change of Watch



PHOTO: Flotilla 2025 Officers, L-R: Louis Laguardia, FSO-DV; Henry Seiden, FSO-NS; Herbert Peters, FSO-VE; Georgia Young, FSO-PV; Roxanne Anstett, FSO-FN; Jon Cegielski, FSO-MA; Steven Rich, FSO-SR; Joe McCoy, FSO-PE. Shown conducting the ceremony for Staff Officers is Alphonse Albano, Vice Flotilla Commander.

U. S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Flotilla 14-7 held its annual Change of Watch program on December 10 (2024) at the GTM NERR (Guana Tolomato Matanzas, National Estuarine Research Reserve. Saint Augustine's Flotilla 14-7 is one of almost eight hundred nationwide volunteer units with more than 21,000 members, whose mission is to contribute to the safety and security of boaters, ports, waterways, and coastal regions with the focus on recreational boating safety and education.

The U. S. Coast Guard Auxiliary, authorized by an act of Congress in 1939, recently commemorated its 85th anniversary. Flotilla members come from all walks of life. Some are retired military. Others are experienced or unexperienced boaters just looking to learn more about their local waterways, (continued on page 9)

## St. Augustine Beach and Beyond . . .

By Lorraine Thompson (staugbeachwatch@aol.com)

### Anastasia Island Welcomes the new year

### 2025 Beach driving passes now available

The free ride on the beach ends on March 1 when toll booths will be back in business. Motorized vehicles seeking beach access will be required to either pay a daily admittance fee or display a seasonal pass during the hours of 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. through September 30. Daily beach passes are \$10 per driver or \$5 for ADA drivers or active duty Military with proof of active duty status on Military ID.

St. Johns County resident seasonal passes, valid March through September, are \$50, non-resident passes are \$100 and ADA-accessible passes are \$40. Passes are available during normal business hours at the following locations through March 1:

- Tax Collector's Main Office – 4030 Lewis Speedway, St. Augustine
- Tax Collector's DuPont Center Office – 6658 US 1 South, St. Augustine
- Tax Collector's Office Julington Creek Office – 725 Flora Branch Blvd., St. Johns
- Tax Collector's Ponte Vedra Office – 151 Sawgrass Corners Drive, Ponte Vedra Beach
- St. Johns County Beach Services Office – 901 Pope Road, St. Augustine
- St. Johns County Ocean and Fishing Pier Gift Shop – 350 A1A Blvd., St. Augustine Beach



(continued on page 5)



At its December 2, 2024, meeting, the City Commission approved a proclamation to declare January 2025 as Human Trafficking Awareness Month. Left to right: Commissioner Don Samora, Commissioner Virginia Morgan, Ms. Alison Hashan (Betty Griffin Center), Ms. Catherina Altman (American Association of University Women), Mayor Dylan Rumrell, Vice Mayor Beth Sweeny.



At its December 2, 2024, meeting, the City Commission presented a plaque to Mr. Henry Dean to recognize his years of public service. Left to right: Commissioner Virginia Morgan, Commissioner Don Samora, Mr. Henry Dean, Mayor Dylan Rumrell, Vice Mayor Beth Sweeny.

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

**Free Tree Giveaway for Florida Arbor Day!**

by Helen Boxer, Garden Club Publicity



Florida Arbor Day is around the corner. Always the 3rd Friday of the new year, it's slated for January 17, 2025.

The Garden Club of St. Augustine continues its tradition of giving away young potted trees to residents and businesses of St. Johns County. This year, an assortment of 200 fledgling WILD BLACK CHERRY, RED MAPLE, RIVER BIRCH and SUGAR BERRY trees will available for the taking at the the Garden Club at 3440 Old Moultrie Rd. from 9 am to 12 noon, 01/17/25.

For information about the Garden Club, visit [gardenclubofstaugustine.org](http://gardenclubofstaugustine.org). General meetings are open to anyone interested. All are welcome the 2nd Wednesday of most months at the Old Moultrie Rd. location.

**Temple Bet Yam Presents  
 its Ever-Popular Deli Nite**

Our eagerly awaited Deli Nite returns February 13, 2025, to be held from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. at the Temple, 2055 Wildwood Drive (just off SR 207) in St. Augustine. For only \$36 enjoy overstuffed deli sandwiches with a choice of pastrami, corned beef or turkey, coleslaw, half-sour pickles, potato salad, dessert and refreshments.

A live improv show will be there to entertain you. You can try your luck for fabulous items from the Pickle Jar Raffle. The reserve-by date is February 1, 2025. Questions? Call Tracey at 321-303-8990 or Sharon at 407-625-7483.

**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 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 [stauggnso.org](http://stauggnso.org) or contact Georgia Horsey at 770-337-6137.

**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.

**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.

**Interested in the Civil War?**

Please join our Civil War Discussion Group. Our next presentation will be Tuesday, January 7, 2025 at 1pm, at the Anastasia Branch library in Sea Grove.

The January presentation will be with Len Whiteside titled “Bloody Kansas and Missouri”. It examines the 1854-1861 political turmoil in Kansas over slavery. It includes the guerrilla warfare that ensued that made Kansas and Missouri bleed and determined their fate.

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



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# St. Augustine Beach City Hall Update

The St. Augustine Beach City Commission held its regular meeting on Monday, December 2, 2024. Here is a summary of the decisions that the Commission made:



1. Approved a proclamation to honor Mr. Henry Dean for his public service over many years as County Commissioner, Executive Director of the St Johns River Water Management District, Executive Director of the South Florida Water Management District and his leadership for promoting protection of Florida's natural environment.

2. Approved a proclamation to declare January 2025 as Human Trafficking Awareness Month.

3. Approved a replat of lots for residential construction at 31 Seafoam

Way at the east end of Versaggi Drive. 4. Approved a resolution to adopt a cybersecurity policy.

5. Heard a presentation from the City's Director of Building and Zoning, Mr. Brian Law, about changes to simplify sections of the Land Development Regulations. The City Attorney will prepare an ordinance for the changes.

6. Re-elected Mayor Dylan Rumrell and Vice Mayor Beth Sweeny to a second term for 2025.

The City Commission's next regular meeting will be held on Monday, January 6, 2025, 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 [staughbch.com](http://staughbch.com).

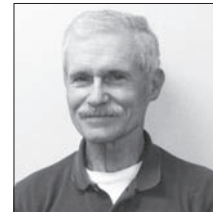
## St. Augustine Beach Democratic Club

by Susan Horwitz

The SAB Democratic Club's January meeting will be on Tuesday January 7, 2025 at 5:30 pm at the Anastasia Island Branch Library 124 Sea Grove Main Street. Our speaker will be Tom Torretta from Habitat For Humanity who will discuss the activities and projects of Habitat. To follow in the footsteps of Jimmy Carter, we will be asking for volunteers to sign up for a day or more of service and to "grab hammers and start building houses." 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 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](mailto:info@sabdems.org). Susan Horwitz 617 877-1752.

## Transitions

By Max Royle  
St. Augustine Beach City Manager



Back in The Day when I was a newbie in the city manager occupation, "wet behind the ears" did not begin to describe the copious flow of moisture dripping from the posterior of my hearing appendages. To compensate for inexperience, I had an absolutist belief, which resulted in a right- versus-wrong rigidity.

At the beginning in the first city I managed, this belief may have been an advantage because the city had several personnel "issues" that required drastic action: A director resigned before I could fire him for stealing city property. A building inspector, overly fond of "happy hour" libations during working hours, was fired. A police chief unwilling to hire the city's first female officer, despite her qualifications: I accepted his resignation. A fire chief departed for "personal reasons" when his marriage publicly exploded because of his sundry romantic dalliances. These changes created gaps in the supervisory ranks, which required me to find replacements. The process did not go well.

Why? Because of my uncompromising belief that suitable candidates were to be found only outside the city's workforce, only they wouldn't be mired in a department's rut of mediocrity and staleness, wouldn't be ensnared by loyalties that thwarted improvements. The result of this belief: a revolving door of department heads. A course change was needed.

It happened when I faced having to hire yet another fire chief. A resident suggested I promote from within the department a long-term officer nicknamed Bucky. Balding, rotund, with a folksy, West Virginia drawl,

he was the personification of a "good, old boy" who had risen through the ranks more because of longevity than knowledge of the best firefighting practices. But desperate times required desperate actions. I followed the advice and a revelation ensued.

At a party the firefighters held for Bucky to celebrate his promotion, I saw tough men, who would pound tables when confronting me over alleged unfair labor practices, cry with joy because they loved and respected this man so much. His leadership of them was unshakeable. Whatever he didn't know about firefighting practices was more than compensated for by younger officers who took the latest training courses. And Bucky was honest, carried out his responsibilities diligently and helped me avoid unrest with the firefighters' union.

Today, I'm a firm believer in promoting from within whenever possible. Give current employees the opportunity to advance to other positions where they can demonstrate their innate abilities, learn new skills and earn higher pay. Morale is improved and commitment to the City is strengthened. A master of this method is Brian Law, the City's Building Director, who has encouraged Public Works laborers to transfer to his department where he has trained them to do building permitting and code enforcement.

Recently, I promoted two well-qualified employees to be the Public Works Director and Assistant Director. Hired as laborers years ago, they each proved their abilities by learning and advancing to positions of greater responsibility. The posterior of my hearing appendages is now dry.

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## Anastasia Island Welcomes the new year....

(continued from page 1)

After March 1, annual and daily beach passes will be available for purchase at toll booth locations: Vilano, Porpoise Point, A Street, Ocean Trace Road, Dondanville Road, Matanzas Avenue, Mary Street, Crescent Beach (Cubbedge Road), Fort Matanzas (exit only ramp). Purchases made at toll booths are cash only. Proper eligibility identification is also required for toll booth purchases including a valid I.D. with a St. Johns County address or present proof of property tax payments in St. Johns County. A disabled person parking permit or proof of qualification must be presented when requesting an ADA-accessible pass. Disabled military veterans are eligible for a free annual pass by showing their military I.D. or a letter from Veterans Affairs verifying their disabled status. All sales are final. If passes are lost or misplaced, a new pass must be purchased.



Vehicular access is dependent on beach conditions. Call Beach Services at (904) 209-0331 to get beach conditions. Lifeguards will begin limited duty in March with full lifeguard coverage starting Memorial Day weekend.

**What's new for 2025 beach access?** Toll attendants will scan pass barcodes at entry points. Debit and credit cards will now be accepted at the booths.

The old Reach the Beach app is no longer in use. Beach information and updates are now accessible via the SJC Connect app. For more information call the St. Johns County Beach Services Office at 904-209-0331.

### City Mayor and Vice Mayor to be sworn in January 6

Dylan Rumrell and Beth Sweeny will be sworn in as Mayor and Vice Mayor of the City of St. Augustine Beach at the January 6 meeting of the St. Augustine Beach Commission. Both were elected by the Commission at its December 2 meeting for their second consecutive 4 year terms. The public is invited to attend the meeting which begins at 6 p.m. in the Commission Meeting Room at City Hall, 2200 A1A South. Call 904-471-2122 for more information.

### Ron Parker annual ceremony January 10

The 50th anniversary of the death of Deputy Marshall Ron Parker will be observed at Ron Parker Park on Friday, January 10. The ceremony will begin at 10 a.m. The park is dedicated to Parker who was shot and killed at the age of twenty-seven in the line of duty on January 12, 1975. Located at the corner of Old Beach Road and Pope Road, the popular park offers various amenities to enjoy including playgrounds, a dog park, tennis and basketball courts, a baseball diamond, picnic facilities and Restrooms. Parking and admission are free.

### Right Whale watching season

It's time for seasonal visitors to arrive—and it's not just the winter visitors affectionately known as "snowbirds." It's also the time of year for whale watching along our beaches.

## Sheriff's Update

By St. Johns County Sheriff Robert A. Hardwick

### 2nd Annual St. Johns County Fight Night: First Responders Boxing for Charity



The St. Johns County Sheriff's Office is excited to be hosting the 2nd Annual St. Johns County Fight Night... a boxing battle between Police and Fire! The date of this year's Fight Night is February 13th at 6:00pm at the St. Augustine Amphitheatre. This year's event will benefit Diamond of Dreams and St. Johns PAL.

The Diamond of Dreams is a new build project providing a ball field and a playground for children with special needs. The St. Johns County Police Athletic League (PAL) is an organization that provides all youth an opportunity to play a variety of sports in St. Johns County. While supporting your local heroes, you can contribute to a much larger cause!

The night will kick off with teenagers in the ring that are a part of the PAL Boxing Program. These kids are tough and have dedicated their time to the team to be awarded a legit fight in front of a real audience. The main events consist of members of SJSO, SJCFR and SAFD battling for the belt and annual title. These fighters have shown commitment and devotion to the event on their off time while still serving the community in fire trucks, patrol cars and our jail. The fights will be three rounds, one minute each, with a one-minute interval.

For more information and to order tickets, please visit: St. Johns County Fight Night: First Responders Boxing for Charity | St. Augustine Amphitheatre

### Friends of Anastasia Island Branch Library Book Sale & Spring Basket Silent Auction

#### Book Sale:

Our amazing book sale will be Friday, February 28, 2025 from 10:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. and Saturday, March 1, 2025 from 10:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. As a special treat, we will hold a pre-sale for Friends members only from 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. on Friday, February 28, 2025.

#### Spring Basket Silent Auction:

Our 10th annual Spring Basket Silent Auction will be held from Monday, March 3 through Friday, March 21, 2025 during normal library hours. In past auctions, we have had up to 30 various baskets for auction.

If you'd like to become a Friends member, have questions about membership, or would like to be added to our email list, please email us at [anastasiaslandfaibl@gmail.com](mailto:anastasiaslandfaibl@gmail.com).

The Marineland Right Whale watcher project whose members include "snowbirds" as well as locals, is part of a network of "watchers" who track the travels of the endangered whales which are protected under the U.S. Endangered Species Act and Marine Mammal Protection Act and Canada's Species at Risk Act.

Once a thriving species, less than four hundred North Atlantic right whales are known to exist, making them the world's most endangered whales. It's this time of the 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. Once whales are spotted and 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 the 2024 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 2024 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 now has 150 dedicated volunteers returning this season. Mobile survey teams watch from designated shoreside points for 10 weeks, January 4 through March 8. Two calves have already been spotted so far this year.

The only nearby areas in need of additional "watchers" by the Project are between Ormond Beach and Daytona Beach. There is still the opportunity 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.

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).

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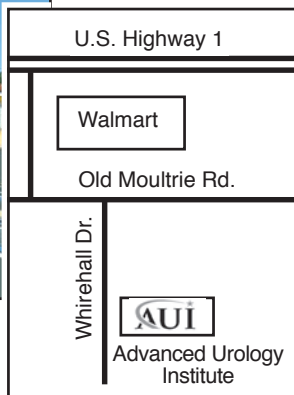
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As we usher in 2025 we are excited to embark on a New Year at the Art Studio with more Classes and Workshops, some free and all affordable. It's never been a better time to be a Member. We opened up our Membership this January and for \$60 you can show and sell your work in our Gallery. We kick off the year with our New Artist of the Month for January: Pam Consolie, Born and raised in the Finger Lakes region of New York in the small town of Geneva, "I met my husband in high school and we married in 1983. We were blessed with our two boys, Jack and Anthony, in 2000 and 2001, respectively. They are a constant source of pride and immense joy. Being a wife to my best friend and a mother to two great young men have been my greatest accomplishments. A year after graduating from The State University of New York at Geneseo with a major in education and a minor in art, we moved to Georgia and settled in Stockbridge and then in McDonough, both suburbs of Atlanta. I worked for Henry County Schools in Georgia in several positions, ultimately serving as an elementary school Principal for 17 years. During those years I continued my education culminating with a Doctorate from The University of Georgia. After working in schools for 30 years, I retired from Henry County Schools in 2017. Shortly after retiring, I began working part-time as a coach for new teachers and did this for three years until Covid changed everything.



In 2021, our family realized a long-held goal of moving to St. Augustine. Having spent countless vacations in St. Augustine over the years, we were finally able to make it our full-time home. After making the move, I found I had time to indulge my life-long interest in art, having studied art in both high school and college. I converted our pool house into an art studio where I happily spend countless hours creating. I enjoy working in a variety of mediums including acrylic painting, resin, coastal art, beading and jewelry making. Currently, I devote much of my time to working in acrylic paints and resin. I love the beach with its vibrant colors, beautiful marine creatures and plant life, and ever-changing moods. The beauty that surrounds me on a daily basis is a heavy influence on the art work that I do.

Along with art, I enjoy reading, crocheting, walking the beach, travel, all things Notre Dame (Go Irish!), and most of all, spending time with my family."

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.



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# Special Primary Election · January 28, 2025

## CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT 6



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in Congressional District 6.**

### Florida is a Closed Primary State

Florida is a closed primary state. To vote in this Special Primary Election, you must be a registered voter in the party for which the primary is being held. In this Special Primary Election, Democrats receive a **Democratic** ballot and Republicans receive a **Republican** ballot.



Use the My Voter Status tool on our website to view your current party affiliation.

### Vote-by-Mail

All mail ballot requests in the state of Florida will expire on December 31, 2024.

If you wish to continue voting by mail in 2025 and 2026, you must RENEW your request.

Visit [www.votesjc.gov](http://www.votesjc.gov) or call **904-823-2238** to request a vote-by-mail ballot!

### Early Voting

January 18 – January 25, 2025  
9 AM to 6 PM Daily at both  
early voting locations below:

#### **Supervisor of Elections Office**

4455 Avenue A, Suite 101  
St. Augustine, FL 32095

#### **Southeast Branch Library**

6670 US 1 South  
St. Augustine, FL 32086

### Election Day

January 28, 2025  
Polls open 7 AM to 7 PM

- You must vote at your assigned precinct on Election Day
- ID is required when voting in person

Visit [www.votesjc.gov](http://www.votesjc.gov) to find your polling place and view your sample ballot.

For a map of Congressional District 6,  
visit [www.votesjc.gov](http://www.votesjc.gov)!



## Carpal Tunnel Syndrome

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

You may have seen recent commercials with NFL quarterback John Elway for a condition called Dupuytren's Contracture and wondered what it is. You may have wondered if it applies to you.

Dupuytren's Disease is a condition that affects approximately 5% of the population in the US. It has also been termed "Viking's Disease" because of the prevalence in those of Northern European descent. It tends to affect men more than women and becomes more prevalent with age, typically affecting those over 40 years old.

Within the palm of the hand, you have a layer of tissue, called the palmar fascia or aponeurosis, which stabilizes and anchors the skin of the palm during use. This palmar fascia can undergo mutation causing it to contract forming lumps, nodules, and cords, which gradually pull the fingers down into the palm. Movement then is restricted causing Dupuytren's Contracture, which decreases the ability to perform everyday tasks, such as putting your hand in your pocket, driving, wearing a wedding ring, putting on gloves, and holding and letting go of tools and objects. Dupuytren's Disease most commonly affects the ring and small fingers of the hand but can draw the other fingers and even the thumb down toward the palm.

The presence of a lump in the palm does not mean that the disease will progress or even that you have Dupuytren's Disease. It can be helpful to see a hand surgeon to evaluate what is going on in the palm of your hand and obtain a thorough diagnosis. If your hand surgeon suspects that you have Dupuytren's, he will most likely perform the Tabletop Test, where he has you try to lay your hand flat on the table. If you cannot lay it flat, it is considered positive for Dupuytren's and he will discuss treatment options, based on the stage and pattern of the disease and the joints involved. In mild cases, especially if hand function is good, only observation is needed. Dupuytren's Disease can and often does affect both hands.



### Nonsurgical Treatment

The procedure that John Elway was advertising can be performed in the doctor's office. It is a two-step procedure. At the first visit, the physician will inject the cord with an enzyme called collagenase (common brand name is Xiaflex), which works to dissolve the cord tissue. After allowing the enzyme to break down the cord for 24 hours, the physician will have you return to physically stretch out and straighten the finger joints to mechanically break the cord. Bruising, increased swelling, and small tears in the skin are common.

### Surgical Treatment

The most common surgical procedure is a fasciectomy where the nodules, cords, and diseased skin is removed and the skin is then sutured shut.

Surgery can be performed with the patient asleep or awake using a variety of anesthesia techniques and is considered outpatient surgery. Typically, the patient will be placed in a post-op dressing which may have a temporary finger extension splint incorporated.

Attending occupational therapy/hand therapy after nonsurgical and surgical procedures can improve overall hand function by addressing open and closed wounds, limited motion, swelling, and to ensure greater extension of the fingers, with the fabrication of a finger splint. The sooner the patient begins hand therapy after the procedure, the more successful the final result will be.

If you feel like you may have Dupuytren's Disease, I recommend you consult a hand surgeon. If you had a procedure to address your Dupuytren's or are planning to have a procedure to correct it, please consider First Coast Rehabilitation. One of our occupational therapists, certified hand therapists would be happy to evaluate you and address your needs. The earlier we see you the better. If you are interested in pursuing an evaluation, you will need a referral from your physician. 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.

## Advanced Urology Institute Expands To New Offices - Dr. Gordon Fifer Joins Practice

Gordon L. Fifer, MD, a board certified urologist with more than 22 years experience, has joined the medical group at Advanced Urology Institute in St. Augustine. Dr. Fifer specializes in minimally invasive surgical options for kidney stones, prostate and kidney cancers, and upper urinary tract reconstruction. He also provides medical and surgical treatments for enlarged prostates (BPH), bladder cancer, erectile dysfunction (ED), and low testosterone. Dr. Fifer graduated from the University of Cincinnati/Medical Center.



Gordon L. Fifer, MD, Urologist

He is fellowship trained in Endourology, treating conditions affecting the urinary tract system or male reproductive organs. Dr. Fifer provides non-surgical and surgical care options for urinary tract infections, incontinence, pelvic prolapse, enlarged prostate and urologic cancer in men and women. Prior to practicing urology, Dr. Fifer served as a Commander in the United States Navy.

Dr. Fifer is accepting new patients at his office located at Advanced Urology Institute, 113 Whitehall Drive, St. Augustine, FL 32086. To schedule an appointment, call 904-824-1450.

## St. Augustine Orchid Society Vandaceous Orchids!

by Janis Croft

On Jan. 7 Keith Emig, owner of Winter Haven Orchids, will talk about other varieties in the vandaceous alliance besides vandas. More unusual vandaceous orchids include the Aerides, Angraecoids, Neofinetias, Renantheras and Rhynchostylis. Keith and wife, Dina grow, hybridize and register plants in the Oncidium, Cattleya, Phalaenopsis, Vanda, and Dendrobium alliances, and have even created their own genera (Emigara). They have received more than 45 American Orchid Society awards, so far, including nine for their original crosses.

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/>. Meeting January 7, 2024 6:30 til 9 pm at Memorial Lutheran Church at 3375 US 1 South, St. Augustine 32086.

## USCG Flotilla 14-7 Change of Watch

(continued from page1)

with the desire to become part of the local boating scene. Members are trained in boating safety and other aspects of on-the-water experiences.

Flotilla 14-7 meets monthly, generally on the first Tuesday, at the St. Augustine Yacht Club - 442 Ocean Vista Avenue, St. Augustine starting with a social at 6:30 p.m. followed by the meeting at 7 p.m. For membership and other information contact Flotilla Commander Joseph McCoy, Flotilla Vice Commander Henry Seiden, or Human Resources Officer Steven Bergmann, at CS@mysafeboating.com/

## Romanza's Collage Concert Series Continues!

by Gloria MacDonald

Romanza's Collage Concert Series continues with a great lineup of exciting performances! Romanza's mission is to bring a wide variety of outstanding entertainment to Northeast Florida, and to celebrate the amazing quality of talent in our area. This year we will be presenting 5 concerts all at The Waterworks, 184 San Marco Ave., St. Augustine. Tickets are \$25. For more information and to purchase please visit [romanzafestivale.com](http://romanzafestivale.com)

January 25, 2025 - 7:30pm

### Jazz/Soul Vocalist, Akia Uwanda featuring Taylor Roberts on Guitar

What better way to start a new year than with an intimate concert featuring Jacksonville's own Akia Uwanda. Akia has performed all over the world from Carnegie Hall to Parma Italy. A favorite of Romanza Festivale, Akia's smooth vocals and engaging performances make for an evening of music you won't soon forget.

February 15, 2025

### A Special Valentine's Concert

Celebrate love with a special Valentine's concert filled with great love songs from great composers. The team behind the hugely popular Broadway concerts featured in Romanza Festivale return with an evening filled with music to bring out the romantic in everyone. Directed by Cliff Parrish, this concert will feature songs of love from some of the world's greatest songwriters with local favorites Jason Whitfield, Haley Kirk, Trudye Luton and Timothy Keatley. This special event is the perfect way to celebrate with your valentine.

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Certified Hand Therapist



**Brittany Cole**  
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Manual Therapist  
Dry Needling  
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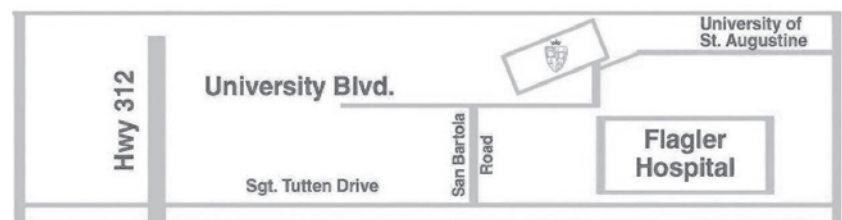
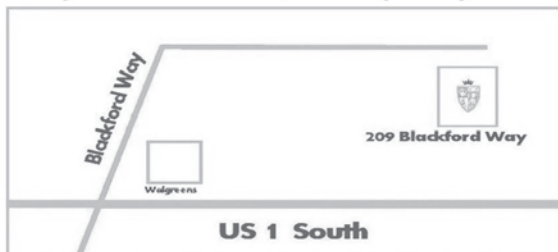


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## Financial Focus

Information Provided by

Edward Jones

Cory Caplinger AAMS

### Time for New Year's financial resolutions

Now that the calendar has flipped, it's time for some New Year's resolutions. You could decide you're going to exercise more, lose weight, learn a new skill, reconnect with old friends — the possibilities are almost limitless. This year, why not add a few financial resolutions to your list?

Here are a few to consider:

- Reduce your debts. It may be easier said than done, but if you can cut down on your debt load, you'll increase your cash flow and have more money available to invest for your future. So, look for ways to lower your expenses and spending. You might find it helpful to use one of the budgeting apps available online.

- Boost your retirement savings. Try to put in as much as you can afford to your IRA and your 401(k) or other employer-sponsored retirement plan. If your salary goes up this year, you've got a good opportunity to increase your contributions to these retirement accounts. And once you turn 50, you can make pre-tax catch-up contributions for your 401(k) and traditional IRA. You might also want to review the investment mix within your 401(k) or similar plan to determine whether it's still providing the growth potential you need, given your risk tolerance and time horizon.

- Build an emergency fund. It's generally a good idea to maintain an emergency fund containing up to six months' worth of living expenses, with the money kept in a liquid, low-risk account. Without such a fund, you might be forced to dip into your long-term investments to pay for short-term needs, such as an expensive auto or home repair.

- Keep funding your non-retirement goals. Your traditional

IRA and 401(k) are good ways to save for retirement — but you likely have other goals, too, and you'll need to save and invest for them. So, for example, if you want your children to go to college or receive some other type of post-secondary training, you might want to invest in a tax-advantaged 529 education savings plan. And if you have short-term goals, such as saving for a wedding or taking an overseas vacation, you might want to put some money away in a liquid account. For a short-term goal, you don't necessarily need to invest aggressively for growth — you just want the money to be there for you when you need it.

- Review your estate plans. If you haven't already created your estate plans, you may want to do so in 2025. Of course, if you're relatively young, you might not think you need to have estate plans in place just yet, but life is unpredictable, and the future is not ours to see. If you have already drawn up estate plans, you may want to review them, especially if you've recently experienced changes in your life and family situation, such as marriage, remarriage or the addition of a new child. Because estate planning can be complex, you'll want to work with a qualified legal professional.

You may not be able to tackle all these resolutions in 2025. But by addressing as many of them as you can, you may find that, by the end of the year, you have made progress toward your goals and set yourself on a positive course for all the years to come.

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

## Computer Corner

by Steven Aldrich

### Got Updates?

#### The Importance of Updating Operating Systems

Updating operating systems like Windows and macOS is crucial for maintaining the security, performance, and functionality of your devices. Regular updates provide a range of benefits that enhance user experience and protect against potential threats.

##### Enhanced Security

One of the primary reasons to update your operating system (OS) is to improve security. OS updates often include patches for vulnerabilities that hackers could exploit to gain unauthorized access to your system. By installing these updates, you protect your personal and business information from cyberattacks such as malware and ransomware. For instance, Windows updates frequently include security patches that address new viruses and vulnerabilities, ensuring that users have the latest protection available.

##### Improved Performance

Operating system updates can significantly boost device performance. Over time, systems can become sluggish. Updates often include optimizations and bug fixes that enhance speed and efficiency, allowing devices to run more smoothly. For example, keeping macOS updated can extend the lifespan of older devices by improving their performance and stability.

##### Access to New Features

Updating your OS also provides access to new features and functionalities that can improve productivity and user experience. These updates may introduce new applications, tools, or improvements to existing features. Recent macOS updates have included features like SharePlay for shared experiences on FaceTime and enhanced multitasking capabilities.

##### Compatibility with New Software and Hardware

As technology evolves, new software and hardware require compatibility with the latest operating systems. Regular updates ensure that your device remains compatible with new applications and peripherals, preventing issues with installation or usage. This is particularly important for users who rely on their devices for professional work or need to integrate them with other modern technologies.

##### Improved Stability and Accessibility

Operating system updates often address bugs and stability issues, reducing the likelihood of crashes and improving overall user experience. Additionally, updates may introduce enhanced accessibility features that make devices more usable for individuals with disabilities.

##### Conclusion

Regularly updating your operating system is not just a matter of convenience; it is essential for ensuring device security, performance, and longevity. By keeping your OS up-to-date, you protect against cyber threats, gain access to new features, improve compatibility with modern software and hardware, and enhance overall device stability. Whether using Windows or macOS, enabling automatic updates can help maintain your system without manual intervention.

*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 or (904) 479-5661.*



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