

October 2024

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St. Augustine OBSERVER

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

Shores Resident Gives Community A "Spooktacular" Halloween Display



Shores resident Arch Rivenbark continues again this year show to show off his annual Halloween display in front of his home at 223 Estancia Street. Drive by and see the display after October 10th.



Shores and South residents don't need to look at their calendar or notice a change to fall weather to realize its nearing Halloween again.....they just drive by Shores resident Arch Rivenbark's house and see his annual Halloween display to know trick or treat time is on its way. Arch, who starts planning his display months in advance, has 30 - 40 humorous tombstones for neighbors and friends. Each year, Arch entertains his neighbors with the much anticipated display and has them all asking him "What are you going to put on my tombstone this year?" He invites everyone to drive by 223 Estancia Street to enjoy his display. You can find him off Lilly or Alhambra streets. Last year he had almost 200 kids and several dog Tirck or Trickers!

St Augustine South Reflections

by Ruth Hope

September has surely taught me to be careful about what I wish for in a long dry spring in St Augustine South! We went from one extreme, drought, to the other extreme with inundation for days and days on end this past month. Mulch in neighborhood gardens is cropping with colorful toadstools and there have been several "fairy rings" in Shore Drive Waterfront park. The rain continued for so long, I barely remember the sunny times over the marsh. With the summer emerald green of the spartina grass under bright blue skies prior to the incessant rain, I was reminded of Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings letter to the New York Times. In response to the New York Times critic's review of the premier of The Yearling, Kinnan Rawlings was forced to pen a rebuke as the vibrant colors were natural Florida and not Disney Technicolor.



Now that I am thinking of sunnier times over the intracoastal, there has been some interesting traffic. The "Pirate Ship" still comes down under SR312 bridge and turns around across the marsh from the Douglas Crane boat ramp. The "crew" can be a little raucous when it's an adult rather than a family voyage. On one afternoon, I saw a tug with an exceptionally large barge loaded with old sailing boats, heading north. But most of the wrecks that have lain along our stretch of the Matanzas marsh for years are still lying abandoned there. The most interesting craft I have ever seen on the ICW came through heading north at a fast rate of knots. It appeared to be a church on a barge although there was no tugboat. Using a Google image search, I learned that it is a houseboat that was recently sold in Tampa. It had originally been constructed as a



floating marriage venue. Apparently "the bottom dropped out of the floating marriage business" and the floating building was converted to a house. I found it on Zillow and can confirm that the inside, which was sold fully furnished, is now a really beautiful home. According to The Palm Beach Post, its destination was a marina at Palatka. I will have to go over and look for its final resting place.

Many gardeners in St Augustine South incorporate a theme in the design of their gardens. One corner garden has a clear "beach theme." The homeowners brought in silver sand and planted sea oats and dune sunflowers, protected by a fence reminiscent of sand dunes along our Atlantic coast. Later additions include a mound of oyster shells that had been dumped down by Moultrie Creek, and cacti. They have a handsome wooden pelican perched on a post the thickness of a utility pole. They don't, yet, have a rowboat tied up to that post, but in my imagination, I can see a future such boat with cascading flowering plants down the sides. The beach theme seems to be an appropriate one for our boaters' neighborhood.



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