

December
2019



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and others



St. Augustine OBSERVER

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

“Visions of Sugar Plums” Saint Augustine Ballet Presents THE NUTCRACKER



Devin Mantei
Photo by Julie Abella

Grace Karger
Photo by Danielle Bleau

The Saint Augustine Ballet will present the holiday classic The Nutcracker at Lewis Auditorium, Flagler College, on Saturday, December 21st and Sunday, December 22nd 2019 at 1:30 pm and 7 pm. A child's dream world of sugar plums, twirling dancers, soldiers, dolls, snowflakes and an enormous growing Christmas tree come to life with all the magic of the holidays. With this in mind, each year the creative team at Saint Augustine Ballet sets out to infuse the production with exciting new elements and surprises.

Indeed, many little ones in the audience will leave the theater on their toes with dreams of becoming like the Sugar Plum Fairy they encounter on stage. A few will go on to realize this dream -

and this year's production will feature two of them. Two local dancers, *Devin Mantei and Grace Karger*, will share the principal role of Sugar Plum Fairy this year. The young women grew up dancing with Saint Augustine Ballet, and have each performed in nine Nutcracker productions. Over those years they have shared the stage with luminaries from the ballet world including 'Sugar Plum Fairies' from such world-renowned companies as London's Royal Ballet, Miami City Ballet, and National Ballet of Cuba. This year, they will be dancing the role themselves.

"Sugar Plum Fairy is a role that has entranced me since I first saw The Nutcracker," Devin Mantei, 17, reflected. "I have been dreaming of dancing it since I first slipped on a pair of pointe shoes. It is a blessing to have this opportunity."

Ballet dancers have delighted audiences for centuries, appearing to defy the laws of gravity and fly through the air with effortless grace. Yet, making it look easy is incredibly difficult work.

"Dancers spend 10 years or more of serious study and intense physical training in preparation for a role like this," explained Luis Abella, Artistic Director of Saint Augustine Ballet. "It is gratifying that we have dancers who are able to dance at this level." The two dancers have trained at Abella's School of Dance in St. Augustine since they were young children.

Grace Karger, 18, debuted in the role in last year's tenth anniversary production. "Sugar Plum Fairy is a dream role," she shared. "I am overjoyed to have the chance to dance it again."

The spectacle and power of The Nutcracker inspires boys, as well. This year, the production will feature local dancers, *Jake Karger*, reprising the role of Nutcracker Prince, *Jax Czerniak* in the role of Fritz, and *Anthony Romero* portraying the Rat King. In addition, three male dancers from the Orlando Molina Ballet T.C. of Atlanta, Georgia will join their ranks in the roles of Cavalier, Snow King, Dewdrop Prince and Russian ensemble.

Saint Augustine Ballet's The Nutcracker will be performed on Saturday, Dec. 21st at 1:30 pm & 7:00 pm, and Sunday, Dec. 22nd at 1:30 pm & 7:00 pm at Lewis Auditorium at Flagler College, 14 Granada St, St Augustine, FL 32084. To purchase tickets, call 855-222-2849 or visit www.saintaugustineballet.com.

To learn more about Saint Augustine Ballet's productions, details about auditions, and for information on becoming a sponsor, visit www.saintaugustineballet.com.

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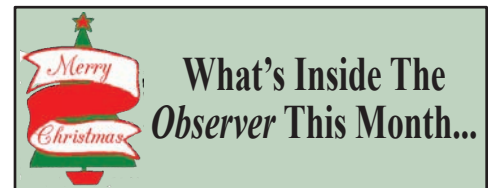
St. Augustine Ballroom Dance December 14th

"Let It Snow, Just Not Here."

The St. Augustine Ballroom Dance Association's next dance is on Saturday, December 14th from 7 to 10pm at the Riverview Club, 790 Christina Drive, in St. Augustine Shores. A 45 minute dance lesson starts at 6:15pm and will be taught by dance instructor Michael Singleton. After the lesson, dance to the beautiful music and vocals of Debbie Owen and Tony T. Enjoy hors d'oeuvres, desserts and coffee served throughout the evening.

Guests pay just \$20 per person. Appropriate attire for this dance is a dark business suit with tie, or a tuxedo, for the men and a cocktail dress, gown or Palazzo style pants for the ladies. For a reservation, call Dennis or Mary Larimore at 904-825-4902. For more information and pictures, visit facebook.com/sabdastaug.

Picture Caption: Former SABDA president and first lady, Harry and Marie Frantz, cutting the SABDA 39th anniversary cake at the October dance.



What's Inside The Observer This Month...

- *St. Augustine Shores:* October 10th Board Minutes
- *St. Augustine South:* Santa Visits St. Augustitne South December 14th
- *In the Law:* IRS Audit Rate Has Dropped Steeply Since 2010
- *Computer Corner:* So, you want to cut the wire.....
- *Financial Focus:* Take Greater Control of Your 401(k)
- *Sheriff's Corner:* Holiday Crime Prevention
- *Diaries of a Shores Grand-Dad*
- *County Code Enforcement* visits SASIA for information meeting
- "The Nights of Lights Calendar for December



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St. Augustine Observer

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Augustine Florida 32080-6509. Information may also be e-mailed to clifflogsdon@att.net.

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The purpose of the St. Augustine Observer is to serve residents of St. Augustine area Communities.

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

Information should be received by the 15th of the month in order to appear in the following month's issue. Articles or information may be sent to the St. Augustine Observer, 1965 A1A South #180, St.

St. Augustine Shores Community Calendar

The Shores Service Corporation
Shores Homeowners Association
(904) 794-2000

www.staugshores.org

Shores Monthly Meetings

• Shores Service Corporation monthly meetings are held on the second Thursday of each month. Meetings are at 7 p.m. at the Riverview Club.

• Conquistador Condominium Board meetings are held on the fourth Monday of each month at 6

p.m. at the Riverview Club.

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

• Greens Condominium Board meetings will vary. Contact Jeff Edwards at Sovereign-Jacobs at 904-461-5556.

• Casa Bella Condominium 2019 Board Meetings: March 18th-6pm (Annual Meeting), April 15th- 6pm, May 6th- 6pm, June 17th- 6pm, July 15th- 6pm, August 19th- 6pm, September 16th- 6pm, October 21st- 6pm, November 11th- 6pm, December 16th- 6pm. For Information contact Ellen Lumpkin at 904-461-5556.

St. Augustine South Community Calendar

St. Augustine South Improvement Assoc.
709 Royal Rd. St Augustine, 32086
email: staugsouthimpassoc@gmail.com
www.staugsouth.com

SASIA Board Members

President - Julie Bruijn
1st VP - Alan Chappell
2nd VP - Dave Whitaker
Secretary - Ruth Hope
Treasurer - Margo Geer
Board Member - Ryan Flagler
Board Member - Suzanne Godbout
Board Member - Robert Kennedy
Board Member - Daniel Kennedy
Board Member - Frances Lundberg
Board Member - Joe Satterelli

SASIA Meeting 3rd Wednesday 7:00 PM

Please join us and bring your ideas on how to improve our wonderful neighborhood! Connect with us on our Facebook.com and NextDoor.com pages: St. Augustine South Improvement Association.

Monthly Meetings at Clubhouse

DAV Meeting -3rd Tuesday of the month DAV monthly meeting at 7pm.

Bingo - Every Thursday at 1pm except Holidays,light lunch, from 11:30 to 12:30. Open to the Public.

Yoga - Join Registered Yoga Teacher Emily Flagler for Gentle Flow Yoga on Thursdays 5:30 - 6:30! Just bring your yoga mat, towel, and water. Try your first class for free!

St Augustine South Reflections

By Ruth Hope, SASIA Treasurer

At the beginning of October, a local remarked we would have two days of fall and move quickly into late summer. Little did any of us expect the torrential rain in the middle of October. It washed out our plant and seed exchange and cancelled "neighborhood night out" that had been in the planning for months, with SJSO and first responders. So here, I will ponder on our neighborhood assets rather than events.

Our neighborhood—always gorgeous shaded by our tree canopy—is blessed by Shore Drive Waterfront Park and the Matanzas River. I've seen an epidemic of sand burr along the park this year and heard of furry friends taking in sandburs on their coats to their homes, where the burrs immediately fall off and find hiding places in carpet pile and rugs. Unsuspecting neighbors have the wounds to support their stories of pain and suffering from standing on a sandbur. By October the sandburs were ripening and hard becoming even more devilishly painful underfoot.

Of course, the warm temperatures and rain brought on splendid shows of yellow cassia Senna spectabilis and stands of tree marigold [Mexican sunflower] Tithonia diversifolia. Neither are native to Florida but the bees are attracted to them. Turk's cap mallow, Malvaviscus penduliflorus, a Florida-friendly shrub related to hibiscus, is just coming into flower as the days shorten and nights get cooler. It's bright red flowers attract those ruby throat hummingbirds that over winter here rather than migrate to Mexico.

Halloween in St Augustine South—perhaps egged on by a little friendly competition from Lincolnville—was awash with candy corn icons on NextDoor, pumpkins, decorated gardens, and even a couple of haunted homes! Trick or Treaters, many in amazing costumes, were widely noted to be polite and thankful for the candy they collected.

Meanwhile, SASIA is planning to gift Holiday baskets to our very elderly and otherwise housebound neighbors. Be sure to email names and addresses of neighbors you know who should receive a basket to RuthSASIA@aol.com. We don't want to disappoint and miss any very elderly or housebound neighbor! What a grand start to the Holiday Season!

Community Classifieds

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

Business, Service, seeking work, etc. may be placed in the classified section: (1-4 lines) \$5, (5-8 lines) \$10, (9-12 lines) \$15, (13-16 lines) \$20. These Ads should be paid in advance before placed.

Send your listing and payment, if required, to Observer, 1965 A1A South #120, St. Augustine, 32080-6509. You may email your ad to clifflogsdon@att.net. Deadline for all listings or ads is the 15th of every month for the next monthly issue.

FOR SALE: "Sunbrella" fabric porch valance. 22"W x 250"L. Fits Conquistador screened porch. Excellent condition, shades of teal, off white, hint of lavender, blended stripe, four sections. Professionally made. Track included. Nice finish to porch. \$125. (904) 797-9089. Leave message saying "valance" with call back number.

FOR SALE: One dtx400k Yamaha electronic drum kit complete. (like new) with Roland kc 150 amplifier. Call Frank (904 794-5637 or (386) 643-9384.

FOR SALE: 2014 - 33' Forest River Travel Trailer - Two slides, one on each side. Queen size bed, 2 Lazy Boy chairs, Mahogany Kitchen Table with 4 Chairs, Oven and Microwave, Full size shower, TV/DVD, and 8 windows- very bright. Electric jacks and slides. Looks like new! Price: \$18,000. all or Text Judy (2- 7 pm) at 904-347-4479.

FOR SALE: Make your Christmas gifts. Complete jewelry making huge kit. Ready to sell 16 necklaces, semi-precious bead stones, acrylic, glass beads. Charms bracelets, tassels. Tri-color all sorts of findings. Bead palette and tools. \$150.00 Text 214-642-6068

FOR SALE: ((1) 7 piece Queen Size Bedroom Set. \$450. (2) Baby's High Chair \$20. Crib with mattress \$100. Call Bruce 904-615-4899.

FOR SALE: (1) Air Martess, never used \$20. (2) Fiesta Ware, Flamengo, Ivory, Turquoise, Suflower, Orange, Peacock, Scarlet. \$5 - \$30. Call 904-417-3210

WANTED: I buy old record collections. I am not a re-seller but a serious listener. Your records will go to a good home. Call John 904-325-9802

WANTED: Silver Coins, Gold and Jewelry at great prices. Call Mike at 904-540-2235.

Community News?

Do you have news, events or personal interest information that are relevant to our communities in Southern St. Johns County? Please forward them to the Editor for consideration for the monthly Observer.

Please contact Cliff Logsdon
email: clifflogsdon@att.net or call 904-607-1410



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St. Augustine South Upcoming Events

St. Augustine South Improvement Association
Watch the Observer, Next Door @ St. Aug South & our Face Book page for more information as dates approach.

December 14th
"Santa Visits St. Augustine South"
At Community Center on Royal Road

Fran's Knitting Boutique

904-797-9951

2765 US 1 S. St. Augustine 32086

Don't wait to long - the item you need may be gone. Also offer private and group classes - these make a great gift too.

Hours Tuesday - Saturday 10:00-3:00

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St. Augustine Shores Club News

December 2019 Riverview Club Calendar

DECEMBER DANCES: Payment prior to event is required: Call 904.794.2000 *BYOB*

Christmas Dinner Dance
Frank Saffi Band
 Saturday, December 7th
 6:00 pm to 10:00 pm
 Dance Club Members \$25/pp
 Guests: \$40/pp

New Years' Social
Nostalgia
 Monday, December 30th, 2019
 7:00 pm to 10:00 pm
 Finger foods/appetizers will be provided
 Club Members: \$5/pp Guests: \$20/pp

FREE for Activity Members, guests are \$5.00/pp/class.

- Bridge** Fridays 1:00 pm - Must have table of 4 to join.
- Bridge Lesson** Classes led by Nancy Thursdays at 10:00 am.
- Chicago Bridge** Must have a partner to play, Mon and Thu at 12:30 pm.
- Card Game** Group meets on Tuesdays, at 3:30 pm – 6:00 pm.
- Mah Jongg** Tuesday at 1:00 pm & Wednesday at 10:30 am.
- Chair Yoga** Class led by Nancy, Mon, Wed & Fri at 10:45 am.
 A gentler form of yoga for those whom balance is an issue.
- Yoga** Class led by Nancy, Mon, Wed & Fri at 9:00 am.
 Evening Yoga, Thursday at 5:30 pm.
- Exercise Class** Led by Marcia Tuesday and Thursday at 10:00 am.
- Dance Class** Class is cancelled until further notice.
- Line Dancing** Monday at 6:30 pm and Wednesday at 10:00 am.
- Tai-Chi** Beginner class starts Tuesday January 7, 2020 at 7:00pm.
 By membership only, NO DROP INS allowed.
- Zumba** Tuesday at 5:30 pm Zumba with Mary Beth.
- Writers in the Shores** Tuesday December 10th at 1:00 pm in the library.
 For information call Donna at 794-0789.

****No Classes: December 24 & 25 and January 1, the Riverview Club will be closed.****

Upcoming Events at the Riverview Club

Early Social: Friday, January 17th (7pm to 10pm)
 Entertainment by Southern Style

Main Social: Friday, January 31st (7pm to 10pm)
 Entertainment by Soul Fire

Riverview Club Events

FREE Introductory Fitness Pole Walking Clinic with Sheila Vidamour

- Wednesday, December 10th at 12:30 pm – Meet at the Riverview Club.
- Pre-registration is required: to register call 904-540-1067, or email Sheila: walkyourpath406@aol.com.

Pole Walking is a fun and easy way to get a very effective and efficient total body aerobic workout!

Please wear comfortable walking shoes and demo Walking Poles will be provided.

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 Fund Raisers
 Holiday Party
 Class Reunion
 Graduation Party



RIVERVIEW CLUB
 SAINT AUGUSTINE SHORES
 790 Christina Drive
 St. Augustine, FL 32086

904.794.2000

St. Augustine Shores Service Corporation October 10th Board Meeting Summary

"This Summary is an overview by the Observer Editor and is not the complete meeting minutes. Minutes are to be approved and posted at the Riverview Club and Association Website."

The St. Augustine Shores Service Corporation's Board of Directors meeting was called to order by President Austin Dietly at 7:00 P.M. Present: Vice President Thomas Filloramo, Treasurer Claire Lorbeer, Director Steve Raff, Director Michael Amato and Director Phil Van Tiem. Absent Secretary Michael Winkles. Quorum was established. The Invocation was given by General Manager Smith followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of the Minutes of September 12, 2019 - Director Raff made a motion to approve the minutes of September 12, 2019. Seconded by Vice President Filloramo. Unanimous. The Motion carried.

Treasurers Report read by Treasurer Lorbeer and Vice President Filloramo made a motion to approve the Treasurers report as read. Seconded by Director Amato. The motion carried unanimously. General Managers' Report provided by Joseph H. Smith III

Director Raff made a motion to negotiate with Straight Edge Painting to exclude the pressure washing from the bid and award Straight Edge Painting the project to paint the three RVF structures. Seconded by Director Amato and motion carried

Director Raff made a motion to remove the two trees blocking the South Entrance sign and replace with Italian Cypress. Seconded by Director Van Tiem and motion carried.

Director Raff made a motion to deny the proposed payment plan presented to the Board. Seconded by Director Amato and motion carried.

Director Raff made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Vice President Filloramo and the motion carried.

Meeting Adjourned.

Code Enforcement Presentation St. Augustine South Improvement Association

by Handly Caraway

In the past, when code enforcement has appeared at SASIA meetings, there has always been a lively exchange with residents. A recent visit was no exception.

Lori Troxel, Code Enforcement Officer, and Joseph Cearley, Special Projects Manager for Growth Management (pictured), addressed the monthly meeting of the association. There are eight county employees in the code enforcement department.

One area that generates numerous complaints is inoperable vehicles stored on properties. Code enforcement will investigate these complaints, and, if founded, will work with the resident to achieve compliance before issuing a citation. Vehicles that are obviously not roadworthy, like missing wheels or having a flat tire, must be enclosed by a building on the property to comply with the code.

Boats and recreational vehicles must generally be stored beside or behind the residence, and at least 25 feet from the front property line. There are some exceptions to this rule that can be clarified by contacting code enforcement. It is not safe to assume that power poles are on the property line; a survey may be needed.

Trash, debris, junk, and a generally poor appearance, may be code violations and would have to be observable from the road. There is no grass ordinance in the county, and homeowners who choose a "natural or Florida Friendly" yard may do so.

Houses that are occupied and have no water or electric service are not automatically in violation of the code, but a county judge may have to rule. If there are health issues, such as abandoned pools, which could become a breeding ground for potentially disease carrying mosquitoes, or vegetation that is breeding rats, they may be reported to the health department or mosquito control.

There were questions from the membership about door to door solicitors who seem to be proliferating in the sub-division, and the response was that solicitors should be able to present a permit issued by the sheriff's office. It was suggested that residents who don't want solicitors post a notice to that effect on the property.

Citizens can make referrals for code investigations by the department on the county website through the Public Request Inquiry Data Exchange Program. Referrals may be made anonymously on the Pride tab at the St. Johns County Code Enforcement website. Contact data is required if the complainant wants to be informed of action taken.

At the conclusion of the presentation, Troxel said that code enforcement is focused on working with people to voluntarily correct violations and to avoid punitive measures by the county. If compliance is not achieved in a reasonable length of time, the code enforcement officer will issue a formal warning before issuing a citation. If the resident contests the citation, there would generally be a hearing before a St. Johns County judge before penalties are imposed.

Meetings of the St. Augustine South Improvement Association are held at the clubhouse, 709 Royal Road, at 7 p.m. on the third Wednesday of each month. All SAS residents are encouraged to attend.



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News Around Southern St. Augustine Area

Santa is Calling!



St. Johns County Recreation Department has partnered with the North Pole Telephone Company for our Annual "PHONE CASS FROM SANTA" From December 10th through 12th.

Parents with children under the age of eight that live in St. Johns County can sign up to have Santa call their child at home this Holiday Season. The program is FREE!

Visit SJCFL.US/YOUTH and download the form or stop into the Recreation Department's main office at 2175 Mizell Road, St. Augustine, email or fax completed forms to abrown@SJCFL.US or 904-209-0321. For more information contact Ashley Brown, 904-209-0379.

Writers In the Shores

By Donna Johnson

There will be only one meeting in December for Writers in the Shores due to the Christmas holiday. We will be meeting on Tuesday the 10th. The chosen subject is to be "looked him/ her right in the eye", is suggested for this month's topic to write about on the 10th. Come join us, you just might like us ! Everyone is welcome and we would like to invite anyone who loves to write. You do not have to be a member. We normally meet on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday each month, at 1pm here at the Riverview Club Library. We are a casual group who enjoy sharing their work and related discussion with each other. There are no officers, dues or requirements. All genres are encompassed. For information call Donna at 794-0789. Wishing all a "Very Merry Christmas an a Happy New Year !"

Did You Just Push My Button?

by Cheryl Robertson, Clinical Hypnotherapist

The Holidays have arrived and we all know what that means. Family gatherings and happy times. However, there are times that, even though, our family may have good intentions, past or unresolved issues can surface and disrupt what is meant to be a happy, memory filled occasion.

I am hosting a free group hypnosis session that may help you when a family issue arises. Please join me on December 14th from 10am to 12pm at the Riverview Club. Please bring a yoga mat, small blanket and pillow as you will be laying on the floor for the session. Space is limited, so please reserve your spot by emailing me at cheryllrobertsonhypnosis@gmail.com



Shores United Methodist Celebrates Christmas

Shores United Methodist is hosting special Christmas events and worship opportunities for the community this year. On Wednesday, December 11, the Children's Ministry is hosting a Children's Christmas Party for children ages 3 to 11 starting at 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. There will be pizza, a dessert bar, refreshments, and a Cookie Exchange Party. Children from the community are welcome! Please RSVP the church office at 797-4416.

On December 15, the Children's Choir will be performing their Christmas Program at both the 8:45 a.m. Traditional and 11:00 a.m. Contemporary Services. The program includes popular classic and contemporary Christmas Carols under the direction of Children/Youth Music Director Suzann Maass.

On Sunday, December 22 the Chancel Choir will present a musical program "Christmas through Song" at the 8:45 a.m. Traditional Service. The program is a treasury of traditional songs, favorite hymns, and choice carols under the direction of Music Director, Roger Woods.

On December 24, Christmas Eve there are two Candlelight Services to celebrate the birth of our lord, Jesus Christ. A Traditional worship service at 4:00 p.m. and a Contemporary, family-oriented service at 6:00 p.m. Childcare is available for infants and preschoolers during both services.

The community is invited to join us in celebrating the birth of our Savior at these special worship services and seasonal events. Shores United Methodist Church is located at 724 Shores Blvd, between the Shores Golf Course and Hartley Elementary. Rev. Carolyn Westlake is the pastor. For more information, visit the church's website at www.shoresumc.org.

Friends of St. Augustine Southeast Library Business Membership Program

Our goal is to establish a business membership to the Friends of the South East Library which would include a photo shoot with their business name which we would use at our community outreach events such as our "READ" program. READ pictures are a sample of some of the tools we are using to promote reading and the library programs.

We seek business owners to participate as part of our "business membership packet" supporting our efforts. We hope to finalize our business packets by January.

Please call 907-687-5438 to contact us to find out more about this program or questions you may have.



Complimentary Holiday Gift Wrapping

By Nancy Sorokin,

Members of Temple Bet Yam in St. Augustine will once again provide complimentary gift wrapping for purchases at Barnes and Noble, December 14-24. For over twenty years, the congregation has offered this service to the community. At least 70 members volunteer their time during this event, from teenagers through grandparents. The St Augustine community looks forward to TBY's presence.

"Surf Illumination" December 7th at Pier Park



Join us at Pier Park on Saturday December 7th from 3 until 7 PM for an evening of family fun that includes the lighting of our Christmas Tree by Commissioner Dylan Rumrell and his family.

There will be free children's activities included photos with Santa & Mrs. Claus, face painting, balloon twisting, two bounce houses, holiday music and about 15 local vendors selling unique holiday gifts and more. All activities are free. Refreshments will also be sold.

Free Program for our community!
How to Organise and Digitise your Family Archive of Photos, Film, Slides, Tapes and Documents.

By David McFee
Dec 14th, 10:30am
© St Johns County Public Library
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St. Augustine, FL 32086

Heritage Baptist Church
"A Warm & Friendly Fellowship"

Sunday School 9:30 a.m.
Morning Service 10:30 a.m.
Evening Services 5:30 p.m.
Wednesday Night Services 7 p.m.

1480 Wildwood Drive
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News From Around St. Johns County

The Garden Club of St. Augustine Announces 50th "Christmas Tour of Homes"

On December 8 from noon to 5pm, the Garden Club of St. Augustine, Florida presents their 50th Annual Christmas Tour of Homes. Ticket-holders will visit 6 homes in the Oldest City in the Continental U.S.A. Each home will be exquisitely decorated by Garden Club members. Ticket price is \$30 and includes Tea and Boutique at the River House. This is a walking tour. For those in need, free transportation will be provided.

Tickets go on sale October 1, 2019. Advance purchase is recommended as the event has "sold out" the last 8 years. For tickets, call Virginia at 904-466-7827 or purchase online at www.gardenclubofstaugustine.org. For more information, call Trudi at 904-686-9320.

St. Augustine Travel Club Meeting

by Peter Dytrych

St. Augustine Travel Club - The next Travel Club will be held Wednesday, December 14th @ 3:00 P.M. at the Southeast Branch Public Library, US1 South at SR 206. The subject of presentation will be: CHRISTMAS MUSICAL TOUR - Festive music by Johann Sebastian Bach and Handel accompanied by holiday season images from Austria, Germany and Switzerland. The club is free to the public and no registration is required. Call Peter at 904 797-3736 if you have any questions.

St. Augustine Travel Club Cruise

The St. Augustine Travel Club will again be sailing the seas on Saturday, March 28 -April 4, 2020 on the beautiful Norwegian Breakaway out of Port Canaveral to the Eastern Caribbean ports of Tortola (British Virgin Islands), St. Thomas and Norwegian's private island Great Stirrup Cay in the Bahamas for a 7-day cruise. Prices start from \$972.35 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, Free Beverage Package and more. Call Peter, St. Augustine Travel Club at (904) 797-3736.

Wags and Whiskers Pet Rescue and Adoption

Wags 'n Whiskers Pet Rescue and Adoption Garage Sale Saturday, December 14th, 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. We are doing our next fundraising garage for Wags 'n Whiskers. If you are interested in selling, we ask for your \$10.00 donation. Bring your own table or tarp/blanket to display your goods. This is one way we are raising money for this wonderful organization. We have been having more folks participate and more shoppers over the last few months. Call Lana Bandy at 317-450-0505 to reserve a space. If you are not interested in the garage sale, we would love for you to stop by to say hello and if you happen to have any extra cat food and/or kitty litter, the facility is always in need! The address is 1967 Old Moultrie Road, St. Augustine, across the street from the rear of the Lowes' building.

Mickler's Landing Beachfront Park Public Access Schedule

Monday - Friday: open to the public 11:00 a.m. to sunset

Saturday and Sunday: open to the public sunrise to sunset

St. Johns Board of County Commissioners has directed the Mickler's Landing Beachfront Park dune reconstruction schedule to be revised to allow daily public access. The park and parking lot will be open to the public from 11:00 a.m. to sunset Monday through Friday, and from sunrise to sunset Saturday and Sunday. Construction activity on the beach north of the park will continue while the park and parking lot are open. Activity related to the dune reconstruction project will occur in the park and parking lot from 6:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. Monday through Friday, and will continue in a restricted portion of the parking lot through a secondary construction entrance from 11 a.m. to sunset Monday through Friday. Alternate parking and public access to the beach are available at GTM Research Reserve, located three miles south of Mickler's Landing Beachfront Park on A1A. For further information regarding this project, please call 904-209-0333.

First Coast Card & Newcomers Club

First Coast Newcomers Club Card Playing Dates:

Tuesday, December 10th. Christmas Holiday Cards Event. St. Augustine Library. Arrive: 12:50P. Refreshments. Bring Treats to share.

Thursday, December 19th. Donut-Pastry Shop. St. Augustine. Arrive: 5:15P.

Monday, December 23rd. Couples Event. Coffee Store. 2P/Dinner-Korean Hot Pot 4:30P.

Monday, December 30th-Dinner St. Augustine Grill. 4:30P/Cards-Coffee Store St. Augustine. 5:30P

Please Contact Our Club Organizers for Venues, Addresses, & Yes RSVPs Made To: 904-814-9612. Smoke/Drug Free Club.

First Coast Newcomers Games & Recreation Events Club Dates:

Tuesday, December 3rd-Christmas Party Lunch. Music/Trivia/Games St. Augustine. Arrive: 1P.

Wednesday, December 18th. Concert Series-Annual Holiday Pops. Jacksonville Symphony Orchestra, St. Augustine. 7:30P-10:00P.

Saturday, December 21st-Holiday Night Of Lights. Club Van Tours-1.5 Hrs.\$10./Dinner/Arrive: 6P.

Friday, December 27th-7 Joys Of Christmas-Jacksonville Chorus Chorale-St. Augustine. 7P. Free

Please Contact Our Club Organizer To RSVP Yes, How To Join Our Club, & For Questions To: 904-829-0643-Days/Evenings. No Texts. Smoke/Drug Free Club.

Invitation to Living With Cancer Support Group

Whether you're a patient, survivor or caregiver, this is your opportunity to talk about the day-to-day challenges of living with cancer in a group of people who can inspire, relate to and support you along your journey.



Meetings are the Third Wednesday of every month at 11:00 am on the first floor of the main hospital building Suite 1010. Our next group will meet on December 18, 2019. Please call 904-819-4693 (or 4742) for more information or to RSVP.

St. Augustine Jewish Historical Society

First Coast's Josh Fisher, a citizen under Spain's new Law of Return for decendents of Jews exiled in 1492 to speak December 11th

Jacksonville's Josh Fisher has obtained Spanish citizenship through his Sephardic ancestry, demonstrating that his family was exiled in 1492. Fisher, who will be the featured speaker at the December 11th meeting of the St. Augustine Jewish Historical Society is one of the more than a 140 Sephardic Jews that have had the opportunity to become Spanish citizens through Spain's Miami Consulate in the last few years.

Fisher will explain the process and some of the background of Spain's Law of Return to the St. Augustine Jewish Historical Society at a meeting open to all and scheduled to begin at 2:00 p.m. Wednesday, December 11th at the Main Branch of the St. Johns County Library, 1960 N Ponce De Leon Boulevard (Route US. 1), St. Augustine, Florida 32084. Call (904) 827-6940 for best directions. This hour-long program is free, open to the public and no advance arrangements need be made. All are welcome. Call 804-914-4460 for further information.

"Food for Fines" Program Benefits Food Pantry

The St. Johns County Public Library System is excited to announce that it will once again offer patrons a way to lower or eliminate library fines, while providing much needed assistance to the Health and Human Services Food Pantry through the "Food for Fines" program. This program will run through December 20.

It's simple to take part in this program. The donation of one item of non-perishable food will remove \$1 of fines from a patron's library record. This fine-reduction program applies only to overdue fines. Fees related to damaged or lost items are not included in the Food for Fines program.

Your food donations and pet supplies/food may be dropped off at any St. Johns County Library branch or with one of our Bookmobiles. Last year, St. Johns County residents provided over 7,000 non-perishable items through the Library System's "Food for Fines" program. All food collected will remain in St. Johns County for the benefit of local residents. For more information, please call 904.827.6925 or visit <https://sjcpls.org/library-food-for-fines-program-returns/>.

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Wildflower Meadow Group

by Cindy Taylor



Muhly Grass



Lopsided Indian Grass

In many of my articles I complain about lawn grasses trying to invade and take over the meadow. We pull them out and away from the wildflowers but not all grasses are unwanted. Some are natives, beneficial to the natural eco system, and in fall their fluorescence is at its peak. *Muhly grasses* are a perfect example and there's no missing the *bushy bluestem* this year. The six-foot tall grasses are in the lower meadow on the side near the woods and fill half the area where flat-top *goldenrod* bloomed last year. That's what a meadow does. It changes by itself from year to year, as long as we let it be what it is. We'll have to pull some of the *bluestem* out next year or there won't be ANY space for flat-top goldenrods or much of anything else either. So you see? We let the meadow be what it is AND the meadow lets us be what we are. It's a two-way street. Some grasses belong in a meadow and some belong in yards. Each has its own place and we value native grasses in the wildflower meadow.



Bushy Bluestem



Bushy Aster



Goldenrod

Other native greases in early November were *broom sedge bluestem*, *lop-sided Indian grass*, and *Elliot love grass*. The *bushy aster* were starting to bloom and so, likewise, two different kinds of golden aster. *Blazing stars* were still blooming and a few *blue curl* blossoms were holding on. Surprisingly, there were also some spider wort and meadow beauty. We think of these as a spring flowers and wonder if October's warm temperatures encouraged a spring-like response.

We hope you will join us at our next meeting the first Saturday of the month. We meet at the meadow near the Riverview clubhouse at about 8:30. Sometimes we drive to local parks or on back country roads looking for wildflowers, identifying, and photographing them. We're an informal group without officers or dues.

Call Claire at 904-826-5366 or Cindy at 904-797-3931 for more information.

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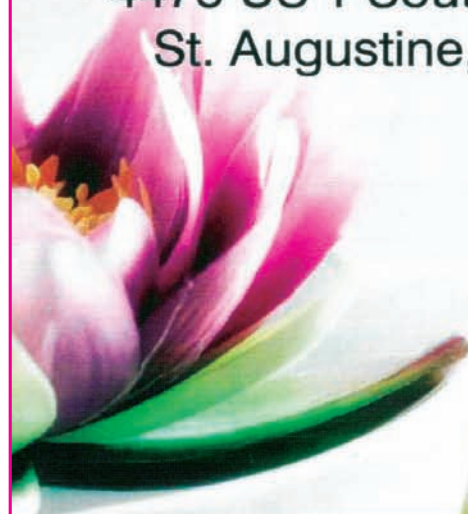
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Fresh from the National Association of Realtors (NAR) Convention in San Francisco, excerpts from a Presentation by Lawrence Yun, Chief Economist for NAR:

- No Recession expected in 2020 (unless there is an all-out Trade War with China)
- Housing Forecast - Moderate Growth expected in 2020
- An 11% Increase is needed in New Construction to keep up with demand
- Housing starts are insufficient to meet demand and are needed to tame inflation
- Interest Rates are expected to remain at or under 4%
- Millennial (under 35 Yrs Old) Homeownership

is at only 38% (of all millennials)

- Average age of all buyers is 47 Years of Age
- Buyer and Sellers use Realtors in 89% of all transactions.
- For Sale By Owners (FISBOS) are at an all time low of 8%.
- 45% of Seller do not stage homes
- Yun addressed demographic shifts and Buyer preferences changes.

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"Diaries of a Shores Grand-Dad"

by Dirk Schroeder

In the last edition of the Diaries, I shared some of the best memories that I've had with some of my family members. I spoke to my sister about my best memories (she doesn't get the Observer in DC) and she reminded me of other aspects of that trip that I had completely forgotten and we ended up having a great laugh about that stuff. What might surprise you is when you ask your family (or friends) about what memories they cherish most about you (or their family and friends) – you might be completely surprised. With Thanksgiving and Christmas Holidays being here, now is the perfect time to ask that question; it could open some excellent dialog. One simple way to pose the question might be, "What are some of your best memories about me (or your friends or family)?"

One of the nicest road trips that we took with my older brother and his wife and two kids, my little brother and his wife and son, my sister and her husband and of course our entire clan of five was a trip to the Keys over the Christmas Holiday. We chipped in and rented a couple of condos in Marathon that would accommodate the whole 14 of us and we ended up getting a lot of quality time in going to the beach, sailing, motor boating and going to dinners. Some of the other fun times were just watching movies and playing board games and such around the condo. It was such a good time that, a few years later we decided to do it again with four fewer of us in a 3-story house. I would bet that, when asked, my family members would likely point to those trips as being among the better memories of our lives - I'll simply ask them and see what response I get. There was the one unfortunate incident on New Year's Day when we were snorkeling and my sister and I tried to save a rescue snorkeler and yet even that would be a part of that memory.

Thanksgiving is a time to get together and enjoy the fruits of our labors – good food, as many family members as possible and to have some enjoyable conversations with one another (maybe even play some cards or board games or take in a game or movie). Christmas time is even more special since we also get to kick our spiritual minds into high gear – to experience the joy of the birth of Christ and to remind ourselves of the humility of knowing our own human imperfections. We have made and continue to make so many errors throughout our lives. It is a blessing to know that Christ forgives our sins when we are sincere and contrite in our prayer requests. Why is it more difficult for humans to forgive each other? Why would our reality be so much different? And there's something more profound about Christmas for all of you who are reading this article with nobody else in your lives - know that you never walk alone. Christ is always with you; living in your heart and in your soul and looking for you to let him shine - through you.

Get in the spirit - I've said it many times and I'll say it again, "Life is NOT about YOU – it's about everyone around YOU!" Burn that old, "It's all about Me" T-shirt that you put on as underwear. Keep that in mind as you go through the upcoming Holiday Season. Ask others about them. Ask them about their favorite memories. I wish everyone a fantastic and better-than-ever series of Holy Days and, as always, a Sunshine State of Mind!



IRS Audit Rate Has Dropped Steeply Since 2010

by Andrew Jackson, Esq.
Jackson Law Group
904-823-3333



Are you concerned about being audited by the IRS? An IRS audit takes place when the Internal Revenue Service chooses to review a taxpayer's accounts to verify that tax laws are being followed. As a preliminary caution, beware of phone scams as the IRS will always initiate a tax audit by mail. The IRS will not call to demand immediate payment or ask for a debit or credit card number over the phone, nor will they threaten to bring in local law enforcement to arrest people. Threats like these are common tactics scam artists use to trick victims.

There are various types of audits that can occur. A Correspondence Audit means that the IRS needs additional documentation from you, and you will be asked to mail it in. This is the most common type of audit, and you will not have to meet with an IRS agent. Field Audits are generally done on businesses. In a field audit, an IRS agent will come to your business or home to look at your records. An Office Audit is just like it sounds. You will have to go to an IRS office to meet with an agent.

In recent years, the audit rate has dropped for individual tax returns. Listed here are the percent of individual returns examined by fiscal year according to the

IRS Data Book:

2010	1.1%
2011	1.1%
2012	1.0%
2013	1.0%
2014	0.9%
2015	0.8%
2016	0.7%
2017	0.6%
2018	0.5%

Remember that while audits are rare, good record keeping will help you endure the audit process. A good rule of thumb is to keep records for 7 years. There are also things you can do to minimize your audit risk. It's recommended Holiday crime prevention

Andrew Jackson, J.D., LL.M. is the Managing Partner at Jackson Law Group, a law firm with a history in St. Augustine since 2007. He manages the firm's legal practice areas and focuses on Business, Real Estate, Estates/Trusts, and Tax matters. Mr. Jackson received a B.A. in Economics from Hampden-Sydney College, J.D. law degree from Florida Coastal School of Law, and LL.M. Master of Laws in Taxation from the University of Florida.

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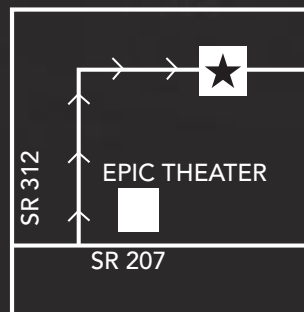
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December "The Nights of Lights" Calendar Events

St. Augustine's annual Nights of Lights celebration features millions of white lights outlining the trees and architecture of the city. One of Florida's most popular holiday events, this brilliant showcase in America's oldest city will take place November 23, 2019 through February 2, 2020 and will set the stage for many exciting events taking place this holiday season.

Enjoy these and many other special events taking place on Florida's Historic Coast during Nights of Lights:

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December 4 Luminary Night- The St. Augustine Lighthouse & Maritime Museum hosts this free evening of lights, music, and cheer. Lanterns decorate the Museum grounds, while holiday performances fill the night.

December 7 St. Augustine Christmas Parade- This display of floats, bands, cars, horses, and Santa will travel downtown from the Mission Nombre de Dios.

December 14 Holiday Regatta of Lights- The Victory III invites visitors to brighten up the waters as part of its holiday boat parade.

December 14 Castillo Holiday Open House- Lit by lantern light, the Castillo de San Marcos offers an opportunity to interact with over 300 years of living history, complete with reenactors and cannon firings.

December 31 Beach Blast Off- Celebrate the new year with fireworks and family activities at St. Johns County Ocean Pier Park.

Shuttle Services

Free Nights of Lights Park and Ride Shuttle returns for Light-Up Night offering transportation into the heart of downtown within easy walking distance to heart of the historic city during one of the busiest times of the year.

Free Nights of Lights Park & Ride Shuttles are available from 8 a.m. to 11 p.m. every Saturday in December.

Detailed information about Light-Up! Night shuttle is available online at www.CityStAug.com/LightUpNight

The shuttle is made possible by the City of St. Augustine with the cooperation of St. Johns County and funding support from the St. Johns County Tourist Development Council. The special island shuttle on Light-Up! Night is made possible with the support of Historic Tours of America and Ripley's Red Train Tours.



Announcing a program available through the St. Johns County State Housing Initiatives Partnership (SHIP), for site-built homes that allows up to \$40,000 for Rehab Improvements for low- to very low-income homeowners.

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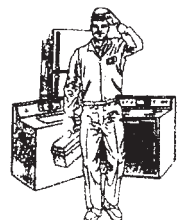
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St. Johns County Sheriff's Corner

By David Shoar, St. Johns County Sheriff

Holiday Crime Prevention

We are coming up on one of the most festive times of the year for families with the celebration of several holidays. However, joy and fun can quickly turn to disappointment and sorrow when someone becomes a victim of a scam, burglary or online fraudulent holiday shopping scheme.

At a time of year when most people are filled with goodwill there are criminals who relish taking advantage of it. Crime statistics always rise during the holiday season and I wish to pass along a few tips to help you avoid becoming a victim. Business experts tell us that again this year the number of people who shop online for gifts will increase dramatically and therefore so do the opportunities for those who use new technology to take advantage of unsuspecting victims. The cyber-crimes that become more popular during the holiday shopping season include fraudulent auction sites, resale of stolen or counterfeit gift cards and reshipping merchandise purchased with stolen credit cards. Do not become a victim. I recommend that if you wish to purchase a gift through an auction or classified site on the Internet insist on paying with PayPal or some other reputable third party payment service. That way your credit card number and personal information is not shared with the seller. I would also like to add that if you receive an unsolicited call requesting payment of any type requiring the purchase of a third party payment card (Green Dot, I-Tunes, etc.) to be extremely suspicious. Most likely it's a scam!

Most of you already know the safety tips for traditional retail shopping: take your purchases to your vehicle frequently and lock them in the trunk or out-of-site;

carry purses with the strap going over one shoulder and the purse against your body on the opposite side; carry billfolds in a front pants pocket; pay by credit card or check if at all possible; and if you must use an ATM always shield the keypad when entering your PIN and put cash away promptly in your purse or wallet.

Home burglaries are more common during the holidays and sadly the thieves target the gifts under the tree. If you are going to be away from home, leave some lights on and a radio or television to make it appear and sound as if someone is home. After the celebration do not put the boxes of expensive gifts out for street garbage pickup without first breaking them down and folding them so only plain cardboard shows so they don't become an unintended billboard for what you have in your home.

Holiday parties can be wonderful fun but please remember to celebrate safely and if alcoholic beverages are served, moderation is the best practice. The concept of "friends don't let friends drive drunk" becomes even more significant. We will have impaired driver patrols out in full force to help keep your family safe during the holidays.

Whether you will be celebrating Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanza or a holiday of another faith on behalf of all of us at the St. Johns County Sheriff's office I wish you a merry, happy, joyous and safe celebration and best wishes for the New Year. For any issue regarding law enforcement and/or public safety you can always contact me by email at dshoar@sjsso.org. You can also follow us on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Nextdoor.

St. Augustine Orchestra Starts Christmas Music Season with 'Happiest of Holidays' Concerts

The St. Augustine Orchestra (SAO) will kick off the city's first holiday concerts of the season on Wednesday December 4th and Thursday December 5th at the beautiful Lightner Museum.



"There's a lot of research about the positive effect both physically and psychologically of Christmas music as well as how nostalgic it makes you feel," said Artistic Director Scott Gregg. "That's part of the reason we chose to call this performance 'The Happiest of Holidays'. And since there is also data that people who decorate for Christmas earlier are generally happier, why not have the Christmas concerts start earlier in the month too, just after the Nights of Lights begins," he added.

The city's namesake Orchestra will be presenting more than a dozen holiday classics, including the Nutcracker, Hugh Martin's Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas and Mel Torme's Christmas Song, to Bill Holcombe's 'Twas the Night Before Christmas, the Frozen movie Concert Suite by Kristen Anderson-Lopez, and music from the movie Elf by John Debney. They will be accompanied by Lee Weaver, and by the St. Augustine High School Chorus.

Ticket prices are \$27.50 for adults 18 years and older; \$12 for youths 11-17 and free for children 10 and under. The ticket price reflects all online handling fees. Tickets are available at <https://staugustineorchestra.ticketleap.com/holiday-sao2019/>. Both concerts are at 8:00 pm with general seating. The doors open at 7:30 p.m. at the 25 Granada Street entrance. Wine is available by donation and there are free mini candy canes to nibble on.

"This is definitely the happiest performance of our Concert Season, and it's really nice as a musician to look out at all these happy, smiling faces in the audience and see people singing along," said Board Chair Mitch Kolesaire, and its principal upright bass player.

The SAO's mission is "to create and support a highly respected symphony orchestra, performing great works with passion and excellence, and to be an indispensable partner to our community, providing enrichment through inspiring concerts, music education programs, community program collaboration and affordable access for all." In 2019, the SAO was awarded FOLIO Magazine's "Best of St. Augustine" large band/orchestra and it was a finalist for the St. Augustine Record's "Best of" Local Band/performer.

For more information, please contact: Sheila Kolesaire, Board Member, Marketing and Communications Skolesaire@gmail.com, phone 973-687-0188.

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Computer Corner

by Steven Aldrich
904-479-5661

So, you want to cut the wire....

Since my article about Streaming (in July of this year) I have been asked several times about how one would go about "cutting the wire". This is the term used when folks get rid of their cable provider for TV entertainment.

I have been considering doing this myself and I thought it might be good to write about the process, and how I intend to accomplish it.

First, it is important to recognize that one still needs internet access. Since the only viable choices I have for that are AT&T and Comcast, I'll need to make a choice about which to use.

Second, I have a list of entertainment requirements. I want to have the Tennis Channel, and my wife wants two specific shows. Plus, we would like access to a few shows that we have watched for many seasons. Once I have my list complete, I need to see if I can access these shows via some streaming service.

Third, I need to know that my chosen shows and services will all be accessible via my Apple TV streaming device. I prefer this device to the smart TV features on my TV. It's crazy, but true... I have an Apple TV plugged into my Smart TV and access all of my streaming content via the

Apple TV. It might be possible to access everything a person wants by only using the smart TV.

Now that I have my list, it's time to start testing everything out before I cut the wire. I have signed up for Tennis Channel Plus and am watching that to see if they provide the things I want to see, especially the live events. I have found that the shows my wife wants are generally available, and now it is time to teach her how to access them via the Apple TV.

Once we are happy with our entertainment choices using only the streaming content, we can call Comcast and tell them to turn off everything except the Internet connection, and return our Cable box.

So, make a list of your entertainment needs, and start checking if it can be streamed. Try searching google like this: Can I stream the Tennis Channel? (just replace the program name)

Steven Aldrich - 3 decades experience as an IT Director and is the owner of First Coast Computer Services (www.fccspro.com). Contact Steven if you need a trusted advisor to come to your business or home and help with your technology. See my ad on this page. Steve@fccspro.com or (904) 479-5661.

Financial Focus

Information Provided by

Edward Jones

Take Greater Control of Your 401(k)



If your employer offers a 401(k) or similar plan, you've got a powerful retirement-savings tool at your disposal. And yet, how well you do with your 401(k) depends greatly on your choices and actions. What steps can you take to maximize the benefits of your plan?

For starters, be aware that your 401(k) may come with what might be called "standard" features, which you should review to determine their applicability to your situation. These features include the following:

1. **Default deferral rate** – When you take a job, your employer may automatically enroll you in the company's 401(k) plan and assign a "default" contribution rate – the percentage of your salary you will put in to your 401(k). Many companies choose a default rate of 3 percent, although, in recent years, there has been a move toward higher rates, even up to 6 percent. Unfortunately, too many people don't question their default rate, which could be a problem, especially if it's at the lower end. If you want your 401(k) to ultimately provide you with as many financial resources as possible, you will likely need to contribute as much as you can afford. So, be aware of your default rate, and, if you can possibly afford it, increase that level. And every time your salary goes up, consider boosting your contributions.

2. **Investment mix** – When you're automatically enrolled in your 401(k), the amount you might initially contribute isn't the only "off the shelf" feature – you also might be assigned a default investment option. One common default investment is known as a target-date fund, which generally includes a mix of stocks, bonds and

cash instruments. Your 401(k) plan provider, or your human resources area, will typically base this mix on your age and projected retirement date. Usually, this fund will grow more conservative over time, reflecting the need to reduce the portfolio's risk as you get nearer to retirement. However, you may not be obligated to stick with the default option. Most 401(k) plans usually offer several options from which to choose. Ideally, you'd want to spread your investment dollars among a mix of these investments to give yourself the greatest growth potential, given your risk tolerance and time horizon. And always keep in mind that your 401(k) is a long-term vehicle, designed to help you prepare for a retirement that may be decades away. Consequently, try to discipline yourself to look past the inevitable short-term drops in your portfolio.

3. **Matching contributions** – If your employer offers a 401(k) matching contribution, you should certainly take advantage of it. Consider this: If you employer matches 50 cents for every dollar you contribute, up to 6 percent of your pay, and you contribute the full 6 percent, you would, in effect, be receiving a 3 percent pay raise (50 percent of 6 percent). That's like a 50 percent rate of return even before you invest this added money.

Taking control of your 401(k) in the ways described above can help go a long way toward getting the most from your plan – and, as a result, may help get you closer to supporting the retirement lifestyle you've envisioned.

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



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