

Appreciation Parade held for St. Augustine Area Seniors

By Tatiana Diaz



Popsicles, bubbles and smiles were served up at senior centers throughout St. Augustine on Thursday, May 28, 2020 during the first Annual St. Augustine Appreciation Parade.

The socially-distanced parade - an organized effort by area agencies Concierge Home Care, Concierge Care and Vitas - invited members of the community to serve up smiles to St. Johns County's senior residents. A parade of cars (with drivers wearing personal protective equipment) strolled through several agencies including the Riverview Club in St. Augustine Shores and Silver Creek along SR 207 to greet awaiting residents while event organizers, like Kelly Leedom of Concierge Home Care, stood by to hand out popsicles. (continued on page 9)

St Augustine South Reflections

by Ruth Hope, SASIA Board

June is the month when the salt marsh transitions from its dark and somewhat somber winter mantle to the bright green hues of summer cordgrass. The transformation— perhaps stimulated by rising temperatures, or longer hours of sunlight—has certainly

been helped by the heavy rains that blest our gardens and the marsh from the end of May. One evening after a storm, the marsh seemed pink in the setting sunlight reflected from clouds over the Matanzas River.

As longtime residents will know, the marsh itself is in transition as the water temperatures warm and welcome mangroves spreading north. Mangroves, one of the few trees of the salt marsh, can survive because of specially adapted roots. The red mangrove has prop roots which stabilize the



plant in soft muddy soil and which exposes more root surface to the oxygen in the air. Black mangroves have numerous finger-like projections called pneumatophores which serve the same purpose. South of Daytona Beach, tropical mangrove forests begin to predominate in the coastal wetlands and these may predominate in St Johns County too, in decades to come. State and local regulations have been enacted to protect Florida's mangroves as a type of plant species and a type of habit that is both necessarily and greatly beneficial to the state. Mangroves grow land and protect our shoreline from hurricanes, high tides and storm surges.

It is illegal to trim any mangrove that is less than 6 feet. It is illegal to trim any mangrove along Shore Drive Waterfront Park. Only one arborist in St Johns County is a professional mangrove trimmer, who has met the qualifications under the Mangrove Act (403.9329, F.S.) The State imposes fines on property owners (see page 8)

SDT SDT FINE, FL #132	Wednesday Pier Farmers Market Resumes July 1 The Wednesday Pier Farmers Market at the St. Johns County Ocean and Fishing Pier	What's Inside The <i>Observer</i> This Month
PRSRT SDT S POSTAGE PA . AUGUSTINE, PERMIT #132	parking lot, 350 A1A Beach Blvd., will resume modified operations from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. on Wednesdays, beginning July 1. In accordance with recommended CDC guidelines, the following	• <i>St. Augustine Shores:</i> All events and meetings cancelled Pool reopens with social distancing
ST. ST.	 Protocols will be in place: Vendors are required to wear face-covering masks. Traffic will flow one 	• <i>St. Augustine South:</i> Most events and meetings cancelled. See page 4
	way through the event site. • Ten feet of space will be between each vendor site.	• <i>Computer Corner:</i> Office 365 Subscription Is there an alternative?
erver 120 32080-6509	• Each vendor site will be marked to indicate six feet of space between vendor and patron.	• <i>Financial Focus:</i> Work to Achieve Your Financial Independence
	• No onsite food consumption will be permitted. All purchased foods must be taken offsite.	• Sheriff's Corner: Hurricane Awareness
St. Augustine Obs 1965 A1A South ∉ St. Augustine, FL	• Vendors will include farms, hot foods and food trucks, grocery and prepared foods, personal protection and care items, and arts and crafts. For more information regarding the Wednesday Pier Farmers Market, please visit	 Diaries of a Shores Grand-Dad Fireworks Over the Matanzas
5. 5. 5.	www.wednesdaypierfarmersmarket.com/ or email staugpiermarket@gmail.com. Michael Ryan, Director of Communications – 904.209.0549 / 214.493.2983. Lauren Ferro, Communications Specialist – 904.209.0573. sjccommunications@sjcfl.us	• Wildflower Meadow



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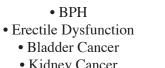


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Faver Dykes Old Florida: Enjoy the peace and tranquility of Pellicer Creek and Favor Dykes camp ground and park just down the road. Custom built in 2001, this owner left no details unturned. Spacious brick 4 bedroom 3.5 baths. Entery tile foyer with specious formal dining room and great room with large windows. Cooks dream kitchen with center island and loads of corian counters. 2 built in office areas and 3 pull out nties. Large tiled breadfast room with big windows overlooks backyard and access to large screen porch



Marshcreek: Wood floors greet you throughout the first floor of this stunning brick home custom built by original owner. First floor open and spacious formal living and dining room with high ceilings. Large crystal chandeliers in dining and foyer. Plantation shutters. The kitchen, breakfast and family with fireplace and custom built open area for spacious entertaining easy. Massing will in party with buffer bar Large island new easy. Massive walk in pantry with butler bar. Large island, new stainlesss appliances in 2012.

Paloma at State Rd 16: Lake front, 1500+ square feet, 3 bedroom 2 1/2 path town home. Convenient location near I-95 and State Rd. 16. 1 car garage. Storage under stair case. Master with bath ands 2 additinal bedrooms 2nd floor with Jack & Jill bath. Great rental history. Community pool.





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Cliff Logsdon Publisher/Editor (904) 607-1410 Email: clifflogsdon@att.net

Communities

as space permits.



Email: TatianaObserver@gmail.com

month's issue. Articles or information may be sent to the St. Augustine Observer, 1965 A1A South #120, St. Augustine Florida 32080-6509. Information may also be e-mailed to clifflogsdon@ att.net

of the month in order to appear in the following

All material submitted to the Observer is subject to editing. Publishing of submitted letters and information is at the discretion of the publisher. Views and opinions expressed are those of the writer and do not express the viewpoint of the publisher or editorial staff of the Observer.

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• Fairview Condominium Board meetings are

held on the second Tuesday of every other month at

· Greens Condominium Board meetings will vary. Contact Jeff Edwards at Sovereign-Jacobs at

• Casa Bella Condominium 2020 Board

Meetings: March 16th-6pm (Annual Meeting), April

20th- 6pm, May 4th- 6pm, June 15th- 6pm, July

20th-6pm, August 17th-6pm, September 21st-6pm,

October 19th-6pm, November 9th-6pm, December

21st- 6pm. For Information contact Ellen Lumpkin

4 p.m. at the Fairview Condo club house

p.m. at the Riverview Club.

904-461-5556

at 904-461-5556.

St. Augustine Shores

Information should be received by the 15th

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

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

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

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

St. Augustine South Community Calendar

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

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!

Tai Chi - Join Instructor Katie Monaghan for a donation based Tai Chi class on Tuesday's at 6:00PM.

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KatieMonahanTaiChi@gmail.com **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.

SASIA Board Members President - Alan Chappell 1st V.P. - Robert Kennedy 2nd V.P. - Dave Whitaker Secretary - Kate Anreise Treasurer - Margo Geer Board Member - Suzanne Godbout Board Member - Ruth Hope Board Member - Lindsay Ryan Board Member - Brad Hernandez Board Member - Jerri Sue Dawson Board Member - Dan Kelly

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The Observer offers *free community classified listings for USPS selected addresses in Southern St. Johns County and paid subscriptions.* Classifed 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.

dents/leaks. Call Leon at (904) 347-3127. **FOR SALE:** (1) 5 piece set of cymbals

including: 1 16 in ride, 1 14 in crash, 1 10 in splash, 2 14 in high hat, 1 soft carry case-\$100.00 (2) Singer 951 antique commercial sewing machine on large work table very good working condition-\$350.00 obo (3) DTX400 Yamaha electronic drum set complete w/Roland KC 150 amp, like new \$600.00 Call Frank (386) 643-9384 or 904-794-5632

FOR SALE: Big Berkey Water Filter 2.25 gallons, used 6 months \$180. Also 6ft x 4ft Hardie Boardpiece \$10. Emaol lclvt@ optonline.net

FOR SALE: 2000 Harley Davidson Electra Glide motorcycle, asking \$10,600, trike kit, low miles, garaged and maintained, very clean, many ultra classic options, Tour Pac floorboards, LED lights, cruise, radio/CD, tinted windshield, trailer hitch, no scratches/

FOR SALE: (1) Drive Rollator Walker,

never used \$35. (2) Univage 12 speed road bike, new tires, needs pedals \$50. (3) Cateye Cyclesimulator, great for indoor winter riding \$35. (4) Bubble pool cover up to 15 ft by 21 ft. \$40. Call 904-797-5023.

WANTED: House cleaner for Shores resident with 3 bed/2 bath home on Aleida Dr. I will provide cleaning supplies and equipment. Weekly or bi-monthly. \$65 for 2 and 1/2 hours. Please call with references. Call Patti at 207-515-1076.

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

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St. Augustine Shores Club News July 2020 Riverview Club Calendar

As per CDC guidelines, the Riverview Club will continue to follow the recommendation that all events of 10 people and more be cancelled/ postponed to try to halt the spread of the coronavirus. Please go to our website for updates: https://www.staugshores.org/calendar

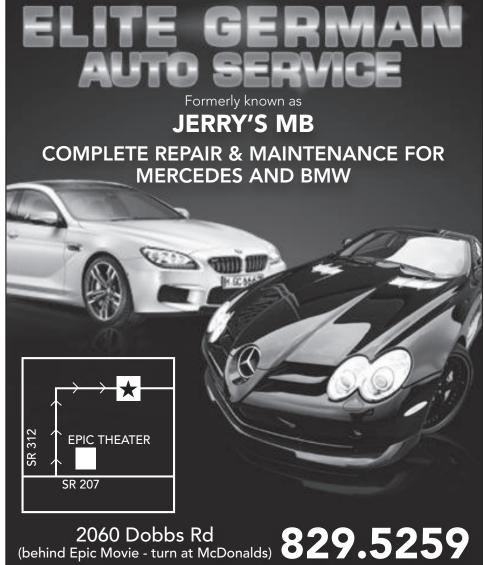
Sorry for any inconvenience this may have caused. If you have any questions, please call 904-794-2000.

An Invitation to the 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

Meetings are the Third Wednesday of every month at 11:00 am Our next group will meet on Wednesday July 15, 2020 in a Virtual Environment Check in with fellow survivors who face similar challenges to our well-being. Call 904-819-4742 for log-in information.





St. Augustine South Improvement Association (SASIA)

SASIA Upcoming Schedule of Events 2020

July 15, 2020 7pm SASIA General Meeting. We hope to have a speaker from SJC Parks and Recreation Department speaking
SASIA has reinstated Food Truck Fridays. We will be hosting food trucks on a

• SASIA has reinstated Food Truck Fridays. We will be hosting food trucks on a Friday in July and in September, and showing a movie in the clubhouse. Look for details of dates and which food trucks on our road signs and in social media. Cold beverages on sale in the SASIA Cubhouse, 709 Royal Rd.

• St Augustine South Garden Tour 2020. SASIA is organizing a tour of the best and most interesting gardens in the South in November 2020! This event is a fundraiser for the SASIA Post High School Financial Grant Program. Prizes will be awarded to the best gardens!

SASIA is observing the requirements for reducing the spread of COVID-19 during the phased reopening of Florida by limiting clubhouse occupation to 50% capacity, sanitation, and social distancing. We ask that participants at meetings and events are considerate of others by wearing a mask while inside the clubhouse. Single-use, disposable paper masks will be available at the door for those who do not have their own.

Post High School Financial Grant Program

Class of 2020, you have missed out on so many rites of passage this year, don't miss out on a chance for a SASIA Scholarship!!!

We have extended the deadline for applications to July 15, so take action to complete your application today!

Financial grants are offered by SASIA to high school graduates who are residents of St. Augustine South subdivision, to assist in further education. The grant may be applied to registration, tuition, books or other appropriate fees.

Application forms and instructions for their completion are available at:

http://staugsouth.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Scholarship-Application-2020-.

The deadline for applications has been extended and the grant awards will be announced at the General Meeting on July 15, 2020, or soon afterwards.

Packed meal distribution

On Tuesdays from April 14 to May 5, St Augustine South Improvement Association (SASIA) received and distributed packed meals from Cathlene Miler, founder of Hopefull Handbags, working with Epic Cure.

These were part of a collaboration involving multiple volunteers distributing to thousands of elderly residents of St Johns and Putnam Counties during the 'safer at home' period. Each week there were about 50 meals donated and we ensured

Each week there were about 50 meals donated and we ensured that all 38 recipients received two packed, cooked meals for at least two weeks. Our most senior neighbors received them all four weeks. SASIA was happy to help distributing a little cheer during stressful times for all – but especially stressful for our elderly and isolated neighbors.





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Fireworks Over the Matanzas Postponed

By Tatiana Diaz

The annual Fireworks Over the Matanzas fireworks display in St. Augustine has been postponed due to COVID-19 concerns. The decision was made by the St. Augustine

City Commission during the June 8 City Commission meeting. St. Augustine Mayor Tracy Upchurch cited concerns for the public during the Coronavirus pandemic as the cause for the postponement of the annual show

'Fireworks Over the Matanzas attracts thousands of visitors every year and is valued by our local businesses as well as our residents, Upchurch said in a news release on the City of St. Augustine website. "With the recent spike in COVID-19 cases reported in Florida in mind, and with a heavy heart, we



simply must postpone this year's event for the safety and health of our community. City of St. Augustine officials have not yet released a future date for the Fireworks Over the Matanzas event. The city's event calendar is empty through November 21 when the "Light Up Night" is scheduled to take place.

For questions about Fireworks Over the Matanzas, contact Melissa Wissel, City of St. Augustine Communications Manager, at (904) 825-1053.



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"Diaries of a Shores Grand-Dad"

by Dirk Schroeder

The longest day of the year, the Summer Solstice and Father's Day all happened last Sunday. From here on in, the days will slowly contain 2 minutes less of sunlight each day until December 21st. In doing the math, each month there will be about an hour less of sunlight for us Northern hemisphere folk. In 1999 I was in Stockholm, Sweden on June 21st and the sun set around 3 AM and rose around 6 AM. They take their roomdarkening shades very seriously there. It's a good thing that we live in the Sunshine State so that we have as much daylight year around to enjoy life to the fullest.

As for Father's Day, it is a day for me to look back on the life of my father who has been gone for 17 years now. As for me as a father, I'm pretty sure that our boys know that they don't have to do anything for me. It's fulfilling to me that our oldest son is the father of two bright and cheerful girls so we have something to look forward to; watching and helping him to be a good father.

I want to share something completely different. A local police department recently posted on Social Media an accident wherein a mother was driving along a major roadway. She lost control of her vehicle in a hard rain. The car flipped upside down and her daughter, was ejected from the vehicle and died. The Social Media post, where apparently it is necessary to post news like this, is open to a public forum and it became a see-saw of post - some sharing in the family's grief yet other post were demeaning comments about the mother. Nobody knew if the daughter was in the of fireworks have you ever considered are all a part of the Greatest Country in note - I wish y front or back seat. Nobody knew if she reading the Bill of Rights, the Preamble the World - even without fireworks on the State of Mind.

was buckled when she and her mother first set out and then later unbuckled herself. Instead, there's a quick rush to judge and pile on a traumatized mother who has to live without her daughter for the rest of her days. The mental anguish she and her family are suffering is unfathomable. I attended the service as our friends are the child's grandparents. It was very, very painful.

Facebook (Social Media) was intended for friends and relatives to connect with each other so that we could socialize with one another when we could not physically be together. It has evolved into a platform where many people are using it as their own public production studio where they can broadcast virtually anything. The harmful misinformation, the public shaming, the political whack-a-moling, the posturing it's becoming more hijacked every day. Maybe Zuckerberg should have called it myfriendbook.com instead (that domain name is available). Maybe people can remember to think twice and post once.

There's a mother, father and grandparents (and siblings) that are living through their darkest hour and there's a police department whose informative purpose has provided a platform for anyone and everyone to be either helpful or hurtful. Where will you be? What will your posts look like when someone comes to rush in and judge you and your posts? Thank God we're all Human

On another note, July 4th is the Saturday after next. No fireworks are planned for the City of St. Augustine. In the absence



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and the seven Articles and the twenty-seven Amendments; you may be surprised about the Blessings of Liberty and domestic tranquility in our "more perfect Union".

4th of July. With a glance to the heavens, remembering all who have sacrificed their lives to lift up our United States, to give a hand up to others around the world in the Have Faith and Hope in knowing that we name of freedom - we salute you. On that are all a part of the Greatest Country in note - I wish you all, as always, a Sunshine

ONLY YOU KNOW & I KNOW

I had submitted these Year to Date statistics to the Editor and 2019 but the month to month comparison on dollar volume had a another staff member of The Record yet neither chose to publish 5.75% drop from last year (from \$324.6 million in 2019 down to \$306 these facts in the paper. Instead, they chose to publish a real estate million in April of 2020 - a decrease in about \$19 million in sales). article wherein they quote a few Realtors opinions (not that there's anything wrong with that). So when the headline reads, "ONLY YOU KNOW AND I KNOW" - you truly will know what others don't. Right now, the State and the County is opening back up and Buyers are coming out in big numbers but what happened to the market up to the end of April?

The March month-end report indicated a record start to the 1st Quarter of 2020. The Year-to-Date (YTD) real estate activity for St. Johns County had a 15.4% increase in the number of residential sales over 2019 and a 24% increase in dollar volume - that is a huge increase.

By the end of April these numbers are still strong due to the delay in the time it takes to get from an accepted Contract to a successful closing (typically from 30-60 days). The Total Single Family category (new and resales) increased in the YTD number of sales by 10%. On the downside, the number of sales decreased by 3% when comparing April 2019 to 2020. The YTD dollar volume is still up by 14.5% over

CENTURY 21

St. Augustine Properties, Inc.

Condominiums took a small drop; from 472 Units sold in April 2019 to 457 in 2020 whereas mobile homes sold in April 2019 numbered 114 and decreased to 102 in April 2020. Commercial "Improved" sales numbered 82 in April of 2019 and increased to 89 Units sold in 2020 and the dollar volume of those sales in 2019 was at \$67.8 million and went way up to \$100 million in 2020 - a whopping 47% increase in dollar volume in commercial buildings. We'll see how that goes in May once that month is

closed out in mid-June.

The Total Dollar Volume including all categories of real estate for St. Johns County YTD to the end of April in 2019 was \$1.430 Billion and in 2020 that number increased by 19.4% to \$1.708 Billion. (All stats from Metro Market Trends) All these factors show a positive sign for St. Johns County for the time being but I will continue to monitor the hard facts to counter opinion in the coming months - good, bad or indifferent.



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Wildflower Meadow Group

by Cindy Taylor

We planted one of the variations of St. John's wort (hypericum reductum) in the upper meadow several years ago and every year they look better than the year before. They're blooming and spreading because they like where they are. The other day I saw many clusters by a path in Faver Dykes Park and their profuse and numerous, tiny flowers were a cheerful sight. If anyone wants to donate some for the meadow, please give me a call. We have only two clusters and in this case more would be better.

The *spiderwort* had grown "leggy" early in June, their blooms were no longer as profuse as in the spring, so I went the internet for advice. One website to recommended that, after the flowers are through blooming, we trim the foliage and flower stalks down to two inches above This will encourage a second the soil. blooming period, we did it during our June meeting, and hope for the best. Time will tell the rest of the story.

The *ironweed* near the old myrtle tree were beginning to bloom in early June, so was the beauty berry bush, and what we refer to as the sand-hill sunflower. There are also wood sage, rain lilies, and Indian Plantain. The fire bush and honeysuckle vine are always blooming and always appreciated.

By the way, we put fliers in the wildflower information box if you want to learn more







about the flowers you see in the meadow. Be sure to close the lid after you return them to the box; otherwise they get water-logged when it rains.

Thanks to Janet for some of the photos and for watering the meadow on Fridays (when it isn't raining). Thanks also to Loretta for watering on Wednesdays, again, when it isn't raining.

We meet at the meadow near the Riverview clubhouse at about 8:30 the first Saturday of each month. 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 and hope you will join us. Call Cindy at 904-797-3931 for more information.

South Reflections

(continued from page 1)

and the person performing illegal trimming and may require restoration of the area of illegal trimming: up to \$100 for each mangrove illegally trimmed; and up to \$250 for each mangrove illegally altered.

Many neighbors were alarmed at the beginning of June to find that some trees along Shore Dr Waterfront Park had been slashed and apparently sprayed with kerosene. This was done by County Contractors working under a grant from the State Government to remove exotic and invasive plants. The trees were camphor trees. The Contractor has also sprayed herbicide on Mexican petunia, Ruellia simplex, and Sword Fern, Nephrolepis cordifolia. We haven't had word on how the wild taro, Colocasia esculenta, and Brazilian pepper, Schinus terebinthifolia, will be removed.



News From Around St. Johns County

St. Johns Emergency Notification System for Updates during Hurricane Season

With June marking the beginning of the 2020 hurricane season, St. Johns County is encouraging all residents to sign up for Alert St. Johns, a new emergency notification system that provides critical information during emergency situations. The Alert St. Johns system enables St. Johns County, the St. Johns County Sheriff's Office, the City of St. Augustine, and the City of St. Augustine Beach to quickly inform residents regarding a variety of situations, including severe weather, unexpected road closures, water advisories, missing persons, evacuations of buildings or neighborhoods, and incidents that may threaten public safety.

Residents can sign up at www.sjcemergencymanagement.com. Those who sign up can choose to receive notifications via a phone call to their home, business, or mobile phone, by email, or text message.

The Alert St. Johns system has replaced the Code Red notification system, so it is imperative that residents sign up for these critical notifications. For more information regarding Alert St. Johns, please call 904.824.5550.

St. Augustine Travel Club

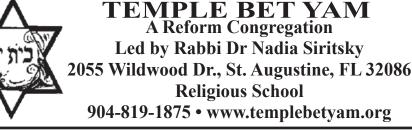
Hi everyone. As you already are aware, we have not convened our meetings since the coronavirus outbreak at the library for obvious reasons. We will be on our regular summer recess for the months of July and August. We will reassess the situation with the library as to when we will be able to restart our program, and will send an update. In the meantime, we wish everyone to be safe and enjoy your summer. Any questions, give me a call Peter Dytrych at 904 797-3736.

Appreciation Parade for Seniors

(continued from page 1)

"We want to lift their spirits and brighten their day," Leedom said of the event. "We also want to give appreciation to the employees and tell them 'Thank you for all you do for us, keeping our loved ones safe." Event organizers hope to bring back the St. Augustine Appreciation Parade next year and beyond to show their love and support to our community's seniors.







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St. Johns County Sheriff's Corner

By David Shoar, St. Johns County Sheriff

Hurricane Awareness

cover.

With the extreme effects our area received during Hurricanes Matthew and Irma several years ago and the close proximity of Hurricane Dorian last year, I feel this is an excellent time to remind our citizens and visitors to develop a Hurricane plan. Before those two devastating storms, it had been over 50 years since a hurricane struck the first coast directly from the east. That storm, Hurricane Dora has been the only one to strike our coast since records have been kept, dating back to 1851. Hurricane season began at the beginning of last month and lasts until the end of November and meteorologists are calling for an above normal amount of storms this year. According to the NOAA, they predict a total of 13 to 19 named tropical storms, of which will be 6 to 10 hurricanes with winds greater than 74mph, and 3 to 6 major hurricanes with winds greater than 115mph. This season already had nearly three named storms before the first of June. You should be familiar with the terms Hurricane Watch and Hurricane Warning. A Watch is issued when conditions are favorable that a hurricane could strike in 36 hours. A Warning is issued when hurricane force winds are expected to strike in 24 hours. By this time you should already have an emergency plan for yourself and family and begin implementation of that plan.

Some things to consider in your preliminary plans are:

• Take photos of your property from all angles, it may not look the same once the storm passes.

• Plan for elderly/handicapped/invalid care at a shelter or at home.

• Learn which routes will be safe during a storm.

• Learn where official shelters are located.

Trim any dead wood from trees prior to the storm.
Check for, fix or take note of loose items on

your structures (shutters, screens, eaves, gutters, antennas, satellites).

• Get and use a hurricane tracking chart

• Plan what you and your family will do if you have to evacuate.

• Get necessary supplies and secure them in safe area.

• Plan for pet care.

• Review your insurance coverage.

• Protect your important documents.

• Show others in the family how to turn off/on gas, electricity, and water.

• Make outside repairs.

When a Hurricane Watch for your area is issued you should do the following:

Listen to official bulletins on radio, TV, or NOAA Weather Radio, and Internet for updates.
Check all supplies you already have to

see if they are in satisfactory condition include batteries.

• Fill gas tank of vehicles, check oil and tire pressure.

Inspect mobile home tie-downs.
Board, tape, cover windows and doors or visible.

skylights. • Secure boat.

• Secure any objects and furniture that are outside.

• Check on all medical supplies, special needs for elderly, handicapped, etc.

• Plan to evacuate if necessary.

When a Hurricane Warning is issued here are some suggestions: • Stay tuned to TV, radio, Internet or NOAA

Weather Radio. • Move valuables to higher location

• Move furniture away from windows and



• Fill containers (bathtub, plastic jugs) with drinking water.

• Use phones only in an emergency.

• Bring in/secure pets (food & water).

• Shut off water and electricity at main breaker switch.

• Leave mobile homes.

• Leave low areas. If evacuating--leave early. Sometimes a hurricane path may not be predictable and evacuation orders could come at any time. If you are asked to evacuate, please do so early and know the route you will be taking. Remember there will be many folks taking the same route from a very large area so be sure to give yourself plenty of time to leave safely.

Finally, if you refuse to leave following an evacuation order, here are some safety tips for riding out the storm:

• Make sure your building is well-constructed.

• Turn the refrigerator to maximum cold.

• Freeze water in plastic containers, if the electricity goes off you can use the ice to keep food cold in the refrigerator.

• Turn off utilities if told to do so by the authorities.

• Unplug small appliances.

• Fill bathtub and containers with water.

Stay indoors.

• Prepare for storm surge and possible flooding.

• Plan what to do if the winds become too strong.

• Stay away from windows and doors, even if covered.

• Stay in a small interior room, hallway, or closet.

• Close all inside doors, brace exterior doors. • If you have a two-story house, stay on the first floor.

• Lie on the floor or under a table or other sturdy object.

Hurricane preparedness is critically important for the 2020 hurricane season, just as it is every year. Keep in mind, you may need to adjust any preparedness actions based on the latest health and safety guidelines from the CDC and your local officials. You can visit the National Hurricane Center's website at hurricanes.gov throughout the season to stay current on any watches and warnings. Now is the time to go over your hurricane preparedness plan. If you have not made any emergency plans, you should do them now. Planning ahead will save you unnecessary stress from not knowing what to do or not having the supplies you will need to get you through the hurricane watch, warning, storm, and aftermath. Print and post this list on the refrigerator or somewhere it will be easily seen.





Computer Corner

by Steven Aldrich 904-479-5661

Office365 Subscription... Is there an alternative?

I remember when software was a lot less expensive, and if you bought it you owned it... forever. It seems like that model is being pushed aside, in favor of subscription-based software licensing. Most of the software I use on a daily basis, I do not technically "own". I am renting it via a subscription which is paid monthly or annually.

It used to be that you would get a CD (or several floppy disks) that you would use to install software. The software came in a box that had an install code you used to prove that you "owned" it. You could install it on several computers, and life was good. Now, most software comes via a downloaded installer and each time you use the software, it checks online to see if you have a current license.

One specific example is Microsoft Office. Many of my clients seldom use Office products like Word or Excel. Even so, when they need it, well.... they need it! But is it worth \$69 per year? Hard to say

Occasionally clients ask what alternatives might there be, how hard would it be to learn how to use the alternative, and how much will it cost? Luckily there are several highly respected,

FREE alternatives. Some will open old Word documents, and some will even save documents in a format that Word users can open. This is important if you are sharing documents with others that only use Word.

Three alternatives are; Libreoffice, OpenOffice, and FreeOffice. All are free to use "forever". As with all software, each has its own set of capabilities and limitations. Recently I tested FreeOffice and found it to be easy to use. It will open Microsoft Word docs, as well as save docs so that I can open them in Word.

If you decide that you would like to try one of these free alternatives, please be certain that you get the "official" product. This can be done by going to any of the following sites: LibreOffice.org, OpenOffice.org, or FreeOffice.com. All three of these Office alternatives run on Windows, Mac and Linux.

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. See my ad on this page. Steve@fccspro.com or (904) 479-5661.



Steve has been my go-to IT professional for going on five years now. He has always provided us with timely and affordable service. He has extended the life of my office equipment, improved my networking capabilities, assisted with new network printers, and on many occasions, recommended affordable

solutions for small office security and efficiency.

I have and will continue to recommend Steve to all my friends and clients.

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Financial Focus

Information Provided by

Edward Jones

Work to Achieve Your **Financial Independence**

everyone has felt the loss of some type of freedom, whether it's being able to travel, engage in social gatherings or participate in other activities we previously took for granted. Still, as we prepare to observe Independence Day, it's comforting to realize all the freedoms we still have in this country. And taking the right steps can also help you achieve your financial independence.

Here are some moves to consider:

• Build an emergency fund. It's a good idea to create an emergency fund consisting of three to six months' worth of living expenses, with the money held in a liquid, low-risk account. With this fund in place, you can avoid dipping into your longterm investments to pay for short-term, unexpected costs.

Keep your debts under control. It's not easy to do, but if you can consistently minimize your debt load, you can have more money to invest for the future and move closer toward achieving your financial liberty. One way to keep your debts down is to establish a budget and stick to it, so you can avoid unnecessary spending.

• Contribute as much as possible to your retirement plans. The more money you can save for retirement, the greater your feelings of financial independence. So it's essential that you contribute as much as you can to your 401(k) or similar employersponsored retirement plan. At a minimum, put in enough to earn your employer's match, if one is offered, and every time your salary goes up, boost your annual contributions. Even if you participate in a 401(k), you're probably also still eligible to contribute to an IRA, which can help you build even more funds for retirement. And because you can fund an IRA with virtually any type of investment, you can broaden your portfolio mix.

• Explore long-term care coverage.One day, your financial independence could be

consequences.

To learn more, call today.

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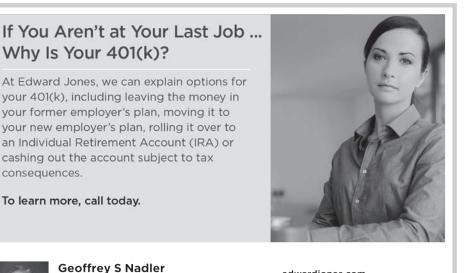


Over the past few months, just about threatened by your need for some type of long-term care. It now costs, on average, over \$100,000 for a private room in a nursing home and more than \$50,000 for the services of a home health aide, according to Genworth, an insurance company. Most of these costs won't be covered by Medicare, either, so, if you want to reduce the risk of seriously depleting all your financial resources - or burdening your adult children with these heavy expenses – you may want to consider some type of long-term care insurance. You could choose a traditional long-term care policy – which can cover a nursing home stay, home health care, or other services – or a hybrid policy, which provides long-term care coverage plus a death benefit.

· Manage withdrawals carefully. Once you retire, your financial freedom will depend a great deal on how skillful you are in managing the money in your retirement accounts. Specifically, you need to be careful about how much you withdraw from these accounts each year. If you set a withdrawal rate that's too high in your early years of retirement, you might eventually risk outliving your resources. So, set a withdrawal rate that reflects your age, assets, retirement lifestyle and other factors. You may want to consult with a financial professional to establish an appropriate rate.

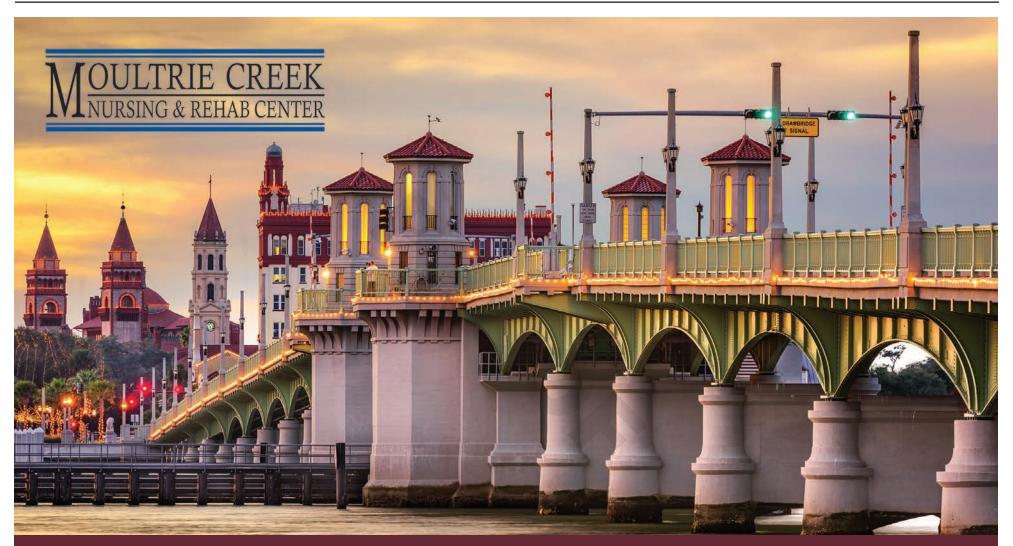
As you can see, working toward your financial independence is a lifelong activity but it's worth the effort.

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