



The Islander

September 2016

A Publication of the St. George Island Civic Club

The next club meeting will be on September 15; the Speaker will be
Lois Swoboda

St. George Island Civic Club to hold Political Forums

Join the SGI Civic Club on September 21 and 28 as we host the candidates for positions for the formal election in November.

Vice-President Diane Bodenhamer is head of a committee to set up the agenda and can be reached at bodenhmr@me.com.

The Civic Club will not endorse any candidate, but will provide information to assist our members in determining for whom to vote. More info to come.

Summer Bingo Ends Season

The total money collected during Summer Bingo exceeded \$5,300. Our goal of \$10,000 was collected in 2016. At the August meeting, it was decided to research the cost of a new Bingo machine and bring the results to the September meeting.

Drug Intrigue in Franklin County

By Lois Swoboda

In the mid-seventies, Franklin County was a hotbed of intrigue and smuggling.

Loads of cash and boatloads of contraband, swingers and police officers with a blind eye and perhaps an open hand were all factors in the bizarre disappearance of two yachts that sailed under the Gorrie Bridge and into a fog of confusion and conflicting clues.

What happened to the Pirate's Lady and the Flying Dutchman? Find out Sept. 15.

Island Survives Arrival of Hurricane Hermine

On Wednesday, August 30, St. George Island began its watch for landfall of Hurricane Hermine with a mandatory evacuation of nonresidents. Some rain and heavy wind began hitting the Island that afternoon.

On Thursday, the Tropical Depression, moved into a Tropical Storm and then the final move to a Category 1 Hurricane. The Sheriff's department began restricting access to the Island via the bridge that morning and closing it when winds were consistently at 45 mph. Winds were around 60 mph at landfall with the eye going East of us and going in at St. Marks in Wakulla County. The Island didn't lose power and most residents who stayed also had cable and internet service.

Water went over U.S. 98 in several places with the most publicized in Lanark Village. On the Island itself, the surge intruded on many of the Bayfront homes and across the road around Sunset Beach and 300 Ocean Mile. Several Civic Club members had dock damage and water surge damage under their homes. There was fascia damage to several homes on the Gulf. One of the two homes that caught fire on the Island in August lost the membrane that had been placed on the roof. The roof was damaged when the Volunteer Fire Department had to cut holes in it to address the fire.

Island has Two Homes catch fire on successive days in August

The St. George Island Volunteer Fire Department reacted quickly when 2 lightning strikes caused fires. One of the fires was on West Gulf Beach Drive and Fire Chief Jay Abbott was injured slightly during the action.

The Second fire was in Sunset Beach where another lightning bolt hit one of the homes next to East Gulf Beach Drive. Chief Abbott was able to attend this fire after his injury.

September Sunset/Moonrise Climb at SGI Lighthouse

The September Sunset Climb at the Cape St. George Lighthouse will take place from 7:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. on Friday, September 16. This full Moon corresponds with the time of harvesting corn. It is also called the Barley Moon because it is the time to harvest and thresh the ripened barley. The Harvest Moon is the full Moon nearest the autumnal equinox, which can occur in September or October and is bright enough to allow finishing all the harvest chores.

Admission for the climb is \$15 (\$10 for St. George Lighthouse Association members) and includes snacks and a sparkling cider toast.

Please call the Lighthouse Gift Shop at 850-927-7745 to make reservations as space is restricted.

Upcoming Events

3rd annual Franklin County Locals Rib Cook-Off

On Monday, September 5th, there will be a food and fun fundraiser to benefit Franklin Needs and raise money for their 2016 PINK OUT event. Enjoy free kayak and paddleboard demos by Journey's of SGI. \$10 BBQ plates on sale at 11 am. Event will be held on St. George Island at Regatta Park (9th Street and West Bay Shore Drive).



Seagrass Exploration Class

The Apalachicola National Estuarine Research Reserve will offer a Seagrass Ecology Class on Friday, September 9th, from 12:00-4:00 p.m. at 3915 State Road 30-A, Port St Joe.

The class will feature an overview of the delicate seagrass ecosystem, basics of life in a seagrass bed, as well as the intricate ties between organisms, and the importance of conservation and protection efforts in our area. Be prepared to get wet! Participants will put their knowledge to the test in a guided snorkeling tour of the crystal clear seagrass beds in St Joseph Bay. Class fee is \$25 per person, registration is required. Please visit gulfalliancetraining.com to register or call (850) 670-7743. Attendees must know how to swim and bring their own snorkeling gear.

Invasive Exotic Species ID and Control Workshop

On Thursday, September 15, there will be an ID and Control Workshop at 108 Island Drive in Eastpoint. Many exotic plants are invasive weeds that spread quickly. The rapid and effective dispersal characteristics of these invaders make them extremely *(See Exotic Species, page Three)*

(Exotic Species, From Page Two)
difficult to eliminate or manage. This workshop will focus on some of the more common and troublesome invasive exotic plants and animals in this region and current strategies to control them. A \$10 fee covers lunch and materials. Please register online at <http://www.gulfalliancetraining.org/detail.aspx?Id=118>. You can also reserve a space by contacting Anita Grove at the Reserve at (850) 670-7708, Anita.Grove@dep.state.fl.us. Pesticide Applicator and Forestry Continuing Education Credits are approved. The workshop will be held at 108 Island Drive, Eastpoint

Rock By The Sea LITE



From Thursday, September 22, through Sunday, September 25, Rock by the Sea Lite will be held at Harry A's Restaurant and Bar at 28 W. Bayshore Drive on St. George Island.

Rock by the Sea Lite is 3-night charity music event. It is an intimate showcase of music. The event includes a Golf Tournament at St. James Bay Golf Resort in St. James.

Rock by the Sea, Inc. is dedicated to organizing music festivals and events where money is raised to assist deserving charities who provide direct services to those in need. Every Rock by the Sea event is an intimate showcase of music designed to bring people together for the love of music and the common goal of helping these charities.

For more information, go to rockbythesea.org/

National Estuaries Day 2016



The Apalachicola National Estuarine Research Reserve (ANERR) will celebrate National Estuaries Day on Friday, September 23, from 1:30-6:00 p.m., at 108 Island Drive, Eastpoint. Activities will include dozens of free, fun and educational activities for kids and adults including marine animal touch tanks, lessons on casting a fishing rod, and estuary-themed games.

During Estuaries Day, visitors will be able to interact with researchers and volunteers from the Apalachicola National Estuarine Research Reserve, St. Joseph Bay State Buffer Preserve, the Environmental Cooperative Science Center (FAMU), Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, Gulf Specimen Marine Lab, and Florida State University Coastal and Marine Lab.

Attendees can also tour the ANERR's impressive 5,400 square foot Nature Center with its three large, clear sided aquariums filled with local sea life, an 80-foot long mural depicting the area ecosystems, and a hands on Bay Discovery Room.

A temporary interactive exhibit entitled *Seagrass is My Home* invites participants to assume the role of a young estuarine animal and step through life in an estuary, learning about the benefits that seagrass provides and (*See Estuaries Day, Page Five*)

(Estuaries Day, From Page Four)

the dangers that threaten seagrass habitat. The first 600 people to arrive will get a free National Estuaries Day T-shirt, and there will be door prizes for adults to win at the end of the day. Children must be accompanied by an adult. For more information contact the Apalachicola National Research Reserve at 850-670-7700.

Whatever Floats Your Boat Regatta



On Saturday, September 24, it's time once again to challenge friends, family and colleagues to build boats out of stuff that any normal person would take to the dump and enter them in the **Whatever Floats Your Boat Regatta** at the Florida State University Coastal and Marine Laboratory. Boats can be as artistic or as whacky as can be made. Just build them and they will float . . . more or less.

Landlubbers will be busy ashore cheering on the captains and crews of these outrageously constructed vessels as they sail, row, or scull around the course, topple over, or slowly sink into Apalachee Bay. Watch the Regatta from various shoreline vantage points around the lab on either side of the boat basin. Enjoy good food, have loads of fun, all while learning about recycling and how to reduce the impact of plastics in our marine environments.

Visit the website at www.marinelab.fsu.edu/outreach/regatta/ to see more details and register. Or call 850-697-4120 for more information.

Paddling Trip

Join the Apalachicola Riverkeepers on their monthly paddling trip on Saturday, September 24 in and around the Apalachicola River and Bay. The trips are free to members and \$30 for non-members. In addition to their monthly paddling trips, the Apalachicola Riverkeepers are also hosting longer paddling excursions (10+) miles which are best suited for paddlers with experience.

For more information, call 850-653-8936, or go to www.apalachicolariverkeeper.org

Smithsonian National Museum Day

This marks the tenth consecutive year that the Camp Gordon Johnston WWII Museum has been asked to participate in the Smithsonian Magazine's Annual National Museum Day on Saturday, September 24. The museum is located in the Carrabelle Municipal Complex, at 1001 Gray Ave., Carrabelle. Visitors are welcome from 10 A.M. until 4 P.M. Come view the ever-growing exhibits. The gift shop will be open all day. Hear live music and enjoy free refreshments! As always, admission is by donation. For further information on National Museum Day, please visit Smithsonianmagazine.com/museumday, call (850) 697-8575 or go to www.campgordonjohnston.com

Bay Friendly Landscaping Workshop

The Apalachicola National Estuarine Research Reserve at 108 Island Drive in Eastpoint will host a Bay Friendly Landscaping workshop on Friday, September 30, from 1:00-3:30 pm. Yard design and maintenance can have a big effect on adjacent water bodies. Learn to be Bay Friendly by implementing so simple techniques. Participants will learn about *(See Landscaping, Page Five)*

(Landscaping, From Page Four)

resources to help them transform their yard into a lush bay conscious landscape. The class will also feature innovative Green Infrastructure techniques such as rain gardens, green roofs, bio-swales, and more.

Following the discussion portion of the workshop participants will have the option to assemble their own rain barrel that they can take home. The workshop will be held at the Apalachicola National Estuarine Research Reserve, 108 Island Drive, Eastpoint. The class is free; rain barrels are \$20.00 per barrel. Please register for the class in advance. For more information contact Emily Jackson at 850-670-7743 or send an email to emily.a.jackson@dep.state.fl.us.

Thanks to the Franklin County Tourist Development Council for Upcoming Events. Go to: <http://www.saltyflorida.com/events>

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The Islander is edited by Eric Roberts