



The Islander

October 2016

A Publication of the St. George Island Civic Club
The next club meeting will be on October 20. This our Annual Pig
Roast and Luau at Lighthouse Park, No Speaker

St. George Island Civic Club holds Political Forums

The SGI Civic Club held its first political forums on September 20 and 21. According to feedback from attendees, the forums sponsored by the Civic Club were a success. The forum committee collected concerns and issues in the prior weeks to formulate the panel questions, and audience members were able to submit questions each evening on 3x5 cards.

Three panels were held on Tuesday 9/20 with an audience of around 75 people. First up was Marcia Johnson, candidate for Clerk of Court (her opponent, Penny Sutton, was unable to attend due to a family emergency). The second panel included candidates for School Superintendent, Frank Stephens and Terri Moses. The final panel was comprised of Heather Crum and Pinki Jackel, candidates for Supervisor of Elections.

Two panels were held the following evening, Wednesday 9/21, again with around 75 attendees. The first panel was the candidates for Sheriff - AJ "Tony" Smith, Terry Martin, and Brad Segree (Spence Massey did not attend). The second panel was Rick Watson and Ricky Dallas Jones, candidates for District One County Commissioner.

Questions were asked by a panel consisting of Club Vice-President Diane Bodenhamer and members Susan Kearney and Mason Bean. Sharon Matthewson also assisted in the preparation of the programs.

Summer Bingo Ends Season

The total money collected during 2016 (both exceeded \$5,300. At the September meeting a motion was made and approved to purchase a new machine not to exceed \$8,000.

Piracy in the Panhandle

The State of Florida has over 1,350 miles of coastline. During Prohibition, many of those miles, including around Apalachicola, were used by "Rum Runners" to deliver alcohol. At the September meeting, local reporter and author Lois Swoboda talked about how those same waters became littered with square backed grouper, a reference to the bales of cocaine and marijuana found floating in the Gulf.

Her presentation centered around the
(*See Piracy, Page Two*)

October Sunset/Moonrise Climb at SGI Lighthouse

The October Full Moon Climb at the Cape St. George Lighthouse on St. George Island will be held on Saturday, October 15. The Sunset/Full Moon Climb will take place from 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. and will include light hors d'oeuvres and a sparkling cider toast to the full moon. Cost is \$15.00 for the general public and \$10.00 for members of the St. George Lighthouse Association. The October full moon is called the Hunters moon because deer are fattened and being
(*See Lighthouse, Page Two*)

(Piracy, From Page One)

disappearance of three boats: The Flying Dutchman, The Pirate's Lady and The Gunsmoke.

The Flying Dutchman - A 47-foot Concorde Sport Fisherman worth \$75,000 (\$320,000 today).

It left the Sheraton Marina in Fort Walton Beach on October 24, 1976, headed for Fort Lauderdale. The trip was expected to last for 10 to 12 days.

At 2:48 p.m. October 26, 1976, it passed under the John Gorrie Bridge and disappeared along with the owner and three passengers.

The wife of the owner, John Dijt, said he told her on October 23 they had electrical problems and a dispute with someone at the marina in Fort Walton. The dock attendant disagreed about electrical problems. A \$5000 reward for information was later raised to \$25000.

The Pirate's Lady – Valued at \$1 million (\$4 million today). It was a 75-foot yacht built by the Burger Boat Company and was on its Maiden Voyage. It was owned by Champagne Charlie Slater who had a Fleet of 21 ships.

The Pirate's Lady left New Orleans on January 24 or 25 traveling on the intercoastal waterway. She stopped over in Apalachicola on January 26 because she was experiencing minor engine trouble.

They docked at Miller Marine Dock on January 26, 1977, and had dinner at the Grill.

The Pirate's Lady was seen leaving early the next morning by a shrimper returning to port. The captain said it was going like "A bat out of hell..."

A massive search for the two boats covered more than 100,000 square miles and cost more than \$500,000.

In addition to the Coast Guard, Slater deployed part of his own fleet to search the area near where the Pirate's Lady was last seen.

The official search was called off in mid-February, but Slater continued to hunt for his yacht and is rumored to have taken a private army to Costa Rica during his search.

In 1992 the burned hull of the Pirate's Lady was discovered off Carrabelle. The Florida Marine Patrol ruled it an accident; Charlie Slater disagreed.

Missing from the Pirate's Lady were 2 motorcycles, the life boat, a safe containing \$15,000 and the crew.

The Gunsmoke – A 70-foot shrimp boat loaded with 26 tons of marijuana worth \$21,000,000. It was the largest shipment ever brought into US waters at the time.

An FBI Sting at Sandy Creek was exposed when two men and two teenage girls came upon the unloading of the drugs and were murdered. Their remains were found in a sink-hole in Taylor County months later.

This is known in the Panhandle area as the Sandy Creek murders.

The Gunsmoke was found sunken in the Gulf off Tampa Bay.

Lois' last comment was "What happened to the Flying Dutchman and the Pirate's Lady? Were the crimes related?"

(Lighthouse, From Page One)

hunted to store up meat for the winter ahead. Since fields have been harvested, fox and other animals feeding on the grain refuse can be easily spotted by hunters. Full Moon names are attributable to Native American tribes, most notably the Algonquin, who named the moons to mark the changing seasons.

After sunset, people are invited to climb to the top of the lighthouse for a breathtaking view of the full moon, as space and time permit. Cost is \$10.00 for the general public and \$5.00 for SGLA members.

Parking is available in lots at either side of sun will set at 7:08 p.m. and the

(See Lighthouse on Page Three)

(Lighthouse, From Page Two)

“Hunters” moon will rise also at 7:08 p.m. the park.

Because space is limited, reservations are recommended. For reservations or more information, please contact the Lighthouse Gift Shop at 850-927-7745.

Upcoming Events

Lantern Making Workshop

Lantern making workshop with) Laurel Newman 1-4pm on October 1 and October 8 at the Crooked River Lighthouse on U.S.98 West in Carrabelle. Construct paper lanterns for the Lantern Fest on October 22. Cost is \$5



materials fee. Please call and reserve a spot for workshops at the lighthouse as space is limited - 850-697-2732. Sponsored by the Carrabelle Lighthouse & Carrabelle Artist Associations.

The Recollections in Concert

An evening of Jazz and Popular music on Friday, October 7 at Rio Carrabelle at 102 James Avenue beginning at 7:30 pm. Cover is \$10.00. THE RECOLLECTIONS are: Tony Partington - vocals & percussion, Frank Miceli - keyboard, Bo May - saxophone & clarinet, Tony Chapman - saxophone & guitar, David Wentzell - percussion. For more information, please call 952-491-0131.

Estuary Workshop

What is an estuary and why it is so vital to the economy and way of life? Join the Apalachicola National Estuarine Research Reserve on Friday, October 7, from 12:00-4:00pm and explore the estuary. Participants will learn about the habitats and creatures that make up the estuary and how the river and bay are intricately connected. You will see these habitats up close on the Reserve’s research vessel. The workshop will be based out of the Apalachicola National Estuarine Research Reserve, 108 Island Drive, Eastpoint, FL 32328. The class is \$25.00. Please register for in advance. For more information contact Emily Jackson at 850-670-7743 or send an email to emily.a.jackson@dep.state.fl.us or Anita Grove at (850) 670-7708 or Anita.Grove@dep.state.fl.us.

St. George Island Art & Wine Splash

Art show begins at noon on Saturday, October 8. Wine tasting tickets \$20, 3-6 pm. For details call 850-323-1260 or go to www.sgisplash.com



Oyster Workshop

On Thursday, October 13, at ANERR, 108 Island Drive, Eastpoint, discover the important role oysters play in the health of Apalachicola Bay. Participants will learn about what makes Apalachicola Bay so ideal for growing oysters, what gives Apalachicola oysters their distinct taste and how oysters benefit the ecosystem. Please register in advance. For more information contact Emily Jackson at 850-670-7743 or send an email emily.a.jackson@dep.state.fl.us or Anita Grove at (850) 670-7708 or Anita.Grove@dep.state.fl.us.

Gumbo Cook-Off & Car Show

Come help a neighbor on Saturday, October 15 at the Red Pirate at 236 Highway 98 in Eastpoint! The gumbo cook-off and car show will raise funds for the Franklin



County Fire Victim Relief Fund. Contact Richard 850-370-0655 or Jimmy 850-670-1090 for more information.

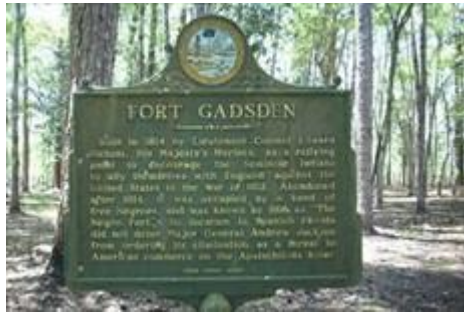
Lighthouse Lantern Fest

The Crooked River Lighthouse in Carrabelle, presents LANTERN FEST on Saturday, October 22, 5-10 PM. Shipwreck tales, glowing lanterns, music and night time tower climbs, bring magic & history together! Join us to celebrate another birthday for this 1895 maritime landmark. Admission: Adult \$4, Child \$2
Special Evening Tower Climbs: Adult \$5, Child \$3
Activities include: An exciting original play based on a documented shipwreck on our Forgotten Coast in 1766 (at 8 pm); Musician, Michael Pace; The dazzling TCC Dancers (at 9 pm); Moonlight Tower Climbs; Candle Dipping and Ancient Crafts; Star Gazing with the Tallahassee Astronomers Club; Children's Activities; Enchanting Glowing Lantern Display; *(See Lantern Fest, Page Five)*

(Lantern Fest, From Page Four)

Museum and Gift Shop Open; and Good Food and Desserts! For more information, please call 850-697-2732 or go to www.crookedriverlighthouse.org

Celebration of Fort at Prospect Bluff



You're invited to the 200th anniversary celebration of the Fort at Propsect Bluff in the Apalachicola National Forest: Saturday, October 22.

This commemorative event at British Fort (Fort Gadsden) National Historic Landmark is free to the public.

Gates open at 10 AM. Closes at 3 PM Eastern Time.

Tour the site and learn from local historians. Commemorative program is 11:30 AM - 12:30 PM. Bring a picnic lunch and have fun exploring all day!

Directions: From Eastpoint travel North on SR 65 to Sumatra, Turn right on Brickyard Road (also Forest Road 129, unpaved). Look for event marked parking.

For more information, please go to www.fs.usda.gov/apalachicola

Autos & Oysters Auto Show

The Autos and Oysters Car Show, on Saturday, October 29, at 199 Water Street, Apalachicola, will showcase the cars of local collectors and will also attract enthusiasts from throughout the region. The show will be followed by a sock hop on the



City Docks Saturday night featuring local refreshments, music, and oysters. It promises to be a fun, family-friendly weekend for all!

The Sock Hop will be held at Riverfront Park, and the Car Show will be held on Water Street. Both events are free and open to the public. To register for the car show [click here to download a registration form](#).

[Download a PDF version](#) of the flyer.

PACKAGE DEALS for Autos & Oysters Car Show - October 28-30, 2016

Stay with one of our participating lodging providers...

Water Street Hotel (\$15 off nightly rate)

Coombs House Inn (\$20 off nightly rate)

The Flat at 49 Palmetto (\$15 off nightly rate; 2 night minimum)

And receive coupons for shopping and dining discounts!

10% off your meal at Tamara's Café

10% off your meal at Tamara's Tapas Bar

10% off your purchase of \$10 or more at Apalach Outfitters

10% off your purchase of \$10 or more at

The Tin Shed Nautical Antiques

For more information, please call 844-272-2523 or

go to www.downtownapalachicola.com

Apalachicola Historic Ghostwalk

Hauntings will abound at Apalachicola's Chestnut Street Cemetery on Saturday, October 29 when local history enthusiasts don the garb and take on the persona of the *(See Ghostwalk, on Page Six)*

(Ghostwalk, From Page Five)

cemetery's more notable inhabitants to tell their tale of life in Apalachicola more than 100 years ago.

The Ghostwalk will be held 6:30-8:30 pm. at the Chestnut Street Cemetery on Hwy 98 in Apalachicola. Tickets sold the night of the event at the main entrance on Hwy 98 or



advance tickets may be purchased online at : www.apalachicolahistoricalsociety.org.

Admission is \$5, children under 12 free with an adult all proceeds will be used for cemetery restoration.

Florida Seafood Festival

The Florida Seafood Festival, the oldest seafood festival in Florida, is held the 1st weekend of November. This year it will be held on Friday, November 4 and Saturday, November 5. It annually draws tens of thousands of visitors to the historic town of Apalachicola in scenic Franklin County. The Festival is held at the mouth of the

Apalachicola river under the shady oaks of Apalachicola's Battery Park. The festival



features delicious seafood, arts and crafts exhibits, seafood related events, Musical Entertainment. Some of the notable events include Oyster Eating and Oyster Shucking contest, Blue Crab Races, Photo Contest, Parade, 5k Redfish Run, The Blessing of the Fleet, History of the Festival Exhibit and Tonging For Treasure. For more information, please call 850-653-4720 or go to www.floridaseafoodfestival.com

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