



# INSIGHT

INTO YOUR CITY GOVERNMENT

November 2005  
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CITY OF ST. AUGUSTINE • THE NATION'S OLDEST CITY

## Old but new lighting fixtures at city hall

City of St. Augustine  
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### IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

Emergency.....	911
Fire/Non-Emergency.....	825.1098
Police/Non-Emergency.....	825.1070
Water Bills/Customer Service.....	825.1037
Utility Dept/After Hours.....	825.1044
Planning/Building.....	825.1065
Trash Pickup.....	825.1040
City Clerk.....	825.1005
Neighborhood Council.....	825.1053

### Project updates

#### Bridge of Lions Rehabilitation Project

Work on the temporary bridge is continuing. For more information regarding the rehabilitation, please visit the Florida Dept. of Transportation's Web site at [ww.fdotbridgeoflions.com](http://www.fdotbridgeoflions.com).

#### Seawall Reconstruction Project

The project received an approval for an Opinion of Appropriateness from the Historic Architectural Review Board (HARB). The next step to receive a Certificate of Appropriateness from HARB.

#### City Hall holiday closings

City Hall will be closed the following dates:

- November 11 - Veteran's Day
- November 24-25 - Thanksgiving
- December 23 - 26 - Christmas
- January 2 - New Year's Day

Whenever possible, the City of St. Augustine works to return its publicly owned buildings to their unique past by accurate restoration of facilities to their original condition.

The Alcazar Hotel, now housing City Hall and Lightner Museum, was built in 1888 the same year the Hotel Ponce de Leon, now Flagler College, opened for its initial season.

Today, newly arrived city residents comment quite frequently, "I love it here in St. Augustine because of the history." And even the least knowledgeable of local historians know that Henry Flagler built both of these structures as well as many others throughout downtown that have achieved the status of true landmarks.

Taking a closer look one sees many similarities, perhaps because they were both designed by the architectural team of Thomas Hastings and John M. Carrere. And both were constructed using poured concrete and share the intricate details in terra cotta, although the Ponce is considered Spanish Renaissance and

the Alcazar is Moorish Revival. A closer examination reveals other similarities right down to the facades and lighting fixtures.



When Flagler College received a grant four years ago to refurbish much of the 19th century property, among the restored items were the original wrought iron lighting fixtures in the loggia area off the main building's courtyard.

Photographs taken soon after the Alcazar opened

verify the same lighting fixtures were originally used in the loggia areas of the hotel. It's not known what became of the fixtures when they were replaced with the present hanging lamps. The City recently embarked on a restoration project that will replace the present lighting fixtures with historically correct ones identical to the fixtures at Flagler College.

The hanging fixtures are surrounded by a cast iron frame with brackets and chains holding the light globe. A prototype now hangs just outside the entrance to The Alcazar Room where the City Commission meets.

The new loggia fixtures are similar to the upright light fixtures along the perimeter wall in front of the Alcazar along King St. and facing Flagler College. Last year after one of those exterior fixtures was discovered in a storage area of City Hall, it was used as the template to manufacture the new outside fixtures which were installed a year ago.

The new loggia lighting fixtures are expected to be completed before the end of the year.

### Nights of Lights begins November 19

All over the City of St. Augustine crews of city workers, residents and business owners have been checking connections and replacing light bulbs, because no one wants to be left in the dark with the *Nights of Lights* begins its 12th year on November 19.

Early in October city crews began stringing

lights in the ancient oaks that canopy the Plaza de la Constitucion, but in other locations lighting preparations on public buildings have been in the works since mid-summer.

Joining in the preparations have been the hundreds of residents and business owners who participate in the holiday

lighting extravaganza each year.

The *Nights of Lights* Celebration begins at 4:30 p.m. in the Plaza with holiday spirited musical entertainment and then the "throwing of the switch" is at 6:45 p.m.

(continued next page)

## Nights of Lights (continued)

### Twelve Years

Today the *Nights of Lights* is recognized as one of the Southeast's major seasonal events, delivering holiday excitement annually since 1993.

St. Augustine's success with the *Nights of Lights* lies partially in the fact that the city has such a large volume of unique historic structures in a very compact area. When outlined in light, the sweeping Bridge of Lions, the many arched doorways of Spanish Colonial homes, the sturdy towers of the 19th Century hotels together with the huge oaks in the parks and the tall straight palms that line the streets all come together in a seamless display of light.

### A Celebration

The program begins at 4:30 p.m. with a holiday performance.

Then at 5:30 p.m., the All Star Orchestra, under the direction of Gary Strohminger, returns for an encore performance. The popular 20-piece band, performing from the Gazebo, will fill the Plaza with great swing and big band sounds.

### Throwing the Switch

The lighting ceremony begins at 6:30 p.m. when St. Augustine Mayor George Gardner continues the tradition of asking a member of the community to step onto the stage and assist members of the City Commission in lighting the city's official Christmas tree.

Once the tree is illuminated, it is time to light-up the city. Again, Mayor Gardner will honor a member of the community by asking that he or she join "flip-the-switch" when the Ancient City instantly dazzles in light.

If past years are any indication, the throngs gathered for the lighting remain in the city for hours afterwards for dinner or dessert or to meet friends, stroll the streets and admire the bright decorations that mark the beginning of two-and-a-half months of special holiday events.

Truly it is one of the most festive times of year for a city that thrives on festivals.

## Neighborhood Research Library

Miss a presentation at a citizen board meeting or a city commission meeting?

The Neighborhood Research Library has copies of all the presentations for the public to review.

Also available are various publications for residents regarding their city government.

For information call 825.1053 M-F from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

## Hey...we're in St. Augustine, right?

Where are we?

Calls come in to City Hall regularly with questions about city government, however, many times the callers are located outside the city limits and live in St. Johns County or another of St. Johns County's municipalities.

"But my mailing address says St. Augustine, FL?" The postal mailing address is not necessarily within the city limits. In fact within the city limits there are three postal mailing zip codes, 32084, 32080 and 32086 out of a

total of ten countywide with two being Jacksonville zip codes, one Elkton and one Hastings.

And since the city provides water and sewer to some residents outside the city limits, that isn't the gauge either. However, if you're billed by the City of St. Augustine for water, sewer and trash and stormwater, bets are that you're within the city limits.

If you still have questions about where you live call the Neighborhood Council Office at 825.1053.

## Mom isn't here...pick up after yourself

As responsible business owners and residents of such a lovely city which hosts more than six million visitors yearly, we want our city, our businesses, our yards and our neighborhoods to be clean and clear of trash and debris.

In order for public places to remain clean, the city employs more

than 14 people working full or part-time to pick up trash and empty trash containers.

Know though, that we also have a responsibility to clean our own areas at home and work.

Take pride of your place and pick up after yourself, please.

## Mooring fields for boaters on horizon

The City of St. Augustine is not only the Nation's Oldest City but also the Nation's Oldest Port City.

The number of boats visiting and staying in and around the waterways of the city has increased over the last years.

This increase has resulted in new challenges including abandoned and derelict boats, lack of proper sewage disposal from boats and encroachment on private property as some boaters tie dinghies in unauthorized locations.

With the assistance of the University of Florida's Center for Governmental Responsibility and the Florida Sea Grant, the city recently headed a workshop to receive input from the public.

The resulting harbor management plan includes waterways from the Usina Bridge at Vilano Beach south to the Mickler-O'Connell Bridge.

Included would be designated no anchor areas, other areas where transit boaters may anchor for a limited amount of time and the creation of mooring fields, which are defined as permanent buoys for tying up vessels. The plan's primary goal is to provide a safer and cleaner harbor that will, in the end, be accessible by a greater number of boaters.

Additional comments from the public are welcome by calling the City of St. Augustine at 825.1015 or visiting the city's web site.

## Notes of interest

Dog and cat tags for the City of St. Augustine are now available for the 2005-2006 fiscal year.

Bring your current rabies certificate and \$3 for a male or spayed female and \$5 for a female which has not been spayed.



Your monthly water bill has updated and important information each month in the notes section on the front page.

And if you have a change of address or telephone, please call Customer Service at 825-1037 to update your billing information.



Because of the holidays, the St. Augustine City Commission will not meet November 28 and December 26.



Slow down...you're in someone else's neighborhood. For information on speed humps, call 825.1040.



Stormdrains are for rainwater runoff, not grass clippings, cigarette butts, trash or other debris.



For information on organizing a neighborhood association call 825.1053.

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