



# THE ST. AUGUSTINE REPORT

Local news in our Nation's Oldest City



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## ***The 12 months of 2009***

You can get details of these stories of 2009 by clicking the **Previous Issues** button in the left column below.

### ***January***

Mayor Joe Boles seeks a 99-year lease on 34 state-owned historic properties here, after ten years of city management with no state funding support. The longer lease can encourage public and private investment in needed repairs, Boles argues.

Restoration begins on three fountains installed by Henry Flagler a century ago. Of Flagler's original seven fountains, two others are functioning and two lost over time. The work is being done "pro bono."

Our city celebrates Barack Obama's inauguration as 44th, and first African-American, president with a rally in our Plaza de la Constitución.



### ***February***

Recreation of the turn of the 20th century "Bishop's Building" at St. George Street and Cathedral Place is proposed, launching debate on architectural style in our historic district.

The University of Florida, delegated by the legislature to take over management of its historic properties here, seeks \$37 million for an orientation center and historic property restoration.

Businesses are tapped to support a ten-year plan to end homelessness.



### ***March***



Historic Tours of America National Museum Director Dana Ste. Claire is named interim director for our 450th Commemoration.

City Commission approves plans for highway signage featuring our city coat of arms, part of a highway and pedestrian wayfinding Heritage Signage Program.

Proposals are outlined for exhibit centers for our city, the Castillo, and the Mission of Nombre de Dios. Only the Mission project is currently

## TOP TEN 2009

*Our choices for the  
Top Ten stories of 2009*

- **Mooring fields approved**
- **Fish Island dock settlement**
- **Judge lifts Plaza artist ban**
- **Ste. Claire named Heritage and 450th director**
- **Redesign for Aviles Street**
- **Bishop's Building style rejected**
- **Hamilton Upchurch Park opens**
- **Amtrak rail service proposed**
- **Leak closes Visitor Center restrooms**
- **Vendor debates**

destined to be developed.

### **April**

Hamilton Upchurch Neighborhood Park opens at Anastasia Boulevard and Red Cox Drive.

Fort Mose joins the National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom.

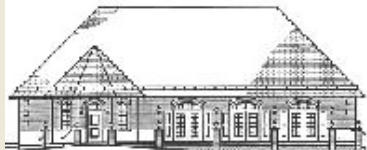
The Black Raven pirate ship replica makes its home port here.



### **May**

Federal judge lifts the ban on four categories of artists in our Plaza, initiating revision of vending ordinances in the city.

Ponce Mall's Regal Cinema closes with the opening of Epic Theaters on SR 207. The struggling mall retains Belk's and JC Penney anchor



stores, and will get further support with plans to relocate Sears from its US 1/SR 207 location.

The North City Waterworks Building is described as a "true treasure," worth the \$1.2 to \$1.8 million to restore.

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## June

City Commission turns down Bishop's Building plan, favoring colonial style architecture in our historic district. City Commissioner Don Crichlow, architect for the project, warns that "fake colonial" recreations in a living, evolving city doesn't make sense.

State Department of Environmental Protection OKs mooring field permitting in our bay and Salt Run, but final approval awaits US Army Corps of Engineers and Fish and Wildlife Commission permits.

A Steering Committee of community leaders holds its first meeting for our 450th Commemoration, following a community meeting.

Plan to establish Amtrak passenger rail service along our east coast is announced, including a train depot at US 1 and West King Street.

City Commission debates a settlement plan for a Fish Island dock, the plan reducing the size of the original 1,200-foot walkway and 100 slips.

Citizen group develops plans for "Romanza," a music/arts festival styled after Charleston's Spoleto.



## July

Fish Island dock settlement is approved.

Interim 450th Commemoration Director Dana Ste. Claire is named City Heritage Tourism director on the retirement of Bill Adams.



State Senator Tony Hill promotes city's Caribbean connection with Haitian Society delegation visit.

The Mission of Nombre de Dios announces funding is complete for a museum on the Mission grounds, anticipating its opening in early 2010.

## August

City Commission approves a lottery system for twelve vendor spaces in the Plaza market building. Few sign up in first round.

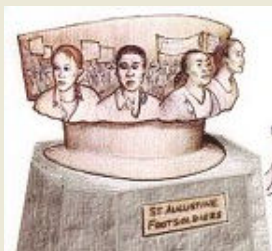
A redesign for Aviles Street is outlined by City Chief Operations Officer John Regan, who describes it an ideal public/private project with Aviles Street businesses and property owners .

Noise barrier and more enforcement are recommended at the skateboard area of Hamilton Upchurch Park after complaints from neighboring Flamingo Drive residents.

County Commission debates Tourist Development Council organization and bed tax distribution.



## September



Contract signed for a monument in our Plaza to the Foot Soldiers of the 1964 Civil Rights movement here.

Groundbreaking is held for a Hospice Center at Flagler Hospital.

A 12-foot noise attenuation wall is planned for the skateboard area of Hamilton Upchurch Park.

Plans are outlined for Riberia Street improvements and for the Bridge of Lions reopening in 2010.

## October

Historic Echo House is deemed unsafe. Our Code Enforcement Board will give property trustees a checklist and time to seal up the vacant building.

Air conditioning system leaks close the Visitor Center restrooms.



North City becomes a National Register District.

City Heritage and 450 Commemoration Director Ste. Claire outlines goals for the Heritage Tourism Department and commemoration.



## November



Heritage highway signage installation begins, featuring city's coat of arms.

Initial 450th Commemoration Commission *Discover First America* program fills Flagler College Auditorium.

Nights of Lights ceremonies recognize Lynette Pemberton and former Mayor John Bailey.

Groundbreaking is held for a Boys and Girls Club at Chase Field.

## December

Annual Christmas Parade, PAL Day, and British Night Watch open the holiday season.

City Commission approves Harbor Management Plan and mooring fields.

Ordinance introduced to allow sidewalk dining on Aviles Street.

City Commission debates vendors, considers creating a farmers market.

University of Florida's College of Design, Construction and Planning studies Davis Shores heritage.

Utility lease concept offers new hope for West Augustine utility development.

City Commission approves more than \$300,000 in budgets for Heritage Department improvements and 450th Commemoration.

North Florida Transportation Planning Organization approves plan to study traffic patterns in Lighthouse area.

Fencing proposed to protect Constitución Monument in our Plaza.

Parking changes go into effect, designed to "Rediscover Downtown," with increased on-street parking limit and *ParkNow* card giveaway.



**The St. Augustine Report** is published by the Department of Public Affairs of the City of St. Augustine each Tuesday and on Fridays previewing City Commission meetings. The Report is written and distributed by George Gardner, former St. Augustine Mayor (2002-2006) and Commissioner (2006-2008) and a longtime newspaper reporter and editor. Contact The Report at [gardner@aug.com](mailto:gardner@aug.com)

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