



# THE ST. AUGUSTINE REPORT

Local news in our Nation's Oldest City



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## **City Budget public hearing Thursday**

The first of two public hearings on the 2009-10 city budget will be held Thursday at 5:05 p.m. in the Alcazar Room at City Hall. The second will be Thursday, September 17.

Included: public hearings on the tentative millage rate, the proposed budget, and assessment roll for the fire assessment fee. Also on the agenda, first reading of an ordinance adjusting sewer and water rates, connection fees, and maintenance responsibilities.

The fire assessment fee increase of two cents, and electric utility tax of eight percent, will raise \$485,000, and affects both taxed and non-taxed properties. The alternative would have been an additional one-third mill rate increase on taxed properties.

City Manager Bill Harriss noted that, while the proposed millage is increased, actual tax revenue is \$650,000 less than last year, the deficit being picked up by the fire and utility increases and other sources.

## ***Bed Tax grants panel meets Thursday***

With the St. Johns County Tourist Development Council revamped last week by our County Commission, its Category II Arts/Grants Funding panel will meet in special session Thursday at 9 a.m. to sort out the delayed funding allocations our special events and cultural programs count on.

The meeting will be in the St. George Room of the County Administration Building, 500 San Sebastian View, and is open to the public.

The panel will wade through 48 applications totaling \$696,870 in requests. Available bed tax money is almost half that, \$389,016.

The good news: our Nights of Lights and the Surf Illumination at St. Augustine Beach, fireworks and July 4th events in St. Augustine, and fireworks and New Years Events at St. Augustine Beach, are being funded separately with \$115,000.

## ***Celebrating our 444th***

St. Augustine's original natives, founding, first Mass, and first Thanksgiving are on tap this week as we celebrate the 444th birthday of our city's founding.

**Thursday** there will be cake for all, as our Royal Family does the cutting honors before our traditional Thursday night concert in the Plaza. Servers will include members of the St. Augustine Sister Cities Association and the Historic St. Augustine Area Council of the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce.

**Thursday and Friday** from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., our Fountain of Youth Archeological Park will host living history presentations and exhibits highlighting the culture of the original Timucua Indians, as well as the Seminoles and other U.S. Indian tribes that have been part of Florida's history. A highlight will be an Indian Pow Wow from 6-9 p.m. Thursday.



Rendering of Foot Soldiers monument

### ***1st Friday, 1st steps***

Our 1st Friday Art Walk will include an historic step forward - signing of a contract for a \$50,000 bronze sculpture to be featured on a monument in our Plaza de la Constitución, commemorating the Civil Rights movement in St. Augustine which led to passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

Deltona Sculpture Brian Owens and Project President Barbara Vickers will sign papers in a brief ceremony at 6 p.m. Friday at the site of the proposed monument in the Plaza.

The non-profit St. Augustine Foot Soldiers Remembrance Project, formed three years ago, has raised enough for this first stage, but is still \$10 - \$15,000 shy of its goal for the complete monument.

Contributions may be sent to the St. Augustine Foot Soldiers Remembrance Project, Box 164, St. Augustine FL 32085.

**Saturday** brings all the living history pomp of St. Augustine Founder Pedro Menendez' arrival, the first Mass, first Thanksgiving and a colonial period cooking contest. Ceremonies begin at 9:30 a.m. at our Mission of Nombre de Dios with Menendez' arrival by ship's boat. St. Augustine Historical Society Executive Director Dr. Susan Parker will be main speaker, followed by a Mass at the location where Father Francisco Lopez de Mendoza Grajales - principal priest with Menendez' fleet - celebrated the first parish Mass in what is now the United States. Father Thomas Walsh, Pastor of San Sebastian Catholic Church, will officiate.

Historian Dr. Michael Gannon will attest from his research that, fifty-five years before the Pilgrims sat down for a Thanksgiving feast, St. Augustine had already established the tradition with its neighbors, the Timucua Indians. That first Thanksgiving will be commemorated from 6 to 9 p.m. at the Fountain of Youth Archaeological Park with a cooking contest featuring meals created from 16th century recipes.

Authentic 16th Century dinners will be sold, with period music and dancing highlighting the evening. Details on entering the contest, 904.669.1485.

All birthday events are free. Details at [St. Augustine's Birthday](#).

### ***Plaza concerts finale Monday***

Fitting end to all the birthday celebrating this Labor Day Weekend will be the finale of the 19th season of Concerts in the Plaza on Labor Day Monday, 1p.m. - 5p.m. The St. Augustine Jazz Society, whose traditional Memorial Day and Labor Day concerts pre-date the Concerts in the Plaza, will once again wrap up the 15-concert period. Details [here](#).

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## ***FSDB instructors, grad in Taipei Deaflympics***

Two Florida School for the Deaf and Blind instructors and one FSDB graduate are competing in the [Deaflympics](#) Games September 4-15 in Taipei, Taiwan.

FSDB graduate Roman "Rusty" Nawrocki, now a senior at Gallaudet University, is the first athlete selected to represent the U.S. in tae kwon do at any Deaflympics, and he may be America's best hope for a medal at the Taipei Games.

David Snow, a media specialist at the school, specializes in cycling time trials and won third place in the 2008 State Time Trials for Florida. He'll be competing in his first Deaflympics. Betsy Hoerner, a teacher assistant, is on the Women's soccer team that won the gold medal in 2005 in Australia.

Rusty, 22, is a fervent student of tae kwon do, the martial arts discipline originated in Korea. He earned a state championship and placed 12th at the nationals in 2004. Looking forward to the competition, Rusty said, "It's every athlete's dream to get gold. It's definitely mine too."



'Rusty' Nawrocki  
*Eyes US Deaflympic gold*

## ***Cyprian Center - Found money for Expressive Arts***

Historic St. Cyprian's Episcopal Church in Lincolnville has found funds - a grant from the Kresge Foundation of Troy, Michigan, to open a [Cyprian Center for Expressive Arts](#) in the church's Mission House.

The newly established center will celebrate its grand opening Saturday, September 19 from 11 to 1 p.m., with ribbon cutting, local and regional musicians, art activities for adults and children, a tour of the grounds, and refreshments.

The grant came through St. Cyprian's member Robert D. Storey, a Kresge trustee for 15 years, who was honored for his service with a grant to an organization of his choice. Lynn Strahan is executive director of the center.

The unique non-profit organization will provide children and adults of all ages and cultural heritages with instruction in the arts, offering and supporting programs in visual, lively and expressive arts to enhance personal and community spirit, including music, painting, photography, quilting, mosaics, film studies, lectures and dance. The Center is modeled after cultural organizations in Cleveland, Pittsburg, Charleston and other cities.

**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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