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## This Month at the Museum

July 2026

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### A Note from the Director

Dear Friends:

As our nation celebrates America's 250th anniversary this Independence Day weekend, we're reminded that our country's history is made up of countless local stories—including those here at the Beaches.

While our community wasn't founded in 1776, the people who have called these shores home have each contributed to the American story. From preserving treasured family memories to protecting historic places, every generation plays a role in shaping the legacy we leave behind.

At the Beaches Museum, we're honored to preserve and share those stories. As we continue creating our new permanent exhibit, we're finding new ways to connect our local history with the broader story of our nation and inspire future generations to appreciate the communities they call home.

This Fourth of July, I hope you'll take a moment to reflect on the stories that have shaped your own family and community. Thank you for supporting the Beaches Museum and helping us ensure that the history of the Beaches remains an important part of America's story.

Wishing you a safe and happy Independence Day!

Sincerely,



Chris Hoffman  
Executive Director



# Beach LEGENDS

Join us on Friday, September 18 at the TPC Sawgrass Clubhouse as we celebrate these remarkable individuals and their lasting contributions to the Beaches community. As the Museum's premier annual fundraising event, Beach Legends supports our mission to preserve and share the distinct history and culture of the Beaches area.

The fun begins at 6:30 P.M. with cocktail hour and silent auction, followed by a seated dinner to recognize our 2026 honorees and conduct our live auction. This annual gala is our largest fundraising event. We need your sponsorship to ensure the success of this year's gala! Proceeds will go toward the Museum's educational programs and operational needs.

## Meet This Year's Beach Legends



**Bill Longenecker** is a longtime surfer and respected figure in the Jacksonville Beach and Neptune Beach communities. Living for decades near A1A in the same family home purchased by his father in the early 1950s, he has maintained deep ties to the Beaches and its surfing culture.

Beginning in 1984, Longenecker became one of Florida's longest-running daily surf reporters, and for more than 40 years, surfers throughout Northeast Florida relied on his updates. Bill was also a gifted science teacher and a columnist for the *Beaches Leader* and *Shorelines* newspapers for 40 years. As a trained paramedic, he worked in area hospitals for 25 years. He still volunteers at Beaches Baptist Hospital. Through decades of dedication and community involvement, Bill Longenecker has helped define the spirit of the Beaches community.

**Karen Wolfson** is a longtime educator, volunteer, and civic leader whose service to Northeast Florida has spanned more than 50 years. She began her career in education in 1968, teaching at Florida Community College at Jacksonville before later joining the faculty at Fletcher High School, her alma mater.

Since 1985, Wolfson has been a dedicated advocate for Wolfson Children's Hospital, serving 26 years on its Board of Directors, including five years as chair. She is also a past president of the hospital's Women's Board.



Founded in 1936, **Proctor Ace Hardware** is a fourth-generation, family-owned business with longstanding roots in Northeast Florida. Operating three Jacksonville-area locations, the company has earned a reputation for exceptional customer service, innovative retail practices, and steady growth over nearly 90 years.



Led by members of the Proctor family, including **Steve, Joe, and Lizz Proctor**, the business has remained deeply committed to community involvement alongside its commercial success. Proctor Ace Hardware supports numerous local initiatives, including Habitat for Humanity, community gardens, youth sports programs, and regional charitable campaigns. The company has also emphasized environmentally responsible business practices and neighborhood engagement.

Interested in sponsoring the event or making a donation? Please contact Chris at [director@beachmuseum.org](mailto:director@beachmuseum.org) for more information.

TICKETS

SPONSOR

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**THE PERMANENT EXHIBIT IS CURRENTLY CLOSED FOR RENOVATIONS**  
*Thank you for your patience and support!*



## PARDON OUR DUST



We are working to improve  
our Permanent Exhibit



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**Current Temporary Exhibit - *Atlantic Beach 100***  
**April 17, 2026 - August 23, 2026**



From its beginnings as a bustling center of beachfront activity for vacationers in the early 1900s to the vibrant coastal community it is today, this exhibit highlights the photos, artifacts, stories, and people that shaped the city.



Discover its role in national golf tournaments, the preservation of its cherished parks, and the rich history behind the familiar names that still appear in the community today.

**Traveling Exhibit: Right Whales of Amelia Island**  
**May 16, 2026 - August 26, 2026**



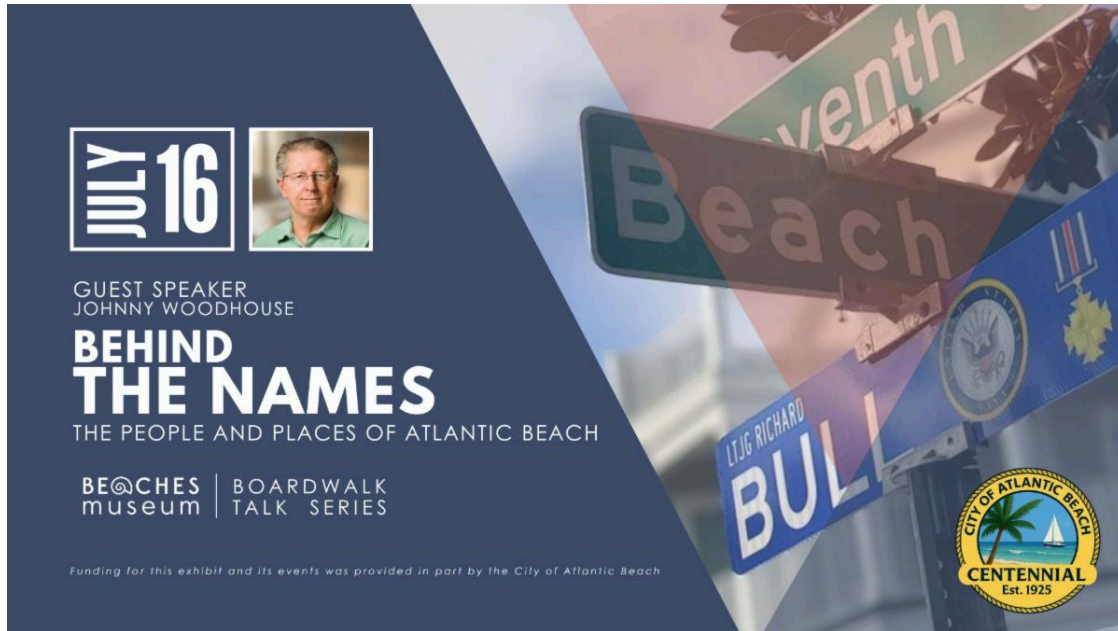
Looking out from Amelia Island's beaches, the coastal waters of SE Georgia and NE Florida host the only calving grounds for the endangered North Atlantic right whale.

This exhibition explores their hunted history and fragile future. Fewer than 400 remain. This traveling exhibit, "Right Whales of Amelia Island," was created by the Amelia Island Right Whale Ambassadors, whose mission is to protect North Atlantic right whales through education and awareness.

*This exhibit made possible by Dan and Krissi Barr and Defenders of Wildlife.*

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**Boardwalk Talk: Behind the Names**  
**The People and Places of Atlantic Beach**  
**Thursday, July 16 - 6:30 p.m.**



Join local historian Johnny Woodhouse to discover the stories behind the names of Atlantic Beach streets, parks, and monuments. From Ahern Street to Bull Park, learn the surprising local history and the influential figures behind these familiar places.

Writer and editor Johnny Woodhouse spent 16 years with the Beaches Leader as Associate Editor covering police, law, education, and military news. He has written several self-guided history tours for the Museum as well as a number of featured articles. He is a 25-time Florida Press Association award winner and holds three National Newspaper Association awards for feature writing, sports writing, and sports photography.

The Boardwalk Talk is free to Museum members with a \$5 donation suggested for non-members. Because seating space is limited, registration is required. **Use the code MEMBER at checkout for free access.**

[REGISTER](#)

[ALL BOARDWALK TALKS](#)

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**Member Moment: Patron Benefits!**

MEMBER  
MOMENT

# DID YOU KNOW?

A Beaches Museum **Patron Member** receives a...



✂ — — — — — ✂

**GIFT CERTIFICATE**

for one 8" x 10"

historic photo print

Choose any image

from our Archives!

✂ — — — — — ✂

Ready to take your support to the next level? As thanks, our Patron members and above receive a gift certificate for **one 8" by 10" photo print** of any image from our collection!

Got a coupon? Search our [online photo collections](#) and pick your perfect photo! Note the P-Number and contact us to redeem your deal.

This benefit comes in addition to the **free or reduced admissions at over 1,400 participating museums nationwide** all Family and above members receive through our partnerships with NARM and SERM! To learn about participating locations, visit the [NARM](#) and [SERM](#) websites.

Not a member? Join today and enjoy the benefits of support!

MEMBERSHIP

MUSEUM MEMBER DEAL

PRODUCT OF THE MONTH

**\$16 OFF**

ALL KATHY STARK PRINTS - THIS MONTH ONLY

For the month of July, our members can enjoy an exclusive discount on fine art prints from Kathy Stark's *SEE JACKSONVILLE* series, designed and painted in the style of silk-screened National Park Service posters to beautifully depict the various sites of Northeast Florida's wilderness park system.

Simply show your membership card at checkout or ask us to check your membership date to apply your discount! Not a member? Membership expiring soon? You can join or renew online using the link below!

[MEMBERSHIP](#)

### Partner Spotlight: Bright Side Painting of Jax

The Beaches Museum is proud to partner with Bright Side Painting of Jax as a part of our ongoing permanent exhibit renewal!

Locally based in Atlantic Beach, Bright Side's commitment to quality craftsmanship and community projects has made them a valued partner in this exciting transformation.



We can't wait to reveal the renewed exhibit to our visitors. A fresh coat of paint is just one part of the process, and there's so much more to come!

### Leave Your Mark! Buy a Brick!

Show your Beaches Museum pride, memorialize a loved one, or celebrate something special by having your message displayed on a commemorative brick to be installed inside our Train Enclosure.



Engraved on your brick could be a name, a message, a business, or something else entirely! Whatever you decide, your brick will serve as a visible reminder of your commitment to the Museum and the Beaches area.

Every brick has a story. Write yours and make your mark as a part of the Beaches Museum. History is in the making, and this is your chance to memorialize the things that matter most to you. Your brick will be a place where the past meets the future in a perfectly preserved moment as a permanent part of Beaches history.

The 4"x 8"x 2 1/4" bricks are engraved using state-of-the-art laser technology and they are all guaranteed for life. Each brick is \$100, and each purchase supports the Museum in our mission to preserve and share Beaches history.

[Buy-A-Brick](#)

[Support the Museum through Membership!](#)

Membership at the Beaches Museum is a great way to show your support!

Join us in preserving, understanding, and celebrating the history of the Beaches – become a member of the Beaches Museum.

Join now, and you receive all the benefits of membership, including guest passes for special events, NARM and SERM reciprocal admissions all over the country, and more!



You can become a member of Beaches Museum on our [website](#). You can also [donate](#) directly to the Museum. When you choose to donate, you can select a project that most interests you, including the Chapel Preservation Fund, the Jean McCormick Founders Fund, or the Museum's General Fund.

[Join or Renew!](#)

### Beaches Museum Legacy Circle

Help ensure a future for our past by making a planned gift or a gift to our endowment!

To learn more about remembering the Museum in your will or contributing to the future sustainability of our organization, please contact Chris at 904-241-5657 x 113 or [director@beachmuseum.org](mailto:director@beachmuseum.org).



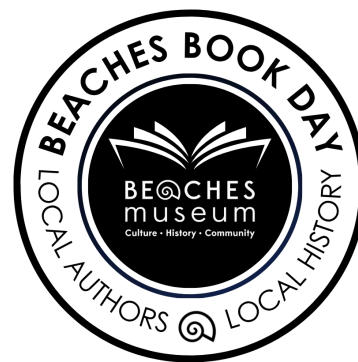
### Save the Date!



**August 6**  
**Picturing Paradise:**  
**From John James Audubon**  
**to the Florida Highwaymen**  
**with Keri Watson**



**August 25**  
**The Right Whale: Film**  
**Screening and Exhibit**  
**Closing Reception**



**August 29**  
**Beaches Book Day:**  
**Meet Local Authors and**  
**Learn Local History**

[View Full Calendar](#)

[About the Beaches Museum](#)

The Beaches Museum is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit with the mission "to preserve and share the distinct history and culture of the Beaches area."

A thriving creative economy enhances the quality of life for us all. Supported in part by the Merit-Based Cultural Service Grant Program, administered by the Cultural Council of Greater Jacksonville with funding from the City of Jacksonville and our elected officials, we extend our gratitude to all partners who make this possible.



### **Beaches Museum**

381 Beach Boulevard  
Jacksonville Beach, FL 32250  
(904)241-5657

**VISIT WEBSITE**

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Beaches Museum | 381 Beach Blvd. | Jacksonville Beach, FL 32250 US

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