

[Narrator] You've tuned in to another edition of The Breakroom, a

weekly conversation about how the City of Saint Augustine

works from those who do the work everyday.

Hosted by the

City of Saint Augustine's communications director,

Melissa Whistle.

The Breakroom offers a closer look at the different city departments and provides updates on current and

upcoming projects and events and now your host Melissa

Wissel.

[Melissa] Welcome to The Breakroom.

Thanks for tuning

in.

Over the years, the City
Commission has established

three citizen awards as a way
to recognize local individuals

for outstanding service and
contributions to the city.

These awards are the Aviles
Award, the Adelaide Sanchez

Award, and the Order of La
Florida.

Each award carries

with it distinct criteria which
must be met by its recipients.

The individual must be
nominated by a city

commissioner and confirmed by a

unanimous vote of the entire

commission and the awards are
presented at a time that

coincides with a milestone in
our city's history.

So in

September coinciding with the
founding of the City of Saint

Augustine, the nation's oldest
city, the city commission

recognized Miss Kay Burton for
the first of two recipients of

the 2023 Order of Law Florida
Award.

Joining us in the break

room for the first time, allow
me to introduce miss Kay Huppi

Burton.

Kay welcome and
congratulations.

[Kay] Well, thank
you very much and thank you for
congratulations.

I'm very very
humbled.

[Melissa] What an honor.

You've
been in the city for many many
years doing lots of great
works.

We're going to talk
about that.

I do want to I
want to let folks know what the
criteria is and I'm going to
say that it requires for the

individual quote over a long period of time has unselfishly

devoted time and talent to the welfare and betterment of Saint

Augustine's citizens and heritage who has exemplified

the finest qualities of citizenship and has contributed

extraordinary services to the community.

[Kay] Goodness.

[Melissa] You you

probably don't think that all of the great work you do

Measures up because for you it's a love of what you've been

doing.

[Kay] I have truly enjoyed

what I do probably much more

than the people who receive

whatever I do.

[Melissa] Well let's talk

about I think the one standout

thing that you do is your work

with the Art Association.

That

was sort of the the pinnacle of

your work.

Yeah there's a lot

of things that you do and I

want to come back to that.

But

let's talk a little bit about

the art association.

[Kay] Yes.

[Melissa] Think
back eight late 80s is when You

started?

[Kay] Well, I became the
administrator in 1989 the day

after I retired from Southern
Bell but I had been associated

with the Art Association since
I was a baby.

Um my mother and

father came here in 1925 and of
course, the Art Association was

founded in 19 yes,
19twenty-four by Naina Hawkins,

the editor of the Saint
Augustine record and in those

days, nobody had ever heard of
a babysitter.

So, they just

dragged the kids along.

[Melissa] Right.

[Kay] And there were several of us

who grew up in the art
association, the Rangers and

and the trying to think of the
name but anyway, many artists

families.

[Melissa] Right.

[Kay] Who grew up in
the Art Association and ours

unless they have already left
us, left this world, they're

still associated.

[Melissa] And the

Reigners I believe were a

recipient.

[Kay] Yes.

[Melissa] Of this award
as well.

So you're in you're in
good company.

[Kay] Oh yes.

Tom and I
have been friends since we were
kids.

Toddlers.

[Melissa] Yeah.

[Kay] But at
any rate I took over the
presidency of the Saint
Augustine Art Association Just
the year after my first husband
died and it was because we were

just about finished.

[Melissa] Mm hmm.

[Kay] Our Art Association Gallery

which was built in 1953 had a
roof that leaked like a sieve.

[Melissa] Mm hmm.

[Kay] We used to count how
heavy the rain was by the

number of buckets of water we
filled in the kitchen.

[Melissa] Oh

goodness.

[Kay] It was terrible and
finally, I said to the board,

if we don't do something about
this roof, we're not going to

have a gallery.

[Melissa] Okay.

[Kay] And we
went to the bank and Ingrid

Geyer was very conscientious
and very kind and did arrange

for us to get a loan so we
could get a new roof.

So that

was the first thing that we
did.

[Melissa] Sounds kind of like that
rain and water was a problem
even back then.

Well we

continued to deal.

[Kay] And the
problem was there was a tree

that was leaning on the roof.

[Melissa] Okay.

[Kay] The tree had made big

holes.

[Melissa] Oh boy.

Okay.

[Kay] Anyway

that that that was just the

first problem.

The second

problem was that because of all

the moisture in the building.

The person who had been running

it had declared it was a sick

building and she wasn't

going to open the gallery

anymore and I said well I'll

open it so that's how I started
the next day and we gradually

build up.

I established a
newsletter.

I sent it to all of

the former people that I knew
who loved the art association

and we gradually began to get
started having regular shows

again and getting tears to come
in and help.

It was it was

really magical.

[Melissa] And the other
what another piece of the

building and we're talking
about the building that's down

on Marine Street.

Right?

[Kay] Yes.

[Melissa] It's pink.

It's a very pretty

building.

[Kay] Yeah.

[Melissa] And it and you
also were part of the there was

a major fundraising effort in
the 2000s if I'm right.

[Kay] Well

actually it was my sister and
brother-in-law Faith and Joseph

Tiberio.

Uh We had difficulties

of course always raising money

and one of the things we did
was to have an art auction.

Well, one year of the art
auction was a terrible failure

and they saw me standing up in
front of people with tears

running down my cheeks and
Ty poked faith and faith poked

him and they said, let's let's
do something and so they got

together with our architect and
president of the Art

Association at that time who
was Les Thomas and Les said

well I have the plans that were
originally drawn with two wings

in the front of the gallery.

Would you like to build two

wings?

And Ty said well I think
we'll start with just one.

And

Les said well it's going to
look funny with just one wing.

We really ought to go for two.

Right.

We convinced Ty that he
should do both.

So within a
couple of years allowing for
the dig by the archaeologist.

[Melissa] Right.

[Kay] And other things we
achieved 2 new wings.

One wing
is named the Faith and Joseph

Taberio Wing.

The other one is
named for my mother Margarita

Phillips.

[Melissa] And you you were

coming here for years as a

child with your mom.

[Kay] Yes my my

mother drove every year we

would come down in just in time
for Thanksgiving dinner.

We

drove a model A Ford loaded to
the guild and she drove all the

way from actually we started in
Western New York from my

father's farm in near Buffalo

and then we'd go to

Philadelphia stay in

Philadelphia for a month with

my grandmother and then drive
down to Saint Augustine.

So

here it was my mother in this
little poor little Tin lizzy as

they called it.

[Melissa] Right.

[Kay] And she
was blind in eye.

She had only

the sight of one eye and two
little girls.

And I always used

to say she was either stark
raving man or very brave.

[Melissa] Well

clearly she was a role model of
just we're going to go and do

and you followed you have
followed in that.

Let's get

some things done.

[Kay] Yes.

[Melissa] If
you're just now tuning in

you're listening to the break
room.

This week I have

Kay Burtin in studio with us.

She is a 2023 recipient of the

Order of La Florida Award Uh

telling us a little bit about

the history of her time here in

Saint Augustine and getting the

Saint Augustine Augustine Art

Association closer into what we

see it as it is today and the

Art Association now is

extremely successful.

[Kay] Absolutely.

Thanks to Diane and

Bill, Diane Bradley, and Bill

Mayor, our present president,

and all of the volunteers that

we have.

We have wonderful

volunteers.

We have a wonderful

board of directors.

Everybody

the board works.

We are a

working board.

Everybody has a

job and we all do our jobs.

[Melissa] Well, before we run out of

time, I also want to talk a

little bit about the two

things.

The other two other

things that are near and dear

to your heart, one is the pilot

club and the other is Emma and

if we don't get it in in this

conversation, I'm going to have

you come back.

Let's start with

Emma.

[Kay] Alright.

The Emma Music

Association which is an
abbreviation for Emil Maestra

Music Association began in my
living room because we had a

very fine piano which we had
brought with us from

Pennsylvania and a lady who was
a French Canadian lady was

spending winters here but she
missed her piano and she

couldn't practice.

So she found
out about our piano and asked

if she could come and play.

She
could practice.

And of course

we said yes you're more than
welcome.

So they came very good
friends.

She and her husband
Eli.

And one one year for
Thanksgiving we had several
guests.

Uh Madam Richoux
invited Noor Alban the daughter
of Doctor Alban and she invited
her to sit on the bench and
play the piano together and do

a duet.

And with that another
guest whose name was Carl

Boringer Hop Dog and he sat
down and the three of them

started playing jazz.

And
everybody was amazed.

They had

no idea that Madam Richoux
could play jazz.

She was

strictly very very classical
but Carl Broringer was a German

prisoner of war of the
Americans and because the

American officers had heard him
playing his harmonica in his

cell they asked him to play the piano in the officer's club

during dinner.

And with that he began to make a liaison with his captors.

Ultimately came to Canada and spent winners in Saint Augustine.

[Melissa] Wow.

So you've seen musical talent crosses all barriers.

[Kay] Absolutely.

[Melissa] Well I'm going to ask you so and and so

Emma was born.

It it came out
of this was a great wow this is
fun.

This music how else can we
get you to perform and Emma

came out of that [Kay] Yes.

They they
all agreed at that point that
we should have a concert
featuring Madam Richoux playing

and also featuring Emil Maestra
who was a retired musician,

very eminent musician who
played the cello.

And that was

Emma.

[Melissa] That was Emma.

[Kay] That was
the beginning.

[Melissa] All great ideas

tend to come from people
sitting around doing something

they love together and saying
how do we share this with other

people?

[Kay] I'm very very grateful
that I had the opportunity to
do this.

[Melissa] Sure.

[Kay] And I think
that's one of the if if I have
a talent it may be knowing how
to get people together who can
help one another.

[Melissa] Well Emma

stands today of a thriving

concert series in Saint
Augustine.

[Kay] Yes.

[Melissa] Do we do you

know off the top of your head
what year it's in?

[Kay] What year it

began?

[Melissa] Well what year is it the
thirtieth twentieth?

What what

year are we in with with Emma?

[Kay] Well it began in 1979.

[Melissa] Oh wow.

[Kay] So it's been
around.

[Melissa] It's been around a long

time.

[Kay] Yes.

[Melissa] I can tell you I was
years old when that realist

started.

[Kay] See, time flies.

[Melissa] Yeah.

[Kay] You're having fun.

[Melissa] Doesn't it

though?

Well, I hate to say it
but we are already out of time

and but I'm going to have you
come back.

We're going to talk

a little bit more about some of
the other activities that you
do.

Kay, you're an amazing
woman.

You're still on the go.

We walk down here where you're
active as ever and so I would

love to continue this
conversation to share with your

history and and what you things
that you do to still contribute

to the community and have you
back on the break room.

[Kay] Thank

you.

[Melissa] If you missed part of this
broadcast and want to go back

and listen from the beginning,

you can now find us on your

favorite podcasting app, look

for us on Spotify, iHeartRadio,

and more.

You can get a

complete listing at City Saint

Aug Radio.

com.

We want to keep

you informed about what's

happening in and around the

city and most importantly, we

want you to hear it here from

the people doing the work and

making it happen every day.

Be

sure to follow us on social

media.

You'll find the city at
on Facebook, Twitter, and
Instagram at City Saint Aug.

Thanks again for tuning in.

[Narrator] You've been listening to The
Breakroom, a weekly program

addressing projects and
programs offered by the City of

Saint Augustine.

Join us each
week as the city's

communications director Melissa
Whistle has in-depth

conversations with the people
who make our town work to meet
the needs of our community.

The
Breakroom is produced by

communication specialist for
the City of Saint Augustine,

Cindy Walker.

See you at this
time next week for another

edition of The Breakroom.