



The Almost Monthly Epic-Cure Newsletter

November, 2024

A Note from the Founders

For nearly three months, we feel as though we have been playing an out of focus movie. The forced move in Palatka has been comprehensively disruptive, leaving us little time leftover for other concerns. Our volunteers have encouraged us to press unrelentingly forward. With everything they do for Epic-Cure®, our volunteers inspire optimism. Pessimism has never accomplished what optimism makes possible to all over time. Optimists create great things:



[The New York City skyline](#): No pessimists created that.

And optimists are behind preserving our US National Parks:



[Grand Teton National Park in Wyoming](#)

We choose optimism and hard work. We are fueled by the unwavering help of our volunteers. Good things are happening, even if they are not always in clear focus.

See our updates on the forced move in Palatka and the progress on the St. Augustine warehouse construction project, after the Report Cards on the next page.



The Report Card

The Epic-Cure <i>Report Card</i> as of October 31, 2024		
Life to Date <i>(since May 24, 2019)</i>		
Pounds In/Out	27,841,496	
Wholesale Value of Food Distributed	\$56,005,806	
Pounds of Food per Family:	125.26	<i>Average pounds per family per visit</i>
Equivalent Meals Served:	23,201,247	<i>Assumes 1.2 pounds per meal</i>
Families Served		
Number of Families Served this month:	7,323	<i>in Month of October 2024</i>
Number of Distributions this month:	73	<i>in Month of October 2024</i>
Pounds of Food/Household Goods		
Total Pounds In / Out:	955,151	<i>in Month of October 2024</i>
Total Pounds In / Out:	873,275	<i>Average of 3 prior months</i>
Operating Efficiency		
Wholesale value of food distributed for each \$1.00 spent on Operations since inception:		\$40.91
Wholesale value of food distributed for each \$1.00 spent on Operations in October:		\$83.28

Forced Move in Palatka – Optimism and Execution

The Palatka warehouse saga continues, but there is much room for optimism. While our first option on Reid Street is not viable, we have since identified two options that make sense for us. The first is at the Palatka Mall and is not without challenges. Those challenges can be overcome, and the owner of the mall has been sincerely helpful and accommodative.

The second option is a building owned by the City of Palatka. It is currently vacant and is also nearly ideally suited to our needs. It, too, needs some preparation for Epic-Cure® as a tenant; however, the elbow grease to be applied for this one is imminently achievable. We are on the city's agenda for Wednesday at 5:30 pm for a 10 to 15 minute presentation, and the City Council will vote on whether to grant Epic-Cure® a lease on the facility. With the Mall property as a viable Plan B, we will be ready to move full steam ahead in short order.

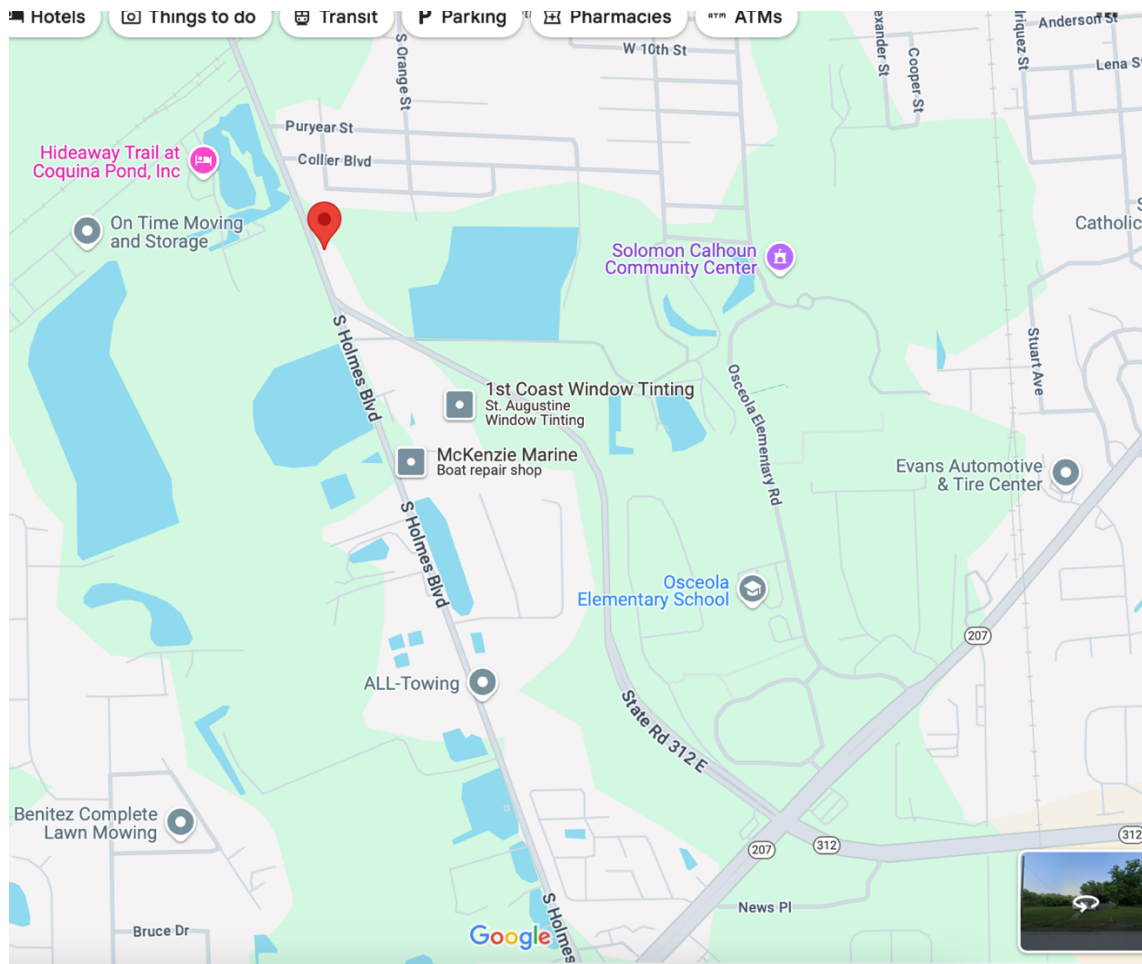
And, of course, here is the link if you would like to participate: [GoFundMe](#)



St. Augustine Operations Facility Update

Progress continues on the St. Augustine operating center construction project. We have successfully executed the contract to access the funds appropriated by the State of Florida for Epic-Cure's Food Security Distribution Center. We have also submitted our first advance request that will allow us to buy the parcel of land that we have under contract to purchase. Without requesting it, our sponsors at the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services has requested a rush on providing funds for this purchase and for a number of the costs associated with the land purchase and development, including a survey, soil borings, civil engineering, and others.

For those that are interested, the land we intend to purchase is located at 450 S. Holmes Blvd. in St. Augustine. Here are some views of the place.



It is located at the intersection of S. Holmes Blvd. and the new SR-312 connector.



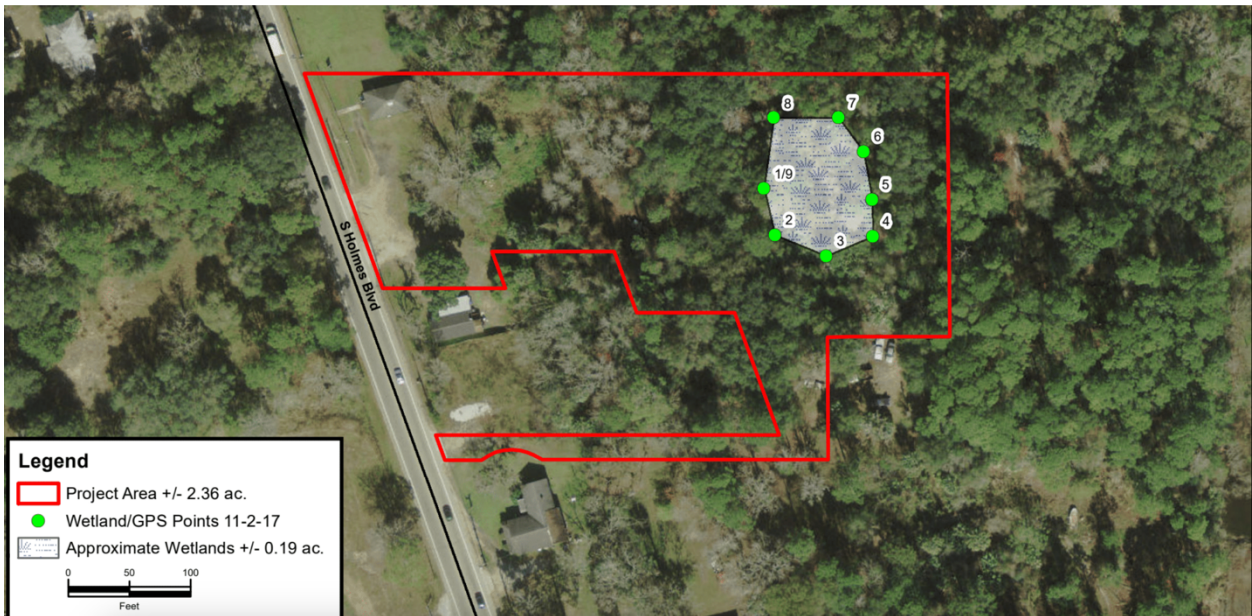
This is a Florida Department of Transportation schema of the new SR-312 connector. You can see the two cut-aways (for driveways) on S. Holmes (circled, middle-right side of the picture) that lead into the property.



The property is outlined in red (all such depictions of the property's boundaries are approximations).

With the help of the civil engineers, we believe that access to the new facility will be can be achieved not only from S. Holes Blvd. but also from the SR-312 Connector. At least, that is a possibility.

The following images are aeries of the property taken prior to the completion of the construction of the SR-312 Connector.





In other news...

Back when the journey of Epic-Cure began. Time and effort not wasted:



Oct 24, 2018 • 👤

Does anyone in St. Augustine know of any compost initiatives in our area? On my recent trip to AZ/NM to enjoy nature with my Hanna I watched the movie Wasted. EVERYONE should watch it. It is a documentary about food waste and the inefficiencies of it's management and impact on our planet.

Was thinking about possibilities for our local farming communities collecting and composting food waste (after using it as feed for any pig farms in the area). Would love to host a gathering for anyone interested in discussing possibilities.

During a recent Florida Food Recovery Coalition meeting, Shelby Lewis with the [City of Tampa](#) did a presentation on their recent use of a USDA Composting and Food Waste Reduction Cooperative grant. Their initial plan was to work with a composting company , but due to lack of adequate infrastructure they re-worked the grant program and to purchase backyard biodigesters. It is an interesting solution that converts food waste into fertilizer and cooking gas.

<https://www.homebiogas.com/solutions/backyard/>

This is an interesting question that comes up regularly – [Why do grocery stores donate food rather than discounting it?](#) We did not fact check this article, but it seems like a reasonable explanation. Thank you Paula Rives for sharing it with us.

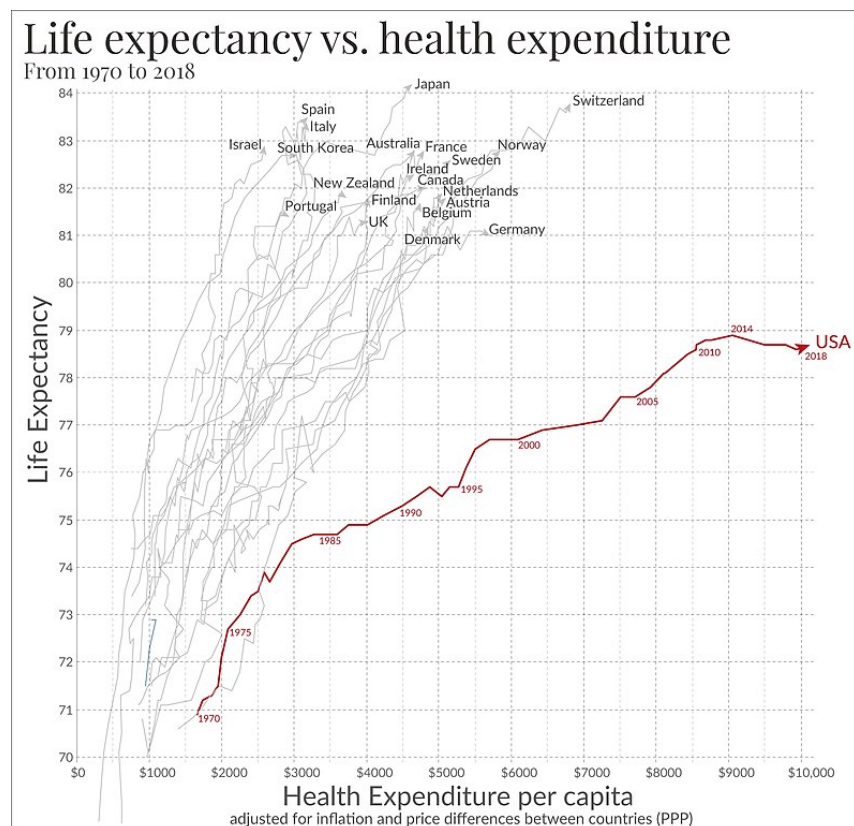
<https://www.goodgoodgood.co/articles/grocery-stores-donate-expiring-food-make-higher-profits>



Health Care and Life Expectancy: This chart (next page) shows the relationship between life expectancy and health expenditure per capita (adjusted for inflation and purchasing power parity) across various countries from 1970 to 2018. The chart illustrates how, as health expenditure per capita increases, life expectancy generally rises. However, the United States stands out as an outlier, showing significantly higher health spending per capita without a corresponding increase in life expectancy similar to other countries. (Please note: the adjustment for Purchasing Power Parity distorts the impacts, as the US Dollar is the world's reserve currency). Without assessing how these distortions may be manifest, it is clear from the chart that there is a divergence that does not favor the US in the comparison.

In all countries depicted, there is a steady upward trend, with health spending contributing to longer life expectancies. Nations such as Japan, Switzerland, and Norway are clustered near the top right, indicating high life expectancy with moderate to high health expenditure. However, they achieve these outcomes with significantly lower spending than the United States. Other countries, including Italy, Spain, and South Korea, also maintain high life expectancies but with much lower health expenditures, demonstrating more cost-effective healthcare systems.

The U.S. follows a distinct path, as seen in the red line tracking its progress over the years. By 2018, the United States had the highest health expenditure per capita (close to \$10,000) but a life expectancy just under 79 years, lower than many other developed nations. This suggests inefficiencies in the U.S. healthcare system and unique trends in personal habits (diet, exercise), as increased spending has not yielded similar improvements in life expectancy.



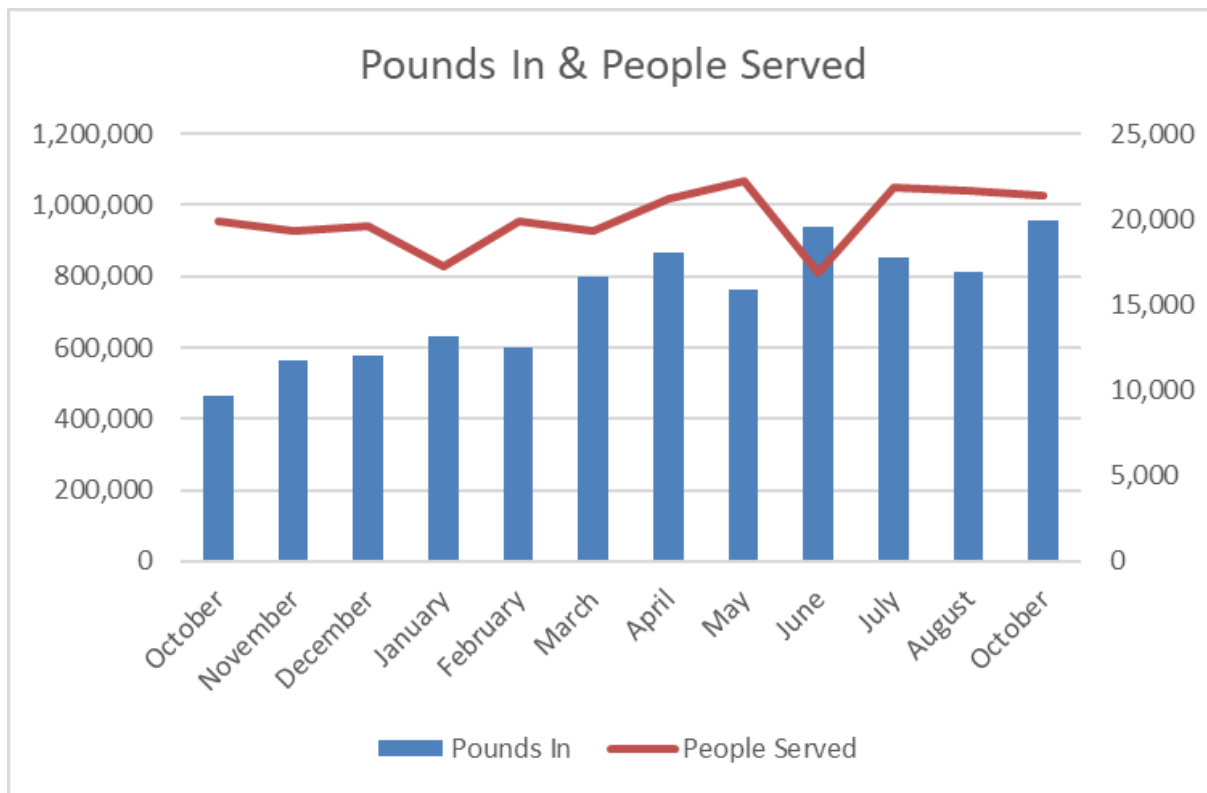
In the August edition of the AMEC Newsletter, we provided a series of graphs that tell a story quite different from the angry narratives we have heard all too regularly in this silly season (election-speak, nattering nabobs, ugh). We noted that humans have never had it better. Never. We also noted that there is more work to be done, a fact demonstrated in this graph.

So, assuming that the warehouse move resolves this month, we will return to that story with an instalment on Air Pollution.



Here is our PIPS (Pounds In & People Served) Graph

In October, we rescued over 955,000 pounds of food! Despite the challenges we're facing, we're continuing at full speed ahead.



Notes on the graph:

The hurricane affected supplies and distributions for a week in October. Otherwise, we were working steadily through our normal operations, forced move fundraising, and hurricane response.



Fundraising

Empty the Bowls event will mix culinary arts and ceramic art to take a bite out of hunger

By Lucia Viti

The St. Augustine Record



St. Augustine's Empty the Bowls event is merging delicious culinary delights with fine art ceramics and music at the Art House on Saturday, Nov. 16 from 5 to 8 p.m.

Proceeds fund Epic-Cure and the St. Vincent de Paul Food Bank to help combat food insecurity.

"It's important to recognize that people living in our community may be unable to fill their bowls and provide nourishing meals for themselves and their families," Melissa Noeth, owner of The Art House, said in a news release. "I was inspired when I learned about the Empty Bowls project, which is an international movement to assist in alleviating hunger in local communities."

Guests will select a locally handmade ceramic bowl made in-studio at The Art House to fill with tasty foods prepared by two local culinary stars, Chef Gaston Buschiazzi from Café Buena Onda and Chef Barry Honan, the force behind Lotus Noodle Bar.

"As a society, we have the means and the moral obligation to ensure that no one goes hungry," Honan told the St. Augustine Record. "I've always believed that if we have the power to help someone in need, we should. Food insecurity is a solvable issue, and with the right community-driven initiatives and public policies, we can work towards making hunger a thing of the past in America."

Sunny Mulford, Epic-Cure's co-founder and executive director, underscored the event as an inspiration in the fight against to alleviate food insecurity and hunger.



"We extend our heartfelt thanks to The Art House for hosting this event and to Lotus Noodle Bar & Buena Onda Café for their generous food donations," she said.

It's on all of us to get involved, whether by supporting food banks, advocating for living wages, or volunteering our time," Honan said. "Every bit of effort can make a real difference in the lives of our neighbors facing food insecurity. Together, we can build a more just and equitable food system that provides nourishment and dignity for all."

In the release, The Art House recognized the local businesses who donated their time and talents to the evening of Empty Bowls, including Buena Onda, Lotus Noodle Bar, Dog Rose Brewing Co., St Johns Illuminations, Laguna Clay, Tula Rose Floral Design and musician Jeremy Weinglass.

Established in 2018 by Ken and Sunny Mulford, Epic-Cure's 100% volunteer workforce feeds northeast Florida's underserved communities, including those living in St. Augustine. The nonprofit combats food waste and food insecurity simultaneously, serving as both a food rescue organization and redistribution center.

Ken Mulford, the organizations chief financial officer, describes Epic-Cure's approach as simple yet transformative.

"We bring free, nutritious food directly into disadvantaged neighborhoods through mobile distributions, and open our warehouse allowing families to choose the foods they need in a dignified, grocery-store-style setting," he said in a news release.

Tickets for Empty the Bowls cost \$65 per person and include a handcrafted bowl, the meal, and a beverage of your choice including beer, wine and nonalcoholic options.

To purchase tickets, go to [Event Tickets](#)



BJ's Wholesale Club Discount Membership to Benefit Epic-Cure

BJ's Wholesale Club new location at 124 Beachwalk Blvd is opening soon!

Their basic membership is normally \$55. With their current promotion volunteers and supporters can join for only \$20 for a full year! For every new membership, they will donate \$10 and for every renewal membership they will donate \$5 to Epic-Cure if you use the promo code 813052.



Join or renew a BJ's Club membership with special savings!

Epic-Cure has partnered with BJ's Wholesale Club!!!

Membership Level	New BJ's Club Members	Renewing BJ's Club Members
BJ's Club Card Membership (Standard membership)	\$20 for 12-month new membership (Regularly \$55) tax where applicable	\$50 for 12-month membership (Regularly \$55) tax where applicable
BJ's Club Plus Card Membership (Earn 2% cash back on most purchases)	\$60 for 12-month new membership (Regularly \$110) tax where applicable	\$100 for 12-month membership (Regularly \$110) tax where applicable

How to take advantage of this offer:

Its quick and easy

Call#: 800-313-8887

And Reference the promo code 813052

Hours of Operation: Monday-Friday from 9:00am-6:00pm EST

This offer is not available at any BJ's club location or online.

Offer expires 12/13/24

If you have any questions, please contact: dchartier@bjs.com



BJ's Sign Up Link



Join Us in the Fight Against Food Waste and Hunger: Your Monthly Gift Makes a Difference

Every day, millions of pounds of perfectly good food are thrown away while countless families go hungry. This is a problem that we can solve — together. As a 100% volunteer run organization, Epic-Cure® and its volunteers are deeply committed to rescuing food that would otherwise go to waste and redistributing it to those in need. We cannot do it alone.

Your support has already made a tremendous impact, but the need is ongoing. By becoming a recurring monthly donor, you can help us ensure that our efforts continue without interruption. With your consistent support, we can:

- **Rescue more food:** Every dollar you donate helps us save more food from being wasted, providing fresh, nutritious meals to families in need. Looking at the Report Card on the first page of this letter, you will see that every \$1 we spend on operations yields almost \$73 worth of food (taken at wholesale values, not grocery store retail values which are greater) distributed to those in need here in our community.
- **Expand our reach:** Regular donations enable us to grow our network, reach more communities, and deliver food where it is most needed. We will connect with more individuals as well as more food pantries, food banks, and other nonprofits to ensure that more and more local people have the food they need.
- **Sustain our operations:** As a 100% volunteer-run organization, your monthly gift directly supports the logistics, transportation, and resources needed to keep our mission alive. No money is spent on salaries, benefits, or corporate perks.

A monthly donation, no matter the size, creates a reliable foundation that allows us to plan and respond quickly to food insecurity in our communities. Your commitment helps us turn potential waste into hope, every single day.

Please consider setting up a monthly donation today. With your help, we can continue to fight hunger and reduce food waste, making a lasting impact on our environment and the lives of those we serve.

Together, we can build a future where no one goes hungry, and no food goes to waste. Thank you for standing with us in this crucial fight.

With gratitude,
Sunny & Ken

[Donate Now](#)



Awareness:

An easy, impactful way that you can help us is to please ...

Save And Drop Off Your Grocery Store Plastic Bags.

You will help reduce waste by allowing us to re-use them. You will save us money by reducing the number we have to purchase.

Transparency:

Anyone who wishes to see *Epic-Cure's financial statements* need only ask.

- Our CPA-Audited financial statements and tax returns for fiscal years 2021, 2022, and 2023 have been released and are available upon request.
 - Also available on our website.
 - Click here to view: [Epic-Cure's Financial Statements](#)

Please email your requests to Sunny Mulford: sunny.mulford@epic-cure.org