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# SOWAL Life

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## Giving HOPE; to Humanity and Horses

By HEATHER BENNETT

Hope is an optimistic feeling, based on the desire or wish for a positive outcome. Hope can also be faith in the unknown. For HOPE Project, Inc, hope means Healing Our Patriots With Equines. Through equine therapy, this nonprofit organization is giving hope to Veterans, First Responders and their families, as well as children, teens and adults that have PTSD or have trauma from physical or sexual abuse.

Located in Fountain, Florida HOPE Project was founded by Veteran David Trogdon. David served our country on active duty for 25 years, and spent the last 16 years as an Army Chaplain. He spent 3 years in Iraq and Afghanistan. David retired medically from the Army with 3 traumatic brain injuries and PTSD. After leaving Fort Benning, he helped friends rescue horses from kill pens here in Florida, and the Hope Project was developed bringing together both animals and veterans that needed healing.



The equine therapy used at HOPE Project is based on the Eagala Model that incorporates a certified mental health professional and a certified equine specialist working together with the horses and clients. Horses react to the client's emotions and the horse's

behavior will change as the client's emotions change. This provides information to the therapist.

"Horses are truly amazing, and God's given them these abilities where a horse can read your body language and your facial expressions, and because

they are so emotional, they also know your emotions," David said. "When I'm having a tough time or a down day, the horses know it and they'll come up and check on me."

HOPE Project provides free counseling, resources and equine therapy to Veterans, First Responders and their families, children, teens and adults who have been physically or sexually abused. They don't turn anyone away that needs help. "It's been a blessing to help anyone who's been hurting," said David. "Last month we reached out to over 100 people who needed help."

Instead of talking to a counselor at an office, clients will spend time with David and their equine specialist in the arena, interacting with the horses as they are given tasks to complete while answering questions. "We've had Vietnam Vets with severe PTSD that haven't talked to anyone, but I've seen them talk to a horse for over an hour and cry," said David. "It totally

**GIVING HOPE**  
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## Walton County Habitat for Humanity ReStore Flooded During Sally

Last week, as Hurricane Sally made her way across the Florida Panhandle, the Habitat ReStore in Walton County was left with 19 inches of standing water in their store and throughout their entire property. Unfortunately, the flooding caused extensive damage and destroyed all of the inventory the ReStore had on hand forcing them to close until further notice.

"Our team and community work hard to ensure our store is stocked with quality furniture and construction materials. It is such a shame that all of that was lost in just a few hours due to the flooding" said Teresa Imdieke, Executive Director of Habitat for Humanity and the ReStore.

This is not the first time the ReStore in Walton County has experienced a devastating loss due to flooding. In May of 2014, the property flooded during heavy rains over a three day period.

In February of 2020 the Restore

**RESTORE FLOODED**  
*continued on page 4*



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 Community

# Commissioner Tony Anderson to Focus on Infrastructure, Economic Recovery if Re-Elected

Seeking a second term on the Walton County Commission, Republican Tony Anderson said this week that he would prioritize economic recovery and infrastructure improvements if he is reelected on November 3. Both priorities, he said, will improve the quality of life for residents in Walton County.

On the economy, Anderson said the county must act quickly to ensure that pandemic-related job losses do not become permanent — a scenario that could impact business investment and property values.

“For three years, employment in Walton County grew at a faster rate than in neighboring counties, thanks to our strong small business sector in South Walton and the county’s focus on job growth in Freeport, Mossy Head, and DeFuniak Springs,” Anderson said. “Now, we need to make sure we can save those jobs and create even more, with a focus on attracting higher-wage jobs.”

Anderson’s plan includes keeping Walton County’s prop-



erty taxes low and supporting existing small businesses. To diversify the economy and attract higher-paying jobs, he wants to fast-track the construction of a high-tech business park south of DeFuniak Springs, as well.

The commissioner also said that the county would continue to aggressively pursue state and federal funding for both economic recovery and infrastructure improvements. The two, Anderson said, are closely linked.



Using state and federal funding for major projects has allowed Walton County to prioritize its resources to accelerate local projects. Under this fast-tracked model, Walton County has experienced historic infrastructure improvements in just a few years, Anderson said.

He pointed to the new South Walton Sports Complex, improvements at Helen McCall Park, the opening of both Pilcher Park and Grady Brown Park, the building of new turn lanes, and the repair of aging roads and bridges as key accomplishments.

In addition, he said, funding has been secured to build a pedestrian tunnel at Inlet Beach to reduce traffic congestion.

If re-elected, Anderson said he will also closely monitor two key issues that residents say matter a lot to them: curbing residential development growth and protecting the public’s right to use the beaches. He remains a staunch supporter of Customary Use and has been outspoken on the need to win the policy battle in court.

“Over the past four years, we’ve also invested \$25 million in tourism tax dollars to protect

land from over-development. We’ve been very proactive about slowing down development while also increasing the availability of public beaches. So, instead of allowing condo buildings along the beach, we’ve purchased beach-front land and created public beach parks and beach accesses, dune walkovers, and public parking,” Anderson said.

Anderson said he will continue to oppose high-rise condos along the beach and will support maintaining the existing “height limit” policy, which restricts such developments.

“I grew up in Walton County and I want to do everything possible to make sure that we preserve what makes our county special,” Anderson said. “I have three children and three grandchildren, and I want to make sure my kids and grandkids — and everybody’s family — can continue to enjoy this unique place that we call home.”

Anderson faces Democrat Carolynn Zonia on the November 3, 2020 ballot.

# TONY ANDERSON

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**Tony delivers results.** As our Walton County Commissioner, Tony worked to build parks, fast-track infrastructure improvements, increase funding for public safety, protect land from over-development, and support Customary Use — all without raising taxes.

**Tony has a plan to strengthen our economy.** He will support local businesses, oppose excessive regulations, attract new private-sector jobs, secure federal and state funding for economic growth, and oppose tax increases.

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COMMISSIONER, DISTRICT 5



**VOTE TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 3.**

**GIVING HOPE**

*continued from page 1*

transforms their lives, and I know what it does for me.”

HOPE Project is completely nonprofit. They currently have 10 horses, 2 donkeys, 6 goats and cats. The horses were rescued from kill pens, are retired from racing or displaced from Hurricane Michael. HOPE Project operates solely on donations and volunteers. Many spend 20-40 hours a week there. Most are medically retired like David, and some work full time, but volunteer because they believe in the work. “We have the best volunteers in the world. We appreciate all our volunteers and all who help,” said David.

HOPE Project also has some great partners and projects. One of the HOPE volunteer staff is a Retired Air Force First Sergeant who owns 20 acres off Highway 20. She provides free riding



therapy for Veterans and others. They also work with Alaqua Animal Refuge where they come out to provide therapy there. HOPE Project is also a member of the National Alliance on Mental Ill-

ness. After Hurricane Michael they were a distribution center for over 6,000 people. They have also held suicide prevention training on site.

David said HOPE Project is

currently working on raising money to build a covered arena so they can provide therapy regardless of the weather and the elements. “The Chaplain in me says God provides,” said David.

“We’ve been very blessed.”

If you are interested in more information on donating or therapy, you can visit their Website at [hopeprojectinc.org](http://hopeprojectinc.org).

# Coastal Seniors of South Walton October 2020 Events

## International Coastal Cleanup: A Community Project

Tuesday, October 6th at 9am.

In past years, Walton County residents and visitors have turned

out in large numbers to support the cleaning of our beaches and subsequently the Gulf during the International Coastal Cleanup. Each piece of debris collected is one more piece of trash saved from our ocean systems. We think this year can be equally effective with your help and presence in this community cleanup. Join the Coastal Seniors of South Walton (CSSW) at the Dune Allen Regional Access, 5999 W. Co. Hwy 30A, Dune Allen. Laurie Reichenbach, local Volunteer Beach Ambassador Team leader, will lead a discussion about microplastics and its effect on our beach envi-



ronment and marine/shore life.

Trash bags and gloves will be available. Clean up will start by walking toward Ft Panic, which is about 1/4 mile to the east. Everyone should bring their water bottles, sunglasses, hats, and sunscreen. We will add these hours to the community total for the International Coastal Cleanup.

Please let the CSSW know if you will participate and if you have any questions by contacting Nancy at [\[walton@gmail.com\]\(mailto:walton@gmail.com\) or by phone at 850-280-5342.](mailto:coastalseniorsofsouth-</a></p>
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**GIVING BACK TO THE COMMUNITY**

In cooperation with The Area Agency on Aging, the Coastal Seniors of South Walton (CSSW) is providing care packages for homebound senior citizens during the current pandemic. The packages will include a mix of items, including hand soap, medical masks, helpful tips and phone

numbers.

Seniors 50 years of age and up residing in Walton County are invited to join CSSW. Membership is \$15 for individuals, \$30 for family, and \$50 for businesses. You can become a member on Facebook at Coastal Seniors of South Walton, or via email at [coastalseniorsofsouthwalton@gmail.com](mailto:coastalseniorsofsouthwalton@gmail.com), or on the website at [www.coastalseniorsofsouthwalton.org](http://www.coastalseniorsofsouthwalton.org). Coastal Seniors of South Walton, Inc. is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization for active adults and we’re looking for dedicated, enthusiastic persons to join our Board of Directors.

**SoWal Life** LOCALS GET IT

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### RESTORE FLOODED

*continued from page 1*

broke ground on the site of their new store off of Highway 98 in Santa Rosa Beach. The threat of flooding was one of the many reasons the organization decided to move to a larger, better positioned facility. Their new building is expected to be complete in the Spring of 2021.

“Unfortunately, our programs and new building rely on the income from our current ReStore and this unexpected closure is going to make things difficult,”

The organization has a list of needed items on their website <https://waltoncountyhabitat.org>.

For more information on how you can support their recovery efforts please call 850- 660-1681 or email [admin@waltoncountyhabitat.org](mailto:admin@waltoncountyhabitat.org) or go to their website for a list of donatable items.

**Walton County ReStore** operates as a nonprofit organization under the umbrella of Habitat for Humanity of Walton County, proceeds from the ReStore go toward the Habitat for Humanity mission of eliminating substandard hous-



said Imdeke. “We were already struggling with closures due to COVID 19, all of our fundraising events being cancelled, and now this. I feel like we got kicked when we were already down.”

Over the last several days, volunteers have helped the ReStore team clean up their property and fill ten construction dumpsters full of unsalvageable items. The organization is relying on continued community support to get back up and running as soon as possible. “Our community needs the ReStore more than ever right now. Our store offers affordable construction materials and furniture that will be needed by the families impacted by Hurricane Sally,” said Imdeke. “We need your help filling our store back up with quality material as soon as possible.”

ing. ReStore provides access to lower-cost building materials and household goods to the community, fulfills our responsibility to the environment by keeping quality goods out of the landfill, and generates funds to build more Habitat houses in Walton County.

**Habitat for Humanity** of Walton County works to provide affordable housing for working-class citizens. Recipients are selected through an application process and sold a home for its exact building price at zero percent interest. Last year, Habitat for Humanity of Walton County received \$130,801 back in mortgage payments and over 4,745 nights were spent under the roof of a Habitat Home in our community.

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# WCSD October 2020 Superintendent's Update

## Walton Students are "Falling" Into New Expectations



Superintendent A. Russell Hughes

Walton School District continues to gain momentum as students settle into their new normal. Although there was apprehension surrounding the opening of schools, Superintendent Hughes and district staff with the cooperation of parents and students, have been able to prevent

serious outbreaks of the COVID-19 Virus in the district with the implementation of a stringent safety plan. Since the opening of schools in August, the district has only had reports of 16 cases of virus infection. Mr. Hughes says, "We are certain these totals are due to staff and community compliance to the safety protocols put in place, and we appreciate everyone's cooperation." Students have been attentive to expectations of social distancing, hand washing, and sanitizing as well as the need to wear masks when social distancing isn't possible. District staff continues to observe safety guidelines by disinfecting and sanitizing rooms between classes and wearing face coverings. Our efforts have been rewarded with low infection rates in comparison to school cases in

other counties. "We are intentional about the safety of our students," says Russell Hughes, Superintendent of Schools. Walton County began the year with approximately 75% of students attending the brick and mortar campuses throughout the district and to date, that number has risen to approximately 90%. Superintendent Hughes says, "I believe we are seeing increases in the number of students returning to our brick and mortar buildings because our parents have gained confidence in our endeavors to maintain safety and normalcy for our students. Student safety is always a priority."

Current economic challenges have created unexpected hardships for parents in our community. Walton County School District is pleased to announce the USDA waiver food service program which will allow ALL students, regardless of family economic status or school attended, the opportunity to receive school meals without cost. Breakfast and lunch are the only

meals covered under the waiver as a la carte items will continue to be on a pay per receipt basis. The free meals are for our brick and mortar and ILDA students only. Parents are encouraged to complete applications for free or reduced benefits regardless of need. The data collected helps to determine the need for the continuation of this federally sponsored program.

Another important data collection directly affecting school funding is the United States 2020 Census. Walton County's population growth is ranked 3rd in Florida. However, when evaluating our county's Census completion data at the end of September, we ranked 64th out of Florida's 67 counties! In 2010, the time of our last Census 57.5% of our community had self-reported. This year, closing in on the collection deadline only 33.2% of Walton County citizens had made the effort to respond. Superintendent Hughes made community pleas to parents and the community at

large to encourage the completion of the 2020 Census. "The Census is an important data collection piece that directly affects the federal funding critical for schools, students, and young children," says Mr. Hughes. "Every citizen should make every effort to get their Census information counted."

Walton County schools look forward to Fall and the return of athletics. Guidelines for spectator safety are in effect for all schools hosting athletic events. Please expect random temperature checks upon entering stadiums, social distancing enforced and volunteers serving food at concession stands to wear their PPE.

Superintendent Hughes is aware as a community we are becoming taxed with the tediousness of ongoing safety protocols but he encourages us to "stay diligent. The consequences to family, neighbors, and friends far outweigh the sacrifice." Hughes continues, "Our most precious commodity, our children are worth everything!"



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Community

# NatureWalk at the Watersound Origins® Community Opening this Winter

More and more people are seeking the authentic, coastal 30A lifestyle as an everyday way of life, not just a vacation destination. KOLTERHOMES is excited to announce a new community coming to the 30A area this winter – NatureWalk at the Watersound Origins® Community. This will be Kolter’s second new-home community in Northwest Florida. NatureWalk will feature a lifestyle that is truly connected with the outdoors, with a simplicity and laid-back feel that are unique to 30A. And while the lifestyle may be relaxing, residents will have easy access to the area’s

world-class local restaurants, upscale boutiques, artsy villages, and of course, the white-sand beaches of the Emerald Coast. Only two miles from the Gulf, NatureWalk at the Watersound Origins® Community puts you close to the action, yet nicely removed from the congestion.

For those looking for an amenity-rich lifestyle, NatureWalk is the place to be. Within the gated community of NatureWalk, residents will enjoy a fitness center, pickleball, tennis, pool with beach-style entry and lap lanes, sundeck, outdoor spa, firepit, social lanai and an event lawn. Residents will

## NATURE WALK

at WATERSOUND ORIGINS



also enjoy access to the amenities within the master-planned Watersound Origins® Community – including Origins Golf Club, Lake Powell, FootGolf and Watersound Origins community fitness facilities. KOLTERHOMES is excited to unveil a whole new collection of homes designed specifically for NatureWalk at the Watersound Origins® Community. These 2- to 5-Bedroom homes are designed to embrace outdoor living – with large porches on both the front and rear of the homes. The homes will feature open plans designed for entertaining and elegant details such as tall ceilings and extensive trim, yet with a relaxed feel reminiscent of a coastal cottage. When the designer model opens this winter, home shoppers will be able to tour the model and view available floorplans. With the help of a KOLTERHOMES professional designer, buyers will be able to personalize their homes from the ground up - including designer finishes and the choice of structural options. With so many personalization options, the homes at NatureWalk are truly built around you and your lifestyle.

For those that don’t want to wait until winter to get a glimpse of this incredible new community near 30A, we invite you to take the first step and preview the website at NatureWalkWatersound.com and join the VIP List to be among the first to preview the home plans and receive special benefits. NatureWalk at the Watersound Origins® Community. Outside living that is truly outside of ordinary.



also enjoy access to the amenities within the master-planned Watersound Origins® Community – including Origins Golf Club, Lake Powell, FootGolf and Watersound Origins community fitness facilities.

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## Guest Columnist; The Right to Vote



When was the first US election? December 15, 1788 was the first United States presidential election. George Washington was inaugurated in New York City on April 30, 1789, 57 days after the First Congress convened. The act of voting in colonial times was quite different from today. In many places, election days were social occasions accompanied by much eating and drinking. When it came time to vote, those qualified would simply gather together and signify their choices by voice or by standing up. As time went on, this form of public vot-

ing was gradually abandoned in favor of secret paper ballots. For a while, however, some colonies required published lists showing how each voter cast his ballot.

After declaring independence on July 4, 1776, each former English colony wrote a state constitution. About half the states attempted to reform their voting procedures. After the unanimous election of George Washington as the nation's first president, the Founders figured that subsequent elections would feature a large list of candidates who would divide up the electoral pie into small chunks, giving Congress a chance to pick the winner. But as soon as national political parties formed, the number of presidential candidates shrank. Only two U.S. elections have been decided by the House and the last one was in 1824.

As it did in 1789, the United States still uses the Electoral College system, established by the U.S. Constitution, which gives all American citizens over the age of 18 the right to vote

for electors, who in turn vote for the president. The president and vice president are the only elected federal officials chosen by the Electoral College instead of by direct popular vote.

The Electoral College was (and still is) the "glue" that allowed the individual former British colonies to come together as the United States. The founders, in establishing a republic and not a democracy, devised the electoral college system as a way to protect the rights of the smaller states having their interests overwhelmed by larger states. The same is true today.

Political parties usually nominate their slate of electors at their state conventions or by a vote of the party's central state committee, with party loyalists often being picked for the job. Members of the U.S. Congress, though, cannot be electors. Each state is allowed to choose as many electors as it has senators and representatives in Congress. During a presidential election year, on election day (the first Tuesday after the first Monday

in November), the electors from the party that receives the most popular votes are elected in a winner-take-all-system, with the exception of Maine and Nebraska, which allocate electors proportionally. In order to win the presidency, a candidate needs a majority of 270 electoral votes out of a possible 538.

On the first Monday after the second Wednesday in December of a presidential election year, each state's electors meet, usually in their state capitol, and simultaneously cast their ballots nationwide. This is largely ceremonial: Because electors nearly always vote with their party, presidential elections are essentially decided on Election Day. Although electors aren't constitutionally mandated to vote for the winner of the popular vote in their state, it is demanded by tradition and required by law in 26 states and the District of Columbia. Historically, over 99 percent of all electors have cast their ballots in line with the voters. On January 6, as a formality, the electoral votes are counted

before Congress and on January 20, the commander in chief is sworn into office.

Critics of the Electoral College argue that the winner-take-all system makes it possible for a candidate to be elected president even if he gets fewer popular votes than his opponent. This happened in the elections of 1824, 1876, 1888, 2000 and 2016.

However, supporters contend that if the Electoral College were done away with, heavily populated states such as California and New York might decide every election and issues important to voters in smaller states would be ignored.

Tim Norris, a long-time Panhandle resident is past Chairman of the Walton County Republican Party and is the current Republican Party of Florida's State Committeeman for Walton County. Tim Resides in Santa Rosa Beach with his wife Nancy. The couple have 3 daughters, Calli, Hannah and Piper.



# WHY DO MOSQUITOS HATE TIM NORRIS?

## TIM NORRIS IS OUR MOSQUITO CONTROL COMMISSIONER.

In South Walton, we take mosquito control seriously. As our Mosquito Control Board Commissioner, Tim Norris has gained a reputation as the "Skeeter Deleter," bringing his knowledge of county government and environmental management to the Mosquito Control Board. Tim is running for re-election this year.

## TIM MODERNIZED MOSQUITO CONTROL WHILE KEEPING TAXES LOW.

As commissioner, Tim worked to develop new email and phone programs to notify residents of spraying, adopt the use of environmentally-friendly larvicides, and create education programs in local schools to help in mosquito prevention, all with one goal: getting rid of mosquitos so we don't have to, while keeping taxes low!



**TIM NORRIS IS BRINGING EXPERIENCE AND INTEGRITY TO SOUTH WALTON MOSQUITO CONTROL.**

Community

# Flooded Refuge Seeks To 'Come Back Strong'

By JENNIE MCKEON, WUWF, NPR FOR FLORIDA'S GREAT NORTHWEST, WUWF.ORG

When disaster strikes, Laurie Hood, founder of Alaqua Animal Refuge, is usually one of the first people to hitch her trailer and rescue domestic, farm or even exotic animals.

But after the refuge took in over 30 inches of rain from Hurricane Sally, Hood is on the receiving end of assistance to ensure the safety for the hundreds of animals that call Alaqua home. "The storm was not like anything we thought it was going to be," she said. "We knew we were always at risk — there's a Bay to the south, a creek to the west and a river to the east, but we were watching the storm and it was supposed to head toward New Orleans."

When the path changed, Hood made the quick decision

to call fosters to take in the dogs and cats on Tuesday. It took three hours to find temporary housing for 90% of domestic animals. The farm animals were moved to higher ground. By Wednesday morning, Hood said the refuge had taken in about 1 to 2 feet of rain. And when she returned later that day, she said the flooding had nearly tripled. Full-sized horses were in chest-high water. "I couldn't stop thinking about this opossum I saw sitting on the top of a fence. So, I got in the kayak to bring him to the dry areas at the refuge," she said. "When I got there, it was surreal. I just thought, 'Oh my God.'"

She called her husband, two sons and Alaqua staff to rescue the 30 remaining animals — goats, sheep, pot-bellied pigs, mini-horses and turkeys. Instead of Noah's Ark, they used paddle boards and kayaks to move them



Alaqua Founder Laurie Hood and her family used paddle boards and kayaks to help move animals to higher ground as the flooding got worse. CREDIT ALAQUA ANIMAL REFUGE



Alaqua Founder Laurie Hood and her family used paddle boards and kayaks to help move animals to higher ground as the flooding got worse. CREDIT ALAQUA ANIMAL REFUGE

to the highest ground on site. "(The refuge) was all underwater," she said. "We lost all the food and supplies. I don't know if any of the buildings or barns will be salvageable."

Hood founded Alaqua Animal Refuge in 2007. The 10-acre farm in Freeport is a no-kill haven for hundreds of animals,



A pot-bellied pig sits in high water. As the flooding got worse, Hood and her family moved farm animals to the highest point of the refuge. CREDIT ALAQUA ANIMAL REFUGE

some of which are rescued from abuse cases. Hood regularly responds to hoarding or breeding cases throughout the state.

When Hurricane Michael devastated Panama City in 2018, Alaqua responded by taking in 2,500 animals, and boarded hundreds more for people displaced by the storm. And when Louisiana was hit with massive flooding in 2016, Alaqua helped raise thousands of dollars for rescued animals. They also took in six horses from the St. Landry Parish Animal Control & Rescue.

In 2016, Alaqua announced plans to relocate the refuge to a 100-acre piece of land donated by local conservationists MC and Stella Davis, just 10 miles away from its current location. They began a capital campaign to build what will be a permanent home for the refuge.

While staff and volunteers have begun cleaning up debris and pressure-washing the buildings, Hood said she'd like to take this opportunity to not just build back, but build back better. "This could be the big push to get us there," she said. "We're so grateful to have a community that steps up when we need help, and our staff that hasn't had a day off. This is an opportunity to come back strong."

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# Free Training Advice for Rescued Pets

Dog-Harmony Inc., a non-profit that works to keep dogs out of shelters through education, is offering free training advice for rescued dogs with behavioral problems, such as jumping, leash pulling, potty-training and separation anxiety. Nancy Bown, Dog-Harmony's founder and Certified Professional Dog Trainer – Knowledge Assessed (CPDT – KA) can help over the phone, or better yet, after meeting the pet at Dog-Har-

mony headquarters at 237 Market Street in Santa Rosa Beach. No shock collars or choke collars are used and Brown is a force-free trainer. "It's critical to have the correct type of training," says Nancy. Pet problems, mainly undesirable behaviors and aggression are the most common



reason owners rehome their pet, according to the ASPCA's 2015 National Rehoming Survey. For dogs, nearly half are relinquished for that reason (47 percent). While most dogs are rehomed to a friend or family member (41 percent), the survey found, the second highest place where they end up is a

shelter (34 percent). What might have helped keep them in their homes, according to the survey? The second-most requested service was low-cost training or behavior help (34 percent). The free training advice is by appointment only, and aggressive dogs are not eligible for the program. For more information call 850-376-4190 to reserve a spot. And, please visit dog-harmony.org

# Florida Enters Phase 3 Business Recovery

The Okaloosa County Office of Emergency Management and the Office of Gov. Ron DeSantis has announced that Florida has entered Phase 3 Business Recovery.

Executive Order 20-244 does the following:

Removes state-level restrictions on businesses, such as restaurants.

Provides that no COVID-19 emergency ordinance may prevent an individual from working or operating a business, giving Floridians and business owners needed certainty and the ability to provide for themselves and their families.

Provides that restaurants may not be limited by a COVID-19 emergency order by any local government to less than 50% of their indoor capacity. If a

restaurant is limited to less than 100% of its indoor capacity, such COVID-19 emergency order must satisfy the following:

Quantify the economic impact of each limitation or requirements on those restaurants; and

Explain why each limitation or requirement is necessary for public health.

Suspends all outstanding fines and penalties, and the collection of such moving forward, applied against individuals related to COVID-19.

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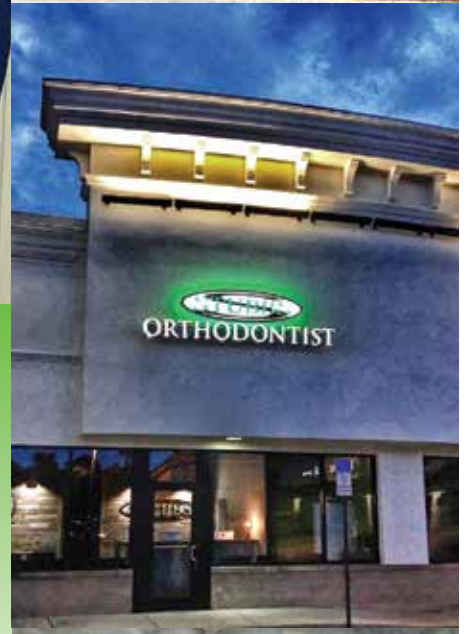
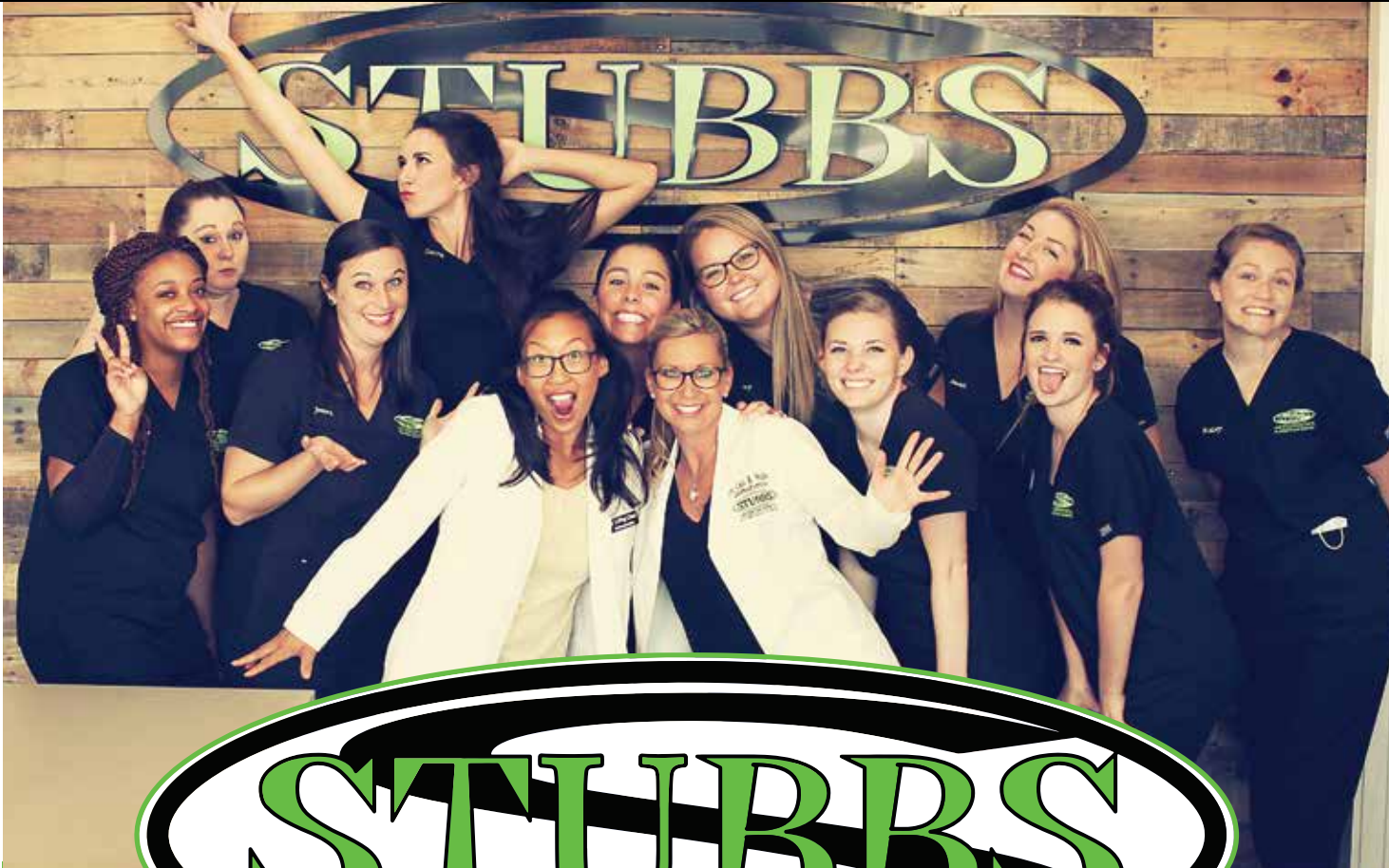
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Our daughter just completed her second phase and had her braces removed today, what a milestone!! This experience has been amazing. We love Dr. Stubbs and her staff. Always friendly and always went above and beyond for my daughter's comfort. ~ Micha K.



# Faces of Walton County: Meet Michael Bickett

By MARK STANLEY AND TRACY STEELY

Michael is the General Manager of the Vue on 30a and the Santa Rosa Golf & Beach Club. He has lived in Santa Rosa Beach for a little over four years. Michael grew up in Michigan and graduated with a Criminal Justice degree from Michigan State University.

“My parents did the typical midwestern thing and retired to Mt. Dora, Florida about 5 years ago.”

Michael has one sister and brother-in-law who live in Richmond, Virginia. “I am also very close to two sets of aunts and uncles who also live in Florida. I don’t get to see them as much as I want, but it is amazing what group texts can do for staying connected.”

“I fell into my career at first by accident. I graduated from Michigan State University with a degree in Criminal Justice and was attempting to work for the federal government in a law enforcement capacity. The interview process was long, and I needed a job to pay the bills, so I started working at the club in my hometown as a bartender. I had great mentors who showed me I had an ability in the hospitality field and who pushed me to improve. I also enjoyed the pace of the work environment and not

being chained to a desk and computer.”

Michael has been working in country clubs for 20 years now. After moving around the country, he settled in Santa Rosa Beach and landed the job as General Manager at Santa Rosa Golf & Beach Club.

“The great part of my job is the relationships I have made with my co-workers and the members of the Club. If you take the time and pay attention enough you can’t go a day without learning something new. My job is to make sure people are having fun and enjoying themselves, and I also get to share some of the biggest moments in their lives. It doesn’t get much better than that.”

What current or former local business makes you the most nostalgic about our community?

“There isn’t one specific business that makes me nostalgic about the area. I think it is more the collective feeling and aura of all the locals. It is very diverse and before I moved here I didn’t realize the thriving art community, specialty retail shops and music culture that was present here.”

If you could choose anyone alive today to have lunch with, who would it be and where would you have lunch?

“This is so hard to narrow



down to one person. I could probably come up with at least ten people that I could choose, but right now I would pick Jimmy Buffet. I can’t think of a better way to relax and let my mind wander than sitting with him and listening to some stories. I have enjoyed his music for so long and think his influence has helped me find my way to my current location. For food we would have cheeseburgers and we would eat them on the beach in front of Vue on 30a, with a few cocktails thrown in, too.”

Where do you see yourself in 5 to 10 years? “I have moved

experiences with me, both good and bad. I love them like brothers, and they hold me to high standards. They have absolutely no problem in calling me out when I need it. They constantly push me to become a better version of myself.”

Tracy Steely and Mark Stanley are the hosts of a community website called The Faces of Walton County. The project aims to showcase the diverse residents of our community, one Face at a time. To nominate someone for an interview visit [www.thefacesofwaltoncounty.com](http://www.thefacesofwaltoncounty.com) or call Tracy at 850-803-9822.

around so much in my career, that I would like to be able put roots down and stay in one place for a bit. Can’t think of a better place than being here and enjoying the Emerald Coast.”

Who inspires you to be better?

“This is easy. I have a group of friends that have shared many



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 Community

# October 2020 30A Real Estate Update



Dear 30A Neighbors,

It is amazing how busy the real estate market has been this fall. I normally focus on the larger communities but this month I am including a number of communities that are prominent on the East End of 30A.

## East End of 30A Market Update:

There are currently only 224 active detached single-family properties on the East End of 30A. In the past 12 months, there have been 1041 detached single-family properties sold. The highest sale being \$15,100,000 at Paradise By the Sea. Current availability ranges from \$439,900 to \$12,990,000. The average property is \$2,905,391 with 3582 sq. ft., priced at \$759.30 per sq. ft. and 193 days on the market. The subdivisions with the most availability currently are Rosemary Beach with 36 properties, Seagrove with 21 properties, Seacrest Beach with 10 properties, Watercolor with 15 properties, Watersound Origins with 14 properties, and Watersound Beach with 9 properties available, Eastern Lake with 8 properties, The Preserve at Inlet Beach with 8 properties. Take a look at a few of the 1041 sales within the past year along the East end of 30A!

### Alys Beach:

53 Sales ranging 1,800,000 to \$10,000,000. The average sale is \$3,861,080 with 3408 sq. ft., selling at 97% of list price, at \$1121.86 per sq. ft. with 107 days on the market.

### Bungalows at Seagrove Beach:

Sales range from \$330,000 to \$378,000 with the average sale being \$358,357 with 1008 sq. ft., selling at 99% of list price at \$355.51 per sq. ft. with 18 days on the market.

### Cassine Village:

Sales range from \$525,000 to \$820,000 with the average sale being \$627,952 with 1971 sq. ft., selling at 96% of list price at \$324.28 per sq. ft. and 68 days on the market.

### Costa Carina:

Sales range \$1,212,500 to \$1,450,000 with the average sale being \$1,334,500 with 2594 sq. ft., selling at 94% of list price, at \$522.23 per sq. ft. and 375 days on the market.

### Cottages at Camp Creek:

Sales range from \$400,000 to \$703,500 with the average sale being \$597,375 with 2037 sq. ft., selling at 95% of list price at \$311.88 per sq. ft. and 123 days on the market.

### Cottages at Eastern Lake:

Sales range from \$585,000 to \$810,000 with the average sale at \$687,500 with 1976 sq. ft., selling at 98% of list price at \$351.17 per sq. ft., and 209 days on the market.

Cottages at Inlet Beach: Sales range \$1,050,000 to \$2,800,000 with the average sale being \$1,631,250 with 2431 sq. ft., selling at 94% of list price, selling at \$650.06 per sq. ft. and 235 days on the market.

### Eastern Lake:

Sales range from \$517,500 to \$1,850,000 with the average sale being \$1,200,722 with 2407 sq. ft., selling at 94% of list price at \$491.70 per sq. ft. and 99 days on the market.

### Grace Point:

Sales range \$1,950,000 to \$3,995,000 with the average sale being \$2,841,791 with 4052 sq. ft., selling at 96% of list price at \$702.45 per sq. ft. and 101 days on the market.

### Grande Pointe at Inlet Beach:

Sales range \$382,850 to \$649,000 with the average being \$486,872 with 2230 sq. ft., selling at 97% of list price at \$221.64 per sq. ft. and 157 days on the market.

### Grove By the Sea:

Sales range from \$600,000 to \$1,100,000 with the average sale being \$844,688, selling at 97% of list price, at \$374.34 per sq. ft. and 166 days on the market.

### Gulf Shore Manor:

Sales range from \$380,000 to \$3,783,333 with the average sale being \$1,635,133 with 3360 sq. ft., selling at 95% of list price at \$456.01 per sq. ft. and 361 days on the market.

### Inlet Beach:

Sales range from \$421,711 to \$5,490,000 with the average sale being \$2,282,147 with 2858 sq. ft., selling at 97% of list price at \$1033.62 per sq. ft. and 191 days on the market.

### Lakewood:

Sales range from \$572,300 to \$1,900,000 with the average sale being \$1,175,383 with 2813 sq. ft., selling at 95% of list price at \$420.09 per sq. ft. and 230 days on the market.

### Magnolia Cottages:

Sales range from \$515,000 to \$799,236 with the average sale being \$656,077 with 1781 sq. ft., selling at 98% of list price at \$370.03 per sq. ft. and 203 days on the market.

### Magnolia Dune:

Sales range from \$875,000 to \$940,000 with the average sale being \$911,250 with 2617 sq. ft., selling at 95% of list price at \$349.93 per sq. ft. at 147 days on the market.

### Naturewalk at Seagrove:

There have been 74 sales ranging from \$573,835 to \$998,615 with the average sale being \$731,961 with 2440 sq. ft., selling at 99% of the list price at \$303.76 per sq. ft. and 132 days on the market.

### Paradise By the Sea:

There have been 2 sales, one at \$3,650,000 with 5489 sq. ft. and 370 days on the market and \$15,100,000 with 10,558 sq. ft. and 72 days on the market.

### Pinecrest at Inlet Beach:

Sales range from \$1,170,000 to \$1,625,000 with the average sale being \$1,305,000 with 2517 sq. ft., selling at 96% of list price at \$518.48 per sq. ft. and 38 days on the market.

### Prominence:

There have been 57 sales



ranging from \$805,175 to \$1,432,127 with the average sale being \$996,297 with 2933 sq. ft., selling at 100% of list price, at \$349.02 per sq. ft. and 51 days on the market.

### Rosemary Beach:

There have been 55 sales ranging from \$1,070,000 to \$4,900,000 with the average sale being \$2,418,191 with 3155 sq. ft., selling at 94% of list price at \$783.34 per sq. ft. and 249 days on the market.

### Sand Cliffs:

Sales range from \$725,000 to \$2,500,000 with the average sale being \$1,403,800 with 2791 sq. ft., selling at 94% of list price at \$508.42 per sq. ft. and 104 days on the market.

### Seabreeze Forest:

Sales range from \$940,000 to \$1,450,000 with the average sale being \$1,210,000 with 3640 sq. ft., selling at 96% of list price at \$332.45 per sq. ft. and 177 days on the market.

### Seacrest Beach:

Sales range from \$525,000 to \$8,600,000 with the average sale being \$1,006,111 with 2545 sq. ft., selling at 97% of list price at \$378.56 per sq. ft. and 175 days on the market.

### Seagrove:

Sales range from \$530,000 to \$8,995,000 with the average sale being \$2,168,948 with 2882 sq. ft., selling at 95% of list price at \$764.44 per sq. ft. and 156 days on the market.

### Seanest:

Sales range from \$616,598 to \$1,989,000 with the average sale being \$1,136,766 with 2528 sq. ft., selling at 94% of list price at \$451.01 per sq. ft. and 299 days on the market.

### Seascape:

2 sales at \$2,100,000 with 4067 sq. ft. and 260 days on

the market and \$2,495,000 with 4938 sq. ft. and 74 days on the market.

### Seaside:

Sales range \$750,000 to \$6,250,000 with the average sale being \$2,347,626 with 2076 sq. ft. at \$1284.72 per sq. ft. and 179 days on the market.

### Watercolor:

120 sales ranging from \$930,000 to \$5,500,000 with the average sale being \$2,047,266 with 3321 sq. ft., selling at 96% of list price at \$618.91 per sq. ft. and 138 days on the market.

### Watersound Beach:

58 sales ranging from \$915,000 to \$5,495,000 with the average sale being \$2,383,301 with 3481 sq. ft., selling at 94% of list price at \$671.77 per sq. ft. and 230 days on the market.

### Watersound West:

23 sales ranging from \$839,000 to \$1,700,000 with the average sale being \$1,233,457 selling at 97% of list price at \$438.37 per sq. ft. and 98 days on the market.

### Watersound Origins:

134 sales ranging \$366,900 to \$1,495,000 with the average sale being \$671,483. Selling at 99% of list price at \$285.60 per sq. ft. and 88 days on the market.

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# Presidents and Elections, the Market, the Economy



By MAURICE STOUSE, FINANCIAL ADVISOR AND BRANCH MANAGER

The 2020 presidential election

is nearing, and many investors, workers, savers and retirees are being bombarded with messaging and have a lot of things they are considering by Nov. 3. Many are wondering, asking and offering their opinions (deservedly so) as to what impact the election will have on the economy and the markets (stock market, bond market, money market, real estate market to name a few). Many might be pondering the age-old question of, “Do presidents make markets or do markets (and the economy perhaps) make presidents?”

It is important to remember that long-term investors should not be as concerned with the short-term moves the markets might make and, that in either direction, those might end up as short-term blips. Note that while it is indeed important to take good notice of who occupies the White House, it is more important to think about the economy long-term, what corporate and business earnings are to be and what the Federal Reserve does. It is generally not prudent for investors to make dramatic changes to their portfolios or strategy based



upon the results of an election.

It is important to remember that the strength of the economy and the corona virus can impact the outcome of the election, but investors might want to look beyond that. There are always near-term implications that impact some, but not all the 11 sectors of the stock market.

Raymond James has also published a piece entitled: “3 Myths About Voting and Market Volatility.” The article points out that when making decisions on investing, elections are one of many things to be considered. Here are the myths in short:

The first myth is that Markets Underperform in Election years. Raymond James points out that in 17 of the past 23 election years, the S&P 500 index has ended in positive territory. When the market was down, it was because of things beyond the election.

The second myth is that one party can lay claim to superior economic or financial performance. Raymond James points out that neither party can make such a claim as both the economy and the markets have performed well under both parties.

And the third myth is that the markets are weakest in the year following the election. Raymond James dismissed that as cause and effect as there is not sufficient evidence to support that.

Market timing has often been mentioned as very tempting for investors, either to preserve a gain, avoid a loss, or perhaps make a large gain. The problem many investors have experienced is that predicting the markets can be akin to predicting the weather. There can be forecasting for sure but predicting the outcome is next to impossible.

To learn more, you can go to

[www.raymondjames.com](http://www.raymondjames.com) to read the article on the election myths. The Raymond James site is replete with information regarding presidential elections, the economy and the markets.

*Maurice Stouse is a Financial Advisor and the branch manager of The First Wealth Management and Raymond James and resides in Grayton Beach. He has been in financial services for over 33 years. His main office is located at First Florida Bank, a division of the First, A National Banking Association, 2000 98 Palms Blvd, Destin, FL 32541, with branch offices in Niceville, Mary Esther, Miramar Beach, Freeport and Panama City, Pensacola, Tallahassee, and Moultrie, GA. Phone 850.654.8124. Raymond James advisors do not offer tax advice. Please see your tax professionals. Email: Maurice.stouse@raymondjames.com. Securities offered through Raymond James Financial Services, Inc. Member FINRA/SIPC, and are not insured by bank insurance, the FDIC or any other government agency, are not deposits or obligations of the bank, are not guaranteed by the bank, and are subject to risks, including the possible loss of principal. Investment Advisory Services are offered through Raymond James Financial Services Advisors, Inc. The First Wealth Management First Florida Bank, and The First, A National Banking Association are not registered broker/dealers and are independent of Raymond James Financial Services. Views expressed are the current opinion of the author, not necessarily those of RJFS or Raymond James, and are subject to change without notice. Information provided is general in nature and is not a complete statement of all information necessary for making an investment decision and is not a recommendation or a solicitation to buy or sell any security. Past performance is not indicative of future results.*

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Community

# John (M and M) Magee Announces Bid for Re-Election to South Walton Mosquito Control Board

BY JOHN MAGEE

I am asking for your vote for Re-election on November 3, 2020, for the position of Commissioner Seat One, South Walton County Mosquito Control District.

I have been a resident of Miramar Beach for 38 years and consider Walton County my home. Prior to that time, I lived all over the United States to include serving in the Army. Watching Walton County growth has been exciting knowing that I have been part of the foundation. Can you imagine how it would be if we did not have mosquito control?

I have been married to Patricia for 47 years and we have two wonderful sons and four fantastic grandchildren. One of the satisfactions I get is knowing that the SWMC goes that extra step to manage the mosquito population around our ballparks protecting our kids while they learn leadership skills in sports.

In 1993 Pat and I founded Hi-Tec Laboratories Inc. this company's primary function was the manufacturer and development of specialty chemicals. From this company we had a spinoff company called Gulf Stream Plastics, which was a blow molding bottle manufacturer. Both these com-

panies were housed in Walton County, Florida. It was a twenty-four-hour operation and 95% of our employees were residents of Walton County. It was my objective to create as many full-time non-tourist related jobs as possible. We sold these companies in 2015 and they are still in operation in Walton County under the new ownership.

I started to attend monthly commission meetings and realized that this was an area of expertise and leadership I could bring to the organization as a commissioner and after two years of attending meetings I was elected as Commissioner for Seat One.

The accomplishments that the district has achieved over the last sixteen years was for a better South Walton County. We have an outreach program that took years of dedicated work teaching in the schools which is now a success story. We developed an on-line notification spraying notification for individual areas all you have to do is register on our webpage. Building a strong district requires the assurance that our technicians are fully trained and up-to-date on all procedures. Education has always been one of my first objectives. The list



goes on but the fact the matter is the quality of life presently is much better than it was when I moved here in 1982. I used to joke around back then and say the mosquito was the state bird. Now I'm often stopped by constituents praising the district on how well we manage the mosquito population, thank you for your support.

There are other objectives that had to be turned around. When I first went on the board there was not a good strong working relationship with the county. Reaching out and meeting with the administrator and commissioners to include department heads we

have bridged a strong relationship of working together. Sure, there's times we disagree but at the end of the day we try to make everything work out legally and to the best for the constituents.

Over the last sixteen years I have served twice on the Board of Directors of the Florida Mosquito Control Association. I am currently serving now. I was elected to this position by the other commissioners throughout the State of Florida. I appreciate their confidence in me to perform the duties representing them. It is a very challenging position but rewarding for accomplishments gained. One thing I do like about it is that we work very close with the Department of Agriculture who governs the use of pesticides in the State of Florida. This gives me a heads up of changes that will be coming so that we are bet-

ter informed as our district level prepares for those changes.

**Other Affiliations:**

Florida Mosquito Control Association, I am currently serving on the Board of Directors

Active Member, American Mosquito Control Association

Member American Chemical Society

Insurco Reassurance Corporation past Board of Directors (insurance company)

Walton County Economic Development Alliance, past founding member

Past Chairman Walton County Republican Party

Past President South Walton Republican Club

South Walton Kiwanis Club (Past Charter Member)

On November 3rd I am asking for your vote to Re-elect John Magee Seat One SWMC. This is a nonpartisan position and we are in the lower right-hand corner of the ballot please do not overlook me; we are after the amendments.

I have proven leadership and experience.

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# Caring and Sharing of South Walton Announces New Partnership with Beach Blue Counseling

BY HOPE MCCORMICK AND EMILY PROCTOR

Caring & Sharing of South Walton is pleased to share that we have partnered with Beach Blue Counseling, LLC, to provide four hours of case management and mental health therapy for our clients each week, at no cost to the clients. The idea for the partnership began when Emily Proctor reached out to Brian Boelk, a former social work intern at Hope Medical Clinic, for some help with one of our clients. “Brian came by for a few hours on one of our assistance days and sat for over an hour in the heat helping someone fill out paperwork for government assistance. He was so helpful that it was hard NOT to begin imagining what a partnership might look like, for both myself and our Executive Director,” Proctor said. “When we learned that he was thinking about joining a local practice with McCorry, another former intern with Hope Medical Clinic, it was a no brainer to reach out to them.”

The services, which are offered by appointment between 10 am and 2 pm every Friday, began in mid-July. Sometimes only one or two appointments are needed; others come every other week or even weekly, which is part of how we know it’s already having a positive impact. Social Workers Patrick McCorry, MSW, and Brian Boelk, MSW,

see an average of four clients each week, providing needs assessments, counseling, and connection to other resources. Both



are also being trained to use the Homeless and Housing Alliance’s Homeless Management Information System to help coordinate services for the homeless and those at risk for homelessness. They are also working with clients on probation to help them fulfill recovery-related requirements.

Emily Proctor, the Director of Outreach, says about the program, “Although a lot of our clients initially come to us seeking food or help with a past due utility bill or rent, many of them have needs that go well beyond financial assistance. They may be recovering from a traumatic event or loss, struggling with depression or addiction, or wanting to learn new ways to relate to family. Having trained social workers available, allows some of our most vulnerable clients to have access to resources that will hopefully help them in a deeper

and more transformative way than a one-time payment on a bill. Ultimately our goal is to help all of our clients, not just survive, but thrive. Offering social work and case management is an important step in that direction. I have already seen how meeting with Brian or Patrick has helped a client feel calmer and more hopeful about the future. We have also seen concrete improvements to clients’ living situations and access to healthcare services as a result of just one or two sessions.”

Proctor said she is excited

about the additional services and collaboration with Beach Blue Counseling. “We are so grateful for McCorry and Boelk’s willingness to work for us at a reduced rate so that the most vulnerable in our community can get the help they need. We look forward to offering more of this kind of assistance over the long term,” she said. “For more information or to schedule an appointment, please call (850)-267-2866 or email Emily Proctor at outreach@caringandsharingsowal.org. Caring & Sharing of South Walton’s facility is located at 112

Lynn Drive in Santa Rosa Beach (behind the Sherwin Williams, just east of the County Hwy 393 intersection on the south side of Hwy 98). For more information about Beach Blue Counseling, visit their website at <https://www.beachbluecounseling.com/>.

About the Authors: Hope McCormick is the Community Development VISTA for Communities of Transformation South Walton. Emily Proctor, M.Div., serves as the Director of Outreach at Caring and Sharing of South Walton.




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Community

# Furnishings with Flair

Tactile, is the first thought that comes to mind when visiting the Maison 30A's furniture showrooms on Panama City Beach Parkway.

From the cool, smooth edge of the industrial chic cement dining tables, to the rugged, hewn feel of the hand carved teak sculptures and occasional tables, everything at Maison 30A is intended to be touched, seen and experienced.

Indeed, as soon as you enter it is clear that owner and designer, Chris Bailey deliberately seeks to evoke the senses and stimulate the eye. In the interior showroom, a lit candle lingers subtly in the background, the walls are covered in part by soft pastel shades of recycled wood, once strewn aside by Hurricane Michael, contrasting starkly with opposing walls finished in rugged corrugated iron. Wood samples and color swatches are set out in an alluring display on the table, all setting the tone for a memorable shopping experience.

With success has come growth, and what was once a warehouse is now a spacious extension of their interior showroom, featuring on-trend French Bistro chairs, intriguing geometric side tables and an abundance of furnishings in all manner of colors, shapes and creativity.

This is not a shopping experience to be rushed. Maison 30A is both dog and people friendly, and visitors are



Not sure exactly what you want or don't see exactly what you want? No problem, Daniel is always on-hand to gently guide you through your selection, and private appointments with Chris are suggested if you are in the building and design process, or seeking to undertake a major remodel.

Large or small, statement piece or delicate accent, you are sure to find a memorable treasure at Maison 30A.

Conveniently located on 98 near the junction with Highway 79, Maison 30A offers ample parking and is open daily Tuesday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

encouraged to slow down and linger over the many, many furnishings ideas on display. In addition to Chris' signature industrial line of large, heavy furniture, there are numerous, much smaller accent pieces interspersed among the furniture. All intended to give you a perspective on how individual pieces might fit into your own home.

Outside there is an equally large space featuring pots and planters from around the world. So many pots and planters! From gleaming, glazed Mediterranean style pots in bold colors, to their much sought-after collection of subtle, neutral-toned pots and water fountains. All in sizes large and small and everything in between.



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# Boca Boutique & Galleri in Watercolor Celebrates 10 Years!

By RITA L. SHERWOOD

If you're a local like me, you know exactly where to go for that cute, unique gift for your girlfriend. As a matter of fact, I've been shopping there for years, and I'm never disappointed. From one-of-a-kind jewelry made by local artists to adorable tea towels with comical phrases, Boca Boutique & Galleri is your one stop shop. Distinctive clothing, shoes and even acrylic and oil paintings by local artists round out their collection of gifts for your friends, your families, even for yourself!

Owner Traci Mansfield says, "We appreciate our locals and visitors alike, and love to provide them with the latest trends. I can't tell you how many times I've met ladies who are vacationing here with their girlfriends who come in and shop to pick up their 'happiness' for their friends and families at home."

The clothes at Boca are mostly beach casual and not too dressy, and the pearl jewelry is done here locally by Lily Chartier. Their jewelry line Behati, which means "Blessed, she who brings happiness," is affordable. The local artist utilizes a mix of new, vintage, repurposed, and handcrafted elements in her designs, with new natural stones and crystals. They also carry 30A gear, "We People" unisex ball caps, and beautiful,



fragrant candles.

You can also find trendy clothing, as they like to have something for everyone, and their prices range from low to moderate and high. Traci says, "Our customers love natural fabrics, like cotton and bamboo. We are continually bringing in new lines so customers will have fresh, new choices. At Boca Boutique we make a point to seek out lines that are

made in the USA. We also carry lines made in Italy, Israel, India, Vietnam, Indonesia, Spain and Guatemala."

And what's unique to Boca that no one else carries? They have three new lines out of Australia, which provides the beach Boho vibe at a reasonable price point.

Boca Boutique & Galleri also is proud to support our local community by donating to various charities such as Emerald Coast Middle School, South Walton High School, Point Washington Medical Center, Seaside School 5K/10K/Half Marathon, Destin Women's Club, Snowbird Association, Destin History & Fishing Museum, and the Miss Okaloosa County Pageant. They also enjoy participating in local events in Watercolor, like the Easy on 30A concert and the Holiday & Winter Market.

Traci goes on to say, "We do want to express sincere thanks to our loyal customers who have been shopping with us for so many years. It is such an enjoyable experience to develop a relationship with the ladies that shop with us and visit with them each time they come in. We are from Kentucky and often times when talking with customers we find that we have a common connection. It truly is a small world. Without our dear customers we



could not have grown our business to where it is today."

Customers near and far can keep up with Boca Boutique on Facebook and Instagram @boca.boutique #shopboca. They can get a glimpse of new apparel, shoes, jewelry and gifts, and stay up to date on sales and events.

Traci says, "The key to our success has been our great team of employees who take care of

our customers with their sense of southern hospitality. We've been known to hand deliver items among all three of our locations for our clients."

Well with service like this and three locations to shop, why go anywhere else for that special something? Visit Boca Boutique & Galleri by McGuire's in Destin, in Miramar Beach, or by Publix in Watercolor.

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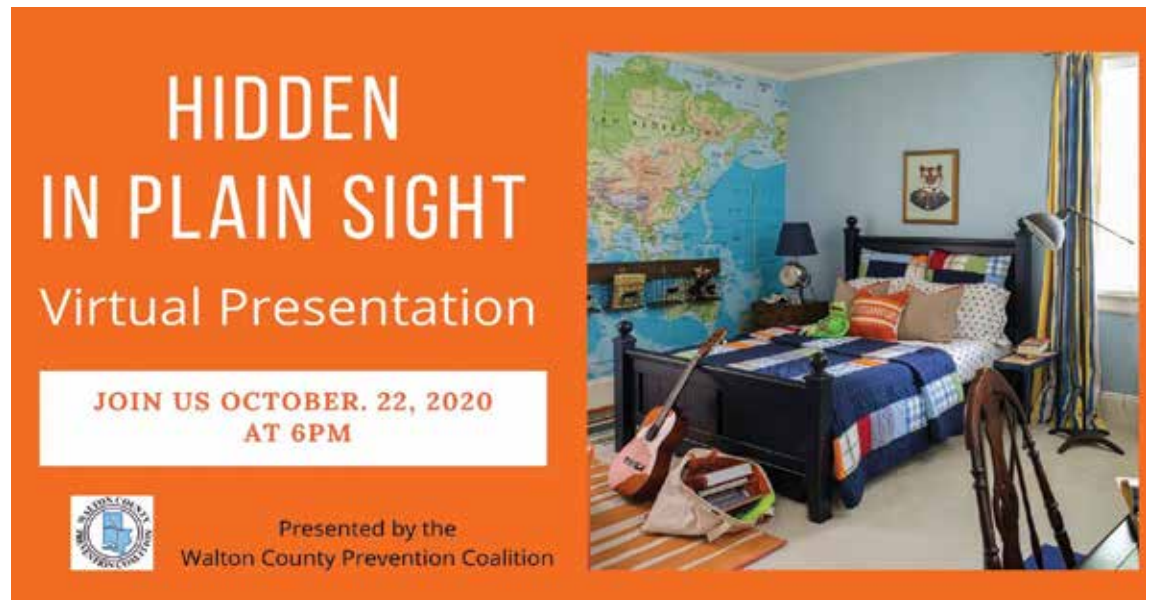
Community

# Walton County Prevention Coalition Hosts "Hidden in Plain Sight" Virtual Presentation

Join Walton County Prevention Coalition for a virtual Hidden in Plain Sight presentation on Thursday, October 22nd at 6:00pm via ZOOM. This event is for adults and parents only, please no students. Registration for this event is free however, space is limited so please register ahead of time. The purpose of this interactive drug education

presentation is to raise awareness of the signs that may point to risky adolescent behaviors.

During the presentation, participants will be taken through a mock teenager's bedroom where parents, caregivers, or other adults will be presented with a series of objects that will give them insight into current trends youth use to conceal alcohol and drugs.




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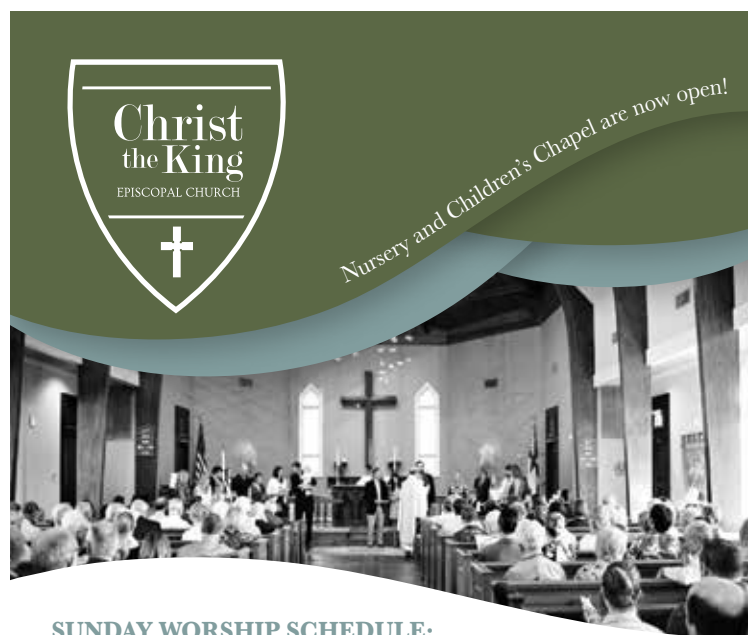
Participants will identify hidden drug paraphernalia, warning signs, and learn more about symptoms of youth substance use to watch for.

The Prevention Specialists leading this presentation will provide guidance on how to talk to youth about drugs and alcohol, and what to do if a problem is

suspected. They will share a few suggestions for starting difficult conversations with your teens about these issues. We recognize that it is hard to know what to do or say about substance use and we are here to help you start those conversations.

Up next for the Coalition is facilitation of the DEA National

Prescription Drug Take Back Day in Walton County on October 24th. Stay tuned for details on how you can dispose of unused prescription medication in a safe manner. For more information about upcoming community events visit the Walton County Prevention Coalition Facebook page.



Nursery and Children's Chapel are now open!

**SUNDAY WORSHIP SCHEDULE:**

10:30am: Service is open for public service and live streamed [christthekingfl.org](http://christthekingfl.org)

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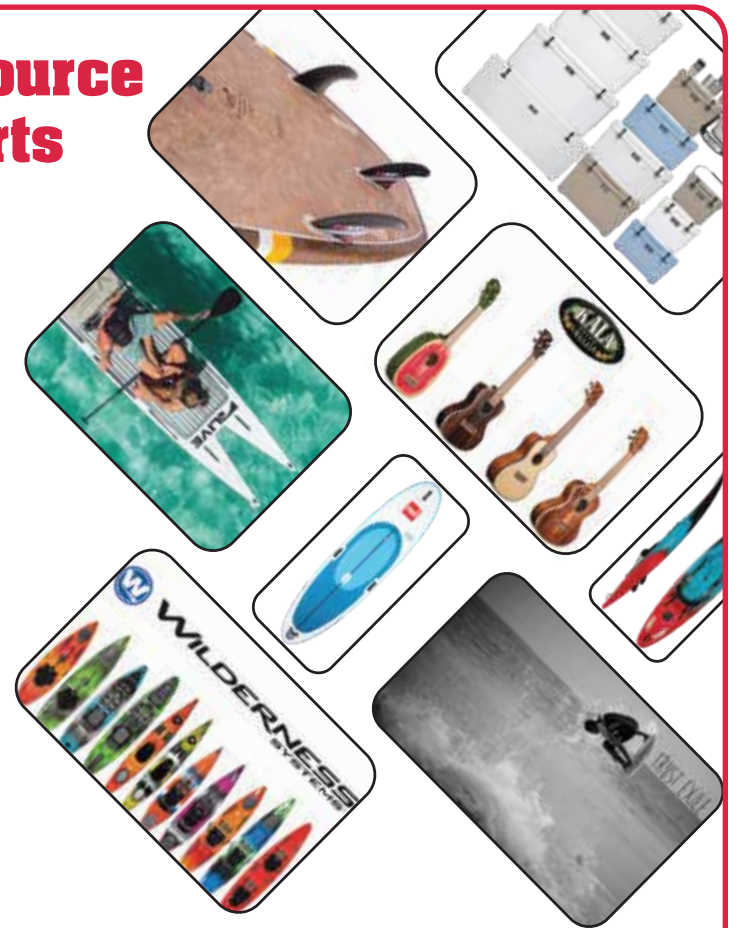
Thursdays

Centering Prayer: 10:30am-10:50am

Discussion Group: 11am-12pm

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# Our Local Pros: Spotlight on Architectural Elements and Resources

The Emerald Coast is growing. It appears that everywhere one turns there is a new building or new development popping up. Santa Rosa Beach has been one of the quickest areas to expand, and with expansion more resources are needed. Architectural Elements and Resources, LLC, owned and operated by local natives Michael and Kari Weaver, aim to be the building and designing solution for Santa Rosa Beach and the surrounding area.

With more than 30 years' experience in the Flooring industry, Architectural Elements and Resources works with end users, Builders, and the A&D Community to help educate them on the new flooring trends and products available for their home. The company finds value providing a unique experience to each person and project, as each one has specific needs. Beginning as early as initial drawings, Michael and his team assists each client with picking out the appropriate flooring and surface coverage from the front door to the back door, and everything in between. The company focuses on importing



Zach Weaver



Michael Weaver

and selling exclusive tile, wood, carpet, LVP's and a variety of other surface coverages. Michael and his team do not typically install the products themselves but are happy to recommend their customers to the best installation teams in the area.

Michael attributes the success of his company to their upfront and honest attitude about what

will work and what won't in the initial design phase. Customers often come in with a certain design in mind, and while the team always strives to work in harmony with their customers, they also want each person to go away with something they are thrilled with. Sometimes these two goals do not coincide. Michael and his team are happy to be honest

about that and work together for a solution that fulfills the designer's dreams.

The thing that really makes Architectural Elements and Resources stand out as a company is both their dedication to customer service and their commitment to being a no pressure business. Michael strives to create an atmosphere where people can come

in and feel like they are working with a friend. Their goal is always to educate rather than sell. As the saying goes, "knowledge is power."

"We try to educate people on the right products," Michael said.

Going forward, the company hopes to expand to Panama City and other surrounding areas. This service is especially needed in the area of Panama City as many families have still not been able to rebuild from Hurricane Michael and other storms. The company's goal is to add more builders to their team as well as create a wider customer base. More than anything, Michael and his team want to give back to the community in whatever way they can, primarily through donation and education.

You can visit Architectural Elements and Resources at 181 Lynn Drive A in Santa Rosa Beach or contact them at (850) 622-0246 or online: [www.adesrb.com](http://www.adesrb.com). Be sure to check them out the next time you're in search of an expert designer!

## Walton County Tax Collector Receives Legacy Award

Walton County Tax Collector, Rhonda Skipper was recently presented with the 2020 Excellence in Finance Operations Legacy Award by the Florida Tax Collector's Association. The award recognizes offices who have achieved innovation, customer focus, a well-managed budget and clean audit in the finance operations of the office. "Receiving this award is an amazing honor and a testament to our Chief Financial Officer, Nathan Thomas and his finance team," said Rhonda Skipper. "We have a fantastic finance team that works diligently to ensure we are innovating in our daily work processes to reduce redundancy and ensure accuracy. They ensure every penny is accounted for and accounts are balanced daily."



This is the 10th straight Legacy Award the Walton County Tax Collector's office has received. The Legacy Award is one of the highest achievements the Florida Tax Collector's Association can award a local Tax Collector. "Achieving this perfect audit is a reflection of Rhonda Skipper's exemplary

performance day in and day out. Maintaining focus on the details to achieve perfection is not easy," said Anne Gannon, president of the Florida Tax Collectors Association. "The residents of Walton County can have confidence in her ability to provide exemplary service."

A five-person judging panel made up of government financial executives from throughout Florida reviewed the Tax Collector's processes as related to the four areas of competency. The review included methods utilized

by Mrs. Skipper to deliver customer service to the people she serves and consideration of the technological innovations she has developed and put into place.

Recently Mrs. Skipper received a huge designation from tax collectors throughout Florida and was sworn in as the First Vice President of the Florida Tax

Collectors Association. This is a tremendous milestone and designation the citizens of Walton County can be proud of.



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Dining

# Wine of the Month: California Wines

At Kwiker Liquor they know that the key to having a great selection of Fine Wines, is knowing a great selection of Vintners and Winemakers. And they take pride in cultivating these relationships to bring the very best to their customers on the Beach and beyond. This month we will

explore California wines with Consulting Winemaker, Julien Fayard.

In the American wine business—especially in its leading regions like Napa and Sonoma—consumers are becoming more savvy and discerning in their taste and purchase

decisions. There is a new evolution of palates looking for fresher, less-manipulated wines; Napa winemaker Julien Fayard calls it “American wine with old-world restraint.”

One of Fayard’s brands, Nicholson Jones, captures what today’s wine drinkers are seek-



Julien Fayard

ing from the bottle: better balance and increased ageability. The brand, which originated in 2003, is owned by part-time Naples, Fla. residents Cal Nicholson and his wife Pam Jones who brought Fayard on board as winemaker in 2006. At the time, Fayard had been working as Philippe Melka’s Director of Winemaking, and Nicholson was the first vintner to recruit him to save their 2005 vintage. He did, and Fayard has been the winemaker for Nicholson Jones ever since.

Throughout the past 15 years, Nicholson Jones has evolved to become a true collaboration between vintner and winemaker. Nicholson and Fayard share a common vision to produce California-style wines with a traditional French accent, shining a light on unique, small vineyards in Napa Valley’s most famed AVAs. The result is a diverse portfolio of terroir-driven, single-vineyard wines and blends.

“Napa has an incredibly wide array of soils. What is good for us as winemakers and for those who enjoy the wines is that there are so many expressions due to that soil variance and undiscovered expressions still waiting to be revealed,” said Fayard.

For Fayard and Nicholson Jones, terroir-driven wines are defined by respecting the vines. Fayard believes that it is his job to bring out the specific characteristics and personality of each site. He doesn’t have a set equation for any wine. He is in the vineyards daily, tasting the fruit around harvest, deciding when they pick based on each specific site. He will go to the vineyard, look at what is happening in a given row with the soil, the vines and the fruit. That holistic approach of keeping in mind all aspects of nature that provides us this fruit is what sets great wine apart from good wine.

“We make wine naturally not artificially. The winemak-

ing process has the least impact on the fruit, the vineyard dominates,” said Fayard. “It’s finding the balance between farming and winemaking that gives you certain flavors that are consistent over time and shine through the vintages. You can credit it to the terroir.”

Take the Sugarloaf Vineyard, located in the very south part of Napa Valley between Coombsville and Carneros, for instance. Nicholson Jones sources Cabernet Sauvignon and Syrah from this site for a single-vineyard, single-varietal Cabernet Sauvignon and the Proprietary Cuvee. The vineyard sits on a volcanic rocky bench, in a cooler climate widely influenced by the bay. The vineyard is positioned high on the hills guarding the entrance to Coombsville. In general this vineyard has long hang time and very low yields. Standing in this beautiful vineyard, one can see the most northern part of the San Francisco Bay. Fayard and Nicholson like this terroir because it creates fresh acidity, a balanced wine with elegance and finesse that is a distinguishing factor in both wines.

“With great vineyards you can make beautiful wines, but having the presence and involvement of the owners is what truly makes the difference for us,” said Fayard. “Wine has a soul. It is a people business, especially for us. I thrive on producing value with high quality and new areas that are still to be explored.”

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# Coastal Branch Library Presents "Art in Public Places"

As part of the "Art in Public Places," artists, Pat Faber and Leslie Hathorn will display their work at the Coastal Branch Library Through October 31, 2020



**Pat Faber**

Pat Faber's journey as an artist began with numerous paint-by-number kits during grade school and progressed with high school art classes. It was there that she was introduced to her favorite medium, watercolor. Over the years she has always been involved in creative ventures with a career in event planning and community



activities. During this time her artistic interests progressed from needlework of all varieties, to acrylics, drawing, and pastels.

After having lived in several cities, life brought Pat back to the Gulf Coast twenty years ago. She was very fortunate to discover Robert and Sharon Long's painting classes, and they reintroduced her to her first love, watercolor painting.

Pat was swept away with the beauty and challenges of her own style of painting under their training. The realistic depictions

of the coastal shoreline as well as Florida's diverse flora and fauna inspire Pat's works. Pat has been honored to create several commissioned watercolor paintings which have pushed her artistic boundaries and furthered her love of the watercolor medium. You can find Pat painting year around with local artist Sharon Long.



**Leslie Hathorn**

Leslie Adams Hathorn is a local artist and professional photographer. She has been painting since childhood and favors watercolors and acrylics. She received her art degree from Jacksonville State University in



Alabama and later received her Masters. Leslie's work features the natural world and focuses on the South's native fauna and wildlife with a coastal influence. Her art is vibrant, spirited, and fun. Her style encompasses realism, impressionism and the occasional abstract. She has taken inspiration from her favorite artist Georgia O'Keeffe with her ability to present nature in a profound way.

Leslie owes much of her skill to local watercolor artist, Sharon Long. Leslie continues to gain painting skills and knowledge as she assists Long with her watercolor classes and workshops. She values Long's use of color, textures, and her unique watercolor system.

"My art is influenced by the ocean and its glorious colors, textures, patterns of light and countless details. I want to inspire others and promote our beautiful area as a vacation paradise through my art and photography."

Leslie's art can be seen at the Miramar Beach Retail Therapy where she has a display of her original art, prints and gift items.

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Community

# Seaside School Half Marathon + 5K Announces Virtual Race in February 2021

## Funds to Benefit Seaside Neighborhood School & Seacoast Collegiate High School

The Seaside School Virtual Half Marathon + 5K is now open for registration to participants around the world. In an effort to minimize the spread of COVID-19 and prioritize the health and safety of the community and participants, the Seaside School, Inc. and Seaside School Foundation have decided to move forward with a virtual half marathon + 5K for the 19th annual event.

The virtual half marathon (13.1 miles) and 5K (3.1 miles)

will start on Sunday, February 14th, 2021 and end at midnight on Sunday, February 28th, 2021. Participants can run or walk at any pace during the race dates, then simply report the time to be added to the national results leaderboard.

“With continued uncertainty, this virtual option will allow us to provide the safest possible experience for participants,” said Teresa Horton, Executive Director of the Seaside School Foundation. “This was an incredibly

difficult and emotional process for our school and community as a whole to make. With that said, we need the community’s support this year more than ever. We look forward to virtually cheering on our runners in 2021!”

Registration cost for the 5K is \$75 and the half marathon is \$100. In order for participants to receive complimentary swag bags before race week, runners need to complete registration before January 17th, 2021.

Each registrant will receive the following:

- Virtual Training Coach Program led by lululemon® Grayton Beach Ambassador, Rex Stinnet
- Vera Bradley® ReActive Sling

- Backpack + Pleated Face Mask
- Billie Gaffrey Designed Race Shirt (Celebrating 25 Years of the Seaside School)
- Custom Finisher Medal
- Customized Playlist
- Virtual Bib, Finisher Certificate + Goody Bag

“We’re looking forward to engaging with the runners virtually while still offering some perks of race day our participants have come to know and love!” said Mrs. Horton.

100% of the funds raised from the virtual race benefits the Seaside Schools Foundation, which supports the operating budget for the Seaside Neighborhood School and Seacoast Collegiate High School. The Seaside

School is tuition-free, public charter school serving students in across Walton County. Last year the race raised more than ever with proceeds totaling more than \$600,000.

“Our students and parents are extremely grateful for each and every race participant this year,” said Ms. Kim Mixson, Principal of Seaside Neighborhood School. “This fundraiser has become a part of our school culture, a stellar example of the Seaside Way in action. By applying creative thinking and problem-solving, we can keep this tradition alive and meet the needs of our growing school and community.”

Registration options can be found at [www.runseasidefl.com](http://www.runseasidefl.com).



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The Seaside School is a high-achieving, non-profit, public charter school serving students in grades 5-12.

### COMMUNITY + SPIRIT + INSPIRATION

- ★ You are part of the Seaside School Family and Community—you've played an instrumental role in our success over the years and we need that to continue.
- ★ Your continued support and participation keep the spirit of our beloved event and the Seaside School thriving.
- ★ Your commitment to support and participate during these unprecedented times is an inspiration for all!

### SEASIDE RACE SWAG

- ★ Virtual Training Coach Program led by lululemon® Grayton Beach Ambassador, Rex Stinnet
- ★ Customized Playlist
- ★ Billie Gaffrey Designed Race Shirt
- ★ Custom Finisher Medal
- ★ Vera Bradley® ReActive Sling Backpack
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- ★ +More goodies!



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# A Covid-19 Story and a BIG Idea

Local resident Nancy Wills (and her siblings) mother, Margaret Wills, was born April 18, 1924. Many things happened in her 96 years of life: The Great Depression, the legalization of alcohol, World War II, Nuclear weapons, the Vietnam War, Korean War, NAFTA, School desegregation, Twin Towers falling, the Kennedy assassination, the first man on the moon, market collapse of 2008, the twin bomb blast at the Boston marathon and so much more.



In addition, her mother was privileged to experience some of the greatest innovations and inventions such as the invention of the hairdryer, life-saving vaccines, self-winding watches, loud speakers, aerosol, car radios, jet engines, ball point pens, helicopters and television, turbo engines, disposable diapers, power steering, women's liberation, smoke detectors, the Internet, digital technology, WIFI, lithium batteries, vacuum cleaners and the cell phone, just to name a few.

could prepare her mom or her family for the devastation of what would come next—Covid-19. We all have been affected by the Covid-19 Pandemic, but those especially affected were the ones who could not stand up for themselves. Nancy and her family were not allowed to sit with their mother during the months of quarantine, her

final months. "We begged, we pleaded, became assertive, livid to be honest, and even considered being arrested to wake up this non-functioning system, a system that must be improved," said Nancy. "COVID-19 was covered! Companionship for our loved one was stolen!" Nancy said her mother did not die of Covid-19. She died of loneli-

ness. "It is so very important to physically see your loved ones, especially our elderly," Nancy continued. "The separation from our loved ones is causing many of our elderly in nursing homes to deteriorate and die. We must be able to see them and help with any situation that might need attention. We need to see them smile. They have very little to live for and seeing family and friends is the highlight of their day. This is one way we can show our love and they can feel loved," said Nancy.

Nancy feels strongly that we must stand for those who cannot stand up for themselves—the elderly in nursing homes like her mother. So, she has begun an awareness campaign by requesting, basically pleading, for every nursing home in America to designate a room for quarantined patients. She said this should be a non-physical contact room with telephone visitation; a place where you talk to one another behind a glass partition with a separate air-filtering system—totally safe!

"This is a simple and inexpensive solution," she said. This change alone can heal a broken heart and be a life saver." A local nursing home is considering the concept and she hopes more will soon follow. It's ideas like these that can change lives. "This time the bullet was not missed; it directly hit our nursing homes and hospitals and personally, our mother. We must learn from this and change it so in the future we will be allowed to be there for our loved ones."

Nancy is calling for construction businesses or contractors who might be willing to contribute services and/or nursing homes and assisted living facilities that want to lead by example.

If you have a similar story or would like to help, contact Nancy at willswaychanges@gmail.com or (850) 376-7635.

*Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves. ~ Romans 12:10*

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Wellness

# Medicare Annual Enrollment Period Opens October 15th through December 7th

By MICHAEL ROTH

Happy with your Medicare benefits? Not interested in making changes for 2021. Great! You do not have to do a thing! However, if you are ready to make a change, the Annual Enrollment Period (AEP) runs from October 15, 2020 to December 7, 2020 with any policy changes becoming effective January 1, 2021.

If you have an Advantage or Drug plan, your insurance provider should have already sent you the "Annual Notice

of Change" (also known as the "ANOC") letter. This notice alerts you to any changes regarding your plan... such as premiums, copays, pharmacy networks and drug formularies.

During AEP you can: change from Original Medicare to a Medicare Advantage Plan or vice-versa. choose a different Medicare Advantage Plan. join a Medicare Prescription Drug Plan or switch to another drug plan. Drop your Medicare Advantage or Prescription Drug Plan completely and return to Original Medicare A & B.

### Why you may want to make a change:

- An increase in monthly premiums.
- Better benefits - since all plan benefits are not the same.
- Your doctor is no longer in the plan network or you want a broader and more stable network of providers.
- Your medications are no longer covered.

### What Not to Do:

You should not listen to all the TV commercials and phone calls that begin airing in October.



Remember the old Joe Namath commercial about the best Medicare plans on the Planet? You should not wonder, "Should I be doing something since everybody else seems to be? Can I believe what I hear from my friends, colleagues, and family?"

You should not call an "800" number. The majority of Medicare members should just ignore the "noise" and do nothing. However, not paying attention to the changes in their Medicare plan (reflected in the ANOC letter) and not calling to find out what other plans may work bet-

ter for their current needs is not good either!

For further information on how the benefits and resources at Florida Blue can help you live more and worry less call 850-899-7003, or email mhaalandroth@gmail.com.

*Michael Roth is Regional Manager with Florida Health Connector (Your Local Agency for Florida Blue), and President of MrBenefits, Inc. Michael has been a local resident on 30A since 2008 and has over 40 year's experience specializing in Medicare, Health, Life and Group Benefits.*

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# Enduring Hard Things in 2020



BY STEPHENIE CRAIG

Even if you highly value optimism, 2020 is giving you a run for your money. As we sit six months into the pandemic, Hurricane Sally has pummeled the Panhandle, and we all know someone impacted by Covid, fires, racial tensions, not to mention the upcoming election discussions. Exhaustion and uncertainty fatigue are very normal in these circumstances. I continue to hear stories, both locally and nationally, of people being angry, irritable, depressed and overwhelmed. Situations that used to be mildly irritating are now feeling off the charts infuriating and disappointing. We are collectively worn down and struggling to manage emotions, to be kind to each other, and to

find a continued sense of resilience.

So, what can we do to remember who we are and to be the people we want to be in the current season of uncertainty? What are the tools that inspire us not to give ourselves permission to spiral downward and give up loving our neighbors?

## 10 Ways to Endure & Thrive Through Hard Things:

**Engage self-care practices.** When you sleep well, eat well, move your body, take prescribed medicine, engage in personal hygiene and get out of bed at a consistent time, you communicate a sense of hope and motivation to your brain and body.

**Look for the positive in the midst of the negative.** While being honest with yourself about the real current challenges, also daily look for and focus on the positive happening around you. Hurricanes are awful; people showing up lovingly for neighbors is beautiful.

**Engage your spiritual life.** Remember that God is present in the midst of suffering and you are deeply loved. While difficult, try embracing the reality that some of our deepest growth as humans is born in times of suffering.

**Remember your values.** Values such as honesty, family, love, and kindness can be consistent guides through both the wonderful and the awful moments of life. Try listing your top 10 values to remind yourself of the anchors that drive your life and decisions daily.

**Focus on others.** Spend a few minutes each day thinking of someone you know and engaging in kindness toward them such as a thoughtful text, a phone call, praying for them, or helping them in a practical way. Remembering others gives perspective to our personal suffering and reminds us that love lives in the hard places.

**Let go of what you can't control.** Sort what you can control from what you can't. As much as possible, let go of what is outside your control. Now, try spend your energy on taking meaningful action on the things within your control. I cannot control the pandemic; however, I can control my daily routines and self-care.

**Engage social support.** Chat with neighbors outside, call or Zoom friends, return to activities that feel safe to you with social distancing precautions. We all need other people regularly.

**Breathe when you're about to lose it.** Don't give yourself

permission to take your frustrations out on others at home, at work or on the road. Notice when you're getting flustered. Slow down, take 10 slow, deep breaths. Check in with yourself and take 10 more until you feel your brain calming back to the rational space.

**Give grace.** Assume the best of other's intentions until they prove otherwise. Be kind to yourself and others as much as possible. We are all having a hard time.

**Practice gratitude.** Write or say aloud five things you are grateful for daily. It's okay to repeat some. Be creative and try to notice new things that bring joy.

While many of these tools may seem simplistic, we often

neglect practicing them regularly and wonder why we feel so negative and out of control. Take a few minutes to rate yourself on each tool using a scale of 1-10, 1 being "I've not been so great at this" and 10 being "I'm great at doing this daily." Then choose two areas to begin focusing on consistently.

You are certainly not alone in the struggles you might be facing as you walk through 2020. Remember that seeking support is brave and wise. Journey Bravely has coaching sessions available to help you through finding tools for balance and forward movement in these challenging times. Connect with us at [journeybravely.com](http://journeybravely.com).



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Wellness



# Ask Doctor Marty: Taking Care of Yourself

**Drink a sufficient amount of pure water daily.** Take your weight in pounds and divide that in half. That number is the amount of water in ounces per day that you need. Add more ounces to your day if you experience heavy perspiration or drink diuretics like soft drinks, coffee, or non-herbal tea. Water washes out cellular waste and makes every part of the body work better.

**Eat a diet that is free from chemicals** such as artificial colors, flavors, or preservatives. These chemicals in the diet can often cause hyperactivity in children. In adults, we usually call it stress.

**Get exercise that is appropriate for your fitness level.** Build up to your routine very gradually. Exercise is great, but you don't start an exercise program by walking 10 miles the first day! If you need to, seek

the advice of a professional, like a physical therapist. If you can, build up to at least 20 minutes for a minimum of four times a week. Exercise increases the circulation of oxygen and nutrients to every part of the body, including the brain. Exercise can also boost your mood and help maintain healthy blood sugar levels. An activity as simple as walking can mean a big difference in your overall health.

**Eat healthy fats.** Butter, for example is a much better alternative than margarine, because of the chemicals and processing. Even natural, healthy fats change their chemical structure with the heat of processing and become unhealthy fats.

**Eat unprocessed foods whenever possible.** The heat used during processing destroys nutrients.

**Avoid caffeine.** Caffeine can

be very addictive. Stopping your caffeine intake cold turkey, even if you only drink 16 ounces daily, can result in severe headaches. That's withdrawal. If you have any caffeine, it's best to limit it to before 3 p.m. in the afternoon. If you decide to cut back or eliminate caffeine, do it gradually. If we are amped up on caffeine (or sugar), it is very difficult to find peace in our hearts and health in our bodies.

**Avoid refined sugar.** There are so many choices when it comes to sugar on the grocery aisle. Some are much healthier than others. Agave juice, stevia and raw honey are healthier choices. Chemical sweeteners, like aspartame, can cause anxiety, memory problems and food cravings.

**Spend time in prayer and meditation daily.** Recent studies at Harvard Medi-

cal School and the University of Pennsylvania have shown that prayer reduces stress, quiets the body, stimulates the brain and promotes healing.

**Get 7 1/2 to 8 hours of sleep per night.** Getting deep, uninterrupted sleep allows our "batteries to recharge" and our bodies are allowed to heal.

Stay well.

*Marty Kernion, Ph.D. is not a medical doctor. She has a doctorate in naturopathy. Naturopathy uses natural, gentle ways to bring our bodies back into balance so that they have the God-given ability to heal themselves. She is a retired professor of herbal medicine and nutrition and has written 39 college level courses in natural approaches to health. She has published two books on natural health. She can be reached on askdoctormarty@cox.net for scheduling a class or consultation, or for sending in your questions for this column.*

**QUESTION:**

Throughout this quarantine, I have realized how important it is to take care of myself. I want to fight off whatever comes my way, not just the pandemic at hand. What else can I do besides the supplements I am taking?

**ANSWER:**

Here are some basics. These are things you probably know already, but it sounds like they might be timely reminders for us all.

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# Weight Loss and Thyroid



BY DR. RICHARD CHERN, MD

Last month we discussed our quick weight loss program. This month I will discuss how even mild thyroid dysfunction can cause weight gain over months and years. And this weight gain is nearly impossible to lose and keep off without getting the thyroid optimized.

The thyroid regulates every metabolic process in our body. This includes growing hair and fingernails, moisturizing your skin for less dryness and a better appearance. It also means keeping our toes warm, and our brains focused and working.

The thyroid determines how many calories we burn for each process. With age, thyroid function often decreases causing weight gain. So how does this cause weight gain?

Imagine you are in your 30's. Your thyroid is functioning perfectly and your weight has been the same for years. Your calorie intake matches your calorie output. If you are eating 1500 calories a day then you must be burning 1500 calories a day. Now fast forward 10 years. You haven't changed a thing, but your body has decided that adding color to your hair is no longer a priority, and also, that your hair and fin-

gernails do not need to be made as fast or as well. Your hair gets some gray, and becomes more coarse, dry or brittle. You don't need to trim your nails nearly as often and they seem brittle and thin too. You are getting tired and unfocused in the afternoon and either nap, drink caffeine or just push yourself though the day. And you notice your weight is creeping up!

Now the diet and exercise is a start, but it's always a struggle and seems less and less successful. What is going on? It's you



thyroid! Even though you haven't changed anything in your life, your body has decided to burn less calories. You're still eating 1500 calories a day and have exactly the same activity level, but your body is slacking on the job. Maybe your body is just burning 50 calories less a day. That's five pounds of weight gain every year! And as you decrease your calorie intake or increase your exercise, your body continues to burn fewer and fewer calories each year. So, your diet and exercise just gets more difficult.

What's the solution? Get your thyroid functioning! When you turn the thermostat up, you burn

more fuel. Hair, nails, skin, energy, focus improves and weight loss can happen without effort.

But my doctor says my thyroid labs are normal. We hear this a lot and, unfortunately, traditional medicine only orders a TSH and stops. Dr. Richard Chern,

MD, orders numerous thyroid labs and understands that normal and optimal do not always agree. Of course, optimizing thyroid without also optimizing hormones is like going shopping without your credit card.

Dr. Richard Chern specializes in

*bio-identical hormone and thyroid optimization. He is the only Platinum Provider for BioTE in the region and mentors other physicians on the practice of bio-identical hormone therapy. Call Dr Richard Chern, MD at 850-837-1271 for an appointment and turn your body back on!*



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# The Lotus Life; Happiness

BY LAUREN CATANESE

The flutters in your heart. The smile that will not stop. The beaming of joy that radiates through your soul. The powerful feeling that comes over you effortlessly, and washes away, instantly, any fear. "Life is too short to wake up with regrets. So love the people who treat you right. Forget about those that don't. Believe everything happens for a reason. If you get a chance, take it. If it changes your life, let it. Nobody said life would be easy, they just promised it would most likely be worth it."- Paulo Coelho.

Happiness is a rip-roaring emotion that can turn your world upside down. We love to feel it and believe it is the "rightful" emotion to bestow. And in all its glory it is and does stand up to its name. But it is not something to be taken for granted. In its fleeting moments, we can be in a rush of joy too quickly to fall back into pain. This is where happiness becomes our guide. It is our life gage on how we are

doing and where we need to stop, release, and come back. It's a guiding force, happiness. A force to be reckoned with. Tempting us into a life that is up leveling who we are, closer to where we dream of being. Life wants for us, what we want from life. We are creative beings, having a human experience. Full of all the juicy and raw emotions to be felt. So, feel them all. Let them come and go as they need to. And rejoice in the flow of life and experiences that it will bring you through. And when you feel it, that ecstatic feeling that you are just going to burst with so much love you cannot wait! Pause and let yourself soak it in. And keep moving towards anything that brings you to utter happiness. That is following your bliss. Where is yours leading you?

Happiness 101

Believe in it. Believe it is possible for you. Anything that you want to be, have or do. You are the captain of your ship.

Let it happen. Give yourself the freedom to surrender into



all your emotions, that is the only way to fully experience the greatness and depth they have in store for you. When you let yourself fall into your emotions, even the ones you don't want, you are also giving yourself permission to experience the most amazing ones on another level. You deserve it, so let it be.

Give thanks. Accepting the world as you experience it, and allowing life to bring to you, what you put in. It's a beautiful dance of co-creating that can spawn magic in your life. Yes magic. So be grateful for all that you see around you. It's life happening in its purest form, and that in itself, is a happiness miracle.

Our Ad & Editorial Deadline is the 20th of each month for the following month's issue.

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# Choctawhatchee



BY SEAN DIETRICH

There is something about the way the sun falls upon the lustrous water of the Choctawhatchee Bay that lights my heart on fire.

No. Wait. I apologize. That sentence you read in the above paragraph was ridiculous. Lustrous? How immature and overly dramatic. This is because I wrote that sentence when I was about 17 years old, everything was dramatic back then.

That was probably the age when I truly decided that I wanted to be a writer. I was lanky. I was dumb. I was a fatherless dropout. I remember taking my Lettera 32 portable typewriter down to the bay, pulling it out of its travel case, and loading it with paper. I expected a wave of literary inspiration to just (bam!) hit me, but nothing happened. Nada. Zip.

Welcome to writing, kid.

I was sitting there on the shore, my typewriter was getting corroded with salt air, and the only sentence that came to me was the ridiculous one you just

read.

But I remember the evening I wrote it. I was camping by the water in a secluded spot. My dog was with me. Lady was her name. She was curly-haired, and faithful. Behind me was my pup tent. Ahead of me was that water. And that stupid typewriter.

What a dork. I can't believe the level of dorkiness. I remember sitting by that bay, trying to write what I hoped would become a novel. I got maybe six words into it and realized I was an idiot.

You can't write a novel at 17, your earlobes haven't dropped yet. You know nothing of life, or about the joys of paying health insurance premiums that cost more than tactical helicopters. But there I was, trying, and I have to give Young Me credit for giving it his best shot.

Somehow, the kid thought that looking at the big water would give him the right words. But after only 10 minutes the kid realized he was wrong and he just wanted to go fishing. So he pulled out his rod and caught one very small fish. He fried it in a little skillet over a fire, and he shared it with his greedy dog.

He was no writer. And he knew it.

Yesterday, I was going through old things in my office, since I have nothing better to do during a quarantine. I found a blue folder that had typed pages in it. There was a one page with a corny sentence about the bay. That was it. No more sentences

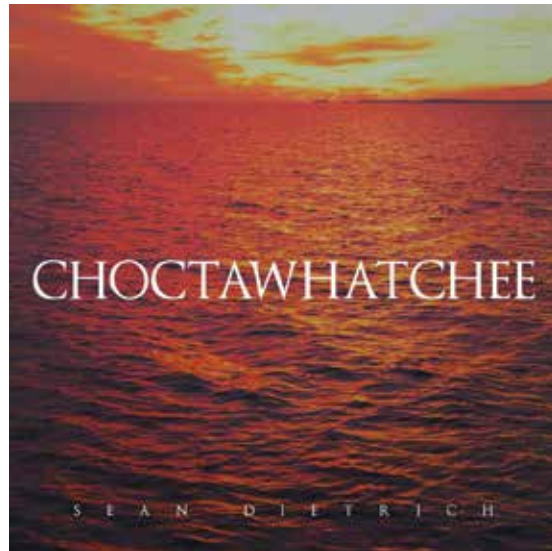
were on the page, only a ketchup stain.

I was embarrassed when I saw all the writings in this folder because I was such a lost boy back then. Some boys without fathers go their whole lives trying to act like they have things figured out, but by the time they actually do figure anything out, the preacher is already sitting beside their nursing home bed, reading the 23rd Psalm.

Sometimes, when I meet young men or women who are about 17 or so, I see that same dizzy look in their eyes. And I feel for them because it's hard growing up, it takes someone brave to do it.

The high school years stink. They sneak up on you when you're not ready for them. There is so much angst and hormones flowing through your bloodstream at the time that you become a fire hazard.

You worry that you're ugly, you worry that you're a complete dork, and about other silly things. I'm not alone here. The high school years were misery for a lot of people.



last thing any debutante needed was to have a loser for a prom date. Her friends would've had too many questions, and I would have never felt comfortable.

I regret turning her down, even to this day. Because she was a sweet person, and I would have enjoyed learning how to dance.

Even so, I was not a normal kid. And it took me a lifetime to figure that out. You can't see yourself when you are yourself.

Those years were doubly bad for me because, like I said, I didn't even GO to high school. Thus, I never fit in around actual high-schoolers. I had never attended a high-school football game, never had a locker combination, never did a lick of algebra, and I never went to prom.

Don't get me wrong, I wanted to attend a prom. There were moments when I would have killed for it. I had a chance once.

I remember when a girl asked me if I wanted to go to her high school prom. I was so flattered that I almost started to cry. A dropout like me? Go to a prom? But it would have ruined her reputation. I couldn't do that to her.

So, I turned her down. The

But oh, that bay. Whenever I held that little typewriter on my lap, on the shores of the prettiest body of water God ever made, comprised of 129 square miles of gray water, teeming with redfish, schools of speckled trout, silver ladyfish, blue herons, great white egrets, and the sands of a million years compacted on a shore, perfect for a little pup tent, I was a poet. Even if only in my imagination. And the world was okay.

My dog and I would watch the sun go down, and I'd think to myself:

God. There is something about the way the sun falls upon the lustrous water of the Choctawhatchee Bay that lights my heart on fire.

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Musings

# The Death of a Salesman, the Birth of a...



By Kirk McCarley

I was proud of that first uniform. Neatly clad from head to toe in navy blue with gold trim, topped by a cap with insignia, an optimistic eight year old cub scout set foot in the neighborhood on a sunny Saturday determined to lead my pack in thin mint sales.

Early that morning those who knew the McCarley boy at least acted more than happy to procure a box or two. Gravitating farther from the safe and known vicinity of the 2300 block of Stanley Ave, however, successful sales of the mints began to...thin.

Kinder rejections ranged from, "I promised my grandson I would buy from him this year," to "I already got some from the nice young man who called earlier." Several bothered not even coming to the door. Worse were the homes of unkempt yards, a bit creepy, rumored to be haunted. There someone might answer with a steely glare asking, "What do you want?"

A count began as despondency

grew. Ten "no's" in a row. Then 20 and upwards. After house 31 the lower lip began to quiver, tears welling up. The still relatively full box of merchandise was now worn at its corner and bottom creases. Abruptly, I stumbled on the sidewalk, dropped the container and split it, spilling mints and boxes onto the parkway and into the street. I then did what any less than gallant and heroic adolescent would do--I sat down on the curb in front of that last house and fully cried my eyes out.

After a few minutes of sobs, I gathered my wits and slowly trudged home sans the box. Upon arrival my mother observed the swollen eyes and empty hands and asked, "what's wrong?" and "where is your box?" Uttering, "I hate sales," and "Never want to be a salesman," I headed to my bedroom and slammed the door shut.

Traumatized by that experience, I never went into sales in my professional career, forevermore

loathing asking others to buy or invest in something. Today when leading clients on a discovery of career choices and opportunities we often reflect back on our strengths and weaknesses, likes and dislikes as youngsters.

I knew of a boy who like me, mowed a few lawns during the summer. When his peers asked what he was going to do after college graduation, he answered, "mow some lawns." While they secured their respective "professional" jobs, mocking him under breath, he endeavored to build his business, which eventually became a multi-million dollar lawn empire.

Though a bit older, Debbie Fields was still quite young when she began selling homemade chocolate cookies, ultimately growing into Mrs. Fields, with now 390 locations across the US alone.

Oftentimes opportunity is birthed from despair. Although my sales experience occurred 55

years ago, why do I still so vividly recall how many times I was denied? Perhaps an innate element of recall and numerical sense?

As a ten year old, when reviewing baseball and other sports box scores in the days prior to electronic calculators determining an up to date average or statistic involved longhand division or multiplication. Soon, when constant calculation and blunt pencils grew wearisome, I just memorized the answers. That's parlayed itself into a part-time career in behind the scenes sports production for me for a long time.

Each of us has a special talent, skill, or ability. Often it takes an objective encourager, such as a coach, to ask the right questions to lead us on a path of renewed self-discovery. It would be my honor to help in that process. And, if your kids are selling something put me down for a purchase.

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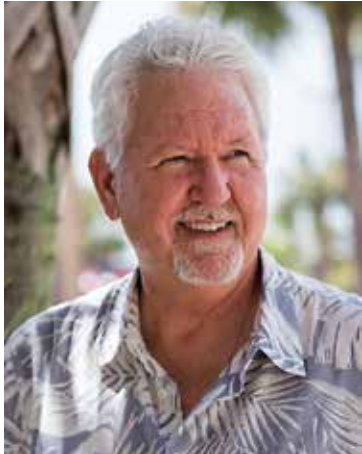
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# A Pastor's Ponderings: **The Greatest**



BY PASTOR DAVE HOLLAND

An argument started among the disciples as to which of them would be the greatest. Jesus, knowing their thoughts, took a little child and had him stand beside him. Then he said to them, "Whoever welcomes this little child in my name welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me. For he who is least among you all — he is the greatest." - Luke 9:46-48. NIV

Who doesn't want to feel loved, respected, and admired? We search our entire lives for a sense of fulfillment. We compete on the job and in almost everything we do. Ambitions can drive

us to heart attacks. Entertainment and sports dominate our attention as they give us the feeling of achievement, even if it is through someone else. I have been on this same unconscious quest since my dad left when I was five years old. I want to feel like I matter.

Picture the scene here as Jesus plays with a child. Christ is seemingly oblivious to the disciple's debate, as they contend to be the greatest among His followers. The discussion revealed their root problem as each of them longed to be top dog. Don't we all want to feel like we are in the driver's seat?

Jesus interrupts the disciples with this object lesson. Holding the child close, the Lord attempts to refocus their vision. He seems to say, "Love matters more than status. Joy rules, but rivalry rots the bones. Ladder climbing wears you out, but play renews your strength. Brothers, look at this child."

By most earthly standards, a child lacks status—no money, possessions, property or fame. A kid is virtually powerless. Yet Christ exemplifies them as the greatest. Why? Because children are open and vulnerable. Turning to the



disciples, "Christ said to them, 'Whoever welcomes this little child in my name welcomes me'" (verse 48). Children play with almost anybody—even the bearded Savior who speaks in mysteries. We should be so welcoming.

Are we like the disciples? Do we long for status to make us feel significant? The notion we might be insignificant haunts us. Down deep where the soul meets the spirit, do we wonder if our lives are meaningless?

Standing not far away, Jesus holds the child. Imagine Jesus looking at his disciples and shaking his head. "Look at this child," he seems to say, neither striving nor jockeying for position. The

little child stands innocent, vulnerable and open—the ideal follower.

My youngest daughter is a bartender at a high-end restaurant in the Boston area. She works with many people with alternative lifestyles. She recently said that she would never identify herself as a born-again, evangelical Christian, because those terms would evoke many bad associations for them. So, I asked her, "How do you identify yourself with them?"

"I tell them I'm with Jesus." That simple phrase releases the power to spread the grace of God. No condemnation, no indoctrination, no competition, and no finger-wagging. Just Jesus.

John 1:12-13 adds, "Yet to all who received him (Jesus), to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God." In the end, it is those who become like children that are the greatest of all.

*Dave Holland pastored churches for more than 38 years before retiring in Destin. He recently released his new devotional-Bible study based on the Gospel of Luke called "Every Day Jesus: Experience the Jesus Who Ignites Your Soul." You can get a copy of this book from his website, [DaveHolland.org](http://DaveHolland.org), or by contacting him at [davidvholland54@gmail.com](mailto:davidvholland54@gmail.com). Pastor Dave is available to preach and teach in churches and conferences.*



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Musings

Memories



By Rick Moore

Norman Rockwell said "The view of life I communicate in my pictures exceeds the sordid and the ugly. I paint life as I would like it to be." Looking back on the twenty-fifth year of my marriage, the memories of that season can be recalled as either a fairytale or a horror story. It all depends on what view of life I choose to tell it from.

Anniversaries have always been a big deal in my marriage. We even celebrate the day I proposed. We call it our "proposal-

versary." The date is easy to remember because of the lyrics of a song by Earth, Wind & Fire, "Do you remember, the twenty-first of September?" Yes it is cheesy, but I proposed on the twenty-first of September. Fast forward twenty-four years and I'm still as cheesy as ever.

For our twenty-fourth wedding anniversary, personal finances were so tight I had to get creative. There was no way I could afford to buy the twenty-four karat gold jewelry I wanted Catrina to have in celebration of our twenty four years together, so I did the next best thing. I purchased twenty-four baby carrots from the grocery store and wrapped them in a gold bag. Get it...twenty-four carrot gold! My wife Catrina didn't think it was funny either. She said she would forgive me, but only if our twenty-fifth anniversary was truly special. By truly special, that meant a trip to Hawaii, Aspen or Europe; not a day at a theme park. No worries. There was a whole year to plan the perfect getaway.

A few months before our twenty-fifth anniversary, Catrina's scoliosis became so bad the

doctor said she would need complete back reconstruction. After a challenging surgery which took over ten hours, the doctor admitted he made a mistake and would have to go back for a second surgery. The second surgery went well, and she was doing well physically, but the medical bills and weeks off of work were taking a toll financially. It was looking like the big time plans for the perfect getaway were not going to happen. Being the loving and understanding wife Catrina is, she suggested we do something nice but simple. We settled on two days and one night at Disney World.

As we entered the Magic Kingdom the morning of our twenty-fifth anniversary, a cast member asked if we were celebrating anything special that day. We told her it was our twenty-fifth anniversary. She then asked a question that was more shocking than when I asked my wife to marry me. She said, "Would you like to be the Grand Marshals in today's parade?" I thought you had to be an astronaut, the chairman of a fortune five-hundred company, or the MVP of



the Super Bowl to be the Grand Marshal of the parade. They gave us special Mickey Mouse Ears with our names embroidered on them, free pictures, and so many gifts we were a bit embarrassed. One minute before the gate opened for us to lead the three o'clock parade through the Magic Kingdom, Catrina squeezed my hand and said, do you realize it was exactly twenty-five years ago to the minute we were married. At that moment I looked up into the heavens with a wink and a thankful heart full of gratitude, knowing the Lord took my mediocre plans and turned them into a truly "magical" memory. The evening ended

with our own personal Disney chief (at no cost to us) and the projection of our picture plastered on Cinderella's Castle. That memory will be with us forever.

The 23rd Psalm says "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life." But sometimes, goodness and mercy seem to follow so far behind they are nowhere in sight. In such times of despair, I have to remember to look past the sordid and ugly parts of life and choose to recall the times our cup is running over with blessings.

Rick Moore is Communications Pastor at Destiny Worship Center.

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# What Ever Happened To: Communication?



BY MYRNA CONRAD

Communication is the art of giving and receiving information. There must be at least two participants in any act of communication. There are three methods of communication: verbal (speak and hear), written (write and read) and nonverbal (express and interpret). Some experts add a fourth, visual communication such as art (express and interpret).

Today, because of technology, we have many more means of communication than we used to have, but technology has certainly changed the effectiveness of communication, making it more available, but sometimes less effective.

Years ago, people spent more time communicating face-to-face. Families spent more time communicating around the table, as they played games or while taking walks together. Time was spent sitting on the front porch or in the back yard, just talking. We would visit our neighbors (yes we actually knew our neighbors), visit family members and friends. Most Sunday afternoons, after church, were spent visiting with family and friends. If people were not close enough to communicate face-to-face, they either spoke over the phone or through writing letters. Adults and children were not involved in as many individual activities as they seem to be today. This gave more opportunity for spending time together, which fostered better communication.

I believe there is something of great value that is missed with some of our newer means of communication. So much of communication today takes place via emails, texts, or social media posts. Many of

the younger generation would rather text than talk on the phone. When communicating with someone face-to-face, each of you receives more information from the communicator's non-verbal communication than the actual words being said. In fact, when the two contradict each other, the listener will usually go with what is being expressed through non-verbal communication.

I am in no way negating the importance of these other means of communication. In fact I'm sure we can all agree how thankful we are for what they have offered during this time of social distancing that we have recently experienced. Families living apart can still communicate. Some people are able to continue working while at home. We can still communicate with our friends. We can meet with groups of people through Zoom and other meeting apps. We can still worship and feel a part of our church family. But haven't you noticed through this time of social distancing, what is missing when we can't get together face-to-face? I know I have.

I believe that through this period of "sheltering at home" we have learned to better communicate as a family. We take more walks together. We sit on our front porch and talk to people as they walk by. We have time to talk while we eat our meals together at home. We have played more games as a family, put together puzzles, done craft projects, planted gardens, worked on projects together. Hopefully, families have grown closer and we have all learned to appreciate how vital face-to-face encounters are in good communication.

Let's not forget this as we venture back into our "new normal" routines. Let's continue to spend more time with family, while at the same time appreciating the ability to start interacting face to face with others.

Do you want to continue practicing better communication? Here are a few strategies:

**Be Aware:**

Be aware of how much time you spend texting rather than

talking.

When you are communicating face-to-face, be aware of those non-verbal cues and gear your responses accordingly.

Be aware of your own non-verbal communication and how it affects those around you.

Be aware of how much you talk and how often you really listen.

**Be Intentional:**

Make sure when things "go back to normal" that it is a bet-

ter normal and that you will continue to find ways to communicate and spend time with your family.

When someone is talking to you, stop and listen. If you cannot express back to them what they are trying to communicate, you are not really listening.

When you are about to send a text or email, ask yourself first if it would be better to talk to the person instead.

Eat more meals at home to-

gether without any device on while you are eating. Just talk about your day while you eat.

Thank God every day for the ability to communicate.

Communication requires accurate expression and active listening, not just listening to answer, but listening to understand. A wise young man once said "The key to communication is love".

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Dining

# 30AEats.com Recipe of the Month; Comforting Chicken Pot Pie

BY SUSAN BENTON

Chicken pot pie is an example of the best of American home cooking. A kind of culinary miracle worker, with a creamy sauce and a flaky pastry top that is guaranteed to calm even the most stressed nerves, Chicken Pot Pie is the ultimate comfort food. Both the pastry and the filling can be made ahead and refrigerated for up to 8 hours before assembling and baking.

### Chicken Pot Pie

From The Blender: WS  
6 Tbs. unsalted butter  
1/2 lb. button mushrooms, quartered  
1 cup chopped leeks, white and pale green parts  
1/2 cup finely diced carrots  
1/3 cup fresh or thawed fro-

zen peas  
1/3 cup plus 1 Tbs. all-purpose flour  
4 1/2 cups chicken stock or broth  
1/3 cup dry sherry  
2 tsp. minced fresh tarragon  
4 cups cooked, shredded chicken breast  
Kosher salt and freshly ground pepper  
Double-crust flaky pastry dough  
1 large egg

### Preparation:

To make the sauce and vegetables, in a large fry pan, melt 1 tablespoon of the butter over medium heat. Add the mushrooms and cook, stirring occasionally, until they begin to brown, about 6 minutes. Stir in



whisking frequently. Stir in the shredded chicken and the mushroom-leek mixture and season with salt and pepper. Let cool until lukewarm, about 1 hour.

Preheat the oven to 400 degrees F. Spoon the chicken mixture into six 1 1/2-cup oven proof soup crocks or ramekins.

Place the unwrapped dough on a lightly floured work surface and dust the top with flour. (If the dough is chilled hard, let it stand at room temperature for a few minutes until it begins to soften before rolling it out.) Roll it out into a rectangle about 20 by 13 inches and 1/8 inch thick. Using a 6-inch saucer as a template, use a knife to cut out 6 rounds. Beat the egg with a pinch of salt. Lightly brush each round with the egg. Place 1 round, egg side down, over each ramekin, keeping the pastry taut and pressing it around the ramekin edges to adhere. Place the ramekins on a rimmed baking sheet. Lightly brush the tops with the egg. Bake until the pastry is puffed and golden brown, about 25 minutes. Transfer each ramekin to a dinner plate and serve. Serves 6.

the leeks and carrots, cover, and cook, stirring occasionally, until the leeks are tender, about 5 minutes. Remove from the heat and stir in the peas.

In a large saucepan, melt the remaining 5 tablespoons butter over medium-low heat. Whisk in the flour and let bubble gently for 1 minute. Gradually whisk in the stock and sherry and then the tarragon. Bring to a boil,

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<b>#2 Chimichanga 11.99</b> Four tortilla stuffed with ground beef and covered with cheese dip. Served with rice and beans and guacamole salad.	<b>#8 3 Tacos 9.99</b> 3 ground beef tacos in a hard shell. Topped with lettuce, cheese & tomatoes and a side of sour cream.	<b>#11 Reuben Burger 11.99</b> Served with fries.
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# Restaurant Review – Mike’s Café & Oyster Bar

Let’s cut straight to the chase – it’s worth the drive! Whether you’re coming from the north, east or west, (it’s a little tricky to come from the south unless you have a boat or scuba gear) it is worth the trip to Mike’s Café and Oyster Bar on Front Beach Road.

Locals love to regale newbys like me with stories of how much the Beach has changed over the years, and how it was once a quaint seaside village, popular with visitors from Alabama and Georgia. It is often hard to picture it the way it was until you walk into a popular hangout like Mike’s.

According to their website, Mike’s did not actually open until 1981, but there is a certain ‘I have been here forever’ feel to the place that makes you feel immediately at home and back in old Panama City Beach.

Deceivably spacious, Mike’s is part diner (it used to be called Mike’s Diner) and part restaurant and one hundred percent Southern. Right down to the notice on the front door that tells you service will be denied if you don’t pull your pants up over your underwear.

Even a cursory look at the menu and you know you are in the South and in for a treat. The lunchtime Blue-Plate Specials draw a large and habitual crowd. A virtual cornucopia of Southern fare. I visited with friends on a Wednesday (I thought the more people who joined me the more we could sample) so that meant



Liver & Onions, Southern Fried Chicken, Fried Chicken Breast with Gravy, Pork Chops and Fish were all on the menu. And each option was served with your choice of mac & cheese, lima beans, collard greens, peas and fried okra and banana pudding or peach cobbler to boot.

But before the mains we did not think it polite if we did not first sample some appetizers. The fried mushrooms were succulent and light, the oysters that day were small – just as our very honest server Brittany told us before we ordered, so they lacked that salty brininess plumper mollusks would

have provided. Then there was the seafood gumbo, thick, dark and exceptionally hearty, by far the best I have had this side of New Orleans. Simply delicious!

One of my guests said he was very pleasantly surprised by the liver and onions which he claims restaurants often get wrong. He

described this specialty dish as tender, flavorful and perfectly cooked. I will have to take him at his word!

The fried chicken and fried chicken breast were both well-seasoned, perfectly cooked and

not at all greasy. The BBQ flavored shrimp with cheese grits were out-of-this world! And there were certainly plenty of to-go boxes required as portions were all more than ample. Great value for money when you consider the Blue-Plate Specials are just \$10.99

In conclusion, it was time, calories and money well spent. Brittany was attentive, with little wait time between refills of tea and adult beverages (Mike’s has a full bar) and she was not at all flustered or annoyed by off-menu requests. Hometown charm, down home good cooking and all at a price that will make you want to return. All in all, Mike’s Café and Oyster Bar was a delight.

Mike’s Café is located at 17554 Front Beach Rd, Panama City Beach, FL. Visit [www.mikescafeandoysterbar.com](http://www.mikescafeandoysterbar.com)

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# 30 A Songwriter Radio; Reflections of a Thankful Generation

By JOSETTE RHODES

Nights at the shop have been pretty quiet for a while now. In the best interest of our customers, our musicians, and our staff, we have not been hosting any music or poetry nights. As things begin to assemble themselves in a safe order we will begin our live music and poetry nights once again. So please stay tuned. 30A Songwriter Radio will be back Live very, very soon. Follow us on Facebook & Instagram to be the first to hear the announcement of our music schedule. And don't forget! Music & Coffee is open and serving the best coffee in town! So stop by and treat yourself. You deserve it.

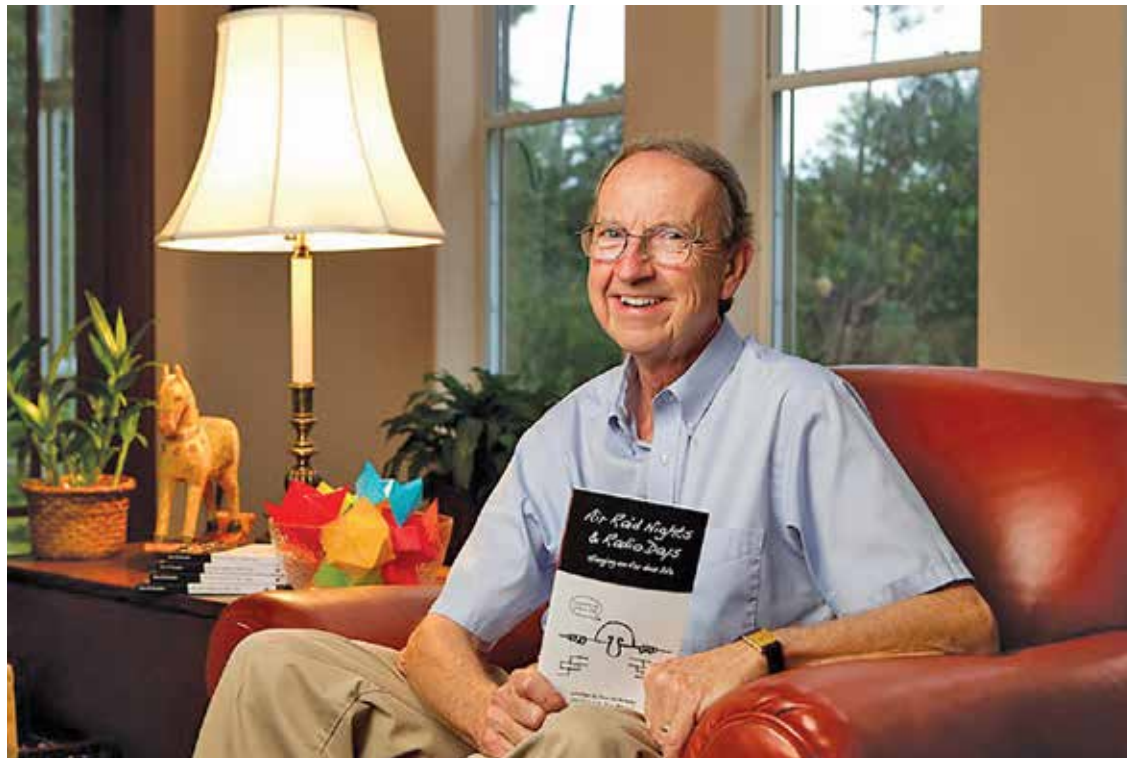
This down time had me thinking back on the different guests we have had on the show over the years. I was reminded of a gentleman that I had the pleasure of interviewing about a book he had written. It seems timely to share his story. It was not our typical show as there was no music. Yet,



what we heard, what was shared with all of us, is something we will not forget. Take the time to listen. Really listen.

Don Schroeder is an unassuming gentleman with a twinkle in his eye and a gift for storytelling. Mr. Schroeder is the author of the book: "Air Raid Nights & Radio Days". It is a book full of stories about growing up during WWII and into the 1950's.

Shannon and I thought Mr. Schroeder's experience with old time radio would dovetail nicely with the show. And it did. Don's stories of the family gathered around the radio waiting to hear the latest drama or comedy coupled with his first hand knowledge of sportscasters and their



tricks made for an entertaining show.

It was not until Mr. Schroeder began to talk of the war that I began to realize the treasure about to be bestowed upon us. You see, Don was not old enough

to serve in the war. He does not have your typical war stories to share. He was just a kid. A teenager. A young man. A regular old joe. Only, he witnessed The Greatest Generation ensure us our freedom as a nation. It is

through these eyes that he shares an intimate knowledge of what it was really like to live through what was the most defining time in the history of our western civilization.

As we sit at the cusp of what is again a defining time in our history, let us listen to each other and learn the lessons before us. Just as Mr. Schroeder did. Don Schroeder comes from a very special generation and this generation holds a key. A key to unlock something needed desperately in the world today. Listen as he speaks. Read what he has written. I heard you Mr. Schroeder. And I am Thankful.

~ Josette

Find "Air Raid Nights & Radio Days" at a bookstore near you. If you do not see it, ask for it. You can hear Mr. Schroeder tell his story in his own words at [30asongwriterradio.com/don-schroeder](http://30asongwriterradio.com/don-schroeder).

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# Do You Play the Guitar?

BY SCOTT GILMORE

Have you ever asked someone the question, “do you play the guitar?” If they answered “yes” then there are always the inevitable follow up questions of: “What style do you play? What kind of guitar do you have? How long have you been playing?”

The guitar is a plucked string instrument that probably originated in Spain or Portugal early in the 16th century. It is derived from late-medieval and renaissance instruments such as the vihuela and the lute. During the 20th century Andres Segovia popularized the guitar by inviting some of the greatest composers of his era to develop compositions specifically for guitar. These compositions combined with Renaissance, Baroque and Classical pieces transcribed from other instruments such as the lute, cello, and harpsichord create much of the modern music performed today.

Classical guitar keeps evolving

to this day through it’s modern composers like Roland Dyens, Andrew York, Sergio Assad, Johannes Moller, and many others. The classical guitar roots are the foundation for the Guitar “Family Tree.” Pioneers like Maybell Carter and Chet Atkins developed a style whose echo can still be heard in Country Music today. In Jazz, Charlie Christian, Wes Montgomery, and Joe Pass laid the foundation which others built upon like Pat Metheny and Stanley Jordon.

The early blues players like Robert Johnson, Muddy Waters, and later B.B. King set a high bar for future lugubrious pickers. Stevie Ray Vaughn, John Mayer, and Joe Bonamassa stepped up to the challenge. Chuck Berry broke off from the blues to cultivate his own style when Rock and Roll was just a baby crying in the crib but would later be destined to change a generation. Jimmy Hendrix, Jimmy Page, Eddie Van Halen, Steve Vai, and a legion of other virtuosos pushed the limits



of what we thought the guitar could be. Of course, the Beatles’ guitarist inspired a legion of guitar wielding singer-songwriters like James Taylor, Joni Mitchell, Tom Petty, and countless others.

Why has the guitar become the world’s most popular instrument? That question has a few answers. Firstly, although the standard guitar has only half the notes of a piano, it still contains a mini orchestra. Bass, mid-range, and high-end notes are all represented. Secondly, the guitar is portable. Its’ go anywhere aspect makes the guitar the perfect tag along friend! Thirdly, in this mod-

ern world people really like the fact the acoustic guitar is made of wood, keeps sounding better with age and does not require gas or electricity. When we want to unwind at the end of the day, gently strumming, picking, or even thrashing on a guitar can be very cathartic and healthy. During this virus season when we find ourselves inside with more free time than some of us ever imagined, it is a good reason to get our guitar out of the closet and set out on another incredible journey of playing.

Music grows from its roots. Have a plan and a teacher.

Choose a quality instrument that you will be able to grow into. Step up and pay more for a quality instrument since when you dollar cost the average amount, it will come down to pennies redeemed for every time it’s picked up and played.

My final advice is to get a guide or quality teacher. I have studied with the same teacher for 25 years. Most of my guitar knowledge has come through him.

The New York Times recently published an article entitled, “The Guitar Boom of 2020.” Perhaps we have the time that we didn’t have a year ago to pursue our musical dream. No matter who you are, I believe your life will be better with a guitar in it. Strum-day could be NOW!

*Scott Gilmore is lead Guitar Instructor with Studio 237 Music. For lessons, please call 850.231.3199 Visit our website [www.Studio237Music.com](http://www.Studio237Music.com) and register online to improve your skills on guitar.*

# Green Thumb Garden Club Announce Virtual Garden Tour

Walton County’s Green Thumb Garden will be taking its members on a virtual garden tour of one of the USA’s iconic gardens on Wednesday, October 21, 2020. The event, exclusive to GTGC members, will include the gardens and art of this historic location in the Upper South region of the United States.

Also, the GTGC is pleased to announce its 2020/2021 Board of Directors:

President Elizabeth, (Lisa) Ermini  
First Vice President, Lori Echols

Secretary, Susan Sutherlin

Second Vice President, Kathleen (Kathy) Edge

Treasurer, Judy Zito

Parliamentarian, Wendy Davis

Chaplain, Connie Shear

Ex-officio President, Betty White

Advisor, Robbie Carroll

Honorary President, Carole Bergstrom

The Green Thumb Garden Club’s mission for over six decades has been the on-going beautification of Walton County.



It is a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation and a member of the Florida Federation of Garden Clubs and the National Garden Club Deep South Region. GTGC meetings are the third Wednesday of each month, September through May. Due to

the current Covid-19 restrictions, virtual meetings will be held until further notice. New members are welcome at the Green Thumb Garden Club. For membership inquiries, contact Jan Shuttle-

worth at [jan.shuttleworth@cox.net](mailto:jan.shuttleworth@cox.net). For additional information, please contact Kathleen Edge, [edge.kathy@gmail.com](mailto:edge.kathy@gmail.com) or Lisa Ermini, President, [gtgclisaermini@gmail.com](mailto:gtgclisaermini@gmail.com).

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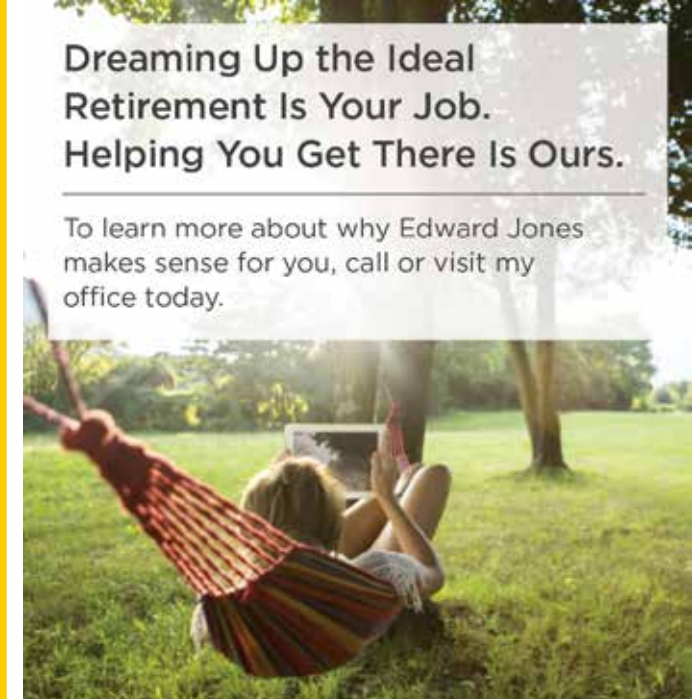
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MAKING SENSE OF INVESTING



# Northwest Florida State College Unveils New Indoor Practice Facility

Northwest Florida State College unveiled the new Raider Athletics Indoor Practice Facility in August. Members of the local community joined NWF-SC Board of Trustee members along with College personnel and student-athletes to celebrate the grand opening of this state-of-the-art facility.

The Raider Athletics Indoor Practice Facility features 6,250 square feet of indoor arena blend turf. Student-athletes will have access to batting and pitching cages with four retractable dividers that create five tunnels. The entire space is climate-controlled with eight coiling bay doors that can be opened to allow for natural air flow. "Our Raider athletic facilities are second to none, and we are excited

to add this one to our lineup," Northwest Florida State College President Dr. Devin Stephenson said. "We are grateful for the support of the community members who really stepped up to the plate and share our vision for Raider Athletics."

Funded by generous community donors, in-kind contributions and college funds, the Raider Athletics Indoor Practice Facility is a contemporary facility designed to maximize practice days, improve our competitive edge and keep our student-athletes safe. "We are excited to see the culmination of a lot of hard work," Northwest Florida State College Athletic Director Ramsey Ross said. "This is a project that has been talked about for some time and



to see it completed makes me truly proud to be a Raider."

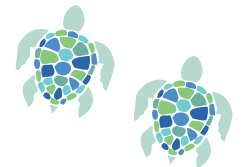
At a recent Rotary Club of Destin meeting, coach Ross said he's looking forward to having players take advantage of

it. The facility will create more opportunities to practice during inclement weather and have less missed practices. The coaches are also excited to show it off to recruits when they come to the

campus which will help with recruiting. The teams will get to use it soon to prepare for the upcoming spring season, which is when the college's athletics have been rescheduled.

For more information on Northwest Florida State College athletics, visit NWFRaiders.com or follow the team on Twitter at @NWF\_Raiders.

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# Jack "Doug" Liles Announces Candidacy for South Walton Mosquito Control Seat 1

Mosquitos are an unfortunate part of living in the South, particularly when one also lives near water. It is often an unavoidable interaction with these pests when doing no more than stepping out of the front door.

Jack Doug Liles understands the difficulties residents of this area face when battling an army of mosquitos that present themselves every summer. It is for this reason he is running for the seat of South Walton Mosquito Control Commissioner.

Jack had his first real battle against the mosquito population in July of 2010 while celebrating his daughter's 7th birthday. The family had prepared for a multitude of water-based activities to enjoy their day. Unfortunately, the party ended abruptly when the group was bombarded by a horde of mosquitoes. Many in the area share a similar story!

Since this experience, Jack has been actively looking for ways to reduce the mosquito population in South Walton and the surrounding areas. Jack has pulled upon both his training as a scien-



tist and his trade as a builder to create a lasting solution to reduce the population of mosquitos. He believes one of the best ways is to

have effective stormwater management rather than continuing to spray a large number of chemicals.

"It occurred to me that effective stormwater management reduces mosquito habitats, which translates into reducing the need to spray chemicals or treat with larvicides," Jack commented.

Jack is extremely qualified to serve the citizens of South Walton in the seat of Mosquito Control Commissioner. He has a Master's Degree in Microbiology, which gives him a unique understanding of the ecosystem, water quality, and the role mosquitos, as well as other pests, play. Jack is also a builder by trade, which gives him a deep understanding of how to manage stormwater through a maze of mosquito control ditches.

There are few people who are a fan of the pesticides that are sprayed throughout the area in hopes of ridding it of mosquitos. In fact, many would say that the chemical sprays have done more harm than good, allowing the mosquito population to reproduce with an immunity to the sprays. Jack believes that the best

way to effectively manage the mosquito population is to prevent stormwater, which is often polluted, from running into the local water sources in the area.

"To protect our Choctawhatchee Bay and Coastal Dune Lakes, we must implement a comprehensive plan to prevent polluted stormwater run-off from flowing unfettered into these bodies of water. Effectively fighting the mosquito population and protecting our natural resources can be accomplished without raising taxes," Jack expressed.

Jack Doug Liles has both lived in and loved this area for many years. As the father of five children, as well as five grandchildren, Jack understands the importance of protecting our natural resources for the next generation. Jack truly cares for the environment and the health of the community.

Be sure to visit his website [voteliles.com](http://voteliles.com) for more information and to show your support!

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# Fall Energy Tips



BY CHRIS BALZER, ECES

The official first day of fall was September 22nd. We don't experience fall like most parts of the country. It seems like most years we just jump right into winter. We choose to live in paradise for a reason—beautiful beaches and warm temperatures. Here are just a few things we can do to lower energy consumption and make our homes more energy efficient.

**Switch to LED lighting.**

Consider replacing your incandescent bulbs with LED bulbs, which operate at a lower wattage and produce much less heat. LED bulbs use 75% less energy and last 50 times longer than incandescent bulbs, saving you money on electricity and replacement costs. A 6 to 10-watt LED bulb is comparable to a 40 to 60-watt incandescent bulb. In fact, 90% of the energy used to light an incandescent bulb is heat and only 10% produces light, wasting energy producing unwanted heat in your home. When I was growing up, we used incandescent bulbs to bake cupcakes with a popular toy. This

## ENERGY TIPS by Emerald Coast Energy Solutions

just demonstrates that incandescent bulbs are similar to having tiny ovens around your house.

**Lower water heater temperatures.**

Many of our water heaters are set to 140° from the manufacturer. Lowering the setting to 120° will save energy and money. When showering, many of us will start with the hot water turned all the way up and then add cold water for a comfortable temperature. By doing this, you are cooling the hot water which you spent energy and money to heat. Lowering water heater temperatures saves energy and money. Many of our dish washer and clothes washers, have heating elements in them to increase temperatures while washing, so you don't need to have 140° heated water.

**Fix Leaky Faucets.**

My faucets don't leak. Are you sure? One way to find out is to put a dry cup under the faucet in the sink over night, when not in use. In the morning, check the cup and if there is water in it, your faucet leaks. Well, my faucet only drips a little and not really worried about it. Even the slightest of drips waste energy costing you money. Let's say you have a faucet which drips once every

two seconds. It's hard to be precise on volume. So, we are going to estimate the drip volume at 1/4 ml. One gallon contains roughly 3,785 ml. One leaky faucet will waste approximately 2.5 gallons of water per day and approximately 912 gallons of water per year. Now think if you have two or more dripping faucets. Faucets can easily be fixed and some manufacturers will send you replacement parts for free; you just have to ask.

**Quick Tips:**

Change your HVAC filters. Clean filters allow more air flow putting less strain on the unit, extending the life with less maintenance.

Use dryer balls when drying clothes or bulky items like sheets. Dryer balls help separate clothes allowing more heat between items and some help absorb moisture shortening drying time.

Check for cracks, leaks and drafts around windows and doors. Many times, a simple replacement of your weather stripping or an inexpensive tube of silicone or caulk can seal these gaps saving you energy and increasing comfort.

In the spring and summer times, the fan should spin in a counter clockwise direction to

push cool air downward. In fall and winter, fans should move in a clockwise direction.

By just following a few simple steps you can increase your comfort and save energy. It is always a good idea to consult with a professional when looking to be more energy efficient when it comes to larger projects. The DOE (Department of Energy) states that properly insulating and weatherizing your home can save up to 30% on heating and

cooling.

*Chris Balzer is Founder and President of Emerald Coast Energy Solutions which is a Smile Provider Company. We provide smiles to our customers after installing our high energy efficient products, increasing comfort and lowering energy bills. For more information on how to save and become energy efficient, schedule an inspection by calling (850) 588-2870, visit [www.trusteces.com](http://www.trusteces.com) or email [wecare@trusteces.com](mailto:wecare@trusteces.com) and Beat the Heat!*



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Business

# Hurricanes, Floods and Claims



By VICTORIA OSTROSKY

I can hear the entire Panhandle breathing a collective sigh of relief that the wet, windy, destructive month of September

is over. Fall's first month was too full of tropical storms and torrential rainfall and hurricanes. I experienced my very own personal flood. As did many of you.

Customers still have questions regarding the difference between hurricane/wind coverage and flood coverage. Every time we have a weather incident the questions come up again. Let's clear the fog around the subject.

We're going to start with a couple of assumptions. First, we're assuming your home/condo/dwelling policy includes hurricane/wind coverage (for clarification - some carriers don't write wind coverage for property close to the water).

Then we'll assume your flood policy is a separate policy.

When Hurricane Sally slowly churned her way through Walton and Escambia counties, she brought a ton of rain and wind. Rain that reached far to the east and to the west. Let's say you own a home near the coast. Water is running down your wall and ceiling because some shingles were blown off. Maybe water is coming in around your windows from the force of the wind.

Here's another scenario - mine. The rain keeps coming down and the community drains fill up. Water begins to rise higher and higher until it breaches your doors.

In scenario one, you would file a claim under your hurricane/wind deductible on your home/condo/dwelling policy since the damage was the result of the wind. Scenario two would fall under your flood policy, because the damage was the result of rising water. What about storm surge? If Hurricane Sally would have brought a massive storm surge that then flooded homes, that would still fall under your flood policy. But the hurricane caused it! Yes, that is true, but the actual damage was from flooding.

According to FEMA, this is the definition of flood: A flood is a general and temporary condition where two or more acres of normally dry land or two or more properties are inundated by water or mudflow.

Once the claim is filed, the real fun begins. Write down your claim number and adjuster's contact information. Document everything. Take pictures. Separate unsalvageable items from salvageable. Mitigate the damage, meaning have a disaster restoration company remove the water, set up fans and a dehumidifier. The sooner your walls and floors dry out the less permanent damage will be sustained. Tarp your roof if it continues to leak. Don't be afraid to ask questions. Then when you forget the answer, ask again. Dealing with damage to your property is emotionally draining and highly stressful, and, if you're like me, my memory suffers when I'm trying to process new information.

My small flood took about a month to get from the date I filed my claim to the date the desk adjuster said he was sending a check. But it doesn't end there. Because my bank required the flood insurance (I'm in flood zone AE), they're also listed on the flood policy. I called them and they opened a file.

Next, they mailed me a packet of documents to fill out, and for the contractor I was going to use to fill out and sign. These documents have to be returned, along with the unendorsed check, to my lender, who then processes everything, sends out an inspector to verify the work was done satisfactorily, then will endorse the check and send the money to me. It's a good thing I had enough in my emergency fund to take care of the repairs, so I'll basically be reimbursing myself once I receive the endorsed check from my lender.

The upshot of it is this: just because you are in an X flood zone, doesn't mean you won't flood. This is Florida. If it can rain, it can flood. Purchase flood insurance, because the next time a tropical storm or Hurricane Sally comes through, your bank account might not be able to handle the expense.



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# Looking at the Law:

## Coronavirus Pandemic: How does this affect planning for guardianship over children?



BY GREG CROSSLIN

For the most part, everyone plans for distribution or preservation of their assets to make sure their minor children, adult children, and their families are taken care of at the time of their death. Unfortunately, people often overlook planning for the event of being mentally incapacitated or simply “unavailable” for their children. In view of the Coronavirus pandemic, Estate Plans should answer the question: what happens if I’m simply “unavailable.”

The Covid-19 pandemic has given people a new perspective, with the overwhelming number of hospitalizations, quarantines, and when front-line workers (nurses, doctors EMTs, and others) are forced to make the difficult decision of being separated from their minor children to avoid them contracting the virus. This pandemic has taught us that now perhaps it is more important

than ever for a parent to plan for the guardianship of their minor children. Accordingly, there are three documents that I believe every parent should consider for their minor children:

1. Medical Power of Attorney essentially allows someone other than natural guardians/parents to make medical decisions, including procedures or treatment, and if necessary, surgery. It is also often referred to as a “Healthcare Surrogate for Minor.” Florida Statute §765.2035 advises that this designation remains in effect until terminated by the person who made the declaration. Further, a Healthcare Surrogate can also be named before a child is born.

2. Power of Attorney for Minor Child is a document that addresses more of the day-to-day activities and care than a Medical Power of Attorney, and includes the following:

- a. Care for school and after school decisions, transportation arrangements;
- b. Receiving and holding any funds or property payable to the minor child;
- c. Residency of the minor child;
- d. Nominating a person to act as a Guardian;
- e. The signing of Waiver and Release of Liability (kids go on field trips, etc.);
- f. To access communications intended for the minor

child (Certified Mail, FedEx Delivery);

g. Access to accounts of the minor child involving web-based communications, such as email, memberships to various organizations, or even commercial enterprises and social media;

h. Representation of the minor child in any legal matter.

3. Declaration of Preneed Guardian. Is a legal document that is filed with the Court which designates the Guardian for the Person and Property of the Minor in the event of death or incapacity of the natural parents of the child pursuant to Florida Statute §744.3046. This does not replace the rights of another natural parent and the Court is not bound to designate the person named. It is however, strong evidence of the parents’ intentions and is often followed by the courts.

In addition to the above items, there are other considerations that should be carefully accounted for in your planning. For instance, in your Will you should provide insight as to why the person named as a Guardian is the best fit for that position. This is especially important when the natural parent has not been involved in the child’s life and it would not be in the best interest of the child to be in their care or custody. While these may seem of “lesser consequence” some of these decisions may become the most crucial issues if

documents are contested. Overlooking these types of details can be harmful to your children and costly as well.

Remember, the information contained herein is of a general nature and is not all-inclusive or intended to answer any individual’s legal questions. Do not rely only on information presented herein to address your individual

legal concerns. If you have a legal question about your individual facts and circumstances, you should consult an experienced Estate Planning attorney.

*Greg D. Crosslin is Principal Attorney at the Law Office of Greg D. Crosslin, 3999 Commons Drive West, Suite D, in Destin, Fl. Call 850-650-7378 or visit www.destinlegal.com for more information.*

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Business

# Bel-Mac Roofing Celebrates 25 Years!

Living on the coast is equally as challenging as it is beautiful. Weather conditions are often unpredictable, and homes and buildings in the area suffer damage as a result. Roofs are one of the areas to suffer most, as high winds decimate them all too quickly. Bel-Mac Roofing, locally owned and operated, understands the struggle of living in an unpredictable area and offers their quality services at an affordable rate for all.

Bel-Mac Roofing had humble beginnings as a partnership between Bill Bell and Mike McEnany. The pair started out as friends with big dreams for their futures. After graduating college Bill wanted to go into construction, and did so for a few years, working under NASA. Mike, on the other hand, was interested in sales. He could imagine and design a company but needed someone to be a hands-on worker. Eventually, Bill and Mike's aspirations intertwined, and Bel-Mac Roofing, named after both men, was founded.

The pair started out doing roofing construction on commer-

cial buildings in various places. Much of their work consisted of repairing hospitals and condominiums. With time, however, they realized that they wanted to expand their operations to repairing and building residential roofs as well. The Emerald Coast was a near-perfect place, as homes in this area are always weather-beaten from salty air and high winds, and there was real potential to help others.

Like any business, Bel-Mac has faced multiple challenges along the road to success. One of the biggest difficulties they've faced has been finding enough people to bring on their team.

"The challenge is that this is a touristy area. There's not a lot of blue-collar folks moving into the Panhandle," Bill commented.

In spite of this, Bel-Mac has truly been favored with the people it does have as part of the team. The company contributes it's success to its core group of employees, who Bill says are full of integrity and have "treated the company as their own." What an incredible blessing to be surrounded by a team of individuals



"Photo Courtesy of: Tiffany Sims Photography"

who are willing to give their all!

The thing that really makes Bel-Mac Roofing stand out is their commitment to their customers. People expect jobs to be done in excellency and without complaint, and Bel-Mac truly steps up to the plate in their dedication to the community and their customers.

"We give people value for their money," Bel-Mac said.

Bel-Mac currently operates in all roofing services, from building to minor and major repairs. Moving forward, the company would like to continue to expand across the Panhandle, but they are taking caution as they continue expanding. The com-

pany understands that success isn't guaranteed, and have stayed humble as they've grown.

*Bel-Mac Roofing is located is 122 Bishop-Tolbert Road #3 in Santa Rosa Beach. Contact them at (850) 267-0900, or visit their website at www.bel-macroofing.com. Be sure to support this fantastic local business for all your roofing and repair needs!*

## Safety Corner Is Your Security Idle?

BY COREY KOTOWSKA

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