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Postal Customer Local

Walton County Sheriff's Posse is Alive and Well

By HEATHER BENNETT

While driving around Walton County, ever seen a vehicle, similar to the Sheriff's Cruisers, marked "Sheriff's Posse" and wondered, "what is that?"

The history of the sheriff's "posse" dates back to the Dark Ages in England, when citizens were called upon by the sheriff to assist in capturing outlaws. The organization of a sheriff's posse made its way to America during early colonization in 1635.

The Walton County Sheriff's Posse has roots dating back to the mid-1800's, when Florida was still a wild frontier. Besides a few established towns like Pensacola, Milton, and DeFuniak Springs, Florida was still full of thick pine forests, swamps and sandy back roads. There was a lot of ground to cover, but very few law enforcement officials in the territory. The sheriff, in addition to his deputies, needed men to volunteer to help them track down outlaws



making their way across the panhandle. These men were deputized and operated under the law, assisting law enforcement in capturing numerous murderers and thieves.

They continued to operate throughout the early to mid-20th century, and assisted in tracking down escaped felons, moonshiners and bootleggers.

They found bootleggers before and after prohibition, as Walton County opted to stay a "dry" county for several years after the national repeal of prohibition in 1933.

Years went on, and the frontier turned into well-populated and established towns with more sheriff's departments being incorporated and ade-

quately staffed. Eventually, the Walton County Sheriff's Office was able to hire a full team of deputies, and the need for a posse declined.

In 2010, Sheriff Michael Adkinson requested a group of volunteers to once again

POSSE
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International Coastal Cleanup September 21st

The Friends of South Walton Sea Turtles invites the South Walton community to join them in participating in the International Coastal Cleanup on Saturday, September 21st from 9-11 am.

International Coastal Cleanup is a worldwide event sponsored by Ocean Conservancy; they engage countries around the globe to organize citizens in the cleanup of their oceans, gulfs, lakes and river beaches.

Walton County is one of these coastal areas and has the opportunity to participate with millions across the globe to cleanup the coastline and prevent debris from polluting Gulf waters.

Some interesting facts: During the 2018 International Coastal Cleanup, the top ten items picked up were:

- #1 Cigarette butts 5,716,331.
- #2 Food wrappers 3,728,712.
- #3 Straws & stirrers 3,668,871.
- #4 Forks, knives, spoons 1,754,908.
- #5 Plastic beverage bottles 1,754,908.
- #6 Plastic bottle caps 1,390,232.

COASTAL CLEAN-UP
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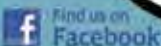
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COASTAL SENIORS

OF SOUTH WALTON

Join the Coastal Seniors of South Walton to Learn about Sea Turtle Conservation

Full-time residents and millions of visitors who come to Walton County each year, share the beautiful beaches with several species of sea turtles. Although sea turtles have existed for thousands of years, today, all species are listed as endangered or threatened, and face an uncertain future. Habitat encroachment and degradation, pollution, incidental capture in commercial

fisheries, and strikes by watercrafts are only some of the hazards they face in their struggles to survive. In today's environment, mankind has created other obstacles that are detrimental to sea turtles as well, such as beach house lighting, firepits, trash, holes dug on the beaches, sandcastles, beach chairs and toys.

Beth Coppedge, Founder and President of the Friends of South

Walton Sea Turtles, (FOSWST) and several members, will join the Coastal Seniors to educate attendees about sea turtle conservation. FOSWST's objective is to help residents and visitors understand the obstacles sea turtles face, and what one can do to help protect endangered sea turtles by keeping the beaches #CleanDarkFlat#.

The presentation will take

place on September 17th, 2019 at 12:00 pm at the CSSW location, 70 Logan Lane, Santa Rosa Beach, Florida. Lunch will be available, and a raffle will follow the presentation.

Coastal Seniors of South Walton, Inc. is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization for 50+ and older active adults who reside in Walton County, Florida. Annual membership dues are \$15 per

person or \$25 per couple. Non-profit organizations and businesses can join this dynamic, fast-growing group for \$35 and \$50, respectively; and receive advertising on the CSSW website. Join at www.coastalseniorsofsouthwalton.org or at coastalseniorsofsouthwalton@gmail.com.

A \$5.00 donation is requested for non-member participation at the event.

POSSE

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form the Walton County Sheriff's Posse to serve as a bridge between the sheriff and the public. Unlike their predecessors, today's posse does not carry firearms. They do have their own fleet of patrol cars, use the same dispatch, computers, and radio frequency as the sheriff's office. Uniforms are provided by the sheriff's office with a patch indicating they are a member of the sheriff's posse. The posse members receive professional training from

the sheriff's office, and then once qualified, they receive a badge.

The Walton County Sheriff's Posse does not have the power to arrest anyone, but they do actively patrol the area, assist in neighborhood crime prevention, issue civil citations, help with emergency evacuations, provide traffic control and blocking for funeral processions, and perform elderly welfare checks. They also perform many other services that benefit the community, and assist deputies to improve productiv-

ity and multiply the force of the sheriff's office.

They've even been honored by the Federal Government, receiving the Presidential Volunteer Service Award and the Congressional Special Service Recognition. Last year, the unit volunteered 8,418 hours to the sheriff's office, and according to the state of Florida dollar per hour formula for professional volunteering, it equated to \$23.33 per hour. The unit donated \$204,833 worth of time to

the citizens of Walton County.

The Walton County Sheriff's Posse currently has 18 members, and is looking to expand. This is a volunteer position and is available to anyone, men and women, from the ages of 19 to retirement. Those interested must submit to

a criminal history check and pass a criminal history investigation. A minimum of 16 hours is required per month. If interested in joining or want more information on the sheriff's posse, please contact the Walton County Sheriff's Office at (850) 892-8111.



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Bay Baits Announces Fall Inshore Classic Fishing Tournament

Bay Baits, a locally owned and operated bait and excursions shop in Santa Rosa Beach, invites anglers of all ages to fish in the the fall Bay Baits Inshore Classic October 5th and 6th. "With the success of our other annual fishing tournament, the Bay Baits Benefit, we wanted to give the community another chance to come out and enjoy a great weekend of fishing in South Walton," said Jacob Watkins, co-owner of Bay Baits. This

tournament is set to offer prizes valued at over \$3,000 dollars in cash. \$1,000, \$500, & \$100 will be given to the first, second, and third place winners. Each angler, who can win in the Trout and Redfish first, second, and third place categories, will compete to see who can bring in the heaviest trout and/or redfish. Entry into the tournament is 45 dollars and anglers must pre-register through the Bay Baits Website. *Registration closes on October 5th at 6

a.m. The competition begins on October 5th at 7:00 a.m. On Sunday, October 6th, the tournament will conclude with an after party at The Bay Restaurant from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m., with weigh-ins to be held between 5 p.m. & 6 p.m. The party is open and free to the public where we will have live music starting at 4 p.m. and an awards presentation at 6:30 p.m.! Bay Baits is looking forward to partnering with their

title sponsors, Highway 98.1 and The Bay, to make this a unique, local tournament that anglers look forward to participating in. To register or for more details about this event, please visit www.baybaits.com.



and operated sportsman's supply shop located at the foot of the 331 Bridge in South Walton. It offers a variety of goods, such as bait and tackle, to excursions and water sports rentals. For more information about Bay Baits, visit <https://www.baybaits.com/>.

Bay Baits is a locally owned

COASTAL CLEAN-UP

continued from page 1

- #7 Plastic grocery bags 964,541.
- #8 Other plastic bags 938,929.
- #9 Plastic lids 728,892.
- #10 Plastic cups & plates 656,276.

1,080,358 people worldwide picked up 23,333,816 pounds of garbage. Who were the heroes who helped clean up 22,301 miles of coastline in 2018? This year, there are four South Walton Cleanup sites for 2019. This is a REALLY BIG DEAL! Can one imagine being a part of this massive global effort? Come out and help on September 21st.



To learn more, please visit www.oceanconservancy.org/

If interested in participating, simply report to one of four regional beach accesses listed below:

Inlet Beach Regional Access
438 South Orange Street Center
Panama City Beach, FL 32413
Long: -86.00393018
Lat: 30.27401447

Santa Clara Regional Beach Access
3468 E. Scenic Highway 30A
Santa Rosa Beach, FL 32459
Long: -86.11926901
Lat: 30.31363771

Ed Walline Regional Beach Access
4447 W. Scenic Highway 30A
Santa Rosa Beach, FL 32459
Long: -86.22992065
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Walton County School District Superintendent's Update



Superintendent A. Russell Hughes

Excellence, Professionalism, Innovation and Collaboration to the 3rd Power. Superintendent Hughes is excited to announce that Walton County Schools are an A+ school district for the 2nd consecutive year, and ranked #7 in the state of Florida in school grades. This ranking is based on academic achievement, learning gains, middle school acceleration, graduation rate, and college and career acceleration. The WCSD ranks in the top 10% in 9 of the 22 assessed areas for school grades calculations. Of those areas, it ranks 2nd in the state in 7th grade reading, 2nd in the state in geometry, 4th in the state in civics, 6th in the state in biology, 6th in the state in 9th grade reading, 7th in the state in algebra 1, 8th in the state in 8th grade science, and 9th in the state in 8th grade math.

As part of Superintendent Hughes' plan to maintain this forward momentum, WCSD is

“holding tight” with “no breaks” in progress monitoring academic achievement. Mr. Hughes' theme for this year is “Curriculum, Character and Culture – the Power of Three.” Just like a 3-cord strand, WCSD will hold fast, and remain unyielding and unbreakable in the ongoing, purposeful intent to provide the best opportunities for its students.

Enrollment in the Walton County School District is at an all-time high, with a total increase in student population of 460 since September of 2018. Dune Lakes Elementary has recently opened, and is a state of the art facility designed for the future of education, and a recent 1st place winner in the Elementary category of the Florida Educational Facilities Planners Association's 2019 Architectural Showcase.

Additionally, a new Pre-Kinderergarten center at Bay School (formerly Bay Elementary) has

opened, with 143 new Pre-K students starting their journey of becoming lifelong learners. The new addition at South Walton High School, completed last school year, is also being fully utilized, providing additional learning spaces for students.

September is Attendance Awareness Month, and the WCSD will be partnering with attendanceworks.org to bring awareness of the positive impact of regular school attendance. Absenteeism in the first month of school can predict poor attendance throughout the school year. Poor attendance can influence whether children read proficiently by 3rd grade, and by the 6th grade, chronic absenteeism can become a leading indicator that a student will not finish high school. WCSD's goal is to keep students in class so they have every opportunity to reach their full potential. The emphasis this month, and throughout the year,

will be to educate and create a culture of understanding about the importance of regular school attendance. As part of this campaign, WCSD encourages parents to stay in front of their student's grades, attendance and progress by registering and regularly accessing the Focus Connection for Parent on the district website at www.walton.k12.fl.us/index.cfm?p=parent-portal. By registering, parents will have access to student info in the areas of grades, daily attendance, teacher communication by email, school messages and upcoming events.

Parents are reminded to be on the lookout for mid-term progress reports to be distributed on September 11, 2019. These reports provide an additional opportunity for parents to stay informed of their students' success in school, and lend insight into ways parents can help their children stay motivated.

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Guest Columnist: The Constitution and the Bible



BY TIM NORIS

All have heard the term “Separation of church and state.” In 1947, the U.S. Supreme Court declared there is a “wall of separation” between the religious affairs of the people and the government elected to represent them. Thomas Jefferson first used the term in a letter written in 1802. It was clear from the letter that Jefferson was referring to the Constitution as the wall protecting the people’s religious liberty from an overreaching government:

*“It would be a dangerous delusion were a confidence in the men of our choice to silence our fears for the safety of our rights; **that confidence is everywhere the parent of despotism**; free government is founded in jealousy, and not in confidence; it is jealousy, and not confidence, which prescribes limited constitutions to bind down those whom we are obliged to trust with power; that our Constitution has accordingly fixed the limits to which, and no farther, our confidence may go....In questions of power, let no more be said of confidence in man, but bind him down from mischief by the chains of the Constitution.”*

Notwithstanding Jefferson’s clear intent, The 1947 decision directly led to prayer being outlawed in all public schools beginning in 1963.

It’s interesting to note the founding fathers were anything but neutral on the question of religion as the basis of government and society. From Washington to Adams and even the great liberal of his time, Thomas Jefferson, believed religion provided an “indispensable

support” to a civil and just society. Noah Webster went so far as to say “the moral principles and precepts contained in the scriptures ought to form the basis of our civil constitutions and laws.”

While the constitution does not directly refer to God, biblical concepts contained within it presupposed a set of commonly accepted morals, ethics, and standards of behavior drawn directly from the Old and New Testaments. For instance, the system of checks and balances and the separation of powers is derived from the founders’ understanding of the flawed nature of man. (See Genesis 3 and Jeremiah 17:9). The three branches of government are reminiscent of the roles of God as described in Isaiah 33:22. The exception for Sundays in the time limit for the President to sign a bill into law in Article VII, Section 2, hints at the assumption that Sunday was the day of rest as set forth in Exodus 20. Exodus 18 reveals that before Israel demanded that God give them a king, the Hebrews had a repre-

sentative form of government, similar to the system created in the Constitution. Both Leviticus 19:34 and Article I, Section 8, of the Constitution require uniform treatment of immigrants.

The words “Separation of church and state” do not actually appear in the U.S. Constitution. The sole reference to religion in the Constitution is Article VI, Section 3: “No religious test shall ever be required as a qualification to any office or public trust under the United States.” The Bill of Rights was added later to include First Amendment protections, “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.”

Perhaps John Adams, our second President said it best... “Suppose a nation in some distant region should take the Bible for their only law book and every member should regulate his conduct by the precepts there exhibited! Every member would be obliged in conscience to temperance, frugality, and in-

dustry; to justice, kindness and charity towards his fellow man and to piety, love, and reverence toward Almighty God! What a utopia, what a paradise would this region be.”

Tim Norris, a long-time Panama City 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.



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Community

Renowned Floral Designers to Present at the Green Thumb Garden Club October 11 & 12

Green Thumb Garden Club is pleased to announce that celebrated author and floral designer, Laura Dowling, is coming to the Emerald Coast for their Styling

Your Table event. Ms. Dowling won a nationwide competition to become the Chief Floral Designer at the White House from 2005 until 2015. Her cutting-

edge, innovative designs are both beautifully sophisticated, modern and classically refined. Laura is an annual presenter at dozens of venues including the Philadelphia Flower Show, the nation's oldest, largest flower expo. Her books will be available for purchase and signing by the author and a new book, Bouquets, will be published at the end of this year.

Emerald Coast local Timothy M. Ryan, Florida State Master Designer, is also a featured seminar speaker. Tim has been an active member in the floral industry for over 20 years. He has held offices with multiple Florida floral associations and was an editor for SUNLIGHTING magazine. A former recipient of the Emerald Coast Designer of the Year Award as well as the FSFA Sun-



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shine Cup, Tim loves education and sharing what he has learned with others. Tim co-owns 1920 & Co., a florist/event company in Santa Rosa Beach, Florida.

Local vendors offerings will include fresh flowers and plants, bulbs, artisan soaps, art, jewelry, bakery items and much more. There will be a Garden Shoppe with a myriad of items for sale as well as a Garden Cafe with refreshments and tasty treats for visitors.

GTGC members will be creatively arranging over two dozen tabletops that celebrate special occasions.

Location is 400 Grand Boulevard, Suite T-100, Miramar Beach.. Don't miss this unique opportunity to participate in seminars, learn about design, gardening, and other ideas for your home. Proceeds benefit the local community initiatives/charities of the GTGC.

The Green Thumb Garden Club was established in 1956 and is an incorporated 501(c)(3) non-profit with over 130 members. The GTGC mission is the ongoing beautification of Walton County and the education of its members, the general public and especially our youth in the areas of gardening, conservation, environmental awareness, and horticulture.

For additional information, please contact Kathleen Edge, edge.kathy@gmail.com. Betty White, President, bettywhite101@gmail.com.

Styling Your Table Seminars Schedule

October 11 2019 11:00 AM
Pottery Barn - Developing a Beautiful Tablescape

Fri 10 am to 4 pm 12:00 PM
Laura Dowling - Latest Techniques in Floral Design

2:00 PM Williams Sonoma
Cooking Class

October 12, 2019
11:00 AM Laura Dowling
Latest Techniques in Floral Design

Sat 10 am to 3 pm
2:00 PM Tim Ryan - Creating Fabulous Floral Arrangements

2:45 PM GTGC - Raffle Drawing, over \$2,000. in prizes

National retailers Anthropologie, Pottery Barn, Williams Sonoma and Tommy Bahama will showcase table settings and offer demonstrations on floral design and home décor.

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Rockwell Tharp Ladies Boutique - Inside the Story of Faith and Fashion:

Over 10 years ago, after we had designed our first 6 boot styles, we were so thrilled and excited. We immediately knew we had something fabulous on our hands. We realized the demand for what we created far exceeded our initial small production. We knew we needed to sit down and really have a heart to heart about the future and what message we wanted our brand to send to our customers and stores.

Of course, we solicited advice from close family, friends and business mentors that we trusted. We knew that we wanted to be bold and incorporate our core beliefs and faith into our business. We thought it would be really neat to develop a zipper handle for all Rockwell Tharp Boots that had an engraved Bible verse on it.

We asked around and for the most part people were pretty encouraging and supportive of our idea, however we quickly found out that some were very against having a bible verse on our designs. They said it would cost us lots of business to profess our faith out in the business world.

So, we took into consideration everyone's thoughts and we agreed to sleep on it overnight. The next morning came quickly and so did our decision. **It was a resounding and unanimous decision that yes, we were going to move forward and share our faith within our business.**

We then learned that if we wanted to do a custom zipper, we would have to produce thousands of them and that would come at a high dollar price. Well.. we hadn't factored that in, but it did not matter. We were able to come up with the funds, pull the trigger, design the zipper handle and put thousands into production.

And now 10 years later, that very zipper handle is on almost every pair of boots we've ever made. They are on our lovely Ladies wearing Rockwell Tharp boots all across the world, on various TV shows, magazines, CBS News, an array of awesome celebrities and of course, in all the stores across the US and Canada that we've had the privilege of designing for over the years.

We have watched God open and close many doors and the zipper choice goes back to the very beginning- a special decision, having a lasting



Roman Nights Modern Cowboy Boots with back zipper.



Handcrafted knee high Tuscany Boots



Prayer jar located at Rockwell Tharp and usually always full- "Let go and let God's will be done."



Handcrafted Tuscany Boots with authentic signature engraved custom Rockwell Tharp zipper handle.

do both! We made our decisions, regarding sharing and we have never regretted them and never looked back.

Rockwell Tharp Ladies Boutique is the only location in the United States where you can see the entire boot collection in one place. This is really neat for Sandestin and The Emerald Coast. Be sure to experience shopping Rockwell Tharp and always look for our authentic signature custom zipper handle. And know before you ever walked through our doors, you were prayed for! -II Cor 5:7

impact- and little did we know, at the time, where it would lead.

Over the years, we have incorporated other important faith items into our business. We have a prayer jar loaded with prayers located at the checkout and we are amazed how many people are eager to have their prayers put in there and know that they will be prayed for. We also put a little special surprise in each of our shopping bags and it is worth more than everything else in the

bag! Come on by to find out.

At Rockwell Tharp, we love and embrace all people, with all beliefs. We simply share ours and we enjoy doing it. God continues to bless us and we would love to be a blessing to you.

We are glad we have incorporated our faith into our business and if you are a business owner or work in another business, there are many ways to share you faith, love and kindness. Business and faith can go together. You can



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 Community

Local Leaders and Citizens Are Driving the Community Comeback. Here's How.



BY QUINT
STUDER

America's small towns are doing big things. They're bypassing traditional

methods and finding innovative ways to revitalize. And this "community comeback" is being driven by civic-minded entrepreneurs and private citizens of every stripe.

The chaos and uncertainty of the past few decades have made us crave personal connections. We want good jobs so our children and grandchildren will stay nearby. And we want lively downtowns with great restaurants, funky stores, cool living spaces, and plenty of fun things to do.

Even deeply struggling communities can turn themselves around. It won't happen overnight.

But when leaders take a strategic, intentional approach and stick with it—using tactics that are proven to work—it *will* happen.

Pensacola is a case in point. More than ten years ago, when its revitalization process began, it was feeling the aftermath of decades of economic decline. There was a huge talent drain, and young people left for better opportunities. Vacant buildings dotted downtown.

Today, much has changed. In the last five years assessed property values have increased 34% and investment in downtown has increased 67%. And the city is winning awards and showing up in national magazines.

Just this year Pensacola was named "World's Strongest Town" by nonprofit organization Strong Towns. We were number 15 on U.S. News and World Report's "Most Desirable Places to Live in the US" list. We were 17 on Go.Verizon.com's "best small city to start a

small business" by Go.Verizon.com. And back in 2013, American Planning Association named Palafox Street one of "10 Great Streets in America."

Similar stories are being played out everywhere. Here are a few strategies community leaders are embracing as they work to create vibrancy:

They're tying their plans to economic growth. It's important for a community to know where its revenue comes from and, more importantly, know what isn't generating revenue.

They're changing the conversation on who drives revitalization. It's important to get citizens engaged in change.

They're getting smart about the psychology of change. It's only human to resist change, even when we know we need it.

They're connecting change initiatives to what citizens

care about most. It's important not just to throw data at people, but rather to find a "burning platform" that speaks to their emotions.

They're using community dashboards to keep critical metrics front and center. Just like a company, a community needs objective metrics to know how healthy they are.

They're rebuilding their downtowns. To attract businesses and talent to a community, it must have a walkable, livable, vibrant downtown with lots of great restaurants, shops, fun activities, and trendy residential areas.

They're making education a priority. In 2014 Pensacola had a 66 percent graduation rate and also a 66 percent kindergarten readiness rate. We connected the dots and realized if we focused on early brain development, we could impact graduation rates long-term.

They're getting aggressive about attracting investors. This is both a science and an art.

They're going to extraordinary lengths to engage citizens. The more successful leaders are at doing this, the more engaged

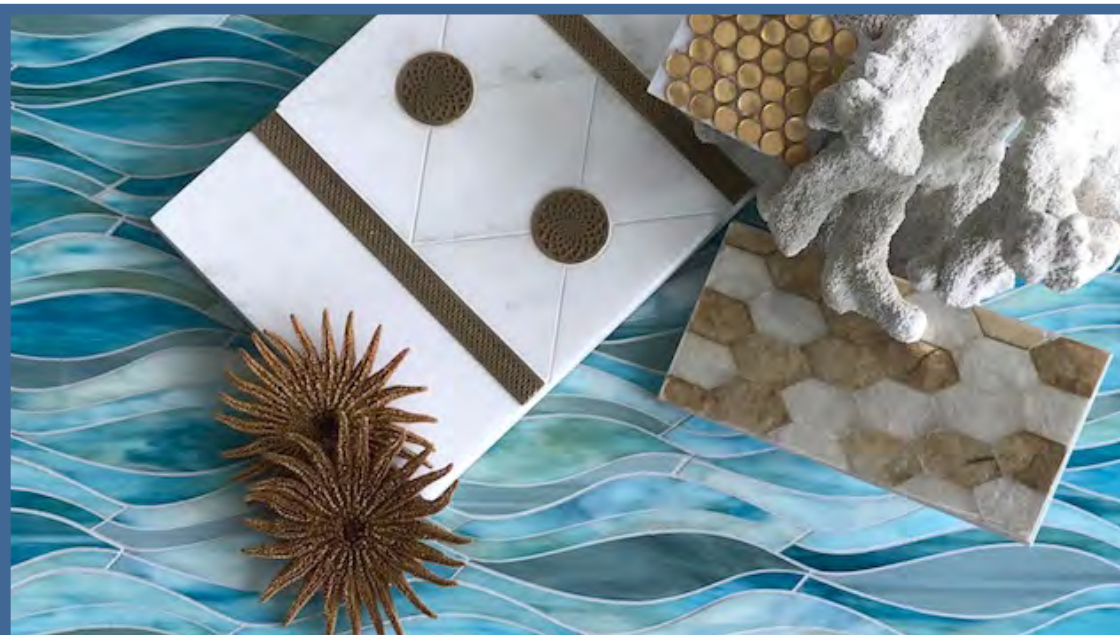
the community becomes, and the more likely it is to meet its goals.

They're galvanizing their small business communities in ways that go beyond "business-friendliness." It's not just about starting businesses, but about keeping them growing.

They're leveraging small successes to keep the momentum going. Great leaders never declare victory. They use each success to grow more enthusiasm and grow the project base.

Creating a vibrant community is a journey. It's not easy. But once you can get some wins under your belt, and get citizens behind you, you'll start to see what is possible. That's when the magic happens. That's how we'll change America for the better—one community at a time.

Quint Studer is author of *Building a Vibrant Community: How Citizen-Powered Change Is Reshaping America*. He currently serves as the Entrepreneur-in-Residence at the University of West Florida. Quint will be speaking at the Transforming Communities Through New Urbanism Symposium on September 16th.



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Q. I got a letter that states that I am being automatically enrolled into a prescription drug plan by Medicare. I don't want to lose my retirement health plan, what should I do?

- Cindy

A. Very good question. The letter you received means that you have qualified for Low Income Subsidy (LIS). Once you qualify for LIS, Medicare will automatically assign you to a prescription drug plan. In most cases, qualification for LIS means that you will not have to pay a premium for your drug plan and most of the copays will be paid. This should not affect your health plan, as the drug plan only covers your prescriptions. However, it is always best to visit with your retirement plan administrator to verify. The most important thing for you to do right now is to check the plan formulary to ensure that all of your prescriptions are covered. When you are automatically enrolled, this step isn't always done thoroughly by Medicare. If the prescriptions you are taking are not on the plan formulary, then they will not be covered by the plan. This means that you would have to pay for them yourself, out-of-pocket. Feel free to reach out to us for a personal consultation. We will analyze your specific circumstance and ensure that you have the best plan for your prescription needs.

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30A Chiropractic has Grown into an "All in One" Health Center

BY RITA L. SHERWOOD

It all started with one idea, an idea that kept popping up in owner Dr. Scott Thurston's head, in order to stay strong and healthy, wouldn't it be cool to be able to go to one particular place, to have all those services under one roof. How could one combine a complete gym facility with the availability of chiropractic care, deep tissue massage and medical care? Well that's how it all began, and now the "All in one" location has been created: 30A Gym and Fitness, 30A Chiropractic, 30A Massage, 30A Yoga, and 30A Medical, at 4161 West County Highway 30A in Santa Rosa Beach. And, the locals love it.



The gym opened in June of 2016 and thanks to a growing local population, and ever-present tourists, soon became the place to go to workout. The equipment is top of the line, covering all methods of working out from free weights to selectorized machines and cardio equipment; there are showers and bathrooms for men and women, and also free lockers. An attendant is present, and 24/7 access is also available. Also, for the safety of its members, both the inside and outside of the gym is under 24-hour surveillance.

And they've maintained the same personal trainer, Eugene Mims, since the gym's opening. Eugene has a great following and is certified, licensed and insured as a senior fitness specialist as well as a functional specialist, and lives by what he teaches. Most days, Eugene makes the 5-mile trip from his house to the gym on his bicycle or paddleboards in the bay on his days off.

The gym also works closely

with the 30A Yoga Studio located on the ground floor of the building. Offering classes on Monday mornings, Wednesday mornings and evenings, and Friday mornings, there's a steady flow of regulars as well as visitors. Quite a few nurses and doctors from the local area also attend the yoga classes. The instructors teach private sessions for wedding parties, and recently held a "Yoga with your Kitty" event, partnering with Alaqua Animal Rescue.

30A Medical is located on the ground floor also and functions as a primary care provider. Led by Dr. Tommy John as the Medical Director, they have recently added Ms. Katie Huckaby, ARNP who works closely with Dr. John.

Katie is an experienced family nurse practitioner with her master's degree from Western Kentucky University, and has previously worked as an RN at Vanderbilt Medical Center



in Nashville, Tennessee in the Pediatric Emergency Room. Since leaving Vanderbilt after receiving her nurse practitioner license, Katie has amassed 5+ years of clinical experience in primary care, urgent care, occupational health, and aesthetic injections. 30A Medical also provides BOTOX, and will soon introduce IV therapy.

30A Chiropractic and 30A Massage rounds out the location.

With more than 15 years experience in private practice, Dr.

Scott Thurston sees the benefit of providing chiropractic care, health, and muscular relaxation to his patients. Dr. Scott as most people call him, works very closely with the medical group, the gym, and 30A Massage.

30A Massage provides a "spa" feeling with clinical results by providing a deep tissue medical massage, scheduled in one-hour increments. The licensed massage therapist is Racheal Hill, who also obtained her BS in Exercise Physiology to better under-

stand the entire muscular system, including the correct process to massage expectant mothers. Racheal has also recently introduced "cupping" for those patients who request the procedure. Her technique and understanding of her clients has produced a steady following.

So, the next time you're out on 30A, and you're endeavoring to stay strong and healthy, stop by and see the many services this "all in one" location offers, you won't be disappointed.



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30A Massage
with Rachael Hill, LMT

30A Fitness
with Personal Trainer Eugene Mims

30A Yoga Studio
with Christine Collier, Lesa Klein & Mark Anthony



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Pet Care

Meet Laurie Hood: A Visionary Extraordinaire and Hometown Hero

By MARY CHRIS MURRY

Local Laurie Hood, founder of Alaqua Animal Refuge, is the epitome of an extraordinary animal advocate and an exceptional leader in the animal welfare community. She is a visionary and change maker who has brought more awareness to the plight of abused, neglected and homeless animals in Northwest Florida than any other individual or organization.

A passionate animal lover since she was a child, Laurie founded Alaqua in 2007 upon discovering that countless animals were being euthanized in five nearby counties, including

her own, due to the lack of a no-kill shelter or adoption organization in the area. Laurie never intended to start an animal rescue. However, this situation was not acceptable for any animal. It certainly wasn't acceptable for Laurie, and Alaqua Animal Refuge was established practically overnight.

Initially providing shelter to 38 animals, Alaqua has helped find homes and provided sanctuary for tens of thousands of animals, and has grown to become the Southeast's premier no-kill 501(c)3 refuge and sanctuary, as well as a recognized leader in animal welfare and cruelty prevention in our region, the state



and around the U.S. The shelter has expanded into a refuge that provides respite for over 350 animals at any given time. Since its founding year, Alaqua staff and volunteers have helped find homes for more than 15,000 animals, with up to 100 adoptions completed each month.

With Laurie at the helm, Alaqua is currently undertaking a bold endeavor to build a one-of-kind facility and sanctuary on 100 acres of donated land in Walton County. The new Alaqua home will be the first of its kind in the U.S., will be a model for animal sanctuaries around the world and a destination for animal welfare advocates as a place that will inspire, educate and empower others to make change.

Alaqua's new location will increase their sheer land space tenfold where they will have the ability to serve more animals, conduct safe educational tours, host larger community educational programs, and provide an educational and training center where people from all over the country, and world, can come to visit and learn.

During the practice of healing thousands of abandoned and abused animals, Laurie realized that people could also be helped through the powerful effects that interactions with animals have on the human spirit and



Laurie Hood
Photo courtesy of Vie Magazine

"Laurie makes extraordinary things happen for animals," said Wayne Pacelle, former CEO of the Humane Society of the United States and New York Times Best Selling Author. "She's a turnaround artist, taking animals from the darkest of places to the promise of peacefulness."

The work of Alaqua couldn't be done without Laurie leading the way. From rescue to intake to rehabilitation, and everything in between, she is there for it all. She is truly the heart and soul of the organization and it has become her life's work.

Alaqua is located in Walton County, but serves surrounding counties including Okaloosa, Bay, Holmes, Washington, Franklin and Santa Rosa. Also serving the greater Southeastern U.S. when there's a need, Alaqua has rescued animals from Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, and across the country. Alaqua the leader in our area in the coordination of animal relief efforts in the Panhandle, and works with national organizations to help provide assistance when necessary. For more information about Alaqua's relocation, campaign, volunteer opportunities, adopting or fostering a pet, or purchasing tickets to the upcoming Animoré event, an inaugural benefit for the love of animals to be held on the grounds of Alaqua Animal Refuge's future home in Freeport, visit www.Alaqua.org.

body. The new sanctuary will allow Alaqua to continue the important work that is done now, expand their scope of animal welfare services and programs, and be an inspiration for creating a kinder, more empathetic, and healthier society by healing animals and people. Keeping in alignment with its overall vision, Alaqua will continue its commitment to these focus areas: Rescue, Rehabilitation, Adoption, Education and Training.

Driven by faith and perseverance, Laurie sees a living soul in every animal and feels compelled to be its voice. Her boundless enthusiasm, loving heart, and extraordinary courage keep Alaqua's staff, volunteers, and board of directors moving forward in support of Alaqua's mission—ensuring that every abused, neglected and homeless animal deserves a second chance—at life, hope, happiness, and most of all, love.

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Dog-Harmony's Racquets for Rescues Sept 28th

The annual Racquets for Rescues fundraiser for Dog-Harmony Inc. is set for noon to 3 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 28, at Hidden Dunes Resort Tennis Center, 9815 U.S. Highway 98.

The event, sponsored by Pratt Aycock Title, features a fast-feed tennis clinic and round robin, plus silent auction. More sponsorship opportunities are available.

Cost is \$40 per person and includes lunch provided by Destin



Hooters, local brews by Grayton Beer Company and specialty cocktails by Tito's Handmade Vodka.

To register, or for more info, email rybroxson@yahoo.com or call (850) 269-2590. Tickets also

can be purchased at dog-harmony.org.

All funds raised from this event will support Dog-Harmony's mission to reduce the shelter dog population through humane education, force-free training, low-cost spay/neuter and microchipping. This non-profit focuses on keeping dogs out of shelters in the first place by creating programs to combat the top reasons and ways dogs end up being rehomed.

OneBlood to Host Blood Drive at The Market Shops in October

OneBlood will be having a Blood Drive at The Market Shops in Miramar Beach on Saturday, October 5th, hosted by Maple Street Biscuit Company. The OneBlood Big Red Bus® will be parked in The Market Shops parking lot, adjacent to Highway 98.

OneBlood is a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) community asset responsible for providing safe, available and affordable blood. Generally healthy people ages 16 or older who weigh at least 110



pounds can donate blood. Photo ID is required. All donors receive a wellness checkup of blood pressure, pulse, temperature and iron count, including cholesterol screening. Those who donate

blood from 8 a.m.- 1 p.m. will receive a free mini iced cinnamon biscuit from Maple Street Biscuit Company as well as a movie ticket that can be used at the AMC Theaters located in Destin Commons or at the New Vision Theaters Boulevard 10 located in Grand Boulevard Town Center.

Visit oneblood.org. The Market Shops is located on Hwy. 98, 9375 Emerald Coast Pkwy. in Miramar Beach.

Around Town Events



Sacred Heart Charity Golf Classic

The 18th Annual Sacred Heart Charity Golf Classic is on the horizon, slated for Friday, September 20th, at Burnt Pine Golf Club. Proceeds will support the expansion of the Sacred Heart Hospital on the Emerald Coast's Comprehensive Spine Program, that includes the addition of a 5th operating room and equipment supporting robotic spine surgeries.

For more information on golf registration and sponsorships, visit the tournament webpage at www.sacredheartcharitygolf.com, or contact Sacred Heart Foundation at (850)278-3702 or lisa.wainwright@ascension.org.

4th Annual Women in Science Conference

The 4th Annual Women in Science Conference will be held Thursday, Sept. 12, 2019, 5:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. at the Student Services Center (Building 400) in the Raider Cafe and Lobby at Northwest Florida State College, Northwest Florida State College, 100 E College Blvd., Niceville.

Hosted by the Emerald Coast Science Center, the evening will consist of inspirational presentations from professional women in STEM careers. Proceeds benefit the Emerald Coast Science Center's Girls Engaged in Making (GEM) Workshops.



15th Annual CVHN Big Give!

Join Children's Volunteer Health Network for the 15th Annual CVHN Big Give on September 27 at Bud & Alley's in Seaside! Directly impacting CVHN programs serving children in need in Okaloosa and Walton counties, the evening will be filled with live music, dancing and live and silent auctions. Bud & Alley's will put together a delectable buffet dinner and a cash bar will be available. Tickets on sale now cvhnkids.org/the-big-give. CVHN provides dental and vision care to underserved children throughout Walton and Okaloosa Counties. Visit www.cvhnkids.org for more information about the mission of CVHN.



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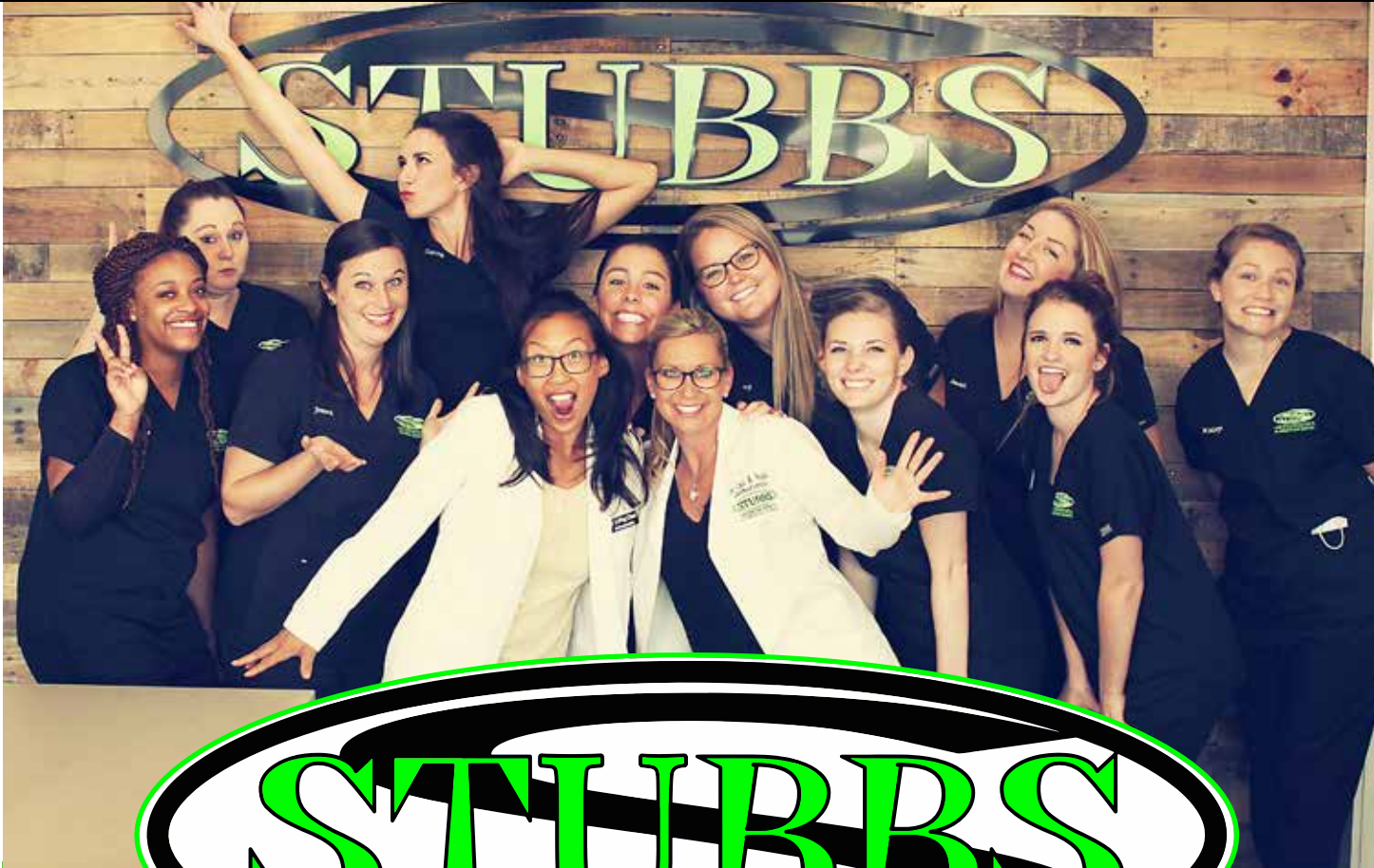
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Our daughter just completed her second phase and had her braces removed today, what a milestone!! This experience has been amazing. We love Dr. Stubbs and her staff. Always friendly and always went above and beyond for my daughter's comfort. ~ Micha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

Baytowne Wharf 12th Annual Beerfest Oct. 11 & 12

Time to roll out the barrel and discover unique suds and ales! The Village of Baytowne Wharf at Sandestin presents the 12th Annual Baytowne Wharf Beer Fest on Oct. 11 & 12, 2019. American specialty beers from around the nation will be available for participants to sample and savor. The main event on Sat., Oct. 12 will feature more than 200 domestic and international craft beers available for sampling. Brewery representatives will be available at the event, offering an opportunity to learn about the different types of lagers and ales from a variety of styles. Live music will be also featured during the festival. The Village provides the perfect backdrop for fun-in-the sun and strolling the charming streets while enjoying live music and a wide range of beer. It makes for a very memorable experience for tourists and locals. The Baytowne Beer Festival is a pitcher perfect reason for a getaway or “staycation” with special discounted accommodation packages. Sandestin makes it easy with great offers! Use code

Beer19 for accommodation and ticket discounts on www.baytownebeerfestival.com. Stay in The Village of Baytowne Wharf and never leave the resort; everything you need is right here! Event Line Up:

back our Beer From Around Here event, and it’s going to be better than ever! The relaxed and intimate Beer From Around Here event will take place in the Village Events Plaza. Sample local breweries and homebrews



Saturday, October 12 | VIP Event | Slick Lips Seafood & Oyster House | 1 - 2pm

This year, we are offering a little something special for our Beer Fest attendees! Our Saturday VIP event will feature exclusive beer tastings and great food! This ticket is all inclusive for Saturday’s events. AND you can beat the lines to get in the event before anyone else!

Saturday, October 12 | Craft Beer Tasting | 2-6pm

The main event will feature more than 40 breweries, offering close to 200 domestic and international craft beers for sampling! Brewery representatives will be available to discuss the different types of lagers and ales, teaching about the variety of styles. All ticket holders will be provided a Baytowne Wharf Beer Fest tasting glass for sampling. Enjoy live music from The Luke Langford Band from 2-4pm. Next on the mic will be The Shakedown from 4:30-6:30pm!

Friday, October 11 | Beer From around Here | 6-8pm

We love featuring the local breweries at our Beer Festival and this year, we are bringing

and taste delicious appetizers from merchants right here in The Village, all while enjoying live music by The Blenders.

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Time To Consider Investing in Silver?



By MAURICE STOUSE, BRANCH MANAGER AND FINANCIAL ADVISOR

Some investors, for the first time in several years, are beginning to take note of precious metals, silver in particular. The reasons are many, but most notable are the world economic climate and the price of silver to gold. Silver bullion, coins, silver mining companies, mutual funds and exchange traded funds (ETFs) have generally seen an increase in investing and prices.

The world economic climate has become much less certain over the past couple of years. Interest rates and unemployment rates are at record lows, yet economic uncertainty abounds. The biggest concern is that demand for goods and services has not grown commensurate with output. A decade of low-cost borrowing and fundamental changes in the demand for certain natural resources has brought about sizable gains in output. Technological advances have also resulted in sizable output gains as well.

The demand for these gains has not kept pace however and world governments and banks have taken steps to lower rates even further to encourage expansion, stimulate growth and consumption. This has not resulted in enough demand to keep pace with the output. This is most notable when you look at inflation, which is not only the pace of increase in the costs of goods and services, but a sign of the growth of the economy. Gross Domestic Product or GDP is another measure for economic growth. Both have continued to move at a rate of approximately 2% a year. Economic growth is considered healthy at 3% for these measures.

So, why the recent increase in investor interest in silver? Often

precious metals price increases are a result of inflation, stemming from a weaker currency. This is not currently the case. What has been the case is that the value of silver, relative to gold, is lower than its historical ratio. Silver has most consistently had a ratio of 1:50 versus gold. In other words, gold prices have typically been 50 times greater than silver prices. Currently the ratio is closer to 1:88 or gold is selling at 88 times silver. Many investors might consider that a value gap or that silver has become undervalued, cheaper, oversold and hence an investment (albeit is speculative) opportunity. Year to date silver is up in price approximately 12.05% and up almost 20% over the past three months. Gold is up 17.50% year to date and 19% over the past three months.

Economic uncertainty with trade wars in the news as well as sluggish world growth and growing budget deficits (and debts) are also being noted by investors as reasons for seeking these types of hedges or investment opportunities. Silver has also been seen as a store of value, something that historically retains purchasing power into the future.

To learn more, call or visit an advisor or do your own research on ways to understand the silver market. Exchange traded funds, mutual funds and individual stocks are available through brokerage firms. The United States Mint and of course coin dealers give investors alternatives as well. Be sure you understand the risks associated and that you are comfortable with this being part of your investment program or portfolio.

Maurice Stouse is a Financial Advisor and the branch manager of the First Florida Wealth Group and Raymond James and he resides in Grayton Beach. He has been in financial services for over 32 years. His main office is located at First Florida Bank, 2000 98 Palms Blvd, Destin, FL 32451. Branch offices in Niceville, Mary Esther, Miramar Beach, Freeport and Panama City. Phone 850.654.8124. Raymond James advisors do not offer tax advice. Please see your tax professionals. Email: Maurice.stouse@raymondjames.com.

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Holding stocks for the long term does not

insure a profitable outcome. Diversification and asset allocation do not ensure a profit or protect against a loss. Every type of investment, including mutual funds, involves risk. Risk refers to the possibility that you will lose money (both principal and any earnings) or fail to make money on an investment. Changing market conditions can create fluctuations in the value of a mutual fund investment. In addition, there are fees and expenses associated with investing in mutual funds that do not usually occur when purchasing individual securities directly. The information has been obtained from sources considered reliable, but we do not guarantee that the foregoing material is accurate or complete. There is no guarantee that these statements, opinions or forecasts provided herein will prove to be correct. Individual investor's

results will vary. Investing in commodities is generally considered speculative because of the significant potential for investment loss. Their markets are likely to be volatile and there may be sharp price fluctuations even during periods when prices overall are rising. Price fluctuations of silver can be less predictable than other commodities. Global demand for silver can influence its value, as well as the economic cycle. Gold and silver are subject to the special risks associated with investing in precious metals, including but not limited to: price may be subject to wide fluctuation; the market is relatively limited; the sources are concentrated in countries that have the potential for instability; and the market is unregulated. Investments mentioned may not be suitable for all investors.



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Up, down or sideways: Keep your head on straight when markets move.

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For starters, you can turn to us. We can help you find a clear way forward before fear or concerns take over with a strategy tailored to your situation. In our experience, perspective is the ticket to helping endure the ups and downs as you pursue your financial goals. Contact us to learn how we can help.



Maurice Stouse
Financial Advisor

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September at Topsail Hill Preserve State Park

September brings the arrival of Fall, opportunities for service and many beautiful butterflies to the 1,643 acres that make up Topsail Hill Preserve State Park as well as the return of some “fan favorites.” Whether you visit the park’s butterfly garden, or you witness the migration of butterflies floating along the sea oats on the beach, you are in for a visual treat. The insects’ bright wings bring many spots of color to the park as if they were wildflowers. The Gulf Fritillary will be the most common butterfly spotted this season. As an adult it relies on Lantana as its primary source of nectar. You’ll know you’re looking at the caterpillar of a Gulf Fritillary because they are a bright orange with black spikes. These caterpillars need the Passion Flower or Passion Vine for their primary source of food before forming a chrysalis and metamorphosing in to an adult butterfly. Why all the excitement about butterflies, you ask? Butterflies are effective pollinators, a great food source for birds, amphibians and reptiles and their presence indicates a healthy ecosystem.



September brings the return of the ever-popular Kids Club to the park. Children along with their parents will enjoy nature crafts and activities in a fun volunteer led atmosphere. Families

are welcome to bring a picnic lunch and stay after to add to their fun. Kids Club will be held on September 15th at 12:00pm.

Also returning to the park are canoe, kayak, paddleboard and bike rentals. The park’s concessionaire, Fancy Camps, rents watercrafts either by the half or whole day and you can enjoy either the Gulf of Mexico or Campbell Lake, a rare Coastal Dune Lake. Bikes can be rented as well so you can enjoy the beautiful preserve area by bike. For more information on the rental

process you can contact the park store 850-267-8333.

On September 21st you can help the park by participating in its International Coastal Cleanup Day beach cleanup. September 28th you can help the park with its “Cache In, Trash Out” adventure for National Public Lands Day and Bike Your Park day. All three events are wonderful opportunities for you to help conserve the unique ecosystems found within the park for the many imperiled species that visit them or call them home.

In early October you’ll be able to enjoy the return of Topsail Under the Stars and the expansion of the annual “Rollin’ Through the Decades” Vintage RV and Camping Show on October 5th. This year there will be close to 100 campers spanning the years of 1916 to 2018 with a large portion of them from the 1950s, 60s and 70s. Along with all these fantastic campers for you to visit there will be a Vintage Camper Holiday photo

booth and other fun camping and outdoor related activities.

For more information about the park events, programs and activities visit <https://www.floridastateparks.org/parks-and-trails/topsail-hill-preserve-state-park>. As the Prk Rangers always say: whether you want to camp, hike, bike, paddle, explore, swim, learn or volunteer, there is something for everyone at Topsail Hill Preserve State Park. See you in the park soon!

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Community

4th Annual Sonder Project Half Marathon and 5K October 11-13th

The Sonder Project is excited to announce the 4th Annual 30A Half Marathon & 5K Race Weekend, October 11-13. This annual event is their biggest fundraiser of the year and sure to be an incredible weekend! Events include a BBQ Concert kickoff on Friday, a Race Expo on Saturday, and the Half Marathon & 5K Race on Sunday. This spectacular event will bring together

over 1,300 runners—and more than 5,000 guests—from around the world. Race participants will be competing for prizes valued at more than \$20,000 while enjoying the beautiful scenery of the 30A Gulf Coast. 100% of the proceeds from the weekend will benefit The Sonder Project, directly supporting their mission to strengthen communities by providing food security, clean water,

housing, and education.

Chad Zibelman, CEO of The Sonder Project, says of the annual event, “Whether you want to compete, run for fun, or volunteer, there is something for everyone, and your participation will help support our mission to strengthen communities all over the world!”

Schedule of Events

All events will take place at Gulf Place: 45 Town Center Loop, Santa Rosa Beach, FL 32459

Friday, October 11

30A BBQ Festival, 5:30PM–9:00PM—Presented by Hospitality Depot

Kick off the 30A Half Marathon & 5K weekend with some of the best BBQ on the coast, an incredible selection of beer and wine, and great live music from The Heritage Band! Grab your lawn chairs and enjoy a fun evening in beautiful Santa Rosa Beach while supporting a wonderful cause. Before you head out, be sure to cast your vote for your favorite BBQ creation!

This lively event is the perfect way to spend a gorgeous Friday night, whether you’re out with the family or looking for a fun and unique date night.

Advance Ticket Prices:

Adults: \$30.00
Children 6-12: \$12.00
Children 5 & Under: Free
VIP Tickets (includes VIP tent, open bar, & lounge seating): \$100
Purchase tickets at 30ahalf.com/bbq

Tickets purchased at the door:

Adults: \$35.00
Children 6-12: \$12
Children 5 & Under: Free

Saturday, October 12

Race Expo & College Game Viewing Party, 12PM–5PM

Race participants registered for the Half Marathon & 5K are invited to come out and pick up their race packets! Enjoy the great selection of delicious food, cold beer, and race vendors—and bring the kids to play in the bounce houses! Don’t forget your lawn chairs to enjoy the college football viewing party.

Sunday, October 13

30A Half Marathon & 5K on Sunday, 7AM–1PM—Presented by 360 Blue

Experience one of the most beautiful races in the world! The race course features stunning landscape along Scenic Highway 30A—incredible architecture, sparkling coastal dunes lakes, and spectacular forests. Both the half



marathon and 5k start and end at Gulf Place on 30A. Race participants can celebrate crossing the finish line while enjoying live music, great food, ice cold beer, and bloody mary’s. To register for the race, visit 30ahalf.com

Volunteers Needed

Interested in volunteering for this incredible event? We need your help to make the fundraising weekend a success! Sign up to volunteer at 30ahalf.com/qvolunteer



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Explore The Outdoors Festival October 19th

Walton Outdoors will be hosting the 10th annual Explore The Outdoors Festival on Saturday, October 19th, 2019. The fun-filled family event will be held from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. at the beautiful waterfront location of Live Oak Landing Outdoor Destination, 229 Pitts Avenue in Freeport, Florida 32439.

The day will be geared toward engaging children in the wonders of exploring nature and the outdoors. Hands on activities will include fishing, kayaking, wildlife, archery, interactive educational exhibits, giveaways and much more. The event is free for all ages. The water activities are for children six-years-old and up.

- Activities and exhibits include:
- Learn to fish on Black Creek with fishing pros
 - Florida Fish and Wildlife fresh-water fishing exhibit
 - FISH FLORIDA fishing rod/reel giveaways
 - Freshwater fishing education with Florida Fish and Wildlife
 - Kayaking
 - Archery
 - Boating with Wounded Warrior Fishing and Backwater Tours
 - Birding with the Choctawhatchee Audubon Society
 - Wildlife exhibit with Florida Fish and Wildlife



- Topsail Hill Preserve State Park exhibit
- Eden Gardens State Park exhibit
- Northwest Florida Astronomy Club stargazing
- Choctawhatchee Basin Alliance touch tank
- Smokey the Bear and his friends from Forestry
- Florida Sea Grant exhibit
- Freeport Town Planters Society crafts
- Beekeeping exhibit with Jeff Chesser
- Walton County Master Gardeners activity
- Crafts with Glendale Memorial Nature Preserve
- Nonie's Ark Animal Encounters

- North Walton Fire and Rescue exhibit
- Food will be available for purchase from Black Creek Café
- On site parking
- Free admission

For more information, email: info@waltonoutdoors.com, or call (850) 267-2064.

Many thanks to the sponsors C.W. Roberts Contracting, FISH FLORIDA, Freeport Town Planters, Copeland's Gun and Tackle, and the many volunteers who help make this event a success.

About Walton Outdoors: Walton Outdoors is an online source for outdoor adventure in Walton County and northwest Florida. The mission is to share great spaces to explore the outdoors, and to educate the readers on the wonders of nature.

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Community

What's on 30A TV -- Plate to Plate with Chef Kali

“Plate to Plate” is a newly developed video concept launched by traveling Personal Chef, Kali Davis, showcasing the diversity of fresh, local ingredients, in private, dinner party settings. With future shows to be shot in various locations throughout the United States, the premiere episode presents a ladies-night culinary experience in Santa Rosa Beach, Florida.



Home to magnificent sugar-white beaches, beautiful homes, and backwoods charm of Santa Rosa Beach, the featured meal reflects the freshest seafood the Gulf has to offer. Check out the pilot episode at www.30a.tv.

Born and raised in Destin, Florida, Kali Davis knew early on that she wanted to be a chef. Undaunted by small, hot kitchens, 15 year-old Kali recognized that she found

an outlet for stress relief by cooking. In particular, that release was centered around the joy of creating something out of nothing. Her early culinary efforts were centered around family, with Kali cooking her first private dinner (as a celebration of the women in her life) for Mother's Day.

After high school, Kali was on a mission, and moved to Miami by herself. With some



well-crafted storytelling and a little embellishment, she landed her first back-of-the-house position at a boutique hotel called ONE Bal Harbour Resort and Spa. Working under a hot-shot French chef, Kali's experience at ONE was physically and emotionally challenging. Fiercely determined, she fought her way through the trials. As this experience shaped her mindset and built her credentials, Kali solidified her role at ONE.

Over the next few years, the restaurant was transformed into two other entities, with three different executive chefs, and by this point, Kali felt ready for a new challenge. Her next role was at BLOOM, where the executive chef was the former chef of Nobu. It was

at BLOOM that Kali learned speed in cooking, as the restaurant was always packed.

During this period, Kali attended Johnson & Wales University in Miami, where she met her husband, Eric Davis. At that time, he was working for a personal chef, and convinced her to start her own business. “Personal Chef Kali” launched as a business with a multimillionaire for a client, and she spent those years experimenting with numerous recipes and innovative styles of cooking. This included testing a variety of options from pre-made meals to tasting menus and everything in-between. She built up her business to include a wide range of clients, and simultaneously started a family.

Moving back to the Florida

panhandle, Chef Kali had her first child at 25, and continued to work on her business which now includes eight chefs and assorted employees. For original press release and more information visit www.30a.tv

About 30a Media The goal is simple, to be the #1 video resource for information and entertainment, beach style. 30A TV Broadcasts in 9 counties of the NW Florida Panhandle, nationwide on Roku Web TV, Amazon Fire TV, Google Play, and at www.30a.tv. - Download the free Iphone and Android apps to watch live. 30a Media remains committed to continue innovating and providing viewers with the content they request.



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Homeschool Community Growing

By ALISSA AICHELE

A growing number of families are opting for Homeschool along the Emerald Coast. This family friendly area of the panhandle has always been a favorite for parents to raise children or vacation with grandchildren. The lush landscapes and access to various kinds of ecosystems naturally foster wonder and a love for learning that every child longs for. Along with the rise of home education, groups of schooling mamas diligently gather and form co-ops to aid their instructional efforts. Forming a sense of togetherness, these groups can be made up of common interests such as nature walks or classes filled with fizzing science projects or lessons in long division. Energetically, home educating parents organize through Facebook groups to line up field trips or to buy and sell text books online.

While enjoying the active outdoor life that the South Walton area provides, families are also meeting around the kitchen table to teach students at home.

What would cause a family in the stunning Emerald Coast to choose school at home? The mainline educational choices are usually between public or private school, but the family who homeschools is willing to take up the task with ingenuity and DIY power. Among the many reasons to homeschool, a family might look for a specific form of education that can be easily and affordably offered from home. Nationwide, parents look to teaching methods such as classical, Charlotte Mason, Montessori, unschooling, unit studies and Electronic methods. Some families might be attracted to a lifestyle of learning in the comfort of home while others desire

the flexibility to travel or get into nature. Whatever the draw, homeschooling children offers the chance to aptly tailor a student's education and experience to size.

As homeschooling families grow in number along the Gulf Coast, the community responds with enthusiastic efforts. Groups such as Emerald Coast Theater Company and Alfonso Company offer acting and dance classes during the normal school day to accommodate the needs of homeschooled children. Businesses such as the Gulfarium, Zoo World and Wonder Works promote special offers for homeschoolers to take advantage of enriching educational activities. Florida State now provides Florida's Virtual online school to meet the growing demand of homeschool options. It is more and more common to see fami-



port than ever before to take the plunge into this alternative route to home education. When asked about school by an interested senior, a homeschool student can explain that their parent is also their teacher. If you see a group of kids touring Publix on a week day or quietly listening to a Turtle Talk at the Seaside Farmer's market, you might have met some homeschoolers. The presence of home education is vibrant and undeniable in this ever-growing community.

For more information about classical conversations, look for a community near you at classicalconversations.com or for questions about connecting with homeschool families in the Santa Rosa Beach and Destin area, reach out by email to 30Abeachmamas@gmail.com.

lies doing school at home in the Destin area at large.

Unquestionably, homeschooling families are generating increased openness and acceptance from the Gulf Coast community members. Parents have more availability, opportunity and sup-

Democratic Women's Club honors Doris Johnson September 24

The Democratic Women's Club of Walton County is honoring Doris Johnson of Defuniak Springs on Tuesday, September 24, 2019 from 11:30 am to 2 pm at Cantina Laredo Restaurant, 585 Grand Boulevard, Miramar Beach. Doris is the founder of the Democratic Black Caucus of Wal-

ton County and is also the owner of the Park Funeral Home in Defuniak Springs, one of the first female owned businesses in the Florida panhandle. Doris is known for being kind and helpful to may citizens of Walton County over the years, and it is for this reason that The DWC is honoring her with

this special luncheon. If you are interested in coming, please mail a check for \$30 to the Democratic Women's Club of Walton County, PO Box 2507, Santa Rosa Beach FL 32459 by September 17. After that we will accept payments at the door but we would appreciate an RSVP by September 17 so we

know how many attendees to plan for. For RSVPS and questions,

please contact Sue Bowden at susanbowden4321@yahoo.com.

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Arts

Big Green Eggheads Unite Sept. 29th

BY MICHELLE FARNHAM

Just as the summer tourist season has begun to cool off on the Emerald Coast, the Eggs on the Beach cooking competition will be firing things back up! Slated for Saturday, September 29th from 10 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., this gathering of Big Green Egg cooking enthusiasts promises to fill bellies and inspire home grillers.

Susan Kiley and Wayne Paul – co-owners of Bay Breeze Patio and retailers of the Kamado-style cooker – are gearing up for their sixth annual EGGfest.

“Regionally around the country, fairly large Big Green Egg dealers started having their own EGGfests, but we like to tell people, ‘This is not your grandfather’s EGGfest,’” explained Kiley, stressing that their competition features truly gourmet food. “Often times for these EGGfests, you go to the state park and you have 20 guys making pulled pork. Ours is everything but pulled pork!”

What might ticket-holders find at one of the 30-plus sta-



tions located throughout the festival, held on the driving range at Seascapes Resort? Kiley listed some of the more memorable bites from years past, including smoked dates wrapped in bacon with cream cheese, triggerfish tacos, and smoked pork belly.

Some top contenders from years past include Saltwater Restaurants Inc., The Gulf Restaurant of Okaloosa Island, and The Rotary Club of Destin. Attendees will also enjoy live music, a charity raffle, a kids area sponsored by Food For Thought, big screen TVs to watch football courtesy of ENCO Electronics, smoked cocktail seminars from Knob Creek, and live Big Green

Egg cooking demonstrations.

The fest accommodates up to 34 teams, comprised of restaurant crews, non-profit groups, and backyard grilling enthusiasts.

“It’s a pretty diverse group with a lot of competition among the teams,” Kiley said. “Last year we had these firefighters from Louisiana who happened to be here on vacation at Seascapes. They called and said, ‘We don’t know what this is, but it sounds like fun. Can we enter?’ They ended up winning one of the categories and had a really good time!”

There are plenty of locals involved in the competition as well, and the generosity they display is

impressive.

“We had a team last year called Sacred Que, with some people from the medical staff at Sacred Heart. They ended up winning People’s Choice, and the prize was a Big Green Egg. They turned around and donated it to one of the non-profit teams so that team could use it as a fundraiser. I was like, ‘This is why we do this stuff!’ It was pretty awesome,” Kiley admitted.

The 2018 EGGfest raised \$36,000 for local charities, with more than \$100,000 over the local event’s history. Of that money, \$6,000 is earmarked for prizes for the top three non-profit teams. The balance gets donated

to the event’s two charities: Food For Thought and Fisher House Foundation.

While the affair has certainly been successful at generating funds for good causes, Kiley made sure to point out their EGGfest is “a food festival that happens to raise money.” They also cap attendance at 800 tickets.

So what’s so special about a Big Green Egg that it deserves its own festival?

“The Green Egg is a 100 percent ceramic cooker and it’s almost impossible to make a mistake with it,” Kiley explained. “It’s a grill, an oven, and a smoker. You can’t overcook on it; you can’t undercook on it. It truly has its own cult following.”

For more information on EGGfest or to purchase tickets, visit www.eggsonthebeach.com. Tickets can also be purchased by cash or check at Bay Breeze Patio, 32 Forest Shore Drive, Miramar Beach. If any tickets remain, they can be purchased at the door the day of the event.

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Coastal Library Hosts SWHS Art Students Exhibit

South Walton High School is home to many accomplished young artists on the Emerald Coast. Many of these art students submit their individual works to the College Board for the AP Studio Art Portfolio 2019 assessments in AP 2D, AP Drawing, and AP 3D. A selection from this stellar group of SWHS AP Art students will be exhibited at the South Walton Branch of the Coastal Library in September.

and illustration work for the Drawing AP Portfolio. The 3D AP Portfolio included balsa wood sculptures and architectural models by Josh Chee



dents from SWHS had a 100% pass rate on their 2019 AP Studio Art Portfolios submitted to the College Board.

South Walton Coastal Branch Library is located at 437 Greenway Trail, Santa Rosa Beach. 850-267-2809.

Included in this exhibition are AP 2D students: Megan Benopoulos, Mary Claire Brown, Cam Bruce, Kevin DeJesus, Faith Duran, Xavier Epplin, Noelle Garcia, Gabe Mathews, Jielle Paul, Jhonathan Ramirez, Callyn Sims, and Jarod Young who submitted AP 2D Photography based portfolios. Other media based AP 2D portfolios students include: Ferrell Crawley, Diego Duran, Kizzi Anna Fersted, Lily Gravlin, Jessie Miller, and Reegan North. AP Drawing students Quinn Yandell, and Mary T. Pickers submitted expressive



and Jielle Paul. These students range in grades 9th – 12th in SWHS, and work with Dr. Vivian Moreira Komando. 32 stu-



Community Bible Study Prayer Group in Miramar Beach

Along with a Study of Galatians

Community Bible Study (CBS) is an international, interdenominational organization committed to helping people grow in their relationship with Jesus Christ by exploring the Bible. CBS classes are structured, in-depth studies of the Bible, God's revealed Word. Classes are comprised of people from many different churches who gather for in-depth Bible study because it complements their local church and helps them grow spiritually. Class members belong to and actively support their local church; many are servants and leaders in their congregations. CBS concentrates on the essentials of the Christian faith, not on denominational differences. Through love and respect for one another, Christians can hold differing views on matters that are not essential to salvation. The goal of CBS is to build unity in the church in the midst of Christian diversity. Everyone



is welcome and made to feel comfortable in their class regardless of background, education, church involvement, ethnicity or economic status.

Meetings are on Tuesdays, from 7:00 pm till 8:30pm at Destiny Worship Center, 122 Poinciana Blvd., in Miramar Beach. Each person will receive a study guide and the topic will be the book of Galatians. Men and women in and around South Walton and Destin are invited to come and please, bring a friend!

For more information, please contact Rod Cameron, 501-804-5900, RodinDestin@gmail.com or Pam Cameron, 501-690-8521, PamCameron16@gmail.com.

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Update From Visit South Walton: The Value of Tourism

Visit South Walton Celebrates Local Artists, Hospitality Leaders and Businesses

Did you know that the Walton County Tourist Development Council does more than just promote visitation to South Walton?

In addition to purchasing property for beach accesses and parking, and maintaining more than 60 beach, bay and lake accesses, the TDC also invests in the community through a series of community programs – the South Walton Artist of the Year Award, the Van Ness Butler Jr. Hospitality Award and the Perfect in South Walton Awards.

Let's take a closer look at each program.

South Walton Artist of the Year

Entering its 18th year in 2020, the South Walton Artist of the Year program continues to showcase local art. Through this program, the TDC promotes the destination's thriving art community while placing the spotlight on one talented local artist annually.

From Kathleen Broaderick and Justin Gaffrey to Marisol Gullo, Allison Wickey and Andy Saczynski, some of the most recognizable names in the South Walton art scene have been honored as Artist of the Year.

For some it's validation of their craft and years of hard work. For others, who may be relatively new to the area, it can serve as a launching pad.

For 2019 Artist of the Year Jenna Varney, the honor was a complete surprise, especially when looking at the artists who had been honored before her.

"There was a lot of screaming and a lot of jumping around," she remembers. "To be up there with

such talent, it's almost unreal."

The 2020 South Walton Artist of the Year will be announced during the annual Perfect in South Walton Awards which will be held in January 2020.

Van Ness Butler Jr. Hospitality Award

Established in 2003, the Van Ness Butler Jr. Hospitality Award recognizes excellence in hospitality service, travel/tourism marketing, advertising, promotion, and contributions to the local community.

The award honors the legacy of service embodied by the Van Ness Butler family who acquired the land now known as Grayton Beach in 1922. The Butler family built the Grayton Beach Hotel, and through their family's passion, determination, and energy set the stage for the developing tourism industry.

Following his grandfather's legacy, Van Ness Butler, Jr. served as the first chairman of the Walton County TDC, as interim executive director for two years and on the Tourist Development Council for more than 13 years.

Through the Van Ness Butler Jr. Award, true visionaries and leaders in the South Walton community have been recognized. Previous winners include Seaside founder Robert Davis, Malcolm Patterson (the first director of the Walton County TDC), co-founder and owner of Newman-Daily Resort Properties Jeanne Dailey, 30A company founder Mike Ragsdale and Lino Maldonado, vice president of operations, growth and innovation



Artist Jenna Varney, who specializes in hyper-realistic paintings, was honored as the 2019 Visit South Walton Artist of the Year.

for Wyndham Vacation Rentals North America.

The 2019 recipient, Tracy Louthain is a tireless promoter of the South Walton story, and knows the importance of the economic impact that tourism and hospitality spreads throughout Walton County.

"Our way of life is funded in large part through visitor spending, which translates into paychecks that are reinvested in our community and revenue from sales tax that helps fund education and infrastructure needs in Walton County," she says. "From master planned communities to the businesses that have opened

to provide conveniences for residents and visitors alike, tourism shapes our community and provides us an improved quality of life."

Nominees for the Van Ness Butler Jr. Hospitality Award are selected for their contributions to the community, innovation and collaboration with other community businesses or organizations to enhance Walton County's standing as a destination.

Nominations for the Van Ness Butler Jr. Award will open in Spring 2020.

Perfect in South Walton
South Walton's local busi-

nesses play a huge role in the visitor experience, so it should come as no surprise that the TDC shines light on the hardworking men and women who make it all possible through the annual Perfect in South Walton Awards.

This community program is promoted nationally, and invites both visitors and locals to recommend and vote on their "perfect" places in South Walton, whether it be an art gallery, a favorite boutique or one of the 200-plus restaurants.

Categories range from best fine dining and best casual dining to best wine list, best event, best live music venue and best clothing boutique just to name a few. All told, there are 30 categories and businesses vie for Diamond, Platinum and Gold honors.

All Perfect in South Walton Award winners are featured in the Perfect in South Walton brochure, which is mailed to potential visitors, and is available at the Visit South Walton Visitor's Center and on the Visit South Walton website (www.visitsouthwalton.com).

Want to help keep people talking about your favorite business or event year-round? Head to www.perfectinsouthwalton.com to nominate them. Winners will be announced during the annual Perfect in South Walton Awards in January 2020.

To learn more about these community awareness programs, contact Lisa Foster, industry relations specialist at Visit South Walton, at (850) 267-1216 or Lisa@visitsouthwalton.com.

Managed Vendor Program Receives Positive Response on the Beach

It's been just over four months since the Walton County Tourist Development Council and the South Walton Beach Service Association rolled out its managed vendor program at the Inlet Beach Regional Beach Access,

Ed Walline Regional Beach Access, and Grayton Dunes public beach access, and the results have been promising.

"The effect was immediate," says Brian Kellenberger, director of beach operations for the Wal-

ton County TDC. "We've received many positive comments from beach visitors and the general consensus is to expand the program."

The goal of the managed vendor program is to help elimi-

nate issues with "ghost chairs" while also streamlining the guest experience for those renting beach chairs, umbrellas or other equipment. A total of 18 vendors currently participate in the program.

To participate in the managed vendor program, individual vendors must be permitted through Walton County; they must sign the South Walton Beach Service Association's



Walton County TDC to Add Parking, Beachfront Through Recent Property Purchases

As the summer season winds down, the Walton County Tourist Development Council has been busy researching and strategically purchasing properties to add not only additional beachfront, but ease parking congestion in South Walton.

Property Purchase:

Earlier in the year, the TDC purchased a 2.3-acre property along CR393 near Gulf Place that will offer additional parking for shopping, access to bike paths and parking for the Ed Walline Regional Beach Access. The property, which cost \$3.7 million, is expected to accommodate between 120-150 vehicles.

Likewise, the 2018 addition of a 7.35-acre property along CR283 in Grayton Beach, meant that instead of a planned hotel, the county was able to add 274 parking spaces, which are available to visitors and also being used to shuttle local workers to nearby jobs where parking is more limited.

With the recent purchase of two properties near Eastern Lake, the TDC has plans to help reduce congestion and add parking for the nearby neighborhood beach access. The properties, located at 392 and 406 Eastern Lake Road, were purchased for \$775,000 and \$1.11 million respectively and total almost a half-acre in size.

Beach Access Additions & Upgrades

As the TDC continues to expand beachfront for both locals and visitors to enjoy, work continues on the three new regional beach accesses in South Walton. The additional access points will bring the total number of regional beach accesses from eight to 11.

Construction on the new Dune Allen Regional Beach Access, located across from Stinky's Fish Camp on Scenic Highway 30A, is underway and on schedule, with construction expected to be completed by early fall.

The new Miramar Beach Regional Beach Access, which is located across from the Amalfi Coast resort on Scenic Gulf Drive, is still in the planning phase. Construction is expected to begin in the late summer or early fall.

The Seagrove Beach Regional Beach Access, located on the beach near Café Thirty-A, is currently in the planning phase, with construction tracking to begin in early spring of 2020.

These three new access points, like all of the regional beach accesses in South Walton, will feature parking, restroom facilities and lifeguard stations.

In addition to the work being done on the three new regional beach accesses in South Walton, crews are also planning renovations at nine regional and neighborhood accesses. Once



Located across the street from Stinky's Fish Camp on Scenic Highway 30A, the Dune Allen Regional Beach Access is expected to be completed by early fall.



A total of 222-feet of seawall is being replaced as part of the Kellogg Park renovation project. Work on the park, which is located on the southern portion of the Choctawhatchee Bay near the Clyde B. Wells Bridge, is about 90 percent completed.

construction begins, work will include improving or replacing decking and railings, adding bike racks, or if needed, a complete rebuild of the access.

The five neighborhood accesses set to see improvements are: Inlet Beach (438 South Orange Street), Gulfview Heights (186 Gulfview Heights St.), Ed Walline (4447 W. Co. Hwy. 30A) and Fort Panic (5753 W. Co. Hwy. 30A). The five neighborhood accesses include: CR 395 (2790 E. Co. Hwy. 30A), Nightcap Street (south end of roadway), Hickory (2624 E. Co. Hwy. 30A), Live Oak (2680 E. Co. Hwy. 30A) and Dogwood (2560 E. Co. Hwy. 30A) – all of which are located in Seagrove Beach.

Work is expected to begin after turtle nesting season (October 31) and be completed by March 1, 2020. No more than two neighborhood/beach access points will be under construction at one time.

Bay Access Renovations:

Renovations are also underway at the Kellogg Bayside Park which is located on the southern shore of Choctawhatchee Bay, just west of the Clyde B. Wells Bridge. A total of 222-feet of seawall is being replaced as part of the project. Overall, work is 90 percent complete and crews are in the process of installing a new canoe and kayak launch. The park should be ready to welcome visitors by the end of September.

continued from page 22

participation agreement; drop off/pick up equipment as needed or store their equipment in the association's storage boxes on the beach.

Vendors are not allowed to set up or remove equipment on their own, and they must pay a fee based on how many beach sets are rented out.

Currently, the program is in effect at only three South Walton beaches – Ed Walline Regional Beach Access, Inlet Beach Regional Beach Access and the Grayton Dunes public beach access – and will run through November 30.

When visiting a beach where the vendor program offered, you'll notice a beach attendant who is on hand to work directly with guests. They will assist with obtaining and setting up equipment. When the guest is done, the beach attendant will remove everything from the beach.

With the inaugural season wrapping up in the next couple of months, Kellenberger said they have already started some evaluations of the program as they look for ways to improve it in the future. As with any new program, there are always lessons to learn and processes to fine tune.

"I think we can do a better job of accommodating walk-up

business with a point of purchase-type system," he says. "We can also improve on staffing and doing a better job of communicating how the program works and where the program is in effect for beachgoers."

As for the next steps, Kellenberger says the Walton County Board of County Commissioners will review the program at a future meeting and determine whether or not it should be expanded to other regional and neighborhood beach accesses in South Walton. To learn more about the managed vendor program, contact Phillip Poundstone at info@swbsa.org or call (850) 832-8715.



Walton County's managed vendor program has made an "immediate" impact along the beach, helping reduce the number of "ghost chairs," while also streamlining the guest experience.



ECTC Offers Fall Youth Classes and Programs

Calling all ‘drama queens’ (and kings) from tots to teens to take the stage and take part in Emerald Coast Theatre Company’s (ECTC) Fall 2019 Theater Educational Programs. “We realize most of the schools in our community cannot offer the theater arts and so we are thrilled to be able to supplement with our professional education programs,” said ECTC co-founder and producing artistic director Nathanael Fisher.

ECTC has extended its educational programming with classes offered for a longer duration. The ECTC Little Rascals



program is approximately nine weeks long, while ECTC Kids and Teens programs span 13 weeks, providing young thespians more time to engage and learn.



All programs are offered at either Emerald Coast Theatre Company’s (ECTC) performance space located at 560 Grand Boulevard in Grand Boulevard Town Center in Miramar Beach or at the Florida

Chautauqua Theatre (FCT) located at 848 Baldwin Ave. in DeFuniak Springs now a new partner.

ECTC is a non-profit professional theater company founded by Anna and

Nathanael Fisher, MFA, in 2012 with a mission to enrich and entertain the Emerald Coast community through professional and educational theater. There’s a \$25 non-refundable registration fee. Tuition may be split into payments. Registration fees vary per class. Payment plans, sibling, and military discounts are available.

For more information, additional classes offered and to register for one or more of ECTC’s Fall Theatre Education Programs, visit www.emerald-coasttheatre.org. For questions for more information on ECTC, call (850) 684-0323.

Ready to Eat, Drink and be Mary?

Now dubbed as the largest tailgating party on the Emerald Coast and a local favorite, The Market Shops 5th Annual Bloody Mary Festival will be held Nov. 2, 2019 from 11 a.m. – 2 p.m. Enjoy unlimited tastes of creative and innovative Bloody Mary’s made with Cathead Vodka, served by some of the finest local restaurants.

Guests will enjoy FREE food by The Market Shop’s merchants, FREE beer courtesy of Grayton Beer Company, CHAMPAGNE at the bubbly bar courtesy of Courtyard by Marriott Sandestin at Grand Boulevard and Residence Inn by Marriott Sandestin at Grand Boulevard, a hydration station provided by Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Beach Properties of Florida, live music by Dread Clampitt AND a DJ, an {Epic} photo booth by Epic Photo Co. courtesy of Legendary Marine, Cigars by Shore Thing Cigars, Boozy Popsicles by Swell Pops, yard games and lounge chairs by Rent Gear Here and Tail-Grayton Beach Outfitters and SO much more! SEC football games will be streamed, so plan



to tailgate, too!

This year, Another Broken Egg Cafe, Bijoux Destin, Camille’s at Crystal Beach, The Henderson, Half Shell Oyster House, and more will be competing for the title of the Best Bloody Mary!

Winners will receive custom awards created by Maxine Or-

ange Bern.

Tickets are available at www.themarketshops.com and come support Habitat for Humanity Walton County!

If you’re a restaurant interested in participating or a business interested in sponsorship opportunities, please contact Jessica@ProffittPR.com.



Kite Film Fest Returns!

The 4th annual Kite Film Fest will take place Saturday, Nov. 9th at Club LA in Destin. Submissions are currently open for the short film event.

The mother/daughter team behind 850 Music & Entertainment, with the support from Rock Destin and Club LA, launched Kite Film Fest in 2016. “Our goal is to create an event to highlight the local film community. For three years we’ve been a part of many filmmakers seeing their project on a theatre grade screen and sound system for the first time. It’s always an honor to be a part of that,” says Heather Hedrick.

The submission process is open until September 16th. Kite Film Fest prides itself on simple, inclusive rules that can be viewed on their official website: www.KiteFilmFest.com.

“We want Kite Film Fest to be a celebration,” says Nikki Hedrick. “We want to minimize roadblocks for participation for our local film community and the indie film community at large, it’s why we are continuing the tradition of the festival being free to submit and free to attend.”

For more information, visit KiteFilmFest.com. Further inquiries can be directed to KiteFilmFest@gmail.com.

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The region's only fully professional symphony orchestra led by Music and Artistic Director Demetrius Fuller, presents an "out of this world" lineup of concerts, and world-renowned guest artists during the 2019-2020 Season.

The season starts on a high note at Seagar's Prime Steaks & Seafood with Tony and Olivier Award-winning singer and actor, Gavin Creel. Creel received a Tony Award for his performance as Cornelius Hackl in "Hello, Dolly" starring Bette Midler and David Hyde Pierce. The evening includes valet parking, a sparkling wine reception, a four-course meal prepared by Seagar's Executive Chef Lee Guidry, wine, all gratuities, and the performance.

The annual gala event on Friday, November 15th at The Henderson, A Salamander Beach & Spa Resort, brings the Northwest Florida debut of Vanessa Williams, one of the most respected and multi-faceted performers in entertainment today. She has conquered the musical charts, Broadway, music videos, television and motion pictures. She has sold millions of albums worldwide and has achieved critical acclaim as an actress on

stage, in film, and on television. Join her and her band on the Sinfonia Gala stage for an unforgettable evening of music.

Sinfonia is "Mad for Mozart"

Sinfonia's full orchestra for an evening of the most cherished and festive holiday medleys, plus many of the songs that he has performed throughout his in-

eral Coast Convention Center with "Jurassic Park in Concert." Featuring visually stunning imagery and groundbreaking special effects, the action-packed

performing John Williams' iconic score live to picture. This epic film is sheer movie magic 65 million years in the making.

The season comes to an official close with Sinfonia Goes Pops!, presented al fresco on the amphitheater lawn at Alys Beach at 7:30 p.m. on Sunday, May 24th, 2020. This patriotic, family-friendly concert is free and open to the public and concludes with a festive firework display finale.

Tickets for all performances are now on sale. Sinfonia conveniently offers the ability to purchase and print tickets online. Use the free Sinfonia Gulf Coast mobile app for Apple and Android devices and store mobile tickets in Walletini or Apple Wallet, or call the box office at (850) 460-8800.



for its first Silver Sands Premium Outlets' Classical Connections of the season on Saturday, November 23rd, at Grace Lutheran Church at 7:30 p.m. Young Concert Artists Award winner, violinist SooBeen Lee, joins Sinfonia and will perform Mozart's "Concerto for Violin #4, K. 218, D Major." Tickets range from \$29.50 to \$45 per person.

Join Sinfonia for the most festive holiday concert along the Gulf Coast featuring singer/actor of the stage and screen, Matthew Morrison. Nominated for a Tony, Emmy, and Golden Globe Award, Morrison joins

credible career including his role as Mr. Schuester on Fox's musical comedy series, "Glee." Bring the entire family for this special event. Tickets range from \$29.50 to \$55 per person.

The second installment of the Silver Sands Premium Outlets' Classical Connections Series will be on Saturday, February 1st, 2020, at 7:30 p.m. at Village Baptist Church and features the 2017 Bronze Medalist of the Van Cliburn International Piano Competition.

On Saturday, May 16th, 2020, the main season will come to a cinematic finale at the Em-

adventure of "Jurassic Park" pits man against prehistoric predators in the ultimate battle for survival. Experience it, projected in HD with Sinfonia Gulf Coast



How to Raise a Healthy Eater



BY MELANIE STEWART

First of all, I appreciate the questions you've been sending in and will do my best to cover your areas of interest. This month's

question has to do with how to raise a healthy eater. I've heard many parents describe their children as picky eaters who will only tolerate a very limited menu of foods. While I understand there are some kids who suffer from texture issues, I would challenge that children eat what they are allowed to eat. When we offer children options, they choose options!

Consider the different cultures and the kids who live within those environments. Kids in Japan typically eat vegetables, fish and seaweed; kids in India eat vegetables and lentils; in Korea, kimchi (pickled vegetables); children in Africa eat local fruits and vegeta-

bles, cassava and millet; Middle Eastern children are raised eating local fruits and vegetables, hummus and barley. By contrast, many American kids are sustained on sugar laden cereals, pb&j, chicken nuggets, mac n' cheese, pizza and hot dogs.

Now consider this: A study revealed that beggars in India showed less nutritional deficiency than our American teens because despite the fact that they may not get a lot of food, the food they eat is real while our children are consuming an abundance of garbage. Among our children and adolescents, 33% are overweight and a staggering 75% meet the definition of malnourished.

When it's time to introduce solid foods, make it easy! Babies don't demand variety so you don't need to plan elaborate menus. A perfect first food is avocado. This incredibly nutritious fruit contains 20 vitamins and minerals, heart healthy fat, powerful antioxidants and has a mild and soft flavor and texture that babies love. With the exception of cereal (rice or wheat), which I would not introduce

until 12 months or later, there is no evidence to support a specific order for introducing new foods. However, it is important to introduce only one new food every 2 - 7 days so that you can determine if your child has a reaction to it.

For my weaning menu, I began with avocado followed by other soft fruits like bananas or cooked apples. Blending sweet fruits with avocado can help maintain better blood sugar balance and discourage developing a sweet tooth. Next I introduced soft-cooked vegetables like steamed broccoli and carrots, followed by healthy starches like baked yams or potatoes and finally easy proteins (eggs, fish, yogurt, or cottage cheese). As they got teeth, I introduced thinly sliced meat or meatballs made from ground beef, chicken, or turkey.

As the baby transitions to toddler, again keep it simple, nutritious and easy to digest. I suggest limiting meals to only 2 categories and pairing them as follows:

When consuming fruit, the companion food is either a specific healthy fat (avocado, coco-

nut milk/cream or nut butter) or fermented protein (kefir, yogurt or cottage cheese).

When consuming starch (pasta, potato, rice or bread), the companion food is a specific healthy fat (avocado, butter or olive oil) and vegetables.

When consuming animal protein the companion food is always vegetables.

When consuming legumes (beans, lentils, peas), the companion food is whole grains (quinoa, sprouted grain toast, rice), healthy fat (butter or olive oil) and vegetables. Fun fact: combining legumes with whole grains creates a complete protein.

Avoid, reject or, at the very least, delay the introduction of refined foods particularly foods high in sugar. Remember, no baby is born knowing all that's available to eat! They know only what their parents provide and, more importantly, they notice what you model. So make sure you're eating healthy too!

Melanie Stewart has written 2 books for children (Yum Tum, Good Food is Fun! and Yum Tum, We Get it Done!) and one for adults (Yum Tum For Everyone!) all available on Amazon or at: <https://www.yumtumnutrition.com/> All content is commentary or opinion and is protected under Free Speech laws. It's not meant to give individual medical advice or to make any health claims on the prevention or curing of diseases.

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For more information, please call **850-399-0228**.

Medicare Questions Answered, Open Enrollment Begins October 15th

By TINA FADER

It's hard to believe there are 10,000 Baby Boomers turning 65 every day right now. Know someone? Here are some basic facts about Medicare, and a few things that are new.

Who is Covered:

If turning 65, one may apply for Medicare Part A and Part B, 3 months before or after one's 65th birthday. One may qualify for Medicare Part A and Part B even if one chooses not to take Full Retirement Benefits (i.e. Social Security). Signing up late can affect costs, for example, penalties exist for signing up late for Part B or Part D (Prescription Drug coverage). Even if one doesn't take any prescription drugs now, one should still sign up for Part D because there are late penalty fees to sign up later. In many cases, there are no premiums for Part D coverage.

What is Covered:

Medicare Part A is hospital insurance that helps cover hospital, skilled nursing, home health

and hospice care. Medicare Part B is medical insurance that helps cover doctor visits, outpatient care and preventative services. It also helps to pay for services Part A does not cover, like occupational and physical therapy.

Part A and Part B covers much of the medical care, but not all, and one typically pays a deductible and coinsurance when it's used. That is why many people buy coverage with benefits beyond those included in Medicare.

Medicare Part C is a Medicare Advantage Plan that covers everything that Parts A and B cover and often includes services at no additional cost and may include Prescription Drug coverage. You must have both Medicare Part A and B to join a Medicare Advantage Plan. Medicare Advantage Plans usually include extra benefits and services like fitness programs and gym memberships, mail delivery pharmacy access, health education programs, and a 24-hour nurse advice line, and may lower out-of-pocket costs. Also, one may be able to custom-

ize the plan to meet needs with optional supplemental benefits such as dental and vision coverage, for an added cost.

Medicare Advantage Plan Types:
Health Maintenance Organization (HMO). A primary care physician arranges healthcare in the plan's network.

Preferred Provider Organization (PPO). One can choose any provider, although may pay more for out-of-network providers.

Private Fee-For-Service (PFFS). More freedom to choose providers may be available, however, a network arrangement may still apply. Medicare Supplement plans can be purchased to go with original Medicare to help with some costs Part A and B don't pay, like coinsurance and deductibles.

Special Needs Plans (SNPs). Medicare Special Needs Plans are available only to people with specific diseases or circumstances. These plans include tailored benefits, providers and drug Lists to meet the needs of members.

How the Plan Choices affect Costs:

Whether one chooses original Medicare or Medicare Advantage, one must pay Part A and B premiums. Medicare Advantage, Medicare Part D prescription drug coverage, and Medicare Supplemental Insurance may have additional premiums. The cost depends on the coverage chosen. The cost for a Medicare Advantage plan depends on whether the plan charges a monthly premium and pays any of the monthly Part B premium. Original Medicare and Medicare Advantage plans both cover routine services. Medicare Advantage Plans are required to cover everything that original Medicare covers, including coverage for services that Medicare considers medically necessary.

If one chooses a Medicare Advantage plan, one still has Medicare coverage. One simply chooses to receive Medicare benefits through a private insurance company. One may pay an additional premium for the extra ser-

vices and benefits of a Medicare Advantage plan.

Annual Enrollment Period Begins October 1st

This is a special election period when Medicare beneficiaries can change plans for the following calendar year, between October 15th and December 7th, to become effective January 1, 2020. There are exceptions that may allow one to enroll outside of this period. Call with any questions, as the best time to make a change to the existing plan is coming soon, October 1st, 2019.

Tina Fader is a Licensed Health and Life Insurance Professional offering Medicare Advantage Plans, Medicare Supplemental Plans, Vision and Dental Plans for all ages, and Life Insurance. Tina Fader has been a local resident for 20 years serving the community and looks forward to helping anyone needing personal service or has questions needing answers. You can reach Tina for a confidential assessment at 850-368-8007 or e-mail at tinafader@yahoo.com.

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Wellness

Sacred Heart Hospital Creating Area's First Level II Neonatal Intensive Care Unit

Sacred Heart Hospital on the Emerald Coast, part of Ascension, one of the nation's leading nonprofit and Catholic health systems, is creating the county's first Level II neonatal intensive care unit. The 10-bed NICU is scheduled to open in January 2020.



Level II NICUs are for infants born prematurely at 32 weeks or later who weigh more than 3.3 pounds. They often care for babies who have some health prob-

lems but are expected to improve quickly and are not expected to need urgent specialty care. The comprehensive group of caregivers will include board-certified neonatologists (pediatricians with specialized training in the care of critically-ill infants), neonatal nurses, immunologists and nutritionists along with a team of specialized nurses, support staff and volunteers.

"Adding this next level of care for babies at the Family Birth Place means parents can rest assured that when they have their babies at Sacred Heart Hospital on the Emerald Coast, they'll have immediate access to high-quality, compassionate care," said Roger Hall, president of Sacred Heart Hospital on the Emerald Coast. "The NICU is the hospital's seventh major expansion in our efforts to increase access to



care in our community. We are forever grateful for the continued support."

The hospital is the only one in the area with a five-star rating from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, the highest possible rating. It is also the only one to hold the "baby-friendly" designation from the World Health Organization and UNICEF, recognizing its commitment to the highest level of breastfeeding support and education.

Sacred Heart Hospital on the Emerald Coast's pediatric ser-

vices are backed by The Studer Family Children's Hospital at Ascension Sacred Heart in Pensacola, Northwest Florida's only children's hospital. It provides a Level III NICU for the most critically ill and premature newborns. Should a baby need surgery or have needs beyond what can be managed at the Emerald Coast's Level II NICU, a mobile neonatal critical care transport ambulance stationed in Miramar Beach will provide rapid transfer to the children's hospital.

The NICU is the last phase of a \$30 million hospital expansion which added 13 new rooms to the emergency room, 12 additional inpatient rooms and 12 new postpartum suites to the Family Birth Place. Construction on the NICU is complete and a hiring process is under way. The hospital will host a grand opening celebration later in the year.

To learn more please visit www.healthcare.ascension.org

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Long Days at School Can Lead to Long Nights at Home



BY CHRISTINE RUSHFORD,
COASTAL COUNSELING

The back to school rush has begun. Millions of children have returned to their daily routine of early wakeups, multiple hours of academic rigor and then a plethora of after school activities. Often over the summer, the schedule becomes more relaxed. Bedtimes become more flexible, organized activities get put on hold and there is little demand to sit and focus. This return to routine and structure in the Fall can be a difficult transition for many kids, leading to meltdowns at home.

As parents, we always hope that our children do their best and behave appropriately when out of our sights. It is not unusual for a child to get rave reviews about his behavior from teachers at school, yet the parent spends the after-school hours battling with defi-

ance and cranky behavior. Some parents wonder if the teacher could possibly be talking about their child or be confused about someone else! This is especially common in the first few weeks of returning to the school year schedule.

Although this home behavior can be frustrating, if we put ourselves in our children's shoes, we can at least empathize with why it is happening. A traditional public school day in America lasts between six and a half to seven hours. Many children are getting on buses as early as 6 a.m., requiring wake ups before the sun even rises. Children are then expected to sit at their desks, eyes on teachers and ears open for classroom activities. They must also navigate the social complexities while at school. As we can all remember, that seems to get more difficult with every grade of school completed. With the amount of focus and self-control expected from a child after the long, lazy days of summer, it's no wonder why Suzy is on the floor in a tantrum when you ask her how her day went! What's a parent to do when they are only getting the worst from their child during the back to school transition?

The first step is to remember this is normal and you are not alone (misery does love company



right?! The next step is to implement some preventative measures to minimize emotional upheaval for your kids. This starts with regular bedtime routines. Sleep is essential for everyone, but especially our people with still developing brains. Implement a calming, structured routine that is followed every night for little ones. For the older kids who have access to technology, be sure to establish a cut-off time for electronics to ensure they are not up all night with the glow of a screen on their faces. Establish preventative measures for wake-up time too. If you know Johnny is terrible to get out of bed and you often end up sending him on the bus after a frantic morning of yelling and hunting down backpacks, plan ahead. Have Johnny set out all school items by the door the night before. Wake Johnny (or set his alarm) an extra 15 minutes early if you know he is going to

struggle with waking up.

When it comes to after school exhaustion, respond with empathy rather than frustration. This can be difficult as we welcome kids home only to receive an attitude. But take a deep breath and remember all that was expected of your child that day. Rather than grill your child on their day, provide a favorite healthy snack and sit back to determine what he would like to share in that moment. Just be a good listener. For younger children a snack and a physical outlet is often needed. When emotionally dysregulated, grounding our bodies through movement can be helpful. Encourage your child to

run around outside with a neighbor or the family dog before sitting down to tackle homework. Allow for unstructured time where your child can decompress. When it comes to extra-curricular activities, start back slowly if possible. Speak up to coaches when planning the Fall schedule and explain that Suzy will be adjusting to school the first week and will be at soccer practice the second week of school rather than the first. Hold off on enrolling Johnny in trumpet lessons until after he has gotten the school routine down a bit. Some coaches or instructors might balk, but your child's mental and emotional health comes before extra-curriculars.

Think of your child's personality to determine what he or she might need after school to decompress. For some, it will be running around to release energy and socialize and for other children they will need quiet and solitude to return to their regulated state of mind after school. More than likely, your child's after school grumpiness will ease after a few weeks of returning to the Fall schedule.

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Wellness

Meet our Local Pro: Dennis Lichorwic DMD from The Center for Cosmetic and Family Dentistry

By RITA L. SHERWOOD

What started off as a dental practice on the Destin harbor back in 1999, now has grown into one of the most innovative and professional dental practices in our local area, specifically, “Where the South Comes for Smiles.”

When asked what his mission statement would be, Dr. Dennis Lichorwic says, “We are a team of dedicated professionals passionate about providing the highest quality dental care with exceptional service in a comfortable, relaxing environment. Our goal is to exceed our patient expectations at every level. We will continually raise the standard of our dental services to become and maintain ourselves as leaders in our community and country.” He goes on to further explain that he was trained by the likes of Disney and the Ritz Carlton, and having had that background, he enjoys giving

people life-changing service that they don’t always expect. He says, “It’s not about the crown or the filling, instead it’s about exceeding their expectations.”

And how does that work exactly? “We provide a pleasant experience for our dental clients, and use every high tech gadget and gizmo out there,” Dr. Lichorwic explains. With everything from a computer that actually numbs the patient with no syringes, to nitrous gas (laughing gas) in every room, and even sedation pills available for relaxation dentistry, to high tech prep-less veneers, (which means some patients may not have to have their teeth ground down) it sounds like tech is alive and well



Dennis Lichorwic DMD

in The Center for Cosmetic and Family Dentistry.

And what does the future hold? With so many people suffering from sleep deprivation and sleep apnea, Dr. Lichorwic



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says they’ve been able to help their patients with about 15 different appliances including special retainers that hold their airways open, and that in some cases, those can replace the awkward and sometimes scary CPAP masks. Also in the near future, is the expansion of their Destin office in order to take in more patients quickly and more efficiently.

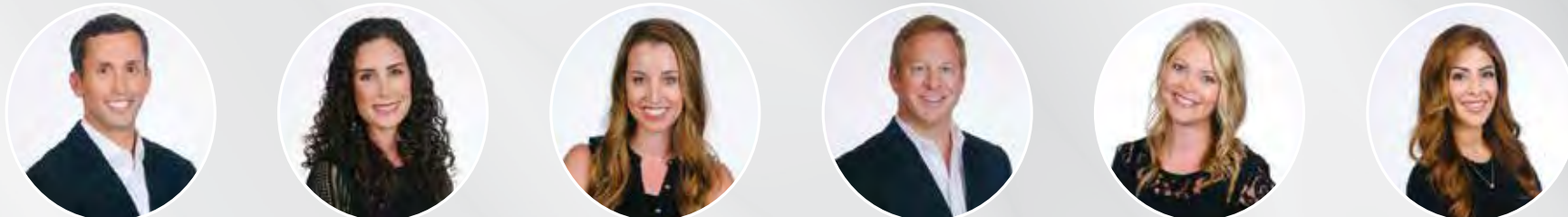
Some of the many local charitable organizations The Center for Cosmetic and Family Dentistry support are Sinfonia Gulf Coast, the Emerald Coast

Children’s Advocacy Center, the Destin Charity Wine Auction, the Destin Women’s Club, the PCB Toys for Kids Foundation, the White Wilson Community Foundation, the PCB Chamber Golf Classic, and the Children’s Volunteer Health Network.

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Teacher



BY SEAN DIETRICH

I am watching Jeopardy! with an elderly woman who doesn't know why I'm here because she has Alzheimer's.

We are in a nursing home. She sits in a wheelchair and blurts out answers along with the TV contestants.

To be honest, Jeopardy! moves too fast for me. By the time I've figured out one question, the show is over, and the eighteen-year-old from Sheboygan, who designs nanotubular probes for NASA, has won twelve thousand dollars. Game over.

This elderly woman was a tenth-grade English teacher. She has spent a lifetime sharpening her brain. She taught English, literature, and poetry. She showed average children how to become above average.

I am here to interview her, but she is too engrossed.

The nurse introduces us.

The elderly woman says, "Who're you, and where's my blueberry yogurt?"

"gurt?"

"This man is a writer," the nurse explains. "Remember, I told you?"

"I don't care if he's Topo Gigio," she says. "Where's my yogurt?"

The nurse winks at me.

So far so good.

I clear my throat and ask a question to get the conversational banter going. The woman shushes me, then shouts: "I'll take folk music for five hundred!"

"What is 'the Ballad of Frankie and Johnnie!'"

The nurse winks at me again and urges me to keep questioning. So I do.

"Do you play piano anymore?" I ask. "Your nurse tells me you play the—"

"What is the Treaty of Tordesillas!"

It's impressive how this elderly woman can know so much trivia, but doesn't always remember her own name. Alzheimer's is a cruel enemy.

I am about to give up on the interview when one of the nearby nurses whispers a story to me. She tells me that long ago, this woman was her high-school teacher. The woman taught her to appreciate books like *Catcher in the Rye*, *The Old Man and the Sea*, and *Animal Farm*.

"I decided I wanted to BE a nurse



because of her," the nurse explains. "I was in a bad situation, living with my boyfriend's family, my mom had just died. I was lost..."

"Who is Saint Hubert!" yells the elderly woman. She looks at me with crazed eyes. "Saint Hubert! Ha!"

The only Hubert I ever knew was my former supervisor who often belittled employees in public. He also spoke with an unnaturally high voice. Because of this, some employees called him "Huberty Puberty."

One disgruntled coworker even wrote this nickname on Hubert's new Mustang convertible with shaving cream. Not me. I didn't do it. I would never do that. But I did purchase the shaving cream.

The elderly woman's son drops in. When she sees him, she says:

"Yogurt, get my yogurt. They're

trying to kill me. Where are my car keys? I need yogurt. I like blueberry. Who are you?"

"It's okay, Mama," he says. "I'm here, Mama."

She returns to her beloved Alex Trebek.

Her son whispers, "When I was a kid, Mama was all about civil rights, she wanted to take me and my sister to a Doctor King rally, but my dad was like, 'No, it's too dangerous...'"

"Who is Andy Williams!" the woman says.

"My mother was ostracized by her friends for things she believed. But she didn't care, she knew she was doing right in this world, and her students looked up to her."

Another interruption by a middle-aged woman who comes through the door. Her name is Carrie.

"I went to her church," Carrie says. "She was so cool. She had a huge influence on me."

"When I was twenty, I almost gave up college, I wasn't sure I could go through with the rest of my degree. She took me to lunch one day and told me that she believed in me, and she let me bear my soul for hours. I cried a lot, she was my hero. She changed my life, you know?"

"What is a Keebler elf!" the old woman hollers.

When Jeopardy! is over, the woman's son apologizes to me. He tells me his mother's disease brings many good days and bad days. Today wasn't exactly a "good day," he explains.

But I don't mind. Interviews don't always work out. You win some, you lose many.

I am about to leave when the elderly woman in the wheelchair faces me. She smiles, and I can see something sharp in her eyes. She's awake.

It's her. The real her. She is a beacon in an overcast world. She is a voice. She is someone who once told children that they were unique. And important. And equal. And loved. And that we can be whatever we want to be if we try. And even though she is foggy today, she will always be holy because of this. For she is a teacher.

The lady's eyes rest on me. "Now who're you again?" she says.

Her son answers, "This is the writer I told you about, Mama."

"Oh, the writer? Did you know I used to teach writing? I taught a lotta beautiful kids. Kids are so beautiful aren't they? So very, very beautiful."

Yes, ma'am.

And so are you.

Next time, I'll bring yogurt.

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Musing

The Value of a Good Question

By KIRK MCCARLEY

It was a two hour exam. As he thoughtfully sought the best words in response to the questions, a glance at the clock reminded him that it was now 2:45. Only 15 minutes remained until the bluebook must be submitted. The proctor overseeing

the process reminded students of the time. "You will recall that those failing to complete the exam in the allotted time period and not returning it to my desk promptly by 3:00 will automatically receive a zero," he said.

As the clock reached the 2:55 mark, only a handful of

students remained in the lecture hall. Fighting fluster, he composed himself for his final thought, and walked his exam up front just as the monitor called time with a hint of condescension.

Preparing to place his bluebook on the desk, the futility



conducting interviews, however, the number of applicants who presented no questions about the job, work conditions, or organizational goals was astonishing.

Conversely, the most impressive applicants would go so far as to artfully turn the interview around and they would express an interest:

What have you liked best about working here?

If I were to be offered a job here and accepted, what are three things that you feel would lead to my success as an employee?

What do you and this organization value?

What are some ways that this company invests in employee development?

If they were that mindful to connect, how effective might they be with a customer? More often than not, they got the job.

My dad, Tex, started college when he was 69. Forever seeking knowledge he rarely turned down an opportunity to talk to someone, even a total stranger, who might share a bit of history, information, or an anecdote. I know where to blame my curiosity. What about you?

A graduate of the University of North Texas, Kirk McCarley is a Certified Professional Coach as well as a Professional in Human Resources (PHR) and SHRM-CP Certified. He also is a Production Assistant for both college football and basketball for ESPN and leads group cycling classes as a Certified Spinning instructor. Contact kirk@theseedsowercoach.com, theseedsowercoach.com, or call 314-677-8779.

of his effort was mocked with a sassy, "You understand that your grade is a zero," advised the monitor.

Momentarily defeated and frustrated, the young man gained enough composure to ask the question, "Sir, do you not know who I am?"

The proctor snapped back, "I don't know and I don't care." At that the student stared back, simultaneously grabbed the entire stack of bluebooks off the desk, thrust them towards the ceiling, and strode out of the lecture hall muttering, "That's what I thought."

Many answers are easily found. Years ago, there was a World Book Encyclopedia or a parent to ask. Today, it's most often a Google search. It's not surprising that the answers to the ultimate smart person game show, Jeopardy, come in the form of a question.

Good sales people are gifted with the best questions. They are consistently open-ended (eliciting more than a yes/no response), thought provoking, and customer centric. They may track along these lines:

May I ask you some questions about your business?

You specialize in X. Why did you choose that niche?

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How does your company evaluate new products and services before buying?

Tell me about your average day. How would this product solution impact your daily work?

What's holding your team back from reaching your goals?

Who else do you think I should speak with?

Another selling proposition is the job interview. Certainly the value of preparation and knowing the best response should not be diminished. In many years of



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Lotus Life: The Power of Forgiveness

BY LAUREN CATANESE

Unforgiveness has a way of creeping up on us. One moment your energy is happy, joyful and at peace. Then someone comes around or a certain situation happens and the next thing you notice your mood has completely shifted. Your body might get tense, your smile disappears, and the defenses start to come up. You have been triggered; something in the outside world has illuminated a part of you that needs healing. Healing that can only come from within. We can be triggered several times throughout the day. The first step is being conscious that your mood has even shifted. And the best part is that you have the power to change it. Without having to understand on a deeper level we can begin to clear the energy with forgiveness. Forgiveness is not accepting or saying anyone's actions against you are ok. Forgiveness has nothing to do with anyone else around. It's only about yourself. The healing takes place within.

A very powerful and healing tool that has come into my life over the years is called. Ho'oponopono. It is a Hawaiian tool for forgiveness. And its simple enough to do as many times as you feel you need to say it. It is four statements. "I love you, I am sorry, please forgive me, thank you." All you need to do is recite the words either to yourself or out loud. Saying them



to God, the Divine, or your higher power; whichever words you prefer to use. Repeating the phrases while thinking about the situation or whomever has lightened the space that needs to heal. Saying it over and over until you feel the energy shift.

This tool is super powerful and can bring healing in many ways. It might not solve all your problems but it will clear away some of the heaviness and bring in clarity, so you make choices that are aligned with your highest-self. You will still have to do some work, but it's part of the process and bridges the gap toward miracles. Carrying around deeper rooted feel-

ings and emotions, some you don't even realize are there until they're "triggered," keeps everyone around you on edge. Letting some of that go in a loving, gentle way, brings more peace and light into your life. A lightness you can feel. Give yourself some well-deserving peace and lighten your load. Allow the power of forgiveness to lead the way. Happy healing

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Musing

A Pastor's Ponderings



By Rev. Pete Hyde

His name was John Chapman. He was born just before the Revolutionary War, and

died in the mid 1800's at the age of 70. He was an American pioneer that one might know as Johnny Appleseed. He became an American legend while he was still alive as a nurseryman and missionary. He was a kind, generous man who is best known for living a subsistence lifestyle introducing apple trees to large parts of Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and West Virginia.

The image most have of Johnny Appleseed is that as he journeyed through what was then the western reaches of the New World, he spread apple seeds randomly from a seed bag over his shoulder; that's the

image most have of him from old animated films and stories.

The facts tell a little different story. He planted nurseries rather than orchards, built fences around them to protect them from livestock, left the nurseries in the care of a neighbor who sold the trees on shares, and returned every year or two to tend the nursery. Since apples grown from seeds are usually sour, they were used to make hard cider and a drink called apple jack.

When Johnny Appleseed died, he left an estate of over 1200 acres of valuable nurseries to his sister. He also owned four plots in Allen County, Indiana, including a nursery in Milan

township, with 15,000 trees.

Here was a man who sowed seed. He didn't just sow the seeds of apple trees, but sowed the seeds of kindness, generosity, leadership, and Christian values as he spread the good news of the Gospel. Though he died owning some property, he lived a basic, subsistence lifestyle wandering as a pioneer through what then was the rugged wilderness of the American Midwest. Here was a man who was a legend in his own lifetime and in many stories was elevated and exaggerated to almost "tall tale" fame. But yet, he is known to many for only one thing – planting seeds.

There may not be anyone

who reads this story today who is or who will be considered legends in their own life times, except maybe in one's own mind. But perhaps one will have the privilege of being known as someone who planted the seeds of Christian faith, kindness and generosity. Some will plant, water, or feed a seed in someone else's life today, even if they have no idea they have done it. May the seed one plants, waters or feeds today be a God seed, a kind seed, a generous seed, a seed that will grow in God's kingdom.

Rev. J. Pete Hyde, Senior Pastor
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Bucket List

BY RICK MOORE

Supposedly, in the days of the Wild Wild West, if a prisoner on death row was well behaved, the sheriff would ask if he had any last request. Such requests would range from asking for a Holy Bible to a T-bone steak with a bottle of wine. The sheriff would review the list and usually agree to bring the prisoner the items in a bucket, thus the process became known as the “bucket list.” But, the story doesn’t end there. After having a last meal, the prisoner would be escorted to the gallows, have a rope placed around his neck and told to stand on his bucket. Once the bucket was kicked, the prisoner’s life was over. That’s where the term, “kick the bucket” comes from. The same bucket which brought something wonderful was also a means to a quick and final ending.

While the origin of the phrase may be a bit morbid, the modern use of the term “bucket list” is a wish list containing a number of experiences or achievements that a person hopes to have or accomplish during his lifetime. According to a Stanford Letter Project, from 3,000 people interviewed, they found six common themes. Ranking from first to sixth were: travel, accomplish a personal goal, achieve specific life



milestones, spend quality time with friends and family, achieve financial stability, or do a daring activity.

Visiting a favorite online store, one can keep a wish-list of items in the shopping cart. One may not be able to afford it now, but hopes for it. For several years prior to marriage, some young women keep a large wooden chest in their bedroom. They call it a “hope chest.” It can be filled with home goods ranging from cookware to a set of tea cups. The idea is to wait until marriage before using the items. While in high school, many have a list of things to do before graduating. Such lists may include lettering in a certain sport, making the honor role or being accepted by a major university. Most children write

letters to Santa detailing all they would like for Christmas. That is probably the first written wish list for most people. It is amazing how wishes change as everyone grows older.

Some people live their dreams vicariously through their children. Goals they will never be able to achieve due to age or physical limitations may be lived out through others. This is seen as bad in some cases (sorry to pick on stage moms), but it can be good also. A favorite non-profit organization is Give Kids The World Village outside of Orlando. This group works closely with the Make-A-Wish Foundation providing a village which rivals any theme park. It is designed especially for children with life threatening illnesses and

their families. Organizations like these remind everyone that they have the ability to help others fulfill their wish-lists.

As so many do, one dreamt of going out West to view some of the major National Parks, but had no idea how to make that happen. An opportunity came when a friend asked to help film

various landscapes in Utah. One enjoyed seeing the five national parks there, yet, it was a state park remembered the most, an obscure place named Goblin Valley. As the sun was setting, one took photographs of the many rock formations known as hoodoos. It looked like a scene from a Road Runner cartoon. Sometimes the best part of a journey isn’t even planned.

To prepare the “bucket list,” dig deep inside, discuss it with family members and be true to one’s self. This has nothing to do with keeping up with the Joneses or impressing others on social media. Remember this proverb: “Hope deferred makes the heart sick, but a longing fulfilled is a tree of life.”

Rick Moore is Pastor of Communications with Destiny Worship Center in Miramar Beach.

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Dining

The Tommy Bahama Story

By PHIL HEPPDING-
30A FOOD AND WINE

For those of us that live and vacation here in South Walton, operating on beach time is a way of life. If an island destination is what you crave, Tommy Bahama Restaurant at Grand Boulevard can meet your need for tropical

breezes without ever leaving the shores of South Walton.

As one of the original restaurants at the iconic Grand Boulevard, Tommy Bahama has grown a loyal local following while also catering to tourists and vacationers alike that visit the area. If you have visited Tommy Bahama recently, you may have noticed they

just recently completed a refresh of their interior space. We caught up with the new General Manager, Pratt Shirley to get the run down on what's new, both with the building and the menu. "We haven't changed the building itself or the bones as you would say, but we updated the colors and made things much lighter," said Shirley.



30AFOODANDWINE.COM



"We're very happy that we were able to keep the characteristics of the restaurant so that when our guests return, they see the same space they have come to love, but with a brighter, more open feeling to it," Shirley continued.

In addition to cosmetic updates, the menu has also seen some changes, upgrades and additions that will only serve to raise the level of cuisine in South Walton.

Frequent visitors might be well acquainted with the coconut shrimp that has become a fan favorite, but a few other dishes are quickly rising to the top of diners with list.

"The flatbread pizza is by far the most popular appetizer other than the shrimp," said Shirley. The filet mignon flatbread features bacon, honey roasted onions, lemon arugula, gruyere and roasted mushrooms.

The restaurant also highlights daily chef features each day, depending on what local fisherman and purveyors are offering. Dinner guests might find the evening special to be a snapper, grouper, amberjack or sea bass based on seasonal availability with a hint to the island theme.

For those that are used to happy hour, more live music options make Tommy a fantastic option for starting your night off in

South Walton. Added Shirley "We have what we call island time from 4-6. We now have live music 6 nights a week with a different artists each night." Executive Chef Andre Dobbs takes pride in wowing the guests that visit the restaurant. "We want our guests to feel at home and I try and spend a lot of time visiting the dining room to make sure everyone is having a great experience," said Dobbs.

"From our crab cakes to our macadamia nut shortbread key lime pie, we take the island theme pretty seriously here."

Guests will notice new presentations on some old favorites, But not to fear, if you are craving island time, Tommy Bahama looks forward to hosting you soon. Tommy Bahama Restaurant is located at Grand Boulevard at Sandestin at 525 Grand Blvd,

Suite P-101, Miramar Beach, FL 32550. Open Daily at 11AM with Island Time happy hour from 4-6PM Daily. Live music Monday-Saturday from 5-9PM. For more information visit <https://www.tommybahama.com/restaurants/sandestin> or call 850-654-1743.

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30A Eats Recipe of the Month: Crabmeat Maison

A favorite New Orleans recipe adapted from Galatoire's cookbook, a favorite New Orleans restaurant. It's called Crabmeat Maison. Galatoire's is a James Beard Award winning restaurant nestled in the heart of the French Quarter, and it's cuisine is anchored in French Creole traditions, which reflect the bounty of the region's seafood, poultry, game and spices. Receiving a large gift box of avocados with four varieties from SoCal Avocados served as inspiration to make Avocados Stuffed with Crabmeat Maison (Crab Stuffed Avocado).

SoCal Avocados are grown on a small farm in California, ripen after they are picked from the tree, and each is handpicked to order. They are carefully packed,

and shipping is free. Their prices are very affordable, and the new favorite, the Fuerte, comes highly recommended. Though familiar with Hass native Florida avocados, there are now new favorites. The varieties sent were:

Bacon: Large body, smooth green skin, fruity and mild in flavor.

Fuerte: A smaller avocado in size, smooth, creamy and rich flavor. This was used in the Crabmeat Maison Recipe.

Pinkerton: Large body with rougher skin, and slightly fruity. This was used in the Great Guacamole.

Hass: Thick rough and dark skin, most commonly seen in markets, creamy and smooth.

Recipe: Avocado Stuffed with



Crabmeat Maison:

Ingredients:

For the Maison dressing:

- 1/2 cup white wine vinegar
- 2 tablespoons creole mustard (can substitute Dijon, or a course, seeded country-style mustard)
- 1-1/2 cups high quality olive oil
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/8 teaspoon freshly ground

white pepper

Avocado Stuffed:

- 1/2 cup Dukes or Hellman's mayonnaise
- 3 tablespoons Maison dressing (above)
- 3 green onions, finely chopped
- 1 teaspoon small capers, rinsed and drained
- 1/2 teaspoon chopped flat-leaf parsley
- 1 pound lump crabmeat
- 3 soft ripe avocados
- 1 large head of iceberg lettuce cut into ribbons (not shown)
- 1 large heirloom tomato cut into wedges, creole if available (not shown)
- Lemons

Preparation:

To make the maison dressing, combine vinegar and mustard in a food processor, slowly adding olive oil in a thin stream to form an emulsion. Season with salt and pepper.

Remove to a mixing bowl, and mix together mayonnaise and maison dressing. Gently fold in the green onions, capers, parsley, salt and pepper.

Chill for two to four hours.

Just before serving, gently fold in the lump crabmeat.

Slice the avocados in half, removing outer shell and seed. Divide the lettuce ribbons among 6 serving plates spooning the crab on top of the avocado. Garnish with a slice of tomato and wedge of lemon on the side.

The Gathering Spot at the WaterColor Inn Unveils New All-Day Dining Menus

New Offerings Include Bowl-Themed Entrees and a Build-Your-Own Martini

The Gathering Spot, located within the WaterColor Inn, has unveiled new all-day menus.

The new bowl-themed menus provide guests with the chance to try a signature entrée bowl (such as the Cobb Bowl or the Caesar Bowl), or to experiment with flavors by building their own bowl – choosing a base, vegetable, protein and sauce. Breakfast bowls (such as the Salmon Bowl) are also available, as are delicious handhelds, which include a Wagyu Burger, Smoked Wings and House-Made Soft Pretzels served with beer cheese.

“Guests will find it hard to pick a new favorite, but I recommend they have some fun trying out different bowls. My choice? House-made fettuccini, Gulf grouper, locally roasted vegetables and some

pesto, for good measure,” says Matt Moore, Executive Chef and Food & Beverage Director. “Those looking to share smaller plates are sure to be tempted by the scent of our hot, fresh-made pretzels, while the cauliflower has quickly become a preferred (and innovative) appetizer.”

Keeping with the build-your-own theme, the restaurant's cocktail menu now includes a Build-Your-Own Martini option, in addition to the restaurant's wide selection of wines, beers and creative libations. Guests can select their choice of Spirit, Syrups (or Purees), Mixers, Bitters and Garnishes for a truly personalized sip.

“My advice to guests is to be adventurous,” says Kyle Davis, Assistant Director of Food &


Beverage. “It's best to rely on the knowledge of our staff as a guide, but don't be afraid to venture out. Plus, blue cheese stuffed olives taste great with tequila!”

A popular spot for a casual meal in a laidback, beach-house setting, The Gathering Spot is a comfortable place for families and

couples alike to spend time together, while enjoying a fresh (and fun) meal. The restaurant, which is open to the public seven days a week, is located on the main lobby level of the WaterColor Inn, across from the library. Entry into the restaurant does not include doors, and seating is wheelchair accessible.

Reservations are never required.

Hours are as follows: Breakfast (Daily): 8 - 11 a.m. Lunch & Dinner (Daily): 11 a.m. - 9 p.m. Happy Hour (Daily): 5 - 6:30 p.m. (cocktails served until 10 p.m.) Entertainment: Live music (seasonal) For more information, call (850) 534-5000.



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 Music

30A Songwriters Artist Spotlight: Introducing Amy Blizzard: Healer and Songstress

By JOSETTE-
30A SONGWRITER RADIO

Compassion, intelligence, talent, and beauty, this homegrown treasure has them all. Born and raised in Walton County, Amy Blizzard is what you would call a true local. Amy grew up in a musical family that fostered her love of music and encouraged her to use her voice, and what a voice she has!

One remembers the first time hearing Amy sing. It was at the Tuesday night Open Mic at 30A Songwriter Radio. She was to accompany a pianist on a song. She took the stage and the room quieted as the audience looked to see what this newcomer could do. She was going to sing a song with a home stage favorite, Shane D' Fury, and it takes a special kind of talent to hold your own on the stage with him. As the first notes emanated forth, all doubt was erased. From her fiery red mane to her



tapping toe, this beauty owned the room. As the song ended, the crowd roared.

Talking with Amy, she has a

rich history in the performance industry from coast to coast. In 2002, Amy was involved in a motorcycle accident right on



30A. During her 3 year, 9 surgery recovery, Amy discovered the true medical benefits of massage therapy. "Sure, I had massages before but never for the intention of helping to heal my body. I just wanted to relax. During visits with my physical therapist, she used techniques to help loosen scar tissue and increase circulation to specific parts of my leg that were requiring more attention. While it was uncomfortable at times, the results were amazing! She suggested I book regular massages to help further my results. Taking her advice, I saw an even greater improvement in my range of motion." shares Blizzard on her website.

In 2008, Blizzard became a certified and licensed massage therapist versed in sports massage. Amy began applying the same principles of massage to musicians in the Nashville area. Seeing many of the same issues as athletes, such as repetitive motion injuries not allowing musicians to play without pain, numbness and tingling.

Amy missed home, moved back to the Emerald Coast and opened a practice in her hometown of Freeport called Trinity Massage and Body Works, LLC. So whether one is an athlete or a musician with playing issues or just looking to relax, Trinity Massage can help.

One can hear Amy Blizzard singing around 30A as well as with her band Lucky Strike Retros. Everyone loves them!

For more information, check out Trinitymassageandbodyworks.com, 850- 865-0293, Luckystrickemusic.com

30A Songwriters Festival Announces Headliners for 11th Annual Festival

The 30A Songwriters Festival will celebrate its 11th year with performances on the main stage at presenting partner Grand Boulevard's Town Center. This year's headline performances include iconic artists Brian Wilson, John Prine, Indigo Girls, Tanya Tucker, Don McLean and Herman's Hermits starring Peter Noone.

The following prominent songwriters are confirmed to per-

form two shows each throughout the weekend: Dan Wilson (Semi-sonic), Peter Yarrow (Peter, Paul and Mary), Mindy Smith, Todd Snider, Elizabeth Cook, Birds of Chicago, Sierra Hull, James McMurtry, Carlene Carter, Shawn Mullins, Nikki Lane, Matthew Sweet, Mary Gauthier, Chastity Brown, Hayes Carll, Gretchen Peters, Will Hoge, Marc Broussard, Sarah Lee Guthrie, Darrell Scott, Chely Wright, Over the

Rhine, Jeffrey Steele, Pat McGee Band, Amy LaVere, Livingston Taylor, Paul Thorn, John Fullbright, Steve Poltz, The Secret Sisters, Robyn Hitchcock, Miles Zuniga & Tony Scalzo (Fastball), Ken Block & Drew Copeland (Sister Hazel), Aaron Lee Tasjan, Lindsay Lou, Radney Foster, Bob Schneider, Allison Moorer, David Ryan Harris (John Mayer Band), Dan Bern, Cory Chisel & Adriel Denae, Amy Ray (solo),



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Emily Saliers (solo), Robert Ellis, Jonny Fritz, The Honey Dewdrops, Grant-Lee Phillips, Griffin House, Peter Holsapple (The dB's), Chris Stamey (the dB's), Chris Stills, Amy Rigby, Abe Partridge, Liz Brasher and AJ Ghent.

Festival Weekend Passes are currently available at www.30asongwritersfestival.com. VIP tickets that include premium seating on the lawn at Grand Boulevard for the headline shows on Saturday and

Sunday afternoons along with access to the VIP tent serving complimentary food, beer, wine and cocktails are also available. For a full description of each ticket package, VIP transportation packages for groups of 2 up to 12, and details for the special night of music and free craft beers at festival sponsor and locally based Grayton Beer Company Taproom, visit www.30asongwritersfestival.com.

Studio 237 Music School; The Art of Focus

With the advent of computer technology, cell phones, internet, and a sundry of technology intelligent devices, our brains' ability to focus is on overload. People are concerned about the next generation of children losing their ability to patiently think through simple everyday situations and develop life skills. Anxiety is on the rise, causing all sorts of problems and boundaries to restrict us from finding our true identity and purpose in life.

Learning the art of focus happens while learning to play a musical instrument/voice. Part of teaching someone to play an instrument, is providing strategies for pushing away all distractions, relaxing, and finding the answers to the problem at hand. It's about preparing to complete a task by a certain time with a spirit of confident excellence. The result is our bodies releasing lots of dopamine which basically makes us feel "rewarded, motivated, and happy." How wonderful it is to know that a teacher will mentor you through this process to a successful finish. And yes, it takes patience and a little time.



Our precious time is limited to 24 hours in a day. If we effectively schedule, apportion, and use that time, then, it will give us a focused positive result. Here are some ways to get started:

Choose an amount of time. For most beginners, 30 minutes is a reasonable start.

Review the ideas and notes your teacher gives you. This will save you lots of time. Why practice something incorrectly for a week, because you didn't want to take the time

to read and follow the directions?

Give each task a specific amount of time. Maybe 5 minutes of warm up/review, and the remaining 25 minutes towards 2 or 3 items. Stay true to your goals. Write on your music: finger numbers, note names, circle problem areas, write short reminder words. When your time is up, move on to the next song. Tomorrow is another day to play, again.

Periodically, during your

day, quickly quiz yourself to see if you can play that small section of music as well as you did hours ago.

Reward yourself after each practice with a favorite activity such as: texting, games, food, phone call, the beach, pool, playground, or meeting up with a friend. I like M&M's, ha!

Learning to focus happens in small bite size pieces on a daily basis. Be positive and easy on yourself, knowing that you are making slow and sure progress. Like the sea turtle, one stroke at a time, making her way to the beach to ensure her next generation of turtles.

When you are learning to play instruments such as piano, violin, guitar, drums or voice, ask your student's teacher to write down the details to review later. Become part of their process. This is very helpful for par-

ents of young students who may need a little help remembering their focus points which really becomes a reward to the child. Most children love the attention and doing something "with" their parent versus "for" their parent.

Our gifted teachers at the studio, are naturally going to provide strategies for success. Strategies are the building blocks of focus. Provide feedback to your teacher so they can better serve you.

September is the perfect time of year to begin learning a musical instrument. School has begun and your mind is already in the mode for learning. If you train your brain to focus, process quicker, and more effectively then you are setting your foundation for success in many other areas of study. Call Studio 237 Music Lessons at 850-231-3199 to begin your music journey. Located in Santa Rosa Beach, FL. Studio237Music@gmail.com or visit our website: www.Studio237Music.com.

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Because you're worth it

By CHRIS BALZER

If you are like most people when your electric bill arrives every month, you place it in the "to pay" folder and open it later. When we do get around to opening the electric bill, we look at the amount owed; some sign, some grunt, some grin, mainly in November and we get out our checkbooks or log into our accounts and pay the amount without fail, no matter the cost.

There are ways to lower our electric bills. We can turn our thermostats to 85°, we can draw the blinds preventing natural sun light to illuminate our homes, we can use the fire drill exercise by running out the front door closing it quickly so our bought air does not escape or we can take measure to become more energy efficient. It's not rocket science, its building science. A well insulated and properly sealed home uses less energy while maintaining the same comfort.

So how do we make our homes more energy efficient? Outlets and switches on exterior walls can waste 1% of energy.



Adding insulating cover plates can reduce the amount of conditioned air leaking into the outside. 12% of energy loss occurs from drafts around doors and fireplaces. Seals around doors can and will fail over time and should be checked and replaced as needed. Thermal imaging can

detect these leaks or simply look for daylight or use a flashlight at night; If you see light, adjust or replace the seals. Windows can contribute up to 14% of energy loss. Replacing windows can be expensive. If there are cracks or fog like film between the panes on windows, these will most

likely need to be replaced. If the window is clear but you feel heat when the sun shines thru or have single pane, there are spectrally select films which can be applied to the window which dramatically increases efficiency, almost completely eliminates UV destruction at a fraction of a replacement window. An area which we focus on is our attics. 33% of energy loss occurs through our attics and roofs. Recently, Florida has required new construction homes built in 2017 and newer to undergo a blower door test. A blower door is a powerful fan that mounts into the frame of an exterior door. The fan pulls air out of the house, lowering the air pressure inside. The higher outside air pressure then flows in through all unsealed cracks and openings. This test determines the air infiltration rate of a building. Prior to 2017 these tests were not required and rarely used. The importance is now builders seal electrical and plumbing penetrations with a fire block expandable foam making your home more energy efficient. Prior to this requirement many

builder never utilized blower door testing. Attic insulation is also extremely important. So much so, if your home is 15 years or older and have not added insulation to your attic, you most likely have 61% less insulation than what is required today for new construction. If you see joists or wood beams where the insulation should be, adding insulation will increase your comfort and lower your energy.

There are many ways to increase comfort and lower your electric bill, because you're worth it. If you have concerns with your electric bill or energy loss, we are happy to schedule an inspection and educate you on how to increase comfort and save energy.

Chris Balzer is Founder and President of Emerald Coast Energy Solutions and resides in the Santa Rosa Beach area with his wife and 3 Children. For more information on how to save this summer and become energy efficient schedule an inspection by calling (850) 588-2870, visit www.trusteces.com or email wecare@trusteces.com and Beat the Heat.

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Meet our Local Pros: Joe and Lea Capers of Insurance Zone

BY LAUREN GALL

Insurance Zone (IZ), headquartered in Miramar Beach, is a full service commercial and personal lines independent insurance agency. IZ specializes in designing insurance programs

to do our work in this beautiful and giving community,' says Joe.

Recognized for their colorful and fun personal service and professional style, the Capers truly make their work day a fam-

Chamber's 2018 Small Business of the Year. The company is well known for their annual Chamber Business After Hours, with partners Rum Runners and Showtime Events. Save the date for the 11th annual event on Nov. 21 at Rum Runners.

Joe, Lea and the IZ team also believe strongly in community

involvement. Joe is Board Chairman of Alaqua Animal Refuge and serves on the board of The REP. He is a member of the Sacred Heart Charity Golf Classic Committee and the MORE Men's Group at Resurrection Catholic Church. Lea is Chair of Alaqua's annual Sip N Shop fundraiser, a part of the Chi

Chi Miguel Weekend. They love playing at the Santa Rosa Golf and Beach Club.

So, to 'Get in the Zone,' on the Emerald Coast, look to IZ and Get Covered.

For more information about Insurance Zone, visit www.ins-zone.com, call 850.424.6979, or find them on Facebook/Insurance Zone.



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Led by co-owners and co-founders, Joe and Lea Capers, the agency provides competitive and comprehensive coverage for home, auto, business, life and long-term care policies. They say that having a great working environment is the key to their success. 'Our personalities and strengths are almost polar opposites, so we complement each other well. We wake up every day excited about the opportu-

ity experience. Their pups, Izzi (named after the company) and Buckeye (Ohio State fans, anyone?), accompany them to the office every day. But, the success of Insurance Zone is not solely based on the efforts of Joe, Lea and the pups; every person who works at IZ is part of the family. 'Being a success for us means offering great products and exceptional service to our clients, while maintaining an inviting atmosphere for our clients and staff,' says Joe. The Capers and their staff believe that energy comes from working not only as a team, but as a family unit.

Celebrating more than 150,000 pens shared in our community, Insurance Zone was voted Best Insurance Firm by VIP Destin Magazine eight years in a row and Best Customer Service for three of those years, and Best Insurance Firm by Emerald Coast Magazine for the past three years. This makes IZ the only local insurance agency ever to be voted BEST by both publications. IZ was also Walton Area

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Business

Local Businessman Introduces GoVetted: A New Way to Rideshare

BY ALAN ROBERTS

How safe did you feel the last time you used a rideshare service? Did the driver open the door for you? Were you treated like a guest and feel special? There are so many questions, so little justification for what Americans are currently experiencing throughout the industry. Put it

this way, if what is happening with the two largest rideshare companies occurred on Delta or United Airlines, a congressional inquiry would be started.

Fun fact: Currently, only 20% of Americans have used a rideshare service. Numbers will continue to increase each year, because those who

used rideshare during the previous 12 months, increase their usage by another 20%. And despite losing \$5 billion in the most recent quarter, Wall Street loves a unicorn. Even the onslaught of negative press can't slow down this juggernaut. The apps are already on people's phones and it appears the general public is happy tempting fate.

It doesn't have to be this way.

Local area businessman John Finch wants to change the perception of ridesharing. His new company, Govetted Technologies, opened its doors in Santa Rosa Beach earlier this year. But why here?

"This is a good testing ground for our technology," said Finch. "With three airports, a nice mix of locals and tourists, plus the opportunity to provide non-emergency medical transportation to area hospitals and medical offices, we are uniquely qualified to change the perception of ridesharing by offering fully vetted and background screened, and drug tested drivers."

How uniquely qualified? GoVetted is the only rideshare company in America currently drug screening its drivers. This



translates to better security and safer conditions when your mom, daughter, or wife needs to get home. In addition to local, state, and federal background checks, GoVetted also performs sex offender background checks, and their drivers must pass CPR, First Aid and Defensive Driving training.

"Honestly, some of the drivers for other companies couldn't pass muster to work for Publix," said Finch. "Yet here we are trusting them with our most valuable resource, our families. It's simply unacceptable for companies started by computer programmers to come into our neighborhoods and operate this way. I have over 16 years of experience in the professional ground transportation industry, and I sit on the Board of the Florida Limousine Association.

More importantly, I have three daughters. I started GoVetted with them in mind."

Finch's passion for the industry, and his training methods, are legendary. He has trained over 300 drivers in NW Florida through the years, instilling in them the necessary tools to treat customers with consideration and respect.

Finch says, "We provide our drivers with the opportunity to create a sustainable business for themselves. The two largest rideshare companies have made it clear, they are not transportation companies. They are strictly tech. Where does it say you can't be both?"

GoVetted's slogan is "Caring Ridesharing." And with Finch at the helm, the panhandle is lucky to have a local option to get home safely.



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