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# SOUTH WALTON Life

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## Volunteer Beach Ambassador's Gearing up for 2020 Season

The Friends of South Walton Sea Turtles (FOSWST) has announced the Volunteer Beach Ambassador training sessions for 2020! The VBA team first took root in October of 2016 as a group of 30 volunteers who gathered to work the beaches for Fall Break. Over the years it has grown to a team of 208 adult volunteers and 31 Trained Junior VBAs and 35 Non-Trained (students who work under the supervision of a parent/grandparent) in 2019. Students serving as JVBA earn service hours required by their school, church youth organizations and Girl/Boy Scout organizations. VBAs logged an impressive 6,143 hours from March 1st through October 31st, 2019!

This group of dedicated volunteers work along our beach, scenic bike paths, and out in the community greeting local citizens and visitors along the Emerald Coast. These volunteers are all members of FOSWST, a 501 c 3 non-profit organization whose



mission is to work toward sea turtle conservancy through awareness and education. Laurie Reichenbach is the VBA Program Director. "Our main job is to greet those visiting our beaches and help educate them on beach etiquette, activities and ordinances- especially those codes that directly impact the safety and

preservation of our nesting sea turtle population," she said. "In addition, we pick up trash as we go along, fill in holes, and flatten sand art at the end of the day. All of these tasks help promote the goal of keeping our beaches #cleandarkflat."

FOSWST is currently preparing for the 2020 season and actively recruiting new mem-

bers. To be a member of the VBA team you must commit to the following:

Be a full time resident of Walton County or a second homeowner who spends 3+ months a year in the area.

Attend and complete a VBA training sessions.

**AMBASSADOR**  
*continued on page 3*

## Fun Run for Autism April 4th

Color the Coast, sponsored by South Walton Academy will be held on April 4, 2020 and is a fun run to raise awareness for autism with proceeds going directly to South Walton Academy students for scholarships.

This is a fun, family-friendly event. Run, walk, or push a stroller to the beach while enjoying a beautiful variety of plants and animals along a paved trail through Topsail Hill Preserve State Park, at 7525 W. Scenic Highway 30A. After the run, there will be food, music, games, resource tables and more!

Each participant will receive a t-shirt with their ticket purchase. Same day registration is available but t-shirts may be gone.

Tickets are \$30 for adults, \$15 for children 3-12 years old, and free for children under 2 years old. Register online at Eventbrite.com. Company sponsorships are also available, visit [www.southwaltonacademy.com](http://www.southwaltonacademy.com), or email [southwaltonacademy@gmail.com](mailto:southwaltonacademy@gmail.com) for more information.

Check in is at 9:00 a.m., race begins at 9:45 a.m., and a beach bash

**RUN FOR AUTISM**  
*continued on page 3*

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**AMBASSADOR**

*continued from page 1*

Join Friends of South Walton Sea Turtles (\$5 per year).

Upon completion of the training session, team members are provided at no cost a professional collared shirt and lanyard nametag identifying you as a certified Volunteer Beach Ambassador. The Tourist Development Council/Visit South Walton sponsors all uniforms and training materials. The training schedule for the



year has now been set and there are several dates to choose from.

**Wednesday, March 25th, 6:30 pm**

**Tuesday April 22nd, 6:30pm**

**Wednesday, May 20th, 6:30pm**

**Tuesday, June 17th, 6:30pm**

**Wednesday, July 22nd, 6:30pm**

**Wednesday, August 19th, 6:30pm**

Training Sessions will be held at The Coastal Branch Library,

437 Greenway Trail in Santa Rosa Beach.

A member of the VBA team is also available to provide private training sessions to groups of 10 or more in our local HOA organizations, church groups, business groups, etc.

The VBA team would like to invite everyone to consider joining their group of dedicated citizens and help promote sea turtle conservancy through greeting

our guests and providing them bits of educational information that help our visitors personally invest in keeping our environment pristine and safe for our sea turtle population. Feel free to contact Laurie Reichenbach, Director of Volunteer Beach Ambassadors, at 214-505-6273 or lauriereichenbach@gmail.com We are saving a place on the team for YOU!

**COASTAL SENIORS**  
OF SOUTH WALTON

**Coastal Seniors Host "Strategies to Maintain Balance Skills as You Age"**

On Tuesday March 17th from Noon to 1pm Connie Drum, Physical Therapist at Concierge Physical Therapy of 30A, will discuss factors that affect balance and provide strategies/exercises that are effective in improving balance. A light lunch will be provided. For more information, please call Nancy at 850-280-5342. This event will be held at the CSSW offices at 70 Logan Lane, Santa Rosa Beach.

Connie is an Air Force Veteran and is originally from NJ. She earned a BS in Physical Therapy from the University of Medicine/Dentistry of NJ and went on to earn a MS in Health Promotion from the University of North Carolina/Charlotte. She has been practicing Physical Therapy for over 25 years and specializes in post-operative rehabilitation, soft tissue remod-

eling and orthopedic injuries and dysfunction. She has a true passion for working with the Senior population. After raising her children in North Carolina, she and her family recently moved to Santa Rosa Beach. She is the Owner/Therapist of "Concierge Physical Therapy of 30A, LLC" - and offers personalized Physical Therapy services in the comfort of patients' homes. To attend, please RSVP to coastalseniorsofsouthwalton@gmail.com or call 850-280-5342 and leave a message. If you are 50 years or older, and reside in Walton County, the Coastal Seniors invite you to join, in order to participate in their activities. Membership dues for 2020 are \$20.00 per person/ \$30 per couple. Become a member of CSSW on Facebook at Coastal Seniors of South Walton, or via email at coastal-

seniorsofsouthwalton@gmail.com, or on the website at www.coastalseniorsofsouthwalton.org. Coastal Seniors of South Walton, Inc. is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization for active adults and we're looking for dedicated, enthusiastic persons to join our Board of Directors.

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**Editor & Publisher**  
Dave White  
dave@southwalton.life  
editor@southwalton.life

**Production & Layout**  
Dawna Shackley  
graphics@southwalton.life

**Advertising Department**  
850-399-0228

**Advertising Manager**  
Raymond Cyr  
850 797-3546  
sales@southwalton.life

**Contributing Writer**  
Heather Bennett  
Rita L. Sherwood  
850-399-0228

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### RUN FOR AUTISM

*continued from page 1*

follows from 11:30 a.m.- 2 p.m.

Many know that Santa Rosa Beach is one of the fastest growing counties in the United States and autism is the fastest growing developmental disability in the United States.

Once a tourist town, Santa Rosa Beach has become home to many families. With the growth of the community and the increase of children being diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder, South Walton Academy was created to bridge the gap between special needs and the community by creating the first of its kind inclusion program on the Emerald Coast. Students range from all abilities including those on the autism spectrum as well



as typically developing and advanced developing students. It's not only a school, but has therapy

programs, summer camps, after-care programs and more open to the public.



South Walton Academy works with the Florida Department of Education as well as the state of Florida to provide additional opportunities for students that include scholarship programs for children of low-income families, children who have been bullied, those who struggle with reading, and those with disabilities. To expand and make room for the

growing student population, the community will be instrumental in helping to add additional classrooms as well as fill the gap for scholarships for students.

So, come out and enjoy the Color the Coast Fun Run to support South Walton Academy, and by doing so, you'll also help kids!



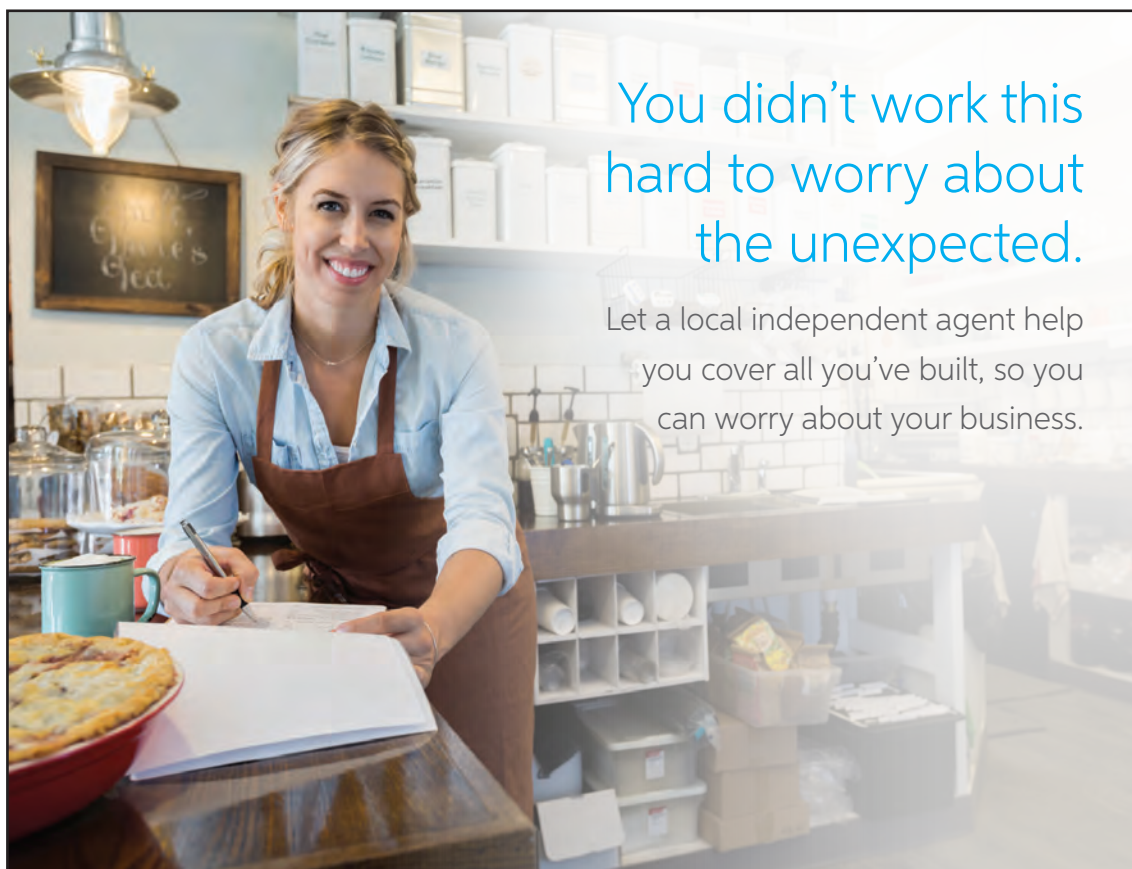
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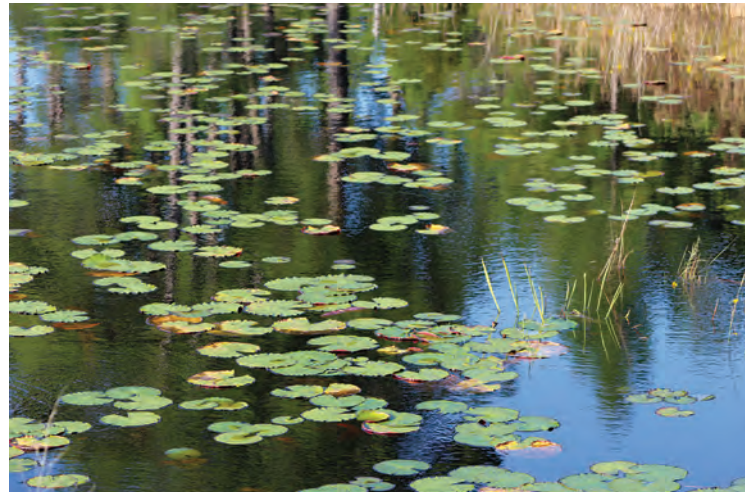
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Community

# Message From The Coastal Dune Lake Advisory Board

The Coastal Dune Lakes are an integral part of our South Walton lifestyle. Walton County and its citizens long ago recognized the importance of protecting these natural resources that are found only in a few places in the world. The Coastal Dune Lake Advisory Board is a County Volunteer Board made up of seven (7) residents of Walton County. The Advisory Board is responsible for monitoring the coastal dune lakes and activities that effect the environmental conservation of the lakes and their surrounding watersheds. The mission of the Advisory Board is to promote the protection, health, and environmental wellbeing of Walton County's globally rare and imperiled Coastal Dune Lakes and to provide sound recommendation to the Walton County Board of County Commissioners. We as an Advisory Board hope that



you will join us in protecting the lakes. You can learn more about what the board does, when we meet and how you can participate at: [www.co.walton.fl.us/1275/Coastal-Dune-Lake-Advisory-Board](http://www.co.walton.fl.us/1275/Coastal-Dune-Lake-Advisory-Board).

Millions of visitors flock to South Walton each year to enjoy our beautiful beaches and sunny skies. On one of those visits they

are sure to come upon one of our rare coastal dune lakes. Be it riding over a bridge and catching a glimpse of the Gulf just beyond an outfall or sitting along the beach while their children wade in the dark tannin waters right where they flirt with the Gulf's emerald hues. On rare occasion do they witness one of these lakes burst open into the Gulf. This is



an experience few forget, and few understand. Many of said visitors will ask a local about the "lagoons" they see along the beach, asking where do they come from, what is feeding this waterflow? Is this water DIRTY! The dark color is like tea, steeped from the roots systems of plant life in their watersheds. These waters allow for many fun activities including boating, fishing, paddle boarding, and kayaking. The beauty of these lakes has been depicted

in photos, books, paintings and even a movie. This fascination has long been, and hopefully will forever be among locals and visitors alike.

If you have questions or would like more information on the coastal dune lakes or the Coastal Dune Lake Advisory Board contact Melinda Gates, Walton County Environmental Coordinator, (850)892-8108 or [gatmelinda@co.walton.fl.us](mailto:gatmelinda@co.walton.fl.us).



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# March 2020 WCSD Superintendent's Update



Superintendent A. Russell Hughes

The 2020 school year is moving quickly along, and we are already approaching the end of the 3rd 9 weeks of school! March 12 is the official end of the 3rd 9 weeks, and March 13 is a teacher workday/student holiday. The week of March 16-20 is Spring Break, and a time to enjoy family and friends before the final stretch of school. We encourage

our parents to check their student's academic standing so they can provide assistance as needed to encourage students to complete all necessary assignments and course expectations. The testing season will begin again in full swing with the Florida Standards Assessments in April and May, so now is the time to really buckle down and make progress toward academic success! Report cards will be distributed throughout the district on March 27, 2020.

Kindergarten registration for the 2020-2021 school year will be held Monday through Friday from March 2 through March 13 at all Walton County Elementary Schools for any child who will be 5 years of age on or before September 1st, 2020. An official birth certificate is required to register during the March timeframe, and each child should have a physical exam and up to date immunizations before the

first day of school in August.

Congratulations to our Regional Science Fair Winners in the East Panhandle Science and Engineering Fair in late January! We have 2 student (Sophie Harris from South Walton High School, and Aaron Wilmoth from Walton Middle School) who were selected as State Finalists and will be attending the 65th State Science Fair in Lakeland, FL on March 24 and 25, 2020. We are proud of their accomplishments and know they will represent us well!

Our Odyssey of the Mind teams are also to be congratulated for their success at the 2020 Emerald Coast Regional Tournament in Crestview on February 22, 2020. The Freeport Elementary, Van R. Butler Elementary, Freeport Middle School, and Walton High School Odyssey of the Mind teams qualified for the state tournament on April 11, 2020, in Orlando! Odyssey

of the Mind. Odyssey of the Mind is an international creative problem-solving program that engages students in their learning by allowing their knowledge and ideas to come to life in an exciting, productive environment.

The Walton High School FBLA students have advanced to the state competition which will take place in Orlando on March 12, 2020, after bringing home 19 awards at the FBLA District competition. We wish them the best of luck!

South Walton High School Senior Nadia Bock has advanced to the Finalist stage in the National Merit Scholarship competition based on her high academic performance for 4 years at SWHS, and her PSAT scores. This is a huge accomplishment, and we are so excited to watch Nadia making a difference in the world!

Congratulations to the Walton High School and South Walton

High School Jazz bands for their ratings of Superior at the Florida Bandmasters Association District Jazz Band Music Performance Assessment. Both bands have qualified for the State Jazz Band MPA! We know they will "rock the house!" We also wish all the bands great success as they participate in the Florida Bandmasters Association District Concert Band Music Performance Assessment on March 5 through March 7, 2020!

As we have seen in the national and world media, the flu season has hit hard this year. Superintendent Hughes has stated "We are making sure that we are keeping our school environment very safe and sanitized to protect the students who attend our schools. We encourage parents to do the same at home. Together we can make sure all of our children get to school and back home safe and healthy."

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**Community**

# Faces of Walton County: Introducing Emma King

BY MARK STANLEY AND TRACY STEELY

Emma has one of the most fun careers around – she makes popsicles! If you have been in Walton County for a while, you may be familiar with Swell Pops – the best pops around.

Emma was born and raised in Ft. Walton Beach. She went to college in Dallas and taught kindergarten after she graduated. But Emma began to feel the sense of wanting to come back to her home. “All my family is in the Panhandle, except one sister who lives in Atlanta. I just wanted to come back home.” Eventually, she did just that. Emma and her husband moved back to the area

and she landed a job teaching third grade at Destin Elementary School. But after some time, things fell into place for Emma and her career path changed. Her dream came true and she and her husband became owners of a popsicle company called Swell Pops.

So, did you always want to make popsicles? “Well, I was in Montgomery with my sister and after dinner she said, ‘Hey, let’s get a popsicle!’ Usually, you get ice cream after dinner, but I went with her to Steel City Pops, and I fell in love! I fell in love with the concept and the popsicles and I wanted to start a company of my own.”

How did Swell Pops get started? My brother and I had some dear friends, David and Haylee Huffman. They started the company about three years before we took over. My brother went to lunch with David one day and David mentioned that he was ready to sell Swell Pops. My brother told me about it and my husband and I bought the company.”

What are Swell Pops? “Swell Pops are gourmet popsicles. We use local sources as much as we can, such as the Honey Hutch, and we buy fruit from local farm markets. We use local ingredients to give the pops a sense of home. They are all natural and do not



*The Faces Of.*  
Walton County FL

contain chemical preservatives, genetically modified organisms, hydrogenated oils or artificial colors or flavors. Just simple, natural popsicles.”

Where do you make Swell Pops? “I rent a commercial kitchen. In the mornings I make the popsicles, and in the afternoons, I deliver them to our clients. We have gotten so busy that I have hired two ladies to help me make the pops, so I am freed up to deliver. We make about 500 popsicles every morning!”

Where can we buy Swell Pops? “Right now, I mainly deliver to wholesalers from Water-sound to Navarre. We also take care of events and catering. We provide Swell Pops for weddings, birthday parties, showers, corporate events, music festivals, etc. You can even order a box to keep in your freezer at home.”

What is the best-selling flavor? “Hands down it is Cookies and Cream. Everyone loves that flavor from children to grown men. Strawberry Lemonade and Mango Pineapple are close sec-

onds. We have about 23 flavors so far and the list is growing. We just used my great-grandmother’s recipe for banana pudding to make one of our newest flavors, it’s great!” If you don’t have time for breakfast, you can grab a yogurt parfait popsicle. It is made with Greek yogurt, honey, fresh fruit and granola.”

What do you like about Walton County? “I really love the local people. They are good people. What is great about this area is that everywhere you go you see people you know, and at the same time you can meet new people.”

You can check out all the delicious flavors on their website [www.swellpops.com](http://www.swellpops.com).

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

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# At Lakeview Estates, Community Begins at Home

Heading east on Hwy 98, drivers may never notice the sign for Thompson Road. This inconspicuous road can lead you to Stinky's Fish Camp and the public beach access at Dune Allen Beach but also is home to a peaceful, gated community, skillfully designed with coastal living in mind.

At Lakeview Estates, their commitment to cultivating an inspired lifestyle that homeowners can truly call home. This means developing a vibrant community where people can engage, connect and feel like they belong. Their Coastal Traditional homes are steeped in architectural design, blurring the lines between indoors and out, crafting homes with spaces and features that embrace the Florida lifestyle and embodies the very best of South Walton.

With 57 homesites available, each home and lot package in Lakeview Estates boasts lofty open-concept floor plans designed with generational living in mind, and interior finishes that showcase the craftsmanship of the developer and builder. Statement tiles, stunning backsplashes, millwork and varied textures throughout the home provide a whimsical yet luxurious

place to call home. Offering single level and multilevel homes, the floorplans range from 2230 sqft to 3308 sqft, and coastal brick exteriors with generous outdoor living spaces surrounded by lush landscaping.

This rental-restricted community has a vision for the future to offer its residents a step back in time, to a place where afternoon fishing, bike rides down the wide private streets and afternoons by the pool are just a regular Tuesday afternoon. Where sitting around the fire pit in the backyard and community barbeques is just as common as the tide coming in along the Emerald Coast. Towards the rear of the development there is a spring fed, 4-acre pond, stocked with bass, perfect for catch-and-release fishing, or take the walking path across to Helen McCall Park for a game of catch or watch the development of the skate part that is nearing completion. A short drive to shopping, restaurants and activities, residents at Lakeview Estates are never far from all the goings on along 30A.

Lakeview Estates is a Driftwood

Group, LLC community, who stands firm on their commitment to their customers, who are like family. Part of their commitment to their customers is building high-quality, affordable, and structurally sound homes. They believe that a home houses a lifetime of memories and meaningful moments that last families a lifetime. By choosing Lakeview Estates, you are choosing a



home with an experienced builder that puts families first and builds with the meaning of home in mind.

The model home is located at 36 Pine Lake Drive Santa Rosa Beach, 32459 is open daily from 10:00am-5:00pm, the onsite Hilary & Reverie sales team are available to present the neighborhood and floorplans. Additional information can be found at [www.lakeviewestates30a.com](http://www.lakeviewestates30a.com) or by calling 850-460-0848.



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**Pet Care**

# 2020 Sip N Shop: Celebrating a Decade of Sipping

**Alaqua Animal Refuge** will host its 10th Annual Sip N Shop event on Friday, April 3 at Emeril's Coastal Italian in Miramar Beach beginning at 11 a.m.

Presented locally by Insurance Zone, the event is in partnership with the Emeril Lagasse Foundation and is one of five events included in the annual Chi Chi Miguel Throwdown Weekend held each spring in Santa Rosa Beach.

Chairing the event is the dynamic duo of Lea and Joe Capers, who have led the success of the Sip N Shop for the past five years. "The Sip N Shop is a super fun occasion when we all, as a community, come together

to support Alaqua and the work they do 365 days a year," said Joe.

Celebrating a decade of sipping, this year's Sip N Shop is once again set to be a festive day of sipping, shopping, socializing and savoring! There's live music, welcome cocktails and champagne, a specially selected 3-course seated luncheon with wine, an amazing silent auction, fab photo area, and of course, a couple of celebration surprises.

The brainchild of Valerie Thompson, the Sip N Shop began in 2010 and has now grown into one of Alaqua's premier and signature fundraising



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events. Thompson and her husband, Mike, co-founded the Chi Chi Miguel Throwdown Weekend. In fact, the entire weekend is named after Mike, as "Chi Chi Miguel" was his childhood

nickname.

The annual event is one of Alaqua's largest fundraisers in support of the refuge, and helps to sustain the shelter's daily operations and provide ongoing

funding for a variety of programs and services in support of Alaqua's mission.

To purchase tickets, visit [www.ChiChiMiguel.com](http://www.ChiChiMiguel.com) or email [SipNShop@Alaqua.org](mailto:SipNShop@Alaqua.org).

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# Swim Therapy for Degenerative Conditions in Dogs

BY MELANIE BARRETT

Since the opening of 30A Swim Dog in 2014, they knew they'd be helping dogs of all ages, shapes and sizes with issues that would not be able to be helped in any other way. Dogs would have arthritis, hip dysplasia, and be post-surgery, etc.

One issue that was fairly new back then was degenerative myelopathy (DM). Degenerative myelopathy is a progressive disease of the spinal cord in older dogs, and shows up typically between 8 and 14 years of age. It begins with a loss of coordination in the hind limbs. The affected dog will wobble when walking, knuckle over or drag their feet. This can first occur in one hind limb and then affect the other. As the disease progresses, the limbs become weak and the dog begins to buckle and has difficulty standing. The weakness gets progressively worse until the dog is unable to walk. The clinical course can range from six months to one year before dogs become paraplegic. If signs progress for a longer period of time, loss of urinary and fecal continence may occur and eventually weakness will develop in the front limbs. But, it is not a painful disease. What causes it? It begins with the spinal cord in the chest region, where there is degeneration of the matter of the spinal cord; and recent research has identified a mutation in a gene that confers a greatly increased risk of developing the disease.

Since 2014, when 30A Swim



Dog first opened, several dogs have come in with DM. The majority of the breeds that have come for swim therapy have been Boxers, but also Australian Shepherds. When pet parents reach out with no hope for the future, and no direction from their vets, they just know that those dogs need swim therapy. Several dogs with DM can't walk, but can swim in the water.

Rebecca and Barry Dixon are snowbirds from New Hampshire who found 30A Swim Therapy when they were vacationing here and their dog began having trouble walking. "In 2018, we discovered that our Boxer, Ezzy, had DM. As devastated as we were over learning about the effects of this disease, we were determined to identify the best exercise and care that would help keep our

baby girl strong," Rebecca Dixon said. "We learned that dogs who receive hydrotherapy have shown less symptoms of progression of the disease. We searched the Walton County area and found Melanie Barrett of 30A Swim Dogs in Santa Rosa Beach, Florida. After having a consultation with her and researching her training and certification we were very excited to get started with Ezzy's hydrotherapy sessions. We have been impressed and delighted with Melanie's professionalism and observations of Ezzy's condition and progress in gaining strength and endurance. Boxers typically are not water dogs! Melanie's hydrotherapy sessions have given Ezzy a better quality of life. She has maintained and even increased the muscle tone in her legs which is integral in maintaining balance and supporting her gait. Ezzy still uses

her walking wheels to assist her on long walks, but after her hydrotherapy sessions Ezzy wants to walk without them and she has increased her distance. Ezzy's swim therapy sessions have been a crucial and integral part of her rehabilitation that has strengthened the weakened areas of her body and assisted her in building muscle and confidence."

Dogs with DM that usually have a life expectancy of nine months, have lived 18 months participating in swim therapy and energy medicine. Melanie is also a dog behaviorist, owns emeraldcoastdogbehavior.com and has trained with Cesar Millan. She can be reached at 850-218-0476, and her canine aqua therapy website is 30aswimdog.com. She is also a Healing Touch for Animals certified practitioner, which is an energy medicine worker.



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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.



# Christ the King to Host The Paganini Violin Caprices on March 15th



Christ the King Episcopal Church is honored to welcome Benjamin Sung, Ph.D., as he performs Paganini's 24 Caprices from Opus 1 as a violin solo on Sunday, March 15 at 1 p.m. Sung is currently the associate professor of violin at Florida State University, and a faculty artist and violin coordinator at the Brevard Music Center and principal second violin of the Brevard Music Center Orchestra. Sung's performances have taken him around the world, and he will continue that trajectory in 2020 with his Paganini concert touring in Canada, Taiwan, Brazil and across the United States. Sung is currently working on a new solo album featuring works by Sciarrino, Berio, Maderna, and Schnittke, and is an accomplished TED Talk speaker. "I'm always happy to return to the 30A communities, and I'm especially excited about sharing this unique program with the people there," Sung said. "The 24 Caprices of Paganini take you on quite a journey, and I'm looking forward to experiencing that journey in the beautiful space at Christ the King."



Sung will lead a pre-concert discussion over a light lunch beginning at 12:30 p.m. in Sandefur Hall. The concert will begin promptly at 1 p.m. Attendees are urged to arrive early. All concerts at Christ the King are free of charge and open to the public thanks to the generous support from patrons, parishioners and church offerings. Christ the King Episcopal Church is located at 480 North County Highway 393 in Santa Rosa Beach. For more information, call 850-267-3332.

# E.O. Wilson Biophilia Center Hosts Green Thumb Garden Club March 18th

The Green Thumb Garden Club will meet at 10 AM on Wednesday, March 18th. Green Thumb Garden Club member, Connie Shear, and other Green Thumb members have organized a day of programs at the E.O. Wilson Biophilia Center in Freeport. The E.O. Wilson Biophilia Center is located just east of Freeport on Hwy 20. The program will start by enjoying a cup of coffee and refreshment while viewing the museum, and dioramas. A presentation in the auditorium of the Biophilia Center will follow with a Birds of Prey demonstration. The programs will include live mammals, turtles, and the



WOW program, a Wonders of the World. Programs will end approximately at 12:30. You may want to tour other parts of the property after lunch. Plan to depart the facility at approximately 2 PM. If you'd like to carpool, there will be a meeting place at the Grand Blvd Publix parking lot, out near Hwy 98, just west of Grimaldi's pizza. Cars will depart that location beginning at 9:15 am, so if you'd like to ride in a carpool, then you need to be there by 9 am. You can also organize your own carpool, just be sure you arrive at the Biophilia Center by 10 am. The cost is \$25 for both the lunch and program. To make a reservation, email Peggy Sue Mullen at psuemullen@cox.net.

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## March 2020 30A Real Estate Update



Dear 30A Neighbors,

Spring is just around the corner and buyers are looking for that perfect property! If you have been waiting to place your home on the market, now is the time to get the most out of your property. We have the tourist season upon us, very low interest rates and low inventory!

Some owners feel overwhelmed when contemplating placing their home on the market. I am a pro at making the process an easy one. I have helped to coordinate landscapers, pressure washing, painters, packers, movers and cleaners. I stage properties utilizing the owner's items as well as bringing in some of my inventory and carefully chosen new pieces. The goal is to stage the property to appeal to the masses and therefore get the most for the property. For builders I have access to wholesale lines of furniture to help with the cost of furnishing a model home.

Although I love doing the necessary things to bring the property to the market, my expertise and skill lies in the pricing, marketing and negotiating of properties. Please don't hesitate to call me if you have questions concerning selling your home, or purchasing a new one. I would love to help you!

Here is your 30A Market Update for March, 2020: Detached Single Family Homes

### Rosemary Beach, Gulf Front

There are currently 3 ac-

tive properties ranging from \$4,799,000 with 2800 sf to \$10,200,000 with 5208 sf. The average property is \$7,083,000 with 3894 sf priced at \$1791.35 per sf and 1442 days on the market.

### Rosemary Beach, Non-Gulf Front

There are currently 36 active properties ranging from \$1,399,000 with 1592 sf to \$8,400,000 with 6459 sf. The average property is priced at \$3,360,054 with 3445 sf, priced at \$985.73 per sf and 256 days on the market. There are 5 pending properties ranging from \$1,625,000 with 2152 sf to \$2,499,000 with 3317 sf. The average property is \$2,102,400 with 2783 sf and 499 days on the market. There are 33 sales ranging from \$1,140,000 with 1474 sf to \$4,220,000 with 4484 sf. The average sale is \$2,020,076 with 2793 sf, selling at 94% of list price, \$732.31 per sf, and 157 days on the market.

### Seacrest, Non-Gulf Front

There are currently 47 active properties ranging from \$549,000 with 1120 sf to \$1,599,000 with 4123 sf. The average property is \$906,735 with 2453 sf, priced at \$372.52 per sf and 173 days on the market. There are 6 pending properties ranging from \$649,000 with 1886 sf to \$949,000 with 2544 sf. The average pending is \$756,967 with 2221 sf at \$341.96 per sf with 266 days on the market. There have been 50 sales ranging from \$625,000 with 1600 sf to \$1,570,000 with 4205 sf. The average sale is \$891,410 with 2494 sf, selling at 94% of list price and \$358.16 per sf, with 153 days on the market.

### Alys Beach, Gulf Front

There is one active property priced at \$11,500,000. with 3631 sf and 37 days on the market.

### Alys Beach, Non-Gulf Front

There are currently 19 ac-

tive properties ranging from \$2,095,000 with 2010 sf to \$5,795,000 with 5080 sf. The average property is \$3,928,109 with 3665 sf and 165 days on the market. There are 8 pending properties ranging from \$2,495,000 with 2545 sf to \$6,295,000 with 4230 sf. The average pending is \$4,050,953 with 3504 sf. There have been 24 sales ranging from \$1,662,500 with 1943 sf, to \$5,750,000 with 4583 sf. The average sale is \$3,378,679 with 3395 sf, selling at 98% of list price with 101 days on the market.

### Prominence

There are currently 4 active properties ranging from \$929,000 with 2348 sf to \$1,095,000 with 3408 sf. The average property is \$975,725 with 2750 sf, priced at \$360.41 per sf and 74 days on the market. There are 16 pending properties ranging from \$821,900 with 2095 sf to \$1,111,900 with 3954 sf. The average pending property is \$962,586 with 3086 sf, \$318.44 per sf and 17 days on the market. There have been 28 sales ranging from \$727,500 with 2095 sf, to \$1,113,000 with 3954 sf. The average sale is \$877,765 with 2794 sf, selling at 99% of list price at \$321.76 per sf and 38 days on the market.

### Seagrove, Gulf Front

There has been one sale at \$8,995,000 with 4446 sf, selling at \$2,023.17 per sf and 37 days on the market.

### Seagrove, Non-Gulf Front

There are currently 22 properties available ranging from \$740,000 with 936 sf to \$8,900,000 with 5727 sf. The average property is \$2,095,000 with 3011 sf, priced at \$764.56 per sf, and 259 days on the market. There have been 31 sales ranging from \$545,000 with 1071 sf to \$4,295,000 with 7009 sf. The average sold is \$1,928,594 with 3271 sf, selling at 94% of list price, at \$594.29 per sf and 196 days on the market.

### Seaside, Gulf Front

There are currently 4 active properties ranging from \$1,950,000 with 672 sf to \$9,995,000 with 5335 sf. The average property is \$5,783,750 with 3056 sf, priced at \$2,091.97 per sf, and 61 days on the market. There is one pending property priced at \$1,825,000 with 784 sf, \$2,327.81 per sf and 137 days on the market. There have been 5 sales ranging from \$3,750,000 with 2198 sf to \$6,800,000 with 2952 sf. The average sale is \$4,750,000 with 2681 sf, selling at 95% of list price and \$1775.54 per sf, with 309 days on the market.

### Seaside, Non-Gulf Front

There are currently 10 properties available ranging from \$1,390,000 with 1852 sf to \$3,750,000 with 3400 sf. The average property is \$2,307,000 with 2557 sf and priced at \$892.88 per sf, and 129 days on the market. There is currently 1 pending property priced at \$4,495,000 with 4073 sf and 946 days on the market. There have been 17 sales ranging from \$750,000 with 835 sf to \$3,475,000 with 4208 sf. The average sale is \$1,798,353 with 2004 sf, selling at 94% of list price, at \$953.34 per sf, and 126 days on the market.

### Watercolor, Gulf Front

There are 3 active properties available ranging from \$3,699,000 with 2200 sf to \$3,895,000 with 3353 sf. The average property is \$3,781,333 with 2753 sf at \$1419.82 per sf and 467 days on the market.

### Watercolor, Non-Gulf Front

There are 44 active properties ranging from \$1,195,000 with 1648 sf to \$5,095,000 with 7568 sf. The average property is \$2,437,206 with 3590 sf, at \$666.32 per sf and 147 days on the market. There are 9 pending sales ranging from \$1,150,000 with 2695 sf to \$4,995,000 with 5446 sf. The average pending is \$2,129,667 with 3681 sf, priced at \$554.37 per sf and 229 days

on the market. There have been sales ranging from \$840,000 with 1232 sf to \$5,500,000 with 6163 sf. The average sale is \$3,781,333 with 2753 sf, selling at \$1419.82 per sf and 467 days on the market.

### Gulf Place

There are 6 active properties ranging from \$910,000 with 2416 sf to \$2,900,000 with 8493 sf. The average sale is \$1,370,000 with 4019 sf, priced at \$348.09 per sf and 205 days on the market. There is one pending sale at \$1,120,000 with 3393 sf. There are 5 sales ranging from \$681,250 with 1956 sf to \$1,275,000 with 4175 sf. The average sale is \$898,250 with 2955 sf, selling at 95% of list price and \$306.72 per sf, and 422 days on the market.

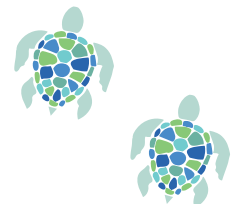
### Emerald Walk on 30A

There are 2 pending properties at \$407,900 with 1576 sf and \$429,900 with 1754 sf. There have been 5 sales ranging from \$340,000 with 1549 sf to \$397,000 with 1658 sf. There are The average sale is \$372,830 with 1615 sf and selling at 96% of list price at \$230.85 per sf and 106 days on the market.

If you have questions, or if I can help you with any of your real estate needs, please contact me.

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# Your Investments – Current and Future Considerations



BY MAURICE STOUSE,  
BRANCH MANAGER AND  
FINANCIAL ADVISOR

The world economy has

slowed over that past year, wages have increased in the U.S., there have been disruptions to trade and most recently, concern for the public's health. The uncertainty has brought significant volatility to stock markets around the world.

As an investor it is always good to take caution and consider several things with respects to your goals and investments. The first would be is it indeed different this time? Market uncertainty comes in a lot of different shapes and

sizes. Investors have seen it before and will see it again. The words of Sir John Templeton, who first uttered this many decades ago are something to think about. In other words, uncertainty is not different although the causes may be. Next, how much attention should you give the daily if not hourly updates on all the bad news? Another famous investment manager, Peter Lynch suggested that in the volatile times, try not to pay too much attention to what he called "background noise". In

other words, stay focused on the long-term plan, assuming your plans are long term. Staying on course with a certain strategy is most often been the best way to go unless you need these funds now or need to depend on these to live or for an emergency.

Next would be to reflect on your belief in commerce long term. Will the consumer continue to consume? Will there be more and better goods and services and will commerce continue? And lastly, in the most volatile times not to give up hope when things seem most dire.

Interest rates appear to continue to soften and the Federal Reserve continues to lean on the tools that it must maintain liquidity and encourage borrowing and commerce. The one variable is that the consumer, be it an individual or a business probably won't invest and spend if they are scared. That hurt the recovery badly in the 1930s. So, it probably is not different this time but perhaps investors can research the history of times like these and act or react accordingly.

If you are investing for retirement, do you have a goal or a number in mind? There is a plethora of tools that advisory and brokerage firms make available for you to chart your way to retirement. There are also a couple of simple rules of thumb that many retirement investors have used over the years and perhaps these can help you at times like these.

**Number one:** What is a tool to help you solve for how much of a retirement nest egg you will need? A very simple and popular one is the 25 times rule. In other words, what do you think you will need or want to live on in retirement per year by way of income? Take that total and multiple it by 25. As an example, if you need or want to live on \$100k per year then you would need to have saved \$2.5 million (100K X 25). You would still want to avail yourself to planning tools, but this is a way to do a quick check or quick assessment in your mind.

**Number two:** The rule of 72. That is, at a given rate, how long does it take money to double? An example would be if you can average 6% a year, a given

amount invested would double in 12 years (72 divided by 6 = 12). Put another way, if you started with \$10k and average 6% per year, that would be \$20k in 12 years, \$40k in 24 years, \$80k in 36 years and so on. Young people and investors with a long-term time horizon would do well to think about this.

Lastly, as you plan and assess and reassess, do you keep a balance sheet for yourself? A balance sheet is a great way of knowing everything you own (stocks, bonds, cash, home, real estate, etc.) and everything that you owe and ultimately what your net worth is. Many investors update this often to help them keep moving on track to their goals. A personal income statement is also a good idea to constantly keep (at the) top of (your) mind.

*Maurice Stouse is a Financial Advisor and the branch manager of The First Wealth Management and Raymond James and he resides in Grayton Beach. He has been in financial services for over 33 years. His main office is located at First Florida Bank, a division of the First, A National Banking Association, 2000 98 Palms Blvd, Destin, FL 32451. Branch offices in Niceville, Mary Esther, Miramar Beach, Freeport and Panama City, Pensacola and Tallahassee. Phone 850.654.8124. Raymond James advisors do not offer tax advice. Please see your tax professionals. Email: Maurice.stouse@raymond-james.com. Securities offered through Raymond James Financial Services, Inc. Member FINRA/SIPC, and are not insured by bank insurance, the FDIC or any other government agency, are not deposits or obligations of the bank, are not guaranteed by the bank, and are subject to risks, including the possible loss of principal. Investment Advisory Services are offered through Raymond James Financial Services Advisors, Inc. The First Wealth Management First Florida Bank, and The First, A National Banking Association are not registered broker/dealers and are independent of Raymond James Financial Services. Views expressed are the current opinion of the author and are subject to change without notice. Information provided is general in nature and is not a complete statement of all information necessary for making an investment decision and is not a recommendation or a solicitation to buy or sell any security. Past performance is not indicative of future results.*



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

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Community

# "Undue Influence" Scam Hits Santa Rosa Beach

BY RITA L. SHERWOOD AND GABRIELA VOICULESCU

Imagine a strong, successful woman, the top sales producer of the famous Tupperware Company in Chicago, a woman who built wealth not only for herself, but also for many other families, and then becomes a victim of a "charity" scam. It's hard to believe, but it happened. Almost three million dollars, cars, trucks and many homes were things she donated during this long-term charity scam that lasted several years.

Her outstanding love for people, her dedication to those in need, and her desire to help, made her easily become the "bait" in this charity scam.

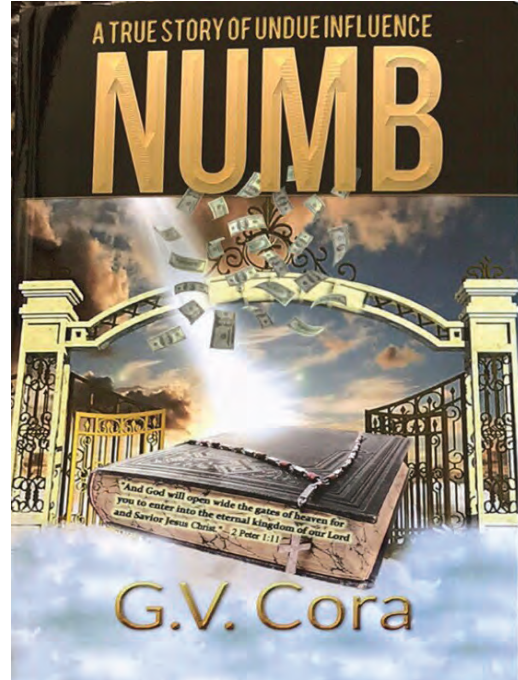
Mary Rita Wish, a Santa Rosa Beach resident since 1950, is one of the founders of St. Rita's Catholic Church; she attended the services regularly and considered the



church to be her home. But, her enormous love for God became an instrument of exploitation for a so called "charity group"

led by an influential woman who used her "faith" as an important convincing tool to obtain money, lots of money, for different purposes, specifically her own. This technique has a legal name, and is called undue influence, and is a crime in the state of Florida.

This mystical woman who had "visions" had deep roots in Hell, pretending she was a child of God. Most of the churchgo-



ers believed her and opened their pockets, believing their hard-earned money went to the right places, to the right people. It took more than 13 years of financial abuse for Mary Rita Wish and her family to realize how horrible and abusive this woman was.

Mary Rita's daughter also suffered financially, because she was a victim of the scam too, but she realized it, and then tried to get

her mother out. But the group knew how to make their victims believe that their families were only after their money. It was a cult, with an evil leader, who pretended to have visions and commands coming from Heaven above.

The FBI and CIA conducted numerous interviews with Mary Rita Wish and her daughter, and also the victims were interviewed on TV in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, where most of the actions of the cult took place.

Meanwhile, the woman cult leader died from cancer and all the investigations stopped. Mary Rita Wish asked her friend and neighbor, Gabriela Voiculescu, to write the story of her life, in order to make everyone aware of this horrible abuse called undue influence, and to ensure people check more than twice when giving donations.

In less than two months, Gabriela finished the novel "NUMB," which can be purchased on Amazon, or from the author, or Mary Rita Wish. Please contact gavo98@gmail.com or call (770) 570-2863 or (850) 267-2175 for more information.

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## Democratic Women's Club Celebrates Women's History Month March 31st



Our next Democratic Women's Club of Walton County meeting is Tuesday, March 31 from 11:30 am to 1:30 pm at the Sunset Bay Cafe in the Linkside Conference Center in the Sandestin Resort in Miramar Beach. This luncheon meeting honors Women's History month. Our guest speakers will be Grace Marse and Kathy White, Democratic women pioneers who will share their reflections on the history of Democratic women in Walton and Okaloosa counties. You don't have to be a Women's Club member, a woman,

or a Democrat to attend. Please rsvp by replying to this email or contacting Sue Bowden at [susanbowden4321@yahoo.com](mailto:susanbowden4321@yahoo.com). The cost is \$27 if prepaid before March 24 or \$30 if paying at the door (we need the rsvps by March 24 one way or the other). Checks can be mailed to Democratic Women's Club of Walton County, P.O. Box 2507, Santa Rosa Beach FL 32459. Call Carolyn Zonia at 850-714-3793 if you want to pay by credit card. Your payment covers choice of 5 entrees, non alcoholic drink, tax, tip, and dessert.

## The Sentinels of South Walton Will be Back on Duty March 9th

BY CAMI ADAMS

Did you know South Walton County is one of nineteen Florida counties that employ chickens to help guard against mosquito-borne diseases? Sentinel chickens perform a very important job for the public because they are our first line of defense for monitoring arboviruses in the area. Samples are taken weekly from the chickens (except in winter) and sent to a testing facility to be analyzed for West Nile Virus, Eastern Equine Encephalitis, and St. Louis Encephalitis. There are numerous benefits to this early-alert system for both our district and the public. By utilizing chickens as "mosquito monitors", the district can make a better-informed decision on control efforts based on the virus present and the mosquito species that are known to vector the virus. This also narrows down our control response to specific geographical regions, decreasing our response time and increasing the chances of control before



an outbreak can occur. Furthermore, the resulting data provides historical heat maps/hot spots of arboviruses in SoWal, allowing us to map out zones of higher arboviral concern that may require further surveillance and/or control efforts. SWCMCD employs 16 coop sites across the county and 94 total chickens in the field,

the most of any Florida county.

The biggest advantage to using chickens for testing is their asymptomatic nature, meaning they do not get sick from the viruses or exhibit symptoms. This is because chickens are not an effective amplifying host for the viruses. In other words, the virus will never replicate to a high enough level within its chicken host to be transmitted back to any biting mosquito. Consequently, this also means the viruses cannot be transferred from chickens to humans through mosquito bites, providing a safe and effective way to monitor for arboviruses within the county.

As of March 9th, the sentinels will be back in the field to continue protecting the public! If you have any questions, please contact the South Walton Mosquito Control District at (850) 267-2112 or email [publicrelations@SWCMCD.org](mailto:publicrelations@SWCMCD.org). And always remember the 5 D's of Protection: Drain, Dress, Defend, and Dusk to Dawn.



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Community

# Bears in the 'Hood: How to Live Safely with the Florida Black Bear

J.S. GREEN

Imagine seeing a large male bear hanging out by your backyard firepit as if he were ready to watch the sunset while waiting on an evening cocktail of honey in a highball glass. What about a bear cub climbing the ladder of your child's playhouse in your backyard, fortunately while your child was not around? Welcome to my life and my neighborhood. I've seen night cam footage of a mama bear and her two cubs walking down the sidewalk, looking for a full trash can. Then there was the other time a cute bear cub entertained itself by spinning a garden windmill decoration, again caught on a night cam, in our neighbor's backyard. Cute? Fascinating? Maybe. If it's

not in your backyard.

Living in the thickly wooded Santa Rosa Beach area, I feel as if I've been transported back in time to the wilds of 19th century Florida. As a newly developed, we love our community and its surroundings. But, wild animals in our backyards is dangerous. What measures can a community take to keep bears from getting too comfortable? Too close?

"Removing attractants is important to prevent human and bear interactions," says Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) spokesperson, Bekah Nelson. Attractants are trash cans, bird feeders, pet food bowls, and uncleaned grills and smokers, etc. When a bear sees a neighborhood as a food



source, they become reliant on that food source, and they don't hunt as much. The likelihood of a bear being hit by an automobile, killed by illegal shooting, or trapped by FWC and killed because it's become a hazard, is higher. So, "a fed bear is a dead bear." After preventative measures have been consistently made in a neighborhood, it can take several weeks for a bear to



learn that the community is no longer a place to find food.

Relocation isn't a likely option as the bear will come back, often crossing highways, potentially causing danger for motorists. However, the FWC considers trapping on a case-by-case basis. Also, it is against the law in Florida to shoot a black bear. If you see a bear, the first action should be to give the bear space and walk away. Learn how to "Scare that Bear," or deter a bear by using bear spray; view this one-minute video by hunting journalist, Craig Boddington, to learn how.

"We're impeding on their home. From a law enforcement perspective: do your due diligence and don't give them a reason to come to your neighborhood. Don't put garbage cans out until morning of trash pick-up." Public Information Officer, Corey Dobridnia, Walton County Sheriff's Department.

Six "at-home" practices to exercise bear safety, according to the BearWise website:

Do not feed or approach a bear – Feeding a bear teaches it to approach humans as a pet would its owner for a "treat." A bear may feel threatened and

"bluff charge" or stomp and make noise; it's not preparing to attack. It wants you to go away.

Secure food, garbage, and recycling. Set garbage out on the day of your trash pick-up, not the night before.

Remove bird feeders when bears are active. It's a treat to them. Learn of other ways to feed birds.

Do not leave pet food outdoors. Pet food is high in protein and fat, which bears love.

Clean and store grills. Thoroughly clean and cover your grill or smoker.

Make neighbors aware of bear activity. Whether you're intentionally or unintentionally attracting bears, their presence is a safety issue. Alert neighbors and your local fish and wildlife agents of bear activity.

Protect your family as well as bears by educating yourself and others. You may contact your local fish and wildlife commission and invite a bear biologist or wildlife assistance biologist to a meeting in your community. Visit [myfwc.com/wildlifehabitats/wildlife/bear/wise/](http://myfwc.com/wildlifehabitats/wildlife/bear/wise/) or [www.bearwise.org/](http://www.bearwise.org/) for further information on how to live with bears in your area.

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# The Arc of the Emerald Coast and British Swim School launch swimming classes at the Aquatic & Education Center in Fort Walton Beach

The Arc of the Emerald Coast proudly announces a new partnership with British Swim School. The British Swim School teaches water safety and survival skills to children as young as three months old. The British Swim School, founded by Rita Goldberg in 1981, currently operates in over 215 schools across the United States and Canada. British Swim School will be using its unique and highly effective teaching methods to host classes every Thursday and Friday at The Arc's Aquatic & Education Center at 341 Holmes Boulevard in Fort Walton Beach. Classes will start Thursday, March 5, 2020.

The Arc's Aquatic & Education Center opened on May 23, 2017. Since its inception, the center has focused on providing an inclusive facility that the entire community can enjoy, including people with and without disabili-

ties or limitations. The facility is 7,000 square feet and features a 1,400square-foot zero-entry pool. The building is also home to a state-of-the-art kitchen and nutrition center and offers space that can be used for events, birthday parties, board meetings and more. The Aquatic& Education Center was jointly funded by Impact 100, Destin Charity Wine Auction Foundation and Cox Communications.

"This is a great partnership for the Aquatic & Education Center," said The Arc's CEO, John Roper. "We use the pool regularly for our clients at The Arc, but it's exciting to see other members of the community dive in and enjoy the pool."

For more information or to sign your child up for classes with the British Swim School, visit: [www.facebook.com/British-SwimSchoolOfPensacola](http://www.facebook.com/British-SwimSchoolOfPensacola)

# The Arc of the Emerald Coast Hosts Father-Daughter Princess Ball

Tickets are now on sale for The Arc of the Emerald Coast's annual Father-Daughter Princess Ball, presented by Emerald Coast Hospice. It's a magical night she'll never forget, so be sure to mark your calendars for May 30, 2020! We invite all princesses between the ages of 3 and 17 to slip on their glass slippers, don their fanciest dress, and join us for an evening of laughter and dance. Princesses may attend with their Father, Grandfather, Uncle, or other Prince escort of their choice. The royal celebration will begin at 6:00 pm in the Student Services Building 400 at Northwest Florida State College, Niceville. Princesses and their escorts can look forward to photos, party gifts, refreshments, a candy table and dancing.

Tickets to the Ball are \$30.00 per couple and \$15.00 for each additional Princess. Military couple discount is available. Tickets are now available on [850tix.com](http://850tix.com). All proceeds will benefit The Arc of the Emerald Coast (Formerly Horizons of Okaloosa County). Reservations are required to attend. Horizons was founded in 1992 and is an affiliate of The Arc of the United States, the world's



largest grassroots advocacy organization for citizens of all ages with cognitive, intellectual, and developmental disabilities, and their families. June 2015 Horizons of Okaloosa County changed its name to The Arc of the Emerald Coast. The Arc of the Emerald Coast provides services in Okaloosa, Santa Rosa, and Walton Counties. We provide services that work to include all children and adults with cognitive, intellectual, and developmental disabilities in every community. We also focus on abilities, respect, choice for all and encourage active citizenship and inclusion in every community.

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Community

# Celebrate the 34th Annual Sandestin Wine Festival!

Thursday, April 16th - Sunday, April 19th | Friday 5-8 p.m. and Saturday 1-4 p.m. | The Village of Baytowne Wharf

Uncork some fun in the Sun this spring at The Sandestin Wine Festival! In its 34th year, the Sandestin Wine Festival is one of the most established and continuously running coastal wine festivals in the region as evidenced by its continued success; thousands know there's no substitute for this coveted four-day event that takes place in the charming setting of The Village of Baytowne Wharf at Sandestin.

For years, April has been a highly anticipated month for local and visiting wine enthusiasts. Regarded as one of the top wine festivals in the country and known as the "Kentucky Derby of Wine Festivals," the festival offers wine aficionados a wide range of experiences!

The main events, the Grand Wine Tastings, showcase more than 500 domestic and international wines throughout the weekend. You will enjoy the opportunity to talk to vineyard owners and wine makers about their favorite appellations in all varieties, styles and price rang-

es, and perhaps try something new. Treat yourself, family and friends to a gourmet experience courtesy of some of the best chefs on the Emerald Coast from your favorite local restaurants who pair delectable bite-sized appetizers with their current glass selections—the Savor South Walton experience!

A new festival favorite, the Bubbly & Boozy tent, returns to the Grand Sandestin Lawn, featuring bubbles and specialty liquors. Local and regional music also set the vibe for fun days of discovery.

As we look back over the years, it's amazing to witness an event that has aged to perfection—just like a fine wine. Join wine novices and connoisseurs for a picture-perfect series of events featuring one-of-a-kind seminars, wine dinners, grand wine tastings and culinary experiences for which the festival is known and which lends to its popularity.

Benefitting the Fisher House of the Emerald Coast and Sand-



estin Foundation for Kids, the Sandestin Wine Festival will deliver an enjoyable weekend with amazing food, wine and friends!

To purchase your tickets or for more information, visit [sandestinwinefestival.com](http://sandestinwinefestival.com).

**THURSDAY, APRIL 16**  
**The Official Kick off Party**

7 p.m., The Village Door at Sandestin  
**Willamette Valley Wine Dinner**  
6 p.m., Slick Lips Seafood and Oyster House

**FRIDAY, APRIL 17**  
**Champagne & Seafood Lunch Cruise**  
12 p.m.-3 p.m., Baytowne Marina  
**Grand Wine Tastings**  
5-8 p.m.  
**SOLD OUT VIP Lounge Area, 4:30-8 p.m.**

**SATURDAY, APRIL 18**  
**Mind. Body. Beach.**  
9 a.m., Sandestin Beach  
**Grand Wine Tastings**  
1-4 p.m.  
**SOLD OUT VIP Lounge Area, 12:30-4 p.m.**

**SUNDAY, APRIL 19**  
**Bubbly Brunch**

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# Humbleman Men's Hair Studio Announces Expansion

The humbleman men's hair studio is pleased to announce a new member to their team, Alex Burhig. Alex, 32 and recently married, moved to Walton County in 1996 from Nashville, Tennessee. He's been cutting hair professionally for over 10 years. Alex specializes in hairstyles from men's skin fades, versed in clas-

sic to current hairstyles, and even accommodates the ladies, from short haircuts, to long layers. ...and he doesn't forget about the kiddo's either! Outside of the studio, Alex loves surfing, cooking, and most importantly, traveling, and spending time with his lovely wife. Alex's likable personality, and talent for his craft will send

you off feeling as good on the inside, as you feel on the outside. For appointments with Alex, call or text 850-842-8423. Walk-ins welcome. 76 Arbor Lane Santa Rosa Beach. (Located behind Sherwin Williams off 283S, above Salon 76.)

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## 13<sup>th</sup> St Patrick's Parade Cancelled

BY PAUL VIZARD

Sadly, the 13th St. Patrick's Day Parade cannot take place this year. The logistics of the route, and compliance with Walton County permitting, coupled with the short time frame to get approval, proved to be too big a hill to climb.

However, great strides have been made for a bigger and better event in 2021. Plans have al-

ready begun for the parade, and after party festival. Anyone that donated to the fundraiser can contact me to request a refund. Monies left over will be put into escrow for next year. A not for profit is being formed for future events. Should anyone wish to be part of the planning board please contact me.

A huge thank you goes out to all that donated, shared, called,

emailed and texted support. Further thanks go to WCSO Lt. Jordan, Dave Talley, Butler Elementary, Linda Richards, and Walton County staff who tried their outmost to make the event happen. So, save the date for 2021 -- Saturday, March 13th for the biggest 13th St Patrick's Parade and Festival ever! Stay up to date at [www.30aparade.com](http://www.30aparade.com)

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Arts

# Local Artists William Edwards and Sarah Stewart to show at WaterColor's Art in the Park March 21-22

Father and daughter duo, William Edwards and Sarah Stewart are an artistic force to be reckoned with. William who originally set out to study documentary filmmaking, instead put his education on hold to raise a

growing family that eventually numbered 6 children. He first became a house painter in his native Southern California and when the family moved to his wife Becky's home town in upstate New York, he set his sights

on delving into a more artistic aspect of painting. William attended decorative art training in London, New York City and Miami and learned a myriad of techniques from faux wood graining and marble to Venetian plaster and "trompe l'oeil" (a realistic painting style that means "to trick the eye.") Venetian plaster has seen a resurgence in popularity of late for its timeless appeal and use in contemporary minimalist spaces. Venetian plaster has been around for centuries and was first used in Italy where water, lime, and marble dust were combined and spread on walls and burnished to create depth and shine.

Sarah, the oldest of the children, would spend countless hours in her father's studio watching him mix paints and practice his various techniques on sample boards. "I was so riveted that I wouldn't even say anything for hours and then I would and he would practically throw his paintbrush and we would laugh," she recalls. "I think even then the seeds for my own artistic endeavors were planted." William and Becky and their kids vacationed to Santa Rosa Beach in the late '90s where they fell in love with the white sand and crystal clear waters of the Gulf of Mexico. "We just knew we had to move" says William. So in 1998, they did and bought a home just blocks from the water. Since then they have never looked back.



Sarah has had the opportunity to study nursing and is certified as an art teacher as well but prefers to teach private art lessons and create bas relief plaster paintings. Bas relief is French for "low relief" as in a two-dimensional work of art with depth. Sarah's trip to Monaco, France, Italy, and Switzerland in 2015 was pivotal. "To feel the heartbeat of the renaissance, to hear the bells ring from ancient cathedrals, to walk sun-washed streets and watch the waves break on polished marble stones was nourishing to my soul. To see the refined architectural edifices, to admire masterpieces at the Louvre and contemplate the history and art soaked cultures of Europe was life-changing. I felt inspired to keep finding my direction as an artist and my love for classical themes was solidified."

Both Sarah and her father William will be showing their bas relief plaster art at the "Art in the Park" show in Watercolor March 21-22. His company is called 30A Decorative Arts and Sarah's is 30A Venetian. They collaborate on projects together and give bids for Venetian plaster. "To work with my dad here at the beach," says Sarah, "and follow my own artistic pursuits for a living is truly a dream come true."

Their websites are under construction and will be live soon. Check back at 30ADecorativeArts.com and 30AVenetian.com

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# Spring Has Arrived at The REP Theatre

## Andrew Duhon, Thursday, March 12th

Andrew Duhon is a songwriter from New Orleans, a teller of stories with an undeniable voice, weighted and soulful. Duhon has released 3 recordings, the latest of which, 'The Moorings', was nominated for a Grammy in 2014 for 'Best Engineered Album'. He has toured solo for much of his career, and that troubadour element is certainly present, an usher of modern-day folklore.

## My One And Only, Thursday, March 26th

Emotionally-honest lyrics will bid you to wander through hidden scenes in their lives, accompanied by the intimate harmonies that only life-long lovers could discover. With their polar-opposite musical backgrounds, Kassie and Benjamin meld old-school country, singer-songwriter, and alternative folk-rock into a sound that can only be described as "Southern-Soul and Curious-Grit".



## Sofia Talvik, Sunday, April 5th

Sofia Talvik is a rare artist with a voice comparable to giants like Joni Mitchell, or as the Folk/Americana Magazine No Depression said it "A singer/songwriter who is able to evoke the essence of Laurel Canyon circa the '60s as expressed in the work of Joni Mitchell, Judy Collins, Buffy Sainte-Marie and others who were able to paint beautiful tapestries from words and music."

## The REP Film Club Presents, Honeyland Thursday, March 19th at 7:30 pm

Hatidze lives with her ailing mother in the mountains of Macedonia, making a living cultivating honey using ancient beekeeping traditions. When an unruly family moves in next door, what at first seems like a balm for her solitude becomes a source of tension as they, too, want to practice beekeeping, while disregarding her advice. The most awarded film out of this year's Sundance Film Festival, Honeyland is an epic, visually stunning portrait of the delicate bal-

ance between nature and humanity that has something sweet for everyone.

## Improv Bootcamp for Kids!, March 17th - April 16th 2 pm - 3:15 pm \$25 per Session

At The REP, not only do we perform and share stories, but we also share the craft of storytelling and theatre arts with local and visiting students. This Spring, The REP continues our popular children's Improv Bootcamp sessions. Through these sessions, students learn all the basics of improv by focusing on teamwork, creativity, and thinking outside the box. Students as young as 5 get to be onstage, learning and performing for their friends and family with The REP's talented actor/teachers. On Thursday of each week, you will see firsthand how much your child has grown and embraced their creativity through our Improv Army performance where they will show off their incredible new skills.

## Go, Dog. Go!, March 9th - April 13th at 6 pm

Seaside Amphitheater

P.D. Eastman's classic children's book comes to life on stage in an exploration of movement, color and space. The dogs delve into life with gusto, creating a visual spectacle for the audience to feast upon. They snorkel. They sing and dance and climb trees. A big and little musical world of doggy fun. Like a pop-up book that comes to life and never stops. A complimentary event for all ages. Proudly presented by the Seaside Merchants.

## Adventures in Alys, March 9th - April 9th at 10 am Alys Beach Amphitheatre

Join The REP Theatre for a one-of-a-kind storytelling adventure that is perfect for the entire family! On Mondays and Wednesdays at 10 am, The REP's professional actors create an improvised story with help from the audience. On Thursdays at 10 am, The REP's improv comedy show takes audiences on a hilarious and fast-paced ride filled with interactive improv games.

For a full list of upcoming events & tickets please visit [www.Lovetherep.com](http://www.Lovetherep.com)



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# How to Read Labels



BY MELANIE STEWART

Have you ever picked one grocery item over another because of the health claims on the label? You may have been duped. That's because terms like fat free or all natural are often slapped on a food item that may not be healthy at all. Frustrated? You're not alone. Nearly 59% of consumers have a hard time understanding nutrition labels, according to a Nielsen survey.

**NO SUGAR ADDED?** This does not mean there is no sugar in the product. The product could still be full of carbohydrates and calories, so be sure to notice how many grams of sugar per serving.

**FREE RANGE?** Although a food label may say free range chicken, don't assume your bird was scampering around outside the barn. Although the USDA does define the words free range, there are no requirements for the amount, duration, and quality of outdoor access.

**ALL NATURAL?** Don't be fooled, all natural doesn't mean all that much. The FDA doesn't define it, although food makers won't get in trouble as long as so-labeled food doesn't contain added colors, artificial flavors, or "synthetic substances." That means there's room for interpretation. What you think it means: It's healthy, pure, and good for you. What it actually

means: Who knows, this claim is not regulated. I've seen this label on all kinds of things I would not consider 100% natural.

It is potentially misleading to say a meat is all natural. All fresh meat qualifies as natural, as it doesn't contain additives and is not more than minimally processed – so, this phrase is useless. Similarly, grass-fed: Nearly all cattle are fed grass at some point in their lives, so this term is virtually meaningless. Even Angus beef can be misleading as nearly 65% of cattle are black-hided and receive the Angus stamp, but only 25% of Angus-influenced cattle actually meet Certified Angus Beef standards, which are the criteria that truly make a cut of beef the best quality.

**1. AMERICAN GRASSFED LABEL (BEST)** If you want beef from cows that grazed exclusively on grass for their entire lives, look for the American Grass-fed label, which requires that animals were

raised on pasture and have never been confined, fed grain or given antibiotics or hormones.

**2. CERTIFIED ORGANIC (2nd BEST)** Certified organic meat must come from pasture-raised animals and have never been given antibiotics or hormones.

**3. CERTIFIED ANGUS BEEF vs. Angus beef**

**4. PASTURE-RAISED** While there is no specific pasture-raised certification; animals raised this way can roam freely in their natural environment.

**5. RBGH-free or rBST-free:** Signifies that the product came from cows that were not treated with a genetically engineered growth hormone that artificially increases milk production but which may cause health problems in humans.

**How about PRODUCE?** With produce it's important to look at the 1st 3 digits of the barcode.

Bar-codes that begin 00-09 are grown in the USA and CANADA; 40-44 are from GERMANY;

49 is from JAPAN and 50 UK, USA, or CANADIAN. These

are the ones that I prefer. Bar-codes that begin with 690, 691 or 692, the product is made in China. 471 is made in Taiwan. Personally, I avoid these products as many chemicals banned from use in growing food in the US can be used in foreign countries on food to be exported here. It is important to read the bar code to track its origin. Many products no longer list where they were made or grown, only where the distributor is located.

**NOTE:** 5 digits beginning with 9 ##### is ORGANIC, 5 digits beginning with 8 ##### is genetically modified. I try to avoid ALL GMO products.

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.yumtum-nutrition.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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# What's Your Life Dashboard Telling You?



BY STEPHENIE CRAIG, LCSW

As you're driving down the road, your car dashboard tells you your speed, engine temperature, gas level, and oil needs. Maybe you never let your gas dip blow 1/4 tank and change your oil every 3,000 miles. Maybe you like to push the limits and see how far you can go before you're on empty. Maybe life is really busy and it's hard to find the time to take care of your car. Regardless of your personality, failing to tend to your dashboard indicators long-term usually results in trouble on the side of the road.

Life also has a dashboard with measurable indicators that provide you with useful information about how you're functioning at a basic level. When you tend to your life dashboard indicators regularly, you set yourself up to feel more stable, calm, energetic, and ready to face life's challenges

in health. When you ignore your life dashboard indicators, you are more likely to feel hungry, angry, lonely, tired, and stressed often resulting in unhealthy coping behaviors like excessive drinking, drug use, unhealthy relationships, excessive spending, and other addictive patterns.

Most people don't intentionally pursue living on empty and stalling out in life and relationships, however, without intentional effort, we are all vulnerable to finding ourselves there. So how do you know what your dashboard is telling you?

### 6 Life Dashboard Indicators to keep you on the healthy road:

**Sleep:** Most people need 7-9 hours of mostly uninterrupted sleep per night to maximize body and brain function. Prioritizing healthy sleep provides a necessary foundation for all daily interactions and decisions. If you're struggling to sleep, deep breathing before bed, sleeping in a dark room, refraining from screens an hour before bed, and use of Valerian Tea and calming essential oils are places to begin trouble shooting.

**Health:** Seeing a doctor regularly for a physical and blood work can provide useful information about any ongoing health needs that might be impairing your daily energy level. If you are prescribed medications, take

them consistently as prescribed and check in with your doctor about any negative side effects or physical changes.

**Exercise:** Regular heart-elevating exercise for 20-30 minutes, 4-6x per week helps your physical health and stimulates your brain's release of endorphins, dopamine, norepinephrine, and serotonin supporting stress and mood regulation.

**Nutrition:** Drinking enough water and consuming more healthy foods daily including fruits, vegetables, and lean meats most often contributes to better overall health, decreased brain fog, and increased energy. What you eat and drink is directly related to how your brain and body function.

**Spiritual Life:** Personal faith activities and involvement in faith community increase feelings of hope, connection, and seeing yourself as part of a greater whole in the world. Spiritual practices most often lead to generous living and feeling a sense of life purpose.

**Relationships:** Surrounding yourself with supportive, healthy relationships adds meaning to life. Healthy relationships are friendships and/or family relationships that have a give and take dynamic, provide/request support when needed, and encourage you toward health.

As you read through the life

dashboard indicators, notice how you're doing in each area. Choose one or two indicators to address if you're noticing you've been ignoring your dashboard. Begin actively tending to your life dashboard by telling one trusted person your indicator of focus (I want to prioritize sleep) and one action step you'll do consistently over the next 3 weeks (I will go to bed by 10 each night with no screens). Ask your trusted person to check in with you periodically about your progress.

While tending to indicators can feel like an annoying nuisance, not doing so puts you at risk for an exhausted, isolated, stalled-out life. As you develop habits for checking your dashboard daily, weekly, and monthly,

you'll begin to find, being proactive with your life dashboard indicators isn't so hard after all and keeps you moving along your journey much more smoothly! Connect on the journeybravely.com Resources page to get your free Life Dashboard Indicator Worksheet PDF.

*Stephenie Craig is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker/Therapist of 18 years, specializing in emotional/relational health. She loves hearing others' stories and helping people find new perspective that produces peace, healing, and connection through counseling. Stephenie provides treatment for adults, teenagers, couples, and families with anxiety symptoms, parenting struggles, teen issues, depression, grief, divorce, and other life transitions. Connect with Stephenie at Journeybravely.com.*

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 Wellness

# The Benefits of a Personal Trainer



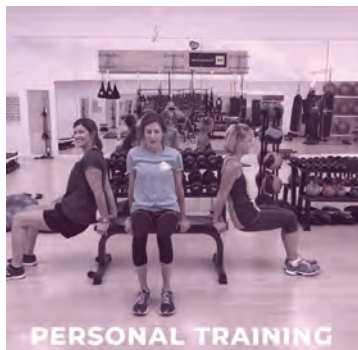
BY LISA LEATH TURPIN, HEALTH AND WELLNESS COACH

Lack of motivation, discipline and lack of knowledge are huge hurdles when it comes to working out and keeping yourself healthy, balanced and strong. You have only one body and how you handle it influences your quality of life for now and the time you have left.

A personal trainer is someone who has studied and devoted themselves to learning about the physiology of the body, i.e. how it works, kinesiology, which is the physics of movement, as well as utilizing human behavior modification, including basic

nutrition. A good trainer combines all these aspects and looks at everyone INDIVIDUALLY. Everyone is a little different, but with a trainer's knowledge, individual plans can be made with on-going evaluation, and therefore goals are reached more quickly and safely. Personal Trainers are experts in training the body so as to make the most of the time spent for a variety of personal goals people might have.

The body is intricate. Motions done incorrectly can affect you for life. For instance, a strong back is so very important. Muscularly, it is your second largest muscle group (group being the operative word) in your body. It's comprised of your trapezius, latissimus, rhomboids and the important erector muscles. Each one of these muscles play their role in supporting the spine and holding us upright. Keeping a healthy and balanced back means to work these muscles in the way they are intended. Pulling exercises work the back. Examples are rowing or pulling yourself up in a pull-up (or pull-



down if you have a machine). There are numerous exercises to choose from, but what is important is keeping it safe. Range of motion, speed of movements, and knowing how to stabilize your positions are extremely important. Full range of motion is more safely achieved when your speed of movement is slow and controlled, otherwise you will have semi-spastic movement which leads to injury, either over time, or during a single workout. Moving slow and controlled recruits more muscle instead of working joints and ligaments. The goal of exercising is to work your muscles with little to no damage to joints, tendons and ligaments.

Sometimes in sports you have to train with very quick and explosive movements. This type of training is called sports specific training. Sports specific has its place for competitive athletes or certain individual goals, and is monitored closely by trainers and coaches. This means that there is a place for that training, but the risks go up; those that choose certain sports weigh the risk to play the sport. It's good to change speeds, WITH proper progression, when your body is ready for it. Strength + Speed = POWER. That is a true formula, but it has limitations—and those limitations are an individual thing.

Types of personal training sessions are: one-on-one sessions, partner sessions (two people), and small group training, which I like to have between three to six people. There are benefits to each. One-on-one gives undivided attention. It's tailored to you and you alone. These are called private sessions and are the most expensive, because they are more focused and exclusive. Partner training

breaks the fee in half for each individual and gives you a partner to share the workout with. Small group training is still exclusive and trainers are still able to tailor, but the group's goals have to be somewhat similar. So, this works very well with basic fitness goals and staying healthy, and most LOVE the comradery. All types of training keep you on track and consistent. Group training is a great way to keep costs down and still get individual attention. The trainer designs the workout, watches and teaches proper movement, and motivates everyone to complete and stay consistent weekly. Training can be done on the beach, in-home or in a private facility. If you have questions or would like to inquire about hiring me as your personal trainer, feel free to TEXT at (850) 974-2005 and I'll give you a call with more details. It's my passion to help educate others using my Sports Fitness Management degree and educational training for more than 25 years.



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# Coming Soon: Corona Virus



By DR. RICHARD CHERN, MD

Unless you've had your head in the sand you've heard about coronavirus. Should we be worried? Well...maybe. Coronavirus is very similar to influenza and many of my peers have asked, "What's the hype? Am I missing something here?" The rate of death from influenza is about 0.5% and the rate of

death with coronavirus is about 3%. This is still fairly low, but there are concerning differences between coronavirus and influenza.

There are no available immunizations. Immunizations provide herd immunity. This means if I am sick and you are susceptible and we have mutual friends you avoid exposure if the mutual friends are immunized. This can slow or stop the spread of influenza but not coronavirus.

The virus spreads like influenza. It can transfer from an infected person up to 10 days before they display symptoms. And, it stays alive on surfaces for up to 9 days! This means that someone who didn't look sick can transfer the virus to a surface and infect second person who can infect a third person before anyone shows

signs of illness. When you combine these two factors, coronavirus becomes much more of a problem. Essentially every person on the planet is susceptible so it will be impossible to prevent the spread of this virus. Basically, it's very likely to spread to the Emerald Coast.

Next, even though the death rate is 3%, children and healthy adults rarely have complications. This means older individuals with medical conditions are at much higher risk of serious complications. The good part for us is the virus does *not* do well in warm weather so as we approach summer the chances of getting infected will diminish.

What can we do?

There is one thing I want everyone to change today. Stop coughing *into your hands!* This spreads disease! Unless you

*immediately* wash your hands, whatever you touch is now contaminated with a virus that could kill the person next to you. Starting right now *cough into your elbow!* It is easy and very effective. Teach your children right now to do the same. I still see kids every day that cough into their hands and then wipe it on whatever is close or worse just cough directly on other people! These acts only serve to spread the virus. Unfortunately, and more than once, I have seen grandchildren infect their own grandparents with infections that were only lethal to the older of the two. Wash your

hands regularly with soap and water. Although I'm not a fan, using hand sanitizer can also help. Clean surfaces with alcohol or bleach. I have discussed peptides in the past and two fantastic peptides to boost immune function are Thymosin Alpha and Thymosin Beta. We have both available. There are others but these are my favorites. These are natural peptides which help us fight viral and bacterial infections. Unfortunately, they are lost as we age. The nice part is we can now put them back in the body. Call Dr Richard Chern, MD at 850-837-1271 to find out how.

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 Wellness

# DPC: A Possible Solution for Your Health Care Needs

BY DR. KIMBERLY P. HOOD

Attempted solutions for America's health care issues have left doctors and patients with big government/insurance companies, who dictate how physicians run their offices and see patients, only to reimburse doctors 70% of the time. This interference has caused higher overhead expenses due to the need to hire more employees to satisfy the demands of these dictators. The higher overhead means the physician must see more patients per hour, creating long office wait times for patients, with visits lasting only 6-10 minutes.

The contribution of big corporate managed medical entities has not been any better. "Streamlining" protocols, and "red tape" in offices, have made patients a faceless number and doctors disposable. Humanity's been removed from medicine. The days of your personal physician sitting with you for a while

and really listening when you're not well are gone, or are they?

Many physicians have walked away from burdensome, bureaucratic practice models in order to offer their patients the doctor-patient relationship so many patients desire and so many doctors train for, a "DPC" model of practice. DPC stands for Direct Primary Care. This model allows for a physician to contract, for a periodic fee, directly with patients to provide defined services without interference from nonmedical administrators and big corporate entities. DPC providers do not take insurance, thus, freeing the physician for patient care. The doctor works for the patient. The contracted services could consist of labs, x-rays, generic medications, electronic communication 24/7, same day appointments, procedures, etc.

Small business owners and their employees often find it difficult to obtain affordable health insurance. Most policies have

high deductibles and will only help if there's a major illness, car wreck, or need for emergency surgery. It does not pay for basic health care, labs, medications, etc. A DPC practice model is a great solution in this situation. It is also perfect for patients without insurance or for patients who just want personalized time with their physician.

Because the overhead expenses are considerably lower, it allows the physician opportunity to see less patients, therefore, spending more time with the patient. Visits may actually be 30-60 minutes or longer. Studies show this model has fewer medical errors and actually lowers healthcare costs. In my practice, my patient visits are 30-60 minutes, and wait time is five minutes at most. I offer traditional and functional medicine solutions, discounted medical-grade supplements, and virtual appointments to my members. Patients can meet with me online for urgent care needs or for follow-up visits. Labs, radiology, or prescriptions can be sent from my computer. Patients don't have to leave their home to sit an hour or more in an office, especially when they're ill.

If you have minimal health-care coverage, no healthcare



coverage, or just want a personal physician to be available to you, consider a DPC physician. Other than myself, there are several in the area. Three that I personally know to be great DPC doctors and who've helped

me get started are Dr. Michelle Vandembosch in Baker, Dr. JD Bailey in Crestview, and Dr. Calvin Blount in Destin. DPC docs provide personalized patient care that's perfect for you and meaningful to us.



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# My Wife



By SEAN DIETRICH

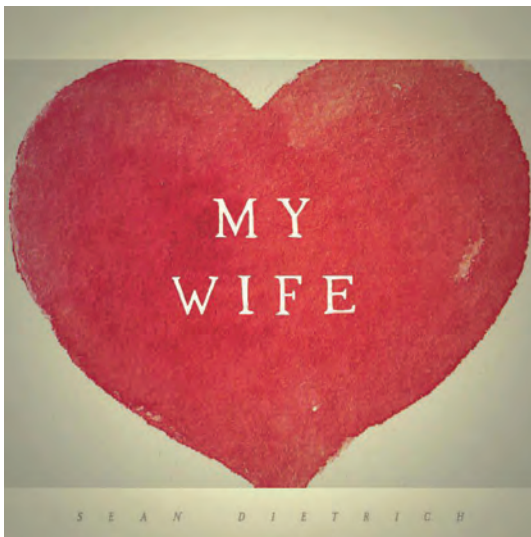
Do you remember when we met? I do. It was a Barnes and Noble bookstore. I was reading; you were with friends. You waltzed through the door with that determined walk you have. That I-can-take-care-of-myself walk. There are some things a man never forgets. You wore a baby-blue sweater. Your hair was chin-length. We must've talked for an hour. Two strangers. A chance meeting. No. I take that back. I don't believe in chances. How about the long

drives we took just for fun? We'd ride two-lane highways through the night for an excuse to talk. We've always been able to carry our weight in words.

I asked you to marry me. You said yes. I gave you a jeweler's box containing the world's tiniest diamond. It cost me every dollar I had. You wore red that night. Red. We got married in a small chapel. We honeymooned in Charleston. We had no money for that trip, but we went anyway.

We were dumber back then. I miss being dumb. How about our ugly apartment. Remember that place? I drove by it yesterday, for old time's sake. The grounds were overgrown. Mold on the siding. What a dump. Our old neighbors were still there. The same ones who had fleas that infested the whole building. God, I loved that place.

Then there was the time I wrecked the truck. The man behind us fell asleep at the wheel. You were listening to the radio when it happened. "Shameless,"



was the song playing. I thought we were dead. It was a miracle we survived. But then, our whole lives have been one big miracle, you know? You got me through

college. You tutored me through math class. Those are miracles in themselves.

We used to argue hard sometimes. When our spats ended, we didn't get lovey dovey like adolescents. That's not who we are. Instead, we'd go to Pizza Hut, or Kentucky Fried Chicken, or anywhere with a buffet. And there was the time at UAB Hospital. After your biopsy. My chest felt cold. I've never been so scared. When the doctor called us into his office I thought I would vomit. I stared at his mouth when he spoke. I didn't want to miss a sentence. You were squeezing my hand. He said the word "benign" and we both cried. He left the office to give us privacy.

We cried a lot that day. And here we are.

After this many years, I know our lives aren't glamorous. I'm

sorry. You could've married a man with money. A gentleman. Instead, you married me—whatever I am. We live in a home with brake lights on the back. Our queen bed has a foul-smelling coonhound in it. Our vehicles are old. My truck needs new tires; your transmission ain't what it used to be.

But we've survived life together. We've watched good dogs die. We dug their holes. I stood beside you during your father's funeral. You stand beside me every day. You made me who I am. It makes me feel rich to think I might make you who you are. Life isn't forever. I know that. Sometimes I think about this, and I'm too scared to imagine the day one of us wakes up in an empty bed. But that day isn't today. And so I thank the moon, the stars, the sun, and their maker.

I am thankful for life. For love. For us. And for people you meet by chance in bookstores.

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Musings

# Enlarging Territories: Networking



BY KIRK MCCARLEY

An Old Testament Biblical verse from 1 Chronicles 4: 9-10 contains an otherwise obscure passage, the prayer of Jabez. In it we learn:

“Jabez was more honorable than his brothers. His mother had named him Jabez, saying, ‘I gave birth to him in pain.’ Jabez cried out to the God of Israel,

saying ‘Oh that you would bless me indeed and enlarge my territory! Let your hand be with me, and keep me from the evil one.’ And God granted his request.”

Author Bruce Wilkinson penned a book 20 years ago based on these five sentences, and the three key words:

“Enlarge my territory”

What do these words mean to you? Do they suggest personal acquisition? Greater responsibility in vocation? More resources and wealth?

The first of a year is a busy time for a Career Coach. New Year’s resolutions for prospective clients can include seeking different employment or even altogether new careers affording greater challenge, opportunity, and compensation.

Preparing for occupational change requires an assessment of our talents and skills and identification of employment

targets, to be sure. In spite of our planning and searching, however, the reality is that likely 80% of job placements are for positions not publicly communicated. Rather these opportunities come about as a result of contacts job seekers either know or assertively pursue. Some call it networking. I often call it “territory enlargement.”

One way to network is the traditional “cocktail party” approach where business cards and pleasantries are exchanged. Another is communicating with family members, friends, and associates that you are aiming to change employment.

A better tactic involves not even directly making a contact with the friend or associate about a job, but rather scheduling a “research” meeting of short duration. The introductory call may go like:

“I am doing some research about your industry and wondered if you might have time for

a brief conversation. I am interested in learning about the challenges and opportunities you face, how you deal with them, and what your expectations are going forward.”

Who would not be honored to make time to grant such a request?

Once the appointment is secured come to the meeting not so much equipped with a resume, but rather a professional binder for note taking. Some questions to ask during the face-to-face:

What are some of the challenges or obstacles you see at this time and how do you think they are best overcome? How flexible or adaptable has your company been to change? What are some of the opportunities that can be leveraged to move your company successfully forward?

Where appropriate be prepared during the conversation to interject personal experiences you may have had that pertain

to the discussion. Share similar situations you may have faced, what the obstacles were, the actions taken, and results achieved.

At the conclusion of the meeting your binder will contain a list of other organizations and contacts you also plan to meet. Present your list to your contact and ask, “what other names and organizations should I have on this list?” Their name and the name of their enterprise will also be on that sheet. It is highly likely that they will either give you an additional contact, or more, or were so impressed with your direct and professional approach that you have gotten an interview without actually going through the process.

Follow up with a thank you note for their time, knowing that you may have just forged an opportunity for yourself; at worst you have networked creatively by receiving an informal interview...and enlarged your territory.

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.



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# Whatever Happened to Gratitude?



BY MYRNA CONRAD

How often each day do you take the time to say “thank you” to someone? Did you take the time to thank your spouse today? Did you find something to thank your children for? When was the last time you thanked your supervisor, fellow employees, or those who work for you? What about those who wait on you at a restaurant, or in a store, or the cashier that checks you out at the grocery store? It only takes a moment to say “thank you” and you might just make someone’s day, maybe it’ll start to change your perspective as well.

My mother was in her 60s when she bought her first new car. She was so excited and appreciative of the help that the car salesman gave her, that she took him home-baked goodies periodically for the next six months. He was just doing his job, but she was grateful for his kindness and help in an area she had no prior experience. She not only said “thank you” but showed her gratitude.

When was the last time you thanked God? Ingratitude isn’t something new. In fact, Luke tells a story, in scripture, about Jesus healing 10 lepers and only one of them came back to say thank you. Can you imagine? Leprosy (Hansen’s Disease) back in Biblical times was a disease that was incurable. People who had leprosy would have to leave everything and live outside the village in a place just for lepers. They were shunned and no one wanted to get near them. There was no hope for recovery and they were left to die in their misery. However, Jesus completely healed them and gave them back their life, their families, and their hope. How could only one go

back and thank Him?

Yet think of all of the blessings each of us receive everyday and fail to say “thank you.” We live in a country of abundance and yet there is so much depression and unhappiness. There are millions of people in the U.S. that suffer from depression. We get the very thing that we think will make us happy, then we are onto the next thing that we think we need or must have. The desire for more pulls us from a heart of gratitude.

After years of research, it has been determined that gratitude is a key to psychological well being, making people happier, improving their relationships, and even counteracting depression. Researcher Jeff Huffman states, “There is growing evidence that being grateful may not only bring good feelings, it could lead to better health, lowering blood pressure and strengthening the immune system.”

Scientifically, it has to do with gratitude activating the parasympathetic, relaxing part of the nervous system. Some studies also have found that gratitude is good for the heart.

Do you want to develop a heart of gratitude? Here are a few strategies:

### Be Aware:

Look back on your day to see if you had more of an attitude of grumbling or gratitude. There is always something to be thankful for.

Notice when someone is kind to you or does something for you and shows appreciation.

Notice how it feels when someone thanks you.

### Be Intentional:

Start a journal and list several things you are thankful for each night before going to bed. It will probably improve your sleep and maybe even help you wake up with a better attitude.

Take notice of those in your family and all of the things they do for you. Tell them how thankful you are for them.

Pay attention to those you interact with each day and remember to say thank you.

Thank those in the service industry because it’s often a thankless profession.

Thank God every day for giving you life.

Gratitude starts with you! Choose an attitude of gratitude, it might just change your life.

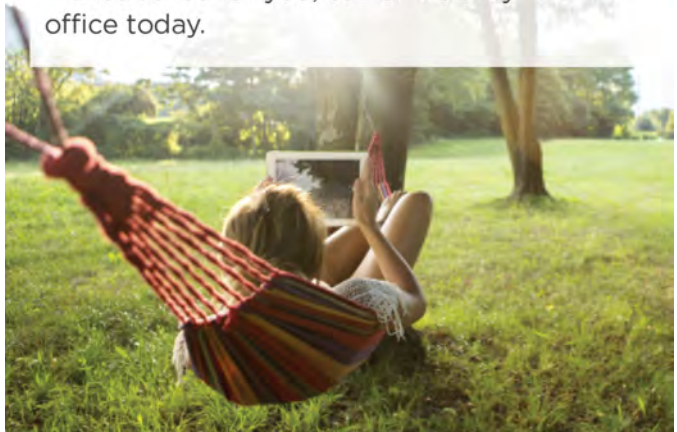
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# A Pastor's Ponderings; Memories That Last a Lifetime



BY REV. PETE HYDE

The cold, winter air had a feeling that there was a change coming. The sky that Saturday in January was a crystal, winter blue without a cloud. The Scouts were on their monthly campout

about twenty miles south of Topeka near the small town of Overbrook, Kansas. The high for the day was to reach the upper forties. They had arrived the evening before and set up camp in the dark, each patrol of boys scattering across the wooded hills of the area. The trees were bare, skeleton fingers reaching towards the azure sky. Campfires filled the little, stream bed valley with the wonderful aroma of burning wood as wispy fingers of smoke curled upward from four or five fires. The boys were busily working on badges and doing all those things junior high boys do when left to their own devices. Later that after-

noon they gathered around their fires to begin cooking the dinner meal. Cast iron dutch ovens were readied for stew, cornbread and cherry cobbler all made from scratch and cooked over and under the coals. Another group made a spit out pieces of wood and were basting a chicken while potatoes wrapped in foil were occasionally turned in the coals.

Sunrise awoke the scouts as it broke across the eastern horizon with a brilliance that seemed almost unnatural. They scurried to get dressed in the cold air. The experienced campers had their clothes in the bottom of their sleeping bags, so they were warm to put on and one did not have to get out of the bag until you were dressed and ready. A glance at the side of the tent revealed a surprise. It looked from the inside like the tent had sunk several inches into the ground. The zipper was frozen and had to be forced open to reveal about five inches of freshly fallen snow glistening in the clear Kansas

morning. We were hesitant to step out of the tent because it was so pretty. But it was so cold. We all wanted to climb back into our sleeping bags.

Then we heard him. It was our Scoutmaster, Moses Richie. (how appropriate). He was an old (old to us junior high boys) short, red headed Master Sergeant whose face could get as red as his hair if you aggravated him. He was calling us to gather up and get ready for the hike. We hadn't even had breakfast yet. But in a few minutes off we went out into the winter wonderland in single file for a hike that covered about five miles. There was lots of griping and complaining as we started out, but as we warmed up and began to realize why Sgt. Richie was leading us through this white, cold wilderness, the complaining stopped. You see, Moses knew what was good for us. We needed to get up and get moving, even if we didn't want to, to get warmed up and active. The rest of the day was

great. A memory that has lasted a lifetime was made.

How often does the unexpected sneak up in the night and surprise us? How often do we stand and just look at our new situation and are unsure of what we should do now? How often do we just want to retreat back into the safe warm sleeping bags of our lives only to hear the voice of one calling us out from the wilderness? The changes in life, whether gradual or as dramatic as a nighttime Kansas snowfall, many times catch us off guard. But God is calling us to walk (or to go on a hike) with him. He knows what is best for us even if we cannot figure it out. If we follow with eyes, heart, mind and soul open to his guidance, He will make a memory for us that will not only last a lifetime, but an eternity.

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



# Happy Art

BY RICK MOORE

A few years ago, in one of America's larger cities, a diverse group of seventy adults were asked to grade the artwork scattered throughout their town. Using an app, their grades and personal remarks were accumulated in order to influence what future artwork would be placed in city parks and common use areas. The overwhelming favorites were not pieces of art that made people think, nor was it the artwork that made a social statement. It was art that made people smile. It was happy art. For centuries, philosophers have argued over the meaning of the word art. Singers are called artists. Great chefs are able to master the art of cooking. Creative architects design buildings that are viewed as works of art. Movie directors create the art of cinema. But are these creations really art? Director Martin Scorsese's recently shared his view on Marvel Movies saying "I don't think they're cinema." Does that mean these movies are not art? Is the late great Stan Lee, comic genius, not truly an artist? What is art?

It seems art communities have become more open to a wide range of various works in the last hundred years. Even a single frame from a Disney classic film

Painted on celluloid (known as a cel) is now taken seriously as art. One such example is the cel from "The Band Concert" a movie released by Disney in 1935, which is noted as the first color Mickey Mouse cartoon. In this classic, Mickey is trying to conduct a concert, while trying to overcome various distractions such as Donald Duck playing the wrong tune on his flute, a pesky bee, or a violent storm. This original cel was sold in a private transaction in 1999 for a reported \$420,000. Somebody thinks it's "real art."

One of the greats from the same time frame as Disney is Norman Rockwell. While a few of his paintings dealt with tough social issues of the day, most of his paintings simply found a way into your heart and warmed your soul with a heaping dose of Americana that, at the very least, made you grin.

Some credit Andy Warhol for pop art becoming accepted by mainstream art collectors in the 1960s. Andy's philosophy was everybody should like everybody, and that pop art is all about liking things. Much of the art from this period aimed to blur the

boundaries between "high" art and "low" culture. The majority of pop artists also began their careers in commercial art. Unlike many "high art" themes of mo-



reality, pop art celebrated simple happy reflections of everyday society. One example would be David Hockney's "The Splash." At Sotheby's auction in February, 2020, the 1967 painting sold for over £23,000,000. I hope it put a smile on the face of the person's face who bought it; I'm sure it made the person who sold it very happy.

What about the local artists of the Emerald Coast? Recently my wife and I (and our two dogs) were visiting some of the cute shops in Grayton Beach where some artist who loves dogs (or a

dog lover who is an artist) painted a wall dedicated to the "The New Dogs of Grayton." That's definitely happy art. Located a few feet away is local artist

Beach, I went to see my new dentist at Miramar Beach Dental & Orthodontics, and what do you know, they had several of the fun and lively pieces of Andy's artwork scattered throughout their facility. Seems like dentists really do know how to make people smile, and so do our local artists. Even at my church, Destiny Worship Center, they recently lined the halls with portraits of joyful students, and covered the vestibule with giant murals of church members donning huge smiles. No, it's not the fancy artwork from the Vatican, nor does it have the opulence of the Louvre. But it is happy art.

Always remember; the greatest artwork in the world is often attached to a refrigerator by a magnet.

Andy Saczynski's cool art studio. His works of mixed media are mind blowing. A few days after my wife and I visited Grayton

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Dining

# St. Joe Hospitality's Award-Winning Properties – The Pearl Hotel & WaterColor Inn – Welcome Spring with a Bouquet of Festive Events!

Spring is just around the corner – and with it, plenty of opportunities to celebrate the season with good food, good music and even better company. From The Pearl Hotel and WaterColor Inn to their acclaimed restaurants, FOOW and Havana Beach Bar & Grill, St. Joe Hospitality is springing into longer, warmer days with an array of events sure to keep you hopping from March through May. Additionally, exclusive seasonal savings provide even more incentive for springing into action and booking a stay.

A roundup of these standouts is included below.



Havana Beach Bar & Grill @ The Pearl Hotel, 63 Main St., Rosemary Beach

### St. Patrick's Day Rooftop Celebration Sunday, March 17 | 11 a.m. to Close (weather-permitting)

Today, we're all Irish! Wear your best green accessory and join Havana Beach Rooftop Lounge for a special St. Patrick's Day celebration and menu – complete with themed cocktails and Havana Beach's twist on classic Irish food. Open to the public (must be 21+ to consume alcoholic beverages). In order to seat our guests more efficiently, reservations are not accepted; walk-ins always welcomed.



twenty percent will be added to all guest checks.

### Watercolor Inn Events Fitness Field Day

Marina Park, First Wednesday of Each Month (March – May) | 8 a.m. 238 Watercolor Blvd. W., Santa Rosa Beach

### Easter Brunch Sunday, April 12, 9 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Join Havana Beach Bar & Grill for a delectable Easter Sunday Brunch with the whole family. The restaurant will be offering a specially curated brunch buffet, featuring items for both children and adults. Open to the public; \$75+ per adult, \$40++ per child (12 and under). Reservations preferred (call 850.588.2882). 9am-1pm. +A service charge of

and sales tax are not included.

### Cocktails & Canvases

The Gathering Spot (located within WaterColor Inn), Friday, March 27, 7 – 9 p.m. 34 Goldenrod Circle, Santa Rosa Beach.

Grab your apron, invite your friends and join The Gathering Spot for a fun night of painting and sipping. Hone your artistic skills with an instructor-led class and your very own masterpiece on canvas. Open to the public. \$65++ per person; includes art instruction and supplies, one complimentary welcome champagne and one additional alcoholic beverage, plus light fare. Reservations required (call 850.534.5028). +Service charge and sales tax not included.

### Easter Brunch at WaterColor LakeHouse

WaterColor LakeHouse, Sunday, April 12, 9 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. 235 Watercolor Blvd. W. Santa Rosa Beach

Celebrate Easter Sunday with a special family-friendly brunch – complete with delicious house-made delights, beautifully set tables and even pictures with the Easter Bunny! Open to the public. \$65++ per adult, \$30++ per child (12 and under). Reservations required (call 850.534.5050). ++Service charge and sales tax not included.

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# 30a Eats Recipe of the Month; Shrimp Remoulade

BY SUSAN BENTON

New Orleans has been on my mind quite a bit lately, especially with Mardi Gras still in the rearview this month. When recently invited to create a recipe for Stonewall Kitchen using one of their mustards, I chose the horseradish as I knew it would make a delicious Shrimp Remoulade. There are two types of Remoulade sauces in Louisiana. One sauce is white and mayonnaise based, similar to the French classic, Celeriac Remoulade. The other is a red version made with ketchup (below), and I love both!

Shrimp Remoulade (pronounced ruma-lahd) is simple to prepare, and when served on elegant china, it is an impressive dish for entertaining. The fresh Gulf shrimp tossed in the spicy sauce, served on a bed of crisp lettuce ribbons is a delight to savor as a full meal, or as an appetizer.

I live on the Gulf Coast, so I'm partial to our local seafood, but you just need to look for the best and freshest wild caught shrimp in your local area for this recipe.

## Remoulade Recipe:

### Ingredients:

- 1 1/2 cups heavy-duty mayonnaise like Blue Plate, Duke's or Hellman's
- 1/4 cup Heinz ketchup
- 1/2 cup Stonewall Kitchen Horseradish Mustard
- 1 tbsp Worcestershire sauce
- 1 tsp hot pepper sauce such as Tabasco
- 1/2 cup finely diced green onions
- 1/4 cup finely diced celery
- 2 tbsp minced garlic
- 1/4 cup finely chopped parsley
- 1/2 tbsp lemon juice
- salt and cracked black pepper to taste
- 3 dozen 21-25 count boiled shrimp, peeled and deveined

### Preparation:

In a mixing bowl, combine all of the above ingredients, whisking well to incorporate the sea-



sonings. I usually prefer to stop here and leave my sauce chunky, but many prefer a smooth sauce which requires the use of a food processor or emulsion blender. If the consistency is too thick, loosen by adding 1-2 ounces of good olive oil and pulse with blender or processor. Once blended, cover and place in the refrigerator, preferably overnight. A minimum of four hours

will be required for flavor to be developed. When ready, remove from the refrigerator and adjust seasonings to taste. Toss in the shrimp and coat. Place six shrimp on a leaf of romaine, sliced iceberg, or your favorite leafy green cut into ribbons (slicing on bias), and spoon a generous serving of Shrimp Remoulade on top of the greens. You can also toss the shrimp in the sauce right before serving. Do not sauce the shrimp at leave at length prior to service, as the shrimp will lose their firm texture. This recipe serves 6.

Note: For readers who do not have immediate access to Stonewall's delicious and intensely flavored Horseradish Mustard, use Creole mustard and add 2 tablespoons of horseradish to substitute. I also prefer to chill the salad plates prior to serving. I decided to include my boiled shrimp recipe below, just in case there was to be any confusion. Many cooks like to use Old Bay seasoning or Zatarains. Feel free to boil your shrimp to your preference, toss with the remoulade sauce, and laissez le bon

temps rouler!

## Boiled Shrimp Recipe:

### Ingredients:

- 1 tsp Mustard Seed
- 1 Tbsp Black Peppercorns
- 3 Tbsp Kosher Salt
- 1 Tbsp Cayenne
- 2 Fresh Bay Leaves
- 1 Rib Celery Quartered
- 1 tsp Whole Allspice
- 5 Whole Cloves Garlic
- 2 Lemons Quartered
- 12 Cups Water

### Preparation:

Combine the ingredients in a large stock pot and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat and simmer partially covered for 20 minutes. At a different station, prepare an ice bath with 8 cups ice and 8 cups cold water. Return the stock pot liquid to a boil, and add the shrimp. Turn off the heat immediately. Wait 3 minutes making sure the shrimp are white all the way through, and then remove them to the ice bath. When they're completely cooled, peel by removing the shell and tail, then devein.

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Music

# 30A Songwriter Radio Artist Spotlight: Micky Mouth



By SHANNON IRELAND

Local musician Micky Mouth releases another music video, and again he has not left us disappointed. Having celebrated 10 years of sobriety, Micky Mouth is a powerhouse in the Hip Hop / Rap community.

Micky Mouth's music is lyrical poetry with a hard punch of reality. The lyrics have always mirrored the Artist's personal experiences, and real life situations. Micky and his team never use the "cookie cutter" approach and always move on to the next project with a blank canvas. The end result is always something fresh, new, and hip. His latest music video release is titled "Away...". When I heard this was out, I could not wait to see and hear what he has come up with this time. Admittedly, this is a "new for me" genre of

music, but I will be honest with you...Micky Mouth is definitely one of my favorite genre's of person, and artist! I am glued to every word in his songs, and how cleverly he puts them together. If you run into Micky, ask him about any of his songs. There is so much to each song, you will get a 30 minute answer for a 4 minute song. That's a good thing. It means something. Micky Mouth mentors young artists;



with his life experiences and sobriety he brings a well needed balance. Shiesty Z4, an up and coming artist, and Micky Mouth recently dropped a single, "My T!me." Micky plans to keep creating his signature sound and building his following large enough to team up with a major label. You can find Micky Mouth's music on all major platforms. Apple, Spotify, Pandora, Tidal and more.



## St. Rita's Hosts Annual Lenten Fish Fry

Just 2 dates left for St. Rita Catholic Church annual Lenten "Fish Fry Friday's. Friday March 13th and continuing Friday March 27th, from 4pm till 7pm. Come out and enjoy a great meal

at a great price. It's only \$12 (and children under 12 eat free) for a complete all you can eat meal! The meal consists of Fried Fish, Corn Nuggets, French Fries, Cole-slaw, Baked Beans, Dessert,

Coffee and Ice Tea. And... Chicken Fingers for the kids! Take Out Orders are available. Proceeds benefit community service programs including the St Vincent De-Paul Society for the poor. For

more information please call 850-267-2558. St. Rita Catholic Church, 137 Moll Drive, Santa Rosa Beach.

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# Studio 237 Music School Meet the Teacher: Amy Delivorias

Amy Delivorias moved to the Santa Rosa Beach area in 2009 along with her husband Bradley and their four children. Originally from Macon Mississippi, Amy's love for music began at a very young age with the release of the classic musical film, "Grease". She began performing vocals at age seven, singing in church, and at local events in Mississippi with her father, a talented guitarist and vocalist. She's been singing in church and at local events for over thirty years.

Amy's performance of music extends to multiple styles. Her most loved ones are country, pop, rock, and gospel. She has a passion for the older rock and roll, and enjoys the music of Queen, The Eagles, Fleetwood Mac, Creedence Clearwater Revival, and similar rock bands from the 60's, 70's, and 80's. Amy has recorded several demo tracks in professional recording studios in Nashville, TN and recently participated in auditions for "The Voice" in Nashville, TN.

Amy says, "The emotional connection to the music is where each vocalist best performs. It is my goal as a vocal instructor to help each student reach their full potential, by developing exercises and choosing songs best



fitting the vocalist's personality and emotional connection to the music."

Amy believes that unlike other instruments, the voice is unique to each person. Teaching voice enables her to help each student develop and grow with their unique instrument. Amy encourages students to develop their own style, and to avoid trying to sound exactly like the original artist. A student "sounding like themselves" is where the student connects emotionally with their music.

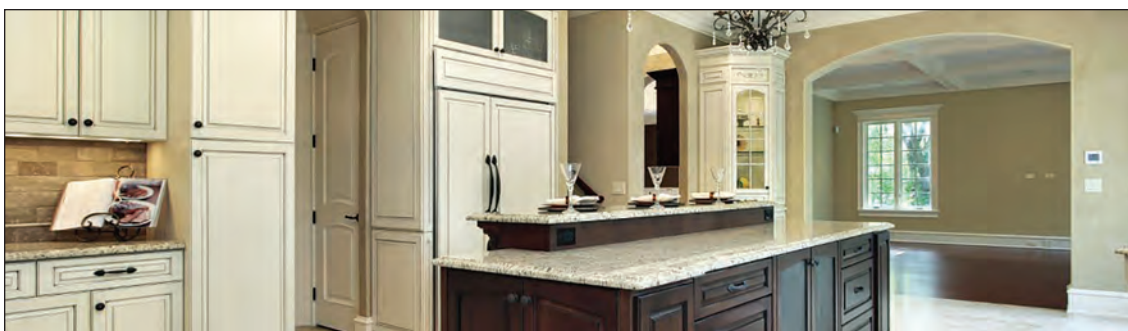
As a teacher, her first focus is to determine what genre of music the student most closely relates to or moves one's emotions. Amy then develops vocal exercises which are student specific, to enable the individual to obtain their own personal goals and where the student desires to "go" with their vocal ability. "I encourage students to be themselves, sing from their hearts. My message to all aspiring vocalists is, 'The best thing to do in life is to do something that outlasts it'."

Amy adapts each vocal lesson to the needs and musical preferences of each student/artist. She encourages every artist who loves to express their unique creativity through music, to use their unique set of qualities. "Qualities" will set any singer apart from the others.

Amy says, "If singing is your passion, then you should always "go for it". Pursue your dreams and do what you love. I feel blessed to be able to have this opportunity, to share my love of music with others, who feel it in their spirit as I have since my early childhood."

You may listen to Amy singing at [www.spaces.hightail.com/receive/T4E6PITSb4](http://www.spaces.hightail.com/receive/T4E6PITSb4)

To schedule voice lessons with Amy Delivorias, call Studio 237 Music Lessons at 850-231-3199 and ask for Ray Cyr. To find out more about our studio, visit the website [www.Studio237Music.com](http://www.Studio237Music.com) or call us to schedule a studio visit tour. Our studio email is [Studio237Dawson@gmail.com](mailto:Studio237Dawson@gmail.com).



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Business

# So Nice, They Named It Twice: John-John Automotive

## A Local Heritage of Business, Family and Integrity

At age 3, John Michael (“Mike”) Ward helped his dad change the spark plugs in his “wheel-stand” racing truck. He learned to weld and fabricated a utility trailer for the family’s

riding lawn mower at 10, then rebuilt the motor in his mom’s 1965 Buick Rivera at 11. With this God-given talent, he always knew he would be a business owner in the automotive indus-

try when he grew up.

Mike is a true local, born in Fort Walton Beach and moved to Destin in 1970. He grew up surrounded by all things automotive. His dad, Johnnie, was




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a highly regarded service manager at dealerships around the state and owned his own small automotive repair shop with Mike’s mom for several years. Uncles on his mom’s side of the family (the L’Oranges of Valparaiso) owned automotive repair shops and worked in parts stores. Racing was the family’s preferred weekend hobby.

In March 1986, upon graduation from the University of South Alabama, Mike’s business ownership dream became a reality. He and Johnnie opened John-John Auto Parts in a small storefront in Miramar Beach (where Romeo’s Pizza is currently housed). Around that same time, another small business was getting off the ground down the road—Santa Rosa Beach Auto Repair, the first stand-alone automotive repair shop in South Walton County. The repair shop became a long-time customer of John-John Auto Parts.

The parts store shortly moved to Santa Rosa Beach and became a fixture in the community. Many years later, Mike was ready for expansion and the owner of Santa Rosa Beach Auto Repair was ready to retire. It was an opportunity too perfect to pass up. On Jan. 1, 2001, Santa Rosa Beach Auto Repair re-opened as John-John Automotive and within a few weeks, John-John Auto Parts was relocated there as well. 2001 was a year for expansion in Mike’s life. In June of that year, he and

his wife Lori welcomed their first child, a son they named John Huston Ward. Even then, Mike was passing on the “John” moniker, in hopes his son would one day in the future take up the John-John mantle.

Ever the entrepreneur, Mike has operated numerous businesses under the John-John Enterprises umbrella over the years, the latest of which include a towing division and a site work group which operates as John-John Earth Worx. He is also a partner in Dispozall Dumpster Rental with friends Bryan and Melanie Cuff. And, it turns out, he might have been onto something giving his son the family name: Huston (as he is called) graduated high school in 2019 and went straight to work behind the counter at John-John Automotive, on a path to take over the family business when Mike is ready to pass the torch.

When asked about his formula for success over the years, Mike’s humble, servant heart quickly becomes evident: “Work hard, take risks when opportunity presents itself, and cover it all with a lot of prayer.” The Ward family welcomes everyone to stop by and see why they call it “The Place So Nice, They Named It Twice.” John-John Automotive is your hometown source for automotive parts and service (and now towing, site work and dumpster rentals) for nearly 35 years. Call them at 850-267-2750 or email mike@john-johnonline.com.



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# Spring Energy Tips



BY CHRIS BALZAR

## ENERGY TIPS

by Emerald Coast Energy Solutions

light wasting energy and produces unwanted heat in your home.

### Lower water heater temperatures

Many of our water heaters are set to 140° from the manufacturer. Lowering the setting to 120° will save energy and money. When showering, most people start with the hot water turned all the way up and then add cold water for a comfortable temperature. By doing this, you are cooling the hot water which you spent energy and money to heat. Lowering water heater temperatures saves energy and money. Also, by switching on bathroom fans when showering will suck out the hot and humid air from your shower, so your air conditioner doesn't have to work as hard.

### Leaky faucets

My faucets don't leak. Are you sure? One way to find out is to put a dry cup under the faucet in the sink overnight, when not

in use. In the morning check the cup and if there is water in it, your faucet leaks. Well, my faucet only drips a little and I'm not really worried about it. Even the slightest of drips waste energy and costs you money. Let's say you have a faucet which drips once every two seconds. It's hard to be precise on volume so we are going to estimate the drip volume at 1/4 ml. One gallon contains roughly 3,785 ml. Our leaky faucet will waste approximately 2.5 gallons of water per day and approximately 912 gallons of water per year. Now think if you have two or more dripping faucets. Faucets can easily be fixed and some manufacturers will send you replacement parts for free, you just have to ask.

### Ceiling fan directional settings

Most, if not all ceiling fans have a directional setting. This setting is normally a small switch

located on the side of the fan motor. In the spring and summer, the fan should spin in a counter clockwise direction to push cool air downward. In winter, fans should move in a clockwise direction. Using ceiling fans can save energy by making you feel cooler. Ceiling fans do not actually cool rooms, they make you feel cool by producing a breeze over the skin which evaporates the moisture on our skin making us feel cooler. By using ceiling fans we increase our air conditioner setting a few degrees warmer which saves energy and money.

By just following a few simple steps you can increase your comfort and save energy. It is always a good idea to consult with

a professional when looking to be more energy efficient when it comes to larger projects. The DOE (Department of Energy) states that properly insulating and weatherizing your home can save up to 30% on heating and cooling.

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

Say goodbye to winter and hello to spring. The official first day of spring is March 19 and summer will follow close behind. If you are looking to save energy and money this spring, here are some tips:

### Switch to LED lighting

Consider replacing your incandescent bulbs with LED bulbs, which operate at a lower wattage and produce much less heat. LED bulbs use 75% less energy and last 50 times longer than incandescent bulbs, saving you money on electricity and replacement costs. A 6 -10 watt LED bulb is comparable to a 40- 60 watt incandescent bulb. In fact, 90% of the energy used to light an incandescent bulb is heat and only 10% produces

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**Business**

# Water Damage and Leak Detection Systems



By VICTORIA OSTROSKY

Eric was in an important meeting. He kept stealing glances at his cell phone, showing he'd missed three calls from his property management company. That didn't bode well. As soon as he was able, he stepped out of the conference room and called them back.

Nope. It wasn't good news. That very morning his property manager had stopped at his rental condo to make sure everything was ready for the next renter due to arrive on the weekend, and discovered the unit three inches deep in water. The cause of the leak was a faulty shut off valve under the kitchen sink. To say it ruined Eric's day was putting it mildly.

He called his insurance agent, filed a claim, then prepared for the fallout. His renters were contacted, their deposit returned, and when he saw how awful his once nicely furnished condo looked, he almost cried.

The disaster restoration company vacuumed up the water,

then set up heavy-duty fans and a dehumidifier to dry everything out. Next came the tear out and renovation. The total cost? Close to \$60,000 dollars. Now he had a water claim on his record.

This, unfortunately, occurs too often in Florida. Water heaters, ice makers, toilets, washing machine hoses, leak. Did you know water claims are the second highest percentage of claims in the state? It's true. And many times, these scenarios can be avoided.

Here's an excerpt from Insurance Journal, March 2, 2016, written by Amy O'Connor,

"The frequency of water loss claims has increased by 46% since 2010, equaling an average annual increase in frequency of 8.3% each year. The severity of water claims has increased 28% since 2010, representing an annual increase of 5.4%."

Carriers are now getting on board with some amazing discounts available for homeowners who are willing to spend a little money to avoid a possible water claim, with leak detection systems.

Leak detection systems are designed to detect unusual water flow in your home. Some systems attach directly to your water meter or main pipe. Their purpose is to monitor your water flow where you can receive instant alerts to your phone. Some also give you the ability to shut off your water

from your smartphone app. Still others will automatically shut it off for you.

It all depends on what your setup is, and how much money you're prepared to spend.

Water leak detection systems are not just for the homeowner, they're also available for commercial applications, condos and townhomes.

Since coverages under policies for water incidents vary significantly from one carrier to another, you should examine and understand your policy language including conditions and exclusions. Typically 'sudden and accidental incidents like a burst pipe or failed water shut off valves are covered. For older homes, water damage may be limited or even excluded, with a \$10,000 buy-back of 'limited water damage' coverage possibly available.

Of course, there are other discounts homeowners can take advantage of. Centrally monitored burglar and fire alarm systems, sprinkler systems with waterflow, permanently installed generators, surveillance cameras, and lightning suppression systems are just a few. Keep in mind, not all carriers offer the same discounts.

When Eric told his colleagues about his water woes, Jack, his immediate supervisor, said he should check into a water leak detection system. "Just last month," Jack said, "I got an alert on my



phone about a possible leak in my home. That one alert saved me a ton of money and headaches. The \$800 cost of installation was well worth it."

"What was it?" asked Eric. "It was my water heater. It had started leaking, so I shut off the water before it became a problem. I was getting ready to replace it anyway since it was 15 years old, and I'm glad we caught it before there was any damage done."

"Yeah," replied Eric. "Getting a water leak detection system in place is my next goal. I never want to deal with a water problem again."

*Insurance Zone, owned by Joe and Lea Capers, is a full service commercial and personal lines insurance agency serving Destin, Miramar Beach, Santa Rosa Beach (30A) and Inlet Beach. Visit their Video Library on www.ins-zone.com and watch several informative videos on 'Homeowners, Condo and Umbrella Liability', or call 850.424.6979. Victoria Ostrosky, author of this article is an Agent/CSR with IZ.*

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# A Homeowner's Worst Nightmare



By JEREMY NEEL

Sewage backups are a homeowner's or renter's worst nightmare. Backups can cause flooding, broken pipes, and introduce raw sewage into your home. Cleaning up after and fixing a problem like this is a task that is best left to a professional. Raw sewage carries a variety of germs and bacteria that can make you ill. If you, or someone in your family, is pregnant, elderly, or has a compromised immune system, you should not risk exposing yourself to the germs that are carried within raw sewage. It is best to immediately call a professional sewage cleanup crew for remediation of a flooding or sewage backup. They will follow specific safety protocol and use protective gear designed to prevent the spread of disease.

The longer water and sewage remains, the worse the problem will get. Significant water damage can occur in as little as 12-24 hours. Most people do not have the flexibility to drop everything

at a moment's notice to dry out and disinfect their homes after a sewage backup. Apex Disaster Specialists can be at your home within a few hours to minimize water damage and begin sewage cleanup. Recovering from a sewage backup is more than cleaning the dirt and waste out of your home. Problems can occur such as water damage, mold growth, bio-hazard threats, or a broken plumbing or septic system. Disaster Specialists will also be able to advise you on which of your possessions can be safely cleaned or restored, and which should be replaced. If your property remains under sewage water for long, the damage will be considerable. Flooring and insulation materials that have been soaked up will need to be removed, as well as mattresses, leather products, stuffed toys, and paper products (including books and documents).

## What To Do After Sewage Backup

- 1) Do not flush toilets or attempt to drain tubs and sinks – just don't use the water supply system in your home until the problem has been detected and taken care of.
- 2) Do not use harsh chemicals in an attempt to unclog the drainage system quickly and easily. They can damage your pipes and sewer lines and make the matters
- 3) Keep children and pets away from the affected area.
- 4) If it is still safe, shut off the power. Otherwise, don't go near electrical equipment.
- 5) Wear protective clothing: gloves, eyeglasses, rubber boots and a face mask.
- 6) Open windows to allow fresh air in and ventilate well to remove any fumes.



worse. Opt for treatment options which use enzymes instead of chemicals – they will most likely solve your problem and will prevent future clogging.

- 7) Add small amounts of chlorine bleach to standing water to ensure some disinfection.
- 8) Use sump pumps to remove excessive water.
- 9) Call for professional assistance.

Remember that sewage backups should be dealt with as quickly as possible to prevent further damage. Apex Disaster Specialists has the most adequate equipment and the experience required for a quick and efficient intervention. We can come up with the most appropriate and safest solution.

Apex also offers not only water extraction but quality repair work, odor removal, and overall sanitization. Before returning to your everyday life, make sure the entire property has been perfectly sanitized, the electrical and plumbing systems have been checked and fully repaired, and all the appliances are safe and in good working order. Should you experience a sewage backup, Apex is the company to call! We will reach your property in a timely manner and restore your home as quickly as possible. Call 850-660-6900 [Apexdisasterspecialists.com](http://Apexdisasterspecialists.com).

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Business

# What's on 30A TV; Backstage with Cortni Bird

Cortni Bird is an up and coming country singer songwriter. She is also an accomplished television interviewer with her new 30A television show called "Backstage with Cortni."

Cortni wrote and produced her first album at aged 19, has toured the United Kingdom, and is in constant contact with the Nashville and Florida music scene. She is at home on radio or television, and her music insight produces entertaining and probing interviews.

Cortni recently interviewed Kristian Bush of Sugarland, who has a new collaboration with his brother called Dark Water. Other



artists were in town for the 30A Songwriters Festival, and one of the breakout shows showcased Shaun Amos, who has worked with Quincy Jones and many others.

Cortni was able to ask ques-




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tions most others won't or dared not. One of the most intriguing she asked was "What was the craziest thing that has ever happened on tour" - the answers are a "must watch" experience when the answers are retold on camera.

"I just enjoy cutting up a bit and always try to make the artist feel at home, said Cortni. So

my interviews are kinda buttoned up into a package, but I would rather dig a bit deeper, while still covering the questions fans want to hear about."

Both of these interviews are available on www.30a.tv in the Music Scene Channel.

Cortni is very active on social media, you can follow her as Cortni Bird on instagram, Face-

book, and on her website at www.cortnibird.com

### About 30A Media

30A TV broadcasts seven live channels of original programming, including Outdoors, Real Estate, Celebrity Interviews, music videos, and comedy. Available via iTunes, Android, ROKU - Amazon Firestick, and at www.30a.tv.

## Young Professionals of Walton County to Host Speed Networking Luncheon

The Young Professionals of Walton County (YPWC) will host a speed networking luncheon on Thursday, March 12 from 11:30 a.m. - 1 p.m. hosted by Cantina Laredo, located at 585 Grand Blvd N-106 in Miramar Beach. Sponsored by Ocean Reef Vacation Rentals & Real Estate, the

networking luncheon will give existing members and potential members the opportunity to mix and mingle with one another while also making professional connections. The Young Professionals of Walton County are dedicated to providing their members with various avenues

and events in order to foster relationships that will long serve them in their professional careers. The cost to attend is \$10 for members and \$15 for non-members.

Founded in 2009 under the name YP @ The Beach and having undergone a revamp in 2017, the Young Professionals of Walton County (YPWC) is an organization created by the Walton Area Chamber of Commerce whose mission is to bridge social, geographical, political and economic boundaries across Northwest Florida's Gulf Coast, while providing a venue for ambitious individuals to network and enhance their professional development skills. YPWC will host networking, professional development and team building events the second Thursday of every month. Visit: www.facebook.com/YoungProfessionals of Walton County for more information

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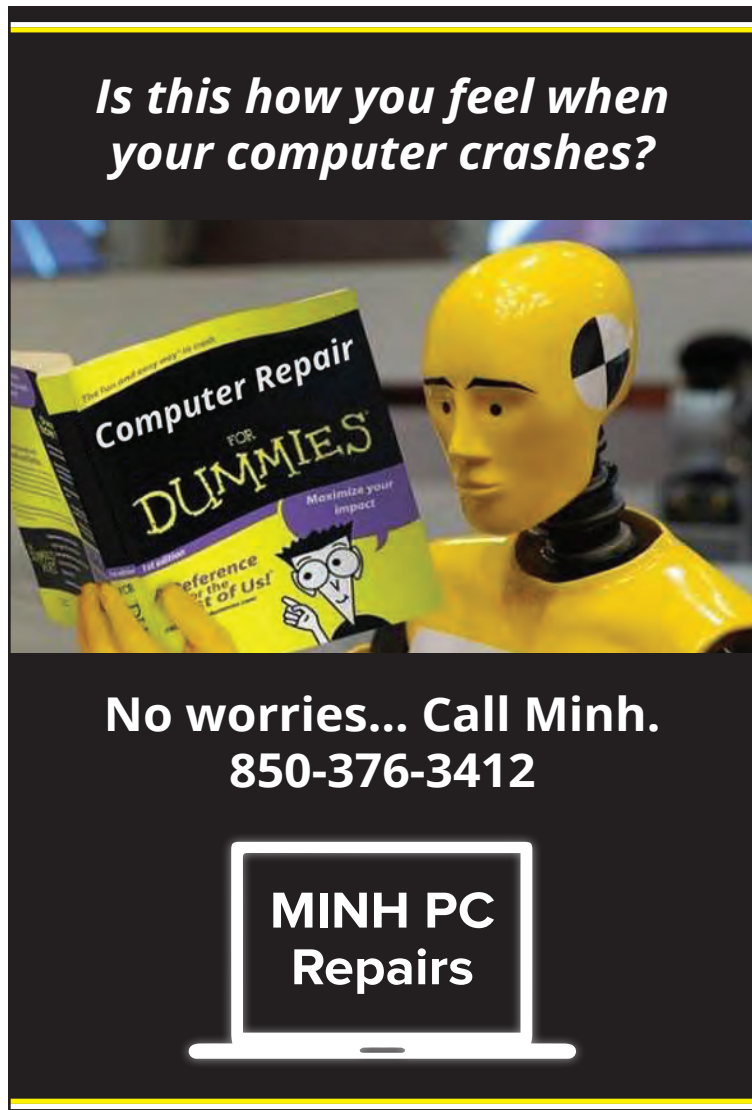
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# Walton Area Chamber of Commerce Announces Fourth Annual Spring Golf Classic

The Walton Area Chamber of Commerce is pleased to announce their Fourth Annual Spring Golf Classic on Monday, March 30, 2020 presented by Clary-Glenn Funeral Homes and Crematory.

For the fourth year, the Walton Area Chamber of Commerce Spring Golf Classic will take place at Blackstone Golf Course in Mossy Head, Fla. Registration and check-in will begin Monday, March 30, at 8 a.m. with a shotgun start at 10 a.m. Entrance fees are \$400 for a four-person team with only 25 team slots available. Hole sponsorships are available

for \$100. All tournament players will receive complimentary food and drinks on the course, and an invitation to the 19thHole Celebration after-party and awards ceremony following the tournament at the Blackstone Golf Course Club House. The tournament and after party are open

to the public. Golfers can register a team or secure a sponsorship by emailing gabrielle@waltonareachamber.com.

A number of local businesses and community partners have graciously stepped forward as sponsors of the upcoming 2020 Spring Golf Classic. Title sponsor: Clary-Glenn Funeral Homes and Crematory; Golf Cart Sponsors: Clark Partington and Chautauqua Rehabilitation and Nursing Center; Beverage Cart Sponsor: Affordable Home Insurance; Eagle Sponsors: Centennial Bank, CHELCO, Hilton Sandestin Beach Golf Resort and Spa, Visit South Walton; 19th Hole Sponsor: Okaloosa Gas.

Sponsorships are selling rapidly and only a few remain. For more information on sponsorship, volunteering, or to register to play, please contact Gabrielle Kilgore at gabrielle@waltonareachamber.com or call (850) 892-3191



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**PECAN JACKS ICE CREAM & CANDY**  
**BUY ONE SINGLE SCOOP, GET A SECOND ONE FREE**  
 Offer expires 3/31/20  
 Gulf Place, On 30A across from Ed Waline Beach Access, 850-622-0011

**BOCA BOUTIQUE**  
**30% OFF**  
**ONE REGULAR PRICED ITEM**  
**GOOD AT ALL LOCATIONS**  
 Offer expires 3/31/20  
 174 Watercolor Way Ste. 102  
 Santa Rosa Beach, 850-534-0002

**FOR THE HEALTH OF IT**  
**10% OFF**  
**YOUR ORDER WITH THIS COUPON**  
 Offer expires 3/31/20  
 2217 West County Hwy. 30A  
 Santa Rosa Beach, 850-267-0558

**INDOOR /OUTDOOR RENOVATIONS**  
**15% OFF**  
**OUTDOOR KITCHENS, ARBORS, DECKS, FENCING & PAVERS**  
 Offer expires 3/31/20  
 181 Lynn Drive, Santa Rosa Beach  
 850-622-0246

**FURRY FANATICS**  
**10% OFF**  
**PET SUPPLIES**  
 Offer expires 3/31/20  
 Located in the Post Office Plaza  
 3906 US 98 W, Santa Rosa Beach  
 850-502-3433

**TAMTECH POOLS**  
**SERVICE CALL**  
**\$50 OFF**  
**W/ THIS COUPON**  
 Offer expires 3/31/20  
 185 N. Holiday Rd., Miramar Beach  
 850-650-3747

**BLUE/GREEN LANDSCAPING**  
**FREE ESTIMATES**  
 Offer expires 3/31/20  
 6844 W. County Hwy. 30A Santa Rosa Beach  
 850- 660-1934

**THE GROUTSMITH**  
**\$50 OFF ORDER OF \$500 OR MORE**  
**\$30 OFF ORDER OF \$200 OR MORE (WITH COUPON)**  
 Offer expires 3/31/20  
 Serving Northwest Florida  
 850-367-3100

**30A OLIVE OIL**  
**BRING IN THIS COUPON FOR 10% OFF PURCHASE!**  
 Not to be combined with other offers  
 Offer expires 3/31/20  
 Located in 30Avenue, 12805 Hwy 98E Suite N101  
 Inlet Beach, 850-909-0099

**HUMBLEMAN MEN'S STUDIO**  
**\$5 OFF HAIRCUT**  
 Offer expires 3/31/20  
 76 Arbor Lane, Grayton Beach  
 850-842-8423



# UNDER CONTRACT



## PRICED TO SELL! \$3,698,500!



## Watersound Beach - 70 S. Watch Tower Lane 6 Bedrooms - 6.5 Baths - 4900 SF

This property is located in the prestigious neighborhood of Watersound Beach, bordering the Beach Walk! This gorgeous smart home has never been on a rental program and has been lovingly maintained. The dining room wall slides back to reveal the In-ground Pool with fountains, Hot Tub, and Built in Fire Pit! The main floor is open and spacious, perfect for entertaining. The kitchen is outfitted with the only the best in appliances, including a Wolf Range and 2 Dishwashers, gorgeous honed marble, and a large center island. The master suite has its own floor, with a morning bar, Icemaker and more! Imagine taking the elevator to the third level and sliding onto a lounge chair to relax and watch the sunset over the water with your expansive gulf view from the watch tower. A second master is located on the main, and the property comes completely furnished with a game room/bunk room and a media room.



### Call Lisa for a Private Showing.

### 850-660-1962

Exclusively Marketed By:

**Lisa Hughey, Classic Luxury Real Estate**

