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Independence Day Perspectives; From the Many, One

By Heather Bennett

The beauty of The Emerald Coast brings together people from many walks of life, political views, religions, and races. On Independence Day we celebrate the birth of our nation in one of the most beautiful locations in the country. While some of us may disagree over the current state of affairs of this nation, most everyone agrees we love the United States of America, and the freedoms we enjoy. To celebrate this Independence Day, we asked various members of our community, from different backgrounds, what Independence Day means to them.

Susan Bowden – Sue is the President of the Democratic Women's Club of Walton County. She is originally from Massachusetts and spent most of her adult life in Michigan before moving here with her husband in October 2016. She has fond memories celebrating July 4th with her family at Lake Michigan. What Does Independence Day Mean



to Me? "My grandparents and great grandparents all came to America in the early 1900s to escape the oppression of Eastern Europe. The ones who stayed behind, were killed by the Nazis in World War II. I am very grateful to live in a country with free speech and a Declaration of Independence that states that all men {and women) are created equal. We don't have a perfect union yet but at least there are many



people here who stand up for change and strive to effect it."

Tim Norris – Tim is the Walton County Republican Party Committeeman. He was born at Eglin Air Force Base to a military family and was raised in the area. Tim has enjoyed taking his family out to Crab Island to watch the fireworks in the Destin pass on the 4th of July. What Does Independence Day Mean to Me? "Independence Day means freedom.



Our forefathers gave us great liberty in signing the Declaration of Independence, as did those who fought for our freedom in the Revolutionary War. All who have since fought to help us maintain our freedom are to be honored and recognized as well. Freedom isn't free. May God Bless America and all those who have served

> PERSPECTIVES continued on page 2

Walton County **Provides Free Day-Use Admission** to State Parks for **Fourth Year**

Locals and Summer visitors to South Walton will once again be able to enjoy free day-use admission to Grayton Beach State Park and Topsail Hill State Park from Memorial Day through Labor Day. The Walton County Tourist Development Council is paying the cost of entry for day-use visitors in order to increase available parking for beach-goers during the peak visitation season, as well as raise awareness of the variety of eco-tourism activities in the area. This year marks the fifth year of admission coverage for Topsail Hill State Park

FREE DAY-USE

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PERSPECTIVES

continued from page 1

and are currently serving." Lori Leath Smith - Lori is Publisher and Executive Editor of Bay Life and Destin Life. She is originally from Alabama and grew up visiting Destin with her family. On the 4th of July they would have a shrimp boil and walk down to the beach to watch the fireworks. What Does Independence Day Mean to Me? "Freedom is what Independence Day means to me! It's also a time of remembrance of what our forefathers fought for - to guarantee our freedom, and thankfulness to be living in and positioned in the greatest country in the world!"

Clint & Effie Eagar – Clint, an industrial designer and artist, and his wife Effie, co-founder of TechX International, have a true modern-day immigrant

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story. Clint grew up in South Africa during apartheid, and Effie lived in mainland China. Both left their countries in search of a promising future. **What Does Independence Day Mean to Me?** "For both of us now citizens of this fine country we truly value all that this day truly means. For us it's not as simple as picnics, concerts, barbecues, parades, etc. It's not being persecuted, murdered, and all your liberties taken. It celebrates the legal journey we took and all the steps to create the life we now experience on a day to day basis. July 4th stands for what most of the world's population craves for and the safety of our liberties. It's interesting because my wife and I come from extremely different countries and cultural backgrounds, yet as human beings, have the common bond of hope, and the pursuit of happiness.



Russell Hughes – Russell is the Walton County Superintendent of Schools. He's from Okaloosa County and has been a distinguished teacher, principal, coach and leader throughout the community, and has worked in the Walton County school district for 20 years. **What Does Independence Day Mean to Me** "This holiday is about recognizing the privilege to make decisions about anything we can conceive if we are not infringing upon the well-being of others. In fact, our Country's Declaration of Independence declares this to be true. As an educator, my thoughts automatically gravitate toward the expectation that all students have the opportunity and access to an excellent education. This is a right for every child in Walton County and in the world."

Sheriff Adkinson Provides Testimony to Presidential Commission on Law Enforcement

Sheriff Michael Adkinson was invited to testify before the Presidential Commission on Law Enforcement and Administrative Justice. The hearing, held on Tuesday, June 20th, was an opportunity for Sheriff Adkinson to offer his perspective and insight on the accreditation of law enforcement agencies. In October 2019, President Trump signed Executive Order 13986 establishing the formation of the Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice to perform a national review of law



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In 1965, President Lyndon B. Johnson authorized a similar commission to study ways to improve American efforts to

fight crime and create public safety for all citizens. Attorney General William Barr has been tasked with the design, development and implementation which includes providing a report to the President, the Congress and law enforcement based on the findings and

work of the Commission. An integral part of the Commission's work is hearing from experts and practitioners with firsthand experience in the field about best practices, lessons learned, challenges, successful programs and initiatives, and innovative strategies to address and enhance law enforcement and the administration of justice. Sheriff Adkinson's testimony on accreditation analyzed how and why agencies gain accreditation and areas of



improvements. "T'm grateful for the unique opportunity to address the Commission," said Sheriff Michael Adkinson. "It's important we use every situation as an opportunity to educate, learn, grow, and improve."

To learn more about the Presidential Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice please visit: www. justice.gov/ag/presidential-commission-law-enforcement-andadministration-justice.



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FREE DAY-USE

continued from page 1

and the third for Grayton Beach State Park.

"This is our fourth summer covering day-use admission to both state parks," says Visit South Walton Director of Communications David Demarest. "It benefits everyone, visitors and locals alike, that during the summer we effectively add two additional regional beach accesses – equipped with parking, picnic and restroom facilities, and a tremendous amount of natural beauty for guests to enjoy. This also lessens the pressure on any one stretch of beach. "

The free day-use admission

is available to visitors during normal operating hours, generally 8 a.m. to sunset. The official kick-off of the event was on the Saturday of Memorial Day weekend, and free day-use admission extends through Labor Day. For more information on Topsail Hill Preserve State Park visit www.visitsouthwalton.com/ listing/topsail-hill-preserve-statepark Grayton Beach State Park. For more information on Grayton Beach State Park please visit www.visitsouthwalton.com/ listing/grayton-beach-state-park. Walton County Transit Ser-

Walton County Transit Service 'GoWal' Launches June 29th New public transit system will provide travel alternative in the

provide travel alternative in the region

Representatives from Walton County are announcing the launch of "GoWal", the area's first public transit service offering free rides to those traveling north and southbound throughout the region. The shuttle buses launched Monday, June 29 along U.S. Route 331, from DeFuniak Springs to South Walton. The service will operate Monday through Friday, from 6 a.m. to 6:30 p.m., with buses running twice in the morning and twice in the evening. The morning routes will depart from the De-Funiak Springs Courthouse with a stop in Freeport before arriving at the South Walton Annex. Full route schedules and bus stop locations can be found online at

GoWalTransit.com. Each bus will feature bike racks and free WiFi, along with special accommodations for persons with disabilities. The county hopes this convenient, affordable, and comfortable alternative will provide individuals and families with a new option to commute and explore the area. Although this opportunity will most directly benefit those traveling along U.S. Route 331 for work, the service will also provide full-time residents with less traffic congestion and an increase in available parking

"Our new shuttle buses are ideal for residents looking for an affordable commuting option between the northern and southern parts of the county," said Mac Carpenter, Walton County Planning Director. "We hope to provide convenience and connectivity, allowing individuals to seek new employment opportunities, connect with friends and family, or simply visit one of the many local hot spots we have in the region." The name GoWal was selected for this movementfocused initiative because we believe this new route will enable folks to physically "go" throughout Walton County. For more information, to sign-up for GoWal service updates, or to see a schedule with exact times and pick-up/drop-off locations, visit www.GoWaltransit.com.

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July 2020 WCSD Superintendent's Update



Superintendent A. Russell Hughes

In the beautiful panhandle of Florida, summer is synonymous with beautiful beaches, warm breezes, and relaxation! Our dedicated Walton County teachers and administrators are spending long summer hours in specialized training to make sure we are up to date on cutting edge technology, learning strategies, and Florida educational standards. WCSD Administrators were recently excited for the opportunity to participate in a coaching and feedback workshop led by K12Lift to review school and individual student data to facilitate planning for student success in the school year 2020-2021.

Our summer feeding program will continue as it has in years past. Feeding will continue every Thursday through the month of July (July 9, July 16, July 23, and July 30). Our two food locations are Walton Middle School in DeFuniak Springs and Freeport High School in Freeport. We will offer a curbside service from 10:00 a.m. until 12 noon.

On June 11, Governor De-Santis and the Florida Department of Education released a 150- page plan for "Re-opening Florida Schools and the CARES Act: Closing Achievement Gaps and Creating Safe Spaces for Learning." In response, Superintendent Hughes created a Re-opening Task Force in May which is meeting regularly and includes expert stakeholders from the Florida Department of Health and Walton County Emergency Management. Many of the topics being focused on by the task force have been guided by COVID-19 data; Florida's phases, which were established by our Governor; CDC guidelines; and our recent parent survey results. With that input, we immediately started preparing for our next steps and ultimately for the restart of our school year on August 10, 2020.

To start, we have carefully and strategically begun bringing small groups of students onto our campuses. On June 1st, we were able to serve families by opening our SPICE program to 180 students at four schools. To date, this program has been very successful, and the process has allowed us to transition effectively keeping our children and employees safe.

Next, in July, we hope to continue bringing additional students back for our annual Summer Bridge and other types of educational programs to help fill in learning gaps from the last nine weeks and/or help students who may need a jumpstart to the 2020-2021 school year.

In preparation for the new year, we are working hard to provide answers, options, and innovative solutions. As our state and nation moves forward, we will begin to see school districts across America discuss non-traditional ideas for the educational process. We do know that school will look different. COVID-19 effects, phases, and information may continue to change, so traditional school processes like scheduling, car drop off, school lunches, buses, and more may change with what we know and learn. For example, whether we wear masks, not wear masks, or choose to wear masks, all will be addressed. Please know over the coming weeks, our school district will determine what is best for all stakeholders. We will work hard to achieve and are committed to the best re-opening plan for our district. Rest assured, this task, and likewise making it EPIC, is taken seriously for the well-being of our children and greater community.

Please continue to look for additional information from Superintendent Hughes' office which will be rolled out in the weeks to come. When decisions are made, vou will be the first to know, and we will post the information as soon as we finalize it. Until then, if you hear rumors or have questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to your school(s) and/ or the district office. Thank you for your trust, confidence, and belief in our school district, and thank you for giving us time and grace to make the best decisions for our children. Remember that we now have another avenue of communication with our added texting feature. Parents, students, and other stakeholders can text questions to 850-204-9667. Text submissions are immediate, and a staff member should respond to you quickly. With this new number, the district will be able to provide a quick response for any issues or concerns that may occur as we move into the 2020 school year!







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What's New From The St. Joe Company

The St. Joe Company is one of the largest developers in Northwest Florida with active projects spanning from South Walton to the Forgotten Coast. The company also owns various commercial, resort and club properties in addition to operating the St. Joe Community Foundation which provides charitable grants toward the civic infrastructure of communities in Northwest Florida.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the St. Joe Community Foundation dispersed grants to three local nonprofit organizations totaling \$297,340 to fund the purchase of much-needed testing supplies and personal protective equipment for three Northwest Florida health care providers.

Wondering what else the St. Joe Company has in the works? See the latest updates for Walton and Bay counties.

SOUTH WALTON

The St. Joe Company broke ground in March 2020 on a new

64-unit townhome community to be built in phases in Watersound. The new community will be located off of North Watersound Parkway in the Watersound Origins Community adjacent to the Origins Golf Course. Construction is expected to be complete for the first phase and townhome units will be available for lease in early 2021.

Also, in March the company broke ground on Watersound Camp Creek, a new residential community. According to plans, this gated community will feature 262 custom homesites located adjacent to the Camp Creek Golf Club. This new community will be developed in phases with the entrance located off of South Watersound Parkway.

"Watersound Camp Creek will be the newest Watersound community adding to WaterSound Beach, WaterSound West Beach and Watersound Origins in South Walton County," said Bridget Precise, Senior Vice President of Residential Real Estate for St.



Joe in a press release distributed by the St. Joe Company. "This development is ideally located adjacent to Camp Creek Golf Club and the amenities that are being constructed and within a short walk, bike or golf cart ride to Scenic Hwy 30-A and the Gulf of Mexico or to the future Watersound Origins Town Center and Publix Super Market that will break ground this spring."



PANAMA CITY BEACH

The St. Joe Company commenced development of 80 homesites in the Breakfast Point community in Panama City Beach in late May. The new phase will increase the total number of homesites from 369 to 449 upon completion and was initiated to meet demand for new homes in the community. The new homesite phase is being developed to the east of Breakfast Point Boulevard off of Graze Point Drive with plans calling for development work to be completed later this year.

"The Breakfast Point community continues to attract homebuyers looking for a family-friendly, short-term rental restricted neighborhood that is close to everything that makes Panama City Beach such a great place to live," said Bridget Precise, Senior Vice President of Residential Real Estate for St. Joe in a press release distributed by the St. Joe Company. "We have established relationships with homebuilders and closed on 88 homesites in the Breakfast Point community in 2019. This new phase will enable us to meet the continued demand from these homebuilders as the community continues to grow and attract new residents.'



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Community Faces of Walton; Caring & Sharing's Carly Harmer

By MARK STANLEY AND TRACY STEELY

Carly Harmer is the Executive Director of Caring & Sharing of South Walton, a nonprofit that provides food and assistance to local residents with the support of churches, civic groups, individuals, and businesses. Her organization has been a crucial component in our community's response to the pandemic.

Please tell us a little bit about your family. "I live just off Highway 30A with my fiancé, Geoff Barnes, and our labradoodle, Sunny Cha Cha. Both of us have been in the area for 10-plus years and can't imagine living anywhere else."

Please tell us about your current career and what you love most about what you do. "I am the Executive Director of Caring & Sharing of South Walton. I absolutely LOVE every aspect of my current career. It has been a crazy few months, but we have been able to help hundreds of families in Walton County with food and financial assistance. There is no better feeling."

What inspired you or led you

to your current career? "I served on the Caring & Sharing board for about two years before my current position came open. I hinted here and there that I was interested and finally our board president asked if I was serious and I told him that it was actually my dream job. I have always loved working with nonprofits and having a pulse on the needs of our community. I feel honored to be leading Caring & Sharing."

What is your favorite thing about our community? "We live in the most GENEROUS community I have ever been a part of. There are so many people that call this area home and help make sure that their neighbors are taken care of. Whenever a need arises, our community jumps at the opportunity to meet that need. People living here, love living here and really take pride in what our community stands for."

What current or former local business makes you the most nostalgic about our community? "Hard to choose one ... we have so many cool small businesses in South Walton that really embody

The Faces Of Walton County

what our community is all about with some beach vibes thrown in. Some current local favorites are Balance Health Studio, Nanbu, Blue Mountain Bakery, Shunk Gulley, etc., etc."

If you could choose anyone, who would you have lunch with and where would you go locally? "Honestly, I'd like to have lunch with anyone at this point in the pandemic! However, if it were someone I would not typically have easy access to, I think I would want to have lunch with Ann Patchett, one of my favorite authors and an Indie bookstore owner, and we would head to the best lunch spot around, Chanticleer."

Where do you see yourself in 5 to 10 years? "In 5-10 years, I hope to be married (planning a wedding during a pandemic is fun!), have a growing family, and be leading Caring & Sharing in



a new building with expanding programs that make a lasting impact on the lives of the families we serve."

What is the most beautiful place you have ever been? "I love to travel and have been lucky to see some really beautiful places. I would say that our national parks are some of the most beautiful places I have been - the Dry Tortugas, Grand Teton, Acadia, Rocky Mountain National Park, Yellowstone. The list goes on."

Who inspires you to be better? "The clients we serve at Caring & Sharing. The better I am at all aspects of my job, the more resources and support we are able to provide."

Finally, what advice would you give to people? "In a world where you can be anything, be kind. Seems a little cliché, but a little bit of kindness goes a long way.'

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 or call Tracy at 850-803-9822.





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For the Health of It Celebrates 25 Years as 30A's Natural Foods Store

For the Health of It has been 30A's leading natural foods store for longer than many people have been in the area. They provide a number of products not carried in other nearby stores, as well as operate a fresh juice bar. In April For the Health of It celebrated 25 years of giving its community some of the freshest, most delicious products along 30A.

The store, owned by Ed Berry, began as a small outreach to the community. Over time, word of its superior products and service spread, and now For the Health of It is one of the most widely known stores in the area. "We set out to be a good neighbor and foster a relationship with the community. Our guiding principles were to do things in the best possible manner every time and to never compromise on quality."

Ed believes that the store's success has been a team effort. For multiple reasons, Ed has been unavailable to be in the store as often as he would like, and the rest of the team has stepped forward to help For the Health of It run efficiently and successfully. Some of the team members include the general manager, Wendy Martin, who has been incredible in her professionalism and dedication. Lindsey Wilson, the supplement manager, has also played a tremendous role in the success of the store. "Wendy and Lindsey Wilson treat it like their own business." Ed said. Other contributing members of the team include Peter Lovecchino, the produce manager, who has been with the business for over twenty years, as well as massage therapists June Sinnott and Mark Grissom

With everything going in the world today, becoming healthier and creating a strong immune



system has been a priority for many people. For people who have contracted COVID-19, a strong immune system is essential for a complete and speedy recovery. For the Health of It provides a number of immune boosting foods and supplements,



and the team makes it a matter of highest importance to remain as stress free as possible, setting the example for the community. "We're trying with the best of our ability to create what we think is a healthy environment for our customers." Ed commented.

For the Health of It prides themselves in refusing to flow with food trends. Rather, they have stuck to their core principles

have stuck to their core principles and common sense, providing locally grown and non-genetically modified foods. The store holds



high standards for their foods, only providing products that are chemical and pesticide free, and it's clear that quality is For the Health of It's most important value.

In light of For the Health of

Its successes, Ed Berry is now taking on the task of starting a new company, Earthquake Eddie Bee SuperFoods, where it is certain the same quality will be provided. "We've taken some of the smoothie recipes and nutritional mixes that I've been making for 25 years and brought them to market. They're shelf stable and supplemental mixes that can be added to smoothies or foods like yogurt or energy balls. I'm excited to see this come to fruition."

For the Health of It is open from 9 AM to 4 PM Monday through Friday, and Saturday from 9AM to 2 PM. Don't forget to check out the fresh juice bar as well! They are located at 2217 W County Hwy 30A in Santa Rosa Beach. Visit: www. shopforthehealthofit.com

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What Ever Happened To: Patriotism?



By Myrna Conrad

We have just celebrated two very patriotic holidays, Memorial Day and Independence Day. Memorial Day commemorates the men and women who have died in military service for the United States. Independence Day (Fourth of July) celebrates the birth of American independence from Great Britain on July 4, 1776. We also celebrate Veterans Day in November, honoring all persons who have served in the U.S. Armed Forces.

If you go in order, The Declaration of Independence precedes all of these holidays. This declaration led to our Constitution which guarantees our freedoms, including the Bill Of Rights. The final version of our Declaration of Independence declares: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness."

Our freedoms were fought for from the very beginning and have been fought for ever since. These men and women were and are the



ultimate Patriots. Patriotism, however, shouldn't just be attributed to those who have served in our Armed Forces. Patriotism should be practiced by EVERY citizen of the United States.

The definition of Patriotism is "devotion to and vigorous support for one's country. A patriot is a person who is on the side of his or her own nation or its leaders." To support one's country doesn't mean you have to agree with everything the current political leaders endorse. What is does mean is that you support and stand up for the freedoms that our country represent.

The freedoms that make our country different and stand out among all others are stated in The Bill of Rights. Those include: Freedom of Religion; Freedom of Speech; Freedom of The Press; Freedom of Assembly; Freedom of Petition; The Right To Bear Arms; 'No-Quartering" Right; The Right To Equal Justice, The Right To Own Private Property. The Tenth Amendment includes: freedom to live or travel anywhere in our nation; freedom to work at any job for which we can qualify, freedom to marry and raise a family, freedom to receive a free education in public schools, and freedom to join a political party, union, or other legal group. Aren't you thankful for these freedoms? Let's never take

In a 2018 Gallop Poll only 33% of Americans aged 18-29 said they were proud to be an American, while 60 % of those age 50+ expressed extreme patriotism. The surprising and disturbing statistics in this poll, however, were that between 2013 and 2018 all age groups under the age of 50 went down significantly in their pride in being an American.

Those are troubling and sad statistics. Why this drop in patriotism? I believe a lot of it comes from the lack of accurate knowledge about our country's history and the moral fiber our country was founded on. As my husband, Bob, put it, "revisionist history and expunging God from our society are the root causes of the failure and decline of patriotism in our country today." History used to be one of the major subjects taught in school from elementary school through high school. That doesn't seem to be the case today. Even when history is taught, parts of history that might offend someone are left out or erased. How can we expect our youth to be proud of a country they know so little about?

When searching for statistics on how many Americans have even read the Constitution, the numbers were between 15% and 37%. So when the majority of our people have never even read the Constitution that our country was founded on and what all who serve swear allegiance to, why should we be surprised that patriotism is on the decline.

When I was in school we stood, with our hands over our heart and all quoted the Pledge of Allegiance. We all knew the words and no one even thought about refusing to do this. Today we see people refusing to stand and pledge allegiance to our flag. Kids in school, people in sports, many of those in the media and entertainment industry stay seated or take a knee when saluting our flag or speak disparagingly about our country.

Freedom is not something to

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take for granted. We all enjoy the picnics, fireworks, and fun when celebrating these holidays but let's never fail to acknowledge the sacrifices that secure our freedoms. People throughout the history of our country have left home and family, bled and fought under extreme circumstances, seen and experienced horrific things and even died for our freedom.

I belong to a family with strong military ties. My father-in-law was a prisoner of war in Japan in WWII. My husband, his brothers, my brother, and many of the next generation of our family have served in the military. We have seen, first hand, the cost of freedom. That's why when we see a flag waving in the wind or hear the National Anthem, our hearts swell and we proudly salute the flag that represents the "land of the free."

While our country is not perfect, what has made our country different and great is its stated commitment to liberty, justice and equality for all. Let's ALL stand strong for our freedoms and be proud that we are Americans!

Do you want to better understand our nation's history and renew your patriotism? Here are a few strategies:

Be Aware:

Be more aware of the cost of freedom in our country?"

Know and understand the principals and foundations our country was built upon. www.archives. gov/founding-docs.

Think about some of the things you have had to give up during COVID-19 and give thanks daily for the freedoms in our nation.

Ask yourself how quickly and at what costs you would be willing to give up vour freedom?

Be aware of any negativity you might have toward our country and find ways to change that.

Be Intentional:

Read more about the history of our country and make sure your children are aware of our nation's history.

Celebrate our country's holidays, not just with fun and food but with remembrance and appreciation.

When given the opportunity to salute our flag, think of all that it has cost those in our military to insure our freedoms and stand proud!

Find ways in the community to thank and support those serving our country.

Thank God every day for the freedoms you enjoy. Never take them for granted!

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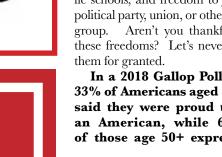
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CBA Oyster Shell Recycling Program Thrives with Help From Local Community

By Chad Perko, CBA Ecology Technician

As an Ecology Technician for Choctawhatchee Basin Alliance, one of my primary duties is to oversee our oyster shell recycling program. You may ask, "Why does an oyster shell need to be recycled and what does CBA do with it?" Well, it's all about the bay. Our community is home to the Choctawhatchee Bay. The bay stretches 30 miles from east to west and consists of brackish waters that are home to abundant wildlife and diverse recreational opportunities, making it the lifeblood of our area's current and future ecological and economic health. Throughout the bay's history it has supported diverse habitats for humans and wildlife alike. Of all the creatures that call the Choctawhatchee Bay home, the humble oyster is perhaps the most important to the bay's health.

Oyster reefs are an important marine habitat since oysters act as Mother Nature's water filtration system. For example, one adult oyster is capable of filtering 50 gallons of water in one day, improving the water clarity and quality, which benefits the entire bay and by extension our community. So just imagine what an entire oyster reeftypically hosting thousands of oysters--can do for the bay's water quality! Sadly, in recent decades, as the local human



population has soared, our oyster population has declined due to increased stormwater runoff and habitat alteration. Thankfully, our community is home to The Choctawhatchee Basin Alliance (CBA), the non-profit, 100 percent grant and donor funded environmental organization that I work for, whose mission is to promote swimmable, fishable waterways in our community through monitoring, education, restoration and research. As part of our Restoration Program, we have taken on the important mission of working to increase the Choctawhatchee Bay's oyster reef populations, improving habitat and water quality.

The CBA organizes an Oyster Shell Recycling Program in partnership with local seafood restaurants. We collect shucked oyster shells that would otherwise end up in a landfill and use them as the building



blocks to construct oyster reefs and restore oyster populations. The recycled oyster shells provide oyster spat (larva) with a stable surface material where they can attach and grow. The CBA picks up oyster shells three times a week from participating restaurants. The oyster shells are then taken back to CBA's staging area, where they stay for several months allowing the sunlight and rainwater to clean the shells. Once the shells are clean, the CBA and volunteers bag the shell in marine grade mesh bags, forming the building blocks for an oyster reef. We place the bags in the water at our permitted restoration sites around the bay. Oyster spat then settle on the oyster shell and begin to grow and reproduce. Soon, the new ovster reef becomes its own diverse ecosystem, providing a habitat for other beneficial marine life, as well.

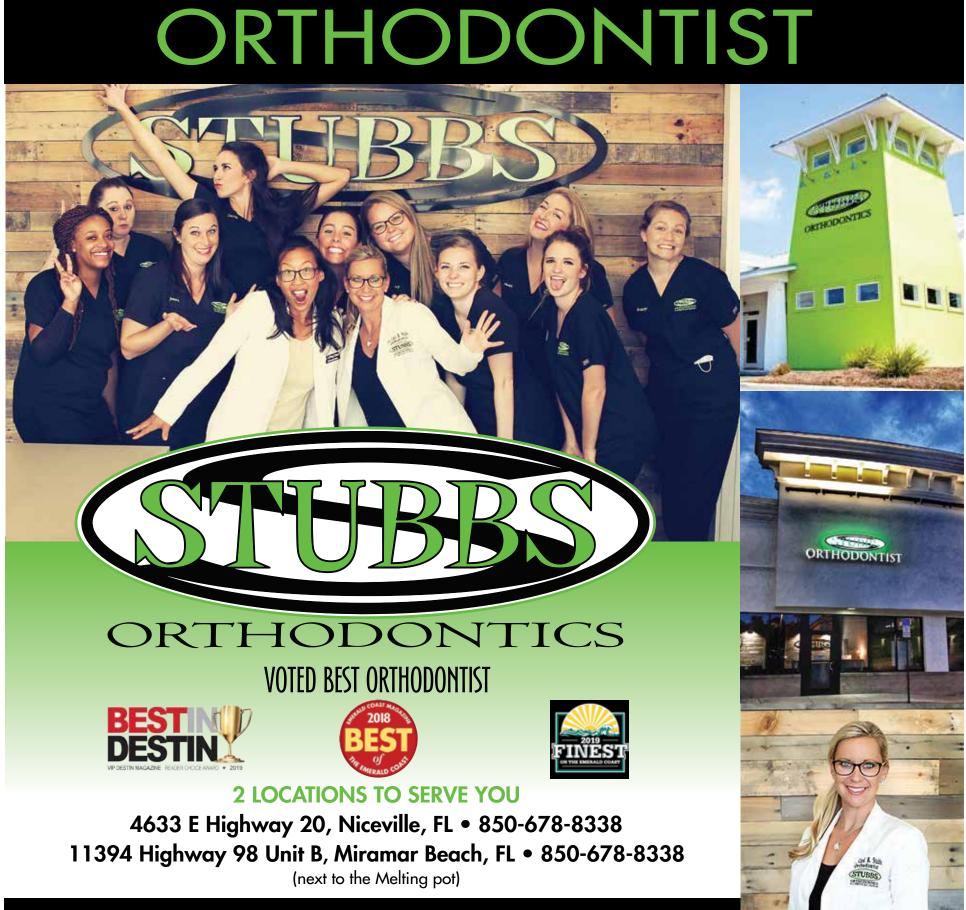
Recycling Program currently partners with Acme Oyster House, AJ's in Grayton Beach, The Back Porch, Half Shell Oyster House (Destin), The Henderson, Johnny O'Quigley's , The Surf Hut (Destin), and Shunk Gulley Oyster Bar. This year the CBA is planning to expand their reach into Okaloosa Island and Fort Walton Beach as they have secured new funding from Impact 100 Northwest Florida to make an even bigger impact for the overall community! Find out more at basinalliamce.org. (Photos by Sean Murphy)

The CBA Oyster Shell









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Guest Columnist; The Fourth of July as an Idea

By Tim Norris

Most people in the United States celebrate the 4th of July, but do you know why the holiday is so important to our country? We celebrate the

Declaration of Independence for two important reasons. First, It represents an official severing of ties between the original 13 colonies and the rule of Great Britain. And also, the Declaration represents the core of our beliefs, the very makeup of our identity as citizens of the U.S., making us the envy of the world for the past two hundred fifty years. (If you've been watching TV lately you would not get that impression!)

Thomas Jefferson, the author of the Declaration of Independence, presented to the King of England a set of ideas that formed the basis for the American people to separate from England.

The first two paragraphs set the tone:

1. When in the Course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

LISA Y. SHORTS PITELI

ATTORNEY AT LAW



2. We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.--

3. That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, --

4. That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness.

Before 1776, the United States of America was not a country. The individual states were colonies of the British Empire and were ruled by the King and Parliament of Great Britain- the greatest power on Earth at the time. In Verse 1, Jefferson refers to "The Laws of Nature and Nature's God", as entitling the citizens to a separate and equal station in political affairs. This was a revolutionary idea for 1776, where most countries, including Great Britain, were ruled by the legal term "Divine Right of Kings." Verse 2 expounds on the idea by explicitly saying our rights come from God, not the King; and that our rights are unalienable- meaning they could not be divided or taken away; they existed in a "State of Nature" before any government existed, thus the rights of the People were superior to any government structure. The three unalienable rights mentioned in the Declaration are Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness. In verse 3, we clearly see that Governments are formed only for the purpose of securing those rights given to the "People" by God; and the power given to Government to Rule over the People is derived by "the consent of the Governed."

These ideas were truly revolutionary at the time. Most of the signers of the Declaration had death sentences placed on them by the King of England. Few believed the Declaration it-

self would result in the eventual United States of America! But here we are, nearly 250 years later trying to make sense and hold on to the ideas that made America, even today- with all its warts- the envy of the World!

At times, the concept of what it means to be a citizen of the United States of America may seem unclear. For those who already deeply love the United States, and for those who are struggling with the idea, the Declaration can be a guidepost. It is an unassailable document that embodies what it means to be an American, and everything we hold dear.

The Fourth of July is a cel- Piper.

ebration of America. I celebrate all we stand for as a people of one country: The freedom to believe what we want (in a religious sense), to speak what we feel about our government and the opportunities we have here to be what we desire and continue to learn and grow.

May God continue to bless America!

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

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The community

July 2020 30A Real Estate Update



Dear 30A Neighbors,

There are a few things I have learned over the past 25+ years in this business I would like to share with you.. It is important to keep in mind: Even though a house exists on a piece of land.. there are no guarantees there is an easement to get to the property.. Always make certain the door is unlocked when going out onto a deck or balcony without stairs. If you do not check the lock, make certain you have your cell phone in hand..Never Jump..

Do not believe an ELVIS impersonator who shows up to your open house and tells all other attendees to leave because he is buying the house for cash..his manager will take care of everything..even if he has a sidekick girlfriend named Patsy Cline hanging on his every word..later you will find out he has just been released from jail..

CALL 911 when you are followed to a vacant property by a seemingly sweet older lady..who parks her minivan across the driveway so you cannot exit..it eventually takes five police cars to apprehend her..

On the serious side..

EVERY home is someone's castle regardless of price point..I market EVERY home like a million dollar property..I stay AHEAD of marketing trends..I answer my phone and FOL-LOW-UP.I treat the AGENTS in my office the way I wanted to be treated as an agent.. EXPE-**RIENCE** is priceless.. especially when pricing and negotiating.. If vou make a mistake..MAKE IT RIGHT.. and last but not least .. When I list a property, I list it to SELL. When YOU are ready to sell or purchase your next property, I would love to have the opportunity to work with you..

30A July Real Estate Update, Detached Single Family Homes

Rosemary Beach, Gulf Front

There are currently 3 properties available ranging \$3,495,000 to \$10,200,000. The average property is \$6,398,333 with 3520 sf and priced at \$1845.43 per sf.

There is 1 pending property priced at \$4,799,000 with 2800 sf and 1535 days on the market.

There has been 1 sale at \$3,150,000 with 2530 sf, selling at \$1,245.06 per sf and 805 days on the market.

Rosemary Beach, Non-Gulf Front

There are 41 properties available ranging from \$1,150,000 to \$8,100,000. The average property is \$3,478,098 with 3369 sf and priced at \$1,035.51 per sf with 221 days on the market.

There are 14 pending sales ranging \$1,649,000 to \$3,750,000 with the average property being \$2,284,000 with 3051 sf, and 192 days on the market. There have been 34 sales ranging \$1,250,000 to \$4,220,000. The average sale is \$2,206,103 with 2995 sf, selling at 93% of list price and 201 days on the market.

Seacrest Beach, Non-Gulf Front

There are currently 23 active properties ranging \$689,000 to \$3,495,000. The average property is \$990,813 with 2592 sf, priced ta \$375.80 per sf and 185 days on the market. There are currently 16 pending properties ranging \$549,000 to \$1,899,000. The average property is \$958,327 with 2527 sf and 120 days on the market. There have been 50 sales ranging \$570,000 to \$1,570,000. The average sale is \$862,710 with 2443 sf, selling at 96% of list price at \$353.45 per sf, and 189 days on the market.

Alys Beach, Gulf Front

There is 1 gulf front property available at \$10,000,000 with 3631 sf and 198 days on the market.

Alys Beach, Non-Gulf Front There are 9 active properties ranging \$3,100,000 to \$6,395,000. The average property is priced at \$4,325,111 with 3895 sf, and priced at \$1,123.68 per sf and 84 days on the market. There are 20 properties pending sale ranging from \$2,095,000 to \$5,685,000 with the average property being \$3,461,797 with 3389 sf, and 97 days on the market.

There have been 35 sales ranging \$1,800,000 to \$6,200,000 with the average sell being \$3,673,440 with 3397 sf, selling at 98% of list price, at \$1,067,62 per sf and 110 days on the market.

Watersound Beach, Gulf Front

There is 1 active property priced at \$5,445,000 with 5738 sf. There are 2 pending properties at \$5,999,999 with 4433 sf and \$6,695,000 with 4853 sf.

Watersound Beach, Non-Gulf Front

There are currently 25 active properties ranging \$1,050,000 to \$4,836,000. The average property is \$3,004,960 with 3843 sf, priced at \$775.30 per sf and 222 days on the market. There are currently pending sales ranging \$1,275,000 to \$5,200,000. The average pending is \$2,393,000 with 3185 sf, and 204 days on the market. There have been 36 sales ranging \$815,000 to \$4,400,000 with the average sale being \$2,505,325 with 3691 sf, selling at 94% of list price at /4667,14 per sf, and 302 days on the market.

Seaside, Gulf Front

There are currently 5 active properties ranging \$1,690,000 to \$9,995,000, with the average property being \$5,654,000 with 2777 sf, priced at \$2183.31 per sf and 116 days on the market. There are 2 properties pending at \$1,790,000 with 784 sf and \$4,795,000 with 2716 sf and 110 days on the market. There have been 5 sales ranging \$1,700,000 to \$6,800,000 with the average sale being \$3,910,000 with 1978 sf, selling at 95% of list price at \$2,105.32 per sf and 331 days on the market.

Seaside, Non-Gulf Front

There are 6 active properties ranging \$1,580,000 to \$3,650,000 with the average



property being \$2,427,333 with 2958 sf, priced at \$891.39 per sf and 83 days on the market. There are currently 7 pending properties ranging \$1,329,000 to \$3,750000. The average pending is \$2,017,857 with 2341 sf, priced at \$853.05 per sf and 63 days on the market. There have been 9 sales ranging \$750,000 to \$4,191,655 with the average sale being \$2,068,406 qirh 2275 sf, selling at 95% of list price at \$949.85 per sf and 235 days on the market.

Watercolor, Gulf Front

There have been 3 sales ranging \$2,919,555 to \$3,999,900 with the average sale being \$3,339,818 with 2537 sf, selling at 86% of list price at \$1,322.06 per sf and 496 days on the market.

Watercolor, Non-Gulf Front

There are currently 33 active properties ranging \$1,245,000 to \$4,350,000 with the average list price at \$2,523,058 with 3727 sf, priced at \$679.95 per sf and 144 days on the market. There are currently 25 pending properties ranging \$1,195,000 to \$4,650,000 with the average pending sale being \$2,193,360 with 3324 sf, and 132 days on the market. There have been 85 sales ranging \$840,000 to \$5,500,000 with the average sale being \$1,894,951 with 3266 sf, selling at 96% of list price at \$561.55 per sf and 128 days on the market.

Grayton Beach, Gulf Front

There are 2 active properties ranging \$3,850,000 to \$6,200,000 with the average property being \$5,025,000 with 3188 sf, priced at \$1,804,21 per sf and 236 days on the market. There has been 1 sale at \$5,700,000 with 6043 sf and selling at 96% of list price at \$943.24 per sf and 217 days on the market.

Grayton Beach, Non-Gulf Front

There are currently 19 active properties ranging \$1,100,000 to \$4,950,000 with the average property being \$2,109,684 with 2803 sf, priced at \$787.67 per sf and 328 days on the market. There are 3 pending sales ranging \$749,000 to \$2,898,000 with the average pending sale being \$1880,667 with 2801 sr and 118 days on the market.

There have been 12 sales ranging \$580,000 to \$3,100,000 with the average sale being \$1,449,542 with 2498 sf, selling at 94% of list price at \$607.69 per sf and 194 days on the market.

Gulf Place, Detached Single Family Homes

There are currently 3 active properties ranging \$865,000 to \$1,200,000. The average property is \$1076,667 with 3269 sf, priced at \$328.68 per sf and 164 days on the market. There is 1 pending property at \$1,195,000 with 2416 sf and 95 days on the market. There have been 6 sales ranging \$700,000 to \$1,275,000 with the average sale being \$957,167 with 3150 sf, selling at 96% of list price at \$308.01 per sf and 377 days on the market.

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

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By MAURICE STOUSE,

BRANCH MANAGER AND

Looking at the ROTH IRA for Retirement and Estate Planning

FINANCIAL ADVISOR

When it comes to taxes and investing there are three ways that an investor might benefit: Tax deferral, tax deductible and tax-free investing. This article addresses tax free investing with focus on the Roth IRA in particular

First a recap of the other two. Tax deferred investing is best exemplified with retirement plans like 401ks, 403bs, IRAs and defined benefit (or pension) plans. These may also include some tax reduction in that the contributions are being made with pretax dollars. Taxes are deferred and are not due on money in these types of accounts until withdrawals are made. For pure tax-deductible benefits, consider that charitable giving (either directly or through a donor advised fund) might reduce income taxes if that can be itemized.

So, what about tax free investing? The ROTH IRA allows for contributions and future withdrawals to be tax free (there are some restrictions

for those under 59.5 years old however). This is growing in popularity, because many investors and savers are finding it to be an option for retirement planning and saving and for planning for their estates (what they leave behind) as well.

The ROTH IRA however is not available to everybody. There are earnings tests that must be met and in some cases the wage earner might be in too high a bracket to be able to tax advantage of the Roth. For those that can, however, consider the following:

1. \$6000 dollars a year can be contributed for each tax year. If you are over 50, you can add \$1000 as a catch-up contribution effectively making it \$7000.

2. There is no required minimum distribution during your lifetime. If you make qualified withdrawals, those are tax free. The rules for beneficiaries are different than those beneficiaries who are spouses, however, regarding future tax-free withdrawals.

3. Contributions can be taken out at any time. However, earnings are subject to a minimum five-year rule and need to be taken after age 59 1/2 to be free from penalties.

• For more information, you can review details at IRS.gov and its publication 590 or see a qualified tax professional.

Many investors are also looking at converting existing IRAs (or Rollover IRAs that were originally 401ks as an example) into ROTHs now. Why might they be doing that? They might want to pay the taxes now (a conversion means that the amount being converted that year would be included in taxable income) and, therefore, as a ROTH, its future growth or earnings (and withdrawals) becomes tax free. They may be thinking that taxes might be higher in the future. This has taken on increased awareness with current federal deficits, the size of the national debt and future interest on the debt. Originally, a future retiree might be thinking they would be in a lower tax bracket at retirement. Lastly, they might want as much retirement income as possible to be free from income taxes.

There are other ways to invest tax free. The first of these is municipal bonds. That interest is federally tax free. If someone is in a state that has an income tax (Florida of course does not), bonds issued in that state would be federally and state tax free. One thing that retirees should take note of is that municipal interest is considered when computing how much of their Social Security benefits are taxable. In addition, municipal bonds may subject their owners to the alternative minimum tax and might not be suitable for all investors. Lastly would be utilizing cash value or socalled permanent life insurance. The cash that accumulates on those is not taxed nor is it counted regarding Social Security benefits. When using life insurance, it's important to consider whether there is an underlying need for the insurance to begin with.

Find out more about the importance of investing utilizing tax advantaged strategies. Visit with an advisor (Financial as well as tax) or conduct your own research to learn more.

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, Tallahassee, and Moultrie, GA. Phone 850.654.8124. Raymond James advisors do not offer tax advice. Please see your tax professionals. Email: Maurice.stouse@raymondjames.com. Securities offered through Raymond James Financial Services, Inc. Member FINRA/SIPC, and are not insured by bank insurance, the FDIC or any other government agency, are not deposits or obligations of the bank, are not guaranteed by the bank, and are subject to risks, including the possible loss of principal. Investment Advisory Services are offered through Raymond James Financial Services Advisors, Inc. The First Wealth Management First Florida Bank, and The First, A National Banking Association are not registered broker/dealers and are independent of Raymond James Financial Services. Views expressed are the current opinion of the author, not necessarily those of RJFS or Raymond James, and are subject to change without notice. Information provided is general in nature and is not a complete statement of all information necessary for making an investment decision and is not a recommendation or a solicitation to buy or sell any security. Past performance is not indicative of future results.

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Local Christians Committed to Improving Race Relations

BY HOPE MCCORMICK, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT VISTA FOR COMMUNITIES OF TRANSFORMATION SOUTH WALTON, AND EMILY PROCTOR, DIRECTOR OF OUTREACH AT CARING AND SHARING OF SOUTH WALTON

Amid heightened racial conflict across the US, many in our local community are wondering how they might contribute to reconciliation, justice, and equality. Irene Fowlkes, a Black woman living in Santa Rosa Beach, believes dialog is essential to bring people together. She knows firsthand how people of different backgrounds can end up avoiding or disliking each other based on misunderstandings. "It's easy to react quickly and negatively,"



she said, but she strives to a little distance from everyone follow the Bible's guidance. For example, Philippians 2:3 teaches that Christians should esteem others better than themselves. Irene takes that to heart and does her best to treat everyone with kindness and respect. Irene shared an experience she had during a faith-based study group, made up of Black students, except for one woman, who was of a different ancestry. The woman kept to herself, sitting at

else, and from all appearances was focused on reading while everyone else was talking. Soon she gathered her belongings and left.

When they gathered again, the woman who'd left early shared that she was offended by their behavior and that she felt excluded from the discussion. Rather than dismissing the accusation or getting defensive, Irene chose instead to hold the woman in high esteem, as the Bible directs, and have an honest talk about the incident. Irene explained that she had interpreted the woman's body language and focus on a book to mean that she didn't want to participate. Furthermore, Irene said she assumed if the woman did want to contribute to the conversation, she'd have spoken up and joined in.

The woman appreciated that



the slight was unintentional. She shared further, explaining that English is not her first language, and she often has trouble understanding Americans. "She needs people to speak slowly, and it helps if they make eye contact with her, because reading lips helps her figure out what's being said," Irene said. Once they understood how to approach each other, a meaningful friendship bloomed.

Irene and her friend aren't the only locals who believe in

the power of dialogue. Three White members of Christ the King Epsicopal Church in Santa Rosa Beach were talking amongst themselves about the division and rancor our country is experiencing over the killing of unarmed black people by police, the Black Lives Matter movement, and the call for changes in policing.

Libby Fisher, Mimi Gavigan,

CHRISTIANS

continued on page 15



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CHRISTIANS

continued from page 14

and Krissi Finch agreed to take concrete steps to promote reconciliation between races. "We wanted to offer a racial dialogue program at Christ the King," Libby said. "From there, we found the Sacred Ground curriculum and had a great response from folks interested in participating." The program is designed specifically for White Americans to educate themselves about race and become more racially self-aware. It lasts 10 sessions, and participants are meeting in small groups either online or in person. Homework includes watching videos and reading assignments, including the books Jesus and the Disinherited by Howard Thurman and Waking Up White, And Finding Myself in the Story of Race by Debbie Irving. It requires a significant time investment, but Libby believes some people feel compelled to make a real effort to work for positive change. Libby added, "I don't think it's an option for Christians to ignore the unrest in our country right now, and to be on the sidelines tolerating racism. Even if we are not ourselves overtly racist, we can unknowingly participate in and benefit from racial prejudice."

"As Dr. William Barber III, co-chair of the Poor People's Campaign, preaches, chapter 5 in Amos calls out the Israelites for caring about the trappings of their faith as they ignore the downtrodden in their midst," she said. "And my personal mantra is Micah 6:8. God calls us to 'Act justly, love mercy and walk humbly with your God.' " In addition to participating in the Sacred Ground groups, both authors of this article agreed that we needed to facilitate a conversation about race in Caring and Sharing of South Walton's weekly Communities of Transformation (COT) Zoom meeting. One reason for doing so is that members of COT are of diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds and have families directly impacted by the unrest and division. As the Apostle Paul states in his letter to the Corinthians (1 Cor 12:26), "When one member of the body suffers, all suffer." We felt it was important to take time to "listen to our [collective] body." Secondly, conflict mediation is one of the core skills we try to develop in both our Awaken students and our volunteers.



CARING & SHARING OF SOUTH WALTON

Having difficult conversations about emotionally charged issues like race is one way we can practice the skills we are learning, such as active listening and the use of "I-statements."

To this end, we began our conversation about race, by asking participants to commit simply to listening to one another share about the emotions stirred up for them by the topic of race and the racial unrest in the news, as well as experiences they might have had in their past that influence their current

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850-200-0835 | www.cmacommunities.com 7 Town Center Loop, Suite C-16 | Santa Rosa Beach feelings and views on the matter. The emotions shared ranged from frustration to despair to guilt to fear to a cautious hope. This sharing and listening was followed by the sharing of some basic definitions about race and racism that the group will reflect on and discuss together. Our hope is that others in the community can take inspiration from this article to brave having difficult conversations with friends, family, and coworkers in a way that models humility, compassion, and openness. We encourage all--in both the realm of politics and theology--to lead with a practice confession rather than accusation.

To learn more, please visit www.caringandsharingsowal. org and www.communitiesof transformation.org.



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Jeri MIchie Announces Candidacy for Walton County School Board



Ieri Michie, a longtime resident of Walton County, is running for the position of Walton County School Board. Jeri has been in the field of education for over thirtyfour years, first operating as a classroom teacher and eventually moving on to principal.

Jeri has always felt like her purpose in life is to teach and serve. From the time she was a child the value of taking care of others was instilled in her being a good citizen and using her talents to help others in the community. Jeri has primarily accomplished this through the

field of education, wearing many hats throughout her career. Today, Jeri spends most of her time volunteering in her community as a coach for high school and elementary tennis and soccer teams.

When asked what drives her to want to be the representative for Walton County's School Board Jeri said, "I think of three things. First, I have a lot of experience. I believe that experience is such a great teacher, and I learned at a young age that this is what I wanted to do. Second, it's my nature and gift to want to bring people together to solve problems. If you have a problem, all you need is a plan. Third, I'm highly motivated. I'm driven by my faith, and my faith motivates me to serve, as well as my family. I just love our community." Jeri believes that there are four areas our focus needs to be on concerning the county's education.

Firstly, she believes the community must plan for growth. Walton County is among the top five fastest-growing counties in the United States, and this puts a strain on the schools and their staff. As a member of the Walton County School Board, Jeri plans to prioritize investment in the facilities and personnel in

order to support the growth in the student population. As Walton County continues to grow, the need for practical and modern schools and educated staff grow as well.

Second, Jeri believes in the importance of rewarding teachers. Jeri's experience as a teacher herself has taught her the importance of a classroom teacher in the lives of students. Teachers are sometimes

the only line of support a child has. Jeri also believes that competitive salaries are necessary in order to recruit and retain talented teachers. A person who feels underappreciated never gives their best.

Thirdly, Jeri believes that the primary focus should be on the students. Events such as COVID-19 have made it apparent that students need support in their mental and emotional health.



Guidance counselors have assisted but often find themselves busy with other duties in addition to counseling. Jeri believes that the way to solve this problem is to reduce the ratio of students to

counselors and to decrease the dependence on school counselors for administrative work. Jeri will work hard to make sure that counselors have enough time to support students in all areas of their life, from basic emotional and mental health to college and career planning.

Finally, Jeri is advocating for increased pre-vocational opportunities. She believes that these courses should be expanded to middle and high school students, as technical schools often help students gain valuable skills to transfer to their future careers.

Jeri Michie's greatest passion is simple - to live her life serving other people. She feels like the best way she can do this is to be given the opportunity to represent Walton County on the School Board. Voting will take place on August 18th, 2020. We are always learning new things, and every community could stand to grow. As Jeri said, "Working together, we can do great things."

Every Student in Walton County deserves a world-class education! RI MICHIE - No one is more gualified to serve!

"Every Walton County student deserves an inspired, passionate, and highly trained classroom teacher. I was blessed as a young elementary school student to have a teacher who inspired me to dedicate my life to teaching. As a math teacher, assistant principal, principal, and school improvement specialist, I worked to improve the joy of learning for students. Working together, we can continue to

inspire our teachers and principals to be their best for our students, our future citizens."

-Jeri Michie, Candidate for Walton County School Board



Experience

- Educator with 34 years experience in elementary school, middle school, and high school
- Math teacher, assistant principal and principal for public and private schools
- Pre-K through 12th grade teaching experience
- Administrator at Okapilco Elementary, Butler Elementary, Emerald Coast Middle School, and Gateway Academy
- School Improvement Specialist at the State Department of Education

Certified School Bus Driver

Education

- Educational Specialist, Educational Administration Valdosta State University
- Masters of Education, Educational Administration Valdosta State University
- Bachelor of Science, Elementary Education Georgia Southern University

Honors and Activities

- Teacher of
- the Year
- Technology Conference
- Outstanding District Member Award
- with Special Education programs
- Junior Woman's Club Family of the Year

Community Activities

- and Baseball coach
- American Cancer Society Chairman
- Church Children's Director
- Member of Destiny Worship Center

Family

 Married for 40 years to Scott Michie, former principal with 42 years teaching/administrative experience, two sons, Brian and Bradley, married to Josie and Ashley and four beautiful grandchildren

- Presenter. Educational
- Professional Association of Educators
- Jim Hall Humanitarian Award for work

- Volunteer Soccer, Tennis,

Path of Grace Expanding its Horizon with Serenity Village!

BY AETHER VAN DYKE

Path of Grace rehabilitation facility has been changing the lives of struggling women and their families since 2008. Beginning as a small program with only five women, Eddie Mansfield and his team have grown Path of Grace into a life changing program that has now helped over eighty women. Today, this organization has multiple homes where women are finding victory and freedom.

Path of Grace provides an affordable sober living facility, primarily through sales from its two thrift stores, located in both Miramar Beach and Destin. Proceeds from the shops continue to help women free themselves from the chains of addiction.

Now, expanding their horizon even further, Path of Grace has designed a safe place where women who have overcome drug and alcohol addictions can live with their children while regaining financial and emotional stability. The new housing development- Serenity Village,



will contain between twelve and sixteen transitional cottages, as well as a chapel. Each cottage will be in the style of a single family home, measuring about 800 square feet and containing two bedrooms. Each home will also be equipped with appliances, including a washer and dryer. It will be located on the first two acres of a property Path of Grace owns near Church Street in Santa Rosa Beach. The property of ten acres was purchased after one of the founding members, Jim Bock passed away. Resources contributed by Jim and his wife went towards purchasing the property, and began the reuniting of families.

Many mothers who have been blessed through Path of Grace's program have not been able to live with their children for months or years due to addictions. Though these mothers have been broken-hearted, their determination to rebuild their lives has shined through in more ways than one. Serenity Village will provide a safe environment, free of alcohol and drugs, where mothers and children can thrive together after the devastation an addiction causes.

"I feel like one of the biggest needs of the women is that they all want to be reunited with their children," said Eddie Mansfield, who has been the director of Path of Grace for eight years now. Eddie's heart, as well as the rest of the Path of Grace team is to give these women a new life - a life they deserve. "I just love seeing them reunited with their kids, and seeing the restoration of family and lives." Eddie continued.

Serenity Village will be happening in three phases, the first phase will be the building of the cottages. Construction for the first four to six homes should begin in about thirty days. The village will be cost affordable, and mothers will remain connected to both their recovery programs and support team, as well as be able to acquire steady employ-

ment. Path of Grace is breaking generational lines of addiction, and teaching children that their future is determined by them alone. Currently, there are no other programs along the Emerald Coast that will operate as Serenity Village will. Women who have gained their life back through this organization can testify to the power of surrounding yourself with a great recovery team such as Path of Grace has provided. Every day is a new beginning - a chance to start over and make different choices. Path of Grace is the proof.



Recovery and to Reunite Families

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Wellness Shield of Faith Missions Dedicated to our Nation's Veterans

Shield of Faith (SOF) Missions is a non-profit organization serving our Nation's warriors. The purpose of SOF Missions is to combat the veteran suicide crisis by restoring purpose, resiliency, and life after service. SOF Missions was founded in 2011 by Dr. Damon Friedman, an Air Force Special Operator who served four combat tours in both Iraq and Afghanistan. The scars of war took a huge toll on Friedman physically, psychologically, mentally, and spiritually. He experienced a traumatic brain injury (TBI) and post-traumatic stress (PTS) which made him question his own purpose and existence, putting him on a path of selfdestruction and self-defeat. For a long time, he didn't know he was struggling, and he didn't ask for help, like so many of our brave warriors today. But eventually, he was blessed to get specialized care outside of the military and he had a moment of clarity. He wanted to figure out a way to help each and every veteran suffering like he was and help them find their purpose in life. He wanted to help save others from themselves, from a path of self-destruction.

Today, more than 2.7 million men and women have been deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan in the fight on terrorism. Friedman said, unfortunately for many, the rigors of combat and the challenges of military life take a toll on their overall health. The suicide rate among veterans has reached drastic proportions. The Department of Veterans Affairs Suicide Data Report from 2019 states that over 20 veterans take their lives every day and the suicide rate for veterans is 1.5 times the rate for non-veteran adults. "Today, more than ever, with all the issues facing our world and the scars from combat, there are so many veterans suffering in isolated silence. They live in fear and are either too strong-willed to ask for help or they just don't know where to turn," said Friedman. "When our veterans are struggling, we want to be there to bridge the gap, whatever the challenges. If you're afraid, we want you to know you aren't alone."

SOF Missions has a first-of-itskind holistic paradigm of care, called The Resiliency Project, provided wherever the veteran is located. It's a four-component

ECORATIVE





program that exists to combat PTS and put warriors on a path of wellness. Warriors who apply and are accepted into the program receive individualized programs based on specific need. The program is fully funded by private donors and is provided at no-cost to all veterans. "What that means is, veterans don't have to come to us to get the care that they need, we go to them. We provide a customized treatment solution with our national network of partners," said Friedman.

In 2019, SOF Missions served 20 warriors in The Resiliency Project, 60 groups used our veteran resources, 275 veterans received care and 10,000 people were present at 19 speaking engagements and events across the country. In 2020, SOF Missions has a goal to increase their impact five-fold, which will provide 100 warriors with full-spectrum care and more than 1,400 warriors will receive connect care across the Nation. "No matter what you're dealing with, you can always reach out for help. SOF is here to encourage you, help you heal and help you understand you are never alone. You are worth it. You have a purpose in life, and SOF Missions is here to help you get there. Please reach out if you need help," said Friedman.

If you are a veteran or firstresponder in need or you know of someone who does, please connect with us at SOFmissions. org. https://www.youtube.com/ watch?v=jxjVjsD_Ou8

https://www.youtube.com/ watch?v=akituEOYPiU



ARTS

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The Seaside Institute Summer Update

The Seaside Institute's Academic Village Closes Out an Era Katrina Cottages to be Repurposed as the Site is Redeveloped

The Seaside Institute recently oversaw the removal of the Academic Village cottages located in Seaside[™] which has provided a place for students of all ages to learn, study, collaborate and reflect for over seven years.

The Seaside Institute's Academic Village was completed in August 2013. This long-desired addition to the Lyceum area in Seaside is a concept that was discussed by Seaside's founders, Robert and Daryl Davis, since the early 1980s. The purpose of the village was to provide muchneeded affordable housing for students, faculty and professionals who travel to Seaside to study or to participate in the town's civic and cultural events. Located right in the middle of the Seaside community, the Academic Village provided the community with access to a wide variety of people who could share their talents and teach and inspire others.



The village included seven repurposed Katrina cottages, two large boardwalks and a 3,000-square-foot courtyard. The cottages were positioned with all buildings facing the large courtyard, artfully designed by Dhiru Thadani, allowing guests to enjoy a collegial living environment where discussions continued after classes were officially over. The Academic Village became a reality in 2013 through the generosity of the Dorney Family, Andres Duany and Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk, the Geier Family, the Montague Family, Frank Starkey and the Stice Family.

"The Academic Village was a splendid place for receptions and served well as housing for people coming to Seaside for symposia and seminars," added Davis.

On December 31, 2019, when the collective sponsorships of the Academic Village cottages expired, the Seaside Institute entered into an agreement to sell the seven cottages to a private group of investors, who intend to repurpose them. "Now, at last, they will become affordable housing for people who work in our area but cannot afford to live here," stated Davis. "They are moving a few miles away and will have yet another life after serving as post disaster emergency housing after Hurricane Katrina (humane and elegant substitutes for FEMA trailers) and as student housing in Seaside," concluded Davis.

As is the case with other buildings within Seaside and embracing the Institute's "living laboratory" mission, Seaside Community Development Corporation, will continue the historic practice of fostering successive development.

The Seaside Institute continues to explore the topics that matter to you and apply nationally.

On the Horizon for 2020-2021

- 2020 Symposium Transforming Communities Through New Urbanism- *Planning for the Future* Aging with Grace
- The 2021 Seaside Prize will occur on March 5, 6 and 7, 2021.

• International Travel Program resumes in October 2021

Join us on our journey to help people create great communities. For more information or tickets, please go to our website at seasideinstitutte.org.

The Seaside Institute is a 501 (c)3 non-profit. Our mission is to help people create great communities. Through education, innovation, the arts and engaging our community, we are working to improve the quality of life for families and individuals within Seaside, as well as nationally and globally, while at the same time creating an innovative design that not only enhances the beauty of our environment but, preserves it as well.

If you are interested in helping the Institute fulfill its mission contact us at: information@ seasideinstitute.org, or call us at 850.231.2421.



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Coastal Branch Library Announces

"Art in Public Places" for July

🀲 Arts

As part of the Art in Public Places, three emerging artists, Jacqui Bickel, Ann Frederick and Linda Rakers, will display their work at the Coastal Branch Library for the month of July.

Jacqui Bickel



Jacqui works in watercolors and photography. Both her paintings and her photography are inspired by her love of the outdoors and the beauty of her summer residence in Northern Michigan and her winter home in the Florida Panhandle.

Jacqui grew up in Michigan and took photography classes



in college at Central Michigan University. Watercolor didn't become part of her life until much later. Needing a distraction during some personal life changes, she discovered watercolor painting. She continues to develop her talent taking various workshops and classes and has most recently studied under Northern Michigan artists Charles Murphy and Mary Guntzviller and favorite instructor Carol Dickson of Santa Rosa Beach, Florida. Bickel credits Carol for being instrumental in her artistic

development and in her passion for the art of watercolor. Jacqui is a member of the Cultural Arts Alliance of Walton County and the Crooked Tree Arts Center in Traverse City, MI. To view more of Jacqui's art visit her website, Jacquelin-Bickel.pixels.com.

Ann Frederick WaterColor Artist from Santa Rosa Beach Florida.



Ann is an emerging local artist focused on Watercolor as her medium. As a child she dabbled in Oils, Pastels and Charcoal and only came back as a retiree to paint with watercolor. Her art education came through



experimentation, local art classes, a few workshops and online courses.

She is a member of the Cultural Arts Alliance and has her art posted on her Facebook page "Art by Ann", on Instragram as user AeFrederick22, and her website Ann-Frederick.pixels. com.

At her website her original artwork can be ordered or as prints, along with items featuring her art, such as totes, blankets, metal prints, yoga mats, phone covers, beach bags and other fun useful artsy items!

Linda Rakers

Linda painted her first painting of a beach on the Emerald Coast in 2006. Since then, she has painted many other watercolor and acrylic paintings. She has painted many



beaches, animals that include giraffes, zebras, elephants, tigers, dolphins, tropical fish and many fluffy dogs. Linda continues to take classes from local instructors each week who continue to inspire her creativity and joy.

She has a small exhibit of her artwork, including notecards at her home.

Originally from Illinois, she now spends her days in her cottage on a lake imagining and producing new artwork in the Sandestin Resort area.

The Coastal Branch Library is located at 437 Greenway Trail in Santa Rosa Beach, call 850-267-2809 for more information.



- Lovin Summer
- Coast Hippie
- Shine On Living
- Sunbum

Kayaks

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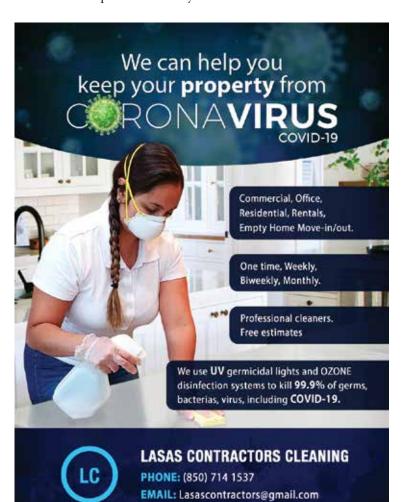
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Arts 🔅

Cultural Arts Alliance Announces Second Round of Emergency Relief Grants to Artists

Applications Open for Short-term Grants to Local Artists Impacted by COVID-19

The Cultural Arts Alliance of Walton County (CAA) announces applications are open for the second round of grants from its Emergency Relief Fund for Artists (ERFA). The Fund was established in April to address the immediate economic needs of local, professional artists who have experienced loss of income due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Applications will be accepted weekly through August 28th through the CAA's website, and grant awards will be available within one week of approval.

A fundraising campaign has also been launched to ensure that funds remain available as long as necessary. Walton County residents and CAA Members Shawn and Richard Tomasello have already pledged a matching donation of \$100,000 for the fund and challenge other individuals, businesses, and foundations to quickly donate to the fund in order to meet the needs of artists who have experienced significant loss of income. "We feel so blessed to be part of such an active art community," said CAA Board Member Shawn Tomasello. "With that blessing comes a sense of commitment to those who make our world more interesting and beautiful."

Donations to the emergency relief fund can be made online at CulturalArtsAlliance. com/Donate and through the phone by texting 'CaaArtist-Relief' to 76278. All donations, less any processing fees, will go directly to artists. "The emergency relief fund process was created to be simple and easy so we can quickly meet the needs of our valued artists," said CAA Executive Director Jennifer Steele. "How many times have we asked artists to donate their work and time for our and others' worthy causes? It is critical for the CAA to lead this effort to give artists a boost of support during this time." ERFA grants are available to individual, professional, working art- ists of all



disciplines who live or work in Walton County, FL and have lost income because of the cancellation of a specific, scheduled gig or opportunity or a temporarily or permanently closed business due to COVID-19 precautionary measures. Artists can request up to \$1,000 during the first grant period to compensate for income lost between June 1 and August 31, 2020. Artists who received a grant from the first round of granting are eligible to apply during the second round.

The program is designed for artists who are struggling to meet their basic needs (food, shelter, medical, supplies) due to loss of artistic income from COVID-19. Artists who do not make the majority of their income from their work as an artist or have other significant sources of income are asked to not apply so that those who are most vulnerable can be served. Priority will be given to applicants who are full-time Walton County residents and to requests made due to cancellation of opportunities that were to occur in Walton County. Applicants must be at least 18 years of age.

Artists may apply online through August 28th. Visit CulturalArtsAlliance.com/Artist-Resources to review the full grant guidelines and complete the online application. Artists may be awarded only once during the first grant period. A second grant period may be added based on need and available funds. If an application is denied for any reason, the artist may reapply within the same grant period.

The Cultural Arts Alliance (CAA) of Walton County offers support, connection and access opportunities for all forms of art, every variety of maker, all levels of learners, and especially, art lovers. Through sponsorship, performance, and educational programs, the organization directly connects the people of Walton County with the broader view, the critical exploration, and the answers only the Arts have the power to provide. For more information, visit CulturalArtsAlliance.com.



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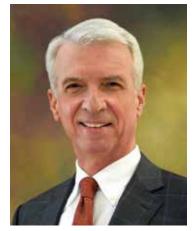
🐲 Wellness

Ascension Sacred Heart Names Henry Stovall Regional President

Ascension Sacred Heart has named Henry Stovall as regional president to lead Ascension Sacred Heart hospitals serving the Emerald Coast and Gulf County.

He will replace Roger Hall, who will retire as president of the two hospitals on July 5, after 18 years of service that produced a steady growth of high-quality healthcare services in Walton County and Gulf County. Stovall also will oversee Ascension Sacred Heart Bay, where he will work closely with its hospital President Heath Evans to expand services in Panama City and Bay County. Stovall served as president of Ascension Sacred Heart Pensacola between 2012 and 2019 and also served as president of the Studer Family Children's Hospital in Pensacola. He was instrumental in advancing the hospitals clinical capabilities and cementing its role as the regional leader in specialized areas such as neuroscience and pediatrics.

"At a time when our staff and the communities we serve are facing the coronavirus pan-



Mr. Henry Stovall

demic, we are pleased to regain an experienced, proven leader who already knows our health system and lives our values,» said Susan Cornejo, chief operating officer for Ascension Florida and Gulf Coast. «Henry is well equipped to continue the tremendous record of success that our Emerald Coast and Gulf County hospitals have achieved under Roger Hall>s leadership. Like Roger, he has shown the ability to build strong relationships with community leaders, physicians and our associates."

Stovall has held many leader-

ship positions in healthcare for more than 30 years. Before joining Ascension Sacred Heart, he managed a healthcare advisory service firm that specialized in interim executive management and large-scale project management. Other past roles include Corporate Vice President of Presbyterian Healthcare System in Dallas, Texas, various executive positions at Presbyterian Hospital of Dallas, Vice President and Partner at Hay Management Consultants in Dallas.

Dr. MIchelle Joins Lowe Ascension Medical Group Sacred Heart at the Market Shops

Family medicine doctor Michelle Lowe, DO, has joined Ascension Medical Group Sacred Heart's regional network of doctors. Dr. Lowe will see patients at The Market Shops, located at 9375 Emerald Coast Parkway. Virtual visits are also available.

Dr. Lowe joins the office of family medicine doctors Matthew Kinzelman, MD, and Mikael MacKinney, MD, and internal medicine doctor Pat-



Dr. Michelle Lowe

rick Ferry, MD. She is accepting new patients, ages 18 and up. For information or to schedule an appointment, call 850-278-3940.

Dr. Lowe graduated with her bachelor's degree in music performance from Austin College in Sherman, Texas. She then received a master's degree in biomedical sciences and her doctor of osteopathic medicine degree from the University of North Texas Health Science Center in Fort Worth, Texas. Dr. Lowe completed a family medicine residency at Ascension St. Vincent's Riverside in Jacksonville.

Dr. Lowe volunteers with the Red Cross and is a member of the American Academy of Family Physicians, the American Osteopathic Association and the American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians. She has a special interest in performing osteopathic manipulative treatments for a variety of musculoskeletal issues. Dr. Lowe comes to Ascension from practicing family medicine at Eglin Air Force Base.

Ascension Medical Group Sacred Heart offers the largest network of primary care and specialty physicians in Northwest Florida, with more than 80 locations and 300 providers along the Gulf Coast from Gulf Shores, Ala., to Apalachicola, Fla. Doctors from more than 25 specialties provide personalized, compassionate care to people of all ages. To find a doctor and request an appointment, call 850-416-2337 or visit ascension.org/doctors.



Wellness

Can People Really Change?



By Stephanie Craig

Are you worn out from navigating the current emotional climate in America? Tensions certainly abound. Mask or no mask? Reopen or slow down reopening? Support black lives or support law enforcement? Peaceful protesting or fear of looting? It's a lot to sort and manage emotionally.

Maybe as you've been quarantined, you've noticed something about yourself that needs to change. Maybe an important relationship isn't as strong as you believed. Maybe racial tension has caused some reflection and personal work around racism. Entertaining the need for internal change is no small thing. Do you find yourself wondering if you or others can really change? Or are you basically stuck in the ways you've always thought and behaved?

The good news is your brain was created to expand its capacity and shift its focus based on what you intentionally and repetitively practice. In addition to your neurobiology, humility is required for true change. Being able to admit there are things you need to learn that only someone else can teach you opens the door wide for genuine, deep, sustained change. Everyone falls short and needs to engage in change throughout life, but how does that actually work?

10 Steps to Transformational Change:

Notice the discomfort. Life events create emotional/relational discomfort that challenges you to admit something in your life is unhealthy.

Name the problem. "I'm drinking too much." "I'm working too much." "I'm not standing up for others like I want to."

Grieve the impact of the problem. Acknowledge and take responsibility for the hurtful impact the problem has had on yourself and others. Give heartfelt apologies and confess/receive forgiveness from God.

Confront and release shame. Notice where you are beating yourself up for the problem and recognize that shaming yourself results in feeling stuck and impedes growth and healing. Commit to move forward here and now.

Cultivate curiosity about the problem. Where and how often is the problem showing up in your daily life? You may experience some overwhelm realizing the problem is more widespread than you knew. Allow yourself to be emotionally unsettled about the problem. Entertain the need for action to make a change.

Educate yourself. Consume new resources, seek counseling/ support to understand the origin of the problem. Learn new tools/ strategies to make a change.

Commit to and complete action steps for change repeatedly. Begin taking a pause each time you notice the problem and take intentional steps to implement the new positive behavior or strategy of change. You might begin by noticing and making the change after you've already engaged in the problem at first. That's ok; it's part of the process. Eventually with practice, you'll be able to notice and implement change before the problem has occurred.

Sustain change. Practice new skills for weeks, then months until you begin to notice the problem is showing up much less in your life. Eventually, the new, healthier tools and perspective will become

normal. Make a life-long commitment to keep the new normal.

Celebrate and enjoy freedom of change. As you see the evidence of transformation in your life, know that with commitment and attention such change can be repeated in other areas of your life.

Embrace humility. Know deeply that you don't have life figured out and there's always something to learn. Be open to repeating this process of change as you are open to noticing more problem areas within yourself.

You can apply this process of change to many areas of your personal life including bad habits, stuck relationships, negative thoughts/beliefs and community areas of change such as pursuing justice and loving your neighbor as you love yourself. The important thing is to be a person who continues to do your personal work so you can show up as a positive contributor in your relationships, community and world. As you walk through your process of change, remember counseling or coaching can be a helpful tool. Journey Bravely would be happy to connect with you along your journey at journeybravely. com. Or contact Stephanie, Therapist and Coach, at stepheniecraig@journeybravely.com, 918.221.9987.





Wellness

5 Ways To Improve Libido in Women



Kimberly P. Hood, MD

By Dr. Kimberly Hood, M.D.

Decreased libido is a complicated women's health issue that requires a thorough conversation of social, psychological, and physical factors in order to treat it. Libido can be hindered by depression, kids, finances, bad job, perception of intimacy, insomnia, health issues, hormonal alterations, pain, poor body image, relationship issues. This is just a short list of ALL that can contribute. What can you do?

1. Optimize health:

Women with health issues don't feel like having sex. Regardless of your medical issues, some simple dietary changes may improve your health and how you feel. Don't roll your eyes at me. I'm serious!

Diet and weight loss are not synonymous! Diet makes a HUGE impact on body function. Major improvements can occur in patients who do small things, like remove processed foods, dairy, corn, wheat, or sugars! If weight loss occurs, great! However, it's not the goal.

As one of my functional medicine professors once said, "We are not designed to be stressed, toxic, inflamed, infected, malnourished, and unrested, AND YET, still easily thrive, grow, reproduce, be thin, feel well, eat anything we want, enjoy perfect BMI's, and have great sex. This combination would not be natural."

2. Optimize hormones:

Hormones can make a difference. Sluggish thyroid, sluggish everything else! Saliva testing to assess estrogen, progesterone, testosterone, and adrenal balance may really improve energy and libido!

Work with a functional medicine provider. Traditional medicine physicians treat disease. Functional medicine practitioners treat lack of optimization that eventually leads to disease.

3. Optimize sleep:

Sleep is important for detoxing and restoring our bodies. Certain vitamins can be used in the evening to make sure your body has the appropriate raw materials to detox and restore. You need at least 7 hours of sleep. Meds like ambien or klonopin, increase your risk for early onset dementia. There are better options that help sleep, restore neurotransmitters, improve mood and libido!

4. Medications:

There are two medications for Hypoactive Sexual Desire Disorder (HSDD) available for women at this time, Addvi and Vyleesi. HSDD means the loss of sexual desire, for 6 months or more, in a premenopausal woman that once had desire, causing distress in her relationship, but is not caused by relationship issues, health issues, meds, or a psychiatric diagnosis. These medications are not indicated in women not matching this definition. However, one size does not fit all. Libido is complex. Addyi is currently being studied in postmenopausal women; preliminary results are good. I prescribe it "off label" for postmenopausal ladies. For more info on Addyi and Vyleesi, please visit my blog, Health With Hood, at www.healthwithhood. com.

5. Plan it:

Many ladies tell me they don't think about having sex, but if they engage, they are able to enjoy it. For this to be effective, you need to socialize with your significant other. Date nights and getaways are super important. Many couples live in the same house but never really connect because life can be super distracting!

Remember, libido in women is complicated. The five recommendations listed are a few things I've seen help. However, there may be more that needs addressing. Don't ignore decreased libido. Speak to someone with experience in helping with libido issues. Sex is too important for a good relationship, for good mental health, and for a long healthy life.

Kimberly Hood, MD is a local gynecologist with 20 years of experience. Not only practicing traditional medicine, she also practices functional medicine, helping women combat the signs and symptoms of age or a stressful life, like fatigue, brain fog, insomnia, and decreased libido. She's learned this isn't "normal" and can help you learn to optimize your body's function to live your best life now! Please visit www. DPCGYN2020.com; Blog: www. healthwithhood.com for more information

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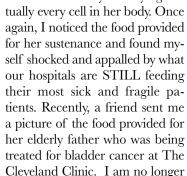
definitely NOT in the best interest of the patient, in my opinion. It would be wonderful if our hospitals would provide more nutrient-rich, healing diets with more wholesome foods and liquids to help revitalize and nourish (AND

my advice if you are headed to the hospital.... PACK A COOLER FROM HOME!

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

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By MELANIE STEWART



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Just over 20 years ago my younger brother was diagnosed with an "aggressive cancer of unknown origin". He had no real symptoms, no interruption of function and yet he was in stage 4b, the final stage of metastasized cancer. The doctors, having no specific treatment at that time and concerned with how advanced he was, took out the biggest drug in their chemotherapy arsenal and gave it a shot. Chemotherapy, as you may know, is designed to kill fast replicating cancer cells and can also target hair follicles and the cells that line the intestines. This is why so many of our chemo patients are bald and feel pretty terrible. During his treatments I noticed what they were feeding him. To me, it seemed logical that the appropriate diet would be easy to digest and supportive to the immune system. The food provided for him was anything but. Instead he was offered a steady stream of non-nutritive, difficult to digest, and even toxic foods including any and all forms of junk food. 20 years later I found myself at Vanderbilt Hospital in Nashville, Tennessee. A dear friend was in the fight for her life having been diagnosed with a form of leukemia typically seen only in children. In preparation for a stem cell transplant, she was given high doses of chemotherapy specifically programmed to bring her within

shocked but remain completely dismayed by the clear and continued lack of decent, relevant, current, holistic and helpful nutrition education. The evidence of which can be found on a hospital tray.

What is wrong with this meal? In a word: EVERYTHING!! There is zero nutritional profit from this meal because the nutrients have been either destroyed or effectively cancelled out by the sheer volume of anti-nutrients including:

Sugar - highly destructive, blood sugar spiking, cancer feeding sugar in the "French" toast, cereal, and orange juice.

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While the current hospital diet might make economic sense, it is

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bioTE

Musing

The Lotus Life; Mr. Impossible!

By Lauren Catanese

I believe in a blessed life, where we get to live and experience the highest version of ourselves. It is possible. Like Mr. Impossible, a children's book I read as a child, told the story of a funny character who no matter what obstacle he came against, he would find a way through it; not always in the same way. With each new task he came to, he became a little wiser from the last. No matter the challenge, the theme was always the same; anything was possible. Even when he wanted to fly. Guess what Mr. Impossible did, he believed anything was possible, and for him it was-Even flying.

The seasons change and so do we, learning as we go along, about who we are becoming, along our journey. Making strides, stumbling, expanding, taking risks, life brings us through a lot. Faith is being in the dark and knowing that the light is still shining. Feeling the heaviness of a storm but looking towards the clear sky on the other side. Our soul calls to us, asking us to keep reaching higher. We have to be willing to keep going, even in the moments of indecision. WE have to believe in the possible!

So when life gets tough, anxiety builds, and you begin to feel an overwhelming pressure that seems almost too much to bear; Do not give in.

Do not let the pain encompass who you are. Remember you are on a journey and this shall pass. Keep believing it's possible to move through it. And you will. Trust me it's possible. Here are some tips when you are in that space, but know that you are meant for more. Because in your soul you know you were meant to fly!

Trust that your inner knowing is always guiding. Even in the moments when you feel you are alone, you are not. We are nev-



er alone. We have an internal guiding compass that is there always waiting for us to listen to its message and lead us to where we want to go. We will not always know in our minds what the best strategy or choice to make is, we are too emotionally involved. But our inner knowing, sees through all of that, and will steer you where you need to go.

Support - Having at least one friend, two is even better, who you can call and share your heart too is a Godsend. Some-



one that loves you for you, accepts you without judgement, and understands life's ups and downs, is a gift in these moments. There are also many social media sites that have uplifting messages, words of wisdom, and offer support. There is support out there for you, be open to what's best for you.

Shift - When we feel the heaviness of negative emotion, we will not feel peace until we shift our energy. Switch from fear-based thoughts and vibration into one of love. There are many ways to do this and you will find what works best for you. Walking on the beach, exercise, meditation, giving yourself a hug, closing your eyes and imagining the outcome you desire, remembering a happy moment in your life, writing in your journal what you are grateful for. It might be the simplest action, but you will feel the shift within, and lightness will remind you of the love that is always possible.

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SUNDAY WORSHIP SCHEDULE:

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BY SEAN DIETRICH

Remember back in church when they used to tell us to pray for the shut-ins? Well, that's exactly what I've become. A shutin.

A lot of people have become that way since this coronavirus thing started, millions have been stuck inside. And it's the little things we've lost that hurt the most. Things like baseball.

I could have endured this quarantine if I would have had baseball. But it's the fourth official day of summer and baseball is still in limbo. Summer without baseball isn't summer.

We lost more than just baseball. We lost eating at restaurants where waiters don't dress like masked ninjas. We lost the pleasure of meandering in the grocery store without feeling like you're racing toward the last chopper out of Saigon.

Yesterday, I saw my neighbor in Publix, wearing a surgical mask. I waved at him, but he didn't see me. He was busy sprinting for the door while disinfecting his hands with isopropyl alcohol.

Right now, my wife and I are on a leisurely drive because I had to get out of the house. Nobody tells you how hard it is to be stuck indoors. If I would have known how difficult it was, I would have prayed harder for the shut-ins.

So, we're riding dirt roads. Hank Williams plays on our radio. I don't know what we're looking for, but I'll know it when I see it.

And there it is.

A painted sign on a red-clay road that reads: "tomatoes." I feel a thrill beneath my ribs. I haven't felt this good in 109 days. Our vehicle splashes through mud puddles. Hank Williams sings another chorus of "Dear John."

After a few hours of following cow paths through a Floridian wilderness, passing trailer homes, swamps, creeks, and horse pastures, we find it. A vegetable shack in the distance, tucked among live oaks and magnolias.

An old man with a white beard is seated on an overturned bucket, swatting flies. "How're y'all?" he says. "Just picked the okree this morning.'

When a guy calls it "okree" you know you're among family.

He also sells creamer peas, crowder peas, zipper peas, Silver Queen corn, and-hallelujah-

He has a hanging scale dangling from his rafters, the kind used in grocery stores long ago. The ones from the days when you would visit the supermarket with your mother, still wearing your Little League uniform, and the butcher always had a butterscotch Dum Dum for you in his pocket.



I buy two five-gallon buckets of tomatoes and lots of veggies. The old man only charges me a pittance. Country people aren't greedy.

On the way home, my wife and I strike gold again. We see a large roadside stand selling white peaches. We pull over and fill our trunk.

The cash register is manned by three children. Two 12-yearold twin girls and their 6-yearold brother. They are wearing surgical masks and selling lemonade. The girls try to sell me some.

"No thanks," I say.

"Please?" says the 6-year-old.

Summer

"It's for a good cause."

"Really? What cause?" I ask. Silence.

I give them a buck, but I skip the lemonade. I will never in my long-legged life drink from another lemonade stand. A few years ago I bought some lemonade from a bunch of Cub Scouts in Virginia. One kid had a runny nose. The heathen wiped his snotty face with his bare hands, then dipped his whole arm into the pitcher and stirred it.

After that, I made a solemn oath to never drink lemonade prepared by anyone under 30.

We drive onward. We roll across backroads that I haven't seen in years. I pull over at a place where the blackberries grow wild. This is a spot my wife and I used to visit all the time when we were dating. We used to pick berries in the ditches because they were free. I don't know why we quit coming.

We have the entire ditch to ourselves this afternoon. Soon, we are in the open sun, picking dewberries, using our T-shirts as makeshift baskets.

And life is beginning to feel normal again. Since COVID-19, the Great American Summer began disappearing before it even started. It is almost Fourth of July right now, and where

has the year gone? God help us come Christmas.

The national parks closed. Supermarkets sell hazmat suits. Family reunions were cancelled. Baseball became a myth. Some places are open. Others aren't. It's hit and miss. In some towns it's hell on earth. In other spots, people are dancing the rhumba on the beach. There is no logic to it.

The worst part is, there is nothing anyone can do about it.

When we get home, I open our windows and let a summer breeze fill our den. The kitchen windowsill is littered with ripe tomatoes. My wife is making a blackberry cobbler. I hear the sound of a distant lawnmower fill the air.

I know I shouldn't, but something makes me turn on the television to catch the nightly news.

"Breaking news," the newscaster says. "Major League Baseball is returning ... "

Baseball. My God. Can it be true? It's enough to make a grown man cry. I sit on my sofa, place my head into my hands, and I weep a little because it's been a long spring for us all. But thank heaven, summer is here.

Don't forget to pray for the shut-ins.



🔅 Musings

Pausing for a Moment to Learn...from Hollywood?

Ideas for Quietly Bringing Change



By Kirk McCarley

A few days back I read an article by Tim Denning, "Be Aware of the Quiet Ones like Keanu Reeves—They are the Ones that Actually Make You Think." In all honesty my knowledge of the actor Reeves is limited. I know of him from "The Matrix" and "John Wick," but beyond that he's quite off my radar. In fact, as I learned from Denning's piece, he is off many tracking devices.

Although Reeves has his place

among the most iconic recent Hollywood actors, he doesn't fit the mold. Rarely does he get the attention associated with so many celebrities, seemingly still trying to figure out how to be famous. Rather, he is reserved and comfortable with contemplation, hesitation, and ...silence.

Some years ago he sat for an interview with a Rolling Stone journalist. When asked "why he acts," Reeves sat stone-faced silent for 42 seconds, finally replying, "Uh, it's fun."

Upon diving further into the narrative it became apparent that although Keanu Reeves' personality and behavior as a part of his comfortably unorthodox brand were the tease, the real story was about the power of silence. Denning shares the need for quiet people.

- Quiet people make you think.
- Thinking brings clarity.
- Thinking can lead to change.

Conversely though, there's encouragement to be loud. Make your presence felt! Allow your

voice to be heard! Get your seat at the table!

There are five basic human senses. Speaking is not among them. Consider the ones that are. How about that ingrained visualization of meeting your child for the first time? A second sense might conjure the smell of freshly baked bread. What about the taste of our favorite ice cream on a hot summer day? Or the soothing sensation of touching those sand granules from our beaches coursing through our fingers? The sound of the waves hitting that same sand? Again, nothing about talking.

Denning further lists five points as it pertains to Reeves:

- Silence breeds curiosity. That curiosity then often leads to a conversation where someone will listen to you.
- Being quiet interrupts the pattern. We all know people can't resist the urge to talk. We also know they can't resist the temptation to hear from the people who are extremely

RETAILTHER

quiet.

- Pauses give time for reflection allowing our minds to think at a deeper level.
- The smarter you become, the less you speak. Intelligence is letting other people talk first, listening with intention, practicing saying less, and leading with empathy.

At this time especially might it be more important than ever to pause and think, asking ourselves, "who needs to be heard?" A person of another race or nationality? Another political persuasion? Someone much older or a lot younger? Call them or make a time to see them. When you do, a comfortable way for commencing the dialogue could be something along the lines of "how are you?," rather than "what do you think about ...?" How about allowing them to set the agenda.

Notice inflections or changes in body language if you are in person. Repeat back what you are hearing said. Most importantly be positive and encouraging. In the moment. Hopeful. Loving.

My son came to visit recently. We cycled a little more than 100 kilometers in the countryside to the north and inland of where we live. During the ride there was some talking, but the enjoyment of the time was more the view of the terrain, the physical exertion, the sounds of birds and wind, and the sense of achievement. We were just present in the moment. Nothing much needed to be said. The communication transcended words.

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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Musings



BY REV. PETE HYDE

It was the summer of 1968. The Scouts from Topeka loaded up early and headed to the beginning point of their week-long adventure. They were going to spend the next 5 days hiking 50 miles of the actual Santa Fe Trail that runs from Independence, Kansas to Santa Fe, New Mexico. Their leaders did some research on the old Santa Fe Trail and overlaid the old trail map on a current property owner's map. They contacted the property owners and received permission for this group of Scouts to hike to the original trail, which now ran through pastures, across streams and over the rolling plains of Kansas from Burlingame to Council Grove. Only a small portion of

the trek would be done on roadways or easy terrain. Campsites were preset, so they had to cover the planned mileage each day in order to finish on time and at the planned location. The first couple of days were the longest. They covered almost 25 miles while fresh and energetic. But then the doldrums set in. The landscape was unchanging. The trudging cross country, carrying our personal equipment in back packs, crossing barbed wire fences, wading through streams that still had water in them in the middle of a Kansas summer became an arduous routine. Why couldn't we have just taken the easy route on the roads that marked the "approximate" route of the Santa Fe Trail? The leaders encouraged us to keep moving and not lag behind the rest of the group. Each day brought a new set of challenges for the increasingly tired group who spent the nights sleeping on the ground in tents. Each night we went to sleep a little earlier. I remember being so tired of the journey that it did not seem like an adventure any more. I toiled against the heaviness of the backpack. Many times I found myself looking down at my feet and just placing one foot in front of the other, almost counting the

steps to reach some magic number when I could stop and rest even for a short few minutes. It was in those times that one of our leaders would come up beside me and tell me to pick my head up, look around, take in the sights, notice the surroundings, remember the history through which we were walking. I lifted my head more out of obedience than anything else. (I was a good child of a military father.) When I lifted my head and began to look around my attitude changed. I seemed to be less tired. The boredom and drudgery of the hike seemed to disappear. Time and distance passed by quickly and easily. When I turned my focus away from me and my struggles and began to concentrate on other things, the immediate task became easier. I learned a lesson that summer between 8th and 9th grade. It would be a lesson I learn and forget many times over the years. Whatever your struggle, whatever tasks you face today or this week, take time to pick your head up from the drudgery and look around you. Move your focus away from yourself to what God has placed around you, whether that be family, friends, nature, a good song, a short Bible reading, cup

of coffee (enjoyed, not drunk to get the caffeine rush), a look out the window at the portrait God has painted in the clouds above. A few moments spent focusing on what God places around us and on others will change your attitude and add new life to the tasks you face each and every day. So, lift up your head today. Acknowledge what God has placed in your life and do something for someone else.

Rev. J. Pete Hyde, Senior Pastor Santa Rosa Beach Community Church 850-267-2599; srbcc.com







Illusions

Musings

By Rick Moore

Behind-the-scenes programs show how movies are made. They reveal green screens and special effects that can take an audience to new worlds and exotic places. For decades, Hollywood has teased us with brief glimpses behind the curtain to see how the magic is made. One trick-of-the-trade used in both movies and in theme parks is called "forced perspective." This is a technique which makes an object appear larger or smaller than it actually is. For example, an artist can make a three-story building look like a skyscraper, or an illusionist can make it appear a person is cut in half.

Growing up, I was amazed to discover how every major secret of Harry Houdini could be learned by going to the public library. From making an elephant disappear to escaping the water torture tank, the mysteries of the greatest magician of all time was illustrated in detail. When someone asked me to share the secret of an illusion, I usually would jokingly say "a good magician never tells a secret." But the truth is, more times than not, the secret is a forced perspective.

While recently watching a documentary focusing on the special effects of Star Wars, I was challenged to recreate a process that is used to make something small seem like an out-of-thisworld landscape. The picture you see next to this article is the result. Where in Florida might I have taken this picture? The answer: on the beach. But what about the mountains and cliffs? There are none. What you are looking at is actually a three-footlong piece of driftwood. There is zero manipulation, editing, or photoshopping of this picture. You have just experienced a forced perspective.



Forced perspective often leads to forced perception. The media uses forced perception regularly. They can take something that is small and make it look big, or something that is big and make it look small. Parents use forced perception on their children. Teachers use forced perception on their students. Leaders use forced perception on their followers. Sometimes this is a good thing. Sometimes this is a bad thing. But ultimately, it is up to us to decide what we magnify to others, and more importantly, what we magnify in our own minds.

In one of the most popular of all Bible stories, Jesus is walking on the water when Peter asks if he can get out of the boat and walk toward Jesus. Miraculously, Peter begins walking on the water. But then, Peter starts focusing on the wind and the waves and immediately begins to sink. The moral of the story isn't to pretend as if the wind and waves do not exist. Troubles are real. Life is filled with challenges. The "secret" is learning not to magnify the wind and the waves. It is easy to focus too much on the challenges of life which can cause us to sink.

It's easy to make a mountain out of a molehill (or a mountain out of a piece of driftwood). Unfortunately, people only see what they want to see, and people overlook what they want to overlook. When flying on a commercial airline, you shouldn't totally ignore the flight attendant reviewing safety procedures, because you may experience an emergency one day. Nor should you become nervous and constantly rehearse in your mind the plane going down in flames or crashing into the side of a mountain. There is a healthy way to approach potential challenges without magnifying the danger.

Usually, when it seems your entire world is on fire, it's not. It's only a forced perception. Yes, a few trees may be on fire, but we have to step back and see the whole forest. Try taking a few minutes today and listen to Louis Armstrong sing "It's A Wonderful World." As you listen closely, you can actually see the wonderful world he is singing about. But is such a place real or just an illusion? That all depends on your perception.

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

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Page 31

An Event-Filled Summer for Everyone at Baytowne Wharf!

Baytowne is OPEN and boomin' with events, activities and fun for summer! The Village and all of its merchants welcome you to come SHOP, DINE and PLAY! The Village is taking all necessary precautions and working hard to ensure a safe and clean environment for you including practicing social distancing.

We welcome you to join us to celebrate, escape and embrace the best of summer!

Hydroflight Monday

Mondays through Aug. 3rd Time: 6:30 p.m. & 8:30 p.m.

Enjoy shows from fly-board extraordinaire Ben Merrell over the lagoon! Watch as he soars to the sky and makes waves at Baytowne Wharf.

Boomin Tuesday

Tuesdays through Aug. 4th Time: 7:15-9:15 p.m.

Put on your dancing shoes

and join us in The Events Plaza for a dance party with DJ Mike Whitty 7:15-9:15 p.m.

Then, turn your eyes on the sky and watch as we light up the night with a breathtaking fire-works show over the Lagoon at 9:15 p.m.

Wednesday Night Concert Series Wednesdays through October 2020 Time: 7-9 p.m.

This summer sit back and relax, as you take in the cool crisp air, and enjoy live entertainment. The concert series will feature both local and regional talent from a variety of genres. Concert begins at 7 p.m. on the Events Plaza Stage.

Live Music Schedule: July 1: Boukou Groove July 8: Modern Eldorados July 15: Big AL and the Heavyweights



July 22: **Jessie Ritter** July 29: **Luke Langford Band**

Magical Thursday

Thursdays through Aug. 6th Time: 7-9 p.m.

Join us for magic, music, and mayhem! Watch as our featured pirate Captain Davy takes you on an adventure with two magic shows on stage! 7 p.m. & 8 p.m. Show Times!

Red, White & Baytowne! Saturday, July 4th Time: 7-9 p.m. Cost: FREE

Join us at The Village this 4th of July for the Red, White, and Baytowne celebration! Enjoy LIVE music on the Events Plaza Stage at 7 p.m., followed by a fireworks display that will light up the night sky at 9:15 p.m.

Baytowne LIVE Music Through Aug. 7th Time: Every Tuesday, Thursday and Friday starting at 6:30 p.m.

The Village of Baytowne Wharf presents Baytowne LIVE on Adventure Lane. Located just across from Blast Arcade and Laser Maze.

Baytowne LIVE Schedule: Music by Steve Hall

6:30 p.m.-10 p.m. July: 7, 9, 14, 16, 21, 28, & 30

Music by Ken & Andi Johnson 6:30-9 p.m. July 17

Music by Jarred McConnell 6:30-9 p.m. July 31

Music by Casey Kearney 6:30-9 p.m. July 3

Music by Jessie Ritter 6:30-9 p.m. July 24

Music by DonnieSundal6:30-9 p.m. August 7

Sunday Cinema

Sundays through Aug. 2 Time: 8 p.m.

Grab a lawn chair or blanket and cozy up on the Events Plaza Lawn for a featured film on the big screen!

Movie Listings: July 5: **Abominable** July 12: **Finding Nemo**

July 19: Incredibles 2 July 26: Lion King



Dining

30A Eats.com Recipe of the Month; Southern Squash Casserole

By SUSAN BENTON

My mother, Charlotte, makes the best squash casserole, and no matter how I try, mine is never as delicious as hers. It is always a favorite, and a dish that is comfort food to me.

Whether at a church social, a holiday gathering, a family dinner, or to share with a friend in a time of need, this old favorite has been the workhorse of Southern side dishes for decades. Squash casserole is the just-right accompaniment for everything from fried chicken at a summertime Sunday lunch to roast turkey at Thanksgiving.

The main ingredient is typically yellow squash, but some recipes call for other summer squash such as pattypan and zucchini. Most recipes usually include chopped onion, as well. Once you get past those two core ingredients the differences begin. Southern Squash Casserole:

Ingredients:

1 small onion, finely chopped

5 strips of bacon, coarsely chopped

3 lbs of yellow squash, thinly sliced

2 cloves garlic, minced

2 eggs, beaten

8 oz sour cream

1/2 teaspoon salt

1/8 teaspoon black pepper

1 1/2 cups shredded cheddar cheese

1 sleeve buttery crackers (like

Ritz)

3 tablespoons butter



Preparation:

In a large skillet, cook bacon and over medium heat 10 to 15 minutes, or until bacon starts crisping, then set bacon aside on a paper towel.

Add onions, cooking until translucent

Add garlic, sauté until fragrant.

Add squash and sauté 5 minutes, stirring occasionally.

Toss in cooked bacon.

In a large bowl, combine beaten eggs, sour cream, salt, pepper, and cheddar cheese. Mix well.

Add squash and bacon mixture to bowl. Mix well. Turn out



into a greased 9X13 casserole dish.

Topped with crushed crackers and pats of butter.

Bake at 350 degrees F from 35 to 40 minutes, or until the casse-role is browned and bubbly.

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💮 Dining

30A Eats.com Restaurant Review; Grits & Grind on 30A

By Hannah Neville

Grits and Grind is located in Seacrest Beach, specifically in the same location as La Cocina Mexican Bar & Grill, and it is open daily from 8AM to 11AM. Grits and Grind serves Southern style breakfast foods as well as libations that are perfect for any morning occasion, and they even have outdoor seating for guests to enjoy dining al fresco. Their menu features fresh squeezed orange juice, which makes for a delicious mimosa, and they also serve house made Bloody Mary's. Their side dishes are generously sized which makes them perfect for sharing.

As a lover of omelets, I am happy to say that Grits and Grind has a nice selection of omelets to choose from. My family (parents and siblings), Chase (fiance), and I each had a difficult time selecting what we wanted to eat. After having the guacamole from La Cocina the night before,



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I was sold on trying anything with avocado in it, so I settled on the Bagel Egg In A Hole. The dish featured a multigrain bagel with smashed avocado and feta cheese, and was complete with a side of cheese grits and fresh fruit. The creamy avocado and salty feta paired well together and the fresh fruit added brightness to the meal.

Chase decided on the Smoked Salmon Benedict which arrived with sliced tomato and fresh spinach on top of a biscuit that was drizzled with hollandaise sauce and sprinkled with dill; the dish was accompanied with loaded cheese grits and fresh fruit as well.

My parents both ordered the Smokehouse Omelet, a decision that both of them were happy with. The smokehouse omelet featured sausage, bacon, or smoked ham with cheddar cheese; a simple dish with great flavor. My sister decided on the Next Morning Benedict which has two eggs over medium on a biscuit with chopped sausage, tomatoes, green onions topped with gravy and hollandaise sauce. The gravy and hollandaise are what made this hearty dish!

If you are looking for a great place to enjoy a solid Southern breakfast while on 30A, Grits and Grind is the spot to go for tasty drinks and comfort food served in a friendly atmosphere. Grits and Grind is located at 10343 E County Hwy 30A, Seacrest Beach. For more information call (850) 231 4021 or visit www.gritsandgrindbreakfast.com.







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🔅 Music

30A Songwriter Radio Artist Spotlight; Chat Holley



By JOSETTE RHODES

It's a well known fact that there's a plethora of amazing musical talent here in South Walton. All along 30A you can find "Live Music!" And that is a great thing! What may not be as well known is the South Walton Music Scene extends well beyond 30A. Let me introduce to you a new favorite band of mine, "Chat Holley." This trio is rocking their way across the

Emerald Coast and beyond. Named after one of South Walton's oldest roads, Chat Holley, (originally known as Powerline Road to the natives) these young men are showing respect for their roots. The band consists of Shane Huron on Bass, Zack Sloan on guitar, and Levi Ward on Drums. As the three worked at "The Bay" restaurant, a mutual love of music was discovered, friendships bloomed and a band was born.

One of the things that really impressed me about Chat Holley was the amount of original music they write and perform. They name influences such as Jimi Hendrix, The Beatles, Led Zeppelin, Highly Suspect, Weezer, and Cage the Elephant. And you can definitely hear

these inspirations in their classic rock sound, laced with heavy bass grooves and guitar solos. But do not think for a moment that Chat Holley is just another classic rock band. They have a unique sound that can best be described as psychedelic rock that's wild, groovy, dark, mysterious and sexy. The fact that this young band is already making a name for itself with original performances guarantees we will be hearing much more from them. Their first EP, "Homegrown" recorded at Enlightened Studios in Fort Walton Beach is due to be released later in 2020. You can hear Chat Holley on Spotify, Youtube, and on the bands Instagram @chatholley.







30A Songwriter Radio Music & Coffee is located in the South Walton Publix Shopping Center on Hwy 98 - 850-213-2882





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Before and After

By Lisa Cyr

In June, it was time to refinish my bathroom vanity cabinet. After gathering supplies and watching a variety of YouTube tutorials about chalk painting, I began to transform the dark outdated cabinet into a new look. It took weeks as I deliberated over each brush stroke and layer. The waiting between coats took hours. And I stressed over distressing the finish. Daily, I stared at it, checking my work, seeking improvement, did I miss a spot? Finally, the cabinet was completed. I posted the before and after pictures on my Facebook page. I think people are inspired by before and after pictures.

Learning to play an instrument is like "before and after". Here are some basic steps to follow:

Gather your supplies: Choose your instrument. Do some research online, listen to different instruments and styles of music. Find out which genres you gravitate towards such as: jazz, classical, country, rock, blues, pop, etc.. If you choose piano, then you need to get one. I usually recommend a used smaller sized "real" piano. Something easier to move that will fit in well with your home. If space is a problem then invest in a digital keyboard with weighted keys, touch sensitivity, internal speakers with above average piano sounds. A keyboard often costs more than a used piano. We have some good information about purchasing a piano on our website (www.Studio237Music.com).

Get set up: Where is my instrument going to be set up? Create a music zone for yourself. It could be a den, bedroom, or the living room. We had a music room where our children practiced, created, and played together without distraction. They had fun learning to work together, experiment, write songs, and record albums. A variety of instruments were in there for them to try.

Choose a teacher to study with and plan to consistently attend lessons once a week, every week, on the same day, same time. Whether you practiced or not, you will learn something new weekly. Don't give up. Have patience with yourself and your teacher. Teachers know from their many years of personal practice how to help you reach your next level. Do what they ask you to do. Even if you feel silly and/or bored.

Stay engaged in your playing. It's easy to become impatient with the learning process (like waiting for paint to dry in between coats). During those "waiting times", take a look at your progress, review old pieces you are able to play, make improvements, give an old piece a "new coat" of playing technique you have learned.

Step back and take a look. Use your cell phone to record your performance. Listen and compare it to the sheet music. Examine problem areas in different ways. A wise piano teacher said to me, "How you perceive the music can cause you to stumble or succeed." When you have completed your piece, enjoy it. Be proud that you have finished. Memorize the music. You are a better player and have "made the song yours" forever.

Lastly, share with your family or friends. I have a young student who learned to play "America the Beautiful". It was tough for him, he wanted to quit, then suddenly, he played perfectly from beginning to end (an online lesson!). He proudly finished with a big grin. I applauded and told him to play the song for his family on the Fourth of July.

Before learning to play, you knew very little. During the process, you learned and practiced. The "After" is when you have this amazing musical ability. Best of all, you can share your songs with others and smile. Wishing you a Happy 4th of July.

Studio 237 Music Lessons is

open, and our staff are teaching lessons now on guitar, violin, drums, ukulele, cello, viola, piano, keyboards, voice, songwriting, and more. Here at the studio or online. July is a good month to start. To get started, give Lisa or Ray Cyr, schedule a visit, try our Aspire 4 Music Summer Program half price specials. Call: 850-231-3199 and website www.Studio237Music.com.



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Emerald Coast Energy Tips; Homeowner's Frequently Asked Questions



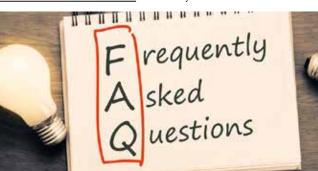
By Chris Balzer

What does R-value mean? R-value measures insulation's resistance to heat flow. It can also be referred to as "thermal resistance." The higher the Rvalue, the greater the insulating power. All materials having the same R-value, regardless of type, thickness, or weight are equal in insulating power. Don't forget that R-values are determined by material type, thickness, and installed weight per square foot, not by thickness alone. Insulation helps keep your home cool during the summer months and warm during the winter months.

How much will I save by adding insulation to the walls, ceilings and floors of my home? Insulation saves money, increases your home's comfort and protects the environment by reducing en-

ENERGY TIPS by Emerald Coast Energy Solutions

ergy use. According to the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) shows that typically 44% of a homeowner's utility bill goes for heating and cooling costs. DOE also states that homeowners may be able to reduce their energy bills from 10% to 50% by taking certain steps. One of the major steps is increasing the amount of thermal insulation in their existing homes or purchasing additional insulation when buying new homes. Unless your home was constructed with special attention to energy efficiency, adding insulation will reduce your utility bills. The amount of energy you conserve will depend on several factors: the climate; the size, shape, and construction of your house, the living habits of your family, the type and efficiency of the heating and cooling systems and the fuel you use. Energy conserved is money saved and the annual savings increase when utility rates go up, which on average is 3.9% yearly. Insulation upgrades also instantly add to the value of your home and is out for in contracts or job estimates? Once you have chosen an insulation contractor, make sure the contract includes the job specification, cost and warranty information. The contract



a great investment.

How much insulation should I have? "Insulation," says Bob Vila, host of the nationally syndicated TV program that bears his name, "is the most efficient energy-saving expenditure." Vila says homeowners should check attics to determine the amount of insulation already installed. "Most homes built before 1980 have inadequate insulation," he said, noting that if insulation between the joists of the attic floor comes only to the top of the joist, it probably makes sense to install more insulation. The U.S. Department of Energy recommends home insulation for our area to be R-30.

What words should I watch

should list the type of insulation to be used and where it will be used. Make sure that each type of insulation is listed by R-value. Beware of any contract or verbal offering that quotes the job in terms of thickness only (e.g. "14 inches of insulation"). Remember, it is the R-value, not the thickness that tells how well a material insulates. Avoid contracts with vague language such as R-values with the terms "plus or minus"; "+ or -"; "average"; or "nominal."

Is there anything other than insulation to increase comfort and efficiency? There are several innovated materials out in the market which are not widely used by most insulation contractors. ERG window film is a tint material which can be applied to glass and is virtually clear. This film blocks 94% of radiant heat and 99.9% of UV rays protecting floors, furniture, you and pets. Some applications would be sunrooms, wheelhouses, rooms with direct sunlight. Another great product is a Radiant Barrier which is a reflective material installed in attics which blocks 97%of radiant heat reducing your overall attic temperature increasing comfort and saving money.

There are many ways to save energy and become more energy efficient. We all are spending more time at home which is a great time to learn how to increase comfort and lower those energy bills.

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 or email wecare@trusteces.com and Beat the Heat.

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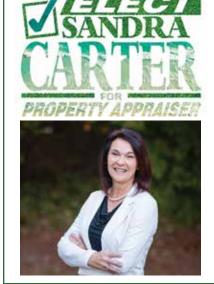
Business

Sandra Carter; Walton County's Dedicated **Candidate for Property Appraiser**

Sandra Carter is Walton County's newest candidate for the Walton County Property Appraiser. She has dedicated her entire career over 35 years to the Walton County Property Appraiser's Office, and her passion shines through as she pursues her

dream of becoming Property Ap- tence and tenacity began working praiser.

When Sandra began working at the property appraiser's office, she was one of five employees. As the office grew, so did her expertise. She started out working in customer service, and with persisher way up gaining knowledge in deed transactions, exemption approvals, and appraisal techniques and procedures. She advanced through multiple positions, including operating as the Tangible Personal Property Supervisor and



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Office Manager, until she obtained her current position as Director of Administration, which she has held for the past seven years. Her responsibilities under her current position include payroll management, human resources, annual procedural audits, and property tax roll analysis, preparation, and submission. Her duties also include personnel training and management where she trains the staff in legislative changes, new laws, and exemptions that will affect Florida's property tax structure.

"The property appraiser's office is a major component in our local government," Sandra says, and it's clear that it's an integral part of her life as well. Mrs. Carter offers Walton County her knowledge and experience of thirty-five years, and promises to continue to operate with the same integrity and professionalism Walton County has recognized with her predecessors if she is elected. "I am qualified, certified, and prepared to start on Day 1." She said.

Mrs. Carter has been an extremely dedicated employee to the appraiser's office, and now holds both experience and knowledge in all phases and operations within the office. Over the years, Sandra has accumulated an indepth knowledge of all aspects of the property appraiser's office, including an education in appraisal methodologies, sales qualification and verification, budget and finance, property tax exemptions, and records management. In addition, she correlates with constitutional offices, taxing authorities and local county offices for Truth in Millage (TRIM) and the Value Adjustment Board. Sandra currently holds the State of Florida Evaluator designation with over 250 course hours in appraisal and valuation of both real and personal property, along with a myriad of certification hours with the Florida Department of Revenue. Those successes, however, have not put her in a state of passivity. She certainly has a drive to continue to move forward. "I have a passion to continue my service and take my dedication to the next level!" Sandra commented.

Sandra is a lifelong resident of Walton County. She graduated from Walton High School, and later obtained a degree in Business Management through Northwest Florida State College. She currently resides in Defuniak Springs with her husband of forty years, Eddie. The Carters have two children, Blon and Morgan, as well as five grandchildren. Mrs. Carter is very active in her grandchildren's lives, often visiting their school and attending sports activities. Some of her favorite times are spent outdoors with her family, camping and swimming. Sandra is also an active member of Pleasant Ridge Baptist Church where she serves on several committees.

Sandra's zeal and devotion is undeniable as she continues to wholeheartedly commit herself to this county. Mrs. Carter's final words are the perfect summary. "It would be my greatest honor to serve Walton County as your next Property Appraiser."

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Looking at the Law; Planning for Incapacity



By Greg D. Crosslin,

Planning for incapacity is an important aspect of Estate Planning. Estate Planning is more than just writing a Will or a Trust. Incapacity planning (IC) addresses what happens if you are unable to make medical decisions or handle your finances because of a medical condition. Although often overlooked, IC can be a very essential aspect of your planning. In Florida, your wishes regarding your medical treatment may be made known by executing a Healthcare Directive or Living Will. Healthcare Directives become effective as soon as you are unable to speak for yourself due to a terminal medical condition, unconsciousness or other medical condition as defined by Florida Statutes. These allow you to express what kinds of medical treatment should be withheld or provided, whether you want certain surgery or not, respirators or other life prolonging procedures to be taken for you. Clearly, you have the

option to change or revoke a Healthcare Directive at any time you want. In addition. because Healthcare Directives do not address every situation that might arise, you may also need a Healthcare Power of Attorney. This form of a power of attorney allows you to appoint an Agent to make healthcare decisions on your behalf, should you become unable to communicate your healthcare wishes yourself. Within a Healthcare

Power of Attorney, you can designate that your

Agent must make healthcare decisions according to what is stated in your Healthcare Directive. In the event your Healthcare Directive does not address a specific situation, you can direct your Agent to decide based upon the preference you have expressed to that person or based upon his or her own knowledge of your wishes.

In addition to making healthcare decisions on your behalf, a Healthcare Power of Attorney allows your Agent to be empowered to do things for you. These include things like having you admitted into and checked out of a hospital and/or other medical facilities. They can hire and fire medical



staff responsible for your care, receive information concerning

your care, review your medical records, talk with your medical team and provide information to your medical team about you and your care. At the same time, if you become incapacitated, meeting your financial needs can be delegated to an Agent who you have designated through what is commonly referred to as a Durable Power of Attorney. Although you still maintain complete control over your matters, this document empowers your Agent to do things like pay your taxes, bills, manage your financial affairs (such as stocks,

bank accounts, etc.) and to take care of other items on your be-

ur half.

There are many levels of a Durable Power of Attorney and Florida recognizes Durable Powers of Attorney to allow your designated Agent to handle virtually all of the affairs you need handled. To ensure that nothing is overlooked in planning for the possibility of incapacity, we recommend that you consult an Estate Planning Attorney to ensure that the appropriate documents are in place to address your healthcare and financial affairs as necessary. Remember the old adage, failing to plan is planning to fail.

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



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Destin Environmental Cleaning is the Emerald Coast's first team of environmental cleaning experts. It started when two young men realized that the current sanitation procedures for businesses were not doing much more than a light cleaning. Logan Wayman and Caleb Pratt took their discovery and created a vision for the future that would allow their community to expand its sanitation procedures to a full disinfection process, all while providing environmentally friendly products to do so.

There was a time when a simple wipe-down would do the trick



for cleaning a surface. But events such as COVID-19 have made it obvious that the standard procedures and products being used are not always the best options available. With the introduction of new viruses, there's been an awareness that certain things need to shift, including beginning to hold to a higher standard of cleanliness.

Destin Environmental Cleaning proudly states that its products do more than just sanitize. They also fully disinfect. The difference is that a disinfectant destroys or irreversibly inactivates all microorganisms on surfaces. Sanitation products typically are less potent and, as a result, will reduce microorganisms, but not eliminate them completely. This is especially important in today's world due to the rate in which viruses and bacteria are spreading.

Disinfecting products are divided into two types: hospital and general or household use. Household disinfecting products would include things such as Clorox wipes and similar products. While the use of these can be effective against microorganisms, Destin Environmental Cleaning recommends that commercial facilities, including short-term rentals, all use hospital-type disinfectants which are used for infection control.

The company states that in order to properly disinfect, each business or property should first be cleaned with regard to typical janitorial services, which allows the disinfectant to work more effectively. If a surface contains a layer of dust, dirt, oil or grime, it creates a barrier between the surface and the disinfectant. This may prohibit the disinfectant from destroying or inactivating the microorganisms on the surface face.

What makes Destin Environmental Cleaning different? To begin, all of the company's chemicals are hospital grade and paired with electric and electrostatic tools that get into the surface to produce a deeper clean and overall a safer environment. Each space is cleaned with an EPA Antimicrobial Registered Disinfectant, which meets the criteria for use against SARS viruses.

The solution consists of bactericidal, virucidal, tuberculocidal and fungicidal disinfectants. It kills 99.99 percent of viruses in one minute, 99.99 percent of bacteria in two minutes, and 99.99 percent of fungi and mold in three minutes.

However, unlike other products which are often made from a multitude of synthetic ingredients, Destin Environmental Cleaning provides products that are made from plant extract, which limits the risk of leaving behind harmful residue and causing lung damage by inhalation. The botanical active ingredient used has no known adverse effects to human health or the environment. It is safe to use on everything from food surfaces to children's toys. In addition to being some of the safest products on the market, the company's products also contain no synthetic fragrances, dyes or bleaches which can often make cleaning difficult for those suffering from breathing problems.

In a world that is changing so drastically, it is important that the products being used adhere to the highest safety and cleanliness standards. Destin Environmental Cleaning Services holds fast to both. Logan and Caleb have committed their time, energy and resources to producing products that present a higher standard. Keeping you safe. Staying green.



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Real Estate

30A LOCAL PROPERTIES Danny Magagliano Grayton Beach 850-830-4747 DestinPropertExpert.com

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Offer expires 7/31/20 174 Watercolor Way Ste. 102 Santa Rosa Beach, 850-534-0002

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Offer expires 7/31/20 10962 Hwy. 98 W, Miramar Beach 850-654-8500

THE GROUTSMITH

\$50 OFF ORDER OF \$500 OR MORE \$30 OFF ORDER OF \$200 OR MORE (WITH COUPON)

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FOR THE HEALTH OF IT

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Offer expires 7/31/20 2217 West County Hwy. 30A Santa Rosa Beach, 850-267-0558

TAMTECH POOLS SERVICE CALL \$50 OFF W/ THIS COUPON

Offer expires 7/31/20 185 N. Holiday Rd., Miramar Beach 850-650-3747

30A OLIVE OIL

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Offer expires 7/31/20 Located in 30Avenue, 12805 Hwy 98E Suite N101 Inlet Beach, 850-909-0099

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850-909-0405

PECAN JACKS ICE CREAM & CANDY BUY ONE SINGLE SCOOP, GET A SECOND ONE FREE

Offer expires 7/31/20 Gulf Place, On 30A across from Ed Waline Beach Access, 850-622-0011

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Phenomenal 2 Bedroom, 2 Bath Condo #3103, Miramar Beach, Florida. Just Steps to the Beach! Fabulous Community Pet Friendly! \$369,000.



28 S. Summit Drive, Santa Rosa Beach, Exceptional 4 Bedroom, 4.5 Baths with a Carriage House located .70 from the closest public beach entrance! Master on the Main, Guest Bedroom on the Main, Spa Patio with Wet Bar & Fireplace, Custom Built by Terry Crews, 3349 SF, \$925,000! Off Hwy 393 Close to Gulf Place!



15 Nancy Drive, Santa Rosa Beach, Gorgeous 3 Bedroom, 2.5 Bath, situated on an Oversized Corner Lot with Huge Wrap Porch, 2 Car Garage, Renovated Kitchen with New Cabinetry, Bosch Professional Gas Cooktop & Range, Stainless Vent & More! \$459,900

BAYTOWNE WHARF



9100 Baytowne Wharf, Extraordinary 2 Bedroom, 2 Bath with 1023 SF, Located in Observation Point North beside of The Marlin Grill in The Village of Baytowne Wharf! Huge Party Deck! \$279,900!



1400 SF, Fabulous Location in Holiday Plaza, Miramar Beach! 12273 W. US Hwy 98 #111, New AC 2019, Only \$504 in Holiday Plaza Monthly Fees! Only \$250,000!



162 Cypress St. in Freeport, .89 Acre with 2 Buildable Lots! No HOA! Close to the Bay! Includes a Well, Septic and Power, Existing 50x35 Shop with 17x25 Game Room, \$200,000!



50 Albatross Court, Gorgeous Ranch, 3 Bedrooms and 2 Baths, 1754 SF, located in Emerald Walk on 30A, Close to the Beach! \$429,900!



The Grand Sandestin 1 Bedroom, 2 Baths, Sleeps 6! 737 SF, Just minutes to The Village of Baytowne Wharf! \$209,900



WATERSOUND BEACH, 70 S. Watch Tower, 4895 SF, Elevator, Close to the Beach, \$3,575,000!



DRIFTWOOD ESTATES, 543 Driftwood Estates, 6587 SF, Bay Front with Double Lot, \$4,150,000!



5300 Tivoli Drive, Miramar Beach, Tivoli By the Sea III, 3 Bedroom, 3 Baths \$550,000!



144 Spires Lane # 315, Gulf Place Caribbean 2 Bedroom, 2 Baths, Gulf View! \$480,000



Hammock Bay, 145 Symphony Way, 5 Bedroom, 3.5 Baths, 3781 SF, 3 Car Garage, \$422,500!



109 Flamingo Drive, 3 Bedroom, 2 Baths, Emerald Walk on 30A, \$ 360,000!

To List Your Property Call: **850-660-1962**

Exclusively Marketed By: Lisa Hughley, Broker/Owner Classic Luxury Real Estate



Pines of Blue Mountain, Residential Lot, Great Location! \$200,000!



Ventana Dunes, Lot 24, Great Lot for New Build, Beside of Community Pool! \$120,000





