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# SOWAL Life

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## Golden Anniversary: 919th Special Operations Wing

BY DOUG STAUFFER

They say blood runs thicker than water, but I witnessed what happens when colleagues choose to create an enduring bond. With its many branches, this extended family of the 919th Special Operations Wing (SOW) showed the heights achieved through genuine solidarity. I had the distinct pleasure of interacting with one of Okaloosa County's largest families. While they are not literal siblings, they are affectionately known as "America's Citizen Air Commandos."

The future is bright, because we have men and women willing to serve and sacrifice without much recognition. At the outset, may I express a heartfelt thanks to the 919th SOW from each of us?

One word encapsulates this unit: Camaraderie—I sensed this truth at the informal family Wing Day and the formal anniversary banquet. Yet, these two events hardly scratch the surface of who they are and what they mean to all Ameri-



cans. The close bonds extend from top to bottom—starting with the Wing Commander throughout the entire organization.

They sacrifice to support the nation's defenses at home and at distant points around the globe. The Wing Commander is Colonel Jason Grandy. He stated, "We perform 13 unique missions and serve as the only

Reserve Wing with such a diverse mission. We pride ourselves as quiet professionals; we do not work for the praise, but we want to do a good job, because that is what we do. The human capital in our Wing is exceptional." Like most true professionals, he leads by example.

The 919th Special Operations Wing, located at Eglin

Air Force Base Field 3 (Duke Field), is the only special operations Wing in the Air Force Reserve. The Wing supports the Air Force Special Operations Command (AFSOC) and the Air Force Reserve Command (AFRC). Its taskings include operations, maintenance, security forces, civil engineering,

### SPECIAL WINGS

*continued on page 3*

## WCEM to Host "Herricane Florida" Leadership Camp for Young Women

Walton County Emergency Management is excited to host "Herricane Florida," Landfall: Walton County, a free, weeklong girl's day camp dedicated to transitioning young women into community leaders and showcasing the emergency management as an obtainable and rewarding career path. This week-long camp is for young women entering 9-12th grade in the 2022 school year and will be hosted June 6th-10th at the Walton County Emergency Operations Center.

"After a two-year hiatus, we are thrilled to host Herricane this summer," said Jeff Goldberg, Walton County Emergency Management Director. "The Emergency Management profession is more than coordination during a disaster; it is a network of critical thinkers and diverse individuals that come together to help build a more disaster-resilient community. The purpose of this program is to help Walton County's young women find their niche, become better prepared and develop skills to apply to any career path they

### WCEM

*continued on page 3*



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## SPECIAL WINGS

*continued from page 1*

communications, logistics, supply, transportation services and personnel functions. As Colonel Grandy mentioned, it is the most diverse Wing in the Air Force Reserve Command, performing 13 unique missions.

There are approximately 1,700 members assigned to the 919th Special Operations Wing. Over 1,400 of those are part-time reservists. The Air Reserve Technicians (ARTs) provide the full-time continuity and support to keep the units and members combat-ready. ARTs carry dual status as full-time civil service employees for the U.S. Air Force and participate as reservists. More than 300 ARTs and 47 civilians support the Wing in day-to-day operations.

As the only special operations unit in the Air Force Reserve, the unit has supported Operation Just Cause, Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm, Operation Uphold Democracy, Operation Enduring Freedom, Operation Iraqi Freedom, and Operation New Dawn. The 919th Security Forces Squadron was the first Air Force Reserve unit to be activated to support Operation Enduring Freedom.

Family Wing Day: The Niceville Valparaiso Chamber of Commerce partnered with Duke Field to celebrate its 50th Anniversary.

The Chamber's business community donated the funds to provide free "Nice-cream" from Dippin' Dots for the attendees of Family Day.

The 50th Anniversary Banquet: "50 Years of Valor" was the theme for the evening as the 919th SOW wrapped up the weekend of celebrations with a formal gala. Lt. Colonel James Wilson, the 919th Chief of Public Affairs, said, "The 919th Special Operations Wing is one of the most decorated units in the Reserve. Since the unit's activation in 1971, Reservists from Duke Field have earned 20 Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards for organizational excellence. Today's standards are closely tied to those pioneers who established the Air Force Reserve's presence at Duke Field more than 50 years ago. This weekend is our opportunity to honor and thank them for showing us what it means to be the 'Best of the Best.'"

Retirees, former commanders, current leaders and everyone in attendance enjoyed reminiscing and learning about the rich history and mission of Duke Field. Major General Richard S. "Beef" Haddad gave an inspirational speech. Community leaders, Jerry Williams, President/CEO of Eglin Federal Credit Union (EFCU) and the Military Affairs Chair, Teresa Halverson, expressed gratitude for our local

military.

The late Brig. Gen. Donald Haugen, the 919th's founding member, created the 919th Tactical Airlift Group in 1971. Judy Haugen is considered the First Lady of the 919th. She is the mother of retired Lt. Colonel Brian Haugen of the Taylor Haugen Foundation. The evening wrapped up by highlighting several annual award winners from the 919th, with Colonel Grandy bringing the closing remarks.

I caught up with EFCU's Jerry Williams, a major supporter of the anniversary celebrations Presto! International Magic Show Debuts in Destin This Summer!

Prepare to be dazzled! PRESTO! at The Magic Parlor is a spectacle of magic featuring five internationally-renowned acts that have graced the stages of Broadway, London's West End, America's Got Talent and more. Guests will be transported to an amazing world in this tapestry of illusion, showmanship, and outright hilarity with this timeless new production. Inspired by early 20th century magic performances and the beauty of vintage, traveling European dance halls, PRESTO! delivers an experience unlike anything previously seen in North America.

## WCEM

*continued from page 1*  
choose."

This free week-long camp provides exercises in disaster preparedness, leadership skills, networking tools, career exploration, professional development and confidence building. Program curriculum fire safety and fire extinguisher training, a mock activation, drone training, CPR certification, storm spotter training, basic first aid, confidence building and more.

"One of the most unique aspects of the program is the one-on-one mentoring camp participants will receive," Said Donna Free, Walton County Emergency Management Deputy Director. "From local, state and national emergency agencies to private sector organizations and higher education, we wanted to ensure our mentors

## Community

would provide perspectives from a wide range of disciplines to fit each girl's interest."

Whether you are interested in pursuing a career in the public safety field or you are looking to become better prepared for the professional world, Hericane has something for everyone. Registration is now open! To register, please visit [www.surveymonkey.com/r/Hericane2022](http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Hericane2022). WCEM is actively looking for sponsors to help underwrite the cost. Please email Jeff Goldberg at [Jeff@waltoncountymem.org](mailto:Jeff@waltoncountymem.org) to discuss sponsorship opportunities. WCEM says "Please join us as we endeavor to empower the next generation of female leaders. For more information, please visit [www.waltoncountymem.org](http://www.waltoncountymem.org) or Walton County Emergency Management on Facebook.

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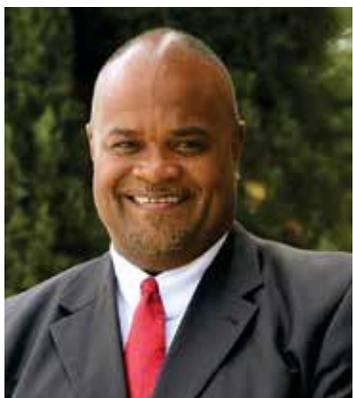
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# May 2022 WCSD Superintendent's Update



**Superintendent A. Russell Hughes**

Walton County School District is alive with activity preparing for the culmination of a year of hard work. Schools will showcase the dynamic work of students in upcoming award nights, art shows, music concerts, drama performances and Seniors are looking forward to activities which will make lasting memories. We encourage parents to make certain their students are mindful of school attendance for the remainder of the school year.

We are proud to announce that our Magnet Innovation Center will offer four summer camp sessions for our Walton County students. The MIC will take this

opportunity to expose students to STEAM (science-technology-Engineering-Arts-Math) programs in the hopes of creating life-long interest in these areas. The sessions that will be hosted are: Coding and Robotics June 20-23, 2022; Art Camp July 11-14; Engineering Camp June 13-16, 2022 and Science Camp July 18-21, 2022. For more information visit the Walton County School District Permalink: <https://www.walton.k12.fl.us/2022/4/magnet-innovation-center-steam-summer-camps>.

Freeport High School will also host a summer STEM camp. The camp is presented by Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University's Gaetz Aerospace Institute and the Panhandle Area Education Consortium. Participants will experience hands-on action-packed learning everyday. The program is open to 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade students at no cost and transportation is provided! The session begins June 7-9, 2022. For more information see the Permalink: <https://www.walton.k12.fl.us/2022/4/stem-summer-challenge-fhs-june-7-9>.

Students will have opportunities for summer enrichment through

Summer Bridge and Reading Camps beginning June 15, 2022 and ending July 14, 2022. Look for detailed information from your child's school outlining summer cohorts, particular interventions or acceleration programs. In addition, our Summer Mobile Van will be available to service all areas of the County. Scheduling and times are forthcoming so be sure to check our website regularly: [https://www.walton.k12.fl.us/!](https://www.walton.k12.fl.us/)

Superintendent Hughes releases updates for each month to keep parents, community, and business partnerships abreast of the events and notable highlights for the month. Student information, changes or improvements and the wonderful achievement throughout our district is the focus of these videos. Look for them on our district website, you don't want to miss them! You can access the May update here: <https://youtu.be/Onx0euuLk1c>.

Our administrators, teachers

and students are continuing to strive for diligence and rigor in the pursuit of academic success as we close out the 2021-2022 school year. Many of our seniors will be making plans to begin the next phase of their education at the college and career level, and others will be impacting our community in the workforce. Graduation is near and summer is quickly approaching for all of our students. For planning purposes, the graduation dates for this month are:

**May 19th In10sity School of Excellence 4PM**

**Walton High School 7PM**

**May 20th Paxton H.S. 7PM**

**May 21st Freeport H.S. 7PM**

**May 24th South Walton H.S. 7PM**

As you hear excitement in the voices of graduating seniors over the next few weeks, remember to encourage them; give words of wisdom or motivate them with your appreciation for the work they have already accomplished.

Happy Summer!

The Walton County School District, along with many educational systems, recently received a list of over 50 books deemed inappropriate by an outside group. From that list, as Superintendent of schools, I sought information from district Staff regarding the availability and locations of said titles. Staff located 24 of 50 plus books within media centers throughout the district. Being proactive, I asked staff to remove the books from circulation for the purposes of reviewing and evaluating age appropriateness and content, especially in the context of Florida's latest legislative session.

With reports of movements underway across the State, coupled with legal implications and the potential of undue stress to my District and Staff, I am not willing to place any WCSD personnel in the crosshairs of these kinds of perilous circumstances. I want to emphasize that **no "book ban" has occurred in Walton County.** Any headlines or news stories as such are inaccurate and false!

The Walton County School District is committed to a culture we proudly call EPIC. Leaders, teachers, administrators, staff and families in Walton County are focused on end of year assessments, achievement and graduations, which have earned the District the #5 ranking in the State of Florida. I will continue to protect and maintain the trust of our community and do what is right for all students and stakeholders consistent with how I have served as Superintendent for the past six years.



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# May 2022 Coastal Seniors Update

## FRIDAYS WITH FRIENDS - May 13th and 27th from 10 AM - Noon

Each "Fridays with Friends" program will be open from 10 AM until noon. Coastal Seniors will welcome members, who are 50 years and older, to our office to participate in activities, such as: card games, board games, ping pong, bingo, art classes, exercise classes, etc. If you are interested in any of these activities, please let us know so that our volunteers can prepare. You can contact us by calling 850-280-5342, or by sending an email to: [coastalseniorsofsouthwalton@gmail.com](mailto:coastalseniorsofsouthwalton@gmail.com).

## MONTHLY MEETING - May 17th from 11 AM - 2 PM (including a Mexican themed potluck lunch)

Ryan Mims from the Florida Department of Health will speak about Hurricane preparedness, including having a plan and a kit ready to go. In addition, Shannon Flynn will speak about Zentangle Art. We will have a Mexican themed potluck lunch. Bring your favorite

## COASTAL SENIORS OF SOUTH WALTON

dish. If you have any questions contact Sonia at 850-280-5432 or message her at: [coastalseniorsofsouthwalton@gmail.com](mailto:coastalseniorsofsouthwalton@gmail.com).

## PICKLEBALL - Beginner Pickleball 101 at Walton Sports Complex courts - Fridays, May 20th from 6:30-7:30 PM

Space is limited. CSSW Members please contact Sandy at [sowalpickleball@gmail.com](mailto:sowalpickleball@gmail.com) to register.

The new public pickleball courts are now open daily from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. at the Walton County sports complex behind Dune Lakes Elementary School. Please join the SoWal Pickleball Association on Facebook for more information and weekly updates.

## COASTAL SENIORS BOOK CLUB - The second Wednesday of each month - May 11th at Noon.

Join the Coastal Seniors of South Walton (CSSW) at The North Beach Social Club res-

taurant on Hwy. 331 South to discuss books you've enjoyed by participating in the book club once a month. You choose your own book - there will be no assigned books for all to read. Each participant will have up to 5 minutes to share the book they read and their thoughts about it. Should members want to exchange books they can drop one they've read at our offices at 70 Logan Lane in Grayton Beach and pick up another there to read.

## LITTLE FREE LIBRARY

Coastal Seniors of South Walton, Inc. has received a **Little Free Library** which is located at our office at 70 Logan Lane, Santa Rosa Beach, Florida 32459. It is outside our front door and allows seniors to access books and puzzles whenever they are able to come by our office location.

Seniors 50 years of age and up residing in or visiting Wal-

ton County are invited to join CSSW. Membership is \$20 for individuals, \$30 for family, and \$50 for businesses. You can become a member on Facebook at Coastal Seniors of South Walton, or via email at [coastalseniorsofsouthwalton@gmail.com](mailto:coastalseniorsofsouthwalton@gmail.com), or

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



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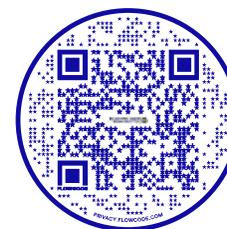
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# Presto! International Magic Show Debuts in Destin This Summer!

PRESTO! will run from May 19 through August 28, 2022, with 10 shows per week at Destin Commons. Under the velvet dome of The Magic Parlor, audiences will witness some of magic's greatest minds perform their innovative, legendary acts. Full of hilarious magic, stunning mentalism, and mind-blowing illusion, PRESTO! will be a must-see experience for the whole family.

The show will be hosted by the charismatic David Williamson, who has been featured on ABC's Champions of Magic, CBS' Magician's Favorite Magicians, and NBC's World's Greatest Magic III. David has also been featured on the CW's Masters of Illusion and as a guest-performer on America's Got Talent. Williamson has created illusions for and performed in several commercials,

all while developing TV shows for Walt Disney Productions and consulting for illusionists David Copperfield's and David Blaine's television specials.

Chris Cox is the only mind-reader in history to have starred on Broadway, the Sydney Opera House and in London's West End. Having performed for millions worldwide, he is the star of Chris Cox's Mind-Boggling Magic




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(CBBC) and the award-winning Killer Magic (BBC Three) in the United Kingdom. Cox has starred in some of the world's largest magic shows including world tours of The Illusionists, Impossible, and Wonderville. Additionally, he's written and performed five critically acclaimed Edinburgh Fringe Festival shows, four solo UK tours and two extended sell-out runs at the New Zealand International Comedy Festival. Chris has created magic and theatrical creative experiences for DC Comics, Warner Brothers, and Harry Potter & the Cursed Child Parts 1 & 2.

To house PRESTO!, The Show Company has imported a beautiful antique theater from Belgium, which will appear almost overnight at Destin Commons in early May. Opulent palaces of red velvet and gold brocade, stained glass and deep mahogany, these European cabaret tents, known as spiegel tents (or mirror tents), were constructed in the 1910s by renowned craftsman Willem Klessens. These warm, intimate circular theaters hosted dances, cabarets and celebrations throughout Europe for almost a century. There are currently about thirty-

five of these remarkable structures in existence, largely still seen throughout Europe. PRESTO!'s spiegel tent, dubbed The Magic Parlor, is owned by the Meder family in Belgium, which continues to lovingly restore and provide these glorious venues to the world, overseeing their construction on-site personally.

Guests to The Magic Parlor will be transported to what feels like another time, where the venue itself is one of the co-stars of the performance. Standing over 30 feet tall, and with a diameter of almost 100 feet, The Magic Parlor can comfortably accommodate up to 500 guests, along with the performers, crew and hosts who serve them.

PRESTO! at The Magic Parlor will reside in Destin from May 19 through August 28, 2022, at Destin Commons with 10 shows per week, six days a week. The show is dark on Tuesdays. Tickets start at \$69.95 and \$49.95 for children under 12, with special rates available for military and seniors. Group rates are available for parties of 12 or more. Reservations for the fun and excitement of PRESTO! can be made by visiting [prestodestin.com](http://prestodestin.com).



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# SEE IT TO BELIEVE IT

SUMMER 2022 AT  
DESTIN COMMONS



# Horse Power Pavilion To Feature Outdoor Dining, Camping, Micro-Brewed Beer and More

BY KENNETH BOOKS

Had enough of the Golden Arches? Look for the Golden Horses.

That will tell you you're at the entrance to the Horse Power Pavilion, a new, 70-acre, facility at 4497 State Highway 20 W, Freeport.

The Pavilion is the project of Kate and Fred Holland, who, with their two sons, Hamilton, 9, and Heston, 5, emigrated from Manchester, England, about three-and-a-half years ago.

"We love it here," Kate said. "It's a great place, especially for

children."

So, they set out to build a business that would bring joy to people of every age. Currently, there's a play area for the youngsters, and plans for "Hamilton's Bistro," featuring live music, authentic British fish and chips and al fresco dining that Kate said will be open seven days a week for lunch from noon to 2:30 p.m. and for dinner from 6 to 10 p.m. She said the bistro should be up and running in four to six weeks. Part of the bistro experience will be enjoying beer brewed at the Pavilion's Hairy Hogg Brewery, and rich, Kona coffee the Hol-



The Horse Power Pavilion's "Hamilton's Bistro" is set to open in four to six weeks.



Kate Holland celebrates between the Horse Power Pavilion's trademark Golden Horses.

instructors to educate potential modern-day Vikings how to throw axes through the air and hit targets. An expert will provide a full safety briefing along with tips on the art of throwing.

For years, Kate said, the Hollands vacationed on the Emerald Coast. Finally, it seemed logical simply to move here. And the Golden Horses drew them to the property.

When we bought the Golden Horses, the gates were always locked," Kate said, "so nobody knew what was inside. It was just a vast waste of space." Thus, was born the idea for the Horse Power Pavilion.

The bistro is phase one of an ambitious building plan, to be followed by the campground in 2023, providing between 50 and 60 slots for RVs and "glamping," outdoor camping with amenities and comforts such as beds, electricity and access to indoor plumbing.

For more information, go to [horsepowerpavilion.com](http://horsepowerpavilion.com) or call (850) 520-1737.

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# Gov. DeSantis Announces 57-Day 2022 Gulf Red Snapper Recreational Season

Gov. Ron DeSantis recently visited the Destin Harbor and announced that the 2022 Gulf red snapper recreational season will extend for a total 57 days, the longest season since the state assumed management of red snapper. It will include both a summer and fall season.

Those fishing from private recreational vessels in state and federal waters in the Gulf and charter vessels without a federal reef fish permit who are limited to fishing in state waters will be able to participate in the 2022 Gulf red snapper season. "Snapper season is one of the most exciting times to be fishing in Florida, and I am excited to announce the longest season since the state took over management of red snapper," said Gov. DeSantis. "People travel

from all over to enjoy the recreational opportunities we have in Florida that can't be found anywhere else. Florida is proud to continue providing access and opportunities to all who want to experience the Fishing Capital of the World."

The 45-day summer season will begin on June 17 and continue through July 31. The 12-day fall season is the longest fall season since the beginning of state management and spans the following dates:

- October 8-9, 15-16, 22-23
- November 11-13 (Veteran's Day Weekend), 25-27 (Weekend after Thanksgiving)

"For decades we have been proud to be known as the worlds luckiest fishing village," said Jennifer Adams, Director, Okaloosa County Tourist Development.



"And as you stand here today in Destin Harbor, you can see why. The impact of fishing extends far beyond our docks. This past year visitors spent more than \$736 million in our community and that money goes directly

back to the local economy."

If you plan to fish for red snapper in state or federal waters from a private recreational vessel, even if you are exempt from fishing license requirements, you must sign up as a State Reef

Fish Angler (annual renewal required) at GoOutdoorsFlorida.com.

Find more on recreational snapper regulations at MyFWC.com.

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 Community


BY MAURICE STOUSE, FINANCIAL ADVISOR AND BRANCH MANAGER

### Market Volatility Continues

It has been quite a different year for investors. Investments can be classified in a few main categories: 1) Financial: stocks, bonds or cash; 2) Real: real estate, 3) Alternative: gold, bitcoin, commodities and 4) Personal: jewelry or perhaps collectibles.

War, rising interest rates and bond yields and inflation have had major impacts on asset prices. Stocks are down 10 percent YTD, bonds are down 10 percent. However, cash (based upon yields only) has climbed to approximately .25 percent from at or near zero at the start of the year. Bitcoin has had an increasing amount of volatility and commodities for the most part have rallied.

### What is Driving the Volatility?

Uncertainty over the short term has traditionally added a lot to volatility for most asset classes. While a long-term perspective (in line with an investor's risk tolerance, investment objective or goal and time frame) offers the best approach, in our opinion, the volatility can lead to a lot of concern for investors.

The big three are 1) the horrific war in Ukraine and the fallout; 2) rising rates and their impact on the economy and earnings; and 3) inflation (at a four-decade high).

The war has brought uncertainty to grain supplies, specialty gasses and minerals and metals, oil and gas as well as impacts to world security. It has meant strong short-term returns for defense stocks but has added to inflation and overall uncertainty.

Rising rates have continued to affect growth-oriented stocks (technology for example) as well as the current value of bonds. Rising rates mean bond prices have fallen. Rising rates are also affecting the mortgage lending market as long-term mortgage rates crossed 5 percent for the first time in more than a decade.

## Market Volatility

Inflation has continued to increase with the latest CPI reading of 8.5 percent. This is a rate not seen in over four decades. That impacts yields, earnings, cost of borrowing and the potential value of the dollar (although the dollar is up over 5 percent YTD).

### What Might Bring Inflation Down?

In our view, housing costs could be slowing and the main reason for that is rising mortgage rates. Housing accounts for approximately 40 percent of CPI. That is not to mean the growth of housing as an investment but rather something called the Owner Equivalent Rent of an owned home. As housing values grew (over 18 percent in 2021 for example) that had a major impact on CPI.

We now consider this: Mortgage rates have climbed from the low 3s to over 5 percent in a few short months. The cost to borrow is higher and that cost is starting to squeeze out would be buyers. The Washington Times reported recently that when rates crossed 5 percent, over 10 million would-be homebuyers would be pushed out of the borrowing market. That is because the rates to borrow and or amount they can borrow worked against their ability to quality. We also consider so called demand destruction: As an asset climbs in cost, demand goes down. The cost to build (materials and labor) as well as inventory are beginning to work against housing prices and that, we believe, will have a mitigating effect on inflation. We agree with a lot of what we see and hear: Inflation is likely to move to 5 percent or lower by year's end, mainly due to housing.

### The Fed Raising Rates

We learned at the start of the year that 2022 was the year of "Don't Fight the Fed," according to Global X, a provider of exchange traded funds. The action of the Federal Reserve on two main fronts are of importance to investors: 1) raising the Federal Funds rate (currently at .25 percent) in May as well as perhaps in June, July and at other intervals for the remainder of the year and 2) The Fed's balance sheet. That has a significant impact on the supply of money or liquidity in the economy. The Fed is yet to start reducing that

(it is approaching \$9 trillion). We understand the Fed intends to start reducing that in June. Fewer dollars could also have a mitigating effect on inflation as well. We think the balance sheet has greater impact than raising rates.

### Where Might Markets be Headed

Predictions we believe take a back seat to objectives, time frame and risk tolerance. While equities and real estate have historically outperformed most other assets classes as well as inflation, their returns have not been uniform. Timing the markets is not a strategy but time in the markets we think is a strategy. According to Jim Cramer of CNBC, panic is not a strategy either. Expectations and hope have not factored in to achieving investment goals or targets either. Timing, conviction, and patience have proven to serve investors well in our view.

According to Ibbotson, Morningstar (data from Raymond James) large cap stocks (which make up 70 percent of market value) have returned 10.5 percent from 1926 to 2021. That includes reinvested dividends as opposed to dividends taken in cash. Government bonds have averaged 5.5 percent, Treasury bills (close to cash) 3.3 percent and inflation 2.9 percent.

Many institutions suggest that investors might anticipate lower returns on equities (stocks) over the next decade. Vanguard (vanguard.com) recently suspected that U.S. equities might return just 3.3 percent over the next decade. They feel at this point that global (non USA) equities could fare better at 6.2 percent. See their website for greater detail.

Valuations are always important for investors to note. Most would agree that valuations (costs) of many investments, such as stocks, are high. That means for valuations to come down, stocks would have to continue to sell off or earnings would need to rise. It is important to note, at least at this writing, that U.S. companies continue to report strong earnings and strong growth.

### Headwinds and Tailwinds

Goldman Sachs recently commented on inflation's direction and pointed more toward tailwinds for decreased inflation

with three main points: 1) slowing growth of energy costs 2) slowing growth of wage costs (unretirements have been reversing the great resignation with 55+ year olds and hence a greater labor pool, lowering wage pressures) and 3) rising mortgage rates slowing the cost of housing (a major component of CPI as noted earlier).

While the world and the markets are climbing a wall of uncertainty, investors and would-be investors might want to review and update their goals and strategies. We believe this should be done at least annually and that investments should be reviewed at least quarterly. When goals, time frames or risk tolerances change, a plan matching those should be developed and implemented.

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*Investing in oil involves special risks, including the potential adverse effects of state and federal regulation and may not be suitable for all investors.*

*There is an inverse relationship between interest rate movements and fixed income prices. Generally, when interest rates rise, fixed income prices fall and when interest rates fall, fixed income prices rise.*

*Bitcoin and other cryptocurrency issuers are not registered with the SEC, and the Bitcoin marketplace is currently unregulated. Bitcoin and other cryptocurrencies are a very speculative investment and involves a high degree of risk.*

*Investors should consider the investment objectives, risks, charges, and expenses of an exchange traded fund carefully before investing. The prospectus contains this and other information and should be read carefully before investing. The prospectus is available from your investment professional. The companies engaged in the communications and technology industries are subject to fierce competition and their products and services may be subject to rapid obsolescence. Investing in the energy sector involves special risks, including the potential adverse effects of state and federal regulation and may not be suitable for all investors.*






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

Some investors have learned how to ride out the most stomach-churning market cycles. Others follow the urge to jump out mid-ride. So what can you do to play it smart in a roller coaster of a market?

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



**Maurice Stouse**  
Financial Advisor

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**Amy Parrish**  
Financial Advisor

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# Sundog Books Donates Books to Local Teachers in Honor of Teacher Appreciation Month

Every Walton County Teacher Able to Receive One Free Children/Young Adult Book for Classroom Libraries

In honor of Teacher Appreciation Month, Sundog Books is donating a children or young adult book to every Walton County teacher to help stock classroom libraries. All Walton County teachers with a current

teacher identification badge can visit Sundog Books from May 1st to June 30th to select a free children or young adult book of their choice to be used in their classroom libraries.

“As our community’s local independent bookstore, we know first-hand how important it is to have new, exciting literature available to students in the classroom,”

said Linda White, co-owner of Sundog Books. “We are so fortunate to have such amazing educators in Walton County and we want to support their efforts by donating books directly to our local teachers to help offset the cost of classroom libraries which, more often than not, comes out of the teachers’ pockets.”

According to the National Education Association, public school educators spend an average of \$459 on school supplies. Thirty percent of teachers spent \$1,000 or more on school supplies.

“We hope our small contribution will make an impact, getting more books in the hands of students,” said Bob White, co-owner of Sundog Books. “It’s a small thank you to our local educators for showing up and giving their all to the next generation of read-

ers.”  
 “Teachers are our heroes!” said Mrs. White. “We are so excited to give back to those who make such a positive impact in our local community.”

To redeem, Walton County teachers just need to come by Sundog Books in Seaside, FL from May 1st to June 30th, 2022 with a current teacher badge. The teacher can choose any children or young adult book for their classroom libraries. Teachers are limited to one book per school badge and this donation is not redeemable to cash value. To avoid paying a parking fee, teachers are encouraged to use the complimentary shuttle provided by Seaside, Florida that runs from the 283 South Grayton Beach public parking lot to Seaside, Florida every 15 minutes.



Sundog Books is a family owned, independent bookstore located in the heart of Seaside, Florida. In business since 1986, Bob and Linda White have supplied locals and visitors alike with books, books and more books for 36 years. Sundog Books is located at 89 Central Square, Santa Rosa Beach, FL 32459 and open daily from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m.

## Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor:

The Democratic Women’s Club of Walton County thanks you for your article in the April issue of South Walton Life on Fisher House, the residential facility for families of veterans and active-duty military personnel receiving medical treatment in this area. Thanks to your article, our club invited Fisher House’s Director, Mia Hughes, to be our guest speaker at our May 12 meeting on zoom. Our

hope is to learn more about the services Fisher House provides and how our club might be able to help.

We appreciate you enlightening us about this valuable resource to military personnel, veterans and their families!

Sue Bowden, President, Democratic Women’s Club of Walton County

Rebecca Baker, DWC of WC Veterans Outreach Coordinator



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Community

# John Farrow Has Construction In His Blood

BY KENNETH BOOKS

John Farrow was born to be a contractor.

He said he became interested in construction “probably about the time I was 4 and started playing with Legos and building blocks. In summers in high school, I’d actually go work on construction sites.” He also put himself through school by working construction.

“I decided I love this, this is what I want to do and I went for my contractor’s license,” he said.



his workers went floor by floor.

A residential project that stands out took place on the West Coast. “A gentleman wanted all concrete walls 20 feet tall, an entire slab concrete home,” John said. “Every aspect had to be completely balanced and measured. I guess he thought

Armageddon was coming.”

Farrow’s company also handles disaster recovery. For example, a corporate office in downtown San Francisco had a huge water release on the 12th floor on the Friday before Labor Day, which flooded the entire building, including a Walgreens that

was the building’s anchor.

“We mobilized 160 men from all over the country, including equipment – large dryer units, drywall folks, carpet folks, painters, and restocking all the supplies at Walgreens. By Tuesday, everything opened up and everyone was back in business.”



Today, John is owner of Farrow Commercial Construction, handling residential, commercial and fire and disaster recovery.

Founded and headquartered in Sonoma County, Calif., John has opened an office on the Emerald Coast.

“We’d been coming to Destin for 20 years,” the San Francisco native said. “We have family here. We love the governor of Florida, we love the area and we love the people.”

John, 55, and his wife, J.K., have lived in Destin for about five years. But they soon will become landed gentry as they’re in escrow and are about to close on a ranch in Laurel Hill. There, they can enjoy Florida, Okaloosa County and their horses. They have a daughter, Montana, 24, and two sons, Peyton, 21, and Clayton, 19. John said Montana will soon join the firm

as project manager.

“I’ve had the personal benefit of working with folks here and I believe the way I do construction will be a huge benefit to the folks here in Florida,” John said. “We think we can make a difference and one of my slogans is that I like to do things differently.”

That penchant for innovation has come in handy in several Farrow Commercial Construction jobs.

The most challenging commercial job took place at the Magnolia Hotel in downtown Denver.

“That was difficult,” he said, “as far as staging, getting vehicles in and out and working on a hotel, adding 56 rooms, as well as working through the winter months with very limited parking to store and stage equipment and supplies.” Meanwhile, the hotel was occupied, so John and

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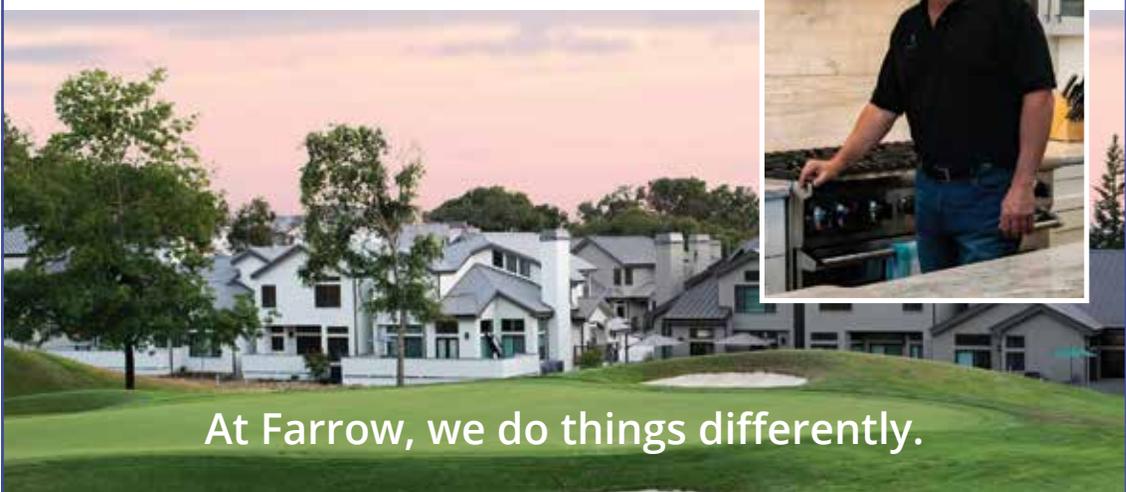


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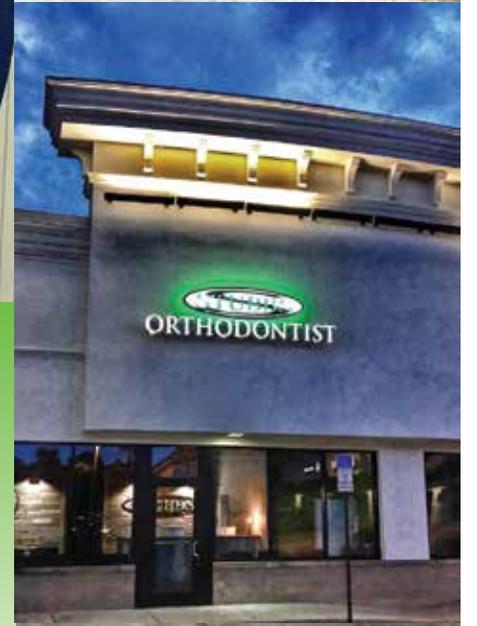
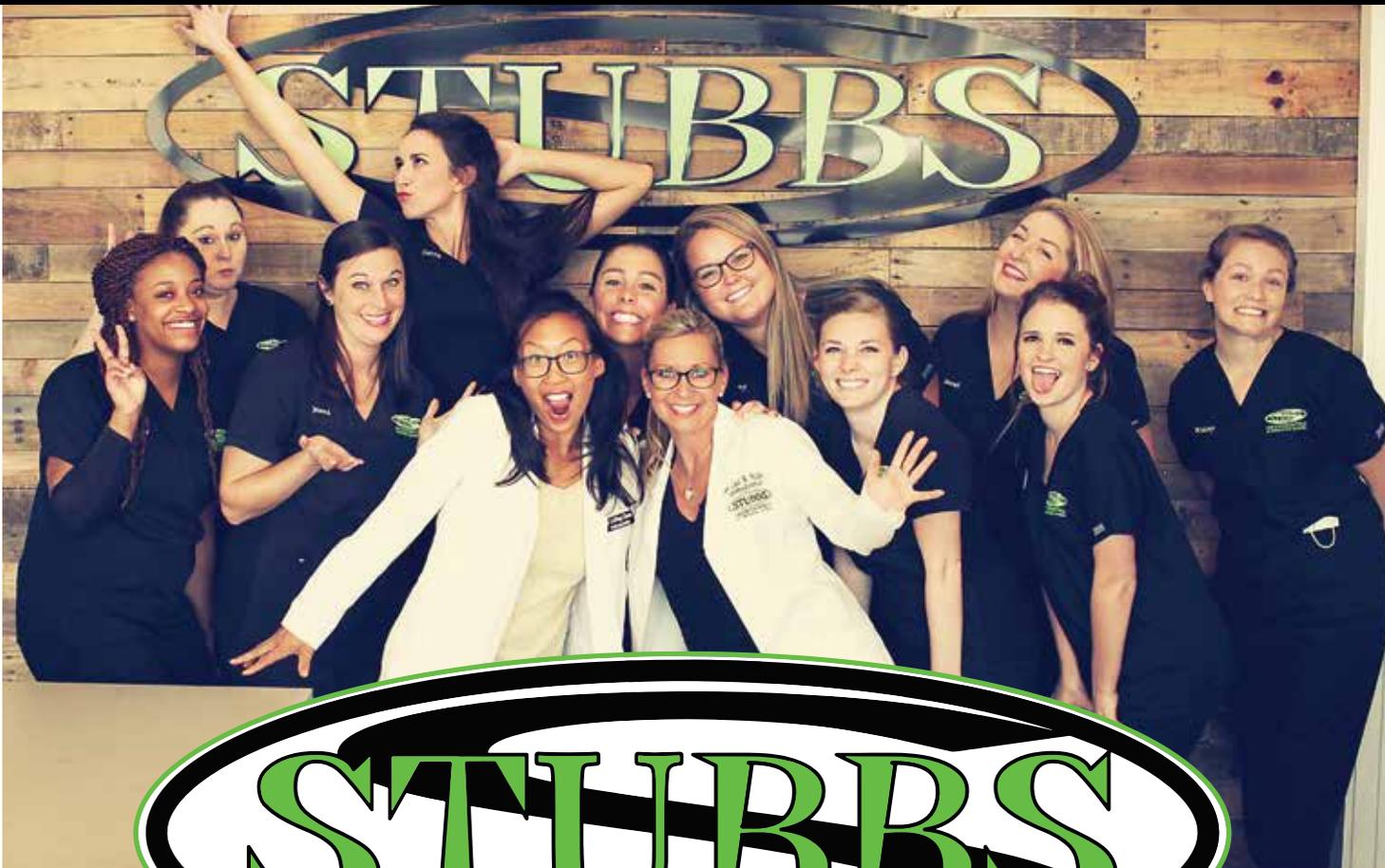
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Community

# Small Business Connect Hosts Chamber Membership Director Jennifer Cooper May 25th

Have you ever wondered what the local Chamber of Commerce does and what the benefits would be for a small business considering joining? On Wednesday, May 25th, Jennifer Cooper, Membership Director of the Walton Area Chamber of Commerce will give a talk and answer your questions about the value of joining the local Chamber. Jennifer will be

speaking to the Small Business Connect group that meets each Wednesday at Noon at the Destiny Worship Center, 122 Poinciana Blvd. In Miramar Beach. Jennifer will be speaking on how the Chamber can help a small business:  
Make business contacts. ...  
Receive chamber newsletters. ...  
Acquire customer referrals. ...

Bring credibility to your business. ...  
Increase your visibility in the community. ...  
Networking opportunities. ...  
Gain a voice in government.

The meeting will run from noon till 1:15pm. Small Business Connect is a Free business networking group meeting each Wednesday at Destiny Worship

Center in Miramar Beach. The group has been meeting for the past 6 years, sharing referrals and offering small business support. The group meets at noon-time for Lunch, which can be purchased at the DWC café for only \$7 (Includes salads, delicious sandwiches, a side and a drink). You do not have to be a member of the church to attend.

Small Business Connect has no fees or extensive requirements and is a non exclusive type group. If you are interested in attending please contact Dave White, Dave@Southwalton.life or or call Minh Nguyen, 850-376-3412 for more information. Register online at destinyworshipcenter.com/smallgroups to find small business connect.

## Florida is a "Closed" Open Primary State - What Does That Mean to You?



BY BILL FLETCHER

Florida is a closed primary election state. Only voters who are registered members of political parties may vote for respective party candidates or nominees for an office in a primary election including a presidential preference primary election. A person can register with a party or change his or her party affiliation at any time but in order to vote for a party candidate in an upcoming primary election, the person must register with that party or change his or her party by the registration deadline for that pri-

### FLORIDA IS A CLOSED PRIMARY STATE What Does "Closed Primary" Mean to You?

<b>NO PARTY AFFILIATION (NPA)</b>	Voters Registered as NPA will not see party candidates on their Primary Election Ballot.
<b>Minor Parties</b> (For a list of registered minor Florida parties visit <a href="http://votewalton.com">votewalton.com</a> or call (850)892-8112)	Voters registered with a MINOR PARTY will not see party candidates on their primary election ballot unless two or more of their minor party candidates have qualified.
<b>Republican (REP)</b>	Registered REPUBLICAN voters will see Republican candidates on their primary election ballot.
<b>Democrat (DEM)</b>	Registered Democratic voters will see Democratic candidates on their primary election ballot.

Nonpartisan judicial and school board offices, nonpartisan special districts, municipal and local referenda questions are included in some primary elections and will appear regardless of party affiliation.

*\*If all candidates for a single contest have the same party affiliation and there is not opposition in the General election, all qualified voters, regardless of party affiliation, may vote in the primary election for that office. This is known as a Universal Primary Contest.*

mary election (applicable also to a presidential preference primary election). See section 97.055, Fla. Stat.

However, there are times when all registered voters can vote in a primary election, regardless of

which major or minor political party they are registered or even if they are registered without a specific party affiliation:

If all the candidates for an office have the same party affiliation and the winner of the pri-

mary election will not face any opposition in the general election (i.e. no write-in candidates have qualified), then all registered voters can vote for any of the candidates for that office in the primary election.

If races for nonpartisan (i.e., free from party affiliation) judicial and school board offices, nonpartisan special districts or local referendum questions are on the primary election ballot, then all registered voters, including those without party affiliation are entitled to vote those races on the ballot.

At a general election, all registered voters receive the same ballot and may vote for any candidate or question on the ballot. If there are write-in candidates who have qualified for a particular office, a space will be left on the ballot where their name can be written.

Bill Fletcher is the Chairman of the Walton County Republican Party.

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## Get involved with your local GOP.

Contact **Bill Fletcher** (fletch7245@aol.com) or **Jim Jaquess** (jfjaquess@gmail.com) for more information on how to join one of these groups:

**South Walton Republican Club, North Walton Republican Club, Walton Republican Women Federated, Republican Women of Walton County, Freeport Republican Club and 30A GOP**

WALTON COUNTY Republicans

# Donna Johns: Retired Air Force Veteran Running for Walton County Board of County Commissioners (District 4)

By JIM JAQUESS

Donna's roots in the Florida panhandle go back to the '70s. She has been a permanent resident of District 4 (Miramar Beach) in Walton County for over 20 years.

She is a Southern girl born in Orlando, Florida. Her father, a 28-year veteran of the Air Force, raised her to respect the flag and encouraged her to be the best she could be, including stepping forward to serve others in the community to the best of her ability.

She served two decades in the United States Air Force, including several assignments in Europe. She later had the opportunity to graduate from the United States Air Force Office of Special Investigations Academy, serving the last decade of her military career as a Special Agent in OSI.

For the past twenty-two years (2000-2022) she owned a Private Investigation Agency in Mira-



mar Beach, but recently retired from that endeavor to focus on other activities.

She has been active in local community service for many years. She usually attends most of the Walton County Board of County Commissioner (BCC) meetings and can often be found voicing her opinion during pub-

lic comment at those meetings.

Donna was appointed to the Walton County Design Review Board (DRB) in 2018. Working on the DRB provided an in depth understanding of the various committees that eventually report to the Commissioners for final approval of actions that can affect all citizens of the County.

In 2020, she was elected a Commissioner for the South Walton Mosquito Control District. During this period, the district experienced a number of organizational changes and operational improvements that Donna initiated. She did not know much about mosquito control when elected, but took the opportunity to learn what was needed and helped make the improvements with the assistance of the entire team at the Mosquito Control District. Working together to

accomplish common goals is a characteristic that was instilled in her during childhood.

Donna is a fiscal conservative and has a focus on eliminating unnecessary waste of taxpayer dollars. She understands the need for infrastructure improvements throughout the county. For example, there is no valid reason why it should take half a decade or more to complete a few miles of widening Hwy. 98, as we have experienced.

She has been involved in local government and politics for years. Donna served as President of the South Walton Republican group for three years. During her tenure as President, the group experienced a 30% increase in membership and is now almost 200 members strong. She is also a member of the Walton Republican Executive Committee, helping provide guidance to local Republicans through the Republican Party of Florida (RPOF).

Donna is a long-time cancer survivor. She formerly served as the Sponsorship Chair for the American Cancer Society's fundraising efforts in Walton County.

She is a mother and grandmother. Her daughter and one of her grand-children live in Walton County. They know what it is like to live in paradise, as do all of us. Donna wants to keep paradise for all Walton County residents.

Donna loves Walton County and she wants it to be the best it can be. District 4 deserves a voice from someone that has experienced living in the district, but her candidacy focuses not only on District 4 but all of the county from one end to the other-- Paxton to Freeport, Rosemary Beach to Santa Rosa Beach/Miramar Beach, Mossy Head to Defuniak Springs and all points in between. Donna will represent all residents of this great county.



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Community

# Raising Awareness of Veteran Suicide

Army veteran and Destin's own Geoff Speyrer is making his way around Destin five times to bring hope and awareness to veteran suicide. The SET22 endurance event starts Friday, May 13, and continues throughout the night and into the next evening. As founder of the event,

Geoff will make his way around five times with a 26.2-mile run, a 100-mile cycle and 1-mile tire flip (200 pounds) to raise funds to help reduce veteran suicide.

The event will begin at midnight at the Legendary Marina/Lulu's parking lot and be complete within 24 hours, ending at

the Destin Middle School track, with an after party at Lulu's. There will be aid stations and opportunities to sponsor along the way. Geoff also invites others to join him. "If you can't do the whole event, do the longest run you've ever done. Cycle farther than you've ever cycled. Push hard. Suffer a little bit with us," he said. "There is power in numbers and we are better when we grind together and know someone has our back."

Sadly, 22 veterans and active-duty members take their lives every day, thinking there is no hope. But Geoff found health and wellness as his tool to face adversity and turned his life around. While in the military, Geoff was near explosives and later received medical care that adversely affected his health, resulting in lower leg trauma/surgery that left him with a life-long injury; reducing his chances to be able to run and facing the challenges of Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI).

After leaving the military, Geoff spent the next 13 years in and out of incarceration and treatment facilities and became a fugitive; however, it was during these darkest years that he turned his life around. Instead of becoming a statistic and taking his own life, he became in-



involved in physical fitness to heal. Today, Geoff pushes himself both mentally and physically for this and other endurance events, trying to set an example for other veterans who are faced with this challenge to follow. In the past two years, Geoff has raised over \$30K in support.

The proceeds for this year's event will be donated to Healing Paws for Warriors, a local veteran founded/veteran led 501(c)(3) that provides trained service dogs for combat veterans faced with PTSD, TBI and/or Military Sexual Trauma (MST) at no cost to the veteran. Con-

tinued support helps to reduce veteran suicide and increase self and family health and wellness. It's a resilience program of veterans helping veterans from personal experience and trained service dogs.

"If you can't make it, consider purchasing an event shirt or two or three for the whole family," said Geoff. "Or you can help by making a contribution or sponsoring the event. We will bring that 22-a-day average down to zero, but I need your help." To sponsor, visit <https://www.foundation.mdturbines.com/set-22-veteran>.



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**Lee Campbell**

# Stan Hall Makes Car Buying Fun!

Usually, the car buying experience is ranked right up there with getting a tooth pulled; necessary but filled with trepidation and anxiety. But Stan Hall takes pride in emphasizing two qualities every time a customer walks in or contacts the dealership looking for a car. “First, is the Golden Rule- treat people the way you want to be treated, and second, make car buying fun,” he said. And he is serious! After nearly 54 years in the car business, Stan knows the ins and outs of the business pretty well, and what becomes evident pretty quick, he’s more interested in a customer’s happiness than he is in making a sale.



and is now nine years free of that terrible disease. The experience left him with a renewed faith in the Lord Who greatly helped his healing process.

Stan and his team try to be very active in their community. A few of the organizations they support are: Sinfonia Gulf Coast, Mattie Kelly Arts Foundation, Destin United Methodist Church and the Destin Chamber of Commerce.

Stan is also extremely proud of Bunny, “the most important and inspiring person in my life.” Bunny has 35 Years of experience as an interior designer, and recently opened her own business, “The Perfect Plan Destin, LLC.” You can reach Bunny at 850-830-3995 or bunny@perfectplandestin.com.

So, the next time you’re in the market for a new car, give Stan Hall a call. I think you’ll be refreshingly surprised.

Stan presents as a Christ-centered man who will go out of his way to anticipate and fulfill his customer’s needs. “To me, the Golden Rule in the car business is to concentrate on the customer’s needs and God will take care of the rest,” he said.

Emerald Coast Motor Cars operates as a car buying “concierge” service. Customers specify the kind of car they want, then Stan and his team track it down and bring it right to their doorstep. “No haggling, no deception, just great service and honest pricing.”

A quick look on the ECMotorcars.com website and the testimonies and reviews are glowing. There are pages of positive testimonies confirming the success of Stan’s concierge business model.

A key component to the overall success and growth of ECMC is the addition of Devon Kiss, a young 36 year-old from Tennessee who is quickly adapting to the car business, and he especially enjoys the Stan Hall concierge model. “Devon displays the same qualities of an honest car man in this new generation,” Stan Says. “And his background as a computer programmer, website designer, helps the company locate the best car for our customers by searching and negotiating coast to coast. Devon is learning the car business faster than anyone I have ever known.”

Stan and his wife, Bunny, moved to the Destin Area from Georgia 25 years ago, and while Stan takes pride in his business accomplishments, surviving cancer ranks even higher. In 2012, Stan beat throat cancer



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Community

# Top 10 Reasons High Schoolers Should Enroll in an Associate's Program for 11th Grade

## Make Seacoast Collegiate High School's Dual Enrollment Program Your Top Choice

Say hello to a flexible class schedule and college credits! Dual Enrollment is a breeze at Seacoast Collegiate High School. Students attend Northwest Florida State College in Niceville and can earn college credit while still in high school.

Can you imagine graduating with two years of college done? Students who earn 60 credit hours can be eligible to earn their associates degree and their high school diploma simultaneously.

Hang with other Seacoast students while taking college classes. As a Seacoast student, you have access to a dedicated Seacoast Classroom at Northwest Florida State College where dual enrolled students are able to collaborate and spend time with one another on campus.

Ride the shuttle! Seacoast Collegiate High School students are able to ride the shuttle from South Walton to Niceville daily-free of charge! It's the ultimate carpool - safe and fun!

A built-in community of amazing like-minded students who are high achieving, motivated and FUN! Seacoast has all of the social aspects that make high school such a special time in a student's life: clubs, dances, prom, athletics. It's a small school environment and a close knit group of friends with all of the traditional high school rituals.

50% of Seacoast graduates earn Bright Futures Scholarships. The team at Seacoast are pros at making this an easy, engaging and fun process. Parents say again and again that it's a life-

saver to have so much help!

Personal attention from Seacoast guidance counselors will ensure that each student's dual enrollment program meets their individual needs. Additionally, guidance counselors help make the college admissions process a snap with hands-on assistance with applications and everything else.

Scholarship Opportunities - this year's senior class has earned more than \$4.1 million in college scholarships. Seacoast Collegiate High School had three National Merit Scholarship Nominees for the 2021-2022 school year.

Spots are still available to enroll for the 2022-23 school year - but hurry - they are going fast.

It's worth repeating that enrollment at Seacoast Collegiate High School and dual enrollment coursework at Northwest Florida State College that can earn students an associate degree



Tanner Bates

and a high school diploma simultaneously are TUITION FREE!

For some students, the opportunity to earn an associate degree upon high school graduation is a

springboard to further higher education. For others, it provides a head-start and a competitive advantage for entering the workforce. Whatever the motivation, Seacoast Collegiate High School in Santa Rosa Beach has the team and the ability to help students navigate what could otherwise feel like an intimidating process.

Seacoast Collegiate High School, which along with the Seaside Neighborhood School form Seaside School, Inc, Florida's longest-operating charter school and the #3 ranked combination school in the state, has been providing Walton County students with this unique opportunity since opening in 2013. Students begin their high school careers at Seacoast Collegiate High School on Northwest Florida State College's South Walton campus in Santa Rosa Beach. During 9th and 10th grades, students enjoy small class sizes where their individual needs and learning styles are a priority. Upon entering 11th grade, students are dual enrolled with all classes taking place at Northwest Florida State College's main campus in Niceville.

While many students enroll at Seacoast in 9th grade, those who choose to enroll as 11th graders and have maintained a 3.0 grade point average are presented with a unique opportunity to immediately enter the dual enrollment program and begin earning college credits. As a public charter school, the entire curriculum, including college coursework, is completely tuition free for Walton County students.

ACT NOW!

Space for the upcoming school year is still available for new students, including incoming 11th graders. Interested in learning more? Check out the information available at [www.seasideschools.net](http://www.seasideschools.net), have a conversation with the school's administration and take a school visit. We will provide interested students and parents with the information needed to make a school decision that could culminate with both a high school diploma and a free associate degree in just a few short years.

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Seacoast Collegiate High School (SCHS) students have individualized plans allowing them to earn an associates degree, while simultaneously earning their high school diploma at no cost to the student or family.

SCHS caters to local students who would like to take their education to the next level by ensuring they are on the right track to meet and exceed their goals. Our staff works with each student to better their chances of qualifying for the Florida Bright Futures program and boasts an extremely high average of over 50% of all graduating students earning the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship.

Visit [WWW.SEASIDESCHOOLS.NET/ADMISSIONS](http://WWW.SEASIDESCHOOLS.NET/ADMISSIONS) to apply online.

Community

# 17th Annual Destin Charity Wine Auction

## Raises More than \$3.8 million for Children in Need in Northwest Florida

The Destin Charity Wine Auction Foundation (DCWAF) is pleased to announce that the 17th Annual Destin Charity Wine Auction presented by the Jumonville Family raised more than \$3.8 million for children in need in Northwest Florida. The record-breaking results are a staggering \$1.8 million increase over the previous year.

Hosted April 22 and 23, the 17th Annual Auction was the first in-person auction experience produced by DCWAF since 2019 following two years of virtual auctions. With a sold-out crowd of 600 guests, the proceeds of the auction benefit DCWAF's 15 partner children's charities in Northwest Florida.

"The results of this year's auction far exceeded anything we could have ever dreamed," said John Russell, President of DCWAF. "We expected to show growth when compared to the past two virtual auctions, but we had no idea we would beat our best auction by over a million dollars! We are so grateful to our

supporters from the wine and culinary fields but also to our board of directors and the patrons that attended the auction and raised their paddles high and often. What cannot be overstated is the impact these funds will have on our supported charities. They have battled through the pandemic to continue to deliver their services, often at great risk to themselves, so that the children of our community would know they were not forgotten. We cannot wait to present the largest checks in our history to our charity partners."

The auction weekend began Friday, April 22 with 10 patron dinners hosted along the Emerald Coast collectively raising more than \$720,000. The live



auction kicked off on Saturday, April 23 with the Magnum Force lot (50 magnums from vintners past and present) which raised a record winning bid of \$70,000. The highest single-selling lot of the afternoon was a trip with private air passage to Middle-

burg, VA, which sold for \$110,000. A luxurious seven-night stay in the British Virgin Islands aboard a four-bedroom Moorings 52.4 monohull captained by Chef Tim Creehan sold for \$70,000, and an immersive trip to the Kentucky Bourbon Trail complete with private air passage, courtesy of NetJets, sold for \$75,000.

The funds raised at the 17th Annual Destin Charity Wine Auction will be distributed to 15 local non-profit organizations for specific projects and programs that benefit children. DCWAF's charity partners for 2022 include AMIkids Emerald Coast, Ascension Sacred Heart Emerald Coast, Boys and Girls Clubs of the Emerald Coast, Children

in Crisis, Children's Volunteer Health Network, Emerald Coast Autism Center, Emerald Coast Children's Advocacy Center, Food for Thought, Habitat for Humanity of Walton County, Mental Health Association of Okaloosa and Walton Counties, Opportunity Inc., Shelter House of Northwest Florida, The Arc of the Emerald Coast, Westwood Ranch, and Youth Village.

As the top charity fundraising event in Northwest Florida, the Destin Charity Wine Auction is currently ranked fifth among the nation's top charity wine auctions by Wine Spectator Magazine. The money raised at this year's auction will be presented to DCWAF's charity partners during a special check presentation ceremony in September.

The dates for next year's Destin Charity Wine Auction weekend are April 28-29, 2023. For more information on the Destin Charity Wine Auction Foundation, visit [www.DCWAF.org](http://www.DCWAF.org).

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# Spring Into an Event-Filled May at Baytowne Wharf!

There's something BIG going on every month it seems at The Village of Baytowne Wharf. And May is no exception!

## Welcome Summer During the Memorial Day Celebration Weekend!

**Saturday, May 28th, 7-9 p.m.**

**Sunday, May 29th, 6-9 p.m.**

**Monday, May 30th, 7-8 p.m. | FREE**

Kick off the 100 days of summer as festivities begin on Saturday, May 28th, when a true locals' favorite, Forrest Williams Band, takes the stage at the Events plaza from 7-9 p.m.

On Sunday, enjoy live music from Jarred McConnell and The High Aces from 6-9 p.m. Free children activities will be from 6-9 p.m. and fireworks at 9 p.m. You won't want to miss the fireworks, live music, shopping, dining and fun all weekend long!

On Monday, May 30th, 7-8 p.m., join the Sandestin Owners Association for a special Memorial Day ceremony!

Baytowne is boomin' all month long with events, activities and fun! The Village and its merchants welcome you to come shop, dine and play! Celebrate, escape and embrace some of the best of Baytowne Wharf at one of the most gorgeous times of the year!

## Alissa Steffens Vocal Studios Presents a Spring Concert!

**Tuesday, May 10th 7-8:30 p.m.**

**Events Plaza Stage | FREE**

All Invited! Please join Vocal Coach Alissa Steffens and some of her very talented students as they present a night of music! All Genres! Performers are Kids through Adults! May 10th at 7pm. Location: Baytowne Amphitheater (next to Zip Line). Will be a night to remember! Come on out and support local talent! Open to public! No charge. Grab a chair or blanket and enjoy the evening! Can't wait to see you there!

Coach Alissa Steffens is a Performer, Professional Songwriter, Recording Artist and Vocal Coach with a history rich in the Nashville Music Industry! After moving to Sandestin/30a area a few years ago, she continued her work as a Vocal Coach, special-



izing in Mentorship, Vocal Performance, Songwriting, Artist Development/Career Planning, Acting and Speaking. Alissa works with students regionally, nationally and internationally. Her students sing all different musical genres and range from the Beginner to the Advanced Career Artist. She and her students work on various projects together that involve vocal performance, songwriting, albums, tours, career planning, artist development, commercials, film acting projects, theatre, speeches, etc. Alissa has a big heart for giving her students both a voice and a platform.

## Champagne While You Shop at Bubbly Baytowne

**Thursday, May 19th 5 p.m. | FREE**

Join Baytowne Wharf for an evening full of FREE champagne and shopping during the always popular Bubbly Baytowne! Sip and Shop through the Village streets! Stop into various retail merchants while you savor a selection of premium champagnes.

\* This event is free and for 21 and up only. The Village will be open to the public during this event.

## Wildlife Monday Mondays | May 23rd - August 8th

**Time: 5:30-8 p.m. | FREE**

Enjoy wild face painting and animal crafts from 5:30-6:30 p.m. at the Events Plaza Stage! Then from 6:30-8 p.m. join Emerald Coast Wildlife Refuge and meet all their animal friends while you learn all about the Emerald Coast ecosystems, wildlife rehabilitation and more!



## Boomin' Tuesday Tuesdays, May 24th - August 9th

**7:15 p.m.-9:15 p.m. FREE**  
Turn your eyes on the sky and watch as Baytowne Wharf lights up the night with a breathtaking fireworks show over the Village Lagoon at 9:15 p.m. PLUS now enjoy a DJ Dance Party with DJ Mike Whitty in the Events Plaza at 7:15 p.m.

## A Can't Miss Wednesday Night Concert Series!

**Wednesdays | through May 25th, 7-9 p.m. FREE | Events Plaza Stage**  
Wednesday Night Concerts at The Village of Baytowne Wharf are BACK! Sit back and relax with an outdoor concert and enjoy LIVE entertainment. The concert series features both local and regional talent from a variety of genres. Don't forget your lawn chairs and blankets.

**Live Local Favorites Music Lineup:**  
**May 11:** Cosmic Rascals  
**May 18:** Boukoo Groove  
**May 25:** Cadillac Willy

## Fly Guy Thursday Thursdays, May 26th - August 11th

**6:30 p.m. & 8:30 p.m. FREE**  
Enjoy shows from flyboard extraordinaire Ben Merrell over the lagoon! Watch as he soars to the sky and makes waves at Baytowne Wharf.



# Memorial Day

**Saturday, May 28th 7-9pm**  
**Sunday, May 29th 6-9pm**  
**Monday, May 30th 7-8pm**

*Live music all weekend!*  
**Saturday: Forrest Williams Band**  
**Sunday: Jarred McConnell and The High Aces**  
**FREE CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES 6-9PM**  
**FIREWORKS 9PM**



The Village of  
**BAYTOWNE WHARF**  
at SANDESTIN



Community

# June 2022 Family Friendly Events in South Walton

## Art Month South Walton Mon., May 2-31

Activate your imagination at Art Month South Walton, an initiative of the Cultural Arts Alliance of Walton County. Come and experience a collaboration of visual, performing and literary arts events presented in diverse formats and various venues throughout South Wal-



ton, located along Northwest Florida's Gulf Coast. Spanning the month of May, Art Month South Walton includes Under the Sea: a fundraising event for the Underwater Museum of Art, South Walton Street Art Festival, Digital Graffiti Festival, Longleaf Writers Conference, Artist

Receptions and more! Get all the details at CulturalArtsAlliance.com.

## Digital Graffiti at Alys Beach Fri., May 13-14

Digital Graffiti at Alys Beach is a one-of-a-kind projection art festival where artists use the latest digital technologies to project their original works onto the iconic white walls of Alys Beach.

The 15th Annual Festival takes place May 13-14, 2022. The festival opens on Friday night, May 13th, with an all-inclusive food and beverage experience for adults (21+). Stops along the event path will feature samples by local and regional chefs, winemakers, dis-

tillers, and breweries, culminating in a festive gathering around Caliza Pool where art and architecture provide a dynamic backdrop for cocktails, music, and conversation. The closing evening of the festival, Saturday, May 14th, is a family-friendly experience with local food trucks and vendors providing food and

beverages for purchase along the festival footprint. With the event winding through Alys Beach from 30A up to Caliza Pool, this all-ages event is a lively, engaging celebration of art and architecture. This event is open to all ages. 9581 E County Hwy 30A, Alys Beach, FL 32413.

## Scratch Biscuit Kitchen Brunch & Live Music Saturday, May 14, 10:00 am to 1:00 pm

Scratch Biscuit Kitchen, located in WaterColor Town Center, invites you to enjoy brunch featuring live music every Saturday from 10AM - 1PM. It's hard to compete with biscuits, brunch and beats near the beach! May 14 | Tanner Gray, 21 | Joey Shaling, 28 | Mike Whitty.

## Seaside Lyceum Lawn Cinema Sunday, May 15, 8:00 pm

Grab a blanket and come out to Seaside on Sunday night for Lyceum Lawn Cinema, a movie on the lawn under the stars. Free and open to the public. Show begins at 8:00 PM. Movies Include: May 15 | Parent Trap, May 22 | Angels in the Outfield, May 29

| McFarland USA. Lyceum Lawn, Seaside, FL, Topsail Hill Preserve State Park: Guided Plant Stroll

## Monday, May 16, 9:00 am to 11:00 am.

Join Topsail Hill Preserve State Park and Master Gardener Bill Kuenstler on the third Monday each month from 9:00a.m. - 11:00a.m for a Guided Plant Stroll. Take a stroll through the park and the campground to explore the plants visible and to see what is in bloom. Visitors will learn about some of the plant species here at the park. Topics for the hike will vary based on the time of year and growing season. The program is on the third Monday of the month. This program is free with regular park admission. 7525 W. Scenic Highway 30A, Santa Rosa Beach.

## Splash & Dash 5K Run & 2.5K SUP Race Saturday, May 21, 7:00 am

The Splash & Dash 5K Run



& 2.5K Paddle will be taking place on Saturday, May 21st. A collaborative effort between the Rotorhead 30A Running Co and RUN/SUP, The Splash & Dash offers participants the option to participate in a 5K Run and/or a 2.5K SUP (Stand Up Paddleboard) Race. Start time for the 5K Run will be 7:00AM and the 2.5K SUP Race will start at 8:15AM. The 5K Run will start and finish adjacent to the WaterColor BoatHouse, and will run throughout WaterColor primarily on its beautifully-groomed trails. The 2.5K SUP Race will take place on Western Lake and finish underneath the iconic WaterColor bridge. Participants will have the option to participate in the Run ONLY; the SUP Race ONLY; or both the 5K Run + 2.5K Paddle Race. To learn



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**ECTC: Jr. Thespian/  
Company Showcase**

**Saturday, May 21, 2:30 pm**

Emerald Coast Theatre Company invites you to Jr. Thespian/Company Showcase, an exciting showcase featuring group and solo works by talented ECTC teens on May 21 at 2:30PM. This performance will include classic and contemporary musical theatre pieces, improv, and comedic and dramatic selections. A great “dramatic” afternoon out for all ages. For additional info, visit [www.emeraldcoasttheatre.org](http://www.emeraldcoasttheatre.org). 560 Grand Blvd (Upstairs), Miramar Beach.

**30Avenue Concert Series**

**Wednesday May 18-31, 6:00 pm to 9:00 pm**

Come out to 30Avenue for the Summer Music Series from 6:00 p.m. till 9:00 p.m. on the green. Enjoy live music with family and friends under the stars in Inlet Beach, Florida. Guests are encouraged to bring a blanket or low back lawn chairs. May Schedule; 18 | Otha + Kristi, 19 | John Hart,,20 | Hunter & Tony, 21 | FoxPlay, 25 | Tanner Gray, 26 | Mat Hall Trio, 27 | Bo Adams & Friends, 28 | The

Shakedown, 29 | Ken & Andi Johnson, 30 | FoxPlay, 31 | Tanner Gray & Mike Ingram. 12805 US Highway 98 E, Inlet Beach.

**Locals Last Stand at  
Watersound Origins**

**Sunday, May 22, 3:00 pm to 7:00 pm**

The Watersound Origins community will host 30A's annual Locals Last Stand party on Sunday, May 22nd from 3-7pm. The event will take place at Watersound Town Center Pavilion and will feature live performances by local artists. The concert is FREE and open to the public! The Live music schedule is as follows: 3 p.m. – 3:40 p.m. – Roshambo, 4 p.m. – 5:15 p.m. – Dion Jones and The Owsley Brothers, 5:30 p.m. – 7 p.m. – Dread Clampitt featuring Matt Miller. Local food trucks and vendors will also be available. Bring lawn chairs and blankets to enjoy an afternoon and evening of fun at the Watersound Town Center. For more info, visit [www.localslaststand.com](http://www.localslaststand.com).

**Boomin' Tuesday at The Village of Baytowne Wharf Tuesdays, May 24 - August 9th, Music: 7:15 - 9:15PM | Fire-**



**works: 9:15PM**

The Village of Baytowne Wharf is hosting a Boomin' Tuesday extravaganza every week. Enjoy singing and dancing with DJ Mike Whitty in the Events Plaza from 7:15 - 9:15PM. Then watch as they light up the night sky with a breathtaking fireworks show over the Lagoon at 9:15PM!

**Fly Guy Thursday at Baytowne Wharf Thursdays, May 26-August 11, 6:30 pm**

Enjoy shows from fly-board extraordinaire Ben Merrell over the lagoon! Watch as he soars to the sky and makes waves on Thursday nights in The Village

of Baytowne Wharf. Admission is FREE and open to the public. The Village of Baytowne Wharf is the heart and soul of Sandestin Golf and Beach Resort and the gathering place for many locals and visitors along the Emerald Coast. Learn more about shopping, dining, nightlife and events at [www.baytownewharf.com](http://www.baytownewharf.com).

**Sinfonia Goes Pops & Fireworks at Alys Beach Sunday, May 29, 7:30 pm to 9:00 pm**

Celebrate the Memorial Day holiday weekend in Alys Beach at the Sinfonia Goes Pops concert. Fireworks to follow the show! Enjoy the orchestral sounds of Sinfonia Gulf Coast under the palm trees as the sun sets on the Gulf of Mexico. Bring blankets or low back chairs and grab a spot on the amphitheater lawn. Food and beverage available for purchase. Free and open to the public. Alys Beach Amphitheatre, Scenic Hwy 30A, Alys Beach.

**Huck & Lilly @ Seaside Amphitheater Tuesday, May 31, 6:00 pm to 7:00 pm**

in the Seaside Amphitheater

Tuesdays and Thursdays from 6 - 7 PM. Bring a chair or blanket, snacks and drinks, and enjoy the show. Free and open to all ages. Singer/songwriters Ken Johnson and Andi Zack-Johnson as Huck and Lilly specialize in music for kids AND the grown ups who love them! Seaside Amphitheater, 25 Central Square, Seaside.

**Camp Helen State Park: Guided Nature Walk Thursday, June 2, 10:00 am**

Camp Helen State Park invites the public out for a guided Nature Tour held each first Thursday of the month at 10am. Tour begins at the Visitor Center. Come out to learn about the rare coastal dune lake, Lake Powell, as well as the park wildlife. Hike is suitable for all ages. Dress for the weather; water and bug spray are recommended. This 180-acre park is for day use only. Activities include swimming, beachcombing, nature study, hiking and both freshwater and saltwater fishing. Camp Helen is located at 23937 Panama City Beach Parkway, just west of the Phillips Inlet Bridge on the Bay County and Walton County line.



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# Emerald Coast Theatre Co. Concludes 9th Season with Xanadu: The Musical

Get ready to roll with it! Emerald Coast Theatre Company (ECTC) continues its 9th main-

stage season with its most ambitious production yet — “Xanadu: The Musical.” The show opens

Thursday, May 13, and runs two weekends through Sunday, May 22. Performances are Thursday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday at 7:30 p.m. with 2:30 p.m. matinees on Thursday, May 19 and Sunday May 15 and 21.

Slap on your roller skates, pump up the glitter, and get hip to the muses in “Xanadu,” the laugh-out-loud musical stage adaptation of the 1980 film. “Xanadu” follows Clio, the lovely and precocious Greek muse who decides to put on some roller skates, legwarmers, and an Australian accent in order to help Sonny Malone, a chalk artist with half a brain and a heart of gold, rediscover his creativity. With both help and hindrance from the other muses — and from a clarinetist-turned-real estate mogul named Danny Maguire — Sonny and Clio work to rebuild their “apex of the arts” — a roller disco.

More than a dozen pop songs from this ‘80s cult classic round out the soundtrack including “Xanadu,” “I’m Alive,” “Dancin’,” “Have You Never Been Mellow” and more.

“We invite everyone to forget their troubles and join us for this hilarious roller-skating musical adventure filled with ‘80s pop rock music,” says ECTC producing artistic director Nathanael Fisher. “We are thrilled to cap our season with such a fun and funny show.”

This production is directed by Nathanael Fisher. Vincent Pelligrino is musical director and choreographer. Lighting and set design are by Rebeca Lake. Costume design is by Kristen Taylor. Sound design and stage management is by Phillip Padgett, assisted by Madi Fann.

The cast features both new and old faces familiar to the ECTC stage.

New to ECTC stage is Kevin Ganzekauer (Sonny Malone) who recently appeared as Claude Bukowski in “Hair,” Sam Himmelstein in “The Wild Party,” and Orcus in “She Kills Monsters.”

Arianna Reyher (Kira/Clio) returns to ECTC’s stage having appeared earlier in the season in “The Marvelous Wonderettes.” When not on stage, she assists

with ECTC’s children’s programs.

Abigail Huhtala (Melpomene) moved to the Emerald Coast in 2014 and has been performing regularly in Fort Walton Beach with Stage Crafters Community Theater, in Destin as a member of The Village Belles, and most recently with ECTC performing in “Miracle on 34th Street: A Live Musical Radio Play.”

Adam Silorey (Danny/Zeus) will be familiar to ECTC audiences from his performances in “First Date,” “Dancing Lessons,” “Around the World in 80 Days,” “The Fantasticks,” and “Buyer & Cellar.”

Hillary Marshall (Calliope) marks her seventh production at ECTC after appearing in “First Date,” “A Christmas Carol,” “Treasure Island,” “A Midsummer Night’s Dream,” “Nonsense,” and “Miracle on 34th Street.” She has also been involved with the Pensacola Opera and appeared in “H.M.S. Pinafore” last season.

*continued on next page*



**XANADU**  
THE MUSICAL

**ECTC**  
emerald coast theatre company

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# MKAF Spring Lineup



On Thursday, April 21, the Mattie Kelly Arts Foundation (MKAF) kicked off the 2022 Spring Concerts in the Village series with the showstopping Michael Jackson LIVE, direct from Las Vegas featuring Santana Jackson, one of the top Michael Jackson tribute artists in the world! The highly-anticipated season includes pop icon, Taylor Dane; fan favorites, Sister Hazel; and the Music of Led Zeppelin featuring Sinfonia Gulf Coast.

“For 27 years, the Mattie Kelly Arts Foundation has been at the forefront of providing arts entertainment and education to Northwest Florida. The annual Concerts in the Village is no exception and we are thrilled to announce this year’s incredible lineup of guest artists,” stated MKAF CEO Demetrius Fuller. “The revenue generated from these events enables us to provide the highest quality of arts education and community engagement throughout Okaloosa, Walton and Bay Counties. Thank you to all of our season sponsors, community partners, and members! If you are not yet a member, please consider joining,” said Demetrius.

### 2022 Season MKAF Concerts in the Village | Destin

Enjoy a night under the stars at the most beautiful outdoor music venue on the Emerald Coast. Bring a bottle of wine, your favorite craft beer, some delicious snacks, and a blanket

or chair. Food and drinks are available for purchase!

Throughout the Spring concert season, concert-goers can expect exciting performances from an incredible lineup of artists.

Thursday, April 21, 2022:

**Michael Jackson LIVE (Vegas Show)**

Thursday, April 28, 2022:

**Naturally 7**

Thursday, May 5, 2022:

**Shania Twin (Shania Twain Tribute)**

Thursday, May 12, 2022:

**Yacht Rock Revue**

Thursday, May 19, 2022:

**Six Piece Suits**

Thursday, May 26, 2022:

**Taylor Dayne**

Thursday, June 2, 2022:

**Alter Eagles**

Thursday, June 9, 2022:

**Sister Hazel**

Thursday, June 16, 2022:

**Sinfonia Gulf Coast Performing the Music of Led Zeppelin**

Thursday, June 23, 2022:

**Boogie Wonder Band**

Gates open at 6 p.m. with concerts beginning at 7 p.m. for this come-as-you-are family-friendly outdoor concert series. Bring a lawn chair, picnic, wine or purchase food and beverages on-site prepared by featured restaurants and food trucks.

Purchase tickets online at [MKAF.org/events](http://MKAF.org/events). General admission varies per concert. Children (12 and under), and MKAF members are free. Those interested in becoming a MKAF member can learn more at [MKAF.org](http://MKAF.org). Children 17 and under must be accompanied by a parent or guardian. All sales are final; sorry, no refunds. Pets,



tables larger than two feet, and drones are not permitted. A limited number of VIP tables (provides a reserved table and seating with admission for up to 8 guests) are available. Those interested in sponsoring the 2022 MKAF season, please call 850-650-2226 for details.

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*continued from previous page*

For Meghan Chase Horri- gan Erato is her third role with ECTC. Graduating the Univer- sity of Tampa with a BFA in Mu- sical Theatre, her favorite roles include Meg in “Little Women,” Amber Von Tussle in “Hair- spray,” and Hen in “Click Clack Moo: The Musical.”

Rounding out the cast is Josh Hudson, Seth Patterson, Samantha Savoie and Arin Walker.

A part of the Professional The- atre Mainstage series, “Xanadu” will be staged in ECTC’s per- formance space located on the second floor of 560 Grand Bou-

levard in Grand Boulevard Town Center in Miramar Beach.

Arrive early to enjoy the dis- play of original artwork in the ECTC Lobby Gallery sponsored by the Cultural Arts Alliance of Walton County. The exhibit fea- tures artwork by local artists. All of the artwork is available for purchase. Proceeds benefit ECTC and its theater education programs.

Tickets to “Xanadu” are \$36 per person for adults, \$34 for se- niors (55 years old and up)/mili- tary and \$30 for students (must show ID). Purchase tickets online at [www.emeraldcoasttheatre.org](http://www.emeraldcoasttheatre.org).

Wellness

# Journey Bravely: Kindness vs. Canceling



By STEPHENIE CRAIG

You're in the middle of a conversation and suddenly it becomes apparent the person you're talking to holds a different opinion on an important topic. Maybe you start to worry if you share your thoughts, you'll be judged or canceled. Maybe you feel incensed that the other person could possibly hold that opinion or belief and you feel tempted to judge, cancel, or shame them. Maybe you want to learn to hold the tension of differing views and values but you feel confused about how to be true to your values while not judging or shaming someone else.

Cancel culture regularly sacrifices kindness in the name of being right and holding others accountable. Cancel culture says for justice and rightness to prevail, people must be publicly shamed for holding independent beliefs that deviate from some moral majority. And when you're part of the moral majority, canceling others can feel justified. The problem is cancel culture is built on the false idea that shame creates true change. In reality, current shame research (read anything by Brene Brown for more on shame) tells us shame actually breeds insecurity, self-loathing and hopelessness. Shame may create a temporary, superficial, face-saving shift but results, long-term, in the opposite of healthy change. Ashamed people are highly likely to make poor choices that have negative, hurtful effects on themselves and others.

So, if you remove shame from your toolbox, what options do you have? Reflect on a time when you needed to learn something new. What was most effective in helping you move

forward? Maybe someone said you were unintelligent and you needed to get it together. Maybe someone said you must be ignorant for not already knowing something. Was that helpful to you? Or, maybe someone lovingly and kindly said you are a valuable person, period. Maybe they directly and kindly shared a different perspective and allowed space for you to hold your value while also presenting a new possibility. Was that helpful to you? Kindness consistently moves people toward change more effectively than shame. And, kindness makes you feel better about yourself at the end of the day.

### 5 Ways to Practice Kindness Over Canceling:

Slow down and take a breath. Different opinions/values can be emotionally overwhelming if you feel strongly about something. You may find yourself going into fight or flight and impulsively speaking words of shame. Try taking a few breaths and reminding yourself that someone else having a different value than you does not mean attack

or shame are needed. Instead, remember that both values can exist even if you disagree.

Humanize the other person. Often when someone holds a different value, it's tempting to begin viewing them as "other" and deserving of shame. Try remembering traits you like and appreciate about the person. Remind yourself they are a whole person with strengths and weaknesses and try not to define them by the one issue about which you disagree.

Seek to validate. Validating means trying to understand how the other person might believe or feel the way they do, based on their history and experiences. You don't have to agree. Instead, try to embrace and articulate to the other person that you can understand how they might see things the way they do even if it's very different than how you see it. Validation reduces defensiveness and opens avenues for seeing the other person as valuable despite differences.

Embrace humility. Try remembering that while you may hold your values to be very true

and dear, you are not the absolute authority on truth. You can believe your values are right and true while also recognizing others can differ from you and still be worthwhile humans who may help you understand something new.

Communicate directly and kindly. Share your thoughts and beliefs calmly, directly, and with a kind tone. Remember that your values/opinions can exist securely even when others don't agree.

Approaching others with kindness instead of canceling creates opportunities for growth in yourself and others. Kindness brings more conversation, connection, and increased possibilities for change without the unnecessary negativity of shame. As you practice walking in kindness, connect with us for support along your journey at [journeybravely.com](http://journeybravely.com).



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# Tell Your Mom You Love Her



BY DR. RICHARD CHERN, MD

Happy Mother's Day to all the moms out there reading. Thank you for working to the point of exhaustion, worrying to

the point of tears, supporting us through our good decisions and bad, and loving us even when we do our best to push you away. I'm sorry it takes so many years for us to understand everything you do for us and some of us never get to understand the suffering you go through as a mom.

This month, I would like to let you know how to help your mom feel better and live a longer and healthier life. As moms get older they start losing the hormones that protect them from disease.

At some point mom's estrogen levels start falling. This leads to difficulty falling asleep at night and also leads to moms waking up too early in the morning. The lack of sleep increases mom's

stress levels and makes moms more irritable as well as increasing the risk for Alzheimer's and other diseases.

Falling testosterone levels in moms leads to physical exhaustion, moodiness and also increases the risk for strokes, heart attacks and breast cancer, which are the top three ways moms die. Nobody wants his mom to die. Adding testosterone to moms who have hit menopause will greatly reduce their risk of getting breast cancer. Moms don't like breast cancer and giving testosterone to moms is one of the best ways to prevent breast cancer.

Failing thyroids lead to weight gain, loss of mental clarity, coarse

hair, increased cholesterol levels and increasing sugar levels. Just so you know, moms hate gaining weight and hate coarse hair. They also don't like having to take medications. Just so you know, ironically, increasing sugar levels in moms does not make them sweeter.

I know you want your mom and the other moms you know to live as long as possible and be as healthy as possible so you can get as many hugs and kisses as you want whether you deserve them or not. So, make sure you let your mom know about us and how we can help her live a longer, happier, and healthier life.

Moms, we love you more than

we could ever tell you and more than we could ever show. The crazy thing is that no matter how much we love you I'm sure you love us more. Happy Mother's Day!

*Dr. Richard Chern, MD, provides hormone therapy to men and women from across the country. He is also on staff at BioTE Medical and teaches hormone therapy to new providers including providers in our local area. In addition, he treats doctors in the local area and from around the country. Dr. Chern is a platinum BioTE provider and runs one of the largest BioTE hormone clinics in the country in Miramar Beach. To schedule an appointment, call The Hormone Restoration Center at 850-837-1271.*

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Wellness

# Carbohydrates, Our Friend and Enemy



BY KAY LEAMAN,  
HEALTH ARCHITECT

Carbs are everywhere and necessary for our health. However, the carbs we choose can affect our gut health, immune system, cholesterol levels, blood sugar and energy. So, let's learn a little about them.

**Definition:** (carbo-hydrate) A large group of organic compounds occurring in foods and living tissues, including sugar, starch and cellulose. They contain carbon, hydrogen and oxygen (1:2:1). This can vary depending on the type of carb. They are broken down in the body to release energy.

Carbs are an essential energy source, vital for good health. They convert to sugar (glyco-

gen), which supplies energy to our bodies. There are two types of carbs:

**Complex:** These are polysaccharides and contain at least three glucose molecules. They are found in foods high in fiber and starch. They take longer to digest and contain important vitamins, minerals, probiotics and antioxidants. Complex carbs help to maintain healthy blood sugar levels.

**Simple:** These carbs only contain one or two molecules and are referred to as monosaccharides and disaccharides. These contain naturally occurring or added sugars and are digested quickly. These simple carbs tend to raise blood sugar levels.

Processed carbs like crackers and chips lack essential nutrients such as fiber and vitamins. When grains are processed the bran and germ is removed (fiber) along with the vitamins and minerals leaving little to no nutritional value. What they add back is sugar, sodium and preservatives, none of which the

body recognizes or needs.

Complex carbs consist of vegetables, legumes (beans), nuts and seeds, tubers (sweet potatoes and white potatoes (red is more beneficial) and whole grains (oats, quinoa, brown rice, barley, etc.). The healthiest wheat to look for is Stone Ground Whole Wheat or Sprouted Whole Grain. Simple carbs, on the other hand, consist of fruit juices, milk, white flour, white rice, sugar and soda. Fruit is also in this category but because it is high in fiber and has natural sugars it is a beneficial option.

Fiber, both soluble and insoluble, is vital for maintaining a healthy gut. The soluble fiber (found in popular over the counter fiber supplements) binds to cholesterol and sugar mitigating it's release into the bloodstream whereas insoluble fiber is responsible for reducing incidences of constipation and protecting against colon cancer (This is usually not found in popular over-the-counter fiber supplements).

Begin substituting healthy

carbs for processed carbs. Brown rice pasta vs white pasta, gluten free crackers vs regular processed crackers (in moderation), whole rolled oats vs quick oats, etc. Add barley to homemade vegetable soup, add nuts, seeds and fresh fruit to plain greek yogurt. Use mashed avocados as a spread instead of mayo on sandwiches.

Feel free to reach out if you have questions or something specific you need help with.

You're invited to an important Holistic Detox series this month. Registered Holistic Nutritionist Linda Murphy, RHN/NPP will share the importance of spring detoxing our bodies and the benefits it provides. These sessions are free. To attend these invitation-only events, email me using May Series in the subject line.

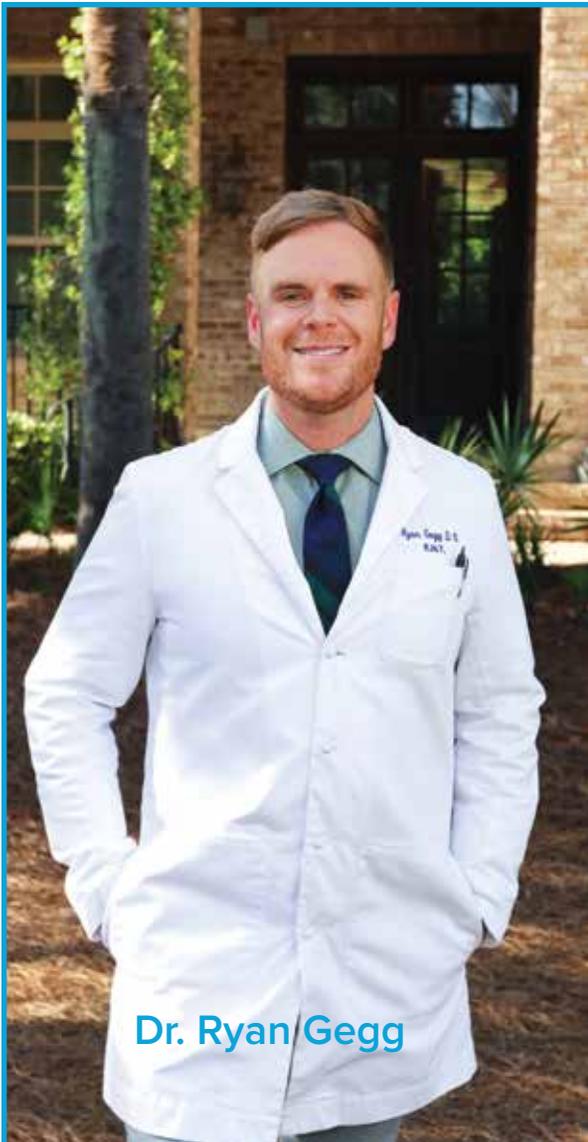
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# Speaking up for Child Victims of Abuse and Neglect

...Meet Teen Giselle McLaughlin

The Emerald Coast Children's Advocacy Center (ECCAC) wants to introduce the community to a young lady who is wise beyond her years. Meet 13-year-old Giselle McLaughlin, an 8th grade student at Liza Jackson Preparatory School in Ft. Walton Beach. Julie Porterfield, CEO of ECCAC, met Giselle at their Niceville Center when she presented a \$280 donation check to Porterfield.

It seems that Giselle is taking an in-depth look at Florida foster care for her school "Graduation By Demonstration" (GBD) project. GBD is a process whereby students undertake a major project that is of personal interest to them and may have a positive impact on their future career interests and decision making. The program is designed to take students out of their comfort zone, set goals and discover their interests. GBD culminates with a major presentation at school by each student about their project.

Taking on foster care as her GBD project, Giselle wanted to find a way to give back and create awareness of what children face. As it turns out, she has had first-hand experience in this area, coming very close to the foster care system. Being raised by her mother and step-father, both were in the military. Unfortunately, in 2018, her mother took her own life. This caused a split-up of Giselle's siblings that included a younger brother and sister. In 2020, her step-father moved Giselle and her then 4-year-old sister to Northwest Florida to be closer to family. There was a brief stint in Texas and then back to Northwest Florida because of unpredictable circumstances. Last August, Giselle was taken in by their Great Aunt

and Uncle in Ft. Walton Beach, passionate relatives who really understood the situation. Several weeks ago Giselle was officially adopted by these kind relatives. Although her siblings do not live with her, they are all close and communicate frequently.

Giselle commented, "Throughout this period of instability after the loss of my mother, in 6th and 7th grade, I felt like I had no purpose in life. But then once my Great Aunt and Uncle stepped into my life, things began to normalize for me. Now I am so happy at Liza Jackson Prep School and involved with so many school activities."

With a shortage of foster parents in Walton, Okaloosa, Santa Rosa and Escambia Counties, now one understands this teenager's avid interest in taking on this subject. Because of Giselle's foster care research for her school's project, she became aware of ECCAC.



**13-Year-old Liza Jackson Prep School student, Giselle McLaughlin, met ECCAC CEO, Julie Porterfield to learn more about the non-profit organization for her school GBD project and presented a donation to ECCAC.**

Giselle has been very impressed with the many child-friendly services the non-profit organization provides for kids and their families dealing with abuse and neglect situations. In a couple of years, she hopes to volunteer at the Niceville Center saying, "I would love to stay in-

involved, and hope I can give insight to other kids. It is a really nice thing ECCAC does for kids dealing with so many problems."

Julie Porterfield, ECCAC's CEO, said, "It has been our pleasure to meet Giselle and acquaint her with our operation. She is a passionate and caring young lady. I'm certain she will do an impressive job with her GBD presentation. Who knows, maybe one day Giselle will be an important ECCAC staff member!"

ECCAC provides services in a child-friendly environment to help identify, treat and support children in abusive situations, as well as helping to prevent child abuse through education and prevention programs. With

a Center in Okaloosa County and the Pierce Family Center in Walton County, they house representatives from the Florida Department of Children and Families, Child Protection Team, State Attorney's Office, local law enforcement, licensed mental health counselors, and ECCAC's staff and volunteers. In ECCAC's 23-year history, over 15,000 children have received more than 170,000 services at no cost.

For further information about the Emerald Coast Children's Advocacy Center, visit [www.eccac.org](http://www.eccac.org). If abuse is suspected, call the anonymous Florida Abuse Hotline at 1-800-96-ABUSE.




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# Off the Hook:

## Record Breaking Tuna Caught Off Destin's Shores

By CALI HVALAC,  
TO DO IN DESTIN

Easter morning started off differently for one local charter boat called the "NoName," as it hooked up the largest Bluefin Tuna ever caught off the Florida shore. The team, led by Captain Jacob "Jake" Matney, set out for a weekend of Marlin fishing when they hooked into the massive fish 160 miles offshore. It took all five anglers fighting for a full 4.5 hours to land it to the boat. "Fishing has always been a way of life for my family and something that we love to do together," said Captain Jake. "I'm very fortunate to have them on the boat for this and to have this caliber of fisherman on my team."

This catch breaks the current state record of 826.5lb tuna caught by Rick Whitley in 2017. But, it might not make the record



books based on a technicality. In order for a fishing record to be certified, it needs to be reeled in by one angler. As for this monster catch, the "whole team" is listed as the angler, since all five took a turn on the rod.

The 832.2 lb. tuna measured 113.5" long and 86" around the girth. Record or not, it will still be the largest fish caught offshore in our state.

On board the boat was Captain "Jake", his wife Jennifer, their two boys Jacob and Jeremiah, first mate Jett Tolbert and deck mate Devin Sarver. None of them expected to hook such a massive fish, and it is definitely the fish of a lifetime.

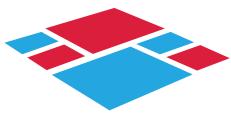
"To be a part of this with such an incredible team of people is truly a blessing. I will think about this as long as I'm kicking and smile from ear to ear," said

Devin. "My parents had a rod in my hand fishing off the dock before I could walk, so they tell me. This is what dreams are made of. I love this way of life. GOD is great! Still seems surreal. Epic!"

Jett said, "We were Stoked to finally land one that we could bring in and hang up. It's harder than people think. Last trip we fought one for 10 hours and it broke off. So, bringing in this one meant a lot to me. I love fishing and am thankful for an awesome boss. I plan to travel the world and fish my whole life; it's my passion."



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# The Road to Redemption: The Story of Garland and Gretel

BY VICTORIA OSTROSKY

Swede, a character in one of my favorite books, *Peace Like a River* by Leif Enger, says this about miracles: No miracle happens without a witness. To me, that's an intriguing statement. We experience God's creation every day at sunrise and sunset. Some people like to call those miracles.

But, I think miracles occur when God does something completely out of the natural order of things. Like physical healing when doctors can't explain why the tumor is gone. Or finding a lost sheep that didn't want to be found, bringing it back to the fold, and giving it a new heart so that it never wants to wander away again. I've always said that God is in the heart changing business. He loves to restore relationships, remaking our brokenness and transforming us into something beautiful and useful for the Kingdom.

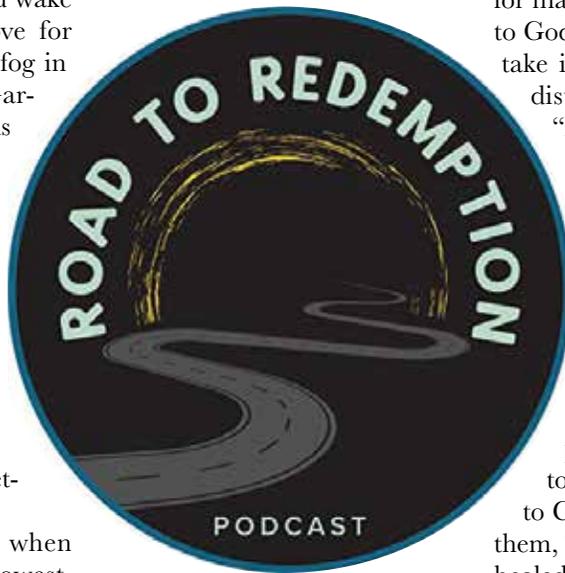
Garland and Gretel were high school sweethearts who got married, had children, worked hard and eventually grew apart. We've all experienced to some degree that slow erosion of a

relationship. One day you wake up and realize, your love for them has dissipated like fog in the sunshine. Neither Garland nor Gretel knew Jesus at the time, but He certainly knew them. And He had plans.

Garland and Gretel had both reached the point where they'd contacted attorneys to start divorce proceedings, when God stepped in, and the miracle began to slowly unfurl as flower petals open to the new day.

Garland, one night when things were at their lowest, opened a Bible where it fell open to Matthew 3:8. "Produce fruit in keeping with repentance." The verse, to his eyes, was highlighted, and the rest of the page was dark. At that moment, his heart responded. "Jesus you're real. I'm never looking back." He immediately went into the next room where his soon-to-be ex-wife was sleeping, shook her awake and said, "You can't love me, but you can love Christ in me." She thought he was crazy.

One day shortly after this, her daughter handed her a Gideon



Bible, telling her that she felt compelled to give it to her mother. Gretel began reading the scriptures and saw supernatural things occur. She discovered that her mom had been praying for her

for many years. Gretel cried out to God telling Him she couldn't take it anymore. She says she distinctly heard Him say, "It's time for healing."

Once she had submitted to the Lord, she called her husband and told him. Garland said, "You are free, but I'm following Jesus Christ. Do you want to go with me?"

They both began praying, reading the Bible together and leading others to Christ. Gretel says that for them, "Praying for other people healed our hearts."

Do you see the miracle? Witnesses watched two lives completely change, and with the change, God has used them to bring in more of His lost sheep.

How many times have we come to a place where we felt

it was just too much to deal with? When we believed there was nothing else to do but walk away and start over again? Before you end that relationship for good, look to God and ask Him what He wants you to do. It's amazing how our obedience puts heaven in motion, bringing about the miracles that are right there waiting to happen and to be testified to.

You can listen to Garland and Gretel's complete story of restoration and many other incredible interviews on the weekly Road to Redemption radio show and podcast at [www.roadtoredemptionpodcast.com](http://www.roadtoredemptionpodcast.com).

*John Martin, the founder of Road to Redemption, encourages everyone to find a church, read the Word, and get involved in a small group. Let Jesus take your impossible situation and turn it around so others can witness the miracles He can do in and through you.*



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Musings

# The Lotus Life; 10 Ways to Shift Your Mood

By LAUREN CATANESE

Feeling moody? It happens to us all. One minute we are flying high and happy, and the next we can be ready to scream. And if you are not accepting your emotions or feelings, and instead you are burying them behind sugar, booze or a shopping spree, then give these tips a try and see if you can positively change your mood for your highest good and health with no side effects:

Feel your feelings – easy as that. When you feel an emotion coming on, just close your eyes and feel it, which means you focus on it. Just by allowing it to come and not trying to hurry it away, you are allowing yourself

to experience something that you need to. It will pass by like a floating cloud.

Think about 3 things for which you are grateful.

Get outside. Go smell the fresh air. Even better, take your bare feet to the beach and walk on the sand.

Try some affirmations such as: I love and accept myself; I am enough; or I am willing to believe. Find one that works for you.

Hug someone you love...really hug them. Connect your breathing, stop all else that is going on, and feel them.

Close your eyes and do some intentional breathing. Intentional



means to focus on your breath — the inhales and the exhales.

Get your body moving with yoga, dance, working out or going on a run.

Take out pen and paper and write down all the things that you want to experience in your life... no limitations.

You have heard me say it be-

fore...go hug a tree!

Get out of your own head. Write out any feelings you are having in a journal and release whatever you need to.

Life doesn't happen to us; it happens for us. So everything that you are going through, dealing with or working on will propel you to your next step in life. We are the changes we make in our lives. We are the products of love, on a mission of faith, to live a destiny to the fullest. It is our highest self that we're always connected to that sends out alarms and warnings when we are going against ourselves. So, the next time a mood tries to stop you in your fun, notice it and find out why. You will learn so much more about yourself. Life will flow and you will begin to dance along with it.



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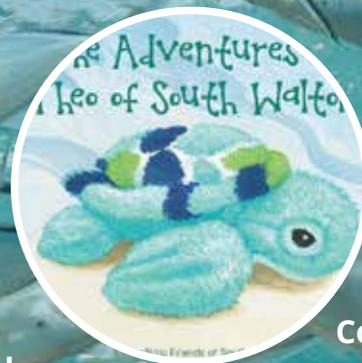
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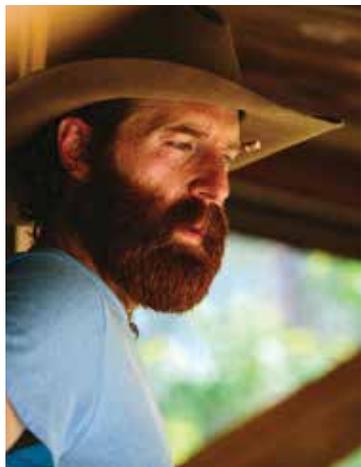
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# Sean of the South



BY SEAN DIETRICH

Nobody knows when it started. But it did. The first jar of pickles to appear on Aunt Bee's grave in Siler City, North Carolina, showed up in 1989, the year she died. Legend states that the pickles were probably homemade. Although some claim they were store pickles.

Since that fateful day, nobody has found a good reason to stop leaving pickles. Pickles show up by the hundreds. Maybe even thousands. From all over the United States.

"I think it's just a form of respect," says Billy, age 73, from Bentonville, Arkansas.

Billy traveled 840 miles to Siler City in his 2007 Ford Ranger, which is more rust-colored than green, to deliver a single jar of Kosher Dill Snack'mms to the grave of Frances Bavier, the actress who played Aunt Bee on "The Andy Griffith Show."

"She was America's mom," says Billy. "She was my whole childhood."

The pickles are a salute to season two, episode 11, "The Pickle Story." In the episode, Aunt Bee makes pickles that

taste so bad they could take the paint off navy ships. "Kerosene cucumbers" they were called in the episode.

"That's my favorite episode," says Billy.

"Mine, too," says Billy's brother, Roger, who is busy taking Billy's picture with his phone camera. Roger is 80 this year. He is vaping. His flavor du jour is tropical cherry, and he is puffing so frequently that we are all able to enjoy this flavor with him.

"Best show ever," says Roger between puffs. "Period."

Billy and Roger have visited this cemetery twice before. And they say that each time they come, there are multiple pickle jars sitting on the gravemarker.

"Sometimes there are ten or twenty of 'em," says Billy. "Depending on if it's tourist season or not."

The Oakwood Cemetery is a nondescript burial place, nestled within the black gums and post oaks of the Old North State, with headstones stretching back toward the horizon. You'd never guess that this particular plot belonged to one of America's most beloved celebrities.

There's nothing remarkable about the marker. Nothing glitzy. Nothing fancy. The gravestone looks just like the headstone of, well... Your favorite aunt.

On Aunt Bee's tomb are a few handwritten postcards, a couple dozen pennies, dragon tears, various trinkets, and I count six jars of pickles. Among the brands represented are: Best Maid, Famous Dave's Spicy, Wickles, Claussen, Mount Olive, and Walmart's flagship

brand Great Value.

I read one of the handwritten notes. It's more personal than I expected. "Dear, Aunt Bee... You raised me... I love you." It was signed by a woman from Marietta, Ohio.

Another vehicle pulls up. A Honda SUV. It is a family of five. They are from Salina, Kansas. They have been hanging out in the nearby town of Mount Airy all week, hometown of Andy Griffith. The kids leap out of the dusty vehicle. One of them is carrying a jar of pickles.

"My kids all wanted to bring their own jars," says Melinda (age 44). "And I was like, um, no, guys. Three jars of pickles is expensive. And it's not like Aunt Bee is gonna eat them, since, you know, she's dead."

Melinda says her kids are religious fans of the show. It all started a few years ago when her husband lost his job. The family had to cancel their movie streaming services to save money. They had nothing to watch.

"So," Melinda explains, "I went to the store and bought a television antenna. Like in the old days."

A local station out of Hutchinson-Wichita played Andy



Griffith in all its black-and-white glory. After the very first episode the children were spellbound.

"We plan our whole days around that show," Melinda says. "To my kids, it was like the show was brand new, like it'd just come out."

I watch the children stand reverently before the gravestone of everyone's favorite aunt. Hands in their laps. Heads bowed. They are solemn. Much the same way you'd behave at the graveside of a loved one or a close relative.

And it makes me feel pretty good to be an American right about now. Because say what you will about us, but our country's children know Andy Griffith, Jim Nabors, Frances

Bavier, Don Knotts, Ron Howard, and Betty Lynn.

I am a lot like the other people here today; Andy Griffith practically raised me. Our station played two "Andy" episodes every evening after school. I was a fatherless kid who needed someone to pay attention to me, to love me, to teach me, to make me laugh, to show me how to be a man. Andy did this for me. Every weekday at five o'clock.

After all these years, I've never gotten over him. And I don't want to, either.

The words on Aunt Bee's tombstone read: "To live in the hearts of those left behind is not to die."

Would that the same be said of you and me someday.

I left a jar of Vlasic.

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Musings

# Distinctive Solutions



By KIRK MCCARLEY

The Washington Monument was deteriorating. The culprit appeared to be the harsh chemicals being applied to clean the edifice. The cleaning was

required in order to eradicate, at least temporarily, the staining caused by a significant amount of excrement, otherwise known as pigeon poop. This cycle, in one form or another, had repeated itself in some shape or form since the Monument's completion over 130 years ago.

Deeper probing presented a solution. Why was there such an inordinate population of pigeons? It seemed that the birds found spiders absolutely delectable. The arachnids, too, also thrived in the vicinity of the Monument. So, what attracted the spiders? Even smaller insects, gnats, found the habitat at the end of the National Mall to their liking as well. What then

with the gnats? Well it seemed that especially at dusk, when the illuminating lights were flipped on, a gnat frenzy ensued thus initiating the predator food chain, eventually resulting in the requirement for chemical cleansing. The solution to eliminate the cause became fairly simple: switch the lights on later in the evening. The National Parks Service, curators of the Monument, and the nearly one million annual visitors were delighted.

Most of us can claim proficiency at identifying problems. Social media boasts a plethora of respondents, along with reader opinion editorials, and the rants of elected officials and talking heads. Although it is more likely to believe this predilection is a recent phenomena, the reality is more probable that the tendency has been a component of the human spirit since time immemorial.

One of the things that seems to distinguish great leaders is their ability to derive solutions to problems or surround themselves with those who are capable. For those of you who enjoy good cinema, I recommend "Hidden Figures" if

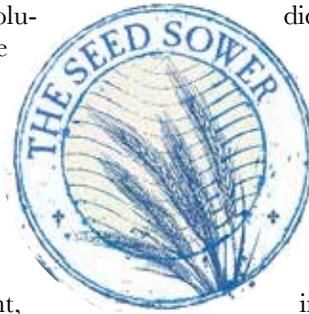
you have not seen it. The 2016 biographical drama is the story of three black female mathematicians who calculated trajectories and programmed computers for some of America's earliest space missions. Not only did these women overcome racial and gender discrimination and stereotypes, but through great will, intelligence, and persistence had a significant role in the pioneering voyages of John Glenn and later moon landings.

In another instance the name of Washington played a significant role in a feat of American invention and ingenuity. Washington Roebling was a Civil Engineer who teamed up with his father, John Roebling, to engineer the construction of several early bridges during a period of dramatic expansion of American infrastructure. After his father's passing Washington Roebling accepted the assignment to design and build one of the marvels of that time, a mission so impressive yet farfetched, that observers labeled him a mere dreamer, or worse, a fool. During early construction, in 1870, Roebling contracted decompression sickness essentially rendering him

incapacitated from any measure of physical activity. In fact, he was unable to personally visit the construction site. Hospitalized and later bedridden, Roebling communicated through his wife, Emily, who took it upon herself to learn the mechanics of bridge building and served as essentially the on-site lead foreman. After a series of setbacks and challenges, finally in 1883 the 1600 foot cable-stayed/suspension Brooklyn Bridge opened across the East River connecting Manhattan to Brooklyn.

The challenge now, for you and me, lies in how we take our next steps. We see the opportunity, what is the next "why" to ask? If there is already a solution to the problem what can be added to that recipe to make it even better? How willing are you to be bold and "put yourself out there?" What will distinguish you?

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



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# GOAT or GMOAT?



BY RICK MOORE

After traveling to the far southeast of the Caribbean, we flew to the island of Tobago to see the GOAT. Some say Michael Jordan is the GOAT (Greatest Of All Time). Some say Tom Brady is the GOAT. Some say Elvis Presley is the GOAT. However, we didn't go to see the "Greatest Of All Time" in sports or entertainment. We went to see a real goat race. I had heard of horse racing and dog racing, but I had never heard of goat racing. Several times a year, the island of Tobago features a goat racing festival. Tobago proudly calls itself, "The Goat Racing Capital of the

World." When we arrived for one of these events, our host asked us if we would like to enjoy some boiled chicken feet on a stick. Oddly enough, eating chicken feet was not the weirdest part of the day. I had assumed the goats would be pulling a cart behind them, but instead, they pulled humans behind them. The fastest young men and women on the island are selected to race with the goats. There are usually eight teams per race; one human and one goat per team. Each racer stands behind their goat holding on to a rope for dear life. The lanes on the grass track are about one-hundred yards long. When the gates open, it's off to the races.

While pedigree is part of the selection process in choosing a goat that can run fast, the secret is finding goats that can swim. Yes, the race takes place on ground, but the training takes place in the beautiful Caribbean waters surrounding the island. The goats who swim have much more strength in their legs, allowing them to run faster. Unfortunately, goats are much less tolerant of wet conditions than



sheep and cattle, and goats will naturally seek shelter from the rain when it is available. Trainers select healthy goats to carry into the water one at a time. If a goat takes to the water and gets accustomed to it in a short time, it is selected to be a member of the racing team. There are many myths surrounding the advantages of swimming in the beautiful Caribbean waters of Tobago, but it is true that the mineral rich waters have several health ben-

efits, even for goats.

Not only are many of the goats in Tobago extremely healthy, but so are the people. I asked our host why? He said it's the chicken feet. I thought he was joking. However, like the health benefits of homemade bone broth, chicken feet have vitamins, minerals and calcium in abundance. Bone marrow carries oxygen to our cells. It is, truly, a natural super-supplement. Self-improvement often requires a

willingness to try something you have never tried before. I must confess, that was the first and last time I have eaten chicken feet, but it did inspire me to eat healthier foods.

As I reflect on my life, it seems doubtful I will ever be considered the GOAT (Greatest Of All Time) at anything. But I can still become the GMOAT...the "Greatest Me Of All Time." The question is, am I willing to be thrown into the water? Will I allow myself to be placed in "sink or swim" moments that lead to the "Greatest Me Of All Time?" Getting out of our comfort zone isn't comfortable. If you ever feel like a fish out of water, or a goat in water, remember, there is a purpose to every challenge in life. You may not understand the purpose of what you are going through, but there is a purpose. That purpose may not lead you to becoming the greatest entertainer or the greatest athlete, but if it leads to becoming a better you, embrace it.

*Rick Moore is Communications Pastor at Destiny Worship Center*



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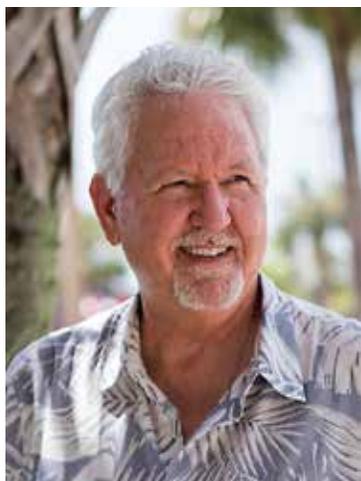
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Musings

# A Pastor's Ponderings: God in the House



BY PASTOR DAVID HOLLAND

What would you do if God came to your church? How would you act if He came with all His r and sat in the middle row? Most Christians assume He is there every time they go to church. Indeed, Christ promised He would be with us when two or more people gathered in His name. It just seems that people don't act like the King of Kings is present.

He is God of very God, Light of very Light. Jesus spoke the worlds into existence. He is the One who wove the solar systems into galaxies, waved His hand,



and galaxies spun into space with calculated order and precision. At His word, our Milky Way flows in perfect harmony amidst a universe of ever-expanding dimensions.

The light from stars we see with our naked eye left their origin millennia ago. Traveling at incalculable speed, they cast a moment of splendor upon our existence. God hung those stars in place. He's coming to your church this Sunday to cast the radiance of His presence into your life.

God is not just a God far away; He is a God nearer than our dearest friend or relative. He knit your frame and body together like a blanket and breathed life into your very flesh and bones. Jesus knows every fiber of your body, every molecule, atom, and the very DNA strands of your cell structure. He knows you right down to the hurts and pains of your history. He is so pleased

with the joy you feel and the love that is present in your life. He knows the stress, the emptiness, the regrets, and the sorrows you feel right now. He would like a word with you this week.

I remember a time several years ago when I had been on an extended fast. As worship began on Sunday morning, I immediately felt the warm presence of God. Overwhelmed by the sheer wonder of His attendance, Tears flowed easily as I wept for the joy of freedom that comes with God's forgiveness. A veil lifted and I could sense the cloud-like presence of God in the room.

As I looked around the sanctuary, expecting other people to sense the same phenomenon, I was disappointed to see that people were unaware of God's presence. Some looked sleepy, and some seemed bored. I even saw someone look at his watch as if to say, "How much longer before we can go to lunch?"

My mind screamed, "Don't they know who is here? People, God is in the room!" Sadly, many went home that day ignorant that God had words of comfort, guidance and encouragement for them. They were oblivious to the One that came to church that day.

Two thousand years ago, Christ approached the throne room of God carrying His blood, which He sprinkled on the mercy seat. He reported to the Father,

"It is finished, I paid the price of forgiveness, I received all their punishment on the cross, Your justice is forever satisfied." (Author's paraphrase)

Then He who judges righteously spoke once again with a thunderclap echoing through the corridors of eternity, "This is My Son sacrificed for the sins of the world. He has redeemed the lost ones." (Author's paraphrase)

At that moment, the veil of the temple was rent from top to bottom and a booming invitation to enter God's presence rang out to all humanity. The way opened so that we would enter and enjoy His presence. Christ sits at the right hand of God clothed in robes of light, but His garment stained red by the blood of sacrifice. He bids us "come."

The Lord is attending your church this Sunday. Will you come with eyes to see and ears to hear? It's time to act like God is present, worship Him with urgency and adore him with eyes wide open.

*Build your life on the Word of God with Dave Holland and his daily devotional, "Every Day Jesus." He recently released this devotional-Bible study based on the Gospel of Luke. You can get a copy of this book from his website, DaveHolland.org, or at Amazon.com. Pastor Dave is available to preach and teach at churches and conferences.*

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# Flex Workspace

BY MELISSA FERTITTA,  
BEACHWORX

A new study by The Instant Group shows demand for flex workspace is up 58 percent in cities across the United States. According to the data, Miami is outpacing all other cities, with demand skyrocketing by 143 percent.

While Miami may be busier than its Panhandle counterparts, entrepreneurs, employees and tourists are enjoying the flexibility of Destin's coworking space, Beachworx.

As far as commercial office space goes, resort towns will always have fewer options than

concentrated urban city centers. But what we lack in high rise real estate, we make up for with flexible affordable solutions for physical and virtual office spaces.

Destin's coworking community, Beachworx, offers a mix of private office suites, conference rooms and open coworking that can accommodate monthly and daily users. Tourists vacationing in Destin appreciate the ability to work in a quiet professional environment with day or weekly passes.

Small businesses and startups not quite ready to hang their own shingle appreciate

that these private offices can be rented on a month-to-month basis, a stark difference from traditional commercial leases, which require long-term commitments and additional charges for utilities, taxes and the like.

A virtual office membership at Beachworx is one way small businesses are improving their credibility, by elevating its address from a post office box to a class A office building. Entrepreneurs who work from home appreciate the privacy protection of a virtual address while others are eager to use that address to expand their businesses into a new market.



Perhaps the greatest value a coworking space offers its members is its community. Beachworx members do business together, seek advice from one another and expand their

networks through introductions made by other members.

Whatever your business needs, Beachworx probably has a flexible, affordable solution.

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BizTech will take place at Emerald Grande at HarborWalk Village. The conference begins with lunch at 11:30 a.m., and ends with a cocktail happy hour.

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 Dining

# Chef Jim Shirley Opens The Great Southern Cafe's Chicken Shack and C-Bar in Seaside

Just in time for the 2022 season, Chef Jim Shirley opened two new establishments in Seaside, FL - The Great Southern Cafe's Chicken Shack and C-Bar (Container Bar). Both are located between Sundog Books and The Great Southern Cafe and share a communal courtyard for dining and relaxing. Chef Jim Shirley has been musing over the idea of a chicken shack for quite a while, and when the opportunity arose to work with the Seaside team to bring his vision to fruition, he saw it was time to cross the road and get to the glorious fried chicken on the other side. After all, there are few things more Southern than fried chicken, and Jim loves the opportunity to showcase Southern food culture in Seaside. Especially as the geographic diversity of guests to the beach town continues to grow every year, and some might not be as familiar with 'true' southern food.

Slowly marinated in sweet tea and then tossed in Jim's secret breading recipe, each piece of chicken is cooked to perfection. While the 2-piece, 3-piece, and tenders meals are meant to share, you might find you're fighting over the last bites! Don't worry, though; the "Bucket O'Chicken" - eight pieces of white and dark meat chicken, four sides, and four rolls - is sure to have a little something for everyone. Along with this all-star lineup, guests can indulge their side cravings with french fries, loaded potato salad, deviled potato salad, brussel sprout slaw, and the best garlic butter rolls you have ever tasted. The Chicken Shack's structure is also perfect for families and groups wanting to share a delicious yet casual meal together. Orders are made at the walk-up window, and then guests can either sit in



the large, open seating area or take their food-to-go as they explore Seaside.

Container Bar (dubbed C-Bar) is right next door and offers

an exceptional lineup of local craft beer, liquor, and cocktails, which can be enjoyed at the bar or to-go from the walk-up window. Guests sitting at the bar

can enjoy all their favorite menu items from The Great Southern Cafe (including Grits à Ya Ya) at this cool new location. C-Bar is a fun, low-pressure bar that allows guests to choose their experience. Whether they are grabbing one of the 30 seats at this custom, upcycled shipping container and unpacking their day, or walking up to the to-go window, ordering a drink, then exploring the town or beach, guests will love the opportunity to enjoy the C-Bar, and Seaside, how they'd like to. The local craft beer lineup is thoughtfully put together and highlights some of the exceptional breweries in the area. The cocktail list offers a mix of Great Southern classics (like Great Southern's world-famous mojitos) and new and inventive C-Bar specials.



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B E A C H

# 30AEats Recipe: Indian Stew with Yukon Gold Potatoes, Vidalia Onion and Spring Vegetables

BY SUSAN BENTON,  
30AEATS.COM

This flavorful stew recipe is filled with an array of spices that marry together to create the most aromatic and satisfying vegetarian dish. Served over a bed of Jasmine rice, it is both fragrant and delectable. Some of the spices used include turmeric, ginger, bay leaves and cinnamon.

### Ingredients

2 tablespoons olive oil or clarified butter

1/2 yellow onion (Vidalia) thinly sliced

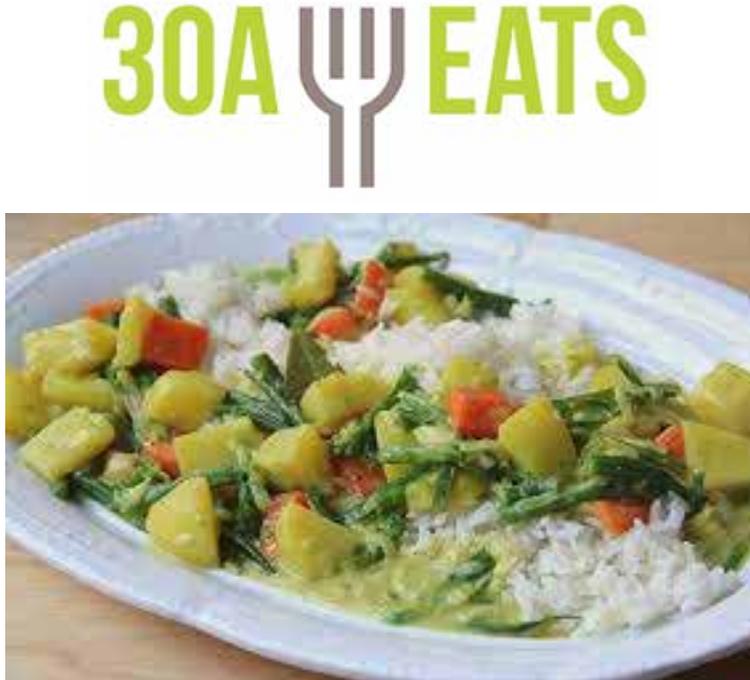
2 tablespoons peeled fresh ginger finely chopped

4 garlic cloves, thinly sliced

2 bay leaves

2 serrano chiles, finely chopped

1 tablespoon ground turmeric



1 teaspoon ground curry powder

Coarsely ground black pepper to taste

Salt to taste

3 small Yukon Gold potatoes, peeled and cut into 1-inch cubes

2 medium carrots, cut into 1/2-inch pieces

1/2 pound French style green beans, cut into 1/2-inch pieces

1/2 cup vegetable stock

1 cup unsweetened coconut milk

### Preparation

In a large heavy bottom saucepan, heat the olive oil or butter

Add the ginger, garlic, curry leaves, chopped chilies, turmeric, one teaspoon of black pepper and the onions.

Season with salt and cook over moderate heat, stirring occasionally, until the onions are softened, about 6 minutes.

Add the potato cubes, diced carrots, green beans, and vegetable stock, and bring to a boil.

Add the coconut milk and

simmer, partially covered, until the vegetables are tender and the coconut milk is slightly reduced, about 30 minutes.

Season with salt and black pepper.

Discard the bay leaves and serve over Jasmine rice

### Notes

Chopped fresh cilantro will add additional flavor when sprinkled on top of the stew. If seeking more vegetables, 1/2 cup of frozen or fresh peas is a nice touch. To thicken the stew add equal parts flour and coconut milk in a separate sauce pot and add to the mixture one tablespoon at a time. Serve with baked chicken for added protein if not wanting a vegetarian meal.

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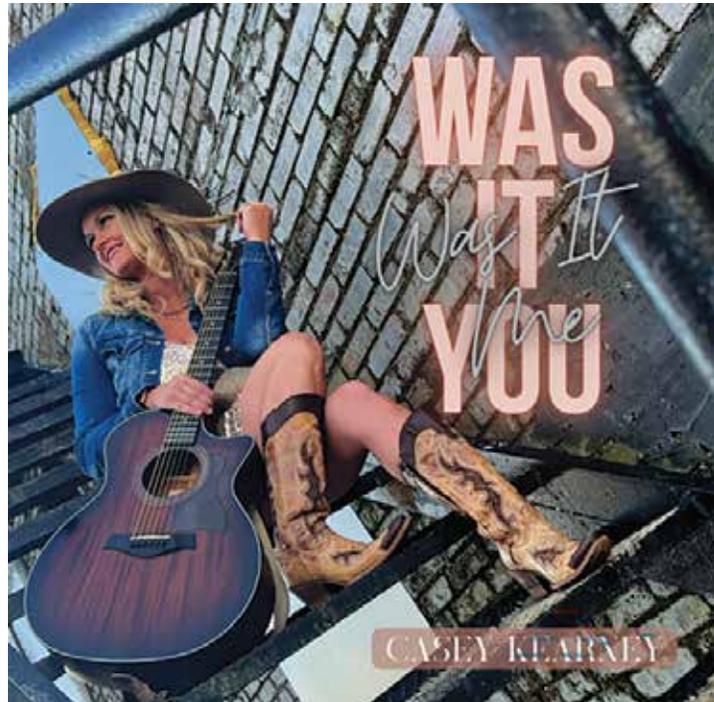
Music

# Casey Kearney Highlights Fierce Everyday Women

Nashville recording artist Casey Kearney, a well-known artist with local roots and featured in past Bay Life issues, has proven her songwriting prowess once again in her most recent release, "Was it You Was it Me," where Casey's writing skills are front and center. In this country

meets sassy rocker hit, she pays homage to the women who bring a little spice to life and proudly own it, and includes a playful warning to men who chose these powerful women— this isn't your average relationship.

Recorded in Nashville with award winning producer Doug



her mouth is, Casey set out to do just that in her soon to be released music video that was produced, filmed and edited by an all-female team, and highlights 10 gritty women who are breaking stereotypes in their everyday lives. "We have a mom with a toddler on her hip working cattle. A Legislative Chief of Staff who has spent a lifetime supporting her son's baseball dreams and is his biggest cheerleader when he takes the field at the University of Alabama each week. A tough as nails championship team roper who owns her own super feminine boutique. A military pilot who didn't earn her wings until her thirties when she realized she could indeed be anything she wanted to be. Plus, so many more women who have embraced unlikely paths and have extraordinary stories that I can't wait to share with you."

The video features each of these women and many more, doing their thing from driving heavy equipment to driving a Mercedes. However, the music video is just the start. Casey has created an entire social media project dedicated to each of these women, where they will be featured in photos, videos, and interviews about their views on being a strong woman.

Casey said she herself had to learn to accept who God created her to be, even if it was a little louder and bossier than sometimes those around her might have wanted her to be. Casey fought so hard to learn that lesson that, in fact, she even wrote a children's book about it that teaches young girls to embrace their uniqueness through a fun, over the top character and title, Felicity. She continues her work to empower women with her new "Was it You Was it Me" video and accompanying social media project as she honors these and all the everyday heroines who challenge the status quo and elevate all women in the process.

Casey's video on Youtube and Facebook releases in May. Follow her on Facebook and Instagram @caseykearneymusic for the full song project with special features of each woman. "Was it You Was it Me" will be available April 29th on your favorite streaming outlets such as Spotify, Apple Music, Pandora and more.

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Kahan, the new addition to Casey's repertoire exhibits Casey's versatility and complexity as both a vocal artist and songwriter. "It's a fun song with a great beat that makes you want to sing along," explains Casey, "but more importantly, I wanted to use the lyrics to tell all the women out there who may not be the stereotypical 'sweet' wife

and mom... I see you. I am you. And we're ok- even if they think we're a little crazy."

"We can so easily get stuck in the game of comparison, but if all the women I know could only see themselves like I see them- as the strong, spunky, independent women they are, it would change their lives."

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# Studio 237 Music Lessons: Mood Music

BY LISA CYR

Perhaps you recognize that music affects your emotions. When you listen to upbeat songs, you feel good, and listening to sad songs can lower your mood. If you think about it, the notion that tunes impact feelings shouldn't come as a surprise. The word tune, after all, as well as referring to music, relates to frequency adjustment. Here's how to use tunes to modify your mood.

## Music can make you see things that aren't there

A 2011 study shows that music influences you in more ways than you may imagine. In the study, researchers showed people smileys and asked them to identify sad or happy faces while music played. Sad songs made them see the

smileys as unhappy, while cheerful songs had the opposite effect. The subjects saw merry faces when they heard upbeat music. It was astonishing they saw things that weren't there. It means music changed what they perceived in the environment.

## So, what are the implications of this study for you?

You might want to think about the results and how the findings play out in your life. You can use them to your advantage. If you are in a negative mood but want to improve your outlook, you can play joyful songs. When you want a balanced mindset, though, background tunes might skew your perception. Turning them off during a difficult conversation, for example, may boost clarity.



## How long you listen to music matters

Another study shows it takes thirteen minutes of slow tempo, classical music to aid focus, and nine minutes of uplifting music to increase happiness. Relaxing music eases stress, improves sleep, and boosts peacefulness in thirteen minutes. It seems that how long you listen to music matters if you want to change your state of mind and adopt its emotional

frequency. So, persevere for more than a few minutes when you hope to change your mood.

## Your heart follows the beats

The number of beats in a rhythm makes all the difference. According to Lyz Cooper, who collaborated with Marconi Union to create 'Weightless,' a soothing track, listeners' heartbeats fall into rhythm with the music they hear. The BPM, or beats per minute, affects you on a physical and emotional level.

To change your mood, choose music with a tempo to match the energy you want to feel. Note whether it lifts, relaxes, or saddens you. Don't discount sad music, though. Many people swear it helps them release heartache. It's possible unhappy music resonates with despairing individuals and

helps them let go of emotions.

Another theory suggests it might support the production of prolactin, a hormone that aids consolation and calm. So, when you're sad, listening to music that pulls on the heartstrings may help. If it doesn't, switch to tunes with different tempos and find one that does.

Music is a powerful tool when used with care. It can alter your perception of life, making it sunnier, or help you release sadness. Notice how tunes affect you, and you can employ them to improve your wellbeing.

Studio 237 Music Lessons is in Santa Rosa Beach. Our teachers are ready to teach guitar, piano, drums, voice, ukulele and more. Call 850.231.3199 to schedule a visit or lessons. www.Studio237Music.com

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Join the annual summer Savor the Sound event taking place May 14, 2-6 p.m. at the Mattie Kelly Arts Center Outdoor Amphitheater in Niceville. The Taylor Haugen Foundation's annual Savor the Sound concert fund-

raiser will rock with Password Reset and the LA Strangers. This community event provides entertainment for all ages, an array of food choices from local vendors and breweries and highly sought-after auction items, all

while honoring Taylor's legacy, raising awareness and protecting our youth athletes from abdominal injuries. Bring a blanket or chairs, but no coolers as there will be plenty of food trucks and drinks for purchase.



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# Ask Apex: The Importance of State-of-the-Art Structural Drying

BY KEN LARSEN, CR

Your home or commercial building has water damage. Do you know how to select a com-

pany with water damage and structural drying services? More importantly, will you be able to tell if they did the job right? Are

you sure you're asking the right questions?

Improper structural drying causes problems like structural

damage or mold. Wood rot, rusted pipes, and crumbling drywall are frustrating. Still, they are not the worst problem.

Water contains bacteria. Whether the moisture in your home came from a storm or backed up sewage, it is a health hazard.

While you may not see or feel bacteria and mold creating moisture, it's there. It's under your carpets, in your drywall, and in many other places. It's even in the air you breathe.

Online, you can find a plethora of articles on how to deal with water in your home. Industry-specific articles, or a webpage by the EPA or CDC, have varying advice.

The same goes for different restoration service sites. Each company claims its method of water removal and structural drying is the best.

The truth is, you want a company that is willing and able to keep up with the latest developments in the industry.

Industry expert, Ken Larsen, CR explained why to me in a recent interview.

About 22 years ago, the IICRC taught a form of structural drying called top-down or in-place drying. This method replaced the need for removing and disposing of wet materials, such as carpet and padding, before drying. Restoration technicians would then extract as much water as they could. Then they would place down air movers and dehumidifiers to dry out the rest of the moisture.

"Materials started to go moldy and nobody knew about it." Said Larsen, CR.

He goes on to say mold grew in walls, behind baseboards, and other unseen places. The surfaces looked dry. Yet, underneath, the plywood and concrete contained moisture. The IICRC got reports of buildings being moldy after the use of this method.



"Environmental Consultants started to look cross-eyed at this strategy," stated Larsen, CR, "because it was resulting in many of these buildings becoming extremely biological."

According to Larsen, CR, The IICRC is a standard-setting, certification, and education organization. Thus, it was important for them to pull this method from their practices and teachings.

Why is this story important? There are technicians who certified when top-down drying was an accepted practice. There may be technicians who learned to spray active mold growth with a disinfectant. While that was an accepted practice 30 years ago, it's now known to spread mold.

Larsen, CR, concluded his story by stressing that certification isn't enough. Home and commercial property owners need to identify a contractor with integrity and commitment to state-of-the-art restoration.

"A standard restoration process in conjunction with the latest technology, that's state of the art." Says Larsen, CR. "Our understanding changes over time. And we must remain current like Apex is."

For more information, contact Apex Disaster Specialists, : (850) 660-6900, apexdisasterspecialists.com.

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# Mom's Earth Day



By CHRIS BALZER, ECES

## ENERGY TIPS by Emerald Coast Energy Solutions



Mom's Earth Day? Sounds made up, right? Earth Day was April 22 and Mother's Day is May 8, only 16 days apart, so I thought I would combine the two and make Mom's Earth Day.

At ECES, we treat every day like Earth Day. We increase comfort and lower CO2 emissions, saving the planet one home at a time. With these two great holidays so close together, I had to offer suggestions more than just flowers and home-made cards for Mom this spring.

Air conditioning is vital, spring and summer months are getting warmer and we want Mom to be comfortable. When you visit your mom, help change the air condition filter. Clogged filters cause strain on the system and can lead to more service calls, costing mom money. Many HVAC professionals suggest using the less expensive filters to allow more air flow and efficiency. These filters do need to be changed more often but cost less. After replacing the air filter, pour distilled vinegar down the condensate drain line to remove mildew and grime from the line, as well as extending time between

service calls. If you are uncomfortable or unfamiliar with this process, consult a professional. Don't forget to dust HVAC vents and fans. These areas build up dust quickly and could be hurting the circulation of airflow as well.

What better way to show your mother love than with savings on energy costs. One of the easiest ways to save energy is to change out incandescent light bulbs with LED bulbs. LED bulbs can save as much as 75-80 percent on lighting cost and they can last 10-20 times longer than incandescent bulbs. Replacing five frequently used inefficient incandescent bulbs in your home with energy savings LED bulbs could save you about \$75 per year and reduce your CO2 footprint. It's also your turn to tell Mom to shut off the lights

when leaving the room. Even with LED bulbs, when you are not in the room, switch off the lights and save energy.

What's tall, green, made of wood and can save energy for your mother? (Answer: a tree) Doing a little landscaping and planting trees can cut energy costs in the long run by adding shade during the summer months. Trees also help purify the air we breathe by absorbing pollutants and provide habitats for birds and other wildlife, maintaining a balance with nature.

Buy mom a power strip and plug in energy vampire electronics like cell phone chargers and other electronics which don't need to be powered on all the time. By switching these off at the power strip when not in use or unplug-

ging them you can save as much as \$100 a year. When cell phone and tablet chargers are not in use, they still consume energy, costing money and wasting energy.

If your mom says that her HVAC constantly runs or there are rooms which never get cool, it may be time to schedule an energy inspection by a professional. These professionals can pinpoint areas which are losing energy, costing money and comfort. By addressing these areas with energy efficient solutions, you can

increase comfort, lower energy bills and lower your CO2 footprint.

Finally, try keeping our Earth and our moms in our daily activities and actions. They deserve it.

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



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 Business

# Inflation May Be Leaving You More Underinsured



By JOE CAPERS,  
INSURANCE ZONE

For the past year or so, Florida property owners have learned about the many factors that caused our insurance premiums to increase at unprecedented levels. This is true in all lines of insurance, but primarily with insurance for residential and commercial property. There are multiple reasons for the state of the insurance marketplace, but two of the biggest driving forces are storm activity over the past few years and the overwhelming

number of claims that end up in lawsuits.

A recent statistic from the National Association of Insurance Commissioners (NAIC) showed that Florida homeowners' claims represent 8 percent of the nation's total claims; however, Florida has more than 76 percent of the lawsuits related to homeowners' claims in the entire nation. Just when we did not think things would get worse, inflation enters the arena, and puts even more pressure on rates. Inflation also must be considered when determining the adequate amount of coverage to replace your structure and personal property.

In economics, inflation refers to a general progressive increase in prices of goods and services in an economy. When the general price level rises, each unit of currency buys fewer goods and services; consequently, inflation

corresponds to a reduction in the purchasing power of money. There's no denying that inflation like we haven't seen in decades is on the rise. All you need to do is go to the local grocery or hardware store or fill up your gas tank and you will feel the pinch.

The cost of residential and commercial construction is also skyrocketing due to inflation, and this could spell trouble for homeowners and business owners. Increases in the cost of lumber and other building materials, in conjunction with continued supply chain issues and labor shortages, could leave many homeowners underinsured if they need to rebuild after a covered insurance claim.

Should disaster strike, homeowners without enough coverage could find themselves digging into their savings to cover the shortfall. Now is the time to be

certain you have enough insurance to pay the cost of what it would take to rebuild your home or building, also known as replacement cost. Here's what you need to know.

Insurers use replacement cost calculators to determine how much structural coverage is needed to rebuild your home or business investment. Information about your building, such as its square footage, quality of construction materials and the year of construction or upgrades, are all factored into the estimated replacement cost.

You can also take steps to determine the replacement cost on your own. One method involves multiplying your home's square footage by the current cost of construction per square foot in your area. You can get an idea of per square foot building costs by calling the builders association in your area, a licensed appraiser, or a local contractor. Most estimates will range from \$200 to \$300 per square foot, but in our area we have had some suggested amounts around \$500 per square foot and more. We just learned that one of the premium writers of homeowners in our state will be adopting CCI (Construction Cost Index) as replacement for the Inflation Guard Endorsement on its HO3 policies. CCI provides a more precise method for adjusting dwelling limits annually based on true changes in cost of construction vs. the straight-line increase used in the Inflation Guard endorsement.

To make sure you have the appropriate coverage, talk to an agent about your homeowners or commercial policies. They are willing to help you understand what you have and what

you need based on the replacement cost. Protecting your assets and your retirement funds from losses you wouldn't otherwise be able to financially afford is what insurance is about. Making sure you have the correct amount of coverage can be the difference between rebuilding your entire structure versus a partial rebuild. You have the ultimate decision in choosing your limit for coverages, such as those for dwelling or personal property. Your insurance agent is here to assist you with making sure your coverage keeps up with the increasing cost to repair, replace or rebuild the home.

As a consumer, you may want to see if a recent evaluation of the replacement cost of your home or structure has been done. You may request that this be updated. Based on what you learn, choose a limit that provides peace of mind and can help you protect against catastrophic loss.

The bottom line, when it comes to insuring your home, is this: don't skimp on the coverages, look carefully at your renewal policy, and address any coverage deficiencies you may have, and always let your agent know about any upgrades and remodeling you've done to your home. We recommend an annual review of your property insurance program because life happens and circumstances change.

*Insurance Zone, founded by Joe and Lea Capers, is a full service personal and commercial lines insurance agency serving Destin, Miramar Beach, Santa Rosa Beach (30A) and Inlet Beach. Visit their Video Library on www.ins-zone.com and watch an informative video "Market Value vs Replacement Cost" or call (850) 424-6979.*

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