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# BAY Life

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## Our Thankful Community

BY HEATHER BENNETT

One of the many great things about living along The Emerald Coast is our sense of community. We cheer on one another, we pray for one another, and we show up for one another when we are in need. Our community is passionate about showing up for each other during the holiday season in particular.

This Thanksgiving is a little different than others. We're a community full of hopeful people still recovering from the economic impact of Covid-19 on top of our everyday struggles. However, there are some really great nonprofit organizations and businesses here making sure that we still have a holiday meal to share with our families.

The **Church on Bayshore** is offering a community-wide Thanksgiving Day meal from 11:30 a.m. – 2 p.m. If you're homebound, meals are available for delivery. You simply need to RSVP for the meal, to receive a delivered meal, or to volunteer. Please register at [www.churchonbayshore.org/events](http://www.churchonbayshore.org/events) or call the church office



at 678-4621. By doing this for the community, the Church on Bayshore is keeping with its vision "to grow disciples of Christ who love God, share Christ and serve others." You can visit [www.fbcniceville.org](http://www.fbcniceville.org) for more information.

Other churches such as **Crosspoint Church** and **Destiny Worship Center** conducted Thanksgiving food drives for those in need in the

community and are delivering to families in our area.

The annual **Crop Drop Destin**, which provides over 80,000 pounds of produce to more than 50 agencies and 6,000 families for Thanksgiving each year, is scheduled to take place Nov. 21 at Destin United Methodist Church. The organization coordinates with farmers in Florida and Mississippi to buy produce that wasn't sold

to the marketplace. Donations and sponsors are always welcome. The more produce they can buy, the more people they can reach. This year, the Crop Drop will be receiving produce in individual family style boxes. These boxes weigh roughly 32 lbs. and include produce and poultry. They not only supply

**THANKFUL**  
*continued on page 2*

## Destiny Radio!

Encouraging  
Connection with God  
and Our Community



BY LORI LEATH SMITH

Destiny Worship Center Pastor Steve Vaggalis might not have known what the former Miramar Beach Taco Bell/Kentucky Fried Chicken would become when the church had the opportunity to purchase it in 2018. But the building located next to the Destin campus had its own destiny—and God knew.

Recently, Destiny Radio Studios was launched on the same day as the church's 19th anniversary and is now live! Formerly 91.1 WPSM-FM Christian radio, Destiny Worship

**DESTINY RADIO**  
*continued on page 2*

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## THANKFUL

continued from page 1

food to those in need, but help our farmers. Partner agencies can drive in, pick up their boxes and take them back to their facility to distribute to their families. Volunteers will be limited to about 35 this year. If you are interested in donating, visit the website at [www.cropdrop.org](http://www.cropdrop.org) or Facebook page.

**Food For Thought** will be providing a pick-up service for the families that are enrolled in its school programs in Okaloosa and Walton Counties, which will take place at different locations. They will be providing food that children need during Thanksgiving break, which is about 10 meals, and they will also receive food for a holiday meal that includes a turkey, rolls and fresh produce. Donations are always



welcome. Their holiday food list includes instant potatoes, stuffing, cornbread mix, canned veggies and rice. You can check out their website at [fftlf.org](http://fftlf.org) to learn more about donating food or how you can sponsor a family at Thanksgiving for just \$40. If you would like to learn more about how you can get involved, email [volunteer@fftlf.org](mailto:volunteer@fftlf.org) to learn about volunteering opportunities.

During the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays, **Sharing & Caring of Niceville**, an all-vol-

unteer agency (roughly 70), participates with area churches and civic organizations to provide meals and gifts for families, specifically coordinating community efforts to meet emergency needs of individuals and families in the Niceville-Valparaiso-Chocotaw Beach area. Normal hours are Monday-Thursday 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. and Friday 9 a.m. - noon. Donations needed include non-perishable food, toiletries, diapers, laundry and dish soap. Monetary donations are used to purchase perishable food such as milk and eggs. If you are looking to volunteer for Thanksgiving or any other time or for an application, please contact them at (850) 678-8459 or visit [sharing-n-caring.org/nicevillehome](http://sharing-n-caring.org/nicevillehome). The final day for Christmas signups is Monday, December 7.

**Caring and Sharing in Walton County** is providing

holiday food items for pick up November 16th-20th, the week before Thanksgiving. People must apply by filling out an eligibility form and qualify for assistance and must live in Walton County. They will receive items for a holiday meal like mashed potatoes, stuffing, cranberry sauce, a turkey or ham and produce. Caring and Sharing is expecting roughly 300 families to pick up meals. They are looking for any additional volunteers to help pack meals, and to hand out food the week of pick up. If you're interested in donating or volunteering, contact them at 850-267-2866 or visit the website at [caringandsharingsowal.org](http://caringandsharingsowal.org) for more information.

**Harvest House Destin** will be providing food items for an all-inclusive holiday meal to cook at home. Any families in our area in need of a holiday meal can contact Harvest House and they

will be sent an invitation to attend a drive-through pick-up on distribution day Monday, Nov. 23. Harvest House is always looking for food donations if you are interested in donating. They are down to a limited number of volunteers. So, if you're looking for volunteer opportunities, call them at 850-837-2277 to find out how you can help. You can also check out their website at [www.harvest-housedestin.org](http://www.harvest-housedestin.org).

Two restaurants will be hosting free meals on Thanksgiving. **AJs on the Bayou** in Fort Walton Beach will have free meals available. **Harbor Docks** will have free Thanksgiving meals to go. Donations are welcome.

This year, as every year, I am thankful for being a part of such a great community. I hope everyone gets to share a warm Thanksgiving meal with the people they love and care about.

## DESTINY RADIO

continued from page 1

Center was offered the opportunity to keep the 36-year-old familiar and beloved station's legacy alive through a new local Christian, full-power FM radio station launched to serve our communities.

At the recent ribbon cutting with area residents, businesses and the Walton Area Chamber, Pastor Steve took a moment to honor his former Pastor and mentor L.M. Thorn and his wife June—the local couple who had the vision to start a Christian radio station to reach this area back in 1984. “They started 91.1

FM and we have the privilege and honor of continuing the legacy,” says Pastor Steve. Just as Destiny Worship Center was founded on the ministry philosophy to build on its heritage, not abandon it, to serve and reach people from all denominations, help build and support families, and transform communities, the new radio airwaves are designed to do the same. “It's pretty special that Destiny Radio will have the same influence in getting the message and the music out. We're excited we get to take the ball and run with it and excited to serve and reach the Gulf Coast for Jesus Christ!”

Walker Beach, Destiny Ra-



dio's new station manager, feels the same way. “It's such an honor and privilege to have a voice of influence in this region,” he says. “That's why our key phrase for this station is ‘Encouraging Connection with God and Our Community.’ It's our mission!”

Now 91.1 FM Destiny Radio, the station plays a variety of well-thought-out, cultivated inspirational praise and worship songs, is commercial free and covers three counties (Bay, Walton and Okaloosa). “You can trust us to put the right songs in your car, your home and for the whole family,” says Walker. “Commercial-free radio—yep, you read that right. 99% music – virtually uninterrupted. And, it's the only local, Christian full-power, non-stop music, FM radio station.”

“We also plan to play music

you want to hear,” continues Walker. “We've spent hours going through thousands of songs to bring you music that is fresh and relevant, truly curated for our local audience. Our song lists are handcrafted and updated often.” The station will also air exclusive live performances and interviews from its beautiful, new on-site studios. “We'll be bringing these artists straight to you in real time,” Walker says.

Drew Powell is your Destiny Radio DJ, a true local who has been with WPSM 91.1 for 18 years. Drew says he loves the way a single song can change somebody's whole day, and even life, when it comes on at just the right time. “I always pray that God would be the program director of the station and lead us to play the right music,” says Drew. “God always seems to play a song for me right when I need it. Even as I say this, I am tearing up because of how many times I have been blessed by hope filled music at just the right time; to share God's goodness feels like a dream.”

You can listen to Destiny Radio's non-stop music on 91.1FM, [DestinyRadio.Live](http://DestinyRadio.Live), mobile app, Alexa and YouTube live! The new station is located right beside the Destin campus at 140 Poinciana Blvd. “Destiny Radio 91.1 FM is excited to inspire and encourage our local community through Christian music,” says Pastor Steve. “Please share Destiny Radio with someone

in your world. You never know how a song of hope can change someone's life,” says Drew.



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*Christmas Day Mass*

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*Masks are required to attend Mass*

*Signing up for Mass is required at [corcatholic.org/christmas-mass-sign-up](http://corcatholic.org/christmas-mass-sign-up)*



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 Community

# Happenings Around the Bay

## NOVEMBER

19 | Katie's Christmas Open House  
8am | Katie's House of Flowers | Niceville

Visiting the Beyond  
6pm | Niceville Public Library | Niceville

20 | 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Beards and Brews  
5pm | 3rd Planet Brewing | Niceville

21 | Beading Intro  
10am | Artful Things Niceville | Niceville

Shop 'Til You Drop Vendor & Craft Fair  
11am | 3rd Planet Brewing | Niceville

25 | Kids Art Camp  
10am | Artful Things Niceville | Niceville

27 | Not Your Average Black Friday  
8am | Destin Commons | Destin

27 - DEC 20 | Jolly Jubilee - Fri, Sat, & Sun  
Times Vary | Destin Commons | Destin

28 | Shrimp boil by Willingham Seafood  
5pm | 3rd Planet Brewing | Niceville

29 | Emerald Coast Taco Festival  
12pm | Lucky's Rotten Apple | Destin

## DECEMBER

03 | Holiday Open House  
4pm | Artful Things Niceville | Niceville

04 | Sip N' Stroll  
4pm | J.Leon Gallery+Studio | Destin

05 | Women's Climbing Circle  
9am | Rock Out Climbing Gym | Destin

Holiday Watercolor Cards  
10am | Artful Things Niceville | Niceville

Freeport Christmas Parade  
4pm | Freeport Elementary School | Freeport

Wheel Throwing Try Night  
6pm | J.Leon Gallery+Studio | Destin

08 | Dual Chamber Ribbon Cutting  
4pm | J.Leon Gallery+Studio | Destin

## FARMER'S MARKETS

Niceville Community - Fridays & Saturdays  
Nov. 20, 21, 27, 28 & Dec. 4, 5, 11, 12, 18, 19  
9am | Palm Plaza | Niceville

Hammock Bay - 1st & 3rd Sundays  
Dec. 6 & 20  
8am | Victory Blvd | Freeport

## DECEMBER CONT.

09 | Second Wednesday Breakfast  
7:30am | Niceville Community Center | Niceville

10 | Business After Hours  
5pm | The Manor at Bluewater Bay | Niceville

11 | 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Cornhole Tournament  
1pm | PrimeLending | Niceville

Wheel Throwing Try Night  
6pm | J.Leon Gallery+Studio | Destin

Northwest Florida Symphony Orchestra's Holiday Pops  
6pm | J.Leon Gallery+Studio | Destin

12 | 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Niceville Track and Field Ugly Sweater 5k Run/Walk  
8am | Hurricane Grill & Wings | Niceville

Holiday Goldleaf Calligraphy  
10am | Artful Things Niceville | Niceville

Niceville Valparaiso 2020 Christmas Parade  
10am | Niceville

Pictures with Santa at VenYou201  
1pm | Redwood Avenue | Niceville

13 | 34<sup>th</sup> Annual Destin Christmas Boat Parade  
6pm | Destin Harbor Boardwalk | Destin

18 | 24 Hours of Creativity for Change  
Frances Roy Agency | Niceville



It's that Give Generously time of year! As FRA's most impactful event of the year, our team is ready for a full 24 Hours of Creativity for Change.

This year, our agency will choose 3 new small businesses (open less than a year) to benefit from free marketing services. Interested businesses, please visit:

[FRANCESROY.COM/C4C/](http://FRANCESROY.COM/C4C/)

*Frances*  
FRANCES ROY

# NWFSC Enters into a Season of Gratitude

Now more than ever, I am grateful for our community, who have funded, volunteered, celebrated and advocated for us throughout the years. Your unwavering support throughout this time of great uncertainty has helped Northwest Florida State College thrive. This year, we are overwhelmed and humbled by the community's response to assist our students through the College's Student Emergency Fund and major scholarship endowment donations.

We are fortunate to live in such a generous community with deep roots in patriotism and loyalty. Let us all pause in gratitude for the men and women who have served to protect our great nation. I am thankful for the sights and sounds of freedom that can regularly be seen and felt outside my home and office windows. I am proud that we are doing our part to serve our active duty service members, veterans, and their family members at our one-stop Veterans Success Center (VSC) by offering a tranquil,



professional and respectful space, where veterans and their family members can study or pursue other scholastic assignments.

Above all, I am thankful for the overall health and wellbeing of our College community. I am humbled by the resiliency and resolve of our College administration, faculty and staff. This year, specifically, I have witnessed great efforts to transform long-practiced teaching methods and operational processes to better serve our students and personnel.

As we prepare for the holiday season, I find myself reflecting



Dr. Devin Stephenson, President

on a number of good things that came from a year that was filled not only with unprecedented challenges, but one that also generated extraordinary opportunities. Our College has received over \$18 million in grant

funding in the past year, which will continue to transform our career education offerings and positively impact the quality of place in both Okaloosa and Walton Counties. Most recently, U.S. News & World Report ranked Northwest Florida State College #1 among all southern region colleges for the least amount of student loan debt realized by our graduates, and ranked 4th nationally among all regional colleges. This is an honor and a testament to our affordable first-class education and the work of our team.

Northwest Florida State College is a member of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) Reaffirmation of Accreditation Class of 2020. We successfully completed our decennial review in mid-October and submitted our five-year Quality Enhancement

Plan (QEP): Engage NWFSC. The reaffirmation process was a college-wide effort that guarantees our accreditation for the next ten years and affirms our mission to improve lives by providing high-quality, globally competitive education. Through our QEP, we pledge to become a more present, visible and active partner in our students' path toward academic and career success.

It is my sincere wish that you experience a joyous holiday season with your loved ones. The year 2020 has stretched us, challenged us and forced us to adapt. Never lose sight of the goodness around you. Together we will Make a Difference and continue to advance as we have for 56 years. We are in the prime of life as an organization, and we will continue doing great things for Northwest Florida!

Warmest Regards,



# HOMETOWN HEROES

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Northwest Florida State College is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges to award associate and baccalaureate degrees. Contact the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools at 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, Georgia 30033-4097 or call 404-679-4500 for questions about the accreditation of Northwest Florida State College. Northwest Florida State College is committed to equal access/equal opportunity in its programs, activities, and employment. For additional information, visit [www.nwfsc.edu](http://www.nwfsc.edu). Materiales de la Universidad son disponibles en Español llamando a la Oficina de Admisiones de Northwest Florida State College al 850-678-5111.

Community

# Unprecedented 2020...But Still We Give Thanks!

In positive psychology research, gratitude is strongly and consistently associated with greater happiness. Gratitude helps people feel more positive emotions, relish good experiences, improve their health, deal with adversity, enhance empathy, reduce aggression, improve self-esteem and build stronger relationships.

So, Bay Life asked, "What are you thankful for in 2020?"

Personally, I am so very thankful for a supportive community that makes our program work. Without their financial support we could not keep the doors open. Thanking God for all the support.

~ Miss Grace, President of Crisis Aid for Littles and Moms (CALM) non-profit in Niceville

I'm thankful our community has fabulously supported our free community events, like our Back-to-School Supplies giveaway, vendor craft fair and the upcoming Photos with Santa on Dec 12th. And by renting our non-profit venue, they know



100% of proceeds help our moms and children in real and tangible ways.

~Wanda Siefke, Secretary CALM Board & Publicity person for CALM VenYou201

I am thankful for an unwavering, loving and giving community.

~Julie Porterfield, CEO, Emerald Coast Children's Advocacy Center

I am thankful that COVID-19 has not been as bad in Okaloosa County as other counties. I am thankful that we re-opened to help our local economy prosper instead of die like so many other cities. Most of all I am thankful to God for the good fortune of having a great job, great friends

*"A spirit of thankfulness attracts others to your cause, ideas and goals."*  
-Skip Prichard

and a wonderful loving husband.

~Denise Kendust, Dir. PR & Communications, FWB Medical Center and Twin Cities Hospital

I have overwhelming gratitude for my team at Frances Roy. Hillaree, Janae, Kelsey, Jodie, Gregory, Kayla and Rinn are the most agile and resilient individuals I've ever worked with and they've navigated the unknowns at each and every turn. Proud isn't the right word but certainly, I am in awe of their efforts. I am most especially grateful for Hillaree Durso - who has grown into her leadership abilities and truly embodies each and every Frances Roy core value."

~ Shantelle P. Dedicke, CMP, President/Chief Creative Officer, Francis Roy Agency



I am thankful for my wife Catrina who enjoys fishing and can hook a line better than I can. I'm also very thankful to live near Choctawhatchee Bay.

~Rick Moore, Communications Pastor Destiny Worship Center

I am thankful for God's love, mercy and grace. I am thankful for my husband, Bob, for our daughter and son and their wonderful spouses, and for our four grandchildren. I am thankful that we are all healthy and that we all love and care for each other. I am truly blessed.

~ Myrna Conrad, Bay Life/Destin Life writer

I'm thankful for my amazing and loving family! I'm very grateful for the privilege of serving Mattie Kelly Arts Foundation and the people who have

been on this cultural journey with me for the past 22 years.

~Marcia Hull, CEO, Mattie Kelly Arts Foundation



I am thankful to be living in this paradise surrounded by my beautiful family and amazing friends!

~ Gregory Durette, Florida Health Connector



I'm so blessed to have such an amazing and supportive family. We are so very fortunate to live and be able to work in an amazing and beautiful area of the Florida panhandle.

~ Jason Hall, Five Channels

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# Toys for Tots: Giving is the Best Gift!

BY AETHER VAN DYKE

The holiday season seems to bring out a spirit of giving in nearly everyone. Family members become more aware of each other during this time, people often feel the urge to help complete strangers, and parents are inclined to make sure their children have the best gifts. For many, the season is a time of beauty, and a time to look forward to. However, for many less fortunate families, the holiday season brings with it sorrow and anxiety over not being able to make sure their children have gifts. The **Toys for Tots** program has made sure that this sorrow does not become a reality for many families.

Toys for Tots is a national program, started in 1947 by Major Bill Hendricks. Bill's dream, along with the dreams of many involved in this program, was to see toys distributed to every family in need. Major Hendrick's program was incredibly successful that first year, distributing toys to over 5000 children. The program's enormous success within the first year then prompted the Marine Corps to adopt and



expand it, leading to what we know today - The **U.S. Marine Corps Reserve Toys for Tots Program**.

Toys for Tots is a nonprofit organization and is run by a dedicated staff of all volunteers. It operates primarily as a campaign between the months of October and December. During this time, various toy drives are set up in major businesses such as Walmart, Bass Pro Shop, and Build a Bear Workshops.

Though the program is a na-

tional program, each area runs its own campaign. The Walton and Okaloosa county's campaign is directed by Campaign Coordinator Casey Tetman. Casey began her career with Toys for Tots as a volunteer about four years ago. With time, she advanced to become Co-Coordinator and eventually Coordinator of the program in our local area. Casey's passion is to see enough toys collected each year to make sure no child goes without. When asked why Casey chose to get in-



involved with Toys for Tots she said "I really love working with children and volunteering in general. I come from a family without a lot of money so Christmas holds a special place for me."

Toys for Tots has faced a number of challenges. The program often gets confused with other nonprofit organizations and programs, and this can cause it to be difficult to truly express the mission of Toys for Tots. Finding volunteers is a challenge every year as well- as many people don't realize the organization needs assistance. In spite of its difficulties, Toys for Tots has maintained gigantic success. Casey believes the greatest contributing factor to the success of the program has been the extreme generosity of the

community and local businesses. Without them, very few if any children would have the opportunity to be part of this program.

This year, The Walton and Okaloosa campaign is expected to distribute toys to over 8000 children in the area. One thing is clear. This organization is making a huge impact on an individual, local and national level. Giving is the best gift!

For more information on the Toys for Tots program, you can visit their website at [www.toysfortots.com](http://www.toysfortots.com). For information on local campaigns, you can search for "Fort Walton Beach" on their "Find a Local Campaign" tab or visit Emerald Coast Toys for Tots on Facebook.

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NO Red Tape | NO Hidden Fees | NO Catch



**SERVICE DESERVES ITS REWARDS!**

 Community

# Eglin Pet Welfare Adoption Center

## Rescuing and Rehoming Cats and Dogs For 35 Years

BY LORI LEATH SMITH

In September 1982, Pet Welfare was founded for military members needing a safe place to leave their pets until a home could be found. Today, the organization continues to provide this service with an all-volunteer force.

Pet Welfare is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit, no-kill shelter located on Eglin Air Force Base and places anywhere from 100 to 300 surrendered and homeless cats and dogs every year. Still true to its mission to support the military member and military lifestyle by easing the hardship

associated with abandoning or euthanizing a valued family pet, Pet Welfare is mostly funded through adoptions. For example, if there is a permanent change of station that would make it unfeasible or impossible for a family to continue ownership of their family pet, Pet Welfare will provide the necessary care for that cat or dog until a qualified adoption can be arranged, if space permits. "If Pet Welfare cannot take in the family pet at that time, we will assist the family as much as possible in finding a suitable temporary home for their pet until the pet can be ad-



opted to another family or until we have space at the shelter to bring the pet to our shelter to wait for its forever home," says Melissa Gromer, Fundraising/Publicity Co-Chairman. Pet

Welfare will also support Department of Defense civilians, retired military members and their families, and local civilians as necessary whenever possible.

All animals are screened, spayed or neutered and up to date on all their shots and all are evaluated for temperament. "We take each and every adoption very seriously and look for that last forever home for our pets," says Melissa. "Come in and meet our community of cats and dogs. We're sure if you are ready to adopt that we have the right pet for you and your family."

Pet Welfare has no paid staff—only dedicated, motivated, hardworking volunteers and an elected Board of Directors responsible for governing the rules, policies, and procedures.

Further, it receives no monetary support from the government. "We are always in need of volunteers and foster homes and depend solely on donations, grants, adoptions fees, Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) contributions and fundraisers for our financial needs," says Melis-

sa. "We do whatever is possible to provide shelter to many found animals and rescue others from local animal shelters, as space and funding permit, that would otherwise euthanize pets at their shelter."

Currently, there are some great candidates for adoption, such as Beau (age 13 Siamese) or Little Miss (Age 10 American Longhair), both older cats that were relinquished to Pet Welfare after their owners passed away. Then we have Benji (age 15 Lab/Hound mix) rescued from Paws. He's incredibly smart, full of energy and loves to play with other dogs!

To learn more about the pet adoption process, to volunteer or for a list of supplies needed, contact [petwelfare@embarq-mail.com](mailto:petwelfare@embarq-mail.com) or (850) 678-5066 or visit [petwelfare.net](http://petwelfare.net) or [facebook.com/petwelfare](https://www.facebook.com/petwelfare). Location: 683 Range Road, Eglin AFB, FL 32542. Hours Monday - Saturday: 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. or by appointment.

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## Eglin Squadron Joins Space Force



(Courtesy photo)

1st Lt. Conner Thigpen, 20th Space Control Squadron crew commander, receives his new blue name tapes after joining the U.S. Space Force.

BY SAMUEL KING JR.

More than 30 officers and enlisted military members were among the first to join the newly formed United States Space

Force during a recent swearing in ceremony. Those members were former Airmen with the 20th Space Control Squadron.

*Continued on next page*

# Female Fighter Pilots Test Modified "G-suit"

BY 1ST LT. SAVANAH BRAY,  
53RD WING

A modified version of the Advanced Technology Anti-Gravity Suits was successfully tested by five female fighter pilots at Eglin Air Force Base in October.

ATAGS is a proven design and a critical life support item that protects aircrew members from the effects of high-G forces during maneuvers in fighter aircraft, but having been in use since 2001, the more than 20-year-old ATAGS design was developed primarily for standard men's body types. Pilots who are shorter or have smaller or hard-to-fit body types often struggle to properly adjust the G-suit to fit well due to a limited range of adjustability in the standard sizes.

Directly tasked by the Secretary of the Air Force, engineers and subject matter experts at Air Force Life Cycle Management Center and AFWERX set out to address priority shortfalls in female specific aircrew equipment and gear, to include ATAGS. Instead of creating a new product altogether, experts determined that modifications could be made to the current ATAGS design to better fit women and various body types.

In order to properly and safely test the ATAGS, the 85th Test and Evaluation Squadron executed nearly 20 sorties in F-16 D-model aircraft. During these test sorties, pilots conducted low- and high-G basic fighter maneuvers and specific profiles to allow for accurate evaluation of the modified ATAGS. F-16 D-models were used so that in each sortie, a pilot wearing standard ATAGS was in the aircraft to ensure safety should an issue with the modified ATAGS arise.

For the purpose of this test, five pilots and one aircrew member tested the modified ATAGS and evaluated it based on comfort and performance when compared to the normal ATAGS typically worn. Pilots were asked to evaluate based on not only the ATAGS during high-G maneuvers, but also during regular activities like sitting, standing, walking and climbing into and out of the aircraft.

The pilots and aircrew who tested the ATAGS noticed significant improvements in comfort and functionality in the modified ATAGS.

Prior to flight testing, AFLCMC conducted developmental endurance testing, which simulated 14 years of use on identi-



(U.S. AIR FORCE PHOTO BY 1ST LT SAVANAH BRAY.)

From left to right, Maj. Shanon Jamison, Capt. Brittany Trimble, Lt. Col. Ashley Rolfe, Maj. Kristin Hollrith, and 1st Lt. Elizabeth Pennell.

cally designed modified ATAGS. Once those versions were successfully endurance-tested with no issue, flight testing began with the 46th Test Squadron providing the engineering and test planning expertise and the 85th TES executing the flight tests.

Following the flight testing, the 46th TS will provide a test report. Under the current acquisition strategy, the modified ATAGS could be in the hands of fighter pilots and aircrew who need it within 12-24 months.

For F-16 pilot, Maj. Shanon Jamison, testing the modified ATAGS was a great opportunity not only to help ensure pilots have gear that fits, works, and

prevents G-induced loss of consciousness, but also to connect with other female fighter pilots.

"It is great to see the Air Force bring female pilots together to test these new improvements, and it also gave us a chance to share our career experiences with one another," said Maj. Jamison. "There are things we have experienced in our career that many of our colleagues cannot understand, from as simple as worrying about getting your hair caught in a harness to as complex as how to return to flying while juggling breast-feeding your infant. The chance to come together for an important test, while also receiving continued mentorship and leadership from

the female cadre of fighter pilots, was both useful and fulfilling."

"These tests are important because they will ultimately increase the lethality of those who no longer have their mask slip down during a sortie, their G-suit crunch under their waist, or the extra fabric of a too big anti-exposure suit get in the way of their movements in the jet," said Capt. Brittany Trimble, F-16 instructor pilot. "These don't seem like big issues, but everything counts in the air, and having gear that fits and works as intended should be the standard. I'm excited the Air Force is working to identify and fix these issues, especially in innovative ways."

## SPACE FORCE

*continued from previous page*

After being sworn in to the new military branch, squadron personnel exchanged Air Force spig brown for Space Force blue thread uniform insignias and a full color American flag worn on their left shoulder. "I am extremely honored and humbled to be one of the founding members of the U.S. Space Force," said 1st Lt. Conner Thigpen, 20th SPCS crew commander. "The military provided me with an incredible opportunity and I am excited to continue my service to the nation by protecting U.S. and Allied interests in space."

The 20th SPCS operates the AN/FPS-85 Phased Array Radar located at Site C-6 here. Serving as Eglin's only space weapon system, the unit's missions and designations varied throughout its 51 years of operations. The organization evolved from the 2nd Surveil-

lance Squadron to 20th Space Surveillance Squadron in the 1960s, to the 20th Missile Warning Squadron in the 1980s, to the current 20th Space Control Squadron in the early 2000s. The unit's new Space Force squadron designation is currently in development and will be released in the near future.

The USSF was officially established as the sixth branch of the U.S. military Dec. 20, 2019.

"This is truly a pivotal moment in U.S. military history. Much like how the creation of the U.S. Air Force in 1947 marked a national dedication to the development of Airpower, the birth of the U.S. Space Force echoes the same dedication to space power through unencumbered development of space professionals and capabilities," said Lt. Col. Michael Wilson, the squadron's director of operations.



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 Community

# Meet Our Hometown Hero **Bobby Dove**

## His Story of Combat's Invisible Pain & How New Technology is Bringing Hope

By VICTORIA OSTROSKY

I learned a new word today. Proprioception: “Neurology – The subconscious sensation of body and limb movement and position, obtained from non-visual sensory input from muscle spindles and joint capsules.” (*McGraw-Hill Concise Dictionary of Modern Medicine. Copyright 2002 by The McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc.*)

The thing about proprioception is that when you have it, you don't notice. But when you don't have it, well, you do notice.

From a young age Bobby Dove knew he wanted to join the military. In 2008 he signed on as a Special Forces recruit and trained as a medic. He graduated in 2011 as a Green Beret 18D (Special Forces medical sergeant) and was assigned to the 7th Special Forces Group at Eglin AFB.

He loved his team. “I started every day saying this is where God intended me to be.” Bobby loved the physical training and academics. The military was his life. In Afghanistan, June of 2012, while driving a dirt bike, his front tire hit a pressure plate IED and blew apart. He knew immediately he was injured. So, with his medical training kicking in, he attempted to grab the tourniquet he always carried, but the effects of the blast on his nervous system prevented his fingers from breaking the rubber band holding it in place. He improvised, rolling onto his right arm to help staunch the blood flow and felt his left leg hit the ground where his right leg should have been.

He woke up about nine days later from a drug induced coma,

after multiple surgeries, at Walter Reed hospital. His right leg was amputated above the knee and his right hand was gone. Close to 100 units of blood kept him alive in those first few days beginning with his arrival by MEDEVAC to Kandahar barely within that ‘golden hour,’ the crucial time period when, after a catastrophic injury, a patient has the greatest chance of survival.

“When I awoke, I realized I had two paths I could choose to take. Remain there and feel sorry for myself or choose to do something about it. Through this whole experience, that has always remained clear to me. I can lose body parts, memory and more, but, in the end, nobody or nothing can take from me the ability to choose how I react to it.”



socket prosthesis...In particular, patients who have an osseointegrated prosthetic limb have dramatically improved proprioception, called osseoperception. Touch vibrations to the implant (such as during impact with the ground while walking) can be transferred through to the person's natural bone. This helps patients walk more smoothly, feel more stable and effectively transfer all of the strength of their residual limb to the prosthesis.” ([www.hss.edu/condition-list\\_osseointegration.asp](http://www.hss.edu/condition-list_osseointegration.asp))

For Bobby, OI has resulted in a 75% - 90% decrease in his daily pain level. “I have a better life because I don't hurt all the time.” He is able to not only enjoy better memory, but he can remain focused on a subject and interact with his children.

We know about PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder) and TBI (traumatic brain injury), those invisible wounds of war, but another invisible wound – pain – is seldom addressed. Relentless pain is just one factor driving our sons and daughters to suicide. “You just want the pain to stop,” says Bobby.

But he encourages others – “don't accept a bad situation as a life sentence. You have the power to choose.”

We are all so very thankful for the sacrifices of our brave men and women, and it's now our turn to do everything we can to make them whole again, finding ways to improve their lives and relieve their pain. Osseointegration is one step in the right direction.

*Bay Life's "Hometown Heroes" are sponsored by Northwest Florida State College. To read about more Hometown Hero graduates or for more information, call 850.837.8880 or visit [nwfsc.edu](http://nwfsc.edu).*

Over the years, Bobby became used to doing what he could with his prosthetic device. But, the daily, relentless pain exacted its toll. Being a high amputee, his prosthesis included a strap that helped hold the prosthetic leg in place to help him maintain his balance and have a sensation of walking. But the strap cut into his skin, bruising and blistering and causing it to bleed. The intense pain interfered with his ability to think clearly and enjoy life.

In late 2019, Bobby was approved to receive OI – osseointegration. Imagine a titanium screw surgically implanted into your remaining bone with an extension that hooks to your prosthetic leg. That's where proprioception comes in.

With osseointegration, “patients with an osseointegrated limb have better physical control over – and a more intimate, emotional connection to – their prosthetic leg or arm, compared to those using a traditional



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## Four Common Causes of Roof Leaks

A leaking roof causes more trouble than an annoying “drip drop” from your ceiling. It can damage your attic insulation and roof deck as well as lead to mold and mildew growth and reduced energy efficiency. It can also spoil a holiday gathering with family or friends.

Roof leaks can be due to several causes, all of which will require the immediate assistance of a professional roofing contractor. Here are some common roof leak culprits:

### 1. Loose, Cracked or Rotting Shingles

If your roof is 20 to 30 years old, you may see signs of aging such as cracking or rotting. In some cases, the shingles may come loose and fall to the ground. A weakened outer layer will expose the underlayment. Continued exposure to wind and sun can wear the layers away and eventually cause leaks

to form. If your roof is in such a condition, you need to have it inspected. Your roof may only need repairs, which will definitely cost less, and, if properly done, can extend your roof’s life for a few years. This is enough time to prepare for a scheduled roof replacement.

### 2. Roofing Nails Backing Out

Apart from roofing shingles, roofing nails can sometimes back out. This leaves small holes that water can easily penetrate, especially when it’s close to the roof’s edge where wind-driven rain can enter. These little holes are usually unnoticeable to the untrained eye, but not when you have your roof inspected by professional roofers. Catching this issue early helps you prevent bigger repair expenses or even a premature roof replacement.

### 3. Damaged or Dislodged Flashing

Flashing is a piece of metal that protects valleys and any spot where the roof meets a vertical surface, such as walls and dormers. If damaged or dislodged by strong winds, this could leave the breaks in the roof exposed, making it easy for rainwater to get in. Timely repairs can help mitigate leaks caused by flashing issues.

### 4. Cracked Rubber Boots

Plumbing vents and anything that protrudes from the roof require a rubber “boot,” which works like flashing by protecting the area where it meets the roof. Continued exposure to outside conditions will eventually crack the rubber boot, meaning it needs to be replaced.

Regular maintenance and timely repairs help spot these problems and prevent roof leaks.

Are you seeing these signs on your roof? Call Specialty Roofers, Inc. at (850) 974-ROOF (7663) or email [info@specialty-roofers.com](mailto:info@specialty-roofers.com)

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## EAFB Museum Opens

BY ELVIRA S. CHICCARELLI, DDS, USAFR (RET'D), MEMBER MUSEUM FOUNDATION

The Eglin AFB Armament Museum building is now open as a welcome addition to the area’s attractions. Locals and visitors have been restricted to looking at outside aircraft since March where dedicated museum employees and volunteers,

have been cleaned and relocated either under the massive F-105 or inside up on the balcony which enhances the view of the newly wrapped and restored P-51 Redtail aircraft. Many outside aircraft have been cleaned

and wrapped. One of the new museum exhibits, “Woman and Aviation,” is still in progress as funds are raised to complete it.

The museum follows the COVID-19 guidelines which

*Continued next page*



with the support of the AFAM Foundation, have been busy with outside tours while checking on visitors’ safety outside.

The museum director, David Fitzpatrick, orchestrated an extensive restoration project which includes updating the 28,000 square foot building with gleaming blue-gray epoxy floor paint. Numerous weapons and new exhibit information plaques

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 Community

## Excess Liability For Entities: Filling In The Gap



BY VICTORIA OSTROSKY

Andrea had just opened her blinds to the morning sun when her phone rang. “Good morning, Jake! What can I help you with today?”

“Hi, Andrea. Hey, I’m buying an investment condo to rent out to short term vacationers, and I need an insurance quote. Can you help me with that?”

“Of course! Let me get some information and I’ll put together a quote right away.”

“Oh, I wanted to make sure to mention this property will be in an LLC. Is that going to be a problem?”

“No problem,” replied Andrea. “However, we’ll need to get you a separate excess liability policy to go with the condo policy to give you that extra layer of liability protection.”

“Don’t I already have an umbrella policy?” asked Joe.

“Yes, you do, but that’s tied to your primary residence titled in your personal name. Because this property will be in an LLC, it won’t be eligible for coverage under your umbrella policy,” replied Andrea.

And with that last statement, Andrea launched into a more thorough explanation to Jake about umbrella and excess liability policies. She started with the case for umbrella and excess liability insurance.

“Liability insurance is designed to protect a customer’s assets from being taken from them due to a judgment. If there is a judgment that is rendered against a customer that isn’t

covered by the liability policy or exceeds the policy’s limits, what happens? The customer might be required to liquidate assets to raise the money to pay the judgment. That’s what makes umbrella and excess insurance a necessity for many customers.”

([www.insurancejournal.com/magazines/mag-features/2019/06/17/529365.htm](http://www.insurancejournal.com/magazines/mag-features/2019/06/17/529365.htm))

Both umbrella and excess liability policies are designed to fill in any gaps in liability protection. In the event of a claim, once the underlying policy’s liability limits are exhausted, the umbrella or excess liability policy steps in to pick up the slack up to the policy limits.

For most umbrella policies, they’re tied to the insured’s primary residence and ‘floats’ over all the insured’s properties (within the U.S.), autos, motorcycles, RVs, boats, and more. All property, however, will need to be titled in the insured’s personal name. Once an insured purchases a property and places it in an entity, such as an LLC, it will no longer be eligible for the umbrella policy. And that’s where an excess liability policy comes into play. That excess liability policy affords additional coverage for that specific property. For some carriers, you can slide multiple properties under the same excess liability as long as they’re all titled in the same entity.

For both umbrella and excess liability policies, there are different limits available, depending on how many assets you need to protect. For most, you can easily purchase anywhere from one million to five million, with some carriers offering even higher limits.

Andrea explained to Jake the importance of protecting his investment from lawsuits and judgments with an excess liability policy.

“Ok,” said Jake. “So how expensive are these excess liability policies?”

Andrea sipped her coffee. “They’re quite affordable, actually. And easy to quote and purchase.”

Jake was excited to start making some passive income from his new investment. The rental market was picking up again after the COVID-19 temporary hold, and he was ready to take advantage of the investment opportunity.



*Insurance Zone, owned by Joe and Lea Capers, is a full service commercial and personal lines insurance agency serving Destin, Miramar Beach, Niceville, Freeport, Santa Rosa Beach (30A) and Inlet Beach. Visit their Video Library on [www.ins-zone.com](http://www.ins-zone.com) and watch several informative videos including ‘Auto Insurance Made Easy,’ or call 850.424.6979. Victoria Ostrosky, author of this article, is a Personal Lines and Life Agent/CSR with IZ.*

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### MUSEUM

continued from previous page

include mandatory masks worn by everyone inside, social distancing, hand sanitizer stations, and no more than 45 people allowed in the museum at a time. STEMM programs are being planned and groups can reserve time for tours, retirements, etc. (limit 25).

The museum needs volunteers, both men and women, now more than ever to provide valuable educational programs community members of all ages as well as tourists. Volun-

teers are needed to sit behind plexi-glass protection and take non-contact temperatures and keep count of how many people are coming inside. Of course, tour guides for inside or outside tours are needed and informational cards are available. Tour guides enhance the donations that keep the museum vital. For more information or to obtain an application/information packet, please contact David Fitzpatrick, museum director, directly (882-4062) or email [David.Fitzpatrick.7@US.Af.Mil](mailto:David.Fitzpatrick.7@US.Af.Mil).



# Becoming More Knowledgeable with Investing



BY MAURICE STOUSE, FINANCIAL ADVISOR AND BRANCH MANAGER

Have you ever thought about what is meant by the various terms you hear and see about investing? We will attempt in this article to cover several terms and hope it covers a lot of questions or curiosities. In today's markets – stock, bond and money markets—things have changed very quickly since the beginning of the year. Increasing your understanding might help you become a more informed saver and investor as you work toward your goals for yourself and your family.

Let's start by putting assets into classes: Stocks, bonds, cash, real estate. You can also classify these according to risk with stocks and real estate carrying more risk than bonds and bonds more than cash. And then each of these can be further categorized by types of stocks, bonds, real estate or cash holdings.

One term in use is “asset bubbles.” What are they and how do they happen? Typically, as many of you have probably experienced, it is when a certain class of assets or a certain asset moves up very quickly in value, often-times outpacing the actual growth of the company or sector. In many cases, this is the result of a strong money supply (as we are seeing now), low inflation and low interest rates. Alternatively, a stock or bond or asset class appreciates rapidly due to another term: “momentum.” Oftentimes a stock may rise and continue to rise mainly because of the velocity and sheer number of people buying the stock. This often increases the risk substantially in a short period of time. Nonetheless, many investors see it as an opportunity, but they should examine their tolerance for risk. The opposite of momentum or buying into an asset which has risen substan-

tially is called “contrarian.” Put another way, running contra to current investor sentiment.

Stocks or sectors are often put into one of two descriptions categorized as growth vs. value. A growth investment means that the potential for growth of the company or sector is seen as significant, whereas the value investment means that the asset is probably selling or trading for less than it is potentially worth. Growth stocks tend to be found in technology, whereas value stocks tend to be found in financials for example (like banks). Currently, there are 11 different sectors of the market. Technology currently makes up the greatest share of market value (approximately 28%). Energy, by contrast (after five years of underperformance), is the lowest at around 2%.

The growth sectors generally are technology, communication services, consumer cyclicals, consumer durables and health care. Value sectors are generally industrials, basic materials, utilities, energy, real estate and financials. Sometimes a sector can be both – depending upon current market valuations.

When it comes to bonds, investors take note if those are issued by governments or corporations. They also take note as to the quality of the issuer and the likelihood of payment of interest and repayment of principal. In a low interest rate environment, investors also watch for the potential impact inflation can have on interest rates and hence the market value of bonds. Today, with interest rates so low and the money supply having grown, there is renewed interest in government treasury bonds by way of those bonds called TIPS – Treasury Inflation Protected Securities. Those bonds rise in principal value with inflation but the payout remains the same. Should inflation be stable or perhaps we experience deflation, that value (not the payouts) could decrease. So, investors concerned about inflation and who might not want the risk of stocks or real estate, sometimes consider these types of bonds.

Investors might wonder when and where to invest in certain sectors along with how they want to be invested in bonds, cash and real estate. Becom-

ing a more informed investor is at the heart of every financial plan and relationship with an investment firm or professional. Knowledge can help you be prepared for the decisions you make as you build and maintain your plan and work toward your financial future.

*Maurice Stouse is a Financial Advisor and the branch manager of The First Wealth Management and Raymond James. He resides in Grayton Beach. He has been in financial services for over 33 years. His main office is located at First Florida Bank, a division of the First, A National Banking Association, 2000 98 Palms Blvd, Destin, FL 32541. Branch offices in Niceville, Mary Esther, Miramar*

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# Off the Hook

## Winter Fishing? Try Flounder and Sheepshead



By CALI HLAVAC,  
TO DO IN DESTIN

Last year at this time, as it began to get cooler, we noticed different species of fish migrate into our Gulf waters – specifically Flounder and Sheepshead. That’s good for us since the cooler weather means the fish will school up in one area, making them easier to catch once



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you track them down. “Flounder and Sheepshead are two popular winter/spring fish that anglers target in this area,” says Captain Lionel James of Lion’s Tale Adventures Fishing Charter. “Flounder will start to school up in October as they prepare to migrate during winter with the cooler water,” he says, “typically heading out

into the nearshore Gulf areas.” This move allows them to settle on natural and artificial reefs to spawn at this time. Find Flounder burrowing along the bottom, waiting for their prey. One of the best things about targeting Flounder is that they will come back for your bait if you miss the bite, making them easy to catch. Typically, they’re



found around 200 yards off the beach, in depths of 20 to 60 feet.

Sheepshead actually become more active with the colder water and are usually found hanging near structures like jetties and bridges, where oysters and barnacles grow. “Sheepshead can be a little trickier to catch,” Captain James says. “They like to steal your bait and leave the hook exposed. So, you’ve really got to feel for that subtle bite. Once you hook them though, they’re quite a fight!”

Both these fish are abundant. So, the season is open year-round for these species. The limit per angler is 10 flounder per day, and 15 sheepshead per day. Many anglers will tell you they love catching these fish and bringing them home for dinner. Both species are considered prime seafood, with a delicious white meat that’s never oily or “fishy” in taste. Before it gets too cold, we recommend getting out and hitting the waters to stock up while they’re easy to find!

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# New Gulf Lionfish Record!

Niceville resident Donald C. Vautrinot was spearfishing for red snapper in Destin Oct. 18 when he went back down to snag a few lionfish. And there it was. "I saw a monster lionfish and immediately knew I wanted to measure it," Donald said. "I got really excited because I knew the Gulf record was around 18 inches, but I didn't know exactly and we didn't have a cell signal to check it out there."

Once back at shore, he took it to Okaloosa County coastal resource manager Alex Fogg for an official measurement. Alex confirmed, at 18.19 inches (462 mm), Donald was the new Florida state record holder for the longest lionfish caught in the Gulf of Mexico.

He beat the former Gulf of Mexico record of 18.07 inches, caught off Escambia County and held by Joshua Falkner. Donald's Gulf record is still shy of the overall state record of 18.78 inches (477 mm) caught by Capt. Jimmy Nelson in 2015 in the Atlantic off Islamorada.

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) encourages removal of lionfish, which are an invasive species that could have a negative impact on native fish and wildlife.

The FWC lionfish record program includes categories for both length and weight in spearing, hook and line, and junior (16 and under) divisions.

Record holders will be recognized on MyFWC.com and can receive prizes as well.

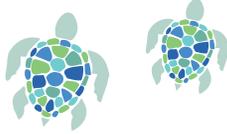
Enter your record fish today by visiting [MyFWC.com/Lionfish](http://MyFWC.com/Lionfish) and clicking on "State Records Program." Make sure to review the application form thoroughly before submitting your



PHOTO COURTESY OF DONALD VAUTRINOT  
Donald C. Vautrinot, right,  
with Alex Fogg

catch. Potential record lionfish must have been harvested using legal methods.

For state records on other salt-water fish besides lionfish, visit [CatchaFloridaMemory.com](http://CatchaFloridaMemory.com).



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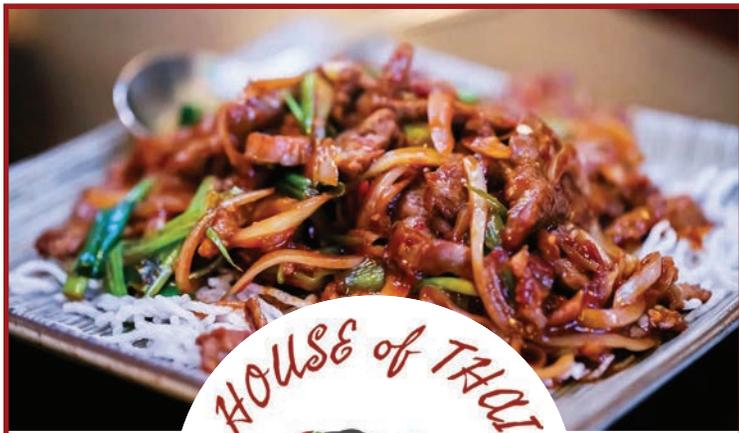
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### JoJo's Coffee and Goodness

JoJo's is owned and operated by Angela "JoJo" Stevenson who wanted to incorporate a cafe and relaxed coffee shop atmosphere to accompany her attached teaching studio. Her dream team bakes fresh "goodness" daily—breakfast and lunch—Tuesday-Saturday. Feel free to come work (free WiFi) or meet up with friends or family.

This month's fresh goodness specialties include Cinnamon Rolls, Bacon Swiss, Orange Cranberry, Strawberry Lemon SCONES, Strawberry Coffee Cake, Banana Bread, Vanilla Pound Cake, Espresso Brownies and breakfast specials such as quiche (spicy sausage, ham, roasted red pepper or keto) with hash brown casserole and best coffee ever!

Order ahead and pick up some for Thanksgiving breakfast or to accompany your Turkey Day offerings!

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### L.J. Schooners Dockside Restaurant

Welcome to L.J. Schooners Dockside Restaurant located at the spectacular Bluewater Bay Marina Complex. The restaurant is named after "L.J. Schooner" (the L.J. is for Lazy Jack) who was a cherished four-legged icon on Bluewater Bay Marina docks. The Oyster Bar area is open as well as the restaurant side while abiding by the 50% occupancy! Almost all seats offer a magnificent view of the water and unparalleled sunset with, of course, oysters and a delicious varied menu. Join L.J. Schooners for Sunday Brunch, 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. and enjoy bottomless Mimosas for \$10! Adults \$13.95; Children 7-12 \$4.50; Children under age 6 free. Call to order take-out and pick-up in the L.J. Schooner's Oyster Bar or call when you arrive for curbside pick-up.

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## It's Chili Cook-Off Time!

Saturday, November 21, L.J. Schooners Dockside Restaurant & Oyster Bar will be holding its 2nd Annual Chili Cook-Off. Participants can "Compete" or "Consume." All proceeds will benefit CALM - Crisis Aid for Littles and Moms. To register for the competition, call 850-897-2821. Tickets (\$10) will be sold the day of the event for consumers. Tickets include chili tastings and four Oyster City Brewing Company beer tasting tickets. Chili Cook-Off Compet-



itors can set up between 3 and 3:45 p.m. with event starting at 4 p.m., and awards at 7 p.m. L.J. Schooners Dockside Restaurant & Oyster Bar is located at

290 Yacht Club Dr., Niceville 32578. For more information, contact 850-897-2821 or [frontdesk@bwb-marina.com](mailto:frontdesk@bwb-marina.com).



**QUESTION:**

I get a little irritated with some people. They always seem to be happy, regardless of their circumstances. What can I do to be more like that?

**ANSWER:**

You might be surprised at some of the tips listed below that were developed by United Health Care. It's not wealth. It's not fame. It's not any of the things that so many of us think are important to our emotional well-being. These simple habits can make a difference in your life:

**Nurture social ties.** Try to connect with a friend or loved one every day. It will boost your

mood and theirs. Texts and emails are good timesavers, but nothing replaces face-to-face time with someone who makes you laugh.

**Give thanks for blessings – both large and small.**

After all, it is the season to be thankful, isn't it? Be mindful of all the little and big things that go right in your world. Writing a daily journal of all the things for which you're grateful can really put some perspective in your life. My niece has a grateful jar. When her family sits down to dinner, they all write down on a piece of paper what made them grateful that day and place it in a jar on the table. What a great conversation starter!

**Lend a hand.** You will be amazed at how good you feel just to do something simple and kind. Volunteer for a cause about which you are passionate. As an added benefit, you will be more likely to meet other like-minded people who are happy.

**Talk nicer to yourself.** We are most often our worst enemies. If we had friends who talk to us the way we talk to ourselves,

# Ask Doctor Marty: Happy People



when you have to dig really deep for it) can help you understand and appreciate someone even more.

Taking the time to assess your life and create balance in all the areas of your world can pay off in many dividends. Give it your best shot. Think of creative ways to make some inroads in the areas listed above.

Stay well.

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



would they still be our friends?

**Find joy in movement.**

Exercise is great, but just dancing to the music you love can make you feel like you are 16 again! Love those endorphins (feel-good hormones)!

**Make time for creative play time in your schedule.**

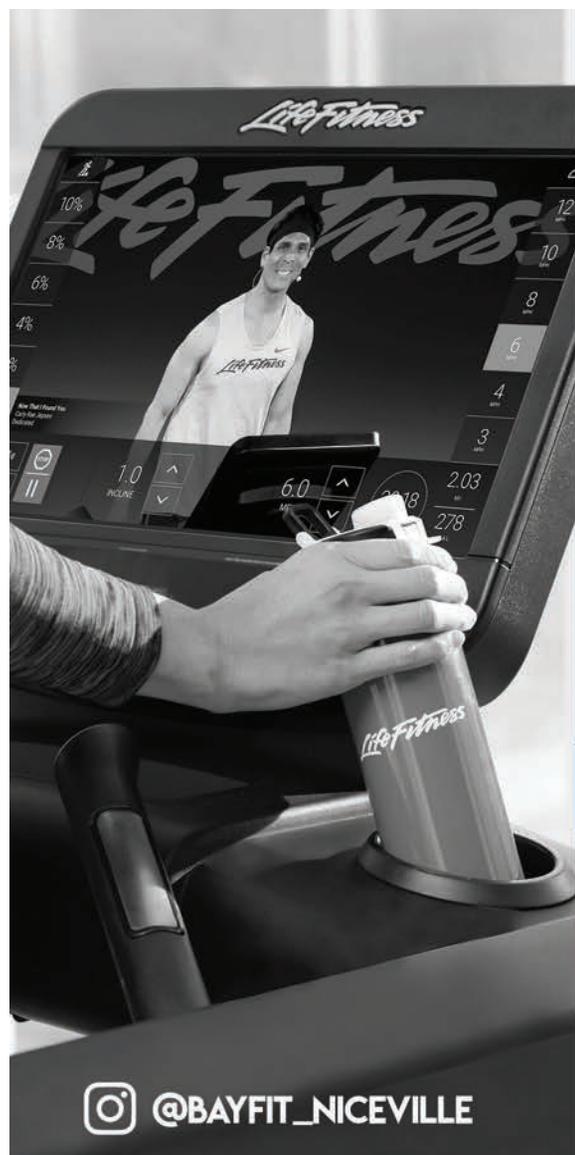
Fun activities like arts and crafts, or playing cards with friends that

make you laugh can do you a world of good. You will exercise the neurons in your brain that often create benefits in the rest of your life.

**Catch your ZZZs.** Getting a good night's sleep can be like getting your batteries recharged.

**Make the effort to look for the good in everyone.**

Finding the good in others (even



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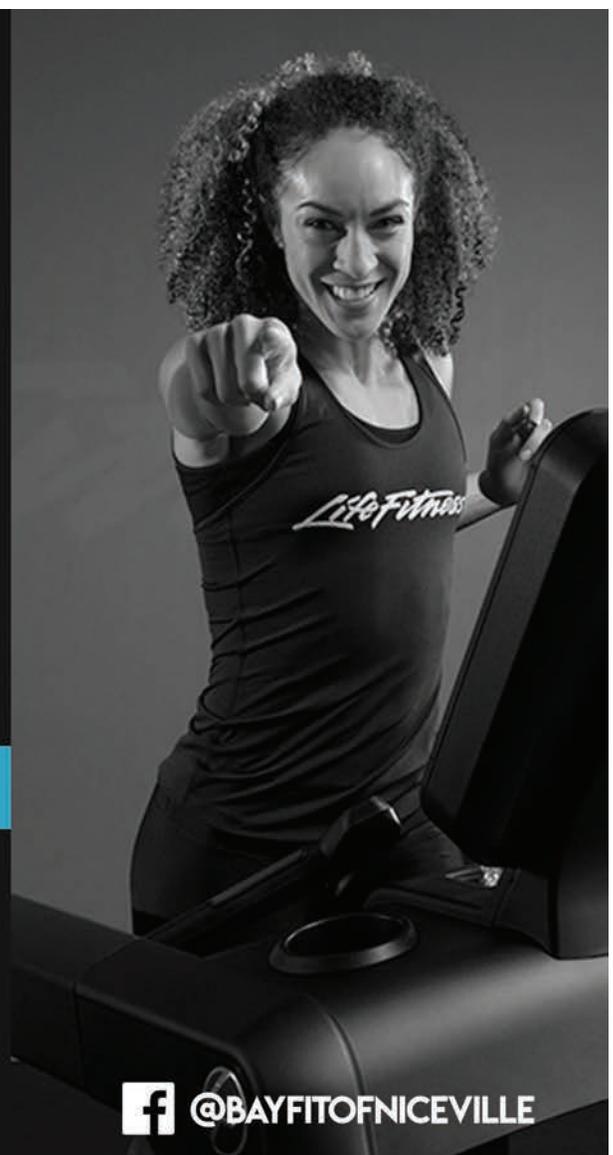
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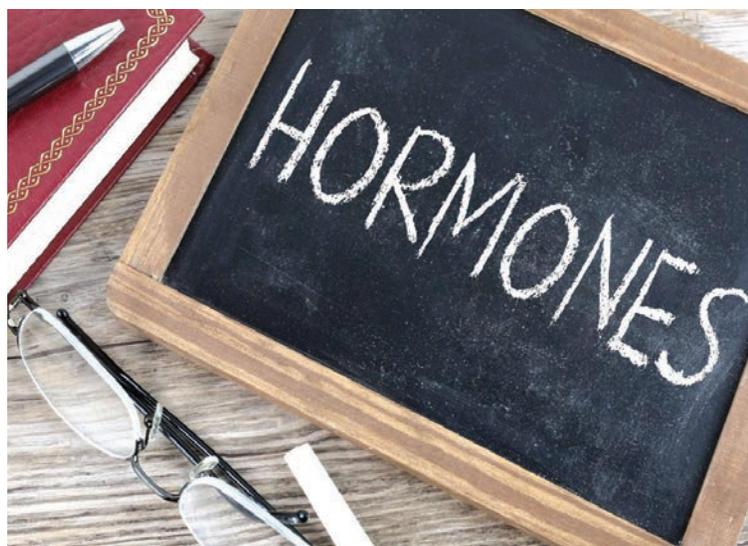
Wellness



By DR. RICHARD CHERN, MD

I used to get stressed over small stuff. A lack of plans or a last-minute change would make my head spin. Events I had no control over could keep me from sleeping and I struggled to get active. I felt exhausted by the end of each day and woke up each morning to repeat this endless cycle of fatigue and irritability. I would tell myself to start eating right and get into shape, but it would just never happen. I felt like I couldn't engage in life or conquer the day. I would have been happy to just accomplish one item on my list, but it seemed like it just never happened. Finally one day, everything changed.

As a traditionally trained physician, I looked at anti-aging, hormone optimization, supplements, etc., as a scam or just not good medicine. So, when I was approached to get bio-identical hormone treatment, I was highly



suspicious and even antagonistic about the idea. I had my labs drawn so many times looking for a problem, but they were always "normal." What I didn't realize was that "normal" and "optimal" are two very different things. My life changed drastically when the hormones kicked in four weeks after my treatment started.

All of a sudden, the everyday stresses lightened and my outlook improved. I was sleeping better at night and more awake during the day. My energy level increased and I just started going outside more. As weight started coming off, it encouraged me to eat better.

Over the last nearly 10 years

of being treated, I have been more active than I have ever been in my life. I feel better than I ever have and I tell people I feel like I'm aging backwards. Everyday life challenges are still there, but they just don't seem as big and it's getting difficult to even remember the little things that used to bother me.

I understood this was something spectacular. So, I stopped everything else and opened a clinic to provide the same hormone services to my patients. I've now been providing BioTE hormone therapy longer than any other physician in the region and currently help train other physicians how to do hormone therapy properly. We have pa-

tients who fly in from Europe, Asia and all over the U.S. to get treated at our clinic. We are the largest BioTE provider and the only Platinum BioTE provider in the region. To top it off, I believe I have the best staff I could ever ask for. They are knowledgeable, hard-working and keep me on my toes. I'm so thankful to have them.

Hormones, thyroid and vita-

min deficiencies have so much more impact on our lives than we think, and the difference between a "normal" level and an "optimal" level can be life changing.

Dr. Richard Chern, MD is currently accepting new patients so if you are wondering if you might benefit then give us a call and don't forget to vote for us for Best in Destin. 850-837-1271.

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# Life in Motion – Be Active – Be Thankful



BY LISA LEATH TURPIN,  
HEALTH & WELLNESS COACH

This is the season for Thanksgiving—that is giving thanks and being thankful. Recently, I wrote that I was thankful for movement, aka. being able to move. This year I'm thankful for that again. Use it or lose it, as it's said, but oh so true. If you find yourself a little more achy or feeling weak, you can do something about it. You have much more control over how you feel than you realize. Technology, longer work hours, and larger life demands make taking care of yourself challenging. But just like an athlete methodically and specifically trains for their event, starting small and building to their personal best for competing, so must everyone. If life or work demands more, then the worst thing you can do is stop moving or exercising, because you will be-

come weaker and weaker and life will become even more cumbersome. An individual that follows a good exercise routine will have much more stamina than someone who doesn't. That's the very definition of why we exercise. We put our bodies through challenging actions (stress) to train it to handle any actions (stress) that life dishes out. If I ask you how you would like to feel, I'm pretty sure you would say: To feel energized, strong and with stamina regardless of your age. So, any movement is good. Start small, set realistic goals, don't get too down on yourself if you fail to meet your expectations, and **JUST MOVE!** Regardless of any limitations you have, use modifications and rise above. If one body part is injured or limited, then work the others. Movement = Calorie Burning, period! No matter where you start, you can always progress with time, consistency and determination.

Here are some strength ideas to keep you moving using body-weight so you can work out anywhere with or without access to a gym, etc. Lunges, Push-ups, lying Bridge Dips, Squats, Side Squats, Side Moving Squats, Dips from a chair or table or stairs, various planks, hyper-extensions (lying face down on the floor), Pilates moves or Yoga. When using

body-weight for your workout, you should aim for fairly high reps, i.e. doing as many as you can before you begin losing your form. Start with your major muscle groups which are your Legs/Back/Chest because movements that are meant to target your major muscle groups are compound movements, meaning you have to use a combination of muscles to perform the exercise.

For example: When you want to work your chest, you have to use your arms and shoulders to do so. It's the same with training your back. So, you might succumb to injury if you work your arms first, fatiguing them out, then ask those same arms to assist in working the chest or back. Legs are a little more resilient, but still probably not smart to fatigue out the hamstrings then ask them to assist in squatting or lunging which is meant to target quadriceps and glutes (thighs & butt). Or just get out for a walk or bike ride. The beach is an amazing place to exercise, because the extra challenge of the soft sand. Walking in the soft sand alone for a good 20+ minutes will tone your legs and burn calories all over better than just about anything else. Then add push-ups, planks and dips and you have a super good and simple workout.

**Holiday Health Challenge:** This holiday season I invite you to join me in "Weigh Down to Christmas." For the next 60 days/9 weeks, let's see if we can keep our weight the same. The objective is to not gain weight during the holidays. Don't worry about losing—just don't gain! Indulge a little, but also stay active to counterbalance the extra calories. If you'd like an accountability partner, write me at beactive850@gmail.com.

**Tip:** Taking a walk after a big meal not only burns calories, but the energy needed for the walk will use up any sugar you ate before it gets stored. This is a great way to help control blood sugar levels. This is not to be confused with vigorous training directly after a meal; that would counterproductive and could be too hard

on your system. But a nice walk will help blood sugar and your weight as opposed to sitting on the couch while full.



### Fun Healthy Protein Pumpkin Mousse:

Ingredients 60g canned pumpkin puree, 225g nonfat Greek yogurt, 30g vanilla whey protein, 27g fat free cool whip, 12g fat free sugar free cheesecake pudding mix. Mix all ingredients together and refrigerate for at least an hour. Add cinnamon, maybe whipped cream, or spice on top and ENJOY!

## 30A 10K Thanksgiving Day "Virtual" Races

Nov. 21 – 29

Burn extra calories on Thanksgiving Day by signing up for the 30A 10K Thanksgiving Day "Virtual" Race, which features the new 18.6-mile distance – the exact length of Scenic Hwy. 30A! Participants have the week of Thanksgiving between Nov. 21 and Nov. 29 to complete their race. Race options include the traditional 10K, 5K, 1 mile or the new 18.6 mile stretch. All participants will receive a super-soft race shirt and signature medal.

For more information, including registration, visit: [https://secure.getmeregistered.com/get\\_information.php?event\\_id=134705](https://secure.getmeregistered.com/get_information.php?event_id=134705)

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 Business


BY MATTHEW VANDERFORD,  
CLAIMOLOGY

With hurricane season still upon us, the panhandle still recovering from hurricane Sally, and at the time of this article, well underway with named storms bearing the names of mighty Grecians of the ancient

past—or at least we can imagine they were mighty. Then again, I'm not so sure there's a story about a Greek god Delta.

In light of this very active season while in the midst of the reality that many in our communities have been already affected by a named system, and with another one looming in the Gulf, clearer minds prevail when planning for an advent rather than reacting to one.

But in the event you got caught with your proverbial pre-planning pants down, not to worry. Hopefully, this article can help get things back up again

## Hurricane Recovery Tips: How to Survive the Disaster



and you on your way to a better insurance claims outcome.

**Rule #1:** Take Photos – lots of photos. Can't stress this enough. The only way to prove that something was damaged and not like it was before is to have photos. Without them, it's really up for debate. That's why insurance companies invest heavily in anti-fraud measures. And those measures slow down claims.

**Rule #2:** Know Your Policy. Most people know they need help understanding their policy. DON'T WAIT FOR A DISASTER to know what you've purchased. Knowledge is Queen. (I omit the king on purpose as men have been running this joint for far too long and look where it's got us—maybe we should let the girls have a try!). So, KNOWLEDGE is QUEEN. And how do you make yourself royal in

knowledge? Ask. Ask someone to give you advice on exactly what you're covered for. Listen to the stories of your friends, neighbors and colleagues, and then apply it your life. Ask yourself, "If any of those things happened to me, would my policy protect me?"

**Rule #3:** The Power of Yes. How good does it feel to say yes to something?! Try this with me and say out loud: YES, I want to be treated fairly. YES, I desire respect as a fellow human on this planet. YES, I want to treat others with the same respect and love I want and desire for my own life.

Feel good? Great! Let's keep going. Say with me: YES, I desire this claim to bring me to the place I need to be. YES, I desire the people handling my claim to care about my well-being. YES, I desire the insurance company to honor the agreement we have and bring me to pre-loss condition.

**Rule #4:** The Power of k(NO)w. Not knowing what your entitled to receive under a policy and how to present the information necessary to substantiate your request is a major reason

why claims are underpaid. You must Know that No is a powerful word, too. By simply saying, No, I don't accept that answer until I have a better understanding, empowers you to say YES to something else. Making sure you have the most accurate information on what should be covered and what is not. You'd be surprised how many denials get turned around into legitimate claims. There's an old adage: Knowing is half the battle. But you don't have to take my word for it.

Here's to better claims handling skills, a better claim outcome, and most importantly, a better you!

Interesting enough, although I didn't find a Greek god named Delta, I did find some pretty neat things about the DELTA GAMMA Fraternity: Article II of the Delta Gamma Constitution: "The objects of this Fraternity shall be to foster high ideals of friendship among women, to promote their educational and cultural interests, to create in them a true sense of social responsibility, and to develop in them the best qualities of character."

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For over a decade, Matthew Vanderford has worked in the Construction, Restoration and Insurance Industries as an Insurance Company Preferred Vendor, Insurance Industry Continuing Education Instructor, Public Adjuster/ Policy Holder Advocate and Licensed Contractor. He's proud to call Destin his home, with his wife Candice and four children: Matthew, Blake, Jordan and Scarlett.

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## FPRA NWFL Coast Celebrates 15 Years Chapter Wins Multiple State Awards, Installs 2020-2021 Board

The Northwest Florida Coast Chapter of the Florida Public Relations Association (FPRA) is celebrating 15 years serving the Florida Panhandle. Formed in 2004 as the 15th chapter to be established under the Florida Public Relations Association, it currently has 57 members (and growing) across three counties; Bay, Walton and Okaloosa.

In August, the chapter inducted the 2020-2021 Board of Directors during a virtual installation ceremony via Zoom. "Now is a critical time for public relations and marketing professionals to lean into our association for continuing education, professional development, and



networking in order to stay vigilant and on top of their game as leaders in our companies and our profession," said Shaye Smith, incoming Chapter President.

Members who were sworn in

as officers of the chapter's board of directors are:

**Shaye Smith** – President  
**Jenni Brunson** - President-Elect and VP of Membership

Continued on next page



BY RICKY HARPER, C12

There is a great lesson on leadership when one studies the difference in the way cows and buffalo respond to storms.

When a storm is building on the horizon, cows do a very natural thing—they run away from it as quickly as possible. On the surface this makes perfect sense, it is logical behavior, and they

continue running away from the storm as it approaches and overtakes them.

On the other hand, buffalo are unique in the animal kingdom. When a storm develops on the horizon, buffalo turn and charge directly into it. By running at the storm, they run straight through it.

Whereas cattle maximize their exposure to the elements and danger, bison minimize their exposure. The buffalo experience less discomfort, exert themselves less overall, and simply are not in harm's way as long as the cattle are. This behavior is counter-intuitive...and brilliant!

Cows do what many leaders do when faced with a storm. Rather than confront it, they

use tactics such as optimism and wishful thinking, or they hide to avoid danger and confrontation.

Whether on the plains of the western U.S. or in the crucible of corporate office suites, our reactions to the storms we face dictate our exposure to their dangers.

Today, American businesses face storms of unprecedented proportions. We are living in a VUCA environment (Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity, Ambiguity) and we must confront the storms our businesses face with courage, aggressiveness, clarity and without hesitation. In 2020 alone, we have faced what was unimaginable just a year ago—Covid-19, widespread civil unrest, mandatory shutdown and a contested election.

There is another storm that owners must face—that is the storm of being alone at the top. It is not just cliché; being at the top can be a lonely place. And the storm of that loneliness can limit your ability to innovate and pivot. How many times have you sat in your office wondering what to do, who to turn to, where to go next, or how you were going to make it?

You do not have to be alone. Right now, there is a group of your peers running into the storm together. Called a Peer Advisory group, they are each other's sounding board. C12 builds Peer Advisory groups of up to 12 non-competing like-minded Christian CEOs. In a Peer Advisory group, leadership is developed by challenging

each other's thinking, studying MBA accredited content together, sharing best practices, and holding each other accountable to excellence. All of this is done on a strong foundation of biblical principles and the understanding that we are just the stewards of the businesses and humans we lead and employ.

We are a 'buffalo culture;' we run into the storms and we do it together. We are holding a seat for you!

Learn more about the C12 Group and 'buffalo culture' at one of two 'Kingdom Minded Business' events: January 21, 11:30–1:00 at the Niceville Chamber, or January 26, 12:00–1:30 at the Destin Chamber. Lunch is included and tickets are available at EventBrite.com

## FPRA

*continued from previous page*

**Denise Song** - Secretary

**Lori Leath Smith** - VP of Finance

**Chelsea Fox** - VP of Professional Development

**Maggie White** - Professional Development Chair

**Bobby Parker** - NWFL Communications Summit Chair

**Corey Dobridnia** - VP of Communications

**Cali Hlavac** - Digital Media Chair

**Danica Phillips** - Design Chair

**Whitney Lee** - VP of Student Services

**Kelly Curry** - VP of Events

**Hillaree Durso** - VP of Image Awards

**Stephanie Pettis, APR, CPRC** - Immediate Past President and VP of Accreditation

“What an exciting time to reflect on all our chapter has accomplished in 15 years while evaluating the ever-changing needs of area PR professionals and how we can deliver quality opportunities to support them during this time,” said Shaye. “For me personally, FPRA has provided a strong foundation for my career and my contacts in the industry both on the local and state level.”

Despite “unique” circumstances facing the chapter re-



cently, there have been many accomplishments including having the largest APR study group in chapter history with seven students, hosting virtual webinars/professional development events for the first time, and winning three State President's awards from FPRA: 2019 State President's Award for Professional Development (third consecutive year!); 2019 State President's Award for Financial Management; and 2019 State President's Award for Transformation (new award, runner-up to Chapter of the Year). “This is the first year our chapter has taken home three State President's awards and I could not be prouder of our board's efforts under such challenging circumstances,” said Stephanie Pettis, APR, CPRC, Immediate Past President.

In addition, several leaders in the field of public relations were recognized for their outstanding communication efforts in Northwest Florida, making a profound difference and using their platforms and voices in innovative ways in our communities:

**Shantelle Dedicke**, Founder and Chief Creative Officer for the Frances Roy Agency, received the 2019-2020 Com-

municator of the Year for Business/For Profit organization.

**Andrea Gaaney**, Lead Legislative Aide for Senator George Gainer of the Florida Senate 2nd District, received the 2019-2020 Non-Profit Communicator of the Year.

**Christopher Saul**, Public Information Officer for Okaloosa County was the recipient of the 2019- 2020 Social Impact of the Year Award.

**Tracy Louthain**, APR, CPRC, Newman-Dailey Resort Properties, was the recipient of the 15th Annual Northwest Florida Coast Chapter/2020 Person of the Year.

**Kate McMillan**, Communications Manager, Destin Charity Wine Auction Foundation, was the recipient of the Chapter President's Award.

**Bobby Parker**, Director of Marketing and Public Relations,

Aloha Hospitality International, was the recipient of the Chapter's Member of the Year Award.

To learn more about becoming a member of FPRA NWFL Coast Chapter and membership benefits, visit [https://nwcoastfp-ra.org/membership/!](https://nwcoastfp-ra.org/membership/)



Through **The C12 Group**, thousands of Christian CEOs, business owners & executives across the United States are learning from peer wisdom and insight by sharing with those who have **been there**. Members encourage and hold each other accountable to the core values and Biblical principles that guide them.

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Ricky Harper | Chair

**850.510.5771**

[ricky.harper@c12group.com](mailto:ricky.harper@c12group.com)

 **Musing**

# A Pastor's Ponderings: A Wake



BY RICK MOORE

A wake... no, not "awake"... a wake (according to Wikipedia) is the region of disturbed flow (often turbulent) downstream of a solid body moving through a fluid, caused by the flow of the fluid around the body. Or you could just say it is the waves caused from a boat. Near the Freeport Marina is a cute road sign in a residential area. This sign is a creative reminder for those driving through the neighborhood on their way to launch a boat. The sign reads "SLOW WAKE - 20 MPH." Obviously, it is usually a boat in the water that creates a wake, not a car on the road. This sign serves as an admonition to proceed slowly and cautiously while traveling through the community. But after Hurricane Sally hit and the waterways overflowed the roads, the sign took on a literal meaning. With streets flooded out, cars were replaced with fishing boats taking residence back and forth to the subdivision's entrance where vehicles were parked on the main road. It was some of the worst flooding in decades.

Every body... no, not "everybody"...every body of water

has a purpose. Throughout our great country, there are numerous majestic bodies of water to see. Some are meant to be wondered at. Some are meant to be explored. A countless number of streams, rivers and lakes are used for canoeing or kayaking. Water is used for drinking, taking a bath, cleaning clothes, washing cars, mopping a floor, and even generating electricity. Water is also used symbolically. Many poems and great writings reference water. The psalmist David wrote "As the deer pants for water, so my soul longs for you." The emotional attachment to water has a way of beckoning us back again and again.

Our bays, rivers, lakes and streams are treasures to be cherished, and they are to be left as undisturbed as possible. This is one reason why there are signs throughout congested waterways reminding boaters - SLOW DOWN - NO WAKE. If you've ever been in a small fishing boat when a vessel passes by going fast, you know how annoying it can be. Many times a driver of a marine vessel doesn't even recognize when he is "rocking the boat" as he passes by. There are many environmental concerns, not the least of which is the erosion caused from wakes. But the worst wake of all is not from a boat. The worst wake has nothing to do with water. The worst wake can take place at an office, in the living room, or anywhere in public. What is so disturbing is it can be caused by you or me.

Are we "awake" to the wake



we leave behind? I'm not talking literally, but figuratively. Did you know every room we walk into we leave a wake? Sometimes we may cause huge waves with one or two hurtful words. Other times we may cause constant erosion from little snide remarks full of negativity. Some people have no clue how big of a wake they leave behind and how inconsiderate they are to those they pass by, especially when carelessly sharing views on subjects such as politics, religion or sports. Hope-

fully, you and I will not be "one of those."

Wakeboarding... no, not "wake boarding"... wakeboarding is a combination of skiing and surfing behind a boat. Some call it snowboarding without snow. In this case, a wake is a good thing. The trick is to stay above the wake. Just like we can leave a bad wake when we walk through a room, we can also leave a good wake. A compliment, a pat on the back and even a smile on our face can be a

source of refreshment to others. Remember, people do not care how much we know until they know how much we care. They do not care how smart, successful or clever we are. They may never recall the words we share. But they will definitely remember how we made them feel when we were in their presence. That is our wake.

*Rick Moore is Communications Pastor of Destiny Worship Center.*

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BY SEAN DIETRICH

Stand-still traffic. I had the windows open and I was breathing in the exhaust from seven thousand cars all trying to get home. There was fruitcake sitting in my passenger seat, glazed in bourbon sauce. A Mark Twain book beside it.

The cake had arrived on my porch anonymously. Along with it, a hardback book, “Life on the Mississippi.” And a card with one sentence on it: “Thank you, Sean.”

So, right there in traffic, I began eating this fruitcake with both hands.

Meanwhile, in my windshield I saw a kid riding a bicycle along the highway shoulder. He was making better time than us motorists in pickup trucks, SUVs, and sassy sports cars.

I waved at him. He waved back. The boy looked so happy compared to the rest of us, and his smile was catching. Soon, I was smiling too. I don’t even know why.

Suddenly, my smile made me hyper-aware of the madness going on around me. It was like someone had peeled open my crusty eyelids and knocked the fruitcake from my hands. Have

you noticed how loud our world is?

Through my open windows I could hear stereos blaring adrenaline-fueled political talk radio. The vehicle behind played angry-sounding music with subnuclear bass notes that rattled my

ing, use them against me.

The first item I’m thankful for is the month of November. And here’s why:

About eight months ago, I didn’t think we’d even make it to November. When COVID first hit, I was traveling for work



molars. A guy in a Pontiac was shouting into his cellphone. It was chaos, I tell you.

But somehow, I was still smiling in spite of it all. All because of some random kid on a bike, and one anonymous thank-you package.

Then I started thinking about how much unthankfulness is in the world, and how I don’t want to be the guy who perpetuates it.

So, while a mass of idling vehicles clogged the Florida interstate system like a kidney stone from hell, I removed a notepad and began making a list.

This is a sacred practice passed down by my mother, who made me list things I was grateful for so she could tack them to the refrigerator and, God-will-

in a big city, and it was like a mini-apocalypse.

Bars and restaurants were boarding up windows, there were mile-long lines outside stores. And my first thought was: “Heaven help us when the holidays come.”

But just look at us. November is here. You’re alive. So am I. And that’s something to be grateful for.

I’m also grateful for books. More grateful than ever. During this pandemic I’ve been reading to pass the time, and I’ve never found so much literary joy amidst the drudgery of self-isolation.

When I was a kid, all I ever wanted to do was be a maker of books. I adored them. I loved

## Thankful

their odor. I loved the way they made my brain feel. Still do.

Surprisingly, the rest of the U.S. still loves books, too. No matter how technological we’ve gotten, Americans are reading the heck out of paper material. About 73 percent of us still read physical books. Which is great news because in this digital age, I get concerned that we are forgetting about all Gutenberg’s hard work. But that’s not happening. And I’m thankful.

I should also restate that I’m grateful for this fruitcake I just told you about. When I found it on my porch a few days ago, along with a hard bound copy of Twain’s book, I got warm and fuzzy all over.

Because here’s the thing. It’s only November. Fruitcake season is still a LONG way off. Which means we still get two more months of this unashamedly premature holiday spirit.

Before I could tear into the cake, however, my wife confiscated it and whipped up a bourbon glaze. This is what my people do for fruitcake. In fact, during my childhood, the only time I ever saw sober-minded church ladies lay a finger on a Wild Turkey bottle was to doctor fruitcake, bread pudding, or to pour it down the sink while quoting the Psalms.

Oh, yes. Bread pudding. I’m thankful for that, too, since we’re on the subject.

My wife is known for having the best peach bread pudding in six countries. She uses a recipe

she has been perfecting for three decades. She can make this stuff in her sleep. Literally.

I have been startled awake at 3 a.m. to find my wife in the kitchen, making bread pudding. This is what it’s like being married to a chef.

Which leads me to the end of my list—I’m skipping over a lot because I saved the best for last.

I just read a study that said depression is sky high in America. Not only because of coronavirus, but also because of the glowing screens in modern life. You can’t get away from screens. They’re everywhere. Just when you think you’re finally alone and have tranquility, your phone vibrates and lights up to remind you that the world is falling apart.

I don’t know if I could have made it through this societal depression without my wife. Which is why I wrote her name on my list in bold print. Then I underlined it.

She has kept my head from rolling off my shoulders.

Before I finished scribbling in my notebook, traffic started moving again. So I dusted crumbs off my shirt and reached for another piece of fruitcake. But there was none left. I’d finished the entire thing.

Vehicles started to creep ahead. I soon passed the kid on the bike again. He was still moving forward. Still pedaling. Still smiling. I waved. He waved back.

I’m thankful for that kid, too.

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## MKAF 2020 Festival of the Arts Winners

The 25th Annual Mattie Kelly Arts Foundation (MKAF) Festival of the Arts saw more than 2,000 art lovers in October and featured 65 premier artists from throughout the U.S.

**Winning Best in Show** was artist Kelly Rysavy from Tallahassee with her Renaissance-inspired art pieces; she won \$1600. Rysavy, a first-time festival exhibitor, layers rich earthy colors and a delicate play of light against form to create a velvety texture that breathes life into the canvas.

**The Best in Show Adult winner of the Collaborative Art Exhibit** was awarded to William Osnabrugge and the **Best in Show Student winner** was Veronika Jacobson from Fort Walton Beach High School. The Collaborative Art Exhibit features adults and students competing for the Special McIlroy Awards in honor of the late Patricia McIlroy, Destin's First Lady, and an MKAF advocate and patron.

**Award of Excellence Winners** (\$800) were Juli Juneau, George Bragg and Dorothy Starbuck.

**Award of Merit Winners** (\$400) were Jason Stoddard, Patrick Reynolds, Ricky Steele, Karron Troil and Nick Cantrell.

**Judge's Recognition Award Winners** (\$200) were Kelly Pierre, Kelly Nichole Gardner, Daryl Harwood, Royal Miree, Jenny Wang, Jeff Waldorff, Melanie Blackerby, Evie Davis, Michael Fagan and Herb Brown.

**The People's Choice Award** (\$800) was Jeff Waldorff. The Poster Art Contest Winner (\$500) was Estelle Grengs.



Collaborative Exhibit Winners were:

**Best in Show** (\$250) William Osnabrugge - Oil on Panel; Adult 1st Place (\$100) Autumn Johnson - Large Mouth Bass; Adult 2nd Place (\$75) Melanie Moore - Coastal Dreamscape; Adult 3rd Place (\$50) John Groah - Sailboat Marsh; Best in Show - Student (\$200) Veronika Jacobson - Mysterious Cat - FWBHS; Student 1st Place (\$100) Erin Bauduin - Erosion- FWBHS; Student 2nd Place (\$75) Connor Cross - Tangled- SWHS; and Student 3rd Place (\$50) Francine Caballa - Movement- FWBHS

Event proceeds help to fund MKAF's cultural season of events and community outreach programs that serve populations of K-12 students and families, including children and adults with special needs, at-risk youth, and a wounded warrior initiative for our returning combat veterans suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder.

For more information on how you can become a member of MKAF or provide a donation, please call (850) 650-2226 or visit [mkaf.org](http://mkaf.org). For a full list of upcoming MKAF events, follow MKAF on Facebook.

## The Season to be Grateful for... Live Entertainment!

As part of its Professional Theatre Mainstage series, ECTC presents Charles Dickens' beloved classic tale, **A Christmas Carol** beginning Fri., Dec. 4 – Sun., Dec. 20. Performances are Friday, Saturday and Sunday at 7:30 p.m. with 2 p.m. Sunday matinees Dec. 6, 13 and 20.

In this thrilling adaptation by Patrick Barlow, five actors bring to life some of Dickens' most beloved characters. From Scrooge and Tiny Tim to Bob Cratchit and Mrs. Fezziwig, Barlow's **A Christmas Carol** uses simple props, fresh physicality and the power of imagination to convey this timeless story of redemption. Witness Ebenezer Scrooge's transformation from a stingy miser to a man who generously celebrates the spirit of the season all year long, in this highly theatrical adaptation.

Tickets are \$32 per per-



son for adults, \$30 for seniors/military and \$28 for students. Purchase online at [www.emeraldcoasttheatre.org](http://www.emeraldcoasttheatre.org).

ECTC's Second Stage: Musical Revue will host two performances of **Christmas Cabaret** on the Boulevard Tues., Dec. 8 and 15 at 7:30 p.m. Mix, mingle, and enjoy live musical selections performed by talented performers from the cast of **A Christmas Carol**, ECTC Education's Musical Theatre Cabaret Class, and a very exciting addition — renowned pianist Tom LaDow.

Tom LaDow studied classical piano at Birmingham Southern College under the direction of concert pianist Sam Howard and later at Samford University under the direction of classical pianist W. W. Turkevich. A seasoned jazz pianist, he played regularly with all the great B'ham players among them many Alabama Jazz Hall-of-Famers including trumpeter Bo Berry and bassist Cleve Eaton of Count Basie fame. Currently he performs predominantly in the Atlanta area.

Tickets are \$22 per person for adults; \$20 for seniors/military; \$18 students. Purchase online at [www.emeraldcoasttheatre.org](http://www.emeraldcoasttheatre.org).

With COVID-19 safety protocols in place, all will be performed at 560 Grand Boulevard in Miramar Beach.

For more information, find ECTC on Facebook, call (850) 684-0323 or visit [www.emeraldcoasttheatre.org](http://www.emeraldcoasttheatre.org).

## NWFL Ballet Keep Dancing Drive

The Northwest Florida Ballet (NFB) 2020 Keep Dancing Membership Drive will take place now through Dec. 4, to mitigate the financial impact of COVID-19 on the organization. This fundraising effort provides patrons with the opportunity to join at two levels and receive benefits, including access to archived productions plus discounts on 2021-2022 season subscriptions.



NFB, like many nonprofits and arts organizations around the country, has suffered devas-

tating effects on funding mechanisms as the pandemic required cancellations of performances with large, indoor audiences. Additionally, to protect students' and staff's health and safety, the organization made significant alterations to close contact and in-person dance instruction, leading to fewer students.

Please visit [www.NFBallet.org/join](http://www.NFBallet.org/join) or NFB's Facebook page for updates and information.



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## Sinfonia's Holiday Gospel Brunch featuring D'Vine

A special holiday gospel brunch will be held in the Coastal Ballroom at the Hilton Sandestin Beach Golf Resort & Spa, Sunday, Dec. 13 at 10:30 a.m. Tickets are \$95.00 - \$125.00 (all inclusive) and can be purchased at <http://bit.ly/HolidayGospel-DVine20>.



The National Endowment for the Arts describes D'Vine as an American masterpiece, whose artistic excellence and significant contribution to its artform has left a lasting impression on the national landscape. Paula Saunders, Pam Deas and Sheryl Pollard Riggins have performed for millions of people around the world. From the Olympic Games in Atlanta, Georgia, to Athens, Greece, D'Vine has traveled the world delivering songs that linger in the hearts of audiences long after the group has left the stage. Hilton Sandestin executive chef Dan Vargo will create a tantalizing brunch menu to set the mood. Ticket price includes performance, brunch and all gratuities. Cash bar also available. (TBD on valet parking at main entrance included)

*Sinfonia Gulf Coast was founded in 2005 on Florida's Northwest*

*Gulf Coast with the mission of redefining the symphony experience. Under the guidance of founder and Music Director Demetrius Fuller and a dedicated board of directors, the nonprofit orchestra is in its 15th season of innovative musical programming, designed to entertain, educate and inspire the community. Since its founding, Sinfonia Gulf Coast has presented more than 575 concerts and events that have reached over 350,000 patrons, has collaborated with numerous nonprofits and businesses throughout the community and has reached more than 150,000 children through its Sinfonia Guest Artists in the Schools program/music education outreach initiatives. For more information on Sinfonia Gulf Coast, visit [SinfoniaGulfCoast.org](http://SinfoniaGulfCoast.org), call (850) 460-8800 or e-mail [info@sinfoniagulfcoast.org](mailto:info@sinfoniagulfcoast.org).*

## Historic Chautauqua Theater Announces Holiday Movie Series



Make it a new family tradition!

The Florida Chautauqua Theater, located in Downtown DeFuniak Springs, recently announced a Sunday Matinee Series. The first movies to be shown in the historic theater in over 35 years, the series will begin on Sunday, Nov. 29 with a collection of holiday films beginning at 3 p.m. weekly, the first movies to be screened in over three decades!

Sponsored by Main Street DeFuniak Springs, the schedule includes:

- November 29th – Polar Express**
- December 6th – Disney's A Christmas Carol**
- December 13th – The Grinch**
- December 20th – A Christmas Story**

Tickets are available for purchase in advance at [fcweb.org](http://fcweb.org). Cost is \$10 for adults and \$6 for children 12 and under. Remaining tickets will be available at the theater box office, located at 848 Baldwin Avenue, DeFuniak Springs, FL 32435 prior to the start of the show.

The holiday Sunday Matinee Series is the beginning of new events guests can look forward to at the Florida Chautauqua Theater. Funded solely through private donations and grants,

the Theater is seeking additional sponsors for 2021. Sponsorships and movie screen advertising are available.

For more information on The Florida Chautauqua, Inc. including future matinees, theatrical performances, and how you can get involved, follow The Florida Chautauqua, Inc. on Facebook and Instagram. To contact The Florida Chautauqua Theater, please email [info@fcweb.org](mailto:info@fcweb.org).

## Niceville Creative Firm Invites Small Businesses to Pitch a Project for Free Services

Can 24 hours of creativity change a community? On Dec. 18, local creative firm and full-service marketing agency, Frances Roy, will choose three small businesses (open less than a year) to benefit from free marketing services. Small businesses are encouraged to pitch all project ideas. Project examples include but are not limited to graphic design, copywriting, social media, and general consultation.

"2020 brought everyone a whole lot we didn't ask for

but the challenge and struggle has also been an incubator of innovation, growth, and creativity. Many are launching new businesses as an answer to the loss of income and we want to help them put their best brand forward. They have the courage to launch, we want to provide some fuel," says Shantelle Dedicke, owner, president and chief creative officer.

Frances Roy's 24 Hours of Creativity for Change was created in 2016 as a way to honor the agency's name-

*Frances*  
FRANCES ROY

sake, Frances Warner. Frances is grandmother to agency founder, Shantelle Dedicke, and her birthday is December 18th!

Interested businesses are invited to fill out the application by Dec. 3 at [francesroy.com/24-hours-of-creativity-for-change/](http://francesroy.com/24-hours-of-creativity-for-change/). Chosen businesses will be notified by Dec. 8, 2020.

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## Walk or Run to Support Local Education Efforts



Photo Courtesy of: Lynn Crow Photography

BY MICHELLE HAYES UHLFELDER

Celebrating 25 years, the Seaside School is a tuition-free, public charter school serving Florida Panhandle students. Every year, the gap between the Seaside School standard of excellence and the funding provided by the state grows; thus the school increasingly relies upon fundraising efforts to endow existing programs. Given the challenges of this year for all non-profits, the school is asking for the community at large to lace up their running or walking shoes and register for the upcoming Seaside School Half Marathon + 5K to support local education efforts.

“Participation in our fundraising events reduces class size, provides middle school and

high school students the opportunity to enrich schooling experience with elective classes such as gardening, music, art, an award-winning robotics program, and allows for advanced placement classes, as well as career-readiness industry certification courses for our students,” said Teresa Horton, Executive Director of the Seaside School Foundation. “Whether you’re a runner or walker, or your business is a sponsor, please know that your support is needed and appreciated more than ever!”

100% of the funds raised from the Seaside School Virtual Half Marathon + 5K race benefits the Seaside Schools Foundation, which supports the operating budget for the Seaside Neighborhood School and

Seacoast Collegiate High School.

The virtual half marathon (13.1 miles) and 5K (3.1 miles) will start on Sunday, February 14th, 2021, and end at midnight on Sunday, February 28th, 2021. Participants can run or walk at any pace during the race dates, then simply report the time to be added to the national results leaderboard.

Registration for the cost for the 5K is \$75 and the half marathon is \$100. In order for participants to receive complimentary swag bags before race week, runners need to complete registration before January 17th, 2021. Register at [runseasidefl.com](http://runseasidefl.com).



In February 2021, we welcome you to join  
*our community*  
for the **Seaside School Half Marathon + 5K**.

We are going completely virtual, so get ready to  
*sweat, connect and support*  
the Seaside School from your own neighborhood.

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IN OUR SUCCESS OVER THE YEARS AND KEEP THE SPIRIT  
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Register at [www.RunSeasideFL.com](http://www.RunSeasideFL.com)



SEASIDE SCHOOL  
virtual half marathon & 5k

## Holiday Bay Buzz

**Heritage Museum of Northwest Florida Thanksgiving Event History & Crafts for children K-5. Saturday, Nov. 21, 10 a.m. – 12 p.m.**

Join the museum for a history of Thanksgiving in the New World! What did they eat? Who was there? Kids will also be making crafts just like Pilgrim children made!

Register at [heritage-museum.org](http://heritage-museum.org). Seating is limited to 12 participants. \$5 for HMNF members and \$7 for non-members. Masks are required. 115 Westview Avenue, Valparaiso 32580.

**Fall Break Fun at The Science Center**

Join the Emerald Coast Science Center Nov. 24, 25 and 27 for fun fall activities from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. November 24, 25, and 27: Makerspace Fall Crafts from 10:30 a.m. – noon (new activities each day!); SMALLab Fall Games from 11 a.m. – 2 p.m.; Creature feature from 2 – 2:30 p.m.; Candy Corn Bowling all day. Nov. 28: Chem Demo from 11 – 11:30 a.m.; Creature Feature from 1 – 1:30 p.m.

31 Memorial Pkwy SW, Fort Walton Beach, FL 32548

Access to all events included with general admission pricing. \$10 adults/\$8 seniors/\$8 kids Kids age 2 and under are free; military discounts available

Visit [escience.org/events](http://escience.org/events) or call 850-664-1261.

**3rd Planet Brewing Shop til You Drop Vendor & Craft Fair**

**Saturday, Nov. 21, 11 a.m. – 3 p.m.**

Featuring over 30 Local vendors to include; Scent-sy Cigar Factory, Paparazzi Jewelry, Touchstone Crystal, Local Honey, Hot Sauce, LuLuLemon, Color Street, multiple woodworking crafts, LuLaRoe, Pepper Jelly, Avon, Mary Kay, Beauty Counter, Custom Wreaths, Frios Gourmet Pops, Pet Welfare and many more locally crafted gifts! Cafe Rico and Tonie's Gumbo will be on site with all your favorite eats. Live music by Rob Romans!



**Turkey Bowl Flag Football Tournament Saturday, Nov. 28, 9 a.m. – 12 p.m.**

Ages 16 & up, Niceville High School Practice Fields

Register at [crosspoint.church/recreation](http://crosspoint.church/recreation).

**Jolly Jubilee 2020**

**Friday, Nov. 27, 5 – 7 p.m.**

Join Destin Commons for a series of holiday happenings now through Christmas. With the 50' Christmas tree as a backdrop, Destin Commons creates the premier holiday atmosphere with 10 large reindeer topiary shrubs, multiple Christmas trees, Christmas carolers, and live performances! Beginning Friday, Nov. 27-Sunday, Dec. 20. Check Facebook for dates and times.

**“Geek Lights” 2020-2021 Show Schedule**

Mon., Nov. 30 each night – Jan. 6, 2021, Corner of Bluewater Blvd. and Antiqua Way in Bluewater Bay. Shows begin every 30 minutes starting at 6 p.m. with the last show starting at 9:30 p.m. Sunday-Thursday, and 10:30 p.m. on Fridays, Saturdays and holiday eves. Get up-to-the-minute schedule information at [FaceBook.com/GeekLightsOnTheCorner](http://FaceBook.com/GeekLightsOnTheCorner). Now in its 13th year, the free show consists of Christmas lights and other themed display elements, all under computer control and synchronized to music. A collection box will be located in the viewing area. 100% of donations will support Crisis Aid for Littles and Moms (CALM). The show is the technical and creative wizardry of Jeff Werner, the “Northwest Florida Geek” and Wendy Werner, his “spouse peripheral.”

**Small Pottery Angel or Tree Dec. 1 and Dec. 8, 6 - 8 p.m., \$47.70**

Create a beautiful piece of pottery with Laurel in these two sessions! You can choose to make an angel or a small tree.

# Holiday Bay Buzz

Build the piece on the 1st, come back and glaze it on the 8th! Big Orange House Designs, Niceville. [bigorangehousedesigns.com](http://bigorangehousedesigns.com).



### Niceville Valparaiso Christmas Boat Parade

Sat., Dec 5, 6 p.m., Boggy Bayou

Emerald Coast Marine and the Rotary Club of Niceville/Valparaiso will host the Niceville/Valparaiso Christmas Boat Parade! The skippers meeting will occur at 5 p.m. Registration is \$30 and all proceeds support holiday meals for local families. The parade route will last about an hour with an award ceremony at approximately 7:30 p.m. Registration is \$30. To register, visit <https://donorbox.org/niceville-valparaiso-christmas-boat-parade-2>.

For more information, [nicevillevalparaisorotary.org/](http://nicevillevalparaisorotary.org/).

### Live Nativity at Valparaiso First Assembly of God

Dec. 11-13, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m., Free

Experience a hayride through a live action telling of the Christmas Story! Bring the whole family for free hot chocolate and Christmas cookies as you sit back and watch the very first Christmas unfold throughout your ride. Then visit the craft tent for kids or pet the bunnies!

571 Valparaiso Pkwy, Valparaiso, 32580. For more information, call 850-678-4030.

### PrimeLending 4th Annual Charity Cornhole Tournament

Fri., Dec 11, 1 p.m. - 5 p.m., 1 p.m. Tournament Start, \$50 for 2 Person Team

Join PrimeLending for its 4th Annual Charity Cornhole Tournament benefiting Niceville Strong. Flex your cornhole skills and give back to our community! Food provided by Jim N' Nicks BBQ Niceville & drinks provided by PrimeLending. Prizes will be awarded for 1st, 2nd & 3rd place. Extras: Long Toss game (\$10 for 3 bean

bags tosses), 50/50 Raffle. For more information, contact Erica Nelson at 850-678-5229 or [erica.nelson@primelending.com](mailto:erica.nelson@primelending.com). PrimeLending Niceville is located at 1054 John Sims Pkwy. E., Niceville 32578.

### Yule of Yesteryear

Dec. 12, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m., Perrine Park

Join the Heritage Museum of Northwest Florida for food, crafts and fun. Dozens of vendors line the sidewalks with creative and unique hand-made holiday gifts for everyone. Fur babies are welcome, too. Register at [heritage-museum.org](http://heritage-museum.org).

### Niceville Valparaiso 2020 Community Christmas Parade

Sponsored by the Niceville Valparaiso Rotary Club, the Niceville Valparaiso Christmas Parade will be held Sat., Dec. 12 at 10 a.m. This year's theme is "Timeless Traditions."

The annual parade is made up of participants of all ages and walks of life with dozens of civic and youth groups, organizations, churches, businesses and individuals taking part in the procession. To watch,

stand along John Sims Pkwy. and Partin Dr. Businesses, individuals and organizations are encouraged to participate. For more information and parade registration, visit [Nicevalrotary@yahoo.com](mailto:Nicevalrotary@yahoo.com) or find on Facebook/Niceville-Valparaiso-Rotary-Club.

### Pictures with Santa

Sat. Dec 12, 1 - 3 p.m., 201 Redwood Ave., Niceville

Have your little one's picture made with Santa Karl at Ven-You201. They'll provide the indoor backdrop, and possibly a snack, for free. You provide the camera and the child. Donations accepted. All proceeds support Crisis Aid for Littles and Moms (CALM) Org, a 501c3 nonprofit offering housing and life skills to single moms in crisis with their children. For more information, visit [venyou201.com](http://venyou201.com) or email [venyou201@gmail.com](mailto:venyou201@gmail.com).

### 3rd Annual Santa Paddle Parade

Sat., Dec. 19, Bluewater Bay Marina

All paddlers are welcome; if you can paddle it, bring it! Paddle on a stand-up paddle board, canoe, kayak, paddle boat or surf

skis. A group photo will be taken at noon with paddle starting at 12:10 p.m. when the group of Santa Clauses leave BWB Marina and paddle East to Rocky Bayou Bridge, North to North Shore of Rocky Bayou and back to the Marina. Registration is \$30.00 and includes your Sunny Santa Suit, which must be worn during the paddle. The first 75 to register are guaranteed Santa suits. Proceeds benefit Sharing and Caring of Niceville. To register, call Bluewater Bay Marina Ship Store at 850-897-2821 or visit [bluewaterbaymarina.com](http://bluewaterbaymarina.com).



### A Bed 4 Me Wine Tasting

Wed., Dec. 2, 5:30 - 7:30 p.m., Toast Wine Bar

Tickets \$45 per person and funds raised benefit A Bed 4 Me.

You will enjoy five wines, as well as appetizers and dessert.

Please call 850-279-6665 to purchase tickets in advance.

## Local Coupons

**GULF SHORE AIR CONDITIONING**

**\$50 OFF**

OUR OPTIMUM OR ELITE PROACTIVE PERFORMANCE PLAN

Offer expires 12/31/20  
850-896-6540  
[gulfshoreair.com](http://gulfshoreair.com)

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12889 Emerald Coast Pkwy, Miramar Beach, FL  
Miramar Plaza | 850-424-6767

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Offer expires 12/31/20  
(850) 419-8612 • [www.midbayfloors.com](http://www.midbayfloors.com)  
4508 Hwy. 20 E, Niceville

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(850) 897-6400 • [www.bluewaterbaymarina.com](http://www.bluewaterbaymarina.com)  
290 Yacht Club Dr., Niceville

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Reg. \$1,490 **SALE \$1,199**



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Queen: \$2199 King: \$2799

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Mattress  
**\$32**  
per month  
with 60 month  
financing

**Tempur-Adapt Medium Hybrid**  
Queen: \$2199 King: \$2799

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Mattress  
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