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It's Almost Time for ArtsQuest!

The Exciting and Historic Arts Experience Returns During Art Month Saturday, May 7th | 10 a.m. - 7 p.m. • Sunday, May 8 | 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. | Grand Boulevard

By Lori Leath Smith

As a child growing up in Grayton Beach in the 80s, Jennifer Steele never dreamed she'd one day become the director of a non-profit that would help cultivate the arts in our region. She just knew she loved visiting the little art shop of local Grayton Beach artist Susan Foster where she would buy postcards and photos. Susan's gallery was her first experience with fine art and as much a part of young Jennifer's childhood memories as Grayton Beach

Susan, along with another local Jan Clarke, dreamed of having an art festival with other local artists to help bring the community together to provide a sense of community the art world provides. Susan and Jan began mentioning their arts festival idea to other locals such as Van Ness Butler, and the buzz began with folks coming into the gallery talking excitedly. The Walton County Tourist Development



Council, who also adminis-

tered the festival's first TDC

grant, recommended they

schedule the event during a

with a small community gath-

ering, the first Grayton Beach

Fine Arts Festival, now called

ArtsQuest, was born! Early

organizers chose Mother's

The rest is history. In 1989,

slower time of year.

PHOTO BY SHELLY SWANGER



Day weekend with the event becoming one of the first in our area to promote a "shoulder season."

Many locals, all volunteers and names you might still recognize today, were involved in this first endeavor including Jeff Ellis, Chris and Manny Chavez, Malcolm Patterson, Paul Digiamico, Doug Krumel, Nicky Frye, Jack Houston, Hilda McDonald, Kitty Tyler and several more. Through the years, it evolved into a weekend event and has moved to various locations such as Eden State Gardens, Seaside and The Village of

Moore, Jan Clarke (AQ/CAA co-founder), Jennifer Steele,

Julie Steele



Golden Anniversary: 919th Special **Operations** Wing

By Doug Stauffer

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

> 919TH continued on page 2

ARTSQUEST continued on page 3

PHOTO BY SHELLY SWANGER



2022-2023 SEASON CALENDAR

(See back cover for more details)



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919TH

continued from page 1

siblings, they are affectionately known as "America's Citizen Air Commandos."

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

One word encapsulates this unit: Camaraderie—I sensed this truth at the informal family Wing Day and the formal anniversary banquet. Yet, these two events hardly scratch the surface of who they are and what they mean to all Americans. The close bonds extend from top to bottom—starting with the Wing Commander throughout the entire organization.

They sacrifice to support the nation's defenses at home and at distant points around the globe. The Wing Commander is Colonel Jason Grandy. He stated,"We perform 13 unique missions and serve as the only Reserve Wing with such a diverse mission. We pride ourselves as quiet professionals; we do not work for the praise, but we want to do a good job, because that is what we do. The human capital in our Wing is exceptional." Like most true professionals, he leads by example.

The 919th Special Operations Wing, located at Eglin Air Force Base Field 3 (Duke Field), is the only special operations Wing in the Air Force Reserve. The Wing supports the Air Force Special Operations Command (AFSOC) and the Air Force Reserve Command (AFRC). Its taskings include operations, maintenance, security forces, civil engineering, communications, logistics, supply, transportation services and personnel functions. As Colonel Grandy mentioned, it is the most diverse Wing in the Air Force Reserve Command, performing 13 unique missions.





PHOTO BY SRA DYLAN GENTILE, 919TH SOW Trisha Brunson and Teresa Halverson with Col. Grandy

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

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

Family Wing Day: The Niceville Valparaiso Chamber of Commerce partnered with Duke Field to celebrate its 50th Anniversary. The Chamber's business community donated the funds to provide free "Nicecream" from Dippin' Dots for the attendees of Family Day.

Tricia Brunson, President and CEO of the Niceville Valparaiso Chamber, expressed her appreciation for the 919th: "The mission of Duke Field is to serve, protect and defend our nation. Its proximity to us makes it an integral part of our local economy. They are our friends and neighbors. Their children are students in our schools; their spouses fill employment needs for our businesses, while many reservists work full-time jobs within our community. The 919th Special Operations Wing has been there for us for 50 years, standing ready to keep us safe and our nation strong. They provide us peace of mind while we provide them with a sense of home—a signature asset of Okaloosa County."

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

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

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

I caught up with EFCU's Jerry Williams, a major supporter of the anniversary celebrations like so many other community

events. "Our loyalty to the military stems from the fact that EFCU exists because of the military. The credit union was birthed in 1954 because of the military institutions in this area. Many of our employees have worked for the credit union while serving in the Reserve at the 919th. Presently we have two employees in the 919ththey are serving our members one day and our country the next. We are honored to play a small part in such a magnificent endeavor."

Did you know that Niceville Mayor Henkel is a retired Air Commando? The next time you see him, be sure to express your sincere appreciation for his service.



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ARTSQUEST

continued from page 1

Baytowne Wharf to accommodate its growth.

In the meantime, Jennifer was growing up and witnessing it all happen in her hometown. Today, 34 years since the festival's inception, Jennifer is the Cultural Arts Alliance (CAA) Executive Director and ArtsQuest is one of the largest juried art shows in the region bringing in thousands of attendees from all over. Having evolved into much more than a community gathering, in a VIE Magazine article, Jennifer describes ArtsQuest as "an intricate and beautifully detailed tapestry, woven over the years by locals tooled with varying backgrounds, resources and talents."

Eventually, realizing the need for a non-profit organization to help cultivate the arts in Walton County, the CAA was formed as the official local arts agency. Its vision is to continue to make Walton County a home and destination for cultural and artistic excellence where lives are enriched, the economy is stimulated and the community is strengthened through the arts. It offers support, connection and

access opportunities for all forms of art, every variety of maker, all levels of learners, and especially, art lovers all throughout the year.

Through sponsorships, advocacy, funding and educational programs, the CAA directly connects people to all things art related. ArtsQuest was the first event the CAA ever produced and has truly become a beloved CAA signature event — one of the most significant ways CAA is able to continue to fulfill its mission. It bridges the gap for those who either lack access to the arts or could uniquely benefit from the experience.

Each year, the CAA produces popular, large-scale events, including the 30A Songwriters Festival, Valentine Tour of Homes, ArtsQuest Fine Arts Festival and the Flutterby Children's Arts Festival; operates The Foster Gallery, a local artist collective showcasing art works from more than 30 local artists in a quarterly rotation; and also presents over 250 exciting and educational art workshops in its offices at the Bayou Arts Center. Further, the CAA recently partnered with the South Walton Artificial Reef Association to launch the nation's first permanent Underwater Museum of Art off the coast of Grayton Beach State Park. Visit umafl.org to learn more about this Art in Public Spaces program that is expanding the county's artificial reef system. The CAA also provides much-needed arts funding through its Art For All grant program to Walton County's teachers, students, artists and arts organizations.

Still a Mother's Day weekend tradition, this year's ArtsQuest, May 7 and 8, is being hosted by Grand Boulevard at Sandestin and features exhibiting national, regional and local artists as well as art workshops and live art demonstrations. With continuing support from Visit South Walton and additional support from the Florida Department of State, Division of Arts & Culture and Emerald Coast Magazine, the festival will provide an opportunity to view and purchase original art from more than 100 artists who convene each year from throughout the U.S. They will display their original artwork in various mediums including, but not limited to, ceramics, glass, oil and acrylics, photography, sculpture, metal and wood. They will also compete for awards and cash prizes totaling \$10,000. Further, the festival will offer heritage art demonstrations, a CAA member artist exhibit, a Walton County student exhibit, continuous live music and entertainment and "ImagiNation: where kids rule." A full cash bar will be available throughout the weekend in Grand Park.

You will find this year's featured artist, Orestes Barrios Marañón, who was also the 2021 ArtsQuest 'Best in Show' winner, at the event. His featured piece, "Fable In Eden," is a parody of fables and everyday life, creating stories with each of the characters that live in it. His wide range of work will be on display and "Fable In Eden" is the featured image on all ArtsQuest marketing materials.

An independent engraver, painter, cartoonist, sculptor, designer, set designer and children's book illustrator, Orestes was born in Cuba in 1963, studied at the Provincial School of Arts of Pinar del Rio specializing in plastic arts and graduated from the National School of Arts "Cubanacan" in Havana in 1983. Orestes has received more than 20 national and international awards for his artistic work as well as various recognitions for his teaching. He has had eight personal art exhibitions and participated in more than 70 collective exhibitions in Cuba, Canada, Germany, Argentina, Spain, France, Uruguay and the U.S.

ArtsQuest is now part of a full month of art activities in May! Art Month Walton County is a collaboration of visual, performing and literary arts events presented in diverse formats and venues throughout the county. It includes "Under the Sea"-a fundraiser for the Underwater Museum of Art, Digital Graffiti Festival at Alys Beach, the Longleaf Writers Conference, Music on Main in DeFuniak Springs, Sinfonia Goes Pop, Xanadu-a production from Emerald Coast Theatre Company, gallery events and more.

Would you like to help and join the rich history of volunteers for ArtsQuest? Sign up at CulturalArtsAlliance.com/volunteer. ArtsQuest will happen rain or shine. Open to the public with only a \$5 admission donation requested, visit CulturalArtsAlliance.com or see the inserted Art Month program for more information. Bay Life looks forward to seeing you there!



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Heritage Museum of NWF 46th Annual Saturday in the Park!

Join the Heritage Museum of NWF for its 46th Annual Saturday in the Park event, April 30, from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Enjoy free admission to the Museum. Come shop from local food and craft vendors as well as the Museum's Bake Sale and Non-profit organizations. The Boneless Grouper fish fry will begin at 11 a.m. hosted by Jerry Spence. Just for purchasing a fish fry plate, you will get to take home Grandmother Spence's Famous Secret Hushpuppy recipe. Major performances will take place outside beginning at 1:30 p.m. with the mini-musical "Valparaiso." Live music will take place outside all day as well as a Porsche, Corvette and Mustang Car Show. There will be a kids'



crafts zone from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. and you won't want to miss the Piñata

smash starting at 3 p.m. The Fire Dept. will be on site as well as re-enactors and much more! The Annual Saturday in the Park 5K Run/Walk will be held from 8 a.m. to 9 a.m. to clear the roads for any event traffic. If you're interested in signing

up for the 5K Run/Walk or in becoming one of our vendors, please call the Museum at (850) 678-2615 to register and pay.

The Heritage Museum of Northwest Florida is located at 115 Westview Avenue, Valparaiso, 32580. For more information, call (850) 678-2615 or visit us online heritage-museum.org

✓ Blessed by Mom ✓

To celebrate this Mother's Day, Bay Life asked, "What blesses (or blessed) you about your mom?"



I am blessed to call Brenda Cook my mother! She taught us the importance of serving and showing compassion to others before yourself.

~ Garrett Floyd, Niceville Insurance Agency



My mother always thinks of others before herself...we love surprising her or doing things for her because of this. She deserves all the pampering and more!

~ Nathanael Fisher, Emerald Coast Theatre Company

I am a first generation American and it is because of my



mother's bravery and resilient, "never quit" mentality that I live in this country and enjoy the privileges not afforded to so many. To my siblings and I, she passed her creative spirit, a drive to lead, and a self-propelled motivation to create change. We are blessed to have such a Momma!

~ Shantelle Dedicke, President and CCO, Frances Roy Agency



My mom blesses me every day, because she is my best friend, and has love for all of God's animals.

~Jan Holt, Holt Phillips Services

I'm blessed to have my mother's (Sharon Higgs) support throughout all of my life challenges including 23 years in the Marines, and establishing Hon-



eybee Ice Cream and Arcade for my amazing community.

~ Duke Higgs, Owner, Honeybee Ice Cream and Arcade

My mom, Geralding Harris, was the best. She loved her three children unconditionally. Her huge amount of love she carried

Continued on page 10



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Dora Cawood
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Dora Cawood, a Northwest Florida native, has been a part of the Ruckel Properties team since 1999. Dora manages RPI's commercial, residential, vacation, and airport rentals. She is a member of the National Association of Realtors®, the Emerald Coast Association of Realtors®, and the International Council of Shopping Centers, which helps her meet customers' rental needs. If you need a location for your business, family, or plane in the Niceville/Valparaiso area, Dora is happy to assist you.



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Yeska has been a REALTOR® since 2006, and has both the Seller Representative Specialist (SRS) and Military Relocation Professional (MRP) designations. Originally from Central America, she is bilingual and can easily assist both English and Spanish speaking clients. She values integrity and honesty in every real estate transaction, and builds strong relationships with her customers.



Yeska Sand
REALTOR® Hablo Español
Seller Representative Specialist (SRS)
850.368.5936

Kelly Shephard REALTOR®

850.543.7353



Kelly has been a real estate agent serving Northwest Florida since 2005. She provides local knowledge and experienced guidance, and prides herself in making each transaction as stress-free as possible. She enjoys helping her customers, now friends, fulfill their home buying and selling needs. Her expertise includes resale, new construction, second home, and investment property purchases, as well as current home listing and sales.

Jodie became a licensed Florida REALTOR® in 2005 and has never looked back. Her greatest pleasure is matching properties with customers and knowing she has provided them with the best service and the best deal possible. She keeps buyers and sellers informed every step of the way, answering questions and explaining what comes next.



Jodie Snell
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Val understands the stress of relocating frequently and at a moment's notice, having been a military spouse since 1994 through seven moves. She and her family have lived in Niceville since 2004. She is a skilled negotiator for buyers, sellers, and real estate investors. She is passionate and full of energy, and would love to help ease your transition to Okaloosa or Walton County.

Crystal has worked on interior and exterior design elements of many homes, having been married to a builder since 1995. She became a REALTOR® in 2005, and works with both buyers and sellers, but she especially enjoys each step of the new construction process, from dirt to final inspection. You can count on her for honesty, integrity, and most of all, follow-through. Her job is to make your real estate transaction seamless.



Crystal Tingle REALTOR®
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Happenings Around the Bay

MAY

- Walton Area Chamber Power of Business Lunch 0411:30am | Hotel Effie | Miramar Beach
- 05 | Concerts in the Village: Shania Twin 7pm | MKAF Cultural Arts Village | Destin
- 06 | J.Leon Sip N' Stroll 5pm | J.Leon Gallery and Studio | Miramar Beach



Mommy & Me Craft & Canvas 5pm | Strange Colt Brewery | Niceville

10th Annual Rotary Crawfish Bash 5pm | Seascape Towne Centre | Miramar Beach

11th Annual Burning Up the Beaches 07 9am | Destin Commons | Destin

Rubber Duck Race

10am | Turkey Creek Nature Trail | Niceville

Sugar Cookie Decorating

12pm | Create with Big Orange House Designs | Niceville

- **ArtsQuest Fine Arts Festival**
- 10am | Grand Boulevard | Miramar Beach -08
- Freeport Republicans Meeting 10 5:30pm | Hammock Bay Clubhouse | Freeport
- 11 | Second Wednesday Breakfast 7:30am | Niceville Community Center | Niceville
- Concerts in the Village: Yacht Rock Revue 7pm | MKAF Cultural Arts Village | Destin

FARMER'S MARKETS

Niceville Community - Saturdays May 7, 14, 21 & 28 9am-1pm | Palm Plaza | Niceville

Hammock Bay - 1st & 3rd Sundays May 1 & 15 8am | Victory Blvd | Freeport

- Relay for Life of the Emerald Coast 6pm | Mullet Festival Grounds | Niceville Gilleran's Island Band Live
 - 6pm | 3rd Planet Brewing | Niceville
- 19th Annual Bob Hope Memorial Charity Golf Classic
- Eglin Golf Course | Niceville -14
- **Opioid Awareness & Prevention Event** 14 8:30am | South Walton Boys and Girls Clubs of the Emerald Coast | Santa Rosa Beach

Rally 4 Rest to Benefit Bed4Me 5pm | 3rd Planet Brewing | Niceville

The Art of Resin Pours with Barbara Suhadolnik 11:30am | J.Leon Gallery and Studio | Miramar Beach

- 14 **Emerald Coast Open Lionfish Tournament and Festival**
- -16 10am | Harbor Walk Village & AJ's Seafood and Oyster Bar | Destin
- Walton County Republican Executive Committee (REC) Meeting 16 5:40pm | Hammock Bay Clubhouse | Freeport
- Concerts in the Village: Six Piece Suits 19 7pm | MKAF Cultural Arts Village | Destin
- Singer-Songwriter Corey Fernandez 20 | 6pm | 3rd Planet Brewing | Niceville
- **Emerald Coast MudRun for Orphans** 21 7am | Northwest Florida State College | Niceville

FORE! THE LOVE OF ANIMALS -Alaqua's Inaugural Golf Tournament 8:30am | Windswept Dunes Golf Course | Freeport

Duchess Live 6pm | 3rd Planet Brewing | Niceville

Concerts in the Village: Taylor Dayne 26 7pm | MKAF Cultural Arts Village | Destin

> Wag the Flag | Dog-Harmony Grand Boulevard | Miramar Beach

- 27 **Rick Esguerra Live** 6pm | 3rd Planet Brewing | Niceville Lawn Games on the Green Grand Boulevard | Miramar Beach
- **Live Music with Purple Monkey** 28 6pm | 3rd Planet Brewing | Niceville











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Harbor Rats Take A Bite Out Of Kids' Needs

By Kenneth Books

The rats are coming. And the children will benefit.

Harbor Rats, an organization centered at Harbor Cigars of Destin, are a pack of men who are enthusiastic about three things: cigars, golf and helping to make the lives of needy children a little better.

"It was started by my customers," said Marvin Holthouser, owner of the 26-year-old Harbor Cigars. It is comprised of about 105 members who are interested "not in what they get, but what they give," he said.

The like-minded members began by socializing together, but quickly morphed into an organization with a higher calling.

Organized by Eric Wilhelm, an Atlanta businessman who, like his fellow "Rats," find one of the benefits of cigars is simply sitting and enjoying them with one another.

"We're all very blessed to know each other," Marvin said, "and have a good life." And they want to give back to the community.

The end result is an annual golf tournament and silent auction, with the proceeds going to the Sandestin Foundation for Kids. The first event, held in 2019, was "put together rather quickly," Marvin said. But,



Harbor Cigars owner Marvin Holthouser displays a mock-up check for the \$40,000 earned by the 2021 Harbor Rats golf tournament and silent auction.

despite the speed with which it evolved, it raised \$11,000.

Sandestin Foundation for Kids is a volunteer-based organization, which donates 100 percent of proceeds to children in need, both locally and abroad.

"We help children in our local community, but also extend support to children abroad by drilling wells in Africa and giving to needy orphanages in Panama," the organization's website states. "Our mission is to make an impact fast when help is needed the most. Support decisions are made quickly to help children and families directly after a tragedy."

"It's really exciting for us," Marvin said of the now-annual event. "It's still new, but has the potential for something much larger. Our goal is to build on our success and expand the beneficiaries."

In 2021, despite the hardships created by the Covid pandemic, the Harbor Rats event raised more than \$40,000.

Last year, 108 people participated in the golf tourney and silent auction. And, while Harbor Cigars is the focal point of the event, "to me, it's the volunteers" who make it work, Marvin said. "A tournament like this

takes a lot of effort."

Most of the legwork, Marvin said, was handled by five men: Michael Smith of Transaction One, retired businessman John Falkenstein, Jet Blue captain Chris Fuller, Craig Collins of Sandestin and Ben Tolle.

"It took a lot of time," Mar-

vin said, "They go out, tell our story and strategize."

And Harbor Rats look to expand their influence.

"We made a commitment to the Foundation," Marvin said. "We want to grow that and look for other charities."

Walton County Sheriff's Office Needs Your Help To Reduce Crime

The Walton County Sheriff's Office has identified three major areas in which they would like to see drastic changes in our criminal statistical data:

- 1. Vehicle Burglaries
- 2. Low-Speed Vehicle (LSV) violations
- 3. Deaths/Injuries caused due to violations of our Double Red Flags

They feel their primary target is tourists. Tourists come to Walton County on vacation and lose that sense of crime that does not occur when you're on vacation.

The WCSO has developed a postcard that they feel ad-

dresses those primary issues, is a visual reminder to the tourist to take safety measures, and will hopefully assist us in reducing crime while keeping Walton County the paradise it is.

They are asking for local businesses to help support their cause by placing the postcards at their cash registers, within their rental units, or within their front lobbies so tourists and locals can take them as they want.

If your business would like some of the postcards, please reach out to Mark Wendel

Sergeant - Walton County Sheriff Office, Crime Prevention, Cell (850) 200 - 5143.



Bay Buzz



The Emerald Coast Association of Realtors recently donated \$1000 to CALM house as well as \$1000 to A Bed 4 Me Foundation. ECAR Niceville Director Tammy Summers and fellow realtors members and members of the board of Directors were there to present the check. The Emerald Coast Association of Realtors cares about its community!

Niceville was recently named the Safest City in Florida for 2022 according to

Safewise, an online resource that provides tools and information for safety at home and in the community. Niceville is the only com-

munity in our area to be named to the Safewise Safest Cities list in Florida this year and jumped 14 spots to land at number 1, out of the 143 cities ranked. Safewise cities were ranked based on formulas utilizing FBI crime data as well as median income and poverty data, high school graduation rates, unemployment rates, household access to high-speed internet, redlining practices, and/or city budget allocations. Safewise's data points for Niceville-Population: 16,345; Median Income: \$76,823; Violent Crime Rate 2022, 2021, 2020: 0.6, 0.7, 1.5; Property Crime Rate 2022, 2021, 2020: 2.9, 12.8, 12.0.

The **Heritage Museum of Northwest Florida** presents a **Mother's Day Tea**, Saturday, May 7, from 1-3 p.m. Members \$20; Non-members \$25. Call (850) 678-2615 to register and pay. 115 Westview Ave., Valparaiso, 32578.

The **Niceville Library Friends** is hosting a **Pop-Up Used Book Sale** in the lobby and bookstore of the Library on Saturday, May 7, including a bake sale. The featured sale items will be DVD, CD and Audio books for \$.50 and children's books for \$.25.

Attention Golfers, Sponsors and Alaqua lovers!
Save the Date for FORE!
THE LOVE OF AMIMALS –

Alaqua's inaugural Golf Tournament, Saturday, May 21st. 100% of the proceeds go to help comfort and feed all the animals at Alaqua Animal Refuge in Freeport and those yet to experience a second chance. Golf at Windswept Dunes is \$200 per player and \$750 per team! Registration is at 8:30 a.m.; Shot Gun Start at 10 a.m., Yappy Hour and Awards from 3-5 p.m. next door at Alaqua. To register, sponsor or donate, visit https:// app.eventcaddy.com/events/ fore-the-love-of-animals. Sponsorship Opportunities are available and are designed to give you and your company great exposure including golf entries for individuals and teams, logo recognition, social media platforms and the ability to distribute materials and more.

Bless **CALM**—Crisis Aid for Littles and Moms—and get rid of your unused household



items! Bring your furniture and household items to donate and benefit CALM to **VenYou201**, 201 Redwood Ave. Niceville, meeting and event space between May 18-20 for a community-wide rummage sale to be held on Saturday, May 21st. Proceeds from the rummage sale will be used to benefit and support the moms and kids in CALM House. Contact (850) 585-1665 by Tuesday, May 10th to reserve your spot!

In April, **CALM**—Crisis Aid for Littles and Moms, hosted its 5th annual fundraiser, raising funds for CALM Village, which will assist future residents to achieve self-sufficiency and independent living. The dinner was

Continued on next page



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Bay Buzz

a sold-out success! Ed Wrann and the John Galt Band entertained over 72 guests who bid on 27 auction items with Emcee and Auctioneer Jeff Jourdan. Attendees feasted on a delicious meal provided compliments of Café Bienville, Toast Wine Bar, Tisano's Italian, 790 and 3rd-Planet Brewery. One20Bistro also provided food.

A whopping \$47,000+ was raised – an amazing amount that will be used to begin CALM Village. For more information, contact wandanv@cox.net or (850) 543-0534.

The Florida League of Cities (FLC), celebrating its 100th anniversary as the united voice for Florida's municipal governments, recently recognized Niceville Councilman Bill Schaetzle with a 2022 Home Rule Hero Award for his hard work and advocacy efforts during the 2022 Legislative Session. Councilman Schaetzle worked tirelessly throughout the session to promote local voices



making local choices, protect the Home Rule powers of Florida's municipalities, and advance the League's legislative agenda. Home Rule is the ability for a city to address local problems with local solutions with minimal state interference. Home Rule Hero Award recipients are local government officials, both elected and unelected, who consistently respond to the League's request to reach out to members of the legislature and help give a local perspective on an issue. Bill Schaetzle and his wife,

Claudene, moved to Niceville in 1999. He was first elected to the City Council in August of 2011.

The **Freeport Republicans** will meet Tuesday, May 10, in Freeport at the Hammock Bay Clubhouse, 1830 Great Hammock Bend. Registration begins at 5:30 p.m.; meeting 6-7 p.m. May's speaker is Mr. Bryan Jones, candidate for the U.S. House of Representatives. He will be speaking on his platform and doing a Q & A. The club meets monthly on the second Tuesday, same location and time.

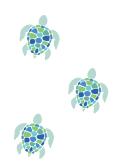
The Walton County Republican Executive Committee (REC) will meet Monday, May 16 at the Hammock Bay Clubhouse, 1830 Great Hammock Bend in Freeport. Registration begins at 5:40 p.m.; meeting 6-7 p.m. and is open to Republicans in Walton County. If you want to know what the various clubs in Walton County are doing, to include speak-

ers and events, this is the place to find out. The REC meets monthly on the third Monday, same location and time.

Dwellics.com recently named Valparaiso the 18th best place in America for **outdoor living** in its 2022 rankings! Dwellics analyzed more than 50,000 U.S. cities to compile a list of the Top 100: Best Cities for Outdoor Living. Among the ranking factors are the numbers of parks, fields, playgrounds, hiking trails, and other public outdoor spaces; numbers of trees and amount of open spaces; climate, including temperature, humidity, windiness, and cloudiness; air and water quality and risk of natural disaster.

Suicide is the tenth leading cause of death in the United States, yet suicide is preventable.

The Florida Panhandle Chapter of American Foundation for Suicide Prevention invites the community to join them on Saturday, May 21, 11 a.m. -2 p.m., for the Sixth Annual Paddle for Prevention at Juana's Pagodas and Sailors' Grill on Navarre Beach. Registration is \$30 per person. Participants are encouraged to bring their own board, and rentals will be available at the event with all proceeds benefitting AFSP. Official AFSP t-shirts and merchandise will be available for sale, as well as raffle tickets with packages from several local businesses! Visit AFSP.org/Paddle to register or follow the Florida Panhandle Chapter @AFSP-FloridaPanhandle. To become a sponsor, email flpanhandle@ afsp.org.





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BLESSED BY MOM

continued from page 4

blessed all around her and all who knew her!

~ Jimmie Harris Boisjolie, LJ Schooners



My beautiful mom encouraged my endeavors, and always with a healthy dose of love. I miss her every day.

~ Share Norville, Artful Things Niceville



My Mom, Carol, was a blessing in so many ways. She was compassionate and loving yet firm. She instilled in me to be a gentleman, to always give my best and to never quit.

~ Scott Miller, Director of Sales, Destin Life/Bay Life



My mother, here from summer of '72, blessed my sister and me with creative talent and an entrepreneurial spirit of courage running through our veins. She was a lifelong artist and entrepreneur, launching multiple businesses along the way, so that environment was our "norm" as we grew up.

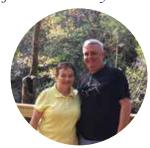
~ Marta Rose-Thorpe, Writer and Publisher; A Superior Air Conditioning

My mother taught us by example the importance of being gracious and kind. Always full of southern colloquialisms, she was quick to remind us "You catch more flies with honey than with vinegar" and "If you can't say something nice, don't say any-



thing at all." I've never heard her disparage anyone or pass judgment on poor choices. When my mother says "Bless her heart" she actually means it. "It's not my favorite" is the most she will ever say to show distaste. Her voice stays in my head as I navigate relationships, children and my career and I strive to stay gracious and kind. If I can be half the woman she is, I am truly blessed. Happy Mother's Day, Callie!

~ Amy Milligan, Cryo850 Performance & Recovery



My mom, Claudette Canuel, has blessed me with a tenacity

balanced with empathy which brought my family to live in this paradise.

~ Greg Durette, Florida Health Connector



I am beyond blessed that God chose Rosalia Sacco to be my mom. Her love never waivers. Her love is unconditional.

~ Julie Porterfield, Emerald Coast Children's Advocacy Center



My Mother, Yvonne Bennett (1930-2016), was a sweet woman who rarely raised her voice at her two daughters. She made our childhood amazing and full of happy memories. My little

sister passed away in 2000, so I always take comfort in knowing they are together. I love you Mom!

~ JoDell Haverfield, Have Travel Memories Vacations



The most important blessing is from my children to their Grandmother, Oma, and I had them answer the question. Emm: She's always there for me. She always makes strawberries with chocolate. I love when I am with her because she makes her Oma bread. Reid: I think Oma is great because she makes me comfortable and she's really nice and sweet and cares about everybody. Brant: I love that my Grandmother is there to talk too. I also love that Oma brings the family together.

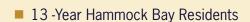
~ Chris Balzer, Emerald Coast Energy Solutions



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20th Anniversary Seaside School Race Weekend Surpasses Expectations with Over \$700K Raised

On a sunny and brisk Sunday, February 20th, 2022, 3,200 runners from the local area and 40 states took their places at the start line in the New Urbanism town of Seaside, FL to participate in the 20th running of the Seaside School Half Marathon and 5K. The Seaside School Foundation proudly reports that over \$700,000 was raised to benefit the Seaside School, Inc., through Seaside Race Weekend efforts.

100% of the funds raised from the race weekend benefit the Seaside School Foundation, which supports the ongoing operational needs, endowment and capital projects for the Seaside Neighborhood School and Seacoast Collegiate High School. The Seaside School, the oldest operating charter school and #3 combination school in the State of Florida, is a tuition-free, public charter school serving students across Walton County.

"The money raised during the race weekend is critical to keeping our school doors open" said Patrick McCarthy, President of the Seaside School Foundation. "Hundreds of students rely on this annual fundraising event. Without the race and the community that supports it, Seaside Neighborhood School and Seacoast Collegiate High School could not provide their unique student experience and reach such high levels of

student achievement."

Half Marathon male champion Steven Cornelius, 41, of Valparaiso, FL, sprinted his way into first place, finishing the half marathon in 1:12:00.01. The women's half marathon winner, Rachel Kennedy, 33, of Fort Walton Beach, FL, finished strong with a time of 1:25:54.74. Jacob Russell Lister, 23, of Birmingham, AL won the male division of the 5K race with a time of 15:00.26 and Scarlett Griffin, 13, of Santa Rosa Beach, FL, was the women's 5K winner with a time of



20:36.84. Additionally, Seaside School 8th grade student Calvin Chilton finished fifth in the 5K with a time of 19:32.71 and William Justiss, 8th grader at Seaside School, completed the Half Marathon in 1:49:37.72.

"Our community of runners, supporters, volunteers, students and staff were excited to be back in person, celebrating the race weekend as well as our acclaimed Taste of the Race culinary event," said Teresa Horton, Executive Director of the Seaside Schools Foundation. "The Seaside School is fortunate to be part of such a philanthropic community that rallied to raise

significant funds that are essential to our operation and allow us to thrive in a very special way."

The charity race weekend kicked off on Friday, February 18th with an evening under the stars at the annual race pre-party, Taste of the Race hosted by Tom Glavine, Major League Baseball Hall of Famer and

former Atlanta Braves' pitcher and the Corchis Family, owners of Amici 30A Italian Kitchen and Amigo's 30A Mexican Kitchen restaurants. Nearly 700 party-goers attended the Seaside party and fifteen local chefs competed for top culinary awards. Wild Bill's Beach Dogs won the coveted Chef's Choice Award with the dish of Wagyu Beef Loaded Frito Pie. The People's Choice Award went to The Red Bar with their array of dishes including, smoked tuna dip, smoked salmon + shrimp and crawfish + crab pasta.

"We were excited to bring back Taste of the Race for the 2022 race weekend, and as usual our amazing local chefs representing 15 local restaurants knocked it out of the park," said Tom Glavine, host of the Taste of the Race event, Seaside School Board Member, proud Seaside School parent, Major League Baseball Hall of Famer, and former Atlanta Braves' pitcher.

"Events like the Seaside School race are incredibly important to our community," says Matt Algarin, director of communications for the Walton County Tourism Department. "This event not only shines a spotlight on Seaside and its charm, but the direct support to our community from attendees provides a welcomed boost to restaurants, boutiques and our accommodation partners during a slower time of year."

Dates and registration information for the 2023 events will be available soon at runseaside-fl.com.





Coastline K9's New Location Is Officially Open!

By Lori Leath Smith

Congratulations to veteran-owned and operated Coastline K9 on its recent grand opening in Fort Walton Beach! With an elite team of prior military, Special Operations and Law Enforcement K9 handlers, Coastline K9 is a business that provides customized training for dogs and world-class protection dogs for family and other needs.

The trainers work with any breed, any age to be obedient. "But we're not your average protection dog company," said Byron. "Our leadership team is made up of special operations K9 handlers who have trained and utilized protection dogs in some of the most dangerous and demanding circumstances ever." He said because of that, the team understands the importance of security and protection in ways that many have never experienced. "These K9's serve as a personal security guard for you and your loved ones, a loyal companion that can go anywhere with you, and a highly intelligent asset that can adapt and learn new skills," said Byron. "You can enjoy the life you've created for yourself while your protection dog takes on the responsibility of being hyper-vigilant."

"The dog thing found me," said Byron. In fact, Byron, a local who grew up in Destin and Pensacola, joined the military in 2001 and served our country

as a Special Ops Army Ranger. While serving, he participated in the Iraqi and Afghanistan invasions, risking his life to protect ours, as do so many others. "That's why dog training is such a perfect fit," says Byron. "Anything can happen to anyone, and we train our dogs to handle it. That gives me a lot of satisfaction and also utilizes my experience and knowledge."

In 2009, he returned home as an instructor and taught a pre-scuba dive course for the Army's Special Ops Special Forces Combat Dive School on Eglin Air Force Base. Since then, Byron has worked as a contractor, an underwater welder, and in the medical field's emergency services. "Now, I've found another purpose with training these dogs that help so many," said Byron.

Serving clients throughout the U.S., Byron and his partner, Trent McDonald, a well-known veteran dog trainer, expanded Coastline K9 to our area. The business originated in Naples by partner Erick Innis, also founder of the RESCUE 22 Foundation 5013{c}. Erick served as Special Operations K9 Handler with his teammate, a Veteran Military Working Dog named Rex. You might have seen the recent movie, "Dog," about Rex. The two served two combat tours together throughout Afghanistan during Operation Enduring Freedom. After military service, Erick be-





gan training law enforcement canines in both the U.S. and Internationally as a civilian.

"The first step is to evaluate your individual needs to find the right dog and then provide customized training to suit your unique lifestyle." He said the majority of the K9s are imported from Europe, where the world's best K9s have been bred for decades. "We hand-select the pedigree for excellent temperament—a balance between being loving, loyal and protective—and security attributes to perfectly suit an owner's personality, lifestyle and protection requirements."

Coastline K9 dogs are sourced from its partners in the UK, Holland, Belgium and Ireland. "We rigorously assess all prospects for the qualities and attributes that will perfectly suit your needs," says Byron. Once approved, training begins. When training is complete, your new companion is transported to you anywhere in the continental U.S. and your trainer will spend 3-4 days with you providing handson, specialized training.

The new Fort Walton Beach location, the largest on the East Coast is a host each month also to educational seminars for dog trainers that are open to the public. Along with the daily business, it is also a partner of the non-profit Rescue 22 Foundation training service dogs and has become Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office police dog trainers.

Visit coastlinek9.com, face-book.com/CoastlineK9 or give Coastline K9 a call at (850) 307-7771.819 Navy Street, Fort Walton Beach 32547.

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Our Hometown Hero: Sal Believes in Giving Back to the Community His Family Loves

By Kenneth Books

Sal Nodjomian and his family could live anywhere in the world. But, after Sal spent his last tour of duty as an Air Force officer at Eglin Air Force Base, they chose to remain in Niceville.

"My wife fell in love with the area," Nodjomian, 56, said. "My boys weren't interested in leaving the area. It starts with the people. There are a lot of places you can get access to water, Spanish moss and the beach. This just feels like home."

Sal and Carla will have been married 30 years in September. They have two boys, both of whom are Niceville High School graduates. Adam, class of 2013, is a civil engineer with a masters in transportation engineering. Jason, class of 2017, is pursuing a doctorate in physical therapy at the University of Alabama.

Retiring in 2012 as commander of the 96th Air Base Wing, Sal cites the "overall quality of life" and the "military attitude, the support and love" the

Emerald Coast is known for, as among the reasons his family settled down here. And that was unique in itself: "This is the longest we've ever been anywhere," the retired colonel said.

It didn't take Sal long to make his mark both professionally and in service to his newfound home. Shortly after his retirement after 23-and-a-half years in uniform, he began work with Matrix Design Group, Inc., a national company that handles engineering, planning and environmental projects, and started a branch office in Niceville. Three years ago, he was named chief executive officer of the



local branch. Since then, he has doubled the size of the local outlet. "We've enjoyed a lot of success on the national stage," he says.

Although could have remained in the Air Force and possibly earned a star, Sal, a University of Delaware ROTC graduate and native of Baltimore, has no regrets about leaving. "I enjoyed every single assignment I had in the Air Force," he said. "The Air Force sent me back to school many times. Compliments of Uncle Sam, I've accumulated five master's degrees. I'm a life learner."

He also got to see much of the world.

He lived in Turkey after the first Gulf War and remained there for about a year, "leaving there speaking Turkish like a native." He also spent time at the Pentagon, in Alaska and in Virginia. He also spent time in Iraq, which he said was still in the throes of a shooting war, Kuwait, Qatar and "I even dipped my toe in Afghanistan."

Sal has also found a niche in local politics. He is in his third term on the Niceville City Council, where he served for the past nine-and-one-half years.

"I consider it a blessing to be able to serve the city," he says. His city council service has also given him the chance to mentor the Niceville Youth Advisory Council, which Sal's son, Adam started.

"Jason served for a number of years," on the advisory council, Sal says, "which I thought was great."

He said the advisory council

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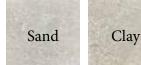




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The Arc of the Emerald Coast Hosts Its 11th Annual Burning Up The Beaches Car Show

May 5-7 | Destin Commons | The Island at Fort Walton Beach

Burning Up The Beaches is a fun-filled weekend with gearheads from throughout the U.S. Participating attendees will enjoy three days of events and show off their cars on the sugar-white beaches of Destin and Fort Walton Beach.

Burning Up The Beaches kicks off Thursday, May 5, at 2 p.m. at The Island Resort at Fort Walton Beach. Once checked in, attendees will be greeted with happy hour on the Buccaneer Pirate Cruise which will leave from Destin Harbor at 6 p.m. At 10 a.m. on Friday, May 6, the group will drive in the Main Street Parade in downtown Fort Walton Beach to show off their vintage cars. The celebration will continue with various events hosted at The Island Resort including a DJ at the pool and live music.

Saturday, May 7, is the big show day! The Burning Up The Beaches car show will begin at 9 a.m. at Destin Commons. Valve cover racing will begin at 11 a.m. Participants will enjoy a day of cars, music and more around Destin Commons.

The Main Street Parade and



continued from previous page

educates young people in civics, the Sunshine Law and other, related topics. Members also visit Tallahassee to see how Florida's government functions and it's won at least six statewide competitions, including essays and photojournalism.

Sal is up in the air regarding continuing as a city council member. "I'll finish my current term, then we'll see," he said. "I don't like to see seats encumbered."

It's clear that Sal is proud of his community service.

"I'm such a big fan of giving back," he says. "I wish more community members would find a way to do that. This community is special. There are so many opportunities to make it even better."





car show are open to the public

the Burning Up The Beaches to attend. To participate in the parade, car show, as well as the other activities during the Burning up the Beaches weekend, registration is required.

For those looking for a place to stay during Burning Up The Beaches, The Island Resort at Fort Walton Beach is offering special rates for registrants. Registration and information to book your stay at The Island

Resort at Fort Walton Beach can be found at www.burningupthebeaches.com

All funds raised during Burning Up The Beaches weekend will support The Arc of the Emerald Coast's mission to provide a path from disability to capa-



Happy Mother's Day











Share the Road: Bicycle and Motorcycle Safety

As the weather warms up, more people will be on the roads riding bicycles and motorcycles. While there are many laws operators must adhere to, there are also laws for other motorists to observe when operating near and around these vehicles. The end of April and beginning of May brings additional motorcycle traffic to our area as the Thunder Beach Motorcycle Rally takes place. It is important for all motorists to be aware of the traffic laws as well as put into practice some tips to keep both cyclists and motorists operating safely together on the roadways.

Sharing the Road with Bicycles

- Florida law requires motorists to give bicyclists a minimum of three feet of clearance and use caution/slow speed when driving alongside or passing them.
- On a two-lane road, motorists should pass a bicyclist as one would a slow-moving vehicle,



and only when it is safe to do so.

- When crossing a bike lane to make a turn, yield to any bicyclist in the bike lane and make your turn behind the cyclist.
- Do not follow a bicyclist too closely.
- At night, avoid using high beam headlights when you see a bicyclist approaching.
- Bicyclists may ride out of the bike lane into the travel lane for their own safety due to narrow roads, to avoid obstacles or pavement hazards, or to prepare for a left turn.
- Bicyclists must obey all traffic controls and signals.

• Bicyclists must not wear headphones or ear-buds while bicycling on the roadway.

Sharing the Road with Motorcycles

- You must never attempt to share the lane with a motorcycle. The motorcyclist is entitled to the entire lane.
- Do not follow too closely to a motorcycle; motorcycles have the ability to stop more quickly than other vehicles.
- Watch for motorcycles and look carefully before pulling into an intersection or changing lanes.
- It is difficult to gauge the speed of a motorcycle; they may appear to be much farther away than they really are.
- Motorcyclists often slow down by down-shifting or rolling off the throttle, thus not activating the brake light.
- Never pass a motorcyclist with only a few feet of space. The force of the wind can cause

a rider to lose control.

Motorcycle Endorsements

Florida law requires anyone desiring to operate a two or three-wheel motorcycle, whose engine size is more than 50 cc, to obtain a motorcycle endorsement on their driver license or hold a 'Motorcycle Only' license.

To obtain the motorcycle endorsement, motorcyclists must:

- You must hold at least a valid Class E operator's driver license.
- Complete the Basic Rider-Course® (BRC) or Basic Rider-Course updated® (BRCu) motorcycle safety course with an authorized Sponsor.

After successfully passing the RiderCourse®, you must obtain your endorsement within (1) year. If the endorsement has not been obtained during the one-year grace period, the course completion card as well as the "Pass" waiver status is consid-

ered invalid and you must complete another RiderCourse® before the endorsement can be added.

After you complete the Basic RiderCourse® (BRC) or Basic RiderCourse updated® (BRCu), visit a driver license office or tax collector office that issues driver licenses and inform them that you completed the course. Upon providing proper ID and paying the required endorsement fees, your Class E license will be issued with a motorcycle endorsement.

For more details regarding motorcycles or to find a Florida Rider Training Program Course, visit flhsmv.gov.

As you hit the roadways, be sure to remember we share the road with all types of vehicles. Do your part to keep yourself and others safe, by following some of the safety tips shared above.

(Information Source: www.fld-hsmv.gov)

Military News

Eglin Claims Air Force Hospital of the Year: The 96th Medical Group at Eglin Air Force Base claimed four awards recently, including Hospital of the Year, at the 2021 Air Force Medical Service Annual Awards and included individual and team awards. Individual category winners included USAF Biomedical Specialist of the Year

- Field Grade Category: Lt. Col. William J. Chalmers III; USAF Diet Therapy Airman of the Year: Senior Airman Maylen J. Dumanas; USAF Physician of the Year - Field Grade Category: Maj. Roselyn Jan W. Fuentes.

This year's Air Force Materiel Command Company



Grade Officer of The Year is Eglin Air Force Base's

own Capt. Troy D. Soileau Jr. A prestigious major command award, Capt. Soileau performed as the flight commander, 47th Cyberspace Test Squadron, 96th Cyberspace Test Group, 96th Test Wing, Air Force Test Center, Air Force Materiel Command at Eglin Air Force Base. Capt. Soileau oversaw \$9 million of equipment in

support of 12 critical aircraft and weapons cybersecurity test programs. Additionally, as the 96th Cyberspace Test Group Chief Data Officer, he made strides in transforming how the Group and Wing leveraged large data sources to create more lethal weapon systems for the Air Force.

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

By Kenneth Books

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

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

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

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

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

A wedding and event facility, called Open Oak Barn, will follow. And a campground and RV park is planned. "We want



Kate Holland celebrates between the Horse Power Pavilion's trademark



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

the campground to be open," Kate said. "I hate it when you can look into the window of the next RV."

There will be plenty for the kids, too, including home school clubs, forest activities and kids' summer camps. "We just want people to bring their kids," Kate said.

For the older set, there will be axe-throwing, with professional instructors to educate potential

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

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

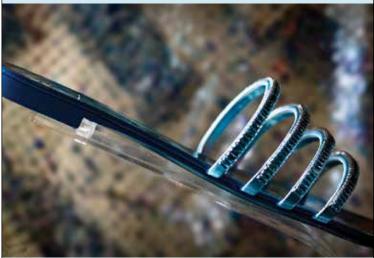
When we bought the Golden Horses, the gates were always locked," Kate said, "so nobody knew what was inside. It was just a vast waste of space." Thus, was born the idea for the Horse Power Pavilion.

The bistro is phase one of an

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

For more information, go to horsepowerpavilion.com or call (850) 520-1737.





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Inaugural FORCE BLUE Ocean Conservation School

Military veterans from FORCE BLUE launched their inaugural FORCE BLUE OCS (Ocean Conservation School) for Gold Star families recently at Vortex Springs in Ponce De-Leon. (A Gold Star Family is the immediate family member(s) of a fallen service member who died while serving in a time of conflict.)

The FORCE BLUE OCS program, made possible with support from PepsiCo, NAUI Worldwide and GoRuck, featured 11 Gold Star family "recruits," ranging in age from age 10 to 23, who participated in three days of dive training, marine conservation education and veteran mentorship.

Marine biologist and New York Times best-selling author ("Blue Mind") Dr. Wallace J. Nichols was also on hand, joining the cadre of FORCE BLUE instructors to deliver an important parting message to the OCS graduates. "It is not enough simply to be or to become a scuba diver. If you have the ability, you now have the responsibility to put your training to use in ser-



vice of our oceans," Dr. Nichols said. "Carry that wonder and awe you experienced here with you."

FORCE BLUE Executive Director Jim Ritterhoff had high praise, not only for the Gold Star family members who braved unseasonably cold temperatures to don their wetsuits, but also for the Vortex Springs staff and Holmes County residents who made the weekend possible. "We could not have picked a better spot to hold our inaugural FORCE BLUE OCS," said Jim. "From the moment Angela (Vortex Spring Owner Angela Dockery) welcomed us home, we felt like a family. And that feeling permeated everything we did."

Holmes County Commissioner Jeff Good, a retired Air Force veteran, treated FORCE BLUE team members and their recruits to his own home-cooked catfish recipe at Friday dinner. "It's an honor to have them with us," said Commissioner Good. "And to be able, in some small way, to give back to those who have served and sacrificed so

much for our country."

FORCE BLUE partnered with the Green Beret Foundation, Marine Corps Scholarship Foundation, Pararescue Foundation, EOD Warrior Foundation and Angels of America's Fallen in selecting the Gold Star children who participated — each of whom received his/her NAUI Open Water Diver certification and a FORCE BLUE "challenge" coin upon graduation.

FORCE BLUE was formed in 2016 with the goal of addressing two seemingly unrelated issues — the rapidly declining health of our oceans and marine resources and the difficulty far too many servicemen and servicewomen have in adjusting to civilian life once their service ends. It's the only 501c3 organization in the world that retrains and redeploys former Special Operations veterans and military trained combat divers to work alongside scientists and environmentalists on marine conservation missions.









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Financial Research and Commentary March 25, 2022



By Maurice Stouse, Financial ADVISOR AND BRANCH MANAGER

Will Money Become Scarce Again?

It seems that these days everywhere you go there is a shortage of service, a shortage of product or a shortage of labor, or people to help you. Americans have never been in stronger financial shape, savings have never been higher, and it seems like jobs have never been so plentiful. The jobless claims number just reported this week shows the lowest number of claims since 1969 (of course the labor market and population are much larger now). Americans are flush with cash more than ever before. And that has shown up in housing prices, stock prices (in 2020 and 2021) and other asset prices except perhaps for investment grade bonds.

Inflation is a much bigger consideration in investing today than it has been in past decades.

The Federal Reserve and the federal government applied massive stimulus and relief going back almost two years ago as America and the world plunged into the pandemic. Almost 25 million jobs suddenly went away. Restaurants and businesses across the land had to close until further notice. That massive stimulus came in two forms: 1) new spending bills passed and signed by the President and 2) the lowering of interest rates and the buying of Treasuries and mortgage backed (and other) bonds by the Federal Reserve. The latter unleashed almost \$5 trillion dollars of new money into the financial system. That more than doubled what the Fed had done in history to date. And the Fed "printed" about 30% of all money created in the US for over the past 200 years in that short two-year time. That eventually (adding to the supply chain problems) unleashed monetary inflation: Too many dollars chasing suddenly fewer goods and services. When considering an investment, we encourage individuals to look at the real rate of return (after inflation) as they make their evaluation

The Fed is acting.

Now the Fed is, very carefully, moving to address inflation and has raised its shortest-term rate, known as the Federal Funds rate from 0% to .25%. That is also known as the overnight rate. Banks are an immediate benefactor of this because any funds they park overnight with the Fed start receiving this, vs zero or close to zero. Investors are also seeing an immediate benefit as the yields on money market funds have also increased. We therefore continue to be encouraged by long term opportunities in the banking industry, which is part of the Financial sector of the S&P 500. We think that clients should consider the top 40 largest banks (measured in terms of total deposits) in par-

The Fed's balance sheet

The greater impact, we believe, on inflation, and asset prices of all kinds, will be when the Fed begins to reduce the size of its approximately \$9 trillion balance sheet. We feel that has much more impact as it makes money scarcer. The Fed is being, in our opinion, very practical and tactical as it tries to slow the rate of inflation without harming this very strong economy. With the Fed not competing to buy Treasuries and mortgage-backed securities, that could mean less price support and yields could continue to rise. Not good for bond prices but could help slow the rate of inflation. The Fed has indicated that action on the balance sheet could come by May or by sum-

The question becomes, will those two major components increase by the same amount in 2022? We don't think so. We think money will slowly become scarcer and that will mean a lowering of prices for just about everything. We do believe inflation will range from 3-5% by year's end.



The First Wealth Management is located at First Florida Bank, a division of The First Bank, 2000 98 Palms Blvd, Destin, 32541 with branch offices in Niceville, Mary Esther, Miramar Beach, Freeport and Panama City. Phone 850.654.8122.

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Investing involves risk and you may incur a profit or loss regardless of strategy selected, including diversification and asset allocation. Investors should consult their investment professional prior to making an investment

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

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

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

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



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Think Before You Act

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- Don't rule out an investment or financial strategy because it's foreign to you.

 Take the time to consider your motivations for selecting certain investments or strategies.

 Don't rule out an investment or financial strategy because it's foreign to you.



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By Joe Capers, Insurance Zone

On June 24, 2021, Champlain Towers South in Surfside, Florida, suffered a collapse of the east wing, killing 98 people. This building was constructed in 1981 with 136 units. Although building failures of this nature in the U.S. are seldom seen, it is important to examine what happened to prevent similar collapses in the future.

The investigators are likely to uncover defects in the original design and construction. Settlement of the site may also be a contributing factor, as may have been the construction of an adjacent development. None of these were under the control of the board. However, there is also clear evidence from the site that some factors within the board's control are likely culprits. The structural deterioration was readily visible in some areas, even to a lay-person and this failure could have been delaved.

The current condo laws in Florida places fiduciary re-

Condominium Insurance and the Value of a Customized Unit Owners Policy

sponsibilities on Unit Owners and Board Members. It is very important to understand the requirements and design your policy to maximize your condo insurance program protection whether used as your primary, secondary residence or rental. And make sure your packages include Hurricane/Wind coverages and flood insurance as well.

Because the association is responsible for maintaining and insuring the exterior of the building (shell), Condo Unit Owners need coverage for the replacement cost of Structural Elements With**in** – from the paint in, including flooring, fixtures, cabinets, builtin appliances, and more. This coverage amount is arrived at by calculating the cost per square foot to rebuild multiplied by the square footage of the unit. Sometimes the developer will provide this number and typically the range starts at \$60 per square foot, and depending on the quality of construction, that can go up significantly. Your condo policy should always include Special Coverage A. This is broader coverage, changing the policy from a named peril to an open peril policy.

Another important cover-

age to consider is Personal **Property** coverage which is replacement cost on furniture, accessories, clothing, appliances, electronics, and other valuables, basically anything that's not attached. Replacement cost insurance is defined as the cost to replace and/or repair the building with materials of like kind and quality following a loss. If policyholders have replacement cost insurance, they may receive advance payments for the depreciated value for furniture, televisions, clothing and other household items.

Loss of Use/Loss of Rents is an important feature as well. Depending on the carrier, they may offer loss of use but not loss of rent. If your unit is damaged and you can't use it for a period of time, you may be able to collect under loss of use if it's your primary or secondary residence. If you're losing out on rental income, check your policy to see if you have the Loss of Rents coverage. You should always make sure you have the correct policy for the right risk.

Loss Assessment is another important coverage on condo policies that Florida law requires. Its purpose is to pay up to your loss assessment cov-



erage amount (typically \$2,000) for an assessment levied by the association for covered losses to the common elements. An example of this coverage coming into play was when Hurricane Michael knocked down most of the fencing and damaged the roofs of an administration building and conference center that was covered under the master policy. Because these perils were covered under the association's policy, they had the option to assess each condo owner to help re-coup their out-of-pocket expense.

Flood coverage, which is typically a separate policy, is also important. The unit owner should carry flood insurance even if their unit is not on the ground floor. Some condo associations purchase a master program through the National Flood Insurance Program called the RCBAP (residential condominium building association policy). This policy does cover many of the interior build-out items for a unit owner, but it does not cover the personal property. So, does the unit owner still need their own condo flood policy? David Thompson, with the FAIA (Florida Association of Insurance Agents) says this: "If there is no RCBAP in place the unit owner needs his own primary flood coverage. If the RC-BAP has a large deductible and

the unit owner sustained building damage, then their [flood] policy will respond. Should the unit owner be assessed by the association for a flood loss, the unit owner's policy will cover the loss assessment up to their building limit with no deductible. This alone is a compelling reason for all condo unit owners to have their own building flood coverage."

Liability and Mold and Water Backup, which are also important coverages on condo policies should be properly structured. And if you rent vour unit, always consider excess of higher limits of liability protection. The bottom line is this - when it comes to condo insurance policies the average consumer isn't aware of their exposures and responsibilities. You should always talk to an experienced insurance agent so you can make the best coverage decisions for your situation.

Insurance Zone, founded by Joe and Lea Capers, is a full service commercial and personal lines insurance agency serving Destin, Miramar Beach, Santa Rosa Beach (30A) and Inlet Beach. Visit their Video Library on www.ins-zone.com and watch our informative video on 'Condo Insurance Made Easy', or call 850.424.6979 and talk with one of our experienced agents.







EOD Warrior Foundation Joins Carry The Load as a 2022 Non-Profit Partner

Uniting to Restore the True Meaning of Memorial Day

As many readers know, this part of Florida is the home of EOD Warrior Foundation, a military supportive nonprofit based in Niceville. Because of that, the Foundation and the entire EOD Community gather in our area at least once a year to pay tribute to the 343 Men and Women honored on the EOD Memorial Wall on Eglin AFB. EOD Memorial Week kicks off with the EOD Memorial Challenge on Saturday, April 30th.

This year, the event is even more special, because it will be held in conjunction with a Carry The Load rally to honor all those lost. EOD Warrior Foundation has announced Carry The Load as its non-profit partner for the 2022 Memorial May campaign. This partnership creates a valuable collaboration between the Carry The Load's Continuum of Care program and the EOD Warrior Foundation's Pillars of Support programs. In addition, this partnership helps raise awareness and funds that are essential to helping our military, veterans, first responders and their families. "We are honored to partner with Carry The Load and their other non-profit partners to raise awareness and funds for such a worthy cause," says Nicole Motsek, Executive Director of the EO-DWF

Join the EOD Warrior Foundation and Carry The Load at the 2022 EOD Memorial Challenge on Saturday, April 30. All Memorial Challenge participants will ruck 4.5 miles, swim a half-mile, and then run another 3.2 miles through

Eglin, Range Road, and Rocky Bayou. The course will be lined





with 343 signs, each carrying the name, branch, and dates of an EOD Tech killed in action and being honored for their sacrifice on the EOD Memorial Wall that weekend. This event helps kick off the events of the EOD Memorial Week and will begin at the EOD Memorial at the EOD Schoolhouse on Eglin Air Force Base. It is open to the

public and all who are interested in participating are welcome to register.

Supporters are also encouraged to join the EOD Warrior Foundation's team at Carry The Load to raise funds and participate throughout month of April and May. One hundred percent of funds raised through EOD Warrior Foundation's team page now through Memorial Day will go directly back to the organization to provide much needed services for our veteran and first responder

communities.

There are two ways to become involved:

Join and participate in the EOD Memorial Challenge! There are prizes for all ages levels, individuals, and team participation. The Top Team will be honored with their name engraved on a Trophy in the

trophy case held on the Quarterdeck of NAVSCOLEOD. This event kicks off the most meaningful week of the year for the EOD Community and is held in honor of the 343 men and women killed in action. Each participant will be given a name and story of one of these EOD Techs to 'carry' during the challenge and the course will be lined with their pictures and stories, helping to fulfill the sacred vow of We Remember. Registration may be found here or on the EOD Warrior Foundation – Events page.

And, people of all ages can participate by walking with Carry The Load's National Relay team, attending one of its 100 Rally locations, hosting a Carry It Anywhere event, organizing a youth Carry The Flag activity and fundraising for our nation's heroes. "We exist to unite the country through one common purpose of honoring the lives of those who have gone before us," says Stephen Holley, co-founder, president and CEO of Carry The Load and veteran U.S. Navy SEAL. "This spirit of collaboration among our non-profit partners helps improve the lives of so many today and for years to come."

For more information, visit www.eodwarriorfoundation.org.

Get Your 30A Tag to Benefit Scenic Walton

Over 1,000 locals have already signed-up to help keep Walton County scenic! Once we reach 3,000 names, the State of Florida will manufacture these new charity license plates.

100% of revenue generated by these new tags will be donated to Scenic Walton, a nonprofit working to preserve and enhance the quality of life in Walton County. This is the only Florida specialty tag that generates revenue exclusively for beautification projects in Walton County.

Due to a generous donation from the J.W. Couch Foundation, the 30A charity tags are FREE for the first 3,000 Florida residents who sign up (See QR code). However, please note that when your new tag arrives later this year, the State of Florida will charge a standard one-time license plate change fee between \$28 – \$38, depending on when your tag is normally due for renewal.

If you are a Florida resident, please help support Walton County by signing up for FREE below now, and be sure to snag a charity tag for every driver, car, truck, golf cart, RV and trailer in your household. Questions? Read our 30A Charity Tag FAQs at 30a.com/30a-tag-faqs/or email mckenna@30A.com.





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What Does Your Front Door Say About You?

By Kim Schneider

Before you open your front door to welcome your guests inside (or shoo away the unwanted solicitor), you've already made your first impression. Yes, your front door is your first impression to all who knock. Your

READY TO CREATE YOUR DREAM?

Your Search Ends Here!

front door makes a statement. It should reflect YOU and compliment the overall exterior of your home.

Wait! Before you run outside to assess your front door color and your neighbor's, you should consider what story you're



Inspiring modern & classic design solutions for your home or office while helping you effortlessly transform any space!

It is important to balance functionality and aesthetics while considering and aesthetics while actions are actions and actions are actions and actions are actions are actions and actions are actions and actions are actions are actions and actions are actions and actions are actions are actions are actions are actions are actions are actions and actions are actions are actions are actions and actions are actions and actions are actions actions are actions are actions are actions actions are actions actions actions are a

"When designing, I feel it's important to balance functionality and aesthetics while considering the unique qualities of each space. My inspiration comes from listening to YOU!" ~ Kim Schneider

- Living Room & Bedroom Design
- Custom Window Treatments
- Lighting Designs
- Color and Wall Coverings
- Fixture & Finishes
- Patio Furniture & Cushion Replacement
- Furniture Selection
- Furniture Reupholstery
- Art & Accessory Selection



kim@coastaldesignbykim.com coastaldesignbykim.com telling the world about YOU. Did you know that colors have meaning? Here's where "What does your front door say about you?" comes into play. Let's take a stroll down the color spectrum and see what your front door says about your personality.

Red = A red front door is one of the most common colors used today, aside from white and brown. Throughout history a red door has meant "Welcome" no matter where you live.

Blue = A blue front door is associated with "prosperity and abundance." A darker blue door, such as Navy, projects a sense of "peace and elegance."

Brown = A front door that's painted/stained in a light brown shade says you're "warm and reliable," and a darker brown tells everyone you're "private."

Yellow = A bright yellow front door says you're "confident and curious."

White = A white front door tells everyone that you're "organized and serene."

Orange = An orange front door radiates "excitement" and says "you're ready for a new challenge."

Black = A black front door symbolizes "sophistication, power and authority."

Green = A green front door can be associated with "money, ambition and growth."

Purple = A purple front door tells your neighbors that you're a LSU Fan. Just kidding, but it does let them know you're "open-minded." A darker purple, such as aubergine or eggplant, is associated with "royalty and wealth."

Grey = A grey front door is associated with "Intelligence," but also can come across as stand-offish. It all depends on the shade you select.

Aqua = An aqua front door radiates an uplifting sense of "friendliness," like us Destin Life readers.

Lime/Chartruese = A bright lime/chartreuse front door attracts "attention," and lets everyone know you're living an "exciting life."

Coral/Salmon = A coral/salmon front door says you're "nurturing, affectionate and cheerful." You may even be a "hopeless romantic," which is NOT a bad thing.

After reading this article, does your front door fit your personality or are YOU ready for a color change? There are so many color options to choose from, but it should be in a hue that will also be complimentary to your home.

Undecided about what shade to select? Scared to take that leap? Sometimes you just need someone with a keen eye for color and Coastal Design by Kim is here to help YOU. (Don't be afraid to buck the trend in your neighborhood, but do get HOA approval if required.) Be the house with the WOW factor. Your curb appeal is counting on YOU!

Coastal Design by Kim is located at 981 Highway 98 E, Ste. #3-346 in Destin. Reach Kim at (850) 904-6622 or kim@coastaldesignbykim.com.



Local Dining, Drinks and Coffee

JoJo's Coffee and Goodness

Owner and operator Angela "JoJo" Stevenson invites you to enter a cafe and relaxed coffee shop atmosphere for a daily dose of "goodness." Her dream team bakes fresh breakfast and lunch daily—Tuesday-Saturday. Feel free to work on site (free WiFi) or meet up with friends or family. Stop in for Cinnamon

or ham! Cinnamon Rolls and Kaloches still hold the top spot for SELL OUTS! Stop in for featured Muffins, Coffee Cake or Pound Cake which go great with Maple Cinnamon Latte or Caramel Macchiato!

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Rolls; Scones: Cranberry Orange, Chocolate Caramel and Cheddar Thyme; Strawberry Coffee Cake; Cranberry Orange Muffins; Red Velvet Cookies; Brownies with Espresso Ganache or Caramelitas! Try a Breakfast Special with a piece of Quiche or Kolache-Hashbrown Casserole. Breakfast Burritos are rolled and ready daily! Choose from Andouille, Bacon, Chorizo or Veggie. Or tantalize your taste buds with a made-to-order Breakfast Sandwich on Croissants or Bagel with two eggs and cheese and then choose if you want to add Jojo's homemade smoked jalapeño beef bologna, bacon, house smoked barbecue

next meeting! Book online at bigorangehousedesigns.com.

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LJ Schooners Dockside Restaurant

Welcome to LJ Schooners Dockside Restaurant located at the spectacular Bluewater Bay Marina Complex. The restaurant is named after "LJ Schooner" (the LJ is for Lazy Jack) who was a cherished four-legged icon on Bluewater Bay Marina docks. The open air Oyster Bar and restaurant is open to serve



you! Almost all seats offer a magnificent view of the water, marina and unparalleled sunset with, of course, oysters and a delicious varied menu with dinner specials such as Blackened Mahi and grilled shrimp with hollandaise, served over cheese grits! Join L.J. Schooners for Sunday Brunch, 9 a.m. – 1 p.m. and drink your bottomless Mimosas for \$10! Adults \$13.95; Children 7-12 \$4.50; Children under age 6 free.

Join us for our spectacular Sunset Shrimp Boil, last Sunday of the month, April through October and enjoy the most delicious local wild caught shrimp you've ever tasted. It includes Shrimp, Sausage, Corn on the Cob, Potatoes and Bread (Market Price). Call Ahead for To Go Orders. Don't miss the Shrimp Boil entertainment May 29—Coconut Radio! And don't miss all the fun in May: Wednesday Sailboat races at 6 p.m.; Thursday Karaoke/Open Mic 6-10 p.m.; Thursday Throwdown SUP Races 6 p.m. Live music all month long. (See ad for dates and times.) Call to order take-out and pick-up in the L.J.

Schooners Oyster Bar or call when you arrive for curbside pick-up. Dine-in, Pick-up, To-Go

Oyster Bar Hours, May: Mon-Thurs. 3pm-10pm, Fri.-Sat. 11am to Midnight, Sun. 9am-9pm.

Restaurant Hours, May: Mon.-Tues, Closed. Wed.-Sat. 11am-9pm. Sun. 9am-9pm

> Sunday Brunch 9am-1pm. (850) 897-6400 290 Yacht Club Dr., Unit 200, Niceville in Bluewater Bay



Breakfast: Bakery • Quiche • Breakfast Sandwiches Lunch: Chicken Salad • BLTs • Paninis • And MORE

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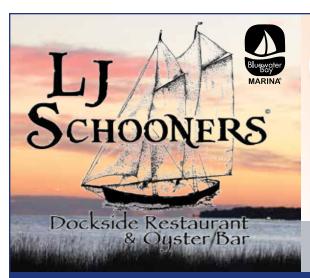




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Sunset Shrimp Boil Featuring Local Wild Caught Shrimp from Willingham Seafood

LAST SUNDAY OF THE MONTH

Shrimp, Sausage, Corn on the Cob, Potatoes, Bread (Market price)
Call Ahead for To Go Orders

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT May 29: Coconut Radio 4-8pm

Wednesday Sailboat Races 6pm Thursday Karaoke/Open Mic 6-IOpm Thursday Throwdown SUP Races 6pm Sunday Brunch 9am - Ipm

More Upcoming Fun:

May 4 Jered Herzog 6-10pm

May 6 Jody Lucas 6-10pm

May 7 Ronnie Dean Garrett 6-10pm

May 8 Wrapped Candies 4-8pm

May 13 Jackson Bledsoe 6-10pm

May 14 DJ Chris Saylor

May 20 Laura Lane Duo 6-10pm

May 21 Below Alabama 6-10pm

May 27 David Gautreau 6-10pm

May 28 LA Strangers 6-10pm

May 29 Coconut Radio 4-8pm
May 30 Memorial Day FATHOM 4-8pm

Oyster Bar Hours: Mon.-Thurs.3pm-10pm, Fri.-Sat. 11am to midnight, Sun. 9am to 9pm

Restaurant Hours: Mon.-Tues. Closed, Wed.-Sat. 11am to 9pm, Sun. 9am to 9pm, Sunday Brunch 9am to 1pm

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

Just in time for the 2022 season, Chef Jim Shirley opened two new establishments in Seaside, FL - The Great Southern Cafe's Chicken Shack and C-Bar (Container Bar). Both are located between Sundog Books and The Great Southern Cafe and share a communal

courtyard for dining and relaxing. Chef Jim Shirley has been musing over the idea of a chicken shack for quite a while, and when the opportunity arose to work with the Seaside team to bring his vision to fruition, he saw it was time to cross the road and get to the glorious fried

chicken on the other side. After all, there are few things more Southern than fried chicken, and Jim loves the opportunity to showcase Southern food culture in Seaside. Especially as the geographic diversity of guests to the beach town continues to grow every year, and some might not







be as familiar with 'true' southern food.

Slowly marinated in sweet tea and then tossed in Jim's secret breading recipe, each piece of chicken is cooked to perfection. While the 2-piece, 3-piece, and tenders meals are meant to share, you might find you're fighting over the last bites! Don't worry, though; the "Bucket O'Chicken" - eight pieces of white and dark meat chicken. four sides, and four rolls - is sure to have a little something for everyone. Along with this allstar lineup, guests can indulge their side cravings with french

fries, loaded potato salad, deviled potato salad, brussel sprout slaw, and the best garlic butter rolls you have ever tasted. The Chicken Shack's structure is also perfect for families and groups wanting to share a delicious yet casual meal together. Orders are made at the walk-up window, and then guests can either sit in the large, open seating area or take their food-to-go as they explore Seaside.

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





Off the Hook

Off the Hook: Spring Fishing

By Cali Hlavac, To Do In Destin

We are loving this warm weather and the fish are, too! We've had some rough waters this month, but overall the bite has been decent. The Choctawhatchee Bay is a bit slow this time of year, but the Gulf action has been picking up.

March 1st kicked off Trigger-fish season, which many offshore anglers were excited for. In our area, Triggerfish are normally found nearshore and offshore, hanging around artificial reefs and natural bottoms, in depths between 50 to 300 feet. They share the same habitat as Red Snapper and Gag Grouper. So, catching a Triggerfish is usually a sign that additional species are below as well.

The average size of the Triggerfish ranges from 12 inches to 20 inches, with females growing larger. They are a distinctive gray in color and have the ability to change their color while



swimming in open waters. The mouth is small but mighty, containing a set of sharp teeth even the most experienced anglers don't want to mess with. Along with the teeth, Triggerfish have a strong jaw that can make a hook difficult to set.

We like to call them Bait Stealers which is exactly what they like to do. Triggerfish are aggressive feeders; a plus if you've set out to catch them specifically, but a con if you were trying to reach the Red Snapper or Grouper they hang around with. Shrimp and any sort of cut bait on a circle hook will do the trick as they typically chase anything they perceive as being food. Catch and keep them legally until May 1.

Also, in April, the Cobia will begin their migration through our area with the warmer water temps. They are best found by sight fishing, running the lengths of the beaches until you spot one, or around buoys, navigational markers, structures or other large fish where they feel safe. An average Cobia is 20-40 lbs., with a 60 lb. fish considered a large catch.

Cobia put up a great fight and are often compared to or mistaken for a shark once they hit the line and take off. You can keep Cobia year-round, with a size minimum of 33" and 2 per boat. They are a tasty, white meat fish with a hint of lemon flavor -great as grilled steaks. This is a season our local anglers look forward to year round!



Lionfish Tourney Time!

visit www.emeraldcoastopen.com. **ECO Pre-tournament:** February 1–May 12, 2022

ECO Main tournament:
May 13–14, 2022, Destin
Harbor

Lionfish Removal and Awareness Festival:

May 14–15, 2022, Harbor-Walk Village

Emerald Coast Restaurant Week:

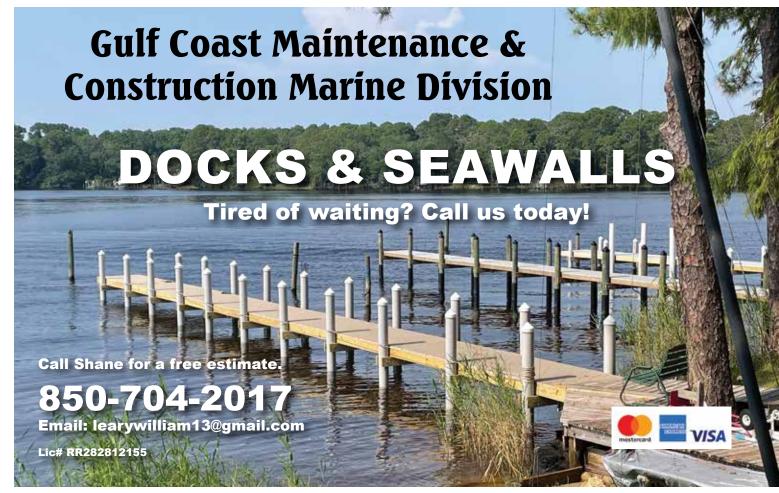
May 8-14, 2022 (AJs Seafood & Oyster Bar May 14!)

It's time for the world's largest lionfish tournament, the Emerald Coast Open, held right here at the Destin Harbor. Calling all spearfishermen to join the tournament and remove this invasive species. Participate and win cash and Gear prizes! The more lionfish you remove, the more prizes you can win! There's huge cash prizes for the Main Tournament. In 2019, ECO had 189 participants and removed 19,167 lionfish throughout the tournament – 14,119 in 3 days! ECO gave away \$48,000 in cash prizes, and over \$10,000 in gear prizes.

Families will enjoy the Lionfish Removal and Awareness Festival with educational opportunities, lionfish tasting and festivities. Bring the family and learn about lionfish, see lionfish, and even taste lionfish!

Sample lionfish at one of Destin-Fort Walton Beach's featured restaurants during the Emerald Coast Open Lionfish Restaurant Week! Local chefs will highlight lionfish in unique dishes to help bring awareness to the lionfish invasion in the Gulf of Mexico.

For a full schedule of events



Off the Hook

Family-Owned The Ships Chandler Opens in Freeport Bringing Over 40 Years of Experience

By Lori Leath Smith

The oldest fishing tackle business in Destin has now opened its second marine and service center in Freeport! The Ships Chandler, located at 17309 U.S. Hwy, 331, has over 14 acres of space! The new marine and service center supplies the area with new and used boats, outboard motors, and everything in between to make sure the boater is set up for success and supported in their fishing or boating journey.

"We were drawn to Freeport, because there's a big need to service the locals and areas surrounding the city with excellent service," owner Peter Wright, Jr., said. "It's easy to get to from all over the Panhandle and lower Alabama without having to deal with the traffic of the beach. "It's quickly becoming the hub of everything Walton County has to offer. We're excited to become a part of the community and help it grow with the help

of all the surrounding communities in Walton County."

The Ships Chandler is a family-run boating and fishing business that opened in Destin 42 years ago. "Our goal since day one has been to help fishermen become better in their craft," said Peter, Jr.

The business was started originally by Peter Wright, Jr.'s grandfather, Bill Wright and father, Peter Wright. The Wright family relocated to Destin in 1970 on a military assignment to Eglin Air Force Base. Destin was a small fishing village during this time, and after graduating from high school in 1976, Peter, Jr.'s father decided fishing was his future. He took the time to travel around, from the Keys to the Virgin Islands, Bahamas to the Caribbean, where his fishing knowledge grew. In 1979, he returned to Destin and instead of fishing to make a living, they opened The Ships Chandler in Destin. Peter Wright, Jr., having



grown up with the business, later joined. The name, The Ships Chandler, made sense since a ship's chandler in the old days was a person who provided supplies, provisions, cargo and crew to the boats.

When asked what it was like back then, Peter Jr., shared one story that came to mind. "{My grandparents, Bill and Mary Wright,} were the seventh house built on Holiday Isle, a two-story house," Peter Jr. said.



"My grandmother could sit on the top deck of their two-story home and watch my grandfather go by boat from the back and through the Harbor, out of the pass, and into the Gulf. With hardly any houses built, she could watch him the entire way." Almost unheard of these days!

At the new Freeport location, customers can expect to find state-of-the-art personal service including new and used boat brands such as Maverick, Hewes, Pathfinder and Cobia. The new center is also a brokerage for boat sales, engine sales for Yamaha and Mercury Outboards, engine service and warranty for Yamaha and Mercury

Continued on next page





17309 U.S. Hwy, 331, Freeport | (850) 837-9306 theshipschandler.com | info@theshipschandler.com

- Custom Electronics/Rigging Installation
- Yamaha Outboard Service/Sales/Parts/Warranty Center
- New and Used Boat Sales

Maverick, Hewes, Pathfinder, and Cobia Boats



Off the Hook

The 65th Annual Blessing of the Fleet

Destin's 65th Annual Blessing of the Fleet will be held this year on Ascension Day, Thursday, May 26, 2022 at the docks behind Brotula's Seafood House and Steamer Restaurant on the Destin Harbor. The event begins at 4 p.m. with a Captains' Worship and Prayer Service to be held under a large tent. The public is encouraged to attend. Following the service, around 5:15 p.m., local clergy will process to the dock to begin blessing those vessels which have pre-registered. All commercial fishing, safety and recreational vessels that make their living on the sea are invited to participate. Last year 140 fishing boats and vessels were blessed.

A community fish fry will begin at 5:30 p.m. with a suggested meal donation. Many community sponsors help make the Blessing of the Fleet possible. Our special thanks go to Aerial Seafood and Brotula's Seafood House and Steamer restaurant for making the fish fry possible. Thanks to the City of Destin, free parking will be available across the street from Brotula's at the City Parking Lot on May 26th from 3 p.m.. - until. 65th Annual Blessing of the Fleet tee shirts will be on sale, near the docks on the day of the event.

To pre-register your vessel: If you and your vessel make your living on the sea and would like to receive a blessing, please register your watercraft by emailing immanuel@iacdestin. org, or by calling the church at 850-837-6324 with your vessel's name, captain's name, mailing address, email address and phone number.



Many local captains, crew and their vessels which make their living on the sea return year after year for their blessing during Destin's long-standing tradition — the Blessing of the Fleet.



Bishop Philip Jones of the Anglican Mission (in red), Rev. James Calderazzo of Safe Harbor Presbyterian (in black) and Pastor Matt Metcalf of Shoreline Church (far right), along with other local clergy speak prayers of protection over commercial vessels in the line-up.

SHIPS CHANDLER

continued from previous page

Outboards, engine parts and accessories, boat/marine repair and maintenance services, boat/marine parts and accessories, gelcoat repair, boat detail service, and custom marine work including electronics, boat restoration and a refurbish shop. They even have an inshore fishing guide service if you'd like personal instruction or just a fun day of fishing. "The difference in this new location and our Destin location is ROOM," said Peter, Jr. "We have tons of it! And, other than tackle, we offer

the same products and services as the Destin location."

Peter, Jr. says even though they're expanding, "We'll always keep the same small-town, family-owned business feel. When businesses get too big, they lose track of the customer service side of things quickly. We know how important that is to people. Our service staff are professionals, not just employees, that take extreme pride in their work," he said.

With more than four decades of experience, The Ships Chandler staff knows the best boats for Panhandle area fishing, and what the best tackle, bait and locations are for what's

biting each season. Stop by with questions or just to introduce yourself anytime. They'll even evaluate your needs and make recommendations. "We talk boats and fishing all day and we'd love to talk with you. We won't try to sell you something you don't need," Peter, Jr. said.

The Ships Chandler will be constructing Phase Two of the project in the coming months which will include 170 covered spaces for boat and RV storage.

Visit theshipschandler.com, give Peter a call at (850) 837-9306 or email info@theshipschandler.com.

Also during the week of Ascension Day, "Destin's Week of Blessings" 18-year tradition offers additional faith-focused family-oriented events which create greater opportunities to bless and support the Destin community.

For more information on the Blessing of the Fleet, visit iacdestin.org/special-events/blessing-of-the-fleet, contact Immanuel Anglican Church at immanuel@iacdestin.org or 850-837-6324. Immanuel Anglican Church is located at 250 Indian Bayou Trail in Destin, just north of the Nancy Weidenhamer Dog Park in Destin.

VISIT **MYBAYLIFENWFL.COM**TO READ OUR LATEST ISSUE







Grammy-Nominee Jontavious Willis to Headline Under The Sea Event

Blues artist and GRAM-MY-nominee Jontavious Willis will headline the 4th annual "Under The Sea" fundraiser for the Underwater Museum of Art (UMA), a collaborative project with the South Walton Artificial Reef Association (SWARA). "Under the Sea" will take place on Wednesday, May 4th, 6-9 p.m., in Grand Boulevard's Town Center and is the official kick-off party for Art Month Walton County, a month-long celebration of the Arts that includes many diverse cultural events throughout the month of May.



Every generation or so, a young bluesman bursts onto the scene and sends a jolt through the blues community. Jontavious Willis may just have that effect on people. The 24-year-old multi-instrumentalist was nominated for a GRAMMY in 2020 thanks to his latest album, Spectacular Class. Through original lyrics written by Willis himself, the gifted musician delivered a timeless album that features dynamic vocals and all types of blues: Delta, Piedmont, Texas and Gospel. His stand-out fingerpicking, flat-picking and slide prowess are also on display.

In addition to enjoying amazing music, "Under The Sea" party-goers will have an exclusive chance to meet the 2022 UMA artists and see several of the original works they have created before the sculptures are deployed to the UMA site. Special food menu items from some of South Walton's most popular restaurants, including Black Bear Bread Company (Chef Phil McDonald), Blue Mabel (Chef David Cunningham), Down Island Gulf Seafood Restaurant (Chef Brannon Janca), Farm & Fire (Chef Joyce Russell), Grayton Beach Catering (Chef Blake Bohannon), Roux 30a/Nanbu (Chef Nikhil Abuvala), and Stinky's Fish Camp (Chef Tim Chyrek) will be available, along with a cash bar featuring signature cocktails, wine and beer.

Tickets are \$50 per person in advance and \$60 per person day of the event, if available. They are on sale now at CulturalArtsAlliance.com/upcoming-events.

Fishing News

One million registered Florida recreational vessels

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) today announced that Florida continues to lead the nation and has passed the mark of 1 million registered recreational vessels across the state. Florida, with its great year-round weather and plenty of access to fresh and salt water, is the "Boating Capital of the World." With more people calling Florida

home and more vessels on the water, it's important that residents and visitors practice safe

The top five counties for vessel registration in Florida are Miami-Dade (74,622), Pinellas (53,867), Lee (50,304), Broward (47,741) and Hillsborough (41,495).

"Crossing the million mark just confirms what we always knew - Florida is the top state for boaters. And with more boats on the water, we want to spread the word about boating safety to both residents and visitors enjoying Florida's yearround boating season," said Maj. Rob Beaton, Boating and Waterways Section Leader. "A safe day while boating is a great day. Nothing can ruin a fun and memorable experience on the water faster than a boating accident."

Boaters are encouraged to wear their life jackets, maintain 360-degree awareness and know the dangers (and penalties) for operating a vessel while impaired.

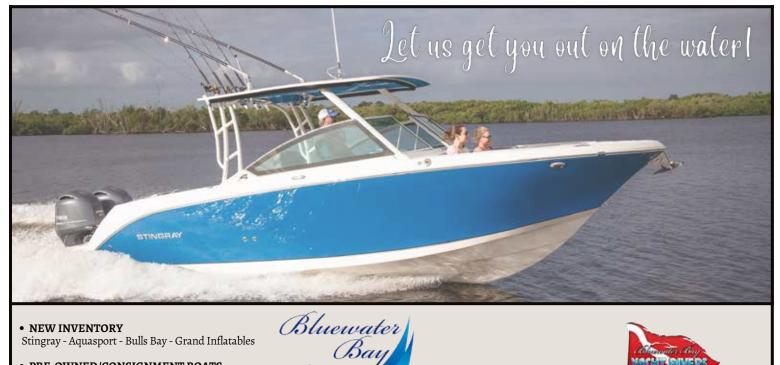
Visit MyFWC.com/Boating for boating safety tips. You can even search there for the Florida Boat Ramp Finder to help you find a great place to launch vour boat!

Nets on the Beach?

If you've been getting out to the public beach lately, you might have seen poles and nets that extend from the shoreline out into the water and wondered what it was and what it's doing there. It's actually a NuShore beach renourishment project facilitated by Okaloosa Countyporous "groynes" or nets in the form of fencing to capture sand to widen the beach and extend the shoreline seaward. Having kicked off in November 2021, this "fencing" results in sand accumulation that widens the beach and extends the shoreline seaward, thereby renourishing the beaches and increasing coastal resiliency to storms and other erosive events. Designed to help restore Okaloosa County beaches where steady erosion and beach loss has already occurred, "This system actually slows down the sand that may be suspended in the water column and allows it to accumulate within the system," said Alex Fogg, Coastal Resource Manager for Okaloosa County, in a YouTube video. "It's a more cost-effective method of building back the beaches here."

Each groyne is spaced every 100 feet along the beach and extends roughly 150 feet seaward from the mean high waterlineeach system covering 1,500 feet of beach.

Funded by tourism development dollars, it will likely be taken down soon before turtle season and more visitors hit the beach.



NEW INVENTORY

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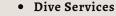
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Sip and Splash: An Aquatic Affair by Tim Smith Acura

The Emerald Coast Fitness Foundation (ECFF) is pleased to announce its upcoming fundraising event, Sip and Splash: An Aquatic Affair presented by Tim Smith Acura. A first of its kind, the event will take place on Saturday, May 14 at the Aquatic Center, located at 4345 Commons Drive West, in Destin.

The community is invited to the Destin pool, which will be transformed into an elegant event space, to enjoy a sunset cocktail hour followed by an upscale wine dinner under the stars. Attendees will indulge in a five-course seated dinner featuring five of the Emerald Coast's most iconic restaurants. Each restaurant will create a dish for their course including hand rolled sushi by Destin's own Yoshi from Harbor Docks, dessert by Bitterroot, and additional courses by Brotula's Seafood House and Steamer, Camille's at Crystal Beach, Café Rico, and Dewey Destin's Seafood. Dishes will be both gulf and farm-to-table, showcasing the various cuisines of each restaurant and will be paired with unlimited craft cocktails, craft beers and wine.

Guests will enjoy live music by the Emerald Coast's own, Reed Waddle, throughout the evening as well as a photo booth sponsored by Dr. Bawa & Associates, a cigar bar sponsored by Studio6twenty5, live painting sponsored by Saltmarsh CPA, and an extensive silent auction featuring fine art, jewelry, gift cards and other sought-after items, including a week-long vacation to Colorado. ECFF will also raffle off the centerpieces from the evening, each created by local swim teams from Okaloosa County. All proceeds raised from the auction, raffle, ticket sales, and sponsorship will go directly to ECFF to help them in operating the various facilities, upgrading equipment, and offering numerous aquatic

The Emerald Coast Fitness Foundation is a public charity formed to develop physical fitness and water safety among the youth and adults of Oka-





loosa County. ECFF provides facilities and programs to Destin, Crestview, and Fort Walton Beach communities that deliver opportunities for instruction, training, and competitive excellence, primarily in the sports of swimming, running, and cycling. ECFF manages the Destin Aquatic Center, the Bernie R. Lefebvre Aquatic Center in Fort Walton Beach, and the ROC Pool in Crestview.

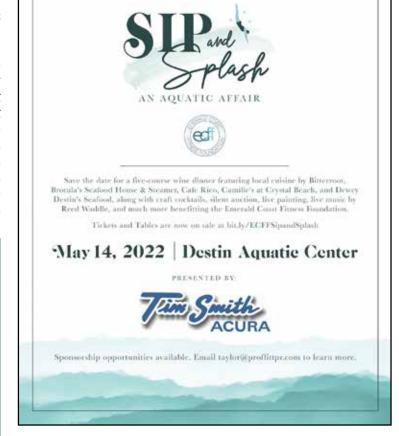
ECFF would also like to thank the local community businesses who are sponsoring the inaugural event, including 654 Limo, As You Like It Salon and Spa, Brotula's Seafood House and Steamer, Cardinal Financial, Coldwell Banker and the Jen Purdy Group, Cory Fosdyck and Merrill Lynch, Eglin

Federal Credit Union, FWB Alumni Swimmers, Greenday Cleaners, Hand Arendall Harrison Sale, The Harris Family, Home-

Fi Digital Mortgage, La Dolce Vita, Powell & Swanick Attorneys at Law, Sea Dragon Swim Shop, The Ships Chandler, Simple HR, Studio 6Twenty5, and Taylor Allen Properties.

Tickets and tables are cur-

rently on sale through 850Tix. com for the price of \$125 per individual or \$1,000 for a table of 10. Only a few sponsorship opportunities remain, however ECFF is collecting silent auction items from area businesses and individuals wanting to support the event. To learn more, please visit https://ecfitnessfoundation.org. Those interested in sponsoring or donating an auction item, email taylor@prof-fittpr.com.



Niceville High School Tennis Team Update

The Niceville High School Varsity Boys Tennis Team won the District Championship on Tuesday, April 12, in Tallahassee. Senior Blake Forester, Juniors Grayson Dannelly, Porter Devane, & Cooper Seymour, and Freshman Zavier Barbary, Cole Hawkins, & Andrew Roberts all played and contributed points to the overall team win! Go Eagles!



L-R NHS Tennis Assistant Coach Brian Braziel, Cole Hawkins, Cooper Seymour, Porter Devane, Blake Forester, Grayson Dannelly, Andrew Roberts, Zavier Barbary, NHS Tennis Head Coach Chris Poate.





Raiders Win The 2021-22 National Championship!

Coach of the Year Named; New Coach Hired

By Doug Stauffer, SPORTS DESK

Youth and inexperience, frequently a recipe for sports disaster, turned into a miracle in the making. Coach Greg Heiar (affectionately called GH) and his youthful Raiders overcame every obstacle. With little experience playing at the college level, the Raiders reached the pinnacle of success—their crowning as the 2022 NJCAA Men's Division I Basketball National Champions! For the third time in school history, the Northwest Florida State College (NWFSC) Raiders men's basketball team claimed the cherished title.

The Raiders received an atlarge bid to the national tournament, which meant they had to compete head-to-head against the country's top-tiered teams. Over six days, they had to win (and did win) all five games. This turnaround team consisted primarily of freshmen who had never played college basketball. They recorded 25 more wins over the previous year's 6-15 record to finish with a magnificent 31 wins and only five losses.

This team was built from scratch and described as fearless, determined, and tough. The team represents five countries on three continents. Dr. Devin



Stephenson said of the program and the college, "To be the best of the best is a standard that we strive for in everything. Unrealistic expectations become the foundation for growth." Dr. Stephenson also took the opportunity to present the AIM award (Advancing Institutional Mission) to Coach Heiar and the Director of Athletics, Ramsey Ross, for their "commitment to improving lives in our community and great efforts to cham-

pion NWFSC's mission, vision

and values."

Deshawndre Washington was named the national tournament's Most Valuable Player. Washington, Brennan Rigby and Kam Woods were all named to the All-Tournament Team. Of course, GH was named Coach of the Tournament as the best bench boss at the national tournament. He was also recognized as the conference and national coach of the year. This championship is NWFSC's first men's national title since 2015. Soon after the win, Coach Heiar accepted a position as head coach at New Mexico State. So, how does the future look for men's basketball? Glad you asked!

Guess who is returning to take over the reins? Yes, the coach of the 2015 National Championship team. Coach Steve DeMeo was the Raider's head coach from 2013 to 2019, with an astonishing 170-27 record. During those six years, NWFSC was the winningest JUCO men's program. During his tenure at NWFSC, Coach DeMeo's teams won five Panhandle Conference titles, four FCSAA state championships, three national final four appearances, and in 2015, the NJCAA

National Championship. Under his leadership, the Raiders also made three Elite Eight appearances and a 2017 Final Four appearance. The future? Shining like the sun!

Dr. Stephenson commented on Coach DeMeo's return: "We are pleased to welcome back Coach DeMeo as the men's head basketball coach. Northwest Florida State College strives to produce the best student-athletes in this region by providing them with the support, leadership, and resources they need to excel on and off the court. We are confident that they will continue to develop and succeed under Coach De-Meo's leadership and are excited to see what is in store for them next season."

Ramsey Ross voiced the same sentiments: "Our College feels incredibly fortunate to have Coach DeMeo lead our men's basketball program again. His previous tenure here was extraordinary, and we could not be more excited to see what awaits in the next chapter. It was important to us to sustain the tremendous momentum of our men's basketball program from this past season, and we feel bringing Coach DeMeo back to the Raider community does just that."

You can become a part of Raider Nation, too. For more information on Northwest Florida State athletics, visit NW-FRaiders.com or follow @NW-FRaiders on Twitter.



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Lisa Leath Turpin is a degreed and certified health and fitness lifestyle

Spring Into Fitness



By Lisa Leath Turpin, Health & Wellness Coach

It's spring and not too late to get into fitness. With spring comes more sunshine, warmer weather and the urge to wear less... like tank tops, shorts, sleeveless dresses and swimsuits. So, if you messed up on New Year's resolutions, don't let that hold you back or feel like you have to wait another year to "start." There IS no better time than the present. And the "present" is any day that has a beginning and an end. Knowing what to do makes that hurdle less intimidating. First: Figure out your goals.

According to the Cambridge Dictionary, fitness is "the condition of being physically strong and healthy...usually through exercise and nutrition." Exercise can achieve several outcomes such as, strength, flexibility, cardiovascular endurance, strength endurance, and power/speed. Everyday life calls for a combination of these. If you begin exercising you will be more "fit" to live LIFE. It's actually essential and those that don't exercise choose to create unnecessary obstacles for themselves due to fatigue, tightness, illness and weak-

A basic fitness lifestyle will focus on being healthy through a

consistent routine of cross-training to achieve a mixture of the above outcomes. An example of cross-training can be rotating through two days of strength training, two days of yoga or Pilates, and two days of sports, swimming, cycling or jogging. The different modalities of exercise will give you different outcomes and the consistency will offer you the improvement overall. Any consistent activity, along with a nutritious and reasonable diet, will help you lose weight if that is your goal. But having strong muscles through strength training will raise your metabolism, thus helping your body burn more calories, even at rest. So, strength training is an important key component to being fit.

All weight bearing exercises, whether it be bodyweight (i.e. yoga/Pilates) or training with free-weights or machines, help build strong bones. This is so very important and the benefits are accumulative. The earlier you start the stronger your bones will be; so, don't wait until a doctor tells you that you have to. Please don't worry about getting bulky from weight training. Most likely, if you feel you are bulky while weight training, you probably have excess fat covering your muscles. It's so extremely difficult to grow big muscles, just ask any bodybuilder. They are extremely dedicated to THE GOAL of building as big of muscles as possible and it does not happen overnight. Your muscles draw in tighter to your skeletal system when you tone and strengthen them. They will begin to take on their shape due to their functional purpose.

For instance, the biceps are



coach and consultant who has devoted her life to motivating and strengthening the body and mind of others. With over 20 years' experience, Lisa has a B.S. degree in Sports & Fitness Management from the University of Alabama, developed and managed the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Health & Wellness Facility and programs in Huntsville, Ala., is board certified by the National Board of Fitness Examiners and possesses certifications from AFAA, Polestar/Balanced Body, Reebok U, SCW Fitness and American Heart Association. She is currently a group exercise leader at Destin Health & Fitness and an independent personal trainer in the Destin area, diversely and extensively trained in classical and modern Pilates, lifestyle management, personal training, group exercise and post-rehabilitation. Have a fitness question for Lisa? Email BeActive850@gmail.com.

small at the insertion at the shoulder and small at the attachment of the inside of the elbow, yet larger in the middle. Once fat is removed, you will see that definition and the arm, on most individuals, will look lean and slender. Understand, most fat is "subcutaneous," meaning it is just under the skin. So, your body should have this order: bone, muscle, fat, then skin. You can imagine that while you begin strength training, any layer of fat will look more prominent, because it's closer to the skin. That's why a moderate diet helps in your efforts if you give your efforts the deserved time your body needs. In other words, don't give up! Like I have said before, "be active." Just get moving! All movement plays a role in your



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By Dr. Richard Chern, MD

A lack of energy is one of the most common complaints we hear from new patients before they receive treatment. And, many of the patients who didn't mention fatigue or a lack of energy prior to treatment will tell us how surprised they were at the increase in energy they experience while on hormone therapy. I can also remember

I Just Need a Quick Nap

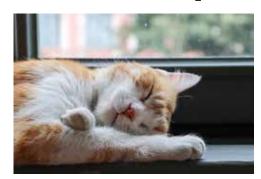
that before I started getting my own hormones treated that I needed a nap in the afternoon, especially after lunch. I always thought I had eaten too much or something too heavy. It turns out my hormone levels were just suboptimal.

Keep in mind, my levels were normal. It took a while for me to figure out that normal values are usually not optimal values. Many physicians and providers still do not understand this. For instance, a reference range or normal vitamin D level is from 30-100. If your level is 31 your doctor will likely tell you that your vitamin D is normal. Well, vitamin D levels under 50 are associated with an increase in breast cancer that is six times

higher than those with higher vitamin D levels. Vitamin D levels less than 40 are associated with a 40% increase in all cancers. How do you feel about that "normal" vitamin D level now?

Testosterone for both men and women will increase energy, focus, concentration, libido while reducing cancer, disease, anxiety, depression and more. Yet, most doctors have no clue what an optimal testosterone level is for men or women. Has your doctor ever even tested your testosterone? If not, then do you think they will know how to interpret the results properly?

So if you have noticed that you are taking naps regularly or feel wiped out before your day is done it may very well be an issue



with your hormone levels. Call us for an appointment. We can draw your blood and get your results the same week. Have a consultation with Dr Richard Chern MD or Sue Griffin ARNP and finally find out what has been dragging you down.

Dr Richard Chern, MD provides hormones therapy to men and women from across the

country. He is also on staff at BioTE Medical and teaches hormone therapy to new providers including providers here in the local area. In addition, Dr Richard Chern, MD treats many of the doctors in the local

area. Dr Richard Chern MD is a platinum BioTE provider and runs one of the largest BioTE hormone clinics in the country right here in Miramar Beach. Call Dr Richard Chern MD at The Hormone Restoration Center for an appointment at 850-837-1271.

A Message From Food for Thought

As we approach a major milestone at FFT, we want to take a look back at how we began. These are photos of our first service in 2010 and our first delivery using backpacks.

We will deliver our 500,000th backpack during our services the week of April 4th! This is over 5 million food items to the food insecure children we serve in Walton & Okaloosa Counties! Our eyes are set on the future and staying strong for another 500,000 bags! Please help us #StayStrong and continue to deliver on our mission to remove the negative impacts of hunger and empower children to get the most out of their education.

The Board & Committee members at FFT are matching the first \$5000 raised!

We would not have reached

this milestone without our dedicated volunteers!

Every week, generous members of our community show up and make our work possible.

We ALWAYS need volunteers and your support will help us #StayStrong for another 500,000 bags!

If you would like to volunteer, please email volunteer@fftfl.org.

5 Years in the Emeril Lagasse Full Circle Kitchen

Five years ago, we opened the Emeril Lagasse Full Circle Kitchen with a purpose of serving our students into their future. Students get the opportunity to learn from area Chefs. They cook together, eat together, clean up together and gain skills toward job placement.

8 Years in Santa Rosa Beach

After years of moving from borrowed space to borrowed space, 8 years ago FFT was able to secure our forever home. Our Santa Rosa office has been renovated multiple times to meet the needs of our programs. We are grateful everyday to have a secure place to run our programs.



Get the Smile You Deserve Smile with Confidence Again

- Are you embarrassed about smiling in front of people?
- Do you ever put your hand up to cover your smile?
- Do you dislike your smile in photographs?
- · When you look through magazines, do you envy the models' smiles?
- Do you wish your teeth were whiter?

f 😈 📵

- Do you think you show too much or too little of your teeth when
- Would you like to change the way your teeth or gums are shaped?
- Do you have gaps or spaces in between your teeth?

If the answer is "yes" to any of these questions, you may be a good candidate for A Smile Makeover.







By Stephenie Craig

Do you ever find yourself feeling anxious, irritable and out of control? You've got that person who refuses to do things the way you think they should and it's causing stress in your life and theirs. You believe deep down that if your child, partner, coworker, parent, sibling, random driver on the road would just do things "the right way" (your way), things would be so much better for everyone. You spend energy thinking about how you can change them. Then, you find yourself frustrated and resentful when you realize they are going to continue doing things their way. Often, you spend energy that could be spent managing yourself focused on the other person. And, all of this results in more feeling out of control and stuck.

It's uncomfortable when other's choices cause inconvenience, stress and pain for you. Maybe someone in your life is drinking too much. Maybe they are choosing an unhealthy relationship. Maybe they aren't showing up emotionally for you. Maybe someone is in a self-destructive space and you can't help them snap out of it. Regardless of how much you care about the well-being of others, one thing is true. The only person you can control is yourself. You cannot control your friends,

Journey Bravely: Stay in Your Lane

family, children or anyone else.

So, what are you supposed to do with this tension of believing life would be better if only others would do what you say and the reality that people are only in charge of their own thoughts, feelings and actions? Finding your lane of healthy self-control and developing the discipline to stay in that lane is the pathway to your freedom.

5 Ways to Find Your Lane and Stay in It:

Accept what you can and can't control. You can only control yourself. Your energy is best spent focusing on managing your thoughts, emotions, and actions well. Focusing on others' behavior is an unhelpful distraction and a waste of energy. Try making imaginary bins for what you can and can't control and sort things into them when you find yourself in frustrating situations with others.

Notice anytime you are saying or thinking, "If they would just..." Thoughts and conversations that revolve around what others should be doing differently indicate you're driving in someone else's lane in which you have no control. This will result in consistent frustration and exhaustion. Try reminding yourself to get back in your lane where you have healthy power and self-control.

Focus on understanding and mastering your own lane. Think honestly about how you are managing your thoughts, feelings and behaviors. Notice things you might want to change such as taking better care of yourself, developing healthier coping skills, working on your relationship



skills. Try choosing a couple of specific areas and intentionally focus your energy on your personal growth.

Pay attention to boundaries. Often when you are out of your lane, it means you need to adjust boundaries. Instead of focusing on changing someone else's behavior, try focusing on how you will adjust your engagement in the relationship if the other person continues with unhealthy behavior. Maybe spend less time with them, share less vulnerable information, and invest less energy. Or with parenting, perhaps you reduce privileges or make electronics contingent on responsible behavior.

Ask for what you need directly with kindness. When someone else's behavior is negatively impacting you, it is more effective to have a direct,

kind conversation than to try to control their behavior. Try saying, "When you ______, I feel ______, what would work better for me in our relationship is ______." Once you've had the conversation, you can observe whether the person responds with openness and intention to respect your needs. If they do, great. If they don't, stay in your lane by changing your boundaries in the relationship.

Staying in your lane is not selfish. In fact, it's one of the most healthy, loving things you can do for others. By staying in your lane, you provide space for others to learn the healthy practice of staying in and managing their lane. As you are learning how to stay in your lane, remember to connect with us along your journey at Journey-bravely.com.











By Kay Leaman, Health Architect

Inflammation is both good and bad. When the body is invaded by foreign bacteria, viruses, chemicals, plant pollen, etc. or an injury occurs, white blood cells

It Boils Down to Inflammation

release specialized proteins into our blood and tissues to clean up debris, fight infection and heal damaged tissues. This raises our blood flow, and can cause redness, warmth and swelling.

Acute inflammation is short lived such as when we get a cut or abrasion, broken bone, etc. This type of inflammation is beneficial and necessary. However, when this acute inflammatory response fails to shut off and becomes chronic it wreaks havoc in our bodies.

Chronic inflammation can begin to break down healthy tissue and over time can prematurely age us, damage our DNA and keep us from feeling our best. Issues like allergies, asthma, arthritis, sinusitis, tendonitis, dermatitis, etc. can begin to surface.

Underlying every chronic disease condition is inflammation. It contributes to the onset of cancer, heart disease, type 2 diabetes, asthma, arthritis, cognitive decline, dementia including Alzheimers, auto-immune disorders (when immune system activates inside the body when there are no invaders or injury thereby causing injury) such as celiac disease, rheumatoid arthritis, Hashimoto's thyroiditis, etc.



When dealing with chronic inflammation we can experience symptoms such as fatigue, body pain, depression, anxiety, gastro-intestinal complications (diaherrea/constipation), weight gain or loss, or persistent infections.

So what causes inflammation to become chronic? Smoking, obesity, alcohol, chronic stress, poor diet (refined carbohydrates, fried foods, sugary beverages, margarine, shortening, lard, red meat) and lack of exercise (lifestyle).

What can we do to help our body reduce this cycle?

Exercise. Get up and walk, stretch and 'just move' your body.

Eat a Mediterranean diet. (For a list of foods to in-

corporate this type of diet into your lifestyle email succeed. hdhl@gmail.com with Med Diet List in the Subject line.)

Decrease Stress. None of us can escape stress but we can learn to recognize and control it. Deep breathing exercises can stop the stress response and calm us down and this can be done anywhere at any time.

Turn off the TV! Listen to your favorite music, sit outside, read a good book, spend time with friends.

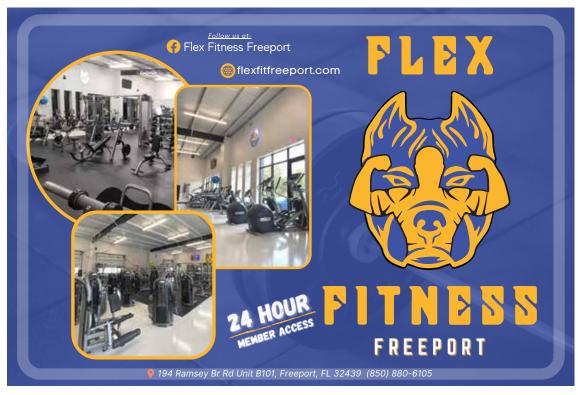
Consume a highquality supplement containing anti-inflammatory ingredients in their correct forms and amounts (fish oil, lipoid acid, curcumin, ginger, garlic, cayenne, certain mushrooms, etc.).

Avoid processed foods. If it has an ingredient list it has been processed. When purchasing these foods look for the package with the least ingredients and avoid colorings, harmful preservatives such as BHS and BHT, etc.

Be aware of what you put on your skin. ewg.org is a great resource to look up ingredients and how they are rated (toxicity level).

Here's to Your Health! HealthyDay HealthyLife, succeed.hdhl@gmail.com









What's a Virtual Business Address?

By Melissa Fertitta, Director of Operations, Beachworx

Since the pandemic of 2020, we've all learned about the many changes the traditional workplace has endured. "Hybrid work" and "remote work" are both approaches aimed at retaining talent. They're paradigm shifts that place more value on results than presenteeism, meaning employees can work whenever and wherever as long as they're hitting their metrics and producing.

According to International Workplace Group, "cloud-based tech" is "central to the success of hybrid working" and, as long as this trend continues and advances, workers will be able to successfully deliver no matter where they are physically located. As long as workers have a professional environment, with the ability to tap into these cloud-based systems, the traditional workday can evolve into something more flexible and worker-friendly.

This one reason why coworking spaces are trending for digital nomads and enterprise cli-



ents, alike. The best coworking spaces offer employees a professional environment with the tools to conduct remote work, namely reliable high-speed internet and private call spaces to conduct video meetings. The spaces may be trendy or traditional, sprawling and open for collaboration or private and designed for quiet, individual occupancy. Some industry-specific spaces are even popping up in larger markets (think biotech labs you can rent by the week and podcast and film studios that can be rented by the day).

In resort towns, like Destin,

coworking spaces meet multiple needs. Without the "central business district" larger towns enjoy, resort towns often have fewer commercial office spaces for lease. This makes coworking spaces attractive for small business owners and entrepreneurs who desire affordability and flexibility over long-term leases or purchasing a building. The coworking model also offers tourists an "office at the beach." While we all start with the best of intentions to work while on vacation, real world scenarios of crowded condos and residential internet stressed by multiple devices can make it difficult to deliver on that promise. The coworking space is a welcome alternative to the local coffee shop or library. Daily, weekly

rental options help tourists get the work done and quickly get back to the vacation.

If you are a small business owner with the best of circumstances, who can successfully work from home, you may only need a coworking space for its virtual address. What's a virtual address? It's another resource coworking spaces offer, allowing you to use the coworking space's physical address as your business's own. Virtual addresses

protect your privacy, lend credibility to your small business, help you establish an online presence and expand into new markets. There may even be tax benefits to having your business virtually registered in business-friendly state, like Florida.

Beachworx is a flexible, affordable coworking space in the heart of Destin that delivers all of these solutions. Find out more by visiting

https://thebeachworx.com.

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You could have it answered in one our columns.







Eglin Federal Credit Union Announces New Location in Freeport

Eglin Federal Credit Union recently announced a new branch will be added in Freeport, making it the first location in Walton County. As part of the Credit Union's growth and expansion efforts, property was

recently purchased at the intersection of Riverwalk Boulevard and US Highway 331, south of the Publix shopping center. Construction is expected to begin in a few months and be completed in 2023. La Macchia

Group is the design/build firm for the new Freeport branch.

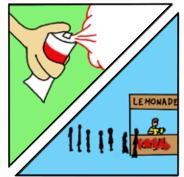
Eglin Federal Credit Union President/CEO Jerry Williams said, "We are looking forward to engaging with members at this new branch location in







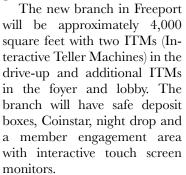








Freeport. This location was selected to add convenience for current members as well as to grow membership in Walton County. The members of this Credit Union are our neighbors, our communities, and we are proud to help them achieve their financial goals."



Last year Eglin Federal Credit Union added specific geo-

report graphic locations in northern and central Walton County to its field of membership. Eligibility extends to persons who

and central Walton County to its field of membership. Eligibility extends to persons who live, work (or regularly conducts business in), worship, or attend school in, and businesses and other legal entities located within the approved seven census tracts in Walton County. Learn how you are Eligible to Become an EFCU Member (eglinfcu. org).



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Meet Our Local Pros:

Ross Vollmer and Jay Choquette, X8 Marketing

Meet Jay and Ross. People that know them say they're the yin and yang together—each with very different personalities, but ones that fit together perfectly. Maybe that's why their business, Atlanta and Dallas-based X8 Marketing, LLC, is such a hit with their clients. "We always seem to find that center edge," says Jay. "But meet naturally in the middle all the time. You can't fake or create that kind of chemistry and it translates into the work we do for our customers."

X8 Marketing is a branding and marketing firm that specializes in website design, logo and graphic design, and Search Engine Optimization. Founded in 2009, Jay started the business with the ideal of solving one major problem for small businesses—their need for proper marketing, without time involvement or large budgets. Ever since, X8 has helped local, national and even international small businesses expand their brands through cost effective use of internet marketing campaigns.

At the beginning of his career, Jay worked with a former Disney executive, who brought in local businesses to help create marketing plans, projects and strategies, and thereby gained a valuable marketing foundation. In the early days, many of Jay's clients were referred to him by his former college classmates and others and, by way of referrals, his business began to prosper

One of his first small clients, Atlanta Fish Limousines, came to Jay for help. Jay recognized some issues right away and rebranded them to Atlanta Famous Limousines; then built their website, developed business cards, etc., all within their budget. And the company wasn't too small anymore.

"I come from the small town of LaGrange, Ga., where my parents owned a little transmission shop," said Jay. "I've always rooted for the Underdog. We really want to help small businesses live an independent life where they have time and money. You can have all the money in the world, but with no time, you aren't free."

Jay says X8's goal is to help businesses, as well as his X8 team, achieve this. "We take care of our team," says Jay. "Because of that culture, our team always takes care of our clients. We give you the look of a big business with the heart of a small business."

X8 has thrived in part due to helping businesses develop a good website. They found that a ton of businesses don't have aesthetically appealing, great functioning websites—X8 can provide it. Through the years, they've picked up some major clients such as Chic-Fil-A and Smucker's. Because of that, X8 is now able to offer Fortune 500 tools for their small-business clients, including professional imagery and functionalities that, predominantly, only large companies would have.

X8 was founded in 2009 and the tagline is Xceler8 Your Business! "Psychologically, it's the easiest letter and number to remember," says Jay, "both the least used, and the logo also features a B2 bomber in the negative space between the X and the 8, which is a nod to one of our first clients which was a jet chartering business."

Jay's business partner, Ross, is another backbone of the business. Ross was in Dallas running his own business as a certified personal trainer and Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu instructor. As he grew his business, he did all of his



own branding and marketing including building several websites, blogging, and designing his own logo. He became a very established trainer and that's how Jay and Ross met. Jay was a former student of Ross'. Jay recognized Ross' other talent in developing websites and the two

became fast friends and business partners. Ross is the lead developer in X8, and moved to our area with his fiancé, and now 4-month-old son, to cover Northwest Florida and South Alabama. Loving his new home, Ross still competes in Jiu-Jitsu, hunts and gardens.

Jay says they've doubled in business revenue every year and are 35% over their goal currently with nine staff members. "Approximately 1/3 of our business comes from existing clients and existing client referrals. It's because we care," says Jay. "For us, we get to feel like superheroes when we're able to help people. Sometimes they don't need a whole marketing strategy, but simply need theirs cleaned up a little, and that's all it takes to change people's lives. We put that above our profit line. If we take care of people and help them be successful, we know we, too, will be successful. Our fates are tied together."

Websites, SEO and Branding are X8's primary offerings. "In addition to establishing professional logos and websites, organizations should always focus on building a strong and credible brand through synergistic marketing materials," says Ross. "Remember, your marketing materials represent you. And, all of our websites are built 100% by developers in the U.S. at a time when much of that kind of work gets outsourced overseas."

X8 invites you to explore marketing solutions for your own business. "You can reach me at 970.324.0877 and ross@x8it.net," says Ross. "Let's build something together!"



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Like a Pine





Seen from Scenic 30A, and located on the easternmost part of Grayton Beach State Park is Western Lake. This is one of the fifteen coastal dune lakes in the area located along twenty-six miles of coastline in Walton County. The tall pine trees and sand dunes that separate this dune lake from the Gulf



have been photographed and painted by artists from around the world. While many parts of Florida are identified by palm trees, the Emerald Coast is still identified by the mighty pines.

Before The Emerald Coast was known for its world-class tourism, the number one industry of the area was producing turpentine from the pine trees. Since the late 1800s, turpentine

distillers throughout Walton County have used the resin from pine trees to produce household items such as soap, glue, rubber, and paint products. It was also used heavily in ship building.

The pine tree is not as strong as the mighty oak, nor as tall as the giant sequoia. The life of a pine tree doesn't appear to be as exciting as that of the deer running by, or of the birds that nest in the branches. As the bunny rabbits chase each other, and the butterflies pollinate the flowers below, the pine tree remains still. Yet, the pine tree is very much alive.

You will not see pine trees lining glamorous streets like Sunset Boulevard in Beverly Hills, nor positioned along the Promenade in Miami Beach. The pine tree isn't trying to win a popularity contest. It doesn't care how many "likes" it gets on Facebook or if it is voted tree of the year. It is content fulfilling its purpose.

Not many trees can withstand the many hurricane force winds these trees have withstood. Though the pines bend and the dunes shift, they continue to stand the test of time. They learn to bend so they do not break. The many storms these pine trees of Western Lake have persevered through have only made them stronger. Unlike many palm trees, the pines can withstand freezing temperatures as well as the blistering heat. There is much we can learn from the pines.

Tests help purify, temper and make us stronger. Testing doesn't exist to destroy us. It prepares us for the next steps in our journey. Getting from where we are to where we want to be is hard. We often tend to run from or resent struggles when the storms of life head our way. This is especially true if it appears we will not survive the storm. Everyone faces moments when the likelihood of success seems unlikely, the challenges seem insurmountable, and the costs are simply too much. It is in such moments we come face to face with who we really are. Albert Einstein said, "Adversity introduces a man to himself."

It is doubtful anyone living in the late 1800s would have painted the pine trees of Western Lake or considered them special in any way. It was often said how horrible the area was because little could be grown in such sandy soil. Western Lake would have been considered just another mosquito infested swamp area. Today, houses next door to Western Lake in WaterColor are worth millions of dollars, and the WaterColor Inn and Resort is one of the most sought after destinations on earth.

If you feel unimportant, not very valuable, or even worse, dead weight, consider this: You are very much alive. You are planted where you are planted. You have a purpose. Quit trying to be something or someone you are not. Accept the challenges that come your way. Be like a pine.

Rick Moore is Communications Pastor with Destiny Worship Center.

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Using Radio to Spread Good News

By Victoria Ostrosky

Some of us have a word of the year – mine is 'moderation'; but, this year I also have a phrase of the year that grabbed me recently on the Road to Redemption podcast, an interview with Dr. Mike. Here it is: The more you listen to God, the louder He speaks.

I love it, because it's so true. And it looks like John Martin has been a good listener. The idea for Road to Redemption came to him when God's Holy Spirit impressed upon him that he should start a show sharing powerful testimonies to reach those looking for hope. One day he thought, "Wow, we have so many people with Road to Redemption stories," and that's when he knew the Holy Spirit was the one bringing him back to an idea that had been percolating for some time in his heart. John, in obedience to God's direction, reached out and began partnering with his church, Destiny Worship Center, to produce a weekly radio show and podcast titled "Road to Redemption," interviewing folks from all walks of life with compelling stories of how God brought them by, sometimes, difficult paths to where they are today. The show seeks to bring glory to God by showcasing how formerly broken and wandering souls have been brought into the fold and saved.

John's vision for Road to Redemption is first and foremost to reach the lost for Christ. He wants to give the Holy Spirit the platform to use stories of people who love Jesus and desire to share their journey and testimony in order to evangelize those who are seeking joy and peace.

John, and his team, ask the Holy Spirit to lead them to the right people to share their life experiences with Road to Redemption's listeners. They interview locals from all walks of life, including business owners, retirees, homemakers, young people, famous and normal everyday people like you and me.

Their first podcast was this past December, and John says, "The feedback has been incredible, and the show has already touched many lives."

Each interview is approximately 20 - 30 minutes long. You can listen to them live every Monday at 2 p.m. on Desti-

ny Radio 91.1 FM, or later, via Apple Podcast and Spotify. All the episodes are archived on the show's website at www.roadtoredemptionpodcast.com.

John doesn't do all this on his own. His awesome team includes Nate Kelly, Aliya Yellen, Walker Beach and Drew Powell. Together, they work to conduct the interviews and produce a high-quality radio show and podcast.

You can listen to Shanna's testimony, an abused wife

and set on a new course. Or you learn Riabout cardo, who afoul ran of the law and ended behind up That's bars. where Jesus found him and changed the

who was delivered

course of his life. Then there's Dr. Mike, who God called to live and minister in the Destin area, making a difference in his professional and personal life, learning more and more every day to listen to the Holy Spirit and act in obedience.

These and many more podcasts are available to encourage, uplift and instruct. Like the Apostle Peter said in 1 Peter

potity. All yed on the croadtore
Il this on e team inya Yellen, ew Powell. o conduct produce a show and

Shanna's wife

From left to right Aliya Yellen, John Martin, Nate Kelly.

3:15, "Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have."

John Martin has been faithful to his area of service, giving us an example of how we need to look for our area of service as well. As Jesus told us, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore, pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest." (Luke 10:2 ESV)



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By Pastor Doug Stauffer

I lost my mom last Mother's Day to complications following surgery. The loss was painful, but I don't believe that future Mother's Days should become a day of sadness and mourning. Quite the opposite! I prefer to consider Mother's Day as a special tribute, remembrance and recognition. My mom was a beloved mother of four and a treasured grandmother, great grandmother, wife and friend.

She was born in Erding, Germany, just outside of Munich, two years before the onset of WWII. She loved to read, and the library was her home away from home. She directly impacted me with that same passion, greatly influencing my life and career. For 20 years, she and my dad were snowbird RVers.

Two months before her death, my mom and dad celebrated their 65th wedding anniversary. Thankfully, my dad will spend this Mother's Day with us here in Niceville. One of the many personalized sympathy

A Pastor's Ponderings: A Tribute to My Mom and Moms Everywhere

cards expressed the commonly held sentiments about my mom.

"God saw she was getting tired, and a cure was not to be, so he put his arms around her and whispered, 'Come with me.' With tearful eyes, I watched her suffer and saw her fade away. Although I loved her dearly, I could not make her stay.

A golden heart stopped beating, hard-working hands to rest, God broke my heart to prove that He only takes the best."

Truly, heart-rending words to read again! Like so many others in our communities, my mom was a military spouse, and I would be remiss not to remind everyone of their sacrifices during deployments. In 1967, my father was stationed at Andrews Air Force Base and volunteered to go to Vietnam with the 7th Air Force—1967/1968.

My 29-year-old mom was left with three preteen, type-A boys, a new puppy and giving birth to my sister. While my dad was there, the Vietcong attacked every major city and base during the TET Offensive. I am proud of his Bronze Star, but my mom should have received the Parental Distinguished Service Medal for conspicuous gallantry. We must NEVER forget the tre-



mendous sacrifices of those who do not wear the stars, the bars and the stripes, but keep the home fires burning.

To close on a lighter note: here are seven truths my mom taught us:

- **1. How to pray:** After spilling grape juice on the carpet, she instructed, "You better pray the stain will come out."
- **2. Plan ahead:** "Make sure you wear clean underwear, because you could be in an accident."
- **3. Life's paradoxes:** "Keep laughing, and I'll give

you something to cry about."

- **4. How to persevere:** "You'll sit there 'til all that spinach is finished."
- **5. Spotting severe weather patterns:** "It looks like a tornado swept through your room."
- **6. The circle of life:** "I brought you into this world, and I can take you out."
- **7. Empathy:** "There are millions of less fortunate children who don't have it as good as you do!"

Pick up the phone or visit your mom this Mother's Day. Tell her that you love her, because you are not guaranteed unlimited opportunities. The Bible exhorts every generation, "Hearken unto thy father that begat thee, and despise not thy mother when she is old." (Proverbs 23:22). Happy Mother's Day!

Dr. Doug Stauffer is pastor of Faith Independent Baptist Church. He was saved July 6, 1980, in Niceville, while stationed at the 33rd Tactical Fighter Wing at Eglin Air Force Base and has now been in the ministry for over 35 years. He has written 20 books including the best selling "One Book" trilogy ("One Book Rightly Divided, One Book Stands Alone, One Book One Authority"); along with several devotionals ("Daily Strength" series); and prophecy books ("Reviving the Blessed Hope, When the End Begins")

Publisher's Tribute

Happy Mother's Day to my mom in Heaven! Mom—I know you can hear and I want you to know that you taught me how to have integrity, how to laugh, and how to be classy, caring, passionate, loving, persevering, patient, successful and kind. You taught me how to raise my kids which is invaluable! Most of all, you taught me to love Jesus! I'm so

thankful God gave me to you. Your legacy lives on...

Missing my Mom daily and wishing a Happy Mother's Day to all the other Moms out there! Your contributions are to be revered and, I believe, this is the most important "job" you could ever have!

~ Bay Life/Destin Life Publisher, Lori Leath Smith



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God's Art Show

Where Alabama nears Tennessee Find mountains, rocks and waterfalls And rabbits and deer running free.

> Hidden underneath the cliffs Deep down in the ravine, A river flows along it's path Washing the rocks so clean.

Inhale the beauty of the valley, Guarded by the towering heights, It takes your breath away to view Such magical, natural sights.

Wildflowers in abundance grow Not planted there by man But springing up to greet the sun Because it is the Father's plan.

A union lives amidst this place Of nature linked with man. The connection is a holy one Conceived by God's own hand.

People blending with the earth Hearts beating kind and pure Proud to live in God's creation Trusting it will endure.

Thankful to have come this way, Enlightened, we now know His timeless love bestows these gifts As part of God's Art Show.

by Carolyn Leath, August 17, 2001



Sean of the South



By Sean Dietrich

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

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

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

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

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

The pickles are a salute to season two, episode 11, "The Pickle Story." In the episode, Aunt Bee makes pickles that taste so bad they could take the paint off navy ships. "Kerosene cucumbers" they were called in the episode.

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

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

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

Billy and Roger have visited this cemetery twice before. And they say that each time they come, there are multiple pickle jars sitting on the gravemarker. "Sometimes there are ten or twenty of'em," says Billy. "Depending on if it's tourist season or not."

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

A local station out of Hutchison-Wichita played Andy Griffith in all its black-and-white glory. After the very first episode the children were spellbound.

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

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

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

I am a lot like the other people here today; Andy Griffith practically raised me. Our station played two "Andy" episodes every evening after school. I was a fatherless kid who needed someone to pay attention to me, to love me, to teach me, to make

me laugh, to show me how to be a man. Andy did this for me. Every weekday at five o'clock.

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

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

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

I left a jar of Vlasic.





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MKAF Spring Lineup

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

"For 27 years, the Mattie Kelly Arts Foundation has been at the forefront of providing arts entertainment and education to Northwest Florida. The annual Concerts in the Village is no exception and we are thrilled to announce this year's incredible lineup of guest artists," stated MKAF CEO Demetrius Fuller. "The revenue generated from these events enables us to provide the highest quality of arts education and community engagement throughout Okaloosa, Walton and Bay Counties. Thank you to all of our season sponsors, community partners,



and members! If you are not yet a member, please consider joining," said Demetrius.

2022 Season MKAF Concerts in the Village | Destin, FL

Enjoy a night under the stars at the most beautiful outdoor music venue on the Emerald Coast. Bring a bottle of wine, your favorite craft beer, some delicious snacks, and a blanket or chair. Food and drinks are available for purchase!

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

Thursday, April 21, 2022:

Michael Jackson LIVE (Vegas Show)

Thursday, April 28, 2022:

Naturally 7

Thursday, May 5, 2022:



Shania Twin (Shania Twain Tribute)

Thursday, May 12, 2022:

Yacht Rock Revue

Thursday, May 19, 2022:

Six Piece Suits Thursday, May 26, 2022:

Taylor Dayne

Thursday, June 2, 2022:

Alter Eagles

Thursday, June 9, 2022:

Sister Hazel Thursday, June 16, 2022:

Sinfonia Gulf Coast Performing the Music of Led Zeppelin

Thursday, June 23, 2022:

Boogie Wonder Band

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

Purchase tickets online at MKAF.org/events. General admission varies per concert. Children (12 and under), and MKAF members are free.

Those interested in becoming a MKAF member can learn more at MKAF.org. Children 17 and under must be accompanied by a parent or guardian. All sales are final; sorry, no refunds. Pets, tables larger than two feet, and drones are not permitted. A limited number of VIP tables (provides a reserved table and seating with admission for up to 8 guests) are available. Those interested in sponsoring the 2022 MKAF season, please call 850-650-2226 for details.



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MJ LIVE



Naturally 7

Shania Twin

Shania Twain Tribute



Yacht Rock Revue



Six Piece Suits



Taylor Dayne



Alter Eagles



Sister Hazel



16

Sinfonia Gulf Coast performing

The Music of Led Zeppelin with Conductor Brent Havens and Vocalist Randy Jackson

Boogie Wonder Band followed by Silent Disco

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Arts & Music

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Saturday Night-Date Night!



Never stuffy or routine, you can include everything you love about regular dates — your favorite BYOB beverages and finger foods, plus the fun that

comes with trying something new. You'll take home a great painting and even better memories. You and your partner will create a complementary set of masterpieces—together. Upcoming date nights include Sat, May 7, 7 p.m., Lunar Love! Couples, Friends or Mom Date Night; Sat., May 14, Summer Love! Couples or Friends Date Night; Sat., May 21 and Sat., May 28, Lunar Lit Palms! Couples Date Night!

Girls' Night Out!

Right when you thought you were out of girls' night out ideas — you found the most creative one yet! BYOW (bring your own wine-ages 18 +) to a paint party that's a toast to your girl gang.

Family Fun Events the Entire Month of May!

Bring your whole crew for a unique family outing they'll never forget. You focus on quality time and we'll handle the rest!

Set your kiddo's creativity free with a new twist on fun! Book a birthday party, kids camp or Mommy & Me event!

Paint a beautiful scene on canvas with your Mom on Mother's Day, Sunday, May 8 from 6 to 9 p.m.

Paint a Paisley Elephant in the dark under black light at the Black Light Event! Saturday, May 28 at 1 p.m.

Paint Your Pet—Your furry (or scaly) friends deserve some love, too! Turn your pet's photo into a portrait with step-by-step instruction from amazing artists. Sun, May 22 at 2 p.m. (3 Hours)



Ages 18+ Painting with a Twist's most personal class!

Trivia Nights--From wizards and zombies to space nights and 90s coffeehouse trivia, cheers to a little friendly competition Wed, May 4, 6:30 p.m., Painting is the Way! Trivia Night; Thursday, May 26, 6:30 p.m., Welcome Friend! Trivia Night!

Mommy & Me for ages 8 and up! Bring the whole family for an afternoon of FUN! Sat, May

7, 1 p.m. Snuggle Bug Mommy & Me!; Sun, May 8, noon, Mommy and Me Afternoon!

The May calendar offers a variety of paintings— from seasonally-inspired landscapes to decorative DIY wood board signs, funny self-portraits, Seaside sunsets, paint pour and more! Find a paint night theme that fits you, then sign up at paintingwithatwist.com/studio/fort-walton-beach/calendar.

Studio 237 Music Lessons: Incentives

By Lisa Cyr

During spring, teachers prepare students for end of season exams, papers, presentations, and report cards. In a similar fashion, private lesson music teachers consider spring the season to perform, receive evaluations, and awards.

Music recitals are a popular performance opportunity. Studio 237's recital is scheduled for May 21st, beginning at 10:30am and 2:00pm, at Seagrove Baptist Church in Santa Rosa Beach and is open to family, neighbors, and friends. In addition, below are two organizations that have enriched my students and Studio 237 for many years.

Every February, the Choctaw Bay Music Club (CBMC) (www. ChoctawBayMusicClub.org) sponsors a student music festival at Northwest Florida State College. Music students from Pensacola to Tallahassee perform original pieces by memory before two judges, receive written evaluations, rating, certificates, and accrue points towards trophies. Superior rated students may compete in the State and then National level. CMBC is a local chapter overseen by the National Federation of Music Clubs (NFMC). Membership is only \$25 a year.

"Founded in 1989, NFMC is the largest nonprofit organization in America to promote and support American music, performers, and music education. Working in local communities, they provide musical opportunities for all ages: professional and amateur musicians, volunteers, music lovers, teachers, students, and supportive parents. At their website www.nfmc-music.org, you will discover the many activities in which over 121,000 members participate, including festivals, competitive events, scholarships, and community outreach."

The NFMC festival catalog

(entitled "The Bulletin") includes the rules, many songs/pieces to choose from, and includes a large variety of instruments and musical styles/genres. There is a wide range of instruments represented such as piano, violin, voice, trumpet, clarinet, guitar, harp, banjo, drums, and more. The catalog is for sale on the NFMC website.

Secondly, The American College of Musicians a/k/a National Guild of Piano Teachers began in 1929. (www.pianoguild.com) Their "primary function is to establish definite goals and awards (via private noncompetitive auditions) for students of all levels, from the earliest beginner to the gifted prodigy. Their purpose is to encourage growth and enjoyment through the study of piano. Teachers have the flexibility to choose original repertoire for performance. Students play a program of songs (2 to 10+) by memory and are judged on individual merit, by a well-qualified music professional, in areas such as accuracy, phrasing, dynamics, rhythm, interpretation, and technique. They receive a handwritten detailed evaluation, award certificate, and other incentives. Guild students choose and practice their songs beginning in August for performance in May. Members receive a catalog explaining programs and a seasonal magazine acknowledging student achievement. We currently have a guild chapter in our area. This year's live auditions will take place at North-

Continued on page 45



View the calendar at PaintingWithaTwist.com
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You paint and party... we clean up the mess!



Area Art Classes May 2022

Artful Things Niceville

Call the gallery at 850-729-2600 to reserve seating for the following workshops:

7—OPEN AIR ART DAY!

Noon-3pm. Find a Mother's Day gift and enjoy the day with the family! Open gallery, guest artists, hands on activities and demonstrations. Featuring Holi on Wheels food truck, a bee handling demonstration by Bees on the Bayou, local author book signings and live painting!

12—Encaustic Scenes with Corina Zalace 10:30-

12:30pm. Create 5-7 scenes using colored wax and unique methods, and take your artwork home the day of! \$47.50, includes supplies.

13—Acrylic Pour and String Pull with Debi Profeta 2-4pm. A semi-private workshop with very limited seating; learn to resin pour in black and white on a 10x20 canvas with artist and instructor Debi Profeta. \$37.50, includes supplies.

14—Acrylic Pour with Debi Profeta 10:30-2:30pm. Learn to resin pour on a 24x24 canvas with an experienced instructor Debi Profeta. \$77.50 including supplies. Featuring La Chama Venez food truck on site, 11:30-2:30.

21—Journal Making with Helene Pappas 10:30-2:30pm. Introduction to making your own personal journal with artist Helene Pappas, where students learn to bind by hand. \$47.50, includes supplies.

28—Oil Florals the Impressionist Way with Jeanette Herron 10:30-2:30pm. Artists with some experience working in oils are invited to paint like the masters with award winning artist Jeanette Herron, one of Artful Things Niceville's fea-



tured gallery artists. \$37.50 with own supplies, \$75.00, supplies included.



1087 East, E. John Sims Pkwy in Niceville

Finding Community Through Art

By Alanna Grayce Campbell When I moved to Niceville in December of 2021, I was thoroughly excited. Living so near the beach has been a dream of mine for most of my life, and this opportunity was, of course, too good to pass up. So, as my partner and I packed up our life to make the 12-hour haul, I never concerned myself with the fact that I was leaving everyone I knew behind. That was part of the adventure, after all!

To be honest, after arriving here, it took a bit for me to feel like I was lacking friends. The newness and the adventure had yet to wear off. Thankfully, in January of 2022, I found myself pitching myself to Share, the owner of Artful Things Niceville. She saw my experience and talents and brought me on—and the rest is history. That opportunity

has shaped my entire experience of my new home.

As an artist myself, but one who has often tried to take the "safe" route, I had often found myself dreaming of making art my occupation, not just a hobby. Being a full-time creative was never unattainable, but was always made to seem risky. Dangerous, even. The friends and mentors I've found through Artful Things Niceville, however, have made me realize that this place is the perfect environment for my talents to thrive.

The artists featured in the gallery at Artful Things Niceville, as well as the artists who instruct classes there, have become a family for me. Not only do they produce exquisite pieces of artwork, the likes of which I have rarely seen outside of European museums, incredible pieces of literature

and beautifully crafted pottery, just to name a few, the artists and local authors are beautiful people, who want to uplift the community and share the beautiful gift of creativity with others. What more could you want to find in your new community? What better place to find a sense of community, than amongst a group of people who want to unite, share, inspire and create?

For these reasons alone, I encourage you to take some time to visit us at Artful Things Niceville. You'll likely walk away with more than just Niceville's new go-to shop for local books and occasion cards, more than just handmade soaps and jewelry, more than just an experience of beautifully curated artwork from local artists. You'll walk away having met at least one new friend.

Ongoing Classes:

Rosalyn O'grady – Oil or Acrylics. Tuesday mornings 10 a.m. – noon, \$20 per session plus supplies. ogradytr@cox. net. www.RosalynOgrady.com

Theresia Mcinnis-Watercolor Techniques. Tuesday afternoons 12:45-3:45pm. \$27.50 plus supplies. www. TheresiaMcInnis.com. Sign up: 850-729-2600.

Chris McIoone-Anime & Drawing Basics. Wednesday afternoons 3:30-4:30pm. \$15, bring a sketchbook and pencil. Sign up: 850-729-2600

Charlotte Arnold-Open Studio with Live Model Wednesday mornings 10:30am-1:30pm. Uninstructed-\$15, limited to 6 seats. Bring your own supplies, your medium and an easel. Sign up: 850-729-2600

Tues-Fri 10am – 5pm | Sat 10am – 3pm | Appointments Available

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30—Kidz Paint Pour 9:30-

30—Open Studio Leather & Pearls 12-2pm

MAY

 $\begin{tabular}{ll} \bf 7--Sugar & \bf Cookie & \bf Decorating & {\rm W/Mery} \end{tabular}$

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ECTC: Xanadu, You and a Really Big Hairdo

By Anna and Nathanael Fisher

What do roller skates, mall hair, leg warmers, jean shorts, neon green and Greek Mythology all have in common? They're just a few of the '80's throwbacks you'll find in ECTC's production of Xanadu! This Tony Award-nominated, hilarious musical adventure is about following your dreams despite the limitations others set for you. The original hit score composed by pop-rock legends, Jeff Lynne and John Farrar rolls along at an upbeat, toe tapping pace. Based on the cult classic movie of the same title which starred Olivia Newton-John and Gene Kelly, Xanadu is hilarity on wheels for anyone who has ever wanted to feel inspired. We are kicking (or should we say skating) it up a notch at ECTC with this production... great costumes, heart pumping music, incredible talent, and fabulous lighting and

Speaking of talent... if you saw The Marvelous Wonderettes, then you know the work of the wonderful and talented actress Arianna Reyher! You'll remember Ms. Reyher as the straight-laced, cat eye glasses wearing ingenue who had a thing for Mr. Lee. She is playing the lead, Kira, in Xanadu and will make you forget all about Olivia Newton John when you hear her belt out "Xanadu!"

Kevin Ganzekaufer hails from Long Island and is flying south for this production to play the role of Sonny. Mr. Ganzekaufer's most recent credits include Claude Bukowski in Hair, but we affectionately refer to him as "the guy who did a dive



roll, popped back up, and went straight into a jazz turn in his dance audition." His fun and zany energy is perfect for the role of Sonny and will surely make you laugh as you fall in love with his character.

Our patrons who have been with us for a while may remember the dynamic Adam Silory! Mr. Silory hails from Michigan whose ECTC credits include: First Date, Dancing Lessons, Around the World in 80 Days, The Fantasticks, and Buyer & Cellar. Mr. Silorey is playing Danny/Zeus in Xanadu and with his sharp comedic timing is sure to bring the laughs!

The rest of the Xanadu cast is a mix of some of your favorite local ECTC actors and a few very talented regional actors we are bringing in just for this production: Fort Walton Beach locals Abigail Huhtala as Melpomene and Hillary Marshal as Calliope join the cast, as well as Meghan Horrigan as Erato and Arin Walker as Eturpboth from Niceville. Samantha Savoie is our Featured Dancer/

Aerialist and resides right here in Santa Rosa Beach, while the rest of the cast is rounded out by our out of town talent. Seth Patterson as Thalia (New York, N.Y.) and Josh Hudson as Terpsicore (Eatonton, Ga.).

After May at ECTC we head into all of our summer programming. The Tempest, a part of the Coastal Culture Series through Grand Boulevard, is the free Shakespeare in the park offered on Theatre Thursdays at Grand Boulevard. We also offer a wide variety of summer camps for kids (some of which are already full. So, sign up NOW at emeraldcoasttheatre. org/summercamp), and our SummerPOP Fundraising series featuring Peter Lake, Comedy on the Boulevard, Dread Clampitt, and maybe a few other surprises!

Behind the scenes we are working on Season 10, if you can believe it! Though we cannot reveal specifics yet, we can promise you that this next season is going to be bigger and better than ever! Bigger shows,

thrilling musicals, engaging plays, dvnamic children's educational programming, and all kinds of great ways for us to show love to our community! We look back on the last 10 years with so much gratitude in our hearts at how you, our community, supported us.

We are here for you. To entertain

you, to enrich our community, to bring joy and life to every-

one that comes into our space at Grand Boulevard in Sandestin. We look forward to seeing all of you here at ECTC!

In May:

Xanadu, May 13 - 22

Thursday - Saturday at 7:30 p.m., Matinee Performances Thurs., May 19 & Sundays at 2:30 p.m.

For more information call (850) 684-0323 or visit emerald-coasttheatre.org.





INCENTIVES

continued from page 43

west Florida State College. Also, video submissions are accepted. Teacher's yearly membership fee is \$85.

These programs incentivize students and teachers to prepare for achievement and success. Discover Magazine, June 2019 issue, wrote: "A new study published in the Journal of Educational Psychology reports that students who study to play musical instruments score significantly higher in science, math and English exams than

their non-musical peers." Higher grades add up to higher ACT and SAT scores which leads to scholarships and look great on applications for higher education. Although sports participation is a viable way to obtain a scholarship, a strong equal is the study of music, resulting in higher GPAs and developing the skill of planning for success.

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







Gulf Coast Jam Brings Country to the Coast

By WILL ESTELL

If you're a fan of great country music and America's best beaches, you've probably already heard a thing or two about Gulf Coast Jam. What started as a decent size outdoor music festival 10 years ago has now grown into one of the topten largest, and most popular, country music festivals in the nation.

Having covered the festival editorially for four years, I can assure you it does not, and will not, disappoint. I've seen everyone from Tim McGraw, Brad Paisley, Luke Bryan and Florida Georgia Line to Riley Green, Big & Rich, Lynyrd Skynyrd, Brothers Osborne and Kid Rock play to Gulf Coast Jam's growing crowds of music lovers. Every single year the shows get better while the crowds get bigger. With attendance topping the 30,000 mark for the headlining shows in 2021, this year's festival is proving to be even more popular, with some ticket packages already sold out months in advance.

Taking place June 2-5 at Panama City Beach's Frank Brown Park, this world-class music festival is just right down the road if you reside anywhere in the vicinity of Destin, Niceville, Fort Walton Beach, South Walton

and the surrounding areas.

Spring 2022 Gulf Coast Jam's headliners encompass some of country's biggest duos, including long-time hitmakers Brooks & Dunn headlining June 5th while the festival will be one of the last venues that local favorites Florida Georgia Line will perform at (having recently announced they are taking a break) on June 4th. Additionally, the newly minted ACM Group of the Year, Old Dominion, will headline on June 3rd.

When asked about some of the highlights of the upcoming 10TH Anniversary festival, Gulf Coast Jam's executive producer, Rendy Lovelady, said, "Florida Georgia Line is not only one of the most-requested acts we've ever had at Pepsi Gulf Coast Jam, but both Brian and Tyler are fixtures on the Florida Panhandle. We can pretty much guarantee a party when they play Panama City Beach!"

As if the top-notch array of festival headliners isn't enough bang for your buck, the 10th Anniversary Jam features a smorgasbord of entertainment that includes some of the biggest names in music—every single night. For the first time in the festival's history, this includes a bonus kickoff show featuring Brett Young on Thursday June



Will Estell with Florida Georgia Line band members.

2nd, included for all of those who purchased a weekend pass.

Thursday night's lineup also includes Jameson Rodgers, Niko Moon and Casi Joy, while Friday night brings to the big stage: Tyler Rich, Jordan Davis, Gary Allan, Randy Rogers Band, Presley & Taylor, Ryan Griffin and Tigerlily. Saturday features wellknowns Chris Janson, Maddie & Tae, Darryl Worley, Frankie Ballard, Steve Moakler, Nate Barnes, and Chandler Flint. Finally the culmination of the entire festival weekend will start Sunday, and includes one of my personal favorites, Georgia's own, Corey Smith, along with Scotty McCreery, Tracy Lawrence, Confederate Railroad, Mitchell Tenpenny and Elvie Shane

Having attended and written about concerts by a wide array of artists, the one thing I am always in awe of is that even with today's ever-increasing ticket pricing for single concerts, somehow the producers of Gulf Coast Jam still find a way to offer a remarkable package that allows a concert goer to see in excess of 20 well-known artists, over four days, on a single stage, and make it affordable. I mean where else can you experience all of this music, first-hand, on a \$159 general admission weekend pass? People pay that to see one or two groups at most large venues around the nation.

Festival COO, and Panama City Beach Mayor, Mark Sheldon, agrees that the price has a lot to do with how popular Gulf Coast Jam continues to be, stating, "Four days of fun, sun and great music – you just can't beat that!"

My friend, Craig Campbell, of Campbell Entertainment Group in Nashville, has played an instrumental role in orchestrating various behind the scenes aspects of Gulf Coast Jam since its first year, and he's told me, firsthand, that the talent alone runs well into the multi-millions each year.

Campbell went on to explain, "it's actually because of our great sponsorship by Pepsi, as well as the generous support of Panama City Beach, Jim Beam, Bud Light, and our many other valued sponsors and festival partners that the promoters are able to continually make this one of the most affordable music festivals in the country, yearafter-year. That's one of the aspects that Rendy and Mark are most proud of. Bringing great music to Panama City Beach and making it attainable to most evervone."

In addition to weekend passes, Thursday-only tickets are available starting at just \$29 for general admission. This is the first time the festival has offered a one-day pass, though, as I mentioned above, everyone who purchases a three-day ticket will automatically get the fourth night free as a bonus.

Four-day Pepsi Gulf Coast Jam passes were still available at the time of this article. General Admission passes are currently \$159.00 for the full four-day weekend, with special college student passes only \$139.00, and Military, First Responder/Medical Personnel passes just \$129.00.

There's also VIP Pit and Super VIP passes at \$459.00 and \$659.00, respectively. And, trust me they are worth every penny for that location and stage view. There are also very limited numbers of Side Stage passes available for \$1,150.00. All passes are available at www.Gulf-CoastJam.com, while they last.

For additional information you can follow Pepsi Gulf Coast Jam on Facebook and Instagram. However, the best way to get in on all the action is simply to grab your tickets and music-loving friends and get to Panama City Beach to experience it all yourself.



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TO VIEW THIS ISSUE ONLINE



Casey Kearney Highlights Fierce Everyday Women

Nashville recording artist Casey Kearney, a well-known artist with local roots and featured in past Bay Life issues, has proven her songwriting prowess once again in her most recent release, "Was it You Was it Me," where Casey's writing skills are front and center. In this country meets sassy rocker hit, she pays homage to the women who bring a little spice to life and proudly own it, and includes a playful warning to men who chose these powerful womenthis isn't your average relation-

Recorded in Nashville with award winning producer Doug Kahan, the new addition to Casey's repertoire exhibits Casey's versatility and complexity as both a vocal artist and songwriter. "It's a fun song with a great beat that makes you want to sing along," explains Ca-"but more importantly, I wanted to use the lyrics to tell all the women out there who may not be the stereotypical 'sweet' wife and mom... I see you. I am you. And we're ok even if they think we're a little crazy."

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

Putting her money where her mouth is, Casey set out to do just that in her soon to be released music video that was produced, filmed and edited by



an all-female team, and highlights 10 gritty women who are breaking stereotypes in their everyday lives. "We have a mom with a toddler on her hip working cattle. A Legislative Chief of Staff who has spent a lifetime supporting her son's baseball dreams and is his biggest

cheerleader when he takes the field at the University of Alabama each week. A tough as nails championship team roper who owns her own super feminine boutique. A military pilot who didn't earn her wings until her thirties when she realized she could indeed be anything she wanted to be. Plus, so many more women who have embraced unlikely paths and have extraordinary stories that I can't wait to share with you."

"Women are truly breaking stereotypes every single day, just living what they think is their very ordinary lives. But man, this is the good stuff that I want my daughter to see and know is real life."

The video features each of

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

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

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2022 Arnie Hart

Student Show: April 1-May 27 Faculty Show: April 1-June 30

30th Annual Emerald Coast National Juried Art Exhibition

Open call to working artists across the country Juried by, Dr. Việt Lê, international artist & scholar, faculty at California College of Arts

Best in Show 2021 Emerald Coast National, My Body is a Battleground Dong Kyu Kim

LA-based artist and fashion designer
Opening Reception: August 26, 6-8 PM
August 26 - October 21

Degas Pastel Society Biennial Exhibition

America's prestigious national Pastel Society
Opening Reception: November 11, 6-8 PM
November 11 - December 16

2023

Student Life, by, Dr. Nan Liu

Accomplished binational artist, faculty at Florida A&M University
Opening Reception and Live Demo: January 27, 6-8 PM
January 27-March 31

Arnie Hart

Student Exhibition: April 7-May 9 Faculty Exhibition: April 7-June 29 Opening Reception: April 7, 6-8 PM

Hours: Monday - Friday, 10 AM to 4 PM Summer Hours: Closed on Fridays Director, J. Wren Supak, MFA & MHR

Contact: 850-729-6044 | artgalleries@nwfsc.edu
Facebook:@MattieKellyArtsCenterGalleries | Instagram: @mkac_galleriesnwfsc

Mission: MKAC galleries is an academic museum that conducts programs to enhance the educational mission of Northwest Florida State College. Serving as a teaching adjunct to the Department of Art within the college's Division of Fine & Performing Arts and Humanities, the galleries organize exhibitions by established national and international artists across all styles and media. The MKAC galleries is a reputed viable cultural asset for the entire campus and its regional community.

