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DESTIN Life

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Reflections on 2020, Hope in 2021 "Unprecedented" is the Word for 2020

BY DAVE WHITE,
PUBLISHER, SO WAL LIFE

Users of the online dictionary, Dictionary.com, voted "unprecedented" as the People's Choice 2020 Word of the Year. Can anyone disagree? 2020 has certainly been an unprecedented year of problems, challenges, pivots, solutions and, perhaps, even successes. For many Americans, 2020 has been one of the most challenging years of their lifetimes. And of course, the coronavirus pandemic and the government's response has again been unprecedented.

Nevertheless, as a community, we have persevered. The "bubble," as many here call our wonderful slice of paradise, for the most part has held. After a near universal shutdown beginning in March through the better part of May, Florida began a partial reopening beginning after Memorial Day. As a state, we've come through better than most parts of the U.S., which are still experiencing significant hardships. We ap-



plaud Governor Ron Desantis' early focus on protecting the most vulnerable, while at the same time looking to mitigate the damage done to Florida residents' businesses, jobs and livelihoods. As such, Florida's unemployment rate of just over 6% is one of the lowest in the U.S.

Although we've come through this most unprecedented year perhaps better than most across our country, it has not been without many

challenges. "Stay Safe" has become as popular in our language as "Have a good day." Everyone has become more germ conscious and hand sanitizer and mask wearing has become a part of everyday life, and probably will be for a long time to come.

The business community faced many difficult challenges, enduring shutdowns, reductions in hours of operation and seating capacity, social distancing and sanitation is-

sues; each restriction coming with a cost. According to online giant "Yelp," 61% of restaurants across the U.S. have closed and will never reopen. Here on the Emerald Coast, businesses have fared better, but not without significant challenges.

Despite a competitive environment and upheaval in the market, businesses were forced

HOPE

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Destin High School Moves Forward

New Location Will Open in 2021-22 School Year

BY KAY PHELAN

The much-anticipated Destin High School (DHS) is slated to open for 9th and 10th graders (and currently investigating the possibility of 11th graders) in August of 2021. The tuition-free public charter school is under contract to purchase the Grace Lutheran Church property located at 4325 Commons Dr. W., next to the Mattie Kelly Cultural Arts Village. DHS will be a model for innovation providing unique educational opportunities for both

DHS

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Community

HOPE

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to innovate on the fly. Many of our local businesses were creative and ingenious. “When the world sees obstacles, we see opportunity,” says local business owner Bob Conrad with Eagle Vision Services. “What we have observed in our communities is a values-based mindset that demands self-leadership and a tenacity of spirit that drives our personal and local culture.”

For instance, “curbside” pickup became a thing! Many upscale restaurants offered take-out or even a delivery service for the first time in order to stay in business and generate revenue.

“All of the restaurants had to make major adjustments, cre-

ating outside seating, take-out, drive through, etc.,” says Destin Chamber President Shane Moody. “Also, rental companies had to make some changes due to the governor’s executive orders. And any professional service (accounting, law, banking, etc.) had to adjust to teleworking and zoom calls.”

Though many organizations’ fundraising efforts were cut short due to cancelled events and other activities, some were still very successful through support of our community. For example, Children’s Volunteer Health Network was able to exceed its goal of serving 1,000 students during the school year.

Another example is how our area’s real estate market adapted; as a result of people relocat-

ing from more restrictive states to our area, the market is up over 17% year over year which also translates to more activity and growth for our local businesses, construction trades, suppliers, etc.

Other specialized businesses such as J. Leon Art Gallery actually opened its doors for the first time in June. Shantelle Dedicke, owner of local agency Francis Roy said, “Bringing art at a time when a lot of businesses and activities were shut down was challenging. But people were ready for an escape and the new pottery classes, which were small and social distanced, were seemingly therapeutic.”

Amid the struggle, there are signs of hope. If you look, there’s always a silver lining. This is

America after all! We can always find that ray of hope, the sun breaking through the clouds on a cold morning; alas, the sun will rise, and the chill will give way to a warm and beautiful day. Yes, you can always find a positive in any situation. For instance, remote working has become much more common. Many will never go back to an office, saving businesses millions.

Working from home means more time with the family; many of us have more time for walking and cycling and enjoying the beach, spending time outdoors, perhaps meeting a new neighbor for the first time! And, of course, enjoying the Florida sun is the best source for vitamin D which contributes to a strengthened immune system!

In the article “Tough Times Never Last, Tough People Do!” Robert H. Schuler said, “We all go through difficulties in life. Sometimes, we just want to give up.... But often, when you look back, you realize that those tough times didn’t last. In fact, they did more for you than success or good times ever could do. There’s a reason why they say that tough times don’t last, but tough people do. It’s because, when you don’t give up, you come away a stronger and more resilient person.

As we look back and say goodbye to a challenging 2020, all of us at Life Media’s family of local newspapers send you our most heartfelt wishes for a blessed and hope-filled New Year.

DHS

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college-bound and vocationally-minded students living in Destin and along Florida’s Emerald Coast.

The DHS Governing Board, comprised of members Prebble Ramswell, Denise Fountain, Myra Williams, Sarah Stone, Heidi LoCicero, Jim Luttrell, Dr. Mitch Silver, Al Gardner and Drew Palmer, has been diligently working to bring the community its own high school, starting with entering into a \$4.6 million purchase contract with Grace Lutheran for the land and buildings. A closing on the property is anticipated in the early part of this year.

Mike Wind, executive director of ministries for Grace Lutheran Church, commented, “We are very excited for the Destin community as the prospect of having its own high school gets closer to becoming a reality. And, we are prayerful for them as the board works to make it happen.”

Greenwich Investment Management, based in Stamford, Conn., and well-versed in educational facility investments, will handle DHS’s financing of the new site.

DHS’s Governing Board president, Prebble Ramswell,



RENDERING COURTESY OF DAG ARCHITECTS

Grace Lutheran Church on Commons Drive in Destin will be retrofitted to be the new home of Destin High School.

commented, “The vision of opening Destin High School is about to be a reality due in large part to our donors, parents, community leaders, and our Governing Board. We are thrilled to have the assistance of RoundTable Funding whose financial advisors are highly experienced in guiding visionaries like the DHS Governing Board through the processes of securing charter school financing, retrofitting, project oversight and building additional school facilities. This community asset will make a positive economic impact while greatly enhancing the quality of life here in Destin.”

In addition to site acquisition

and financing, the board has also retained the services of DAG Architects. The local architectural firm which has designed schools throughout the state including Destin Middle School, is designing site plans for the retrofit, and set forth a strategic plan to accomplish the renovation in record time.

The board is also pleased to announce that DHS’s first head of school has been selected following a nationwide principal search and intensive interview process. The principal will be announced in the coming weeks.

The student enrollment application period will commence this month. In addition to offering advanced and state-mandated core curriculum, DHS will utilize a place-based approach to learning that will take advantage of the local geography, industry and community. This will allow the school to offer additional curriculum opportunities through authentic, meaning-

ful and engaging personalized learning for students.

Fundraising is a critical component of opening the school. The start-up costs alone are \$400,000. Long-term, the more revenue raised toward purchase cost, the less needed to be financed, thus putting additional revenue into student programming, opportunities and options. Of course, when DHS is fully operational, as with all public educational institutions, the school will receive state and federal government funding. Area businesses and individuals can contact the DHS fundraising chair and governing board treasurer, Sarah Stone, at (850) 598-6888 or sarah@saysarah.com.

“We would like to thank the students, parents, citizens and donors that have supported the efforts to bring forth this highly desired and needed educational asset. We promised that the board would be working hard to move the ball across the finish line. Destin High School is happening. Now is the time for the community to step up, donate, volunteer and take part in the plan to enhance the community educational experience for our students,” said Sarah. There will be a series of small group meetings and tours at the future home of DHS. More informa-

tion will be forthcoming to keep the community and future students updated.

For additional information on registering, donating or volunteering, please call (850) 424-1664, email info@destin-highschool.org or visit www.destinhighschool.org.

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KOHLER HOMES

Meet Our Hometown Hero: Sean Dietrich, An Overcomer

BY LORI LEATH SMITH

Longtime local and Destin Life favorite Sean Dietrich (sometimes better known as “Sean of the South”) is a traveling storyteller, podcaster and Southern Living writer known for his daily column filled with stories of steel workers, church potlucks and trusty bloodhounds. His penned words seem to grant his readers a reason to believe there is good in the world—despite what they might have experienced to the contrary.

As a child he liked to write. He filled up notebooks with tales of the high-seas, shameless vixens, and steamy scenarios combining both of the aforementioned. His 5th-grade teacher found one of his notebooks and scanned through it. “She told me I wrote with too many commas,” says Sean, “and encouraged me to pursue a career in construction work. That, old, woman, never, liked, me.”

“Years later, I learned my teacher had left the school. She took a job at the Piggly Wiggly as a cashier. I went to visit the old girl, to show her the man I’d grown into,” Sean says. “She seemed genuinely glad to see me. And I was just as glad to find her wearing that red apron for a living. After visiting for a few minutes, I realized something I’d never noticed before. Beneath her hard-shell exterior was a regular lady, working from nine to five for pennies. She was doing the best she could with her life. Just like me. Before I left, she asked me what kind of work I did. At the time, I worked in construction,” Sean says.

Today, Sean is a columnist, novelist and podcast host known for his commentary on life in the American South. Pure, raw and transparent, long-time readers are well familiar with Sean’s monthly column in Bay Life. His work has appeared also in Newsweek, Southern Living, Garden and Gun, The Tallahassee Democrat, Good Grit, South Magazine, Alabama Living, the Birmingham News, The Bitter Southerner, Thom Magazine, and The Mobile Press Register. He has authored 11 books and is the creator of the Sean of the South Podcast.

Recently, Sean posted “Second Chances,” an eloquent blog post about his experience as a student at now Northwest Florida State College. A graduate of the Class of 2012, in 2018 he was the Against The Odds Award Recipient, a distinguished alumni winner, which is fitting for this popular and well-known writer and storyteller who has certainly beaten the odds...and overcome the words of his 5th-grade teacher. What happened one Saturday morning in his creative writing class, at then Okaloosa-Walton College, was a turning point. The teacher told Sean he was her favorite student. Until then, I’d never been anybody’s favorite anything.

The truth is, I was a sad kid in an adult’s body. And these professors believed in me. My literature professor told me I was “smart.” Professor Domulot said I was “going places.”

My English teacher said, “I think you could be a novelist one day.”

I remember the exact day she said that. I almost cried after class.”

Last year, he published *Will the Circle Be Unbroken?: A Memoir of Learning to Believe You’re Gon-*



na Be Okay. Here Sean tells his own story for the first time. It is one that has been marked by both loss and love and has taken him on an unlikely path. Sean was only age 12 when he scattered his father’s ashes from a mountain range. His father had been a man who lived for baseball. He was a steel worker with a ready wink, who once scaled a 50-ft. tree just to hang a tire swing for his son. But he also had been the stranger who tried to kidnap and kill Sean’s mother before pulling the trigger on himself. He was a childhood hero who was now reduced to a man in a box. After his father’s

death, Sean dropped out of 7th grade and became a dishwasher, newspaper deliverer, and then a construction worker, to help his mother and sister scrape by. As a self-described “nobody with a sad story behind him,” Sean still could not deny the glimmers of life’s goodness. Such goodness became even harder to deny when he met the love of his life, Jamie, at a fried chicken church potluck, and harder still when his lifelong love of storytelling led him to stages across the country, where he is now known and loved as “Sean of the South.”

That ‘Against The Odds Award’ is certainly relevant and well-deserved for a person who can testify to the strength that lives within us all to stop the cycles of the past from laying claim to our future.

You can visit Sean at SeanDietrich.com, on Facebook: @seanofthesouth, Instagram: @seanofthesouth, Twitter: @seanofthesouth1, Show/Podcast: www.SeanoftheSouthShow.com.

Destin Life’s “Hometown Heroes” are sponsored by Northwest Florida State College. To read about more Hometown Hero graduates or for more information, call 850.837.8880 or visit nwfsc.edu.

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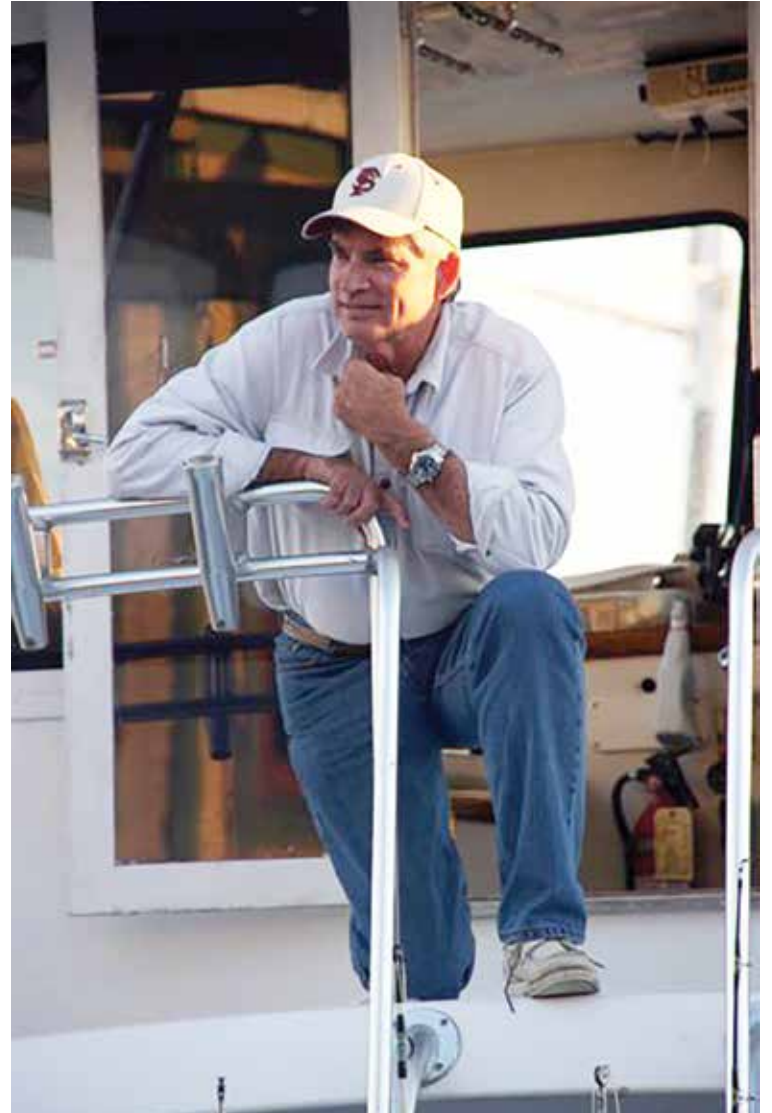
Capt. Commish Retires from Politics and Heads Back to the Sea

Destin Local Capt. Kelly Windes, aka “Capt. Commish” in the political world—“Killer” in the fishing world, is no stranger to hard work or retirement. In 2017, he retired from his more than 50-year, fishing-for-hire career aboard his beloved Charter Boat SUNRISE when he sold his 53’ G&S Sport Fisherman to his son, Capt. Trey Windes. He had been driving a 38’ Hatteras,

Charter Boat OUTTA LINE. He wanted to devote more time to the Okaloosa County Board of County Commissioner District 5 position to which he had been elected in 2012. As his second term on the County Commission came to a close, he opted to not run again, but to retire from political life and return to being a fisherman again. This time though, he will not be

working directly with the public; instead, he will become a commercial fisherman at the age of 74.

As a charter boat captain, Capt. Kelly Windes was a consistent Captain of the Year winner at the Destin Fishing Rodeo. The crowds always knew he would show up daily at the close of the weigh-in’s around 6:58 p.m. Cutting it close was



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part of his charm, but his popularity was due to the size of the fish he caught. Back then, Captain of the Year was based on the number of winning fish you weighed in, and Capt. Kelly Windes brought in some whoppers, including several Rodeo and USGA world records.

The secret to his success, he will tell you, is investing back in the business. He didn’t rely solely on navigation equipment and natural bottom to get a “mess” of fish. He spent tens of thousands of dollars annually to build more artificial reefs to which only he knew the readings. Making your own places to fish insures that other fisherman can’t wipe out a spot before you get there. Having knowledge of what depth and areas would attract which species, he built a lot of “wrecks” that turned into good business and a great reputation.

Back in the day, charter boat captains would commercial fish during the winter to make ends meet. Instead of the 12-hour or

more fishing charters which are somewhat glamorous, the captains would be gone 3-5 days at a time catching fish to sell to the local fish markets. Some of the fish would be shipped outside of the area, but they were all sold locally. That’s what he plans to start doing again full-time.

His last meeting as a county commissioner was November 17, and he is already chomping at the bit to get out fishing again. He has made a lot of friends at the county, and he concedes he will miss them. They will tell you that he brought his work ethic and common sense to Okaloosa County, and they will miss him, too.

So, it’s back to sea he goes! Will he retire from that? Who knows! Kelly says he’s still got a lot of things he wants to do. So, when you see him, you could say, “Happy Retirement,” but just know that retirement is never really an end for him. It’s just a transition to something new.

Meet Our Local Pro: Michael Conner, Owner of Mattress Outlet

By JILLIAN BARNHART

There is nothing better than a good night's sleep. We need sleep to recharge, reset, and renew ourselves. It is an essential function that keeps us healthy and performing at our best. Without it, we are left in a daze as our bodies and brains cannot function properly. Millions of people struggle daily to fall asleep or stay asleep at night and for many the root cause is an old, poor quality mattress. We often take for granted how much a mattress can affect our daily lives. The start of everyone's day is where they wake up. So, it really is crucial to ensure we are waking up the right way.

This was all too clear to Michael Conner, an area local and entrepreneur who found his calling in the mattress business. In April of 2006, Michael opened his first Mattress Outlet store in Miramar Beach. Over the years, he was able to open another location in Pensacola and, since then, his stores have



been providing quality brand name mattresses, home furnishings and excellent customer service for almost 15 years now.

Michael did not want his establishment to be just a mattress store, however, and realized that a business can do more than just

sell. Throughout the years, Mattress Outlet has developed a program partnering with Gulf Coast Kid's House to donate beds to children in need. They feature this platform at the top of their website, right next to "Store Policies" as it is a top priority to them.

Continuing this philosophy of giving back to the community, Mattress Outlet created a robust and inclusive financing option, allowing people to purchase a quality product on credit without the stress of high interest rates and damaging credit checks. Not stopping there, Mattress Outlet also provides layaway options that make it easy to afford what you need when you need it.

As it did for most everyone, 2020 is bringing change to Mattress Outlet. The showroom location in Miramar Beach is making a move to a new location and will have a different look. Operating as a warehouse with enough inventory to meet the demands of the many vacation rental properties in the neighborhood, Michael and Mattress Outlet in Miramar Beach will now be accessible by appointment only. Shopping for your new mattress will become a private and safe experience – free of crowds, but with the

same above and beyond customer service.

With so many options – from memory foam to pillowtop, adjustable bases to cooling comfort, twin sizes to California king and everything in between, including famous name brands like Serta, Tempur-Pedic and Nectar – it can be confusing as to which mattress you need. "Everyone is different and everyone has a preference," says Michael. "You want to go somewhere with a variety of products that you can feel and experience before committing. That is why Mattress Outlet is your best route – the possibilities are there for you to make an informed decision, and even better, there will be a responsive, friendly expert with years of experience to help you find the best product and ultimately, the best night of sleep."

To make your appointment, call (850) 837-6336.



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Community

Get Your Gumbo On During an Event-Filled Winter at Baytowne Wharf!



The 32nd Annual Sandestin Gumbo Festival!

Friday, Feb. 19, 5 p.m.

Saturday, Feb. 20, 12-4 p.m.

Yum! Yum! It's Almost Time for The Sandestin Gumbo Festival! The Best Gumbo Cook-Off on the Emerald Coast!

Known as one of the largest and most popular winter food events along Florida's Emerald Coast, this winter festival favorite is back for its 32nd year! Kick off your tasting days, Fri., Feb. 19, with a delicious seafood boil at Hammerhead's Bar & Grill.

Then on Saturday, Feb. 20, Gulf Coast restaurants will be featuring their top-secret gumbo recipes and competing for your vote! Sample the variety of gumboes and vote for your favorite as the "People's Choice" winner! Dark or light roux? Chicken, sausage or seafood? Celebrity judges will name the "Area's Best." This festival's atmosphere is so fun, with live music from Dikki Du and the Zydeco Krewe while you taste, free kid's activities, and restaurants from all over our area vying for your coveted vote!

And, the popular Bloody Mary competition is BACK again this year featuring the Best

Bloody Mary's at the beach! Taste some of the finest local bars' and restaurants' Bloody Mary's and you get to judge those, too! Vote for your favorite and help contestants win the title of "Best Bloody Mary at The Beach!" This year's event is promising to serve up fun for everyone. Visit www.SandestinGumboFestival.com for tickets and details, including a daily schedule of events and entertainment. General admission tickets

are \$40 and allow tastings of all gumbo and Bloody Mary's. If you're interested in entering the event, visit baytownewharf.com. Event will happen rain or shine.

There's still time to have your winter fun at Baytowne On Ice!

Now a family tradition, lace up those skates and continue the magical, winter spirit at The Village of Baytowne Wharf's

Baytowne on Ice. For locals and visitors who miss the cold and ice, Baytowne's seasonal ice rink is the perfect opportunity to share some of your favorite winter traditions. The ice rink is open through January 31st. Hours vary daily. \$11 for a 90-minute skate; \$3 skate rentals. Rent the rink for private parties and functions starting at \$300. Call 850-714-7614 or visit baytownewharf.com for more information.



Mark Your Calendar for the Mardi Gras Parade!

Sunday, February 14th, 2 p.m.

No Cost to Attend

The Village streets will be filled with costumed dogs and their humans along with unique and colorful floats, golf carts, and pick-up trucks. Mardi Gras music will fill the air as four-pawed friends and parade participants shower parade-goers with a barrage of beads, moon pies and other trinkets. To participate in this event, register by Feb. 12 at baytownewharf.com.

The Village of Baytowne Wharf features an array of boutiques, eateries, galleries and nightlife—not to mention a diverse schedule of outdoor special events for the entire family. This spectacular setting, all within the gates of Sandestin Golf and Beach Resort, is a gathering place for many locals and visitors as well as the perfect spot to spend a vibrant afternoon, evening, week, vacation, or you can be one of the lucky few who frequently experience Baytowne Wharf through home ownership.



Cali's To Do In Destin! JANUARY 2021

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Baytowne On Ice | ALL Month
Long @ 11am | Baytowne Wharf

New Years Day Celebration |
10am | Stinkys Fish Camp

Pelican Plunge | 10:30am |
Okaloosa Island Boardwalk

Free Beach Bonfire | 5pm | Royal
Palm Grille

Karaoke Night | 6pm | Village
Door Music Hall

Dueling Pianos | 8pm | The
Palms Bistro

First Friday Comedy Show |
9pm | Enlightened Studios

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Hot Chocolate Hike | 8:30am |
Eglin Air Force Base

Farmers' Market | 9am-1pm |
Grand Boulevard

New Year Cookout | 12pm |
Emerald Coast Harley-Davidson

Karaoke Night | 6pm | Village
Door Music Hall

Karaoke Night | 8pm | World Of
Beer Destin

Dueling Pianos | 8pm | The
Palms Bistro

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Beach Church Service | 7:30am |
Crab Trap Destin

Karaoke | 6pm | Village Door
Restaurant (Baytowne)

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Free Beach Bonfire/SIN Night |
5pm | Royal Palm Grille

Island Disk Golf | 6pm | Island
Wing Company Destin

Music Bingo | 7pm | Pallet Bar
and Grill

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Karaoke | 6pm | Enlightened
Studios FWB

Music Bingo | 7pm | World of
Beer

Game Night | 7pm | Landsharks
Pizza

Trivia Night | 7:30pm | Village
Door Music Hall

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Expecting Mothers Float Free
(Appt Required) | 9am | Float
Brothers

Bonfire on the Beach | 6pm |
The Bay

Open Mic Night | 7pm |
Enlightened Studios FWB

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Karaoke Night | 6pm | Village
Door Music Hall

Little Black Dress Ladies Night |
6pm | Palms Bistro

Café Thirty-A Charity Ball | 7pm
| Café Thirty-A

Dueling Pianos | 8pm | The
Palms Bistro

Ladies Night | 10pm | McGuires
Destin

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Sip n Stroll | 4pm | J.Leon
Gallery

Free Beach Bonfire | 5pm | Royal
Palm Grille

Karaoke Night | 6pm | Village
Door Music Hall

Dueling Pianos | 8pm | The
Palms Bistro

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Farmers' Market | 8am-1pm |
FWB Landing

Farmers' Market | 9am-1pm |
Grand Boulevard

Winter Wonderland | 9am |
Baytowne Wharf

Women's Climbing Circle | 9am |
Rock Out Climbing

Pet Adoption Event | 10am | Pet
Supermarket

Karaoke Night | 6pm | Village
Door Music Hall

Karaoke Night | 8pm | World Of
Beer Destin

Dueling Pianos | 8pm | The
Palms Bistro

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Beach Church Service | 7:30am |
Crab Trap Destin

Brunch, Rhythm, & Brews | 2pm
| Harborwalk Village

Karaoke | 6pm | Village Door
Restaurant (Baytowne)

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Free Beach Bonfire/SIN Night |
5pm | Royal Palm Grille

Music Bingo | 7pm | Pallet Bar
and Grill

..... 12

Karaoke | 6pm | Enlightened
Studios FWB

Music Bingo | 7pm | World of
Beer

Game Night | 7pm | Landsharks
Pizza

Trivia Night | 7:30pm | Village
Door Music Hall

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Youth Climbing Club | 5:30pm |
Rock Out Climbing Gym

Bonfire on the Beach | 6pm |
The Bay

Open Mic Night | 7pm |
Enlightened Studios FWB

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Karaoke Night | 6pm | Village
Door Music Hall

Little Black Dress Ladies Night |
6pm | Palms Bistro

Dueling Pianos | 8pm | The
Palms Bistro

Ladies Night | 10pm | McGuires
Destin

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Free Beach Bonfire | 5pm | Royal
Palm Grille

Sip n Paint | 6pm | Lucky Beach
Nutrition

Karaoke Night | 6pm | Village
Door Music Hall

Pink Floyd Tribute Concert |
7pm | Club LA

Dueling Pianos | 8pm | The
Palms Bistro

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Farmers' Market | 8am-1pm |
FWB Landing

Farmers' Market | 9am-1pm |
Grand Boulevard

**PAWS Adoption Event/
Celebration** | 11am | 850 Craft
Reserve

Karaoke Night | 6pm | Village
Door Music Hall

Pink Floyd Tribute Concert |
7pm | Club LA

Karaoke Night | 8pm | World Of
Beer Destin

Dueling Pianos | 8pm | The
Palms Bistro

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Beach Church Service | 7:30am |
Crab Trap Destin

Brunch, Rhythm, & Brews | 2pm
| Harborwalk Village

Karaoke | 6pm | Village Door
Restaurant (Baytowne)

**Laugh Out Loud Sunday
Comedy** | 7pm | Destin
Commons

..... 18

Free Beach Bonfire/SIN Night |
5pm | Royal Palm Grille

Music Bingo | 7pm | Pallet Bar
and Grill

..... 19

Karaoke | 6pm | Enlightened

Studios FWB

Music Bingo | 7pm | World of
Beer

Game Night | 7pm | Landsharks
Pizza

Trivia Night | 7:30pm | Village
Door Music Hall

..... 20

Bonfire on the Beach | 6pm |
The Bay

Open Mic Night | 7pm |
Enlightened Studios FWB

**Natural Awakenings Health &
Wellness Expo** | 11am - 6pm |
The Palms Destin

..... 21

Karaoke Night | 6pm | Village
Door Music Hall

Wine Dinner for Marcia Hull |
6pm | Vin'tij

Dueling Pianos | 8pm | The
Palms Bistro

Ladies Night | 10pm | McGuires
Destin

..... 22

Free Beach Bonfire | 5pm | Royal
Palm Grille

Karaoke Night | 6pm | Village
Door Music Hall

**Rumors: Fleetwood Mac
Tribute** | 7pm | Club LA

Dueling Pianos | 8pm | The Palms
Bistro

..... 23

Farmers' Market | 8am-1pm |
FWB Landing

Farmers' Market | 9am-1pm |
Grand Boulevard

Sip and Science | 5:45pm |
Emerald Coast Science Center

Karaoke Night | 6pm | Village
Door Music Hall

**Rumors: Fleetwood Mac
Tribute** | 7pm | Club LA

Karaoke Night | 8pm | World Of
Beer Destin

Dueling Pianos | 8pm | The
Palms Bistro

..... 24

Beach Church Service | 7:30am |
Crab Trap Destin

Brunch, Rhythm, & Brews | 2pm
| Harborwalk Village

Karaoke | 6pm | Village Door
Restaurant (Baytowne)

..... 25

Free Beach Bonfire/SIN Night |
5pm | Royal Palm Grille

Youth Climbing Club | 5:30pm |
Rock Out Climbing Gym

Music Bingo | 7pm | Pallet Bar
and Grill

..... 26

Karaoke | 6pm | Enlightened
Studios FWB

Music Bingo | 7pm | World of
Beer

Game Night | 7pm | Landsharks
Pizza

Trivia Night | 7:30pm | Village
Door Music Hall

..... 27

Youth Climbing Club | 4pm |
Rock Out Climbing Gym

Bonfire on the Beach | 6pm |
The Bay

Open Mic Night | 7pm |
Enlightened Studios FWB

Trivia Night | 7pm | World of
Beer

..... 28

Winter Guest Fest | 8am-12pm |
Destin FWB Convention Center

Karaoke Night | 6pm | Village
Door Music Hall

Dueling Pianos | 8pm | The
Palms Bistro

Ladies Night | 10pm | McGuires
Destin

..... 29

Free Beach Bonfire | 5pm | Royal
Palm Grille

Karaoke Night | 6pm | Village
Door Music Hall

Aerosmith Tribute | 7pm | Club
LA

Dueling Pianos | 8pm | The
Palms Bistro

..... 30

Farmers' Market | 8am-1pm |
FWB Landing

Farmers' Market | 9am-1pm |
Grand Boulevard

Chili Cook Off | 5pm | 3rd Planet
Brewing

Karaoke Night | 6pm | Village
Door Music Hall

Aerosmith Tribute | 7pm | Club
LA

Karaoke Night | 8pm | World Of
Beer Destin

Dueling Pianos | 8pm | The
Palms Bistro

..... 31

Beach Church Service | 7:30am |
Crab Trap Destin

Brunch, Rhythm, & Brews | 2pm
| Harborwalk Village



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 Community

Trends & Treasures

2021 is here and birthdays, weddings and romance are in the air!

Make 2021 Your Healthiest On The Coast! Healthy Coast Meals



Who's ready to get back on track for the New Year? Your Grab-N-Go location at City Market is open and stocked with staple meals, specials, breakfast items, gluten-free meals and protein doughnuts! Stock up on nutritious meals ready to eat in just two minutes! Clean eating is now simple! Healthy Coast Meals are made with all-natural, whole ingredients. All meals are prepared in a licensed commercial kitchen and sold fully cooked. All you have to do is heat and eat! Eliminate the inconvenience and stress of planning, shopping, cooking and cleaning. Select weekly "Healthy Gourmet" specials or the eight popular staple meals! Or select one of the packages and Healthy Coast will choose for you! Your meals are made fresh to order with clean, healthy ingredients, so you know exactly what you're eating, whether you're trying to maintain your existing health, lose weight, build muscle or get fit. With Healthy Coast, you can achieve your New Year's resolutions!

www.healthycoastmeals.com
850-496-6470

Flavor for Me and Gluten-Free! Smallcakes

A new year means a new wave of cupcake heaven on earth! An array of flavorful frostings and a variety of cupcake flavors to suit even the pickiest palate! Have you tried the new January specials? There are 18 flavors to choose from as well as GLUTEN-CONSCIOUS and VEGAN versions. Why not try Blueberry Cheesecake, Cannoli, Caramel Latte, Chocolate Co-



conut, Confetti, Cookie Dough, Flutter Nutter, Grasshopper, Maple Bacon, Orange Creamsicle, Peanut Butter Brownie or Rocky Road? Get some for yourself or give them away. Make your celebrations personal with custom edible logos and images on gourmet cupcakes, custom cakes, mini cupcakes and tempting treats baked fresh daily. There's cupcakes, full-size cakes, pull-aparts, cupcakes in a jar, cookies, pies, brownies and more! 2021 is going to be a sweet year!

(850) 460-7487
www.smallcakes.net

New Year, New You! CRYO850 Performance and Recovery Center



It's 2021 and time to get back on track with your health and wellness! Visit CRYO850 to strengthen your immune system, detox excess sugars and fats, and relieve aches and pains to keep you active! We work with students as young as age 8 and seniors as old as 80!

*Step one: Start with a **3D Body Scan** to find your baseline and track your 2021 health progress.

*Step 2: Schedule a **Pagani Detox** to start the process of eliminating excess sugars and fats.

*Step 3: Jump in the **Infrared Sauna** to flush the toxins.

*Step 4: Add **Contrast Therapy** to your weekly routine to keep you centered, pain

free, healthy and fit!

Contrast Therapy is the alternation of heat and cold therapies to help alleviate joint and muscle pain, eliminate lactic acid, and improve skin. The advanced technology of combining Red Light Therapy and Whole Body Cryotherapy provides all of the benefits of contrast therapy in a short 15 minute visit. Take it to the next level with our newest and most popular service — **Pagani Muscle Recovery**. By applying alternating cycles of direct heat and cold, we can decrease inflammation and soothe aching muscles.

To ring in 2021, we are offering three different **\$99 Jump Start to Wellness** offers. Choose from

*One week of whole body cryotherapy,

*a "2 For 1" Day Pass, OR

*a \$99/month membership!

During the month of February, make sure to grab someone you love and chill for our annual Valentine's Day "2-For-1 Cryotherapy" Special!

Improve your immune system, detox your body, boost your metabolism, sleep better, reinforce cognitive abilities, manage pain and inflammation and improve athletic performance. Come visit CRYO850 and make 2021 your best year yet!

(850) 279-4145
www.cryo850.com

Let's RING in a New Year! Frill Seekers Gifts and Personalized Fabulous Finds



Obviously, we're ALL ready to RING in a New Year. If you or someone you know, has recently become engaged, it's time to visit Frill Seekers Gifts. A save the date card and the wedding invitation will be your guests' first impression of your special event. To make a beautiful impression, your wedding invita-

tions should be as coordinated as the rest of your big day. Upon arrival for your bridal appointment, with the Frill Seekers' team, you'll be whisked into a private wedding suite, where ice cold champagne will be waiting and a complimentary wedding gift for you and your groom. Then the fun of selecting and designing your wedding invitations begins, with a wide range of lettering colors to choose from, a variety of exquisite paper options, and several envelope styles to coordinate with the overall style of your wedding. Frill Seekers' experts help you choose the perfect look for your big day, along with thank you notes, RSVP cards and reception cards. The shop specializes in bridesmaid "ask gifts," hostess gifts, fine stationery, attendant's gifts, cups, napkins and koozies. Envelope addressing services are also offered. Ready to schedule an appointment? Call Frill Seekers Gifts' bridal team.

(850) 460-2700
frillseekersgifts.com

Transformation Time! Pure & Couture



Treat yourself to a colorful, trendy transformation and begin 2021 with "pure" confidence. Then invest in good hair care products to change your hair game. Whether you're looking to grow it longer, or have healthier hair, we Pure & Couture has products to help. For example, the new Renewal Remedies Treatment by Oribe is on fire. It can be customized to address a variety of concerns such as strength, color retention and smoothness. Pure and Couture Salon's team of stylists are sought after, because they listen to what YOU want your hair to look and feel like. They discuss your preferences for your makeup and personality and suggest options that work with your skin

tone, face shape, lifestyle and budget. With hand-tied hair extensions, color, styling, makeup, spray tans, a pampering facial or even a therapeutic massage or kinesiology, Pure and Couture wants a relationship with you! Even brides trust their "look" to the Pure & Couture team! And the team can go on location to you, or you can bring your wedding party to the salon.

(850) 424-3935
pureandcouture.com

A Luxurious New Year! Bijoux De Mer



With the new year comes artistic, non-traditional, fine jewelry with a fashion forward edge. Bijoux De Mer, meaning "jewels of the sea" in French, presents everything from customer couture pieces done in 18k gold, diamonds and other precious gemstones, to funky baroque pearl fine jewelry, and fashionable gift pieces! Pearls, Tourmalines, exotic gemstones, 18K gold, precious metals, blackened silver and more, all exquisitely hand-crafted by artistic jewelry designer, Renee Launiere, who passionately pushes the boundaries of conventional jewelry design. Pearls and jewels set in gorgeous pieces created by Renee's talented hands and available in fine jewelry stores, nationwide and internationally, even on luxury cruise lines, Renee's designs are popular with celebrities and featured in runway shows. You have the opportunity to work directly with Renee on a perfect custom piece. Work exclusively with Renee by booking a private appointment to custom create your own combo with leathers, stones and pearls in all colors and sizes. Renee is also booking events and design consultations. A Best in Destin winner, at Bijoux de Mer, a one-on-one experience is waiting!

(850) 830-5465
www.bijouxdemer.com



Ring in a New Year with beautiful personalized stationery, invitations and wedding gifts from Frill Seekers. Complimentary gift wrapping, as always.
 (850) 460-2700
www.frillseekersgifts.com



Gourmet cupcakes, custom cakes and more, as seen on the Food Network and Cupcake Wars. Baked fresh, with up to 18 flavors to choose from. Order ahead and pick up!
 (850) 460-7487
www.smallcakes.net



The salon's goal is simple—give every client a luxurious experience. Offering a variety of services: hair styling, hair extensions, makeup, blow outs, eye brow styling, facials and massage.
 (850) 424-3935
www.pureandcouture.com



Bijoux De Mer Fine Jewelry by Renee Lauriere is a global brand that defines modern elegance. Handcrafted pieces that are bold and innovative, yet sure to retain classic appeal.
 (850) 830-5465
www.bijouxdemer.com



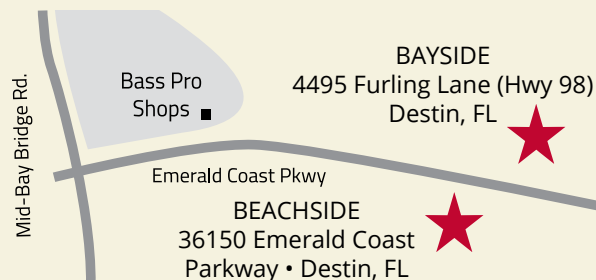
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It's Almost Time for CRESCENDO!

Sinfonia Gulf Coast, our region's only fully professional symphony orchestra, is pleased to announce the full line up for its annual fundraiser Crescendo! a cultural and culinary extravaganza slated for February 12-14, 2021.

Festivities begin on Thursday, January 14 at 11 a.m., with a Crescendo! Kick Off Lunch at Bijoux Restaurant + Spirits located at The Market Shops. Enjoy an incredible lunch prepared by award-winning chef/co-owner Jack McGuckin, sip elegant wines, indulge in delectable desserts, shop all of the must-have accessories of the season from The Jewel, view the latest fashions modeled by Today's Boutique, door prizes and raffle items, plus much more. Tickets are \$100 per person and

include lunch, wine and gratuities.

On Friday, Feb. 12 at 6 p.m. Crescendo! weekend will begin with a series of carefully curated vintner dinners hosted in elegant homes and venues throughout the Emerald Coast, which pair the talents of local and regional "celebrity" chefs with some of the country's most acclaimed vineyards for a delicious evening of food and wine. Participating wineries and chefs will be announced soon. Vintner Dinner tickets are \$295 per person and include all food, wine and gratuities.

This year's main event is themed "Moulin {vin} Rouge" and is set for Sunday, Feb. 14 at 11:30 a.m. at the Hilton Sandestin Beach Golf Resort & Spa in Miramar Beach. This ener-

gy-infused event experience will celebrate the cultural and culinary arts by showcasing world-class vintners, expert spirit purveyors, amazing auction items, and a musical performance. Enjoy reserved table seating, hors d'oeuvres, a full, seated lunch, live and silent auctions and an all-inclusive afternoon of incredible fun.

Tickets to Crescendo! 2021 are \$150 per person and include all food, wine, reserved table seating, performance and valet parking. Tables of up to 10 guests can be reserved by calling (850) 460-8800. Sponsorship opportunities are still available.

Proceeds from Crescendo! will benefit Sinfonia and its music education programs which include musicians/guest artists in schools, free orchestra con-



certs, bus transportation for students, the Sinfonia Youth Orchestra program, the Arts in Medicine initiative with Sacred Heart Hospital and LINK UP concerts for third through fifth graders in partnership with Carnegie Hall.

For more information on

how you can join Sinfonia's team of volunteers, contact Beth Clavier at (850) 460-8800 and bclavier@sinfoniagulfcoast.org. For more information or to purchase tickets for Sinfonia Gulf Coast's Crescendo! events, visit www.sinfoniagulfcoast.org or call (850) 460-8800.

Save the Date! NWFL Communications Summit

February 26-27, The Island Ft. Walton Destin by Hotel RL

Join the Florid Public Relations Association, Northwest Florida Coast chapter, for this year's Northwest Florida Communications Summit happening Feb. 26-27, 2021, and hosted by The Island by Hotel RL on beautiful Okaloosa Island.

This year, FPRAs is hosting TWO action-packed days complete with top-notch keynote speakers, interactive breakout sessions, and much more professional development from some of the industry's leading professionals.

Breakfast and lunch are included both days! The Island is also offering us discounted room rates, so you can turn your professional development into a weekend getaway.

There are a lot of surprises and extras planned, including an opening night beach bonfire included for all attendees. FPRAs annual Blind Wine Fundraising event (a super popular, fun event each year) will also be held during the Summit on Saturday evening!



Sponsorship opportunities are available to get your business in front of some of the leading marketing, public relations and communication professionals.

Are you Interested in speaking? Applications to be a break-

out session speaker as well as registration information will be available soon! **For questions or more information, contact Bobby Parker at parkergenepr@gmail.com.**

Shaye Smith, FPRAs chapter president and former chairperson for the event, says this year will be bigger and better than ever before. For the past two years, our team of PR and marketing professionals have brainstormed and tirelessly worked to escalate this event to meet

a higher standard; we strive to make sure valuable information, ideas and assets are presented with tools and tactics that will help professionals in any industry promote their businesses and get their messages heard; we have worked to bring a quality summit to our area that was non-existent until recent years. And, we're looking forward to an expanded, informative, educational and industry-leading event this year!"

Visit nwflcoastfpra.org.

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City of Destin Selects Employee of the Year for 2020

BY CATHERINE CARD,
PUBLIC INFORMATION MANAGER,
CITY OF DESTIN

Each year, a City employee is nominated and selected by co-workers to celebrate the qualities that inspire us to achieve the City's mission: "We are an organization that strives to provide a healthy, safe quality of life, balancing the needs of our residents with the expectations of our visitors, and providing open, clear, accurate communication." Destin City

Manager, Lance Johnson stated, "It is a pleasure to honor Lidieth Quintana of the Public Works department as the 2020 Employee of the Year."

Ms. Quintana began her career with the City in January of 2015, as a custodial technician with the Destin Library. She was responsible for the cleanliness of the entire facility. Within months of being on the job she quickly demonstrated her value which was recognized by fellow co-workers and patrons alike,



Left: Public Works Director Michael Burgess, with Ms. Quintana and Destin City Manager, Lance Johnson

of being highly productive and displaying very high standards

in all her tasks. Upon adoption of the FY18 budget, she moved to the Public Works department and was promoted to a full-time position to serve the needs of the entire organization. City co-workers wrote the following things about Ms. Quintana:

- Attention to detail is unwavering, high standards.
- No matter the task she takes it seriously.
- Doesn't cut any corners, done right the first time.
- She is a team player,

self-starter, extremely punctual.

- She can foresee problems and plan ahead.
- Takes pride in everything she does.

The recipient of the Employee of the Year award receives a cash certificate, an etched plaque and a reserved parking space for the year ahead. Our elected officials and staff greatly appreciate all that Ms. Quintana does for our City. Congratulations Lidieth!

OCSO Sheriff Ashley Retires; Sheriff Eric Aden Sworn In

On Dec. 31, OCSO Sheriff Larry Ashley's term ended and Sheriff Eric Aden was sworn in this month.

Sheriff Ashley served tirelessly as Okaloosa County Sheriff the past 10 years in the elected office, but was in law enforcement for more than 30 years.

Having a desire to be sheriff ever since his days as a patrol deputy, then as a K-9 officer working street crimes, Sheriff Ashley kept



Sheriff Ashley



Sheriff Aden

pursuing the role through investigations and then into the command staff. His yearning to lead matured into the feeling he could truly make a difference and his vision was to do that by becoming Sheriff. That he did in 2010 after the Sheriff Charlie Morris scandal, after Ashley reported it to the FBI.

Already having been with the Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office since 1990, he then became

Sheriff, though a negative time in OCSO's history. Undaunted, he set out determined to rebuild the office's credibility and trust within the communities of Okaloosa County.

Once Ashley was in the head seat, he and his team set up programs and computer-generated alerts within the OCSO financial system, armory and with

Continued on next page



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Have you reached the point in your life where you're ready to leave the housekeeping, laundry and daily chores to someone else and enjoy life? Then Brookdale Destin is the place for you. Our assisted living and memory care community is located on Florida's Emerald Coast, a tourist destination known for its white beaches and emerald green waters. It's convenient to shopping and restaurants, and there's not a chore in sight.

As a resident you can jump into a busy social calendar and a life of leisure and independence while still receiving the personal assistance you need. Should your needs change over time, and you require memory care, you have the assurance of knowing you can remain here. You and your family will have peace of mind knowing that we have trained staff on-site 24 hours a day, seven days a week.



2400 Crystal Cove Ln, Destin, FL 32550 | (850) 267-1600 | www.brookdale.com

 Community

Need to Change Your Plumbing Pipe Flashings?

Failed Pipe Flashings are the #1 Roof Leak! Why? Because most are made of plastic which breaks down under the sun's UV rays and because some are of poor design.

Vent pipes penetrate your roof to allow air into the plumbing system which enable your toilets to flush and your sinks to drain. These pipes require pipe flashings to prevent water intrusion into your house.

More often than not, they fail in several years or less. Plumbing pipes are inside the walls and floors and leaks can travel easily throughout the house. They are usually discovered as stains on your ceilings, walls or floors. Unfortunately, leaks can be the source of hidden damage for months or even years.

Gradual water damage of this type caused by deterioration of pipe flashings IS NOT typi-

cally covered by insurance as it can be deemed to be a maintenance issue.

So, what happens next? Most importantly, pipe flashing leaks often cause dangerous mold in wall cavities. These leaks can take years to discover and pose costly damages and serious health risks. Mold exposures are attributed to many well-documented chronic health conditions.

A high-standard roof vent is the best route to take to help avoid these issues—one with a design that allows for a water-tight roof, where the cap is removable for easy cleaning, one that suppresses damper noise and carries an extended year warranty.

Specialty Roofers, Inc., can help determine if this is your problem and is a roofing company you can trust. We aim

to provide the highest quality workmanship and customer service at a competitive and fair price. We only partner with the best manufacturers in the country to ensure our roofs can stand the test of time. As a locally-owned and operated company, you can count on us to stand by our work. Contact us to get a quote at 850.974.ROOF.

SHERIFF

continued from previous page

evidence. Audits are now conducted on a frequent basis and all data is available online for maximum transparency.

Some of Ashley's other goals during the past decade were to initiate a more robust physical fitness program for Sheriff's Office employees, maintain the state accreditation and consolidate communications resources. One of his main accomplishments was expanding the school resource officer program. Now, other communities use Ashley's program as a role model.

OCSO was also the first Northwest Florida agency to receive and use body cameras; the first to aggressively use social media to connect with the community; and the first to put deputies in every school.

Ashley has been successful in restoring transparency to the OCSO. He is passing the baton to newly-elected Sheriff Eric Aden to carry it forward. Aden will be overseeing the OCSO that, currently, serves and protects nearly 200,000 year-round residents as well as many more tens of thousands of visitors each week. The OCSO has approximately 325 sworn offi-

cers and 110 civilian support staff services ranging from road patrol, traffic enforcement, investigations and environmental enforcement, to school resource

officers, marine and beach patrols, K-9, civil process, warrants, communications and judicial services. As Sheriff, Aden says, "I am not only honored to

serve alongside these men and women to combat crime, I feel privileged to have such a wonderful community to call home."



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Our daughter just completed her second phase and had her braces removed today, what a milestone!! This experience has been amazing. We love Dr. Stubbs and her staff. Always friendly and always went above and beyond for my daughter's comfort. ~ Micha K.

 Community



Essential Policy Portfolio Reviews

BY VICTORIA OSTROSKY

He must have hit a puddle of water. Something grabbed his car and tossed it forcefully aside into the guardrail. He heard the impact, then lost consciousness for several seconds. The drizzling sky was a grey lid on his grey day when he opened his eyes, tasting blood in his mouth. His airbag saved him from the worst of it.

Bob had bought his newest used car earlier that day after

flying into Phoenix to pick it up and drive it across country back to his home in Florida. Texas and the rain were his undoing.

“Hey,” Bob said, with still shaking hands as he held his cell phone to his ear, “I’ve been in an accident with the car I bought today.”

“I’m so sorry!” replied Natalie, an agent at his insurance agency. “Are you alright?”

“Yeah, just a little shook up is all.”

“Your agent isn’t in today because of the holidays, but I’ll pull up your policy and see what your deductibles are,” said Natalie. She discovered that Bob had not added comprehensive, collision, rental or roadside coverage on his car, which surprised her. “You requested these coverages, right, Bob?” she asked.

“Yeah, I was trying to save some money. I guess I just threw

away \$13,000, didn’t I?”

There’s a reason to review your insurance portfolio each year. And there’s an even better reason to listen to your agent’s professional recommendations based on your situation and their expertise. Your insurance policies are there to protect, not just your life and property, but your bank account as well.

We know there will be things in your life that impact your insurance needs. Whether you’re purchasing a home, buying a new vehicle, getting married or starting a business, take the time to get a policy review.

First, let’s look at your auto policy. Bodily Injury liability steps in when you’re in an accident that’s your fault and someone in another vehicle or a pedestrian, is injured. This is also your asset protector. Make sure the coverage is high enough to

protect your assets in the event of a lawsuit. And match your Uninsured/Underinsured to the Bodily Injury and stack it.

Should you have Comprehensive and Collision? That depends on whether you have a lien (or lease) on the car, and what the car’s value is. If you own it free and clear, and if the value of the car is about the same as the cost of the deductibles, you may not want to add physical damage coverage. Otherwise, yeah, you should have it.

Next, what about your home policy? Is the dwelling coverage enough to rebuild your house in the event of a loss like this past year’s fires and hurricanes? Construction prices have gone up astronomically, so ensure you are adequately covered. This holds true for rental properties and condos as well. And make sure you have Law and Ordinance coverage of at least 25%, and if the property is a rental, check to see if your DP3 policy has that coverage available, since some carriers don’t offer it on Landlord/Tenant policies. Always include replacement cost for your Personal Property and have enough Loss of Use/Loss of Rents coverage as well.

We’ve discussed Umbrella policies at length before. So remember, this is an excellent way to obtain additional asset protection that goes above your home or auto policy. (Visit MyDestinLife.com, November 2020, page 12.) Most carriers offer from \$1

million up to \$10 million depending on your needs.

Then there’s flood coverage. Even if you’re in an X flood zone, flood policies are always recommended since here in Florida, if it can rain, it can flood. Remember Hurricane Sally a few months ago? Your home policy will not cover flooding.

Lastly, for your collections like jewelry, fine art, coins, guns or something else, verify how much coverage you have on your home policy. They come with standard sub-limits, so ask about a separate Personal Articles Floater, or see if you can schedule them on your home policy.

The bottom line is this – take time to review your policy portfolio with your agent every year and listen to what your agent recommends. Don’t throw away thousands of dollars needlessly.

For more information, visit <http://myinsurancevideos.com/videos/vid-27/?user=ins-zone>.

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

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2020: What Happened in Real Estate and Why it's Important to YOU!

Time for the Annual: Just the Stats, Ma'am

BY GAIL PELTO

2020. Done. Caput! On to a new, exciting year! (And Thank Goodness for THAT!) So, let's recap the Destin and Miramar Beach residential real estate market stats for 2020 compared to 2019:

In 2020, the number of SOLD Listings was up by 22.1% over prior year. That's HUGE!

In 2020, the Median Sales Price was up by 12.7% over prior year.

In 2020, the Number of New Listings was up by 8.9% over prior year.

In 2020, March, June and August had the highest number of sales and in 2019 it was March, April and May. Remember COVID-19 hit hard in March and in April 2020

sales were down 44.5% over prior year. April closings usually go under contract in March. March and April were a bit scary in Real Estate and then it rebounded!

The Median Sales Price was \$459,900 in 2019 and in 2020 it was \$489,000—up 6.3%.

Average Cumulative Days on Market (length of time from listing to under contract) was 129 in 2020 compared to 135 in 2019.

Average Sold to List Price was 95% in 2020 and the same in 2019.

In 2020, we averaged 4.45 months of inventory, in 2019 we averaged 6.44 months of inventory. Note: 5 months or less is considered a sellers' market, over five months is considered a buyers' market. However, with interest rates so low, buyers can purchase more house than they ever could. So, now is a good time for Buyers AND Sellers!

The current Active Listings have been on market 245 days on average; the sold listings were on market an average of 134 days.

Keep in mind that these stats are for ALL residential sales through December 2020 and, depending on where you are selling or buying, the numbers might change.

What does this all mean to YOU?

We had slightly higher inventory and way more sales in 2020 over prior year, AND prices were higher.

If you are on the market for sale now and you've been on market for more than 129 days, it's time to review why and think about some changes. Maybe it's because of the condition? Or maybe it's the price? Talk to your Real Estate Agent.

If your property is priced correctly, you should expect to sell at about 95% of list price.

If you are looking to sell in 2021, LIST NOW! March is right around the corner and the stats show you have a better chance of going under contract in the Spring; you need to be on the market soon. It's time to interview to make sure you get the right agent. Don't know how to interview agents? Reach out to me at (850) 374-0454 or email me at Gail.Pelto@KW.com. I'll give you some pointers.

If you're looking to buy, BUY NOW—there's not too many buyers in January and February and you might have a good chance at finding a motivated Seller! AND, you can take advantage of the low mortgage interest rates!

If you're looking to add to or start an investment property portfolio, NOW IS THE TIME! Cash-out refinancing may be a great way to start! Purchase the property and have the renters pay you. And, if you have one,

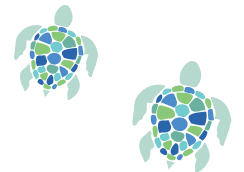
have them pay the mortgage too! Need to speak to a lender? Call me and I can help.

Need an agent? I can help. Call me at (850) 374-0454 or email to Gail.Pelto@KW.com.

Know the stats and, more importantly, make sure your real estate agent knows the stats! (Just sayin')

Cheers to your healthy, prosperous and joyful New Year! Call me if you need some help.

Gail Pelto is a full-time real estate agent with Keller Williams and a board member with both the Mattie Kelly Arts Foundation and The Rotary Club of Destin. If you have questions about real estate, call her at (850) 374-0454.



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 Community

Investing in the New Year



BY MAURICE STOUSE, FINANCIAL ADVISOR AND BRANCH MANAGER
Each new year brings resolutions, new goals, new plans as

well as the review of existing plans. Short term, many of you might want to look to where you want to be in six months. But equally important is to plan for where you want to be in five years and well beyond that. Keeping that in mind, as we enter the new year, here are 10 considerations investors, savers and planners might want to plan and or review now.

Retirement plans. Have you funded your IRA (assuming you qualify for and have one) for 2020? Typically, you have until the federal income tax filing deadline. If you are self-em-

ployed or a small business, have you made the necessary contributions for 2020? Do you utilize a SEP, a 401k or a Defined Benefit Plan? What might you need to know about a Roth IRA? You might also want to review the investments you have for retirement including current allocations, any rebalancing considerations and if the portfolio is in line with your current investment objectives, risk tolerance and time frame. Lastly, did you take a Required Minimum Distribution in 2020 or did you waive that per the CARES Act? It is also a good idea to preview

what your distribution might be for 2021.

Beneficiaries. The new year is also a good time to review current beneficiaries on your retirement plans and see if they are current or perhaps need to be updated. The same would be for non-retirement accounts. You can have a beneficiary buy way of "Transfer on Death" on your nonretirement accounts if you would like to.

Estate planning. Whether you have an estate plan or not, it is also a good time to review how your assets are titled and how ownership will transfer upon your passing. This would go not only for financial assets (stocks, bonds, mutual funds and the like), but also for real estate. That would mean both home ownership (your domicile) or investment or income producing real estate. It is also a time to look at your will as well as medical directives and power of attorney should have need those.

Long Term Care. Do you have a plan in place for your long-term health and physical care, should that be needed?

Trusted contacts. Many firms today offer you the option of having a trusted contact listed on your account(s) should you like to have that. Or you might want to see your options for granting authority to your accounts by power of attorney form, trading authorization (limited or full) or simple inquiry authority.

Asset allocation. Review of what you own and where you own it and why you own it.

Tax Efficiency – review of tax treatment of your investments. Are they tax deductible, tax free or tax deferred?

Charitable giving – do you have a giving plan or perhaps a donor advised fund or your own foundation? The new year is a good time to review what you have or perhaps to learn about or consider alternatives available.

College Savings Plans – There are three main categories: 529 plans, UTMA's (Uniform Transfer to Minors Act) as well as state tuition plans. The new year is opportunity to either fund or learn more about which of these might best fit your plans or objectives.

Income planning. The new year is also a time to look at your sources of income. Systematic

Withdrawal plans, dividend income only, bond interest or fixed income interest are areas that might warrant a review early in the year. Systematic withdrawal plans might mean the systematic redemption of principal in addition to any earnings. You might want to explore the components to your income plan to ensure you are not accelerating your draw down of principal in down years for variable or stock market investments (and the like).

Most investors, firms and advisors encourage investors to look at their plans regularly, on a quarterly, or at least on an annual basis. Take time early in the year to plan for now and for the years that come for you.

Maurice Stouse is a financial advisor and the branch manager of The First Wealth Management and Raymond James and resides in Grayton Beach. He has been in financial services for over 33 years. His main office is located at First Florida Bank, a division of the First, A National Banking Association, 2000 98 Palms Blvd, Destin, FL 32541 with branch offices in Niceville, Mary Esther, Miramar Beach, Freeport and Panama City, Pensacola, Tallahassee, and Moultrie, Ga.; phone 850.654.8124. Raymond James advisors do not offer tax advice. Please see your tax professionals. Email: Maurice.stouse@raymondjames.com. Securities offered through Raymond James Financial Services, Inc. Member FINRA/SIPC, and are not insured by bank insurance, the FDIC or any other government agency, are not deposits or obligations of the bank, are not guaranteed by the bank, and are subject to risks, including the possible loss of principal. Investment Advisory Services are offered through Raymond James Financial Services Advisors, Inc. The First Wealth Management First Florida Bank, and The First, A National Banking Association are not registered broker/dealers and are independent of Raymond James Financial Services. Views expressed are the current opinion of the author, not necessarily those of RJFS or Raymond James, and are subject to change without notice. Information provided is general in nature and is not a complete statement of all information necessary for making an investment decision and is not a recommendation or a solicitation to buy or sell any security. Past performance is not indicative of future results.

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 decision. Please note, changes in tax law may occur at any time and could have a substantial impact upon each person's situation. While we are familiar with the tax provisions of the issues presented herein, as Financial Advisors of RJFS, we do not provide advice on tax matters. You should discuss tax or legal matters with the appropriate professional.

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From the Emerald Coast Boys and Girls Clubs

Holiday Hometown Heroes

It was a very Merry Christmas for 162 kids from nine Boys & Girls Clubs across the Emerald Coast. Thanks to a generous donation made by Rusty and Brooke Skalla, 162 children each received a once in a lifetime shopping trip to the Walmart in Destin. The kids purchased necessities like socks and winter clothing, and the donation left room for a few fun purchases as well. "Because of a huge and generous gift from the Skalla Family, we are collectively able to bring some holiday happiness to 162 of our club members. I cannot in words describe how monumental this is for our youth and families in an ever so adverse year. Brooke and Rusty Skalla have made a huge impact on our communities and we thank them," said Shervin Rassa, CEO, Boys & Girls Clubs of the Emerald Coast.

Shopping works up an appetite and the Boys & Girls Clubs kids and staff celebrated the magical event with breakfast provided by Costa McDonalds and Krispy Kreme, fueling up

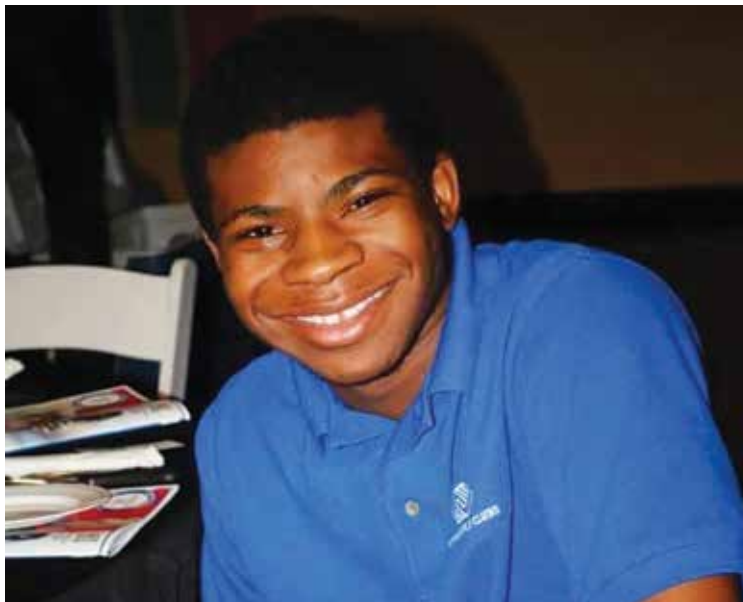
the group for a fun experience donated by Urban Air Indoor Trampoline Park.

"We are here today to help make a difference in these children's lives. We want them to know we love them and we want to make sure they feel that when they leave here today," said Rusty and Brooke Skalla.

Jacobe Turner Memorial Fund Established by Boys & Girls Clubs of the Emerald Coast

In November, five people were killed in crash on State Road 85 in Crestview. One of the victims was 19-year-old Jacobe Turner.

In honor of the memory of Jacobe, the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Emerald Coast, in conjunction with Jacobe's family, has established the Jacobe Turner Memorial Fund. Turner was awarded the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Emerald Coast Organizational Youth of the Year Award in 2019 and was an active and beloved member for over a decade.



According to BGCEC, Jacobe was attending Northwest Florida State College where he pursued his passion in the Culinary Arts. He was able to put this passion to work for Little Caesars, the NWFSC kitchen and the Emerald Grande.

"Jacobe was a huge part of our Boys & Girls Club family and many people are reaching out for ways they can help his family during this time of

need. This memorial fund is a great way to help Jacobe's family and celebrate his life. We will make sure Jacobe's legacy lives on within our organization and our community," said Shervin Rassa, Chief Executive Officer, The Boys & Girls Club of the Emerald Coast. Donated funds will be dispersed directly and immediately to the family of Jacobe Turner to be utilized at their discretion.

To donate to the Jacobe Turner Memorial Fund, visit a local BBVA Compass Bank location. Donations will be accepted in the form of cash or check and deposited using Customer ID #16079647. Outside donations can be mailed to BBVA Compass Bank c/o Teller, 728 N. Ferdon Blvd., Crestview, FL 32536.

The Boys & Girls Clubs of the Emerald Coast is a registered IRS 501(c)3 charity whose mission is to promote and enhance the development of boys and girls by instilling a sense of competence, usefulness, belonging, and influence through its programs focused on academic success, good character and citizenship, and healthy lifestyles. The Boys & Girls Club of the Emerald Coast receives funding from contributions, special events, grants, and major donors such as Destin Charity Wine Auction Foundation and United Way agencies in Escambia and Okaloosa/Walton Counties.

To learn more about the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Emerald Coast, visit emeraldcoastbcg.org or follow the organization on Facebook and Instagram.

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 Community

Looking Back to Look Forward

BY COURTNEY LINDBERG,
DIRECTOR OF INNOVATION,
ARBORBROOK CONSULTANTS

My father died at the young age of 62 from Pulmonary Fibrosis. He retired as a Lt. Commander in the Coast Guard and had achieved a financially comfortable life in retirement. He enjoyed the arts with friends, traveled internationally and drove a Lexus. By all measures of the world surrounding us, he had done well. But some of the

final remarks in our last few conversations told me a very different story.

My father had a financial planner. I distinctly remember this as a teenager from the coinciding of conversations my parents were having during the same season I was active in a school project where we invested in the stock market. I made some poor financial choices in college with debt and it spawned conversations with him about

proper financial management. Yet, despite having a professional advisor and his perceived success in this arena, in his final days he felt, in many ways, he had missed the entire point.

In the past I have kept his words private. What was spoken between us in those days, and words he softly spoke under his breath, that he wasn't aware I had heard, have so anchored in me that I would almost say they haunt me. I stood at the doorway

to his room in the ICU, looking at a man sitting in a chair, not eating the food in front of him, hunched over with tubes everywhere, machines humming and beeping, his skin hanging on his bones – and I wondered what had become of this man in front of me? Surely this wasn't the barrel chested, loud, picture of strength I knew as my father.

His words struggled out from him, his lungs and spirit weakened. "There's more I should have done."

It's too challenging to try to capture all that was said in that single sentence without filling in the details of an entire life. The generosity that followed in the final few days was more than I had ever seen in my life. I could see the joy and fulfillment it brought to him, but also the heartbreak that he had discovered this truth so late in life.

Money, in and of itself, is not the goal. Others will disagree. But it is where we stand. Good, even great, financial management and planning is simply not enough. It is a part of success, but only a part. And the part it plays, from our experiences and beliefs, is that it is a tool to

achieve a higher understanding of success. As a Christian firm, what defines "higher" is pretty well mapped out, and it can be boiled down to this: It's not about your goals. It's about His goals for you, and the rest of His children.

The closer we get to the end of our lives, the more we begin to reflect on the decisions we've made. In 2020, we had a lot of opportunities to question the world around us. Why did we do the things we did? Why are we doing what we're doing now? It's existential, but time to reflect is important. Even God took time to rest.

The question is why. Why are you doing with money what you're doing? There is someone who knows a why that was created just for you and it will shape every decision you make, including the financial ones. Don't let money be the place where your planning and goals end. Let money be one of the tools to help you achieve the higher goals you've been called to. Then, you will join all the others in this growing movement into greater stewardship and Go Beyond Money.



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PAWS Animals' Wishes Come True

The Panhandle Animal Welfare Society (PAWS) received the largest cash donation in its 63-year history from a “Secret Santa,” a gift that will make wishes to better serve Okaloosa County and its animals come true in this new year.

The donation from a part-time Destin resident who asked to remain anonymous, is enough to break ground and complete Phase I of the new PAWS campus.

“I have always been an animal lover, and the need for PAWS is very apparent in the community,” the donor said. “As the community is growing robustly, it will need greater capacity at PAWS. I hope this will help PAWS keep up with the demand.”

While certified plans for a central administrative building

were completed last year, the donation will allow architects to also begin plans for new dog kennels, cat housing, a low-cost veterinary clinic and other animal welfare needs for the campus.

To determine those needs, the PAWS board of directors will solicit ideas this month from the community, municipalities, county staff, volunteers, rescue agencies and other animal advocates. Due to COVID-19, the input will be collected via online surveys and meetings.

Based on that input, a project manager and committee will create a phased master plan, then launch a 2021 capital campaign to fund the rest of the campus. Some parts of the campus, such as the dog kennels, already have large-scale matching donors. In honor of



their late son, a local couple also has donated \$100,000 for a hydrotherapy pool to help rehabilitate injured dogs.

The new animal campus, at 745 Lovejoy Road NW, will be on a 15-acre parcel donated six years ago by local supporter Al

Qualls in memory of his beloved wife, Peggy Ann Qualls. It is just a few blocks northeast of the current dilapidated PAWS shelter.

The renderings, plans, a survey link, and other details about the campus development will

soon be featured on the PAWS website, paws-shelter.org.

For other information, email PAWS Executive Director Tracey Williams at TraceyW.paws-shelter.org.

Help Finding Your Lost Pet

There's another way to help locate your lost pet. On a website, PawBoost.com, you can begin the process for free to alerts locals on Facebook as well as notify a Rescue Squad™, a group of volunteers, rescue owners, shelter employees, veterinarians, and pet lovers—members that sign up to receive alerts about lost pets in our area.

You simply enter your pet's information on the site and post to the Facebook page for our area to instantly start spreading local awareness. Then it alerts local members of the Rescue Squad™ by email. It basically utilizes Facebook and email to send out notifications when someone registers a missing pet. It also has a place to post found pets.

If your furry friend goes missing or you find someone's pet, visit the website, Pawboost.com, and upload your information. Here you can also sign up to be a Rescue Squad member if you want to help others find theirs.

Travel

Close to Home and A Postcard Away



Bear Lake just down the hill are indeed stunning, for this Florida girl living in Miramar Beach for the past 14 years, temps ranging from 7 to 30 degrees at nearly 6000 feet above sea level is indeed very cold. Due to the pandemic, my family's 2020 multi-generational trip turned out to be a Christmas trip to the Rocky Mountains.



By JODELL HAVERFIELD,
HAVE TRAVEL MEMORIES

As I am writing my first editorial for 2021, the snow is lightly falling outside the window of our rustic mountain cabin. While the picturesque views of the craggy Utah peaks above us or

When I say we have gone where the wild things are, I am not referring to my 15 grandchildren running around. In this part of the country, you can feel like you're on a Wildlife Safari every day. You might see wild turkey, deer, elk, wolves, moose, mountain lions and even hear

erie howls at night. Having raised our children in Montana, being in the mountains of UT is hardly any different and just as adventuresome, except we have not seen a grizzly bear yet. I have been told that is because they're rarer here, and did not know that! I remember one summer in Montana our family was hauling our boat to Flathead Lake when traffic was stopped right in the middle of a small town as we watched a huge Grizzly finish ambling across the highway.

At this very moment, everyone has just returned from skiing the non-social distanced

freshly powdered slopes and are trading their ski suits for swim-suits as they head for our cabin's hot tub in the snow. The frigid temperatures only make it even more appealing.

For me, though, nothing beats a cruise. From my first cruise as a girl with my parents to my first cruise with my own children where we created such great memories we still talk about today, especially now as we have a renewed appreciation for our time cruising together. Thanks to cruise industry connections, we have had many opportunities to cruise. Whether

it's hosting a group or experiencing a new ship's inaugural cruise with fellow travel advisors, being on a cruise ship is invigorating to my soul. My adrenaline starts pumping the minute the cruise port comes into view.

If cross country flying December 2020 is any indication, then I would say people are ready to travel again. The airports were full and every seat the airline offered had someone in it. I also noticed something else—people were happy. Even their masked faces could not cover their joy. Maybe it was anticipating Christmas with family or just the exhilarating feeling of going somewhere.

Whether it's 2021 or 2023, whether you're waiting for cruise ships to return to the seas or dreaming of a Sandals Resort in the Caribbean which are already welcoming visitors, my advice is to start planning now. Availability will be tighter than it has ever been and with amazing offers and liberal cancellation policies currently in place, you can't go wrong. Booking now will get you better deals and as far as cruise ships go, with fewer passengers on board, it's a win win.

TIP: Traditionally at the beginning of each new year, cruise lines promote their best offers; this is known as Wave Season. So now is an especially great time to start planning your next cruise. Whatever happens in 2021, you will have the opportunity to cancel or rebook, so why wait? Our Destin office is ready to help you plan your perfect post Covid-19 travel experience today.

Happy New Year and Happy Travels from all of us at Have Travel Memories Vacations, a family travel agency and a family that travels together!

~JoDell, Dave, Jalayne and Jason



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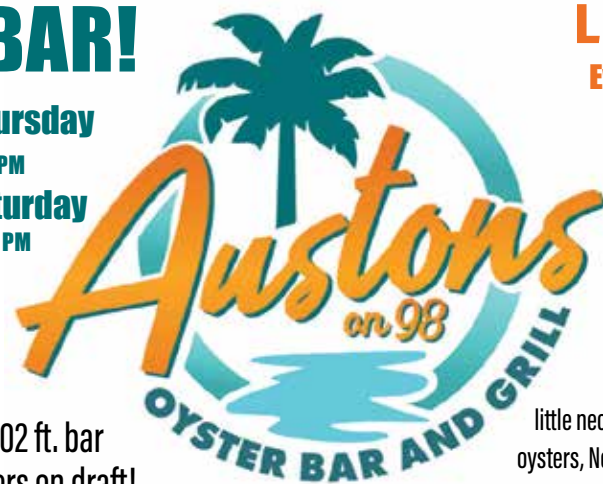
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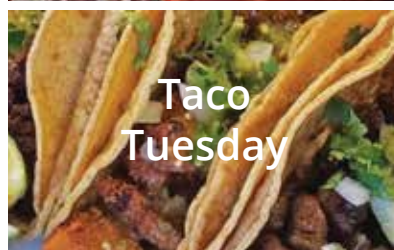


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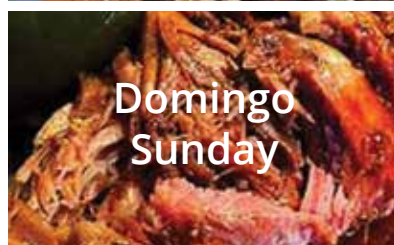
Mi Gente
SUPERMARKET
TAQUERIA & CANTINA



Micheladas



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Mi Gente

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Bric a` Brac Restaurant & Night Club



Bric a` Brac can help with your parties, promotions, birthdays, business events or really any private event! Voted "Best Crab Cakes in Destin" five years in a row, Bric a` Brac is the true definition of something for everyone—a family friendly, kid friendly, American-style restaurant well known for its tasty and colorful food selections served up in a fun, artsy atmosphere by professional and friendly staff. Locally-owned and operated since 2014 by twin brothers Rodolfo and Fernando Petit, their hands on, fun loving style, engaging charisma and true passion set them apart. But it doesn't stop there. Want great food coupled with great fun? Enjoy delicious entrées while you listen to some lively tunes. There's something for everyone!

SPECIALS

11pm - 4am Latin Night Fridays & Saturdays - Music and Dancing Upstairs/Downstairs. 18+ to Enter, 21+ to Drink. GUYS \$10, LADIES \$5.

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

Thursday: Live Music from 6pm to 9pm

Friday: Jones & Co from 7pm to 10pm

Saturday: Live Music from 6pm to 9pm

(850) 424-6369
Shoreline Village Plaza
824 Hwy 98 E, Destin
Bricabracdestin.com

Café Destin



Having reopened in September under new ownership, Café Destin offers an expanded menu serving breakfast staples such as pancakes, waffles, omelets, Eggs Benedicts, biscuits & gravy and more. For a lighter take, they also have a variety of Fancy Toasts (avocado, salmon and

more) along with pastries and muffins. For lunch, choose from a variety of burgers, sandwiches and salads. You will love the full-service coffee shop, offering everything from hot or iced fresh, local Amavida coffee to espresso and lattes. And there's diverse fresh fruit smoothies and a variety of tantalizing teas. Open for breakfast and lunch 7 days a week from 7am-2pm. and has free WiFi, encouraging you to bring your laptops and work during the day. There's also a conference room available for small groups, and the dining area can be rented for larger groups for networking, luncheons and more. If you haven't stopped in recently to check out the new menu, be sure to make breakfast or lunch plans soon! And don't forget the coffee stop!

(850) 424-6777
985 US-98 E, Destin
cafedestin.com

Fatboys

Welcome to Destin's newest locally owned restaurant located on 98 in the heart of the Destin Harbor.

Fatboys serves up Juicy Beef and Tasty Bird offering up the juic-



iest burgers you've ever had using only the freshest ingredients available. Come taste the difference. Fatboys starts with 100% premium beef, the freshest ingredients, and you can build it just the way you like it. Taste the difference! Make sure to try out their meatless op-

tions and gluten-free buns!

Follow them on social media to find out about the daily specials. With plenty of parking out back, come in today and see what you're missing.

Sunday-Thursday 10am to 10pm & Friday-Saturday 10am to 11pm

SPECIALS

Daily specials, lunch specials and Happy Hour specials are waiting for you to come by and enjoy every day of the week. 10% off for all military, veterans, EMS, firefighters, police and local residents.

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ilovefatboys.com

HOLI - Indian Restaurants

Holi is a unique combination of Indian Cuisine and Indian heritage bringing you a variety of dishes from different regions of India. The menu contains both vegetarian and non-vegetarian dishes. For those with pure food indulgence in mind, sate your desires with their ever changing, internationally and seasonally in-



spired small plates. Holi not only uses authentic Indian spices, but also customizes the spice level for greater experience. The menu is available online with orders available for takeout or pickup.

10859 Emerald Coast Pkwy.,
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(850) 353-2630

280 Eglin Pkwy NE,
Fort Walton Beach
(850) 362-6077
3102 W 23rd St.
Panama City
(850) 215-3030
holirestaurants.com

Island Wing Company Grill & Bar



Voted "Best Wings" four years running, Island Wing Co. is calling your name. Come in and find your favorite beer among the 58 selections on tap or enjoy a cocktail and savor some of the tastiest food you've ever eaten. Are you ready for some sports? With Big screen TVs situated all around the bar and restaurant, Island Wing Company invites you in to watch, cheer and enjoy the 2021 seasons. Need to feed the whole family? Family meals to go with curbside delivery has you covered. Your Island awaits you...

SPECIALS

Daily Happy hour 3-7pm and 7pm-close. Happy Monday! Kids eat free. (Free kids meal with adult entrée purchase) and Happy Hour All day long. TWOsday was made for TACOS! Enjoy two tacos with reggae rice for \$8.95 Choose from Jah'mon Jerk, Maui Wowwie Mahi, Buffalo Chicken and Baja Fish. Wednesday is flatbread special day. Enjoy \$3 off their five famous flatbreads. Pairs well with \$3 house wine or 1/2-priced bottles.

(850) 837-2999
981 U.S. Hwy. 98, Destin
islandwing.com

La Famiglia Restaurant



La Famiglia has earned a reputation for serving some of the finest homemade Italian dishes on the Emerald Coast including Veal Parmesan, homemade pastas and raviolis and antipasto. Not to be missed, La Famiglia is a local favorite for authentic,

brick oven Italian pizza, topped with a variety of traditional and specialty ingredients. A big appetite? Try the hand-stretched, 2 ft. pizza on for size! Simply a great place to take the family out for a genuine, Italian pizza experience and memory-making.

SPECIALS

Lunch Menu starts at \$7.99
Wine Down Wednesdays \$3 glass of House Wine all day and 20% off bottle of wine
(850) 279.4527
16055 Emerald Coast Pkwy.,
Ste. 114, Destin
lafamigliadestin.com

Landshark's Pizza



Hey Sports Fans... Hungry, Thirsty, maybe a little of both? Come in and visit Landshark's Pizza. Owners Brian and Sue Hassmann have created the locals' favorite pizza, buffalo wings and sports pub and bar that

Continued next page

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Daniel Boone
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serves great pizza AND awesome wings plus many other scrumptious eats for folks of all ages. There's plenty of seating for everyone and TV's galore, plus fun and games all week long. Sports fans from all over come and watch all their favorite teams on countless regional and national sports networks including College and Pro Football, Basketball and more. And there's a fully stocked bar with 95 different bourbons and 30 beers on draft!

SPECIALS

Weekly specials and fun include Music Bingo on Tuesdays at 7pm; \$.69 cent Wing Wednesdays

(850) 424-6743
300 Harbor Blvd., Destin
landsharkspizza.com

Supermarket & Taqueria Mi Gente'

Do you make your own Tamales? Mi Gente' is always stocked and has all you need to make them! Open for breakfast, lunch and dinner, Mi Gente' is one of Destin's newest and hottest dining spots for the whole family and friends to enjoy. With fresh ingredients and home-



made recipes, this fun and festive restaurant will instantly capture your heart. Serving up huge portions, you can choose from an incredible select menu offering a diverse selection of delicious food from different Latin-America countries. Taqueria Mi Gente' is a treat you just have to experience for yourself. Enjoy a drink from the cantina, try a few tasty options on the menu. Take a walk through their amazing and diverse supermarket and fresh meat department where you can buy a variety of Latin America groceries to take home. Open 7 days, 9am-9pm daily.

(850) 842-2992
733 Harbor Blvd., Destin

Tailfins Waterfront Grill

With multiple levels of stunning views of the Destin Harbor and your favorite foods and drinks, locally-owned Tailfins'



Waterfront Grill delivers an incredible mix of friendly and fun atmosphere. A magical combination for watching your favorite teams and enjoying the entertainment with Live Music to kick back and enjoy. Rusty Hammerstrom performs every Wednesday & Friday. Daniel Boone is live every Thursday & Saturday. Tailfins offers multiple levels of indoor and outdoor dining overlooking the Destin Boardwalk. And Tailfins is your go-to destination for all the football games and sporting events with Huge Big Screen TV's everywhere you look so you can watch your favorite teams all season long. Start your day off right with Tailfins breakfast every day from 9am - 11am! Enjoy a classic breakfast with bacon and eggs or add a little flair to your morning with Chicken & Pancakes, a Seafood or Cajun Omelette and even a

Kids Smiley Pancake! A great breakfast at a great price!

SPECIALS

Scrumptious Early Bird Specials M-F from 4-7pm include Tailfins' famous Alaskan Snow Crab ~ Steamed Crab Clusters with New Potatoes & Corn, \$19.95. Happy Hour from 4-7pm Mon. - Fri. featuring \$15 Domestic Bottle Buckets and \$7.99 Pitchers, \$5 House Wines and Well Drinks and \$5 Long Island Iced Teas.

(850) 650-1200
On the Harbor in Destin
172 Harbor Blvd.
tailfinsdestin.com

Tequila's Sports Bar & Grill



EAT, DRINK, FIESTA!!

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literally - Tequila's Sports Bar and Grill has quickly become a local favorite. Let them serve up some of their world class, jumbo sized Margaritas, sure to set the mood to watch your favorite game. Tequila's has some of the best seats in the neighborhood. Everyone's got a favorite...find your Mexican food fave here inspired by years of tradition and authentic spices such as the Tequila's Plate, Chili Con Carne, The Three Amigos and the new MASTER

PARILLADA—a unique fusion of sports bar food and delightful Mexican dishes.

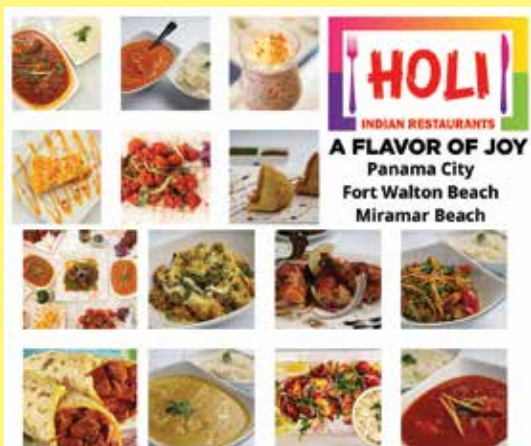
SPECIALS

Lunch specials offered daily Monday - Friday for \$8.99. Open seven days a week for lunch, dinner or call ahead to place your take out and to-go orders.

(850) 279.6402
11225 U.S. 98 W,
Miramar Beach
tequilasmiramarbeach.com



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HOLI Restaurants (A Flavor of Joy) serve a unique combination of Indian Cuisine and Indian heritage. Holi brings you a variety of dishes from different regions of India and our menu contains both vegetarian and non-vegetarian dishes.

OPEN

Tues-Sat 11am-2:30pm & 5pm-10pm & Sun 11am-3pm & 5pm-9pm

LUNCH SPECIALS

Tuesday - Friday 11am - 2:30pm

Look for our food truck: Holi on Wheels

FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA for updates and food truck locations

FORT WALTON BEACH

Holi Indian Cuisine
280 Eglin Pkwy NE
Fort Walton Beach
(850) 362-6077

MIRAMAR BEACH

Holi Indian Kitchen
10859 Emerald Coast Pkwy
Miramar Beach
(850) 353-2630

PANAMA CITY

Holi Indian Grill
3102 W 23rd St.
Panama City
(850) 215-3030



Have you visited Fatboys...where we build the juiciest burgers and fry up the tastiest wings you've ever had?

We start with fresh never frozen 100% premium beef for our burgers, add only the freshest ingredients, and build it just the way you like. Taste the difference! Make sure to try out our Meatless Options and Gluten-Free Buns!

DAILY SPECIALS Monday - Wednesday

LUNCH SPECIALS available Mon-Fri 10am-3pm

HAPPY HOUR Monday - Friday 3pm - 6pm

Check out our menu at ilovefatboys.com

104 HARBOR BLVD., DESTIN, FL
(850)842-3190

Follow us on Social Media

Romance Is In The Air at Henderson Park Inn

BY LORI LEATH SMITH,
PUBLISHER

When was the last time you ran away with your sweetheart? I did that just recently. After my stay last year at Henderson Park Inn, I was simply spoiled and itching to get back to my happy place—one of the most romantic hotels in the U.S. located adjacent to Henderson Beach State Park.

Here, it seems as if the Inn was woven into the fabric of Destin from the time the area was discovered. This 35-room, upscale boutique resort is known for creating a romantic atmosphere and offering personal service with all-inclusive amenities. It's become a local favorite! And, as a local, I truly felt as if they were honored we chose to stay there, their warm welcome comforting right from the start.

With safety an utmost priority, it seems the Inn has more than adjusted to offer any visitor the same personalized, excellent service and optimized stay they come for. I couldn't have imagined it would be even better than my first visit to the Inn! Once again, we were "wowed" from the time we arrived. No amenity or service was lacking. Need a drink or a towel on the beach, someone's there to get you one. Want to hop on a bike and ride, it's right at your fingertips. You get hungry at any time of day, there's always snacks available. There's even easy access to The Henderson Resort's amenities, including two resort-style pools and an impeccable spa. We could order our breakfast the night before for delivery to our room upon waking. But, we opted to enjoy a cooked-to-order, complimentary breakfast each morning outside on the deck — omelets, bacon, waffles and fresh fruit...oh, the waffles! Our custom-ordered complimentary lunch was waiting for us each day as well. I know it's cliché to talk about amenities, but you just can't help it; they're simply part of "what" Henderson Park Inn is.

Social distancing and the utmost hygiene and cleanliness could clearly be seen. From the time we parked our car, we were greeted with smiles and very personalized attention. When the front desk person remembers you name, you feel special

and pampered. Everything is designed for adults only, ages 25 and older, with a private beach.

Our adorable room overlooked this stunning, undeveloped beach of Henderson Beach State Park and coastline view. I was told our room was one of the most popular at the Inn and I now know why! From the moment we opened our door, we were greeted with fine wine and chocolate, ready and waiting for us! And if I wasn't already swept off my feet, the view overlooking the beach and the Gulf was breathtaking for miles, especially standing from our quant overlook outside. I couldn't wait to get out on the main deck when evening fell where there was a burning fire pit surrounded by comfy, cozy seats, nestled on the lower deck where we could feel the warm breeze and enjoy the glow. Tiki torches completed the ambiance around the back deck which familiarly beckoned us to sit in its hammocks, rocking chairs and loveseat-style swings.

You know you're in a special place when you find out local designer Alec Hritz, who was part of the White House Christmas decorating team in 2019, designed the most spectacular Christmas décor the Inn has ever displayed this year.



It was almost painful to leave this extremely memorable, relaxing...and safe experience. I

do plan to make our "staycation" a yearly vacation. Rest assured, the Inn and its



Beach Walk Café, have indeed implemented procedures for optimal safety, impeccable service and utmost comfort. We simply called the front desk to make any request and it was handled.





If you're looking for a great escape with your honey for Valentine's Day, look no further. The Inn has crafted a package that includes all of what I describe here! And for locals, Beach Walk Cafe is hosting a Locals' Night on Wednesdays in January and February! Savor delicious food from Executive Chef Daniel Peters along with 15% off your entire bill, excluding alcohol, and 50% off select wines. To redeem, you must present a valid Santa Rosa, Okaloosa, Walton or Bay County ID. Just call (850) 650-7100 to book your table.

For a complete list of Henderson Park Inn's safety procedures or to book your own Staycation, visit hendersonparkinn.com.

BOATHOUSE

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9pm Roshambo
- Tuesdays:** 5pm Kyle LaMonica
8pm Austin Jennings
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9pm Squeely Dan
- Thursdays:** 4pm Shane Curle
8pm Austin Jennings
- Fridays:** 4pm Jason Findley
8pm Airavata
- Saturdays:** 12pm Kelly Byrd
8pm Gunner
- Sundays:** 12pm Kelly Byrd
4pm Jason Findley
8pm Squeely Dan

Open Daily from 11 am-2 am
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Facebook: www.facebook.com/BoathouseOysterBar
www.boathouseoysterbardestin.com

 Off the Hook

Off the Hook

No Boat? No Problem!



By CALI HLAVAC,
TO DO IN DESTIN

In our lucky little fishing village, it may be perceived that a boat is necessary to catch certain kinds of fish, or a multitude of fish. However, without access to a boat, there are still some great fishing spots anglers can take advantage of (even some who will rent rods if you don't have your

own!) Grab your rods and reels as we head out to explore some active spots to fish in Destin.

Probably the most popular and first thought of fishing spot without a boat is our white sand beaches. With miles stretching across the Emerald Coast, there is no shortage of spots to fish but a few key factors could help you be more successful. When searching for a spot, look for a more secluded area where there are less swimmers. Also, check the water for color changes and wave breaks as that will signify better feeding spots for the fish. Try to find a spot where two sandbars meet and post up in the middle of them. Popular fish caught off the beach include pompano, redfish, bluefish, ladyfish, black drum and jack crevalle.

The Destin Jetties is another local favorite. Many anglers will walk the stretch of rocks that line the Destin Pass to claim their spot for the day. With the way the tides change daily through the east pass, the jetties create a prime feeding area and attract a variety of fish like bluefish, redfish, flounder, and Spanish mackerel, sheepshead, and a variety of baitfish. This is a spot



recommended for adults only, as the jetties were constructed with large boulders to climb over and there is no smooth walkway to reach the end.

Pier fishing is another hot spot in our local area, and we have two within driving distance – The Okaloosa Island Pier or the Navarre Beach Pier. Both piers stretch almost a quarter mile into the Gulf of Mexico and anglers of all skill levels can try their

luck. Most frequent catches from the pier include Spanish mackerel, whiting, sheepshead, ladyfish and bluefish, but some noteworthy fish have been caught there as well. Cobia, king mackerel, tuna, even Tarpon weighing over 100lbs and a few Sailfish have been pulled up from the water. Redfish and pompano are also frequent catches in this area. Both piers have a tackle shop on site that will also rent rods and reels, so even the novice angler can spend a day trying their luck.

A new spot to try is Thomas Pilcher Park, located under the 331 Bridge. There are plenty of parking, bathrooms, and a variety of spots to cast a line. There is a bait shop down the road before the bridge that you can pick up tackle, bait and anything else you'll need to get started. This is also a good spot to launch a paddleboard or kayak if you want to try fishing the shallow water along the shoreline, around the docks and grass flats.

In any of these locations, the best time of year to fish is from March-November, but fish will bite all year long if we have a warm winter. The bite is also always best when the tide is rising or falling and it's common to see fish start to school up along the beaches. Practice makes perfect my friends, and we look forward to seeing you out on the water with tight lines!





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Taylor Haugen Trophy Winner's School to Receive \$1,000 Donation

The Taylor Haugen Trophy award given each year will now include a \$1,000 donation to the athletic department of the Trophy winner's school! This is in addition to the winner earning the trophy and a \$1,000 scholarship.

Every February the prestigious Taylor Haugen Trophy is awarded to a high school senior who best demonstrates Taylor Haugen's balance between academics, athletics, leadership, community service and faith. The Trophy is awarded in conjunction with the All Sports Association and co-presented with Danny Wuerffel at the Buck Smith FCA Breakfast. The annual Trophy winner receives a \$1,000 scholarship and a trophy that stands 26" tall, weighs 35lbs, and is a hand-sculptured bronze eagle taking to flight on a ribbon of air as inspired by Isaiah 40: 30-32. Starting in 2021, the athletic department of the Trophy winner's school will receive a \$1,000 donation from the Taylor Haugen Foundation.

"Since each high school can nominate only one student, we wanted to do something special to reward the winning school as well" said Brian and Kathy Haugen, parents of Taylor.

The Trophy honors Taylor "T" Haugen who passed away from an abdominal injury sustained while playing football in 2008. Haugen was a member of the Niceville Eagles Football and Wrestling Teams as well as being an Honor Student. He was comfortably expressive about



his faith in God and showed it through his commitment to volunteer work in his church and community. As well as exemplifying Haugen's character traits, the Trophy winner embodies his motto of "Don't Quit... Never Give Up."

The Foundation hopes to recognize those well-rounded individuals who demonstrate the perseverance to improve themselves in all aspects of their life while enjoying God's gifts to the fullest. The newly added \$1,000 donation to the winner's athletic department enables the foundation to continue their mission of supporting and recognizing faith-based student athletes who have overcome, persevered and dynamically improved in their sport over the course of time. Greg Hill, chairman elect of the board of directors said, "Con-

tributing \$1,000 to the Trophy winner's school is the Foundation's tangible way of supporting and rewarding the primary institution promoting the academic and athletic pillars of our focus as a Foundation while encouraging all schools in the same endeavor." The Foundation is proud of this area and wants to support the future leaders who pour into this wonderful community.

The Taylor Haugen Foundation was created to honor the memory of age 15 Niceville High School student who passed away after a traumatic abdominal injury sustained during a football game on August 30, 2008. The Foundation builds

and recognizes youth leaders and promotes abdominal sport safety to honor the legacy of Taylor. They provide awareness, education and abdominal injury protection to secondary aged schools and leagues in contact sports, through its YESS© Program (Youth Equipment for Sports Safety). The Foundation also recognizes and supports outstanding scholar-athletes with scholarships and awards. For more information, go to TaylorHaugen.org or find Taylor Haugen Foundation on Facebook and Instagram.





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 Environment



By CHRIS BALZER, ECES

Welcome 2021! Last year was certainly a unique one. Once driving to the bank with my son, he said, "Dad, I remember when you couldn't wear masks and hats while entering the bank." Even with such a unique year, a recent survey of 531 U.S. adults

Resolutions

ENERGY TIPS

by Emerald Coast Energy Solutions

showed the top resolutions for 2021 are to exercise more, eat healthier and save money. A look back 20 years, and CNN's poll showed the top resolutions were to get out of debt, lose weight and develop a healthy habit (quit smoking). It's not surprising that the top resolutions are similar year after year, because they all have great intentions and actually go hand and hand. Let's look

at eating healthier and exercising. Eating healthy can mean cooking more at home, which saves money. Eating healthy also could cause fewer medications or doctor visits, which saves money. The same with exercising—developing a good exercise plan will make you healthier and could cause fewer medications or doctor visits saving you money. My grandmother once said, "It's better to spend money at the grocery store on healthy foods than at the doctor's office."

Another way to save money, which is always on the top of my mind and typically not on most, is to increase efficiency and tighten the envelope of our homes. Tightening the envelope is not a phrase from Tom Wolfe's novel *The Right Stuff*, but a term used to describe a system. The building envelope is the physical barrier between the exterior and interior environments enclosing a structure (your home). Generally, the building envelope is comprised of a series of



components and systems such as a roof, walls, windows and a foundation. These systems protect the interior from the effects of the environment like precipitation, wind, temperature, humidity and ultraviolet radiation. One function of the building envelope is to control these effects between the interior and exterior of the building. When there is missing or compacted insulation or unsealed windows, doors and attic penetrations, your building envelope is comprised wasting energy and comfort.

If your home is older than 10 years, you most likely don't have enough insulation to meet today's guidelines. Prior insulation code for this area was R-19

(roughly 6.5" of insulation); now the new code is R-30 (roughly 10.5" of insulation). That's a 61% increase. Why the increase? Because we know that traditional insulation has trouble keeping our homes comfortable and the only solution was to add more insulation. More states are requiring the use of a reflective radiant barrier insulation installed on the attic rafters. Reflective radiant barriers reflect 97% of radiant heat in your attic, lowering the attic temperature by 40 to 50 degrees in the summer allowing your insulation and ductwork to perform better, saving you money and increasing your comfort. It's all about tightening the envelope to increase efficiency and comfort. If one of your resolutions is to save money this year, schedule an inspection to know exactly where your home could improve its envelope.

May success knock on your door, all your joys multiply and you and your loved ones stay healthy. Happy 2021!

Chris Balzer is founder and president of Emerald Coast Energy Solutions, a Smile Provider Company. We provide smiles to our customers after installing our high energy efficient products, increasing comfort and lowering energy bills. For more information on how to save and become energy efficient, schedule an inspection by calling (850) 588-2870, visit www.trustec-es.com or email wecare@trustec-es.com and "Beat the Heat."



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Gulfarium C.A.R.E. Center to Rehabilitate Twelve Cold-Stunned Sea Turtles

The Gulfarium C.A.R.E. Center in Northwest Florida has taken in 12 Kemp's Ridley sea turtles that were recently stranded off the coast of New England during a recent mass cold-stun event. The sea turtles made the trip down from Massachusetts to Florida on Monday, December 14th, 2020.

The C.A.R.E. Center would like to thank Turtles Fly Too and their pilots Chuck Yanke and Julie Tromblay for transporting the sea turtles to the local area by private plane, where they were then collected and immediately taken to the C.A.R.E. Center for rehabilitation.

Cold stunning occurs when a sea turtle is exposed to cold water for an extended period of time. This exposure causes their heart rate to decrease, resulting in the turtle becoming lethargic and often unable to eat. Unfortunately, cold stunning events, where large numbers of sea turtles become stranded, are not unusual in northern areas during the months of November through February as water temperatures drop below 50 degrees.

Upon arrival at the C.A.R.E. Center, the veterinary team assessed each individual turtle, took x-rays and determined the best plan of action to care for these endangered animals. These sea turtles will stay at the C.A.R.E. Center for rehabilitation until they are deemed releasable by Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC). The recovery process can take up to a few months for cold-stunned turtles, but once their health has improved they will be released into the Gulf of Mexico.

"We are so grateful to be able to help these sea turtles from the Northeastern seaboard of the Atlantic due to a cold-stun event



C.A.R.E. Center Veterinarian Dr. Wells administers fluids to the sea turtles upon arrival to the center.

they recently experienced," explains Terra Throgmorton, Gulfarium's medical and stranding coordinator. "Kemp's Ridleys are the most endangered species of sea turtle in the world. So, anything that we can do to try to conserve this precious species is vital. We are so thankful for everyone involved who has helped us to provide the best possible veterinary care for these turtles."

If you see a sea turtle in distress, injured or deceased, please report it to Florida Fish and

Wildlife Conservation Commission immediately at 1-888-404-FWCC (1-888-404-3922).

Follow the C.A.R.E. Center on Facebook to learn more about sea turtles and the center's rehabilitation efforts.

The Gulfarium CARE Foundation, a 501(c)(3) non-profit, is proud to act as a beacon for coastal conservation through marine animal rescue and rehabilitation. Donations are tax-deductible and can be made online on the C.A.R.E. Center's page.

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 Wellness


BY KAY LEAMAN,
HEALTHYDAY HEALTHYLIFE

This new year is bringing different things to each of us. I want to share this with you, because it's important for us to be informed and aware. There are professionals fighting for what's right and for us.

One such professional is Jay Bhattacharya, a professor of medicine at Stanford University, where he received both an M.D. and Ph.D. in economics. He is also a research associate at the National Bureau of Economic Research, a senior fellow at the Stanford Institute for Economic Policy Research, at the Freeman Spogli Institute for Int'l Stud-

ies and director of the Stanford Center on the Demography and Economics of health and Aging. A co-author of the Great Barrington Declaration, his research has been published in economics, statistics, legal, medical, public health and health policy journals.

Below are excerpts from "A Sensible and Compassionate Anti-Covid Strategy," (a publication of Hillsdale College)

He states his goal is to first, present the facts about how deadly COVID-19 actually is; second, to present the facts about who is at risk from COVID; third, to present some facts about how deadly the widespread lockdowns have been; and fourth, to recommend a shift in public policy. This article can be found in its entirety at HILLSDALE.EDU. I have taken a few core thoughts from this article. My hope is that it sparks within us the courage to take control of our lives and a curiosity to search for the truth.

We need to distinguish

Informed and Aware

COVID cases from COVID infections. Today the fatality rate of COVID is known to be less than one half of one percent.

But the effects on health, beginning with the U.N., estimate that 130 million additional people will starve this year as a result of the economic damage from the lockdowns. Case fatality rate is computed by dividing the number of deaths by the total number of confirmed cases. However, to obtain an accurate COVID fatality rate, the number in the denominator should be the number of people who have been infected-rather than the number of confirmed cases.

Seroprevalence studies (82 studies worldwide) show the fatality rate is closer to 0.2 percent. In New York it was more like .5 percent and in Idaho it was 0.13 percent.

In the early days, the health care system managed COVID poorly. At risk: people who are 70 and older. Their mortality rate is about four percent. The

fact is that for young children, this disease is less dangerous than the seasonal flu.

This year in the U.S., more children have died from the seasonal flu than from COVID by a factor of two or three. Herd immunity is not a strategy, it is a biological fact.

Coming from both the left and right, and around the world, we have devoted our careers to protecting people. Current lockdown policies are producing a devastating effect on short and long-term public health.

We know that vulnerability to death from COVID-19 is more than a thousand-fold higher in the old and infirm than the young.

When scientists have spoken up against the lockdown policy, there has been enormous pushback: "You're endangering lives." Science cannot operate in an environment like that. I don't know all the answers to COVID; no one does. Science ought to be able to clarify the answers.

But science can't do its job in an environment where anyone who challenges the status quo gets shut down or cancelled.

To date, the GREAT BARRINGTON DECLARATION has been signed by over 43,000 medical and public health scientists and medical practitioners. Members of the general public can also sign the Declaration. Together, I think we can get on the other side of this pandemic. But we have to fight back. We should respond to the COVID virus rationally: protect the vulnerable, treat the people who get infected compassionately, and develop a vaccine.

You can read the GREAT BARRINGTON DECLARATION at www.gbdeclaration.org (just moved this line to below the above paragraphs. Also, made the above info into one paragraph.)

Blessings and health to each of you. Contact me at succeed@healthydayhealthylife.com.

Beauty Corner

BY KRISY WHITELEY ANDERSON,
BEVERLY HILLS DAY SPA OWNER

Did you realize massage has many more benefits for men

and women than the fact that it simply feels fantastic?

Pain Relief: Next time you think about popping that pain

pill, make an appointment with your massage therapist instead. Soreness and stiffness result when overworked muscles produce waste products like lactic acid, and massage can help by improving the circulation to muscles to flush these out. Tense muscles can also compress blood vessels and nerves, and massage leads to a gradual release that eases the pain. Just be sure to let your massage therapist know if your pain is caused by stress, injury or surgery.

Improved lymph movement: Lymph is the milky-white fluid that drains waste from the cells. The pumping effect of muscle contraction moves lymph through the body, and massage (as well as exercise) can facilitate the process. The pressure of massage also increases blood flow that can help reduce swelling after surgery.

Increased circulation: The manual pressure of massage increases blood flow to the treated areas. The increased blood flow brings more oxygen and nutrients to the muscles to help repair and revitalize the body.

Better skin: Massage helps



the skin by stimulating the sebaceous and sweat glands. Increased blood flow also has a positive effect on the skin by supplying the cell with nutrients and oxygen. More blood at the skin's surface also leads to a rosy, healthy glow.

Positive attitude: Massage has been shown to increase the body's protection of "feel-good" endorphins and the mood regulating hormone serotonin and decrease levels of the stress hormone cortisol.

Balance the nervous system: Stress revs up the nervous system, leading the restlessness, hyperactivity, anxiety, muscle tension, cardiovascular stress and even abdominal problems. Massage helps reduce stress and

the body's reaction to it, bringing your nervous system back into harmony.

More perfect posture: Muscles that are too tight or too slack can throw off your posture. To compensate, your body will utilize other muscles, which can eventually become accepted by your body and lead to permanent imbalance and chronic muscle pain. Massage can loosen those areas and help bring back into more balance.

Do you still have questions? We're here to help with a customized massage tailored to your needs and would love to talk with you. Visit beverlyhillsdayspa.com or call (850) 654-8544.

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By RICHARD CHERN, M.D.

Bio-Identical vs. Synthetic Hormone Treatment

You might have heard the phrase synthetic is not always bad and organic is not always good. But in the world of hormones, the research suggests bio-identicals are always the right way to go! So, what's the difference? The main difference is the molecular structure of a bio-identical hormone is...well...identical to our hormones, and the structure of a synthetic is not. Since this is not

well understood by patients or doctors, hormones sometimes get a bad name.

Well, testosterone is bad, right? We hear news stories all the time telling us about the negative effects of testosterone. For testosterone in the form of testosterone cypionate, a synthetic—and the most commonly prescribed testosterone shot—this is true. Synthetic testosterone will make you feel better, but it will NOT make you healthier. Synthetic testosterone increases your risk of heart attacks, strokes, cancer and more. Bio-Identical testosterone, however, not only makes you feel better and provides an increase

in vitality for life, but also reduces your risk of Alzheimer's, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, osteoporosis, muscle loss and more (the list goes on).

In 1991, the Women's Health Initiative (WHI) was started by the National Institute for Health (NIH) to confirm the benefits of hormone replacement. The study was stopped in 2002, three years early, because the women taking synthetic estrogens were dying from heart attacks, strokes and breast cancer at such a high rate that the study could not ethically continue. Unfortunately, the story became "all hormone replacement is bad."

This information was so

widely dispersed that both patients and doctors around the world stopped using hormone replacement and many are still hesitant to use hormone replacement today. However, while strokes, heart attacks, breast cancer and more are all increased in the women who received the synthetic hormones, those receiving bio-identical hormones experienced a decrease in their risk of all of these conditions. Again, synthetic hormones can improve symptoms, but bio-identical hormones improve health and prevent disease as well.

Bio-Identical progesterone helps decrease the risk of uter-

ine cancer, helps the brain heal after injury, and promotes nerve and brain function while synthetic progesterone, or progestins, increase your risk of breast cancer, stroke and heart attack. There is a pattern here I believe everyone can see.

At The Hormone Restoration Center, we specialize in bio-identical hormones and believe we have the highest quality bio-identicals available. For more information, please call 850-837-1271, located at 12889 U.S.-98 E., Unit 107B in Miramar Beach.

FWBMC Provides Monoclonal Antibody Therapy to Treat COVID-19

Fort Walton Beach Medical Center is now offering bamlanivimab antibody infusions to non-hospitalized patients who have tested positive for COVID-19 and have other high-risk factors. The first patient received the treatment on December 22. Fort Walton

Beach Medical Center is the only hospital in the tri-county area offering this antibody infusion.

The U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA) granted Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) of bamlanivimab for the treatment of COVID-19

patients experiencing mild to moderate symptoms who are high risk to develop severe COVID-19. Fort Walton Beach Medical Center will provide the outpatient IV treatment for adults and adolescents age 12 and older.

High-risk conditions that

may be eligible for this treatment include:

- Obesity
- > = 65 years of age
- Chronic kidney disease
- COPD
- Diabetes
- Immunosuppressive disease
- Heart disease

• For children over the age of 12, sickle cell disease, neurodevelopmental disorders, and asthma are also among several additional considerations for eligibility.

"We're committed to providing our patients, caregivers,

Continued on page 33



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 Wellness



BY LISA TURPIN,
HEALTH AND WELLNESS COACH

Sadly, we're all cheering that 2020 ended even though it feels like it never fully started. Many people have professed they did not do well in the "fitness" department during the crazy restrictions and lockdowns. If you did, then pat yourself on the back, because you deserve it! For those still struggling, put 2020 behind you and make a stand against the mental block holding you back and DECIDE for yourself 2021 will be your year to be more self-empowered and feel better. If strength, toning and stamina are on your goal list, then these three factors will help you design an efficient and effective routine.

Fit Principle: Frequency, Intensity, Time (duration)—How frequently you work out will get you to your goals most quickly. If you only workout one time a week, there will be some benefit, but not as much as if you work out three times a week. The intensity of your workout will affect how much time is needed to get to a certain goal. If you only have 30 minutes to work out, you should try and make that workout more intense to have the same effects as working out a full hour. This is why HIIT (High Intensity Interval Training) is such a big thing right now. You can get more calorie burn in shorter time if you go at it super intensely. Some people's bodies can't handle the high intensity; so moderate intensity over longer time could be a better choice to reach the same amount of calories burned. The FIT Principle is used mostly to design workouts where you are trying to maximize calorie expenditure and overall health.

Cross Training: Having a mixture of different exercise modalities will offer you the best

well-rounded benefits for your health routine and help keep overuse injuries down. Choose different types of cardio, such as running, biking or rowing, instead of just always running, for example. For strength gains, try traditional weight-lifting mixed with Pilates or Yoga. Or add circuit training to mix things up. Each modality has certain benefits. So, by changing those around you receive the benefits from all. Cross-training will also keep your workouts more interesting.

Strength Training: Gaining strength is important at all levels of life, but definitely as we get older and more sedentary. Strength training, done properly, has amazing benefits on your balance, metabolism and quality of life. When weight training, the main thing is to keep your movements very controlled. The heavier the weight you are lifting, the slower your movements should be. When you move too quickly lifting weights, your joints will suffer. If you want to work the muscles properly, you need to slow down enough for the muscle to be able to contract. Otherwise, your joints will be doing far more work than they have to. Avoid spastic movements. Another name for weight/strength training is "Resistance Training." You want to focus on the resistance, also called "the negative." Focusing on the resistance will help you work the muscle properly and give you the best gains to your

training. An example is lowering the dumbbell in an arm curl (bicep curl).

Every day counts, so get active. Set short-term goals, such as taking a 30-minute walk daily at a certain attainable time, so you can have simple successes to keep you motivated. Remember, all movement is beneficial and exercise levels out your hormones, especially happy hormones that combat depression and fatigue. Please do at least a little something every day that will enhance your mental and physical fitness. I am currently taking new clients and would love to help you on your fitness journey. (Text only to (850) 974-

2005 or message on Facebook.) Together we can make 2021 a much better year.

Lisa Turpin is a degreed and certified health and fitness lifestyle coach who has devoted her life to motivating and strengthening the bodies and minds of others. With over 20 years' experience as a group exercise leader, currently at Destin Health & Fitness and an independent personal trainer in the Destin area, she is diverse and extensively trained in classical and modern Pilates, lifestyle management, personal training, group exercise and post-rehabilitation. Try some workouts, more ideas and recipes on Facebook: Lisa Turpin-Be Active Health & Fitness (@LisaTurpinFitness).

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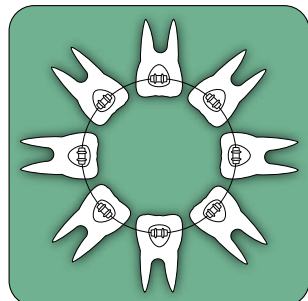
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What's Your 2021 Story?



By **STEPHENIE CRAIG,**
JOURNEY BRAVELY

2020 is over and yet you might continue to face many of the same challenges as you enter the new year. It can be easy to feel resentfully stuck in survival mode and to view yourself as a victim of the pandemic and other major stressors of 2020. Isolation, financial challenges, racism, political change, value debates on social media, and missing the way things used to be. It's all a lot to carry and work through as you hope for recovery and continue to walk in the mess.

Resolutions may feel trite and impossible this year as we limp

along and try to hold it together. Honestly acknowledging our personal and collective discomfort and suffering is a healthy practice. However, getting stuck in bitterness and hopelessness only feeds the negative energy we are all hoping to escape.

What if instead of writing resolutions, you were to ask yourself what you want your story to be at the end of 2021?

While there are many circumstances in life that are often out of your control, you are in control of your behavior and choices. You get to decide how you'll treat others, how you'll talk to yourself, how you'll live out your faith, how you'll engage with your values, how you'll take healthy risks, how you'll respond to challenges, and how you'll step into personal growth. These personal practices will largely shape your story this year.

What if instead of carrying the weight of victimhood from 2020, you were to step into the practice of writing all of the

parts of your story that are within your power?

5 Ways to Move from Victim to Writer of Your 2021 Story:

Acknowledge struggle while looking for redemption. Honestly admit to yourself when you're experiencing grief and hardship. Feel the feelings associated with the difficulty. Watch for short- and long-term ways you see suffering in your life creates opportunity for growth, connection and comforting others.

Create a mental or written list of 3-5 big ideas within your control you want to be true of your story at the end of 2021. Examples: I want to have been a loving, connected parent, friend, partner. I want to have given generously from what I earned. I want to have expressed a grateful attitude regularly. I want to have faced challenges and pain with grace and dignity. I want to have spent time on things that matter most

to me. I want to have said encouraging things to myself and others most of the time. I want to see progress in this specific business skill. I want to have engaged a spirit of adventure.

Create a more detailed story for each of your 3-5 big ideas. Big idea: I want to have lived generously. Detailed story about living generously: I want to look back over 12 months and see that I intentionally set aside money, time and other resources as a monthly practice rather than spending all of my resources on myself. I want to see that I used those resources to give to people and causes I value. Some of the people and causes I value are my church, Caring & Sharing of South Walton and Compassion International.

Take steps to make your story real. If I'm going to look back and see that I gave generously this year, I'm going to: set up auto-giving for my top 3 valued organizations, set up a specific auto-transfer savings account designated for generous

giving, set up regular monthly volunteer hours.

Read and edit your story as you go. Check in monthly on your story and determine if you're living into the story you want to be true at the end of the year. Be gracious with yourself, determine where you're struggling, and make edits when needed. For example: I planned to auto-give to 3 organizations but I had a financial change. I'm going to reduce my amounts to all 3 or I'm going to choose one organization instead.

The healthy way to engage your 2021 story is to face the circumstances outside your control with acceptance and focus on writing what you can control with hope and determination. As you move from victim to writer of your 2021 story, remember that Journey Bravely has coaching sessions available to help move your story forward. Connect with us at journeybravely.com.

ANTIBODY THERAPY

continued from page 31

and the communities we serve with the latest treatments in the fight against COVID-19 and are excited to bring this option to the tri-county area," said Dr. Bob Kiskaddon, chief medical officer for Fort Walton Beach Medical Center. "We will support all of our local hospitals in working closely with physicians and other providers across the communities we serve to provide treatment to patients who may benefit, per FDA guidelines."

The medication supply is limited and based on availability. Patients will need a physician referral and meet FDA criteria prior to scheduling. The treatment is a one-time intravenous infusion over the course of one hour followed by an hour of monitoring. Scheduling for patients who meet the criteria can be made by calling Emerald Coast Infectious Disease at 850-862-3979.

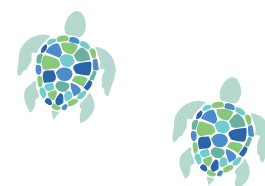
Bamlanivimab is not authorized for use for patients who:

- Are hospitalized due to COVID-19
- Require oxygen therapy

due to COVID-19

- Require supplemental oxygen for other conditions and require an increase in their oxygen requirement.

For more information on monoclonal antibody treatment for COVID-19, visit the Coronavirus Hub at www.fwb-mc.com/covid-19.





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 Musing



By SEAN DIETRICH

DEAR SEAN:

I don't think my school is going to have prom for 2021, everyone is guessing this is the case. We don't know yet, but it's probably not happening. It just sucks that we might not get to do this because we have nothing to look forward to.

Thanks,
A-SAD-JUNIOR

DEAR SAD:

First of all, I am sorry. I know this year has been a major let down. So I am not going to offer you some overused parental slogan like: "You oughta count your blessings, young lady."

When I was a kid I heard versions of this phrase all the time from my mama. And I swore these words would never, EVER exit my lips. Because this is old-person talk, and I'm no fuddy-duddy.

Although, before I write another word, you should know something. Life is unfair and nothing you can do will change this. Not just a little unfair, either. A lot unfair.

Nowhere is this more clearly

illustrated than in karaoke clubs. Have you ever been to one? They are totally criminal. Singers with the pitch sensitivity of tugboat airhorns try to sing "I Will Always Love You" while spilling their Harvey Wallbangers all over the audience. And these people get standing ovations.

Meanwhile, the guy who sings from memory all eight verses of Allan Sherman's masterpiece, "Hello Mudda, Hello Fadduh," gets booed off the stage. I ask you, is this fair?

Something else unfair? The price of automotive tires. I bought new truck tires a few days ago and they cost as much as a three-bedroom rambler. I remember buying secondhand

tires when I was a younger man for \$19 apiece from "Al's Used Tire Barn." Al even threw in a complimentary emergency flare gun.

You know what else really sucks? Body pain. I had spinal surgery when I was in my mid-20s; nobody ever tells you how quickly chronic pain can ruin your life. And here's the worst part: chronic pain affects about 50 million Americans. That's roughly the population of eight U.S. states. How's that for unfair?

While we're on a roll, here's another. Last night, 390 million people went to bed hungry. Starving actually. And in your own national backyard, 11 million kids live with empty pantries.

I once knew a couple of kids in my town who grew up in "food insecure" households. One of them was in such brittle health he died from pneumonia.

Starvation, in case you're wondering, happens like this: Your body starts eating its own muscular tissue in a last-ditch effort to fuel your brain. But after a while it's no use. Without calories, your cells can't fight off viruses and bacteria, so your body gives up. Your belly bloats, your skin starts flaking away. Your teeth fall out.

Whenever you have a bad day, think about this: Yesterday, 25,000 people died from hunger. Many were kids.

And hunger is preventable. What about things like cancer? Each year this disease kills 600,000, which equates to 69 people per hour. Or what about heart disease? Or COVID? Or diabetes?

Listen, I'm not trying to make you feel bad. I promise. Quite the contrary, I'm agreeing with you. Because, yes, this world is unfair. But this life shows no prejudice with its unfairness. Almost everyone is going through their own private hell right now.

Still, there is a tiny bright side to this pandemic mess. And I have been saving this part for last.

Back in the 1930s when the economy tanked and jobs were a myth, when the country fell into a Great Depression, people could have given up, moped around, and bitterly complained. But do you know what many Americans did instead?

They went dancing.

Yes. In a time when life expectancy was plummeting, and hunger was going up, and suicide was on a sharp rise, folks made their own fun. They started dancing like their pants were on fire. Towns threw big, fun bashes that would've made your prom look like a routine colonoscopy.

There were all-night dance contests in nearly every backwater, township, and major city across the nation. And when people couldn't find any local dances, they threw parties of their own, scuffing up the floors in Mama's living room.

Radio stations from Maine to California were broadcasting non-stop "musical dance hours." Parents would waltz, brothers and sisters would foxtrot, Aunt Lucille and Uncle Ray Ray would two-step like lovebirds.

Radio ownership in the Depression skyrocketed. Which almost makes no logical sense when you think about it. But that's what happened. Over 80 percent of U.S. homes owned radios by 1939. Dance music was, literally, everywhere.

This reminds me of my grandfather, who lived through the Depression. Like you, he didn't get a prom, either. He dropped out of high school when his father died. He started doing a man's work as a teenager. His brother got polio, his mother gave piano lessons to earn enough for supper.

And yet he danced. I have a picture of my baby-faced grandfather holding my brunette grandmother. The photograph was taken in some dancehall. They're both on the pinewood floor, smiling wildly like two film stars.

They were about your age in this photo. And do you know what? They don't look sad. In fact you'd never guess the world was crumbling by the looks on their faces. They appear downright hopeful.

These were two people who knew hunger. Two people who had occasionally gone barefoot. And yet they went dancing multiple times per week.

So I know this has been a tough year, and I'm on your side here. In fact, I'm just like you. Which is why I pray our mouths may never mistakenly claim that we have "nothing to look forward to."

Because you and I really oughta count our blessings.

Dear Sean

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A Pastor's Ponderings: Have a Joy-filled New Year



BY DAVE HOLLAND

My mother says I was born 40 years old, a quiet and serious child. Expressing emotions has always been difficult. So, I have to work at showing love. When I became a Christian, I considered my sober demeanor to be a godly, sort of a gift from our puritan ancestors. But as I ponder Luke 10:17-23, I am struck by the raw emotional joy Jesus demonstrates toward His Father in front of the men.

Jesus sent out 70 disciples into the surrounding villages to proclaim the kingdom of God

and prepare them for His coming. In Luke 10:17 (NKJV) we pick up the story: The 70 returned with "joy" saying, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name." The disciples' "joy" comes from the Greek word "chara" and means cheerfulness or calm delight. Thrilled that Christ used them to help people, they bristled with newfound confidence. There is nothing like the rush of helping people encounter God.

Christ joins the joy-party: "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven" (Luke 10:18, NIV). People who declare God's kingdom message defeat the devil and give joy to the King. Jesus rejoiced with them. He also reminded them that it was more important their names are written in heaven. All believers in Christ possess this basis for joy as there is no greater miracle than your salvation.

But Jesus demonstrates a better joy. As the disciples share their victories, Jesus turns toward His Father and erupts in



prayer, "full of joy through the Holy Spirit." In this instance, the word translated "joy" is derived from the Greek word "agalliao" meaning to jump for joy, exult, to be exceedingly glad. Unrestrained and unashamed, Christ leaped with exuberance. I think He rejoiced more in the success of others and He poured that joy out toward Father God.

Most people are skeptical of emotional religion. They view it as unseemly to exhibit such private feelings publicly. Yet, Jesus lets us see His inner humanness with a natural display of His feelings. He is perfectly at

home in His skin and secure in His masculinity. These are the kinds of feelings that wives long for from their husbands and that children need to see from their parents—emotions expressed openly in a healthy way.

When I was in Bible College, I had a dream of a little boy about age five running in a tranquil place. It was beautiful and serene with a clear blue sky. As the boy ran faster and faster, the wind seemed to blow through his hair, and I perceived that he was well-groomed, as if he had just come from the barbershop. The boy was so happy running

unrestrained, feeling clean, free of worry, and playful as little boys should be. Then I realized the boy was me. It was apparent I was running toward an immense billowy cloud and as I approached it I leaped with abandon into the mist. I felt utterly surrounded and embraced by God's presence. Liquid love and pure acceptance overwhelmed me. The Lord received me and gave me laugh-out-loud joy.

God the Father joins with Jesus in revealing His delight in His children. You are His child and His joy. I pray that you leap with the joy of the Lord in 2021. Happy-joy-filled New Year.

Dave Holland pastored churches for 38 years before retiring in Destin. He recently released his new devotional-Bible study based on the Gospel of Luke titled "Extraordinary Jesus: Ignite Your Season of Miracles." You can obtain a copy of this book from his website, DaveHolland.org or at Amazon.com. Pastor Dave is available to preach and teach in churches and conferences.

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 Musing


BY MYRNA CONRAD

We often start each New Year with commitments (New Year's resolutions) to do things differently. We commit to eat less, work out more, spend less, travel more, step out of our comfort zone more, love more, stress less, and numerous other grand aspirations to start the year right.

Commitment is seen differently by different people and it seems to have morphed into something different over time. The definition of commitment is "an agreement or pledge to do something." A pledge is "a solemn promise or agreement to do or refrain from doing something." We make commitments in so many different areas of our

lives: marriage, relationships, work, social activities and beliefs. Sometimes we make serious life changing commitments and sometimes we make commitments without thinking very much about them. Some commitments are long term and some are for a specific task or activity. If commitment means that you are pledging to do something, it means you are giving your word. Therefore, integrity and commitment go hand in hand. Our commitments should demonstrate a clear picture of our convictions and beliefs.

Fulfilling our commitment should not change with what feels good to us at the moment or what we'd rather do. I remember as a teenager making a commitment to do something with a relative and then getting an opportunity to go out with someone I had been hoping to go out with for a while. But, my mother taught me a very important lesson by making me keep the prior commitment. She told me that to break that commitment was to break my word. I learned a very valuable lesson about integrity

and fulfilling my commitments.

We live in a different world now than the one I grew up in. I see a big difference in how people view commitments today. Very few people stay committed to their marriage anymore. There are some marriages that need to end for the protection of those involved, but so many more end just because one or both don't feel their needs are being met or that they no longer love each other.

Few people work in the same company for more than a couple of years. I remember a time when people would stay with a company their whole lives. Companies don't commit to their employees anymore either. Today companies down size, right size, terminate people and hire people with more concern regarding the bottom line of the company than the well-being of the employee.

People hop from relationship to relationship, from church to church, from job to job, from cause to cause from activity to activity. Commitments today, seem to be linked more to emotions or desires, than to convictions and integrity.

What Ever Happened to **Commitment**?

It is important to take time to think and understand what a commitment requires before making it. It is also important not to over commit knowing that you can't possibly fulfill all of your commitments. Since making a commitment is to give your word, then not fulfilling that commitment affects your integrity. I've often heard it said that it takes a long time to develop a reputation of integrity but only one action to destroy it.

We may not think breaking a commitment really matters, but people are watching. We rarely do anything in life that only affects us. One of the greatest values that you can teach your children is to fulfill their commitments, to finish what they start. Lead by example. They learn by how well you fulfill your commitments.

Do you want to live and demonstrate a life of commitment? Here are a few strategies:

Be Aware:

Be aware of what you are committing to and of your ability to fulfill your commitment.

Reflect on how you feel when

someone does not fulfill a commitment they made to you.

Think about who will be affected if you break your commitment.

Realize that integrity and character take a lifetime to build but only a moment to lose.

Understand that commitment has nothing to do with what you would rather do or how you are feeling at the moment but with what you have said you will or will not do.

Be Intentional:

Make every effort to fulfill any commitment you make. There are always extenuating circumstances, but those should be the exception, not the rule.

Make sure your convictions and your commitments match up.

Teach your children what it means to fulfill their commitments. Lead by example.

Don't over commit, because when you do, you are less likely to fulfill all of your commitments.

Live your life with integrity. Make keeping your commitments a priority.



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Thank You, Ryan



BY MATTHEW VANDERFORD,
CLAIMOLOGY

I was just on the phone with an amazing local contractor, Ryan Simas. Ryan's one of those people that when you're with them, you feel fortunate to have come to know who they are as a person.

I first met Ryan after I saw a Remodeling and Maintenance van pass by called Beachside Maintenance. This was a few years back when I was out marketing. I called the number

and the owner picked up the phone—it was Ryan. We spoke for a while, I introduced myself and he, in turn, invited me to his then networking group. So, Ryan and I met, made more conversation and exchanged information. And it was through those initial conversations that seeds were planted which would later sprout and evolve into what I now consider one of the most important and beneficial relationships I have. And not just in business, but on a personal level, too, because isn't that what networking is really all about? It's when you really get to know people and build those valued relationships that transcend business and dive into the depths of real interpersonal stuff. Because it's there, in those depths that those who are like minded will connect and those who aren't on the same frequency won't. Ryan's frequency is all about helping others. Or at least to me it is. And I'm sure I'm not

the only person who would say the same about Ryan.

However, Ryan and I didn't really get to know each other until much later on. It wasn't until Keller Williams Realtor Gail Peltó sent out a request through her local Master Networks Group that she was in need of very reliable talent for work that needed to be addressed on a real estate project. She was introduced to Ryan and, subsequently, she invited Ryan to Master Networks where Ryan and I got reacquainted. It has been through the weekly connections of Master Networks which are centered around business growth through personal evolution (I call it business therapy), where the relationships of like-minded people have taken root and sprouted into valued relationships bearing real fruit.

As those trusted relationships flourish, those we serve benefit the most. As a public adjuster who's been in the insurance in-

dustry for more than 10 years, I can say what a privilege it is to know that people like Ryan exist and that those who have suffered damage to their properties can be taken care of for insurance restoration work by a person who values quality and service. His commitment to serving with integrity shines. His continual commitment to personal growth has pushed him to excel in business and benefit from those ethics, because referrals just don't happen by accident.

I am very grateful for relationships like this. It's these types of relationships that others like myself also get to benefit from, too. For as we all work to grow

higher and higher as individuals, those we meet along the way are marked by that presence, that shine, that desire for excellence. Thank you, Ryan, for being you. For showing up daily, even when things get tough. But showing up nonetheless. Showing up for those you help along the way. We see you – thank you.

Here's to seeing you shine even brighter! "The Spirit of Kindness will always endure as long as thanks escape the lips of men." – Santa.

May the Spirit of the Light that shines bright like the noon-day sun bless us all with warmth and sight.

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 Business

6 Great Spaces to Work from in Destin

BY CALI HLAVAC

With the influx of working from home in 2020, it's safe to say that we could all use a change of scenery from the office in our house. Whether you prefer to grab coffee and breakfast while you work, or you enjoy sneaking away for lunch or happy hour, there is somewhere for everyone to work from in Destin. Next time you need to get out of the house, grab your computer and hit one of our favorites.

Beachworx

A true co-working space, there are so many things to love about Beachworx. Located in the heart of Destin, it has both day, week and monthly passes available to work. The space

includes conference rooms, separate offices, and a communal space in the middle with seats, outlets, booths, tables and more – everything you need to get your work done!

Cafe Destin

Want to grab coffee and breakfast while you work? Then this is your place. Café Destin is located to the South of the Winn Dixie Plaza, near Island Wing Company. They offer breakfast and lunch items served all day from 7 a.m.-2 p.m., along with a full coffee and smoothie bar to serve whatever you're craving. The Wi-Fi is free; so bring your computer and stay a while.

Austons on 98

Another great happy hour



spot, Austons on 98 has both indoor and outdoor seating and an expansive menu of delicious food. Happy Hour is from 3 p.m.-6 p.m. and is the perfect

escape from the office for a few hours while you finish up the day. With an extra-large dining room and bar, there is plenty of room to pull out the laptop and work.

Island Wing Company

Featuring the area's best baked wings, Island Wing Company has 58 beers on tap and over 30 TVs – So, if you need to finish up work but don't want to miss the game, they've got you covered. Sit at the bar, at a side high top table or even outside and start crossing things off the list.

Destiny Worship Center Café

A hidden gem in Miramar Beach, find this Café inside

Destiny Worship Center's main doors. They're open Tuesday-Friday from 11 a.m.-2 p.m. with an affordable lunch selection, and plenty of tables for seating. It's open to the public and a great place to work, network and meet others.

Tailfins

Maybe working during lunch or Happy Hour is more your style – We get it! Tailfins has three levels with amazing views of the Destin Harbor. Serving lunch and cocktails, bring your computer and find a corner to get a few things done. The TVs inside may even let you catch a game or two while you work!

EDC of Okaloosa County Rebrands as One Okaloosa EDC

The Economic Development Council of Okaloosa County ("EDC") will now be known as One Okaloosa EDC. Along with the name change, there is a new organizational logo stylized as a

circle indicative of forward motion. The logo utilizes the organization's long-standing gold, blue and green colors as a nod to the EDC's 31-year history. Specific design elements within the new



logo include a gear representing Okaloosa's diverse industry base; the sun, representing the area's enviable coastal lifestyle; and an atom, representing the community's emphasis on education and noteworthy research and innovation assets.

Along with the new name and brand, the organization will also begin utilizing www.oneokaloosa.org as its primary domain name with new staff email addresses structured in the same manner. In addition, all other One Okaloosa EDC managed websites – including www.okaloosasites.com, www.startupokaloosa.com, www.shoalrivergigasite.com and www.tecmenindustryday.com – have been updated accordingly.

"After 31 years of being known as the Economic Development Council of Okaloosa County, our Executive Committee began to evaluate the opportunity for a more simplified – and impactful – organizational brand last spring just as COVID-19 was tightening its grip on our area.

Noting how swiftly our local governments, businesses, non-profits and everyday citizens joined together to help one another through the unprecedented challenges brought forth by the pandemic, it was clear that our community was rising to the occasion and working as ONE Okaloosa. This is where the concept was initially born," stated Lee Lewis, AVCON, and One Okaloosa EDC FY 2021 Chairman.

"Along with being emblematic of the spirit of our community that has been on regular display during the pandemic, One Okaloosa speaks to a collective desire to be best-in-class and the tireless commitment of so many to ensuring that Okaloosa's infrastructure systems, educational assets, military bases, workforce development programs and industrial sites are ranked number one. As we emerge from the pandemic and prepare to begin a new year, we feel these efforts have never been more important," stated Nathan Sparks, Ex-

ecutive Director, One Okaloosa EDC.

The new brand is the culmination of many timely pivots and strategic initiatives the EDC has unveiled during the COVID-19 pandemic. Other recently announced initiatives include the formation of a new partnership between the EDC's TeCMEN (Technology Coast Manufacturing & Engineering Network) and FloridaMakes for the benefit of area manufacturers, the launch of the Startup Okaloosa virtual incubator (www.startupokaloosa.com) in support of local entrepreneurs, and the rollout of a new quarterly professional development webinar series for the benefit of Okaloosa businesses.

Founded in 1989 as the Economic Development Council of Okaloosa County, One Okaloosa EDC ("One Okaloosa") is a 501(c)(6) non-profit, public-private partnership serving Okaloosa County and its nine municipalities (Cinco Bayou, Crestview, Destin, Fort Walton Beach, Laurel Hill, Mary Esther, Niceville, Shalimar and Valparaiso).



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BY RICKY HARPER, C12 GROUP

Some years ago, I did service work in hospitals. Two of the hospitals that I frequented had strikingly different cultures. At one facility, every staff member from the CEO to the janitor was energized, happy, engaged, and genuinely made me feel welcome. At the other hospital, each encounter was difficult,

stressful, depressing. I usually left that place angry and I always left in a hurry. Which hospital do you think received my best work?

At the C12 Group, we work with Christian business owners to help them build great businesses, because business conducted to God's standards is business done exceptionally well. Most Christian business owners understand the concept of being a 'steward' of the business they lead. And the concept of being a steward of the people in that business is even less obvious. 1 Peter 5:2-3 puts it bluntly, "Be shepherds of God's flock that are under your care—not lording over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock."

How does one do this? Even for the most devout believer, practicing great human stewardship might require a shift in management practices, perhaps even a wholesale change of the business's culture, and that is scary. But one of the many rewards of a company with a stewardship culture is that you create 'gravity' and that means finding and retaining the best employees becomes much easier. What is the value of that?

There is another aspect of stewarding people, and that is the idea that you do not just manage them, you 'develop' them. By intentionally developing your people into better employees, leadership reaps the benefit of having more time to lead, plan

and focus on vision. But doesn't that come with risk you ask? Yes, it does. But as Chad Carter, the Senior Director of HR at Gideons International, a 121-year-old company with nearly 400 employees says, "We know Gideons may not be our employees' last stop, yet we also know that we are part of the stewardship journey of developing them. Metaphorically, we don't want to hold them in the grasp of a fist but in an open hand. We don't have an issue with pushing them out of the nest. Why would we? When they leave the nest, our hope is that they will go on to influence unto the Glory of God. Often, leaders don't see employee development as ministry, but it is our worship."

In January, the C12 Group is hosting 'Kingdom Minded Business,' a lunch and learn where you will hear from industry experts on becoming and being a great steward of your business, money and people. You will also hear from great local business owners that are already 'stewards' of their people and companies.

If applying your faith to your business is important to you, then join us at one of these two events:

January 21, 11:30–1:00 at the Niceville Chamber, or January 26, 12:00–1:30 at the Destin Chamber. Lunch is included and tickets are available at EventBrite.com.

BizTech is Back!

Join the Destin Chamber on Tuesday, Feb. 16, for a daylong conference and expo, the 2nd Destin Business Technology Summit, connecting Destin area small business owners and employees with the technology-related information and companies they need to improve their business operations, find new customers, and protect their electronic assets.

Thanks to BizTech sponsor and Destin Chamber Trustee member Five Channels, this year's keynote speaker is Michael Levin, the current CEO and Founder of the Center for

Information Security Awareness (CFISA), a former Secret Service Agent, and the former Deputy Director of the National Cyber Security Division of the Department of Homeland Security.

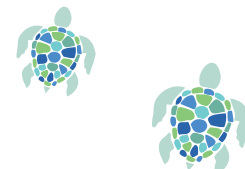
Topics include Cybersecurity, Leveraging Technology in Remote Work Setting, Home Network Security, Google My Business, Vendor Manage-

ment, Post-COVID Payment Solutions, and more. The full agenda is available below. More social media marketing sessions will be added soon.

To register, visit Destin-Chamber.com. Registration is open, and seating is limited to ensure proper physical distancing! Early bird rate is \$50 for Destin Chamber members and \$65 for non-members, if you register prior to Feb. 5. After Feb. 5, the cost is \$60 for Destin Chamber members and \$75 for non-members.

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conference? Visit compassresorts.com, search for The Palms of Destin Resort, and use BIZ15 when booking your stay for a 15% discount.



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Picture this: A couple painting a beautiful scene on canvas, sipping on their favorite wine, and laughing together for hours on end. This couple walks away with stomachs that ache from laughter and artwork they can keep for years. Couples' painting parties at Painting with a Twist make it easy to enjoy a unique date with your better half.

Why not add a little color and mix things up a bit? 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.

All the painting supplies, canvases and step-by-step instructions are included. You and your partner will create a complementary set of masterpieces—together—an exciting way to forego the stresses of life and connect with your sweetheart.

The events calendar offers a variety of paintings— from seasonally-inspired landscapes to decorative DIY wood board signs, funny self-portraits, and more! Find a paint night theme that makes your heart

skip a beat, then sign up. Your Picture-Perfect Date Night Awaits!

Don't Forget Girls' Night Out!

Right when you thought you were out of girls' night out ideas — you found the most creative one yet! Save the date for a

BYOW (bring your own wine)* paint party that's a toast to your girl gang. The relaxing atmosphere, art supplies and step-by-step instructions await, so you can focus on celebrating your best life with your best friends!

Want to host a private party in an exclusive party room?

Party rooms are available for your business, family, Krewe, Girls Night Out or whatever you can dream up! Check out the January calendar and then request an event. For your private event, you get to pick the painting.

Call (850) 226-7218 or text "PARTY" to our studio to re-

quest a party! Private parties can be held any day and time (subject to artist availability).

The January calendar is published at paintingwithatwist.com/studio/fort-walton-beach/calendar/.

Painting With a Twist offers Porch Leaners, Wood Planks, Fun Black Light Events, Twist at Home and room for Private Events in a colorful, spacious "Party Room!" Located at 255 Miracle Strip Pkwy, Suite B-8, Fort Walton Beach, 32548, in Downtown Fort Walton Beach. Call (850) 226-7218 or visit studio205@paintingwithatwist.com.

Mattie Kelly Arts Foundation Appoints Demetrius Fuller as Chief Executive Officer

The Mattie Kelly Arts Foundation (MKAF), a not-for-profit charitable arts organization founded in 1995 to be Northwest Florida's champion of cultural arts and arts education for all, announced that Demetrius Fuller has been named as Chief Executive Officer. Fuller will replace Marcia Hull, who has served as MKAF CEO for the past 22 years. After years of devoted service, Hull is retiring on December 31, 2020.

"We are thrilled to have Demetrius lead the Foundation. His local ties to the community and with other arts and culture organizations in the area as well as around the country made this decision very easy for the board. We did conduct a nationwide search for a new CEO and received more than 25 applicants. Little did we know that our new leader was sitting in our own backyard," said Kevin Bowyer, Chairman of the Board, Mattie Kelly Arts Foundation.

"I am honored to join this incredible team of staff and board members who comprise the Mattie Kelly Arts Foundation. It will be a great honor to work in tandem toward continuing to realize



by Atlanta-based Tomlinson-Graham Group. The name of the parent organization, of which Fuller will ultimately be Chief Executive & Artistic Officer, along with the vision and plans for the transformation of the MKAF property into a cultural and educational hub, will be announced in early 2021.

"When a partnership opportunity arises - a partnership that brings two like-minded organizations

together which allows for special synergies in our community - you jump in with both feet. This is exactly what we have with SGC and MKAF. This newly aligned partnership not only allows for a powerful force to keep bringing all genres of art and cultural events to our community, but it also provides the right forum to elevate the level of service both organizations currently provide within our community and our schools," said Jeff Dannelly, Board President, Sinfonia Gulf Coast.

For more information about MKAF visit www.mkaf.org or call (850) 650-2226.

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ECTC Presents The Storyteller Series

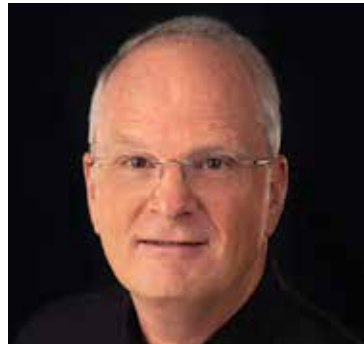
Emerald Coast Theatre Company's (ECTC) The StoryTeller Series returns with three new offerings: Three Places at Yalta (Jan. 12 & Feb. 9), Give 'em Hell Harry! (Jan. 26) and Katharine Hepburn (Feb. 23 & March 2) all at 7:30 p.m.



The series begins with the world premier staging of Three Places at Yalta, a one-man show written by and starring Bruce Collier. In this power-packed political piece, Collier deftly portrays World War II's "big three" — Winston Churchill, Josef Stalin and Franklin D. Roosevelt.

Collier, a local actor, playwright and editor who hails from

Ohio, was most recently seen on ECTC's stage as Ebenezer Scrooge in A Christmas Carol. Collier has performed professionally in summer stock in Ohio, at the Alabama Shakespeare Festival, the Courtyard Playhouse in New York City, New Horizons Theatre in Michigan and The REP at Seaside. His original Restoration comedy, Tarts, was staged in New York at the Courtyard.



Alan Tuttle stars Carl Eugene Bolt's "docudrama" play Give 'em Hell Harry! This faithful and often humorous piece is a portrayal of the life and presidency of President Harry S. Tru-

man. The play spans Truman's childhood, his "political apprenticeship" as a judge in Jackson County Missouri, his years in the U.S. Senate and his momentous two terms as U.S. President.

Tuttle has been involved in theater for nearly six decades. He has appeared in several Stage Crafters productions in Fort Walton Beach, Florida, as a member of the ensemble in Sound of Music, Music Man, and Damn Yankees; as Manolo in Odd Couple (the Female Version), in Bad Seed playing Leroy, and as several favorite characters in Spamalot! He assisted the director of Lakebottom Proper, stage managed Steel Magnolias, produced Noises Off, and directed Neil Simon's Rumors.

ECTC's StoryTeller Series concludes with Katharine Hepburn, a one-woman show written and performed by the incomparable Shirley Simpson. Simpson embodies the wit, charm and fierce grit that is the Oscar-winning American actress Katharine Hepburn (1907-2003). Her



piece delivers a humorous and touching portrayal of the fiery and independent Hepburn throughout her career touching on the events and people who shaped her 96-year life.

Simpson most recently appeared as Hannah in the musical The Spitfire Grill at New Stage Theatre in Jackson, Mississippi. Also, at New Stage, she played Grace in Grace & Glorie, the title role of Shirley Valentine, Kendall Kingsley in Impossible Marriage, and Vada Love in The Exact Center of the Universe. At the LSU Colonnade Theatre in Baton Rouge, she again played Shirley Valentine, and directed and played the role of Elaine

in Neil Simon's Last of the Red Hot Lovers.

A former producer, writer, and performer in the New York Madison Avenue television market, her TV series The Vital Link was nominated for and won the ACE Award. Simpson is a member of Actor's Equity Association and is contributing her performance fees to Sacred Heart. Simpson is performing Katharine Hepburn as a benefit for ECTC.

Tickets are \$32 per person for adults, \$30 for seniors/military and \$28 for students. Purchase tickets online at www.emeraldcoasttheatre.org or call (850) 684-0323. Performances are held at 7:30 p.m. at 560 Grand Boulevard (upstairs) in Miramar Beach.

ECTC is implementing its Safety Protocol Plan found on ECTC's website.

To make a tax-deductible donation, volunteer or learn more about ECTC, find them on Facebook, call (850) 684-0323 and visit www.emeraldcoasttheatre.org.

The Destin Library Has Answers Thrives Through an "Unprecedented" Year

Most of us know the Destin Library has many useful services available to patrons through its websites and free mobile applications. Now, the library also has a video series to help you learn how to get the most out of these services: Answers with Amy! Twice a month, tune in to the Destin Library's Facebook page or their website (www.cityofdestin.com/library) for new short, informative videos on how to do everything from place a book on hold to registering for a challenge on the Beanstack app.

That's just one of the many ways the Destin Library has been innovative this past year. The Destin Library strives to be a vital cornerstone of the Destin community. 2020 at the Library started with a new face and some new services. Laura Harris joined the team as the Youth Services Librarian and has created a new early reader collection. Also new this year is free notary services provided by Kitti Capps, circulation supervisor. The Library added a fax line for faxing services and wireless printing. Two new scanners were purchased for the media

lab. These scanners are very popular with genealogy patrons who wish to scan old family memorabilia. The book scanner can scan old maps, bibles and other larger items that cannot be copied on a traditional copier.

In December, the Library held its annual Food for fines drive to benefit Harvest House. The staff collected \$312 in nonperishable food items and cash donations.

Spring of 2020 brought in many challenges with the COVID-19 pandemic. The Library closed to the public in March of 2020 to help curb the spread of the virus, reopened with limited services, and then closed again at the beginning of July. Library staff has learned to be flexible and creative to serve our community and follow the CDC guidelines to prevent the spread of COVID-19. The Library offers curbside pickup service along with an online form for patrons to request "grab bags" for a variety of materials. The staff has created digital story times and other programs of interest on its webpage or Facebook page. A daily cleaning and sanitizing regimen



was implemented for frequently touched surfaces along with wearing masks. Quarantining of library materials and cleaning of book covers was implemented to help reduce the risk of viruses that may have been on items returned from patrons.

The Library's annual Summer

Reading Program was moved to a digital platform called Beanstack. Beanstack allowed participants to keep track of their summer reading progress by downloading the Beanstack app to a smartphone and entering their reading minutes into the app. Children earned prizes and badges for reading and completing their reading challenges. The Rotary Club of Destin sponsored the program again this year where 237 children and adults were registered for the

Summer Program, and 138,719 minutes of reading were logged into the Beanstack app. A total of 247 people tuned into digital performances during the summer.

The Library staff continue to modify services with digital programming and self-directed activities during this unprecedented time. If you have any questions or a suggestion for a future Answers with Amy tutorial, please contact the library at 850-837-8572 or library@cityofdestin.com.

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Around Town

Heartwarming Soups & Stews with the Destin Library



Come join the latest, mouth-watering new Beanstack Challenge from the Destin Library: Heartwarming Soups and Stews. From now-Feb. 28, warm your heart and tummy with interactive cooking activities, videos, recipes and cookbooks each week. Have fun creating your own soup or stew and then share your recipe with other challengers. Participating in the activities earns badges that will automatically en-

ter you into the surprise drawing at the end of the challenge. Join at cityofdestin.beanstack.org or download the free Beanstack app on your mobile device. For questions, contact the Library at (850) 837-8572 or library@cityofdestin.com.

2021 City of Destin Annual Passes

Full-time Destin residents (within the incorporated city limits) are encouraged to submit their request for a 2021 Annual Pass via the city website at <https://www.cityofdestin.com/342/Annual-Passes>. For those who do not have internet access, beach parking passes are available at City Hall only. Henderson Beach State Park and Joes Bayou Boat Ramp passes are available at both City

Hall and the Destin Community Center.

Do you live in the incorporated city limits? Find out here: www.cityofdestin.com/605/Am-I-in-the-City-Limits..

For questions, please contact Destin City Hall, 4200 Indian Bayou Trail or call 850-837-4242.

Reporting A Street Light Outage

To ensure the safety of our community, City of Destin staff survey and report light outages within the city limits of Destin to Gulf Power. If you see a street light out, please assist by reporting the outage at the following link: <https://gulfpower.streetlightoutages.com/public/default.html>.

Big Brothers Big Sisters to Host Virtual Gala

Mark your calendars for Fri., Jan. 15, 2021 for The Big Gala 2021. 'Bigger Together,' The Big Gala is normally the charity's biggest black-tie event of the year, but due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Big Brothers and Big Sisters of Northwest Florida will be hosting their first-ever Virtual Big Gala. The night may look different than years past, but the committee assures us it will still be filled with many of its fun signature elements! Sponsorship opportunities are available now. To learn more, visit www.bbbsn-wfl.org/events/big-gala.

Lane Redding Joins Progress Bank as Senior Lender

Lane Redding has joined Progress Bank Okaloosa & Walton County as Senior Lender, Business Banking. Lane has 10 years of banking experience from major institutions, where her roles primarily involved the areas of credit analysis and commercial banking. Active in the local community, Lane serves on the boards for the Walton Area Chamber of Commerce and the Destin Charity Wine Auction and is a member of the Destin Rotary Club.

Hog Ride for Children in Crisis

The 41st Annual Emerald Coast Harley Owners Group Chapter #3605 Toy Ride in December closed out by raising critical funding to help the abused children served by the Emerald Coast Children's Advocacy Center and the at-risk abused and neglected children living at the Children in Crisis Neighborhood. 100 bikers met at Emerald Coast Harley Davidson in Ft. Walton Beach Sunday morning and pa-

raded on a completely new route for 2020. According to Ken Hair, CIC President and CEO, "This wonderful event has help us make Christmas a special time for the at-risk children living at the CIC Neighborhood."

Berkshire Hathaway Ribbon Cutting

You're invited to celebrate Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Beach Properties of Florida with a ribbon cutting, Jan. 19, 2021, 4 - 5 p.m., 151 Regions Way Ste. 4A, in Destin. Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Beach Properties of Florida is a full-service real estate agency serving 30A, South Walton, Panama City Beach, Destin, Port St. Joe and St. George Island. For more information, please call (850) 534-3006 or visit <http://www.30A.BeachPropertiesFLA.com>.

The Arc Receives \$20K Christmas Gift

In December, the Emerald Coast Foundation (ECF) presented The Arc of the Emerald Coast with a check for \$20,000! The donation from ECF will help The Arc continue its mission of empowering those with developmental disabilities to live meaningful lives here in our local community.

Dementia Wellness Expo

Registration is now open for the 2nd annual Dementia Wellness Expo to be held virtually, Thurs., January 21. The event offers free CEUs for nurses, CNAs, Social Workers, OTs, PTs, SLPs. The Expo opens at 8 a.m. with 'Morning with Teepa and Senior Helpers,' to be followed in the afternoon by the main Expo 'Stronger Together.' To register or to learn more, visit dementiafamilypathways.com.

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