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DESTIN Life

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Postal Customer Local

Sixteen Musical Candles

And Sinfonia Gulf Coast is Just Getting Started

By BETH CLAVIER

What's in a name?

Well, in Latin, "Sinfonia" means a group of musicians, which local founder, Artistic and Music Director Demetrius Fuller says is how Sinfonia Gulf Coast got its clever moniker. "I wanted Sinfonia to represent any group of musicians, not just a full orchestra, so we can remain versatile in what we present."

Our locals love a local story.

Demetrius grew up in the area and attended Fort Walton Beach High School, where the strong history of music programs and his very supportive parents inspired him at a young age to make music his career. He went on to study at the University of Cincinnati's prestigious College Conservatory of Music, where he received his Bachelor and Master of Music degrees and then went on to post graduate work in Geneva, Switzerland



with additional training in Italy, France and Estonia. From 2005-2007, he was visiting professor and guest conductor at the Festival of Music in Poços de Caldas, Brazil, and was selected to conduct the Unity Academy Orchestra in Erbil, Northern Iraq.

He could've settled anywhere with this extensive background. But Demetrius had a passion to bring the musical arts back to his hometown and our local region and knew he could do it in a way that nobody else had done before. "I wanted to create

Sinfonia so that our community would have its own professional, stand-alone organization dedicated to all genres of music and could provide access to music education for

SINFONIA
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Coach Green Brings College, Pro Background to DHS Football Program

By KENNETH BOOKS

Ernest Green III's life has been football. The Fort Walton Beach native was a star wide receiver on the gridiron with Fort Walton Beach High School, where he led the Vikings to an undefeated season and a No. 2 national ranking by USA Today en route to the Florida AAAA state football championship in 1991. After high school, he played football for Florida State, finishing his college career as the Seminoles' all-

COACH GREEN
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 **Community**

SINFONIA

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the region’s school districts,” said Demetrius.

From Sinfonia Gulf Coast’s inception in 2005, the organization has provided countless unforgettable concerts that Northwest Floridians may have otherwise never had the opportunity to attend. Among several industry A-listers that have performed with Sinfonia, some very recognizable names include Vanessa Williams, Kristin Chenoweth, Matthew Morrison, Patti LuPone, Roberta Flack, Mary Wilson and Jane Lynch. With Demetrius’ go-big or go-home mentality, it’s no surprise that he chose to bring the talented Bernadette Peters into town for Sinfonia’s first major event back in 2006. That was the hook; that’s what turned



heads and accelerated Sinfonia’s reputation as a fully professional orchestra and entertainment organization in our area.

Making a mark has never been an issue for Demetrius as he lives and breathes his craft. His drive to foster a love of music in the next generation is why Sinfonia took over the management of the region’s only youth



orchestra in 2013, when then director Liz Aylor determined it needed a larger support base.



Since then, the youth orchestra program, along with its many branches, has grown exponentially. Now under the direction of Conductor Aaron King Vaughn, the Sinfonia Youth Orchestra is thriving with opportunities to perform alongside professional musicians regularly.



Just this year, a first of its kind after-school violin program was born by Aaron at Destin Elementary school. It has been a success, which has fueled his goal to expand into more schools across the districts. “The

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COACH GREEN

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time leader in receiving touchdowns with 29. His 182 total points, still stands at 13th on the all-time scoring list at Florida State.

A third-round NFL draft choice, Coach Green made 54 catches for 665 yards and two touchdowns. And now, he faces a new challenge – head coach of the fledgling Destin High School football team. He relishes the opportunity. “We’re going to have tough, hard-nosed, disciplined kids,” Coach Green said. “We have a lot of skill and talent, just not a lot of big guys.” So far, the team, which opens play Sept. 2, has 35 players, but “we still have some kids in the building who’ve played before,” Coach Green said.

Coach Green is no stranger to coaching, having done so at Tampa Freedom High School, American Heritage High School in Plantation, and IMG Academy, Bradenton, where he was assistant head coach. This



will be his first time in charge of the entire operation.

One advantage he’ll have is he doesn’t have to live up to the reputation of a predecessor. “When you’re coming in cold, it’s a mad rush,” Coach Green said. “You really get only one chance. It’s like a painting. They might know of me, but they don’t know me.”

He said he tends to be offense-minded. “I like to throw the football,” he said. “Ideally, on both sides of the ball, we’ll be fast, physical and (ticked) off.”

With Coach Green, the apple

didn’t fall far from the tree. His father, Ernest Green Jr., a math teacher and coach with Fort Walton Beach High School, coached defensive backs and receivers to win the 1991 Florida State 4A Football Championship.

A high school coach ideally is not a taskmaster, a philosophy embraced by Coach Green. “I told the kids we’re teachers first. We’re not here to cuss the kids. I enjoy teaching the game. I love the game. It’s been very good to me. You can get paid a king’s

ransom to play a child’s game.”

Currently, Coach Green and his wife, Michelle, live in Pensacola. He’s looking for a closer home, but said he doesn’t mind the drive each day. They have two grown children, Isaac and Will, and Dominic, age 12.

Coach Green’s background has gone a long way to prepare him to run the Destin High School football program. But it’s been a dream of his for quite a while. “This is exactly when I was 5 I saw myself doing,” Coach Green, 46, said.

Destin High School 2022 Football Schedule

All regular season games begin at 7 p.m. Games are played at Destin Middle School.

Aug. 19 – Pre-season Football Classic Jamboree vs. Vernon HS, Freeport, 6 p.m.	Sept. 23 – @ Lighthouse Private Christian HS
Sept. 2 – @ Baker	Sept. 30 – @ Jay HS
Sept. 9 – North Bay Haven HS	Oct. 7 – Dean Bozeman HS
Sept. 16 – @ Rocky Bayou Christian HS	Oct. 14 – @ Chipley HS
	Oct. 21 – Hilliard HS
	Oct. 28 – Aucilla Christian HS
	Nov. 4 – @ Homes County HS

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Romance is in the Air!

Ideas for Fun with Your Valentine

With so many great Valentine's Day events happening in Destin this month for singles or couples, there's no lack of a unique time with our list of romantic experiences, each an over-the-top experience you can find only in our beautiful paradise!

A "COOL" Couples' Experience at CRYO850



Ready for something unique and a bit different this Valentine's Day? You and your sweetie can chill out at Destin's CRYO850 and the two of you can experience a cryotherapy session together for \$40, (instead of \$80) with a BOGO offer valid through February. Call (850) 279-4145 for more information and visit cryo850.com to book.

Pose with Your Valentine



Pose together for a Valentine's Day special mini photo session with Savvy Leigh Photo, recently featured as one of the area's Top 8 photographers. Local photographer Savannah Smith offers fun, professional keepsake photos to treasure. 25-minute session-\$75 | 45-minute session-\$120. You receive all the edited digital images! Appropriate for all ages, families and babies, too! Visit SavvyLeighPhoto.com or text (205) 567-2779 to book anytime through Feb. 28.

Travel on a Romantic Cruise!

Get back to travel in February with one of the best and safest ways ever! Set sail to the beautiful U.S. Virgin Islands of St. Thomas, St. Lucia, St. Croix and St. Kitts as well as Barbados. JoDell with Have Travel Memo-

ries can do all the work for you so that it's easy and romantic and just the getaway you and your sweetie are longing for! Call JoDell at 850-608-3058 or visit HaveTravelMemories.com and book your Valentine's memory!

For Deep Sea Fishing Lovers

Why not experience the one thing that Destin is famous for, "The World's Luckiest Fishing Village?" Deep sea fishing with your sweetie for Valentine's Day

is a must! Check out www.Destin-Fishing-Fleet.com, call (850) 837-1995, or www.CharterBoatOuttaLine.com—(850) 837-2320 for reservations.

An Island of Love for Valentine's Day

Stay on an island of love this Valentine's Day weekend at The Island Resort on Okaloosa

Continued on page 6

AJs

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AJs

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Community

Cali's To Do In Destin! FEBRUARY 2022

..... 5

Zumba on the Tavern Lawn | 8am | The Island Resort

The Salty Market | 9am | 211 Main Street Destin

Farmer's Market | 9am-1pm | Grand Boulevard

Palate & Palette Wine Dinner | 6pm | Legendary Marine

Karaoke | 7pm | FishHouse inside The Island Resort

Karaoke | 8pm | World Of Beer Destin

..... 6

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

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

Sound Bath | 6pm | Prana Mudra Center Hot Yoga

..... 7

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

..... 8

Music Bingo | 6pm | FatBoys Destin

Trivia | 7pm | World of Beer

Rock'n Bingo Night | 7pm | Landsharks Pizza

Open Jam Mic Night | 8pm | Enlightned Studios

..... 9

Power of Business Luncheon | 11:30am | Hotel Effie

Bonfire on the Beach | 6pm | The Bay

..... 10

Cocktail Mixing Workshop with Tippy Mule Bar | 6pm | GraytRoom

Poetry Night | 7pm | Enlightened Studios FWB

Ladies Night | 10pm | McGuires Destin

..... 11

Business Before Hours | 7:30am | Embassy Suites Destin

Singo! | 8am | The Island Resort

Free Beach Bonfire | 5pm | Royal Palm Grille

Walton Chamber Awards Gala | 5:30pm | Hilton Sandestin

Family Game Night: Bingo | 6pm | Hub 30a

Karaoke Night | 7pm | Harry T's Harborwalk

..... 12

Zumba on the Tavern Lawn | 8am | The Island Resort

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

The Salty Market | 9am | 211 Main Street Destin

Farmer's Market | 9am-1pm | Grand Boulevard

Brunch Fest | 12pm | Harborwalk Village

A Dinner to Die For, Murder Mystery Theater | 6pm | Drunken Goat Saloon

Karaoke | 8pm | World Of Beer Destin

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

Local Arts & Crafts Fair | 9am | Enlightened Studios FWB

Mardi Gras Parade | 1pm | Downtown Fort Walton Beach

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

Galentines Day Paint & Sip | 2pm | Hotel Effie



Superbowl Parties!

Superbowl Party | 5pm | Lucille's Kitchen

Superbowl Party | 5pm | Royal Palm Grille

Superbowl Party | 5pm | The Island Resort

Super Bowl Party | 4:30pm | The Gulf Okaloosa Island

Sound Bath | 6pm | Prana Mudra Center Hot Yoga

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

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Music Bingo | 6pm | FatBoys Destin

Trivia | 7pm | World of Beer

Rock'n Bingo Night | 7pm | Landsharks Pizza

Open Jam Mic Night | 8pm | Enlightned Studios

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Destin Chamber Ladies Who Lunch | 11:30am | Destin Chamber

Bonfire on the Beach | 6pm | The Bay

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Military Night | 6pm | The Gulf Okaloosa Island

Ladies Night | 10pm | McGuires Destin

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Free Beach Bonfire | 5pm | Royal Palm Grille

Crawfish Boil | 5pm | HammerHeads in Baytowne Wharf

Family Game Night: Bingo | 6pm | Hub 30a

Karaoke Night | 7pm | Harry T's Harborwalk

Drag Night | 9pm | Enlightened Studios FWB

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The Salty Market | 9am | 211 Main Street Destin

Farmer's Market | 9am-1pm | Grand Boulevard

Show n Shine Car Meetup | 9am | Destin Hooters Parking Lot

Shrimp & Grits Festival | 12pm | Brotula's Parking Lot

Gumbo Festival | 12pm | Baytowne Wharf

A Comedy Hypnosis Show | 7pm | Enlightened Studios FWB

Karaoke | 7pm | FishHouse inside The Island Resort

Karaoke | 8pm | World Of Beer Destin

Drag Night | 9pm | Enlightened Studios FWB

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

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

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

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Music Bingo | 6pm | FatBoys Destin

Trivia | 7pm | World of Beer

Rock'n Bingo Night | 7pm | Landsharks Pizza

Open Jam Mic Night | 8pm | Enlightned Studios

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Bonfire on the Beach | 6pm | The Bay

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Bubbly Baytowne | 5pm | Baytowne Wharf

Poetry Night | 7pm | Enlightened Studios FWB

Ladies Night | 10pm | McGuires Destin

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Singo! | 8am | The Island Resort

Free Beach Bonfire | 5pm | Royal Palm Grille

Family Game Night: Bingo | 6pm | Hub 30a

Mardi Gras Masquerade | 6pm | Destin Commons

Karaoke Night | 7pm | Harry T's Harborwalk

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Zumba on the Tavern Lawn | 8am | The Island Resort

The Salty Market | 9am | 211 Main Street Destin

Farmer's Market | 9am-1pm | Grand Boulevard

Chess Tournament | 10am | Enlightened Studios FWB

Mardi Gras Celebration | 2pm | Harborwalk Village

Karaoke | 7pm | FishHouse inside The Island Resort

Karaoke | 8pm | World Of Beer Destin

Drag Competiton | 9pm | Enlightened Studios FWB

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

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

Mardi Gras Parade | 2pm | Baytowne Wharf

Pawdi Gras | 3:30pm | Harborwalk Village

Sound Bath | 6pm | Prana Mudra Center Hot Yoga

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

..... March 1

Music Bingo | 6pm | FatBoys Destin

Trivia | 7pm | World of Beer

Rock'n Bingo Night | 7pm | Landsharks Pizza

Open Jam Mic Night | 8pm | Enlightned Studios

..... 2

Bonfire on the Beach | 6pm | The Bay

..... 3

Ladies Night | 10pm | McGuires Destin

..... 4

Singo! | 8am | The Island Resort

Free Beach Bonfire | 5pm | Royal Palm Grille

Locals on the Harbor | 5pm | Boathouse Oyster Bar

Sip n Stroll Gallery Night | 5pm | J.Leon Gallery

Family Game Night: Bingo | 6pm | Hub 30a

Karaoke Night | 7pm | Harry T's Harborwalk

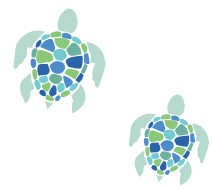
..... 5

The Salty Market | 9am | 211 Main Street Destin

Farmer's Market | 9am-1pm | Grand Boulevard

Karaoke | 7pm | FishHouse inside The Island Resort

Karaoke | 8pm | World Of Beer Destin



EVENTS • LIVE MUSIC • FOOD

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Around Town Highlighted Events

Blue Dog + Bourbon



Tickets are now on sale for the Mattie Kelly Arts Foundation's Blue Dog + Bourbon event at Bijoux, Thursday, Feb. 17, 6 p.m. Step into the whimsical and colorful life of George Rodrigue's "Loup-garou" or Blue Dog featuring original artwork from Wendy's private collection, paired with a palette of bourbon tastings and the culinary masterpieces of Chef Jack McGuckin of Bijoux! See George Rodrigue's Blue Dog paintings like never before in this mini-exhibition of rarely seen original artworks from the artist's private collection, shared by his widow, Wendy Rodrigue. This unique experience benefits the ongoing partnership between MKAF and Wendy's Life & Legacy Foundation, engaging students of all ages through storytelling and the arts. This exciting evening includes a palette of bourbon tastings and the culinary masterpieces of Chef Jack McGuckin of Bijoux! Tickets: \$175 members; \$195 non-members. Visit mkaf.org.

Wine & Fries!

Make plans to attend Wine & Fries held at Hotel Effie's hot, new Ara Rooftop Bar and Lounge, on Friday, Feb. 18 from 6-9 p.m. benefiting Ronald McDonald House Charities of Northwest Florida! Powered by Step One Automotive Group, this year's rooftop event will feature a DJ, cocktails, light bites, a wine raffle, and, of course, plenty of wine and McDonald's signature French fries, served by Costa Enterprises McDonald's. Guests will also have the opportunity to bid on several items donated by local businesses, including an original piece by Kathy Schumacher Art, a golf outing at Blackstone Golf Course, a helicopter ride from Timberview Helicopters, spa treatments from Hotel Effie's Spa Lilliana, Kendra Scott jewelry and much more!

3rd Annual Shrimp & Grits Festival



Do you have your ticket to the 3rd Annual Shrimp & Grits Festival yet? Benefitting the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Emerald Coast, the festival will sell out, so

don't wait to secure your ticket. Saturday, Feb. 19, 12 - 4 p.m. on the Destin Boardwalk (Behind Brotula's) - 210 Harbor Blvd. Destin. General Admission is \$40 and includes armband for unlimited food samples and drink tickets for craft beer and cocktail samples. Food Only/Under 21 Tickets are \$25 and includes armband for unlimited food samples. VIP is \$65 and includes armband for unlimited food samples and drinks tickets, plus exclusive early admission (11 a.m. - 12 p.m.) to the event, VIP lounge with private bar and more.

Let the Good Times Roll at Mardi Gras Masquerade

"Laissez les bons temps rouler" or "Let the good times roll"! Destin Commons will hold its annual Mardi Gras Masquerade on Friday, Feb. 25 from 6 to 8 p.m. Enjoy a fun-filled evening with entertainment for the entire family! Don your Mardi Gras attire and dance the night away to New Orleans style music. Enjoy free face painting and create a lasting keepsake at the photo booth. Guests can catch trinkets and treasures galore during the festive Mardi Gras parade along the streets of Destin Commons. The parade will be led by this year by Danny Wilcox of BrightView. Guests will feel the jubilant Mardi Gras spirit as they enjoy colorful floats, beads, and moon pies.

Wild Game Dinner for Taylor Haugen Foundation

The 'Real' Forrest Gump, Medal of Honor Recipient Sammy L. Davis, will be the special guest speaker for the Taylor Haugen Foundation's Wild Game Dinner & Auction on Saturday, March 12 from 3:30-6:30 p.m. at Walton Plantation. Individual tickets for this exclusive event are \$250 at TaylorHaugen.org.

Mac & Cheese Festival

Thought macaroni and cheese was just for kids? Think again! Join the 4th Annual Mac & Cheese Festival presented by Cox Media on Sunday, March 6 at the Destin Commons! This family-friendly event will feature gourmet, chef-inspired twists on the South's favorite comfort food. Local restaurants will compete for the best mac in town. Be there to sample every-

Continued on page 46

WILD GAME DINNER & AUCTION
SATURDAY, MARCH 12, 3:30-6:30PM
 JERRY & LESLIE SULLIVAN'S AT WALTON PLANTATION
 331 Little Yaupon OR 1919 Hwy 2, Laurel Hill, FL, 32567 (depending on your GPS)

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 Community

ROMANCE

continued from page 3

Island! This special package includes dinner from Fish House, The Island's signature restaurant, then a concert of Frank Sinatra's greatest hits with Tony Sands, a bottle of champagne and breakfast included. To book your stay, call reservations at 800.874.8962 or visit theislandfl.com using code VDAY.

Romantic Couples' Massage

Inhale, exhale and let it all go! It's time to relax this Valentine's Day. Check out a romantic couples' massage for the two of you, complete with champagne and chocolates at Destin's Beverly Hills Day Spa, (850) 654-8544. Or at Hand & Stone Massage and Facial Spa in Destin, enjoy

a free added enhancement to your massage. Call (850) 462-5603 for more details. Valentine's Day gift cards also available for each.

Attend a Show



Why not Wipe that lipstick off your collar and time travel to the 1958 Springfield Prom with us where you can be serenaded with all the classics like "Lollipop" and "Dream Lover?" This is the month of Love at Emerald Coast Theatre Company and you and your lover can take in

a romantic show worthy of the best. See The Marvelous Wonderettes Feb. 10-13 (and March 3-6) featuring over 30 classic '50s and '60s hits—a must-take musical trip down memory lane! For more love and laughter, don't miss 2 Across Feb. 18-27, an intriguing look at two strangers on the San Francisco BART train. Visit www.EmeraldCoastTheatre.org or call the box office at 850-684-0323.

Destin Harbor Sunset Tiki Cruise

If you're looking for a unique experience for your special someone, the Sunset Tiki Tour is all romance. Bring your favorite snacks and beverages and relax as Cruisin' Tikis Destin takes you on a cruise through the aquamarine waters of the Destin Harbor, floating and wit-



nessing a breathtaking sunset to remember. Call (850) 200-0573 or visit www.cruisintikisdestin.com.

Get Your Gumbo On

Grab your tickets to pursue the roux with your significant other at the 33rd Annual Sandestin Gumbo Festival Saturday, Feb. 19, 12-4 p.m. You'll have fun voting for Gulf Coast restaurants' top-secret gumbo recipes, live music and Bloody Mary's! Visit www.SandestinGumboFestival.com for tickets and details!

Date Night at Painting With a Twist

Paint a unique date with your better half for Valentine's Day! Bring 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 complimentary set of masterpieces—together. Find a paint night theme that makes your heart skip a beat, then sign up. Your picture-perfect date night awaits! Check out paintingwithatwist.com or call (850) 226-7218.



Timberview Offers "You Two" an Amazing Experience

Why not do something completely different for Valentine's Day? See the Gulf like you've never seen it before!

Check out destinhelicopters.com or call (850)774-0991 to

book your very own couples' Destin beaches helicopter tour for magnificent views of emerald green waters and sugar white beaches from the Harbor east along the coast! Couples

wanting an exclusive tour can select Private Flight at checkout to reserve the entire cabin for 'just you two!' You can choose from a Coastal Tour, Jaws Run, Dolphin Run or Seaside Tour, prices ranging from \$59 To \$209 per person.

Having chartered flights for National Geographic and the Travel Channel, the professional pilots at Timberview Choppers expertly navigate sweeping, picturesque views, allowing you to steal glances of Destin and the beautiful Emerald Coast from a perspective normally reserved for birds and astronauts with binoculars. They ferry passengers high into the clouds aboard



a sky-scraping whirlybird during flight tours and the high-definition video you receive will make sure your memorable in-flight experience is commemorated.

You can also purchase a gift card for your sweetie, then schedule the super surprise!

Timberview's Coastal Helicopter Tour is \$59 per person for 8 miles of unforgettable views of the Destin Harbor and jetties of East Pass. Call (850) 774-0991 or visit Destinhelicopters.com.

Beach Helipad | 34859 Emerald Coast Pkwy., Destin, FL 32541 | (850) 774-0991

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All Things GUMBO!
Pursue the Roux at the
33rd Annual Sandestin
Gumbo Festival!

Friday, Feb. 18, 5 p.m.
Saturday, Feb. 19, 12-4 p.m.

Yum! Yum! Tantalize your taste buds at 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 foodie's favorite Gumbo winter festival is back for its 33rd year!

Kick off your tasting days, Fri., Feb. 18, with a Crawfish Boil Kick-Off Party at Hammerhead's Bar & Grille serving boiled potatoes and corn on the cob. Only \$18 a plate! Also enjoy LIVE music starting at 4 p.m.

Then on Saturday, Feb. 19, Gulf Coast restaurants will be featuring their top-secret gumbo recipes and competing for your vote! Sample the variety of gumbos 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 SandestinGumboFestival.com for tickets and



details, including a daily schedule of events and entertainment. General admission tickets are \$45 presale (\$55 day of the event) and allow tastings of all gumbo and Bloody Marys. If you're interested in entering the event, visit sandestingumbofestival.com. Event will happen rain or shine.

It's Mardi Gras Time!
Sunday, Feb. 27th, 2 p.m.
No Cost to Attend

Mardi Gras is BIGGER and BETTER than ever at The Village of Baytowne Wharf! The Village streets will be filled with costumed dogs and their humans along with unique and colorful floats, golf carts and

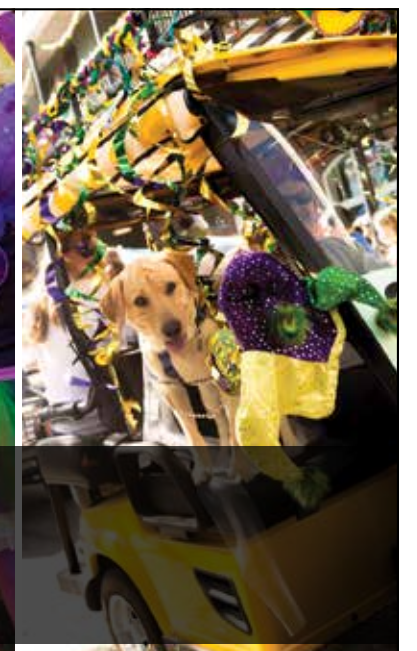
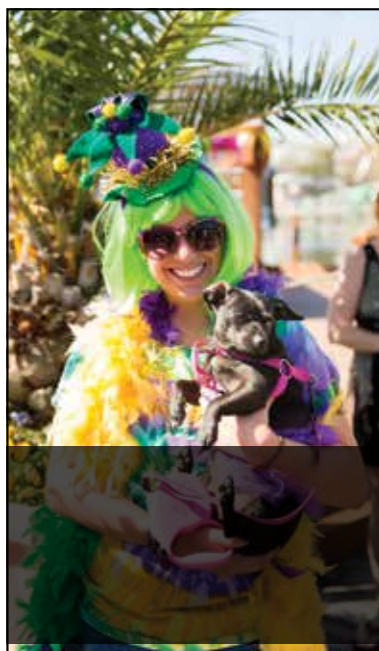
pick-up trucks. Mardi Gras music will fill the air as four-pawed friends and parade participants shower parade-goers with a barrage of beads, moon pies and other trinkets. To participate in this event, register by Friday, Feb. 25 at 5 p.m. at baytownewharf.com. Participants who register by Feb. 14 will receive five points added to their score.

Baytowne Mardi Street Pardi
Tuesday, March 1, 6-8 p.m.
No Cost to Attend

"Laissez les bon temps rouler" (let the good times roll)! Prepare to let your hair down on what many call the most festive day of the year, Fat Tuesday,



the day before Ash Wednesday. Starting at 6 p.m., join folks in the Village for a Village Street party complete with music, street performers, entertainers and more! The post-pardi celebration continues into the night with parties at various Baytowne establishments. So, break out the beads and get ready for a night to remember!



Mardi Gras

The Village of Baytowne Wharf presents

Mardi Gras Parade

Sunday, February 27th
Time: 2pm | Cost: FREE

Baytowne Mardi Street Pardi

Tuesday, March 1st
Time: 6pm | Cost: FREE

FOR MORE INFO VISIT: WWW.BAYTOWNEWHARF.COM

 Community

Trends & Treasures



Once in A Lifetime Opportunity To Sell Your Home Be On The Coast™ Real Estate Group

“When selling anything, you hope for strong demand for the item, coupled with a limited supply. That will maximize your leverage as you negotiate the sale. Home sellers are in that exact position right now,” according to Brian K. LoCicero REALTOR® with the Be On The Coast Real Estate team at Keller Williams. If you’re thinking about selling your house in 2022, you truly have a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity at your fingertips. Here’s why.

Strong Demand. According to the latest Existing Home Sales Report from the National Association of Realtors (NAR), 6.18 million homes were sold in 2021, the largest number of home sales in 15 years. Demand isn’t expected to weaken this year, either. The Mortgage Finance Forecast, published by the Mortgage Bankers’ Association (MBA), calls for existing-home sales to reach 6.4 million homes this year.

Supply Is Very Limited. The same sales report from NAR also reveals inventory just hit the lowest of the century. “Total housing inventory at the end of December amounted to 910,000 units, down 18% from November and down 14.2% from one year ago (1.06 million). Unsold inventory sits at a 1.8-month supply at the present sales pace, down from 2.1 months in November and from 1.9 months in December 2020.”

Right now, savvy homeowners have maximum leverage—there may never be a better time



to sell than right now. You need flexible negotiators that make very competitive offers. Tips in your favor when your house goes on the market: Competitive sales price; Flexible closing date; Potential for a leaseback to allow you more time to find a home; Minimal offer contingencies.

Now is the optimal time to list your home or condo. Contact Brian K. LoCicero, REALTOR® for a free analysis of your home and what price your property could bring in today’s competitive market: (850) 739-3800 or visit BeOnTheCoastRealEstate.com.

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cupcakes, custom cakes, mini cupcakes and tempting treats baked fresh, with 13 signature flavors to choose from daily! With all these flavors, you can celebrate your “love” all month long! ...Because cupcakes are love with icing on top!

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connected to their ancestors and history. For many, monograms are a popular way to pass on their heritage, especially on pieces of jewelry. These personalized items become treasured heirlooms to pass down from generation to generation. The monogram trend isn’t new, especially in the South. Rulers as far back as the early Greek and Roman history would put their seal on currency to help identify from whence it came. In the Middle Ages, artists took the idea and applied monograms to their work as signatures. Even later, the Victorians also made monogramming their own to show off their wealth and status by wearing precious jewelry and expensive embroidery with their



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cus on both of you! Pre-register online at www.cryo850.com.

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 Community

From the City of Destin

BY CATHERINE CARD, PUBLIC INFORMATION MANAGER



Annual Parking, Henderson Beach and Joe's Bayou Boat Launch Passes Available to Destin Residents

Residents who reside full-time within the incorporated area of Destin are eligible to receive up to two free Resident Annual parking passes (per household) for use in paid parking areas along Scenic Hwy. 98 in Crystal Beach, Gulf Shore Drive in Holiday Isle and the Harbor District. Passes are available at city hall and online.

All City of Destin residents who reside within the incorporated city limits of Destin are eligible to purchase an annual resident beach pass from the city for \$30 (valid Jan. 1-Dec. 31). The fee for senior citizens age 65 and up is \$25. This pass is only valid

at Henderson Beach State Park. Residents must provide proof of residency at the time of purchase. Passes may be obtained at Destin City Hall or the Destin Community Center.

Free annual Joe's Bayou Boat Launch passes are available for Destin residents who reside within the incorporated city limits of Destin (one pass per household). Passes can be obtained at Destin City Hall or the Destin Community Center. Residents must provide a valid driver license showing Destin residency, as well as their boat and trailer registration information. Residents may purchase additional boat launch passes for \$50 each. The daily fee for non-pass holders is \$20. Non-residents may purchase annual Joe's Bayou Boat Launch passes for \$205 each. Boat registration must be provided. If a trailer registration is applicable to your state, please provide the registration as well.

All passes are available to obtain online at www.cityofdestin.com/annualpass. To find out if

you live in the incorporated area of Destin please visit www.cityofdestin.com/605/Am-I-in-the-City-Limits. For more information, please call Destin City Hall at 850.837.4242.

City of Destin to Host Coed Registration Softball Leagues

Beginning March 9th, the City of Destin will host Coed Recreation Softball Leagues on Wednesday nights. A mandatory team captains' meeting will be held on Wednesday, Feb. 9, 2at 6 p.m. at Buck Destin Park, located at 724 Legion Drive. Space is limited to the first 16 teams. The team fee is \$275 and must be paid before the team is placed on the schedule. The last day to register a team is March 2nd. Individual fees are \$40, with a \$20 discount offered to Destin residents (proof of residency required). There will be a \$10 discount to players who sign up for the men's league. Individual fees must be paid before a player is eligible to play and all players

must be at least 17 to participate. For more information, please call 850-654-5184 or email recreation@cityofdestin.com.

Free AARP Tax Aide Service at the Destin Library

The Destin Library is teaming up again with AARP to provide free tax preparation services. You do not need to be a member of AARP to use the Tax-Aide program. Tax volunteers can prepare simple federal returns (no state returns or federal returns with rental income). Appointments are available every Thursday beginning February 3 and ending March 24 from 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. You will need to bring a copy of your 2021 tax return, a photo ID, and our Social Security card to the appointment. Call 850-837-8572 to schedule or schedule in person.

City of Destin's 16th Annual Spring Craft Show

The City of Destin's 16th Annual Spring Craft Show will be held at the Destin Community Center on Friday, Feb. 11, from 9:30 a.m. – 4 p.m. and Saturday, Feb. 12 from 9 a.m. – 3 p.m. More than 50 vendors with hand-crafted jewelry, wood carvings, paintings, food items

and more will be displaying. Vendor booths are available for \$45 for Destin residents and \$55 for non-residents. Register early, as space is limited. FREE admission. Call 850-654-5184 for more information.

Winter Movie Series Continues at the Destin Library

Every Wednesday at 1:30 p.m. you are invited to enjoy a free movie and complimentary popcorn. Film fans are welcome to bring their own movie-friendly snacks and beverages with tight lids. Seats fill up fast, so arrive early.

February Lineup:

- 2/2 – Jungle Cruise (2021) Dwayne Johnson, Emily Blunt, Edgar Ramirez
 - 2/9 – Respect (2021) Jennifer Hudson, Forest Whitaker, Marlon Wayans
 - 2/16 – Here Today (2021) Billy Crystal, Chad Jennings, Tiffany Haddish
 - 2/23 – Searching for Sugar Man (2012, Documentary)
- *Movies are subject to change based on availability at the time of the showing.

For more information, call 850-837-8572 or email library@cityofdestin.com.

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- Do you think you show too much or too little of your teeth when you smile?
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Around Town

The **Friends Guild of the Destin Library** is pleased to share in the celebration of Black History month with representatives from the Okaloosa County Democratic Black Caucus on Tuesday, Feb. 8 at 2 p.m. at the Destin Library (Calhoun Room) and learn first-hand about the history, leadership, goals, current efforts, and concerns.

The **Distinguished Young Women (DYW) of Okaloosa County** will have its information meeting Sunday, Feb. 27 at 3 p.m. at Crosspoint Church in the Fellowship Hall. There will also be information meetings on zoom Monday, Feb. 28 and Tuesday, March 1 at 7 p.m. Email Okaloosa at distinguedyw.org for zoom link. This scholar program is open for young women in their current Junior year of high school. Okaloosa County has had multiple State winners which have been awarded full scholarships.

Magnolia Fisher Candles has partnered with **Habitat for Humanity** of Walton County



for a Repurpose Project February 28 at 6 p.m. benefiting **Women Build 2022**. In this class, students will create one homemade Magnolia Fisher Candle using 100% Chemical Free ingredients. Enjoy time with friends at the Walton County ReStore after hours! All supplies and materials will be provided. Ages: 5-95 are welcome. The ReStore and class are located at 2440 U.S. Hwy 98 W., Santa Rosa Beach. Call 850-660-6004 ext. 5 or email at volunteer@waltoncountyhabitat.org.

Florida Panhandle Area first responders (search and rescue) from three local and DOD agencies completed maritime search and rescue training this week. The teams were

composed of personnel from the **Okaloosa County SO, Destin Fire Department, and United States Air Force SERE School**. The week-long course provided specialized search and rescue training designed to strengthen partnerships and promote mission success in the Search and Rescue mission. The training, dubbed the “Boat Operator Search and Rescue (BOSAR),” was presented by instructors from United States Coast Guard Station Destin. It is a nationally accredited curriculum that allows federal, state and local responders to work seamlessly together in responding to mariners in distress. It also provides responders with state-of-the-art tactics and techniques needed to locate and rescue people at sea. The U.S. Coast Guard has designated the training as the National Standard for maritime first responders. The rigorous not only tested the responders’ capabilities, but that of their equipment while underway in the waters of Choctawhatchee Bay near Destin.

United Way Emerald Coast (UWEC) recently announced the launch of **Women United**, a network of women donors who wish to affect change in their community through philanthropy and leadership, improving the quality of life for women and girls across our region and is a growing force of over 70,000 women worldwide. Join Okaloosa and Walton County women for its launch on March 5 from 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. at WaterVue at Brooks St. in Fort Walton Beach. Have brunch, network and learn about its vision. Tickets on sale February 11 at united-way.org/womenunited. Women United is open to those who generously donate a combined household gift of \$500+ a year (unrestricted funding) to UWEC.

Ken Wampler, President of Newman-Dailey Resort Properties, is the **Destin Chamber’s 2021 Business Person of the Year!** Jerry Sullivan presented the award noting Ken’s leadership role in one of the area’s most successful rental and real estate

companies, his visibility at Destin City Council and Okaloosa County Commission meetings, his passion for the tourism industry, his involvement in advocating for Gov. DeSantis to open Northwest Florida to vacation rentals during the COVID pandemic, and his leadership of the Okaloosa County Tourist Development Council. For more information, visit DestinChamber.com.

The **Destin Charity Wine Auction Foundation** (DCWAF) is once again welcoming wine enthusiasts to Grand Boulevard for a fully in-person, live auction experience April 22-23. Patron packages to the **17th Annual Destin Charity Wine Auction** are on sale now at dcwaf.org/tickets. A patron package grants two guests access to the full weekend of auction-related events beginning Friday, April 22 with an intimate patron dinner experience and culminating in a high-energy, live auction underneath an air-conditioned tent in Grand Boulevard. To purchase or learn more, visit dcwaf.org.

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 Community

YOWZA! 2021. What a Year in Real Estate!



By GAIL PELTO, REALTOR

2021. Done. Caput! On to a new, exciting year! So, let's recap the Destin and Miramar Beach residential real estate market stats for 2021 compared to 2020:

In 2021 the **number of SOLD Listings was up by 23.9%** over prior year.

In 2021 the **Median Sales Price was up by 23.4%** over prior year.

In 2021 the **Number of New Listings was up by 10.6%** over prior year.

In 2021 **March, April and**

May had the highest number of sales.

The **Median Sales Price was \$549,000** in 2021 and in 2020 it was \$448,250. WOW!

Average Cumulative Days on Market (length of time from listing to under contract) was 63 in 2021 compared to 129 in 2020.

Average Sold to List Price was 97% in 2021 and 95% in 2020.

In 2021 we **averaged 1.94 months of inventory**, in 2020 we averaged 4.48 months of inventory. (Five months or less is considered a sellers' market; we just may be transitioning to a buyers' market.)

The current (as of January 26) **Active Listings have been on market 206 days** on average; the **sold listings were on market an average of 49 days.**

Keep in mind that these stats are for ALL residential sales through Dec. 31, 2021. Depending on where you are selling or buying, the numbers may change.



What does this all mean to YOU?

2021 was an incredible year! The number of new listings were lower than the number of sales, so inventory was (and still is) really low which in turn, drove prices higher. **Prices were up more than 22% over prior year!** Statistically, a 10% increase is considered a great year.

If you are on the market for sale now and **you've been on market for more than 63 days, then it's time to re-view why** and make some changes. Maybe it's because of the condition? Or maybe it's the price? Talk to your Real Estate Agent and find out why your

house hasn't sold.

If your property is **priced correctly, you should expect to sell at about 97% of list price**, maybe higher. (Remember, this number is an "average.")

If you are looking to sell in 2022, LIST NOW! Why? First, 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. Second, what goes up, usually comes down. Could housing prices continue to rise? Maybe. Could they come down? Maybe. So, strike when the iron is HOT and it's hot NOW! Third, interest rates are rising which has an

effect on what buyers can afford. Don't let the buyer pool shrink. 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 Gail.Pelto@KW.com and I'll give you some pointers.

If you're looking to buy, BUY NOW—there aren't too many buyers right now and you might have a good chance at finding a motivated seller! Plus, you want to avoid the next rate increase if you're financing. **Need an agent? I can help. Call me at 850.374.0454 or email to Gail.Pelto@KW.com.**

Know the stats. 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.

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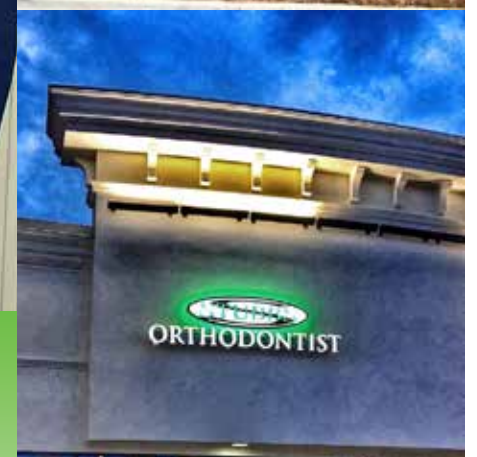
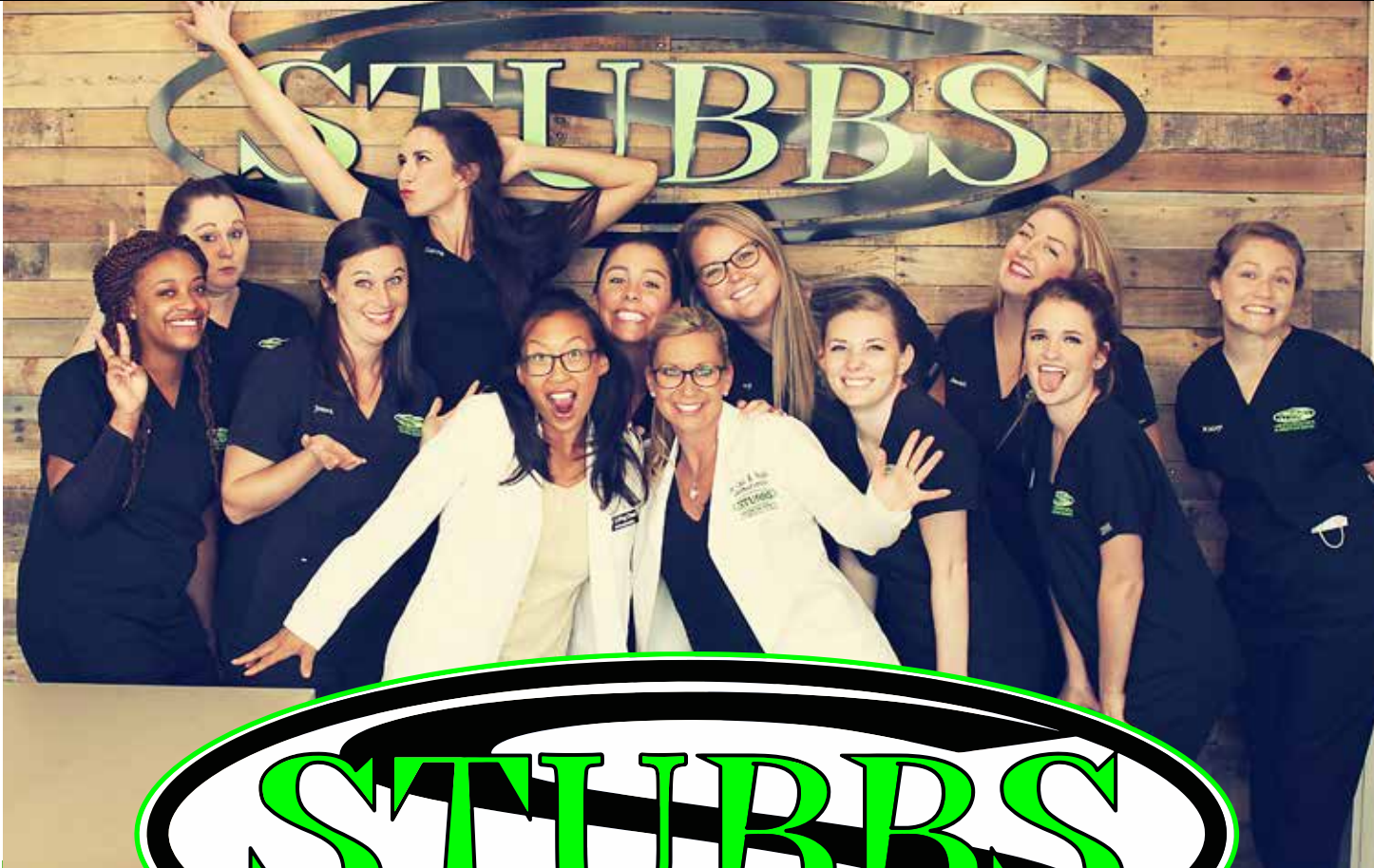
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Our daughter just completed her second phase and had her braces removed today, what a milestone!! This experience has been amazing. We love Dr. Stubbs and her staff. Always friendly and always went above and beyond for my daughter's comfort. ~ Micha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

 Community

One Year In, Sheriff Aden's Vision is Well Under Way

By Kenneth Books

Eric Aden's love affair with law enforcement goes back a long way, from his invitation to a dance by the sheriff's daughter when he was just 13 to his study of criminology at Florida State University to his current role leading Okaloosa County's Sheriff's Office.

Initially, the sheriff planned to work for federal agencies and, in fact, applied for four federal jobs.

"I was going to work for the feds," he said, "but I got a call from the sheriff (Larry Gilbert) who asked me to join the local force." That led to the Choctawhatchee High School graduate's service as a deputy from 1995 to 2003, first as a patrol deputy, then as a school resource officer and finally as a part-time deputy.

He then spent 10 years working for his brother's mortgage company, where he learned finance, which, it turned out, gave him experience in finance. That, he said, has helped him with the

administrative end of his job.

But law enforcement was never far from Sheriff Aden's mind. He eventually joined the Walton County Sheriff's Office as a sergeant and later a lieutenant. He stayed there two years, but, he said, "My true desire was to come back home" to Okaloosa County. That came to fruition when he got a call from Okaloosa County Sheriff Larry Ashley, who had his eye on Aden as his successor, in 2010. He worked as a captain and a major, then as a major in a different sphere of activity so he could learn administration. "Those were all the things I wanted to know, but didn't have in my tool chest," he said.

In the spring of 2019, he finally got a taste of federal law enforcement at the 10-week FBI academy course. Then Aden was elected sheriff unopposed in 2020, succeeding the retiring Ashley. He recently completed his first year in office. "It was hard to improve" the sheriff's



Sheriff Eric Aden, left, and Deputy Tim Patterson bond with the Sheriff's Office's new bloodhound. Patterson will be the dog's handler.

office, he said, because Ashley had done an exemplary job. One thing Aden did was treat his sub-

ordinates as important members of the Sheriff's Office family.

"I take a lot of input from my employees," he said. "That helps the troops buy in." Recently, for example, he surveyed the deputies regarding their choices for a new paint scheme on their cruisers. "I'm not the one driving them," he said. "They are."

The degree of success Aden has had in applying his vision surprised him. "I had set goals for myself," he said. "The agency was able to implement all of them. I was shocked." Among his goals was boosting the ICAC – Internet Crimes Against Children – task force. Deputies arrested 22 people in a sting. "If those people see that, it scares them into their corner," Aden said.

In 2021, the Sheriff's Office solved five cold cases, one for sexual battery and four for homicides, bringing justice to the victim and the loved ones.

Recruitment is a constant need for the generally understaffed Sheriff's Office. To that end, Aden instituted a cadet program – 10 weeks of paid train-

ing, followed by hiring. He tells of one potential recruit who said he would love to join the administration but couldn't afford it. Aden asked how much the man made and he said \$32,000 a year. "I said, 'I'll pay you \$38,000 a year and pay your tuition.'" The sheriff is hoping to recruit more minority deputies as well.

Aden has stepped up training with a program using a huge flat screen and scenarios in which a deputy may have to come to an immediate decision. A tabletop program features four high-energy scenarios: a condominium collapse; a George Floyd situation; a bomb and a river rescue. Aden hopes to recruit some other agencies to take part in the near future.

As part of the Sheriff's Office's community outreach, Aden set up a citizen advisory board, composed of members from a wide variety of neighborhoods, occupations and lifestyles. "They tell us how we're doing and tell us when they have a problem," he said.

And the Sheriff's Office recently obtained a bloodhound puppy. It has other dogs, but Aden said they have eclectic responsibilities and, therefore, are jacks of all trades and masters of none. A bloodhound, though, has one main job and concentrates fully on it. The new puppy was a gift from the Santa Rosa County Sheriff's Office, whose own bloodhound had a litter. Currently, the employees are being surveyed for a name for the new addition.

One year in, Aden's administration has been a rousing success, but he's quick to pass the credit to others. "All I did was put out my vision," he said. "It was our people who made it happen. We are a family here." And he has not been without support from a variety of areas. "I just continue to thank the public and the leaders in the county for their support. We're only as good as our community."



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TO READ THIS ISSUE ONLINE

Meet Our Hometown Hero

Julie Porterfield Wants To End Child Abuse

BY KENNETH BOOKS

Julie Porterfield loves children. Because of that, when she was offered the chance to be Chief Executive Officer of the planned Children's Advocacy Center 23 years ago, she jumped at the opportunity.

"I worked at the state attorney's office," she said. "I started as a receptionist and went to night school to get my bachelor's and master's degrees," studying legal administration and public administration.

It was there that she got the chance to build the CAC.

"It came out of the state attorney's office," she said. The impetus was a severe child abuse case.

The goal was to put all services helping abused children under one roof.

"I started researching grants and organizing," Julie said. "After a year, I was asked to be executive director. It seemed like a good fit. I absolutely love kids."

The CAC officially opened in

October 2000 with Julie at the helm. "We started with three employees," she said. "Now we have 23." In addition, the center has a regular roster of volunteers. But the children it serves could use more. "The center is always in need of volunteers," Julie said. "There are lots of opportunities."

A second facility, called the Pierce Family Children's Advocacy Center, opened in DeFuniak Springs in spring 2017.

The CAC has a budget of about \$2 million, Julie said, up from its original budget of about \$180,000. The money comes from grants, state funding and 60 percent from the community. "We live in a very kind, generous community," she said.

The need is great. Each year, the CAC helps between 700 and 800 children. But, Julie said,



that's probably just the tip of the iceberg.

"We only see reported cas-

es of abuse," she said. "I think there's about two thirds more out there."

In 2017, Julie said, the CAC added prevention efforts to its repertoire. A program called Child Safety Matters was begun in local schools, educating about 10,000 youngsters in 2021 from kindergarten through 12th grade. This has led to more disclosures from children about their circumstances. "They didn't know who to tell," Julie said.

"We focus on the more egregious cases," Julie said, such as sexual abuse and physical abuse. "There are a lot of online predators," she said. "With social media, it's just rampant." And the incidence of crimes

against children rose during the pandemic, as schools were no longer open.

Some cases stand out due to their gruesome nature.

"Probably the worst was a girl with 90 percent of her body battered, burned and abused," Julie said. "There was a lot of evil in that case. There was no rational reason." The perpetrators, two women who were not the girl's caretakers, received 20 and 15 years in prison, respectively, sentences Julie believes were too lenient. But the good news is, the girl was adopted and is a successful adult today.

"For me, I'm doing God's work," Julie said. "What has kept me here is you see a lot of good. If something bad is going to happen to kids, we're here."

But, she adds, "It would be great to hang a 'Closed for Business' sign. Our mission is to end child abuse."

To learn more about the Children's Advocacy Center, including its ongoing need for volunteers, check the website at ECCAC.org.

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 Community

What Does it Mean to "Age-In" to Medicare?



BY GREG DURETTE, FLORIDA HEALTH CONNECTOR

As many times as I have said the term "age-in" to folks when discussing Medicare, it has never failed to elicit a visceral response like, "What do you mean with this age-in thing?!" or "I don't feel aged-in!"

The fact of the matter is, aging-in, meaning you are turning 65 soon, is a good thing. There are many we all know that didn't make it to that milestone.

Yes, we are in the middle of the Open Enrollment Period which runs from January 1 – March 31 of every year pre-dominantly for Advantage Plan members (You can re-read my article from last month for more information about the ins and outs of that.), that does not change the fact many people have birthdays all year long and are actually aging-in during this time as well.

What generally happens is, folks get confused between what they see on TV with all the pitches about "time running out" and, what they can actually do during the aging-in period. So, let me attempt to de-mystify it a little here.

There is a period of time when a person ages-in and becomes eligible for Medicare. Typically, this period of time is three months before the month in which they turn 65 and

three months after the month in which they turn 65. Do the math and you will see this is a 7-month period of time around your birthday. There are a few other exceptions to this eligibility period but, those will have to be saved for another article.

The first order of business is to obtain your Part A and B (if desired or needed) through Social Security. Without adding a litany of boring details as to qualifications for each, suffice it to say Part A is typically \$0 premium for most folks and Part B for 2022 will typically cost \$170.10 per month. The Part B premium is means tested can get a little complicated...certainly more complicated than can be described in this article. Again, suffice it to say, some could pay much more or much less, depending on your income.

If you wish to avoid LIFE-LONG penalties, you will have

to have Part B and Part D (prescription coverage) in place at the time of first becoming eligible. As a reminder, eligibilities are one of those things unique to each person's circumstances. So, it is important to know how these things apply to you.

If you choose to obtain a Supplement, commonly called a "Medi-Gap" policy, you will need to also obtain a separate Part D prescription plan as the Supplements DO NOT INCLUDE such. If you choose to obtain an Advantage plan, the Part D prescription coverage is typically INCLUDED.

As you can see, this can and usually is a very confusing time for most folks used to have traditional insurance for their whole lives. Suddenly, you are thrust into this new system and everybody and their cousin is calling and/or mailing you every single day with their "better option."

Your best option is the one that suits you best. Maybe it is a great price. Maybe it is a great network of providers. Maybe it is just the peace of mind in knowing you have someone you can rely upon for information when you need it.

If there is only one take away you can have from this article, it would be to work with someone that can help you navigate the local landscape and help you completely understand this otherwise very confusing time in life.

Happy New Year!

Greg Durette is a qualified, licensed agent with Florida Health Connector providing Medicare throughout the state and is based in Niceville. He has been in the insurance industry for over 38 years and can be reached at his office at (850) 842-2400 or his mobile at (978) 509-2941.

SINFONIA

continued from page 2

excitement and pride I see in my student's faces is priceless to me, because in many cases, this will be the only time they will ever be exposed to music in this way and it will forever leave a lasting impression whether they choose

to continue their music education or not", said Aaron.

This year is Sinfonia Gulf Coast's 16th season, and with the limitless opportunity to reach new students and patrons alike, it's fair to say that Sinfonia is still in the prelude of the organization's history. If there is one thing Northwest Floridians

are adept at, it's embodying the local vibe and fervently supporting local businesses. Music is a universal language, so come and immerse yourself in one of Sinfonia Gulf Coast's offerings this season. Your support is instrumental to its success!

Beth Clavier is the director of events and patron services for Sinfonia Gulf Coast.



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Fun Facts and the Lighter Side of Insurance...



BY JOE CAPERS,
INSURANCE ZONE

By Joe Capers

Last month, we updated everyone on the changing insurance marketplace in Florida, and the fact that the hard market (increase in premiums and tighter carrier guidelines) will continue for at least another year. I do not anticipate any improvement until well into 2023.

Knowing that insurance can be boring, and currently very stressful, we are going to have fun with some insurance facts. Granted, it's not the most exciting subject on earth. However, as we all know, it's necessary in our lives when we need a safe-

ty net underneath to protect the things that matter to us the most.

Let's have a bit of fun and take a look at some interesting and intriguing insurance facts that you might not be aware of.

Golf insurance protects you when you win! In some cultures, it is required so anyone who scores a hole in one can use this policy to help buy drinks for everyone.

If you refill a wine glass before it's empty, it still counts as one glass...

US insurance policies often vary from state to state. Although there are similarities in laws and rules, they may vary a lot in the U.S.

Fire departments revolve around insurance. The very concept of a fire department has ties to insurance. In the beginning they were established to put out fires for specific households and policyholders.

Gender gap is tightening in the insurance industry. Current studies still show that the majority of people work-

ing in the industry are women, about 60-40 divide.

9/11 resulted in huge payouts. The World Trade Center disaster in 2001 resulted in payouts up to \$40 billion from life and property claims.

The meaning of insurance has changed enormously. Insurance used to refer to being engaged to wed someone. The term has evolved to now mean 'assurance'.

GPS once had conflicts with insurance. Those that engineered GPS and satellite navigation thought that insurance would not cover those who drove with navigation systems guiding their way. It was never patented as such.

Some companies make serious returns on insurance. Some companies like Sony are believed to make more money off its insurance division than from selling its products and services.

Mental health is not always protected by insurance. Many U.S. health insurance companies do not cover mental health issues for their policyholders. They are required to cover in some states.

Can you obtain alien abduction coverage? The policy would pay should you be abducted by aliens and the UFO Abduction Insurance Company

states that they have paid out!?!)

Life insurance can skyrocket for celebrities. The most influential people have obtained some high limits life insurance policies, and Steven Spielberg is reported to have a policy over \$1 billion. Betty Grable insured her legs for \$1 million and Bruce Springsteen insured his voice for \$5.7 million.

Starbucks pays substantially for life and health insurance. They pay more to cover their staff than they pay for their actual coffee. It is believed that they pay staff more than \$300 million.

Insurance has been around for centuries. The first contract was signed back in the 14th Century or earlier. Traders in China insured their boats in case of loss at sea or theft.

Ben Franklin founded the first Insurance Company in the United States in 1751. The Philadelphia Contributorship for the Insurance Houses from Loss by Fire still exist today.

Body part insurance is a big deal. Famous people, actors and singers often purchase body part or body insurance.

Your insurance score can significantly influence your insurance costs. All compa-

nies today utilize 'credit-based insurance scores' that will influence the premiums quoted.

Home insurance policies often exclude animal liability and certain dog breeds. Over 4 million people are bitten by dogs each year so if you have a pet this coverage is very important.

Car insurance for male teenagers is surprisingly expensive. Statistics show that 16-year-olds have twice as many accidents as 18-19 year olds.

Which of the facts below did you already know and which ones are new to you? Let us know! We would love to hear of any odd and bizarre insurance facts you might have! Send your comment to info@ins-zone.com or post them on our Facebook wall.

Insurance Zone, founded by Joe and Lea Capers, is a full service commercial and personal lines insurance agency serving Destin, Miramar Beach, Santa Rosa Beach (30A) and Inlet Beach. Visit their interactive website at www.ins-zone.com and click on our Video Library to watch several informative videos to enhance your Personal and Business Insurance Programs, or simply call 850.424.6979 and talk with an IZ Team Member.

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CBA and Community Preserving Waterways through Fishing Line Recycling

The Emerald Coast is home to some of the most diverse and dynamic ecosystems in the world, so abundant with marine life that it is no surprise that it attracts anglers from all over. Our waters, stretching from rivers to the Gulf, host some of the best fishing on the planet. However, this area and many other coastal towns are experiencing a common trend, tangles of forgotten fishing line harming local wildlife and humans. You can help prevent this by recycling your fishing line with Choctawhatchee Basin Alliance's (CBA), monofilament recycling program.

Monofilament — or simply fishing line — is made of a single plastic strand, designed to hold tension and stay strong in harsh saltwater conditions. First introduced in the 1950's, this type of tackle is the most common and effective line for catching fish from bluegill to blue marlin. Monofilament is designed to be strong, invisible,



and not break down in saltwater. Unfortunately, monofilament's strength and durability becomes dangerous when the line is improperly discarded.

When line is lost or littered into the water, it can become an invisible, free-floating entanglement hazard that can last upwards of 600 years. Just think of it—600 years ago, Leonardo DaVinci painted the Mona Lisa! These bunches of littered fishing line are dangerous and

deadly to marine life such as turtles, dolphins, fish, birds, sharks, manatees and even scuba divers and beachgoers. When an animal becomes entangled in this strong and virtually invisible hazardous plastic, it becomes trapped and unable to move, hunt, or even breathe in many instances.

Fishing is part of our culture and history here in the Florida Panhandle; historically, the area has been one the largest Red

Snapper fishery in the world! Moving into the future, as we expand the numbers of people fishing our waters, it is equally important that we as a community deploy responsible practices for discarding old tackle. The Choctawhatchee Basin Alliance (CBA) has led the way by setting up monofilament recycling stations all along the Bay. You may have seen one of these PVC tubes, beautifully painted by local artists, along the Destin

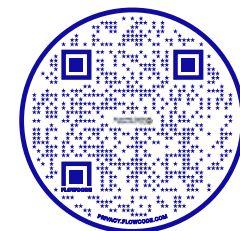
Harbor or the Okaloosa Island Pier. CBA will be hosting new sites on the Choctawhatchee River, as well as new shore-fishing recycle bins on the Gulf. CBA takes this plastic line from the monofilament recycling program stations, cleans and collects it, and sends it to be recycled into fishing tackle. Anyone in the community can be a part of this "responsible fishing movement." Simply by recycling undesired fishing lines, you can make a lasting impact on our waterways and greatly reduce the number of entanglements of humans and wildlife. To learn more about Choctawhatchee Basin Alliance and programs that benefit our waterways, visit basinalliance.org. If you would like to volunteer to collect fishing line for recycling, email Brennan Wehrhahn at wehrhahb@nwfsc.edu.



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Interior Design Trends for 2022



BY KIM SCHNEIDER,
COASTAL DESIGN BY KIM

Every year, we have a wave of new interior design trends that hit the market. Some make a huge impact and hang around for years and others fade into the sunset as quickly as they arrived. I must confess, I'm not a huge follower of trends or rules (shhh, don't tell my grandkids),

but you can never go wrong when you add a little modern flair while welcoming Mother Nature indoors.

That being said, I've taken the liberty to explore the items I think would be most applicable to our beautiful Emerald Coast area:

Vintage/Reclaimed Materials – Yes, we're still experiencing supply chain shortages that will likely continue for a while. One-of-a-kind finds are being found at antique marts, second-hand stores and estate sales. Think about reupholstering chairs, painting or re-staining furniture in an earthy color, not to mention you are "upcycling" which is environmentally friendly.

Green – If your first thought was plants, wall color or furniture, the answer is yes to all of them. Plants are not only aesthetically pleasing, but they also help purify the air, too. Several of the top paint manufacturers have named various shades of "green" as the "Color of the Year" for 2022. Selecting the right shade of green can add playful accents in the kitchen to fully painted walls in the living room. You'll also see more use of wallpaper and fabrics in green tones. Yes, wallpaper is back and the larger the pattern the better! As far as furniture goes, think about repainting a traditional piece or recover an existing chair for a pop or subtle nod in any room.

Organic and Shape – Expect to see more furniture with rounded or curved edges, upholstered in organic prints. If a printed sofa is too risky for you, you can always use those prints on throw pillows or chairs. Printed fabric will create interest in any room. Bamboo and Cork flooring options are being highly sought after, too. These flooring materials are sustainable and provide a soft and natural look. Cork is ideal for any room in your home, since it's waterproof and resistant to mold and mildew.

Lamps – Back in the 70's, lamps made a statement. That trend is front and center again in 2022. You can expect to see more table lamps with sculptural shapes, lots of texture and even colored glass making them pieces of artwork in your room. Vintage and antique lamps like these are considered gems. Grab one (if you can find it) and add a fresh new shade for a modern twist. You'll also start noticing



LESLIE MAY DESIGNS

printed lamp shades making a comeback, too. If you love your existing lamps, you can update them by adding a printed shade. Lamps add light to your favorite reading area, make a style statement and are most often the finishing touch in your space.

Windows – This is not as simple as some of the other trends, but larger windows are a hot ticket item and not just in the kitchen and living room. Larger windows are being installed in some unexpected rooms, like a bathroom. Skylights are also trending and they're better than ever. They can be installed with

screens, remote controls and motorized shades. You can never go wrong with natural light, unless you're installing a home theatre.

Trends come and go. There are no rules. However, whatever trend you choose to follow, make sure you will be comfortable in your home. If all of this talk about style, décor and color trends has your head spinning, Coastal Design by Kim is here to help. Contact us at (850) 904-6622 or email us at kim@coastaldesignbykim.com to discuss how we can assist YOU.

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Award-Winning Ale Features Rescue Dogs

Destin Brewery collaborated with Dog-Harmony to feature long-term shelter dogs on the label of the Dog-Harmony Ale launched in November 2021. “The goal of the beer is to raise

awareness for long-time shelter dog cases so that they can get adopted by their forever families,” says Dog-Harmony founder, Nancy Brown. “Once that dog is adopted, we will feature the next long-time rescue dog resident from an animal shelter in the Panhandle.”

The first dog to grace the label is Koda, a brindle, 18-month-old American bulldog residing at Dog-Harmony since November 2020. His previous rescuer went into hospice care, at which point Brown moved him to Dog-Harmony and began basic, then advanced, obedience training. Koda is friendly with other dogs and cats. He is seeking an active family familiar with large breeds and rescues. His favorite game is to play tug-of-war with his furry friends.

Destin Brewery’s Dog-Harmony Ale is a German Kölsch-style ale. Owners, Chelsea and Kelly Taylor, say they “developed this recipe because we wanted to make a flavorful ale, but also make it light and crisp like a lager. It is a very easy drinker that pairs well with our culinary region favoring seafood dishes.” The ale won Platinum in the World Beverage Competition and Bronze in the New York International Beer Competition in 2019. It also won Bronze in the New York International Beer Competition in 2021. The Taylors “are very proud of this brew!”

To be considered for adoption of Koda, please submit an application form at [https://dog-har-](https://dog-harmony.org/adoption)



mony.org/adoption. To order the beer wholesale, contact Kristi Ray at Vintage Distributors (kristi@vintagedistributorsllc.com). Otherwise, pop in to the dog-friendly Destin Brewery tap room or any BÖTE location to buy the award-winning Dog-Harmony Ale. A portion of the proceeds directly supports Dog-Harmony’s humane education programs and, of course, increases the chances of Koda finding his furever home.

Dog-Harmony’s “Love And Football”

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BY LES AND GINA PAYTON,
FPEA REGION ONE
REPRESENTATIVES

Every person's educational journey is unique. Every child is different. Every person is fearfully and wonderfully made. When it comes to your child's education, leave no stone unturned. We began home education 20 years ago, when our oldest turned two. The Marine Corps moved us to six different states and the District of Columbia. I left the Marine Corps at the end of my service, and stayed home with our first born. Since then, we've added three more children and they've all been home educated.

During the last two years, many parents have realized the benefits of home educating their children. With concerns about kids' health and wellness, many parents have turned to bringing their children home. Some of the benefits include extra family time and remarkable progress tailoring their work to their child's individual learning style. Building good character in our kids at a young age will help them to be disciplined young learners with everything we ask

our kids to do in our home. We must teach them to prioritize time management and establish discipline because, honestly, aren't we all still learning every day?

The new challenge in home education, compared to when we began 20 years ago, is the abundance of resources. There is so much to choose from for every type of learner. By joining local support groups, parents and children can also stay informed of regional events and field trips.

As regional representatives of our state organization, the Florida Parent Educators Association (FPEA), we volunteer to keep families informed about homeschool legislation, current laws and building community. One way we recommend families do this is by joining a support group. You can email the local Destin support group at panhandleche@gmail.com.

FPEA puts on many family field trips throughout the year such as trips to Key West and the Space Coast. Families can join us on February 19 for Homeschooling 101 and a Highschool Homeschool Seminar (<https://fpea.com/events/6216/yes-you-can-home-educate-florida-style>). For questions about this event, write to regionalrep1@fpea.com.

FPEA also holds one of the nation's best conventions at the end of May every year in Orlando. This year's theme is "Gather" and will be held at the Rosen Shingle Resort. All the details can be found at www.fpea.com or contact us, regionalrep1@fpea.com, so we can answer your questions before you register.

New homeschoolers or homes with growing families have so much to choose from! There are child-led studies, unit studies, as well as robust and complete curriculums. We educate our kids from a biblical perspective, which helps us to hone in on particular curriculums. No matter whether you choose to home educate your kids for faith-based, academic or physical health and wellness choices, visiting a homeschool convention will help you and your child appreciate how large the homeschool movement has grown and you'll know you're not alone.

It's been during the last two years only that my husband and I have felt able to dive in as volunteers. Our oldest joined the Marine Corps at 17, four years ago, and is now at the United States Naval Academy. Our oldest daughter is 19 and a sophomore in Industrial Engineering at Liberty University. With 16- and 10-year-olds still in the

home, we continue our homeschool adventure in this beautiful area. We have finally been able to live where we want after husband Les has been in uniform for 27 years. With FPEA we have found a community, found a support group and can enjoy the many field trips to include traveling to the yearly convention in Orlando.

Whether you are new to homeschooling or are a veteran homeschooler, everyone questions

their ability to homeschool successfully. Each home can define what success looks like for their own children. Each person's educational journey is unique. Every child is different. Each person is fearfully and wonderfully made. When it comes to your child's education, leave no stone unturned. In order to get started now, send in your letter of intent to your local district superintendent's office.

RESCUE DOGS

continued from previous page

Creative and Most Enthusiastic. Dog-Harmony Ale from Destin Brewery will be available and JC's Gourmet will be serving Somethin' Snappy smoked snapper dip, Poppin' Pimento cheese and Jommin' Jalapeños candied jalapeño garnish.

Proceeds benefit Dog-Harmony, a nonprofit 501(c)(3) dedicated to reducing the shelter dog population through humane education. Founded by Nancy Bown, a Certified Professional Dog Trainer - Knowledge Assessed (CPDT-KA), Dog-Harmony works to build positive relationships between canines and humans, preventing dogs from becoming homeless in the first place. Programs include fun classes for children to learn responsible pet care, compassion and bite prevention; low-cost dog training; and educational symposiums with dog behavior experts.

For more information, contact Dog-Harmony Founder Nancy Brown, hello@dog-harmony.org, (850) 376-4190.



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 Travel

Sailing Into 2022 and Beyond



TRAVELIN' with JoDell

By JODELL HAVERFIELD,
HAVE TRAVEL MEMORIES

Building back the Cruise Industry was the main theme of the Maritime Group for Informa Markets president as he kicked off the State of the Industry address at the 35th edition of Seatrade Cruise Global, and that was the underlying theme throughout the keynote address. Pierfrancesco Vaga, Clia (Cruise Line International Association) chair and executive chairman of MSC Cruises noted, "With the dark days of this pandemic behind us, the cruise

industry has emerged as one of the safest styles of vacations," adding that the "future is bright for all of us." The president and CEO of Clia noted, "Our abilities to adapt to any situation and unite and collaborate across an entire cruise community is the key to our accomplishments so far."

The clear message here is that the cruise industry has stood together as a whole; they say it is an even better cruise industry. It is planned that 220 ocean-going ships will be back in service with cruising having resumed in 30 countries around the world. Richard Fain, chairman and CEO of Royal Caribbean, mentioned "We have a history of working together for the common goal." When it comes to new brands entering the cruise industry, there's plenty of space for new players.

It's surprising, but a lot of first-time cruisers are sailing the Covid seas. There are half a billion vacationers out there, and we are a just a tiny industry with only 30 million passen-

gers a year pre-covid. There is plenty of room for us to grow and cruising has a very bright future. It wasn't until the golden era of steamship travel (1927-1978) when the idea of cruising for pleasure and not just a means of transportation to get from one side of the ocean to the other even became somewhat popular. However, it was generally the wealthy who could afford it. As passenger air travel increased, cruising became even more leisure bound. However, it was still not widely used and cost effective especially for family travel. By the late 90's, only 10 million passengers cruised, while 33 million people went to Vegas each year.

So, why is it an even better cruise industry post Covid? Well, besides everything being squeaky clean, travel insurance and cancellation policies have been improved. Onboard medical facilities have been expanded to include better equipment, more staff and emergency care. There's faster embarkation procedures and, best of all, the in-your-stateroom-digital-Munster drill. In fact, you can take care of most everything right from your stateroom and/or the app on your phone, minimizing personal contact and those dreaded lines at Guest Services.

Speaking of the app, you can



also easily communicate with your travel companions on your cell phone and even access your stateroom. I know many are lamenting the end of the self-serve buffet and 24-hr. soft serve ice cream, but I think they will return. The good news is if you hated the buffet, you got your wish. The buffet is still there, just without the self-service. Cruise lines have always been concerned about the health of their passengers with all their "washy washy" routines, but now they have superior sanitation procedures and air ventilation.

North American cruising been the market leader of the world with Germany as the second highest prior to 2020. Even with Covid restrictions, the U.S. is still the market leader. There is a record number of 30 new cruise ships in 2020 with 5.8 million cruise passengers and 3 million of them from North America. And so, with Vago's

words in mind, the cruise industry sails into 2022 and beyond with an array of new offerings for clients hungry to cruise the globe, and that pent-up demand is palpable. There is a cruise for every budget.

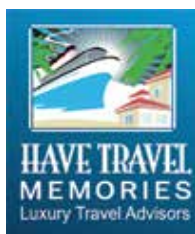
I will be part of the record-breaking numbers cruising this year. My first cruise in 2022 will be as soon as the end of February when my husband and I are sailing from San Juan to those beautiful U.S. Virgin Islands of St Thomas, St Lucia, St Croix, St Kitts, as well as Barbados. We have visited these Islands several times, even with our other children, but not with this son and his wife. Each time I have the opportunity to share the world with my friends and family is such a blessing to me. The memories will be passed down for generations.

I still have space on our all-inclusive Panama Tour March 24. Join me on this once in a lifetime exclusive chartered River Cruise tour from Budapest to Munich including hotels and the Oberammergau Passion Play May 20. On September 18, we will be hosting a Pioneer Woman and Magnolia Market Tour from Destin. October 10 will be our hosted repositioning Alaska cruise from Vancouver to Los Angeles with \$250 per cabin Deposit and reduced air from most U.S. cities.

Special Notice: Don't miss the announcement of our first hosted TRAIN TOUR coming soon.

Book space now for our next all-inclusive hosted tour to Israel March 7, 2023. This is our #1 tour and sells out quickly. Watch for our Israel podcasts throughout this year.

For more information on our cruises, tours, podcasts and webinars, visit havetravelmemories.com and follow us on FB and You Tube. We look forward to you next memorable trip!



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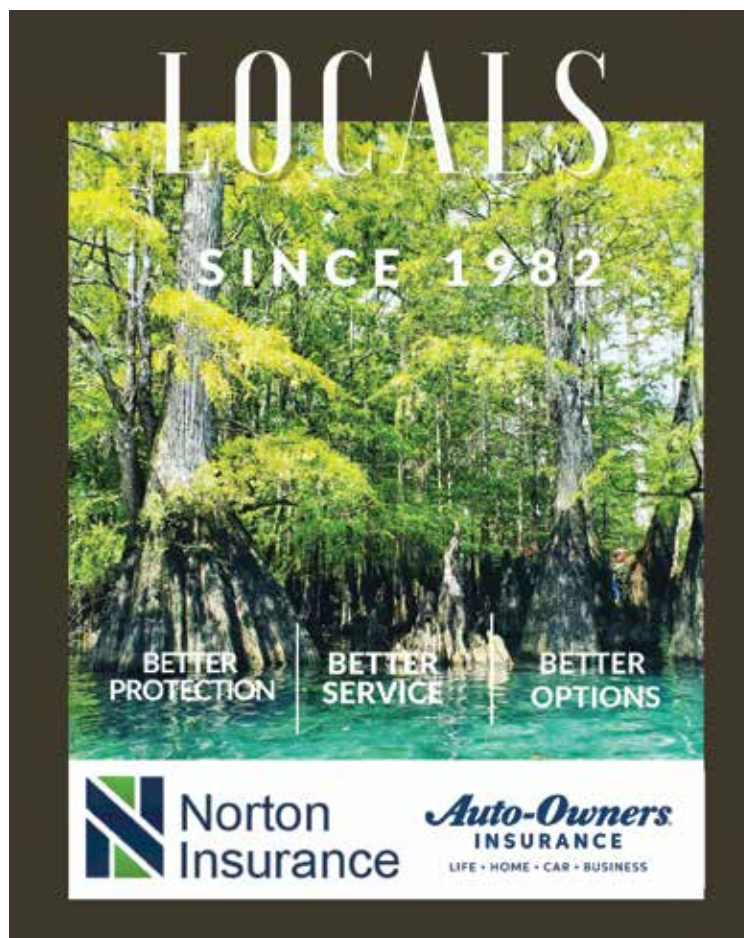
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AJ's Seafood & Oyster Bar

Home of the World Famous Jumbotron! You don't want to miss out on experiencing the 2022 season AJ's style. AJ's Seafood & Oyster Bar is featuring the best sports all year long on the one and only Jumbotron, right here on the Harbor in Destin. Be sure to enjoy an adult beverage or two with AJ's branded vodka or savor the flavor of local beers brewed exclusively for AJ's by Props Craft Brewery. Serving up delicious daily specials and entertaining live music all week long, AJ's Seafood & Oyster Bar is where you want to be. Super Bowl Sunday is Feb. 13. Come watch the biggest game of the year on the biggest screen in town! Join Sunday Feb. 20 for AJ's Mardi Gras Brunch from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. And don't miss the party of the year, AJ's Mardi Gras Celebration on Sat. Feb. 26 from 12 p.m. until?

(850) 837-1913
116 Harbor Blvd., Destin
ajstestin.com

Austons on 98

Offering a raw bar, happy hour and live music, Austons is home of the 102-foot bar including 32 beers on draft. Some of the specialties include little neck clams, freshly shucked raw oysters, New England style clam chowder and jumbo shrimp cocktail! Football fans, Austons is ready for you on Super Bowl Sunday, Feb. 13. There are big screen TVs all around, so not a bad seat in the house. Enjoy Football Specials including \$5 Pints, \$16 Buckets and more. Austons on 98, of Nashville roots, open 7 days from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m., also features its very own "Real Deal Nashville Hot Sauce!" And don't miss the endless Mimosa and Bloody

Mary Brunch featuring amazing chicken and waffles every Saturday and Sunday from 11 a.m. – 3 p.m. with live music every Wednesday and Friday night. Check out more specials, beer selections and a full menu at austonson98.com.

(850) 842-3200
125 Poinciana Blvd.,
Miramar Beach
Austonson98.com

Boathouse Oyster Bar

Destin's best kept secret—it's where the locals go with live music every night! Located in the heart of Destin on the Destin Harbor, the Boathouse specializes in making oysters a delicacy. Boathouse's Gumbo recipe was written by Mama Gumbo herself. And, of course, the oysters are raw, steamed or baked just

the way you like 'em! The first Friday of every month the Boathouse hosts locals on the Destin Harbor from 5 p.m. – 7 p.m. Who wants a free keg? Bring a donation for the Emerald Coast Foundation to qualify for entry. Listen and move with live entertainment daily. See ad for bands and times. Music schedule subject to change. Follow on Facebook for updates! Enjoy...

(850) 837-3645
288-B Harbor Blvd., Destin
Boathouseoysterbardestin.com

Bric a` Brac Restaurant & Night Club

Now celebrating seven amazing years in the Destin community, colorful, eclectic fun is to be had at Bric a` Brac! They 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. Enjoy delicious locally-approved entrées while you listen to some lively tunes, dance or sing along. There's something for everyone! Latin Night Fridays & Saturdays 11 p.m. – 4 a.m. – Music and Dancing upstairs/downstairs.

18+ to enter, 21+ to drink. GUYS \$10, LADIES \$5.

Thursday: Live Music from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Friday: Jones & Co from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m.

Saturday: Live Music from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m.

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

Café Destin

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

Continued on next page



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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.
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(850) 215-3030



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(850)842-3190**

**10859 EMERALD COAST PKWY.,
MIRAMAR BEACH
(850) 842-2807**

Follow us on Social Media



DESTIN DINING

continued from previous page

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 7 a.m.-2 p.m. 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, lun-

cheons 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!

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

Fatboys - Destin

Are you craving a delicious burger or some tasty wings and an ice cold beer? Maybe all of the above? But the game is on and you won't miss even a single play. FATBOYS has you covered. Fully staffed and ready to serve you, the obvious choice is easy to see and that's just how they want it. Yes, indeed y'all, Game Day and FATBOYS go hand in hand. So, hustle on down to some of the best, most delicious gameday football watching food the world has ever known. Be sure to enjoy a tall glass of FATBOYS Lager too, a true joy to your taste buds that will perfectly compliment anything on the menu. Oh, and bring the crew with you, too. There's always a great seat waiting just for you! Their newest location in Miramar Beach is now open so stop by and say hello. Visit Fatboys' Facebook page for exciting up-

dates. Happy Hour from 3-6 every Monday through Friday, enjoy 1/2 price draft and bottle beer. Super Bowl Sunday—1/2 price beer while the game is on. Wednesdays Kids eat free!

(850) 842-3190
104 Harbor Blvd. Destin
(850) 842-2807
10859 Emerald Coast Pkwy.
Miramar Beach
Ilovefatboys.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 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, because College and Pro Football is back and the 2021 season is underway. With a fully stocked bar serving up 95 different bourbons and 30 beers on draft,

it's no secret why the locals love Landshark's Pizza Company.

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

Mi Gente' Supermarket & Taqueria

Open for lunch and dinner 7 days a week, Mi Gente' is one of Destin's hottest dining spots for the whole family and friends to enjoy. Enjoy Happy Hour from 5 p.m.-7 p.m. for 2 for 1 House Margaritas and 2 for 1 draft beer. With fresh ingredients and homemade 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 dishes on the menu such as rich and flavorful! Quesa-Birria Tacos topped with fresh diced onion, cilantro and a squeeze of lime juice served with the broth on the side to dip your tacos! Take

Continued on next page

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Mi Gente'
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DESTIN DINING

continued from previous page

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. Get your fresh Tamales here! Open 7 days, 9 a.m.-9 p.m. daily. Menudo Domingo de Menu-do Sundays!

(850) 842-2992

733 Harbor Blvd., Destin

migenterestaurantandcantina.com

Oasis

It's time to find your way to the Oasis! Not your ordinary fare, the new Oasis restaurant highlights the delicious diversity and abundance of gourmet, plant-based comfort food. Menu items include overstuffed sandwiches, cheesy buffalo spinach dip, loaded burgers and a Chocolate Espresso Martini for dessert. You're not missing a thing with this new kind of dining experience. The breakfast burger is a BIG hit with us locals. It's a perfectly seasoned, plant-based burger topped with an egg patty, leaf lettuce, tomato, avocado. A dinner specialty is shepherd's pie with garlic butter toast and roasted Brussels sprouts. And don't forget the Burnt Chocolate Cream for dessert! With a daily rotating menu, other recommended items include Berry Spinach and Mixed Greens Goat Cheese, Buffalo Tender Wrap, Fried Oyster Mushroom Gyro or Kefta Kabob Gyro (personal favorite), Mediterranean Bowl, eggplant lasagna, lentil meatless loaf and Trumpet Scallops Over Angel Hair Pasta—some familiar 100% vegan dishes; some not. Open Tuesday to Friday-Lunch: 11 a.m.-3:30 p.m.; Dinner 5 to 10 p.m. Saturdays 5-10 p.m.; Sunday Brunch 11 a.m.-3 p.m. Stay. Chill. Relax.

(850) 401-9149

306 Bald Eagle Dr.

theOasisSRB.com or

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DAILY CRUISES: Introducing Tailfins Island Adventure. Departures 7 Days a Week aboard "Always Workin," Tailfins' Brand New 45-foot long cruiser. Enjoy the Destin Harbor & Crab Island like never before; Choose between The World Famous 3-Hour Tour, Sunset Cruise or Thursday night's Spectacular Fireworks Cruise. Book online at tailfinsislandadventure.com

(850) 842-3333

On the Harbor in Destin,

172 Harbor Blvd.

tailfinsdestin.com

Tequila's Sports Bar & Grill

EAT, DRINK, FIESTA!! Tequila's knows what that means here in Destin and is ready for you on Game Day or any day. Ready to shake it up a little? And we mean 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 PARRILLADA—a

unique fusion of sports bar food and delightful Mexican dishes. Celebrate Taco Tuesdays with 2-4-1 Margaritas! 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.

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Facebook: www.facebook.com/BoathouseOysterBar
www.boathouseoysterbardestin.com

Sinfonia Presents Crescendo! Feb. 25-27th

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 25-27, 2022.

Festivities begin on Thursday, January 27 at 11:00 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, door prizes and raffle items, plus much more. Tickets are \$125 per person and include lunch, wine and gratuities.

On Friday, Feb. 25 at 6:00

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 include Darioush, Fleury Estate, Oakville Ranch, Bouchaine plus more. Chefs include Jude Tausin, Executive Chef of Tony Chachere and Jack McGuckin of Bijoux Restaurant + Spirits, with the full culinary lineup announced soon. Vintner Dinner tickets are \$350 per person and include all food, wine and gratuities.

This year's main event is themed, "Carnivale" and is set for Sunday, Feb. 27 at 11:30 a.m. at the Hilton Sandestin Beach Golf Resort & Spa in Miramar Beach. This energy-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! 2022 are \$175 per person and include all food, wine, reserved table seating, performance and valet parking. Tables of up to 10 guests may 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 concerts, bus transportation for students, Sinfonia Youth Orchestra program, Arts in Medicine initiative with Sacred Heart Hospital and LINK UP concerts for third through fifth graders in partnership with Carnegie Hall.

Tickets for Crescendo! 2022 are now on sale. For more information or to purchase tickets for Sinfonia Gulf Coast's Crescendo! events, visit www.sinfoniagulfcoast.org or call (850) 460-8800.



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Austons

on 98

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3-6 pm Daily

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HOF Braves Pitcher Tom Glavine to Speak at 2022 ASA Banquet!

BY LORI LEATH SMITH

Each February, many of the area's top high school, collegiate, amateur, professional, Special Olympics athletes, and individuals who have fostered youth activities are honored during the annual All Sports Association's (ASA) Awards Banquet. The ASA is a Northwest Florida non-profit organization whose primary mission is to help raise money for local youth-oriented non-profit organizations with an emphasis on sports programs. The annual awards banquet is used to identify, then recognize and honor some of the finest athletes from Northwest Florida who are contributing to their sports and their community.

The recognized individuals not only excel in their sports, but also are at the top in academics and community involvement.

Synonymous for attracting the likes of NFL and MLB MVPs, Hall of Fame coaches, Super Bowl quarterbacks, award-winning journalists and LPGA major champions, this year is no exception. Herschel Walker, Bo Jackson, Nick Saban, Bobby Bowden, Paul "Bear" Bryant, Tim Tebow and Herm Edwards are just a few former speakers. Now add two-time Cy Young winner and first-ballot Hall-of-Famer Tom Glavine.

Glavine is an American former professional baseball player. A pitcher, Glavine played in



Major League Baseball for the Atlanta Braves (1987–2002, 2008), and New York Mets (2003–2007). With 164 victories during the 1990s, Glavine earned the second-highest number of wins as a pitcher in the National League, second only to teammate Greg Maddux's

176. He was a five-time 20-game winner and two-time Cy Young Award winner, and one of only 24 pitchers (and just 6 left-handers) in major league history to earn 300 career wins. He was the MVP of the 1995 World Series as the Braves beat the Cleveland Indians. On January 8, 2014, he was elected to the Baseball Hall of Fame in his first year of eligibility, receiving 91.9% of the votes cast.

This year, the banquet returns to its roots and will be held at the Emerald Coast Convention Center on Feb. 25 from 6-9 p.m. Other events include the 2022 Buck Smith FCA Breakfast with guest speaker Willie Spears on Feb. 25 at Northwest

Florida State College Arena from 7-9:15, a golf outing and fish fry.

Through the efforts of the annual All-Sports banquet and summer golf tournament, and in addition to supporting our local high school athletic programs, the association helps fund numerous worthwhile sports organizations and charitable causes. The primary beneficiaries are the Boys & Girls Club of the Emerald Coast, Special Olympics Florida- Okaloosa, Eleanor J. Johnson Youth Center and Okaloosa Walton FCA.

For more information, visit allsportsassociation.org.

Prestigious Awards Sweep by Area Student Athletes

BY DOUG STAUFFER

There were smiling faces and cheers everywhere when the Blue Blazer board members of the All Sports Association made their announcements at Niceville High School. The philanthropic association awarded several prestigious awards to three student-athletes and an assistant coach.

The Cornell-bound multi-sport athlete Noah Harman was awarded the Male Scholastic Award based on the merits of his 4.6 GPA and his contributions as captain of both the state championship track and field team and the football team. He also volunteers at the middle school and at his local church.

The Air Force Academy-bound Page Dolloff, another multi-sport athlete, was awarded the Female Scholastic Award. She earned the award based on the merits of her 4.74 GPA. She was the Daily News Female Swimmer of the Year and appeared in the final four for tennis. Page is also involved with several community and church volunteer programs.

The University of Florida-bound Senior Eric Trapp received the faith-based Taylor Haugen Foundation award. As he accepted the award, he quipped, "The Bible is my guidance in life." He serves as the SGA president, carries a 4.3

GPA and is involved in many volunteer programs through his church. The history of this award is both heartwarming and heartbreaking. (See Sept. 2019 Destin Life at MyDestinLife.com.)

Coach Adron Robinson was recognized as the Assistant Coach of the Year. He graduated from Niceville High School and returned to his alma mater contributing to the school in several capacities as a coach and mentor.

All Sports President Carter Zorn mentioned that award winners are chosen using blind résumés, ensuring zero bias in the outcomes.

The Taylor Haugen Foundation nominees are considered based on the character traits of the trophy's namesake, Taylor Reid Haugen. "T" passed away on August, 30, 2008, of abdominal injuries suffered during a football game. The award represents this young man's legacy, whose two passions were "JESUS AND FOOTBALL." His motto was "Don't Quit, Never Give Up."

Eric Trapp received this honor based upon Taylor's similar balance of Academics, Athletics, Leadership, Community Service and Christian Faith.

The trophy portrays an eagle taking flight on a ribbon of air as appropriately inspired by the

last two verses of Isaiah chapter 40. "Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: 31 But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint" (Isaiah 40:30-31).



Niceville High School Principal Charlie Marelo pictured with Eric Trapp, Adron Robinson, Page Dolloff and Noah Harman.

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 Off the Hook

Tugboat To Become Newest Artificial Reef

By JARED WILLIAMS,
GETTHECOAST

Earlier this month, Morgan Marine in Freeport was putting the finishing touches on prepping its tugboat to become the next artificial reef offshore Destin-Fort Walton Beach. The 75 ft. vessel was built back in the 1940s, and was used most recently to do a lot of Marine salvage, pulling a bunch of those derelict vessels that may be around the area. The vessel

also helped sink other artificial reefs offshore. “This vessel actually belonged to Morgan Marine,” said Alex Fogg, Coastal Resource Manager for Okaloosa County. “They were going through the recertification process with the Coast Guard and some of their new rules made this vessel require a lot of retrofits to bring it back into code.”

According to Alex, due to the cost of those retrofits, Morgan Marine decided to donate the

vessel to the county to be deployed as an artificial reef. The county is paying for the cleaning and the deployment cost, but the price of the vessel was free.

This vessel has about 40 feet of relief, and is going to be put in an area called “The Boat Yard.” If that name sounds familiar, it’s because two other deployments have already happened there.

The Dylan, which was deployed back in September 2020, and the Brannon, which was deployed just this past summer. “This taller vessel provides a little bit of relief to the location so that folks can do a dive maybe on the bottom, which is about 119 feet and come up to the top, which will be at about 79-80 feet,” explained Alex. “It makes it a lot easier to dive and allows you to spend a little more time down there.” He added that the extra relief will also provide a great location for people to go fishing. “You’ll have your amberjack swimming around in the column, you’ll have your snappers and your groupers on the bottom,” said Alex. “It really is going to be a good site.”

Because this vessel was actually constructed back in the 40s, it had to go through more screening to make sure that it was okay to go into the environment. Alex said that before the

1980s, there were PCBs and a lot of lead that was used in the paint and the wiring. “We had to test the paint to make sure that it was okay,” said Alex. “We got the results back and everything is good to go. We also had to make sure that there were plenty of holes cut into the floor so that if marine life were to find their way into the vessel, they could find their way out. The holes also allow the vessel to sink at a more even rate.”

Until about a year-and-a-half ago, the Coastal Resource Team had not had very many vessel deployments. This tugboat will actually be the fourth vessel deployment that Alex and his team have done the last year-and-a-half. “We still have a few more on the books,” he said. “Being able to deploy these large wrecks, it creates a unique habitat. It’s not your normal concrete modules that have been deployed for many years now, and provides a great location for people to go diving and fishing too.”

The Dylan:

The tourism department of Okaloosa County, in collaboration with U.S. Customs and Border Protection, sank a 61-foot steel-hulled vessel named the S/V DYLAN in Sept. 2020.



The vessel was deployed by contractor Morgan Marine approximately 16.5 nautical miles southeast of Destin-Fort Walton Beach in 120-feet of water.

In late 2019, U.S. Customs and Border Protection seized the M/V Dylan that had over 400 pounds of cocaine inside with a street value of \$7.5 million. Following seizure, the vessel was forfeited to the U.S. Government and transferred to Okaloosa County to be deployed as an artificial reef. “The U.S. Customs and Border Protection Miami Field Office is happy to continue collaborating with our state partners in transferring seized and ultimately forfeited vessels to be converted into artificial reefs. These vessels were used in attempted efforts to smuggle hard narcotics into the U.S. We recognize the significant long-term benefits of partnering on the artificial reefing projects – benefits beyond the immediate consequences of seizures for the criminal organizations, to include the positive impact on the ecosystem as well as the economy for the State of Florida and the Federal Government,” said Amelia Castelli, Deputy Fines, Penalties and Forfeitures Officer, U.S. Customs and Border Protection. This was the first vessel deployed as an artificial reef since the M/V MONICA LEE was intentionally sunk in 2011. This reef site not only provides a habitat for commercial and recreationally important species of fish that are commonly targeted by local and visiting anglers, but also offers an interesting site for SCUBA divers.

The S/V DYLAN was cleaned and modified to be environmentally friendly. Due to its relatively small size, additional similar-sized vessels will be deployed nearby, adding to the reef site’s complexity and creating an underwater “boatyard.”



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TUGBOAT

continued from previous page

“It is exciting to see a vessel deployment off our coast. This was the first of many vessels that are in line to be sunk in the coming years and will complement the hundreds of artificial reefs that have been deployed over the last couple of years,” said Alex.

The Brannon:

In 2020, Okaloosa County was contacted by the Brannon Family out of Freeport who wanted to donate a 65 ft. experimental military “fast response” catamaran for use as an artificial reef.

The catamaran was originally purchased in Maine and transported by trailer to Freeport where it sat for more than 20 years.

According to Alex, the origi-

nal plan was to retrofit the vessel and use it as a house boat or other semi-permanent living quarters. However, the vessel retrofit was never started and the vessel was never placed in the water or ran. Because the vessel was never named, it was eventually given the working name of the BRANNON in honor of Mr. Ronnie Brannon, who passed away in 2021.

The BRANNON was deployed approximately 16.43 nm SE of Destin Pass in the Okaloosa County Large Area Artificial Reef Site A (LAARS A). This is the exact location where The DYLAN was deployed.

According to Alex, due to the relatively small size of the BRANNON (65 ft.), it was secured to the DYLAN for “increased stability and to provide additional complexity to the site.”

“We had a pretty stagnant artificial reef program until a few years ago,” said Alex. “When we deployed the DYLAN, the project got a lot of attention and an increased interest in what we are doing. Since then, people have been lining up to donate vessels to the county. It is always exciting to see a vessel deployment off our coast.”

Okaloosa County’s artificial reef program provides excellent sites for fishing, diving, exploring and snorkeling activities that are easily accessible. Our area’s artificial reefs consist of anything from concrete piles to specifically designed modules to these mentioned in this article. With Destin-Fort Walton Beach being home to the nation’s larg-

est charter fishing fleet, it’s no wonder we have one of the most active artificial reef programs in the nation. Every year more artificial reefs are deployed off our coast. Check out the Reef map at www.destinfb.com/explore/ecotourism-hotspots/artificial-reefs.

To receive Jared’s daily newsletter, visit GetTheCoast.com.

Artists Revealed For 2022 Underwater Installation

The Cultural Arts Alliance of Walton County (CAA) and South Walton Artificial Reef Association (SWARA) are proud to reveal the 10 sculpture designs, including two international selections, chosen by jury for permanent exhibition in the fourth installation of the Underwater Museum of Art (UMA).

The 2022 installation will include the following pieces of sculpture: Currents and Tafoni by Joe Adams (Ventura, CA) Pirate Shipwreck by Sean Coffey (Pittsburgh, PA), Bloom Baby Bloom by Brit Deslonde (Santa Rosa Beach, FL), The Seed and The Sea by Davide Galbiati (Valreas, France), Fibonacci Conchousness by Anthony Heinz May (Eugene, OR), New Homes by Janetta Napp (Honolulu, HI), Arc of Nexus by Tina Piracci (Richmond, CA), We All Live Here by Marisol Rendón (San Diego, CA), Mobifish-2021 by Mathias Souverbie (Les Valence, France), and Common Chord by Vince Tatum (Santa Rosa Beach, FL).

The deployment is slated for Summer 2022.

Visitors who wish to experience the site at-depth should be certified divers who are comfortable swimming in open water. The coordinates for the center sculpture (SWARA Skull) are Latitude N 30 18.754 Longitude W 86 09 33.722. Out of respect

for the art, boaters are asked to find the center location and then move away from the park to anchor in order to avoid damage to the artwork.

We’d love to see any images you capture while diving! Tag your photos with #UMAFL or @UMAFloida on Facebook and Instagram.

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 Off the Hook

Off the Hook: **Black Drum Fishing**

BY CALI HLAVAC,
TO DO IN DESTIN

If you've wandered around any dock inside the Destin Harbor, you might have looked down to see some very large fish swimming below and wondering what kind they were. Often referred to as the "Big Ugly" by fishermen around the area, these monster fish are Black Drum.

the Red Drum and are a popular fish among anglers, because they will eat both live and dead bait. They typically feast on oysters, crabs, shrimp and small bait fish and are often circling docks to eat the crustaceans off the sides of the pilings. Another name for these fish is the "lazy fish," for their tendency to feed on dead bait more frequently than Red Drum will.

Black Drum are a cousin to When the weather is warm,



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you'll often find them on top of the water, making it easy to sight the fish, or throw a fly at them if you're a fly fisherman.

Black Drum can surpass the 50 lb. range, and while they are edible, their flesh becomes coarser and less desirable once they surpass lengths of 30 inches. Slot size for a keeper is 14-24" and you are able to keep five per day. When they are too large and pass the slot size, they have an old prehistoric look to them and can be full of worms, so not ideal for the dinner plate.

In terms of a fight, Black Drum are strong and solid, but not as determined as other fish. Often, they will run towards the dock and, if you're not careful, you might break the line when it hits the pilings. While you may not want to eat the large ones,

catching one is still a great fight and should be on your bucket list while visiting Destin.

Try to snag one yourself from

a dock or call up one of our local Charter Captains to take you out and get it done.

FWC Florida State Fish Art Contest

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC), in partnership with Wildlife Forever, is hosting the Florida State Fish Art Contest again this year. Students in kindergarten through twelfth grade can compete in this free contest for a chance to win state and national honors, and prizes. This program inspires creativity while developing the next generation of anglers and conservationists.



Florida winners will be selected by the FWC in four grade categories, kindergarten through third grade, fourth through sixth grade, seventh through ninth grade and tenth through twelfth grade. State winners will advance to the National Competition to be judged for top prizes including Best of Show. The deadline to enter is March 31, so start designing today!

"The State Fish Art program is a unique and creative way to connect to youth anglers and the FWC is proud to be sponsoring the initiative for Florida," said Eric Sutton, Executive Director of the FWC.

To enter, students from Florida should submit their entry at wildlifeforever.org consisting of the following:

An original horizontal 9"x12" piece of artwork featuring any fish from the wildlifeforever.org.

A piece of creative writing, no longer than one page, about the chosen species (required for grades 4-12).

A Florida State Fish Art Contest entry form.



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You Made a Resolution, Now Stick With It!



By LISA LEATH TURPIN, HEALTH & FITNESS COACH/CONSULTANT

Consider these suggestions to get the best out of your workouts and keep you interested.

Structure your workouts to fit your goals: A gymnast doesn't train like a football player, and a tennis player doesn't train like a basketball player. Why? Because in order to perform better at each sport, it takes specific movements and strengths, in specific areas, to make one stronger for each sport. How does this equate to you? You are unique. From your bone structure, genetics, chemical make-up (hormones/immunity) and body type. It's great to get ideas from others, but make sure it will benefit you personally. When I train my small groups of two to six people, even if they do somewhat the same order of exercises, not all lift the same weight or perform the same reps. Some people want a more muscular build; some want long lean smoother muscles; some need to focus on fat burning. Figure out your goals at the beginning of your quest and it will give you direction and keep you more motivated.

Mix it up: In order to customize your workout journey, tailor it to fit your goals and make it enjoyable. Your body needs to be challenged to change. Do something called "Phase Training." Briefly, a phase training plan manipulates exercise volumes and intensities over the course of weeks, months and years. Change your range of repetitions, how many sets, as well as the exercises themselves. It's suggested, though, that in order for a muscle to get stronger or more toned, it needs time to adapt and change. Therefore, we need to have some time repeating a movement for this muscle adaptation to occur. A good example is the push-up. When you first begin doing pushups, you might

be lucky to do five good ones. But if you do push-ups more often, you will increase the number of push-ups you can do. This is most important when looking for strength gains, but also for coordination. So, a simplified example of Phase Training for overall fitness would be:

Weeks 1-4: Endurance Phase/high repetitions 13-20/2-3 sets 3-4 days/week focusing on mobility, stability and form

Weeks 5-8: Strength Phase/moderate repetitions 8-12/2-6 sets 3-4 days/week focusing on lean muscle mass and gaining strong muscles (not bulky). Strong is GOOD!

Cycle through these phases all year.

Other additions to keep it interesting are Circuit Training, HIIT (High Intensity Interval Training) or other types of interval training. Again, depends on your goals.

Slow down: For strength and safety purposes, perform your repetitions SLOWLY. The slower you go, the more muscle fibers you recruit, thus maximizing strength gains and less joint or ligament damage. There are times that you want to move faster like in Circuits or Interval Training. But the key to "faster" is stay in control and in good form. It's best to sometimes work as fast as you can, but while performing full range of motion (ROM) with full control. If you can't perform full ROM with full control, then you are too fast or too heavy. That makes speed relative to controlled performance. When lifting weights there is a positive and negative motion. When performing a bicep curl, you start with your arm relatively straight; but when you raise or curl the weight, flexing the elbow, it is the positive part of the lift. The lowering of the weight or extension of the elbow, is the negative. You always want to control and go slowly on the negative: this is where "resistance" training gets its name. It's the control of resisting the weight that challenges the muscle and makes the greatest difference.

Be Active – choose what you like! Any and all movement is good. Don't overthink it. Dance if it makes you happy! Guess what? You will be working out!

Lisa Leath Turpin is a degreed and certified health and fitness lifestyle coach and consultant who has devoted her life to motivating and strengthening the body and mind of others. With over 20 years' experience, Lisa has a B.S. degree in Sports & Fitness Management from the University of Alabama, developed and managed

the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Health & Wellness Facility and programs in Huntsville, Ala., is board certified by the National Board of Fitness Examiners and possesses certifications from AFAA, Polestar/Balanced Body, Reebok U, SCW Fitness and American Heart Association. She is currently a group exercise leader at

Destin Health & Fitness and an independent personal trainer in the Destin area, diversely and extensively trained in classical and modern Pilates, lifestyle management, personal training, group exercise and post-rehabilitation. Have a fitness question for Lisa? Email BeActive850@gmail.com.



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 Wellness

Weight Loss and Thyroid



BY DR. RICHARD CHERN, MD

In this column, we've discussed the thyroid before. However, it's such an important subject, because even mild thyroid dysfunction can cause weight gain over months and years. And this weight gain is nearly impossible to lose and keep off without getting the thyroid optimized.

The thyroid regulates every metabolic process in our body. This includes growing hair and

finger nails, moisturizing your skin for less dryness and a better appearance. It also means keeping our toes warm, and our brains focused and working.

The thyroid determines how many calories we burn for each process. With age, thyroid function often decreases causing weight gain. So how does this cause weight gain?

Imagine you are in your 30's. Your thyroid is functioning perfectly and your weight has been the same for years. Your calorie intake matches your calorie output. If you are eating 1500 calories a day then you must be burning 1500 calories a day. Now fast forward 10 years. You haven't changed a thing, but your body has decided that adding color to your hair is no longer a priority, and also, that your hair and finger nails do not need to be made as fast or as well. Your hair gets



some gray, and becomes more coarse, dry or brittle. You don't need to trim your nails nearly as often and they seem brittle and thin too. You are getting tired and unfocused in the afternoon and either nap, drink caffeine or just push yourself though the day. And you notice your weight is creeping up!

Now the diet and exercise is a start, but it's always a struggle and seems less and less success-

ful. What is going on? It's your thyroid! Even though you haven't changed anything in your life, your body has decided to burn less calories. You're still eating 1500 calories a day and have exactly the same activity

level, but your body is slacking on the job. Maybe your body is just burning 50 calories less a day. That's five pounds of weight gain every year! And as you decrease your calorie intake or increase your exercise, your body continues to burn fewer and fewer calories each year. So, your diet and exercise just becomes more difficult.

What's the solution? Get your thyroid functioning! When you

turn the thermostat up, you burn more fuel. Hair, nails, skin, energy, focus improves and weight loss can happen without effort.

But my doctor says my thyroid labs are normal. We hear this a lot and, unfortunately, traditional medicine only orders a TSH and stops. Dr. Richard Chern, MD, orders numerous thyroid labs and understands that normal and optimal do not always agree. Of course, optimizing thyroid without also optimizing hormones is like going shopping without your credit card.

Dr. Richard Chern specializes in bio-identical hormone and thyroid optimization. He is the only Platinum Provider for BioTE in the region and mentors other physicians on the practice of bio-identical hormone therapy. Call Dr. Chern at 850-837-1271 for an appointment and turn your body back on!

Planting for a Purpose

There's been a lot of activity going on with trees lately, the planting of them that is, thanks to Trees on the Coast

and your support. Trees on the Coast was founded with the mission to beautify our community through tree plantings. "It's goal every year is to plant 100 trees in Okaloosa and Walton Counties," said Bobby Wagner, director.

For the recent Florida's Ar-

bor Day celebration on January 21 (National Arbor Day is the last Friday in April), how fitting that 15 native live oak trees were planted in Defuniak Springs, the birthplace of Arbor Day in Florida, to commemorate. The City of DeFuniak Springs celebrates the occasion with the

Florida Chautauqua Association with a tree planting ceremony with notable or famous speakers attending the historic Florida Chautauqua Assembly. The Association orchestrates the annual Assembly, a 4-day

Continued on page 34

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End the Cravings



By KAY LEAMAN,
HEALTH ARCHITECT

When we think of ending cravings, we usually begin with telling ourselves, “I’m going to stop eating.” However, as most of us know, the willpower to eat

it is many times stronger than our will power to not eat it. Let’s be real. As soon as we make this decision, someone offers us a doughnut or a sumptuous homemade goodie.

In order to conquer our cravings, I’d like to look at it from a different point of view. So, what habits can we work on that can help us in conquering our cravings?

Here’s a quote: “Life changes in mere moments. It all comes down to the decisions you make in the little moments of each day. Yeses and nos. But here’s the catch: It’s the hours and days after those decisions that dictate the direction you’ll head. So,

what split-second decisions can you make each day over the next 28 days to make healthy changes that will last a lifetime?”

Decide to go to bed on time. Set an alarm if you need to be reminded. Sleep is critical to improve our health. While we sleep, our bodies are busy repairing, healing and performing many other functions. Getting enough sleep can help us make healthier decisions. As a side note, if you eat within 2-3 hours before going to bed, your body has to focus on digestion which interferes with the other tasks it needs to be doing.

Decide to make exercise a habit. If you’d like to exercise,

but just can’t seem to work in 30 minutes a day, then it’s time to think out of the box. Break it up into short segments. Find exercises you can do at your desk like leg lifts, stretches, etc. Take a quick break and walk up and down a flight of stairs, etc.

Decide to take time for yourself. Tell your family you’re taking 10. Find a quiet place, take some deep breaths, close your eyes, clear your mind, read a few pages, relax. De-stressing works wonders.

Decide to eat to live, not live to eat. This is a powerful statement. We associate food with fellowship, entertainment and comfort. Food is fuel. How

well will your car run if you add the wrong fuel to the tank? How well will your body run if you do the same?

Decide that your health is a priority. This one decision can change what shows up in our grocery cart. It will inform our choices on how we spend our personal time, how we look at the goodies in the break room. It also changes how we look at ourselves in the mirror.

If we set our minds on taking these decisions to heart, we can make a huge difference in our health, energy and mindset.

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Self-Care Corner: Cupid is in the House!



By KRISY WHITELEY ANDERSON,
BEVERLY HILLS DAY SPA OWNER

I love Valentine’s Day, because it is a special day dedicated to expressing love for yourself and for others. We all deserve and need love in our lives, so don’t neglect this holiday. Set time aside and make a point to spoil yourself (and/or a loved one) all month long. You deserve it!

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 Wellness

Journey Bravely: You Are Only Given One Life



BY TODD CRAIG

Sometimes we need a wake-up call, something to shake us from being lulled into the dull existence of an unintentionally lived life—something that awakens us to snap out of the mindset that life is something that happens to us rather than a gift we get to live. One of my wake-up moments came from a friend who had just finished two challenging years serving as a missionary in a hostile country. Matt knew I was walking through a frustrating season, so he looked me in the eye, held up one finger and said, “The biggest lesson I have learned over the past two

years is, ‘You are only given one life.’”

When I heard that statement, things deep down in my soul wanted to spring to life. There were things I needed to do, decisions I needed to make, and growth that needed to take place. What about you? What stirs within you when you hear, “You are only given one life?” Are there truths and desires that begin to awaken?

“You are only given one life” is a powerfully simple statement packed with four truths to consider.

The life you were given is your life to live.

It is so easy to conform our lives to what we perceive to be the expectations of others. Often, we do this without even thinking about it. We are surrounded by cultural scripts (buy the bigger house, take the higher paying job, get married and have

kids, stay single and free, retire early if you can, you are too old, you are too young, etc.). Maybe it is time to stop worrying about what other people think and live the life you were meant to live. Sometimes it is good to get wise counsel from those you trust but pay close attention to who you are listening to and remember, this is your life.

You weren’t given someone else’s life.

If we are only given one life, that means we weren’t given the lives around us. As the father of three boys, I find myself often saying, “Stop policing your brothers and get your stuff done.” The truth is this temptation to tell other people how to live their lives is as much a distraction for adults as it is for kids. Maybe it is time to stop worrying about what other people do so you can take responsibility for your own life. Additionally, if we

weren’t given someone else’s life, maybe it is time to free ourselves from the comparison trap. Paying too much attention to what others have with jealousy will lead to resentment. Comparison and resentment trap us in a sense of helplessness that can prevent us from living our one life with intention.

Who do you want to be? What do you want—really?

You are given one life. It wasn’t given to anyone else. So, what are you going to do with it? Who do you want to be? And, what do you want—really? If you block out the voices around you, free yourself from the shackles of comparison, and work towards answering these questions for yourself with courage and vulnerable honesty, you will begin to awaken a vision and passion for life that may have been buried for years.

What is the next step you

need to take?

We tend to overestimate what we can do in a day and underestimate what we can accomplish in a year. Impatience can kill a vision. Clarifying who you want to be and what you want is one step on a life-long journey. You do not have to have every step toward your vision clarified, just the next one. A life well lived is lived one day at a time with courageous intentionality. Your next step might be to work towards clarity on what you want and who you want to be. It might be to share that vision with someone else. It may be time to try something new or to quit something. Whatever your next step, may you be challenged and encouraged to take it remembering, “You are only given one life.”

Connect with us at journeybravely.com for coaching support as you pursue living your one life with intentionality.

PLANTING

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educational program mirroring the original, multi-week events which took place in DeFuniak Springs between 1885 and 1927. “With the help of Destin city park and rec staff, local

volunteers and Thomas Hicks nursery, this event was a huge success,” said Bobby.

Recently, in Destin, Trees on the Coast also planted \$3,000 worth of trees—17 live oaks (7-8 ft.)—at Kell-Aire Nature Walk park (community of Airport Road) and at the Destin Dog

Park on Commons Drive.

In addition to its tree-planting mission, Trees on the Coast has taken on a project to certify Okaloosa County as a Community Wildlife Habitat™. The National Wildlife Federation’s Community Wildlife Habitat program partners with cities, towns, counties, neighborhoods and commu-

nities to become healthier, greener and more wildlife-friendly. Community Wildlife Habitats garden and landscape with wildlife in mind, promote the use of native trees and plants, work to reduce or eliminate the use of pesticides and chemicals, and integrate wildlife-friendly practices into sustainability plans and park

master plans. Through this program, our community would be able to enhance and restore wildlife habitat and more. For more information on this project, please reach out to Jessica Valik with the TDD Okaloosa County at jvalek@myokaloosa.com.

Continued on next page

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Homeowners' Frequently Asked Questions

ENERGY TIPS

by Emerald Coast Energy Solutions

BY CHRIS BALZER, ECES

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

How much will I save by adding insulation to the walls, ceilings and floors of my home? Insulation saves money, increases your home's comfort and protects the environment by reducing energy use. According to the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), typically 44% of a homeowner's utility bill goes for heating and cooling costs. DOE also states that homeowners may be able to reduce their energy bills from 10% to 50% by taking certain steps. One of the major steps is increasing the amount of thermal insulation in their existing homes or purchasing additional insulation when buying new homes. Unless your home was constructed with special attention to energy efficiency, adding

insulation will reduce your utility bills. The amount of energy you conserve will depend on several factors: climate, size, shape and construction of your house, your living habits, the type and efficiency of the heating and cooling systems and the fuel you use. Energy conserved is money saved and the annual savings increase when utility rates go up, which many of us are experiencing. Insulation upgrades also instantly adds value to your home and is a great investment.

How much insulation should I have? "Insulation," says Bob Vila, host of the nationally syndicated TV program that bears his name, is the most efficient energy-saving expenditure. Vila says homeowners should check attics to determine the amount of insulation already installed. Most homes built before 1980 have inadequate insulation, noting that if insulation between the joists of the attic floor comes only to the top of the joist, it probably makes sense to install more insulation. The U.S. Department of Energy recommends home insulation for our area to be R-30, which is 11.5 inches of blow in fiberglass insulation.

What words should I watch out for in contracts or job estimates? Once you have chosen an insulation contractor, make sure the contract includes the

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

Is there anything other than insulation to increase comfort and efficiency? There are several innovated materials in the market which are not widely used by most insulation contractors. ERG window film is a smart tint material which can be applied to glass and is virtually clear. This film blocks 94% of radiant heat and 99.9% of UV rays protecting floors, furniture, you and pets from the damaging sun's UV. Some common applications would be any room with direct sunlight; sunrooms, offices are great areas to add ERG film. Another great product is Radiant Barrier which is a reflective material installed in attic spaces which blocks 97% of radiant heat reducing your overall attic temperature by 40 to 50 degrees

in the summer. By reducing your attic's heat signature, you increase your comfort and your insulation and HVAC systems work less, saving you money and extending the life of HVAC systems. Radiant Barrier systems should be installed on rafters, just under your roof line and should not be installed lying on top of your insulation.

There are many ways to save energy and become more energy efficient. We all are spending more time at home which is a

great time to learn how to increase comfort and lower those energy bills.

Chris Balzer is Founder and President of Emerald Coast Energy Solutions which is a Smile Provider Company. It provides smiles to our customers after installing our high energy efficient products, increasing comfort and lowering energy bills. For more information on how to save this summer and become energy efficient schedule an inspection by calling (850) 588-2870, visit www.trusteces.com or email wecare@trusteces.com and Beat the Heat.

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PLANTING

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Bobby said it's due to the support and sponsorship of our readers and the community businesses and individuals that they are able to help our communities thrive through these activities. "Trees on the Coast is a nonprofit organization with 100% of its donations going toward beautifying our community," said Bobby. "Donating \$300 will put one tree into the ground, and with your help, we could potentially plant between \$30 to \$50 thousand to plant trees in Okaloosa and Walton Counties." You can donate at



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 Business

Here Today, Where Tomorrow? Today's Boutique Celebrates 40th Anniversary With New Location

Destin's Longest Standing Boutique Prepares for Big Move

By WHITNEY LEE

After 22 years in The Shoppes at Paradise Key in Destin,

Today's Boutique formally announces they will be moving their luxury boutique to a new location

in 2022. In the final stages of confirmation, the new location will be officially unveiled this spring through Today's Facebook and Instagram profiles. This decision, in the midst of a global pandemic and ever-changing economy, will bring this locally-owned store a fresh new space to better serve their loyal clientele, many of which have been shopping with them since their opening in 1981.

Founded in 1981 by Kim and Jim Dettle, Today's Boutique was initially located in the Harbor district of Destin, where Target and Hobby Lobby currently stand today. Today's occupied this location from 1981-2000 and made countless memories during this time including starting Destin Community Cares, an organization that mobilized numerous fundraisers to help local individuals and families that faced hardships. Kim & Jim expanded their family with the gift of their two children, Jameson and Kristin, who spent many of their childhood days in the boutique. In 2005, Jim was honored as the Businessman of the Year by the Destin Chamber of Commerce. The Today's booth was the focal point for fun at Destin

Seafood Festival, with ladies lined up to get their hair spray painted by Jim. Throughout the years, the Dettles also owned multiple other retail stores including Naturally White (all white clothing), Something's Fishy Gifts, Fresh Produce clothing store, as well as the first Brighton store in the area. The Dettles have truly been synonymous with fashion and retail in the Destin area for over 40 years.

In 2000, Today's moved to their current location in The Shoppes of Paradise Key and over time, the Dettles streamlined their efforts to focus on their flagship store. Over the 22 years in this location, Today's held over 200 fashion events and trunk shows within the store, including their annual anniversary party, an opportunity for the Today's family to celebrate their long-time clients who have been such an integral part of the boutique's history. In 2017, they ruled the runway at Sinfonia's Wine, Women & Shoes fashion show, with their stunning, colorful looks and iconic floral headpieces. They hosted numerous opportunities to give back to the community, including a clothing drive for Save the Closet, which generated 50+ massive



bags of gently used clothing donated by their clients to support those affected by Hurricane Michael. In 2018, the next generation of this fashion family came onto the scene, with the birth of the Dettles' granddaughter Lucy, followed by Audrey in 2021. Even through the uncertainty of the pandemic – a shutdown, supply chain delays and staffing challenges, this local boutique continued to thrive thanks to the support of the loyal shoppers.

In its new location, Today's will continue to offer the luxury brands for which they are known as well as plans to add new brands. Today's last day at their current location in The Shoppes at Paradise Key will be February 12. Now through the final day, the Today's family will celebrate their move with 40-70% off storewide, also available online through todaysboutique.com.

During the transition period, Today's shoppers can shop online through the website with free local shipping. Here Today... where tomorrow? Destin Commons, by Belk near Level 10 Salon, formerly Jos. A. Banks and currently called "The Big Sale." Follow Today's on Facebook and Instagram to stay up to date or visit www.todaysboutique.com to shop online.

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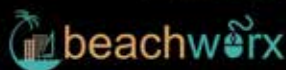
For over a decade, Matthew Vanderford has worked in the Construction, Restoration and Insurance Industries as an Insurance Company Preferred Vendor, Insurance Industry Continuing Education Instructor, Public Adjuster/ Policy Holder Advocate and Licensed Contractor. He's proud to call Destin his home,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

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Lifecycle of Stewardship

BY COURTNEY LINDBERG,
ARBORBROOK ADVISORS

Goals are good.

Plans are better.

Relationships are best.

January has faded and, unfortunately, but statistically accurate, most of our goals and resolutions set not so long ago. There are many books, many gurus, videos, etc. out there dis-

cussing how to achieve all your dreams, some of them audaciously selling the idea that you can do this without hard work and in a short amount of time. Ignore them. They are making money by selling you a feeling, not results. You will know a tree by its fruit. If there is no fruit (results) on the tree, don't expect it to feed you.

Most of our goals tend to fade, because all we have is the destination and we think we great hope, though sometimes blinded by it, that we can get there without a map. If you're just going across the street, then maybe. But, if the goal is beyond your current field of vision, you're probably going to need a map, a plan.

And plans are good, especially when broken down into small bits that can be accomplished one-at-a-time at a daily rate, weekly at max. Slow, methodical, incremental progress may be boring, but it works—at least until life happens, or something or someone unexpected happens, for better or worse. Suddenly, you're off your plan and a day goes by, a week, then it's January again and you're starting over.

Which is why relationships are best. We're really talking

FOUR STAGES OF STEWARDSHIP



you've seen this person accomplish something in their own life.

Understand clearly what you sense you're being called to. Clarity is critical.

From that clarity, set achievable goals that are broken down until the next step is something you could accomplish in a single day.

Act! One task at a time. Do not worry about tomorrow. Today has enough.

Arrive. Thank those who have helped you. Learn. Start over.

All of us have been given things to care for. We believe that all those "things" come from a higher power and thus it is our responsibility to steward well all we have received. We hope you have success in your journey and are here when you're ready.



Boeing Selects Fort Walton Beach for Competitive Expansion Project

One Okaloosa EDC announced that Boeing Global Services has selected Fort Walton Beach for a competitive expansion project. The anticipated \$2,550,000 project involves a 20,000 SF expansion to the company's existing facility located at 20 Hill Ave. in the Fort Walton Beach Commerce & Technology Park. In addition, Boeing's current position as one of Okaloosa County's largest private sector employers will be further reinforced with the creation of 12 new positions at an average salary of \$70,000 per year plus benefits (168% of Okaloosa County's average wage).

In Fort Walton Beach, Boeing Global Services employees are dedicated to modifying, testing, repairing and servicing aircraft for customers in the U.S., including the U.S. Navy and U.S. Air Force, as well as customers around the globe. Additionally, there is a maintenance repair and overhaul facility that services avionics, wiring and hydraulic systems for a variety of aircraft. The engineer-

ing capability is extensive and concentrates on military aircraft sustainment.

Boeing employees in Fort Walton Beach also support technical manual development for Boeing and non-Boeing platforms, such as the C-130, F-15, F/A-18, CH-47 and elements of the U.S. national defense system.

"Boeing is a world class company, and the fact that they have chosen to undertake this important expansion project in Okaloosa County is a testament to our community's continued ability to provide them with the top-notch talent and infrastructure they require. We welcome Boeing's growth in Fort Walton Beach and appreciate the vital role they play in supporting our nation's warfighters," stated Chairman Mel Ponder, Okaloosa County Board of County Commissioners.

Construction is expected to begin in March 2022 with completion in March 2023, while hiring of the 12 new positions will occur within the next two years.

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Five Themes for Investors to Explore in 2022



BY MAURICE STOUSE, FINANCIAL ADVISOR AND BRANCH MANAGER

As we are now into a whole new year, the more things change, the more they stay the same: The Covid virus is still with us, the money supply is still at historically high levels, rates remain low, housing remains strong. Unemployment is now at pre-Covid levels. Some things are not the same: Inflation is at its strongest in two generations, there are more jobs than job seekers, the employment rate (percent of eligible Americans working) is at an all-time low. Savings rates are higher, U.S. household net worth (as reported by Josh Brown and CNBC) is at an all-time high of \$130 trillion. In generations past, that net worth was mainly

comprised of home value and pensions. Today over a third of that is in stock holdings, pensions are no longer a significant source, and housing maintains its influence on people's overall net worth. Something to ponder when fretting about national debt levels: household net worth is more than four times the national debt. And overall national wealth (the value that all governments hold) is around 10 times greater than the national debt. That is not to say that the current elevated levels of debt are not challenging to economic growth and sustainability – considering debt to GDP is at over 100%, the highest since 1946 – but still worth noting that overall wealth far exceeds overall debt.

Here are some themes for investors to ponder and explore for 2022. We provide five in this edition of Research and Commentary from The First Wealth Management. As the world evolves and changes, investors can take note of innovations and disruptions and explore potential opportunities for their future investments.

Electrical Vehicle (EV) Batteries – It is interesting to note that there will need to be

considerable increase in the supply of EV batteries to come anywhere near the projections for new EV sales by 2030. Note that in 2022 in the U.S., EV sales might reach 5% of vehicles sold, a relatively small percentage. Still, ABC News reports there were 15mm cars sold in the U.S. in 2021 and if EV sales are to make up 5% in 2022, that means 750k batteries are needed. The supply of batteries is dependent upon the mining and development of lithium and cobalt and rare earth minerals and somewhat in the recycling of existing phones and laptops. Although the U.S. is a leader in the natural resources needed, it is a laggard when it comes to mining and production. It could take years for supply to meet the demand. The takeaway for investors is to look at those stocks and funds that concentrate on exploration, mining and producing minerals such as cobalt, lithium, copper, nickel, manganese and zinc and rare earth minerals. Investors might want to consider some of the emerging (some of them or still private) companies that recycle batteries and sell them to electric vehicle manufacturers.

Infrastructure. With billions being set aside for everything from roads and bridges to the electric grid and recharge stations, materials and materials producers, as well as industrial construction firms, could stand to gain significant new business opportunities. Copper might very well be one basic metal whose demand could grow at an increasing rate. There are numerous firms and funds that investors could consider in order to participate in these areas.

Quantum Computing. Simply put, quantum computing execution means that computers could run and produce at rates exponential to today's rates. It is important to note that major technology firms are investing a lot in this technology, but it is too early to experience any revenues. Ari Zoldan, the CEO of Quantum Media Group, wrote recently that the quantum computing market is "valued at \$0.5 billion and is expected to grow to \$65 billion by 2030, indicating a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 56%.

Carbon Sequestration. There may be economic and in-

vestment opportunities to consider here. The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) defines carbon sequestration as the process of capturing and storing atmospheric carbon dioxide. It is done naturally (biologically) by plants, trees and oceans. Plants need CO₂ as part of the photosynthesis process. When areas of the world are "deforested" (to grow other crops or clear for development), we are in a sense decreasing the number of carbon sinks in the world. It is also done by Geologic carbon sequestration, which is the process of storing carbon dioxide (CO₂) in underground geologic formations. Some of this is done in oil and gas extraction. The oil is forced out of the reservoir through the injection of CO₂ (which takes the place of the removed oil and remains there forever). Some firms are also developing technology that removes carbon from the atmosphere and then injects it below the earth's surface and charges storage fees. Many major oil and gas firms, in addition to green tech companies, are rapidly pursuing this. Carbon capture and sequestration (CCS) is also part of coal burning energy producers.

PBS suggested that three keys would be 1) Increasing plants and forests, as plants and trees use carbon dioxide as part of the photosynthesis process. Forests act as lungs (as do oceans) and sequester the carbon emissions that are produced. The problem is that while deforestation is finally declining, reforestation is declining too. 2) Construction of carbon sequestration plants. These are facilities that capture carbon in the air and pump it underground. 3) Food consumption. PBS points out that if people threw away less food, which could significantly reduce carbon emissions as well.

The takeaways for investors: Consider opportunities to invest in forestry companies. Most new trees planted each year are by forestry companies. While the rate of deforestation is slowly declining, there is yet to be a commensurate increase in reforestation. Regarding CCS, there are firms pouring billions into new technology to capture and often sell the carbon. According to CNBC, Arizona State University has reported that its

research shows that automated CCS can be thousands of times more efficient in removing carbon from the atmosphere. It is early with this technology, but some major oil and gas firms are putting billions into technology that could produce significant carbon capture each year as early as 2030 and to double that by 2040.

Energy & Energy transition. We think this is still an area that investors should continue to consider. There are ETFs that invest in wind, solar, nuclear, clean and, of course, traditional energy firms, such as oil and gas. The aforementioned PBS story pointed out that the demand and consumption of fossil fuels should be addressed, but also acknowledged that it continues to grow. As demand is growing however, a report from Rystad Energy says, "the oil and gas industry will deliver its worst exploration year since 1946... production budgets are not returning to pre-Covid levels and probably never will." A classic case where supply cannot meet the demand.

We last reported that the European Union was set on reducing carbon emissions to net zero sooner than later and with strict targets as early as 2030. This has had an added impact on natural gas supplies, which is already constrained. The New York Times reported that now there is a proposal before the European Union, by the European Commission, to make certain natural gas and nuclear electricity plants be considered either green or transition to green energy producers. That could have a significant impact, according to The Times, on new investment into these types of facilities. Despite the huge gains being made by wind and solar, in that order, the investment and production in those technologies would not be able to meet the ever-growing demand. Many traditional energy producers are making significant investments in wind and solar but also natural gas as well. As for nuclear, we take note that nuclear plants (which produce electricity) produce zero carbon emissions. The EC proposal points out its support for nuclear is only for those facilities that

Continued on page 42



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Meet Our Local Pros: Ross Vollmer and Jay Choquette, X8 Marketing

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

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

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

One of his first small clients, Atlanta Fish Limousines, came to Jay for help. Jay recognized some issues right away and rebranded them to Atlanta Famous Limousines; then built their website, developed business cards, etc., all within

their budget. And the company wasn't too small anymore.

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

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

X8 has thrived in part due to helping businesses develop a good website. They found that a ton of businesses don't have aesthetically appealing, great functioning websites—X8 can provide it. Through the years,



they've picked up some major clients such as Chic-Fil-A and Smucker's. Because of that, X8 is now able to offer Fortune 500 tools for their small-business clients, including professional imagery and functionalities that,

predominantly, only large companies would have.

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

Jay's business partner, Ross, is another backbone of the business. Ross was in Dallas running his own business as a certified personal trainer and Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu instructor. As he grew his business, he did all of his own branding and marketing including building several websites, blogging, and designing his own logo. He became a very established trainer and that's how Jay and Ross met. Jay was a former student of Ross'. Jay recognized Ross' other talent in developing websites and the two

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

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

Continued on next page



X8 Marketing
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Web Design • Logo and Graphic Design • SEO



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 Musing

What Ever Happened to Love?



BY MYRNA CONRAD

February is the month that we celebrate Valentine's Day – a day where we purchase a special gift or card to express our love for someone. Even though

the day will be celebrated on February 14 by many people, the world seems to still be filled with people expressing anger and hatred toward one another. James addresses this inconsistency in God's Word as follows: "With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse human beings, who have been made in God's likeness. Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers and sisters, this should not be." James 3:9-10 NIV

Given all of the discord, dismissiveness, anger and hatred evidenced around us, we might ask the question, "Whatever happened to love?" Why do we

go out of our way to find a way to express love on this day and not every other day? What does love even mean?

Merriam Webster defines love as "a strong or constant affection for a person. "A profoundly tender, passionate affection for another person" is the definition found on www.dictionary.com. The Cambridge dictionary describes love as "liking another adult very much and being romantically attracted to them or having strong feelings of liking a friend or person in your family."

The words "I love you" can be said to many different people and the meanings can vary



widely. Many people struggle to define and understand love. We all want to be able to express love and we want to be loved.

God's Word tells us that God is love and that we humans crave love from the moment of existence. However, the emotion of love holds differing degrees of intensity. Four forms of love are found in God's Word, coming from four Greek words: Eros, Storge, Philia, and Agape. Eros describes romantic love that two people feel for each other and we express as being "in love." The Greek word Storge describes the affectionate bond that forms between parent and child, and between siblings. The word Philia is used to describe the deep emotional bonds found in friendship. Agape is the highest form of love and describes the immeasurable, unchangeable love that God has for His creation, mankind. This kind of love was demonstrated by Jesus when He gave His life for us.

All of these definitions and words center around a person's feelings. Feelings come and go and that, I believe, is why committed love is so elusive in our society today. While love is a feeling, I believe lasting love is a choice followed by an action.

Most of the time, people are seeking love to fulfill something within themselves, to fulfill their needs. However, when we experience the agape love of God, our need for love is fulfilled and we can love others by focusing on their needs. As I said before, feelings fluctuate, they change with the situation, but when we practice committed love with our actions, the feeling of love will come back even stronger.

You've heard the saying, "Actions speak louder than words." This definitely applies to love. So, how can we better love those around us?

Be Aware:

Be aware of the discrepancy between what you say you feel and how you act.

Realize that love is a choice and an action, not just a feeling.

Think about the way you use the word "love" and make sure you aren't replacing the word "like" with "love."

Be Intentional:

When you are feeling frustrated with someone, choose to love them.

Don't just express words of love, express your love through your actions.

Try to find ways to express your love toward those who are important to you every day, not just on special occasions.



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LOCAL PROS

continued from previous page

too, will be successful. Our fates are tied together."

Websites, SEO and Branding are X8's primary offerings. "In addition to establishing professional logos and websites, organizations should always focus on building a strong and credible brand through synergistic marketing materials," says Ross.

"Remember, your marketing materials represent you. And, all of our websites are built 100% by developers in the U.S. at a time when much of that kind of work gets outsourced overseas."

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

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Sean of the South



BY SEAN DIETRICH

We were newlyweds, living in a grungy apartment.

Each morning, I would wake before her. I would pass my morning hours writing poetry on a yellow legal pad, sipping coffee.

Mostly, I'd write the kinds of god-awful things you'd expect newlyweds to write. I'm talking painfully corny stuff. I'd leave these poems on slips of paper scattered throughout our apartment for her to find.

One such poem read:

“Together, the two of us,
“In thought, and deed, and breath, and heart,
“Shall never be lacerated apart.”

Gag me with number-two pencil. “Lacerated?” What kind of a dork uses that word? In fact, I'm not certain this verb works in this particular case.

LACERATE [verb: las-uh-reyt] lac'er'at'ed, lac'er'at'ing

1. to tear; mangle; rip. Example: “Hey dude, that poem you wrote really freakin' lacerated.”

My wife saved all my crummy poems in a shoebox, and today they reside in a storage closet.

Anyway, when we first married, we lived in an apartment that smelled like dead squirrels. I am not being figurative. I mean our apartment actually had a nest of decomposing squirrels in the attic above our master bedroom.

The place was tiny, and about as ugly as homemade soap. The tenant before us had painted the walls black and greenish-gray. Sherwin Williams officially titled this color “Seasick Granite®.”

When we moved in, we made the place our own. We painted the walls brown and khaki. We bought a used coffee table and some scented candles.

My friend, Chubbs, found an old console television on the side of the road. I was lucky enough to claim the TV before the garbage man came.

The thing was heavier than a dead preacher, but we got it up the stairs. Chubbs, however, would suffer from severe disc degenerative problems for the rest of his life.

Our building sat across the street from a Waffle House, a Chick-fil-A, and an ice cream shop. And this is why we gained nearly fifty pounds within our first year of marriage.

We never went to the movies because we didn't have the money. We ate Hamburger Helper without hamburger sometimes.

We saved our cash for a new



window unit AC—our air conditioner was on the fritz. The thing would only work on days of the week beginning with “R.”

On weekends, every weekend, we ate donuts. It was our simple ritual, and I loved it. Krispy Kreme was only a stone's throw from us, and when the hot-and-ready light would glow, by God, we were there.

Over donuts, we would talk for hours about nothing. Heavy doses of sugar can do things to the human mind. It can make a person honest.

She told me all her stories. I told her mine. You can do a lot of soul-searching over crullers.

My professional life was non-existent, I took whatever jobs I could get. I spent days crawling rooflines, swinging a hammer, or operating a commercial lawn mower. She worked as a preschool teacher at church, or in a kitchen.

For extra income, I played piano at a Baptist church on Sundays, Sunday nights, Wednesday nights, Thursday night choir practices, and Saturday night prayer meetings.

We learned things about each other. We learned important things.

We learned how to argue in the middle of a Winn-Dixie, and how to attend two Thanksgivings in one day. How to share a sunset, seated on the hood of a truck. How to read in bed with a flimsy battery-powered book light.

We learned how to travel together with paper maps. And after years of practice, we finally learned how to make a bed together without me getting murdered.

We learned how to hold each other when loved ones die. We learned how to sit together—me reading a magazine, her playing

a crossword puzzle.

We learned how to wring our hands in hospital waiting rooms. We learned how to bury dogs with a shovel and a burial sheet.

We learned how to make a life together.

A lot has changed since those days, but I still wake early in the mornings to write. I don't use a legal pad anymore, I use a laptop.

This morning, however, I did not write. Instead, I sifted through our storage closet. I found things. An old coffee-tin sewing kit, some scented candles, love poems, and the picture of a young man and his new wife in their first apartment.

In the picture, the place had ugly gray walls, but that's the only ugly thing about this photo.

He's holding her. She's holding him. They are young. Their skin is smooth. I wish I could tell you how much I love these two people in the picture.

I wish you could see their faces, and their punch-drunk smiles. You can tell they belong together by looking at them. You simply know that their names should never be said apart.

It's as though nothing bad in this life can ever touch them. As though the two of them, in thought, and deed, and breath, and heart, shall never be lacerated apart.

I suppose that word is growing on me.

Happy Valentine's Day, Jamie.



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 Musing



A Pastor's Ponderings: Love Most Tender

By PASTOR DAVID HOLLAND

Then little children were brought to Him that He might put His hands on them.

~ Matthew 19:13

Jessica came screaming and bawling into this world and irrevocably altered my life the moment she was born. The responsibility of this fragile human being weighed on me. I was so afraid I would drop her and she would break.

In that raucous, birthing moment, the Lord breathed into my heart, "That's what I mean by being born again, moving from

one form of existence to another, out of the womb and into the world." This experience revealed new facets of the Lord.

I learned how to bottle feed my baby girl and the evil of "burping" her. Patting her back rhythmically would produce the rudest sound, followed by this odious curdled smell. Yet, she was so cute as she bobbed her head with glazed, unfocused eyes. This curious creature was human, but I couldn't imagine what was going on inside her little head.

I took the early morning feedings to give my wife some sleep. Changing and feeding this eating, pooping, peeing machine was challenging, but wonderfully bonding. After her bottle, I would rock her back to sleep and pat her back gently out of sheer reflex. When she was about five months old, IT happened. I was utterly exhausted working two

jobs and a senior in college. As I sat rocking her to sleep, her tiny hand began to lovingly pat my back. The hurts of my childhood began to melt away by the love of my child.

How does a non-communicative, miniature human learn to respond with loving touch? You could say, "She was imitating," and I would respond, "That is how we learn profound emotion." The innate ability to love is the mark of God upon our psyche, the touch of God upon our soul.

There are seven billion people on this planet, each equipped with a unique fingerprint. Each one also has their own distinctive capacity for affection. Giving and receiving love is what we were born to do. The early events of my life handicapped my ability to love as God intended, but God is on a mission to restore that ability.

As a young Christian, I remember the old-timers lingering at the altar singing a curious song, "Just a touch from His nail-scarred hands, just a touch from His nail-scarred hands, just one touch from His nail scarred hand." What were those old fogies talking about? Those elders in the faith knew something that I didn't—it is the gentle touch of the Master that brings healing to the broken heart. God restores the love stolen from us in our brokenness. The peace of God quietly descends upon our hearts with an unseen, yet unmistakably tender pat on our backs.

"This is where the healing begins...where the light meets the dark," sings the Christian rock group Tenth Avenue North. For me, this healing began with the touch of the Master through my infant daughter.

When Jesus walked the earth, people brought their babies to

Him. They brought the sick and the troubled to Christ that He might touch them and heal them. I pray the Master would touch you today and that you would rest in His arms as He pats you on the back. You were born a loved child and He would hold you and love you.

There is nothing you can do to make God love you more and there is nothing you can do to cause Him to love you less. His is the love most tender.

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 get 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. Contact him at DavidHolland54@gmail.com.

FIVE THEMES

continued from page 38

can safely dispose of the waste. We know of only one nuclear plant under construction in the USA currently. Should the EU pass legislation approving of nuclear, we think that addition-

al U.S. nuclear plants are in the offing. Interested investors could consider equities or ETFs in the Industrials and Materials

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

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

when interest rates rise, fixed income prices fall and when interest rates fall, fixed income prices rise.

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

Gifted Musicians Greatly Impact Our Community's Children, Seniors and Disabled

By DEBORAH CARLSON

"Music provides a very natural and universal means of building bridges between people" mused Alon Goldstein, an Israeli born classical pianist who performs all over the world. Alon's passion to "bring Carnegie Hall free of charge" to those who may not have access to such inspired him to form Emerald Coast Music Alliance, a not-for-profit organization that hosts week-long music festivals each January, bringing in world renowned musicians from all over the country to perform in Northwest Florida schools, senior centers, organizations for the developmentally or intellectually disabled, churches and more.

Emerald Coast Music Alliance (ECMA) held its sixth Music Festival recently, scheduling 50 live performances on January 6-14, with a total of six musicians and two dancers. Joining Alon were pianists: Regina Tanujaya,

Crystal Jiang, Valerie Wellington and Junyi Nie. Boyan Bonev on cello returned for his second appearance as a guest musician, and the ECMA welcomed Jonathan Holden on clarinet. New to this year is the element of dance, featuring dancers Taylor Harrison and Kaitlyn Christiansen Sacco, who performed with the musicians.

A FREE concert open to the general public is held each year. This year, the concert was live on January 15 at Tyler Recital Hall, Northwest Florida State College, featuring the dancers and all musicians.

Alon calls these festivals a "win on all levels," because of the incredible impact it makes on both the audience and the performers. Guest musicians sense a "greater purpose as a musician" as they witness the power of music in how children, seniors and persons with disabilities respond to the beauty of classical music. Some of the un-

forgettable moments are moving and inspirational:

A woman in a senior center who had not spoken for six months began to speak to her husband after hearing a live piano performance. Another woman declared aloud that "she felt alive again."

Apprehensive residents of a developmentally disabled facility began to slowly filter into the room where a trio of cellists played – from a beginning audience of 5 to 120 residents who had been hiding, but listening – within 15 minutes. The director of the facility said that never before had this many residents sat in one room together.

Children in a Santa Rosa Elementary school got up and spontaneously began to sway their arms and interpret the music in movement.

High school students began opening up after a performance, asking questions to the musicians specifically about their instru-



ments and how they developed their career in music.

Crystal Jiang, in her second year as one of our guest pianists, began to sing a Chinese folk song in her native language during her performance that enraptured her young audience. She asked them to visualize as she played; think of a story the music is telling, to dance or to sing. Crystal says she learns, too, from their comments and the description of emotions they feel as she plays. She invited them to sit on her lap to touch the piano keys, the personal contact that she says gives them a sense of collaboration; of performing with her. One child who was unruly

became quiet and one of the most quizzically interactive after listening to a 300-year-old Bach piece. Crystal seeks to learn from her audience's responses which help her to discern if their reactions and emotions are those she is trying to convey through her music. One child told her she would be famous and asked for her autograph on his shoe in Chinese. Soon, all the children wanted her autograph!

Alon has a vision for the future of Emerald Coast Music Alliance; to expand its current role to include teaching seminars that connect young musicians in our schools with our gifted guest musicians and inspire them to pursue music.

The ECMA operates in cooperation with the Northwest Florida Symphony Orchestra and relies solely on donations to fund its festival expenses. Tax deductible donations are welcome. To learn more, visit us online at <http://emeraldcoastmusic.org>.

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 Arts & Music

J.Leon Gallery Rings in New Year with New Artists

New year, new art! On Friday, January 7, 2022, J.Leon Gallery + Studio, the area's newest fine art gallery, hosted its monthly Sip N' Stroll event, where four new artists debuted in the gallery's Spring show from January 1, 2022, until April 26, 2022. The gallery welcomed artists, Mindy McClendon, Andi Scurto, Wes Hinds and MJ Montgomery to the talented lineup of featured artists.

"It is with great excitement that we introduce our January to April show of artists," said Ja-



son Lindblad, Owner & Artist, J.Leon Gallery + Studio. "We greatly appreciate all of the talent and creativity of each of our artists and know that people who visit the gallery will enjoy the variety of styles that they bring to

the table. Guests will find inspiration around graffiti, thoughts, illustrated and whimsical books, and new ceramic pieces as part of this show. We invite everyone to stop by the gallery to check out the wonderful works these creatives have to offer!"

During the Sip N' Stroll event guests received a first look at the gallery's fresh Spring art installations featuring twenty talented local and national artists. Visitors took a tour of the gallery while enjoying wine, champagne, and light eats.



(Artists from left to right) Roy Calvin Eure, Estelle Grengs, Kim Eifrid, Wed Hind, Jason Lindblad, Andi Scurto, Melanie Moore, Betsy Latham, Mindy McClendon, Gayle Campbell, Kathy Schumacher, Maxine Orange

MKAF Announces Spring Concert Lineup

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

"For 27 years, the Mattie Kelly Arts Foundation has been at the forefront of providing arts



entertainment and education to Northwest Florida. The annual Concerts in the Village is no exception and we are thrilled to announce this year's incredible lineup of guest artists," stated MKAF CEO Demetrius Fuller. "The revenue generated from these events enables us to provide the highest quality of arts edu-

cation and community engagement throughout Okaloosa, Walton and Bay Counties. Thank you to all of our season sponsors,

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

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

available for purchase!

Thursday, April 21, 2022

Michael Jackson LIVE

(Vegas Show)

Thursday, April 28, 2022

Naturally 7

Thursday, May 5, 2022

Shania Twin

(Shania Twain Tribute)

Thursday, May 12, 2022

Yacht Rock Revue

Thursday, May 19, 2022

Six Piece Suits

Thursday, May 26, 2022

Taylor Dayne

Thursday, June 2, 2022

Alter Eagles

Thursday, June 9, 2022

Sister Hazel

Thursday, June 16, 2022

Sinfonia Gulf Coast

Performing the Music of

Led Zeppelin

Thursday, June 23, 2022

Boogie Wonder Band

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

Purchase tickets online at MKAF.org/events. General admission varies per concert. Children (12 and under), and MKAF members are free. Those interested in becoming an MKAF member can learn more at MKAF.org. All sales are final; sorry, no refunds. Pets, tables larger than two feet, and drones are not permitted. A limited number of VIP tables (provides a reserved table and seating with admission for up to 8 guests) are available. Those interested in sponsoring the 2022 MKAF season, please call 850-650-2226.

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Level 1 Ballet (8-10 years).

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Registration: 2-8 years

Tuesdays

10:45-11:15am: Pre Primary A (2-3 years)

11:30-12:00pm: Pre Primary B (3-4 years)

Saturdays

9:30-10:00am: Pre Primary A (2-3 years)

10:10-10:40am: Pre Primary B (3-4 years)

10:50-11:40am: Pre Primary C (4-5 years)

11:50-12:30pm: Primary Ballet (5-8 years)

Pre-Primary Ballet and Primary Ballet creative dance classes are part of the classical curriculum for the youngest dancers, instilling foundational elements of movement through creative experience, expression and play. Both boys and girls are highly encouraged. Classes occur once a week on either Tuesday or Saturday. All levels are instructed by Rachel Prescott.

Visit website for additional level and adult classes, or to register online: studio6twenty5.com. Please email any questions to rachel@studio6twenty5.com.

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ECTC: A Love Note to Our Community

By NATHANEAL FISHER, ECTC

Ahhh...February, the month of LOVE. In 2022, we are determined to have hope and to continue providing you, our community, with excellent professional and educational theatre.

To all of our **VIP Members** who have consistently been there for us, renewing your membership, increasing your membership level or donating on top of your membership, you are the wind beneath our wings. Thank you for all the ways you have stepped up and kept us going throughout these challenging past few years.

To all of our **Sponsors** who generously give and remain faithful supporters, your partnership means the world to us. We love it when you come to the theatre, send your clients/customers to shows and appreciate your advocacy for theatre in our community.

To all of our loyal **Patrons** and future loyal patrons, we look forward to seeing you at each show and we appreciate all of the times you have told your neighbor/cousin/friend/stylist/cashier about ECTC.

To all of our **Leading Ladies** and **Volunteers**, you are the force that keeps us going and you do it all with a smile. Thank you for all of the ways you serve and support ECTC—we salute you!

To all of our precious **Students** who bring joy and laughter to our space every day, thank you for sharing your smiles and energy with your theatre family. We find such joy every time you make a new discovery or find more and more self-confidence as you sing and act your heart out on stage.

To **YOU**, our Community here in Miramar Beach, Santa Rosa Beach, Destin and beyond, you are the heartbeat of everything we do at ECTC. Whether



Photo by Lori Saczynski

you are a VIP member, sponsor, patron, volunteer, or student, you are the reason ECTC is a living, thriving entity because of your involvement.

This month of Valentines is busy over at ECTC. So, come see a show, have a laugh and feel the love!

We have the last weekend of Miss Abigail's Guide to Dating, Mating, and Marriage February 3-6. Join Miss Abigail and Pedro as they help their live studio audience navigate the murky waters of love, and maybe find a spark or two along the way. If the cure for life is comedy, then this is the remedy you're looking for. Think Loveline meets Dr. Ruth and combine that with the personality of Miss Abigail and the charm of Paco...we'll have a love fest that's filled with joy and laughter.

The Marvelous Wonderettes is showing from February 10-13 (and March 3-6). Wipe that lipstick off your collar and time travel to the 1958 Springfield Prom with us where you can be serenaded with all the classics like "Lollipop" and "Dream Lover." Featuring over 30 classic '50s and '60s hits, The Marvelous Wonderettes will keep you smiling in this must-take musical trip down memory lane! Great music, fine wine and a good time are central to this cabaret stage addition to our professional season.

For more love and laughter, don't miss 2 Across February

18-27, an intriguing look at two strangers on the San Francisco BART train, and how a crossword puzzle teaches them each a little more about life and its unpredictability. This is the type of show ECTC fans have come to love. If you enjoyed Bakersfield Mist, Dancing Lessons and Maytag Virgin, you are going to love the comedy and connection that take place in 2 Across.

Finally, our Storyteller Se-

ries is not to be missed with your ECTC favorites on stage: Shirley Simpson as Katherine Hepburn in Katharine Hepburn and Allan Tuttle as Harry Truman in Give Em Hell Harry are all stories that share glimpses into history.

Come join us for some laughter, humor, history and fun as we celebrate the month of love! More information, registration information and ticket purchases can all happen at www.EmeraldCoastTheatre.org or call the box office at 850-684-0323.

Upcoming Schedule:

Miss Abigail's Guide to Dating, Mating & Marriage!

By Ken Davenport & Sarah Saltzberg. Mainstage Comedy. January 28 - February 6

Thursday - Saturday at 7:30 p.m., Sundays at 2:30 p.m.

The Marvelous Wonderettes

Musical by Roger Bean. Cabaret Stage: Musical Revue.

February 10-13, March 3-6
Thursdays - Saturdays at 7:30 p.m., Sundays at 2:30 p.m.

Give em Hell Harry Performed by Alan Tuttle

February 8 at 7:30pm

2 Across

Written by Jerry Mayer. Mainstage Dramatic Comedy

February 18-27
Thursday - Saturday at 7:30 p.m., Sundays at 2:30 p.m.

Katharine Hepburn by Shirley Simpson

March 1 at 7:30 p.m.

CARNIVALE
FEBRUARY 25 - 27

VINTNER DINNERS
Friday, February 25
Celebrity vintners and chefs in stunning homes and venues
\$350/person

CRESCENDO! MAIN EVENT
Sunday, February 27
Hilton Sandestin Beach Golf Resort & Spa
Join us for world-class vintners, delectable bites, a seated lunch, expert spirit purveyors, amazing auction items and award-winning entertainment!
\$175/person

SCAN HERE FOR TICKETS

TICKETS: 850.460.8800 or visit SinfoniaGulfCoast.org

ECTC
emerald coast theatre company

LIVE THEATRE IN MIRAMAR BEACH!

The Marvelous Wonderettes
CABARET STAGE: MUSICAL REVUE!
JAN. 21 - 23 | FEB. 10 - 13 | MAR. 3 - 6

2 ACROSS
FEB. 18 - FEB. 27, 2022
MAINSTAGE DRAMATIC COMEDY

FOR TICKETS & INFO:

Call 850.684.0323 or Visit EMERALDCOASTTHEATRE.ORG

Emerald Coast Theatre Company is located at 560 Grand Boulevard, Suite 200, Miramar Beach, FL 32550



Ask Destinites: Power To The People



By PATRICIA LEE, DESTINITES

In our Destinites locals Facebook group this past month, a big topic was the increase in our power bills. In most cases, bills have doubled. Apparently, this rate increase is in place for the next 3-4 years with a then planned lower rate adjustment. Meanwhile, it's time to start be-

ing diligent over things you can do to help lower your bill. Below are some ideas for you to consider.

Solar Panels: The number one thing you should do when starting your research is contact your homeowner's insurance agent to ask how it will affect your coverage, because it certainly does. If you still wish to proceed, start by talking with other homeowners who already have solar panels. These two things will give the initial insight you need before contacting solar companies. Do your homework!

Here are some ideas of which everyone can take advantage: If you really are diligent about all

these things, it will make a difference.

1. Turn off the light when you leave a room.
2. Unplug items when you are not using them. Yes, it's a little trouble but worth it. Be mindful of unplugging items especially when you are going to be gone from your home any length of time.
3. Take shorter showers. Power is being used to heat that hot water.
4. Don't use hot water when washing clothes.
5. Adjust that thermostat. Simply dress warmer or cooler, as needed.

6. Adjust your fridge and freezer temp.

7. Check seals on windows and doors.

Go into your account online to view your current usage and projected balance for the month. That way you won't get sticker shock when the bill comes and it can also help you know if you need to make more adjustments during the month "before" that bill comes. Current usage and projected balance for the month are located at the top right of the first page you come to, on your account. Also, when you do receive a bill, take note of the number of billing days.

If you are a resident of Destin or the surrounding area, I invite you to join our very active, private locals Facebook group with 5800+ members—a place where locals can reach out to each other for help, recommendations or just make new friends. If you are not on social media, I invite you to join our monthly email newsletter. Anyone may sign up for it on the homepage of our website at www.Destinites.com.

*Patricia Lee, Owner: www.Destinites.com
Creator: www.facebook.com/groups/Destinites*

EVENTS

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thing for yourself and cast your vote! All proceeds from this event will go to the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Emerald Coast, which works in our community 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. Sponsorships for this event are available.



To learn how your business can be involved, please contact helo@francesroy.com. Tickets are \$45 for VIC (Very Important

Cheese tickets); \$25 for adults ; \$15 for kids (5-16 years). V.I.C. (Very Important Cheese) tickets include (1) beverage ticket and a t-shirt.

ECCAC Gala & Golf Weekend 2022

The Emerald Coast Children's Advocacy Center (ECCAC) is hosting its annual Gala & Golf Weekend, this year presented by Jim & Tammy Pierce. The Gala features a cocktail hour starting at 5 p.m., with dinner being served at 6 p.m. on Sat., March 12, at the Hilton

Sandestin Beach Golf Resort & Spa. Guests, in coastal chic attire, will enjoy dinner and live entertainment by popular local musicians, The Will Thompson Band, as well as live and silent auctions. The Gala is an energetic, yet important ECCAC fundraiser to benefit children by providing services at no cost to help identify, treat and support child victims in abusive situations.

The Golf Tournament, also to benefit ECCAC, will take

place on Sun., March 13, at Kelly Plantation Golf Club with registration and brunch from 10:30 to 11:45 a.m. for a tournament shot gun start at 12 p.m. Tournament cost is \$400, which includes two tickets to the Gala. Gala tickets only are \$250 per couple. Please make reservations on-line at <https://cbo.io/eccac/tickets>. Sponsorships are still available. Contact Mary Fomby at 850-833-9237, Ext. 283, or email her at Mary@eccac.org.

Spring Break in Paradise!

Paradise Promotions of the Emerald Coast presents a Spectacular SPRING BREAK In Paradise Music Festival – March 11, 2022, at the Destin-FWB Convention Center (1250 Miracle Strip Pkwy., Fort Walton Beach). An all-day music event, it will feature three great bands performing five hours of Live Music on the Big Stage. Doors open at 3 p.m. for visitors to browse the food vendors and entertainment sections before Ted Corcoran, the Master of Ceremonies (President/CEO of the FWB Chamber Of Commerce), introduces the show's opener with Paradise Bayou Band at 4:30 p.m. with Classic Rock, Country and Motown tunes. Cadillac Willy Band members perform their DEAD-SPREAD show with a tribute to WIDESPREAD PANIC and the GRATEFUL DEAD at 6:30 p.m. And at 8:30 p.m., Ron Adams (the shadow of the king)

and the Memphis Echoes close the event with one the best Elvis Shows in the land. Don't be surprised if Elvis dons his Johnny Cash hat for a song or two.

Vendors will be selling T-shirts, hats, hand-made and fine jewelry, cookware and more. The entertainment section will be manned by volunteers from United For A Good Cause, Inc. raising money for the Hope Squad peer-to-peer suicide prevention program in our schools. It will feature corn-hole games, darts, murbles, face painting, stick on tats and other games – as well as over \$5000 in Door Prizes and raffles.

Tickets are ON SALE NOW by going to the website at www.ParadisePromotionsFL.com (Paradise Music Festival). Reserved Table Seats are \$30-\$75. General Admission is \$20 in advance; \$25 at the door. **Get your tickets soon because this event will be a sell out.**







EMERALD COAST CHILDREN'S ADVOCACY CENTER'S

Gala & Golf Weekend 2022

Presented by *Jim & Tammy Pierce*

When: March 12-13, 2022
Where: Hilton Sandestin and Kelly Plantation Golf Club



Scan this QR code to purchase tickets and learn more about the event.

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