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Postal Customer Local

# When the Impossible Happens

By Gueary Clendening

How is it that geese fly south in the winter? Who gives them instructions for the trip? How can an ant carry 50 times its weight, the equivalent of a 180-pound man carrying a full-grown cow? It seems to me God is in the business of making the impossible happen!

In Luke's gospel, we are given the story of a young lady named Mary, who is visited by an angel; She's told she will give birth to the Son of God. It's found in Luke, chapter one, verse thirty-four through thirty-eight.

Mary asked the angel, "But how can I have a baby? I'm a virgin." The angel replied, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; So the baby born to you will be holy, and He will be called the Son of God. What's more, your relative, Elizabeth, has become pregnant in her old age! People used to say she was barren, but she is already in her sixth month, for nothing shall be impossible with God."



God's timing is always perfect! Elizabeth's pregnancy was used by God to encourage Mary to believe that God would fulfil His promise.

impossibility Another happened to me personally. On May 2, 2024, I made an appointment for my annual appointment with my cardiologist in Pensacola for May 8, 2025. During the first few

days of May, in the week before my appointment, I began to suffer extreme pain in my throat and chest. On the day of my appointment, I was sitting in my car preparing to leave, when the pain came back again. I sat there for a few minutes, and I decided to go to Crestview. If the pain lessened, I would drive on to Pensacola, but if not, I would

return home. Well, the pain decreased, so I started driving to Pensacola. I explained to the doctor what had happened. He took me up a flight of stairs. By the time we reached the third floor, the pain in my throat and chest exploded. Thankfully,

#### **IMPOSSIBLE** continued on page 2



## Where Hope **Grows:**

A Story of Love, Legacy and Local Families

By Maranda Shaye Smith

Imagine just entering parenthood, facing the challenge of balancing a new baby with mounting bills and little support. Whether a pregnancy comes as a surprise or right on time, stepping into that moment can feel overwhelming. Questions, fears and practical needs often rise quicklyespecially for those navigating the journey without a strong support sys-

When life takes an unexpected turn, Lauren's Legacy Pregnancy Center, right here in our area, stands ready to walk beside those facing un-

> **HOPE GROWS** continued on page 2



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#### **IMPOSSIBLE**

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the cardiologist's office was in the hospital. They immediately ordered a heart cath. The next morning, he said to me, "You had a ninety-five percent blockage in your main artery. You had a widow-maker and are a very lucky man."

Later, after thinking about

his words, I realized the entire episode was a lot more than just dumb luck. If I had not made that appointment a year ago, I would not have thought about going to Pensacola. God knew a year in advance what was coming, and because of that, I am alive today and writing this article. The impossible happened, God gave me a miracle!

Soon, I will be celebrating

the miracle God gave to Mary. The Son of God was born and came into the world to die for our sins. He lived a perfect life, something you and I cannot even dream of. And yet, a savior was born to a virgin. What God did in sending His Son was to empower Him to have the ability to forgive and remove the blockage and bondage of sin in our lives, so we can live in free-

dom now, and have life eternal forever!

If you haven't already done so, I encourage you to receive Christ now through prayer. He will hear you and remove the past, and give you a new beginning! "If the Son therefore shall make you free, you shall be free indeed." John 8:36.

May the joy of knowing God's Son make this Christmas

the greatest ever for you and your family, because receiving Jesus Christ into your life makes the impossible happen!

Merry Christmas!

Pastor Gueary Clendening is a retired minister with the Assemblies of God. He has ministered for over 50 years and resides in Valparaiso.

#### **HOPE GROWS**

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certainty. Serving women and families across Walton and Okaloosa counties, the center provides free, confidential services including pregnancy testing, ultrasounds, parenting programs, counseling and assistance connecting with community resources.

What began as a tribute of love and remembrance has grown into a cornerstone of compassion and care—meeting physical, emotional and spiritual needs at every step. Executive Director Stacey Reed describes it best, "This is a safe place for women to discuss their options and feel supported. Every story matters here."

## Rooted in Love and Legacy

Lauren's Legacy was founded in memory of a young woman whose life continues to touch others through her family's vision of turning loss into purpose. Lauren was known for her compassionate heart and steadfast faith, someone who naturally reached out to help others in need. After her passing, her family turned their grief into purpose, creating a place that would carry on her spirit of love and service.

Lauren's Legacy now stands as a reflection of who she was, offering hope and support to women and families facing some of life's most difficult moments, and that legacy lives on through every client who walks through the doors and every child whose life begins with love and support.

#### **Impact That Matters**

The past year has been one of remarkable growth and impact for Lauren's Legacy. From January through November 2025, the center served 127 clients, provided 686 appointments, administered 86 pregnancy tests and 78 ultrasounds, and supported local families through 535 parenting classes. Each number represents a person—someone who found hope, encouragement and practical help when they needed it most.

#### A Night to Remember: Legacy Night 2025

In August, Lauren's Legacy hosted its first-ever Legacy Night,



a celebration of life, community

and hope. The evening raised an

incredible \$217,000, thanks to

the generosity of local sponsors,

donors and volunteers who share

organization expand its reach,

broaden its services, welcome

more families, and continue

These funds will help the

the center's mission.

meeting growing community needs.

#### **Real Life Impact**

Lauren's Legacy exists to meet people right where they are, offering steady, compassionate help when it's needed most. Access to free pregnancy tests, a no-cost ultrasound, one-on-one education about their options, and a full suite of parenting classes are available free and confidential. When they complete the classes, they receive essential baby items such as car seats, diapers, strollers and clothes—giving them a real boost as they start this chapter.

All services are completely

free and confidential, including pregnancy testing, ultrasounds, parenting classes and referrals for housing, medical and community resources. Anyone in

Continued on page 4



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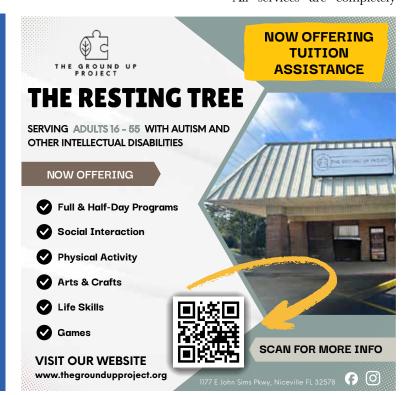
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# A Veteran's Call to Serve Again:

Angel Force Brings Safety and Leadership to Local Schools

By Michelle Ruschman

One of the most important missions we have as a nation is to ensure that our children, teachers, administrators, and the support staff in our schools can focus on education without the distraction of feeling unsafe. Retired veteran Joshua Yirkovsky was inspired to start his private protection company, Angel Force Protection, and his nonprofit organization, Angel Force Foundation, when he saw firsthand what can happen when a school day is halted to deal with an intruder.

"In 2024, I was in the car lane waiting to pick up my kids from a private Christian school. I looked up to see a vagrant pulling on the doors, insisting to be let in, thinking it was the church. He was agitated and using foul language, and I could see the students and teachers through the door, clearly scared, trying to handle it on their own. With my sons being in there, I knew we needed a solution. That was the seed for Angel Force Protection and Angel Force Foundation."



The business and the foundation are two sides of the same coin. The business employs military veterans to become Angel Guards, primarily for schools. The other focuses on providing children, their families, and educators with resources that are "dedicated to advancing school safety through proactive education and comprehensive initiatives." This includes programs like Future Leaders Academy and safety seminars. They also conduct fundraisers so schools have the resources to utilize the instruction and protective services they need to equip their students and staff.

"Schools don't have to use our services, but we do want them to have the option of having safety personnel on-site without worrying about where the backing is coming from."

As a retired 21-year member of the U.S. Navy, Joshua recognized that veterans may leave the career, but the military training, the desire to protect, and the passion to serve are still part of their spirit. It's why they're so suited to protect the vulnerable.

"Our veterans need a sense of purpose. We served our country, and many of us are asking,



'Now what?' We have unique skills and the ability to adapt and overcome in the most adverse situations. We've been trained to be proactive and to see what bad guys look like with smiles on their faces. Being an Angel Guard can be the next chapter. I make sure each applicant is properly vetted, and they go through an extensive physical, emotional, and mental screening to make sure we're putting the right vet at the right school. When they get in there, something amazing happens. They become someone the kids



can rely on, and they become part of that school family. Having an Angel Guard in place frees SROs to be part of the community again, which continues to add another layer of protection for the village we're all a part of."

Not only is Joshua looking to secure the institutions that educate our children, but he wants the students who attend to have the skills to be effective citizens. Future Leaders Academy is his way of serving families, even after the child's school day is over. The lessons are age-appropriate, starting at the age of 7.

Junior Captains (Ages

Continued on next page



#### **Community**





#### **HOPE GROWS**

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need can call 850-880-6287 or visit the website to connect with someone who cares and schedule a confidential appointment.

#### **How to Get Involved**

Lauren's Legacy is a faithbased organization and operates entirely through the generosity of donors, volunteers and community partners. Whether through giving, volunteering or spreading awareness, every act of support helps this mission grow.

To learn more, visit Laurens-Legacy.net or call (850) 880-6287 to find out how you can help.

Together, we can continue to build a community where life is cherished and hope is shared.

16019 Hwy. 331 Business, Suite 10, Freeport, 32439

#### **ANGEL FORCE**

continued from page 3

**7–9):** Young leaders take part in fun, hands-on exercises like group discussions, decision-making games, and interactive leadership challenges. The goal is to instill foundational habits of responsibility and expression.

**Rising Stars (Ages 10–12):** Participants explore leadership through goal-setting activities, debates, and group projects. They'll learn to manage conflict, collaborate effectively, and lead small teams.

Teen Trailblazers (Ages 13–15): Teens take on leadership roles, practice

public speaking, and develop strategic thinking in team-based projects. Ideal for teens preparing for leadership in school and community roles.

Young Visionaries (Ages 16–18): This advanced group dives into case studies, community service projects, and mentorship experiences to refine leadership identity and prepare for future academic and career goals.

If you're interested in learning more about hiring Angel Force Protection or supporting Angel Force Foundation, go to www.angelforcefoundation.org. Joshua Yirkovsky can also be reached by emailing info@angelfp.com or calling 904-436-3883.



**Community** 

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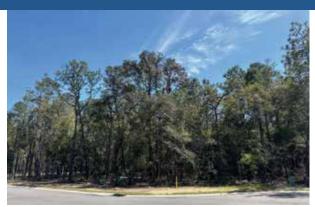
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# What Are You Doing New Year's Eve?

By Christopher Manson

As the countdown to 2026 begins, the Emerald Coast is buzzing with celebrations for every age, every family and every kind of New Year's Eve.

Here's a few of our area faves:

#### Wednesday, December 31 Baytowne New Year's Eve Countdown

The Village of Baytowne Wharf, Miramar Beach, 6 p.m.-1 a.m. | baytownewharf.com

An evening to remember, with fireworks at 8 p.m. and midnight. Plus, kids' activities, face painting, DJ music on the Baytowne Live stage from 6 to 8 p.m., and live music from the Heather Hayes Experience on the Events Plaza stage from 7 p.m. to 1 a.m., drone light shows, and more. Attendees under 21 years old must be accompanied by a legal guardian after 10 p.m.

#### New Year's Eve at HarborWalk Village

HarborWalk Village, Destin, 7 p.m.-1 a.m. | HarborWalkVillage. com

It's a "Grande" celebration on the Destin Harbor, with fireworks (8 p.m. and midnight), live music from the Aces (7 p.m.)



and New Royals (9:30 p.m.), and more festive fun.

#### **New Year's Eve Dinner**

Beach Walk Café, 2700 Scenic Hwy. 98, Destin,

Henderson Park Inn, Times Vary Each Day | opentable.com

Ring in the new year with a chef-inspired dinner, waterfront views, and a sparkling start to 2026 by the shore. Guests must be 13 or older.

#### New Year's Eve Dinner Cruise Aboard the Solaris

Sunquest Cruises, 8330 Mike Hayes Boulevard, Miramar Beach. 8 p.m.-12:30 a.m., Check-in at 7 p.m. | sunquestcruises.com

Enjoy a four-course dinner and dancing under the moon-light aboard the 125-foot Solaris yacht in Sandestin. Special parking available. The New Year's Eve cruise is exclusively for guests age 21 and up, and includes chef-inspired cuisine, a stunning view of the Village

of Baytowne Wharf's midnight fireworks show, party favors, and a champagne toast to get 2026 off to an awesome start. Cost is \$200 per person; make reservations (required) online or call 850.650.2519. A 72-hour cancellation policy applies to this event.

#### Okaloosa Island Boardwalk New Year's Eve Fireworks

The Boardwalk, Okaloosa Island, 8 p.m. | theboardwalkoi.com

Ring in the New Year beachside as fireworks launch from the end of the fishing pier, visible from anywhere along The Boardwalk—restaurants, bars, pier or shoreline. Make it a dinner-and-a-show with a front-row view from one of The Boardwalk's beach-facing restaurants, or grab a treat and spread out along the sand to watch the fireworks light up the night.

#### LuLu's Annual Noon Year's Eve Celebration

LuLu's Destin, Destin, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. | lulusfunfoodmusic.com

A festive, kid-friendly New Year's celebration featuring face painting, live music and entertainment from Capt. Davy and his Pirates, plus family fun on the sandy beach. Kids enjoy their own countdown to Noon with a giant beach ball drop. Perfect for families looking to celebrate early. LuLu's closes at 3 p.m. on December 31.

#### Noon Kids' Eve Beach Ball Drop

The Island Resort, 1500 Miracle Strip Parkway SE, Fort Walton Beach, 11 a.m.-1 p.m. | theislandfl. com

New Year's fun for the little ones, with festive crafts and activities, and a countdown to an early beach ball drop to ring in 2026. Public welcome; free for resort guests. Purchase a day pass at resortpass.com.

#### Noon Year's Eve

HarborWalk Village, Destin, 11 a.m.-Noon | HarborWalkVillage. com

A family-friendly celebration with fun activities, DJ dance party on the lawn, crafts, and an early "smokeshow" fireworks display.

#### Noon Year's Eve Balloon Bash with Bluey and Bingo

Fort SK8 Family Fun Center, 202 Racetrack Road NW, Fort Walton Beach, 10 a.m.-1 p.m. | fortsk8.com

Join kids' favorites Bluey and Bingo for skating, playground,



arcade, games, "themed" snacks, and a balloon drop. Reserve online and save \$5 on tickets, or call 850.863.1223.

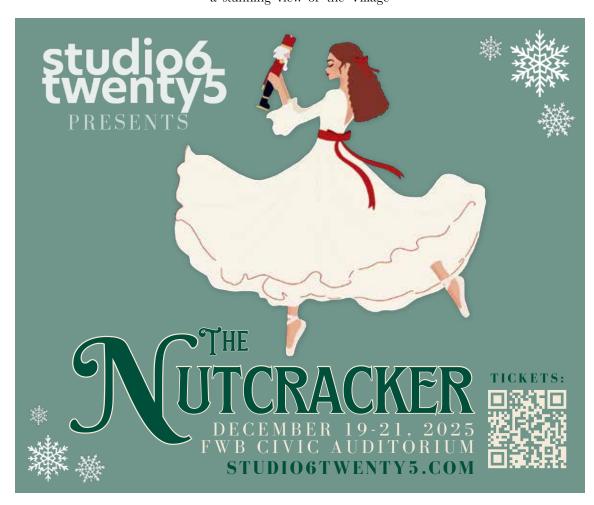
#### **January 1, 2026**

#### Juana's Penguin Plunge 'n Paddle

Juana's Pagodas and Sailors' Grill, Navarre Beach, 9 a.m.-4 p.m. | juanaspagodas.com

The theme of the 2026 Plunge 'n Paddle, benefiting Gulf Coast Kiln Walk Society, is "Freezin' for a Reason." Jump into the Santa Rosa Sound for a fresh start to the new year. There will be a number of tempting raffle items, so get your tickets for \$20 (five tickets in advance, four tickets day of event).

The Gulf Coast Kiln Walk Society's mission is "to promote awareness of the ceramic arts and build a sense of community through clay-related activities, bringing individuals of all ages together to celebrate our heritage and pass it on to future generations." Learn more at gulfcoastkilnwalk.org.







## Cali's To Do In Destin! DECEMBER 2025

**\*Baytowne on Ice** open daily through Feb. 8 at Baytowne Wharf!

Gingerbread Man Ornament Kids Work shop | 8am | Home Depot

Farmers Market | 9am-1pm | Grand

Farmers Market | 10am | Harborwalk

Main Brew Merry Market | 9am | Main

Winter Sandyland | 9am | The Island Resort City of Destin's Painting at the Park | 9am l 206 Harbor Blvd

Breakfast with Santa | 9am | Ovide at

Breakfast With Santa | 10am | The Hender-

Scoops with Santa | 10am | Pink Coyote Dessert Co

Jolly Jubilee | 10am | Destin Commons

Holiday Sip & Shop | 10am | Grand Boule-

Christmas ZOObilee | 10am | Emerald Coast

DHS Holly Jolly Market | 10-3pm | MKAF

Discover Science Saturday | 10am | Emerald

The Mean & Green One - Holiday Toy Drive | 12pm-3pm | Crab Trap Okaloosa

Photos With Santa | 12pm | Parkway Veteri-

Visits with Santa | 1pm | Harborwalk Village Destin Commons Market | 2pm | Destin

Commons

Lantern Parade | 5pm | Baytowne Wharf Karaoke | 6pm | Fatboys Destin Annie – The Musical | 7pm | Emerald Coast

Theatre Company

Karaoke | 8pm | 5 o'Clock Somewhere Baytowne Wharf

Karaoke | 9pm | Fubar

Destin Community Farmers Market | 9am-1pm | Beall's Parking Lot, Destin

DJ Brunch | 10am | Azul @ Harborwalk

Seaside Holiday Market | 10am | Seaside, FL Brunch with Santa | 10am | AJ's on the Bayou Christmas ZOObilee | 10am | Emerald Coast

Jolly Jubilee Holiday Festival | 10am | Destin

Commons
Sinfonia Gulf Coast: Toast 'n Jam – Broadway Holiday the "Calla-way" | 10:30 am | Hotel Effic Sandestin

Santa Paws: Bark Street Market | 11am |

Harborwalk Village

The Mean & Green One – Holiday Toy

Drive | 12pm-3pm | Crab Trap Okaloosa

Christmas Extravaganza | 12pm | Palm Folly

Visits with Santa | 1pm | Harborwalk Village Annie – The Musical | 7pm | Emerald Coast Theatre Company

Karaoke | 9pm | Fubai

Karaoke | 9pm | Outcast Bar & Grill

Free Beach Bonfire/SIN Night | 5pm | Royal

Trivia Night | 6:30pm | Destin Brewery
Trivia Night | 7pm | Beachview Breakfast &

Niceville High School Chorus Holiday Con-cert | 7pm | Mattie Kelly Arts Center

Karaoke | 6pm | AJ's on the Bayou Karaoke | 6pm | Hooters Destin Karaoke | 6pm | Hooters Destin Joy Factory | 6pm | Shoreline Church Trivia Night | 6pm | Rick's Crab Trap FWB Open Mic Night | 7pm | Soundside FWB Bonfire on the Beach | 5pm | The Bay

studiobtwenty5's The Nutcracker Music Match Game Night | 5pm | The Island **Business Entrepreneur Night** | 5pm | Soundside **Run Club** | 5:30pm | Destin Brewery

Holly Jolly Baytowne | 6pm | Baytowne Trivia Night | 6pm | Craft Bar @ The Harbor Annie – The Musical | 7pm | Emerald Coast

Run Club | 5:30pm | Destin Commons x

Theatre Company

Music Bingo | 7pm | Hooters Destin

Karaoke | 7pm | Kenny D's Karaoke | 7pm | AJ's Oyster Shanty

Holiday Sip & Shop | 5pm | ScubaTech Destin Christmas on the Coast | 5pm | Rockin' Tacos
Burn After Tasting Candle Making Class |
6pm | 30A Distilling Co
Little Black Dress Night | 6:30pm-9:30pm |

Fort Comedy Open Mic Standup | 7pm |

Annie – The Musical | 7pm | Emerald Coast

Theatre Company
Karaoke Night | 9pm | Harry T's Lighthouse
Ladies Night | 10pm | McGuire's Destin

Friday Martini Lunch | 11am-4pm | Skybar

Jolly Jubilee Holiday Festival | 3pm | Destin

Locals On The Harbor - Free Beer Friday 5pm | Boathouse Oyster Bar Movies on the Lawn | 5pm | Harborwalk

Free Beach Bonfire | 5pm | Royal Palm Grille Winter Wonderland | 6pm | NWFL Fair

City of Destin: A Christmas Kids Night Out

Movies on the Lawn | 6:30pm | Destin

Annie – The Musical I 7pm IEmerald Coast

Theatre Company
Karaoke | 7pm | Island Wing Company
Salsa & Bachata Dance Lessons | 8pm | Bric

Latin Night | 8pm-2am | Bosforo in Miramar

Karaoke | 8pm | 5 o'Clock Somewhere Baytowne Wharf

Breakfast with Santa | 8am | Rick's Crab Trap Farmers Market | 9am-1pm | Grand Bou-

Destin Holiday Give Back Market | 9am |

Pelican Adventures ashells and Sleigh Bells: The 41st Annual Destin Christmas Parade | 10am | Downtown Destin, U.S. 98

Yule of Yesteryear | 10 am-4 pm | Heritage Museum of NWFL | Val'p PetSmart Adoption Event | 11am | PetSmart

Beachy Little Christmas | 12pm | The Island

Visits with Santa | 1pm | Harborwalk Village

Jolly Jubilee Holiday Festival | 1pm | Destin

A Nutcracker Holiday Afternoon | 1pm | Ovide at Hotel Effie Tuba Christmas | 5pm | Baytowne Wharf

Winter Wonderland | 6pm | NWFL Fair Association

Karaoke | 6pm | Fatboys Destin

Annie - The Musical | 7pm | Emerald Coast

Theatre Company
Sinfonia Gulf Coast: Holiday Pops | 7:30 pm
| Destin–FWB Convention Center
Karaoke | 8pm | 5 o'Clock Somewhere Baytowne Wharf

Karaoke | 9pm | Fubar

Destin Community Farmers Market | 9am-1pm | Beall's Parking Lot, Destin DJ Brunch | 10am | Azul @ Harborwalk Jolly Jubilee Holiday Festival | 10am | Destin

City of Destin's Holly Jolly Market on the Harbor | 11am | 200 Harbor Blvd. Mistletoe Market | Noon-8pm | Emerald

Grande HarborWalk Village | Destin Visits with Santa | 1pm | Harborwalk Village Merry & Bright Market | 1pm | The Market

Dock The Halls Fundraiser | 2pm | Boat-

Destin Lighted Boat Parade | 6pm | Destin Harbor
Annie – The Musical | 7pm | Emerald Coast

Theatre Company
Karaoke | 9pm | Fubar
Karaoke | 9pm | Outcast Bar & Grill

Free Beach Bonfire/SIN Night | 5pm | Royal

Trivia Night | 6:30pm | Destin Brewery
Trivia Night | 7pm | Beachview Breakfast &

Karaoke | 6pm | AJ's on the Bayou Karaoke | 6pm | Hooters Destin Karaoke | 6pm-9pm | Fatboys Destin Joy Factory | 6pm | Shoreline Church Trivia Night | 6pm | Rick's Crab Trap FWB

Annie - The Musical | 10am & 2pm |Emerald

Coast Theatre Company
Bonfire on the Beach | 5pm | The Bay
Music Match Game Night | 5pm | The Island

Run Club | 5:30pm | Destin Brewery Holly Jolly Baytowne | 6pm | Baytowne

Trivia Night | 6pm | Craft Bar @ The Harbor Music Bingo | 7pm | Hooters Destir Karaoke | 7pm | Kenny D's Karaoke | 7pm | AJ's Oyster Shanty

Coastal Christmas – Santa, Horse Drawn Carriage Rides, Live Music | 4pm | Grand

Little Black Dress Night | 6:30pm-9:30pm | Marina Café
Fort Comedy Open Mic Standup | 7pm |

Annie – The Musical I 7pm |Emerald Coast

Theatre Company
Karaoke Night | 9pm | Harry T's Lighthouse
Ladies Night | 10pm | McGuire's Destin

Friday Martini Lunch | 11am-4pm | Skybar

Free Photo With Santa | 2pm | Fudpucker's Jolly Jubilee Holiday Festival | 3pm | Destin

Coastal Christmas – Santa, Horse Drawn Carriage Rides, Live Music | 4pm | Grand

Locals On The Harbor – Free Beer Friday

Village Free Beach Bonfire | 5pm | Royal Palm Grille Grinchmas | 5pm | Baytowne Wharf
Nutcracker Performance by studio6twenty5 | 6pm | FWB Civic Auditorium
Movies on the Lawn | 6:30pm | Destin

Annie – The Musical | 7pm | Emerald Coast

Theatre Company

Karaoke | 7pm | Island Wing Company Salsa & Bachata Dance Lessons | 8pm | Bric

Latin Night | 8pm-2am | Bosforo in Miramar Karaoke | 8pm | 5 o'Clock Somewhere

Baytowne Wharf Farmers Market | 9am-1pm | Grand Bou-

Breakfast With Santa | 9am & 11am Seatings

| Emerald Grande **Jolly Jubilee** | 10am | Destin Commons Cookies & Crafts with The Grump | 12pm |

The Island Resort

Visits with Santa | 1pm | Harborwalk Village

Victorian Christmas Tea | 1-3pm | Heritage Museum of NWFL | Val'p Free Photo with Santa | 2pm | Fudpucker's Annie – The Musical I 2pm & 7pm IEmerald

Coast Theatre Company

Coastal Christmas – Santa, Horse Drawn Carriage Rides, Live Music | 4pm | Grand Boulevard

Nutcracker Performance by studio6twentv5 | 6pm | FWB Civic Auditorium

Karaoke | 6pm | Fatboys Destin Karaoke | 8pm | 5 o'Clock Somewhere Baytowne Wharf Karaoke | 9pm | Fubar

Destin Community Farmers Market | 9am-1pm | Beall's Parking Lot, Destin

Breakfast With Santa | 9am & 11am Seatings | Emerald Grande DJ Brunch | 10am | Azul @ Harborwalk Jolly Jubilee Holiday Festival | 10am | Destin

Christmas Brunch Market | 11am | Sound-side FWB

Cookies & Crafts with The Grump | 12pm | The Island Resort

Visits with Santa | 1pm | Harborwalk Village

Annie - The Musical | 2pm & 6pm | Emerald

Coast Theatre Company

Free Photo with Santa | 2pm | Fudpucker's

Coastal Christmas – Santa, Live Music | 2pm | Grand Boulevard Nutcracker Performance by studio6twen-

ty5 | 2pm | FWB Auditorium Karaoke | 9pm | Fubar Karaoke | 9pm | Outcast Bar & Grill

Coastal Christmas – Santa, Horse Drawn Carriage Rides, Live Music | 4pm | Grand Free Beach Bonfire/SIN Night | 5pm | Royal

Trivia Night | 6:30pm | Destin Brewery
Trivia Night | 7pm | Beachview Breakfast &

23 ..... Coastal Christmas – Santa, Horse Drawn Carriage Rides, Live Music | 4pm | Grand

Karaoke | 6pm | AJ's on the Bayou Karaoke | 6pm | Hooters Destin
Karaoke | 6pm | Fatboys Destin
Joy Factory | 6pm | Shoreline Church
Fort Walton Beach Christmas Parade |

6:30pm | Eglin Parkway, FWB **Trivia Night** | 6pm | Rick's Crab Trap FWB

Bonfire on the Beach | 5pm | The Bay Music Match Game Night | 5pm | The Island

Trivia Night | 5pm | Down Island

Run Club | 5:30pm | Destin Brewery Holly Jolly Baytowne | 6pm | Baytowne

Trivia Night | 6pm | Craft Bar @ The Harbor Music Bingo | 7pm | Hooters Destin Karaoke | 7pm | Kenny D's Karaoke | 7pm | AJ's Oyster Shanty

MERRY CHRISTMAS!
Christmas Dinner Buffet | 5pm | The Island Resort

Jolly Jubilee | 10am | Destin Commons Friday Martini Lunch | 11am-4pm | Skybar

Fire Pit Friday | 4pm | 30A Distilling Co Locals On The Harbor – Free Beer Friday |

5pm | Boathouse Oyster Bar Movies on the Lawn | 5pm | Harborwalk

Village
Free Beach Bonfire | 5pm | Royal Palm Grille
Movies on the Lawn | 6:30pm | Destin

Karaoke | 7pm | Island Wing Company Salsa & Bachata Dance Lessons | 8pm | Bric Latin Night | 8pm-2am | Bosforo in Miramar

Karaoke | 8pm | 5 o'Clock Somewhere Baytowne Wharf

Farmers Market | 9am-1pm | Grand Bou-

Farmers Market | 10am | Harborwalk Village Adoption Event at PetSmart | | 11am |

Smart Destin **30A Gingerbread House Smash** | 3pm & 6pm | 30A Distilling Co

Karaoke | 6pm | Fatboys Destin Karaoke | 8pm | 5 o'Clock Somewhere Baytowne Wharf Karaoke | 9pm | Fubar

Destin Community Farmers Market | 9am-1pm | Beall's Parking Lot, Destin DJ Brunch | 10am | Azul @ Harborwalk

Jolly Jubilee Holiday Festival | 10am | Destin Trivia Night | 6pm | The Wharf 850

Karaoke | 9pm | Fubar Karaoke | 9pm | Outcast Bar & Grill Free Beach Bonfire/SIN Night | 5pm | Royal

Trivia Night | 6:30pm | Destin Brewery
Trivia Night | 7pm | Beachview Breakfast &

Karaoke | 6pm | AJ's on the Bayou Karaoke | 6pm | Hooters Destin
Karaoke | 6pm | Fatboys Destin
Trivia Night | 6pm | Rick's Crab Trap FWB

Noon Year's Eve Celebration | 10am | Fud-pucker's Beachside Bar & Grill Noon Year's Eve Beach Ball Drop | 11am |

Noon Year's Eve Bash | 11am | FortSk8 Noon Year's Eve | 12pm | Harborwalk Village Noon Year's Eve | 12pm | LuLu's Destin Baytowne NYE Countdown | 6pm | Bay-

New Year's Eve Fireworks Cruise | 7pm | Sunvenuture Crab Island Cruise New Year's Eve Celebration | 7pm | Harbor-

New Year's Eve Celebration | 7pm | Skybar New Year's Eve Celebration | 8pm | Oka-

New Year's Eve Dinner Cruise | 8pm | Sunquest Cruises – Solaris Yacht

NYE BassDrop 2025 | 8:55pm | Harbor

New Year's Eve Denim & Diamonds Bash



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# Baytowne Wharf Shines Bright: A Season of Holiday Magic & a Dazzling Countdown to 2026

The holidays sparkle a little brighter at The Village of Baytowne Wharf, where twinkling lights, festive music, icy winter fun and cheerful streets filled with jolly décor create a wonderland for all ages. From magical concerts and visits with Santa to nightly light shows and seasonal skating, Baytowne invites families, friends and holiday lovers alike to rediscover the joy and wonder of the season.

#### **Wednesday Night Holiday Concerts Holiday Edition** + Visits with Santa

Get into the holiday spirit! Listen to some of your favorite holiday classics from 6-8 p.m. during the holiday edition of Baytowne Wharf's Wednesday Night Concert Series. Each concert features a festive choreographed light show and fun. Visit with St. Nick and share your holiday wish list Dec. 10 and 17, 6-8 p.m. for a Holiday Concert and Visits with Santa. No cost to attend! PLUS, visit with Santa from 6-8 p.m. during Tuba Christmas on Dec. 14!

December 10 | TBD **December 17** | The Magic of Christmas: A Holiday Show-

case Presented by Alfonso Academy in partnership with Sur le Pointe Academy

#### Lighting up the holiday nights are Nights of Lights!

Dust off those skates and get in the winter spirit at The Village of Baytowne Wharf's Baytowne on Ice. For those visitors who miss the cold and ice, this seasonal ice rink is the perfect opportunity to share some of your favorite holiday traditions, open now - Feb. 8th. Hours vary daily. Check the schedule at baytownewharf.com. The

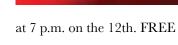


and \$3 skate rentals. Skaters must be at least 3 years of age and fit into appropriately sized skates. Children under the age of 6 must be accompanied by a parent or adult family member. Call 850-428-2736 or visit baytownewharf.com to fill out the waiver before you arrive.

#### A Who-liday spectacular-**Grinchmas**

#### December 12th & 19th, 5-9 p.m.

During this holiday season, put a little snark in your holiday spirit with The MEAN One on December 12th and 19th! Meet the maven of mischief himself for a photo opportunity from 5-7 p.m., then enjoy a movie showing of The Grinch starting



It's a Tuba Christmas

**December 13 | 5-7 p.m.** Join Baytowne for a free, special, unique holiday event from 5-7 p.m. at The Village of Baytowne Wharf. Enjoy your favorite holiday classics with Tuba Christmas and visits with Santa!

#### **Baytowne Countdown** NYE

#### December 31

After a full season of holiday magic, ring in the New Year at Baytowne Countdown | NYE from 6 p.m. - 1 a.m. at The Village of Baytowne Wharf's endof-the-year celebration! It's an evening to remember with two breathtaking fireworks displays at 8 p.m. and midnight. Enjoy

fun for kids and kids at heart from 6-8 p.m. with face painting, kids' activities and LIVE music on the Baytowne LIVE stage. But, the fun doesn't stop there! Dance the night away with live music from The Heather Hayes Experience from 7 p.m. until 1 a.m. featured on the Events Plaza Stage. End the night with a spectacular, midnight fireworks show. There is no better place to ring in 2026!

For 21 and over after 10 p.m. Twenty and under must be accompanied by a legal guardian after 10 p.m.

Beach TV LIVE! Join Beach TV LIVE during the holidays and every day year-'round! All holiday events are free!









# Making Time for You: Why the Holidays Can Be the **Perfect Season for Cosmetic Surgery**



By Dr. Clark, BLUEWATER PLASTIC SURGERY

The holidays are filled with shopping, travel, and family gatherings. But, for many people along the Emerald Coast, this season also presents a unique opportunity: the chance to finally schedule a surgical procedure they've been considering. While it may seem counterintuitive to think about cosmetic surgery during the busiest time of year,



December often provides the ideal window for both recovery and renewal. For many of our patients at Bluewater Plastic Surgery, this season becomes the perfect moment to invest in themselves—something we see often as patients appreciate both the flexibility the holidays allow and the attentive, expert care we offer throughout recovery.

#### **Built-In Recovery Time**

Most cosmetic surgeries require at least a few days of rest and limited activity. The holiday season often includes builtin vacation days, office closures and school breaks. This natural downtime makes it easier to schedule procedures like breast augmentation, liposuction, tummy tucks or facelifts without missing significant work or family obligations. Many patients

find it comforting to recover while surrounded by supportive loved ones at home.

#### **Starting the New Year** with Confidence

January is naturally a season of fresh starts. For patients who undergo procedures in December, the new year often begins with renewed energy and confidence. Whether it's restoring body contours with liposuction, rejuvenating facial features with a facelift, or reclaiming pre-pregnancy shape with a mommy makeover, surgical solutions can provide dramatic, long-lasting results that align with new year goals.

#### **Combining Procedures for Comprehensive Results**

The holiday season is also a time when patients consider

combining procedures. For example, pairing a tummy tuck with breast surgery in a mommy makeover can provide more balanced, transformative results while limiting recovery to a single period. Similarly, combining facial surgery with non-surgical treatments like injectables or medical-grade skincare can help maximize and maintain results.

#### **Privacy and Discretion**

Another benefit we value at Bluewater Plastic Surgery is discretion. With many friends and colleagues traveling or celebrating, it's easier to step back for a short period without raising questions. Many patients appreciate the opportunity to move forward discreetly during the season, knowing that holiday schedules naturally provide privacy. By the time normal routines resume in January, swelling and bruising have often subsided, leaving only the refreshed results. Choosing a board-certified plastic surgeon is essential in ensuring these procedures are performed safely, discreetly, and with exceptional outcomes, especially during a busy season.

To schedule a private consultation and explore your options, contact Bluewater Plastic Surgery today. As a board-certified plastic surgeon, my practice is dedicated exclusively to cosmetic surgery, and I have performed thousands of procedures over the last 25 years. My surgical focus includes the face, breast, and body, allowing me to tailor procedures to each patient's goals with precision and experience. My highest priorities are patient safety and superior results. With

more than 300 five-star reviews, I let my patients' experiences speak for themselves.

bluewaterplasticsurgery.com

# Bluewater

PLASTIC SURGERY

Steven J. Clark, MD, DMD, FACS

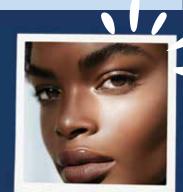
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## **Trends & Treasures!**













#### Glow All Season: Holiday Beauty, Gifts & Glam Pure & Couture

The holidays may be merry and bright, but they're also busy—making a little self-care the perfect way to stay glowing all December long. At Pure & Couture, owner Adrianne Brackett and her talented team have everything you need to refresh, recharge and step into the season looking and feeling your best

Ready for a festive transformation? Pure & Couture's hand-tied hair extensions add instant volume, thickness and confidence, making them a thoughtful gift for anyone dreaming of a holiday makeover. Gift cards are another foolproof favorite, offering your loved ones the chance to enjoy color, styling, extensions, makeup services, pampering facials or even a soothing therapeutic massage.

Stocking stuffers are covered, too. From luxury travel bars and candles to essential styling products, Pure & Couture offers beautifully curated items with custom gift wrapping for effortless holiday giving. Prefer convenience? Enjoy curbside pickup and easy online ordering.

Visit Pure & Couture at City Market Beachside or stop by their second location—Pure Collective Salon—at Grand Boulevard at Sandestin, 600 Grand Blvd., Suite 102.

(850) 424-3935 pureandcouture.com | purecollectivesalon.com

#### Where Holiday Magic Becomes Personal Frill Seekers Gifts & Personalized Fabulous Finds

For gifts that spark joy and feel truly one-of-a-kind, Frill Seekers Gifts in City Market Bayside is Destin's holiday go-to. Known for its charming Southern style and signature personalization, Frill Seekers transforms ordinary presents into meaningful

keepsakes—perfect for teachers, coaches, neighbors, co-workers and everyone on your Christmas list.

Step inside and discover a wonderland of monogrammed treasures, coastal-inspired gifts, fine stationery, whimsical hostess presents, custom acrylic name tags for stockings, personalized notecards, invitations, and so much more. Their beloved "storyline" photo cards are a festive way to share your family highlights, while their custom monogramming service adds a heartfelt touch to any gift. From elegant stationery sets to thoughtful everyday accessories, each piece is designed to be memorable, cherished and uniquely yours.

With famously fast turncomplimentary gift wrap and a team that delights in helping shoppers find the perfect present, it's no surprise Frill Seekers is a longtime favorite—and a place Santa himself is rumored to visit. Shop online for convenience or stop by the store for a joyful, boutique holiday experience. M-F 10 a.m.-5 p.m./Saturdays 10 a.m. -2 p.m., located at City Market Bayside off Hwy. 98 in Destin. FREE Gift Wrapping! Phone orders welcome!

(850) 460-2700 FrillSeekersGifts.com

#### Timeless Treasures for the Season Beyond Measure Fine Jewelry

This Christmas, elevate your gift giving with handcrafted pieces that shimmer with artistry and meaning. At Beyond Measure Fine Jewelry, owner and designer Ashleigh Woolly brings her passion for fine craftsmanship to every custom creation—transforming 18k gold, diamonds and vibrant gemstones into wearable works of art. Her showroom is filled with couture designs and fashion-forward pieces perfect for

the holiday season, each one reflecting her signature blend of elegance, creativity and modern style.

For those seeking something truly one-of-a-kind, Ashleigh of-fers private design consultations, guiding clients through the process of creating their dream piece—whether it's a symbolic pendant, heirloom redesign, gemstone ring or that unforget-table holiday engagement. With a reputation for cutting-edge trends, exceptional sparkle and concierge-level service, Beyond Measure continues to shine as a local favorite and a Best in Destin nominee.

Looking for a meaningful Christmas gift? A dazzling ring? A custom necklace? Or simply the joy of opening a box filled with brilliance? Whatever is on your wish list, Beyond Measure is ready to make it sparkle.

(850) 424-7011

Facebook.com/beyondmeasurejew-elers

beyond measure jewelry. com

#### Gift an Experience! CRYO850 Performance and Recovery Center

There is no better gift than an experience... and no better experience than one that elevates your health or the health of someone you love. CRYO850 has something for everyone on your Christmas list! Owner Amy Milligan polled her customers for suggestions to create the 12 Deals of Christmas — 12 amazing, new holiday specials starting as low as \$59 and including something for everyone on your list, youngest or old.

- 1. Warm Me Up!
- 2. Stay Active Muscle Recovery
- 3. Breathe Easy
- 4. Tighten and Tone
- 5. Glow Up!
- 6. European Spa Day
- 7. Family Time
- 8. Jump Start EMS Fitness
- 9. Holiday Detox
- 10. One Month of Love

11. Student Season Pass12. Partner Up for Health

All specials are included on the website through 12/25/25. Treat yourself and those you love. CRYO850 has served the Emerald Coast since 2019. Locally owned and operated, CRYO850 is building a community of health! "We look forward to seeing you soon! Happy Holidays and Merry Christmas!"

CRYO850 also offers individual services and discounted Punch Cards, Passes and Memberships along with discounts for Military, First Responders and Students under 25. www. cryo850.com

#### Unlock Your Best Home Sale Yet Brian K. Locicero,

### REALTOR® | BeOnTheCoast.com

Thinking about selling? Local REALTOR® Brian K. Locicero has helped thousands of homeowners do it faster, smoother and for top dollar — and now he's sharing the same proven strategies in his popular book. Inside, readers will find practical, easy-to-use tips on pricing, staging, timing, negotiation and understanding today's market so sellers can walk confidently into their next move.

Brian's goal is simple: empower sellers with the knowledge to make the smartest decisions possible. "I've provided an effective guide to ensure the most successful transaction possible," he says. And his track record proves it. One Destin homeowner shared, "Because of Brian's efforts, we quickly sold our home and purchased a 30A beachfront property below asking price."

From maximizing curb appeal to winning in multiple-offer situations, Brian's expertise gives sellers a true edge. If you're ready to sell smarter — not harder — this guide is the place to start. Destin Life readers can get it FREE by calling

the number below. (850) 739-3800 | BeOnThe-Coast.com

#### Holiday Sweetness Awaits: Indulge in Christmas Cupcake Heaven Smallcakes Destin: A Cupcakery & Creamery

December is the sweetest month of the year at Smallcakes Destin, where every day brings a new reason to indulge. Let Smallcakes do the holiday baking with your imagination perfect for parties, office events, family gatherings, or simply treating yourself on Christmas morning. Their festive lineup includes cozy seasonal flavors like Peppermint Crunch, Chocolate Snowball, Salted Banana Pretzel, Eggnog Cheesecake, Hot Cocoa, Gingerbread and more, each one baked fresh daily and sure to bring winter-wonderland joy with every bite.

Smallcakes specializes in custom holiday cupcakes, edible logos and images, gourmet creations, and even "pupcakes" for your four-legged friends. Beyond cupcakes, you'll find housemade ice cream in 12 rotating flavors, jumbo cookies, gourmet popcorn, brownies, cupcake-in-a-jar gifts and cookie cakes—plus sample-size fun with their popular 12-pack of assorted minis.

With limited quantities available each day, pre-ordering is encouraged for holiday events or gift giving. Call 850-842-9002 to reserve your favorites, or choose DoorDash or curbside pickup for easy holiday convenience.

For decadent desserts that make every celebration a little merrier, Smallcakes Destin is your Christmas cupcake head-quarters.

Hours: Mon.-Sat. 11 a.m.-7 p.m.; Sun. 11 a.m.-4 p.m. (850) 842-9002 SmallcakesDestin.com Follow @SmallCakesofDestin







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# "Reel Talk" from the City of Destin



Mayor Bobby Wagner and PIO Tamara Young, PhD

By Tamara Leigh Young, PhD. Public Information DIRECTOR FOR THE WORLD'S Luckiest Fishing Village

# Mayor's 'Who's the Merriest?' **Choice Award**

It's time for more "reel" talk from the City of Destin's Mayor, Bobby Wagner, and me.

TY: 'Tis the season to sparkle! Every year we have some great residents and businesses

who light things up with their holiday lights. The city does its part, too, with lights around our village and the sweet, annual Christmas tree lighting at the Community Center (this year held December 4th).

**BW:** That tree lighting is one of my favorite nights of the year. It's simple and full of heart, and it reminds me how much this community loves coming together. My goal this year is to take that night and ripple it out across Destin in new ways.

TY: A favorite is when residents and businesses join in, and we try to encourage that with the city's Christmas Outdoor Decorating Contest. People can find out more about that contest on our website under "News and Info," but, basically, we recognize a Best Decorated Home, Best Decorated Business, Best Organization and Best Overall Holiday theme. People need to make sure they turn in a nomination to be considered (It's free to do so, of course.) at (850) 654-5184 or emailRecreation@ cityofdestin.com to enter.

BW: I love a good competition, especially when it involves holiday lights. Every year, I get asked about the city "adding



more lights," and while I never disagree, there's only so much we can budget. That's why this year I'm turning up the heat and encouraging local businesses and residents to help us bring more magic to our municipality. The more people who jump in, the brighter Destin feels.

TY: In that same spirit but on a different timeline and with a twist, I know you and I are excited to try a "Mayor's 'Who's the Merriest?' Choice Award" this year. Can you give the readers any hints on what you're looking for to be the best of the best?

BW: I'm looking for heart more than anything. Funny, creative, coastal, classic, handmade, totally unique... it all counts. I just want to see the displays that make Destin feel connected and cheerful. If you

put in the effort, if it brings joy to your neighbors, if it makes a kid laugh or a parent pause for a moment, you're in the running. And instead of one big reveal at the end, we'll be doing weekly shout-outs all December long. It's a way for us to celebrate the season together as it unfolds.

TY: You know, they say you can learn a lot about a person by how they handle tangled Christmas lights. How does our Mayor fare in that battle?

**BW:** I THRIVE in the tangled chaos of Christmas lights. Every year, I do my best to put away the lights neatly, but it never fails that they are scattered by next year. But that's part of the charm of the season. Not everything has to be perfect to be meaningful. And that's why I hope people jump into this 'Who's the Merriest?' theme with us. Whether it's a porch wreath or a full winter wonderland, it all adds to the magic of Destin in December.

Please join the fun for the "Mayor's Who's the Merriest?" Choice Award, and let's make our city shine a little brighter this year. You can send your photos and mailing address to publicinfo@cityofdestin.com





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# Simplifying Medicare Advantage vs. Supplement Choices



By Greg Durette, Florida Health Connector

This is the time of year when you should review your Medicare options and make important decisions about your coverage for 2026.

Right now, we are in the Annual Election Period (AEP) for all Medicare beneficiaries. It is often referred to as the Annual Open Enrollment Period. This annual event runs from October 15th through December 7th.

Because this period allows ALL Medicare eligible folks to make switches and changes to their plans, it is the most heavily advertised time of the year...not like I have to tell you that! Folks on Original Medicare (Parts A&B), Supplements (MediGap), Stand Alone Prescription Plans (Part D) and Advantage Plans have a chance to pretty much do anything they want with their coverage mix. The hard part comes with sorting it all out.

One of the things I often talk about with Medicare beneficiaries around this time of year is to make sure you don't get so overwhelmed by all the information out there that you run out of time to take action. It can sometimes become "paralysis by analysis" syndrome. Remember, the AEP ends on December 7th!

Figuring out which coverage options are best for you can be confusing at any age. But, understanding healthcare options

for those 65 and older can be even more difficult.

I suggest considering these three things when shopping for Medicare Advantage/Supplement plans:

- Choice: When it comes to Medicare, one size does not fit all what works for your neighbor (or doctor/provider!) might not work best for you. Take the time to learn and understand the benefits and costs of each plan so you can feel confident in your decision and your health care coverage. Remember, you are getting the best for you, not your doctor or other provider.
- Care: Care starts with a strong relationship with your primary care provider. If your plan has a network, make sure you're comfortable with the doctors and hospitals in that network. Check to see if your plan will coordinate your care with the rest of your providers—in and out of state.
- Experience: Medicare can be complex and confusing. It's important to find a seasoned agent/broker that works for you and supports you throughout your health care journey with plan benefits and resources that can help you live more and worry less about out of pocket costs.

Since Medicare Advantage Plans are offered by private companies, one excellent feature is they have more freedom and motivation to include extra benefits such as vision, hearing, gym memberships, dental, overthe-counter pharmacy items and more.

However, it is important to note that, not only do Medicare Advantage plans vary by state, but are different right down to each individual county in each state. Supplements are universal regardless of state/county, but often times cost more premium per month and do not cover pre-



scriptions, requiring additional premium costs to pick up that coverage (Part D).

Your sibling in North Dakota is not going to have the same insurance company/coverage options you would in your Florida county. Try not to get trapped into believing the Supplement terms and Advantage are the same. It is critical to know your specific differences before making a choice that works for you.

This is why it is vitally important to work with a local agent that knows the area and understands the benefits landscape as it applies to you. A famous actor or retired athlete on TV touting a toll-free number from who knows where will likely not.

Based in Niceville, Greg Durette is a qualified, licensed agent with Florida Health Connector providing Medicare throughout the state of Florida. He has been in the insurance industry for over 42 years and can be reached at his office number of 850-842-2400 or mobile at 978-509-2941.



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# **Vets Helping Vets & First Responders:**

# What Does 'Giving Back' Look Like For You?

By Marta Rose-Thorpe

For years, Jimy Thorpe had felt the urge to give back. A U.S. Army Veteran who served during the Gulf War, Jimy had always held the highest regard for the men and women who serve our country and keep us safe. This group also includes First Responders – the men and women who keep our communities safe. In 2014, he created the tagline "Vets Helping Vets" - later elevated to "Vets Helping Vets & First Responders" - and decided to start giving what he had to give: AC units. Jimy owns A Superior Mechanical, a local business which he launched in 2002. "We are honored to give thanks to the men and women who put their lives on the line every day for the citizens of our community," he says.

In the beginning, Jimy and his team decided to give away eight AC units per year. Veterans and First Responders were encouraged to apply online at ASuperiorMechanical.com; the Giveaway was open to all who have served in the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, Coast Guard, and all First Responders, including EMT/Medics, Police, Sheriffs and Fire Fighters. American Legion Post 392 in Panama City met and voted on all submissions each quarter, selecting one Veteran in need and one First Responder in need to be awarded the units.

In 2015, the Giveaway began taking the form of a quarterly appreciation lunch at Harley-Davidson of Panama City Beach. The first event hosted around 40 guests and several local businesses co-sponsored. The next lunch brought in a few more guests and sponsors, and the Vet Center and other veteran-related organizations joined in. As the word-of-mouth continued, the guest list grew. By 2017, the event had moved to Texas Roadhouse PCB and grew through the years to host around 380+ guests each time. In 2019, Pastor David Butler of Faith Assembly Church in Miramar Beach (AKA "The Rock & Roll Church") invited Jimy to host a quarterly appreciation lunch there, to reach Veterans and First Responders in the Walton and Okaloosa areas. This lunch took place quarterly, for five years, during which Jimy gave away 12 AC units, including installation, per year. "I feel that giving back to Veterans and First Responders is like taking the time to help my father,"

says Jimy, whose father served in the U.S. Marines. "It's something that comes second nature; it's instinctive and something that's driven in me."

The next Veterans & First Responders Appreciation Lunch takes place on Tuesday, April 21, 2026, from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Niceville Community Center, 204 Partin Drive North, Niceville, FL 32578. The event will include a hot lunch catered by Swiftly Catered, a brief welcome from the sponsors and supporters, and the AC Giveaway. This event is supported and sponsored by the Niceville Community Center, Niceville High School (who will present the colors), United Community Bank, Blanken Management, and



Beachworx CoWorking Spaces. Walton and Okaloosa County businesses are encouraged to sponsor; for details, contact Marta Thorpe at (850) 814-3822. To register to win an AC unit, visit ASuperiorMechanical.com and go to ABOUT US > HVAC GIVEAWAY.

Thorpe says he hopes his AC giveaways serve as an example to the community of how others can give back. "Let us be your template," he shares. "For a long time, I felt the desire to somehow give back, and after talking with my wife about what this would look like, we realized we should give back what we have to give: AC systems. Any business — any person — can do the same and find their own way to give back."







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## I'm Not Your Friend... I Am Not Your Friend

### Why Today's Real Estate Market Demands Professionalism Over Friendship



By Paul Andres Domenech

"What's the market like right now?" Hot or cold? Strong or weak? Good or bad?

Those questions dominate real estate conversations today. And while all of those descriptions can be debated, the truth is simple: "good" and "bad" are often just matters of perspective. What truly matters is how you respond to the conditions in front of you.

Real estate professionals are trained to study the past-comparable sales, trends and historical data, to predict future value. When homes sell quickly and multiple offers are common, consistency feels comforting. It becomes our friend. But when the environment changes, that

become a liability.

The past is not a guarantee of the future. What was once "the future" is now the past, and today's market is clearly different. Homes are sitting longer. Price reductions are more frequent. Listings are expiring. This is not a broken marketit's a changing one. And change exposes whether decisions are being made based on current conditions or outdated expecta-

Think of it like stepping back into a sport you once played. You might know the rules, but if you aren't conditioned and in rhythm, jumping into competition can lead to costly mistakes. Real estate works the same way. Many people know the rules. Fewer are actively in the game, adjusting daily to the realities of today's marketplace.

When conditions shift, it's easy to label the moment as "bad." But stormy weather doesn't stop progress, it creates opportunity. While others wait

same consistency can quietly for perfect conditions, those willing to adapt gain ground. Advantage is built in uncomfortable moments

> The key is operating in the present. Learn from the past. Act in the now. Prepare for what's ahead.

> This is where process matters most: Position, Preparation, Promotion and Price. Markets should never be reduced to oneword labels like hot or cold. Perspective matters. What benefits one seller may challenge another. What truly matters is clarity around expectations and real-time market position.

> The best way to gain that clarity is to work with someone who is actively in the gamesomeone showing up daily regardless of conditions. If an agent thrived only when everything felt easy, that doesn't make today's market "bad." It simply means they were built for favorable conditions, not challenging

> Today's environment is not built for friends.

- Longer days on market.
- More negotiation.
- More strategy.
- More accountability.

Kindness is appreciated, but kindness alone does not sell homes.

A real estate transaction exists to serve the client—not the agent. It requires the highest level of service, integrity, and professionalism. A true professional is not your friend. A true professional is your asset.

To create clarity when choosing representation, consider these four questions—the 4 P's:

**Position:** Where is your agent positioned right now in the market? How many listings do they personally carry? How many are under contract? Results reveal real-time effectiveness-logos do not.

**Preparation:** What specific steps must be taken to position your home for the highest net in the shortest time? Preparation is not generic—it is strategic.

**Promotion:** How will your home stand out from other options buyers are seeing? Visibility without distinction is noise.

**Price:** What will the home realistically sell for today? And, if it doesn't sell within 30 days, what is the adjustment strategy? Pricing should follow buyer behavior, not seller hope.

Confidence is not always comfortable, but it is clear. When you work with someone who is navigating the current market daily and producing consistent results, certainty replaces fear. The market is neither hot nor cold, it simply is.

You don't need a friend.

You need an asset.

And when that asset earns trust through consistency, execution and integrity, something stronger than friendship forms—a professional partnership built on results and mutual respect.

I may not be your friend on day one. But, I will work to earn that title. And to the clients who trusted me and became friends along the way-thank you for the opportunity to serve you.

# A House Sold Name



DOMENECH GROUP

**Emerald Coast Real Estate** 

**KW** EMERALD COAST

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Paul@TheDomenechGroup.com (850) 543-1418

thedomenechgroup.com



# Your 2025 Guide to Gift Giving

By Christopher Manson

The holiday savings at **Ecco Motors** proved so appealing that Santa had decided to ditch the ol' sleigh. Now through December 31, Ecco offers \$500 off all Sierra LSV models. Sleek, stylish and built for performance, it's "the perfect present for under the palm tree." Ecco Motors is located at 147 Professional Place in Miramar Beach. Call 850.837.2600 or visit eccomotors.com. For sales and custom builds, visit their Destin location at 36058 Emerald Coast Parkway across from Regatta

Mr. Claus liked what he saw at Electric Cart Company in Santa Rosa Beach, too. Located at 5426 U.S. Highway 98 West, Electric Cart Company's showroom boasts test drivable carts, both gas and electric. Call 850.622.2000 or visit electriccartcompany.com.

Destin's **McCaskill & Company** offers a variety of fine jewelry gift ideas that will add some sparkle to the holidays, from pearl necklaces and earrings to diamond engage-

ment rings (now, there's a Christmas to remember). Custom-made pieces from top jewelry designers are available, too, plus lots more. Located at 13390 Highway 98 West. Call 850.650.2262 or visit mccaskilland-company.com.

Deck your home in holiday greenery with festive pots, stylish planters and more from **PC-**

**Beach Pots & Planters**. The Panama City Beach retailer offers everything you could imagine to make your space merry and bright. Located at 12405 Panama City Beach Parkway. Call 850.960.7687 or email pcbpotsnplanters@gmail.com.

For the people on your shopping list that love to eat — and who doesn't, really? — pick up a gift card for \$25 (or more!) at some of our favorite restaurants: **AJ's** (locations in Destin, Fort Walton Beach, Okaloosa Island and Grayton Beach), **Tailfins** (Destin Harbor), **Auston's on 98** (Miramar Beach), **The Boathouse** (Destin Harbor),



Fudpucker's (Destin – check out their one-of-a-kind gift shop, too), **Crispy Cajun Chicken** (Destin), **FUBAR Pizza Bar** (Okaloosa Island), and the **Saltwater Restaurants** family of irresistible eateries – Surf Hut (Miramar Beach), The Crab Trap (Destin and the Okaloosa Island Boardwalk), Rockin' Tacos (Okaloosa Island Boardwalk), AL's Beach Club (Okaloosa Island Boardwalk) and Floyd's Shrimp House (Okaloosa Island Boardwalk).

At **Beverly Hills Day Spa,** 30-minute massages – Swedish, aromatherapy, prenatal, deep tissue, hot stone, reflexology and

more – start at \$50, and that's just one of many spa services available. Purchase an instant gift certificate at beverlyhillsday-spa.com. Located at 114 Palmetto Drive Suite 6 in Destin. Call 850.654.8544 to find out more.

Other looking good / feeling good options include gift cards from Coastal Protein & Energy (facebook.com/coastal-protein) . . . Bluewater Plastic Surgery in Niceville – and coming in January 2026 to Watersound (bluewaterplasticsurgery.com) . . . and Niceville's Gulf Coast Dental – who can turn down a teeth whitening treatment? (gulfcoastdental.com)

Judging by the lovely tree photo posted on their Facebook page, **Blue Bay Lifestyle Co.** is serious about this whole Christmas thing. Check out a wide selection of men's and women's apparel, shoes, accessories and gifts, including such quality brands as Vuori, Liverpool Los Angeles, Hobo Bags, Maui Jim Sunglasses, and more. Located at 27 Racetrack

Road, Fort Walton Beach. Call 850.374.8236 or visit bluebay-lifestyle.com.

And while you're in the neighborhood, stop by **Run With It** to satisfy the running/walking aficionado on your shopping list. 850.243.1007.

**Lisa Turpin** offers private personal training, a/k/a health and well-being enhancement. Look for Lisa Turpin Fitness on Facebook, call 850.974.2005, or email Lisa. Turpin8r@gmail.com.

The arts and culture lover in your life will appreciate a **Mattie Kelly Arts Foundation** Membership, starting at \$75. Benefits include free access to Concerts in the Village, discounts on Festival of the Arts merch, and members-only ticket pricing. Help keep the arts thriving by calling 850.650.2226 or visiting mkaf.org.

More live entertainment options include tickets to studio6twenty5's production of **The Nutcracker**, December 19-21 at the Fort Walton Beach Civic

Continued on page 24







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# Last-Minute Gifts That Make a Big Local Impact

Skip the Shipping Stress: 20+ Thoughtful Finds Discovered Right Here on the Emerald Coast



By Danica LaFaire, Fish Window Cleaning of Northwest Florida

The holidays always seem to move faster than we do. One minute we're planning ahead, and the next we're thinking, "Wait... I still need a gift."

The good news? Some of the most meaningful last-minute gifts aren't ordered online — they're discovered right here at home. When we shop local, we invest in the Emerald Coast, support families and strengthen the small businesses that give our communities their personality and heart.

At Fish Window Cleaning, we have the unique perspective of seeing the Emerald Coast community and its vibrant businesses up close every day. It's honestly the best part of the job! We love being part of a community filled with incredible local shops and creators. Here are just a handful of our clients that make last-minute gifting both easy and genuinely enjoyable.

## Jewelry, Boutiques & Apparel

**Klara Haloho** — Destin: Known for her signature freshwater pearls and simple, elegant designs, Klara's pieces feel timeless and meaningful.

**Kiss the Sky Boutique** — Destin: A lively, uplifting boutique full of colorful apparel, accessories, and personality-filled finds.

**A Christmas to Remember** — Destin: A seasonal wonderland of ornaments, décor, and festive treasures — perfect for sentimental gifts.

**Ophelia Swimwear** — Sandestin: A beautifully curated swim and resort wear boutique for the beach lover or traveler in your life.

Path of Grace Thrift Store & Boutique — Miramar Beach: A thrift boutique with heart and mission. Unique finds and fashionable gems, with proceeds supporting addiction recovery for women.

#### **Beauty, Spa & Self-Care**

**Luxe Nail Bar** — Destin: A modern, relaxing spot for polished pampering.

Magnolia Soap & Bath Co. — Destin: Hand-poured soaps, bath bombs, lotions, and custom scents — perfect for building a self-care bundle.

#### Home, Décor & Local Art

**Artful Things** — Niceville: A beautiful mix of local art, pottery, jewelry, and handcrafted gifts full of meaning.

**Salt & Story** — Niceville: A cozy independent bookstore with carefully curated titles for every age—perfect for escaping the winter rush with a great read.

**Sea Glass Interiors** — Miramar Beach: Coastal-inspired décor and refined accents for the design-minded person on your list.



**Risa's Interiors** — Fort Walton Beach: Elegant furniture pieces, art, and unique décor — perfect for someone who loves a thoughtfully designed home.

Hobbies, Collectibles & Specialty Shops

**TBS Comics** — Fort Walton Beach: Comics, collectibles, and graphic novels — you'll find the inner kid in anyone with these wonderful finds for hobbyists and teens.

**Caddies Corner** — Fort Walton Beach: Golf accessories, apparel, and gear — ideal for the golfer in your life.

**Fort Walton Vintage Records** — Fort Walton Beach: A local treasure with thousands of vinyl records, rare finds, and new releases — a dream for music lovers.

**H&B Army Navy Store** — Fort Walton Beach: A longtime local staple with rugged gear,

mar Beach: A thrift boutique tools, outdoor essentials, and with heart and mission. Unique practical finds.

## Health, Wellness & Experience-Based Gifts

**Hotworx** — Destin: A cutting-edge infrared workout studio where fitness meets recovery, making it an ideal gift for the health-minded on your list.

**Paradise Fit Jiu Jitsu** — Destin: An empowering experience that builds confidence,

discipline, and strength — wonderful for both adults and kids.

**CRYO 850** — Miramar Beach: Cryotherapy, red-light therapy, and recovery services are perfect for wellness lovers and anyone needing a boost.

**Island Time Mobile Detailing** — Destin: A practical, thoughtful gift that comes straight to the driveway — everyone appreciates a freshly detailed vehicle.

**Solasta 30A** — Santa Rosa Beach: A holistic wellness sanctuary offering far more than just a workout. From hot power yoga and sculpting classes to restorative infrared sauna sessions and salt chamber therapy.

**Stretch Zone** — Santa Rosa Beach: Assisted stretching designed to improve mobility, reduce tension, and support ac-

Continued on next page





Lifestyle



By Kyle Sparks. OVATION PAINTING

As the year winds down, many of us naturally start thinking about fresh starts. We clean

## Fresh Interiors for a Fresh Start:

# Why Winter is Perfect for Whole-Home Painting

out closets, reorganize spaces, and set goals for the new year. One of the most powerful ways to reset your environment is with a full-home interior painting project.

Unlike small touch-ups, whole-home projects transform the way you experience your space. Fresh walls, ceilings, and trim don't just look better -

they feel better. Clean, even finishes create a sense of order and calm, turning rooms into places you actually want to spend more time in. It's the kind of change that quietly uplifts daily life.

Winter is an especially smart time for interior painting. With shorter days and cooler evenings, we naturally gather indoors more. This means kitch-

ens, living rooms, and bedrooms see heavier use — and also benefit most from a refresh. Taking on a large project now ensures these spaces feel welcoming and renewed for both your family and your holiday guests.

For homeowners with second properties or rentals, December and January are often slower months. That makes it the perfect window to complete a big project without disrupting bookings. By spring, the property is not only guest-ready but also protected and polished for the busy season ahead.

Think of winter painting as a gift to yourself — a way to step into the new year with clean, bright spaces that reflect the life you want to live. It's not



just about paint on the walls; it's about starting fresh in a home that feels truly yours.

Ready to give your home the loving protection it deserves? Reach out to Ovation Painting and let's start planning your refresh. Call or text us at (850) 830-9668 to get started....And as a thank you to those who serve, we proudly offer a military and first responder discount by mentioning this article!



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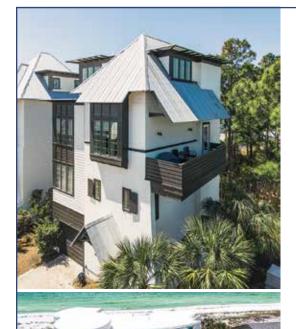
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#### **LAST-MINUTE**

continued from previous page

tive living — ideal for anyone wanting to feel better in their body.

#### Robin's Bikes & Fitness

- Miramar Beach: Bikes, accessories, and active-lifestyle essentials — perfect for outdoor enthusiasts and individuals embracing movement.

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Every "shop local" purchase creates ripple effects:

- Supports local jobs and
- Builds real community connections
- Helps preserve the Emerald Coast's unique character
  - Reduces shipping waste
- Strengthens businesses that strengthen others

This season, let your gifts reflect connection, gratitude, and pride in the place we call home. From our team at Fish Window Cleaning, we wish you a wonderfully bright and stress-free holiday!



It's just not clean unless it sparkles!

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"I use Sparkles for my vacation rental, and the guests ALWAYS rave about how clean it is. Highly recommend!"



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SEE COUPON IN BACK OF PAPER

Weddings

# Holiday Magic: Proposals Wrapped in Love & Family



By Kristin K. Sullivan, GENERAL MANAGER, THE ALICE Destin

There's something undeniably enchanting about holiday proposals. The glow of candlelight, the sparkle of ornaments, and the warmth of family all

come together to create a storybook moment. For many couples, the holidays symbolize more than celebration they represent love, connection, and the promise of new beginnings.

Between Thanksgiving and New Year's, thousands of couples choose this magical season to get engaged. Whether under a glittering tree, beside a cozy fire, or during a festive family gathering, holiday proposals blend excitement, nostalgia, and the joy of involving loved ones in one of life's most meaningful surprises.

I've been behind the scenes of many pro-

posals, and it's always an honor to help create the perfect setting. I've hidden in wild places to keep candles lit and curious strangers away. My favorite was organizing a family scavenger hunt where the bride's family competed against the groom's — only to discover in the end that the bride had already found her ring, duct-taped inside a conch shell at a bar in Key West. Moments like these embody the magic of the engagement expe-

We look forward to creating many unforgettable proposal settings at The Alice.

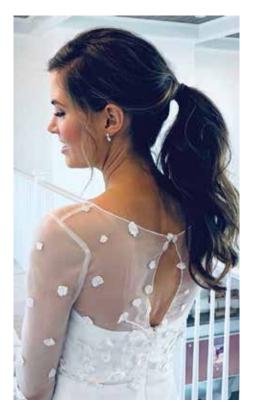
#### **The Meaning Behind A Holiday Proposal**

A proposal during the holidays is more than just a shiny new ring; it is a memory tied to a season already rich with emotion. The holidays naturally draw us closer to what matters most-love, gratitude and togetherness.

Choosing to propose during this season weaves your engagement story into the fabric of family traditions. Each year when the decorations go up or the first fire is lit, you'll relive that magical moment again. It becomes a part of your shared history; a story that begins with "Remember when...?"

#### **Setting The Stage: Finding The Right Moment**

Not all proposals need to be grand gestures. Sometimes, the



most meaningful settings are the simplest. Think of a quiet Christmas morning when the house is still, or at the family's annual beach bonfire under the stars. The key is authenticity and choosing a moment that reflects your love story.

For the sentimental cou**ple:** Propose while trimming the tree or hanging the final or-

For the family-focused pair: Pop the question right before the family holiday toast or after dinner when everyone gathers for dessert.

For the adventurers: Plan a destination moment; on the dock at The Alice during sunset or a quaint cottage getaway by the firepit, a Christmas Eve sailing, or a surprise gourmet dinner for two under the stars.

The best proposals blend personal meaning with genuine emotion.

#### **Bringing Family** into The Magic

This season is about connection; and sharing that joy with loved ones creates memories that last a lifetime. The blending of two families creates a bond for the remainder of your lives together.

Here are some creative ways to include family in your proposal:

1. The "Gift Within a Gift" Reveal: Wrap the ring box inside several layers of boxes and pass it around during the

gift exchange. When your partner opens the final box, you will be down on one knee.

2. A Family Toast to Forever: Ask both families to gather for what they think is a holiday toast; then turn it into your proposal moment.

Continued on page 37

# **WOMEN'S WELLNESS** REIMAGINED

What if your story mattered as much as your labs?

What if "normal" isn't optimal for you?

What if your fatigue, bloating, or anxiety isn't just stress - but a sign your body needs support?





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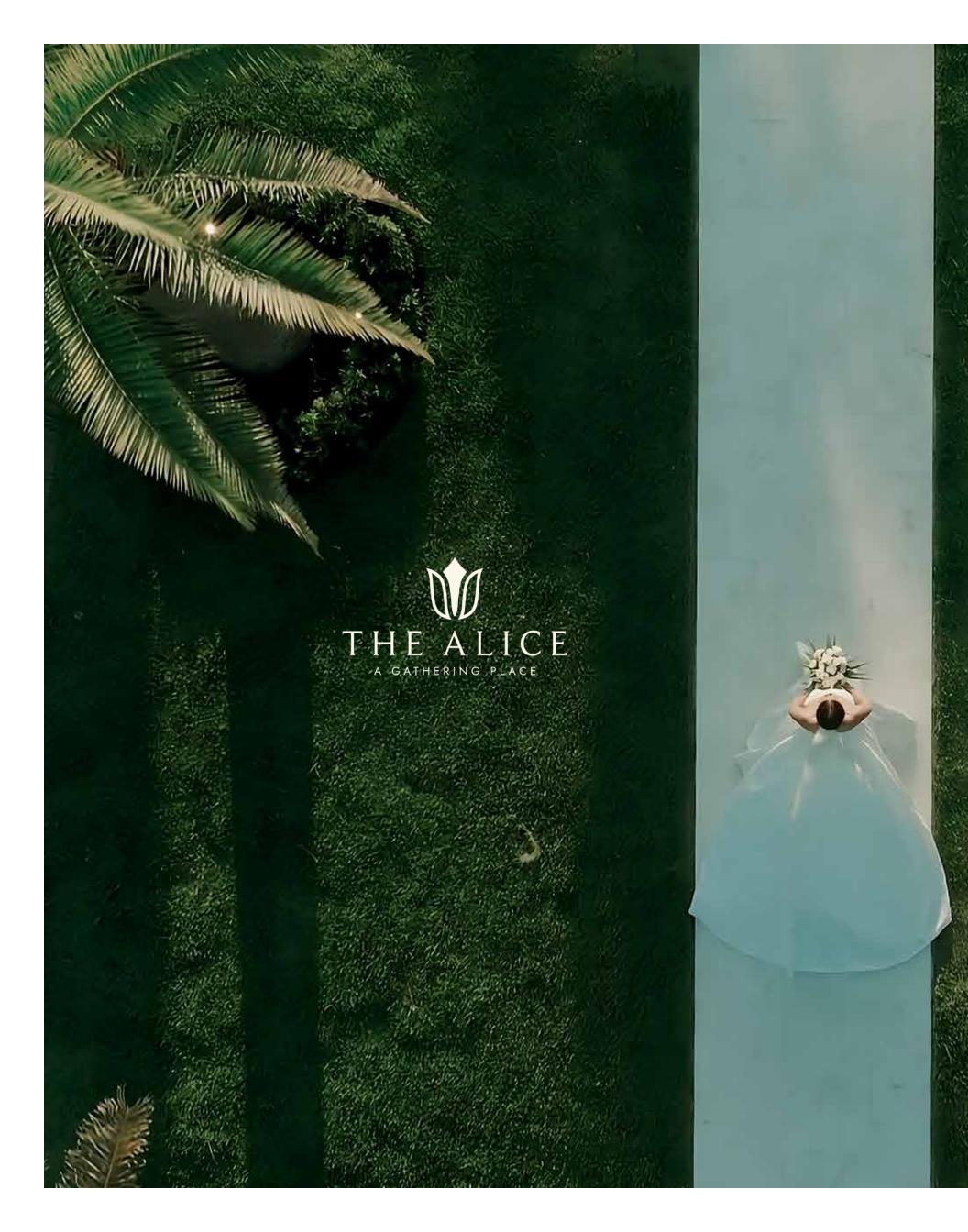
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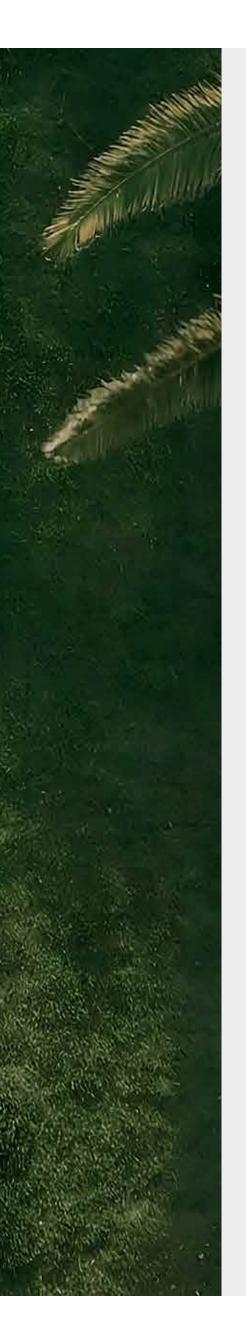


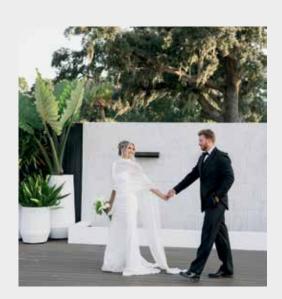


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**NEW PATIENT OFFER** 









## A BRIDAL AFFAIR

SUNDAY, JANUARY 11, 2026 | 1:00 PM

Join us for Bridal Affair at The Alice—Destin's newest luxury waterfront venue. Sip champagne, savor chef-curated bites, and enjoy live music as you explore our private bayfront setting. Preview designer gowns and tailored suits, connect with top-tier wedding professionals, and discover all of the details that will set your day apart.

Guests will be entered to win over \$10,000 in elevated giveaways and experience what makes a celebration at The Alice so unforgettable.









By Scott Miller

The stakes are high, the lights are bright, and December football is finally here. Playoff season has arrived and the road to the title is underway — let's talk gridiron.

The College Football Playoff kicks off its first round this month, with games on Friday, December 19, followed by three more on Saturday, December 20. The quarterfinal round continues on Wednesday, December 31.

Seems like every year there's a new bowl game added to the mix — and why not? These kids deserve it and football fans love it. It'll be interesting to see how the expanded playoff system shakes out and who gets

## Game On!

Check out the local top spots to eat, cheer and high-five your way through the games.

crowned national champion this year. Where will you be watching?

Here along the Emerald Coast, we're fortunate to have some of the best sports bars and restaurants around, ready and waiting to welcome us. They serve up great food, cold drinks, and make every game feel like a championship. So, grab your crew, claim your spot and get in on the action — I hope to see you there!

#### AJ's Seafood & Oyster Bar

For over 40 years, AJ's Seafood and Oyster Bar has been serving cold Gulf Coast oysters and cool libations. What began as a popular local hang out known for fresh oysters and cold beer has grown into one of the most iconic "hot spots" on the Destin Harbor. From its humble beginning shucking oysters off the deck behind a small trailer on the Destin Harbor, it has grown to four locations along our Emerald Coast, serving fresh seafood, live music and

exciting water activities in the Destin area. Attention all die hard football fans, AJ's boasts the one and only Jumbotron on the Destin Harbor, where you can watch your favorite games on the BIG, BIG screen surrounded by the energy and beauty of the Destin Harbor. AJ's serves up delicious daily specials, mouth-watering drinks plus entertaining live music all month, too. Don't miss any of the action! Come on down to AJ's Seafood and Oyster Bar all season long.

(850)837-1913 116 Harbor Blvd. ajsdestin.com

#### **Austons on 98**

Offering an amazing raw oyster bar and the best happy hour in town, Austons is the place to be and 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. With



big screen TVs all around and football season upon us, there's no bad seat in the house. So, come by and watch the games all season long. Happy Hour daily from 3-6 p.m., \$2 off all bar drinks. Bucket Specials all day every day. Monday-Friday from 3 p.m. - 5 p.m. \$3 off a dozen raw oysters. Auston's on

98 is open daily from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. and features its own "Real Deal Nashville Hot Sauce." View full menu at austonson98.com. (850) 842-3200

125 Poinciana Blvd., Miramar Beach Austonson98.com

## Boathouse Oyster Bar

Oysters, live music and a local vibe, the Boathouse is 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 each month, The Boathouse hosts locals on

Continued on page 23



#### **GAME ON**

continued from page 22

the Destin Harbor from 5-7 p.m. Listen and move with live entertainment daily. See ad for bands and times. Music schedule subject to change. Follow on Facebook for updates. During or after the game, mosey on over to hang with the locals.

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

#### **Tailfins Waterfront Grill**

Hey football fans, Tailfins Waterfront Grill is calling YOU! That's right y'all, Destin's favorite season is here and there's not a better place in Destin to come and watch your team play.

Looking for a locals' favorite breakfast before the game? Start your day off right with Tailfins breakfast from 8-11 a.m., seven days a week. Enjoy a classic breakfast with bacon and eggs,



a seafood or Cajun omelet and

(850) 842-3333

On the Harbor in Destin, 172 Harbor Blvd. tail fins destin.com

DAILY CRUISES: "Talk of the Town" Tikis, Tailfins' newest, one-of-a-kind tiki boat, features on-board restrooms and certified captains. Talk of the Town tikis are the only Coast Guard certified Tiki boats in the U.S.! Enjoy the Destin Harbor and Crab Island like never before. Choose between the three-hour tour, sunset cruise or Thursday night's spectacular fireworks cruise. Book online: tailfinsislandadventure.com.

(850) 842-3333 On the Harbor in Destin, 172 Harbor Blvd. tailfinsdestin.com

# Save the Date for Taste of the Race

### Friday, Feb. 13 | SEASIDE® Lyceum

Get ready for an unforgettable evening as SEASIDE SCHOOLTM kicks off its annual Half Marathon + 5K Race Weekend with one of 30A's most eagerly anticipated events: Taste of the Race, presented by Publix and headlined by Rubiks Groove, a nationally acclaimed, character-driven musical act known for its "outside of the box" performances featuring iconic hits from the '80s, '90s, and '00s.

Mark your calendar for Friday, February 13, 2025, at the iconic SEASIDE® Lyce-

VIP ticket holders gain early entry at 6 p.m., an exclusive VIP gift, culinary tastings, complimentary wine and craft beverages, and a special live performance from the SEA-SIDE NEIGHBORHOOD SCHOOLTM Performance Band. VIP guests will also enjoy exclusive side-stage access during Rubiks Groove's performance.

General Admission opens at 7 p.m., with Rubiks Groove taking the stage for a high-energy show sure to have the entire Lyceum dancing under the stars. Experience the culinary talents of the Gulf Coast's top chefs and restaurants as they compete for prestigious awards including People's Choice, Judges' Choice, and Chef's Choice. Enjoy delicious tastings from more than a dozen talented chefs, complemented by fine wines, craft cocktails, and local brews, all while soaking in the lively musical entertain-

games and Sunday Ticket.

Proceeds from Taste of the Race support the SEA-SIDE SCHOOL FOUN-DATION<sup>TM</sup>, benefiting programs that enhance academic and extracurricular opportunities for students at SEA-SIDE NEIGHBORHOOD SCHOOLTM and Seacoast Collegiate High School.

To purchase tickets to Taste of the Race or learn more about the SEASIDE SCHOOLTM Half Marathon + 5K Race Weekend, visit RunSeasideFL.com.

Local chefs or restaurants interested in participating may contact Callie Cox at coxc@seasideschools.net.





## **December 2025 Pro Football Schedule**

#### Week 14

#### Thursday, Dec. 4

Dallas Cowboys at Detroit Lions, 7:15 p.m., Prime Video

#### Sunday, Dec. 7

Indianapolis Colts at Jacksonville Jaguars, Noon, CBS New Orleans Saints at Tampa Bay

Buccaneers, Noon, CBS Miami Dolphins at New York Jets. Noon, CBS Pittsburgh Steelers at Baltimore Ravens, Noon, CBS

Seattle Seahawks at Atlanta Falcons, Noon Fox

Tennessee Titans at Cleveland Browns. Noon. Fox

Washington Commanders at Minnesota Vikings, Noon, Fox

Chicago Bears at Green Bay Packers, Noon,

Even better, it all supports

a cause. Produced by the Cul-

tural Arts Alliance of Walton

County, 100% of net pro-

ceeds benefit local arts pro-

grams, helping keep creativity

Expect Americana, blues,

country, rock, folk, gospel,

genre walls here, just the best

songwriters from across the

able for a limited time. Grab

yours, cue up the official

30ASWF playlist, and start

planning your musical weekend now. Visit 30aSong-

writersFestival.com for tickets

and more information.

Discounted tickets avail-

thriving in our community.

iazz, neo-soul and more -

What Makes the 30A

Songwriters Festival So Unique?

Jan. 16-19, 2026 | 30a/South Walton Venues

The 30A Songwriters Fes- other.

– it's four days

tival isn't your average mu-

of pure musical immersion.

With 120+ artists, 260 per-

formances, and more than 20

intimate venues, you'll never

catch it all... but you'll expe-

rience more live music in one

weekend than most people do

ery performer is a true sing-

stage with music they wrote

themselves. Add in the setting

rooms stretched along sce-

nic Highway 30A, steps from

sugar-white sand and emerald

Gulf waters — and you have

a festival experience like no

state-of-the-art listening

What sets it apart? Ev-

taking

sic weekend

all year.

er-songwriter,

Denver Broncos at Las Vegas Raiders, 3:05 p.m., CBS

Los Angeles Rams at Arizona Cardinals, 3:25 p.m., Fox

Cincinnati Bengals at Buffalo Bills, 3:25 p.m., Fox Houston Texans at Kansas City Chiefs, 7:20

#### p.m., NBC Monday, Dec. 8

Philadelphia Eagles at Los Angeles Chargers, 7:15 p.m., ESPN

Bye week: Carolina Panthers, New England Patriots. New York Giants. San Francisco

#### Week 15

#### Thursday, Dec. 11

Atlanta Falcons at Tampa Bay Buccaneers, 7:15 p.m., Prime Video

#### Sunday, Dec. 14

Los Angeles Chargers at Kansas City Chiefs, Noon, CBS

Buffalo Bills at New England Patriots, Noon,

New York Jets at Jacksonville Jaguars, Noon, CBS

Baltimore Ravens at Cincinnati Bengals, Noon, CBS

Las Vegas Raiders at Philadelphia Eagles, Noon, Fox

Arizona Cardinals at Houston Texans, Noon,

Washington Commanders at New York Giants, Noon, Fox Cleveland Browns at Chicago Bears, Noon,

Detroit Lions at Los Angeles Rams, 3:25

Tennessee Titans at San Francisco 49ers,

3:25 p.m., Fox Carolina Panthers at New Orleans Saints. 3:25 p.m., Fox

Green Bay Packers at Denver Broncos, 3:25 p.m., CBS

Indianapolis Colts at Seattle Seahawks, 3:25 p.m., CBS

Minnesota Vikings at Dallas Cowboys, 7:20 p.m., NBC

#### Monday, Dec. 15

Miami Dolphins at Pittsburgh Steelers, 7:30 p.m., ESPN

#### Week 16

#### Thursday, Dec. 18

Los Angeles Rams at Seattle Seahawks, 7:15 p.m., Prime Video

#### Saturday, Dec. 20

Green Bay Packers at Chicago Bears, 2:30 or

Philadelphia Eagles at Washington Commanders, 2:30 or 4 p.m., Fox

#### Sunday, Dec. 21

Kansas City Chiefs at Tennessee Titans, Noon, CBS

New York Jets at New Orleans Saints, Noon, CBS

New England Patriots at Baltimore Ravens, Noon, CBS

Buffalo Bills at Cleveland Browns, Noon, CBS Tampa Bay Buccaneers at Carolina Panthers. Noon, Fox

Minnesota Vikings at New York Giants, Noon,

Los Angeles Chargers at Dallas Cowboys, Noon, Fox

Atlanta Falcons at Arizona Cardinals, 3:05 p.m., Fox

Jacksonville Jaguars at Denver Broncos, 3:05 p.m., Fox

Pittsburgh Steelers at Detroit Lions, 3:25 p.m., CBS

Las Vegas Raiders at Houston Texans, 3:25 p.m., CBS Cincinnati Bengals at Miami Dolphins, 7:20 p.m., NBC

Monday, Dec. 22

San Francisco 49ers at Indianapolis Colts, 7:15 p.m., ESPN

#### Week 17

#### Thursday, Dec. 25 (Christmas Day)

Dallas Cowboys at Washington Commanders, Noon, Netflix

Detroit Lions at Minnesota Vikings, 3:30 p.m., Netflix

Denver Broncos at Kansas City Chiefs, 7 p.m., Prime Video

#### Saturday, Dec. 27 or Sunday, Dec. 28

\*NFL Network has a 3:30 p.m. game and Peacock has an 8 p.m. game on December 27

New York Giants at Las Vegas Raiders Houston Texans at Los Angeles Chargers Arizona Cardinals at Cincinnati Bengals Baltimore Ravens at Green Bay Packers Seattle Seahawks at Carolina Panthers

#### Sunday, Dec. 28

New Orleans Saints at Tennessee Titans, Noon, CBS

Pittsburgh Steelers at Cleveland Browns, Noon, CBS

New England Patriots at New York Jets, Noon, CBS

Jacksonville Jaguars at Indianapolis Colts, Noon, Fox

Tampa Bay Buccaneers at Miami Dolphins. Noon Fox

Philadelphia Eagles at Buffalo Bills, 3:25 p.m., Fox

Chicago Bears at San Francisco 49ers, 7:20 p.m., NBC

#### Monday, Dec. 29

Los Angeles Rams at Atlanta Falcons, 7:15 p.m., ESPN

### **2025 GUIDE**

continued from page 16

studio6twenty5.com) . . . Emerald Coast Theatre Co.'s Murder on the Orient Express,

Auditorium (\$15.99-\$30.99 at

coming January 15 through February 1, 2026 (emeraldcoasttheatre.org) . . . The  $\boldsymbol{Ground}$ Up Project's Second Annual Wacky Tacky Ball, set for January 31, 2026, at Destin's Emerald Grande, promises ridiculous fun for a worthy cause (facebook.com/thegroundupprojectinc) ... **Act4Mystery** 

offers gift cards good for any of its comedic murder mystery shows on the Emerald Coast (act4mystery.com). For those who could use a

post-holiday charter boat fishing trip - which would be everybody, right? - check out the deals being offered up by the **Destin Princess and Desti**ny charter boats. Visit destinpartyboatfishing.com or call 850.753.8667. Discounts for se-

Speaking of post-holiday fun, who could resist a gift card for a home cleaning from **Spar**kles Cleaning Service? In addition to residential cleaning, Sparkles offers commercial, vacation rental, and move in/ move out cleaning. Visit sparklescleaningflorida.com for more info.

niors, military and children.

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Locals On The Harbor: July 11 @ 5pm Air Guitar Competition: July 20 @ 3pm w/ \$500 Prize Slacker Olympics Fundraiser: July 26 @ 10am

w/ Road Dogg Rescue

#### LIVE MUSIC!

Mondays: **Tuesdays:**  4pm: Cole Jordan 8pm: Roshambo

Thursdays:

Fridays:

**Saturdays:** 

**Sundays:** 

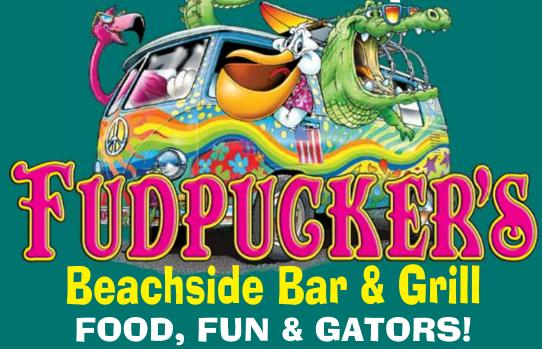
4pm:Zach Renzi 8pm: Austin Jennings Wednesdays: 4pm: Hunter Dawson 8pm: Boathomies 4pm: Flash Flood 8pm: Austin Jennings 4pm: Jason Findley 8pm: Airavata 12pm: Joey Collins 4pm: Flash Flood 8pm: Gunner 12pm: Grayson Turner 4pm: Shane Curle 8pm: Shane Curle Trip

> Open Daily from 11 am-2 am Lunch Specials M-F for \$9.99 Slacker Sunday Oyster Brunch 11 am

#### 288 Harbor Blvd, Destin (850) 837-3645

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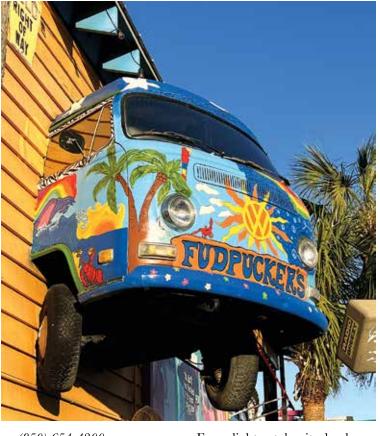


# Destin Diving, Entertainment, Specials

## Fudpucker's Beachside Bar & Grill

"Ya Ain't Been Pucked Til Ya Been Fudpucked!" Fudpucker's Beachside Bar & Grill in Destin has been locally owned and operated since its inception in 1982. Fudpucker's restaurant stands out by being dedicated to its owners' three favorite "F" words: Food, Fun and Family. Fudpucker's is not just a restaurant, it's not just a bar, it's a one-of-a-kind entertainment experience, and one that can be enjoyed by locals, kids and families of all ages and all occasions with plenty of fun included!. Bring your family and come for the food! Come for the fun! Get your Christmas shopping done with a Fudpucker's gift card or shop the Fudpucker's gift shop for unique gifts and merchandise!





(850) 654-4200 20001 Emerald Coast Pkwy. Destin fudpucker.com

#### **Café Destin**

Looking for dining the entire family can enjoy? Looking for a place to work with free WiFi while enjoying your cup of coffee? For breakfast and lunch, Café Destin offers an expanded menu serving breakfast staples such as pancakes, waffles with Nutella, omelets, eggs benedict, biscuits and gravy and more.

For a lighter take, it also has a variety of fancy toasts (avocado, salmon and more), along with pastries and muffins. For lunch, choose from a variety of burgers, sandwiches and salads. You will love the full-service coffee shop, offering everything from hot or iced fresh, local Amavida coffee to espresso and lattés. And there are diverse fresh fruit smoothies and a variety of tantalizing teas. Check out the special kids menu, too. Indoor and outdoor seating on the large covered patio are both available. Book after-hours for private events or special occasions. Open for breakfast and lunch every day, 7 a.m.-2 p.m.

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

#### **Coastal Protein & Energy**

Fuel your day the healthy way at Coastal Protein & Energy, Destin's cutest spot for clean caffeine and protein-packed treats. Sip on energizing loaded teas, protein coffee and shakes, or dig into protein waffles, smoothie bowls and even guilt-friendly protein donuts - all crafted to keep you going strong. Tucked along Harbor Boulevard in Norred Plaza across from Boshamps, this bright, beachy hangout has quickly become a favorite for locals looking for fast, feelgood fuel between school runs, gym sessions and days on the water. Special holiday flavors are available for a limited time and December specials include Gift Cards, wellness shots and koozies for gift-giving. Swing by for your morning energy, midday pick-me-up or post-workout refuel and see why everyone's talking about Coastal Protein & Energy.

(850) 904-9738 501 Harbor Blvd., Ste. F, Destin Facebook.com/coastalprotein/ | coastal-protein-co.square.site

#### **Crispy Cajun Chicken**

"Get Your Crunch On" with a big taste of the Bayou right here on the Destin Harbor at Crispy Cajun Chicken. Marinated for 24 hours and flavored with Tony Chachere's Creole spices, their hand-breaded fried chicken and tenders come out golden, juicy and packed with Cajun kick in every bite. Load up your tray with Southern favorites like dirty rice, jambalaya, red beans and rice, Cajun dirty rice, cornbread biscuits and more – plus beignet fries and other sweet treats to finish things off. Game day or any day, Crispy Cajun also offers family packs and catering boxes so you can feed a crowd without lifting a finger. Come hungry, leave happy and let Chef Ernie and his crew give you a true Louisiana welcome on the Emerald Coast.

(850) 353-2877 209 Harbor Blvd., Destin crispycajunchickenfl.com



#### CHEF ERNIE'S CRISPY CAJUN CATERING MENU

#### **FAMILY BOX BONE CHICKEN**

16 pieces of mixed bone chicken marinated with Tony Chachere's & fried crispy with 12 Crispy Cajun sauce cups. Ayeee \$49.99

#### **CHICKEN & ANDOUILLE JAMBALAYA**

1 quart of Tony Chachere's Crispy Cajun chicken & andouille sausage jambalaya with New Orleans French bread loaf, Ayeee \$19.99

#### **CORNBREAD BISCUITS**

1 dozen Tony Chachere's new cornbread formulated biscuits with six Mike's Hot Honey packs and six regular honey packs \$18.99

#### **CAJUN COLE SLAW**

1 quart of Chef Ernie's own Cajun Cole slaw with shredded green & purple cabbage with Tony Chachere's flavored dressing \$18.99

#### **CAJUN FRIED TURKEY**

10-12 lb whole turkey injected with Tony Chachere's creole butter garlic marinate, rubbed with Tonys seasoning & fried crispy \$59.99

#### RED BEANS & RICE

1 quart of Tony Chachere's andouille sausage red beans and rice with 1 quart of steamed white rice & a French bread loaf \$19.99

#### CHICKEN & ANDOUILLE GUMBO

1 quart Tony Chachere's chicken & andouille sausage dark roux Cajun gumbo with 1 pint of steamed white rice & French bread \$26.99

#### MINI NOLA PO-BOYS

25 mini ham & cheese dressed New Orleans po-boys sandwich pieces with Crispy Cajun sauce and frilly toothpick Ayeee \$39,99

#### CRISPY CAJUN TENDER BOX

24 pieces of Tony Chachere's Crispy Cajun marinated jumbo chicken tenders with one dozen Crispy Cajun sauce cups Ayeee! \$49.99

#### **CAJUN DIRTY RICE**

1 quart of Tony Chachere's dirty rice Cajun style with fresh sautéed ground meat and lots of flavor with French bread loaf \$19.99

#### CAJUN SHRIMP ÉTOUFFÉE

1 quart of Tony Chachere's Cajun style shrimp étouffée with 1 pint of steamed white rice & 1 New Orleans French bread loaf \$28.99

#### MINI MUFFULETTA

24 mini muffuletta sandwiches with salami, ham, mortadella, provolone, olive salad on Gambino roll with frilly toothpick \$49.99

TO ORDER CALL 850-353-2877 OR EMAIL CHEFERNIE@CRISPYCAJUNCHICKENFL.COM, ALL ORDERS MUST BE PLACED 48 HOURS IN ADVANCE OF PICK. THANKS, CHEF ERNIE - AYEEE!

Off the Hook

## December on the Line:

# Where the Fish Are Biting from Destin to FWB

As December's cooler temps settle in across the Emerald Coast, anglers shift their attention to inshore winter favorites—Flounder, Redfish and Speckled Trout—while also taking advantage of some underrated offshore opportunities unique to this time of year. Cold weather pushes many species into tighter schools, making them easier to locate once you pattern their movements.

Flounder remain a top target through December. This month offers some of the best action of the year as they move between the Bay and the Gulf, staging on natural and artificial reefs to spawn. Because of their flat shape, flounder stay tight to the bottom, often burrowing into the sand as they ambush prey. Look for them within 200 yards off the beach in 20–60 feet of water or around near-

shore structure along Destin Pass and East Pass. Gulf Flounder and Southern Flounder are the most common; the larger female Southern Flounder can reach up to 28 inches. One perk for anglers: if a flounder misses your bait, they often return for a second strike—so be patient.

Speckled Trout push into deeper, slower-moving water during the winter. Look for them around deep boat docks, bridges, bayou drop-offs, and deep channels in Choctawhatchee Bay and around Fort Walton Beach. Live shrimp, pinfish, and croakers on a Carolina rig work well, as do soft-plastic shrimp tails. A slow troll is an excellent way to

locate a school; once you get a hit, switch to live bait to maximize your chances.

Bull Redfish are another winter staple. Massive schools often gather in the Destin Pass, deep channels, and around the Mid-Bay Bridge. You'll also find them cruising the edges of Crab

Island on outgoing tides and schooling off our beaches when conditions are calm. These oversized reds put up an impressive fight and make for great catch-and-release action. Use lures or live bait—preferences can change daily. Because these big reds are spawning, be sure to use circle hooks, wet hands, and a rubber net to ensure a safe release.

Sheepshead, a cold-weather favorite, become increasingly active this month. Look for them around bridge pilings, jetties, docks, and rock piles—especially along the Destin Harbor and Brooks Bridge in Fort Walton Beach. Fiddler crabs, live shrimp, and sand fleas are top-tier baits. Their bite is notoriously subtle, so stay alert.

Black Drum also school up in winter and can be found around deep channels, bridges, and bay

**⊗GILZ** 

docks. Smaller drum are excellent table fare, while the larger "big uglies" offer fun, steady action on light tackle.

## Nearshore and Offshore Winter Notes:

Calmer winter days can offer excellent opportunities for Triggerfish (catch-and-release only in state waters this month), Vermilion Snapper, Blackfin Tuna, King Mackerel (on warm fronts), and Amberjack (season-dependent). Many anglers troll for Blackfin just outside the Pass or hit nearshore wrecks for winter bottom fishing. On the coldest days, keep an eye out for gin-clear water along the beach—perfect for sight-fishing bull reds.



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By Stephenie Craig, Journey Bravely

# Journey Bravely: 2025 Year End Reflection

2025 is rushing to a close. Maybe you find yourself overscheduled and weighed down by your own expectations or those of others this month. Maybe your mind is busy with gift planning, meal planning and travel planning. What will your kids

do while out of school? How will you manage time away from work? How will you navigate awkward and difficult relationships through the holidays? What will you wear? What pictures will you post? How will you love others well?

December is a brain-busy month. It's easy to fill the days forgetting to slow down, rest, and reflect on what 2025 has meant to you. Reflecting on what you have experienced and learned each year creates an opportunity for you to approach the next year with intentionality about living life according to your values. Here are some questions and instructions to guide personal reflection regarding the past year, the present, and what you want for 2026.

**Create space** – Set aside a couple of hours to work through these questions without distraction (including your phone).

**Record reflections** – Honestly and vulnerably record your answers so you can refer back to them throughout the year and review them at the end of next year.

**Share it** – Share your responses with one or two trusted people. Sharing intentions with others solidifies them internally and increases your chances of

**BOOK A VISIT!** 

果鳞黑

following through.

Live from it – Use the responses to these questions as a daily compass directing your next steps.

#### **The Past Year**

What did you accomplish personally and professionally that you feel really good about?

What challenges, struggles and fears did you work through?

What did you hope to accomplish or change but weren't able to? What kept you from doing so?

How are you different from 12 months ago? What did you learn? How did you grow?

How did you make a positive difference in the world around you?

What and who brought you the most joy?

What and who were the greatest stressors?

What did you tolerate this year?

What are you thankful for from the past year?

What are your top 3 insights?

#### **The Present**

Life is made up of multiple domains. Take time to check in with yourself by rating each of the following areas on a scale of 1-10:

Personal – How do you feel about yourself?

Physical – How are you taking care of your body (diet, exercise, rest, etc.)?

Financial – How is your financial situation (income, budget, spending, savings, giving, etc.)?

Spiritual – How satisfied are you with the way faith is integrated into your life?

Vocational – How do you feel about your work/career? Family – How are you doing as a partner and/or parent? Friends – How do you feel about your social relationships?

Fun – How well are you creating time for enjoyment and recreation?

What 2-3 areas of life do you most want to improve in the next year? What steps will you take to make those improvements?

#### **The Upcoming Year**

If it were two years from now and you were living your best life, how would you know?

If it were two years from now and you weren't living your best life, what got in the way?

Who do you want to be by the end of the year? In what areas would you like to grow?

What 2-3 things if completed would generate feelings of pride and fulfillment at the end of the year?

What is one thing that if you accomplished it next year would make all your other goals easier or unnecessary?

What do you want to start in the next year?

What do you want to stop in the next year?

How will you make a positive difference in the world around you next year?

If this next year was a chapter in a book, what would you title it?

As you reflect, take time to celebrate and be thankful for the good and growth in 2025 wherever you can find it. And, as you look toward 2026, remember that no one is perfect and you have the ability to grow and gather wisdom each day. Your journey is traveled over a lifetime and all of your growth adds to the depth and beauty of your story. For support along your journey, connect with us at www.journeybravely.com.



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www.journeybravely.com

MARIJUANA REMAINS MEDICAL IN FLORIDA

# The Hidden Weight of Caring: Supporting Vulnerable Loved Ones Without Losing Yourself



By Melanie Yost, LCSW

Being a caretaker for a loved one who is mentally ill, disabled, or elderly is one of the most profound expressions of love and loyalty — and one of the hardest. Few roles require more emotional strength, patience, and resilience. Caregiving rarely begins all at once; it starts with a few errands or appointments and slowly expands until your own needs, dreams, and identity begin to slip quietly into the background.

According to the National Alliance for Caregiving and AARP's 2020 Caregiving in the U.S. Report, more than 53 million Americans provide unpaid care to an adult or child

with special needs. Nearly one in five caregivers report being in "poor or fair" health, and over 40% experience high emotional stress. These numbers reveal a difficult truth: caregiving can be deeply meaningful — but also profoundly depleting. Without support, the toll on a caregiver's mental, emotional, and physical health can be life-altering.

Many caregivers describe feeling like they're living two lives at once: the visible one, where they appear to be functioning well, and the hidden one, where exhaustion, fear, and guilt silently build. Chronic caregiver stress has been linked to anxiety, depression, sleep disruption, high blood pressure, and even compromised immune function. Research published in the Journal of the American Medical Association found that caregivers under chronic stress face a 63% higher mortality risk than non-caregivers of the same age. Love should never cost you your health — but too often, caregiving pushes people dangerously close to burnout.

There is also a deep emotional loneliness that many caregivers carry privately. Watching someone you love struggle with memory loss, mobility limitations, chronic pain, or mental illness — can break your heart a little each day. You may grieve the version of your loved one you remember while still fiercely loving who they are now. That ongoing strain can lead to compassion fatigue, where your ability to feel empathy and joy becomes depleted simply because you have given so much of yourself for so long.

And then there is the guilt. Guilt for feeling tired, for needing a break, or for the resentment that follows too many sleepless nights or unappreciated tasks. Guilt for wanting your own life back. But the truth is this: self-care is not selfish — it is survival. Just as every airline safety briefing reminds us, you must secure your own oxygen mask first before assisting someone else. If you cannot breathe,

you cannot help anyone. Caregivers must protect their own well-being in order to continue providing compassionate, effective care.

As we enter the holiday season, these truths become even more urgent. This time of year brings additional responsibilities, emotional triggers,

family expectations, financial pressures, and a pace of life that can overwhelm even the strongest caregiver. It is a season when caregiver stress peaks — and when getting support can prevent a silent struggle from becoming a crisis.

If the responsibility of caregiving is starting to affect your mental health OR you are seeking effective, innovative therapies for a loved one struggling with depression, anxiety, PTSD, chronic pain, traumatic



brain injury, dementia, or neurodegenerative issues related to stroke or Parkinson's, call Be Well Solutions for a free consultation.

You deserve support. And you don't have to carry this weight alone.

Melanie Yost, LCSW is the co-owner of Be Well Solutions and Complete Ketamine Solutions in Destin and can be reached at 850-786-2051 to schedule a complimentary confidential consultation.

DEPRESSION/ ANXIETY

**PTSD** 

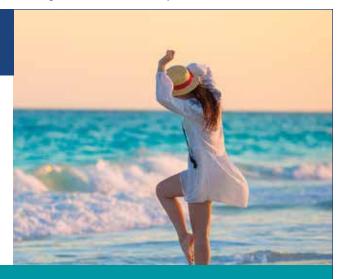
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**Wellness** 



By Dr. Richard Chern, MD

Social media has a way of knowing when a woman has matured. As a woman enters her 40's, her social media accounts are flooded with advertisements touting magical remedies promising to make life bearable again. Night sweats? Solution. Hot flashes? Solution. Mental Fog? Weight Gain? Decreased libido? Solution. Solution. Solution. And, if you're

## Social Media Feels Your Hot Flashes

struggling, you'll click every link offering a way out. Before you know it, your bathroom counter is overflowing with wellness products and supplements. Just keeping track of it all becomes a daily challenge. Unfortunately, these products rarely treat the root of the problem—changing hormones. This is exactly what we do at the Hormone Restoration Center.

Hormone levels in women are constantly changing. Even women in their 20's and 30's can exhibit early signs of estrogen loss, and they often don't recognize the symptoms. Acne, irregular menstruation, fatigue and mood swings are just a few. As women approach perimenopause and menopause, their symptoms are dismissed

as "normal." Detailed hormone panels are rarely ordered by primary care doctors or OB-GYNs, and in reality, doctors receive very little training on hormones or menopause in medical school. Some report as little as one hour of formal instruction. At The Hormone Restoration Center, our mission is to provide the highest quality medical service with a level of personalized care not available anywhere else. Our highly skilled providers have extensive training in bioidentical hormone therapy and tailor treatments to each patient's individual needs. Bioidentical hormone therapy offers significant benefits for women, particularly those experiencing menopause or hormonal disruption. It effectively

alleviates common menopausal symptoms, enhances overall quality of life, and helps prevent long-term health complications.

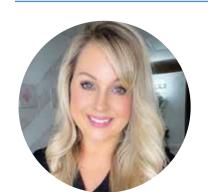
Hormone therapy is highly effective in reducing menopause symptoms like hot flashes, night sweats, vaginal dryness, mood swings, irritability, and the dreaded "brain fog." These symptoms severely disrupt your daily life. Hormone therapy restores comfort quickly, often within weeks of starting treatment. Hormone therapy alleviates vaginal dryness and pain during intercourse, thereby improving sexual health. Hormone therapy also improves pelvic floor strength, thereby reducing leakage. Hormones are vital for maintaining bone density; hormone therapy reverses

osteoporosis and decreases your risk for fractures. This contribution to bone health reduces long-term disability associated with osteoporosis and increases mobility in later years.

The Hormone Restoration Clinic is the premiere hormone clinic in the region. We invite you to make an appointment with us at 850-837-1271 to schedule a consultation, so you can experience the benefits of hormone therapy for yourself. Forget making life bearable again. Make life spectacular! January is Thyroid Awareness

January is Thyroid Awareness Month! Call 850-837-1271 to optimize your thyroid. Follow us on Facebook!





By Krisy Anderson,
Beverly Hills Day Spa
It's the holiday season—and

# Glow All Season: Holiday Spa Specials to Treat Yourself (or Someone You Love!)

looking your best for every party, picture and gathering is essential! At Beverly Hills Day Spa, the **Ultimate Skin Refiner** is one of the most effective ways to refresh your complexion. After just three treatments of the Ultimate Skin Refiner H2O Facial, you can minimize and deeply

cleanse pores, refine tone and texture, and infuse potent antioxidants and anti-aging benefits. It's a safe and gentle way to clear away dirt, debris and oil, revealing fresh, clear, radiant skin.

This 4-step water facial exfoliates, extracts and hydrates

in one luxurious service. It removes dead skin cells, extracts blackheads, resurfaces the skin, refines fine lines and wrinkles, plumps and hydrates, brightens and softens, minimizes pores, boosts circulation and helps reduce breakouts. Clients have called it a game changer—and

the results speak for themselves.

This year, Beverly Hills Day Spa is bringing back its beloved holiday package, "**Deck the Halls**," featuring the hydra skin refiner plus a 90-minute Deep Tissue Massage, the Ul-

Continued on page 38









KAY LEAMAN, HEALTH ARCHITECT

There are four main things that help the body to store fat. The more we abuse them, the more the body responds in kind.

There is a plethora of ads aimed to help us rid ourselves of belly fat creating a billion dollar industry. These 'diets' bring success for the first six months or so, and then slowly the fat begins to return and the cycle continues.

We know that it's lifestyle vs. diet that can remove the unwanted fat for the long term. Adequate water intake, quality sleep, managing stress, exercise and diet (calories in - calories out) should be our goal. However, understanding what causes the fat to accumulate is a critical component to achieving greater success.

The food we eat is either used as energy or stored as fat. When you get up in the morning, how do you feel? Do you feel refreshed and ready to go or sluggish and dragging? This is our first clue that something is 'off.'

#### **#1 Food Preservatives**

Preservatives are used to extend shelf life. Some of these are more toxic than others. They also make food more difficult to digest. These preservatives can lead to gas, bloating, heartburn, slow metabolism, fatigue, sluggishness, brain fog and a decreased sex drive.

One of the most disrupting is high fructose corn syrup (HFCS). The process in producing this chemical is important in understanding it. Because consumers have become aware of the dangers, companies have

# **How to Subtract Fat From Your Body**

spent millions in order to 'rename it' so the consumer can remain unaware. There are even products that state they are high fructose corn syrup free when the label states otherwise and the fine line between these is legal!

Some of the new names being used are: maize syrup, glucose syrup, tapioca syrup, fruit fructose, crystalline fruit, HFCS, esoglucose, corn syrup and dahlia syrup.

The body needs energy to survive. Our energy is stored in the mitochondria of the cell. There are 50 to 2,000 mitochondria in every cell. Within these cells, sugar is converted into glucose and O2. This is turned into ATP and CO2. The preservatives in foods prevent them from being properly digested, which means the calories are not able to be converted to energy; less energy for our brains, muscles, etc. When this process continues, the body goes into starvation mode. This teaches the body to take these calories and store them as fat. The body learns to survive by what we feed it.

Utilizing digestive enzymes can aid the body in better digestion. They can reduce gastric and bowel symptoms and increase the body's ability to covert food to energy rather than fat. By combining digestive enzymes with foods that contain less preservatives, we can aid our bodies to better utilize what

#### **#2 Bad Gut Bacteria**

There are 50-100 trillion bacteria in our gut with over 5,000 species. Our guts are biodiverse and contain both good and bad bacteria.

The roles of this microbiome: to break down undigested food (carbohydrates), production and absorption of vitamins B's and K, processing of bile and sterols, strengthens the immune system, defends against infection from bad bacteria, effects brain neurotransmitters (thinking, mood, autism), production of serotonin (low levels can cause depression and anxiety), and hormones that direct fat metabolism and

The effects of when our gut bacteria are out of whack (more bad than good) can be obesity, bowel disease, cancer, brain issues, diabetes, liver disease, immune system issues as well as effects on the skin.

Disruption of this system includes high glycemic foods, chemicals (preservatives and

additives), pesticides, fake sugar, toxic metals, antibiotics used in food, irritating and spicy herbs and condiments, parasite tainted food, allergies to food, lack of vitamins and minerals, stress (cortisol), poor general health, and certain medications such as steroids and NSAIDS. Signs of this disruption are nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, gas, bloating, cramping, constipation, heartburn, irritable bowel syndrome, lactose intolerance, food sensitivities, drowsiness or fatigue after meals, depression, frequent illness (colds and flu), forgetfulness, sluggish thinking, weight gain and difficulty losing weight (excess body fat).

When there is an overgrowth of bad bacteria and yeast in the gut, sugars are broken down incorrectly and the signals for fat metabolism and storage are disrupted.

Add a probiotic every other day or daily to your diet. Science has shown that we don't need to replace all the bacteria. The two most important bacteria that can survive the harsh stomach environment are lactobacillus, rhammosus GG, LGG and bifodobacterium BB-12. These can also be stored at room temperature, making it easy to travel with or take to work.

These are the first two out of four things that allow body fat to accumulate. In the January issue, we will discuss Part II.

Have a fabulous Christmas season! Here's to health!

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## The Restaurant Fix:

### How Coast 2 Coast Payroll & Payments Helps Solve the Problems Owners Face Every Day

By Kris Ford

Anyone who has worked a Friday night shift knows the truth: restaurants run on rhythm. When the rhythm is good, everything flows. When it's off—one wrong modifier, one backed-up POS station, one tech glitch—everyone feels it. What seems small on the surface becomes a costly chain reaction: wasted food, unhappy guests, frazzled staff and margins that shrink month after month.

These daily pressures are exactly why so many local operators along the Emerald Coast turn to Coast 2 Coast Payroll & Payments, a homegrown team that understands the pace and realities of restaurant life. Their focus isn't selling equipmentit's solving the little pain points that make the biggest difference.

#### **Order Accuracy Starts with Better Modifiers**

Ask any chef what derails service, and they'll mention modifiers. When they aren't set up correctly, tickets come in unclear or incomplete. Coast 2 Coast helps restaurants simplify the process with POS systems that improve communication between front and back of house. Cleaner screens, smarter workflows and accurate orders mean fewer re-



makes and a happier kitchen.

#### **Cash Discounting: A** Simple Way to Keep **More of Your Revenue**

Processing fees take up to 4% of your revenue! Coast 2 Coast offers programs that are Visa/ MC compliant and can eliminate up to 100% of those fees, allowing operators to keep more of their own revenue while servers effectively earn more per shift. It's a quiet change with a big impact on morale and the bottom line.

#### **Handhelds That Bring Back the Flow**

If vou've ever watched a server stuck in line at a POS station, you know how quickly momentum disappears. Table-side handhelds fix this issue instantly. Servers stay on the floor, checks close out faster and guests feel taken care of. Many local owners report a 20% increase in covers just by switching to handheld A Partner Who Gets It ordering and checkout. Efficiency goes up, tips rise, and the dining room feels more connected.

#### **Local Matters More Than Ever**

Technology is great—until it stops working during a dinner rush. When that happens, 1-800-Good-Luck won't save the night. Coast 2 Coast is built on local, same-day support. They install systems in person, train your team on-site and show up when something goes wrong. No waiting days for an out-of-state tech. No ticket numbers. No guessing. Just real support from real people who know your mar-

#### **Systems Built for Your Style of Service**

A small café doesn't operate like a high-volume bar. A food truck doesn't look anything like a multi-location restaurant group. With 35+ POS solutions, Coast 2 Coast matches the system to the operation—not the other way around. They also support owners with payroll, HR services, business capital, and high-risk workers' comp options, recognizing how interconnected those needs are in the restaurant

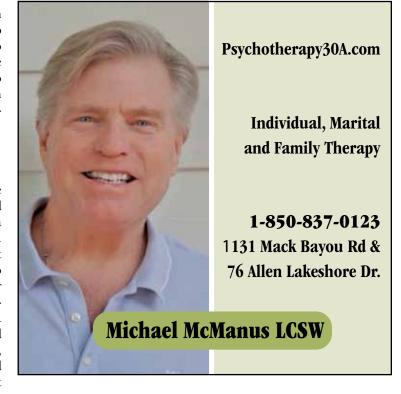
Most restaurant owners say the same thing: they don't want another vendor; they want someone in their corner—someone who understands that the rhythm of a dining room matters. Someone who helps create smoother shifts, less stress and happier teams.

That's what Coast 2 Coast aims to provide-practical, local solutions that let restaurants focus on hospitality, not head-

#### **Learn more at:** www.c2cpayroll.com

Coast 2 Coast Payroll & Payments — Local Serving Local

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• Do you wish your teeth were whiter?

you smile?



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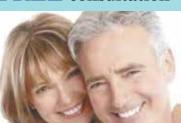
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# **Unlocking Strengths at Work:**

# Helping Your Co-workers Rise



By BILL MASON, ROCKET FUEL COACH

Sometimes the teammates we rely on most hit unexpected "basement" moments—yet with the right support, their greatest strengths can shine even brighter.

#### Unlocking Your Co-worker's Consistency Power

Do you have a co-worker who's usually calm, reliable, and all about fairness, but every now and then, they seem to hit a wall? I've got one on my team who is usually the backbone of consistency, ensuring processes run smoothly and everyone is treated fairly. But recently, when faced with an unexpected change, they became frustrated and rigid, unable to adjust. It was like watching someone with a deep commitment to fairness stuck in the basement of resistance! This is a classic case of "basement" behaviors for someone with the Consistency strength. When things don't go according to plan, they can become overly focused on maintaining the status quo and struggle to adapt. But at their core, they have an amazing ability to bring structure, reliability and fairness to any situation.

How can we help them get back to their "balcony" and thrive?



**Acknowledge Their Strengths** – Remind them of how their consistency has positively impacted the team and how valuable their reliable nature is in maintaining stability.

**Encourage** Flexibility

Help them see that change doesn't have to disrupt fairness. Encourage them to find ways to maintain fairness even in shifting circumstances.

**Provide Clear Expectations** – Give them a clear framework for changes or new processes. Knowing the "rules" can help them feel comfortable adapting without losing their sense of fairness.

#### Unlocking Your Coworker's Context Superpower

Do you have a co-worker who's usually great at connecting the dots and understanding how the past shapes the present, but every now and then, they seem lost in the details? I've got one on my team who typically excels at bringing historical context into conversations, but recently, when the team was faced with a new challenge, they couldn't stop reflecting on past failures. It was like watching someone with a deep understanding of history stuck in the basement of overthinking!

This is a classic case of "basement" behaviors for someone with the Context strength. When they get too focused on the past, they can become stuck in what went wrong instead of moving forward. But at their core, they

have an amazing

ability to use history as a guide, providing valuable lessons and insights for the present.

How can we help them get back to their "balcony" and thrive?

Frame the Present with Purpose – Encourage them to connect past lessons to current opportunities. Help them see how history can inform progress without holding them back.

**Create a Learning Environment** – Invite them to share historical insights in a way that inspires action. This gives them the chance to provide value without getting stuck in analysis.

Celebrate Their Knowledge – Acknowledge how their perspective enhances decision-making. Recognizing their ability to bring wisdom into the team can help them feel more confident in applying it productively

No matter the strength—Consistency or Context—we all win when we help our teammates rise to their best selves. Stay strong, keep learning and keep lifting one another higher.

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# A Pastor's Ponderings: Run to the Manger



By Pastor Dave Holland

"When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, 'Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about.""

"So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger."

"When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them."

"But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told."

— Luke 2:15–20

The angels vanished, the sky went quiet, and the shepherds were left standing in the dark. Can you imagine that moment with an angelic choir singing in the sky and then it ends? Hearts still racing, eyes wide, trying to process what just happened. Amazing.

But they didn't stand around for long. They looked at each other and said, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened."

Notice the urgency—they hurried off.



Faith doesn't procrastinate. When God shows up, the right response is to move. To go. To step into what He's doing.

The shepherds didn't know exactly what they'd find. But they knew they had been invited. And when heaven invites you, you don't stall — you run.

And sure enough, just as the angel said, they found the baby wrapped in cloths, lying in a manger. The Savior of the world, right there in the ordinary mess of a stable.

Their response didn't stop at seeing. They became the first evangelists of the gospel. "When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child."

Shepherds, the ones society overlooked, were the first to share the news of Jesus. And the people who heard them were amazed.

This is how the gospel spreads: ordinary people who have encountered Jesus telling others what they've seen and

heard. You don't have to have all the answers. You don't need a polished sermon. Just share your story. "This is what God showed me. This is what I've experienced."

Meanwhile, Mary responded differently to the angel's message. "She treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart."

Some of us respond like the shepherds — loud, joyful, ready to tell everyone. Others respond like Mary — quiet, reflective, holding the mystery close and letting it sink in slowly. Both responses are holy. Both are worship.

The shepherds eventually returned to their fields. Life didn't stop. Sheep still needed watching. Work still needed doing. But they returned changed. They glorified and praised God for everything they had seen and

heard

That's what encountering Jesus does. It doesn't always remove you from your ordinary life, but it transforms the way you live it. You go back to the same places — but with a new song on your lips, with worship in your heart.

This passage leaves us with a simple challenge: How will we respond to the news of Jesus?

Will we run to Jesus like the shepherds? Will we treasure the moment like Mary? Will we return to our ordinary lives carrying extraordinary joy?

The invitation is the same as it was that night: Come and see. Go and tell.

When God speaks or moves in your life, do you respond quickly like the shepherds and run to the manger, or reflect deeply like Mary?

Please pray with me: Lord, thank You for inviting me to the manger, to see Jesus with fresh eyes. Teach me to respond with urgency, like the shepherds, and with deep reflection, like Mary. As I go back into my everyday life, let my heart be full of praise. Amen.

Pastor Dave Holland and his wife, Jonie, have lived here on the Emerald Coast since retiring from pastoral ministry. Dave adapted this article from his new book, Light Slipping Through the Chaos, available on Amazon.com. He is also available to preach or teach at churches and conferences. Contact him at davidvholland54@gmail.com.

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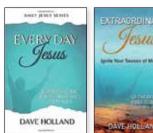


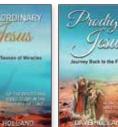
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#### By Sean Dietrich

I was 15 years old. I walked into the rural library. My father was freshly dead. I was a middle-school dropout. We were poor. It was Christmastime.

The small, public library was decorated for the holiday season. There was plastic holiday crapola everywhere. It was cold outside. I had no winter coat.

I stepped into the library with a blast of sleet and rain. I was wearing a T-shirt. My hair was soaked.

"Where's your coat?" said the librarian.

"I don't have one."

"You don't have a coat!? It's 30 degrees outside!"

Shrug.

The librarian's name was Miss Terry. She was old enough to predate the Roosevelt administration. Her hair was cotton white. Her shoes were Reeboks. Her embroidered sweatshirt read: "Dear Santa, I can explain."

The library was a converted residential house. And I was a regular here.

"You can't go around without a coat," Miss Terry said. "You'll freeze."

Shrug Number Two.



I wandered to the fiction section. Fiction was all I was interested in. I read fiction each morning, afternoon, and night. It was escapism, I see that now. And I was a classic escapist. But then, there were very few happy things in my life. Who wouldn't want to escape?

That day, I checked out two Louis L'Amour books, a few Dick Francis novels. When I brought my selection up to the counter, Miss Terry just looked at me with warm eyes.

"I have a book I want you to read," she said.

"You do?"

She placed a leather-bound book atop my stack of books. Written by Lucy Maud Montgomery.

"I think you'll appreciate this one."

"It looks like a girl book."

"Try to keep an open mind."

I took the books home, I read them the way I always read books. Ferociously. But when I read the Lucy Maud Montgomery book, time stood still. And my heart moved sideways in my chest. I had never read a book

with more tenderness.

When I returned to the library a week later, Miss Terry asked how I liked the book. I told her it was maybe the best book I ever read.

I returned my books, and checked out more. This time, she placed another book atop my stack. This one was written by Laura Ingalls Wilder.

I took the books home. I read them in a frenzy, just like before. But Laura Ingalls Wilder was immediately my favorite.

I brought the books back to the library.

"How did you like the book I gave you?" she asked.

"I read it twice."

She smiled.

Then it happened. After Miss Terry accepted my stack of books, in return, she gave me a gift-wrapped box. The box was wrapped in glittery red paper, with a green ribbon.

"What's this?" I asked.

"It's for you," she said.

"Is it another book?"

"Just open it.

I tore the paper. There was a coat inside. Warm and fluffy. I

cried when I put it on.

Sean of the South: Christmas Cheer

"We can't have you catching a cold and getting sick," she said. "There are too many books left for you to read. You might even write one of your own someday."

I wiped my face. "One day I'm going to grow up and write a book," I told her. "And when I do, I'm going to write something about you, and how you gave me this coat."

She smiled and straightened the collar of my jacket. "You won't even remember me when you're all grown up."

Well.

I showed her.

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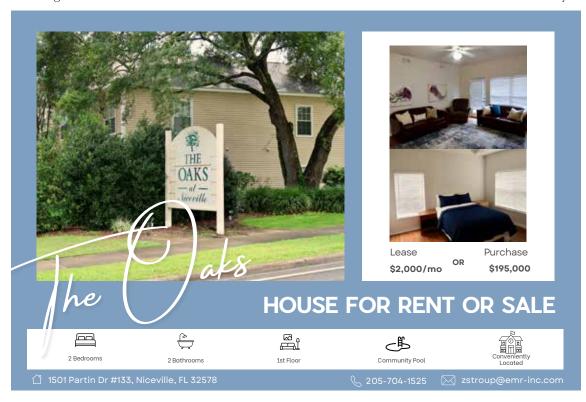


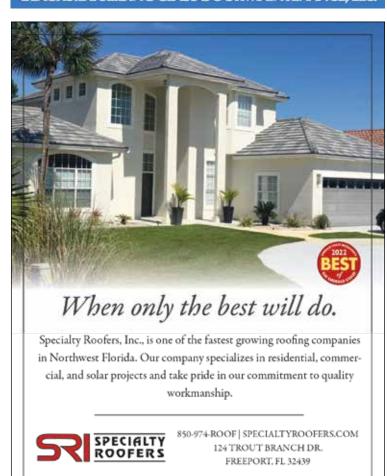
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# Emerald Coast Theatre Company Presents The Holiday Classic "Annie" Nov. 28-Dec. 21

Emerald Coast Theatre Company (ECTC) lights up the season with Annie, running Nov. 28—Dec. 21 at Grand Boulevard in Miramar Beach. Join Annie, Daddy Warbucks and the unforgettable Miss Hannigan in this beloved, feel-good musical filled with classics like "You're Never Fully Dressed Without a Smile," "It's the Hard Knock Life," and "Tomorrow."

Directed by Nathanael Fisher, the show features choreog-

raphy by Emily Bainbridge and Vincent Pellegrino, music direction by Martha Wingfield, and design work by Rebeca Lake, Taylor Walker, Gavin Young and Cailey Mize, with additional production support from Ora Wolfgram, Carl Hendin and Bella Fisher.

The cast includes Evelyn Brooks and Lanier Hooper as Annie; Adam Du Plessis as Warbucks; Darla Briganti as Miss Hannigan; Rachel Morse



as Grace Farrell; Gavin Parmley as Rooster; and Martha Wingfield as Lily St. Regis, along with a talented ensemble and a large cast of Orphans. Bruce Collier portrays President Franklin D. Roosevelt, with Kingston Mixson as Child Actor Supervisor.

Performances take place at ECTC, 560 Grand Boulevard, Suite 200, with tickets priced \$30–\$65. ECTC's 2025–2026 season is supported by Grand

Boulevard Town Center, St. Joe Community Foundation, South Walton, Howard Group and Jerry and Alice Zich.

Engage with ECTC on Facebook, Instagram and YouTube | (850) 684-0323 | emerald-coasttheatre.org











# Destin Life Bookshelf: Light Slipping Through the Chaos

Light Slipping Through the Chaos, Finding the Real Story Behind Christmas is a fresh, heartfelt exploration of the real meaning of Christmas, skillfully penned by D.V. Holland.

Rooted in the biblical narrative of Luke 1-2, Holland invites readers to experience the Nativity story in a deeply human and spiritually resonant way. With his signature warmth and narrative clarity, he unpacks the fears, flaws, and faith of the people at the heart of the Christmas story—reminding us that light can break through even the most chaotic seasons of life.

The book cover displays the central idea. Christ came down from eternity like a small meteorite landing on earth within the womb of a teenage girl in a small village. Subtly, his light grows fulfilling His bringing salvation to humanity.

The book blends devotional insight, historical context, and emotional storytelling in a way that's both accessible and profound. Holland has a gift for connecting the ancient world to our modern one-making the timeless truths of Scripture feel relevant, even urgent.

From Mary's teenage courage to Zechariah's silence, from angelic interruptions to divine delays, Light Slipping Through the Chaos offers a lens that is both honest and hope-filled. It's not just a Christmas book—it's an invitation to see how God works in the waiting, the wondering, and the wildness of real

Perfect for:

- Youth Group or small group Advent studies
  - Family devotions
  - Personal reflection during

Light Slipping Through Cha Finding the Real Christmas

the holiday season

This is not the sugary, sanitized version of Christmas. It's the raw, real, God-breaking-in story we all need.

A powerful debut in the "G-Z Series – Luke 1–2," this book is a timely reminder: the light of Christ still slips through the cracks of chaos, bringing clarity, hope, and peace.

This book can be purchased at Amazon.com, or his website at DaveHolland.org/books.

#### **HOLIDAY MAGIC**

continued from page 19

- 3. Hidden Helpers: Enlist siblings or parents to help set the stage; string twinkle lights, decorate the space or cue the music just before the big reveal.
- 4. Holiday Photos with a Twist: Schedule a "family photoshoot" and surprise your partner mid-photo with the proposal. The photographer will capture every priceless reaction. Your family not only shares in the surprise, but becomes part of your love story.
- 5. Capture on Video: Hire a Videographer to film the big moment.

#### **Keeping It A Surprise: Subtle Planning Tips**

Balancing secrecy and family involvement takes a bit of finesse.

- Limit the circle of trust. Only tell those who truly need to know, and who can keep a
- · Coordinate logistics early. You may wish to hire a professional planner to assist. The holidays are busy, so plan times, travel and props well in advance.
- Have a backup plan. Weather, travel delays or unexpected guests can shift the timeline.

Remember, surprises are not about perfection; they are about

#### **Capturing The Moment**

Whether you hire a professional photographer or ask a trusted family member to record discreetly, capturing the moment ensures that joy is preserved forever.

Candid reactions, laughter,

and happy tears become part of vour engagement story—something to share for generations.

Afterward, consider creating a keepsake to commemorate the

- A custom ornament engraved with your engagement
- A framed family photo from the proposal
- A short video compilation shared at your engagement party or wedding reception

#### **Final Reflections: Love, Family and Forever**

A holiday proposal blends love and tradition, reminding us that the greatest gifts are the people we share life with.

Including family means you're not just proposing to one person you're bringing two families together.

The laughter, the tears, the glow of the season — it's a kind of magic that lasts far beyond the moment.

D.V. Holland

Whether it's Christmas Eve under a shining tree, a New Year's toast beneath fireworks, or a quiet winter morning with

just the two of you, remember this: love, wrapped in intention and family, is the most timeless tradition of all.

# 5 Quick Tips for a Seamless **Holiday Proposal**

1. Plan ahead: The holidays book up fast, reserve photographers, florists, and venues early; The Alice still has dates available for the 2025 season.

2. Think logistics: Hide

the ring carefully (and keep it away from curious relatives).

3. Choose the right words: Speak from your heart; perfection is not the goal; authenticity is.

- 4. Include loved ones mindfully: Only invite those who enhance the moment.
- 5. Celebrate softly: Do not rush to post online; cherish and relish your private joy first.



## Holiday Porps SPECTACULAR!

SATURDAY, DEC. 13 | 7:30 PM **DESTIN-FWB CONVENTION CENTER** 

This festive concert features full orchestra, vocalists and everything from timeless favorites like Winter Wonderland to chart-topping hits such as Mariah Carey's All I Want for Christmas is You, along with beloved holiday songs from Broadway and film like It's Beginning to Look a Lot Like Christmas.





SUNDAY, DEC. 7 | 10:30 AM **HOTEL EFFIE SANDESTIN** 

Enjoy a sparkling Sunday brunch concert with Broadway sisters Ann Hampton Callaway and Liz Callaway as they bring their acclaimed show to Destin. This celebrated cabaret performance blends their extraordinary voices. From Broadway classics to pop standards.













# Ask Destinites: Shopping Local for Holiday Gifts





By Patricia Lee - Owner: www.Destinites.com

This past month, in our local Destinites Facebook group (www.Facebook.com/groups/Destinites), one of our members said she wanted to "support local" for Christmas shopping. Our members stepped right up with some great suggestions. I thought I would share some of them with you so that you may help support local business owners (and their families) this season, too. HAPPY SHOPPING!!

## **Group member suggestions for you:**

- 1. A. Family & Friends Massage Spa. B. Jaekae Luxury Massage & Esthetics C. OM Relaxation Spa D. Destin Weight Loss & Wellness
- 2. DeannaRheaPhotography.com Special seasonal deals.
  - 3. LoveStitchScrunchies.com
  - 4. Small Batches Fort Wal-



ton - variety of local vendors from around the area.

- 5. Terra Handcrafted & Permanent Jewelry Okaloosa Island
- 6. Kitty Hawk Kites Destin Harbor
- 7. LucindaBunnCreative. etsy.com
- 8. Laneybug Bowtique Baby and Childrens Clothing https://www.facebook.com/search/top?q=laneybug%20 bowtique
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   high quality, naturopathic doctor-formulated supplements focused on health and wellness.
- 10. Aqua Vitae-IV Drip Bar - Destin - Hydration, NAD+, Vitamin Shots, Oxygen Bar, Weight loss

AquaVitaeIV.com

11. CRYO850.com - Well-

ness center. Drug free technologies for pain management.

#### MERRY CHRISTMAS & HAPPY HOLIDAYS TO ALL!

If you are a Destin resident or in the surrounding area, I invite you to join our private, targeted group for locals and property owners at Facebook.com/groups/Destinites, which now has 12.200+ members (est.

Oct. 2018). Check out our local business directory at Destinites. com, where more than 500 local businesses are already listed and enjoy advertising, in our targeted community group.

#### **GLOW**

continued from page 30

timate Skin Refiner Treatment, Micro-Current lifting and 15-minute Red LED light therapy—all for just \$360 (\$25 savings!). Treat yourself or gift it to someone special.

Or explore these 2025 Holiday Specials—perfect to give or keep:

**Christmas Massage:** 60-minute Aromatherapy massage with back and foot sugar scrub – \$90 (\$25 savings)

Mrs. Claus' Night Out: Oxygen Facial with 15-minute Red LED light therapy – \$120 (\$25 savings)

**Santa Baby:** Ultimate Skin Refiner Facial (HydroFacial) with Collagen Eye & Lip treatment – \$135 (\$50 savings)

**A Few of My Favorite Things:** Derma-Zen Facial
(Dermaplane with Rezenerate)
with natural enzyme peel –
\$150 (\$25 savings)

**Winter Wonderland:** Microneedle treatment with Collagen Sheet Mask and Cold Gloves – \$150 (\$50 savings)

My True Love Gave to Me: 60-minute Deep Tissue Massage, Anti-aging Facial and 30-minute Red LED light therapy – \$185 (\$50 savings)

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