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So Others May Live

Coast Guard Rescue Swimmers, Saving Lives, Defying Death

BY MARTHA J. LA GUARDIA-KOTTIE,
FORMER CAPTAIN USCG

Immense Pacific Ocean seas rolled ashore. The frigid salt water swept into the mouth of the Oregon cave at the foot of Cape Lookout with a roar so loud, the Coast Guard helicopter hovering above was quieted.

For Aviation Survivalist Tristan Heaton, the rescue swimmer looking wide-eyed down towards the cave from the protection of the helicopter's cabin—it was the kind of day he lived for. Nothing got his adrenaline going in such an incredible rush as when he was preparing to save lives. He was addicted to the natural injection. Looking down at the ocean he thought, "If I make it back from this one, I'm going to go back and do it again." Heaton said he had waited all his life to "almost die" to help someone. On this day, two brothers were trapped inside the cave. The only way out for the brothers was back through the cave's mouth, into the wild sea.

* * *

The desire to help someone, to save lives is at the core of what it means to be a first responder and a member



of the U.S. Coast Guard. I joined the Coast Guard to save lives and to protect the environment. After getting my appointment to the US Coast Guard Academy on the steps of Station Destin, located across from Crab Island and at the foot of the Destin bridge, I served in the U.S. Coast Guard for over 30 years at sea and ashore.

When I learned of this extraordinary cave rescue, I

was a lieutenant working in the Pacific Northwest as the Coast Guard's Public Affairs Officer. I was surprised to learn more about what happened that day and how Tristan "almost died" to save a stranger. I figured if I didn't know about the extent of what our Coast Guard men and women do to save others, then certainly many people in America and around the world did not either. This story stuck with me as I moved from Seattle

to New York and continued to serve as a Coast Guard officer. As I transitioned from active duty to active reserve, I was driven to write a book about the Coast Guard's modern day heroes and their rescues in an effort to shine a light on our service and celebrate their sacrifices, their risks and their

**SO OTHERS
MAY LIVE**

continued on page 2

Breaking Bread with American Lunch

BY HEATHER BENNETT

Food insecurity along The Emerald Coast is an ongoing issue that we have spotlighted with stories involving local food banks, churches, and food drives, but it's not something we all think about. However, with many people out of work and kids home from school due to COVID-19 it's now something that has been brought to the forefront of the community.

Thankfully our community is caring and supportive, and we come together when in need. Many local businesses and restaurants have stepped up to help provide free meals during these trying and uncertain times, making sure kids have access to lunch, and families can get a hot meal.

You may have seen the American Lunch food truck handing out free lunches the last couple of months. They are a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that has been delivering free hot meals to people in need since

AMERICAN LUNCH

continued on page 3

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SO OTHERS MAY LIVE

continued from page 1

courage. This story was the first chapter I wrote which became *So Others May Live: Coast Guard Rescue Swimmers Saving Lives, Defying Death*. This book was also a template for the movie "The Guardian" starring Kevin Costner and Ashton Kutcher.

I returned to the Emerald Coast and recently retired on the steps of Station Destin, the place where my career began. Station Destin is special to me, not only because I grew up in Destin when all it was known for was "the luckiest fishing village in the world," but also because this station for me represents the heart of the Coast Guard. The men and women of our service are selfless and tireless when it comes to their job, their mission and their dedication to save lives, and protect our coasts.



The Coast Guard is a multi-mission force and branch of the military under the Department of Homeland Security. A force of 42,000 men and women nationwide, we are similar to the size of the New York Police Department serving to defend America's borders and protect the maritime environment. From drug interdiction, to search and rescue, migrant interdiction, ice operations, law enforcement and marine environmental protection to aids to navigation, the Coast Guard serves at sea and ashore.

The next time you're going over the Destin bridge or on a boat near Crab Island, honk your horn, wave hello or greet the

Coast Guard men and women of Station Destin and thank them for their service. When you need help, the Coast Guard will be there just like Tristan and his aircrew.

Tristan's fearful thoughts, looking down at the cave he was about to enter, did not get the best of him. He found the confidence in his training and in his aircrew hovering above to descend on the cable and enter the mouth of the cave to rescue a survivor. Only when the helicopter flew into the cave to help Tristan and the nearly unconscious survivor he held in his arms, did this hero escape death and rise up to see the sunrise of a new day.



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Coastal Seniors offering Help for Homebound Seniors



Nancy Ambinder of the CSSW holds a basket showing some of the items included in the care packages that will be distributed.

In cooperation with The Area Agency on Aging, the Coastal Seniors of South Walton (CSSW) is providing care packages for homebound senior citizens during the current pandemic. The packages will include a mix of items, including hand soap, medical masks, helpful tips and phone numbers. If you are 50 years or older, and reside in Walton County we invite you to join CSSW in order to participate in our activities. Membership dues

for 2020 are \$20.00 per person/ \$30 per couple. Become a member of CSSW on Facebook at Coastal Seniors of South Walton, or via email at coastalseniorsouthwalton@gmail.com, or on the website at www.coastalseniorsouthwalton.org.

Coastal Seniors of South Walton, Inc. is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization for active adults and we're looking for dedicated, enthusiastic persons to join our Board of Directors.



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Our Local Pros: Spotlight on Sowel Services

BY RITA L. SHERWOOD

So what's a stay-at-home mom of two teenage boys to do when they don't need as much time and attention? How about opening up her own business to take care of your second home just as carefully as you would, that is, if you lived here.

And that's exactly what Polly Boone of Seagrove Beach did.



Polly says it was a natural fit as she was holding keys to various friends' vacation homes anyway, and checking on them periodically. One day, two years ago, she was sitting there perusing Facebook, and decided to advertise her services and make it a business. 12 people responded, and the rest is history.

Sowel Services' main focus is to be your local eyes and ears for your second home when you can't be there. Services can be weekly or bi-weekly and range from interior and exterior home inspection to hurricane preparedness, cleaning, coordinating deliveries, and even groceries and supplies stocking prior to arrival. They've even been known to install cameras and build a boardwalk per their customer requests, and most of their business is concentrated on 30A.

Some of the items/issues that Sowel Services have uncovered with second homes are AC units not working, leaks in toilets, vandalism, etc.

Polly says, "I'm very straightforward, and we tell it like it is. We're there when you can't be, we're your eyes, and treat your home like it's our own." She

goes on to say that everything they do is automated and they use Samsung tablets to report information in real time along with photos of what's needed and/or any damage immediately to the owners.

Sowel Services also is offering rental owner support for short-term rentals. While not a big part of their business, some out of town individual owners have really come to rely on them. For example, one owner called because the WIFI wasn't working for their rental house. Sowel Services was able to reply immediately, find the solution, and get it working.

Pricing averages about \$46 per 20-30 minute visit to each home, but varies by the total square footage.

When not working, these Houma, LA natives Polly, Daniel Boone (that's right, Daniel Boone!) and their two boys love to enjoy the outdoors by off-roading in their Jeep, boating, fishing and paddle boarding. Not a bad place to be, these now transplanted locals of 30A!

Be sure to check out Sowel Services at Sowalservices.com, or call 850.565.9038, They are fully insured, Polly herself handles much of the second homes, and their employees who have had background checks handle most of the short-term rentals.

AMERICAN LUNCH

continued from page 1

2012. They receive 1% of the proceeds from Morgan family restaurants like Harbor Docks, La Paz, The Local Market and Camille's to cover operating costs. Recently, they've been serving up free lunches on The Emerald Coast during the shut-down.

"We're doing it because we know these times are tough, and food is hard to come by for people, and people need to eat," said Eddie Morgan of Harbor Docks. "We're going to be regularly ordering food to keep feed-

ing people."

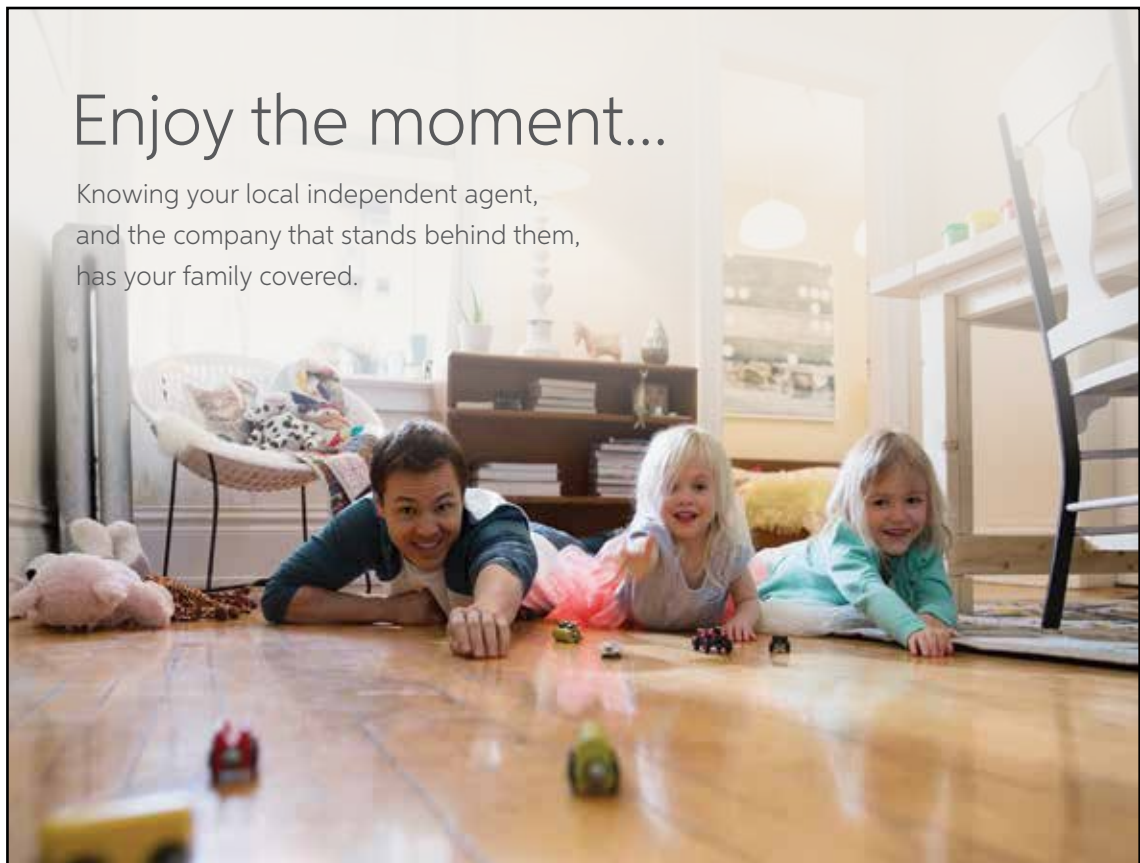
Some of the meals being offered by American Lunch are gumbo, tacos, fajitas, ham and cheese sandwiches, pulled pork sandwiches, fried chicken and fish salad sandwiches. Other local restaurants have also donated meals to American Lunch to distribute. "We've had a great response. We've been averaging about 150 people a day," said Eddie. "Everything's free, completely free of charge. No questions asked. We're not here to judge, we're just here to feed people."

American Lunch not only serves The Emerald Coast, but

also is available in other areas of the south – Athens, Georgia, Birmingham, Mobile, and Tuscaloosa, Alabama, where Morgan family restaurants are located. Since serving free meals is something American Lunch has done for years, they will continue to help the communities as we all start to reopen.

If you would like to know more about American Lunch, or the food truck schedule you can check out their Website at americanlunch.org or their Facebook page [facebook.com/AmericanLunch](https://www.facebook.com/AmericanLunch).

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 Community

June 2020 WCSD Superintendent's Update



Superintendent A. Russell Hughes

FROM SUPERINTENDENT
RUSSELL A. HUGHES

As the 2019-2020 school year has come to a close, I wanted to take the time to say a sincere thank you to all Walton County School District students, parents, and employees. The last few months have been like nothing we have ever experienced,

but at the same time, I can share story after story of excellence, professionalism, innovation, and collaboration. In Walton County, we call that the Walton Way – EPIC. Those are the only words to describe you! From bus drivers and food service workers delivering food to families to parents working on a math problem over a conference call with teachers, everyone has stepped up to the “new normal” and even exceeded expectations.

Before the summer starts, I do want to share a few updates with you.

First, our summer feeding program will continue as it has in year's past. Feeding will begin June 11 and run every Thursday (June 11, June 18, June 25, July 1, July 9, July 16, July 23, and July 30). Please note July 1, our holiday week, will be on a Wednesday. Our two food locations are

Walton Middle School in DeFuniak Springs and Freeport High School in Freeport. We will offer a curbside service from 10:00 a.m. until 12 noon.

Second, we have put together a short survey for parents. You can access the survey from the link at the end of this post. Please take a few minutes to help us plan for the 2020-2021 school year. Your feedback is very important to us. We want to know your thoughts surrounding health, safety, and returning to school.

Finally, as I stated above, we do appreciate everyone's hard work and enthusiasm during these past two months. If you would like to recognize a Walton County School District employee or school who has gone above and beyond, please feel free to send a compliment via our text line at 850.204.9667. We will be sure to pass on your “shout-out” to your child's school! Please continue to stay safe, healthy, and connected to your school for updates. Have a great summer and thank you again for another great school year!

Parent Survey: https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=OiUjugsuok2fpgZAQ5LOGHj4YnMx-ftZMj_GWnByLYTxUOUN-ZUTVFVvK5PWDBXU1oy-QUVTWVo0SUZPTi4u

In other district news, we wish a special congratulations to Gabriella Lanza for being named the WINNER of the 2020 Congressional Art Competition with her incredible work titled Ocean Layer! Gabriella is a student at South Walton High School where she studies with art teacher Dr. Vivian Komando. Gabriella's art will hang in the United States Capitol Building tunnel for one year!

Congratulations also goes to Marie Claire Brown from South Walton High School under the tutelage of Dr. Komando for being named 1st runner up in the 2020 Congressional Art Competition. Her art piece will be displayed in Congressman Gaetz Pensacola district office for one year! We are so proud of these amazing art students and their teacher!

We are excited to tentatively announce graduation ceremonies for our three traditional high schools on the following dates:

- Freeport High School: July 21, 2020; 8:00 pm
- South Walton High School: July 23, 2020; 8:00 pm

- Walton High School: July 24, 2020; 8:00 pm
- In10sity School of Excellence: July 25, 2020; 4:00 pm
- Paxton High School: July 25, 2020; 7:00 pm

These dates are contingent upon government mandates and CDC advisories on social gatherings in order to prioritize the safety of students, parents, and staff. Family and friends can check with the schools, either directly or via their web and social media pages, to gather more specific information about times and locations

Superintendent Hughes is honored to announce the appointment of Mrs. Carrie Chavers as the new Dune Lakes Elementary School Principal. Mrs. Chavers served as the Dean of Students at South Walton High School (2017-2019), and most recently as Assistant Principal at South Walton High School since July of 2019. She is equipped and ready to serve the staff, students, and parents of Dune Lakes Elementary School, and we know they will welcome her in true Dune Lakes Sandpiper and “EPIC Walton County” fashion!



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St. Joe Announces Final Phase of WaterColor Community

PLANS CALL FOR SHORT-TERM RENTAL RESTRICTIONS

The St. Joe Company has announced it has broken ground on the final phase of homesite development in the WaterColor community. Plans call for this phase to feature 41 custom homesites to be developed north of West Lake Forest Drive.

The WaterColor community is an award-winning, iconic, master-planned community spanning approximately 500 acres and featuring approximately 1,000 existing homes. Homes in the WaterColor community listed for sale range in price from approximately \$1 million to over \$4 million. Situated along Scenic Highway 30-A, the community is bordered by the Gulf of Mexico, Western Lake, Point Washington State Forest and Grayton Beach State Park which was named the #1 Beach in America for 2020 by Dr. Beach. These natural surroundings are a part of the amenities that are available to residents of the WaterColor community in addition to multiple beach access points, neighborhood parks, miles of paths and trails and an outdoor amphitheater. Residents



have access to the community pools, tennis center, fitness center and the recently renovated WaterColor Beach Club which offers three pools, multiple dining options and sweeping views of the Gulf of Mexico. The WaterColor community is home to the

award-winning WaterColor Inn, St. Joe's 60-room gulf-front resort hotel, and several shops and res-

The development is less than a 1/4 mile from the WaterColor Crossings Shopping Center and Publix Super Market.

"For many years the WaterColor community has been a very special place for so many people," said Bridget Precise, Senior Vice President of Residential Real Estate for St. Joe. "What makes this phase so unique is that not only is it the final phase of new homesite development but that it will be rental restricted, creating a neighborhood within the WaterColor community that will not have short-term rentals. In addition, this new neighborhood will feature a residents-only pool offering some privacy for anyone looking to build a custom home to serve as a primary residence or a second home at the beach to experience the unique WaterColor lifestyle."

Site work is currently underway and plans call for homesites to be available for sale later this year or early 2021. For more information on this development and to sign up to receive development updates and homesite sales information, visit www.watercolorflorida.com.

taurants. These 41 planned custom homesites represent the community's final phase of homesite development. Plans call for the phase to have a short-term rental restriction and feature a private pool available only to residents.

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Community

Faces of Walton County; Helen "Redd" Vizard, The Singing Bartender

BY MARK STANLEY AND TRACY STEELY

After months of pandemic purgatory I am pleased to welcome the return of "the Singing Bartender" to Redd's Fueling Station, located around the back of Sally's By The Sea Store on 30A in Blue Mountain Beach. We recently had a chat with the bartender-server-hostess-cashier-entertainer and owner of the establishment, Helen "Redd" Vizard.

"That's Redd with two D's, one here and one here," she says, slapping her chest – twice.

I asked her how she came to be the Singing Bartender. She started at the beginning.

"I have been singing since I could talk. In fifth grade we did the Wizard of Oz. I wanted to play Dorothy, but when I auditioned they said I sang like a city girl. I've always been a belter. [She demonstrates her powerful voice]. In high school I did girls' choir, concert choir, pop ensemble, like Glee. I did a little com-

munity theater in Tucson. Gilbert and Sullivan theater. So I have some theater background."

Originally from New Jersey, Redd came to Florida for the first time in 1991, landing a job as ship's purser on a floating casino boat in Key West. When her shift ended at the end of the day, she would gravitate to the microphone.

"They had a band upstairs and they had karaoke at the end of the night downstairs. I would go sing with the band for a couple songs, and then I would go sing karaoke for a couple of songs. This was when karaoke was getting really big."

After a few years in the Keys she headed back to New Jersey. "I left in search of a nice straight man. Because there aren't any down there. You know, with jobs and teeth and stuff like that."

The cold drove her back to Florida in the mid-1990s, where she met her future husband, Paul. "He heard me sing one night at a karaoke place in Fort Lauderdale. I sang Rocket Man. And he

said 'Why are you a bartender? Why aren't you a singer?' 'Well, because I need to make a living.' From then on, whenever we went anywhere, he would put me in for songs under the name of Redd with two Ds."

The couple moved permanently to South Walton about twelve years ago. Redd got a gig tending bar in the back of Sally's store. Business was slow. "It was just a couple of local yocals sitting at the bar every night. I said, 'Sally, I used to do this thing down in Key West where I would sing and bartend at the same time. I stole the idea from a couple of drag queens.'

Sally liked the idea and leased Redd the space in the back of the store. Fortuitously, the walls were already painted red. "It was Karma. It was meant to be. We



started adding to the silliness and the tin signs and the gas station theme and the movie theme ... it just took on a life of its own."

I asked Redd for her top five sing-a longs. She struggled with that.

"I can't just do five. My go-

tos on my Pandora playlist right now are Sting, Billy Joel, Elton John, David Bowie, Little Big Town (that just sort of happened recently). Then I mix in like the Talking Heads. Occasionally I throw in K.C. and the Sunshine Band, Harry Connick Jr., Frank Sinatra. My current favorite is Mack the Knife by Bobby Darren."

Redd's is open for dinner Tues-Sat. Redd sings on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays. Live entertainment on Fridays. She will be hosting a seven-year anniversary bash on June 20th. For more information and to listen to Redd's rendition of Mack the Knife, visit www.reddsfuel.com.

Tracy Steely and Mark Stanley are the hosts of a community website called The Faces of Walton County. The project aims to showcase the diverse residents of our community, one Face at a time. To nominate someone for an interview visit www.thefacesof-waltoncounty.com or call Tracy at 850-803-9822.

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Communities of Transformation Celebrates Accomplishments in the Spite of Pandemic

BY HOPE MCCORMICK & EMILY PROCTOR

Communities of Transformation (COT) South Walton is pleased to highlight the accomplishments of Susannah Wright and Mike Robinson.

COT is a relatively new program, offered by Caring and Sharing of South Walton, that takes a holistic approach to help under-resourced people build leadership skills and develop supportive friendships to assist them in transforming their lives.

Wright, whose graduation ceremony was cancelled due to the pandemic, is celebrating her success after earning a Bachelor's Degree in Education. "It's nice having people to celebrate with," Wright said. "They've all been very kind and they're there when I need them. You always need someone in your corner, and with COT you have a whole community in your corner."

Wright joined COT as a student in March of 2019, when the South Walton chapter was just getting started. Her COT family has kept her motivated, as they celebrated the completion of each task on the road to her degree.

"When it got hard, COT reminded me why I'm doing this," she said. "It's because I love this community, and I want to show kids how much they matter to this community, and what they can do. I want to tell the kids, 'I'm proud of the way you're growing and learning, but who you are is enough right now.' I learned that



from COT, that who you are now is OK, even if you're working to improve yourself."

Robinson, a veteran who served for almost a decade, found his transition back to civilian life difficult. While working to heal past traumas and make a new start, he befriended Courtenay, who was already involved with COT.

"I came to observe the meetings, and I felt comfortable because they were vulnerable, too. When a new class opened up, I

signed up officially." He added, "I like how people don't judge me there. It's people from all walks of life interacting as peers."

Like Wright, Robinson says COT has taught him about goal setting and "basically how to approach a problem in your life when you have the support around you. It's helped me to look at my life, slow down a little, and attack a problem systematically. Step by step."

Robinson had dreamed of opening his own business, using his years of experience in landscaping and tree service. He was doing some contract work as a climbing arborist, but was frustrated with some of the people he worked with and the life choices they were making. It was important to him to surround himself

with like-minded people who were committed to improving their lives. So, a little over a month ago, with Courtenay's help, he started Bayside Tree Service. Robinson believes he will be successful, because he is well qualified to provide people with expert service. "A lot of people can use a chainsaw, but not everybody pays attention to OSHA safety codes and the science of how to correctly work on a tree."

"I'm in the beginning phases of the business," he said. "I've had some really good customers. It's a little slow, and that's scary. But I'm excited."

He is eager to share his love for COT. "My hope would be that we can get the word out and show people what COT can do for you," he said.

For more information about COT, and how you can be a part of this community program, contact hopenccormick.cot@gmail.com or call Caring and Sharing of South Walton at 850-267-2866.

About the Writers: Hope McCormick is Community Development VISTA for Communities of Transformation South Walton. Emily Proctor is Director of Outreach at Caring and Sharing of South Walton.

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Food For Thought Supplies Food to Families Affected by COVID-19

By JESSICA ROBERTS

Food For Thought's mission is to remove the negative impacts of hunger and to empower children to get the most out of their education and development by providing them weekly access to healthy, easy to prepare meals through their many programs.

In the 25 weeks of the 2019-2020 school year before the COVID-19 "Stay at Home" Order, Non-Profit Food For Thought distributed 829,000 food items to over 3,300 students across Okaloosa and Walton counties through their backpack

program with the assistance of 6,300 volunteer hours. When the global pandemic hit and schools closed their doors, Food For Thought had to quickly restructure and embrace the fluidity of the ever-changing situation at hand.

"We have never closed our doors. We keep fighting to support local families in need," says Tiffanie Nelson, Founder and Executive Director of Food For Thought. "We're seeing families that have never required our services before. Food insecurity can often result in just one missed



paycheck. And, that's what we're seeing now. People in need like never before. If your kids haven't been a part of our backpack program prior to COVID, that's ok. We're here to help."

Food For Thought operates year-round providing services during all breaks in the school year including summer months. The organization has had to shift to these larger, more involved summer-style services three months earlier than anticipated without skipping a beat.

There are five established locations - each of the pantry locations in Destin, Santa Rosa Beach, Defuniak Springs and

newly added locations in Mary Esther and Freeport. Families receive curbside bags of food, each vehicle receiving 30 to 50 full-size food items in order to prepare full meals for the entire family. Each location hosts two pickups per month serving 500-600 families across all five locations. Staff and volunteers are strictly adhering to safety guidelines including wearing gloves and face masks, social distancing, and less than 10 volunteers working together at any one time.

This shift in programming means 60,000 food items are needed per month in addition to replacing \$120,000 in dona-

tion losses from postponed or cancelled events and fundraisers from March into September.

It's just \$30 a month to Sponsor a Family. That \$30 provides one week of food for one family and you can sponsor a family by texting FFTSUMMER to 44321 or donating online at fftfl.org. You or your business can now Sponsor a Pickup Location for \$1500 a month which includes both service days.

"A mom of six reached out on Facebook. One of our new delivery drivers recognized our food items. His five kids had been bringing home our backpacks. Now with kids out of school, these families have lost the direct line to our services and many don't have reliable transportation," says Nelson. "We are learning to be nimble. To meet people where they are and help them the best we can. Our community has always come together in times of need, and we're asking for their help now. Every dollar helps."

If you or someone you know is in need of support from Food For Thought, you can get information about food distribution the following ways: text @FFTST to number 81010 to use the Remind App, email support@fftfl.org, or call 850-714-1960.

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Yellow Fly Season Has Come Early!

When the weather heats up in Florida, you know yellow fly (*Diachlorus ferrugatus*) season isn't far behind. This past winter was one of the hottest on record and yellow flies have come out to bite early. Yellow flies are known for their painful bites and just like mosquitoes, only females take a blood meal for egg production while males prefer to feed on nectar and pollen. When it is time to lay their eggs, females find objects perched over water or mud so that the larvae will fall into a wet environment upon emergence, which is generally 5-12 days later. Again, just like mosquitoes, yellow flies go through a larval and pupal stage

before emerging as the adults we loathe. As springtime temperatures increase



larvae become active and begin to feed. Found in heavily shaded root mats of woody plants, such as cypress,

the larvae eat mostly decaying organic matter. In their habitats they molt upwards of 10 times before moving to drier soil and pupating. At this point they will rest in this stage, not eating, until they finish development and emerge into adult flies. The life cycle from egg to adult takes approximately one year.

Biting flies tend to appear as early as March and as late as September, with the peak season lasting from April through June. They are vicious daytime biters, though they prefer the late afternoon and cloudy days. Residences near forest and/or large bodies of water (not saltwater) have a higher chance of encoun-

tering this pest as well. Unlike mosquito larvae, there are no effective methods to control yellow fly larvae yet. However, mosquito repellents, especially those with DEET, have proven moderately effective against yellow flies unless numbers are abundant and food sources limited. Because of this, it is recommended that gloves and head coverings be worn for guaranteed protection from these nuisances; especially if a person has hypersensitivity to such bites.

Since there are no current means to effectively control yellow fly populations around the Gulf Coast, and specifically South Walton County, South

Walton County Mosquito Control District (SWCMCD) dedicates time every year to the creation of yellow fly sticky trap kits to help control populations for single residences. Trap kits are limited to one per household, and the kit includes one inflatable ball, string, all-weather adhesive (glue), and gloves. An instruction sheet is also included for easy installation and sources for materials if further traps are needed. If you have any questions, please call SWCMCD at (850) 267-2112 or email Hallie Oalde, publicrelations@swcmcd.org.

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Please Note:



Jeri & Michie

Guest Columnist; The 2nd Amendment - A Fundamental Principle of American Liberty

By TIM NORRIS



The Florida Department of Agriculture’s recent closing of the processing of concealed carry permits due to Covid-19 has opened some eyes and more debates. New applications need to have fingerprints provided from either of two locations, law enforcement or Tax Collectors offices. Most of these offices have been closed or have very limited hours of operation. Is this a time when Government agencies begin to control and limit your 2nd Amendment rights? A Florida Representative, Rep. Donna Shalala, wants firearm owners to quarantine firearms from its ammunition and then lock them up. “While we stay home and socially distance, it is imperative for gun owners to make sure their firearms are unloaded, separated from ammunition, and locked up” she says. What would be the point of having a firearm for home and self-defense if it’s not ready to be used at a moment’s notice? Why is it our rights are never more threatened than in the midst of a crisis? So please, allow me to voice an opinion: Freedom, in the form of our God-given rights once squandered are not easily regained.

The Second Amendment to our Constitution reads, “A well regulated Militia, being necessary

to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed.”

The origins of the Second Amendment is well-documented in English and American history from the late 17th century through the American Revolution; The right to “keep and bear Arms” was included as a means to accomplish the objective of a “well regulated Militia”—to provide for the defense of the nation, to provide a well-trained and disciplined force and to check federal tyranny. The founders were aiming for a balance of power shared equally among the people, the states, and the federal government. At the founding, all rights not specifically enumerated, were reserved for “The People.” In the 21st century—not so much!

In his classic work popular with the Founders, “Commentaries on the Laws of England,” William Blackstone referred to the right of having arms as a “natural right of resistance and self preservation, when the sanctions of society and laws are found insufficient to restrain the violence of oppression.” Today, what our Founders considered a “natural right” of self-defense is considered by many to be violent in and of itself!

In 2008, the Supreme Court acted, In the case of District of Columbia v. Heller, the Court

examined the meaning of the Second Amendment for the first time. The justices overturned Washington, D.C.’s ban on residents keeping handguns in their homes, affirming the individual’s right to keep and bear those weapons in common use for self-defense and other lawful purposes.

Two years later, in McDonald v. City of Chicago, the Supreme Court incorporated the Second Amendment’s individual right throughout the country, finding it “a fundamental principle of American liberty.”

Despite these decisions, debate continues. Both landmark

opinions affirming the right of Americans to keep and bear arms were passed by 5-4 majorities, with the dissenting justices asking that they be overturned. Further, some judges are choosing to ignore the high court. Moves to protect and expand the right to be armed are, however, rapidly advancing in the states. Forty-four state constitutions include a right to be armed, and only nine of the 50 states have restrictive rules to prevent residents from carrying a concealed weapon, while 11 states permit any resident who lawfully owns a firearm to carry it concealed without further requirements. Millions of Americans own and

use firearms peacefully. Despite the recent uptick in gun violence in a few cities, the past 20 years have seen a dramatic drop in gun crime and gun homicides. The Second Amendment affords Americans a right and ability to protect themselves and their loved ones. It places ultimate trust in the good sense of the American people, as the Founders intended.

Tim Norris, a long-time Panhandle resident is past Chairman of the Walton County Republican Party and is the current Republican Party of Florida’s State Committeeman for Walton County. Tim Resides in Santa Rosa Beach with his wife Nancy. The couple have 3 daughters, Calli, Hannah and Piper.

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 Community

June 2020 30A Real Estate Update



BY LISA HUGHLEY

Dear 30A Neighbors,

2020 has been a memorable year and not for the reasons you may think. During the midst of all of the turmoil we have all found amazing moments to cherish. We are resilient. We are fighters and we will persevere.

At my office, we have changed our business model. We showed and sold properties via FaceTime and did everything possible to locate the right properties and supply the necessary info to our clients in a safe way for both the client and the agent. I love to work.. always have, and am blessed to work with a team of agents who truly care about our clients and community. We have sold a lot of property throughout the first half of 2020, even with all the adversity. I am excited to see what the rest of 2020 brings for all of us! If you have a property to sell or are looking for a property to purchase, please give me a call! I would love to answer your questions!

Rosemary Beach

Detached Single Family Homes, Gulf Front: There are currently 4 active properties ranging from \$3,495,000 to \$10,200,000. The average property is \$5,998,500 with 3340 sf and priced at \$1812.56 per sf and an average of 1162 days on the market. There has been 1 sale at \$3,150,000, selling at 100% of list price, with 2530 sf and \$1245.06 per sf with 805 days on the market.

Detached Single Family

Homes, Non-Gulf Front: There are currently 40 active properties ranging from \$1,150,000 to \$8,400,000. The average property is \$3,391,349 with 3389 sf and priced at \$996.20 per sf and 251 days on the market. There are currently 9 pending properties ranging from \$1,649,000 to \$3,250,000. The average pending sale is \$2,412,889 with 2931 sf and priced at \$857.78 per sf, and 199 days on the market. There have been 30 sales ranging from \$1,175,000 to \$4,220,000. The average sale is \$2,058,483 at 94% of list price, with 2860 sf and selling at \$731.45 per sf with 192 days on the market.

Alys Beach

Detached Single Family Homes, Gulf Front: There is one property available at \$10,000,000 with 3631 sf, priced at \$3,631 per sf and 198 days on the market.

Non-Gulf Front: There are currently 18 active properties ranging from \$2,095,000 to \$6,395,000. The average property is \$4,002,782 with 3612 sf, priced at \$1105.83 per sf and 179 days on the market. There are currently 17 pending sales ranging from \$2,295,000 to \$5,685,000 with the average property being \$3,439,000 with 3448 sf, and 38 days on the market. There have been 28 sales ranging from \$1,800,000 to \$6,200,000. The average sale is \$3,702,664 at 98% of list price with 3460 sf and selling at \$1,057.07 per sf with 103 days on the market.

Watersound Beach

Detached Single Family Homes, Gulf Front: There are 4 currently available. The first at \$6,695,000 with 6 bedrooms and 7 baths, 4853 sf and 42 ft of waterfront, 11 days on the market. The second is \$5,999,999 with 5 bedrooms and 5.5 baths with 4433 sf, 52 ft of waterfront and 283 days on the market. The 3rd listing is \$6,250,000 with 6 bedrooms, 5.5 baths, with 4765 sf, and 51 ft of waterfront with 46 days on the market. The 4th property is \$5,445,000 with 7 bedrooms, 6.5 baths, with 5738

sf, and 64.62 ft of waterfront and 493 days on the market.

Detached Single Family Homes, Non-Gulf Front: There are currently 32 active properties ranging from \$1,050,000 to \$5,200,000. The average property is \$2,871,625 with 3738 sf, priced at \$755.63 per sf and 257 days on the market. There are 5 pending sales ranging from \$960,000 to \$2,960,000. The average pending sale is \$2,037,800 with 2879 sf and 198 days on the market. There have been 33 sales ranging from \$815,000 to \$4,400,000. The average sale is \$2,587,021 with 3787 sf, selling at 94% of list price, at \$671.01 per sf and 303 days on the market.

Seagrove Beach

One Seagrove Place: There are no active properties available! There are currently 2 pending sales. One pending at \$597,000 and the 2nd at \$615,000 with an average 870 sf, priced at \$696.55 per sf and 49 days on the market. There have been 11 sales ranging from \$550,000 to \$620,000. The average sale is \$578,778 with 870 sf, selling at 98% of list price, and selling at \$665.26 per sf with 74 days on the market.

Dunes of Seagrove

There are currently 4 active properties ranging from \$495,000 to \$738,000. The average property is \$530,375 with 1210 sf, priced at \$477.19 per sf and 285 days on the market. There are 6 sales ranging from \$503,000 to \$1,250,000. The average sales price is \$800,817 with 1524 sf, selling at 96% of list price and \$514.30 per sf, with 199 days on the market.

Park Place on Seagrove Beach

There are no active properties available! There is one pending sale at \$1,649,000 with 2209 sf, priced at \$746.49 per sf and 427 days on the market. There have been 2 sales at \$1,775,000 and \$1,800,000 with the average sale being \$1,787,500 with 2214 sf, selling at 96% of list price, selling at \$807.36 per sf, and 192 days on the market.



Seaside

Detached Single Family Homes, Gulf Front: There are currently 4 active properties ranging from \$1,750,000 to \$9,995,000. The average property is \$4,982,500 with 2573 sf priced at \$2146.99 per sf, and 141 days on the market. There are 2 pending sales ranging from \$1,760,000 to \$4,795,000 with the average pending at \$3,277,500 with 1694 sf, priced at \$2192.26 per sf, and 105 days on the market. There have been 6 sales ranging from \$1,750,000 to \$6,800,000 with the average sale being \$4,250,000 with 2365 sf, selling at 95% of list price and \$1851.64 per sf, with 280 days on the market.

Detached Single Family Homes, Non-Gulf Front: There are currently 7 active properties ranging from \$1,595,000 to \$3,650,000. The average property is \$2,211,857 with 2944 sf, priced at \$760.90 per sf and 164 days on the market. There are currently 4 pending sales ranging from \$1,345,000 to \$3,750,000. The average pending sale is \$2,714,250 with 2762 sf and 119 days on the market. There have been 13 sales ranging from \$750,000 to \$4,191,655 with the average property being \$2,002,973 with 2301 sf, selling at 94% of list price at \$907.69 per sf and 150 days on the market.

Watercolor

Detached Single Family Homes, Gulf Front: There are currently 2 sales. The first sale is \$3,100,000 with 2200 sf and 3 bedrooms, 3 baths and 48 ft of waterfront, 431 days on the market. The second sale is \$2,919,555 with 2706 sf and 4 bedrooms, 4 baths, and 49 ft of waterfront, with 1058 days on the market.

Detached Single Family

Homes, Non-Gulf Front: There are 42 active properties available ranging from \$1,295,000 to \$4,125,000 with the average property being \$2,530,881 with 3711 sf, priced at \$683.61 per sf and 136 days on the market. There are 13 pending properties ranging from \$954,000 to \$5,095,000. There have been 82 sales ranging from \$840,000 to \$5,500,000. The average sale is \$1,884,059 with 3261 sf, and selling at 96% of list price at \$559.68 per sf and 135 days on the market.

Gulf Place, AKA Bellamar

Detached Single Family Homes: There are currently 3 active properties ranging from \$875,000 to \$1,195,000. The average property is \$1,081,667 with 2949 sf, priced at \$377.22 per sf, and 176 days on the market. There is one pending sale at \$893,000 with 3435 sf and 122 days on the market. There have been 5 sales ranging from \$700,000 to \$1,275,000 with the average sale being \$970,000 with 3093 sf, selling at 95% of list price at \$317.62 per sf and 428 days on the market.

If you have questions, or if I can help you with any of your real estate needs, please contact me.

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VISIT SOUTHWALTON.LIFE TO READ OUR LATEST ISSUE



BY MAURICE STOUSE,
BRANCH MANAGER AND
FINANCIAL ADVISOR

These days many investors are in search of income. With interest rates nearing record lows, a recent sell off in the stock market, job losses, early retirements, reduced or eliminated dividends, and income security has become even more important to many Americans. Equally important is principal security. Investors, savers and those in need of income have quite the dilemma: How to get income security yet not have to sacrifice principal in order to do so. This article explores ideas for investors to consider. Ultimately each person's situation is unique. So this is a guideline to aid you in your research and decision making.

Strategies for Income and Wealth Replacement

The yield on CDs, treasury bonds, money market funds and savings accounts took a sharp downturn this year as the Federal Reserve worked to bring liquidity into the economy in the face of the COVID 19 virus and the disruption it caused. This meant reduced interest rates on many investments that a lot of individuals relied upon for income or, as a supplement to Social Security, pension or other income. The problem many have faced is that it takes more principal to fund the same income. Or it means the systematic liquidation of assets to meet a given income need.

Enter solution one: The systematic withdrawal plan (SWP or swip). This is how it works. Here is where you start with inputting a desired income amount. Next you would add the amount of principal you can afford to apply to that income. You will also need to put in the percentage you need to earn to meet the income, add

any rate for presumed inflation and lastly put in a projected or expected rate of return. There are many tools available online and through Financial Advisors that will assist you on building this scenario.

Here is an example. Let's say an age 72 retiree with one million dollars in her account desires annual withdrawals of \$40,000 per her required minimum withdrawal. She is concerned about the systematic liquidating of the investment and she does not know how long she will need to rely upon it, or in other words, how long she will live. Also, she might be concerned if her income will keep up with the cost of living. Using the calculator and inputting the 40k, she will find that the account has a withdrawal rate of just over 4% per year. She also instructs the calculator to assume her investment will return 5%. Inflation is factored in at 2%. The results show (if all assumptions turn in to reality) she will receive the annual income of \$40,000 and if she were to attain age 100 (28 years later) her account would then be worth \$1,014,656, about where she started.

Next, solution number two: Income investors might also have the concern that they do not want or cannot commit all of their capital to one strategy. They may need to have funds set aside for an emergency or other needs as well. Insurance companies offer a variety of options through the use of annuities that might involve investing less principal and, given the needed investment performance, might even grow the income. This strategy might also free up capital to invest for long term growth (and not have to have it focused on current income) in an attempt to replace the wealth that was being utilized to provide the income.

There are more aggressive strategies, such as a dividend producing stock portfolio where the income would come from the dividends paid by a basket of stocks or by using a stock

mutual fund. The average yield on the S&P 500 is just below 2%. So an investor needing 4% would need to research companies and or mutual funds (or exchange traded funds) that would have that return. There is also the growth (or loss) potential on the stocks.


Finally, many income investors have turned to real estate over the years for long-term income. Some have done so by way of investing in rental properties and others through Real Estate Investment Trusts (REITS) to generate the income and perhaps the wealth replacement they have as a goal. REITS invest into a number of properties and the investor can buy the REITS themselves or funds made up of REITS. Once again capital appreciation is a potential, but so is the potential for loss.

When considering any of these options, it is important to take note of 1) the risks involved to your principal 2) the risk of sustaining a given rate of return (for example a company may decide to reduce or eliminate a dividend) and 3) the costs associated through the strategy (expenses, maintenance (real estate) riders if any, early withdrawal charges if any, or investment expenses).


Maurice Stouse is a Financial Advisor and the branch manager of The First Wealth Management and Raymond James and he resides in Grayton Beach. He has been in financial services for over 33 years. His main office is located at First Florida Bank, a division of the First, A National Banking Association, 2000 98 Palms Blvd, Destin, FL 32451. Branch offices in Niceville, Mary Esther, Miramar Beach, Freeport and Panama City, Pensacola, and Tallahassee. Phone 850.654.8124. Raymond James advisors do not offer tax advice. Please see your tax professionals. Email: Maurice.stouse@raymondjames.com. Securities offered through Raymond James Financial Services, Inc. Member FINRA/SIPC, and are not insured by bank insurance, the FDIC or any other government agency, are not deposits or obligations of the bank, and are subject to risks, including the possible loss of principal. Investment Advisory Services are offered through Raymond James Financial Services Advisors, Inc. The First Wealth Management First

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Investing involves risk and you may incur a profit or loss regardless of strategy selected, including diversification and asset allocation. Investors should consult their investment professional prior to making an investment decision. With variable annuities, any withdrawals may be subject to income taxes and, prior to age 59 1/2, a 10% federal penalty tax may apply. Withdrawals from annuities will affect both the account value and the death benefit. The investment return and principal value will fluctuate so that an investor's shares, when redeemed, may be worth more or less than their original cost. An annual contingent deferred sales charge (CDSC) may apply. A fixed annuity is a long-term, tax-deferred insurance contract designed for retirement. It allows you to create a fixed stream of income through a process called annuitization and also provides a fixed rate of return based on the terms of the contract. Fixed annuities have limitations. If you decide to take your money out early, you may face fees called surrender charges. Plus, if you're not yet 59 1/2, you may also have to pay an additional 10% tax penalty on top of ordinary income taxes. You should also know that a fixed annuity contains guarantees and protections that are subject to the issuing insurance company's ability to pay for them. Dividends are not guaranteed and must be authorized by the company's board of directors. The S&P 500 is an unmanaged index of 500 widely held stocks that is generally considered representative of the U.S. stock market. Indices are not available for direct investment. Any investor who attempts to mimic the performance of an index would incur fees and expenses which would reduce returns. Be advised that investments in real estate and in REITs have various risks, including possible lack of liquidity and devaluation based on adverse economic and regulatory changes. Additionally, investments in REITs will fluctuate with the value of the underlying properties, and the price at redemption may be more or less than the original price paid. Real estate investments can be subject to different and greater risks than more diversified investments. Declines in the value of real estate, economic conditions, property taxes, tax laws and interest rates all present potential risks to real estate investments.




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 Community

The Resilient Rose Every Gardener Must Know About

It's easy to understand why Southern Living named Clay Garden & Gifts among the South's Best Garden Shops in 2020. The Seagrove nursery's artfully arranged plants make it a popular destination for locals and visitors alike. The owners have curated a collection of plants that thrive in the area along with unique finds not typically sold in big-box stores. But there's one plant in particular, the Peggy Martin rose, that always gets a lot of attention.



"We first learned about the Peggy Martin rose a few years ago when a wonderful

customer asked us to seek it out," Jason Daniel of Clay Garden & Gifts, said. "Needless to say, it's been a huge success!"

Not only is Peggy Martin a beautiful rose, she also has a story to tell. The

semi-thornless, rambling rose with clusters of pink flowers, is named after Louisiana gardener, Peggy Martin. An avid rose col-

lector and former president of the New Orleans Old Garden Rose Society, Martin had more than 450 old roses on her property, but there was only one that survived Hurricane Katrina. Katrina's deadly storm surge flooded the Martins' 12-acre homestead in the Plaquemines Parish with



more than 20 feet of saltwater for two weeks. When they returned, months later, the garden was full of mud and blackened stems, but there was some green growth on an old rose planted by the tractor shed.

Martin had planted the rose 18 years earlier after receiving a cutting from her

hairdresser, who had gotten a cutting of the rose from a relative's garden in New

Orleans. Martin, nor any of the members of the New Orleans Old Garden Rose Society, could

ever pin down its name. Through the years, she continued to share cuttings of the rose with friends. One of those friends was Bill Welch, a rosarian and horticulturist at Texas A&M University. After Katrina, Welch came up with the idea to use the resilient rose that survived a hurricane to raise money to restore gardens damaged along the Gulf Coast. He shared his idea with the Greater Houston Community Foundation and the Peggy Martin rose was born. Welch worked with several nurseries across the South and the

first roses became available to purchase in 2008, with a portion of the proceeds

benefiting the restoration fund. "The Peggy Martin rose has become a symbol of survival and rebirth," Daniel said. "This rose is a great addition to any garden, and the story behind it makes it even more special during these times."

Peggy Martin roses are a favorite among Southern gardeners, due to their ease of care, disease resistance, and gorgeous, prolific pink blooms. The repeat-bloomer grows vigorously, reaching up to 15 feet, and will bloom spring through fall. Peggy Martin roses are categorized as climbers, but they need to be secured and trained to grow over a fence, trellis or wall. They should be planted in a full or mostly sunny spot with well-draining soil. Water well until established and fertilize twice a year. A limited number of Peggy Martin roses are available to purchase at Clay Garden & Gifts located at 4808 E County Highway 30A. If you would like to receive information about Clay's 2021 Peggy Martin rose delivery or other news, sign up for their newsletter at www.clay30a.com or follow them on Facebook or Instagram. In addition to roses, Clay has a large selection of annuals, perennials, shrubs, house plants, succulents, small trees and herbs.

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Gary Gregor Announces Candidacy for Walton County Property Appraiser

Gary Gregor, a long time resident of Walton County is running for the office of Walton County Property Appraiser. When asked why he wants to run for the position, he says, "Walton County is one of the most unique and diverse counties in Florida. With 25 years of experience in the appraisal field, I have extensive knowledge, skills and education to best serve our county during this time of growth and diversity. I have assessed a wide range of property types and possess the understanding and knowledge of Florida statutes and guidelines to successfully produce a county property assessment role. Most importantly, I will serve the public and assist property owners to address any questions or concerns they may have. I love Walton County and it would be my honor to lead the Walton County Property Appraiser Office fairly and professionally."



He holds a Certified Florida Evaluator (CFE) designation and has completed more than 300 credit hours of appraisal related course work. Also, he's obtained an Assessment Administration Specialist (AAS) Professional Designation from the International Association of Assessing Officers (IAAO). According to IAAO, the world leader in mass appraisal education and training for property appraisers, less than 10 percent of members attain a Professional Designation, making him one of the select few. Gregor is married to Brianne Gregor and together they share

two children, Chyanne (10) and Easton (7). He says they love raising their children in the peace and quiet of the New Harmony area of Walton County, where they have so many fond memories. His family is actively involved at New Harmony Baptist Church and they enjoy spending their free time outdoors at the beach, playing softball, hunting, fishing, and going on new adventures. They are so happy to call Walton County home and he hopes to share his knowledge and passion by serving as the next Walton County Property Appraiser.

working and managing the State appraisal process. Gary has also made it a priority to continue his appraisal education and stay up to date with current appraisal practices.

Currently, Gregor serves as the Land Department Supervisor for the Okaloosa County Property Appraisers Office. He is responsible for the assessment of over 100,000 parcels in Okaloosa County, he addresses taxpayer questions and concerns, and defends the Property Appraisers assessed value at Value Adjustment Board Hearings.

Raised in North Walton County, Gary graduated from Paxton High School in 1992. After high school, He went on to receive his AA/AS in Criminal Justice Technology from Northwest Florida State College. Then, at the age of 21 he began his career as a Field Appraiser with the Walton County Property Appraiser's Office, where he spent the next six years learning the fundamentals of the appraisal process. Gary then went on to work for the Florida Department of Revenue for the next 15 years,

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For more info, visit garygregorforpropertyappraiser.com

Community

Furniture South; Turning Dreams into Reality



Shopping for furniture can be overwhelming. Choosing the right styles, colors and size furniture for your space can be difficult on your own. The right interior designer can make all the difference, and the team at Furniture South has been providing their expertise in space planning and furniture selection for happy clients in South Walton since 2012. Whether it's a single room or an entire home or condo, the team at Furniture South knows how to turn the client's vision into a reality. "Our overriding mission has been to make our clients smile after the final product is installed in their home or condo. We offer

'one-source shopping', in which we do everything for the customer to make furnishing their home seamless," said Julie Kovach, who co-owns the store with her husband Frank.

Frank and Julie Kovach have been in the furniture and design business for nearly 40 years. Prior to opening Furniture South, they operated the largest furniture and interior design store on the coast, Resort Interiors. Furniture South has been selected for Beyond Top 100 by Furniture Today three years in a row. Julie is an interior designer certified by the National Council for Interior Design Qualifications.



"We specialize in seamlessly providing interior design services while giving our clients a large showroom filled with the broadest range of furniture, bedding, and accessories available on the

Emerald Coast," Kovach says.

With more than 10,000 square feet of showroom space, Furniture South has the latest collections from more than 100 manufacturers, with thousands of pieces in stock. Shoppers will find an eclectic collection of thoughtfully priced and custom made, handcrafted pieces for every taste. In addition to furniture, the store features design accessories, rugs, art, lamps and more! Customers can access thousands of furniture and fabric selections through two touch screen kiosks in the Design Center. The design team at Furniture South is there to help shoppers

bring everything together, assisting with everything from paint selections to bedding and even kitchenware – everything needed to make a house a home!

Like many businesses across the nation, Furniture South has made some adjustments to their operations to adapt to the pandemic. Their showroom is currently open with increased sanitation and social distancing, and they are encouraging customers to also shop by appointment. Those who aren't able to make an appointment can easily practice social distancing in Furniture South's large showroom.



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Caring & Sharing of South Walton Launches Covid-19 Relief Fund

Like many organizations across the country, Caring & Sharing of South Walton has seen a rapid increase in the number of people in need of food and financial assistance. The local nonprofit has risen to the occasion, serving more people than ever before, while also launching a relief fund to help other organizations in need. "While we continue serving our neighbors in need in Walton County, we also want to support other nonprofit organizations doing the same," Harmer said. "COVID-19 has had a financial impact on many nonprofit organizations, putting the services they offer in jeopardy."

In response to widespread requests for support, the Caring & Sharing board of directors has elected to redirect surplus funds, which had been set aside for a new building, to help the community through uncertain times. These redirected funds will enable the organization to launch the Caring & Sharing Neighborhood Fund. Once the Thrift Store reopens, the organization will dedicate 10 percent of sales to continue funding the initiative.

In addition to supporting individuals in need through Caring & Sharing's current programs, The Caring & Sharing Neighborhood Fund will also aid the efforts of other nonprofits in the community with similar missions. Gifts to the fund can now be made at: www.caringandsharingsowal.org/caring-during-covid19. The organization is currently creating a streamlined application process for local nonprofits affected by COVID-19 in need of financial support for programs that serve the community. For up-to-date information on this process, visit the Caring & Sharing website or Facebook page.

Caring & Sharing provides food, clothing, prescription, rent and utility assistance to individuals in need. Despite temporarily closing its thrift store to protect the health of clients and volunteers, Caring & Sharing has provided 745 bags of food to 382 families, 1,269 individuals, in Walton County over the last month through its drive-through food pantry operation. Additionally, they distributed more than \$22,000 in funds in April to help members of the community pay


rent and utility bills during these challenging times. "We are seeing a lot of people who have never needed our services before," Carly Harmer, executive director at Caring & Sharing, said. "We are thankful for the generosity of our community, enabling us to keep up with the increased demands."

Caring & Sharing is currently seeing clients Mondays and Wednesdays from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. in their offices at 112 Lynn Drive in Santa Rosa Beach. Those seeking services must meet USDA Guidelines to qualify for assistance and be a resident of Walton County. Unemployment is currently a qualifier. For more information about Caring & Sharing and their services, please visit www.caringandsharingsowal.org or call 850-267-2866.



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Wellness

Aletha's Legacy Offers Hope to Liberian Children

BY LORI LEATH SMITH

Last fall, photographer and philanthropist Zhalman Harris, best known locally behind the camera, returned to his home country Liberia on a mission: to tour schools and orphanages to bring help to under-privileged children plagued by the lack of basic needs, education and other necessities.

Zhalman's passion for the Liberian children is deep rooted. Born in Monrovia, he lost his mom during Liberia's 14 years of civil war that ravaged the country when a bomb hit their home. He has now founded the Florida-based non-profit Aletha's Legacy named in her honor.

Aletha's Legacy is a 501c3 organization founded to give underprivileged children in Liberia and Africa hope and a chance to a better education. Its primary objective is to create a better learning environment for these vulnerable and fragile children. "We are raising funds to renovate entire schools and update the facilities, such as classrooms, the library, restrooms, the offices, the



school grounds, and cafeterias," says Zhalman. "We also want to provide a stipend for the teachers after all renovations and upgrades are completed."

Aletha's Legacy began its first project with the elementary school which was founded by Zhalman's grandfather! Zhalman says he vowed never to go back to Liberia, because of the atrocities he had seen. But in 2010, he started feeling the urge to return and help his home country, though he will continue to live in Destin. "The idea just kept coming back that I had a

starting point, a school with my family name on it that we could help, and in my heart, I knew it was right," Zhalman states emotionally. "But, because I was not planning on narrowing assistance to my family school only, I toured other schools and orphanages and decided to choose four that Aletha's Legacy will be working with and helping in the years to come."

This past February, a fundraiser was held in Destin. The event brought together Zhalman's friends, prominent members of the community and

keynote speaker, former Finance Minister of Liberia Hon. Amara Konneh. That event raised \$56,000 of \$170,000 needed to start the building of the new two-story, 10-classroom school building. Immediately, some of the funds were transferred to begin construction of the school's perimeter wall, the foundations of the main school building and the cafeteria. Between February and May, the first and second phases were completed.

"I and my board members express appreciation to the community and businesses for their support and generosity, such as Insurance Zone, Setco, Beauchamp Commercial, Sandestin Foundation, VIP Magazine, Destin Rotary, Greater Horizons and the many individuals who have stood by the organization to help bring change and hope to those vulnerable children in Liberia," said Zhalman thankfully. "Because of you, we were able to start the building and renovation of the Abedu-Bentsi School within three months of our visit to Liberia. They said they had never seen a structure go up that

fast."

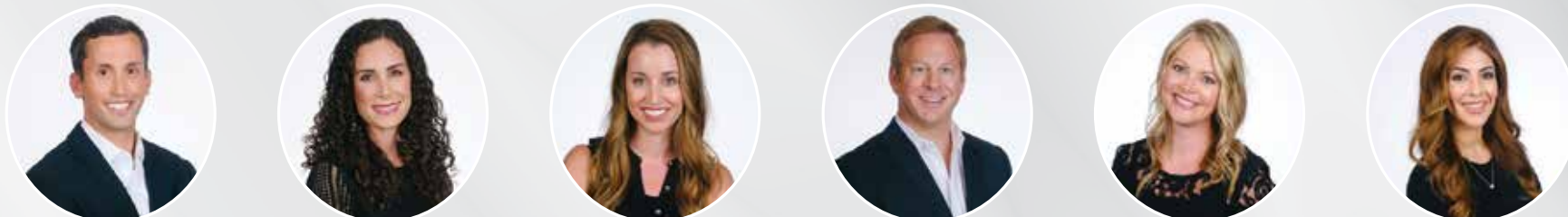
Contractors now await more funds to begin the third phase which is to complete the cafeteria and restrooms and take the main building to the 2nd floor. \$65,000 is needed to complete the building and there are donor naming opportunities for the cafeteria, auditorium, labs and classrooms. "We made a commitment to this school and we are determined to change the students' lives for the better by improving their educational conditions and their health," says Zhalman.

Longterm, through local community support and others, Aletha's Legacy plans to provide the four chosen schools a safe environment and the tools they need to become self-sufficient. "Your contributions will help these underprivileged children get the education they need, but never dreamt of," Zhalman says.

Visit alethaslegacy.org, email info@alethaslegacy.org or call (612) 616-0143. See the latest updates at Aletha's Legacy on Facebook and Instagram.



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What Ever Happened To Patience?



By MYRNA CONRAD

We live in such a fast-paced world today. Technology has made things so much easier and faster, while at the same time made us expect quick results for almost everything. We expect instant gratification. We have become less and less tolerant of waiting in line for anything. We don't want to wait in restaurants. We don't even like long "fast food" lines. We try to find the quickest looking checkout line and change lines if it looks like it will not get us out of the store fast enough. We get behind a slow

driver and can feel our anxiety rising. We either honk at them, or try to go around them, sometimes even when it could put ourselves or others in danger. Our laptops are too slow; deliveries are too slow; our device streaming is too slow; our appliances are too slow; promotions at work are too slow, and often it is slow people that irritate us the most.

We have become so impatient that we are willing to pay more for speed. We are willing to pay more for next day delivery. We pay more at Disney World for a fast pass so we don't have to wait in line as long. We pay to have a higher speed internet. We pay to use the commuter lane on our highways. There is a lot of money spent yearly on the newest method to lose weight quickly, and we are willing to pay high interest rates to get what we want now instead of saving to buy it later.

Impatience leads to stress, anger, shorter attention spans, unhappiness, missed opportunities, and damaged relationships.

We are told that patience is

important and that everything worthwhile requires time and effort. Most people that have reached their goals in life have had to practice patience. An athlete does not become a winner without a lot of time and work. Great leaders had to work hard and learn skills that led to their positions. Parenting well requires quality time and an enormous amount of patience. Great marriages take time, hard work and patience with each other.

Patience has many more benefits than impatience. It relieves stress and replaces it with peace. Patience gives us the opportunity to pay attention to what is happening around us. It gives us time to think, to observe, and to appreciate. Patience leads to better decisions, closer relationships and opportunities that we might otherwise miss.

Patience is something we have to choose to develop and practice.

Do you want to practice more patience? Here are a few strategies:

Be Aware:

Learn to recognize the signs of your impatience. Be aware when your anxiety starts to rise.

Choose to believe that most delays have a reason and often it is for your protection or for a better opportunity at a later time.

Realize that the stress that you experience from impatience is a lot worse for you than the benefits that you can experience from waiting.

Think about which has cost you more, impatience or patience.

Realize that impatience is not going to make things happen any faster.

Be Intentional:

Start your morning early enough to give yourself time to get ready for your day within a comfortable time frame. Starting your morning in a rush often leads to impatience throughout your day.

Always give yourself time for delays in your schedule. Build in

time for possible delays.

When you find yourself losing patience, take a few deep breaths and think of something positive that might come from your wait.

While waiting, whether in a line, on the road, on the phone, for an appointment, in the office or at home, focus on what is going on around you. Talk more to those who are also waiting; observe and see if there are ways you can help others. If you believe in prayer, pray for those around you. Think of all the things in your day you are thankful for. Think of something nice you can do for those you love.

Learn to laugh at interruptions.

Patience starts with you! You alone can decide whether you want to react with patience or impatience. Choosing patience will benefit you and those around you.



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Arts

Auditions for Northwest Florida Ballet 3rd Grade Académie Rescheduled for June 27th



The Northwest Florida Ballet (NFB) Académie will hold auditions for third graders entering the 2020-2021 academic year, on June 27 from 11 a.m.-2:30 p.m. Auditions are by appointment only and must be made by June 24 at 5 p.m. No prior dance training or academic achievement level is required for students seeking admittance to the

third grade. Auditions are open to all children in the community, and selection is made solely on the child's ballet potential.

Perspective students will audition in 20-minute intervals at the NFB studios located in downtown Fort Walton Beach. Dancers will be taken in by groups of 10 for auditions and will be spaced accordingly upon

entering the studio and for the duration of the appointment. Students will begin the process by checking in outside of the main doors where they must wait until they are called. Parents must remain outside, as the NFB lobby will be closed.

Dancers will be required to sanitize their hands and have their temperature taken upon

entering the building, and staff will wear masks and gloves. After each group finishes, dancers will be escorted back outside to their parents. If the dancer or anyone in the same household is experiencing any COVID-19 related-symptoms, alternate options will be made available.

The NFB Académie is a free, nationally acclaimed integrated arts and academic program for third through eighth-grade boys and girls who demonstrate the potential to excel in dance. Académie students receive concentrated instruction in ballet as a part of their overall academic and artistic education. Certified elementary and middle school teachers under the direction of the Okaloosa County School District supervise the educational program. French, art and music are taught weekly.

Celebrating its milestone fiftieth anniversary, the Northwest Florida Ballet (NFB) is a regionally recognized semi-

professional ballet company and school committed to excellence in its training programs and the professional artistry of its productions. The organization's educational endeavors also epitomize excellence with the nationally acclaimed Académie, an integrated arts and education program for students in third through eighth-grade. Additionally, NFB operates the dance intensive Pre-Professional Program for ninth through twelfth-grade students preparing for a career in dance. The NFB is led by Artistic Director and CEO Todd Eric Allen, an area native. The organization is funded in part by the Florida Division of Cultural Affairs.

For more information on the NFB Académie or to reserve an audition time, please visit www.NFBallet.org/Academie, call (850) 664-7787 or email office@nfballet.org.

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Emerald Coast Theatre Company Has Resumed Their In-Person, On-site Summer Camp Programs

Emerald Coast Theatre Company has reopened its doors for Summer Camp 2020.

In addition to the online Summer Camp programs now underway, ECTC has released its schedule for in-person, on-site classes, workshops and lessons, designed for various age groups, ranging from preschool through 12th grade. Tuition ranges from \$40 to \$395 per student depending on the program. Sibling, military and multiple camp discounts are provided; payment plans and scholarships available for group camps/classes. The more camps you register for, the more you save on tuition.

“We have had a ball with our innovative online offerings this spring, but we are thrilled to be able to reconnect with our parents and theater-loving kids for the 2020 Summer Camp season,” said ECTC co-founder and producing artistic director Nathanael Fisher. “The safety and well-being of everyone in our ECTC tribe always comes first, so we are carefully activating our Safety Protocol plan in accordance with CDC guidelines.”

ECTC programs will be held at its performance space located at 560 Grand Boulevard in Grand Boulevard at Sandestin in Mira-



mar Beach. Additional off-site locations are Florida Chautauqua Theatre, located at 840 Baldwin Ave. in DeFuniak Springs and Gulf Coast State College, located at 5230 US-98, Panama City.

This year’s guest instructor is Peter Lake. Lake is an international opera and musical theatre performer currently working on finishing his doctorate in vocal performance and pedagogy. Lake welcomes students of all levels of vocal experience and tailors his lessons and style of teaching to the individual needs and goals of each student. Lake works from the basis that everyone is capable of learning and thus his method works to instill intuitive muscle coordination and mental concentration to produce a technique that will feel natural to the singer. His ultimate goal in teaching singing

is to help the singer communicate, to use technical training to allow the singer to reach their own goals, and to develop a strong love for music as one of the great joys in life.

Here is a snapshot of this summer’s camp schedule. For the full schedule, including Advanced Classes and Workshops visit: www.emeraldcoasttheatre.org or call 850 684 0323.

Little Rascals Camp

Ages 5-7, rising kindergartners
9am to noon
June 22-25 - Miramar Beach
July 6-10 - Miramar Beach
July 13-17 - Miramar Beach
July 20-24 - Miramar Beach
July 20-24 - DeFuniak Springs

Designed specifically for our youngest players, our Little Rascals camps focus on activities that

allow students to explore acting, singing, and movement in an energetic, nurturing environment that fosters creativity and collaboration.

Peter Pan Camp

Grades 2-12
9am to 3pm
June 15-19 - Miramar Beach
July 6-10 - Panama City
July 27-31 - Miramar Beach

This is a non-musical one-week camp for all those pirates and mermaids out there who want to go on adventures with Peter, Captain Hook, Tinkerbell, and other memorable characters in this classic tale of wonder and imagination.

Camp Showtime

Grades 2-12
June 8-12 - Miramar Beach
June 29-July 3 - Miramar Beach
July 13-17 - DeFuniak Springs

This week-long camp focuses on Broadway music and choreography from popular musical numbers as well as theater games,

improvisation and watching classic musicals on film.

Disney’s The Little Mermaid JR

Grades 2-12
9am to 3pm
July 13-24- Miramar Beach
July 20-31- Panama City

Journey under the sea with Ariel and her aquatic friends in Disney’s The Little Mermaid JR, adapted from Disney’s Broadway production and the motion picture.

Film Camp

Grades 5-12
9am to 3pm
July 6-10, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.-
Miramar Beach
July 27-31, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.-
DeFuniak Springs

Students will learn to write, direct, and act during the process of creating a one minute film. This is a fun, fast paced class for any aspiring filmmakers out there — or anyone who loves a good movie.



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Wellness

Ascension Medical Group Sacred Heart Opens New Primary Care Facility at Watersound

Ascension Medical Group Sacred Heart has opened a new healthcare facility in the Watersound Origins community in South Walton County.

The 6,700-square foot outpatient office offers primary care and Ob/Gyn services,

with the ability to expand in the future to offer additional specialty care services. Ascension Medical Group Sacred Heart at Watersound is conveniently located along Highway 98 at the entrance of Watersound Origins at 180 Watersound Parkway N in

Inlet Beach.

“This new facility supports our mission to offer residents of our community convenient access to expert healthcare covering a wide range of needs,” said Justin Labrato, chief operating officer of Ascension Medical Group




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At Ascension Sacred Heart, the care you need is available today. From routine visits and health screenings to surgical procedures and specialty care, our caregivers are fully prepared for your arrival.

As we all embrace a new care experience, Ascension Sacred Heart will continue to maintain strict precautions for your safety in our care including screenings, social distancing and protective equipment. Yet our compassionate, personalized care remains unchanged. When you enter our open doors, you'll be greeted by the Ascension Sacred Heart caregivers you know and trust.

We are now open to schedule appointments for your urgent and ongoing care needs, including: back surgery, joint surgery, heart screenings, mammograms, pediatric vaccinations, annual wellness visits, prenatal care visits and more.

Schedule now. Ask about virtual visits.
GetSacredHeartCare.com



Sacred Heart. “Patients want to receive care close to where they live or work, and this project is part of our outpatient growth strategy to increase access to high-quality, compassionate care in the communities we serve.”

The new office is home to internal medicine doctor Michelle Parker, MD, and Ob/Gyn Cory Tinker, MD. For appointments or information, call (850) 278-3551 for internal medicine or (850) 608-6405 for OB/GYN.

The facility was built in collaboration with Commercial Real Estate Development, LLC, a subsidiary of the St. Joe Company. The connection between Ascension Sacred Heart and the St. Joe Company dates back more than 18 years when St. Joe donated land for the site of Ascension Sacred Heart Emerald Coast in Miramar Beach.

“We are honored to serve the families of Watersound Origins and bring much-needed

healthcare services to this growing community,” said Roger Hall, president of Ascension Sacred Heart Emerald Coast and Ascension Sacred Heart Gulf. “Having worked with the St. Joe Company for many years - and on our Watersound facility most recently - I am excited to see this beautiful facility come to fruition, with our devoted care team members ready to serve.”

Ascension Medical Group Sacred Heart offers the largest network of primary care and specialty physicians in Northwest Florida, with more than 80 locations and 300 providers along the Gulf Coast from Gulf Shores, Ala., to Apalachicola, Fla. Doctors from more than 25 specialties provide personalized, compassionate care to people of all ages. To find a doctor and request an appointment, call 850-416-2337 or visit ascension.org/doctors.

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Another Perspective on Distancing



what you appreciate about how they are treating you and what has hurt you, when you decide how much time and energy you will invest, and when you choose to reduce your exposure to or end a relationship when you feel disrespected.

Relationship without boundaries results in you feeling exhausted, unappreciated, unseen, and taken advantage of. Lacking boundaries also results in attracting unhealthy, takers into your life repeatedly. So, how do you begin to create basic, healthy boundaries in your relationships?

6 Ways to Begin Healthy Boundaries:

Identify 5 relationship deal breakers. What are 5 things that must be present for a relationship to be healthy for you? For example: honesty, mutual respect, kindness, authenticity, meaningful apologies. Choose according to your most important values.

Notice in both your existing and new relationships whether your deal breakers are present. If they aren't, it's time to reevaluate the relationship.

Give yourself permission to say

no. Healthy relationship respects your no. Often, you will want to say yes in your relationships. However, it is not selfish to say no when you want or need to do so. It is healthy to say no when you sense another person consistently expecting more from you than you feel is healthy. If someone is guilt-tripping, shaming, or punishing you when you say no, it's time to reevaluate the relationship.

Decide how much time you will invest. You have many things to balance in life and limited time to give to any given relationship. You decide how much time feels healthy and respectful to give each relationship. For one relationship it might be an hour per week vs. an hour per day for another. If someone is consistently demanding more time than you believe is healthy to invest, it's time to reevaluate the relationship.

Give and expect reciprocity in relationship. Reciprocity means both people are both consistently giving and receiving in the relationship. There may be seasons where you are giving more or receiving more, but the overall tone of a healthy relationship is reciprocal. If you are consistently giving in a relationship and rarely receiving, it's time to reevaluate the relationship.

Say what you need and want. It is healthy for you to speak plainly about what is working for you and what is not. No one can read your mind no matter how long the relationship. If you don't tell people what leaves you feeling valued or hurt, others won't know how to be healthy in relationship with you. If someone continues hurtful behavior without improvement after it's been addressed, it's time to reevaluate the relationship.

Give yourself permission to end unhealthy relationships. Sometimes relationships are unhealthy and do not improve. You can care about someone and at the same time acknowledge

the relationship is not healthy for you. It is not mean or selfish to end relationships when you have been clear about what is not working and it continues to happen.

Thinking about boundaries can feel uncomfortable at first, but in the long run, creates healthy evaluation and adjustment in your relationships resulting in the life-giving connection you want and need in your life. As you are working through boundaries and other common life struggles, remember that many counselors are providing online services throughout the pandemic and accepting new clients including Journey Bravely.

Social distancing has become a daily part of life...spacing out 6 feet, groups of 10 or less, wearing masks. While such practices can feel exhausting and isolating, they are designed to create a healthy sense of boundary between you and others for the sake of collective well-being. As you imagine when and how life will return to "normal," you can apply the lessons of physical boundaries through COVID-19 to improve your emotional boundaries, as well.

Emotional boundaries are the structures you place in your relationships to let others know how you will and will not allow yourself to be treated. You set boundaries when you say yes or no, when you tell other people

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Wellness

Ask Dr. Marty: Immune System Strength



drinking a lot of water. What supplements do you recommend to strengthen my immune system?

ANSWER:

There are dozens of vitamins, minerals, amino acids, herbs and miscellaneous nutraceuticals (a catch-all category for the other nutrients we need) that I use with my clients to boost their immune systems. The following is a list of my favorites to protect us from respiratory viruses in particular, in order of importance, including the typical daily amount used:

QUESTION:

I am really trying to take better care of myself during this covid-19 pandemic. I have been eating well, getting plenty of rest, minimizing stress and



CITRUS BIOFLAVONOIDS /VITAMIN C/ ROSE HIPS COMBINATION (1000 mg) Bioflavonoids are antioxidant compounds found in the leaves, flowers and stems of many plants.

QUERCETIN is a broad-spectrum antiviral bioflavonoid that has been shown to increase zinc uptake. Quercetin is especially important in the prevention of a COVID-19 infection because it inhibits cytokines and raises our resistance to upper respiratory infections. Excess cytokines are responsible in part for some of the severe and

sometimes fatal damage caused by COVID-19. If you bruise easily, you might need more vitamin C. Gradually increase the amount you are taking until you have loose bowels, then return to the prior dose. This is called bowel tolerance.

ZINC (30-50 mg) An in vitro study showed that zinc coupled with quercetin blocks the replication of SARS coronavirus. Green tea has an antioxidant compound called EGCG that also increases zinc uptake.

SELENIUM (50-100 mcg) is a trace mineral that acts as an antioxidant in the body and is

especially healing for the respiratory system.

VITAMIN D3 (100 mcg) is the sunshine vitamin. It is especially helpful for fighting infection and lowering the risk of catching the flu and getting an upper respiratory infection. Studies indicate that having a vitamin D deficiency, which is very common, can double your risk of having an upper respiratory infection. Having dark skin, winter months, and living in northern climates are all risk factors for vitamin D deficiency. Aren't you glad you live in the South?

SPIRULINA (15 grams) is a blue-green algae and other greens, like chlorella (a fresh water green algae) are powerful antioxidants that have been shown to stimulate immune function. They are especially rich in minerals and vitamins that boost the immune system. In clinical trials, spirulina reduced the severity of the flu and lowered mortality.

PROBIOTICS (18 billion beneficial bacteria) A broad spectrum probiotic with at least 11 different strains of probiotics will really build the immune system by improving the absorption of nutrients and increasing resistance to infection.

ELDERBERRY (600-1500 mg) can be used for prevention but should not be used if you have COVID-19 because of the stimulation of cytokines.

Regardless of what bacteria, virus or fungus is among us, building your immune system will provide protection and more peace of mind. Heaven knows we all need an extra dose of that right now.

Hot Tip: The amounts listed are for pharmaceutical grade supplements. Otherwise higher amounts would be needed.

Stay well.

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

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Your Doctor Isn't Infallible!



BY DR. RICHARD CHERN M.D.

to keep up with all the latest medical knowledge, especially in specialties outside our own.

Because of this indoctrination (sorry, had to) there is a fear of not knowing and often, if a doctor is not current on a particular subject, they show scepticism. This leads to the comment, "That's not good for you it will cause [insert scary disease here]." Doctors tend to revert to information learned 20 or more years ago rather than admitting they are not read up on a particular subject.

About 20 years ago I was taught all hormones are bad and cause cancer, strokes, and heart attacks. Guess what, we were wrong. In fact, the studies we referenced to say hormones were bad are now referenced with others to prove hormones are good. How is this possible? Previously bio-identical and synthetic hormones were grouped together but after looking at them individually, it becomes obvious that synthetic hormones are bad and bio-identical hormones are very good! Nobody likes to admit they made a mistake and the medical community is often the worst.

Doesn't it make sense that a natural product is good for us and a synthetic is bad? When we are young and feeling great we have high levels of bio-identical hormones and as we age and deteriorate these levels fall. So doesn't it make sense that the fall in these hormones are actually the cause of us feeling bad and deteriorating and that replacing

them can reverse this process and make us feel better? It's not a difficult concept to grasp and you can ask any of the thousands of patients who have received our bio-identical hormone therapy what results they have seen.

The point here is that during

our medical training any outside-the-box thinking is frowned upon and quickly squashed. And, secondly, it is ok for you to be sceptical when your doctor is not up-to-date on studied and proven bio-identical hormones. Contact us for more information.

Dr Richard Chern and his staff have the latest training and specialize in hormone therapy for men and women. They are currently accepting new patients and encourage you to call for an appointment at 850-837-1271.

Many of my patients have been told by their doctor that hormones are bad. I used to respond by calling to inform them of current treatment recommendations. I once had a cardiologist tell me testosterone caused elevated cholesterol until I had him read an article from his American Journal of Cardiology that said testosterone lowers cholesterol. And most physicians still are not aware that low testosterone is related to highly aggressive prostate cancers and that optimizing testosterone can reduce their occurrence.

In medical school, it's drilled into our heads that everything we learned is non-negotiable. "I don't know" usually led to an onslaught of verbal abuse ending with, "if you don't know, your patients will die!" So we spent years inside textbooks and journals learning as much as we could. Unfortunately, even if we learned "everything", information and treatments are continually changing. As we enter practice it's not possible

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Musing

The Lotus Life; One Step at a Time

BY LAUREN CATANESE

“You don’t have to see the whole staircase, just take one step at a time.”

How is your journey going... the life you are living? When we are little, we dream big and have all these different aspirations and experiences we want to accomplish. Then life happens, right? And we get taken down in what seems like opposite directions from where we were wanting to go. Some seem to keep a straighter path, while others seem to keep doing a dance in the same circle. No matter how crazy and disjointed life may feel at times, there is always a purpose.

Life will bring us through and to just what our souls cry out for even if we don’t know what it’s saying. Our inner wisdom is interconnected indefinitely to the divine and while our physical selves don’t understand the pain, the detours, the unexpected experiences that happen for us, there is a part of inside that gets it. It’s our inner gumption that shines like a bright light and speaks faith

and hope to us when we need to hear it the most. Asking us to just take one step towards that which opens our hearts. Trusting that once we have taken that first action the next will follow. We don’t have to see our entire journey in one big jump, we get to be grateful and witness each moment and fully be present with the step we are on. Because here in that one step lies the entire universe: all-encompassing and whole, fully, and complete, a radiance of love that is available to you in every moment. We don’t just have one big bang of joy in the end. But a whole life full of all colors and experiences to share with those with love. So, take the next best step and love it like it’s your dream come true! Because it is.

Stepping towards your dreams:
Step One: What is it you want to create? What does your heart

desire to manifest into fruition? It is particularly important to not just think about what you want, but how you want to feel. When you see yourself having or doing what you want, what emotions come up for you? Joy, peace, abundance, fulfillment, loved? Focus on how you want to feel. Because if you think about it, the reason we want certain things to happen to us is because we think that it will cause us to feel a certain way. So, it’s not really about “what” we want to create, but how we want to feel while experiencing it.

Step Two: Now that you know how you want to feel, close your eyes, and ask, “What is one step I can do today towards feeling this?” Or “What is one action step I can take today towards creating this?” When you ask you will get a feeling, an intuitive thought, maybe an image will pop up in your mind. Trust it. It might be something that seems simple and insignificant. But trust what you get. Whatever it may be, however big or small.

Step three: Take action! Take

that step you felt guided to take. It seems pretty easy, and it is. The reasons why we might not take any action could be many. But do not get caught up in all of that. Just trust in the process and muster up enough courage and self-discipline and just do it! You will have a feeling of accomplishment even from completing one step.

Step Four: Say thank you to the Divine and yourself for actually doing it and repeat as necessary.



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Minneapolis



BY SEAN DIETRICH

It was an average Tuesday morning at the VA hospital. Elderly Sam Nilva awoke in his bed with crusty eyelids from sleep. He blinked at the ceiling a few times. A nurse brought some good news.

“You’re going home today, Sam,” she said.

Home. After being stuck in a sterile room for God only knows how long, the Minneapolis VA hospital was discharging him.

Another nurse leaned over Sam’s bed. Her surgical mask, goggles, and face shield could not cover her award-winning smile.

“And guess what?” she said. “We have a little celebration for you, birthday boy.”

Next, the nurses had all gathered in Sam’s room, holding handwritten cards, posters, and a multi-colored banner that read: “Happy Birthday.”

The little old man didn’t say anything. He didn’t have to. His face said enough. He was taking it all in. More nurses were chiming in via video phone on a monitor beside his bed. Everyone was

cheering. It was a great day.

Sam recovered from a recent brain surgery, and he’s been in this hospital fighting COVID-19. It was no day at the beach. Some weren’t sure if he’d beat it, but he did. And he did it with flying colors.

Though it should come as no surprise. On Apr. 29, 1919, Samuel Nilva came into this world, and he’s seen a lot worse in his life.

It’s hard to imagine what the world was like back in such an ancient era, but it was a turbulent time to be alive. Woodrow Wilson was in office. The government had just voted to protect sections of virgin land that would become national parks, which was considered a wacky idea by many critics. Pachelbel’s “Canon in D” was just officially published.

Congress had just approved the 19th amendment so that women could vote. Einstein proved Newton’s theory of space to be dead wrong. A little football club in Green Bay, Wisconsin, decided to start calling themselves “The Packers.”

And the whole world was dying from a Spanish Flu epidemic.

To call this period Hell on Earth would be like calling the Grand Canyon a ditch. Americans were staying inside just to keep from dying.

Theaters and silent-movie houses were boarded up. Those infected were tying white scarves around their doorknobs to signal

the rest of the world to keep away. Sometimes, the hanky stayed on the doorknobs until everyone inside was carried out with a sheet draped over them.

So, try to imagine this scene: You’ve been stuck inside during a nationwide quarantine. One day, your neighbor knocks on your door, tears in his eyes. He is asking for your help to carry his dead wife out of his house.

So, you carry her down the street to a dancehall that’s been converted into a temporary morgue. In some areas, there are so many dead bodies to deal with that communities are setting up makeshift morgues in local gymnasiums, fellowship halls and schools.

That was the world Sam was born into.

And this was just the historical appetizer. Things got a lot crazier.

For starters: World War Had just been in full swing before Sam’s birth, killing about 40 million. And the hits kept coming. When Sam was a 10-year-old, the stock market crashed. Bank executives were leaping off ledges in crowded cities when they learned that they were ruined. America entered a Great Depression, setting off a chain reaction of financial ruin around the world.

Meanwhile, dust storms chewed at the Great American

Midwest, forming black clouds that blotted out the sun and killed children with dust pneumonia. The earth was literally blowing away.

And as if this era didn’t already feature enough Biblical-style tribulation, they made beer illegal.

But even the 20s and 30s were just a dress rehearsal for the real problems ahead. The 40s brought Hitler, Stalin, another World War, 85 million deaths worldwide, and polio epidemics.

By the 1950s, the Cold War was on. Life was better, but people were still scared of what was next. American dads were building concrete bunkers in their backyards, behind the kids’ swing sets.

Schoolchildren were practicing atomic-bomb duck-and-cover drills, wherein students were trained to take shelter from nuclear threats by hiding beneath nuclear-attack-resistant school desks.

And as if this world couldn’t get any more out-of-control and unsettled, along came Perry Como.

Sam went through it all. He survived it all. When he got COVID-19, he told his daughter he wasn’t worried.

“I’ve survived polio,” Sam said. “I’ve survived World War

Two, I’ve survived so many things, and I want people to know we can get through this.”

If that sounds a little too optimistic to you, that’s probably because you’re too young to know better. Just ask Sam. This world has been through hard times before, and it will see them again. But according to Sam, we can get through.

When Sam left the hospital, Minneapolis VA staff nurses made a big ordeal over him. You should have seen it. They sang, they cheered, they laughed. When EMTs wheeled him down the hallway, Sam’s bed rolled past a barrage of medical workers who whooped and hollered.

Hospital personnel lined the halls, clapping, their gloved hands, making muffled applause, wearing protective face gear. Some tossed handmade greeting cards onto Sam’s bed when it wheeled by. And the fanfare didn’t end until the ambulance disappeared on the horizon.

They weren’t just celebrating a birthday. They weren’t simply celebrating a recovery. These people were celebrating Samuel Nilva, for proving that humans are a lot stronger than we think they are.

Happy 101st birthday, Sam.

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Musings

A Creative Renaissance?



By KIRK MCCARLEY

Dismal though this time may have been, beneath the surface, discovery and curiosity quietly marinated. Astronomers began devising instruments to better gaze at the heavens. Explorers contemplated the idea of foreign lands existing beyond a flat earth. Writers and philosophers contemplated new ideas and thoughts and challenged commonly held beliefs as gains were made in knowledge and science. By the beginning of the 15th century, a new time of Renaissance launched.

The Dark or Middle Ages were a post-Roman time in European history marked by significant misery. Though historians disagree as to its exact timeline, most say it lasted several hundred years, with some stretching the parameters as long as the ten centuries between 500 and 1500 AD. Even the end days of this era weren't exactly celebratory. The disastrous Black Death spread across Europe between 1346 and 1353. Estimates are that as many as 50 million people succumbed: 60% of the European population!

As were the Dark Ages, The Great Depression of less than 90 years ago was a desperate time. The US stock market lost more than 90% of its value over a four year period. By 1933 one out of every four Americans were out of work. Average family income dropped 40%. Around 11,000 banks failed and 300,000 companies went out of business.

If not calamitous enough, right on the heels of and compounding the suffering came further strife and uncertainty: A World War. By its end in 1945, an estimated 70-85 million people will have died: three percent of

the world's population.

In many ways, not too unlike the Renaissance, the time following the 30's and 40's

from school. We've lost some of our population to the virus.

Despite aggravations and



marked the onset of arguably the most creative years of the 20th century, especially in the US. Space exploration began. Television overtook radio as a communication medium. Out of the inspiration of Gospel, Jazz, and Rhythm and Blues a new sound of Rock 'n Roll was heard by teens on airwaves across the country.

We have existed in a Covid period now for about three months. Comings and goings are more restricted. All of us are inconvenienced, some are angry, others fearful or overwhelmed. Businesses are shuttered, a few forever, perhaps. Kids are home

struggles, what is the chance that we could right now also be on the precipice of renewed inventiveness? As a Coach, when working with a client considering a career shift, it is not uncommon to ponder the types of activities that person enjoyed as a child. Not so much the usual pursuits such as sports or music lessons, but more what we resourcefully did after lamenting to mom, "I'm bored!"

How could that ingenuity from back then ignite a spark today? For the now homebound sales agent who in their younger days would pick up a guitar and strum a few notes? How

might they consider the rhythm, harmony, and tempo of a sales call on Zoom? Or a first grade educator who once prided in their marble collection? What online lessons can be created in math or consumerism illustratively using the shooters? Could there be a nurse who as a youngster constructed puppets from old socks. How might that bring light to a patient? Who could cast a frown at something so joyful, yet simple?

Apparently my pre-school days were occupied by construction with blocks. Though I did not pursue architecture as a profession, maybe the same parallel applies now by helping clients build upon their own creative ideas toward a more positive and self-confident tomorrow.

A graduate of the University of North Texas, Kirk McCarley is a Certified Professional Coach as well as a Professional in Human Resources (PHR) and SHRM-CP Certified. He also is a Production Assistant for both college football and basketball for ESPN and leads group cycling classes as a Certified Spinning instructor. Contact kirk@theseedsowercoach.com, theseedsowercoach.com, or call 314-677-8779.

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A Pastor's Ponderings; What If?



BY REV. PETE HYDE

There was nothing out of the ordinary about that evening. The two young bachelors sat in the living room of their shared apartment. They seemed to have life by the horns - good jobs, freedom to do what they pleased, nice cars, parties, no real cares about the future, you know, all the necessities of life. The TV was on, but the memory of what show was on has been lost in the events of the evening. They had just purchased handguns. Why? There is probably not a good reason - just a cool thing to do because they could. One was sitting on the couch cleaning his .38 pistol. The other got up

out of the recliner and headed to the bathroom. He reached the middle of the room when a shot rang out. It was deafening. He instantly froze in his footsteps. Though his heart was racing, the color ran from his face as he stood motionless, frozen in a moment that felt like eternity. He glanced over to his friend who sat shaking, almost violently. His face was white as a sheet. Neither could speak for a long minute or so.

Once their senses had been gathered, they surveyed the situation. The pistol was loaded. The cleaning cloth snagged the trigger and the shot rang out. The deadly bullet had passed just in front or just behind the young man walking across the room. It penetrated the wall and buried itself in the towels stacked in the linen closet. The wall could be fixed. The closet could be cleaned out. But the memory of that near-fatal moment was never forgotten - at least not forgotten by the young man who was almost the recipient of a stray, accidentally discharged bullet.

The memory has been shoved back into the deep storage banks of his mind until

it resurfaced recently after an old friend's picture popped up on Facebook. It has been floating around in plain view for several weeks now along with some questions. What were the chances of the bullet missing him as he walked across the room? What would have happened if it had hit him? What direction would his life, if he survived, have taken? He knows those are unanswerable questions. Most "what ifs" don't have an answer.

A few days ago he heard someone quote Jeremiah 29:11. This, too, has been floating around in his mind. "For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope. Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will hear you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart. I will be found by you, declares the Lord, and I will restore your fortunes and gather you from all the nations and all the places where I have driven you, declares the Lord, and I will bring you back to the place from which I sent you into exile." (Jeremiah 29: 11-14, ESV)

There was and is a plan for the young man's life - God's plan. The young man would once again seek the Lord and the Lord would find him and give him a future

and hope. The old memory has resurfaced not to haunt him but to give him assurance that God has a plan and that God will carry out His plan even if it takes a miracle to do so.

The young man is now graying and little worn, but he is reassured once again of the presence and power of God Almighty who knows his name and knows the number of gray hairs on his head and has shaped the events of his life according

God's grand and many times unknowable plan. Thanks be to God!! God has a plan for your life. Open yourself this week to the great work He has in store for you. You will be blessed because he has a plan grander than any plan we can devised for ourselves.

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Musings

The Early Worm

By RICK MOORE

“Pigs get fed and hogs get slaughtered.” “You can’t make a quarter horse run a mile.” “Chicken one day and feathers the next.” These are just a few of the sayings my father often quoted. Seldom did my mom communicate in such a way. But there was one saying she repeated regularly when waking me up for school. “Remember, the early bird gets the worm.” It was mom’s way of reminding me that waking up before everyone else means having a head start on everyone else. But my motive for getting up was much more than being early for school.

Where I grew up, most kids in the neighborhood would spend several hours each day playing outside. We played in the streets. We played in the woods. We played in the rain. We played in the heat. But few played early in the morning. I was different. Almost every day at the break of dawn, for about an hour, I prac-

ticed kicking a football. Sometimes kicking into a net in our backyard, sometimes using the goal posts at the football field a few blocks away, and sometimes both, I was obsessed with becoming the best.

The hard work paid off. I found myself winning competitions like Punt, Pass and Kick, and later becoming the kicker for the school football team. It seemed that everything was going great. But during a summer football practice, the dream of one day being a professional kicker was destroyed. I pulled a muscle in my leg and had to limp off the field. The coach told me to sit it out for a while and try some new stretching routines. That seemed to help for a bit. But then, just one week into school starting, and only days before the first game of the season, I re-injured the same muscle. The entire season, my kicking career, and what seemed to be my entire life, was over. It felt worse than being a loser. I was damaged goods.



The next morning, mom opened the bedroom door and repeated her familiar greeting just like clock work. “Remember, the early bird gets the worm.” With tears in my eyes and a qua-

ver in my voice I asked her why is it the early worm is always devoured by the bird? Why does everybody care about the bird and nobody cares about the worm? Not only did it feel like I was a worm, I felt lower than a worm. Others who tried much less than I did would be playing in the big game the next day while I was wondering if I’d even dress out or if I’d have to quit the team. Is this what trying harder than everyone else gets me? Why even try at all? After a few attempts to console me, mom’s perky motivation quickly turned to threats if I wasn’t dressed, ready for school and sitting in the car within the next five minutes.

Limping through the halls of school that morning, a friend asked me if I wanted to participate with the school drama team. Continuing with my pity party, I asked if they needed a cripple. What they needed was help behind the scenes making props,

lighting the sets and running the microphone cables. I accepted and, to my surprise, enjoyed it. This later led to roles in acting, performing illusions, singing and directing. Little did I realize then just how much performing arts would become a major part of my life and my livelihood. The time spent kicking a football was quickly replaced with time spent building sets and painting props.

Whether it’s getting up at the break of dawn to go fishing or studying for an exam, the saying holds true; the early bird does get the worm. But if you woke up this morning feeling more like a worm than a bird, remember, you are no longer obligated to the past. It’s time to become focused on the future. Whatever your hands find to do, do it with all your might. Today is a new day.

Rick Moore is Pastor of Communications at Destiny Worship Center in Miramar Beach.

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Local Authors Announce New Releases

Changing the Rules of Engagement

In Martha LaGuardia-Kotite's recently-released new audio book, she shares her story of being one of the first female officers to serve aboard two Coast Guard cutters with all male crews, being a woman in the U.S. Coast Guard and, a graduate of the Coast Guard Academy with a masters from Harvard University, rising to the senior rank of U.S. Coast Guard Captain.

Changing the Rules of Engagement is a collection of leadership insights and inspirational stories of other female heroes of the U.S. military which include an astronaut, Marine Corps drill instructors, fighter pilots, enlisted women on the front lines and on warships and officers who are divers, aviators and more. The audio book documents the lives of these women who have shattered the glass ceiling and performed extraordinary feats while serving their country. By telling the stories of their remarkable careers in traditionally male-dominated environments, Martha demonstrates how tenacious and courageous women can achieve the unimaginable.

Among the pioneering women profiled are Vice Adm. Vivien Crea who, as vice commandant of the U.S. Coast Guard, held the highest-ranking position of any woman in the history of the U.S. military; Senator and former Capt. Tammy Duckworth, USA (Ret.), a Purple Heart recipient and triple amputee who was shot down in Iraq while



piloting a Black Hawk helicopter; and Heather Wilson, an Air Force Academy graduate, Rhodes scholar, and the country's only female veteran in Congress. Included are the inspirational stories of women Marines, one of the three female Shuttle commanders in the history of the NASA program, and the first female members of the military service academies' gender-integrated classes, who recall the highs and lows of their trailblazing experiences. Representative of a widely diverse group of enlisted women and officers from different races and cultures, they have succeeded since the mid-1970s at combating prejudices and aiding change in the military with intelligence, passion and honor while serving on the front lines. Martha also tells her own story of overcoming fear and building trust.

Now a TEDx and professional speaker as well as an award-winning author, Martha has authored five books, is a wife and mother of two sons who enjoys being in nature, sailing, swimming and playing tennis with friends. Her keynotes and breakout sessions have provided corporations, schools and leadership symposiums insights for managing during a crisis and leading beyond by Being Bold, Being First and Being You. Martha infuses her presentations with her own "sea stories" and profiles of top-leaders she has written about.

You can purchase Changing the Rules of Engagement on Amazon and Barnes & Noble as well as Martha's other books including the award-winning So Others May Live: Coast Guard Rescue Swimmers Saving Lives, Defying Death. To learn more, visit her website at marthakotite.com and click on "News and Articles."

Fighting for Your Purpose: From Sex Trafficking to Ministry

"Fighting for Your Purpose," updated and expanded, by author Sula Skiles has just been released on Amazon! "People always ask me how I got through all of the trauma and pain in my life story," says Sula. "In this book, I've poured almost everything that I've learned from the Lord, over 20 years, about freedom and finding life purpose. It's loaded with scriptures and there is self-work at the end of each chapter so that you can talk to



the Lord and apply what you've learned-great for small groups. If you came to me asking for ministry counseling or prayer, more than likely, the truths from this book would organically flow

out of me to you."

Sula unapologetically shares the traumatic and drama filled details of her life. As if speaking to a close friend, she holds nothing back in hopes that through her mistakes, pain and ultimately her miraculous life transformation, you would be drawn to the God who makes all things new.

In this book, you will:

- Journey through invaluable truths.
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- Find freedom from your past.
- Learn what your God Purpose is and how to fight for it.

You can purchase Fighting for Your Purpose on Amazon or through her website sulaskiles.com.

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 Dining

Long Live the (Casserole) Queen

BY DEE CRUCE

Howdy folks. I'm just sitting here on the porch, soaking up this post-Memorial Day rain while thinking about the Queen's Shrimp Scampi... It's been too long since I called Nancy Britton up and ordered one of her fantastic, crowd-pleasing, freshly made and never frozen, filled with LOVE and deliciousness, casseroles. We sure do need this rain right now. It's been so dry. Rainy weather makes me crave comfort food more than anything else. I remember how my Grandma Ouida loved afternoon thunderstorms. She told the best stories on her screened-in front porch to me, my brothers and all our cousins. We loved it, looked forward to it. Heck, we counted on it. Not only did we love her stories, but we loved her love-filled cooking.

Nancy reminds me of my grandma. She was a grammar school language teacher for 30 + years. So was Nancy who has only recently retired from the Walton School District after 44 years of service. Grandma had a special way with children

and most all people. She taught most kids in Bridge Creek 1 of 2 things, if not both, and that was how to love Jesus or how to swim. Even at Sunday-School, all the kids gravitated to Mrs. Ouida, kind of like me and Nancy gravitated to each other from the first time we met, almost 2 years ago now. Having lived here my entire life, I know just about everyone around these parts, but 'Britton' didn't ring any bells when I first received my marching orders from my editor.

As a girl growing-up in Pennsylvania, Nancy loved cooking and learned from her mother, who happens to be the best cook she's ever encountered. "Every time I make a casserole for a customer, I think of her and the love she put into every meal she made for our family". Having died from complications related to Alzheimer's Disease, Nancy honors her memory and preserves it with her business and every love-filled casserole she makes. You can literally taste the love in every bite too.

My Grandma taught me how to cook. I loved watching

her in her kitchen as a child. She would sift her flour in an old flour pan she kept under the island. She made the best cat-head buttermilk biscuits. I think of her every time I make them. She was an expert on deer meat dishes of all varieties, but there is one dish that stands head and shoulders above all the rest, Grandma's cast iron, slow-cooked, deer hash. Oh, how I miss and crave this dish. It's not often that I have any deer meat to stew, but when I do, I ALWAYS make her hash. It tastes great, and it fills my soul with a hug from my Grandma.

I imagine Nancy feels the same way about her mother when she cooks. There's something extra about love-filled homemade meals, no matter what part of the country they come from. If they are made with love, then you can taste it in every bite. Nancy's dishes are the same way. Currently, she offers some fifteen + varieties of fresh, daily-made, and not ever frozen crowd pleasers including



the much-loved Chicken Divan, meat or spinach lasagna, pierogi casserole, shrimp scampi, seafood or chicken alfredo, vegetable bake, chicken or beef enchilada, breakfast scramble, Reuben casserole, ham and scalloped potatoes, corned beef noodle, countless varieties of salads, with or without a protein option, and the classic shepherd's pie. Nancy also offers special order casseroles at your request. Each pan of casserole generously serves 10-12 adults and is delivered to your door for \$50. You can order yours hot and ready-to-serve or ready-to-cook. They also freeze well, just in case, you order one too many.

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Watercolor Inn Welcomes New Amenities with expansion of Beach Club

WaterColor Inn guests can now enjoy two highly anticipated resort-wide projects, developed by the WaterColor Community Association: an expansion of WaterColor Beach Club and of Camp WaterColor – adding even more family-friendly outdoor recreation and dining options.

With the addition of six total WaterColor resort pools, WaterColor Inn now boasts the most pool accesses on Scenic Highway 30A, as well as a handful of new casual dining restaurants – providing families with plenty of options for basking in the Northwest Florida sun, just steps away from the area’s iconic sugar-white-sand beaches.



Resort Experiences for the Whole Family

The newly expanded WaterColor Beach Club boasts a new main pool with seating and lounge areas, a second pool deck with lounge seating and a third pool with zero-entry – all with

unobstructed views of the Gulf. Guests will also have the chance to indulge in an array of brand-new resort dining venues, including Costa Chica and the newly renovated WaterColor Grill, which will also serve the first- and second-level pool decks.

During the day, WaterColor Grill will offer a fresh and casual menu of small and shared plates, handhelds, salads and bowl. At dinner, the menu will focus on Italian fare, complete with signature and build-your-own pizzas, hearty sandwiches and a selection of Italian wines; this menu is slated to be available for delivery within the WaterColor community later this year. The Club’s expansion also includes the addition of a brand-new casual fast-dining option, aptly named Beach Cow, anticipated to open later this summer. To-go drinks and cocktails will continue to be available at the beachside Tiki Bar.

Additionally, Camp WaterColor, which opened last year,

is the ideal recreational destination for families, featuring the main Butterfly Pool with Monarch Slide; the Caterpillar Pool, a zero-entry pool and small children’s area and slide; and the Lazy Lizard Pool, a zero-entry lazy river. The pool areas are supervised by a lifeguard on duty. Camp WaterColor also features a playground and basketball court, in addition to The Canteen Restaurant & Bar, which serves a casual menu of food and drinks daily.

Special Resorts

Special offers are now available, including savings of up to 20% off weekday rates through Sept. 3. For reservations, call 1.888.426.2656 or visit www.watercolorresort.com.

30A Eats.com Recipe of the Month; Home Style French Toast

BY SUSAN BENTON

This has been an emotional time in America, and for South Walton too. With that, many people have taken to their kitchens, myself included. Not like I wasn’t already there, but I have been cooking a lot for my husband who is trying to limit his time between the medical office and the hospital where he would often eat.

This weekend he stopped at a local farmers stand on the way home and picked up a loaf of bread. I sprayed the package and him like I always do (now with COVID-19) before he entered the house, and then he requested French Toast.

I haven’t made French Toast since the kids were in high school, so I dug up this recipe.

Ingredients

- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 1 tablespoons sugar
- 4 tablespoons real butter
- 4 eggs
- 1/4 cup whole milk
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 8 slices challah, brioche, or good white bread
- 1/2 cup maple syrup, warmed (My husband likes blackstrap molasses)

Directions

Toast bread slices, lightly
In a small bowl, combine cinnamon, nutmeg, and sugar and set aside.

In a medium bowl whisk together eggs, milk, and vanilla, and then add the cinnamon mixture still whisking.

Pour mixture into a shallow container like a pie plate.

In a 12-inch skillet, melt butter over medium heat.

Dip bread in egg mixture. Fry slices until golden brown, then flip to cook the other side. Serve with syrup.



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Music

30A Songwriter Spotlight: THE KRICKETS



By JOSETTE RHODES

I have been excited to see the art that emerges from these long days of quarantine. You can not lock up the passion of an artist. The art will always find a way. As we begin to emerge from the lockdowns so do the incredible gifts that were born of it.

Please allow me to introduce you to The Krickets, an all female Americana group from the Gulf Coast. The band consists of

Emily Stuckey, Lauren Spring, and Rachel Grub. Some awards they have won are: 2016 IMEA Folk Artist of the Year, 2016 IMA Winner Folk Song of the Year for 'Cool Cool Water' and 2019 IMA Winner Alt Country Song of the Year 'Redbird'

Lauren Spring was the first artist to reach out to me about a new release, "These Games."

I have high expectations of what is to come from these trying times and The Krickets did not disappoint!

Not only are these ladies beautiful in appearance, the beauty of their souls shines through their songs. I have heard previous work from The Krickets and have thoroughly enjoyed

every bit of it. "These Games" have catapulted this talented trio to a whole new level.

Each song by these ladies is an experience and "These Games" carried me on a passionate ride of harmonies from heaven. I began to understand the stories of old where sailors were drawn in by the sensual voices of sirens. You can not listen to The Krickets without falling into their voices as you are carried away on their instrumental caravan surrounded by words that you yourself could be singing. The Krickets use their talent in a way that allows their audience to really feel their songs.

"What happens when the world turns upside down and a quarantine benches a band's



tour? Something Magical. They learn to write and record remotely, self produced some music and... then release it - bells and whistles be damned." The Krickets

A beautiful fact about this female trio is that a portion of the proceeds from every album sale benefits the Sacred Heart

Hospital Guild's "Cricket Fund" in honor of Cricket Russel (namesake of the band) providing screenings for the uninsured in rural North Florida. The "K" was interchanged to give space to Buddy Holly's fabulous Crickets.

You can learn more, purchase their music, and find their music schedule at thekrickets.com



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Aspire 4 Music

BY LISA CYR

The deer ate all my green bean plants yesterday, then began to eat the roses in my front yard. My piano student noticed him outside my piano room window. We watched for a moment. A beautiful young animal hungry for food. I hope he doesn't eat all my rose buds since I have high aspirations for them to bloom. The green beans are history. Thankfully, he doesn't like peppers, kale, nor arugula. Found out he went next door and ate their garden too. Oh well.

Everyone has aspirations. Some by the day and some that last a lifetime. Music, nature, and administration seem to be mine. Finding ones' enjoyable driving-force and turning that into a lifelong journey is most people's hope. It's that saying, "I've always wanted to _____". I believe the goal is to choose one and seek to do it.

At some point, a change happens when you want to share your aspirations with others. We really need each other. I started out as a child with a passion for music. That passion grew into a heart to share and help others discover and develop their musical aspirations. Along with that came years of study, practice, performance, and work. Although, it is much easier to do what is naturally fun.

Too many times, we put our dreams on the back burner to help meet the needs of those we love. I tried that too. It was rewarding, I learned a lot, exercised my other giftings, helped a lot of people, and ultimately returned full circle to my childhood passion. God has a way of turning us around.

I believe that summertime is a great opportunity to try or learn something new. Uninhibited creativity is high. A change of season usually ushers in new

curtains, bedding, clothes, cars, events and yes...music. In fact, many famous songs are released during the summer in hopes of becoming the top "Song of the Summer", because people are looking for something different to make them smile, dance, sing and celebrate. They create fun memories to share and talk about.

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all about helping others reach towards their musical aspirations, we want to let you know that all of June and July we are teaching music lessons (beginner thru advanced) in a variety of ways through our Aspire 4 Music Summer Programs:

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Business

What's on 30A TV? Coastin' with Carol

Summer is here and this area is a honey pot for shopping for the unusual, art, sculptures, clothing, and all things funky and different.

Coastin with Carol, hosted by Carolina Sauer, covers restaurants, retail shops, and events happening on the Emerald Coast. Coastin' with Carol brings the latest updates to the local community and provides locals and visitors with an inside

scoop on the who, what, when, and where. Carolina is a journalist and producer with a bachelor's degree in communications and a minor in hospitality management from Florida International University. She has a knack for communicating with a variety of



audiences and tailoring her presentation to specific markets.

Coastin with Carol's first episode visited Sandi at Little Village in St. Andrews. Located near the St Andrews marina, Little Village is an eclectic mix of shopping and dining all in the same loca-

tion. Carol covered some of St. Andrews, where you can wander around shops, restaurants and visit several craft beer places there. "You can just stroll down the streets. Check out all the cool shops and then check out Little Village," said Carol. They have nothing but fresh food, prepared as you order and shop, snack, relax and listen to live music. There is a lot of local art, with what they call fair trade, calling

it a hand up instead of a hand out while helping local artists and vendors."

Coastin' with Carol is available to view at www.30a.tv

30A TV broadcasts eight live channels of original programming, including 30A, Outdoors, Real Estate, Celebrity Interviews, music videos, and comedy. Available via iTunes, Android, ROKU - Amazon Firestick, and at www.30a.tv

Grayton Beer Company Announces New COO

Grayton Beer Company has announced new leadership of its 30,000 square foot production facility, located in Santa Rosa Beach, Florida. Jamey Price has left his role as President of Grayton Beer Company to pursue other endeavors. Stepping in, Bo Walker joins the company as Chief Operating Officer, overseeing all operations for Grayton Beer Company.



Longtime local, Walker, comes to the leadership team with ample experience in the craft beer industry. As founding partner and former CEO of Oyster City Brewing Company, Walker has experience in all facets of the craft beer industry including distribution, operations and logistics – making him an

industry expert.

"I am enthusiastic to come on board with such a skilled team. From the front office to the loading dock, each position is

held by a qualified team member who is focused on seeing Grayton Beer Company succeed," Walker said.

Founded in 2011, Grayton

Beer Company will continue to support its community and make the high-quality beers that locals and vacationers have come to respect and love. For more information on Grayton Beer Company, please visit www.graytonbeer.com.

Founded in 2011 in Santa Rosa Beach, Florida, Grayton Beer Company places an emphasis on sourcing the finest ingredients to craft beers of character for a Gulf Coast state of mind. Grayton Beer Company brews

a variety of year-round styles, limited releases and barrel-aged beers in their 30,000-square foot state-of-the-art facility that are available in Northwest Florida, Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi and Tennessee. With its community-driven mindset, Grayton Beer Company invites guests to its Taproom, which is both pet and child friendly. For hours and more information, please visit www.graytonbeer.com or call (850) 231-4786.

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BY CHRIS BALZAR, ECES

ENERGY TIPS

by Emerald Coast Energy Solutions

natural sunlight to illuminate our homes; we can use the fire drill exercise by running out the front door and closing it quickly behind us so our bought air condition does not escape; or we can take measure to become more energy efficient. It's not rocket science, its building science. A well-insulated and properly sealed home uses less energy while maintaining the same comfort.

So how do we make our homes more energy efficient? Outlets and switches on exterior walls can waste up to 1% of energy. Adding insulating cover plates can reduce the amount of conditioned air leaking to the outside saving you money. Up to 12% of energy loss occurs from drafts around doors and fireplaces. Seals around doors can and will fail over time and should be checked and replace as needed. Creating a tight seal on exterior doors will keep that cool air in. Thermal imaging can detect these leaks easily. If you don't have access to a thermal camera, simply look for daylight or use a flashlight at night; if you see light, adjust or replace the



seals.

Windows can contribute up to 14% of energy loss. Replacing windows can be expensive. If there are cracks or fog-like film between the panes on windows, these will most likely need to be replaced. If the window is clear but you feel heat when the sun shines through or have a single pane, there are spectrally select films which can be applied to the window which dramatically increase efficiency, almost eliminating UV destruction and at a fraction of the cost of

replacement windows. What's great about these films are that they are virtually clear, blocking the heat, not the view.

Up to 33% of energy loss occurs through our attics and roofs. Recently, Florida has required new construction homes built by 2017 and newer to undergo a blower door test. A blower door is a powerful fan that mounts into the frame of an exterior door. The fan pulls air out of the house, lowering the air pressure inside. The higher outside air pressure then flows in through all unsealed cracks and openings. This test determines the air infiltration rate of a building. Prior to 2017, these tests were not required and rarely used. The importance is now builders seal electrical and plumbing penetrations with a fire block expandable foam making your home more energy efficient. Prior to the requirement of blower door testing, many builders did not seal these penetrations allowing for energy loss. Sealing these penetrations increases comfort, increases air quality and saves energy. Having proper attic insulation is extremely important,

so much so that if your home is 15 years or older and you have not added insulation to your attic, you most likely have 61% less insulation than what is required today for new construction. If you see joists or wood beams where the insulation should be, adding insulation will increase your comfort and increase energy efficiency saving you money.

There are many ways to increase comfort while lowering your electric bill. Why? Because you're worth it! If you have concerns with your electric bill or energy loss and want to be more energy efficient, we are happy to schedule an inspection and educate you on how to increase comfort and save energy.

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

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Preparing for the Unexpected – Inventory Checklists



By VICTORIA OSTROSKY

Janet and Sam had just enough time to hurriedly, with shaking hands, grab some framed photos, their laptops

and changes of clothes. The police officer urged them to move quickly. With their adrenaline pumping like they had just run a sprint, they drove out of their subdivision, abject fear coursing through their veins, black-gray smoke billowing up, obliterating the yellow and orange sky, vibrating with heat. It looked like the world was on fire.

Afterwards, they held hands as they sifted through their destroyed belongings, stopping often to stoop down and pick up a charred item that was once a treasured part of their home. They remembered raising their children here, and entertaining friends here. When would their lives be back to normal?



We love our cell phones. In particular we love the camera on our phones. We take selfies and sunset pictures of the water. We photograph birthdays and anniversaries and graduations.

Compiling a home inventory list isn't what we normally think about taking pictures of, do we?

We might think we can remember everything we have in each room and drawer and cabinet and closet. The truth is, we can't.

Whether you've experienced a total loss, or a partial loss, being able to supply your claims adjuster with concrete evidence of your possessions will help facilitate finalizing your claim.

It is recommended that you start with a Home Inventory Checklist. On this list, include every item in each room, especially items of value, including serial and model numbers. A home is chock full of all kinds of valuables from ordinary items like wide-screen televisions to unique ones such as original paintings. This list provides you, the homeowner, with solid evidence to submit to your insurance company in the event of a natural or manmade disaster.

The checklist is a document of all assets found in your home, condo or apartment, and can be a valuable tool in estate planning and a guide for distributing property to heirs. This same type of detailed list would work if the same disaster wiped out your business showroom, warehouse or office.

Keep receipts of larger purchases, and don't forget to update your list on an annual basis, ideally at the beginning of the year. Then store it in a safe place such as a cloud account. There are even several apps available now to help develop your home inventory checklist. If you're prone to becoming overwhelmed easily, start with a small room, or a specific collection such as your sports equipment. Because I'm an avid reader and collector of books, I'd probably start with my bookshelves. And don't forget items like computers, washing machines, bikes, AC units, tools and video games.

In addition to a written/typed list, include photos and videos, and don't forget to open all drawers and cabinets when

you're documenting your possessions. You don't need to list every item of clothing, but you could specify the number of, for example, jeans, like five pairs of jeans and 500 pairs of shoes. And while you are compiling



your inventory list, it is a good idea to take photos of the exterior of the home including your cars and boats.

If you have collections such as jewelry or firearms, art or memorabilia, you should consider scheduling these on a Personal Articles Floater, since most homeowner's policies contain sub-limits of coverage for specific types of possessions. Underwriters will require copies of receipts for newer purchases and possibly appraisals for items of a certain value.

This whole year has been a tough one for all of us. The recent Santa Rosa Beach wild-fire brought even more distress to families in our community. We've been social distancing, wearing masks, working from home, homeschooling our children, and doing our best to be good neighbors and responsible citizens.

And now I'm telling you that you need to do something more. Make it a game if you can. But do it. Then keep it somewhere safe, such as a safe deposit box, cloud account, or you can even email it to yourself (just don't forget your email password!)

There are also companies in our area who can take care of it for you if you prefer not to do it yourself.

As Gandalf said to Frodo, about secreting the One Ring, "Keep it secret, keep it safe!"

Insurance Zone, owned by Joe and Lea Capers, is a full service commercial and personal lines insurance agency serving Destin, Miramar Beach, Santa Rosa Beach (30A) and Inlet Beach. Visit their Video Library on www.ins-zone.com and watch several informative videos including 'Home Inventory Checklist, or call 850.424.6979. Victoria Ostrosky, author of this article is an Agent/CSR with IZ.

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Estate Planning: Can I Do It Myself?



BY GREG D. CROSSLIN

The Internet is a wonderful tool. There are many easily accessible forms and guidelines offered by a number of document service providers on the Internet. These companies provide a “do it yourself” approach to creating your own Estate Plan. While “fill-in-the-blank” Wills and Trusts can be tempting and seem very easy and inexpensive, the question becomes is it really a good idea to do it yourself?

Some may say that a “do-it-yourself” (DIY) Estate Plan is better than nothing at all and for many is the less expensive or affordable option. This may well be true. But is that really a choice? Wouldn't you be better served working with an attorney who can provide you guidance, explain applicable laws in the

state in which you reside, walk you through the process, answer your questions, and ensure your Estate Plan is what you want and need it to be, rather than hoping that it works. Without legal advice, you simply will never know if your plan is sufficient until it is challenged in court.

I have reviewed several DIY products on the Internet and in some Box stores and they certainly seem to provide less expensive options. However, if you look carefully at what you are getting and the price, it appears the savings may cost more in the long run. This is especially true,

intended. What appears to be an immediate savings may cost you and your family in the long run. Fill in the blank services are generally thought to be helpful because they charge a standard rate for each document. Unfortunately, as a rule, no one “fill-in-the-blank” form is available to explain how each document in your Estate Plan works together, should work together, how they have been changed, modified, and applied to your specific needs.

By contrast, most Estate Planning Attorneys create a complete Estate Plan that includes multiple documents, such as a Will, a Trust, a Healthcare Power of Attorney, a Durable Power of Attorney for Property, Beneficiary Deed, a Living Will or Healthcare Directive, a Pre-Need Determination for your children as well as other items. A blank box on a form cannot tell you how these all work for your specific needs. At the Law Office of Greg D. Crosslin we believe affordable Estate Planning is necessary and should be available. We have simplified a Flat

Fee approach which allows you to consider and choose each portion of your plan, identifying what your needs are and providing you what you want! We have

developed this approach to work with your specific circumstances, desires and requests.

The shortcoming of a “Do It Yourself Estate Plan” is that you really are doing it yourself, by yourself and without legal guidance. Estate Planning requires you to address an array of questions, topics and circumstances, some of which you might not have considered before and requires you to make choices that affect not only your life, but the lives of those you love the most.

We believe you should do so with the guidance of someone trained in the law, who is able to help you make the best Estate Plan possible you can to carry out what you wish and to avoid pitfalls that may present themselves.

Greg D. Crosslin is Principal Attorney at the Law Office of Greg D. Crosslin, 3999 Commons Drive West, Suite D, in Destin, Fl. Call 850-650-7378 or visit www.destinlegal.com for more information.


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Business

Meet our Local Pro: **Robyn Hicks** with **Community Management Associates**

By RITA L. SHERWOOD

Community Management Associates (CMA) is an association management firm that offers customized management services to the different associations they serve. Each community is different and has differing needs. CMA provides services for HOA's of all sizes and condominium developments as well as mixed use properties which have residential properties and well as commercial sites. CMA has been around for more than 30 years, serving Georgia, Alabama, South Carolina, Tennessee and now Florida. When CMA started back in 1989, they managed seven associations with only four employees. Today they manage more than 900 associations located throughout the southeastern United States.

Robyn Hicks, Business Development and Division Manager for Florida, says she quit her job of 11 years with CMA when she and her husband decided to move to Destin in 2018. Just a couple of months later, her previous boss called and asked if she'd like to open a CMA office in Florida. She was told that CMA had always wanted to move into the Florida market, but just didn't have anyone there locally to open an office. Robyn said she wasn't quite ready to retire, and jumped at the chance. She started getting involved in the local community, and before you knew it, she had her first account, Calusa Bay in Destin, and has been with the company for 13 years now.

The CMA office is located in Santa Rosa Beach and services associations like Gulf Place, Draper Lake and Highland Parks of Blue Mountain Beach, just to name a few. CMA also manages property in Fort Walton Beach, Destin and Freeport. And the company is growing by the day.

When asked what the most rewarding part about her job is, Robyn replies, "It's so great to see how communities can really



come together and thrive with our help and assistance. We have more than 30 years of expertise, so there's not much we haven't seen or dealt with," she says. "One of the benefits of hiring an experienced management company such as CMA is that we can help our customers navigate any issue or project. We also bring top notch technology to the table, something that our Boards find very valuable. But one of the things I love most about CMA is that even after all this time, we are still family owned and operated."

Last year in particular, Robyn says CMA bought a local property management company called "The Association Office," which had been locally owned and operated in Santa Rosa Beach for 20 years. She's proud to say that the original owner and all employees

have stayed on to work for CMA. "We have the most amazing, dedicated group of people working with us. I am so thrilled that our office is filled with such hard working, caring people."

When not enjoying her free time paddle boarding, Robyn likes to spend time with her husband who works at Progress Bank in Destin, and her two rescue fur babies. She recently adopted a puppy from Alaqua, an animal refuge located in Freeport. She also likes to travel to Illinois to watch her son play as a tight end for the Western Illinois University football team.

If your residential or commercial association wants a change or is looking for experienced management, give Robyn a call at 850-200-0835. Visit cmacomunities.com to learn more!

Marlin Grill Gifts Over \$6K to Employees During COVID-19

Marlin Grill, located in the Village of Baytowne Wharf, gifted over \$6,000 to their employees including bussers, servers, and bartenders during the wake of COVID-19 through tips from delivery and take-out orders.

After closing their dining room and outdoor patio area, the restaurant offered a limited menu for delivery and to-go orders. The management staff worked to deliver these meals while maintaining new health and safety precautions. Over the course of the closure of traditional in-person dining, the management staff collected tips from the take-out orders that were then gifted amongst the regular tipped staff who had been working limited

hours due to the pandemic.

"We appreciate all of our staff and know that this time has been hard for everyone," said owner Tom Rice. "I value their hard work and dedication to reopen Marlin Grill while adapting to these new safety measures. We are a family and I couldn't do this without them."

The staff returned in May to reopen the restaurant when it was deemed safe by the governor's office. Marlin Grill is now operating at 50 percent capacity inside their dining room and 100 percent outside on the patio where tables are placed six feet apart. Marlin Grill is open for normal business hours from 5-10 p.m..





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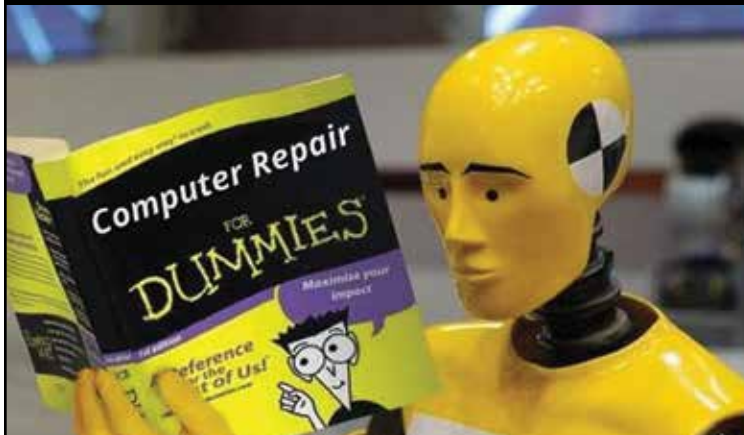
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OUTDOOR KITCHENS, ARBORS, DECKS, FENCING & PAVERS
 Offer expires 6/30/20
 181 Lynn Drive, Santa Rosa Beach
 850-622-0246

YOUR COUPON COULD BE HERE
 CALL
850-399-02288

TAMTECH POOLS
SERVICE CALL
\$50 OFF
W/ THIS COUPON
 Offer expires 6/30/20
 185 N. Holiday Rd., Miramar Beach
 850-650-3747

BLUE/GREEN LANDSCAPING
FREE ESTIMATES
 Offer expires 6/30/20
 844 W. County Hwy. 30A Santa Rosa Beach
 850- 660-1934

THE GROUTSMITH
\$50 OFF ORDER OF \$500 OR MORE
\$30 OFF ORDER OF \$200 OR MORE (WITH COUPON)
 Offer expires 6/30/20
 Serving Northwest Florida
 850-367-3100

30A OLIVE OIL
BRING IN THIS COUPON FOR 10% OFF PURCHASE!
 Not to be combined with other offers
 Offer expires 6/30/20
 Located in 30Avenue, 12805 Hwy 98E Suite N101
 Inlet Beach, 850-909-0099

HUMBLEMAN MEN'S STUDIO
\$5 OFF HAIRCUT
 Offer expires 6/30/20
 76 Arbor Lane, Grayton Beach
 850-842-8423

MILLION DOLLAR MARKETING FOR ALL PRICE RANGES PRICELESS EXPERTISE!

SOLD



Phenomenal 2 Bedroom, 2 Bath Condo #3103, Miramar Beach, Florida. Just Steps to the Beach! Fabulous Community Pet Friendly! \$369,000.

SOLD



28 S. Summit Drive, Santa Rosa Beach, Exceptional 4 Bedroom, 4.5 Baths with a Carriage House located .70 from the closest public beach entrance! Master on the Main, Guest Bedroom on the Main, Spa Patio with Wet Bar & Fireplace, Custom Built by Terry Crews, 3349 SF, \$925,000! Off Hwy 393 Close to Gulf Place!

SOLD



15 Nancy Drive, Santa Rosa Beach, Gorgeous 3 Bedroom, 2.5 Bath, situated on an Oversized Corner Lot with Huge Wrap Porch, 2 Car Garage, Renovated Kitchen with New Cabinetry, Bosch Professional Gas Cooktop & Range, Stainless Vent & More! \$459,900

BAYTOWNE WHARF



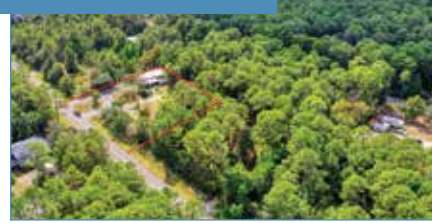
9100 Baytowne Wharf, Extraordinary 2 Bedroom, 2 Bath with 1023 SF, Located in Observation Point North beside of The Marlin Grill in The Village of Baytowne Wharf! Huge Party Deck! \$279,900!

SOLD



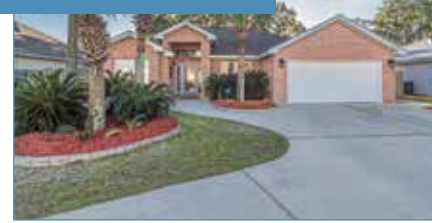
1400 SF, Fabulous Location in Holiday Plaza, Miramar Beach! 12273 W. US Hwy 98 #111, New AC 2019, Only \$504 in Holiday Plaza Monthly Fees! Only \$250,000!

CLOSE TO BAY



162 Cypress St. in Freeport, .89 Acre with 2 Buildable Lots! No HOA! Close to the Bay! Includes a Well, Septic and Power, Existing 50x35 Shop with 17x25 Game Room, \$200,000!

SOLD



50 Albatross Court, Gorgeous Ranch, 3 Bedrooms and 2 Baths, 1754 SF, located in Emerald Walk on 30A, Close to the Beach! \$429,900!

SOLD



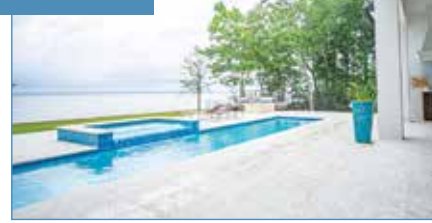
The Grand Sandestin 1 Bedroom, 2 Baths, Sleeps 6! 737 SF, Just minutes to The Village of Baytowne Wharf! \$209,900

SOLD



WATERSOUND BEACH, 70 S. Watch Tower, 4895 SF, Elevator, Close to the Beach, \$3,575,000!

SOLD



DRIFTWOOD ESTATES, 543 Driftwood Estates, 6587 SF, Bay Front with Double Lot, \$4,150,000!

SOLD



5300 Tivoli Drive, Miramar Beach, Tivoli By the Sea III, 3 Bedroom, 3 Baths \$550,000!

SOLD



144 Spires Lane # 315, Gulf Place Caribbean 2 Bedroom, 2 Baths, Gulf View! \$480,000

SOLD



Hammock Bay, 145 Symphony Way, 5 Bedroom, 3.5 Baths, 3781 SF, 3 Car Garage, \$422,500!

SOLD



109 Flamingo Drive, 3 Bedroom, 2 Baths, Emerald Walk on 30A, \$ 360,000!

SOLD



Pines of Blue Mountain, Residential Lot, Great Location! \$200,000!

SOLD



Ventana Dunes, Lot 24, Great Lot for New Build, Beside of Community Pool! \$120,000



Call Lisa for a private showing:

850-660-1962

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**Lisa Hughley, Broker/Owner
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