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Scenic WAL Life

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Construction on the U.S. Hwy. 98 Underpass at Inlet Beach has Begun!

The beginning of construction of a new underpass beneath U.S. Hwy. 98 was announced at a recent groundbreaking ceremony held in March. With expected completion in late 2022, the new underpass will provide a safe pedestrian and cyclist crossing through a lighted tunnel at the busy and still growing area between Inlet Beach and Rosemary Beach. It will also provide easier access to the area's popular shopping and dining outlets including 30Avenue, The Donut Hole and Shade's Bar & Grill at the intersection of U.S. Hwy. 98 and County Rd. 30A. This \$5.6 million project will be the first pedestrian and cyclist underpass to be constructed in the county and will measure 12 ft wide x 8 ft high x 136 ft long.

To complement the construction of the underpass and for extra safety, safe-way lighting will be installed as well as lighted access points at the northeast and southeast corners of the intersection, ADA compliant stairs and ramps,



enhanced pedestrian crosswalks and sidewalks, drainage upgrades and a new eastbound right turn lane from U.S. Hwy. 98 to County Rd. 30A going southbound. The Florida Department of Transportation will also install landscaping in the area of the underpass once construction is complete.

According to the FDOT, the first construction activities

include installing signage, erosion control and clearing areas for pipe installation. Crews have already removed streetlights at the intersection.

The Scenic Walton organization has been integral during the last several years to coordinate the effort to make this important safety improvement happen, working with several state and county partners inte-

gral to the effort including the Florida Department of transportation (FDOT), Visit South Walton, the Walton County Board of County Commissioners and local restaurants Shades Bar & Grill and The Donut Hole.

Scenic Walton is also part-

CONSTRUCTION
continued on page 3

Easter Reflections: Then Came Morning

BY GUEARY CLENDENNING

In our culture, we think of the day as starting in the morning and ending with night. In the Biblical culture, the opposite is true. Genesis chapter 1, verse 5 reads: "and the evening and the morning were the first day." In the Jewish calendar, the sabbath begins in the evening and ends at sunset the next day. Often, when we are sick, it seems the illness worsens in the evening and we find ourselves longing for the breaking of day. The day Christ was crucified, because the Sabbath was approaching, He, being dead, they took Him from the cross and placed Him in a borrowed tomb. It must have been a horrific, restless night for the disciples. Their minds were filled with fear and confusion, and their hopes were shattered.

But then came the morning, recorded in Luke's Gospel: "but very early on Sunday morning the women came to the tomb. They found the

EASTER REFLECTIONS
continued on page 3



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CONSTRUCTION

continued from page 1

nering with the Cultural Arts Association to create a public arts component so that the Inlet Beach Underpass is as unique and special as the National Scenic Byway it connects to. The public art component will be part of the CAA's Art in Public Spaces program and feature original artwork, including murals and permanent sculptures installed at each of the underpass entrances.

The public art component will include two mid-sized sculptures installed next to each tunnel entrance and murals created on the tunnel's interior walls. Lighting will be stylistically installed on the ceiling and the floor will remain unobstructed for clear and safe passage.

A national RFQ is being announced this month and finalists will be chosen in July with commissions selected in August. Con-

cepts will be reviewed and chosen by a panel of representatives from the creative, public and private sectors, and the community at large. Two artists/teams will create and install the sculptures, and one artist/team will create the interior murals with collaboration by local students through the CAA's ongoing partnership with the Walton County School District.

The overall project outcome will be a safe, practical and necessary crossing that also provides enhancement to the surrounding area through indigenous landscaping and beautiful, engaging and thought-provoking artwork. Artistically and conceptually, and in recognition of this underpass being the first in the area, the theme of the art installations will be "connectivity" and "relationship" among and between humans and connection with our built environment through



creativity and will be installed in Spring 2022.

The underpass will be an obvious thoroughfare, but will also add value to the practical environment and become an experience for those who live, work

and vacation in our community. For more information about the public art project, email Jennifer@culturalartsalliance.com. For more information on the U.S. Hwy. 98 underpass, contact info@scenicwalton.org.

To stay informed on construction, the FDOT has created a Facebook page named "My U.S. 98 Underpass at Inlet Beach" where ongoing information about impacts to traffic and construction updates will be posted.

EASTER REFLECTIONS

continued from page 1

stone covering the entrance had been rolled away."

Two angels, appearing as men, said to them, "why seek the living among the dead? For He is not here but is risen."

At an early age, we are filled with dreams and hope for the future. As we grow older and the years pass by, we come to the realization that the night time of our life is fast approaching. It is so different for those whose focus is on God. Their lives begin in the darkness of unbelief, not knowing God. But then life comes alive with meaning and purpose as they come to believe in God's Son. Zacharias, a Jewish priest, prophesied of the coming of Christ: "Because of God's ten-

der mercy, the light from heaven is about to break upon us, to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, and to guide us to the path of peace."

Jesus, the light of heaven, came to earth, lived a perfect life, fulfilling the laws of God; thus He became qualified to die in our place, receiving the judgement of God for our sins. Three days later, on Easter Sunday, He arose from the grave and said, "because I live, you shall live also."

What great news!

Whereas, people view life beginning in the morning and ending at night; Christians view life as beginning in darkness but ending in life that lasts forever. For not only do they have hope now, but they believe in heaven where life never ends. "There shall be no night there, and they need no candle, neither light of the sun,

for the Lord God giveth them light and they shall reign forever and ever."

There is a lot of darkness in the world. Many people seem to have lost their way and are without hope. Jesus said, "I am

the light of the world, he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."

When we come to trust and follow Christ, the darkness is lifted and we begin to experience

God's love and peace. The light of His presence will guide you now and into the future!

Then came the morning. Are you experiencing it? It's yours for the asking!

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Community

April 2021 WCSD Superintendent's Update



Superintendent A. Russell Hughes

Walton County School District moves closer to ending the 2020-2021 school year. Teachers have worked hard to maintain normalcy and create environments that support student achievement. Students will soon showcase their academic achievement during the upcoming testing period. Third grade students will participate in FSA

Reading exams while fourth through tenth grades will take FSA Writing exams in April. Parents are encouraged to make sure their child is prepared to do their best by sending them to school well rested and having had a healthy breakfast. Superintendent Hughes values community and says, "Our community support for the work of the Walton County School District is unmatched!"

It's hard to believe, but Walton County Schools are entering the last nine weeks of the year! May 26, 2021 is the final day of the second semester and the end of the academic year. Students are excited to be nearing their summer vacation! Graduating seniors are busy choosing rings, ordering caps and gowns, and making continuing education choices for career or college. We congratulate all students on their perseverance and adaptability

this year! Our District Mission is: Preparing the whole child for a life of Success," but learning isn't only for students! During the month of March, our maintenance staff participated in a training on Bloodborne Pathogens, Mandatory Reporting and Student Safety. Under Mr. Hughes' leadership there are no exceptions when considering student safety and safe schools; only high expectations!

Superintendent Hughes, Deputy Superintendent, Dr. Jennifer Hawthorne and Curriculum and Instruction Supervisor, Crystal Appel were selected by Florida Association of District School Superintendents (F.A.D.S.S.) to present to Florida Superintendents at their quarterly conference. Each of these district leaders shared information regarding our successes in preventing learning loss and acceleration achievement during the COVID Era.

The Walton Republican Women Federated welcomed an update from Superintendent Hughes in March at the Sandestin Hyatt conference room at

Grand Boulevard. Members of the Federation were informed on the response of Walton County School District to campus closures which included:

- Educating 10,700 students from home during 9-weeks time, with only 1 week of planning
- Distributing 1,100 computers for home use assisting student with virtual learning
- 22% of students completing paper-based "At-Home Learning" assignments
- Providing breakfast and lunch during last 9-week period -236,318 total meals
- On average, between 2,300 – 2,900 children were served each week, provided at school sites & on buses

Superintendent Hughes shared with the group of women that we were only able to accomplish this with the E.P.I.C. work of Bus drivers, food service workers, custodians, plant managers, guardians, non-instructional staff, ESP's, nurses, administrators, and many district staff members working tirelessly to ensure our students lost minimal hours

of academic instruction.

In recognition of Women's History Month which is highlighted yearly during the month of March, Superintendent Hughes acknowledged two leading ladies who are making a difference in the Walton County School District. Ms. Jill W. Smith, serving as Director of Facilities and Maintenance and Ms. Michelle Doggett, serving as District Facilities Planner were selected for this honor. Jill Smith was selected to lead as Director of Facilities and Maintenance for Walton County School District in July 2019. Ms. Smith has a Bachelor of Science degree in Environmental Studies – Policy from the University of West Florida and is currently completing a Master of Business Administration from Louisiana State University. Ms. Doggett has a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Education and a Master of Education in Educational Leadership from the University of West Florida. These ladies are taking our District facilities forward in E.P.I.C. fashion!



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Coastal Seniors April 2021 Update

COASTAL SENIORS OF SOUTH WALTON

APRIL MEETING FOR COASTAL SENIORS - APRIL 20 - 9:00 AM

Come and join the Coastal Seniors of South Walton for our April get together on Tuesday, April 20th at 9AM at our office located at 70 Logan Lane, Santa Rosa Beach, Florida 32459. During the meeting, a light breakfast will be available and information will be shared about our "Fridays with Friends" program, which will start on Friday, April 16th. Each "Fridays with Friends" program will be open at 9AM until noon. Coastal Seniors will welcome members, who are 50

years and older; to our office to participate in activities, such as: card games, board games, ping pong, bingo, art classes, exercise classes, etc. If you are interested in any of these activities, please let us know so that our volunteers can prepare. You can contact us by calling 850-280-5342, or by sending an email to: coastalseniorsofsouthwalton@gmail.com.

Information about Coastal Seniors of South Walton is available on our web page: www.coastalseniorsofsouthwalton.org, and on the - Coastal Seniors of South Walton - Facebook group page.

COASTAL SENIORS BOOK CLUB - VIRTUAL VIA ZOOM (see our website calendar for a link to meeting on the day of the meeting) - The second Wednesday of each month - APRIL 14th from 3:00 PM - 4:00 PM.

Join the Coastal Seniors of South Walton (CSSW) to discuss books you've enjoyed by participating in an online book club once a month. You choose your own book - there will be

no assigned books for all to read. Each participant will have up to 5 minutes to share the book they read and their thoughts about it. Should members want to exchange books they can drop one they've read at our offices at 70 Logan Lane in Grayton Beach and pick up another there to read.

Seniors 50 years of age and up residing in or visiting Walton County are invited to join CSSW. Membership is \$20 for individu-

als, \$30 for family, and \$50 for businesses. You can become a member on Facebook at Coastal Seniors of South Walton, or via email at coastalseniorsofsouthwalton@gmail.com, or on the website at www.coastalseniorsofsouthwalton.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

2021 Walton County Scholastic Chess Tournament

The 2021 Walton County Scholastic Chess Tournament will be held Saturday, April 24, 2021 at the Coastal Branch Library, 437 Greenway Trail, Santa Rosa Beach, Florida. This tournament will be open to all school-age children in Walton

County. There is no entry fee. Onsite registration will be from 9:00 until 10:00 on April 24th and students can pre register by calling (859) 267-2809. Players will have 30 minutes for each game to make all their moves, and tiebreakers will be

resolved by playing a 5-minute game.

There will be four sections: Grades 9-12; Grades 6-8; Grades 2-5; and PreK-1. The games are scheduled to begin at 10:00, 11:30 and 2:00 with accelerated pairings whenever

possible. The PreK-1 section will follow a different time schedule and be finished before noon. Following US Chess guidelines, all chess players and visitors will be required to wear a mask. After each round, all clocks, boards and pieces will be

cleaned and disinfected. Latex and Nitrile gloves will be available for those who want to use them, and hand sanitizer will be available.

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Community

Ana Gonzalez Receives Promotion at Edward Jones

Ana Gonzalez has been promoted to senior branch office administrator at a Santa Rosa Beach branch office of financial services firm Edward Jones. Gonzalez has been with Edward Jones the past 5 years.

Shelley Albarado, the local Edward Jones financial advisor, said Gonzalez is very deserving of the promotion.

“Ana has demonstrated an outstanding ability to juggle the many complex tasks and responsibilities associated with helping run this office. I’m very pleased



that her exceptional ability and dedication to the firm have been recognized and rewarded,” Albarado said.

To be named a senior branch office administrator, an individual must meet specific training requirements, demonstrate exceptional performance when completing office responsibilities, handle the complex tasks associated with running a high-volume office, and typically must have at least five years’ experience with the firm.

A branch office administrator

is responsible for the daily operation of an Edward Jones office. This includes providing top-notch client service, supporting marketing activities for the office and staying updated on technological advances.

Shelley Albarado and Branch Office Administrator Ana Gonzalez can be reached at 850.622.2112. You may also visit their website at www.edwardjones.com.

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in the U.S. and, through its affiliate, in Canada. Every aspect of the firm’s business, from the investments offered to the location of branch offices, caters to individual investors. The firm’s 19,000-plus financial advisors serve more than 7 million clients with a total of \$1.5 trillion in client assets under care. Visit edwardjones.com or the recruiting website at careers.edwardjones.com. Member SIPC.

What’s on 30A TV ?

Upstarts Are Changing The Face of FREE TV

This past year has seen an increase in choices for free and small fee television providers; due to streaming TV available on devices and TV’s with ROKU, Amazon Fire, Apple TV, and now, Smart TV’s. After years of stellar growth, the streaming boom is expected to continue in the coming years – mainly due to a surge in global demand for video streaming.

Large players in the subscription business are offered by players such as Netflix, Disney+, Discovery, Youtube TV and Paramount (NBC), but there are a plethora of upstarts at similar or lower pricing such as VivaLiveTV, (www.vivalivetv.com) Zingo TV, (www.zingotv.com) Yowi TV (www.yowi.tv) Simultv (www.simultv.com) and Cabbage TV (www.cabbagetv.com)

These subscription services are being pushed by Non Subscriptions (Free with advertising) such as Pluto TV (owned



by CBS Viacom) and one of our favorites, Airy.tv (www.live.airy.tv) with DIstro TV (www.distrotv.com) an up and coming player with news, movies and classic tv.

The streaming market, also called the OTT and IPTV market, (Streaming TV) refers to video and television content offered to customers directly online, bypassing traditional cable, broadcast, and satellite television networks and platforms. It now includes movie and DVR televi-

sion, and live channels as well.

One of the main growth drivers behind Streaming TV services is convenience. Customers can easily subscribe and cancel online, and content is available all the time. Subscribers can watch what they want, where they want and when they want, using the device they want. This has become increasingly important to customers, particularly for younger generations.

Another important factor

driving demand, is more programming choices, and more free TV. Even fee based streaming TV subscriptions have low monthly fees compared to cable. This is important, especially given the relatively high content quality, typically offered by these platforms nowadays.

The next trend you will see with streaming TV is bundle packages, where one subscription can include several services in one app.

Are you making use of Streaming TV ? If not, dive in and purchase a Smart TV or Amazon Fire Stick device. Your large cable or dish bill will disappear and your choices for free and fee based TV will be a delight. Then check out some of the links and providers in this article.

For help or advice on these TV’s and the program apps, drop me a line at paul@30a.tv

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Edward Jones
MAKING SENSE OF INVESTING

Women's Soccer League Comes to South Walton!

Heads up Sports Fans! This Summer, the Women's Premier Soccer League is coming to South Walton! The WPSL is the largest women's soccer league in the world with 100+ teams nationwide. You may recognize names such as Abby Wambach, Megan Rapinoe, and Brandi Chastain? Some of the country's most accomplished women's players played in the WPSL. In fact, 28 WPSL alumni earned roster spots in the 2019 Women's World Cup. Our very own Sporting South Walton is the WPSL's newest expansion team. We will welcome highly-skilled collegiate and post-collegiate athletes to our beautiful coastal community where they will live, train, and compete. "This will be a great opportunity for our South Walton community and greater panhandle area to be exposed to top-level talent and competition," General Manager, Frank Casillo shared.

Entering its 22nd season, the Women's Premier Soccer League strives to provide the highest level of developmental opportu-



nities for players in the United States.

The Sporting South Walton

team will also establish a reserve or feeder team where area players will train alongside the team. "We have seen our soccer culture grow in South Walton and this program will bridge the gap and engage burgeoning younger players," Casillo said.

By creating training and programming opportunities for younger players, Sporting South Walton will also keep long term

goals in sight. "Long term I hope this will create relationships and pathways for some of our more capable local players to pursue college careers and beyond," Casillo pointed out. Games will start in May 2020 with Sporting South Walton competing against teams from the Southern Region like Birmingham, Baton Rouge, and WPSL's 2019 world champs, the Penascola FC.

For more information about getting involved, including internship and sponsorship opportunities, contact Sporting South Walton at www.sportingsw.com. Be sure to follow the team on Facebook and Instagram @sportingsw to stay up to date on game schedules, to score tickets, and much more. One Team, One Community!

Coastal Branch Library Hosts "Books 'Buy' the Bag Event April 17th

The Friends of the Walton County Coastal Branch Library will be hosting a Book Sale event, "Books 'Buy' the Bag!" on Saturday, April 17. Hours are 9:00am to 4:00pm. Two size bags will be available

for purchase, \$8.00 and \$5.00. Fill the bag with books of your choice. This is a CASH ONLY event. Individual books will be available to purchase for \$1.00 each. This book sale will be held in the

Coastal Branch Library parking lot to accommodate social distancing. Please come and support the Coastal Branch Library located at 437 North Greenway Trail in Santa Rosa Beach.

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 Community

Benefits of Having a Service Dog

BY ELENA BEPLAY AND
RESCUE 22 FOUNDATION

Service dogs can augment many different aspects of daily life for people struggling from a physical or mental disability. Here at the Rescue 22 Foundation, we provide task trained service dogs to veterans with service-connected injuries that have resulted in a diagnosis of PTSD or other medical and mobility challenges free of charge. We also partner with the USF School of Public Health in order to continue research towards the efficacy of service dogs as a medical tool.

Before we dive into the story of one of our recipients, maybe you have thought about what services a dog can provide and why someone might need a service dog.



Service dogs can provide a variety of task trained jobs specific to help those with physical and emotional disabilities. Specifically, the dogs can be trained to perform tasks related to ambulatory problems, visual impairments and mental disabilities. Trained tasks could include: picking up objects for the owner, retrieving water or medications, turning on and off lights, calling a medical alert system,

alerting family members, guiding the owner through daily obstacles, providing brace support for standing or sitting, providing wheelchair pulling, interrupting panic attacks or PTSD episodes, or providing consolation from chronic depression and emotional distress. Dogs can also be trained to provide different types of therapy such as deep pressure therapy and positional therapy. For centuries, man's best friend has been up for the job!

In order to perform a service, the dog must be highly trained by a reputable trainer. The dog should meet specific criteria in the area of breed, age, health and behavior. The trainer should have significant experience training reputable service dogs, and knowledgeable in dog behavior. Choosing the perfect helpful companion is not an easy task, but we strive to make it a seamless process for the veteran.

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is a common reason for someone to have a service dog. Our foundation specifically deals with this disability the most often. PTSD can occur from any traumatic event; it is not limited to combat alone. Symptoms are varied; however, many experience suicidal thoughts, recurring memories and nightmares, sleeplessness, a loss of interest in life or feeling numb, anger, irritation and fear. PTSD can thus impact their everyday life. Research suggests that psychiatric service dogs may be an effective complementary treatment option. It has been found that disrupting episodes of anxiety ranks is among the most important tasks a service dog can

provide.

James, a U.S. Marine Corps veteran, was one of our first recipients of a service dog. Although a veteran, his PTSD was not combat related. James lost his son to a very traumatic event in which James was the first on scene. Following his death, James had a difficult time functioning in society and was now alone in his home. He couldn't sleep, suffered from depression, and was prescribed a significant amount of medications. Hopeful, James reached out to our foundation and we went to work placing him with his service dog Zara.

Zara is a Belgian Malinois task trained by Coastline K9 and customized to James. She responds to panic attacks and anxiety by disrupting his distress. She senses when he is having an episode and will rush to him providing tactile stimulation by jumping on him, licking or nudging. She wakes James up when he is having nightmares and provides a companion for his daily life. After receiving Zara, James was able to ditch his sleep medication and get back to a social life.

"Zara gives me a purpose again. I can leave the house, be social, and get back to a normal life. She goes everywhere with me." James says.

Zara wears a service dog vest and collar that is properly marked with "service dog" patches and "do not pet" patches visible to the public. James is an information technologist specialist at a local hospital in St. Petersburg, Fla., and he takes Zara to work with

him every day. She is trained to be neutral in public settings and pay attention to James's needs. Outside of work, both James and Zara enjoy competing in numerous "GORUCK" events and kayaking. When asked about some of the difficulties of taking Zara everywhere James said, "I have flown on a plane with Zara three times with no issues from Airline staff about having a service dog. When we go to restaurants, I choose to respect others around me by sitting a good distance from other customers, but I have never had an issue taking her to restaurants."

"I recommend getting a service dog; it really makes a difference in daily life and gives me purpose. Just make sure you are getting the dog for the right reasons and continue follow up training"

James's story provides an opportunity to share insight into the daily life of living with PTSD and having a service dog. He is a testament to what our Foundation strives to provide and the strength of others experiencing similar situations. For more information, visit Rescue22Foundation.org or email Byron Beplay with Coastline K9 at byron.beplay@gmail.com.

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South Walton Fire District Issues 2021 Beach Safety Warning!

As South Walton enters into its most busy time of year beach safety is at the top of many local residents' priority lists. While Spring and Summer offer tons of fun activities and new adventures, danger is often lurking just below the water's surface. Many visitors and even some locals are not educated on proper beach safety measures, leading to multiple drownings each year.

One such drowning took place just this past month when a Texas man attempted to rescue a young boy who had become distressed while swimming. Fifty-four-year-old Timothy Browne, who was both a husband and a father, found himself given an opportunity for heroism and acted promptly. A young boy, along with a multitude of other people, had chosen to go swimming despite the rough gulf conditions and became caught up in the current. Seeing the boy in distress, Mr. Browne attempted to intervene. The boy eventually made it to shore, but unfortunately, Browne was found slumped over in the water when rescuers arrived and was not able to be revived. All too often people are willing to swim in high-risk conditions, leading to incidents such as the one this past month.

The State of Florida has chosen to implement a uniform beach flag system indicating surf conditions as well as marine life dangers. Many residents and tourists find themselves traveling across the state and having the beach flag system in place has proven to reduce some risk when it comes to enjoying Florida's beautiful beaches. There are four colors of beach flags, each identifying different surf conditions. Green flags are an indication of near-perfect beach weather with calm waters and few riptides. Yellow flags show that surf conditions have shifted to slightly more dangerous and that caution should be used when swimming. Single red flags indicate rough surf conditions, and visitors to the beach are encouraged to stay out of the water, while a double red flag shows that surf conditions have become too dangerous and the water is closed. The fourth flag, a purple flag that is displayed with one of the other colors, shows that dangerous marine life may be present close to the shore. This includes jellyfish, sharks, and other aquatic animals.

South Walton's Beach Safety Director David Vaughn commented, "the number one thing people need to be more aware

ingly calm waters, dragging sand, rocks, marine life, and people into deeper waters. Once caught in a riptide it becomes very difficult to get out. The ma-

swim towards the shore. All along Florida's beaches, one can find signs painted to boardwalks and set up near the water warning visitors of riptides and encouraging them to stay calm and take proper precautionary measures when dealing with them. This simple measure has saved hundreds of lives.

The beaches are certainly one of the most enjoyable parts of this area! However, when proper precautionary measures are either not put in place or not acted upon they can become dangerous very quickly. Be sure to pay attention to Florida's beach flag system whenever you visit the beautiful waters of the Emerald Coast! Awareness is necessary, and it just might one day save your life!



majority of people naturally panic and attempt to swim towards the shore, which actually makes it near impossible to be released from the riptide. Instead, swimmers should swim parallel to the beach until they are out of the riptide and then

of when it comes to beach safety is that the flag system exists and represents the best method for assessing the risk levels as well as the respect with which you should approach your decision making when entering the water."

In addition to its uniform beach flag system, the state of Florida has taken a multitude of precautions when it comes to riptides. Riptides are unseen currents that cut through seem-

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 Community

Faces of Walton; Robert Bushnell

Sandestin Golf and Beach Resort in south Walton County is known today for its four championship golf courses and over 1,200 rental accommodations. It has nineteen swimming pools, twenty restaurants, and seven miles of waterfront property. It attracts thousands of visitors from around the world every year. And it has been attracting them for a very long time. A full decade before Seaside was developed, the first vacation homes were being erected at what would later be called Sandestin.

Thirty years before Sandestin put South Walton on the tourist map, the 2000+ acres it now sits on was nothing but trees, swamp, and dunes. And it was this land that inspired Robert Bushnell, a prominent Boston attorney, to try his hand at chicken farming. And this, naturally, almost contributed to the defeat of the Imperial Japanese Army.

Stay with me. I'll explain.

Robert Tyng Bushnell was born in New York City in 1896. Both sides of his family were New England blue bloods who could trace their lineage back for generations. On his father's side were

the Bushnells of Old Saybrook, Connecticut, who had arrived in the Massachusetts Bay colony in 1638. His mother's family, the Tyngs, were Mayflower descendants who established themselves in New York.

Bushnell attended Phillips Andover Academy and Harvard, graduating from Harvard Law School in 1921. In the 1920s he served as District Attorney for Middlesex County, Massachusetts. During the 1930s Bushnell returned to private practice in Boston and rose in the ranks of the state Republican party. He took a stand against Boston's strict book censorship laws. He became chairman of the Republican Club of Massachusetts and stood up to the Democratic party machine in his state and their "threats of intimidation." In 1935 he declared he "would not stand idly by and see a Huey Long dictatorship established" in Massachusetts.

It was apparently about this time that he developed his fondness for chickens.

He was enticed to the Florida Gulf coast after reading about the area in an issue of a poultry



trade journal that he subscribed to, or so the legend goes. His dream was to retire to the area and raise chickens. Whether or not that was true, in 1941 he did travel to our area with his mother Mary, sister Dorothy, and Dorothy's husband, John Coffeen, and purchased thousands of acres of trees, swamps and dunes bounded on the east by what is now Mack Bayou Road. The parcel encompassed what is today the Sandestin and Tops'l resorts, the Coffeen Nature Preserve and Four Mile Village.

The Coffeens settled per-



manently in our area. Robert returned to Massachusetts and was elected attorney general of the state, serving in that capacity throughout WWII. As attorney general he gained notoriety fighting corruption within the Boston police department and presiding over the investigation of the Coconut Grove nightclub fire, a tragedy that claimed nearly 500 lives and led to changes in fire codes throughout the United States.

While Bushnell was fighting organized crime in Boston, Hitler was attacking London with his V-1 "buzz bombs." In 1944 a nearly intact V-1 that had failed to explode was found on the coast of England and shipped to Wright Field in Ohio for reverse engineering.

Meanwhile, back at the chicken ranch, the Army Air Forces Tactical Center began construction of a specialized

testing facility known as Range 64. They chose Bushnell's land for its remote location and for its large sand dunes, perfect for test launches of the new JB-2 missile.

Within weeks the pristine stretch of dunes was transformed into a mini air force base, complete with mess hall, post office, machine shops, and housing for 200 troops. Hundreds of tests took place over the Gulf. The goal was to fine tune the JB-2 for mass production and use against the Nazis and the Japanese.

The development and deployment of the atomic bomb in Japan put an end to the usefulness of Range 64. The land was returned to its owner. But Robert Bushnell never became a Florida chicken farmer. He died of a heart attack in a New York hotel suite in 1949 before he could return to Florida. He was only 53 years old.



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BY MAURICE STOUSE, FINANCIAL ADVISOR AND BRANCH MANAGER

The Financial Services Sector of the stock market has been the second-best performing sector so far this year. A sector of the market consists of similar industries and those which have other things in common such as, in this case, interest rate sensitivity (there are a total of 11 sectors that make up the stock market). Yields on bonds, U.S. Treasury bonds, directly impact banks and financial services companies as well as the overall market. The yield of the 10-year U.S. Treasury note is closely watched as it has a direct impact on the overall stock market as well as the financial sector. This is because when yields rise, it is thought that banks and other financial services companies stand to increase their revenues

and their profits as a result. Yields help determine the rate a bank can charge for lending money and as they rise the banks' revenues and profits rise faster than their costs. Note: yields impact the rates of interest that banks can charge, but are not the same as stated interest rates you typically see with regards to rates like the Federal Reserve's Federal Funds rates.

Rates on the 10-year Treasury note have been climbing for several months now. At this writing, the yield was at 1.74%. That is up from a low of just .57% in April of last year, nearly tripling. At the time when the rate was that low, prospects for banks were quite grim, especially since there were fears that banks and other lenders might be facing steep losses because of the substantial economic downturn brought on by the pandemic. Banks also had to move to set aside additional reserves for those potential losses. That is money the banks could not lend out. While banks could invest those reserves in things like Treasuries, (which are quite conservative) they stood to make



somewhat less on their reserves.

In mid-March, it was reported that banks had somewhat exceeded the amount they needed to have in additional loss reserves as the fears of loan losses continued to decrease as the economic picture continued to improve. That put many lending institutions in a position to free up those reserves that were into higher yielding loans and, hence, drive greater revenues and profits to the lending institutions. Shortly following that, however, the Federal Reserve made changes to some pandemic era rules put in place last year that allowed banks to exclude (from something known as their supplementary leverage ratios), the Treasury securities they held in their Federal Reserve deposits. With that no longer being the case, banks were suddenly faced with lower revenues because of those changes since they would have to increase their reserves with non-U.S. Treasuries. This is an example of the risk of investing and the impact of unexpected events, in this case, the change of a previously favorable regulation.

Nonetheless, if yields continue to rise, that would be increased potential for revenues for banks and lending institutions. So, where might an investor look if she or he wanted to add financials to their portfolio?

There are over 5,000 banks in the U.S. They range in size from the big, so called money center banks, to the much smaller community banks. In between are regional banks. There is a plethora of research available for investors to review when considering the sector. They can look at individual stocks of financials, mutual funds and exchange traded funds. Additionally, many of these may offer attractive dividend yields to their investors as well.

Also, some financial services companies offer online accounts, credit cards and loans. Brokerage firms, too, are part of this sector. Many brokerage firms have banking subsidiaries where uninvested cash of their customers is held. Those subsidiaries stand to make greater earnings when yields increase. There are also a multitude of "fintech" companies which stand to improve their earnings when yields increase.

What might be driving the increase in yields? A simple explanation is expectation of economic growth or economic rebound. That would be a signal that demand is growing, and that inflation is increasing. Large institutional investors like pension plans, endowments, and funds tend to sell lower yielding Treasuries as a result. More selling than buying drives the price of bonds and treasuries down but conversely drives the yield up.

The Federal Reserve has two main objectives: One is full employment and the other is keeping inflation in check. The Fed has most recently indicated that it does not see inflation as a particular threat and is prepared to keep rates close to zero until 2023. Note those are rates, not the yields. The daily trading of U.S. Treasury bonds determines the yields. Some inflation is considered healthy for economic growth. That is typically from 2-3%. Investors however appear to be more concerned with inflation as supply interruptions and price increases of various commodities have moved producer and consumer prices up. Left unchecked, inflation eventually erodes purchasing power which is harmful for consumers and the economy.

If you want to learn more or want to make some adjustments to your investing plans, be sure to

use your resources. Ask your advisor or brokerage firm for information, research, advice or input. In some situations, investors prefer to delegate that decision making to an advisor or money manager. In any case, continue to understand and know what you own and why you own it.

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

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Community

Fellowship, Networking and Service Through the Rotary Club of South Walton

Fellowship, networking, and service. These are at the very heart of what it means to be a Rotarian. Several citizens of South Walton are currently members of Rotary of South Walton County. Rotary International is a service organization that has been in existence since 1905 and its founder was Paul Harris, an attorney in Chicago. He had the idea for a club of

local businesspeople and professionals to come together for community and fellowship. The first Rotary meeting took place on February 23, 1905 in downtown Chicago and Harris began the tradition of the Rotary meeting over lunch, a tradition which lasted for years.

Today, Rotary clubs meet at various times and various places and the South Walton



Club meets in person and virtually twice each month. Rotary's central themes of fellowship, networking and service continue to this very day with 1.2 mil-

lion members and 35,000 clubs worldwide. Club activities, social events, and volunteer projects offer networking opportunities that build personal and professional connections. And Rotarians can extend those networks by visiting other clubs around the country and the world.

Perhaps the most important part of being in Rotary, is being part of one of the most well-known foundations in existence, The Rotary Foundation. Rotarians and the Rotary Foundation work on "promoting peace, fighting disease, providing clean water, sanitation and hygiene, saving mothers and children, supporting education and growing local economies".

The Rotary Foundation is also on the list of Charity Navigator's "10 of the Best Charities Everyone's Heard of" with an overall score of 99.40.

The mission of Rotary is to "provide service to others, promote integrity, and advance world understanding, goodwill,

and peace through fellowship of business, professional, and community leaders".

Rotary has been responsible for its work in helping to eradicate polio, provide clean water to help fight waterborne illness and create safer environments for children.

Why not plan to visit a club meeting and experience the fellowship, networking and hear about the work going on today in the South Walton community and around the world? In person meetings, with masks and social distancing are currently being held in the conference room at the back of the South Walton Branch Library on Greenway Trail. The meeting is the first and third Thursdays of each month at 8am. Or you might want to visit virtually. To get the link and any other information, please email Membership Chairman Maurice Stouse at moe.stouse@gmail.com or call President Brenda Whitwell at 228.697.0333.

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Community

Vets Helping Vets & First Responders

BY MARTA ROSE-THORPE

For years Jimmy Thorpe felt the urge to give back. A veteran, Jimmy had served as a young man in the U.S. Army for eight years and had always held the highest regard for the men and women who serve our country and keep

us safe. This group also includes first responders – the men and women who keep our communities safe. So how would he give back? In 2014, he created the tagline “Vets Helping Vets” – later elevated to “Vets Helping Vets & First Responders” – and

decided to start giving what he had to give: HVAC units. Jimmy owns A Superior Air Conditioning Company, a local business he launched in 2003.

In the beginning, Jimmy and his team decided to give away eight units per year. Vets and



Mr. and Mrs. Lundeen with Jimmy Thorpe



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first responders were encouraged to apply online at ASuperiorAC.com and the giveaway was open to all who have served in the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, Coast Guard and all first responders including EMT/ Medics, Police, Sheriffs and Fire Fighters. American Legion Post 392 in Panama City met and voted on all submissions each quarter, selecting one veteran in need and one first responder in need to be awarded the units.

In 2015, the giveaway began taking the form of a quarterly appreciation lunch at Harley-Davidson of Panama City Beach. Local musician Neal James opened the lunches with the National Anthem and play background music while Texas Roadhouse catered. The first event hosted around 40 guests and several local businesses co-sponsored. The next lunch brought in a few more guests and sponsors, and the Vet Center and other veteran-related organizations joined in. As the word-of-mouth continued, the guest list grew. By Fall 2017, the event moved to Texas Roadhouse. Today this appreciation lunch still takes place, now maxing out the restaurant at 380+ guests.

But Jimmy still wanted to reach and help more veterans and first responders. In November 2019, Pastor Dave of Faith Assembly Church in Miramar Beach (affectionately known as “The Rock & Roll Church”) invited Jimmy to

launch a quarterly appreciation lunch there, thus reaching vets and first responders in the Walton/Okaloosa area. The appreciation lunch has taken place there ever since, slowly growing in attendance and giving away one HVAC unit per quarter, for a total of 12 HVAC units given away per year.



“I feel that giving back to veterans and first responders is like taking the time to help my father,” says Jimmy, whose father served in the U.S. Marines. “It’s something that comes second nature; it’s instinctive and something that’s driven in me.”

Join us for the next **Veterans & First Responders Appreciation Lunch on Tuesday, April 13, 2021 from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Faith Assembly Christian Church** (a.k.a. The Rock & Roll Church), 306 South Geronimo Street, Miramar Beach, 32550. To register to win a HVAC unit, go to ASuperiorAC.com and scroll down to the box at the bottom, “Veterans & First Responders HVAC Giveaways.”

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Latitude Margaritaville Watersound Opens for Tours by Appointment

Taking appointments now for preview tours April 3-24



Inspired by the lyrics and lifestyle of singer, songwriter and best-selling author Jimmy Buffett, whose songs evoke a passion for tropical escape and relaxation, Latitude Margaritaville's dynamic, all-new approach to active adult living has captured the imagination of today's vibrant and active 55-and-better home buyers. Latitude Margaritaville Watersound is the third Latitude Margaritaville to be developed by Minto and Margaritaville, and the first to be developed in partnership with St. Joe. The first two are located in Daytona Beach, Florida and near Hilton Head, South Carolina.

ents a stunning setting in which to deploy the four pillars of the Latitude Margaritaville lifestyle — food, fun, music and escapism — in one of the country's most beautiful and desirable locations," notes Minto's Latitude Margaritaville Division President William Bullock. "The area's natural terrain is breathtaking and the planned Latitude Town Center amenities will provide spectacular views of the Intra-coastal Waterway."

A virtual preview is available now at LatitudeMargaritaville.com/watersound where floor plans, site plans, amenity renderings and more details about



Latitude Margaritaville Watersound partners announce that the community's sales center and 13 island-styled model homes will open for by-appointment preview tours April 3-24. Appointments are available by calling (866) 609-8713, Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. CT.

Due to the unprecedented interest in Latitude Margaritaville communities, and current need to avoid large crowds and maintain social distancing, advance appointments to tour Latitude Margaritaville Watersound are required. Those scheduling in-person tours or phone appointments from April 3-24 will have the opportunity to complete a reservation agreement to enter a virtual, live-streamed drawing on May 1 for the first sales release of homes. At that time, all reservation agreements from the April preview period will be drawn in random order to determine the order of scheduling appointments to purchase a new home.



Latitude Margaritaville Watersound is located on Northwest Florida's Emerald Coast between Pensacola and Panama City, near Panama City Beach, and situated in the heart of St. Joe's vast Bay-Walton Sector Plan that encompasses approximately 110,500 acres with approximately 15 miles of frontage on the Intra-coastal Waterway.

"This amazing property pres-

the community can be viewed. Four distinct home collections, the Conch Cottage Collection, Caribbean Villas Collection, and Beach and Island Collections of single-family homes, capture the "no worries" tropical vibe that defines Latitude Margaritaville. Floor plans range from 1,204 to 2,564 square feet under air with pricing from the low \$200s.

"The start of tours and the

beginning of the home sales process brings us one step closer to welcoming the first residents to Latitude Margaritaville Watersound," said Jorge Gonzalez, President and CEO of St. Joe. "This location, the quality of the homes and the amenities that are planned will make this the ideal place to call home for those 55

and better."

For more information, contact John Martin, your 30A Real Estate Specialist providing superior service with homes, condos and land in South Walton County FL. John can be reached at 850-714-3731 or John@JohnMartin30a.com.

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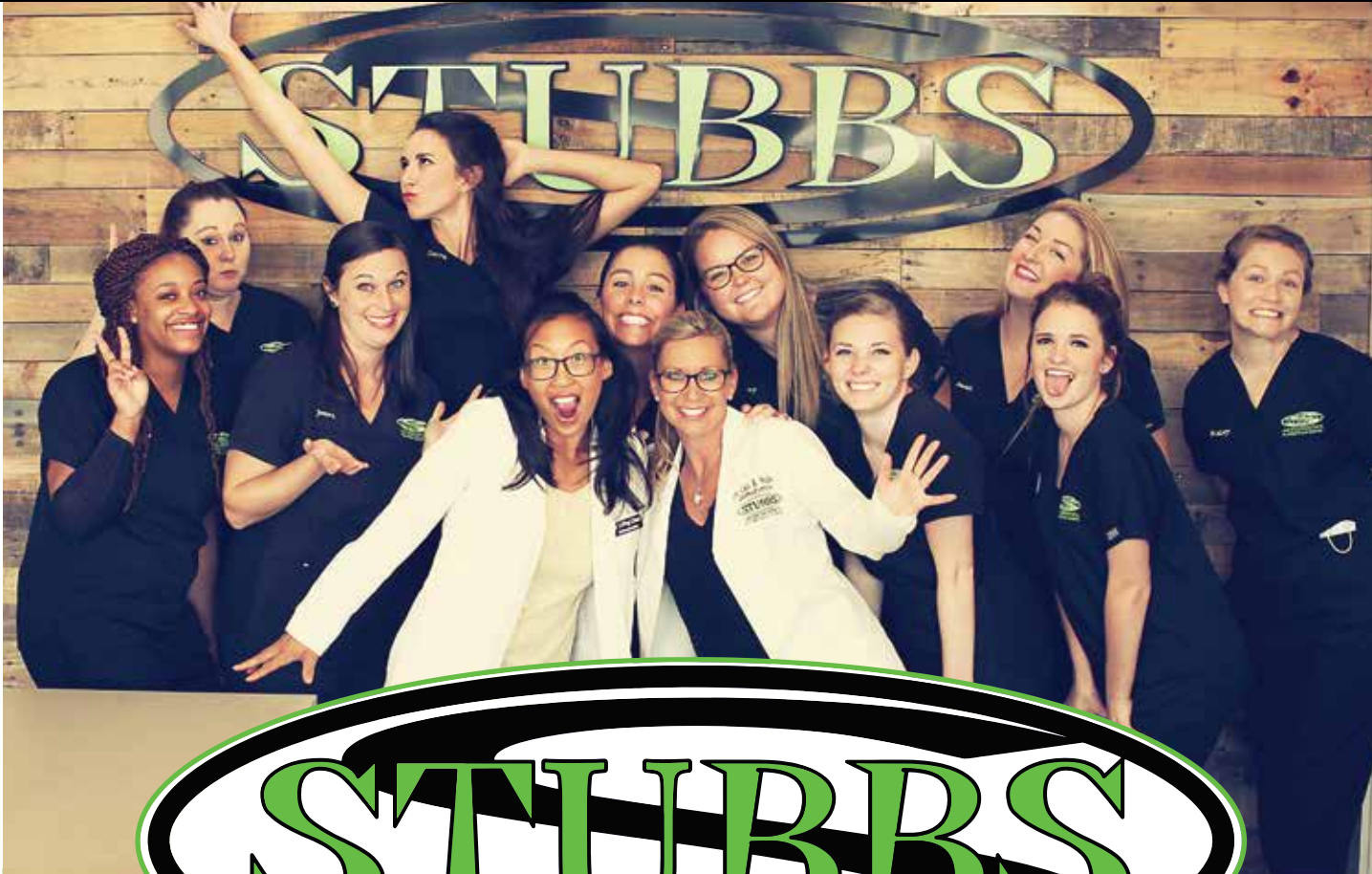
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For Eddie Mansfield of Path of Grace – a Story of Redemption

Eddie Mansfield has a story to tell!

In a recent interview with the long-time director of Path of Grace in Miramar Beach, we asked Eddie if he could sum up his life story in one sentence, what would it be? He answered unhesitatingly, “What the enemy meant for evil, God turned it for the good.”

What an answer!

Born and raised in a good family in Owensboro, Kentucky, known for its thriving retail and dining district nestled on the southern banks of the Ohio River. His Mom owned a women’s apparel and Gift shop and his dad was an artist and architectural designer. “I had every advantage growing up, but somehow I got on the wrong track at a young age and for many years couldn’t get off.”

Eddie began experimenting with alcohol and marijuana at around age 15. After being arrested for Driving under the Influence (DUI) at age 16, and again at age 17, Eddie was sent to a boarding school in Tennessee. “My parents tried everything,”

he says. “The boarding school, several rehabilitation centers, psychologist’s—you name it, they tried it. And they never stopped praying for me night and day.”

Unfortunately, things only got worse as Eddie kept experimenting with other, and more powerful drugs. Nothing could stop his addiction. “From the age of 15 to the age of 38, I lived a life opposite of what my parents had in mind for me. I bounced from state to state, from job to job, from rehab to rehab.”

In 2006, Eddie’s life would be changed forever. He was arrested for possession of drugs, and it was at that moment he called out to God for help. And, as Eddie says, “Believe it or not he was there.” Instead of going to prison, He was given a diversion sentence of 18 months to Haven House in Santa Rosa Beach, a faith-based rehabilitation program. “I finally realized it was God I was resisting for all those years and it was God who rescued me and gave me a second chance.”

Since then, life has taken a “complete 180” for Eddie. “My life is full of happiness, joy, love



and peace now.” Since 2009, Eddie has worked with Path of Grace Women’s Recovery Home. Path of Grace is a women’s residential recovery home dedicated to helping those struggling with addiction find recovery through faith. There are now 36 beds at Path of Grace and a new project is in the works that will help many more!

In 2012, Eddie was appointed managing director of the minis-

try which has now helped hundreds of women recover from their addiction, recover their lives, and in many cases, recover their families.

In 2014, Eddie fulfilled another lifetime dream of opening a shop similar to the one his parents operated in Owensboro while Eddie was growing up. He opened FAVORI Boutique in the Market Shops of Sandestin. “It has been a great success and I

really love it. We carry apparel, footwear, jewelry, gifts, home decor and art.” In many ways, the income from the shop allows Eddie to dedicate his full-time attention to Path of Grace.

In addition, Eddie has expanded his business by opening a second shop in Destin—KISS THE SKY boutique in the Plantation Commons near Fresh Market and Home Goods. KISS THE SKY boasts twice the floor space as FAVORI which allows for the sale of more home decor and “Coastal Chic” beach furniture.

Eddie’s girlfriend, Kimberly Givens, has been a big help in managing the expansion and coordinating the buying for both stores. She is also a former graduate of Path of Grace, and also works at Path of Grace as Supervisor of Homes.

All-in-all, Eddie says there are regrets about the wrongs of the past, but, He says, “I’m sure glad I found God when I did. My relationship with Him gets better every year. I love what I do and I hope God allows me to continue for a long time.”



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The Seaside Institute Spring Update

With the world turned on its axis, never did anyone foresee the impact that COVID-19 would have on our lives. States, towns and businesses closed, people out of work; friends, family, colleagues sick or worse. As the world looks forward from the COVID-19 Health Crisis, we have learned to adapt our perspective on the world and how we navigate it. Through the pandemic, the Institute has remained focused on its mission with the development of a new website at seasideinstitute.org and updated programming to include virtual options.

Already in 2021, the Institute co-hosted Gulf Coast Energy Network's Sustainable Town Planning 2021 bringing together planners, architects, builders, developers, engineers, and other professionals to discuss the latest trends in construction, architecture, and town planning.

The Institute has some remarkable programs planned for 2021 both virtually and in-person.

The Institute will present a se-

ries of three book launch events throughout the year bringing authors and audiences together virtually to discuss new urbanism concepts and how they apply to communities locally and across the globe. Check the Institute's website seasideinstitute.com for dates and registration links.

The Institute has decided to postpone the 29th Annual Seaside Prize until 2022 when large gatherings are safer as the event is best experienced in person.

Additional programming for 2021 will include:

- Transforming Communities Part III
- Celebration of Seaside's 40th Anniversary
- Aging with Grace

The Seaside Institute's Board of Governors remains focused on furthering the Institute's mission to Inspire livable communities. Our Board of Governors reflect a diverse group of professionals nominated and elected by the Board of Governors and serve a minimum term of three years.

In 2020-2021, the Institute welcomed several new board members: Ann Daigle, Elizabeth Case, Doris Goldstein, Carl Tricoli and Jeff Zehnder. They join current members: Victoria Lee (Chair), Laurance Davis (Vice-

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Chair), Reynolds Henderson (Secretary), Daryl Davis (Treasurer/Founder), Robert Davis (Founder), Anna Lowder, John McGinty, and Scott Merrill.

Join us on our journey to help people create great communities. For more information or tickets, please go to our website at www.seasideinstitute.org.

The Seaside Institute is a 501 c3 non-profit. Our mission is Inspire livable communities. Through education, innovation

and engaging our community, we are working to improve the quality of life for families and individuals within Seaside, as well as nationally and globally, while at the same time creating an innovative design that not only enhances the beauty of our environment but, preserves it as well.

If you are interested in helping the Institute fulfill its mission contact us at: information@seasideinstitute.org, or call us at 850.231.2421.

Become a Member:

- Membership Does Have Its Perks-
- Early registration for events hosted and produced by the Seaside Institute
- Reduced rates for select paid events

For further information on our benefits visit our website at www.seasideinstitute.org

Volunteer:

As a small organization, we use volunteers to augment our staff, help us at events and work

together in engaging the community in the mission of the Seaside Institute. All skill levels are needed and we are happy to train our new volunteers.

Internships:

The Seaside Institute provides continuing learning opportunities for college students seeking for-credit internships through projects that benefit the organization and help the student meet their objectives for learning and skill development.

Advocate:

Advocating for a mission is one of the easiest things one can do in support of an organization, especially when you are passionate about the mission. If you have a passion for education, a strong sense of community and want to improve the quality of life for friends, family, co-workers, and acquaintances, working with the Seaside Institute is a terrific and convenient platform.

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Wellness

South Walton Academy to Host Second Annual Tee Up for Autism Golf Tournament

South Walton Academy is raising awareness for students on the Autism Spectrum one swing at a time. Due to COVID-19, the inclusion school will now host their second annual Tee Up for Autism Golf Tournament on Saturday, April 10 at 9 a.m. at The Links golf course located within Sandestin Golf and Beach Resort. All proceeds will benefit their diverse student body, consisting of children that are neu-

rotypical, advanced developing, and on the Autism spectrum.

Registration will begin at 8 a.m. followed by a full day of golf, food and drinks, entertainment and prizes. Teams of four and individuals are welcome to sign up for the event with all proceeds to benefit South Walton Academy, a non-profit inclusion school, the only of its kind located in Santa Rosa Beach.

“We are a unique school that

accommodates all learning styles and learning abilities,” said South Walton Academy Founder and President Calley Middlebrooks. “All of our classrooms are inclusive, and this helps with learning and teaching students with and without disabilities. We are so much more than just a private school, we are also a pediatric therapy center, and are opening a gymnasium and indoor place space.”

Middlebrooks, a developmental therapist and mother to three, has a son who was diagnosed with Autism at four years old while one of her daughters



was developing academically advanced. Through her experience

as a developmental therapist and at home, Middlebrooks recognized the need for a school where children could move at their own pace and receive therapy or accommodations as needed all in one place. This would be the answer for most families coping with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).

“Our school is for all students, not just those with special needs,” Middlebrooks said. “Being able to accommodate special needs students provides the inclusion environment all of our community needs. We don’t plan to stop here, our hope is to soon add adult services to the school including music, art, and fitness.”

Sponsorships for the second annual Tee Up for Autism Golf Tournament are still available and there are many ways to become involved. Those interested can choose from sponsoring a child for \$110, sponsoring a hole for \$125, or sponsoring an activity, such as longest drive and closest to the pin competition. Companies or local businesses are also welcome to donate a raffle prize to be auctioned off during the event. Each sponsor will be mentioned in the program, on social media, and have their logo displayed on the event t-shirt. Those sponsoring an event, or a hole will have a tee box sign placed at the hole.

Teams of four can sign up for \$450, and individuals can play for \$125. Register in advance at www.SouthWaltonAcademy.com. Players will also be able to register in person the day of the event, but pre-registration is highly encouraged to ensure a spot in the competition. For more information on how to become a sponsor or volunteer, please contact Brooke at brooke@southwaltonacademy.com or southwaltonacademy@gmail.com.

“As a parent, I am always looking for ways to educate others about Autism and how to make the world a safer place for my child and others on the Autism Spectrum,” Middlebrooks said. “We can all learn from one another how to help others succeed, which in return will help us make the world a better place.”

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¹O'Sullivan, et al (2019). Puvvada, K. C., & Simon, J. Z. (2017).
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Walton County Republican Chair Sets Agenda for 2021-22

Walton County's Republican Executive Committee recently elected Bill Fletcher as Chairman and Artie Rodriguez Vice-Chairman. Mr. Fletcher, a long-time activist and community leader, said he considers his election "a great honor to lead the Republican Party and I also can't think of anyone better to serve as vice-chairman than Artie Rodriguez. «We're committed to expanding the conservative voice in Walton County and growing the committee," he said.

Fletcher is the retired CEO of JTM Industries, a national company dedicated to coal ash disposal and marketing in coal burning power plants. After working his way up to CEO of JTM Industries, Inc., Bill spent nine years as executive leader growing the company's annual revenues from \$18 million to \$62 million, making it one of the largest companies in the U.S. in the industry. "I came up the hard way," Bill says. I earned every promotion. My experience gave me an appreciation of how difficult it is to run and grow a business. It is my job now to make

sure our elected officials understand that and continue to advocate for limited taxes and limited government."

After leaving JTM and making South Walton home, Bill and his wife Mary have been involved with many local community organizations, including the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society, Relay for Life, Emerald Coast Children's Advocacy Center and the Kiwanis Club of Freeport-South Walton. Bill was also a volunteer with the

Walton County Sheriff's Office, served on the Boards of Walton County Chamber of Commerce, the ZBA and the Institute for Senior Professionals.

Bill is given a lot of credit for his hard work to defeat a toll bridge being placed on the Hwy. 331 Clyde B. Wells Bridge. "Toll bridge taxes would have put a huge burden on local working people crossing the Bay each day, and today the bridge and highway expansion are complete with no burden on the county or its citizens," he said.

"Artie and I have set goals for 2021 we hope will be a spring-

board for the elections in 2022. Our number one goal is to grow the membership in the Republican Party of Walton County and fill all of our offices down to the precinct level. Next, we've set a goal to reach out personally to every new resident and encourage them to register to vote. Many people don't realize you must be registered as either a Republican or Democrat in order to participate in the primary elections. Non Party Affiliate (NPA) voters can not vote in the primaries, so our goal is to educate as many republican leaning voters to officially register."

In addition, Fletcher and Rodriguez are both committed to greater community engagement, fundraising and an increased social media presence for the Republican Party. Party. For

more information on all Walton County Republican clubs, consider attending an upcoming Republican club meeting or email WCREC Chairman Bill Fletcher at fletch7245@aol.com

Freeport Republicans Announce Upcoming Meetings

The Freeport Republican Club will be meeting on Tuesday evening April 13th at the

Hammock Bay clubhouse / theater, 74 Great Hammock Bend, Freeport. The meeting begins at 5:30 pm with registration

followed by the 6-7pm meeting with the election of officers and open forum. Republican and Independent Party members and future Republican members are welcome to attend. For more information please contact Jacquelyn Dabney at adventureaf@gmail.com.

The May Freeport Republican meeting will be held May 11th at 5:30 pm registration and 6-7 open forum at the Hammock Bay clubhouse- theater.





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Cultural Arts Alliance Announces Spring Artists & Mural Project

Reception Scheduled for April 14th

The Cultural Arts Alliance of Walton County (CAA) is proud to announce the 19 local artists recently chosen to exhibit their original work in The Foster Gallery's Spring rotation, which runs March 8th through June 27th, 2021 in its Grand Boulevard location. The selected artists are Melody Bogle, Gayle Campbell, Jose Cantu, Andrea Chipser, Donnelle Clark, Kim Cleveland, Kim Eifrid, Pamela GaVette, Linda Kernick, Betsy Latham, Mindy McLendon, Sherri Springer, William Polley, Mary Redmann, Kathleen Schumacher, and Jenna Varney. The gallery is also pleased to feature ceramics from Skip Deems as well as hand-crafted jewelry from local artisans Hardwear Merry and The Salty Sparrow.

All artists are members of the Cultural Arts Alliance, and each will exhibit and sell their work in their own section of the gallery.



Many works are also available for viewing and purchase on the CAA website at CulturalArtsAl-

liance.com/foster-gallery. Curbside pick-up is available. The Grand Boulevard location is at

495 Grand Boulevard, Suite J104, next to Chico's and across from Tommy Bahama. The public is welcomed to a come-and-go "open house" on Wednesday, April 14th from 5 -7 p.m.

The CAA is also excited to debut a new mural next door to the Gallery. The mural is part of the CAA's Art in Public Spaces program which also includes the nation's first Underwater Museum of Art and a regional billboard art project. Produced in partnership with Grand Boulevard Town Center, the mural was conceived and created by local artist Sarah Page. The design was inspired by our beautiful coastal surroundings as well as Amanda Gorman's moving 'The Hill We Climb' poem, which includes the line, "For there is always light, if only we are brave enough to see it, if only we're brave enough to be it." Additional murals will be

added in Grand Boulevard and throughout Walton County in 2021. Founded in May 2016, The Foster Gallery is an artist collective led by the Cultural Arts Alliance of Walton County that features at least a dozen artists on a seasonally rotating basis, along with special exhibits and invitationals throughout the year. Named for the late Susan Foster, a founder of the Cultural Arts Alliance and one of the area's first professional artists and gallery owners, The Foster Gallery also symbolizes the support the CAA strives to provide for artists in our community. The gallery is open daily from 12 p.m. until 7 p.m. For more information, call 850.837.3037 or visit CulturalArtsAlliance.com.



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Sinfonia Gulf Coast's Announces Crescendo April 30-May 2

Sinfonia Gulf Coast, our region's only fully professional symphony orchestra, is pleased to announce the full line up for its annual fundraiser Crescendo! A Cultural and Culinary extravaganza, rescheduled for April 30-May 2, 2021.

Festivities begin on Thursday, March 25 at 11:00 a.m., with a Crescendo! Kick Off Lunch at Bijoux Restaurant + Spirits located at The Market Shops. Enjoy an incredible lunch prepared by award-winning chef/co-owner Jack McGuckin, sip elegant wines, indulge in delectable desserts, shop all of the must-have accessories of the season from The Jewel, door prizes and raffle items, plus much more. Tickets are \$100 per person and include lunch, wine and gratuities.

On Friday, April 30 at 6 p.m. Crescendo! weekend will begin with a series of carefully curated vintner dinners hosted in elegant venues throughout the Emerald Coast, which pair the talents of local and regional "celebrity" chefs with some of the country's most acclaimed vineyards for a delicious evening of food and wine. Participating wineries and chefs will be announced soon. Vintner Dinner

tickets are \$295 per person and include all food, wine and gratuities.

This year's main event is themed, "Moulin {vin} Rouge" and is set for Sunday, May 2 at 11:30 a.m. at the Hilton Sandestin Beach Golf Resort & Spa in Miramar Beach. This energy-infused event experience will celebrate the cultural and culinary arts by showcasing world-class vintners, expert spirit purveyors, amazing auction items, and a musical performance. Enjoy reserved table seating, hors d'oeuvres, a full, seated lunch, live and silent auctions, and an all-inclusive afternoon of incredible fun.

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

Proceeds from Crescendo! will benefit Sinfonia and its music education programs, which include: musicians/guest artists in schools, free orchestra concerts, bus transportation for students, Sinfonia Youth Orchestra program, Arts in Medi-

cine initiative with Sacred Heart Hospital and LINK UP concerts for third through fifth graders in partnership with Carnegie Hall.

Crescendo! is made possible by the generous support of local businesses including the following co-presenting sponsors: Dermatology Solutions | Aqua Med Spa, The Center for Cosmetic & Family Dentistry, Silver Sands Premium Outlets, Hilton Sandestin Beach Golf Resort & Spa, SETCO Services, and Visit South Walton.

Are you a "treble" maker? If so, Sinfonia Gulf Coast invites you to join this honorary committee. For a \$550 contribution, Treble Makers will receive one



You Party, a reserved seat at the closed-to-the-public student LINK UP performances on March 2, 2021 at the Emerald Coast Convention Center, plus a special Treble Maker gift.

For more information on how you can join Sinfonia's team of volunteers, contact Beth Clavier at (850) 460-8800 and bclavier@sinfoniagulfcoast.org.

Tickets for Crescendo! 2021 are now on sale. For more information or to purchase tickets for Sinfonia Gulf Coast's Crescendo! events, visit www.sinfoniagulfcoast.org or call (850) 460-8800.

ticket to the Crescendo! Kick Off Lunch and Main Event, recognition in the event program, invitation to the 2020 Thank

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Wellness

Ascension Sacred Heart Nationally Recognized as a Best Maternity Care Hospital by Newsweek

Ascension Sacred Heart's hospitals in Pensacola and Miramar Beach have been named to Newsweek's 2021 list of *Best Maternity Care Hospitals*. Ascension Sacred Heart Emerald Coast and Ascension Sacred Heart Pensacola were two of only seven hospitals in Florida named to the list. The Best Maternity Care distinction recognizes facilities that have provided exceptional care to mothers, newborns and their families, as verified by the 2020 Leapfrog Hospital Survey.

The Leapfrog Group is an independent nonprofit that monitors the quality and safety of health care. Best Maternity Care Hospitals are hospitals that meet Leapfrog's tough standards

for excellence in maternity care: hospitals that have low rates of C-section, episiotomy, and early elective deliveries, and follow important protocols to protect moms and babies. Though these are standards aligned with medical research and best practices, not all hospitals achieve them.

"Best Maternity Care Hospitals showcases an elite group of hospitals nationwide," said Nancy Cooper, Global Editor in Chief of Newsweek. "These facilities should be commended for the care they provide to women and families, and for giving babies a strong start to life. As families continue to cope with the effects on the pandemic, this information can support Newsweek's

readership in planning for one of life's most precious moments."

Approximately 1,350 babies were born last year at the Emerald Coast hospital in South Walton County.

Ascension Sacred Heart Emerald Coast consistently earns high marks against national competition for its patient satisfaction scores and quality of care. In the fall of 2020, the hospital earned a grade of "A" on Leapfrog's Hospital Safety Grade.

Using up to 27 evidence-based measures of patient safety, Leapfrog calculated a numerical score for all eligible hospitals in



Ascension Sacred Heart

the U.S. Taken together, those performance measures produce a single letter grade representing a hospital's overall performance in keeping patients safe from preventable harm and medical errors. "A" represents the best Leapfrog Hospital Safety Grade.

Ascension Florida and Gulf Coast is a faith-based healthcare organization dedicated to transformation through innovation across the continuum of care. As the largest non-profit and Catholic health system in the U.S., As-

ension is committed to delivering compassionate, personalized care to all, with special attention to persons living in poverty and those

most vulnerable. In FY2020, Ascension provided \$2.4 billion in care of persons living in poverty and other community benefit programs. Ascension includes more than 160,000 associates and 40,000 aligned providers. The national health system operates more than 2,600 sites of care – including 145 hospitals and more than 40 senior living facilities – in 19 states and the District of Columbia.

Primary Care Doctor Joins Ascension Sacred Heart at Watersound



Primary care doctor Nicholas Seeliger, MD, MPH, has joined Ascension Medical Group Sacred Heart's regional network of doctors. Dr. Seeliger is offering virtual appointments and will see patients from his office at 180 Watersound Parkway N in Inlet Beach. Ascension Medical Group Sacred Heart opened this new healthcare facil-

ity at the entrance of the Watersound Origins community in May of 2020.

Dr. Seeliger provides personalized, comprehensive care to patients ages 2 weeks and older. He is accepting new patients, and he has a special interest in global health, men's health, sports medicine and HIV care. He joins the

office of internal medicine doctor Michelle Parker, MD, and Ob/Gyn Cory Tinker, MD. For information or to schedule an appointment, call 850-278-3551.

Dr. Seeliger is a board-certified family medicine doctor with more than 15 years of experience. He has served as an active-duty officer and physician with the rank

of major in the U.S. Air Force in Turkey, Portugal and at Eglin Air Force Base. He also achieved the rank of GS14 with the U.S. Army in Germany and Japan. Dr. Seeliger comes to Walton County from the U.S. Army's Camp Zama in Japan. He is a fellow of the American Academy of Family Physicians.

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Journey Bravely; Working Through Worry



By TODD CRAIG

In many ways, the last year has felt out of control. With the slower pandemic pace and life reminding you left and right of what you cannot control, worry and anxiety have peaked and become more common than is comfortable. The reality of living through unprecedented historical events can invite your mind to spiral into worst case scenario thinking about life in general.

Worry is a natural part of life. We all worry from time to time,

but you don't have to be consumed by worry. So, what are you supposed to do to keep the worrying from taking over your thought life?

6 Ways to Keep Worry from Taking Over Your Life:

Acknowledge the worry. Often, trying to ignore the worry or trying to wish it away can make you worry about the worrying. So, if anxious thoughts are playing over and over in your head, it may help to get them out of your head and onto paper. Schedule 15 minutes a day to put your anxieties down on paper. Confine your worry to that 15 minutes per day and postpone giving energy to the worry until your 15 minute worry time. Often, simply naming the anxiety can take away some of its power.

Challenge the narrative. Sometimes your anxieties are

exaggerated negative perspectives. Your imagination may inflate the challenges you may be faced with or minimize the tools and abilities you have to confront them. As you write down your anxieties, also ask "What's the truth in the story?" "What is a more positive way to look at this scenario?" and "How is worrying helping?" These questions are good ways to challenge the narrative.

Share your worry. Identify someone you trust who is also a peaceful and encouraging presence in your life and share some of your worry with them. Sharing your anxiety with a friend may uncover creative ways to solve or address the issue causing anxiety. And, sometimes speaking the worry out loud may expose it as unwarranted.

Exercise. During physical activity endorphins are released in the body. Endorphins are the

body's natural way of reducing pain and stress and producing feelings of pleasure. Additionally, exercise helps you to be mindful of your body and your surroundings which helps to take your mind and energy off of those things you are anxious about.

Act or surrender. Ultimately, worry can't be wished away, it must be replaced with either action or surrender. If the problem is one you can do something about, create a list of actionable steps to solve the problem and get to work. If the problem is outside of your control, name it, acknowledge that it is outside of your control, and prayerfully surrender it to God.

Seek professional help and support. If the worry isn't relieved by employing some of these strategies or has persisted over a prolonged period of time, find a professional who can work with you to work through it. Life is too short to needlessly live in a state of worry, stress and anxiety. There is help available!

As you address your worries,

remember that some worry and anxiety are normal. While uncomfortable, worry alerts you to areas of your life that might need dedicated attention. Slow down and be open to what your worry is trying to tell you about things you might need to change in your life. If you'd like additional support with feelings of worry and overwhelm, Journey Bravely currently has coaching sessions available to help you along your journey. Connect with us at journeybravely.com.

Todd Craig is a Life and Leadership coach whose passion is to see others discover and thrive in the life they were meant to live. With over 20 years of having clarifying conversations and guiding people through life change, Todd has coached others to identify places of feeling stuck and overwhelmed in work and life and provide effective, strategic tools and questions to help them move life forward both at home and work. Todd offers coaching in both professional and personal capacities toward identifying, developing and living your goals, desires, and dreams.

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Wellness

Living Your Optimum Life!



By CJ LYDON, SENIOR LIVING COMMUNITY ADVISOR

“WHY” should someone look at moving their loved one or themselves into a Senior Living Community? An important topic to discuss initially, is that it is o.k. to admit you need help. If you are the senior citizen trying to manage the upkeep of your home, yard, pool, doctor visits, shopping, cooking, cleaning, paying the bills, fixing or having to schedule home repairs, etc. and it’s all getting to be too much, **YOU ARE NOT ALONE!** Maybe you are the spouse or family member who is having to do all of the above mentioned tasks for a loved one and you still have a home, family, career and well-being of your own to manage as well.

This is why you should consider the best option that addresses all of the needs and worries that are

causing you concern, discomfort, hardship and more. Senior Living Communities are designed to take what is getting harder off your plate so to speak, and hand those cares to specially trained professionals that will not only meet your needs, but work tirelessly to exceed your needs and bring new life to senior living!

Another why are what we call the “Six Dimensions of Wellness.”

Emotional Dimension: Studies have found that seniors with a positive outlook on life lived an average of 7.5 years longer than those who were burdened with the cares of life.

Purposeful Dimension: People with a high sense of purpose are 23% more likely to live a longer more satisfying life and are 19% less likely to have a heart attack or stroke.

Social Dimension: The health risks of prolonged isolation have both physical and cognitive negative implications and can shorten one’s life span.

Intellectual Dimension: Providing continuous opportunity to stimulate the brain to learn new things as well as to recall previous learned behaviors and activities.

Physical Dimension: Engaging in as little as 20 minutes of exercise or movement like walking around tree-lined walkways and ponds can act as an anti-inflammatory.

Spiritual Dimension: Re-



searchers have found that people who have meditation/self-reflection/religious affiliations have much lower risk of diseases.

It is very important to understand that some Senior Living Communities are designed to offer a home where the senior can “age in place.” This refers to their ability to properly care for their residents as their personal medical care requirements change and increase over time. This could be from not needing any assistance initially to at some point needing help with tasks such as managing their daily medications or assistance with bathing, etc. It would also include more advanced services such as assistance with all daily tasks due to cognitive decline such as with dementia or Al-

zheimer’s. Not many people like to move. So, it is imperative especially with our senior citizens that we choose the correct community from the onset. This way they can remain in familiar surroundings and with neighbors and staff they have formed relationships with. Unfortunately there are some communities who don’t want the appearance of seniors needing additional care as it doesn’t align with their marketing. This is not the type of community that will be able to care for your loved one in the long term. Continuity in care is vital!

It is never too early to inquire about why you think it might be time to talk about the transition from you or your loved one living alone or even with family into a

Senior Living Community. Why do you take your vehicle to a mechanic, your pet to a Veterinarian or yourself to a Doctor? It is because we know that there are people who are trained to provide those services. Likewise, it is o.k. to acknowledge that you need help in caring for yourself or loved one or just don’t want the hassle anymore of all that goes with living by yourself. Give yourself permission to seek guidance and assistance. Your entire family will benefit from you taking this important first step of saying “why” you think it’s time for a Senior Living Community to become part of your extended family.

Do you have questions about why Senior Living? Contact me at (850) 543-3339.

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Have Medicare? Turning 65?

BY TINA FADER

Did you know that there are 10,000 Baby Boomers turning 65 every day right now? You are probably one of them, or know someone who is. I would like to go over some basic facts about Medicare that you may already know about, but there still might be a few things you didn't know.

Who is Covered

If you are turning 65 in the 6 months of your birth date, you may apply for Medicare Part A and Part B 3 months before or after your 65th birthday. You qualify for Medicare Part A and Part B even if you choose not to take your Full Retirement Benefits (i.e. Social Security).

What is Covered

Medicare Part A is hospital insurance that helps cover hospital, skilled nursing, home health and hospice care. Medicare Part B is medical insurance that helps cover doctor visits, outpatient care and preventative services. It also helps to pay for services Part A does not cover, like occupational and physical therapy. Medicare Part C is a Medicare Advantage Plan that covers everything that Parts A and B cover and often includes services at no additional cost and may include Prescription Drug

coverage.

You must have both Medicare Part A and B to join a Medicare Advantage Plan. Medicare Advantage Plans usually include extra benefits and services like fitness programs and gym memberships, mail delivery pharmacy access, health education programs, and a 24 hour nurse advice line, and may lower your out-of-pocket costs. You may also be able to customize your plan to meet your needs with optional supplemental benefits such as dental and vision coverage, for an added cost.

Medicare Advantage Plan Types

Health Maintenance Organization (HMO). A primary care physician arranges your health-care in the plan's network. Preferred Provider Organization (PPO). You can choose any provider, although you may pay more for out-of-network providers.

Private Fee-For-Service (PFFS). More freedom to choose providers may be available, however, a network arrangement may still apply.

Medicare Supplement Insurance Plans. Medicare Supplement plans can be purchased to go with Original Medicare to help with some costs Part A and B don't pay, like coinsurance

and deductibles.

Special Needs Plans (SNPs). Medicare Special Needs Plans are available only to people with specific diseases or circumstances. These plans include tailored benefits, providers and Drug Lists to meet the needs of members.

How My Plan Choices Affect Costs

Whether you choose Original Medicare or Medicare Advantage, you must pay your Part A and B premiums, if you have one. Medicare Advantage, Medicare Part D prescription drug coverage and Medicare Supplemental Insurance may have additional premiums. Your cost depends on the coverage you choose. The cost for a Medicare Advantage plan depends on whether the plan charges a monthly premium and pays any of your monthly Part B premium.

Original Medicare and Medicare Advantage plans both cover routine services. Medicare Advantage Plans are required to cover everything that Original Medicare covers, including coverage for services that Medicare considers medically necessary.

If you choose a Medicare Advantage plan, you still have Medicare coverage. You simply choose to receive your Medicare

benefits through a private insurance company. You may pay an additional premium for the extra services and benefits of a Medicare Advantage plan.

Annual Enrollment Period Began Oct. 15. This is a special election period when Medicare Beneficiaries can change plans for the following calendar year between October 15th and December 7th to become effective January 1, 2021. There are exceptions that may allow you to enroll outside of this period.

Tina Fader is a Licensed Health and Life Insurance Professional offering Medicare Advantage Plans, Medicare Supplemental Plans, Vision and Dental Plans for all ages, and Life Insurance. Tina has been a local resident in the area for 20 years serving the community and looks forward to serving your needs. Call Tina Fader for a confidential assessment at 850-368-8007 or e-mail tinafader@yahoo.com.



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 Musings

The Gift of Life

By LAUREN CATANESE

Life is like a song. A melodic tune that carries with it all kinds of notes and inflections, pauses, rises & deeper hues. But also, just like your favorite song, life always keeps flowing. We are the witnesses to what is created and we feel the different points but all the while keep moving along.

What choice do we have? We could stop in our tracks, dig our heels into the ground, cross our arms and with a pouty face demand no. But that wouldn't stop the song. Even though at times we take shelter in our innermost cave. We have to at some point come out for air, feel the sunshine and nourish our souls and body.


We at some point inherently understand that while we feel we have stopped time, it actually has continued to move forward and we have to accept the road we are on and keep traveling. And in that moment of releasing resistance to what is and in the reckoning there is a moment of bliss. A juicy space that fills our body with warmth and our face with a smile because we cannot help the fact that we are human beings, alive, breathing and able to experience another moment in this life. And that is the gift. No matter the tune that is playing in your world, it will shift and flow and it will be high and it will be low but there will still be a tune

that carries you forward. Because as long as you are here this world needs you! - your life and very existence- your light to shine in all its glory. However big or small that may be. It's yours. Your life is yours and it's yours to receive as a gift. The juiciness of life is found in every moment. The melody that is your song beats for you and those that can hear it. So I say it again: Life is a gift. The gift is Life. Now go and be free! Live mighty! And smile to another that might have forgotten their own tune- and just maybe you can help someone remember their own song and find their groove back into their true soul's essence.





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The Dance



BY SEAN DIETRICH

“Will the room please settle down before the dance begins?!” says Gary to the elderly crowd in the nursing home cafeteria. “Simmer down, please!”

Gary is an old man with a saxophone dangling from his neck. He speaks over a microphone, addressing old folks who are all wearing their dancing shoes. These residents need a little fun tonight. It’s been a very long year.

“People, hush!” says Gary.

Someone goes: “SSSSSHH-HHHH!”

The murmuring stops.

“Let’s do this in an orderly fashion!” says Gary. “I need two groups! I want my men dancers over HERE! I want my lady dancers over on THAT side!”

Soon, the room is reorganizing itself like the final round of a livestock auction. It’s a downright mess.

“Quickly, people!” says Gary. “We haven’t got all night!”

It’s a good night for a dance. There has been an 82 percent drop in COVID cases among U.S. nursing homes since the vaccine, and these people need something joyous.

Gary says, “Alright! I want healthy dancers to the front of the line. Quiet please! Orderly fashion! Healthy knees and good tickers up front! Anyone who’s only upper-body dancing tonight, you’re at the back of the line!”

The people in the cafeteria once again reorganize. Ladies on one side; men on the other. Even nurses and cafeteria workers are present for the fun, watching this clambake from the outskirts in case someone overdoes it.

“Okay,” announces Gary. “Ladies and gentleman, it gives me great pleasure to introduce TONIGHT’S BAND!”

Everyone claps. You would never believe a nursing home

could produce so much applause. But as I said, it’s been a long year.

Each person within this cafeteria knows someone who has died from COVID-19. Each person bears the scars of a pandemic. Thankfully, everyone here tonight is healthy (knock on wood).

There are four musicians in tonight’s community band:

Lonnie (Pacific Grove, California) playing electric bass. Lonnie can’t feel his fingertips because of neuropathy, but he can still play.

Jennifer (a staff nurse, originally from Tampa) on upright spinet.

Thomas (Sioux Falls, South Dakota), on the drum kit, holding his sticks like Gene Krupa.

And of course Gary (Lansing, Michigan) on alto sax and vocals.

“Everyone ready?” Gary says. Then he counts off a tempo. “And a’one, and a’two, and a’one, two, three...”

The band launches into “Somewhere Beyond the Sea.” People come unglued. The whole facility suddenly becomes ten shades happier.

By the the first chorus, the cafeteria dancefloor is already crowded with eight men and fourteen women.

Bashful smiles. Weathered hands clasping other weathered hands. Feet shuffling. A few women are dancing with other women since there aren’t enough men to go around.

One old man wraps his arms around a woman’s waist. They are barely moving. This non-aerobic dance style is what’s commonly known as “Prom Dance.”

Another athletic couple is doing light twirls and they’re both smiling—literally—to beat the band.

The tune ends. The band plays “When You’re Smiling.”

Gary is now singing like Louis Armstrong, and the heck of it is, they say Gary does an excellent imitation.

Fifty years ago Gary used to be in a band in Orlando. His group used to play this tune every night at closing time.

People are moving stiffly on the dancefloor, wobbling about as gracefully as the decades of osteoarthritis will allow. Onlookers seated in wheelchairs are singing, clapping in all the wrong places.



The next tune is Cole Porter. “You Do Something To Me.” Medium swing. This one really gets them cranked.

A few wheelchairs scuttle to the dancefloor, accompanied by enthusiastic nurses who are performing upper-body dance moves with non-mobile patients. This is already the best day of the entire year.

Gary plays saxophone solo after solo. People do foxtrot after foxtrot. Everyone is glowing.

When the party winds to a close Gary takes the microphone and makes his final speech. He gives the dancers a chance to catch their breath while he uses a serious voice.

“I’d like to dedicate this song,” he begins, “to everyone who has lost someone this year.” His voice breaks when he says it.

The nurses and staff bow their heads.

Gary whips up the band. The musicians begin to play “What a Wonderful World” at a ballad tempo. The whole room comes alive because everyone on planet Earth recognizes this song.

Dozens of elderly voices are soon bellowing in wrong keys, but each mouth sings the correct lyrics. Even the employees are howling along with Gary.

Because everyone here knows that Gary has had one of the hardest years among those here. His wife died from COVID last year. He’s playing this number for her.

Gary brings the saxophone to his lips and begins to play, but he is interrupted. In the middle of his solo a nurse approaches the stage and asks Gary if he’d like to dance with her.

Gary turns red. “Gosh, it’s been a long time, I don’t think so...”

Too late.

The nurse ignores his remark. She forces Gary to discard his saxophone and join her while the band plays. Pretty soon the

two of them are on the dancefloor.

The nurse rests her head upon Gary’s bony shoulder while they sway in rhythm. She can hear him sniffing loudly. After a few moments, they stop dancing and simply embrace on the dancefloor. The nurse rubs Gary’s back while he weeps.

And later that evening, when that nurse recounts this entire story to me in an email, I find myself doing the same thing.

Because, it really has been a long year.

Musings

Words



By Kirk McCarley

At a recent Spinning class I lead, a participant greeted me with the question, "so Kirk are you going to put us through an

arduous workout this morning?" Following a chuckle and a moment of processing we moved into our hour long routine. Curiously, throughout the next 60 minutes that word, arduous, resonated. For one, I was impressed that my friend Dave's mental acuity was already percolating at 5:57 am. Secondly, it was a term I'd not heard muttered for some time.

Words and phrases have power. Consider some from the past century:

"Today I consider myself to be the luckiest person on the face of this earth." Lou Gehrig "December 7, 1941, a day that will live in infamy." Franklin D. Roosevelt. "That's one small step for man, one giant

leap for mankind." Neil Armstrong

"Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall." Ronald Reagan

"You can't handle the truth." Jack Nicholson, "A Few Good Men"

In his book, "The Five Love Languages," Gary Chapman writes we receive love in five ways: acts of service, receiving gifts, quality time, physical touch, and words of affirmation. For me the most powerful is words of affirmation. To this day I can still recite almost verbatim parents expressing pride or praising choices, kind expressions of recognition, or positive comments in a performance evaluation. Conversely, the less affirming reminders penetrate deeper and reverberate even longer.

My mother had a glass swan on an end table. One day while running recklessly through the house, I nudged its beak, nicking it. My mom treasured that swan. The scolding, "look what you did, shame on you," still echoes. As an adult I've walked into more than one, "I can't believe you did that, what were you thinking?"

Words impact self-confidence. Even when affirmations exceed criticisms in multiplicity, the pull towards the negative is still de-

moralizing. Compounding that proclivity is the rhetoric we see and hear on television, in social media, and even often unintentionally from our family, friends, and neighbors. It's almost like we're perpetually in the balcony with Statler and Waldorf, the crankiest of muppets.

In the midst of the static, then, as in the prayer of St. Francis, "how can we be an instrument of God's peace? Some ideas that came to mind, not only as a Career and Life Coach, but individually:

Listen. Listen actively. Active listening encourages the speaker through the listener repeating back to the speaker what they have heard them say. It's affirming.

Save your breath, say it succinctly. I listened to a colleague the other day who spoke for 15 minutes straight, stifling hopes for active listening. I also wondered how they were able to go for 900 seconds without taking a breath!

Be curious. Be open to understanding another perspective or viewpoint.

Listen to word usage. Visual individuals will describe their viewpoint, vision, or insight. Those of an audial persuasion seek harmony, rhythm,

and tempo. A kinesthetic person might feel cool to or irritated about a subject.

Be careful with assumptions. Those who I think "may think like me," may in fact not. How about disagreeing with someone without using a negative word? In other words no can't's, won't's, or shouldn't's in your lexicon. How about that for a challenge?

In these lyrics alt rockers Missing Persons refrained,

"What are words for when no one listens anymore,

What are words for when no one listens,

What are words for when no one listens,

it's no use talkin' at all."

when the song "Words" was released in 1982. After 39 years, I don't know about you, but I want to be better than that.

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@theseedsovercoach.com, theseedsovercoach.com, or call 314-677-8779.

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A Pastor's Ponderings: Jesus is Alive



BY DAVE HOLLAND

On the first day of the week, very early in the morning, the women took the spices they had prepared and went to the tomb. They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. While they were wondering about this, suddenly two men in clothes that gleamed like lightning stood beside them. In their fright, the women bowed down with their faces to the ground, but the men said to them, "Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here; he has

risen! Remember how he told you, while he was still with you in Galilee: "The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, be crucified and on the third day be raised again." Luke 24:1-7 (NIV)

Where's Jesus?

Depression hung on them like a bitter aftertaste. Jesus is dead. Their feet dragged with disappointment and disillusionment. Jesus is dead. Duty called for them at the tomb to anoint His body. Jesus is dead.

Luke 24:1-12 shows us a group of dejected women dragging themselves dutifully to the rock cave supposedly housing the dead remains of Christ. Someone had to embalm Him. So these faithful women summoned the courage and ingredients to prepare Him for the grave. I'm guessing they were numb with grief, putting one foot in front of the other to do what had to be done.

Can you summon your faith when you feel lifeless? These women did. Jesus is gone. Or far



away, or whatever. Has life shattered your hope? Do you feel your future in uncertain? Are you in despair concerning your health or your finances? Those are the times when you decide who you are and what you really believe in. You are being prepared for something more.

The women discovered an empty tomb—Christ's body gone. They surely felt shock and perhaps anger. Where's Jesus? Imagine going to the mortuary to say goodbye to your dead grandfather and before the funeral, you open the casket to look at him and the casket is empty. I doubt that resurrection would be the first thing coming to mind.

Back at the tomb the women burst in and as their eyes adjust in the dark cave an abrupt light erupts. Two men clothed with lighting flash into the cave. Trust me when I tell you they didn't beam down from a spaceship. God the Holy Spirit raised Jesus from the dead and He left two angelic witnesses to explain. The heavenly creatures said in Luke 24:5, "Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here; he has risen!"

Really? Yes, really. Just like Jesus said in Galilee, "The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, be crucified and on the third day be raised again." Jesus showed us the meaning of life—overcome the worst trial, suffer the cruellest torture, reduced to the deepest hell and rise victorious over it all. Hallelujah! Where's Jesus? Above it all.

Author Brennan Manning writes, "The French Easter liturgy says, 'L'amour de Dieu est folie'—the love of God is foolishness. And Jesus says it is foolish-

ness that is meant to bring forth joy."

Your dark places cannot keep you from the love of God. With your faults and failures buried in Christ's tomb by faith, a new life awaits you. The habits and mindsets that have kept you bound with grave clothes are no match against the power of the Holy Spirit to raise you to victory. Faith invites the Wind of God to breathe on your lifeless self and resurrect something new. Make every day a new Easter of joy.

Dave Holland pastored churches for 38 years before retiring in Destin. He recently released his new devotional-Bible study based on the Gospel of Luke titled "Extraordinary Jesus: Ignite Your Season of Miracles." You can get a copy of this book from his website, DaveHolland.org, or at Amazon.com. Pastor Dave is available to preach and teach in churches and conferences. Contact him at David@Holland54@gmail.com.

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Musings

The Steamer Trunk



BY RICK MOORE

This is the story as it was told to me. In 1899, Malaky, her brothers David and Naif, along with their mom and dad, boarded a steamship heading from Byblos, Lebanon to New York City. Malaky was eleven, David was four, and Naif was one year old. All of their possessions were inside a wooden steamer trunk. While boarding,

the sailor in charge of the ship's logbook asked for a last name. They told him Muir. The sailor didn't know how to write Muir so he spelled their name Moore. On the way across the Atlantic Ocean, the father had a heart attack. They were only half way through their eight-day journey, but they held onto the hope that he could receive medical help once the ship arrived in New York. As they passed the Statue of Liberty on the way to Ellis Island, people began to cheer. But after the small ship docked, and the family started to leave the ship, sailors detained them.

There was a strict rule at Ellis Island in those days: If a person onboard was sick, they were not allowed to go to ground. The sailors said the father would have to return to Lebanon. The mother could not understand. Though she only spoke broken English, there clearly had to

be some mistake. Surely they wouldn't break up the family. A fellow traveler from Byblos, Abraham, who spoke better English and fluent Arabic tried to intervene. The sailors would not budge. The rest of the family could decide to stay or go back, but they were not going to let anyone sick off that boat. Abraham told the mother the children could stay with him and his wife if she wanted them to. As the mother cried, struggling to make sense of it all, pleading to the sailors to let her husband off, the fog horn began to blow. The sailors yelled to the family "stay on the ship or leave now, but the father isn't getting off."

In a split second decision, the mother suggested Malaky take the steamer trunk with the family possessions, and stay with Abraham's family. She felt the two boys were too young to stay without her. Malaky watched in disbelief as her sick father and the rest of the family sailed off. On the way back to Lebanon, the father died.

Abraham was unable to find work in New York, so he moved Malaky with the rest of his family to Worcester, Massachusetts, where he secured a job. Malaky also found work in a factory as a mill girl. There was no way for them to communicate back and forth from Lebanon, but they



did receive word from other travelers that her father had died.

After several weeks went by, Malaky asked Abraham for the key to the trunk. He said he thought she had it. In all of the confusion on board the ship, the mother forgot to give them the key. Abraham offered to break into it, but Malaky asked him not to. She said "I'll wait for mama to open it." Many nights, Malaky would lay her hands on that old steamer trunk and pray to see her family again. About two years later, the mother had raised enough money to pay for a second journey back to America. When the mother finally arrived in Worcester with Malaky's

two brothers, there was a family reunion like none other. Before going to bed that night, Malaky asked her mom for the key to the trunk. The mother was puzzled. She had no idea where the key was. After waiting all that time, Abraham had to break open the trunk anyway.

My Great Aunt Malaky died when I was twelve years old, but I still remember her. The old steamer trunk sits in my living room to this day. Though no one ever found the key to the steamer trunk, they did find the key to happiness. Thank God for family.

Rick Moore is Communications Pastor of Destiny Worship Center.




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A Weekend of Tequilas and Tacos Comes to The Village of Baytowne Wharf

The 8th Annual Tequila & Taco Fest Is On!

As the saying goes, “If you’re having a Taco Emergency, call Nine Juan Juan!” Extreme Festivals & Events and The Village of Baytowne Wharf are hosting the 8th Annual Tequila & Taco Fest April 30 - May 2, the second longest running Tequila & Taco Fest in the U.S.A. The weekend is full of savory tacos, smooth Tequilas, live music and contests...and a whole lot of FUN!

The brainchild of this event is Chef/Restaurateur and founder of Carlito’s Amazing Products, Carlos Shaffran. The event has grown significantly since being founded in 2014. “Locals and guests from all over the Southeast come to celebrate this unique event right here on our Emerald Coast,” says Carlos. Initially planned to be a restaurant event at one of Carlos’ Restaurants, Tequila & Taco Fest quickly grew to become the second largest festival event (formerly held on the Destin Harbor), aside from The Destin Seafood Festival. Because of its popularity, the event has moved to a larger venue in Miramar Beach, “The Village of Baytowne Wharf” located at the beautiful Sandestin Golf & Beach Resort. This great new location will allow more vendors and more Tequila booths.

During the event, you will be able to taste and sample an array of unlimited fresh tacos prepared with local ingredients and sip on the finest Tequilas available today! Participating food vendors will serve mouth-watering tacos with exotic twists on beef, pork, chicken, fish and shrimp. Vegan options and traditional Latin tacos will also be available. “It’s really a great place to experience some off-the-wall tacos you may have never considered,” says Carlos.

And with 30 or more different Tequilas throughout the festival, can you really go wrong? You will experience specialty Tequila Margaritas and Tequila shots. “The education process of learning about different types of Tequila is phenomenal,” Carlos explains. “In a Tequila, we find primary Tequila aromas, which come from the raw material (raw or cooked agave), secondary Tequila aromas, mainly fruity, from fermentation and distillation and finally, tertiary Tequila aromas, usually sweet, spicy and woody,



which come from resting Tequila in oak barrels. Higher-end Tequilas, including Azuñia which is a two-year-old Aged Black Private Reserve Añejo Tequila from 100% Agave, and Corralejo 1821 Extra Añejo Tequila, will be available in the VIP area just to name a couple of them,” he says.

A weekend of festive fun begins on Friday evening, April 30th, with a “Bocadillo & Mar-

garita” Kick-Off Party (\$50) presented by Corralejo Tequila, featuring music from “DJ Vasco” hosted at “The Village Door” who has been voted best place to dance on the Emerald Coast. Enjoy an evening of delightful small plates, assorted Tequilas and signature Margaritas from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m., and then the dance party goes on until 2 a.m!

Tequila & Taco Fest gates open for the main event on Sat-

urday, May 1st, at 1 p.m. where you will sip and savor until 5 p.m. during this flavorful afternoon at The Village of Baytowne Wharf, featuring a large selection of Tequilas including award winning Tequilas from Familia Camarena, 1800 Tequila, Dos Primos, Siete Leguas and Corralejo. Also, we will have some very tasty new Tequilas that have just been introduced to the market for a variety of Margaritas, Latin beers

to sample and, of course, Tacos, Tacos and more Tacos! During the event, judges will vote for their favorite taco. Local vendors will compete for the top prize of \$2,500 for the ‘Best Taco on the Emerald Coast.’ And this year a People’s Choice and most Exotic Taco award has been added to the event. ‘Live music and DJ’s will play on three stages including “DJ Vasco,” and Salsa Band “Merengue 4” from the Dominican Republic. Little Amigos will delight at face painting, and all will enjoy the “Aye Chihuahua” beauty contest! You can even show off your football arm by tossing the longest tortilla. And you do not want to miss the “Macho Nacho” eating contest!

Ticket pricing starts at \$30 for tacos only, \$50 for military and first responders, \$60 for general admission and \$125 for VIP. Kids 10 and under are free.

And if that is not a full day, end the day and catch one of the top Queen tribute bands in the country “Absolute Queen” will be performing at The Village Door. Tickets are \$30; doors open at 6 p.m.

The weekend concludes on Sunday, May 2nd, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. with the Bye-Bye Brunch sponsored by 1800 Tequila at the award-winning “Slick Lips Seafood & Oyster Bar” (\$25) which includes one entrée from a special brunch menu and one On the Rocks Margarita or a Zesty Pao Pao Bloody Mary from Carlito’s Amazing Products.

Plan a Stay & Sip weekend Staycation at one of Sandestin Golf & Beach Resort properties. Sandestin is offering special rates for the event. Book and save up to 30% when you stay two or more nights and receive discounted tickets per adult to Saturday’s Main Event.

If Tacos, Tequilas and Bands are not incentive enough, a portion of the proceeds from The 8th Annual Tequila & Taco Fest benefits the Fisher House Foundation, Sandestin Foundation for Kids and Boys & Girls Club.

Carlos concludes, “It really is a big party!” This is a rain or shine event. Purchase tickets for all Tequila & Taco Fest events or for information please visit www.efestevents.com

 Dining

A Slice of Heaven: Pizza on My Mind

By JAMIE ZIMCHEK, EDITOR

Some say the secret is “in the sauce.” At Papparazzi Gourmet Deli in Panama City Beach, the secret is so, so much bigger: the secret is equal parts perfectly crisped crust with a delicate crunch; sauce balanced just so between tomato, herbs, and garlic, and a cheese that melts exactly as it should, stretchy and moist, with just the right assortment of toppings to finish things off. Full disclosure: I’ve had pizza in many, many places around the world, and this pizza, hands down, is in a class all its own – it’s that good (move over Napoli).

Great pizza doesn’t just manifest itself on Thomas Drive without some history and a little human involvement though. In this case, the expert pie-maker, and Papparazzi’s owner, is John Trubia. Trubia hails originally from New York City where he was a First Responder during the

9/11 attacks. In 2006, he retired from the police force and moved south, bringing his family and his Italian family recipes with him.

As a gourmet deli, Papparazzi even pre-covid was nearly 70% take away, which has made things easier as eat-in numbers have dropped for most restaurants. There are, of course, a handful of indoor and outdoor tables as well as beer and wine available should you wish to eat in. The lunch crowd can build a super sub with Boars Head meats, or pick up pizza by the slice from 11-3pm Monday-Saturday. On Fridays, First Responders in uniform get two free pizza slices along with a soft drink (there’s also a daily discount for military and First Responders). If, rather, you’re headed home from the beach, or a day at the office, it’s fast and easy to grab a baked ziti or fresh lasagna to heat quickly at home, or, better still, one of their aforementioned par-baked pizzas that needs only 6-8 minutes



at 450 degrees in your oven.

But back to those pizzas: they’re an unexpectedly detailed labor of love, from the dough to the imported Italian sausage. Trubia explains that in order to make dough, you have to consider things like the outside temperature, the water tempera-

ture, and the type of oven you’re using. “Then you have your sauce,” says Trubia. “pizza sauce you don’t cook.” They crush Italian tomatoes to make their sauce fresh, with a few other top-secret ingredients, before adding the cheese. Trubia explains that traditional Italian pizza historically didn’t have cheese at all,

but added it to cater to tourists (many of them American), and it caught on. The right high-quality mozzarella will be slightly dry so the pizza doesn’t get soggy, but with enough natural oils to give it good stretch. Toppings are the icing on the pie at Papparazzi – always high quality and garden fresh, they’re cut to a certain size that blends in well.

“If you have a great crust, a great sauce, and a great cheese, your pizza is going to be great,” says Trubia. Put it this way: Papparazzi’s pizza will upend everything you thought you knew about pizza, in a really great way (Mamma Mia!).

Papparazzi Gourmet Deli is located at 2810 Thomas Drive, PCB. They’re currently open from 11 a.m.-7 p.m. Monday-Thursday, and 11 a.m.-8 p.m. Friday and Saturday. Find an online menu at papparazideli.com or ring them at 850.588.8244.

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30 A Eats.com Recipe of the Month; Katherine Hepburn's Brownies

BY SUSAN BENTON

"If you obey all the rules, you miss all of the fun." – Katherine Hepburn

Katherine Hepburn, known for her wit and spunk as well as her impeccable acting, also has a brownie recipe of some fame. I began making these brownies about 2003 when my kids were 9 and 10. They loved them then, and still do today. The recipe was in *Epicurious*, and now is being circulated in the April issue of *Relish* magazine. Originally, the recipe accompanied an interview with the actress Katharine Hepburn in the August 1975 issue of *The Ladies' Home Journal*. This brownie recipe, which calls for the smallest amount of flour, produces incredibly chewy bars with full chocolate flavor.

Recently my friends at California Walnuts sent me a nice sample of their delicious product- and a natural defender. I learned that more than 99% of the walnuts in the U.S. are grown



in the fertile soils of California's Central Valley. Internationally, California walnuts supply two-thirds of the world's walnut

trade. They are the only nut significantly high in Omega-3's, and I found I loved them toasted as a snack, and as a crunchy alterna-

tive to croutons for salads.

Hope you enjoy the chewy, crunchy, fudgy brownies straight from Kate's kitchen-to mine-to yours!

Ingredients

- 1 stick (8 tablespoons) butter
- 2 squares unsweetened chocolate
- 1 cup sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla
- 1/4 cup all-purpose flour (like King Arthur Flour)
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup chopped walnuts

Preparation

1. Melt together 1 stick butter and 2 squares unsweetened chocolate and take the saucepan off the heat.
2. Stir in 1 cup sugar; add 2 eggs

and 1/2 teaspoon vanilla, and beat the mixture well.

3. Stir in 1/4 cup all-purpose flour and 1/4 teaspoon salt. (In the original recipe, 1 cup chopped walnuts is added here as well.)

4. Bake the brownies in a buttered and floured 8-inch-square pan at 325°F for about 40 minutes.

You can cut these brownies into squares, once they have cooled, and eat them out of the pan, but it is so much nicer to pile them on a fancy plate, from which people are going to eat them with their hands anyway. If you want to smarten up your act you can put a square of brownie on a plate with a little blob of crème fraîche and a scattering of shaved chocolate.

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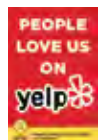
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Music

30A Songwriter Radio Artist Spotlight: Blair Woods



By JOSETTE RHODES

Blair Woods is an American Pop singer/songwriter and actress originally from the Emerald Coast. She found her way into the entertainment industry while living in Los Angeles California.

When the world turned upside down Blair moved back home. Unable to quell her innate drive to perform Blair began to livestream her music. You can catch her every night on the MeetMe app at 11pm EST.

Ms. Woods loves to write and perform her original music as well as sharing covers from her inspirations which include; Arianna Grande, Mariah Carey, Whitney Houston, Celine Dion, Selena Gomez, Taylor Swift, Britney Spears, The Beatles, and



Zara Larsson. She shares that she listens to metal core, rock, classic rock, rap, hip-hop, blues, and alternative styles as well for inspiration in her music.

Blair is primarily self taught

but has acquired a vocal coach to help maintain her healthy vocal habits. With an impressive 5 octave range that she likens to Mariah Carey, she enjoys trying new vocal tricks with her whistle



register for fun and to incorporate it into her own music.



When asked about her writing process Blair shares, "I primarily just hear a melody in my head and once it pops into my head I record on voice notes an idea and go from there making sure I'm not copying anyone. I

sometimes write on a piano but I find the best creative moments come when I am in the car alone or with my producer Nick in the studio. From voice notes I get an idea of what I want the instrumental to sound like, then I just find a song with similar instruments in it and tell Nick and he makes something incredible and then we record when I can fly out."

We asked Blair where she would like to be in ten years. "Touring, consistently chart topping, seeing millions of fans, and loving every bit of it, including the rough stuff. In 10 years I also hope the platform and earnings are enough so I can start my own homeless shelter that actually helps and houses people who have been left on the streets due to job loss or other uncertain circumstances they couldn't control. I think the government doesn't do a great job and I have ideas that would, in time, all completely go full circle and create possibly one of the best non profits. Also in hope to make sure families and single people aren't left on the street. It of course involves a plan to get them back into a career path they would choose from. I feel like if I get blessed enough to have a full successful career that I should give back however possible."

To learn more about Blair Woods and to hear her music you can find her at, blairwoods-music.com and Blair Woods on Spotify.

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Studio 237 Music School; Meet Violin Teacher Tara Bohlen

"I love violin because it is technically blissful. My mind is engaged, my heart is engaged. It is a total mind, body, and spiritual experience."

Tara Bohlen began studying violin at age eight. Her desire and curiosity for music/violin has taken her on a life-long journey. In 2001, she earned her Bachelor's Degree in Music Education from St. Olaf College in Minnesota and in 2011 received teacher training at Hartt Suzuki Institute. Tara and her husband Joshua live in Santa Rosa Beach with their daughters: Hannah, Taliah, and Sylvia who also play string instruments.

"I have had many wonderful teachers and I am forever grateful for each person in my life who has personally poured their love of music, gifts, talents, and abilities into me." The mentorship from a music teacher is one of Tara's favorite childhood experiences, inspiring her to be a violinist, educator, and more. Her mother was her first music teacher. Tara affirms that an excellent music education is passed down by spending time with an expert who can show you the way.

"I love sharing and communicating beauty through music to my audience." Tara Bohlen currently serves as violinist in the Panama City Symphony Orchestra. She is a recording artist in the violin rap performing group B-L'Attitude being a featured guest artist with the Bismarck Mandan Civic Chorus, TedX Music, and live in Medora. B-L'Attitude has released music videos (YouTube) including: Elevated Love, Heaven's Door, The First Noel, Ring Christmas Bells, and Joy to the World. She was voted North

Dakota Music Awards 2016 Favorite Instrumentalist, performed as: solo violin artist with Bismarck Mandan Symphony Youth Orchestra, member of Sonorus String Quartet, and violinist with the N.D. String Quartet. Locally, as a freelance violinist she performs at weddings and other celebrations as a solo artist or with a group.

Tara says, "I am happy to share what I have learned. The traditional classical with the Suzuki method that I apply in my teaching, works to produce results. Plus, it is fun to repeat this process." She says to students, "success builds success". Each time a student accomplishes a task, and is celebrated by the teacher/parent, it fuels more progress. Accomplishment builds confidence which enables them to: enter a deeper work level, experience success, resulting in joy from the learning process. This "fueling cycle" of little successes builds towards bigger successes motivating the student to keep learning."

Tara has 20 years of music teaching experience on string instruments and piano. She was formerly the conductor of the Bismarck-Mandan Youth Symphony Orchestra, director at Love Attitude String Academy teaching violin, viola, and cello, Associate Concertmaster of the Bismarck Mandan Symphony Orchestra, served as Director of Bismarck Public School Orchestras, and directed the Strolling Strings Performance Group.

"Music is a wonderful way to teach students how to love learn-



ing. I love watching students get excited about making music and for young musicians taking ownership of musical goals. They

develop valuable discipline and habits which help them reach their goals and gain essential life skills."

Tara Bohlen says, "At the end of a teaching day, I am grateful for the opportunity to mentor students and be part of a music conscious community. I honor the dedicated efforts of students and parents who prepare for each lesson, I am overjoyed by

their smiles of reward, and enjoy encouraging the student to reach for more to become the best they can be."

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 Business



By CHRIS BALZER, ECES

I have been in the home improvement industry for over 17 years and have heard just about all the sales gimmicks and cheeky techniques used by sales people

Radiant Barrier, Alien Technology?

ENERGY TIPS

by Emerald Coast Energy Solutions

to wow customers. One slightly stretched story I heard about radiant barrier is that radiant barrier was developed by NASA from alien technology! If only radiant barrier was so glamorous. Actually, in 1925 two German businessmen filed patents on reflective surfaces for use as

building insulation. This became the launching pad for reflective insulation. NASA did help to improve this technology and adopted it for the Apollo program. This metalized film was used to protect spacecraft, equipment and astronauts from the extreme heat of space. Even the student housing at MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology), Princeton and Frank Sinatra's residence in Palm Springs have used radiant barriers to become more energy efficient. In 1996, radiant barrier was even inducted into the Space Technology Hall of Fame—now that's pretty cool.

So why use radiant barrier? When the sun's rays strike a roof heating the roofing material (shingles, tiles or roofing sheets), it causes the underside of the roof surface and the roof framing to heat up causing radiant heat to flow downwards through the roof space towards the attic floor, heating up the entire attic. When a radiant barrier is installed on the rafters in the attic, much of the heat radiated from the hot roof is reflected back toward the roof allowing for a cooler attic.

Why is that important? Many of our attics will reach into the 150° F to 160° F range this summer, lately in fall too, heating up insulation, ductwork and many times our stored belongings. Any-



one who has stored candles in the attic knows what I mean. This extreme heat makes our current insulation and air conditioners work harder to keep our homes cool, costing us money and comfort. Properly installed radiant barrier on the roof rafters will reflect 97% of the radiant heat reducing the attic temperature during this extreme heat by 40° to 50° degrees allowing your insulation, ductwork and HVAC systems to perform better saving you money and increasing your comfort.

One common misconception regarding radiant barrier is that the heat reflecting off the radiant barrier back to the roof has the potential to increase the roof temperature and possibly damage the roofing material voiding warranties. Performance testing by Florida Solar Energy Center showed that the increase in roof materials temperature, at the hottest time of day, was no more than 2° to 5° degrees. RIMA (Reflective Insulation Manufacturer Association) wrote a technical paper on the subject which included statements collected from large roofing manufacturers, and none said that radiant barrier would in any way affect the warranty or

lessen the life of the roof.

To improve on this technology, we added a piece of high density insulation between two pieces of radiant barrier allowing our radiant barrier to help fight against not only radiant heat, but conduction and convection heat as well. My son recently did a science fair project on the performance of different types of radiant barrier. The results? Our multilayer radiant barrier out performed both silver and copper single layer radiant barriers. If you would like to learn more or see a demonstration on how radiant barriers work, contact us at 850-588-2870 or visit us at www.trusteces.com.

Chris Balzer is founder and president of Emerald Coast Energy Solutions which is a Smile Provider Company. We provide smiles to our customers after installing our high energy efficient products, increasing comfort and lowering energy bills. For more information on how to save 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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Underinsured – Don't Let It Happen to You!



BY VICTORIA OSTROSKY

Protecting your assets (and your bank account) from losses you wouldn't otherwise be able to financially afford is what insurance is about. Making sure you have the correct amount of coverage can be the difference between rebuilding your entire structure versus a partial rebuild.

Take Larry for instance. He's well known by all his friends and family as the guy who knows where to get the best deals. They call him 'let's deal Larry'. He researches and asks questions, compares and tests before he plunks down his money. From cars to espresso machines, Larry's your guy to give you the scoop on where to find the best deal. We all have a friend like Larry.

Over the years, Larry discovered something crucial about what constitutes the 'best deal,' and it's not always price. He found it's usually a combination of price and quality. As the saying goes, "You get what you pay for" and that can apply to your insurance as well. It's one thing to buy a cheap toy to entertain your toddler for a day, and it's another thing to purchase cheap insurance that leaves you out to

dry when disaster comes knocking on your door all because you wanted to save a few dollars.

Calculating the correct rebuild can be tricky and as an agent we can assist you. But to get the most accurate number, we recommend you work with your builder or hire a licensed appraiser.

From Hurricane Michael to the recent wildfires in California, when all is said and done, some homeowners are discovering not only were their homes destroyed, but they were underinsured. In addition, inadequate insurance on your dwelling can also lower the coverages available to replace your personal property, loss of use and more.

There are several factors that directly contribute to being underinsured. The biggest one being your initial purchase of that dream home. You searched until you found the perfect house. You bought furniture, painted walls and hung a stunning chandelier over your brand-new dining table and chairs. And that was fine, until Hurricane Michael toppled a few trees onto your roof and the rain soaked not just your furniture, but the drywall and cabinets, and that beautiful chandelier shattered on the floor.

The adjuster came and you ended up with a check that would only rebuild two-thirds of your house. Because of the scope of the catastrophic disaster, building materials and construction labor costs rose significantly, which means the rest came out of your pocket.

The second factor that contributes to being underinsured can happen when your policy has been with the same company for a number of years. Not

all policies have a built in inflation guard, so it's always best to review your dwelling and content limits at their renewal each year.

The third factor is a sneaky one. Most homeowners periodically update their homes, like installing new flooring, remodeling bathrooms and kitchens, adding rooms and square footage, but they don't always inform their agent so that the replacement cost can be recalculated and limits increased.

The bottom line when it comes to insuring your home is this: Don't skimp on the coverages; look carefully at your renewal policy and address any coverage deficiencies you might have, and always let your agent know about any upgrades and remodeling you've done to your home. We recommend an annual review of your property insurance program, because life happens and circumstances



change.

Make sure you have the correct amount of coverage to rebuild back to the beautiful dream home you had before disaster struck.

Insurance Zone, founded by Joe and Lea Capers, is a full service commercial and personal lines insurance agency serving Destin, Miramar Beach, Santa Rosa Beach (30A) and Inlet Beach. Visit their Video Library on www.ins-zone.com and watch an informative video "Market Value vs Replacement



Cost" or call 850.424.6979. Victoria Ostrosky, author of this article is an agent/CSR with IZ.

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Time with Wine: King Estate Winery

At Kwiker Liquor, we know that the key to having a great selection of fine wines is knowing a great selection of Vintners and Winemakers. We take pride in cultivating these relations to bring the very best to our customers in the Panhandle. This month we called on our friends

from King Estate Winery to share their story with us:

Three Generations of Making the Finest Oregon Wines

When King Estate was founded in 1991, it was driven by a commitment to sustain-

ability and profound respect for the land. The adventurous spirit that inspired us from the beginning continues to guide us as we nurture our vineyards to craft premium Oregon wines.

The King Estate story is woven into the history of Oregon wine, where winemaking is syn-



onymous with discovery and sustainability. The last 30 years have been focused on innovation, craft, and a deep sense of respect for the land, the vines and the people who enjoy our wines. We have been establishing our traditions, one vintage at a time.

Today we continue to build a legacy with sustainable agricultural and winemaking practices, resulting in our collection of fine wines. Our deep-rooted philosophy led to King Estate becoming the largest certified Biodynamic vineyard in North America. It's more than a trend to us — it's a way of life.

How It All Began

An appreciation of risk and adventure runs through the King family lineage. The family patriarch, Ed King Jr., began his career as a designer of Navy aircraft electronics during World War II, later starting his own company, King Radio Corporation. He imparted a love for wine and enterprise to his son, also named Ed King. Together they envisioned the possibilities of producing premium wine in an untapped viticultural region.

In 1990, the younger Ed King owned two small vineyards as part of his timberland and farmland properties. Ed's passion for wine grew alongside his vision for a premium Oregon winery. His aspirations came to fruition when, while purchasing hay for his horses, he discovered an ideal parcel, a 600-acre cattle ranch near Lorane, Oregon.

Looking over the misty ranch lands, Ed envisioned what would become the 1,033 acres of rolling vineyards of King Estate. Ed and his father purchased the land and the first grapes were planted in 1992 on just 16.5 acres. By 1994, more than 100 acres had been planted, creating the most clonally diverse soil and climate-matched vineyard



Ed Jr. and Carolyn King



Jodee and Ed King III

in Oregon at the time. The first vintage of estate-grown grapes was harvested in 1995.

Over the next few years, the company acquired two adjoining properties — the Springhill Ranch and the Doughty Ranch, to the north and east, respectively — bringing the acreage to its current substantial size.

In 2006, the highly acclaimed King Estate Restaurant opened, adjoining the winery, to serve visitors with world-class dining and fine wine pairings. That same year, the company launched its North by Northwest label to honor the high quality and bright future of the wine industry in the inland regions of Washington and Oregon. North by Northwest focuses on the Columbia Valley and Walla Walla AVAs, featuring superior cabernet sauvignon, syrah, red blend, chardonnay and riesling.

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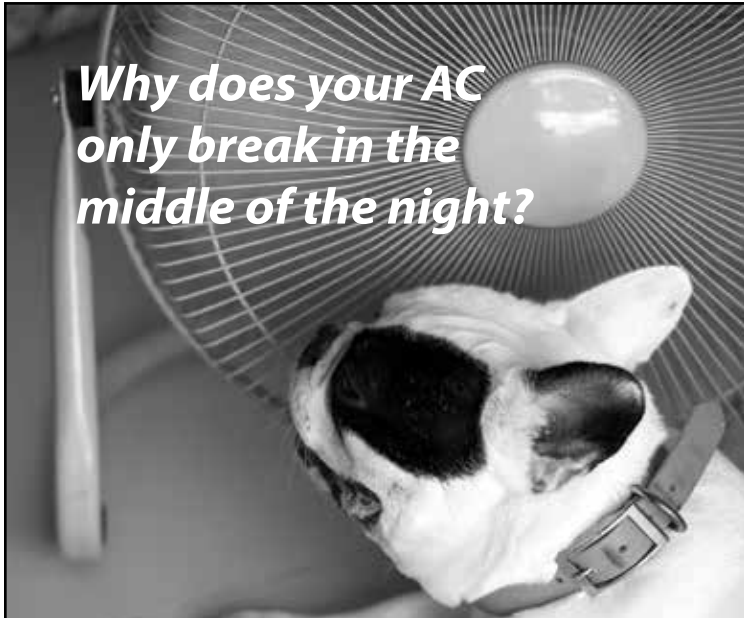
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