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Postal Customer Local

Emerald Coast Theatre Company 10 Years and Counting!

BY ANNA AND
NATHANAEL FISHER

In a recent interview, we were asked if reaching our ten-year milestone felt like “We did it. Mission Accomplished!” Our response was that it feels more like “Mission ongoing, mission good start, mission we’ve so much more to do.” As we look back on the very beginning of our little newborn baby theatre company, the feelings of gratitude overwhelm us. ECTC shares a birthday with our youngest daughter, as they both made their appearance in January of 2013, with quite a few months of planning prior. It was in those early days that we experienced the joy and excitement of something new, and the fulfillment of a dream long hoped for—both with our new little baby and our new little company.

We started with 10 students in an afterschool class offered in partnership with the Mattie Kelly Arts Foundation. Nathanael was working as a part



time adjunct theatre professor at University of West Florida in Pensacola and Gulf Coast

State College in Panama City, as well as other part time local jobs. I was working behind the scenes and caring for our six-year old twins and newborn baby girl. He would teach the after school classes on those days he was in town and we continued to work together, dreaming and planning our little company’s

first wobbly steps.

Fast forward four years and we are growing, continuing to offer more and more classes and a small season of professional theatre. All of our classes and shows are offered through the kindness of local schools and retail merchants who give us the use of their empty stores. For every show and every class, we load our family car with set, props, costumes, speakers, scripts and whatever else can be crammed in, and we arrive early to set everything up. Our garage, our living room, our kitchen table is always covered with things like feather boas, a golden lamp, a tinman’s costume and maybe a basket of fake apples. We overtake Anna’s Dad’s shed across the street as our stock grows, and our neighbor next door is always kind to turn a blind eye when we paint sets in our carport and turn the side yard grass blue until the

ECTC

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St. Joe Foundation Expanding Aid to Walton / Bay County Non-Profits

BY ED OFFLEY

Do you have a good cause aimed at helping the Walton and Bay County communities?

If so, April Wilkes would like to hear from you. And if your organization qualifies, she would like to provide you with the money to make your endeavor a success.

For nearly a quarter-century, the St. Joe Community Foundation has done just that, providing more than \$34 million in grants to scores of community organizations in Bay and Walton Counties. Wilkes, executive director of the foundation since 2018, says it wants to expand its roster of recipients.

“We are always looking for great nonprofits that we haven’t helped before,” she told Life Media.

As the largest landowner in Bay and Walton Counties, the St. Joe Company has long played – and continues to play – a major role in the development of the area. Its 50-year sector plan anchored around the Northwest Florida Beaches International Airport promises to transform

ST. JOE

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ST. JOE

continued from page 1

the Bay-South Walton region by 2045 into a community of over 350,000 people anchored around new town centers, retail centers, major employers and recreational sites.

In addition to land donations for projects as varied as the Northwest Florida International Airport, Publix Sports Complex and major medical facilities and schools, St. Joe Company officials have long been involved in direct support of local charities, other nonprofit organizations and educational programs, Wilkes said.

Established in 1999, the St. Joe Community Foundation is funded exclusively by a 1/2-percent transfer fee on the sale of real estate in certain communities and resorts the company has developed, Wilkes said. This fee applies the first time a property is sold, and on each resale. In recent years, the foundation has received around \$2-3 million it can reassign for community grants annually, but with the spike in real estate values since 2020, officials anticipate this year's intake might top \$6 million.

Grant outlays are approved by the foundation's board of trustees, who meet every two months or so to consider applications, Wilkes said. Current trustees include St. Joe CEO Jorge Gonzalez, Senior Vice President Rhea Goff and company General Counsel Lisa Walters.

Thus far in 2022, the foundation has awarded grants to 75 organizations throughout Bay and Walton Counties. Grants are awarded in four general categories:

education, health care, the arts and environmental stewardship. "We're already up to \$2 million [in grant outlays] this year," Wilkes said. "I have another \$2 million in requests before the board." If the current transfer fee projection holds, the foundation anticipates it will have an additional \$2 million available for grants this calendar year.

Wilkes said she is particularly proud that the St. Joe Community Foundation has been able to assist organizations dedicated to improving the quality of life for local residents.

Wilkes said the most unusual grant she recalls the foundation approving was five years ago for the Future Farmers of America program at Bozeman High School. The students had raised a prize-winning heifer but had no way to transport the animal to other FFA events around the state. The foundation awarded the school an \$11,000 grant for the club to purchase a covered trailer, she said with a smile. (The trailer has since proved quite valuable in other ways; after Hurricane Michael devastated many local farms, it was used to move livestock to less-damaged farms where the animals could be fed and cared for.)

Wilkes urged local organizations to consider applying for grants if they have a genuine need. The only requirement is that it be currently recognized by the Internal Revenue Service as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

How to Apply

Grant applications can be submitted online. Funding requests are reviewed according to the foundation's guidelines, and then reviewed for approval by the St. Joe Community Foundation board of trustees at pre-scheduled meetings. The amount granted is dependent upon the availability of foundation funds during the grant year. Organizations with ongoing programs can re-apply for funding annually.

Grant guidelines: www.joe.com/community-foundation/grant-guidelines

Online application: www.joe.com/community-foundation

Other contact information:
St. Joe Community Foundation

Attn: April Wilkes, Executive Director
30 Richard Jackson Blvd. Suite 200
Panama City Beach FL 32407

Email: April.wilkes@joe.com



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 Community

WCSD August 2022 Superintendent's Update



Superintendent A. Russell Hughes

Walton County School Teachers returned to work Wednesday, August 3, 2022 at the annual EPIC day; a professional day of learning, reconnecting, and collaboration! Mr. Hughes started the day with an inspiring “talk” with teachers reminding them of the reason the education profession exists; “its all for the children of Walton County,” he beamed. “We owe them the very best we have to offer!” Teachers were

encouraged to create relationships with every student by keynote presenter Kim Bearden, the cofounder and executive director of the Ron Clark Academy in Atlanta, GA. Mr. Hughes challenged every educator with his theme “Get on – Go on!”

There was plenty to celebrate after receiving the Florida Department of Education’s report of Walton County School District school grades, District grade and school improvement ratings. Walton County, as a district, once again scored an “A” rating, which it has now been since 2018. This is the first time since grading began that this has occurred in four (4) consecutive grading periods. According to the state’s data release, Walton ranks #3 of 67 districts in district school grade calculation. The district improved by two (2) rankings from the 20-21 school

year.

The following are 2021-2022 school grade results for Walton County. Eight (8) schools were designated as an “A”; Mossy Head School, West DeFuniak Elementary, Dune Lakes Elementary, Van R. Butler Elementary, Emerald Coast Middle, Freeport High, South Walton High, and Paxton School. Five (5) schools are designated as a “B”; Freeport Elementary, Maude Saunders Elementary, Freeport Middle, Walton Middle, and Walton High School. Walton Initiative for Success in Education (WISE) received a school rating of “Maintaining.”

It is exciting and worth celebrating to know that Walton County School District is becoming recognizable across the state and nation. As always, we will continue to strive towards being the number one school district in

the state of Florida – we are well on our way!

Additionally, The Walton County School District will be seeking approval to continue the ½ Mill Referendum at the August 23rd Primary Election. The referendum is needed to shift millage from Capital Outlay to General

Operating for operating expenses to maintain the excellent quality of Walton County’s public-school system. This has been in place for 19 years and is not a tax increase. Please see below for more information. Your vote on August 23rd can make the difference! Please vote YES on August 23rd!



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A “YES” vote is revenue neutral – **NOT A TAX INCREASE.**

WCSD is an “A” School District – let’s keep it that way.

Vote YES on August 23rd!

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August 2022 Coastal Seniors Update

FRIDAYS WITH FRIENDS - August 12th and 26th from 10 AM - Noon

Each "Fridays with Friends" program will be open from 10 AM 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. On August 26th Vince Lovoy will teach Beginning Bridge. You can contact us by calling 850-280-5342, or by sending an email to: coastalseniorsofsouthwalton@gmail.com.

MONTHLY MEETING - FLORIDA FRIENDLY PLANTS - August 19th from 11:00 AM - 1 PM (Light lunch provided)

Master gardeners Margaret Morrison and Bill Kuenstler will talk about plants that grow well in Florida, including the plants they recently installed at our Logan Lane offices. If you have any questions contact Sonia at 850-280-5342 or message her at:

coastalseniorsofsouthwalton@gmail.com.

PICKLEBALL

Beginner Pickleball 101 at Walton Sports Complex courts - Wednesdays, August 10th and August 24th from 6:30-7:30 PM Space is limited. CSSW Members please contact Sandy at sowlpickleball@gmail.com to register.

The new public pickleball courts are now open daily from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. at the Walton County sports complex behind Dune Lakes Elementary School. Please join the SoWal Pickleball Association on Facebook for more information and weekly updates.

COASTAL SENIORS BOOK CLUB

The second Wednesday of each month - August 10th at Noon. Join the Coastal Seniors of South Walton (CSSW) at The North Beach Social Club restaurant on Hwy. 331 South to discuss books you've enjoyed by participating in the 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.

LITTLE FREE LIBRARY

Coastal Seniors of South Walton, Inc. has received a Little Free Library which is located at our

office at 70 Logan Lane, Santa Rosa Beach, Florida 32459. It is outside our front door and allows seniors to access books and puzzles whenever they are able to come by our office location.

Seniors 50 years of age and up residing in or visiting Walton County are invited to join CSSW. Membership is \$20 for individuals, \$30 for family, and \$50 for businesses (your business will be listed on our home webpage and

our Facebook page). You can become a member via email at coastalseniorsofsouthwalton@gmail.com, or on the website at www.coastalseniorsofsouthwalton.org. Also, follow us on Facebook at Coastal Seniors of South Walton. Coastal Seniors of South Walton, Inc. is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization for active adults and we're looking for dedicated, enthusiastic persons to join our Board of Directors.



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Community

David Buchanan Has a Vision for South Walton Traffic



Local businessman David Buchanan has a vision for South Walton that will help traffic issues and preserve the beauty makes the community great. David entered the race for County Commissioner this year in his first bid for elected office. As a long time resident of Walton County, David has witnessed first hand the impressive growth of the county and many of the issues that growth creates. "Healthy things grow," David comments. "And we as a county need to shepherd that growth in a way that main-

In addition to increasing parking spaces and beach access points, David supports connecting roads between Highway 98 and 30A. "Its a public safety issue," he says. "Our first responders need to be able to access anywhere on 30A with acceptable response times because minutes matter in emergency situations."

One issue David Buchanan is fervently opposed to is making 30A a four lane road. David has vowed to fight that initiative if elected to the seat. "I believe it will detract from the appeal of 30A and negatively impact businesses," David says. Tomas Gallion, owner of local 30A hotspot Shunk Gulley, agrees. "A four-lane 30A will destroy the character of the community and cause more problems than it solves. There are better options to solve the traffic and parking issues than widening the road," Gallion said.

David has a unique plan for opening up underutilized sections of the beach that would allow locals to avoid heavily trafficked tourist areas of 30A and enjoy more of the natural beauty

about four miles of State Forest that the county can create access roads, parking, restrooms, picnic areas, and biking/jogging trails that would provide local Walton residents their own space to enjoy," David commented. This section of beach is located east of the Hilton Sandestin and west of Topsail Hill Preserve. He believes providing access to these areas will preserve their natural beauty and give residents additional options for recreation. "Enhancing the forest there would take coordination with the state, so it is important for us to build and maintain healthy relationships with our representative and senator. I believe it is a win/win for residents and tourists."

David and his wife Natasha, own and operate Buchanan Builders and live in Santa Rosa Beach with their four young children. At a recent meet and greet



shared his vision to a crowd of voters. He described how much he values spending time with his family in many of Walton county's natural areas, biking, fishing, and swimming. David said he understands while many of the residents recognize the value tourism brings to the county, sometimes it can create frustration when they want to enjoy the paradise where they live. "I believe having additional access points will help alleviate some of the stress

This would be a good opportunity to utilize TDC funds in a way that will relieve congestion and competition for parking near crowded beach access for visitors and locals," David said.

If you would like to connect with David and support his campaign, please visit buchanan-cd4.com.

The primary elections are scheduled for August 23, 2022, and early voting runs August 13-August 20.



Shane Abbott Op-Ed: Preserving Florida's Wildlife Corridor



BY SHANE ABBOTT

The Florida Wildlife Corridor stretches across our state and covers around 17.7 million acres of land. Here in Walton County, we are in the heart of the Panhandle's portion of the corridor.

Governor DeSantis has done a phenomenal job in protecting the environment and conserving this corridor which allows local wildlife to thrive. Earlier this year, the Governor approved almost 17,000 new acres for the Corridor. I applaud this decision. It's a great thing for our state when we have a Governor who takes proactive steps to ensure future generations have a chance to enjoy Florida's incredible natural environment.

As an avid outdoorsman and lifelong resident of Walton County, continuing to protect and maintain the Wildlife Corridor is a personal mission of mine. I want my children to experience the beauty of Florida's environment the same way I have been able to.

My family has a home right here in the South Walton area, where we can see the Governor's agenda at work first hand. The beaches here remain the best in our state – and it is up to us to make sure it stays that way.

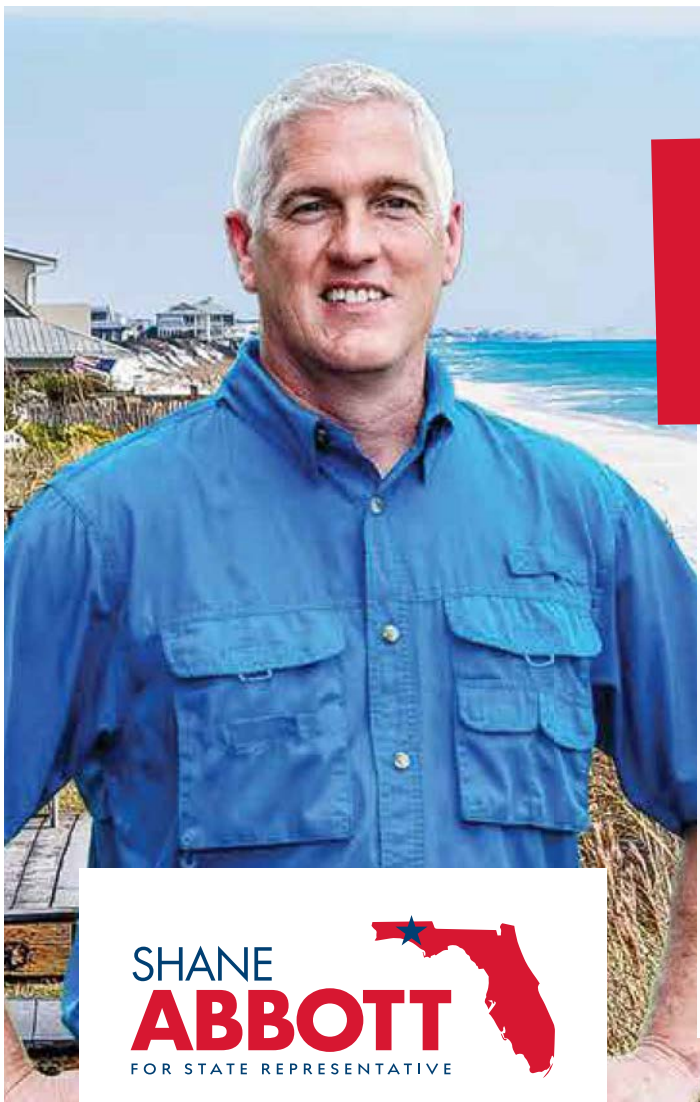
There's no doubt our community thrives when the protected areas around us do. It's a blessing to watch our local economy grow, but with this growth comes a responsibility to maintain and protect the landscapes which make Northwest Florida so special.

Initiatives such as the Florida Wildlife Corridor help preserve the outdoors we love so much. From our beaches, lakes, and rivers to even our golf courses. It is important that our natural envi-



ronment is taken care of.

I want voters to know that I'm a proud supporter of Governor DeSantis and I will always support his initiatives to conserve and protect our beautiful local environments!




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Community

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next mowing.

Throughout this period, Grand Boulevard was especially generous to us. If they had an empty space, we were welcome to it. We produced professional shows and children's shows in the place where Williams Sonoma is now. They hired us to produce an outdoor Summer Shakespeare in the park series which continues to this day. I would be remiss if I didn't mention our board of directors, the people who work behind the scenes without a lot of recognition. They were always there championing us and finding new and creative ways to produce theatre without a building. And then one day...

Stacey Brady, Director of Marketing at Grand Boulevard and long-time board member, called us one morning. "Can you meet me at the 560 building on property?" We thought with excitement that this may be another temporary empty space, another opportunity to run rehearsals and classes at the place that had been so supportive of us already. What we didn't think was that she had secured a dream space for us. She brought us up to the absolutely empty concrete rectangle that is now Emerald Coast Theatre Company and with a twinkle in her eye said, "Well, do you think you can work with this?" After catching our collective breath, through smiles and tears, we responded with a resounding yes,



Anna and Nathanael Fisher

and immediately got to work with more dreaming.

What Grand Boulevard has provided has catapulted us to where we are today. We have grown from the two of us volunteering and investing our time the first few years to a full-time incredible staff of eight including ourselves, Rebeca Lake-resident designer, Phillip Padgett-production and stage manager, Tara Padgett-costume

and wardrobe assistant and teaching artist, and our three newest staff members Trenton Bainbridge-managing director, Emily Bainbridge-patron relations and teaching artist, and Drake Miller-technical director.

As we celebrate Season 10 this year, we celebrate all of the hands and hearts that got us here. We recognize that the heart of ECTC is you! It's our students, volunteers, sponsors, patrons and VIP members. It's our vibrant Leading Ladies, our hard-working staff, our dedicated board of directors and our talented local actors as well as those performers who travel from all over the country to bless our stage. It's our community that held us through a pandemic and became the most generous donors we could have imagined. As we prepare to produce six professional shows, three Theatre for Young Audiences shows, many educational shows



First rehearsal of the first show in the new space at Grand Blvd.

and classes, a Storyteller Series and a few cabarets, we look back with gratitude and a thankful heart at all that has come before. Our little theatre company is growing up and expanding, nurtured by so many along the way. We hope that you will join us as we launch our Season 10 with a grand celebration on September 16th, and continue to celebrate with us all season long. Mission accomplished? Never.

*Nathanael and Anna Fisher
Founders, Producing Artistic Director,
Associate Artistic and Education
Director*

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20th Annual Charity Golf Classic on September 23 to benefit Ascension Sacred Heart Emerald Coast

Registration has begun for the 2022 Charity Golf Classic, which will be held Friday, Sept. 23, at Burnt Pine Golf Club in Sandestin. The presenting sponsors this year are Grand Boulevard, Howard Group and Silver Sands Premium Outlets. The chair of this year's event is Bill Tate.

Proceeds from the tournament will be used to purchase advanced diagnostic imaging technology for the care of both pediatric and adult patients at Ascension Sacred Heart Emerald Coast. The

Siemens Somatom Drive CT scanner is considered one of the industry's fastest and most versatile scanning modes, allowing an entire adult chest, abdomen and pelvis study to be conducted in approximately one second so patients don't need to hold their breath. The new CT scanner will have 4D high-resolution for better detection of lesions and abnormalities to ensure more accurate diagnostics as well as minimum radiation exposure.

"With the generous support of

our community and event supporters, we are able to provide new equipment and technology to our community," said Adrienne Maygarden, President of the Ascension Sacred Heart Foundation. The new CT-imaging system will touch thousands of lives in so many ways in the coming years, and we are so grateful to all who have joined us in support."

The cost for a four-person golf team is \$2,000 or \$500 per player. Multiple sponsorship opportunities also include team entries and sponsor recognition. Tax-deductible sponsorship opportunities range from \$1,000 to \$15,000. For more information, visit sacredheartcharitygolf.com or contact Lisa Wainwright, development specialist, Ascension Sacred Heart Foundation, at 850-278-33702 or lisa.wainwright@ascension.org.

Since 2002, the Charity Golf Classic has raised more than \$3 million for various expansion efforts at Ascension Sacred Heart Emerald Coast including; the Olson Women's Diagnostic Center, the Family Birth Place, the Judy & Steve Turner Heart and Vascular Center, Cancer Center, the Emergency Department and the Comprehensive Spine Program.

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Child & Teen Safety Matters Goes Back To School With The Students

It's back to school time and the Emerald Coast Children's Advocacy Center's (ECCAC) prevention team is ready. They have had their Child & Teen Safety Matters prevention programs in place for the past several years. Each year, ECCAC's staff educates and empowers Okaloosa and Walton students with information and strategies to prevent, recognize, and respond appropriately to bullying, cyberbullying, all types of abuse, and digital abuse dangers. Curriculum is available for students K-12.



According to ECCAC CEO Julie Porterfield, "In the 2021-22 school year, our prevention team was able to teach a significant 11,328 students about how to spot red flags and when to reach out to a Safe Adult if they need help. This education goes a long way in achieving ECCAC's goal of preventing child abuse. We are so proud of our amazing team and the incredible reach they have been able to achieve."

Mental health issues for children and teens have come into prominence in today's times. With the start of a new school year, ECCAC's Child & Teen Safety Matters programs will teach students 5 safety rules. Im-

portant safety rule #4, Talk It Up, reminds children and teens they have a voice and that they can use it to help adults keep them safe. Part of "Talking It Up" includes identifying a Safe Adult; a person they can go to if they ever feel unsafe, have ever been hurt, or just need someone to talk to. A Safe Adult is a person that is 18 years or older who the child/teen can easily talk to even about difficult things. Examples of Safe Adults could be a parent, a friend's parent, a teacher, a coach, an aunt or uncle, among many other people. It is someone who the child/teen can trust,

a person who will do everything they can to make sure the child is healthy and safe.

"Just don't forget when you're talking to your kids, truly listen to what they are saying. Put down the phone, set the laptop aside, and just listen to your child," said ECCAC's Community Outreach Manager, Nautica Caswell. "Our lives are full of chaos and stress but connecting in a meaningful way, even for short periods of time, can make all the difference in relationships. No matter how trivial or insignificant the topic may be, if they can't trust you as a parent to listen and care

about the small things, they won't trust you with the big things. No matter what else is going on in the world around them, remind them that they are safe and loved

with you as a Safe Adult. Research shows that 95% of child sexual abuse of children is preventable through education."

ECCAC serves Okaloosa and Walton counties with two centers that house representatives from the Florida Department of Children and Families, Child Protection Team, State Attorney's Office, local law enforcement, licensed mental health counselors, and ECCAC's staff and volunteers. In the past 22+ years, ECCAC has provided more than 170,000 services at no cost to over 15,000 children.

For further information about the Emerald Coast Children's Advocacy Center, visit www.eccac.org or call 850-833-9237. If abuse is suspected, call the anonymous Florida Abuse Hotline at 1-800-96-ABUSE.

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BY MAURICE STOUSE, FINANCIAL ADVISOR AND BRANCH MANAGER

The U.S. dollar has strongly performed year to date having risen over 10% as of this writing. That has positive and negative impacts on the U.S. and its economy. Former Secretary of State James Baker noted some time ago that the U.S. remains an economic powerhouse, and we think that still holds true today. It was Baker who as then Secretary of the Treasury, led the effort to weaken the dollar in the mid-80s in collaboration with several central banks around the world. If the dollar is too strong, that can hurt U.S. companies as it makes their goods and services more expensive in overseas markets. If the dollar declines that obviously aids international business. Add that as international investments accelerate any positive returns are in part, and perhaps signifi-

cantly, due to the impact on exchange rates. Many investment houses have for some time suggested investors look into emerging markets funds and we think that a diversified portfolio should include that. We remain cautious however because we feel that any enthusiasm for returns from those markets has a weaker dollar as a key element for those returns. There is no way to be certain as to the direction of the dollar however we would expect the U.S. to work to ease its value soon. This might prove helpful as the economy continues to slow or perhaps if we are in a recession, as we believe we are now.

We see the economy continuing to slow due to quantitative (or monetary) tightening but also, as Fidelity Investments pointed out in their Quarterly Market Review last week, fiscal tightening. The U.S. deficit, as a percent of GDP, has gone down to 4% vs 12% a year ago.

We remain optimistic on muni bonds.

As yields have risen so has investor interest in municipal

The Strong U.S. Dollar Areas of Optimism, Areas of Caution



We are cautious on housing, materials, crypto and world energy markets.

We take note that prices for houses (while pending home sales have continued to drop) have continued to increase. Here is the interesting part of that: The price appreciation and pending sales are mainly for homes above 500k while prices for homes on the lower end of the scale are eroding. We are seeing the same trend by the way on electric vehicles: Demand and prices are higher for more affluent Americans. Major U.S. car makers are in the meantime forging ahead with making medium and lower cost EVs available for mass production and at considerably lower costs than current EV manufacturers. The legacy U.S. automakers might be worth some consideration if investors agree with that.

The world energy picture continues to demonstrate concern for Europe (which could be headed for severe recession) but there is hope that the Middle East producers might be able to close the gap from European countries moving away from Russian supply. Still, years of underinvestment in fossil fuels and nuclear energy are proving to be challenging for Europe over the short run. Most of Europe would be considered Developed Markets (DM, vs Emerging Markets or EM). Much of the emerging world is ramping up investment in nuclear plants with upwards of 300 planned over the next decade. The U.S. currently has 95 nuclear plants in operation with perhaps two coming online this year. Nuclear is gaining more and more attention because despite the risks most people fear, it may not be as lethal as believed. Bjorn Lomborg of the Copenhagen Consensus Center notes that mortality rates are vastly higher from fossil fuel emissions

than from accidents or operations of nuclear facilities.

As always, we encourage investors to make decisions over time vs overnight and to take historical patterns into consideration when making their investment decisions.

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Maurice Stouse
Financial Advisor

The First Wealth Management
A Division of The First Bank, NA
2000 Ninety Eight Palms Blvd.
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Amy Parrish
Financial Advisor

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Walton Area Chamber of Commerce Seeking Sponsors for Annual Symposium, "The Next BIG Thing"

The Walton Area Chamber of Commerce is seeking local businesses and individuals interested in sponsoring their annual symposium, "The Next BIG Thing", Tuesday-Wednesday, September 6-7, 2022, at Hilton Sandestin Beach Golf Resort and Spa.

Presented by Ascension Sacred Heart Hospital on the Emerald Coast, the annual symposium has three distinctive tracks, including leadership development, business and entrepreneurship, and women in business. The event is aimed to inspire growth in all areas of professional development.

The Walton Area Chamber of Commerce would like to thank the local businesses who are already signed up to sponsor this year's event including 850 Magazine, All In Credit Union, Clark Partington, Cox Communications, Emerald Coast Title Services, Emmanuel Sheppard & Condon, Epic Photo Co., Grand Boulevard, Hand Arendall Harrison Sale, Hilton Sandestin Beach Golf Resort and Spa,

Horsley Construction Group, Silver Sands Premium Outlets, and Step One Automotive Group. A variety of sponsorship opportunities are still available for those looking to get involved and can be found online at <https://bit.ly/NBTSponsorship>. Pricing ranges from \$5,000 to \$250. There are also various advertising opportunities available in the event program. Individuals and area businesses interested should contact Gabrielle Kilgore at 850-892-3191 or Gabrielle@WaltonAreaChamber.com.

Registration and check-in begin at 8:30 a.m. with a continental breakfast in the vendor ballroom. "The Next BIG Thing" will begin promptly at 9 a.m. with welcoming remarks from Walton Area Chamber of Commerce CEO, Megan Harrison. Lunch, provided by Hilton Sandestin, will begin at 11:30 a.m. The day will conclude with a cocktail reception featuring light bites, cocktails, and raffle prizes. The second day of the symposium will kick off with a

morning workshop at 8:30 a.m. and culminate with the Chamber's September Power of Business Luncheon.

The Walton Area Chamber is also looking for local businesses to participate in the vendor ballroom throughout the first day of the symposium. The vendor ballroom will showcase area businesses and organizations while providing networking opportunities to professionals in attendance. Vendors are also able to sell products, goods, and services in the vendor ballroom. The cost to have a booth during the event is \$250 for chamber members and \$350 for non-members. To



reserve a booth space, please email Gabrielle@WaltonAreaChamber.com.

Tickets are on sale for \$125 for a one-day pass and \$175 for a two-day pass for Walton Chamber members while the cost to

attend for non-members is \$150 for one-day and \$200 for two-days. Interested individuals can register for the event by visiting <https://bit.ly/NextBIGThingRegister>. Military and Group discounts are available.



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Community

Florida Power & Light Plans Energy Grid Upgrade in Walton County

Florida Power & Light Company (FPL) is upgrading the energy grid in Walton County in 2022 to continue enhancing day-to-day reliability for customers and improving resiliency in the face of severe weather.

Strengthening power poles,

managing trees and vegetation near power lines, installing smart grid technology and regularly inspecting equipment have helped improve service reliability by 58% since customers in Northwest Florida became part of the FPL family in 2019.

“We understand how much our customers depend on the critical service we provide,” said Eric Silagy, chairman and CEO of FPL. “That’s why our team works tirelessly to continuously improve the energy grid across our service area – from Pensac-

ola to Miami. We know that in Florida it’s not a matter of if, but when, the next storm will impact our state. Our disciplined infrastructure and technology investments are improving day-to-day service for customers and helping us speed restoration after a storm.”

-- resulting in more than 10 million outages avoided over the last decade for FPL customers.

FPL is also continuing to boost reliability by putting more power lines underground in neighborhoods that can most benefit based on analysis of past hurricane outages, vegetation-related service interruptions and other reliability data. FPL’s Storm Secure Underground Pilot Program will complete 11 projects in Northwest Florida by the end of 2022, and FPL plans to bring the benefits of undergrounding to more neighborhoods across

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2022 Improvements in Walton County

FPL is making the following improvements in Walton County this year:

- Strengthening six main power lines, including those that serve critical services that are necessary for communities to recover faster after major storms.
 - Managing trees and vegetation – a common cause of power outages, particularly during hurricanes and severe weather -- along 53 miles of power lines.
 - Installing smart grid technology, including 254 automated switches on main and neighborhood power lines, to help detect problems and restore service faster when outages occur.
- FPL made the following improvements in Walton County from 2019 - 2021:**
- Strengthened three miles of main power lines, including those that serve critical services.
 - Inspected and maintained vegetation near 191 miles of power lines.
 - Inspected 2,486 power poles for strength.
 - Installed smart grid technology, including 111 automated switches on main and neighborhood power lines.
 - Inspected 63 main power lines and equipment using infrared technology.



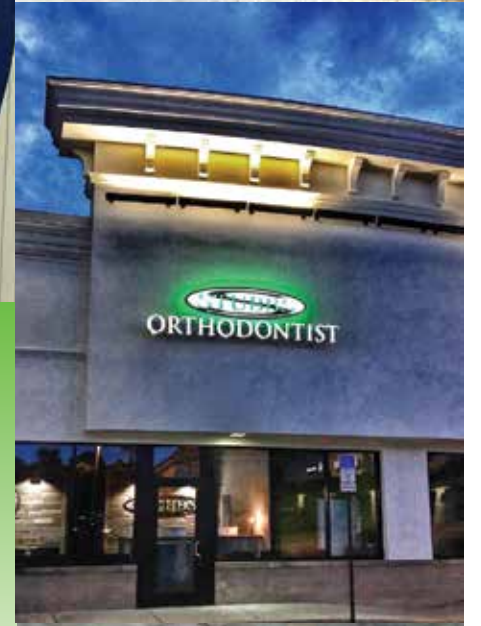
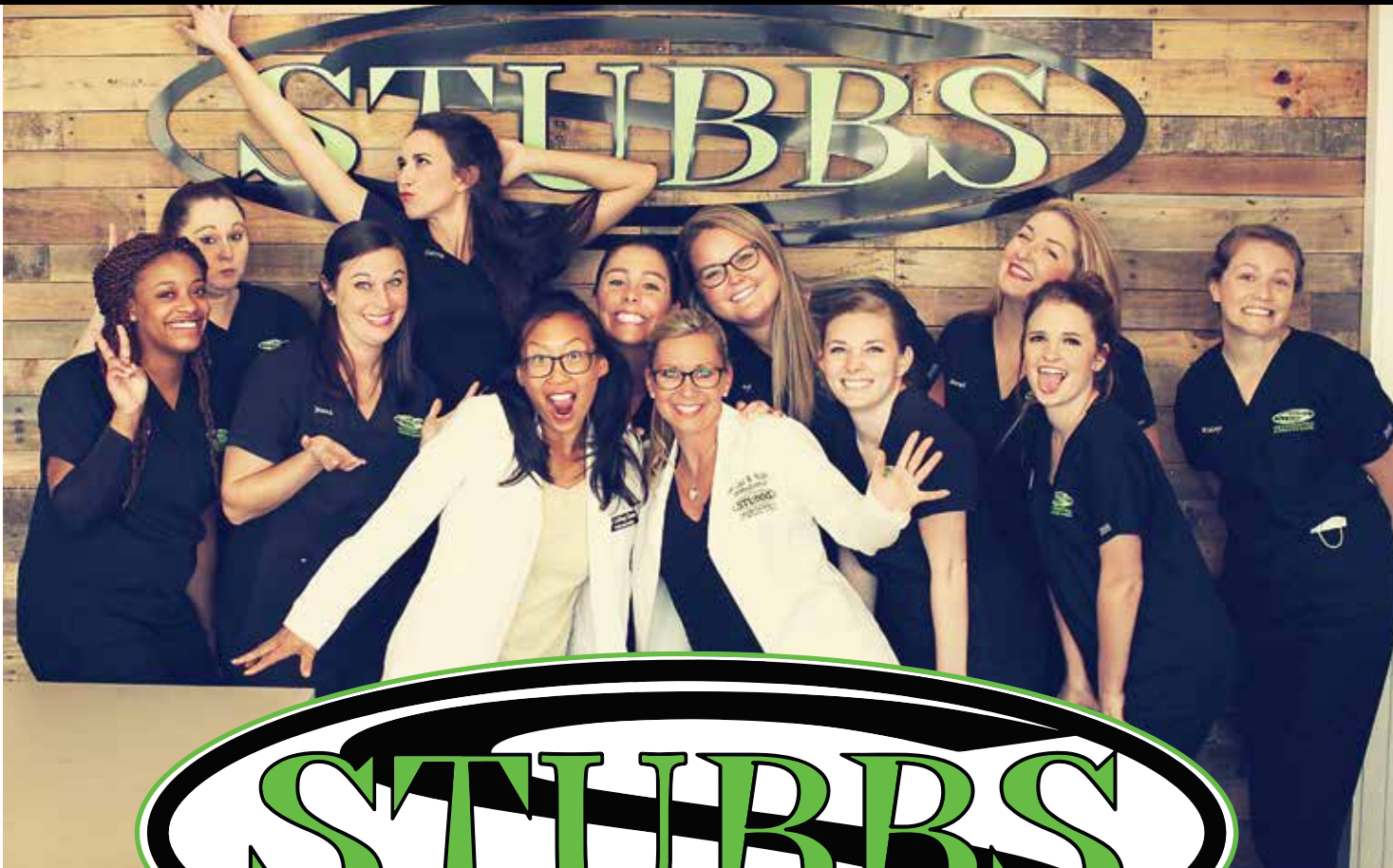
Florida in the future.

“We continue to deploy innovative and industry-leading solutions that improve the grid – investments that are paying off for our customers,” said Manny Miranda, executive vice president of power delivery for FPL. “We are always looking for new ways to enhance the reliability of our service. From examining lessons learned from past storms to incorporating new advancements, we are seeing the value of our efforts every day.”

The improvements continue to benefit customers across FPL’s service area in many ways. In 2021, the average customer in Northwest Florida experienced the fewest outages and momentary interruptions or flickers of any year in company history and the shortest overall duration of outages ever. FPL in 2021 won the ReliabilityOne® National Reliability Award for the sixth time in seven years. Presented by PA Consulting, the award is widely regarded in the energy industry as one of the most prestigious honors and reinforces FPL’s commitment to provide its more than 5.7 million customers with the nation’s most reliable service.

FPL’s adoption of emerging technology helps improve day-to-day service reliability. Drones and robots are used to conduct regular assessments and locate potential power issues to fix many problems before they affect customers. Intelligent devices can automatically redirect power, self-heal and eliminate or minimize customers affected

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 Community

Green Thumb Garden Club Is Ready to Kick Off Another Year of Charitable Giving

The Green Thumb Garden Club (GTGC) new season is starting off strong with socials, committee volunteer signups and meetings. Plans are being finalized for a great year for members and the Walton County charities it supports. A July summer social brought many current and new members out for games, good food and an overall fun time.

The first general membership

meeting of the year is scheduled for September 21, 2022, at the Westwinds Conference Center, 4700 Westwinds Drive, Miramar Beach, FL. The meeting begins at 9:30 am, concludes with lunch and the cost is \$25.00 per person. The September meeting is very popular as members reconnect and share stories about their travels and adventures over the long, hot summer as well as welcome

new members.

Attendees will also learn about the exciting programs planned for the year including the scholarships and charities the Club will support through the generosity of its members and fundraising events.

Planned events already include a tour of the Southern Grace Lavender Farm in October and the second annual Holi-

day Bazaar fundraiser at Cantina Laredo Grand Boulevard in November. Additional program and event information will be shared at the September event.

The Green Thumb Garden Club welcomes new members. The GTGC website www.greenthumbgardenclubinc.org con-

tains detailed information about how to join the Club, support its charitable mission and details on meetings, activities, and events. For additional information, please visit the website or email greenthumbgardenclubinc@gmail.com.



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Second Annual Holiday Bazaar

Start your holiday shopping with unique and beautifully crafted trees and wreaths, floral designs, centerpieces, jewelry and more on Saturday, November 12, 2022, 10:00 am to 3:00 pm at Cantina Laredo (in the rear meeting room).

The Green Thumb Garden Club, Inc., located in Walton County, Florida, is a tax-exempt, 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Its mis-

sion is to stimulate interest in the beautification of Walton County, furthering the education of its members and the public in botany, community beautification, conservation of natural resources, environmental awareness, floral design, gardening, horticulture, and nature studies and instill in our youth the love of gardening and respect for the environment.

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News From Your Walton County Republican Party

By JIM JAQUESS

Governor DeSantis Announces Protections From the Threats of ESG in Florida

In late July, Governor DeSantis announced a series of protections for Floridians from the environmental, social and corporate governance (ESG) movement that threatens the vitality of the American economy and Americans' economic freedom by targeting disfavored individuals and industries to advance a woke ideological agenda.

"The leveraging of corporate power to impose an ideological agenda on society represents an alarming trend," said DeSantis. "From Wall Street banks to large asset managers and big tech companies, we have seen the corporate elite use their economic power to impose policies on the country that they could not achieve at the ballot box. Through these actions we are protecting Floridians from woke capital and asserting the authority of our constitutional system over ideological corporate power."

Governor DeSantis' proposed legislation for the 2023 Legislative Session will:

Prohibit big banks, credit card companies and money transmitters

from discriminating against customers for their religious, political, or social beliefs.

Prohibit State Board of Administration (SBA) fund managers from considering ESG factors when investing the state's money.

Require SBA fund managers to only consider maximizing the return on investment on behalf of Florida's retirees.

The proposed legislation will amend Florida's *Deceptive and Unfair Trade Practices* statute to prohibit discriminatory practices by large financial institutions based on ESG social credit score metrics. This "ESG score" is a framework created to force companies to meet ESG standards and arbitrarily includes metrics based on political affiliation, religious beliefs, certain industry engagement, and ESG benchmarks. Violations will be considered deceptive, and unfair trade practices will be punished according to the law.

At the next State Board of Administration meeting, Governor DeSantis will propose an update to the fiduciary duties of the State Board of Administration investment fund managers and investment advisors to clearly define the factors fiduciaries are to consider in investment decisions. Environmental, social, or



corporate governance factors will not be included in the state of Florida's investment management practices.

Governor DeSantis is working with like minded states to leverage the investment power of state pension funds through shareholder advocacy to ensure corporations are focused on maximizing shareholder value, rather than the proliferation of woke ideology. This means protection of your assets that are tied up in retirement funds. Another win for the people of Florida.

tection of your assets that are tied up in retirement funds. Another win for the people of Florida.

Vote YES on Walton-County School District Referendum

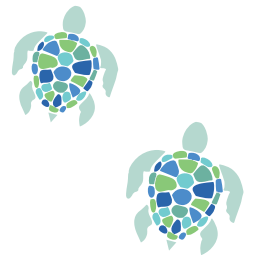
Everyone in Walton County will have the opportunity to vote on the Walton County School District Referendum during the primary election on August 23rd. This is a key referendum and should NOT be confused with the upcoming sales tax increase on the ballot this fall in the General Election.

This referendum will not increase taxes, it is simply permitting the Walton County School District to continue the current one-half mill ad valorem millage for the fiscal years beginning July 1, 2023 and ending June 30, 2027. This funding will be used for operating expenses

necessary to recruit and retain quality teachers, preserve extra-curricular programs and provide instructional materials and technology to maintain the excellent quality of Walton County's public school system.

Please vote **YES** on this all important referendum so critical to our school system.

Jim Jaquess is Vice Chairman of the Walton County Republican Executive Committee.



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South Walton Republican Club, North Walton Republican Club, Walton Republican Women Federated, Republican Women of Walton County, Freeport Republican Club and 30A GOP



Community

Walton Republican Women Host Senator Rubio

The Walton Republican Women Federated was pleased to host a luncheon meeting for Senator Marco Rubio on Wednesday, July 6th before a crowd of over 140 inspired guests and members. Also in attendance were 7 local elected officials and 8 local candidates. Senator Rubio spoke on the growing threat of China, its Tik Tok influence especially on younger people, and what impact on America the culture would be should America become under communist rule.

family immigrating to the States in the 1950's, becoming U.S. citizens in the 70's, and citing those who have immigrated to the States as very patriotic as they lived in unhealthy and dire circumstances. Although his parents never obtained wealth, they worked hard to achieve the American dream of owning a home and being free.

Senator Rubio's comments met with much applause as he emphasized having conservative and common sense values, the recent move of the Supreme Court to reverse Roe v Wade leaving the



Pictured with Senator Rubio is the Executive Board of Walton Republican Women Federated: President Stephanie Phillips, Vice President Mary Howard, Treasurer Marinell Lightfoot, Secretary Julie Bogenreif, and Former President Jeri Michie

The Walton Republican Women Federated is pleased to announce that Joan Reynolds will speak at our September 7th meeting at Westwinds in Miramar Beach. Ms. Reynolds will educate the audience of the Mighty American Strike Force and its nationwide efforts of strategic campaigning in key battleground districts to win key House and Senate seats during the upcoming election. The creation of a Panhandle Strike Force will be discussed, and members will be encouraged to get more involved in the November 3rd election. Luncheon provided by Carrabba's. Prepaid registration is required and available on our website WaltonRepublicanWomenFederated.org. The WRWF has 150 members, and men are welcome to join as associate members. Questions may be sent to WRWFederated@gmail.com.

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decision to the states, how important our military and veterans are, and stressing combating anti-Americanism. He also emphasized how important supporting good conservative candidates on the local level, particularly topics affecting our children.

Stephanie Phillips, President of Walton Republican Women Federated, expressed how pleased

WRWF was to have Senator Rubio to visit this area. "So much great information from our Senator Marco Rubio, he spoke passionately and straight from the heart on the real concerns Floridians have with our current administration. Also his thoughts on how to continue moving forward and serving all Floridians alongside Governor Ron DeSantis.

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Stan Hall Makes Car Buying Fun!

Usually, the car buying experience is ranked right up there with getting a tooth pulled; necessary, but filled with trepidation and anxiety. Stan Hall, however, takes pride in emphasizing two qualities every time a customer walks in or contacts the dealership looking for a car. "First, is the Golden Rule - treat people the way you want to be treated, and second, make car buying fun," he said. And he is serious! After nearly 54 years in the car business, Stan knows the ins and outs of the business pretty well, and what becomes evident fairly quickly; he's more interested in a customer's happiness than he is in making a sale.

Stan is a Christ-centered man who will go out of his way to anticipate and fulfill his customer's needs. "To me, the Golden Rule in the car business is to concentrate on the customer's needs and God will take care of the rest," he said.

Emerald Coast Motor Cars operates as a car buying "concierge" service. Customers specify the kind of car they want, then Stan and his team track it down and bring it right to their doorstep. "No haggling, no deception, just great service and honest pricing."

A quick look on the ECMotorcars.com website and the testimonials and reviews are glowing. There are pages of positive testimonials confirming the success of Stan's concierge business model.

A key component to the overall success and growth of ECMC is the addition of Devon Kiss, a young, 36 year-old from Tennessee who is quickly adapting to the car business, and he especially enjoys the Stan Hall concierge model. "Devon displays the same qualities of an honest car man in this new generation," Stan says. "And his background as a computer programmer and website designer helps the company locate the best car for our customers by searching and negotiating coast to coast. Devon is learning the car business faster than anyone I have ever known."

Stan and his wife, Bunny, moved to the Destin Area from Georgia 25 years ago. And, while Stan takes pride in his business accomplishments, surviving cancer ranks even higher. In 2012, Stan beat throat can-



cer and is now nine years free of that terrible disease. The experience left him with a renewed faith in the Lord who greatly helped his healing process.

Stan and his team try to be very active in their community. A few of the organizations they support are: Sinfonia Gulf Coast, Mattie Kelly Arts Foundation, Destin United Methodist Church and the Destin Chamber of Commerce.

Stan is also extremely proud of Bunny, "the most important and inspiring person in my life." Bunny has 35 years of experience as an interior designer, and recently opened her own business, "The Perfect Plan Destin, LLC." You can reach Bunny at 850-830-3995 or bunny@perfectplandestin.com.

So, the next time you're in the market for a new car, give Stan Hall a call. I think you'll be refreshingly surprised.



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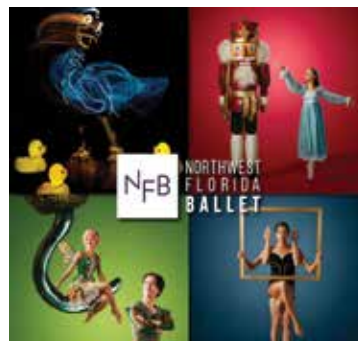
Northwest Florida Ballet Announces 22/23 Season

The Northwest Florida Ballet 53rd season kicks off with *The Ugly Duckling*, performed by Lightwire Theater, Saturday, Oct. 1, at 7:30 p.m. in Grand Boulevard at Sandestin's Grand Park. This audience favorite brings a classic tale to the modern stage in an unforgettable theatrical experience. Lined with electroluminescent wire, the beloved story of *The Ugly*

Duckling plays out on stage through a cutting-edge blend of puppetry, technology and dance. With dazzling visuals, poignant choreography and the creative use of music ranging from classical to pop, this free outdoor production brings this story into a new and brilliant light. Lightwire Theater has been featured as semi-finalists on NBC's *America's Got Talent*

and won Tru TV's *Fake Off*.

Season subscriptions will be available beginning Tuesday, Aug. 30, and include tickets to *The Nutcracker* and *Peter Pan* for \$76 per adult and \$35 per child (12 and under), a savings of more than 15 percent compared to box office prices. Patrons are also eligible to purchase tickets to the VIP parties for \$25 each and receive a 10



percent discount for additional

performance tickets when buying a season subscription.

Visit www.NFBallet.org and NFB's Facebook page for full season performance dates, subscription packages and individual ticket sales announcements. NFB is sponsored in part by the State of Florida, Department of State, Division of Arts and Culture and the Florida Council on Arts and Culture.

Democratic Women's Club Recognize Dr.'s Hillary Glen and Patsy Vargo as Women of the Year Sept. 27th

On September 27, 2022 The Walton County Democratic Women's Club will recognize Dr. Hillary Glenn, DNP and Dr Patsy Vargo, co-founders of The Point Washington Medical Clinic, as its Women of the Year.

Since its founding as a mission outreach program of the Point Washington Methodist Church in May 2017, TPMWC has worked to build a stronger and

healthier community by providing high quality primary health care regardless of the patients' means or access. Funded 100% through voluntary donations of money and time by doctors, nurses and various community members assisting with health education, translation and administrative tasks, the clinic serves patients of all ages, no questions asked.

TPWMC was on the scene of Hurricane Michael in 2018, rendering primary health care and making referrals through pop-up clinics in Panama City and Lynn Haven, as well as the clinic in Point Washington at the United Methodist Church. When the COVID pandemic reached this area in early 2020, the clinic offered free testing and vaccinations from its mobile van and

continues to do this today. It is also there for community events, such as the annual Songwriters Festival and the opening of the Monarch Butterfly Trail.

After 5 years of operation in the Fellowship Hall of the United Methodist Church, ground has been broken for a dedicated clinic building which will have 4 private consultation rooms and, in time, a children's dental clinic.

All services of TPWMC are provided at no cost, including children's school physicals.

The recognition event will be held at the Lake Club, 1850 Great Hammock Bend in Freeport on September 27 with lunch at 11:30, followed by the award and a presentation by Dr. Glenn. For further information contact Sue Bowden At susan-bowden4321@yahoo.com.



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Seacoast High School Student Reagan Wells Wins Merit Scholarship

Miss Reagan Wells, a Walton County resident and a member of the 2022 graduating class at Seacoast Collegiate High School, the dual enrollment high school program of Seaside School, Inc., was named one of 2,500 award recipients of the 2022 National Merit Scholarships Program. Miss Wells is one of two local Santa Rosa Beach scholars.



in communications. As a Seacoast student Miss Wells graduated from high school with an Associate's Degree from Northwest Florida State College in addition to her high school diploma. Seacoast's unique dual-enrollment program put her on track to pursue an accelerated master's degree with the goal of ultimately attending law school.

"Reagan was a model Seacoast student," said Dr. Scott O'Prey, Chief Executive Officer of The Seaside School, Inc., and principal of Seacoast Collegiate High School. "I enjoyed working

erates as a public charter school and admissions are conducted on an annual basis. Admissions for the next school year open in February and applications are due by the end of March. The lottery drawing takes place in May for available openings. Currently, Seaside Neighborhood School has a waitlist while Seacoast Collegiate High School has select openings for the 2022-2023 school year. Seaside School, Inc. accepts applications for grades 5th through 12th for the 2023-2024 school year starting in February 2023. If interested in learning more about admissions or attending upcoming events, please contact Dr. O'Prey at opreys@seasideschools.net.

lege admissions officers and high school counselors, who appraised a substantial amount of information submitted by both the Finalists and their high schools: the academic record, including difficulty level of subjects studied and grades earned; scores from the Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT®); contributions and leadership in school and community activities; an essay written by the Finalist; and a recommendation written by a high school official.

The non-profit National Merit Scholarship Corporation operates without government assistance. It was founded in 1955 to conduct the National Merit Scholarship Program.

The 2,500 Merit Scholar designees were chosen from a talent pool of more than 15,000 outstanding Finalists in the 2022 National Merit Scholarship Program. National Merit \$2,500 Scholarship winners are the Finalists in each state judged to have the strongest combination of accomplishments, skills, and potential for success in rigorous college studies. The number of winners named in each state is proportional to the state's percentage of the nation's graduating high school seniors.

"I am so honored to have been selected as a National Merit Scholar this year," said Miss Wells. "I am thankful for the academic challenges and opportunities Seacoast Collegiate High School offered me that played a factor in receiving this honor as well as preparing me

to continue my education."

In addition to receiving this highest academic honor,

Miss Wells graduated from Seacoast Collegiate High School with a 4.68 GPA and qualified for a Bright Futures Florida Academic Scholarship. Miss Wells plans to attend the University of Alabama in the Fall and major

with her when she was president of the Student Government Association. Her positive attitude, work ethic, and community mindedness will continue to set her apart."

The Seaside School, Inc. op-



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Songwriters Performance Series to Benefit Point Washington Medical Center

Songwriters David Bourné, Kree Harrison and Jason Martin to headline Tim Jackson's Songwriters Performance Series Live at the Bait Shack on Thursday, August 18th to raise funds and awareness for the Point Washington Medical Clinic (PWMC). The event, scheduled to take place from 6:30-10 PM at Stinky's Bait Shack on County Highway 30A, is presented by McNeese Title with additional support from Ocean Reef Resorts.

General admission early bird tickets are on sale now for \$75. Visit thepwmc.org to purchase. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. Included in your ticket price is a wine tasting and heavy hors d'oeuvres generously provided by



Stinky's Fish Camp. A cash bar will also be available. Following the tasting, event goers will settle in for an intimate listening room concert experience with this incredibly talented group of singer songwriters.

Funds raised from the event will be used towards the clinic's

stand alone facility currently under construction. The new 4,750 square foot building includes space for six examination rooms, a conference area, teaching kitchen, meeting room, dental suite, dispensary, and inviting lobby with an educational library. New services and program-

ming planned will include preventative education, primary care, dental care and more. This will transform the clinic into a «one-stop shop» for comprehensive patient care, continuing our mission of providing quality primary care, while expanding to include specialty services, dentistry and wellness education. For more information about the clinic's building campaign, visit thepwmc.org.

The Point Washington Medical Clinic is an independent 501(c)(3) charitable organization whose mission is to build a stronger and healthier community by providing high quality primary healthcare regardless of the patients means or access. For more information, visit thepwmc.org.

Coastal Branch Library to Host the Art of the Students of Dorothy Starbuck

The Friends of Walton County Coastal Branch Library is excited to host the art of the students of renowned Florida artist, Dorothy Starbuck. Dorothy has been teaching for approximately forty years. She has also given many multi-day workshops and demonstrations for various art clubs. Bonnie Loman, Lauren

Cotton and Shelley Blackmarr are a few of the current students of Dorothy Starbuck that are displaying their art. «We feel privileged to sit under the instruction of a well-known and loved artist.»

Coastal Branch Library, 437 Greenway Trail, Santa Rosa Beach, 850-267-2809.



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Community

August 2022 Family Friendly Events in South Walton



Saturday, August 13, 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm
Grab a blanket and come out to the Seaside Amphitheater on Saturday afternoon for Sounds of SEASIDE. Seaside's Monthly Music Series features a family-friendly concert on the lawn. Free and open to the public. Show begins at 1:00PM. August Schedule: August 13 & 20. Seaside Amphitheater, Seaside.



Topsail Hill Preserve State Park: Guided Plant Stroll

Monday, August 15, 9:00 am to 11:00 am
Join Topsail Hill Preserve State Park and Master Gardener Bill Kuenstler on the third Monday each month from 9:00a.m. - 11:00a.m for a Guided Plant Stroll. Take a stroll through the park and the campground to explore the plants visible and to see what is in bloom. Visitors will learn about some of the plant species here at the park. Topics for the hike will vary based on the time of year and growing season. The program is on the third Monday of the month. This program is free with regular park admission. 7525 W. Scenic High-

way 30A, Santa Rosa Beach.

Turtle Talk Tuesday

Tuesday, August 16, 9:00 am to 10:00 am
Join South Walton Turtle Watch on Tuesday mornings in the park across from Amavida in Rosemary Beach for Turtle Talk Tuesday. The first talk is at 9AM and the second at 9:30AM. Learn about sea turtles, paint, and adopt a hatchling! Grab a coffee at event co-host Amavida Coffee Roasters while the kids take their Jr. Ocean Ranger pledge to help keep our beaches clean, dark and flat for nesting sea turtles and

baby hatchlings! Amavida Coffee, 104 N Barrett Sq., Unit 1, Rosemary Beach.

RUN/SUP: Guided Kayak Tour

Wednesday, August 17, 9:30 am
Explore Western Lake with RUN/SUP on a Guided Kayak Tour every Wednesday at 9:30AM, launching from The Boathouse in Watercolor. Join Molly for an approximately ninety minute adventure throughout one of 30A's beautiful coastal dune lakes. Space is limited, sign-up in advance at runsup.com/classes/. You will paddle smooth, calm waters in

Baytowne Wharf: Autos in August
Saturday, August 13, 11:00 am to 3:00 pm
Calling all Muscle Cars, Jeeps, Vettes, 4x4s, Exotics, and Imports! Join The Village of Baytowne Wharf and Emerald Coast Customs on Saturday, August 13th from 11AM - 3PM for Autos in August. Enjoy a day of fun, sun, and cars! Visitors are welcome to walk around The Village of Baytowne Wharf and look at the cars PLUS enter raffles and win FREE prizes. Registration limit is 100 cars. First come first serve. Vehicle registra-

tion includes a FREE Emerald Coast Customs T-shirt. Pre Entry Fee is \$15 per vehicle and \$25 after August 1st. Registration and vehicle load in is 8AM-10:45AM day of event. For participation info email eccdestin@gmail.com or call 850.424.3821. Prizes will be awarded in more than 6 categories and trophies will be given for nine different classes. Join fellow car-lovers for a fun day and help raise money for Children in Crisis. The Village of Baytowne Wharf, 9100 Baytowne Blvd., Miramar Beach.

Sounds of SEASIDE: Fred Domulot Band



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a kayak at a relaxing pace. In addition to searching out wildlife, you'll learn all about coastal dune lakes, the famous stash pines, Grayton Beach State Park, Watercolor, 30A history and fun facts, and much more. Every trip leads to a different adventure! 250 Watercolor Blvd W, Water-Color.

Bubbly Baytowne

Thursday, August 18, 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm Come out to The Village of Baytowne Wharf for an evening of champagne and shopping during Bubbly Baytowne from 5-7PM. Stop in various retail merchants as you enjoy a selection of premium champagnes and enjoy the sounds of live music in the Events Plaza. This event is free and for 21 and up only. The village will be open to the public during this

event. Visit baytownewharf.com for additional Bubbly Baytowne Dates! 9100 Baytowne Blvd, Miramar Beach.

Watersound Sounds Like Summer Series: Outdoor Movie Night

Thursday, August 18, 8:00 pm The Watersound community invites to join them for Sounds Like Summer, a series on Thursday night, June 2 - August 18, featuring live music, theater, outdoor movies and more under the shade of The Pavilion at Watersound Town Center. With ample parking, a covered pavilion, and even ceiling fans, all events are free and open to the public. 170 N. Watersound Parkway, Watersound.

Seaside Central Square Cinema

Friday, August 19, 8:00 pm

Grab a blanket and come out to the Seaside Amphitheater on Friday night for Central Square Cinema, a family movie on the lawn. Free and open to the public. Show begins at 8:00PM. Movies Include: August 12 | Alice Through The Looking Glass, August 19 | Secret Life of Pets 2, August 26 | The Lego Movie. Seaside Amphitheater, Seaside.

Grand Boulevard: Movies in Grand Park

Saturday, August 20, 8:00 pm to 9:30 pm Enjoy movie night under the stars with balloon art and popcorn for the kids every Saturday night at 8 PM in The Grand Park at Grand Boulevard. This show is free and open to the public - bring a blanket or lawn chair for seating. Movies Nights: Saturdays | 8:00 p.m. - 9:30 p.m. August 13 || Lion King, August 20 || Aladdin, August 27 || Finding Dory. The Grand Park, Grand Blvd., Miramar Beach,

Sinfonia Gulf Coast: Peter and the Wolf Performance at Seaside

Sunday, August 21,

6:00 pm to 7:00 pm Join Sinfonia Gulf Coast in the Seaside Amphitheater on Sunday, August 21 from 6PM - 7PM for Sergei Prokofiev's symphonic fairy tale, Peter and The Wolf performed by the woodwind quintet from Sinfonia Gulf Coast. Bring blankets and chairs to enjoy! Seaside Amphitheater,



Seaside.

Camp Helen State Park: Guided Nature Walk

Thursday, September 1, 10:00 am Camp Helen State Park invites the public out for a guided Na-

ture Tour held each first Thursday of the month at 10am. Tour begins at the Visitor Center. Come out to learn about the rare coastal dune lake, Lake Powell, as well as the park wildlife. Hike is suitable for all ages. Dress for the weather; water and bug spray are recommended. 23937 Panama City Beach Parkway, Panama City Beach.

Perfect Hues: Baytowne Art & Food Fest

Sunday, September 4, 5:00 pm to 10:00 pm This Labor Day Weekend Join The Village of Baytowne Wharf for Perfect Hues: Baytowne Art & Food Fest, September 2nd - September 4th. Each evening from 5pm-10pm, stroll The Village streets as you browse a variety of artwork from local and regional artists, and savor bites from some of the area's best restaurants and food trucks. Enjoy LIVE music throughout the festival and a spectacular fireworks show over the lagoon on Sunday at 9:30pm. Admission is free and open to the public. 9100 Baytowne Blvd, Sandestin.



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ECTC Opens Registration for Fall Programs

Classes Begin August 13

There's no tap dancing around it, Emerald Coast Theatre Company's 2022 Fall Educational Theatre programs offer something for everyone including both children and adults.

"There couldn't be a time where self-expression through the performing arts is more essential for our children," said ECTC co-founder and producing artistic director Nathanael Fisher. "Many of the schools in our community cannot offer the theater arts and so we are thrilled to be able to supplement with our professional education programs, and this year we have even more for adults, too."

ECTC continues its popular Educational Theatre Program with creative and engaging offerings designed especially for young thespians from pre-school to high school. The full schedule of class dates and times along with and registration rate information can be found at www.EmeraldCoast-Theatre.org.

All programs are offered at Emerald Coast Theatre Company's (ECTC) performance

space located at 560 Grand Boulevard in Grand Boulevard Town Center in Miramar Beach unless noted otherwise. Most classes begin the week of August 13.

Mini Players- K-1st

Beauty and The Beast Minis

Tuesday 3:30-4:20 p.m.
Wed 3:45-4:35 p.m. (skip Sept. 28)
Friday 3:30-4:20 p.m. (skip Sept. 16)
Tuition: \$225

Ballet/Tap Minis

Tuesday 4:30-5:20 p.m.
Tuition: \$205

Little Players- 2nd-3rd

Beauty and The Beast Littles

Thursday 3:30-5 p.m.
Performance Nov. 5 at 3:30 p.m.
Tuition: \$415

Ballet/Tap Littles

Tuesday 3:30-4:20 p.m.
Tuition: \$205
Acting for Littles: Harry Potter
Wednesday 4:00-4:50 p.m.
Tuition: \$225

Big Players (4th-5th graders)

Beauty and The Beast Bigs

Tuesday 4:30-6:30 p.m. - Performance - Nov. 4 at 7 p.m.
Wednesday 4:45-6:45 p.m. - Performance - Nov. 5 at 11:30 a.m.
Tuition: \$415

Ballet/Tap Bigs

Wednesday 3:45-4:35 p.m.

(skip Sept. 28)
Tuition: \$205

Acting For Bigs: Harry Potter

Tuesday 3:30-4:20 p.m.
Tuition: \$225

Acting for Littles and Bigs: Harry Potter (Homeschool) Ages 7-12

Wednesday 10:30-11:20 a.m.
Tuition: \$225

Musical Theatre Workshop Bigs: Beetlejuice, Anastasia, Dear Evan Hansen

Thursday 5:00-5:50 p.m.
Tuition: \$225

Teens

Beauty and The Beast (6-8th graders)
Sat 9 a.m.-12:30 p.m. - Performances - Nov. 12 at 5 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.
Tuition: \$500

Beauty and The Beast (9th-12th graders)

Sat 9 a.m.-12:30 p.m. - Performances - Nov. 11 at 7:30 p.m. and Nov. 12 at 12 p.m. Tuition: \$500

Shakespeare for Teens

Tuesday 4:30-5:20 p.m.
Tuition: \$225

Acting for Teens: Harry Potter

Thursday 4-4:50 p.m.
Tuition: \$225

Musical Theatre Workshop Teens: Beetlejuice, Anastasia, and Dear Evan Hansen

Tuesday 5:45-7 p.m.
Tuition: \$250

Ballet for Teens/Adults

Wednesday 5-5:50 p.m.

Tuition: \$205

Tap for Teens/Adults

Wednesday 6-6:50 p.m.
Tuition: \$205

ECTC Thespian Troupe (6th-8th graders)

Saturdays 1-4 p.m.
Tuition: \$1,230

ECTC Jr. Company (9th-12th graders)

Saturdays 1-4 p.m.
Tuition: \$1,230

The ECTC Jr. Company is an opportunity for high school students in 9th-12th grade to continue their theatrical education. Members of the company have the opportunity to audition for several performance opportunities at ECTC as well as time to work on their individual pieces to be featured in a showcase. Students have exclusive masterclasses with the professional actors who come to work at ECTC. There are also opportunities for practical experience in technical theatre for all interested students. Florida Theatre Conference audition package workshops will be included as well. Our goal is to provide students with the advanced opportunities and educational training they need to

succeed in whatever they do.

This is a year-long commitment. Production audition opportunities include:

A LIVE Radio Play, A Charlie Brown Christmas, The Best Christmas Pageant Ever: the Musical, You and Me Under the Sea (an original production written and performed by Jr. Company members), Clue On Stage, The Sound of Music.

(ECTC staff will cast Jr. Company members in the shows, every Jr. Company member will not be in every production)

Adult Classes

Adult Dance - Wednesday 10-11 a.m. \$205*

Ballet for Teens/Adults

Wednesday 5-5:50 p.m. \$205

Tap for Teens/Adults

Wednesday 6-6:50 p.m. \$205

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Orchestra Conductor Todd Craven Promises Fantastic Season

BY KENNETH BOOKS

The Northwest Florida Symphony Orchestra (NFSO) is about to launch its 2022-23 season, offering a full slate of great concerts.

Todd Craven begins his second season as Music Director of the NFSO. He brings a lengthy and impressive background to his position, as well as a love of the Emerald Coast. The Michigan native had previously worked in Sarasota and Buffalo.

“I have been a musician all of my life, developing a love for the trumpet at age 10,” Todd said. “I was fortunate to have great teachers and mentors in my hometown in Michigan and went on to pursue music at the University of Michigan, where I studied with the renowned former Principal Trumpet of the Boston Symphony and Boston Pops, Armando Ghitalla.”

After he completed his master’s degree at Indiana University, Todd won an audition for Principal Trumpet of the Sarasota Orchestra, where he and his wife Laurie, an accomplished trombonist, played for several years. Todd’s trumpet-playing career ended in 2008 when he developed a non-life-threatening neurological condition. It was then that he developed an interest – and eventually a love – for conducting.

That required going back to school. He went back to his alma mater to study orchestral

conducting and was later accepted into the prestigious class of Marin Alsop at the Peabody Conservatory in Baltimore.

After the year in Baltimore, which he describes as “quite the culture shock moving from Sarasota,” he won auditions for two assistant conductor positions: Edmonton Symphony in Canada and the Buffalo Philharmonic.

“I knew that JoAnn Falletta and the Buffalo Philharmonic would be a great training ground, so I accepted that position,” he said. During the covid pandemic, he took a one-year teaching position at the University of Illinois, and auditioned for the Northwest Florida Symphony that year as a finalist. “I was so thrilled that I was awarded the position and my wife and I and our small cat moved immediately to Niceville to settle in before the start of the season,” he said. “We love being back in Florida and have enjoyed this area so much. We were thrilled to find that the area parks and beaches are even better, in our opinion, than South Florida! I certainly do not miss snow and driving in blizzard conditions! Our families are all based in Michigan still, so we visit the old stomping grounds over holidays and in the summer.”

Todd and his wife have settled into the small-town atmosphere of Niceville, he said, and have enjoyed football games and Niceville High School band



concerts. “We have also made new friends with our wonderful Northwest Florida Symphony Guild members and others in the community,” said Todd. “Also, I try to attend the local Niceville Chamber of Commerce breakfasts and am a member of the Mid-Bay Rotary Club.”

The NFSO was founded by John Leatherwood in 1987, which started as a community/student orchestra and then eventually evolved into a fully professional ensemble. “We draw from outstanding musicians as far away as Birmingham, Alabama, but most of our players come from this area of Northwest Florida,” Todd said. “They are all auditioned musicians, who have multiple degrees and are experts on their instruments.”

Todd is chomping at the bit for the 2022-23 NFSO season. “As Music Director, I am responsible for planning all of the music for the season, and it is something I very much love to do,” he said. “I like to work around themes for each concert and think of each one as an event. Our season opener, for instance, is entitled “Ravish and Mayhem” and features internationally acclaimed cellist, Amit Peled.

The first half of the kickoff concert, Todd said, features two beautiful contemporary works by living composers, Stephanie Berg and Anna Clyne. Each work has a connection to sounds of the ancient Middle East. Clyne’s “Dance for Cello and Orchestra” is a piece inspired by the poems of the ancient Sufi poet Rumi. The ever popular “Schehe-

razade” is the featured work on the second half, by 19th-century Russian composer Rimsky-Korsakov and is based on the famous tale from 1001 Arabian nights.

“It is my sincere hope that everyone enjoys our concerts this season and further understands what a wonderful cultural jewel that we have in the Mattie Kelly Arts Center! We have a state-of-the-art hall, an amazing art gallery and an exceptional orchestra that will knock your socks off,” said Todd. “Even if you are new to classical or orchestral music, there is something for everyone at the Northwest Florida Symphony Orchestra!”

For a copy 2021-2022 MKAC 25th Anniversary Brochure or to purchase tickets, visit MattieKellyArtsCenter.org.

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Wellness

Life with ADHD Part 2: In the Words of Mom and Dad

By STEPHENIE CRAIG

Last month, our son, Will, age 10, shared his experience living with ADHD. This month we are sharing our parent lessons navigating ADHD in our home. Neither of us are diagnosed with ADHD.

What are the positives of navigating ADHD in your home?

Our son sees the world through a different lens than we do. We can both be singularly focused and can miss the world happening around us. Will has more going on in his mind than we are able to fully recognize until he paints a picture, creates a flipbook, or builds a creation using discarded items. His creativity is inspiring and challenges us to see the world in new ways.

What are the challenges of navigating ADHD in your home?

Often people can't see past Will's challenges to stay on task. What appears to be lack of focus or engagement is actually him being hyper focused and engaged with everything around him. He makes connections and recognizes patterns that others miss. His struggle to focus, sit still or manage his impulses gets labeled by us and others as disrespect when that is rarely his intent.

What has not been helpful in navigating ADHD as a parent?

Expecting Will to feel, behave and move through the world like we do is not helpful. He is uniquely created and he doesn't need to be more like us to be a better version of himself. Assuming challenging behavior is coming from a place of disrespect creates unnecessary

conflict. Kids' behavior is most often about trying to meet an internal need or achieve an internal goal and is not designed to get under parents' skin (despite how it may feel sometimes). A lack of patience and frustration on our part is the quickest way to prolong follow through on Will's part. When he feels judged, misunderstood, and labeled as disrespectful, trust is broken and his brain moves into fight or flight. His focus shifts from the task at hand to the emotional battle at hand.

What has been helpful in navigating ADHD as a parent?

In our relationship, Will is the most vulnerable person with the least developed brain. It is not his job to change to make parenting easier for us. It is our responsibility to seek understanding about his experience, find ways to get on the same team, and help him overcome challenges and



develop confidence. Will lives with ADHD in a world that is built on systems that expect him to behave as though he doesn't have ADHD. This dynamic is frustrating for him and offering compassion over judgment makes a big difference. Rather than taking an adversarial approach, we learn to seek first to understand by asking questions, then offering to help him devel-

op strategies that work for him. Some strategies include adjusting diet, task checklists, calming skills and a reward point system for task completion. More recently, medication has played a helpful role in unlocking confidence in focus, follow through, and impulse control.

What have you learned from navigating ADHD in parenting?

We are all created and wired

differently. We cause unnecessary problems expecting kids or other people to see and process the world like we do. Our way is not the right or only way to be. Slowing down, listening, seeing and appreciating Will's unique personhood is a beautiful gift to him and to us. We want to manage ourselves well so we are affirming his giftedness rather than stubbornly insisting he be like us to be lovable and acceptable in the world. We want him to know he is wonderfully Will and in the world with an important purpose that will be accomplished because of his brain wiring not in spite of it.

ADHD is one way people experience feeling different. You are surrounded in life by different personalities, brain wiring, emotional processing and ways of seeing the world. Try remembering your way of being is not the only right way to be. Imagine the growth you might have within yourself and your relationships if you begin seeking to understand others' ways of seeing the world. As you navigate your journey, connect with us at journeybravely.com for support. Coaching sessions are currently available.

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Love That Traffic?

BY DR. RICHARD CHERN, M.D.

How are you handling life's little frustrations? I know this article goes outside the immediate area but I would bet everyone reading this article knows exactly how life in Destin has changed in the last ten years. I know for me, if there's a bridge, it might as well be an international border requiring a visa because the chances of me crossing from Destin to Niceville or Fort Walton Beach is about zero. In fact, unless I am hopping onto a boat to go fishing, I'll even avoid driving into the heart of Destin most of the year.

But, there are times when you just can't avoid the traffic, the crowds, or Publix on a Saturday afternoon. Or you have a family in town who want to go hunt for a parking spot near a public access point to sit in a mass of chairs, coolers, and people at that place we used to call the beach. These are the days that test our ability to let go of the stress and

frustration and enjoy the tiny bits of happiness that are still here.

What does this have to do with hormones? Hormone's help with muscle tone, weight loss, bone density, pain levels, sex drive, skin appearance, heart disease, breast cancer and more. One of those "and more" items are stress and anxiety. When you turn on 98 into a mass of tourists who are oblivious to everyone else on the road, have no issues crossing three lanes of traffic to turn left, and are more concerned with updating their Instagram than the traffic in front of them, hormones will help you stay calm and happy.

Hormones will help you keep you happy and calm after you arrive at Publix on Saturday afternoon for some creamer only to



find masses of tourists and empty shelves.

And when you decide to go to Smallmart with your list of essentials only to find that the most important item is not even sold at that location, hormones will help.

You see, hormones help you tolerate and even maybe enjoy the everyday events that might

be causing you stress, anxiety and grief today. Even the small stuff like someone's tone or attitude or the rudeness we see everywhere. Now, when I deal with a rude person I kind of find pleasure in the fact that they can't get me riled up. And, I understand that much of their problem is that they need their hormones.

If you find you are losing it in these situations you should really give us a call. In my experience it's much easier to find calm and humor in all the madness. Come see us and give us a chance to give you the relief you deserve.

Dr. Richard Chern, MD provides hormones therapy to men and women from across

the country. He is also on staff at BioTE Medical and teaches hormone therapy to new providers including providers right here in our local area. Dr Richard Chern, MD might even be treating your doctor or nurse practitioner. Dr Richard Chern, MD treats many of the doctors and nurse practitioners in the area and their staff as well. Dr Richard Chern, MD is a platinum BioTE provider and runs one of the largest BioTE hormone clinics in the country right here in Miramar Beach. Call Dr Richard Chern, MD today for an appointment at The Hormone Restoration Center at 850-837-1271.

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 Wellness

The Collagen Craze



By KAY LEAMAN,
HEALTH ARCHITECT

From commercials to magazine ads, it's all about collagen. But what is it and why do we

need it?

Collagen is the most abundant protein in the body. It has an adhesive quality that is only matched by its ability to provide connection, structure and strength. About 30 percent of our body's proteins are one type of collagen or another and it is also top dog in the animal kingdom.

Saying collagen is found throughout our bodies is kind of an understatement. It's a structural element of bones, muscles, tendons and ligaments. Collagen and skin are always talked about together, because it's a major component of our largest organ. Collagen is also found in blood

vessels, the cornea of your eye, teeth, cartilage, discs between your vertebrae and the digestive tract.

Age is the main enemy, with the sun coming in a close second in regards to production. Collagen production starts to decline in our 20s or 30s. The structure is somewhat complex and there are 16 different types that exist in our body, each having different structures and functions.

I also discovered three things:

1. Sugar and refined carbohydrates can hamper collagen's repairing capabilities. This is just another reason to limit these in our diet.
2. It's a large molecule which cannot be absorbed by skin so don't waste money on creams, lotions or potions that tout collagen for your skin.
3. There can never be a vegan collagen; it doesn't exist.

Type I (90 percent of our col-

lagen) is the strongest and a component of bones, skin, tendons, cartilage, teeth and other connective tissue and it can stretch a lot without breaking. Our muscles, organs, and arteries rely on Type III.

If you're considering adding collagen to your diet, remember that it requires consistent consumption on a daily basis. The role it plays goes far beyond what I've covered here. High quality is a must. I've seen some amazing before and after photos as well as several surprising health improvements. These individuals consumed a high quality collagen daily for a minimum of three months. Remember, it takes time for the body to do what it does so well, repair and heal itself. Our job is to nourish it to the best of our ability and rejoice as we reap the benefits. Find me at succeed.hdhl@gmail.com.

Here's to health!



Animal Behavior Focus works with dogs and cats that suffer from fear, anxiety and aggression issues.

Working on a case-by-case basis along the Emerald Coast, Animal Behavior Focus provides training during in-home visits or via Zoom. The firm uses positive methods for training and employs certified trainers.

Proper evaluation and training can address behavioral issues such as:

- Isolation distress (separation anxiety)
- Resource guarding (food aggression)
- Inter-dog or cat aggression
- On-leash dog aggression
- Dog/cat aggression towards a human
- Fear-related aggression
- Generalized anxiety
- Territorial aggression
- Storm phobia



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Ascension Opens Third Women's Breast Cancer Diagnostics Center

Ascension Sacred Heart is opening a new Women's Diagnostic Center that offers 3D mammography. The center also features a breast health navigator who provides support, from diagnosis to treatment, for new patients newly diagnosed with breast cancer. This is Ascension Sacred Heart's third women's diagnostic center of its kind in the region.

Designed with a woman's comfort and convenience in mind, Ascension Sacred Heart Watersound Origins Women's Diagnostic Center is located at 75 Origins Main Street, Suite 201 in Watersound. That's inside the Watersound Town Center Building on the second floor. The center is conveniently located near Ascension Medical Group Sacred Heart at Watersound that includes primary care and OB/GYN services.

The center will provide a variety of services including:

- 3-D mammography
- A patient navigator to guide and support women, provide resources and facilitate coordination among caregivers and patients
- Bone density imaging and ultrasound

"At the sister facility at Emerald Coast, we have found that approximately 30-percent of women who were screened needed follow-up testing", said Pulido. "It is recommended that women are screened annually starting at age 40, although some women's doctors may recommend screening earlier."

For more information about the Women's Diagnostic Centers, visit ascension.org/sacred-heartmammogram. For more information about Cancer Care, visit ascension.org/sacredheart-cancer.

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Ascension Sacred Heart Emerald Coast First in the Region to Offer New Procedure for Sleep Apnea

Last week care teams at Ascension Sacred Heart Emerald Coast completed their first Inspire procedure. Inspire is an FDA approved treatment option for people living with sleep apnea who struggle to use or get benefit from CPAP (Continuous Positive Airway Pressure) therapy. Ascension Sacred Heart Emerald Coast is the first hospital to offer the procedure in Northwest Florida.

The American Sleep Apnea Association estimates that about 22 million Americans live with sleep apnea. It occurs when the airway collapses during sleep and blocks oxygen from flowing to the brain. The brain senses a lack of oxygen and wakes the body up just long enough to take a breath. The cycle repeats throughout the night and causes poor, disruptive sleep. When left untreated, the consistent lack of sleep can sometimes cause other health issues like high blood pressure, depression, and heart issues.

“It’s exciting to finally have a surgical option for sleep apnea that can be equal to CPAP for people who cannot tolerate CPAP,” said Dr. Ryan Gegg, an ear, nose and throat doctor who treats patients at Ascension Sacred Heart Emerald Coast. “We know that sleep apnea not only causes fatigue but can have other significant heart and brain comorbidities if left untreated.”

The device works inside the body with a patient’s natural breathing process to treat sleep apnea. Mild stimulation opens the airway during sleep, allowing oxygen to flow naturally. When someone with the device takes



wake up.

The Inspire system is implanted during a short, outpatient procedure. The system is placed under the skin of the neck and chest through two small incisions. Most patients return home the same day and take over-the-counter pain medications to manage pain as needed.

Researchers have evaluated the safety and effectiveness of Inspire during a clinical trial and there have also been more than 150 peer-reviewed publications of the device. Five-year trial outcomes showed patients using

Inspire experienced significant reductions in sleep apnea events and significant improvements in quality-of-life measures.

Since its opening in 2003, Ascension Sacred Heart Emerald Coast has consistently been ranked high among U.S. hospitals for the quality of its care and patient satisfaction survey scores. In June, the hospital was again

named as one of the nation’s top 100 hospitals by Merative. The hospital also recently earned the top safety grade of “A” from Leapfrog Group, a national organization focused on preventing errors, accidents, injuries and infections in U.S. hospitals. In 2021 and 2022, the hospital also was named to Newsweek’s 2022 list of Best Maternity Care Hospitals.

For more information on services offered at Ascension Sacred Heart Emerald Coast, visit ascension.org/EmeraldCoastFL.

a breath, the nerve that controls their tongue is stimulated causing their tongue to move forward without disturbing their sleep. The patient uses a small handheld remote to turn Inspire on before bed and off when they




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Community

Ka-Boom!



BY RICK MOORE

Many years ago, I was asked to drive the bus for a field trip from Mobile, Alabama to Navarre Beach, Florida. We were going to eat an early lunch on the beach, go to the zoo, and then have the students back home by the time the sun went down. There were twenty-five students and five chaperones including myself. The two-hour drive was uneventful. We were almost to the top of the Navarre Beach Causeway Bridge when we heard a loud “Ka-Boom” that shook the whole bus. I stopped the bus at the very top of the bridge so we would not slide forwards or

backwards, and then applied the emergency brakes. After a few moments of watching smoke billowing out, we raised the hood to discover a piston hanging outside of the engine: we had blown a head gasket. This was about as bad as it gets. One of the chaperones called the school and asked for them to send another bus and a huge wrecker to tow the broken down vehicle back to Mobile. They told us it would be three hours before they could meet us.

Since we could see the Gulf waters from where we were, I suggested letting the students walk down the bridge to the beach, but a couple of the chaperones thought that way too dangerous. So there we were: twenty-five students on a hot day, stuck in a bus on top of a bridge with no air conditioning. This was not what I signed up for. One of the chaperones started asking me if I had been watching the oil gauge, implying it was my fault the engine blew up. Another chaperone began calculating how much this was going to cost the school. Traffic was backed up for miles with angry tourists honking their horns. When one student asked



to go to the bathroom, six others said they had to go as well. This was not my idea of fun. We all know the saying, “When life hands you a lemon, just make lemonade.” That sounds nice, but it’s no fun when you are the lemon and you are getting the life squeezed out of you. We needed something to change the atmosphere.

As soon as a police officer came to relieve me from direct-

ing traffic, I went back inside the bus and asked the chaperones and students for their attention. I informed them they were no longer on a school bus. They were now traveling on the flying ship known as the “SS Navarre.” The students were no longer classmates. They were now shipmates. We were no longer chaperones: we were captains. I informed them the “Ka-Boom” heard earlier was a cannonball

that struck the front of our flying ship. We then taught the shipmates to say Navarre like good pirates do: “Na-vaRRRR...” We played Hide the Treasure which was just an adaptation of Hide the Biscuit, a game I had learned to play with a chalk eraser in the fourth grade. We put a twist to the popular game hangman, and called it Walk the Plank. We even played Pass The Cannonball where students put a tennis ball under their chin and passed the “cannonball” to the person next to them without using their hands. Before we knew it, three hours had gone by and a new bus was there to pick us up in time to eat lunch at the beach, and still make it to the zoo. A week later, one of the parents told me their daughter didn’t mention anything about the beach or the zoo, but she wouldn’t stop talking about the “SS Navarre.”

Sooner or later, life goes “Ka-Boom” for everyone in one way or another. When it does, rise to the occasion and change the atmosphere.

Rick Moore is Communications Pastor at Destiny Worship Center.

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The Road to Redemption: The Story of Ashley Vannoy – small groups and spiritual growth



partying or clubbing or bar hopping, so she couldn't grasp how we could have a good time just being together, praying for one another and sharing our good times and struggles with each other.

Ashley Vannoy, a native of Pensacola, knew Jesus for quite a while before she discovered one of the secrets to encouraging spiritual growth and that happened when she joined a small group at Destiny Worship Center. Ashley's career is in Commercial Banking and, as she pointed out, "if you're in a corporate environment you're constantly pushed to do more. Learning what it looks like from the Kingdom perspective has changed me. I didn't live by faith but deal to deal."

She came from a charismatic background and wanted to live the Christian lifestyle, but has, in her own words, "only been living by faith recently by participating in small groups." Even though she's known Christ for a long time, being part of small groups has made a tremendous impact on her.

The concept of small



groups is reminiscent of the early church where they met in each other's homes to worship and break bread together. Remember in the Book of Acts when Herod threw Peter into prison? A small home church stayed in prayer all night for his release, and God mightily answered their prayers.

One of the first small groups Ashley joined was a "back to basics with a simple format to get habits together to lead a Christian life." As a long-time Christian she wasn't convinced that this simple curriculum was what she needed, but she discovered that it was well done and ar-

ranged to "maximize the benefit for each person." She experienced complete house cleaning after six weeks.

During her time in various small groups Ashley really began to mature in Christ. It's not just that she has grown, but that she's also been able to participate in the growth of members in her small group.

There's something very powerful when we pray with and for one another. The Holy Spirit is released to work in hearts, accomplishing great things for God that wouldn't have happened otherwise.

The church, in its infancy, was known to spend time with each other going from house to house. This daily fellowship not

only encouraged them to be bold in their faith, but it allowed the new believers to help each other as needed. The scripture calls us a family. Close families do more than get together once a year for a reunion. They find the time to be with each other on a regular basis.

In her small groups, Ashley has learned to "put your trust in the Lord 100% and trust Him even when you don't understand."

You can hear Ashley's complete story and listen to many other incredible interviews on the weekly Road to Redemption radio show and podcast at www.roadtoredemptionpodcast.com.

BY VICTORIA OSTROSKY

Small groups, life groups, and connect groups seem to be all the rage in Christian circles nowadays. There are so many devotional books and courses available that it would be impossible to take advantage of each one in any lifetime.

You may wonder why this is. Why do Christians even want to get together and do life together? I have an unbelieving friend who, one time a few years back, expressed her confusion over why it was so important to me to spend time around my Christian brothers and sisters. We weren't



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Sean of the South: The Old Ballgame



BY SEAN DIETRICH

It was an average Thursday night. The crowd waiting to get into Truist Park was a biblical mass. There were too many people to comprehend.

Everyone was sweating through their undergarments. The smell of human armpit odor was in the air.

It was a sold-out game. Forty-odd thousand baseball fans stood waiting for the sacred gates to open. There wasn't a frown in the bunch. Almost everyone in this crowd was cheerful.

That's baseball for you.

At its heart baseball has always been about fun. Plain and simple. At ballgames, most people are glad to be there.

You'll see kids in jerseys, laughing with each other. Mothers smiling, bouncing babies on hips. Old men with bright eyes,

wearing leather mitts that predate the Eisenhower presidency, telling stories about "the Say Hey Kid" and "Hammerin' Hank" to their grandchildren.

And that's the beauty of this game. It is one of the only American institutions remaining wherein people of different persuasions, ages and creeds can find a common bond, and boo in unison at the same umpire.

A place where all God's children can come together and pay \$18 for a beer.

That's probably why I love the game so much. Because there are no divisions in a ballpark. Here, you'll see all cultures. All classes. All kinds.

Guys who drive Peterbilts brush shoulders with men who drive Range Rovers. Bankers and attorneys stand alongside millworkers and pipe fitters and cheer for the same home run.

A home run which was launched by a 24-year-old Afro-Dominican who earns more money per fiscal year than Pope Francis.

The gates opened.

Children in line started vibrating with enthusiasm. Parents hoisted toddlers onto shoulders. And the throngs began moving toward the City of Joy.

Truist Park, 10 miles north of Atlanta. A 1.1-billion-dollar ballpark and real-estate development

that makes Disney World look like a trip to the gastroenterologist. This place is nothing but a fun zone.

Even the guy scanning tickets was having fun. He scanned my ticket and said, "You ready to kick butt tonight, boss?"

"I'm ready to win," I said.

"That's my man," he shouted.

Then he high-fived me.

It was a firm, strong high-five. The kind that you remember for several minutes thereafter.

In real life, you don't get many high-fives. But you get them in ballparks.

My first beer of the evening was purchased from a vendor who carried a heavy ice chest over his head.

"ICE COOOLD BEEEEER!" he shouted to each passerby.

I asked how he liked his job.

"Man, I walk eight to ten miles every game. I run up bleachers all night until my legs burn. I work like a mule. But people are so generous. They tip me better than any job I ever had. I'll make more money this week than I made all month last year. I love it here. You don't meet any sad people at a baseball game."

And he was right. I was looking around and I didn't find a single long face.

So it was an all-around great night. But frankly I don't remember much about the game. Not

because I don't love the Braves. I do.

I've been rooting for the Braves since I was a young guy and the Superstation broadcast their games for free.

I loved Dale Murphy, I remember the Sid Bream slide, the 78-pitch game thrown by Greg Maddux, and I recall with fondness almost every time coach Bobby Cox threatened an umpire.

But the reason tonight's game was so good has nothing to do with nostalgia. Not for me. Tonight's ballgame was a great experience because I rarely see so many joyous people in one place.

There was the "Kiss Cam," when the jumbotron showed images of random people in the ballpark kissing.

There was the booty-shaking contest, when my wife and I bounced our hindparts together, high in the bleachers, along with thousands of others who danced to Bill Haley and his Comets singing "Shake, Rattle and Roll."

There were the crummy hot-dogs. The overcooked hamburgers. The stale French fries. The

tasteless nachos, served in a plastic batting helmet.

And there was the height of the evening.

It happened during the seventh-inning stretch. And it happens at every Braves game.

This anomalous event occurs when 42,000 stand to sing "Take Me Out to the Ballgame."

These are ordinary humans. People who disagree on virtually everything within our society. These are people who would rather eat dirt than find common ground.

But tonight, the entire stadium took to their feet, cheered and made music together. Everyone hollered. Everyone knew the lyrics.

Some raised plastic cups into the air as they sang. Little girls sat on the shoulders of old men. Teenage boys bellowed alongside their dads. Strangers high-fived hard enough to break their wrists.

And for a very brief moment on an average Thursday night, everything was okay in America.

And well. That's baseball for you.

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Musing

The Rewards of Curiosity



BY KIRK MCCARLEY

One of the things I most enjoy about coaching is the opportunity to learn from clients. This journey has allowed a wide

variety of diverse exploration:

What constitutes the highest quality vintage from the perspective of a certified Sommelier.

The impact of location and climate in maple sugar farming.

The correlation between the seemingly unrelated disciplines of music and mathematics.

Leadership principles gleaned through the eyes of a fighter pilot.

Challenges, demands, and expectations that fall on the shoulders of major college sports information directors.

Storyline and equipment considerations that go into the development of engaging podcasts.

The unrealized and unintended discrimination that frus-

trates and demoralizes members of “protected classes.”

The value of a simple phone call to former colleagues during the peak of Covid.

How taking a minute to repair a cyclist’s flat tire translated to a totally unrelated sales lead.

Currently I’m revisiting some of the fundamentals of coaching in an effort to earn more advanced certification. Through that process I am reminded that besides being ethically grounded, one of the foundations for successful coaching is to possess an attitude of curiosity. Healthy curiosity is non-judgmental, empathetic towards the client, and most importantly not predicated upon the coach’s own value system. An effective coach does and should not try to convince or persuade a client.

Some time back I had the honor of working with a young man who was employed as an engineer with a major company. He was well rewarded by his organization, important as he resided in an area notorious for high living costs. He was generous with his earnings, sharing unconditionally with members of his family who were not as fortunate or financially disciplined. His reason for reaching out to me was predicated upon identifying another passion that would not

only augment his current vocation, but also bring some level of further monetization.

Given his lifelong disciplined mindset he began to explore the possibility of developing a service specifically designed for millennials, many of whom are debt riddled and finding dreams of financial security, home ownership, and raising a family bleak. The “side” endeavor launched. He continues as a financial coach having positive impact for his clients.

I might add too that this client had another dreamful aspiration for coaching. Lovelorn, he was hopeful that he might meet a special lady, make a connection, find romance, and build a family. Never losing sight of or abandoning that dream and with my encouragement, he made that happen.

They married last year. I always tell my career coaching clients, “life” invariably intersects career.

Earlier this year, there was another career coaching client frustrated in his job search. This individual was well-seasoned in his professional field, yet found not only rejection, but difficulty even getting through corporate “gatekeepers.” Was it age? Was there lack of demand for his trade?



A coaching curiosity compelled me to ask how he might leverage his experience? Rather than allowing age to present an obstacle, how could he advantageously “sell” it and his experience? Further, what about the possibility of launching his own enterprise?

Obviously there were a number of other different questions and conversations, but at the end of the day, that is exactly what he did, establishing his own LLC, specializing in a particular service area that though important, flies under the radar of many small- to mid-sized companies. Creating that safe, supportive environment facilitated his creating and now living his “ideal job description.”

As a coach, there are few things more gratifying than seeing a client’s energy shift when they discover that “aha” moment. The joy of being a curious partner on that path of discovery is beyond reward.

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





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Detached Single Family Homes								
Community	Currently Active	Ave Active Price	Days on Market (Active)	Currently Pending	Sold Listings	Ave Sold Price	Sold Price to List Price	Ave Sold Price Per Sq Ft.
30A East	279	3,800,750	65	68	213	2,866,926	98%	898.91
30A West	147	2,536,524	72	31	109	1,718,799	97%	644.4
Alys Beach	5	7,320,000	52	1	12	6,057,149	98%	1,699.34
Burnt Pine (Sandestin)	9	3,981,000	77	3	6	2,177,555	94%	556.39
Churchill Oaks	3	3,891,600	51	1	2	3,321,500	101%	835.44
Grayton Beach	7	5,095,000	110	3	3	3,045,000	96%	1,194.56
Miramar/Sandestin Resort	147	2,040,460	65	27	103	1,727,852	98%	547.65
North Santa Rosa Beach	120	1,354,373	84	36	106	869,949	99%	333.79
Naturewalk at Seagrove	4	1,661,250	24	2	5	1,426,000	99%	614.79
Prominence	7	2,742,857	117	1	3	2,042,783	98%	647.37
Rosemary Beach	17	4,672,824	44	1	11	5,688,182	98%	1,678.25
Seacrest Beach	24	2,053,458	66	7	12	2,137,917	97%	791.92
Seaside	3	4,931,667	80	2	3	2,711,000	101%	1,540.3
Watercolor	28	3,830,893	82	5	21	4,251,238	98%	1,185.64
Watersound Beach	10	5,126,950	32	1	10	4,371,500	99%	1,242.86
Watersound Origins	21	1,336,571	47	19	34	1,144,031	99%	439.54

* Average Prices are rounded for simplicity.

Information is obtained from the Emerald Coast Association of Realtors Multiple Listing Service, Inc (ECARMLS).

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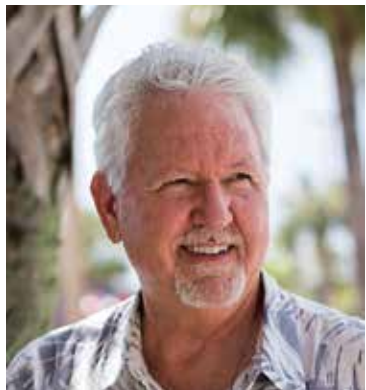
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 Musing

A Pastor's Ponderings: Prodigal Sin Collides with Prodigal Love



BY PASTOR DAVID HOLLAND

But we had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost

and is found. Luke 15:31-32

The young man hated mucking out the stinking pig stalls. But he snuck some slop for himself occasionally to avoid starvation and prolong his miserable life. Hunger gnawed at him, his constant companion. Squandering his wealth on wine and women reduced him to caring for pigs.

Life could not be worse for the young man. His shoes gave out, leaving him barefoot as sores on his feet oozed. With clothes tattered, and hair falling out in clumps, even the lice didn't want him anymore.

He had once been the life of the party. All the girls wanted his attention, as his prodigal money caused the wine to flow freely. Now, he was skimming pig slop. He yearned for the days of his youth eating at his father's table, overflowing with sumptuous food. Tormented by memories of better days, he came to himself.

The thought drifted into his foggy mind, "I could go to Father for help." Then he remembered the hurt look in his father's eyes when he demanded his inheritance years before.

"No, but perhaps he would cut me some slack and hire me as one of his field hands. Anything would be better than this." So, with some anticipation of rejection, he turned toward home. Filthy, famished and broken, he shuffled toward the very place he had turned his back on. Then, he saw the strangest sight.

In the distance, an older man ran awkwardly toward him. Holding his long, beautiful robes up around his knees, he clopped along in his sandals. As the familiar man approached, he heard him shouting and calling his name. "My son! My son!" Father cried, embracing the young man, sobbing with joy and relief.

"Father, don't touch me. I stink of my sin. I have failed you, wasting your money and my life. Just hire me as a servant, and I will be happy."

Passing over his son's confession, the father ordered the servants, "Bring my son clean clothes, put new sandals on his feet and place my ring on his finger. Let's eat and have a party to celebrate my son's return." The servants responded quickly, incredulous of the prodigal love the father lavished upon his son.

This is Christ's classic parable told in my words. The story hinges on the scriptural word, prodigal, which usually means wasteful, extravagant, or lavish. In the son's case, he wasted his inheritance on selfish pleasures. But the father shows us something altogether different as he lavishes his love upon his child. His father saw him and was filled with compassion for him. Luke 15:20.

We have traditionally associated prodigal with the son's wild lifestyle because we immediately identify with his sinfulness. It is just as true to say that the father's love was prodigal in the sense of lavishing joy and forgiveness upon the son. Too often, the shame of our sin dominates our thoughts and prevents us from embracing God's great love.

Prodigal sin collides with prodigal love and crumbles because grace always wins. Sin melts in the presence of the white-hot heat of unconditional love. "How great is the love the Father has lavished on us that we should be called children of

God!" 1 John 3:1. Can you feel Father God's loving embrace wrapping around you as He weeps with joy at your return?

This story moves me because Jesus took on all of my prodigal sin and lavished his prodigal love on me instead. I am the prodigal son in His story. How many times have I run after my own desires? I gave myself to terrible habits that ran my soul dry. Why did it always take me so long to run back to the Father?

But here He comes running toward me, the Father of all creation. Weeping, he yearns for me and calls my name. He removes my filthy clothes and dresses me with the white robe of Christ's righteousness. God puts the ring of His authority on my finger. Then, He calls me "son."

We go about our lives chasing lesser gods while God waits for us to come home. He lingers on the road, waiting for His colossal love to collide with the magnitude of our sin. God is patient because love always wins.

Dave Holland pastored churches for 38 years before retiring in Destin. He recently released his new devotional/Bible study based on the Gospel of Luke titled "Extraordinary Jesus: Ignite Your Season of Miracles." You can get a copy of this book from his website, DaveHolland.org, or at Amazon.com. Pastor Dave is available to preach and teach in churches and conferences. Contact him at DavidHolland54@gmail.com.



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Dining

Soleil: An Experience in Flavor, View and Variety

BY LORI LEATH SMITH

If you're looking for fine dining with a backdrop of the Gulf of Mexico, Soleil located in The Inn at Crystal Beach is your spot. It's a grand view of the beach and Gulf, great seafood and much more with an upscale vibe.

We tried an array of entrees and loved them all. Celebrity Chef Michael Sichel takes ordinary menu items such as steak, and turns them into a delicious work of art that leaves your taste buds wanting more. Dishes are positively different, ones you won't find anywhere else, such as oysters prepared several ways that pay tribute to the Bienville style of the Gulf Coast but with Chef Sichel's twist. The crab rolls were perfect, allowing the crab meat taste through, instead of the sauce. Chef Sichel delights in leaving his creative mark on



in the kitchen was at New York City's legendary Gotham Bar and Grill, and he credits its pioneering Chef Alfred Portale as his most influential culinary inspiration. Chef Sichel has since been in the kitchens of Rubicon (Drew Nieporent's San Francisco blockbuster restaurant), the Abbey of Sainte Croix (Salon-de-Provence, France), Auberge du Soleil (Napa), Restaurant Indigo (New Orleans), and Galatoire's (New Orleans), among others.

His accolades include competing on Bravo's Top Chef: New Orleans, 2013, an internship with World Pastry Champion Chef En-Ming Hsu of The French Pastry School at the Ritz Carlton Chicago, being a featured Chef at Jazz Aspen in June of 2018, being a featured Chef at Gatsby on DAOU Mountain Annual Wine Club event in Paso Robles, California in 2016, and he was a featured Chef at Arkansas Symphony Orchestra Opus Ball XXXII in Little Rock, Arkansas in 2016, to name a few.

Soleil serves lunch from 11 a.m. - 3 p.m. and dinner from 5 p.m. until close Tuesday - Saturday along with a Sunday Brunch from 11 a.m. - 3:15 p.m. Visit soleildestin.com.

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each and every dish. The grand finale? Pastry Chef Michael Bump presented us with thoughtfully prepared delights to top off our meal. Pair your appetizer, entrée and dessert with non-ordinary, hand-chosen wines designed to complement, and you have a winning night out.

Soleil features coastal modern cuisine with an elevated dining

experience. Menus evolve seasonally to match the naturally exquisite setting of sun, sand and sea. So, there's always something different to experience.

As a New York native, Chef Sichel grew up immersed in the ingredients, heritage and family-style cooking of his Italian roots. A Culinary Institute of America (CIA) grad, Chef Sichel's first job

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The 10th Annual Paddle at the Park Sponsored by HCA Florida Destin Emergency, a standup paddle board race event, will take place on Saturday, Aug. 20, in the beautiful emerald-green Gulf waters at Henderson Beach State Park in Destin, Fla. It offers races for all ages and skill levels, with its Kids' Fun Paddle, 1-Mile Beginner Ride, 3-Mile Recreational Race, and 6-Mile Elite Race.

The weekend fun begins on Friday, Aug. 19, with a Racer Welcome Party at BOTE,

1, 3 & 6 Mile Races

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2022

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sponsored by HCA Florida Destin Emergency

an international paddle board brand headquartered in the Des-

tin area. It continues on Saturday morning with the races, which have staggered start times, beginning at 9 a.m. Racers and spectators alike will enjoy the festive atmosphere with displays and booths set up along the beach. The event will conclude with awards.

Registration is now open at <https://paddleguru.com/races/10thAnnualPaddleatthePark>. Find all race details at PaddleAtThePark.com or follow [Facebook.com/PaddleAtThePark](https://www.facebook.com/PaddleAtThePark).

Roux 30a's Around The World Dinner Series Returns To Grayton Beach

Prepare for a trip around the globe with Roux 30a as they are thrilled to announce the return of their 'Around the World' dinner series. These special dinners feature five courses inspired by different countries' distinctive cuisine while incorporating Executive Chef Nikhil Abuvala's custom flair. This Fall, Roux 30a's curated experience will feature three delicious stops.

The series will begin on August 17th and 18th featuring dishes from the home tables of India, a country marked by brilliant spice and vibrant culture. The country is a natural first stop for Chef Nikhil Abuvala as his culinary roots were forged in fond childhood moments rolling fresh Indian flatbread alongside his grandmother. He grew up admiring the herbs and spices that characterize this South Asian fare which have inspired his restaurant ventures and Around the World series' menus.

On October 12th and 13th, indulge in joie de vivre as Roux 30a takes you on a culinary tour of France, where rich and refined dishes from this classical country will take the stage. Next on our itinerary, we'll travel to Greece, where Roux 30a will provide guests with a Mediterranean

menu founded on the traditional triad of wheat, olive oil and wine. This two-night stop will take place on November 16th and 17th. More countries and dates will be announced soon.

Purchase a seat at the table for \$125 per person and indulge in an optional wine pairing for an additional charge. These intimate five-course dinners only take place twice per month, so be sure to reserve the experience in advance via Resy.

An intimate, chef-to-table experience, Roux 30A is led by Owner and Executive Chef Nikhil Abuvala. The award-winning restaurant, located in the heart of South Walton, Florida at Grayton Beach just north of world-renowned Highway 30A, features an impressive state-of-the-art, open-air kitchen and inviting 44-seat dining room outfitted with custom distressed-wood farm tables. Guests are treated to a skillfully constructed six-course tasting menu that is of the seasons. For nearly a decade, Roux 30a has presented immersive culinary experiences in an effusive atmosphere, by expertly redefining cuisines from all over the world and hand selecting superb ingredients and wine. Roux 30a is seaside inspired, mod-

ern cuisine. Roux 30a offers evening seatings featuring a rotating tasting menu and Snack Hour by reservation only and is available for private dining experiences. For more information, visit roux30a.com and follow along via Facebook and Instagram.



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Community

A Destin Tradition Where Fish Reigns Supreme!

The Destin Seafood Festival is back and better than ever for 2022!

October 7-9 | Friday 4 pm – 10 p.m., Saturday 10 a.m. – 10 p.m., Sunday 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.

One of the locals' favorite times of year is the Destin Seafood Festival, now in its 44th year! So popular is this exciting, delicious, delectable event that more than 60,000 locals and visi-

tors are expected to walk through Destin Harbor and the Harbor Boardwalk on Harbor Boulevard (Hwy. 98) during the weekend. The 2019 Festival included more than 110 food and craft vendors,



all in. You can stroll along the Destin Harbor enjoying the arts and crafts where artists and vendors display their jewelry, clothing, sculpture, glass, watercolors, oil paintings, designs and more. And don't forget your seafood festival T-shirt!

one-day festival on "Kelly's Hill," where folks could overlook the Destin Harbor, the current site of HarborWalk Village. It has always been held in conjunction with the Destin Fishing Rodeo during October.

New for 2022 is the Call To Chef – A local seafood experience that brings back the flare of local seafood to our Destin Seafood Festival. Located inside the larger festival, the Call to Chef will require a paid ticket to browse the local restaurant tents, sample their flavors and vote for your favorites. The winning chefs will be invited to/honored at a village supper at a later date.

For more information on participating as a chef or being a sponsor for this great event, email info@destinseafoodfest.com.

All the yum and fun began in 1978 when the Destin Charter Boat Ladies Auxiliary decided to establish a festival to celebrate local fishermen. Now a Destin tradition, it used to be only a

Portions of the proceeds are donated to the Destin Fisherman's Fund to help those in need and today is hosted by area businesses in conjunction with sponsors and countless volunteers. While the festival has grown into its new home on the Destin Harbor Boardwalk, the Destin Seafood Festival remains the primary fundraiser for the non-profit, Destin Charter Boat Association formed in 1954.

This year's musical entertainment, with four different stages, will feature local bands playing throughout the festival. Harbor restaurants and bars will offer a full lineup of local favorites as well, performing throughout the day and evening. You can bring a chair and chill or don your dancing shoes! Bands and schedule TBA. Visit DestinSeafoodFestival.com.

There are Kids Zones for all ages. The East Pass Marina Kids Zone has pony rides, a petting zoo and kids' games geared towards younger kids and toddlers. There is a seating tent nearby so you can take a break and cool down while the kids play. The HarborWalk Kids Fun Zone has Hamster balls, a rock-climbing wall and a zip line. There is a seating tent nearby also. Kids will delight in face-painting and tattoos as well.

Parking will be available at Heron Harbor, the HarborWalk Village, the Destin Community Center and the Destin Fishing Museum.

Admission is totally free or you can go as a VIP with passes that include a private VIP seating area that overlooks the Destin City Stage, complimentary unlimited food and refreshments that include a variety of seafood, gumbos and catered treats, soft drinks and bottled water. To purchase a VIP pass, visit the official Destin Seafood Festival website.

For a site map, to become a vendor and other information, visit DestinSeafoodFestival.com.

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in addition to local restaurants. Happening Friday through Sunday, Oct. 7-9, the Festival kicks off October's month-long Destin Fishing Rodeo. You need no ticket to attend and you'll get the opportunity to take in some of the best local and coastal musicians at the beach with four stages beckoning you to a variety of live rock, reggae, country, tropical tunes and more. Local Destin restaurants and eateries will serve up their scrumptious seafood specialties on the docks and along the new, pedestrian-friendly Harbor Boardwalk. Cold drinks, including beer and wine, are available and will keep you cooled off while you take it

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Studio 237 Music Lessons: Benefits of Music Lessons

With a packed schedule, it can be difficult to decide whether to add music lessons into your kid's weekly activities. If you're on the fence about signing them up for lessons on piano, guitar, ukulele, singing, or perhaps something else, take note of the unique benefits provided by music lessons which other disciplines just can't provide.

Good for Brain Development

It's long been said that music makes you smarter. A famous study by E. Glenn Schellenberg in 2004 found that taking weekly music lessons led to small increases in IQ in first-graders, while non-musical activities did not. Schellenberg provided nine months of weekly piano and voice lessons to small groups of six-year-olds with a second set taking drama lessons and a third with no lessons at all. Children taking music lessons over the school year surprisingly scored an average of three IQ points higher than the others.

There is also a strong link between music and language processing abilities. Researchers at Northwestern University found that language skills like auditory working memory and the ability to learn sound patterns were strengthened by music lessons. Children taking music lessons performed better in reading ability tests when compared with children taking painting or other

visual arts lessons.

Academic Success

Musical training is also excellent for improving spatial-temporal skills (meaning visualization, creativity, and problem solving). A study at the University of Kansas found that elementary schools with better music education scored around 20% higher in English and math standardized tests compared to schools with low-quality music programs. The study does show a strong connection between music lessons leading to better grades.

Better visualization and problem-solving can transfer over to a well-rounded range of subject areas and careers such as math, art, computing, designing and engineering. In the long-term, children who participate in music training are also more optimistic about their futures, and are about 15 percent more likely to aim to attend higher education.

Creativity and Enjoyment

It's great to think about how music lessons can improve your child's learning and cognitive abilities, but by far the greatest benefit of music is being musical itself. Creativity is difficult to measure from a scientific perspective, but anyone who participates in a creative subject will tell you about the positive effect it has on personal expression, happiness, and self-confidence. According to the University



of Texas, taking music lessons gives children a fantastic boost in their self-esteem and motivation, which can lead to better study habits and a sense of pride in their musical accomplishments.

Which Instrument to Choose?

Ultimately, there is no one instrument more beneficial than any other. The choice can depend on a few factors, for example:

- Are they excited about the instrument?

- Does it match the style of music they like?

- Have they seen other people performing on the instruments?

If you're not sure, it's hard to go wrong with popular choices like piano, guitar, ukulele, drums, or voice. To help you make a

choice, visit our studio, listen to and try some instruments. One of our teachers can help you discover an instrument that best fits you. Call Ray and Lisa Cyr at 850.231.3199. Located in Santa Rosa Beach, FL. www.Studio237Music.com.

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 Business

To Rent Or Not To Rent? That Is The Question

Should you rent your beach home? That is the question many homeowners struggle with. The rental income a beach home can produce can be extremely profitable, but short term rentals are not for the faint at heart. We wanted to get some insight on what type of furnishings a designer would recommend when furnishing and designing a short term rental. So we found top designer in our area, Marisol Gullo of Not too Shabby for her thoughts, this is what she had to say.

“Well, certainly this can be a fine line to walk, you want your beach rental to be as beautiful as possible, but also as durable as possible. “it is a mistake to think that just because you are furnishing a rental property that gives you carte blanche to put in the cheapest furnishings you can find. This will negatively effect your bottom line. There are a great deal of rentals on the market, so the competition is fierce. We live in an age where your rental property can be rated immediately through social media

apps. The last thing you want are negative reviews.

There are rental properties in our area that rent for north of \$20,000 a week, so there are expectations from your renters that the unit should reflect what they are paying to stay there.”

“We’ve all heard the expression “you get what you pay for”, well, that certainly applies to home furnishings. I never tell my clients to put the most expensive pieces in their rental, but I do tell them if you put the cheapest pieces in your home, you WILL be replacing them sooner rather than later because it will not hold up. So buying cheap furniture will cost you much more in the end because you will replace it with what you should have bought in the first place. “

We asked Marisol what percent of her clients hire her to design a rental verses a primary residence.

“Gosh, that’s a good question. Honestly its about 50/50. I do a lot of both.”

Our final question we



wanted to ask her was, which do you prefer, primary residence or rental?

“Honestly, I treat them all the same. Certainly I feel like I have more freedom to design a primary residence, but I do love the challenge of designing a rental. In the end though, as long as I can feel good about stamping my name on the end product, it really doesn’t matter to me. What matters most is the smile on my clients face with the outcome.

So, whether you have a primary residence, or a rental property, there’s no-one better to help you design it than Marisol Gullo. She has two very large stores, one in Inlet beach and one in Miramar Beach, and with an additional 20,000 soft warehouse always stocked, you can be sure that there is no one on the Gulf coast with more readily available inventory than Not too Shabby.




Not Too Shabby
by Marisol Gullo

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by Emerald Coast Energy Solutions

BY CHRIS BALZER, ECES

Saving energy and lowering our utility bills seems to be on everyone's mind lately. We get advice from neighbors, friends, blogs, big box stores and Internet searches. Sometimes this advice can get confusing or contradicting, and we decide to do nothing. Let's face it, saving energy has an important impact which we all have a role in. So here are five popular energy saving myths.

Myth #1: Leaking tubs and faucets are not that big of a deal.

Surprising, one faucet leaking two drops of water per second will waste 200 gallons of water in a month. Two faucets will waste 400 gallons of water. What if the leak came from the hot water side? Leaking faucets on the hot water side puts a continual strain on your water heater and costs you money and energy. In most

cases, fixing leaky faucets will only cost a few cents to replace the washer. I recently called the manufacturer of my faucet and they sent replacement parts for free.

Pro Tip: To check if your faucet leaks, put a dry cup under the faucet at night. Check the cup in the morning, no water, no leak.

Myth #2: Leaving ceiling fans on, cools down the room when you're not there.

This is a common practice but don't be fooled. Fans don't cool the room; they only circulate air. We experience a cooling sensation from moisture evaporating from our skin. Leaving fans on all the time wastes energy and money.

Pro Tip: The ceiling fan direction in summer should be counterclockwise to help create a downdraft, which creates that direct, cooling breeze. Your fan



direction in winter needs to be clockwise to create an updraft and circulate warm air around the room.

Myth #3: Closing off HVAC vents in rooms you aren't using improves your HVAC system's output and efficiency.

Your HVAC system is sized for your entire home or a zone within your house. Closing off vents in certain rooms could actually lower the system's efficiency. Plus, with forced air systems, closing off vents could create a buildup of pressure in ducts which could cause cracks and gaps in ducts leaking condi-

tioned air into your attic.

Pro Tip: Don't forget to replace your HVAC filters regularly. Dirt and debris in your filter can obstruct air flow, increasing the workload of your cooling system. By replacing the filter regularly, you can reduce wear and tear on your air conditioner while allowing the free movement of air for improved indoor comfort.

Myth #4: Setting the thermostat lower in the summer cools down a home faster and likewise in the winter.

HVAC systems are designed to operate at maximum power when they are first turned on. They won't produce cooler air just because the setting is set extremely low or hotter air when set high. They will run longer wasting energy and money attempting to achieve arctic temperatures.

Pro Tip: Installing a smart thermostat allows you to control settings remotely using an app from your mobile device saving you energy and increasing comfort.

Myth #5: Appliances like TV's, monitors, computers,

and charges, when not in use or turned off, don't use energy. It is not necessary to unplug them.

Anything with a digital display, remote control or turns on instantly are constantly drawing energy. Charges for cell phones, cameras, tablets, are known as "energy vampires" for a reason. Even if they are not attached to their device they continue to draw power from the outlet.

Pro Tip: Pull the plug or flip the switch on your power strip and start saving energy.

Saving energy and becoming more efficient does not have to be difficult or costly. Anything we can do to save energy today has an impact on tomorrow.

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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Business

Understanding Your Homeowners Insurance Policy



BY JOE CAPERS,
INSURANCE ZONE

Words like “endorsements,” “conditions” and “exclusions” don’t have to be confusing. Your home insurance policy isn’t exactly easy reading, as it is filled with insurance jargon, legalese and acronyms. But before you toss it in a drawer with all the others, you should at least take a glance. The policy language could be the difference between being completely covered for a peril or having to pay thousands of dollars to repair your home and possessions.

If you own a home or invest-

ment property, you are aware that having the right homeowners or rental insurance policy in place is of utmost importance. Without proper coverage, you could be responsible for expensive damage in the event of a weather-related incident. In fact, as this year’s hurricane season kicks off, now is a really good time to review your homeowner’s insurance policy and make sure you are satisfied with your level of coverage.

Start with a review of the Declarations page, which is customized to your home and spells out such details as property address, coverage amounts, premiums and credits that have been applied. Examine this declaration carefully to make sure everything looks adequate and if it does not, contact your agent to obtain clarification and make necessary corrections.

Adequate Dwelling Limit coverage to rebuild your home in the event of a loss is also important. Local and national data indi-

cates that nearly two out of three homes and structures are underinsured. The cost of lumber and other common building materials has soared in the past year as a result of supply chain disruptions and shortages, and now the impact of inflation. These are main reasons new home and all construction costs have grown more expensive in recent months. As such, the homeowner’s policy that was once sufficient for your property may now fall short.

Another important area to look for on the declarations page is Deductibles. This is the amount that you would be responsible for in the event of a claim. And in Florida and other coastal areas, our declaration page will list more than one deductible, depending on the type of claim. A separate and usually much higher deductible would apply to hurricane and other wind-related events. Hurricane or windstorm deductibles often are based on a percentage

of your dwelling coverage. The deductible applied to all other perils such as fire, lightning and most water losses other than flood is a flat amount.

The declarations page will also spell out how much coverage you have, but often it will not clarify what is not covered. For info relative to Exclusions, you need to look for sections of the policy with headings like “exclusions” or “losses not insured.” Here you will find a list of scenarios that the insurance company won’t cover, like flood and earthquake. Since we are definitely at risk to flood disasters, we encourage everyone to purchase flood insurance from the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), or a reputable, private flood insurance facility, which may be a better flood insurance alternative to the NFIP for your home, investment or commercial property.

Another common way to address gaps in coverage is through an Endorsement, which changes or enhances the coverages to your policy. Endorsements are typically listed separately from the main policy text and often found at the end.

Review your policy and be aware of areas of Special Limits or Sublimits. A good example of these common provisions relates to your own personal belongings such as a pricy piece of jewelry or art collection. Most likely there will not be full coverage under a standard homeowners policy and the limit may be as low as \$1,000. If you have items that are worth more than the sublimits, talk with



your agent to see how these may be insured more appropriately.

The last area of your review should focus on the Conditions section of the policy, as they spell out how to get the coverage you are entitled to. Read these parts so you understand what you need to do when filing a claim. If you do not meet the conditions, then your claim could be denied.

The insurance marketplace has rapidly changed with premiums increasing, guidelines and appetites tightening and some carriers losing the ability to offer a renewal or write new policies. This seems to be especially true for those with older properties that are close to the water. Citizens Property Insurance Corporation, our state’s insurer of last resort, is again becoming a popular and vital player in Florida.

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 several informative videos on “Homeowners, Condo Unit Owners and Flood,” or call (850) 424.6979 and talk with one of our experienced team members.

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