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SOWAL Life

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Postal Customer Local

You Can Be a Hometown Hero for Those in Need

BY LORI LEATH SMITH

Are you looking for ways to help our community? As always during the holiday season, there is an ongoing need for giving. Many children don't have enough food to eat over a weekend, much less over Thanksgiving, and have to return to school hungry. Some don't even have beds. Many homeless veterans go without a warm meal all year long. Walton County has a food insecurity rate of 14.1 percent among children younger than 18. In Okaloosa County, it is 13.6 percent (source: Feeding America). There are families in our area who are struggling to get by. They can be blessed by an extra boost this holiday season. Fortunately, we live in a compassionate community that pulls together for its own. We have some amazing organizations ready to give this Thanksgiving and you can help them help others.

Caring and Sharing of South Walton will provide holi-



day food items to local families from Nov. 14-16, the week before Thanksgiving. Families are asked to pre-register by filling out an eligibility form to qualify them for assistance. They must live in Walton County. Families will receive items for a traditional holiday meal and Caring and Sharing's regular pantry food items. Caring and Sharing is expecting close to 500 families to pick up meals.

It is looking for volunteers to help pack Thanksgiving bags and to hand out food the week of pickup. If you're interested in donating or volunteering, contact them at (850) 267-2866 or email carly@caringandsharingsowal.org for more information.

Have you ever had to sleep without a bed? Put some sparkle into a child's holiday this year. A Bed 4 Me invites you



to help provide beds for children in Walton and Okaloosa counties this season. Five dollars buys a pillow; \$50 buys bedding; \$125 buys a bed and \$250 sponsors a full bed kit and helps with operational expenses. A Bed 4 Me has provided beds to 2,000 children in our community since 2016, but is always in need of our

HERO

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Walton County Cuts Ribbon on New Regional Beach Access

On the morning of October 13, the Walton County Board of County Commissioners, alongside the Walton County Beach Operations and Tourism Departments, held a ribbon-cutting ceremony for the new Scenic Gulf Drive Regional Beach Access.

"There is a lot of hard work that goes into completing something like this, and to see it come to fruition is a great feeling," Tourism Director Matt Algarin said. "Anytime we can open a new beach access and provide the opportunity for our residents and visitors to enjoy the sugar white sands is a good day. The beach is a gathering place. It is where people can come to make lifelong memories."

The project first gained traction in 2017 when the county purchased the 2.1-acre property for \$5.75 million. Additional project costs, such as permitting and construction, were estimated at \$3.4 million, for a total cost of \$9.15 million. All expenses related to the project were covered using the tourist development tax, a 5-percent tax collected on short-term rentals.

RIBBON CUTTING

continued on page 3



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HERO

continued from page 1

support. To help, visit abcd4me.org where you can donate in any amount.

Food For Thought (FFT) provides five year-round programs to bridge the meal gap in the lives of the food-insecure children they serve, but it's especially needed during the holidays. Last year, our communities gave more than \$20,000 to support FFT holiday services! FFT served more than 3,200 children, dis-



tributed more than 33,000 food items and was supported by 250

volunteer hours just for Thanksgiving alone. Families supported by Food for Thought programs across Walton and Okaloosa counties will be provided food to prepare a traditional Thanksgiving meal along with food to support their students' needs while they are out of school for a week, which is about 10 meals they will miss. To enroll, email support@fftl.org. To volunteer or donate, please visit www.fftl.org. You can also sponsor a family at Thanksgiving.

Destiny Worship Center is

providing Thanksgiving meals for families in need. You can help by picking up a Thanksgiving bag from Oct. 22 (Saturday) – Nov. 19 (Saturday). Purchase and fill the bag with the list of items on the bag and drop off at the Destiny Campus NO LATER THAN Nov. 13. Thanksgiving bag assembly day is Tuesday, Nov. 15, 9 a.m. in the sanctuary. Consider joining on Saturday, Nov. 19 to deliver to families in our area. Please sign up in the foyer.

RIBBON CUTTING

continued from page 1

"It is not just for the tourist, but for everyone that lives in Walton County who wants to come to our beaches and enjoy them," Brian Kellenberger, director of beach operations said.

Located at 907 Scenic Gulf Drive in Miramar Beach, this new beach access boasts 400 feet of sugar-white sand along the Gulf of Mexico. It showcases a coastal cottage design, mirroring the county's other beach accesses. It features 18 vehicle parking spaces, nine golf cart parking spaces, bike parking, a large deck plaza, a 360-foot ADA-accessible boardwalk/

dune walkover, restroom facilities, and a picnic pavilion with dune walkover.

"We are proud to offer this to the public. It is a great facility and a great amenity to have," Walton County Commissioner Michael Barker said.

Opening the Scenic Gulf Drive access brings the total number of regional beach accesses in Walton County to 10. Work is also underway on two additional regional beach accesses, Seagrove Beach RBA in the heart of Seagrove Beach and Walton Dunes RBA in the Eastern Lake community.

Each regional beach access point includes parking, restroom



facilities, beach flag condition information, and a seasonally tended lifeguard station.

To learn more about Walton County and its beach accesses, visit www.visitsouthwalton.com.

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Editor & Publisher

Dave White
dave@southwalton.life
editor@southwalton.life

Production & Layout

Dawna Shackley
graphics@southwalton.life

Advertising Department

850-399-0228

Advertising Manager

Raymond Cyr
850 797-3546
sales@southwalton.life

Contributing Writers

Heather Bennett
Rita L. Sherwood
850-399-0228

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Psalm 18:28

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Community

Walton County School District November 2022 Update



Superintendent A. Russell Hughes

Autumn approaches and Walton County School District continues to exemplify Excellence,

Professionalism, Innovation and Collaboration. All though our District has received an unprecedented #3 state ranking, teachers, students and staff strive to improve and reach higher levels of achievement! Freeport Middle School exhibits this “reach” within its growing Forensics and Biomedical elective programs. Mr. Nathan Smith, the Principal, announced that Mrs. Angela Robinson, a FMS science teacher, had been awarded a \$10,322 grant from the St. Joe

Community Foundation! These funds will go towards assisting the growth of science elective programs at Freeport Middle. Superintendent Russell Hughes also expressed appreciation to the St. Joe Community Foundation for this generous contribution.

Superintendent Hughes welcomed the Walton County Sheriff’s Office to the Magnet Innovation Center, thanking the WCSO for their generous donation of approximately \$50,000 worth of drones. These state-of-the-art drones will help engineering and robotics students develop their understanding of and skilled work with drones, which are increasingly prevalent across most 21st-century industries. One Magnet Innovation

Center student remarked, “This has made my day, my week, and probably this school year! I saw these and thought, ‘What can’t we do?’”

Walton County School District participated in the 2022 Walton County FAIR with its booth entry: “Excellence in 5G,” highlighting the achievements of the Walton County School Board, Superintendent Hughes, Instructional staff, and students. Our District System was recognized by Cognia Accreditation for its efficiency, ranking with only five other Florida school districts. Our ranking of #3 among 66 Florida school districts was also a part of this display. Walton County School District appreciates the community’s support,

and our team members enjoy seeing parents and students in a relaxed atmosphere.

Walton County School District art teachers had the opportunity to participate in a professional development workshop as part of the Rosemary Beach Foundation’s 12th Annual Music in Pictures art initiative. Dr. Benjamin Sung, Associate Professor of Violin at Florida State University, presented a violin mini-concert and a session on the music selected as inspiration for the Music in Pictures artistic renderings. Malayne DeMars, Executive Director of the Rosemary Beach Foundation, and Winky Dowdle, Chair of the Music in Pictures Program, were the gracious hosts and organizers of the workshop. Walton County School District is grateful for our collaboration with the Rosemary Beach Foundation and its incredible cultivation of student creativity and self-expression.

Our Elementary Music students participated in FVA (Florida Vocal Association) and FEMEA’s (Florida Elementary Music Educators Association) auditions in September. As a result, students from Dune Lakes Elementary, Freeport Elementary School, Van R. Butler El-

UPDATE

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November 2022 Coastal Seniors Update

COASTAL SENIORS OF SOUTH WALTON

FRIDAYS WITH FRIENDS - November 11th 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. You can contact us by calling 850-280-5342, or by sending an email to: coastalseniorsofsouthwalton@gmail.com.

EXERCISE CLASSES FOR SENIORS at Padgett Park on J.D. Miller Rd.

Barbara Reynolds will teach Zumba Gold at 10:00 am on Wednesdays, Nov. 19,16,23 and 30th, Gentle Yoga at 11:00 am on Wednesdays, and Senior Pilates on Fridays at 10:00 am on Nov. 4, 11, 18 and 25th. Cost is \$40 per 8-week session. Sign up by calling 850-280-5342, or by sending an email to: coastalseniorsofsouthwalton@gmail.com.

HEALTHY AGING FAIR

Saturday, November 12th from 9 am - 1 pm - at South Walton High School - Coastal Seniors is partnering with area health organizations to showcase local resources and services available to Walton County seniors. The bloodmobile will be there and several food trucks will offer food and beverages. Volunteers are needed so contact CSSW by calling 850-280-5342, or by sending an email to: coastalseniorsofsouthwalton@gmail.com.

MONTHLY MEETING - THANKSGIVING POTLUCK LUNCH

Friday, Nov. 18th from 11:00 AM - 1 PM (bring your favorite Thanksgiving sides and desserts - main courses will be provided). Sign up by calling 850-280-5342, or by sending an email to: coastalseniorsofsouthwalton@gmail.com.

ART CLASSES

Karen Peterson will teach seniors Beginner Watercolor Paint-

ing on Fridays - Nov 4th 1pm - 4pm, Nov 11th 9am-Noon and Nov. 18th 1pm - 4pm. Cost is \$20 per session. Sign up by calling 850-280-5342, or by sending an email to: coastalseniorsofsouthwalton@gmail.com. The Cultural Arts Alliance is holding an "Animal Stakes in Clay" class on Nov. 17th from 1pm-2pm.

PICKLEBALL

Beginner Pickleball 101 at Walton Sports Complex courts - Check the Coastal Seniors website calendar or Facebook page after Nov.10 for November dates and times, or contact Sandra Gulak at sowalpickleball@gmail.com. The 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 and COASTAL BRANCH LIBRARY MOVIE

Join us at the Coastal Branch Library on Thursday, November 10th at 1 pm as Jim Wilson brings back monthly movies.

Don't miss a tribute to Angela Lansbury as we present the 1962 film THE MANCHURIAN CANDIDATE in which she plays an evil femme fatale alongside Frank Sinatra. Popcorn and

COASTAL SENIORS

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- HERB CRUSTED PRIME RIB**..... 130
6 lbs. Serves 4-6. Served with au jus and horseradish cream.

SIDES

- MASHED POTATOES** 25
Homemade mashed potatoes. Feeds 4-6
- CORNBREAD DRESSING** 25
Homemade dressing made with sautéed fresh vegetables. Feeds 4-6
- SWEET POTATOE CASSEROLE** 25
Homemade whipped sweet potatoes with candied pecans, and toasted marshmallows. Feeds 4-6
- GREEN BEAN CASSEROLE** 25
Tender green beans are tossed in a creamy mushroom sauce with crispy fried onions. Feeds 4-6
- SOUTHERN CANDIED YAMS** 25
Sweet and tender candied yams baked in a delicious buttery cinnamon syrup for that true old-fashioned flavor! Feeds 4-6
- STUFFING**..... 25
- COLLARD GREENS**..... 25
- CRANBERRY SAUCE**..... 10
Pint of Cranberries goes great with turkey, ham, or beef.

HOLIDAY FAMILY FEAST #1

- FEEDS A FAMILY OF 4-6 240**
- 1 Salad • 2 Apps • 2 Sides
 - 1 Pint of Cranberry Sauce
 - 1 Meat (Turkey or Ham)
 - 1 Dozen Dinner Rolls • 1 Dessert

HOLIDAY FAMILY FEAST #2

- FEEDS A FAMILY OF 8-10 . . . 340**
- 1 Salad • 2 Apps • 3 Sides
 - 1 Pint of Cranberry Sauce
 - 2 Meats (both Turkey and Ham)
 - 1 Dozen Dinner Rolls • 2 Desserts

APPETIZERS

- SPINACH ARTICHOKE BREAD BOWL** 20
Creamy spinach, tender artichoke hearts, Parmesan, and garlic, served in a bread bowl with sliced baguette.
- SAUTEED GREEN BEANS** 20
French green beans sautéed in light olive oil with garlic and shallots.
- CHARCUTERIE BOARD** 30
Assortment of gourmet cheeses and meats, complimented with an assortment of olives, nuts, seasonal fruits, and veggies served with local honey, and crackers.
- FRUIT SALAD** 15
The freshest fruits and berries during the season.
- SPINACH QUICHE**..... 25
- SHRIMP COCKTAIL PLATTER**..... 33
2 pounds Jumbo Shrimp cooked and arranged on a platter. Served chilled with lemon wedges and cocktail sauce.

SOUPS

- NEW ENGLAND CLAM CHOWDER**... 20
Our chowder is a classic with a creamy broth, chock-full of tender Cape Cod clams, potatoes, and onions.
- SHE CRAB SOUP**..... 20
- RED BEANS & RICE** 20
- SEAFOOD GUMBO** 20
Fish, shrimp, scallops, and other delicious seafood delights.
- TURKEY GRAVY** 8
Our homemade gravy is a must for this holiday season, it is smooth, creamy and full of savory flavors.

SALADS

- HOUSE SALAD**..... 20
Mixed greens, cherry tomatoes, red onion, house made croutons, red wine vinaigrette, and finished with Parmesan Reggiano.
- CEASAR SALAD**..... 20
Romaine lettuce, house made croutons, house made Caesar, finished with Parmesan Reggiano.
- APPLE WALNUT SALAD**..... 20
Our seasonal salad with apples, pears, raisins, blue cheese, and walnuts, finished with a honey mustard dressing.

DESSERTS

- SEASONAL PIES** 25
- SALTED CARMEL BROWNIES**..... 25
- LARGE CHOCOLATE CHIP COOKIE**.... 3
- ONE DOZEN COOKIES**..... 25

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Orders are available for pick up **Wednesday, 11/23 from 10am-6pm** or **Thursday, 11/24 from 8am-1pm** at the Market. Due to the holiday volume, we cannot manage special orders. **NO CHANGES TO RECIPES, BUNDLES, OR INGREDIENTS.** Items are available to purchase in our market in additional quantities. Pre-order is only available for quantities listed. All items are picked up cold with reheating instructions. Please call AJ's Market with questions: **850-279-4098**



20th Annual Charity Golf Classic Raises Nearly \$220K

to improve imaging services at Ascension Sacred Heart Emerald Coast

The Ascension Sacred Heart Foundation held its 2022 Charity Golf Classic on Friday, Sept. 23, at Burnt Pine Golf Club in Sandestin. The tournament raised \$218,145 for a new CT scanner at Ascension Sacred Heart Emerald Coast to better serve adult and pediatric patients.

The CT scanner, arriving in late 2022, will enhance the experience of patients with its speed and image quality. For example, an entire adult chest, abdomen and pelvis study can be conducted in approximately one second so patients don't need to hold their breath. This speed also reduces the amount of radiation, therefore improving safety. The quality of images produced from the machine allows for better detection of lesions and abnormalities to ensure more accurate diagnosis.

A total of 27 teams played in the tournament with the Berkshire Hathaway/PenFed Team winning first place. The team was co-sponsored by Chris Sause and John Martin and included:

Joe Nacchia, Joe Fagundes and Dr. Phillip Taum. Teams enjoyed breakfast, lunch and on-course food provided by Hunter's Chicken and Burgers and Culver's. Kombi Keg, Lewis Bear, Distillery 98 and Driftwood Wine and Spirits provided beverages. Ronnie McBrayer and The Backsliders provided live music during the afternoon to entertain those who came out for a Bubbly



Walkabout, which featured artist Jeannie Maddox of Dothan, AL and Today's Boutique.

The event was supported by our presenting sponsors; Grand

Boulevard, Howard Group and Silver Sands Premium Outlets. The event chair was Bill Tate and committee members included; Jon Vice, Marie McKenna, Karen Wade Allen, Joe Capers and Ronnie Stanley for all of their efforts in coordinating the tournament. The 2023 tournament will be held Friday, September 29 at Burnt Pine Golf Club. Contact Lisa Wainwright at lisa.wainwright@ascension.org or 850-278-3702

for more information regarding sponsorship and participation.

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. Visit www.ascension.org for more information.

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Bring Back the Praise!

By STEVE KOTOWSKA

You don't have to teach a dog to be a dog... you must instead allow a dog to be a dog; a dog that lives in a human world, so to speak, when we take them on as our companions. As a dog owner, you should be accepting of the fact that you must meet its innate needs. This is achieved through satisfying your dog's drives for certain things like hunting, retrieving, chasing, playing, among others. It is imperative to have good communication, set boundaries, and show fair leadership. Dogs like leadership, believe it or not. As a pack animal it is instilled deep in their psyche to follow the leader – not to BE the leader. You don't have to attempt to be an alpha dog in human skin. Likewise, you cannot treat your dog like a human. There are enough examples of why this is wrong they could fill a page by themselves. You just need to be a good human leader for them to follow your lead, a zookeeper of sorts.

Communication is a multi-faceted and oftentimes highly challenging piece of the puzzle. My experience spans decades in the dog world, and I have very rarely seen a forced relationship work with a dog. If a dog does not want to do something, it won't do it until convinced there

is some benefit in doing it. The touchy part of that is finding the thing the dog will see as a benefit, then not overdoing the benefit so the dog only elicits a behavior for a motivator. The motivator typically will be a treat or toy and we are neither going to have

dog's resolve to avoid doing the wrong thing so it can satisfy its own desires.

Instead of force or bribery, we must teach dogs that our praise is enough, that their actions have value to us, that they make us happy. In turn, they are happy with our happiness and resounding praise of them. I challenge people to remember the first time they laid eyes on their new dog or cute little puppy. Muster up the courage to praise it with the same enthusiasm you did back then, before it started doing bad things, before it's drives really began to show themselves to you and before its impulse to act on those drives became uncontrollable. Praise your dog for lying still and doing absolutely nothing. Praise your dog for making eye contact with you. Praise your dog for the little things and they will seek your praise for good behavior. Set boundaries and be fair!

Steve Kotowska is Senior Trainer of What's Up Dog in Santa Rosa Beach and Miramar Beach, offering Professional Dog Grooming, Dog Training, Boarding, and Doggie Daycare. "What's up Dog" is the area's largest independent pet retailer with a focus on holistic food products.



those things constantly available nor should we need to. When we fall into this trap it moves the relationship to one based solely on bribery. While this might work for the short term and has value for conditioning, the bribery mechanism can lose value with many dogs and create frustration for humans. The force mechanism typically loses value in its absence, often testing a



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REGISTER TO RUN!

Citizen Scientist Volunteers Needed for Walton County's Coastal Dune Lakes

By MARK MESSERLY

Walton County's Dune Lakes are ecological treasures, and there are opportunities to help monitor and preserve these unique environmental systems. In addition to recreational activities, the lakes store and filter water, and provide unique transitional habitats for a unique mix of plants and animals.

The Choctawhatchee Basin Alliance (basinalliance.org), a non-profit organization, helps to sustain our dune lakes and related watersheds, through monitoring, research, and education. Research efforts inform strategic actions for preservation, restoration, and guidance for future development.

Citizen Scientist Volunteer opportunities (basinalliance.org/volunteer/) include taking lake water quality samples. In some cases a vessel is provided by the Choctawhatchee Basin Alliance (basinalliance.org), others require a volunteer-provided vessel. Following a training session, volunteers will be provided with the equipment used to take samples at specified locations. Data from the samples are analyzed at University of Florida's Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences. Reports are generated



for each lake indicating short, and long term trends. Additional resources, including a link to the Coastal Dune Lakes Advisory Board, are available on the Walton County Coastal Dune Lakes web page www.co.walton.fl.us/97/Coastal-Dune-Lakes.

All of the coastal dune lakes with the exception of Fuller are accessible from the beach. Other Lakes have additional access points for public use. The Tim-poochee Trail is a wonderful way

to see nearly all of the lakes – it is a multimodal trail which is great for hiking and biking. The trail runs along County Road 30A, providing stunning views of all of the coastal dune lakes from Stallworth to Camp Creek

To learn more about the

Coastal Dune Lakes, please contact: Melinda Gates, Environmental Coordinator, Walton County Public Works, 117 Montgomery Circle

Defuniak Springs. Office: (850) 892-8108, gatmelinda@co.walton.fl.us

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 Community

Becoming a Smarter Giver



BY MAURICE STOUSE, FINANCIAL ADVISOR AND BRANCH MANAGER

The United States and its citizens are among the most charitable in the world. And

even though tax laws have made some changes to charitable giving, investors and savers alike are not only thinking how and what they are giving, but also how they might be able to be smarter givers. The question is, how do you do it? Giving is motivated by the three Ts: Time, Talent and Treasure. This article is focused on the giving of treasure.

It all starts with a review of today's givers, the "who." In 2018, Raymond James produced a white paper on charitable giving, and we are sharing some of that insight for you here. If you looked at some numbers, you

would find that a giver is typically a mature American (88 percent) and 72 percent of all givers are classified as baby boomers. Next, what are their causes? The study says the top four are: 31 percent to religious institutions; 14 percent for education; 12 percent to human services and 11 percent to foundations. And lastly, where do the givers typically come from? The leaders are Utah, D.C., Mississippi and Tennessee.

So, how and why are people giving? People want to make a difference, to create a legacy and to act upon a sense of moral duty.



There are incentives as well: Potentially lower taxes, managing their wealth and guidance on estate planning. Giving can be as straightforward as a cash, check or even stock donation. Other assets might qualify as well. This can be cumbersome, however, if you have several nonprofits you want to support.

An idea growing in popularity is the Donor Advised Fund or DAF. Raymond James calls it "the new face of giving" and it is the fastest growing charitable vehicle in America. DAFs are public charities and qualify under IRS section 501(c)3. They take in contributions from the giver by way of cash (or check) but also securities (stocks and bonds, for example). Depending on someone's situation, a tax deduction might even apply. The DAF in turn invests the contributions into mutual funds for growth or income or preservation of capital.

Note the wording of "donor advised." That means that the donor can directly ask the DAF to periodically, or when they would like to, send contributions on to another charity. That charity could be educational (a college, university or any educational nonprofit), religious (church), human services or foundations (educational, athletic as example). In the meantime, any amounts not given can be left to grow and accumulate over time, for many years.

In the end, giving is simpler – one contribution to one charity, which can then be dispersed as you request or advise. Many firms allow you to do this online or even delegate it to your adviser, at your direction. You can title or name the account as well. These accounts also allow you to name successor donor advisers or a final recipient charity of

the value of the account at your death. Many people appreciate having this available for making donations to their schools, churches, hospitals and various local or national/international causes.

Donors are urged to consult their attorneys, accountants or tax advisers with respect to questions relating to the deductibility of various types of contributions to a Donor-Advised Fund for federal and state tax purposes.

Maurice Stouse is a Financial Advisor and the branch manager of The First Wealth Management and Raymond James. The main office is located at First Florida Bank, a division of The First, 2000 98 Palms Blvd. Destin, FL 32451 with branch offices in Niceville, Mary Esther, Miramar Beach, Freeport and Panama City. Phone 850.654.8124. Raymond James advisors do not offer tax advice. Please see your tax professionals. Email: Maurice.stouse@raymond-james.com.

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Up, down or sideways: Keep your head on straight when markets move.

Some investors have learned how to ride out the most stomach-churning market cycles. Others follow the urge to jump out mid-ride. So what can you do to play it smart in a roller coaster of a market?

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Maurice Stouse
Financial Advisor

The First Wealth Management
A Division of The First Bank, NA
2000 Ninety Eight Palms Blvd.
Destin, FL 32541
850.654.8122



Amy Parrish
Financial Advisor

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New Guy Harvey Program Boosts Marine Biology Education in Local Schools



Guy Harvey Ocean Foundation’s ongoing efforts, please visit the GHOE.org website and donate to their education program or sign up as a volunteer.

The Guy Harvey Ocean Foundation (GHOF) conducts

scientific research and hosts educational programs to conserve the marine environment. The GHOF also funds affiliated researchers working to better understand our ocean ecosystem and educators helping to foster

the next era of marine conservationists. The GHOF will help ensure that future generations can enjoy and benefit from a properly balanced ocean ecosystem. www.GHOE.org.

Thanks to a sizable grant from The St. Joe Community Foundation, a Guy Harvey Ocean Foundation program designed to assist local teachers will soon be expanding into Walton County. The St. Joe Community Foundation will be presenting a check for \$96,175 at the Walton County School District meeting on Tuesday, October 18, at 5 p.m. in the South Walton High School Media Center.

The grant will pay for Walton County teachers to receive interactive hands-on training in the Guy Harvey Ocean Foundation’s STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art & Math) curriculum. The teachers, in turn, will take what they’ve learned back to their classrooms, along with scientific equipment and educational materials provided by the Foundation, and guide their students through lessons related to marine ecosystems, conservation and art.

The Guy Harvey Ocean Foundation curriculum is built on the videos, articles and papers from Dr. Harvey that cover decades of scientific research. The Foundation works to make marine and environmental science more engaging through virtual field trips that include diving with sharks, witnessing sea turtles nesting, and examining the impacts of pollution, climate change and overfishing on the marine world.

“At the Guy Harvey Ocean Foundation, we are committed to education and that’s why we were so excited to roll out our curriculum throughout Florida and beyond,” said Guy Harvey Ocean Foundation’s Co-Chair Jessica Harvey. “It is critically important to inform, educate and engage young students on the

importance of preserving our oceans and marine life. Through the educational initiatives we’ve launched, students learn about the world’s environment and wildlife. They come away with a better understanding of how they can help us in preserving our ecosystems for future generations.”

Already, more than 7,500 students in Bay County have benefited from the Guy Harvey Ocean Foundation lessons, thanks to a \$99,500 grant from The St. Joe Community Foundation in 2021. This year’s new grants will allow the program to launch in Walton County and continue to grow in Bay County.

“The St. Joe Community Foundation aims to support local nonprofits that work to make life better in their communities by focusing on education, environmental stewardship, cultural arts, and building healthy communities,” said The St. Joe Community Foundation’s Executive Director April Wilkes. “The Guy Harvey Ocean Foundation touches on many of our key pillars, and we’re proud to be a part of the good work they do here in Northwest Florida.”

Local nonprofits can apply for grants through The St. Joe Community Foundation. Learn more at www.StJoeFoundation.com

Teachers in Walton and Bay County School Districts interested in participating in a Guy Harvey Ocean Foundation professional training should be on the lookout for notifications from their district for upcoming professional learning opportunities. The GHOF will also be offering monthly virtual content overview sessions that teachers can sign up for through the GHOE.org website. If you can help support the



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 Community

AJ's Feeds the Community this Thanksgiving

For the seventh year, AJ's in Grayton Beach will host a free Thanksgiving Day meal from 11am till 4 p.m. Last year, AJ's Grayton and AJ's on the Bayou on the waterfront in Fort Walton Beach served close to 1,000 meals. "We open up our doors to everyone, to ensure that no one is alone or hungry for the

holiday," says Keith Waters, Director of Operations for AJ's.

AJ's Thanksgiving feast will feature time-honored classics such as turkey, ham, stuffing, turkey gravy, mashed potatoes, sweet potato casserole, green bean casserole, cranberry relish, garden salad, dinner rolls, and assortment of pies.

"We have expanded our outreach to include our sister store in Grayton Beach, this will be their third year," adds Waters. "We are open to everyone, and invite the community to join our AJ's family on this day, to give thanks. While there is absolutely no charge, donations will be accepted from those capable of



making them."

Alan Laird, the Owner of AJ's says, "We want to give back to those that may not have the means to celebrate Thanksgiving. We also want to provide a gathering place for those who don't have anyone with which to share the holiday meal or for those who simply want to celebrate with their neighbors. This is our way to thank the community that provides for us and our families, each and every day."

Reservations are not accepted, and diners will be served on a first come basis. AJ's Grayton Beach will open their doors from 12pm till 5 p.m. to serve Thanksgiving dinner, then join us for family Karaoke starting at 6 p.m.

All donations received from both Thanksgiving feast will benefit Kids on the Coast Foundation. Donations will be used to assist local high school youth this upcoming holiday season.

COASTAL SENIORS

continued from page 5

drinks provided. 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 coastal-seniorsofsouthwalton@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.

Kids on the Coast is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that supports various charities that provide assistance and give support to local children and youth.

For more information, please contact our Special Events and Promotions department: Rachael Green at info@ajs-destin.com or 850-259-2057.

Learn More at www.ajsgrayton.com.

UPDATE

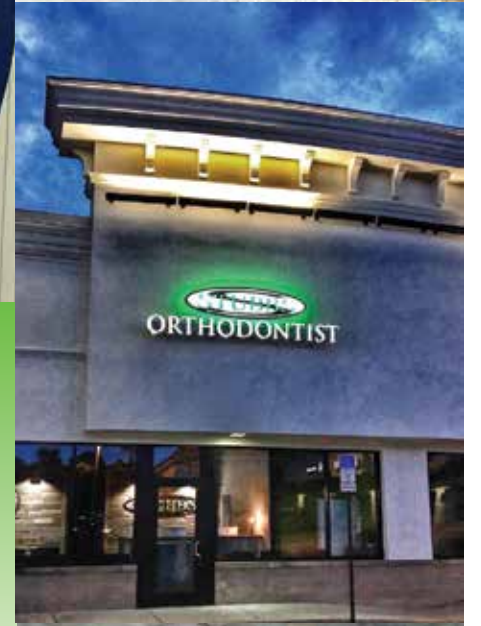
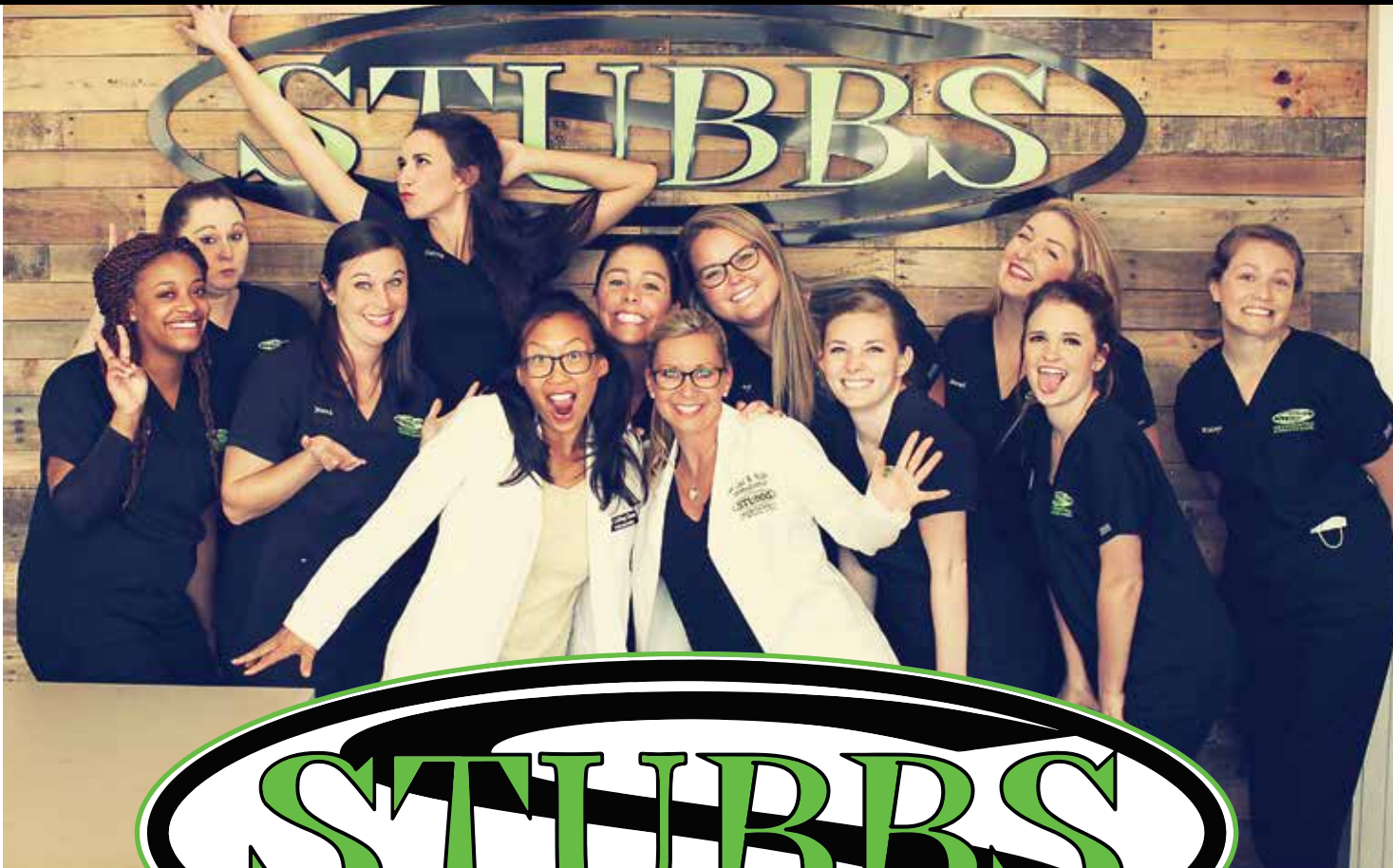
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ementary, and West DeFuniak Elementary were selected to represent our District in the state choral performances to be held in Tampa, Florida, January 12-14, 2022. Congratulations to these students for representing their schools in EPIC Fashion! Other outstanding students were chosen for the All-State Orff Ensemble, North Regional Honor Choir, and the North Regional Honor Orff Ensemble.

In athletic news, "high-fives" are appropriate for the South Walton High School Sea Hawks Girls Volleyball team who won their Regional Quarterfinals game. Congratulations to each of these hardworking, talented girls. Go HAWKS! A rousing ovation is due to the Walton Middle School Football team also. They are the reigning Panhandle Athletic Conference champions! WMS defeated North Bay Haven 44-14 on Tuesday, October 4, 2022. Congratulations Braves!

The Walton County School District seeks to provide a first-class education for ALL students enrolled in our schools, and we continue our quest to be the number one (#1) District in Florida!

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Community

Serving the Community from the Sand to the Snow – Meet Venturing Crew 562

By HEATHER BENNETT

Everyone, or at least almost everyone, has heard of Boy Scouts of America (BSA), but few may know about Venturing, a core program of BSA, or know we have our own local crew. I recently spoke to CJ Inman, a local scout and crewmember, about what Venturing has to offer.

So what is Venturing? Established in 1998, it's a co-ed, youth-led program for ages 14-20 that let's members choose their own activities where they will use their scouting skills while developing other vital skills such as leadership, planning, organization, communication and responsibility. There is a crew committee of adults, led by a committee chair, but the crew itself is led by youth crew members that are elected to such positions as president, vice

president, secretary and treasurer. "With Venturing it's a little bit more of a mature experience than boy scouts," stated CJ. "Because it's an older audience that's participating, it is a lot more truly youth led. We're the ones that make the decisions, planning – everything is up to us. The adults are just there to make sure everything goes to plan. It's a lot more responsibility."

Local Venturing Crew 562 was established just this year, and is affiliated with Troop 562. They meet at St Rita in Santa Rosa Beach on the 1st and 3rd Thursday of every month. It was the idea of CJ's scouting friend, Brighton Cardenas, who is the crew's first president. "He wanted to see a new Venturing crew in our area because the next closest one is a couple of hours away. He



wanted it to be more accessible to bring more people into the program." Said CJ. "Right now we're only going to get a few years out of it, but it will benefit the community for years to come."

To get things started, the crew took a survey to see what type of things members were interested in, and if anyone has an idea for an event, they are encouraged to share it at a meeting. "Ideas are absolutely heard," said CJ. "Everybody's there to work together to make this a fun experience."

The crew has had a couple of meetings and unofficial outings, and have more planned events to come, including a trip to the snowy north in winter 2023. "The big event we're planning for is Okpik," said CJ. "It's a huge winter experience."

Okpik is a cold-weather adventure program created by the BSA Northern Tier High Adventure Base located in the Great North Woods of northern Minnesota and Canada. Here they will learn how to camp and cook in winter conditions as well as dog sled, snowshoe and ice fish.

When talking to CJ about Venturing, I felt the sense of team building that Venturing is about. "The thing that hits home with me with Venturing, you're forced to learn how to get close to the people that you're with. It could literally be that your life depends on it so you learn to trust those people and value them," stated CJ. "If you have a strength that they might be struggling with, you guys come together, to work together to solidify that for both

of you." It's an experience like Okpik that will help the crew learn to trust and depend on one another.

While Venturing crews are working to strengthen their leadership, team building and accountability, their core values still embrace the BSA adherence of duty and service to others. "Doing your duty to your country also has a metaphorical meaning. Rather than just one country, scouting as a whole has a duty to the world because it's the world scouting movement." Stated CJ. With Venturing it's about the bigger picture. "How can I leave a footprint that our descendants can follow in?"

If you are interested in helping Crew 562 with earning money towards their Okpik adventure, they are currently selling coffee out of Lucky Goat in Tallahassee. They are also planning events like a seafood boil in DeFuniak Springs and a BBQ in Freeport. Crew 562 will also be working with Troop 562 selling Christmas Trees during the holidays for a percentage of the proceeds.

Interested in joining or know someone who is? You can contact their Crew Advisor, Lenny Cardenas at 321-501-4443.



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The Holiday Season is Here at Food for Thought and You Can Help

The mission at Food For Thought Outreach is to bridge the meal gap in the lives of food insecure children and empower them to get the most out of their education. We know that students coming to school after missing multiple meals do not learn or develop at the same rate of their peers. The goal at FFT is to provide year-round services to take students from K-12 without the fear, stress and illness related to childhood hunger.

Established in 2010, Food For Thought Outreach started as a small family project to serve food insecure students in one school for one year. With a \$300 budget, Founder Tiffanie Nelson partnered with her son's school to begin providing critical access to food to children in need. Over the past twelve years, Food For Thought has grown into the go-to organization for fighting childhood hunger in Walton and

Okaloosa Counties. The organization has grown to meet the ever-changing needs of the community and currently provides weekly access to food to 3,400 food insecure school aged children across 32 school locations.



Ways You can Help This Holiday Season

The average food insecure child will miss 10 meals over the Thanksgiving Break and 20 meals over the Christmas Break while removed from the Free/Reduced Meal Plan they depend upon at School. Our holiday services bridge the meal gap in the lives of the children we serve while also providing the families food for holiday meals.

Food For Thought expects to serve at least 700 families across Walton and Okaloosa Counties this holiday season. The average family in our program has 4-6 children in their household.

Your support helps ensure these are indeed Happy Holidays for the children we serve.

You may sponsor a family for \$40:TEXT FFTHOLIDAY TO 44321

Santa Brunch

Santa is coming to Food For Thought for a traditional holiday brunch, Sunday December 4th. Join in, as we celebrate the season with live music, kids crafts, professional photos with Santa along with food prepared by the Marrow Chefs, Hot Cocoa Station for the kids and Cocktails for the Parents. 132 Market St., Santa Rosa Beach. For tickets,

Adults: www.fftfl.org/products/brunch-with-santa-adult-ticket

Kids: www.fftfl.org/products/brunch-with-santa-kids-ticket

Holiday Help

If your family, business or organization is looking for opportunities to support your local community, all of our services are provided in Walton and Okaloosa Counties and You Can Help. Sponsor a Service - Use Link To Learn More: www.bitly.ws/vAEp.

Volunteer Opportunities

"Volunteerism is a core value of FFT outreach. Promote Volunteerism. We strengthen our volunteer-base almost daily, which brings new ideas, energy, support, and love into our organization. It

is our goal to provide our communities with a local, positive, hands-on volunteer experience. We welcome volunteers of all ages and encourage student and team volunteerism. Our volunteer base packs and distributes food, organizes our pantry, and supports our events. We depend on our volunteers to help make our work possible.

Please fill out our volunteer interest form and we can help you get started."

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Community

Coastal White Christmas Comes to Grand Boulevard

Grand Boulevard at Sandestin has released an exciting schedule of events for this holiday season. Included this year are Grand Boulevard's signature holiday celebrations, the new Holiday Lights Kick-off Celebration and Parade, and numerous festive family-friendly activities.

The schedule will include the return of the popular Festival of Trees - a charitable tree decorating contest, complementary photos with Santa, free rides on elegant horse drawn carriages and choral performances by the Emerald Coast Theatre Company.

Grand Boulevard Holiday Schedule of Events:

Christmas Holiday Lights Kick-Off

Friday, November 18th, 4:30 P.M.

The Grand Boulevard Town Center will be awash in tens of

thousands of brilliant white lights, bringing a festive spirit to the Boulevard. Coastal White Christmas officially begins with the unveiling of the holiday lights and a celebratory short parade down the Boulevard featuring Butler Elementary School Chorus; Emerald Coast Middle School Cheerleaders, Cub Scouts Pack 562, Destin High School Marching Band, Emerald Coast Theatre Company, Dog-Harmony and Santa's arrival! Enjoy faux snow while taking complementary photos with Santa, horse-drawn carriage rides, live entertainment, refreshments and strolling throughout the Boulevard, taking in the breathtaking lights and beautifully decorated trees, while getting a start on holiday shopping.

Festival of Trees Benefitting 12 Local Charities

Tuesday, November 22nd - Sunday, December 25th

On Nov. 22 from 4 PM - 6 P.M., twelve non-profit organizations will decorate a tree and compete to win cash prizes totaling \$8,500, including Best of Show and People's Choice. The People's Choice winner will be voted on and announced along with Best of Show, Second and Third Place winners. The trees will remain on display in Grand Park through Christmas for all to enjoy!

Holiday Open House & Walk-About

Tuesday, November 22nd, 3 P.M. - 6PM

Take advantage of holiday specials and promotions from

Grand Boulevard retailers and restaurants before and during the Festival of Trees kick-off. Stop by Grand Park to pick up your map for this event. Then visit participating retailers and restaurants to register for a chance to win one of three fabulous "A Taste of Grand Boulevard" prize baskets that include gifts from participating businesses.

Horse-Drawn Carriage Rides, Carolers & Photos with Santa

December 2nd - 17th, Friday & Saturday Nights - 5 P.M. - 8 P.M.

December 19th - 23rd, All Week - 5 P.M. - 8 P.M.

Enjoy free horse-drawn car-

riage rides around the Town Center while taking in the Coastal White Christmas lights and the Festival of Trees display. To add to the festivities, get a complementary professional photo with Santa while listening to the seasonal sounds of the Emerald Coast Theatre Company's Dickensian Carolers singing popular holiday carols.

A Charlie Brown Christmas

Friday, December 2nd - Saturday, December 10th

Public Performances: Saturdays at 9:30AM & Sunday, December 4 at 2:30PM

Presented by Emerald Coast Theatre Company and part of their Jr. Company Educational Program promoting Theatre for Young Audiences. Discover the true meaning of Christmas with Charlie Brown, Snoopy and the rest of the Peanuts Gang in this classic adaptation of "A Charlie Brown Christmas." Presented by ECTC's talented Junior Company teen players. For ticket information: Emerald Coast Theatre Company.

The Best Christmas Pageant Ever: The Musical

Thursday, December 8th - Sunday, December 18th

CHRISTMAS

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Join the Green Thumb Garden Club for their Second Annual Holiday Bazaar

Please join Walton County's Green Thumb Garden Club (GTGC) for its second annual Holiday Bazaar showcasing unique décor for the upcoming season and beyond.

The bazaar is an opportunity to take away beautiful, one-of-a-kind treasures, handcrafted by the talented GTGC members. GTGC is fortunate that many of our creative members are trained floral designers, master gardeners and flower show judges. In addition to trees, wreaths, handmade cards, jewelry, and home décor, there will be a certified, autographed guitar from CMA winners Brothers Osborne available for purchase. Attendees can also purchase raffle tickets to win cash prizes -- need not be present to win!

The bazaar net proceeds support Green Thumb Garden Club's education scholarships as well as local charities such as Habitat for Humanity, E.O Wilson Biophilia Center, Butler Elementary Junior Gardeners, and

many other organizations.

Please come and support the local garden club and the community Saturday, November 12, 2022

9:00 am - 2:00 pm, Cantina Laredo, 585 Grand Boulevard at Sandestin, Miramar Beach. Admission is free and the event is open to the Public.

The Green Thumb Garden Club, Inc., located in Walton County, Florida, is a tax-exempt, 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Its mission is to stimulate interest in the beautification of Walton County, furthering the education of its members and the public in:

gardening ~ horticulture ~ botany ~ floral design ~ environmental awareness ~ conservation of natural resources ~ civic beautification ~ nature studies ~ and instill in our youth the love of gardening and respect for the environment

For additional information, go to: www.greenthumbgardenclubinc.org or email greenthumbgardenclubinc@gmail.com.

CHRISTMAS

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Thursday - Saturday at 7:30 PM - Sundays at 2:30PM

Wednesday, December 14 at 2:30PM

The Herdmans are the worst kids in the history of the world—so when they crash Sunday school and demand parts in the Christmas pageant, the whole town panics. There's not supposed to be biting or cigar-smoking in Bethlehem and soon everyone is calling for reluctant director Grace Bradley to cancel the whole thing. It's now up to the Bradleys to help the

community see the Herdman kids through new eyes in this buoyant musical adaptation of the funny and touching holiday classic. For ticket information: Emerald Coast Theatre Company.

These festive events are part of the Coastal Culture Calendar of Events made possible by the Grand Boulevard Arts and Entertainment Program and have quickly become a tradition among South Walton residents and visitors.

For more information, please call (850) 654-5929 or visit GrandBoulevard.com.



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Ohana Day School to Open Second Location in Grand Boulevard

South Walton's premier day school is now taking applications for its second location, opening in the Town Center of Grand Boulevard at Sandestin, Summer 2023. Ohana Day School, fully licensed and accredited, was established in 2020 in Inlet Beach, Fla., to deliver an exceptional model for early education. The name "Ohana" means family in Hawaiian. "My lifelong mission is to provide children with a strong learning foundation that offers a holistic, whole-child approach to education. Grand Boulevard is the perfect second location to further this goal through a unique environment that brings families together and supports 3 to 5-year-olds as they begin their learning journey. The Ohana model provides ideal conditions for learning to happen through a holistic and indi-



vidualized educational approach including exploration, discovery, and play. This unique and proven approach is ideal for the cognitive and social development of three, four, and five-year-olds. Ohana Day School aims to provide young scholars with a foundation for a lifetime of learning and growing while supporting creativity, imagination, and self-expression."

-Lettye Burgtorf, Founder, Ohana Day School

School teaching strategies include multi-sensory applications,

theme-based activities, and discovery time. Additionally, the environmental and educational program objective at Ohana Day School is to grow and develop young scholars socially, emotionally, cognitively, and physically.

In addition to accepting applications for children's enrollment, the school is now also accepting applications from individuals with a background in early childhood education and a passion for delivering creative learning methods to

foster exploration and discovery. The Ohana Day School opens at 495 Grand Boulevard, Miramar Beach, late Summer 2023. For more information on enrollment and career opportunities, please visit their website, www.ohana-dayschool.org.

Gulf Place Wine Walk November 17th



Gulf Place Merchants host the Wine Walk on the third Thursday each month. For \$25, attendees can enjoy samplings of hand-selected wines, light appetizers, live music and giveaways while venturing to all of the unique Gulf Place shops. Featuring jewelry, artwork, clothing and many other unique gifts, event-goers can enjoy the evening sipping and shopping in Gulf Place. 5:00 PM - 7:00PM. Check in at the Artists of Gulf Place to receive your complimentary glass and your walkabout map. Visit

each participating merchant to be entered for a chance to win awesome giveaways at the end of the night! Gulf Place is one of South Walton's most beloved places to eat, shop, play and stay. Gulf Place is located on Scenic Highway 30A, at the intersection of CR 30A and CR 393. For a list of shops, restaurants, and services, visit gulfplacefl.com. For the latest buzz, including specials and events, follow Gulf Place on Facebook and Instagram. Gulf Place, 40 Town Center Loop, Santa Rosa Beach.

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The Northwest Florida Ballet Presents the 43rd Annual Production of The Nutcracker

The Northwest Florida Ballet (NFB) proudly presents The Nutcracker on Fri. and Sat., Nov. 18 and 19 at 7:30 p.m. and Sun., Nov. 20 at 2:30 p.m. at the Mattie Kelly Arts Center. In its forty-third year, NFB's The Nutcracker remains the only full-length version of the classic holiday fairytale in the area and features live musical accompaniment by the Northwest Florida Symphony Orchestra (NFSO) under the direction of NFB Music Director David Ott.

NFB's production includes a cast of over 140 performers, including over 100 local children and international guest artists.

Guest artist Oliver Halkowich will delight audiences as the Nutcracker Prince and Harlequin Doll. Halkowich began his professional dance career in 2001 with the Boston Ballet and a year later joined Houston Ballet as a Corps de Ballet member. There, he rose

through the ranks to First Soloist, dancing for 19 seasons with the company. Halkowich has danced various classical, contemporary and character roles in Sir Frederick Ashton's La Fille mal Gardee, Stanton Welch's Cinderella, George Balanchine's Rubies and Jerome Robbins's Fancy Free. Also a talented choreographer, he debuted his first solo commission, Following, for Houston Ballet's 50th Anniversary season in 2019.

NFB soloist Luciana Ato will dance the role of the Snow Queen with guest artist José Soares as the Snow King. Soares will also perform as the high-flying lead Russian. One of 10 children selected to study ballet at Bolshoi School, Soares trained under Dmitry Afanasiev and Galina Kravchenko and was rehearsed by Vladimir Vasiliev. After graduating from the Bolshoi School, he was ac-



cepted into the Trainee program at the Joffrey Ballet and went on to dance with the Milwaukee Ballet's second company. Soares has danced principal roles with Lake Erie Ballet in The Nutcracker and Dracula with the Missouri Contemporary Ballet. He was also invited to dance in Kansas City with Concept Zero and later with the Chicago Opera Theater. He currently resides in Alabama, where he teaches at the Andalusia Ballet Academy and

performs in freelance roles.

Ato will also share the role of the Dew Drop Fairy with NFB company member C'Jae Ransom. The Arabian pas de trois will feature NFB company member Ava Elpedes with NFB soloist Timothy Knoll and NFB alumni and guest artist for the season Keegan Lloyd.

The NFSO, led by David Ott, will provide live musical accompaniment making NFB's The Nutcracker a truly unique cultural experience. In his seventh year as the NFB Music Director, Ott has been cited among America's most-performed composers of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. Nominated for a Pulitzer Prize in music and Grammys, he has an extensive portfolio of compositions in every genre of music, from large-scale orchestra works to short overtures. Some of the most distinguished American

and European orchestras have performed or recorded his works.

The NFSO is the Emerald Coast's premiere professional orchestra and is under the leadership of Music Director Todd Craven. The 65-piece ensemble resides at the Mattie Kelly Arts Center and features internationally acclaimed guest soloists and emerging local talent.

Box office-priced tickets for The Nutcracker are \$40 for adults and \$20 for children 12 and under. Tickets will be available at NFBallet.org or through the Mattie Kelly Arts Center Box Office beginning Fri., Oct. 21. The Signature Season sponsor for The Nutcracker is Emerald Coast Magazine. NFB is sponsored in part by the State of Florida, the Department of State, the Division of Arts and Culture and the Florida Council on Arts and Culture.

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2022 Family Friendly Events in South Walton

Harborwalk Village: Veteran's Day Celebration Friday, November 11, 4:00 pm Join Harborwalk Village in honoring Veterans at the Veteran's Day Celebration from 5 - 8PM on Sunday November 11th on the beautiful Destin Harbor. The ceremony will include a performance by Reid with Autism

Sings, a presentation of colors, speakers, and veteran-owned businesses. We honor those that have served our country and local charities that serve our community. 4:00PM - Ceremony on the Main Stage. 5:00 - 7:00PM, Entertainment by Band of Revival. HarborWalk Village, 10 Harbor Blvd.,Destin.

Blue Angels Homecoming Air Show at NAS Pensacola Saturday, November 12, The NAS Pensacola Blue Angels Homecoming Air Show will be held on November 11 & 12, 2022, when the Blue Angels close out the season at Pensacola Naval Air Station. The NAS Pensacola Blue Angels Homecoming Air



Show is located aboard NAS Pensacola, the Cradle of Naval Aviation. General admission to the air show is free, and guests are welcome to bring their own portable lawn chairs or blankets to enjoy the show. For those guests that would prefer to reserve or purchase seating, there are several options available. Check the website for event schedule and tickets: naspensacolaairshow.com. NAS Pensacola, 1750 Radford Blvd., Pensacola.

Sunday, November 13, 10:00 am to 4:00 pm The Flutterby Festival, produced by the Cultural Arts Alliance of Walton County, celebrates its 30th year of the migration of the Monarch butterfly through our area with children's art activities, live music, theatre and dance performances, student art exhibits, a butterfly parade and more! Join us for this free, family-fun event at The Pavilion at Watersound Town Center. Proceeds benefit the CAA's 'Art For All' Program. Parking, including accessible parking, is available onsite. Admission to the festival is free and open to the public. Watersounds Town Center, Watersound.

Sounds of SEASIDE: Roman Street Saturday, November 19, 1:00pm 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. November 5 & 19 | Roman Street, Seaside Amphitheater, Seaside.

Sparkling Wine & Holiday Lights at Baytowne Saturday, November 19, 4:00 pm to 6:00 pm Sandestin Golf and Beach Resort invites you to kick off the holiday season with the Sparkling Wine and Holiday Lights event on Saturday, November 19th from 4-6 pm in the Village of Baytowne Wharf. Sparkling Wine and Holiday Lights will take place on

Flutterby Arts Festival



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Epic Bakery Festival Nov. 13

Bring the whole family out to the 2nd Annual Epic Bakery Competition benefiting the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Emerald Coast (BGC EC) on Sunday, November 13th, 1:00



PM - 3:00 PM on Main Street in DeFuniak Springs. Competing teams provide samples to attendees and compete for the Best Baked Goods in Town. Enjoy a day full of fun

featuring a LIVE DJ for an epic kid-friendly dance party, karaoke, blind donut tasting at the kid zone, coffee sack relay race, bubble zone, and more! All proceeds from this event go to the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Emerald Coast. Tickets are \$10 for Adults and Children \$5 (3-12 years old). Visit emeraldcoastbgc.org for more information.

 **Community**

the beautifully decorated streets of Baytowne Wharf and feature more than 30 champagnes and delicious appetizers at featured Village restaurants. Guests can enjoy the sounds of the season with carolers, and a sneak peek of our first tree lighting of the season! The Village of Baytowne Wharf, 9100 Baytowne Blvd., Miramar Beach.

The Nutcracker at Mattie Kelly Arts Center Saturday, November 19, 7:30 pm The Mattie Kelly Arts Center hosts the Northwest Florida Ballet (NFB) as they perform the 43rd production of The Nutcracker, November 18th - 20th. Purchase tickets online at nfballet.org or by calling the box office at (850) 729-6000. NFB's The Nutcracker, Friday, November 18 | 7:30 PM, Saturday, November 19 | 7:30 PM, Sunday, November 20 | 2:30 PM. Mattie Kelly Fine & Performing Arts Center, Northwest Florida State College, 100 College Blvd E, Niceville.

Sandestin Turkey Trot Sunday, November 20, 8:00 am The inaugural Sandestin Turkey Trot 5K Run and 1 Mile Fun Run/Walk is set to take place Sunday, November 20th. The race begins at 8AM at the Bay-



towne Marina. It's a great time for the whole family! To register in advance, visit bit.ly/3yO5pl7. Event details and schedule: 7:00AM | Registration / Packet pick-up, 8:00AM | Sandestin Turkey Trot race begins, 9:00AM | Food and beverages, 10:00AM | Awards, 11:00AM | Tailgate Football with beer, food, prizes and rewards. Baytowne Marina, 9300 Emerald Coast Parkway, Miramar Beach.

Emerald Coast Theatre Company: Wake Up Brother Bear Sunday, November 20, 9:00 am. Emerald Coast Theatre Company's Professional Theatre for Young & Very Young Audiences showcases professional actors performing productions on ECTC's Main Stage especially selected for young audience members. For tickets and additional info, visit www.emeraldcoasttheatre.org or follow along on ECTC Facebook. Emerald Coast Theatre Company, 560 Grand Blvd (Upstairs), Miramar



Beach. **Rosemary Beach Unleashed** Sunday, November 20, 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm. Join two and four-legged friends for the annual Rosemary Beach Unleashed pet festival on Sunday, November 20 from 2 - 4pm on St. Augustine Green in Rosemary Beach. You and your pet are encouraged to come in costume or theme attire (only vaccinated pooches, please!). This annual festival is free and open to the public, and benefits Rosemary Beach Foundation and Alaqua Animal Refuge. St. Augustine Green, Rosemary Beach.

Topsail Hill Preserve State Park: Guided Plant Stroll Monday, November 21, 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. Topsail Hill Preserve State Park, 7525 W. Scenic Highway 30A, Santa Rosa Beach.

30A 10K & 1 Mile Fun Run Thursday, November 24, 7:30 am The annual 30A 10K Thanksgiving Day charity race takes place on Thursday, Nov. 24 in Rosemary Beach. This fast & flat, out-and-back course route is designed for running enthusiasts looking for a great race to set a personal record or families that want to start a new, fun tradition on Thanksgiving Day morning. With a 10K, 5K, and 1 mile run/walk, there is a race distance for every ability. Registration available at www.30A10K.com. Rosemary Beach, County Hwy 30A, Rosemary Beach.

FOOW: Brunch with Santa Friday, November 25, 8:00 am to 2:00 pm. FOOW is celebrating the season at Brunch with Santa of Friday, November 25th beginning at 8AM. Brunch will

be served a la carte from 8AM - 2PM and Santa will be available from 8AM - 11AM for pictures and wish lists for all the good boys and girls! Plus, Santa will have a special sweet treat for all the children! Cost: \$45 per adult, \$25 per child Reservations not accepted, service is on a first-come, first-served basis. FOOW30a, 34 Goldenrod Circle, Santa Rosa Beach.

Baytowne Cinema: The Polar Express Friday, November 25, 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm. Watch the holiday classic The Polar Express on Friday, November 25 at the Village of Baytowne Wharf on the Events Plaza lawn. Grab a lawn chair and enjoy a movie under the stars. Admission is free and open to the public. Baytowne on Ice is open for the winter season in Sandestin! Come out for "Here Comes Santa Claus" on Saturday, Nov. 26 (6-9pm) to see Santa and watch the lighting of the Baytowne tree for the holidays. The Village of Baytowne Wharf Events Plaza, 9100 Baytowne Blvd., Miramar Beach.

Seaside Central Square Cinema Friday, November 25,

EVENTS

continued on page 25



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Emerald Coast Theatre Co. Presents "Students on Stage" Events

Emerald Coast Theatre Company's High School theatre program presents The Edgar Allan Poe Afterlife Radio Show on Friday, October 28th, 7:30 pm and Saturday, October 29th, 2:30 pm. A tap at a chamber door and the beat of a hideous heart evoke the very best and creepiest of Edgar Allan Poe. So when Poe sets out to keep his stories alive from beyond the grave, an otherworldly radio studio proves just the thing. Wandering spirits gather to play the roles in Poe's most classic works, from "The Cask of the Amontillado" to "The Fall of the House of Usher." The production will feature the talents of Walker Rivard, Mattie Livingston, Savannah Herndon, Alexander Koehler, Carly Parker, Alexa Whitten, Ethan Craig, Olivia Volquartsen, Jaydin Baine, and Selah Metzger. Tickets are \$12 - \$18 and available at emeraldcoasttheatre.org.

"These students are scary talented! We are so proud of the work that our Jr. Company

members are doing. You're sure to see them on the mainstage in our professional season soon!" - Nathanael Fisher, Producing Artistic Director

Beauty And The Beast JR Performed by Students on Stage Students steal the show in these Education Theatre Program productions with all of your favorite characters like Mrs. Potts, Lumiere, Cogsworth, Belle, and the Beast. Students get to act, dance, and sing on a professionally designed set with lights, sound, and fun costumes!

The "Bigs" (Tuesday's Class) will perform Friday, Nov, 4th 7:00 p.m., the "Bigs" (Wednesday's Class) will perform Saturday, Nov, 5th 11:30 a.m. and the "Littles" will perform Saturday, Nov, 5th 3:30 p.m. Tickets are \$8-\$14. Teens (6th - 8th Grade) will perform Saturday, Nov, 12th at 5:00 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. Teens (9th - 12th Grade) will perform Friday, Nov, 11th 7:30 p.m. and Saturday, Nov, 12th 12:00 p.m. Tickets are \$12 -\$18 and avail-



able at emeraldcoasttheatre.org. "Our talented kids and teens are such a joy to watch on stage. I'm proud of how hard our students work to make their show a success!"

- Anna Fisher, Associate Artistic and Education Director

Save the date for ECTC's upcoming family friendly offerings: A Charlie Brown Christmas (Dec 2 - 10), The Best Christmas Pag-

eant Ever (Dec. 8-18), You and Me Under the Sea (for 6 mos - 5yrs - Mar 21 - Apr 8) and The Sound of Music (May 5-14).

To make a tax-deductible donation, volunteer or learn more about Emerald Coast Theatre Company, call (850) 684-0323 and visit www.emeraldcoasttheatre.org. Engage with ECTC as well on Facebook, Instagram,

Twitter and YouTube.

A special thanks to ECTC's Major Sponsors of the 2022-2023 season: Grand Blvd at Sandestin, St. Joe Community Foundation, Howard Group and the South Walton Tourist Development Council (Visit South Walton). Thank you to our Education Program Sponsors - Shoreline Title, Barker Williams, PLLC, Jennifer Crawford's Own At The Beach Team with Keller Williams, Heritage Oak Wealth Advisors. Emerald Coast Theatre Company is a 501(c)(3) founded in 2012 by Nathanael Fisher, MFA, and his wife, Anna Fisher, MA. Based in Miramar Beach, Florida, ECTC's mission is to enrich and entertain the Emerald Coast community through professional and educational theater. ECTC operates year-round with a two-fold mission to provide both educational and professional offerings to the Northwest Florida community.

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Cultural Arts Alliance Calls Artists for 35th Annual Artsquest Fine Arts Festival

Event To Take Place May 13th and 14th in Grand Boulevard Town Center

The Cultural Arts Alliance of Walton County (CAA) invites visual artists of all disciplines to apply to participate in the juried 35th Annual ArtsQuest Fine Arts Festival planned for May 13th and 14th, 2023 in south Walton County, along Northwest Florida's beaches.

ArtsQuest will take place in the Town Center of Grand Boulevard, which is also home to other large-scale events including the 30A Songwriters Festival and the South Walton Beaches Wine & Food Festival. Located along the Scenic Highway 98 corridor, Grand Boulevard is easily accessible from regional drive and fly markets, including Dallas, Houston, Memphis, Atlanta, Nashville, Birmingham, Mobile, Pensacola and Tallahassee. The Town Center also offers upscale shopping, restaurants and three on-site hotels.

"We are excited to embrace

our 35th year of creativity in the community, a passion for art and an event that brings extraordinary artists and art collectors together," said CAA Events Director Allie Anderson. We look forward to celebrating and recognizing the craftsmanship and vibrant artistry ArtsQuest brings to Walton County."

Artists may apply in the categories of Mixed Media, Oils, Acrylics, Works on Paper, Photography, Wood, Metal, Fiber, Glass, Ceramics, Sculpture, Jewelry, Pastels, and more and will be juried by art industry professionals. The jury fee is \$45 and booth fees start at \$325. The final application deadline is March 4, 2023.

ARTISTS MAY APPLY TO THE EVENT AT: Zapplication.org.

- ArtsQuest Artist benefits include:
- * Limited to 200 juried artists
 - * Attendance of 5,000 quality art buyers
 - * \$10,000 in cash prizes
 - * Program listing
 - * Exceptional artist hospitality



- * Easy, convenient Friday load-in
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- * Free artist parking onsite
- * Corner and double booth options
- * Booth sitters
- * Overnight security
- * Indoor restroom facilities
- * Live music and entertainment
- * Food vendors & full cash bar, along with existing restaurants in Grand Boulevard ArtsQuest Fine Arts Festival is a featured event for Art Month Walton County with a reputation of

artist centered promotion and execution and as such implements an extensive festival media plan directed to drive and fly markets including print, radio, digital and social media advertising, in addition to local signage. These marketing efforts combined with artist benefits, exceptional location and repeat local and visiting educated patrons who are eager to get to know and purchase makers' works make this long running and highly anticipated event a must on the calendar for artists of exceptional quality.

Awards are given based on the Judges' evaluation and scoring of each artist's body of work as displayed in the booth. ArtsQuest Fine Arts Festival is a Cultural Arts Alliance signature event that helps to fulfill our mission to bring high-quality artistic experiences to the community. Call the CAA office at 850-622-5970 for details.

EVENTS

continued from page 16

7:30 pm. Grab a blanket and come out to the Seaside Amphitheater on Friday night for Central Square Cinema, Elf, a family movie on the lawn. Free and open to the public. Show begins at 7:30PM. Seaside Amphitheater, Seaside.

Ice Skating Extravaganza at Baytowne Wharf Friday, December 2, 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm. The Village of Baytowne Wharf will host its annual Ice Skating Extravaganza at the Baytowne skating pavilion. The event will feature performances from well-known skaters on Friday, Dec. 2 at 6:00pm & 7:30pm. Skaters will be sharing tips and

tricks. Free and open to the public. Before and in between the shows, lace up those skates around with the pros. The Village of Baytowne Wharf, 9300 Baytowne Blvd, Miramar Beach.

Eden Gardens Christmas Luminary Stroll Saturday, December 10, 5:00 pm to 8:00 pm. Eden Gardens will once again illuminate the park for an evening that has become a local holiday tradition. The Friends of Eden Gardens State Park invite the public to the Luminary Stroll throughout the park grounds on Saturday, December 10th from 5:00 PM to 8:00 PM. Over 2000 luminaries will be lit and placed along the garden paths of the park, giving the public the opportunity to experience the magic

of Eden Gardens at nightfall. There will be music and carolers on the grounds throughout the evening, as well as cookies

and hot beverages provided by the Friends of Eden Gardens at the Pavilion area. Everyone's invited! Admission fees to the park

are waived for the event. Eden Gardens State Park, 181 Eden Gardens Rd., Santa Rosa Beach.

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Wellness



BY TODD CRAIG, JOURNEY BRAVELY

I grew up believing emotions were inefficient and to be avoided. Emotions, even the "good" ones, were not to be trusted. They were to be overcome by being tough and powering through. So, I learned

how to ignore emotions for the sake of efficiency. While this approach enabled me to perform and accomplish many tasks, it didn't allow me to enjoy those accomplishments. It also left me feeling disconnected from myself and others, including my wife and boys. When I avoided emotions, I lived with low-grade anger and discontentment that, ironically, demanded more of my time and energy than the original emotions I was avoiding.

Maybe you, too, were taught feelings aren't safe and should be suppressed. But, what if that isn't true? What if there is a purpose to emotions? What if ac-

knowledging them is a pathway to growth and progress? What if there is a depth of life and relationship to be experienced through emotional awareness? What if emotions aren't something to escape but the path to the life, relationships and influence you have been searching for?

Four Steps to Allow Emotions to Work for You:

Slow down to speed up

The speed and busyness of life is one way we are taught emotions are to be ignored. There is simply no time for emotions. We pursue more work or activities as a means of escaping or numbing emotions. However, if emotions have purpose and can provide important information about the abundant life path we desire, we must slow down and create space to experience and acknowledge them. When we create space for emotions, we bring them to the light instead of allowing them to drain our energy while operating in the shadows. Next time you sense an emotion, whether comfortable or uncomfortable, pause and take three to four deep breaths, allow yourself some space to experience the emotion, and then move on to the next step.

Name the emotion

At first glance, naming the emotion appears to be simple. However, this can be difficult without a strong emotional vocabulary. When asked how we are feeling, we often have two or three go-to answers such as "fine," "good," "frustrated," or a favorite of my son's, "meh." If moving beyond words like these is difficult, you are not alone. A simple hack is finding and printing an emotion word bank. We have a printable "Feeling Word List" available in the Resources tab at Journeybravely.com. Keep a picture of this on your phone or fridge. When you are tempted to use words like good, fine, or meh, look at the word bank and find words like thankful, valued, respected, overwhelmed, relaxed, betrayed.

What's the story

After naming the emotion, consider the narrative behind the emotion. How are your beliefs shaping your emotional interpretation. If you are feeling rejected when your friend turned you down for lunch, try investigating your story about your friend's intentions. Are you believing you aren't important to your friend? When you identify your emotional story, it is important to test the story with three

questions. Is the story true? Is it kind? Is it helpful? If the answer to any of these questions is "no," it's time to adopt a new narrative. Try challenging the original story with a version that gives your friend the benefit of the doubt. Perhaps he would like to get together another time because your friendship is important to him.

What are your action steps?

Now that you understand your emotion, how will it guide your actions? Maybe it's time to replace old thought patterns that are no longer serving you. Maybe there are relational boundaries you need to establish. Maybe it's time to set boundaries with news, social media or other cultural input. Maybe it's time to start saying "no" so you can slow down and be present with yourself and others in more meaningful ways. Remember, you are ridiculously in charge. You largely get to make your own decisions as well as what and who you allow in your life. Emotions can help make these decisions more efficient if we give them the space to do so.

As you allow your emotions to work for you, we are here to support you along your journey. Coaching sessions are currently available. Connect with us at Journeybravely.com.



Stephenie Craig, LCSW
Therapist
918-221-9987 | stepheniecraig@journeybravely.com

Todd Craig
Life & Leadership Coach
918-740-1232 | todd@journeybravely.com

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Depression During the Holidays



BY RICHARD CHERN M.D.

The holidays are coming up and these are the best times of the year. At least that's what we are led to believe. In fact, the holidays can be very stressful for people. Even though most people enjoy the holidays, nearly forty percent of people report increased stress and anxiety during these times. This often leads to substance abuse, relapse, or other worsening medical conditions.

In preparation for these potential stressful times, I'd like to tell you about some of the not so commonly discussed effects of hormone replacement. Many of our patients initially complain of physical exhaustion, generalized aches and pains, weight gain, lack of sleep or low libido. I honestly don't think even one patient has come to the clinic specifically complaining about depression or anxiety. This is not to say they don't have these symptoms, but it is rarely the reason they seek us for treatment.

What many of our patients don't realize is that optimizing hormones can reduce or eliminate depression and anxiety. I ask every patient who gets treated, "What effects do you see that you didn't expect?" Many patients talk about the overall reduction in joint or arthritis pain, some talk about the increased desire for physical activity but I think the most common comment is the huge reduction in stress levels and positive ef-

fects on mood.

I believe that the reduction in stress levels and improvement in mood are probably the most important benefit of hormone optimization. That huge weight of problems you must pick up and carry every day is nowhere near as heavy. And you stop viewing stressors as problems to deal with but more like challenges to overcome. Your outlook changes from just trying to survive the day to waking up feeling rested and ready to attack the day.

So, if you are dreading the holidays then this is a sure sign that you need to at least get your hormone levels looked at and let us review the results with you. Remember, normal levels don't necessarily represent optimal health. In order to get optimal benefits and optimal health you will need optimal levels.

Dr Richard Chern, MD provides hormone therapy to men and women who travel from across the globe to be treated here in Miramar Beach. He is on staff at BioTE Medical as an

instructor to teach hormone therapy to new providers including providers right here in our local area. Dr Richard Chern treats many of the providers in the community and might even be treating your doctor. Dr Richard

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Only hospital in Northwest Florida to offer new procedure to relieve GERD symptoms

Doctors at Ascension Sacred Heart Emerald Coast are the first in Northwest Florida to offer a new, minimally invasive procedure to relieve heartburn, acid reflux, and other symptoms of Gastroesophageal Reflux Disease (GERD). The procedure is called TIF, which stands for transoral incisionless fundoplication. According to the National Institutes of Health, researchers estimate 20 percent of people in the United States are living with GERD.

Doctors recently performed the first 10 TIF procedures at the hospital and say it has provided a new option for some patients.

«We are excited to offer this procedure at Ascension Sacred Heart Emerald Coast,” said Dr. Thomas Shaknovsky, a general surgeon. “This minimally inva-

sive procedure can help people who are not getting rid of their discomfort with lifestyle modification and medication.”

In the TIF procedure, a gastroenterologist uses a flexible instrument called an endoscope and a special TIF device to repair or rebuild the antireflux valve through the mouth, which helps restore the body’s natural protection against reflux, which occurs when stomach acid flows back into the esophagus. Since there is no incision, it could mean a quicker, less painful recovery for some patients. Dr. Shaknovsky says his patients no longer have to rely on medication to treat their condition after the procedure. The TIF procedure may be right for those who are concerned about taking medications over the long term.

“With so many people liv-



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ing with GERD, offering this procedure at our hospital can improve the lives of people living in Northwest Florida,” said Bryan Walrath, President, Ascension Sacred Heart Emerald Coast. “Our surgical care teams at Ascension Sacred Heart Em-

erald Coast continue to provide compassionate care close to home.”

Ask your doctor if the TIF procedure may be right for you. To learn more about Ascension Sacred Heart Emerald Coast and procedures at the hospital

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CVHN & The Youth Mental Health Project Kick Off Partnership

New Mental Health Resources coming to Okaloosa and Walton County Parents

Children’s Volunteer Health Network (CVHN) and The Youth Mental Health Project are introducing regional chapters of The Parent Support Network to the panhandle. Two local events will be held in Okaloosa and Walton counties to discuss The Parent Support Network and the regional chapters being developed. The new resources will provide local parents and caregivers who are concerned about their children’s mental health with an opportunity to find and support each other in a confidential and safe space.

The events will take place in October, both free to attend. One will be held in Okaloosa County and the other in Walton County. Each event will be 90 minutes long with a presentation by The Youth Mental Health Project team including Valerie Barton, Executive Director and Tyesha Branch, Program Manager. The Walton County event will take



place on October 17, 2022 at Van R Butler Elementary School at 5 p.m., and the Okaloosa County event will take place on October 18, 2022 at United Way Emerald Coast at 5 p.m.

“We are thrilled to partner with the Children’s Volunteer Health Network in offering parent and caregiver support groups to families in Walton and Okaloosa counties,” said Barton. “Our youth mental health crisis continues, so it is critical that caregivers who are struggling to raise children with mental health challenges tell their stories to oth-

ers who have “been there” and get the support and information they need to cope.”

The Youth Mental Health Project aims to educate, empower, and support families and communities to better understand and care for the mental health of local youth. CVHN initially sought out a partnership with The Youth Mental Health Project in fall 2021 with a screening of No Letting Go, a film that follows the story of a family dealing with a young son who is struggling with mental illness. As CVHN continued to focus on

eliminating barriers to accessible and affordable healthcare for children in need, the Santa Rosa Beach nonprofit decided to collaborate once again to officially bring The Parent Support Network to the panhandle.

“The mission and work of the Youth Mental Health Project perfectly aligns with what we hope to offer to the families in our community. Introducing The Parent Support Network will

allow caregivers to find others who understand, who have the same struggles, and share support and resources to help all of our kids in their mental wellness journey,” said Associate Executive Director of CVHN, Megan Trent.

For more information on this partnership and upcoming events, follow CVHN on Facebook and visit www.cvhnkids.org.



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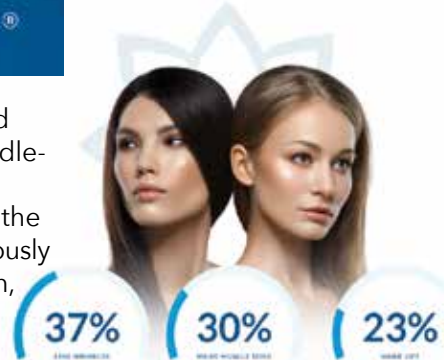
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A Pastor's Ponderings: Thankful for God, Family, Country



BY PASTOR DAVID HOLLAND

"I have been young, and now am old; Yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken,

Nor his descendants begging bread. He is ever merciful, and lends;

And his descendants are blessed."
(Psalm 37:25-26, NKJV)

There I stood in Capernaum, where Jesus once provided bread for the multitudes and healed the sick. The weather was perfect. The full moon lit up the night and three hours of unadulterated worship rocked the hillsides.

Praising God with gusto came easily with the great throng of pilgrims gathered on the north shore of the Sea of Galilee. Two thousand Christians assembled from all over the world in ancient Capernaum to kick off the Feast of Tabernacles and walk in the footsteps of Christ. Faith was on full display.

Similar to our Thanksgiving celebration, the Feast of Tabernacles is an annual holiday in Israel that commemorates the Israelites' 40-year journey out of Egypt. God provided manna to eat and water for them in the wilderness. They slept in tents, called "succots," or temporary dwellings. This holiday is a time of joy for the Jews and the Christians who visit. Jesus wants to tabernacle among us today if we invite him.

While in Nazareth, the minimalism of Christ's life struck me in Joseph's workshop, literally a cave. Questions probed my mind. Do we adorn our faith with so much pomp and ceremony that

we miss the power of his love and the simplicity of His teachings?

Shifting to southern Israel, we explored Hebron, where Abraham received the promise that God would bless his family. Recent excavations reveal stone pathways traveled by Abraham 4,000 years ago. While offering his son Isaac as a sacrifice, God interrupted him with a ram caught in a thicket and taught Abraham that God will provide Himself a sacrifice. I thanked God for sending Christ as our eternal sacrifice.

Landing more than 6,000 miles to the west of Israel, we arrived in South Carolina. Our grandson, Josiah, was about to graduate from Marine boot camp on Parris Island. The family gathered to celebrate his achievement. Fourteen of us stood at rapt attention among thousands of family members of the 374 graduating Marines. The Marine Corps band played in the shadow of the statue commemorating the battle of Iwo Jima.

My family cheered them on, along with hundreds of other families representing every walk of life in our pluralistic culture, every one of them proud of their Marine and their country. My daughter and the mother of our Marine is fiercely loyal and unyielding as iron. She whooped and hollered, shouting above the din, "I love you Josiah!"

Waves of pride and patriotism washed over me as I watched my grandson march in strict formation with his company. The innocent baby-faced toddler I once knew stood as a strong, disciplined United States Marine willing to lay down his life for his faith, family and country. That's when stark, raving fear ruined the parade.

Will the Corps send my grandson into battle in some far-off desert or jungle? Will an enemy's weapon tear through his flesh and bone? Will he come home in a body bag? These thoughts tormented me while the band played on.

Only God knows these answers.

Moses showed us that even in the wilderness, God is good and always provides. I learned from Father Abraham to place my family in God's hands because he is so faithful. I learned from my savior Jesus that God is truly with us through the battles of life. Like King David of old, I have learned to be thankful for my God, my family, and my country.

Happy Thanksgiving.

Dave Holland pastored churches for thirty-eight years before retiring in Destin, Florida. His book, "Christmas Jesus" is now available at Amazon.com for \$5. He also 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 his books from his website, DaveHolland.org, or at Amazon.com. Pastor Dave is available to preach and teach in churches and conferences. Contact him at DavidoHolland54@gmail.com.

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The Road to Redemption: Children in Crisis and The Children's Neighborhood

BY VICTORIA OSTROSKY

When she heard the authoritative knock on her front door, she quickly ran to her baby brother and grabbed his hand. Her eyes were great pools of fear and, with a trembling voice, she begged to not be separated from her little brother. Their home, such as it was, was home no longer, and she didn't know what would happen next.

The vision for Children in Crisis, a non-profit 501(c)(3), began in 2002 in a living room of concerned citizens who worked in school systems and foster care. They were concerned about how many times children, removed from their abusive and unsafe homes, were shuffled from one foster home to another because of the severe shortage of foster parents. More often than not, siblings were separated, further traumatizing the children. This core group wanted a better way to meet the needs of these vulnerable children, with a vision of opening a foster care neighbor-

hood.

Children in Crisis and their Children's Neighborhood is now a reality, sitting on 20 acres of beautiful land in Fort Walton Beach, through a charity land lease by Northwest Florida State College. They serve Circuit

1, comprising the counties of Walton, Okaloosa, Escambia, and Santa Rosa. On this land, Children in Crisis has an emergency shelter for children removed

from abusive environments on short notice, where they can stay temporarily. Then there are five family-style foster homes where foster parents live on site, and eight studio apartments for young adults who have aged out of foster care but aren't ready to be on their own yet.

Children in Crisis' mission is to keep brothers and sisters together. They've worked dili-

gently to obtain the funding to build the neighborhood and have placed foster parents in each home to watch over and care for children, keeping brothers and sisters together, greatly

mitigating the need to move them from one home to another; thereby giving them a better chance to heal and grow strong.

Every adult who works at The Children's Neighborhood lets the children know they are in a safe environment. Many of the kids that are removed from homes arrive with only a Walmart bag of a few items. Many don't even know how to use a shower. And because many have lived not knowing when they would eat again, hide food in their rooms. These are just some of the behaviors these abused children need help with overcoming.



Children in Crisis has seen lives transformed and children able to trust adults again and flourish at school because of the unique setting at The Children's Neighborhood.

Their greatest need right now are foster parents. They have two empty homes waiting to accept and house children, but no foster parents to receive them. Fostering is a calling, and though it's not an easy job, God equips those who are prepared to do the work.

The Bible doesn't directly instruct us to be foster parents, but it does speak of taking care of the fatherless and the widow and loving each other sacrificially. We are told to take in strangers and be like the Good Samaritan who

stopped and got involved, giving his time and money to care for another.

Who is our neighbor? The person in need who God puts in front of us.

To get involved, please check out www.childrenincrisisfl.org. You can fill out their application online, or call 850-864-4242, come visit the neighborhood, and find a way to be part of rescuing children in great need right in your backyard.

You can hear the entire story about Children in Crisis and listen to many other incredible interviews on the weekly Road to Redemption radio show and podcast at www.roadtoredemptionpodcast.com

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Sean of the South: Happy Thanksgiving



By SEAN DIETRICH

It's a few minutes until Thanksgiving. I thought I'd stay up and watch the clock change. I'm sipping tea, listening to gentle music playing in the background.

I think it's Bing Crosby, or maybe Nat King Cole. The volume is too low to tell. Either way, it sounds

like 1948 in this living room.

Yesterday, my wife made a batch of cornbread and biscuits. She left them on top the refrigerator so they'd get good and dry before she crumbled them into cornbread dressing.

There is a big debate between calling it "dressing" or "stuffing." And while I am no authority on the matter, I can tell you this:

Once, I spent Thanksgiving at a buddy's house, his mother was from West Virginia, and she served "stuffing."

She cooked the entire feast without ever dropping the Winston cigarette that dangled from the corner of her mouth. And she must have had a few too many cups of holiday cheer because she accidentally

shoved all her cornbread into a well-known orifice of the turkey's body. I had never seen this done.

"What have you done to the dressing?" I asked her.

"Dressing?" she said, laughing, elbow-deep in a turkey's butt. "This ain't dressing, kid. It's stuffing."

You can imagine my surprise when just before serving the turkey, she rammed an extra-long spoon up the bird's backend and announced, "This stuffing looks a little undercooked, but oh well."

It was apple-pecan stuffing. Everybody ate some and a few hours later we all got deathly ill. And I don't mean to get graphic here, but we were having projectile-like symptoms.

And that was the last time I ever ate salmonella-flavored West Virginia stuffing.

Anyway, I'm sorry I brought that up. Especially on Thanksgiving. What I meant to say was that I hope you have a great day. And I really mean that, I'm not just blowing smoke.

I love this holiday. The smells, the colors, the families trying to run each other down with their SUVs and make it look like self-defense. The nervous breakdowns in the bathroom, the forced pleasantries among in-laws, and of course, the cornbread dressing. I love it all.

But when I was a kid, I did not like holidays. In fact, I hated them.

And that's why I'm writing you. The thing is, for some people, holidays really stink. They are reminders of how everybody ELSE in the world has a nice, happy family, and how you have jack squat.

At least that's how it was for my

family during my childhood. After my father died in a pretty horrible way, people would invite us to spend holidays with them because they felt sorry for us. We would join them, but it was awful.

The only thing worse than being sad on Thanksgiving is being a charity case, sitting all alone on someone's living room sofa.

But my story isn't important here. What I'm saying is that there are lots of people who are like I was. People who hate Thanksgiving, Christmas, or New Year's Day. To them, this is the hardest part of the year.

You can't always see these heart-broken people because they disguise themselves with happy faces that make them invisible. I know this because I grew up that way. I had a phony face for every occasion.

There's the "We're-doing-great-thanks-for-asking" face. There's the "We're-so-happy-we're-practically-squatting-out-gold-bricks" face. And the "If-I-were-any-happier-I'd-be-in-the-nuthouse" face.

Lies. All lies.

So, if you are lucky enough to have what could be loosely called a good life, I hope you look for these forlorn people. You don't have to do anything. You don't have to invite them to move into your house. You don't have to act all sympathetic and frowny faced.

But maybe you can sit beside them on a sofa, tell them a funny story, or try to get them to smile. Or if you are hard up for conversational topics, you can always talk about how your sister-in-law is crazier than a runover cat.

Unless, of course, the person on

the sofa is actually your sister-in-law herself. In which case, you will have no choice but to talk about "The Bachelorette" because that is all she ever freaking talks about.

When I was a kid, the people who saved my life were quiet, meek people. They were old men who entertained me with magic tricks, or a guitar, or by teaching me corny jokes.

And it was because of these people that for a few hours on a holiday like this one, in an ordinary living room, I was temporarily not sad.

Because of them, I would listen to Bing Crosby, or maybe it was Nat King Cole, and I would let myself pretend, like everyone else does, that today was the greatest day of the calendar year. Even though there is no such thing. Not really.

A day is just a day. You can't make it more than that no matter how hard you wish. No matter which fancy name you give it.

But then again, what if you can? What if today really is the best day in the history of the world?

And what if the coolest thing you and I could ever do upon this weary earth is not to be a big hero; or make lots of money; or live a long life; or travel the globe; or be the best in our field; or do something noteworthy; or be considered important; or unique; or successful? What if the greatest thing anyone could ever do is to simply find some sad little heart, sitting all alone on a sofa, and make that heart un-sad?

Watch out for undercooked stuffing. Eat dressing instead.

Happy Thanksgiving.



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Discovering Inspiration in What Drives Us Nuts!



BY KIRK MCCARLEY

A few days ago, I shared a drink and some sandwiches with a couple of work mates at an airport eatery, killing time before our respective flights back home departed. As guys are often wont to do, our conversation drifted into a Seinfeldian discussion of observations and subsequent questions. Given we were eating perhaps all three of us sensed a subliminal urging into a culinary-oriented discourse of food, food preparation, and kitchen appliances.

Which brought us to the plight of the automatic dishwasher.

All of us married, we quickly reached universal agreement that rinsing and then loading the dishwasher was not such a disdainful chore, but rather it was the unloading that was loathsome. We evaluated the source of our contempt and concluded two factors were of influence. One, there seems to be a higher degree of thought that goes into the emptying process. Where do the utensils go and how should they be configured? When unloading, does other cookware need to first be moved to accommodate those most recently cleansed? Have bowls or glasses been overturned in the cleaning process and accumulated that dingy “graywater,” that requires a manual re-rinsing?

The second consideration was the manner in that the kitchenware may have been loaded initially. Had larger items such as colanders or large measuring cups occupied significant space, when they might have been hand washed at the outset, thus deferring the automatic washing process and subsequent unloading for at least 12 more hours?

No remedy was reached for our dilemma, except for feeling a bit



more lightened through discovering mutual comradeship and “misery” by talking it through.

What is your peeve? Is it the toilet paper positioned up or down? The driver’s seat moved too far forward, or back? The tube of toothpaste squeezed from the middle, or front?

Enough of these annoyances piled on top of one another can result in aggravation, anger, and even lashing out at an unaware loved one or bystander.

Why do these seemingly inconsequential things annoy us?

An article in “Psychology Today” examined our reactions.

It revealed that though there can be physical and mental factors contributing: sleep deprivation, stress, illness, financial concerns, oftentimes, the fundamental issue is more a sense of our “space” having been invaded, reflecting a need to “reset.” What are ways to step back and discipline ourselves to rethink? The article shared five examples:

Set a limit. Someone asks you an irksome question that you really don’t want to answer. One approach can be to respond with “I’m not prepared to discuss that now.” Another can be “That is really difficult for me to talk about at this time.”

A need to protect your time. Little intrusions matter. Even the five minutes it takes to unload the dishwasher is time to take care of another chore, or “check in” with a loved one.

Identify another approach. Will waking up 15 minutes earlier help? Can tasks be broken up into diverse increments such as take out the trash, watch a 30-minute show, then unload the dishes?

Resentment and anger. Speak out. Don’t stuff it. “I feel I’m doing a great share of the chores.

I really could use help.”

Finally, it may be us that suffers from perfectionism. You get mad at yourself for falling short of your own expectations. You’re human, give yourself a break. Likewise, if another person fails to live up to your standards, either express your hopes, or try to see things from a different perspective. Better yet, is it worth hanging onto or should it be let go?

Rethink, reframe, refocus. My Mother-In-Law had a saying posted in her house—“Thank God for dirty dishes, they have a tale to tell; while other folks go hungry, we’re eating very well.”
Time to unload.

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



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Yours, Mine, & Ours



BY RICK MOORE

During the first year of college, I was elected freshman class president. Two days before the first monthly meeting that I was to preside over, a tornado ripped through the city destroying dozens of homes. I proposed we do our part and help those who were less fortunate. The entire class voted unanimously to volunteer their time on Saturday by cleaning up residential areas which were hit the hardest. When Saturday morning came, only seven students out of the hundreds of freshmen actually showed up to help. It was at that moment I

learned a profound lesson. We can share our response, have the ability to help, but not accept response + ability. It's easy to speak up. It's harder to show up. The word and the deed should go hand in hand.

What is a response without responsibility? Let's look at a couple of examples. If a city says they are a sanctuary city but refuse to provide sanctuary, that is a response without responsibility. If some say they support adoption but do not adopt, become a foster parent, or at least support an adoption organization, that is a response without responsibility. In no way does this make the response wrong. It just makes it weak and hollow.

When we do take responsibility to make a difference with the resources we have, it is important not to guilt trip others, or become involved in virtue signaling. I know someone who volunteers by assisting patients in a hospice. I do not feel guilty that I don't have time during this season of my life to do the same. There are dozens of worthy causes I do not contribute to. All of us are all limited on how much responsi-



bility we can take on. I can't help everyone, but I can help someone.

Another pitfall to avoid is volunteering others. It took me years to realize that volunteering myself was often "volunteering my wife," even if she was not going to be directly involved. If I agree to coach a ball team, be a camp counselor for a week, help children with disabilities, or volunteer in youth ministry at my church, that equals less time for me to be at home helping my family. Often, my wife has handled the chores I would

have been doing if I was home. Every time I went on a mission trip, I had to remind myself how blessed I am to have an awesome spouse who is willing to do so many extra things behind the scenes so I could be gone. No one likes to be "volun-told" (told they have to volunteer). It is wise to ask your spouse or family members for their blessing before taking on new responsibilities.

Maybe it's been a while since you volunteered at a local church, school or community event. Maybe it has been a while

since you contributed to Shriners Hospitals or Saint Jude's Hospital. Refrain from becoming involved out of guilt or pressure. Ask yourself what is a good fit for you. Usually, when people buy vehicles, they kick the tires and take it out for a test drive. Approach volunteering in a similar way. Don't make long-term commitments until you discover what you are most fulfilled doing. You may believe you will be happy working with fifth graders, but later discover you enjoy working with high schoolers instead. You may think soccer is the sport you want to coach, but later find out you enjoy t-ball instead. You can't do everything, but always remember, you can do something.

I cannot take resources with me once I leave this earth. You cannot take resources with you once you leave this earth. One day yours will be gone. One day mine will be gone. The only thing which will be left is ours.

Rick Moore is Communications Pastor at Destiny Worship Center.



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 Dining

Thanksgiving in South Walton

The Pearl Hotel

Havana Beach Bar & Grill at The Pearl Hotel is offering a Thanksgiving Grand Buffet this year. The Grand Buffet will be held on November 24, with seating times from 11 AM to 7 PM. Highlights include an Emerald Coast Seafood Display with poached Gulf shrimp, cocktail

crab claws, smoked tuna dip, oysters on the half shell, and Gulf Coast ceviche; Entrees including roasted turkey with sage-shallot butter, herb-roasted prime rib at a chef-attended carving station, maple-bourbon glazed ham, and blackened Red Snapper; and a selection of House Baked Desserts including pies, tarts,

and much more! Price: \$85 for adults; \$45 for children ages 4 to 12; \$35 for children ages 3 and under. Reservations are required. Call (850) 588-2882 for reservations or visit www.ThePearlRB.com. 63 Main Street, Rosemary Beach.

Old Florida Fish House



Old Florida Fish House Thanksgiving Menu

Open 11AM-6PM

Carving Station

Butter & Herb Roasted Turkey Breast w/ Traditional Giblet Gravy
Rosemary Garlic Roasted Prime Rib
w/ Fresh Grated Horseradish Crème Fraiche

Mains

Roasted Wild Salmon
w/ Cucumber Dill Yogurt Sauce
Gluten Free Royal Red Fried Shrimp
w/Bloody Mary Cocktail Sauce

Sides

Traditional Cornbread & Sage Dressing
White Cheddar Macaroni & Cheese
Brown Butter Roasted Butternut Squash Medley
Herb & Butter Smashed Yukon Gold Potatoes
Pecan Praline Sweet Potato Casserole
Crispy Brussel Sprouts Tossed in Balsamic Glaze
Haricot Verts Sauteed w/ Caramelized Sweet Onions & Preserved Lemons
Sister Shubert, Hawaiian Sweet Rolls & Stone Ground Wheat Rolls w/ Honey Butter

Salad Bar

Heirloom Cherry Tomatoes & Mini Mozzarella Balls Tossed in Basil Vinaigrette
Sun-dried Cranberry, Charred Scallion & Herb Penne Pasta Salad w/ Creamy Parmesan Dressing
Local Grown Greens w/ Cucumbers, Carrots, Tear Drop Tomatoes, Pickled Sweet Onions (Choice of dressing)
Ambrosia Salad-- Pineapple, Mandarin Oranges, Black Cherries, Toasted Coconut & Marshmallows

Appetizers

Smoked Tuna Dip Filo Cups
Crispy Wonton Shrimp w/ Cilantro Pesto
Mini Beef Wellingtons
Lobster Stuffed Mushrooms

Desserts

Key Lime Pie Bites w/ Nilla Wafer Crust
Pecan Pie
Blacksmith Pie
Carrot Cake
Chocolate, Vanilla & Strawberry Cupcakes

\$30 Seafood Bar Add-On (Per person, No sharing)

Assortment of Oysters on the Half Shell
Shrimp Cocktail w/ Pickled Vegetables
Tuna Poke • Hawaiian Squid Salad
In House Cured Salmon Philadelphia Roll • Crunchy Shrimp Roll
Traditional Caviar Bar- Eggs, Chopped Onions, Preserved Lemons, Chopped Chives, & Assorted Toast Points, Crème Fraiche, Cucumbers & Daikon Radish

Drinks Included

Soda • Iced Tea • Coffee

Adults \$69 • Little Pilgrims \$29 (10 and under)

Call for Reservations: 850-534-3045
Or go to OldFloridaFishHouse.com

Deposit refundable if cancelled by 11/21/22.
18% Gratuity will be added. Menu subject to change.

Join the Old Florida Fish House for their Traditional Thanksgiving Buffet, featuring two carving station choices: Butter & Herb Roasted Turkey Breast and Rosemary Garlic Prime Rib. Other mains include a Roasted Wild Salmon w/ Cucumber dill Yogurt Sauce or Gluten Free Royal Red Fried Shrimp. Open 11am - 6PM. The full menu can be seen by visiting www.oldfloridafishhouse.com. Adults \$69, Children Under 10: \$29. Call for reservations, 850-534-3045. Old Florida Fish House, 33 Heron's Watch Way, Santa Rosa Beach.

WaterColor Inn & Resort

The WaterColor LakeHouse is offering a special Thanksgiving Buffet on November 24 from 10 AM to 3 PM, featuring everything from a Breakfast Corner (offering familiar favorites like scrambled eggs, crisp Applewood bacon, French toast and hot oatmeal porridge) to a Bakery section (house-baked rolls, breakfast Danish and pastries, banana bread and more), along with an Iced Seafood & Raw Bar, a Carving Station featuring herb-roasted whole turkey and herb peppercorn-crusted prime rib, a wide selection of Main and Side Dishes, Desserts, and even a Kids Menu! Price for the WaterColor LakeHouse Buffet is \$85 per adult, \$45 per child ages 6 to 12, and complimentary for children 5 and under. 235 WaterColor Blvd. W, WaterColor. Email WCISocialEvents@stjoe.com for reservations. Phone 850 534-5000.

Family-Style Turkey To-Go or WaterColor Delivery

For those who would rather have their Thanksgiving Dinner delivered or get it to go, WaterColor Inn & Resort has the perfect option for you – choose between a Whole Turkey Package or Half Turkey Package. Both options come with a wide selection of Main Dishes (herb-roasted whole turkey and butternut squash ravioli), Cold Selections (coastal greens salad, Caesar salad, poached Gulf shrimp), and Dessert (salted caramel pumpkin pie, bourbon chocolate pecan pie). Each package includes turkey and all the trimmings for 4 to 6 people. \$300 – Whole Turkey Package \$225 – Half Turkey Package

Email WCISocialEvents@stjoe.com

by Monday, November 21 to place your order; pick up will be at Gather Kitchen + Bar from 10:30 AM to 2 PM on Thanksgiving. 34 Goldenrod Circle, WaterColor. Phone 850 534-5000

Thanksgiving Brunch at Ovide by James Beard award-winning chef Hugh Acheson

Perfect for hotel guests and locals, guests can skip the clean-up and dine in at Ovide, Hotel Effie's in-house restaurant. Ovide, the restaurant by award-winning celebrity chef and 2-time James Beard nominee, Hugh Acheson, is offering a feast of roasted turkey, cornbread stuffing, savory gravy, Effie's iconic homemade biscuits and much more. This experience includes a seafood buffet alongside a family style dinner, including starters, salads, entrees, sides, and delicious desserts to taste. Brunch is available from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. for \$65 per person and \$30 for children under 12. Make reservations by calling 850-351-3030 by November 18. Hotel Effie Sandestin, 1 Grand Sandestin Blvd, Miramar Beach

Thanksgiving Fall Dinner at Ovide

Leave your cooking utensils at home and enjoy an elegant home cooked meal at Ovide with all the flavor and none of the stress. This elevated Thanksgiving dinner features a three-course meal with an array of all your favorite fall classics. Ovide's chic, well-appointed interior and sophisticated ambiance is the perfect setting for a heart-warming meal with loved ones. Make reservations by calling 850-351-3030 by November 18. Hotel Effie Sandestin, 1 Grand Sandestin Blvd, Miramar Beach.

Fish Out of Water at WaterColor Inn

The Fish Out of Water restaurant is offering Thanksgiving-themed options throughout the day on November 24, including a Pumpkin Spiced Croffle, Shaved Turkey Rueben, Warm Sweet Potato Casserole, and Brown Butter Pecan Ice Cream between 8 AM and 2 PM, and the Thanksgiving Feast from 4 PM to 9 PM, with roasted turkey breast, fried maple almond Brussels sprouts, green bean casserole, cornbread stuffing,



the cooks to servers and everyone in-between. Credit cards will be accepted for donations and alcoholic beverages can be purchased at the bar separately but not included with the meals. Large family groups of 10 or more are encouraged & asked to please call the restaurant ahead of time so that a table can be reserved to avoid long waits... (850) 837-2506. Harbor Docks will begin seating at 11:00AM and will take the last sitting at 4:30PM. Please note that food will be served while it lasts. The serving is not buffet style but served individually to patrons. Parking will be available across the street from the restaurant with plenty of parking signage and handicap parking available also. Harbor Docks Restaurant is a Destin institution located in the "Heart of Destin" at 538 Harbor Boulevard.

Gather Kitchen + Bar

Gather Kitchen & Bar is offering Thanksgiving-themed

options throughout the day on November 24, including an open-faced Louisville Hot Brown (with turkey breast, bacon, roasted tomato, Texas Toast and Mornay sauce); salted caramel pumpkin pie; black bottom sweet potato bread pudding; and her-roasted turkey roulade (with cornbread stuffing, haricot vert, wild mushroom, sage-roasted parsnips, creamed Brussels sprouts, candied sweet potatoes, acorn squash, garlic mashed potatoes, cranberry gastrique sauce, and giblet gravy). 34 Goldenrod Circle, WaterColor. www.watercolorresort.com/dining/gather-kitchen-bar. Call 850 534-5000 for details.

Scratch Biscuit Kitchen

For a Thanksgiving special this year, Scratch Biscuit Kitchen will offer Turkey Pot Pie (shredded braised turkey, diced root vegetables, garden peas, Scratch biscuit crust), and pumpkin latte cinnamon rolls. 1777 E. County Hwy 30A, Unit 101, Water-

Color. www.scratchbk.com.

The Canteen at WaterColor Resort

Thanksgiving Day specials at The Canteen in WaterColor Resort will include pumpkin pie brownie bars, and a Snickerdoodle Deep South Freeze (made with vanilla ice cream and pumpkin pie spice). 205 Spartina Cir., WaterColor. www.watercolorresort.com/dining/the-canteen. 850 534-5025.

Beach Cow at WaterColor Beach Club

Guests of WaterColor Resort can stop by The Beach Cow in the WaterColor Beach Club this Thanksgiving to try out a pumpkin pie milkshake, served with caramel syrup, whipped cream and Graham Cracker crumbs. 24 Goldenrod Circle, WaterColor. www.watercolorresort.com/dining/beach-cow. 850 534-5025.

candied yams, Boursin whipped potatoes, turkey gravy and cranberry sauce. 34 Goldenrod Circle, WaterColor. www.foow30a.com, Phone 850 534-5000.

Harbordock's Restaurant 28th Annual Thanksgiving Dinner

In what has become a local Thanksgiving tradition like no other, Harbor Docks Restaurant will provide complimentary meals to locals & out-of-towners for the 28th consecutive year this November 24th Thanksgiving day. After providing curbside

"to go" plates the past two years because of the Covid-19 virus, Harbor Docks is back to having their sit down dinners inside the restaurant serving hundreds of people a traditional Thanksgiving meal including turkey, ham, dessert, beverages and all the "fixins." There is no set charge for the meal but donations are accepted benefitting Habitat For Humanity of Okaloosa County & Destin Harvest. All of the volunteers for the Thanksgiving feast are provided by Habitat For Humanity Okaloosa from

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Dining

Summer Haze Winter Fest November 19 & 20

Southern Sound Music Alliance is so proud to present this year's Summer Haze Winter Fest on November 19 & 20, 2022! This event will feature some of SoWal's favorite local & regional musicians at Distillery 98 & Idyll Hounds with a portion of proceeds benefiting the Emerald Coast Children's Advocacy Center.

As always, Southern Sound Music Alliance strives to highlight all the talent this area has to offer. Winter Fest kicks off on Saturday, November 19, at 12:00 PM at Distillery 98 and 12:30 at Idyll Hounds. Come out and enjoy a full day of music on two stages from Mari Gleason, the Cosmic Rascals, Hunter & Tony, Tanner Gray, 12Eleven, Firewater Tent Revival, The Neon Tears, Chris Alvarado Trio, Boukou Groove and Deltaphonic! In addition to the day of music, Summer Haze Winter Fest will host multiple



food trucks and a Holiday Sip & Shop with local art vendors.

There is also an exciting new event on this year's Summer Haze Winter Fest lineup!! Sunday, November 20, is our first annual Soul Sunday at The Bay. Soul Sunday is from 2:00-4:00 featuring Blue eyed Soul singer and American Idol winner Taylor Hicks along with local legends Tim Jackson and Donnie Sundal! This event is a ticketed, VIP only event.

Summer Haze Winter Fest is presented by Southern Sound

Music Alliance, Emerald Coast Children's Advocacy Center, Distillery 98, Idyll Hounds Brewing Company, and The Bay. Sponsors for the second annual Winter Fest include: Neptune Studios, Driftwood Guitars, Kenny D's, McNeese Title, Corcoran Reverie, Bote Board, Humbleman Studio, WineView, Vacayzen, Central Square Records, To Do in Destin, The UPS Store of Freeport, The Perfect Pig, The Red Bar, Beach Hits Radio, and Visit South Walton.

For more information on the artists, ticket sales and sponsorship opportunities, please visit www.southernsoundalliance.com/summer-haze-music-festival.



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30A Songwriters Festival Announces 2023 Headliners

For the past 13 years, the 30A Songwriters Festival has attracted thousands of dedicated live music fans from around the country to hear original songwriters spanning many genres of music perform their songs. The beach resort towns along Highway 30A on the Gulf feature 30 venues presenting over 200 songwriters and 300+ solo, band and in-the-round performances throughout the weekend of January 13 – 16.

30A Songwriters Festival will celebrate its 14th year with performances on the main stage at presenting partner Grand Boulevard's Town Center in Miramar Beach with headline performances by renowned artists LYLE LOVETT, GIN BLOSSOMS, RICKIE LEE JONES, STEVE EARLE, YOLA, AND MORGAN WADE.

The festival welcomes for the first time to 30a Amy Grant, Tom Rush, Brian Vander Ark (The Verve Pipe), The Black Opry Revue, Beth Nielsen Chapman and John Craigie.

Returning to perform two shows each throughout the weekend are songwriting Legends John Paul White (The Civil Wars), Shawn Mullins, Kathleen Edwards, Tinsley Ellis, Dar-



LYLE LOVETT



GIN BLOSSOMS



RICKIE LEE JONES



MORGAN WADE



STEVE EARLE



YOLA

rell Scott, Adia Victoria, Chuck Prophet, Livingston Taylor, Abe Partridge, Lilly Hiatt, John Fullbright, Sarah Lee Guthrie, Paul Thorn and James McMurtry. An Additional 100+ Artists Will Be Announced Over the Next Few Weeks—Stay Tuned

The following are confirmed artists: Hayes Carl, Glenn Phil-

lips, Jeffrey Steele, Pat McGee, Bob Schneider, Abe Partridge, Cousin Curtiss, Mary Gauthier, Dan Navarro, Mark Erelli, Jonathan Byrd, Peter Holsapple & Chris Stamey, Will Hoge, Don Dixon & Marti Jones, Nicole Chillemi and the Jazz Legacy Project, Amanda Platt & The Honeycutters, Griffin House,

Gretchen Peters, Kim Richey, Amy LaVere & Will Sexton, Will Kimbrough, Leigh Nash, Garrison Starr, Michael Tolcher, Mary Bragg, Tim Easton, Kalen & Aslyn, Cooper Carter, Crys Matthews, Florence Dore, Adrian Carter, John Lowell, Heather Mae, Charlie Mars, Michael McDermott, Leslie Mendelson,

Amy Rigby, Danielle Howle, Side Pony, Darden Smith, The Kennedys, Pat Byrne, Levi Lowery, Certainly So, Eddie 9V, Tall Pines, Meaghan Farrell, Jesse Lynn Madera, Danni Nicholis, Certainly So, Alice Peacock, Hannah Miller, Sammi Accola and Goldpine.

The 30A Songwriters Festival production team transforms amphitheatres, town halls, restaurants, theaters, bars and covered patios into unique music venues with state-of-the-art sound systems ranging in capacity from 75 to 750 seats indoors and 6,000 outdoors.

Festival Weekend Passes are currently available at www.30asongwritersfestival.com. VIP tickets that include premium seating on the lawn at Grand Boulevard for the headline shows on Saturday and Sunday afternoons along with access to the VIP tent serving complimentary food, beer, wine and cocktails are also available. For a full description of each ticket package including VIP mainstage and transportation packages for groups of 2 up to 12, visit www.30asongwritersfestival.com.

SoWal life is direct mailed (US Postal Service) to every home and business in Santa Rosa Beach and Inlet Beach). If, for some reason, you are not receiving the paper, please contact your postmaster. You may also pick up a copy at the following locations: Publix Supermarkets, Gulfwinds Paddle and Surf, Gulf Place - near Sunrise Coffee, The HUB, Seagrove Glass.

For more information, please call **850-399-0228**.



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30A EAST & WEST

ACTIVES FROM NOVEMBER 1ST 2022 & THE SOLDS ARE FROM 8-01-2022 TO 10-31-22.

AVERAGE ACTIVE PRICE

\$3,365,988

CURRENT DAYS ON MARKET

113

AVERAGE SOLD PRICE

\$2,538,662

AVERAGE SOLD PRICE PER SQ. FT.

\$845.16

AVERAGE SOLD DAYS ON MARKET

53

MIRAMAR BEACH/SANDESTIN

ACTIVES FROM NOVEMBER 1ST 2022 & THE SOLDS ARE FROM 8-01-2022 TO 10-31-22.

AVERAGE ACTIVE PRICE

\$1,990,565

CURRENT DAYS ON MARKET

114

AVERAGE SOLD PRICE

\$1,380,253

AVERAGE SOLD PRICE PER SQ. FT.

\$523.40

AVERAGE SOLD DAYS ON MARKET

46

NORTH SANTA ROSA BEACH

ACTIVES FROM NOVEMBER 1ST 2022 & THE SOLDS ARE FROM 8-01-2022 TO 10-31-22.

AVERAGE ACTIVE PRICE

\$1,310,921

CURRENT DAYS ON MARKET

128

AVERAGE SOLD PRICE

\$823,943

AVERAGE SOLD PRICE PER SQ. FT.

\$331.11

AVERAGE SOLD DAYS ON MARKET

55

* Average Prices are rounded for simplicity.

Information is deemed reliable but is not guaranteed accurate by the MLS or John Martin Group | Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices PenFed Realty.

Happy Thanksgiving from Studio 237 Music

“We’ve come to the time in the season,

When family and friends gather near,

To offer a prayer of thanksgiving,

For blessings we’ve known through the years.”

These are the opening lines of “Thanksgiving Prayer,” written by Josef Anderson and performed by national legend Johnny Cash in the 90s TV show Dr Quinn, Medicine Woman. Though Johnny’s music is usually described as country, he did not like it to be genre-defined. His music brought together fans of all ages and many different genres such as country, rock and roll, blues, folk and gospel.

Here at Studio 237 Music, we believe that’s what music is all about - coming together to build a loving community to share in the joy of music and happiness of others, no matter their background. Music is for everyone, and without a community to share it with, music just would not exist.

As there’s only a short while before Thanksgiving is with us once again, we wanted to take this time to reflect on the hard work of all our students and teachers, celebrate their successes, and give thanks to everyone and their families for their supportive and encouraging atmosphere as students continue on their musical journey.

First, let us reflect on the progress our students have made since they began their studies in August. When they first started out, the process of pushing down the piano keys or plucking a guitar string seemed so strange and unfamiliar, yet now they are read-

ily performing holiday songs and gearing up to approach more challenging musical material. Let us celebrate their dedication, perseverance and enthusiasm towards learning and growing a new gift.

Let us also be thankful for our team of knowledgeable and talented teachers who are leading the way for students to reach their highest potential, as well as providing a safe and motivating environment for students to continually work on their musical abilities. The teachers’ job is by no means an easy one - they must pass on the traditions of many, many past generations of musicians (music has been around for a very long time, after all) for future generations to continue on.

There is no doubt that the families and wider community around us should also be cel-



brated. We are very thankful to the many families who support and encourage students, take them to their music lessons, help them with instrument care and maintenance, and never get tired of their home practice sessions (hearing the same song over and over again!).

We are grateful for all the

teaching and learning resources we have at hand to help us in achieving our future goals. We are grateful to God for providing us with abundance, for guiding us throughout all of our lives and on into the future. And of course, we are grateful to our musicians for sharing their heart through music to everyone around them.

We wish you all a happy and blessed Thanksgiving!

If you’d like to hear Johnny Cash’s full performance of “Thanksgiving Prayer,” you can find a copy of the recording here <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=egIB7tYW80M>.

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The Health Dangers of Mold After a Hurricane

BY FELIX ZAPATA

Hurricanes are known to bring intense weather in the form of wind and rain. As a result, oftentimes storm surges are caused and create life threatening dangers and put your property at risk of flooding. After a flood occurs and your home is damaged, you face the risk for mold accumulating in your home.

When assessing your property, keep in mind that where there is dampness and water there's

more than likely mold. However, sometimes the visual hazard can be hidden behind walls, under flooring or in a basement or attic. Although mold has the potential to damage your property, its greater threat is the damage it can have on your health. If you've experienced any of these signs or symptoms after a flood, you may have been exposed to mold in your home.

- Nasal congestion and sneezing
- Voice hoarseness and throat

- Irritation
- Coughing, wheezing, shortness of breath
- Aggravation of asthma symptoms
- Severe fatigue

If you have experienced any of the above following a flood in your home, seek medical attention immediately. To learn more about hurricane prevention and repair, please contact APEX Disaster Specialists at (850) 660-6900.

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Emerald Coast Energy Solutions:

Ways to Save this Holiday Season

ENERGY TIPS

by Emerald Coast Energy Solutions

BY CHRIS BALZER

I cannot believe the holiday season is here. It has been nice getting a break from the high humidity and I am especially enjoying those attic inspections this time of year. With the holiday season, inheritably comes more energy use. Family and friends come to visit, school holiday breaks and the enjoyment of cooking and entertaining those traditional meals. All mean, more energy use. Here are a few holiday energy savings tips to help brighten your nights and lower your energy bills.

Switch to LED lights when decorating and in general. LED lights use 80 to 90% less energy than incandescent lights. It is estimated that 4 strands of LED lights will save \$30 this month

compared to 4 strands of the traditional lighting. When I changed out my landscape lighting bulbs to LED, they were brighter, looked great, will last longer, and use less energy. It is also a clever idea to use timers to reduce the amount of time holiday lighting stays on, plus one less thing to worry about.

When cooking the holiday feast, do not forget about the smaller appliances. Microwaves, slow cookers, and multi-use smart appliances all use less energy and give off less heat than ovens and stoves. Also consider co-cooking. If one dish needs to bake at 400° and the other at 350°, consider sharing the baking time and set your oven at 375° and bake both dishes.

We typically use our com-

mon appliances more during the holidays. Many of our water heaters are set to 140° from the manufacturer. Lowering the setting to 120° will save energy and money. When showering, many of us will start with the hot water turned all the way up and then add cold water for a comfortable temperature. By doing this, you are cooling the hot water which you spent energy and money to heat. Lowering water heater temperatures to 120° on your hot water heater saves energy and money.

Do not run dishwashers when they are half full, this wastes energy. Fill up those baskets and try adding a drying agent. These agents help lower the surface tension of water causing it to sheet off dishes, using less drying time,

saving you money. Also, use cold water in your clothes washer. Most new clothes washers and detergents are designed for cold water and get your clothes just as clean. When drying clothes, throw a few dryer balls into the dryer with your load, this will reduce drying time by preventing laundry from clumping allowing the warm air to circulate better. If your dryer has an auto dry option (moisture sensing), use that option instead of timed dry and clean the lint trap between loads—this improves air circulation and increases the efficiency of the dryer.

If you plan to leave this holiday season, think about automating your home. Put exterior and interior lighting on timers to avoid being on all day and night. Add a thermostat which you can control via Wi-Fi and your smart phone. In the event we get a cold streak or heat wave during the time you are away, you can control your home's temperature. Also remember to unplug those energy vampire electron-

ics which use energy even when turned off.

Buying local foods and goods not only supports our community but saves energy by reducing transportation related energy costs.

Be innovative and give your home an energy checkup by a professional. They can pinpoint your biggest energy loss areas and provide suggestions and solutions to become more energy efficient.

We wish you and your loved ones a Happy, Safe and Energy Efficient Holiday Season.

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 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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Don't Be a Statistic: Have Adequate Flood and Wind Insurance



By JOE CAPERS, INSURANCE ZONE

Every time a storm threatens our state, we are reminded of how many homeowners and business owners either do not carry flood and wind insurance at all, or have inadequate limits to cover their loss. Unfortunately, the 2022 Atlantic hurricane season runs to Nov. 30.

When Hurricane Ian hit our state, the property insurance market was already in peril. The market was the most volatile in the U.S. well before Hurricane Ian formed, and will most likely

become even more unstable in the wake of the storm. The market has been strained under billion-dollar losses, insolvencies and skyrocketing premiums. The massive storm barreled into southwest Florida, delivering catastrophic winds, rain and flooding. The majority of the estimated losses in Florida come from wind damage, estimated between \$22 billion and \$32 billion, while insured storm surge losses in the state are expected to be an additional \$6 billion to \$15 billion.

The increasing unpredictability of hurricane threats underscores the need for property owners – especially those close to water – to raise their standard of preparation. The most significant risks for these homeowners are wind and water. Windows are particularly

vulnerable points during a hurricane, but any exterior points – including shingles, gutters, and railings – are at risk from wind. Homes, in general, should have window protection in advance. Owners should either board up the windows or install hurricane shutters. This is one of the more important decisions individuals make.

Without adequate reinforcement, windows can be a source of indoor damage during a storm. A home's occupants could also be injured near windows when a hurricane strikes. Similarly, doors could become a weak point, so these entryways should also be secured

Although most standard homeowners and business insurance policies can include wind coverage, they do not cover flooding. So it is important to

have protection from flooding associated with tropical storms, hurricanes, heavy rains, broken levees, outdated or clogged drainage systems, rapid accumulation of rainfall and other conditions that impact our area. Almost everyone in a participating community of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) can buy flood insurance. Recently, Florida has become the leader in the country in encouraging private markets to respond to our needs with competitive alternatives, but the prevailing market condition will slow down this development.

A flood is defined by FEMA as a general and temporary condition in which two or more properties of normally dry land are inundated by water. Just because you haven't experienced a flood in the past does not mean you won't in the future. Flood risks are based partly on history, but also on rainfall, river-flow and tidal-surge data, topography, fold-control measures and changes due to building and development.

The NFIP's Dwelling Form offers coverage up to a maximum of \$250,000 for building property and up to \$100,000 for

contents and the Commercial Form provides up to a maximum of \$500,000 for building and/or contents. Both should be purchased as well as excess flood for limits up to the replacement cost of the dwelling and personal property over the basic limits. Recent storms and predictions of a future with bigger and stronger storms highlight more than ever the importance of flood insurance.

You can buy flood insurance through the NFIP no matter where you live if your community participates, except in Coastal Barrier Resources System (CBRS) areas. For properties in these areas, the private market is available.

We recommend you call an experienced insurance agency with access to the NFIP as well as private markets to help evaluate your flood exposures.

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 its Video Library on ins-zone.com and watch the informative video on "Flood Insurance," or call (850) 424-6979.

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